

## = Music of Dominica =

The music of Dominica includes a variety of genres including all the popular genres of the world . Popular music is widespread , with a number of native Dominican performers gaining national fame in imported genres such as calypso , reggae , soca , kompa , zouk and rock and roll . Dominica 's own popular music industry has created a form called bouyon , which combines elements from several styles and has achieved a wide fanbase in Dominica . Groups include WCK ( Windward Caribbean Kulture ) , Native musicians in various forms , such as reggae ( Nasio Fontaine , Lazo , Brother Matthew Luke ) , kadans ( Ophelia Marie , ( Exile One , Grammacks ) and calypso ( The Wizzard ) , have also become stars at home and abroad .

There is also " Cadence @-@ lypso " , the Dominica kadans , which has set the stage for some of the region 's most significant musical developments such as zouk , bouyon ( another Dominican creation ) and soca music .

Like the other Francophone musics of the Lesser Antilles , Dominican folk music is a hybrid of African and European elements . The quadrille is an important symbol of French Antillean culture , and is , on Dominica , typically accompanied by a kind of ensemble called a jing ping band . In addition , Dominica 's folk tradition includes folk songs called bélé , traditional storytelling called kont , masquerade , children 's and work songs , and Carnival music .

Until the late 1950s , the Afro @-@ Dominican culture of most of the island was repressed by the colonial government and the influence of the Roman Catholic Church , both of which taught that African @-@ derived music was evil , demonic and uncultured . This perception changed in the mid-to late 20th century , when Afro @-@ Dominican culture came to be celebrated through the work of promoters like Cissie Caudeiron .

## = = Characteristics = =

Dominica 's terrain is rugged , which has fostered distinct regional traditions . The northern , eastern , southern , western and central parts of the island are music areas . The villages of Wesley and Marigot are also unique in their preservation of English language and music rather than the more French @-@ based styles of the rest of the island .

Dominican folk music is an oral tradition , learned informally through watching others perform . As of 1987 , most performers of traditional music were either over 50 years old or under 35 , which indicates an ongoing revival of previously declining traditions . Music is evaluated based on both characteristics of the music , such as complex syncopated rhythms , as well as social factors , such as the ability of the performers to improvise and respond to their surroundings and to keep the audience excited and participating in the music .

Characteristics of Dominican music include the West African use of call and response singing , clapping as a major part of rhythm and lyrical , dance and rhythmic improvisation . Lyrics are almost all in Dominican Creole French , and are traditionally sung by women ( chantwèl ) , while the instrumental traditions are predominantly practiced by men . Drums , generically known as lapo kabwit , are the most prominent part of Dominica 's instrumental tradition .

## = = Folk music = =

Dominican folk music includes , most influentially , the French Antillean quadrille tradition , the jing ping style of dance music , as well as bélé and heel @-@ and @-@ toe polka . Traditional Carnival music includes chanté mas and lapo kabwit . Folk music on Dominica has historically been a part of everyday life , including work songs , religious music and secular , recreational music .

The quadrille is one of the most important dance of the Dominican folk tradition , which also includes the lancer and distinctive forms of several dances , many of them derived from European styles . The bidjin ( biguine ) , mereng ( méringue ) , sotis ( schottische ) , polka pil ( pure polka ) , vals o vyenn ( Viennese waltz ) and mazouk ( mazurka ) are particularly widespread .

### == = Bélé == =

Bélé are folk songs of West African origin , traditionally performed recreationally in the evening during the full moon , and more rarely , lavèyé ( wakes ) . The bélé tradition has declined in the 20th and 21st century , but is still performed for holidays like Easter , Independence Day , Christmas , Creole Day ( Jounen Kwéyòl ) and patron saint festivals held annually in the Parishes of Dominica , especially in the Fèt St.-Pierre and the Fèt St.-Isidore for fishermen and workers respectively .

All bélé are accompanied by an eponymous drum , the tanbou bélé , along with the tingting ( triangle ) and chakchak ( maracas ) . Bélés start with a lead vocalist ( chantwèl ) , who is followed by the responsorial chorus ( lavwa ) , then a drummer and dancers . Traditional dances revolve around stylized courtship between a male and female dancer , known as the kavalyé and danm respectively . The bélé song @-@ dances include the bélé soté , bélé priòrité , bélé djouba , bélé contredanse , bélé rickety and bélé pitjé .

### == = Quadrille == =

The quadrille is a dance form that is an important symbol of French Antillean culture , not just in Dominica , but also Martinique , Guadeloupe and other Francophone islands . Dominican quadrilles are traditionally performed by four sets of couples in subscription picnics or dances , and in private parties . However , the quadrille tradition now only survives at holidays and festivals .

The Dominican quadrille generally has four figures , the pastouwèl , lapoul , lété and latrinitez . Some regions of Dominica , such as Petite Savanne , are home to local variants such as the caristo . Many quadrilles are found across Dominica under a wide variety of names . In addition to the standard quadrille , the lancer is also an important Dominican dance .

Accompaniment for the quadrille is provided by a four @-@ instrument ensemble called a jing ping band .

### == = Jing ping == =

Jing Ping is a kind of folk music originated on the slave plantations of Dominica , also known colloquially as an accordion band . In Dominican folk music , jing ping bands accompany a circle dance called the flirtation , as well as the Dominican quadrille .

Jing ping bands are made up of a boumboum ( boom pipe ) , syak or gwaj ( scraper @-@ rattle ) , tambal or tanbou ( tambourine ) and accordion . The double bass and banjo are also sometimes used . Bamboo flutes led the jing ping ensembles before the 1940s , when accordions were introduced . The Dominican flute tradition declined as a result , despite their additional use in serenades , until being revived after the National Independence Competitions .

### == = Chanté mas == =

The chanté mas ( masquerade song ) tradition is based around pre @-@ calypso Carnival music performed in a responsorial style by partygoers . The Dominican Carnival masquerade lasted for two days of parading through the streets , with a singer dancing backwards in front of the drummer on a tanbou lélé . Chanté mas lyrics are traditionally based on gossip and scandal , and addressed the personal shortcomings of others .

### == = Other folk music == =

Dominica 's folk musical heritage includes work songs , storytelling , children 's music and masquerade songs . Dominican work songs are accompanied by the tambou twaway drum , and are performed by workers while gathering fruit , building roads , fishing , moving a house or sawing wood . Many are responsorial , and are generally short and simple , with the lyrical text and rhythm tying into the work to be accompanied . On modern Dominica , work songs are rarely performed .

The kont , or storytelling , folk tradition of Dominica was focused around entertainment for night @-@ time festivals , funeral wakes and feasts and festivals . Modern kont is mostly performed during major festival competitions . Most kont storytellers work with local traditions , such as legends and history , and provide an ethical or moral message . A one line theme song , often based around a duet between two characters , recurs throughout most kont performances .

Unlike most Dominican folk songs , children 's songs and musical games are mostly in English . They were originally in the same Creole as the rest of the island , but have come to be primarily of English , Scottish , and Irish derivation . Children 's musical traditions include ring games and circle dances , and music accompanied by thigh @-@ slapping and circle dancing .

= = Early popular music = =

Dominican popular music history can be traced back to the 1940s and ' 50s , when dance bands like the Casimir Brothers and , later , The Swinging Stars , became famous across the island . Their music was a dance @-@ oriented version of many kinds of Caribbean and Latin popular music , such as Cuban bolero , Brazilian samba , the merengue from the Dominican Republic , Trinidadian calypso , and American funk .

By the beginning of the 1960s , calypso and Trinidadian steelpan became the most popular styles of music on Dominica , replacing traditional Carnival music like chanté mas and lapo kabwit . Early recording stars from this era included Swinging Busters , The Gaylords , De Boys an Dem and Los Caballeros , while chorale groups also gained fans , especially Lajenne Etwal , Siflé Montan 'y and the Dominica Folk singers . These early popular musicians were aided by the spread of radio broadcasting , beginning with WIDBS and later Radio Dominica .

Of these early popular musicians , a few pioneering the use of native influences . The Gaylords ? hits , such as " Ti Mako " , " Pray for the Blackman " , " Lovely Dominica " and " Douvan Jo " , were either English or the native Creole , ( kwéyòl ) . By the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s , American rock and roll , soul and funk had reached Dominica and left lasting influences . Funky rock @-@ based bands like Voltage Four , Woodenstool and Every Mother 's Child became popular .

The first internationally known bands from Dominica were 1970s groups such as Exile One and Grammacks . These bands were the stars of the cadence @-@ lypso scene , which was the first style of Dominican music to become popular across the Caribbean . By the 1980s , however , Martinican zouk and other styles were more popular . In 1988 , WCK formed , playing an experimental fusion of cadence @-@ lypso with the island ? s jing ping sound . The result became known as bouyon , and has re @-@ established Dominica in the field of popular music .

= = = Calypso = = =

In the 1960s , calypso and steelband music became very popular and indeed replaced lapo kabwit and chanté mas as the music of carnival , particularly in the capital Roseau . Many of the traditional songs were performed in the new calypso beat . Calypsonians and Calypso Monarch competitions emerged and became extremely popular . Steelbands emerged all around the country . The older musicians and bands had moved on and were replaced by the younger musicians . Bands such as Swinging Stars , The Gaylords , De Boys an Dem , Los Caballeros and Swinging Busters surfaced and began to cut records . The emergence of radio , first WIDBS and later Radio Dominica helped to spread the music .

Calypso has been popular in Dominica since the 1950s ; the first Calypso King was crowned in 1959 . Popular calypso in Dominica has always been closely associated with steelpan music . The first wave of Dominican steelpan includes such bands as Esso , Shell and Regent , Vauxhall and Old Oak .

= = = Cadence ( kadans ) / compas = = =

In the 1970s , a wave of Haitian , mostly musicians , to Dominica and the French Antilles ( Guadeloupe and Martinique ) brought with them the kadans , a sophisticated form of music that quickly swept the island and helped unite all the former French colonies of the Caribbean by combining their cultural influences . This was followed by mini @-@ jazz like Les Gentlemen , Les Leopards , Les Vikings de Guadeloupe and others .

Later in the decade and into the 1980s , the French Antilles became home to a style of cadence music called cadence @-@ lypso . Gordon Henderson 's Exile One innovated this style , as well as turned the mini @-@ jazz combos into guitar @-@ dominated big bands with a full @-@ horn section and the newly arrived synthesizers , paving the way for the success of large groups like Grammacks , Experience 7 , among others . Drawing on these influences , the supergroup Kassav ' invented zouk and popularized it with hit songs including " Zouk @-@ La @-@ Se Sel Medikaman Nou Ni " . Kassav ' formed in Paris in 1978 .

= = = Cadence @-@ lypso = = =

The most influential figure in the promotion of Cadence @-@ lypso was the Dominican group Exile One ( based on the island of Guadeloupe ) that featured mostly the cadence rampa of Haiti and calypso music from the English @-@ speaking Caribbean . It was pushed in the 1970s by groups from Dominica , and was the first style of Dominican music to find international acclaim .

Dominica cadence music has evolved under the influence of Dominican and Caribbean / Latin rhythms , as well as rock and roll , soul , and funk music from the United States . By the end of the 1970s , Gordon Henderson defined Cadence @-@ lypso as " a synthesis of Caribbean and African musical patterns fusing the traditional with the contemporary " .

Aside from Exile One , other bands included the Grammacks , Black Roots , Black Machine , Naked Feet , Belles Combo , Mantra , Black Affairs , Liquid Ice , Wafrikai , Midnight Groovers and Milestone , while the most famous singers included Bill Thomas , Chubby Marc , Gordon Henderson , Linford John , Janet Azouz , Sinky Rabess , Tony Valmond , Jeff Joseph , Mike Moreau and Anthony Gussie . Ophelia Marie is a popular singer of cadence @-@ lypso in the 1980s .

Cadence @-@ lypso was influenced by nationalist movement that espoused Rastafari and Black Power . Many groups performed songs with intensely ideological positions , and much of the repertoire was in the vernacular Creole language .

Gordon Henderson , Exile One 's leader and founder , coined the name " Cadence @-@ lypso " in his full band that used a full @-@ horn section and was the first to use the synthesizers in kadans . Many mini @-@ jazz from Haiti and the French Antilles followed this format . The band is considered by some to be one of the pioneers of soca . During the early 1970s , they initiated a fusion of cadence and calypso " Cadence @-@ lypso " that would later become soca music .

Exile One was the most promoted Creole band of the Caribbean . The first to sign a production contract with major label Barclay Records . The first to export kadans music to the four corners of the globe : Japan , the Indian Ocean , Africa , North America , Europe , The Cape Verde islands .

= = Recent popular music = =

During the 1980s , cadence @-@ lypso ? s popularity declined greatly . Some Dominican performers remained famous , such as Ophelia , a very renowned singer of the period . Popular music during this time was mostly zouk , a style pioneered by the French Antillean band Kassav , who used styles of folk music of Martinique and Guadeloupe . Soca , a kind of Trinidadian music , was also popular at the time , producing bands like Windward Caribbean Kulture . The ' 80s also saw a rise in popular for jazz and the formation of several jazz bands , while groups like Exile One began exploring tradition rhythms from jing ping and lapo kabwit .

= = = Zouk = = =

The inspiration for Zouk 's style of rhythmic music comes from the Haitian compas , as well as

music called cadence @-@ lypso ? Dominica cadence popularized by Grammacks and Exile One . Elements of gwo ka , tambour , ti bwa and biguine vidé are prominent in zouk . Though there are many diverse styles of zouk , some commonalities exist . The French Creole tongue of Martinique and Guadeloupe is an important element , and are a distinctive part of the music . Generally , zouk is based around star singers , with little attention given to instrumentalists , and is based almost entirely around studio recordings .

Music authors Charles De Ledesma and Gene Scaramuzzo trace zouk 's development to the Guadeloupean gwo ka and Martinican bèlè ( tambour and ti bwa ) folk traditions . Ethnomusicologist Jocelyn Guilbault , however , describes zouk as a synthesis of Caribbean popular styles , especially Dominica cadence @-@ lypso , Haitian cadence , Guadeloupean biguine . Zouk arose in the late 1970s and early 1980s , using elements of previous styles of Antillean music , as well as imported genres .

= = = Zouk @-@ love = = =

Zouk Love is the French Antilles cadence or compas , characterized by a slow , soft and sexual rhythm . The lyrics of the songs often speak of love and sentimental problems .

The music kizomba from Angola and cabo @-@ love from Cape Verde are also derivatives of this French Antillean compas style , which sounds basically the same , although there are notable differences once you become more familiar with these genres . A main exponent of this subgenre is Ophelia Marie of Dominica . Other Zouk Love artists come from the French West Indies , the Netherlands , and Africa .

Grammacks , Exile One , Ophelia Marie , and many Dominican bands played cadence @-@ lypso ( Dominica Kadans ) that later influenced zouk love in the French Antilles . Nowadays , zouk @-@ love is called the French Antilles cadence or compas . Popular artists include French West Indian artists Edith Lefel and Nichols , or like Netherlands @-@ based Suzanna Lubrano and Gil Semedo , the African artist Kaysha .

= = = Soca = = =

The calypsonian Lord Shorty of Trinidad was the first to really define his music and with " Indrani " in 1973 and " Endless Vibration " ( not just the song but the entire album ) in 1975 , calypso music really took off in another direction . Later in 1975 Lord Shorty visited his good friend Maestro in Dominica where he stayed ( at Maestro 's house ) for a month while they visited and worked with local cadence artists . You had Maestro experimenting with calypso and cadence ( " cadence @-@ lypso " ) . Sadly a year later Maestro would die in an accident in Dominica and his loss was palpably felt by Shorty , who penned " Higher World " as a tribute .

In Dominica , Shorty had attended an Exile One performance of cadence @-@ lypso , and collaborated with Dominica 's 1969 Calypso King , Lord Tokyo and two calypso lyricists , Chris Seraphine and Pat Aaron in the early 1970s , who wrote him some Creole lyrics . Soon after Shorty released a song , " Ou Petit " , with words like " Ou dee moin ou petit Shorty " ( meaning " you told me you are small Shorty " ) , a combination of calypso , cadence and Creole .

Soca 's development includes its fusion of calypso , cadence , and Indian musical instruments ? particularly the dholak , tabla and dhantal ? as demonstrated in Shorty 's classic compositions " Indrani " and " Shanti Om " .

= = = Bouyon = = =

Bouyon is a fusion of Jing ping , Cadence @-@ lypso and traditional dances namely bèlè , Quadrille , chanté mas and lapo kabwit , Mazurka , Zouk and other styles of Caribbean music , developed by a band called Windward Caribbean Kulture ( later WCK ) . WCK was among the most prominent of ' 80s Dominican soca bands . They began using native drum rhythms such as lapo kabwit and elements of the music of jing ping bands , as well as ragga @-@ style vocals . Bouyon is

popular across the Caribbean , and is known as jump up music in Guadeloupe and Martinique .

The best @-@ known band in the genre was Windward Caribbean Kulture " WCK " in 1988 by experimenting a fusion of Jing Ping and Cadence @-@ lypso . While the Cadence @-@ lypso sound is based on the creative usage of acoustic drums , an aggressive up @-@ tempo guitar beat , and strong social commentary in the local Creole language , this new music created by the " WCK " band focused more on the use of modern technology with strong emphasis on keyboard rhythmic patterns .

Bouyon has diversified into multiple subgenres . These include bouyon soca , bouyon @-@ muffin , reketeng , and bouyon gwada .

= = = Bouyon soca = = =

Bouyon soca : , sometimes referred to as Jump up soca , is a fusion @-@ genre that typically blends old bouyon rhythms from the ' 90s and soca music . Bouyon soca , is a term coined by non @-@ Dominican producers and musicians who wish to attribute the current success of bouyon music to other islands . In its native Dominica , the concept of bouyon soca is pretty much unheard of . Bouyon is a very specific and original genre and is very much distinguishable from its " colleague " Soca .

While there may have been the occasional fusion , Bouyon has always maintained a very clear , recognisable and obviously different style from soca . This style of bouyon music was originated in Dominica , but is also very popular in Saint Lucia , Guadeloupe and Martinique .

= = Alternative music = =

Religious music , influenced by American gospel , has become an important part of Dominican popular music in the 1990s . Calypso has also retained much popularity in Dominica , as has Jazz . The band Impact has fused jazz with Caribbean music . Other styles include steelpan , which has declined popularity despite the efforts of groups like Dancehall .

= = Music institutions and festivals = =

The Caribbean Carnival is an important part of Dominican culture . Originally featuring masquerade songs ( chanté mas ) and other local traditions , traditional Carnival , Mas Domnik , came to be dominated by imported calypso music and steel bands in the early 1960s ; calypso appealed to Carnival @-@ goers because the lyrical focus on local news and gossip was similar to that of chanté mas , despite a rhythmic pattern and instrumentation which contrast sharply with traditional Dominican Mas Domnik music . After a fire in 1963 , the traditional Carnival was banned , though calypso and steelpan continued to grow in popularity . Modern Carnival on Dominica takes place on the Monday and Tuesday before Ash Wednesday , and is a festive occasion during which laws against libel and slander are suspended . The modern Dominican Carnival is heavily based on the Trinidadian celebration , but is not as commercialized due to a lack of corporate sponsorship .

The World Creole Music Festival takes place on the island of Dominica , in Festival City , Roseau , which is run by the governmental Dominica Festivals Commission . The National Independence Competitions are an important part of Dominican musical culture . They were founded by Chief Minister of Dominica Edward Olivier Leblanc in 1965 , and promote the traditional music and dance of Dominica . The government of Dominica also promotes Dominican music through the Dominican Broadcasting Station , which broadcasts between 20 % and 25 % local music as a matter of policy .