

# **The enthralling musical heritage of Assam (From pre-historic to contemporary period)**

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## **Abstract**

Music is the language that breaks all barriers and divisions of a human society. Assamese music is as old as the epics like the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. Since then, Assamese music has come a long way, the present form of music of this state can be said to have acquired as a result of a historical development. Along its journey through the sands of time, music of Assam has adopted and assimilated the cultural sentiments and aspirations of different ethnic groups that has migrated and inhabited Assam from time to time. The vibrant festivals of the state are the prime occasions of singing these songs. Some of the varieties are verbal and passed down from mouth to mouth by common people which render day to day life chores. This is a form of folk culture, though few of the practices are slowly dying and disappearing due to modern lifestyles. On the other hand, some varieties are preserved in manuscripts and some of them have classic characteristics.

The domain of Assamese music is as vast and deep as an ocean. This study delves only an inch of it and has presented just a few elements of it. Assamese songs can be divided into three categories: folk, classical and modern. All domains are not equally flourished now due to the popularity of Western and Bollywood music. It brings threat to folk and classical forms of music. This study will help in linking the elements of music from prehistoric times to the contemporary period and bring in the attention of the people towards it.

**Key words:** *Assam, Musical Heritage*

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