

# Apitua, Grello & Agogo



**PEAP100**  
Apitua

**PEGR100**  
Grello

**PEAG100**  
African Bell with holder

**PEO100**  
Agogo

**PEDG100**  
Double Bell

In African music one will find some instruments that are not so attractive at first sight. In most cases they play a special role in the ensemble, for example as the rhythmical backbone for the other musicians. Therefore it is quite important for them to be loud enough to drown out other instruments but at the same time to be not too loud that they dominate all. They give the beat and offer some interesting effects as well.

Apitua and Grello belong to that special category. The Apitua resembles a little boat that is bent at the ends. It is made from black iron and played with a metal stick. The holding hand encloses the body between the beats and so creates special effects. The Grello is a set of two metal pieces put onto the fingers and struck together. Both instruments sound metallicly dull but are effective in the ensemble.

The African double-bell Gonkogui, too, belongs the metrically precious percussion instruments. Most people call it Agogo, which rather describes the Brazilian type that is different from the former in form and use. However, it also originates in Africa. As the name says the Gonkogui consists of two bells welded together with a holding grip. They differ in size and height of tone. In the Djembe ensemble the double-bell is put on top of the bass drum; in that way the player can play on both instruments simultaneously. Usually it is struck with a wooden stick but in some cases also with a metal stick. The beat of the bell is called the guideline as it insures that the music gets going and the musicians find their orientation. The bells of the Brazilian Agogo can be pressed together as they are connected with a spring-like metal shackle, so it offers an additional click besides the normal beat.