

# MUSICUNITESUS

## Lesson Plan Overview: Obbini Tumbao 7<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies

### Context:

This is an overview of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade mini-unit that will precede and accompany the October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2009, performance of Obbini Tumbao, an Afro-Cuban music ensemble. The unit is currently planned to utilize three days of Social Studies class, plus one day for the performance. There are several places where the unit can be shortened or extended.

### Objectives:

This unit will augment the work already being done in the classroom per the Massachusetts Curricular Frameworks (specifics listed below). In accord with the mission of MUUS, it will also further the understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures, in this case African and Cuban, through music. **Students will use listening exercises to help them understand the movement of peoples and cultures across time and space.** Specific objectives for each day of the mini-unit are listed below.

- **Day 1 Objective:**
  - To assess understanding prior to unit
  - To develop knowledge about the “triangular trade” so that we can better talk about the movement of peoples and products throughout the unit
- **Day 2 Objective:**
  - To identify influences and elements in OT’s music
  - To develop “active listening” strategies
- **Day 3 Objective:**
  - To use “first encounters” listening strategies at the performance
  - To understanding of how movement impacts peoples, musics, and ideas by connecting the music to current events.
- **Day 4 Objective:**
  - To debrief performance and to assess learning

### Assessment

- Before/After reflections will help teachers and MUUS staff assess what students learned.
- Formative assessments built into each lesson.
- Summative Assessment: students will complete “After” reflection as well as the “Salsa Journal”

### Standards

This mini-unit attends to the following Massachusetts Curricular Frameworks, focusing especially on the **theme of movement (of people, goods, and ideas)**:

NB: The Frameworks do not include specific learning objectives for the Caribbean

#### *Africa*

A.2 Use a map key to locate countries and major cities in Africa.

#### *History and Geography:*

7. Use the following demographic terms correctly: *ethnic group*, *religious group*, and *linguistic group*. (G)

#### *Waltham Benchmarks:*

Students will be able to relate current world events to the geographic information studied.

## Day 1: Trade

### Objectives

- To assess understanding prior to unit
- To develop knowledge about the “triangular trade” so that we can better talk about the movement of peoples and products throughout the unit

**Initial Assessment:** (This may be completed the day prior to the unit).

- Students complete “Before” reflection and assessment.

### Warm up Activity:

- In groups (using chart-paper or something similar) students brainstorm the many meanings and manifestations of “trade.” What is trade? What items are most often traded? Is the word “trade” only used for products, or can it be used to describe less tangible items? What about people? Religions? Ideas? Skills? *Music*? Do you have to *pay* for something for it to be considered “trade”? (Teacher compiles class ideas list on board).

### Investigation:

- Students partner-read “Triangular Trade” (attached) and then compile lists of products traded (with origin and destination).
- What items were traded on purpose and for money? What other items (or ideas or concepts or feelings) might have been traded along the way?

### Journal Entry:

Students spend the remainder of class composing their answer to the following journal question (which will need some teacher guidance and set-up):

- Consider an aspect of your culture that is meaningful to you. (You might want choose special foods, a religion, the music your family listens to, the language you speak at home, etc). Consider where else geographically people do the same thing. (If you speak Spanish at home, think about all of the other countries where Spanish is spoken.)  
Now:
  - How did this part of your culture get to Massachusetts?
  - Who brought it here?
  - Was it paid for? Was it brought on purpose? Or did it just travel with people?
  - Why do you think that people hold onto some aspects of their culture (like their language or religion or music) when they move to new countries?

**Homework:** Complete Cuba Pre-Reading

## Day 2: Focus on Cuba

### Objectives

- To identify influences in OT's music
- To develop "active listening" strategies

### Agenda

#### Warm up

Students locate Cuba on their textbook maps and make a list of countries that probably "trade with" Cuba (either in goods or ideas or culture).

#### First Encounters (worksheet attached)

In this activity students will listen and *respond* to examples of **Obbini Tumbao's** music, each of which is available on the MUUS website. The first time the students hear the music, they should listen to the music without background, explanation, or translation. The second time, the teacher may read the below translations of the songs' words.

<http://www.musicunitesus.info/listen.html#Obbini>

#### Mas Vale Tarde (Better Late Than Never)

*Long-missed affection arrives late in a relationship, but better late than never.*

#### Se La Comieron (They Ate It Up)

*A man (Don Gregorio) cooks for his friends in hopes to seduce a special interest, but he is left high and dry.*

#### Tu No Tienes Tiempo (You Ain't Got Rhythm)

*A man bemoans his beloved's lack of rhythm and skill as a dancer.*

### Discussion and Synthesis:

Teacher leads discussion about the various elements in each of the pieces. Students use take out "Triangular Trade" Map and label the areas from which different aspects of the music came from. They add lines to show the *new* triangular trade.

### Notes from OT:

#### Instruments used on these recordings:

Timbales (with a bass drum)

Congas

Bongos

Cowbells

Woodblock

Trumpets

Trombones.

Tracks recorded in Caracas, Venezuela.

The conga drums were brought to the Caribbean from Africa. The timbales were a Caribbean invention, a modification of the European timpani drums.

Conga drums were used in Cuba in *rumba* music (vocals and percussion music), later integrated into ensembles that played Cuban *son*, which is the forerunner of what we call "Salsa." Salsa is a genre invented in NYC by combining many rhythms and styles from the Spanish Caribbean.

### Homework:

Journal Entry: How is the "trading" of music different than the "trading" of goods? How is it similar? Which one (music or goods) do you think has the most impact on people? Which one lasts the longest?

### **Day 3: Performance (and more on Cuba!)**

#### **Objective**

- To use “first encounters” listening strategies at the performance
- To understanding of how movement impacts peoples, musics, and ideas by connecting the music to current events.

**Homework:** Please read Junior Scholastic article, “Cuba Today” (April 30, 2007).

### **Day 4: Reflection and Assessment**

#### **Objective**

- To debrief performance and to assess learning

#### **Warm-up**

Journal Entry: Many people have noted that “salsa” is the perfect word to describe a music that is a blend of cultures. What cultures, languages, rhythms, and instruments play some part in creating salsa music?

NB: This could easily be extended to become an art project with a visual representation of salsa as a mix of instruments, peoples, sounds, languages (each of which retain some of their identity – as opposed to the melting pot metaphor).

#### **Discussion**

Reflect on performance. What worked well (for students and for teachers!) and what could have been better?

#### **Assessment**

See attached “After” Assessment.



# MUSIC UNIT 5 US

## Before Reflection

**Directions:** Please complete the following worksheet before the unit begins.

1. Please define **trade**. What products or ideas do you often study when you talk about trade in your Social Studies classes?

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2. What is the “triangular trade” that existed between the American Colonies, Africa, and Europe? What products were traded?

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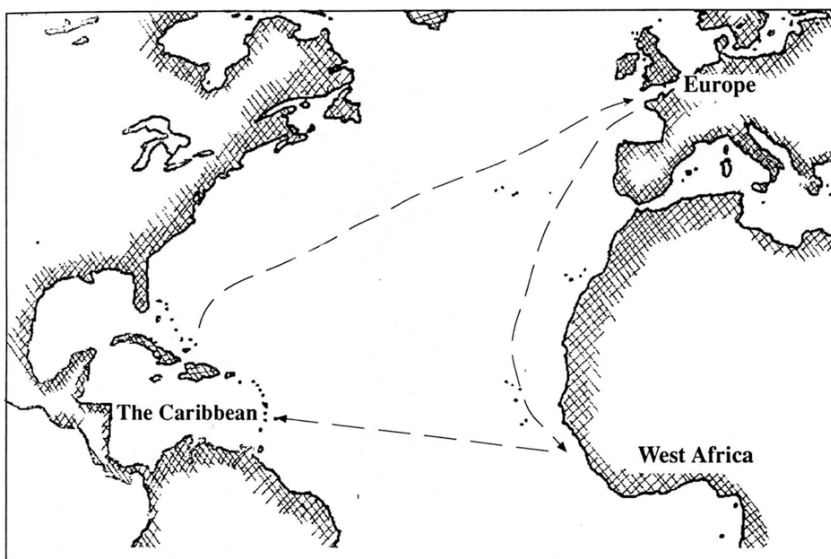
3. Why do people bring music with them when they immigrate to different parts of the world? Do you think that the music that people bring with them changes when it arrives in a new place? How? Why?

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4. On the below map, please label goods that you know were traded among Europe, American Colonies, and Africa.



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## After Reflection

**Directions:** Please complete the following worksheet after the unit is complete.

1. Please define **trade**. How did your understanding of trade change over the course of this unit? What did you learn about trade from the musical performance?

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2. List five products involved in the original triangular trade between Africa, Europe, and the Colonies.

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3. List five instruments or sounds or rhythms involved in the musical triangular trade between Africa, Europe, and the US.

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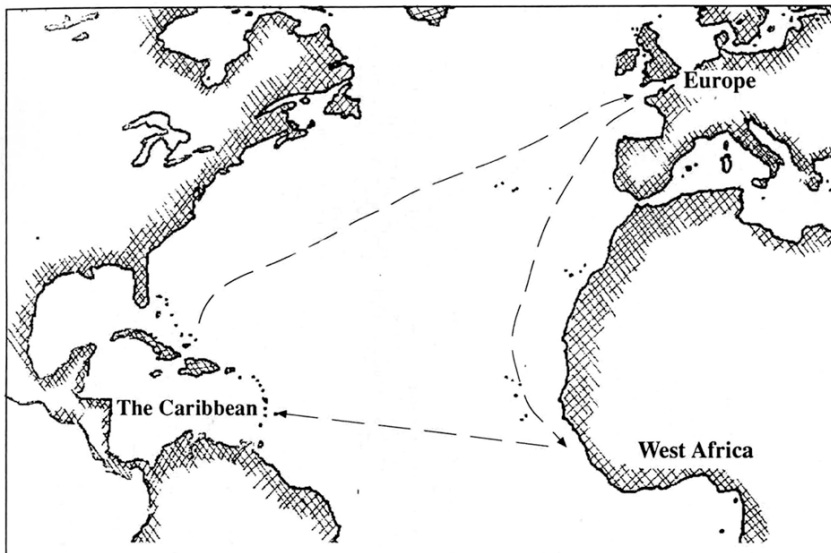
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4. What is your final impression of the performance? What did you like about it? What would you like to know more about? Would you want to see something like this again?

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4. On the below map, please label items (goods, peoples, instruments, ideas) that you know have been traded among Europe, the USA, and Africa.



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## Cuba Pre-reading (Glencoe textbook)

Tonight for HW, please read pages 215-218 of your Social Studies textbook (in Chapter 7: The West Indies). Answer the below questions:

1. Locate Cuba on the map on p. 216. What are three other countries that are close to it?

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2. Who originally lived on the islands in the West Indies, and what happened to them? Who else moved (by choice or by force) to the West Indies? Why? Who lives there now? What different races and/or ethnicities are represented?

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3. Read the Island Profile on Cuba. What kind of government does Cuba have? Is the country doing well economically? Do most people have plenty of money?

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4. From what you know about Cuba and the West Indies, what kind of music do you think people play and listen to there?

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## First Encounters Worksheet

**Directions:** For each of the pieces of music that you “encounter” today, please answer the following questions in your notebook. There are no “right” answers to these questions. These questions are designed to help you listen closely and to identify as much about the music as you can.

### Questions:

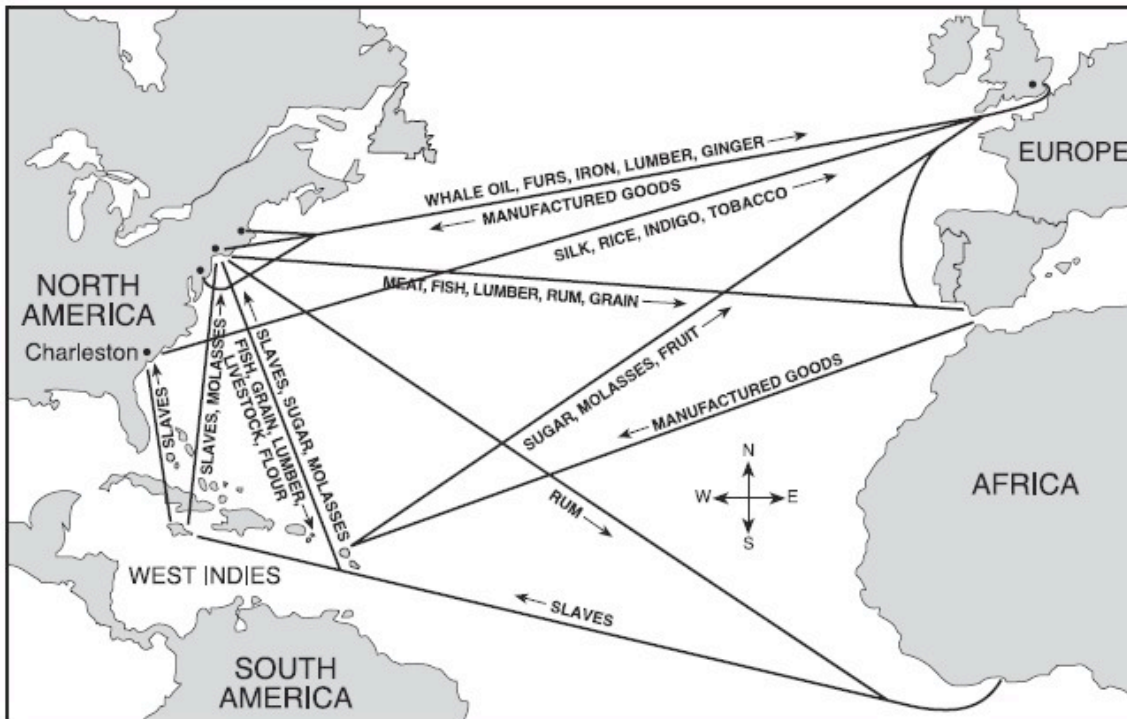
1. What sounds do you hear? What instruments can you identify?
2. What is the mood of the piece?
3. What pictures do you imagine in your head as this piece is playing?
4. What country/region/continent does this piece sound like?
5. What else do you notice?
6. If this piece has words, what is their general message?
7. Do the words identify the nation of the song’s origin?
8. Even without understanding the words to the song, do you think the music itself “says” something? What are some things this music said to you?



## Triangular Trade

The early days of the American economy were filled with trade routes stretching across the Atlantic in seemingly all directions. As with trade between European countries, the goods coming into and out of America tended to be part of a pattern. The money paid for one set of goods would be used to pay for another set of goods, and so on. Also at this time, goods were traded for each other, in a barter system.

In early American settlement, goods came from two main sources: England and Africa. This came to be known as Triangular Trade.



Source: Steven Goldberg and Judith Clark DuPré, *Brief Review in Global History and Geography*, Prentice Hall (adapted)

A typical shipment of goods from Great Britain would consist of any or all of beads, cloth, hardware, rum, salt, or weapons. The shipment would go to Africa, where the goods would be traded for people who were enslaved.

A ship leaving Africa for America would contain hundreds of enslaved people, tightly packed in horrific conditions for the journey to their new "home."

Once in America, the ship would unload the slaves and take on any or all of molasses, rum, sugar, or tobacco and then head to Great Britain, completing the Triangle. (It should be said here that not all ships made this giant triangular trip. Many ships did no more than sail back and forth from America to Africa and vice versa or from England to Africa and vice versa. The description of the Triangular Trade deals more with the goods as a whole.)

Some of the ships coming to America sailed straight to ports along the Eastern Seaboard, although some stopped in the Caribbean or Brazil, where

large slave plantations were.

The number of Africans shipped as slaves to America has been conservatively estimated at 10 million. That number doesn't include the thousands who died along the way. Some estimates have concluded that 15 to 25 of every 100 Africans died on those voyages. The practice of slavery had a history of hundreds of years. It was made illegal in America in 1807, although it continued in small part for many years after that.

### Cuba Flag and Fast Facts

**Population**

11,275,000

**Capital**

Havana; 2,189,000

**Area**

110,860 square kilometers  
(42,803 square miles)

**Language**

Spanish

**Religion**

Roman Catholic, Protestant,  
Jehovah's Witness, Jewish,  
Santeria

**Currency**

Cuban peso

**Life Expectancy**

76

**GDP per Capita**

U.S. \$2,700

**Literacy Percent**

97

## Supplemental Reading (for teachers)

From [www.thinkinfinity.org](http://www.thinkinfinity.org)

### Cuba's Music

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

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

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

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

At the heart of what makes Cuban music so enticing is its power to inspire dance, and the heart of Cuban dance music is the *son*. A truly Creole form, the *son* emerged in the late 1800s as an equal mixture of Spanish and African elements, and formed the foundation of almost all Cuban dance rhythms to come. The structure of *son* includes a syncopated bass, a repetitive section called the *montuno* (with call-and-response vocals), and the most important element of all: the

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

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

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

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

## **Salsa**

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

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

Puerto Rico, most popular groups also concentrated on the Cuban rhythms until groups such as the conjunto of Rafael Cortijo (along with singer Ismael Rivera) got the island's dancers moving to their own genres such as the bomba and the plena.

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

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

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

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

*Rebeca Mauleon*