



The Soul of Mbira: Music and Traditions of the Shona People of Zimbabwe

Paul F. Berliner

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This sensitive, scholarly portrayal of Shona musicians and the African Musical tradition is highly engaging and comprehensive in its range of data. Paul Berliner provides the complete cultural context for the music and an intimate, precise account of the meaning of the instrument and its music.

"Paul Berliner's *The Soul of Mbira* is probably the best ethnography ever written about an African musical tradition. It is a complete classic . . . I know of no other instrument with the range of the mbira, and the book is equal to the instrument."—John Chernoff

"[*The Soul of Mbira*] illustrates the fact that Shona mbira music in its beauty, subtlety, and virtuosity demands the same kind of respect that we might hold for any other classical music."—David Reck, *Parabola*

"The book is a model of ethnomusicological thinking and investigation and it suggests a specific way of approaching a complex socio-musical system."—John Baily, *Popular Music*

"When next someone asks 'What is ethnomusicology?' or 'What do ethnomusicologists do?' I shall suggest this book. . . . This is a landmark in ethnomusicological literature. Berliner succeeds in conveying both the joy that goes with mbira playing and the mystic relationship between the player and his instrument. In short, this is humanized ethnomusicology."—K.A. Gourlay, *Ethnomusicology*



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