

**AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSIC**, music of the natives of many parts of Africa sold into slavery in the Americas, and of their descendants. Early African-American music in the U.S. accommodated African musical practices with the vocabulary and structures of Euro-American music. Comprising work songs, calls, field and street cries, hollers, rhyme songs, and spirituals, this music provided the slaves with a means of effectively pacing their work, with a form of sung prayer and praise, with a means of surreptitious intragroup communication, and with psychic relief from the degradation of bondage. Many of the work songs used the African call-and-response form; a lead singer gave the line of melody and the others joined in for the refrain. This pattern, as well as a number of actual African tunes, was also carried over into the African-American spiritual. Both the spiritual and later the blues, a form of secular solo folk song, incorporated the African freedom to improvise variations in the melodic line. Also derived from African heritage was polyrhythmic drumming, simultaneously combining several different rhythmic patterns of different meters. The interplay of contrasting rhythms was eventually carried over into **jazz**.

Although sacred music—the spiritual—was the most ubiquitous African-American music in the early 19th century, secular music also existed. Like the spirituals, the work songs, calls, and cries were performed a cappella; other secular songs were accompanied by instruments. The earliest slave instruments included drums and an African transplant, the banjo; later, the flute, violin, and guitar were also used. The guitar, violin, and banjo often constituted the string bands that provided music for the African- and Euro-American social dances of the 19th century—jigs, reels, the buck-and-wing, cotillions, and quadrilles. Makeshift instruments such as quills, gutbuckets (bass fiddles made from washtubs), and jugs were also used in string bands.

### **The Evolution of Jazz.**

Following the American Civil War, rhyme songs and ballads became plentiful, and the **blues** began to take on its modern forms. The music of the black minstrel shows, the string bands, the brass bands, and the honky-tonk pianos began to assert itself, and such genres as the cakewalk and ragtime gradually emerged. Having originated in the southern and midwestern U.S., **ragtime** reached its classic form in the 1890s in the St. Louis, Mo., school of ragtime pianists led by SCOTT Joplin. In the first decade of the 20th century, the musical practices of black Americans syncretized to form a new

American music called **jazz**. It first flourished in New Orleans, La., then spread to cities all across the country.

Among the most important jazz innovators in the 20th century were LOUIS Armstrong, FLETCHER Henderson, BILLIE Holiday, DIZZY Gillespie, CHARLIE Parker, JOHN Coltrane, and MILES Davis. Works composed by DUKE Ellington, a seminal figure in jazz, have also found a home in the concert hall. Trumpeter WYNTON Marsalis has achieved extraordinary success both in jazz and in the classical repertoire, while the vocalist, composer, and conductor Bobby McFerrin (1950– ) has pursued a unique career path, crossing the boundaries of jazz, classical, pop, and world music. From Rhythm and Blues to Rap.

In the 1940s, **rhythm and blues** (R&B) emerged as a combined product of rural blues and black-oriented, **big-band swing** music, performed by small ensembles with a lead vocalist or instrumentalist and rhythm and backup sections. The pioneers and popularizers of R&B included T-Bone Walker (b. Aaron Thibeaux Walker, 1910–75), Little Walter (b. Marion Walter Jacobs, 1930–68), Louis Jordan (1908–75), Antoine “Fats” Domino (1929– ), Little Richard (b. Richard Penniman, 1932– ), JAMES Brown, RAY Charles, and Ruth Brown (1928–2006). Since the 1950s R&B has been the generic source of black music, as well as of American pop music.

**Soul music** was a further development of rhythm and blues. Essentially, it combines the R&B sound of the 1950s with techniques, effects, and performance practices borrowed from black gospel music. Black gospel music had its beginnings in the black HOLINESS Churches and in the published songs of the Philadelphia minister Charles A. Tindley (1851–1933). Using the resources of work songs, hollers, cries, spirituals, blues, and jazz, black gospel music was fully developed by both the hymnodist-composer Thomas A. Dorsey (1899–1993) and the singer Roberta Martin (1907–69). Famous performers of gospel music include MAHALIA Jackson, James Cleveland (1931–91), and Andrae Crouch (1942– ) and the Disciples.

Famed as the Queen of Soul, ARETHA Franklin remains one of the most acclaimed and influential black singers. Otis Redding (1941–67) and Booker T. (Jones; 1944– ) and the MG’s exemplify the earthy style characteristic of Memphis, Tenn. The polished,

sophisticated Motown sound, developed in Detroit in the 1960s and early '70s, made chart-toppers of such groups as the Supremes, the Four Tops, and the Temptations, and fostered the talents of such artists as Smokey Robinson (1940– ), STEVIE Wonder, and the young MICHAEL Jackson. JIMI Hendrix and PRINCE fused rock and R&B to create their own distinctive styles. Black musicians, including pop diva Donna Summer (1948–), helped shape the disco era of the late 1970s.

During the last decades of the 20th century, no musical style had greater worldwide impact than **rap** or **hip-hop**. Rap arose on the streets of New York City during the 1970s; the Sugar Hill Gang's *Rapper's Delight* (1979) was the first rap hit record. Using bits or "samples" of funk and hard rock records (plus a miscellany of other sounds, including turntable scratching) as background, rap performers chanted often-complicated rhyming couplets, generally about ghetto life. In the 1980s the music spread across the U.S. as young audiences responded to the rap performers' angry words about social injustice, racism, and drug abuse. Late in the decade and into the early 1990s, controversy surrounded some artists accused of rapping racially and sexually inflammatory lyrics. By the late '90s and early 2000s, hip-hop dominated the pop charts, in styles ranging from soulful to hard-core.