PUERTO RICAN AND CUBAN MUSICAL EXPRESSION IN NEW YORK

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In New York the phrase “Latin music” has come to mean the up-tempo hot Latin dance-band sound currently known as salsa but the history of Latin music in New York goes back much further than the salsa industry. (“Salsa,” literally “sauce” is used to describe the feeling performers put into their music, like savory,” “spicy,” “tangy.” Thus playing *con salsa* means playing with soul.*) Earlier in the century, Tin Pan Alley, Broadway, and Hollywood borrowed some of the music and dance forms of Mexico, Cuba, and Argentina and incorporated these elements to add flavor and a touch of exoticism. The tango dance craze to which this thirst for exoticism gave rise lasted through the thirties and spread throughout Europe as well as the United States. But the music “'as merely a Latin-flavored Tin Pan Alley stereo-typed imitation. This “'as not the case with the Cuban rumba craze that swept the United States and the Continent at the start of the thirties. *(Rumba* music is known as *son* in Cuba. *Son* and *rumba* will be discussed below.) The craze was short-lived in Europe and everywhere in the United States except New York, where a sizable Latin community had begun to form in East Harlem. El Barrio (literally “the quarter”), as this community was known by its residents, created a second major audience for Latin music in New York. The first continued to flourish in the down-town and East Side nightclubs that catered to white audiences demanding Americanized versions of Latin music. The Latin audiences demanded the real thing, which they got in the uptown dance halls and nightclubs.

In 1898, after the Spanish-American War, Puerto Rico became a protectorate of the United States, and in 1917 the United States imposed citizenship upon the Puerto Rican people. With citizenship they were free to travel between the island and the mainland without the delays and restrictions faced by other immigrant groups. By this time the island’s economy had experienced an agricultural industrialization as a result of North American investment. In the twenties this industrialization began to decline and in the thirties reached full collapse. Although it remained profitable to investors throughout the Depression, agricultural in-dustrialization proved unable to provide a subsistence wage for the majority of the people. This economic upheaval gave rise to movement from the rural areas to the cities and in many cases from the cities to the mainland when work could not be obtained on the island.

Migration from the island to the mainland was significant in the twenties and thirties, but the factors that stimulated migration became sharply aggravated in the forties, when there was a shift from agriculture to industry, once again as a result of North American capital. This industrialization, however, could not absorb the growing labor pool. The demand for unskilled or semiskilled labor in industry and the service sector on the mainland, combined with unemployment on the island and the Puerto Rican government's encouragement of migration, resulted in massive migrations starting immediately after World War II. Two additional factors facilitated these migrations: the Puerto Rican government made an agreement with the Federal Aviation Administration to lower transportation rates between the island and the mainland, and large media campaigns on the island lauded the values of moving to the United States, which was depicted as the land of opportunity.

The massive migrations lasted until the end of the fifties, and although there has been a decline in the numbers of migrants, the flow continues to the present. A factor of great importance is the constant contact that migrants and their children have maintained with their island home through frequent messages, letters, telephone calls, and visits.

While Puerto Rican migrants have settled in nearly every state, New York City has by far the greatest concentration. El Barrio was the first major Puerto Rican community in New York and remains the best-known, although it is no longer the largest.

In the early fifties, people from the same town on the island began to form home-town social clubs. These clubs, named after the home towns (for example, Club Lares, Club Ponce), were intended to re-create the home-town environment. They also gave the members a means of coping with an alien environment, assisted the newcomer in adapting to life in the city, and provided a forum for the discussion of the problems of daily existence. The clubs were usually converted factory lofts decorated with artifacts, memorabilia, and photographs from home. They were family-oriented places where members could come together to socialize in a manner they had been used to on the island. The music performed in the clubs provided entertainment and also aided in creating a sense of the home town. As a rule, the *cuarteto* sound of the *jibaro* (rural dweller) dominated these settings.

Cuban migrations to New York, although significant, never reached the proportions of the

Puerto Rican migrations. A primary factor was the stringent United States laws imposing a quota on the numbers of immigrants. Some Cubans managed to circumvent the quota system by going first to Puerto Rico and from there entering the United States, but this accounts for only a small number of Cuban immigrants.

The economic factors that stimulated migrations from Puerto Rico also obtained in Cuba, but the economic problems of the *campesino* (farmer) and urban unskilled or semiskilled laborer were compounded by racial issues. The Spanish colonizers had transported African slaves to Cuba in much greater numbers than to Puerto Rico, hence the black population was sizable. Socioeconomic distinctions were made primarily along racial lines, relegating a disproportionate number of blacks to the lower strata. Black Cubans who came to the United States before the revolution of 1959 cite racism in Cuba as a strong factor in the decision to emigrate.

Aided by a relaxation in the laws, immigration patterns changed after the revolution. Before 1959 the majority of Cuban immigrants were from the lower classes, and of these a large percentage were black. Although some, *campesinos* and urban dwellers (black and white) continued to enter the United States after 1959, a disproportionate number of immigrants came from the middle and upper socioeconomic strata. The new immigration was top-heavy with businessmen, intellectuals, and professionals.

Other Hispanic peoples have migrated to New York in significant numbers, although never in the same proportions as the Puerto Ricans. Immigrants from Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Colombia, and Venezuela, among others, settled in the areas established by the Puerto Ricans, but more often formed their own distinct communities. The Cubans, for example, are concentrated in the area west of Broadway and north of One-hundred thirtieth Street and in sections of Washington Heights.

JÍBARO MUSIC FORMS

Seis, aguinaldo, mapayé, and *danza* are Spanish-derived forms for solo voice and instrumental accompaniment. The *danza* is the only one that was written by composers in the Western art-music tradition and the only one that developed among the elite in the urban areas of Puerto Rico. Possible influences on the *danza* were the Cuban habanera and the European country-dance. The *danza* had become popular all over the Caribbean in the nineteenth century and was performed by dance orchestras modeled after European salon traditions. The *danza* is the only form on this album whose structure is sectionalized in the manner of European art music. The piece begins with an introduction *(paseo),* which is followed by a minimum of two contrasting sections, each of which is repeated. The number of contrasting sections is at the discretion of the composer. The Puerto Rican *danza* is distinguished from other Caribbean *danzas* by a distinctive rhythmic structure.

In the early nineteenth century, large plantations (haciendas) were formed as a result of the Spanish land grants, which gave one family control over large portions of land, much of which was already being worked independently by *jíbaros.* The hacienda system relegated the *jíbaro* to a position of subservience to the landowner *(hacendado),* making him a sharecropper. The *hacendados* perceived themselves as an aristocratic rather than agrarian class. They made frequent excursions from their country homes to the cities for a variety of reasons, including entertainment, which they sought in the salons. *Danzas* and other European-derived musical and dance forms were played in these places. Many *hacendados* also acquired pianos for their homes. The piano and the European-oriented music played on it were symbols that reinforced the *hacendados'* aristocratic pretensions. In addition, the *hacendados* invited orchestras from the cities to perform on special occasions at their haciendas. In this way the *jíbaros* came into contact with these musical forms, many of which they adapted to their own expressive styles. For the most part, forms such as the *danza* retained their structure but were adapted to the instruments of the *jíbaros:* guitar, *cuatro* (a small ten-stringed guitarlike instrument), maracas (a pair of rattles), and *güiro* (a scraped gourd). The word *cuarteto* refers to various combinations of these instruments and has come to symbolize the "typical" sound and repertoire of *jíbaro* music.

In addition to the adaptations of European art-music forms, the *jíbaros* possess a varied repertoire of traditional music. Forms such as the *seis, aguinaldo,* and *mapayé* are derived from music brought to the New World by the Spanish settlers.

The *seis* (literally "six") takes its name from a six-couple dance and refers to a variety of musical and dance forms, although not all *seises* are intended for dancing. The type of *seis* is identified by town of origin (for example *seis de Fajardo),* type of dance *(seis chorreao),* type of text *(seis con décima,* harmonic structure *(seis mapayé),* or composer (e.g. *seis de Andino).* Hence the word *seis* does not appear alone. "La Cuna de Mis Amores" is a *seis con décima,* which is one of the few *seises* not danced. *Seis con décima,* the slowest of all *seisés,* consists of a *cuarteto* accompanying a solo singer.

The improvised text is based on a *décima* (ten-line-stanza) structure, each line consisting of six or eight syllables. This improvised stanzaic form, common throughout Latin America, is frequently incorporated into other forms of *jíbaro* music.

"Las Mujeres de Borinquen" is a *seis mapayé,* a form more popularly known as *le lo lai,* after the vocables sung at the beginnings of various verses. *Le lo lai* is characterized by a more varied harmonic structure than that of the other *seises* and is always in the minor mode. The texts of *le lo lai* are generally improvised around nostalgic themes of homeland, motherhood, nature, and idealized love, themes that characterize much of the *jíbaro* repertoire.

The *aguinaldo* differs from *danzas* and *seises* in that it is associated with a particular season. During Christmas, groups traveled from house to house singing *aguinaldos* and asking for small symbolic gifts such as food and drink. (The word *aguinaldo* means a gift that is requested at Christmas time.) In recent years the *aguinaldo* has come to he associated with other occasions. *Aguinaldo* texts, whose contents may be religious, secular, or a combination, are based on a *décima* structure.

With the migrations of *jíbaros* from the rural regions to the urban areas of Puerto Rico, the musical forms underwent a shift in emphasis. In the country, the *danza, seis, mapayé,* and *aguinaldo* were used for entertainment at all types of formal and informal gatherings. In the cities, special occasions such as weddings, baptisms, and holidays became the primary settings for these forms. *Jíbaro* musical expression in New York found its outlet in the home-town social clubs, where it again was used for informal entertainment as well as for special occasions.

BOMBA AND PLENA

Bomba and *plena* are the only distinctive African-derived musical and dance forms of Puerto Rico. They both developed in the coastal towns, where large communities of black workers gathered around the sugarcane mills. *Bomba* is an entertainment form and is generally performed at social gatherings. It is a couple dance in which the woman performs relatively fixed dance steps while her partner is free to exhibit his dancing skills. He competes with the *requintador* (lead drummer), who rhythmically responds to his steps. The *bomba* ensemble consists of cuá (a pair of sticks stuck on the side of a dram or some other hard resonant surface), which provides a fixed rhythmic pattern (time line) around which the other instruments are organized; one or two *seguidoras* (low-pitched barrel-shaped drums), which provide a fixed supporting rhythm; and requinto (higher-pitched barrel-shaped dram), which plays changing rhythmic patterns within the rhythmic structure of the *seguidoras* and *cuá.* (The terms *seguidora* and *requinto* refer not only to the names of the drums in the ensemble, but also to the drums' musical function. The *seguidora* is always a supporting drum, and the *requinto,* also known as *quinto,* is an improvisatory drum.) The specific manner in which these patterns are organized is regulated by the rhythmic nature of the song text and the movement of the male dancer. In addition to the *cuá, seguidora,* and *requinto,* maracas or a *güiro* may be included in the ensemble, increasing the rhythmic density and drive. A *campana* (cowbell) is optional and may substitute for or be used in addition to the *cuá,* reinforcing the time line. *Bomba* texts are usually on topical themes relating to everyday life in the community, such as social relationships, work, or historical events. They may also be spontaneous statements commenting on activities taking place in the performance. The musical form of *bomba* consists of alternation between solo singer and chorus in a call-and-response pattern. The soloist, having textual and melodic freedom, presents the main themes of the text, while the chorus is restricted to a fixed response.

Plena, although African-derived, incorporates more European musical elements than does *bomba*. *Plena* began as a street music, but as it moved into the bars and nightclubs it came to be associated with night life and the underworld. Although white and black musicians performed *plena,* the whites associated it more with slumming, but for blacks *plena* was a valid part of their musical heritage. *Plena* is a couple dance, but the dance is not an integral part of the event, as it is in *bomba.* The competitive interaction between drummer and dancer that characterizes *bomba* is not found in *plena.* A number of instruments may be used in various combinations in the *plena* ensemble. In "El Safacón de la 102nd St," Montañez uses four *panderetas (frame* drums): two *seguidoras* and one *punto de dave* (supporting drums) provide fixed interlocking patterns; the fourth *pandereta (requinto)* plays extended rhythmic passages that accent portions of the rhythmic structure of the text. The *requintador* is also allotted a segment of the piece in which to demonstrate competence on his instrument. Montañez also uses conga drums, which have only recently been added to the *plena* ensemble to reinforce the *seguidoras.* The *güiro,* playing a fixed rhythm, is an indispensable part of the *plena* ensemble. The harmonica has various uses within the ensemble: melodic introduction of the vocal refrain, contrapuntal accompaniment to the

verse, melodic unison with the refrain, melodic embellishment of the verse or refrain, and solo performance to demonstrate the player's skill. This instrumentation does not represent a fixed format for *plena* ensemble. The minimum requirement is two *seguidoras,* one requinto, one *güiro,* and either harmonica or accordion, both of which serve the same musical function. When a guitar is included it provides harmonic accompaniment.

Plena texts are on contemporary or historic events and are in a stanzaic verse-refrain structure.

In New York, *bomba* and *plena* have undergone certain transformations. Their use at informal social gatherings—and, in the case of *plena,* in nightclubs—has sharply declined. However, their content is being reinterpreted in the salsa *conjunto* (small-group) format. *Bomba* and *plena* are reaching a wider audience through the popular-music industry.

LUCUMÍ AND SANTERÍA

An important form of musico-religious expression of Puerto Ricans and Cubans in New York derives from beliefs and practices of the Yornba people of Nigeria and Dahomey in West Africa. The belief systems of the Yoruba and other African peoples were brought to the New World as a result of the slave trade. Voluntary organizations provided a means for these peoples to maintain their identity in the post-slavery period. From these organizations, which were known in Cuba as *cabildos,* the Yoruba-derived Lucumí and other religious and secret societies of African origins emerged. Lucumí beliefs are characterized by complex relationships among the forces of nature, concepts about the creation of the world, the pantheon of *orishas,* and man. Each *orisha* is associated with various myths, herbs, stones, colors, animals, and musical forms. An individual is devoted exclusively to one *orisha,* who may, during ritual events, possess his devotee. Once this is accomplished the *orisha* becomes actualized in human form and can interact with participants in the event. The philosophical foundation and organizing framework for these beliefs are centered in a system of divination known as Ifa.

Syncretism between Catholicism, as imposed by the Spaniards, and the African belief systems of the slaves resulted in certain superficial changes in Lucumí, the most common of which was overt acceptance of the symbols of Catholicism in an effort to mask Lucumí religious practices (e.g. saints' names were equated with *orishas).* This was necessitated by the attempts of the dominant political and religious structure in Cuba to force blacks to sever ties with their African heritage and thus gain greater control over them. Despite such superficial changes in Lucumí, adherents made a conscious attempt to maintain a close identification with Yoruba practices by using the Yoruba language in religious contexts and by observing the function and role of the *orishas,* musical practices, and numerous other aspects of their world view. However, two basic changes occurred in Cuba. Whereas in Africa each religious center was devoted to one *orisha,* and an individual's dedication to that *orisha* was determined mainly by lineage, the situation in the New World did not allow for an individual center to be committed to one *orisha.* Instead, each center paid homage to the entire pantheon. Furthermore, as a result of the destruction of family lineages by slavery, acquisition of one's personal *orisha* came to be determined solely by Ifa divination.

The migrations of Cubans to New York City, both before and after the revolution, led to the establishment of religious centers in New York. Lucumí in New York became popularly known as Santería. The multi-ethnic character of the city is reflected in the religious centers. Membership now includes black and white North Americans as well as Cubans, Puerto Ricans, and other Latino groups.

Music functions in the Santería as the central organizing feature of different events in the ceremony. *Igbodú* and *Eya Aranla* are separate events in the ceremony, and each serves a particular ritual purpose. The purpose of the *Igbodú is* to pay homage to the pantheon of *orishas* through a set liturgical sequence of rhythms known as *Orú del Igbodú,* which is performed on the *batá* while members stand in silent reverence. *Batá* is a drum family composed of three different-sized instruments, each of which is double-headed and hourglass in shape. They are held horizontally, with one hand on each membrane. The largest drum, *iya,* communicates directly with the *orishas,* each of whom has his own identifying rhythms. The *iya* also enters into musico-linguistic conversations with the *itótele,* the second largest drum. *Okónkolo,* the smallest drum, plays a rhythmic pattern that changes when signaled to do so by the *iya.*

The ritual purpose of the *Eya Aranla* is to facilitate communication between the *orishas* and the devotees. This is done through the *Orú del Eya Aranla,* a series of chants performed for each *orisha* by a lead singer *(akpwón)* and chorus *(ankori)* in a call-and-response pattern while the *batá* play corresponding rhythms. The *Orú* is performed to call the *orisha* into the ceremony. When called, the *orisha* manifests itself in human form through possession of individual devotees. In this way the *orisha* is now able to communicate directly with the participants.

RUMBA

Rumba is the generic term for a group of African-derived Cuban musical and dance forms. Each form reflects a different degree of syncretism among African and Spanish linguistic, musical, and dance elements. Since slavery times *rumba* has provided a means for commentary on a wide range of issues, such as political and social events affecting the life of the community.

Three of the better-known forms of *rumba* are *guaguancó, yambú,* and *columbia.* The instrumental ensemble for *guaguancó* and *columbia* is a set of three drums—*quinto, segundo,* and *tumba*—which function the same as the *requinto* and *seguidoras* of the *bomba.* The ensemble for *yambú* is the same, except that the *segundo* is optional. The *segundo* and *tumba,* when used together, provide the supporting rhythmic structure through inter-locking patterns. *Cáscara* and *claves* are used in all three *rumba* forms. *Cáscara* are like the *cuá* of the *bomba,* and together with the *claves* serve the same function of providing the time line around which the other instruments are organized.

Guaguancó, yambú, and *columbia,* all musical and dance forms, also use solo voice and chorus. Similarities between *yambú* and *guaguancó* exist in their musical form, which may be divided into three basic sections. The first, *la diana,* is a melodic passage sung in vocables by one of the lead singers or the chorus and serves to cue both the beginning of the song and sectional changes. *El canto* consists of verses sung by a lead singer and stanzas sung by the chorus. The verses may be traditional, improvised, or a combination. The verses of the *canto* thus provide a framework within which the singer can display his poetic and improvisational ability in addition to his knowledge of the traditional repertoire. The verses may also be traded off between two lead singers who enter into a sung verbal duel to see who can be more creative in his use of humor, irony, and metaphor. The final section of the piece, called *rumba* or *el montuno,* switches to a call and response between lead singer and chorus. Although lead singers may take turns initiating the calls, the element of verbal competition that characterizes the *canto* section is not present.

The main distinction between *yambú* and *guaguancó*—other than that *yambú* is slower—is the dance that occurs in the *montuno* section of each. In *guaguancó* the dance is a competition between male and female in which the man attempts to symbolically conquer the woman by the execution of a pelvic thrust known as *vacunao.* While this competition is taking place, the *quinto* interacts with the dancers by responding to their movements. The element of competition does not exist in the *montuno* section of *yambú;* rather, the couples jointly give an elaborate display of expertise. That the *vacunao* is consciously avoided can be seen in the frequent call of the lead singer: *"En el yambú no se vacuna* [as sung], *caballeros"* ("In the *yambú* there is no *vacunao,* gentlemen").

Columbia differs from *yambú* and *guaguancó* in several respects. The latter are in duple meter; *columbia* is in triple meter. *Columbia* has no *diana* section; it has an introductory section, sometimes called *llorao,* in which the lead singer calls his chorus to sound their presence. In *columbia* the dance in the *montuno* section is for men only, and the movements allude to personages in the Abakuá secret society as well as display the dancer's virtuosity. Competition exists between the dancer and the *quintador,* who interact closely. The texts of *guaguancó* and *yambú* are almost always in Spanish, but *columbia* texts include many phrases borrowed from and alluding to the African-derived Abakuá or Lucumí.

SON

The word *son* is used to describe a particular type of instrumentation and feeling rather than a specific formal structure. *Son* emerged among blacks in the Cuban countryside as a form of entertainment at informal gatherings and was brought to urban areas in the early nineteen-hundreds. The early *son* ensemble consisted of a *tres (* guitarlike six- or nine-stringed instrument), a *marímbula* (large resonating box to which metal tongues are attached; when plucked, these render a bass like sound), *botija* (large clay jug that is blown into), bongos, maracas, *claves* (two hard wooden sticks struck together), and *laúd* (Spanish-derived lute). In the cities *son* gained popularity among whites as dance and background music for social events and provided a major source of income for black performers. The complex African-derived rhythms, however, did not easily conform to the musical expectations of the whites, and out of economic necessity the performers simplified the rhythmic structure and deemphasized the *estribillo* (refrain), which consisted of call-and-response patterns.

Another feature that characterized the transition of *son* from the country to the cities was the incorporation of *guajira,* a music of the Cuban countryside whose structure, text, and musical elements are primarily of Spanish derivation. In *guajira,* troubadours, accompanying themselves on the *tres,* sing nostalgically of their country life. *Son* groups in the cities adapted melodic and textual

aspects of *guajira* to the *son* instrumentation and added the *guajeo* (interlocking melodic and rhythmic ostinato patterns based on the *clave* patterns).

There have been three recognizable stages in the development of *son,* which are typified by three groups: the Sexteto Habanero, the Septeto Nacional, and the *conjuntos* of Arseñio Rodriguez. Although numerous other *son conjuntos* were performing in the cities before 1918, the Sexteto Habanero had begun by that time to crystallize what was to become the typical *son* sound. Three voices became standard, a bass replaced the *marímbula* and *botija,* and a trumpet and guitar were added. The bongos, *claves,* maracas, and *tres* were kept, but the *laúd* was dropped. Even though the Sexteto Habanero and the Septeto Nacional were playing at the same time, in the late twenties the latter began to expand on the quality of the *son* sound as established by the Sexteto Habanero. The general tendency toward greater Europeanization of the sound by the Septeto Nacional and other *son conjuntos* of this period may be related to the fact that *son* was gaining international popularity through records, tourism in Cuba, and performances abroad. This tendency resulted in tighter vocal harmonies, and expansion of the melodic range and use of ornamentation by the trumpet. In addition, the rhythmic pattern of the bongos became fixed, and there was less freedom for improvisation and interaction with the rest of the *conjunto.* The *tres* was assigned a larger role but had not yet reached the importance in the ensemble that it achieved with Arseñio Rodriguez.

In the thirties *son* also became popular in Puerto Rico when Puerto Rican musicians adopted the *septeto* style of the *son* as performed by the Septeto Nacional and other Cuban *son* groups. The popularity of *son* continued with the migrations of Cubans and Puerto Ricans to New York.

In the late thirties Arseñio Rodriguez expanded the *son* sound to reincorporate and reemphasize many of the African-derived elements from the countryside that had been omitted or simplified by the Sexteto Habanero and the Septeto Nacional, while continuing the Europeanizing trends initiated by these two groups. Arseñio achieved a synthesis between African- and European-derived musical elements while maintaining the integrity of both. To the established instrumentation of the *son conjunto* Arseñio added a *campana,* a conga drum, a second trumpet, and a piano. Stylistically, Arsenjo's main innovations were to stress the *guajeo* and incorporate the *tumbao* (an ostinato pattern resulting from interlocking rhythms played by the bass and conga); structure horn arrangements and musical breaks around the *clave;* integrate the rhythm section (bongos, conga, bass, *campana, tres,* and piano) so as to achieve a melodic-rhythmic unity centered around the *clave;* expand the role of the *tres* to a solo as well as accompaniment instrument; reemphasize the importance of the *estribillo;* introduce a solo section (*montuno*) in which *tres,* piano, or trumpet players could demonstrate their skills; and extend the dynamic range.

Arseñio's *son montunos* have a special meaning for his audience because, although many of his texts continued to deal with the traditionally romantic themes of the earlier *sones,* he also used texts that philosophically express his sentiments toward Cuba, community life, and racial pride.

Another major innovation of Arseñio's was the creation of the mambo and its introduction into dance halls in 1937. Mambo was performed using *son-conjunto* instrumentation. Arseñio's mambo, his compositions, and his *conjunto* sound strongly influenced Latin popular music in New York. In the fifties Machito, Tito Puente, and Tito Rodriguez adapted mambo to the big-band sound. In the sixties Arseñio's *conjunto* sound and many of his compositions were reinterpreted by salsa musicians.

SALSA

Salsa is to Latinos as Soul is to blacks. The word connotes a feeling as well as a variety of musical traditions that have been redefined and reinterpreted in the context of the Latin popular-music scene in New York. Cuban music provides the basis for salsa, but as early as the thirties the Cuban forms had become popular in Puerto Rico. By that time in New York a sizable Latin community had begun to develop, which was tuned in to the Cuban styles and which had been hearing them in the uptown dance halls and nightclubs. Machito, a Cuban who was performing with one of the uptown bands, formed his own group—Machito and His Afro-Cubans—around 1940. The group included Mario Bauza, who had years of experience as a jazz trumpeter with numerous black swing bands. Bauza expanded the size and role of the Latin horn section, using compositional concepts of the black jazz bands, and integrated it with the full Afro-Cuban rhythm section. Thus Machito's group set the stage for a growing relationship between jazz and Latin music that led to the creation of a distinctly New York Latin sound.

In the late forties two highly influential Puerto Rican big-band leaders emerged. Tito Puente and Tito Rodriguez, together with Machito, elaborated on the mambo form and set off the mambo craze of the fifties. Somewhat later a second fad hit New York. *Cha-cha-cba* was brought to New York by

Cuban *charanga* orchestras, which consisted of several violins and one flute backed by a rhythm section. *Cha-cha-cha* was also incorporated into the Latin big bands. The mambo and the cha-cha reached a tremendous non-Latino audience and created a dance fad that lasted throughout the fifties.

In addition to the bands that consisted largely of New York Puerto Ricans, popular Cuban artists came to New York to perform. They brought their charts with them and hired the New York musicians to back them up, thus expanding the training ground for young New York Puerto Rican musicians. This training was the foundation of what came to be known in the late sixties as salsa.

Until the cessation of diplomatic relations with Cuba in 1962, the interaction between the New York and Cuban music scenes formed the basis for parallel musical development. After 1962 the Cuban musical forms as adopted by Puerto Ricans began to move in directions that further defined the music as a distinctly New York phenomenon. Two general tendencies can be discerned. The first reflects the contact between the Puerto Rican and black communities in New York. By the late sixties there was a large population of bilingual second-generation New York Puerto Ricans whose ties were to both the island and New York. Interaction between blacks and Puerto Ricans was facilitated by overlapping community boundaries and by participation in many of the same educational and recreational institutions. The strength, success and cultural manifestations of the movement for black identity had an important impact on young Puerto Ricans. As one musical result of this interaction, boogalno, a black musical and dance form that gained tremendous popularity in the mid-sixties, was adapted by Puerto Rican musicians and reinterpreted as Latin *bugalú'.* It used standard salsa instrumentation (horns, piano, bass, congas, *timbales,* bongos, *campana,* and *guiro)* plus trap-drum set. The rhythmic structure was altered to accent the second and fourth beats (the backbeats), a characteristic feature of black music, and the lyrics were sung in both Spanish and English.

Latin bugalú' was an attempt to break away from the strictly Latin audience and to expand into the mass entertainment industry. But the relationships between Latin and black music were not solely economically motivated. To Puerto Rican musicians who had grown up listening to both Latin and black popular music, the latter offered a logical source for new musical ideas.

The second tendency was to look to the traditional musics of the various Hispanic peoples living in New York. Before 1962, popular Latin music in New York was based primarily on Cuban forms. A notable exception was Rafael Cortijo and his vocalist Ismael Rivera, who as early as 1957 introduced *bomba* and *plena* into the *conjunto* format. The Dominican *merengue* gained some popularity in the fifties, but it was not adapted to *conjunto* instrumentation until the sixties. At this time, forms such as the Colombian *cumbia* and Puerto Rican *jíbaro* music were also reinterpreted and presented in a popular-music idiom under the rubric of salsa. Thus salsa today is a vehicle for the expression of many musical forms associated with different Hispanic peoples coexisting in New York.

The authors wish to thank Hector Rivera, Victor Montañez, Julito Collazo, and Armando Sanchez for sharing their knowledge and life stories with us. We also wish to thank Zuni Lopez for her meticulous and punctual assemblage of various important materials, and Francia Luban, Frank Bonilla , - Felix Cortes, Jorge Perez, and Joe Luban for their collective energies in a welcome brainstorming session. Thanks also to Los Pleneros de la 110th Street and Son de la Loma for playing just for us. And to all the musicians: *chevere!*

Note: Song texts are not included owing to textual problems, such as frequent use of Africanisms, vocables, and idiosyncratic neologisms.

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El Safacón de la 102nd St.
[PLENA]
(Victor Montañez)

Victor Montañez y sus Pleneros de la 110th Street: Victor Montañez, Sr., lead vocal; Victor Montañez, Jr., conga; Ismael Rivera, *pandereta (punto de clave)* and chorus; Marcial Reyes, *pandereta (requinto)* and chorus; Efraim Ramos and Pedro Juan Dumas, *panderetas (seguidoras)* and chorus; Francisco "Tan" Martinez, harmonica and chorus; Jaime Flores, *güiro* and chorus.

René Lopez, producer of this album, feels that most innovations and changes in Puerto Rican music in New York are in the realm of increased rhythmic density. Conga drums are a recent addition to *plena* ensembles and can now be found in *plena* groups in Puerto Rico as well as in Montañez' group. The conga serves to reinforce the *seguidoras.* An innovation of this particular group has been to add

to the numerous conventional functions of the harmonica the role of providing rhythmic accompaniment to the *pandereta (requinto)* solo. *Plena* performance in this style has declined considerably in New York and on the island. Like the *bomba,* however, it has been reinterpreted by salsa groups such as those of Willie Colon and Rafael Cortijo.

"El Safacón de la 102nd St." ("The Garbage Can of One-hundred-second Street) is an adaptation of a traditional island form and the transplantation of the function of *plena* texts to the New York urban environment. The text, which talks about a burning garbage can, is perhaps a comment on the fact that fires are frequently lit in trash cans on New York streets to provide warmth in cold weather, and also present a source of potential danger.

Bomba Calindé
[BOMBA]
(Anon.)

Victor Montañez y sus Pleneros de la 110th Street: Victor Montañez, Sr., *bomba* drum and lead vocal; Ismael Rivera, *pandereta (requinto)* and chorus; Marcial Reyes, cuá and chorus; Jaime Flores, maracas and chorus.

This piece is based on the older style of *bomba* as it emerged in the black coastal regions of Puerto Rico. Its performance in this style is rare today in both New York and Puerto Rico. Like the *plena,* however, it has been reinterpreted by salsa groups such as those of Rafael Cortijo and Willie Colon. In salsa in New York and on the island, conga drums have replaced the barrel-shaped *bomba* drums characteristic of the traditional ensemble.

An innovation of Montañez' group is Ismael Rivera's use of the *nandereta* held between the legs, which substitutes for the *requinto bomba* drum. One barrel drum is retained, and performs the function of the *seguidora.*

According to Montañez, the text consists of what were African words, the meaning of which he does not know. His recitation of them in this song is from rote memory.

Julito Collazo y su Grupo Afro-Cubano: Julito Collazo, lead vocal; Hector "Flaco" Hernandez, *iya* and chorus; Milton Cardona, *itótele* and chorus; Steve Barrios, *okónkolo* and chorus; Wufredo "Moreno" Tejeda, achere (gourd rattle) and chorus; Augusto Lore, Virgiho Mart and Osvaldo "Chihuahua" Martinez, chorus.

The text of this tune is in Lucumí' (a Yoruba-derived language), which is traditionally used in the Santería. Although the Lucumí language and *batá* drum family are generally confined to religious settings, the text of this tune is secular and would not be for ceremonial use. Julito Collazo wanted to display his creative and compositional abilities and departed from the traditional thematic repertoire of religious songs. In this text he speaks of a beautiful woman who visits his home.

Loteria
[RUMBA–COLUMBIA]
(Julito Collazo)

Julito Collazo y su Grupo Afro-Cubano: Julito Collazo, lead vocal; Hector "Flaco" Hernandez, *quinto* and chorus; Milton Cardona, *segundo* and chorus; Virgillio Marti, *tumba* and chorus; Steve Berrios, cáscara and chorus; Osvaldo "Chihuahua" Martinez and Wilfredo "Moreno" Tejeda, chorus.

"Loteria" ("Lottery") begins in the traditional manner with the lead singer calling to his chorus to make their presence heard. The lead singer then engages in a ritual insult formula designed to stimulate verbal competition with other *rumberos* present at the event. Instead of playing *claves,* Julito provides the *clave* pattern with hand claps.

The text is based on a type of speech-play in which the lead vocalist creates a variety of humorous images, such as conversing cockroaches and chicken electricians.

Yo Quisiera Ser
[SON MONTUNO–SALSA]
(Hector Rivera)

Hector Rivera y su Conjunto: Manny Ramos, lead vocal; Benjamin Cabrera and Brad Upton, trumpets; Hector Rivera, piano; Pablo Guzman, bass; Kike Perez, conga; Vitin Gonzales, bongos; Adalberto Santiago, maracas and chorus; José Garcia, chorus.

The ensemble for this tune is typical salsa instrumentation. The text is about male-female relationships, as in many salsa tunes, and tells of the responses of a group of men on the street corner to a beautiful woman who passes by.

Borinquen
[DANZA]
(Israel Berrios)

Sexteto Criollo Puertorriqueño: Israel Berrios, lead vocal and guitar; Tito Baez, guitar; Neri Orta and Nieves Quintero, *cuatros;* Jaime Flores, *goiro.*

This *danza* is performed in the traditional style as created by the Puerto Rican *jíbaros.* The text of "Borinquen" (the indigenous name for the island) uses a stylized imagery characteristic of *jíbaro* song texts that pay homage to the homeland. The singer reminisces about the beauty of his island and its women.

Las Mujeres de Borinquen
[MAPAYÉ (LE LO LAI)] (Cristobal "Tobita" Medina Colón)

El Puertorriqueno
[AGUINALDO]
(Cristobal "Tobita" Medina Colón)

La Cuna de Mis Amores
[SEIS CON DÉCIMA]
(Cristobal "Tobita" Medina Colón)

Sexteto Criollo Puertorriqueño: Cristobal "Tobita" Medina Colón, lead vocal; Israel Berrios and Tito Baez, guitars; Neri Orta and Nieves Quintero, *cuatros;* Jaime Flores, *güiro.*

Tobita improvised these texts, based on a general thematic framework, in the recording studio. Texts for the *mapayé, aguinaldo,* and *seis con décima* generally contain expressions of nostalgia and romantic impressions of the homeland, motherhood, and womanhood.

"Las Mujeres de Borinquen" ("The Women of Borinquen") compares Puerto Rican women with the heavenly constellations.

"El Puertorriqueño" ("The Puerto Rican") is a romantic poetic salute to the Puerto Rican people.

In "La Cuna de Mis Amores" ("The Cradle of My Loves") Tobita uses a stylized imagery to pay homage to the homeland. He sings of the beauty of the mountains, the crops, the seas, and the women, and calls the island the cradle of his love.

Amor a la Virtud
[BOLERO–SON]
(Gerardo Martinez)

Guajira dei Mayoral
[GUAJIRA]
(Armando Sanchez)

Armando Sanchez y su Septeto Son de la Loma: Marcelino Morales, solo vocal; Marcelino Valdez, bongos; Teodoro Vanderpool, *tres;* Frankie Acevedo, first voice; Israel Berrios, guitar and second voice; Leo Fleming, bass; Alfredo "Chocolate" Armenteros, trumpet; Armando Sanchez, conga; Vicentico Valdez, maracas.

Son de la Loma plays in a style that combines characteristics of the Sexteto Habanera, the Septeto Nacional, and the *conjuntos* of Arseñio Rodriguez. That this group consists in large part of Puerto Ricans reflects the tremendous popularity the Cuban *son* and *guajira* have had in Puerto Rico since the thirties.

The text of "Guajira del Mayoral" ("Guajira of the Overseer") is typical of the form and content of most *guajiras.* Like the *jíbaro* songs, this one speaks of the beauty of the land through romantic descriptions of the countryside.

In contrast, the lead singer of "Amor a la Virtud" ("Love to Virtue") states in angry protest that he wants to live his own life and does not want his progress disturbed or misled by devious or false words.

Aguinaldo *(ah-ghee-NAHL-dai').* A form of Puerto Rican JÍBARO music.

Barrio *(BAH-ree-oh).* In Spanish-speaking countries refers to a district or a community. In New York it has come to denote areas in the city where large numbers of Spanish-speaking people live.

BATÁ *(bah-TAH).* Among the LUCUMÍ, a drum family composed of three different-size drums that are double-headed and hourglass-shaped. Each has its own name. From largest to smallest they are iya (EE-yah), *itótele* (ee-TOH-teh-lay), and okónkolo (oh-KOHN-koh-loh).

Bomba *(BOHM-bah).* An African-derived form of Puerto Rican music.

Bongo *(bohn-GOH).* Two small attached single-headed drums held between the knees.

Botija *(bob-TEE-hah).* A large clay jug that is blown into to produce its sound. It can be tuned by filling the body with varying amounts of water.

Cabildos *(kah-bVEEL-dohs).* Voluntary organizations that arose in Cuba during slavery times from which many of the African-derived religious and secret societies emerged.

Campesino *(kahm-peh-SEE-noh).* Farmer. (See JÍBARO)

Canto *(KAHN-toh).* Verse section sung by the lead singer in RUMBA ensembles.

Cáscara *(KAHS-kah-rah).* An instrument used in RUMBA ensembles consisting of two thin sticks struck against a hard resonant surface such as a drum shell or a chair. They play a fixed rhythmic pattern that along with the CLAVES provides the time line.

Cha-cha-cha *(chah-chah-CHAH).* A Cuban dance and music form.

Clave *(KLAH-veh),* claves. 1) Time line (a fixed organizing rhythmic pattern) in RUMBA ensembles. 2) Two short sticks struck together to play the time line or clave pattern.

Columbia *(koh-LOOM-bee-ah).* A form of Cuban RUMBA .

Conga *(KOHN-gah).* A single-headed drum with a tapered barrel shape.

Conjunto *(kohn-HOON-toh).* A small musical group.

Cuá *(ku-AH).* A pair of sticks used in the Puerto Rican BOMBA that are struck on the side of a drum or some other hard resonant surface, providing a fixed rhythmic pattern (time line) around which the other instruments in the ensemble are organized.

Cuarteto *(kuahr-TEH-toh).* Typically, a group of four musicians. *"Cuarteto* sound" refers to the style of music played by JIBAROS.

Cuatro *(KUAH-troh).* A small ten-stringed g'uitarlike instrument played by JIBARO musicians.

Danza *(DAHN-sah).* A composed musical form originally played by the elite but later adapted by the JinARO.

Décima *(DEH-see-mah).* A ten-line verse structure common throughout Latin America.

Diana *(dee-AH-nah).* A melodic passage sung in vocables by the lead singer in RUMBA ensembles.

Estribillo *(ehs-tree-bVEE-yoh).* A refrain section in song texts.

Eya Aranla *(EH-yah ah-RAHN-lah).* A performance context in LUCUMÍ religious ceremonies that facilitates communication between ORISHAS and devotees.

Guaguancó *(gwah-gwahn-KOH).* A form of Cuban RUMBA.

Guajeo *(gwah-HEH-oh).* Interlocking melodic and rhythmic ostinato patterns used by SON CONJUNTOS and SALSA groups.

Guajira *(gwah-HEE-rah).* A form of Cuban music.

Güiro *(GWEE-roh).* A scraped hollow gourd.

Hacendadeo*(ah-sehn-DAH-thoh).* A landowner or plantation owner.

Hacienda *(ah-see-EHN-dah).* A farm or plantation.

Ifa *(EE-fah).* A Yoruba and LUCIMÍ system of divination.

lgbedu *(eeg-boh-DOO).* The ceremonial context in which homage is paid to the ORISHAS of the Lucumí.

Jíbaro *(HEE-bah-roh).* Indigenous term for the Puerto Rican rural dweller.

Laud *(lah-OOD).* A Spanish-derived lute.

Lucumí *(loo-koo-MEE).* A Yoruba-derived religion practiced in Cuba.

Mambo *(MAHM-boh).* A form of Cuban music and dance.

Mapayé *(mah-pah-YEH).* A form of Puerto Rican JÍBARO music.

Maracas *(mah-RAH-kahs).* A pair of shaken rattIes.

Marímbula *(mah-REEM-boo-lah).* A large resonat;ng box with attached metal tongues that are plucked. This instrument, used in early SON ensembles, was later replaced by the string bass.

Montuno *(mohn-TOO-noh).* Call-and-response section of RUMBAS. Also a section in salsa and SON *montunos* where musicians are able to improvise.

Orishas *(oh-REE-shahs).* The generic name fer deities of the Yoruba and LUCUMÍ pantheon. The Spanish equivalent is *santos.*

Pandereta *(pahn-deh-REH-tah).* A classificatory name for frame drums used in PLENA ensembles. *Panderetas* resemble tambourines without cymbals.

Plena *(PLEH-nah).* An African-derived form of Puerto Rican music.

Punto de Clave *(POON-toh deh KLAH-veh).* An additional supporting PANOERETA in the PLENA ensemble. (See SEGUnoOBA)

Ouinte *(KEEN-toh).* A drum in RUMBA ensembles whose function is to improvise around the time line. The words SEGUNDORA, REQUINTO, TUMBA, SEGUNDO, and *quinto* are not only the names of drums in Puerto Rican and Cuban ensembles but also refer to their musical function. The SEQUIDORA, TUMBA, and SEGUNDO are always supporting drums, and the REQUINTO and *quinto* are improvisatory drums.

Requinto *(reh-KEEN-toh).* A drum in both PLENA and BOMBA ensembles that plays improvisatory patterns.

Rumba *(ROOM-bah).* A genre of Cuban music.

Salsa (*SAHL-sah).* Literally "sauce." In music it is used as an adjective that carries sensual overtones such as "savory" and "spicy" and refers to the kind of feeling that musicians put into their performing. Thus "playing *con salsa"* means "playing with soul." The word has also become a commercial tag for popular Latin music performed in New York.

Santería *(sahn-teh-REE-ah).* Spanish name for LUGUMÍ.

Seguidora *(seh-gee-THOH-rah).* Drums in both PLENA and BOMBA ensembles that provide fixed supporting rhythms.

Segundo *(seh-GOON-doh).* A drum in RUMBA ensembles that plays a fixed supporting pattern.

Seis *(SEH-ees).* A form of JÍBARO music.

Son *(SOHN).* A form of Cuban music.

Tres *(TREHS).* A guitarlike instrument with six or nine strings.

Tumba *(TOOM-bah).* A drum in RUMBA ensembles that plays a fixed supporting pattern.

Tumbao *(toom-BAH-oh).* An ostinato pattern resulting from interlocking rhythms of bass and CONGA drums in *son conjuntos.*

Vacunao *(Vah-koo-NAH-oh).* Pelvic thrust executed by male dancers in the MONTUNO section of GUAGUANCÓS.

Yambú *(yahm-BOO).* A form of RUMBA.

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THE PERFORMERS

Julito Collazo y su Grupo Afro-Cubano
Collazo, a disciple of the late Pablo Roche, the great Cuban bata drummer, has been in New York since the fifties. He is represented on a great number of Afro-Cuban recordings, and has played with virtually all the leading Afro-Cuban bands in New York (Mongo Santamaria, Silvestre Mendez, Tito Puente, and others). Collazo has made a world tour with the Katherine Dunham Dance Company. Since the early 1970s he has become more involved in community music and is a community-supported performer with his group. He and his group have played at the Festival of American Folk Life at the Smithsonian Institution.

Victor Montañez y sus Pleneros de la 110th St.
With six other members of the New York Puerto Rican community Montañez has for the last ten years tried to keep alive the rich *plena* and *bomba* traditions of black musical expression of Puerto Rico. He plays in community activities and in folkloric festivals, and has recorded with Simon and Garfunkel, been on the *Mike Douglas Show,* and represented Puerto Rican music at the Festival of American Folk Life at the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. The group uses all traditional instruments that they make themselves. Their basic instrument is the *pandereta.*

Hector Rivera y su Conjunto have played together since 1965 and have made over ten records. Rivera, one of the most popular Puerto Rican pianists in New York for the past twenty years, has worked with such musicians as Vicentico Valdes, Johnny Pacheco, and Rey Caney.

Armando Sanchez y su Septeto Son de la Loma are dedicated to keeping alive the traditional *son* music of Cuba. They have been together since the early seventies. Sanchez, son of the great Cuban *animador* (master of ceremonies) known as "El Principe Cubano," has been in the United States since the fifties. He has a vast knowledge of all types of Cuban music and created the first working Cuban *charanga* (orchestra with rhythm section, violins, and flute), the Orchestre Nuevo Ritmo.

Sexteto Criollo Puertorriqueño. Israel Berrios, founder of this group, is one of the most popular Puerto Rican guitarists in New York. He also performs as a *segunda voz* (baritone). Berrios worked with the Cuban *tres* player Arsenio Rodriguez, and also works with Armando Sanchez, and in the past twenty-five years has worked with practically all the small typical Puerto Rican and Cuban groups in New York (a "typical" group is one that maintains the traditions of the island). The Sexteto Criollo also plays in community activities and folkloric festivals.

• • •

Rene Lopez, the producer, is prominent in New York's Latin community. He is currently working as a record producer for such groups as Grupo Folklorico Experimental Nuevoyorquino Cachao and Roberto Torres. Lopez also serves as a panelist and consultant for the Culture Task Force at the Center for Puerto Rican Studies, the African Diaspora Advisory Group at the Smithsonian Institution, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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(publ. Trina Jill Music Corp)
Victor Montañez y sus Pleneros de la 110th Street

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(Anon.)
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Victor Montañez y sus Pleneros de la 110th Street

3. EMI RA OBINI LE WA..... 5:53
(Julito Collazo)
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Julito Collazo y su Grupo Afro-Cubano

5. YO QUISIERA SER 8:43
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Hector Rivera y su Conjunto

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Sexteto Criollo Puertorriqueño

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8. EL PUERTORRIQUEÑO..... 3:55
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11. GUAJIRA DEL MAYORAL.....4:52
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