



Exhibit message

This exhibit displays a number of percussion, string and wind instruments from around the world, and shows how these basic types of instrument can have many variations.

Quick Fact

Instruments are classified into four broad groups based on what part of the instrument vibrates to create sound.

Idiophones, such as the Canadian spoons, vibrate the entire body in order to create musical sound; **membranophones**, such as drums, vibrate a membrane stretched over a cavity; **chordophones** vibrate strings and **aerophones**, the wind instruments, vibrate air.

Graphic panel text

PERCUSSION

Ceramic tasa drum: India

This drum was used to sound royal activities in India in ancient times. The drum is tuned by heating it in the sun to give a sharper tone, or by dampening it to give a duller tone.

Shanti carillon chimes: France

Carillons, chimes and bells are found throughout the world. In this chime, different length metal tubes within the resonator create clear tones and overtones. Chimes are used for

healings and meditations as well as by musicians.

Rainstick: Chile

Pebbles falling through thorns stuck into dead cactus wood create the sound of rain. This instrument is used in Andean and Mexican music, and also to bring rain to the Atacama desert of Chile.

Singing bowl: Tibet

Singing bowls were brought to Tibet from India in the 700s, along with Buddhism. Tibetan singing bowls, used for meditation, are struck or rubbed around the rim with a mallet.

Thumb piano (*m'biras dzevaozimu, sansa*): Zimbabwe

A traditional instrument of the Zesuru tribes of the Shona people of Zimbabwe. The player uses thumbs to pluck the keys downwards and the forefinger to pluck the keys upwards.

Shaman's dhyangro: Nepal

The dhyangro is a two-sided drum played with a stick. It is used to treat sick people by the shaman of the Chepang people of Nepal.

Jaw harp (*kubing*): Philippines

The jaw harp is one of the oldest instruments in the world and is found in many countries. It is held in the mouth and plucked with the finger. Pitch is changed by changing the shape of the mouth.

Flexatone: Britain and USA

The flexatone was patented in the 1920s. It is mainly used to create mysterious sound effects and only rarely used in classical music. Pitch is changed by bending the body of the instrument.

Canadian spoons: Canada

Canadian spoons are made from a single piece of wood, as opposed to individual metal spoons. The spoons often accompany Canadian folk dance music, which has a strong Celtic influence.

Juju belt: Ghana

The 'rattles' on this belt come from the 'juju' bean. The belt is worn around the waist by dancers. Similar waist, arm and ankle belts are also worn for dancing in Nigeria.

STRING

Viola berimbau: Brazil

This string percussion instrument commands the rhythm of the Brazilian martial art dance game *capoeira*. There are different berimbau rhythms (*toques*) and each one has a meaning to the game.

Turkish spike fiddle: Turkey

Spike fiddles are a type of bowed lute common in the Middle East, Asia and North Africa. The spike fiddle is held vertically and rested on the knee when played.

King David's harp: Africa, Serbia, Ancient Egypt, Greece, and Medieval Europe

This biblical lyre harp dates back nearly 5000 years ago. It was popular in Ancient Egypt and Greece. Today, similar harps are found in Siberia and parts of Africa. Lyre harps are strummed with one hand.

Bubul tarang (benjo): Pakistan, India and Bangladesh

The bubul tarang (meaning 'waves of nightingales') is a dulcimer with 27 typewriter keys. The instrument is strummed while the keys are used to fret the notes. It is a common folk and children's instrument.

Mandolin: Europe

The mandolin is a type of lute, originating in Europe in the 1700s. All lutes have a resonating belly and strings which run the length of the neck. Mandolins are typically played by rapid plucking (*tremolo*) with a flat pick.

Valiha: Madagascar

The valiha is a type of tube zither, traditionally made from bamboo. It is a cultural symbol of Madagascar, but probably originated in South-East Asia. The strings are plucked with both hands.

Saz: Turkey

The saz is a type of long neck lute (the neck is longer than the body) popular in Turkey. The *cura saz*, here, is one of the smallest of several sizes.

Black Mountain dulcimer: Appalachian Mountains, USA

Zithers and dulcimers are found in all corners of the world. Zithers have strings running the length of the body. The mountain (or Appalachian) dulcimer is a type of plucked

zither. A true dulcimer is a zither struck with hammers or beaters.

WIND**Kaen (or khene): Thailand**

This is the oldest form of free-reed instrument. It is played by blowing and sucking on the brass mouthpiece and covering the holes of each tube, like the western harmonica.

Shofar: Israel and the Middle East

A shofar is traditionally made from a ram's horn and used in Hebrew ceremonies. It is played by vibrating the lips at the opening. The player is called the *ba'al tokea* (the 'sounder of the shofar').

Hunting horn (double coil): France and Western Europe

Hunting horns evolved from simple animal horns, like the shofar, and into the modern orchestral horn. Hunting horns were originally meant to be played one-handed, while riding a horse.

ACME siren whistle: United Kingdom

Whistles are a type of vessel flute. This whistle, also known as the 'cyclist's road clearer', was first made in 1895. It is often heard as a special effect related to circus clowns.

Metal Tibetan trumpet (dung, rag-dun or rag dung): Tibet

This instrument is played alongside sacred Buddhist chant music. This unique type of music contains no string instruments, only wind and percussion instruments.

Ceramic ocarina: Peru

Ocarinas are thought to be around 12 000 years old. In Peru, the Inca used ocarinas to send messages in the Andes. Ocarinas were also important in ancient China and Egypt.

Bamboo panpipes: Peru

Panpipes are found in most parts of the world, made from many materials, including stone, bamboo and clay. The hollow tubes are closed at one end and played by blowing horizontally over the open end.

Melodica (Melodihorn): Germany

The melodica, also known as the melodihorn, blow accordion or wind piano, was created in the late 1950s. It is played by blowing through

the mouthpiece and pressing the keys to allow air through the holes.

DIDJERIDU

Didjeridu (*yidaki*): Arnhem Land, Northern Australia

The didjeridu (also spelt ‘didgeridoo’), or *yidaki* originated in Arnhem Land in Northern Australia. It is made from the branch of a eucalyptus tree which has been hollowed out by termites.

Playing the Didjeridu

The didjeridu is classified as a lip-reed instrument (like the trumpet), because it is played by vibrating the lips. However, it is the interaction between the player’s vocal tract and the instrument which creates its unique sound.

Players use a technique called ‘circular breathing’—breathing in through the nose and out through the mouth at the same time—to create endless sound.

Circular breathing causes changes to the instrument’s timbre and volume which are incorporated into the rhythm of the music.

Further information

General:

- ★ *Musical instruments of the world – an illustrated encyclopedia*. R Midgley (ed.) (Diagram Group), 1976. Facts On File Publications, Inc, New York.
- ★ *Measured Tones, 2nd edition*. I Johnston, 2002. Institute of Physics Publishing Ltd, Bristol.
- ★ *UNSW Acoustics Lab*:
<http://www.phys.unsw.edu.au/music/>
- ★ *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopaedia*:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page
- ★ *Lark in the Mornin:–*
<http://larkinthemorning.com/siteindex.asp?bhcd2=1111537439>

PERCUSSION

Rice singing bowl:

- ★ <http://www.bodhisattva.com/about.htm>

Thumb piano:

- ★ <http://membres.lycos.fr/musicand/INSTRUMENT/ETHNIC/SANZA.htm>

- ★ <http://www.mbirra.org/instrument.html>

Canadian spoons:

- ★ *Canadian Society for Traditional Music*:
<http://www.yorku.ca/cstm/>

Rainstick:

- ★ <http://www.nativevillage.org/Messages%20from%20the%20People/Rainsticks-Heard%20Museum.htm>

Shaman’s dhyangro:

- ★ *Nepal Ethnographic Museum*:
<http://www.asia-planet.net/nepal/museum.htm>
- ★ <http://www.rhythmatis.com/museum/shamanicdrums.html>

Juju belt:

- ★ <http://www.bongocentral.com/rattles.htm>

DIDJERIDU

- ★ *Australian didjeridu cultural hub*:
<http://www.ididj.com.au//theDidjeridu/what.html>

STRING

Valiha:

- ★ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/music/features/africa/isinsvaliha.shtml>

Bubul tarang:

- ★ www.pakistanstudies-aips.org/en/mi.htm
- ★ http://chandrankantha.com/articles/indian_music/bulbul.html

Berimbau:

- ★ <http://www.rhythmweb.com/berimbau/>
- ★ <http://www.capoeiranyc.com/berimbau.html>

WIND

Kaen:

- ★ Recording of excerpt of *Noi Paat* by Randy Raine-Reusch, SOCAN, Copyright 2005 Randy Raine-Reusch, used with permission, WWW.ASZA.COM

Panpipes:

- ★ <http://www.sbgmusic.com/html/teacher/reference/cultures/peru.html>

Hunting horn:

- ✦ <http://members.aol.com/ncpmb/french.htm>
- ✦ <http://www.uh.edu/engines/epi291.htm>

Melodica:

- ✦ <http://www.melodicas.com/melodicas.htm>