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Front

An animistic belief system found primarily in Cuba.

Back

Abakwa

Front

A pre-Columbian indigenous population of the Caribbean.

Back

Arawak

Front

The lowest vocal part in a rhyming spiritual performance from the Bahamas.

Back

Basser

Front

Ritual drums used in Santeria ceremonies.

Back

Bata

Front

An animistic belief system found primarily in Brazil.

Back

Batuque

Front

A Latin American dance and music.

Back

Bolero

Front

A popular music from Trinidad characterized by improvised lyrics on topical and broadly humorous subject matter.

Back

Calypso

Front

A general term for “song” in Mexico.

Back

Canción

Front

A form of dance that developed from a distinctive style of martial arts created by runaway slaves in Brazil.

Back

Capoeira

Front

A pre-Columbian indigenous population of the Caribbean.

Back

Carib

Front

A rhythmic pattern played on the timbales in salsa music.

Back

Cascara

Front

A Latin American ballroom dance.

Back

Cha-cha

Front

A gourd rattle with externally beaded netting.

Back

Chéquieres (also, Shekere)

Front

A term for escaped slaves from the Spanish-colonized regions in the Caribbean and Americas.

Back

Cimarrons

Front

A pair of hand-held wooden bars used as percussion instruments in many African and Latin American music traditions.

Back

Claves

Front

A Latin American dance music.

Back

Comparsa

Front

A tall, barrel-shaped, single-headed drum used often in Latin American music.

Back

Conga (also, Tumbadora)

Front

A Cuban dance form.

Back

Contradanza

Front

A “two-against-three” rhythmic pattern often found in polyrhythmic performance in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America.

Back

Cross-rhythm

Front

An animistic belief system found primarily in Jamaica.

Back

Cumina

Front

A Cuban dance form.

Back

Danza (also, Danzon and Danzonete)

Front

Recorded music that emphasizes the bass and rhythm tracks so that a DJ can talk over the music through a microphone.

Back

Dub (also, Dancehall)

Front

An iron bell used in Santeria rituals.

Back

Ekón

Front

A Rastafarian word for marijuana, borrowed from the Hindu Indian term for "herb."

Back

Ganja

Front

A type of folk music ensemble from the Bahamas.

Back

Goombay

Front

A Latin American ballroom dance, as well as a song type emphasizing call-and-response vocal organization.

Back

Guaracha

Front

A scraped gourd idiophone.

Back

Guiro

Front

Clapping and shouts of encouragement associated with a juerga (“happening”) in Spanish Flamenco music. Also, refers to the closing section of a meringue performance from the Dominican Republic.

Back

Jaleo

Front

A ceremonial language found in the vodou (voodoo) tradition from Haiti.

Back

Langaj

Front

A category of deities in Haitian vodou (voodoo).

Back

Lwa (also, Loa)

Front

A Latin American dance and music form.

Back

Mambo

Front

A pair of small Caribbean gourd rattles with interior beads.

Back

Maracas

Front

Anglicized term for cimarrons.

Back

Maroons

Front

A Creolized form of ballroom dance music considered a predecessor to reggae.

Back

Mento

Front

A Latin American dance and music form, originally from the Dominican Republic. Also, the term for the middle section of a merengue performance.

Back

Merengue

Front

A type of street theater actor, usually in performances staged during the Christmas season.

Back

Mummer

Front

A category of deity in the animistic spiritual belief system of Santeria and in other African-derived religious traditions.

Back

Orisha

Front

A rhythmic pattern associated with an orisha in the Santeria religious tradition.

Back

Orus

Front

The term for a rhythmic pattern played on the side of a drum in salsa music.

Back

Palito

Front

A musical instrument from Trinidad made out of a steel oil drum.

Back

Pan

Front

A steel drum orchestra competition held at the end of the Carnival festivals in Trinidad.

Back

Panorama

Front

A Portuguese-derived music sung during Christmas season.

Back

Parang

Front

The opening section of a merengue performance.

Back

Paseo

Front

Ritual drums used in Vodou (Voodoo) ceremonies from Haiti.

Back

Rada

Front

A folk music from the Bahamas.

Back

Rake and scrape

Front

A believer in Rastafarianism.

Back

Rasta

Front

A religious cult centered in Jamaica, which purports that the second coming of Jesus Christ has already occurred in the form of Haile Selassie, an Ethiopian king.

Back

Rastafarianism

Front

A popular music from Jamaica characterized by a rhythmic emphasis on the off-beat and by politically and socially conscious lyrics.

Back

Reggae

Front

The lead vocalist in a rhyming spiritual performance from the Bahamas.

Back

Rhymer

Front

A popular music from Jamaica considered a precursor to reggae.

Back

Rock Steady

Front

A Latin American dance and music form.

Back

Rumba (also, Rhumba)

Front

A Latin American dance music form.

Back

Salsa

Front

An animistic belief system found primarily in Trinidad.

Back

Shango

Front

A popular music from Jamaica considered a precursor to reggae.

Back

Ska

Front

A popular music style related to calypso music from Trinidad.

Back

Soca

Front

An Afro-Cuban music genre from Latin America.

Back

Son

Front

A musical instrument from Trinidad made from steel oil drums.

Back

Steel Drum

Front

A type of ensemble developed after drums were banned in Trinidad, which used cane and bamboo tubes that were beaten with sticks and stamped on the ground.

Back

Tambo-bamboo

Front

A small barrel-drum made with thick leather faces, commonly used in merengue from the Dominican Republic.

Back

Tambora

Front

A pair of metal-framed drums of European military origin used often in salsa music.

Back

Timbales

Front

A tall barrel-shaped single-headed drum used in salsa music.

Back

Tumbadora (also, Conga)

Front

A rhythmic pattern played on the conga in salsa music.

Back

Tumbao

Front

An animistic and Roman Catholic syncretised belief system found primarily in Brazil.

Back

Umbanda

Front

Popular music from the French Lesser Antilles in the Caribbean.

Back

Zouk