

# Yiri by Koko

## The Elements of Music

Melody



Rhythm



Texture



Instruments



Genre



Harmony & Tonality



Structure



### RHYTHM

Four beats in a bar (there are odd bars here and there with different time signatures)

Introduction is in a free tempo - after that there is a definite steady pulse.

Frequent syncopation (vocal and balafon parts)

Cross rhythms - balafon during a vocal solo

Vocal soloist uses triplets

Rhythmic ostinato throughout



Djembe plays fills

### MELODY

Balafons play short patterns which often fall from high to low.

Emphasis is on Gb and Db.

Balafon has solo breaks in between choruses - more virtuosic.

During choruses, group sings together in unison. Short falling phrases, just like the balafons.

### TEXTURE

Layered through most of the piece.

Monophonic in the introduction (balafon solo)

Occasionally heterophonic - when the two balafons play different versions of the same tune at the same time.

Little dynamic variation throughout.

### INSTRUMENTS

Balafon - similar to a xylophone. Wooden bars tuned to different pitches.

Djembe - goblet shaped drum played with the hands.

Dundun - large drums.

Talking drum - hour glass in shape. Can be used to imitate speech.

Voice - solo and chorus.

### GENRE

West African (Burkina Faso)  
Oral tradition (word of mouth)

Key features are: repetition, improvisation, call and response, layered textures.

Koko are the name of the group - all professional musicians.

### STRUCTURE

Short intro using tremolo

Drums play to a clear pulse throughout. Alternates between balafon solos and choruses. Also a vocal solo - call and response between soloist and choir.

Coda - short balafon phrase played 5 times. Drum ostinato interrupted by rests. A bell sounds the end.

### HARMONY AND TONALITY

The key is Gb major.

Balafons emphasise Gb (tonic) and Db (dominant)