

Traditional African Karimba Collection for the Hugh Tracey Karimba  
transcribed by Mark Holdaway

Welcome to the new (Dec 2008) collection of Traditional African tunes for the Hugh Tracey Karimba. These ten songs come from two sources: five are from the insert page written by Andrew Tracey which comes with the Hugh Tracey African-tuned karimba, and five come from the appendix of Paul F. Berliner's book "The Soul of Mbira". In turn, some of Paul F. Berliner's songs came from a paper authored by Andrew Tracey. At any rate, most of these songs go back to the Shona karimba master Jege Tapera. Jege Tapera was discovered by Andrew Tracey in 1960 when Hugh and Andrew Tracey were visiting in Rhodesia to help set up the Kwanongoma College of Music.

Note that this collection will not work for the Alto or Treble kalimbas, but only for the Hugh Tracey version of the traditional karimba, also known as the mbira nyunga nyunga. Unlike the 15 note instrument in Berliner's book, this collection is designed for the 17 note Hugh Tracey instrument which puts the upper octave tines to the right of the lower tines (on the right half of the instrument), rather than to the left. We do have plans to translate this body of work to the Alto and the Treble kalimbas, but that will be coming in the future.

What makes this collection of karimba tunes valuable? How is it an improvement on the songs in Andrew Tracey's insert and Paul F. Berliner's book? First, this collection has been transcribed into an easy-to-read tablature which has all of the tines drawn out, but using standard western rhythmic notation. Together, the visual tablature and the rhythmic notation make this tablature much easier to read than the more symbolic numbers-based systems used by the other authors. But the feature of the tablature in this collection which makes it really useful is the fact that it comes in both PDF and KTabS (Kalimba Tablature Software) format. The KTabS computer program for Windows lets you play the KTabS files for each song. KTabS will display the tablature on the screen and play the sound for the song, highlighting the notes as they are played. So, you can hear exactly what the song is supposed to sound like. KTabS is the Guitar Hero of kalimba. The KTabS Player is \$5, the full KTabS Program, which lets you write your own music or modify THIS music, is \$30.

If you don't have KTabS, you can get it at: <http://ktabs.theirhouse.org>

Please note that the KTabS files are write-enabled. I urge you to stash away the KTabS files as you downloaded them in a safe place (don't worry - KTabS files are tiny), and then copy them to a working directory. When you get them in the working directory, feel free to edit them in any way. If you get the full KTabS program, you can change the number of repeats for a given section. You can cut and paste to change the order of the variations. You can remove a variation entirely. You can modify variations, or create your own variations. You can change the tempo - this is especially useful when you are just learning the piece. Anyway, I am a big fan of KTabS, because I never learned these pieces from the Tracey or Berliner tablature alone - it was only after I put these pieces into KTabS that I could see and hear how they went, and it was then that I began to learn these beautiful pieces of music. SO, go out and at least get the KTabS reader, and YOU will see how these songs go, too.

If you need some help, please contact me at: [mark@kalimbamagic.com](mailto:mark@kalimbamagic.com)

You can learn more about the kalimba at: <http://www.kalimbamagic.com>

Blessings through love and music.

-Mark Holdaway  
Tucson, Arizona  
December 5 2008

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Songs:

Andrew Tracey:

Chikunda  
Kana\_Ndod  
Meriā  
Shumba\_panzira  
Wa\_Kalulu

Paul F. Berliner:

Bunga\_Utete  
Bustu\_MTandari  
Chemutengure  
RovaNgomaMtawasa  
SadzaMadyaHere