MUS 230
African Drumming
S3 External 2013

Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Unit Convenor
Tony Lewis
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Contact via anthony.lewis@mq.edu.au
Y3A 165F
By appointment

Credit points
3

Prerequisites
15cp or MUS229

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
This unit is a practical and theoretical unit in the ensemble drumming of West Africa, which investigates three different traditions from Ghana. Participants receive direct hands-on tuition in these traditions from an experienced practitioner, and where possible, on authentic instruments. The unit focuses strongly on interlocking networks of simple support parts, which combine to create complex and sophisticated rhythmic structures, and further investigates the phenomena of polyrhythm, polymetre and rhythmic ambiguity in African drumming. The unit considers the instruments of the ensembles, the social role and value of the drumming, and it also looks at certain extra-musical considerations, such as dance, language, and ritual, and how these influence the music. Reading and theoretical work are required, including transcription of given rhythms.

Important Academic Dates
Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://students.mq.edu.au/important-dates

Learning Outcomes
On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- Apply skills of physical and mental co-ordination in a collective and co-operative context
- Identify and discuss abstract structures in music and rhythm
- Recognise and reproduce interlocking rhythms and polyrhythm
Analyse and evaluate the relationships between music and society in Africa
Analyse and evaluate the relationships between aural timed-based phenomena, and visual static representations of the phenomena

**Assessment Tasks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>23/12/13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>9/1/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>9/1/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>1/9/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Due: **23/12/13**  
Weighting: **15%**

*To be submitted as a pdf file via iLearn*

**Important Note:** You will need to begin your reading for the unit well before the first on-campus day, in order to complete this assessment task.

Write a short essay (800 words) that addresses **one** of the following topics:

- Lewis (2012, pp.5-6) refers to “event, cognition and symbolism”. Elaborate on your understanding of these terms, and the respective roles they may play in your learning in this unit. *(Read: Lewis 2012.)*

- In your readings, how many different African names and spellings have you found for the Ga instrument that we refer to in English as the “gourd rattle” (or sometimes in the literature as just a “rattle”, or a “rattle strung with beads”)? How do you make sense of the wide range of names? Which names do you find more credible than others, and why? *(Read: DjeDje 1998 p.463, Hampton 1982 p.79, Rentink 2003 p.43, Zabana 1997 Kpanlogo p.1.)*

This is a short essay, and can be completed with no further research outside the readings identified against each option above. You may of course conduct further research outside these readings, but please do not use internet sources unless they are identified in your Required Readings or Recommended Further Readings for this unit.

Criteria for Assessment

- Evidence of engagement with the nominated readings
- Demonstrated understanding of the concepts and principles of African drumming that the unit focuses on
- Demonstrated understanding of the language that the unit uses to explain and evaluate these concepts, and appropriate use of them
- Clarity of expression in written form, and correct use of referencing, grammar and spelling, etc.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify and discuss abstract structures in music and rhythm
- Analyse and evaluate the relationships between music and society in Africa
- Analyse and evaluate the relationships between aural timed-based phenomena, and visual static representations of the phenomena

2

Due: 9/1/14
Weighting: 15%

Your task is to notate a given rhythm or piece of drumming music. The example to be notated will be given to you aurally. It will be given to you twice daily (at the beginnings of Periods .2 and .4 each day) for the first 6 days of the unit, for submission at the start of the final day (Period 7.1). You may use conventional notation for this example, any system that is presented to you during the course of the unit or that you have encountered in your further research, or you may devise your own system. The most important requirement is that your notation accurately reflects the critical features and characteristics of the given rhythm pattern, in accordance with the terms and guidelines given to you in the unit’s lecture material. It should also be clear and easy to interpret. (It is recommended that you read Lewis 2012 Chapter 2 before completing this task.)

Students are asked not to make recordings of this rhythm on their mobile phones, video cameras, or any other recording device, as that is against the spirit of the exercise. Students found abusing this rule will fail the assessment task, and will considered not to have undertaken
it. Your challenge is to get to know the rhythm from memory and devise a notation system from there.

Your notation should be accompanied by a brief reflective paper (c.500 words). This paper should explain the system of notation you have chosen to use, including why you have chosen it. It should document your processes in arriving at your particular result, and any particular problems, challenges or discoveries you encountered in the exercise. (Please note, this accompanying paper is not an essay – it does not need to be referenced, you may use the first person, and the word count is not strict but a guideline only. However it must be word processed.)

**Criteria for Assessment**

- Accuracy of representation with regard to the musical example notated
- Effectiveness of the notation in communicating the important musical qualities, including easiness to read
- Clarity of explanation of your notation, with reference to terms and guidelines from unit lecture material

On successful completion you will be able to:

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3

Due: 9/1/14
Weighting: 30%

Your task is to perform a selected set part from the repertoire studied during the unit, in an ensemble context. A particular part from one of the drumming traditions studied will be nominated as the assessment part, and all students will be assessed on the same part. During the assessment performance, students will also make up the relevant ensembles around the assessment part, so as to create a musical context for them. Each student will be expected to sustain each selected part in performance for about three minutes.

This exercise will be conducted in the class, on the morning of the final day of the unit (Period 7.1).
Procedure: The class is arranged so that up to 6 students at a time play the assessment part, while other students form the relevant ensemble around them. In this way we run the assessment part in sections, until all students have performed it. I video these performances so that, on the day, I can concentrate on managing the procedure, rather than on assessing you on the spot. The teaching staff then assesses you all from the video, which allows us to make detailed observations on your performance.

Criteria for Assessment

- Rhythmic accuracy and fluency in the execution of the given part
- Correct and appropriate performance technique(s), including hand/sticking structure, hand/sticking shapes and positions, sound and pitch qualities

Appropriate rhythmic relationships of the performed parts to the accompanying parts within the ensemble

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply skills of physical and mental co-ordination in a collective and co-operative context
- Identify and discuss abstract structures in music and rhythm
- Recognise and reproduce interlocking rhythms and polyrhythm

Due: 1/9/14
Weighting: 30%

This written exam will comprise a number of both short answer and long answer questions. The questions will concern material that has been taught directly in the unit, or that is in your required readings.

Students are asked to write their answers without recourse to their Unit Guide, unit notes or readings, internet access or any kind of external source. You will be given answer sheets to write your answers on, but please bring your own writing implements.

Criteria for Assessment

- Correct answers to questions
- Demonstrated understanding of the concepts and principles of African drumming that the unit focuses on
- Demonstrated understanding of the language that the unit uses to explain and evaluate these
Unit guide MUS 230 African Drumming

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Identify and discuss abstract structures in music and rhythm
- Recognise and reproduce interlocking rhythms and polyrhythm
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- Analyse and evaluate the relationships between aural timed-based phenomena, and visual static representations of the phenomena

5

Due: Continuous
Weighting: 10%

Students are evaluated upon their level of participation in the unit through the duration of the on-campus periods. Participation in the unit means being actively and creatively involved in class discussion of theoretical ideas and concepts, and in group execution of the performance exercises that the unit builds upon its source material.

Please note that this task does not allocate marks for attendance. In other words you will not get mark for simply attending each session. Attendance is an essential prerequisite to participation.

Please also note that full attendance at all appointed on-campus periods is compulsory. Students must attend all such periods to be eligible for a passing grade. The reasons for this policy are explained under the heading “Attendance”, below.

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Apply skills of physical and mental co-ordination in a collective and co-operative context
- Identify and discuss abstract structures in music and rhythm
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Delivery and Resources

Delivery: Day

This unit will use: iLearn
Times and Locations for Lectures and Tutorials

The unit will be run in intensive mode over seven days: Wednesday December 18\textsuperscript{th} to Friday December 20\textsuperscript{th}, 2013, and Monday January 6\textsuperscript{th} to Thursday January 9\textsuperscript{th}, 2014. Each student will be required to attend for five of these seven days – the two Lecture Days, Assessment Day, and two of the Tutorial Days (according to your tutorial groups).

There are four periods each day, apart from Assessment Day – see the full schedule immediately above.

All classes will be held in Building Y3A, Rooms 207, 210, 211 and 212. On Lecture Days we convene each morning in Room 207 (Theatre 1). On Tutorial Days and we convene in Room 212. On Assessment Day we convene in Room 212 for the morning period, and Room 207 for the afternoon period.

For current updates, lecture times and classrooms please consult the MQ Timetables website: http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au.

Required and recommended resources

All students are required to bring a pair of drumsticks to each class (no special type is required – the cheapest you can find will suffice). If you have access to a conga or similar type of drum, you are welcome to bring that along too, but you are not expected to. Please bring your own note-taking materials (paper, pens & pencils, etc), and a folder for the paper handouts you will be given in class. Please bring these handouts to all following classes.

Female students are advised that they may be more comfortable in trousers than in skirts or dresses, in consideration of the playing positions of some of the instruments.

MUS230 2013 S3 Required and Recommended Reading:

A substantial list of required and further recommended readings is given below, and is also available to enrolled students through the unit's iLearn site.

Because of the short and intensive contact time of this unit, students are expected to read the
required readings well before the contact sessions. Your first assessment task (Short Essay) is based on these readings, and you are required to submit that on Monday December 23rd, 2013, short after the first part of the unit.

All required readings are available through the Macquarie University Library’s e-Reserve, and/or through external websites. Most of the recommended further readings are also available on e-Reserve, but copyright restrictions prevent me from supplying them all through that system.

Further notated resources and procedural and support documents are available on the unit’s iLearn site.

NB: To access the Macquarie University Library’s e-Reserve system, go first to the Library home page (www.lib.mq.edu.au). Enter MUS230 in the e-Reserve dialogue box, and search. A list of accessible documents will come up. You will need your user name and password to access them. Having gained access, you can read the documents online or download them.

Required Reading:


and further sub-pages to these.


### Further Recommended Reading:

1. **Readings relevant to Ashanti Adowa**


2. **Readings relevant to Ga Kpanlogo**


3. **Readings relevant to Ewe drumming**


4. Readings relevant to Dagbamba drumming


Audio-visual:


5. General Readings on African Drumming & Music


**Audio-visual:**


Unit Schedule

Journals:
The following periodical journals are highly recommended –

- *Ethnomusicology*
- *African Music*
- *The Yearbook for Traditional Music*

Databases:
The following databases are accessible through the Macquarie Library website, in a manner similar to e-Reserve. Go to the MU Library home page and enter “music” under Databases. A number of databases come up. The following are particularly recommended –

- *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music* (in particular see Volume 1: Africa)
- *Grove music online*
- *JSTOR*

Changes based on student feedback

Based on feedback obtained from past students, this unit has been adapted in the following way(s):

- Assessment tasks have been redesigned and reweighted
- More online resources are being supplied through procedural and support documents
- The Department has acquired more instruments for student use
- The library has improved its resources on the topic

Unit Schedule

Daily Schedule

There will be four 90 minute periods each day, between 9.15am and 4.45pm.

Assessment Day is in two 2.5 hour periods.

9.15-10.45am Period .1 (90 mins)

Break 15 mins
Full Schedule

Please note that the days you are required to attend depend upon which tutorial group you are enrolled in. Please ensure that you know your tutorial group and your appointed days.

Day 1 (Wednesday December 18th, 2013) Lectures

Tutorial groups to attend: All

Lecturer: Tony Lewis

Period 1.1: Lecture 1 Introduction and Overview
Period 1.2: Lecture 2 Understanding Rhythm
Period 1.3: Lecture 3 Ga Kpanlogo
Period 1.4: Lecture 4 Ashanti Adowa

Day 2 (Thursday December 19th, 2013) Tutorials

Tutorial groups to attend: 1&2
Tutors: Jess Ciampa and Leigh Giles

Period 2.1: Ga Kpanlogo
Period 2.2: Ga Kpanlogo
Period 2.3: Ashanti Adowa
Period 2.4: Ashanti Adowa

Day 3 (Friday December 20th, 2013) Tutorials

Tutorial groups to attend: 3&4
Tutors: Jess Ciampa and Leigh Giles

Period 3.1: Ga Kpanlogo
Period 3.2: Ga Kpanlogo
Period 3.3: Ashanti Adowa
Period 3.4: Ashanti Adowa

Session Interval

**Day 4** (Monday January 6th, 2014) Lectures
Tutorial groups to attend: All
Lecturer: Tony Lewis
Period 4.1: Lecture 5 Ewe drumming
Period 4.2: Lecture 6 Dagbamba drumming
Period 4.3: Lecture 7 Ga Kpanlogo
Period 4.4: Lecture 8 Ashanti Adowa

**Day 5** (Tuesday January 7th, 2014) Tutorials
Tutorial groups to attend: 1&2
Tutors: Jess Ciampa and Leigh Giles
Period 5.1: Ga Kpanlogo
Period 5.2: Ga Kpanlogo
Period 5.3: Ashanti Adowa
Period 5.4: Ashanti Adowa

**Day 6** (Wednesday January 8th, 2014) Tutorials
Tutorial groups to attend: 3&4
Tutors: Tony Lewis and Megan Lipworth
Period 6.1: Ga Kpanlogo
Period 6.2: Ga Kpanlogo
Period 6.3: Ashanti Adowa
Period 6.4: Ashanti Adowa

**Day 7** (Thursday January 9th, 2014) Assessment Day
Tutorial groups to attend: All
Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central. Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:


In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the Learning and Teaching Category of Policy Central.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of Academic Student Support Services. Details of these services can be accessed at: [http://students.mq.edu.au/support/](http://students.mq.edu.au/support/)

UniWISE provides:

- Online learning resources and academic skills workshops: [http://www.students.mq.edu.au/support/learning_skills/](http://www.students.mq.edu.au/support/learning_skills/)
- Personal assistance with your learning & study related questions.
- The Learning Help Desk is located in the Library foyer (level 2).
- Online and on-campus orientation events run by Mentors@Macquarie.

Student Enquiry Service

Details of these services can be accessed at [http://www.student.mq.edu.au/ses/](http://www.student.mq.edu.au/ses/).

Equity Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the Disability Service who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

IT Help

If you wish to receive IT help, we would be glad to assist you at [http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/](http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/).

When using the university’s IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use Policy. The policy applies
Graduate Capabilities

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Apply skills of physical and mental co-ordination in a collective and co-operative context
- Identify and discuss abstract structures in music and rhythm
- Recognise and reproduce interlocking rhythms and polyrhythm
- Analyse and evaluate the relationships between music and society in Africa
- Analyse and evaluate the relationships between aural timed-based phenomena, and visual static representations of the phenomena

Assessment tasks

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Apply skills of physical and mental co-ordination in a collective and co-operative context
- Identify and discuss abstract structures in music and rhythm
- Recognise and reproduce interlocking rhythms and polyrhythm
• Analyse and evaluate the relationships between music and society in Africa
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Assessment tasks
• 1
• 2
• 3
• 4

Problem Solving and Research Capability
Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes
• Apply skills of physical and mental co-ordination in a collective and co-operative context
• Identify and discuss abstract structures in music and rhythm
• Recognise and reproduce interlocking rhythms and polyrhythm
• Analyse and evaluate the relationships between music and society in Africa
• Analyse and evaluate the relationships between aural timed-based phenomena, and visual static representations of the phenomena

Assessment tasks
• 2
• 4

Creative and Innovative
Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes
• Apply skills of physical and mental co-ordination in a collective and co-operative context
• Identify and discuss abstract structures in music and rhythm
Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Apply skills of physical and mental co-ordination in a collective and co-operative context
- Identify and discuss abstract structures in music and rhythm
- Recognise and reproduce interlocking rhythms and polyrhythm
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- Analyse and evaluate the relationships between aural timed-based phenomena, and visual static representations of the phenomena

Assessment task

- 5

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Apply skills of physical and mental co-ordination in a collective and co-operative context
- Identify and discuss abstract structures in music and rhythm
- Recognise and reproduce interlocking rhythms and polyrhythm
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- Analyse and evaluate the relationships between aural timed-based phenomena, and visual static representations of the phenomena
Assessment tasks

- 1
- 4
- 5

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Apply skills of physical and mental co-ordination in a collective and co-operative context
- Analyse and evaluate the relationships between music and society in Africa

Assessment tasks

- 2
- 3
- 5

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Apply skills of physical and mental co-ordination in a collective and co-operative context
- Analyse and evaluate the relationships between music and society in Africa

Assessment tasks

- 3
- 5

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to
demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Apply skills of physical and mental co-ordination in a collective and co-operative context
- Identify and discuss abstract structures in music and rhythm
- Recognise and reproduce interlocking rhythms and polyrhythm
- Analyse and evaluate the relationships between music and society in Africa
- Analyse and evaluate the relationships between aural timed-based phenomena, and visual static representations of the phenomena

**Assessment tasks**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5