Songs and Dances of Puerto Rico
Recorded by Dr. William S. Marlenes
Folkways Records FW 8802
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In the world of music and sound, as in every other field, the ponderous pantograph of man's inventive genius has laid its deep footprint. Electronic devices, magnetic recording, feedback sound effects, reverberation, multiple dubbing, equalization, and all the tricks of high fidelity reproduction have wrought great changes in the realm of sound. We sit in our living rooms and an orchestra sits with us -- perfectly rehearsed, perfectly recorded and perfectly reproduced. A far cry from the water-thin reproductions in the days of the great Caruso. So be it.

Yet there is much in our lives so very dear to us which suffers irreparably by the embellishments of the recording specialists. A baby's cry, a mother's welcome, a sweetheart's longing, a tragedy's deep scar, the hypnotism of a dance, the anger of disappointment, the pride in one's home, the endlessness of labor, the sparkle of a holiday. These ageless things -- these human things -- all of which defy the expert and defy the machine, these are the things of which the broth of a people's music are made. The Puerto Rican people have so richly expressed themselves in their folk music.

The Puerto Rican people, 2 million in number, have their roots in their beautiful little Island 100 by 35 miles in size. Their basic culture, though Spanish differs from all others. The land is mountainous, composed of thousands of small volcano-like hills, some crowded and some sparsely placed. The Island of Puerto Rico is truly volcanic in origin. But all is covered with green -- all summer and all winter. Roads twist and turn from town to town so that nearby towns seem far away, and further places seem separated by great distances and so on until the whole little country has the effect of being much vaster than it really is. And while there is a culture typically Puerto Rican, each of a hundred different communities has its own characteristics, from the crops it raises, to the manner in which it trims its trees in its town plaza.

When I recorded the music of the players in one town, I would ask them if they would like to hear what I recorded in some other town sometimes a nearby one. Each time it was the same. They wanted very much to hear. And each time as they listened they were greatly amused by the manner of their neighbors' renditions.

Coffee, sugar, mangoes, pineapple, bananas, papayas, chickens and pigs, hardwood and bamboo, cement and clay, tobacco and coconuts these are some of the things of the earth which for centuries have flowed in the cultural veins of Puerto Ricans. These things are in their music.

From the early Borinquen days of its original Indian inhabitants through Christofer Columbus's discovery, Ponce de Leon's invasion, Spain's 400 year occupation, the Spanish American War in 1898, and the present Puerto Rico - United States relationship -- these are the things which have been woven and embroidered into the lace-work of their music.

The hurricanes and the very short rains, the warming sunshine and the starry nights, the insect bites and the chill of the mountain evenings, the seashore and the dances in the plazas, the dressup for the holidays, the reverence in the church, the slow funeral parade and the excitement of the cock fights ---- these are the music of Puerto Rico.

The old world grandeur with the new world industry, the scrubbed down bare wood walls with the 21 inch television set, the oil lamp here, the hydroelectric plant there, the ox
drawn sugar cart and the sleek new Cadillacs. The chaperoned sweethearts and the rough and tumble sandlot baseball games, the rickety shacks and the air conditioned suites, the long walk to church and store and school, and the bustling at the airports --- these are in the music of the land.

From the land the hard wood was cut and when struck together made a sound like the ring of steel. With these 'claves' the players of Puerto Rican music make their basic rhythms heard.

To the round gourd with its dried seeds and outer shell a wooden handle was fixed to become a musical rattle, the maraca, to produce a "shirring" noise, and rhythm intricate and complex, adding to the basic rhythm of the claves.

Across the dried and emptied long gourd, comb-like scratches were cut, along whose serrated surface some wires are rubbed and stroked in a pattern which can produce percussive sounds of various degrees of sustained duration supporting the beat and tempo of the music in proportion to the skill of the user. This instrument is the **guiro**.

To these 'nothings' of the earth which produce such enchanting and moving rhythms is added the melodic instrument the **cuatro**. It is a five double-string guitar and mostly homemade. Many children have small ones which they have made themselves and play themselves. The wonder is how they learn to play. I won't reveal the mystery further than to say they don't go to a cuatro-playing school. To all these add the voice, and the basic music-making-means of Puerto Rico is complete. Commonly the tres, a 3 double-string guitar is added to the group. The marimba is a home-made device that looks like a foot square box onto which are slipped adjustable steel strips which when plucked produce notes of deep timber. These can be tuned to any key and suffice to supply bass violin pizzicato effect.

The music swings and fills the room and it is difficult to believe that so much music comes from so simple a combination. But let the listener be the sole judge. Through the perfection of today's electronic recording a small breath of the life of Puerto Rico has been captured - the poetry of the Puerto Rican air - the perfume of a blossoming nation - indescribable - indefinable - strange to the stranger - interesting to the intellectual - the heartbeat and soul of a people - a flutter of that brief candle which is the life of the human being - the life of Puerto Rico.

**Performers**

Nos. 6A, 2A, 1B, 2B, 5A, 1A. Cuarteto Puerto Rico from Cayey.

Victor Rolón Santiago, leader, singer and bongo drum.

Julio Berrios Mendoza, singer and claves and guiro player.

Vincente Cotto Suarez, cuatro player.

Jorge Figueroa, guitar ("tres").

Nos. 3B, 4B, 5B. "Guille" (Guillermo López) The "town singer" of Humacao on guitar, accompanied by a player of a mandolin-like guitar, and 10 year old Roberto Casillas on maracas and singing accompaniment. An old man plays the **guiro**.

No. 4A. A group of young men at the new housing project in Naguabo. The one playing the marimba sits on it. Other instruments, a Cuatro, "tres" guitar, maracas, claves, and one young man is playing a Chinese box.

**Puerto Rican Folk Music** - "Musica Tipica"

1A De las Montañas Venimos - We come from the mountains - an aguinaldo.

1B Merengue - "Que Camino". A dance adopted from the Dominican Republic, for years popular throughout the Island, basically the same dance which has recently gained popularity in all the Americas.

2A Mazurka Maria. A very old piece and one of the many dances characteristic of the countryside. Others are vals, pase doble, merengue pleina, danson, guaracha, bolero.

2B Aguinaldo Caguacho. A 'decima' in which the verses are improvised. The tempo and form is that of the 'seis'. The 'lalola' singing is the typical 'fill' used, giving the singer time to think of his next verse.

3A 'Esta Navidad'. This is Christmas. A well known song to which the singer has put his own words. The accompanying voice is that of a 10 year old boy.

3B The Tragedy of September the 3rd. A sad tale of the abortive Nationalist Revolution telling of the many dead lying in the streets, the weeping women and the sadness.

4A A danson - a typically Puerto Rican dance. A group of young men, one of whom is playing the marimba.

4B Under the shade of a pine tree. 'Bajo las Sombras de un pino'. Instruments - Cuatro, tres, maracas, guiro.

5A A 'Mapalle', A Christmas song using typical Christmas tempo and form.

5B 'Seis Choreao' - Sliding Seis.

6A An 'aguinaldo hibaro'. Typical Christmas Carol music, telling the story of the Nativity, the Birth of Christ. 'Hibaro' refers to the aboriginals, who, in Puerto Rico, were Indians. Like the country's original Indian name, Borinquen, it has the connotation of True Puerto Rican.
SIDE I, Band 1

DE LA MONTANAS VENIMOS

De las montañas venimos
Para invitarlo a comer
Un lechoncito en su vara
Y un buen pitorro a beber

From the mountains we come
To invite you to eat
A wee suckling pig on a spit
And to drink a good draught.

(Repeat the four lines)

Ay com' e María,
Ay comp' e José
Abrame la puerta,
Que los quiero ver.

Ay, godmother Mary,
Ay, godfather Joseph
Open your door for me,
I want to see you.

(Repeat preceding four lines)

Sin arroz con dulce
Pastel de liro
Que estas Nividades
No las paso yo.

Without rice with sweets
Without a cake of liro
This Christmas Day
I refuse to spend.

(Repeat preceding eight lines)

Eso yo lo sé;
Aquí te traemos-
Bellísima flor
Del jardín isleño.

You don't have to tell me -
We are bringing you here
The loveliest flower
Of our island garden.

(Repeat preceding four lines)

De las montañas venimos
Para invitarlo a comer
Un lechoncito en su vara
Y un buen pitorro a beber.

From the mountains we come
To invite you to eat
A wee suckling pig
And to drink a good draught.

(Repeat preceding four lines)

SIDE I, Band 3

ESTA NAVIDAD

Esta navidad
This Christmas Day
Mire, no me acusa a mí,
Dueña de la casa,
Yo canto alegre y contento.
En mi verso específico
In this my special verse,
As I gaze at that sea from afar,
This time my greetings go to
All those from Puerto Rico -
Be they grown-ups, be they
Children -

... OYE...

... This Christmas Day - Listen -
This Christmas Day -
This Christmas Day -
Bring me no pasteries -
None bring me velveteen -
This is why:

Esta navidad, etc...
This Christmas Day, etc...

Voy pa' Sayamonte -
Sí, el día veinticuatro -
El día veinticuatro
Si voy pa' Sayamonte
A comer casey y a bailar.

I'm off to Sayamonte,
Yes on (December) the twenty-fourth,
The very twenty-fourth,
I'm really off to Sayamonte
There to eat cheese and to dance.
And this is why:

Esta navidad, etc...
This Christmas Day, etc...

Esta ya se fue,
Yo no estaba en casa;
Y dicen que digan porque
Yo todavía no vengo:
Esta navidad, etc...
This day now is over,
And I was not at home;
And they say what they will because
I'm still not on my way

Dueño de la casa,
Mire, no me acusa a mí,
Dueña de la casa,
Mire, no me acusa a mí,
Usted, chivanto, mire
Que nos traño aquí
A cantarle, mire:
Esta navidad, etc...
Master of the house,
Look, lay no blame on me;
Mistress of the house, look,
Lay you no blame on me.
You, my capering lad, look you,
What brought us here
To sing to you, look you!

This Christmas Day, etc...

SIDE I, Band 5

Le-la-lo-Le-lo-la-lai!
(Translation)

Mis versos van como flores-
Mire, no me acusa a mí,
Y como no lo van a estar
Dispuestos para saludar
Lo que están en las New Yores?

My verses come like flowers -
My verses come like flowers -
And how can they come otherwise
Since they are aimed to greet
Those of ours who are in New York?

The heart glows with bright light -
Blessed Man
Who is born to save our souls!

To all I bring warm greetings -
With Joy and tenderness.
For after all the Child is born -
Already He dwells here at Yuletide.

Le-la-lai -- le la la -- Lo le la la --

Le la la --- le lo la --
Le la la --

En mi verso específico
Yo al ver ese mar de lejos,
Yo esta ves saludare (a)
Todos los de Puerto Rico -
Lo mismo el grande que el chico
Compaé ...

... I dedicate my melody
Por que en las décimas más
Yo canto alegre y contento,
Recordando el nacimiento
Que una estrella fue' la guía.

Soy un improvisador -
Soy un improvisador
Que le canto con empeno
A todo aquel borinqueno
Que se encuentra en Nueva York
Con alegría y con amor.
Oigame, compadre,
Que le doy esta melodía,
Y tal vez la gracia mía,
Y aquí le doy un adiós.
Yo saludo al Salvador
Y una estrella fue' la guía.

Ya saben que en, el Nacimiento
Una estrella fue' la guía.

Le la la la --- le lo la --

Le la la - lo!

Of course you know that at the Nativity
A star was the guide

In this my special verse,
As I gaze at that sea from afar,
This time my greetings go to
All those from Puerto Rico -
Be they grown-ups, be they
Children -

Good friend ... I dedicate my melody
For within my ten-line song
I sing to joy and peace,
Recalling the Nativity
Where a star was the guide.

An improviser - I -
An improviser - I -
Who sing with eager song
To every Puerto Rican
Who may be in New York -
With love and with delight
Hear me, good friend -
While I sing you this melody,
And give you thanks mayhap.
And here I take my leave.
I bow to our Savior -
And a star was the guide.
QUE CAMINAO

Chorus:
Tu tienes tu caminao
Que me tienes trastornao
(Repeat)

Mañana bien tempranito
Voy a hablar con tu mamá.
(Repeat)

Que tu me gustas muchito,
Y nos debemos casar.
(Repeat)

Tu tienes una boquita
Que se ve para besar.
(Repeat)

Y tienes otra cosita
Que no se puede citar.
(Repeat)

Ay - la - la - loe - lo - la-o -
(Como lloros) y voces se oyen en la calles,
En campos y valles ; Ay! campos y bosques.
El reloj las doce pronto marcará
Y se ausentará el año ya viejo -
Cristo en el cielo, compadres, nos alumbrará.

Viva el nuevo año!
Viva el nuevo año de vida repleto
Viva el nuevo año de vida repleto
Y después del duelo, muchachos, nos alumbrará.
El día 3 de Septiembre
Estaba la capital
Llena de muertes y vivientes -
Daba gana de llorar
No se podía ni andar
Entre tanta gente herida -
Muchos perdieron la vida -
Caían amontonados -
 Padres, hijos y mis hermanos -
No llores, madre querida...
Ya eran muchos los muertos -
Ya eran muchos los muertos -
Habían hasta que quemarlos -
Y en más breve - y en todo esto -
No podían evitarlo -
Este es un ver - el amargo -
Uno de la su’ familia
 Después de perder la vida
Tirarlos a un montón...
Se me aflige en corazón...
No llores, madre querida...
Se me aflige el corazón...
No llores, madre querida...

On the third day of September
The capital was full of the living and the dying.
It made you want to weep...
You couldn’t tread your way
Among so many wounded -
They fell in heaps -
Fathers, sons and my brothers -
Don’t cry, dear mother -
Many were the dead already -
So many, we had to burn them -
And quickly, too - and meanwhile -
They could not help it -
A sight it was - the bitter man -
One of his dear ones...
After losing his life...
To drag them to a heap...
My heart - it aches -
Don’t cry, dear mother...
My heart, it breaks...
Don’t cry, dear mother...

Dr. Marlens’ family for generations back
were engaged in tinsmithing in Latvia where
his mother taught German. His parents came
to the U.S.A. around 1800 and raised 6 children,
5 daughters, the youngest a son. His father
invented a sheetmetal workers tool, patented in
1917.

Born in Brooklyn, Dr. Marlens graduated from
N.Y.U. with a B.S. degree in 1934, a D.D.S.
in 1939. He began practice of dentistry in
Brooklyn but closed it within 3 years to join the
Army of the United States in 1942 where he
achieved the rank of Captain. He received a
commendation for "outstanding service" performed
in France before the fall of Paris. "His unusual
talent and capable manner in handling the
situations as they arose at LeMans assisted
greatly the efforts of all concerned to bring
highly satisfactory results rapidly to a successful
conclusion."

Back to dentistry in Belgium he set up an office
in a boxcar. It was promptly destroyed by a
bomb - eight men killed and many others wounded,
the doctor miraculously escaping injury.

After the war the difficulty of finding an office
led him to a section of the Bronx where many
of his patients were of Puerto Rican extraction.
So many of them told him such enthusiastic and
glowing stories of the beauty of Puerto Rico and
so many brought him records of their music
that he could no longer resist going to Puerto
Rico. Struck by the wonderful music he heard
wherever he traveled there, he decided to
return and make tape recordings. Some were
made in the streets of towns, some in the hills
and in private homes. All of the recordings, of
which this album is a small part, were made on
the spur of the moment with no preparation or
rehearsing. The willingness of the players to
perform and the great hospitality shown wherever
he went, as well as the beauty and climate of the
country, left a rare and everlasting impression
upon him.
Un Hombre, Cultivo Una Rosa Blanca, Que Me Dedito, Las Canciones de Natacha, A Margarita Deby, El Consejo Material, Febo y yo, Margarita, La Hermana y el Monstruo. Texts in Spanish and English.

1-12 33-1/3 rpm long record  $4.98

FL9925 CATALINA LEVINTON RECITAL POÉTICO

1-12 33-1/3 rpm long record  $4.98


1-12 33-1/3 rpm long record  $4.98

"Hort D'en Boira", Un Copee D'es Pla, Peur and Shearing Song, Majorca Bolero, Malesta For the Springtime, Pig Song, Copee, Canzone. Text in Spanish and English.

1-12 33-1/3 rpm long record  $5.95

LATIN AMERICA Folk Songs

PA204 (FP904) SPANISH FOLK SONGS OF NEW MEXICO, sung by Ocarvoral. Notes by Andrew H. Whisford. Texts in Spanish and English translation of "Ranchera".

1-12 33-1/3 rpm long record  $4.25

FL4426 (P420) SPANISH AND MEXICAN FOLK MUSIC OF NEW MEXICO, recorded by J. D. Robbins. Includes Huapango, Ranchera, Tex-Mex, Cumbias (pastillo), Bambuco, Quebracho and Oud. Recorded in China and Colombia and notes by J. D. Robbins.

1-12 33-1/3 rpm long record  $5.95

FW6804 FOLK MUSIC OF COLOMBIA. March Royal, Joroba, Jose in the Pamplona (Bambuco), La Opera, Perico Santa Maria (pastillo), Enigma (Chirrino), Secret To Voces (pastillo), El Sotano (Bambuco), El Rayo (pastillo), Bocacon (pastillo), Bella. Recorded in Colombia and notes by Andrew H. Whisford.

1-12 33-1/3 rpm long record  $4.25

FL6810 (FP810) ARGENTINE FOLK SONGS, sung by Ocarvoral, with guitar. Gato, Vidalta, Chayba, Llanto por el amor perdido, Menos and Indian songs: Cuando Yo Me Muera; Ay, Para Navidad; Nocio de mi amo. Text and Spanish.

1-12 33-1/3 rpm long record  $4.25

FL6834 (FP834) SPANISH FOLK SONGS OF NEW MEXICO, recorded by Ocarvoral, with guitar. Colores, La Llorona, A Canta, Lechonera, Sevilla, Al Pouto, A Llbre, A La Flor, A La Perla, A La Palma, A La Loteria. Text in Spanish and English.

1-12 33-1/3 rpm long record  $4.25

FL6871 FOLK SONGS AND DANCES OF BOLIVIA: recorded in Bolivia, compiled and edited with dance instructions by Jessie and ten Lipper. Huayno, Amor, Chacarera, Calima, Bailecito, Dansa, La Zanadunga, Dos Huellas, Mexico. Text in English and Spanish.

1-10 33-1/3 rpm long record  $4.25


1-10 33-1/3 rpm long record  $4.25

FW6853 (FPB853/2) SONGS OF MEXICO, Volume 2, recorded in Mexico by Timothy Harding. Includes: huapango, ranchera, marimba and other styles from Vera Cruz, and other Mexican Folk music. Text and Songs.

1-10 33-1/3 rpm long record  $4.25

FL8741 CANCIONES DE NOSOTROS, recorded in Bolivia, compiled and edited with dance instructions by Andrew H. Whisford. Huayno, Amor, Chacarera, Calima, Bailecito, Dansa, La Zanadunga, Dos Huellas, Mexico. Text in English and Spanish.

1-10 33-1/3 rpm long record  $4.25


1-10 33-1/3 rpm long record  $4.25

PC7747 YAMOS A CANTAR (Let Us Sing). Children's songs in Spanish sung by Ocarvoral. Vitalita, En el Campo de May, Un Barco Chiquito, Cielito Lindo, Se Va, Ya Vaya La Barca, Azucarado; Tebarantepec; La Mejorada, Un Triste, La Guera, Magdalena, La Malagueña, La Culpa; Le Mueve. Text in Spanish and English.

1-10 33-1/3 rpm long record  $4.25

FW6877 FOLK SONGS OF MEXICO sung by Alfonso Crus with guitar. Recorded in Oaxaca, Mexico; directed by Vivien Richman. Carionino Azucarado; Merezumbe; Tebarantepec; La Mejorada, Un Triste, La Guera, Magdalena, La Malagueña, La Culpa; Le Mueve. Text in Spanish and English.

1-10 33-1/3 rpm long record  $4.25

LATIN AMERICA Folk Songs

CF7824 PASO A PASO (Step By Step), Rhymes and songs for children in Spanish recorded by Ocarvoral; Mi Mama, A Dormir, Que Linda Maria, La Luna, Los Pollitos, Uso de Enero, Frontera de Fidelidad, Yo Soy