SPEECH SURROGACY DIMENSION TO AFRICAN PIANISM: UZOIGWE'S '*DÙNDÚN*' IN FOCUS

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Abstract

A cardinal function of the Iyaalu in the Dùndún ensemble among the Yoruba is speech surrogacy, which is the characteristic of 'talking' or communicating spoken words, hence the appellation 'talking drum', which is a common phenomenon all over sub-Saharan Africa. Replicating this core African tonal language attribute on the piano, which in modern African art music, has come to be conceptualized as an African musical instrument, represents an intercultural perspective to African art music. This paper examines the essence of speech surrogacy, its occurrence, its methods of use and its effect on structure, in 'Dùndún' composed by Joshua Uzoigwe (1946 - 2005). The concept of '*African Pianism*', propounded by Akin Euba, and Willy Anku's '*Theoretical Foundation and the Principles of Structural Organization*' are theoretical models utilized in exploring these details. Findings revealed that the essence of speech surrogacy in African pianism is realized, while the extensive use of speech surrogacy and the adjunct elements in the selected work are also confirmed. Conclusively, the study presents the potential in speech surrogacy as a tonal resource cardinal to extending, evolving, and making more viable the African pianism model, from the level of conceptualisation, into a utilitarian tradition, whereby it becomes a genre with unique and more defining credentials. The study recommends more serious study of the subject of African pianism. It is also to be evolved into a functional tradition, a modus-operandi by the larger body of pianists and composers.

Keywords: African pianism, Dùndún, Ukom, Speech Surrogacy, Speech mode

Introduction

Speech surrogacy is an important characteristic of African traditional music, and more importantly, an inherent characteristic of African Pianism. The objectives of this paper are to examine the essence of speech surrogacy in African Pianism; determine the presence of speech surrogacy in 'Dùndún' (a piano composition of Joshua Uzoigwe); evaluate how speech surrogacy techniques of indigenous African music is utilised in the composition; and investigate how speech surrogacy techniques affect the structure of the work. The study is hinged on the concept of 'African Pianism' propounded by Akin Euba, and on Willy Anku's 'Theoretical Foundation and the Principles of Structural Organization'. This compositional framework utilises techniques that are emblematic to the performance of African drums, xylophones, etc. and the polyrhythmic methods of African instrumental music in general, which form a working foundation for an African piano style. Speech mode of communication is possible in African traditional music, south of the Sahara because the languages of these cultures are tonal in nature.

The Piano, due to its ancestry, invention and developments to mechanical and artistic maturity has been established as a European instrument (Nicholas Giordano, 2016). There have also been formerly established traditions (French, German, and Russian) in its artistic and technical usage (Isacoff, 2011). Nevertheless, because the piano has expended time in the hands of African, and African-music-oriented composers, an 'indigenous' percepional framework has been brought about in the mentation of African composers of piano works towards the instrument. Akin Euba remarked that some Western instruments (the piano inclusive), having been adopted in African music, are "assuming" new identities as 'African' instruments (1988, p. 4). It is under this 'indigenous instrument' perception that Uzoigwe creates the 'Dundun' piece.

In African Traditional music, there is a deep connection between speech surrogacy and rhythm. Each feature symbiotically makes use of the other to make sense of themselves. A lot has been written on the polyrhythmic features of African music, and their working in African art music. However,

not much has been written on *how* the piano has been used as a speech surrogate, like an African talking drum such as the Igbo Ukom drums, '*Yorùbá Ìyáàlù*', or *Atumpan* drums of the Akan people of Ghana. This gap appears to be a problem because the practical application of the processes of speech mode techniques has not yet been broken down into a scientific set of procedures with teachable pianistic applications. The relationship of the problem to this study is that the application of speech surrogacy techniques on the piano need to be properly theorised such that it is teachable in the classroom. This research takes a step in the direction of advancing a study of speech mode *application in piano music.*

Speech surrogacy in African indigenous music has generally been researched upon by writers such as Anthony King (1960), Olatunji Vidal (1983), Akin Euba (1990), Timothy Sexton (2007), Ruth Finnegan (2012) etc. However, the same level of research cannot be said of such, as found in the piano works of established composers. This informs the focus of this paper on the concern of surrogacy in Joshua Uzoigwe's 'Dùndún', as a way of observing how this element has been applied, its essence in African Pianism, and how it can be further utilised in bringing about effective African art music. This work provides a theoretical model for the analysis of African speech mode techniques in contemporary African art music compositions. The theoretical background for the utilisation of speech mode potentially developed herewith will be a much-needed addition to the body of knowledge in African piano scholarship.

African Pianism

African Pianism is a cross-cultural concept, which entails the adaptation and usage of inherent processes and resources that are germane to African music, in compositions for the piano. According to Euba (1989),

> …Africanisms employed in neo-African keyboard music include (a) thematic repetition (b) direct borrowings of thematic material (rhythmical and/or tonal) from African traditional sources (c) the use of rhythmical and or tonal motifs which, although not borrowed from specific traditional sources, are based on traditional idioms (d) percussive treatment of the piano and (e) making the piano 'behave' like African instruments (p. 151).

As pointed out above, one of the 'behaviours' of African instruments is their function of 'talking'. Since speech surrogacy is a consistent feature of traditional rhythm and percussion all over sub-Saharan Africa, it is therefore, in line with Euba's prescription for the workings of African pianism, also an inherent feature of the concept.

Theoretical Foundation and the Principles of Structural Organization

While tackling the problem of the theory of African rhythm, Willy Anku takes it from the angle of *rhythm syntax (organisation)*, differentiated by *ethnic versions* as the basis for formulating a theoretical foundation for analysis. He offers that the 4 descriptive statements about the structural organisation of African drumming are:

1. African drumming is a microcosm of communal community life in Africa.
2. The Timeline concept of the bell rhythm translates as a Time Cycle because African music is perceived as a circular concept rather than linear.
3. The events are unified by a common recurring under-current of one regulative beat per cycle, which is divided into four equidistant beats.
4. The drum ensemble consists of 2 basic concepts - the background Ostinato on the one hand and the Master drum concept on the other.

Against the background of the ostinatic structural framework, the master drummer launches 'a succession of intriguing, logically ordered rhythmic manipulations, which are concurrently regulated by the common timing principle of the time cycle.' The ostinato is therefore, a result of the looping of this structured time set, which constitutes the time cycle. Anku's theory of what the master drum engages here is that of 'much more complex and variegated versions of the composite different patterns of the time set'.

African Drum Language, Communication, and Literature

Several scholarly works have discussed the concept of African drum language from various angles. Sexton (2007) discusses African drumming from the dual angles of rhythm and communication. He observed that in Africa, rhythms are used differently compared to the west. In his article 'African drumming and communication', he writes that rhythm in Africa is a form of communication and that goes beyond mere musical expression.

This view is congruent with the works of music scholars on African rhythm. According to Doris Green (2015) '. . . African music is based on the spoken language of the people . . .' Sexton's argument further seeks to establish that African polymetric patterns and phrases in the same set are essentially call and response in nature, which itself is an "expression of communication and even a language device". Sexton's argument here is that if African polyrhythmic phrases are essentially respondent in nature, it follows that the call, and then the response, would at least in part take the shape of some form of textual perceptiveness (in the minds of the Africans). This cannot be automatically assumed, and so the perception of rhythm from the African perspective, especially in its polymetric form has generated academic debate over the last century. 'Cognitive perception aside and gestalt theory aside', breaking down and understanding the functionality of African rhythm is critical to the understanding, especially of how Africans perceive their rhythm. The gestalt theory that Sexton refers to here reinforces Willy Anku's theory that African drumming is microcosmically emblematic of African society.

Still on drum language and communication, Ruth Finnegan (2012), in discussing the literature of African drum language, held it that although literature forms a vital part of African drums and musical instruments repertory, its significance was largely overlooked in general discussions in African literature where it shouldn't have been overlooked (p. 467). She further differentiates between linguistic and non-linguistic drum communication, saying that drum communication is of two types, that in which conventional pre-arranged signal codes present a certain message and that in which "the instruments communicate through direct representation of the language itself, simulating the tone and rhythm of actual speech. "Here, the instruments themselves are regarded as speaking and their message consist of actual words. Communication, in the second type (linguistic) can only be fully appreciated by translating into words and any musical effects are purely incidental (pp. 467-468).

According to Finnegan, where there might have been ambiguity, the addition of other words in stereotyped phrases, serves to complete the tonal and rhythmic differentiation, bringing about clarity. In addition, simple messages relayed using these drum communication phrases are often lengthy

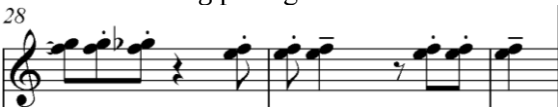
due to the repetition necessary to clarify the meaning and the use of lengthy stereotype phrases (p. 469). She concludes that what is been spoken by the drums is a direct representation of the words themselves. ". . . the basis is a directly linguistic one. From this, we deduce that the content and style of drum communication can often be assessed as literature, and not primarily as music, signal codes, or incidental accompaniment to dancing or ceremonies" (p. 484). Relevant to the above, Uzoigwe speaks on the usage of communicating African traditional music in speech tone patterns in modern African art compositions. He suggests the use of speech tones, and rhythmic patterns thus:

> Similarly for composers of modern African music to create an African identity in their works, they should derive their tonal patterns, as well as rhythmic patterns, mainly from two contrasting sources: one which is influenced by the speech tone patterns of words and the other which can follow the logic of musical discourse (2005: 104).

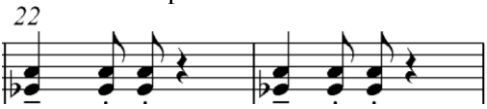
Drum Language and Communication on the Piano: Highlighting some Speech Surrogacy Techniques in 'Dùndún'

A close look at 'Dùndún' reveals the preponderant use of certain surrogacy techniques found in African traditional music. Some of these methods and techniques utilized in this particular modern African art composition include:

1. Cluster and Tritone Note Formations: The mostly indeterminate nature of normal speaking pitches makes cluster and tritone formations on the piano very useful in achieving speech surrogacy in modern African compositions. Examples are found in the following passages in 'Dùndún'

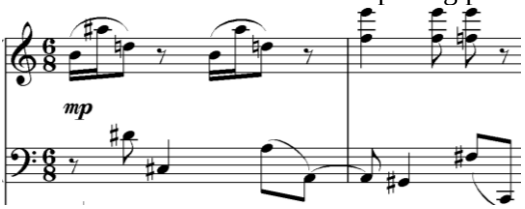


Musical example 1



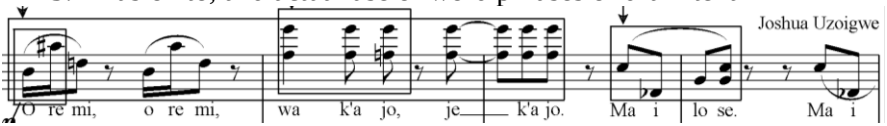
Musical example 2

2. Angular melodic interval movements, of which a good example would be found in the opening passage:

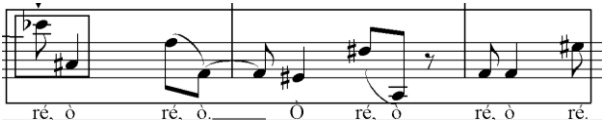


Musical example 3

3. Allusion to, and actual use of word phrases or drum text



Musical example 4



Musical example 5

Analysis of 'Dùndún'

Key to Analysis:

PM – Principal Motif e.g. Principal Motif 1 (PM1).

SM – Sub Motif e.g. Sub Motif 1 (SM1) (SM derivatives come with extension names e.g. SM1a).

PM1 Frg1 – Principal Motif 1 Fragment 1.

PM1 Frg2 – Principal Motif 1 Fragment 2.

GSM – Goal Sub Motif (GSM is also PM1 Frg2).

FGM – Final Goal Motif (fGM is fragment of GSM and so is a PM1 Sub Fragment).

Primary Motifs – Principal Motifs (PM1 and PM1a) and the Sub Motifs (SM1, SM2, SM3) in their original forms.

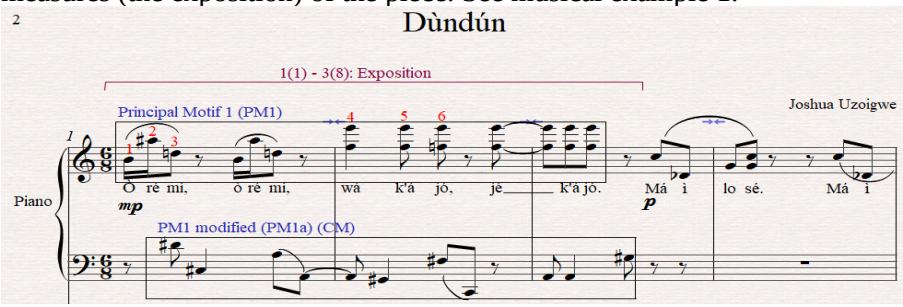
SMB – Speech Mode Block – Word statements that are characteristically representative of textual possibilities in a Primary Motif

SMD – Speech Mode Depth – The frequency i.e. number of reiterations of word statement/s, or modifications/permutations, or fragments of word statement/s in a Speech Mode Block occurrence.)

Identification of the Formal Structure

General introduction to formal structure:

In terms of formal structure, sectional boundaries in Uzoigwe's 'Dùndún' are not so clearly delineated. Such boundaries would be apparent in most written pieces with at least minor but perceivable changes in texture/density, style, materials etc. employed. However, very close scrutiny reveals an underlying structure. Two principal motifs – Principal Motif 1 (PM1) in the right hand and Principal Motif 1 modified (PM1a) in the left hand, containing all the motifs and sub motifs utilized fragmentarily and permutatively throughout the piece, are stated within the first two and half measures (the exposition) of the piece. See musical example 1.



Musical example 6: Dùndún Exposition

As early as measure 9, all primary motifs i.e. the principal motifs and the sub motifs in their original formats, have been stated. (The term 'Primary motifs' is synonymous with Speech Mode Blocks (SMBs) in Uzoigwe's Dùndún. Primary motifs are Principal Motifs (PM1 and PM1a) and the Sub Motifs (SM1, SM2, SM3) in their original forms). Onward from that point, supposedly new materials are improvisations, permutations and modifications of earlier stated motifs. Furthermore, almost all the sub motifs, either original or modified, appeared in all the sections.

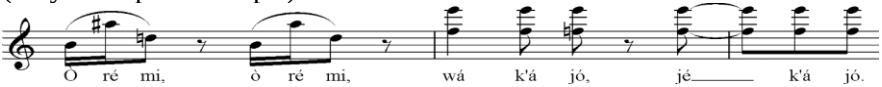
Table 1: Formal Divisions (Dùndún)

SECTION Section measures Mm. (mm.) means measures.	**Exposition** mm. 1(1) – 3(8)	A mm. 3 – 15	B mm. 16 – 33	C mm. 34 – 57	D mm. 58 – 84	E mm. 85 – 107
DURATION (No. of measures)	2 and ½	13	18	24	26	22

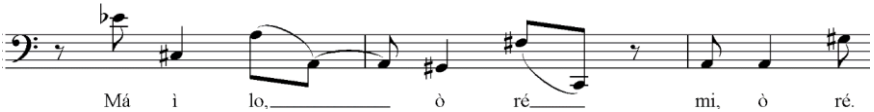
This work employs three main time durations: sixteenth note (𝅘𝅥𝅯), eighth note (𝅘𝅥𝅮), and quarter note (𝅘𝅥) rhythms. There are occasional but rare employments of dotted quarter-note (𝅘𝅥.) and dotted eighth note (𝅘𝅥𝅮.) rhythms. The referent note, the sixteenth-note (𝅘𝅥𝅯), serves as the core of the rhythm structure. M. (m.) means measure. Mm. (mm.) means measures.

Identification of Representative Speech Mode Blocks & Sections

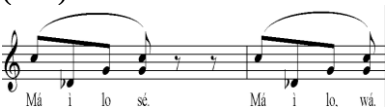
There are five primary motif (the principal motifs, and the sub motifs) elements in the piece. The primary motifs, which altogether are the SMBs, the Goal Sub Motif, and final Goal Motif are shown in the examples below: (Play examples excerpts)



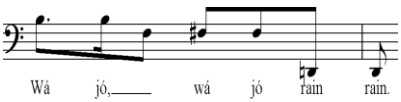
Musical example 7: Principal Motif 1 (PM1)



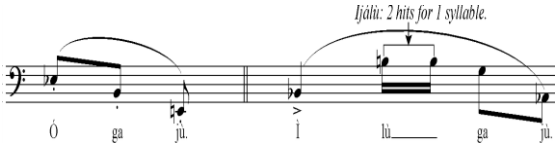
Musical example 8: Principal Motif 1 modified (PM1a). Also Counter Motif (CM)



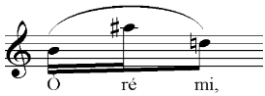
Musical example 9: Sub Motif 1 (SM1)



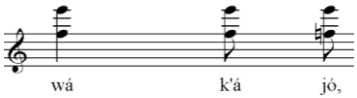
Musical example 10: Sub Motif 2 (SM2)



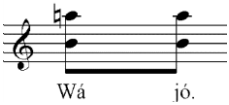
Musical example 11: Sub Motif 3 (SM3)



Musical example 12: PM1 Frg1



Musical example 13: PM1 Frg2 (GSM)



Musical example 14: final Goal Motif (fGM)

Speech phrases identified for use in the representative Speech Mode Blocks are:

Table 3: Primary Motifs (SMBs) Event Summary in Dùndún

Motif	Word Statement	Point of Occurrence
Principal Motif 1 (PM1)	Òré mi, òré mi, wá k'á jó.	Once, at 1(1) – 3(6) (RH)
Principal Motif 1 modified (PM1a)	Máì lo, òré mi, òré.	Once, at 1(3) – 3(8) (LH)
Sub Motif 1 (SM1)	Máì lo sé/ Máì lo, wá	Twice at RH 3(9) – 7(4) and LH 16(1) – 17(8)
Sub Motif 2 (SM2)	Wá jó o, wá jó, rain rain.	Once at LH 5(1) – 6(2)
Sub Motif 3 (SM3)	Ó ga jù. Ìlù ga jù.	Thrice at LH 7(3) – 9(8), LH 18(7) – 21(4), and LH 69(5) – 71(6)

Speech Mode Depth (SMD) Scheme

Table 4: Motifs Occurrence and Frequency of Occurrence in 'Dùndún' (Reduced)

SECTION	Motif	RH/ LH	Word Statement	Measure	Orientation	SMD
EXPOSITION	PM1	RH	Òré mi, òré mi, wá k'á jó, jé k'á jó	1(1) – 3(6)	One presentation	1
	PM1a	LH	Máì lo, òré mi, òré	1(3) – 3(8)	One presentation	1

Textual Analysis

Speech surrogacy occurs in all the sections A, B, C, D, and E.

Section A: GSM in all its formations is the most preponderant motif in section A, with eleven reiterations altogether.

Section B: GSM is the most preponderant motif in section B, with eight reiterations altogether.

Section C: GSM in its original formation is the most preponderant singular motif, with nine reiterations. GSM in all its various formations is the most preponderant motif in section C, with twenty-three reiterations altogether.

Section D: SM3b is the most preponderant singular motif, with five reiterations. SM3 in all its various formations is the most preponderant motif in section D, with eleven reiterations altogether. This section, being the high point of improvisation in the piece, is also the most complex structurally.

Section E: GSM in its original formation is the most preponderant singular motif, with fifteen reiterations.

Findings based on the Stated Objectives

Objective 1: The Essence of Speech Surrogacy in ''Dùndún

Findings show that the first objective of the study, which is that the essence of speech surrogacy, is realized in Uzoigwe's Dùndún. This is realized in the sense that the piano is given the substance of being able 'speak', which confers on it a quality of behaviour as an African instrument.

Objective 2: The Presence of Speech Surrogacy in Dùndún

The presence of speech surrogacy is observed in Dùndún. There is an abundance of word-phrases observed in the motifs – PM1, PM1a, all the sub motifs and ultimately the final Goal Motif (fGM).

Objective 3: Methods of use of Speech Surrogacy in Dùndún
The method of utilizing SS in Dùndún is to place the piano in perspective of an actual dùndún ensemble in performance. Ìyáàlù 'talking' mode pitch scheme and Ìyáàlù 'talking' mode master drum rhythm concepts are preponderantly used. Ìyáàlù 'talking' mode master drum rhythm concepts are preponderantly used throughout the piece.

Objective 4: The Effect of Speech Surrogacy on Structure in Dùndún
Structurally, fGM starts the piece as a full textual motif in PM1. GSM word motif is preponderant. Word statements in all sections ultimately gravitate towards the fGM being the last statement. The final destination motif (fGM) actually starts out as the full textual motif (PM1). The GSM is intentionally preponderant in all but one section.

Within the sections, an internal structural outline deciphered is each section starting with a sub motif, proceeds to other motifs, followed by preponderant GSM reiterations, in the midst of fragmenting of motifs, to end the section. This is true for all sections aside from D.

Summary and Conclusion
The following perspective summary applies to 'Dùndún'. These processes and developments lead to the *Dùndún Circular Development Concept Primary and Secondary Purpose Relationships*. Their final conclusion analytic (seen in figure 1) reinforces the circularity of African traditional music time-line pattern.

The following possible perspectives to this piece all revolve around dùndún ensemble characteristic performance practices, though with deviations. This would be a dùndún ensemble in performance, with the RH as the master drummer, and the LH combining the functions of the secondary instruments performing the timeline and other ostinato materials. Alternately, this could be two dùndún master drummers, both performing in master drummer style, with the right hand taking *more of the leading role,* or it would be a dialogue piece between two master drummers, analogous to standard performance practice in Ukom music of the Igbo people. Here, the principal soloist is taken by the RH, and the receiver soloist taken by the LH. – an Ensemble Technique Shift (ETS). At the African level, Uzoigwe employs mainly

stylistic elements that belong to dùndún music. However, a stylistic element from another African traditional ensemble (Igbo Ukom) has been borrowed for use.

Traditionally, in the dùndún ensemble, the stating of the 'final destination' textual motif is done by the master drummer, the final Goal Motif (fGM) – "wá jó", is been stated and repeated by the same i.e. the (first) master drummer in the RH, while being motivically reinforced by the GSM "wá k'á jó" in the LH. The textual sensibility of the final Goal Motif leads back to the full textual motif (PM1) as this description is not a fully linear motion description but is a circular concept that pervades the piece, happening back and forth. The figure below graphically illustrates this paradigm.

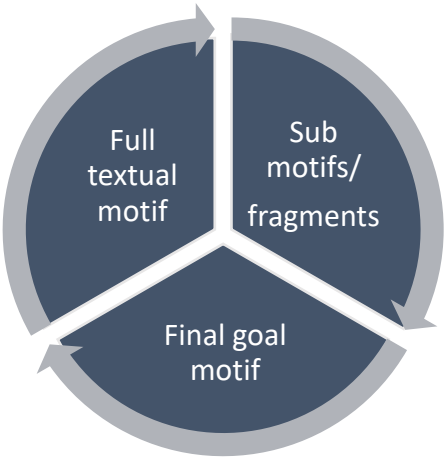


Figure 1: Dùndún Circular Development Concept

This cycle is satisfactorily exploited in 'Dùndún' until, towards the end, with preponderant use of the GSM there is an evident gravitation towards, and the landing of the piece on the fGM. This model corroborates the circular nature of African music and rhythm, reinforcing Willy Anku's thesis that African music is perceived as a circular concept rather than linear. The foregoing discussion, with examples and illustrations stand to testify the essence and presence of speech surrogacy in the pieces analysed, and its viability as an inherent characteristic of African Pianism. Furthermore, there is evidence

that speech surrogacy, along with African rhythm practice considerations, further define the structure of the piece.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion in this discourse, it is believed that the concept of African Pianism can be advanced by making the piano to further 'behave' like the talking drum, of which 'talking' or Speech Surrogacy is a critical component. The following are therefore recommended:

1. The subject of AP and the different characteristic elements of African music methods, as reflected in AP be given serious study, and practice. These characteristics include, but are not limited to the techniques of speech surrogacy, and inherent African rhythms and structure, whose utilisations have been well analysed in this study. Expanding on this recommendation would mean the in-depth study of African drumming methods of articulating and differentiating consonants and vowels sounds in word text or word phrase drum traditions such as the Bàtá, Ukom, and the Dùndún. This in-depth study of such drum traditions would be made available in the classrooms of African music schools.
2. African Pianism should be accorded a whole style of its own, unlike the very little space it is presently given in university music departments and music schools across Africa. Presently, piano music is being studied in the following periods and styles as: Baroque, Classical, Romantic, 20th Century (all predominantly European).
3. African Pianism should be developed into a functional tradition i.e. advancing African Pianism into a utilitarian everyday composition and performance tool by which it becomes a genre of its own.
4. Further to No. 3 above, a functional African pianism that transcends the mainly musicological theorising is possible. Seeing that AP is still largely the preserve of music scholars, this writer would recommend bringing the concept to be accepted as a modus-operandi by the larger body of pianists and composers. Functionalizing AP would advance it and thereby forge into a seminal piano style, the like of which we have of stride piano in jazz etc.

Arising from the above recommendatioons, the model of African Pianism has an opportunity to leverage on and tap into the availability of scores of African students and pianists who would embrace a well-crafted and

articulated piano style that is indigenously 'our own'. This not only adds it to their arsenal of learned piano styles, but also propels African Pianism to a state of wider acknowledgement and recognition, in and beyond the academia.

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LITERATURE AND MUSIC IN FUSION: USE OF *ORÍKÌ* AND *ÒWE* IN GENERATING EMOTIONAL RESPONSES THROUGH TALKING DRUMS

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Abstract

Available evidence suggests that both music and language share some commonalities with regard to structure, properties and their ability to convey and communicate emotions. This study explores the music-language relationship as exemplified by the use of literary-musical genres of poetry and proverbs in the expression and evocation of emotions through the Yorùbá *dùndún* talking drum. The utility of poetry and proverbs in talking drum performance not only demonstrates the intermingling of language and musical properties in the same acoustic signal, but the fusion also provides cultural tools at the performers' disposal to arouse emotions in their listeners. By employing qualitative methods comprising interviews and observation of musical performances, the study sheds light on the complex relationships between music, language and emotion in human expressive behaviours from a non-Western perspective. The findings of the study confirm the importance of culture, context and identity in emotional responses to music with the conclusion that *dùndún* music tends to be effective in a systematic way in generating responses in the listeners.

Keywords: emotion, music, language, talking drum, Africa

Introduction

In European discourses, there has been a prominent tradition to discuss language and music as phylogenetically related forms of acoustic human communication that have split up to serve complementary functions, with language placing emphasis on semantic and denotative meaning and music