

MCM 3007

Solomon Islands

The Sounds of Bamboo *Instrumental Music of the 'Are'are People of Malaita*

MUSIC OF THE EARTH





The Solomon Islands

THE SOUNDS OF BAMBOO

Instrumental Music of the 'Are'are People of Malaita

Track Listing

'Au, Bamboo Instruments and Their Music

Panpipe Ensemble: 'au tabana

1. MUSIC TO RAISE THE HOUSE 2:07
2. SWINE SHRIEKS 2:46
3. LOVE SONG PIECE AND HO'OSIA RITUAL 3:11
4. PARROT PIECE 2:29
5. MOUND BIRD 2:05

Panpipe Ensemble: 'au ripi

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7. HARIDATA'S GRIEF ... 2:15
8. POPORA'S WEEPING ... 2:24
9. THE FROGS OF DARANA 2:24
10. CLOSING PIECE 1:48

Panpipe Ensemble: 'au taka'ori

11. RIHE PIECE 2:31
12. KINKINA BIRD PIECE 1:55
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Panpipe Ensemble: 'au keto

14. STOP AND GO 2:12
15. MOANING PIECE 2:25
16. MICE PIECE 1:58

Stamping Tubes:

'au kiro ni mako

Solo

17. DOVE PIECE :34
18. MICE PIECE :48
19. SOUND OF THE RIVER PIECE :57

Duo

20. BATS PIECE :40
21. THUNDER PIECE :37
22. LAMENTATION 1:19
23. EAGLE PIECE 1:29

Wooden Slit-Drum Ensemble:

'O'o

24. TREE ROOTS PIECE. 1:42
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26. RAT 0:55
27. THUNDER 1:05
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29. SACRED TARO PUDDING TO THE WILD MAN ... 1:18

30. Divination Song 2:10

Sound Play on Water: Kiroba

31. KIROHA DEMONSTRATION 1:05

Singing: Nuu isuiuba

32. Divination Song 1:08
33. Lament, solo 3:57
34. Lament, duo 1:53
35. Lament, hummed 0:58
36. Lullaby 1:23
37. Love Song 2:29

Total time: 69:53

Non-English musical types and styles are indicated by italics. Titles are in capital letters.

Tracks 52 e3 57 are in mono.

Because these are field recordings, there may be some extraneous noise despite the high fidelity utilized.

The Solomon Islands

The Solomon Islands, a volcanic and coral reef archipelago in the southwest Pacific Ocean, encompass approximately 28,000 square kilometers of land and had a population of 285,176 people (1986 census). The island nation gained independence from Great Britain in July 1978, and in 1986, 94% of its people were of Melanesian descent, 4% Polynesian, and 1.4% Micronesian, mostly from Kiribati. There is also a small Chinese and European population.

Christian missionaries first arrived in 1845, and various aspects of Western civilization—including English colonization, coconut plantation development, overseas labor, the Pacific War, the Ma'asina Rule movement, and national independence—have affected the Islands ever since. Although the Solomon Islands have absorbed much Western culture throughout this

history, they have also constructed their own in the process.

One of the first things adopted from the West was a monetary economy. In Honiara, the capital, goods and utilities found in any developed nation are readily available—foreign and domestic foods, other imported merchandise, electric goods, and a reliable supply of electricity, propane, and water. These require currency. Honiara is the Islands' only urban area and contains the only international airport. All other regions are self-sustaining agrarian lands. Yet currency is necessary in these places as well, in order for the residents to obtain such modern amenities as matches, soap, kerosene, and instant noodles. Islanders obtain money through wage labor in Honiara, producing copra for export, and selling produce at domestic markets. Thus, despite significant differences between

Honiara and the other regions, all exist in a consumer economy dependent on currency.

Within traditional Island society, a powerful political, economic, and religious leader is known as the *bigman* (Solomon Pidgin English for an influential or powerful person). The *bigman* neither inherits nor is formally inaugurated to this status, but gains it through such influential personal qualities as eloquence, warrior ability in times of tribal disputes, and financial power. The people who benefit from representation by an able *bigman* support him, in turn, when the opportunity arises. Life in rural areas still basically follows this social structure centered around the reciprocal relationship with a *bigman*, but the nature of the *bigman* has evolved since Westernization began in the 19th century. Today, the *bigman* continues to serve as a political, economic, and religious leader of the people, but he must now also possess administrative leadership skills, a strong cash income, church connections, or other assets that enable him to excel in a Westernized society. The contemporary *bigman*,

therefore, bridges the traditional and Western spheres.

Today, the Solomon Islands are an independent nation that participates in the international political and economic social order, along with Japan and the United States. Within the nation, however, Island society is based on a balanced interrelationship between Western factors and pre-colonial traditions. /HS/

Unique Musical Performances

The musical culture of the Solomon Islands reveals the diversity of ethnic traditions as well as aspects of Western influence. Each of the Islands' three main ethnic groups has maintained its unique arts. The Melanesians are noted for their private lullabies, laments, and love songs, and their public songs and dances (accompanied by rattles worn on the body) honoring the dead or celebrating political leaders. Ensembles of slit-drums or panpipes of various sizes, which make free use of multiple parts, perform during the latter occasions, while musical bows,



bamboo flutes, and stamping tubes* provide music for private entertainment. The Polynesians draw a strict distinction between song and dance for observances of deities and ancestors on the one hand, and for pleasure (frequently sexual and bantering in nature) on the other. Vocal styles include monotone recitation, speech-like song, and 2- or 3-part singing. Micronesians, particularly from Kiribati, have traditional standing and seated dances and *tamure*, or “new dance”—dance forms and costumes from each region of Polynesia, adapted to guitar and similar accompaniments. These have

Kana

become a vital source of income for performers at hotels and tourist venues.

Through Western influence during this century, such traditional bamboo instruments as stamping tubes have reemerged accompanied by guitars, ukuleles, and singers, and have become popular performing Westernized pop idioms in “bamboo bands,”

particularly in Western Province. Christian hymns and other songs sung outside of church services also play an influential role in everyday life. As in other regions of Oceania, a Neo-Polynesian style of music referred to as “island music”—hymns and popular songs sung in local languages

Stamping Tubes: Bamboo or wooden tubes sounded by vertically striking the ground, seen often in the South Pacific, Taiwan, the Philippines, Africa, and Central and South America. Different pitches and tone colors are produced by varying the tube's circumference or length, or by covering and uncovering the top.

(or Solomon Pidgin) with guitar or ukulele—has become popular, especially among young people. Recently, *singsing* (Solomon pop), with electric guitars and keyboards, has become popular in urban areas.

Although Solomon Island music is commonly associated with the Melanesians and their abundant instrumental music, in some areas, such as the Russell Islands and Vanikoro Island, instrumental music is not considered important, even by the local Melanesians. We hope that future study will help rectify such neglect. /RT/

Society and Culture of the 'Are'are People

The island of Malaita, in the middle of the Solomon Islands, is home to the 'Are'are people. Forty kilometers wide by 184 kilometers long (including Small Malaita), it is the most populous island (approximately 91,500 in 1995), and is divided into 12 districts mainly according to language (various Austronesian family languages). The approximately 11,000 'Are'are occupy a relatively wide area encompassing the

southern half of Malaita and a section of Small Malaita. They originally inhabited the inland mountainous region as well, but many 'Are'are moved to coastal areas following post-World War II political and economic upheavals. Their livelihood depends on taro, yam, manioc (the source of cassava and tapioca), and sweet potato cultivation, and on copra production.

The 'Are'are traditionally lived in a class system with a political leader, the *aaraba*, and observed important ceremonies, *manata*, such as the coming-of-age ritual or observances honoring the dead. The exchange of money played an important role on these occasions. Today, the vast majority of 'Are'are are Protestant, Catholic, or Anglican Christians.

Labor migration played an important role in 'Are'are society from the 1870s through the 1910s, when slave traders, then known as “black birders” and now as “recruiters,” forcibly conscripted workers. Most of these laborers worked on commercial sugarcane plantations in Queensland, Australia and in Fiji.

From 1943 through the 1950s,

Malaita and the 'Are'are district were central to the Maasina Rule movement. (Maasina literally means "the cousin relationship"; Rule literally means "collective activity.") This surge of nationalist sentiment developed in the post-World War II socio-economic chaos. Although its last stage included so-called "cargo cult" elements, the nationalist movement mainly progressed toward constructive demands for cultural recognition and self-governance. The movement itself disappeared in the late 1950s and early 1960s, but it

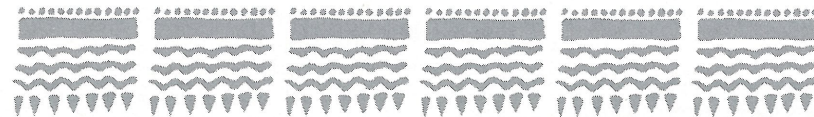
succeeded in reawakening cultural consciousness in the people and in permanently instilling a desire for independence. The Ohio (pronounced "O-hee-o") Cultural Centre of the 'Are'are, which assisted in all aspects of this recording, can be considered an extension of the nationalistic movement. /HS and RT/

Instrumental Music and Song of the 'Are'are

The 'Are'are categorize their music as: 1) *'au*, for bamboo instruments, 2) *'o'o*, for wooden slit-drums,



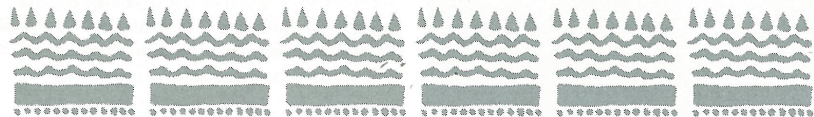
Slit-drum ensemble



3) *kiroba*, sound play on water, and 4) *nuu isuisuba*, vocal. These categories are hierarchically arranged, with *'au* on top. This CD follows the sequence requested by the 'Are'are people. There is very little dance, unlike in other regions of the Solomon Islands; the only example here is a brief selection accompanying a panpipe ensemble. For the 'Are'are, song and, above all, instrumental music provide the core of the musical performance arts.

'Are'are instrumental music typically depicts such natural sounds and human actions as bird and animal

calls, oceans and rivers, rustling trees, crying or snoring children, and people at work. These musical performances skillfully capture the various aural and visual images of the 'Are'are's daily living environment. *Sisihora*, or the story behind each piece's particular title and origin is also of great interest. 'Are'are instrumental music (especially the panpipe ensemble) can bestow a sense of peace, attract the opposite sex, elicit strength and wealth, arouse passions, or awaken sorrows. In this collection, we are able to experience the power held by music. /RT/



The Selections

by Ryūichi Tai

'Au, Bamboo Instruments and Their Music

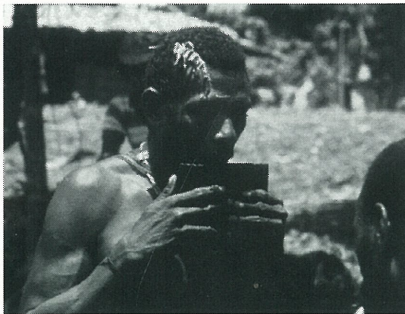
'Au refers to bamboo, musical instruments made of bamboo, and music for bamboo instruments. Bamboo instruments are classified as either *uubi*, blown instruments, or *'ui*, struck instruments. In addition to the ensemble instruments recorded on this CD, there are *'au ware*, panpipes played at an angle; *'au porare*, a two-hole transverse flute; *'au ni aau*, panpipes for solo performing; *'au waa*, bundled panpipes played vertically;

and *'au pasiawa*, a two-stringed musical bow for solo performing.

Panpipe Ensemble: *'au tabana*

This is a two-part ensemble of four performers (led by Kukuku [see track 6] and Kariken, from Kou), each playing a panpipe made of 14 pipes in two sizes. There are four forms of panpipe ensembles, and this form is the oldest, most essential, and the source of the remaining three forms. This CD presents panpipe ensembles grouped according to, and following, this lineage.

All panpipe performances are for such ceremonial occasions (*manata*) as *boura* (observances for the dead), *totoro* (young men's festival), and *ba'aaara bana* (political inaugurations). Every performance normally begins with *bako 'au*, whereby the performers try out their instruments with soft, whispering sounds. *'Au tabana* is said to have a repertoire of about 170 pieces.



1. HA'A'PARASI NIMA (MUSIC TO RAISE THE HOUSE): Performed in order to awaken people on observance days.

2. PO'O KA HOE'HOE (SWINE SHRIEKS): Crying pigs at feeding time; this recording begins with the *bako 'au* warm up.
3. MANI NUU ISUISU (LOVE SONG PIECE) and HO'OSIA RITUAL: A young woman sings to her lover. The ritual in the middle pays tribute to the panpipers by offering them a coconut, symbolizing the food and shell money that will be distributed to them later.
4. MANI RIKORIKO (PARROT PIECE): A composition by Haiwate, a *nukunuku* (unmarried woman), depicting a pair of green parrots playing. The unique movement of the sound imitates the birds with wonderful skill.

5. KIU TAROWARO (MOUND BIRD): A mound bird (megapode) crying at dawn in Tarowaro; note the

striking use of ostinato. Composed by Kenusuana.

Performers (1-5): Willy Hoasitarau, Peter Okamae Ori'a'namo, John Parewauri, George Toiana

Panpipe Ensemble: *'au ripi*

A two-part ensemble of eight performers, each playing a panpipe made of 13 pipes in 4 sizes. The longest pipe of the largest instrument, the *kü*, measures 160 centimeters and, because it requires a lot of breath, the performer positions it almost horizontally and bends over to blow into it. It produces a low, powerful tone (*kiro*), atypical of panpipes, and so this ensemble is sometimes called *'au kiro*. Occasionally, an inspired performer will stop playing in the middle of a piece and launch into a high-pitched song known as *amamata* (crying or shouting). This ensemble has an approximately 80 piece repertoire.

6. SURU 'AU (INTRODUCTION PIECE): Composed by panpipe maker Kukuku as an indispensable performance opener.

7. HAHAKETA NA HARIDATA (HARIDATA'S GRIEF): Old man Haridata lamenting that he receives no food before sleeping at night.
8. ANIANITA NA POPORA (POPORA'S WEEPING): Composed by Popora's father; *amamata* performed by Okamae.
9. 'ORI PASU NAI DARANA (THE FROGS OF DARANA): Large-eyed frogs, deemed sacred, in the night. Composed by Atoaeana.
10. ROKO 'AU (CLOSING PIECE): Panpipe performances actually consist of 10 pieces played as one unit, with a short break afterwards. This piece closes a unit and corresponds to *Suru 'au* (track 6).

Performers (6-10): Hero'apu, Ismael Iirisitapa'a, Dickinson Mapaina, Oa'bura, Peter Okamae Ori'a'namo, Billy Aria Ri'a, Tohoeraro, Teremae, George Toiana, Uutamaesia

Panpipe Ensemble: 'au taka'iori

A four-part ensemble of ten performers, each playing a panpipe made from 4 to 8 pipes of 4 different types and 10 sizes. The is the only panpipe 'Are'are ensemble accompanied by dance. People dance around the panpipers, shaking leaves and tree branches or striking wood blocks (all are called *ma'eta*). The complete repertoire is about 30 pieces.

11. RIHE PIECE: *Rihe* refers to both a part of the panpipe and the type of panpipe that begins this piece. Note the conspicuous use of a drone and ostinato.
12. MANI KINAKINA (KINKINA BIRD PIECE): Kinkina bird cries.
13. ANIANITA NA WERA (INFANT'S CRY): Composer unknown. Note the *amamata*.

Performers (11-15): John Heroapu, Ismael Iirisitapa'a, Peter Keniti'ia, Tome Namuitere, Wilson Oabura, Peter Okamae Ori'a'namo, John Parewauri, To'iana George, Philip Tobu'asi

Panpipe Ensemble: 'au keto

A three-part ensemble of six performers, each playing a panpipe made from 5 to 7 pipes of 3 types and 6 sizes. The newest ensemble combination, it occurs only in northern 'Are'are. It has a 50 piece repertoire.

14. MOU SIKI (STOP AND GO): The outstanding characteristic of this piece is its abrupt stopping and resuming, as its unusual title indicates.
15. MANI HAKEHAKE (MOANING PIECE): A weary old person moaning at night because of his poor health. Note the use of ostinato.
16. MANI ASUHE (MICE PIECE): Scurrying mice.

Performers (14-16): Hau'ota, Willy Hoasitarau, Ohe'anima'e, Peter Okamae Ori'a'namo, To'iana George, Utumae Si'a

Stamping Tubes: 'au kiro ni mako

Mako means "ground," and *kiro* means "a low, strong sound" (see *kiroha*—sound play on water).

Stamping tubes are played solo or in a 2- to 3- part ensemble. There are about 40 pieces for these instruments, which are played for entertainment.

Solo Stamping Tubes

Four bamboo tubes measuring 14 to 50 centimeters in length are held in each hand (for melody) and one in each foot, between the big and second toes (for rhythm), and are struck against rocks on the ground. Stamping tubes are found throughout the South Pacific, but not in this form. Nor are they played elsewhere with such musicality.

17. MANI PORA (DOVE PIECE): Composed by the performer, Hoasitarau's, mother, who was saddened by the early morning cooing of a dove.
18. MANI ASUHE (MICE PIECE): Scurrying mice (compare with track 16).
19. MANI OPIOPI TANI KAHU (SOUND OF THE RIVER PIECE): The sound of river water at a bend.

Duet Stamping Tubes

Each performer plays 2 or 3 long and short tubes in each hand. Young women enjoy playing these for fun and are often joined by men, as here.

20. MANI SISINI (BATS PIECE): Bats flying through wind in a cave.
21. MANI HITAHITA (THUNDER PIECE): Thunder during a wind storm. Lightning is depicted by alternating between tubes on the left and right.
22. ANIANITA (LAMENTATION): Mariri grieving her mother's death.
23. MANI HATA (EAGLE PIECE): An eagle, which symbolizes the Creator according to 'Are'are creation myth, flies crying through the wind high in the sky.
- Performers (17-19):
Willy Hoasitarau (solo),
Alice Watemane'ana and
(20-25) Peter Okamae Oria'namo (duet)*

Wooden Slit-Drum Ensemble: 'O'o

An ensemble of seven wooden slit drums of 5 types, varying from 60 to 120 centimeters in length and 30 to 50 centimeters in diameter, said to have been created by Keakeni Lauhanua (a woman cultural hero). The players beat the drums above the horizontal slit with two sticks. These drums are used for such ceremonial events as death rituals (*boura*) and the restoration of peace (*siwa*). The leader begins with a solo (*ro'u mani 'o'o*) and vocalization (*'o'o rereko*), then everyone joins in unison. The leader also inserts performances (*parahisina*) between pieces. There are 60 pieces in the complete repertoire. In addition to these types of pieces, solo slit drums are also used to transmit messages.

24. MANI IIKU (TREE ROOTS): The sound of wind passing through aerial tree roots.
25. PEPETARI (MOTHS): Two moths flitting about in the night.
26. WETE (RAT): A rat nibbling on nut.

27. HITA (THUNDER): Sound of thunder (compare with track 21).

28. TETARE KUI (THE DOG): This piece, about a dog that is taken hunting, incorporates the question and answer, "What kind of dog?," "A small dog," through the use of 'au *totorea wai tarea*, a type of drum language.

29. HO'OHO'O 'ANA MA'EHUNU (SACRED TARO PUDDING TO THE WILD MAN): According to 'Are'are creation myth, the *Ma'ebunu* (wild man) inhabited these lands before the first ancestors. *Ho'oho'o* is a sacred taro pudding used as an offering to the spirits.

30. KANA (DIVINATION SONG): Modeled on the song recorded in track 32.

*Performers (24-50):
Ishmael Irisitapa'a (leader), Billy Ariaria,
Jimmy Arubane, Jimmy Hawota,
Namo'akau, Peter Okamae Oria'namo,
Billy Robema'e, Simon Peter Wilson
Take'siken, Mateasi Taboai'raro,
Utamaesia*

Sound Play on Water: Kiroba

On the way home from fields or during bathing, women enjoy playing at the river and producing varied intervals and tones by striking the water. Similar examples exist in many parts of the Solomon Islands, including Santa Isabel Island and the Shortland Islands. Because of its deep sound, the word "*kiro*" is sometimes used to describe low, strong sound (e.g., 'au *kiro ni mako* [stamping tubes]).

31. *Kiroba* Demonstration

*Performers: Alice Watemane'ana (leader),
Helen Raerisiwa, Urima'e*

Singing: Nuu isuisuba

Nuu isuisuba literally means "to enumerate something." Other songs not included here are: *nuuha aana bote* (rowing song), *nuuha aana kiro* (sung while hitting bamboo), and *nuuha aana rapaba* (taro-pounding song).

32. *Kana* (Divination Song): Ancestral spirits are invoked for observances, on battle days, or to diagnose illnesses. At night in

complete darkness, a seer (*kana nunubia*) and assistants (*aape, ʔe*) sing while hitting long and short divination sticks against each other. Surrounding men (*nunubia*) also join the singing. A questioner (*mane sune kana*) might also make inquiries of spirits. This recording captures the conclusion of a 30 minute demonstration (mono recording).

*Performers: Ma'ara (leader),
Peter Hau'ota, Michael Houaisuta,
John Hunuratana, Sare Ore'anima'e'e,
Robea Pasibiru, Thomas Rakame,
Simon Utama'esia, George Waitora*

33. *Amamata* (Solo lament): Sung at the death bed to enumerate a person's good deeds or whenever a dead loved one is recalled. *Ama* literally means "to cry or grieve." Here, the composer, Atohe, laments because her brothers, sisters, relatives, and close friends have died and she is alone.

34. *Amamata* (Duet Lament): Boilu Hemibigoenao, who died of an illness within one year of returning

from studying abroad, is lamented by a younger sister. Laments are normally sung by two people, as here.

35. *Amamata* (Hummed lament): Hummed version of track 34. This mode of performance is used to evade the sometimes overpowering words.

36. *Roro wera* (Lullaby): *Ro* means "to rock," and *wera*, "child." Lullabies are often sung by sisters and grandmothers while mothers are away in the fields. This song relates the legend, *keni ni mako*, widely heard in the Islands, about a snake that marries a human.

37. *Nuu isuisu* (Love Song): The title means "to enumerate one's feelings." A woman conveys her thoughts regarding her lover. A close friend will frequently sing the second part. (mono recording)

*Performers (33-37):
Aro'ia, Alice Watemane'ana,
Ester Abinamae, Helen Raerisiwa*

Credits:

Original Japanese Version

Producers: Yuji Ichihashi & Aki Sato
Director: Masaya Murakami
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Planning: Katsumori Ichikawa

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CD Editing: Julian Maka'a (Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corp.), Ryūichi Tai

Notes: Hisao Sekine, Ryūichi Tai

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Recorded in digital stereo (DAT). Tracks 32 and 37 are transferred from U-matic video (mono).

English Language Series:

Producer: Stephen McArthur
Co-Producers: Andrew Sloan and Chris Mills

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Translator: Tokiko Nobusawa

Artwork and Design: Tim Newcomb

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Contributors:

The MABO Project is a cooperative research venture of the Solomon Islands National Museum, Solomon Islands National Archives, Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corp., and the researchers of the Osaka University Musicology Division. Since 1988, the MABO Project has been documenting the traditional skills, musical performances, and oral traditions of each region within the Solomon Islands, including the Russell Islands, Malaita Island, Choiseul Island, the Shortland Islands, and Santa Isabel Island.

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Mark Greenberg teaches Humanities and Cultural Studies at Goddard College and is President of Upstreet Productions, specializing in radio, video, and audio projects involving traditional folk music and oral history. He was the text editor and a writer for *The JVC-Smitsonian/Folkways Video Anthologies of Music and Dance of The Americas, Europe, and Africa* (available from Multicultural Media).

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Videography:

MABO Project Recordings (1988): U/89/1/1 – U/89/1/3, U/89/2 – U/89/4, U-Matic (PAL), 60 min. each. Solomon Islands National Museum.

'Are'are Music and Shaping Bamboo. Filmed by Hugo Zemp. Produced by CNRS Audio-visual, 1984 and 1985. Republished by The Society for Ethnomusicology. 2 VHS, color, 150 min. and 35 min., 1994.

Editor & Translator's Note

These notes have been translated, for the first time, from the original Japanese and edited as judiciously as possible for an English-speaking audience. In translating and editing these notes, we have attempted to preserve the authors' original tone, as well as the essential information. Some references aimed at a Japanese audience have been eliminated but little else. The fieldworkers who recorded these selections represent a variety of disciplines and approaches, and this is reflected in the notes. Some, for example, are more musicologically detailed, while others present the point-of-view of an enthusiastic traveler learning about new cultures and peoples.

Translating always presents challenges, and these are amplified when the material being translated itself contains many terms from yet another language. Often, the Japanese fieldworker attempted to preserve original terms, such as the names of people and musical instruments, through direct transliteration into Japanese. Since transliteration involves capturing one language's

sounds in another's alphabet, it is subject to unavoidable inaccuracies. These are compounded when a second transliteration — as here, from Japanese to English — occurs. Some terms can be checked by using recognized authorities and references, and we have done this wherever possible by following spellings used in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1980 edition) and the *New Harvard Dictionary of Music* (1986 edition). We also appreciate the assistance of Mr. Yuji Ichihashi, at the Victor Company of Japan, and the original writers in reviewing our work and making suggestions.

Some spellings, however, have remained problematic, especially the names of people and some places. In those cases we have followed standard Japanese-English transliteration practice and have attempted to be as consistent as possible. We have also followed Western practice, rather than Japanese, by placing surnames second.

Non-English terms are in italics.

— MG and TN