



Making Music Without Borders

Finding inspiration in tradition and embracing the musical self

As Kenny Werner puts it: in jazz, *"INNOVATION IS THE TRADITION"* (*Effortless Mastery*, 2011). But how is it possible to **organically integrate elements of a given musical tradition** into one's own composing or playing? In other words, to search for inspiration within a tradition while **truly embracing the musical self and letting one's inner voice blossom?**

This challenge is particularly relevant in today's world: the contemporary musician is indeed constantly being exposed to a plethora of musical styles... And the excess of information can be somewhat overwhelming! Since 2011, AfuriKo has been on a journey to bridge the gap between jazz, West African music, and their own artistic expression. The duo's educational mission is to share this passion, embarking new souls on this journey and ultimately helping to **build confidence in the musician within each student.**

In Africa, musical performance is very much a part of everyday life, like breathing, eating, or sleeping. AfuriKo's teaching approach is to bring a sense of **traditional African communal performance by way of song, simple dance steps, and body percussion** to Western audiences and institutions. However, considering the drastic cultural differences in the way music is taught in the West and in Africa, Western methods will not be neglected when deemed necessary in order to get the essence of the musical message across.

Prior to visiting a particular school or institution, AfuriKo will prepare an arrangement of a traditional African piece of music, that will be tailor-made for the specific group of students to be taught. A score, parts, and a recording will be sent to the institution a few weeks before the workshops so that the students may practice.

Upon AfuriKo's arrival at the institution, the course will typically span a period of two days and be divided into the following sessions:

- **3-hour workshop led by Akiko Horii:** internalizing the rhythmic content of the arrangement through movement and song
- **3-hour workshop led by Jim Funnell:** understanding the melodic/harmonic content of the arrangement through analysis and ensemble playing
- **3-hour rehearsal with AfuriKo**
- **Live performance by AfuriKo featuring the students**