

Lyra (Lie-ruh) - The Lyre

Hermes, the Messenger God, invented the Lyre. Hermes happened upon an empty tortoise shell, and turning the shell around in his hands, he idly thumped it. The resonant echoes of the shell gave him the idea of tying strings across the shell. He found the strings made beautiful sounds, and so the Lyre was created.

Hermes gave the Lyre to the god Apollo. Apollo passed the Lyre on to his son, Orpheus, who sailed with Jason and the Argonauts. He was the most accomplished musician of the age. The music of Orpheus could charm people, even angry people and wild beasts. Orpheus with his Lyre could charm even rocks and streams. After a mob killed Orpheus, they took his Lyre and threw it in a river. Zeus sent a vulture to retrieve the Lyre, which he set into the stars.

