Music 25 Course Reader

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Music of Latin America & The Caribbean

City College of San Francisco

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Table of Contents

Part I: The Caribbean

Cuba………… p. 1
Afro-Cuban Music………… p. 2
The Danzón………… p. 3
Rumba………… p. 4
The Son………… p. 5
The Bolero………… p. 6
Timba………… p. 7
Los Van Van………… p. 7
Puerto Rico………… p. 8
Bomba ………… p. 10
Plena ………… p. 11
Salsa ………… p. 12
Hector Lavoe ………… p. 13
Celia Cruz ………… p. 14
The Dominican Republic ………… p. 15
Merengue ………… p. 16
Bachata ………… p. 16
Haiti ………… p. 17
Jamaica ………… p. 17
Ska ………… p. 19
Reggae ………… p. 20
Trinidad & Tobago ………… p. 22
Calypso ………… p. 23

Part II: South & Central America, México

Colombia ………… p. 25
Cumbia ………… p. 25
Venezuela ………… p. 26
Brazil ………… p. 28
Samba ………… p. 29
Bossa Nova ………… p. 31
Argentina ………… p. 31
Tango ………… p. 32
Perú ………… p. 33
Nueva Canción ………… p. 34
Victor Jara ………… p. 34
Garífuna Music ………… p. 35
Guatemala ………… p. 36
México ………… p. 37
The Corrido ………… p. 39
Música Norteña ………… p. 40

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Part I: The Caribbean

Cuba:

Like much of the Caribbean, Cuba's music is largely a mixture of African and Spanish origins, with only traces of indigenous elements (namely percussion instruments such as the *guiro* and the *maracas*). By the late 1500s, the majority of the native populations in Cuba and surrounding islands were wiped out, paving the way for a music generally referred to as Afro-Cuban. While the first musical forms were directly imported from Europe (such as the Spanish *zarzuela*) most genres were the descendants of European roots, such as the *danzón* (Cuba's national dance), and over time these forms would experience a gradual "Africanization."

Also, African music would begin to incorporate Spanish influences, as the slave populations were obligated to speak the language (and practice the religion) of their masters. By the 18th century, music in Cuba began to see the gradual transformation of distinctly European and African forms as the lines began to blur. However, African religious music was able to retain much of its direct links to Africa (as demonstrated in the Yoruban-derived *Santería* religion). The primary West African tribes brought to Cuba were the Yoruba, Congo and Dahomean peoples, and the results of their influence would shape the island's musical tapestry for centuries to come.

Cuban music provides a wealth of the world's so-called "Latin rhythms," and can generally be characterized by two main areas: folkloric (including both sacred and secular forms, largely African-derived), and popular (spanning everything from European forms to purely Creole styles). The process of "creolization" birthed some of the world's most recognized music (and dance) styles: *conga*, *rumba*, *son*, *mambo* and *cha-cha-chá*. Spanish roots in Cuba include the *flamenco* music and dance of southern Spain as well as regional country music, referred to as *trova* or *música campesina*. Spanish poetry, such as the 10-line *décima*, would form the heart of Latin American and Caribbean song, and would pave the way for popular Cuban styles such as the *bolero* and *guajira*. Many countries would later adopt the bolero as the quintessential form of romantic ballad, played by Mexican *trios* to salsa bands alike.

By the 19th century, many composers and musicians explored the fusion of classical music with truly Caribbean influences, transforming the European-derived *contredanse* into the Cuban *contradanza* and *danza*, and inspiring North American composers such as Gottschalk and Joplin to incorporate a so-called "Spanish tinge" into their piano rags. Another notable style in this lineage was the *habanera*, which became wildly popular in Europe (such as in Bizet's opera, "Carmen"), and was a primary influence in the development of the Argentine tango. These nationalist styles gave rise to the *danzón* (first created in 1879 by Miguel Faílde), and by the late 1930s, the *danzón* experienced further evolution as brothers Orestes and Israel "Cachao" López began incorporating improvisational elements. At first called *nuevo ritmo* (new rhythm) and, later, mambo, these changes inspired a new dance style, later named cha-cha-chá.

At the heart of what makes Cuban music so enticing is its power to inspire dance, and the heart of Cuban dance music is the *son*. A truly Creole form, the son emerged in the late 1800s as an equal

mixture of Spanish and African elements, and formed the foundation of almost all Cuban dance rhythms to come. The structure of son includes a syncopated bass, a repetitive section called the *montuno* (with call-and-response vocals), and the most important element of all: the *clave*. This five-note pattern, played on two sticks (called *claves*), would eventually become the force behind salsa music, and the son would give rise to a multitude of styles from the *son-montuno* to the *guaracha*. It was the son that also inspired the reincarnation of the mambo into its next phase, with musicians such as Arsenio Rodríguez, Bebo Valdés and Pérez Prado paving the way for the next Cuban dance craze. Prado's successful blend of big-band instrumentation with torrid horn lines and rhythmically-charged arrangements put the word mambo on the international map; with virtually all of his compositions injected with the term, Prado became the first Latin artist to sell records in the millions, and he was crowned "Mambo King."

Since the Cuban revolution in 1959, music on the island continued its links to the past largely through the son and its descendants, as well as the tradition of *trova*. However, by the 1960s, Cuba's *nueva trova* movement saw its social and political ideology represented by young intellectuals eager to promote their new-world views. Artists such as Silvio Rodriguez and Pablo Milanés became spokespersons for this new genre, spreading their message beyond Cuba's borders to many countries in Latin America seeking to break the ties with political corruption and imperialism. Adopted as *nueva canción* in countries such as Argentina, Chile, Venezuela, Nicaragua and El Salvador, Cuba's nueva trova movement became the catalyst for many modern-day troubadours throughout Latin America.

Cuban dance music also witnessed dramatic change beginning in the late 1960s, as groups explored the fusion of Cuban son with American rock, jazz and funk styles. Groups such as Los Van Van and Irakere established modern forms of Cuban music, paving the way for new rhythms and dances to emerge as well as fresh concepts in instrumentation. Since the 1990s, however, dramatic economic and social changes have created extraordinary musical (and other) creative outlets. Cuba's dance music had already inspired a change from the older son-style dances, as younger Cubans broke free of step-oriented dances and engaged in wild, hip-gyrating movements.

By the mid 1990s, popular Cuban bands began incorporating hip-hop and rap elements into their son-based styles, and referred to their more aggressive way of playing as *timba*. Although the word has origins in the Cuban folkloric style of rumba (where it often referred to the overall feeling of the music as well as a general reference to drums), *timba* itself has no particular definition. By the 21st century, *timba* bands clearly dominate Cuba's dance scene among the younger generation eager to explore more contemporary trends, and they have given rise to the phenomenon of hip-hop on the island. With so much rich history, the Latin music world is indebted to Cuba as the birthplace of many popular rhythms and dances today. —*Rebeca Mauleon*

Afro-Cuban Music

The term "Afro-Cuban" is confusing to many, in particular since Cuban music already contains a mixture of African and European (mostly Spanish) roots. Why, then, call some Cuban music Afro-Cuban? Mainly as a way to emphasize the increased amount of African elements present in many of the island's rhythms and dances. These Africanisms tend to be present in varying degrees wherever Africans were brought as slaves, and include: call-and-response vocals (where a lead vocal alternates with a fixed, repetitive chorus), polyrhythm (layers of rhythms in a complex structure), syncopation (an emphasis on the up-beats of off-beats within a musical phrase) and improvisation (from variation to full-blown solos).

We generally divide Cuban music into two general areas: folkloric and popular. African-derived folklore in Cuba developed both on the sacred as well as secular level, and some of the secular forms—such as the conga and the rumba—certainly appear more African than Spanish. Popular forms, such as the son, seem to have an equal mixture of African and Spanish influences, so that the son could be classified as Creole. And other forms, such as *trova*, evolved primarily from Spanish country music and have less African elements. However, some *trova* styles such as the bolero and the *guajira* wound up within the repertoire of groups regarded as Afro-Cuban or Creole.

Perhaps the best evidence pointing to the adaptation of the term Afro-Cuban has to do with the contributions of Cuban ethnographer Fernando Ortiz, who meticulously chronicled and categorized virtually all of the island's African-derived forms and undid years of previously *negrophobic* musicology by authors who categorically denied that Cuban music had any African influences. Therefore, the term Afro-Cuban can be seen as a tribute to those African slaves and their descendants who unknowingly and knowingly formed part of Cuba's music history. *Rebeca Mauleon*

The Danzón

Cuba's national dance is the product of centuries of evolution and transformation, from its roots in the French *contredanse* to its spawning of the mambo and the *cha-cha-chá.* Considered part of Cuba's classical music lineage—and one of the primary ancestors of popular music on the island, the *danzón* represents a bygone era yet remains connected to its musical family throughout the Americas.

In 17th-century France and England, court dances were common practice among the social elite. The French *contresanse* and the English country-dance both became primordial influences in Cuban culture as Europeans went west to the Caribbean. In Cuba, the contredanse became the *contradanza criolla* (Creole contredanse), and by the late 18th century the style was adopted and the word "criolla" was dropped. The first instrumental group to play *contradanzas* was the *orquesta típica*, consisting of woodwinds, brass, strings, the tympani and the Cuban gourd scraper known as the *güiro*. A signature element in the music is a five-note rhythmical pattern called the *cinquillo*, which came into Eastern Cuba at the turn of the 19th century after Haitian Creoles fled the turmoil of Haiti's revolution (in 1791). The structure of the dance contained two or three brief segments, each one repeated in a jaunty tempo. In the early 19th century the style slowed down and added a section, elongating the form and turning into the *danza*.

An important aspect of the *danza* was the creative interplay that took place among musicians in the introduction section (called the *paseo* or promenade), which would repeat after each of the individual segments had finished, allowing for the dance couples to change partners. This musical structure is known as *ritornello* or *rondo*, and was a common feature in several European forms of the day as well. These slightly improvisational elements were clearly a reflection of the gradual "creolization" of this European-derived form, which was inevitable given that many of the players were of African origin and began to incorporate their own musical sensibilities to the style. Another predecessor to the *danzón* was the Cuban *habanera*, which followed in the lineage from the earlier *contradanza* and *danza*, and became one of the world's most popular forms, inspiring European composers (such as Bizet, whose opera "Carmen" featured the Cuban style) and serving as an important ancestor to the tango in Buenos Aires.

In 1879, Miguel Faílde composed the first *danzón*. It featured an addition to the ritornello structure with another segment, slowed down the tempo and further emphasized the *cinquillo* pattern throughout the

song. Then, in 1910, José Urfé incorporated improvisational and repetitive elements from the Creole *son* to a new section of the *danzón*, which established its format until the late 1930s. Another important development was the creation of a new type of instrumentation called the *charanga francesa* (and later, simply *charanga*), which went on to become the preferred orchestral ensemble for the *danzón*. The *charanga* at that time consisted of one flute, two or more violins, piano, double bass, tympani and the *güiro*. By the late 1930s, several important changes took place in the evolution of the *danzón*, including: the creation of a new Cuban drum derived from the tympani called the *timbales* (now a standard instrument throughout the music world); the addition to the ensemble of a conga drum (which further represented the African and Creole influences); and the addition of a final section to the structure, resulting in its final format.

One of the premiere *charanga* orchestras of the time was that of flutist Antonio Arcaño, and it was within his group that the above-mentioned developments took shape. Among the members of the group were brothers Orestes and Israel "Cachao" López, and together they began exploring the possibility of adding the improvisational and repetitive elements of Cuba's Creole son music to the newest segment of the *danzón*. At first this new section was referred to as *nuevo ritmo* (new rhythm) and, later, *mambo*. The word mambo would encounter several transformations in the decades to follow, but it was within the *danzón* that it first emerged in Cuba. This highly syncopated and repetitive part stimulated dancers to create a new step, one in which they would scrape their feet on the floor in time with the conga drum; we would come to know this dance as the *cha-cha-chá*, but it wouldn't get its name until 1951. Until then, all *danzones* would then be referred to as *danzón-mambo*. As the final touches were made to this musical legacy, the new section became an independent style—named in 1951 by violinist Enrique Jorrín, and singers were added to the *charanga* orchestra as the *cha-cha-chá* became a vocal style as well as one of the most popular dances of the 20th century. *Rebeca Mauleon*

Rumba

Considered one of Cuba's most important Afro-Cuban genres, *rumba* is more than a music and dance genre; it is the collective expression of the Creole nature of the island itself. Rumba is a secular genre of Congolese African and Spanish flamenco influences, and is one of the primary ancestors of popular music in Cuba.

Dating back to the late 19th century, rumba emerged in the port city of Matanzas (one hour east of Havana) as a blending of Congolese-derived drumming styles and Spanish flamenco-singing influences, with dances that truly represent the dominance of the African characteristics. There are three main styles of rumba: the *yambú* (the oldest style dating back to the colonial period), the *guaguancó* (the most popular of the three) and the *columbia* (the most African-flavored, and also the fastest).

As the oldest style, *yambú*, was first played on wooden box drums called *cajones* (as African-derived drums were feared and often banned), the Cuban *claves* (simple wooden sticks that are probably one of the most important instruments in the island's history) and a metal shaker called the *maruga*. In addition, *cucharas* (spoons) were sometimes added, playing a counter rhythm to the claves. This counter rhythm would eventually be played by *palitos* (sticks) on a *guagua* (horizontal piece of bamboo on a stand). The *yambú* dance is slow and graceful, danced by male-female couples who combine Spanish and African movements in a courtship-style partnership.

The *guaguancó* style emerged later as a faster tempo form, and was (and still is) played on *tumbadoras* (conga drums), along with the claves, the *palitos* and the *maruga*. The conga drums are modeled after

the Congolese *yuka* drums, direct descendants of the African *ngomas*, and would go on to be the most commonly used hand drums in all of Latin music. There are three main sizes (or widths) of *tumbadoras*: the *tumba* (bass), the *segundo* or *tresdos* (middle) and the *quinto* (highest, which is the lead drum), and each drum is tuned to a distinct pitch. (At first, tuning took place with heat as the skins were nailed on, but later, metal tuning hardware developed.) The *guaguancó* dance is also performed by male-female couples, and features a more sensual (and often overtly sexual) move called the *vacunao*', wherein the male dancer attempts to "vaccinate" the female with some subtle or not so subtle pelvic movement. This rooster-hen dynamic is a feature of many African dances found throughout the Caribbean and Latin America, and in many places was frowned-upon (or even banned).

The third of the styles, the *columbia*, is primarily a male-only demonstrative dance, with a more up-tempo and complex rhythm that incorporates some of the Congolese ritual music aspects as well as the Bantú languages, still widely used in folkloric as well as popular music. It too is played on *tumbadoras* and the other noted percussion instruments, and also adds a bell that plays a complex 12/8-meter pattern on top of the 4/4-meter structure. While only men typically dance *columbia*, there were (and are) famous women who stood out such as Andrea Baró, who is often the subject of *columbia* songs. The structure of rumba songs has remained virtually the same since it first began. In the yambú and *guaguancó* styles, the claves begin the song, establishing the tempo with the distinct, five-note pattern (which is the heartbeat of most Cuban music as well as salsa). The remaining percussion instruments enter in layered fashion, and begin their repetitive patterns. The lead singer then sets the key with a series of scat-like vocalizations called the *diana*, followed by the verses of the song. The lead vocalist then initiates the call-and-response section and is responded to by the chorus while he/she improvises in between, and it is at this time that the dancing begins.

Almost the same structure holds true for the *columbia*, the difference being that many songs begin with the cowbell (and the claves are not always included), and *columbia* dancers dance solo instead of in couples. Traditional rumbas began to be recorded in Cuba much later after their emergence (around the 1950s), and the seminal group Los Muñequitos de Matanzas is one of the most significant folklore ensembles to take the genre around the world. In the past several decades there have been variations to the styles, instrumentation and dance, but despite its evolution, rumba continues as the ultimate expression of the Afro-Cuban way of life for all generations on (and off) the island. *—Rebeca Mauleon*

The Son

"The *son* is the most sublime way of reaching the soul"—this was the tone set by one of Cuba's most important pioneers of the genre, Ignacio Piñeiro. Truly a Creole form, the son is the product of African and Spanish rhythms, melodies and dances, and became the catalyst for most of the island's popular music (and dance).

Developed in the late 1800s, Cuban son began in the eastern cities such as Guantánamo and Santiago, and made its way to Havana by around 1909. The first style of son was the *changüí*, a lively and highly syncopated genre featuring the instrumentation of the *tres* (a six-string double course guitar), the bongos (two small drums held together by a piece of wood and played between the knees), the Congolese-derived *marímbula* (a box lamellophone similar to the *mbira* thumb piano, only larger), the maracas and a metal scraper called the *guayo*. Couples danced closely together in sensual moves and turns, and followed the syncopated beat of the marímbula bass-line, and the songs featured a repetitive section with call-and-response vocals known as the *montuno*. However, the son was viewed as immoral

at first and was summarily banned. But as the recording industry began to develop by the 1920s, its popularity could not be stopped, and the son soon traveled the island and the world.

The first major development of the more "urban" form of son was a change in the instrumentation from its more rural predecessor, resulting in the *sexteto* which maintained the *tres*, bongos (the bongo player also added a cowbell for the *montuno* section) and maracas, but replaced the African *marímbula* with the symphonic double bass and added a Spanish guitar along with the most important ingredient of all: the Cuban claves. The claves became the primordial element in almost all of the island's music, not only outlining the popular and repetitive five-note pattern, but the structure of the music as well.

Also different was the tempo and overall feeling, which—although still highly syncopated—was much calmer compared to the *changüí*. In 1927, bassist and composer Ignacio Piñeiro (director of the Septeto Nacional) added a trumpet to the sextet, resulting in the *septeto* instrumentation, and also explored a fusion of the son with other popular musical styles such as the *Afro-son*, *bolero-son*, *guajira-son* and others.

Cuban groups into the 1930s and '40s explored further developments of the style, among them *tres* player and composer Arsenio Rodríguez, who popularized the hybrid called the *son-montuno* and added to the *septeto* instrumentation, resulting in the Cuban *conjunto*. His revamped *conjunto* added three more trumpets (for a total of four), the piano and one *tumbadora* (conga drum); the *conjunto* format would inspire numerous groups in the decades that followed.

The next transformation saw the emergence of a slightly faster, more energetic version of son called the *guaracha*, which motivated Cuba's dance-oriented public as they explored fancier moves. It is the *guaracha* that would become the central style in the genre known as salsa. In the decades that followed, the son continued to form the building blocks of most of Cuba's dance rhythms, and although it would experience many changes and adaptations, its foundations remain into the 21st century. *—Rebeca Mauleon*

The Bolero

The Cuban bolero evolved from the Cuban genre known as *trova* in the eastern city of Santiago during the late 19th century. The *bolero's* origins included several poetic styles, and as it emerged it was primarily a music accompanied on the Spanish guitar. Soon after the *bolero* spread to neighboring Latin American countries-particularly Mexico-and since the mid-20th century has remained as the quintessential romantic ballad form.

In Cuba, single *trovadores* (troubadours) gave way to duos and trios with lush vocal harmonies, and the single guitar was joined by other guitars as well as several "offspring," including the laúd (a lute derivative) and the *tres* (a six-string steel guitar mostly associated with the Creole son). One of the most important Cuban trios dating back to the 1920s and '30s in Cuba was Trio Matamoros, and its leader, Miguel Matamoros, was one of the island's most prolific composers. Other well-known composers included Nilo Menéndez and lyricist Adolfo Utrera, who ushered in an era of the adaptation of well-known poetry to the style. In the decades to follow, Cuban composers such as José Antonio Méndez would take the bolero to new heights along with composers Agustín Lara (México), Rafael Hernández (Puerto Rico) and many others.

By the mid-20th century, big bands in Cuba and New York explored the richness of jazz harmony within the bolero style and brought the world crooners such as Cuba's immortal Benny Moré, whose melodic phrasing is the envy of every vocalist to emerge since. By the birth of salsa music in New York

City in the 1970s, the bolero became standard repertoire along with the staple of Cuban rhythms for all musicians of the genre. In the '90s, Mexican pop singers such as Luis Miguel and Alejandro Fernández introduced new versions of the classics to young listeners who found common ground with their *abuelos* (grandparents) as they enjoyed the same songs 50 years after the fact. Undoubtedly, the *bolero* lives on, and continues to serenade listeners and dancers everywhere. —*Rebeca Mauleon*

Timba

Before it became the newest Cuban music and dance craze, timba was a word with several different uses yet no particular definition, mostly heard within the Afro-Cuban genre of rumba. A *timbero* was a complimentary term for a musician, and *timba* often referred to the collection of drums in a folklore ensemble. But since the 1990s, timba represents Cuba's intense and slightly more aggressive music and dance form.

The popular dance bands that emerged in the decades of the '60s and '70s had already begun exploring the influences of North American popular music—albeit on a somewhat clandestine level. Pioneer groups such as Los Van Van (and its founder, bassist/composer Juan Formell) created a fusion of American rock inside the Cuban *son*, and developed a new sound called *songo*. Songo explored the textures of American music and fully expanded upon the son with other Cuban rhythms, added the American drum-set and trombones to the revamped *charanga* orchestra, and paved the way for a new kind of Cuban dance music as well as inspired new ways of dancing. Heralded as the "Rolling Stones of Cuban music," Los Van Van is one of the island's premiere dance bands today.

By 1990, several bands had incorporated elements of funk and hip-hop into their arrangements, and expanded upon the instrumentation of the traditional conjunto with American drum set, saxophones and a two-keyboard format. Along with the Cuban congas and timbales, the drum set provided powerful funk and rock beats that added more punch to the rhythm section, and the bass players began to incorporate the playing techniques associated with funk, slapping and pulling the strings in a percussive way. The combination of the trumpets and the saxes gave the horn section a more jazz-tinged sound, and the harmony began to evolve on a more contemporary level (as it already had in salsa music). Singers would interrupt the song and engage the audience in a participatory shout-out while the music changed its texture, providing a musical "breakdown" reminiscent of the James Brown era in American soul and funk.

Some vocalists even began to rap in Spanish during these sections. One of the first bands to do this was NG La Banda, lead by flutist/composer José Luis Cortés, and many bands would follow suit. Cuban dancers reacted to this new, edgy, more aggressive sound by moving tirelessly in hip-churning motion to the funkier beat. Today's best timba bands include Bamboleo, Paulito FG, Issac Delgado, Manolito y su Trabuco and many others. Timba is the dance music of the new generation, with topics that reflect the social and economic changes in Cuba since the dawn of the postrevolutionary "Special Period." —*Rebeca Mauleon*

Los Van Van

Heralded as "The Rolling Stones of Cuban music," (and called *el tren*, "the train," in Cuba), Los Van Van was founded in 1969 by bassist/composer Juan Formell, and has since remained as one of the most influential dance bands on the island. Formell's success as a chronicler of the Cuban daily experience is

apparent in his lyrics, and his musical tastes brought about remarkable changes to the *son*-derived dance music of the era.

Formell introduced elements of North American pop and rock music and transformed the otherwise traditional *charanga* instrumentation (Cuba's "classical" orchestra with violins and flute), adding truly American ingredients: the drum set and electric guitar. Together with drummer-percussionist José Luis Quintana "Changuito," Formell developed a new rhythmical approach in his music called songo, which emerged as a fusion of son and other Cuban rhythms with the influences of rock and pop. These changes inspired Cuba's dancing public to react, stimulating a more evocative (and sensual) movement.

In time, the band changed its format again, replacing the guitars with trombones, and adding electric keyboards and synthesizers. Much of the band's sound, and a number of its hit songs, are attributed to pianist/composer César "Pupy" Pedroso, whose influential piano style inspired future generations of *timba* musicians. Van Van's tours throughout Latin America and Europe soon had people everywhere dancing to this new sound in Cuban music while it continued to reign at home as the island's premiere dance band.

After making numerous recordings in the more traditional setting, Van Van's live 1993 recording *Lo Ultimo en Vivo* gave listeners a taste of what live fans had known for decades: this band rocked! The 15-piece band made its first appearance in the United States in 1998, which generated a media frenzy. The two-time Grammy winning group celebrated its 30th anniversary in Havana in front of thousands of screaming and singing fans, and continues its powerful legacy today. —*Rebeca Mauleon*

Puerto Rico

As in much of the Caribbean, the musical history of Puerto Rico is a complex story of how colonialism, native populations, slavery, and migrations—both to and from the island—collided and culminated in a tremendous diversity of musical traditions and popular genres. From *bomba* and *plena* to *salsa* and *reggaeton*, music pervades daily life in Puerto Rico. It's the key to the island's cultural identity and is the one thing that binds all Puerto Ricans together.

Not much is known about the musical traditions of the Taíno Indians, the original inhabitants of the island, but they did name the island "Borikén" (Island of the Brave World), which the Spanish spelled "Borinquén"—a name still proudly used today. The Spanish began to colonize the island in 1508, and the following century saw the virtual annihilation of the Taíno. The remnant was absorbed by the Spaniards and later by the slave population imported from Africa, such that their culture and music is only nominally present in current popular traditions. The presence of the *guiro* (a notched gourd played with a scraper) in many popular genres is traced to Puerto Rico's indigenous population.

During the colonial era, a series of musical traditions based on folk songs and ballads of 18th- and 19th-century Spain evolved, to create the basis of what is today known as *jíbaro* music (country music). The term Jíbaro today refers to the country folk of the mountains, with their way of life, clothing and music, and the emotional link they provide to a nostalgic rural past treasured by Puerto Ricans. The *decima*, derived from a poetic form common in 16th-century Spain, is at the root of jíbaro music, a form of song that uses 10 improvised couplets of eight syllables each.

The musical counterpart to the decima is the *seis*, an umbrella term for a repertoire of different melodic motifs that can be used as the basis for sung poetic improvisation. The seis evolved from genres that migrated from Spain in the 17th century. The accompanying instruments include a guitar or *cuatro* (a Puerto Rican adaptation of the Spanish guitar that has 5 pairs of strings and is considered the national instrument of Puerto Rico) as well as the güiro, bongo and sometimes a clarinet or trumpet. A traditional jíbaro singer is expected to sing and improvise the many traditional forms both passionately and accurately. There are many recordings of Jíbaro music, with few prolific contemporaries being Andrés Jiménez, also known as "El Jíbaro," the group Mapeyé, and the NY based *cuatrista* Yomo Toro.

During the 19th century, when a handful of plantation owners in Puerto Rico greatly increased their fortunes and their social aspirations, children who showed musical promise were sent to Spain for further training. By 1850 a group of island composers had adapted the most popular dance of the era, the minuet, into what is known as the *danza*. Based on a somewhat rigid classical score but with an underlying Caribbean lilt, the *danza's* most popular early composer was Juan Morel Campos.

While *música jíbara* is primarily derived from Spanish traditions, bomba and plena are dance genres with roots in West Africa, sharing an African-based polyrhythmic structure, the use of two or three drums of different sizes and pitches, a soloist and chorus call-and-response formats as well as lyrical content that relates to everyday life of the community. Dating back to the 17th century, bomba was brought to the island by black slaves who worked on the island's sugar plantations. Bomba is played on barrel shaped drums called *barriles*, and is essentially a sensual dialogue between the drummer and the dancer, in which the drummer appears to challenge the dancer to a rhythmic duel, which lasts as long as the dancer's stamina persists. *Plena* was born in the late 19th century in working-class neighborhoods. Although rooted in Africa, it incorporates wider musical elements than the bomba, and its rhythmic structure is centered on the *panderos*, handheld tambourines. Plena dances were events in which the singers provided social and political satire and commentary for the community, creating an oral form of news-casting called *el periódico cantado*.

Culturally and musically, Puerto Rico has much in common with Cuba and the Dominican Republic. However, at the close of the 19th century, the United States took control over the island, after assisting Puerto Rico in its struggle for independence from Spain. In 1917 the Jones Act proclaimed the island an official territory of the United States, and Puerto Rico has since held a commonwealth status. This arrangement has helped Puerto Rico maintain a higher level of economic development than its sister islands, and it's greatly impacted the island's culture. The Jones Act made Puerto Ricans U.S. citizens, with the ability to travel and relocate to the mainland without restrictions. And with the onset of an agricultural depression, the 1930s saw the first big wave of immigration of impoverished refugees to urban centers in the U.S., followed by the development of large expatriate communities (exceeding the population of Puerto Rico itself) that retain strong ties to the island.

While most music historians credit Afro-Cuban music for providing the foundation for salsa, the Puerto Rican barrios of New York provided early salsa's urban tempos, drive, and jazzy big band arrangements, not to mention many of its players. The music traveled back to the island, where Cuban music already dominated the airwaves, and Puerto Rico became one of the primary producers of the genre. Some of the biggest names in salsa are Puerto Rican, including the great *timbalero* Tito Puente, the tragic singer Hector Lavoe, the ensemble El Gran Combo de Puerto Rico and contemporary singer Mark Anthony.

The *merengue*, usually associated with the Dominican Republic, is a two-step dance genre that is typified by a hip movement contrary to the step. As with Cuban music previously, the commercial-music

industry in Puerto Rico has also adopted the merengue, and today some of the biggest stars of this genre are from Puerto Rico, including Olga Tañon and Elvis Crespo.

The biggest musical development in Puerto Rico in the last decade is reggaeton, which combines digitized Jamaican dancehall beats with rapid-fire Spanish rapping. Some of the most prominent stars of this emerging genre are Daddy Yankee, Ivy Queen and Tego Calderón. *—Nili Belkind*

Bomba

Created on Puerto Rico's colonial sugar plantations by African slaves and their descendants, *bomba* is the most purely African music genre of Puerto Rico and one of the oldest, dating back to the 1680s. Bomba's roots may trace back to the Akan people of modern Ghana, the original ancestors of much of the black population of Puerto Rico. Performing and dancing the *bomba* provided a social and political outlet for a people burdened with the hardships of slavery; *bomba* was danced at the sugar plantations on Saturday nights and holidays, usually in open areas in the sugarcane fields or in the plazas of the town square. Although the *bomba* developed as a secular dance form, it provided an outlet for spiritual expression and release as well. Forbidden from worshiping their ancient African gods, the African communities fused their customs onto the worship of St James. During festivals that honored the Christian saint, bomba music was played and a traditional mask, called "vejigante" in Spanish, was worn. The mask was supposed to scare away the evil spirits and pirates that populated the Caribbean. Bomba dances were performed during important social or community events. As with other music traditions that originate in West Africa, dance and music are inseparable counterparts in a *bomba* performance. Some historians say that the bomba first developed Loíza, a town on the Northeast coast of Puerto Rico with a strong African presence. Regardless of its original birthplace, the genre continued to develop in coastal towns such as Ponce, Loíza Aldea and Mayaguez where in the 1800s large communities of black workers gathered around sugar cane mills. As the workers moved San Juan and other urban areas, bomba (as well as plena) became a part of urban cultural life.

Traditional *bomba* ensembles featured two or three differently pitched drums, typically made from rum barrels and called *barriles*, a single *maraca*, a pair of sticks ("*palitos*") called *cuá* or *fuá* that tap out a fixed organizing rhythmic timeline on the side of the drum or another resonant surface. A solo singer is answered by a chorus call-and-response style, singing over the great variety of rhythmic patterns that comprise the bomba. The lyrics are generally of topical nature, revolving around the life of the community and island history, and include improvised parts referring to the dance and music performed. Lyrics are delivered in alternating stanzas and responsorial parts. Traditionally, a *bomba* started with a female solo voice called "*laina*", singing a phrase that evoked a primitive call, answered by the chorus, and supported by the musicians who provided the 2/4 or 6/8 rhythm with various percussion instruments.

The barrel shaped drums or *barriles* are covered with tightly stretched skins and played by hand. The lower pitched drum is called the *buleador*, and it plays a supporting fixed rhythmic pattern. The smaller, higher pitched drum is called the *subidor*, primo or *repicador*. The drums are accompanied by the rhythmical beating of the sticks and maracas. There are many rhythmic patterns and variations that comprise the bomba family, and some *bombas* have names that reflect their African origin, such as *cocobale, babú, belén, cunyá, yubá* and *sicá*, which is the *bomba* rhythm most often adopted by modern orchestras. Other *bomba* styles are named for the type of dance it is associated with, such as the *bomba Holandes* or the *leró*, which is a French derivative of the word "rose", referencing the formation of the dancers that symbolized a rose.

Traditionally *bomba* is danced by a mixed couple who take turns showing off their skills, competing with each other and with the drummer. The dancers proceed in pairs and without contact. The excitement and sensual tension in the music is generated by the often improvised interactions of the singer and chorus, the drummers' rhythmic exchanges, and the suggestive "conversation" between the highest pitched drum and the dancer. The drummer follows the movement of the dancer; dancer and drummer cajole, tease and challenge each other to what appears to be a sensual dual, which lasts as long as the dancer's stamina continues. The effect is that of an intimate visual and musical exchange between singer, drummer and dancer.

Bomba and *plena* continue to be present in the cultural life of Puerto Rico, and are symbolic to the Puerto Rican identity. No festivity or public celebration is complete without the bomba and the plena. It is impossible to discuss bomba and plena today without mentioning one of the most famous exponents of Puerto Rican folk music: The Cepeda Family—with several generations of musicians who dedicated themselves to preserving the African heritage in Puerto Rican music. The family is well known for their performances of bomba and plena and is considered by many to be the keepers of the flame. As part of their efforts to preserve the Puerto Rican musical heritage the Cepeda family founded the Bomba and Plena School of Puerto Rico of Don Rafael Cepeda in the 1970s, naming the school after the family patriarch.

Bomba and *plena* broke out of the folkloric milieu and became a popular craze in the mid-1950s, when *conguero* and bandleader Rafael Cortijo and singer Ismael Rivera started their famous orchestra. They modernized the folkloric arrangements for bomba and plena by adding piano, bass, saxophones and trumpets. They updated the rhythm section by introducing percussion instruments of Cuban origin including timbales and bongos, and substituting the *barriles* with *congas*. This orchestra introduced bomba and plena to all levels of society in Puerto Rico, its expatriate communities and to other parts of Latin America. Contemporary-salsa and Latin-jazz musicians, including Eddie Palmieri, Descarga Boricua and La Sonora Ponceña continue to record updated, stylized versions of bomba. —*Nili Belkind*

Plena

The plena originated in Joja del Castillo Ponce around 1900. It was first heard in the Barriada de la Torre neighborhood, whose population consisted mostly of immigrants from St. Kitts, Tortola, and St. Thomas, who had settled on the island since the late 1800s.

At the beginning, sung texts were not associated with the plena, which was rendered by guitar, accordion and pandero; eventually, in 1907, singing was added.

The music is generally folkloric. The music's beat and rhythm are usually played using hand drums called panderetas, but also known as panderos. The music is accompanied by a scraped gourd called the *guiro.* Pleneras resemble tambourines but without the jingles. These are handheld drums with stretched animal skins, usually goat skin, covering a round wooden frame. They are three different sizes of *pandereta* used in plena: the *tumbador* (the largest of the three), the *seguidor* (the medium-sized drum), and the *requinto*. An advantage of this percussion arrangement is its portability, contributing to the plena's spontaneous appearance at any social gathering. Other instruments commonly heard in *plena* music are the *cuatro*, the *maracas*, and accordions.

The fundamental melody of the *plena*, as in all regional Puerto Rican music, has a decidedly Spanish strain; it is marked in the resemblance between the *plena* Santa María and a song composed in the Middle Ages by Alfonso the Wise, King of Spain. The lyrics of *plena* songs are usually octo-syllabic and assonant. Following the universal custom the theme touches upon all phases of life—romance,

politics, and current events—in fact, anything which appeals to the imagination of the people, such as the arrival of a personage, a crime, a bank moratorium, or a hurricane.

Plena was often called the *periódico cantado* or "sung newspaper" for the lower classes because it spread messages among people, similar to the *corridos* in Mexico. The traditional center of *plena* was probably San Antón, a barrio of Ponce, although the black neighborhood of Loíza is also mentioned as the heartland for the genre. Its popularity peaked in the 1920s.

Plena is played throughout Puerto Rico especially during special occasions such as the Christmas season, and as the musical backdrop for civic protests, due to its traditional use as a vehicle for social commentary. Whenever *plena* is played the audience also joins in the singing, clapping, and dancing.

As a folk genre, there have been many good composers, some well known in their day and into the present. Perhaps one of the genre's most celebrated composers and performers was Manuel Jiménez, known as 'El Canario'. Certainly, there were many others, including such greats as Ramito, Ismael Rivera, Mon Rivera (the Younger), and Rafael Cortijo. The genre has had a revival recently, as evident by the emergence of many plena bands (such as Plena Libre and Viento de agua) and its use in various songs, such as Ricky Martin's recent song "Pégate" and Ivy Queen's "Vamos A Celebrar".

Salsa

The word "salsa" is a perfect metaphor for a genre of music that emerged as a result of mixture: Cuban-based rhythms played (mainly) by Puerto Ricans in New York City! What salsa is—a sauce—helped to describe the cultural and musical make-up of New York City during the 1960s and 1970s; what it is not is a rhythm.

Before they called it salsa, many musicians in New York had already explored the possibilities of blending Cuban rhythms with jazz, such as legendary Cuban brothers-in-law Machito and Mario Bauzá. Back in the 1940s, it was perfectly normal to refer to this blend as "Afro-Cuban jazz," although the music was absolutely for dancing. Into the '50s, the Latin big-band era in New York City found favor with dancers and listeners alike, and the bands of Puerto Rican (or "Nuyorican") bandleaders such as Tito Rodríguez and Tito Puente were fervently committed to playing Cuban music—from the son to the mambo, the cha-cha-chá and beyond. Meanwhile, on the island of Puerto Rico, most popular groups also concentrated on the Cuban rhythms until groups such as the conjunto of Rafael Cortijo (along with singer Ismael Rivera) got the island's dancers moving to their own genres such as the bomba and the plena.

Back in New York, the '50s-era Latin big bands soon fell out of favor, and smaller groups emerged, including Cuban style charanga orchestras, trombone-heavy conjuntos and everything in between. In the mid-1960s, Dominican flutist, composer and producer Johnny Pacheco founded the Fania label (bank-rolled by Italian-American lawyer/producer Jerry Massucci), which was exclusively dedicated to recording "tropical Latin" music. With Cuba now being cut off from the United States politically as well as culturally, it was no longer possible to use the term "Afro-Cuban" or anything else related to Cuba, for that matter. It soon came to pass that the word "salsa" emerged as a clever marketing tool, not only for the music, but for the entire atmosphere—music, dance and events. Among the first artists to record on Pacheco's Fania label were Nuyorican trombonist/composer Willie Colón and Panamanian-born singer/composer Rubén Blades, both who carved an important place in salsa music history for their socially conscious and topical lyrics.

By the 1970s, numerous artists joined the Fania roster, including Eddie Palmieri, Ray Barretto, Tito Puente, Celia Cruz, Hector Lavoe and many others. Salsa was hot, not only on the U.S. East Coast, but also in South America as well as Central America; even European, Japanese and African audiences were treated to this new sound. Venezuelan and Colombian artists also joined the Salsa family, producing important artists such as Oscar D'León (from Venezuela), Joe Arroyo and Grupo Niche (Colombia) and others. In fact, Venezuela became one of the largest consumers of salsa music per capita during the '70s. Also, Puerto Rico became a central figure in the salsa phenomenon, continuing to produce some of the genre's most important artists and groups, among them El Gran Combo and La Sonora Ponceña.

What distinguishes salsa from its Cuban predecessors? While the roots of salsa are firmly imbedded in the Cuban son and its descendents (such as the mambo, cha-cha-chá and guaracha), there are four main factors in how it became its own genre: an increased use of trombones; the important role of the Cuban timbales in the ensemble; the modern harmony associated with jazz music; and the incorporation of Puerto Rican rhythms, instruments and stylistic elements.

While Cuban clave remained as the heartbeat of the music, salsa bands began to record bomba and plena rhythms along with Cuban guarachas, and many of the lyrics reflected a Puerto Rican identity and cultural pride. Boricuas (Puerto Ricans) became one of the largest sectors of New York City's Latino population, and salsa music became the ideal platform for their voice to rise above the discriminatory circumstances in which they found themselves. In the '70s, salsa was an "urban folklore of the city," as Rubén Blades once said, and it would remain as one of the world's most influential music and dance genres in the decades to come.
As salsa evolved in the 1980s, it experienced a more bland version of itself in the so-called *salsa romántica* genre as Dominican merengue served up some worthy competition, but has rebounded since the '90s. Salsa has spread throughout the globe, and lives on the in new generations of players and dancers alike. —*Rebeca Mauleon*

Hector Lavoe

Rarely does one encounter stellar success without trial and tribulation, but the life and career of Salsa legend Hector Lavoe was the epitome of triumph and tragedy. As one of the genre's most beloved stars, Lavoe became crowned "El Cantante de los Cantantes" (The Singer of all Singers), and brought millions of salsa music fans years of joy through his performances and recordings. Yet the rollercoaster life of the embattled singer proved more powerful than his musical gifts.

Born in Ponce, Puerto Rico, in 1946, Hector Juan Pérez began his musical journey singing the traditional *jíbaro* music of his homeland, and would be greatly influenced by other legendary Puerto Rican singers such as Ismael Rivera, Daniel Santos and Cheo Feliciano, among others. As a teenager enrolled in the Juan Morel Campos Music School, Hector would secretly hang out with local musicians, beginning stints as a singer with local bands. Against the desires of his father, Hector left for New York in 1963 to seek fame and fortune. A fortuitous meeting with a local promoter led to the christening of Hector's stage name, Hector Lavoe (a reinterpretation of the words "la voz" or "the voice").

Soon, Lavoe was introduced to pioneering salsa musician, composer and producer Johnny Pacheco (founder of Fania Records), who paired Lavoe with the now-legendary Willie Colón for what would be one of salsa music's first powerful collaborations. Unfortunately, Lavoe soon discovered the temptation of New York's drug scene, and he became addicted to heroin while in the midst of his successful career. The balancing act of the music and drug life soon saw Lavoe embarking on a solo career as his colleagues

could no longer rely on his consistency. Still, his fans continued to adore and support him—even when his drug use caused tardiness or a failure to appear at concerts.

Lavoe's singing talents along with his remarkable improvisational abilities and friendly demeanor made him one of salsa's most beloved artists. His most memorable recordings include "Mi Gente," "Hacha y Machete" and "El Periódico de Ayer," and his concerts were often sell-outs at venues such as Madison Square Garden. His 1977 album *Comedia* included the hit song "El Cantante" ("The Singer"), composed for Lavoe by salsa icon Rubén Blades, and the record eventually reached platinum status.

Despite his success, Lavoe's drug dependence and battles with depression found him sinking deeper into despair; although he entered rehabilitation numerous times and sought spiritual advice and healing, Lavoe could not conquer his demons. In the late 1980s, a series of personal tragedies, including the deaths of his mother and his son Hector Jr. pushed him to the brink. While he had success in1988 with the Grammy-nominated album *Hector Strikes Back*, Lavoe would soon find out he had contracted AIDS as a result of his intravenous drug use.

Upon his return to Puerto Rico for a performance, Lavoe fell from his nine-story hotel room, leading many to believe he had attempted suicide. Although he survived, his wheelchair-ridden body could not hide the inevitable scars of his worsening health, and while even making several appearances in the early '90s, Lavoe lost his battle with AIDS in June 1993. He will always be regarded as one of Salsa music's greatest *soneros* (soulful interpreters) of all time. *—Rebeca Mauleon*

Celia Cruz

Born in the humble Havana neighborhood of Santos Suarez in 1925, singer Celia Cruz became one of the world's most beloved musical treasures throughout her illustrious career. While her father hoped to encourage young Celia to pursue her studies and become a teacher, her obvious gifts as a singer brought her to numerous singing contests and radio appearances. Raised in a large family, Cruz soon realized she could provide more with her talent.

A 10-time Grammy nominee, Cruz's career began in Cuba, including her 15-year tenure with the *conjunto* La Sonora Matancera in 1950 when she was called to replace Puerto Rican vocalist Myrta Silva. Her numerous recordings and appearances with the group included tours throughout Latin America and México, where Cruz enjoyed early success appearing on television. She eventually married the group's trumpeter, Pedro Knight, who became her manager and later her musical director; she always lovingly referred to him as her *cabecita de algodón* ("little cotton-ball head").

Upon her arrival in the U.S. in 1960, Celia became a fixture in the salsa music genre (after leaving Sonora Matancera in 1965), and began her solo career recording and touring the world with nearly every leading figure in Latin music including Johnny Pacheco and the Fania All-Stars, Tito Puente, Willie Colón and many others. She recorded more than 100 albums (22 of them went gold) and appeared in films such as *The Mambo Kings* and *The Pérez Family*. Among her many awards and accolades are several GRAMMY awards, a Smithsonian Lifetime Achievement Award, a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, honorary doctorates from Yale University and the University of Miami. Her death in 2003 (following her 2002 diagnosis of a brain tumor) was mourned around the world, and her loss to the Latin music world has left some very large shoes to fill. —Rebeca Mauleon

The Dominican Republic

The Spanish named the island of Quisqueya "Hispaniola," and the Taíno natives were the predominant population on the land at the time of Spanish arrival, just as they were on several other islands in the region, including Cuba and Borinquén (aka Puerto Rico). Taíno music, while not extensively documented, was primarily vocal with simple accompaniment, and native instruments included *maracas*, bone and clay flutes as well as the *mayohuacán*, a hollowed log drum that is reminiscent of the Aztec *teponatzli*. As African slaves were brought to the island, there was some racial mixing between the Africans and the remaining Taínos who had not succumbed to disease, warfare or suicide (a fate faced by the majority of the native populations in the Caribbean).

With the Western portion of the island later ceded to France, the tumultuous history of the land saw it split into two halves—Haïti and the Dominican Republic—and despite the bitter divisions and unsavory political climate, each side produced significant musical contributions to the world. The Eastern (Dominican) half endured dictatorship after dictatorship, and despite this gave rise to two of Latin music's most important styles: *merengue* and *bachata*.

Dating back to the 1800s, Dominican merengue is a combination of European and African influences as well as connections to Eastern Cuban music. Merengue was first played on guitar, percussion and Congolese *marímbula* (box lamellophone). The German-derived button accordion replaced the guitar by the early 20th century and the electric bass guitar supplanted the marímbula by the 1960s. The *meringue típico* (traditional) genre includes several styles and is characterized as a fast two-step dance, characterized by the close proximity of the dancers. Merengue's humble rural beginnings in the countryside evolved into a more modernized orchestral style, largely due to merengue's status as the national form, established by the dictator Rafael Trujillo in the 1930s. While the earlier traditional forms established the complexities of the rhythm, and the development of the dance, it was the orchestral style (called *orquesta merengue* or *merengue de salon*) that saw merengue's rise to stardom by the 1980s, becoming a worthy competitor to salsa. By the 1990s, modernized merengue adopted the sounds of electronic-drum beats and synthesizers, and the widespread success of this new sound was heard out of Puerto Rico and New York City.

Bachata, on the other hand, did not experience the same political or social support. Born in the poorest of Dominican neighborhoods, bachata emerged in the mid-20th century as a slow, romantic style played on the Spanish guitar. The word "bachata" referred to the sometimes rowdy parties in Santo Domingo's poorest communities. Often called "songs of bitterness," bachata tunes were no different than most romantic ballad forms (such as the Cuban bolero), yet they were perceived as low-class; in fact, bachata was not even regarded as a style until the 1960s and was not widely known outside of the Dominican Republic.

But widespread interest (and acceptance) of the style grew largely due to the efforts of musician and composer Juan Luis Guerra, whose 1990 recording *Bachata Rosa* introduced international audiences to this rich and sentimental form. Already credited with developing a more modern and socially conscious merengue, Guerra nearly single-handedly brought bachata out of obscurity, paving the way for many Dominican artists to share in the spotlight. While merengue would continue to be the more popular style, bachata has witnessed a recent boom, particularly in New York City's Dominican community. — *Rebeca Mauleon*

Merengue

Merengue is a fast, two-step dance from the Dominican Republic that emerged around the early 20th century and has European, African, indigenous and Creole roots. Through the decades to come, merengue evolved from its folkloric, rural origins to more modernized forms, and became the national symbol by the late 1930s, as well as one of the most popular Latin dance styles.

Derived from the European contredanse and West African forms, Dominican merengue began in the rural areas of the Cibao Valley as a complex (yet humble) dance style called *merengue típico* or *perico ripiao*, combining the Spanish guitar with the Congolese *marímbula* (a box lamellophone found in Cuba and elsewhere in the Caribbean), and included a call-and-response vocal section.

Eventually, the guitar was replaced by the German-derived button accordion (brought to several countries in the Americas), and was added to an instrumentation of a two-headed drum called the *tambora* (of West African origins) and a metal scraper called the *güira*. The acoustic bass (and, later, the electric bass) eventually replaced the marímbula, and recordings of this style will sometimes feature a saxophone (such as the music of accordionists Francisco Ulloa and Fefita La Grande).

Modernized merengue developed during the 1930s with orchestral versions played in the dancehalls for the social elite as well as for the middle class. The rural instrumentation was changed in favor of a more "generic" Latin band, with the piano replacing the accordion, and larger horn sections along with the staple percussion and bass. Dictator Rafael Trujillo established this modern *orquesta merengue* (or *merengue de salón*) as the Dominican national symbol, and by the 1960s artists such as Johnny Ventura and Wilfrido Vargas began to develop a highly stylized version with flashy choreography and a simplified beat.

In the 1980s and 90s, Juan Luis Guerra began to incorporate more modern sounding arrangements and socially relevant themes into his merengues, and explored the pop and jazz influences as well as earlier merengue típico styles into his new version.
—Rebeca Mauleon

Bachata

Not even regarded as a style until the 1960s, the Dominican bachata is the country's slow, romantic music genre developed in the poor and humble communities. Primarily a vocal music with guitar accompaniment, bachata emerged during the rise of the Cuban bolero in Latin America and the Caribbean, and became the expression of bitterness and nostalgia in the Dominican Republic. Yet the bachata was looked down-upon by middle and upper-class Dominicans.

The word "bachata" refers to the rowdy, lower class parties in some of the poorest neighborhoods, and the music—although seemingly romantic—came off to some as whiney and melancholic. Many songs reflected the undesirable topics of poverty and prostitution, yet most relied on the tried and true themes of love and betrayal. Dominican radio stations such as Radio Guarachita began to promote the music during the 1960s on a limited scale, and by the 1980s artists such as Juan Luis Guerra began to record modernized versions with slightly more sophisticated lyrics, harmony and arrangements with his group 440.

Soon, audiences around the world were exposed to a more "dignified" and accessible form of bachata, and recently Dominicans in the New York area have experienced a recent boom with numerous recordings and live performances by some of the genre's newest young stars. *Rebeca Mauleon*

Haiti

Following a successful slave revolt that ended in the early 19th century, Haiti became history's first black republic. It's no surprise then the Haitian culture that subsequently emerged had a distinct and uncensored African foundation. Drumming, dancing and song were central to the practice of the syncretic *vodoun* religion, which co-exists alongside Catholicism allover Haiti.

As Haitian music became more secularized, folkloric styles like *twobadou* (or troubadour), an intimate sound along the lines of American blues or Cuban *son*, grew in popularity. Throughout the 20th century, such genres as American jazz and African highlife began to be incorporated into Haitian music as bands grew bigger in size and musical patrons more discerning. The 1930s and '40s saw the Haitian government attempting to marginalize vodou practices as part of an "antisuperstition" campaign, but this only led to Haitians determined to celebrate their roots being more resolute in doing so. It eventually became clear that no matter how modern Haitian culture would become, a clear and present African underpinning would remain.

A big-band, African-rooted and eventually globally influenced dance music known as *compas* emerged and achieved massive popularity. By the 1960s rock 'n' roll entered the picture, and many young Haitians were prompted to cop that style, but by the middle of the decade the mini-jazz sound was born. Named for their smaller size and the rage of fashions like the miniskirt, mini-jazz bands played a hotter version of *compas* for a generally younger, less gentrified crowd. Further melding of African traditions with European ones was heard in the *rara* style, a down-home music featuring bamboo horns and rustic percussion played to celebrate the end of the Catholic Lenten season.

In more recent years, soul, funk and rap have made their way into Haiti, but a concurrent emphasis on *raciness* (roots) has led to the rise of Africanized fusion bands like Boukman Eksperyans (named for slave revolt leader Boukman Dutty), Boukan Ginen and RAM. The *racines* movement has also seen to it that such legendary figures as guitarist Gesner "Coupe Cloue" Henri, *compas* pioneer bandleader Nemours Jean-Baptiste and mini-jazz group Tabou Combo (still one of Haiti's finest) rightly retain places of honor in the history of Haitian music.

Today, despite being the Western Hemisphere's poorest country, a land still struggling to recover from the father-and-son Duvalier dictatorships, Haiti continues to produce indomitable, defiantly beautiful music. —*Tom Orr*

Jamaica

For a country that's slightly smaller than the state of Connecticut and has a population of less than 3 million, Jamaica has done more to influence world music that any other country its size—and far more than numerous countries that are much bigger. The country's ska, reggae and dub musical styles and influences are heard around the world.

The Arawak people settled the land they called Xamayca around 1,000 A.D. Christopher Columbus landed there in 1494, and Spain began its occupation of the country in 1509, dubbing it

Santiago. The island's indigenous population was soon wiped out by disease, war and slavery, but Spain's dominion wouldn't last. In 1655 Britain seized Jamaica, and by 1661 the country was in full colonization mode. African slaves, first brought over by the Spanish, continued to be brought to Jamaica to work the highly profitable sugar cane and coffee plantations, which made the island one of Britain's most valuable Caribbean outposts for more than 150 years. With slaves outnumbering their white masters, numerous uprisings occurred throughout the years and many indentured servants escaped. These escaped slaves, called Maroons, developed their own societies, and several of their communities are still around in modern Jamaica.

A strike organized by Samuel Sharp on December 25, 1831, turned violent and was squashed, but it led to Britain abolishing slavery in 1834. But it wasn't until 1865's Morant Bay rebellion, led by Paul Bogle and George William Gordon, that Britain eventually renounced its authority and made Jamaica a Crown Colony. In 1872 the island's capital moved from the interior Spanish Town to coastal Kingston, and over the next 90 years the island went through a series of economic challenges as well as rising political movements pushing for independence. Britain finally granted the island freedom from its Commonwealth on August 6, 1962. Jamaica's main two political groups—Jamaica Labor Party (JLP) and the People's National Party (PNP)—continually struggle for leadership, sometimes violently, and "politricks" (as Rastafarians call it) have influenced many a songwriter.

You can't go anywhere in Jamaica today without hearing reggae or its harder-edged evolution, dancehall. Modern Jamaican music has its roots in earlier forms that were popular on the island, including the percussive junkanoo (jonkunnu, jonkonnu) and kumina styles from West Africa, and the European dance mode called quadrille. These morphed into mento, Jamaica's unique brand of folk music that is sometimes confused with Trinidadian calypso. By the 1930s and 1940s American jazz raged on the island, and in the 1950s R&B, especially that from New Orleans, began its meteoric rise. Also, Jamaica's Rastafarian religious sect kept alive the African-derived drumming style called burra or Nyabinghi. Other influences on Jamaican music over the years include calypso and soca from Trinidad as well as various styles from nearby Cuba and Haiti.

In the early 1960s Jamaican musicians took mento, burra and R&B and mashed them together to form a music called ska. The drumbeats were emphasized on the second and fourth bars, as in R&B, as the bass played driving quarter notes, but it was the syncopated guitar or piano accents, as in mento, on the upbeats that gave ska its distinctive sound. Ska was high-energy dance music, but by 1966 the tunes had slowed into a style called rocksteady: bass took on a more prominent and syncopated role, and Motown-inspired vocalists were able to stretch their soulful pipes over richer melodies. By 1968 the tempo had decreased yet again and funkier bass lines emerged as did the one-drop rhythm—where the bass drum is "dropped" on the one and reintroduced on the three, while the two and the four are heavily accented by the snare and guitars—which became the lifeblood of the music named reggae. (Nobody really knows how the names ska or reggae emerged: the former may be onomatopoeic to represent the sound of the guitar; the latter term was first documented on the 1968 hit "Do the Reggay" [sic] by Toots and the Maytals.)

As Bob Marley spread Jamaican music throughout the world in the 1970s, musicians at home continued to experiment. Dub is a ghostly style that treated reggae tunes as playgrounds for producers who stripped out vocals and added echo and reverb to create new versions of the songs. While a dub "version" was often used as the B-side of a 7-inch single, the style took on a life of its own, spawning new instrumentals that were meant specifically for dub treatments. Another outgrowth of "versioning" was the toaster or deejay, which in Jamaica means someone who chants, raps or talks over a beat, not someone who spins records. Older songs were recycled for new deejay versions, and singers would put a new set of lyrics and melodies over a classic rhythm (riddim). This sort of recycling and invention through reinvention is a hallmark of modern Jamaican music. Other styles than emerged in the 1970s

include rockers (where the bass drum is hit on all four beats), reggae-disco and, from England, home to millions of Jamaican immigrants, lover's rock, which concentrated on sweet songs of romance.
By the 1980s dancehall emerged and it still dominates today. This new form of deejaying often featured more aggressive vocals, sexually suggestive or violent lyrics (called "slackness") and stripped-down music. Over the years, with MTV and BET being pumped into more and more Jamaican households, dancehall was heavily influenced by American hip-hop, which itself borrowed heavily from Jamaican deejays during its Bronx birth in the 1970s. But dancehall artists still have an approach that is uniquely their own, no matter what outside inspirations come to the island, and they've continued to do what musicians in "Ja" have always done: Ingest influences from all sorts of music and recast them as a something undeniably Jamaican. —*Christopher Porter*

Ska

Perhaps it's a coincidence that ska music was developing just as Jamaica was on its way to being granted its independence from the Britain. But there's no denying that by August 6, 1962, ska had become the popular music of its day, giving Jamaica its own sound during the time it became a free nation. But like the island's slogan—"Out of many, one people"—ska was born through the blending of many musical styles.

In the 1930s and 1940s swing jazz spread through Jamaica, mostly through bands on the hotel circuit on the north coast and in Kingston, the nation's capital. By the 1950s R&B began its popular rise, driven by the accessibility of radios that could tune in stations from Miami, New Orleans and as far away as Nashville, Tennessee. Plus, the Armed Forces radio network pumped American music to Jamaica, while nearby Cuban stations could also be pulled in. This era also featured the dawn of the first soundsystem dances, where patrons would attend street parties hosted by promoters spinning the hottest sounds. The music consisted primarily of hot jump-jazz and blues-boogie by the likes of Louis Jordan, Bill Doggett, Rosco Gordon as well as Afro-Cuban music by Perez Prado, Machito and Mario Bauza, swing by Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Louis Prima and Lionel Hampton, bebop by Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie and Harold Land, vocal jazz by Billy Eckstine and Sarah Vaughan and dashes of calypso and mento by singers like Lord Flea and Count Lasher.

In order to keep people coming to their dances, soundsystem operators like Coxsone Dodd (who later founded the legendary Studio One label, where Bob Marley got his start) and Duke Reid (whose Treasure Isle label battled Dodd for supremacy) had to find the newest, most obscure records to entice the crowd. The discs were acquired through frequent trips to America, trades with U.S. servicemen and mail order, and labels were scratched off to foil snooping competitors. (For instance, it wasn't until years later that patrons found out that Dodd's theme song, "Coxsone Hop," was actually Willis "Gator" Jackson's "Later for the Gator.")

By the late 1950s Dodd decided that another way to get exclusive records was to make them himself. He rented time at Federal Recording Studios and hired local jazz musicians that variously included guitarist Ernest Ranglin, bassist Cluett Johnson, pianists Aubrey Adams and Cecil Lloyd, trombonist Rico Rodriguez, trumpeter Baba Brooks and future members of ska's premier band, the Skatalites, such as drummer Lloyd Knibb and saxophonist Roland Alphonso. They cut shuffle tunes and hard-edged R&B exclusively for sound system use.

Other soundsystem men soon followed, with people like Prince Buster, King Edwards and Duke Reid turning into record producers in order to support their dances. But as these musicians tried to duplicate the U.S. music that was so popular, something funny happened. The woozy, loping beats of Rosco Gordon and the swingin' jive of Louis Jordan was being twisted by the Jamaican musicians, with the second and fourth beats being accented more heavily than in the American music they were emulating. The offbeat accents of Jamaican boogie in the late 1950s morphed into afterbeat or upbeat accents in the 1960s with the creation of ska. In this new style the guitar and piano nipped at the two and the four albeit in an exaggerated, highly syncopated and clipped style, while the horn sections played melody lines borrowed from jazz, Latin music, mento and R&B.

Whether the creation of ska was intentional or a happy accident is open to debate. Everyone from Clement Dodd and Prince Buster to Ernest Ranglin and Lloyd Knibb claimed ska (or at least parts of it) as his own invention. Popular bassist Cluett
Johnson used to call people "Skavoovie," and that's sometimes considered as one of the sources for the music's rubric; another is the onomatopoeic sound that a guitar makes: *ska ska ska*. Ska started slowing down by the mid-1960s, with bass lines becoming more prominent and vocalists rather than instrumentalists handling the songs' melody lines. The new music, dubbed rocksteady, morphed into reggae at the end of the '60s.

Ska's "second wave" kicked up in Britain in the late 1970s. Artists like the Specials, the English Beat, Madness and others put a punk rock twist on the style. Ska's "third wave" surfaced in the late 1980s and lasted through the mid-1990s, with groups like the Toasters, the Mighty Mighty Bosstones and No Doubt helped propel the music to U.S. chart success, however brief. *—Christopher Porter*

Reggae

Reggae is the heartbeat of Jamaica. While the term now covers everything from the upbeat grooves of ska and the spooky sounds of dub to the aggressive beats of dancehall, at its core reggae music is all about the one-drop rhythm, which features the bass drum disappearing on the first beat and coming in strong with the snare on the third as the keyboards and guitars add syncopated accents on the two and the four.

The origin of the word "reggae" is open to debate. Some say it's the distortion of "streggae," patois slang for prostitute, while other say it's just a made-up name of no particular origin. Toots and Maytals were the first to use the word on record, however, with the 1968 single "Do the Reggay" (the word's spelling hadn't been formalized yet).

In the late 1950s and early 1960s Jamaican musicians took a Jamaican folk style called mento and mixed it with American jazz and especially R&B to create ska. As with R&B, the drumbeats were emphasized on the second and fourth bars, but it was the syncopated guitar or piano accents, which came from mento, on the upbeats that gave ska its distinctive energy. By 1966 the tunes had slowed into a style called rocksteady, which featured soulful vocalists and bass lines that took on a more prominent and free-ranging role. By 1968 the tempo had switched again, the one-drop rhythm came to form and reggae was born.

From the beginning reggae has been influenced by and identified with Jamaica's Rastafari religion, which was a belief system that was created by poor black Jamaicans in the 1930s who wanted to reclaim their African heritage and feel empowered in the face of a white Protestant ruling class that had previously run the island as a slave colony. Rastafarians believed that the emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie I, was god incarnate. It's not that every reggae musician is a Rasta, but ever since Bob Marley

spread Jamaica's national sound around the world, reggae and Rastafari have been almost as one—as have marijuana and the music. The Rastas use ganga as a sacrament; reggae fans use it as the perfect, if illegal, accompaniment to the music's slow-motion grooves, loose-limbed bass lines and laid-back vibes. Plus, Rastafari's African-derived drumming style, called burra or Nyabinghi, directly influenced the one-drop beat. Jamaican music that emerged in the late '60s and early '70s is called roots reggae, and some of its legendary artists include Burning Spear, Peter Tosh, Bunny Wailer, Dennis Brown and Inner Circle—yes, of the Cops theme song fame, but before that, when the late and great Jacob Miller was its singer, the band was among the very best.

A standard joke from reggae's detractors is, "I love that song," indicating that all the music sounds the same. But the truth is that reggae features a remarkable variety of styles and influences—and it's constantly being reinvented. Dub is one such reggae recasting. Producers will take a rhythm, or "riddim," track and add or remove voices, instruments and sound effects to create something like a smeared Xerox copy of the original tune. While the "dub versions" often appeared on the B-sides of singles, the technique eventually took on a life of its own. In 1970 producer Errol Thompson engineered the first instrumental reggae album, The Undertaker, by Derrick Harriott and the Crystalites. Harriott is one of Jamaica's greatest soul singers, with a voice on par with Smokey Robinson. Yet his vox is little more than an apparition on The Undertaker, and Harriott's credited as playing "sound effects." By 1975 Lee "Scratch" Perry, King Tubby, Augustus Pablo and the team of Harold Chin and Errol Thompson had established dub as a rich and enduringly popular reggae subgenre. No longer were older riddims simply versioned by producers; new music was created from the ground up as dub tunes. Electronica and hip-hop artists have adopted numerous cues from dub techniques, and modern masters like Mad Professor, Adrian Sherwood and Bill Laswell have updated the style in the digital age.

The deejay is another stylistic spin-off from reggae. "Deejay" is what Jamaicans call somebody who talks, "toasts" or raps, usually contemporaneously, over a riddim. Some of the greatest deejays to emerge in the early 1970s included U-Roy, I-Roy, Dennis Alcapone and Big Youth, and their pioneering techniques influenced American hip-hop, which has its roots in New York City's Bronx—a popular place for West Indian immigrants. Deejays would often perform over recycled riddims, and this sort of aural callback is a defining element of post-1970s Jamaican music. Classic beats like "Real Rock," "Stalag 17," "Satta Massagana" and "Sleng Teng" (the first digital-riddim smash) are revived every few years for a new round of hits.

Other styles than emerged out of roots reggae include rockers, a late '70s variant characterized by the high-hat heavy "flying cymbals" sound, and the U.K.-birthed lover's rock, a romance-heavy style capitalized on by crooners like Gregory Isaacs, Dennis Brown, Sugar Minott and Freddie McGregor. Meanwhile, dancehall, which began in the 1980s with Yellowman, Eek-A-Mouse, Super Cat, Cutty Ranks, Shabba Ranks, Dillinger and more, began the dominance that extends to today. Originally called ragamuffin or ragga, the music is a combination of stripped-down, rhythm-heavy sounds (often all digital now) featuring deejays or "sing-jays," if the artist mixes toasting and crooning. The lyrics run the gamut, but "slackness" (topics of a sexual, rude or violent nature) is a familiar fallback. Modern dancehall superstars include Buju Banton, Beenie Man, Sizzla, Capleton, Vybz Kartel and Elephant Man.

The music has also traveled far beyond Jamaica to inspire musicians worldwide, from Australian Aboriginal bands and such African stars as Lucky Dube and Alpha Blondy, to Western pop superstars such as Elvis Costello and the Police (not to mention "Hasidic reggae" sensation Matisyahu.) Reggae, a scrappy music from a small island, is truly a part of the world's musical vocabulary. *—Christopher Porter*

Trinidad & Tobago

Located off the coast of Venezuela, the twin islands of Trinidad and Tobago have a combined population of over a million people. Yet for a small country, "T and T" has an astonishingly rich musical culture that's had a major impact on the international stage. Well-known styles such as calypso, steel band and *soca* are just a segment of the rich musical mix found in the country. The music has strong roots in the islands' dominant cultures, a population largely descended from African slaves and indentured workers from India, along with influences from the succession of colonial control by the Spanish, French, and British.

The musical culture is dominated by a rich calendar of secular and religious celebrations including Independence, Emancipation, Indian Arrival Day, Hosay, Devali, Phagwah, Christmas and -- most important -- the pre-Lenten Carnival season. Carnival is awash in music, from the various roadside tents to the parades and "road marches," music blooms everywhere, and the music of Carnival ranges from calypso, pan (or steel drum music), to soca, *rapso* and more.

Over 100 years old, calypso is the most well known music to arise in Trinidad. Calypso is one of the Caribbean's classic African-derived styles, full of the sly wordplay and topical social and political commentary that marks much African and African-American music. Sung annually in the tents during Carnival season, the best calypsos often lampoon current events, international affairs and local gossip. Calypso has produced several international stars, including Mighty Sparrow, Lord Kitchener and Black Stalin, and the music has had a strong international presence, most notably with the Andrews Sister's hit version of Lord Invader's "Rum and Coca-Cola" and during the "calypso craze" of 1957.

In the 1970s, a new music called *soca* evolved from calypso (the name is a conflation of the words "soul calypso"). Soca is a more dance-oriented style that captured the youth market in Trinidad, with massive turnouts for leading artists like Machel Montano, Destra Garcia and Shurwayne Winchester. Soca has spread throughout the Caribbean as a popular music form. A few songs like Montseratian Arrow's "Hot Hot Hot" and Trinidadian Anselm Douglass' "Who Let the Dogs Out" have become international hits. Some artists like David Rudder have a unique style that incorporates both calypso and soca.

Barely two decades old, *rapso*, a mix of rap and rhyme with calypso, has evolved into a separate form. It has its own set of artists ranging from elders Brother Resistance and Karega Mandela to the talented Atakland and the most successful *rapso* group, 3 Canal.

Trinidad's greatest musical achievement is the invention of the steel drum, an instrument almost synonymous with the Caribbean. Steel drums evolved during the oil-boom period around World War II, from the work of many untutored musicians who started experimenting with transformed used, 55 gallon oil drums into a uniquely tuned musical instruments. By the 1950s, pan or steelbands had evolved into a highly complex set of instruments, and many bands had *panyards* that served as important cultural and community centers throughout the country.

The annual steel drum competition called *Panorama* is now one of the biggest events each year at Carnival. The steel drum's flexibility makes steelband music uniquely versatile, capable of playing everything from calypso to classical music. Steelband music has been exported all over the world. Outside of the Caribbean, there are significant numbers of groups in the United States, Canada, England

and Switzerland. Hundreds of recordings of steelband have been issued and pan is not being used in settings from jazz to world music ensembles.

At Christmas time, the influence of the Spanish comes to the fore with *parang*, a Venezuelan-derived Christmas music in which small groups of singers and guitarists go from house to house. In the last few decades, a hybrid form *soca parang* has grown up with new releases every year that rival the more traditional *parang* music.

Less well known are the many varieties of Indian music in Trinidad. There
is a rich heritage of wedding songs, religious songs, love songs and classical music. A unique form, unknown in India, is *chutney* music. This form has grown up in the last few decades influenced primarily by the popular film music from Bollywood soundtracks as well as calypso and soca music from Trinidad. It is sung in a mix of English and Hindi and backed by Indian and western instruments. The influence of soca became so prevalent that the crossover form chutney soca was born. The annual chutney soca competition held early in the Carnival season is commanding more and more interest.

An Indian form of social commentary song developed in the nineties called *pichakaree*. From both the African and Indian traditions come the rhythm and tassa bands, the popular drumming and percussion groups heard on the streets during Carnival. — *Ray Funk*

Calypso

Calypso developed during the 19th century with roots in Trinidad's Carnival. It grew out of the various styles of Carnival music, including ribald songs, traditional drumming and stick-fighting songs, first sung in French Creole and by the turn of the century sung in English.

These tunes were originally sung by chantwells, singers who led carnival masquerade bands in call and response in tents in the weeks leading up to Carnival and on the streets during Carnival itself. In the 1920s, calypso was transformed into a more ballad style of political and social commentary. The singers no longer led the masquerade bands performed in the tents as shows rather than rehearsals for the street carnival. A strong crop of calypso singers emerged in this period all taking on warrior like pseudonyms including Roaring Lion, Atilla the Hun, Lord Beginner, Growling Tiger, King Radio and Executor. These calypsonians wrote and sang sophisticated songs and performed in competing tents during the Carnival season of the '30s.

Although a few calypsos were recorded in the first two decades of the 20th century, the major break came with the 1934 recording trip to New York after Carnival by Roaring Lion and Atilla the Hun. Their recording brought international notice to calypso and won respect at home. In addition to the recordings, Lion and Atilla were taken under the wing of Rudy Valle, who brought them important exposure at his New York nightclub and on his Saturday night radio broadcast. That session yielded two classics: Lion's "Ugly Woman," which was later featured in a Hollywood musical and rewritten into a rhythm-and-blues hit, and Atilla's "Graf Zepplin," a celebration of the airship coming to Trinidad in the fall of 1933, a song still sung today.

For the rest of the decade, calypsonians went to New York each year to record and numerous field trips were made to Trinidad. By 1938, *Time* proclaimed a calypso boom in the United States. However, it didn't really seem to happen until the Andrews Sisters' version of Lord Invaders' "Rum and Coca Cola"

became popular during World War II: Despite being banned from the radio, it was one of the best-selling records of the war era. This song was a watered-down version of a sharp commentary on the ill effects of the American presence in Trinidad during the war. Still, it provided enormous exposure to calypso and sparked even more interest that led to an increase of recordings in the United States and England as well as the increased travel of calypsonians to both locations.

In 1957, the *Calypso* album by Harry Belafonte sparked a short-term calypso craze in the United States and to a lesser extent around the world despite the fact that most of the album was not calypso. For six months, the American entertainment industry rushed out dozens of singles and albums and three movies were produced with calypso themes. A craze for calypso dancing was born and it caused many nightclubs to change their décor and seek out any calypsonians they could find. The craze fizzled out quickly but not before calypso had entered the music conscious of many people around the world.

In 1956 a young Trinidadian singer named the Mighty Sparrow declared, "Yankee gone, Sparrow take over now" in his hit song "Jean and Dinah," referencing the declining presence of U.S. servicemen in the country after WWII. Sparrow all but took over calypso from leading lights like Lord Melody (with whom he had a delightful duel in song) and the comic genius Spoiler. He created a new sound and style, one that was more melodic and brought a new excitement to the calypso tents with memorable albums of great songs that were heard throughout the Caribbean.

The other great calypsonian of the time was Lord Kitchener who had gone to England in 1948 and was a major force during the Fifties with his recordings of calypsos were popular throughout the Caribbean and in Africa. With Independence, Lord Kitchener returned and the two led competing tents of great singers during a golden era of calypso in the '60s and '70s with other masters of the art form: Duke, Stalin, Cristo, Cypher, Chalkdust and others. In the late '70s, a whole new style, soca, was created by Lord Shorty (aka Ras Shorty I), Shadow and others. These artists brought a range of influences, from Indian music to R&B, and melded them into a more dance-driven, less-lyric-oriented style that has since evolved quite a bit apart from calypso. More recently artists like David Rudder have created a unique style merging elements of calypso and soca, and new forms like rapso exert a strong influence.

In the last decade Extempo competitions have emerged, where calypsonians are asked to compose and sing on the spot on any subject. A master calypsonian like Gypsy has made this art form his own. Until the 1960s, there were few women singing calypsos but with pioneers like Calypso Rose and Singing Francine and current masters like Singing Sandra, the situation has changed and women sing many of the strongest calypsos.

In Trinidad the crowds at calypso tents are older and not as well attended as the large and younger-leaning soca fetes. Yet there are more calypso tents than ever, and they go on the road all over the country during the Carnival season. There are more competitions, and companies continue to have their own calypso contests. There are ongoing efforts to involve young people in singing calypso with youth tents, school events and competitions. Throughout the Caribbean, calypso is a major part of Carnival celebrations in Barbados, Antigua, St. Vincent and the Virgin Islands, while calypsos are sung each year at Carnivals outside the Caribbean, as in Caribana in Toronto and Notting Hill in England. —*Ray Funk*

Part II: South & Central America, Mexico

Colombia

Colombian music and culture are truly representative of the area's geographic regions. As with many of the countries in the continent of South America, combinations of European, African and indigenous traditions emerged over the centuries, producing a wide variety of music (and dance) styles.

Colombia's Amazonian region includes more than 100 native tribes, such as the Chocó, who still speak their native languages and include music as a part of daily life—from magic and ritual to healing. The Andean region shares the wealth of musical traditions going back to the Incan empire as well as many mestizo forms with neighboring Perú and Ecuador. The Pacific coast contains a significant African-derived or Creole population, and is home to the marimba—an instrument widely known throughout Central America and southern Mexico. The interior regions contain several important genres such as the *bambuco*, and Colombia also shares its cultural as well as geographical border with Venezuela in the *música llanera* tradition (music of the plains), including the *joropo* (which is Venezuela's national dance). But perhaps the most vital of Colombian genres has its roots in the Atlantic coast, where Africans and indigenous peoples forged a new race known as *Zambos*.

The Colombian *cumbia* originated as a courtship dance during the colonial period, celebrating *Zambos* along the Atlantic (or Caribbean) coast, and played this style using African-derived drums and Indian flutes and percussion instruments while singing in Spanish. The traditional dance at first mimicked the Spanish colonizers and later evolved into a graceful and sensual couple dance, with the man bringing the woman a candle as a symbol of fertility. As with most folkloric genres, *cumbia* comprised several styles or variations, and eventually was modernized as its popularity spread to the urban centers, where it had previously been looked down-upon. With the adoption of *cumbia* by larger, more modern ensembles, the rhythm became homogenized, yet retained its basic up-beat feeling. It spread throughout Central America by the mid-20th-century, and is considered one of the most popular genres for dancing along with salsa and merengue. Several regional Mexican musical ensembles, including *bandas* and *norteño conjuntos*, have adopted *cumbia* as well. Wider recognition for the traditional forms returned recently, as artists such as Totó La Monposina began recording and performing on an international level.

A bit inland from Colombia's northern coast, specifically from the Valledupar region, comes the genre known as *vallenato*. Emerging in the mid-20th century, with origins in traditional *cumbia*, *vallenato* contains several styles. A traditional group contains button accordion (brought to northern Colombia in the early 1800s), caja (a small, single-membrane drum) and the *guacharaca* (a palm wood scraper). This humble music was discriminated against—as were its creators—until musicians began adapting *vallenato* into more modern ensembles during the 1950s and 60s. In the 1990s, artists including Gloria Estefan and Carlos Vives helped to popularize the genre. Contemporary *vallenato* groups may be much larger, but its humble origins—and traditional ensembles—have recently become wildly popular among young generations in Colombia today. —*Rebeca Mauleon*

Cumbia

Colombian *cumbia* began as many popular Latin styles began: as folklore. Dating back to the colonial period in Colombia's Atlantic (Caribbean) coast, *cumbia* emerged as a courtship dance and music that celebrated the union of African and indigenous people (called *zambos*), and went on to become one of the most popular dance styles in both South and Central America and beyond.

Traditional *cumbia* was (and still is) played on drums, flutes and percussion instruments of African and indigenous origins, and featured lyrics primarily in Spanish (although Creole cultures tended

to mix in African and native words). The specific drums are the *tambor mayor* (a carved log drum with calf or goat skin stretched across the top, held between the legs and played with the hands), the *tambor llamador* (a smaller version of the mayor) and the *tambora* (a large two-headed drum played with sticks). The smaller percussion include the maracas (larger than most varieties) and the *guache* (a bamboo or tin tube filled with seeds). There are two specific types of ensembles that play the traditional styles: *conjunto de cumbia*, which contains the drums and percussion, and the *conjunto de gaita*, which adds the indigenous cactus wood flutes known as *gaitas* to those same percussion instruments. (The *gaitas* were named by the Spanish, who thought they sounded remarkably similar to the Galician bagpipes.) One of the most important artists to actively record, perform and document this and other forms from the region is Totó la Momposina, regarded as an authority of *Zambo* (African-Indian) culture and quite an energetic performer, too.

As *cumbia's* popularity spread to the urban areas of Colombia, musicians began to adapt a more modern type of instrumentation and also simplified the rhythm, reducing the number of drums in these new groups. With the popularity of Cuban and other Latin American music being played on the radio and in the dancehalls, orchestras with horns, piano, bass and drums developed the *cumbia* into a much simpler, more homogenized version, catering to middle class tastes. By the 1950s and '60s, *cumbias* were widely recorded not only in South America but in Central America and Mexico as well, giving the style a new adopted home; in countries such as El Salvador and Nicaragua, *cumbia* is as prominent as the local music, and sometimes even more so. While in Mexico, *cumbia* evolved and took on an entirely new, Mexican identity bearing little resemblance to the original Colombian form. *—Rebeca Mauleon*

Venezuela

Music in Venezuela has evolved much in the same way as its neighboring countries with geographical and ethnic similarities and differences. Like many countries in South America, Venezuelan music combines varying degrees of Spanish, indigenous and African influences, and much of the country's music plays an important role in the community through its function.

There are three general ethnic areas associated with music in Venezuela: indigenous (with little Spanish influence or mestizo tendencies), Hispano-Venezuelan (including several traditional Spanish forms being included along with the mestizo forms) and Afro-Venezuelan (largely along the coastal region, and representative of numerous folkloric drumming styles). The Creole traditions emerging from older African-derived forms would branch out to neighboring Trinidad, and adapt the calypso and the steel pan into Venezuelan popular culture as well.

The indigenous music includes flutes and percussion instruments, and has maintained its more "organic" role in community life, from the supernatural and ritual to healing. Some of Venezuela's native populations include the Piaroa of the Amazon region, who emphasize the important role of the shaman in their community, each with his own musical repertoire. While many traditional forms were eventually replaced as these tribes absorbed the Christian faith (and music), there still remain a few native tribes who speak their aboriginal languages.

Hispano-Venezuelan music encompasses the rich traditions of old Spain as well as the newly formed mestizo genres, incorporating styles such as the *malagueña* as well as the central role of the guitar. Other stringed instruments of European origin were also adapted, including the *bandolín* (derived from the mandolin) and the *bandola* (derived from the Spanish *bandurria*, a lute-style guitar). Perhaps the most significant "offspring" in the guitar family is the Venezuelan *cuatro*, which serves as the premiere instrument along with the *arpa* (harp) in much of the inland styles. The indigenous instruments used in these genres include the maracas (typically smaller than other varieties), which are played quite vigorously.

Referred to as *música llanera* (music of the plains), this area of Hispano-Venezuelan music includes

several rhythms and *dances* such as the *joropo*, which is the national dance, and features ornate harp playing. The term joropo became commonly used by the mid-19th century as a way to define the rhythm, the dance, the song and the actual event. It rose to prominence by the 1920s, and is played in a complex rhythmical structure combining 3/4 and 6/8 time.

One of Venezuela's most important artistic figures is Simón Diaz, who helped to preserve and popularize the country's folk music. A unique aspect of Hispano-Venezuelan music is its "functionality" on several levels. Many musical forms serve in religious or quasi-religious celebrations (also referred to as "folk Catholicism"), such as the *fulía* (a devotional song in honor of the Catholic Holy Cross celebration) as well as an elaborate series of songs and dances in honor of St. James of Padua known as the *tamunangue* (which includes indigenous and African influences) from the Lara state in the northwest. The Hispano-Venezuelan tradition also includes children's songs (including lullabies) and work songs—some dating back to old Spain—as well as slave songs from the colonial era.

Afro-Venezuelan music features an array of drumming forms along its coastal area, and gave way to numerous folkloric styles primarily of West African origin, generally referred to as *música criolla* (Creole music). However, unlike Brazil and Cuba, where religious elements were retained through the drumming language, African-derived music in Venezuela did not maintain its traditional role. Instead, Afro-Venezuelan rhythms and dances became an added feature in Catholic celebrations, such as the style known as *gaita* (originating in the Lake Maracaibo area), which is associated with the Christmas holiday, and features a lively percussion-based music which serves as a social as well as political platform for Venezuelans. The group Guaco has been a frontrunner in the style since the 1970s, fusing modern harmony and contemporary instruments and arrangements into gaita music.

Other African-derived styles include the *sangueo*, the *tambor San Millán* and the *culo e' puya*, and each style has its own unique drums, dances and call-and-response singing traditions. One of the most important groups in the legacy of Afro-Venezuelan music is Grupo Madera, which avidly performed and recorded these styles with the hope of preserving the colonial-era music and dance tradition.

One of the more fascinating traditions in Venezuela incorporates all three of its ethnic ancestors: Spanish, indigenous and African. The *quitiplás* are bamboo stamping-tube instruments of indigenous origin, but the traditional style of music created when performing with them evolved into a tri-cultural blend of African polyrhythms and Spanish singing in call-and-response fashion. While the instruments are undoubtedly part of a more ancient practice, the Creole expression of this style shows a clear example of the ever-evolving traditions in Venezuela and throughout South America.
Since the 1960s, musicians in Venezuela have explored the wealth of the country's numerous traditional forms within a more popular context, as demonstrated by the group Un Solo Pueblo. Folk and popular musicians also joined the Latin American *nueva canción* movement, and by the 1970s had become important contributors to this vital form, including artists such as Soledad Bravo.

Also, Venezuela became an important player in salsa music, producing such legends as Oscar D'León, and becoming one of the musical genre's largest consumers in the latter half of the 20th century.

The country also boasts a remarkable music education program, offering all of its youth access to traditional Venezuelan as well as European classical music. The richness and variety of music in Venezuela continue to evolve today as young and old musicians take pride in preserving traditional forms while adopting more modern styles, from rock and jazz to hip-hop and beyond. *—Rebeca Mauleon*

Brazil

Brazil is a country overflowing with music from every corner, and there is a deep connection between Brazilians and their music. A tricultural mix of indigenous groups, Portuguese colonizers and African slaves makes for an immensely diverse population. (It has the largest number of African descendants outside of Africa.) And while the indigenous music retained much of its traditional context throughout the colonial period (and even to today), it never played as central a role in the development of Brazil's popular music as did the music of the Africans and Portuguese.

As a vast country of many states, Brazil's music is regional, with each section (sometimes specific cities) contributing distinct musical genres. Portuguese influences abound in the country's rich and lyrical poetry, the exquisite melody, and the instrumentation including the accordion, guitar and violin families. Roman Catholic festivals and pageants remain as seasonal events in various regions in Brazil, and the Portuguese sentimental song forms such as the *moda* and the *fado* became staple genres. The European influences are not exclusively Portuguese, of course, as Brazil witnessed the arrival of settlers from Germany, Italy, Lebanon and even Japan.

The African elements are both obvious and subtle, and primarily include drumming and dancing forms expressed largely through communal and spiritual tradition as well as martial art forms such as capoeira. African slaves were brought to Brazil for nearly 300 years, with the racial predominance of Sudanese and Bantu groups (Yoruban, Dahomean, Congolese and Angolan), among others. The Afro-Brazilian religion known as *candomblé* is one of the largest manifestations of syncretic religion in the Americas, combining Yoruban and Catholic symbolism, and thrives primarily in the northeastern state of Bahia. As in Cuba and Haiti, Brazilian Africans were able to retain a great majority of their music, dance and spiritual traditions, primarily along the coastal areas, resulting in some of the richest and most popular forms known around the world. Among Brazil's most celebrated colonial-era forms were the *lundu* and the *maxixe*, both steeped in African tradition with dance elements viewed as erotic and indecent, but which (of course) became increasingly popular as they climbed the social ladder to acceptance by the middle class. Centuries later, Brazil would again "shock" the world with forms such as the samba and the *lambada*, producing some of the most exciting and vibrant music and dance anywhere.

Considered one of the most popular forms ever to emerge from the country, specifically from Rio de Janeiro, samba is another distinct music and dance genre that dates back to the colonial period. Coalescing in the early 20th century, samba's roots lie in the circle dances of Congolese and Angolan tradition. Around the turn of the century it became associated with carnival, where large groups of Brazilians of largely lower class status joined together in celebration. As it evolved over the decades to come, samba became the distinct sound of Rio's *carnaval*, with large contingents known as *escolas* (schools) beating on multiple percussion instruments as they paraded through the city streets. Samba would also spawn several sub-styles and fusions in the eastern state of Bahia, leading to one of the country's most popular genres to date: samba-reggae. And by the 21st century, televised broadcasts of Rio's *carnaval* share the unbridled energy of samba with the world.

One of Brazil's samba relatives emerged during the late 1950s as a softer, more refined form primarily for singing. Connected to a previous offshoot known as *samba-canção*, *bossa nova* was a slower vocal form with lyrics reflecting the romantic and nostalgic side of Brazilian life, and one of its pioneers was composer Antônio Carlos Jobim (1927–1994). Along with lyricist Vinícius de Morães, Jobim's rich and unconventional bossa nova explored the influences of American jazz music through its more sophisticated harmony, while the vocal style was less dramatic, more nasal and subtle. When artists such as João Gilberto first recorded *bossa novas* in the late '50s, music critics panned it as "music for out-of-tune singers," yet the genre would go on to become one of the most celebrated Brazilian styles on an international level.

The 1960s were tumultuous political times in Brazil, and the musical landscape was transformed by the experimental *tropicália* movement. Artists who spoke out against the government repression of the decade found themselves in prison or in exile, such as Gilberto Gil (Brazil's current minister of culture) and poet/activist/musician Chico Buarque, but as tensions relaxed in the '70s, Brazilian music began its most prolific and prosperous era of the 20th century. Dubbed as MPB or música popular Brasileira, this musical melting pot of artists and genres embraced virtually anything and everything from Brazil and beyond, and paved the way for numerous collaborative opportunities between Brazilian artists and their international peers. Seminal artists such as Milton Nascimento, Elis Regina, Ivan Lins, Maria Bethânia, Caetano Veloso, João Bosco, Djavan, Gal Costa and many others explored the richness and variety of regional music, and melded it with jazz, rock, folk and classical forms. Samba found a new forum outside of the *carnaval*, with modern harmony and electric instruments that brought it into the nightclubs 24/7, and Afro-Brazilian roots music began its journey toward the spotlight as MPB artists shared the wealth of Brazil's African heritage within the vehicle of popular music (now largely referred to as axê music).

In Brazil's northeastern state of Ceará there is an entirely different lifestyle and climate, with a vast arid desert known as the *sertão*, and a distinct musical and dance style commonly known as *forró*. This accordion-driven music is part of the region's popular dance forms dating back to the late 19th century, when cowboys would celebrate the end of the dry season. Over time, the specific rhythm attached to the style, called the *baião*, would inspire a couples dance accompanied by accordion, zabumba (bass drum) and triangle. The leading pioneer of the style, Luiz Gonzaga, made the first recordings of the style in the mid-1940s. While the style lost momentum during the bossa nova fever of the '60s, *forró* would gain a new generation of fans in the '80s when MPB artists Gilberto Gil and Caetano Veloso recorded modern versions of Gonzaga's tunes.

While native tribes in the Amazon retain their ancient musical traditions dating back centuries (or millennia), Brazilian regional music continues its extraordinary journey from tradition to modernization, and keeps the world moving to an infectious beat. *—Rebeca Mauleon*

Samba

Perhaps one of the most popular music and dance styles ever to emerge from Brazil, samba evolved in Rio de Janeiro by the early 20th century and grew to become the quintessential music and dance form associated with Rio's *carnaval*. With its rich and syncopated rhythm and its often-voluptuous dance moves, samba has circled the globe as one of the most infectious and popular styles from the South American continent.

The word "samba" is thought to be derived from the Kimbundu (Angolan) term *semba*, which referred to an "invitation to dance" as well as a common appellation for the dance parties held by slaves and former slaves in the rural areas of Rio. These dances involved gyrating hip movements (called *umbigada*) and had roots going back to the colonial period in the Congolese and Angolan circle dances. Over time samba gained important influences not only from Brazilian predecessors such as the *maxixe* and the *marcha*, but the Cuban habanera and German polka as well. As a song form, samba was extremely popular during the turn of the century, with some of the early recordings dating back to 1911. Among the early pioneers of the song form was Alfredo da Rocha Vianna Jr., known as Pixinguinha, who helped to crystallize the form as well as develop a richer harmony. From the 1920s and into the height of the radio era of the '30s, sambas were slower and more romantic (such as those of Ismael Silva), leading to the subgenre known as *samba-canção*, which emphasized the melody over the rhythm, and lyrics that were more sentimental and often moody. Brazilian crooners and composers put samba on the international radar, and icons such as Carmen Miranda embraced the form, becoming a star in Brazil long before her move to the U.S. and Hollywood as a personification of Brazil's exuberant side.

By the 1950s, as *samba-canção* began to lose its momentum, a more percussive and funkier style of samba began to develop in the poor areas and shantytowns (known as favelas). At first called samba de *morro* because of its development in the *morros* (hills), the style came to be known as *samba-de-batucada*, and emphasized the polyrhythmic sounds of multiple percussion instruments. This powerful sounding form would in time become the heartbeat of Rio's *carnaval*, and the primary vehicles for the style were (and are) organized groups or contingents called *escolas de samba* (samba schools). Dating back to the late 1920s, Rio's *escolas* emerged as fraternal groups devoted to playing and dancing for *carnaval*, and now represent some of the most important cultural institutions in the country. Brimming with hundreds of percussionists (collectively called the *bateria*), dancers, costume and float designers and choreographers, the *escolas* prepare virtually year-round for the annual carnival parade, and each group enters into competition with its theme samba called the *enredo*. Rio is not the only city in Brazil to offer Carnaval festivities; the former colonial capital of Salvador, Bahia is also home to one of the most exciting and perhaps more roots-oriented carnival traditions, in particular as the state of Bahia has retained much of its African heritage as the country's center for the Afro-Brazilian religion of candomblé.

Another important development in the legacy of samba took place in the late 1950s, which would spark the second international wave of popularity for Brazilian music: the development of *bossa nova*. Considered an adaptation of the previous *samba- canção* form, *bossa nova* emphasized the melodic and vocal aspects of samba in a slower, more romantic style fused with the richness of American jazz harmony. The result was a sound many music critics first panned for its "out-of-tune" qualities, but its popularity soared as pioneers such as Antonio Carlos Jobim and João Gilberto brought *bossa nova* to new heights. Films such as Black Orpheus (with a musical score of sambas and *bossa novas* composed by Jobim) wowed international audiences with the sounds of authentic Brazilian music. By the 1970s, samba saw its rise within the era of MPB (*música popular Brasileira*) as artists such as Milton Nascimento, Djavan and Ivan Lins modernized the more dynamic *batucada* style with contemporary harmony and instrumentation, fusing samba with rock, jazz and other forms, and bringing the style into the mainstream. No longer would the sound of samba be limited to its role as the soundtrack for *carnaval*. Other sub-varieties of samba began to emerge, including *partido alto* (a funk-inspired style) and *pagode* (a smaller group format associated with parties and informal gatherings). Samba was everywhere, and it seemed to be the measure of happiness for Brazilians of all races and social classes.

While much of samba's history is centered in Rio de Janeiro, a new development of the genre began to emerge in the eastern state of Bahia in the 1980s, as artists in Salvador created a new percussive style that was a bit slower and more driving, with lyrics that reflected the ideology of Brazil's African Diaspora. The group Olodum pioneered by the *bloco afro* style, which adapted some of the *batucada* elements of Rio's samba and focused on a more hypnotic, drum-infused sound. Olodum's lyrics spoke of black culture and pride, and gave Bahian youth an outlet for their frustrations through the formation of a strong community organization dedicated to providing education and opportunity. With much of Brazil's black youth on the fringe of society, *blocos* such as Olodum provided much needed cultural and political refuge, and also happened to produce one of Brazil's most exciting new samba offshoots. In time, the *bloco-afro* sound would fuse with Jamaican reggae and be known as samba-reggae, resulting in one of the most popular incarnations of samba into the 21st century. —*Rebeca Mauleon*

Bossa Nova

Bossa nova is a well-known style of Brazilian music developed and popularized in the 1950s and 1960s. The phrase *bossa nova* means literally "new trend." A lyrical fusion of samba and jazz, bossa nova acquired a large following in the 1960s initially among young musicians and college students. Since its birth, it has remained a vital part of the standard jazz repertoire.

The bossa nova musical style evolved from samba but is more complex harmonically and less percussive. As opposed to Samba's origins in the favelas, bossa nova emerged primarily from the upscale beachside neighborhoods of Rio de Janeiro. Certain similar elements were already evident, even influences from Western classical music like Gershwin's *Cuban Overture* with its characteristic 'Latin' clave rhythm. The influence on bossa nova of jazz styles such as cool jazz is often debated by historians and fans, but a similar "cool sensibility" is apparent.

The development of bossa nova is largely credited to artists working in the 1950s including Johnny Alf, Antonio Carlos Jobim and João Gilberto. One of the first bossa nova songs was "Bim-Bom" by Gilberto. Other songs that popularized the style included Dorival Caymmi's "Saudade da Bahia" and Elizete Cardoso's recording of "Chega de Saudade" on the Canção do Amor Demais LP, composed by Vinícius de Moraes (lyrics) and Antonio Carlos Jobim (music). The song was released soon after by Gilberto.

An early influence on bossa nova was the song "Dans mon île" by French singer Henri Salvador, featured in the 1957 Italian movie *Europa di notte* by Alessandro Blasetti; the song was distributed in Brazil and covered later by Brazilian artists Eumir Deodato (Los Danseros en Bolero - 1964) and Caetano Veloso (Outras Palavras - 1981).

The initial releases by Gilberto and the internationally popular 1959 film *Orfeu Negro* ("Black Orpheus", with score by Luiz Bonfá) brought significant popularity of this musical style in Brazil and elsewhere in Latin America. It soon spread to North America via visiting American jazz musicians. The resulting recordings by Charlie Byrd and Stan Getz cemented its popularity and led to a worldwide boom with the 1963 recordings of *Getz/Gilberto*. Numerous bossa nova recordings by famous jazz performers followed, including those of Ella Fitzgerald (Ella Abraça Jobim) and Frank Sinatra (Francis Albert Sinatra & Antônio Carlos Jobim).

The first bossa nova single to achieve international popularity was perhaps the most successful of all time, the Getz/Byrd recording of "Desafinado". This 1962 song and the Grammy Award winning recording “Girl from Ipanema” sung by Astrud Gilberto and João Gilberto 1964 introduced many people to the bossa nova, and it became a jazz standard. From the popularity of this song, the genre would then endure and withstand substantial "watering down" by popular artists throughout the next four decades.– *Wikipedia*

Argentina

Although known almost exclusively as the birthplace of the *tango*, Argentina is home to a diverse array of music and dance styles from its various geographic regions. Largely a mixture of European and indigenous influences (referred to as mestizo), many of Argentina's musical genres can be divided into two primary categories: folklore and popular music. In addition, the European influences are not limited to Spanish origin, as Argentina became a melting pot of numerous European migrants, including settlers from Poland, Austria and Germany. While African influences are not as extensive in

this part of South America, Argentina's borders with Uruguay and Brazil are notably rich in Creole traditions where African-derived drumming and dance forms abound.

Among Argentina's most popular forms are the *zamba*, a slow dance in 3/4 time played primarily on guitar and *bombo legüero* (the Indigenous Argentine bass drum). Once considered Argentina's national dance, the *zamba* originated in Perú in the Creole genre known as the *zamacueca*, which was adopted in Chile as the *cueca* and became Chile's official national dance in the late 1970s. Another style called the *chacarera* is a widely popular form dating back to the 19th century, emerging in the northwestern region of Argentina. Like many South American rhythms, the *chacarera* is counted in 6/8 meter, and is also a popular dance. Another notable genre is the *chamamé*, originating in the northeastern region of Corrientes around the late 19th century. With a myriad of European influences, its multiple styles include the *polca* (polka) and the *vals* (waltz), and are played mainly on guitar and the accordion-derived *bandoneón*.

Perhaps the most complex and fascinating musical and dance tradition to emerge in Argentina, specifically in Buenos Aires, is the tango. Its origins date back to the late 1700s with ancestors including the Afro-Argentine *milonga*, the Uruguayan *candombe* and the Cuban habanera. It evolved as a male slave dance performed in the brothels when it formally emerged around 1877. At first ridiculed or parodied, it made its way up the social ladder, finally receiving acceptance not in Argentina but in Paris in the 1920s. As the dance genre began to gain recognition in Buenos Aires, a song form also developed paving the way for the tango song, which saw its golden age through interpreters such as Carlos Gardel. An important link in Argentine society and politics, the tango was interpreted by several different instrumental ensembles over the coming decades of the early 20th century—from a single guitarist/singer to full-blown orchestras. But the most significant musical grouping to play the form was the sexteto, which consisted of two *bandoneones* (an accordion relative closer to a concertina), two violins, piano and double bass or cello. In the mid-1950s, composer and *bandoneón* player Astor Piazzolla developed an avant-garde variety of tango that merged the style with European contemporary and classical forms as well as American jazz.

Recently, contemporary groups have begun mixing the tango with drums, from Uruguayan *candombe* drums to the Peruvian *cajón* and even synthesized and sampled drum beats. Several musicians have explored the renewed potential of the tango in the newest craze: *tango nuevo*. Another significant musical tradition in Argentina is that of *nueva canción*, a genre attributed to several countries in Latin America, and inspired by Cuba's *nueva trova* movement. By the 1970s, national artists such as Atahualpa Yupanqui and Mercedes Sosa spearheaded Argentina's new song movement (referred to as *nuevo cancionero* in Argentina) with cries for peace and justice among oppressed peoples in Latin America, and joined other artists in an international expression of solidarity. The musical backdrop of this movement encompassed the richness of national forms such as the *zamba*, the *milonga* and the chacarera as well as neighboring forms including the Cuban *canción* and the Peruvian *marinera*. Perhaps the most significant musical vehicle for the *nueva canción* movement was the rich tradition of Andean music. Together with its Chilean neighbor, Argentina would introduce international audiences to this ancient musical genre through the modern expression of Latin America's new-song movement. —*Rebeca Mauleon*

Tango

Perhaps the most complex and fascinating musical and dance tradition to emerge in Argentina—specifically in Buenos Aires—is the tango. Its origins date back to the 1700s, from the Creole contradanza and habanera of Cuba, to the African-derived *milonga* and Uruguayan *candombe*. All of these predecessors had one thing in common: they were drumming forms; and yet, as the tango evolved it would remain devoid of this important African link—at least until the 21st century.

The word "tango" is derived from the Ki-Kongo language meaning "to move in time to the beat." Its history is shaded in darkness—from slavery to prostitution, the tango represented the "underclass" of Buenos Aires, and was originally a male dance performed in the brothels when it formally emerged around 1877. At first ridiculed or parodied, it made its way up the social ladder, finally receiving acceptance not in Argentina, but in Paris in the 1920s. As the dance genre began to gain recognition in Buenos Aires, a song form also developed paving the way for the tango song, which saw its golden age through interpreters such as Carlos Gardel.

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Recently, contemporary groups have begun mixing the tango with drums—from Uruguayan *candombe* drums to the Peruvian *cajón* and even synthesized and sampled drum beats. Several musicians have explored the renewed potential of the tango in the newest craze: *tango nuevo*. While traditional tango is still danced throughout Buenos Aires (and many places around the world), it seems that the drums have returned to the tango in its next incarnation. —*Rebeca Mauleon*

Perú

As the third-largest nation in South America, Perú comprises a population of coastal, Amazonian and Andean inhabitants. In addition to Spanish, Quechua and Aymara, numerous Amazonian languages are also spoken. Its pre-colonial history includes ancient cultures well before the Incan Empire established its dominance in the 1400s, and many of Perú's instruments can be traced to that time. Most of what has been documented of the country's music revolves around one of the most ancient pre-encounter musical traditions: Andean music. With panpipes, flutes, drums and percussion instruments, many rhythms and dances of the Andes remain today as a testament to their perseverance, with Peruvians committed to passing on the traditions of their ancestors. From the *huayno* (or *wayno*) to the haunting *yaraví*, many Andean forms retain their place in the indigenous culture much the way they have for centuries. However, not much attention was paid to another of Perú's most vibrant traditions: that of Afro-Peruvian music.

On the coast, people (and music) are generally referred to as Criollo (Creole), where we find a myriad of rhythms and dances—some directly descendant from Europe, such as the northern Spanish jota to the Viennese waltz. There was a significant slave population brought to areas along the coast, and the presence of neo-African cultural expression began to take shape by the 1700s. However, the manifestation of the religious (or spiritual) characteristics was limited, if not completely dominated by the Catholic Church, resulting in music that reflected a more secular Creole culture. The genres that emerged during the colonial era included the *zamacueca*, which later became the *marinera* by around 1900 and went on to inspire the creation of Argentina's *zamba* and Chile's *cueca*. As a courtship pantomime dance, the *marinera's* popularity spread from the coast to the Andean regions, where it often was (and still is) interpreted by brass bands called *bandas*. However, its traditional form is still the most popular, as is witnessed wherever Peruvians settle and engage in *marinera* dance contests. Other Creole forms include the *tondero*, the *jarana* and the *socabón*, all featuring distinctive dances and elaborate poetry.

After the 1950s, Afro-Peruvian (or Creole) music began to be recorded, and the instrumentation that emerged included the Spanish guitar, the *cajón* (a wooden box drum that is sat on and struck with the hands) and the *quijada* (jawbone of a mule). In northern Perú, gourd drums (called *angara* and *checo*) were also added to this ensemble.

Two of the most popular forms of Afro-Peruvian music are the *landó* and the *festejo*. The origins of the *landó* were unfortunately forgotten, but the popular form played today contains a rich 6/8 rhythm and call-and-response vocals, as well as graceful hip movements. The *festejo* is considered one of the most popular and important styles, with lyrics that reflect historical accounts of slavery to festive themes, free-style dancing and responsorial vocals in a lively, up-beat rhythmic setting.

Novelty dances also emerged based on the *festejo*, with gyrating pelvic moves to competitive *zapateado* (footwork). Since the 1970s, several artists have propelled these genres to international recognition, including Perú Negro, Chabuca Granda, Lucila Campos, Eva Ayllón, Susana Baca and Arturo "Zambo" Cavero. Today, *festejos* and *landos* can be heard in popular nightclubs alongside Salsa and merengue as Afro-Peruvian music gains national and international popularity. *—Rebeca Mauleon*

Nueva Canción

The new song movement of Latin America saw its beginnings in Cuba's revolutionary *nueva trova* movement in the early 1960s as artists began to reflect the ideology of anti-imperialism. As life in Cuba changed, events in South America lead to the birth of *nueva canción* in Chile and Argentina, where musicians sang about the injustice and oppression in their homeland as well as the plight of the exploited indigenous populations. By the 1970s, many saw this music as a platform for protest, and the musicians would suffer the consequences of rising up against the imposed dictatorial regimes.

In Chile, the movement began in the 1960s with artists such as Victor Jara and Violeta Parra, who began to draw attention to the plight of the indigenous populations of their country. The same occurred in Argentina, with pioneers such as Atahualpa Yupanqui and Mercedes Sosa blending ancient Andean musical traditions with socially conscious lyrics. *Nueva Canción* in many ways reflected the solidarity between Latin Americans from various countries, and offered cries for peace and social justice on a worldwide humanitarian level. Also, *nueva canción* echoed the anti-American sentiment resulting from the Vietnam War, and the genre became a suitable platform for expressing anti-imperialist views.

Chilean groups such as Inti-Illimani and Quilapayún furthered the voice of the oppressed indigenous groups by highlighting Andean music as the vehicle for their songs, and by the torrid events of the early '70s and the self-imposed dictatorship of Agusto Pinochet, these artists and their music were banned. Forced into exile, many groups left Chile to continue their musical (and political) work. However, some artists, such as Victor Jara, were killed, alerting the international community to the horrors of the Pinochet regime.

Unfortunately, the restoration of democracy would wait nearly two decades, but the music of the region gave hope to those who believed in a peaceful, democratic Chile as well as civil rights for all indigenous peoples throughout the South American continent. *—Rebeca Mauleon*

Victor Jara

From modest rural beginnings in the Chilean countryside, Victor Jara went on to become one of his country's most outspoken and beloved voices for peace and justice until his murder by the dictatorial Pinochet regime in 1973.

Jara spent his early years studying accounting and later joined the seminary for a brief period, but his first musical formation was his mother Amanda, who played the guitar and sang Chilean folk songs to her children. Disenchanted with the theological doctrine, Jara entered the University of Chile's

School of Theater and took up acting and directing, and upon completing his degree began his association with singer/poet Violeta Parra as he immersed himself in singing and politics.

He began his recording and performing career in 1966 and became an activist for the oppressed peoples of his homeland. He and Violeta Parra were among the creators of Chile's *nueva canción* movement, and were supportive of Salvador Allende's progressive politics, often playing in support of his campaign.

Upon the subsequent military overthrow and assassination of Allende as president, Jara was taken prisoner along with many others, then tortured and shot in front of thousands of spectators in the Stadium of Chile. Despite this horrific end, Jara's music became a beacon for all countries and individuals seeking an end to political corruption and injustice, and his music would live on in the voices of his Latin American and international brothers and sisters. —*Rebeca Mauleon*

Garífuna Music

In 1635 Spanish ships carrying kidnapped Africans wrecked in the Eastern Caribbean near the island of St. Vincent. Survivors swam ashore and took refuge among the indigenous Carib people, who absorbed the escapees. These Afro-Caribbean people were called Garífuna, and they produced a musical tradition combining powerful vocals with a dense percussive base. Defeated in the British takeover of St. Vincent in 1797, the Garífuna were exiled to Bay Islands, off the Caribbean coast of Honduras, from where they quickly settled the shoreline from Nicaragua to Belize.

As a population never enslaved, the culturally hybrid, multilingual Garífuna maintained palpable West African elements in their music, which builds on a three-drum ensemble resonant with African percussive traditions on both sides of the Atlantic. Garífuna singing and drumming entails a fiercely percussive, communal call-and response formulation rooted in the sacred context of ancestral invocations and spirit possession, as in Cuban *santería*, Haitian *vodoun* and Brazilian *candomblé*. The most salient Garífuna secular traditional genres are paranda and punta. Spanish for "carousal," *paranda* adds an acoustic guitar to the Garífuna drum tradition; the *punta* couple dance (named for its characteristic rhythm) recalls the pelvic thrust or *vacunao* of the Cuban *guaguancó rumba* form.

In the early 1980s, *punta rock*, a creation commonly attributed to Belizean Garífuna musician, composer and artist Delvin "Pen" Cayaetano, added the amplified guitar to the Garífuna rhythm ensemble. Punta rock's upbeat message of cultural awareness and mutual respect has spilled over into the rest of Caribbean Central America. Among an ethnically diverse Belizean population it also has fostered an expansive sense of national identity both at home and abroad, and has brought belated recognition of the minority Garífuna population's contributions to Belize's cultural distinctiveness in the region.

The Garífuna *garaón* drum ensemble comprises the lead *primera* or heart drum, the counter-rhythmic *segunda* or shadow drum, and the steady bass-line *tercera*. An unusual adaptation is the snares, one or two guitar strings or wires stretched over the drumhead to achieve the buzzing sound also favored in some West African music cultures. This lends a highly valued denseness to the overall sound, which may deceive the ear as an artifact of electronic distortion in the recording process. Additional traditional instruments include turtle-shell percussion, bottle percussion, claves and a variety of shakers and scrapers drawn from the Amerindian music of St. Vincent. Garífuna musicians have expanded their instrumental array with European additions, while also incorporating English, Jamaican, Haitian and Latin American folk elements, along with reggae, C&W, R&B and rock gleaned from radio broadcasts.

Prominent Garífuna artists include Junie Aranda, Jursino Cayetano, Lugua Centeno, Paul Nabor, Pen Cayetano, Mohobub Flores, Peter "Titiman" Flores, Dale Guzman, Adrian Martínez, Andy Palacio and Gabaga Williams (Belize); Cuadro de Danzas Garífuna Baruda, the Farm Boys, Fuerza Garífuna,

Grupo Lanigi Mua, Lita Ariran and Aurelio Martínez (Honduras); and Sofia Blanco, the Garífuna Boys, Suamen and Ugandani (Guatemala). —*Michael Stone*

Guatemala

Our knowledge of music-making in Guatemala dates back to the era before the collision of Europeans and the indigenous Mayan peoples of the region.
Archaeological evidence on the material culture of Maya music dates from the late Classic Period (C.E. 600-900). Grave goods from aristocratic tombs near the present-day Belize border include drums, maracas, flutes, and anthropomorphic and animal-figurine ocarinas. Moreover, wind and string instruments, drums, rattles, shakers, and rasps have been documented throughout the Maya region from Classic Period into the present.

Several indigenous documents represent the earliest written sources on music, song, and dance in the present-day Republic of Guatemala. The Dresden, Madrid and Paris codices portray pre-Colombian instruments, ensembles, and musical events, as do various figurines, painted ceramics, sculptures, and murals. Two Quiché Maya texts (The Title of the Lord of Totonicapán and Popol Vuh), and The Annals of the Cakchiquels, all written in the sixteenth-century, note conch trumpets, bone flutes, drums, and rattles. All underscore the ritual and symbolic character of Maya music.

Spanish colonial documents, journals, and correspondence by explorers, government officials, priests, and travelers complement indigenous texts, although generally these sources reveals more about musical context and European attitudes than they do about early Maya music aesthetics and techniques. In highland Maya settlements today, flute, chirimía (a double-reed shawm introduced during the colonial era), and drum music, often with guitar and woodwind accompaniment, continues to be performed publicly during patron saint feasts and other celebrations related to the Christian calendar; marimba and brass band ensembles are also common. Dance dramas include the Rabinal Achí, the deer dance, the dance of the conquest, and "el baile de los moros y cristianos."

Western European music and notation came with the Spaniards, styles well documented in the form of manuscripts from colonial Guatemala and Mexico, and from Spain. Following independence in the 1820s, writings by ruling Ladino (Mestizo), religious, and foreign commentators, and ethnographic accounts from the late nineteenth century onward, offer a general sense of how indigenous, African, and European influences evolved and acted upon one another.

Historically, contemporary Maya have lived in rural agricultural communities, constituting a majority of the Guatemalan population. However, government genocide against the Maya from the 1960s forward, combined with the massive creation of political and economic refugees, ongoing emigration to Mexico and the United States, extensive conversion efforts by U.S. evangelicals, and the impact of Ladino cultural dominance and international popular culture, have adversely impacted the practice and intergenerational transmission of traditional music. However, the whistles, flutes (of cane, clay, or metal), and drums of contemporary Maya music continue to reflect pre-Columbian roots, augmented by the adaptation of the marimba (first noted in late seventeenth-century reports) and indigenous variations on European stringed instruments including guitar, violin, and harp.

Slavery introduced small numbers of West African peoples into colonial Guatemala, furthered by a policy of granting freedom to those escaping slavery in neighboring British Honduras (today, Belize), and the late nineteenth-century development of banana plantations and railroads on the Caribbean coast, which brought English-speaking blacks from the West Indies.

When the Guatemalan Congress declared the marimba to be the national instrument in 1978, it belatedly if obliquely acknowledged the instrument's sixteenth-century African origins and subsequent Mayan adaptations. Paradoxically, by the twentieth century, the politically dominant Ladino ethnic group had successfully appropriated the marimba as representative of Guatemalan national identity.

Retooled as a European chromatic instrument, the modern marimba, developed in Quetzaltenango in the late nineteenth century, proved adaptable to classical and European salon and ballroom fashions (gavotte, mazurka, polka, schottische, waltz, marches, etc.), and twentieth-century popular dances (danza, fox-trot, habanera, merengue, pasodoble, salsa, samba). The resulting hybrid repertoire-a staple of police, military, and government ministry ensembles-remains prominent today, and is emblematic of the marimba in contemporary Guatemala.

The customary ensemble consists of four players on the 78-key marimba grande, plus three players on the smaller, higher-pitched 59-key marimba tenor, accompanied by string bass, drums and-reflecting Afro-Cuban influence-claves, maracas, and güiro. In tropical and big-band settings, this formation may be augmented by woodwinds and brass. Marimba ensembles typically play for weddings, baptisms, communions, birthdays, parties, dances, and festivals.

In the early nineteenth-century, the arrival of the African-Amerindian Garifuna people to Caribbean Guatemala from nearby Honduras introduced another important traditional music into the national repertoire. Garifuna music features communal call-and response vocals with a fiercely percussive underpinning, rooted in the sacred context of ancestral invocations and spirit possession. Important archival recordings exist, although world-music tastes have tended to elevate Garifuna-inspired popular dance styles intended primarily intended for non-Garifuna and international audiences. However, Garifuna punta rock (named after and based on a traditional rhythm), with electric guitar, bass, and Garifuna percussion, has become widely popular in Caribbean Central America.

In both the Maya and Garifuna cases, scholars began to document indigenous music in detail only after World War II. Salient anthropological field recordings from the 1950s onward are archived in the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian, while others have been issued privately. Nonetheless, scholarship on the indigenous music of Central America's northern Caribbean coast is far less developed than ethnomusicological studies elsewhere in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Regional pan-Maya and Garifuna activism (the latter informed by a growing engagement with African Diaspora identity politics) has energized discussions of indigenous identity within the Guatemalan national formation. Recognizing the threat to Garifuna culture, in 2001 UNESCO proclaimed Garifuna language, dance, and music as one of the "Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity." UNESCO's intervention has reinforced efforts to promote Garifuna expressive culture, bringing renewed dedication (at home and in expatriate communities) to teaching language, dance, and music, particularly to young Garifuna at home and abroad. A handful of North American, European, and regional producers has brought Garifuna artists to global audiences, with international tours and recordings that have topped the European world-music charts, while winning major world-music awards from BBC Radio 3 and WOMEX (the Berlin-based World Music Expo).

European traditions also persist in Guatemala, inspired by nineteenth-century European country dances, and by local and regional scholarship on classical music and opera composed in Central America. Important institutions include the Universidad Rafael Landívar's Musicology Institute, the Metropolitan Orchestra, and the National Chorus of Guatemala. Simultaneously, international pop, pan-Latin dance music, and *rock en español* are ubiquitous, while evangelical missionary work has popularized Protestant hymns among converts. *—Michael Stone*

México

Mexican culture and history date back to some of the most powerful indigenous civilizations of the pre-encounter Americas. Prior to Spanish arrival, the Aztecs already had a significant musical legacy, with the establishment of formal music schools called *cuicalli*. The sacred instruments and rhythms of the Aztecs still resonate today, and the Náhuatl language is still widely spoken throughout Mexico. During the nearly three centuries of Spanish colonial rule, Mexican music adopted much of Spain's regional

forms, and merged these traditions with the indigenous elements that endured. The population also was a reflection of this mixture, referred to as mestizo.

But by the early 19th century, Mexicans sought their independence from Spain and began to embrace other European forms, notably the polka and the waltz. Following the independence period (roughly 100 years), the revolutionary period established Mexico's status as an independent nation, and paved the way for one of the country's most important and enduring forms: the *corrido*.
Developed during the early 20th century, the *corrido* is an epic ballad form that in many ways chronicled the events of Mexico's revolution (1910–1917), from tales of its heroes' exploits, to battles, crimes and betrayal. The Spanish poetic forms such as the romance and the *copla* became staple literary choices, and the instrumental accompaniment ranged from a single guitarist to a variety of small ensembles. In time, many of the country's unique regional forms would include the *corrido* as standard repertoire. More than 100 years later, the corrido has continued to dominate Mexico's regional music and given birth to the modern form known as *narco corrido*, with taboo subjects ranging from drug and human trafficking to illegal immigration.

Mexico is geographically large and diverse, resulting in distinct music from each state or region. By the 1930s, Mexican regional son began to flourish, showcasing the unique flavors of each province. What distinguishes each of these regional forms is generally twofold: the treatment of the text (i.e., poetry and its structure around the music) and the instrumentation (or collection of instruments in the ensemble). In the southern states such as Oaxaca, the marimba of African origin is an important fixture in what is known as *son istmeño* as well as the large brass band called *banda*, a result of the Spanish municipal bands of European tradition. Today, *banda* music has become one of the primary forces in regional Mexican music, often interpreting the son within the context of German-derived polkas and waltzes
Perhaps some of the more widely known forms of Mexican regional son are the *son jarocho* and the *son jaliciense*. The *jarocho* form comes from the state of Veracruz, which is part of Mexico's Caribbean coast, and demonstrates the influences of its Cuban neighbor with distinctly African and Creole elements such as repetition and improvisation of the lyrics along with its accompanying instruments—the *arpa jarocha* (harp) and several guitar relatives. A popular example of this style is the song "La Bamba," which reemerged in the 1950s in a Latin rock version by Richie Valens. *Son jaliciense*, from the state of Jalisco, is more recognized by the name for its premiere ensemble: *mariachi*.

Probably one of the most recognizable and distinct styles, this regional *son* features a combination of string and brass instruments, with the musicians themselves referred to as mariachis. Some of the most elaborate *sones* are virtually symphonic in terms of their length and complexity, and many feature distinct choreography as well. Other regional forms include son *huasteco*, *son michoacano* and the *chilena*, which was adapted from the Chilean *cueca*.

One of Mexico's more interesting musical marriages occurred with the emigration of Germans to the Mexico-Texas border regions during the prohibition era in the United States. The German button accordion merged with the Mexican *bajo sexto*—a 12-string guitar commonly used in the northern regions, and the result gave us música *norteña* or *norteño* music. As the accordion-guitar duet expanded in the 1940s and '50s, a new instrumentation evolved called the Texas-Mexican conjunto, incorporating American drum-set and sometimes a saxophone. These groups initiated the so-called "Tex-Mex" fever pioneered early on by accordionist Narciso Martinez and singer/guitarist Lydia Mendoza, and later icons such as Flaco Jiménez. And what did these groups play? The standard repertoire for all *norteño* groups has always been the *corrido* and the *ranchera*.

The *ranchera* is a simple country tune, often depicting everyday occurrences—from life on the farm to more tragic events. Although not as lyrically complex as the corrido, the *ranchera* was everyman's music; it idealized the simple Mexican way of life for all people. In fact, the general term *música ranchera* has been adopted as a way to define the spread of this tradition throughout Mexico.

Today, literally any type of ensemble, regardless of its origin, will play these forms—from the mariachi to *bandas* as well as *conjuntos*. The result has catapulted Mexican regional music as one of the industry's most successful forces, and spread these traditions far north into much of the western half of the United States. —*Rebeca Mauleon*

The Corrido

The *corrido* is a popular narrative song and poetry form, an epic ballad developed and perfected during the Mexican Revolution. The songs are often about oppression, history, daily life for peasants, and other socially important information. It is still a popular form today in Mexico, and was widely popular during the Nicaraguan Revolutions of the 20th century. It derives largely from the Spanish poetic structure known as the *romance*, and in its most known form consists of 1) a salutation from the singer and prologue to the story; 2) the story itself; 3) a moral and farewell from the singer.

Until the arrival and success of electronic mass-media (mid-20th century), the *corrido* served in Mexico as the main informational and educational outlet, even with subversive purposes, due to its apparent linguistic and musical simplicity, appropriate for oral transmission. After the spread of radio and television, the genre evolved into a new stage and is still in process of maturity. Some scholars, however, consider the *corrido* to be dead or agonizing in more recent times (see affirmations of Vicente T. Mendoza, *El corrido mexicano*, 1954). In more rural areas where Spanish and Mexican cultures have been preserved because of isolation, the romance has taken on other forms related to the corrido as well. In New Mexico, for example, a story-song emerged during the colonial period that was known as an Indita, which loosely follows the format of a *corrido*, but is chanted rather than sung, similar to a Native American chant, hence the name Indita.

The earliest living specimens of *corrido* are adapted versions of Spanish *romances* or European tales, mainly about disgraced or idealized love, or religious topics. These, that include (among others) "La Martina" (an adaptation of the romance "La Esposa Infiel") and "La Delgadina", show the same basic stylistic features of the mainstream of later *corridos* (1/2 or 3/4 tempo and "verso menor" lyric composing, meaning verses of eight or less phonetic syllables, grouped in strophes of six or less verses). Beginning with the Mexican War of Independence (1810–1821) and culminating during the Mexican Revolution (1910–1921), the genre flourished and acquired its "epic" tones, along with the three-step narrative structure as described above.

Prior to widespread use of radio, popular *corridos* were passed around as an oral tradition, often to spread news of events (for example, the La cárcel de Cananea) and popular heroes, and popular humor, to the population, many of whom were illiterate prior to the improvements to the educational system that occurred after the Revolution. Academic study of *corridos* written during the Mexican revolution shows they were used as a means to communicate news throughout Mexico as a response to the propaganda being spread in the newspapers that were owned by the corrupt government of Pofirio Díaz. Sheet music of popular *corridos* were sold or included in publications. Other *corrido* sheets were passed out free as a form of propaganda, to eulogize leaders, armies, and political movements, or in some cases to mock the opposition. The best known Revolutionary corrido, is, of course, La cucaracha, an old song that was rephrased to celebrate the exploits of Pancho Villa's army and poke fun at his nemesis Venustiano Carranza.

With the consolidation of "Presidencialismo" (the political era following the Mexican Revolution) and the success of electronic mass-media, the corrido lost its primacy as a mass communications form, becoming part of a folklorist cult on one branch, and on another, the voice of the new subversives: oppressed workers, drug growers or traffickers; leftist activists, emigrated farmworkers (mainly to the USA)... This is what scholars call the "decaying" stage of the genre, which tends to erase the stylistic or

structural characteristics of "revolutionary" or traditional corrido, without a clear and unified understanding of its evolution. This is mainly signified by the "narcocorrido", many of which are egocentric ballads paid for by drug smugglers to anonymous and almost illiterate composers, but others coming from the most popular *norteño* and *banda* artists, and written by some of the most successful and influential *ranchera* composers.

In mestizo-Mexican cultural area the three variants of *corrido* (romance, revolutionary and modern) are both alive and sung, along with sister narrative-popular genres, such as the "valona" of Michoacán state, the "son arribeño" of the Sierra Gorda (Guanajuato, Hidalgo and Querétaro states) and others. Its vitality and flexibility allow original corrido lyrics to be built on non-Mexican musical genres, such as blues and ska, and even non-Spanish lyrics, like the ones composed or translated by Mexican indigenous communities or by the "Chicano" people in USA, in English or "Spanglish". The corrido was, for example, a favorite device employed by the Teatro Campesino led by Luis Valdez in mobilizing largely Mexican and Mexican American farmworkers in California during the 1960s.

Corridos have over the last decade seen a renaissance. As this musical format has been revived, the "narcocorrido" has arisen. Some *corridos* may also be love stories. Also, there are *corridos* about women (La Venganza de Maria, Laurita Garza, La tragedia de Rosita and la adelita) and couples, not just about men. Some even talk about fiction or a made up story by the composer. Contemporary *corridos* written within the past few decades feature more modern themes such as drug trafficking (*narcocorridos*), immigration, migrant labor and even the Chupacabra.

Corridos, like rancheras, have introductory instrumental music and adornos interrupting the stanzas of the lyrics. However, unlike *rancheras*, the rhythm of a *corrido* remains fairly consistent. The *corrido* has a rhythm similar to that of the European waltz; *rancheras* can be played at a variety of rhythms. *Corridos* often tell stories, while *rancheras* are for dancing. Like *rancheras*, *corridos* can be played by *mariachi, norteño, banda, duranguense, Tejano* and *grupero* bands. The instruments used to play the song differ with the type of band that plays the *corrido*.

Música Norteña (or Norteño)

The northern region of México, especially the states bordering Texas in the United States (and within Texas itself), features a tradition that developed a bit later than most of the regional forms throughout the country. With the migration of many Germans to the area during prohibition in the U.S., the accordion music along the Texas-Mexican border gave birth to one of the country's most popular forms into the 21st century: música norteña.

The German migrants brought their beer-halls and their accordion music of polkas and waltzes, and soon a marriage occurred with the Mexican country music of the period—*música ranchera*—which was mainly accompanied on guitar. The 12-string guitar relative known as the *bajo sexto* emerged and joined the button accordion, producing an ideal format for a modest music that reflected the humble country life. The repertoire of the genre featured the simple country song form known as the ranchera as well as the revolutionary corrido, and several well-known Mexican songs were born, including "Cielito Lindo."

By the late 1930s and early '40s, musicians began to expand the duet format with American drum-set and sometimes a saxophone, paving the way for the Texas-Mexican conjunto, an ensemble still widely used today. In certain groups, the *bajo sexto* was "split up" allowing for two musicians: a bassist and a guitarist. By the 1950s, the term "Tex-Mex" was born, as record companies saw the marketing potential of this music to a large Mexican-American community that had migrated north since the early 20th century in search of better opportunity. Early accordion pioneers such as Narciso

Martínez and guitarist/singer Lydia Mendoza set the tone for the many *conjuntos* to follow as Mexicans in the U.S. found comfort in a music they called their own.

By the 1960s, many groups explored the crossover potential of música norteña or Tex-Mex to new generations of Mexican-Americans, many of who did not speak Spanish. Artists such as Flaco Jiménez incorporated blues and other "American" elements into his style, and for many, the music was their only link to their Mexican heritage, as Chicanos felt the discrimination among their U.S. neighbors. Soon, Mexicans and Mexican-Americans migrated further northwest into Arizona, New Mexico and California, and *música norteña* moved along with them. Today it is one of the most successful forms of regional Mexican music, with groups such as Los Tigres del Norte (who live in northern California) and others making huge strides (and selling out stadiums), preserving a tradition dating back nearly 100 years. —*Rebeca Mauleon*