

Understanding Music

It's an open secret that music has the power to awaken in us sensations and emotions of a spiritual kind. Music is a living, moving thing. In early times organized music belonged to the church, later it became the property of the privileged few. By the middle of the 19th century the time had come to emancipate the music of the country from the domination of foreign concepts and conventions. One of the first countries to raise the banner was Russia and the composer to champion this was Glinka who established a new national school, then Dargomizhsky and Balakirev. In early times instrumental music broke away from occasions associated with sacred worship into secular channels. Players were engaged to provide music for various public functions to "give the public what it wants".

Then a new stimulus arrived by way of the Afro-Americans who injected into their music – making African chants and rhythms which were the bases of their spirituals and work songs. One of the first widespread Afro-American influences was Ragtime, essentially a style of syncopated piano-playing, which provided the stimulus for the spontaneous development of jazz. Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" was the first popular jazz concerto.

The so-called "Rock Revolution" began in the mid – fifties, and was based firmly on the discontent of the younger generation who were in revolt against the values of their elders. There followed an extraordinary musical eruption based on the percussive sound of the electric guitar, the rock'n'roll beat and blues harmony. So electrics had invaded the field of music.