

Music of Latin America

Historical Background and Periods

Olmeecs

- 1200 BCE - 400 BCE

Mayans

- 1800 BCE - 1519 BCE

Below bullets apply for Aztec as well

- Music was a large ensemble activity
- Bonampak temple murals
 - Procession with trumpets, drums, and rattles

Aztecs

- 1345 BCE - 1521 BCE

Inca

- 1400 - 1533

Colonial

- 1492 - 1821
- The Spanish and Portuguese brought Roman Catholic religious music to the colonies

National

- 1821 - Present

Cultural Elements

Musical Traditions

- Reflective of the distinctive mixtures of Native American, African, and European influences that have shifted over time
- Folk dances transformed into social and ballroom dances that we see today
- Latin American music and dance have become important in the US

Characteristics of Latin Music

- Nostalgia
- Descriptive ballads of local figures
- Commentary of current and past political events
- Communication with supernatural
- Danceable
 - Music and dance are interdependent

Harmonic Aspects of the Music

Melody

- Folk or popular music based

Harmony

- Adopted European model of harmonies

Rhythms

- Steady
- Danceable

Instruments

Indigenous Instruments

- Wooden flutes
 - South American Tribal Flute
- Drums
- Rattles
- Examples
 - Phuru Runas

European Instruments

- Chordophone (guitar)
- Harp
- Trumpet
- Clarinet
- Accordion
- Saxophone

- Examples
 - Mariachi
 - Banda
 - Norteno

African Instruments

- Marimba
- Hand Drums
- Shaker
- Berimbau

Composers

Juventino Rosas

- Most popular salon music composer in Mexico

Chavez

- Mexican nationalism

Alberto Ginastera

- Established in 1940s
- Leader of national Argentine music movement
- Based on gauchesco tradition

Heitor Villa-Lobos

- Brazil
- International
- Composed for many media
- Composed for many genres
- Developed unique, eclectic style in celebration of the musical soul of his country

Codex

- Manuscript in book form
- Much of these codices were important is allowing to understand the role of music in pre-colonial Latin American culture
 - Ancient Mesoamericans did not develop musical notation

- The Spanish did not transcribe music they heard