



**JUBILANT SONG: AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN  
JOURNEY**

GETTING READY

We are looking forward to you and your class joining us on concert day. To increase your students' enjoyment of this program and to enhance their learning experience, please use the student page included in this packet.

Right away:

- ♪ Duplicate student page.
- ♪ Review the bold-faced vocabulary on the student page to add to your spelling or vocabulary list over the next weeks.

Pre-concert activities:

- ♪ Read and discuss the Student Page as a class.
- ♪ Ask students and your classroom music teacher to bring instruments to class.  
Students can:
  - ♪ name parts of the instruments and find similarities and differences;
  - ♪ produce tones and watch and feel the vibrations and resonance;
  - ♪ make a chart of instruments and their countries of origin by category: string, wind, or percussion.

Before and after the concert:

- ♪ Write an essay comparing two or more types of music and how they are different.

Related Standards:

Reading – analysis of informational text  
Social Studies – chronological and spatial thinking  
Music – historical, cultural dimensions  
Writing – compare and contrast  
History – study of other cultures

CONCERT INSTRUCTIONS

Before you leave for the concert:

- ♪ Restroom facilities are limited. Any student leaving his seat must be accompanied by a chaperone. Plan accordingly.
- ♪ Food, gum, cell phones, and electronic devices must be left behind. *No water bottles.*
- ♪ Review concert manners as listed below.  
**DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS IS THE  
TEACHER'S RESPONSIBILITY.**

At Calvary Church:

- ♪ Do not leave the bus until instructed to do so by the Philharmonic ushers.
- ♪ When leaving the bus, keep students in a **SINGLE FILE WITH A TEACHER LEADING.**
- ♪ When entering the seating area, please be sure that teachers and chaperones are interspersed among the students.

Concert manners:

- ♪ Talking or whispering during the performance is not acceptable.
- ♪ Applause is the best way to show appreciation for the performers.
- ♪ Show respect for the performers, the concert hall, and your neighbors.

After the concert, students can:

- ♪ Write a letter to the Philharmonic Society about their concert experience. (*Writing Standard 1.1*)

Philharmonic Society Youth Programs performances and activities are carefully composed to incorporate the five components of the California Visual and Performing Arts Framework for arts education: artistic perception, creative expression, historical/cultural context, aesthetic valuing; connections, relationships, applications.

# **JUBILANT SONG: AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN JOURNEY**



## STUDENT PAGE

You will soon come to a concert where you will learn about how the music of the African people brought to America as slaves has changed the course of music development in the United States.

### I. THE EFFECT OF AFRICAN CULTURE ON AMERICAN MUSIC

When thousands of African people were brought to America against their will and forced to work for no money and were bought and sold like property, this is what is called slavery. These people were not allowed to bring anything with them from home, but they did have their arts and culture. African music has had a very large effect on the development of music in America. Today you will hear about the beginning of this music and about the influence of African music even today. From work songs to rap, the roots of our popular music are found here.

### II. IDEAS FOR DISCUSSION:

How could you make your own instruments? What kind of instruments would those be?

### III. USING THE WEB:

Research different music styles, such as jazz, gospel and ragtime.

Find pictures of African instruments, such as the banjar, the kora and the kalimba.

# JUBILANT SONG: AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN JOURNEY



FOR TEACHER USE

## VOCABULARY

**Call and response:** – a song form where the leader sings or “calls” a musical phrase, and the other singers “respond” with a musical phrase.

**ensemble** – a group of several performers.

**Gospel music** – a form of song that developed from the work/field songs of slave workers which often had a religious theme.

**harmony** – two or more different tones produced at the same time; normally used to support the melody.

**melody** – a succession of notes or tones with a recognizable musical shape; melody can be used alone or together with harmony. The melody is sometimes called the tune.

**percussion** – a musical instrument which is struck, scraped, or shaken to produce a tone, as a tambourine or drum or rattle.

**quartet** – an ensemble, or group, of four musicians.

**resonance** – the sympathetic vibration of an object near another vibrating object. For example, when a drum head is struck, it causes all parts of the drum to vibrate, sending waves that reach our ears as resonating sound.

**rhythm** – a regular pattern formed by a series of sounds of alternating lengths and silences.

**sound wave** – a longitudinal pressure wave that produces an audible sensation.

**string** – a musical instrument which has strings to produce initial vibration and consequent musical tone, such as a violin or lyre.

**texture** – combination of timbres (tone colors), such as the sound produced by two different instruments being played together.

**timbre** – the tone color of a particular instrument or voice.

**waveform** – the shape of a wave, which determines the timbre of the instrument.

**wind** – a musical instrument for which air initiates the vibration to produce a tone, such as a flute, ocarina, or recorder.

# The Musicians of JUBILANT SONG

## Denean Dyson



Holding a BA in Music from CSU Fullerton, Denean Dyson is a free-spirited mezzo-soprano with a passion for music. Classically trained yet accomplished in many genres, her vocal capabilities in R&B, Soul, and Jazz have allowed her the privilege of sharing a stage with many well-known artists such as singer/actress Reba McEntire and jazz legend Barbara Morrison. She is often a featured soloist in performances and recordings, most recently featured as Nellie in excerpts from *South Pacific* this summer with the Pacific Symphony, and was featured in the premiere performance and record release of Jake Heggie's choral opera *The Radio Hour*, now on Delos Records. As a budding classical soloist, Denean has performed the mezzo-soprano solos in Handel's *Messiah* and Duruflé's *Requiem*, and continues to build her classical repertoire locally in both the solo recital and ensemble settings. Denean is honored to perform locally with several choral ensembles, including The Pacific Chorale, The John Alexander Singers, The Long Beach Camerata Singers, and has sung for gifted conductors such as John Williams, Gustavo Dudamel, John Alexander, Robert Istad, Carl St.Clair, Keith Lockhart, David Newman, Bramwell Tovey and Ludwig Wicki.

## Eulis Kay

Born in Los Angeles, California, Eulis Kay has been involved with music since age 10. First it was the clarinet, which sent him on a journey of discovery through many different styles and genres from classical to jazz, klezmer to fusion. After majoring in instrumental music at CSULA, Eulis got the urge for singing and began to focus on vocal performance in 2003. This opened up a whole new world of performance opportunities, including operas (*The Medium, Hansel und Gretel*), musicals (*Little Shop of Horrors, The Fantasticks*), choral groups (Five of Five a cappella, The Pacific Chorale) and stage shows (Disneyland Resort, Tokyo Disney Sea). Today Eulis resides in Orange County and spends his work and play time performing, teaching, writing, and arranging.



## Ricardo V. McKillips Jr.

Bass/baritone Ricky McKillips graduated in 2009 from California State University Fullerton with a BM in Vocal Performance. He has played numerous roles, including *Bartolo* from *Le Nozze Di Figaro*, *The Grand Inquisitor of Spain* and *Pooh-Bah* from Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Gondoliers* and *Mikado*. He also performs regularly with Pacific Chorale and the John Alexander Singers, and serves as the bass section leader at the First Presbyterian Church of Orange. During the holiday season, he can also be seen caroling for the Charles Dickens Carolers all over the Orange County and LA areas.



## **African-American Music in the United States**

The African-American music tradition comprises many different genres and forms, including spirituals, work songs, blues, gospel music, jazz, and popular music. Each genre includes a complex of subdivisions and is associated with a specific cultural function, social context, and historical period. Despite these distinguishing factors, the various genres exist as part of a musical continuum of African origin. The secular and sacred forms share musical features, demonstrating that the two spheres are complementary.

The web of African-American musical genres is a product of interactions between people of African descent and various environmental forces in North America. The African-American music tradition documents the ways African-Americans reconciled their dual national identity and forged a meaningful life in a foreign environment, first as slaves and later as second-class citizens.

## **African Culture in America**

When Africans arrived as slaves in America, they brought a culture endowed with many traditions foreign to their European captors. Their rituals for worshiping African gods and celebrating ancestors, death, and holidays, for example, displayed features uncommon to Western culture. Most noticeable among African practices was the prominent tie of music and movement. The description of a ritual for a dying woman, recorded by the daughter of a Virginia planter in her *Plantation Reminiscence* (n.d.), illustrates the centrality of these cultural expressions and the preservation of African traditions in slave culture:

*Several days before her death... [h]er room was crowded with Negroes who had come to perform their religious rites around the death bed. Joining hands they performed a savage dance, shouting wildly around her bed. Although [Aunt Fanny was] an intelligent woman, she seemed to cling to the superstitions of her race.*

*After the savage dance and rites were over...I went, and said to her: "...we are afraid the noise [singing] and dancing have made you worse."*

*Speaking feebly, she replied: "Honey, that kind of religion suits us black folks better than your kind. What suits Mars Charles' mind, don't suit mine." (Epstein 1977, p. 130)*

Slaveholders and missionaries assumed that exposure to Euro-American cultural traditions would encourage slaves to abandon their African way of life. For some slaves, particularly those who were in constant contact with whites through work and leisure activities, such was the case. The majority of slaves, however, systematically resisted cultural imprisonment by reinterpreting European traditions through an African lens. A description of the slaves' celebration of Pinkster Day, a holiday of Dutch origin, illustrates how the event was transformed into an African-style festival characterized by dancing, drumming, and singing. Dr. James Eights, an observer of this celebration in the late 1700s, noted that:

*The principal instrument accompanying the dancing was an eel-pot drum. This kettle-shaped drum consisted of a wide, single head covered with sheepskin. Over the rhythms the drummer repeated "hi-a-bomba, bomba, bomba."*

*These vocal sounds were readily taken up and as oft repeated by the female portion of the spectators not otherwise engaged in the exercises of the scene, accompanied by the beating of time with their ungloved hands, in strict accordance with the eel-pot melody.*

*Merrily now the dance moved on, and briskly twirled the lads and lasses over the well trampled green sward; loud and more quickly swelled the sounds of music to the ear, as the excited movements increased in energy and action. (Eights [1867], reprinted in Southern 1983, pp. 45–46)*

The physical detachment of African-Americans from Africa and the widespread disappearance of many original African musical artifacts did not prevent Africans and their descendants from creating, interpreting, and experiencing music from an African perspective. Relegated to the status of slaves in America, Africans

continued to perform songs of the past. They also created new musical forms and reinterpreted those of European cultures using the vocabulary, idiom, and aesthetic principles of African traditions. The earliest indigenous musical form created within the American context was known as the *Negro spiritual*.

## The Evolution of Negro Spirituals

The original form of the Negro spiritual emerged at the turn of the nineteenth century. Later known as the *folk spiritual*, it was a form of expression that arose within a religious context and through black people's resistance to cultural subjugation by the larger society. When missionaries introduced blacks to Christianity in a systematic fashion (c. 1740s), slaves brought relevance to the instruction by reinterpreting Protestant ideals through an African prism. Negro spirituals, therefore, symbolize a unique religious expression, a black cultural identity and worldview that are illustrated in the religious and secular meanings that spirituals often held—a feature often referred to as *double entendre*.

Many texts found in Negro spirituals compare the slave's worldly oppression to the persecution and suffering of Jesus Christ. Others protest their bondage, as in the familiar lines "Befor' I'd be a slave, I'd be buried in my grave, and go home to my Lord and be free." A large body of spiritual texts is laced with coded language that can be interpreted accurately only through an evaluation of the performance context. For example, a spiritual such as the one cited below could have been sung by slaves to organize clandestine meetings and plan escapes:

If you want to find Jesus, go in the wilderness, Mournin' brudder,

You want to find Jesus, go into the wilderness,

I wait upon de Lord, I wait upon de Lord,

I wait upon de Lord, my God, Who take away de sin of de world.

The text of this song provided instructions for slaves to escape from bondage: "Jesus" was the word for "freedom"; "wilderness" identified the meeting place; "de Lord" referred to the person who would lead slaves through the Underground Railroad or a secret route into the North (the land of freedom). This and other coded texts were incomprehensible to missionaries, planters, and other whites, who interpreted them as "meaningless and disjointed affirmations."

The folk spiritual tradition draws from two basic sources: African-derived songs and the Protestant repertory of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Missionaries introduced blacks to Protestant traditions through Christian instruction, anticipating that these songs would replace those of African origin, which they referred to as "extravagant and nonsensical chants, and catches" (Epstein 1977, pp. 61–98). When slaves and free blacks worshiped with whites, they were expected to adhere to prescribed Euro-American norms. Therefore, blacks did not develop a distinct body of religious music until they gained religious autonomy.

When blacks were permitted to lead their own religious services, many transformed the worship into an African-inspired ritual of which singing was an integral part. The Reverend Robert Mallard described the character of this ritual, which he observed in Chattanooga, Tennessee, in 1859:

*I stood at the door and looked in—and such confusion of sights and sounds! ...Some were standing, others sitting, others moving from one seat to another, several exhorting along the aisles. The whole congregation kept up one monotonous strain, interrupted by various sounds: groans and screams and clapping of hands. One woman especially under the influence of the excitement went across the church in a quick succession of leaps: now [on] her knees ... then up again; now with her arms about some brother or sister, and again tossing them wildly in the air and clapping her hands together and accompanying the whole by a series of short, sharp shrieks. (Myers 1972, pp. 482–483)*

During these rituals slaves not only sang their own African-derived songs but reinterpreted European psalms and hymns as well. An English musician, whose tour of the United States from 1833 to 1841 included a visit to a black church in Vicksburg, Virginia, described how slaves altered the original character of a psalm: When the minister gave out his own version of the Psalm, the choir commenced singing so rapidly that the original tune absolutely ceased to exist—in fact, the fine old psalm tune became thoroughly transformed into a kind of negro melody; and so sudden was the transformation, by accelerating the time. (Russell 1895, pp. 84–85)

In 1853 the landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted encountered a similar situation, witnessing a hymn change into a “confused wild kind of chant” (Olmsted 1904). The original tunes became unrecognizable because blacks altered the structure, melody, rhythm, and tempo in accordance with African aesthetic principles. The clergy objected not only to such altered renditions of Protestant songs but also to songs created independently. John Watson, a white Methodist minister, referred to the latter as “short scraps of disjointed affirmations, pledges or prayers, lengthened out with long repetitive choruses.” The rhythmic bodily movements that accompanied the singing caused even more concern among the clergy:

With every word so sung, they have a sinking of one or other leg of the body alternately, producing an audible sound of the feet at every step.... If some in the meantime sit, they strike the sounds alternately on each thigh. What in the name of religion, can countenance or tolerate such gross perversions of true religion! (Watson [1819] in Southern 1983, p. 63)

As they had long done in African traditions, audible physical gestures provided the rhythmic foundation for singing.

The slaves’ interpretation of standard Christian doctrine and musical practice demonstrated their refusal to abandon their cultural values for those of their masters and the missionaries. Undergirding the slaves’ independent worship services were African values that emphasized group participation and free expression. These principles govern the features of the folk spiritual tradition: (1) communal composition; (2) call-response; (3) repetitive choruses; (4) improvised melodies and texts; (5) extensive melodic ornamentation (slurs, bends, shouts, moans, groans, cries); (6) heterophonic (individually varied) group singing; (7) complex rhythmic structures; and (8) the integration of song and bodily movement.

The call-response structure promotes both individual expression and group participation. The soloist, who presents the call, is free to improvise on the melody and text; the congregation provides a fixed response. Repetitive chorus lines also encourage group participation. Melodic ornamentation enables singers to embellish and thus intensify performances. Clapped and stamped rhythmic patterns create layered metrical structures as a foundation for gestures and dance movements.

Folk spirituals were also commonplace among many free blacks who attended independent African-American churches in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These blacks expressed their racial pride by consciously rejecting control and cultural domination by the affiliated white church. Richard Allen, founder of Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in Philadelphia in 1794, was the first African-American minister of an independent black church to alter the cultural style of Protestant worship so that it would have greater appeal for his black congregation.

Recognizing the importance of music, Allen chose to compile his own hymnal rather than use the standard one for Methodist worship (which contained no music). The second edition of this hymnal, *A Collection of Spiritual Songs and Hymns Selected from Various Authors, by Richard Allen, Minister of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (1801), contains some of Allen’s original song texts, as well as other hymns favored by his congregation. To some of these hymns Allen added refrain lines and choruses to the typical stanza or verse form to ensure full congregational participation in the singing. Allen’s congregation performed these songs in the style of folk spirituals, which generated much criticism from white Methodist ministers. Despite such objections, other AME churches adopted the musical practices established at Bethel.

In the 1840s, Daniel A. Payne, an AME minister who later became a bishop, campaigned to change the church’s folk-style character. A former Presbyterian pastor educated in a white Lutheran seminary, Payne subscribed to the Euro-American view of the “right, fit, and proper way of serving God” (Payne [1888] in Southern 1983, p. 69). Therefore, he restructured the AME service to conform to the doctrines, literature, and musical practices of white elite churches. Payne introduced Western choral literature performed by a trained choir and instrumental music played by an organist. These forms replaced the congregational singing of folk spirituals, which Payne labeled “cornfield ditties.” While some independent urban black churches adopted Payne’s initiatives, discontented members left to join other churches or establish their own. However, the majority of the AME

churches, especially those in the South, denounced Payne's "improvements" and continued their folk-style worship.

Payne and his black counterparts affiliated with other AME and with Episcopalian, Lutheran, and Presbyterian churches, represented an emerging black educated elite that demonstrated little if any tolerance for religious practices contrary to Euro-American Christian ideals of "reverence" and "refinement." Their training in white seminaries shaped their perspective on an "appropriate" style of worship. In the Protestant Episcopal Church, for example, a southern white member noted that these black leaders "were accustomed to use no other worship than the regular course prescribed in the *Book of Common Prayer*, for the day. Hymns, or Psalms out of the same book were sung, and printed sermon read. . . . No extemporary address, exhortation, or prayer, was permitted, or used" (Epstein 1977, p. 196). Seminary-trained black ministers rejected traditional practices of black folk churches because they did not conform to aesthetic principles associated with written traditions. Sermons read from the written script, musical performances that strictly adhered to the printed score, and the notion of reserved behavior marked those religious practices considered most characteristic and appropriate within Euro-American liturgical worship.

In contrast, practices associated with the black folk church epitomize an oral tradition. Improvised sermons, prayers, testimonies, and singing, together with demonstrative behavior, preserve the African values of spontaneity and communal interaction.

### **Secular Music in the Slave Community**

The core secular genres among African-American slaves were work songs, field calls and street cries, social and game songs, and dance music. Work songs accompanied all forms of labor, providing encouragement and strength and relieving boredom. The texts, improvised by field workers, stevedores, dockworkers, weavers, boat rowers, and others, frequently reflected the type of work performed. In sociopolitical terms, work songs provided an outlet for protest and criticism while the song rhythms coordinated the efforts of workers and regulated the rate of labor. Performances of work songs exhibit call-response and repetitive chorus structures; melodic, textual, and timbral variation; heterophonic vocal textures; and percussive delivery.

Field calls (rural) and street cries (urban) were used by workers for personal communication. Field calls enabled workers to maintain contact with one another from a distance, make their presence known (e.g., the water boy), attract attention, or communicate a mood. Street vendors used special cries to advertise their products. Both field calls and street cries consisted of short, improvised phrases performed in a free and highly individual style. These features contrast with the call-response and the repetitive choruses that characterize work songs. Game songs accompanied children's activities, facilitating play and the development of motor and social skills. Song texts provided instructions for playing games, as well as a vehicle for the expression of children's fantasies and worldview. Game songs embody all of the aesthetic features associated with folk spirituals, including group interaction, clapping, and stamping.

Slaves spent much of their leisure time singing and dancing. Accounts of these activities and holiday celebrations from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries indicate that a variety of African instruments—drums, xylophones, calabashes, horns, banjos, musical bows, tambourines, triangles, and jawbones—were played in a distinctly African style and accompanied dancing.

Beginning in the 1740s, however, as a consequence of slave revolts, many colonies passed legislation that prohibited the playing of African drums and horns. Such legislation did not restrict the musical and dance activities of slaves. Over time, as traditional African instruments disappeared, blacks found functional substitutes for some of these instruments and constructed modified versions of others. Wooden boxes, stamping, and clapping replaced drums; spoons, washboards, and washtubs substituted for rattles, scrapers, and other percussion instruments; panpipes, fifes, and jugs substituted for flutes and other wind instruments; and the diddly bow and washtub bass were adapted versions of the musical bow. Using these instruments, slaves created new forms of dance accompaniment that later became a part of the blues tradition.



Slaves also adopted European instruments, which they learned to play as early as the 1690s. The fiddle and fife were popular among slaves, and they played them in conjunction with African instruments. By the nineteenth century, the fiddle and banjo (a derivation from the African lute or *banjar*) had become the most common instruments to accompany dancing. Combining African-derived instruments with European instruments, African-Americans created an original form of improvised and rhythmically complex dance music that would give birth to ragtime and jazz in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, respectively.

## **The Reconstruction Era**

The end of the Civil War in 1865 symbolically marked the freedom of slaves. The social upheaval and political maneuvering that followed the war, however, restricted the freedmen's integration into mainstream society. While some ex-slaves had access to the new educational institutions established for blacks, the vast majority had few if any options for social advancement and economic stability.

In the Reconstruction South, many African-Americans remained effectively enslaved because of an emergent system called *sharecropping*. This system, defined by an inequitable economic arrangement between landlords (former slaveholders) and sharecroppers (freed blacks), kept blacks in debt and subjugated them to southern whites. Most sharecroppers lived in the same shacks on the same farms and plantations that they had as slaves. For nearly a century this arrangement isolated most African-Americans from mainstream society, restricted their mobility, and limited their economic empowerment. African-Americans survived this oppressive environment by preserving fundamental values of the past, as they had done as slaves. These values manifested themselves in new forms of musical expression.

## **Arranged Spirituals**

The evolution of new and diverse musical forms during the post-Civil War years paralleled the divergent lifestyles among African-Americans. While the social and economic conditions of many ex-slaves remained virtually unchanged, the establishment of black colleges that had begun in 1856 (Wilberforce University in Wilberforce, Ohio) provided some with opportunities for social and economic advancement. Within this context, black students adopted various Euro-American cultural models dictated by the established Eurocentric college curricula.

At Fisk University, founded in 1866 in Nashville, Tennessee, the white treasurer, George White, organized the Fisk Jubilee Singers to raise money for the school. The Jubilee Singers initially performed both the standard European repertory and arranged Negro spirituals. Responding to the preferences of white audiences, White centered the group's performances on spirituals. The Fisk Jubilee Singers were the first to popularize the choral arrangement of spirituals. Their successful concerts, presented throughout the nation and world beginning in 1871, inspired the subsequent formation of similar groups at Hampton Institute in Virginia and at other black colleges.

George White, influenced by his musical background, arranged the folk spiritual in a European concert form and insisted on a performance style that appealed to the aesthetics and preferences of white audiences. In doing so, according to John Work, he "eliminated every element that detracted from the pure emotion of the song ... Finish, precision and sincerity were demanded by this leader. Mr. White strove for an art presentation" (Work 1940, p. 15).

White's "art presentation" of spirituals required strict conformity to the written tradition. In his arrangements, four-part harmony replaced heterophonic singing, and strict adherence to the printed score eliminated melodic and textual improvisation and the clapping and stamping accompaniment. Despite the removal of elements associated with the oral tradition, evidence of the folk spiritual tradition remained in call-response, syncopation, polyrhythms, melodic and textual repetition, and linguistic dialect.

The legacy of the Fisk Jubilee Singers continued in the 1920s when Hall Johnson and Eva Jessye formed professional choirs specializing in this idiom. Both choirs gave concerts in major halls and on radio, and appeared in theatrical and film productions.

During the second decade of the twentieth century, another concert version of the folk spiritual appeared. This form transformed the folk spiritual into an art song for solo voice. Conservatory-trained singer-composer Harry T. Burleigh provided the model, arranging “Deep River” (1916) for voice and piano. Burleigh’s arrangement brought publication to this musical form, which eventually became a standard part of the repertory of African-American concert singers. Influenced by Burleigh, performers such as Roland Hayes, Marian Anderson, Paul Robeson, and Dorothy Maynor concluded their solo concerts with arranged solo spirituals, as black college choirs continue to do even today. William Warfield, McHenry Boatwright, Camilla Williams, Willis Patterson, Rawn Spearman, Jessye Norman, Leontyne Price, Grace Bumbry, Shirley Verrett, George Shirley, Simon Estes, Martina Arroyo, and Kathleen Battle are among those who followed this tradition in the post-World War II years.

### **The Use of Folk Idioms in Concert Music of African-American Composers**

During the first decade of the twentieth century, a core group of black composers sought to create a school of composition using African and African-derived vernacular forms. Harry T. Burleigh, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Will Marion Cook, R. Nathaniel Dett, Clarence Cameron White, and the brothers John Rosamond Johnson and James Weldon Johnson were among the first composers to arrange and/or write choral and small instrumental works inspired by folk spirituals, blues, ragtime, and other vernacular forms for the concert stage. They pioneered a nationalist school of composition that preserved the spirit and musical features of black folk idioms. In *Six Plantation Melodies for Violin and Piano* (1901) and *Jubilee Songs of the United States of America* (1916, a collection of spirituals arranged for solo voice and piano accompaniment), for example, Burleigh sought to maintain the racial flavor of the original folk melody. To achieve this, Eileen Southern noted, Burleigh’s piano accompaniments “rarely overpower the simple melodies but rather set and sustain a dominant emotional mood throughout the song” (Southern 1983, p. 268).

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (born in England of African and British ancestry) also made every effort to preserve the integrity of original folk melodies in his compositions. Inspired by the appearance of the Fisk Jubilee Singers in London, Coleridge-Taylor arranged traditional African and African-American folk melodies in a piece for piano, *Twenty-four Negro Melodies*, Op. 59 (1904). Coleridge-Taylor’s notes on this work emphasized that he employed original melodies without the “idea of ‘improving’ the original material any more than Brahms’ Variations on the Haydn Theme ‘improved’ that” (reprint of liner notes to *Twenty-four Negro Melodies*, recorded by Francis Walker).

Sharing Coleridge-Taylor’s perspective, other nationalist composers used vernacular materials with the intent of maintaining their original character. Dett’s *In the Bottoms* (1913), a suite for piano, employs various dance rhythms associated with African-American folk culture. Its opening “Prelude” mimics the texture and rhythms of a syncopated banjo, and the last piece, “Dance (Juba),” captures the complex rhythms of *pattin’ juba*. *Pattin’ juba* was a popular self-accompanying dance common among slaves that involved singing and stamping while alternately clapping the hands and striking each shoulder and thigh. Dett’s use of black folk rhythms, melodies, textures, and timbres demonstrates one way in which nationalist composers preserved the integrity of the folk idiom. Their efforts to create a distinct racial artistic identity using European models were advanced by African-American creative artists and intellectuals of the 1920s and 1930s in what became known as the Harlem Renaissance.

Throughout the Harlem Renaissance, African-American intellectuals and university-trained writers, musicians, and visual artists discussed ways to liberate themselves from the restrictions of European cultural expression. As a group they pioneered the concept of the New Negro—one who claimed an identity founded on self-respect, self-dependence, racial pride, and racial solidarity. The New Negro’s ultimate concern, according to William Grant Still, was “the development of our racial culture and . . . its integration into American culture” (Still [n.d.]

in Haas 1972, p. 129). Both intellectuals and creative artists agreed that this goal could be achieved by incorporating African-American folk materials into European concert and literary forms. They disagreed, however, on the appropriate presentation of these materials.

Whereas the pioneer nationalists shared the belief that the original character of folk idioms should be preserved, the Harlem Renaissance group expressed the need to adapt or “elevate” these idioms to the level of “high art” (Locke 1925, p. 28; Locke 1936, pp. 21–23; Still [n.d.] in Haas 1972, p. 134). The issues appear to have concerned the degree to which the folk idiom could be altered through thematic development without losing its authentic character, the use of arrangements that supported rather than diluted the spirit of the folk form, and the preservation of the folk quality without restricting the creative impulses of composers (Burleigh [1924], quoted in Southern 1983, p. 268; Locke 1925, pp. 207–208). Composers of the Harlem Renaissance, including William Grant Still, William Dawson, and Howard Swanson, employed various approaches in establishing racial identity in their music. Some utilized authentic folk melodies; others composed thematic material in the spirit and with the flavor of vernacular idioms; and still others worked to capture the ambience of the folk environment.

William Grant Still, known as the dean of African-American composers, wrote many works using a broad range of African, American-African, and Caribbean folk material. In the first movement of his well-known *Afro-American Symphony* (1930), for example, Still juxtaposes original blues and spiritual melodies; in the third movement he introduces the banjo, the most familiar of all African instruments in the New World. In *Levee Land* (1925), a work for orchestra and soloist, he experiments with jazz elements. *Sahdji* (1930), a ballet for orchestra and chorus, and *Mota* (1951), an opera, dramatize African life. The opera *Troubled Island* (1941) captures the spirit of Haitian culture.

William Dawson, using a slightly different approach, juxtaposed existing folk and folk-inspired themes in his *Negro Folk Symphony* (1934). The Harlem Renaissance composers also established racial identities in their vocal and choral works by employing texts by such African-American writers as Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, Paul Laurence Dunbar, and Arna Bontemps. Hughes, for example, wrote the poems for Howard Swanson’s “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” (1942) and “Lady’s Boogie” (1947) and the libretto for Still’s *Troubled Island*.

Despite the efforts of these conservatory-trained musicians to preserve the integrity of folk expressions, their music had limited appeal outside middle-class audiences. Even within this group, some expressed concern about overelaboration and the tendency to place too much emphasis on formal European conventions. Anthropologist-folklorist Zora Neale Hurston vehemently objected to concert presentations of Negro spirituals. She argued that the aesthetic ideas of oral traditions that allow for spontaneous, improvisatory, and interactive expression could not be captured in the written score or reproduced by trained musicians (Hurston 1976, pp. 344–345).

The wider African-American folk community shared Hurston’s views, objecting that the new modes of presentation were too “pretty” (Work 1949, pp. 136–137). The community simply did not share the aesthetic ideals of the black elite. Even though many composers attempted to preserve vocabulary, form, structure, rhythms, textures, tonal qualities, and aesthetic devices of folk forms, the printed score changed the character of the original style. Because of this, most of the African-American folk community was unable to relate to the aesthetic qualities associated with concert presentations of folk idioms.

## **Ragtime**

Ragtime refers to both a style of performance and a musical genre characterized by a syncopated, or “ragged,” melody played over a quarter- or eighth-note bass pattern. The ragtime style evolved out of syncopated banjo melodies in the 1880s and was popularized in African-American communities by itinerant pianists and brass bands. The pianists, who played in honky-tonks, saloons, and brothels, improvised on folk and popular tunes, transforming them into contemporary African-American dance music. In a similar fashion, black brass bands “ragged” the melodies of traditional marches, hymns, spirituals, and folk and popular songs during funeral processions, parades, and other celebrations, changing the character of these melodies.

By the late 1890s, ragtime had come to identify a body of composed syncopated piano and vocal music published for mass consumption. As such, its improvisatory character and syncopated embellishments became formalized and simplified in written form. The availability of ragtime as sheet music resulted in the ragtime explosion of the first two decades of the twentieth century. Ragtime's syncopated rhythms quickly became popular among amateur and professional pianists. Responding to the demand for this music, publishers flooded the market with ragtime arrangements of popular and folk tunes, marches, and European classical songs for dance orchestras and marching and concert bands and vocal versions for singers. African-American ragtime composers include Thomas Turpin, Scott Joplin, Jelly Roll Morton, Eubie Blake, and Artie Matthews.

The vocal counterparts of instrumental ragtime were labeled *coon songs*. Popularized by minstrel performers in the late 1800s, coon songs became mainstays in vaudeville and Broadway productions in the 1900s. Coon songs are distinguished from other vocal genres of twentieth-century popular music by the use of black dialect and often denigrating lyrics. Between 1900 and 1920, vocal and instrumental ragtime dominated musical performances in theaters, saloons, ballrooms, and the homes of the white middle class, giving a degree of respectability to a form once associated with brothels and minstrel shows.

## **Blues**

The blues evolved from work songs and field calls during the 1880s in response to the inhumane treatment and second-class citizenship that had defined black life in America for seven decades. The blues share the aesthetic qualities of folk spirituals, and like spirituals they attempt to make sense of and give meaning to life. Two historic rulings by the U.S. Supreme Court, in 1883 and 1896, created the social and political environment from which the blues sprang. The first declared the 1875 Civil Rights Act unconstitutional, and the second upheld the "separate but equal" policy related to the *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) court case, which sanctioned segregation or Jim Crow as the law of the land. These decisions resulted in discriminatory state laws, violent activities of the Ku Klux Klan, unfair treatment by landlords and employers, and political powerlessness. In effect, the Supreme Court rulings eliminated any hope for social equality and community empowerment and forced African-Americans to struggle just to survive. Music, especially the blues, proved to be an important tool for enduring an oppressive existence.

Blues performers, like black preachers, served as spokespersons and community counselors; their messages addressed the social realities of daily life. As entertainers, blues musicians provided a temporary escape from daily oppression by performing for barbecues, house parties, social clubs, and informal gatherings in juke joints and bars.

The blues became a way of life, as illustrated by the various blues styles—rural (folk), vaudeville (classic), urban, and boogie-woogie (instrumental). The earliest blues form, known as *rural* or *folk blues*, is the product of the segregated rural South. Performed primarily by men, the texts address economic hardships, sharecropping experiences, unjust imprisonment, broken relationships, travels, and opposition to the Jim Crow system. Folk blues is performed as vocal and instrumental music and consists of a series of verses that vary in structure (usually eight to sixteen bars and two to five lines of text) and length. Chord structures often center around the tonic and sometimes the subdominant or dominant chords. Acoustic instruments, including the guitar, harmonica, banjo, mandolin, fiddle, diddly bow, kazoo, jug, fife and drum, washboard, and washtub bass, provide the accompaniment. The instruments, functioning as accompaniment and as a substitute for singers, often double and respond to the vocal melody. Prominent rural blues musicians include Robert Johnson, Charley Patton, Son House, Blind Lemon Jefferson, Blind Boy Fuller, Sonny Terry, Brownie McGhee, Blind Blake, and Gus Cannon.

## **Boogie-Woogie**

Boogie-woogie is a piano form of the blues that evolved between the late 1890s and the early 1900s in barrelhouses (also known as juke joints) in logging, sawmill, turpentine, levee, and railroad camps throughout

the South. Barrelhouses, which served as social centers for migrant workers living in these camps, consisted of a room with a piano, dance area, and bar. Itinerant boogie-woogie pianists traveled the barrelhouse circuit providing the entertainment—music for dancing.

Early boogie-woogie styles incorporated the chord structures, bass patterns, form, and tonality of the folk blues and the melodic and rhythmic properties of ragtime. Boogie-woogie pianists adapted these elements to reflect the dance function of the music, as well as their own percussive and regional improvisatory style. The various regional styles emphasized a heavy and rhythmic eight-note triadic bass line (1-3-5-6-1 or flattened 7) over which flowed syncopated melodic phrases.

Boogie-woogie pianists were among the southern migrants who moved to Chicago after World War I. High rents and low wages forced Chicago's South Side residents to raise money to pay rent. To do so, they hosted rent parties that featured boogie-woogie pianists. This music was so popular among Chicago's southern migrants that it also provided the entertainment on excursion trains that transported blacks to the South on holidays. The trains, called honky-tonks, were converted baggage cars that contained a bar and a dance floor. Boogie-woogie remained the music associated with the lower social strata of black society until the 1930s, when the style entered the repertory of jazz bands and was featured in a concert at New York's Carnegie Hall. By the 1940s, boogie-woogie had become the new craze in American jazz and popular music, which brought respectability to the form. Pioneering boogie-woogie pianists include Charles "Cow Cow" Davenport, Clarence "Pine Top" Smith, Little Brother Montgomery, Clarence Lofton, Roosevelt Sykes, Jimmy Blythe, Jimmy Yancey, Meade "Lux" Lewis, and Albert Ammons.

## **Vaudeville Blues**

At the turn of the century, a new blues style, which provided the transition from a folk to a commercial style, evolved within the context of traveling minstrel, carnival, and vaudeville shows. Known as vaudeville or classic blues, it showcased black female singers. Most of these women had grown up in the South, and they escaped their impoverished environments by becoming professional entertainers. Relocating in cities, they created widespread awareness of the blues tradition, appearing in cabarets, dance halls, off-Broadway productions, and on records. Vaudeville blues was the first black music style recorded by a black performer and accompanied by black musicians. The popularity of the song "Crazy Blues," composed by the professional songwriter Perry Bradford and sung by Mamie Smith in 1920, resulted in the recording of many types of black music written and performed by black musicians.

The vaudeville blues tradition is distinguished from rural blues by instrumentation, musical form, harmonic structure, and performance style. Vaudeville singers were accompanied by blues-ragtime-jazz pianists or a New Orleans-style jazz band. As a commercial form the blues structure became standardized through the use of a twelve-bar, three-line (AAB) verse or stanza structure, the tonic-subdominant-dominant harmonic progression, and the blues tonality of the flattened third and seventh degrees.

As in rural blues, textual themes varied and included economic hardship, relationships, imprisonment, travels, urban experiences, and southern nostalgia. Many singers, including Ma Rainey, Ida Cox, Victoria Spivey, Alberta Hunter, and Bessie Smith, wrote their own blues songs, bringing a feminist perspective to many topics common to the blues tradition. Other songs were drawn from the folk blues and composed by professional black male song-writers.

The Great Depression led to a decline in the recording of black music during the 1930s. The demand for the blues, nevertheless, continued to grow. The World War II migration of rural southern blacks to urban centers engendered a consumer market for black music that surpassed the previous decades. Urban blues was one of the most popular black music forms to emerge during the 1940s.

## Urban Blues

Urban blues shares the musical features (form, structure, tonality, and textual themes) of vaudeville blues. Musically it is more akin to the rural tradition, from which it is distinguished by a more developed instrumental style and influences from jazz and popular music.

Urban blues evolved in cities where southern black migrants struggled to cope with daily life. City life proved harsher than anticipated; the expectation of social and racial equality quickly abated in the face of covert discriminatory practices. Yet blacks adjusted by adapting southern traditions to the demands of city living. The blues played a pivotal role in this process.

In bars, lounges, and clubs where African-Americans gathered to socialize, rural blues performers Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Sonny Boy Williamson, and Sam "Lightnin'" Hopkins, among others, provided the entertainment. The noise level of these venues, combined with surrounding street and factory sounds, forced these musicians to amplify their voices and instruments. The density and intensity of these gatherings soon demanded that blues musicians expand their instrumentation to include a drummer and electric bass guitar and, in some cases, horns. Over these amplified instruments, blues singers shouted and moaned about city life—the good times, the bad times, and the lonely times. Performers who brought inspiration to inner-city dwellers included T-Bone Walker, B. B. King, Bobby "Blue" Bland, Elmore James, Homesick James, Junior Wells, Buddy Guy, Otis Span, Willie Dixon, and Ko Ko Taylor.

## Jazz

Jazz, an ensemble-based instrumental music, is a twentieth-century form. Like the blues, it comprises many styles, each one associated with a specific historical period, social context, and cultural function. While the various styles may be distinguished by certain musical features and instrumentation, they share certain African-American aesthetic properties, which link them as a whole and to the larger body of African-American music. Early jazz styles evolved around the turn of the century out of the syncopated brass-band tradition. Brass bands borrowed ragtime's syncopated rhythmic style to create an ensemble-based dance music employing conventions of the oral tradition. The bands led by Joe "King" Oliver, Louis Armstrong, Kid Ory, and Bunk Johnson popularized this tradition, providing collectively improvised versions of marches, hymns, folk tunes, popular melodies, and original compositions. They performed in black entertainment venues throughout the urban South, at funerals, and at community social gatherings. Later known as New Orleans jazz, this style featured a small ensemble consisting of cornet, trombone, clarinet, banjo, tuba, and drums.

Many New Orleans musicians and those from other areas migrated to Chicago, Kansas City or New York during the World War I era. In these cities social dancing had become popular, and the number of nightclubs, cabarets, and ballrooms increased dramatically. In this context and by the 1930s, a distinctive style of instrumental dance music labeled *jazz* had evolved out of the New Orleans tradition. This new jazz style, in which improvisation remained a salient feature, differed from the New Orleans tradition in composition, instrumentation, repertory, and musical structure. The number of musicians increased from six or seven to twelve to sixteen; the instrumentation consisted of trumpets, trombones, saxophones, piano, string bass, and drums; the repertory included complex rhythmic arrangements of popular songs, blues, and original compositions; and the musical structure, which featured soloists, took on a more formal yet flexible quality. Prominent bands of this era (labeled *big bands* in the late 1920s and *swing bands* in the mid-1930s) included those of Bennie Moten, Count Basie, Fletcher Henderson, Jimmie Lunceford, Duke Ellington, Andy Kirk, Chick Webb, Cab Calloway, Coleman Hawkins, Earl "Fatha" Hines, and Lionel Hampton.

The World War II era engendered yet another change in the jazz tradition. During the war years, the musical tastes and social patterns of many Americans began to change. After the war, small clubs replaced ballrooms as centers for musical activity, and experimental jazz combos (rhythm section, trumpet, saxophone, and trombone) came into vogue. Over the next six decades, these combos created new and diverse styles of improvised music that were known as bebop, hard bop, cool jazz, soul jazz, jazz fusion, modern jazz, and new jazz swing. Each of these styles introduced new musical concepts to the jazz tradition.

Bebop (1940s), hard bop (1950s), cool jazz (1950s), and modern jazz (1960s) musicians experimented with timbre and texture and expanded harmonic language, melodic and rhythmic structures, and tempos beyond the parameters associated with big bands. Musicians of these styles altered and extended traditional chord structures, introduced unconventional chord sequences, and employed abstract, nonvocal melodies and unpredictable rhythmic patterns. In the process, they transformed jazz from dance music to music for listening. Bebop's major innovators were Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonius Monk, Kenny Clarke, and Max Roach. Hard bop's pioneers included Clifford Brown, Lee Morgan, Sonny Rollins, John Coltrane, J. J. Johnson, Horace Silver, Cannonball Adderley, Wes Montgomery, and Kenny Burrell. Cool jazz is associated with Miles Davis and the Modern Jazz Quartet, among others. Modern jazz (also known as avant-garde or free jazz) innovators include Ornette Coleman, Cecil Taylor, Archie Shepp, Sun Ra, and the Art Ensemble of Chicago.

Some musicians rooted in the bebop or hard bop style experimented with various non-Western musical traditions. John Coltrane, Alice Coltrane, McCoy Tyner, and Ralph MacDonald, for example, drew inspiration from the music of India, Japan, Africa, the Caribbean, and Latin America. Some performers even employed instruments from these countries. While many musicians expanded on bebop's musical foundation during the 1950s and 1960s, others evolved jazz styles that differed conceptually from this tradition.

Retaining the sensibilities and improvisatory style of the jazz tradition, soul jazz (1960s), jazz fusion (1970s), and new jazz swing (1990s) musicians turned to popular idioms (soul music, funk, and rap) for creative inspiration. Fusing the musical language, stylings, rhythms, and synthesized instruments of various popular forms with the harmonic vocabulary of jazz, they not only brought a new sound to the jazz tradition but recaptured jazz's original dance function as well.

Ramsey Lewis, Les McCann, Cannonball Adderley, Jimmy Smith, and Richard "Groove" Holmes are among musicians who popularized the soul jazz style; Herbie Hancock (who introduced the synthesizer to jazz), George Duke, George Benson, Noel Pointer, and Hubert Laws forged the jazz fusion concept. In the 1990s such jazz musicians as Greg Osby, Miles Davis, Roy Ayers, Donald Byrd, Lonnie Liston Smith, Courtney Pine, and Branford Marsalis teamed up with rap (also known as hip-hop) artists to produce a new sound called *new jazz swing*. This style fuses rap's lyrics, hip-hop rhythms, scratching (sounds produced with the needle by rotating a record backward and forward), rhythm-and-blues and funk samples (phrases extracted from prerecorded songs), and multilayered textures with the improvisational character and vocabulary of jazz. The musical borrowings across genres gave birth not only to new jazz forms but also to a new body of religious music labeled *gospel*.

## **Gospel**

Gospel is a twentieth-century form of sacred music developed by African-Americans within an urban context. As described by ethnomusicologist Mellonee Burnim, gospel functions multidimensionally, holding historical, religious, cultural, and social significance among African-Americans (Burnim 1988, pp. 112–120). As an urban response to the sociocultural climate that supported racial oppression, gospel provides a spiritual perspective on the secular events that negatively impacted the lives of African-Americans. As such, it expresses the changing ideas and ideals held by blacks in their attempt to establish a meaningful life in an urban environment.

The gospel tradition relies on three primary sources for its repertory: (1) spontaneous creations by church congregations in the oral tradition; (2) original composition by individuals; and (3) rearrangements of hymns, spirituals, blues, and popular idioms. Given these distinct musical sources, gospel music utilizes many structural forms, including call-response, verse-chorus, blues, and theme and variation. Gospel performances, which are highly improvisatory, are accompanied by a variety of instruments, particularly piano, Hammond organ, bass, tambourine, and drums.

## **Gospel as Oral Composition**

Gospel music, as an oral form of religious expression, has its roots in Pentecostalism, established in the late 1800s. The Pentecostal church, a by-product of the post-Civil War Holiness movement, became a refuge for many African-Americans from lower socioeconomic strata who sought spiritual uplift and deliverance from

hardship and struggle. The worship style of the Pentecostal church appealed to these and other African-Americans because it retained the improvisatory preaching style, spontaneous testimonies, prayer, and music traditions of the past. Pentecostal congregations brought an urban flavor to these expressions, especially the folk spiritual tradition, which they transformed into an urban folk gospel style.

The feature that distinguishes folk gospel from folk spirituals is the addition of accompanying instruments, including tambourines, washboards, triangles, guitars, pianos, horns, and drums. Pentecostal ministers sanctioned the use of these instruments, citing *Psalm 150*, which encouraged the use of trumpets, harps, lyres, tambourines, strings, flutes, and cymbals to praise the Lord. Blues, rag-time, and jazz performers were among those who responded to this invitation, bringing their instruments and secular style of performance into the Pentecostal church. Congregational singing accompanied by instruments increased the intensity and spontaneity of urban black folk services. The bluesy guitar lines, ragtime and boogie-woogie rhythms, horn riffs, and polyrhythmic drum patterns brought a contemporary sound to old traditions.

### **Gospel as Written Composition**

Gospel music as written composition emerged as a distinct genre in independent black churches in the 1930s. The prototype, known as a *gospel hymn*, was developed during the first two decades of the twentieth century by the Philadelphia Methodist minister Charles A. Tindley. Tindley grew up in rural Maryland, where he attended a folk-style rural church. Influenced by this experience, his ministry catered to the spiritual, cultural, and social needs of black people. Tindley gave special attention to the poor, who flocked to his church in large numbers, as did people of all classes and races. His socioeconomically and culturally diverse congregation responded positively to his style of worship, which intertwined the liturgical and cultural practices of the Pentecostal, Baptist, and Methodist churches. These services “embraced both the order and selections of well-loved ‘high’ church literature and the practice, richness, intensity, and spontaneity found in the most traditionally based Black form of worship. These were hymns, anthems, prayers, and creeds. There were ‘amens’ and hand-claps and shouts of ‘Thank you Jesus’ and a spirit that ran throughout the service” (Reagon 1992, p. 39).

The music, woven into every component of worship, was as diverse as the liturgy. The choir performed George Frideric Handel’s *Messiah* (1742) at Christmas and the music of other Western classical composers and the African-American tradition during Sunday morning service. At evening testimonials the congregation sang spirituals, lined hymns, and other songs from the oral tradition. The church’s musical repertory also included Tindley’s original compositions, which he wrote specifically for his congregation and as an extension of his sermons. His song texts related the scriptures to everyday life experiences. A recurring theme in Tindley’s songs and sermons, according to cultural historian Bernice Johnson Reagon, “is the belief that true change or release from worldly bondage can be attained only through struggle” (1992, p. 45).

The theme of deliverance through struggle is one feature that distinguishes Tindley’s gospel hymns from the hymns of white songwriters, whose texts focus on conversion, salvation, and heaven. Other distinguishing elements are the construction of melodies in a fashion that allows for improvisation and interpolation and the use of melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic components of the black folk tradition. Among Tindley’s well-known songs are “Some Day,” published in 1901, and “Stand By Me,” “The Storm Is Passing Over, Hallelujah,” and “By and By,” all published in 1905. These and other compositions, which are included in hymnbooks of all denominations, have become part of the black oral tradition. They are sung in a variety of styles by congregations, gospel soloists, duos, quartets, and numerous traditional and contemporary ensembles and choirs.

Tindley’s compositions had a profound impact on Thomas A. Dorsey, a Baptist, who evolved Tindley’s gospel-hymn model into an original gospel song. Dorsey, a former blues and ragtime performer, brought a different kind of song structure, melody, harmony, rhythm, and energy to the black sacred tradition. Dorsey was known as the “Father of Gospel,” and his compositions fuse blues-style melodies with blues and ragtime rhythms. His texts are testimonies about the power of Jesus Christ, which provides spiritually inspired yet earthly solutions to daily struggles. Among Dorsey’s well-known compositions are “Take My Hand, Precious Lord” (1932),



“There’ll Be Peace in the Valley for Me” (1938), “Hide Me in Thy Bosom” (1939), “God is Good to Me” (1943), and “Old Ship of Zion” (1950).

Despite the “good news” about Jesus Christ of which gospel music speaks, most ministers of independent black churches rejected Dorsey’s songs because of their “secular” beat and musical style and because they did not conform to the established religious musical conventions. He therefore used unorthodox strategies to introduce them to church congregations. Throughout the 1930s Dorsey, along with Sallie Martin, Mahalia Jackson, and Willie Mae Ford Smith, sang his songs on the sidewalks outside churches, at church conventions, and at the gospel music convention, the National Convention of Choirs and Choruses, that Dorsey founded with Sallie Martin, Willie Mae Ford Smith, Theodore Fry, and Magnolia Lewis Butts in 1932.

Also during the 1930s, many established jubilee quartets added Dorsey’s songs and those of such composers as Lucie Campbell, William Herbert Brewster, Roberta Martin, and Kenneth Morris, among others, to their traditional repertory of Negro spirituals. By the 1940s, several newly formed semiprofessional and professional gospel quartets, female and mixed groups, and local choirs specialized in gospel music. In the 1950s, as a result of the proliferation of gospel church choirs, gospel music became the standard repertory in many independent black church choirs.

Performers that brought widespread public notice to the gospel-music tradition of Dorsey and his contemporaries include the gospel quartets Fairfield Four, Famous Blue Jay Singers, Golden Gate Quartet, Soul Stirrers, Highway Q.C.’s, Dixie Hummingbirds, Swan Silvertones, and the Blind Boys; the gospel groups of Roberta Martin, Sally Ward, Clara Ward, and the Barrett Sisters; and the soloists Mahalia Jackson, Sallie Martin, Willie Mae Ford Smith, Marion Williams, Bessie Griffin, Albertina Walker, Alex Bradford, James Cleveland, and Shirley Caesar. Gospel quartets performed a cappella or with guitar accompaniment, and gospel groups and soloists performed with piano and Hammond organ.

The gospel songs of Dorsey and other songwriters were disseminated in printed form. The musical score, however, provides only the text and a skeletal outline of the basic melody and harmonies. Vocalists and instrumentalists bring their own interpretations to these songs, employing the aesthetic conventions of the oral tradition. Thus, gospel music represents both a style of performance and a body of original composition. This style of performance is manifested in the gospel arrangement of the white hymn “Oh, Happy Day,” which transformed the traditional style of Thomas Dorsey into a contemporary sound.

## **Contemporary Gospel**

When Edwin Hawkins, a Pentecostal, recorded his version of the hymn “Oh, Happy Day” in 1969, he ushered in a new era of gospel music—an era that coincided with the changed social climate engendered by the civil rights movement. Hawkins and his contemporaries evolved the gospel sound by blending traditional elements with those of contemporary popular, jazz, blues, folk, and classical music. “Oh, Happy Day,” for example, is laced with elements of soul music, particularly its danceable beat. This song attracted the attention of top-forty and soul-music programmers, who added it to their play list. The popularity of “Oh, Happy Day” within and outside the religious community inspired other gospel performers to exploit Hawkins’s model. Since the recording of “Oh, Happy Day,” the musical boundaries have expanded and this song now falls under the category of traditional gospel.

In the 1970s Andrae Crouch experimented with every black secular form, employing melodies, harmonies, rhythms, and instrumentation from ragtime, jazz, blues, and funk; Rance Allen borrowed rhythms and instrumentation from the rhythm-and-blues and soul-music traditions; and Vernard Johnson elevated the saxophone to the status of a solo gospel instrument. Contemporary gospel songwriters-performers also introduced new textual themes to the tradition. While retaining the established theme of salvation in some compositions, they do not mention God or Jesus directly in others. Instead, themes of peace, compassion, and universal love inspired by the civil rights movement and the spiritually based teachings of Martin Luther King

Jr. prevail. These themes and the musical innovations, which demonstrate the affinity between gospel and popular forms, led to debates regarding appropriate sacred musical expression.

Perhaps the most controversial practice of the 1970s and 1980s was the recording of popular songs as gospel. James Cleveland, for example, recorded a gospel version of George Benson's "Everything Must Change"; the Twenty-First Century Singers presented a rendition of Melba Moore's "Lean on Me" as "Lean on Him"; and Shirley Caesar and the Thompson Community Singers recorded Curtis Mayfield's "People Get Ready," a song inspired by Mayfield's religious beliefs. The only significant change made to the original songs was the substitution of "Jesus" for "baby," "my woman," and "my man."

In the 1980s gospel and classical performers joined forces to record a historic album, *Edwin Hawkins Live* (1981), with the Oakland Symphony Orchestra. The fusion of classical elements with gospel has its origins in the style of the Roberta Martin Singers. During the 1940s, Roberta Martin, a songwriter and classically trained pianist, incorporated scales and arpeggios in the piano accompaniment and operatic vocal stylings from the classical tradition in the group's performances. During the 1970s and 1980s, Pearl Williams-Jones and Richard Smallwood, who also were trained classical pianists, maintained Martin's tradition of fusing classical with gospel piano techniques in gospel music.

Throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s, gospel performers continued to borrow the language, instrumentation, and technology (synthesizers, drum machines, and sound effects) of popular idioms. At the same time, performers of popular music turned to the gospel tradition for inspiration, as they had done for the previous four decades, employing gospel vocal stylings, harmonies, and rhythms and recording gospel songs under the label of soul. The Clark Sisters, Vanessa Bell Armstrong, Tramaine Hawkins, Walter Hawkins, Commissioned, Bebe and CeCe Winans, Take 6, Nu Colors, Sounds of Blackness, Daryl Coley, Keith Pringle, John P. Kee, Little Saints in Praise, Kinnection, and Kirk Franklin (gospel rap) are among those performers who created new gospel styles by stretching traditional musical parameters.

### **Civil Rights Freedom Songs**

Civil rights freedom songs are the products of the 1950s and 1960s civil rights and Black Power movements, respectively. In the mid-1950s, African-Americans from the South mounted a series of grassroots activities to protest their social status as second-class citizens. These activities, which gained widespread momentum and attracted national attention in the 1960s, evolved into the civil rights and Black Power movements. Music was integral to both and served a multitude of functions. It galvanized African-Americans into political action; provided them with strength and courage; united protesters as a cohesive group; and supplied a creative medium for mass communication.

Freedom songs draw from many sources and traditions, including folk and arranged spirituals; unaccompanied congregational hymn singing; folk ballads; gospel quartets, groups, and choirs; rhythm and blues and soul music; and original creations. Protesters reinterpreted the musical repertory of African-Americans, communicating their determination to effect social and political change. The singing captured the energy and spirit of the movement. The power of the songs, according to Bernice Johnson Reagon, "came from the linking of traditional oral expression to the everyday experiences of the movement" (1987 p. 106). Well-known freedom songs include "We Shall Overcome," "Come Bah Yah," "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around," "99½ Won't Do," and "Get Your Rights, Jack."

### **Rhythm and Blues**

During the World War II era, urban areas throughout the country became centers for the evolution of a distinct body of African-American popular music. Labeled *rhythm and blues*, this music consisted of many regional styles, reflecting the migration patterns of African-Americans and the musical background of performers. In Los Angeles, for example, former swing band and blues musicians formed five- to eight-member combos (bass and rhythm guitar, drums, piano, saxophone, trumpet, and trombone) and created a distinctive rhythm-and-blues

style. A hybrid dance style, it fused the twelve-bar blues and boogie-woogie bass line with the repetitive melodic riffs and drum patterns of the swing bands of the Southwest and the West (specifically Kansas City). This tradition also featured instrumental saxophone solos and the vocals of “moaning” and “shouting” blues singers. This style is illustrated in the recordings of Louis Jordan, Joe Liggins, Roy Milton, Johnny Otis, and Big Jay McNeely, among others. The West Coast sound also resonated in the instrumentals of musicians recording in the Midwest and on the East Coast, including Wild Bill Moore, Harold Singer, Sonny Thompson, and Paul Williams.

Paralleling the emergence of rhythm-and-blues combos in Los Angeles in the 1940s was a style known as *club blues* and *cocktail music* in African-American and white clubs, respectively. Associated with the King Cole Trio, this music was performed primarily in lounges and small, intimate clubs as background or listening music. It featured a self-accompanying jazz or blues-oriented pianist-vocalist augmented by guitar and bass performing in a subdued or tempered style, in contrast to the high-energy sounds of the rhythm-and-blues dance combos. Popularizers of club blues include Cecil Gant, Charles Brown and the Three Blazers, Roy Brown, Amos Milburn, and Ray Charles.

In New Orleans, a younger generation of performers such as Fats Domino, Little Richard, Lloyd Price, and Shirley & Lee evolved the 1940s rhythm-and-blues combo style into a contemporary youthful expression. This form of musical expression fuses elements from gospel music with the blues, Latin traditions, and the innovations of musicians, which are summarized as gospel-derived vocal stylings, repeated triplet and rolling-octave piano blues figures, a Cuban-derived rumba bass pattern, and an underlying fast sixteenth-note cymbal pattern accented on beats two and four on the snare drum. Little Richard created this drum pattern, which became known as the *rock ‘n’ roll* beat. By the mid-1950s, New Orleans rhythm and blues had inspired related yet personalized combo styles, including the Atlantic Sound (Atlantic Records), popularized by Ruth Brown and La Vern Baker, the rock ‘n’ roll style of guitarists Chuck Berry and Bo Diddley, and the up-tempo vocal group styles of the Cadillacs, El Dorados, Flamingos, and Coasters.

The vocal harmony group tradition was the most popular rhythm-and-blues form among teenagers, especially those living in urban centers. In the densely populated cities on the East Coast, in Chicago, and in Detroit, teenagers formed a cappella groups, performing for school dances and other social activities. Rehearsing on street corners, apartment stoops, and in school yards, parks, and subway trains, they evolved a type of group harmony that echoed the harmonies of jubilee and gospel quartets and gospel groups. Among the first groups of this tradition in the early 1950s were the Orioles, Spaniels, and the Five Keys, who specialized in ballads that appealed to the romantic fantasies of teenagers.

By the mid-1950s, vocal harmony groups had transformed the smooth and romantic delivery of ballads into a rhythmic performance style labeled *doo-wop*. This concept featured a rhythmic deliverance of the phrase “doo-doo-doo-wop” or “doo-doo-doo-doo” sung by bass singers, which provided movement for a cappella vocal groups. First popularized by the Spaniels in the early 1950s, the rhythmic doo-wop phrases eventually replaced the sustained “oohs and ahs” background vocals of the early vocal harmony groups. This vocal group style is associated with the Moonglows, Monotones, Frankie Lymon and the Teenagers, Five Satins, Channels, Charts, Heartbeats, Chantels, and Crests, among others.

Overlapping the doo-wop vocal group style was a pop-oriented sound that featured orchestral arrangements, gospel-pop-flavored vocal stylings, sing-along (as opposed to call-response) phrases known as *hook lines*, and Latin-derived rhythms. This style, associated with the Platters and the post-1956 Drifters, provided the framework for musical arrangements and hook lines that undergird the mid- to late 1960s vocal group sound of Smokey Robinson and the Miracles, the Supremes, Four Tops, Temptations, Dells, and Impressions.

By the late 1960s, the rhythm-and-blues tradition had begun exhibiting new sounds that reflected the discontentment of many African-Americans engaged in the struggle for social and racial equality. The pop-

oriented vocal stylings of the Drifters, the cha-cha beat of some rhythm-and-blues singers, and the youthful sound and teen lyrics of Motown's groups gave way to a more spirited type of music labeled *soul*.

## **Soul Music**

Soul, distinguished by its roots in black gospel music and socially conscious messages, is associated with the 1960s era of Black Power—a movement led by college-age students who rejected the integrationist philosophy of the 1950s civil rights leaders. The ideology of Black Power promoted nationalist concepts of racial pride, racial unity, self-empowerment, self-control, and self-identification. As a concept, soul became associated with an attitude, a behavior, symbols, institutions, and cultural products that were distinctively black and reflected the values and worldview of people of African descent.

Many black musicians supported the Black Power movement, promoting the nationalist ideology and galvanizing African-Americans into social and political action. They identified with their African heritage, wearing African-derived fashions and hairstyles; their song lyrics advocated national black unity, activism, and self-pride; and their musical style captured the energy, convictions, and optimism of African-Americans during a period of social change.

Soul music embodies the vocal and piano stylings, call-response, polyrhythmic structures, and aesthetic conventions of gospel music. This style is represented in the recordings “Soul Finger” (1967) by the Bar-Kays; “Soul Man” (1967) by Sam and Dave; “Respect” (1967) by Aretha Franklin; “We’re a Winner” (1967) and “This Is My Country” (1968) by the Impressions; “Say It Loud, I’m Black and Proud” (1968) and “I Don’t Want Nobody to Give Me Nothing” (1969) by James Brown; “Freedom” (1970) by the Isley Brothers; “Respect Yourself” (1971) by the Staple Singers; “Give More Power to the People” (1971) by the Chi-Lites; and “Back Stabbers” (1972) by the O’Jays, among others.

The optimism that had prevailed during the 1960s began to fade among a large segment of the African-American community in the early 1970s. New opportunities for social and economic advancement engendered by the pressures of the civil rights and Black Power movements resulted in opposition from mainstream society. Resistance to affirmative-action programs, school desegregation, busing, open housing, and other federal policies designed to integrate African-Americans fully into the mainstream hindered their progress toward social, economic, and racial equality. The lyrics of Marvin Gaye’s “What’s Going On” (1971) and “Inner City Blues” (1971); James Brown’s “Down and Out in New York City” (1973) and “Funky President” (1974); and the O’Jays’ “Survival” (1975) express mixed feelings about social change. Reflecting the disappointments and the continued struggle toward racial equality, new forms of popular expressions labeled *funk*, *disco*, and *rap* evolved out of the soul style in the 1970s.

## **Funk Music**

Funk describes a form of dance music rooted in the rhythm-and-blues and soul music traditions of James Brown and Sly Stone. Funk is characterized by group singing, complex polyrhythmic structures, percussive instrumental and vocal timbres, a riffing horn section, and lyrics that encourage “partying” or “having a good time.” The primary function of funk was to provide temporary respite from the uncertainties and pressures of daily life. In live performances and on studio recordings, funk musicians created an ambience, a party atmosphere, that encouraged black people to express themselves freely and without the restrictions or cultural compromises often experienced in integrated settings.

The therapeutic potential of funk is reflected in key recurring phrases: “have a good time,” “let yourself go,” “give up the funk,” and “it ain’t nothing but a party.” Among the pioneering funk performers were Sly and the Family Stone, Kool and the Gang, Ohio Players, Graham Central Station, Bar-Kays, and Parliament/Funkadelic. George Clinton, founder of Parliament, Funkadelic, and other funk groups extended the definition of *funk* beyond a musical style to embrace a philosophy, attitude, and culture. Known as *P-funk* (pure funk), this philosophy is manifested in the creation of an imaginary planet—the planet of funk. On this planet blacks

acquire new values, a worldview, and a lifestyle free of earthly social and cultural restrictions. Clinton's P-funk songs combined the party theme with social commentary in a comic style. This theme and the philosophy of P-funk prevail in Parliament's "Chocolate City" (1975); "P. Funk (Wants to Get Funked Up)" (1975); "Prelude" (1976); "Dr. Funkenstein" (1976); "Bop Gun (Endangered Species)" (1977); and "Funkentelechy" (1977). Musically, the P-funk style advances the concepts of Sly Stone, who achieved mood and textural variety through the use of electronic distorting devices and synthesizers.

By the late 1970s, advancements in musical technology and the emergence of disco as a distinct electro-pop style influenced the reconfiguration and shifts in the musical direction of many funk bands. To remain competitive against the disco craze, some funk bands, such as Heat-wave and Con Funk Shun, incorporated disco elements in their music, replacing horn players with synthesizers and juxtaposing disco rhythms in the funk groove. Others, including the Bar-Kays, Lakeside, Gap Band, Cameo, Rick James, and Instant Funk, combined synthesizers with the traditional funk instrumentation in ways that preserved the aesthetic of the earlier funk styles. Taking a different approach, Zapp and Roger from Dayton, Ohio, used advanced technologies to create an electro-based Dayton funk sound centering on the vocoder (an electronic and distorting talk box); a heavy, synthesized bottom; and distorted instrumental timbres.

At the same time, rap music deejay Afrika Bambaataa and the Soul Sonic Force developed their own brand of electro-funk based on the innovations of European prototechno group Kraftwerk. Borrowing and reworking a musical phrase from Kraftwerk's "Planet Rock" (1982), Bambaataa used programmable synthesizers, drum machines, and other electronic equipment to produce a danceable space-oriented techno-funk style characterized by a series of varying sound effects. Other groups such as the Planet Patrol ("Play at Your Own Risk," 1982), and the Jonzun Crew ("Space Is the Place," 1982) popularized this style.

## **Go-Go**

Go-go, a derivative funk style, evolved in Washington, D.C.'s inner-city neighborhoods during the mid-1970s. It is distinguished from traditional funk styles in that it is a performance-oriented music and not easily replicated in the studio. Live and continuous audience participation is essential to go-go performances. The audience and performers spontaneously create and exchange phrases in an antiphonal style. Songs are extended and different songs are connected through the use of percussion instruments, resulting into a twenty- to ninety-minute performance. Go-go pioneer Chuck Brown popularized this style, which highlights horns and percussion, in his hits "Bustin' Loose" (1978) and "We Need Some Money" (1985). Film director Spike Lee brought national notoriety to the idiom when he featured E.U. (Experience Unlimited) performing "Da' Butt" in his film *School Daze* (1988). Other go-go groups include Trouble Funk, Rare Essence, Little Benny and the Masters, Slim, and Redds and the Boys.

## **Disco**

*Disco* is a term first used to identify dance music played in discotheques during the 1970s. The majority of these recordings were black music, as evidenced by the first "Top 50 Disco Hits" chart that appeared in 1974 in *Billboard* (a music industry publication). With few exceptions, the songs that comprise this chart were soul, Latin soul, funk, and the new sounds from Philadelphia International Records (known as the "Sound of Philadelphia" or the "Philly Sound," the latter created by the songwriter-producers Kenny Gamble, Leon Huff, and songwriter-arranger-producer Thom Bell).

By the late 1970s, *disco* referred to a new body of extended-play dance music (i.e., remixes of songs that exceeded the standard three-minute recording) distinguished by orchestral-styled arrangements and synthesized sound effects anchored around a distinctive drum pattern known as the *disco beat*. This style, defined as the "Philly Sound," has its origins in the drum beats and arrangements that combine melodic strings with percussively played horn lines over a four-to-the-bar bass drum pattern subdivided by beats of the high-hat cymbal (and variations of this pattern). The groups MFSB ("TSOP," 1973; "Love Is the Message," 1974) and

Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes (“Bad Luck,” 1975) and the singer Thelma Houston (“Don’t Leave Me This Way,” 1976) propelled this sound into the mainstream, and disco became a worldwide musical phenomenon. Both American and European disco producers appropriated the Philly Sound, especially the drum pattern, to create various disco styles. These include the orchestral-style arrangements of Gloria Gaynor (“Never Can Say Good-bye,” 1974; “I Will Survive,” 1978) and Salsoul Orchestra (“Tangerine,” 1975); the Euro-disco styles of the Ritchie Family (“Brazil,” 1975; “The Best Disco in Town,” 1976), Donna Summer (“Love to Love You, Baby,” 1975), the Trammps (“That’s Where the Happy People Go,” 1976), and the Village People (“San Francisco,” 1977; “Macho Man,” 1978); the Latin-soul styles of Carl Douglas (“Doctor’s Orders,” 1974), and Van McCoy (“The Hustle,” 1974; “The Disco Kid,” 1975); and the funk-based disco of Silver Convention (“Fly, Robin, Fly,” 1975), B. T. Express (“B. T. Express,” 1974), Taste of Honey (“Boogie Oogie Oogie,” 1978), and Chic (“Good Times,” 1979).

After the release of the disco film *Saturday Night Fever* (1977), disco crossed over from a primarily black and gay audience into the mainstream. The popularity of the film’s sound track resulted in the disco craze. Record companies flooded the market with recordings that reduced earlier innovative disco sounds to a formula—the disco beat, synthesized sound effects, and repetitious vocal refrain lines. By the early 1980s, disco had lost its originality and soon faded from the musical landscape.

Filling the void for original dance music, black deejay Frankie Knuckles evolved a disco-derivative style known as *house music* in the mid-1980s in Chicago. His creations incorporated gospel-style vocals over a repetitive bass line and drum pattern programmed on synthesizers and drum machines. Similar to disco and funk, the lyrics of house encourage dancers to have a good time. House performers include Marshall Jefferson (“Move Your Body [The House Music Anthem],” 1986), Exit (“Let’s Work It Out,” 1987), Fast Eddie (“Yo Yo Get Funky,” 1988), Inner City (“Big Fun,” 1988), and Technotronic (“Pump Up the Jam,” 1989; “Move This,” 1989).

## **Rap and Hip-Hop Music**

Rap music has its origins in hip-hop culture, which emerged in African-American, Afro-Caribbean, and Latino communities of the Bronx and spread to other sections of New York City in the early 1970s. Encompassing four performance expressions—graffiti or aerosol art, boying/girling (break dancing), DJ-ing, and MC-ing (rapping)—hip-hop became popular throughout the city through its association with gang culture. The rise in unemployment, the lack of educational opportunities, and the decline of federally funded job training and social programs contributed to increased poverty, community decay, and the proliferation of drugs during the years following the civil rights protest activities of the 1960s. Between the late 1960s and the early 1970s, gang violence escalated to new levels throughout New York City. Searching for alternative and nonviolent forms of competitive gang warfare, ex-gang members turned to hip-hop culture. Beginning in 1974, hip-hop became the vehicle through which gang members elevated their social status and developed a sense of pride, displaying their verbal, dance, and technological skills. By the mid-1970s, hip-hop culture had begun to dominate the expressions of all inner-city youth, and in 1979 the first commercial recordings of rap music appeared on vinyl. Since the 1990s, the term *hop-hop* is often synonymous with rap music or rhythm-and-blues–rap fusion. This reference to hip-hop places less emphasis on the original four cultural components—graffiti, boying/girling, DJ-ing, and MC-ing.

Rap/hip-hop music can be defined as rhymed poetry recited in rhythm over musical tracks. It draws from the cultural and verbal traditions of the African diaspora. The verbal component is rooted in the African-derived oral traditions of storytelling, toasting (narrative poems that sometimes bestow praises), boasting (self-aggrandizement), and signifying or “playing the dozens” (the competitive exchange of insults). The performance style of rappers employs rhymes, rhythmic speech patterns, and the rhetorical approach of the 1950s African-American deejays who talked, or “rapped,” over music. These deejays inspired the sound and verbal innovations of Jamaican mobile disk jockeys, whose large and powerful sound systems (consisting of turntables, speakers, amplifiers, and a microphone) were central to the development of rap as a musical genre. As performers for outdoor parties (known as *blues dances*) in Jamaica, deejays competed for audiences through

their display of skills in sequencing records (including rhythm and blues), manipulating volume, and complimenting the dancers through their toasts. To focus more on the technical aspects of the performance, these deejays hired assistants to verbally interact with the crowd. These assistants later became known as MCs (from “master of ceremonies”). After deejays from the Caribbean migrated to the Bronx, they eventually joined forces with African-American rappers, and collectively they created rap music as a distinctive genre. Rap (or hip-hop) music consists of several subgenres and stylistic subcategories, including *party rap*, *hardcore rap* (conscious, nationalist, message, or Afro-centric rap; gangsta or reality rap; and X-rated rap), *pop rap* (novelty or humorous rap), and *commercial rap* (rap ballad and rhythm-and-blues rap). The first commercial rap recording, “Rapper’s Delight” by the Sugarhill Gang, released in 1979, established party rap as the model for early rap recordings. This rap style exploited the art of boasting and often featured a group of rappers (known as a *posse* or *crew*). While bragging about their verbal facility and ability to “rock the house,” they identified their physical attributes, material possessions, and other personal characteristics. Rappers competed with each other within and across individual groups. Popularizers of the party-rap style include Sequence (“Funk You Up,” 1979), Curtis Blow (“The Breaks,” 1980), Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five (“Freedom,” 1980; “Birthday Party,” 1981), Funky Four Plus One (“Rapping and Rocking the House,” 1980), Lady B. (“To the Beat [Y’all],” 1980), Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five and Furious Five Meets the Sugarhill Gang (“Showdown,” 1981).

In the mid-1980s a new generation of rappers from the inner cities and suburbs broadened the scope of rap. While “rockin’ the house,” boasting, and signifyin’, these rappers introduced new lyric themes and musical styles to the tradition. Some told humorous stories and tall tales, and others recounted adolescent pranks, fantasies, and romantic encounters. In 1984 UTFO (“Roxanne Roxanne”), Roxanne Shante (“Roxanne’s Revenge”), and the Real Roxanne (“The Real Roxanne”) popularized verbal dueling, or “signifyin’,” between genders. In “La Di Da Di” (1985), Doug E. Fresh incorporated rhythmic vocal effects in a concept known as the *human beat box*, which became the trademark of the comic group the Fat Boys (“Jail House Rap,” 1984; “The Fat Boys Are Back,” 1985). The humorous style of the Fat Boys established the model for what became known as *pop rap*. DJ Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince brought notoriety to this style through their parodies of the suburban black middle class as illustrated in “Girls Ain’t Nothing but Trouble” (1986) and “Parents Just Don’t Understand” (1988), as did De La Soul in “Potholes in My Lawn” (1989), “Plug Tunin’” (1989), and “Me Myself and I” (1989). LL Cool J introduced the rap ballad in “I Need Love” (1987), which brought a softer edge and a romantic dimension to hip-hop music. MC Hammer brought a rhythm-and-blues flavor to rap by borrowing songs from the rhythm-and-blues tradition as his soundtrack (*Please Hammer, Don’t Hurt ‘Em*, 1990). Queen Latifah, the Real Roxanne, and Positive K introduced a feminist perspective in “Ladies First” (1989), “Respect” (1988), and “I Got a Man” (1992), respectively.

In the late 1980s rap became a public forum for social and political commentary as well as the expression of inner-city rage and X-rated behavior. Throughout this decade, inner-city communities continued to deteriorate. A recession (1980–1982), ongoing fiscal conservatism, the continuing rise in unemployment due to deindustrialization, and the absence of a black middle class resulted in the expansion of the “urban underclass” and the relocation of wealthier African-Americans to the suburbs. These changing economic and social conditions led to a proliferation of drugs and related violence and chaos in inner-city communities. Such conditions inspired a new rap form characterized by an aggressive tone and graphic descriptions of the social ills and harshness of inner-city life. Labeled *hardcore*, this rap form constitutes three stylistic categories: conscious, nationalist, or message rap; gangsta or reality rap; and X-rated rap.

The first hip-hop recordings that exposed the economic woes, social ills, and deteriorating conditions of inner cities were by East Coast rappers, including Curtis Blow’s “Hard Times” (1980), Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five’s “The Message” (1982) and “New York, New York” (1983), and Grandmaster Flash and Melle Mel’s “White Lines (Don’t Do It)” (1983). In the late 1980s, politically oriented rappers began expounding on these themes, condemning social injustices, drugs, police brutality, violence, and black-on-black crime. As a solution to these social ills, they promoted the 1960s Black Nationalist agenda advanced by the Nation of Islam and the Five Percent Nation, who advocated political confrontation and identification with an African heritage.

Innovators and popularizers of conscious rap include Public Enemy (“It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back,” 1988; “Fear of a Black Planet,” 1989–1990); Jungle Brothers (“Straight Out of the Jungle,” 1988; “Done by the Forces of Nature,” 1989); Boogie Down Productions (“By All Means Necessary,” 1988; “Ghetto Music: The Blueprint of Hip Hop,” 1989); Paris (“The Devil Made Me Do It,” 1989–1990); X-Clan (“To the East, Blackwards,” 1990); Brand Nubian (“One for All,” 1990; “In God We Trust,” 1992), and Sister Souljah (“360 Degrees of Power,” 1992).

The political voices of nationalist rappers overlapped with the harsh and violent messages and aggressive style of another group of hardcore rappers primarily from the West Coast. Labeled *gangsta rap* (by the media) and *reality rap* (by the rappers themselves), performers of this rap style described the chaos and the rough and seedy side of inner-city life using graphic language laced with expletives. Although their tales of violence and sexual exploits exposed aspects of life in inner-city communities, they often exploited and dramatized these experiences by glorifying drugs, violence, criminal acts, and misogynistic behavior. Such rappers include N.W.A. (“Straight Outta Compton,” 1988; “Niggaz 4 Life,” 1991); Eazy-E (“Eazy-Duz-It,” 1988); Ice Cube (“Amerikkka’s Most Wanted,” 1990); Dr. Dre (“The Chronic,” 1992); and Snoop Doggy Dogg (“Doggystyle,” 1993). Early representation of this subgenre can also be found on the East Coast (Slick Rick, “Children’s Story,” 1988), in the South (2 Live Crew, “As Nasty As They Wanna Be,” 1989), and in the Southwest (Geto Boys, “The Geto Boys,” 1989; “Uncut Dope,” 1992).

In the early 1990s the gangsta style of West Coast rappers (Los Angeles, Oakland, Compton, and Long Beach) had begun supplanting the nationalist message of East Coast rappers (New York, New Jersey, and Philadelphia) in national popularity and in record sales. This shift in the regional preference for rap music fuelled verbal battles that came to be known as the East Coast–West Coast feud. The East Coast rappers publicly condemned the West Coast rappers as being fake and “studio gangsters” (i.e., creating a fictional gangster lifestyle). In response, West Coast rappers vilified their East Coast counterparts, accusing them of being “soft” and disrespecting the West Coast contributions to hip-hop. These differences in perspectives and the “authentic” representation of black people in hip-hop underscore the issues that fueled the East-West feud. Public Enemy’s “I Don’t Wanna Be Called Yo Nigga” (1991), for example, confronts the disrespectful overuse of the term *nigga* in “Niggas 4 Life” (1991) by N.W.A. (for Niggas With Attitude). In response, in “Endangered Species (Tales from the Darkside)” (1990), N.W.A.’s Ice Cube accused Public Enemy and other conscious rappers of focusing too much on Africa and nationalist issues rather than the struggles of the black poor in America. This feud moved to personal levels with the release of “Fuck Compton” (1991) by the Bronx rapper Tim Dog, to which Compton rapper Snoop Doggy Dogg responded on Dr. Dre’s single “Fuck Wit Dre Day (and Everybody’s Celebratin’)” (1992), which implied that Tim Dog engaged in homosexual acts—a major insult in hip-hop culture.

By the mid-1990s, the earlier preference for message-oriented hardcore rap on the East Coast gave way to the gangsta style and the notoriety of rappers Wu-Tang Clan from Staten Island, Junior M.A.F.I.A. from Brooklyn, and Notorious B.I.G. (a.k.a. Biggie Smalls) from Brooklyn, among others. The level of competition escalated the East/West rivalry to new heights (spurred on by the hip-hop media) and culminated in the deaths of Oakland rapper Tupac Shakur in 1996 and Notorious B.I.G. in 1997. While leaving a New York City recording studio in 1994, Shakur was shot five times, and he publicly blamed Notorious B.I.G. and producer Sean “Puffy” Combs of arranging his attempted murder. After a year of verbal exchanges via the media and public events, Shakur insulted Notorious B.I.G. in the song “Hit ‘Em Up” (1995) by bragging about a supposed sexual encounter between Shakur and Smalls’s wife, vocalist Faith Evans. Smalls responded on Jay-Z’s “Brooklyn’s Finest” (1996), with threats to engage in violent mob-style retaliation.

Despite the messages of violence and the tendency of some gangsta rappers to devalue human life, many expressed their commitment to improving the conditions of inner-city communities, and they frequently denounced behavior that had a negative impact on African-Americans. Ice T (“I’m Your Pusher” and “High Rollers,” 1988), for example, condemned drugs and criminal activity. N.W.A. (“F Tha Police,” 1988) and Ice T (“Cop Killer,” 1992) spoke out against police brutality. Other rappers addressed a broader array of social issues,



ranging from the plight of unwed mothers to that of the homeless and those on welfare. Such socially conscious performers included Tupac Shakur (“Keep Ya Head Up,” 1993), Arrested Development (“Mama’s Always on Stage” and “Mr. Wendall,” 1992), Queen Latifah (“The Evil That Men Do,” 1989), Common (“Book of Life,” 1994), Roots (“What They Do,” 1996), and Kanye West (“All Falls Down,” 2004).

Hardcore hip-hop is distinguished from the other styles by an aggressive, polytextured, and polysonic aesthetic produced electronically and digitally. Often referred to as *noise*, this aesthetic draws, combines, and remixes samples from many sound sources—street noises (sirens, gunshots, babies crying, screams, etc.), political speeches of African-American leaders, TV commercials, and so on—into a sound collage. This collage captures the ethos, chaos, tensions, anger, despair, and the sometimes violent nature of inner-city life, thus supporting the harsh lyrics and assertive delivery style of hardcore rappers. Hardcore hip-hop contrasts the less dense and more melodic rhythm-and-blues/funk-derived aesthetic associated with the 1970s party-style music produced by live studio musicians. Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five and Afrika Bambaata and the Soul Sonic Force provide the sonic transition from the party to the hardcore hip-hop aesthetic. In “The Adventures of Grandmaster Flash on the Wheels of Steel” (1981) and “The Message” (1982), deejay Grand-master Flash incorporates the street-styled production techniques of hip-hop deejays in studio recordings. Drawing and reassembling (remixing) short excerpts from several recordings (rather than different sections of the same record) to which he added scratching sounds, Grand-master Flash created a new musical track best described as a sound collage. Further experimentations of Grand-master Flash resulted in the use of programmed electronic instruments (synthesizers and the beat box) in conjunction with live musicians.

Deejay Afrika Bambaata in “Planet Rock” (1982) further facilitated the transition from live musical production to music generated by electronic and digital instruments, a feature that distinguishes party from hardcore rap. “Planet Rock,” based on a short melodic phrase from “Trans-Europe Express” by the proto-techno group Kraftwerk, was produced electronically, with programmed percussion and keyboard instruments. Afrika Bambaata’s next recording, “Looking for the Perfect Beat” (1983), featured samples as substitutes for programmed synthesizers. A year later, Run-D.M.C. fused rock with rap in “Rock Box” (1984), a technique the group used again in “King of Rock” (1985) and “Walk This Way” (1986). Run-D.M.C.’s collaboration with rock guitarist Eddie Martinez and the rock group Aerosmith gave a hard, raw edge to the hip-hop aesthetic. Public Enemy added multiple layers of sampled raw sounds and textures to this aesthetic framework, which became the group’s signature sound as well as the reference for defining hardcore hip-hop.

Since the mid-1990s, innovative hip-hop productions have moved beyond the East Coast and West Coast to what became known as the “The Dirty South.” Representative performers included OutKast and Goodie MoB from Atlanta, Master P. from New Orleans, and Geto Boys and Scareface from Houston. Innovative hip-hop was also being produced in the Midwest by Bone Thugs-N-Harmony from Cleveland, Common from Chicago, Eminem and Royce the 5’9” from Detroit, and Nelly from Saint Louis. Although these performers have unique local identities, they cross stylistic boundaries, fusing and reformulating concepts from earlier hip-hop traditions.

## **New Jack Swing**

By the late 1980s, new black popular styles were being created by independent producers, including Teddy Riley, Dallas Austin, and the teams of James “Jimmy Jam” Harris and Terry Lewis and Antonio “L. A.” Reid and Kenneth “Babyface” Edmonds. One style that evolved from the innovations of these producers, and was imitated by others, was labeled *new jack swing*. The style, pioneered by Teddy Riley, represents postmodern soul; it is defined by its sparse instrumentation and a marked underlying drum pattern blended with or sometimes above the tempered vocals. Variations of this pattern incorporate a snare drum emphasis on the second and fourth beats, giving the sound a 1970s syncopated swing associated with James Brown and Earth, Wind, and Fire. The rhythms and production techniques of new jack swing became the beat and mix of the late 1980s and 1990s. It can be heard in Guy’s “Groove Me” (1988), “You Can Call Me Crazy” (1988), and “Don’t Clap...Just Dance” (1988); Heavy D. and The Boyz’ “We Got Our Own Thang” (1989); Keith Sweat’s “Make You Sweat” (1990); Hi Five’s “I Just Can’t Handle It” (1990); the gospel group Winans’ “A Friend” (1990); and Michael Jackson’s “Remember the Time” (1992), among others.

Future trends in black popular music will be pioneered by individuals and groups who continue to cross traditional genres and borrow from existing styles to create music that expresses the changing ideas and ideals of the African-American community.

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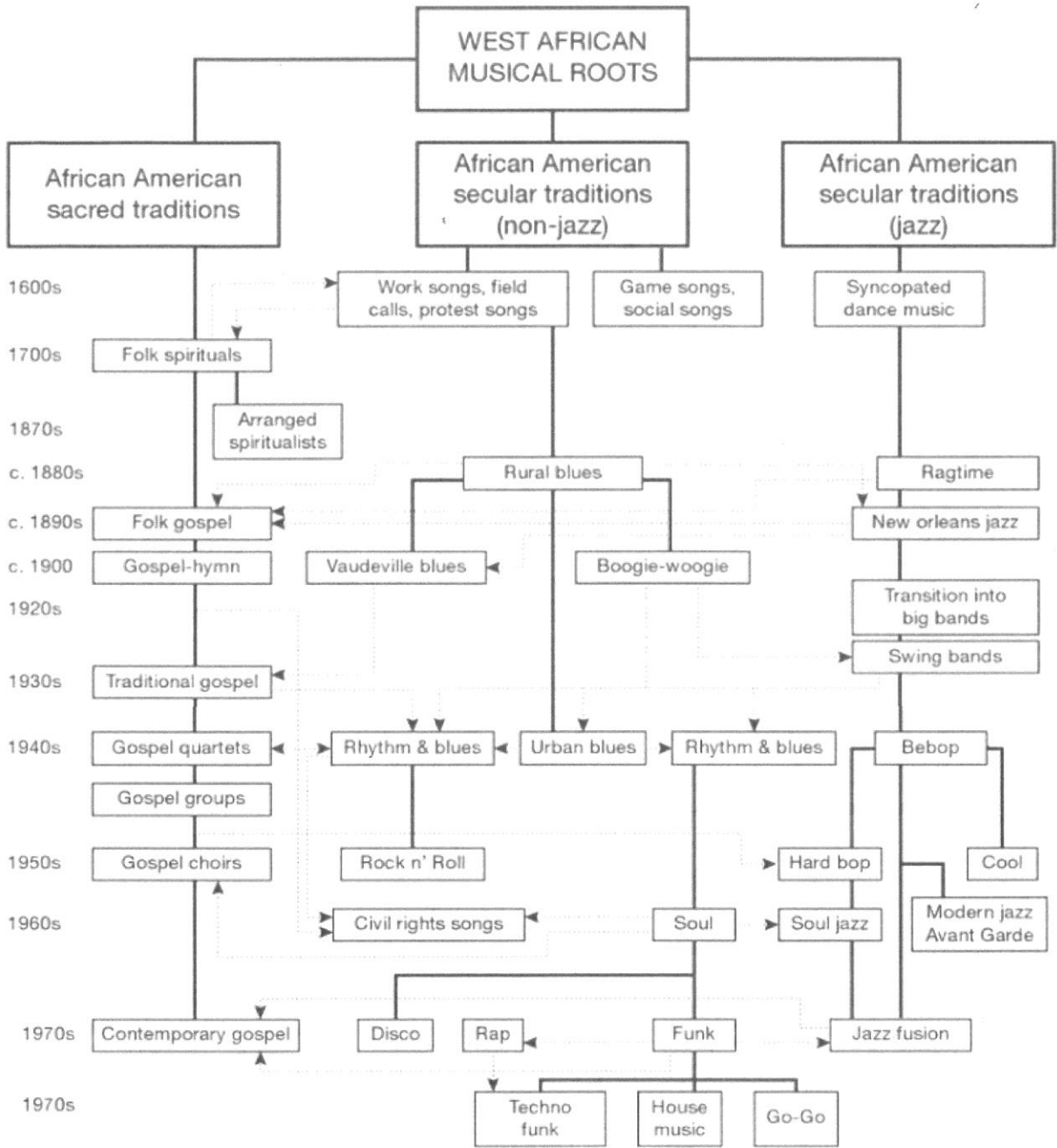
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Updated by author 2005

# AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSIC: ITS DEVELOPMENT



▶ Indicates cross influences

## African-American Music Timeline

### The influence of “Black” music on the development of American popular music

1700s	Slave trade brings West African rhythms, chants and song structures to America, which leads to the advent of blues, jazz and negro spirituals
1831	Popular circus clown Dan Rice blackens his face to perform "negro songs" for a variety show in New York's Bowery district and sets off the minstrelsy craze
1851	Stephen Foster writes Old Folks At Home, based on an Ethiopian melody
1877	First practical phonograph invented
1896	Scott Joplin, James Scott and Joseph Lamb bring West Indian rhythms to European progressions to create a uniquely American popular music form called ragtime
1897	Buddy Bolden organizes first band in New Orleans to play instrumental blues
1900	The Spanish, French, blues and ragtime music all the rage on Mississippi river boats moves into New Orleans brothels and honkytonk bars, where it later becomes known as jazz
1902	Teenaged sporting house pianist Jelly Roll Morton claims to be the first to play this so-called jazz music
1912	Bandleader and composer William Christopher Handy writes and publishes Memphis Blues, giving rise to the classic blues era
1916	Charles Albert Tindley becomes the first published black gospel composer with the release of New Songs Of Paradise, a songbook of 37 gospel hymns
1917	The era of jazz recording is launched in New York with Livery Stable Blues, by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band
1919	New Orleans trumpeter Louis Armstrong and Jelly Roll Morton make Chicago the new capital of jazz music
1920	Prohibition Jazz and blues music flourishes in speakeasies everywhere
	Marnie Smith's recording of Crazy Blues becomes the first "race" record to sell over 250,000 copies
1922	Jazz pianist/composer Duke Ellington forms the Duke Ellington Orchestra in New York
1923	Bessie Smith's first song, Down Hearted Blues, is an instant hit, and Smith becomes "Queen of the Blues"
1924	George Gershwin composes symphonic jazz piece Rhapsody In Blue, leading jazz out of the clubs and into concert halls for the first time
1925	WSM Barn Dance begins Saturday radio broadcasts of country and western music Program becomes known as Grand Ole Opry Lovesick Blues recorded by minstrel singer Emmett Miller, inspiring Hank Williams, Jimmie Rodgers and Merle Haggard The 78 rpm record becomes the industry standard
1927	Louis Armstrong brings new relevance to the role of the soloist in jazz with his Hot Fives and Sevens
1928	Victor label holds first recording session in Nashville, featuring black Opry star DeFord Bailey, but only half of his songs are released and he's short-changed on royalties
1929	Stock market crash brings on the Great Depression
1930	First commercially available "long-playing" records are introduced by Victor but don't catch on due to lack of affordable playback units Columbia has more success with its microgroove LPs in 1948
1931	The dramatic improvement in Robert Johnson's guitar playing is attributed by fellow Mississippi bluesmen to a deal with the devil
1932	Duke Ellington's It Don't Mean A Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing kicks off the swing era
	Blues pianist/composer Thomas A. Dorsey writes Take My Hand, Precious Lord and embarks on a new career as the "father of gospel music"

1933	Columbia Records impresario John Hammond discovers Billie Holiday at Monette's in New York
1936	Electric guitars debut
1938	Sister Rosetta Tharpe takes gospel out of the church and brings the spirit to secular music venues like New York's Cotton Club and Cafe Society Saxophonist Louis Jordan leaves Chick Webb's orchestra to start his own jump band, the Tympany Five, whose sound is a precursor of rock 'n' roll
1939	Saxophonist Charlie Parker, while jamming on Cherokee, hits on a new method of soloing by building on the chords' extended intervals, starting the bebop movement
	Charlie Christian brings the electric guitar to new prominence while sitting in with Benny Goodman
	Oscar Peterson wins CBC amateur contest at 14 and gets a regular 15-minute job playing live on the air
1941	Travelling folklorist Alan Lomax records Muddy Waters on Stovall's Plantation in Mississippi
1949	First 45 rpm 7-inch singles appear in the US
1951	Cleveland disc jockey Alan Freed uses the term "rock 'n' roll" to help sell the black rhythm and blues music he's playing for a white audience
	Ike Turner's Kings of Rhythm cut Rocket 88, generally considered the first rock 'n' roll record
	Bill Haley records a cover of Rocket 88 three months later
	Little Richard steals Turner's piano intro to Rocket 88 note for note for his own Good Golly Miss Molly
1952	Phil and Leonard Chess let recent signee Muddy Waters go into the studio with his own band and they create an electrifying new urban blues sound
1954	Bill Haley and the Comets start scoring million-selling hits by whitening up already popular Rhythm & Blues tunes like Big Joe Turner's Shake, Rattle And Roll, Pat Boone takes note
	Elvis Presley records a version of Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup's That's All Right Mama as his debut single for Sun Records The style of rhythmically propulsive hillbilly holler catches on quickly with the kids
1955	Chuck Berry secures a recording deal with Chess by performing a cover of Bob Wills' western swing classic Ida Red, which he soon transforms into the number-one chart hit Maybelline
	Sun Ra and Cecil Taylor make their first recordings as bandleaders
1957	Entrepreneurial Rhythm & Blues crooner Sam Cooke lays the foundation for the 60s soul boom by using the proceeds of his hit song You Send Me to start his own label, publishing imprint and management firm
	Charles Mingus records The Clown and East Coasting Norman Mailer publishes The White Negro
1958	Modern amplified rhythm and blues is introduced to England by Chuck Berry on a UK tour. A teenaged Keith Richards is listening
1959	Former Detroit assembly line worker Berry Gordy Jr. founds the Motown label and begins mass-marketing black popular music with help from the Miracles, Mabel John, Andre Williams and Marvin Gaye
	Ornette Coleman records Tomorrow Is The Question, Change Of The Century and the presciently titled The Shape Of Jazz To Come, setting the stage for the era of free jazz
1960	Tired of playing sideman, John Coltrane forms a quartet of his own and touches off the new thing movement
1963	The Beatles and the Rolling Stones take over the UK charts by playing in the style of their favourite American Rhythm & Blues and blues artists
1966	Aretha Franklin can't buy a hit until Jerry Wexler records her accompanying herself on piano
1967	Jimi Hendrix Experience blows minds of musicians on both sides of the Atlantic with Are You Experienced?
1970	The Last Poets release its self-titled debut, featuring a confrontational mix of shouted poetry

	and jazz drumming that presaged rap music. Black Spades gang leader Kahyan Aasim, aka Afrika Bambaataa, begins to DJ parties, mixing a wide assortment of musical styles
	David Mancuso begins "invitation only" parties in New York, later known as The Loft Creates concept of DJ record pool, laying groundwork for disco boom
1971	Isaac Hayes composes, arranges, produces and records the symphonic soul soundtrack to Shaft, which becomes number-one pop album and wins him an Oscar
	Marvin Gaye's socially conscious concept album What's Going On proves a huge seller despite Berry Gordy Jr.'s doubts
1972	Curtis Mayfield creates the Superfly soundtrack, a number-one pop and Rhythm & Blues chart smash
1973	Jamaican immigrant Clive "Kool Herc" Campbell applies his knowledge of Kingston sound systems to rock block parties in the South Bronx, using two turntables to extend the length of beat-heavy "break" sections of soul and funk records
1974	Inspired by Jamaican toasting, the concept of emceeing begins with shouts of "to the beat, y'all!"
1975	Coke La Rock and Clark Kent form the first emcee duo, giving Run DMC an alternative to pizza delivery
1976	Disco flourishes. Larry Levan starts spinning at New York's Paradise Garage, bringing new prominence to the DJ as artist
1977	Frankie Knuckles gives up textile design studies to take DJ gig at Chicago's Warehouse club. Thumping drum machine-based music he plays becomes known as house
1979	The Sugar Hill Gang's Rapper's Delight becomes the first commercial rap hit The Fatback Band's release of the rap song King Tim III creates controversy over the "first rap record" for decades to come
1980	Blondie releases Rapture, which despite Debbie Harry's corny rhymes, introduces rap to a whole new audience
1981	Arrival of MTV music video station puts new emphasis on the visual presentation of music
	Juan Atkins releases electronic dance single Alleys Of Your Mind under the name Cybertron, lifted from Alvin Toffler's book Future Shock. He uses another Toffler term to describe the music: techno
1982	Michael Jackson's Thriller is released and sells 25 million copies, making it the top-selling album in history
	Afrika Bambaataa and the Soul Sonic Force's Planet Rock uses samples of Kraftwerk's Trans Europe Express to become first global electro hit
1983	Compact discs are introduced and soon become the industry standard Herbie Hancock cuts Rokit, which becomes the first jazz/hip-hop crossover hit
	Afrika Bambaataa's Looking For The Perfect Beat ushers in the sampling era
1986	Eric B and Rakim's game-changing Eric B Is President forces all aspiring rappers to raise their skills
	Run DMC's reconstruction of Aerosmith's Walk This Way puts rap on the pop charts and MTV
1987	The term "world music" is coined by the music biz to market African and Latin music to the masses
1988	The sample-rich sound of Public Enemy's It Takes A Nation Of Millions To Hold Us Back sets a new production standard. NWA's Straight Outta Compton goes gold, signaling the arrival of gangsta rap
1989	Maestro Fresh Wes's Let Your Backbone Slide becomes the top-selling Canadian hip-hop single ever
	Toronto's K-Cut and Sir Scratch join Queens pals Large Professor and Mikey D as Main Source to record Think single
1991	Dream Warriors put Canadian hip-hop on the map with And Now The Legacy Begins
	Main Source releases its classic Breaking Atoms album

1993	New York's Hot 97 switches from dance format to hip-hop, launching the career of Funkmaster Flex
1996	Scribble Jam begins showcasing unknown underground rappers like Sage Francis and Eminem
1997	Memorex, Maxell and TDK introduce blank recordable CDs
2000	The Internet transforms the way music is disseminated and heard
	Invisible Scratch Picklz break up, putting the final nail in the coffin of turntablism
2001	FLOW 935 becomes Canada's first urban radio station
2002	Hip-hop dominates the mainstream: Eminem's The Eminem Show and Nelly's Nellyville rank as two top-selling albums of the year, far outperforming releases by Celine Dion, Pink and the Dixie Chicks
2003	Othar Turner, perhaps the last living original fife-and-drum musician, dies at 94 in Mississippi
2004	With the release of Confessions, Usher becomes the first Rhythm & Blues singer to sell in excess of 11 million discs in first week
	Jay-Z's unlikely collaboration with Linkin Park on Collision Course debuts at number one and becomes the biggest-selling CD/DVD package of the year
2005	Destiny's Child announce breakup
	50 Cent's The Massacre edges out Eminem's Encore as the top-selling album of the year
2006	Three 6 Mafia become the first hip-hop group to win an Oscar for their contribution to the Hustle & Flow soundtrack
	Jodeci, X-Clan and Bone Thugs-n-Harmony reunite