**Expert Opinion Letter (Confidential)**

Analysis of Positional Requirements for P-3 Status

Author: Susan Quindag

Author Info: On Q Educational Consulting

Professor of Music Education and Program Director of Strings at Bob Jones University

**Areas of Expertise**

Dedicated and creative professor of graduate and undergraduate courses in music education, education, research, and statistics. Supervises an academic program in the fine arts. Active researcher, writer, and presenter for national and international conferences and academic publications. Serves as an equity and diversity advisor/consultant, dissertation coach, and book reviewer.

**Work Experience**

**Professor of Music Education and Program Director of Strings**

Bob Jones University - Greenville, SC -

1983-01 - Present

Teaches graduate and undergraduate music education, education, and music courses in residence and online. Observes clinical experiences. Supervises an academic program (strings) in fine arts. Chairs dissertation committees. Writes, publishes, and present papers and workshops in music education. Serves as an equity and diversity advisor for Pearson Publishing. Also serves as a dissertation coach and book reviewer.

**Education**

**Ed.D. in Music Education**

University of North Carolina at Greensboro 1988-08 - 2002-11  
 **M. Ed. in Teaching Music**Bob Jones University - Greenville, SC 1981-01 - 1983-01

**BA in Music**

- Greensboro, NC

San Francisco State University - San Francisco, CA 1975-09 - 1979-12

SKILLS  
SPSS, Canvas, D2L, Microsoft Office, Finale, Adobe Connect, PowerPoint, Prezi, and Kaltura

AWARDS

**Recipient of the U. S. Speaker and Specialist Program**

2007-09

An invitation extended by the U. S. Embassy in Freetown, Sierra Leone, West African, and the West African Government as a cultural envoy and guest music lecturer on Gullah music for the commemoration of the 300th year anniversary of the abolishment of slavery. Presentations were made in universities and community centers throughout Freetown and Bo, Sierra Leone, West Africa.

CERTIFICATIONS/LICENSES

**Fundamentals of Online Teaching Certification (3 CEUs)**

2017-08 - Present

Certified to design and teach online graduate and undergraduate college courses utilizing current e-learning programs and platforms.

**Certified South Carolina Evaluator with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching**

2017-04 - Present

Certified to evaluate student teachers in education during their clinical experience with the "South Carolina Teaching Standards 4.0 Rubric".

**Certified Accreditation Evaluation with the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools**

2006-10 - Present

Certified to serve on a team to assess Christian colleges and universities for national accreditation based on the standards established by the U. S. Department of Education.

GROUPS

**International Society for Music Education**

1995-03 - Present

International organization which conducts conferences in music education throughout the world. Currently appointed the chair of the "Spirituality and Music Education Special Interest Group" and is planning the next conference in Baku, Azerbaijan in July 2018.

**International Society for Philosophy in Music Education**

2000-02 - Present

International organization which conducts conferences and publishes, "Philosophy of Music Education Review".

**Spirituality and Music Education**

2016-03 - Present

International organization which conducts interdisciplinary conferences relating to spirituality and music education.

**South Carolina Music Educators Association**

1992-09 - 2016-09

State organization for music educators in South Carolina. Previously served as the College Division President (2006-2009) College Division Vice President (2009-2011), State Collegiate Adviser (2009-2010 and 2013-2014), and Chapter Collegiate Adviser (1996-2009).

**Music Educators National Conference**

1992-08 - 2006-09  
National organization for music educators in the United States.

**Additional Information**

Teaching and Academic Experiences

Professor and Program Director of Strings | Bob Jones University, Greenville, SC 1983 – Present

- Resident Courses: Graduate

- Testing and Research in Music Education

- Psychology of Music

- Music Curriculum

- Descriptive Statistics

- Inferential Statistics

- Quantitative Research Methods

- Dissertation Hours

- Master Thesis Hours

- String Literature Survey

- Independent Study in String Literature

• **Resident Courses:** **Undergraduate**

- String Orchestra

- Chamber String Ensemble

- Teaching Music to Students with Special Needs

- Violin and Viola Class

- Lab Orchestra

- Applied violin and viola lessons for music majors and non–majors

- Introduction to Music Education

- Intermediate String Pedagogy

- Survey of String Literature

• **Online Courses**

- Designed and facilitated the graduate courses, "Psychology of Music" and "Testing and Research in Music Education" for Bob Jones University Center for Distance Learning

- Facilitated the graduate course "Music Curriculum" for Bob Jones University Center for Distance Learning

- Currently designing the graduate course "Teaching the 'Spiritual' in Music Education" for the future

• **Committee Participation**

- Chaired and served on dissertation committees in the School of Education for candidates earning an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and Curriculum and Instruction. Research focus of the dissertations included linguistics, English, health and fitness, music, piano pedagogy and Chinese.

- Served on the Music Education Committee for certification and accreditation

- Served as trustee for the Minority Scholarship Fund

- Served as a faculty representative on the Academic Scholarship Conference

- Served on the Philosophy Committee for the School of Fine Arts and Communication

- Served on the Music Review Committee for Bob Jones University Press

Private and Class Instructor | Bob Jones Academy, Greenville, SC 1983 – 2005

• Private string lessons to students from ages 12 to 17

• Class string lessons to students from ages 9 to 12

Consulting Experience

* Currently serves as an equity advisory for Evaluation Systems Group of Pearson Publisher
* Served as a book reviewer for Rutledge Publishing
* Served as adjunct faculty at Walsh College, Troy, Michigan, for a dissertation committee on executive leadership
* Serves as a dissertation coach for doctoral candidates:

- Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina (nursing)

- University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina (music)

- Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas (theater)

- Shenandoah University, Winchester, Virginia (music)

- Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts (music)

October 14, 2024

Dear USCIS,

I have been tasked with evaluating the history and achievements of **Las Catrachas** in order to provide an advisory/expert opinion letter. This letter will address the qualifications of **Las Catrachas** concerning the USCIS regulations for a P-3 classification as "Artists or Entertainers Coming To Be Part of a Culturally Unique Program." **Las Catrachas** is not merely a musical group but a cultural representation of Honduran heritage, blending traditional Honduran music and dance with modern elements, and is being petitioned for a series of culturally significant performances in the United States.

**Las Catrachas** has established itself as a prominent cultural force, not only within Honduras but internationally, through their vibrant performances that showcase a fusion of **Punta**, traditional Garifuna music, and other contemporary rhythms. Their career, though relatively recent, has seen them rise as ambassadors of Honduran culture, particularly for their expertise in preserving and modernizing **Punta**—a unique form of music and dance rooted in Garifuna traditions. Their role as both performers and educators allows them to bring a culturally unique experience to audiences worldwide, which makes **Las Catrachas** highly qualified for the P-3 visa classification.

Since their formation, **Las Catrachas** has garnered both critical and commercial recognition. Their performances are deeply rooted in Honduran traditions, yet they also incorporate modern genres such as reggaeton and tropical rhythms, making their art form accessible to a wider, more contemporary audience. Through their performances at various festivals and events, they have consistently demonstrated their commitment to preserving the traditional sounds of Honduras while simultaneously pushing the boundaries of cultural expression. Their talent and dedication have positioned them as cultural icons within their home country and among the wider Honduran diaspora.

**Las Catrachas** have also made significant contributions to the broader recognition of Honduran music and culture through their collaborations with various media outlets and their performances in culturally significant venues. For instance, their inclusion in the **34th Annual Latin American Festival** in Charlotte, North Carolina, and the **Festival Latinoamericano** in Charleston, South Carolina, highlights their role as cultural ambassadors, showcasing the unique vibrancy of Honduran traditions to international audiences.

The group’s influence is not confined to live performances. Their music has resonated deeply within the Honduran community and beyond, connecting audiences with the rich cultural heritage of **Punta**. Through their efforts, **Las Catrachas** have played a pivotal role in the preservation and dissemination of Honduran music, particularly through their ability to blend traditional and modern elements. Their performances are more than entertainment; they are a vital conduit for cultural exchange, bringing the sounds and traditions of Honduras to diverse audiences.

Their proposed engagements in the United States include performances at significant cultural festivals and venues, aiming to both entertain and educate audiences about the richness of Honduran music and dance. These events offer a platform for **Las Catrachas** to present their unique blend of **Punta** and other traditional rhythms, providing an invaluable cultural experience for audiences while contributing to the global appreciation of Honduran culture.

I was provided with a number of documents regarding the professional qualifications of **Las Catrachas**, which I reviewed to determine if, in my professional opinion, they meet the federally mandated standards for this classification. To this end, I reviewed the following documents:

* Written consultation from the American Federation of Musicians
* Summary of the terms of an oral agreement between the petitioner and the beneficiary (Las Catrachas)
* Tour itinerary detailing the upcoming performances in the United States
* Letters of support attesting to the group's cultural significance and collaboration

I have not authenticated any of the documents provided to me and have formed my opinion based upon the assumption that the documents are accurate. I have been asked to write this expert opinion letter because of my professional background in music education, cultural studies, and the preservation of traditional music forms. Based on my review and expertise, I conclude that **Las Catrachas** meet the requirements for the P-3 visa classification, as their performances embody a culturally unique art form that contributes to the understanding and appreciation of Honduran traditions.

1. **The applicant is coming to the United States for the purpose of developing, interpreting, representing, coaching, or teaching a unique or traditional ethnic, folk, cultural, musical, theatrical, or artistic performance.**

In support of the P-3 visa petition for the members of **Las Catrachas**, it is essential to note the existence of a clearly established professional relationship between **Musica Catracha LLC** and the group members. This relationship is documented through a summary of the terms of an oral agreement, as required by the P-3 visa guidelines.

The agreement outlines that **Musica Catracha LLC** will act as the exclusive employer for the twelve members of **Las Catrachas** for the duration of their stay in the United States, beginning upon the issuance of the P-3 visas and extending until **September 2025**. Under this agreement, the petitioner commits to overseeing the group’s performances during a concert tour across the United States, where they will engage in culturally unique live performances.

As part of this agreement, the petitioner agrees to remunerate the group with **$3,000 per concert performance**, while each member will receive **$400 weekly**. Furthermore, **Musica Catracha LLC** will cover all transportation, accommodation, and incidentals related to the group’s tour. Importantly, the agreement confirms that all group members meet the **75% rule** for the P-3 visa classification, with each member having a sustained relationship with the group exceeding one year.

An outline of their event itinerary highlights the group's participation in various multicultural festivals and events throughout 2024 and early 2025. The proposed tour will feature performances across several prominent venues, allowing the group to showcase their culturally unique musical talents to diverse audiences in the United States.

The tour begins on **September 21, 2024**, with a performance at the **34th Annual Latin American Festival** in Charlotte, North Carolina. This festival is a significant cultural event that celebrates Latin American traditions, offering the group an opportunity to share Honduran music and culture with a broad audience. The festival will take place at **11611 N Community House Road, Charlotte, NC**, with **Tony Arreaza** as the primary contact for coordination.

Following this, the group is scheduled to perform at the **Festival Latinoamericano** in **North Charleston Wannamaker County Park**, South Carolina, on **October 6, 2024**. This event, like the previous one, emphasizes Latin American heritage and culture, and will be coordinated through **Tony Arreaza** as well.

Later in the year, on **December 7, 2024**, the group will perform at the **El Parrandon Festival** in **Greensboro, North Carolina**, located at **4925 W. Market St.**. Their final performance of 2024 will be on **December 14, 2024**, at the **Parranda Navidena Festival** at the **Neighborhood Theater** in Charlotte, NC.

The tour continues into 2025 with additional performances, including one on **March 7, 2025**, at the **Nova Event Center** in **Irving, Texas**, coordinated by **Alma Cruz**, and another on **April 4, 2025**, at **Las Reynas** in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, organized by **Osquiel Mesa**.

Each of these performances offers a platform for **Las Catrachas** to engage with audiences, sharing Honduran culture through live music, dance, and instrumental performances. This itinerary not only supports the cultural significance of the group's tour but also aligns with the purpose of the P-3 visa, which is designed for individuals participating in culturally unique programs. Through this tour, **Las Catrachas** will contribute to the promotion of cultural exchange and understanding between Honduras and the United States, fostering a greater appreciation for the diversity of Latin American traditions.

In response to the Request for Evidence (RFE) issued by USCIS, this letter also seeks to address the specific concerns raised regarding **Las Catrachas**' qualifications under the P-3 classification. The USCIS has requested further information to demonstrate the group's cultural uniqueness and their role in preserving, teaching, and performing a traditional art form. As an expert in music education and cultural studies, I will provide a detailed explanation of how **Las Catrachas**' performances meet the cultural uniqueness requirement for the P-3 visa. This includes a thorough analysis of their skills in presenting and interpreting traditional Honduran music, specifically **Punta**, as well as the credentials that qualify me to offer this opinion.

1. **Attest to the authenticity of the individual’s or group’s skills in performing, presenting, coaching, or teaching the unique or traditional art form.**

**Las Catrachas** represent a quintessential expression of Honduran musical tradition, particularly through their incorporation of **Punta**, a traditional dance and musical form that originates from the Garifuna people of Honduras. **Punta** is known for its distinct African influences, brought to Central America by the Garifuna, descendants of West and Central African slaves who settled along the Caribbean coast. The rhythmic complexity and specific dance movements of **Punta**—notably the rapid movement of the hips while the upper body remains relatively still—are integral to Garifuna celebrations and ceremonies. This dance form serves not only as entertainment but also as a means of cultural storytelling, embodying the history and struggles of the Garifuna people.

**Las Catrachas**' performances bring this traditional art form to modern audiences, blending **Punta** with contemporary musical elements such as reggaeton and other tropical rhythms. This fusion retains the authenticity of **Punta**'s cultural roots while making it accessible and engaging for a broader audience, particularly younger generations who might not otherwise be exposed to these traditional forms. Their dance routines, often synchronized in unison, showcase the precision and energy required to perform **Punta** authentically, demonstrating their expertise in both the technical and cultural aspects of the tradition.

Moreover, **Las Catrachas** serve as cultural ambassadors by incorporating Honduran music and dance into their performances at international festivals and events, such as those outlined in their tour itinerary. These performances are more than entertainment; they are an active preservation and dissemination of Honduran culture, particularly for the Garifuna and broader Afro-Honduran community. Their ability to present this culturally rich music to diverse audiences in the United States speaks to their skill in bridging traditional and contemporary forms.

As an expert in music education with a deep understanding of both Western classical traditions and non-Western musical forms, I affirm that **Las Catrachas** possess the necessary skills and cultural knowledge to perform and present these traditional Honduran art forms authentically. Their mastery of **Punta**—a dance that requires rigorous training and deep cultural understanding—is evident in their synchronized performances and their ability to engage audiences both within and outside the Honduran diaspora.

In addition, the group’s presentation of **Punta** alongside other Honduran and Caribbean musical forms represents a pedagogical approach that not only entertains but educates audiences about the unique cultural heritage of Honduras. This dual function of performance as both artistic expression and cultural preservation underscores the significance of **Las Catrachas**' role in advancing the understanding of Honduran traditions on a global stage.

Their skills in performing, presenting, and preserving these unique cultural elements meet the P-3 visa standards for culturally unique art forms. Based on my professional experience and qualifications, I conclude that **Las Catrachas**' performances indeed embody the cultural uniqueness required for the P-3 visa, as they offer an authentic and educational representation of traditional Honduran music and dance.

My expertise in music education, cultural studies, and the preservation of traditional musical forms is both extensive and relevant to assessing **Las Catrachas**' qualifications for the P-3 visa.

I hold an **Ed.D. in Music Education** from the **University of North Carolina Greensboro**, an **M.Ed. in Teaching Music** from **Bob Jones University**, and a **B.A. in Music** from **San Francisco State University**. With over thirty years of professional experience in both academic and practical music education, I have served as a **Professor of Music Education** and **Program Director of Strings** at **Bob Jones University**. Throughout my career, I have developed specialized knowledge in both Western classical music and non-Western musical traditions, with a particular emphasis on cultural music education. I have chaired numerous dissertation committees for doctoral candidates in music education and have also acted as a peer reviewer for academic publications in the fields of music and education.

In addition to my academic qualifications, my work as a **cultural envoy** and lecturer on **Gullah music**—an African diasporic tradition with roots similar to the Garifuna culture of Honduras—has deepened my understanding of the intersection between music, culture, and identity. The Gullah people, much like the Garifuna, have preserved their African musical traditions, and my experience researching, presenting, and performing Gullah music has provided me with a profound appreciation for the significance of preserving and disseminating such cultural art forms.

My research on non-Western musical traditions has led to presentations at international conferences, such as the **International Society for Music Education** and the **International Society for Philosophy of Music Education**. These forums provided me the opportunity to discuss the role of music in cultural identity, particularly in diasporic communities. My paper on **Spiritual Music and its Relational Ontology**—presented at the **International Society for Music Education World Conference**—explored how music serves as a form of cultural expression, especially for marginalized communities. This background informs my understanding of **Las Catrachas**' role in preserving and promoting Honduran music and dance, particularly their mastery of **Punta**, a culturally significant art form.

Furthermore, my role as a **music adjudicator** and performer has allowed me to assess musicians and musical groups across a wide range of genres and cultural traditions. This experience is directly applicable to my evaluation of **Las Catrachas**. I have regularly judged musical performances for community festivals, national competitions, and academic recitals, giving me a well-rounded perspective on both the technical and cultural aspects of musical performance.

In my capacity as an educational consultant and instructor, I have worked with students and professionals across various levels of musical expertise, from beginner to advanced, which has further enhanced my ability to evaluate and mentor performing artists. My consultancy, **On Q Educational Consulting**, offers academic coaching and cultural music consultations, helping students and professionals integrate cultural elements into their artistic performances. This experience aligns with the evaluation needed to assess **Las Catrachas**' skills in performing and presenting their traditional art form.

Given my qualifications, I am well-positioned to evaluate the cultural and artistic skills of **Las Catrachas**. My academic background, practical experience in cultural music performance, and understanding of Honduran musical traditions provide a solid foundation for attesting to the group’s mastery of **Punta** and other traditional Honduran music. My experience with African diasporic traditions, such as **Gullah music**, further equips me with a nuanced understanding of how traditional music functions as both a cultural and artistic practice.

Therefore, based on my expertise, I affirm that **Las Catrachas** possess the requisite skills and knowledge to authentically represent Honduran culture through their performances, which are both technically proficient and deeply rooted in cultural traditions. Their contribution to the preservation and promotion of **Punta** and other Honduran music forms is vital to cultural understanding, making them highly deserving of the P-3 visa classification.

**Conclusion**

**Las Catrachas** represent a quintessential expression of Honduran musical tradition, particularly through their incorporation of **Punta**, a traditional dance and musical form that originates from the Garifuna people of Honduras. **Punta** is known for its distinct African influences, brought to Central America by the Garifuna, descendants of West and Central African slaves who settled along the Caribbean coast. The rhythmic complexity and specific dance movements of **Punta**—notably the rapid movement of the hips while the upper body remains relatively still—are integral to Garifuna celebrations and ceremonies. This dance form serves not only as entertainment but also as a means of cultural storytelling, embodying the history and struggles of the Garifuna people.

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Their skills in performing, presenting, and preserving these unique cultural elements meet the P-3 visa standards for culturally unique art forms. Based on my professional experience and qualifications, I conclude that **Las Catrachas**' performances indeed embody the cultural uniqueness required for the P-3 visa, as they offer an authentic and educational representation of traditional Honduran music and dance.

The above letter is strictly my opinion and is not the opinion of any of the universities with which I am affiliated or any of their departments or affiliates.

Sincerely,

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Susan Quindag

Professor of Music Education and Program Director of Strings

Bob Jones University