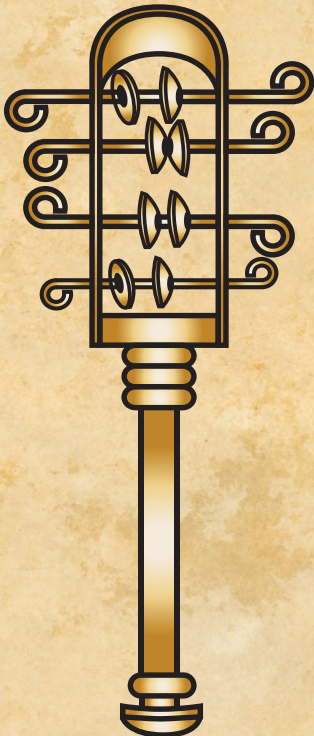# MAKE YOUR OWN

SISTRUM

From Recycled Materials

Sistrum:

sis•trum /'sistrem/

The sistrum is a hand-held percussion instrument that dates back to the days of ancient Egypt. If you look closely at hieroglyphics or books about Egyptian culture, you can see examples of this instrument being played by priestesses or the court musicians who entertained pharaohs and nobility. How can you make your own version? It's easy. First you need a few simple supplies.

Supplies:

- 1 wire coat hanger
- Electrical tape
- Two (unsharpened) pencils or small dowels
- Assorted buttons, jingle bells or metal washers
- A small amount of floral wire, jewelry wire, fishing twine or embroidery thread
- A wire-cutter

Instructions:

Start by straightening out the curved end of the coat hanger. This will form the handle to your sistrum. To make a strong handle that is easier to hold, place two unsharpened pencils or wooden dowels next to the wire and slowly wrap it with electrical tape. Start at the bottom and wrap to the top. At the end, wind the electrical tape around the base of the sistrum to secure the handle in place.

Next, use your wire cutters to cut the long side of your coat hanger in half: exactly in the middle; directly above the handle. Slowly and carefully bend each side down into the shape of your final instrument – somewhat like the letter "Y".

Use your electrical tape to fasten the two sides together on each side, leaving a space for two or three rows of bangles. Different colors of this type of tape can make the project even more decorative!

Now, thread different kinds of buttons, jingle bells or metal washers onto a small piece of floral wire or jewelry wire. You can also use fishing twine or embroidery thread, but wire is better at keeping the bangles in place. Tie or secure the wire in place on each side and try out your instrument. It should make a pleasing sound when "swooshed" from one side to another.

A clothes hanger sistrum adorned with various sizes of beads. It sounds great!

Enjoy!