

Hurrian Hymn – The Oldest Written Song – NAF (Extended Range)

Classical notation for E-minor pentatonic flute (extended range)

*Interpreted by Richard Dumbrill
rranged by Clint Goss*

♩ = 120

Melod

Drum

The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The top staff, labeled 'Melod', is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains four measures of music: the first and third measures are in 4/4, while the second and fourth are in 3/4. The bottom staff, labeled 'Drum', is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains four measures of music, with the first and third measures in 4/4 and the second and fourth in 3/4. The music is written in a style that suggests a pentatonic scale.

The second system of musical notation consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains two measures of music, each with a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains two measures of music, each with a 4/4 time signature. The music is written in a style that suggests a pentatonic scale.

The third system of musical notation consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains four measures of music, with the first and third measures in 4/4 and the second and fourth in 2/4. The bottom staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains four measures of music, with the first and third measures in 4/4 and the second and fourth in 2/4. The music is written in a style that suggests a pentatonic scale.

The fourth system of musical notation consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains five measures of music, with the first and third measures in 3/4 and the second, fourth, and fifth in 2/4. The bottom staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains five measures of music, with the first and third measures in 3/4 and the second, fourth, and fifth in 2/4. The music is written in a style that suggests a pentatonic scale.

The fifth system of musical notation consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains five measures of music, with the first and third measures in 3/4 and the second, fourth, and fifth in 2/4. The bottom staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains five measures of music, with the first and third measures in 3/4 and the second, fourth, and fifth in 2/4. The music is written in a style that suggests a pentatonic scale.



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French archeologists excavated a clay tablet in the early 1950's which is believe 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 a E-minor flute. The melody in this version has been preserved, but will only be playable on a Native American Flute with extended range and clear notes in the upper register.

– Clint Goss, July 16, 2002.