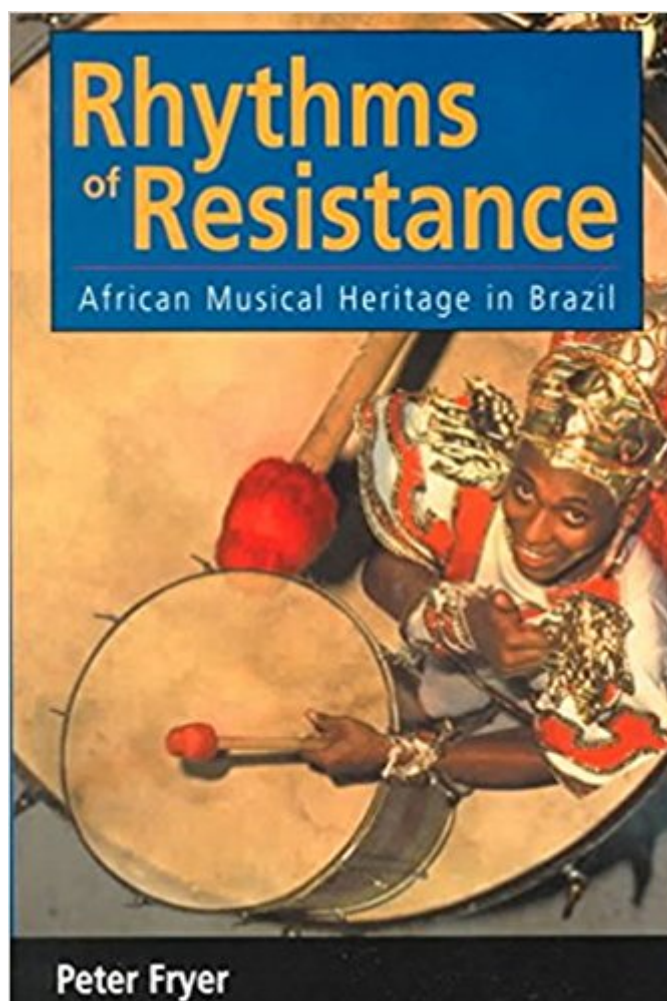


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Rhythms Of Resistance: African Musical Heritage In Brazil



Synopsis

African rhythms are at the heart of contemporary black Brazilian music. Surveying a musical legacy that encompasses over 400 years, Peter Fryer traces the development of this rich cultural heritage. He describes how slaves, mariners, and merchants brought African music from Angola and the ports of east Africa to Latin America. In particular, they brought it to Brazil -- today the country with the largest black population of any outside Africa. Fryer examines how the rhythms and beats of Africa were combined with European popular music to create a unique sound and dance tradition. He focuses on the political nature of this musical crossover and the role of African heritage in the cultural identity of black Brazilians today. The result is an absorbing account of a theme in global music that is rich in fascinating historical detail.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"The greatest strength of Fryer's book is that it explains the African contribution to Brazilian popular music within a transatlantic framework involving multidirectional, triangular flows of cultural contact between Africa, Europe, and the Americas." —Luso Brazilian Review

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Peter Fryer is a scholar and this book on the African influence on musical arts in Brazil demonstrates his thorough research. Essentially a history from the first import of slaves into Brazil

until the early 20th century, he presents example after example of observations by 18th- and 19th-century European and American travelers on the music, instrumentation, ceremony, and dance forms of the Africans, who came from not only Angola but Nigeria and Benin, explaining in part some of the regional differences. For instance, the 12-beat patterns of West Africa entered the candomblé rites of Salvador, while Kongo-Angola 16-beat music led eventually to the samba of Rio de Janeiro. Portuguese folk elements themselves, which had a smaller role in Brazilian forms, had an earlier Moorish Iberian and Galician basis. Additionally, European Baroque music was performed by slave orchestras, and Brazilian composers were the first to bring African-distilled music into the classical repertoire. The book is supported by maps, illustrations, a detailed appendix on African musical instruments in Brazil, a discography, a small section on Cape Verde music and dance, extensive notes, and a fine, useful index. Fryer's book is the necessary introduction to Hermano Vianna's book *The Mystery of Samba*, which continues the story from more recent times. The evolution of Brazilian music, instrumentation, and dance is rich and complex. This book makes it all clear and fascinating.

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