

FUNGA ALAFIA

West Africa

The musical score for 'Funga Alafia' is presented in a multi-staff format. The top staff is a vocal line in 4/4 time, featuring a melody of eighth and quarter notes with the lyrics 'Funga a la-fia ashay ashay Funga a la-fia ashay ashay'. Below the vocal line are five instrumental staves, each with a unique icon to its left: a bell, a gong (labeled 'Agogo'), a maraca, a gourd, and a calabash. The instrumental parts consist of rhythmic patterns of eighth and quarter notes, providing a steady accompaniment to the vocal line. The entire score is enclosed in a double bar line at the end.

Funga Alafia is a greeting song sung throughout parts of West Africa. Some people attribute it to the Hausa people from Nigeria. Alafia is a Hausa greeting and Ashay means something equivalent to good health and peace be with you. The song is often sung with gestures, touching the head and extending the arms, then the lips, then the heart and showing empty sleeves. These gestures symbolize greeting people with your thoughts, with your words, with your heart and then assuring them that you have no tricks up your sleeve, that you have come in peace.