

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Issued 15th February, 2021

(Extracted from *Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 1 of 2020*)²

Music is a form of art that uses sound organised in time. Music is also a form of entertainment that puts sounds together in a way that people like and find interesting to dance to.

Z - Hosho (Rattles; *Glosbe*)

The Hosho are Zimbabwean traditional musical instruments consisting of a pair of maranka (mapudzi) gourds with seeds. These gourds typically contain hota (*Canna indica*) seeds inside them, before seeds are added the gourd is boiled in salty water in order to harden it and the insides are scraped out. The Shona and Ndebele people have a variety of percussive instrument shakers (hosho) worn in the legs known as leg rattles.



A - Mbira Thumb Piano

Over hundreds of years, the musical instrument has been a staple in Zimbabwean Shona ceremonies and a critical symbol of the magic that each individual musician can bring to their respective communities with their playing.

Mbira is sometimes called the thumb piano because it is played with the thumbs and one finger. This musical instrument consists of a hundred sound band called the gwavira and a series of 22 to 28 thin metal keys, attached to a hard wood sound board called the gwavira usually placed inside a large gourd to amplify the sound.



The most important function of mbira is it acts as a telephone to the spirits, used to contact both the deceased ancestors and even more ancient tribal guardians during all night bira ormapira in plural. Mbira is still being used in ceremonial functions such as customary weddings, funerals, honouring of significant people as well as for religious purposes to call on the spirits and seek their advice.

E – Microphone

In order to speak or pass a message to a large group of people, a need arose to increase the volume of the human voice. Some of the first examples from the 15th century Greece were theatre masks with horn shaped mouth openings that usually acoustically amplified the voice of actors and performing singers in amphitheatres.



Serial types of microphones are used today which employ different methods to convert the air pressure variations of a sound wave to an electric signal. The most common are the dynamic microphone which uses a coil of wire suspended in a magnetic field, the condenser microphone which uses the vibrating drop hum as capacitor plate and contact microphone which uses a crystal material.

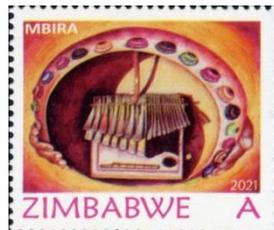
R - Guitar (*Chiridzwa; Masinga*)



The Guitar is classified under the category of chordophone, where by the sound is produced by way of a string stretched between two fixed points, vibrating when plucked. Guitars are traditionally constructed from wood and strung with either gut, nylon or steel strings and distinguished from other chordophones by its construction and tuning.

Guitars are in three main categories namely acoustic, electric and bass guitar, however, there are some important variations within those groups that some people classify as different types of guitars entirely.

The Stamps



(Reduced to 50% of size)

Catalogue Listings

SG	ZSC ¹	Value	Description
1462	855	Z	Hosho (Rattles)
1463	856	A	Mbira (Thumb piano)
1464	857	E	Microphone
1465	858	R	Guitar
MS1466	MS43		Imperforate miniature sheet with set in se-tenant block

Technical details

Stamp size:	Sheet stamps: 35 x 30 mm Miniature sheet 106 x 106 mm
Sheet Size:	50 stamps (10 rows of 5 stamps), two panes per printed sheet
Artist:	Fredy Tembo
Paper:	ZSC paper type J: paper described by Zimpost as “Chancellor Litho PVA Gummed Postage Stamp Paper”. This paper is produced by Tullis Russell Coaters of Glenrothes, Fife, Scotland. Under UV there is no fluorescence either front or back, the stamp appears to be very dark
Print colours:	Cyan, magenta, yellow & black
Perforations:	SG 14½ x 14; ZSC 14¼ x 14 Top margin: Perforated through Other margins: Imperforate
Printer:	NatPrint, Harare, Zimbabwe
Origination:	Fredwill Designs (Pvt) Ltd
Printer’s Imprint:	Sheet stamps only - Bottom margin, below Row 10 Column 3. Imprint printed in black
Cylinder numbers:	Sheet stamps only - Top margin above R1/1. Colours from left – cyan, magenta, yellow, black
Colour register:	Sheet stamps only - Type TL 4– round boxed – left margin opposite R1/1. Colours reading down – cyan, magenta, yellow, black
Sheet Value:	Sheet stamps only - Top margin, above R1/5, printed in black

Sheet Number: Sheet stamps only - Type SN 7 with printed 'ZIMPOST' prefix, in red ink, right margin opposite R1/5 reading down

Bar codes: Sheet stamps only - Opposite R10/5, printed in black, numbers:
 Z 2 009113 009007
 A 2 009113 009014
 E 2 009113 009021
 R 2 009113 009038

Print numbers:

Z	50,000	A	20,000
E	20,000	R	20,000
Miniature sheet	1,000		

Issue date: 15th February, 2021

Postal Rates

Postal rates changed on the 10th September 2020 and were, once again quoted in both US dollars and Zimbabwe dollars.

Postal rates applicable as at date of issue –

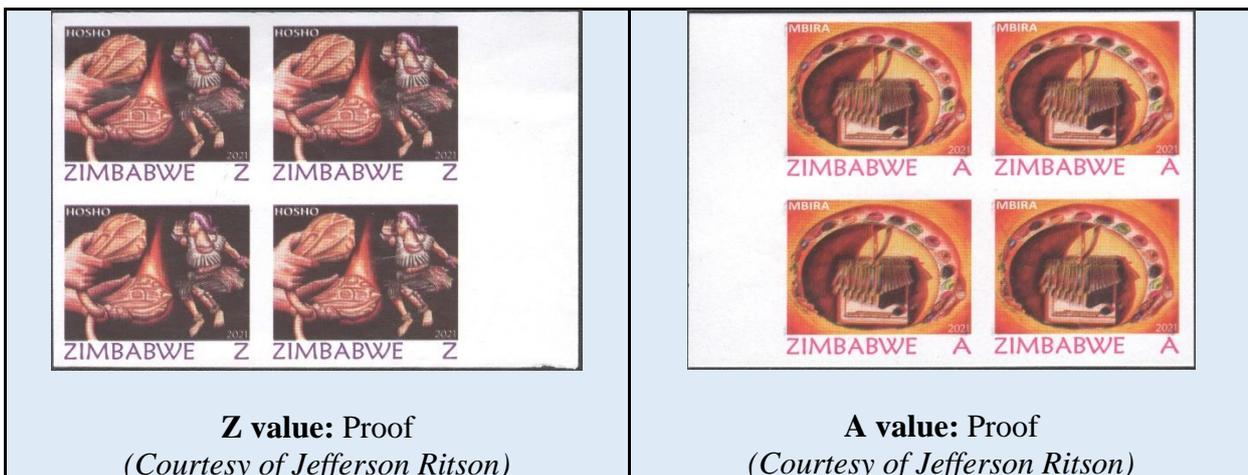
Z = US\$0.40 ZW\$35.00; A = US\$2.00 ZW\$167.00;
 E = US\$2.80 ZW\$244.00; R = US\$3.60 ZW\$300.00

Listed varieties

No listed varieties have been reported.

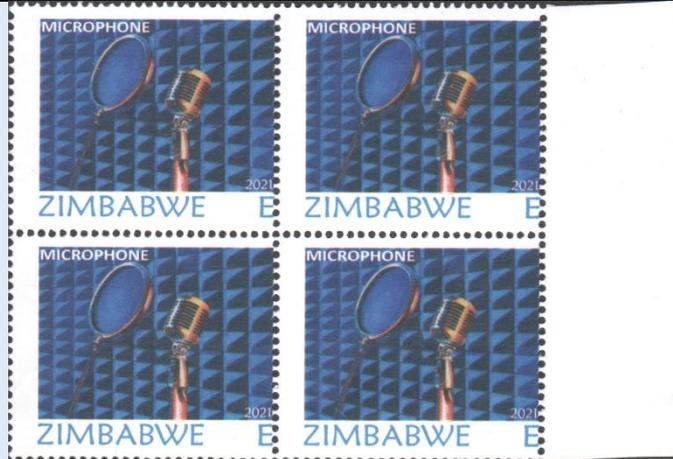
Unlisted Varieties

There are numerous small dots and specks in the printing of these stamps, particularly in the backgrounds which are more noticeable with the solid colours.

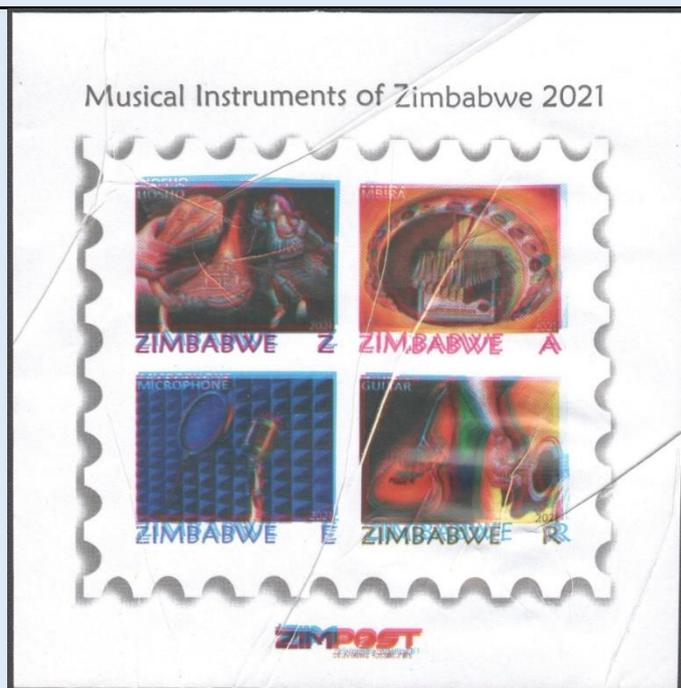




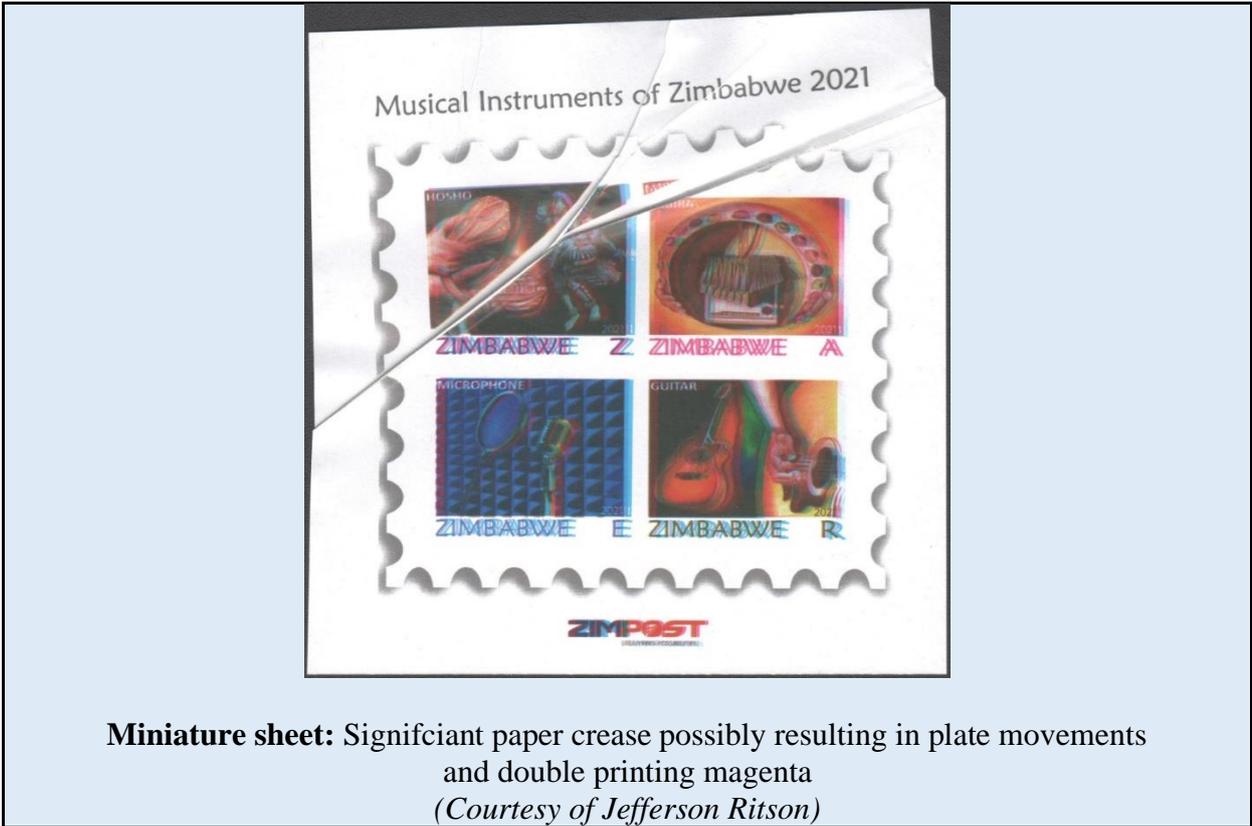
A value: Shift of perforations to the left
(Courtesy of Jefferson Ritson)



E value: Shift of perforations to the left, just touching the design
(Courtesy of Jefferson Ritson)



Miniature sheet: Multiple paper creases, possibly resulting in plate movements and double printing magenta
(Courtesy of Jefferson Ritson)



First Day Cover

Zimpost produced a First Day Cover, which was postmarked by the Philatelic Bureau with a postmark reading “First Day of Issue/Harare”.



ZW174MS (Zimpost)



220 x 110 mm

Bibliography:

1. "The Zimbabwean Concise Postage Stamp Catalogue", published by Harare Stamp Company, edited by Ken Allanson, Mike Amos and Geoff Brakspear. The catalogue continues to be updated and expanded by Geoff Brakspear, and is now published on the Rhodesian Study Circle website.
2. Zimbabwe Post, Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 1 of 2021