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Hey there and welcome to episode 48 of Busy Kids Love Music, a podcast for music loving families. I'm Carly Seifert, the creator of Busy Kids Do Piano, and I'm so happy you're joining me today. This episode is brought to you by the Busy Kids Love Music History course, which is my music appreciation course especially designed for homeschooling families. You can learn more about this interactive, comprehensive course at [busykidsdopiano.com/musichistory](https://busykidsdopiano.com/musichistory), and I'll link to the course in this episode's show notes as well.

In our last episode, we began our podcast summer series -- Around the World with Busy Kids Love Music -- by learning about the folk music of Brazil. Now if you haven't already printed your passport for this summer series, you can do so at [busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/47](https://busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/47), and then you'll be able to collect stamps for your passport with each episode. Today, we're going to continue our journey of learning about folk music from around the world by traveling to the African country of the Democratic Republic of Congo. You'll sometimes hear this country referred to as the DRC or even simply as Congo, and it is a very large country located in central Africa.

The capital of Congo is Kinshasa, and it has long been the heart of Africa's musical scene. Prior to 1940, the city of Kinshasa was carved up and controlled by many different ethnic groups and tribes who each maintain their own folk music styles and traditions. Since the 1940s, more of a pan-Congolese musical identity has been developed, meaning that it's a musical style that represents all Congolese people.

Congolese rumba is the type of folk music that became popular in Kinshasa in the 1940s. While the rumba is a style of music and dance that comes out of Cuba, the Congolese took it and added some of their own elements to make their own style of Congolese rumba.

The lyrics of Congolese rumba are typically in Lingala -- a language used for trading in Congo. You'll sometimes even hear this type of music referred to as Rumba Lingala. The parts that were played by Cuban horns were instead played by guitars. The Congolese rumba music you're listening to now is performed by Victoria Bakolo Miziki, a famous band in the 1940's and 1950s, who toured all over Europe and North America. Their lead singer, called Papa Wendo, was the first star of African rumba music -- and would go on to form many other famous Congolese bands.

Because much of Africa was colonized by Europe, often there are European influences in African music. However, Congolese music is seen as being less influenced by Europe as some of the music from other African countries.

In the 1950s and 1960s, some artists who had been performers of Congolese rumba began to experiment further by fusing Congolese folk music and soul music with Caribbean and Latin beats and instruments. Do you hear those sounds and influences in this famous classic song?

Congolese rumba eventually evolved into a kind of music called soukous. This is the kind of music danced to in bars and nightclubs.

While it has its roots in rumba, the music is usually at a faster tempo and there are longer dance sequences when it is performed. Remember tempo is the speed of a piece. Do you hear the faster tempo in this soukous song performed by Congolese artist Diblo?

As political conditions became more fraught in Congo, many of the Congolese soukous groups traveled throughout the continent, performing in countries such as Tanzania and Kenya. As a result, Congolese soukous influenced the music of many groups from different African countries.

We've only touched on the depth and beauty of the folk music in the Democratic Republic of Congo, but if you head over to my show notes at [busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/48](https://busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/48), you'll find this episode's curated playlist -- something that I always put together to supplement my podcast episodes -- and can watch the performance of the songs you heard on this episode today as well as of a few other folk songs and dances from the Congo. You'll also be able to print your passport stamp for Congo, and add it to your Around the World with Busy Kids Love Music passport, so don't forget to do that! Again, you'll find all that at [busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/48](https://busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/48).

I've so enjoyed learning a little bit about some of the incredible folk music of our musical friends in Congo. Be sure to join me again in 2 weeks when we travel to a new country and learn more about folk music in another region of the world, collecting stamps for our passports as part of our Around the World with Busy Kids Love Music series. I'll see you then!