

= Music of Barbados =

The music of Barbados includes distinctive national styles of folk and popular music , including elements of Western classical and religious music . The culture of Barbados is a syncretic mix of African and British elements , and the island 's music reflects this mix through song types and styles , instrumentation , dances , and aesthetic principles .

Barbadian folk traditions include the Landship movement , which is a satirical , informal organization based on the British navy , tea meetings , tuk bands and numerous traditional songs and dances . In modern Barbados , popular styles include calypso , spouge , contemporary folk and world music . Barbados is , along with Guadeloupe , Martinique , Trinidad , Cuba , Puerto Rico , and the Virgin Islands , one of the few centers for Caribbean jazz .

= = Characteristics and musical identity = =

Bajan culture is syncretic , and the island 's musical culture is perceived as a mixture of African and British musics , with certain unique elements that may derive from indigenous sources . Tension between African and British culture has long been a major element of Bajan history , and has included the banning of certain African @-@ derived practices and black Barbadian parodies of British traditions . Simple entertainment is the basis for most Barbadians ' participation in music and dance activities , though religious and other functional musics also occur . Barbadian folk culture declined in importance in the 20th century , but then rekindled in the 1970s , when many Barbadians became interested in their national culture and history . This change was heralded by the arrival of spouge , a popular national genre that reflects Barbadian heritage and African origins ; spouge helped kindle a resurgence in national pride , and became viewed as Barbados ' answer to the popular Caribbean genres reggae and calypso from Jamaica and Trinidad , respectively .

The religious music of the Barbadian Christian churches plays an important role in Barbadian musical identity , especially in urban areas . Many distinctive Barbadian musical and other cultural traditions derive from parodies of Anglican church hymns and British military drills . The British military performed drills to both provide security for the island 's population , as well as intimidate slaves . Modern Barbadian tea meetings , tuk bands , the Landship tradition and many folk songs come from slaves parodying the practices of white authorities . British @-@ Barbadians used music for cultural and intellectual enrichment and to feel a sense of kinship and connection with the British Isles through the maintenance of British musical forms . Plantation houses featured music as entertainment at balls , dances and other gatherings . For Afro @-@ Barbadians , drum , vocal and dance music was an integral part of everyday life , and songs and performance practices were created for normal , everyday events , as well as special celebrations like Whitsuntide , Christmas , Easter , Landship and Crop Over . These songs remain a part of Barbadian culture and form a rich folk repertoire .

Western classical music is the most socially accepted form of musical expression for Barbadians in Bridgetown , including a variety of vocal music , chamber and orchestral music , and piano and violin . Along with hymns , oratorios , cantatas and other religious music , chamber music of the Western tradition remains an important part of Barbadian music through an integral role in the services of the Anglican church .

= = History = =

Though inhabited prior to the 16th century , little is known about Barbadian music before the arrival of the Portuguese in 1536 and then the English in 1627 . The Portuguese left little influence , but English culture and music helped shape the island 's heritage . Irish and Scottish settlers emigrated in the 17th century , working in the tobacco industry , bringing still more new music to the island . The middle of the 17th century saw the decline of the tobacco industry and the rise of sugarcane , as well as the introduction of large numbers of African slaves . Brazilian exiles however , along with sugarcane introduced Samba to the island which featured a mixture of Latin music with African

influences which soon developed into Soca @-@ Samba which is indigenous to Barbados . Modern Barbadian music is thus largely a combination of English and African elements , with Irish , Scottish , and modern American and Caribbean (especially Jamaican) influences as well .

By the 19th century , the Barbadian colonialists grew to fear slave revolts , and specifically , the use of music as a tool of communication and planning for revolution . As a result , the government passed laws to restrict musical activities among slaves . At the same time , American and other forms of imported music were brought to Barbados , while many important elements of modern Barbadian music , like tuk bands , also emerged . In the 20th century , many new styles were imported to Barbados , most influentially including jazz , ska , reggae , calypso and soca . Barbados became home to many performers of these new genres , especially soca and calypso , while the island also produced an indigenous style called spouge , which became an important symbol of Barbadian identity .

= = Folk music = =

Barbadian culture and music are mixtures of European and African elements , with minimal influence from the indigenous peoples of the island , about whom little is known . Significant numbers of Asian , specifically Chinese and Japanese , people have moved to Barbados , but their music is unstudied and has had little impact on Barbadian music .

The earliest reference to Afro @-@ Barbadian music may come from a description of a slave rebellion , in which the rebels were inspired to fight by music played on skin drums , conch trumpets and animal horns . Slavery continued , however , and the colonial and slaveowning authorities eventually outlawed musical instruments among slaves . By the end of the 17th century , a distinctly Barbadian folk culture developed , based around influences and instruments from Africa , Britain and other Caribbean islands .

Early Barbadian folk music , despite legal restrictions , was a major part of life among the island 's slave population . For the slaves , music was " essential for recreation and dancing and as a part of the life cycle for communication and religious meaning " . African musicians also provided the music for the white landowners ' private parties , while the slaves developed their own party music , culminating in the crop over festival , which began in 1688 . The earliest crop over festivals featured dancing and call @-@ and @-@ response singing accompanied by shak @-@ shak , banjo , bones and bottles containing varying amounts of water .

= = = Folk song = = =

Barbadian traditional folk songs are heavily influenced by the music of England . Many traditional songs concern events current at the time of their composition , such as the emancipation of the slaves of Barbados , and the coronations of Victoria , George V , and Elizabeth II ; this song tradition dates back to 1650 . The most influential Barbadian folk songs are associated with the island 's lower @-@ class laborers , who have held on to their folk heritage .

Some Barbadian songs and stories made their way back to England , most famously " Inckle the English Sailor " and " Yarico the Indian Maid " , which became English plays and an opera by George Coleman with music by Samuel Arnold , and first performed in London in 1787 .

Contemporary Barbadian folk songs , especially through the pioneering albums of author and singer @-@ songwriter Anthony Kellman , show a bold fusion of indigenous rhythms such as tuk and calypso with African , Latin , jazz , pop , and East Indian influences . Kellman 's songs such as " Mountain " (from 2000 album " Wings of A Stranger ") ; " King Jaja " and " My Dog , Your Dog " (from 2005 album " Limestone ") ; and " If You See My Girl " and " Tuk , Tabla , and Fedounoum " (from 2009 album Blood Mates) , exemplify his eclectic style . More than any of his contemporaries , Kellman , through his songs , poems , and novels , demonstrates what it means to be Barbadian through a hybrid mix of African and European cultural elements . ? [25]

= = = Dance = = =

Barbadian folk dances include a wide variety of styles , performed at Landship , holidays and other occasions . Dancers and other performers at the crop over festivals , for example , are popular and an iconic part of Barbadian culture , known for dancing in the costumes of sugarcane @-@ cutters . The Landship movement features song and dance meant to imitate the passage of a British navy ship through rough seas ; Landship and other occasions also feature African @-@ derived improvised and complexly @-@ rhythmic dances , and British hornpipes , jigs , maypole dances and Marches .

The Jean and Johnnie dance was an important part of Barbadian culture until it was banned in the 19th century . This was a popular fertility dance performed outdoors at plantation fairs and other festivals , and was functional in that it allowed women to show off to men , and more rarely , vice versa . The dance was eventually banned because the dance was associated with non @-@ Christian African traditions .

= = = Instrumentation = = =

The Barbadian folk tradition is home to a great variety of musical instruments , imported from Africa , Great Britain or other Caribbean islands . The most central instrument group in Barbadian culture is the percussion instruments . These include numerous drums , among them the pump and the tum tum , made from a hollowed @-@ out tree trunk , the side snare drum and a double @-@ headed bass drum of tuk bands . Folk musicians also use gongs made from tree trunks , bones , rook jaw , triangle , cymbals , bottles filled with water , and xylophones . Rattles are also widespread , and include the pan @-@ Antillean shak @-@ shak and the calabash , de shot and rattle . More recently imported folk percussion instruments include the conga and bongo from Puerto Rico , Dominican Republic and Cuba , and the tambourine .

String and wind instruments play an important role in Barbadian folk culture , especially the bow @-@ fiddle , banjo and acoustic guitar ; more modern groups also use an electric and bass guitar . The shukster is a distinctive instrument , made by stretching a guitar string between two sides of a house . Traditional Barbadian wind instruments are largely metal , but in their folk origins , were made out of locally found materials . Barbadian villagers burned fingerholes , for example , on bamboo tubes , made trumpets out of conch shells and pipes from pumpkin vines . Many modern groups use harmonica , accordion , alto and tenor saxophone , trumpet and trombone .

= = = Religious music = = =

Though Western classical and other musics play an important role in Anglican church services on Barbados , religion and folk music are closely intertwined in the everyday lives of most Barbadians . The basis for religious folk music is the Anglican hymn , a kind of praise song mostly sung on Sundays , a day when Christian Barbadians come together with family members to sing and praise God to ask for strength for the next week 's work .

Pentecostal music has become a part of Barbadian religious and musical traditions since the 1920s . Music plays a role in Pentecostal ceremonies , and is provided by emotional and improvised performances accompanied tambourines . In addition to the Anglican and Pentecostal traditions , Rastafarian music has spread to the island in more recent years , along with African American musical forms , especially gospel , and the Spiritual Baptist religion , which derives from the Trinidadian Shango cult that spread to Barbados in the 1960s . One of the more Internationally known religious music groups from Barbados are The Silvertones of Barbados .

= = = Holidays , festivals and other celebrations = = =

A number of holidays , festivals and other celebrations play an integral role in Barbadian folk , and popular , music . Whitsuntide , Christmas , and Easter are important , each associated with their own musical traditions , as are distinctly Barbadian festivities like the crop over festival and the

Landship movement .

The original crop over festival celebrated the end of the sugarcane harvest . These festivals were held in the great house of the plantations , and included both slaves and plantation managers . Celebrations included drinking competitions , feasting , song and dance , and climbing a greased pole . Musical accompaniment was provided by triangle , fiddle , drums and a guitar , played by slave entertainers . Crop over festivals continue to play a part of Barbadian culture , and always feature music by performers in sugarcane @-@ cutting costumes , even though many modern performers are not themselves sugarcane @-@ cutters .

The Barbadian Landship movement is an informal entertainment organization which mocks , through mimicry and satire , the British navy . Landship began in 1837 , founded by an individual known variously as Moses Ward and Moses Wood , in Britton 's Hall in Seamen 's Village . The structure of the Landship organization mirrors the structure of the British navy , with a " ship " which is connected to a " dock " (a wooden house similar to a chattel house) , and leaders known as Lord High Admiral , Captain , Boatswain and other navy ranks . Each unit is named like a typical navy ship and may include actual names of British ships or places . Landship performances symbolize and reflect the passage of ships through rough seas . Parades , jigs , hornpipes , maypole dances and other music and dance types are a part of the Landship Society 's celebrations . The Council of the Barbados Landship Association regulates the movement .

Barbadian Christmas music is mostly based on church and concert hall performances , where typical North American Christmas carols are performed , such as " White Christmas " and " Silver Bells " , alongside works by English composers like William Byrd , Henry Walford Davies and Thomas Tallis . In more recent years , calypso , reggae and other new elements have become a part of local Christmas traditions . As recently as the 1960s , Barbados was home to a distinctive practice , in which scrubbers traveled from house to house singing hymns and receiving rewards from households .

= = = Tuk bands and tea meetings = = =

Tuk bands are Barbadian musical ensembles , consisting of a bow @-@ fiddle or pennywhistle flute , kittle triangle and a snare and double @-@ headed bass drum . The kittle and bass drum provide the rhythm , while the flute gives the melody . The drums are light @-@ weight so they can be carried easily , and are made by both rural villagers and drummers using cured sheepskin and goatskin . Tuk bands are based on the British military 's regimental bands , which played for many years for special occasions , like visiting royalty and coronations . The tuk sound has evolved over the years , as has the instrumentation , with the bow @-@ fiddle used before being most commonly replaced by the pennywhistle flute . Tuk bands are now most common in Landship events , but are still sometimes independent . On their own , tuk bands are generally accompanied by a range of iconic Barbadian characters , including " shaggy bears " , " mother sally " , " the steel donkey " and " green monkeys " . The upbeat modern sound of tuk ensembles are a distinctly Barbadian blend of African and British musics .

Tea meetings are celebrations held in society lodges or school halls , and feature both solo and group performance , theatrical rhetoric and oratory , and other activities . After declining following World War I , tea meetings have recently been revived and have regained their widespread popularity . They are held at nighttime , beginning at 9 : 00 pm and continuing until midnight , when there is a two @-@ hour break for food and drink before the tea meeting is resumed .

= = Popular music = =

Barbados has produced few internationally popular musicians , with worldwide pop superstar Rihanna being the most famous . It has however created a well @-@ developed local scene playing imported styles like American jazz and calypso , as well as the indigenous spouge style . Calypso was the first popular music in Barbados , and dates back to the 1930s . Barbadian calypso is a comedic song form , accompanied by guitar and banjo . More recent styles of calypso have also

kept a local scene alive , and produced a number of famous calypsonians . Spouge is a mixture of calypso and other styles , especially ska , and became very popular in the 1960s , around the same time as the Barbadian jazz scene grew in stature and became home to a number of famous performers . Modern Barbadian popular music is largely based around reggae , ragga and soca , and includes some elements of indigenous styles . Artists like Terencia Coward have used modern popular music with instrumentation borrowed from folk tuk bands . Two of the more popular bands of Barbadian popular music are Krosfyah and Square One [now defunct] ; the new wave of singers , largely soca , include Rupee , Lil ' Rick and Jabae with lead vocalist Bruce and Barry Chandler , all recent winners at crop over . A more experimental artist such as poet and fiction writer Anthony Kellman writes thoughtful poetic lyrics delivered in a musical style deeply rooted in Barbadian indigenous folk music with strong elements of African and Latin influences . His albums Wings of a Stranger , Limestone , and Blood Mates have been described as groundbreaking due to his highly original style .

= = Calypso = =

Prior to the 1930s , Barbadian calypso was called banja , and was performed by laborers in village @-@ tenantry areas . Itinerant minstrels like Mighty Jerry , Shilling Agard and Slammer were well @-@ known forerunners of modern Barbadian calypso . Their song tradition embraced sentimentality , humor , and opinionated lyrics that continued to the 1960s , often by then accompanied by guitar or banjo .

The mid @-@ 20th century brought new forms of music from Trinidad , Brazil , the United States , Cuba and the Dominican Republic to Barbados , and the Barbadian calypso style came to be viewed as lowbrow or inferior . Promoters like Lord Silvers and Mighty Dragon , however , kept the popular tradition alive through shows at the Globe Theatre , featuring pioneers Mighty Romeo , Sir Don Marshall , Lord Radio and the Bimshire Boys and Mike Wilkinson . These performers set the stage for the development of popular Barbadian calypso in the 1960s .

In the early 1960s , Barbadian calypso grew in popularity and stature , led by Viper , Mighty Gabby and The Merryman . The first calypso competitions were held in 1960 , and they quickly grew larger and more prominent . The Merryman became the island 's most prominent contribution to calypso by the 1970s and into the 80s . Their style , known as blue beat , incorporated Barbadian folk songs and ballads , as well as American blues , country music , and a distinctive sound created by harmonica , guitar and banjo .

By the beginning of the 1980s , kaiso , a form of stage @-@ presented calypso pioneered in Trinidad , was widespread at crop over and other celebrations . The foundation of the National Cultural Foundation in 1984 helped to promote and administer calypso festivals , which attracted tourists , stimulating the calypso industry . As a result , calypso has become a very visible and iconic part of Barbadian culture , and some calypsonians have become internationally renowned , including Mighty Gabby and Red Plastic Bag .

= = = Spouge = = =

Spouge is a style of Barbadian popular music created by Jackie Opel in the 1960s . It is primarily a fusion of Jamaican ska with Trinidadian calypso , but is also influenced by a wide variety of musics from the British Isles and United States , include sea shanties , hymns and spirituals . Spouge instrumentation originally consisted of cowbell , bass guitar , trap set and various other electronic and percussion instruments , later augmented by saxophone , trombone and trumpets . Of these , the cowbell and the guitar are widely seen as the most integral part of the instrumentation , and are said to reflect the African origin of much of Barbadian music .

Two different kinds of spouge were popular in the 1960s , raw spouge (Draytons Two style) and dragon spouge (Cassius Clay style) . The spouge industry grew immensely by the end of the 1970s , and produced popular stars like Blue Rhythm Combo , the Draytons Two and The Troubadours . Recent years has seen a resurgence of interest in spouge among some quarters ,

with people like Desmond Weekes of the Draytons Two indicating that spouge should be encouraged because it is a national form that can reach international audiences and inspire the nation's pride in their cultural heritage .

= = = Jazz = = =

Jazz is a genre of music from the United States which reached Barbados by the end of the 1920s . The first major performer from the island was Lionel Gittens , who was followed by Percy Green , Maggie Goodridge and Cleve Gittens . These bandleaders played a variety of music , including swing , a kind of pop @-@ jazz , Barbadian calypso and waltzes . With little recorded music on the island , radio broadcasts such as Willis Conover 's Voice of America had a major influence . In 1937 , riots over poverty and disenfranchisement occurred , and people like Clement Payne had risen to fame advocating reform . In that year , Payne was deported and riots broke out in Bridgetown , spreading throughout the island . The following year , the Barbados Labour Party was formed by C. A. Braithwaite and Grantley Adams .

As political awareness among the black majority on the island spread , so did bebop , a kind of jazz which was associated , in the United States , with social activism and Afrocentrism . The first Barbadian bebop musician from the island was Keith Campbell , a pianist who had learned to play many styles while living in Trinidad during a time when American soldiers were stationed there , providing a ready market for bands that could play American music . Other musicians of this period included Ernie Small , a trumpeter and pianist , and bandleader St. Clare Jackman .

In the 1950s , R & B and rock and roll became popular on the island , and many jazz bands found themselves pushed aside . A wave of Guyanese musicians also appeared on the island , including Colin Dyal , a saxophonist who later joined the Police Band , and the Ebe Gilkes Quartet . Though mainstream audiences were still listening to R & B and rock , modern jazz retained a small core of followers into the 1960s . The foundation of the Belair Jazz Club in Bridgetown in 1961 helped to keep this scene alive . With independence in 1966 came a focus on black Barbadian culture , and music like calypso , reggae and spouge , rather than the preoccupation with British standards of musical development . Calypso jazz arose during this period , pioneered by groups like the Schofield Pilgrim . The genre had developed by 1965 , when original works like " Jouvert Morning " and " Calypso Lament " were composed . Artists like the pianist Adrian Clarke became popular during the 60s as well .

In the early 1970s , jazz fan and critic Carl Moore launched a project to keep jazz alive on the island , while Zanda Alexander 's performance in Bridgetown in 1972 is said to be the first Caribbean jazz festival . Oscar Peterson 's 1976 performance in Trinidad also inspired Barbadian musicians , as did the radio program Jazz Jam , which was broadcast starting in the mid @-@ 70s on the Caribbean Broadcast Corporation . In 1983 , however , the Belair Jazz Club closed , and was not replaced by any long @-@ term clubs . Later in the 1980s , jazz declined greatly in popularity , though The National Cultural foundation organized the International Barbados / Caribbean Jazz Festival , which after a brief hiatus due to lack of sponsorship was resurrected by Gilbert Rowe of GMR international tours . Other performances were organized by a group called the Friends of Jazz . More jazz calypso fusion musicians appeared on the scene during this period , including Arturo Tappin , Nicholas Brancker , Andre Woodvine and Raf Robertson .

= = = Rock = = =

Rock music is alive and well in Barbados , there have been several bands through the years that perform alternative , rock and even metal music . Most recently the Alt / Rock / Metal band Standing Penance formed in 2009 . The band continues to operate in present @-@ day and is the only act of this genre to be signed to an American record label .

= = Education and musicology = =

Academic study of Barbadian music remains limited . Some song collections and other activities have been conducted , but there remain significant holes in scholarship , such as the musics of recent immigrants from China and India , who presumably have brought with them styles of Indian and Chinese musics . Due to a lack of archaeological and historical records , the island 's indigenous music is unknown . Since the 1970s , an increase in general interest in Barbadian culture has spurred greater study of music , and given an incentive to radio and television stations to create and maintain archives of cultural practices .

On modern Barbados , oral transmission remains the primary mode of music education , and there are few opportunities for most people to become formally educated in music of any kind . The elders of the island , who are the most educated in oral traditions , are held in high esteem due to their knowledge of folk culture . Modern Barbados is home to several institutions of musical education . There are dedicated schools for ballet : Dance Place and the Liz Mahon Dancers . A number of schools sponsor orchestras , steelbands and tuk bands , including the St. Lucy Secondary School Steel Orchestra . Music is a part of the curriculum for early childhood as well as primary and secondary education . The Barbados Community College has an associate degree programme in music . However , the University of the West Indies , though it has a campus on Barbados , does not offer degree programs in music . As a matter of fact , only recently has the University started offering students the opportunity to pursue a minor in music .

= = Music institutions and festivals = =

The main music festival in Barbados is crop over , which is celebrated with song , dance , calypso tent competitions and parades , especially leading up to the first Monday in August , Kadooment Day . The crop over festival celebrates the end of the sugarcane harvest , and is inaugurated by the ritual delivery of the last of the harvest on a cart pulled by mules . The champion sugarcane workers are crowned King and Queen for the event . In addition to crop over , music plays an important role in many other Barbadian holidays and festivals . The Easter Oistins Fish Festival , for example features a street party with music to celebrate the signing of the Charter of Barbados and the fishing industry of the island , and the Holetown Festival , which commemorates the arrival of the first settlers in 1627 .

The annual December Classical / Pops Festival comprises an all @-@ star orchestra accompanied by pop and rock stars , Broadway performers , opera singers , and film composers as featured guests . Opera , cabaret and sports are a major part of the Easter Holders Season . On 30 November , the Barbadian Independence Day , military bands in parades play marches , calypsos and other popular songs . This is preceded for several weeks by the National Independence Festival of Creative Arts . The National Independence Festival of Creative Arts and Crop Over are two of the festivals sponsored by the National Cultural Foundation (NCF) ; the other is Congaline , a recently organized street party that begins in April and ends on May Day . NCF also assists with the Holers Opera Season , Oistins Fish Festival , Holetown Festival and the B 'dos Jazz Festival .

Other major musical institutions in Barbados include the Barbados Chamber Orchestra and the Cavite Choral . There are also dance and ballet groups known as Dance National Afrique , Barbados Dance Theatre Company , Dance Strides , The Dance Place and Dancing Africa . The island 's music industry is home to several recording studios , the largest being Blue Wave , a 48 @-@ track system , and Paradise Alley , a 24 @-@ track system . Others include Chambers ' Studio , Gray Lizard Productions and Ocean Lab Studios .