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(Re) Examining the functions of Dùndún Talking Drum in the Inter-cultural Music process of Africa and the African Diaspora

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Abstract

Whenever the hourglass-shaped drum 'Dùndún' is mentioned, minds of music scholars readily go to the hourglass-talking drum of the Yorùbá-speaking people of West Africa. However, this does not mean that this musical instrument is peculiar to the Yorùbá as its distribution- in its varied forms- across West Africa is general; covering an area stretching roughly from Senegal to the Cameroun Republic[1]. This talking drum's compositional and performance techniques have become highly specialized and standardized because of its high usage in both the social and religious celebrations of the Yorùbá. This paper focuses on the use of Dùndún to perform other sonic functions beyond Yorùbá speech melodies and oral poetry. Intercultural music theory, being used in this study has shown that the prospect of Dùndún talking drum usage within the context of diasporic music performances proffers greater potential for the instrument as it has been favourably utilized by internationally renowned musicians in contemporary popular music both within and outside the shores of Africa. Furthermore, that interested musicians in the diaspora will find this instrument useful for their subsequent compositions and performances will help redefine the socio-cultural worldview of the music of Africa.

Keywords: Musical Surrogacy, Dùndún, African Diaspora, Inter-cultural Music, Talking drum

Introduction

Generally speaking, the term 'Diaspora' can be described as a triadic relationship between a group of people, a host country and a homeland, i.e. a situation where a large group of people who come from a particular place and are living in 'foreign land' (Lidskog, 2017). Suffice it to say that the term' foreign land', as used in this paper, does not only mean the West or Europe but anywhere else outside one's culture. From the foregoing description, one can concur that

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there are two types of diaspora i.e the old and new diasporas. Since African Diaspora is one of the foci of this paper therefore, one can opine that the term 'old diaspora' describes the dispersed people of African descent (especially of Yorùbá extraction) who have been removed or exiled from their original geographical homeland in Africa to foreign lands' during the slave trade period. Suffice it to say here that this diasporic movement goes beyond the historical slave trade which took Africans in captivity to the New World in America and Europe. It also includes the 'new diaspora' which is "… a more recent, often modern, urbanized, cosmopolitan African past that is continually animated in the present" (Muller 2006:64). In other words, it involves not only the descendants of those formerly enslaved Africans who had already been nationalized in their different countries of abode but also African immigrants who recently left the shores of the homeland to live and work or study in areas other than their countries of origin.

These people often long for their homeland, Africa, and want a part of it which they can constantly promote as artifact or political ideology wherever they are. It is common knowledge that some of these Africans in diaspora practise African traditional religion (Akìnyẹmì, 2008, Sterling 2005) but many of these sects or cults do not make use of this Ìyáàlù Dùndún talking-drum in accompanying their religious music/poetry renditions even though they understand its importance and significance in the musico-ritual processes in the African homeland. Also, the 'new' Yorùbá in the diaspora who are professional master drummers still perform the same speech surrogate patterns as has been done over the years on the instrument without really exploring the much expected 'singing' melo-rhythmic patterns which can be easily executed on the drum. These are made up of the Dùndún drum artistes, who like their Yorùbá bata counterparts had "… sought refuge in overseas networks …to successfully recast themselves as traditional performers in a global market" (Klein 2009:135). However, going by the dictates of the intercultural music concept as proposed by Euba & Kimberlin (1995) which posit the increased integration of music elements across two or more cultures, one can see greater fusion of musical perception which will continue to provide "…creative artists with resources needed for in-depth exploration of other cultures" (Euba & Kimberlin, 1995:2).

Therefore, in this paper, we shall explore the potentials of the íyáàlù Dùndún (talking drum)- as a solo instrument- which can be extended and utilized in other intercultural aspects of musical practices in composition and performances. It is believed that this will make Yorùbaì music more interestingly engaging and meaningful to 'outsiders' in order to meet a wider range of musical contexts and expectations.

The Physical Features of Dùndún

The Yorùbá hourglass tension drums are of the bi-membranophonic and uni-percussive instruments (Adegbite 1988:16) and all of them are called by the generic and onomatopoeic name 'Dùndún' because it is capable of producing gliding pitches from a low voice range to

its octave. The musical instruments in this family are all in different sizes with different names and contextual functions *kósó, gángan*, *kànàngó, kẹ́ríkẹ́rì*, and *ìsáájú* but the ìyáàlù Dùndún is both the biggest and most eloquent of these drum types. They all come with two membranous facings (King 1961; Ògúnsànyà 2007) with shoulder straps and are played with a curved wooden drumstick known as '*kọ̀ngọ́*. Of all the instruments in this hourglass family, both koso and guìduìguìduì are markedly different. Koso, though hourglass, is a single-head open-ended hourglass while *gúdúgúdú* "… on the other hand is neither a tension drum, nor hourglass shaped" (Samuel 2009:60). Rather it is bowl-shaped and is referred to as the father or progenitor of all the other drums in the DuÌnduìn family.

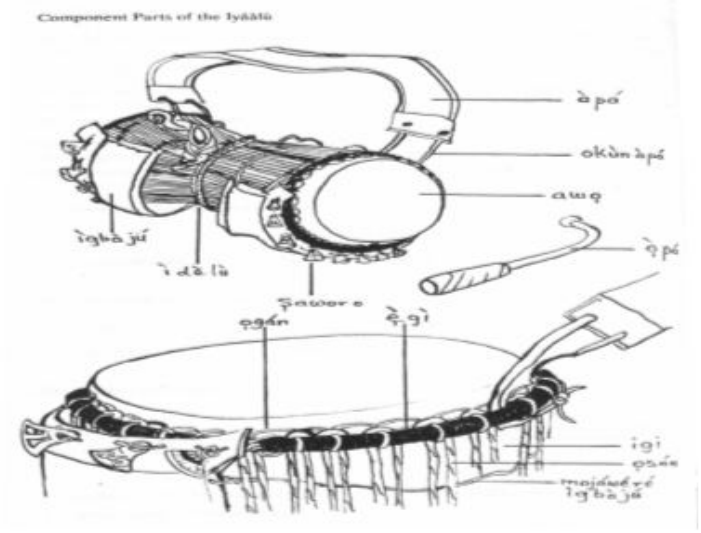


Figure 1. Component parts of the Dùndún talking drum (culled from Akin Euba's Yorùbá Drumming: The Dùndún Tradition. Pg. 112)

Ògúnsànyà (2007) opines that the shells of the foregoing hourglass drums are made from any of the following trees (i) Afzelia Africana Caesalpinaceae (*Apa*), (ii) Albizzia Gummifera (Ayùnrẹ́) and (iii) Cordia Millenii (Ọ̀mọ̀). Among all of these trees, the third specie is the favourite of Yorùbá talking drum makers, which explains the popular Yorùbá idiomatic expression that says *"àìmoye igi ní nbẹ n'ìgbò, kí á tó fi ọ̀mọ̀ gbẹ́'lù"* i.e. there are different species of tree in the forest but the Cordia Millenii is chosen", supports this notion.

The desired trunk is after that carved, and shaped like an enlarged hourglass, with the two equal open ends covered with the skin of either a he-goat or ram. The two membranes covering the two sides of the drum are held in place by about one hundred (100) loops of leather tension thongs (*ọ̀sán*) which are evenly and closely spaced round the entire length of the drum, practically hiding the drum's shell.

These tension thongs (*ọsán*) are grasped by the left hand of the performer drummer to manipulate the tension of the two membranes of the Dùndún and consequently changing the pitch of the drum. Suffice it to say that the two membranes of Dùndún must have an 'equal tempered tuning' for the drum to 'speak' or 'sing'. This will allow for that side which is not played to vibrate in sympathetic consonance with the side which is played to produce the desired sonorities.

The Dùndún which the master talking drummer plays is usually decorated with a pace of fine silky cloth onto which are attached seven or eight small brass bells "*ṣaworo*". These make extraneous tinkling sounds as the drum is being played. Sometimes too, the drummer at the height of performance may just carry the drum with two hands and shake it so that "… the tinkle of the *ṣaworo* may both combine with and enhance that particular rhythmic pattern" (King 1961:10). Another Yorùbá maxim which says "*ṣaworo ni'lù wa, ìlù tí o ní ṣaworo kìí ṣe 'lù gidi*" which means "the brass bells are for our drums, and any drum without the brass bells is not a proper talking drum" corroborates the foregoing statement.

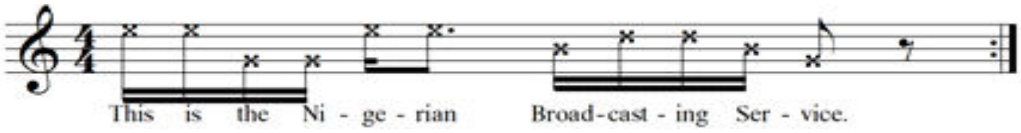
Dùndún talking drum is hung suspended over the left shoulder of the performer down to his waist by a decorated shoulder strap "*àpá*" or "*àgbèkọ́*" made of the same cloth material as the one on which the *ṣaworo* bells are attached. It is also underlined and bound at the edges with leather (Euba 1990:126) and is attached to the drum by four leather straps near the upper edges of both ends of the drum. The drum stick "*kọ̀ngọ́*" or "*ọ̀pá*", with which the drum is played, is a short stick from the branch of the Celtis Soyauxii (ita), Sypsepalum Dulcificum (*Àgbáyun*) or Glyphaes Lateriflora (*Àtòrí*) among others. The stick is originally straight but is made curve during preparation and also given a flattened round head which is subsequently covered with leather and its base is covered with a piece of cloth. This serves both aesthetic and functional purposes i.e. it beautifies the drumstick while at the same time, helps "… to prevent the stick from irritating the drummer's hand and (also) give the drummer a better grip (Euba 1990:126). This "*kọ̀ngọ́*" or "*ọ̀pá*" is shaped and curved like a question mark symbol (**?**) or a fish hook and is held in such a way that the flattened leather-covered head is at a right angle to the part held in the hand.

Ẹ̀gi refers to the strip of twisted cloth or rope in a leather bound which is affixed to the circumferences of the drum head to tightly hold the surface membrane (*awọ*) at both ends in place. There is also the long piece of twine (*ìdè̀lù*) which is used to tighten the tension thongs prior to performance (in case of Dùndún) but can also be used to tune the supporting drums or *omele* to their specific functional pitches with the context of such performance. It is pertinent to say that all of the family's drums can function as either the ìyáàlù (mother drum) talking drum or *omele*. All the *omele* or supporting drums will have their tension thongs permanently tied to a fixed pitch while those of the lead talking drum (Ìyáàlù or Ìyá-ìlù) are left free to be depressed ad libitum by the drummer. The fixed pitch tension of the *omele* ensures that they do not "…try to emulate the talkativeness of Ìyá-ìlù, and thus distract the listeners' attention from the latter's performance (King 1961:11).

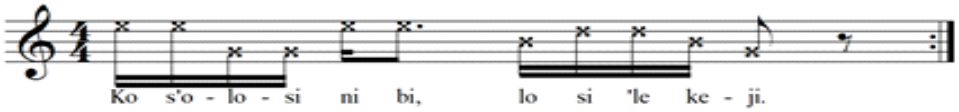
Instruments of Dùndún Ensemble

The instruments of a standard Dùndún ensemble include *ìyáàlù, àtèlé, ìsáájú, ìkehìn, aguda,* and *gúdúgúdú.* All of these drums have an hourglass shape except the *gúdúgúdú*, which is the shape of a mixing bowl or a miniature kettle drum. Although an extensive discussion is out of the scope of this study, it is important to say that this latter drum is the most revered among all other secondary drums in Dùndún ensemble, to the extent that this miniature kettle drum (*gúdúgúdú*) is called the 'father' of all drums in any standard Dùndún ensemble. The big size Dùndún - which is the object of focus in this paper- is known as Ìyáàlù (i.e. mother drum). The standard Dùndún drum ensemble performs during any sacred or secular festive occasion, life cycle ceremony and at the palaces of the King (*Ọba)* and in the houses of wealthy individuals. In addition to the foregoing music types where the Ìyáàlù Dùndún plays an active role, it also features prominently in contemporary neo-traditional popular music genres like, *Fújì, Wéré, Dùndún* and *Ṣẹ̀kẹ̀rẹ̀* group, Juju and Highlife music in Nigeria.

In such an ensemble under discussion, the Ìyáàlù player is the master drummer who not only must have an absolute command of its intrinsic performance technique, he must also be able to give "… stage directions to other drummers or correct discernable artistic lapses or critical gaps that may not be obvious to the audience (Opafehintimi 1995:156). And most important of all, he must be deeply versed in Yorùbá oral poetry performance and interpretation. This is because the interpretive audience relies on the Dùndún drummer to have a mass requisite knowledge of innumerable example in different styles. A Yorùbá idiomatic expression assents that *"…kò s'ẹ́ni tó m'èdè àyàn bí ẹ́ni m'ọ́pà ẹ̀ lọ́wọ́; ẹ́ni gb'ómele lọ́wọ́ ló m'ohun t'ómele nsọ"* (Ajayi 1987:44). This means no one understands the language of the drum as he who holds the drumstick; he who carries (plays) the secondary drum knows what it is saying. An anecdote to explain the foregoing statement was the identification drum-talk jingle of the then Nigeria Broadcasting Service (Radio Nigeria) which the people translated differently to what the drummer intended. What the drummer played was



To which people gave various interpretations such as "*kò s'ólòsì ní'bí, lọ s'ílé kejì*" and this means 'there is no pauper here, go to the next house'



In most of these other bands, Dùndún does not play its regular leading role but acts as a supporting drum and doubles whatever the *gángan* (a small hourglass drum which is the lead talking drum in this instance) plays, although sometimes, it is given either a brief or extensive interlude where the drummer may exhibit his artistry and mastery of the drum.

The Tonal Capacity of Dùndún

The drum which is structurally referred to as Dùndún is that member of the ensemble which has been described as the 'mother drum' (i.e. ìyá-ìlù) of the ensemble. This is because it is the drum which has the greatest flexibility in imitating the tonal inflections of Yorùbá language. These are unlike the other drums within the ensemble whose pitches are restricted to individual single tone because their tension thongs are tied to stretch the membrane to a particular pitch range. The restriction allows such drums to play ostinato patterns to

"… accompany the lead drummer…. And defines periodicity which informs the overall phrase structure of (the ensemble)" (Oluranti 2014). On the other hand, however, the drum head of the Dùndún drum is left to vibrate freely as the tension thongs are not tied thus giving the drum such resilience to produce a wide range of pitches and also makes it pliable enough not only to produce concrete intonations of Yorùbá language but also, executes tonal glides existing within the language (Euba 1986; King 1961).

Figure 3. From left to right; Àtelé, Ìsáájú and Gúdúgúdú (personal library)

These musico-rhythmic pitch variations are achieved by the degree of pressure exerted on the tension thongs of the drum according to the skill or intention of the talking drummer. Thus, in view of the foregoing statement it is evident that although the Dùndún drum is generally used to perform the low-mid-high tonality of Yorùbá language, it can also be used to perform sophisticated technical feats not possible on other drums" (Euba, 1986:47) such as playing any musical piece which is realized from Western-oriented musical scales e.g. major, minor, pentatonic etc.

The pitch range of an individual Dùndún drum when applied to the theory of Western music covers at least an interval of a 9th (for example, from E*b* – F') depending on the key in which the music to be performed is written. Although there are other notes both below and above the octave, the lowest sonority being the sound produced without applying any pressure on the tension thongs. The sound thus produced is a bland, non-resonant fundamental pitch because the drum head is very relaxed and not tact. It is commonly used for special effect.

Also, Dùndún talking drummers generally avoid playing notes in the maximum high register of the drum for fear of either breaking the membrane of the drum or some of the tension thongs. These maximum high register sounds are realized when the tension thongs are at the maximum tension thereby making the drum head very tough.

Thus, talking drummers usually perform within the mid-range to what Euba (1990) refers to as the working low fundamental and the working high pitches unless where it is absolutely necessary to do otherwise.

The Dùndún as a Solo Instrument in Yorùbá Culture

The Ìyáàlù Dùndún talking drum is a ubiquitous musical instrument in the socio-cultural life of the Yorùbá both as an instrument within an ensemble where it usually functions as the lead drum or as a solo instrument performing at any social or cultural events as played by the itinerant drummer. The reason for this cannot be far from what Euba (1986) describes as "…the unusual capacity of tension drum… to perform sophisticated technical feats not possible on other drums (Euba, 1986:47). This is so because the Dùndún talking drum in the hands of a master drummer can effectively articulate the three tone musico-rhythmic levels of Yorùbá language which are the low-mid-high (doh-re-mi) tonal structures to articulate and interpret the highly revered moral and philosophical codes of the society (Ọmọ́jọ́là, 2006). This is highly understood and appreciated by the interpretive audience among the Yorùbá and it also imbues the drummer the authority of exposing and calling to order anyone who engages in any anti-social behaviour within the society. Furthermore, as has been mentioned in the foregoing paragraphs, Dùndún is used in a wide variety of contexts among the Yorùbá either as an ensemble or as a solo instrument during secular or sacred occasions. The reason for this is that it is regarded as "...an instrument that performs both literary and musical functions" (Ṣótúnsá, 2009:43).

Hence the master drummer must have a repository knowledge of the various forms of poetic vocal recitation, which are (a) the spoken poetry (b) chanted poetry and (c) the sung poetry. All or any of the foregoing verses is now performed as the Drum Verse, which is when the instrument is used as speech surrogate in place of human voice. It is a common thing to see a Dùndún talking drummer performing solo on his instruments. This usually occurs during any socio-cultural life-cycle ceremony, especially at a wedding- during what is known as an engagement ceremony among the Yorùbá, where the drummer plays a significant role- and funeral entertainment venues where itinerant Dùndún drummers who may not necessarily belong to any ensemble but simply go about as solo performers are seeing praising some members of the audience and the celebrants for monetary rewards. Euba (1990) also mentions that at the palaces of Yorùbá kings especially that of the Ọ̀ọ̀ni of Ifẹ̀, Tìmì of Ẹdẹ, (and most importantly) that of the Aláàfin of Ọ̀yọ́, "… [it] is the ìyáàlù alone that is most often used to praise and announce/describe visitors to the place."

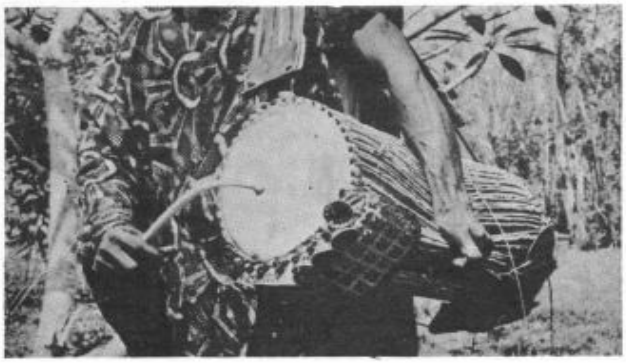


Figure 4. The Playing Technique of Dùndún Drum
(culled from Anthony King's Yorùbá Sacred Music from Èkìtì)

These kings and important paramount Yorùbá chiefs still maintain their various court musicians for the aforementioned reasons and to wake up and sing the praises/cognomens of the royalties.

It is pertinent to state here that Dùndún is not only heard during festive occasions alone but it also featured prominently during the various internecine wars among the Yorùbá. According to one Chief Ọbaníkòrò (in a report published in the 'Record' newspaper of January 2, 1904) "... Drumming is very good, it heartens soldiers for war, it sings the praises of our fathers, it brings back to recollection the great men of past times, [and] it rejoices our hearts." (Echeruo 1977:69). The renowned Yorùbá history scholar, Samuel Johnson (1976) mentioned that drummers performed at war fronts both to encourage the soldiers and also intimidate the enemies. For example at the onset of the Ìbàdàn/Ìjàyè War in 1860, it was the drummers who announced the expedition with a war march rhythms (Johnson 1976:336). It is also known that Ògúnmọ́lá, the great Ibadan general, tricked hundreds of Ìjàyè soldiers into captivity by instructing his drummers to perform the war signature tunes of the opposing general, Kúrunmí.

The soldiers on hearing the drums signal "... naturally thought their master had come to their help against Ogunmola, and as they issued one by one from their hiding places to flock his standard, they fell an easy prey into the hands of the Ibadans." (Johnson 1976:348).

Functions of 'Ìyáàlù' Dùndún in a Traditional Ensemble

It is a well-known fact that among the Yorùbá and in African societies generally, there are various musical instruments ensembles used for specific socio-cultural and sacred events. According to Nketia (1982) the instruments in any of the foregoing ensembles are "…selected in relation to their effectiveness in performing certain established musical roles or fulfilling specific musical purposes" (Nketia 1982:111). The selection and combination might be of homogenous musical instruments consisting of either membranophones or chordophones, idiophones or aerophones (Nketia 1982:84, Akpabot 1998:62, 70). It may also consist of a

mixed combination of instruments from any of the foregoing instrument families. In such ensembles, some of the

Figure 2. Picture of the Dùndún Drums (personal library)

instruments perform the function of the lead or principal instruments while the others perform the ostinato or accompaniment role. Of all the combinations of musical instrument ensemble in West Africa, drums orchestras are the best known not only because of their legends and myths associated with the drums (Akpabot 1998:70) but also because of richness in both the melodic and rhythmic structures and the intensity of the sounds they produce.

At this juncture, we shall look at the performance tradition of an all-hourglass membranophone orchestra- and specifically the Dùndún drum ensemble- where the ìyáàlù Dùndún usually takes the principal role of the lead talking drum. The ìyáàlù (mother drum) Dùndún apparently is "…that particular drum which is the largest and most important member of the Dùndún set" (King 1961:9). It is clearly the most identifiable because of its brass bells attachment and is played by the master drummer or the most versatile musician in the ensemble. ìyáàlù Dùndún can be regarded as the virtual music conductor in an ensemble as it dictates both the style and pace of the music being performed in situ. In addition, this drum plays the role of a social commentator in any performance context and "… any member of the community, high or low, could be made the object of characterization on the talking ìyáàlù" (Ọmọ́jọ́là, 2006:27). As a speech surrogate, the ìyáàlù functions as the principal melo-rhythmic instrument which introduces the beginning of any performance by executing drum flourish patterns. In this session, ìyáàlù Dùndún, through the master drummer, pays homage to esoteric beings, important dignitaries of both his lineage and professional guild (both dead and/or living) and also gives instructions as to what other drums within the ensemble should play. However, it is pertinent to say that whenever the substantive ìyáàlù is not available in any ensemble performance, the *aguda* or the *kànàngó* might be assigned the role and be designated as ìyáàlù to be used as the lead talking drum (King 1961:9, Euba 1998:191). This is because all of the hourglass tension drums are capable of speech reproduction but it is only the ìyáàlù Dùndún (or any one that will be used in such capacity) that will have its tension thongs

relaxed (so as to make it easy to execute the 'talking or singing mode) while others have theirs strung high according to their functions within the ensemble.

Examining the functions of Dùndún Talking Drum in Inter-cultural Music processes

While interrogating what the intercultural music process is, Kimberlin and Euba (1995) posit that it involves a "…highly intimate knowledge and understanding of creative and performance processes of other cultures" (Kimberlin & Euba 1995:4). What this entails is that the concept of intercultural music promotes an adequate interaction with (and study of) music and musical instrument that is not well known to the concerned researcher, probably because it is foreign to his or her musical taste or culture. Furthermore, it is also an in-depth study by a researcher into the performance/playing technique of a particular traditional musical instrument in his (or a foreign culture) in order to creatively adopt and infuse it into a totally different musical style(s). Since this research type is practical and can only be undertaken in situ, the ethnomusicological research methodology, which is open for the use of such scholar/researcher is the participant-observation method and the results or findings from this practical investigation are thereafter creatively used in subsequent compositions or performances.

The rubrics for engaging in this type of intercultural music process (with regards to Dùndún talking drum) as put forward by Kimberlin and Euba (1990) are as follows: The Dùndún talking drum be fully utilized in the liturgical activities of those Africans in diaspora who are engaged in the syncretic African traditional religion especially the worship of the YorùÌbaì orisha in various enclaves such as the Lucumi Santeria (Cuba) and candomble, xango and umbanda (Brazil). In other words, the Dùndún drum must be fully engaged in the religious recitations of the divinity involved in the diaspora the same way as it is being done in the Africa homeland. Also, empirical studies and observations have proven that the Dùndún talking drum can successively execute the western major/minor scales and modes when properly handled. During the course of research for this study, this researcher noticed that some talking drummers of popular music in Nigeria execute melo-rhythmic improvisations whenever the opportunity arises for such to take place during performance. Hence, African art music composers both at home and in the diaspora should write works in different musical idioms (such as classical or contemporary popular) with the Dùndún as the principal instrument as solo or in combination with musical instruments from other world cultures.

This does not suggest that Dùndún, as a musical instrument, is neither known nor being used in the diaspora, as it has enjoyed immense patronage from popular music practitioners. For instance, in her album entitled "Made for Now" (2018) Janet Jackson made use of the Dùndún talking drum in the opening track which she called "Àsìkò Ọpẹ́" (Moment of Thanks). In the said track, the songstress and her back-up singers chant in Yorùbá language "*Àsìkò Ọpẹ́ Janet ti dé*" which means 'moment of thanks, Janet has arrived'. Also, decades before her, other musicians such as King Crimson used the talking drum on their album, "Lark's Tongues in Aspic" in the track "The Talking Drum". Tom Waits has used the talking drum on

his song "Trouble's Braids," a track from the album *Swordfishtrombones*. Erykah Badu used the talking drum on her song "My People", from the album '*New Amerykah' Part One (4th World War)*. Sikiru Adepoju, from Nigeria, is a U. S. based master of the talking drum who has collaborated with artistes such as the Planet Drums Ensemble, Stevie Wonder and Carlos Santana to mention a few.

Naná Vasconcelos (1924-2016), a notable Latin jazz percussionist, started playing the talking drum in the early 80's and has used it to change both the direction and sound of the Brazilian jazz music. It is also pertinent to state that notable African art musicians and music scholars such as Akin Euba, Ayọ̀ Bánkọ́lé, Bọ̀dé Ọmọ́jọ́là, Olúsojí Stephen and Ayọ̀ Olúrántí to mention a few, have creatively written for the Dùndún talking drum in their compositions at one time or the other. Although the foregoing musicians have made use of the talking drum, however it has been used as for its traditional melo-rhythmic role that it plays in any given ensemble. Given that this drum has a tune-able and dynamic tonal range which can be manipulated not only to imitate the Yorùbá tonal inflexion speaking patterns but can also be made to 'sing' just like any other melodic instruments of other world cultures. In other words, it is a speech/song surrogate instrument.

Conclusion

While (re) examining the functions of the Dùndún in inter-cultural music processes of Africa and the African diaspora, this paper posits that the Dùndún is not just to be taken as a mere communication tool to be used for transmitting oral tradition in the form of praise poetry (speech surrogate) or for rhythmic accompaniment only. Popular music artistes, ethnomusicologists and art music composers- both at home and in the diaspora- must creatively utilize the performative tonal register of the Dùndún talking drum in other areas such as pre-determined pitch variations, timbre, and tonal range in consonance with other tuned orchestral instruments. Bearing in mind the argument that might likely ensue from certain quarters that the structural make-up of Dùndún is primarily suited for the performance of Yorùbá tonal music alone and, therefore, not good enough to perform other inter-cultural musical styles. The defense is that since this drum can execute any type of scales or modes form across the world (depending on the creative and artistic disposition of the performer), its continuous inclusion and usage in various inter-cultural music processes shall subsequently bring about the much-desired standardisation in tune and pitch. These anti-Dùndún drum advocates should remember that even the violin will only play well and in tune in the hands of a good performer.

Furthermore, students of African music in the diaspora should be motivated and encouraged to study and acquire the necessary skills required for becoming a master of the Dùndún talking drum playing techniques and to exhibit these skills in the performance of any style of music of their choice. If the Dùndún drum can be tenaciously engaged in such multicultural musical situations as has been expatiated in the foregoing, it will not only serve as a conduit for promoting unity and socio-cultural cohesion among all levels of Africans but shall both maintain

and stabilize ethnic identity formation in diaspora. It will also make this musical instrument known not just as a Yorùbá drum but as a globally accepted musical instrument from Africa.

End Note

The following are the localities where the hourglass talking drum is found along the West African region and how it is called in such areas.

Akan	-	Dondo
Fante	-	Odondo
Twi	-	Dondo
Dagbani,	-	Donno
Hausa	-	Kalangu
Songhai	-	Doodo
Wolof, (Mandinka)	-	Tama or Tamma
Bambara, Bozo,	-	Dyula Tamanin
Yorùbá	-	Dùndún, Gaìngan

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