MADE IN NuYoRico

Fania Records, Latin Music, & Salsa's Nuyorican Meanings

MARISOL NEGRÓN

Made in NuYoRico

Refiguring American Music

A series edited by Ronald Radano, Josh Kun, and Nina Sun Eidsheim

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Le dedico este libro a mami y papi, a Elías, and all the salseros and salseras who danced, sang, and played their way through salsa's everynight life.

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While information about the Fania catalog is now widely available on the internet, that was not the case when I began my research. Victor Gallo

provided a list of the Fania catalog that included SLP numbers and release dates. He also connected me to Ernesto Aue at Palacio de la Música, S.A., a Venezuelan record label that released international titles for Fania Records and the various related labels. Mr. Aue provided a color copy of the cover art for the Fania albums released by Palacio de la Música. Juan Otero Garabís surprised me with a copy of *Our Latin Thing* when the only copies available were bootlegged.

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Introduction. Rican/Struction

THE SOCIAL LIFE OF SALSA

NuYoRico: n. that space between the Empire State and El Morro

La Bruja, "Nuyorico Interlude" (2006)

In April 2013, singer-actor Marc Anthony released the single "Vivir mi vida" (Live my life), a Spanish-language salsa cover of the song "C'est la vie" released by Algerian *raï* singer Khaled a year earlier.[1] The music video accompanying "Vivir mi vida" was filmed on location in New York's East Harlem, or El Barrio, the symbolic home of the Puerto Rican diaspora in the United States. The video follows Anthony from the Fifth Avenue offices of Marc Anthony Productions in Midtown Manhattan, where he ruminates on his legacy as a father-son-brother-friend-and-musician, to East Harlem, where Anthony grew up. A police escort leads Anthony's entourage through the streets of New York to East Harlem, where fans greet him with cheers and requests for autographs as he makes his way to a temporary stage in the middle of the street. The camera shots inserted throughout the video provide a panorama of life in East Harlem. A close-up of the bodega on the corner shows its name to be La Marketa. The name calls to mind the historical East Harlem public marketplace created in 1936 to regulate pushcart vendors.[2] La Marqueta, as it came to be known, became a cultural and economic hub for the growing community of Puerto Ricans and other

Latina/o American and Caribbean peoples in New York. A shot of young men playing stickball in the street and another of one wearing a "Thunder Stickball" jersey invokes modern stickball's quintessentially New York character and its popularity among Puerto Ricans since the 1950s. A banner of La Virgen de Guadalupe, the Catholic patron saint of Mexico and Latin America, signals the growing Mexican presence and "Latinization" of the neighborhood since the late 1980s and 1990s, as do the various flags from Latin America and the Caribbean waved by fans who surround the stage on three sides. The Puerto Rican flag, however, is exceptional. It is the first to appear on-screen and the only one shown by itself. While New York stands in for a cosmopolitan Latinidad, the video links salsa's meanings to a New York Puerto Rican history.

Anthony's rendering of "Vivir mi vida" departs from Khaled's original dance-driven recording, which emphasized heteronormative romantic love and the pleasure of collective dance that transcends the legacies of colonialism and racial hierarchies. Composed by writer-producer Julio Reyes Copello, the cover riffs on the title and chorus of the original while the verses emphasize individual desire.[3] Anthony's rumination in the song's prologue about his legacy precedes verses that center instantaneous and continuous pleasure. Preferring to "vivir en el momento" (live in the moment) rather than dwell on a painful present, the singing subject declares his intention to "live his life." "Vivir mi vida" moves beyond this seemingly self-reflexive referential system by underscoring the potential of salsa's performative excess for envisioning a future beyond the challenges of the here and now. The song turns toward laughter, dance, dreams, and pleasure to "entender el destino" (understand fate) and "encontrar el camino" (find the way). The synthesis of salsa, R&B, and soul in the song's arrangements brings in Anthony's musical influences and early career in freestyle—a genre with formative cues derived from Latin soul, doo-wop, salsa, house, and Hip Hop—as well as those of Anthony's longtime collaborator Sergio George, who produced the song and, like the vocalist, came of age in East Harlem.[4] The song's fast tempo and prominent bass line, a departure from many of Anthony's earlier salsa recordings, invoke the instrumentation and arrangements by salsa pioneers such as bandleader-trombonist-producer Willie Colón, whose explosive trombone line characterized the music's foundational period during the mid to late 1960s and 1970s.[5] Anthony's swagger, in turn, recalls the image of Colón and vocalist Héctor LaVoe, two of salsa's most beloved figures, as salsa's "bad boys."[6]

Anthony's improvisational utterances, timbre, and articulation encourage parallels with LaVoe's performative practices. When Anthony, who played LaVoe in the 2006 biopic *El Cantante* (The Singer), calls out to the audience as *mi gente* (my people), he draws on the meanings of LaVoe's signature song by that name. "Mi gente," as Wilson Valentín-Escobar asserts, "addresses the listeners as belonging to Hector Lavoe, and him to them. Lavoe is positioned as the spokesperson and signifier" of Puerto Ricans.[7] By placing himself into that relationship, Anthony constructs himself as heir to LaVoe's performative legacy and affective relationship with diasporic Puerto Rican communities, who considered the late vocalist one of their own. Anthony's physical frame, long and lanky like LaVoe's, accentuates the role of the body in memorializing the vocalist endowed with the title of "El Cantante de los Cantantes" (The Singer's Singer).[8] The affective economy of pleasure in "Vivir mi vida," both the song and the accompanying music video, insists on the liberatory potential of laughter, dance, and pleasure in the face of suffering, a theme familiar to LaVoe's fans:

> ¿Pa' qué llorar?
> ¿Pa' que sufrir?
> Empieza a soñar, a reír . . .
> Siente y baila y goza
> que la vida es una sola
>
> [Why cry?
> Why suffer?
> Start to dream, to laugh
> Feel and dance and celebrate
> Because there's only one life]

The persistence of desire in the cultural politics of pleasure is particularly salient for poor and working-class diasporic Puerto Rican communities, whose relationship to salsa is foregrounded in the music video. The migration of almost half a million largely rural and working-class Puerto Ricans to the United States during the 1950s made possible the success of what *Time* magazine heralded as "Democracy's Laboratory in Latin America" on its June 1958 cover, featuring Puerto Rico's first elected governor, Luis Muñoz Marín. Puerto Rico's entrance into modernity as a "showcase" of US Cold War economic development policies depended, however, on

massive migration to the United States when the shift toward an urban-centered manufacturing economy, however labor intensive, remained unable to fully absorb displaced agricultural workers.[9] Puerto Rico's colonial status facilitated the migration and provided US employers with a source of cheap labor. In both the United States and Puerto Rico, diasporic Puerto Ricans were situated structurally, historically, and symbolically through "differential inclusion," defined by Yen Le Espiritu as one "whereby a group of people is deemed integral to the nation's economy, culture, identity, and power—but integral only or precisely because of their designated subordinated standing." Constituted as integral to the performance of modernity and reviled as its impediment, diasporic Puerto Rican communities were imagined as failed and expendable subjects.[10]

Together, the song and music video draw on not only salsa's Nuyorican histories but the liberatory potential of salsa's foundational moment to imagine Latina/o and Nuyorican futurities.[11] The music video reclaims the streets of New York, and East Harlem in particular, for Puerto Ricans. Policies like "stop and frisk" targeting Black men and Latinos always already interpellate residents as a waste population that threatens public safety. On the day of the video shoot, however, the sirens that accompany Anthony's police escort signify his status as a world-renowned artist. The sirens, the cheering fans, the pulsing rhythms of the band, the female background vocalists, and the singer's own emotive performance combine to produce a moment of *gozo*, of pleasure, a moment in which to transcend tears, sorrows, and the suffering of the here and now vis-à-vis salsa. Anthony's memorialization of salsa's foundational period and East Harlem's Puerto Rican histories reanimates the music's Nuyorican epistemologies even as it recognizes the neighborhood's pan-Latina/o demographics and symbolic status as a transnational space of Latinidad.

Made in NuYoRico

Made in NuYoRico offers a cultural history of salsa that traces the music's Nuyorican meanings across a fifty-year period, beginning in 1964 with the creation of Fania Records, the "Latin Motown" of salsa. The book traces how a Nuyorican imaginary became embedded within salsa as it flourished across New York's streets, parks, rooftops, afterhours, living rooms, stages, dance floors, and recording studios during the mid to late 1960s and 1970s. I center the music's Nuyorican aesthetics together with the imbrication of social, cultural, political, and economic relations. Mapping salsa's meanings

beyond New York and this initial moment, the book examines how salsa's Nuyorican imaginary was mobilized across various musical, social, legal, and geopolitical contexts in the United States and Puerto Rico over the next four decades. The history of Fania Records and its associated labels and publishing companies forms a core part of this cultural history. *Made in NuYoRico* recuperates the foundational role of New York's Puerto Rican communities in salsa's development. In so doing, I explore how salsa's Nuyorican imaginary remained embedded within the music long after the legendary label closed its doors.

I draw on a diverse and broad archive that illuminates salsa's Nuyorican imaginary, the performative excess of racialized masculinity, and the music's complex, sometimes conflicting, and always danceable meanings. Interviews I conducted with fans, artists, and music industry personnel contribute to the creation of a living archive that not only reveals alternative genealogies of Latin New York and salsa previously rendered invisible, but transforms our understandings of how New York Puerto Ricans impacted salsa's emergence and development over time. Interviews and profiles published in a variety of mediums, including online repositories like *Descarga Journal* (now defunct), digital programs such as SDRB (*El show de Rubén Blades*), and the videos produced by *Salserísimo Perú* expand access to previously undocumented or inaccessible histories. Close readings of songs triangulate lyrics, musical arrangements, and performance. I also work with liner notes and album covers, magazines and newspapers, press releases, and legal documents to examine salsa's significance across a variety of musical and nonmusical contexts. This wide array of primary sources underscores how salsa's Nuyorican meanings shaped the music's formation, aesthetics, and transformation into a global commodity.

Made in NuYoRico does not provide a history of salsa. Nor am I interested in proposing an origins narrative or making claims of Puerto Rican ownership, or authority over the music and its meanings. The book emphasizes the contributions and importance of salsa's multiethnic and racially diverse foundational figures and musical influences. I foreground this issue because the cultural hierarchies embedded within debates about salsa's origins reanimate the coloniality of power. In her groundbreaking work on Puerto Rican music in New York during the interwar period, Ruth Glasser explains how ethnomusicologists and music critics make "Puerto Rican music the loser in an ahistorical Darwinian scheme that closely parallels social science condemnations of Puerto Ricans as a failed ethnic group" whose musicians "have left their own ostensibly meager musical resources

behind and 'merely' adapted Cuban sounds." These assessments leave Puerto Rican music as "more or less a footnote to the history of the rumba and to subsequently popular Cuban genres."[12] This truism, reflected in Hollywood films like *Dance with Me* (1998) and *Dirty Dancing: Havana Nights* (2004), reifies an understanding of salsa as Cuban music.

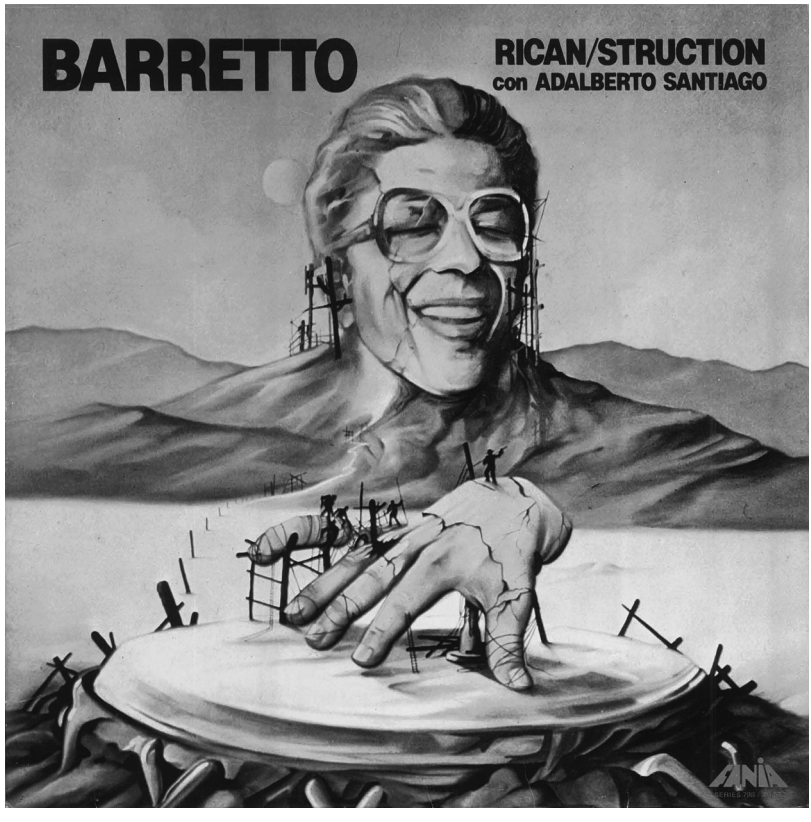
The imposition of modernist frameworks on salsa's musical development minimizes not only the ways Puerto Rican musicians and fans in New York informed the music's emergence but also the transnational flows of Black diasporic expressive culture within the US-Caribbean world over a century.[13] As Lise Waxer notes in the introduction to her anthology *Situating Salsa* (and cultural critics such as Frances Aparicio, Marisol Berríos-Miranda, Wilson Valentín-Escobar, and César Rondón have likewise shown), "Even a casual listening to salsa from the 1960s and '70s (e.g., Eddie Palmieri) and its Cuban antecedents from the 1940s and '50s (e.g., Arsenio Rodríguez) provides empirical grounds for distinguishing between the two."[14] These statements echo those of Eddie Palmieri, who cites Afro-*Caribbean* rhythms as the heart and soul of the music, thereby refusing a nationalist framework and placing salsa within a Caribbean and Black diasporic context. Attempts to fix salsa's origins within a particular national musical tradition privilege the nation-state, recur to a rubric overdetermined by US colonialism, and ignore the multidirectional flows of culture among Latin America, the Caribbean, the United States, and other sites of Black diasporic expressive culture.

The Rican/Struction in *Made in NuYoRico* recuperates salsa's social and relational contours, illuminating the music's Nuyorican imaginary and its multivalent meanings in New York and Puerto Rico over half a century. My use of "Rican/Struction" as an analytic finds its inspiration in the eponymous album by the Bronx-born and East Harlem–raised Nuyorican percussionist and bandleader Ray Barretto, whose musical chops and innovation extended across salsa, charanga, boogaloo and Latin soul, R&B, and jazz. Born in 1929, Barretto came of age listening to the Puerto Rican music of his parents as well as the swing and jazz bands of the era. Barretto has widely credited Dizzy Gillespie's foundational Latin jazz–bebop recording of "Manteca" (1947), composed with Afro-Cuban percussionist Chano Pozo and arranged by Gil Fuller, for propelling his desire to play professionally. Barretto began his professional career in the 1950s with jazz and bebop greats like Charlie Parker and Max Roach. His debut in 1961 with *Barretto para bailar* (Barretto to dance to) marked the beginning of a long and illustrious career. He released more than forty albums and collaborated on dozens more with artists like Herbie Mann, Cal Tjader, and even the Bee Gees. Barretto released his first

album with Fania Records in 1968. *Rican/Struction* (1979) was his thirtieth album and marked a return to Fania after recording with Atlantic Records.

The album cover was conceptualized by Izzy Sanabria, the editor of the magazine *Latin N.Y.* and a graphic designer who often emceed concerts for Fania. The cover finds its inspiration in *Gulliver's Travels*.[15] Painted by Jorge Vargas, it features Barretto's disembodied head emerging from a mountain while his disembodied hand stands poised over a drumskin. Small figures work atop the hand while scaffolding keeps the head upright. According to Sanabria, the small figures on the *Rican/Struction* cover represent band members working on the album, signaling their role in Barretto's creative and professional Rican/Struction. This collaboration is also marked by Barretto's reunion with former lead vocalist Adalberto Santiago, who had previously left the band with several other musicians to form Típica 73. *Rican/Struction* brought together Afro-Caribbean and other Black diasporic forms of musical expression, including jazz and funk, underscoring the continued possibilities for experimentation and musical fusion after the decline of the 1970s salsa boom. *Rican/Struction* celebrated Barretto's vision of both his and Latin music's past, present, and future. Rican/Struction, as an analytic, signals a recuperation of New York Puerto Rican histories that highlights the experimentation and creativity of Nuyorican social and artistic movements.

My use of "Nuyorican" returns to its earliest uses by diasporic Puerto Rican poets, playwrights, and other artists, for whom it signified a racialized colonial subject position intertwined with counterhegemonic aesthetic practices. For the late Miguel Algarín, cofounder of the Nuyorican Poets Café on the Lower East Side, Nuyorican referred to much more than "a Puerto Rican born and/or living in New York," instead indicating "a 'way of being' through which 'individuals practice and embody Nuyoricanness through culture, language, and the spaces they inhabit.'"[16] This Nuyoricanness, similar to the "Neo-Rican" elaborated by poet Jaime Carrero, signifies a counterhegemonic position grounded in the status of diasporic Puerto Ricans as racialized and colonial subjects in the United States as well as cultural agents who draw on Black diasporic, Puerto Rican, and US social and cultural practices in the performance of liberation.[17] Nuyorican was initially a pejorative term used in Puerto Rico to refer to diasporic Puerto Ricans, and its resignification by Algarín and Nuyorican Poets Café cofounder Miguel Piñero highlights the racialized and colonial landscape navigated by Puerto Ricans in New York and Puerto Rico. They claimed the term at a time when the physical and audible presence of Puerto Ricans in public spaces was perceived as a threat to Americanness.



I.1 Album cover for Ray Barretto's *Rican/Struction* (1979)

Part of the Nuyorican Arts Movement, salsa transformed the stages and streets of New York into a space of Puerto Rican collectivity, performance, and colonial resistance. Nuyorican aesthetics, which *Made in NuYoRico* traces within salsa, repudiate normative mobilizations of Americanness *and* Puerto Ricanness.[18] Rather than attempt to constitute a diasporic Puerto Ricanness within narratives of whiteness and respectability, Nuyorican aesthetics celebrate the status of diasporic Puerto Ricans as "revolting subjects," impediments to modernity in both the United States and Puerto Rico whose presence pollutes the racial, linguistic, and moral fabric of the national symbolic.[19] Patricia Herrera and Karen Jaime similarly emphasize the celebration of the abject in Nuyorican aesthetics and cultural politics since the 1960s. Piñero's creative work, Jaime explains, centered "a vibrant neighborhood full of poor and working ethnic people, illicit economies and activities,

and local and international liberatory politics."[20] As Herrera stresses, Piñero's emotive performances, improvisational practices, and vocal aesthetics drew from the soundscape of everyday life, "transform[ing] social realities into artistic and political possibilities."[21] While print and visual culture "centered the male body literally, figuratively, and performatively," scholar-performers Herrera and Jaime demonstrate that feminist interventions and queer art-making and sex practices at the Nuyorican Poets Café were integral to the cultural politics of a Nuyorican aesthetic rooted in the everyday lives, historical experiences, and cultural imaginary of Nuyoricans.[22] These cultural politics connected diasporic Puerto Ricans to other racialized groups engaged in liberatory praxis and global anti-colonial struggles.

Salsa's Nuyorican aesthetics overlap with the conceptualization by Jaime and Herrera, including its "masculinist-centric ethos" that necessitates attention to the roles and agency of women in Latin New York and salsa.[23] Salsa's aesthetic contours include the "oral expression of the self; the negotiation between New York/American culture and Puerto Rican/Caribbean culture through music and language; and the transformation of the performer into a conscious cultural worker before the public" that Algarín considered fundamental to a Nuyorican aesthetic.[24] The development of salsa's Nuyorican aesthetic must also be understood, as Herrera outlines, in relation to both Puerto Rican and Black diasporic traditions, including Afro-Caribbean musical expression and African American vernacular traditions.[25] I capitalize Nuyorican to designate its signification in *Made in NuYoRico* with diasporic Puerto Ricanness, Puerto Rican abjection, and the historical moment in which salsa's foundational narratives developed.

My use of "NuYoRico" draws on what Nuyorican feminist Hip Hop artist, poet, and playwright Caridad de la Luz, aka La Bruja, describes as "that place somewhere between the Empire State and El Morro," a military fort from the Spanish colonial area located at the edge of Viejo San Juan in Puerto Rico.[26] In this book, NuYoRico is a symbolic site where cultural expression, racial and colonial subjectivity, rootedness in physical location, and a recuperation of public space—both the stage and urban streets—are constitutive of diasporic Puerto Rican subjectivity. It signals the continuum of meanings within Nuyorican, with all its possibilities and contradictions.

Music Making and Puerto Rican New York

As Ruth Glasser documents, the history of music making in New York's Puerto Rican communities extends back to the 1920s and 1930s, when recent arrivals established *colonias* (neighborhoods) in which residents formed part

of informal networks that supported the professional development of musicians. As Glasser explains, a small cadre of Afro–Puerto Rican musicians that included Rafael Hernández, his brother Jesús Hernández, and Rafael Duchesne were recruited directly from Puerto Rico to play in the African American military regiment led by Captain John Reese during World War I and settled in New York after the war. Other musicians, many of whom also worked in sectors of the economy unrelated to music, formed part of the migration to the United States propelled by structural shifts in Puerto Rico's economy in the late 1920s that produced a surplus labor force. New York's position at the center of the entertainment industry and recording opportunities played a key role in their decision to settle in New York, where Puerto Ricans played an integral role in the city's musical landscape.[27] Compositions by Rafael Hernández and the *plenas* of Manuel Jiménez (El Canario), who moved to New York in 1925 and remained there for more than twenty years before returning to Puerto Rico, were among the first contributions by diasporic Puerto Rican composers and songwriters to Puerto Rico's musical canon.[28] Puerto Rican musicians had to be versatile to make a living, and thus they were often broadly familiar with US popular music, including African American musical traditions, as well as Latin American and Caribbean repertoires. Yet, as Glasser chronicles, racist practices among nightclub owners and promoters bifurcated the careers of Puerto Ricans musicians. Those that audiences might read as "white" benefited from a broader array of opportunities to play in uptown (e.g., Harlem) as well as the downtown clubs denied to Black Puerto Rican musicians.[29] The birth of Cubop, or Latin jazz, in the 1940s, forged through the collaboration of Afro-Cuban musicians Machito (Frank Grillo) and Maurio Bauzá with Gillespie, brought together Black diasporic musical traditions in new and innovative ways. By the late 1940s and 1950s, the mambo craze spilled beyond the largely Puerto Rican and Cuban neighborhoods in New York and created additional opportunities to play throughout the city to racially and ethnically diverse audiences.[30]

The careers of Puerto Rican musicians during the interwar period foreshadowed a generation of artists born or raised in New York after World War II who were, as Latin soul artist Johnny Colón (no relation to Willie Colón) described himself, Puerto Rican "all the way" down to their bones but were "born with the American Hit Parade."[31] The demographic changes propelled by the migration of African Americans and Puerto Ricans to New York after World War II accelerated social, cultural, and musical reciprocity. During the 1950s and 1960s, Puerto Rican musicians

continued to engage with Caribbean, Latin American, and US popular music, particularly rock 'n' roll's continuum of African American musical styles.[32] The US blockade of Cuba, however, suspended access to a vibrant source of musical innovation. According to musician Elliot "Yeyito" Flores, it also created an opening for Puerto Rican musicians to challenge cultural hierarchies that privileged Cuban music and Cuban musicians in the *rumbas* that took place regularly in Central Park.[33] While mambo, *cha cha chá*, and *charangas* remained largely unchanged during this period, Puerto Rican engagement with African American musical styles like doo-wop flourished.[34]

Living and working alongside each other, African Americans and Puerto Ricans also went to the same nightclubs, which often featured Black and Latin bands on the same billing. The burgeoning boogaloo music scene, with its celebration of Black and Latin American musical traditions, layered a deceptively simple musicality with what Juan Flores describes as an "emotional depth and homespun creativity" that epitomized the synthesis of Black and Latin rhythms. The departure from established musical practices within Latin music is most clearly seen, Flores notes, in the intertwined funk, soul, and Afro-Caribbean rhythms of boogaloo. The boogaloo compositions of artists like Willie Bobo (William Correa) sounded the cultural and musical reciprocity between Puerto Ricans and African Americans that had existed since World War I. Boogaloo emphasized the musical and social reciprocity between African Americans and Puerto Ricans in multiple ways. Juan Flores highlights the synthesis of musical styles, outbursts that invoked a raucous crowd at a party, and the counterpoint between the "crowd" (that is, the chorus) and the piano. The racialized excess of songs like "Bang! Bang!" by Joe Cuba and "I Like It Like That" by Pete Rodríguez influenced the development of salsa, although the latter largely turned away from foregrounding African American rhythms in favor of Afro-Caribbean musical styles.[35]

Puerto Ricans in the City

Even as Latin music sounded the spatial and social relations on the streets of Latin New York, the presence of Puerto Ricans raised concerns for politicians and public officials at the local and federal levels. As the political and economic control of the United States increasingly created conditions catalyzing migration from Puerto Rico in the 1930s, the number of people arriving to New York raised the specter of future congressional representation for a population deemed racially inferior. Puerto Rican participation

in the 1935 uprisings in Harlem became fodder for these anxieties locally, raising concerns about the criminality of a population that could not be deported.[36] Lorrin Thomas has shown how the "flood" of Puerto Ricans arriving to Harlem in the 1940s likewise raised fears about their exemption from the "rigorous physical, political and economic examinations applied to all other immigrants" just as concerns of a fifth column increasingly circulated in the United States during World War II.[37] Puerto Ricans also posed a threat to the nation's borders. "We were reliably informed," stated Representative Ed Gossett, a Democrat from Texas, "that one can purchase in New York itself a Puerto Rican birth certificate," thereby making New York "a haven" for illegal entry into the United States.[38]

The *New York Times* characterized the "infiltration" of the Lower East Side by Puerto Ricans as a contributing factor to the spread of "disease, dirt and crime" in the city. The same reporter contrasted the "tidiness of Puerto Rican housewives" in Spanish Harlem with the practice of "tenants who throw garbage from windows in paper bags." The writer, who identified "traditional" practices in the Puerto Rican countryside as a cause of the unseemly behavior, emphasized that East Harlem remains "dirtier than just about any other place in the city despite daily pickups by the Department of Sanitation." The representation of Puerto Rican women as "tidy" thus appeared as an individual anomaly amid unseemly cultural proclivities that polluted the city. Accordingly, the 1949 profile of East Harlem and its residents included commentary on the high rates of tuberculosis in the neighborhood and the violent clashes with Italian residents who "resent[ed] the *invasion* of East Harlem by Puerto Ricans."[39]

The 1950s brought mixed attitudes toward recent Puerto Rican arrivals. As Thomas outlines, social service agencies emphasized the need for understanding between New Yorkers and recently arrived Puerto Ricans. Likewise, the skill, reliability, and work ethic of Puerto Rican workers were praised by employers who, encouraged by Cold War patriotic fervor, gave "a patriotic tone to the hiring of citizens, including Puerto Ricans."[40] Newspaper articles in the *New York Post* and the Spanish-language *Diario de Nueva York* highlighted the increasing importance of Puerto Ricans to the city as a voting bloc and consumer group, respectively.[41] These changes notwithstanding, the 1950s also saw increasing xenophobia around the growth of Puerto Rican communities in New York, and the media and public officials circulated narratives of them as an economic, structural, and public health threat to the city.[42] Public discourse constructed the large migration of Puerto Ricans to New York as the cause of political instability and declining

resources in the city. Rather than looking at the "excesses of private low-income housing and labor market instability," city officials blamed Puerto Ricans for the spread of slums. The Mayor's Advisory Committee on Puerto Rican Affairs, previously named the Advisory Committee on the Puerto Rican Problem, stressed the economic burden placed on New York's resources.[43]

The racialization of Puerto Ricans in New York became entangled with colonial, anti-Black, and anti-immigrant ideologies. Puerto Rican migrants were not African American, but they were Black. And those who were not Black were not racialized as white. That the mass migration of Puerto Ricans at midcentury coincided with that of African Americans further linked Puerto Rican racialization with that of African Americans.[44] By the late 1950s, mainstream media began publishing stories that pointed to the post–World War II migration of African Americans and Puerto Ricans to New York as a contributing factor in exploding public school enrollments in New York City. A 1958 *New York Times* article implied that abnormal reproductive practices among African Americans and Puerto Ricans resulted in a surge of school-age children that "more than offset the loss caused by the migration of many families to the suburbs."[45] Insofar as the *Times* had already framed white flight from the city in terms of African American and Puerto Rican migration to New York, it reinforced attitudes that the $100 million the city spent on facilities and teacher hires was a drain on the city's resources by the very residents who had replaced white children as the majority in Manhattan and the Bronx. A 1966 front-page *New York Times* article that reported the exodus of twenty-five thousand "non-Negro" and "non-Puerto Rican" children from the city's public schools over the course of a single year reproduced the distinction between "New Yorkers," on one hand, and African Americans and Puerto Ricans, on the other.[46]

In the 1960s, the structural problems encountered by both groups would be described in terms of cultural deficiency by Nathan Glazer and Daniel Moynihan in *Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, and Irish of New York City* (1963). Historical and social science research also contributed to the pathologization of poverty among Puerto Ricans. Oscar Lewis won a National Book Award for his ethnography *La Vida: A Puerto Rican Family in the Culture of Poverty* (1966), which centered Puerto Rican communities in New York and La Perla in San Juan. The "culture of poverty" elaborated by Lewis blamed systemic and persistent intergenerational barriers on "absent fathers, matriarchal families, women having children while still very young themselves, poor work habits, violence and obsession with sex."[47] Puerto Ricans and African Americans would

be singled out within social and economic policies as the primary causes of New York's fiscal crisis of the early 1970s.[48] The public policy of benign neglect enforced drastic austerity measures and provided the template for neoliberal initiatives that developed more fully in the 1980s.

The pathologization of Puerto Ricans brought together representations of economic dependence and racialized inferiority with concerns about local and national security. Anti-imperialist critiques from the Puerto Rican community that framed migration and settlement within the context of broader economic and political forces faced anti-Communist rhetoric that questioned Puerto Ricans' loyalty to the US government. In 1944, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) interrogated political activist and journalist Jesús Colón, who would also be subpoenaed by the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC), about his ties to the Communist Party. Locally, Democrats questioned Antonia Denis, the only Puerto Rican woman who formed part of the Democratic political machine in Brooklyn during the early 1950s, about her presumed Communist sympathies. As Thomas explains, the Democrats based their assumptions about Denis not on her actual participation in the Communist Party but rather on their beliefs about the propensity of poor, racially mixed, morally degenerate Puerto Ricans to be targeted by the Communist Party.[49] Red-baiting persisted as HUAC scheduled a series of hearings to investigate reports of a "Communist conspiracy . . . attempting to penetrate Puerto Rican nationality groups in New York City and to establish conduits between these groups in the United States and Communist conspiratorial operations in Puerto Rico" in 1959. The committee insisted that Puerto Ricans remained susceptible to Communists, who wanted only to further the Soviet agenda and thus had no actual commitment to Puerto Rico.[50]

Even when local politicians, social services, and mainstream media painted more sympathetic portraits of and emphasized the structural challenges faced by Puerto Ricans, they reproduced hegemonic narratives of racialized cultural inferiority. In New York's cultural imaginary, Puerto Ricans and African Americans presented an obstacle to the geopolitical priorities of urban renewal projects and the performance of "national cultural maturity and urban resurgence that could be brandished in the Cold War with the Soviet Union."[51] Concerns over juvenile delinquency were high among politicians and moneyed interests. New York's newspapers, for their part, overrepresented violence between Puerto Ricans and African Americans, downplayed the role of whites, and underreported interethnic tensions among white ethnics, a practice that supported the city's logic for managing space.[52]

Even the Spanish-language newspaper *La Prensa* contributed to the image of Puerto Ricans as "hoodlums" or gang members that threatened the city.[53] By the early 1960s, the development of public housing for middle-class residents exacerbated tensions over real estate by "balkanizing" neighborhoods like the Lower East Side. Urban renewal projects left middle-class white ethnics in new housing living alongside the old and dilapidated buildings where Puerto Ricans, who remained a "problem" in need of "management and regulation" by the New York City Housing Authority despite being "excellent" tenants, continued to live.[54] Efforts directed at stopping the spread of "unsalvageable slums" disproportionately focused on Black and Puerto Rican residents.[55] Throughout the city, one group displaced another as local government agencies moved them around. In parts of East Harlem, for instance, African Americans replaced Puerto Ricans, who in turn had already displaced Italians.[56] Often dubbed "Puerto Rican removal programs," urban renewal frequently resulted in Puerto Ricans finding themselves shuffled from one apartment to the next.[57] The San Juan Hill/Lincoln Square neighborhood, where *West Side Story* was filmed, was a thriving eighteen-block multiracial neighborhood composed of working-class and lower-middle-class residents and their businesses. It was razed by the time the film premiered in 1961 as part of city planning efforts. As Samuel Zipp explains, "The force of culture and the arts, newly rescued from feminized inertia and recruited for manly duty in the Cold War, would also be deployed to offset the threat to racial purity and stable cultural lineage looming in an era of urban transformation." Spurred by urban renewal and Cold War ideology that promoted the fine arts as the apogee of democracy, the neighborhood would be replaced by twenty-eight luxury apartment buildings and the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts.[58]

The abjection of Puerto Ricans as colonial-racial others informs how whiteness *among* Puerto Ricans became unmarked, and racism within Puerto Rican communities in the United States considered "inconceivable." This refusal to mark whiteness reifies persistent racial hierarchies within Puerto Rican diasporic communities—at times even while acknowledging and condemning racism in Puerto Rico.[59] The failure to contend with racialized privilege risks attributing the structural challenges faced by Black Puerto Ricans to individual choices or a "culture of poverty." Moreover, as the Black Latinas Know Collective reminds us in their founding statement, dominant attitudes dismiss private and public charges of racism by Black Puerto Ricans, whose own lives inform their "thought, knowledges, and epistemologies."[60] Racist narratives and practices reproduce discourses that pathologize Black

Puerto Ricans while ignoring the persistence of racial hierarchies informed by histories of enslavement, classism, patriarchy, and anti-Black racism.[61]

Just as Black Puerto Rican bodies marked the "changing complexion" of New York, the sounds of noisy Puerto Ricans speaking in Spanish and Spanish-inflected English racialized Puerto Ricans as linguistically, culturally, and intellectually inferior. Jennifer Stoever's analyses of the reciprocal relationship among sound, listening, and race in the racialization of Puerto Ricans in New York during the 1950s and 1960s reveals a "sonic color-line" wherein "racial difference [was] coded, produced, and policed." Puerto Ricans' aural presence was racially coded as "rough, rowdy, loud, and hilarious, terms that evoke the antithetical image of the disciplined decorum of body and voice demanded by (white) American cold-war norms and listening practices." Equating the city's Puerto Rican presence with noise, the *New York Times* used language similar to that of articles on white flight to describe the invasive and "unseemly" soundscape of Puerto Rican New York.[62]

Racialized anxieties about the presence of Puerto Ricans in the public sphere reveal how both sound and space emerged as loci for the construction of difference in the formation of Nuyorican identity in the geocultural space of New York. The film *Blackboard Jungle* (1955) echoed racialized anxieties about the learning (dis)abilities of Puerto Rican children. As Stoever argues, the Hispanicized English of Puerto Ricans marked their racialized aural dissonance as aberrant noise unassimilable with the reproduction of American national identity.[63] The depiction of Puerto Ricans as racialized others reached its fullest elaboration in the theatrical and film productions of *West Side Story* (1957 and 1961, respectively). The film became the a priori reference for Puerto Ricans in the national imaginary. The sound of drums that opened *West Side Story* reflected how aural markers worked in conjunction with visual and discursive representations such as images of cannibalism, delinquency, and poverty to cement, as Alberto Sandoval Sánchez has argued, the image of Puerto Ricans as "Latina/o domestic ethnic and racial other" that posed a violent threat to the city's social order.[64]

The interlocking discourses elaborated in the media, the political arena, academia, and popular culture produced a "disgust consensus" that shaped dominant perceptions of diasporic Puerto Ricans, in both the United States and Puerto Rico, as disposable populations responsible for the city's deteriorating social conditions.[65] Insofar as "debt represents an economic relationship inseparable from the production of the debtor subject and his 'morality,'" as Maurizio Lazzarato argues, the lack of racial capital and unequal integration

into the US economy, as well as Puerto Rico's colonial relationship to the United States, produced a public identity through which diasporic Puerto Ricans were interpellated as failed citizen subjects indebted to the state.[66] Drawing on the work of Imogen Tyler, I propose that salsa's Nuyorican aesthetics cannot be separated from the social abjection of Puerto Ricans and "what it means to be (made) abject, to be one who repeatedly finds herself the object of the other's violent objectifying disgust." I propose that salsa became a site through which Nuyoricans, and here I turn once again to Tyler, "reconfigure[d] and revolt[ed] against their abject subjectification."[67]

Puerto Rican participation in grassroots social movements proliferated alongside the music that emanated from New York's streets. Like salsa, political activism redefined the meaning of public spaces by transgressing the roles that mainstream media assigned Puerto Ricans. The New York chapter of the Young Lords Organization, which formed in response to the growing needs of Puerto Rican communities, was labeled by critics as "the fifth column in the service of Castro and Moscow."[68] The clandestine Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional (FALN, Armed Forces for National Liberation) took up arms in the fight for Puerto Rican independence from within the United States. Other microlocal efforts focused on both citywide efforts and the needs of specific neighborhoods. The agenda for Lower East Side resident associations such as CHARAS Inc. included economic empowerment while the Lower East Side Puerto Rican Action Committee advocated "rapid and often radical social change."[69] In 1969, the cultural institutions El Museo del Barrio and Taller Boricua became part of social struggles that emphasized shifting away from the middle-class and Hispanophile desires of earlier organizations that endeavored to integrate Puerto Ricans and other Hispanics into the mainstream.[70]

The artivists of the New Rican Village Cultural Arts Center, founded in 1976 on the Lower East Side, combined creative expression, activism, and shared a commitment to "using art as a means to revitalize various dilapidated New York City neighborhoods, and to foster a cultural renaissance modeled around new diasporic Latina/o identities." Poets, dancers, visual artists, and musicians alike participated in an environment that fostered experimentation and creativity. Musicians like Jerry González, Andy González, Milton Cardona, Steve Turre, and Papo Vázquez purposefully departed from commercial limitations placed by Fania Records.[71] In the photographic essay by Marcos Echeverría Ortiz, the New Rican Village is described as follows by photographer Máximo Colón: "The New Rican Village was a place for 'Students, militants, and intellectuals—a place for people from

our community involved in cultural and political stuff.'" In the same essay, Young Lord Miguel "Mickey" Meléndez notes that the New Rican village was "unlike any other traditional salsa club, 'this was a place for left Latin cultural development. It really took the Nuyorican cultural experience to a place where you can experience different things [poetry, theater, and music] under one roof.'"[72] Nuyorican poets like the late Tato Laviera and Sandra María Esteves, who was part of the New Rican Village collective and a founding member of the Nuyorican Poets Café, incorporated the music's rhythms and meanings into their poetry as the sounds of salsa filled their own lives in the streets of Latin New York and the nightclubs across the city.

¡Qué le pongan salsa!

Emerging in the mid to late 1960s in neighborhoods where Puerto Rican and other Latin American and Caribbean immigrants had settled in New York since the beginning of the twentieth century, salsa quickly became a cultural marker for the city's urban, poor, and working-class Puerto Ricans. The experimentation with instrumentation and incorporation of diverse stylistic elements characterized salsa but, unlike boogaloo and Latin soul, foregrounded Afro-Caribbean musical genres. The shift away from African American musical styles and toward Afro-Caribbean musical practices considered more conventional within Latin music did not, however, preclude stylistic developments that distinguished salsa from its predecessors in New York. Nor did it entail a complete departure from African American musical styles. The instrumentation, musical arrangements, and other stylistic elements cultivated an alternative musical soundscape grounded in a brash, urban musicality that sounded the cultural and spatial geography of the city.[73] Like the broader Nuyorican Arts Movement of which it formed a part, salsa both reflected and informed an emerging Nuyorican imaginary.

Often referred to as the Latin Motown, Fania Records developed an infrastructure for the creation, circulation, and consumption of salsa that far exceeded the capabilities of existing Latin music labels established after World War II. The label was cofounded by Dominican flutist, composer, and bandleader Johnny Pacheco and Gerald "Jerry" Masucci, an Italian American lawyer and former police officer. The label struggled financially during its early years, but by the early 1970s it emerged as the dominant force in the New York Latin music industry. Formerly signed to Alegre Records, which had gone bankrupt, Pacheco sought to create a label that, unlike his previous one, prioritized musicians and treated them as family rather than

exploitable commodities.[74] Pacheco brought his experience as a musician and bandleader, his relationship with local performers, and his familiarity with the Latin music scene to the partnership. Most of Alegre's artists followed Pacheco to Fania, and his talent for identifying up-and-coming talent, like bassist Bobby Valentín, proved indispensable as Fania Records grew its stable of artists.[75] Masucci may have first been introduced to Afro-Caribbean rhythms while stationed at the US naval base in Guantánamo as a Marine, but he famously claimed to never have listened to Latin music prior to this venture. Like other labels of the 1960s and 1970s that saw themselves as fostering "innovative and creative oases for new or unconventional musicians in the midst of a capital-driven and profit-oriented record business," Fania Records emphasized its commitment to creative musical practices by signing both established musicians and emerging artists.[76] This corporate strategy allowed Fania to sign emerging musicians with little business acumen and few alternatives for relatively little.

Between 1971 and 1977, Fania expanded its stable of artists and its music catalog by acquiring several of its competitors, including Alegre, Cotique, Tico, Mardi Gras, and Inca Records. Masucci, who eventually became sole owner of Fania Records, also established Fania International; Vaya Records, which recruited talent in Puerto Rico; and Musica Latina International.[77] Fania International and Musica Latina expanded Fania's reach into Puerto Rico and other parts of Latin America, releasing albums by Argentine balladeer Sabu (Héctor Jorge Ruiz) and the Chilean Grupo Ángeles.[78] In 1968 Masucci created Uptite Records, a short-lived label that specialized in soul and R&B, and which has been ignored in histories of Fania's growth. Masucci also created the eponymous label Jerry Masucci Music (JMM and JM), which began releasing albums in 1976. In a 1997 filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission, the company then doing business as Fania (Fania Entertainment Group) reported a catalog of approximately 1,300 master recordings, 10,000 individual songs, more than 650 albums, and all the recording contracts and songwriter agreements signed with Fania's publishing companies. In 2005, the company that bought the catalog from Masucci's estate discovered a storage unit with a treasure trove of masters, including previously unreleased material. In 2018, Concord, the company currently doing business as Fania, reported that the catalog consisted of 19,000 audio masters and 8,000 compositions.[79]

By the mid-1970s, Fania Records succeeded in extending salsa's distribution networks well beyond the United States, where salsa has remained at the core of developments in the "tropical" Latin music market and played

an integral role in the evolution of ballroom dancing. Fania established a distribution center in Panama in 1974 and, just two years later, became the first Latin music label in the United States to own its own recording studio. A year later, it procured a manufacturing plant in Puerto Rico.[80] This eliminated a principal challenge that independent labels faced at the time in predicting sales: Fania could keep production of a particular album modest to avoid overstock while responding to demand quickly.[81] But by 1978, the label was in decline. Masucci sold the catalog in 1979 to the Uruguayan company Valsyn, popularly believed to have been a shell company owned by him. He closed Fania Records and most of the network of additional record labels sometime in the early 1980s. Masucci went on to create and administer various labels that continued doing business as Fania. Each became the legal successor to the original Fania Records and the network of labels and publishing companies owned by Masucci, responsible for the massive catalog of music and publishing rights. Following Masucci's death, the catalog became one of the most coveted in the music industry and has since been acquired by successive entities.

Masucci's stewardship of this empire has led to the generalization of the names Fania and Fania Records to refer to the original label, the network of recording companies and publishing houses he owned, and the various successors who have controlled the Fania catalog. I use "Fania Records" to refer to the original label. I use "Fania" to refer to the original label *as well as* additional labels created or acquired by Masucci in the 1970s, the publishing companies he created, and, when appropriate, the labels' successors. I use "Fania successors" to refer to the series of companies since 1979 that have continued to do business as Fania by acquiring the rights to use the trademarked name, including Musica Latina, Sonido, Emusica, Codigo, and Concord. In some cases, such as that of Musica Latina and Sonido, they also assumed legal liability for unpaid royalties or breaches of contract involving artists signed to the original Fania companies. The "Fania catalog" refers to the music catalog for Fania Records, its network of labels, and successors Musica Latina and Sonido; all available master recordings for each of the labels; and the publishing rights owned by FAF Publishing, Vaya Publishing, and Vev Publishing, the companies to which most of the artists signed to Fania signed over their publishing rights. When appropriate, I use the name of an individual label for specificity.

My use of "Latin music" refers to the US music industry's production of "Spanish-language music of Latin American origins."[82] Deborah Pacini Hernández provides a useful definition of the Latin music industry,

which historically has included recordings from Latin American countries, including the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, and "ethnic" recordings made in the United States, and clarifies my own use of the phrase:

> Although the commonly used term "Latin music industry" suggests a monolithic entity, this industry has always included multiple layers and players—some with strong connections to Latin America, some without—whose domains of activity have often overlapped and intersected with each other as well as with the mainstream music industry. Moreover, many of the most influential players in the Latin music industry—even in the case of small domestic independent labels—have *not* themselves been Latino. Some of these non-Latinos whose professional lives revolved around Latin music have been personally engaged with Latino communities, although for others, Latin music has simply been another product that could turn a profit if marketed effectively. All Latin music industry personnel, however, regardless of their own ethnic and racial backgrounds, have had to ply their trade with a complicated network of multiple ethnically, racially, and culturally defined communities and markets whose boundaries have always been porous and unstable.[83]

This quotation serves to highlight the complexity of the Latin music industry and the use of "Latin" as a referent for both a field of broad musical traditions and a sector of the music industry that, while distinct, remains embedded within larger musical and corporate structures. To this end, when I speak of "Latin" musicians, this refers to the music rather than serving as a marker of artists' racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. In fact, as Pacini Hernández reminds us, during the first half the twentieth century, Latin music was often performed by artists who were neither Latina/o nor Latin American. Nor did it entail, as demonstrated by the mainstream circulation of Mexican music during this period while music performed by Mexican Americans remained primarily within these communities, interest in music performed by Latina/o musicians or music publishers.[84]

With each Latin boom since the 1970s, salsa's social imaginary has been increasingly separated from the communities, musical practices, and cultural matrix from which the music initially drew: largely Black, urban, poor, and working-class Puerto Rican communities. The Rican/Struction in *Made in NuYoRico* resides in foregrounding the entanglement of aesthetics, cultural politics, and economic and social relations with salsa. This

understanding resists the ongoing tendency to describe culture as an opposition between commodified and authentic aesthetic culture. Accordingly, *Made in NuYoRico* considers the imbrication of "work, pleasure, consumption, spirituality, 'aesthetic' production, and reproduction" in salsa from the perspective of diasporic Puerto Rican artists and audiences.[85] Just as salsa did not emerge outside the market, commodification and commercialization cannot be reduced to the logics of the market, and of global media in particular. Such claims presume a monolithic market and passive consumer without considering the specificity of cultural products informed by the everyday lives and cultural practices of racialized and, as in the case of Puerto Ricans, colonial subjects.

Rican/Struction operates as both a methodology and an analytic for exploring the reiterative power of a Nuyorican aesthetic that transmitted ways of knowing and being in the world that drew on the past, present, and future amid the abjection of diasporic Puerto Ricans in both the United States and Puerto Rico. Rican/Struction illuminates the entanglement of pleasure's enduring possibilities with salsa's aesthetics and cultural politics. Salsa became a vehicle for diasporic Puerto Ricans not only to repudiate their structural coming into presence in New York but also to "speak"—by singing, playing, dancing, improvising, listening, arranging, composing—in ways that exceeded normative renderings of productive citizenship.

Laying It Out

Made in NuYoRico restages various moments between 1964 and 2014 during which, should we "listen in detail," as Alexandra Vázquez urges us, we may hear the possibilities and contradictions of salsa as a site for the expression of Nuyorican futurity.[86] Each chapter of the book centers on a particular moment that calls attention to how salsa's aesthetic contours, affective economy of pleasure, and Nuyorican imaginary coalesce in the public, cultural, economic, and/or legal fields. In each case, I tease out not what salsa is but what salsa *does* at a particular moment. That is, I attend to salsa's signifying practices and how its dissonant sonorities sound to particular publics, in particular places, at particular times. I explore salsa's meanings in each instance by bringing together Nuyorican histories with stylistic elements, affect, and market logics. Doing so requires "listening in detail" to music and the *people* who "came to be a part of [the music], what they contributed to, how they made it sound, and what directions" they took salsa.[87] It requires listening closely, carefully, and repeatedly to those people, periods, songs,

and details that have been deemed insignificant. The goal is not to merely add to salsa's histories, fix the music's meanings, or ascribe new meanings to it but to be flexible, open to possibilities, to listen again and again to the music and the people who played it, listened to it, danced it.

I focus primarily on the musical collaborations of Colón and LaVoe from 1966 to 1978, a period during which they helped launch and consolidate Fania's position as New York's preeminent Latin music conglomerate. As two of salsa's foundational figures, they became a synecdoche for salsa's rebelliousness. I situate Colón and LaVoe within broader Nuyorican artistic, political, economic, and social expression, rather than as exceptional figures. The collaboration of salsa's so-called bad boys during this period consists of two phases. The first lasts from 1966 to 1975, during which LaVoe provided lead vocals for Colón's band. Colón's departure from his own band and LaVoe's solo recordings initiate the second phase in their collaboration.[88] LaVoe continued with the band and released *La Voz* (The Voice), his first solo album, in 1975. Colón, who produced *La Voz*, would go on to produce LaVoe's next albums, *De ti depende* (It depends on you, 1976) and *Comedia* (Comedy, 1978). Colón and LaVoe would reunite in 1983 on *Vigilante*, the score to the film by the same name.

Made in NuYoRico is made up of two sections wherein I trace salsa's social life, first through the streets of New York during the 1960s and 1970s as musicians, fans, and Fania reveled in the music's effervescence. The second part of the book traces the afterlife of the salsa boom. It highlights how the music's Nuyorican meanings informed salsa's aesthetic, commercial, legal, and social meanings in Puerto Rico and the United States. This latter section focuses primarily on salsa's meanings within the legal sphere, as part of public policy, and in relation to economic development. Each of the two parts highlights how salsa's imbrication with a Nuyorican imaginary impacted the music's trajectory, producing a plurality of meanings.[89] Similarly to Ana Ochoa Gautier, whose work examines sound and listening practices in Latin America, I endeavor to show how salsa's musical and nonmusical practices "invoke, provoke, and incarnate for different peoples."[90]

Three chapters compose Part I, which maps salsa's cultural history through the streets of "Latin" New York from 1964 through the end of the following decade. This period is demarcated by the creation of Fania Records, its increasing domination of Latin music in New York over the next fifteen years, and the precipitous decline that led to its closure. The first chapter takes as its point of departure the film *Our Latin Thing*, a musical documentary of the legendary 1971 Fania All-Stars concert at New York's Cheetah Lounge.

With a vision that extended beyond salsa to the communities in which the music emerged, first-time director Leon Gast intermingled scenes filmed primarily on New York's Lower East Side with the performance at the Cheetah. Linking salsa's aesthetic contours to the city's poor and working-class Puerto Rican communities, the film illuminates an ambivalent relationship between Fania Records and Latin New York: New York Puerto Ricans participated in the commodification of salsa while resisting their reduction to objects of consumption.

The inspiration for beginning *Made in NuYoRico* with the reciprocity and tensions between culture and the market, broadly conceived, came from both artists and fans I interviewed for this project. I was particularly moved by recollections of salsa's everynight life at nightclubs and afterhours across the city. These interviews, informal conversations, and opportunities to attend community events drew me to explore the salsa circuit of nightclubs, afterhours, hotels, and resorts. During salsa's foundational period, salsa's dance floors were not yet a site for the transformation of whiteness in the context of an exotic other but rather a space wherein the performative excess of Puerto Rican bodies across the city's landscape shaped salsa's cultural and commercial meanings.[91] Highlighting the proximity of dance and political life, salsa's everynight life illustrates, as Celeste Fraser Delgado and José Esteban Muñoz propose, how, "magnificent against the monotonous repetition of everyday oppression, dance incites rebellions of everynight life."[92] This first chapter foregrounds a performative excess that exceeded Fania Records' ability to fully control or appropriate salsa's meanings.

Chapter 2 examines how Colón and LaVoe cultivated an image of themselves as "los malotes de la salsa" (salsa's bad boys) who exulted in excessive behaviors of aesthetic and social incivility that defied established musical practices and social norms. The musicality and defiance form part of a Nuyorican aesthetic that "reclaims peoples, artistic practices, and subjectivities deemed abject and reconfigures them" in ways that resemanticize the streets of Latin New York and repudiate the status of Puerto Ricans as "revolting subjects."[93] Their *chusmería*, an often racially veiled term used to describe excessive "behavior that refuses standards of bourgeois comportment . . . and to a large degree, [is] linked to stigmatized class identity," embraced Puerto Rican abjection.[94] Their use of *relajo*, what Diana Taylor might describe as their "joyous rebellious solidarity" with poor and working-class Puerto Ricans, included those whom *salsero* Luis "Máquina" Flores described as the "pimps" and "whores" at the social fringes of Latin New York.[95] Colón and LaVoe embraced liminality and made visible their rejection of the

respectability central to hegemonic narratives of Puerto Rican and American national identities.[96]

In chapter 3, I explore how Colón and LaVoe's performance of subjecthood regarded the feminine as both necessary and threatening to the performance of subjecthood. These gendered underpinnings necessitate, as Hazel Carby indicates, an interrogation of the ideological and political impact of how their music constructed the sonic, visual, and discursive field of representation.[97] I propose that the performance of subjecthood by salsa's bad boys depends as much on the performance of virile masculinity as the repudiation of *lo sucio*, what Deborah Vargas theorizes as the "surplus subjectivities who perform disobediently within hetero- and homonormative racial projects of citizenship formations."[98] I demonstrate that the racialized masculinity of salsa's ideal subject is predicated on the representation and expulsion of undisciplined desires and disobedient women and queer subjects.[99]

The second part of the book begins with an exploration of salsa's flows to and within Puerto Rico. Chapter 4 analyzes the attempt of then governor Rafael Hernández Colón to mobilize salsa's Nuyorican meanings and global popularity as part of a branding campaign curated for the Puerto Rico exhibit at the 1992 Universal Expo in Seville. Working with government press releases, speeches, newspaper reports, and documents related to the development of the Puerto Rico pavilion, I map how salsa's Nuyorican imaginary was mobilized as a repository of the nation's presumed cultural exceptionalism, cosmopolitan character, and economic aspirations.[100] I demonstrate that the nation branding campaign that culminated with the "Puerto Rico es salsa" (Puerto Rico is salsa) concert at the Expo reified a transatlantic world economy wherein the Caribbean serves to reinforce hegemonic cultural and economic practices invested in white supremacy and the structural inequalities that uphold it.[101]

The final two chapters of the book return to the music itself, following the trajectory of the song "El Cantante" (The Singer) from its initial recording in 1978 by LaVoe to its recording and performances by Rubén Blades, who wrote the song's initial verses. If LaVoe's early work and the public character of his tumultuous personal life endeared him to diasporic Puerto Rican fans, who considered LaVoe one of their own, then his performative persona coalesced around the image of the tragic clown like never before when he recorded "El Cantante." The song narrates the private trials and tribulations of a singer beloved by his fans. In the first of these two chapters, I trace the ways that, over the next fifteen years, "El Cantante"—both the song and its musical persona—became the lens through which a public narrative formed

around LaVoe. By examining lawsuits wherein various parties claimed the rights to LaVoe's royalties, I show that his depiction within the legal system relied on representations of racialized excess and abjection. Chapter 6 turns to the tensions between LaVoe's performance of "El Cantante" and Blades's legal status as the song's sole author. Drawing on the work of legal scholar Rosemary Coombe, I propose that legal claims to "El Cantante" must be approached through an analysis of the constellation of images, narratives, and legal conventions that form part of hegemonic power within the courtroom.[102] To that end, my approach to the question of whether "El Cantante" should be considered a joint work under copyright law, or, at minimum, require a collaborative agreement between Blades and LaVoe's estate, is based on an understanding of law "not as rules and policies but as stories, explanations, performances and linguistic exchanges" through which social constructions of power are negotiated.[103] Rather than attempting to establish the truth of claims to LaVoe's royalties and the song's authorship, this final chapter examines how legal doctrines are established and protected over time and the ways they reify the coloniality of power through which LaVoe's status in the courtroom was (re)presented.

Salsa's social life across half a century reveals a complicated process whereby multiple concurrent claims circulate simultaneously in the artistic, social, economic, and legal spheres. *Made in NuYoRico* shows not only how salsa reclaimed the public sphere in New York from which Puerto Ricans were repeatedly expelled literally (through urban renewal) and symbolically but how the music's Nuyorican imaginary became the site for the performance of musical, cultural, political, legal, and economic authority. *Made in NuYoRico* illuminates how Nuyorican subjectivities embedded within salsa impacted the music's trajectory in both New York and Puerto Rico, sounding a colonial contestation that produced alternative meanings of Puerto Ricanness in each space. Salsa's ability to convey an "authentic" Puerto Rican subject in both New York and Puerto Rico hinged not only on the music itself but also on the ways the performers negotiated the terrain as they claimed the authority to represent Puerto Rico and Puerto Ricanness. This authority extended from the stages of the cuchifrito circuit to Puerto Rico and Spain, and from the streets of Latin New York to its courtrooms, where questions of cultural authority and representation become entangled with modern copyright law. Ultimately, I illustrate how artists, fans, music industry personnel, and even government institutions have produced competing and overlapping claims to salsa's Nuyorican imaginary for over half a century.

Notes

Abbreviations

AHFRHC	Archivo Histórico Fundación Rafael Hernández Colón
COWP.	Cowper's King Bench Reports
D.P.R.	US District Court for the District of Puerto Rico
ICP	Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña (Institute for Puerto Rican Culture)
LEXIS	LexisNexis
N.Y. SUP.	Supreme Court of the State of New York
S.D.N.Y.	US District Court for the Southern District of New York
WL	Westlaw

Introduction. Rican/Struction: The Social Life of Salsa

Epigraph: From *Brujalicious*, De La Luz Records, 2006.

1 The song was also released on Anthony's album *3.0* three months later.

2 City Lore, "La Marqueta."

3 Aparicio, "Marc Anthony *3.0*," 50–51. The most frequent translation of *gozar* would be "to enjoy" or "to revel in." Anthony's usage conveys a

taking hold of pleasure and of life. It also suggests the substantive *gozo*, which can denote both pleasure and bliss.

4 Vázquez, "Can You Feel the Beat?," 112; Neal, *Songs in the Key*, 110. George came of age in New York City's East Harlem neighborhood in the 1970s and 1980s, listening to Afro-Caribbean and African American music playing on the radio and wafting out of 8-track decks in people's cars.

5 Aparicio, "Marc Anthony *3.0*," 48.

6 Nicknamed La Voz (The Voice) by a dazzled local promoter, Héctor Juan Pérez Martínez assumed the stage name Héctor LaVoe. The spelling reflects the aspirated final-syllable */s/* common to Puerto Rican Spanish. I use LaVoe rather than the alternative Lavoe to emphasize the aesthetic and sociolinguistic context. It also reflects the spelling found on various albums. Any use of the lowercase *v* reflects the spelling in interview transcriptions or essay titles.

7 Valentín-Escobar, "El hombre que respira," 176.

8 On LaVoe's status as a Puerto Rican effigy, see Valentín-Escobar, "El hombre que respira."

9 Benson Arias, "Sailing on the USS *Titanic*," 32; Ayala, "Decline of the Plantation Economy," 77–78; Sánchez Korrol, *From Colonia to Community*, 27.

10 Espiritu, "Home Bound," 47. Diasporic Puerto Ricans continue to have the highest poverty rates and the highest asthma and asthma-related mortality rates among Latinas/os, and they continue to account for disproportionately high numbers of new HIV cases in the United States. Deren et al., "Addressing the HIV/AIDS Epidemic"; Asencio, *Sex and Sexuality*, 9–10; Arcoleo et al., "Longitudinal Patterns."

11 Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia*.

12 Glasser, *My Music Is My Flag*, 3.

13 Historian Frank Guridy characterizes the "US-Caribbean world" as the supranational region of trade networks consolidated during the first four decades after the War of 1898 that extended along the Eastern Seaboard of the United States, the Caribbean Basin, the Gulf of Mexico, and the northern boundaries of South America. As the region became increasingly entangled in the US economic sphere of influence, the translocal linkages within the US-Caribbean world connected cities in the northeastern United States such as New York to other major cities. These trade networks facilitated the flows of Afro-diasporic music to coastal cities such as Caracas, Venezuela, and Cali, Colombia, both of which became nodal points in salsa's increasingly transnational flows by the mid to late 1970s and the mid-1980s, respectively. Guridy, *Forging Diaspora*, 7–8; Waxer, *City of Musical Memory*.

14 Waxer, "Situating Salsa," 5; see also Aparicio, *Listening to Salsa*; Berríos-Miranda, "Is Salsa a Musical Genre?"; Valentín-Escobar, "El hombre que respira"; Rondón, *Book of Salsa*.

15 Sanabria (@mrsalsamovie), "The idea #IzzySanabria had for this #RayBarretto cover."

16 Herrera, *Nuyorican Feminist Performance*, 29–30.

17 Herrera, *Nuyorican Feminist Performance*, 30–31.

18 Normative Puerto Ricanness does not signify a singular ideological position but rather the ways that liberal citizenship informed claims to social, economic, and political rights by Puerto Ricans in both the diaspora and in Puerto Rico, albeit at different historical junctures. As demonstrated in the proceeding chapters, I do not suggest that salsa destabilized all hegemonic mobilizations of Puerto Ricanness, particularly with regard to the gendered and sexual boundaries of Puerto Rican belonging.

19 Tyler, *Revolting Subjects*, 3–5.

20 Jaime, *Queer Nuyorican*, 30.

21 Herrera, *Nuyorican Feminist Performance*, 45.

22 Herrera, *Nuyorican Feminist Performance*, 46; Jaime, *Queer Nuyorican*, 8, 46.

23 Herrera, *Nuyorican Feminist Performance*, 36.

24 Herrera, *Nuyorican Feminist Performance*, 69–70.

25 Herrera, *Nuyorican Feminist Performance*, 32.

26 La Bruja, "Nuyorico Interlude," on *Brujalicious*. El Morro was designed by the Spanish to protect Puerto Rico from pirates and constructed between 1539 and 1790.

27 Glasser, *My Music Is My Flag*, 50–51.

28 Significantly, whereas the emergence and consolidation of the plena occurs between 1900 and 1926 across Puerto Rico, during the next quarter century it also becomes a fixture among New York Puerto Rican communities. See J. Flores, "'Bumbún' and the Beginnings of *Plena* Music," in *Divided Borders*, 85–108.

29 Glasser, *My Music Is My Flag*, 74–78.

30 Pacini Hernández, *Bachata*, 24–25.

31 J. Flores, *Salsa Rising*, 121.

32 Pacini Hernández, "Tale of Two Cities."

33 Y. Flores, interview with the author; Pacini Hernández, "Tale of Two Cities," 82; Glasser, *My Music Is My Flag*, 3.

34 Pacini Hernández, "Tale of Two Cities," 81.

35 J. Flores, *From Bomba to Hip-Hop*, 82, 107–10.

36 Lorrin Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen*, 88.

37 Cited in Lorrin Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen*, 134–35.

38 *New York Times*, "City Called Haven." These concerns have continued over time. In 2010, all Puerto Rican birth certificates issued before July 1 of that year were invalidated.

39 Grutzner, "City's Puerto Ricans Found Ill-Housed."

40 Lorrin Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen*, 160.

41 Lorrin Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen*, 159–60.

42 Lorrin Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen*, 88.

43 Lorrin Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen*, 158–60.

44 Andrés Torres, *Between Melting Pot and Mosaic*, 66; Grosfoguel, *Colonial Subjects*, 149–64; Grosfoguel and Georas, "Latino Caribbean Diasporas," 106–7.

45 Buder, "City School Rolls."

46 Buder, "Racial Patterns Shift in Schools."

47 Briggs, *Reproducing Empire*, 163.

48 See Andrés Torres, *Between Melting Pot and Mosaic*.

49 Lorrin Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen*, 150–51.

50 United States Congress, *Communist Activities among Puerto Ricans*, 1515, 1604.

51 Zipp, *Manhattan Projects*, 165–66.

52 Dávila, *Barrio Dreams*, 28; Mele, *Selling the Lower East Side*, 138.

53 Lorrin Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen*, 158–60.

54 Mele, *Selling the Lower East Side*, 142–43; V. Rosa, "Colonial Projects," 189–91.

55 Mele, *Selling the Lower East Side*, 129–31; Dávila, *Barrio Dreams*, 31; Zipp, *Manhattan Projects*, 205.

56 Dávila, *Barrio Dreams*, 31.

57 During a two-year period from 1959 to 1961, Puerto Ricans accounted for 76 percent of residents displaced by urban renewal, reflecting policies that characterized them as a "transient" and "vulnerable" population for whom public assistance was not the city's priority. Mele, *Selling the Lower East Side*, 129–31; Dávila, *Barrio Dreams*, 29–31.

58 Zipp, *Manhattan Projects*, 183.

59 Findlay, "Slipping and Sliding," 27. Suárez interviewed Puerto Ricans born in New York during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s who moved to San Juan, Puerto Rico.

60 Black Latinas Know Collective, "Statement"; Dinzey-Flores, "Stop Sacrificing Black Latinxs"; Lloréns and Dinzey-Flores, "Replay."

61 Lloréns, *Making Livable Worlds*, 34–35. See also Figueroa-Vásquez, "Survival of a People"; T. Hernández, *Racial Innocence*.

62 Stoever, "Splicing the Sonic Color-Line," 65–68.

63 Stoever, "Reproducing U.S. Citizenship," 783.

64 Sandoval Sánchez, *José, Can You See*?, 23.

65 Tyler, *Revolting Subjects*, 19–46; Hancock, *Politics of Disgust*, 66–67; Mele, *Selling the Lower East Side*, 129–30.

66 Lazzarato, *Making of the Indebted Man*, 11.

67 Tyler, *Revolting Subjects*, 4, 170–71.

68 Quoted in Lorrin Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen*, 158.

69 Mele, *Selling the Lower East Side*, 272–73.

70 Dávila, "Culture in the Battlefront," 163–64.

71 Valentín-Escobar, "Bodega Surrealism," 37, 129–30.

72 Quoted in Echeverría Ortiz, "'Where We Were Safe.'"

73 Valentín-Escobar, "El hombre que respira," 165. The section heading means "Let them play salsa," the title of a song by El Gran Combo.

74 Pacheco, interview with the author.

75 Pacheco, "Interview."

76 Lee, "Re-examining the Concept," 13.

77 In cases where a corporation name would normally include a diacritic but none was used by the relevant entity, I have defaulted to the convention used by that party.

78 Gurza, "Fania Tries a Non-salsa Label," 90; Gallo, interview with the author, 2002; Miller, "Crossover Schemes," 192.

79 Fania Entertainment Group, "Securities and Exchange Commission Form SB-2"; Waring, "Fania Records"; Peisner, "Digital Salsa."

80 Gurza, "La Tierra for Latins," 39; Miller, "Crossover Schemes," 192.

81 Lee, "Re-examining the Concept," 14.

82 Pacini Hernández, *Oye Como Va!*, 15.

83 Pacini Hernández, *Oye Como Va!*, 15.

84 Pacini Hernández, *Oye Como Va!*, 20–21.

85 Lowe and Lloyd, "Introduction," 26.

86 Vázquez, *Listening in Detail*, 4–30.

87 Vázquez, *Listening in Detail*, 8.

88 Bongocero José Mangual Jr. assumed the responsibilities of bandleader at LaVoe's request. Mangual, interview with the author.

89 Appadurai, *Social Life of Things*, 5.

90 Ochoa Gautier, *Aurality*, 5.

91 C. García, *Salsa Crossings*.

92 Delgado and Muñoz, "Rebellions of Everynight Life," 9–10.

93 Jaime, *Queer Nuyorican*, 142, 164.

94 Muñoz, *Disidentifications*, 182.

95 I generally refer to public figures by their last name and fans who were not public figures by their first names. Where the use of the last name might cause confusion, I defer to the first name. For example, I refer to Pete "El Conde" Rodríguez as "Pete 'El Conde'" to differentiate him from his contemporary Pete Rodríguez. I refer to Luis "Máquina" as such to distinguish him from the various other persons I interviewed as well as cultural critics who share the last name Flores.

96 Taylor, *Archive and Repertoire*, 129–30.

97 Carby, "Souls of Black Men," 13–16.

98 Vargas, "Ruminations," 718.

99 Vargas, "Ruminations," 715–18; Vargas, "Un Desmadre Positivo," 286.

100 R. Rosa, "Governing Tourism."

101 Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean*, 177–78.

102 Coombe, "Is There a Cultural Studies of Law?," 37–38.

103 Paul Gewirtz, quoted in Coombe, "Is There a Cultural Studies of Law?," 37.

Chapter 1. *Our Latin Thing*: Salsa's Nuyorican Histories

1 I say "generally considered" the band's debut because the All-Stars performed at the Red Garter in Greenwich Village in 1968 and released a live recording of the concert, but neither got significant attention, and the band did not appear together again until the Cheetah Lounge concert.

2 Fundora, "Desde nuestro rincón internacional," 36.

3 Rondón, *Book of Salsa*, 59–60.

4 The song is listed as "Introduction theme" on the album. Barretto also released the song on his 1972 album *Que viva la música*.

5 Greenspun, "Doing '*Our Latin Thing*,'" 13.

6 Miller, "Crossover Schemes," 187–88.

7 In her study of New York's Puerto Rican community, Ana Celia Zentella defines "dense" communities as those where "most of the people not only [know] each other's name and apartment number, they also [know] personal histories and considered each other's friends their friends." *Growing Up Bilingual*, 8.