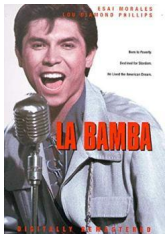
La Bamba

La Bamba is the story of 1950s rock 'n' roll rage Ritchie Valens, played herein with gusto and credibility by Lou Diamond Phillips. The film follows 17-year-old Ritchie as he strolls from one end of his California barrio to the other, guitar in hand. We meet Ritchie's colorful Mexican/American family, who react to his fame with varying degrees of pride and envy. And we meet the ladies in his life: his ambitious mother Connie Valenzuela (Rosana De Soto), his half-sister Rosie Morales (Elizabeth Pena), and blonde classmate Donna Ludwig (Danielle von Zerneck), who inspired Ritchie's first hit "Donna." Both this song and "La Bamba" are given *con brio*
interpretations by Lou Diamond Philips and by the contemporary group Los Lobos, who appear in the film as the Tijuana band. The tragic
coda
of La Bamba is not unduly emphasized; this is a celebration of Ritchie Valens' life, not a eulogy.

La Bamba

"La Bamba" is a classic example of the *son jarocho* musical style, which originated in the Mexican state of Veracruz. The song also refers to a specific incident which occurred in the year 1683, in Veracruz, when pirates attacked the people, free and enslaved, living there. The Spanish officials mistreated the enslaves so horribly that they rebelled in what was known as the *'Bambarria',* an enslave uprising that pitted the African enslaves and Indians against the Spanish.



La Bamba, 1987, poster

Most people never thought of “La Bamba” with an African/Black connection, but, it does have an African origin, and the song owes its creation to enslaved Africans. The song was originally a song sung by African slaves in Veracruz as they worked, since many of the enslaves brought to Mexico by the Spaniards, came from Angola and Congo, with the Africans who originated the song hailing from the MBamba peoples of Angola. Bamba is the name of an African tribe in Angola and in Congo, from the Bamba River. As enslaves, the MBamba peoples brought their beautiful culture with them, and the original origins of this song, over 500 years ago, and as so very often, with enslaved Africans in the new world, they fought against enslavement, running away and joining up with the indigenous peoples in the rain forests and mountainous areas.



Los Lobos sing La Bamba, 1987

Influenced by Afro-Mexican and Spanish flamenco rhythms, the song uses the violin, *jaranas,* guitar, and harp. Lyrics to the song vary greatly, as performers often improvise verses while performing. However, versions such as those by musical groups Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlan and Los Pregoneros del Puerto have survived because of the artists' popularity. The traditional aspect of "La Bamba" lies in the tune, which remains almost the same through most versions.

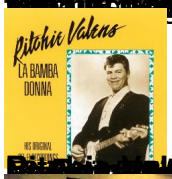


















La Bamba dance -final

Tierra Huicami - La Bamba (Son Jarocho)