

= Music of Saint Lucia =

The music of Saint Lucia is home to many vibrant oral and folk traditions and is based on elements derived from the music of Africa , especially rhythmically , and Western Europe , dances like the quadrille , polka and waltz . The banjo and cuatro are iconic Lucian folk instruments , especially a four @-@ stringed banjo called the bwa poye . Celebratory songs called jwé show lyricism , and rhythmic complexity . The most important of the Afro @-@ Lucian Creole folk dances is the kwadril . Music is an integral part of Lucian folk holidays and celebrations , as well as the good @-@ natured rivalry between the La Rose and La Marguerite societies . There is little Western classical music on Saint Lucia , and the country 's popular music industry is only nascent . There are few recording opportunities , though live music and radio remain a vital part of Lucian culture . Popular music from abroad , especially Trinidadian styles like calypso and soca , is widespread .

Music education has long been a part of Lucian public education in the primary school age groups . More recently , it has been introduced to older students , many of whom now participate in String Orchestras , wind ensembles , steelpan bands and other musical enrichment opportunities . There is also a well @-@ known government assisted non @-@ profit music school , the Saint Lucia School of Music . The Ministry of Education sponsors a variety of festivals and other special events . The island is also home to the prestigious Saint Lucia Jazz Festival and the Creole celebration Jounen Kwéyòl .

Saint Lucia , is an island in the Lesser Antilles of the Caribbean .

= = Folk music = =

A typical Saint Lucian folk band is based around the fiddle , cuatro , banjo , guitar and chak @-@ chak (a rattle) . The banjo and cuatro are regarded as particularly important in Saint Lucian culture , especially the small , four @-@ stringed bwa poye , or skroud banjo . Saint Lucian dances include moulala , faci and comette (a derivative of the minuet) ; however , the kwadril is increasingly viewed as a national symbol . It is a highly stylized and formalized dance that derives from the European quadrille . Jwé is a more informal form of Lucian folk music , and is performed at dances , wakes and other social events ; performers improvise comedic and often biting or lyrics . Music also plays a role in the La Rose and La Marguerite tradition of two rival societies that compete in celebration and form a fundamental part of Lucian culture .

Jwé (play) is a form of rural Lucian folk music associated with beach parties , wakes , débòt dances and full moon gatherings . Jwé is performed as an informal , social event that provide the chance for Lucians to show off their verbal skills , and communicate their comedic , social and political commentaries without offending people . Jwé includes both songs for men and women , both of which can be singers , though most Lucian folk instrumentalists are male . A jwé performance is considered good if the audience participates enthusiastically by clapping , responding to the leader and singing and dancing . Some Lucians avoid jwé altogether because of its sexually raunchy lyricism and atmosphere ; nevertheless , elements of jwé have entered mainstream Lucian culture , such as the use of lang dévivé , or saying the opposite of what is meant .

Musical elements of jwé include gém (game song) , listwa (storytelling) , jwé chanté (sung songs) and jwé dansé (song @-@ play @-@ dance) . These forms are united by their use of the Creole language , their use of call @-@ and @-@ response singing between a leader and a chorus , with the exception of listwa , and the use of improvisation . Jwé chanté and listwa are purely vocal styles with no accompaniment , nor any traditional dance ; the other two are typically accompanied by a ka drum or sometimes the tibwa percussion sticks , which provides a rhythm for dancers .

Sung jwé , jwé chanté or chanté kont , is mostly part of the funeral wake tradition . A jwé chanté leader uses pantomime to enact scenes from a story , or sometimes just the ribald double entendres from it . The gém (game song) are based around a leader who uses his own flourishes on a choreographed dance and improvises witty lyrics , while the audience participates in the performance . Jwé dansé includes four traditional dances . The solo is a couple dance , and the

débòt , yonbòt and jwé pòté are all circle dances . The blòtjé is a musical movement found in all jwé dansé styles , occurring , for example , every four beats in the débòt dance .

= = = Kwadril = = =

Quadrille is a Lucian Creole folk dance derived from the European quadrille . It is performed primarily at private parties which are organized by a host in a private home or rented hall , with musicians paid by the host . Kwadrils are held throughout the year , except during Lent . The modern kwadril has declined in popularity ; it had come to be seen as a symbol of colonialism around the time of independence , and was shunned as old @-@ fashioned and out @-@ of @-@ date . More recently , some aspects of Lucian society have come to promote the quadrille as a symbol of Lucian culture . Quadrilles are unlike other Lucian dances in that they must be memorized and choreographed , with only slight room for personal interpretation and improvisation . Learners act as a sort of apprentice for more established performers . A successful performance brings respect and prestige for all participants who dance the correct steps which are traditionally said to " demonstrate control over behavior , manner , and skills " and " symbolize ... a set of special values linked with a higher social class " .

Kwadril music is provided by an ensemble consisting of a four @-@ stringed instrument , the cuatro (instrument) , a rattle , the chakchak , bones called zo , a violin , banjo (skroud , bwa pòyé) , mandolin and guitar . A kwadril consists of five separate dances : the pwémyé fidji , dézyèm fidji , twazyèm fidji , katwiyèm fidji (also avantwa or lanmen dwèt) and gwan won (also grande rond) . The musicians may also use a lakonmèt (mazurka) , schottische or polka ; the lakonmèt , also called the mazouk , is especially popular and is the only closed couple dance which originated in Saint Lucia .

= = = La Rose and La Marguerite = = =

La Rose and La Marguerite are rival societies that commemorate the Anglo @-@ French heritage of the island ; the factions represent the warring colonial powers , between whose hands Saint Lucia changed fourteen times . La Rose is held on August 30 while La Marguerite is held on October 17 . The societies date back to the early 19th century , when each village was home to competing organizations of the Roman Catholic Church . Both societies draw on English royalty traditions and have a number of positions , including the King , Queen , Prince , Princess and various lower titles like the Chief of Police and nurse . La Rose and La Marguerite meet once weekly except during Lent . At these meetings , which are on Saturday for La Rose and Sunday for La Marguerite , members sing or play instruments and dance . La Marguerite meetings feature the membership in a seat chorus with a leader , the chantwèl , standing , while La Rose meetings include instruments like the tanbouwen (tambourine) , baha (wooden trumpet) , chakchak (rattles) , guitar and gwaj (scraper) .

The celebrations of both groups differ in that La Rose , the " English " faction , is characterized by noisiness , movement , participation , rhythm and exuberance , while La Marguerite , the " French " faction , is characterized by melody , discipline and restraint . There is a vibrant tradition of women singing factional songs related to this rivalry . Traditions common to both factions include the Omans , a sort of waltz , Marches and the duple rhythm manpa (or maynan) dance . Kwadril and lakonmèt are also performed by La Rose .

= = = Other traditional styles = = =

In addition to jwé and other music performed for entertainment , Saint Lucia is also home to styles used only for specific occasions . These include work songs , drinking songs , funereal music and serenades and masquerades . The latter two traditions are nearly extinct in modern Saint Lucia . The masquerade was a celebration held near holidays like Easter and New Year 's Day , which included an orchestra consisting of a tanbou tenbal , chakchak and a bamboo flute . This same

ensemble also traditionally performs for cockfights , merry @-@ go @-@ rounds and vocal serenades , called séwinal in Lucian Creole .

The most widespread form of Lucian work song is the chanté siay , which accompanies the sawing of wood . The vocals are performed by a lead singer and two responding singers , accompanied by a ka and tibwa duo . Both instruments are played in an atypical manner . The ka drum is played on the ground rather than upright , and the tibwa percussion sticks are struck against a bamboo or wooden stick rather than the rim of a drum .

Lucian drinking songs are the chanté abwè , which are rarely performed in recent years . Their traditional context , however , is the wibòt celebration , held during Christmas time . Chanté abwè are performed in a game in which the singers , seated at a long table , take turns singing a new song each time their turn comes . Those who lasted the entire evening won prizes , often a bottle of rum .

= = = Bèlè = = =

The bèlè tradition is a form of Creole song and couple dance , performed one couple with a leader and chorus . They are performed in several contexts , most notably in funeral wakes . Bèlè include the bèlè anlè , bèlè matjé , bèlè anlawis and the bèlè atè . The bèlè anlawis is the only form which is not responsorial .

= = = Funeral music = = =

On Saint Lucia , wakes are held on the first and eighth night after a person has died , in contrast to other Caribbean islands , which hold their wakes on the first and ninth days . Wakes often include music , such as the singing of hymns and drumming . Traditional music for wakes is performed both inside and outside of the deceased 's house . The mourners inside the house sing from a repertoire of songs that are in English and not French Creole , because they are derived from the English @-@ using songs of Lucian churches . The songs include both hymns and sankeys (gospel songs) , and are generally responsorial , led by a male singer with the slow , unsyncopated responses of the chorus in unison . The mourners outside the house traditionally perform drumming and a kind of responsorial song performed in Creole and without accompaniment , called kont . These songs often related to the death of the deceased , and may deal with the cause of death , the last words or events surrounding the death . Mourners also dance to both the débòt and bèlè , accompanied zo or tibwa and ka .

The villages of La Grace , Piaye and Laborie in the southwest area of Saint Lucia were known for a unique song @-@ dance called the koutoumba . The koutoumba was only performed for the death of a djiné , a person descended from Africans who came to the island in the middle of the 19th century . The koutoumba is unique among Lucian folk dance in that it is performed by a sole dancer and using only two to four lines of text , which is evocative of the song 's atmosphere rather than narrative . The last drummer who knew this tradition died in 1986 .

= = = Kélé = = =

Kélé is an Afro @-@ Lucian religious tradition from the Djiné people of the Babonneau region . Only one family , from Resina , in modern Saint Lucia claims to have the religious authority to perform and pass on the kélé rituals . Kélé is based around three deities , Eshu , Shango and Ogun , and is similar to the Nigerian Ogun festival . Kélé 's rituals involve contacting one 's ancestors to ask for protection , especially " good crops , good health , and good fortune " . Kélé has been underground for much of its history , and was only accepted by the Lucian Roman Catholic Church in the early 1960s .

Kélé rituals are accompanied by the drumming of the tanbou manman (mother drum) and the tanbou ich (child drum) , which play four different rhythms at specified moments ; these are the adan , èrè , koudou and kèrè rhythms . Kélé rituals also include singing and dance , as well as

feasting , praying to Ogun and the other gods , the smashing of the calabash to appease Eshu at the end of the ceremony , the display of tools made of iron and steel to honor Ogun , and smooth stones to represent Shango , who also receives a ceremonially cleansed sacrificial ram .

= = Popular music = =

Lucian popular music can be traced back to the 1940s , when calypso became a part of the island 's musical culture . Calypso is a lyrical Trinidadian genre , related to several styles found through the Antillean music area . Music scholar Jocelyne Guilbault has called calypso the primary way modern Lucians " express social commentary " . Along with calypso , Lucia has also imported the Trinidadian steelband and soca traditions .

Some Lucian calypsonians recorded in the 1980s , mostly on 45 @-@ RPM discs which remain largely unavailable today . The Lucian music industry is quite small scale , due to the island 's small market , its lack of recording studios and record producers , the widespread bootlegging of cassettes , and the general unavailability of funding for musical ventures . Saint Lucia is home to several radio stations including Radio St. Lucia and Radio Caribbean International , which play a variety of popular music ; since 1989 , St Lucian radio stations have played an increasing number of programs about Lucian culture and in the local Creole tongue .

Modern Saint Lucia has produced a few popular musicians in various styles , but is most closely associated with calypso music . Popular Lucian musicians include Tru Tones , Rameau Poleon , Prolifik , Disturbing Joan and Aimran Simmons . Marie Selipha Sesenne Descartes (known simply as " Sesenne ") was named Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire for her work as a chantwelle and in the promotion of Saint Lucian traditional culture and music . Saint Lucian folk dance and theater includes flower dances , masquerades and the Papa Djab festival ; various kinds of music are associated with these celebrations .

= = = Roots revival = = =

In 1969 , three Saint Lucians (Eric Brandford , Primrose Bledman and Charles Cadet) collected numerous folk songs for a presentation at the 1969 Expo in Grenada and then again at Guyana 's 1973 Carifesta . Two major folk groups emerged ; they were The Helenites (led by Clement Springer) and Joyce Auguste 's The Hewanorra Voices . Auguste later introduced folk music into Saint Lucian music education . By the end of the 1980s , music and other aspects of Lucian culture was an integral part of the Lucian education system .

In the time leading up to independence from the United Kingdom in 1979 , Saint Lucia underwent a profound political and cultural awakening and roots revival which drew on the rise of the black consciousness movement of the United States , the influence of the Caribbean Ecumenical Consultation for Development on local culture and the loosening of restrictions from the powerful Roman Catholic Church on non @-@ Christian cultural elements . Since 1973 , the non @-@ government organization Folk Research Centre which seeks to " promote research into St. Lucian culture " and to " explore and clarify the role of culture in the development of our people " .

= = = Bouyon soca = = =

Bouyon soca typically blends old bouyon music rhythms from the 90s ' and soca music . In recent years Bouyon soca has become popular in the island of Saint Lucia . Saint Lucian artist Ricky T released a song " Pressure boom " in 2007 which blended the two genres and became very popular throughout the English speaking Caribbean .

This style of bouyon is mostly , but not exclusively , produced in Saint Lucia .

= = Government and industry = =

The government has seen value in promoting a music industry , and has formed the Cultural

Development Foundation (CDF) the statutory body given responsibility for preservation and promotion of Saint Lucian culture and arts. to accomplish this goal . In 1979 , the first @-@ ever M & C Fine Arts Awards were given by Minvielle & Chastanet Ltd , to Saint Lucian artists as an Independence Gift to the Nation ; in the early 2000s , this event was handed over to the newly formed Cultural Development Foundation and is now run as the National Arts Festival . The Folk Research Centre has been a prominent part of Lucian cultural research since 1973 , and has also published the journal Lucian Kaiso , devoted to Lucian calypso , since 1990 . The island 's calypso traditions are also celebrated at the annual kaiposium (a kaiso symposium) , held since 1987 . The island 's music industry remains little @-@ known internationally and of small economic importance . The government of Saint Lucia has worked with the OECS to promote the regional music industry through intellectual property law and sponsoring festivals and other activities .

The most important festival in modern Lucian culture is the Jounen Kwéyòl (International Creole Day) held annually on October 28 since 1983 . The Jounen Kwéyòl is sponsored by the Bannzil Kwéyòl , an international organization . Lucian activities are run by the Folk Research Centre in conjunction with the National Research and Development Foundation and the Mouvman Kwéyòl Sent Lisi (St. Lucia Creole Movement) . Lucian law protects the owners of intellectual property , such as songwriters , through the Copyright Act of 1995 ; copyrights are administered by the Hewanorra Musical Society .

There is also a Saint Lucia Jazz Festival that is a major attraction , and a well @-@ known part of the local music scene . It has been an annual event for fifteen years , and has hosted a variety of jazz stars , in addition to local talent . The 2005 festival was a boost for the local music industry , netting \$ 46 million . The Festival is sponsored by a number of corporations and groups , perhaps most significantly BET .

= = Education = =

Music is a part of the curriculum at public schools in Saint Lucia ; it has long been taught in younger grade levels , but was only introduced to secondary education in 1999 . Primary education on Saint Lucia , music and other artistic education is commonly used incidentally to teaching other subjects or for special occasions . About 40 % of the island 's schools engage in general music education , while others spent more time on general group singing or choir , or recorder ensemble performance . In 2003 , a string program was instituted for primary students .

About 70 % of schools teach music at the lower secondary level . Many of the schools that do not normally instruct in music may offer volunteer clubs or other more informal opportunities for musical enrichment . Many Lucian schools have formed ensembles , most commonly a wind ensemble (30 % of schools) , or a steelpan band (20 %) or combo group (20 %) . The public education field has also collaborated with the Saint Lucia School of Music to form the National Youth Choir , String Orchestra and Secondary Schools Wind Ensemble . The governmental Ministry of Education also sponsors a number of festivals and musical special events , both for the benefit of all students and the enrichment of the musically @-@ gifted among them .

The Saint Lucia School of Music is an independent institute of music education that has two branches on the island , one in the north and one in the south . It was established in 1987 , and has a student body of around four hundred students . The School 's professed goal is to provide music education at all levels , to offer community opportunities for musical enrichment , to facilitate the training and professional development of educators , and to establish the school as a musical resource . There is also a notable music Education Centre operated by a vocal group from the fishing village Anse la Raye ; this Centre provides music education opportunities for gifted and underprivileged children from across the island .