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Rumble: The Indians Who Rocked the World

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Abstract

This is a film review of *Rumble: The Indians Who Rocked the World* (2017), directed by Catherine Bainbridge and Alfonso Maiorana.

Keywords

Native American Music

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***Rumble: The Indians Who Rocked the World* (2017),
dir. Catherine Bainbridge and Alfonso Maiorana.**

Rumble is the untold story of how Native Americans and Native Canadians influenced contemporary music, including rock, jazz, and blues. The story is told on two different levels. First, there is the idea that Native American music in general had a strong influence on the development of contemporary music. Elements of Native music make their appearance in a variety of contemporary music forms. Whether it is the rhythm of chants or drums, these elements find their way into contemporary music. This kind of influence is difficult to show, but *Rumble* does an excellent job of connecting the dots. Native music also is identified as music of the land and one of the most interesting features of the film is a juxtaposition of landscapes with musical performance. You are watching a musical performance that slides seamlessly into a landscape and you immediately recognize the "earthiness" of the music.

At another level, the movie identifies the influence of particular Native musicians on music. This is an easier task because there are contemporary musicians who tell us that they have been influenced by these Native artists. We learn about the influence of Native musicians from those who have felt that influence. Some of the early, but not well known, Native musicians include Charley Patton, Mildred Bailey, and Link Wray. There is something about the way Charley Patton performs, something about the way Mildred Bailey sings, and something about the way Link Wray plays the guitar that other musicians try to emulate. Then there are Native musicians with whom we are all familiar, musicians whose music others liked and drew upon in their own performances. Buffy Sainte-Marie, Jimi Hendrix, Robbie Robertson, Jesse Ed Davis, Redbone, Jimmy Gomez and the great drummer Randy Castillo are some of the best known examples.

There are a number of features that make this a remarkable film. First, we get an important addition to music history, an untold chapter. Second, we follow the influence of Native music in such legends as Tony Bennett, Frank Sinatra, Steven Tyler, and the Rolling Stones. Third, we get to see how Native music works as a part of the larger picture of Native culture and how Native culture permeates the lives of Native Americans. And, finally, we have the music itself. I noticed that almost no one left the theater, even though the credits were showing, as long as the music played.