

# World Music

Music of the Caribbean



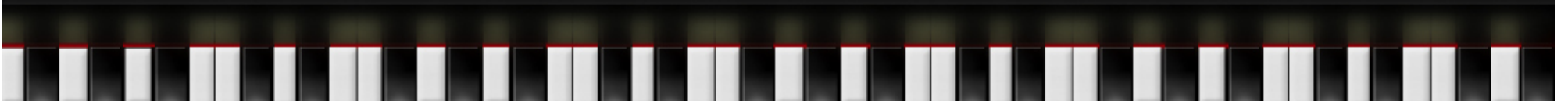
# Music of the Caribbean

- # The Caribbean is a group of some 7,000 islands, islets and reefs located between the United States and South America, and divided into a number of separate countries.
- # Each country has its own particular musical styles and genres, but some styles are shared and can be found all over the Caribbean.



# Activity

- # Caribbean music has its roots in other musical traditions, particularly those of Africa and Europe.
- # Find out why it is influenced by music from these countries.



# Calypso

- # This is a style of music that originated in Trinidad and Tobago at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and spread to other Caribbean islands.
- # It is a form of solo song that combines story-telling with memorable tunes and rhythms.
- # Calypso has always been associated with some form of social comment, and is an important feature of **carnival**
- # Calypso is often performed by the singer accompanied by a guitar, although there can be a larger backing group which might include brass, saxophones, drums and electric guitars.



# Listening Activity

- # Stars of calypso music include Lord Kitchener and Mighty Sparrow.
- # Listen to examples of calypso music by them or other calypso performers.
- # What do the lyrics tell you?
- # Why is calypso so popular?



# Steelbands

- # After the Second World War, the oil drums left by the Americans on the island of Trinidad were converted into pitched musical drums.
- # Each steel drum, or *pan*, can produce several different notes, and there are different sizes of pan, so that steelbands can play a wide range of notes, like a choir.
- # A steel pan does not *sustain*, so each note is struck repeatedly to produce a characteristic 'shimmering' sound.



# Listening Activity

- # Try to listen to some live steelband music.
- # Carnivals take place throughout the country, so look out for one near you.
- # Perhaps a school near by has its own steelband.
- # Try to listen to it, and talk to some of the players about the special kinds of technique they use, and the roles of different pans.



# Salsa

- # Salsa means *sauce* in Spanish, and is a type of dance-music associated with Cuba.
- # It developed in the 1960s from a mixture of two traditional dances (the *son* and the *rumba*) with other kinds of American music, such as jazz.
- # Salsa traditionally uses a 4/4 time signature, and is based on a repeated rhythm called *clave*, around which musicians play repeated rhythmic accompaniments.
- # The clave rhythm is central to all salsa, whether it is performed on the claves or by another instrument.
- # The most common clave rhythm is the *son clave*, which is 8 beats long and can be played in a 2-3, or 3-2 style.





# Listening Activity

- # Listen to this track.
- # Notice the use of jazz features, such as the brass, combined with vibrant salsa rhythms and textures.



# Reggae

- # Reggae developed in Jamaica at the end of the 1960s, emerging from two forms of Jamaican popular music, *ska* and *rock steady*.
- # Ska combined elements of **mento**, jazz and rhythm 'n' blues to create a lively musical style, which had an emphasis on the second and fourth beats of the bar.
- # During the mid-1960s, the beat of ska was slowed down to produce rock steady, a more vocal style of music which used **riffs**, a limited number of chords, and a strong bass line.
- # Like ska and rock steady, reggae makes use of syncopated rhythms and a characteristic of reggae is the solid bass line, which features catchy melodic riffs played by the electric bass guitar.



# Listening Quiz

# Listen to 'One love' by Bob Marley. Notice the 'chopped' guitar chords on beats 2 and 4 and the distinctive bass riff.

1. Which **two** words best describe the bass line?

dotted rhythms      triplets      syncopation      hemiola      arpeggio

2. Name the instrument playing the melody at the beginning of the song.

3. After the solo drum beats at the start of the song, how many bars of instrumental music are played before the voice enters?

4. What type of voices accompany the solo singer in this piece?

male      female      mixed voices      children's voices

5. After the instrumental introduction, which term best describes the structure of the song?

through-composed      rondo      chorus/verse      call and response



# Key Words

- # **Carnival** – a colourful festival involving music, dancing and the culture of the island or region
- # **Mento** – a style of Jamaican folk music popular during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century usually 4/4, with a lively syncopated rhythm accompaniment by acoustic guitar/banjo and hand drums.

