

Program Name: Caribbean Voyage

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Artist: The Traditional Music Society

## Special Requirements:

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Stage or 25' x 25' area; dressing room; large world map; five microphones with stands (four boom stands); one 6' table; four armless or folding chairs; area clean and clear of students 30 minutes before performance

## Performance Description

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The festive music of the Caribbean is introduced by The Traditional Music Society in this energetic performance. The ensemble introduces authentic musical instruments from the Caribbean, describes their historical function, and shows how they are incorporated into a band.

The Traditional Music Society will play particular selections of music to demonstrate the unique role of each instrument in the piece and recreate events based upon the music, such as carnivals and dances.

The music of the Caribbean draws from three major continental influences: Africa, Europe (via

Spain), and North America. These sounds were blended to create the music indigenous to the Caribbean, including *Rumba* and *Cha-Cha* (Cuba,) *Bomba* and *Plena* (Puerto Rico,) *Rada* (Haiti,) *Merengue* (Dominican Republic,) and *Calypso* (Trinidad.)

The Traditional Music Society will invite the audience to participate in this interactive performance by vocalizing the rhythmic parts as they are led through various songs from the Caribbean Islands.



## Educational Objectives & Standards

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### Students will:

- Be introduced to different musical instruments, from cowbells to guiros.
- Recognize the influence of Caribbean music on American jazz, rock, and hip-hop.

### Geography:

- Knows major physical and human features of places as they are represented on maps and globes.

### Music:

- Understands distinguishing characteristics of representative music genres and styles from a variety of cultures.



List of Resources:

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**Books:**

The Brazilian Sound:  
Samba, Bossa Nova, and the  
Popular Music of Brazil

by Chris McGowan, Ricardo  
Pessanha  
Temple University Press;  
New edition (February 25,  
1998) ISBN: 1566395453

Musica Brasileira: A History  
of Popular Music and the  
People of Brazil

by Claus Schreiner, Mark  
Weinstein  
Marion Boyars Publishers;  
(November 1, 2002) ISBN:  
0714530662

The Mystery of Samba :  
Popular Music and National  
Identity in Brazil

by Hermano Vianna,  
John Charles Chasteen  
University of North Carolina  
Press; (February 1, 1999)  
ISBN: 0807847666

Contact KCYA for more  
information about this and  
other programs

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Bird Fleming developed his interest in music and drumming in his fifth grade band class. Since his parents could not afford a drum set, he played the bongos. By the age of 20, Bird was proficient in a variety of African and Afro-Cuban instruments. His career then led to him San Francisco where he performed and studied traditional hand drumming.

After moving to Kansas City in 1981, Bird began performing traditional music in schools, community centers, and universities throughout the metropolitan area. He formed The Traditional Music Society, an arts organization devoted

to multi-cultural arts education. This organization, composed of musicians and dancers sharing a similar background in folk music, has developed programs that teach students about different cultures through music and dance.

Vocabulary

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**Afro-Caribbean music:** the folk music played throughout the Caribbean blending African rhythms and Spanish melodies.

**Bongo drums:** a small pair of connected hand drums, played between the legs.

**Caribbean Islands:** a group of islands in the Caribbean sea, including Cuba, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Haiti, and Trinidad.

**Conga:** barrel-shaped hand drum from Cuba.

**Guiro:** a tube-shaped hollow gourd with grooves cut on one side, played by scraping a dowel stick along the indentations.

**Maracas:** rattles made from gourds with wooden handles, played by shaking rhythmically.

Post-Performance Activities

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1. Have students locate on a map those Caribbean countries mentioned in this performance, and trace the routes that people from Spain and Africa might have taken to arrive in this region.
2. In the last few years, there has been a tremendous rise in the number of Latino artists on the U.S. pop charts, including Ricky Martin, Jennifer Lopez, and Buena Vista Social Club. Compare the music you heard today with the music produced by these artists.
3. Music is an integral part of cultural life in Caribbean countries. Similarly, popular music in America has an enormous impact on our culture. How has music defined generations? How does music bring people together and influence our sense of regional and national identity?