

AFRO-CUBAN FOLKLORE



AFRICAN DIASPORA

- There were three main African tribes brought as slaves to Cuba and much of the Caribbean:
 1. The Yoruba (lucumí)
 2. The Congolese (bantú)
 3. The Dahomey (arará)
- Slaves lived in plantation barracks in Cuba, and were “allowed” to preserve some of their sacred traditions
- Africans in Cuba formed mutual aid societies called *cabildos* as a way to pass down their language, religion and music

YORUBAN SACRED MUSIC

- Batá drums (used in Santería ceremonies)

“ORO DE
TAMBORES”



BATÁ DRUMS

- Güiro (beaded gourds called “chékeres”)



CHÉKERES

SANTERÍA ALTAR & DANCERS



ABOVE: DANCERS FROM THE CONJUNTO FOLKLÓRICO NACIONAL DE CUBA IN ORISHA COSTUMES

LEFT: CEREMONIAL ALTAR WITH BATÁ DRUMS

“ELEGUÁ” BY THE CONJUNTO FOLKLÓRICO NACIONAL DE CUBA

NATIONAL FOLKLORE ENSEMBLE OF CUBA



GÜIRO PERFORMERS

“TOQUE DE GÜIRO A ELEGUÁ”



LÁZARO ROS



YORUBA ANDABO ~ YORUBAN DANCES

CONGOLESE TRADITIONS

- Palo (name of religion and specific style)
- Yuka
- Makuta

CANTOS DE PALO



YUKA DRUMS

DAHOMEAN (ARARÁ) TRADITIONS

- Unique drums, rhythms
- Similar structure of deities to Yorubans
- Many songs sung “a ‘capella”

“ASOYÍN” BY LÁZARO ROS



ARARÁ DRUM

ABAKUÁ

- Secret male sect of Efik origin
- Unique Efik language sung & spoken
- Ceremonial drums and ritual traditions
- Mystical beings called íremes, represented in dances and costumes
- Quasi-religious, male-only societies



ABAKUÁ DRUMS



IREME

“MARCHA EFÍ”



ABAKUÁ

SECULAR FOLKLORIC TRADITIONS IN CUBA

- Conga & Carnaval
- Tumba Francesa
- Rumba



A RUMBA CELEBRATION

THE CONGA AND CARNAVAL

- Origins in Cabildos dating back to slave times
- Combined Spanish Holy Week + African Royal and Sacred Processions
- Groups are called comparsas
- Two types of conga: “habanera” & “santiaguera;” the style from Santiago features a Chinese instrument called the trompeta china.

COMPARSAS = CARNAVAL GROUPS



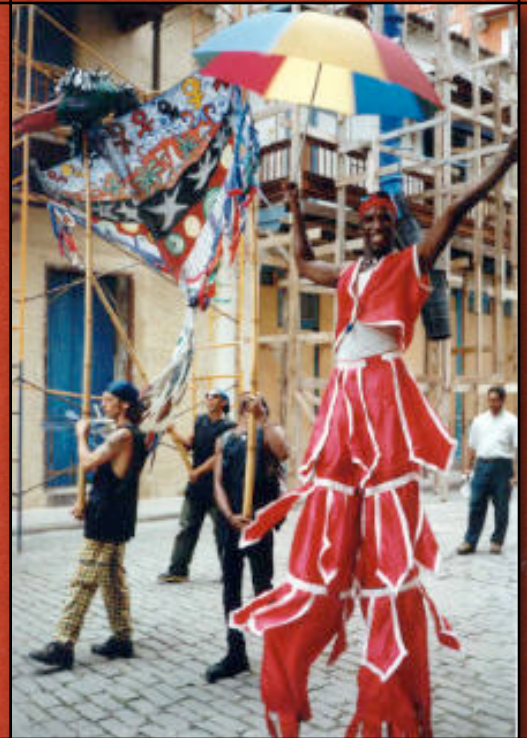
COMPARSA AZUL



“PASO FRANCO AL
CARNAVAL”

TROMPETA CHINA

CARNAVAL IN CUBA





U LAKA LAKA LA
Carnaval La Habana
2003

CARNAVAL IN HAVANA

TUMBA FRANCESA

- Created by former Haitian slaves in Eastern Cuba (after 1791 Haitian Rev.)
- Combination of French, African and Creole styles of music & dance
- Rhythmical elements went on to influence the Cuban National dance: the danzón



“NICANOR BOUKÉ”

RUMBA

- Most important secular folkloric form
- Congolese and Flamenco influences
- Played on *cajones* (box drums), and later on *tumbadoras* (conga drums), *maruga* (metal shaker), *palitos* (two sticks striking bamboo) and the *claves*
- Three styles: *Yambú*, *Guaguancó* & *Columbia*

THE CLAVE IS:

- an instrument (two sticks struck together, referred to as *claves*),
- a repeated 5-note pattern at the root of almost all popular Cuban music.



TUMBADORAS (CONGA DRUMS)

- There are 3 sizes (widths) of *tumbadoras*: the *tumba* or bass, the *segundo* (also called the *tres-dos*) and the *quinto* (the highest-pitched drum), which has the most freedom to improvise



RUMBA

RUMBA SAMPLER: YAMBÚ,
GUAGUANCÓ & COLUMBIA



LOS MUÑEQUITOS DE MATANZAS
DANCING A YAMBÚ



LOS MUÑEQUITOS DE MATANZAS



GUAGUANCÓ DANCERS

A RUMBEAR (TO “RUMBA”)

“MI ARERE”



LOS PAPINES





CLASSIC RUMBA, 1960s

“GUAGUANCÓ OYELO BIEN”



GUAGUANCÓ DANCERS ~ MODERN

LOOKING AHEAD

- Cuban Popular music styles & “The Big Four”
- Evolution to Revolution



ARSENIO RODRÍGUEZ & CONJUNTO