

Son Jarocho

Son Jarocho, which closely translates to “Veracruz sound”, is a musical style created in and appropriately attributed to Veracruz - in the Gulf Coast region of Mexico. The music's rich tapestry combining Spanish, indigenous and African traditions developed primarily as a form of protest against the poor conditions placed on people through colonization. Evidence of this is seen through an early son jarocho song, “El Chuchumbe”, which featured lyrics mocking the colonial authorities.

A key component of how son jarocho is performed or shared is through “Fandangos” - a communal gathering and sharing of the music, that involves instruments, singing and dance, usually on a floor called a “tarima” - a wooden platform that gives the dance a percussive element. The string instruments used include two seen below: (left-to-right: jarana jorocho, a chordal string instrument with 8 strings; and a requinto jarocho, a plucked string instrument with 4 strings - again, just like the ukulele!).

Son jarocho had a large resurgence in popularity around the world following large migration of musicians from Mexico to Los Angeles, and the release of a rock 'n roll-inspired rendition of a traditional Son Jarocho song, “La Bamba” by Ritchie Valens, in 1958.





References:

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