Philippine Bamboo Musical Instruments, 15 September 2008

Filipinos make a wide variety of musical instruments, be they wind, string or percussion. Among the wind instruments are the kalaleng (Tinggian flute), bansik (Zambales Negrito flute), lantuy (Visayan bamboo clarinet), tulali (Sulod flute), sahunay (Tausug flute), diwdiw-es (Abra-Tinggian panpipe), nose flutes called baling (Apayao) or kipanaw (Abra Tinggian) and budyong (Hanunuo Mangyan flute).

The string instruments include the bamboo guitar called tabungbung (Batan Negrito), kulit-en (Tinggian), kungkong (Pangasinan), and pas-ing (Igorot). The bamboo zither with separate strings is called kolitong by the Kalinga, while the same instrument with two parallel strings connected with a platform is called seronggandandi by the Maranao and takumboby the Manobo. The bamboo violin is commonly called gaet-gaet among the Kalingas (Medina 1977).

The Las Piñas Bamboo Organ is part of the Philippine's cultural and historical heritage. It is the only one of its kind in the world. It has more than 900 tubes, 843 of which are made of bamboo. It is more than 5 m high and 1 m deep. It was built in five years by Fray Diego Cera dela Virgen del Carmen in 1816 with the help of the people of Las Piñas. It became famous all over the world when it was brought to the house of Klaus in Bonn, Germany for repair.


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