

Gallery Guide

St. Louis, A Musical Gateway:

OCEANIA

Oceania is a geographic region that is made up of thousands of islands throughout the Central and South Pacific Ocean. It spans both the eastern and western hemispheres and includes the three island regions of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia and the continent of Australia.



This exhibit is the third in a series that celebrates St. Louis' multicultural heritage communities. It features rare and beautiful instruments of the Far East and Oceania drawn from the Hartenberger World Music Collection of Historical Instruments

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Oceania

The tension and vitality of the people in the Oceania region of the world is reflected their rich musical traditions and in the skillful construction of their musical instruments. These instruments were made to accompany the telling of stories, and the singing and chanting of songs, as it is from these sources of knowledge that history of the old traditions and cultures were told and preserved. In the **Melanesia** region of Papua New Guinea and eastern Indonesia you will see the fancifully carved flutes, slit drums, the distinctive handheld hourglass drums, and a full-body fiber mask from the Asmat people of western New Guinea. **Polynesian** instruments include the many hand tapping gourd drums, flutes, shell trumpets and of course the Hawaiian ukuleles. From **New Zealand** are the Maori instruments that today, have all but disappeared. **Micronesia** includes the Palau Island ceremonial Triton shell trumpet, and from **Australia**, is the aboriginal people's iconic didgeridoo accompanied by traditional clap sticks.

ROOM 3

Polynesia – Hawaii



"Ulili" (Triple Gourd Rattle), 1980s
Maker unknown, Hawaii
Wood, gourds, rope fiber

This interesting instrument was constructed by placing three gourds on a wooden rod. The outer two gourds were fixed in place, with the center gourd left free to rotate. A string was tied to the rod within the center gourd and a hole was made to allow access to the string. The performer would hold the middle gourd and pull the string with a quick motion. If the string were pulled correctly, it would spin the rod and the two outer gourds like a top. The spinning gourds would produce a whirling sound, and eventually the string would catch and twist itself back up like a yo-yo, allowing repeated pulls. The "ulili" has perplexed some researchers, who have sometimes confused the instrument with a dance step of the same name or simply considered it to be a toy. Some contemporary traditions do use the "ulili" in hula, manipulating the length of the pull to create different rhythms, while others do not use it at all. Given these conflicting accounts and traditions, the ancient use of the "ulili" remains unclear.



"Uli' uli" (rattles), 1950's
Maker unknown, Hawaii
Gourd, twine, chicken feathers, seeds

This set of "uli uli" is made with brown chicken feathers, lacquered coconuts, cheesecloth, and wrapped bamboo twine. They have very natural coloring compared to the royal "uli uli" which have bright red chicken feathers. The top of the instrument where the feathers are attached also has some marbled material, possibly animal skin/fur. The "uli uli" are used in both "*auana*" and "*kahiko*" hula dances.



"Ipu-Heke" (2 Gourd - Percussion Vessel), 1980's
Maker unknown, Hawaii
Gourd, rope fiber

The "ipu" is a hollowed gourd that is often used to provide a beat for hula dancing. The dancer can use either the "ipu heke" (double gourd - seen here) or "ipu" (single gourd with open top). The dancers will typically chant themselves, as they keep their own rhythm and tell the story with the implements in their hands. The two basic beats of any "ipu" are commonly referred to as "u" (downbeat) and "te" (upbeat). While dancing a Hula "ipu," the "u" is played with the heel of the hand on the bottom of the gourd, and the "te" is played with the fingers of the same hand hitting the side of the gourd.



Strombus Queen Horned Helmet Shell (trumpet), 1950's
Maker unknown, Hawaii
Shell

This Queen Horned Helmet shell trumpet from Hawaii with small hole/mouthpiece created from removed apex of shell, is used as a signaling device. This shell has a smooth patina and is globular in shape with typical rounded spike protrusions.



"Pahu Hula" (pedestal drum) , 1980's
Maker unknown, Hawaii
Ulu or breadfruit tree, skin of a mano or shark, olona and coconut fiber

The "pahu hula" was played by "ho'opa'a," or hula chanters, who produced sound by lightly striking the drum with the fingers and palms of their hands. A smaller coconut drum, called "puniu," was tied to the knee or placed on a stand and played with a free hand using the "ka" a rope striker. The "pahu hula" emitted a deep tone that was complemented by the higher pitched "puniu." According to some traditions, sharkskin "pahu" drums first appeared in Hawai'i five or six hundred years ago when La'a-mai-kahiki, a chief's son, brought the tradition from Tahiti. Although sharkskin drums were used all over East Polynesia, contemporary researchers agree with the oral history and consider the Tahitian tradition to be the progenitor of Hawai'i's "pahu" drums. The "pahu hula" was used in the "hula pahu," which was a "kapu," or sacred dance reserved for high-ranking figures such as chiefs or gods. A larger drum, called "pahu heiau," was used exclusively in the pre-Christian places of worship, called "heiau." It was only after the "kapu" system was abolished in 1819 that the "pahu" was used more casually in hula.



"Puniu & Ka" (Knee Drum and Rope Striker), 1980's
Maker unknown, Hawaii
Coconut, shark or kala fish skin, kapa cloth, twisted coconut fiber

In old accounts, the "puniu" is played only in tandem with the "pahu hula." The larger drum was sounded with the chanter's left hand, and the puniu, tied to the right knee, was played using a beater of twisted coconut fibers or braided "lau ki." Because it was usually played with the "pahu" drum, the high-pitched "puniu" would have been used in the sacred hula "pahu" dances. For contemporary "kumu hula," the teachers and composers of hula, now occasionally compose for the "puniu" as a stand-alone instrument. The "puniu" is unique among Hawaiian instruments, because unlike the "pahu hula," which has its roots in East Polynesia, the "puniu" is not found anywhere else in the Pacific. This indicates that it is one of the few locally invented Hawaiian instruments.



"Pu'ili" (concussion clappers, 1980's
Maker unknown, Hawaii
Bamboo

"Pu'ili" are constructed from short lengths of bamboo that are a little more than a foot and a half long. All but the last five inches of the bamboo is split into long strips, with the unstripped end used as a handle. The strips are cut out to create spaces, presumably to achieve the correct sound quality, which has been described as "murmurous breezy rustle."



"ili' ili" (stone castanets), 1980's
Maker unknown, Hawaii
Lava rock river stones

"ili'ili" were a type of percussion instrument used to keep time and emphasize hand movements. A pair of these stones were held in each hand and clicked together. The smooth water-worn stones to be used as "ili'ili" were commonly found in streambeds or on beaches. Stones that fit the hands of the dancers were preferred, and some dancers apparently had 'ili'ili specially made of hematite, presumably for a louder click and to customize the size to their hands. The music of the "ili'ili" is composed primarily of the singing voice and clicking stones, although they were occasionally accompanied by the "pahu" drum.



"Ohe hano ihu" (nose flute). 1950's
Maker unknown, Hawaii
Bamboo

The "ohe hano ihu," or nose flutes ranged from a foot to a little less than two feet long, with one end open and the other end closed. This nose flute has three finger holes. The spacing of the holes varied from one artisan to the next, and there seems to have been no standard. The nose flute is played by blowing air from the right nostril into a hole just above the closed end. The left thumb or index finger closes the left nostril, concentrating air through the right side. The right hand is used to hold the flute and to cover the finger holes to change notes. Known as "he mea ho'oipoipo" or "a thing for lovemaking", the nose flute is said to have been used to communicate messages between lovers as well as to accompany hula. The nose flute is found throughout Polynesia. Interestingly, the Samoan version of the nose flute was played using the mouth, and in New Zealand, lacking bamboo, the flutes were made of bone or wood.



Polk-A-Lay-Lee (lute), 1960's
Peterson Productions, USA
Wood, nylon strings, metal, fiber rope

The Polk-a-lay-lee was made by Petersen Products in the 1960s. It has four nylon strings and twelve metal frets on a dark brown fretboard. The neck and scroll have a long-extended S-curve shape and the body of the instrument is pentagonal with the sound hole an off-kilter oval. This instrument also has a twisted rope for wearing and is very lightweight overall.



"Ukulele" (lute), mid-20th c.
Maker unknown, Hawaii
Coconuts, metal, wire, wood

An unusual antique folk-made ukulele with two coconut resonators for the back, fretted neck, and a violin-like scroll on top.



"Ukulele" (lute), 1950's
The Harmony Company, Chicago, USA
Wood, strings, metal

This ukulele ("uke") was endorsed by Leroy (Roy) Smeck (Feb 6, 1900 - April 5, 1994). Smeck started his career on the vaudeville circuit and because he could not sing well, he developed novelty dances and trick playing to supplement his act. He later became an early radio performer and even performed in Warner Brothers films. He earned the nickname, "The Wizard of the Strings" and was a master at playing the banjo, guitar, and ukulele.



"Ukulele" (lute), early 21st. C.
Music Link Corporation, Hayward, California,
Nickel-plated bell brass, mahogany, rosewood, padauk, metal strings, aluminum

This Recording King Concert - RU 998 metal body resonator ukulele adds a unique twist to the classical Hawaiian instrument. Inside the sound hole is a 6-inch hand-spun continent cone. Provenance: Dr. Fred Willman



"Ukulele" (lute), 1950's
Luna Guitars, Tampa, Florida, USA
Mahogany, metal, strings

Portuguese immigrants began making ukuleles in Hawaii in the 1880's. By the early 1910's, native Hawaiians were also making these instruments; Jonah Kumalae (1896-1940) was one of the first significant manufacturers.

Polynesia - New Zealand - Maori



"Nguru" (nose-flute), late 20th c.
Brian Flintoff, New Zealand
Maire wood

This small carved wood instrument is a nose flute with high relief and incised decorative motifs. Depicted on this "nguru," carved by Brian Flintoff, is the "kokako" bird in human form with his wings down. Maori master carver Brian Flintoff, the author of "Taonga Puoro: Singing Treasurers," is a celebrated New Zealand carver featured in Donn Salt's book "Stone, Bone and Jade."



"Rehu Kokako" (flute), late 20th c.
Brian Flintoff, New Zealand
Ostrich bone

This "rehu kokako" is a transverse edge blown flute that displays five carved faces. The side-blown aperture is carved to represent the kokako (bird), and when played, you must bring the nose of the kokako face to yours as in the traditional "hongiri" or greeting. At the bottom, is carved the figure of a personified "Raukatauri" (Goddess of Music), with her mouth open to sing through. On the top end where it is plugged, an elaboration of the butterfly face is presented, acknowledging the gift of flight. On the backside of this "rehu," there are two rows of linked manaia faces (looks like waves) the length of the flute. These represent passing down the twin traditions of words and tunes.



"Kōauau" (flute), late 20th c.
Brian Flintoff, New Zealand
Deer bone

The "kōauau" are the most common of the traditional Maori flutes. They are end blown flutes that were traditionally made from albatross wing bone, moa bone or human bone. This "kōauau," made by Brian Flintoff is of deer bone. Most "kōauau" have three finger holes ("wenewene") near the lower end. There is a naming tradition given to these finger holes. First, they depict Maui Mua, Maui Roto, and Maui Taha. Likewise, their functioning names are "te mea whakangawari" (the softener); "te mea whakakaha" (the strengthener); and "mea whakatika" (the corrector). These flutes were used for various occasions, both for entertainment and for ritual purposes, e.g., if a child of the family chanced to be ill, then the instrument was played over him/her and this was to have a beneficial effect.



"Karanga Manu" (bird caller), late 20th c.
Brian Flintoff, New Zealand
Deer bone

This is a small hand carved deer bone instrument called a "karanga manu." Originally the purpose of this tiny flute/whistle was to lure birds by mimicking their calls, making it easier to capture them. Today, the "karanga manu" is worn as a very special ethnic pendant around the neck. These little flutes still create interesting and humorous responses from birds even today.



"Kotiate" (short club), mid-19th c.
Stone carved, New Zealand
Akeake or rautangi wood, mother-of-pearl

This is a superbly hand carved short club called "kotiate." It is a prized weapon used for close quarter fighting and is favored by chiefs when speech making. The word "kotiete" literally means 'to divide, split in two.' It is a curiously shaped weapon and noted for the carved notches on either side of the blade. Like other "patu" (hand clubs), the "kotiate" has a writ thong to wrap around the warrior's hand to ensure the weapon was not lost during battle. Today, some are used in dancing.



"Pūtātara" Shell Trumpet, 19th c.
Maori, Whanganui region, New Zealand, late 19th c.
Charonia lampas rubicunda shell, abalone, pukeko feathers, wood

This "pūtātara" comes from the Whanganui region, where the possessions of chiefs are kept and often preserved as family heirlooms. The end of the shell is neatly cut off, leaving a small aperture for trumpeting to which a wooden, carved, mouthpiece with abalone, is fixed. This "pūtātara" is adorned with feathers of the "pukeko," a large purplish, wetlands dwelling bird that is native to New Zealand and often nicknamed "Swamp Hen." Small holes are drilled in the shell, which are used as tie points for the bundle of feathers that are attached. A wrapped chord is used to bind the shell to the carved mouthpiece. Binding objects with cord and dressing them with feathers is part of a ritual believed to give the object mystical power. The "pūtātara" is considered a gift from the Maori respective "Atua" (gods): "Tangaroa" (god/guardian of the ocean) the shell and "Tane Mahuta" (god/guardian of the forest) the wood. This "pūtātara" is well over 100 years old. It was used by the chief for signaling when traveling to warn villagers of their approach, or to assemble their people. They were also used by some chiefs' families to announce the birth of a first-born son. The ancestors of the Maori people were seafaring Polynesians who sailed their canoes to New Zealand from the Society and Southern Cook Islands.



"Pūtōrino" (bugle/flute), 1908
Maori carver Denis Connor (signed), New Zealand
Akeake wood, abalone

This 100+ year old "pūtōrino" carved and signed by Denis Connor - a Maori carver. During the turn of the 20th century, Maori people were made to change their names to English or Irish names, and he selected Denis Connor. The "pūtōrino" has been called a bugle flute because it has two voices—one "male" and the other "female." The male voice called "kokiri," is produced by buzzing the lips, much the same as playing a trumpet and is used to warn or call people together. The "female" voice, described as a high-pitched crying sound, used during funerals and other events needing a sound that evoked high emotion, is made by blowing across the sound hole – in a manner similar to a flute. The shape of the "pūtōrino" is inspired by the case moth cocoon, which is believed to house "Raukatauri," the goddess of flute music, who according to legend, lives in the flute. The "pūtōrino" is an instrument unique to the Maori and is regarded in very high esteem. This example has the original flax binding and paua shell eyes. I personally received this "pūtōrino" from the carver's grandson, Tane Connor.

AUSTRALIA



"Didgeridoo" (drone pipe/trumpet), mid-20th c.
Yolingu people, north-eastern Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory of Australia
Eucalyptus wood, Beeswax

The termite-bored "didgeridoo" is usually cylindrical, depending upon the tree/limb shape. It is played by continuously vibrating your lips to produce a continuous drone while using a special breathing technique called circular breathing. The "didgeridoo" was developed by Aboriginal peoples of northern Australia at least 1,500 years ago. Traditionally, it was played as an accompaniment to ceremonial dancing and singing and for solo or recreational purposes.



"Timypilpa" ("bilma" - clap sticks), early 20th c.
Maker unknown, Mt Ebenezer NT (Northern Territory) Australia
Wood, pigment

Music sticks, called "timypilpa," were played to accompany the "didgeridoo."



"Timypilpa" (clap sticks), 20th c.
Imanpa Community, (collected by Dr. Doris Trojcek) Mt Ebenezer NT, Australia
Mulga Wood

These music sticks are elongated, thick, and irregular in shape with tapering ends. Two thirds of each are decorated with wood burning in curvilinear patterns. The bottom third of each is a very light beige in color and rough to the touch.

MICRONESIA - Palau



"Debusech" (shell trumpet), 19th century
Maker unknown, Republic of Palau
Triton Shell

This triton shell trumpet called "debusech" was played by the people of Palau, to announce the beginning of celebrations or to inform the community of a special announcement, such as a chief's death. They are also used by fishermen to communicate at night between canoes. Elsewhere, this type of tritone shell horn was considered a Triton Shell War Horn found on the Schouten Islands and Wewak Coast of New Guinea.

MELANESIA - Papua New Guinea



Ancestral Flute, early 20th c.
Tambanum village, Sepik River, Papua New Guinea
Bamboo, wood, pigment, rattan, cowry shells

For many New Guinea people, flutes are among the most sacred and important of all musical instruments. They were made from hollow cylinders of bamboo and played by blowing through a hole in the side of the instrument near the upper end. The tops/caps of these flutes were frequently decorated with ornamental flute stoppers like this flute from the Tambanum village. Flute stoppers portray stylized human images or images of totemic animals. These sacred flutes were used in pairs and were kept hidden in the Men's Ceremonial House or "haus tambaran." The sound of the flutes are the voices of specific honored ancestors. Flutes are also associated with crocodile spirits and were used during initiation rites in which novices had cuts made on their backs and chest that healed into permanent scarification that resemble crocodile skin, marking them as initiated individuals. Sacred flutes were only seen by initiated men and played during important ceremonies.



Shell Rattle, 19th c.
Massim Region of the Trobriand Islands, Papua New Guinea
Ovula ovum shells, fiber rope, wood

Shells are often worn as arm ornaments or held as rattles for important ceremonies or to accompany singing and dancing.



"Katunenia" (finger drum), mid-20th c.
Massim Region of the Trobriand Islands, Papua New Guinea PNG
Kwila wood, reptile skin

Trobriand Islands drums are used for dances and sometimes just to beat out a rhythm. This small drum, about one third the size of the larger "kasausa'u" or "kupi" drum, is called a "katunenia." The two drums are usually played together in performance, each with its separate voice. There are two main types of dances in Boiowa. The orchestra of drums used in these dances consist of five "kupi" drums and one "katunenia."



Korwar Area drum, 1950's
Waropen Village, Geelvink Bay of Papua New Guinea
Wood, iguana skin

The Korwar figures on this drum signifies the special relationship between the human world and the world of the ancestors. The skin of the iguana, which abounds there, is used for the drumheads. Drums are typically played during feasts and ritual ceremonies.



"Kundu" (drum), early 20th c.
Maker unknown, Coastal Papua New Guinea
Wood, pigment, white lime, reptile skin

The handle of this coastal "kundu" drum has two ancestral longnose masks and a lizard ancestor. The geometric incised patterns are superbly carved. There are fine traces of reckett's blue, a washing powder introduced by the Germans in the early part of the 20th century, plus remnant white lime. This is the work of a master carver. These drums are used for religious or civilian occasions and for the Papuans the sound of the 'kundu' is the voice of the ancestors.



Tribal flute and stopper, early 20th c.
Maker unknown, Sepik River region, Papua New Guinea
Bamboo, pigment, wood, shells, fiber

A rare old hand carved tribal flute stopper in the form of a face with what looks to be a bat at the base. This stopper fits into a bamboo flute which has a mouthpiece of carved wood at the opposite end. This flute was collected in the early 1950s and was considered an old piece at that time. Sacred flutes, such as this were used in the Men's Haus 'Tambaran,' a meetinghouse and site for rituals and initiations in many parts of the Sepik River and Highlands regions of Papua New Guinea. The men created sacred flutes from bamboo for their initiation rituals, which were not seen by women or children. Among the "Karawari-speaking Ambonwari" these rituals were characterized by two idiosyncratic song-dances: one associated with the spirit-crocodiles and the other with the bamboo flutes. Hence, the songs of the flute and crocodile were the most secret songs known only to a small number of 'initiated men'. Since the Catholic charismatic movement entered the village at the end of 1994, all previously important rituals were slowly abandoned and so were the song-dances of the crocodile and flute.



"Sapo-kesa" (fish-mouth drum), early-to-mid 20th c.
Kikori areas, Papua New Guinea
Wood, reptile skin, ochre pigment

Kikori area drums are decorated with incised spiral designs. The open-end tapers into two prongs, painted to resemble an animal face with open jaws. The open-mouth carving represents the concept of an instrument "speaking." These drum are used as part of the Usane cult which deals with curing sickness.



"Ta'impe" (drum – "tifa"), late 19th c.
Asmat people, Papua province of Indonesia
Wood, pigment

Drums in Asmat culture are associated with the origin of human life. They are played at all ceremonies, rituals, and social events. The Asmat myths explain that man was born from wooden figures carved by a being named "Fumeripits" to ease his loneliness. As he drummed alone the figures came to life and became the first Asmat people.



Woven Fiber Dance Mask, early- to mid-20th c.
Gulf Province, Tovei Village, Papua New Guinea
Wood, basketry, polychrome, fibers

A playful, huge mask woven from plant fiber with a long, thicker sago leaf skirt attached below the wooden ring that serves as the base of the figure. Two holes near the base allow the arms of the wearer to be extended, with hanging bark strips serving as arm ornaments. The head is loosely anthropomorphic, also woven of fiber, with a stuffed textile nose. The curved lines that mirror face paint is similar to smaller Papuan masks. The mouth is large and open, giving it a charming appearance. Cassowary feathers project from the top of the head. Masks like this one were made for elaborate ceremonies, often commemorating important agricultural activities in the local community.



"Garamut"(slit gong), early 20th c.
Angoram village, Lower Sepik region, New Guinea
Wood

An ethnographic "Ramu" drum (slit gong) of the lower Sepik River called a "garamut." It is of a very early style, made of wood with deeply carved geometric motifs on the outer panel sides, a rectangular central cavity, and two projecting openwork ancestor motifs at each terminal. This clan housed drum, commonly used for communication and in ceremonies to commemorate yearly events, or the death of a kinsman or kinswoman, has a weathered patina and old encrustations.



"Kandimbong" (ancestor mask), mid to late 20th c.
Murik Lakes, Lower Sepik River Region, Papua New Guinea
Wood, cane wicker, dry grass, pigment

This ancestor mask called "kandimbong", is used ceremonially in the first stage of male initiation. It is carved wood with incised decoration, a cane wicker work frame, and dried grass tassels.



"Mai" Mask, 20th c.
Middle Sepik River Region, Papua New Guinea
Wood, cowrie and cone shells, straw, fiber

"Mai" masks are perhaps the most iconic and identifiable art forms from the Sepik River. They are worn for performances with a group of four dancers on the village's central dance ground in front of the "ngeko" ceremonial house. Worn by young men and boys, they represent spirit beings—two brothers and their two sisters. After the performance, the costume of leaf strips, flowers, feathers, and an array of adornments is dismantled and only the wooden mask section is kept in the owner's home.



Blackwater River New Guinea Mosquito Mask, 20th c.
Mumeri village (junction of the Blackwater and the Korosameri Rivers), Papua New Guinea
Wood, basketry, polychrome, feathers

Wickerwork cane gable masks are hung in the exterior of the "Haus Tambarans." Some are even woven into the frame of the haus itself. They range in size from 3 to 9 feet representing ancestors. The Mumeri people came from the Sepik River, but have incorporated the typical long nose of the Blackwater "tumbuans" into this gable mask.



Marquesas Islands Pedestal Drum, 1940's
Maker unknown, Marquesas Islands
Wood, braided raffia cord, hide

A large anthropomorphic goblet/pedestal drum with geometric and curvilinear designs carved into the entire body of the drum. The four legs are decorated with relief carvings of tiki-style motifs commonly found on Marquesan artwork. Tiki figures originated in the Marquesas, and spread throughout most of Polynesia, often with local twists (for example, the moai of Easter Island are believed to be a form of tiki). The tiki figure represents the ancestor "Ti'i" who is half human and half god. His head is large to emphasize his power and his large eyes represent his great knowledge.