

When cultures speak back to each other The legacy of benga in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Sungura and kanindo are currently very popular forms of music in Zimbabwe, such that Zimbabweans sometimes cannot differentiate between the two genres. Very few people are aware that both forms are related to Kenyan benga music. This paper argues that sungura and kanindo are two different types of genres, in spite of their many similarities, with sungura being a Zimbabwean offshoot of benga that has taken its own sonic trajectory. On the other hand, kanindo remains pure benga, and has been given a new lease of life by Zimbabwean disc jockeys. The benga music of the 1970s has seen a great revival when artistes such as the late Daniel Owino Misiani, the late George Ramogi and Daniel Kamau took it to greater heights. Both genres are assured of a future with younger musicians such as Suluman and Tryson Chimbetu mix with experienced artistes such as Tongai Moyo, Alick Macheso and Nicholas 'Madzibaba' Zacharia to produce more sungura music.