

# What is your favorite music of the world

[Art & Culture](#), [Artists](#)



After exploring the cyber journeys for this module, what is your favorite music of the world? Explain why. After listening to different types of music reflecting different cultures and nationalities, any student of the arts will be impressed by how dances are a microcosm of the ethnic group's communal values. Arguably the most vibrant type of dance and music that may be encountered in these cyber journeys is that of the African continent. Africa is large, imposing and omnipresent (Rockwell, 1981), not just because of its size and the harshness of its territory (Africa is four times the size of the United States), but because it is the birthplace of all humanity, and that in itself makes the continent appear larger than life. African music and dance reflect this primeval and embryonic attribute, throbbing with the primal beat of indigenous drums and instruments, accompanied by communal rhythmic stomping and gyration. The performing arts play a vital role as common language in a land mass populated by more than 2, 000 tribes that speak anywhere between 800 and 2, 400 dialects and languages (Rockwell, 1981). More than provide a means by which different tribes commune, the earthy candor and unapologetic directness of African music and dance make them both somber and inspiring. Nelson Mandela aptly said, ' The curious beauty of African music is that it uplifts even as it tells a sad tale. You may be poor, you may have only a ramshackle house, you may have lost your job, but that song gives you hope...' (Lincoln, 2010). One is drawn to contemplate on the ' negro spirituals' that may use language different from native African music, but which convey the same message of hope in the face of adversity. While much of Western music and dance are studied, intellectual, and technically refined, African music and dance have remind close to the heart and soul.

Their raw influence, from the cross-rhythms of Arthur Morris Jones which combined native African and contemporary rhythms, have today remained evident, and relevant, to the modern tumultuous times (Agordoh, 2005).

References: Agordoh, A A (2005) African Music: Traditional and Contemporary. New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc. Lincoln, M (Dec. 3, 2010) ' The Powerful Influence of African Culture on Modern Music.' Jam Play. Available at <http://www.jamplay.com/articles/1-general/161-the-powerful-influence-of-african-culture-on-modern-music> Rockwell, J (March 1, 1981) ' The African Influence on Pop and Jazz Musicians,' The New York Times.

Available at <http://www.nytimes.com/1981/03/01/arts/the-african-influence-on-pop-and-jazz-musicians.html> Video South Pacific – Bali Hai <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81NROmUb7o0>

In my cyber journey video hunt, I chanced upon a lot of different types of music from over Oceania, but among the selections provided for this lesson I noticed the excerpt from the movie version of the Broadway musical, South Pacific. The story line is set in an island (called Bali Hai, in the middle of the Pacific during the Second World War. The location happens to be an American base from which military naval forces are launched, and the story revolves around the interaction of American fighting men with the natives of the island. While the relationships explored are romantic in nature, the song ' Bali Ha'i' highlights the mysticism and exotic allure the Pacific islands holds for Westerners. In all honesty, the movie (which was filmed in 1957, drawing from a 1948 stage musical), was very much Hollywood stylized, and propagated its share of misconceptions about the South Pacific peoples it purports to depict. However, the movie should be forgiven its shortcomings, because after all the dramatic arts of

the period worked under many restrictions that tended to depart from reality, at least in the manner we are accustomed to now. The musical was written by the brilliant team of Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II while the book was by Hammerstein and Joshua Logan. Born by the talent of its director, writers, cast and crew and buoyed by the strong patriotic sentiment of the post-war era, the film nevertheless was able to touch on the issue of racial prejudice and the tragedies of war, even as it entertains and injects nuggets of humour and romance. What we can take from the play is the insight it provides into how Westerners perceive the culture of Oceania, and the awe and attraction they reserve for the culture in this part of the world. It would be great to see how this movie/ musical could be updated.

Response to the Reply It is refreshing that Natasha's exuberance for Chinese music is so evident in the post, and rightly so. Music should not only be cerebral, it should be able move the emotions and inspire the will to action. Studying the arts must essentially change the student so that he/she does not remain a spectator but actually participates in art form. Natasha's story about the little Chinese music box is heartwarming and intimate, providing an insight into the art by describing its power over its audience. Natasha has it right by saying that the fighting scene is much like a dance. That is the balance and duality of Chinese philosophy, the yin and the yang, the crisis and the opportunity - the dance steps in the fighting sequence. It describes exactly the paradox in Asian art in philosophy.