

DANCE STYLE LOCATOR

*Related Topics: Body Music*



Body music is music/dance created by clapping, slapping, snapping, stepping and vocalizing. Body music was most likely the first music/dance. Before people were hollowing logs and slapping rocks to make musical instruments, they were probably stomping, clapping and making sounds to express their musical and dance ideas.

Body music has existed for centuries, and many forms of it still exist today. This includes hambone and stepping in the U.S., to saman in Indonesia, palmas in Spain, and Ethiopian armpit music.

Body music is accessible to all. To experiment with body music, it's easy to manifest familiar rhythms such as the 1-2-3 of a waltz, or the -2-4 of a reggae

beat, by playing different parts of the rhythm on different parts of our bodies – for example, slapping knees, stomping feet, and clapping hands. Playing with the rhythm of words or nonsense syllables can also be body music. Accomplished musicians such as Keith Terry have developed body music into a contemporary art form with links to some traditional forms.

The style of body music that Keith Terry has pioneered since the mid-1970's is not a culture-specific style like those aforementioned, but a mixture of many influences: drumming, world music, tap dance, and circus arts. Through the years, Keith has gained knowledge of many diverse rhythm systems from around the world. As a drummer whose specialty is trap set, his body music initially came directly from displacing what he was playing on the drums, onto his body. On top of finding a portable way of playing rhythmic music, Terry also found mobility, which allows him to move in space, making it a movement art as well as a musical form.

At the time of his initial experimentation, Keith was playing drums for some of the older generation of tap dancers, most of whom have since passed on. Two masters in particular, Charles "Honi" Coles and Charles "Cookie" Cook, encouraged and advised Keith to pursue his unique style of body music. Keith is still following their advice, and the result is some very exciting body music, which combines elements from several world music sources with fresh innovations, forging a now increasingly popular style.