

## Course Content - Traditional Music from Africa - Part 1

### Introduction

- Traditional music from the continent of Africa often features percussion, strong beats and rhythms.
- The continent of Africa is really big! The surface area of Africa is large enough to hold the surface area of the United States of America, China, India and most of Europe. The continent of Africa also has a lot of people living there – almost a Billion! That is almost twice as many people than in North America, which includes the United States, Canada and Central America. There are 48 countries in Africa.
- Singing, dancing and making music are the ways African cultures and ethnic groups celebrate life and share stories. They are passing their history on, from older generation to the younger ones.
- Traditional African rhythms are often Polyrhythms. Poly means two or more and a polyrhythm is when there are two or more rhythms or beats playing over each other at the same time.
- Traditional African melodies are sometimes Polyphonic. A Polyphonic Melody is when more than one melody plays over the top of each other at the same time.
- With so many different cultures, sometimes the same (or very similar) musical instrument is called by a different name, depending on where you are.

### North Africa – Morocco, Algeria, & Egypt

- **Gnawa Music** is from **Morocco** and is often used to tell stories, keep traditions alive, calm down playful spirits or help people who are sad, sick or stressed out.
- **Ma'luf** is a traditional music style from **Algeria**. It is thought to have originated from Jewish and Muslim refugees who came from Spain. Ma'luf tells the history and stories of those refugee people.
- Originally from Sudan, **Zar** is a type of music in **Egypt** which is healing music and meant to create a happy experience for both the listener and performer.
- **The featured instruments in this section:** Gnawa - the Sintir, Karkabas and Ganga. Ma'luf – Mandole, Oud, violins, drums and flutes. Zar – the Tanbura, Mangur, Kawala, shakers and drums.

### Music in Life Lesson

The Music in Life lesson is a moment to engage in active listening. The Music in Life lesson song for this course is “Amal Hayaty” by Umm Kulthum. Students are invited to think about how the music makes them feel, think and move. Music is an individual experience; active listening encourages students to choose their own musical path.

### Gumboot & Musical Movement Minute

- **Gumboot** is a type of dance that was created by South African mine workers as a way to communicate with each other in the mines. They used their hands for clapping and slapping and their boots for stomping.
- Gumboot has evolved into **Stepping**, a popular dance and activity at traditionally Black colleges and universities. We got to see some examples of Stepping competitions!
- The Musical Movement Minute was taught by a group called African Beat. [www.AfricanBeat.com.au](http://www.AfricanBeat.com.au)

### East Africa – Ethiopia, Uganda & Kenya

- In **Ethiopia**, **Azmari** are vocalists and instrumentalists who entertain others with singing or chanting. Azmari are a type of storyteller who sings of family, friendship, romance and history.
- The **Madinda** and **Kadinda** are types of xylophones from Uganda. Uganda's traditional music and dance are usually related to a specific festivity such as marriage, harvests and hunting.
- The **Nyatiti** from **Kenya** is a musical instrument that is over a thousand years old. It is played with the hands, leg and big toe!
- **Featured instruments in this section:** Azmari – Mesenko, Krar, Washint and Kebero. Uganda – Madinda and Kadinda. Kenya – Nyatiti.