

**CULTURAL COUNTERPOINTS:  
Examining the Musical Interactions between the U.S. and Latin America**



**Moore, Robin (University of Texas at Austin):  
“The Danzón and Caribbean Musical Influences on Early Jazz”**

**Abstract:**

Music scholars have long lamented the lack of historical data describing the emergence of early jazz repertoire in New Orleans. Not only do no recordings of the music exist prior to 1917, but few written sources from the turn of the twentieth century make any mention of the emergent musical style. As a result, many studies describe jazz as the invention of a few almost mythical figures in isolation, with little reference to earlier performance practice. This paper uses an analysis of the earliest recordings of the Cuban *danzón*, dating from 1905, as a window into the formative years of jazz. The *danzón* is especially significant as the first African-American music ever recorded, and a style known to have been performed in New Orleans beginning in the late 1880s. Analysis suggests (1) that many parallels in form, rhythm, and style exist between the *danzón* and dixieland repertoire, and (2) that instrumentation associated with the final “hot” (partially improvised) sections of the *danzón* bear striking similarities to the clarinet-trumpet-trombone frontline of dixieland. The *danzón* may well have contributed directly to the development of jazz; *danzón* style ties jazz to broader regional developments, and underscores the fact that the histories of Latin American music and music in the United States are fundamentally intertwined.

**How to Cite this Paper:**

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**Editorial Disclaimer:**

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