

# A study on the characteristics of American music development and its influence

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**Abstract:** The history of music in the United States can be traced back to the traditional music of the First Nations people. It went through many stages of development, including folk music, classical music and popular music, before it became what we see today. The diversity and inclusiveness of American music is the most significant, but we should not ignore the historical changes and innovative spirit contained in the music culture, which is also an important basis for American music to enjoy a good reputation in the world. Nowadays, with the obvious trend of commercialization and globalization of American music, its influence on the world is increasing, promoting the exchange and interaction of multi-cultures, and creating more colorful art forms and styles. In view of this, this paper discusses the development process, development characteristics and influence of American music on the world, hoping to provide reference for more lovers.

**Key words:** American music; Development course; Development characteristics; influence

American music has undergone profound changes in many ways, from local music to diversified musical styles to having a huge impact on the global music industry, and its evolution trajectory reveals a rich cultural tapestry. As a country of immigrants, the United States has attracted a variety of ethnic cultures from different countries and regions, reflected in the styles of black music, Chinese music, Latin music and other ethnic music, as well as derived European classical music and modern pop music and other genres, which together constitute the unique features of American music. At the same time, the United States has always been one of the world's largest music markets, its developed market system and advanced business model, making the American music industry has a huge influence in the world. American musicals, rock music, hip hop music and so on continue to emerge, affecting the change and development of global music.

## 1. The development of American music

### 1. Traditional music of the Native American period

Native American music developed among Native peoples on the continental United States as an expression of their cultural beliefs through sound, instruments, and singing. This music often reflects the indigenous peoples' close connection to the natural world, such as the creation of raw, harmonious sounds through instruments such as drums, flutes, and wooden flutes. As part of tribal life and social rituals, Indigenous music carries rich emotional stories and emphasizes unity, respect and worship. It also plays an important foundational role in the development of music in the United States, laying the foundation for the development of music genres and styles later on. At the same time, many modern artists have also been inspired by indigenous music and incorporated its elements into their own music creation, further enriching the diversity of American music.

### 2. Folk music is popular with classical music

In the early history of the United States, folk music was passed down orally by ordinary people. The corresponding musical styles, represented by folk music, blues and country music, reflected the life and experience of the American people. It was also characterized by simple and unadorned lyrics, and was widely loved by the public and circulated in communities. At the same time, classical music was also widely popular. It was introduced to the United States from Europe during the colonial period and became the favorite form of music of the upper class and cultural elites. For example, the works of Beethoven, Mozart and Bach were widely popular in the United States, developing a unique American classical music culture and style. These forms of music developed further in the 19th and 20th centuries, laying a solid foundation for the rise of subsequent styles such as jazz, rock and hip-hop.

### 3. The rise of pop music

In the early 20th century, the advent of recording and radio technology made it easier to spread music and helped pop music emerge as a popular form of music. Popular music initially drew inspiration from folk and classical music, combining elements of different cultures and styles. Generally, we think of jazz, blues, and country music as the cornerstone of popular music. Its enthusiasm and energy are now symbols of American culture. Over time, popular music has evolved into rock music, pop songs and hip hop. With its exciting rhythms, innovative ways of expression and concern for social issues, pop music has attracted more and more audiences, and of course more followers and fans of the younger generation. Nowadays, pop music has become an important part of cultural exchange and youth culture, inspiring the creative inspiration of the young generation, which is worthy of our in-depth study and practice.

## 2. Characteristics of the development of American music

### 1. Diversity and inclusion

Folk music has a long history in many musical genres in the United States. It stems from musical styles shared by different communities across the country, including ethnic, black and Latino. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, thousands of immigrants to the United States

brought their own musical traditions, such as Irish folk, Scottish folk, and African music, which intermingled with Native American cultures to form unique forms of folk music. This fully demonstrates the diversity and inclusiveness of American music. It is worth mentioning that jazz and rock music are growing on such cultural soil, exerting a huge influence on global music. Jazz originated in the African American community and developed in New Orleans, Louisiana. It combines elements such as African drumming, American folk music and jazz music to form a strong sense of rhythm and freedom. Rock 'n' roll emerged in the mid-20th century, combining elements of blues, country and other genres to become one of the most popular music styles among young people around the world. The rise of these two styles of music undoubtedly fully demonstrates the inclusiveness and diversity of American music, including pop, hip hop and electronic music. It is also under such a cultural background that they continue to grow and become a part of American music. It is this diversity and inclusiveness that make American music with innovative spirit and infinite vitality. It not only makes American music attract worldwide attention, but also provides rich soil for American music culture, making the United States one of the most dynamic and innovative music centers in the world.

#### 2. Reflect social development and change

As mentioned above, the United States is a country of immigrants, and various immigrant groups bring different musical styles. These music blend and blend on the soil of the United States, and finally form a unique American music culture. For example, at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, jazz music originated from the black community in the southern United States and was widely spread throughout the United States. It fully reflected the acceptance and identification of black culture in American society at that time, and also reflected the tension and transformation of racial relations at that time, which is undoubtedly the witness of the development and change of American society. Another example is that in the late 1960s, the United States ushered in the climax of social movements, and young people at that time expressed their protests against war, racial discrimination and social injustice through music. Folk musician Bob Dylan expressed the young generation's dissatisfaction with society and their desire for change through his songs "Blowin' in the Wind" and "The Times They Are a-Changin'". These musical works not only became the symbol of the social movement, but also shaped the musical style and aesthetic concept of later generations. In the development of American music, it is this quality content that reflects the development and changes of society, which makes American music have a profound sense of social history and culture, and is still infected by generation after generation. Through music, we can better understand the social environment, historical background and cultural characteristics of a country. Just because of this, American music has become an important part of American culture and has a profound influence on world music. In a word, American music is not only a form of entertainment or pure artistic creation, but also a spiritual force that reflects the development and changes of society.

#### 3. Show individuality and innovative spirit

Music works full of personality not only make musicians stand out in the music industry, but also lay a solid foundation for them to establish a unique musical image and artistic style. For example, jazz master Charlie Parker, with his personal talent and innovative music theory, created a new musical style and school, and is regarded as the founder of modern jazz. Similarly, famous disco musicians such as Keith Hedge and Michael Jackson have also become legendary figures in music history through their unique musical styles. American music has always been committed to theoretical innovation and experimental expression. For example, rock music in the 1950s created a completely new kind of musical sound and expression by introducing new musical technologies such as electric guitar, amplifiers and special effects. For another example, the rise of electronic dance music also shows the innovation of electronic music technology and sound effects, which not only enriches musical language and expression forms, but also provides musicians with greater freedom to create space, making American music culture more diverse and inclusive. In addition, musicians and singers also show their unique personality and creativity through their unique stage performance and singing style. Rock singer Jim Morrison has become one of the representatives of rock and roll with his unique stage image, passionate singing and free-spirited personal style; Female pop singer Bjork has also been widely concerned and recognized with her personalized shape and unique music style, which also makes American music have a unique status and influence in the world.

#### 4. The trend of commercialization and globalization is obvious

Commercialization has led to the gradual improvement of the American music industry, forming a huge and complex industrial chain. The commercial operation of music production, distribution and sales has given birth to numerous music companies, record companies, music platforms and music stores. These commercial entities have brought abundant resources and funds, providing extensive support for music production. The application of commercial promotion and marketing means helped music works better reach the target audience, enhanced the popularity and influence of music, and also created a historical precedent in the development of the American music industry. With the acceleration of globalization, music works are spread all over the world via the Internet and information technology, and American music and corresponding industries are further expanded, realizing the global exchange and interaction of American music culture. In the field of pop music, American artists often cooperate with international producers, and various musical styles and elements blend with each other, forming cross-cultural music works. Madonna, a female pop singer, has collaborated with music producers from Sweden, France, the United Kingdom and other countries to create a number of internationally renowned pop songs that have been loved and sought after by young people around the world. At present, the excessive expansion of commercialization and globalization has also brought disadvantages to the development of the American music industry, such as the assimilation of music creation and the disappearance of music characteristics. It is necessary to further optimize the plan and countermeasures to achieve the long-term and stable development of the music industry.

### 3. The influence of American music on the world

#### 1. Promoting multicultural exchanges and interactions

The United States brings together people of different cultures and races from all over the world, making American music an extremely inclusive music arena. From jazz to rock, blues to hip hop, American music has incorporated various musical elements from Africa, Latin America, Europe and Asia to create unique musical styles. This is not only reflected in the music, but also brings different cultures closer and promotes cross-border and cross-cultural exchanges and cooperation. Through American music, musicians, artists and listeners around the world can inspire, learn from and collaborate with each other to constantly create new musical forms. As a result, American music has become a melting pot of cultures that have provided excellent support for musical creation in different countries around the world.

#### 2. Innovate art forms and promote fusion of styles

In the American music industry, artists and creators dare to break through the traditional musical norms and constraints, boldly try new musical elements, and create many unique and personalized musical styles. This innovative spirit not only has a profound influence within the United States, but also has a positive effect on the world music industry. The combination of African drum music in jazz, blues and Gospel elements in rock music, and electronic music technology in hip hop are all examples of the fusion of styles in American music, breaking the boundaries between musical genres and bringing new inspiration and possibilities to global music. In other words, the fusion of multiple art forms and musical styles has accelerated the creation of more and more excellent music works, which is of great benefit to the development of world music. Nowadays, American music is the leader of world music, and it is constantly injecting vitality into the development of global music.

### Concluding Remarks

All in all, the development of American music deeply reflects the process of cultural and social changes in the United States. In terms of diversity, inclusiveness, individuation and innovation, American music has continuously contributed to the development of world music, cultivating a group of outstanding talents with cultural heritage and correct values. It can be seen that American music has not only created many excellent artistic styles, but also laid a solid foundation for the development of the music industry and music culture. We look forward to the future of American music, once again exciting development, and exuding greater talent and charm on the international stage.

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