



Music: the weapon of choice

Adaliz N. Cruz

Introduction

With little more than creativity and equipped with every instrument possible, a corrupt government official and many of his closest allies were overthrown with no casualties and minor property damage.

Music has always been a part of protest

Plena



Estrella Sola [ca. 1994]
(Nationalism)

0:30

I want my Borinquen to be free and
sovereign.
Because the star on my flag does not
fit in the American flag.

Plena



Los de la Isla [2015]
(classism)

0:55

Nice to meet you, I'm from the
"Island" and you?
Where are you from?
Maybe from another galaxy?
From China or from Japan?

Salsa



La abolición [1976]
(racial inequality)

0:45

With great hope
It arrived a long time ago
Yes friends that fake
Abolition
If the abolition came the black folk
did not enjoy it

Rap



Querido FBI [2008]

(murder of a nationalist leader)

0:55

Our flag has been desecrated
He bled to death people, he bled to death!
We'll never kneel, they will have to bury
him standing with his machete next to
him

Rise up residents of (names several
communities, housing developments, and
public housing)

The FBI has truly gotten into a mess

Reggaetón



Censurarme por ser rapero [2007]
(criminalization of urban genre)

0:55

Many look at me as if I were a bad guy,
As if they had never seen a black man
before,
As if I were a criminal,
As if with my pencil and notebook I
killed people.

Pop music



Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rUsmLs02RW4>

Ñe ñe ñé [2019]
(political corruption)

0:20

Severely indebted

With people who are not from here
After depleting our resources
They act like it's not their fault

Blah blah blah here

Blah blah blah there

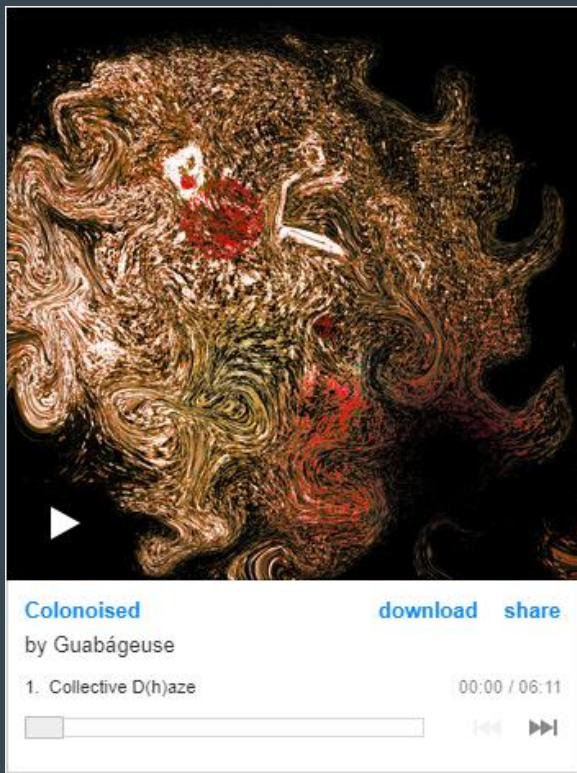
If they don't know what they're doing
Get them out of office

If they give rise to the tyrant

None is reliable

Nobody wipe their hands
Because everyone here is guilty

Computer Music



Colonoised [2018]

(Colonialism & the Federal Control Board)

Music has elevated people into power 0:28



Pedro Rosselló.

During and after his political campaign he would often dance to the Macarena.

The Rosselló name will forever be associated with the Macarena.

Ricardo Rosselló Nevares 0:23



Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-D5Xs1ZVISE>

Dancing to the very music his dad criminalized during office.

“With her peculiar personality, the resident commissioner said that she was now the *Dura*, bringing the largest amount of federal funds in the history of Puerto Rico, achieving federal legislation for tax relief to employers affected by Hurricane Maria” (Primera Hora, 2018).

Little did they know...

#RickyRenuncia 2019

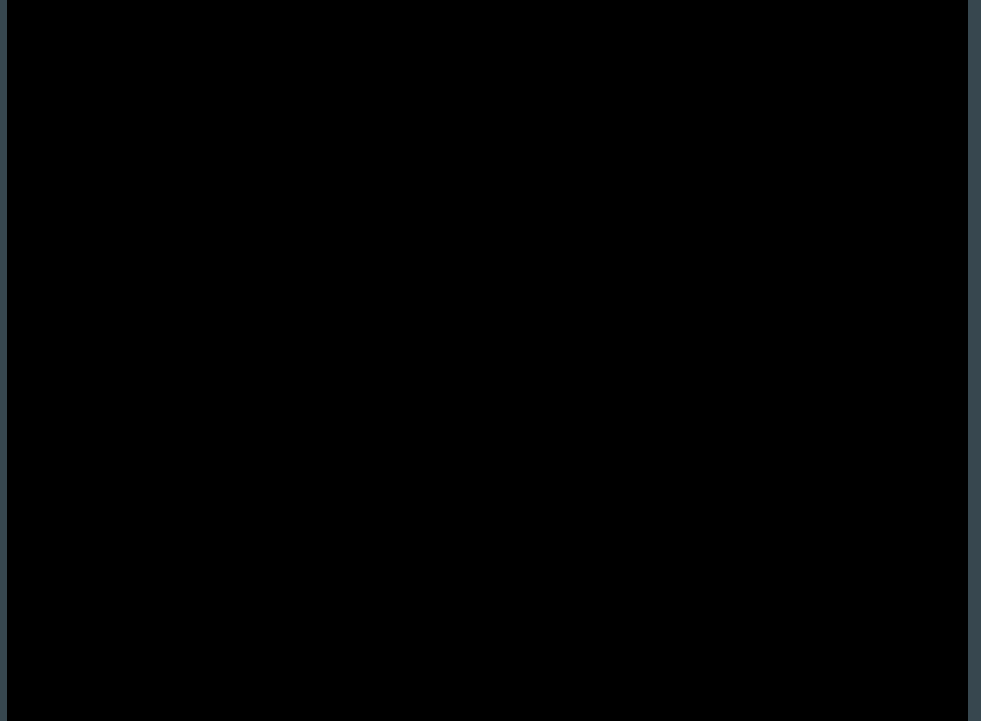
- Summer of 2019
- Telegram Chats made public by the Puerto Rico Center for Investigative Journalism.
- Dubbed *Chatgate*.
- Led to ~12 days of protests and civic unrest.
- Take a look into the music
 - Broken out by genre, not necessarily by timeline



Retrieved from https://media2.fdnms.com/orlando/imager/u/blog/9855814/gobernador_de_puerto_rico.jpg?cb=1515171794

Minute of silence

- For the people who did not survive the hurricane due to the government's negligence.



Percussive

Cacerolazo

- Every night at 8 pm
- Banging pots
- Designed to be annoying
- Peaceful protest
- El Monte, Hato Rey



Telemundo PR via Facebook

Chanting

When do we want it?

Now.

Ricky resign and take the control
board too!



Bomba

- Comes from our African Heritage
- Conversation between drums and dancer.

Let's give them hell

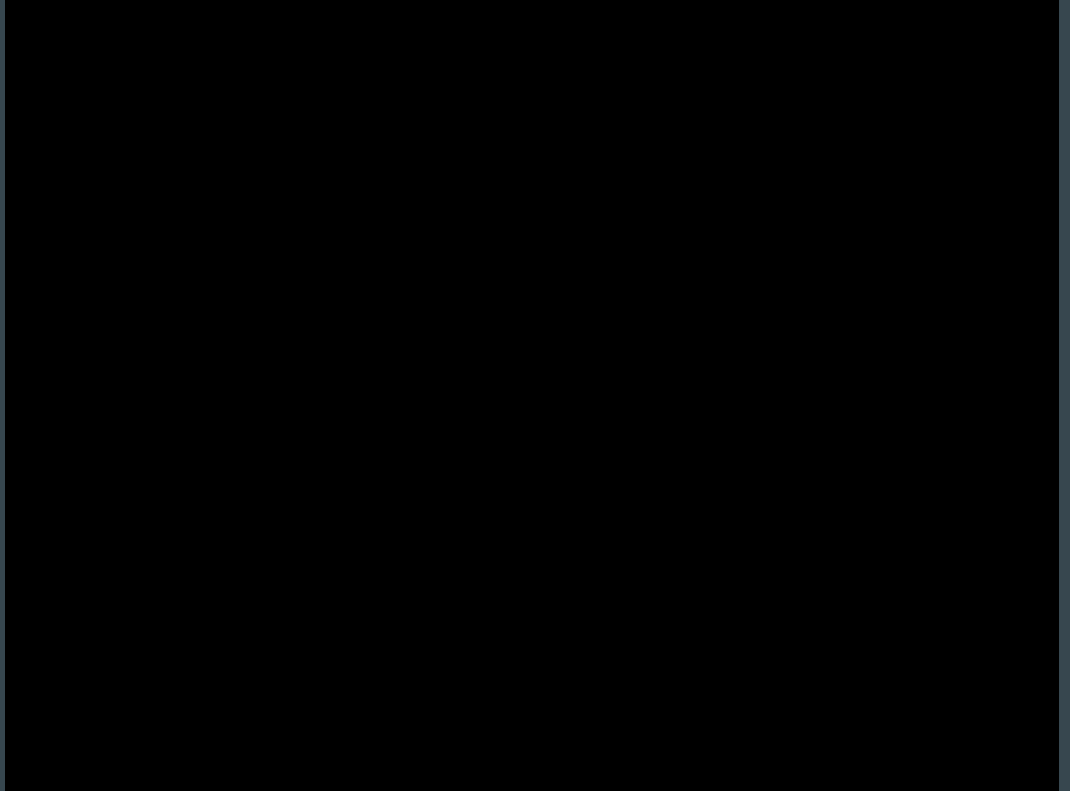
3:07



Plena

- Sung newspaper
- Usually always present during protests
- Marching through the streets of Old San Juan

Firm and onwards
Nobody will be able to stop us.



Décima

- Jibaro music (Mountain folk)
- Improvisatory rhymes

Today I join the artists...
Today the protest has come together
and the people have united
To paralyze the highway.
According to my point of view,
This is a great feat.
We demand it firmly.
Today people pronounce:
Ricky sign the resignation!
Get out of Fortaleza!



El Nuevo Día via Facebook

Danza

Arise, Puerto Ricans! The call to
arms has sounded!

Awake from this dream it is time to
fight!

Doesn't this patriotic call set your
heart alight?

Come! We are in tune with the roar
of the cannon.

We want liberty, and our machetes
will give it to us...

Come, Puerto Ricans, come now,
since freedom awaits us anxiously,
freedom! freedom!

- Puerto Rican “classical” music
- High society and ballrooms
- National anthem



José Antonio Rivera López via Facebook

Traditional/Folk Music

- Homesick anthem
- For all the people who were forced to leave

...I left my heart at the shores
Of my beloved Old San Juan
Goodbye (goodbye, goodbye)
Dear Borinquen (land of my love).
Goodbye (goodbye, goodbye)
my sea goddess (my palm queen),
I'm leaving (I'm leaving)
but one day I'll return
to find of my love,
to dream again,
in my Old San Juan. |



Qué está pasando Boricua via Facebook

Bolero

- Slow ballads
- Cuba

I know about the charms,
of my beautiful Borinquen
that's why I love her so
much
and I will always call her
beautiful.



Choral Music

Perla del Caribe - Danza
Warm sun of Borinquen,
Tropical gentle breeze,
I give you my singing
blue sky of dawn.

I sing to not cry,
I suffer for your love
bride of the sea and the sun
Borinquen mine
land of my heart.



Solmarí Figueroa Cruz via Facebook

Salsa

- Afro Cuban musical influences
- Puerto Rican (and other Latin American) musicians in New York.
- Became a sort of sung newspaper.



Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eoBleWlpaoY>

Parody music

- Los Rivera Destino
- Parody music on genres thought of as old

His name was Ricardo
Corrupt and violator of human
rights

His name was Ricardo
A bad leader

The people actively demand that you
resign

If you act like a bratty kid
The people are going to kick you out.



Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cvp-mHcl8Lw>

Urban Music 2:12

And so the few who follow you are stupid
But just wait, sharpening knives only takes a minute
We are the roar of the Puerto Rican flag with all its colors
Demanding your resignation, so that nobody gets hurt
Everyone united, no matter your political party
This came out early so you can eat it for breakfast
Fury is the only party that unites us

Let's go! Sharp as knives
Creating sparks until we reach the edge
We must pluck the weed from the plantation
So that nobody takes advantage of what's ours

The people can't stand any more injustice
We got tired of your lies and the manipulation of the news
Hey, hey, everybody
The ghettos, we are our own militia



Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RS7H1H2pvg>

Perreo combativo

- Most controversial protest
- Perreo = doggy style dancing
- In front of church landmark
- “Everyone expresses and has expressed themselves according to their idiosyncrasy, let them express themselves in their worldview” (N. Mena González, personal interview, July 21, 2019).



Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gx-G0txXEdA&has_verified=1

After

Fortaleza is burning

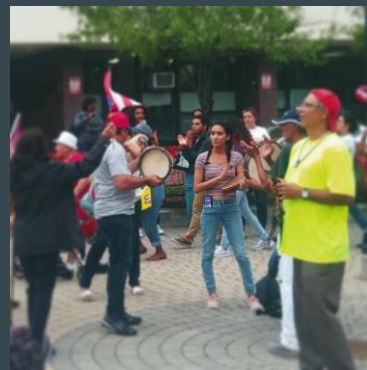
They couldn't handle the
pushback

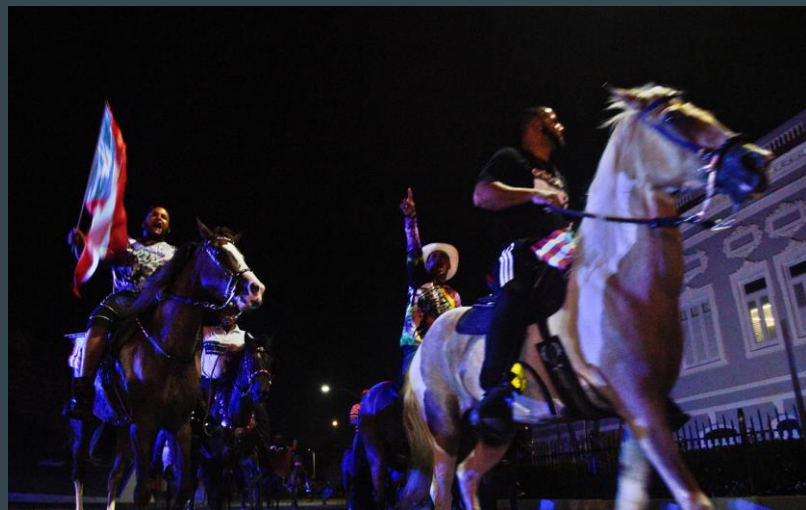
We're more than them and
we're not afraid



Israel González Santiago via Facebook

Not just music





Conclusion

- PR changed
 - Smaller protests
 - Wanda Vazquez
 - Vieques
- Latin American solidarity

Latino raise your fist to the sky
And let the world know that I will
die where I was born
Fire on the 23rd, call the
firefighters!
I come from where the rumba
calls the sonero

2:29



Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eaKWYgZAaT8>

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