

FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader

Welcome to this edition of *African Music*. The range of topics in the articles in this edition varies from descriptive articles written by Andrew Tracey, Esther Omone Aluede and Charles Onomudo Aluede, to ones that are more critical studies of African music written by Lyndsey Copeland and Jim Hickson. We are particularly pleased to have a seminal publication by Andrew Tracey, a former editor of *African Music*. Tracey's article is a recollection of a fieldtrip taken as long ago as 1972, when he accompanied Bonisa Sithole to learn more about an unknown mbira of the Ndaou, called the *mbira dza vaNdaou*. In this article, Tracey shows us that transcriptions still hold value even though there have been so many critiques about transcription as a suitable vehicle for understanding traditional African music.

Olupemi E. Oludare analyses the *dùndún* drum language employed by *dùndún* drummers in Yoruba culture. By describing how the *dùndún* drummers play sequences of melo-rhythmic patterns as a form of communication that employs musical and linguistic elements, he argues that these patterns are comprehensible to listeners knowledgeable in the Yoruba language. He provides several transcriptions of the patterns to strengthen his argument. Jim Hickson's article is a valuable piece of information on how the World Music industry exceptionalises the music of Mali. Malian artists consistently appear more often and rank higher in world music record charts than artists of any other nationality. He provides insightful observations on the intersection of the two. Through a study of Malian music in the World Music industry, he examines the mechanics of the industry, the attitudes and behaviours of the world music audience and the artistic, industrial and institutional practices and processes that define world music as a whole.

The article by Esther Omone Aluede and Charles Onomudo Aluede examines the *Ijieleghe* and *Igbabonelimin* acrobatic dances for female and male ensembles in Nigeria. They specifically address the restrictions imposed on male and female genders, in the *Igbabonelimin* and *Ijieleghe* ensembles. Both ensembles stem from the same source and are similar in dance patterns, repertory and musical instruments but are divided according to gender. They explore the possibilities in the futures of these ensembles should they continue to maintain these restrictions. Lyndsey Copeland brings our attention to an aspect of African music which we may have taken for granted. Exploring the familiar trope of "hot rhythm" in African music studies, the article is a rigorous examination of this trope in the literature on African music. In reflexive mode, she brings this trope into her research experience in Benin. Of great interest here is her examination of the effects of climate change on musicianship and organology.

I am sure that the COVID-19 pandemic is having a devastating effect on a discipline such as Ethnomusicology. Fieldwork is fundamental to the discipline and I hope that while we take cognisance of the devastation wreaked by the epidemic, that we also find innovative means of continuing with our various research interests. Let us hope that

these innovative means will filter into publications such as *African Music*, so that our interest in African music studies is sustained.

African Music is eternally grateful to the reviewers of submissions. Your reviews are of tremendous help. My thanks extends to my colleague in Ghana, Austin Emielu, who served as co-editor for this edition.

Lee Watkins