

Hurrian Hymn – The Oldest Written Song – NAF

Classical notation for E–minor pentatonic flute (limited range)

*Interpreted by Richard Dumbrill
Arranged by Clint Goss*

♩ = 120

Melody

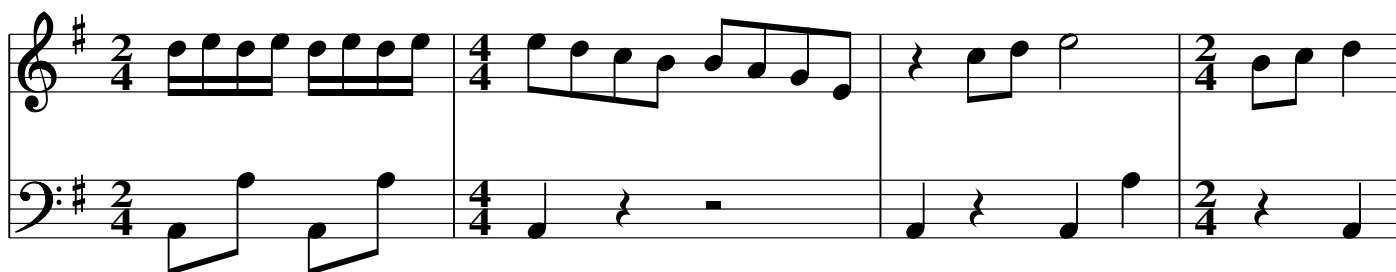
Drum



The first system consists of two staves. The top staff is labeled 'Melody' and the bottom staff is labeled 'Drum'. The melody is written in a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The drum line is written in a bass clef. The time signature starts in 4/4, changes to 3/4 for the second measure, and returns to 4/4 for the third and fourth measures. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, while the drum line consists of quarter notes and rests.



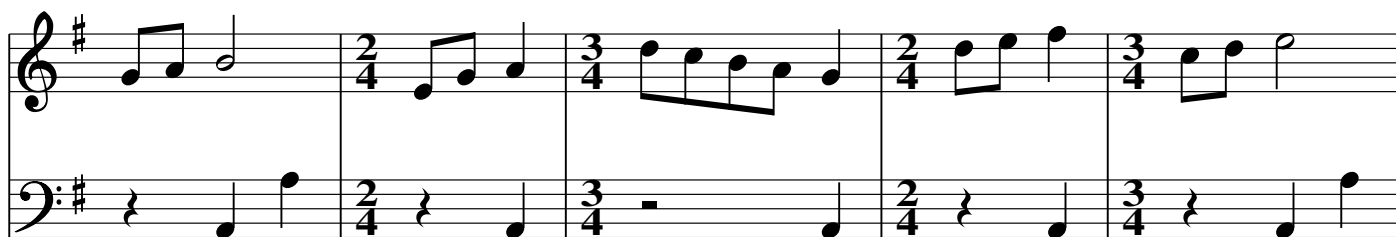
The second system consists of two staves. The top staff is labeled 'Melody' and the bottom staff is labeled 'Drum'. The melody is written in a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The drum line is written in a bass clef. The time signature is 4/4. The melody consists of eighth notes, and the drum line consists of quarter notes and rests.



The third system consists of two staves. The top staff is labeled 'Melody' and the bottom staff is labeled 'Drum'. The melody is written in a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The drum line is written in a bass clef. The time signature starts in 2/4, changes to 4/4 for the second and third measures, and returns to 2/4 for the fourth measure. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, while the drum line consists of quarter notes and rests.



The fourth system consists of two staves. The top staff is labeled 'Melody' and the bottom staff is labeled 'Drum'. The melody is written in a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The drum line is written in a bass clef. The time signature starts in 3/4, changes to 2/4 for the second and fourth measures, and returns to 3/4 for the third and fifth measures. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes, while the drum line consists of quarter notes and rests.



The fifth system consists of two staves. The top staff is labeled 'Melody' and the bottom staff is labeled 'Drum'. The melody is written in a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The drum line is written in a bass clef. The time signature starts in 2/4, changes to 3/4 for the second and fourth measures, and returns to 2/4 for the first, third, and fifth measures. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes, while the drum line consists of quarter notes and rests.



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French archeologists excavated a clay tablet in the early 1950's which is believed to be "sheet music" for this Hurrian Hymn. It is currently the oldest known written music.

The tablet was excavated from the site of the ancient city Ugarit, the current Ras Shamra, a few miles North of Latakia in Syria. It is dated to about 1400 BC and is written with cuneiform signs in the Hurrian language. It records a hymn to the goddess Nikkal, wife of the moon god. The tablet is broken and water-damaged, and at least four groups of scholars have attempted to interpret the music.

This version is based on the interpretation of Dr. Richard Dumbrill. See <http://www.kingdavidsharp.com/pages/sacred.htm>. While Dumbrill's interpretation is highly conjectural, it is widely believed that the notation of the music refers to diatonic intervals and a scale within a particular mode.

Another interpretation was made by Dr. Anne Kilmer. See <http://www.webster.sk.ca/greenwich/evidence.htm>.

I arranged this version for Native American Flute and Drum (two drums of different tones). It is written in Classical notation for an E-minor flute. The melody in this version has been altered to fit the limited scale of this flute, with an attempt to preserve the spirit of the piece.

– Clint Goss, July 16, 2002.