ROOTS OF RHYTHM

WITH HARRY BELAFONTE

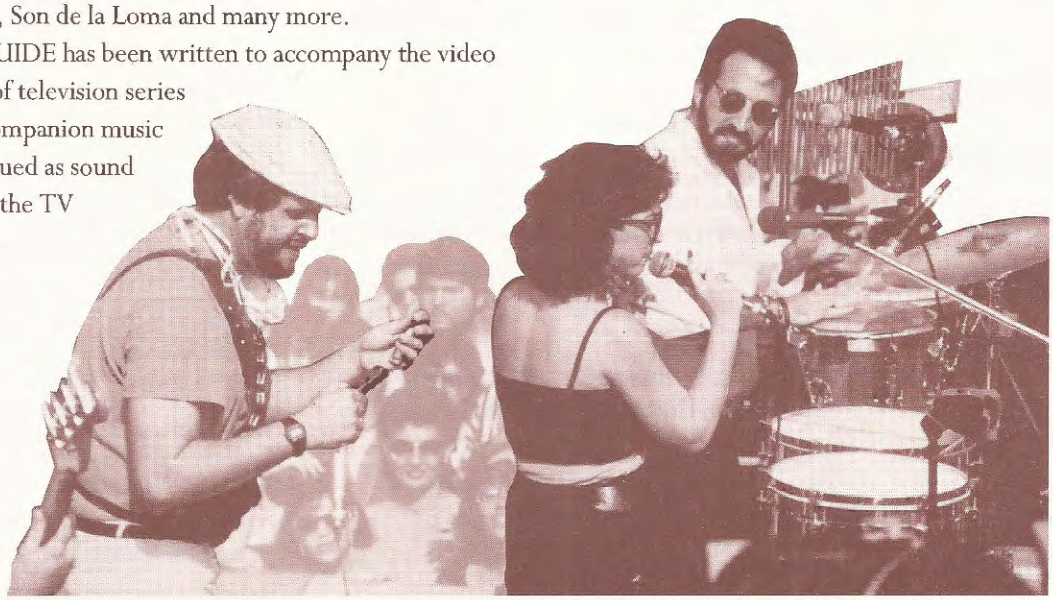
A COMPANION GUIDE

ROUTES OF RHYTHM

WITH HARRY BELAFONTE

ROUTES OF RHYTHM is a joyous and colorful musical odyssey of three one hour programs that tell the story of the most exciting and dynamic music in America today—Latin music—tracing its origins in Africa and Spain through the Caribbean, to the United States and, eventually to the entire world. The series has delighted audiences with an astonishing array of musical styles—jazz, pop, traditional, avante-garde and folk. Host-Narrator Harry Belafonte, international star of stage and screen, travels to a wide variety of locations around the world: equatorial villages, steamy dance and jazz clubs, lavish night spots and wild street carnivals. During this exhilarating musical voyage Harry Belafonte introduces world-renowned jazz and pop stars as well as beloved traditional musicians. The three programs feature the Miami Sound Machine, Ruben Blades, Celia Cruz, Desi Arnaz, Xavier Cugat, Dizzy Gillespie, Cal Tjader, Tito Puente, Conjunto Libre, King Sunny Ade, Los Van Van, Irakere, Isaac Oviedo, Anacaona, Son de la Loma and many more.

This GUIDE has been written to accompany the video cassettes of television series and the companion music albums issued as sound tracks for the TV programs.
Enjoy!!!



Above: Gloria Estefan and the Miami Sound Machine
Front cover photo: The Munequitos de Matanzas

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Isaac Oviedo and his family

CREDITS

This GUIDE was written by Howard Dratch and produced as a companion to the **ROUTES OF RHYTHM** television series and the sound track music albums which accompanied the programs.

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Program 1

Program One, beginning with a quick flourish by the Miami Sound Machine, explores the birth of music itself in Africa. Harry Belafonte travels to remote tribal villages where Africans invented the rhythms that form the basis of much of the music heard today throughout the modern world. Belafonte then moves northward to the Iberian Peninsula, where Spanish troubadours, Andalusian gypsy dancers, and flamenco musicians recreate the melodies and harmonies that crossed the Atlantic to New World colonies in centuries past. There, in the cauldron of the Caribbean, a new music was born, a remarkable blend that one poet called "a marriage between the Spanish guitar and the African drum."

Program One Questions:

1. Do you have an opinion regarding the people-to-people approach suggested by Harry Belafonte? Do you believe musicians and artists can establish special bridges of international understanding and cooperation, beyond the usual diplomatic and governmental channels? Discuss in the context of this series or other examples.

2. Explain how musical forms like the "Rumba", the "Changui", or the "Danzon" styles illustrate the fusion of Spanish and African roots into a distinctly Afro-Cuban style. Can you point to other examples of musical forms evolving from earlier music?

3. How do some of the lyrics and music reflect African roots and others Spanish roots? How do the lyrics of the Spanish "decimas" (rhymed extemporaneous songs) or the "controversias" (duels in rhymed verse between singers) work musically and culturally to reaffirm values? Can you think of other songs where the lyrics serve to transmit culture or to question the prevailing authorities?

4. What is the connection between the Pygmies of the Ituri forest, (as well as other traditional West African celebrations such as the royal procession of the King of Kano in Northern Nigeria) and the music we hear on the radio in cities like New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Miami today?

5. In what ways does our own music resemble the music in historical West African settings? How did the series document the on-going vitality of African musical traditions in Cuba?...in the USA? How do they differ and why?

6. What special techniques did the filmmakers use to represent stories about musicians who might have lived five centuries ago? See for example the story of Bahatunde in Program One,(or Chano Pozo in Program Three). Do you approve of stretching the limits of the documentary form in this manner?

7. What did the interview with the Gloria Estefan of the Miami Sound Machine demonstrate about the experience of Cuban musicians in North American society? Can you see parallels and/or differences in other musicians (in Program Three) such as Desi Arnaz, Xavier Cugat, Don Aspiazu, Arsenio Rodriguez? Does racial background play a role in this, and if so how?

8. What does a celebration like Calle Ocho in Miami each year tell us about North American culture and society? How is it reflective of Old World culture and how is it different? How does it differ from Cuban Carnaval in Havana or Santiago de Cuba?

9. What do flamenco dancers in Seville, gypsies in Granada, and decima singers in the Alpujarras Mountains of Andalusia have in common?

10. What did you think of the use of fictionalized musicians such as the Babatunde and Ojiwa stories in the African section of Program One, or similar sections of the series for the story of the music in Spain and colonial Cuba? Is this a valid technique?

11. Why, in the African section, did the filmmakers base the stories Belafonte tells on

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legendary figures such as Babatunde and Ejiwa?

12. What role does religion play in the invention, preservation, transformation, and transmission of music in these programs? Discuss this theme using several examples from the shows.

MUSICAL HIGHLIGHTS IN PROGRAM ONE

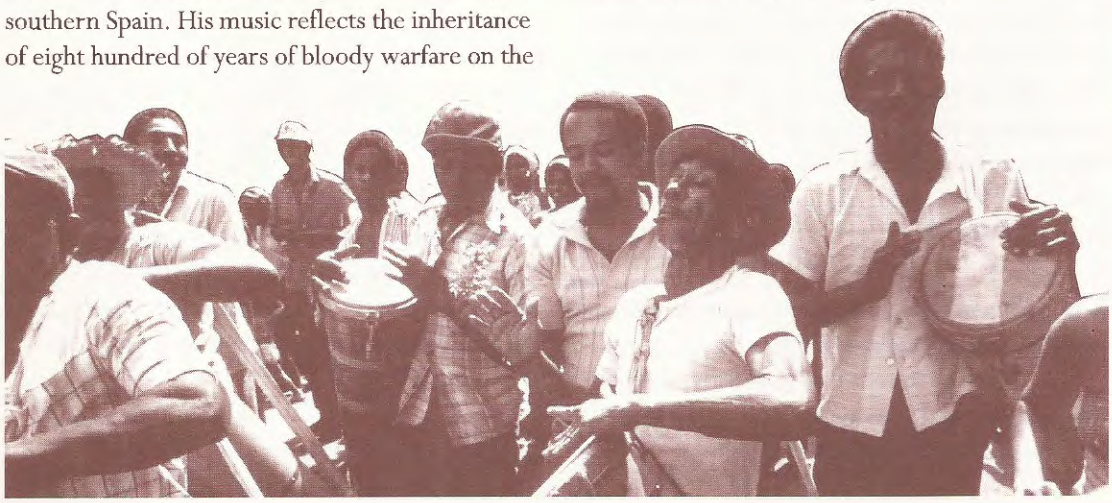
The Miami Sound Machine: Gloria and Emilio Estefan were born in Cuba and came to the U.S. as young children. They paid their musical dues for years before the Miami Sound Machine broke through to a wide audience with their carnival- derived hit —"Conga." As one of the hottest popular groups in the 1980's and 1990's, they have sought to combine today's technology with a feeling for the origins of Latin music. According to Gloria Estefan, in writing "The Rhythm's Gonna Get You" they went back to "bembé", a rhythm used in Afro–Cuban religious ceremonies in Santeria. We chose this song as the theme for the three television programs.

Afro Cuba de Matanzas performs "Chant to Elegua" in Program One. Elegua is one of the principal "orishas" (gods) in the pantheon of Yoruba gods. Elegua opens doorways to the communication with other Yoruba gods. Every santeria ceremony begins with a chant to Elegua. Afro Cuba de Matanzas is a neighborhood folklore group of international renown. The recording was done at a neighborhood event characterized by a day of cooking a ritual meal to which the whole neighborhood was invited, dancing, drumming, in the people's houses, their rehearsal hall and out in the streets.

"El Candiote", **Miguel Garcia Maldonado** is a troubadour we filmed in the hills of Andalusia, in southern Spain. His music reflects the inheritance of eight hundred of years of bloody warfare on the Iberian peninsula, during which balladeers sang epic poems telling how the Christians had driven out the Moslems. We traveled south west of Granada to small villages high in the Alpujarras Mountains to find the origins of Cuban music's poetic legacy. There, as the sun set, El Candiote created spontaneous rhymed verses:

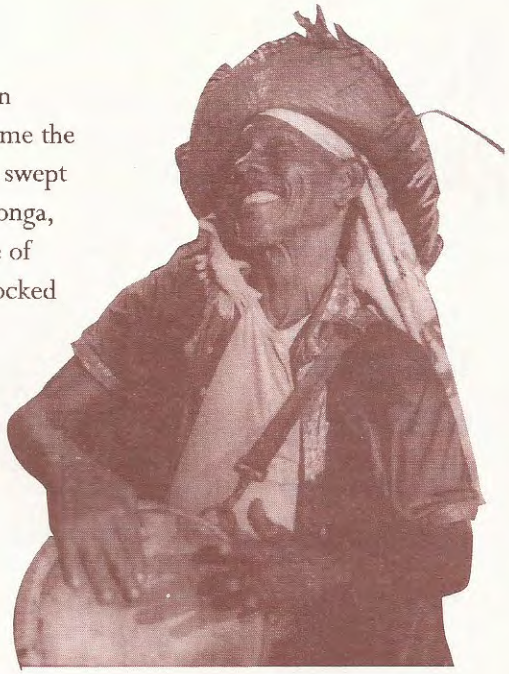
> The Alpujarra have glory,
> They spread a carpet for their hrothers,
> And he who sings this story
> has callouses on his hands
> and carries flowers in his memory!

One of the many **Carnival Comparsa** groups we filmed in Santiago de Cuba was recorded doing a typical Carnival Chant. Carnival is a source for many of the hottest rhythms and melodies that have touched us in America. The roots of Carnival are in the Holy Week parades in Spain, and the praise singing processions of Africa. In Cuba during the centuries of Spanish rule, this festival was called the Day of the Kings, a day when African slaves were allowed to play their drums in the streets and show off their heritage before the Spanish rulers. Camparsas or musical groups from different neighborhoods made up of six to forty percussionists, singers, trumpets parade through the streets culminating in a big parade in front of a reviewing stand, as in New Orleans or Rio. This cut was recorded at 2 A.M. in Cespedes Square, the central square of Santiago De Cuba, Cuba's second largest city.



Carnival in Santiago de Cuba

PROGRAM TWO



In Program Two, Belafonte traces the fiery romance that developed in Cuba between African and Spanish cultures, and shows how the traditional music of yesterday became the dynamic pop music of today. Belafonte reveals the origins of the dance crazes which swept like tidal waves across America and the world: the sensual Rumba, the passionate Conga, the Mambo, and the Cha-cha-cha. These dances come alive through archival footage of legendary bands such as Septeto Nacional and Anacaona. As thousands of tourists flocked to Cuba in the 1930s, 40s and 50s, the joyful exuberance of these dances erupted into the mainstream. Belafonte takes us through Carnival today, an all night party of dancing, parades, and festivity, led by Cuba's hottest bands, Irakere and Los Van Van.

PROGRAM TWO QUESTIONS:

13. What happened when musical cultures of the Old World were transplanted from there to the Western Hemisphere? ...from one country to another? ...for example, Spain and/or Nigeria to Cuba? ...or Cuba to the United States?

14. What happens when cultures of different races come into contact? is the result always a combination? Does it always produce vital and imaginative new art forms? Can music also be a way of separating people and if so, how?

15. What do you think would be the response of Cuban-Americans to this series? Were there any controversial political or social themes addressed?

16. Was the series successful in explaining a complicated musical tradition in a manner not overly academic, musicological or technical on the one hand, nor overly glitzy at the cost of fidelity to the folk arts content on the other hand? Comment, using specific sequences.

17. What is meant by the phrase "polyrhythmic" and what does it have to do with Afro-Cuban music?

18. What is the importance of the clavé beat to Afro-Cuban music? What has been it's impact on other musical forms.

19. What is the relationship between music and the politics of social change? What are the differences for musicians between living in a society like Cuba and a society like the United States. Discuss this theme in different periods in the 20th Century using several examples of the specific experiences of musicians found in the film series.

20. Routes of Rhythm features music from the countryside, the small town, and the big city. Compare and contrast rural and urban music discussing links and discontinuities of style and content.

21. Discuss some of the African deities found in Routes of Rhythm and their importance to Afro-Cuban music. If necessary, do additional research using materials in the album liner notes and bibliography.

22. Discuss the phenomena of "possession" in Afro-Cuban religion and music. Does it have parallels in other cultural settings and other countries? (for example, Gospel music in North America or Brazilian music in South America). Does this relate to the concept of the African Diaspora?

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MUSICAL HIGHLIGHTS IN PROGRAM TWO

Los Munequitos de Matanzas open Program Two with "El Tocoloro (The Singing Bird)". Los Munequitos De Matanzas are, in the words of music consultant Rene Lopez "the most important Rumba group that has ever existed." Outside Cuba their records are the definitive source for musicians who play traditional rumba. Like hollers and shouts which became the basis for the blues, ragtime and jazz, rumba is the main influence on the music of the son (which in its later evolution outside of Cuba was called "salsa"). All Cuban popular dance music has been nourished by, and always reflects, rumba. There are three types of rumba: The Yambu, the older style rumba which is slower and generally played on wooden boxes: the Guaguanco which is a little faster and depicts the courtship between the rooster and the hen; and the Columbia which is danced by solo male dancers. The Columbia performed here, which was recorded in the Pueblo Nuevo neighborhood in Matanzas, is typical in being intensely polyrhythmic and characterized by dialogue between the drummers. There is also a dialogue between the the drummers and the dancers in which the drummers try to anticipate what steps the dancers are going to do.

Isaac Oviedo & His Family perform a number of catchy tunes in Program Two, among which are "De Vasquez Y Bosques (They Went to the Woods)." Eighty-four year old Isaac Oviedo is one of the most important trés guitar players of the twentieth century. He revolutionized the style of playing the tres in the 1920s and 1930s and has been known in Cuba for decades as an outstanding composer and singer. His music is rooted in the African traditions of Cuba and his "lamentos" and Afro-sons" are similar in many ways to the blues. "De Vasquez Y Bosques", a ribald guaracha son filled with double entendres and tongue-twisters, was filmed and recorded in a country one-room wooden shack cultural center, the Peña de Benito.

In "La Fiesta No Es Para Los Feos", (This Party's Not For Ugly People"), Isaac Oveido and his Family launch into a musical satire. The ensemble is again led by Isaac's legendary "tres" (the six strings are grouped in three pairs). This incomparable maestro grew up in the sugar cane fields of rural Matanzas Province, picked up the guitar when he has eleven and began playing at country dances. By 1926 Isaac had moved to Havana with the Matanzas Sextet where he's been an outstanding composer, singer and performer ever since. Isaac performs with his daughter Julia, his son Ernest (one of the best ballad singers in Cuba), another son Papi (one of Cuba's finest tres players) and Andres Sotolongo, who is 92 years old and blind but clearly shows why he's been known for decades as the best bongo player in Cuba. Isaac sings:

You sure are Ugly!
Super ugly my friend.
You can't come in here my friend.
This party's not for ugly people!
Go and change your face, my friend,
It's so ugly, it's scary.

We filmed and recorded **Duo Sauce** singing "Guantanemera" in the famous Bodeguita del Medio restaurant in the heart of Old Havana. They appear in Program Two serenading the lunch crowd at this favorite eatery. Pedro Gonzales plays the guitar and Angel Cordovi plays the tiple. "Guantanemera" is the one of the most popular Cuban songs ever recorded. A bolero son, it is a song of resistance whose original lyrics by Joseito Fernandez were based on the writings of Cuba's national hero Jose Marti and addressed Cuba's long and bloody battle for independence from Spain in the 19th Century. For example, "I'd rather die with honor than live with dishonor." The song, typical of those sung in cabarets and cafes, is part of Cuba's troubadour tradition which can be traced back to the hills of Spain where we filmed in 1988.

Enrique Jorrin, the father of the Cha Cha Cha, has, sadly, passed away since we filmed him in the streets of downtown Havana. But his immortal song, "La Enganadora", lives on. It was the very first Cha Cha Cha written by Jorrin, and it became a hit in 1951. Jorrin took

the onomatopoeic name from the sound made by the guiro player in the band's rhythm section. The dance was an instant success in Cuba and quickly became the largest dance craze to sweep across the United States following on the heels of the earlier tango, the rumba, the conga, and the mambo. According to Jorrin, the Cha Cha Cha was widely popular because it "has a medium tempo. It's not too slow and not too fast. The lyrics can be easily understood. The dance is not too frenetic, and since it has a recognizable beat everything else follows." La Enganadora tells the story of a Cuban woman who is so beautiful that traffic stops and everyone turns to stare at her when she walks by the famous corner of Prado and Neptuno streets in Havana. One onlooker discovers that her sensational figure is helped by some padding, much to the amusement of the crowd in the streets.

"Llegaron los Millionarios" (Here come the Millionaires) is a mambo written by **Orestes Lopez**. We filmed and recorded this song in the Liceo, an enormous marble edifice in downtown Havana, built by the Spanish rulers of 19th Century Cuba and now used for popular community dances and cultural activities. Orestes Lopez composed some of the first mambos back in the late 1930s. The new dance came out of the remarkable group of musicians that gathered round Arcaño's orchestra in Havana in the late 1930s. The mambo was essentially an extension of the son. In this composition by Orestes Lopez it sounds more like a danzon with a new beat. The early mambo composers gave the danzon a new expression by adding a Conga drum. Arcaño's band was influenced hy Tin Pan Alley in the United States. They took American standards like Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue", Ellington's "Take the A Train", W.C. Handy's "St. Louis Blues", and played them with a Cuban beat. They even set "Over the Rainbow" to a 6/8 Abakua rhythm. These cross fertilizations reflect the changes in the 1930s when the music industry was growing. Thanks to the influence of radio and records, there was an increasing internationalization of music.

At popular dances, a band like Arcaño's would frequently dedicate a song to a social club or community organization. For black workers on the lowest rung of Cuban society, finding a steady job was often difficult. When some local workers found regular employment on the docks, their position was significantly better off than most of the poor people in the surrounding barrio. They celebrated by founding "The Millionaires Club". Orestes Lopez dedicated a new mambo to commemorate his friends' success, hence: "Here come the Millionaires".

Estrellas Cubanas,(Cuban All-Stars), was another group we filmed in Havana's Liceo. Before the Cuban revolution in 1959 Estrellas Cubanas was known as Fajardo and his All Stars. Fajardo went to the US and became a popular band leader in New York while other members of the band stayed in Cuba. Felix Reyna, a violin player, became the leader of the new group. Estrellas Cubanas is a "charanga" band, characterized by flute and strings carrying the melody with a rhythm section that has hass, timbales, conga drum and guiro, and a piano player plus two or three singers, often singing in unison. Like the Danzon of the late 19th century, and other forms of Cuban music, we can see in the charanga an energetic blend of European-derived instruments such as the flute and violins, driven by a powerful percussion section whose instrumentation and rhythms are of African origin. The charanga structure, often used by the latin bands now playing in New York, Miami, Los Angeles, and other cities, was well established by the 1940s. These charanga groups are the musical descendants of Arcaño y sus Maravillas (Arcaño and his Marvels) whose orchestral structure was developed in Cuba in the 1930s.

In "Moneda Falsa" (A Counterfeit Coin), Estrellas Cubanas performs an old Spanish tune that translates "A Phony Penny" or "A Counterfeit Coin". According to Armando Sanchez, leader of the group Son de La Loma, this traditional song refers to a two-faced woman, or a deceptive woman of "easy virtue" who goes from man to man. The lyrics tell a sad familiar story,

"You smile when you face me,
but when I turn my back you stab me."

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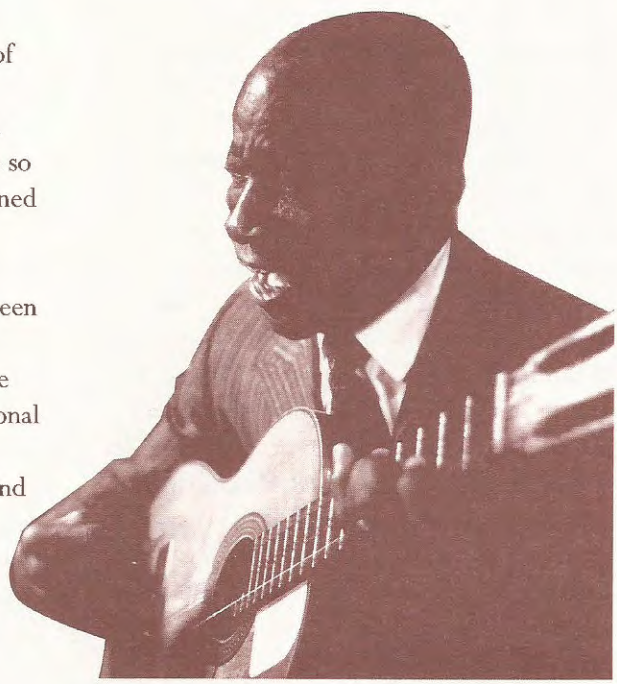
Septeto Nacional de Ignacio Piñero is one of Cuba's legendary combos. We filmed and recorded their performance of three marvelous classics: "La Plegaria del Son", (The Pledge of the Son), "En El Tiempo de la Colonia" (In Colonial Times), and "Maria Antonia". They are the oldest group still playing the "son" from Havana, founded in 1927. One musician has been playing with the group since 1932: Lazaro Herrera Diaz, the trumpet player, worked for many years with the legendary founder and leader Ignacio Piñero. The group plays the son as it was performed in the style of the 1930s, the heyday of groups like Septeto Habañero, Septeto Nacional and others . In those years, North American tourists were flocking to Cuba in ever increasing numbers, drawn by the warm tropical climate, the availability of booze, the sexy dancers and the lush sensual music.

The "son" style of Septeto Nacional differed from the style of contemporary groups like Trio Matamoros and others whose music reflected the Conga and Comparsa rhythms of Santiago in Eastern Cuba. The rumba was more characteristic of Havana and Matanzas in Western Cuba. Septeto Nacional, still active today— six decades after its founding—features the singing of Carlos Embale, one of the great "soneros" of Cuba.

Los Van Van ("the Go-Go's) has been one of the most popular bands in Cuba during the 1970's, the 1980s and into the 1990's— not only because their rhythms and melodies are so exciting, but also because they are finely atuned to the pulse of daily life in Cuba. Their compositions address social issues, such as overcrowding in the cities, or relations between men and women.

We filmed Los Van Van playing to a huge throng of dancers in front of the Hotel Nacional during carnival. Among the numbers we recorded was the song "Que Palo",(What Kind of Spell Is This?), This is one of their many hits, played in the "Songo" rhythm and written by Los Van Van's talented composer-arranger Juan Formell. It literally refers to a "Palo" which may be translated as a bat or stick. But the phrase "Que Palo es ese?" can also be translated as "What Kind of Spell is This?, referring to a type of Black Magic or witchcraft that derives from Africa. The phrase "Palo Mayombe", which occurs later in the song, refers to "brujeria", a sort of religious ritual which was brought over by slaves from the Congo region. In this song, as in so many other aspects of Cuban culture, the strength and enduring power of the African diaspora prevails, as it does throughout the Caribbean, in Brazil, and other new world of Western Hemisphere cultures. We filmed and recorded a version of "Sandunguera" (Sweet and Sexy Woman), Van Van's most popular song, during Carnival. The message of another Van Van number, "Muevete", meaning "Move It", was certainly not lost on the crowd!

Xavier Cugat and His Orchestra provide the music for the closing credits of Program Two with singer Bing Crosby crooning an English Language version of the famous tune," Siboney". Ernesto Lecuona's classic composition, named for one of Cuba's original indian tribes, was such a hit in the 1930s that nearly every band played a version. The Crosby arrangement shows clearly how the music was beginning to have a major impact on North American popular music.



Isaac Oviedo

PROGRAM THREE

Xavier Cugat and his Orchestra

In Program Three, the music from the clubs, canefields, and casinos of Cuba descends on radio, Broadway, and Hollywood and captures worldwide attention. Xavier Cugat, Desi Arnaz, Perez Prado, and Machito become household names and their rhythms and melodies inform and influence a new generation of musicians. The irrepressible Dizzy Gillespie talks with Belafonte about Afro-Cuban jazz, and we follow the music through the salsa craze of the 1960s and 70s, visiting Celia Cruz, Tito Puente, and other leading performers. Today, another generation of musicians such as Gloria Estefan and the Miami Sound Machine are bringing the energy and excitement of new Latin music to audiences everywhere. In his moving rendition of "Buscando America" musician-poet Ruben Blades synthesizes the odyssey of Latin music—from its African and Spanish origins to its compelling role in the world today.

PROGRAM THREE QUESTIONS:

23. How did Routes of Rhythm enhance your understanding of how the musical culture of the United States originated and developed?

24. How has the United States been uniquely shaped by its heritage as a nation of immigrants? Can you give some examples of how the programs enhanced your understanding of the American experience? Can you cite several instances in which this legacy has been characterized by a rich blend of different cultures? Can you point to specific musical groups or individual artists who have combined old and new traditions in imaginative or different ways to create new forms? How did this make the on-going American heritage different from Europe? from Africa?

25. In what way did the programs give you an increased recognition of the intercontinental basis of our musical legacy? Do programs like this increase the sense of mutual understanding and toleration among different groups of our society... or do you think they have another effect?

26. Do you think this film series can help Americans appreciate a the contributions of minority ethnic cultures to the larger cultural quilt of American society? Did the programs give you new insights into the role of African-Americans and Hispanic-Americans in shaping North American culture? If so, how?

27. Could the impact of Afro-Cuban music in the United States have been more comprehensively explored ? What did you think about the use of film and television clips? Can you think of other examples or musicians not used in the series?

28. What does the celebration in which Celia Cruz receives a Star on the "Hollywood Walk of Fame" reveal about about American culture?

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29. How did the filmmakers tell the story of neglected musicians such as Chano Pozo and Arsenio Rodriguez, who had languished in relative oblivion? What techniques were used in lieu of film footage which apparently was rare or nonexistent? Is it an accident that these and other neglected innovators are of Afro-American heritage, while the popularizers, to whom doors opened more easily, were frequently "white"? Comment.

30. How is the Afro-American experience echoed throughout the second and third programs, as seen in such figures as Chano Pozo, Louis Armstrong, and many others, including even Belafonte himself?

31. What role did changes in the technology of recording and broadcasting play in the evolution of the music? Give examples in Cuba, in the United States, in Africa.

32. In what way does a series like this one have a role to play in the national debate over multi-culturalism?

33. Describe the process of transformation in which cultural forms such as the rumba or mambo, which originated Afro-Cuban culture, came to the United States and were widely disseminated. Do you make distinctions and value judgements between folk and street musicians and composers like Arsenio Rodriguez and Enrique Jorrin on the one hand, and the popular music of Perez Prado, Xavier Cugat and the Miami Sound Machine on the other hand?

MUSICAL HIGHLIGHTS IN PROGRAM THREE

Son de la Loma, founded by Armando Sanchez, is the group of New York musicians we chose to open Program Three. For generations Cubans used to gather regularly in the lush and exotic Tropicale beer gardens in Havana. The "mamonzillo" dance—named for a small tropical fruit celebrates these popular gatherings with an annual festival in Queens New York. Cuban-Americans from across the United States come to this popular gathering which takes place every summer in the second week of July, and which attracts the best dancers of all generations. The most popular band to perform at this gathering is Son de la Loma. The band plays a lively traditional Cuban music which soon has everyone on their feet.

Their song "Son de Mayari", for example, refers to an area in the Oriente Province of Cuba that was renowned for the son which developed in the end of the nineteenth century and was rooted in the Changui, a musical form that developed in nearby Guantanamo. It encourages people to uphold the tradition of the "son" and keep dancing to it to keep it alive.

In another selection, "Sanduguera Mujer" (Sweet and Sexy Woman), Son De La Loma performs a number written by Marcelino Guerra. We filmed and recorded this at the annual Mamasillo Dance as well. Son de la Loma is one of the few musical groups in the USA that still plays in the style of Arsenio Rodriquez and

Carnival in Santiago de Cuba

the immortal sextetos of the late 1930's and early 1940's. Playing since the late 70's when the group was started by Armando Sanchez, their music represents the generation of immigrants that came from Cuba in the 1940's and 1950's. Marcelino Guerra, who started

composing in the 1930s and is a pioneer of the form that later became known as "salsa", flew in from Spain to sing with Son de la Loma for this event. Here's a flavor of the lyrics:

She has such dark skin
and such a sweet look
that kissing her
is like licking burnt cane sugar.
Because you have that gracefulness
that certain something
in your walk,
any man who beholds you
has to exclaim,
"Woman in the name of God,
don't look at me that way!
You'll make me lose control
and hold you so tightly
that you'll be
speaking in Congo!"

After a long search, we finally found an amazing film clip of **Don Azpiazu and his Havana Casino Orchestra** performing their classic "The Peanut Vendor (El Manicero)". The story behind this segment of Program Three goes back to a beautiful Spring day in 1930 when this Cuban band leader —Don Azpiazu— introduced New York audiences at the Palace theater to Cuban music performed by an orchestra with an authentic rhythm section and an exhibition Rumba dance team. They were an instant success. Their most popular song, "The Peanut Vendor", was the first tune in the Cuban son tradition to "cross over" to a large North American audience. The giant RCA quickly signed Azpiazu to record the song, known in Spanish as "El Manicero". But then the record company feared it would be too strange for American tastes and delayed the release. When RCA finally marketed the record seven months later, it became the hit that launched the Rumba craze that swept the country in the thirties and forties.

Xavier Cugat, born in Spain and raised in Cuba, began his musical career as a child prodigy who played the violin in a Havana nickelodeon. After a failed career as a concert musician he discovered he could make a living playing a version of the music he had grown up with in Cuba. He rode the rumba dance craze to the peak of its popularity and became the first Latin musician to gain mass popularity in the United States. As "The King of the Rumba" he gained national fame through a series of coast to coast radio broadcasts and over 200 record releases. He appeared in dozens of movies for MGM and introduced several singers that went on to fame and fortune, including Desi Arnaz, Frank Sinatra and Bing Crosby who recorded a version of Siboney with Cugat's orchestra. In his own words he introduced audiences to "a smooth, stimulating, melodic blend of Latin-American music. THAT is Cugat."

Dizzy Gillespie's Big Band recorded "Manteca" with Chano Pozo in the 1940s. As Dizzy told us in the interview we filmed in Manhattan, he was interested in Cuban music as early as 1938 when he used to sit in with latin bands that played the Savoy Ballroom in New York. When Dizzy was organizing his big band he asked Cuban composer and arranger Mario Bauza if he knew anyone who played "those Tom-Tom things." Bauza introduced him to Chano Pozo who was already a musical celebrity in Cuba. Chano joined the band and quickly became a favorite with U.S. audiences who appreciated his theatrical drumming and wild dancing. (He would strip to the waist and oil his body to sing and perform drum solos.) Soon Chano began bringing Dizzy his own compositions. One of the first was Manteca, which Dizzy wrote down, added a bridge, and then gave to Gil Fuller to arrange. The result is perhaps the most famous Afro-Cuban Jazz composition of all time. In 1948, Chano met and early and tragic death in a bar-room fight.

Grupo Irakere. First, a little background: The blending of jazz with Cuban music began back in the 19th Century. In 1900, when W.C. Handy visited Cuba, he discovered the small bands playing in Havana's back streets. When he returned home, Handy introduced Cuban music into Ragtime and Jazz. He used syncopated Cuban rhythms in such classic compositions as Beale Street Blues and Saint Louis Blues. Jelly Roll Morton called this influence "The Latin Tinge." By the late twenties other musicians

like Louis Armstrong were also integrating Cuban music into American jazz.

In Cuba the fusion of American jazz and popular music has produced highly accomplished — and world renowned— groups like Irakere. Irakere introduced new modalities and electronic elements into Cuban popular music. The members of Irakere have included some of the highly accomplished musicians in Cuba. Some like Paquito D' Rivera, who left Cuba while on tour, have found success in their careers outside Cuba. In addition to jazz the group plays classical music and popular dance music which Chu Chu Valdez, the group's leader, says keeps them in touch with the people. Irakere, in turn has influenced jazz players in the United States, like Chick Corea and Dizzy Gillespie, bringing the jazz relationship between Cuba and the U.S. full circle.

We filmed and recorded "Bailando Asi", (Everybody Dances Like This), one of Irakere's most popular dance tunes, at a community dance in San Jose de Lajas, a small town outside Havana on a hot April night in 1984. An exuberant crowd of several thousand dancers kept the energy high well past three in the morning, urged on by a powerful interchange between the band and the dancers. The phrase "Everybody's dancing like this!" sets up a call and response pattern with the audience. Here,the function of the music and musicians has an intimate connection with the community. At rollicking dances such as this Cuba's world renowned jazz band stays in touch with what young people like to dance to.

In addition, we filmed Irakere at a low-key rehearsal one afternoon in Havana. "Las Margaritas" is one of the tunes they did, featured on the CD we later released. This tune is a wonderful blending of Afro-Cuban and modern jazz musical elements, a potent mixture which, as we have seen, has a long interesting history.

Perez Prado, performing the Mambo he did so much to popularize, appears in a lively film montage in Program Three. Through radio, movies, and television, Cuban music progressively became part of mainstream North American popular culture. Then, in the 1940s, following on the heels of the tango, the rumba and the conga, another rhythmic tidal wave: The Mambo. Perez Prado popularized the mambo around the world with his RCA recordings. Mambo #8 was an early Perez Prado tune which became a favorite with mambo dancers everywhere in the 1950s.

We decided that **Arsenio Rodriguez**' "Bruca Manigua", his immortal theme song, would be the perfect musical accompaniment to his story in Program Three. Rodriguez, who was blind, is considered by some musicologists to be the most important Cuban musician of the twentieth century. A strong spokesman for Cuba's black community, he incorporated all the forms of musical expression of black Cubans into the popular music style of the son: carnival congas, street rumbas played at neighborhood parties, and music of the secret Abakua societies which maintained African traditions almost intact. He used hlack popular expressions in his lyrics. Arsenio composed many songs about the different areas of Cuba he visited — songs about Cuban history and protest songs about political and economic situations and racism in Cuba. He changed the basic structural components of Cuban music by adding pianos, conga drums, and trumpets to the interpretation of the son.He incorporated a whole range of new sonoral elements into popular music. "Bruga Manigua" was the first composition of Arsenio Rodriguez to gain international notice and he used it as his theme song to open every set and radio program he played. He moved to the U.S. in 1951 hoping to find a cure for his blindness, more economic opportunity, and a less racist society. He died disillusioned and in poverty in Los Angeles in 1969. But his musical contribution, and his remarkable legacy live on.

When Arsenio Rodriguez wrote one of the first mambos in 1936 he described the rhythm that drove the dancers, as "Ritmo diablo". The hypnotic repetition of this rhythm can lead to a euphoric state. Practitioners of Afro-Cuban religions achieve a similar state when they enter a trance-like state of "possession", in order to commune with one of the "orishas" (deities). As Arsenio knew, you don't have to be a

religious initiate to feel the power this music. We suggest you get out on the dance floor and let the passionate essence of this rhythm infuse your being with pleasure.

Celia Cruz is known as the "Queen of Salsa" for a good reason. Her records throughout the seventies with Johnny Pacheco and Willie Colon were central to tbe popularity of the type of music that promoters called "salsa." Celia herself says of this music "Salsa is not a new rhythm. It is the Cuhan music with a new name." Celia Cruz left Cuba after the revolution and her songs frequently hark nostalgically back to her homeland. In "Bemba Colora", she sings:

A few years ago I left
my golden homeland
and I still remember
her ravines and her valleys
her huts of straw
or palm leaves,
and roofs made
of sturdy palm thatch

Celia Cruz continues to upbold and promote the traditions of Cuban music. According to Celia, "We have to support the salsa. That's why I'm never going to sing nothing but salsa and I say to all my friends who sing and play salsa —Don't leave the salsa, don't leave the salsa because its our culture and salsa is a very happy rhythm, it's a rich rhythm."

It is no accident that we chose **Ruben Blades** and his group Seis del Solar to conclude the series with a deeply felt rendition of Ruben's "Buscando America". Today many hispanic musicians are trying to reach out to English language audiences while remaining true to their musical and cultural roots. For Ruben Blades the political and social dimensions of his music are as important as the melodies and rhythms. Spanish poetic origins and the traditions of the Cuban "trova" resonate in his work. According to Blades, "The idea of Buscando America is to search for that America that must have been in the back of the mind of Columbus and all the adventurers that went with him, because, ..The idea behind the trip, I think, was to find a new place, a new land, for a new beginning. And we're still looking for America today..We found the continent, but we didn't find the emotion behind." The words Ruben wrote are:

I'm calling out to America
but she doesn't reply,
those who deny the truth
have made her disappear.
Surrounded by shadows
we deny what is true
that without justice
there will never be peace.
Living under dictatorships,
I search but I can't find you,
no one knows where
your tortured body lies.

QUESTIONS–ALL PROGRAMS :

34. How did changes in music and musical culture reflect the adaptation to changing social, economic, cultural and linguistic traditions? Can you give specific examples from each of the three programs?

35. Regarding the issue of tradition and change: How has music served as a vehicle for cultural continuity in a rapidly changing society? Point to some evidence provided by the programs.

36. Conversely, how has music served as a stimulant for change? Give some examples of the way lyrics and instrumentation have been transformed based on new environments and historical developments.

37. How does music reflect the experience of people who are undergoing rapid social and economic transitions? For example, what changes did the music undergo in the transition from Medieval Spain to Colonial Cuba?... from a

Cuban farm in 1948 to a modern American metropolis like New York? ... or from a Cuban city in 1959 to an exile community like Miami? Which cultural habits have been maintained and which have been lost through assimilation. Why?

38. Did anything about the way in which the musicians were filmed and photographed strike you as unusual or special? Comment.

39. Could you see the role of scholarship and the off-screen participation of musicologists in the shape of the finished programs? Did the narration help enhance your awareness of the authentic roots of this musical heritage? What did you think of the intellectual rigor and conceptual strength of the research and film planning?.

40. Did the film series successfully tell the story of this music with a respect for its epic quality, the richness of its themes, and the full complexity of its story? Could you suggest changes and improvements in the way this was handled?

41. Discuss examples through which the series presented the social background of the music in depth. Were there sections in which the Spanish and African roots of the music could be studied in greater detail? Which ones?

42. What was, and what is, the role of the oral tradition as used by musicians in Spain of 1492, West Africa of 1550, Cuba of 1933, and contemporary musicians like Ruben Blades or Gloria Estefan?

43. In evaluating musicians, what is the difference between a musical innovator and a musical popularizer? Can you give an example of each and discuss their similarities and differences?

44. How were paintings, graphics, and lithographs used in the series to illustrate the story of the music? Do you have any special examples that were particularly noteworthy?

45. What is your evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of using Harry Belafonte as narrator? Was his presentation of the material effective?

46. Discuss ways in which the Afro-Cuban music found in the United States today stretches back with roots in Cuba, Spain and/or Africa, focussing on several of your favorite examples from the programs.

47. Did the series give you a sense of how a musical tradition can span across continents and history? Can you explain the dynamics of how this music, in particular, migrated from villages in Nigeria and Spain to the streets of LA, New York, Miami and other cities today? Can you point to parallel examples in other national musical cultures in other countries?

48. Do North Americans adequately understand the international dimensions of our musical legacy? To whom should this series be shown and why?

49. What factors do you think prevent the creation of more programs which have the potential of increasing the public's understanding of the country's multi-faceted ethnic and musical legacy?

50. Discuss some of the different percussion instruments featured in the programs and their origins.

Carnival Comparsa, Santiago de Cuba

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DISCOGRAPHY

This discography is subdivided into categories, but like any system of classification, the divisions are somewhat arbitrary. Some of the albums here easily transcend categorization. Others fit into several different areas. Moreover, the list is far from complete. It is intended to provide a starting point for further study and listening. We have simply listed some of our favorites for your additional perusal and enjoyment. (H.D.)

1. EARLY MUSICAL ROOTS & TRADITIONAL CUBAN MUSIC

Various drummers
Drums of the Yoruba of Nigeria recorded by William Bascom
Ethnic Folkways FE 4441

Various artists
La Musica en la Era Descubrimiento Vol 1,2,3
Dial Discos 139410

Gottschalk
The World of Louis Moreau Gottschalk
Vanguard VSD 724
Gottschalk Festival
Turnabout TVS 34440-42

Various artists
The Cuban Danzon
Its Ancestors and Descendents
Ethnic Folkways FE 4066

Orquesta Folklorica de Odilio Urfe
Antologia del Danzon
EGREM/Arieto LD 3724

Various artists
Hot Dance Music from Cuba 1909-1937
Harlequin HQ 2025

Various artists
Anthologia de la Musica Afrocubana V. 1-7
EGREM

Various artists
Musica de Cuba
EGREM LDA 3480
La Musica del Pueblo de Cuba
EGREM LD 3440

Beny More
Grandes Exitos, v. 1 & 2
RCA Int.
El Inigualable
Discuba
Pare! Que Llego El Barbaro
Discuba

Arsenio Rodriguez y su Conjunto
Vol.1
Ansonia ACS 1337
Vol.2
Ansonia ACS 1418
El Sentimiento de Arsenio
Carino DBM1 5802
Primitivo Sabroso Y Caliente
Antilla MLP 586
Salsa Inolvidable
TVC 1501
Sabu
Blue Note 1561
A Todos Los Barrios Quindembo-Afro Magic
CBS Caliente CLT 7049

Various artists
Recordando a Arsenio
Tico LP1231

Trio Matamoros
Escos de Cuba
Kubaney
El Cubanismo
EGREM/Areito LD-2009
El Original
GU 19101

Sexteto Bolona
The Roots of Salsa, vol 1.
Folkloric 9053

Sexteto Nacional
Como se Baila el Son
Bravo 104

Los Monequitos de Matanzas
Cantar Maravilloso
Globestyle
Guaguanco/Colombia/Yambu
Vitral
Rumba Caliente
Qbadisc

Celina & Reutilio
14 Exitos
Discos Fuentes
A Santa Barbara
Sua Ritos LPS103

Odilio Urfe et al
Charanga Nacional de Concierto
EGREM LD-3715

Various artists
Los Mejores Musicos de Cuba
Palladium PLP-110

Arcaño y Sus Maravillas
Danzon Mambo
Carino DBMi-5806
Arcaño y sus Maravillas
EGREM/Arieto

Felix Chappotin con Miguelito Cuni y su Estrellas
Musicalidad en Sepia
Continental
El Son 77 Roiz y Cumbre
EGREM Arieto LP-027

Pinareno
Cuban Music from Pinar del Rio Global Music Centre

Joseito Fernandez
Homenaje Postumo
EGREM

Various artists
Cuban Counterpoint: History of the Son Montuno
Rounder CD1078

Nico Saquito
Nico Saquito
EGREM LD 3920

2. NEW YORK AFRO-CUBAN DANCE BANDS OF THE 40S, 50S & 60S

Machito and his Afro-Cubans
Mi Amigo, Machito
Tico SLP 1053
Mucho Mucho Machito
Palladium
Dance Date
Palladium PLP-111
Kenya, Tin Tin Deo
Palladium

Tito Puente & his Orchestra
Dance Mania
RCA
Cuban Carnival
RCA Tropical 102-23084

Tito Puente & his Latin Ensemble
El Rey
Picante CJP-250
Mambo of the Times
Picante CD 4499
Mamborama
Palladium
Best of the 60s
Caliente 125
Puente Goes Jazz
Blue Bird reissue

Tito Rodriguez
Tito Tito Tito
WS Latino
T.R. at the Palladium
Palladium PCD 108
Returns to the Palladium
Palladium

Xavier Cugat
Bim Bam Bum, X.C. 1935-40
Harlequin HQDC14

Perez Prado
Havana 3 A.M.
BMG Reissue
Voodoo Suite
Bear Family Recording
Concierto Para Bongo
WS Latino

Noro Morales
Mambo with Noro
Palladium

Celia Cruz, y la Sonora Matancera
Con La Sonora Matancera
Seeco CD-122
La Musica De Ayer
Seeco CDD-125
Tesoros Musicales
CBS OMC 80253
La Incomparable Celia
Seeco PDC-133
Homenaje a los Santos v.2
Seeco
Le Mejor de Celia Cruz
TICO TCLP 1316

Roberto Faz
El Son 77 Raiz y Cumbre
EGREM/Arieto LP-027

Miguelito Valdez
Memories of Cuba-Orqesta Casino de la Playa
RCA LPV-1122
Senor Babalu
Tropical 5010

Various artists
Caliente =’s Hot
New World NW 244

3. SALSA CLASSICS

Ray Barretto
Que Viva la Musica!
Fania
Acid
Fania
Indestructible
Fania SLP 346
Eye of the Beholder
Fania SD19140

Willie Colon
Legal Alien
Fania 655

Willie Colon w/Hector Lavoe & Yomo Toro
The Good, The Bad, The Ugly
Fania SLP 482

Willie Colon w/Ruben Blades
Siembras
Fania JMCD 537
Canciones del Solar de los Aburridos
Fania LPS 99,466

Cortijo y su Combo
Caballo de Herro
Coco

Joe Cuba Sextet
Vagabundeando/Hangin’Out
Tico

Fania All Stars
Havana Jam
Fania
Live in Japan
Fania

El Gran Combo
Innovations
Combo
Nuestra Musica
Combo

Larry Harlow
Hommy
Fania

Hector Lavoe
Comedia
Fania JM00522

La Lupe
Too Much
Charley

Andy Montanez
Greatest Hits
TH Rodvan

Chalie Palmieri
Justicia
Tico
Mambo Show
TBR-021
Mas de Charlie Palmieri
Gilmar BL234

Johnny Pacheco & Celia Cruz
Celia & Johnny
Fania

Johnny Pacheco & Pete "Conde" Rodriguez
La Perfecta Combinacion
Fania
Te Invita a Bailar
Fania LP 327
Pacheco, His Flute and Latin Jazz
Fania LP 328

Ricardo Ray
On the Scene
Fonseca

Ismael Rivera
Eclipse Total
Tico

Sonora Poncena
Jubilee
Inca

Roberto Torres
Charanga Vallenata v.2
SAR
Elegantamente Criollo
SAR

Totico
Totico y sus Rumberos
Montuno MLP-515
Patato Y Totico
RVC 1102

Ismael Miranda & Orquesta Harlow
Oportunidad
Fania

Mon Rivera y Su Orquesta
On Karakatis-ki
Ansonia SALP 1356

Son de la Loma
Asi Empezo La Cosa
Montuno Stereo 514
Y Sigue La Cosa
Montuno MLP 518

Eddie Palmieri
The Sun of Latin Music
Coco CLP 109XX
Lucumi,Macumba,Voodoo
CBS Epic 35523
Sueno
Invitation 3011-2
Recorded Live at Sing Sing
Tico TCLP 1321

Mongo Santamaria
Our Man in Havana
Fantasy F8045

Miami Sound Machine
Primitive Love
CBS Epic 40131

4. LATIN JAZZ

Various artists
The Original Mambo Kings
Verve

Charlie Parker
South of the Border
Verve 817 477-1
Fiesta
Verve
Very Best of Charlie Parker
Verve

Dizzy Gillespie
Afro Cuban Jazz Moods
Pablo 2310 771
The Original D.G. Big Band
Crescendo GNPS 23

Dizzy Gillespie w/Machito, & Chico O'Farrill
Afro Cuban Jazz
Verve VE 2 2522

"Sabu" Martinez
Sabu
Blue Note 1561

Cal Tjader
The Cal Tjader Quintet
Fantasy 3232
Mambo with Cal Tjader
Fantasy 3-202
The Original Hits, v.1
Fantasy MPF 4527
Greatest Hits, v.2
Fantasy MPF 4530
Demasiado Caliente
Fantasy 3309

Daniel Ponce
Chango Te Llama (91)
Mango

Mongo Santamaria
Yambu
Fantasy
Our Man in Havana
Fantasy
Greatest Hits
Columbia 1060
Skins
Milestone
Afro Roots
Prestige PR24018

Cachao
Cuban Jam Sessions in
Panart
Miniature "Descargas"
Te Pone a Bailar
Regio 2105
"Dos"
Salsoul SAL-4115
"Master Sessions, Vol. 1"
Cineson, Epic

Jerry Gonzalez
Obatala
Enja
Rumba para Monk
Sunnyside SSC1036C
Ya Yo Me Cure
Pangea 6242

Irakere
Misa Negra
Messidor
Irakere
Columbia C-35655
Irakere-2-
Columbia C-36107
Homenaje A Beny More
EGREM/Messidor 25904
El Coco
Messidor M-911
Seleccion de Excitos 1973-79
EGREM/Areito LD-4004
Bilando Asi
EGREM/Areito LD-4186

Libre
Ritmo, Sonido, Estilo
Montuno MLP 522

Gonzalo Rubalcaba
Giraldilla
Messidor
Mi Gran Pasion
Messidor
Live in Havana
EGREM/Messidor
The Blessing
Blue Note
Rapsodia
Blue Note

Artnro Sandoval
Tumbaito
Messidor
Sondoval en concierto
EGREM
Turi
EGREM LD 3852

Poncho Sanchez
Cambios (91)
Concorde Picante CCD4439

Jesus "Chucho" Valdes
Lucumi
Messidor
Chucho Valdez
Egrem/Areito LDA-3345
Piano I
Egrem/Areito LD 3781

Batacumbele
Afro-Caribbean Jazz
Montuno MLJ-525
Live at The University of Puerto Rico
Montuno

Michel Camilo
On the Other Hand
CBS

Paquito D'Rivera
Explosion
CBS FCT 40156
Celebration
CBS FCT 44077
Live at Keystone Korner
CBS FC 38899
Mariel
CBS FC 38177
Why Not!
CBS FC 39584
Manhattan Burn
CBS FC 40588

5. MODERN CUBA

(Note: EGREM is the Cuban national record company. It issues the Areito & Siboney labels. It licenses to the Spanish label Fonomusic, the German label Messidor, and the U.S. label Vitral).

Various artists
Routes of Rhythm, v. 1
"A Carnival of Cuban Music"
Rounder 5049

Various artists
Routes of Rhythm v.2
"Cuban Dance Party"
Rounder 5050

Various artists
Sabroso/Havana Hits
Virgin/Earthworks

Various artists
Cuba Classics v.2
Dancing with the Enemy
Luaka Bop/Warner

Orquesta Reve
La Explosion del Momento!
Real Word/Virgin

Silvio Rodriguez
Canciones Urgentes
(Cuba Classics, v.1 D.Byrne)
Luaka Bop/Warner 9-26480-4
Causas y Azares
Color
Dias y Flores
Victoria VR 001

Los Van Van
Songo
Mango MLPS 9825
El Negro No Tiene Na'
EGREM
Aqui El Que Baila Gana
EGREM

Ritmo Oriental
La Ritmo Oriental Te Esta
Globestyle
Llamando
Orquesta Ritmo Oriental
EGREM/Areito LD3622

Son 14
A Bayomo en Coche
EGREM/Fonomusic
Ambassadors of Son
Ciboney West

Celina Gonzales
Que Viva Chango
EGREM LD 4075

Mezcla
Fronteras de Suenos
Intuition 3047

N.G. La Banda
En La Calle
EGREM/Qbadisc

Sintesis
Ancestros
EGREM/Qbadisc

Carlos Embale
Carlos Embale
Egrem

Grupo Sierra Maestra
Sierra Maestro Llego
EGREM LD 3940

Pablo Milanes
Pablo Milanes
Victoria VR 002
Anniversario
EGREM LD 3805

Pablo Milanes w/Luis Pena
Anos
EGREM/Areito LD 3853
Canto a mi Abuela
CDPM2001
Yolanda
EGREM/Sonografica
Canto a Nicolas Guillen
EGREM/Integra

Orqnesta Original de Manzanillo
Puras
Qbadisc

Grupo Moncada
Grupo Moncada
Monitor MFS 798

Los Munequitos de Matanzas
Rumba Caliente 88/77
Qbadisc

Orquesta Aragon
40 Anos de Orq. Aragon, v.2
EGREM/Areito C-066
That Cuban Cha-cha-cha
RCA Tropical 2446-4
Aragon
EGREM PRD 081

Xiomara Laugart
"Fe"
EGREM

6. MORE CURRENT ALBUMS

Compilation
Oye! Listen!
Globestyle

Jose Alberto
Sueno Contiga
RMM

Arabella
Mas Alla del Sabor
Kubaney

Ray Barretto & Celia Cruz
Ritmo en el Corazon
Fania

Ruben Blades y Seis del Solar
Buscando America
Elektra 60352-1
Escenas
Elektra 9 60432-1
Crossover Dreams
Elektra 9 60471-1E
Ruben Blades y Son del Solar
Elektra 9 60795-4
Amor y Control
Sony CP2 80839

Bongo Logic
Cha-Cha Charanga
Rocky Peaks
Despierata
Rhythm Safari CDL57141

Carabali
Carabali
Mango

Tabou Combo
Gozalo
Kubaney

Henry Fiol
Sonero
Virgin/Earthworks

Yomo Toro
Funky Jibaro
Antilles

Willie Colon
Top Secrets
Fania
Color Americano
CBS Int.

Ralphy Leavitt y La Selecta
Provocame
RL

Andy Montanez
Todo Nuevo
TH Rodven

Luis "Perico" Ortiz
Vuelvo Orta Vez
Dialen

La Puertorriquena
La Puertorriquena
Top Ten Hits

Johnny & Ray
Salsa con Clase
Polygram Latino

Don Perignon
La Buena Vida
Top Ten Hits

Luis Enrique
Una Historia Diferente
Sony CD2 80710

Son Primero
Son Primero
Montuno

Nestor Torres
Morning Ride
Verve/Polygram
Dance of the Phoenix
Verve

Compilation
Santero!
Panart

Milton Cardona
Bembe
American Clave 1004

THE MAKING OF ROUTES OF RHYTHM

By Howard B. Dratch, Project Director

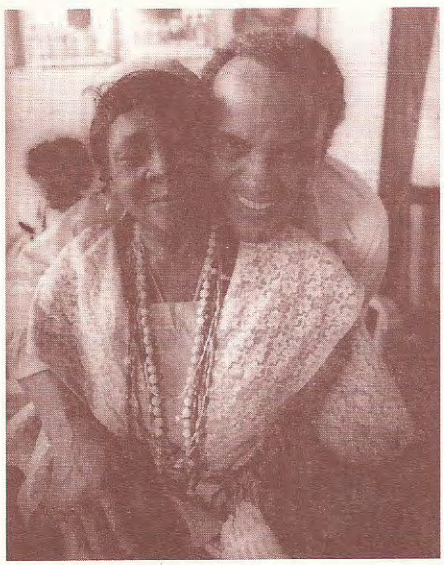
ROUTES OF RHYTHM took over ten years of work to complete. At the outset, we were brimming with hope, optimism, and especially curiosity. As filmmakers and scholars we wanted to explore a number of crucial issues. We focussed on several fundamental themes to structure the research and tailor our overall approach. These included such questions as: How does a musical culture originate and develop? What happens when it is transplanted from one country to another? How does it adapt itself to changing social, economic, cultural and linguistic traditions?

The United States is a country of immigrants. Our national experience has been characterized by a rich blend of different cultures which have combined in amazing and imaginative ways to create a vital heritage. An increased recognition of the broad intercontinental basis of our musical legacy—as seen in the programs—could promote mutual understanding and toleration among different groups of our society.

A second important theme in our work has been tradition and change. In a rapidly shifting society, music has been a vehicle for cultural continuity as well as a stimulant for transformation and change. As people coming to our country experienced fast social and economic transitions, (traveling from a Cuban farm, for example, to a modern North American metropolis), certain cultural habits have been maintained while others have been lost through assimilation. We wanted this film series to help Americans appreciate different minority ethnic cultures, whose significant contributions had not been adequately acknowledged. This included Afro-Americans and Hispanic-Americans, (at nineteen million people, the country's fastest growing minority).

IN THE BEGINNING:

The process of making the series began in 1978, when filmmakers Howard Dratch and Eugene Rosow began the ambitious undertaking of telling the story of Afro-Cuban music on film. Having met while teaching History at the University of California at Berkeley, Dratch and Rosow proposed working together with Les Blank, a fellow Bay Area filmmaker. Blank's skill in photographing musicians and his talent in capturing folk cultures on film were especially valuable. We began with the intention of making a 60 minute film, which then expanded into a 90 minute film, and eventually became an entire film series.



Determined from the start to combine top filmmaking abilities with the best scholarship available, we assembled a team of pre-eminent musicologists. The group included Rene Lopez, Rina Benmayor, and other scholars whose work focussed on the authentic roots of this musical heritage. We approached the National Endowment for the Humanities for funds. By awarding the project several start up grants for research and script-writing, the NEH recognized the quality of our advisors and the intellectual rigor and conceptual strength of our research and film planning.

Next, we began the usual difficult task of securing financing to begin an independent production. We achieved this in the early 1980s with the aid of seed money from individuals and the support of the N.E.H., the Ford Foundation, the Film Fund and other contributors. These first funds enabled us to do the preliminary scholarly research, travel, and scriptwriting.

In addition to the financial challenges, we also faced the difficult logistical problems presented by project that would require the participation of governments and institutions in the United States, Spain, Cuba, and Africa. To accomplish this, we envisioned a people-to-people approach, inspired by Harry Belafonte, in which music and artists could establish special bridges of international understanding and cooperation beyond the usual diplomatic and governmental channels.

We organized a thorough research expedition to Cuba in 1981. Significantly, we secured the cooperation of the Cuban Ministry of Culture and the Cuban Film Institute, without whose assistance filming would have been impossible. With the field research notes and audio tapes in hand, a preliminary script was written by Linda Post as a way of concretizing our plans. This script, and other research findings were submitted to the N.E.H. with a request for production funds. They turned us down!

For many months it looked as if the project was dead in the water. We had spent over $35,000 on research, with not a frame of film shot, and relations between the U.S. and Cuba were growing more frosty every day. Inspired by Isaac Oviedo's music and a passion to film great musicians like him, however, Dratch

completely redrafted the proposal and reapplied to the N.E.H.

This time, in 1983, the National Endowment awarded the project a grant of $237,000 for actual film production. By early 1984, with additional Film Fund and Ford Foundation money, we were ready to begin filming. Fundraising continued incessantly, and eventually we received production funds from the California and Florida Humanities Endowments, the Rockefeller Foundation, and interested citizens.

Committed to a vision of capturing the best possible image and sound, we chose a Super16mm format with an eye to eventual "blow up" to 35mm for theatrical distribution and the best television image. The sound recording equipment was designed to fully capture the expressive power of the music. This sound package included an eight track Otari, a stereo Nagra, and a mono Nagra. (The cost of this sound gear seemed like an extravagance at the time, but eventually proved to be a wise decision. It later allowed us to produce several albums on Rounder Records after the TV series was completed).

During 1984, after extensive preparation, the film production team took two ambitious filming expeditions to Cuba,—including Carnival with Harry Belafonte—and several filming trips to New York. Most of the Cuban filming was done in April 1984 when the weather was still relatively cool. We made a return trip during the steamy hot weeks in July to film Carnival and other material. The film crew was a bi-national cooperative experiment. Production people from the U.S. and Cuba worked together, traveling through all parts of Cuba to film and record the island's finest musicians. The work was intense and challenging. In one instance, enormous lights had to be transported from one end of the island to the other by truck in order to film the Carnival in Santiago at 2 A.M. We filmed as many as three musical groups a day.

Just prior to the Cuban expeditions the Ford Foundation granted us $5,000 to take Michael P. Smith, a distinguished photographer from New Orleans. Smith captured hundreds of black & white photographs and color slides to supplement the film and sound recordings of the trips. This work constitutes important documentation of the cultural and religious extension of Spanish and African forms into the New World. Some of these lovely images were used on the record album artwork, and in this publication.

The experiences we had in Cuba were unforgettable, unpredictable, and very satisfying. We returned with hours of remarkable and beautifully filmed material and the sense of having met our initial filming goals. We next embarked upon many months of organizing and editing this footage. The initial cutting was eventually completed, supplemented by additional grants of $23,750 from the N.E.A. Folk Arts and Music Programs.

AN EXPANDED VISION:

After returning to the U.S. and completing a rough cut, we began to consider the possibility of expanding the film from a single 90 minute documentary to a series of three one-hour programs. The wealth of material and scope of the story suggested an enlarged format to fulfill our original concept of the film: Telling the story of Afro-Cuban music with a respect for its epic quality, exploring the richness of its themes, and adequately expressing the full complexity of its roots.

The question became how to accomplish this? After an analysis of the material on hand, discussions with our consultants, a synthesis of preview screenings, we applied to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for funding to do a three part series. We were initially rebuffed, but after some friendly persuasion, CPB and PBS became receptive. Harry Belafonte concurred with the idea of expanding the programs to reach to a wider audience.

Our scholars favored a series, and encouraged us to proceed. A longer format would allow a more complete presentation of the evolution of the musical forms. We could, for example, give a fuller treatment of the "Danzon" or the "Changui" musical styles, emphasizing the fusion of Spanish and African roots into a distinctly Afro-Cuban style. The doubling of screen time would permit more of each song, and more songs overall. As Benmayor noted, the lyrics of the Spanish "decimas" (rhymed extemporaneous songs) or the "controversias" (duels in rhymed verse between singers) required time to unfold. The completed Program One shows this. Likewise, the impact of the music in the U.S. could be more comprehensively explored, especially in Program Three, by expanding the use of film and television clips. In a longer series we could use Belafonte to strengthen the narrative flow, explaining themes and details not adequately covered in our interviews with the musicians.

In May 1986, CPB awarded the project $125,000. This constituted most of the remaining funds necessary to produce the three one-hour programs. Ford Foundation funds allowed us to move forward with documenting the West African roots of Afro-Cuban music. It was our intention to evoke the earliest African civilizations by filming the Pygmies of the Ituri forest, as well as other traditional West African celebrations. We also needed scenes of village life and landscapes in different West African settings to portray the on-going vitality of African musical traditions. We wanted to include King Sunny Ade playing at a contemporary social event, the gathering for the King of Lagos. (Sunny Ade had personally invited us to film him when we met him during a U.S. tour of his band.) We utilized cameramen J.P. Dutilleux and Ivan Strasbourg, each of whom had long experience in filming in Africa. Our documentary film footage could also be the basis for creative graphic representations of stories about musicians

who might have lived five centuries ago. These musicians' tales were closely based on extensive oral histories of contemporary traditional musicians.

In Fall 1987 and early 1988 we completed another round of filming, including an interview with Celia Cruz, who was honored with a Star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. We went to Miami and Puerto Rico in search of film material, graphics, and video source material. We visited the offices of the Miami Sound Machine regarding a film interview, and obtained clips of their overseas performances. The Cuban Museum of Arts and Culture provided some superb prints and images of Carnival and other material. WPBJ-TV in Miami cooperated in our effort to cover the marvelous "Calle Ocho" carnival celebration held each year.

In Spring 1988 we received word from Madrid that our fourth attempt at funding from the Committee for Cultural and Educational Cooperation between the United States and Spain had finally been approved. (Persistence furthers: our first three applications had been declined). This enabled us to go to Spain to document the Spanish roots of Cuban music. We knew we could film flamenco dancers in Seville and gypsies in Granada. But far less certain was our quest to find and document the roots of the Cuban decima. Ignoring the prevailing consensus that all traces of this music had died out, we embarked up the treacherous winding roads of southern Andulusia. Taking our film crew to the tiny out-of-the-way hamlets of the Alpujarras Mountains, we discovered El Candiote and his village musicians, heirs to an ancient tradition of Spanish troubadours and poets.

In addition to successful location filming, our co-production arrangement with Spanisb filmmakers enabled us to obtain valuable film from the Spanish archives. We also worked in close liaison with researchers in London to acquire additional archival film from Britain, including footage of colonial Africa needed to round out the story.

During 1988, more funding from PBS paid for new archival materials. Financing from the Rockefeller, Ruhin, and Rex Foundations enabled us to complete the task of assembling archival film and sound materials from literally hundreds of sources around the world, and to finish the technical preparations needed for the final image and sound processing. (The Royal Museum of African Art in Belgium, The Museum of Modern Art in New York, UCLA, and many other archives were utilized). We spent a week filming paintings, photos, maps, posters, and other materials at the remarkable Lihrary of Congress collection in Washington, D.C.

In March 1989 we completed post-production editing of the three programs, and filmed stand-ups of Harry Belafonte in a New York studio using the "ultimatte" technique, in which we were able to supplement the location filming already done of him with new narration. This rounded out many sequences including the Babatunde and Ojiwa stories in the African section, and similar sections of the story for Spain, colonial Cuba, and others.

CROSSING THE FINISH LINE AT LAST:

In May 1989, PBS and CPB executives viewed and liked our fine cut. In October we completed work on the three master tapes, except for underwriter credits and final image and sound adjustments. By early 1990, we finally had the series ready for national television broadcast.

Most of the delays and obstacles in completing the work had their roots in the difficult fundraising process. Our presenting station, KCET in Los Angeles, hoped to raise additional production funds, but despite their best efforts, these were not forth-coming and we had to be self-reliant.

Even though it involved considerable risk and sacrifice, we feel tbe expansion of the project was an appropriate response to the richness and breadth of the material we discovered and filmed. The artistic impact was broadened by enlarging the film into a three program series for broadcast television.

WORKING WITH SCHOLARLY CONSULTANTS AND STAFF:

The project can be seen as a good example of the kind of filmmaker-scholar cooperation envisioned by the N.E.H. in designing their humanities grant program. During all phases of the project's activities we utilized the expert services of our original scholars and searched for additional consultants upon whose insights we could draw.

Chief consultant Rene Lopez, an expert on the Caribbean musical heritage in the U.S., Cuba, and Puerto Rico, who had produced many recordings, record albums, and other works in this field, was vital at each stage. Our other scholars included: Dr. William Bascom (Berkeley) (who unfortunately passed away not long after we started, but who was invaluable at the beginning of the work); Dr. Robert Farris Thompson (Yale), who took over for Dr. Bascom as our primary African advisor, Dr. Philip Foner (Pennsylvania), Dr. Richard Fagen (Stanford), Dr.Robert Friedman (Indiana), Norman Granz (Los Angeles), Chris Strachwitz (El Cerrito, California); John Storm Roberts (New York), all of whose work was important, and Dr. Rina Benmayor whose contributions and translations were invaluable through the entire process of production. Before filming in Spain, Rina Benmayor enabled to secure the valuable assistance of Dr. Samuel Armistead (Univ.of Calif.at Davis), Dr. Israel Katz (Hebrew Union College), and Carmen Garcia Matos (Madrid).

When the time came to complete the final translations of the lyrics for the finisbed series, our panel of academicians and scholars reviewed the final script for accuracy and content. They led us to experts who could translate particularly difficult material. John Mason of

Brooklyn, New York worked on the Yoruba language material filmed in Africa, and Jim Kuhn of Seattle, Washington deciphered difficult Andulusian Gypsy lyrics.

Without a doubt, the scholars enhanced the quality of the project. In the pre-production research phase they discussed of prospective themes, sites, and subjects to be filmed, and archival, library, and resource sites to be visited. They had an important part in determining the conceptual desigu of the film, in the planning of its structure, in the selection of interviewees, sites, recordings, photos and older films included. Advising the filmmakers at each stage of production and post-production, they insured scholarly accuracy and the inclusion of essential information.

The project staff and film crew performed their tasks with elan, occasionally rising above and beyond the call of duty. Different cameramen and technical crews were used in locations where budgetary constraints made it expedient for us to hire local crews, for example Spain and Africa. Like the scholars, our crew enhanced the project at each stage. We developed a special method of work to take advantage of this collaboration. During preproduction we structured planning meetings between our scholars and crew, with discussions of the salient issues and history of the music, through contacting the appropriate groups and musicians to be filmed. During production we had meetings each morning before filming for cues on the most important features of the musician(s) to he filmed and recorded that day. In post production, our team provided insights and aid in translations and narrative interpretations.

Without Rene Lopez, for example, we would not have had access to equivalent musicologists in Cuba, like Dr. Jesus Blanco Aguilar who opened doors to many musicians we later filmed. This was also true for community musicians in the U.S. Our scholars put us on the trail of important musicians, and strengthened our ability to document the Spanish and African roots of the heritage. In terms of program accuracy and richness, the crew, the consultants, the advisors, and the people with whom they put us in touch, greatly enriched the series.

POST-PRODUCTION WORK METHOD:

Our critical evaluation of the project's activities continued throughout the work. With our scholarly advisors we constantly reviewed the selection of music, use of materials, and potential effectiveness of different choices we made. We elicited feedhack from public audiences by holding a series of in-progress screenings during the editing phase. These included showings at the Teluride Film Festival in Colorado, the Pacific Film Archive in Berkeley, the San Francisco Art Institute, and Duart Film Lab in New York. We augmented the spontaneous audience comments with written audience questionnaires.

These methods enabled us to discern which film sections were working and which were not, and how to better utilize Belafonte as host-narrator to improve the story telling. (At this stage we heard: "You have a lot of great material but it isn't effectively organized and presented yet.") After this feedback we knew we needed to reconceptualize the structure of the film, to make the story more clear and comprehensible. After a lot of struggle, it led us to the structure we eventually adopted.

Ultimately, we developed a way of explaining a complicated musical tradition in a style that was not overly academic, musicological, or technical on the one band, nor overly glitzy or slick on the other. The latter could have led to a sacrifice in fidelity to the folk arts content which we wanted to preserve.

In the final series, the story line is carried through the lives and stories of individual musicians. Each program features characters the audience can understand, care about, identify with, and remember, rather than a series of obscure musicological, historical and overly academic facts which are quickly forgotten. In the African section, Belafonte tells stories about the legendary Babatunde and Ejiwa. But the Afro-American experience is echoed throughout the second and third programs as well, as seen in such figures as Chano Pozo, Louis Armstrong, and others including Belafonte himself. The smooth flow of the final films is the result of a team effort. The scholars, the host-narrator, the audience, PBS executives, and members of the production team enabled us to make the series a comprehensible and enjoyable whole.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION:

The series accomplishes the goals we set out at the very beginning: To tell the story of "latin music" in this country, which stretches back through Cuba to Spain and Africa. The series explores this musical odyssey spanning across continents and history, from villages in Nigeria and Spain to the streets of Los Angeles, New York, Miami and other cities today. Seen in its entirety, the series captures the amazing sweep of this heritage in a way that has never been done before on film. The programs demonstrate to people of all backgrounds the international dimensions of America's musical legacy. The work succeeds in heing simultaneously informative and entertaining.

The total cost naturally increased when we decided on a three hour series to do full justice to the musical tradition. This expansion created a need to huy more film and sound archival materials, the cost of which rose from the time we began the project to its completion. The problems we faced were not unusual for a PBS project in a milieu of scarce resources for this kind of non-profit endeavor.

The major difficulties we met in finishing stemmed from an ongoing situation of underfinancing, which is true throughout the country. This is part of a larger cultural condition which must be addressed on a state and national level. We favor higher budgets for, and bigger grants by, NEH, PBS, CPB and others, so the level of documentary filmmaking in this country could approach that of European countries like Britain. Most of the friction along our production path, where it existed, was caused by underfunding.

Considering the obstacles we had to overcome, we were pleased the overall results. After years of trying, we were able to put together the resources and team to film in Cuba and Spain, and to obtain the needed material to document the African roots of the music. We were delighted to be able to recreate the lives of neglected musicians such as Chano Pozo and Arsenio Rodriguez, who had languished, virtually unknown except to a few aficionados and experts. With persistence and tenacity we were able to recreate their stories, and rescue them from undeserved semi-oblivion. (It is no accident that these and other neglected innovators are of Afro-American heritage, while the popularizers, to whom doors opened more easily, were frequently "white").

The film series also enhanced the work of our academics in their respective areas. It provided new primary source materials for these scholars to examine in the course of filming and editing. In this process, the scholars learned of new musical styles and syntactical evolution in lyrics and expressions. They discovered new information in the preservation and development of African traditions in the Americas, as well the discovery of some Spanish folk musical and poetic traditions which our academic consultants thought had died out. (The most striking examples of this were the "decimas" we filmed in the Alpujarras Mountains in southern Spain.)

Since in-depth discussions and interpretations are proscribed by the relatively short length of the television hour, we hope this guide can stimulate longer discussions and further research. We trust the shows will enhance expanded exchange between folk artists, musicians, students and members of the wider public.

The initial broadcast of the series was on the Public Television Service in June 1990, followed by numerous subsequent broadcasts. The Cinema Guild (at 1697 Broadway, New York, New York 10019), the educational distributor of the series, makes the programs widely available to institutions of learning. The series will be available in the bome video format in the near future. The Producers' Service Group has taken the series overseas for broadcast in France, Holland, Greece, Finland, Switzerland, Singapore, Japan, and many other countries.

Once production work on the films was done, we set out to fulfill a long-standing dream. We had high-quality location recordings done during the filming, and in 1990, with the help of the New York State Council for the Arts and the NEA Folk Arts division, we issued two musical albums. These recordings were ready for release with the TV series, and available in most record stores. The musical selections on the albums expanded the series' outreach, and contained extensive and carefully researched liner notes. The albums, available from Rounder Records in Cambridge Massachusetts, are entitled "A Carnival of Cuhan Music" and "Cuban Dance Party". (Rounder #5049 and #5050). In 1992, we completed Volume 3, an album featuring "son" maestro Isaac Oviedo and his family. Ever since we first heard Isaac Oviedo's music on the initial research trip in 1980, his music provided much of the inspiration for the entire series. This album was, therefore, a particularly satisfying addition to the work. (Rounder #5055).

Overall, we were pleased with our ability to search for, seek, find, and utilize people from different continents, regions, and areas of expertise, to weave together a complicated tapestry of images and sounds, to tell this story in a new way. There were moments when it looked as if completing the project would be impossible. But along the path we were delighted and inspired by the music. A passion for the music itself, and the people who cared most deeply about it, sustained us, nurtured us, kept us going, and enabled us to prevail.

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(617) 354-0700

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