



# Traditional Music of the Lao: Kaen Playing and Mawlum Singing in Northeast Thailand (Contributions in Intercultural and Comparative Studies)

*By Terry Miller*



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This volume describes the traditional vocal and instrumental music of the Lao-speaking people living in Northeast Thailand. Beginning with a description of the cultural and historical contexts of this music, Miller continues with an overview of Northeast Thai music, its instruments, concepts, and certain proto-musical genres. Individual chapters deal separately with the non-technical aspects, including the history, texts, economics, and performance practices of both kaen playing and mawlum singing. Another chapter discusses all technical matters concerning the vocal genres, including the tonal nature of the Lao language, the relationship between melody and linguistic tone, scales, rhythm and meter, form, and tempo. The final two chapters deal specifically with the kaen--a bamboo mouth organ with 6, 14, 16, or 18 tubes, each with a free-reed. This volume is generously illustrated with musical examples transcribed from field recordings made in Northeast Thailand, numerous photographs, and line drawings. Miller concludes with a series of translations of texts from musical examples; an extensive glossary which includes two forms of romanization, the Thai spelling, and a brief description; and, finally, a bibliography, discography, and index.



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