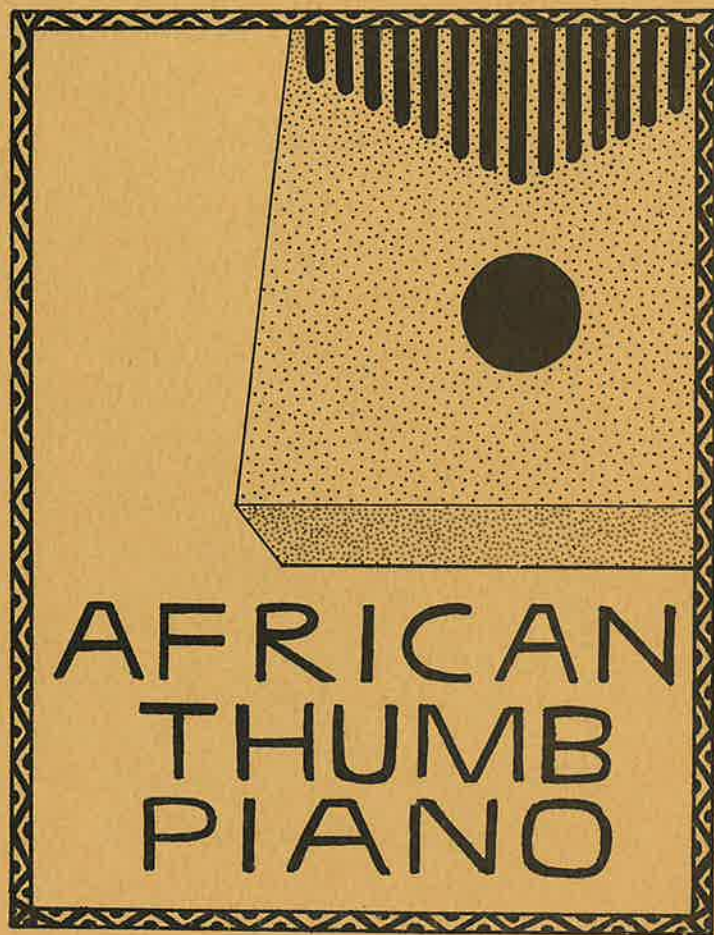




AFRICAN
THUMB
PIANO

THIS IS A LINGUAPHONE (PLUCKED IDIOPHONE) HAVING FIFTEEN METAL REEDS ARRANGED DIATONICALLY OVER A RESONATOR, THEREBY EFFECTING A TONAL RANGE OF TWO OCTAVES. IF YOU ARE FROM SOUTH AFRICA YOU WILL RECOGNIZE IT IMMEDIATELY AS AN AMBIRA, BAMBOLI, BEGE, IKIMBE, JIMBA, RAFIR PIANO, KALIMBA, MBILA, MBIRA, MOLO, SANSA OR ZIMBE. IF HOWEVER YOU ARE NEITHER A SOUTH AFRICAN NOR AN ETHNOMUSICOLOGIST, YOU MAY CALL IT A THUMB PIANO. WE DO.

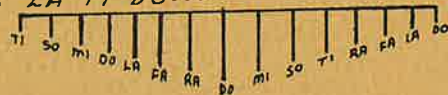
THIS IS A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT FOR PEOPLE. IT IS ASTONISHINGLY EASY TO PLAY. IT HAS A RIPPLING, ALMOST HYPNOTIC VOICE WHICH IS SOOTHING, EVEN WHILE PRACTICING. ANYONE WHO PICKS UP A THUMB PIANO CAN CREATE HARMONY IMMEDIATELY. THE RESULT IS TO LEND MUSICAL CONFIDENCE TO THOSE WHO NEED IT (ESPECIALLY CHILDREN) AND TO ENCOURAGE MOST PEOPLE TO PLAY ON.

THE FIFTEEN TONES OF THE THUMB PIANO ARE ARRANGED TO FORM TWO OCTAVES OF THE DIATONIC SCALE (DO RA MI) BECAUSE THE TONES ARE ARRANGED ALTERNATELY INSTEAD OF LEFT TO RIGHT, AS ON THE PIANO, EACH NOTE WILL HARMONIZE WITH THE NOTES TO EITHER SIDE. MORE ABOUT THIS LATER.

HOLD IT BETWEEN YOUR HANDS LIKE THIS

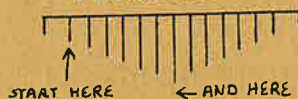


...PLAYING...
STARTING WITH THE CENTER (LONGEST) REED, PLUCK THE REEDS ALTERNATELY MOVING OUTWARD. FIRST CENTER, THEN LEFT-RIGHT-LEFT ETC. YOU WILL HEAR THE OLD FAMILIAR DO RA MI FA SO LA TI DO



...EASY HARMONY...
THE CLOSE POSITIONS OF THE REEDS ENABLES YOU TO PLAY 2, 3 OR 4 NOTE CHORDS WITH EASE. ANY 2, 3 OR 4 REEDS WHICH CAN BE SPANNED WITH ONE THUMB WILL HARMONIZE. TRY THIS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE KEYBOARD, USING FIRST ONE THUMB, THEN THE OTHER. YOU CAN MAKE NO MISTAKES PLAYING THIS WAY, ONLY IMPROVISATIONS.

...MORE EASY HARMONY...

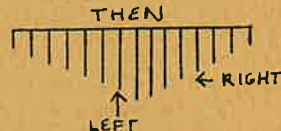
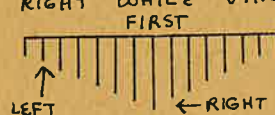


MOVE YOUR THUMBS EQUAL DISTANCE IN THE SAME DIRECTION AS THOUGH YOUR THUMBS WERE INVISIBLY LINKED.



MOVE YOUR THUMBS EQUAL DISTANCE IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS

PLAY A LOW REED ON THE RIGHT WITH A HIGH REED ON THE LEFT AND THEN ALTERNATE LEFT TO RIGHT WHILE VARYING THE NOTES YOU PLAY.



USE YOUR IMAGINATION!

...VIBRATO...

TWO SMALL HOLES ON THE UNDERSIDE OF THE INSTRUMENT WILL PRODUCE A WAVERING OF THE TONE. OPEN AND CLOSE THEM WITH YOUR FINGERS WHILE PLAYING.

EXPERIMENT

NOW FOR YOU MUSICIANS, PRODIGYS AND OTHER HOT SHOTS, HERE IS THE MUSICAL NITTY GRITTY.

...RELATIVE KEYBOARD NOTES...



...CHORDS...

CHORDING IS VERY SIMPLE SINCE THE NOTES NECESSARY TO FORM BASIC CHORDS NEIGHBOR ONE ANOTHER

NOTE:

BASIC CHORDS ON EITHER SIDE CAN BE EMBELLISHED WITH A NOTE OR TWO FROM THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE KEYBOARD TO FORM MORE HARMONYS.

LEFT	RIGHT
$\frac{ECA}{Am}$	$\frac{GBD}{G}$
$\frac{GEC}{C}$	$\frac{GBDF\#}{G\text{ MAJ. 7}}$
$\frac{BGE}{Em}$	$\frac{DF\#A}{D}$
$\frac{DBG}{G}$	$\frac{DF\#AC}{D7}$
$\frac{F\#DBG}{G\text{ MAJ. 7}}$	$\frac{ACE}{Am}$
	$\frac{ACEG}{Am 7}$
	$\frac{CEG}{C}$

...TUNING...
TO TUNE THE THUMB PIANO WE SUGGEST YOU USE A SMALL TACK HAMMER. TAP LIGHTLY ON THE PLAYING SIDE OF THE REED TO MAKE A NOTE HIGHER OR ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE TO LOWER THE NOTE

...RE-TUNE TO SIX COMMON KEYS...

NEW KEYS	ORIGINAL KEY	G	A	B	C	D	E	F#
	G	G	A	B	C	D	E	F#
	A	G#	A	B	↑C#	D	E	F#
	D	G	A	B	↑C#	D	E	F#
	F	G	A	↓Bb	C	D	E	↓F
	C	G	A	B	C	D	E	↓F
	Bb	G	A	↓Bb	C	D	↓Eb	↓F

ALWAYS RE-TUNE FROM ORIGINAL KEY OF G (THE WAY YOU RECEIVED IT) THE CHART INDICATES WHICH REED YOU MUST RETUNE TO REACH THE NEW KEY. FOR EXAMPLE: YOU ARE NOW IN G AND WANT TO GO INTO THE KEY OF C. SIMPLY LOWER BOTH F# REEDS SLIGHTLY UNTIL THEY ARE F-NATURAL. THEN PLAY THE SCALE UP FROM C. NEVER RAISE OR LOWER THE TOTAL RANGE. KEEP EACH REED ON ITS OWN NOTE OR ON THE SHARP OR FLAT OF THAT NOTE (C REED MAY BE TUNED TO C# OR B, BUT NEVER AS FAR AS D OR B

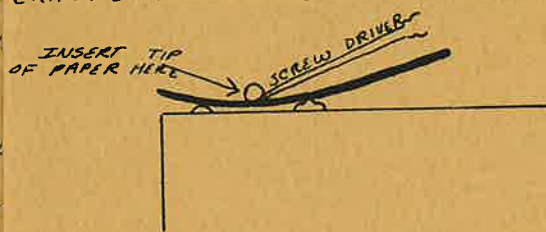
...PRACTICING...

EASY, IS IT NOT? YES IT IS. YOU WILL FIND TO YOUR RELIEF THAT THE SOUNDS YOU MAKE WHILE PRACTICING ARE OFFENSIVE TO NO ONE EXCEPT THE LOWEST ORDER OF GROUCH. IF YOU HAVE ANY COMPLAINTS FROM THAT QUARTER WE SUGGEST YOU DISPOSE OF THE GROUCH AND KEEP THE THUMB PIANO.

...CARE AND ADJUSTMENTS...

KEEP THE THUMB PIANO CLEAN AND DRY AND TAKE CARE NOT TO KNOCK THE REEDS OUT OF PLACE. A DAB OF OIL NOW AND THEN WILL KEEP THE REEDS FROM RUSTING. REMOVE ANY RUST WITH STEEL WOOL.

IF A SLIGHT BUZZ OR RATTLE SHOULD DEVELOPE IN A REED, INSERT A SMALL PIECE OF PAPER BETWEEN THE REED AND THE ROUND METAL BAR. PUSH DOWN ON REED TO INSERT PAPER - CUT OFF EXCESS PAPER WITH A RAZOR OR EXACTO KNIFE SO PAPER DOESN'T SHOW.



ENJOY - ENJOY - ENJOY!

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