RHYTHMS OF CHILDHOOD WITH ELLA JENKINS

Songs with guitar, banjo, baritone ukulele, harmonica and drum accompaniment

With Ginni Clemmens, Shirley Hersh and Harold Murray / Folkways Records FC 7653

RHYTHMS IN NATURE
SONGS ABOUT TREES:
PRETTY TREES AROUND THE WORLD
THE CEDAR TREES
SONGS ABOUT BIRDS:
THE CUCKOO
WAKE UP, LITTLE SPARROW
SONGS ABOUT WATER:
MAID OF JAPAN
ROW, ROW, ROW YOUR BOAT
MICHAEL ROW YOUR BOAT ASHORE
CANOE SONG

RHYTHMS IN THE DANCE
SKIP TO MY LOU
RED RIVER VALLEY DANCING THEME
REEL
BANJO MEDLEY
ALL WILL BE DANCING

RHYTHMS OF FAR AWAY
AFRICAN IMPRESSIONS
KUM-BA-YA
O REIGN O
EN-KOMO-ZEE-GAH-BA-BA
RHYTHMS OF CHILDHOOD
with ELLA JENKINS

Songs with guitar, banjo, baritone ukulele, harmonica and drum accompaniment, with Ginni Clemmens, Shirley Hersh, and Harold Murray

SIDE II

RHYTHMS IN THE DANCE

Band 7:  
  a. Skip To My Lou
  b. Red River Valley Dancing Theme
  c. Reel (Ella Jenkins; Forster Music Inc. - ASCAP)

Band 8: BANJO MEDLEY

Band 9: ALL WILL BE DANCING (E. Kitch Childs; Forster Music Inc. - ASCAP)

RHYTHMS OF FAR AWAY

Band 10: AFRICAN IMPRESSIONS (Part 1)
Band 11: AFRICAN IMPRESSIONS (Part 2)
  a. Kum-Ba-Ya
  b. O Reign O
  c. En-Komo-Zee-Gah-Ba-Ba

(Unless otherwise indicated, all songs adapted & arranged by Ella Jenkins, © Stormking Music Inc.)
RHYTHMS OF CHILDHOOD
with ELLA JENKINS
Songs with guitar, banjo, baritone ukelele, harmonica
and drum accompaniment, with Ginni Clemmens,
Shirley Hersh, and Harold Murray

SIDE I

RHYTHMS IN NATURE
Songs About Trees
Band 1: PRETTY TREES AROUND THE WORLD (Ella Jenkins)
(Forster Music Inc. - ASCAP)
Band 2: THE CEDAR TREES (Ella Jenkins)
(Forster Music Inc. - ASCAP)

Songs About Birds
Band 3: THE CUCKOO
Band 4: WAKE UP, LITTLE SPARROW (Ella Jenkins)
(Forster Music Inc. - ASCAP)

Songs About Water
Band 5: MAID OF JAPAN
Band 6: a. Row, Row, Row Your Boat
b. Michael Row Your Boat Ashore
c. Canoe Song
(Unless otherwise indicated, all songs adapted &
arranged by Ella Jenkins, © Stormking Music Inc.)
There is not very much I want to say or explain about this album for the content of the album, I feel, speaks capably for itself... The album is for children and it is for adults - for adults, of course, who love, enjoy and understand children... The album is designed for people who like to sing, for people who like to play simple songs with their instruments and for people who simply like to sit back and participate in a quieter fashion.

The title of the album - RHYTHMS OF CHILDHOOD - was arrived at by my observing children's observations of the world around them and catching some of their colorful responses and reactions to it.

The findings were combined with reflections of my own childhood - that children - during these formative years respond to a variety of rhythms:

THEY RESPOND more to gladnesses than to sorrows .... THEY RESPOND to more todays than they do the tomorrows .... THEY RESPOND to the trees and the swift blowing breeze that changes autumn to winter .... THEY RESPOND to the birds and often hear words that birds reserve for the bended ears of little people .... THEY RESPOND, by all means to ripples in streams .... They take time to listen to each bull frog's mission .... THEY RESPOND to ducks quacking .... THEY RESPOND to swords whacking in tales of long ago .... THEY RESPOND to a finger-snap .... THEY RESPOND to a hand-clap .... They romp and they stomp .... They merrily prance and oftentimes dance for no reason at all .... except that the WORLD and its RHYTHMS is one BIG ROLLING, TWISTING, TURNING, CHANGING BALL.

I shall consider "RHYTHMS OF CHILDHOOD" a success if it can prompt a hand to clap, a foot to pat - a voice to sing - a heart to ring with natural merriment or if it simply brings forth a silent, soulful spirit of content.

With Conviction,

Ella Jenkins

Ella Jenkins

Ella Jenkins is nationally known as a "Rhythm Specialist" and singer of folk songs. She uses "primitive" gongs, rattles, drums, handclapping, finger-snapping, foot-stamping, chest-beating, thigh-slapping and other effective and interesting approaches to learning folk songs and chants of different countries and for exploring simple and complex rhythms. Her techniques have been highly successful in stimulating more children and adults to sing and want to sing for pure enjoyment.

Throughout the year she conducts teacher-training workshops around the country. The picture below was taken at a recent Education Conference held in Denver, Colorado (October 25-26, 1962) where Miss Jenkins was responsible for a three-hour session, "Teaching Music Values Through Rhythmic Response." Her program was designed for the class-room teacher as well as the music specialist.

Here are a few reactions to Miss Jenkins' workshops and performances:

Miss Ella Jenkins

October 6, 1959

Dear Ella:

Yours is a wonderful talent, which assumes tremendous stature under your personality. You know how you were received by the members of the National Recreation Congress. You know, too, the warmth of the attention and appreciation.

May I add my thanks to you for the fine impact you made and for the impetus and new approach (to many who saw and heard you) to the age old question of rhythm. Though there will be many failures, I'm sure everyone stirred by your personality and enthusiasm, will attempt to recreate in their home groups the spell which you cast. It was a wonderful experience for everyone.

May the giver of every good and perfect gift continue to smile upon you, and bless you.

Sincerely

Dr. Wm. Francis Bergmann, 
Supervisor of Music 
Chicago Park District

photo by Elmer A. Cronquist
Dear Miss Jenkins:

We want to thank you on behalf of the patients and American Red Cross staff of the U.S. Naval Hospital for sharing your talents with us.

The patients enjoyed your "Adventures In Rhythm" and are looking forward to your next visit. It was a sincere pleasure to escort you on the wards. You have a wonderful manner with the patients, so at ease and sensitive to their feelings. The patients who made up the rhythm section, as well as the other patients, have mentioned your program several times and are eager to try their talent with the "sticks" again.

You have a great deal to give to your audience and we are grateful to you for giving your time to the patients. We do hope that you can return in the near future.

Very truly yours,

Miss Bernadette A. Michie
Hospital Field Director

Miss Mildred B. Powell
Recreation Supervisor

February 20, 1960

December 15, 1959

Dear Miss Jenkins:

I have been asked to thank you for the very inspiring program that you presented to the Craft and Recreational Aide Association on Monday, February 8, 1960, sponsored by the Senior Centers of Metropolitan Chicago.

I'm sure you are aware that you held your audience spell-bound, not an easy task with a group of gregarious women. Many in the group now have a new perspective of the BEAT.

Very sincerely yours,

Yolanda Zamis
Member of The Craft and Recreational Aide Assn.

October 15, 1959

Dear Ella:

I wish to express my appreciation and admiration for the fine performance you gave at Washington State University. I think many in your audiences were unprepared for the type of participation program you offer, and I was particularly impressed with your skill in getting them to respond. This may not be so difficult with children, but I have never seen adults so beautifully handled. Everyone seemed to thoroughly enjoy taking part.

Your original numbers were fascinating as were your utilization of old favorites. From children to those advanced in age your program had appeal. I hope we may have the pleasure of having you on the campus again.

Sincerely,

Helen G. Smith, Chairman
Department of Physical Education for Women

October 14, 1959

Dear Ella:

While you are about half way through another busy week I wanted to let you know that we are still glowing here at WSU from our rich experience with you last week. Everyone involved has expressed great satisfaction in this truly different type of recreational singing and entertainment. I cannot say it better than Dr. T. H. Kennedy when he said last Saturday night in his talk "You have just seen real leadership" or in the words of Ruth Slonim "you are a fine teacher and the real joy is that we not only sing songs, but learn the cultural background that goes with it."

Ella, I hope you will include more and more the cultural background as you continue. People love it and that is what makes the thing you do so different from all the singers and song leaders I have known.

We appreciate so much the hard work you put in and the genuine friendliness and warmth you offered to all people.

As ever,

Jane A. Harris
Assistant Professor
Washington State University
Pullman, Washington

COLLABORATORS

- GINNI CLEMMENS -

Ginni Clemens is both teacher and student of the guitar (six-string and twelve string) and five-string banjo.

Her teaching experience includes having taught at the Old Town School of Folk Music in Chicago as well as having accumulated a good number of private students outside the school.

She returns to being a student of these instruments whenever the opportunity arises for her to learn new approaches, new techniques, etc.

In addition to being an excellent teacher, Ginni does a fine job as performer - appearing regularly in programs, concerts and clubs in the Chicago area as well as other cities.

She has an extensive and varied repertoire of songs a pleasant personality and her audiences warm up to her immediately.

Presently, Ginni is hostess on a weekly folk music radio show in Chicago - the program is called "The Meetin' House."

- SHIRLEY HERSH -

Shirley Hersh is a housewife and mother of three wonderful children. She and her family reside in a beautiful home in a fine suburban community adjacent to Chicago, however, Shirley spends a great deal of time in Chicago and other nearby suburbs where she teaches the guitar.

She is on the regular teaching staff of the Old Town School of Folk Music and also does numerous performances during the year for many different club groups. Oftentimes Shirley teams up with one or two other persons - enjoys harmonizing.

- HAROLD MURRAY -

Harold Murray is an experienced Flautist and a specialist in Latin American drums as well as other percussion instruments. Harold began his musical training at the Chicago Conservatory of Music, starting with the piano - prior to that time he studied all of the reed instruments and became a music major in Wilson Junior College where he studied the string bass and cello. He has played professionally for several years in musicals, concerts, clubs and theaters.
RHYTHMS OF CHILDHOOD OUTLINE

A. Rhythms In Nature

1. Songs About Trees
   (a) Pretty Trees Around The World
   (b) The Cedar Trees

2. (a) The Cuckoo
   (b) Wake Up, Little Sparrow

3. Songs About Water
   (a) Maid Of Japan
   (b) Row Row Row Your Boat
   (c) Michael Row Your Boat Ashore
   (d) Canoe Song

B. Rhythms In The Dance

1. Skip To My Lou
2. Red River Valley
3. Reel
4. Goodbye, Betsy Brown
5. All Will Be Dancing

C. Rhythms Of Far Away

1. African Impressions Part I
   (a) Ah-hee-lango
   (b) Uhuru
   (c) Eli-ay-monoquay
   (d) Elah Elah
   (e) Ceremonial Chant

2. African Impressions Part II
   (a) Kum-Ba-Ya
   (b) O Reign O
   (c) En-Komo-Zee-Gah-Ba-Ba

Unless otherwise indicated, all songs adapted and arranged by Ella Jenkins, © Sugarloaf Music Inc.

The Cedar Trees

Once I heard an Israeli tune called Im Barazim (the cedar trees). I forgot the melody completely but remembered the hebrew words meaning the cedar trees and decided to write a short story in song about these beautiful trees.

The Cedar Trees - they grow in numbers
The Cedar Trees - they grow so high
The Cedar Trees - they are such wonders
The Cedar Trees - they touch the sky

Im Barazim - they grow in numbers
Im Barazim - they grow so high
Im Barazim - they are such wonders
Im Barazim - they touch the sky

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Words and music by Ella Jenkins

The Cuckoo

I heard this song for the first time on a radio show hosted by me - my guest was a spirited young man with a guitar and kind of raw-sounding voice - Jim Kweskin. He had heard Rev. Gary Davis, the blind street singer sing it. The next time I heard it, was in concert by a banjo-playing man - Flemming Brown. Then I saw it on the pages of an Alan Lomax book - in fact I've been hearing it and seeing it for quite a spell and decided on singing the song myself altering it to suit my needs.

Cuckoo, cuckoo
You're a funny bird
Cuckoo,
When can you be heard?

O the cuckoo, she's a pretty bird
She sings as she flies
But she never hollers cuckoo
Til the fourth day of July

Gonna build me a castle
In the mountains so high
So I can see the cuckoo
As she goes flying by.....etc.

Copyright: Forster Music Publishers, Inc. (ASCP)
Words and music by Ella Jenkins

Vocals: Ella (solo), Ginni, Shirley
Guitars: Ginni, Shirley

The inspiration for this song came about after my having spent a beautiful two summer weeks in Bridgton, Maine at the Maine Folk Dance Camp (1962) which was surrounded by a host of pretty trees.

CHORUS:
There are many pretty trees all around the world
There are many pretty trees all around the world
Here's a pretty tree now.....

Call: It's an oak tree
Resp: It's an oak tree
Call: It's an oak tree
Resp: It's an oak tree
Call: It's an oak
Resp: It's an oak

Other Trees:
An elm tree
A birch tree
A pine tree
A palm tree
A eucalyptus tree
A cedar tree

Vocals: Ella, Ginni, Shirley - Guitars: Ginni, Shirley

Copyright: Forster Music Publishers, Inc. (ASCP)
Words and music by Ella Jenkins

Vocal: Ella
Harmonica: Ella
Guitar: Ginni
Wake Up, Little Sparrow

This is another one of my compositions - I wrote it for a dear friend - Bernadelle Richter - who is as gentle as a sparrow.

Wake up, wake up, little sparrow
Don't make your home out in the snow
Don't make your home out in the snow

Little bird, O don't you know
Your friends flew South, many months ago
Your friends flew South, many months ago

You're just a babe, you cannot fly
Your wings won't spread against the sky
Your wings won't spread against the sky

Hum chorus
Repeat first verse

Vocal: Ella Baritone
Uke: Ella Guitar: Shirley

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Words and music by Ella Jenkins

Maid of Japan

This song grew out of my childhood. I heard it sung many times while in the elementary grades, but never heard it since. I liked it so much that I just held on to it and now share it with another generation of children and adults. I took the liberty of making a few minor adaptations.

Far over the sea
In the land of tea
Where the cherry blossoms grow
Lives the quaintest child I know
There lives Jo San, maid of Japan
There lives Jo San, maid of Japan

I wish I could float
In a fairy boat
There in dreams I'd sometimes be
In that land beyond the sea
There with Jo San, Maid of Japan
There with Jo San, Maid of Japan

Vocal: Ella (solo), Ginni, Shirley
Guitars: Ginni (special Japanese affect), Shirley
Adaptations: arrangements: Ella, Ginni, Shirley

Row Row Row Your Boat

Vocal: Ella, Ginni, Shirley
Arrangements: Ella, Ginni, Shirley

Michael Row Your Boat Ashore

Michael row your boat ashore, hallelujah (chorus)
Michael row your boat ashore, hallelujah (chorus)

Jordan River deep and wide, hallelujah
Sugar and honey on the other side, hallelujah (chorus)

Jordan River chilly and cold, hallelujah
Chills the body but warms my soul, hallelujah (chorus)

Vocals: Ginni (solo), Shirley, Ella Banjo: Ginni Guitar: Shirley
Harmonica: Ella Arrangements: Ginni, Shirley

Canoe Song

I learned this song from a group of girl scouts at Camp Wind Mountin in Washington State. I added just a bit more rhythm to it. You can run across the song in almost any of the "Cooperative Song Service" community singing books.

My paddle's keen and bright
Flash with silver
Follow the wild goose flight
Dip, dip and swing

Dip, dip and swing her back
Flash with silver
Swift as the wild goose flies
Dip, dip and swing
Dip, dip and swing
Dip, dip and swing

Vocal: Ella Guitar: Shirley

Skip To My Lou

Skip skip skip to my Lou
Skip skip skip to my Lou
Skip to my Lou, my darling

Lost my partner, what'll I do?
Lost my partner, what'll I do?
Lost my partner, what'll I do?
Skip to my Lou, my darling

Vocal: Ella Guitar: Shirley

Row Row Row Your Boat

Vocal: Ella, Ginni, Shirley
Arrangements: Ella, Ginni, Shirley

Michael take your golden oar, hallelujah
Row us through the pearly door, hallelujah

(CHORUS)

Red wagon, painted blue
Red wagon, painted blue
Red wagon, painted blue
(CHORUS)

Had one dollar, wish I had two
Had one dollar, wish I had two
Had one dollar, wish I had two
Skip to my Lou, my darling

(CHORUS)

Vocals: Ella (lead), Ginni, Shirley
Banjo: Ginni, Guitar: Shirley, Harmonica: Ella

Red River Valley

Vocals and instrumentals: same as above.

Reel

Just an impression of the Virginia Reel...

Everybody up and bow
Back in place and you know how
Right hand round and back across
Left hand round and don't get los'
Both hands round and I'm the boss
Duce si doce out to your right
The other way round with all your might
Back in place and now you stand
Stamp your feet and clap your hands....
Now let's start all over....
Once more....

Vocal chant: Ella Banjo: Ella
Banjo arrangements: Ginni Clemmens
Rhythmic Reel Family Style: Ella Jenkins

Goodbye, Betsy Brown

Most of us know this song as Ol' Joe Clark -
we've taken the liberty of giving it a new name.

Well, I went down to Joe Clark's house
Invited me for supper
I stubbed my toe on the table leg
And stuck my nose in the butter

Fare thee well Old Joe Clark
Fare thee well I'm gone
Fare thee well Old Joe Clark
Goodbye Betsy Brown

Old Joe had a yellow calf
Would not sing or pray
So I stuck her head in a butter milk jar
And washed her sins away

Fare thee well Old Joe Clark
Fare thee well I'm gone
Fare thee well Old Joe Clark
Goodbye Betsy Brown

A friend - Kitch Childs - wrote these lovely little lyrics as well as the music. She said she created the song when she was about seven or eight years old. Kitch was delighted over my wanting to record her song.

Come to my party
Today, if you please
Roses and lillies
Will dance in the breeze
Bright yellow candles
Will bow to the blue
All will be dancing
And I'll dance with you (repeat last two lines)

Winter for dancing
With nice shiny floors
Summer is better
To dance out of doors
Birds will make music
In every green tree
All will be dancing
And you'll dance with me (repeat last two lines)

Vocals: Ella (solo), Ginni, Shirley Guitars: Ginni, Shirley

Words and Music by Kitch Childs
Guitar arrangements: Ginni, Shirley

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African Impressions Part I

These chants are more correctly titled Afro-Caribbean, rather than African as they are a combination of Spanish and English and some one of the dialects of Africa - according to the performer - Harold Murray.

Whether or not these chants are authentic is not important, as we have used them here solely to interpret the rhythmic aspect of African music.

Narration.... The music of Africa is rhythmic and melodic. Let's listen to some impressions of both types....

First we hear a chant, calling the people together:

Ah-hee-lango
Next, a freedom chant:

Uhuru

Then, a work chant:

Eli ay monoquay

Also, a play chant with an English translation:

Elah, elah

And the slower paced, ceremonial chant, etc....

Chanter - Drummer: Harold Murray
Narration: Ella Jenkins

African Impressions Part II

Kum Ba Ya - Ginni learned the Liberian dialect from a Liberian art student, at the time, studying at the Art Institute of Chicago.

Kum ba ya my Lord kum ba ya
Kum ba ya my Lord kum ba ya
Kum ba ya my Lord kum ba ya
O Lord kum ba ya

2. Someone's crying Lord
3. Someone's singing Lord
4. Someone's praying Lord
5. Come by here my Lord

O Reign O - I collected this song while attending a recreation leadership conference in Michigan. The person who shared the song with me had heard it from an American missionary who had brought it with her from Sierra Leone.

O reign O reign O reign O
Reign, Master Jesus reign
Reign salvation, in my soul
Reign, Master Jesus reign

I looked at my hands
And my hands looked new
Reign, Master Jesus reign
I looked at my feet
And my feet looked new
Reign, Master Jesus reign (repeat first verse)

Vocals: Ella (solo), Ginni, Shirley
Guitars: Ginni, Shirley

Additional Credits:

Cover Photo................. RAEBURN FLERLAGE
Booklet Photo............... MAURICE SEYMOUR
Recording Engineer........... STEWART BLACK of Hall Recordings of Chicago.

FINIS

Post Script:

It was really a grand musical experience working with Ginni, Shirley and Harold and we all enjoyed and heeded the enthusiasm and advice of our expert engineer, Stewart Black.

Ella Jenkins

Other Recordings By Ella Jenkins:

FC7056 Counting Games & Rhythm
FC7057 Rhythm & Game Songs
FC7308 Rhythms For Children
FC7652 This Is Rhythm
FC7653 Rhythms Of Childhood
FC7654 Negro Folk Rhythms
FC7655 Songs And Rhythm From Near And Far
FI8273 Adventures In Rhythm

For information on sheet music, write to:

Forster Music Publishers, Inc.
216 South Wabash Avenue
Chicago 4, Illinois

For information on Music Books of Ella Jenkins

OAK PUBLICATIONS
165 West 46th Street
New York, N.Y., 10036

En komo zee gah ba ba
En komo zee gah ba ba, etc. inflections vary

Vocals: Ginni, Shirley, Harold, Ella
Guitars: Ginni, Shirley

En komo zee gah ba ba - This little chant caught my fancy at a party in Lombard, Illinois where a few international students were present. A young man from South Africa - a Northwestern University student - led us in this simple chant and it has stayed with me.