

SANSULA

A Short Playing Guide



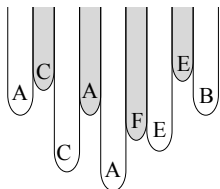
www.kalimbamagic.com

The Magical Sansula

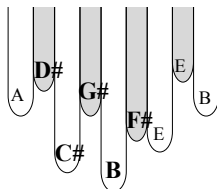
The Sansula is an innovative new further development of the Kalimba (also known as sanza or mbira), which originated in southern Africa. Kalmibas are instruments with keys that are plucked with both thumbs. They exist in Africa in many forms and designs which increase the vibrations of the tines. For example, it can be attached to a resonating case, hollow body, a calabash-gourd, or simply a big piece of wood. With the Sansula, the vibrations of the tines are “stored” at first in a block of wood. The vibrations are then transferred from the wood to a membrane, and on to the air chamber. This results in the sound being audible much longer than with other methods of increasing the resonance. This is assisted by the tuning – Octaves are next to each other. This produces a wonderful, soft tone that is rich with overtones, which is easy to obtain with this instrument. The tuning is an A-Minor pentatonic scale with B and F.

The Sansula usually doesn't lose its tuning from being played. But the tuning can be changed by tapping the keys with a small hammer (50 grams – 1.75 ounces) so that the resonating part becomes longer (lower) or shorter (higher). Use an electronic chromatic tuner such as a Korg CA-30 to get an accurate pitch. When tuning, the screws are not to be loosened.

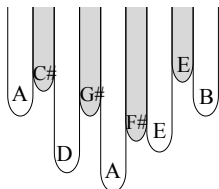
Here are some suggestions for alternative tunings:



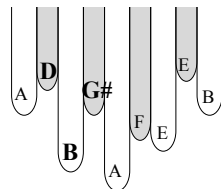
Standard Tuning



Beautiful E Tuning



Tark's Heavenly A Tuning



Morocco Tuning

7. Tips for handling the Sansula

- 1.** Hold the instrument in both hands and pluck the keys with both bent thumbs, either alternating or simultaneously.
- 2.** Open and close the lower opening of the frame while playing (for example on top of a table top or on your lap). This produces the “wah-wah effect”. You can even produce this relatively intensive effect rhythmically by moving the Sansula up and down in time with the rhythm.
- 3.** Protect the instrument from moisture. The tone can change with higher humidity because the membrane temporarily loses its tightness. When the weather returns to normal, the tone also returns to normal.
- 4.** Protect the Sansula from heat. Don't put it in direct sunlight or leave it in a car in summer.
- 5.** Don't hit the skin.
- 6.** Don't let small children play with the Sansula unsupervised. The membrane is extremely sensitive to sharp or angular objects. Dropping the instrument can hurt it.
- 7.** Use the cardboard box that came with the Sansula for transportation and safe keeping. The box is specially constructed to support the membrane and to protect the Sansula to a great extent.

We hope you have much joy with your Sansula

For more information on playing the Sansula, see

www.KalimbaMagic.com/sansula



There are other instruments that go well with the Sansula:

- 1.** 5-Note Hokema Kalimbas can be tuned to chords such as Am, F, C, G, Dm, E, or Em to be played sequentially with the Sansula in standard tuning.
- 2.** Any Catania kalimba (in C) will go wonderfully with the Sansula in standard tuning.
- 3.** The Sansula was inspired in part by the ancient African karimba. You can get the Hugh Tracey African karimba in A minor tuning to go with the Sansula in standard tuning.
- 4.** The Treble Hugh Tracey kalimba can be set up in C major to go with the Sansula in standard tuning.

Also look for an instructional Sansula book available in late 2009 from Kalimba Magic