

Seattle Pacific University

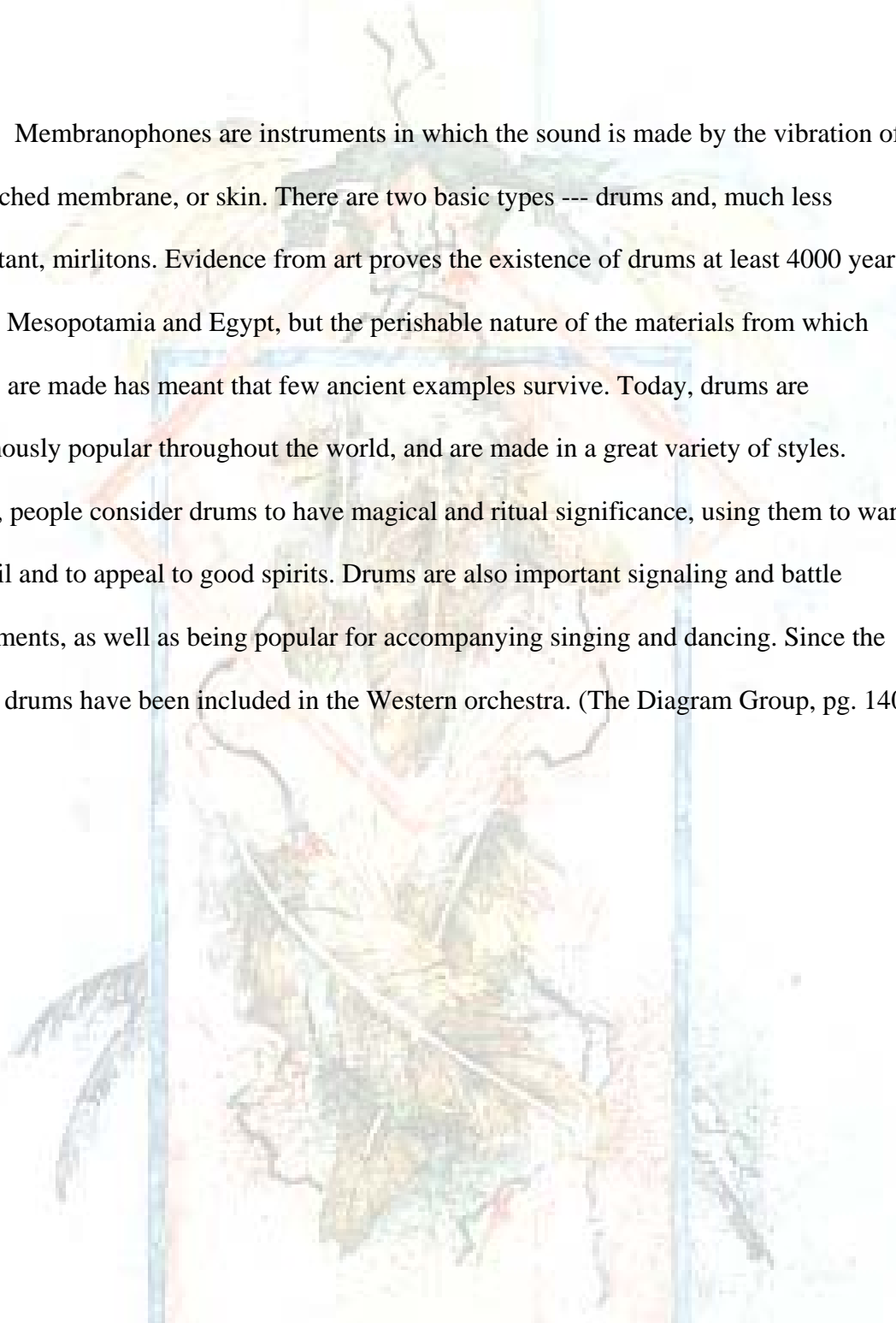


# Ethnic Instruments Catalog

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# Membranophones

Membranophones are instruments in which the sound is made by the vibration of a stretched membrane, or skin. There are two basic types --- drums and, much less important, mirlitons. Evidence from art proves the existence of drums at least 4000 years ago in Mesopotamia and Egypt, but the perishable nature of the materials from which drums are made has meant that few ancient examples survive. Today, drums are enormously popular throughout the world, and are made in a great variety of styles. Many, people consider drums to have magical and ritual significance, using them to ward off evil and to appeal to good spirits. Drums are also important signaling and battle instruments, as well as being popular for accompanying singing and dancing. Since the 1700s drums have been included in the Western orchestra. (The Diagram Group, pg. 140)



### **Tambour - Africa**

This is a side drum with membrane heads. It can be strung around the neck and played on both ends with sticks. It has beads inside which rattle when played, characteristic of West African sounds.



### **Tabla – India**



The 'right hand' drum, called the dayan (also called the dahina, or the tabla) is a conical (almost cylindrical) drum shell carved out of a solid piece of hard wood. The dayan's shell has one 'open' end, covered by a composite membrane. The base of the drum has a slightly larger diameter than the top. The 'left hand' drum, called the bayan (also called the duggi) is a hemispherical bowl shaped drum made of polished copper, brass,

bronze, or clay. Like the dayan, a composite membrane covers the bayan's open end. Both drums stand about 25 centimeters high. The bayan's head measures 22 centimeters across, while the dayan measures approximately 14 centimeters across.

Tabla. <http://www.tabla.com/tablawha.html>



### **Frame Drums**

Frame drums from the USSR and Turkey. The Russian reshoto has a very shallow frame fitted with metal jingle disks. It is held by the handle and played with the fingers or a beater. The Turkish tar has jingle disks in a decorative frame. The sound of this instrument is generally made by the vibration of a stretched membrane or skin. This allows it to fall into the Membranophone family of instruments.



### **Waisted Drums**

These drums are from India and can be played with or without a mallet. These drums cover either pottery or metal with two laced heads. The vibrating membrane makes this drum a Membranophone.



### **Cylindrical and Conical Drums**

Conical drums also come in a variety of shapes and sizes, ranging from a flattish bowl shape to a long tapering cone. Cylindrical and conical drums are the most common types of tubular drum. The Panamanian drum is a double-headed drum with the two skins laced together.



### **The Clapper Drum**

The skins of the clapper drum are struck with small beads as the drum is shaken (twisted). Indians would use this Membranophone to chase away spirits, for weddings, and celebrations.