

Maloya

(last edited on 8 April 2021)

Balafon piece made by Aly Keita for his CD “Akwaba Inisene”

Maloya means “Shame” in Bambara.

‘Maloya is (also) a music genre of Réunion, usually sung in Réunion Creole, and traditionally accompanied by percussion and a musical bow. Maloya is a new form that has origins in the music of African and Malagasy slaves and Indian indentured workers on the island. Maloya was considered such a threat to the French state that it was banned in the 1970s.’ (Source: Wikipedia).

Pattern A is a traditional African pattern. Youssouf and Ali Keita are said to have composed a song to the rhythm as well. The message would be: "If you love something, you should try to be the best at it too." That goes for all the things you do. Even a thief should want to be "the best in his business." So far I have only picked up some snippets of the text from the second part:

*i ke ra fè fè fè so, i ke ra fè
i a ka wa nè, ba ra wa nè
i a ka wa nè, balafon wa nè*

The left hand for pattern A can also be used to accompany the melody being played on the right.

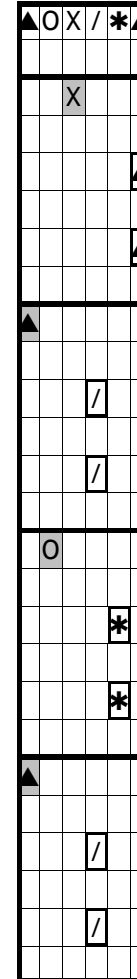
The right hand for pattern A - played on the left - can also be used as an accompaniment to the melody being played on the right.

Sources: Youssouf en Kassoum Keita, Konsankuy, Mali 2012.

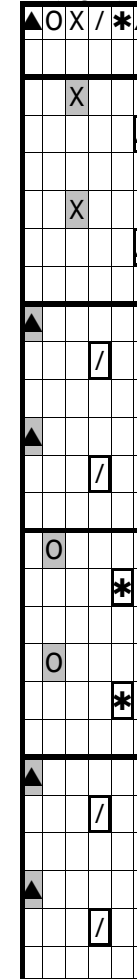
The Dutch formation Havelok played Maloya for NPOradio4 in February 2021.

She showed some derived patterns (E, F and B2)

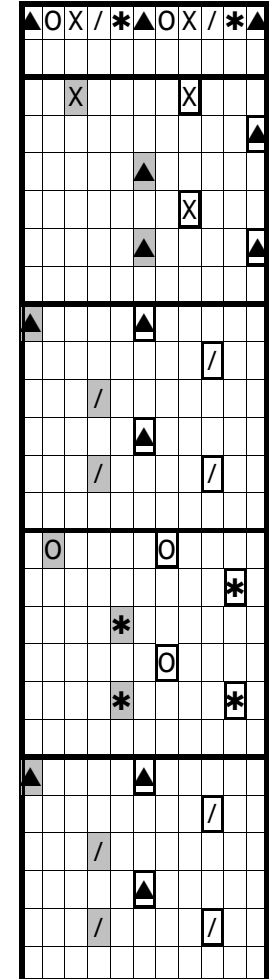
Pattern A
split
(left)



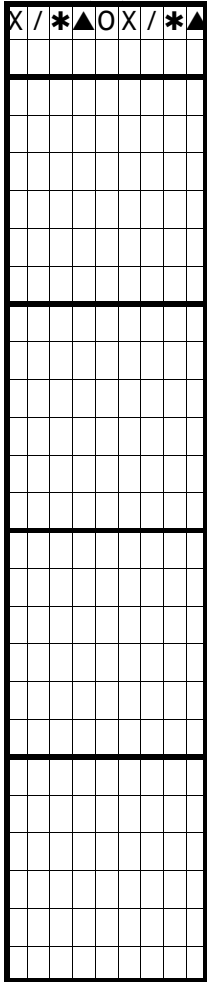
Pattern A
split
(right)



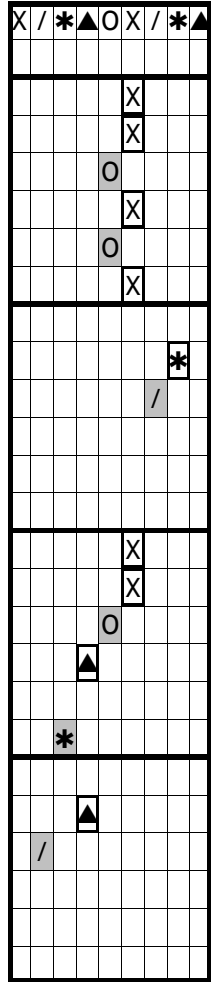
Pattern A
accompaniment



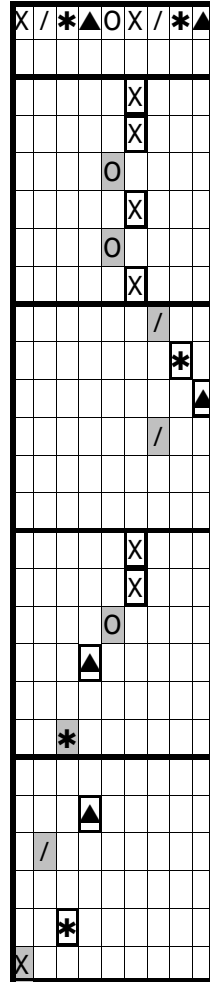
Melody part 1
(2x)



Everything can be played in octave except ▲ X, in the penultimate measure.

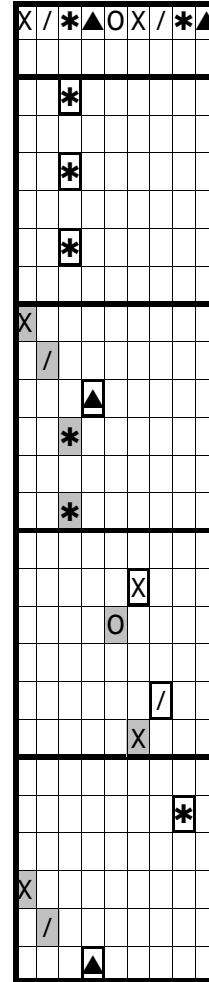
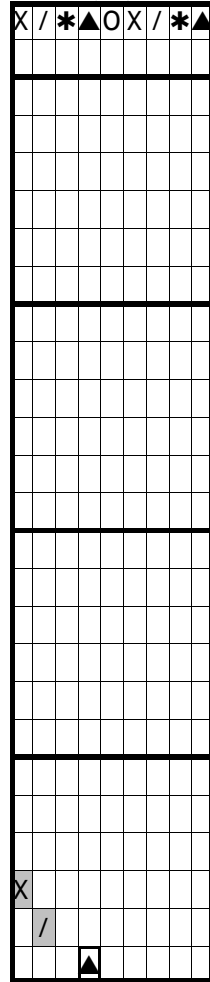


Melody part 2
(1x)

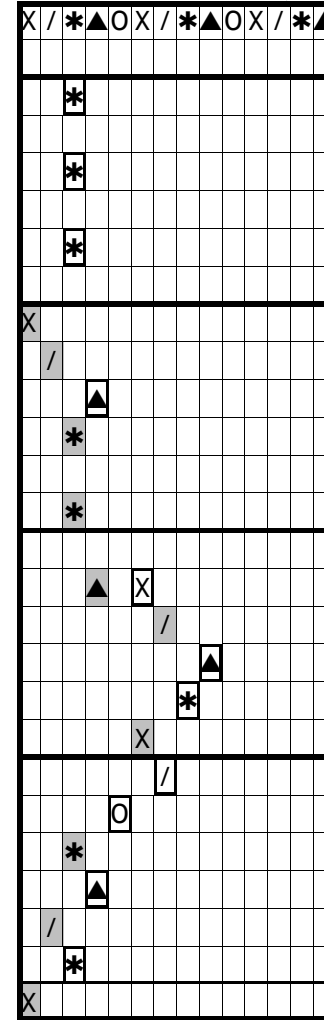


(so return once to the beginning (the empty column))

Melody part 2
(1x)

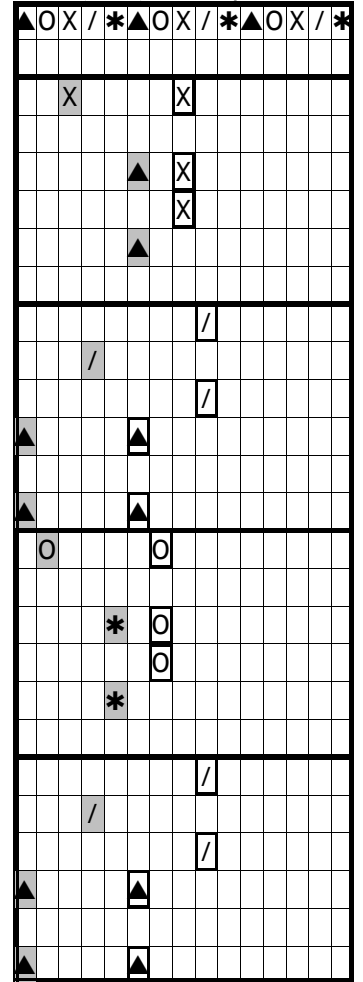


(the last two bars are also the intro)

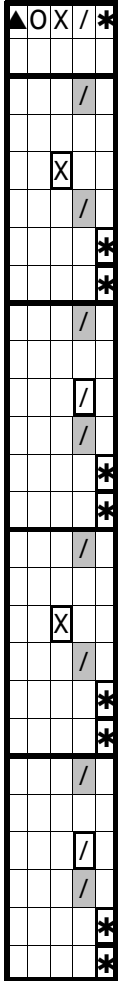


If the highest "▲" on your balafon is missing, you can play a "/" there.

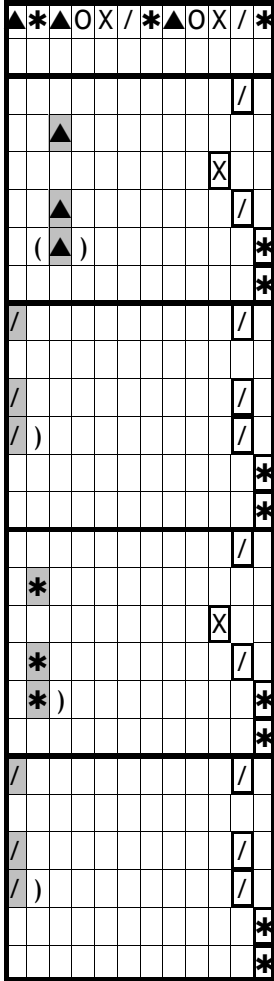
Pattern C1
solo (bass) accompaniment



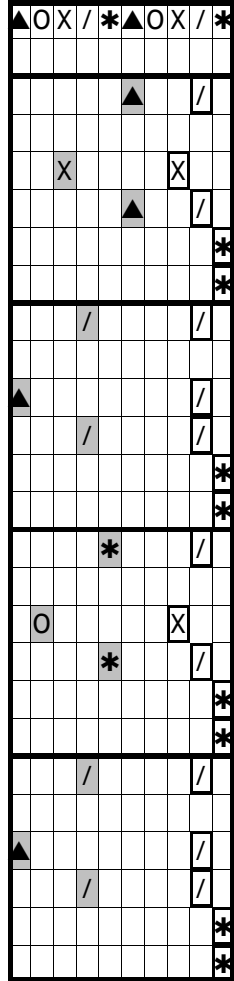
Pattern B1
solo accompaniment



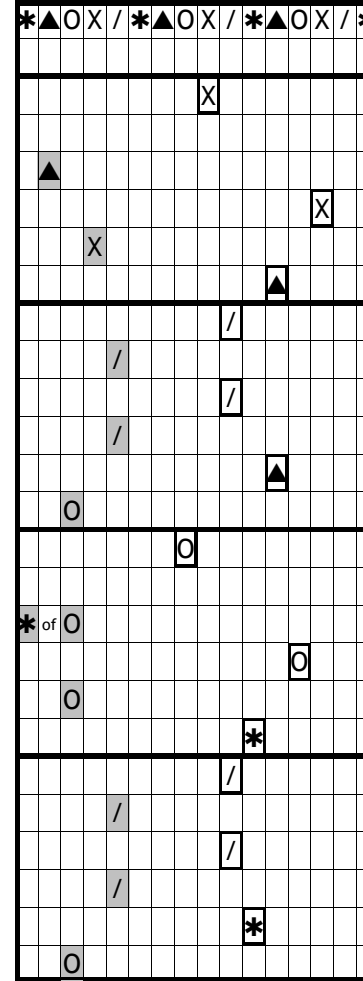
Pattern B2
solo accompaniment



Pattern B3
solo accompaniment



Pattern D
solo accompaniment



Pattern C2
solo (bass) accompaniment

