

Pedro Raposo

Dominican Republic: dancer, teacher, co-founder of KumbaCarey

Object: fututo trumpet

Los fututos representan resistencia, supervivencia, posibilidades polirrítmicas y magia. (Spanish)

[Fututo trumpets represent resistance, survival, polyrhythmic possibilities and magic]

I am from Cibao, in the north of the Dominican Republic, but I grew up in la capital, Santo Domingo. My father and mother moved there when I was a child. They were traditional persons, singing the velaciones, and my father talked a lot about history. So I learned from my family first. In 1978, when Fradique Lizardo started La Escue-la del Ballet Folklórico Dominicano, I went there to learn. We travelled to different parts of the D.R. to do research on cultural celebrations. We went to Villa Mella and La Romana and to Isla la Saona during La Semana Santa, Holy Week. I saw there for the first time people playing palos, the pair of drums, with the sticks on the sides.

During the 1980s, I travelled with the Ballet Folk-lórico to perform in Europe, Cuba, Mexico and Venezuela, and then to New York. In 1994, my brother Boni Raposo and another brother were already living in New York and they encouraged me to come. When I came, I never thought that I would continue to practice this art. I thought I would just go to work to provide for my family. But Boni had a surprise for me: a project with Tony Vicioso, the founder of AsaDifé. They wanted me to teach dance in their workshops. So that was my first job in New York.

I learned of fututo bamboo trumpets in my work with Fradique Lizardo's Ballet Folklórico Dominicano. We used them with AsaDifé when we held gágà celebrations and I would alternate between dancing and playing fututos. I continued playing them in La 21 División ensemble and for events like Gágà Pa'l Pueblo. Fututos represent resistance, survival, polyrhythmic possibilities, and magic. The mongó, a small hand drum used in salves, represents sound, endurance and the infinite.



Bio:

Born in Santiago, Dominican Republic, Pedro Raposo grew up in the rural area of Herrera. In the early 1970's Pedro joined the dance school of the Ballet Folklórico Dominicano under the leadership of Fradique Lizardo. In 1978 Pedro received his certification as Instructor of Folklore Dance from the Ministry of Arts and Fine Arts. In 1994 Pedro moved to New York City, where he worked as dancer and dance instructor with Afro-Dominican music ensemble AsaDifé. He then co-founded and performed with La 21 División Afro-Dominican music ensemble 1998 to 2007. With partner María Terrero, Pedro founded KumbaCarey in 2007. In 2016 Pedro finalized the recording of KumbaCarey's CD, Fruto de Mi Cosecha. The CD is a compilation of original compositions inspired by the day-to-day life of the countryside and the city through the harmonious fusion of traditional rhythms of the congos, palos, priprí, merengue, and son.