



Barrel drum

Date

1900-1925 ca.

Description

This double-headed drum is used in Carnatic music and to accompany dancing. According to Hindu mythology, the mridangam (literally, "body of clay") is the invention of the god Brahma ("The Creator"). Jackwood body with two drumheads usually tuned in octaves. The right head is made of three layers: the siyahi (a mixture of rice, manganese dust, iron filings and other substances) forms the "black eye" in the center; the base layer of leather is traditionally made from monkey skin; and the rim, or kinnara, of bull hide. The right side is designated the female voice, while the left is the male. Traditionally, players sit cross-legged on a mat with the drum resting on its side (the smaller head at the player's right).

Dimensions

Overall length: 475 mm Maximum diameter: 265 mm