

# Africa

Words and music by David Paich and Jeff Porcaro, arranged by Andy McKee



Search for video of Andy McKee playing "Africa" online at YouTube.com.



In spite of all the hairspray and spandex, the 1980s were full of great melodic tunes. Having been born just before the '80s began, I grew up listening to a lot bands from that era. One of my favorites was Toto, a sort of "supergroup" made up of former studio musicians. The band's 1982 release, *Toto IV*, won six Grammy awards and featured their number-one hit "Africa," which can still be heard on radio stations.

Fast forward to just a few years ago—I had been practicing some different rhythmic patterns on the guitar when I suddenly realized that I had just performed the tribal-sounding, syncopated drum beat at the beginning "Africa." I've always loved the song, and decided to try arranging it. Here's what I came up with.

For the polyrhythmic intro section, your right hand will be performing percussive strikes against the guitar using the base of your palm against the soundboard and your fingertips against the side of the guitar. Your left hand will be performing the keyboard part. Since your right hand will be busy handling the drum part, your left hand must tap, hammer-on, and pull-off all of its notes. The trick to getting these two rhythms simultaneously is to play the section slowly, paying attention to where the two rhythms line up and separate.

For the keyboard solo section (measures 35–43), I used a two-handed tapping approach, using my picking hand to tap the bass notes and my fretting hand for the notes of the solo. Also, I play the first seven notes of the solo an octave lower than the original tune, just for the sake of ease and tone. —ANDY MCKEE

Tuning: D G D G B D, Capo II

Intro

play four times

Verse

\* Slap soundboard and side of guitar with picking hand.

\*\* Tap notes with fretting hand.

(simile on repeat)

12

16

### Chorus

20

24

27

30

\* Slap soundboard and side of guitar with picking hand.

\*\* Tap notes with fretting hand.



