

JAZZ AND PUERTO RICAN TRADITIONAL MUSIC, A NEW GENERATION OF  
MUSICAL EXPLORATION

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## Abstract

Many musical styles around the world have been born from struggle and search for cultural identity. The same idea applies to Jazz and the Afro-Caribbean music created within the African diaspora and influenced by Latin and European styles in the United States. More recently, the meaning of diaspora has been used to refer to a group of people and some aspects of their culture (Rivera 2010, 104). For older and newer generations of Puerto Rican musicians two traditions have intersected to create a modern form of expression that reaffirms Puerto Rico's musical creativity and contemporary tendency. In 1989 Warren Pinckney wrote the last known paper about jazz made by Puerto Ricans.

Besides Warren Pinckney's article, *Puerto Rican Jazz and the Incorporation of Folk Music: An Analysis of New Musical Direction*, (1989) I have not found another paper or essay published specifically about jazz music made by Puerto Ricans. The contribution and innovation of these musicians and rhythms has been overlooked in most cases or even completely neglected in the literature. This thesis will explore the musical influence jazz has had in traditional Puerto Rican music and vice versa. It will also discuss the modernization and revitalization of traditional Puerto Rican music by incorporating jazz, providing a new visualization of Latin American music. The field research undergirding this thesis was driven by three goals: first, to demonstrate the contribution of Puerto Rican musicians to contemporary Jazz and Latin Jazz; second, to determine how movement back and forth between the United States and the island has fueled both jazz and traditional music; and third, to describe how this movement has revitalized and modernized Puerto Rican musical traditions.

What has emerged is a story that follows an outline of traditional Puerto Rican music and Jazz tradition being melded together. It is a statement of musical identity that has represented jazz musicians on the island for decades. Some of the best musicians and Jazz music have come from the exchange of Puerto Rican diaspora in the United States and the island. By merging Puerto Rico's traditional music into the jazz format, new generations of musicians are being exposed to their roots with a contemporary approach. Puerto Rican musicians found jazz music to be a vehicle to express their musical identities. Because Latin jazz music was already sodden with Cuban influences, Puerto Rican jazz musicians decided to branch out and incorporate their own musical traditions, creating something unique.

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## **Chapter I. Introduction**

### **Statement of the Problem**

In 1989, Warren Pinckney wrote a paper called *Puerto Rican Jazz and the Incorporation of Folk Music: An Analysis of New Musical Directions*. This is the last paper, and perhaps the only paper, about jazz made by Puerto Ricans. These musicians were at the center of the creation of the new form of American music. Composer Juan Tizol is a perfect example; Tizol left a legacy as an innovative composer of jazz, Latin jazz, ballads, and exotica. He was a valve trombone trailblazer and an early transcriber of the music called jazz when it was in its infancy. Tizol's compositions, such as *Caravan*, *Perdido*, *Jubilesta*, *Bakiff*, among others, continue to be recorded (Serrano 2006). I am hoping this work will provide a new perspective of Jazz music and of the so-called "Latin Tinge," a term which will be described in detail later. Cultural identity in the Americas has been the catalyst for the creation of many musical different styles. This idea can also be applied to American Jazz and the Afro-Caribbean music born within the African diaspora, influenced by European musical styles and created in the United States as autochthonous representation of identity.

### **Need for the Study**

The focus of this work explores the musical influence Puerto Rican musicians and traditional music has had on jazz. It aims to demonstrate the contribution of Puerto Rican musicians to contemporary Jazz. There is also the need to encourage the Puerto Rican community as well as others outside the community to discover the influence of Puerto Rican

musicians on jazz as well as jazz music made by Puerto Ricans. As Puerto Rican emigrants fled the island looking for a better life, they took their language, music, and traditions with them. Harsh living conditions and racial discrimination in the United States helped Puerto Ricans hold on even more to their heritage. They tried to make their surroundings more familiar by transplanting as much of the island culture as possible to the barrio (Manuel 2006, 80.)

Another one of the project's objectives is to identify how new and older generations of Puerto Rican musicians view themselves as well as how two traditions intersect to create a modern form of expression that reaffirms Puerto Rico's musical creativity and contemporary tendencies. The work of these artists reflects their bilingual and bicultural experience and fully integrates the diverse music styles (Bailyn 2006). Music programs in different universities around the island, such as the Conservatory of Music and the Inter-American University of Puerto Rico, are educating young musicians in jazz and traditional music. This thesis will also display music education's influence in the development of jazz and the revitalization of traditional music in Puerto Rico.

As a musician who grew up on the island and currently lives in the United States, I have experienced first hand how music draws a people closer to the homeland. The topic for the project came from the desire to affirm my cultural identity as a musician, but most of all as a Puerto Rican. In my musical career I had the chance to play with a jazz ensemble called Sound Jazz from my hometown of Mayaguez. Musicians of the band are part of the *Casa del Joven* (House of the Youth church), owners of Vid 90 (the only jazz radio station on the island) and creators of the Mayaguez Jazz fest. My tenure with the group revitalized my interest of study in the history of jazz and Latin music. Reading about Latin jazz and traditional jazz, I discovered that there was literature written about the contributions of Puerto Rican musicians in jazz music

since its birth, but that there was not much research about Puerto Ricans developing their own brand of jazz music. Traditional music from Puerto Rico and its jazz tendencies have shaped my identity as a musician and educator. Having played this music and knowing that so little research has been done on the subject moved my interest on this topic even further.

### **Research Questions**

Many musical forms were introduced to the island of Puerto Rico due to commercial trade between Europe, the Caribbean, and the United States. Music in Puerto Rico was subject to foreign and commercial influences as well as to differences in race, class, and regional development, and in New York it continued to be protean shaped according to the situation, evolving through time (Glasser 1995, 9). Due to this exchange jazz music was introduced to Puerto Rican immigrants in its early stages. But when was jazz music introduced to Puerto Ricans on the island? What contributions have Puerto Rican musicians made to jazz music?

Interest in modern jazz in Puerto Rico appears to have started in the 1950s, first among musicians and then gradually spreading to the general public, thanks, to a large extent, to Americans from the United States' mainland who were living on the island (Pinckney 1989, 238). Puerto Rican musicians felt the need to express themselves in other musical idioms and found jazz music to be that vehicle. Considering this idea, is the jazz music made by Puerto Rican musicians a way of defining their Puerto Rican identity? How and when was traditional Puerto Rican music incorporated into Jazz?

There seems to be a natural inclination for musicians towards the genre. Papo Vázquez, Rafael Cortijo, Jerry Medina, Eric Figueroa, Jesus Caunedo, and William Cepeda, to name a few, are among the musicians behind the creation of Puerto Rican jazz. With audio recordings, live



performances, interviews, video archives and even sheet music readily available for study, why has so little been published about this style of music particular to Puerto Rico? Though Puerto Rican musicians have played an enormous role in the United States' Latin Music, Puerto Rico's music has been a good deal less influential than Cuba's (Storm Roberts 1999, 10). Because Latin jazz music was already saturated with Cuban influences, Puerto Rican jazz musicians decided to branch out and incorporate their own musical traditions. So what cultural emphasis does jazz made by Puerto Ricans contribute to mainstream jazz music, and is it relevant to this music's social focus?

Musicians and especially pioneer of Puerto Rican jazz Juancito Torres imply that Puerto Rican musicians should communicate musically in a form in which other Puerto Ricans can relate (Pinckney 1989, 246). This explains in part why Torres considers himself a melodic player, particularly of straightforward melodies, because he believes that they are most easily understood by a great majority of listeners (Pinckney 1989, 246-247). The idea of relating to the listener, in this case Puerto Ricans, led to the creation of a style of jazz unique to Puerto Rico, developing the jazz ideal of relating to listeners in a language that is understandable and relatable.

The relevance of Puerto Rican jazz in relation to the jazz world will be uncovered as the research expands with the interview of Puerto Rican musicians. These interviews will show the relevance of Puerto Rican jazz in jazz mainstream and where Puerto Rican Jazz music is headed in the future. The general cultural standpoint of Puerto Rican musicians as well as the literature collected will help convey a story about the history of Puerto Ricans in jazz and how the music evolved to include Puerto Rican musical tradition in its sound.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Some of the participants contacted to be part of the project did not answer back to the interview request. In other cases participants that did agree to be interviewed were not able to make arrangements to meet. The interviews that did take place were complicated to schedule because it took at least two hours of traveling between the town of Mayaguez located on the Westside of the island to the San Juan area located north of the island. This also required to stay for an average of three days each week to meet with participants in different times of the day to their convenience.

### **Assumptions of the Study**

Being part of the jazz scene in Puerto Rico has made the selection of participants for the interview process less stressful. Most participants are fellow musicians with whom I have played or shared the stage. Others are also educators and have even been professors of mine as well. Some of them are from the same town as I am. These situations will help set the stage for a good batch of conversations along with beautiful musical experiences. This study will be limited to this very personal circle of influence.

## Chapter II. Literature Review

*Latin Jazz: The First of the Fusions 1800s to Today* by John Storm Roberts traces the roots of Latin Jazz since the first Hispanic musicians were integrated into American music in the 1800s. The first generation of jazz musicians drew from Latin elements in melody as well as in rhythm. The first Latin influences were felt in New Orleans, a city that was a melting pot of culture and also not far from Mexico or the Caribbean nations for that matter. Roberts mentions the influence Mexican marching bands had on ragtime music in early New Orleans and later St. Louis. Musicians from Puerto Rico and Cuba lived in both of these cities during the late nineteenth-century, leaving an impact on the new music that developed there. Starting in the 1930s, these immigrants provided an infrastructure for United States-based Cuban and Puerto Rican music that proved to be enormously important. Latin jazz would become a rip tide that eventually transformed Jazz in ways that are still not fully recognized. The blend of jazz and Latin elements could be complex even at this early stage (Roberts 1999, 30). Doubtless many more tinges of tango, and maybe danzón and other Cuban rhythms, lurk unrecognized in the enormous body of (mostly available) recorded jazz of the time (Roberts 1999, 30).

Another book by John Storm Roberts *The Latin Tinge: The Impact of Latin American on the United States* (date) covers everything from the merengue wave, a form of traditional music from The Dominican Republic, to the great traditions of salsa and norteña music in Mexico, to the fusion styles of Cubop and Latin rock. Roberts examines the revolutionary importance of Latin music's influence on the popular music scene of the United States. He also sheds new light on a rich and complex subject: the critical contribution that Latin rhythms are making to the unique American musical idiom. In most references that talk about any kind of Latin music, "Latin Tinge" is mentioned. The late great pianist Jelly Roll Morton first used this term to

describe the excitement that has influenced American music over the decades. Also reference is made back to Africa and the influence that came from the different cultures stationed in the Caribbean. Afro-Cuban rhythms are mentioned in the literature as the nucleus of Latin Jazz, more specifically the Habanera and the Rumba. The popularity of ragtime had already established black music as an important ingredient in Tin Pan Alley (Roberts 1999, 48). The tango's popularity brought in its wake a number of "ragtime tangos" that prolonged the association of the rag style with the "ritmo de tango". At least three were published in 1914 (Roberts 1999, 48).

Timothy Brennam's book *Secular Devotion: Afro Latin Music and Imperial Jazz* gives an outlook on how Afro-Caribbean music made its way into the mainstream in the United States and became a phenomenon worldwide. Cuban, Latin, and salsa to disco and rap are overwhelmingly neo-African. Created in the midst of war and military invasion and filtered through largely European outlook, these musical forms are completely modern in their sensibilities; they are in fact the very sounds of modern life (Brennam 2008, 222). Brennam shows how the popular music of the Americas is an act of devotion to an African religious worldview that survived the ravages of slavery and found its way into everyday life. There was, then, a "direct relation between those new immigrants and those rhythms and Afro-Cuban rhythmical patterns that arise in the formation of Jazz" (Brennan 2008, 222). The article written by journalist Ernesto Baylin "Music of Puerto Rico: Jazz" showcases the contributions of Puerto Rican and Cuban musicians in Jazz music and later the birth of Afro-bop and Latin Jazz. Baylin traces back to the creation of Jazz music in New Orleans and the Salsa explosion in the 1960s and 1970s. The main focus of the paper is on how Puerto Rican musicians gave new energy to Jazz music and how it has evolved over the years. Baylin mentions some of the key-contributing

artists that made Latin Jazz famous, like Eddie Palmieri and Tito Puente, but what the paper lacks is an outlook on the new generation of musicians the island has produced as well as the new musical explorations in Puerto Rican Jazz such as mixing Afro-beat with Bomba and Plena.

Raul Fernandez's *Latin Jazz: The Perfect Combination* talks about the birth of Afro-bop and Latin Jazz. Fernandez tells the story of the creation of Salsa music and Mambo incorporating photos and interviews from greats such as Jerry Gonzalez and Tito Puente. Fernandez gives an authentic account of Latin jazz as a combination of Afro-Cuban beats and Jazz sounds that tend to energize audiences. Fernandez traces and showcases the roots and routes of Latin Jazz from its early beginnings to its worldwide status. Toward the end of the 1898 Spanish-American War, the Onward Brass Band was stationed in Cuba as a military band for several months, during which time they heard much of the music of the island. This created an important point of contact between the music of New Orleans and Cuba (Fernandez 2006, 23).

*Jazz* by Gary Giddins and Scott DeVeaux provides a wide outlook into the history of jazz music and the influence it has had on American and world cultures. Giddins and DeVeaux focus on the roots of traditional Jazz from its nineteenth century beginnings, folk music and blues, dance music, ragtime, minstrelsy and marching bands, to the vibrant scene that has captivated audiences throughout the world, including listening guides of classic jazz recordings. Giddins and DeVeaux reflect on the cultural impact and transcendence, social, and political environment in which the music has adapted to remain relevant to current times. It also elaborates on the creation of Afro-bop and Latin Jazz and how this music represents the cultural sector of Latinos in the United States. The new Cuban-Jazz fusion was known as Cu-bop or Afro-Cuban jazz, and its relatively little-known godfather was the trumpeter and arranger Mario Bauza (Giddins and DeVaux 2009, 510).

Roger Gonzalez's thesis *Latin Jazz! A Syncretic Journey from Spain: Cuba, the United States and Back* traces the roots of a musical exchange between Cuba and Spain shared for centuries and how this exchange has been an influence in the United States and the Caribbean. One of the biggest influences on Caribbean music comes from Spain. The *décima* and *decimilla* are two of the best-known literary forms used in lyrical composition in Cuba and Puerto Rico as well as the *cante jondo* that comes from the Spanish flamenco tradition and can be heard in Cuban *son* music as well as Puerto Rican traditional *jíbaro* music. Recurring within the musical traditions of the Caribbean and Spain is their interaction. Previous migration has formed an intrinsic part of Cuban, and American culture. From the 1880s to the First World War more than three million Spaniards departed for foreign destinations (Gonzalez 2009, 69). Now in the twenty-first century, the emigrational movement is reversed, but parallels can be found between these two phases of immigration (Gonzalez 2009, 69). In 2006 the Spanish Department of Immigration released statistics showing that 40.2% of migration to Spain came from Latin America (*Anuario Estadístico de Inmigración*). This reversal appears to have been influenced by social, political, and cultural factors (Gonzalez 2009, 69).

This interchange of musical ideas moving back and forth from Spain to the Caribbean is presented in the paper *Décima, Seis, ' and the Art of the Puertorican 'Trovador within the Modern Social Context* penned by Prisco Hernández. Hernández writes about the birth of traditional Puerto Rican music and the relevance it has in modern times on the island. It also showcases the art of the "décima" and the skill of improvising amongst singers. It also features examples of "trovador" competitions and singing battles where this craft is well known for affirming Puerto Rican creativity, culture, and identity. Hernández also traces how jazz has influenced the traditional phrasing and improvising of the *Cuatro* over the years.

Two top references are the books *My Music, My Flag* by Ruth Glasser and *Cuban Fire: The Story of Salsa and Latin Jazz* by Isabelle Leimarie. In *My Music, My Flag*, Glasser tells the story of the development of music in Puerto Rico and later among the United States diaspora and recalls the golden age of Puerto Rican music in New York City that threads the lives of forgotten musicians and their songs. Glasser also emphasizes the exchange that occurred between musicians in the Puerto Rican diaspora and the island. The ever-changing musical activities of the island provided a constant point of reference and artistic exchange or compatriotas in the mainland (Glasser 1997, 51).

Musicians based in New York City went to Puerto Rico on tours or for family visits, while Boricuas (another name for Puerto Ricans), who could not afford to leave the island for long, spent a few days at a time making records on the mainland (Glasser 1997, 51). On both sides of the ocean (Puerto Rico and the United States), Puerto Rican musicians eagerly watched for and made changes in musical styles and performance opportunities (Glasser 1997, 51) developing their skills as performers as well as composers.

In the book *Cuban Fire: The Story of Salsa and Latin Jazz*, Isabelle Leimarie disseminates popular music from Cuba and its major artists from the 1920s until today. Leimarie moves back and forth between Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the United States. Music created by artists such as Machito, Mario Bauza, Dizzy Gillespie, and Chano Pozo emerged out of contact with Puerto Ricans and African Americans in the city. Latin Jazz broke race barriers and established itself as the musical identity of the new America. This reference book also deals with the incandescent rhythms of Puerto Rico and, to a lesser degree, Santo Domingo, which have been integrated into salsa and Latin Jazz.

The frequently used saying that Cuba and Puerto Rico are two wings from the same bird refers to the fact that both islands share the same heritage: Spanish and African. The two islands have been trading musical knowledge for decades. Both Cuban and Puerto Rican musicians have been collaborating throughout the Caribbean's musical history developing a sound unlike any other. The new sound of Caribbean music became very popular in the 1920s and 1930s traveling back and forth between the continental United States, Cuba, and Puerto Rico and developing at the same time as Rag and Jazz music. The birth of Son, Guanguanco, Bolero, and Guaracha all came from the merging of Spanish and African traditions that made their home in the Caribbean. Musicians constantly traveled back and forth between the islands and the mainland. This continuous exchange fostered creativity (Leymarie 2000, 101).

In 2006 Basilio Serrano wrote an article concerning the contribution of Puerto Rican musicians to traditional Jazz music, "Boricua Jazz Pioneers." Published by Latin beat magazine, the article focuses mainly on the participation of Boricua (Puerto Rican) musicians in Jazz music from its beginnings. It makes mention of pioneers like Rafael Escudero, Ramon Usera, and Ram Ramirez who were accomplished composers, bandleaders, and sidemen in the Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong bands. Innovators in their own right, these musicians opened new musical possibilities for American music. The article mentions two well-known composers who would help change Jazz composition forever. Juan Tizol, creator of the song "Caravan", introduced Latin rhythms into Duke Ellington's Jazz band – broadening the musical pallet of the time. Basillio's work, however, does not mention the new generation of Jazz music and musicians who live in the United States diaspora and those that move back and forth from the Mainland to the island.



Steven Lozas's *Tito Puente and the Making of Latin Music* (date) is the first historical, musical, and culturally in-depth look at the career of Tito Puente and his influence as percussionist and composer on Latin music. Loza brings the man and his music to life through field research and interviews with Puente and close associates like Poncho Sanchez and Jerry Gonzalez. Steven Loza shows how Puente's music grew in tandem with the manifestation of Latin music into its current mix of Afro-Cuban music. Puente's influence on Latin music is defined over the course of half a century. Tito Puente was one of the main figures of Latin Jazz and was called "El Rey de Timbal" (The King of the Timbal) by his peers due to the vast rhythmic vocabulary Puente possessed. He also was a phenomenal composer and arranger taking traditional Jazz standards (such as Dave Brubeck's tune "Take Five") and turning them into danceable Latin Jazz gems. The musical blend of Puente's Latin ensemble also involves the blending of diverse young virtuoso artists – a blend that has characterized all Puente's music and ensembles since his earliest performances and recordings (and helps to explicate Puente's consistent problem with the idea that "crossover" is a recent phenomenon) (Loza 1999, 194).

*Caribbean Currents: Caribbean Music from Rumba to Reggae* by Peter Manuel offers an excellent analysis of the popular musical styles of the Caribbean. Manuel emphasizes that the music of the Caribbean has something to offer for everyone that wants to learn more about their roots and to the ones who do not know about Caribbean music and their heritage. Manuel includes upfront musical analysis and notation that can be understood by casual listeners as well as experienced musical analysts. Caribbean musics have derived from their inherently creole nature, as the product of people at once liberated from Old World traditions but able to draw on them; such musics hold a heightened self-consciousness as being part of mainstream Western Culture and at the same time on its margins (Manuel 2006, 2).

A very important reference for this project is by Robin Moore. *Music of the Hispanic Caribbean; Experiencing Music, Expressing Culture* is a general overview of the music of the Caribbean Islands. Moore employs three themes in his survey of Hispanic Caribbean music: the cultural legacy of the slave trade; the creolizing of the Caribbean musical styles; and diaspora, migration, and movement. Each of these themes leads to discussions about the region's traditional musical genres as well as the new contemporary forms. It serves as a vibrant introduction to the world of the Caribbean's multi-layered rhythms and musical personality such as salsa, plena, bomba, Latin jazz, bolero merengue, and even reggaeton. Moore also focuses on the energy in the history of Latin Jazz, regarding it as a form of music in which performers of all backgrounds have had more room to express themselves, fusing elements from folkloric, popular, or classical styles of music (Moore 2010, 194). Moore ~~but he~~ does not go as far in tracing the roots of Latin Jazz as Isabelle Leimarie's book *Cuban Fire* does.

The book *History of Puerto Rico: A Panorama of its People* by Fernando Pico examines the ways in which developments in the courts and commercial centers of the Americas, Europe, and Africa shaped Puerto Rico, and how these changes have affected the common folk, who have tried since the nineteenth century to take control of their political, social, and economic lives. Pico traces Puerto Rico's history from its geological formation to the present. This is also a very important reference because it covers everything from Puerto Rican Indian culture to the more recent discussion on the class structure of the Puerto Rican nationalist movement in 1950. Pico evidenced the cultural and social development of the island throughout history as an ongoing process more than an accomplished fact. The island's flag was not adopted to shelter only those who are considered virtuous or worthy; it is also a spur in defeat, hope amid silence, and proof of perseverance. It celebrates the island's community of purpose and diversity among

its people (Pico 2006, 314). Although Pico does not cover the music history of the island, this document is still a valuable reference for its cultural and political context.

Another document of significant importance is *Beyond the Island: Puerto Rican Diaspora in 'America' and 'América'*, a dissertation written by Felicia Fahey. In this dissertation Fahey writes about the migration of Puerto Ricans to the mainland looking for a better way of life and their contribution to the Arts and music in the continental United States. The article also points out the segregation between cultures in Puerto Rico. It does not cover, however, the musical innovation of the era, but it does reflect the political atmosphere of those years. It traces the history of Puerto Rican artists, writers, and musicians from the island that left for the United States in search of new inspiration for their work and to enhance their worldview.

Fahey marks the renaissance of art in Puerto Rico during the 1960s and 1970's. During that time art and music went hand in hand with the expression and cultural identity of Puerto Rico's diaspora. As a result, much of twentieth-century Puerto Rican literature, art, and intellectual thought reflect the possible meanings of a liberated and autonomous Puerto Rican nation (Fahey 2001).

Juan Flores' book *The Diaspora Strikes Back* shows the many definitions of cultural identities within the Caribbean's diaspora in the United States. Flores emphasizes transnationalism and reverse flow or "counter-stream" resulting from the massive circular and return migration and the ongoing remittance of cultural values and practices through friends, relatives, and the media. Flores charts the Caribbean diaspora's boomerang trajectory with clarity, drawing from an array of literature and breaking significant ground in the discussion of cultural remittances. According to Flores, political and cultural reasons for migratory motives and outcomes may in many cases override strictly economic ones (Flores 2009, 35).

Continuing on the topic of the Puerto Rican diaspora, Jorge Duany wrote a book in which he states that Puerto Ricans maintain a vibrant identity that bridges two very different worlds, the Island of Puerto Rico and the United States mainland. According to Duany, the 1930s-generation helped to define the contemporary discourse on the Puerto Rican nation based on five ideological premises (Duany 2002, 21). Two of these five discourses stand out. The first considers the Spanish language as the cornerstone of Puerto Rican identity, as opposed to English, which is typically viewed as a corrupting influence on the vernacular (Duany 2002, 21). The American government and Puerto Rican elites tried numerous times to make English the first language of the island. Many Puerto Ricans viewed that proposed change as an attack on their culture and identity.

The fifth discourse states that local culture, especially folklore, provides an invaluable source of popular images and artifacts that are counter-posed to icons of United States culture, avoiding unwanted mixtures (Duany 2002, 21). Both of these statements affirm Puerto Ricans' awareness of their own identity and cultural roots even though the island has been a territory of the United States for over eighty-five years. The exchange between Puerto Rican musicians of the island and the United States diaspora has generated the development of a jazz style specific to Puerto Ricans. Information acquired from the literature research will help in the construction of a sequential story, which will trace the contribution of Puerto Rican musicians in jazz music.

Various books on Latin jazz, contemporary and traditional jazz history, history of the Puerto Rican diaspora, and the contributions of Puerto Rican musicians in jazz as well as numerous recordings were used as reference. These references will be key in identifying the musical tendencies and transformation of the music over time. The numerous readings taken

from books, articles, essays, and papers will help create a chronological timeline of the history of jazz and Afro-Caribbean styles and how these intersect and created Latin jazz.

Also the information suggests that political, social and economic changes in Puerto Rico have led to movement back and forth from the United States to the island, therefore paving ways for musical ideas to travel, be assimilated, developed and eventually incorporate Puerto Rican traditions. Duality of the Puerto Rican diaspora in the United States and the island is also explained in the literature, suggesting that this has also encouraged Puerto Ricans to embrace their identities as Puerto Rican and as United States citizens without losing their heritage. This strong willingness of Puerto Ricans has filtered thru the music, demonstrating resilience to not lose their roots and at the same time welcoming new concepts.

### **Chapter III. Methodology**

Most of the living pioneers and of the genre reside in the island of Puerto Rico while others are spread out between New York City, Chicago, and Philadelphia. However, the new generation of Puerto Rican jazz musicians travels back and forth from New York to the island – especially during the Holiday season.

Using qualitative methods the research will make use of relative case studies, narratives, and a final ethnography. In order to write a proper ethnography I have engaged in fieldwork that required me to travel to Puerto Rico and New York City. There a series of interviews took place, as well as observance and participation in performances of jazz and Puerto Rican traditional music. The interviews helped to connect the perspectives between musicians from different generations. They have enabled me to discover their motivations for making this music and what it means to them and also helped in determining their worldviews, belief systems, and everyday life. The participants' perspectives on how traditional Puerto Rican music and jazz music merged and developed over time were very crucial for my work.

My goal with these interviews is to make connections between the literature, perspectives, and knowledge of the participants who as insiders have broad experience in teaching and playing both jazz and Puerto Rican music. The purpose is to create a chronological account of the influence of Puerto Rican musicians in jazz and Latin jazz and a timeline for when traditional Puerto Rican music was incorporated into jazz and that fusion's development. The participants for the project have been contacted via email and phone. The interview process has illustrated each individual's opinions on the effects they see this music having in Puerto Rican society in the diaspora of the United States and the island. A list of participants was made for the interviews. From the list some twenty participants were chosen. Twelve are fellow musicians of

Puerto Rican jazz and traditional Puerto Rican folk music from the island and the United States. Two former professors from the Inter-American University of Puerto Rico and two teachers from the School of Art in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, will be asked to become a part of this study. Oscar Correa, owner of Vid90 the jazz radio station in Puerto Rico, along with Pedro “Crawford” Castillo who is part of the Authentic Collectors of Popular Music of Puerto Rico were also interviewed.

As mentioned in the introduction, most Puerto Rican jazz musicians travel back and forth from New York to the island especially during the Holidays. That is why the months of December and January were the best time to catch them visiting family and playing shows in Puerto Rico. Travel arrangements to the island were scheduled from the 16<sup>th</sup> of December to the 7<sup>th</sup> of January of 2014-2015. During the time spent on the island, I toured the towns of Mayaguez, San Juan, Santurce, Caguas, Cupey and Old San Juan to interview participants and participate in performances.

Contacting musicians was done a month prior traveling making sure that the prospects will be in Puerto Rico are available for the interviews. An estimate of three weeks to complete in-person interviews was estimated including attendance to shows from the participants with the intention of experiencing their music in a live setting. To formalize the project I submitted an IRB form for approval to Liberty University. Also permission forms were used with participants in order to keep their opinions and points of view confidential. Also the participants knew they could withdraw from the study at anytime by e-mailing or calling me. Direct quotes or opinions were kept anonymous, unless otherwise noted. Names and discographies of some participants as well as others are were used as reference with their permission.

## Chapter IV. Research Findings

### **Puerto Rican Traditional Music and American Jazz: A Historical Background**

Puerto Rican culture is mostly identified with the figure of the mountain dweller or “jíbaro” (Rivera, 2010 1-2). The first account of this legendary character was portrayed as an impoverished, hardworking citizen oppressed by the Spanish empire. But by the 1950s with the formation of the nationalist political party, the image of the “jíbaro” changed. The literary movement found some writers referring to the mountain dwellers as the foremost image of the Puerto Rican, romanticizing this image but neglecting the African heritage altogether (this happened in other Caribbean islands as well) and epitomizing Puerto Ricans with European descent exclusively (Rivera, 2010 1-2).

Others were defenders of the black image, but in the creole elite’s eyes the coast dwelling Africans were not part of the Puerto Rican heritage; only the lighter skinned people living in the north and center of the island could be named as such. From all of this back and forth of what could be considered a real Puerto Rican, folk music and the new literary movement were born (Fahey 2001, 1). “Jíbaro” music became the voice and the identity of the mountain people lyrically depicting the main issues that were effecting the population. On the other hand the “bomba” and “plena” which emerged from the Africans in the coast protested against the unjustified exclusion of the black blood line into the mainstream of Puerto Rican culture and the hardships endured by the slave trade and its aftermath. This marked the beginnings of an authentic sound that was to become the true Puerto Rican identity as well as the new music from the Caribbean (Fahey 2001, 1). The traditional music of the Puerto Rican “jíbaro” or “campesino” evolved from the music of the Spanish soldiers, farmers, and artisans who settled



the island in the early sixteenth century. Most of these early settlers came from the southern regions of Spain: Andalusia and Extremadura. They brought with them the traditional romances (ballads) and shorter lyrical forms such as the “seguidilla” and the “copla”, as well as their instruments, especially the guitar which was portable and suitable for accompanying these songs (Hernandez 2009, 1). Some of these settlers eventually moved to the interior of the island, where they lived in the relative isolation from the coast.

Their music developed unique characteristics. After three centuries of continuous evolution within its new social context, the music of the Puerto Rican highlands, “la música de la Montana”, was recognizably different from the Andalusian music of the mainland. Present studies provide information on the main characteristics of “jíbaro” music and consider some of the factors of adaptation of this tradition in the current cultural context (Hernandez 1993, 1-2). A very important characteristic quality in musicians and singers in the Caribbean is their innate ability to improvise. The lyrical structure both in Cuba and Puerto Rican traditional music is based upon the lyrical structure of the “decimal,” which comes from the Spanish influence.

The “décima” first became popular in 16th century Spain, and was eventually adopted by many of the colonies of Hispanic America. Most of the cultures in Latin America where of Catholic belief therefore we can see the influence in the use of parallel octaves, fourths and fifths used in liturgical chants (Gonzalez 2009, 34). Although usually grouped together, bomba y plena are actually two entirely different types of music that are coupled with dance. Bomba purely African, was brought over by black slaves who worked on the island's sugar plantations around the 17th century. It is a rhythmic music using barrel-shaped drums covered with tightly stretched animal skins and played by hand. One large drum (burleador) plus a smaller drum called a subidor are used produce in this style. The drums are accompanied by the rhythmic beating of

sticks and maracas to create a pulse that tides to the drum patterns. Bomba is described as a dialogue between dancer and drummer. Although most scholars are uncertain about the exact origin of bomba, it is divided into different rhythmic variations, such as the Holandé Eubá, Cocobalé, Yubá and Síca.

In the case of plena, it is clear that the music has roots in Africa. The plena became popular in the early part of the 20th century in the sugar-growing areas along the southern coast of the island. It provided the slave population and the peasantry with a musical expression of their life. The music was hailed as the “periódico del pueblo” (newspaper of the people) because the lyrics talked about the everyday life of the common folk of the island.

The origin of the danza is not clear, but most scholars agree that it began around the middle of the 19th century (around 1840). During the first third of the 19th century the Spanish contradanza or "counter dance" was very popular in the island. This was a very rigid dance with in which the dancers had to make specific movements according to the directions of the bastonero (dance director). The danza is arguably the highest artistic expression of the Puerto Rican culture. It is the musical genre of the New World that most resembles European classical music. It is a genre very rich in melodic and harmonic content with a very deep character.

Congress’s passage of the Jones act, which made Puerto Ricans citizens of the United States, on March 1917 and the declaration of war with Germany a month later, fallowed a flurry of registration in which 236,000 Puerto Ricans were drafted (Glasser 1995, 53). Some of these men, recruited directly from the island, were among the pioneers that introduced jazz to France during World War I (Glasser 1995, 52). Although relatively few in number, Puerto Ricans formed a particularly prominent part of the United States Army’s most famous musical ensemble, the 369<sup>th</sup> Infantry “Hellfighters” Band. Led by Lieutenant James Reese Europe

(Glasser 1995, 55). Europe himself recruited these men around 18 in total, although still to date it is unknown how he discovered that Puerto Rican musicians were proficient in sheet music reading and could play several instruments. The coming together of African-American and Puerto Rican musicians in the context of World War I and their interactions in the ensuing decades were conditioned by the parallels, overlaps and differences (Glasser 1995, 55). Most of the Puerto diaspora settled in the city of New York, hence the name “Nuyorican” to describe the Puerto Rican living in Harlem that later became known as Spanish Harlem. New York City was the center of Puerto Rican music because of its recording studios, its media infrastructure, and its concentrated market; indeed New York has been the largest Puerto Rican city for several decades (Manuel 2006, 83). Puerto Rican musicians became fluent in all type of Latin styles like Cuban son, “guaracha” and “bolero” playing in various musical settings. Musicians from Latin America and the Hispanic Caribbean that migrated to in New Orleans contributed directly to the development of what is called jazz today. The interaction between Latin musicians as well as Anglo and African-American performers cushioned what was to become known as the “new sound” (Baylin, 2006).

Like Caribbean music, Jazz has many roots including the tribal drums so familiar to Afro-Americans, gospel, ragtime and blues, but clearly developed into a unique genre typified by spontaneous melodic phrasing. Those who play jazz have often expressed the feelings that jazz should remain undefined jazz should be felt. Many hold that jazz was born in New Orleans in the 1890's and subsequently travelled up the Mississippi River to Memphis, St. Louis and Chicago (Baylin 2006). As a southern port city, New Orleans was an exposed city to the sounds of the Caribbean and Mexico and had a large, well-established black population (Fernandez 2002, 14). All the elements were present for the development of new music at the turn of the 20th century.

Musical ideas were traded along with tobacco and sugar in this busy port city. African drums, outlawed in most of North America, could be heard on select days in New Orleans's Congo Square. Minstrels, fiddlers, and singers of various kinds inhabited the street corners (Fernandez 2002, 14). Different cultures formed the melting pot that was New Orleans and flourished the many enriched musical styles that would make their way into jazz.

Jazz has enjoyed periods of fairly widespread popularity, with significant periods such as the "jazz age" of the 1920's, the "swing era" of the late 1930's and "modern jazz" of the late 1950's in which Latin jazz started to evolve (Fernandez 2002, 15). After the jazz clubs in New Orleans were closing down, musicians made their way north to Chicago. The city became the focal point for jazz in the early 1920's. New York City contributed as well to the development of jazz (Fernandez 2002, 14-16). The city was also the center of the music publishing business and was the laboratory where other influences found their way into jazz. There began the incorporation of the piano into jazz due to the influence of ragtime music (Baylin, 2004).

In the 1920's, New York City was home to pioneering orchestras that would greatly affect jazz history. By the late 1920's the capitol of jazz had shifted from Chicago to New York. During the next two decades there were many groups playing throughout the United States in cities such as Kansas City, St. Louis, Detroit and Oklahoma City. With such diverse roots and equally diverse expressions of the genre, it is very difficult to say precisely just what jazz music is and what sets it apart from other genres. Today, the dialogue over what is jazz often plays out in the dichotomy between traditional and modern jazz (Baylin, 2004).

Traditional jazz for example is emotive and sensuous where modern jazz is more abstract and cool. Traditional jazz is meant for dancing with a tonal structure that can be easily recognized, while modern versions are intended for listening and characterized by dissonance or

tonal schemes. The ability to play the blues has always been the mark of all jazz musicians, who then use the blues framework in their music, despite the fact that the blues has a history independent from jazz. A number of the early jazz performers relied on the blues for the driving force behind their musical efforts (Fernandez, 2002 15-16).

A New York trumpeter and “conguero” of Puerto Rican decent, Jerry González, is a very important figure in Latin jazz from the post Cu-Bop. His group, the Fort Apache Band, set the standard for integrating true, folkloric-based Afro-Cuban rhythms into the modern small group jazz vocabulary. The Fort Apache Band defined the sound of Latin jazz throughout the 1980s and 1990s. One of the most important innovators of the 1960s through the 1980s was Nuyoricana pianist, composer, and arranger Eddie Palmieri, whose writing and performance style reflected a heartfelt commitment to both modern jazz and Latin dance rhythms, especially salsa. Eddie Palmieri was the recipient of the 2006 Grammy Award in Latin Jazz.

Although jazz may be relatively new to the island (if we acknowledge the fact that the Puerto Rican branch of the jazz idiom flourished in the 1960s), as mentioned before Puerto Rican participation goes back as far as the early 1900s. The most influential early jazz pioneer was, arguably, Juan Tizol. He was a valve trombone player, bandleader and an early transcriber of jazz music when it was in its infancy. Tizol's compositions, such as “Caravan”, “Perdido”, “Jubilesta”, “Bakiff”, among others, continue to be recorded (Serrano, 2009). It is important to mention that Caravan is one of the most recorded jazz standards to this day including the famous rendition by Art Blakey & the Jazz Messengers in the 1962 album by the same name. One of first boricuas to receive some recognition in the genre of Latin jazz is Rafael Escudero. He was born on April 10, 1898, and was known in the U.S. jazz circles. Today, however, Escudero is largely forgotten. Nevertheless, this native of Manatí was an instrumental link between the

fledgling jazz bands of Washington D.C. and New York and the musicians who came from Puerto Rico. Escudero has been identified as one who successfully recruited musicians from Puerto Rico and found places for them to play in the continental U.S.A (Serrano 2009).

Escudero formed part of the Fletcher Henderson Orchestra, considered the most popular African-American band in New York during the 1920s. Although his band was extremely trendy, when Henderson was contracted in 1924 to play in the Roseland Ballroom opposite a white band, the white musicians objected. A few months later, they quit in protest. As a dark-skinned islander, at this time in history, this experience was probably one of multiple encounters with racism in the United States mainland (Serrano 2009). Escudero left Henderson's band to join the Detroit-based McKinney's Cotton Pickers, led by Don Redman (Serrano 2009). In 1928, he recorded with the Cotton Pickers and later, became a member of the Louis Armstrong band. Following Escudero we find another of "Puerto Rico's premiere band leaders in the middle 20th century, Ramón "Moncho" Usera" (Serrano, 2009).

He developed his first bands in New York City and later became a bandleader, composer and arranger in his native Puerto Rico. By the time he arrived in the U.S, Usera was a well-trained musician who played various instruments including the piano. In 1929, Usera eventually returned to New York, where he joined the Noble Sissle Orchestra. He left the jazz scene to return to the Latin American where he participated in different recording sessions and traveled worldwide. Usera was a composer of different musical genres such as bolero, jazz and R&B. Among his compositions, we find the tune "Under the Creole Moon", which he wrote with Sidney Bechet and Noble Sissle (Serrano, 2009).

Rogelio Ramírez (also known as Roger or "Ram") was born in San Juan on September 15, 1913. He arrived on Ellis Island in 1920. Ramírez was an accomplished pianist who was

comfortable in swing and bop settings. He was raised in New York and by the age of thirteen was already a professional musician. Ram Ramirez, as he was known in the jazz scene, was also a composer. He wrote the piece *Lover Man*, a tune that is considered jazz standard and has been recorded by numerous artists, including the great Duke Ellington (Serrano, 2009). He also backed the legendary Ella Fitzgerald and worked with Frankie Newton and Charlie Barnet in 1942. In 1944, he joined the John Kirby Sextet eventually forming his own trio (Serrano, 2009)

Fernando Arbello was one of several trombonists from the island who made their way to the early U.S. jazz scene. He was born in Ponce in 1902, and as a youngster, he headed for the U.S. mainland with the skills he learned at home. Once in the States, Arbello had tenures with several great bands including those led by Jimmie Lunceford, Fletcher Henderson, Claude Hopkins, and Chick Webb (Serrano 2009). He gained a reputation as a superb trombonist and also a jazz composer when there were few in the genre. His best-known composition is “*Big Chief de Sota*” which he wrote in collaboration with famed Andy Razaf. Fernando Arbello had many opportunities to record with the numerous bands with which he had extended stints starting in the 1920s. He recorded with the Henderson, Lunceford, Hopkins bands, in addition to Fats Waller, Roy Eldridge and Rex Stewart, to name a few. He was essentially a trombonist but also had limited experience with the tuba and the trumpet (Serrano, 2009). Rafael Hernández was born in Aguadilla in 1893. He received his musical training on the island, where he became a member of various bands, including one led by Manuel Tizol.

Hernández was band mate of both Juan and Francisco Tizol. He participated in the earliest recording sessions held on the island with the Tizol led bands (Serrano, 2009). His initial experiences with jazz came as a member of the Hell-Fighters, the band that is credited with introducing jazz to France. When the Hell-Fighters returned to the U.S., Hernández participated

in the first recordings sessions of the band. In March of 1919, he was a member of a four-piece trombone section and among the recordings was one titled “The Moaning Trombone”. He was one of 20 Puerto Ricans who comprised the band (Serrano, 2009).

He achieved substantial recognition as a composer and bandleader in both of those countries before returning to Puerto Rico. Hernández was incredibly versatile; he played the violin and the guitar, sang, and was also a premier composer. Rafael Hernández is considered Puerto Rico's greatest composer and his compositions reflect his varied musical experiences (Serrano, 2009). He excelled especially as a “bolero” and “danza” composer. Rafael Duchesne “was among the musicians recruited by Lieutenant Europe for the Hell-Fighters band in 1917 when he proved to be a standout clarinet soloist (Serrano, 2009).

Duchesne did not stay in the States-side jazz scene too long. However, he was here long enough to record with the Noble Sissle band. He also recorded in Europe; and after the 1919 recordings with James Reese Europe, Duchesne participated in a least six jazz recording sessions as a clarinetist, as well as alto and tenor saxophonist, between 1929 and 1932 (Serrano, 2009). Later in his career he became a music teacher and dedicated himself to his students and composing music. He was fluent as an arranger and composer of different styles by excelled in “danzas” and boleros. Francisco "Paco" Tizol y Tizol was born on October 10, 1893. He was the son of a distinguished island government leader, José de Jesús Tizol. At an early age, he went to live with his uncle Manuel Tizol and the family that included Juan Tizol (Serrano, 2009).

Francisco Tizol played the bass and the cello in Puerto Rico and was also known to be a bandleader and arranger. Once in the U.S. mainland, Paco Tizol entered the jazz world as his cousin Juan Tizol did. Paco at one point collaborated with Eubie Blake, Noble Sissle and other jazz greats in the production of the very successful Broadway revue, “Shuffle Along”. That show



band also included “Moncho” Usera, Rafael Escudero and a group of Puerto Rican dancers (Serrano, 2009). “Shuffle Along” was considered the first successful all African American Broadway show. It is also considered the catalyst to a cultural surge among Black Americans known as the Harlem Renaissance (Serrano, 2009). Paco Tizol left the jazz scene to play more often in Latin American venues in the rapidly growing Latin community of New York. At one point he joined a band led by the great Rafael Hernández and that resulted in a series of recordings (Serrano, 2009). Tito Puente was Born Ernesto Antonio Puente, Jr. on April 20, 1923 in Spanish Harlem; N.Y and is of Puerto Rican descent. Puente is often credited as “El Rey” (the King) of the timbales and “The King of Latin Music” He is best known for dance-oriented mambo and Latin jazz compositions that helped keep his career going for over 50 years. Tito Puente served in the Navy; as many of the Cuban and Puerto Rican musicians also did, for three years. During World War II after being drafted in 1942 he was discharged with a Presidential Commendation for serving in nine battles. The GI Bill allowed him to study music at Juilliard School of Music, where he completed a formal education in conducting, orchestration and theory (Serrano, 2009).

During the 1950s, Puente was at the height of his popularity, and helped to bring Afro-Cuban and Caribbean sounds, like “mambo”, “son”, and “cha-cha-cha”, to mainstream audiences. He was so successful playing popular Afro-Cuban music that many people mistakenly identifies him as Cuban. Later, he moved into more diverse sounds, including pop music, “bossa nova” and others, eventually settling down with a fusion of Afro-Cuban and Latin jazz genres that became known as “salsa” (a term that he and most musicians disliked). Songs like “Oye Como Va” Composed by in 1963 and later covered by Santana where staples of Puente’s new Latin jazz sound (Serrano, 2009).

### **Puerto Rican Traditional Music and American Jazz: A New Generation of Musical Evolution**

North Americans living on the island around the 1950s introduced jazz music to Puerto Rico. Charlie Rodriguez and pianist Luisito Benjamin were among the most outstanding modern jazz musicians on the island, and Jimmy Steven's Hot Ten was one of the better-known jazz-oriented bands that also occasionally played jazz-tinged Latin American dance music (Pinckney 1989, 238). Around this time the Club de Jazz in San Juan was featuring jazz performances and jam sessions by local musicians and U.S. servicemen stationed on the island (Pinckney 1989, 238). Pianist Paul Neves moved to San Juan from the mainland and founded the Caribbean Jazz Workshop. The gatherings served as a center where musicians could meet to rehearse and hold jam sessions. Neve, considered a major jazz pioneering San Juan, has been credited with helping to disseminate modern jazz techniques in Puerto Rico (Pinckney 1989, 239).

There were few locations where jazz was played on the island, much less to a willing listening audience (Pinckney 1989, 238). One of the most noted pioneers of Latin jazz in Puerto Rico was Victor Orta Salaman. Salaman was the founder of a big band jazz orchestra on the island in the 1960s. He was a pianist who recruited a number of musicians devoted to the jazz genre, including trumpeters Juancito Torres, Elías Lopes, Lito Pena and Tommy Villarini; drummer Tony Sánchez; and saxophonists Roberto Jiménez, Mario Ortíz and Emilio Reales, among many others (Baylin 2009). Influenced by the jazz-fusion movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s, Puerto Rican musicians began to experiment with these new sounds. Most respondents mention David Sanborn as a huge influence in their musical composition. Respondents call it a “point of reference” for getting to know jazz. After discovering this they went on to study more traditional jazz and began to incorporate that as well.

A very unique example of the mixture of jazz with Puerto Rican folk music can be found on Rafael Cortijo's album *Cortijo and His Time Machine*, in which four of the seven song titles are explicitly linked to Puerto Rican folk music genres (Pinckney 1989, 244). Many musicians attribute this recording to be amongst the first actual Puerto Rican jazz album in the late 1970s. Another attempt to fuse jazz and Puerto Rican folk music occurred in the early 1980s when saxophonist Jesus Caunedo produced an album entitled *Puerto Rican Jazz* (Pinckney 1989, 247).

While both Cortijo and Caunedo drew from Puerto Rican folk music, their approaches differed significantly. Cortijo's album, for instance, employed vocals, while Caunedo's album was purely instrumental; Cortijo used original songs, while Caunedo consciously chose standard Latin American songs; Cortijo incorporated several Puerto Rican folk music idioms—the plena, the bomba, and the aguinaldo—while Caunedo utilized only the seis chorreo (Pinckney 1989, 247). In the 1970s Juancito Torres and Jesus Caunedo were also doing workshops in the San Juan area. During this time, saxophonist Charlie Rodriguez co-produced a television series called "Jazz Workshop," which was broadcast over the government's television network (Pinckney 1989, 239).

An association for promoting jazz called Don Pedro Productions was established in San Juan in the early 1970s by jazz aficionado Ramon Soto, who first became actively involved with jazz while working in a jazz club in New York City in the 1960s (Pinckney 1989, 239). Don Pedro Productions serves mainly to sponsor jazz concerts in Puerto Rico. (Soto also manages a record store and is affiliated with a publishing company, both of which bear the name Don Pedro.) The name "Don Pedro" was taken from Pedro Albizu Campos (d. 1965), a pivotal figure in the modern civil rights movement in Puerto Rico who, in some ways, was to Puerto Rico what Martin Luther King, Jr. was to the United States (Pinckney 1989, 239-240). Because Soto views

jazz as a symbol of freedom from oppression, he uses the name "Don Pedro" to symbolically reaffirm Campos' views-specifically, to express the historical dilemma of the colonization of Puerto Rico (Pinckney 1989, 239-240). During the 1970s and 1980s, Don Pedro Productions has sponsored performances by numerous jazz musicians, including Betty Carter, Dexter Gordon, Jimmy Heath, Frank Foster, Jackie McLean, and Eddie Gómez, to name a few.<sup>14</sup> Another organization, the Club de Jazz of Carolina, also sponsored jazz concerts and provides rehearsal space for jazz musicians (Pinckney 1989, 239-240).

One of the first venues to host a jazz jam night was called "The Place" headed by trombonist Papo Vázquez. Vázquez is considered to be the pioneer of modern Puerto Rican jazz-fusions according to respondents. Throughout his time back in Puerto Rico with Batacumbele in the 1980s, he began to experiment with traditional Puerto Rican bomba and jazz. In 1993 he recorded his first album as a bandleader called *Breakout*. He later released *Pirates & Troubadours, At the Point, Vol. 1* followed by *At The Point, Vol. 2* the next year. His projects evolved into the Mighty Pirates Troubadours, an "Afro- Puerto Rican jazz band" including musicians such as Roberto Cepeda from the famous Familia Cepeda from Puerto Rico, Milton Cardona and Anthony Carrillo on percussion, John Benitez on bass and Dafnis Prieto on drums. The group has performed at festivals around the world and released *Carnival in San Juan* in 2003, followed by *From The Badlands* in 2007.

Around 1983 an American hotel branch manager (his name was not remembered by respondent) arrived in Mayaguez (a town near the west coast of Puerto Rico) to run The Mayaguez Hilton hotel. A pianist by the name of Madu Diane was already playing jazz in the San Juan area and for whatever reason he ended up getting hired at the Hilton. On Mondays you would have a group called the Other Side lead by a trumpet player from Washington State called

George Snider. He brought American musicians to play along side Puerto Rican musicians, which lead to some interesting music making and jamming. During the winter months a lot of the so call “snow birds” come to the island. These were Northerners escaping the cold and a lot of these were singers and instrument players that dabbled in American pop music. Around that time singer and later Inter-American University professor Deborah Seals came to the island, which was a classically trained singer. She found out about the jazz being played at the Hilton and ended up singing with different groups. In 1984-1985 the jazz movement was becoming strong with Mondays and Madu doing his jazz workshop (Interview, 1/4/2015).

Wednesdays were Latin jazz nights with George Padilla on percussion, Cali Rivera on sax and guitar and Jose Nelson Ramirez on acoustic piano and bass pedals. At the same time a group named Mar del Sur was also forming. This group was the conception of violinist and later professor Nicki Aponte. Luis “Tatito” Torres, Tony Acencio and Nicky and Mar del Sur with Hector Colon on drums Avelito Pabon on keys (Joss Stone) Nicky Cansel on bass and Nicki played guitar and violin, comprised the group for the concert. After the concert Mar del Sur went on to record an album that same year. This was a state of the art studio, now known as Playback was and still is the to go to studio on the island. The jazz jam at the Hilton lasted for a lot of years (Interview, 1/4/2015).

Danny Batistini (piano), Tito Escapa (drums), Nestor Torres (Flute) are a few names that came out of Mayaguez jazz scene. Later in 1994-1995 another gathering called Heineken jazz jam sessions was born, helping to propel the jazz scene even more. A radio station called Radio Color also began to play jazz music in their regular programming at least a record every hour. This was mainly due to the efforts made by Jose Nelson Ramirez who took over the radio station’s programming. The station catered to all kinds of music as well. Shortly after Ramirez

went on to do his own radio show called Colors of Jazz aptly named after the radio station. An event producer that worked for Mendez & Co. (company that now runs Heineken jazz fest) contacted Ramirez to put together a house band for the Heineken jazz jams. He then brought in Luis “Tatito” Torres on guitar, Tony Acensio on bass and Hector Matos on drums. For these jams they usually had a special guest for the night and for Latin jazz night a percussionist was added (Interview, 1/4/2015).

Ramirez also brought in different bass players like Egui Sierra, how now plays with the group Cafezz. The first year of the Heineken jazz jams were at the Holiday Inn hotel in Mayaguez. A lot of great musicians have come out from the Westside of the island that are now international musicians, like Dave Valentin, Giovanni Hidalgo, Pedro Guzmán, and José Gonzalez among others also participated in the weekly jams. When the Mayaguez Hilton closed down and radio Color was sold, the weekly jazz session dissipated. Ramirez went on to work at the stereo-tempo radio station on a jazz show. The radio show had a very short life because the interest of the station was to play ballads. By adding jazz they would be breaking their format, so they decided to drop the show. Even though the show had a good audience and sold well they did not want to have it. After radio color closed down, Vid90 radio station opened it’s programming and is now the only jazz station in Puerto Rico. They are now hosts to the Mayaguez jazz fest, which started around 2008. This events has featured renowned musicians like trumpeters Luis "Perico" Ortíz, Humberto Ramírez, Charlie Sepúlveda, and the pioneering Elías Lopés (Interview, 1/4/2015).

In 1987, Guzmán founded the band called “Jíbaro Jazz”, which would bring him to the forefront of the music scene in Puerto Rico and bring him commercial success. With “Jíbaro Jazz, he played the “cuatro” as a soloist and fully developed his unique style and skills. The

project included pianist Angel Davis Mattos among others. By the end of their first year the group had their first public performance, and released their debut album, the self-titled *Jibaro Jazz* the next year, 1988. Pedro Guzmán wanted to reach people and give them something they could relate to. Guzmán wanted to combine jazz harmonies and chord progressions with the format of jíbaro music songs like aguinaldos and seises. This style of Puerto Rican music already has an improvised nature so it worked beautifully. Pedro wanted to do it in a simple way so that everyone could dance and enjoy it (Interview, 12/29/2014).

The success of Pedro Guzmán and “Jibaro Jazz” can be said to come from their ability to transcend not only musical limits, but cultural as well. Guzmán applied the same instruments used in the traditional jíbaro music and but transformed it by exploring all the capabilities of those instruments and applying them to present the traditional in a new style. Pedro Guzmán is one of the most noted innovators and preservers of traditional and jazz music alike as well as one of the best cuatro players ever to come out of Puerto Rico. The music had its roots in both the traditional and popular worlds, thus creating a balance between the two. This opened the door to for the group to play at the Blue Note club in NYC around 1994 (Interview, 12/29/2014).

William Cepeda, Puerto Rican trombonist and composer insists that the development of Latin jazz had lost energy. "They realize there is too much Cuban music on the street and they need to do something different," Cepeda has said. "It's hard to innovate in Cuban music, and people are now realizing they might have something of their own (Bailyn, 2006 1-2). This same philosophy propelled other Puerto Rican musicians to go back to their roots and incorporate them into jazz. Cepeda has been one of the catalysts for artist that wanted to expand their musical horizons and therefore preserve Puerto Rican culture as well as be innovators in Latin jazz music. The opening of the Jazz and Caribbean music program at the Conservatory of Music in

San Juan as been key for jazz music to grow on the island. Andres “Maco” Torres was one of the first responsible along with Juancito Torres to study at Berkley School of Music in Boston.

“Maco” had the Caguas Jazz Workshop in which many great musicians participated. Alfonso Fuentes renowned composer had a jazz ensemble at the Conservatory of Music in Puerto Rico respondents say this happened around 1989 (Interview, 12/24/2014).

Jazz music was not considered to be a priority of study at the conservatory. Professor Freddie Silva played jazz at a very high level and was one responsible for pushing jazz education at the conservatory. However they did not have an opening for popular music even though Silva had another concept and very practical one. In 1994 a professor from Boston (respondent did not remember his name) came to the Conservatory and gave a whole day of popular music classes. Then in 1995 the Berkley workshops began in Puerto Rico giving the opportunity for students to get scholarships, which many like Miguel Zenón took advantage of. In 2004 bassist and composer Ramon Vazquez joined the Conservatory of music to be a part of the committee that would create a new jazz department. Panamanian composer and pianist Danilo Pérez also participated and it became the Department of Jazz and Caribbean Music. Vazquez helped with most of the curriculums to starting the program in August of 2004. Greats like Luis Marin, Humberto Ramírez, Fernando Mattina, Ruben Rodriguez, David Sánchez, Furito Ríos to name a few are all now professors at the Conservatory and most of them Berkley alumni (Interview, 12/22/2014).

Guitarist and composer L. Raul Romero consolidated his musical studies in Boston as well. After finishing his studies he moved to New York. There he began playing with trombonist William Cepeda who also was a Berkeley graduate around 1991. He ended up sharing the bill with piano great Eric Figueroa. Cepeda’s concept was to bring forward Puerto Rican musical



roots. Upon Romero's return in 1998 to the island, rock music had a vibrant scene. Jazz music had a limited outlet most notable jazz night at the Marriot hotel in San Juan. In 2001 he started a workshop that was the basis for his fusion group Hologram with sax player Ricardo Pons. At that time the Interamerican-University's of San Juan jazz program was in its beginnings. The Conservatory did not have a jazz program still; it was actually in the workings at that time. These batch of musicians were the first doing jazz jam sessions between 1998 thru 2005. In 2005 the Taller C jazz jam session started in San Juan. After the jazz programs were set at the universities new outlets for jazz music were beginning to happen (Interview, 12/29/14)

In 1999 pianist and composer Angel Davis Mattos made an album called *Preludio* in which he combined more of the jazz-fusion style with Puerto Rican and other Latin influences. In Puerto Rico for most musicians' jazz-fusion from the 1970s is a "point of reference" as Mattos calls it. One of the respondents says that after discovering jazz-fusion style musicians then look back at the more traditional jazz. There was a kind of dysfunction between the older musicians on the island because they grew up listening to the 50s and 60s music as opposed to the newer musicians that were mainly influenced by the 1970s jazz-fusion. Mattos is also working on developing "our own language in improvisation" as opposed to using only the jazz language. This involves memorization of traditional melodies from seises for example, in order to develop an improvised solo that combines both jazz and our traditional vocabulary.

Even though the younger musicians did not want to play traditional jazz they did realize that they had to go back and learn the traditional style in order to dominate the new music they wanted to play. So after studying with the elder musicians and learning the traditions of jazz and Puerto Rican musicians alike they then had a new "point of reference" to create music. The trick was to find elements from traditional danza, jibaro, plena and bomba music that have similar

outlines with jazz. The clave is present in both ragtime and danza because they have the same root, Africa-Europe but made in America (Interview, 12/29/2014).

Respondents agree that Puerto Rican musicians each have their own perspectives and that helps the music with its growth. Before you had a lot of arrangers and musicians that had their own sound like Papo Lucca and Wilfrido Vargas but for some reason this uniqueness was lost. But according to respondents jazz in Puerto Rico has its own sound and perspectives. Latin jazz only incorporated Cuban music and was not open to other influences for it to be called Latin. This is why many Latin musicians do not like the denomination Latin jazz. Jazz impacted Puerto Rican music greatly but now this music is starting to impact jazz. The perspective of jazz musicians in Puerto Rico is very unique. Musicians need to know both jazz and tradition in order to make a proper fusion (12/29/14).

The folkloric element is always present in jazz made by Puerto Ricans in one way or another. In any of the recordings that have come out of the island and the diaspora you can hear this. What is needed for the music to keep growing is consistency in the promotion and creation of recordings and events as well as people that are willing to invest in the music. The group Puerto Rican Folkloric Jazz masterminded a very important recording released around 2008 called *Barriles de Bomba*. Comprised by master percussionist Jerry Ferrao and Jorge Rodriguez joined by sax player José “Furito” Rios the record is musical production that combines Puerto Rican bomba with jazz. The jazz arrangements for the album are grounded in different bomba rhythm patterns. Christian Nieves a virtuoso and fluent on both “cuatro” and Spanish guitar, released an album called *Mi Monte* in 2011, in which he fuses heavily traditional “Jibaro” music and instruments with jazz arrangements. He has played in different musical settings from reggae to pop music most notably Puerto Rican pop icon Ricky Martin. A musician like bassist Aldemar

Valentín has released two beautiful recordings *finding my Path* in 2008 and *Ficciones* in 2011 (Interview, 1/2/2015).

In 2012 around twelve recordings came out on the market and in 2014 fifteen recordings have been released. New generations of Puerto Rican jazz musicians from the island as well as the diaspora in the United States are gaining recognition. Guitarist Gabriel Vicéns has released a very impressive debut with *Point in Time* and participated in numerous recordings among them SM Quintet with bassist Samuel Morales and 5Esquinas with Victor Román on sax. Groups like G6 with their recording *Despertar* and Guess Who Jazz Quartet *Guess Who* are among the younger generation of jazz musicians to come out of the island. San Juan Collective comprised of master drummer Raúl Maldonado along with Norberto “Tico” Ortíz on sax and Gabriel Rodríguez on bass has released two recordings in jazz trio format. Drummer Henry Cole has also released an album with his Afro Beat Collective called *Roots Before Branches* in 2012. In it he combines the sounds of Afro Beat, jazz with Puerto Rican rhythms. Orbits Quintet led by trumpeter Danny Ramírez released two recordings *12-6-5* in 2007 and *Desahogo* in 2008 properly showcasing the group's musical versatility and dexterity.

They have also participated with trumpet player Charlie Sepulveda and The turnaround in various recordings. Both Rodríguez and Ortíz are professors at the Conservatory of music, Maldonado teaches at the Interamerican University. Jonathan Suazo also a sax player has also made his presence felt. In 2012 he released his debut recording called *Extracts of a Desire* and in 2014 he released *Vital* his most powerful recording yet. These musicians are a product of the jazz and Caribbean music program of the Conservatory of music in Puerto Rico and have released their recordings independently. Conservatory of music artist in residence and sax player David Sánchez's unique musical sensibility has been crucial in the formation of modern jazz in Puerto

Rico with albums like *The Departure in* 1994 and *Melaza* in 2000. His recordings clearly merge the jazz idiom with the musical languages of Puerto Rican music with other Caribbean and Latin American sources.

From the Puerto Rican diaspora sax players and composers Roy McGrath and Mario Castro have been gaining notoriety in the international jazz community as well. Miguel Zenón is amongst the most distinguished jazz musicians and innovators in Puerto Rico. He now lives in New York. In his recordings *Jibaro* in 2006 and *Esta Plena* 2009, Zenón pushes the boundaries of jazz by mixing traditional music with jazz arrangements. The first introduces jíbaro music melodies in a jazz quartet format. The latter incorporates the hand percussion that is symbolic of the style, the pandero, it's at the heart of it. He brought those traditional instruments and included some lyrics in some of the songs like traditional "plena". With this project Miguel Zenón wrote yet another chapter of Puerto Rican jazz and the endless possibilities in the music. Drummer and composer, Fernando Garcia was awarded the Juan Luis Guerra scholarship in the newly opened Berklee College of Music campus in Valencia Spain.

There he studied a Master's Degree in Contemporary Studio Performance. Fernando released the album *Subidor* in 2013 after being one of the first graduates of the Valencia campus. On the island new outlets for jazz have been appearing in the last few years. The original concert that became what is now called the Heineken jazz fest went by the name of San Juan jazz fest, started in Old San Juan in the 1980s is now one of the biggest draws for jazz lovers on the island. At the same time an event called Ventana al jazz, also sponsored by Heineken takes place every last Sunday of the month at a location called Ventana al mar in Condado, San Juan.

Other outlets for jazz and creative music take place in Old San Juan such as Adoquín jam nights taking place every Friday. Big Band Mondays is an event held at the Yerbabuena

restaurant at el Condado San Juan directed by trumpet player Humberto Ramirez. Bassist and composer Ramón Vázquez recently started a segment in a television show called *Que es la que hay* (*What it is*) lead by local famed celebrity Silverio Pérez. He calls the segment “Creative Music” in which he features different local and international jazz artists. Miguel Zenón’s Caravana Cultural is a project devoted to bringing jazz music to places in the island that have not necessarily been exposed to jazz music.

Musicians like Elio Villafranca from Cuba and Carlos Martín from Spain are incorporating Puerto Rican traditional music in their sound. Villafranca released an album in 2014 called *Caribbean Tinge* that included the participation of the Newyorican group Los Pleneros de la 21 where traditional bomba music can be heard all over the recording. Martín on the other hand included a song called *La Perla* in his 2013 that also fuses bomba with jazz arrangements.

The development of jazz in Puerto Rico was born from the necessity of a unique artistic expression among musicians. Each recording has a distinctive sound and voice. Even though the musical language is centered on jazz, traditional Puerto Rican music is always present. In many cases there is no use of traditional instrumentation, but patterns and melodies of this music are extant beneath the arrangements.

There seems to be a very strong connection between the jazz-fusion style and Puerto Rican musicians. Most musicians on the island say that the late 70s style of jazz music influenced their way of looking at the music immensely. Puerto Rican jazz composers tend to focus a lot on the form and structure of the song other than the virtuosic aspect of playing. Of course virtuosity is a part of their playing but the most important elements are the musical

esthetic, atmosphere, rhythm and melody. Jazz music is definitely growing in Puerto Rico, we will see what the future will bring for these hard working and inspired generation of musicians.

## Chapter V. Conclusions

Discussions on Latin American participation during the fledgling period of jazz and the development of Latin jazz do not often address the Puerto Rican presence, and this may lead some to think that jazz is new to Puerto Rico when actually is not. Thanks to the oral history projects, discographers, jazz historians and music ethnographers, more and more of the participation of different ethnic and immigrant groups in jazz is becoming known to a larger audience (Baylin 2006). Since then a new generation of Latin musicians have pioneered new branches of the fusion of jazz and Latin music. Innovative artists such as Puerto Rican saxophonists David Sanchez and Miguel Zenón, Venezuelan pianist Edward Simon, and Puerto Rican trombonist William Cepeda, are putting the music styles and rhythms of their native countries into the mix and turning Latin jazz into a truly unique sound (Baylin 2006).

The work of these artists reflects their bilingual and bicultural experience, and fully integrates the diverse music styles (Bailyn 2006). Music can be used as a vessel to manifest emotion with cause and effect as to the purpose for its use (Rivera 2010, 105). Musical ideas often represent a cultures identity; it is a symbol of national pride, social awareness, political protest, belief systems and community. The styles developed in the Caribbean grew to be the representation of a valid identity for its inhabitants (Rivera, 2010 105-106). I believe that the meaning that is given to music is relative to the interpretation of the listeners and the music makers. Music is utilized to manifest ones spiritual belief and empower the soul.

It is also a testimony of life and the acknowledgement of a higher power. Each culture organizes sound in a particular way reflecting their ideas and beliefs; therefore music can become a culture's proclamation of self. Music is socially meaningful not entirely but largely because provides means by which people recognize identities and places, and boundaries which

separate them (Strokes 1994, 5). Unfortunately for some countries traditions are slowly being forgotten due to introduction of foreign cultures into the spectrum of that society. Such has been the case with Puerto Rico. The Island has been a commonwealth of the United States for over 80 years (Fahey 2001, 30). During that time little by little traditions have been facing the danger of fading away due to the fast passed establishment of American culture. But the struggle to keep tradition alive has been a work in progress. Musicians, Universities, non-profit organizations and churches have come together to support our traditions and pass them to future generations. There are churches in many cultures that are incorporating traditional folk music in their services in order to help maintain said music alive and at the same time worship God. Such is the case in my culture; Puerto Rican catholic churches created a service called “Misa Jibara” which integrates folk instrumentation into a traditional catholic mass.

What caught my attention is the fact that mainly jazz musicians have taken on the task of promoting traditional folk music by merging it with jazz; taking Latin jazz to another level. This has been a catalyst for younger generations to develop an interest in their traditions giving Puerto Rican music a new light even though it is still a work in progress. Traditional music has proven to be a strong social medium of expression throughout the ages. Each culture is practically known for its music reflecting political resistance, unity, patriotism and belief systems; defining social identity (Fahey 2001, 30-40). Folk music in Puerto Rico celebrates pride but it is also a tool for protests against political injustice and prejudice. I think most music is born out struggle, constraint and restriction. As any type of art, musical expression comes from a place of the human subconscious that echoes our never-ending artistic and creative nature. In my opinion, it is natural for cultures to grow and with it its music. As the information era evolves so will the possibilities for musical fusion. This is the catalyst for traditional preservation as well.



Tradition will never come to pass if we are able to keep them alive somehow by merging it with new trends and sounds. Of course not all civilizations treat their folklore the same way, some cultures traditions have stood the test of time and have been able to keep their folklore practically untouched. The positive outcome of merging tradition with new ideas is that it keeps the old ones fresh and the new ones innovative. Needless to say that in order to make such fusions possible the source in this case the traditional musical style has to be learned accordingly in order to be executed as well as the new style being incorporated. Jazz music as a whole is a perfect example of the said concept and how music can break social boundaries while retaining a traditional background that transcends generational gaps. It is overwhelming to find out about the contributions that Hispanics have made to jazz music since its birth in the port city of New Orleans.

Many of which were Puerto Rican soldiers that later became fulltime working musicians and composers. I feel very proud to be a part of a culture that shares the credit in the development of such wonderful musical expression and to this day is still moving jazz music forward. This is a clear statement of the prevalence and determination of human strength and our ability of surpassing any obstacle we may encounter. Music is knowledge and knowledge is power. One thing that is clear in the evolution of jazz is the influences it has had in other musical genres all around the world; as well as other musical genres have influenced jazz itself therefore proving how music can morph at the same time as social and cultural structures. For future research I would like to expand these ideas of how traditional music in Latin America and the Latin American diaspora of the United States has modernized and revitalized their own traditions as well as the so called Latin jazz music genre.

In the so-called Latin jazz genre Latin music in general has received the notoriety Cuban music has in a commercial level. It is not as accessible and is not being promoted as much. Latin musicians in the United States diaspora and in their home countries are experimenting with their own music as well as jazz pushing the genre forward. The point here is for the Jazz world to realize that Latin America is an enormous musical world, one that has already conveyed a lot into Jazz. Puerto Rican music is part of this movement, another piece of the puzzle. Puerto Rican Jazz music in the future is hopefully evolving. There are many Latin American musicians interested in jazz in the present day (even more than ever before), which are all eager to find their musical personalities and keep evolving. There is definitely see a bright future for the partnership between Jazz and Latin music.

Jazz is making a cultural impact on Puerto Rican culture.. A lot of young musicians want to learn and are looking for higher learning institutions with jazz in their curriculums, which is definitely a step forward. Still there are not a lot of places to play, but a lot of interest. Ultimately it is about giving everyone a chance to be exposed to this music; getting rid of any pre-conceived stigmas that might be connected to this style and just make it about the relationship between the music and the listener, with the respect they both deserve. When you're dealing with musical elements that most people can recognize and relate to, it makes the experience that much powerful for them. But it is important to acknowledge that both Puerto Rican music and Jazz music have very deeply founded traditions. Puerto Rican music is one of the strongest ties to the their identity as a nation, the more they can embrace, it the stronger that bond will be. A lot of people look at jazz as a foreign music. For musicians on the island jazz is a form of expression that filters their emotions to them it is not a foreign form of music it is a familiar friend. According to one respondent, they believe they have been guilty of falling into a colonial

mentality. Thinking that musicians from other countries are better, therefore undermining their own musical quality and ability.

Since those days, the popularity of mainstream jazz and Latin jazz in San Juan and other Puerto Rican cities has been growing steadily. Now musicians have gotten pass this mindset and are witnessing a very big change come about. Today, there are numerous venues for jazz and several annual concerts, including the Heineken Jazz Fest that is held every spring. Other events are held all over the mayor cities of island. Today's Puerto Rican communities, either on the island or the U.S. mainland, have produced a number of legendary jazz artists. The exchange between musicians outside of the island is helping to overshadow the colonialist mentality of “foreign is better; local is not.” The current mentality of musicians is that if you are an outsider you have to prove yourself. The default of being foreign does not exclude you from this. You have to really play in order to get respected. In Puerto Rico there is a “cepa” (new breed) of musicians that are coming up and are really good.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The story of jazz music in Puerto Rico is still in its infancy. Younger generations of musicians outside and inside the island have found a new voice in jazz and their own traditions. I see this happening all over the world, especially in Latin America. Jazz music is getting a hold of the traditions of many these countries. It is extending the pallet of possibilities of jazz giving the music new life. Unfortunately there is no support from the government or the department of culture in many of these countries. They do no invest in the arts not even the local affairs. Puerto Rico for example, needs entities that are not corporate based and are looking to sell their products. These corporations are the ones “doing jazz events” but they don’t give priority to local

acts in most cases. They just want to sell tickets and their merchandise. The jazz scene needs support from people that care about the arts not the money and it has to be consistent in order to see more growth. That is why you can see so many independent recordings out on the market. Musicians, old and new, are making their own recordings because right now it is the only real way of getting noticed. This is a beautiful thing because it empowers musicians to do their own thing letting them know that they can do it on their own. It also opens up interest in the study of jazz as well as tradition. Jazz music in Puerto Rico has a very bright future. To me, jazz, Latin, Caribbean music are all connected.

They arise from the same musical root and that is why it makes sense when you fuse all these styles music. Nowadays, Puerto Rican instruments are used as a standard part of jazz on the island. It has taken the music to unprecedented levels of richness, complexity and beauty. It has become a staple part of Puerto Rican culture and a wide expressive outlet for musicians and for the youth that is longing to learn about their musical roots.

## Appendix A

### Glossary of Terms

**Afro-Cuban Jazz** (cu-bop) – A jazz style, created from a fusion of bop with traditional Cuban elements, which arose in the 1940s, primarily the work of Dizzy Gillespie; it is distinguished from the more general Latin Jazz by specific influences of Cuban dance, folk, and popular idioms. The main impulse for Afro-Cuban movement came from their feeling that American jazz of the 1930s and 1940s, being essentially mono-rhythmic, needed a kind of enrichment that Afro-Cuban polyrhythms would provide (The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz 1988, 7).

**Afro-Bop** - is the earliest form of Latin jazz. It mixes Afro-Cuban clave-based rhythms with jazz harmonies and techniques of improvisation.

**Afro-Caribbean** - A person of African descent born in, or is a resident of, the Caribbean Islands.

**Afro-Rican** - Afro-Rican refers to the African elements in Puerto Rican culture, most notably in the music and food.

**Aguinaldo** - a folk genre of Christmas music in several Latin American countries, based on an archaic form of Spanish Christmas carols. In Puerto Rico it is known as a style of “jibaro” or mountain dweller music.

**Barriles de Bomba** - Traditional drum used in bomba music of Puerto Rico built from the wood of rum storage barrels and goatskin, adjusted with tourniquets, screws, cuñas, or wedges. Two drums are required to perform bomba music and dance: a *Primo* or *subidor*, the lead drum who follows the dancer, and the *buleador*, which keeps a steady beat.

**Boricuas** - Puerto Ricans are the inhabitants of Puerto Rico. Puerto Ricans do not treat their nationality as an ethnicity but as a citizenship with various ethnicities and national origins comprising the Puerto Rican people. Spanish, Taino (Native Aborigine of the Caribbean and Latin America) and African. The name Boricua also comes from the Taino name for the Puerto Rican island, *Boriquen*.

**Bomba** - Bomba is one of the traditional musical styles of Puerto Rico from African descent. Bomba can be used as the generic name for a number of rhythms; its real meaning is about the encounter and creative relationship between dancers, percussionists, and singers. Bomba is a communal activity that still thrives in its traditional centers of Loíza, Santurce, Mayagüez, Ponce, and New York City.

**Bolero** - Bolero is a genre of slow-tempo Latin music and its associated dance. There are Spanish and Cuban forms which are both significant and which have separate origins the bolero has been popular for over a century.

**Cante Jondo** - Cante jondo is a vocal style in flamenco. An unspoiled form of Andalusian folk music, the name means *deep song* (*hondo* meaning deep in Spanish.) It is generally considered the deepest, most serious form of flamenco music styles. The name is spelled with a “j” as a form of eye dialect because traditional Andalusian pronunciation has retained an aspirated “h” lost in other forms of Spanish.

**Cuatro** – The name refers to the national instrument of Puerto Rico. This instrument now was arranged with 10-strings arranged in 5 pairs and tuned to the same intervals as the fancy Spanish Lute. Later in Puerto Rico, artisans changed its traditional keyhole shapes into one reminiscent of a violin, which had become a symbol of upper-class sophistication. In this new configuration, the instrument was heard across the Island (Cumpiano 2011). The cuatro belongs to the plucked chordophone family in the classification of instruments by Hornbostel-Sachs.

**Guaracha** - The guaracha is a genre of Cuban popular music, of rapid tempo, and with lyrics. Guarachas were played and sung in musical theatres and in low-class dance salons. During the later nineteenth and the early twentieth century the guaracha was a favorite musical form in the brothels of Havana. The guaracha survives today in the repertoires of some trova musicians, conjuntos and Cuban-style big bands.

**Guaguanco** – Guaguanco is a subgenre of Cuban rumba, combining percussion, voices, and dance. The two main styles are Havana and Matanzas named after the regions in which the styles were born.

**Danza** - Danza is a musical genre that originated in Ponce, a city in southern Puerto Rico. It is a popular turn-of-the-twentieth-century ballroom dance genre slightly similar to the waltz. It is a mixture of classical music cadenzas and marches with the African clave. The music and the dance is creolized because composers were consciously trying to integrate African and European ideas because many of the people themselves were creoles, that is, born in the Caribbean; accepting their islands as their true and only homeland.

**Decima** - A decima refers to a ten-line stanza of poetry. The song form generally consists of forty-four lines, an introductory four-verse stanza followed by four ten-line stanzas. The decima lyrical content refers to a wide range of subject matter such as religious, lyrical, and political themes. Some decimas are also in the humorous vein, making fun of a rival’s weakness or even a funny story about a foolish act.

**Improvisation** – This term refers to the spontaneous creation of music as it is performed. It may involve the immediate composition of an entire work by its framework, or anything in between. All the performers in a group, or soloists, or any intermediate combination of players may improvise (The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz 1988, 554).

**Harmony** – The combining of notes simultaneously to produce chords and the placing of chords in succession, whether or not to produce tonally functional progressions: the word is used also of the system of structural principles governing chords and progressions. It is based on the relationship between the notes of a single chord and that between successive

chords (The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz 1988, 485).

**Jibaro** - Jíbaro is a term commonly used in Puerto Rico to refer to mountain-dwelling peasants, but in modern times it has gained a broader and, specifically, a nobler, cultural meaning. Since at least the 1920s the term jíbaro has a more positive connotation in Puerto Rican culture, proudly associated with a cultural ideology as pioneers of Puerto Rico; however, the term occasionally also has a negative connotation. Despite this negative affiliation, the image of the jíbaro represents an ideology of a hard working, simple, independent, and prudently wise Puerto Rican. The jíbaro serves as a representation of the roots of the modern day Puerto Rican people symbolizing the strength of traditional values like living simply, properly and caring for homeland and family.

**Latin tinge**– A term applied to jazz in which elements of Latin American music, chiefly its dance and rhythms, are particularly prominent. In striking contrast to most genres of jazz, in which triple subdivisions of beat are prevalent, Latin jazz utilizes duple subdivision. Latin American elements are found in early jazz and related musics. Isolated instances of habanera rhythm, which also formed the basis of the tango, occur of the left hand figurations of some published piano rags. Pianist and composer Jelly Roll Morton referred to this rhythmic tendency as the “Spanish Tinge”, and claimed that it was essential to jazz (The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz 1988, 13).

**Merengue** – Merengue is a style of Dominican music and dance. It was considered by some to be the music of the underclasses, a little like what bachata is now. The merengue's rise to prominence and acceptance by all classes was stimulated by two key events. The first was its role in maintaining Dominican cultural identity from the time when the United States took over the running of the Dominican Republic's customs house in 1905, which had great repercussions on national sentiment (Yeo 1999).

**Música Jibara** – music from the mountains of Puerto Rico. See Seis.

**Plena** – Known as el “periodico cantao” or “the sung newspaper”, the plena comes from the lower classes of the barrio in Puerto Rico. It originated in Ponce around 1900. The plena was first heard in the neighborhood Barriada de la Torre, whose population consisted mostly of immigrants from St. Kitts, Tortola, and St. Thomas, settled on the island since the late 1800s. The traditional center of plena was probably San Antón, a barrio of Ponce, although the black neighborhood of Loíza is also mentioned as the heartland for the genre. Its popularity peaked in the 1920s.

**Panderos de Plena** - The plenera, pandero plenero, or plenera is a percussion instrument included in plena. It comes in three sizes, primo or requinto, used for solo improvisation; segundo or seguidor; and tercero or bajo, which both give a steady fixed rhythm.

**Regueton** - Regueton blends musical influences of Jamaican dancehall music and other Latin America musical styles, like as salsa and hip-hop. Vocals include rapping and singing, typically in Spanish. Lyrics tend to be derived from hip-hop.

**Rumba** - Rumba is used as shorthand for Afro-Cuban rumba, a group of dances related to the

rumba genre of Afro-Cuban music. The most common Afro-Cuban rumba is the guaguancó. The other Afro-Cuban rumbas are Yambu and Colombia.

**Seis** - The seis is a style of Puerto Rican dance music that incorporates the decima. It originated in the later half of the seventeenth century in the southern part of Spain. The word means *six*, which may have come from the custom of having six couples perform the dance, though many more couples eventually became quite common. The melodies and harmonies are simple, usually performed on the cuatro, guitar, and güiro, although other indigenous instruments are used depending on the available musicians. The 2/4 rhythms are maintained by the güiro and guitar.

**Son** - Son cubano is a style of music and dance that originated in Cuba and gained worldwide popularity in the 1930s. The structure and elements of son combine Spanish guitar with African rhythms and percussion instruments. The Cuban son is one of the most influential and widespread forms of Latin American music made most popular in salsa and has have spread across the world.

**Standards** – A composition, usually a popular song, that becomes an established item in the repertory; by extension, therefore, a song that a professional musician may be expected to know. Standards in jazz included songs from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, songs from Broadway musicals and Hollywood films by composers such as George Gershwin, Jerome Kern, Harold Arlen, Irving Berlin, Cole Porter, and Richard Rogers and newly composed tunes by jazz musicians (The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz 1988, 487.)

**Timbal** - Timbales or pailas are shallow single-headed drums with metal casing. They are shallower than single-headed tom-toms and are usually tuned much higher. The player, called a *timbalero*, uses a variety of stick strokes, rim shots, and rolls to produce a wide range of percussive expression during solos. The shells of the timbal are called *cascara* (shell) and it is also the name of a rhythmic pattern common in salsa music played on the shells of the timbales.

**Trovador** – singers of traditional Puerto Rican jibaro music. The trovador is mainly known for his/her ability to improvise in the form of the décima. The origin of the trovador comes from the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century lyric poets in Southern France, Northern Italy and Spain. Also known as a strolling minstrel.



## Appendix B

### Selected Discography

- Angel David Mattos – Preludio (Jazz Boricua, 1999)*  
*Angel David Mattos – Danzzaj (2004, Jazz Boricua)*  
*Angel David Mattos - Traditions (Jazz Boricua, 2008)*  
*Aldemar Valentín – Finding my Path (Aldemar Valentin, 2009)*  
*Aldemar Valentín – Ficciones (Aldemar Valentin, 2011)*  
*Batacumbele – Con Un Poco de Songo (Disco Hit, 1981)*  
*Batacumbele – Afro-Caribbean Jazz (Disco Hit, 1987)*  
*Brenda Hopkins Miranda - Aeriopiano (Brenda Hopkins Miranda, 2014)*  
*Cafezz – Music & Friends (Taslismusic Records, 2014)*  
*Charlie Palmieri – El Gigante del Teclado (Codigo Music, Inc., 1974)*  
*Charlie Sepúlveda – Algo Nuestro (Verve, 1993)*  
*Charlie Sepúlveda – Charlie Sepulveda & The Turnaround (Turnaround Records, 2008)*  
*Charlie Sepúlveda – Sepulveda Boulevard (Turnaround Records, 2009)*  
*Christian Nieves - Mi Monte (Nieves Music, 2011)*  
*Cortijo & His Time Machine – Musical Productions, Inc. 1974)*  
*Curtis Brothers Quartet – Blood, Spirit, Land, Water, Freedom (Truth Revolution Records, 2009)*  
*David Sánchez - Melaza (Sony, 2000)*  
*David Sánchez - Travesia (Sony, 2001)*  
*David Sanchez – The Departure (Sony, 1994)*  
*David Sánchez – Cultural Survival (Concord Music Group, Inc., 2008)*  
*Edgar Abraham – Atmosfehra (Edgar Abraham, 2012)*  
*Edgar Abraham – Organiko (Edgar Abraham, 2014)*  
*Eddie Palmieri - Superimposition (Fania/Codigo, 1971)*  
*Eddie Palmieri – Mozambique (Codigo Music, 1965)*  
*Eddie Palmieri – Vamonos Pal’ Monte (Codigo Music, 1977)*  
*Elías Santos Celpa Jazz Group – Antología (Elías santos celpa, 2015)*  
*Elio Villafranca & The Jass Syyncopators (Motema Music, 2014)*  
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