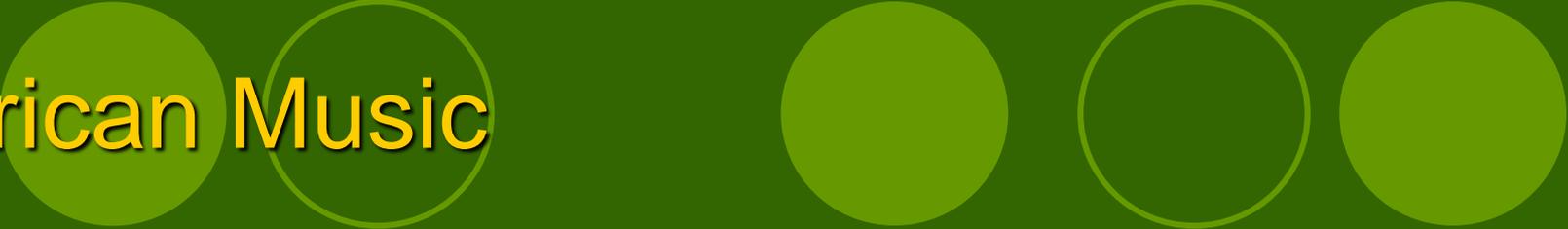


African Music



African Music



- The influence of black African music is widespread, not only within communities of African heritage but across the world, having been brought to the Caribbean and the Americas by the slave trade.

Drums



- African drums come in a variety of shapes and sizes.
- The bodies are usually made from wood, gourds, and clay; drum heads are made from animal skins.
- Some examples: Djembe drum, Talking drum, Sakara Drum and the Doumbek Drum.

Djembe

- The *djembe* drum has been called "the healing drum".
- It dates back to the 12th century Mali Empire of West Africa.
- It has a very wide tonal range setting it apart from other drums.



Sakara

- The *sakara* is a hand-held drum made in Nigeria, West Africa.
- It comes in a family of four sizes, from tiny (*Atele*) to large (*Iya-Alu*).
- It has goatskin stretched over a rim of red clay and is played with a light stick.
- These drums are played all over the world in a variety of ways.



Talking Drum

- *Talking drums* belong to the family of hourglass shaped pressure drums.
- The *gan gan* is the smallest, the *dun dun* is the largest.
- They have a drum head at both ends.



Doumbek Drum

- The *doumbek* drum comes from the middle east, originally played in Egypt, Turkey and Armenia.
- The drum is played with the fingers. *Dum* is the bass tone played with your right hand in the middle of the drum. *Tek* is a high ringing sound played with your right hand. *Ka* is the same sound as tek, but played with your left hand.



Percussion - Gonkogui

- The *gonkogui* is a traditional double bell which is held in the hand whilst being struck with a stick.
- It has one high and one low tone.



Shekere

- The *shekere* also has seeds loosely covering a hollowed gourd.
- It is played by striking it on their hand, then on their leg, in various patterns.
- The top of the ball can be hit to create a deeper tone.



Toke

- The *toke* or *banana bell* is played by striking it with a metal rod whilst it is lied across the palm of the hand.
- It can also be hung on the side of drums.
- A pair of these bells, tuned a fourth apart, usually play together.



Strings - Kora

- The *kora* is a 21-string harp-lute, which includes both plucked and sympathetic strings.
- It is used by professional musicians among the Mandinka people of Gambia.



Other Instruments

- African wind instruments include flutes, whistles, oboes and trumpets.
- The flutes were made from bamboo, reed, wood, clay, bones and other materials found in the sub-Saharan region.
- Trumpets, often associated with royalty, were made from animal horns or wood.
- Clarinets, from the Savannah region of West Africa are made from guinea-corn or sorghum stems, with a reed cut from the surface of the stem at one end. Double-reed instruments, such as the hasua algaita, are derived from North Africa.



Musical Regions of Africa

- North Africa
- This includes all the countries north of the Sahara. The main type of music here is Islamic, which uses drums such as the dombek and string instruments such as the ud. Voices often use ornaments and melismas (lots of notes to one syllable).
- Tribal Africa
- This includes the sub-Saharan countries of Africa such as Senegal, Ghana, Central African Republic, Congo. Music here uses the djembe drum and the kora, with much call-and-response singing. The music often has ostinato patterns, in the rhythm or the instrumental or vocal parts.

Music in African Society

- Music pervades all aspects of life.
- It is not only used for entertainment, but also accompanies day-to-day activities and affairs.
- It is important in religious ritual and provides a link between daily life and culture.
- There are trained musicians called greots who possess special knowledge.

African Drumming

- African drumming is not written down in any form.
- When several instruments are combined generally various rhythms on the different instruments are overlaid to create a **polyrhythmic texture**.

Vocal Music

- Songs are used for all aspects of African life.
- Counting songs, punishment songs and work songs are commonly sung.
- A common characteristic of many songs is that they are in call and response patterning.
- Much African music is sung a capella – without instrumental accompaniment.

Pentatonic Scales



- Much African music utilises pentatonic scales – a five note scale.