



JAMAICA



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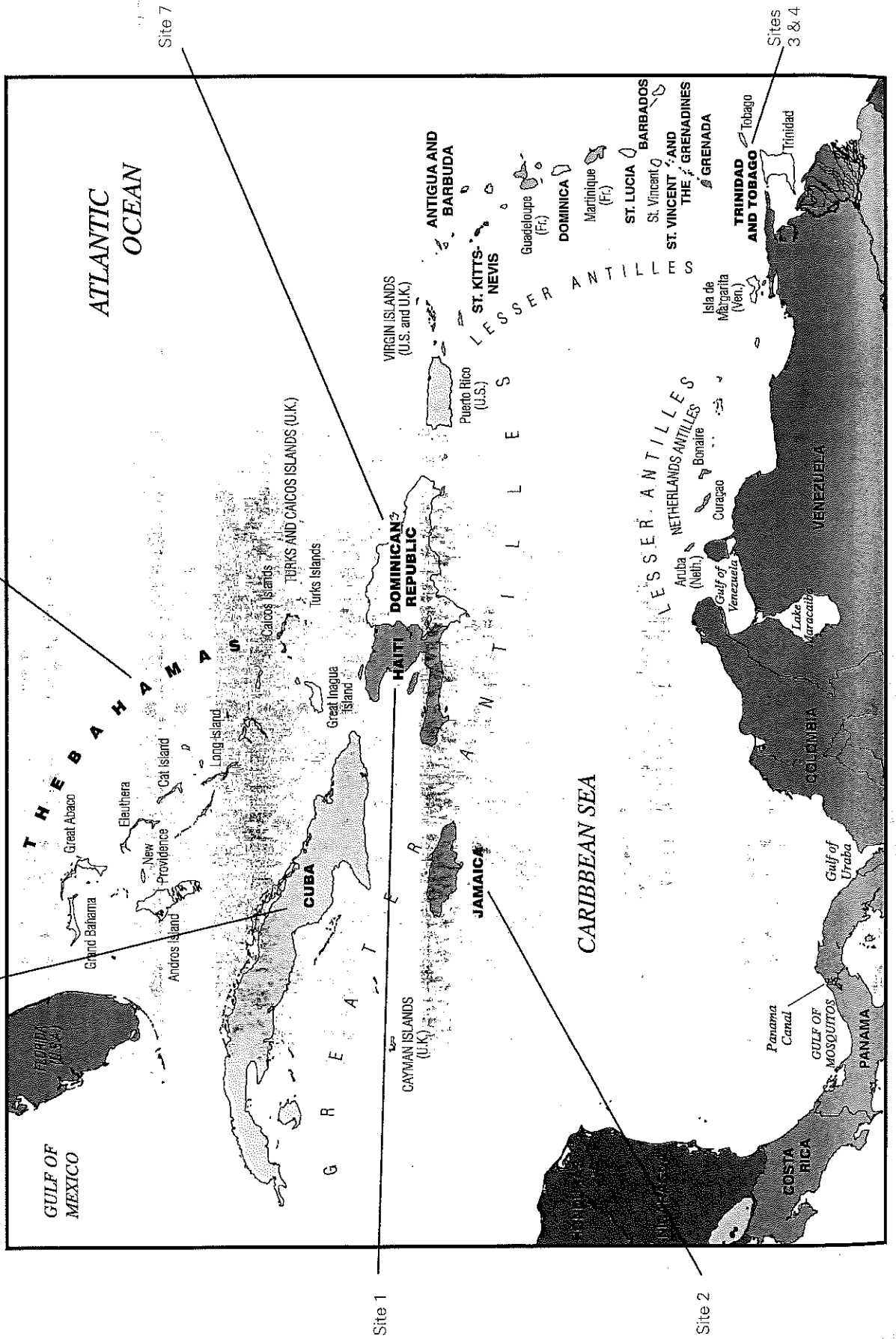


The Caribbean: Haiti, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, The Bahamas, Cuba, The Dominican Republic

11

Background Preparation	378	<i>An Inside Look: Ellie Mannette</i>	399
Planning the Itinerary	379	Site 4: Steel Band (Pan)	400
Arrival: Haiti	379	Arrival: The Bahamas	404
Site 1: Vodou Ritual from Haiti	380	Site 5: Rhyming Spiritual	404
Arrival: Jamaica	385	Arrival: Cuba	407
Site 2: Reggae	385	Site 6: Cuban Son	408
Arrival: Trinidad and Tobago	390	Arrival: The Dominican Republic	414
Site 3: Calypso	391	Site 7: Merengue	414
Explore More: Soca	397	Questions to Consider	418
An Inside Look: Olivia Ahyoung	398	On Your Own Time	418

A typical fishing village on the Caribbean island of St. Vincent, the main island of St. Vincent and the Grenadines



Background Preparation

The Caribbean represents many things to different people: white sandy beaches with clear blue water, dreadlocks and reggae music, cruise ships, Cuban communism and Fidel Castro, sugarcane, steel bands, or perhaps even offshore financial havens. For Americans, none of it is geographically very far away and yet most of it remains little known. There is much material poverty, but the region is a cornucopia of colorful and dynamic cultures. Despite a history of colonial brutality against the native population and of slaves being forcibly brought from Africa, the mixing of different peoples occurs more easily there today than practically anywhere else in the world, and this mixing has produced tremendous cultural and artistic energy. Tiny islands have developed stentorian cultural voices, producing music appreciated worldwide. Most readers likely will have heard steel band music, calypso, soca, reggae, and some form of Afro-Cuban music.

A map of the Caribbean shows a curving string of islands running from the Bahamas off the coast of Florida down to Venezuela. The largest islands—Cuba, Jamaica, Hispaniola (comprising Haiti and the Dominican Republic), and Puerto Rico—are in the center. The pre-contact population consisted of several indigenous groups, including the Arawak and Carib, but attempts to enslave them only led to their deaths or deportation. Today there are still black Caribs—a mixture resulting from contact with Africans—in a few places such as Honduras and St. Vincent. Contact with Europeans resulted first from the four voyages of Christopher Columbus, who between 1492 and 1503 “discovered” not “America” (meaning North America) but the Caribbean islands, Central America, and a bit of South America. After that, Spain claimed virtually all of the New World, though over time its rivals, the English, Dutch, and French, took possession of certain islands. Today, the Caribbean remains one of the world’s last bastion of colonialism; Martinique and Guadeloupe remain French possessions and the Dutch Antilles (Curacao, Aruba, and Bonaire) belong to the Netherlands.

The diversity of languages spoken in the Caribbean reflects the region’s complex and colorful history. The main language currently spoken in any given place is the language of that country’s most recent colonial master, but in many places a layering of languages can be heard; for example, in Trinidad and Tobago everyone speaks English normally, but one finds many Spanish place names and some Spanish terms have infiltrated the English spoken there. Spanish predominates in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic, whereas French predominates in Haiti, Martinique, and Guadeloupe. English is the main language of most of the remaining islands, including the Bahamas, Jamaica, the Virgin Islands, Dominica, St. Lucia, Barbados, Grenada, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago, to name only the better known ones. Dutch and English predominate in the Dutch Antilles. In many islands one also finds linguistic blends, often called Creole or Patois, or old forms of English or French impenetrable to outsiders. Anyone who has listened to reggae “dub” or “dancehall” will know how difficult it can be to understand some forms of island English.

Most Caribbean islands have predominately African-derived populations. After their failure to enslave the Arawak and Carib, Spanish colonialists attempting to continue tobacco and sugar plantations and goldmines began importing African slaves in the early sixteenth century. This practice became pervasive by around 1650, as part of a trading triangle. Europeans exported manufactured goods to Africa in exchange for human cargo that was shipped primarily to South America and the Caribbean, after which sugar and rum produced

ANTILLES

Two chains of islands in the Caribbean, the Lesser and Greater Antilles.

by slave labor were exported back to Europe. Slave trading reached its peak during the eighteenth century. Periodically there were violent slave rebellions, and many Caribbean slaves escaped into the hills, mountains, or other remote areas; escaped slaves were called by the Spanish term *cimarron*, anglicized as *maroon*.

The English abolished slave trading in 1807, the French in 1818, and the Spanish in 1820, but Brazil allowed it until 1852 and the United States until 1862. The English abolished slavery in 1834 in their colonies and the French in 1848 in their possessions, but it lingered until 1865 in the United States, 1873 in Puerto Rico, 1886 in Cuba, and 1888 in Brazil. Amazingly, the number of slaves emancipated in the United States (some four million) was greater than the combined total for the rest of the Americas. Following the end of slavery, the English brought indentured laborers from other parts of the world, especially India and China, while the Dutch brought them from Java. Indentured workers were only a step above slaves but could work their way to freedom. As a result, there are significant populations of people from India in Trinidad and Guyana (in South America), from China in Trinidad and Jamaica, and from Java in Suriname.

The Caribbean, with its incredible mix of peoples, also retains aspects of old cultures from Europe, Africa, and India. In the Bahamas and other nearby English-speaking islands, people of African descent sing old English traditional ballads and perform English *mummer* plays during Christmas. In Trinidad, also during Christmas, people still sing *parang* songs from Spain and Portugal. African traditional religions, surviving intact or in part, flourish in such places as Trinidad, Grenada, Jamaica, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba. Aspects of eighteenth-century English hymn singing and some early "Negro spirituals" survive in the Bahamas, because during the Revolutionary War British loyalists left the rebellious colonies and settled in the Bahamas, taking their slaves with them. Many kinds of Spanish-derived music survived in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico.

MUMMER

A type of street theater actor, usually in English-derived performances staged during the Christmas season.

Planning the Itinerary

While the Caribbean is home to numerous little-known, though fascinating, kinds of music, it is also a wellspring of some of the world's best-known music genres. Steel band music, calypso, soca, reggae, and merengue all originated there and exemplify the idea that small countries can have big voices. Latin-based ballroom dance music fashionable around the world—*cha-cha-cha*, *mambo*, *rumba* (or *rhumba*), *merengue*, *bolero*, and *salsa*—derives from Cuban, Puerto Rican, and Dominican styles. Granted, some of these musics are better described as "popular" rather than "traditional," but reggae and calypso, to name only two, are thoroughly embedded in the cultures of their homelands, Jamaica and Trinidad respectively. We therefore survey most of these well-known musics, along with the Bahamian rhyming spiritual, which is especially interesting because of its roots in the United States.

Arrival: Haiti

Haiti, a nation of around seven million people, occupies the western end of Hispaniola. Originally Spanish, it was ceded to France in 1697. Following a slave-led revolution that lasted more than ten years, Haiti became the first independent nation in the Caribbean in



1804. While the official language is French, most Haitians speak Creole, a blend of French, Spanish, Portuguese, English, and various African languages that is incomprehensible to outsiders. Today Haiti remains one of the world's most impoverished nations, in part because of frequent natural disasters, such as earthquakes, floods, and hurricanes, and the low value of its main crop, sugarcane; its population has also suffered through a series of brutal or ineffective political regimes. The 7.0 magnitude earthquake of January 12, 2010, resulted in the deaths of possibly 316,000 people and the destruction of much of the capital, Port-au-Prince. Virtually all Haitians are of African descent, but class differences based on skin color remain, and as a result Haitians with lighter skin (from mixing with Europeans) tend to hold more wealth and power than the rest of the population. Nonetheless, Haiti is alive with music and dance.

Site 1: Vodou Ritual from Haiti

First Impressions. *Vodou* (or *Voodoo*) is often stereotyped by outsiders as a dark religion with malevolent "black magic" rituals where pins are placed in dolls to hurt someone, or a mysterious powder is sprinkled on someone's doorstep to turn them into zombies. These characterizations are unfortunate and highly inaccurate. As for our recorded example, if you listen to it superficially, you will no doubt be struck by its similarity to West African music—which it essentially is—emphasizing polyrhythmic percussion and call-and-response singing.

Aural Analysis. The audio example consists of two sections: the first includes vocal with drums, the second vocal with bamboo wind instruments. There are two main musical elements in the first part of the example: the rhythmic accompaniment played on drums and other percussion, and the vocal parts, which in this case contrast a male soloist and a group made up mostly of women. The structure of the vocal parts is responsorial—that is, it is based on a call-and-response pattern in which the soloist begins a sentence or thought that the group then completes. These songs are passed on through oral tradition, making them

Haitians dance, offer food and ask the *vodou* saints for help in the Day of the Dead in November, a festival devoted to the god Gede (Dario Mitdieri/ Getty Images)





A display of various drums used in Haitian Vodou ritual

vary somewhat from one group to another, even as certain elements that maintain the song's identity are preserved.

The language is a combination of Creole and *langaj*, the latter being a ceremonial language derived from several West African and Central African religions. The accompaniment in Vodou rituals typically consists of three *rada* drums, sometimes along with an African iron bell or similar object, and some kind of shaken rattle, usually with the shells or seeds fastened to an external net; for example, shekere. The largest drum is the leader, the middle drum provides additional rhythms, and the smallest provides a steady reference beat for the other instruments. As with other types of West African music, these polyrhythmic patterns result from short units known to scholars as "timeline patterns," rather than being thought as a continuous meter (see Chapter 10). Individual accompaniments and songs are specific to particular deities, and are played to invite those deities to a ritual. In a typical Vodou ritual, a succession of deities will be invited, each with its own music. Participants seek to be possessed by the deity they are invoking, and when this happens their dancing incorporates gestures and actions that express the character of that deity. The audio example features a song for Legba and part of a dance for Ogoun (see below).

The second part of the audio track again has responsorial voices, but there are no drums. Instead a group of bamboo "trumpets" called *banbou* (also, *vaksin*) is heard, each instrument playing just a single note. However, because each instrument has a different pitch, a melody results from the interlocking patterns of these single pitches when played together as a group. The performance occasion is called *Rara*; processions of singers and players who go from one sacred spot (e.g., a cemetery) to another during the period between Carnival (the period preceding Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent) and the onset of Easter.

LISTENING GUIDE



CD 3.4 (1'37")

Chapter 11: Site 1

Haiti: Vodou Ritual

Voices: Parts 1 and 2—single male lead and mixed male/female ensemble

Instruments: Part 1—*Rada* drums, *bas* (frame drum), *klòch* (bell), *ason* (gourd rattle); Part 2—*banbou* (bamboo trumpet aerophones, also called *vaksin*), shakers and wooden sticks (idiophones)

TIME LISTENING FOCUS

0'00" Part 1: Listen for the lead male vocalist followed by the group response throughout the performance.

0'01" Listen for the tapping beat on the lead drum, which establishes the basic pulse.

0'05" Listen for the rattle matching the basic pulse. Note that the tempo gradually increases throughout the performance.

0'07" Listen for the first entrance of the *rada* drum, which is followed by the bell and the remaining instruments.

0'21" Listen for the lead drum improvisations within the overall polyrhythmic organization of the ensemble.

0'43" Part 1 fades out.

0'45" Part 2 fades in. Listen for the continued use of call-and-response vocal organization, but the difference in lyrical content.

Note the absence of drums. Listen for a steady pulse provided by a low shaker (idiophone), along with a pair of wooden sticks that contributes additional rhythms.

Listen for the interlocking melodic pattern of the *banbou* (aerophones).

1'08" Listen for the appearance of a high-pitched trumpet.

1'12" Listen for the lead vocal's change in text and the consequent change in group response at 1'17".

1'31" Example fades out.

Source: Excerpts from "Bosou Djo Eya (Mayi rhythm)" performed by Société Jour M'alongé Fòc Nan Point Dieu Devant, recorded by David Yih, Carrefour, Haiti, 1987, and "Guantanamo Song (Rara Rhythm, Southern Style)," recorded by Elizabeth McAlister, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, 1993. From the recording entitled *Rhythms of Rapture: Sacred Musics of Haitian Vodou*. SF 40464, provided courtesy of Smithsonian Folkways Recordings. © 1995. Used by permission.

ETHNO-CHALLENGE (CD 3.4): Find musical examples from other African-derived traditions similar to *Vodou* (e.g., *Santeria*, *Candomblé*, etc.) and compare ritual musical performance dedicated to the same deities.

Cultural Considerations. *Vodou* is an African-derived religious system incorporating newly encountered and adapted influences from Roman Catholicism. Although at least 10 percent of the Africans brought to the New World were originally Muslims, the vast majority practiced traditional African religions. Some of these systems involved interaction with the spirits of ancestors, whereas others focused on a pantheon of personified natural forces, called *orisha* in the more widely known Yoruba language but called *loa* in Haiti. For example, in the Yoruba tradition found in present-day Nigeria, thunder and lightning are personified into a single god, **Shango**. In predominantly Roman Catholic colonies (which comprised most of South and Central America and much of the Caribbean), African slaves vastly outnumbered their European masters, because great numbers of workers were required to farm the sugar plantations. As a result, the Africans in these colonies were able to retain a fair amount of their African heritage, including their religions. More precisely, while many Africans appeared to profess Catholic Christianity, most saw Christ, the Virgin, and the Saints and Apostles as equivalents to African gods—an example of a process called *syncretism*. For instance, in some traditions Shango is equivalent to John the Baptist. Thus, the *Vodou* practitioners considered there to be no contradiction between attending Mass in a church and participating in African rituals at an African temple.

Haitian *Vodou*, which blends the spiritual tradition focusing on ancestors with the one focusing on a pantheon of nature gods, derives mostly from Benin (formerly Dahomey) and nearby areas of West Africa. The two gods invoked in our example, both *loa* in the *Vodou* tradition, are Legba and Ogun. Both are well-known Yoruba-derived deities classified into the "Rada" group in *Vodou*. Legba, the guardian of crossroads and barriers, is artistically depicted as a handsome old man with a flowing beard who limps while walking with a cane and likes meat and alcoholic drinks.

Ogun, the god of iron, is often depicted with a sword, and can be quite fierce and active. While it is true that most African religions include some aspect of destructive power, they are actually predominately positive in focus, as the principal goals are good health and healing, social cohesion, successful harvests, and the like. Participants reaffirm the power of the gods in rituals that involve dancing, singing, drumming, and possession. During possession a person's essence temporarily leaves the body, allowing the *loa* (deity) to "mount" the believer, who is considered to be the "horse." The possessed person acts out the personality of the god and demonstrates the god's traits in dance and gesture. At the conclusion of a possession, the "horse" may suddenly fall to the ground, after which s/he is given time to reunite with his/her human essence.

Each deity is associated with a particular drumming pattern and song. Performing that

SHANGO

A Yoruba name for the god of thunder and lightning in the West African pantheon. Consequently, also the name for a West African-derived religion found primarily in Trinidad.



In Trinidad, two musicians play African-derived drums and sing for a Shango ceremony, a syncretistic religious tradition related to Haiti's *Vodou*.

At the seacoast of Trinidad, six leaders of the African-derived Shango religion bow before ritual offerings about to be floated into the sea for Oshun, the goddess of the sea



music invites a named god to appear and hopefully to possess one or more lucky “horses.” Despite myths to the contrary, *Vodou* music itself does not cause possession; because, if it did, anyone hearing it would be possessed. Indeed, the percussionists—almost always male—stay outside the ritual circle and are not subject to possession. *Vodou* ritual music *regulates* possession—that is, it makes the process of possession more even and efficient. Before a person can be possessed, he or she must learn how to become possessed; otherwise the experience of a *Vodou* ritual can be useless or even dangerous. A full ritual must begin with a song to Legba, the guardian of crossroads and gatekeeper to the spirit world. This is followed by a series of songs for other deities, presented in a prescribed order. These deities can be either nature gods or ancestors; some are violent or energetic, while others are calm. During possession, the “horse” may receive healing energy. Others nearby may also benefit or may ask the deity questions about life and the future. Extraordinary ritual acts, such as walking through fire, can occur at such a ritual, but these feats are intended to demonstrate the power of the deity and verify his/her presence. Such rituals are often sensationalized by outsiders, particularly in the movie industry, without understanding or conveying the purpose behind the actions. For followers of *Vodou*, however, they are recognized as a confirmation of their faith and considered an essential element of their spiritual belief system.

There are a great many African-derived religions in the New World, though admittedly *Vodou* is the best known and most notorious because of negative stereotyping. Other African-derived religions include *Santeria* and *Abakwa* in Cuba, *Batuque*, *Umbanda*, and *Candomblé* in Brazil, *Shango* in Trinidad, and *Cumina* in Jamaica. Caribbean immigrants have transplanted some of these, including *Vodou*, to the United States, Canada, and England. Although not advertised, rituals associated with these religions may be found in cities such as New York, Miami, Toronto, and Los Angeles, as well as in many smaller cities.

Arrival: Jamaica

Jamaica is widely known for its white sand beaches along the north coast at Montego Bay, Ocho Rios, or Negril, classy resort hotels, and welcoming local musicians playing gentle calypsos and limbo dance music. For many Jamaicans, however, life is a different reality, one of hardscrabble poverty and crime. The population of this Connecticut-sized island is 2.5 million, of which fully one-third live in the greater Kingston area. In Jamaica, as in Haiti, there is a stark contrast between the very wealthy and the very poor. The country's colonial past, the low prices fetched by its principal exports (sugarcane and bauxite), and overpopulation in the Kingston area are all partly responsible for this situation and together comprise a recipe for tension and violence. Kingston can, unfortunately, be a dangerous city for foreign visitors. Nonetheless, it was in Kingston's slums that Jamaica's most vibrant music—reggae—originated.

The majority of Jamaica's population is of African descent, their forebears having come shackled in slavery. Spanish colonialists controlled Jamaica until the mid-seventeenth century, when English pirates drove them away. The country then became a British colony in 1670. Throughout Jamaica's history there were occasional slave rebellions, and many slaves escaped into the Blue Mountains in the east and into the uncharted "Cockpit Country" in Trelawny Parish in the west. In these regions, they were able to re-establish an African way of life, including what remained of their ancestral religion, called *Cumina*. Since achieving independence in 1962, Jamaica has struggled politically, going through—among other things—a disastrous experiment with socialism under Michael Manley. Not surprisingly, a great number of Jamaicans have left the island seeking a better life, principally in Miami, New York, Toronto, and London.

Site 2: Reggae

First Impressions. Many world music enthusiasts enjoy the easygoing "walking" feel of reggae music. Its characteristic "offbeat" emphasis (beats 2 and 4, instead of 1 and 3) help distinguish it for even the novice listener. Several major reggae artists, such as Bob Marley and Jimmy Cliff, have achieved international recognition in the mainstream music business, bringing attention with it to some of the island's other musical creations, such as *ska* and *rock steady*. But while the sound of reggae may be familiar, the cultural context out of which the music was born and the meaning its lyrics hold for many Jamaicans are less well known.

Reggae is much more than a form of pop music. Those who enjoy the music purely as entertainment often overlook the politically and socially conscious lyrics that are the essence of the genre. The long, twisted hair (called *dreadlocks*) often worn by reggae musicians, the prevalence of the colors red, green, and gold, the frequent references to "Jah," even the celebration of *ganja* (marijuana), are not merely fashion statements or fads—they are part of a spiritual system of beliefs and way of life that infuses much reggae music.

Aural Analysis. While the majority of instruments introduced throughout our study are unfamiliar to students new to world music, reggae music typically includes routine rock/pop instruments, such as electric guitars and bass, drum set, and electric keyboards. Some aspects of timbre distinguish their use in reggae performance. The tone quality of the electric guitar,



REGGAE

A popular music from Jamaica characterized by a rhythmic emphasis on the offbeat and by politically and socially conscious lyrics.



Reggae's most famous artist, Bob Marley, as seen on the cover of his album, *Legend*

A street market in Kingston, Jamaica, the breeding grounds for reggae music



for example, is usually set to emphasize the “treble” or high-end frequencies in order to contrast with the deep, low-end frequencies of the electric bass. The snare drum is often “tight” with the snare wires disengaged. European trumpets and saxophones are often heard, and the use of “back-up” singers is common for emphasizing the lyric refrain. Most important, however, is the lead vocalist, whose lyrics are intended to convey a message to the audience, whether of peace or protest. While much music with a “reggae sound” today lacks the socially conscious lyrics of classic reggae artists such as Bob Marley, these themes are expected of musicians who identify themselves with the genre.

Cultural Considerations. Reggae is different from most other types of music featured in this book, first because it has been commercially successful, and second because songs usually come from known, individual creators who infuse their life experiences into their work. Reggae musicians often view their music as having the power to prompt people into action against political and social injustice on behalf of those who are oppressed or marginalized in society. Reggae artists regularly regard their position on stage as an opportunity to educate their audience about these issues or other important associations with their music and culture. Our example, “Torchbearer,” is such a song; written by Carlos Jones, a reggae musician from Cleveland, Ohio, the song pays homage to Bob Marley, the most famous figure associated with reggae music.

LISTENING GUIDE



CD 3.5 (3'42")

Chapter 11: Site 2

Jamaica: Reggae

Voices: Single male lead, backing female ensemble

Instruments: Electric guitars, electric bass, electric keyboard, drum set (snare, toms, bass, cymbals, etc.), bongo drums, shaker

TIME	LISTENING FOCUS
0'00"	Electric guitar begins the performance.
0'02"	Listen for the focus on snare drum, leading into the start of a regular pulsation and the entrance of the remaining instruments at 0'06".
0'06"	Listen for the "upbeat" emphasis on the second and fourth pulses of the four-beat phrase.
0'08"	Lead vocalist enters with spoken dialogue. Listen for the reference to Bob Marley. Note the use of electronic "echo" on the voice at 0'10," 0'14," and 0'19."
0'24"	Listen for the lead vocalist transitioning to a singing voice.
0'27"	Listen for the backing vocals and first appearance of the "Torchbearer" refrain.
0'39"	Listen for the reference to "Jah."
0'58"	Listen for the reference to "I and I."
1'06"	First verse begins. Note the various examples of <i>rasta</i> terminology, references to Bob Marley's influence on the lead vocalist, and the review of Marley's personal history.
2'17"	Listen for the <i>Nyabingi</i> reference.
2'26"	Listen for the "Yeah, yeah, yeah" lyric, used to close the first verse.
2'33"	Listen for a melodic-harmonic change as the lead vocalist continues the verse, with female vocalists singing in the background.
3'00"	"Torchbearer" refrain returns.
3'37"	Example fades.

Source: "Torchbearer," performed by Carlos Jones and the PLUS Band; from the recording entitled *Roots with Culture*, Little Fish Records LFD2912, 2004. Used by permission.

ETHNO-CHALLENGE (CD 3.5): Transcribe the lyrical content of this example. Research the various references to Rastafarianism and Bob Marley's personal history.

Bob Marley (a.k.a. Tuff Gong), born Robert Nesta Marley on February 6, 1945, is considered the most important of reggae's many stars, especially for the quality of his lyrics and his articulation of fundamental Rastafarian concepts (see below). His career began in 1960 after he joined with a childhood friend, Bunny Wailer (born Neville O'Riley Livingston), to form The Wailers. Later joined by Peter Tosh (born Winston Hubert McIntosh), they recorded songs that encapsulated their life experiences in Kingston's most notorious slum, Trench Town. Through international tours, including one to North America called "Babylon By Bus," they spread their music to non-Jamaican audiences. Marley's 1981 death from cancer at the age of thirty-six was a devastating blow to both reggae and Jamaica, because, although establishment Jamaica shunned the Rastafarian "rude boys," the public had embraced Marley. Eventually a statue in honor of him was placed outside the National Stadium in Kingston.

Although some might view reggae as simply a Jamaican popular music, it is steeped in very particular aspects of Jamaican history and culture. Reggae is often challenging on several fronts, including the spiritual and the political. Many lyrics combine elements of Jamaican vernacular English with the peculiar vocabulary of the Rastafari religion that informs reggae. Reggae's roots are complex and tangled, as it draws on many contradictory styles, including American rock and rhythm & blues, evangelistic hymns and choruses, and African drumming and singing.

A full understanding of reggae should include a discussion of Marcus Garvey and the roots of the Rastafari spiritual tradition. Garvey (1887–1940), a major force for West Indian nationalism and a promoter of black social pride, founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (U.N.I.A.) in Kingston in 1914. In 1916 he traveled to New York City where he founded a branch of the U.N.I.A. and started a number of businesses (such as the Black Star Shipping Company), a newspaper (*Negro World*), and a church (the African Orthodox Church). His arrest in 1925 on fraud charges led to his being deported back to Jamaica in 1927. It is reported that after returning home he proclaimed, "Look to Africa, where a black king shall be crowned." Indeed, Garvey's teachings led to the beginning of a "back to Africa" movement in Jamaica and beyond.

Many in Jamaica thought Garvey's words had been fulfilled when, in 1930, they read that an Ethiopian tribal chieftain named Ras Tafari Makonnen had been crowned **Haile Selassie I**, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Emperor of Ethiopia. Many came to believe that Haile Selassie (meaning "Power of the Holy Trinity") was the black reincarnated Christ and that the black peoples of the Diaspora were the lost children of Israel held captive in Babylon, awaiting deliverance by Jah (God) and their return back to Zion—in this case Ethiopia, the spiritual home of all black African-descended populations. The colors red, green, and gold became associated with Zion, because they are Ethiopia's national colors.

Those who embraced this loosely organized faith were called Rastafarians. In addition to their core beliefs, they adopted a lifestyle that included the wearing of dreadlocks and the smoking of *ganja* (the Hindi term for marijuana). *Ganja*, or "herb," was already a traditional medicine in Jamaica but was brewed as a tea or eaten with food. Rastafarians believed, however, that smoking "herb" would put adherents into a more prayerful state and bring them closer to Jah. Rastas justify their use of *ganja* with passages from the Bible, such as Revelation 22:2, which states "The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nation."

HAILE SELASSIE

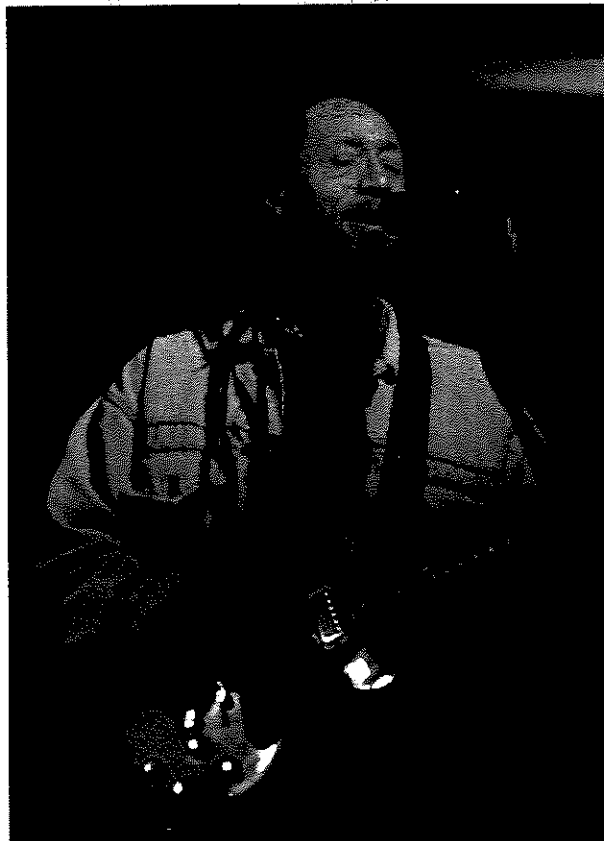
An Ethiopian emperor considered by Jamaican Rastafarians to be a black incarnation of Jesus Christ.

The audio example uses several instances of the language peculiar to Rastafarians, or *Rastas* as they are called for short. The phrase 'I and I' serves as both a singular and a plural pronoun, its use signifying that Jah (the Rastafarian term for God) is always present with the speaker. In plural form it refers to the mystical relationships within a group and between the group and Jah. A *Nyabinghi* (referred to in the line "Nyabinghi shakes the ground") is a Rasta ritual convention at which chanting and drumming occur. The term, which is derived from the name of an earlier anti-colonial movement in Rwanda, also refers to dreadlocked Rastas and may be shortened to "Nya-man," as heard in the example. References to "vibration" in the song highlight the metaphysical goals of peace, brotherhood, and love espoused by Rastas generally. Jones also mentions Marley's bi-racial background (Marley had a white father and a black mother), and refers to Peter Tosh using his original surname, McIntosh.

In Jamaica, Rastas are often scorned by the establishment. Their close association with reggae, due in large part to Marley's adherence to the spiritual tradition, has prompted much of the music to express challenges to the social order. Because Rastas consider the white world to be "Babylon" (referring to the captivity of God's chosen people) and Africa their true home, reggae lyrics also often challenge white hegemony. While not every reggae musician is necessarily a practicing Rastafarian, virtually all are sympathetic to this spiritual system.



Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie I, "Lion of Judah," born Lij Tafari in 1892, crowned emperor in 1930 until his death in 1970 (Rastafari Archive and Fias Adam Simeon)



Reggae artist Carlos Jones, composer and performer of "Torchbearer," of Cleveland, Ohio (Larry Koval)

Because live performances of reggae were long prohibited in Jamaica, the music was a phenomenon of Kingston's many small recording studios. There the musicians, using both acoustic and electric instruments, laid down tracks that were mixed to the liking of the audio engineer. Reggae music was then disseminated on vinyl recordings. Many party venues and dancehalls hired soundmen to bring sound trucks to provide reggae music for dancing. By the 1980s these DJs had discovered that by turning down the melody track and boosting the bass and rhythm track, they could "talk" over the music through a microphone. Eventually recordings without the vocals—or so-called "dub" versions—were made specifically for such improvised speech. This led to the creation of "dub" poetry, later evolving into a style called "dancehall." Some DJs became virtual reggae poets, creating long, complex poems that commented on life. Reggae "dub" also has a close relationship with the origin and rise of African-American rap and "toasting."

DUB (ALSO, DANCEHALL)

Recorded music that emphasizes the bass and rhythm tracks so that a DJ can "talk" over the music through a microphone.

Reggae music derives in part from a number of earlier styles that were not associated with Rastafarians and rarely had political lyrics. The oldest style was *mento*, a creolized form of ballroom dance music that was popular in the 1940s. With independence in 1962 and the increasing concentration of the population in Kingston's burgeoning slums came *ska*, a Jamaican response to American rhythm and blues and rock and roll. By the mid-1960s *ska* was slowing down and incorporating more politically charged lyrics; these changes led to a new style called *rock steady*. Reggae, the name of which is attributed to Toots Hibbert, emerged around 1968. It incorporated not only these older styles but also new forms of blues, Latin American music, and Jamaican religious music. Reggae was also influenced by the music of Rastafarian religious gatherings, which blended the choral style of Christian revival meetings with *Cumina*, African-derived drumming and singing.

Arrival: Trinidad and Tobago



Trinidad and Tobago, five times smaller than the state of Hawaii and with only 1.3 million inhabitants, has more than made up for its small size by contributing three of the world's favorite musics—steel band, calypso, and soca. The nation consists of two islands: Trinidad, the larger, is only about 50 miles by 30 miles (80 by 50 km), and Tobago is a mere 25 miles by 8 miles (40 by 13 km). The name of the capital, Port-of-Spain, suggests something of the island's history. "Discovered" by Christopher Columbus during his third voyage in 1498, Trinidad was held by Spain until the English wrested it away in 1797, holding it as a colony until 1962. The native population, the Carib, disappeared after the first Spanish colonists brought their slaves to Trinidad to establish sugar plantations. Even after the end of slave trading, Britain brought more than 134,000 East Indians, 8,000 Africans, and 1,000 Chinese as indentured laborers to work the land. As a result, today's population is around 40 percent East Indian. The range of religions found is quite varied as well: the country boasts a colorful landscape of Christian churches, Muslim mosques, and Hindu temples, along with many African ritual centers.

Most visitors to Trinidad come for Carnival, a festival preceding Lent, when Port-of-Spain comes alive with near non-stop music and dancing. Because the beautiful beaches on the north coast of Trinidad remain little known and undeveloped, Tobago's easy to reach beaches have been the main destination for swimmers and surf lovers. Trinidad's Great Pitch Lake is perhaps the world's largest pitch (tar) deposit and has been the source of material for paving roads in both Europe and the Americas.

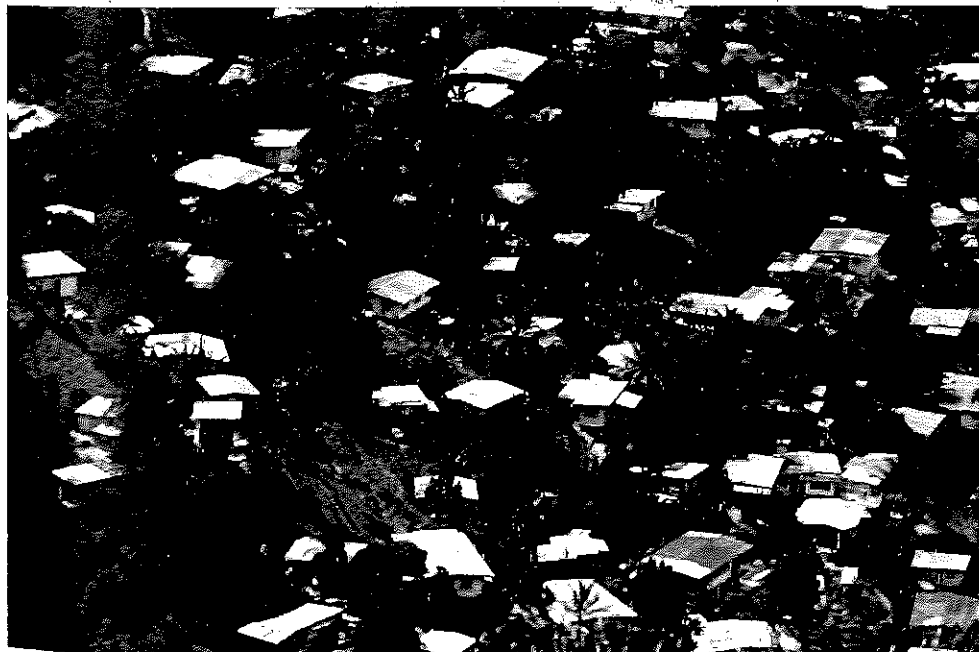
Site 3: Calypso

First Impressions. Our example of **calypso** opens with the sounds of a small dance band dominated by winds. Soon a male vocalist is introduced, who speaks as much as he sings; in a simple but direct manner, he gives his personal view of money and its corrosive influence on people. The repetitious music behind him sounds almost incidental, more a vehicle for the singer to convey the words than an attempt to charm the listener with a sophisticated melody.

Aural Analysis. Studio-recorded in New York City in 1979, using an eclectic group of pan-Caribbean musicians, our example opens with a simple melodic line consisting of four short instrumental phrases; this melody returns periodically during brief interludes and also serves as a coda to the song. While the trumpet and clarinet dominate the purely instrumental sections, quieter instruments, including violin, piano, guitar, and electric bass, are heard accompanying the singing. Throughout, a **conga** drum reinforces the beat.

The singer's stage name is The Growling Tiger, but he was born Neville Marcano in Siparia in southern Trinidad. A prizefighter and sugarcane worker in the early 1930s, he was inspired to become a calypso singer ("calypsonian") in 1934 during a trip to San Fernando, the largest city in the south. Within a short time, his talents as a lyricist and singer had become apparent, and in 1935 he and other singers were sent to New York City to record for Decca Records. Among these early recordings, now considered classics, is Tiger's calypso "Money is King." The present track is a re-recording of this song done some forty-four years later when Tiger was at least in his sixties.

"Money is King" is a Depression-era commentary on the lives of the haves and the have-nots, with the calypsonian, of course, speaking for the latter. Organized into five stanzas,



CALYPSO

A popular music from Trinidad characterized by improvised lyrics on topical and broadly humorous subject matter.

CONGA

A tall, barrel-shaped, single-headed drum used often in Latin American music.

Viewed from Fort George, houses in the hills above Trinidad's capital, Port of Spain, where both *pan* and *calypso* began

the lines of the song are not consistent in length or in rhyme pattern, and do not fit neatly with the music; the singer forces some lines into the allotted time by rushing the words in speech rhythm. Each stanza has eight lines, and thus the melody consists of eight phrases. The first four melodic phrases, however, are the same, whereas each of the second four is different, leading to a melodic structure that can be expressed as A, A, A, A, B, C, D, E.

In the first stanza Tiger declares that if you have money, you can get away with murder, and people will not even care if you have the disease *kokobe* (yaws)—but if you are poor, you are little more than a dog. The latter theme reappears in the third, fourth, and fifth stanzas. In stanza two Tiger asserts that if you have money, the storeowner will treat you like a king and will even go as far as sending your goods to your house on a motorbike. The third stanza declares that even a college-educated man with no money will not be given credit at a Chinese restaurant (“‘Me no trust-am, bawl out the Chineese [sic] man”). In the fourth stanza Tiger says that even a dog can find scraps of food around, and if it’s a good breed, people will take it in as a pet—but a “hungry man” will be treated worse than a dog. Finally, without money a man cannot attract a woman, buy her gifts, or show affection. His conclusion: “If you haven’t money, dog is better than you.” (These lyrics are quoted in Hill 1993, pp. 259–260.)

LISTENING GUIDE



CD 3.6 (2'08")

Chapter 11: Site 3

Trinidad: Calypso

Voices: Single male

Instruments: Guitar, bass guitar, piano, clarinet, trumpet, violin, conga drums

TIME	LISTENING FOCUS
0'00"	Listen for the instrumental “hook,” a refrain that highlights the trumpet, violin, and clarinet parts. Note that the bass, guitar, piano, and drums play a supporting role throughout the performance.
0'03"	Vocalist enters. Listen for the violin imitating the melodic contour of the vocalist and adding supporting harmony.
0'14"	Listen for the change in melody and supporting harmony.
0'23"	Listen for the lyrics “dog is better than you,” which conclude the verse.
0'24"	Listen for the instrumental refrain.
0'35"	Second verse.
0'55"	Listen for the lyrics “money is king,” which conclude the verse.
0'57"	Instrumental refrain.

- 1:08" Third verse.
- 1:27" Listen for the lyrics "dog is better than me," which conclude the verse.
- 1:29" Instrumental refrain.
- 1:39" Fourth verse. Listen for the explanation of why a "dog" is better than a poor man.
- 1:58" Listen for the phrase "dog is better than you," which concludes the verse.
- 2:00" Instrumental refrain as the example fades.

Source: "Money is King," performed by Growling Tiger and the Trans-Caribbean All-Star Orchestra; from the recording entitled *Growling Tiger: High Priest of MI Minor—Knockdown Calypsos*, Rounder 5006, 1979. Used by permission.

ETHNO-CHALLENGE (CD 3.6): Transcribe the lyrical content of this example. Write your own "calypso" verse to add to the present song.

Cultural Considerations. Trinidad's particular history of "kinder and gentler" colonialism helped create the more relaxed attitude reflected in its arts; quite unlike Jamaica, where an oppressed underclass continues to seethe with anger against the wrongs of both today and the past. Although Spain originally claimed the islands of Trinidad and Tobago, few Spanish actually settled there. After the English drove the French out of certain islands of the Lesser Antilles group during the mid-eighteenth century, some French and their slaves resettled

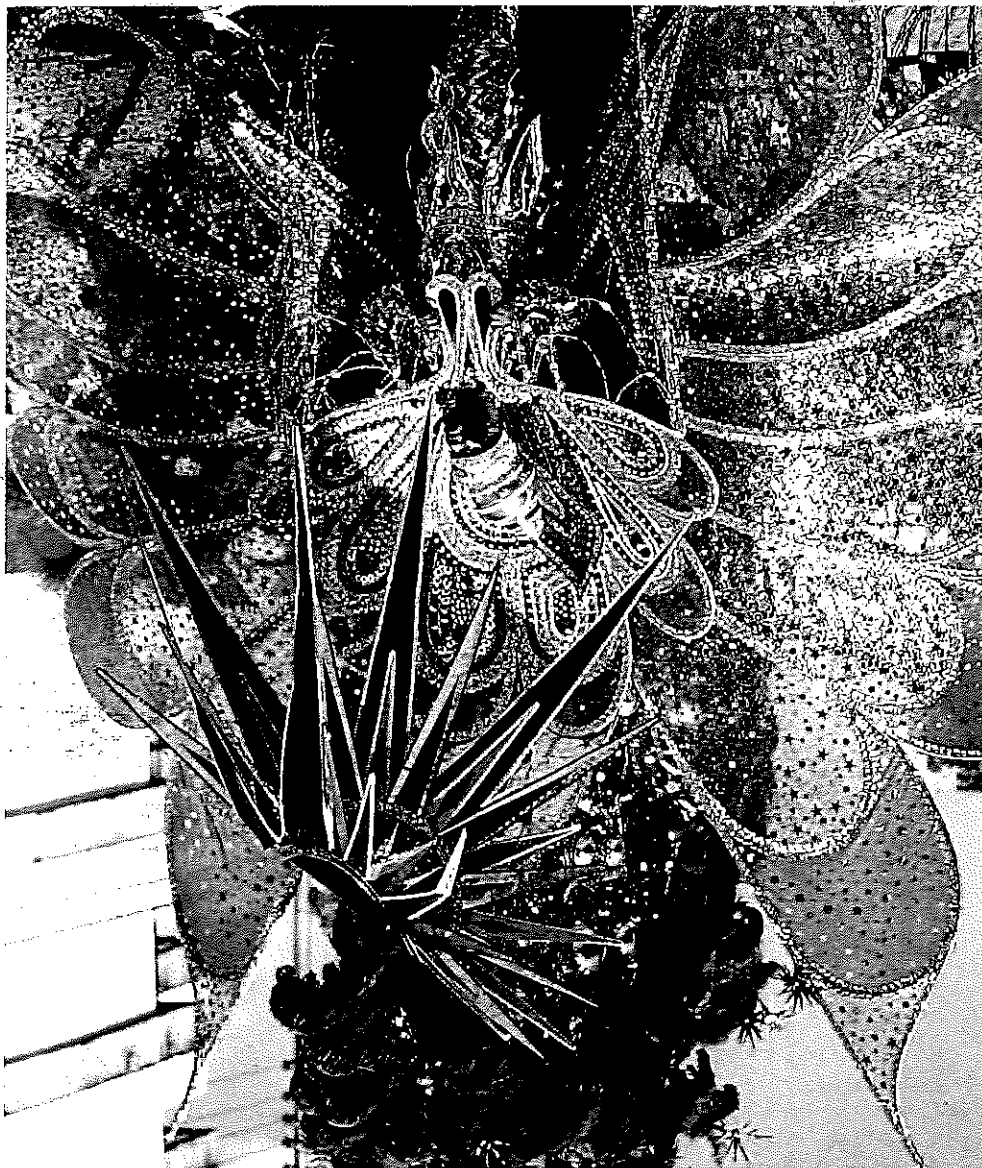


Calypso monarch
The Mighty
Sparrow (aka
Slinger Francisco)
performing at the
Lincoln Center
Out of Doors
"Caribbean
Cultural Center: 30
Years of Carnival"
concert in New
York City (Jack
Vartoogian/
FrontRowPhotos)

in Trinidad, bringing Roman Catholicism with them. The French had a relatively laissez-faire attitude toward their slaves, but tolerance of slave customs declined after the Protestant English took control of the island in 1797. Slavery was abolished in Trinidad in 1843, after which great numbers of indentured laborers, especially from British India, were brought to the country. Thus, the population of nineteenth-century Trinidad consisted of freed slaves, indentured workers (free or still under contract), and a small number of French and English colonials.

Carnival, the period of celebration before Lent begins—called Mardi Gras in New Orleans—is widely celebrated in Roman Catholic countries, and although Trinidad became

CARNIVAL
 A pre-Lent festival celebrated in predominantly Roman Catholic cultures, primarily in Europe and the Caribbean. Known as Mardi Gras in the United States.



His costume more than 12 feet high and 10 feet wide, Anthony Paul portrayed the "Splendour of Moonlight" during Trinidad's annual Carnival parade (Unknown)



English, its Spanish-French heritage remained strong. Early Carnivals were polite affairs celebrated publicly by the upper classes, while the working classes were left to their own devices. By the mid-nineteenth century, however, the "rowdy" classes had taken over Carnival, now celebrated through street dancing, the singing of songs that often mocked the upper classes, stick fighting, and a great parade of costumed revelers. The British authorities attempted to bring this growing chaos under control by passing and enforcing laws against excessive noise. In 1883 the government passed a "music bill" that permitted "drums, tambours, and chac-chacs [rattles]" to be played only under license and forbade all such music at night. The prohibitions on drumming led to protests, riots, and the singing of increasingly critical songs. Not to be outwitted by the British, Trinidadians denied drums began beating or stamping on bamboo tubes, creating the "bamboo bamboo" band—the term *tambo* being derived from the word *tambor*, meaning drum.

During the latter part of the nineteenth century, government officials, especially Norman Le Blanc, began a process of both co-opting and civilizing Carnival activities. By creating competitions among singers (called *chantwells*) and bands, held in tents during Carnival, he simultaneously harnessed what came to be called calypso song and provided an acceptable place for its expression. At the same time, the language of the songs was changed from *patois* to English. Eventually, these now tamed topical songs became one of Trinidad's national musics.

Thus, a "calypso" is a topical song or musical commentary on current events, the foibles of the upper classes, recent scandals, or odd fashions. As such they have a short shelf life, but during their brief existence they often sting. Yet calypso is rarely an angry music like reggae; parody, satire, and ridicule are its methods, though, as is often pointed out in the lyrics, these are used *sans humanité* ("without mercy"). Because calypso songs were created in response to particular events close to home, they also did not export well, and calypso recordings have not had the wide distribution that recordings of steel band have. However, when the Andrews Sisters rerecorded Lord Invader's "Rum and Coca Cola" in the United States in 1945 and sold millions of copies, they showed that some songs could appeal to a broad market. (Lord Invader, who had not received any royalties, later sued and won a settlement.) Jamaican-born Harry Belafonte has also made a career of singing watered-down calypso music for a mass audience in North America.

Many calypsonians took on bombastic names, to match their sometimes bombastic lyrics. Major figures have included Attila the Hun (Raymond Quevedo, a labor leader and politician), The Mighty Sparrow (Singer Francisco), Lord Protector (Patrick Jones), The Mighty Chalkdust (Hollis Liverpool, a school teacher), Lord Kitchener (famous for his "Pan in A"), and others with names such as Roaring Lion, Cro Cro, Lord Superior, Lord Executioner, Houdini, Calypso Rose (a rare female singer), and Immortal Spoiler. Because they were considered thoughtful commentators rather than popular stars, many continued to perform into old age. Among the new generation of calypsonians are Brian London, Kizzie Ruiz, and Superblue.

Trinidad, however, has not been immune to other musical currents, and calypso has faced stiff competition from North American rock, soul, and jazz, as well as reggae, Afro-Cuban music, and *zouk* (from the French Lesser Antilles). In the late 1970s some singers began blending calypso with aspects of rock and reggae, creating *soca* (soul-calypso), a more danceable style with less consequential words. New blends of calypso and other genres continue to be produced, but because the calypsonians retain a significant place in

Trinidadian society as commentators, the pure calypso tradition continues. However, since calypso is mostly performed during Carnival, the singers can rarely make a year-round living through their art. Many work in other sectors the rest of the year, and some live abroad, returning to Trinidad only for Carnival.

Explore More

Soca

While calypso is considered a popular music, its success in recent years has been limited mainly to local audiences. The tremendous international interest in Caribbean folk and popular music during the 1950s and early 1960s subsided as rock music and its many strands of styles took over the radio airwaves throughout the world. Calypso, as with so many other local popular world music traditions, absorbed some of these influences in order to maintain its popular appeal. By the 1970s, these influences were taking calypso farther and farther away from its traditional roots as an outlet for social commentary. Many calypso artists and fans criticized the new developments, stating that the music had lost its "soul."

Among these critics was calypsonian Lord Shorty (born Garfield Blackman (1941–2000)), who is today regarded as the Father of Soca music. His style fused calypso with rock music, as well as Indian *filmi*, which was hugely popular among Trinidad's large Indian population. Though these musical elements broadened the music's appeal, Shorty maintained the social commentary of his lyrics, describing this as the "soul of calypso," which was abbreviated to "soca" as a way of describing the new style. The peppy new

sound did indeed appeal to audiences and musicians alike, but Shorty's hope to maintain the focus on the lyrics came to be overshadowed by an increasing number of soca dance hits emphasizing more universal "party" themes; for example, drinking, dancing, and casual love affairs, particularly in association with the Carnival festivities that attract thousands of tourists to the island each year.

Soca received huge international recognition with the global success of "Hot, Hot, Hot" recorded by Arrow (Alphonsus Cassel) in 1982 and later, in 1987, as a cover version by American artist, David Johansen. The song has become an unofficial anthem for the Carnival celebrations today, at least with those visiting the islands. Natives to Trinidad and Tobago, as well as surrounding islands, are more interested in modern artists, such as Destra Garcia and Bunji Garlin, who have more modest international appeal. Though soca dominates the Carnival soundscape today, calypso still maintains local interest with popular artists, such as David Rudder, as well as many older generation calypsonians, such as Mighty Sparrow. Chutney-soca is also a popular local music, leaning more heavily on Indian popular music influences with artists such as Rikki Jai.

Olivia Ahyoung

A N I N S I D E L O O K

I consider myself fortunate to have been born in the country of Guyana (the former British Guiana) a land of six ethnic races each with its own interesting cultural background, co-existing and blending with each other to make a uniquely Guyanese culture. Being the only English-speaking country on the South American continent, Guyana shares cultural similarities with the English-speaking Caribbean rather than those of Latin America, and it was in this atmosphere that my appreciation and love of Caribbean music with its infectious rhythms grew and flourished.



Olivia Ahyoung

Growing up in a musical household, at an early age I was exposed to classical music through private piano and string lessons, competitions at music festivals and annual examinations. Yet I had always been captivated by the performances of folk songs and dances by local groups and the fascinating array of drumming rhythms I heard in local African, Indian and Chinese ceremonies. But it was the sweet sound of pan emanating from the "pan yards" as the all-male steel bands played intricate melodies and arrangements without music that intrigued me the most.

In Guyana during my tenure teaching music at a boys' high school, I got the opportunity to learn more about the instrument by visiting pan yards to talk and learn from the players, and subsequently taught pan, and wrote arrangements of folk and other local music for the school's steel band. I was helped in this process by the shift in emphasis from classical to indigenous music that came about after the country's independence, and working with the pan alongside other classical instruments was a very rewarding experience for me and the students.

Some years later here in the USA, I again got the opportunity to teach and lead a college steel band that was started by my late husband, an ethnomusicology student who hailed from Trinidad. It was a fun and challenging experience introducing die hard classically trained musicians on the path to a music degree, to the infectious beat of Caribbean music and a different concept of rhythm. Challenge turned into excitement as the repertoire grew to include many styles of music including classical, even as the band spawned other groups.

It has been decades since I first heard and fell in love with the steel pan, and since playing the pan was not socially acceptable for females when first introduced in Guyana from Trinidad, I was delighted to find that my musical journey led me to it both at home and in the United States. As the twentieth century's only new instrument, I use every opportunity to talk to music teachers, students and other interested persons about the role pan has played in my musical life and my rich cultural heritage in general.

Ellie Mannette

AN INSIDE LOOK

In 1937, when I began participating in the steel drum art form, I had no idea how it would impact the world of music. I was little more than an adolescent who had, along with my brothers and other young men in our working-class neighborhood of Trinidad, West Indies, wanted to simply express the music that was inside us. Between the years of 1941 and 1946 I created several key innovations in the realm of pan (also called steel drums), such as inverting the playing surface from convex to concave, wrapping sticks with rubber for the first time, and building the first instrument from a 55-gallon drum. Little did I know these advancements would usher in the era of the modern steel drum instrument. When I was offered a scholarship to study music at the Birmingham School of Music in England in 1946, I turned it down so that I could devote my life to furthering the steel drum art form. However, I did make it to London a few years later, in 1951, along with eleven other panmen as members of the Trinidadian All-Star Percussion Orchestra (TASPO), which represented Trinidad in the Festival of Britain. As my reputation spread across the island, I was asked to provide music for audiences at the Little Carib Theater and for the first radio program to include steel band music. I also crafted a band for the U.S. Navy upon their request.

My career has led me all around the world where I have received countless awards and recognitions including from the Queen of England (in the 1960s), the National Endowment for the Arts (in 1999), an Honorary Doctorate from the University of the West Indies (2000), and my induction into the Percussive Arts Society Hall of Fame (2003). That desire to express the music within me led to my creating seven of the ten voices in the modern steel band, and when I moved to the United States in 1967 that passion fueled my desire to spread the art form in the public education systems across the United States. In 1982, I formed a partnership known as the Mannette Touch with then-freelance journalist Kaethe George that enabled me to



Dr. Ellie Mannette, former artist-in-residence, West Virginia University; founder and emeritus CEO, Mannette Steel Drums

continue being at the forefront of the steel band movement in this country for thirty-five years.

In 1992 my appointment as an artist-in-residence at West Virginia University's Creative Arts Center allowed me to form an innovative apprentice program known as the University Tuning Project, and through it realize my dream of training future tuners and builders. And now following my recent retirement I can see the fruits of my teaching and training in the scores of steel band programs across the world and in the handful of gifted builders and tuners that have been fully trained at Mannette Steel Drums, a for-profit company that works in partnership with West Virginia University's Research Corporation. I would feel proudest if my legacy indicates that I passed along my skills to young people so that our art form was able to progress and that I created instruments that made people happy by enabling them to express the music within them.

PAN

A musical instrument from Trinidad made from a steel oil drum.

Site 4: Steel Band (Pan)

First Impressions. Uninitiated listeners could easily mistake the sounds of a steel band for a steam calliope, a theater organ, or some sort of automatic pipe organ contraption. In fact, the steel band is an unlikely orchestra, made up, in part or entirely, of 55-gallon oil drums, whose heads have been beaten into a series of circular concave dents or depressions. Steel band music is usually energetic, highly rhythmic, and pop music flavored—but it can also be serene, even “classical.” In existence now for more than fifty years, steel band has soared in popularity in North America recently, resulting in an increasing number of schools, colleges, and universities that sponsor steel band ensembles. This music is tiny Trinidad’s most famous gift to the rest of the world.

Aural Analysis. All but the rhythm instruments of the steel band began life as 55-gallon oil drums. A steel band ensemble consists of multiple steel drums, called pan (pronounced like “pawn”), plus a rhythm section known as the “engine room,” which comprises a conventional drum set, conga drum, automobile brake drums, and possibly other kinds of percussion such as *maracas* (rattles), *claves* (sticks beaten together), the *güiro* (scraped gourd), and the cowbell (an echo of the African iron bell). There is no fixed number of pan, nor are their names used consistently. The higher-pitched pan are cut from the full drum, leaving a short “skirt” (side of the drum), whereas the lowest pans use the full skirt. Notes of definite pitch are produced by striking tuned dents that have been carefully hammered into the head of each pan; the higher-pitched instruments are capable of producing many more pitches than lower-pitched ones, because the area required for a high pitch is small and for a bass pitch large. Some pitch ranges require multiple pan, because bass pans often can produce only four pitches each. The leading melodic pan are known variously as the *tenor*, *ping-pong*, *lead*, *soprano*, and *melody* pan. Those creating harmony or “strumming” effects in imitation of guitars are called variously *guitar*, *double second*, *double guitar*, *quadraphonic*, *triple guitar*, and *cello*. The bass line is provided by the *bass* pan. Because the tuning process is most critical, and the ensemble’s overall sound depends on good tuning, skilled tuners are highly sought after.

MARACAS

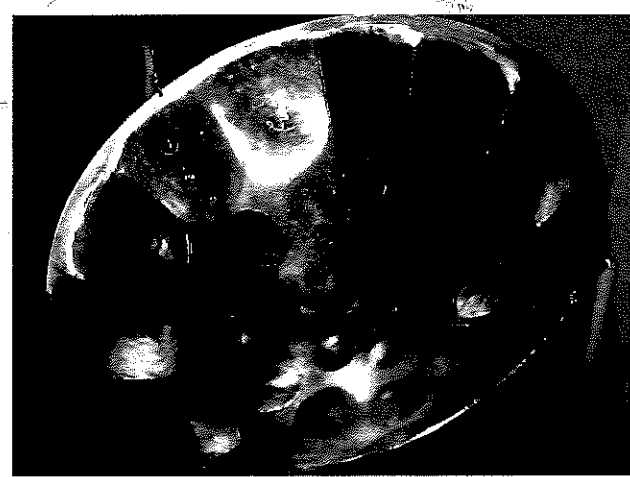
A pair of small Caribbean gourd rattles with interior beads.

Steelbands arrive for the National Small and Medium Preliminaries competition at Victoria Square, Port of Spain (Sean Drakes /LatinContent/ Getty Images)





Full steelband with bass pans in front



A lead or melody pan showing many sunken "note areas," each representing a pitch

The title of our example, "Jump Up," refers to the kind of dancing also known as "breakaway," performed in the streets during Trinidad's Carnival. This is the joyful, outdoor kind of music that really epitomizes Carnival: fast, rhythmic, full of syncopation. Because performances are typically extended and because players have to learn all compositions by memory, repetition is naturally a part of most pieces. "Jump Up" is no exception. Listen carefully and you'll be able to follow its progression.

The piece begins with an eight-measure introduction with much syncopation, played four times. Then follows the main tune, also eight measures in length, which is played twice. Following this, a third section of eight measures, perhaps best called an interlude, is played four times, after which the melody is repeated twice and the interlude four more times. The main melody then returns before fading out in our excerpted example.

LISTENING GUIDE



CD 3.7 (2'02")

Chapter 11: Site 4

Trinidad: Steel Band

Instruments: Steel drums (melodic idiophones), electric bass, drum set (membranophones and cymbals), brake drum (idiophone)

TIME	LISTENING FOCUS
0'00"	Listen for the drum set introduction, and the following introductory melodic section. Note the consistent rhythmic pattern of the idiophone and frequent use of syncopation in the melody and snare drums in particular.
0'07"	Listen for the contrasting descending melodic contour of the lower-ranged steel drums which sound to close the melodic phrase.
0'08"	Introductory melody repeats, and repeats again at 0'15" and 0'23."
0'30"	Listen for the short pause and drum accent that initiate the first melodic section.
0'39"	First melodic section repeats.
0'47"	Listen for new melodic material.
1'01"	First melodic section returns.
1'13"	Second melodic section returns.
1'32"	Listen for an ascending melodic contour in the main melody.
1'40"	First melodic section repeats. Listen for the addition of a secondary contrasting melody in the upper-range steel drums.
1'55"	Example fades.

Source: "Jump Up," performed by the Miami (Ohio) University Steel Band; from the recording entitled *One More Soca*. Ramajay Records. Used by permission.

ETHNO-CHALLENGE (CD 3.7): Using a cookie tin or some other shapeable "steel drum," make your own pan by creating various pitches.

Cultural Considerations. The steel band, locally called pan, is doubtless the best-known and most widely distributed kind of ensemble invented in the New World. Pan were originally made from the thousands of oil drums left behind in Trinidad, first by the British, then during World War II by Americans, who had built a forward base west of Port of Spain for flights to Africa. Like the *tambo* bamboo instruments, their invention was due to the British ban

Steel bands have spread throughout the Caribbean, and some other islands, such as Antigua, have had them since the late 1940s. The use of a single tenor (melody) pan as part of an unrelated ensemble is now common too, sometimes just to invoke the idea of the "West Indies." Steel bands also flourish wherever West Indians have settled, especially in New York, Toronto, and London. Additionally, in recent years ensembles directed by non-West Indians and featuring non-West Indian players have sprung up in high schools, colleges, and universities throughout the United States. Steel bands are becoming prevalent in Europe as well, especially Sweden and Switzerland, and they have also been seen on the streets of Paris.



Arrival: The Bahamas

The Bahamas were the first islands of the "New World" visited by Christopher Columbus in 1492. At that time, the region was inhabited by the Arawak people, who after contact with Europeans were quickly wiped out by European diseases. The Spanish, despite having funded Columbus's voyage, did not lay claim to the islands, and it was the British who eventually settled Eleuthera and New Providence Islands during the mid-seventeenth century. The region became a stronghold for marauders, most notably the British-born pirate Edward Teach, better known as Blackbeard.

By the eighteenth century, the British government had asserted its control over the entire region and claimed the Bahamas as a colony. The islands became an important refuge for loyalists to the British crown after the American revolutionary war in 1776. Many Carolinians fled to the islands with their African-descended slaves. Baptist missionaries accompanied them as well, establishing churches throughout the islands. After slavery was abolished in 1833, many British-descended residents left as economic prosperity declined. As a result, more than 90 percent of today's population in the Bahamas is of African descent.

Today, the Bahamas, with its roughly 700 islands, is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the Western hemisphere. More than three million tourists visit the country each year to enjoy the white sand beaches, spectacular coral reefs, and the splendors of Caribbean cuisine. Grand hotels and luxury cruise ships contrast with chalky stucco houses and solitary sailboats drifting offshore. Seafaring activity has long faded as the primary economic activity of the country as tourism brings in revenue of more than 1.3 billion dollars annually.

The huge emphasis on tourism has greatly affected cultural activities throughout the Bahamas. Most musicians seek employment at hotels or with tourist shows, resulting in a disinterest in music that does not "sell" to the predominantly American audience. Thus, reggae, calypso, and popular music from the United States and Europe dominate the musical landscape of the Bahamas, whereas the "quaint" rhyming spirituals, *goombay* ensembles, and "rake and scrape" bands of the locals usually remain unheard by the average tourist.

Site 5: Rhyming Spiritual

First Impressions. Enthusiasm characterizes this performance. The reverent opening quickly moves into a rousing rendition of "The Lord's Prayer" from the Christian tradition. Sounding



A woman dances in spectacular costume in Nassau, The Bahamas, during Junkanoo, an African-derived festival that resembles Carnival (Shutterstock)

either slightly inebriated or “caught in the spirit,” this male vocal trio performs a rhythmically vibrant rhyming spiritual that is raw rather than sanitized for tourist consumption.

Aural Analysis. The focus of a rhyming spiritual is on the lead tenor voice, known as the *rhymer*. While the music does not strictly follow a call-and-response form, the rhymer starts each phrase and guides the changing tempo. Though each rhyming spiritual has an established melody and basic narrative, the rhymer is free to extemporize the lyrical and melodic content of a performance. In this case, the rhymer begins with the expected lyrics of the spiritual and then uses “The Lord’s Prayer” as the basis for his improvisations after the sixth refrain. He also extends his vocal phrases to make them overlap the refrain provided by the accompanying voices.

As the rhymer “bobs” along, the supporting cast adds unique vocal timbres: a deep growling lower voice and a near-falsetto upper voice repeating the refrain, “My Lord help me to pray.” Rhyming spirituals are expected to have at least the rhymer and the lower voice, known as the *basser* but are frequently enhanced by the addition of one or more upper voices. The inclusion of the upper voices helps clarify the vocal harmony rooted in the lower voice and allows the rhymer more freedom to elaborate his melodic content.

LISTENING GUIDE



CD 3.8 (1'25")

Chapter 11: Site 5

Bahamas: Rhyming Spiritual

Voices: Male ensemble, featuring *rhymer* (lead), *basser* (low voice), plus a middle “refrain” voice

TIME	LISTENING FOCUS
0'00"	Lead voice begins the performance. Note that the example follows a free rhythm with a loose sense of a duple meter. Line 1: <i>Oh Lord, What a faithful soul.</i>
0'03"	Listen for the lead and low voices singing the refrain, while the middle voice hums to find a contrasting harmony pitch. Refrain: <i>My Lord, help me to pray.</i>
0'07"	Lead voice repeats line 1, followed by the low and middle voices singing along with the refrain.
0'14"	Introduction continues with the call-and-response overlap of the lead and supporting voices Line 2: <i>I heard the words from heaven say.</i>
0'17"	Refrain repeats.
0'20"	Line 2 repeats, followed by the refrain and a repeated third verse with refrain.
0'37"	<i>Rhymer</i> (lead voice) begins to improvise using the text of the “Lord’s Prayer.” Listen for the supporting voices continuing the refrain repetition throughout the rest of the example.

Source: “My Lord, Help Me to Pray,” performed by Bruce Green, Clifton Green, and Tweedie Gibson and recorded by Peter K. Siegel and Jody Stecher, Nassau, Bahamas, 1965; from the recording entitled *Kneelin’ Down Inside the Gate: The Great Rhyming Singers of the Bahamas*, Rounder 5035. Used by permission.

ETHNO-CHALLENGE (CD 3.8): Sing the refrain, “My Lord, help me to pray,” along with the supporting voices, perhaps adding your own harmony pitches.

Cultural Considerations. Many hymns and spirituals common to the southern United States can be found in the Bahamas as well. The slaves of British Loyalists exiled after the American Revolutionary War brought these songs with them and maintained their performance in many contexts before and after slavery was abolished. The influence of the Baptist church, with its emphasis on energetic singing, emotionally extemporized sermons, and congregational participation, is especially pronounced. Anthems sung in church are the best-known reminder of the Bahamas' historical link with the United States.

The church's influence was felt in secular realms as well. Rhyming spirituals were most often sung by sponge fisherman who roamed the western coast of the island of Andros. Biblical themes were most common, though some songs focused on local events, such as a shipwreck. The spirituals are essentially narratives told through song rather than speech. The rhymer recounts the tale through his improvisations as the other voices provide harmonic and rhythmic support. The bass voice is likened to the earth while the upper voices are considered to be the sky. The rhymer weaves between the two with a rhythmic freedom akin to the ever-changing movement of wind or waves.

When the sponge-fishing industry declined, a major context for the performance of rhyming spirituals was diminished as well. Consequently, the art of rhyming now has a limited number of practitioners. Today, extemporized rhyming spirituals are most commonly heard at funeral wakes. Some professional groups, such as the Dicey Doh Singers, continue to perform rhyming spirituals, but their music has a slick polished sound intended to appeal to tourists. The raspy voices, improvised rhymes, and ambiguous harmonies heard in our example from the 1960s have been replaced with full voices, composed lyrics, and regular harmonic progressions. Nonetheless, though they have lost some of their raw energy, rhyming spirituals continue to be a distinctive aspect of Bahamian musical identity.

Arrival: Cuba

Only some 90 miles from Florida, Cuba remains a difficult destination for Americans today though tourism by the rest of the world is growing by leaps and bounds. This was not always so. Before the revolution in 1959, when Fidel Castro swept away the American-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista, Cuba was a playground for rich North Americans wishing to dodge the restrictions on alcohol consumption imposed by Prohibition. Havana, wide open to liquor, prostitution, and gambling, was one of the most enticing cities in the Western hemisphere, with its grand hotels, homes, and casinos. One of Cuba's great attractions today is its "time capsule" atmosphere: colonial architecture, classic American cars, and an abundance of old-time Cuban music, the latter made famous by a 1990s recording and movie titled *The Buena Vista Social Club* featuring surviving musicians from an actual members-only club in Havana whose heyday was the 1940s.

An island slightly larger than Indiana or Greece with a population of eleven million, Cuba was first "discovered" by Christopher Columbus in late 1492 but largely ignored by the Spaniards, who found Hispaniola to the east more rewarding. At that time Cuba's inhabitants were the native Tainos and Arawak, but after the beginning of colonialization in 1511, when the Spaniards forced the native people to work the gold mines, rebellions, disease, and starvation reduced that population to only 5,000 survivors by 1550. The first African slaves arrived in 1522 to work the new sugar plantations, and while treatment was



harsh, the Spanish permitted the slaves to maintain tribal groups and therefore a semblance of their original culture. In addition to sugar, the Spaniards began cultivating tobacco and raising cattle, but with little supervision, Cuba (and the Caribbean generally) succumbed to the chaos brought about by pirates, especially the British. Friction between Spain and the United States over Cuba led finally to the Spanish-American War of 1898, triggered by the explosion of the U.S. battleship *Maine* in Havana harbor early that year and made famous by Teddy Roosevelt's charge up San Juan Hill with his Rough Riders. Following direct American control until 1902, Cuba achieved independence but remained under heavy American influence. A series of harsh and corrupt regimes, culminating in that of Batista, led to the Cuban Revolution in 1959, instigated by Fidel Castro and the now iconic Che Guevara, followed by the ill-fated "Bay of Pigs Invasion" of 1961 and the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. Relations between the United States and Cuba, long severed, are now undergoing a slow rapprochement under Fidel's brother, Raul Castro. Whatever else we might say about its government, post-1959 Cuba has shown generous support for the traditional arts, particularly music, and now travelers to Cuba can enjoy performances by vintage musicians of the highest professional level.

What makes Cuba's music distinctive is its successful blending of European and African musical traditions. This mixing can be heard in a range of styles, from the mostly African **Santeria**, a syncretistic religion combining traditional African/Yoruba practices with Roman Catholicism, to genres such as *son* and **guaracha**, which mix African rhythms with European melodies and harmony, to mostly European genres such as *danzón*. It was the middle ground combining Europe and Africa that gave rise to what came to be called the "Latin styles," a plethora of types and artists which spread widely from their original Cuban roots. This led to a musical "rage" for Latin-styled music, a trend that continues today, and was particularly reinforced by the rising popularity of "Latin" ballroom dance.

SANTERIA

An African-derived animistic belief system found primarily in Cuba and the United States.

GUARACHA

(pronounced *gwah-rah-cha*) A Latin American ballroom dance, as well as a song type emphasizing call-and-response vocal organization.

CLAVES

An instrument consisting of two sticks beaten together.

Site 6: Cuban *Son*

First Impressions. Easy going from the outset, this danceable piece of music starts with a guitar or related instrument, quickly joined by others including a trumpet and a variety of percussion instruments, including a prominent one with a sharp clap, another with a gentle scraping sound, and also some hollow-sounding drums. At first a group of men sing, but later a solo voice alternates with the group. Is it any wonder that Cuba attracts visitors, not just for its relaxed way of life and friendly people, but its music?

Aural Analysis. Field recorded around 1980 in Santiago, Cuba, in Oriente province where *son* was first created at the end of the nineteenth century, the group's instrumentation is much expanded from the original *son* groups, which consisted of just three instruments: *tres*, a guitar-like instrument with three courses of two strings each, **claves**, a pair of hardwood sticks struck together, and *maracas*, a pair of small gourds whose seeds create a "sheh-sheh" sound when shaken. After migrating to Havana early in the new century, *son* groups began adding more instruments, some African derived, such as the *marimbula* or *botija*, a wooden box with large metal lamellae plucked to provide bass pitches, and *bongos*, a pair of small single-headed drums, along with European derived ones, such as *timbales*, metal-framed drums of the military snare family, and trumpets or cornets. Additional

Rumba clave, the patterns used for *son* as played by the *claves* (a pair of wooden sticks)

	1	-	2	-	3	-	4	-	5	-	6	-	7	-	8	-
Rumba	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	-	X	-	X	-	-	-
Clave (3+2)	"1"			"2"				"3"			"1"		"2"			
"Reverse"	-	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	X
(2+3)			"1"		"2"				"1"			"2"				"3"



A *güiro*, originally a scraped gourd—now often of wood—common throughout the Caribbean, including Cuba (Shutterstock)

instruments were gradually added, including the *güiro*, a gourd with ridges cut into the side which are scraped, the guitar itself, African-derived conga drums, and later, as *son* was transformed into an urban, big band form, piano and other jazz instruments as well.

The *son*, occupying a point that balanced African and European musical traits, became the progenitor of most music now labeled "Latin." The typical form, heard here, consists of an introduction sung in chorus by the players, followed by a section called the *montuno*, where a soloist alternates with the group. Following this, the instrumentalists begin a free interplay that probably reflects more of a jazz influence than the traditions of Oriente. Many

scholars consider the *montuno* section to be the feature that was most influential on the many *son*-derived styles.

Titled “Soneros Son” and recorded by the song’s creator, Pedro Fernandez of the group Estudiantina Invasora in Santiago de Cuba in 1978–1979 by ethnomusicologist Verna Gillis, the lyrics constitute an expression of pride by the author that “his songs” are known worldwide:

Eso es mi Son, bailalo bien
Es todo Cubano, gózalo mi hermano
Ha paseado el mundo, mi Son Cubano

This is my Son, dance it well
It is purely Cuban, enjoy it my brother
My Cuban Son has traveled around the world
This is my Cuban Son

Although non-Latin musicians hear this song in duple or 2/4 meter, Cuban/Latin musicians hear it in “son clave.” The *claves*, a pair of hardwood sticks creating the sharp rap so prominent in the recording, are actually articulating a cyclic pattern of five clicks, this being the typical “clave” for *son*. Almost certainly derived from an African iron bell pattern, the *son clave* emphasizes the subordinate beats more than the main ones. Using both your ear and the chart on p. 410 as a guide, count “one and two and three and four” while clapping at the correct points.

LISTENING GUIDE



CD 3.9 (4'42")

Chapter 11: Site 6

Cuba: *Son*

Vocals: Three male vocalists (lead and two background)

Instruments: *tres* guitar, guitar, acoustic bass, maracas, claves, trumpet, timbales, cow bell.

TIME	LISTENING FOCUS
0'00"	<i>Tres</i> guitar begins the performance.
0'08"	Timbales roll signals entrance of other instruments. Trumpet plays the main theme.
0'30"	Vocalists enter with polyphonic singing on the main theme. Note the reverse clave (also known as <i>son clave</i>) rhythm of the claves.
0'49"	Brief timbales fill.
0'52"	Trumpet returns.
1'15"	Voices return with repeat of lyrics.

- 1'33"** *Montuno* section begins. Note the "Eso es mi son cubano" repeated refrain. Listen for the improvisatory style of the trumpet.
- 1'36"** Note the appearance of cow bell with a complementary rhythm to the reverse clave pattern.
- 1'55"** Lead vocal sings in improvisatory style between the vocal duet's repeated refrain.
- 2'28"** Voices and cow bell drop out as the *tres* guitar takes lead melodic role in improvisatory style.
- 3'42"** *Tres* guitar plays repeated pattern to signal transition to trumpet melodic lead at 3'58".
- 4'00"** Voices return on *montuno* refrain. Trumpet plays lead improvisatory melody.
- 4'21"** Lead vocal returns to improvisatory style.
- 4'32"** Closing phrase.

Source: "Sonero Son" by Estudiantina Invasora from the recording entitled *Music of Cuba*. Recorded by Verna Gillis in Cuba 1978-1979, Folkways Records FW 04064, © 1985. Used by permission.

ETHNO-CHALLENGE (CD 3.9): Clap the reverse clave rhythm throughout the performance. Perform some vocal or instrumental improvisation during the *montuno* section, or sing along with the vocal refrain.

Cultural Considerations. The development of Cuban music is inextricably tied to dance, and while the various forms of Latin jazz, pop, and rock can stand on their own simply as music, their success is continuously reinforced by the prevalence of ballroom dance generally as well as programs such as *The Ohio Star Ball* and *Dancing with the Stars*. Modern ballroom dancers would rarely encounter old, genuine Cuban music like this track, but none would have difficulty in dancing the rumba (sometimes spelled rhumba) to it. Of all the Cuban-derived dances—including bolero, cha cha chá, and mambo—rumba is the most basic and easiest. But the terminology is confusing in that *rumba* (meaning "party") originally denoted a secular form of local dance music played primarily by African-derived percussion with singing. The mishnamed "rumba craze" of the 1930s was set off by the popularity of a song called "The Peanut Vendor" (*El Manisero*) created from street vendors' cries by Moises Simons and first recorded by Rita Montaner for Columbia in 1927. Mislabeled "rumba" (actually it was a *son*), "The Peanut Vendor" led to innumerable imitations, some faster, some slower, all called "rumba." Rumba dance, however, only made use of the slower *bolero-son*.

The ballroom steps were only created later by Pierre Zurcher-Margolle and his partner, Doris Lavelle, then living in London, Zurcher-Margolle having observed local dancing in Havana during trips in 1947, 1951, and 1953. The basic "international" step pattern "breaks" (begins) on beat 2, as - 2 3 4 hold 2 3 4 hold, etc., whereas the American rumba patterns break on 1 (1 2 3 hold or 1 hold 3 4) in a box pattern.

While the *son*, with its *montuno* section, was the foundation for developments that led ultimately to *salsa* music (see Chapter 13, Site 9, *salsa*), two other types of music also associated with ballroom dances—the *cha cha chá* and *mambo*—must be considered. These



Cuban rumba (or rumba) dancer Zulema performs with a band at the Zombie Club in pre-revolutionary Havana, Cuba, in 1946 (Hulton Archive/Getty Images)

arise from the European-derived *danzón*, a genre popular among Euro-Cubans that gave rise to numerous musical offspring. Derived from old French *contredanse*, both the dance and its music reflected European harmonic and melodic traditions almost exclusively, but over time Cuban musicians increasingly made it their own, especially by infusing African-derived rhythms.

First, the *mambo*. In 1938 Cuban musicians Orestes and Cachao López created a *danzón* song, titled "Mambo," which gave rise to many imitations, all termed informally "*danzón-mambo*." Cuban dancer Perez Prado became closely associated with this type of music in 1943, and after moving his group from Havana's La Tropicana to Mexico City in 1948, he and his musicians began recording many new "mambo" songs, and Prado evolved a dance style that came to be identified as "mambo." After success in Mexico, Prado and his followers brought the style to the United States where, during the 1950s, a "mambo craze" blossomed, centered at the Palladium Ballroom (the "Temple of Mambo") in New York City but also prominent in Los Angeles among Mexican Americans. American dance teachers, however, found Prado's choreography too difficult for social dancing and evolved named step patterns within reach of amateur dancers. Even so, mambo dancing was challenging, requiring dancers to break on beat 2 and also emphasize beat 4 in a complex syncopated pattern. The music for mambo had by then also absorbed characteristics of *son*.

Second, the *cha cha chá*. Zurcher-Margolle, who also created the *rumba*, observed during his 1952 visit a variant of mambo music that subdivided the fourth beat, and dancers moved their feet close to the floor, creating what was heard as a "cha cha cha" sound. Cuban composer Enrique Jorrin came to be closely identified with this type of music. Zurcher-Margolle and partner Lavelle then created named step patterns for a new ballroom dance that was easier than mambo, because it was danced as 2 3 4 and 1 (with the "cha cha cha"

on beats 4 and 1), though American teachers came to view it as beginning on beat 1 (the “prep step” for international dancers). Quickly the new *cha cha chá* caught on and, like mambo and rumba, was adopted into the fixed curricula of ballroom dance studios. What happened after that awaits the discussion for Chapter 13, Site 9, *salsa*.



Arrival: The Dominican Republic

The island of Hispaniola is divided into two countries: French-speaking Haiti in the west and the Spanish-speaking Dominican Republic in the east. Whereas an African-descended populace dominates Haiti, the Dominican Republic’s population is largely a mix of Spanish and African heritages. While African cultural influence is strong throughout the Dominican Republic, Dominicans prefer to emphasize their European roots and associate themselves with Hispanic culture, largely due to the cultural policies promoted by the former dictator Rafael Leonidas Trujillo Molina (r. 1930–1961). These policies instilled a fear of anything Haitian, especially anything associated with the widespread practice of *Vodou*. Trujillo’s influence is still felt today, though many youth are embracing their African roots.

Site 7: Merengue

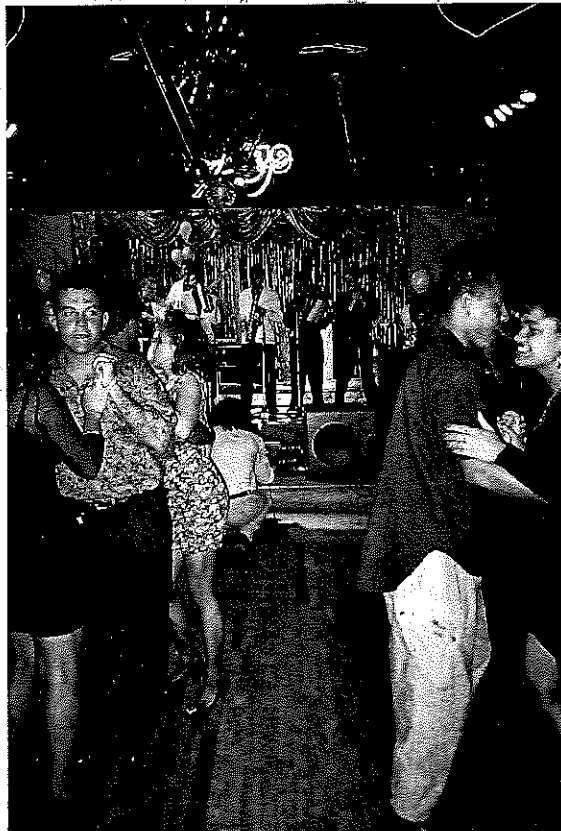
MERENGUE

A Latin American/Caribbean dance and music genre, originally from the Dominican Republic.

GÜIRA

(pronounced *gwee-rah*) A scraped metal idiophone commonly used in *merengue*. (Note: a *güiro* is a similar scraped idiophone made of gourd.)

Dancing to *merengue* music by a *merengue típico moderno* group led by accordionist Adolfo Díaz (Paul Austerlitz)



First Impressions. *Merengue* is fast-paced. The “scraping” sound of the *güira* is the primary timekeeper and perhaps the genre’s most distinctive feature. The accompanying drum (called a *tambora*) plays in “bursts,” with a thudding fundamental sound and interlacing slaps. The repetitive melodic line moves at a frenetic pace, pausing only when the voices enter. As with much Caribbean music, *merengue* is highly danceable.

Aural Analysis. The identifying feature of *merengue* is the pairing of the *güira* and *tambora*. The *güira* is a rasp idiophone, typically a bulbous gourd with rings cut into the surface. The “scraping” sound is produced when a piece of wood or metal is rubbed along the coarse outside face of the instrument. The *güira* provides the fundamental tempo and typically emphasizes the

offbeats with a long “scrape.” The *tambora* is a small barrel drum made with two thick leather faces and is held in the lap. Deep tones are produced by playing one face with a stick, while striking the other face with the hand creates slapping sounds. The “bursts” typical of the instrument are played with the stick and are followed by hand-slap punctuation. In rural performances, the *güira* and *tambora* not only provide the fundamental rhythm but are also frequently featured in improvisatory passages. Ballroom dance *merengue* styles do not generally include such vibrant improvisation on these instruments, however.

The melodic content in our recorded example is provided by a button-box accordion, as well as by the voices. The melody is rhythmically dense and contributes to the fast-paced feel of the music. The voices follow a call-and-response format, which is imitated by the accordion at the conclusion of its solo sections. The quickly repeated tone imitates the call, while the subsequent harmonic chords correspond to the group’s response. Other styles of *merengue* may use guitars or saxophones as the primary melodic instruments.

Merengue songs are typically divided into three sections: *paseo*, *merengue*, and *jaleo*. These equate to an introduction, verse, and chorus. The *paseo*, or “walking” section, emphasizes the melodic instruments and often begins at a slower tempo, sometimes in free rhythm. This quickly leads to the *merengue* section, which is established by the *güira-tambora* rhythms. Vocalists sing different verses in this section followed by a refrain, the *jaleo*, which is repeated throughout the piece. The accordion (or saxophone) improvises its own *merengue* section and follows with a *jaleo* refrain before the voices return. This alternation between *merengue* and *jaleo*, which may be performed either by vocalists or instrumentalists, can continue indefinitely. The concluding *jaleo* often quickens in tempo as a sign that the performance is about to finish.

LISTENING GUIDE



CD 3.10 (2'03")

Chapter 11: Site 7

Dominican Republic: *Merengue*

Voices: Single male lead with supporting male ensemble

Instruments: Button-box accordion, *tambora* (barrel drum), *güira* (scraped idiophone)

TIME LISTENING FOCUS

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 0'00" | The button-box accordion begins the performance. |
| 0'02" | The <i>güira</i> enters, followed by the <i>tambora</i> . Listen for the contrasting timbres of the drum as one side is played with a stick (lower tone) and the other with the hand (higher “slap” sound). |
| 0'12" | Listen for the <i>güira</i> briefly matching the rhythmic density of the button-box. |
| 0'29" | Vocalist enters. |
| 0'34" | Vocal ensemble responds. Listen for the transition to a quick call-and-response between the lead |

- vocalist and vocal group. Note that the button-box is quieter and only sounds along with the group response.
- 0'47"** The button-box returns as the aural focus as the voices drop out. Listen for variations in the rhythmic pattern of the *tambora*.
- 0'58"** Listen for variations in the rhythmic pattern of the *güira*.
- 1'15"** Lead vocalist returns, followed by quick call-and-response section at 1'21.
- 1'29"** Listen for the button-box solo without the use of harmony.
- 1'38"** Listen for variations in the rhythmic pattern of the *güira*.
- 1'46"** Listen for the subtle return of harmony in the button-box part.
- 1'49"** Listen for the extended "scraping" of the *güira*.
- 1'57"** Example fades.

Source: "Apéname la Vela (Put Out my Candle)" performed by Nicolás Gutiérrez, Porfirio Rosario and Santo Pea, recorded by Verna Gillis with Ramon Daniel Perez Martinez, 1976, from the recording entitled *Raíces Latinas: Smithsonian Folkways Latino Roots Collection*, SF 40470, provided courtesy of Smithsonian Folkways Recordings. © 2002. Used by permission.

ETHNO-CHALLENGE (CD 3.10): Construct a scraper to imitate the sound of the *güira* and perform along with the example.

Cultural Considerations. While there are several styles of *merengue*, they are all generally categorized as either "folk" or "ballroom." A large orchestra, often backing a crooning vocalist, and a consistent *güira-tambora* rhythm, characterizes ballroom *merengue*. The ballroom form still follows the *paseo-merengue-jaleo* pattern but has less improvisational freedom. Ballroom *merengue* was strongly promoted during the Trujillo years as a "national" dance in order to help establish a unique Dominican identity. Today, long after the end of Trujillo's rule, *merengue* remains the most popular music in the country.

As with many Caribbean music genres, *merengue* also refers to a dance. Outside the Dominican Republic *merengue* dance experienced a short-lived "craze" during the 1990s but remains one of the highly codified dances of the American ballroom curriculum. The dance is a simple side-step in which the leg that follows drags on the ground. The modern form of the dance requires exaggerated hip movement from side to side, generally called "Latin (or Cuban) motion" by dancers. It is often danced in pairs, with the dancers' upper bodies poised in a standard ballroom dance position with one hand on the hip and the other held out at shoulder height. The dancers move to the left in a circle around the floor but may rotate in a single spot, which allows for numerous couples in a small space.

The origin of *merengue* and its associated dance is not entirely agreed upon, but many believe that the dance is a combination of West African circle dances and European salon dances. The side-step shuffle seems to evoke a time when slaves' feet were chained together while working in the sugarcane fields. The upper body movements mimic the dance positions

of a French minuet. One of the step patterns in ballroom *merengue* is called the *ibo*, a term that, interestingly, refers to the Igbo ethnic group of West Africa. The music is also a blend of African and European elements. The *tambora* is believed to derive from similar West African instruments. The *güira* is thought by some to be a Dominican creation, while others consider it an innovation based on scraped gourd idiophones found in West Africa. The call-and-response vocal organization is reminiscent of West African vocal performance. On the other hand, the inclusion of the button-box accordion and the use of the guitar and saxophones as primary melodic instruments reveal musical connections with Europe.

Questions to Consider

1. Where do "African survivals" appear in music of the Caribbean? What makes them African?
2. How did differences in colonial rule affect the course of musical development in the Caribbean?
3. What role does music play in spirit possession in religions such as *Vodou* and *Santería*?
4. Which Caribbean musics best exemplify the idea that music can express discontent and challenge authority? How are the examples chosen different in content and attitude?
5. How can you account for the fact that the most prominent music types in the Caribbean are popular in nature?
6. How has modern ballroom dance been influenced by music of the Caribbean? What ballroom dances derive from "Latin" music?

On Your Own Time

Visit the textbook website to find these resources for further exploration on your own.

Haiti

Book: Rouget, Gilbert. *Music and Trance: A Theory of the Relations between Music and Possession*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985.

<http://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/M/bo5956162.html>

Book: McAlister, Elizabeth. *Rara! Vodou, Power, and Performance in Haiti and Its Diaspora*.

<http://rara.wesleyan.edu/>

<http://www.ucpress.edu/book.php?isbn=9780520228238>

Website: Sacred Arts of Haitian Voodoo

<http://www.amnh.org/exhibitions/vodou/>