

Synopsis of Sharing Our Cultures 2018 School Youth Participants' Cultural Displays
Theme: Music, Dance, Stories

Please note that these students are sharing their own cultures and not necessarily the official culture of the country they represent.

CANADA
Inuit Drumming

Cultural Significance of the Drum



someone's passing of life, etc.

Like many other Indigenous cultures around the world, Inuit people of the Canadian Arctic have made use of drums within their culture for centuries. The drum is very important to Inuit people because it keeps them connected to their traditional way of life and represents the heartbeat of Mother Earth; the heartbeat of their Nation. The drum was played during many occasions and ceremonies, such as births, marriages, a boy's first hunt, greeting visitors, honouring

People who play the Inuit drum are known as Drum Dancers. Inuit people incorporate dance moves that resemble animals into their drumming to honour their traditional way of living off the land, as well as Mother Earth and the animals who have kept us alive for thousands of years. For example, you may see Drum Dancers mimic a polar bear playing, a caribou walking in the snow, a crow hopping, etc.



How to Make an Inuit Drum

1. Begin by forming the rim of the drum. Gather a narrow strip of Red Oak or Poplar wood (they are most commonly used).
2. Saw an indented line (lengthways) down the middle of the entire strip of wood. This will be used to hold the sinew in place once it's wrapped around the rim.



3. Steam the wood until it's flexible enough to bend. Kettles are often used to create the steam.



4. Once the wood is bendable, wrap the wood around a bike tire rim and clamp it in place. Leave it to dry overnight. This will dry as a solid circle.



- Once the clamp is removed, an additional small piece of wood is attached to the join of the rim to reinforce the join and provide a sturdier attachment point for the drum handle. Holes are drilled at the join of the rim, as well as the additional piece of wood, so that the holes line up and can be tied together with sinew.
- Next you add the handle. A wooden dowel, about 6 or 7 inches, is used. A little section is gouged out of the dowel so it can slide into the rim and stay in place. Sinew is then used to reinforce the handle.
- The material is now added by stretching it over the rim. Sinew is used to wrap around the rim, over the material, and along the indented line to hold the material in place.
- The drum stick is the same type of dowel used for the handle, and is normally covered in seal skin, animal hide, or material to create comfort for the hand.



Traditional Inuit Drum



Traditionally, Inuit drums were made from animal skins such as caribou, walrus, and/or seal. A narrow strip of drift wood was softened and bent in the shape of a circle to create the rim of the drum, and the animal skin was also softened and stretched over the rim. The handle was a piece of bone that stuck out downward from the drum to hold and rotate the drum. The stick to hit the drum was made of bone as well.

Modern Day Inuit Drum

Today, Inuit drums are made of synthetic materials, such as nylon instead of animal skin. The rim is still a piece of narrow wood steamed and bent into a circle. The handle and drum stick are made of wood, rather than bone.

How to Play the Inuit Drum

- Hold the drumstick in whatever hand you write with and hold the drum in the other hand by the handle that sticks down off the bottom.
- Rather than hitting the face of the drum where the material is (like you typically do on a drum), hit the wooden rim instead. This will create a nice deep sound.
- Sway the drum back and forth as you hit it, hitting it downward on one side of the rim then hitting upward on the opposite side of the rim.



CAMEROON

Cameroon Dance

Cameroon's most popular native styles of dance music are *bikutsi* and *makossa*. Cameroon has imported a number of popular dances from abroad, including the *maringa* from Ghana in the 1850s, the *ashiko* from Nigeria in the 1920s, and more recently, the *abele* from Nigeria. Non-Cameroonian dance music that are popular includes Nigerian *highlife* and American *hip-hop*.



Makossa is a type of funky dance music, best known outside Africa for Manu Dibango, whose 1972 single "Soul Makossa" was an international hit. Outside of Africa, Dibango and makossa were only briefly popular, but the genre has produced several pan-African superstars through the 1970s to the 1990s.



Makossa, which means "dance" in the Douala language, originated from a Douala dance called the *Kossa*. Dance in Cameroon is an integral part of the tradition, religion, and socialising of the country's people. Following Dibango, a wave of musicians electrified *makossa* in an attempt at making it more accessible outside of Cameroon.

Later in the 1960s, modern *makossa* developed and became the most popular genre in Cameroon.

The country holds 250 ethnicities and languages, which involves a lot of dancing rhythms and Coupé-Décalé, Salsa, or Zouglou. It has about 200 traditional dances, each associated with a different event or situation, such as births, christenings, weddings, and funerals.



CHINA

The Story of NIAN, A Chinese New Year Story

Once upon a time, there was a man-eating monster called “Nian.” This beast lived in a jungle. It would sleep every day of the year, except on the last day of the Lunar Year when the cold winter months would turn into spring. Nian would come out of the jungle to attack and eat whatever it could find and whatever lay in its path. This was the night everyone lived in terror!

Year after year Nian returned, as this was a beast that was far too powerful for anyone to defeat. Many had tried and all had perished. On New Year’s Eve, all the villagers would take their loved ones, old and young, deep into the mountains to take shelter from the beast.

One year on that night, a traveller came to town, looking for food and shelter. Everyone, except a boy, was far too busy packing to pay him any kindness, or offer him a simple plate of dumplings, or a place to sleep. After his meal, he was touched by the boy’s generosity and decided to bestow a long-hidden secret of how to get rid of the New Year beast.

That evening when Nian arrived at their village, all the houses were dark, except the one in which the boy lived. As Nian saw the light, it licked its lips with anticipation and approached the house.

Suddenly, the beast was greeted with deafening noises of firecrackers sounding endlessly. He was frightened and startled! Next, the beast saw that the house was covered in red paper. That scared Nian even more, and it took off running back into the jungle.

When the villagers returned, they saw that the old woman was unharmed! Everyone was eager to learn what she did to survive Nian. The boy told the villagers that Nian was afraid of loud noises and the colour red.

The next year, the villagers stayed up all night, lit firecrackers, lit red lanterns all around their houses, pasted red paper on their walls and doors, wore red clothing, danced to loud music, and banged loud gongs and drums. That year and every year since, Nian has never returned. This eventually became a tradition and the way to celebrate Chinese New Year.



The Twelve Zodiac



Cat and Rat were the worst swimmers in the animal kingdom. Although they were poor swimmers, they were both quite intelligent. To get to the meeting called by the Jade Emperor, they had to cross a river to reach the meeting place. The Jade Emperor had also decreed that the years on the calendar would be named for each animal as they arrived for the meeting. Cat and Rat decided that the best and fastest way to cross the river was to hop on the back of Ox. Ox, being naïve and good-natured, agreed to carry them both across. Midway across the river, Rat pushed Cat into the water. Then as Ox neared the other side of the river, Rat jumped ahead and reached the shore first. So, he claimed first place in the competition and the zodiac.

Following closely behind was the strong Ox who was named the 2nd animal in the zodiac. After Ox, came Tiger, panting, while explaining to the Jade Emperor how difficult it was to cross the river with the heavy currents pushing it downstream all the time. But with its powerful strength, Tiger made it to shore and was named the 3rd animal in the cycle.

Suddenly, from a distance came a thumping sound, and the Rabbit arrived. It explained how it crossed the river: by jumping from one stone to another in a nimble fashion. Halfway through, it almost lost the race, but the Rabbit was lucky enough to grab hold of a floating log that later washed him to shore. For that, it became the 4th animal in the Zodiac cycle.

Coming in 5th place was the Flying Dragon. Of course, the Jade Emperor was deeply curious as to why a swift flying creature such as the Dragon should fail to reach first place. The mighty Dragon explained that he had to stop and make rain to help all the people and creatures of the earth, and therefore he was held back. Then, on his way to the finish line, he saw a little helpless Rabbit clinging onto a log so he did a good deed and gave a puff of breath to the poor creature so that it could land on the shore.

The Jade Emperor was very pleased with the actions of the Dragon, and he was added into the zodiac cycle. Soon after, a galloping sound was heard, it was Horse. Hidden on its hoof was a Snake. Its sudden appearance gave the Horse a fright, making it fall back and giving the Snake the 6th spot, while the Horse placed 7th.

Not long after that, a little distance away, the Sheep, Monkey, and Rooster came to the shore. These three creatures helped each other. The Rooster spotted a raft and took the other two animals with it. Together, the Sheep and the Monkey cleared the weeds, tugged and pulled, and finally got the raft to the shore. Because of their combined efforts, the Jade Emperor was very pleased and promptly named the Sheep as the 8th creature, the Monkey as the 9th, and the Rooster the 10th.

The 11th animal was the Dog. Although he was supposed to be the best swimmer, he could not resist the temptation to play a little longer in the river. His explanation for being late was because he needed a good bath after a long spell. For that, he almost didn't make it to finish line.

Just as the Jade Emperor was about to call it a day, an oink and squeal was heard from a little Pig. The Pig got hungry during the race, promptly stopped for a feast and then fell asleep. After its nap, the Pig continued the race and was named the 12th animal of the zodiac cycle. The Cat finished as thirteenth place and did not make it in the zodiac.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO Congoese Music, Drums, and Dress PA WEMBA: A Congoese Musician

In the 50s, the famous Congoese rumba dominated the African continent. Half a century later, it has lost nothing of its youth even if, in the meantime, it has undergone numerous, radical face-lifts. Among the most inspired is Papa Wemba. He has everything you love in the new Congoese, and ex-Zairians, ex-Congoese vivacity, humour, talent, and intelligence.

Papa Wemba was also known for his extraordinary dress sense. The country he grew up in had been battered by war and poverty, and he became the leader of a group of young Congoese who hit back at the hardship and gloom that surrounded them by developing an obsession for expensive designer clothes.



Papa Wemba was an internationally renowned Congoese singer known as “the king of rumba rock” for his upbeat, vibrantly danceable numbers that fused African pop with a welter of world music.

CONGOLESE DRUMS

In Africa, drums hold a deep symbolic and historical meaning. African Djembe drums hold a special place in the history of Africa. In Western Culture the idea of drumming is nearly always associated with entertainment or just to add to the musical quality of a song.

Djembe and Djun Djun drums are almost always an accompaniment for any manner of ceremony – births, deaths, marriages – together with a ritual dance. The vivacious sound of many drums pounding together is also a necessary installment to stir up emotions in a battle or war to inspire excitement and passion.



The Djembe drum is possibly the most influential and basic of all the African drums. It dates back to 500 A.D. The Djembe was originally created as a sacred drum to be used in healing ceremonies, rites of passage, ancestral worship, warrior rituals, as well as social dances.

CONGOLESE DRESS

Each type of pagne has different texture, pattern-style, and price. Here are a few names:

- *Java (6 yards for 14000FC)
- *Wax
- *Super wax
- *Demi super (6 yards for 15500FC)
- *Wax Anglais (6 yards for 1100FC)



ERITREA

Eritrean Dance

Eritrea is a country in the Horn of Africa. The most famous Eritrean musicians in history are Engineer Asgedom Woldemichael, Bereket Mengisteab, Yemane Baria, Osman Abderrehim, Alamin Abdeletif, and Atowe Birhan Segid. Some of this music was banned by the Ethiopian government in the 1970s.

Also, of note are Bereket Mengistab, who has had a lengthy career, 1960s legends Haile Ghebru, and Tewolde Redda. The latter was one of the first electric guitar players in the Horn region, a singer, and reportedly a writer of the famous Eritrean independence song “Shigey habuni”, with an allegedly coded political love theme.

DANCE

Traditional Eritrean Tigrinya dancing involves two main styles of dance. In the first, which is called ‘quda’, the dancers form a circle and slowly circumambulate or move around in an endless circular motion to the rhythm of the music.



Then, they cease the circular musical flow/motion and dance in pairs or 3s facing each other for a short while before resuming the circular motion in a file again. During this time, they shuffle their feet to the beat of the music and bob their shoulders in a rhythmic fashion. Female dancers usually move their shoulders more than the male dancers.



Towards the end, the musical tempo increases and the drum beat quickens to signal this musical crescendo. The dancers round off their dancing by facing each other in twos and threes and moving their shoulders faster. This can also involve jumping and bending one’s knees, as well as going down to the floor to sit in a squatting position, while bobbing the shoulders and moving the head sideways to the strong drum beats.

Location and Geography of Eritrea

Eritrea is located in the North East of Africa (between 12° and 18° north, and 36° and 44° east). It includes the Dahlak Archipelago and other islands along the Red Sea coast. It is bordered by Sudan to the north and west, Ethiopia to the south, Djibouti to the southeast, and the Red Sea to the north and north east.

Map of Eritrea



FRANCE

The Phantom of the Opera (French: *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*)

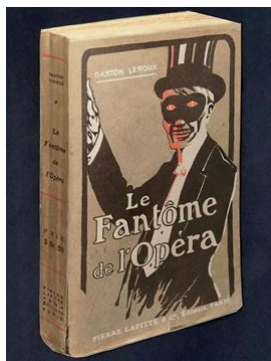
The Phantom of the Opera (French: *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*) is a novel by French writer Gaston Leroux. It was first published as a serialization in *Le Gaulois* (a French daily newspaper) from September 23, 1909 to January 8, 1910.

There have been many literary and other dramatic works based on Leroux's novel, ranging from stage musicals, films, to children's books. Some well-known stage and screen adaptations of the novel are the 1925 film and Andrew Lloyd Webber musical. The novel is partly inspired by historical events at the Paris Opera during the nineteenth century and Leroux claims that it is based on a true story.



Christine began to find herself attracted to her abductor until Christine unmasked him. To her horror, his face was the face of a monster. Seeing how scared Christine was of him, Erik ran from her in pain and sadness.

Plot Summary



The story is a romantic and tragic drama about Erik, Christine, and Raoul. Unfortunately, they are in a love triangle with Christine in the middle. It all begins when Christine Daaé was a child, travelling around Europe with her father who was a famous violinist. Her father used to tell her stories about the angel of music, the personification of musical inspiration. She loved to sing and the stories inspired her to continue to practice her singing.

When they arrived in Paris, Christine met a young boy called Raoul. Since they both loved music, they became great friends. But her father had to continue his travels around Europe, so Christine had to leave her dearest friend Raoul and resumed her journey. After many years had passed Christine came back to Paris, she had grown into a beautiful woman with a lovely voice and she was given a position in the chorus at the Paris Opera House which is called the Palais Garnier. Her stunning looks and heavenly voice immediately attracted the Phantom's attention.

Soon afterward, she began to hear a hauntingly handsome voice that would give her advice on her singing. Christine thought it was the angel of music, but it was the voice of Erik, a strange musical genius who had forever been living in the opera house and was also called the Phantom of the Opera. The days passed and Christine became more and more enchanted by the mysterious voice that so knowingly taught her to sing better and better.

One special night Christine made her debut on the opera stage, she triumphed at the gala and garnered tremendous applause from the audience. Her old childhood friend Raoul, who was present at the performance, recognized her as his childhood playmate and recalled his love for her. Raoul went to meet Christine afterward and found out that they were still very fond of each other, while Erik was hidden and watching everything.

Sometime after the gala, the managers received a letter from the Phantom demanding that they allow Christine to perform the lead role of Marguerite in Faust. The managers ignored

his demands as a prank. Erik was angry with the managers' decision and haunted Carlotta who got scared and lost her voice. She dropped the chandelier into the audience during the show and killed a spectator. In the middle of the confusion, a masked Erik kidnapped Christine and brought her to the lair where he lived and revealed himself as a deformed man called Erik.

The following night Erik abducts Christine during a production of Faust and forced her to marry him. He threatens Christine that he would kill everyone in the Opera House by using explosives unless she agreed to marry him. Christine at first refused but when she remembered Raoul was also in the audience she agreed to marry Erik. Erik lifted his mask to kiss her on her forehead and is given a kiss back. Erik revealed that he has never received a kiss, not even from his own mother, nor has he been allowed to give anyone a kiss and is overcome with emotion. He told Christine to go and marry Raoul. Christine ran away to her beloved Raoul whom she married a short time later. She thought of the Phantom many times over the years but he was never to be seen again, although some people say he still wanders the halls of the Paris Opera House.

How does *The Phantom of the Opera* represent France?

The Phantom of the Opera illustrates the *Belle Epoque* of France very well. The *Belle Epoque* is the French name for the time period between 1871 and 1914, and Leroux represented this era with great accuracy. His writing reflected how French society worked at the time. *The Phantom of the Opera* draws upon the class system; the members of the upper class would often go to the opera, as this was a time of great wealth and prosperity for them.

Also, during this period, poor and uneducated people were often taken advantage of and discarded by the upper-class members, and this practice is seen in the story. *The Phantom of the Opera* represents the culture of the era. It can be considered an amalgamation of all



the arts. It combines theatre, music, architecture, and material art, such as costumes, and these elements were inspired by the rapid growth and innovation of the arts during the *Belle Epoque*.

The Phantom of the Opera is considered a classic of French literature and a timeless representation of an era which is, despite the social inequalities associated with the time, retrospectively considered to be filled with peace and prosperity. After all, *Belle*

Epoque means *Beautiful Era*.

HONG KONG, CHINA

Cheung Chau Tai Ping Festival

History

One story of the origin of the festival is that in the 18th century the island of Cheung Chau was devastated by a plague and infiltrated (侵入) by pirates until local fishermen brought an image of the god Pak Tai to the island. Paraded 游行 through the village lanes, the deity (神) drove away evil spirits. Villagers also disguised themselves as different deities and walked around the island to drive away the evil spirits.

Date and Time

Cheung Chau Tai Ping Festival is normally set at Buddha's birthday, which is a public holiday in Hong Kong, so the Cheung Chau Tai Ping Festival didn't have an exact date. It was recorded by the Chinese calendar, because of this calendar, the festival didn't have an exact date. For this reason, the government set the date of Cheung Chau Tai Ping Festival at 18 to 23 of May.

Characters

Modern:



In addition to political figures and more than a dozen floating colour parade vehicles, there are many traditional people who are representatives and the spirit of the Hong Kong sports elite. one example is a child played as a famous Hong Kong boxing champion "magic boy" Cao Xing Ru.



Traditional:



The visitors will gather together to approach the "The god of Lucky" the god of Fortune striving to attract many people.

Floating of parade

Additional lion dances 舞狮 and dragon dances 舞龙, children dressed 童装 as legendary and modern heroes are suspended above the crowd on the tips of swords and paper fans. This fascinating procession is accompanied by a bedlam of musicians loudly beating gongs and drums to scare away evil spirits.

Bun snatching

1. The centrepiece 核心 of the festival is at Pak Tai Temple where the “Bun Mountains” or “Bun Towers” stand. These are three giant 60-foot bamboo towers covered with buns. It is these bun-covered towers (the building structure) that give the festival its name.



2. Historically, young men would race up the tower to get hold of the buns; the higher the bun, the better fortune it was supposed to bring to the holder’s family; the race was known as “Bun-snatching”.

Food

Every year on the 8th day of the fourth month of the lunar calendar, the islanders organise a weeklong thanksgiving, the Cheung Chau Bun Festival usually in April or May. The festival lasts for seven days. On three of these days the entire island turns to vegetarian food and most of the island’s famous seafood restaurants adhere to this tradition.



The local McDonald's also takes meat off the menu and instead of meat sells veggie burgers made of mushrooms. For an example, “Ping-On Bun” is a type of traditional Hong Kong food. They have a stamp (Ping-On) on the bread top. The villagers believed that eating Ping-On Bun helps ward off disease and spread the Ping-On Buns which have been powered into the sea. This can help to restore calm to

the sea. The buns have different flavours and provided red and green bean. After the event, those buns are distributed to the villagers after prayers and used to offer sacrifice to gods and ghosts.



NAMIBIA

The Story of Rock Painting

HOW ROCK ART TRADITIONS DEVELOPED AND EVOLVED – A SHORT HISTORY

Early symbolic activity (75,000 years ago): Long before people first engraved and painted on stones and rock surfaces, they invested rituals and objects of their existence with symbolic meaning. We can see indications of care and thought that goes beyond mere functionality in the deftly reworked flaked stone tools from Middle and Late Stone Age sites. Ochre tablets bearing cross hatchings are found at Blombos Cave in the southern Cape (South Africa) and dated to around 75,000 years ago. They are thought to be some of the earliest examples of abstract representation.



The beginnings of a representational tradition (40,000 years ago): By 40,000 years ago, stone and bone pendants, shell ornaments, and ostrich shell beads were widely exchanged throughout Africa. They were included in grave goods, suggesting that by this time people consistently used apparently valueless objects to communicate identity, relationships, and spiritual bonds – in other words, to signal social rank, establish regional and personal relations with others, and elaborate rites of passage. Then, around 30,000 to 20,000 years ago, people started leaving more illuminating signs of their presence on small portable stones and rock fragments, so-called ‘art mobilier’.



Apollo 11 Cave (27,000 years ago): The earliest examples of rock art in southern Africa are all small enough to be held in the hand. Seven small painted stones were discovered at a rock shelter (the Apollo 11 Cave) in southern Namibia, including one that depicts a feline form with human hind legs – clearly an animal that exists outside the realm of reality.

Belief in a marginal environment (5,850 to 1,000 years ago): The flowering of the rock art tradition in southern Africa appears to coincide with increases in local population densities around 14,000 years ago and reaching its height again around 4,000 years ago. Archaeological evidence from the Namib Desert confirms that concentrations of rock art in Namibia can be linked to prolonged periods of social aggregation. The rock art reflects heightened intensity of ritual activity in response to social stress arising from limited and diminishing food and water. A significant number of depictions are obviously related to rain-making and many others suggest similar events.

The time of the herders (from 1,000 years ago to present): Nomadic pastoralists grazed their stock on seasonal pastures. As rainfall was patchy, these encampments might not have been used during successive years. The overlap between hunter-gatherer and pastoralist economies is shown by a small number of cattle depictions among the rock engravings.

Twyfelfontein is an “open-air gallery” with the largest single concentration of rock art engravings in southern Africa. There are over 2,000 rock engravings and a few rock paintings at Twyfelfontein. More than 200 giraffes and 100 rhinoceroses are shown as well as ostriches, impalas, elephants, and zebras. Predators like lions are scarce, but one particular lion is exceptional. Kudu, wildebeest, and baboons are also rare. Although human figures are common in the rock paintings, they rarely occur in the engravings.



The engravings include well-preserved examples of various antelope, birds and schematic depictions.



The ‘Dancing Kudu’ is an unusual polished engraving that combines a female kudu and several geometric depictions.

Multiple meanings: Each feature of an engraving is deliberate and holds a specific meaning. Sometimes the meaning is difficult to establish directly, but often an informed guess is possible. For example, the ‘Dancing Kudu’ shows an obviously pregnant female. Kudu was valued as a potent symbol of fertility and this may explain the choice of a kudu cow for the image. However, we cannot know all the multiple meanings that the images held for the artists and viewers at that time.

The main attraction on this route is the ‘Lion Man’ panel in which elements of human and lion are combined. The Lion Man is an example of shaded relief engraving, a technique that is well developed at Twyfelfontein. The route also incorporates an array of other noteworthy engravings.



NEPAL

Tamang Selo Dance

Tamang Selo is a genre of Nepali Folk songs sung by the Tamang people. It is widely popular amongst the Nepali-speaking community in Nepal, India, and around the world.



Damphu instrument

Songs are usually accompanied by percussion instruments: the Damphu and Madal and could be very catchy and lively or melodious and slow. A Tamang Selo is usually sung to express love, sorrow, and stories of day-to-day life. It is also sung as questions and answers between two competing groups of singers. This variety is known to Nepali music from the earliest times and hence its date of origin is unknown.

Tamang Selo is a very sweet and enchanting variety of folk songs. Originally sung by Tamangs but favoured by all. It is popular in the hills of Central and Western regions of Nepal but favoured in the eastern hills as well. As the name suggests, this folk song **Tamang Selo** was originated by Tamangs who inhabit the hills of Western, Eastern, and Central Nepal. The beat and rhythm are slow but the melody is enchanting. When Nepali folk songs are sung in a gathering of singers, **Tamang Selo** is sung to conclude the ceremony.



The Tamang songs are known as “**Tamang Selo**”. There are light songs as well as songs with philosophical thoughts. Tamang light songs are called Fabar Wohoi. These songs express the day-to-day joys and sorrows of life. These songs containing philosophical thoughts are generally sung by the Tamba which is called Tambala Wohoi. There are also duets which are sung between two parties in the form of questions and answers, one party puts some riddles which the other party has to reply.

Tamangs have a dance called “**Tamang Selo**” that is performed with the Damphu instrument. It is also known as the Damphoo **Dance**, having a brisk movement and rhythmic beat specific to the **Tamangs**.

Tamang Selo has transcended the boundary of linguistic, cultural and social limits. All other Nepali Communities have adopted **Tamang Selo** in their music and emotional expression. The Nepalese perform the **Tamang Selo**, which depicts the Tamangs of their community. They dance to the tunes of Damphu, a musical instrument which they carry in their hands. Because of this instrument, this dance is also sometimes called the Damphu dance. On the occasions of weddings, a childbirth, and village fair, this dance is performed.

Tamang community that started the Tamang Selo dance:

Dhampus is a village Development Community in Kaski district in Gandaki zone of northern-center of Nepal. At the time of the 1991 Nepali census, it had a population of 2,753 people living in 547 individual households.



NIGERIA

What Is A Folktale?

A story originating in popular culture, typically passed on by word of mouth.

The Dog and His Mother

The Dog and His Mother is a famous Nigerian folktale, that explains how the turtle supposedly got the cracks in its shell.

This West-African story is a fun and informative one, so enjoy!

It all began in a large animal kingdom in western Africa.

A terrible famine had now spread across the land and there was no food for anybody. Any existing food sources had been completely depleted. The animals knew they had to act on it or they would continue to die off. They would hold meetings to discuss their plans, and what they had come up with was so dreadful and cruel. The animals had planned that they would eat their mothers.

However, one dog refused to eat his mother so he came up with a plan to hide her in the sky. Every day, he'd return to visit her, but he sang a special song that only he and his mother knew, like in some way a secret code. When she'd hear her son singing the song, she would let down a rope and reel him up.

The words to the song were:

Iya Iya ta?kun wa le o

Alu jon jonki jon

Gbogbo araye pa yeye re je

Alu jon jonki jon

Aja gbe ti re o d?orun

Alu jon jonki jon

Iya Iya ta?kun wa le o

Alu jon jonki jon

These words in English mean:

Mother, Mother send down your rope

[Chorus]

All have killed and eaten their mothers

[Chorus]

Dog has taken his mother to the sky

[Chorus]

Mother, Mother send down your rope

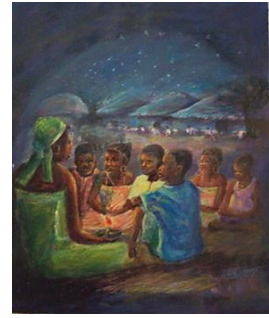
[Chorus]

As his mother would have the rope dropped down, the dog would climb up the rope and join his mother in the sky where she had prepared a feast for him.

After continuously repeating this, one unfortunate day a turtle had followed the dog.

The turtle had always wondered how the dog was always plump and healthy and where he always went.

He followed the dog to his lucky spot and listened closely, doing his best not to make a sound.



The turtle watched as the dog sang out his special song, and as the rope dropped from the cloudy skies, and as the dog climbed the rope.

The next day, the turtle was passing by the special spot and decided to give the song a shot. His nasally voice had to be disguised, so, he did his best to sound like the dog. The mother was curious but let down the rope anyway and reeled up what she thought was the dog.

At the exact same time this happened, the dog went to go do his daily bidding, he saw that he was not the one climbing the rope!



This time he sang out to his mother that the one climbing the rope was not him and that she should cut the rope and so, the mother brought out a pair of scissors and cut the rope sending the turtle crashing down.

What had previously been the tortoise's smooth shiny shell, was cracked, rugged, and in pieces. Even as he managed to get his shells glued back in place, his beautiful shell was now ruined forever!

The End

Folklore is important to Nigerians, and Africans in general, for the following reasons:

1. To transfer culture and history to the younger generation
2. For moral instructions
3. For Entertainment

List of Nigerian Folktales

1. Why the Sun and the Moon live in the Sky
2. Why the Cat Kills Rats
3. The Story of the Lightning and the Thunder
4. Why the Worms live Underneath the Ground
5. Why the Bat is Ashamed to be seen in the Daytime
6. The Fish and the Leopard's Wife

SUDAN

Mohammed Osman Hassan Salih Wardi (Arabic: محمد عثمان حسن وردى) A Sudanese Singer and Songwriter

Early Life

Mohammed Wardi was born on 19 July 1932 in a small village called Sawarda, close to Wadi Halfa in Northern Sudan. His mother, Batool Badri, died when he was an infant. When he was 9 years old, his father, Osman Hassan Wardi, died. He was brought up in a diverse and culturally rich African background and developed an interest in poetry, literature, music, and singing. Wardi travelled to Shendi to complete his education and returned to Wadi Halfa as a secondary school teacher.



Musical Career



In 1953, Wardi went to Khartoum for the first time to attend a convention as a teaching representative for his area. He moved to Khartoum and started his career as a musical performer. In 1957, Omdurman Radio chose him to record and sing on a national broadcast in an arena with popular singers. Wardi recorded 17 songs in his first year! Wardi was a well-known and popular Muslim Nubian Sudanese singer and songwriter. He had a collaboration with poet Ismail Hassan, resulting in more than 23 songs.

Wardi performed using a variety of instruments, including the Nubian tanbur. He sang in both Arabic and Nubian languages. He is described as “Africa’s top singer”, with fans mainly in the Horn of Africa. His more than 300 songs are on topics such as romance, passion, Nubian folklore, heritage, revolution, and patriotism.

Wardi was imprisoned several times over his career for using his musical fame to condemn oppression and tyranny in Sudan. His strong political opinions expressed in his songs resulted in him being jailed. After the military coup in 1989, Wardi left Sudan to live in voluntary exile in Cairo, Egypt, and Los Angeles, USA. In 1990, he played a concert for 250,000 Sudanese refugees at a refugee camp in Itang, Ethiopia. He also took time to tour Britain in 1992. He returned to Sudan in May 2002.



Death

In 2005, Wardi was awarded an honorary doctorate from University of Khartoum. Wardi suffered from renal failure later in his life. He eventually underwent a kidney transplant after one of his fans donated a kidney to him in 2002. He died on 18 February 2012 at 10:30 pm and was buried in the Farouk Cemetery in Khartoum.

SYRIA

Nohad Rizk Wadee Hadad (Fairouz): A Syrian Singer

Nohad Rizk Wadee Hadad, famously known as Fairouz, is a classical singer born in Beirut on November 21, 1935. She has almost 800 songs. Her father's roots come from Syria. Her Lebanese mother, Liza al-Bistani, passed away the same day Fairouz released her song, "Ya Garat Al Wadi".

Fairooz started her singing career when she was 6 years old, approximately in 1940. She proceeded to become one of the greatest Arabic singers of all time. She was married to Assay Al-Rahbany. She has 5 children, 4 boys and 1 girl, who speak Arabic and French.



My Tiny House in Canada: A Poem by Fairouz

My tiny house in Canada
No one knows its way
Covered by snow...and all is green
Trees and so many birds
Get full and fly on the bricks of my tiny house in Canada
Whenever it's snowing... we wait the snow to melt
whenever it's clouding... we wait the spring to come back
My tiny house in Canada
Around it all the space
The door has no key and I'm not worried
A room, home and roof
Staying alone, forgotten
By the windows of my tiny house in Canada
My tiny house in Canada
Just my voice and echo
No friends, no neighbours... the moon is staying all night I'm thinking of you, longing for you
Grieving and missing you
By the door of my tiny house in Canada
Setting fire... waiting you to come back, my darling
To be with me and not to leave me alone
My tiny house in Canada I don't want anyone to visit
Except who my heart has chosen and told him his secrets and what to search in this
universe!
While I know the happiness here
In the middle of my tiny house in Canada



Fairooz wrote this poem about Canada and released many albums, but the most famous one is "Kefak Enta", which translates to "How are you"? "Fairouz de bail al deen" was a live recording from the many concerts she performed. The concerts were done with her son, Ziad al-Rahbani, who composed the music and conducted an orchestra consisting of Syrians and Armenians.

The latest album released in 2017 was called, "Bebally". Even though her poetic-style songs were few in number, they did not lack beauty and coherence. They were in fact the most beautiful of her songs, although they are rarely aired on television because they do not have a music video.

During the Lebanese war, Fairouz did not leave Lebanon but decided to stay in the country. Her decision not to run away showed the highest level of loyalty and love for her country. Although she lost her daughter after a rocket hit her house, she stayed in Lebanon. During the war, Fairouz stayed in Lebanon but didn't do any singing during that period.

Nohad Fairouz was first noticed at the International Festival of Baalbeck, where she performed many of her songs. She became famous after appearing on the "Lebanese Nights" part of the festival for many successive years. Fairouz is commonly known as the "Ambassador of the Arabs" after the title of one of her albums, "the Moon's Neighbour" for her song about the moon of Machgara, and the "Jewel of Lebanon".

SYRIA

Nizar Qabbani, A Syrian Poet

One of the most famous poets in Syria is Nizar Qabbani. He was born in Damascus, Syria, on March 21, 1923.



He studied Law at the Syrian University. After graduating in 1945, he joined the diplomatic corps and moved between different capitals until he resigned in 1966. He also served in Syrian embassies in Britain, China, Egypt, Lebanon, Turkey, and Spain. He published his first book in 1944 entitled "The Black Woman" and continued the process of writing and publishing, which reached 35 books during the last half century.

His most notable poems are "The Childhood of Nahd" and "Drawing with Words". He founded a publishing house in Beirut. He spent his last years living in London, where he was paid more for his political poetry than for his most recent poem, "When Do They Announce the Death of Arabs?" He died on April 30, 1998 and was buried in his hometown of Damascus.

Qabbani was known and loved by those who did not read poetry – even by those who did not read at all. There were elements other than love of poetry involved in knowing and loving Nizar Qabbani. One such element was the need to fantasize, to create an idol corresponding to fantasies that may have very little to do with the reality of the man idolized. His poetry seems, more often than not, very simple.



His vocabulary is not unusual, his syntax is mundane and his rhyme schemes are not complex. There is nothing philosophical about his poetry. On the one hand, it gives his poetry an attractive spontaneity. This spontaneity, however, dilutes its character since it becomes merely a reaction to, rather than an act of critical engagement with, life.

*Balqis...
do you know my beloved Balqis?
she is the most important in love books
a wonderful mix
between softness and hardness*

*the color of violet in her eyes
twinkles all times
Balqis...
in my memory, you're the most blest
a grave travelling through the mist*



This is one of his poems, also it is not the full poem, it is only a small part of it because his poems are long. He wrote this poem for his wife, Balqis, who has killed. He wrote it on December 15, 1981. This poem describes how much he loved his wife and how sad he was for her death.

TANZANIA

Diamond Platnumz, A Tanzanian Dancer and Artist

Naseeb Abdul Juma, born October 2, 1989, is popularly known by his stage name **Diamond Platnumz**, or simply **Diamond**. He is a Tanzanian bongo flava recording artist and dancer. He is best known for his hit song “Number One” in which he featured a Nigerian artist. Diamond has won numerous awards at “Channel O” and the HiPipo Music Awards.



Diamond performed at the Big Brother Africa 7 eviction show in May 2012. Diamond is considered influential among his fans and is said to currently be the most loved and decorated Tanzanian artist. He has received 22 music awards and 28 nominations for his work. In 2013, he was believed to be the highest selling Tanzanian artist of ringtones by mobile phone companies. He is one of the artists earning the highest income in the African Great Lakes region’s music industry.

Diamond Platnumz breaking barriers with “Waka”

Diamond’s latest collaboration, “Waka”, was released in December and features American rapper Rick Ross. It shows how hard he’s working to break down international barriers. The Tanzanian artist is known for song tracks that speak of love and heartbreak.

In this song, Ross, who is known for his unhurried style, raps about running with the young kings – such as Diamond – who are taking over the music industry.



On 3 May 2014, Diamond Platnumz set a new record at the Tanzania Music Awards by winning 7 awards, including Best Male Writer, Best Male Artist, Best Song Writer, and Best Male Entertainer of the Year.

Diamond Platnumz emerged from poverty to be one of the most respected and successful African musician. He has never been shy of his past and he is a perfect example to the rest of the celebrities who never appreciate where they started. Diamond started singing when he was really young and he has never given up.

Diamond’s words during an interview: “For me, just being able to buy food for my mom is a big accomplishment, a big achievement to me, knowing she is able to have the things she wants without worrying is success...To take money out of my pocket and buy food for my mom or to be able to take care of anyone in my family who is in need means everything.”

Diamond: “The moment I started doing shows consistently and getting paid for my music is when I knew it was officially my career. When you’re an artist and you come from the streets, when you first release a song, you can’t tell how people will react to it or what it will mean for your career. People don’t know your name, you don’t have any fans, and you haven’t gained any followers yet. By the time you start performing at shows, dropping songs and people are singing along — people start to know who you are and start searching for you. At that point, you realize that you’re really an artist now.”

