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Week 5 Discussion Unit 8

American pop music in the United States started in the 1950s. Its maturity was supported by media and technology because the musicians connected directly with the fans. It, therefore, increased the audience as the artists would present the content to many people. Media and technology also led to increased music sales because they would easily access the public.

Latin music entered the US in three stages, with the initial one being the development of exotic novelties such as the dance fads. The pieces were meant for short term popularity describing the people's culture, though some lasted longer. The second stage was transformation, where the music was interpreted and incorporated into the American styles. Here, the American musicians played a significant role, letting the mainstream society understand the music. They attracted their attention because the songs had good rhythms, and they would therefore dance. Lastly, beats, blues, and rock music were developed influenced by Latin styles. The listeners' diversity allowed them to choose the songs they liked, resulting in more loyalty towards the music.

Some of the Latin dances imported to the United States are ¹ salsa, merengue, bachata, cha-cha-cha, samba, rumba, Jive and Paso Doble. The most popular dance is salsa because it involves a few steps. The beginners prefer it due to the simplicity, which has made it famous across the world. Specifically, cha-cha dance is based on rumba, which is also easy to learn and favorable for starters. It is again reliable for people willing to try out different styles. The mambo dance is founded on the words 'shake it' where the dancers move the hips. The dance involves the rest, as the feet are placed pointed while shaking hips and moving other body parts. Consequently, rumba dance entails little steps and is mostly used to show romantic relationships.

I have learned a few in ballroom dancing, especially rhumba. The dancers are divided into twos, where side by side hips movement is known. The dance has different patterns, but they all involve side steps and moving forward. I found it fun because the teams compete, and teamwork is created. On the other hand, Latin American music uses unique instruments, one of them being the conga. It originated from Cuba, and it is used in pairs. Each part is set with a different pitch making the drum have a rhythmic beat.

Another instrument used in this music is the guiro, also said to originate in Cuba. It is made with metal or wood in a hollow shape in which grooves are placed horizontally. By hitting it with a stick, it produces a rattling sound. Besides, the timbale tool is used mainly in meringue and salsa dances. It resembles the conga as it is used in pairs but has metal rims, shallow, and produces high tuned sounds. Other instruments used are clave, el Tres, La Marimba, and La Antara. Notably, I have played the pandeiro instrument, which the hands hold and consist of tiny cymbals along the sides. It is versatile so that one would tune according to their liking. It is also played in different ways involving either the fingers or the entire palm.

Latin music is mainstreamed into American popular culture because it is likable and danceable. They appeal to people across ages, and the rhythmic and beats catch many people's attention. Since they are danceable, the people focus more on the feeling the songs give other than words, so the language used does not matter a lot. Los Del Rio is one of the musicians in this category with one of the songs named 'Macarena.' I do not know Macarena's meaning and the words in the music, but I like the beats and rhyme.

I have been to places where people get excited when the song is played because of the dance, even when they do not understand the words. According to NBC News in 2017, Luis Fonsi and Yankee's music 'despacito' also attracted a broad audience. In the YouTube media, the song got almost six billion views (Nahmad, 2019). The broad audience indicated that the

Latino artists and songs influence on music has improved. Notably, the songs are not only preferred by Americans but also by other people worldwide.

Reference

Nahmad E. (2nd February 2019). Sonido: Understanding the Rise of Latin Music in the US.

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