

Side 1

- Band 1. Xylophone-Bapende of Zaire
- Band 2. Marimba from Columbia
- Band 3. "Let 'Em Jump" (Pete Johnson)
- Band 4. "Akonoday" - Ghana
- Band 5. Call to Prayer - Muslim
- Band 6. Mende Muslim song-Sierra Leone
- Band 7. Song from Malaga - Spain

Side 2

- Band 8. "Black Woman" by Vera Hall
- Band 9. Kpelle Brush-cutters - Liberia
- Band 10. "Imo Gal" - Jamaica
- Band 11. "Let Your Hammer Ring" USA
- Band 12. Los Congos de Villa Mella - Criollo
- Band 13. "Palomita Nueva" - Dominica

Side 3

- Band 14. Drum and fife quadrille - W.I.
- Band 15. "Wheel and Turn" - Jamaica
- Band 16. De La Suarez-Caribbean
- Band 17. "War," (Sir Lancelot, Executor, Caesser, Atilla, Lion)
- Band 18. "Fire Brigade" - Calypso (Atilla the Hun)

Side 4

- Band 19. "Ezulie" - Haiti (Le Jazz Condo)
- Band 20. "Retour des Cayes" - Haiti (Fabre Diroseau)
- Band 21. Mazurca
- Band 22. "Sutileza" - Cuba (Septeto Nacional)
- Band 23. "How Long Blues" - USA (Jimmy Yancey)

Side 5

- Band 24. Revival Zion - Jamaica ("How Sweet the Name")
- Band 25. Revival Zion - Jamaica ("I Got a Lighthouse")
- Band 26. "Roll Jordan Roll" - USA (Fisk Jubilee Singers)
- Band 27. "He's a Friend of Mine" - Gospel (Spirit of Memphis)
- Band 28. "Frankie" - USA (Mississippi John Hurt)

Side 6

- Band 29. "I Believe I'll Dust my Broom" (Robert Johnson)
- Band 30. "Leave My Love Alone" - Jazz (Coleman Hawkins)
- Band 31. "Vijana Niwambie" - Kenya (Williamu Osale)
- Band 32. "Kenyatta Aliiteswa Sana" (John Mwale)
- Band 33. "Maboke Nde Temoin" - Zaire (Bholen and Orch.)

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BLACK MUSIC OF TWO WORLDS

from Africa, Middle East, West Indies, South America and the USA.

Compiled and annotated by

JOHN STORM ROBERTS

Based on the book
"Black Music of Two Worlds" by John Storm Roberts.
Praeger Publishers and paperback by William Morrow.

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE



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BLACK MUSIC OF TWO WORLDS

JOHN STORM ROBERTS

ETHNIC FOLKWAYS RECORDS FE 4602

ETHNIC FOLKWAYS RECORDS FE 46O2

Side 1

Side 2

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Band 2. Marimba from Columbia
Band 3. "Let 'Em Jump"
(Pete Johnson)
Band 4. "Akonoday" - Ghana
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Band 7. Song from Malaga - Spain

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BLACK MUSIC OF TWO WORLDS

JOHN STORM ROBERTS

ETHNIC FOLKWAYS RECORDS FE 46O2

BLACK MUSIC of TWO WORLDS



Peg drums like these Ghanaian examples are found widely in the New World.

This album-set is intended to be used in conjunction with the book, **BLACK MUSIC OF TWO WORLDS**, by John Storm Roberts, published in hardback by Praeger Publishers at \$10.00 and in paperback by William Morrow.

BLACK MUSIC OF TWO WORLDS

The subject of this album-set is the meeting of three musical traditions—African, Arab, and European—to create a fourth tradition of great richness and international impact, that of the Black New World.

It is hardly surprising that Afro-American music is so rich. It draws from three major European sources—English, French, and Iberian (Spanish and Portuguese)—as well as several western African traditions. These include the savanna belt styles of the northern uplands—Muslim-influenced, with a tendency to long melody lines and a good deal of guitar- and fiddle-like instruments; the rainforest idioms of southern Nigeria, Ghana and so on, which were less Arab-influenced and also made much use of big drums and complex group percussion; and styles of the Congo-Angolan area, which gave the New World the marimba (the word itself is Bantu) and the berimbau musical bow of Brazil.

It is quite as risky to generalize about African music as about European or American music, but though western African music varies from ethnic group to ethnic group, its many varieties share certain general characteristics.

Perhaps the most important from the point of view of New World Black music are the following:

a) The voice is of overriding importance, and call-and-answer singing is by far the most common group vocal technique.

b) Handclapping is the single most common form of musical accompaniment, and though drumming is found in most cultures and very important in some, there is a wider range of other musical instruments than in most cultures.

c) African music is often made up of relatively short musical phrases that are repeated, or of longer lines constructed of phrases that are never repeated in exactly the same form.

d) Rhythm, and more generally a percussive approach to sound, are fundamental.

e) Above all, it is communal and functional: all music has a function, but African music is much more closely bound up with more of the details of daily living than Black music's European antecedents.

Many of these qualities are found to some extent in European music. But call-and-response singing had become rare in Europe by the time African and European music met in the New World. Much more common was the division into regular "verses," with or without a refrain.

Choral singing in European folk music is rarer than in African, though in "educated" music, especially church music, it is common. In Europe, singers used far fewer varieties of tone, even aside from the standard of "purity" of "educated" music. Folk singing tones in different regions varied, but in any one region, a particular tone dominated. (Spain and Portugal's strident, harsh, high-pitched tone, probably part-Arab in origin, has influenced Latin American singing.)

A common factor in some African and European music was an Arabic influence, via the north African Moorish kingdoms, which also made an important indirect contribution to the New World. Long, highly decorated melody lines, and a liking for brisk and complex rhythms, influenced both the Islamic parts of West Africa from which many New World Blacks originated, and southern Europe. The result, in the Americas, was a melding of compatible African and Latin elements in Latin American music.

By contrast, northern European and African styles, less similar, tended to battle it out, so that it is often possible to point to particular elements of Caribbean and U.S. Black music as African or European, whereas many features of most Latin American music are common to both mother continents.

In making my selections, I have concentrated on the music that lies behind the major modern popular styles—whether soul or reggae, jazz or salsa. These idioms are amply documented, and the elements they share with their forebears can be heard on any of a thousand commercial releases.

John Storm Roberts

BANDS 1-3: Xylophone playing of the Bapende of Zaire; marimba playing from the Pacific coast of Colombia; "Let 'Em Jump" by Pete Johnson. (From FE 4427, FE 4376, and FJ 2810) (Rec. by Leo A Verwilghen; rec. by Norman E. Whitten Jr.; rec. by SAI 2005.)

While many direct African influences are found in the New World, there are very few in U.S. music. But, as these three selections show, an indirect influence—an attitude to sound and percussive playing—can produce striking parallels. First, you hear marimba playing from Zaire, then a marimba currulao from the Pacific coast of Colombia; and lastly, Kansas City pianist Pete Johnson playing "Let 'Em Jump."

BAND 4: "Akonoday." (From Folkways FW 8859) (Rec. by Ivan Annan.)

This religious piece from Ghana contains some of the major ingredients of music from the tropical rainforest belt of western Africa. Such drumming is found in adapted form all over Black southern America and the Caribbean—and the unvarying bell patterns are the source of "clave," the two-bar offbeat rhythm that is the structural underpinning of all Cuban music.

BAND 5: Palestinian Call to Prayer. (From FE 4501) (Rec. by the Hebrew Univ., Dept. of Anthropology, Jerusalem)

The most important outside influence on a very wide range of African music is the Muslim faith. Calls to prayer, like this Palestinian example, have impressed Arabic melody patterns on African ears five times daily for hundreds of years.

BAND 6: Mende Muslim song from Sierra Leone. (From FE 4322) (Rec. by Gary Shulze.)

The Arabic influence on the music of African Muslims tended to produce longer and more decorated call-and-response vocal lines, in the music of the savanna country of Guinea, and the northern parts of West Africa, than were usual elsewhere. This savanna music is believed to have influenced Black U. S. music.

BAND 7: Song from Malaga, Spain. (From FE 4437)

Brisk, complex rhythmic patterns, "melismatic" decorations on individual notes of a vocal, even some of the melodic turns, are Arab characteristics that traveled to both southern Iberia and the Muslim areas of western Africa. They are probably the reason that so many African and Iberian ingredients were able to mix smoothly in Latin music, rather than fighting for hegemony as did African and northern European elements, which had few common factors.

BAND 8: "Black Woman," by Vera Hall. (From FJ 2802) (Rec. by Harold Courlander.)

An apparent Africanism in Black U. S. music is the blues-singer's occasional use of a single yodelled or semi-yodelled note at the end or in the middle of a phrase. European yodelling is almost always in the form of separate phrases, not incorporated into the melody, as in this blues—"Black Woman," by Vera Hall.

BAND 9: Kpelle Brush-cutters of Liberia. (From FE 4465) (Rec. by Packard L. Okie.)

African music is far richer in songs specific to various forms of work than European. Typical is this brush-cutter's song, using the sound of the machetes as a rhythm-marker.

BAND 10: "Imo Gal." (Rec. by John Storm Roberts.)

The worksong is an Africanism widespread in the Black New World. In its use of African call-and-response, often

overlapping; its rhythm marked by the swing of the picks; and its European chorus harmonies, this digging song is characteristic of the particular Jamaican blend of Africa and Europe.

BAND 11: "Let Your Hammer Ring." (From FE 4475) (Rec. in February, 1951, by Toshi and Peter Seeger, John Lomax Jr., Chester Bower and Fred Hellerman.)

A spike-driving song from the southern United States illustrates how Black music in different parts of the New World developed its own very distinctive sound from common roots. Call-and-answer, an unvarying chorus with the possibility of varied melodies in the solo lead parts, a slow increase in tempo, are common in African music. Among the unquantifiable differences is an unmistakable, peculiarly Black American, "swing."

BAND 12: Los Congos de Villa Mella, "Criollo." (Rec. by John Storm Roberts.)

This track from a village near Santo Domingo is typical of the almost purely African music that can be found in parts of the Latin American countryside. A call-and-response performance of almost entirely African melodies is accompanied by drums, maracas, canoa (a wooden equivalent of the West African clapperless bell) and handclapping.

BAND 13: "Palomita Nueva." (Rec. by John Storm Roberts.) Though African music is an important part of Black music in the New World, so is European music. This ancient melody—sung in the northern Dominican Republic by a chorus of women Black, Brown and White—is typical of the almost pure Spanish survivals in Latin America.

BAND 14: Drum and fife quadrille. (Rec. by John Storm Roberts.)

New World musicians often made basically European elements into something new by using African approaches, especially to rhythm. This West Indian drum-and-fife group had its parallels in Europe, and it is playing a movement of an old European ballroom dance, the quadrille. But the result is extremely un-European.



Jamaican mento band (see Band 15).

BAND 15: "Wheel and Turn." (Rec. by John Storm Roberts.)

All over the New World, country dance music sprang up based on an almost inextricable blend of African and European elements. This is mento, the old Jamaican rural style—

er, the famous "Wheel and Turn Me." The band
monica, a coconut grater, a wooden tuba made
a branch of the "trumpet tree," and beerbottle per-
ussion. The rhythm of this piece is reminiscent of much
English country dance music Jamaicanized.



A Dominican Republic merengue group: accordion and tambora (see Band 16).

BAND 16: De La Suarez. (Rec. by John Storm Roberts.)

The Dominican Republic's equivalent of mento is merengue. The African roots may be fairly similar, but the European roots are as different as possible. Comparison of this accordion, tambora drum and scraper number with "Wheel and Turn Me" says more than a thousand words about the richness of the Caribbean's Afro-European heritage.

BAND 17: "War," by Sir Lancelot, Executor, Caresser, Atilla, Lion. (From RBF 13)

The most famous of Caribbean styles is the calypso, an urban development of the 19th century. This marvelous example is a typically African-derived contest-song of derision, and a fine example of the oration style, which blends cross-rhythms with a complex use of long and high-sounding words.

BAND 18: "Fire Brigade," by Atilla the Hun. (From FE 4506)

A famous calypso singer of the 1930s and 1940s performs a "calendar"—the name is a version of the kalinda found all over the Caribbean and in Louisiana. Creole French phrases in the lyrics, tamboo-bamboo percussion, and the African blend of dance and march, are all typical of this cousin of the calypso.

BAND 19: "Erzulie," by Le Jazz Condo. (Rec. by John Storm Roberts.)

The high melancholy sound typical of Haitian street music, shared by modern aïrean dance bands, and unknown elsewhere, is undoubtedly part of a French legacy. This piece is typical of contemporary merengue style, though it takes its rhythm from the vaudou religion. Thus do New World styles grow by borrowing from their own traditions, long after the original European and African ingredients have been localized.

BAND 20: "Retour des Cayes," by Fabre Duroseau. (From FW 6837) (Rec. by Harold Courlander.)

African music did not influence rural and street styles only. The U. S. ragtime orchestras, Black equivalents of salon dance orchestras of Europe, have died out. But elsewhere, local salon and ballroom styles lasted. This marvelous Haitian piano solo merengue, with its hints of Chopin and more-than-hints of ragtime, is an instance.

BAND 21: Mazurca. (From FE 4533) (Rec. by Edward and Lisee Lekis.)

A Polish rhythm—the mazurka, a frontline of clarinet and trombone, like a beheaded New Orleans band, and a French legato clarinet sound, add up to the beguine of Martinique, which hints at what New Orleans jazz might have been if the Anglo-Saxon common-time beat had not imposed itself on Black American music.

BAND 22: "Sutileza," by the Septeto Nacional. (From FE 4505)

With the possible exception of Brazil, Cuba was much the most important source of Latin music. A rich range of country styles, from Spanish to Yoruba, with an advanced approach to percussion, fed into the urban dance idiom from World War I onward, in Havana. They converged in the black groups who added a trumpet when they came to Havana, and gave their two-part structure to the Cuban music and salsa that was to follow.

BAND 23: "How Long Blues," by Jimmy Yancey. (From FJ 2802) (Rec. by Session Records.)

America has long since forgotten the first Cuban dance craze, the late 19th-century habanera. But its rhythms, and the rhythms of the tango (popular in the 1920s and itself a habanera derivative) lingered on—not only in the celebrated tango section of St. Louis Blues, but in ragtime phrases and in the held-note bass of Jimmy Yancey's delicate "How Long Blues."

BANDS 24-25: Revival Zion, "How Sweet the Name" and "I Got a Lighthouse." (Rec. by John Storm Roberts.)

The Revival Zion movement in Jamaica is an example of a Christian group with strong African elements. The first selection, a hymn, shows strong English protestant influence and the old European and white American technique of "lining out" the verses for illiterate congregations. The second example, a "chorus," is accompanied by drumming. The cries of a member of the congregation in a state of possession can also be heard.

BAND 26: "Roll Jordan Roll," by the Fisk Jubilee Singers. (From RF 5)

The Fisk Jubilee Singers amazed the world with a highly Europeanized version of Black spirituals toward the end of the 19th century. This middle-class style of singing is often either regarded as "better" than the authentic Black church music, or despised as "white." In fact, it was a stage in the development of contemporary Black religious music.

BAND 27: "He's a Friend of Mine," by the Spirit of Memphis.

Modern Black Gospel singing is an example of how a tradition preserves ancient elements by self-reinforcement. The impassioned singing was heard in the 19th century, but the input of jazz and the blues reinforced those qualities that distinguished it from the mainstream, thus ensuring that the Europeanizing spiritual tradition did not reduce Black religious music to a tinge in an all-American norm.

BAND 28: "Frankie," by Mississippi John Hurt. (From FA 2951)

Black U.S. balladry is a fine example of how European and African traditions reinforced each other to give strength to a Black New World style. Both Europe and western Africa are full of narrative songs. The general form in this most famous of American examples is European. The ostinato bass and bell-like treble patterns of the guitar are very reminiscent of savanna-belt African string accompaniments to solo songs.

BAND 29: "I Believe I'll Dust My Broom," by Robert Johnson. (From RBF 14) (Rec. by OKEH Records.)

Hidden Africanisms are certainly part of the country blues' distinctive sound. One such is the instrumental technique, common in African accompaniments to solo songs, of the repetition of a short phrase by an instrument or instruments (often varied, but not greatly) while the singer uses a longer melody, also somewhat embellished.

BAND 30: "Leave My Love Alone," by Coleman Hawkins. (From Asch AA 1/2) (Rec. by Moses Asch.)

Long before this track by one of jazz's greatest tenor players was recorded, the Africanisms in Black American music had been transmuted in Black Americanisms. The

indefinable quality that we call swing, the rhythmic "playing around" the beat, neither products of the European nor the African stream in Black American music, but of what Black genius has made of the confluence of the two.

BAND 31: "Vijana Niwambie," by Wiliamu Osale (CMS 7-2007)

The introduction of the guitar, and of foreign records, caused the growth of new African styles. Africans developed a distinctive acoustic guitar style by transposing local stringed-instrument patterns and borrowing ingredients from Cuban music, which was hugely popular during the 1930s and 1940s. This example is Kenyan.

BAND 32: "Kenyatta Aliteswa Sana," by John Mwale. (CMS 708)

The rural semi-traditional acoustic guitar music of Africa changed as electric guitars became available. Distinct national sounds also began to develop. This example from the early 1960s is instantly recognizable as Kenyan, though it was influenced by the same Cuban sources as the following cut. Its function — the praise of a famous man, in this case President Kenyatta — is common in African traditional music.

BAND 33: "Maboke Nde Temoin," by Bholen and Orch. (Tcheza 223)

The modern Zairean guitar style is the most sophisticated in Africa, though it developed from its semi-rural beginnings in only 20 years. Its twin sources are local traditional music, and Cuban music; but the Zaireans have reabsorbed the Cuban style, just as the Cubans made their own thing out of African elements!