



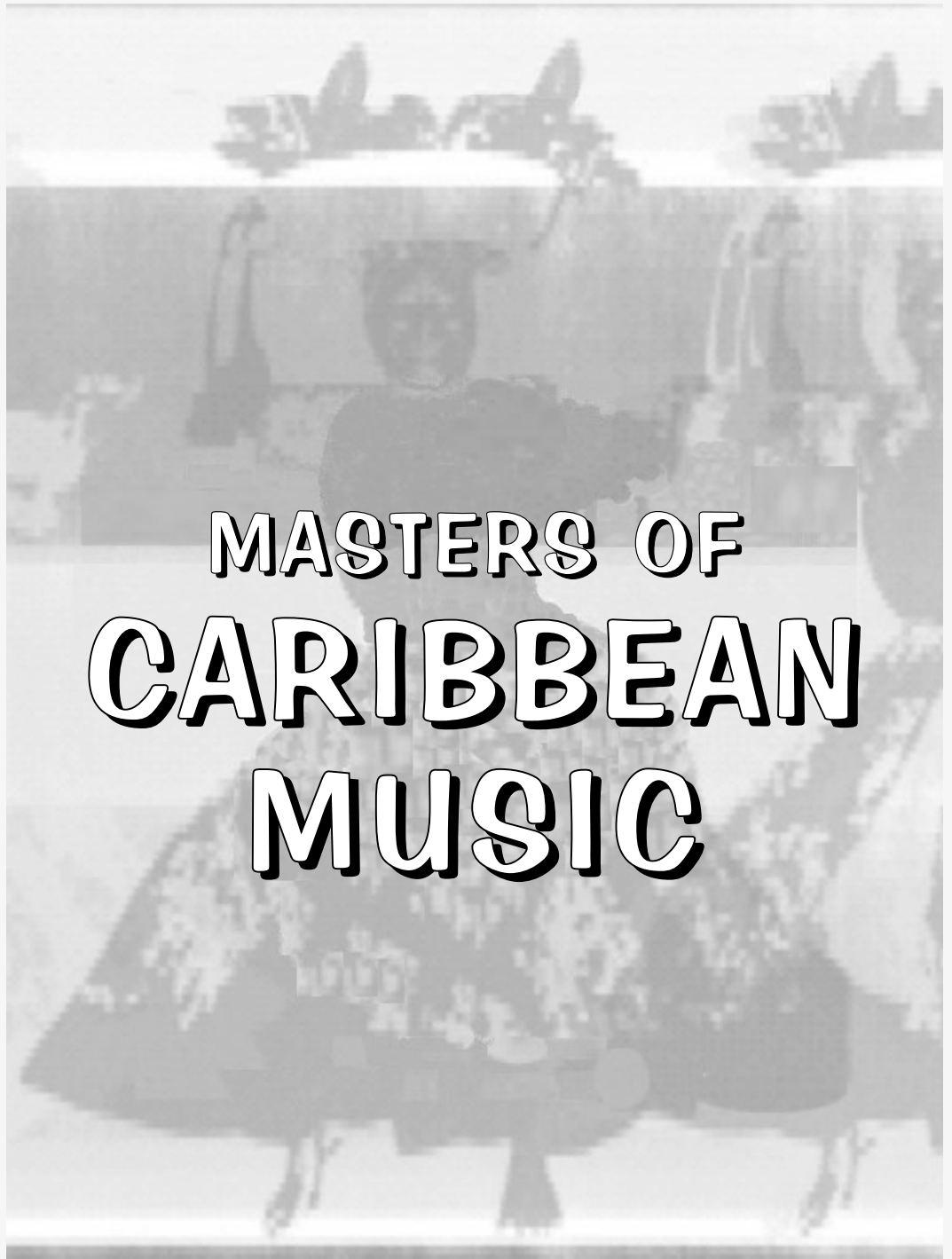
Welcome to *Keynotes*, a performance guide created by the Education Department of the State Theatre in New Brunswick, NJ. These *Keynotes* are designed to be used before and after attending the performance of *Masters of Caribbean Music*.

Here's what you'll find inside these *Keynotes*:

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# Meet the Masters of Caribbean Music 2

At the performance of *Masters of Caribbean Music*, you will hear three different styles of music from island nations of the Caribbean, performed by musicians who grew up in the places where these traditions were born. The performers sing in three different languages: English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole.



## TI-COCA ET WANGA-NÈGÈS

With his small size and dark-brown skin, it's easy to see how Haitian singer David Mettelus earned the nickname "Ti-Coca" ("little bottle of Coca-Cola"). Forming his first group with neighborhood friends in 1971, he has been a professional musician for almost 30 years. His five-member band is called Wanga-Nègès, which means "magic guys." In addition to David (vocals and maracas), the band consists of Allen Juste (accordion), Mathieu Chertoute (tanbou), Wilfrid Bolane (bass), Kesner Bolane (drums), and Richard Hector (banjo and guitar). The music they perform is a traditional Haitian style called *twoubadou* (TWOO-ba-doo).



## ECOS DE BORINQUEN

This group's name is Spanish for "Echoes of Puerto Rico." They have played an important part in the revival of interest in *jibaro*, the traditional music of Puerto Rico's mountain farmers. Their songs tell of country life and its challenges and rewards.

Miguel Santiago Díaz, the founder of Ecos de Borinquen, was born in 1946 in Comerío, a town in the mountainous center of the island. Miguel founded Ecos de Borinquen in 1978. While the membership of the group has changed over the years, its mission of bringing the "echoes" of the *jibaro* musical past into the present and the future has remained constant. The group has performed throughout Puerto Rico and has toured to the United States, Mexico, Venezuela, and Costa Rica.

Ecos de Borinquen's very first recording, entitled *Jibaro Hasta el Hueso* (*Country to the Bone*), received a 2004 Grammy Award nomination for Best World Music Album and a Latin Grammy nomination for Best Folk Album.

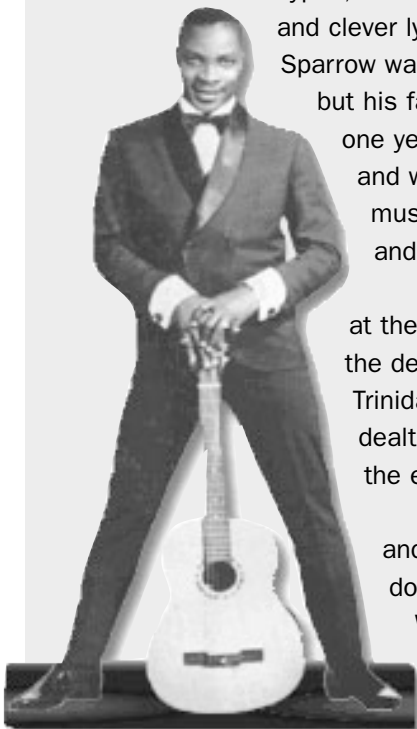
## THE MIGHTY SPARROW

For more than 40 years, Slinger Francisco, better known as "The Mighty Sparrow," has been one of the world's best-known singers of calypso, a song style that features a lilting rhythm and clever lyrics about political and social issues. Sparrow was born in Gran Roi, Grenada, in 1935, but his family moved to Trinidad when he was one year old. He sang in the church choir and was also influenced by the popular music of his day—especially American jazz and pop and Caribbean calypso.

Sparrow had his first international hit at the age of 20, with a song celebrating the departure of American troops from Trinidad. Some of his other songs have dealt with subjects such as human rights, the evils of drug use, and animal cruelty.

A composer, lyricist, singer, comedian, and entertainer, Sparrow has been the dominant figure of calypso for decades.

With over 70 albums to his credit, he has earned the title "Calypso King of the World."



The Caribbean Sea is one of the largest salt water seas in the world, stretching from the northern border of South America north to the island of Cuba, west to the Gulf of Mexico, and east to the Atlantic Ocean. This tropical sea is home to about 7,000 islands and smaller bodies of land. The islands are organized into 24 territories.

The islands of the Caribbean are believed to have been originally populated by different peoples from South and Central America. The earliest evidence of humans in the region dates back about 7,000 years. When the Europeans first discovered the Caribbean islands in 1492, there were three major ethnic groups living there: the **Taíno**, the **Caribs**, and the **Ciboney**. The word “Caribbean” comes from the name of the Carib tribe.

Christopher Columbus landed in the Caribbean on his first voyage and claimed the area for **Spain**. The region became known as the “West Indies” because Columbus mistakenly believed that he had landed in the Indies (southeast Asia) when he had actually reached the Americas. The Spanish made slaves of the native people, forcing them to work in the mines and at other hard labor. European diseases and overwork quickly drove the native population almost to extinction. To replace them, the Spanish began importing slaves from **Africa**.



Not long after the Spanish, other European powers began to compete for lands in the Caribbean. **Great Britain** seized Jamaica in 1655 and held onto it for almost 200 years. After the abolition of slavery, the British began importing hundreds of thousands of indentured servants from **Portugal**, **China**, and especially **India** to take the place of freed African slaves. **France**, **Denmark**, and **the Netherlands** also held territories in the Caribbean.

The **United States** established a presence in the Caribbean in the late 19th century; residents of Puerto Rico and part of the Virgin Islands are now considered American citizens, though they do not hold full voting rights. In the 19th and 20th centuries, some Caribbean islands gained independence from Europe, while today some smaller states are still colonies of European powers.

**HOW DO YOU SAY IT?**  
ca-ri-BEE-in or ca-RIB-be-in?  
Actually, both pronunciations are okay.

## Many Islands, Many Cultures

Reading the history of the Caribbean on this page, how many different peoples/countries can you identify as having influenced the culture of this region? Find all of these places on a world map. Are any of these countries part of your own heritage?

While most people think of calypso (ca-LIP-so) as good-humored dance party music, the roots of this music go back to African slaves brought by the Spanish to work in the sugar plantations of Trinidad. The slaves were forbidden to talk to each other while they worked,

but they were allowed to sing. The singers became skilled at **improvising** words to songs in order to protest against slavery, make fun of their masters, and comment on news of the day.

In the 1780s, large numbers of French began to immigrate to Trinidad. Early forms of calypso were sung in a French-**Creole** language called a **patois**. In 1802, Trinidad became a British colony; by the 19th century, calypso was more often sung in English.

With the abolition of slavery in Trinidad in 1834, calypso became the music of Carnival, a month-long festival leading up to the Christian observance of Lent. Today Carnival is celebrated with elaborate costumes, dancing, music, competitions, and partying.

On “Dimanche Gras” (“Fat Sunday”), the

Sunday before Ash Wednesday, the winner of the calypso competition is crowned Calypso Monarch.

Calypso never lost its original purpose as a means of expressing social and political ideas. Calypso songs have been used to speak out against political corruption and unfair labor practices. In the 1930s, calypso became associated with an anti-British independence movement. When songs were banned or censored by the British colonial government, calypso became a form of underground communication and spreading information.

In the 1950s, artists such as Lord Kitchener, Mighty Sparrow, and Harry Belafonte made calypso popular around the world. People love its irresistibly lilting rhythm, but calypso is equally rich in words and ideas.

**IMPROVISE - to make up something on the spot rather than plan it out ahead of time**

**CREOLE - a person of European descent born in the Caribbean or Latin America**

**PATOIS (pa-TWAH) - a language spoken in a specific region that is a variation of another language**



This postage stamp describes Trinidad and Tobago as the “Land of Calypso.” Pictured is Lord Kitchener, a popular calypso singer from the 1950s.

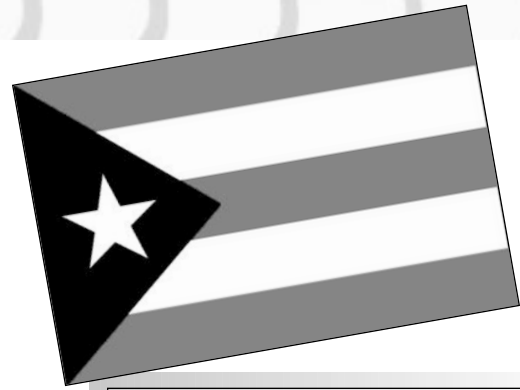
## Trinidad at a Glance

- “Trinidad” is a Spanish word meaning “Trinity.”
- Trinidad is the largest of 23 islands that make up the country of Trinidad and Tobago.
- Trinidad is the southernmost island in the Caribbean. It lies off the coast of Venezuela.
- Trinidad and Tobago achieved independence from Great Britain in 1962.
- South Asian Indians now make up 40 percent of the population of Trinidad.
- Trinidad and Tobago is the leading producer of oil and gas in the Caribbean.
- In addition to calypso, Trinidad is the birthplace of the steel drum or “pan.” Made from the metal top of an oil drum, the instrument has flattened areas that produce different musical pitches when struck with a mallet.

### SOUND FAMILIAR?

Calypso artists take part in competitions judging their ability to create and perform clever songs that comment on contemporary issues. Does this sound like any other type of music you know?

You could call *jíbaro* (HEE-ba-ro) Puerto Rico's "country music." Probably derived from the Taíno Indian language, the word *jíbaro* is used in Puerto Rico to describe the country people of Spanish heritage who live on farms along the island's central mountain range, and also their music. Since their farms were small enough to be operated without using slave labor, the *jíbaros'* retained much of the culture of their homeland, with little influence from the other groups who lived in Puerto Rico. While *jíbaro* music uses some instruments and rhythms from Afro-Caribbean culture, it is still unmistakably Spanish in origin.



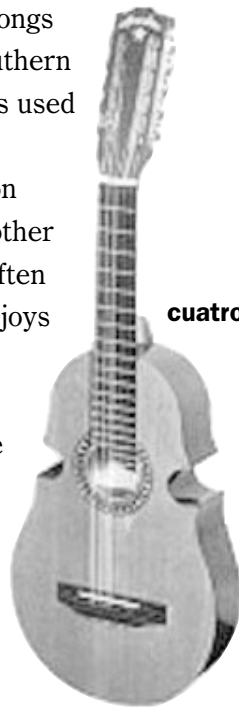
**SEIS - a type of music in 2/4 rhythm that was originally played as a dance for six couples (Seis, pronounced "sace," is Spanish for "six.")**

**AGUINALDO - a type of music based on traditional Spanish Christmas carols**

The music's roots go back as far as the 1600s, to the traditional folk songs and ballads of Andalucia in southern Spain. The main musical forms used in *jíbaro* are the **seis** and **aguinaldo**, which are based on traditional Spanish styles. Another key feature is poetic lyrics—often improvised—which tell of the joys

and sorrows of the Puerto Rican people.

The main instrument of a *jíbaro* band is the cuatro (KWA-trow), a five-stringed guitar. Also heard are the güiro (GWEE-ro), a percussion instrument that was probably invented by the Taíno Indians. It is made from a hollowed gourd and played by dragging a stick over ridges cut into one side, producing an unusual raspy sound. Rounding out the band are maracas, bongo drums, and the singer.



cuatro

Today, many Puerto Ricans associate *jíbaro* music with Christmas because of the tradition of *parrandas*, holiday celebrations where people go from house to house singing *aguinaldos* and begging for *pasteles* (Puerto Rican tamales) and *coquito* (Puerto Rican eggnog).



güiro

## Puerto Rico at a Glance

- "Puerto Rico" is Spanish for "Rich Port."
- The Taíno Indians who lived there before Columbus called the island "Borikén." The Spanish version of that name, "Borinquen," is still used today to refer to Puerto Rico.
- Christopher Columbus landed in Puerto Rico in 1493 and claimed the land for Spain. The island remained a Spanish colony until 1898, when it was awarded to the U.S. after the Spanish-American War.
- Puerto Rico's residents are American citizens, though they do not have a voting representative in the U.S. Congress, nor can they vote in American Presidential elections.
- The political status of Puerto Rico has been an issue of intense—occasionally violent—debate for decades. The three major political parties hold different positions: the Popular Democratic Party (PPD) seeks to maintain the current Commonwealth status, the New Progressive Party (PNP) seeks full U.S. statehood, and the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP) seeks independence from the U.S.

**ISLAND OF CHAMPIONS**  
Though its population is less than four million, Puerto Rico has produced four winners of the Miss Universe pageant and 50 world boxing champions.

*Twoubadou* (TWOO-bah-doo) music has a long and important place in Haitian culture. The word comes from “troubadour,” a medieval poet-musician who wrote and sang songs about courtly love. Like the troubadours of old, the Haitian *twoubadou* is a singer-composer who accompanies himself on songs that tell about the bitterness and humor of love, often using risqué or suggestive lyrics.

*Twoubadou* was developed in the early 20th century. It combined music brought back by Haitian migrant laborers who went to work on Cuban sugar plantations with a Haitian musical style called méringue. The structure of the *twoubadou* song is a simple two-part, verse-chorus form.

In Haiti, *twoubadou* is beloved by the people as their national music, but it is nearly unknown in the rest of the world.

*Twoubadou* groups can be heard in Haiti at *fèt patwon* (patron’s day feasts), during Carnival, at private parties, and in hotels and restaurants frequented by tourists.

A *twoubadou* band usually consists of one or two guitars, a tanbou (barrel drum) played with the hands, a graj (scraper), and a manumba, a large, box-like “thumb piano” on which the player sits and plucks metal “tongues” suspended over a sound hole.

Ti-Coca et Wanga-Nègès use some other instruments, including the accordion, banjo, drums, maracas (a type of shaker) and electric bass.



Ti-Coca

## DRUM TALK

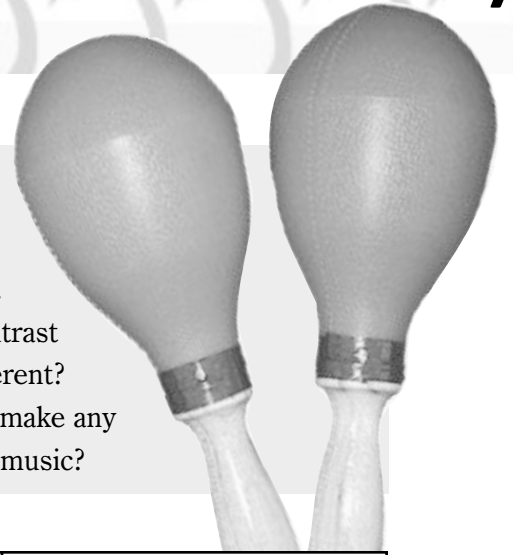
There is a Haitian proverb that says, “Tanbou prete pa janm fè bon dans.” It means, “A borrowed drum never makes good dancing.” What do you think is the meaning of this saying?

## Haiti at a Glance

- Haiti occupies the western third of the island of Hispaniola. It shares the island with the Dominican Republic.
- Once a French colony, Haiti was the first country in the Americas (after the U.S.) to declare its independence, following a revolution fought by freed blacks, mulattos (people of mixed black and white ancestry), and slaves in 1804.
- The official languages of Haiti are French and Creole (a Haitian language based on French). Nearly all Haitians speak Creole.
- Although about 80 percent of the population is Roman Catholic, roughly half the people of Haiti practice Voodoo, a religious tradition from West Africa.
- Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, with 80 percent of the people living below the poverty line. Government corruption, civil war, and natural disasters have contributed to the country’s economic difficulties.

One of the instruments you’ll hear played by Wanga-Nègès is the accordion. This is a diatonic instrument, which means that each button plays two different notes, depending on whether the musician is pushing in or pulling out the bellows, the flexible air chamber in the middle of the instrument.





## A World of Music

Your teacher has a CD with songs by each of the artists in “Masters of Caribbean Music.” There is also a brief description of what each song is about. Listen to songs by all three artists at least a couple of times. Compare and contrast the three styles of Caribbean music. How are they alike and how are they different? Use the table below to record your observations. What conclusions might you make any about the cultures of Haiti, Puerto Rico, and Trinidad just by listening to their music?

	THE MIGHTY SPARROW	ECOS DE BORINQUEN	TI-COCA ET WANGA NÈGÈS
Language			
Instruments			
Tempo (speed)			
Rhythm			
Mood/ Feeling			

## Carnival Time

Trinidad is not the only country with a famous Carnival celebration. Working with a group of your classmates, find out about Carnival traditions around the world. Each one of you should research a different city or country and find out:

- When is Carnival celebrated? How long does it last?
- Who participates in the celebration? How many people?
- What are the special customs (such as costumes, food, parades, competitions) associated with this particular Carnival?

Using this information, your group should create a Carnival poster for each of the countries and cities you’ve researched. The posters should accurately depict the special features of each different Carnival celebration. Display your posters in the classroom and give the rest of the class a guided tour of Carnival around the world!



## Welcome to the State Theatre!

As a member of the audience, you are a crucial part of the performance. Before you arrive at the theater, make sure you know your part!

- ◆ When you enter the theater, follow an usher to your seat.
- ◆ Once the house lights (the lights in the part of the theater where the audience is sitting) go down, focus all your attention on the stage.
- ◆ Attending a live performance is not the same as watching television at home. At the theater, talking, eating, or moving around disturbs the performers and other members of the audience. So watch and listen carefully to the performance.
- ◆ Please don't bring food or beverages into the theater. That includes chewing gum, too.
- ◆ Don't bring cameras, camcorders, tape recorders, or any other recording equipment to the performance. You will not be allowed to use them.
- ◆ If something in the performance is funny, go ahead and laugh. And of course, applaud at the end of the show if you liked what you saw!
- ◆ After the performers are finished taking their bows, stay in your seat until your group gets the signal to leave the theater.



## Resources

### RECORDINGS:

*Caribbean Party.* Putumayo World Music 132.

*Jíbaro Hasta el Hueso: Mountain Music of Puerto Rico by Ecos de Borinquen.* Smithsonian Folkways SFW40506.

*Mighty Sparrow: Volume 1.* Ice Records, 9130.

*The Rough Guide to the Music of Haiti.* World Music Network.

### BOOKS:

*A Brief History of the Caribbean: From the Arawak and Carib to the Present,* by Jan Rogonziński. Plume, 2000.

*Caribbean Currents: Caribbean Music from Rumba to Reggae,* by Peter Manuel. Temple University Press, 1995.

*World Music, Volume 2: Latin and North America, Caribbean, India, Asia, and Pacific - the Rough Guide* (Rough Guide Reference Series), by Simon Broughton (Editor), Mark Ellingham (Editor). Rough Guides, 2000

### INTERNET:

The Mighty Sparrow: [www.mightysparrow.com](http://www.mightysparrow.com)

Lyrics to Ecos de Borinquen songs:  
[www.folkways.si.edu/resources/pdf/40506lyrics.pdf](http://www.folkways.si.edu/resources/pdf/40506lyrics.pdf)



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Continental Airlines is the official airline of the State Theatre.