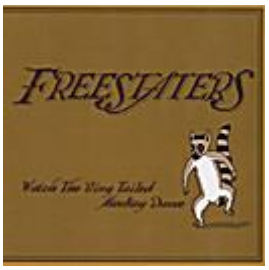
Mp3 The Free Staters - Watch The Ring Tailed Monkey Dance



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America's first pop music from mid-19th century America with ringing banjo, spirited fiddle, buffalo rib bones parlor guitar. 16 MP3 Songs FOLK: Traditional Folk Show all album songs: Watch the Ring Tailed Monkey Dance Songs Details: This is the music America grew up with. Watch the Ring Tailed Monkey Dance is a unique collection of 16 tracks featuring minstrel songs, early-American banjo instrumentals and centuries-old ballads popular in the first half of the 19th century. These songs were heard coming from any number of places: a smoky, dimly-lit tavern; tobacco stained courthouse steps; the dusty floor of a traveling circus; the wooden deck of a chugging riverboat; the quiet of a living-room parlor. And these songs were heard on the immensely popular minstrel stage. The minstrel show, or minstrelsy, was an American entertainment consisting of comic skits, variety acts, dancing, and music. The minstrel show began with brief burlesques and comic entr'actes in the early 1830s and emerged as a full-fledged form in the next decade. In the beginning, minstrel music was performed by white people in blackface or, especially after the American Civil War, African Americans in blackface. Minstrelsy was the first distinctly American theatrical form. In the 1830s and 1840s, it was at the core of the rise of an American music industry, and for several decades it provided the lens through which white America saw black America. On the one hand, it had strong racist aspects; on the other, it resulted in the first broad awareness by white Americans of aspects of black folk culture. Although white theatrical portrayals of black characters date back to as early as 1604, the minstrel show as such has later origins. Blackface characters began appearing on the American stage by the late 17th century, usually as servant types with little role but to provide some element of comic relief. Eventually, similar performers appeared in New York theaters and in less respectable venues like taverns and circuses. Blackface performances continued to gain

popularity and by the 1840s, performers took to calling themselves "Ethiopian delineators" and performed solo and in small teams. In the late 1830s, a decidedly European structure and high-brow style became popular in minstrel music. The banjo, played with "scientific touches of perfection" and popularized by Joel Sweeney, became the heart of the minstrel band. Songs like the Virginia Minstrels' hit "Old Dan Tucker" have a catchy tune, energetic rhythm, and melody and harmony; minstrel music was now for singing as well as dancing. In February 1843, four blackface performers led by Dan Emmett combined to stage a concert at the New York Bowery Amphitheatre, calling themselves the Virginia Minstrels. The minstrel show as a complete evening's entertainment was born. The show had little structure. The four sat in a semicircle, played songs, and traded wisecracks. One gave a stump speech in dialect, and they ended with a lively plantation song. The term minstrel had previously been reserved for traveling white singing groups, but Emmett and company made it synonymous with blackface performance, and by using it, signaled that they were reaching out to a new, middle-class audience. Owing to the Virginia Minstrels success, countless other minstrel groups were born. The more popular groups stuck to the main circuit that ran through the Northeast; some even went to Europe, which allowed their competitors to establish themselves in their absence. By the late 1840s, a southern tour had opened from Baltimore to New Orleans. Circuits through the Midwest and as far as California followed by the 1860s. As its popularity increased, theaters sprang up specifically for minstrel performance, often with names such as the Ethiopian Opera House and the like. Many amateur troupes performed only a few local shows before disbanding. Music and dance were the heart of the minstrel show and a large reason for its popularity. In a day when radio, CDs the internet did not exist, troupes marketed sheet music of the songs they featured so that viewers could enjoy them at home and other minstrels could adopt them for their act. How much influence black music had on minstrel performance remains a debated topic. Minstrel music certainly contained some element of black culture, added onto a base of European tradition with distinct Irish and Scottish folk music influences. Musicologist Dale Cockrell argues that early minstrel music mixed both African and European traditions and that distinguishing black and white urban music during the 1830s is impossible. Insofar as the minstrels had authentic contact with black culture, it was via neighborhoods, taverns, theaters, and waterfronts where blacks and whites could mingle freely. The inauthenticity of the music and the Irish and Scottish elements in it are explained by the fact that slaves were rarely allowed to play native African music and therefore had to adopt and adapt elements of

European folk music. Compounding the problem is the difficulty in ascertaining how much minstrel music was written by black composers, as the custom at the time was to sell all rights to a song to publishers or other performers. Nevertheless, many troupes claimed to have carried out more serious "fieldwork". Minstrelsy lost popularity during the Civil War and survived as professional entertainment until about 1910. New entertainments such as variety shows, musical comedies, and vaudeville appeared in the North, backed by master promoters like P. T. Barnum who wooed audiences away. Nevertheless, minstrel music undoubtedly aided in paving the way for many musical genres to come including the blues, jazz, country, rock, and bluegrass. Excerpts of this article borrowed from the online encyclopedia Wikipedia.