

The Moving Music Museum



by
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The Moving Music Museum is an integrated arts experience which explores a vast collection of ancestral and contemporary musical instruments from different parts of the world.

Instruments such as the Australian didgeridoo, South American chacapa, bullroarer, Afro-Brazilian berimbau, Brazilian pandeiro, Zimbabwean mbira, Afro-Cuban bata drums, Afro-Peruvian cajon, African kalimba, Nigerian dun dun or talking drum, kashaka, jaw harps, hang drum, and hand percussion synthesizers are part of an extensive collection that has been built for over ten years by Cuban American teaching artist Michael Gil Arango. This unique collection of instruments showcases the vital relationship between humans and music, and highlights cultural trends and historical events that explain how the instruments, and their players, changed over time and geography.

Participants will be exposed to the instruments' origins, history, playing technique, and musical possibilities utilizing an integrated arts approach, which also links to CPALMS educational standards and fosters the development of 21st century skills.

Not only do some of the instruments have a very unique appearance, playing technique, and timbre, but they also serve critical religious and social roles in their native socio-cultural settings.

This experience labels regions, countries, oceans, and continents as it connects stories of past cultures and historical processes with contemporary innovation.

Musical transformation connects with the 16th century Atlantic enslaved people trade from Africa to The Americas, Afro-Cuban, Afro-Brazilian, Afro-Peruvian and Australian aboriginal cultures, capoeira, the evolution and expansion of the Afro-Peruvian cajon to the flamenco music and electronic cajon, sound effects instruments, synthesizers, loop station technology, and recently created instruments like the hang drum from Switzerland.

The Moving Music Museum is a concert, a lecture, an exhibition, and a workshop to learn about and honor others. It provides hands-on opportunities that can be transported and set up in a wide array of locations from classrooms and libraries to bigger auditoriums.



Didgeridoo

The yidaki or didgeridoo is a wind instrument that was discovered and developed by the Aboriginal people of Northern Australia. Aboriginals have developed across Australia for over 50 000 years, and despite it is said that the didgeridoo has been present in their culture since the beginning of the times, the earliest scientific evidence of the use of this instrument are between 1000 and 1500 years old. Traditional didgeridoos are usually made from eucalyptus tree trunks that are hollow due to termites' activity. Once the right tree is found, it is cut down and cleaned out. It can be decorated or not, and a ring of beeswax can be applied at the mouthpiece end to adjust the diameter for playing. The Didgeridoo is considered a sacred instrument and it plays a unique role in Australian Aboriginal society and cosmogony. It is the most important musical instrument in secret ceremonies and community celebrations.



Bullroarer

The bullroarer or rhombus is an ancestral instrument historically used for rituals, ceremonies and communicating over long distances. It has been used for several cultures including the Australian Aboriginal. It is a wooden slat attached to a long cord that produces a roaring sound when it is spun.

According to anthropologists it belongs to the Paleolithic period around 18 000 years B.C.



Boomerang

The Kylie, throwing stick or hunting boomerang is a global icon of Australian aboriginal culture. Despite several forms of throwing sticks have been found throughout different continents, in Australia the boomerang was developed to its higher level of perfection. The result was a flying weapon able to defy gravity to powerfully impact targets up to 100 meters of distance away or even more. The Boomerang has been found as old as ten thousand years old.

It was used as a hunting and survival tool, and as a percussion instrument too. The hunting boomerang does not return. Later, the returning boomerang was developed and mostly used for entertainment, and outdoor activities.



Jaw Harp

A jaw harp is an instrument consisting of a flexible metal or bamboo tongue or reed attached to a frame. The sound is produced by plucking, tapping or string pulling the instrument's tongue. The Jaw harp is an international instrument that is likely to have originated in Asia and travelled to Europe. Hundreds of different names are used to name the instrument according to the region. This instrument is very popular and important in Southern India, Viet-Nam, Yakutsk(Russia), Sicilia(Italy) among other places.

Mbira, Kalimba, Thump Piano

Mbirira is one of the most interesting and developed lamellophones of Africa. Lamellophone is a blend word from the latin word lamella, which means small metal plate and the Greek word phone which means sound or voice. Mbira is the traditional instrument of the Shona people of Zimbabwe. It consists of a wooden board often fitted with a resonator with attached metal tines, played by holding the instrument in the hands and plucking the tines with the thumbs and the right index finger (in most cases), and sometimes the left index finger too.

In Eastern and Southern Africa, there are many kinds of mbiras. It is often an important instrument played at religious ceremonies, weddings, and other social gatherings. The art of crafting and playing mbira was added to the UNESCO representative list of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity in 2020.

The kalimba or thump piano, is a modern interpretation of the mbira that was commercially produced and exported from the late 1920s onward.

It is a descendant of the mbira family of instruments that became popularized in the 1960s and early 1970s outside the African continent.



Gangang, Dun dun, Talking drum

The talking drum is an hourglass-shaped drum from West Africa, whose pitch can be regulated to mimic the tone and prosody of human speech. It has two drumheads connected by leather tension cords, which allow the player to change the pitch of the drum by squeezing the cords between their arm and body.



Kashaka

The kashaka is a percussion instrument originated in West Africa consisting of two small gourds filled with seeds or little beans connected by a string. One gourd is held in the hand and the other is quickly swung from side to side around the hand, creating a "clack" sound upon impact.

Other names include Asalato, Kes Kes, and aslatua.





Berimbau

A musical bow is a primitive instrument consisting of a stick that is bent under the pressure of one or more strings, similar to an archery bow. A resonator is optional and often when it is present, it is detachable. The sound is produced by plucking, bowing, or hitting the string and amplified with a resonance chamber. Based on archeological evidence of arrow heads and cave paintings, paleontologists date the invention of bow and arrows about 70 000 years ago.

The berimbau is the Brazilian derivation of African musical bows related to Angola and Congo. These instruments were brought to South America by Africans during the Atlantic people trade between 16th and 19th century. It is almost impossible talking about berimbau without mentioning capoeira, the very unique Afro-Brazilian martial art developed by Africans in Brazil. This kind of art mixes defenses, attacks, dance and music. Berimbau is the most important instrument in the capoeira music orchestra. Usually, three berimbaus are employed in capoeira music according to their pitch: the lowest in pitch is called “gunga”, the highest in pitch is called “viola”, and the one with a middle pitch in between is called “medio”.



Pandeiro

The pandeiro is a type of hand frame drum popular in Brazil to the point that it has been described as one of the most important Brazilian instruments. The pandeiro is used in a number of Brazilian music forms, such as samba, choro, coco, and capoeira music. The Brazilian pandeiro derives from the pandeireta or pandereta of Portugal and Spain. Contemporary sound systems technology and pandeiro playing technique approaches have placed pandeiro far beyond its traditional boundaries. Today, pandeiro is considered the minimum version of a drums set instead a small hand frame drum.



Cajita, Cajon, Quijada

These three instruments are the core of the Afro-Peruvian percussion ensemble, and they are an expression of resiliency, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

Despite African people and their descendants under slavery in Peru, were not allowed to play drums or practice their beliefs, Afro-Peruvian people turned the little box used to collect money in catholic churches in an instrument called cajita, and wooden crates in an instrument called cajon.

The quijada, charrasca or donkey jawbone is an instrument that has its origin in Africa and was adopted by some African diasporas from South and Central America.



Sound Effects Instruments

Sound effects instruments have been used by almost every single culture since ancient times. This special set of instruments can imitate nature sounds like birds, sea waves, rain, thunder, and lightning. These instruments, historically, have been used by shamans in ritual and ceremonies, and by composers in soundtracks and scores for films, documentaries, and cartoons.

Hang, Handpan

The hang is a recent musical instrument created in Switzerland in 2000.

Its origin lies in the classic Trinidad steel drum that at some point, presumably to test the sound, its concave pan was flipped into a convex position.

The mesmerizing sound that came from it was like nothing anyone had heard before. The Hang, composed of two half-shells of steel sheet glued together at the rim, uses some of the same principals as the steelpan, but has been modified so that it resonates, creating layers of different notes.



Michael Gil Arango is a Miami based Cuban American multi-instrumentalist, composer, certified teaching artist, Registered Behavior Technician, Zen practitioner and Brazilian jiu-jitsu blue belt under Andre Gusmao (UFC veteran and Renzo Gracie black belt).

Michael studied guitar and graduated from Felix Varela School of Music, Havana Cuba under the guidance of Barima Gort and Mayra Cruz.

His music career has mostly been dedicated to composing and playing music for theater, documentaries, contemporary dance, sound healing, yoga, PhD Clinical Health Psychologist talks and conferences, and storytelling.

Michael has been devoted to play and learn about ancestral musical instruments such as the Australian didgeridoo, Afro-Brazilian berimbau, African Kalimba, Jaw harps, Nigerian talking drum, Afro-Cuban batá drums among others.

These instruments are not only incorporated in Michael's past and present music projects such as 'Luyano Band' (Miami FL 2011-2017) and

'DJ ma non troppo' (Miami FL 2017- now), but they are the subject of presentations and educational programs in which Michael's passion for music and teaching leads to history, geography, ethnomusicology, global awareness, and arts integration. For a decade, Michael has been a cultural ambassador throughout music. He has worked with South Florida organizations and institutions such as, Musicall, Fundarte, Artefactus Cultural Project, Fundación Cuatro Gatos, Anti Heroes Project, Miami International Book Fair, Conecta Miami Arts Inc., Miami Dade College, Arts for Learning, Sikan Afro-Cuban Dance Project, All Kids Included and Florida Children Theater. He has been impacting the South Florida community from after school programs, juvenile and delinquency prevention programs to families in arts festivals. He has performed in prestigious institutions such as: the Havana Museum of Fine Arts; the Plaza de Armas in Zacatecas Mexico, Puerta de Tierra Campeche, Mexico; Miami Dade County Auditorium, Adrienne Arsht Center, CCEM, MOCA North Miami, MDC, Miami Children Theater, Museum of Science and Discovery of Fort Lauderdale, Florida International University, Art Basel, Historic Asolo Theater at The Ringling among others. He also has collaborated with international medicine music musicians Jesus Hihalgo and Giselle world.

