

TRINIDAD



TRINIDAD (& TOBAGO)

- Named by Columbus for its mountain range, but seemingly unwanted by the Spanish
- Turned over to France - and invaded by Britain - Trinidad became a British colony
- As in Jamaica, slaves were forbidden to learn to read or write
- Yoruban Africans represented the majority of the slave population
- After slave emancipation in the late 1800s, hundreds of thousands of Indian, Syrian and Chinese workers were brought to the islands

SHANGÓ RELIGION

- Developed by the Yoruban slaves, the Shangó religion emerged as a syncretic blending of Catholicism and Yoruban spiritual beliefs
- The British repressed the religion, forcing it underground
- As with Santería and Vodou, Shangó religion involves drumming and call & response singing, trance and possession
- Elements of this tradition would later influence popular music



“ALADO”

CARNIVAL & CALYPSO



CARNIVAL & ITS ORIGINS

- In Trinidad, Carnival emerged as a fusion of the French mas tradition or masquerade balls combined with African royal processions
- Afro-Trinidadians were prohibited from incorporating African-based drumming forms
- Calypso became the primary music of carnival



TRINIDAD
CARNIVAL, 1888

CALYPSO

- Origins include the Creole kalenda, a stick-fighting dance and song form in which rival groups would create percussive sounds on the ground with sticks; kalendas were sung in Patois
- These ensembles evolved into tambo-bamboo groups, but were banned by the British
- Early calypsos were in call-and-response form, and incorporated improvisational “boasting” as well as nonsensical lyrics

KALENDA



19TH CENTURY STICK FIGHTER



TAMBOO ENSEMBLE TODAY



**TAMBOO BAMBOO
ENSEMBLE, CARNIVAL
2003**

CALYPSONIANS & THE ROAD MARCH

- As calypso evolved during the WW II era, singers would enter into competition with their wild and bombastic wit and lyricism
- Calypso tents were situated throughout the streets where calypsonians would try to out-do one another for the Road March prize
- The songs were monitored – and sometimes censored – in particular for any anti-British lyrics
- With the establishment of the U.S. Military base in Trinidad, prostitution became widespread
- Calypso lyrics were extremely misogynist and cruel toward women, and portrayed women as second-class citizens and prostitutes

CALYPSONIANS



LORD BEGINNER, ATILLA THE HUN &
GROWLING TIGER, 1935



LORD
KITCHENER



KING RADIO, LORD BEGINNER,
LORD EXECUTOR & GROWLING
TIGER

"MISS TINA" BY ROARING LION

MORE CALYPTSONIANS

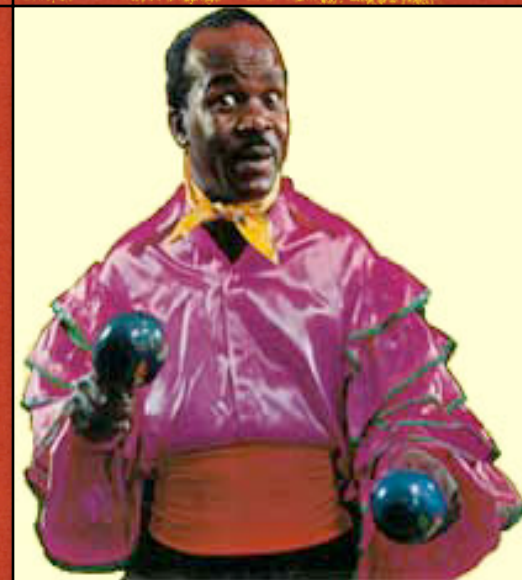


**MIGHTY
SPARROW**

“JEAN AND DINAH”



**BLACK
STALIN**



**LORD
INVADER**

CALYPSO IN THE US

- US audiences became acquainted with calypso on radio, television and film
- Harry Belafonte's recording of "Man Smart, Woman Smarter" in the mid-50s – and his subsequent recording of the "Banana Boat Song" (aka "Day-O") proved very successful throughout the generations



"DAY-O (THE BANANA BOAT SONG)"



MIGHTY SPARROW ~ "CONGO MAN"

WOMEN IN CALYPSO

- Until the 1960s, women were discouraged from (or discriminated against) singing calypso
- By the mid-60s, Calypso Rose became one of the most celebrated women in the otherwise male-dominated field, winning numerous Road March titles
- Calypso lyrics finally began to reflect women's perspectives, and made an attempt to undo years of male taunting and disrespect
- Some female artists gained fame first in the U.S.

WOMEN CALYPTSONIANS



CALYPSO ROSE



**JOSEPHINE
PREMICE**

“COLUMBUS”



**DENYSE
PLUMMER**

STEEL PANS & PANORAMA



STEEL PAN: NEW 20TH CENTURY INSTRUMENT

- Upon the closing of the U.S. military base on the island (in the late 40s), the oil drums littering the island were recycled into one of the most unique new instruments of the 20th century
- Developed by Spree Simon, the steel drum (or steel pan) was eventually incorporated into carnival in instrumental ensembles
- By the 1960s, pans became commonplace in Trinidad and throughout the Caribbean, and were incorporated into carnival in the Panorama

STEEL PANS



**INVADERS STEEL
BAND, 1950**

“MATILDA”



**STEEL PAN
ORCHESTRA, 1990s**

THE INDIAN CONNECTION ~ SOCA

- During the 1960s, a second wave of migration from India reached the West Indies, bringing specific cultural traditions
- Indian music – and drumming styles in particular – transformed the calypso into a more dance-oriented form called soca
- Soca is characterized by a heavy 3-note dance beat (referred to in Cuba as the tresillo), which is at the heart of Jamaican dancehall and modern-day reggaetón
- Soca singing involves a gravel-voiced style, and maintains the “boasting” aspects from earlier calypsos
- The soca dance involves hip gyration called “wining”

IMAGES OF CARNIVAL



“KAKALELE” BY RUDE GIRLS

SOCA MARCH

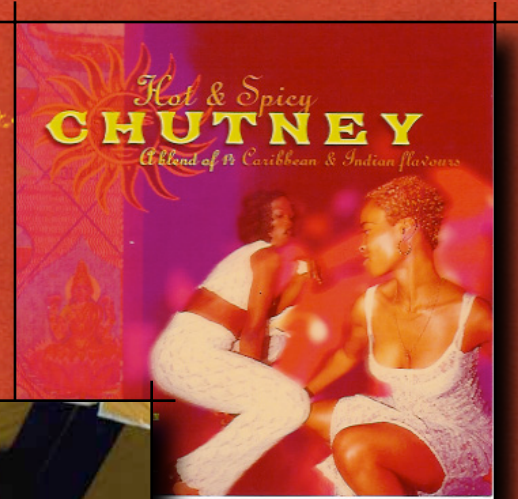
- As with calypso and steel pans, soca also contains a competitive aspect for carnival, often involving spontaneous boasting and a “posse” of dancers



“DANCE LIKE A BAPTIST” BY PREACHER

FROM SOCA TO “CHUTNEY”

- With increasing cultural influence from India, many soca groups began referring to their style as “chutney,” which is an Indian condiment like salsa



“RAGGA DULAHIN” BY DOUBLE D

CHUTNEY STAR
DUPRATEE



“JUMBIE” BY MACHEL MONTANO

(2007)

LOOKING AHEAD

- Beyond the Caribbean to South America
- The 3rd Element: Indigenous Influence

