

yoruba Popular music

Yoruba Popular music Yoruba music has become the most important component of modern Nigerian popular music. Yoruba music is not influenced by foreign music but evolved and adapted itself through contact with foreign instruments. Interpretation involves rendering African, here Yoruba, musical expression using a mixture of instruments from different horizons. Although, it is true that music genres like the highlife played by musicians like Rex Lawson, Segun Bucknor, Bobby Benson, etc., Fela Kuti's Afrobeat, and King Sunny Ade's juju are all Yoruba adaptations of foreign music. These musical genres have their roots in large metropolitan cities like Lagos, Ibadan, and Port Harcourt where people and culture mix. Many Yoruba musicians derived their influences in Islam. From time immemorial, Islam has had enormous influence on Yoruba music. As a matter of fact, most non-juju Yoruba singers/musicians, if not all, had their roots or influences in Islam [2]. However, certain pioneering Muslim juju musicians such as Tunde Nightingale and Ayinde Bakare predated King Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Obey and many popular Christian juju musicians. Take for instance, sakara played by the pioneers such as Ojo Lawale in Ibadan, Abibu Oluwa, Yusuf Olatunji, Sanusi Aka, Saka Layigbade, and etc. In fact, many students of history would recall how Yusuf Olatunji had to convert to Islam in order to succeed in his career. What about apala, which was played by Muslim pacesetters such as Haruna Ishola, Sefiu Ayan, Ligali Mukaiba, Kasumu Adio, Yekini (Y.K.) Ajadi, and etc? Also, it will be simplistic and, far-fetched, to say that these musical genres were only "adapted to the practice of the (Islamic) religion." This is true of Fuji, which emerged in the late 60s/early 70s, as an offshoot of were/ajisari music genres, which were made popular by certain Ibadan singers/musicians such as the late Alhaji Dauda Epo-Akara and Ganiyu Kuti or "Gani Irefin." It's even laughable to hear that waka music played and popularized by Alhaja Batuli Alake and, more recently, Salawa Abeni, Kuburat Alaragbo, Asanat Omo-Aje, Mujidat Ogunfalu, Misitura Akawe, Fatimo Akingbade, Karimot Aduke, and Risikat Abeawo has/had nothing to do with Islam. In both Ibadan (Nigeria's largest city), and Lagos (Nigeria's most populous city), these multicultural traditions were brought together and became the root of Nigerian popular music.

Traditional Yoruba music and instruments: (1) sekere, a melodic shaker; beads or cowrie shells beautifully wound around a gourd. The gourd is then violently shaken and beaten by fists; occasionally, it's hoisted up in the air to create a festive mood. (2) agogo, a high-pitched tone instrument like a 3-dimensional "tuning fork". (3) saworo, like agogo but, its tone is low-pitched. (4) agidigbo, a piano-like instrument; it's wound round the neck and stabilized by the player's chest. (5) ashiko, a cone-shaped drum. (6) bata, a well decorated traditional drum of many tones. (7) dundun, comprising of "iya ilu", main or "mother" drum and omele, smaller accompanying drums. (8) gudugudu, a smaller, melodic bata. (9) goje, sort of violin like the sahelian kora. (10) omele, a smaller, two-pronged, accompanying bata drums. (11) bembe, sort of band drum a la kettle drum. (12) aro, a low-pitched instrument, much like a saworo. (13) seli, a combination of aro, saworo and hand-clapping.