



Ozi Ikòrò

AFRICAN HISTORY · CULTURE · INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

ANTHROPOLOGY AND ETHNOGRAPHY

Igbo Musical Instruments : *A Lost Art : Enenke*

By Maduagwu Nzubechi

Ozikoro.com · Anthropology and Ethnography · 2 min read

FEATURE
IMAGE

photo credit: musicafricawake

Article image · caption retained from the published Ozikoro article



Ozi Ikòrò
IGBO MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Igbo Musical Instruments : A Lost Art : Enenke

By Maduagwu Nzubechi · Anthropology and Ethnography · Ozikoro.com

Sound classification Enenke is an aerophone, which means they produce sound primarily through the vibration of a column of air. These instruments include trumpet, opi okike (opi ike) , and even oja. How it is made Enenke is produced from the horn of a wild animal called “ene” (An antelope). Enenke is used...



antelope-nigerian-animal-min-Photo credit: <https://dnbstories.com/>

01

Sound classification

Enenke is an a erophone, which means they produce sound primarily through the vibration of a column of air. These instruments include trumpet, opi okike (opi ike), and even oja.



Photo credit: swiss skulls

02

How it is made

Enenke is produced from the horn of a wild animal called “ene” (An antelope). Enenke is used in certain areas like Oraifite, Ichi, Ozubulu, Ihiala and the environs. The horns are sourced from ndi Dinta

(hunters) and refined into musical instruments by wood carvers and craftsmen, the inner bone core is removed. Craftsmen then soak the horn or use heat to separate the keratin sheath from the bone. The craftsman thins the walls of the horn by scraping the interior and exterior. This process, known as delicate tapping, allows the carver to listen for the “sweet spot” where the horn vibrates most freely. the blow-hole is then filed into the side (transverse). The placement of this hole is critical because moving it even a few millimeters can change the acoustic of the Enenke



Rev. Chris Ebighgbo blowing Enenke/Ogbo in 2009 Ofobuike Seminar on Igbo lost values

03

Significance

The sound of the Enenke in places like Oraifite signifies something of grave concern and what should be placed very close attention to. The

sound of the Enenke at different times means different things:

- The sound of Enenke at midnight means danger of death,
- The sound of the Enenke in the mornings, may be for festivals, marriage attendance or a call for emergency meetings at the village square.
- In occasions like burials, Enenke is used in the announcement of bringing home the symbolic corpse of a deceased Nwada (daughter of the community). Also it is used to announce the departure or burial of titled men, (ndi nze na ozo) or a war hero (dike) to the afterlife.

For masquerade cults, when Enenke is used to welcome the otu-eke masquerade, it means that the host of spirit soldiers are on the road for a particular social commitment. According to Chris Ebighgbo, In Ozubulu, Ihiala, Okija and environs, enenke are used as described above but have other pleasant uses for their masquerade-- mmuṣo-ozo ebuni. This is a mask that is accompanied with great applause from both men and women. Its appearance in the community is punctuated with gladness. Everybody would want to share the blessings from the land of the spirit. Enenke is mostly used as a solo musical instrument which heralds its appearance and performance.



Photo credit: youtube

04

References:

- Music Africa Awake. (2019). Igbo traditional music instrument.
- Ebighgbo, C. (2009). The trumpets: Okike, Odu-mkpalo, and Enenke as ethnography in Igbo social commitments
- Umu Igbo Magazine. Egwu nkwa ndi Igbo: Igbo music and musical instruments

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Maduagwu Nzubechi

Nzubechi is a history, political enthusiast who dabbles into social commentary once in a while



Ozi Ikòrò

History worth reading.

African history · culture · indigenous knowledge
