

History

The first Rhythms of Resistance band formed in 2000 in London out of Barking Bateria to participate in the Pink&Silver bloc in the protests against the World Bank summit in Prague.

Barking Bateria was one of the first Samba bands in the UK, formed by the Radical Anthropology Group at University of East London during a strike in 1996 and taking its inspiration from the “blocos-afros” bands (such as Olodum or Ilê Aiyê) that emerged in the mid-1970s in Brazil. These bands were formed as expressions of black awareness, in defiance of a military dictatorship which viewed any “cultural” group as potentially “communist” and ruthlessly suppressed them. Blocos-afros bands were responsible for blending traditional samba rhythms with reggae, salsa and merengue to create the samba style now known as Samba Reggae. This way they reappropriated Samba, which had originally come from the Afro-Brazilian communities but had been appropriated by the white privileged Brazilian society to be used for entertainment and profit. Today many of the blocos-afros bands still campaign for freedom, human rights and equal opportunities, and fight against social injustice and racism.

Rhythms of Resistance was formed in 2000 to join the UK Earth First action against the IMF / World Bank summit in Prague. A Pink&Silver carnival bloc was organized for the first time, taking inspiration from a movement called “Reclaim the Streets” (RTS), which has been blocking streets around the world since 1995 to create “temporary autonomous zones” and street parties to take back the space usually reserved for cars. Pink&Silver replaced the sound systems of RTS with Samba bands. During the protest, a carnival bloc focused around a 55 piece band detached itself from a march of 67000 and outmanouvered police resources defending the IMF annual summit. With an international “black bloc” and a large contingent from the Italian movement, “Ya Basta”, three diverse forms of direct action worked towards a common goal and resulted in the shut down of the IMF summit. From then on, along with the movement against capitalist globalisation, one group after the other popped up – now we’re all over Europe and occasional in the rest of the world.