

FROM AURAL PLACES TO VISUAL SPACES:  
THE LATIN/O AND GENERAL MUSIC INDUSTRIES

A Dissertation

by

CHRISTOPHER JOSEPH WESTGATE

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of  
Texas A&M University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

August 2011

Major Subject: Communication

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## ABSTRACT

From Aural Places to Visual Spaces: The Latin/o and General Music Industries.

(August 2011)

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This manuscript tells the stories of the Latin/o and general music industries in the United States from 1898 to 2000. It argues that performers transformed the local identities of aural industries based in place and melody into global industries of visual identities designed for space and celebrity. Both the Latin/o and general music industries shifted back and forth along a local-sound-to-global-sight spectrum more than once, from sounds of music rooted in specific places to sights of musicians uprooted across universal spaces between 1898 and 2000. This claim is supported by a textual analysis of archival materials, such as trade press articles, audio recordings, still photographs and motion pictures.

While the general music industry's identity changed, the Latin/o industry's identity stayed the same, and vice-versa. Specifically, when the general industry identified with transnational performers and images between 1926 and 1963, the Latin/o industry retained its identification with the sounds of music rooted in specific places. From 1964 to 1979, as the Latin/o industry moved from one end of the spectrum to the

other, only to return to its initial position, it was the general industry that maintained its identification with the midpoint of the spectrum. During the 1980s, the general industry zigzagged from the midpoint to the global-visual end and back again, while the Latin/o industry remained at the local-sonic end of the spectrum. In the 1990s, the Latin/o industry's local and sonic identity continued, and the general industry moved from the midpoint to the global-visual end of the spectrum with the Latin boom. The general industry's identity changed during each interval except 1964-1979, the only period in which the Latin/o industry's identity fluctuated. *From Aural Places to Visual Spaces: the Latin/o and General Music Industries* should be of interest to anyone invested in the relations between creativity and commerce, substance and style, or geography and genre.

For my parents

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Ways to Listen and Look<sup>1</sup>**

The Latin/o music industry's independent labels and the "Latin" divisions of the general music industry's major companies have histories, but they have not been written. Apart from the notable exception of Keith Negus, who is now affiliated with musicology, communication and media scholars have overlooked independent Latin/o labels and the major companies' "Latin" divisions.<sup>2</sup> Scholars of Latin/o culture, meanwhile, have conflated those labels and divisions.<sup>3</sup> That conflation does not help us understand how Ramón Ayala (a signatory of Freddie Records in Corpus Christi) and Ricky Martin (a performer signed to Sony-BMG's Latin division in Miami), for instance, make different kinds of music in different ways for different audiences. For that reason, this manuscript distinguishes the Latin/o music industry's investment in its own artists (e.g. Freddie and Ayala) from the general music industry's interests in Latin/o performers (e.g. Sony and Martin) for analytic purposes, and recognizes that the latter industry's inclusion of the former does not mean the former includes the latter.<sup>4</sup>

The *general music industry* is defined herein as an agglomeration of four major entities and thousands of "independent" labels with diverse interests, the majority of which have no explicit relations with Latin/o musicians.<sup>5</sup> The "big four" corporate labels

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<sup>1</sup>This dissertation follows the style of *Communication & Critical/Cultural Studies*.

—Universal, Sony-BMG, Warner and EMI—currently control between 72 and 87 percent of the global music market, and the number of major labels has ranged from eight to four since the 1940s.<sup>6</sup> Each company has horizontally integrated its packaging across platforms, vertically integrated its value chain, and diversified to compensate for loss from sectors that perform poorly. As Patrick Burkart observes, a loose integration approach characterizes the industry’s ownership structure, or a “network” of “flexible” relations with external “affiliates” or “partners.” Unlike EMI and Warner, Sony-BMG and Universal are part of larger media conglomerates.<sup>7</sup> Latin/o music represents roughly five percent of the general industry’s total sales,<sup>8</sup> though that percentage neglects piracy, retailers without SoundScan sales tracking, and a rich historical narrative.

In contrast to the general industry, the *Latin/o music industry* is defined herein as a loose collective of independent labels dedicated exclusively to the production of local and regional Latin/o music without explicit ties to the majors or their affiliates. The Latin/o industry is unique in its ethnic, linguistic, geographic, and sonic productions. A number of independent labels have devoted themselves to the production and distribution of local and regional Latin/o music over the last century,<sup>9</sup> including but not limited to Ideal, Peerless, Tico, Alegre, Buena Suerte, Corona, Falcon, Freddie, Fania, Imperial, Montuno, Coco, Salsoul and Zarape. Even though the first Latin/o label was founded a few years after the advent of synchronized sound in the mid 1920s, the beginnings of the *Latin/o industry* can be traced to the years that immediately followed World War II, when the majors turned their attention to more mainstream genres.<sup>10</sup>

This manuscript interprets the general and Latin/o music industries as cultures of production and as producers of culture, a perspective preceded by a history of critical and administrative ideas. Frankfurt School theorists Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno characterized the culture industry as a complex of standardization and pseudo-personalization. For them, music was mass-produced like packaged food, designed for passive consumption as our minds focused on something else. In shaping our tastes, producers operated under the assumption that we would not notice the ways in which songs were “plugged” as hits.<sup>11</sup> The industrialization of music discouraged “active production,” and accelerated the “decline of folk or community or sub-cultural traditions,” paired with a “general musical deskilling.”<sup>12</sup> Corporate visions, in turn, jeopardized music making and critical listening among the masses. This branch of critical theory offered a starting point from which to think about the cultural industries—especially music and radio.

Subsequent empirical research moved beyond critical theories. As a sociologist of organizational culture, Paul Hirsch instead focused on “contact men,” or the promoters, press coordinators and gatekeepers who filtered new ideas in their circulation from creators to consumers.<sup>13</sup> Richard Peterson and Daniel Berger extended Hirsch’s functional research in their analyses of the general music industry’s organization. Their influential production of culture perspective framed concentration and diversity as cyclical processes between 1948 and 1973, confirmed by Eric Rothenbuhler and John Dimmick from 1974 to 1980, who also found that greater market concentration meant

less musical diversity, measured by the turnover rate of hits on the popular music charts.<sup>14</sup>

Other researchers such as Paul Lopes, however, explained that the diversity of musical content depended more on the organization of each company than on the degree of market concentration. Michael Christianen applied new connotations to concentration and diversity by extending market share calculations from output to input, and by accounting for competition not only among, but also within companies. Peter Ross ultimately observed that earlier measurements—such as how quickly songs turned over on the charts—proved inadequate when major companies incorporated some independent labels and not others into their structures. Ross measured the effects of concentration and diversity in musicological terms, such as time, meter, form, accent, and harmonic structure. Peterson and Anand expanded the production of culture perspective to account for the ways in which expressive systems shaped symbolic elements in art worlds, newsrooms and the rest of popular culture.<sup>15</sup> The perspective subsequently began to take seriously the contexts in which music was produced, such as recording studios and corporate offices.<sup>16</sup>

The general and Latin/o music industries produce culture—in the goods that are distributed and consumed as units with exchange value—and culture, as a larger system of symbols that recognizes and transcends material questions of commerce, produces industry.<sup>17</sup> For cultural economists, commerce and creativity have a symbiotic relationship; any divide between industrial control and production on the one hand and representation and consumption on the other is an artificial one,<sup>18</sup> largely because

“production does not take place simply within a corporate environment created according to the requirements of capitalist production but in relation to broader culture formations and practices that may not be directly within the control or understanding of the company.”<sup>19</sup> Sony-BMG and Freddie Records do not merely determine the meaning of Latin/o music for consumers: both companies also operate *as* and *in* cultures with specialist and generalist discursive registers. Corporate executives and politicians certainly talk about commodities in their own private worlds, but they simultaneously belong to larger publics with interpersonal relationships and social networks that shape the supply of and demand for cultural goods.

This manuscript’s history of the Latin/o and general music industries thus acknowledges both sides of the political economy and cultural studies coin.<sup>20</sup> All of the chapters demonstrate an awareness of concentration, diversity, synergies, royalties, market shares, mergers, acquisitions, strategic alliances, horizontal and vertical integration, commodification, spatialization and structuration,<sup>21</sup> but they move one step further in claiming that the music industries cannot produce Latin/o cultural identities without culture first producing industries that identify with Latin/o music and its musicians’ images in particular and universal contexts. As Raymond Williams wrote, culture is “one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language,” with an “intricate historical development”<sup>22</sup> that preceded Marxist thought and the Industrial Revolution. When taken to mean an entire way of life, the term transcends the corporate boardrooms of Universal, Sony-BMG, Warner and EMI and inhabits every

conceivable context of the human condition here and now, there and then. Indeed, without culture, there would be no (cultural) goods to trade.

Each one of the following chapters will illuminate the ways in which culture produces the identities of the general and Latin/o music industries and, in turn, how those industries produce cultural identities through the prism of performers. As Keith Negus and Michael Pickering have asserted, we must “show the enduring significance and continuing importance of the creative artist within the industrial process. The industries are organized around the artist, as the most basic analysis of acquisitions, contracts, copyright and stardom will reveal... To posit (even implicitly) the insignificance of the creative individual artist is to misunderstand how industries operate in relation to artists.”<sup>23</sup> Put simply: music industries require—above all else—musicians for their very existence. This manuscript pushes that idea further and argues that cultures of musicians constitute the very identities of the music industries and the cultural identities they subsequently create. Artists are the first points of personal contact for an otherwise impersonal set of structures: in that sense, they are the faces of the general and Latin/o music industries, and the ideal inspirations for their material formations. This study analyzes the productions of artists as evidence of that claim.

The claim is situated in a recent body of work from John Thornton Caldwell that originated with the production of culture perspective. Identities are fore-grounded “not just at the level of the audience, but also in the identity activities of media industries themselves,”<sup>24</sup> evinced in the practices of the musicians that represent them. Expanding Caldwell’s industrial-identity theory beyond film and television, this manuscript

illustrates the ways in which identities manifest in the business strategies and branding initiatives of music labels, from how Universal's global vision drives its decisions to sign Latin/o performers with the right crossover images, to the kinds of economic logic satisfied by tour schedules for Fonovisa's roster of artists. As we will see in Chapter IV, the rebranding of MTV Latino into MTV Latin America reflected the changing identity of the network not only with its "think globally, act locally" rhetoric, but also with its new personality of programming lineups. These lineups moved beyond the name of the network to include a composite of recognizable performers who stood-in for the MTV brand, one that was clearly distinguishable from competitors. Bands-as-brands meant that MTV's identity was literally made in the images of its performers and their performances.

Trade and popular press articles, sound recordings, major motion pictures, radio interviews, and television programs—all about musicians—were the primary texts used to answer the question of how culture produced the general and Latin/o music industries' identities and how the industries, in turn, produced cultural identities. The materials used to write this cultural history—collected over a period of two years from multiple archives—represent a set of relations among artists and cultural workers: they are very much artifacts with their own biographies.<sup>25</sup> This history is based on a careful analysis of the industries' "deep texts, reflexive rituals, and managed self-disclosures,"<sup>26</sup> appropriated here to mean the representations, participations and expressions of its musicians. It analyzes the performances of industrial identities in the acts of bands, as they work to distinguish their brands and legitimate their value to the cultural complex



of film, television and related media. This study pays attention to what we might call processes of chart designation, or how publications classify Latin/o music; market promotion, or what a firm does to sell music through tours, merchandise, or product placement; and creative identification, or whose identities find expression in the marketplace. Each process leaves traces of how musicians build, back, ruin, repair or otherwise alter the identities of the Latin/o and general music industries.

More specifically, this history exemplifies an analysis of “semi-embedded deep texts and rituals, [defined as] professional exchanges with ancillary listeners that facilitate inter-group relations,” communicated through trade publications and industry panels, such as *Billboard* and its annual Latin Music Conferences.<sup>27</sup> *Billboard* is “the only mainstream publication in the world that consistently covers Latin music... the Latin music industry’s history in the U.S. is intrinsically tied to *Billboard*.”<sup>28</sup> Most of the discourse under analysis here originated in that publication, though other trade and popular press articles were procured from *Variety*, *Voice of the Victor*, *Edison Phonograph Monthly*, *The Columbia Record*, *Talking Machine World*, *Music Business International*, *Music & Copyright*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The San Antonio Express*, *The Miami New Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *New York Magazine*, *The New Yorker*, *The Village Voice*, *El Diario-La Prensa* (abbreviated *La Prensa* before 1963), *Latin NY*, *Hispanic*, *Latin Beat Magazine*, *Life*, *USA Today*, and *Newsweek*. Criticism has shaped the general and Latin/o music industries since their origins. Critics generate consumption, provide feedback to label

executives, and serve as professional barometers, promotional trendsetters and power brokers.<sup>29</sup>

This study also evaluates “publicly disclosed deep texts and rituals, [understood as] exchanges for explicit public consumption that facilitate extra-group relations,” such as film clips, music videos, and song lyrics.<sup>30</sup> Texts and rituals allow for close readings of knowledge claims that express the ways in which their creators envisioned the world. The study incorporates the recorded works of Eugenia Ferrer, Rosalía Chaliá, Don Azpiazú, Xavier Cugat, Carmen Miranda, Desi Arnaz, Carmen y Laura Hernández, Ritchie Valens, Eddie Palmieri, Willie Colón, Celia Cruz, the Fania All Stars, José Feliciano, Carlos Santana, Little Joe Hernández, Julio Iglesias, the Miami Sound Machine, Menudo, Los Lobos, Ramón Ayala, Los Tigres del Norte, Selena, Jon Secada, Ricky Martin, Jennifer Lopez, Christina Aguilera, Enrique Iglesias, Marc Anthony and Shakira. Films under consideration include *Our Latin Thing*, *Crossover Dreams*, *The Mambo Kings*, *Accordion Dreams*, *Cocaine Cowboys*, *Latin Music USA*, *Cachao: Uno Más* and *Selena*, among others.

Lastly, archival materials such as letters, ledgers, oral histories, promotional photographs, and press releases provided important contextual cues. The following collections proved useful in that regard: C.U.N.Y. Hunter’s Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños’ microfilm of early twentieth-century N.Y. Latino newspapers; The New York Public Library’s holdings of non-circulating periodicals; The University of Texas at Austin’s Nettie Lee Benson Library’s *Rio Record Shop Collection*; the Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin’s *Huey Meaux, Soap*

*Creek, Niles Fuller, Allan Turner, and Chris Strachwitz' Falcon Label* collections; the Rubén Blades Archives at Harvard University; and the Díaz-Ayala Cuban and Latin American Popular Music Collection. Apart from non-circulating and rare materials, the Chris Strachwitz Frontera Collection of Mexican and Mexican American Recordings at the University of Los Angeles provided important information, as well as Indiana University's Latin American Music Center's research librarians.

*From Aural Places to Visual Spaces: The Latin/o and General Music Industries* moves beyond de-contextualized and a-historical narratives by linking discussions of music and images with geographies and genres in the first history of the Latin/o music industry and the general music industry's Latin/o activities. Identities, defined here as the essence of entities such as industries, are formed in performers' creations of music and image genres across distinct places and spaces. Research on the relations between audio and visuals, on the one hand, and places or spaces and categories, on the other, have not been synchronized in the context of a single study on music industries, yet they hold explanatory potential as cultural constructs that transcend a single institution. Alongside the aforementioned industrial-identity theory, this manuscript demonstrates a rich acquaintance with ideas on the visual economy of music,<sup>31</sup> the interrelations among sounds and images in performance,<sup>32</sup> celebrity,<sup>33</sup> and the body<sup>34</sup> as the premiere attraction of mediated spectacles, especially when para-social interactions threaten social capital.<sup>35</sup> The idea of substance *as* style is taken to mean that visuals generally receive more attention than sound in contemporary U.S. popular culture, and that the sensory privileging of seeing over hearing is largely shaped by mediated channels that construct

style as a shared experience of surface with skin-deep meaning, where “signs are becoming a reality for people.”<sup>36</sup> For example, still and moving pictures of Shakira in sexy outfits have garnered the lion’s share of attention in popular press articles, not her recording techniques or songwriting skills.

This study also addresses relations among genre and geography, and the ways in which Latin/o music has been categorized by the trade and popular presses over the last century. There has been a noticeable tendency for cultural workers to link geo-linguistic markets with ethnicity and genre. For instance, Latin/o pop and tropical music with “Spanglish” and English-language lyrics continues to sell well on the East Coast, while regional Mexican music with Spanish-language lyrics remains popular in Texas, California and the southwest, due in no small part to ethnic migration and settlement patterns. Tropical music, or what the industries might have more accurately termed Afro-Caribbean music, has continued to thrive in New York City because of its history as a destination for Cuban and Puerto Rican immigrants, at least in the case of salsa (see Chapter III).<sup>37</sup>

Each chapter in this history addresses genres, from mambo and rumba to norteño and Tejano, and their geographic origins. *Billboard* divided the U.S.-Latin music market geographically after its formal recognition in 1972, and then generically after 1985 into the pop, tropical and regional Mexican super-genres. The pop super-genre consists of baladas románticas and música internacional (romantic ballads and world music); the tropical super-genre signifies salsa (an offshoot of the Cuban son’s Spanish guitar and African percussion) and cumbia (a dance noted for its use of the tambora, or

bass drum) from the Caribbean and beyond; and the regional Mexican super-genre suggests corridos (news ballads) and norteño's accordion and bajo sexto (sixth bass with 12 strings) from both sides of the border, among Other sub-genres. As of 2010, 50 percent of the U.S.-Latin market's year-end sales were regional Mexican, and the rest were a mixture of pop/rock, tropical, and urban (a continuation of the Latin rhythm genre that *Billboard* recognized in 2005).<sup>38</sup>

The discussion of genre and geography is also connected with ethnographic field work on scenes. Beginning with John Irwin's now classic study, subsequent research has examined how genres have been tied to locales, such as salsa in London or the Miami Sound of pop.<sup>39</sup> This research line has a rich lineage of scene-specific studies<sup>40</sup> dedicated to the relations between space and place in musical communities and sites of production.<sup>41</sup> The spaces of places have also factored into the flows of Latin/o music genres.<sup>42</sup>

For example, the Latin/o music industry, with its network of independent labels, has supported artists such as Carlos Varela and the nueva trova (new ballad) movement with music "grounded in the physical, taking listeners down specific streets, traversing particular neighborhoods, sitting on curbs and park benches, and visiting local landmarks."<sup>43</sup> Each time a record with a strong geographic theme was released by Varela, a story was told about a specific place, and lines were figuratively redrawn as those stories crossed borders. The connection between places in Varela's repertoire and the nueva trova genre has captured the essence of urban geographies and the role they play in structuring the Cuban experience, with gestures to de Certeau's micro-

movements, heard in Varela's references to New York City's Central Park on albums released by the Afro-Cuban Bis Music label.<sup>44</sup> And yet both local and global connections are relevant for their roles in the cultural productions of identities in trans-regional places and transnational spaces.<sup>45</sup>

This study's central argument, then, is that cultures of musicians transformed the local identities of aural industries based in place and melody into global industries of visual identities designed for space and celebrity. Identities—the essence of entities (in this case, of industries)—are heard and seen in artists' constructions of music and image genres in places and spaces. Space is an abstract area, and place refers to a concrete location in that area. In musical terms, places mean particular scenes signified by local or regional sounds, or the musical forms of genres recognized by their local or regional identities; spaces imply the total possibility of universal distribution referenced by transnational or global images, or the visual forms of genres known to have transnational or global identities. Melody suggests a sequence of musical notes conveyed primarily for the ears, and celebrity implies stardom intended mostly for the eyes. The Latin/o and general music industries shifted back and forth along a local-sound-to-global-sight spectrum more than once, from sounds of music rooted in specific places to sights of musicians uprooted across generic spaces between 1898 and 2000.

Among musicians identified with the Latin/o music industry, it was common to hear a stress on sounds connected to regional Mexican and Afro-Caribbean genres: melodies, harmonies, rhythms, textures, vocals, and instrumentation. Regional styles in the music and local references in the lyrics have usually been associated with artists

signed to independent Latin/o labels, especially with those who have not crossed-over to non-Latin charts. Recognizable images have figured into the successes of Eddie Palmieri and Los Lobos, for instance, but the industry has tended to highlight their music and its link to specific places. Make no mistake, though: this does not mean that local and regional artists have no interest in stage-craft, nor that global performers have no concern for song-craft; it is much more a matter of degree than kind.

In the cases of performers who identified with the general music industry, it was common to find images related to pop and tropical genres: photos, videos, costumes, dancers, staged spectacle, non-musical media appearances, and stardom. Performers, as stars or celebrities, had identifiable sounds that contributed to their successes, but industry promoters were more interested in selling their images across generic spaces. From Gloria Estefan to Jennifer Lopez, these major-label signatories routinely crossed-over to non-Latin charts and appropriated Anglo musical styles. Local or regional artists who ultimately became pop stars dropped any local or regional references from their lyrics and began to accentuate showmanship over musicianship. A discussion of these attributes is threaded through the following chapters.

Chapter II surveys the general and Latin/o music industries between 1898 and 1964. Musical theater and its stage sounds, song slides, lantern shows and music illustrations predated the phonograph and gramophone in the final decade of the nineteenth century. By the 1890s, the reception of sound media by audiences began to change. Listeners were asked to create their own mental pictures of music. Business and technological practices distanced musicians from their fans with machines as

intermediaries. Disembodied voices and instruments were brought to the fore, and the character of popular music was forever changed. Instead of focusing on musicians, listeners paid attention to the music itself. What was once visible in a public performance was rendered invisible for private consumption in living rooms and parlors across the country. Engineers from Columbia and Victor recorded Latin/o musicians such as Rosalía Chaliá and Eugenia Ferrer in New York and elsewhere in the final decade of the nineteenth century and well into the first two decades of the twentieth century.

After 1926, however, the general music industry and its Latin/o recording activities changed. Sound was no longer fore-grounded, and motion pictures competed for the attention of our eyes. Although sound had heretofore accompanied “silent” picture shows, never before had it been synchronized with images. It was at this point that the general music industry began to invest more in visual than in aural content, and its Latin/o activities were no exception. Many local musicians became international performers (e.g. Carmen Miranda and Desi Arnaz) with the assistance of the cultural complex, and the general music industry ultimately promoted what would later be referred to as “token” regional-Mexican musicians such as Ritchie Valens at the midpoint of the local-sound-to-global-sight spectrum. Those who did not fit the images of the complex and the general industry found their place on radio and records with the Latin/o music industry, which emerged in the final years of the twenties and became a true collective of independent Latin/o labels after the Second World War. Labels such as



Ideal and Falcon stressed local sounds rooted in communities and musicianship more than showmanship, evinced in the work of Carmen y Laura Hernández.

Chapter III focuses on the 1965-1980 period, an interval when one label controlled roughly 80 percent of the U.S.-Latin music market. The Latin/o music industry maintained its position at the local-sonic end of the spectrum with Eddie Palmieri and Willie Colón, though this changed in the mid-seventies, when Fania, the leading label or “major independent” at the time, pushed the sound of salsa outside of New York with the Fania All Stars and Celia Cruz. This required a predominantly global-visual campaign, one that followed the shift made by the general industry decades earlier. The salsa dura o consciente (hard or conscious salsa) from the industry’s early years was displaced to make space for a salsa sensual o erótica (sensual or erotic salsa), one that traded the previous style’s streetwise lyrics and social consciousness for an apolitical and universal image of levity. And yet the new salsa sound—a lighter and more commercial one—did not fare well abroad. After Fania closed its doors in 1979, the Latin/o industry returned to its roots in the local-regional sounds of artists and bands such as Little Joe Hernández, while the general industry maintained its position at the midpoint of the spectrum, promoting “token” Latin/o performers such as Carlos Santana and José Feliciano, while making preparations to return to the global-visual end of the spectrum. From the early seventies to the early eighties, trade press reporters categorized Latin/o music by local scenes in San Antonio, Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, Miami and San Juan, segmented accordingly on *Billboard’s* “Hot Latin LPs” chart.

Chapter IV covers the 1980s. By 1983, the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences enfolded all Latin/o music into three super-genres—pop, tropical and regional Mexican—and *Billboard* traded its former geographic organization for a “Top Latin Albums” genre chart two years later. The general music industry had once again identified primarily with visuals, this time setting its sights on one global genre (pop) from one cosmopolitan city (Miami), demonstrated in the careers of the Miami Sound Machine and Menudo. Distinct geographies and genres, such as San Antonio’s Tejano or San Juan’s plena sounds, did not conform to the general music industry’s image of pop crossovers. The general industry’s shift to the universal space of Miami posed problems for sounds rooted in particular places: in order to sell large quantities, Latin/o musicians needed to fit trade and popular press images of global performers who sang in English.

Just as cultural workers emphasized a global look for performers, they not only defined Latin/o popular music by crossovers, but also Latin/o music by pop. Selective promotion by reporters-as-tastemakers created real results for those artists who did not look popular enough to cross-over, and a paradoxical reality for listeners, whose imaginations of pop sounds might have remained unimaginable in an Anglo-dominated popular culture. For instance, Los Lobos’s industry labeling as a regional-Mexican band denied it pop’s promotional weight and crossover potential. Pop music remained the primary promotional interest of the general music industry, despite or perhaps because of a situational irony: regional-Mexican genres accounted for more than half of all Latin/o music sales.<sup>46</sup> In spite or because of that reason, the general industry supported “token” regional-Mexican artists and bands like Los Lobos periodically, as it had in previous

decades. In contrast, the Latin/o industry maintained its emphasis on local and regional sounds throughout the decade, heard in the commitment of artists like Ramón Ayala to political issues such as immigration and labor rights, and to recording techniques more than stagecraft.

Chapter V begins in 1990 and concludes in 2000. Corridos, or news ballads, and norteño—defined here as a traditional northern Mexican form identified by the prominent use of the accordion and bajo sexto (a baritone twelve-string guitar), bass, and drums—were examples of genres supported by the Latin/o music industry’s Fonovisa label (the largest regional Mexican independent label) and the band Los Tigres del Norte.<sup>47</sup> The band neither crossed over into U.S. popular culture, nor appeared on any non-Latin *Billboard* charts during the decade, in part because its Spanish-language lyrics and traditional clothing did not communicate “the right image” for Anglo advertisers and audiences. From Los Tigres’ beginning with Fama Records to its signing with Fonovisa, the group embraced more than one style of regional Mexican music, dedicating itself to political issues and performing with a nasal vocal style.

The general music industry, on the other hand, was once again about to shift to the global-visual end of the spectrum with Selena Quintanilla. Major motion pictures like *Selena*, television networks such as MTV and its MTV-Latino spin-off (later renamed MTV Latin America), and media events set the stage for what the popular and trade presses called the “Latin boom” of 1998 and 1999. At this point, Latin/o performers, some of whom had previously recorded in Spanish, released major English-language pop albums, many of which crossed over to non-Latin charts. By visualizing

music through videos, magazines and related visual media, the general industry appropriated images of Ricky Martin, Jennifer Lopez, Christina Aguilera, Enrique Iglesias, Marc Anthony, and Shakira to cross these performers over into the Anglo-dominated global music industry-culture-at-large, thereby perpetuating an identity complex in which visuals of performers' bodies supplanted rather than supplemented the very sounds they were once designed to promote. These practices reflected a discourse that dislocated Latin/os from their homelands and relocated them in international spaces as global performers. Additionally, The Latin Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (LARAS) moved its first Latin Grammy Awards ceremony from Miami to Los Angeles in 2000. Fonovisa accused the LARAS of favoring pop and tropical over regional Mexican artists in the air time reserved for live performance and in the number of nominations received. Both sides of the debate are detailed in the chapter.

Chapter VI reflects on the last century of Latin/o musical production and the general and Latin/o industries' shifts along the local-sound-to-global-sight spectrum, represented by performers. The chapter reviews who controlled, invested in or paid attention to Latin/o music, such as labels that led the way by promoting particular artists in particular ways. Whenever the identity of the general industry shifted during the last century, the Latin/o industry's identity remained constant, and vice-versa. These shifts were not so much caused but rather influenced by larger political-economic and social-cultural events.

This manuscript speaks to at least two types of readers in the fields of media studies and the sociology of culture: a scholar interested in studying how cultures of

musicians created the identities of two industries and how the general and Latin/o music industries produced cultural identities, and the curious reader who regularly listens to Latin/o music across various modalities, though both are by no means mutually exclusive. As the late musicologist John Storm Roberts reminded us, “Latin music has been the greatest outside influence on the popular music styles of the United States, and by a very wide margin indeed.”<sup>48</sup> From Tin Pan Alley to streams of the blues, jazz, country and rock, Latin/o musicians in the U.S., Mexico, Cuba, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina and other Latin American countries have contributed to the melodies, harmonies, rhythms and textures of American popular music throughout its course of development. As industry scholars have noted, the twenty-first century will be the period when the influence of Latino music styles incorporates itself into American popular music in the same way that African American styles shaped popular music in the twentieth century. The general and Latin/o music industries will continue to offer rich opportunities with which we can “rethink communication, the locus from which the conflicts that culture articulates comes to the surface.”<sup>49</sup>

## CHAPTER II

1898-1964

*In Cuba, each merry maid/ wakes up with this serenade  
 Peanuts! They're nice and hot/ Peanuts! I sell a lot...  
 Through every city, town, and country lane/ You'll hear him sing his plaintive little  
 strain...  
 In Cuba, his smiling face/ Is welcome most every place.<sup>50</sup>*

Don Azpiazu attracted attention in November of 1930 with his orchestration of pianist Moisés Simón's "El Manisero" (The Peanut Vendor), the first Spanish-language song to lead the hit parade in an emerging U.S.-Latin music market.<sup>51</sup> "El Manisero" was worth his salt: as a synecdoche for vendors everywhere, he distributed roasted and toasted nuts "through every city, town, and country lane." The song's status as a cultural good— a symbol with exchange value—made its lyrical reference to commerce that much more relevant for the mobility of music across borderlands. The musical focus on foodstuff also signified a series of symbiotic relations between industries with seemingly unrelated identities. This chapter tells the story of the general and Latin/o music industries by narrating themes implicated not so much *in* but *by* "The Peanut Vendor," namely, the places and spaces of sounds and sights.

Several kinds of sound media predated the phonograph and gramophone, including but not limited to stage sounds, song slides, lantern shows and illustrations of popular music. Musical theater always featured some type of visual display, just as iconic notations dotted the staves of sheet music.<sup>52</sup> In the late nineteenth century, however, individual listeners imagined the signs and symbols of musical recordings by

their own means and to their own ends. Industry businessmen and engineers began to record musicians in local labs to promote the sale of the phonograph and the gramophone, which separated artists from their audiences in space and time. In the case of Latin/a vocalists, Columbia and Berliner recorded Rosalía Chaliá and Eugenia Ferrer, respectively, in New York. For the second time in the history of mediated communication after telephony, American audiences heard vocals and instruments with no embodied equivalents. A “mutation in the character of popular music” accompanied the audio-visualization of live performance, musical theater and vaudeville: “the scopic drive was displaced from the body of the singer, the musician and the instrument onto a new physical object: the phonograph or gramophone itself.”<sup>53</sup> Listeners, however consciously, sensed the ways in which the visibility of musical performances in public spaces contrasted with their invisibility in private places.

The identity of the general music industry and its specific Latin/o interests changed in response to *Don Juan* after 1926. Sound had frequently—though not always—accompanied “silent” picture shows before with off-screen pianists and performers, yet never through synchronized scores. At this juncture, the general industry started to invest more in global sights than in local sounds. The industry was primarily concerned with music between 1898 and 1926, and only secondarily so thereafter until 1968, evinced in the transformations of local recording and radio artists into international film and television performers.<sup>54</sup>

In contrast, the Latin/o music industry—defined as a loosely affiliated collective of independent labels exclusively concerned with producing and promoting Latin/o

artists—maintained its focus on local and regional sounds with the assistance of radio from the late twenties into the first half of the seventies. Although there were certainly major companies that recorded Latin/o musicians in the United States before the late twenties, such as Brunswick or Vocalion, these firms did not invest exclusively in Latin/os. The first Latin/o music label—located in El Paso, Texas—was, ironically, named Universal. The company recorded musicians as early as 1928,<sup>55</sup> and an industry emerged with a steady stream of local labels after World War II, including Ideal and Falcon.<sup>56</sup>

Carmen y Laura Hernández—Chicana vocalists signed to the Latin/o industry's Ideal label—were dislocated from U.S. popular culture as Desi Arnaz and Carmen Miranda crossed modalities and geographies with the assistance of RCA Victor, Columbia and the cultural complex, now a set of related radio, record, and film industries. Since Tejano and conjunto sounds did not fit the generic sights of tutti frutti hats and conga lines, Carmen y Laura Hernández were rendered invisible in U.S. popular culture by a complex with corporeal concerns. Quality was not enough: the sheer quantity of big bands and the choreography they inspired—modeled by transnational stars such as Miranda and Arnaz who sounded but more pointedly looked good dancing and acting in more than one place—caught the eyes of American audiences.

The first part of this chapter explores the 1898 to 1926 period, when the general music industry invested in the local sounds of Latin/o musicians like Rosalía Chalia and Eugenia Ferrer. The second part of the chapter examines the advent of sound on screen in 1926, when the general industry started to identify with global imagery, seen in the



careers of Carmen Miranda and Desi Arnaz. Although the first Latin/o label was founded in 1928, the next twenty years witnessed the development of the Latin/o music industry, exemplified in the recordings of Carmen y Laura Hernández for the Ideal label. The third part of the chapter illuminates the ways in which Ritchie Valens's career found a middle ground on the local-sound-to-global-sight spectrum in the 1950s, when the general music industry concentrated on rock.

### **The Early Years**

The general music industry's interest in Latin/o recordings initially developed in specific contexts with their own cultural conventions. Cuban hardware stores and neighborhood outlets manufactured Victrolas and musical recordings by the final decades of the nineteenth century, a period in which local producers exported recordings of the *son*'s Spanish guitar and African percussion to sites in New York and New Jersey for distribution. Rosalía Chaliá, the first recorded Cuban vocalist in the history of the industry, moved from Havana to New York in 1893, and released more than 150 recordings of operatic arias over the course of her career with Bettini, Zonophone, Columbia and Victor.<sup>57</sup>

Eugenia Ferrer was the first Mexican-American vocalist to create commercial recordings for gramophone inventor Emil Berliner in New York; she cut eighteen songs between 1898 and 1899, including "Los Lindos Ojos" (Beautiful Eyes) and "El Jaleo de Jerez" (The Dance of Jerez, a municipality of Zacatecas, México), both composed by her father. While Latin/o music has never been constrained by geographic borders, it has,

nevertheless, adopted the social and cultural characteristics of its birthplaces through what we might think of as a sonic mimesis, reflecting the rhythms and idioms disseminated in particular places such as El Barrio—Spanish Harlem—in New York City.<sup>58</sup>

The act of recording Spanish-language lyrics in New York City carried different symbolic and material weights not only for Chalía, Ferrer and their peers, such as Arturo Adamini and the Banda Policia de México, but also for their labels, managed by English speakers who, however consciously, identified as investors in another language. False cognates inscribed onto sheet music by lyricists only confused matters for those who could not write, let alone sing, in Spanish, and strengthened the longstanding arguments of “nativists” who desired an English-only country. It may have helped that Berliner shared Ferrer’s status as an ethnic minority (the German inventor immigrated to the United States in 1870). This would certainly not be the last time a minority producer of culture would expose mainstream audiences to music that mediated tradition and innovation.<sup>59</sup>

1898 was also the year that the Spanish-American War’s Treaty of Paris ceded control over Puerto Rico and Cuba to the United States. New York was well on its way to earning a reputation as “the *entrepôt* for musicians and musical styles,”<sup>60</sup> a trading center for recordings that sounded like Havana; the major labels’ interests in Cuban artists, however, pushed Puerto Rican musicians to migrate in search of work. Another decade would pass before Columbia, Edison and Victor recognized and recorded local talent in San Juan. Cuban musicians were therefore among the chosen few to record in

the final few years of the nineteenth century (independent labels had not yet established themselves in the emerging U.S.-Latin market, partly because of the majors' concentrated and controlled interventions). Each company created catalogues of Cuban recordings from groups such as Sexteto Habanero, which first popularized the son, an Afro-Spanish fusion of rumba rhythm, improvised percussion, el tres—a three-stringed guitar, and the bass.<sup>61</sup>

The Victor Talking Machine Company held a major share of the emerging U.S.-Latin music market two years after the Treaty of Paris. Alongside Victor, more than one major label—Berliner, Bettini, Zonophone, Decca, Brunswick, Vocalion, Columbia and Edison—shaped the sound of early recordings from their cities of origin, proffering, as William Howland Kenney wrote, “a stark example of [their] power to define acceptable ethnic music for those living both in foreign countries and in America.”<sup>62</sup> Anglo producers of Latin/o musical culture, in turn, set up temporary studios in specific locales outside of New York: Columbia established a record laboratory in Mexico City in 1904 to capitalize on that scene's “highest class talent,”<sup>63</sup> and Victor followed suit in 1905; these labels envisioned themselves on expeditions for waltzes, polkas, danzas and “locally in demand records.”<sup>64</sup> Male vocalists such as Ábrego y Picazo and Rosales y Robinsón were among the first musicians to record for Victor in Mexico City; their love songs and parodies captured the dialectical tensions between rural and urban styles and the secular-sacred divisions among civic and religious life. On the other side of the border, soloists, instrumentalists, and groups performed Mexican folk songs for

Brunswick and Vocalion, while Edison, Columbia and Victor expanded into Bogotá, Buenos Aires and other Latin American cities toward the end of the decade.

By the late 1910's, labels in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo—both local and multinational—gradually took notice of the market potential for popular music. Since Brazil had yet to construct a distribution network for its musicians, most companies concentrated on small pressings for local audiences. With the assistance of portable crank-wound devices, middle class cultural workers captured musicians in specific settings before exporting recordings abroad. As Ruth Glasser has observed, major label investment in ethnic recordings “stimulated interest in various places to make foreign records of local talent.”<sup>65</sup> This statement acknowledges the important ways in which multinational labels from Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States supported the export of local recordings linked to particular cities and countries. Brazil would ultimately prove to be an unequal yet formidable contributor to the exchange of local sound streams with the United States.

Just as major corporations strengthened their positions in Brazil and the U.S.-Latin market, local proprietors and retailers demonstrated an awareness—as they had in Havana and New York nearly two decades before—of communal taste cultures. Columbia, Victor, and their peers detailed the demographics and psychographics of particular barrios or neighborhoods of Latin/os, and networked with owners of dance halls and record stores who regularly referred talent to major labels. Industry representatives constructed criteria to segment ethnic music and musicians for retailers in each market, so that zarzuelas in Mexico City, with their dramatic speech-to-song

continua, were not distributed to the same degree in New York. The success of each genre in the U.S.-Latin market varied from one location to another, conditioning and reproducing the ethnic compositions of several scenes. One could conclude that the first quarter of the twentieth century included important developments for Latin/o music scenes, especially since genres such as country and the blues had not yet received comparable attention from major American firms concentrated on Tin Pan Alley compositions.<sup>66</sup>

General music industry representatives advertised for Latin/o artists in local newspapers, and made few attempts to conceal the realities of heavy schedules; they often recorded working class musicians in kitchens, hotel rooms and other makeshift studios. Colonias—small informal networks of friends and family—supported musicians during difficult times of show cancellation, band disintegration, and business corruption: artists not bound by legal contract found shaky confirmation in face-to-face contact. Musicians' records circulated in waves of releases, amusing urban masses and cultivating a social need for entertainment in the U.S.-Latin marketplace. Meanwhile the surface meaning of ethnic recordings were critiqued by British elitists, conservative American tastemakers and influential naysayers of industrialization, urbanization and modernization, many of whom argued that such “old-time” ethnic music pandered to the unsophisticated tastes of blue-collar workers, especially in the case of conjunto, a dance music supported by the accordion and bajo sexto (a baritone-range twelve-string guitar) in Texas and northern Mexico. The conjunto carried a rural sensibility that appealed to

the working classes and shared some stylistic similarities with the polka genre that German and Czech immigrants introduced in Texas.<sup>67</sup>

One can thus form an initial impression of the general music industry's efforts to record Latin/o artists in their communities of origin, whether in New York, Havana or Mexico City, with some appreciation for the "pervasive presence of territory sounds" in a music scene,<sup>68</sup> but what might one make of the industry's segregation of sounds from sights after centuries of audio-visual integration in musical theater? The *Edison Phonograph Monthly*—a publication authored for the Edison National Phonograph Company's dealers and jobbers during the first two decades of the twentieth century—reported on the vocal and instrumental qualities of bands, orchestras, quartets, trios, duettists and soloists instead of how well musicians danced or dressed. Rafael Cabañas, a representative from the Edison Company, indicated that producers and engineers released recordings of Latin/o musicians that "best typified them phonographically."<sup>69</sup> Motivated by an artistic appreciation for and a scientific investigation into the technology as an innovative text in its own right, recordings were selected "for listening rather than for dancing,"<sup>70</sup> which meant that they encouraged, but certainly did not guarantee, reflection on vocalization and instrumentation. Reportage from the time supported this inference: popular press and trade articles frequently focused on musical texts and technologies rather than on the appearances of musicians.

The phonograph and gramophone cultivated listening spheres with limited external stimuli; music was disembodied, and listening practices tended to the invisible: "from the simplest vocally expressed singing—which itself is a vocal transformation of

related speech—to instrumental produced musical sound, transforming beyond the limits of bodily voice, to additional amplifications and complexities of compound and complex audio equipment, on to even greater complexities of recording technologies, there is a continuum of transformations and variations.”<sup>71</sup> From input to output, the properties of musical sound adapted to the surrounding media ecology in a new way, since listeners had neither technological nor historical precedent for hearing music displaced from the bodies of musicians and instrumentalists. During the first quarter of the music industry’s development, then, music was primarily, though not exclusively, acousmatic: audiences listened to records without seeing recorders in front of them. A new and emerging recording industry was now leading the way, while performing and publishing continued as important activities for the general music industry.

Listening to performers on records encouraged audiences to notice the music itself—its complexity, innovation, improvisation, tonality and timbre—and to make judgments in taste based on what the ears found favorable. As we will see in the next section, the Latin/o music industry developed around the careers of musicians like Carmen y Laura Hernández who did not cross-over into Anglo popular culture precisely because they appealed more to community life and less to the requirements of pageantry. Carmen y Laura sounded professional on record, but since they did not mimic popular entertainers such as Carmen Miranda and Desi Arnaz in their modes of comportment, including dress and accent, the general music industry and its larger complex did not offer them filmic roles and, ultimately, television appearances. Cross-promotional investments in the “right looks” had their origins in the advent of sound-on-film

synergies that developed between the music and film industries in the mid-to-late 1920s, a series of complex relationships that challenged the existence of music once made primarily for the ears. It was at this point that the general music industry began to identify more with global imagery than local music.

### **The Middle Years**

The diffusion of sound on film reunited audio with vision after 1926. The idea that the human body could play a role in musical production was certainly not new: from illustrated songs to vaudeville, music was always already attached to musicians before the phonograph and gramophone arrived. Film remediated<sup>72</sup> music from machines and cylinders to their places of origin in the bodies of band members, dancers and singers; indeed, films outstripped records as preferred forms of popular entertainment after 1926. Musicals and movie shorts now depended on the cultural complex of entertainment and its visual synergies. While one may object that music maintained a disembodied status through non-diegetic placement—off-screen and in the background—on records or radio, this objection does not dispute the reality that music was also re-embodied for mass culture through motion pictures.<sup>73</sup>

Hollywood required performers with beautiful bodies to entertain audiences everywhere: “the new emphasis upon visual images drew attention to the appearance of the body... In the 1920s, Hollywood films began to present more glamorous bodies.”<sup>74</sup> The general music industry slowly responded to the visualization of bodies by constructing desirable images of singers and dancers with album covers, poster art and



related promotional media. As a site of sights, the body was dance's intrinsic medium of expression. Cultural workers imagined Latin/o performers that would transcend their careers as singers and orchestra leaders in exchange for billing as dancers, actors, and, more generally, entertainers.

Orchestra leader and classical violinist Xavier Cugat—also famous for his rendition of “The Peanut Vendor”—first challenged what it meant to be a musician by appearing in *Don Juan*, *The Jazz Singer*, and musical shorts with silent film actor Rodolfo Valentino's encouragement. The orchestra leader's interest in pictures piqued several years earlier as an illustrator and cartoonist for *The Los Angeles Times*. Cugat famously said he “would rather play 'Chiquita Banana' and have [his] swimming pool than play Bach and starve;” this does not seem surprising in light of his attempts to commercialize Latin/o music by envisioning new associations between the music and film industries.<sup>75</sup> While orchestra leaders like Cugat became film performers, the bodies of “Latin Lovers” crossed borders.

The Italian Valentino played one of Hollywood's “Latin Lovers” as Latin/os embarked on a silent struggle over stereotypes with limited cultural capital. One *Los Angeles Times* article depicted the actor dipping American actress Nita Naldi underneath his upper torso in a lustful embrace. The discussion of Valentino's and Naldi's corporeal contributions to film left audiences “touched with the Latin brush,” and phonograph stores were consequently “unable to keep up with the demand for Latin music.” The article implied, then, that actors stimulated recording sales; because of the “Latin Lover”

effect, American ladies would require “dark, daring and delightful men” on their album covers, if not in the flesh.<sup>76</sup>

The *Los Angeles Times* article covered fashion, food, film and sound in such a way that it connected their industries *as* entertainment. We may take these connections for granted today in a world of creative rights and cross-media promotions, yet the cultural industries had only just begun to create synergies in the twenties. The Fox Film Corporation, for instance, developed a synchronous sound system in 1926 with Columbia to turn musicians into film stars. Publishing, production, distribution, live performance, and retail combined under corporate care structures as Fox and Columbia assumed control over audiovisual production of “the popular” and its attendant icons, indices, and symbols. Cultural workers at Fox and Columbia, in turn, shaped the ways in which creative firms across the complex competed for market shares.<sup>77</sup>

The cultural industries integrated in the name of entertainment, a concept not far removed from what A.J. Millard termed “empires of sound;” film companies acquired the rights to and collected the royalties from songs that their on-screen productions had turned into hits. Acquisitions and strategic alliances were not uncommon in the late 1920s: Warner Brothers purchased Brunswick Records, and Vitaphone promoted Victor’s recording artists. A complex of primarily visual interests began to integrate cultural products for the express purpose of entertainment: “Recorded sound no longer stood on its own as a distinct product—the wonderful talking machine—but existed as one component in a much more sophisticated world of entertainment...The motion

picture industry became the major consumer of music.”<sup>78</sup> Film corporations like Warner also became major producers of music.

A new economic condition in which a system of industries competed for market shares thus materialized. A decrease in mechanical royalties from record sales pushed performers and publishers to concentrate on performance and synchronization royalties a few years after the advent of synchronized film sound.<sup>79</sup> Cultural workers from Vitaphone and Victor co-constructed the complex of entertainment by promoting imperial rules of business: actors appeared in films produced, marketed and distributed by the same studios, a professional practice of verticality and reproducibility in which they agreed to “act, pose, sing, speak or otherwise perform solely and exclusively for the contracting studio.”<sup>80</sup> The division between public and private life also began to blur for celebrities now expected to look identical in their real and reel lives.

Alongside the music industry’s shift in stress from sound to sight was a corresponding change from local to global sites with the generic geography of Hollywood. One year after the film industry started to concentrate on synchronized sound, an affiliate of the British film company Odeon “precluded [the establishment of] local, independent studios” in Rio de Janeiro.<sup>81</sup> Odeon employed British, German and American directors and engineers to supervise and record popular images of *brasilidade*, or the essence of being Brazilian. The debut of the motion picture *Coisas Nossas* (Our Things) signified that the industry visualized Brazilian music and its musicians in universal terms, “as glamorous and exciting as anything Hollywood had to offer.”<sup>82</sup> Local musicians from Rio de Janeiro did not receive promotion by the Anglo-controlled

complex of entertainment unless they could compete with Hollywood stars; this meant that Brazilian and “other” Latin/o artists needed to learn a transnational language of embodied performance if they desired recognition from the complex and its general music industry. The implications of this statement are many, for local artists now had a harder time competing against global performers who satisfied the demands of the film, radio and record industries.

In one article on Rio’s carnival, *Life* magazine masked the true nature of a “Negro dance called the samba,”<sup>83</sup> a local-regional musical genre that received global attention for its visualization of embodied dance. No singer-turned-entertainer represented the sights of samba more conspicuously than the Portuguese-born and Brazilian-bred Carmen Miranda, who performed with the Bando da Lua—a Brazilian vocal-instrumental group—before “compromising her musical standards to conform with Hollywood’s highly inaccurate but extremely marketable interpretation of Latin American culture.”<sup>84</sup> Miranda communicated a sense of pan-Latinidad through her appropriation of samba on the Brunswick and RCA Victor labels, and in more than a dozen films. The Brazilian government claimed her visual depictions, however hyperbolic and parodic, misrepresented the country’s cultural specificities and social particularities: dictator Getúlio Vargas censored her performance of “The Lady in the Tutti Frutti Hat” in *The Gang’s All Here* for its depictions of women holding massive bananas while spreading their legs to reveal super-sized strawberries.

Although Miranda’s self-parodies often “worked to dissolve the sexual tension and fear that she would threaten moral standards,”<sup>85</sup> American audiences were not

always reading between the lines, but rather eyeing her campy use of colorful fruits. An increase in banana consumption coincided with Miranda's cultural productions beyond Brazil as Americans "symbolically consumed [fruit] through words spoken or sung."<sup>86</sup> The United Fruit Company—a corporation that traded tropical fruit grown on developing plantations for customers in the U.S. and Europe—seized the opportunity to create the famous Chiquita banana cartoon with a tutti-frutti hat that remediated Miranda's flamboyant performance from *The Gang's All Here*. Like peanuts for Azpiázú and Cugat, bananas symbolized the unequal exchange of music and Other cultural goods between the U.S. and its Latin American neighbors.

Hollywood's images of Miranda took tropicalization as their point of departure, a critical-cultural process in which stereotypical shortcuts of Latin/os as entertainers have imprinted themselves in the Anglo social imaginary. For Frances Aparicio and Susana Chávez-Silverman, the term means "to trope, to imbue a particular space, geography, group or nation with a set of traits, images and values"<sup>87</sup> that gain currency and longevity through mediated imprints. It also suggests how dominant Anglo cultural industries have constructed representations of Latin/os as singers and dancers through colonial discourses of entertainer-entertained that predate the twentieth century; the image of Miranda in a tutti-frutti turban created stereotypes for American audiences that had not carefully studied the histories and hegemonies underpinning the normalization of such discourses. Through the use of tropes, Miranda reified fruit for American audiences with her iconicity: the tutti-frutti hat served as a signifier of the complex political-

economic relations and labor practices surrounding the United Fruit Company and, in turn, stimulated the sale of fruit in the United States.

Miranda's popularity was partly a byproduct of President Franklin Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy and its visual implants of pan-American unity in film; *Springtime in the Rockies*, for instance, found Miranda playing a character that supported an American melting pot. The Motion Picture Division of the U.S. Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA) instructed Hollywood to produce positive images of Latin/os, and sent creative artists and filmmakers to Latin America to capture pictures of everyday life. The resulting productions, however, did not always meet the OCIAA's expectations: *Revelry Rules Gay Rio*, for instance, eclipsed the contributions of Afro-Brazilians to their own cultures and offered a "visual emphasis on dancing and beautiful women."<sup>88</sup> Despite the Good Neighbor Policy and its coordinated activities, Hollywood continued to represent Miranda and Other Latin/os as singers, dancers and entertainers in tropical contexts. Additionally, Disney's *Los Tres Caballeros* found Donald Duck in receipt of a magic birthday gift that instantly transported him to Brazil to sing and dance with the natives after *Saludos Amigos* premiered in Rio de Janeiro with El Gaucho Goofy and a woman dressed like Miranda wearing a turban full of fruit; the latter film's poster art read "Walt Disney Goes South American in his Gayest Musical Technicolor Feature."<sup>89</sup> The ethnographic idea of going native with a major film production, however, did not ring true for Brazilians in a context of reductionism and essentialism.

The acousmatic medium of radio, however, offered an important counterpoint to the film industry's international images, despite, or perhaps because it was part of the emerging empires of sound. Local radio programs offered a place for Latin/o artists to gain recognition through live performances and nationality hours during a predominantly national network era. The earliest Latin/o music programs aired in 1928 at San Antonio's KONO AM, an English-language station that leased unpopular time slots—frequently early morning and late night hours—to minority programmers. Radio hosts were largely responsible for selling blocks of time to area businesses. KONO's local programming contrasted with the national-network revenue model of the time, yet ethnic music found a home on the dial because listening habits and radio programming norms had “yet to be solidified.”<sup>90</sup>

By the 1930s, conservative politicians and ideologues insisted that foreign-language programs were un-American. The pathos of Anglo station owners' and policy makers' responses to most ethnic music, including songs with Spanish-language lyrics, ranged from fearful to hateful: the Eugenics Movement—one that sounded eerily similar to the Know-Nothing Movement from the last century—claimed that immigrants, and by extension, their cultural programming, threatened the integrity of the nation's image. This meant the diffusion of ethnic programming was largely restricted by Americanized, English-only broadcasts. Latin/os—including those in the performing arts—carried the social stigma of barbarians from North America's backyard, a throwback to the nineteenth century's Monroe Doctrine that framed Latin America as a breakaway republic of the United States.<sup>91</sup>

Anglo radio advertisers wanted reassurance that the “right” audiences would understand their messages, defined as a conservative mass of native English-speakers with social and cultural capital. Loyalists forged linguistic allegiances with those who demonstrated fluency in the English language, reinforced by radio’s network model and nationalists who felt threatened by the local-regional music of México. The Federal Radio Commission also imposed strict controls on “subversive” Spanish-language programs, even though they “did not possess the same national reach as the American-sponsored broadcasts featured prominently on national radio networks.”<sup>92</sup> Anglo announcers advised Mexican listeners to register with immigration authorities and to stay out of trouble. Along with appeals for assimilation, advertisements invited Mexicans to learn English from night school teachers, and to pay income taxes. Although media opportunities for Latin/o musicians were largely confined to local programs in San Antonio, Los Angeles and New York throughout the 1930s, radio would, nevertheless, become a natural medium of communication for Other musicians who valued musicianship more than showmanship, and, in turn, a natural ally of the Latin/o music industry.

Radio stations, especially those on the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, offered Latin/os opportunities to promote their music after the Second World War. Raúl Cortez put the first full-time Spanish-language radio station on the air in 1946; KCOR-AM in San Antonio also paid personalities regular salaries, a change from the previous door-to-door brokerage system in which radio hosts labored off the air as salespeople. Though it began as a conduit for government propaganda that drummed up support for the war



effort, the station attracted Latin/o listeners over the next decade with local and regional music programs.<sup>93</sup> Thereafter, Latin/o music gradually received a fair hearing on select stations in certain parts of the country.

Independent labels such as Ideal, Peerless, Tico, Alegre, Buena Suerte, Corona, Falcon, Freddie, Imperial, Montuno, Coco, Salsoul and Zarape surfaced shortly after KCOR-AM launched in 1946. Up until that point, major labels like RCA Victor, Columbia and their imprints (e.g. Decca, Okeh, Vocalion and Blue Bird) had cornered the U.S.-Latin music market, at least until the shellac and wax used to manufacture records were rationed for the War. Market flux forced RCA, CBS, Capitol, MGM and Mercury to close their foreign recording divisions, and Anglo interests in Mexican music declined as Mexican companies acquired the rights to export musical commodities to the United States.<sup>94</sup> Jukeboxes had holes to fill in their music offerings, and operators took notice of Tejano and conjunto musicians. As the Arhoolie label's Chris Strachwitz later related:

With its accompanying shortages of materials including shellac from which the records were pressed, the major record companies dropped regional and ethnic music and even had difficulty filling the demand for popular music, which was promoted via national radio. This situation created a great demand, especially from jukebox operators, for regionally popular artists and music. This demand eventually made possible the success of homegrown record companies, such as Ideal. With the end of World War II in 1945, millions of workers all over the country, especially

those of rural background who had found work in the lucrative war industries, were making good wages and were willing and able to support their favorite regional music, musicians and singers.<sup>95</sup>

While the first independent Latin/o label was founded in 1928, the Latin/o music *industry*—defined here as a *collective* of independent Latin/o labels dedicated exclusively to producing and promoting Latin/o musicians—had not emerged until after the Second World War. Ideal led the way in 1946 when founder Armando Marroquín recorded his wife and sister-in-law Carmen y Laura Hernández in their living room with one-track tape recorders. Along with his business partner Paco Betancourt, who provided new microphones and other recording equipment, Marroquín arranged for the production and distribution of Carmen y Laura’s recordings. Ideal’s intent, at least initially, was to supply recordings for jukebox operators, but its scope widened to include record retailers and radio programmers.

Carmen y Laura Hernández’s vocals were backed by Reynaldo Barrera on the bajo sexto and Isaac Figueroa on the accordion, an instrument that attracted listeners to local cantinas and ballrooms. The sisters released “Se Me Fue Mi Amor” (My Love Has Left Me (for the War), which quickly became popular among local and regional audiences. Orchestra leader Beto Villa and accordionist Narciso Martínez joined Carmen y Laura on tours throughout Texas and the southwest. Although Martínez had a successful career before his stint with Ideal, and Carmen y Laura were not the first Chicanas to release a hit single, they nonetheless were among the first to mark the

identity of the developing Latin/o music industry (Lydia Mendoza recorded for the general industry's RCA Victor label and its Okeh imprint more than a decade earlier).<sup>96</sup>

The group emphasized conjunto and orquesta "dance-band" styles that appealed to working and middle class listeners. Middle-class Tejanos consumed orquesta, while the working class generally preferred conjunto because they perceived orquesta as high-class.<sup>97</sup> Ideal captured important instrumental and reportorial changes of the time, such as the union of the vocal and accordion duet, and the inclusion of the canción ranchera and the corrido (sung polka) in conjunto. The label's focus remained wedded to musicianship more than showmanship, and to surrounding local and regional communities. And yet it was still criticized for not signing contracts with its artists or returning royalties to them.<sup>98</sup>

Notwithstanding the work of the Latin/o industry's independent labels and local-regional musicians concerned more with the sounds of melodies than with the sights of bodies, the cultural complex's general industry continued to wield international influence with Hollywood stars. Desi Arnaz launched his career from the Tropicana Club in Cuba and transformed the rumba into the conga by the late 1940s, recording on the Columbia, Decca, MGM and RCA labels. Similar to what Miranda had accomplished years earlier, Arnaz "presented hybridized 'Pan-Latin' music to American audiences... Few Americans knew or cared about the differences between Cuban rumba and Argentinean tango... To Americans, everything south of the border was the same."<sup>99</sup> While the rumba was and still is an Afro-Cuban musical genre intended for local bars, patios, and street corners, the rumba variant traded "the genuine article" for cultural

tourism abroad.<sup>100</sup> Tourist trade among the nightclub-hotel-casino circuits of Havana, Miami and New York translated the authentic article into a popular dance for wealthy Americans who desired the Cuban Club Tropicana sound in the states. Cultural producers responded to the desires of Anglo audiences by promoting big-band performances at the Café Society and the Havana-Madrid in New York.

“Goldwyn girl” Kizmi Stefan was spotted at one rumba dance contest in which “degenerates jiggled, jounced and perspired” to compete for a metal jug worth \$12.50.<sup>101</sup> In a mode characteristic of the cultural complex and its general music industry, due in no small part to a strategic alliance with Hollywood, the rumba offered American audiences glitz and glam to accompany the international dance craze. In contrast to rumba’s emphasis on Afro-Cuban responsorial patterns, the rumba’s mixture of dancing and singing was “doctored for international consumption in Hollywood movies and in spectacles... its body orientation matched the image that stage, movie and theatrical performers thought was appropriate for public rumba performance outside of Cuba.”<sup>102</sup> Film producers assured the superimposition of the musical genre’s sights over its sounds through embodied dance.

Arnaz—in his transition from musician to entertainer—envisioned Latin/o rhythms for American audiences with his rendition of “The Peanut Vendor.” After his high school years in a Cuban rumba band and a stint with Cugat’s orchestra, the entertainer catered to American tastes on conga lines at the La Conga nightclub in New York. One journalist described his version of the conga as a “wild, savage rhythm which lure[d] dancers on to the floor and behind him.”<sup>103</sup> The film *Babalú* popularized the

conga, as dancers took three steps behind Arnaz on the beat and a kick ahead of the fourth beat; the motion picture visualized the genre and the actor for Anglo audiences interested in the international craze.

Soon after the conga descended from its peak of popularity, cultural workers began to focus on the mambo, an Afro-Cuban dance genre that included conga drums, bass, timbales and cowbells that clattered to series of steps. American audiences were hooked on the genre: Tico Records organized a fifty-six city mambo tour, and *Life* magazine issued a special report on “Mambo USA” in 1954. Audiences packed dance halls in droves, like “lizards on a hot slab,” to participate in what was considered the largest fad since the Lindy Hop. Along with a youth culture of teenagers, “light-footed members of all races” popularized another musical style that stemmed from the Cuban son.<sup>104</sup>

More than a musical style, though, the mambo became a visual spectacle for audiences and a cultural symbol for dancers. Tito Puente, Arsenio Rodríguez, Julio Cueva and Pérez Prado transformed the genre into a “transnational musical and dance phenomenon.”<sup>105</sup> Mambo mania spread across movie theaters, nightclubs, dance halls and clubs throughout the United States, Latin America, Europe, and Asia. Puerto Rican musicians brought its dance moves to New York City, while the Cuban bandleader Prado added his own twists between shifts as a session pianist at the Estudios Churubusco in Mexico City; those film studios served as one important node in the mambo network and its points of transnational entertainment.<sup>106</sup>

*The Mambo Kings* film—set in the 1950s but released decades later—told the story of César and Nestor Castillo, two brothers who escaped Cuba to become famous musicians. The film functioned as a trans-mediation across the complex: one of Nestor’s ballads captured the interest of Desi Arnaz, played by his real-life son; Arnaz’s character invited the struggling brothers to appear on an episode of *I Love Lucy*, and effectively remediated television on film in the process. The fictive invitation not only reminded viewers of Arnaz Sr.’s non-fictive career change from bandleader to film and television performer, but also evoked the ways in which “elements of fiction [were] dispersed systematically across multiple delivery channels for the purpose of creating a unified and coordinated entertainment experience.”<sup>107</sup> If audiences could laugh at the Castillo brothers, then perhaps they would extend that experience from one (non)-fictive medium to another.

Arnaz was one of the first stars on the emergent medium of television, another conduit through which Latin/o music showed itself to American audiences in the 1950s. Music variety shows and theme songs altered the experience of listening, similar though certainly not congruent to what film had done for sound in the 1920s. On the one hand, television, like film, encouraged “new and established acts to move from the local stage of the musical hall to the [trans]national, at least in terms of the imaginary.”<sup>108</sup> On the other hand, the unique properties of television would support a streaming aesthetic that continued throughout the remainder of the century; television uniquely channeled a present temporality both episodic and open-ended, germane to what Michele Hilmes has called a “streaming seriality.”<sup>109</sup>

In typical vaudevillian style, *Buscando Estrellas* (Looking for Stars) and *El Show Hispano* could now be viewed on local television stations in San Antonio and New York. *Buscando Estrellas* debuted in 1951 as a talent show that granted amateur musicians opportunities for recognition; *El Show Hispano* aired one year later and juxtaposed musical performances with comic segments. These programs each lasted for a few years, in part because Anglo advertisers had yet to recognize Latin/o consumption habits in the U.S.-Latin market. Telemundo and Univision took off a few years later, though not as the networks they would later become. WKAQ-TV (Telemundo) launched from San Juan in 1954; owner Ángel Ramos branded the station's image with a slogan of Spanish for the world. Univision debuted one year later on KCOR-TV in San Antonio with the assistance of Raúl Cortez, the same person who built the country's first Spanish-language radio station; Cortez later sold the television station to Mexican media mogul Emilio Azcárraga, who expanded it into the Univision network throughout Texas, California, New York and Florida over the course of the next decade.<sup>110</sup>

Apart from token appearances, Latin/o musicians did not receive high degrees of visibility on mainstream U.S. television in the 1950s, partly because rock and roll commanded the nation's attention. As one documentarian declared, "one of the worst things that could happen to the Latin music industry was the popularity of rock and roll,"<sup>111</sup> even with the clave's influence on the baselines and chord progressions of popular rock songs such as Richard Berry's "Louie Louie." While independent labels continued to support local Latin/o music, the majors largely ignored Latin/o genres that did not stylistically resemble rock or earlier transnational successes like the mambo,

which meant that Other local-regional genres such as the Colombian cumbia or the Dominican bachata remained invisible. While the middle years witnessed the development of a Latin/o music industry, and a general music industry consumed with global sights in film and television, the 1950s found the general industry moving closer to the midpoint of the local-sound-to-global-sight spectrum with Ritchie Valens's career.

### **The Later Years**

Ritchie Valens emerged as the first Chicano rock 'n' roller on *American Bandstand*, where he earned popularity points with his performances of "Come On, Let's Go" and "Donna" on two separate occasions; his style fused country and rhythm and blues with Tex-Mex musical traditions on the Del-Fi and Wounded Bird labels. Valens also gained recognition in U.S. popular culture with his rendition of "La Bamba," a traditional wedding song from Veracruz; the song curiously proved accessible to English speakers with its Spanish language lyrics, perhaps overshadowed by transnational dance moves that stemmed from the Spanish verb *bambolear* (to shake or stomp). Championed by Chicana/os as the next great brown hope, Valens nonetheless changed his surname from Valenzuela to Valens to bridge xenophobic divides. An entire youth culture watched the "Chicano Elvis" on television with great interest.<sup>112</sup>

Valens made an impression on the cultural complex of entertainment, though not to the degree that Miranda and Arnaz had during the music industry's middle years. The Chicano rocker balanced the predicaments of showmanship—selling out on a local sound for international stardom—with detailed attention to the authentic roots of a



syncretistic style of musicianship, one that avoided synthetic pop and borrowed heavily from country, the blues, and Tejano. As George Lipsitz wrote, “Ritchie Valens established himself as a commercial performer by playing rhythm-and-blues styled versions of Anglo and Mexican songs for a mixed audience.”<sup>113</sup> Valens served as an intermediary who successfully negotiated the aged tensions between commerce and creativity.

Consider his influence among Chicana/o musicians in Los Angeles who crafted an Eastside scene in Boyle Heights during a time when Latin/os regularly battled ethnic discrimination with rhythmic improvisation: “from pachuco boogie on 78s through Ritchie Valens on television, film and the pop charts... Mexican Americans increased their media visibility and profile. They followed their ambitions and challenged disparaging stereotypes while working in a black-and-white, bottom-line entertainment industry.”<sup>114</sup> Even as a commercial performer, Valens represented a confluence of cultural pride for Chicana/os from a local scene that countered the generic stereotypes of “Latin looks” set into motion by Miranda and Arnaz. This did not mean that Valens did not use visuals to his advantage, but rather that his usage was more selective. Unfortunately for his fans, Valens’s career was cut short by a plane accident in 1959 with Buddy Holly and J.P. “The Big Bopper Richardson,” referenced by Don McLean in his famous “American Pie” hit more than a decade later.

Valens’s rendition of the Mexican folk song “La Bamba” is often credited as the earliest example of a genre known as rock en español, with original compositions in the Spanish language. As Josh Kun has observed, the Latin alternative genre effectively “re-

chart[ed] inter-American geographies by applying a transnational ear to the Americas.”<sup>115</sup> Rock en español associated itself with urban youth culture, post-nationalism, and the restlessness of late capitalism, but also with the global reach of the general music industry. The genre effectively crossed borders omni-directionally, rather than uni-directionally from north to south, and in the process added a new cartographic coordination of mobile music between Latin America and the United States by the late 1950s, reflected in trade policies and import tariffs.

It was after the Cuban Revolution of 1959 that the general music industry, as a rule, discontinued its investments in Latin/o pop and rock because of a generalized (and erroneous) association with Cuba.<sup>116</sup> The Revolution had ruined the reception of Cuban music, further damaged by the economic embargo in 1960. With few exceptions (e.g. Carlos Santana, José Feliciano and Julio Iglesias) the general industry did not focus on major Latin/o rock and pop stars again until the early eighties (see Chapters III and IV), opting instead for more profitable genres, such as mainstream rock and pop. This left an opportunity for Latin/o independent labels to promote their own artists in the U.S.-Latin market.

Additionally, the Brown Power Movement made Latin/os more acutely aware of their contributions to public life after a long history of discrimination and segregation. Young activists like César Chávez crusaded for socioeconomic justice with the United Farm Workers, while radicals and separatists demanded unlimited immigration, cultural nationalism and the reclamation of Aztlán, the Mexican territory sequestered after the U.S. Mexican War in 1848. Radical student movements broke out in California,

including the MEChA (Nacional Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán). This set the stage for an environment in which Latin/os would gradually re-produce their musical traditions with the Latin/o music industry.

A new rhythmic blend of salsa emerged in midtown New York, soon after trumpeter Tony Pabón added the Latin tinge to the Afro-American bugalú, heard in “Pete’s Boogaloo” (another orthographic variation). Bugalú blended “Latin” rhythms with African American rhythm and blues, and demonstrated the close cultural contact between Latin/o and black music in New York in the context of the Civil Rights and Young Lords Movements (see Chapter III).<sup>117</sup> The Latin/o music industry’s first “major independent” label, Fania Records, was founded in this counter-cultural context by the Dominican composer-bandleader Johnny Pacheco and Italian lawyer Jerry Masucci in 1964.<sup>118</sup> Shortly thereafter, Fania controlled the Latin/o industry from New York.<sup>119</sup>

## CHAPTER III

1965-1980

*And ladies and gentlemen, friends, this man sits down one day and writes a guaracha that is the mother of all guarachas, sweet, neat, a treat. And that guaracha, because it's so true, is going up to the heaven of fame, into the first rank of popularity, into the repertory of every combo that's into salsa, the sauce, and a combo that's not into salsa is nowhere.<sup>120</sup>*

In this brief excerpt from Luis Rafael Sánchez' critically acclaimed novel *La Guaracha del Macho Camacho* (Macho Camacho's Beat), an announcer reminds readers of salsa's roots in the guaracha, a musical theater and dance genre with an Afro-Cuban lineage.<sup>121</sup> Sánchez captures a period of time in which Camacho's guaracha not only reaches for "the first rank of popularity" in its climb to the top of the charts, but also surrounds Puerto Rico like a wall of sound; indeed, the novel's characters are always within earshot of "Life is a Phenomenal Thing," the title of Camacho's guaracha. Alongside its style, which resembles a radio program interrupted by advertisements, voice-overs and related commercial media, the novel's content offers more than a glimpse into the lives of a senator, his mistress, wife, and son, characters who find themselves caught between Puerto Rican traditions and innovations from the United States.

Right around the time of the novel's publication in 1976, the Latin/o music industry, led by Fania, temporarily shifted its focus from local sounds to global images. This chapter maps the periods before and after that shift; its key players include Eddie Palmieri and Willie Colón as exponents of a New York salsa sound before the industry's

identity changed with a later version of the Fania All Stars and Celia Cruz. The Fania label, founded by the saxophonist and percussionist Johnny Pacheco and lawyer Jerry Masucci, controlled eighty percent of the U.S.-Latin music market in 1972,<sup>122</sup> and continued to steer the industry's identity throughout the decade, much to the chagrin of other independent labels inside and outside of New York. Consider that 34 of the 63 albums nominated for the first Latin Grammy were Fania entries, and 4 of the final 5 nominees were Fania signatories.<sup>123</sup> Fania was the Latin/o music industry's leading label throughout most of the late sixties and seventies.

The first section of this chapter narrates the Latin/o music industry's investment in local sounds with Eddie Palmieri and Willie Colón. The chapter's second section tells the story of the Latin/o industry's short-term identification with international images, influenced by the general music industry's "token" support of international performers such as José Feliciano and Carlos Santana at the midpoint of the local-sound-to-global-sight spectrum. The third section of the chapter describes how the Latin/o industry lost ground with Celia Cruz and the Fania All Stars's new image, and re-identified with the local sounds of Little Joe. This section also examines the general music industry's plans to relocate to the spectrum's global-visual end in Miami.

### **Before the Shift**

Recall from Chapter II that major labels such as RCA and EMI shared a memory of the Cuban Revolution and its effects on Americans' receptivity to foreign sounds based in the son's Spanish guitar and African percussion. The Revolution had tarnished,

if not “spoiled the glamorous and idyllic image of Cuban music that the major record companies and the tourist industry sought to promote,”<sup>124</sup> in such a way that Cuban music—and Latin/o musicians by hasty generalization—did not register on the radar screens of many Anglo executives in the sixties and early seventies. Additionally, the production of English-language pop, soul and rock in its various styles—folk, psychedelic, country, jazz and art—consumed the majors’ attention; the surplus value generated from these genres pushed corporations to supply for the greatest demand. Moreover, Latin/o producers did not identify with the cultural complex’s transformations of the rumba and mambo from previous decades, genres designed to benefit American dancers looking for just enough of a “Latin” tinge to ensure they would not forget who they were in the momentary surrender of mind to body. The roots of the Afro-Cuban rumba, for instance, were buried beneath the genre’s rhumba variant, cultivated for international tourists that preferred generic to exotic sounds (see Chapter II). Spanish-language compositions did not, for the most part, catch on with American audiences, which was one reason why Desi Arnaz worked as a safe yet imprecise translator of Cuban rhythms with English-language lyrics in the forties and fifties.<sup>125</sup>

By the sixties, lighter fare previously covered by Arnaz in songs such as “Breezin’ Along with the Breeze,” “Holiday in Havana” and “Carnival in Rio” was offset by heavier “social and political violence... music, in one way or another, had to reflect that change... This was music produced not for the luxurious ballroom but for hard life on the street. Music no longer aimed to reach a general audience. Now its only world was the barrio, the same barrio where salsa music would be conceived, nurtured,

and developed.”<sup>126</sup> In this countercultural context, Latin/o producers further segregated from the Anglo complex to create music on their own terms, songs that stood in sharp contrast to those previously composed for easy listening and dancing; instead of general lyrics manufactured by the complex, Latin/o cultural workers gave voice to an urban street life filled with poverty, gangs, drugs, prostitution, and discrimination. Since Latin/o communities in Spanish Harlem and the Lower East Side had grown exponentially in number, musicians found a critical mass for their music and a renewed appreciation for its cultural histories.<sup>127</sup>

The continued development of the Latin/o music industry as a loosely affiliated collective of independent labels cannot be understood without an acknowledgment of the Young Lords Movement. Puerto Ricans that joined the radical Young Lords Party in the sixties and early seventies struggled to eradicate poverty and unfair housing evictions in Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Los Angeles and other cities with rising numbers of Latin/os. Members of the movement committed themselves to reforms in education, health care, ethnic and racial relations by demonstrating on the street and through music, both important media for self-actualization and collective mobilization. Former Young Lords chairman Felipe Luciano pointed to the political nature of music during his weekly *Latin Roots* radio program on WRVR; for Luciano, music was a medium for “the Puerto Rican and Latin communities’ political and cultural resistance”<sup>128</sup> to larger discourses of discrimination and oppression still in circulation after centuries of colonialism.

Music also inspired a material and symbolic exchange of ideas among African Americans and Nuyoricans, defined here as members of the Puerto Rican diaspora living in or outside of New York, though not necessarily born in Puerto Rico.<sup>129</sup> Percussionist and pianist Eddie Palmieri bridged Afro and Latin/o commitments to identity politics in Civil Rights anthems with the Harlem River Drive Group and subversive interpretations of boogaloo, a fusion of rhythm and blues, the guaracha, and the son.<sup>130</sup> Apart from a brief stint with the Group that resulted in one eponymous release, the pianist continued his commitment to social justice and affect on *Justicia* and *Sentido*, respectively, two albums full of salsa compositions like “Verdict on Judge Street” and “Adoración.” Indeed, the motif of social justice—voiced through judges, the judicial process, and judgment in general—recurred throughout salsa’s early years. Palmieri advanced a political process of resistance and regulation that inculcated the genre’s construction of barrio identity as a situated response to the economic dislocation of Nuyoricans and the articulation of hetero-normative gender and sexual identities from New York.<sup>131</sup>

Salsa was a natural outgrowth of boogaloo, a “harmonic sum” rooted in the Cuban son for composer, bandleader and trombonist Willie Colón.<sup>132</sup> Through his sonic activism, Colón confronted topics such as drugs and prostitution with vocalist Héctor Lavoe on the album *El Malo* (The Bad One), which departed from Americanized versions of Latinidad written on the whitewashed walls of ballrooms from previous decades, so much that *The Village Voice* called Colón a “South Bronx badass turned country squire.”<sup>133</sup> Not surprisingly, his protest songs—part of a larger trend known as salsa consciente or conscious salsa—did not appeal to Anglo owned and operated



recording labels and their mainstream audiences. *El Malo* confirmed the musician's commitment to streetwise politics and storytellers that documented the hardships of Nuyoricans and Latin/os in Spanish Harlem throughout the late sixties and early seventies.<sup>134</sup>

Palmieri also demonstrated an acute interest in the locality of music during his days with the Harlem River Drive Group, a name that served as “an ironic reference to the New York City street which allowed mostly suburban drivers to bypass East Harlem entirely on their way to lower Manhattan.”<sup>135</sup> The Latin Sun King introduced new techniques of improvisation to the salsa scene, such as the *moña*'s improvised riffs and earlier climaxes; these techniques were by no means minor, for they contested standard rituals of play invented outside of the City. For example, Palmieri challenged traditional Afro-Caribbean instrumentation, trading trumpets for two trombones, four violins and a flute.<sup>136</sup> He brought a local state of mind to the genre by modeling new arrangements and influencing the ways in which instrumentalists played with and off each other in Manhattan, a state of mind that left little to no room for practices of pageantry, spectacle or visual displays of entertainment.

Similarly, Colón satisfied the need for a Latin/o sound centered on innovation, one that counterpointed the general music industry's visual practices. To be sure, he proved “more audible in terms of aesthetics than as [a] visible center-stage participant,”<sup>137</sup> with little to “no stage presence,”<sup>138</sup> privileging the ears over the eyes in such a way that his albums had to speak for themselves. In an effort to localize salsa, Colón introduced a faster son (3-2) and rumba (2-3) clave pattern to reflect the rhythmic

pace of Manhattan.<sup>139</sup> Moreover, His *El Juicio* (The Judgment/Ruling/Trial) album featured “Timbalero,” an eight-minute song that re-mediated the sound of a parade on 110<sup>th</sup> Street with its urgent calls for a timbales player to not waste any time.

Colón was not one to let time slip by: apart from side projects, he worked with the Fania All Stars as their producer and director at various stages of the group’s evolution, sometimes with guest lists that included Palmieri and Tito Puente. The All Stars’s historic appearance at the Cheetah Club in 1971 with Ismael Miranda, Héctor Lavoe, Bobby Cruz, Johnny Pacheco, Ray Barretto, Bobby Valentín and others spotlighted the salsa scene with two albums of sonorous material, a documentary, and an audience of 4,000 that exceeded the venue’s capacity, a total that did not include a line that stretched for two blocks.<sup>140</sup> Salsa fans followed the All Stars’s sound from 52<sup>nd</sup> Street’s sidewalks to clubs and outdoor festivals, including Yankee Stadium two years after the Cheetah performance.

The Cheetah presented live shows four nights a week with top Latin/o musicians, though it was not the only place to hear the All Stars or salsa for that matter: audiences also frequented the Chateau Caribe, Club Catorce and Buena Mesa. Additionally, most hotels in the City hosted Latin bands nearly every night of the week.<sup>141</sup> Production facilities that scheduled Latin sessions—like Manhattan Center, the Broadway Recording Studios, the Regent Sound Studios, and the RKO—similarly reinforced the localism of the salsa scene: “many salsa album covers routinely [gave] the telephone numbers of the group’s booking agent, reflecting the local orientation of production.”<sup>142</sup> Latin/o producers aimed for accessibility over secrecy in their public relations, in part

because the industry was initially run by executives who called New York their home, many of whom put in plenty of face time interacting with new talent at live music venues and recording sessions.

Salsa's spreading to other cities—Miami, Chicago and Los Angeles—did not dispute the fact that the genre originated in New York.<sup>143</sup> Although one might object that salsa—because it was a modern version of the Cuban son from the early part of the twentieth century—was already an international music, at least from a U.S. perspective, we would do well to distinguish between salsa's existence as a *rhythm* derived from the son and as a *genre* labeled by the industry; this chapter's interest obviously lies in the latter. Communication scholars have shown that musical genres rarely confine themselves to one scene as they fill space and cross borders,<sup>144</sup> yet that does not dispute their birth in particular places. Nor was salsa always as popular outside as it was inside of New York, despite or perhaps because of its billing as Latin jazz in other U.S. cities. For instance, one of Tito Puente's shows at Los Angeles' Scottish Rite Concert Hall found the artist nearly playing for himself. Real or perceived differences in promotion campaigns and consumption habits across the country were influenced not just by identity politics and demographics, but also by aesthetics; for instance, Chicana/os on the west coast usually preferred guitar-based rhythm and blues and rock, while Puerto Ricans in New York City generally avoided the electric guitar, with relatively few exceptions.<sup>145</sup>

Cities outside of New York also thrived as legitimate scenes for Latin/o music in the late sixties and early seventies. By 1972, *Billboard* reporters organized the first-ever

Latin LPs chart according to how well Latin/o musicians performed in Miami, San Juan, San Antonio, Los Angeles, Chicago and New York on a weekly basis. This is important because both the trade and popular presses had heretofore labeled Latin/o music as international, a designation that shaped practices of meaning-making within and between interpretive communities of listeners; to put it plainly, the general music industry's major publication was just beginning to acknowledge Latin/o music scenes and the significance of their social histories, cultural relations, political representations and economic conditions.<sup>146</sup> Geography was now officially recognized as a key influence on the way in which industry personnel classified Latin/o musicians and their music, a recognition that would remain in place until the mid-eighties when the Latin LPs chart changed its organizational structure (see Chapter IV).

Ethnicity also played a considerable role in the structure of *Billboard's* new chart and its scene-based tastes. As one reporter explained, "product going to New York will be primarily Puerto Rican music while product for the Los Angeles area will be Mexican or Colombian."<sup>147</sup> Select cities served as sites for ethnic sounds: San Antonio was considered the "happening city for Chicano music,"<sup>148</sup> and Los Angeles was known as the spot for "mainly Mexican music."<sup>149</sup> Latin/o owned and operated radio stations were also formatted according to ethnic distribution patterns. Programming decisions not only reflected demographic segments, but also advanced the idea that Puerto Ricans would not consume Tejano music because they were not Tejanos. Cultural workers, however, failed to recognize that not all Chicana/os listened to Tejano music, just as not all of those who listened to Tejano music were Chicana/o. Since social scientists and industry

researchers had yet to randomly sample Latin/o music consumers, stylistic overlap within and across markets did not factor into the equation. It thus proved difficult to discern the degree to which the industry reflected and affected real differences in taste cultures.<sup>150</sup> And yet even with its roots in particular locales, the Latin/o music industry was about to make a short-term identity shift in a global-visual direction, influenced in no small degree by the general music industry and its “token” promotions of José Feliciano and Carlos Santana.

### **During the Shift**

The general music industry promoted its version of Latin/o pop and rock with artists that performed in English for international audiences at the midpoint of the spectrum. Born in Puerto Rico and bred in New York, José Feliciano moved beyond the barrio to reach a broader public that did not necessarily support sonic activism. In stark contrast to Palmieri and Colón, Feliciano projected a consumable image for mainstream Anglo audiences with time-tested strategies devised by the cultural complex, just as Arnaz had done decades before.<sup>151</sup> Feliciano’s English-language lyrics and pop sensibilities appealed to audiences around the world. His success was secured with a hit cover of the Doors’ “Light My Fire,” followed by a rendition of the U.S. National Anthem at the World Series, one that reached the fiftieth spot on the *Billboard* singles chart. The cultural complex and its general music industry labels—RCA and BMG in this case—visualized the pop star as an international performer for the masses; as one critic wrote, “he was unable to pass through airports or leave his hotel room without a

riot.”<sup>152</sup> Stage, film and television appearances on “Kung Fu” and “Chico and the Man” solidified Feliciano’s status as a teen idol.

Although Carlos Santana hailed from a different music scene in San Francisco, like Feliciano, he became a major international artist without abandoning his roots. Just as Feliciano used television to support his sound, Santana’s use of images supplemented rather than supplanted his music: “Carlos long described his music in visual terms, calling his guitar tone ‘sculpted.’ A note is like a rose. It can be closed, or halfway open, or all the way in bloom. You have to know when to hit that note the right way.”<sup>153</sup> The international rock icon did not build his career around embodied dance and essentialist iconography; indeed, his guitar techniques served their own purposes as audiovisual art for Columbia Records. Feliciano’s and Santana’s careers represented two median points on the local sound-to-global-sight spectrum, temporarily bypassed by the Latin/o music industry in its relocation to the global-visual end.

In part as a response to RCA’s, BMG’s and Columbia’s models for promoting Latin/o musicians, Fania “pushed the salsa sound out of New York”<sup>154</sup> by the second half of the decade. The label began to promote its All-Stars in Latin America, Europe, Africa and Asia; one group saved the label from the financial risk of supporting multiple bands, and granted the All-Stars greater visibility from frequent tours.<sup>155</sup> The band did not, despite its international tours, gain wide recognition among Europeans or Anglos. In order to appeal to a broader audience, Fania reconceived its image and the composition of its music.

Salsa's lyrical composition changed to meet the requirements of foreign markets with different demographics.<sup>156</sup> Specifically, the salsa dura o consciente (hard or conscious salsa) from the industry's early years was displaced to make space for a salsa sensual o erótica (sensual or erotic salsa), one that traded the previous style's streetwise lyrics and social consciousness for an apolitical and universal image of levity. An easier listening version of salsa skirted "social commentary and references to community concerns in favor of expressions of sentimental love and nostalgia more typical of romantic ballads... oriented toward fantasy rather than any sort of social commentary or sense of community... for an amorphous, homogenous, international mass audience rather than a unified local community."<sup>157</sup> The Latin/o music industry's turn toward sensual and erotic salsa, then, mimicked the general music industry's investment in pop balladry and its standardized contents. Salseros—salsa dancers—that dressed up for fancy clubs did not want to hear about violence, murders, gangs, and other social ills from the barrio; in a sense, salseros in Buenos Aires and London, though vastly different in their backgrounds, had at least one thing in common: they were looking for more entertainment and less information, more fantasy and less reality.

Fantasy, of course, was a necessary, albeit insufficient, condition of pageantry's visual style and embodied forms of communication. *Latin N.Y.* magazine publisher Izzy Sanabria asked Latin manufacturers to pay more attention to design, insisting that Latin/o musicians' album covers imitated standards prevalent in the U.S. more than a decade ago: "it's time for the Latin industry to utilize its talent to the fullest and to begin to create trends instead of just copying them."<sup>158</sup> The Latin/o music industry's new

mission statement called for the construction of original images, and album covers provided the necessary surfaces on which to print them. For instance, Joe Cuba's 1976 release on the Fania label—*Cocinando la Salsa* (Cooking Sauce)—depicted the artist holding a plate of yellow rice with a tomato next to a separate plate of meat and a series of pots placed on a stove, one of which presumably contained tomato sauce.<sup>159</sup>

Cuba's album cover illustrated one of the ways in which Fania mapped food onto music, and, in the process, reified an intangible sound into a tangible image. Not surprisingly, the image of salsa as sauce posed problems for artists who thought of themselves as anything but chefs or of their music as more than just spice; as Tito Puente remarked, "There's no salsa music. They just put that word to the music that we were doing all the time... Salsa is a condiment of food. You eat salsa. You don't listen to it, you don't dance to it... They gave that name to the music to give it heat, to make it exciting."<sup>160</sup> Puente's remarks did not deter Fania from its global vision for salsa, though he did speak to the realities of denotation and connotation alongside a tension between, on the one hand, reverence for history and, on the other, a campaign for consumption. Fania's salsa campaign also recalled the general music industry's visualizations of peanuts and bananas as exotic foodstuffs from the tropics produced by "Latinos" (see Chapter II).

The Latin/o music industry's temporary identity shift from local sounds to global images had direct implications for the salsa aesthetic that Palmieri and Colón pioneered in Spanish Harlem. The main critique here, of course, was of a major independent label, one that dominated the Latin/o music industry, selling out to maximize its profits. Older



salsa fans had their own ideas about the shift: “although tourists and nightclub patrons think bands in Panama hats and white shoes are charming, they are exasperating to listeners with greater expectations”<sup>161</sup> for the improvisation and innovation that characterized salsa’s early years. The industry’s flagship genre had misplaced its streetwise sensibility and forgotten its social consciousness in an embrace of popular balladry and disco hybrids. Spanish Harlem’s aural-oral culture, while preserved for future generations on recordings, no longer fit the new vision of the Latin/o music industry. One *New York Times* reporter argued that salsa artists usually cannot “win a share of the mainstream audience without losing the loyalty of [their] fans,” concluding that the “history of such attempts is usually a history of failure, especially in the salsa field.” Salsa artists who cross-over either “dilute their music” with English-language vocals or mainstream aesthetics.<sup>162</sup>

Fania made a short-term investment in international audiences, one that seemed logical in the context of the larger cultural complex and emerging formations of globalization that reworked the ways in which businesses commoditized time and space. The investment resulted in a generic type of salsa, one for which a sense of place proved less important than commercialization and standardization across space; as James Curtis and Richard Rose have observed, “a location may blossom as the center of a particular sound that is relatively short-lived in popularity.”<sup>163</sup> As we will see in the next section, the Latin/o industry’s temporary identity crystallized in a different lineup of the Fania All Stars with the vocalist Celia Cruz between the mid and late seventies. Artists such as Little Joe, however, reminded the industry of its local and regional roots, which

influenced its shift back to the local-sonic end of the spectrum in the final years of the decade when Fania closed its doors. The general music industry, meanwhile, identified with Santana and Feliciano at the midpoint of the spectrum, though it was preparing for a move to the global-visual end with new “Latin” divisions in Miami.

### **After the Shift**

Images were, at least for the time being, imprinted on the international calling card of the Latin/o music industry: the celebrity culture of bright colors and beautiful bodies had proven too pervasive and persuasive to ignore. By the second half of the seventies, salsa musicians were re-presented as “star[s] [that] occupied the entire stage, relegating to the background the richness of the musical execution.”<sup>164</sup> Fania executives had become star-struck by Feliciano’s and Santana’s crossover successes across multiple media, and found in Celia Cruz a performer who would command global attention not only for her voice, but also for her look, captured in facial expressions, corporeal gestures, and clothing selections. As one reporter later wrote, her “big voice, elaborate costuming and exaggerated gestures all lead to the image that she is larger than life.”<sup>165</sup> If not larger than life, she certainly attracted audiences larger than those that independent labels had heretofore reached with their budgets.

Cruz’s outfits were more costly than the production of her albums, which spoke to the primacy placed on her appearance. From her years as a young singer in Havana through her relocation to New Jersey and New York City, the performer demonstrated a fetish for clothing and accessories, spending the bulk of her paychecks on dresses, shoes,

wigs, feathers, sequins, colored fabrics, and lace.<sup>166</sup> The Smithsonian Institute acquired Cruz's signature orange, red and white polka dot dress and accompanying shoes for its permanent collection, a testament to the importance of her style for curators and consumers of culture.

The performer regularly stepped in and out of more than one costume to disguise what she did not wish to show, or, to direct attention away from what would always show: her face, reportedly Cruz's least favorite attribute. She was initially unable to hire an agent because of her facial features: "Yes, I did have a pretty voice, but I didn't have the look many agents wanted to represent." Cruz attempted to conceal her self-described "ugliness"<sup>167</sup> through hard work, thereby demonstrating that any talented performer, regardless of her appearance, could succeed in the industry. Her remarks imply a high degree of reflexivity for the visual requirements of the complex, for they did not reference pitch, tone, texture and other markers of voice, but rather the heavy weight placed on bodies by cultural workers looking to build a brand that would cross territories and time zones in the years ahead. In addition to her dresses and costumes, Cruz's shoes signified a desire to be seen in specific ways: they "insisted on her distinctiveness as a person and a performer, a one-of-a-kind brand." On stage, Cruz used her high heels to "literally lift herself up from her previous status as a black woman born in poverty on a small Caribbean island into a transnational singing star."<sup>168</sup> Bypassing a social structure stratified by class, race, ethnicity and gender, she contested hegemonic inscriptions mapped onto her body in the present by real discourses from the past, particularly those that automatically labeled her inferior because of skin color.

Cruz also reflected the Latin/o music industry's departure from its earlier efforts to identify with barrio issues by sidestepping politics at all costs, particularly important in light of the U.S.' relationship with Cuba: "she accepted and advanced the marketing strategies necessary for commercial success, avoiding political and social commentary so as not to isolate mainstream crossover audiences... in an era when bodily image, not vocal ability, often sold more records."<sup>169</sup> Cruz traded her previous musical identity as a guarachera from Cuba for international notoriety as the Queen of Salsa, embodying the ideology of celebrity in her performances with a different lineup of the Fania All-Stars, one that featured Ray Barretto on the congas, Roberto Roena on the bongo, Nicky Marrero on the timbales, and Bobby Valentín on bass; Palmieri and Colón were nowhere in sight.

The Queen of Salsa's relationship with the All Stars—forged at the midpoint of the seventies after she left the band Sonora Matancera—was crucial to the Latin/o music industry's interim identity as a global producer of imagery. Cruz became an icon for the All-Stars as the group toured around the world, from Zaire (now the Republic of the Congo) to Japan and Venezuela. The group continued in the direction of sensual and erotic salsa—what was referred to in some circles as supermarket music—to generate interest from mainstream European and American audiences, inviting special guests such as Steve Winwood to play on the *Delicate and Jumpy* album in 1976; this was also the year that Fania ceded control over its distribution to Columbia, a strategic move that indicated its recognition of the general music industry's international reach. *Delicate and Jumpy* and the All Stars's subsequent albums—*Rhythm Machine*, *Spanish Fever*, and

*Cross Over*—failed to catch on, and “further eroded the true essence of the Caribbean music that now, badly disguised, they wanted to sell to the gringos.”<sup>170</sup> *Spanish Fever* received stiff criticism for its generation of the “least favorable image of Latinos and salsa music,”<sup>171</sup> including the album cover’s model sporting a hairstyle that hearkened back to Brazilian samba singer Carmen Miranda and her signification of tropicalization (see Chapter II).

It was at this point that salsa groups formally crossed what Keith Negus called a “salsa matrix.” Before the mid-to-late seventies, salsa was not readily shared “across extra-industrial interpersonal relations inside a cultural matrix.”<sup>172</sup> The salsa matrix would now begin to function as a series of grids and webs that connected major label offices and production studios in New York with Florida, Puerto Rico, Cuba and Colombia; the matrix’s grids linked activities such as composition, production, promotion and distribution. Records and other artifacts circulated through a series of “intermediaries”<sup>173</sup> that transformed their materiality, as much as audiovisual artifacts influenced cultural workers in dynamic ways.

The matrix incorporated London and other world cities beyond the Americas. Patria Román Velázquez’ “routes and routines” of salsa suggested a compelling method for following and monitoring the key players involved in the process of music-making, from promoters and record shops to magazines and radio programs inside and outside of London. Though Velázquez focused on the salsa scene of London in particular, she traced the complex ways in which the genre traveled with people, a direct result of mobility and media exposure across music networks: “as salsa is placed geographically

in different locales around the world, different localized identities are created, represented and experienced.”<sup>174</sup> Diasporic communities of listeners in London thereby re-created and re-purposed the cultural practices they experienced in the Latin American cities and countries from which they migrated.

Salsa existed as part of an international market economy, one that transformed the genre’s inner structures from harder to softer styles; sensual or erotic salsa simulated the industry’s direct production of music across spaces where improvisation was limited to what would generate the most profits, most often from multinational communications rather than artistic creations inspired by political movements. Mayra Santos Febres has argued convincingly that the reality of musical globalization has forced a separation between artists and audiences and turned musicians and dancers themselves into consumers,<sup>175</sup> though one would do well to acknowledge that producers are never not consumers, while the converse of that statement is not always true.

The salsa genre additionally permeated life in select cities like Cali, Colombia, to such a degree that local media began to call the city the “world salsa capital.” This was largely accomplished by recorded means, so that the identity of those living and listening to salsa music in Cali depended on records. As the late Lise Waxer observed, Caleños—natives of Cali—actively worked to appropriate the international style of salsa into their local expressions through everyday acts of listening and dancing to records: “people have learned, embodied and transmitted a certain cultural knowledge about what it means to be Caleño.”<sup>176</sup> Instead of listening to live music, Caleños opted to consume salsa through jukeboxes and record players, aural media that offered important materials

for musical activity and the formations of identity in private and public spaces, from salsotecas to tabernas.

The Latin/o music industry's global vision for salsa was sharpened by television. The "Latin Music Festival" program was hosted by a variety of artists with different ethnicities—José Feliciano, Trini Lopez, El Chicano, Johnny Rodriguez and Liz Torres—to reach multiple groups of Latin/os. The show's distribution of novel and traditional acts not only contributed to a growth in retail and live concerts,<sup>177</sup> but also fostered cooperation across advertising, radio, film, and related media industries interested in reaching different groups of Latin/os. Cross-media synergies required cooperative strategies in which the Latin/o music industry partnered with the complex to promote its artists. Promotion campaigns preceded the launch of new television shows with in-store poster displays, graphic advertisements in English and Spanish language newspapers and magazines, and radio spots.<sup>178</sup>

Some Latin/a performers reduced the nuances of their own musical cultures into little more than glitz and glam on screen, exemplified in the dancer and singer Iris Chacón's "sequin panty thong and big brown ass," an entertainer who made "salsa just a side note."<sup>179</sup> She was further characterized by writer Daisy Hernández as "a curve of glitter on the screen... I stared at the screen, trying to figure out how real Iris Chacón was. The fact that she was on television, a fiction available to us any Saturday evening, only made her seem more real and made me feel that I was in control of my desires, that I could choose who I would love and who I would marry."<sup>180</sup> Hernández pointed to the conflict between realism and perception in music and images, pronounced for producers

and consumers of Latin/o culture in highly gendered ways that upheld traditional articulations of machismo, or structural acts of authority that discouraged women from dressing or behaving like Chacón in public spaces.<sup>181</sup>

It is no wonder that trade press reporter Agustin Gurza called for the Latin/o music industry to reevaluate itself in his final column for *Billboard*: “it must value itself in double measure, be unflinchingly ethical because the stereotype already stamps Latinos as shady and untrustworthy. It needs to be meticulously excellent because it is judged in advance as sloppy and inferior. It needs to be diligent and conscientious because Latinos are already unjustly considered lazy and careless.”<sup>182</sup> The reporter added that the Latin/o industry lacked the confidence of the general industry in its approaches to production and distribution, and that its cultural workers had yet to believe they deserved the public’s respect. Gurza did not, however, concede that the industry had valued its musicians and their talents at the beginning of the decade.<sup>183</sup>

By the final year of the decade, however, Fania could no longer compete with disco, rock and the continued profitability of pop around the world, let alone in the U.S.-Latin market. Jerry Masucci, the now exhausted co-founder of Fania, halted all production in 1979 and sold the company a year later in response to competition from more popular genres. Many of the All-Stars left for more lucrative prospects with other labels. Radio stations had also decreased salsa’s airplay; one manager and promoter—Ralph Mercado—explained that the number of concerts at Madison Square Garden was cut in half because Latin radio stations no longer supported salsa, exemplified in the cancellation of Roger Dawson’s “Sunday Salsa” program on WRVR.<sup>184</sup> It appeared that



Fania's global-visual appeals could no longer sustain the Latin/o industry. This was due in no small part to a misidentification on the part of the label's executives with larger strategies designed for the general industry and its international pop and rock stars, for the smaller Latin/o industry's identity had always been rooted in local-regional musicians and their music.

After the fall of Fania, the sounds of Little Joe (Hernández) y La Familia reminded the rest of the Latin/o music industry of its roots. Although Little Joe was not as popular as the former All Stars on *Billboard's* "Hot Latin LP's" chart, his band, alongside Other groups, prompted the Latin/o industry to reaffirm its existence as a loose aggregation of independent labels with a distribution of power no longer concentrated in the hands of a "major independent."<sup>185</sup> Little Joe recorded and toured in Texas and California with label support from Corona, Zarape, Leona, Buena Suerte and Freddie Records. An exemplar of what would later be called regional Mexican music, the band "resisted incorporation by the market."<sup>186</sup>

Little Joe y La Familia emphasized musical innovation more than spectacle. The group added violins to its repertoire, and a Mellotron, an electronic keyboard that played back recorded sounds from magnetic tape. The band also reworked the basic beat of the *ranchero*—a countrified genre that brought the polka together with guitars, trumpets and accordions—to create a new "orchestral sound."<sup>187</sup> That sound was heard in Little Joe's rendition of the song "Las Nubes" (The Clouds), which became an anthem for Chicana/os during the Farm Workers' Movement throughout communities in the southwest; the song also exemplified what Manuel Peña termed the "bi-musical" tastes

of Mexicans and Americans in the border region, listeners that responded to ranchero/Mexicano working-class conjunto (an accordion-based ensemble of polkas, waltzes and rancheras) on the one hand and sophisticated/Mexican-American upper-class orquesta (groups that played variations on traditional dances with brass, woodwinds, violins and guitars) on the other.<sup>188</sup>

The band's stress on musical innovation resounded in Texas and California; trumpet player Tony "Ham" Guerrero described Little Joe as a "country mouse" in his geographic orientation. The group received the Texas Governor's Award for artistic excellence and recognition from the Tejano Music Awards, a specialized program dedicated to the production of folk and popular music by Mexican-Americans or Chicana/os in Central and Southern Texas. Little Joe's support of Chicana/o political issues also earned him praise as a proponent of a "Brown Sound." His involvement with grassroots politics branded him as a man of the people, rather than as a "wealthy star living in a castle."<sup>189</sup>

The struggle for political and social reform associated with the Chicana/o and Brown Power Movements "helped Little Joe reaffirm his commitment to Chicana/o music,"<sup>190</sup> especially after meeting César Chávez, the labor leader and civil rights activist who co-founded the National Farm Workers Association before it became the United Farm Workers.<sup>191</sup> Little Joe's *La Voz de Aztlán* album painted a picture of the mythical home of the Nahua, a major cultural group of Mesoamerica, and served as a larger indicator of Chicana/os' desire to reclaim land that belonged to México before the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848. The local and regional sounds of Little Joe y La

Familia, then, contrasted with global visuals, for the band resolved to not develop a commercial look after earlier attempts to cross-over into American top 40 as Little Joe and the Latinaires; the name change to La Familia symbolized the band's ideological support of indigenismo, a broader political and social movement for the Indigenous people of North America and the reclamation of their rights in a post-colonial world, one that clearly encompassed Brown Power and the United Farm Workers.

The Latin/o music industry had returned to the local-sonic end of the spectrum, just as the general music industry was about to make a move in the opposite direction from the midpoint. In the last few years of the seventies, the general industry planned to create new Latin divisions in Miami, which suggested that Anglo owned and operated corporations had started to take groups of Latin/o musicians more seriously. The goal was to “manage [Latin/o music] in separate Latin departments of the major companies,”<sup>192</sup> a marked contrast to the general industry's position since the Cuban Revolution in 1959. Latin/os would also be hired to work for the new divisions as producers, engineers, promoters and distributors in subsequent years, divisions primarily interested in an emerging Latin/o pop and salsa hybrid. Latin/o pop balladry manifested from a sandwich-of-sorts: “the top half of the sandwich [was] derived from rock and electronic music of North America and from American jazz. The bottom half of the sandwich consist[ed] of popular and traditional African, Afro-Caribbean and Afro-Latin rhythms.”<sup>193</sup> Latin/o pop was “more like American dance or rock at first listen, with new instruments and rhythms that give it that distinct Latin tinge—the same instruments that kept other performers struggling to make it just fifteen years ago.”<sup>194</sup> This was one

reason why a new salsa-pop hybrid appeared to be an attractive option to the general industry: the Miami Sound mirrored the hybridity of its Latin/o and Anglo audiences.

Miami was about to become the site for the general industry's new Latin/o divisions for several reasons. First, Miami's physical infrastructure, commercial tax breaks and social networks stimulated business growth: 55 multinational corporations established their Latin American headquarters in the city by 1977, and investments grew in response to the area's designation as the largest U.S. Free Trade Zone.<sup>195</sup> Second, Miami's status as a "world city" afforded easy access to Latin America and Europe with its international airport and transportation facilities, with more advanced communication services than any other site in Latin America. Third, the city's artistic capital ensured premium production space for composers, arrangers, producers, musicians and other creative talent. Fourth, the city's number of residents continued to climb after several Latin/o immigration waves, including one of primarily Cuban exiles before and after the Revolution in 1959. Fifth, Miami served as a military location for the U.S.' historic domination over the Caribbean, and as a site for American cultural tourism.

As George Lipsitz has written, "popular music made in Miami offer[ed] an important example of the promise and peril of globalization,"<sup>196</sup> which made sense in the context of the general music industry's impending shift to global visuals that would translate quickly and easily across borders while de-emphasizing the sonic particularities of local scenes. Globalization has, in some cases, threatened to displace if not erase local sounds, though both sides of the cultural imperialism debate—including its potential to create new combinations of sounds previously unimaginable by bringing artists from all

corners of the world into contact with each other—have already been extensively covered elsewhere and thus will not receive any kind of formal treatment here.<sup>197</sup>

The interest in Miami as a future destination for the Latin divisions of major labels was partly spearheaded by the creative work of Emilio Estefan, a keyboardist and producer who would become a central figure for the industry in the next few years. Estefan formed the Miami Latin Boys before the band changed its name to the Miami Sound Machine in 1977; that was the year he recruited future wife Gloria Fajado to serve as the group's lead vocalist. The Miami Sound Machine mixed erotic or sensual salsa with popular balladry. As a signatory of CBS Discos in Miami, Estefan produced seven Spanish-language albums over the next seven years before persuading CBS' International Division to release the band's first English language album on Epic Records. With the initial investment of CBS, which Sony ultimately acquired, Estefan disseminated the Miami Sound around the world through Estefan Enterprises and Crescent Moon Records (see Chapter IV). CBS' simultaneous investment in Julio Iglesias also targeted English-speaking markets.<sup>198</sup>

In sum, the Latin/o music industry was controlled by a “major independent” between the mid-sixties and mid-seventies at the local-sonic end of the spectrum with musicians like Eddie Palmieri and Willie Colón. By the mid-seventies, Fania temporarily pushed the Latin/o industry to the spectrum's global-visual end with the All Stars and Celia Cruz, though the industry returned to its local-regional and sonic roots after the label's sale in 1979. The general music industry, meanwhile, continued at the midpoint of the spectrum with Carlos Santana and José Feliciano, and prepared itself for a move

toward the spectrum's global-visual end by the early eighties. The general industry's re-emerging identification with international imagery was about to cross geographic and ethnic lines, as the next chapter demonstrates in the cases of the Miami Sound Machine and Menudo.

## CHAPTER IV

1981-1989

*Clive James (BBC): “When I got here I expected bullets flying in every direction and large bags of cocaine being offered to me and instead I find you- intelligent, committed, and dedicated; I was wrong about Miami, wasn’t I?”*

*Gloria Estefan: “Well unfortunately, you know how the media is. The exciting things are the things that are wrong with the city... And then Miami Vice didn’t do much for that. It gave it a glamorous edge, but at the same time it gave it a very violent edge. People have to realize it’s made that way for TV because they have to make it exciting, but it’s not that way at all...”<sup>199</sup>*

Miami was more than a metonym for “the drug, murder and cash capital of the United States”<sup>200</sup> or the “cultural capital of Latin America”<sup>201</sup> in the eighties. The city’s name also denoted a music group and a television program, referenced in the abbreviated transcription of a BBC interview with the Miami Sound Machine’s Gloria Estefan. Alongside its fictional imagery, *Miami Vice* instantiated the ways in which cultural workers—composer Jan Hammer, costume designer Jodie Lynn Tillen, sound editor John Larsen and visual effects producer Jim Michaels—utilized music for the production of television from one world city. *Miami Vice* contributed to a music television culture with its high integration of popular songs; according to one of its directors, the show was “written for an MTV audience.”<sup>202</sup>

Three years after the debut of MTV, *Miami Vice* began its first season and CBS released the Miami Sound Machine’s first English-language album on Epic Records. 1984 was also the year that RCA promoted Menudo’s first album of English-language

lyrics with a string of music videos. One year later, *Billboard* exchanged the geographic organization of its Hot Latin LPs chart for a genre-based structure. The first part of this chapter claims *Billboard* displaced Latin/o music from the six cities that had framed the chart since 1972—New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Antonio, San Juan and Miami—and effectively re-placed its musicians into three super-genres: pop, tropical, and regional Mexican.<sup>203</sup> Generally speaking, artists designated as regional Mexican did not receive a large amount of promotional support from the majors because they often lacked “the right look;” charting as a pop performer, however, meant a chance at international success akin to what Desi Arnaz achieved decades earlier (see Chapter II). Musicians rooted in the regional Mexican genre served as counterpoints to the Latin/o pop genre’s uprooted performers. Additionally, the gradual opening of the major labels’ Latin divisions in Miami (and of that city’s economy to global entrepreneurs and investors) undergirded the general music industry’s identity shift from the midpoint to the global-visual end of the spectrum. The chapter’s first part also situates Latin/o music crossovers in the context of the world music genre, one that encouraged listeners to sightsee without leaving home.

While the first part of this chapter focuses on the general music industry’s investment in the Miami Sound Machine and Menudo, the second part explores the industry’s promotion of Chicano rock band Los Lobos, which implied a temporary return from the global-visual end to the midpoint of the spectrum. The chapter’s second part also discusses the Latin/o music industry’s support of norteño singer-accordionist Ramón Ayala as evidence of that industry’s local-sonic spectrum identification. Los



Lobos achieved wider recognition than Ayala because the band appropriated styles of rock, country and the blues with mostly English language lyrics on two major labels; additionally, their rendition of Ritchie Valens's "La Bamba" attracted mainstream attention during the song's climb to the top spot on *Billboard's Hot 100* chart in 1987. Los Lobos and Ayala represented two different regional Mexican genre sounds for two different industries.

### **International Sightseeing**

Before we look at the general music industry's "Latin" activities, it is first necessary to briefly describe the changing state of Miami's economy in the eighties. The city's relatively recent history of immigration meant that new workers controlled the city's means of production before major corporations arrived. By the first few years of the decade, two hundred companies relocated to a city with an international airport, a futuristic Metrorail, a new harbor and a port with the largest Latin American trade traffic in the United States. Miami's stable economy motivated newly relocated firms to develop strategies for transporting goods and services. Multinational corporations turned the bulk of their attention to services, partly because of high demands for music and other forms of mediated entertainment. By renewing their interests in Latin/o music after two decades of relative inactivity (see Chapter III), major companies such as CBS and RCA unequivocally linked the production of Latin/o musical culture from Miami to "the trappings of globalization—world markets, mass media, rapid travel and modern

communications.’’<sup>204</sup> Radio programmers followed the labels’ leads and played more international hits than they had in previous decades to create a modern Miami sound.<sup>205</sup>

The city served as a generic site for the transnational production of Latinidad, one with few scene-specific characteristics. A *New York Times* critic described the Miami Sound Machine’s “Conga” hit as a “break-out that came from nowhere”<sup>206</sup> not only because it took audiences by surprise, but also because the song’s lyrics did not include any physical landmarks or regional differences in dialect. Critics also predicted the homogenization of other local music scenes by the Miami Sound Machine. The very idea of crossing borders with a band may have influenced Emilio Estefan’s decision to create Estefan Enterprises as a global brand of publishing, songwriting, recording, producing, talent management, real estate and restaurants one year after “Conga” became a crossover hit.<sup>207</sup>

Despite or perhaps because the Estefans were not born in Miami, the Sound Machine successfully captured the city’s cosmopolitanism with its hybrid of salsa and pop. The group’s members—comprised of husband and wife Emilio and Gloria Estefan, Wesley Wright, Merci Navarro Murciano and Juan Marcos Avila—combined the claves, congas, timbales, and bongos with a pop aesthetic, one that required universal images to translate the specificities of Afro-Cuban percussion into generalities for mass consumption in and outside of the United States.<sup>208</sup> Moreover, the Estefans and their band did not resist the cultural complex’s larger mission of producing still and moving pictures that reflected and affected international taste cultures (recall that the complex

refers to related media industries, such as theater, photography, film, radio, and television).<sup>209</sup> Music television, of course, was a central component of that mission.

The band's "Conga" music video demonstrated that the sight of the dance did not exist solely to accentuate the sound of the drums: "don't you worry if you can't dance, let the music move your feet" may have meant that the song's rhythm instead served the aims of choreography as a visual medium of communication. While "Conga's" dancers certainly reinforced the rhythm by pantomiming changes in key, one could just as easily have identified breaks in the melody—"there's no way you're going to stop...aaaaahhhhhh"—<sup>210</sup> that not only punctuated the groove but additionally accentuated the spectacle of one drummer falling backwards onto the stage and throwing his drumsticks into the air. The point here is that even if music television's visual codes existed to support aural cues, as Andrew Goodwin has argued,<sup>211</sup> this did not necessarily mean that music was not used (or abused) by television. In the "Conga" music video, dancing bodies commanded the attention of our eyes, which left the sounds that our ears received to be processed as secondary sensory data.

We would do well to consider Jody Berland's analysis of music television and its capacity to "reshape the music industry irrevocably" with "colonizing institutions and narratives of visual media," especially if music and radio are framed "as underdeveloped relations of the image."<sup>212</sup> The visual economy of music television problematically created an uneven investment in resources, to the extent that dance moves, makeup, and fashion accessories mattered more to the majors than melodic or harmonic innovation. Television became a carrier for music, in part because of MTV's ability to translate

songs into images for world markets with the support of major labels. The network thereby played a role in the cultural complex's primary identification with global imagery. MTV Latino—ultimately renamed MTV Latin America—followed suit in the early nineties (see Chapter V).<sup>213</sup>

The Miami Sound Machine's success, then, depended on projecting an ideal image for a mass audience: “things which used to count, such as being a good composer, player or singer, [were] getting lost in the desperate rush to visualize everything. It [was] possible to be all of the above and still get nowhere simply by not looking good in a video.”<sup>214</sup> Surely the band was aware of the general music industry's imbalance between sound and sight, to say nothing of artists excluded from music television for not conforming to an ideal type. The Miami Sound Machine furthered that imbalance by creating a campaign with tropical images sanctioned by the complex, CBS, and its Epic subsidiary, pictures that complemented the Anglo popular imagination of Latin/os as erotic or exotic singers and dancers from the tropics.<sup>215</sup> Tropical tropes came to the fore through videos, advertisements and album covers.

Gloria Estefan adapted her look to the visual culture of the complex and its tropes of Latin/os, with “mucho makeup, eyeliner and lipstick, the image of the Latin woman she thought the media and public wanted.”<sup>216</sup> For instance, the Miami Sound Machine's “Primitive Love” album cover displayed a marked contrast between Estefan's whitened skin and her dark, poufy hair insofar as the former signified culture while the latter suggested nature. The album title alone implied an uncivilized “Latin lover” from the tropics, and reminded audiences of a colonial history that labeled Latin/os as tribal or

primal. Estefan's wild look juxtaposed against the "Primitive Love" title mirrored the general music industry's commoditization of corporeality, voiced in many of the album's song titles, such as "Body to Body," "Mucho Money" and "Movies."<sup>217</sup>

Whether the Estefans consented to the title or album cover design misses the point; the underlying problem was the powerful way in which the Anglo-controlled complex and its cultural workers continued to endorse tropicalization. In one article entitled "Miami Mice," a *Los Angeles Times* reporter associated the Miami Sound Machine with "pitchers of margaritas... potent enough to turn any conga-line reject into Ricky Ricardo."<sup>218</sup> Nor was the band alone in bearing the brunt of the reductionist language with which cultural workers bypassed artistry for sexuality as a marker of ethnicity: the Cuban singer and actress María Conchita Alonso's "sexy image"<sup>219</sup> competed with her Brazilian counterpart Xuxa's "striking beauty and slim body"<sup>220</sup> as well. Music journalists reinforced a series of inaccurate portrayals through their descriptive language and professional discourse, though such portrayals were anything but news to minorities.

Journalists were not the only public figures to share their impressions of Latinidad: the celebrity Madonna had plenty to say about Latin/os in general and Puerto Ricans in particular. One of her books, simply titled *Sex*, printed explicit pictures of and graphic stories about Puerto Rican men, one from whom the celebrity supposedly caught crabs during a lovemaking session at her "Puerto Rican stud farm;" as Frances Negrón-Mutaner asserted, "Madonna has eaten, digested and defecated on Latino culture on multiple occasions over her long career."<sup>221</sup> Negrón-Mutaner described one tour in

which the celebrity lowered the commonwealth's flag between her legs while wearing U.S. army fatigues, perhaps forgetting to remember the island's history of foreign occupation in an attempt to re-present Puerto Rican culture to embodied ends. In another instance, the performer compressed Puerto Rico into a four-minute travel advertisement with tropical breezes in her "La Isla Bonita"<sup>222</sup> music video, a title not far removed from the commonwealth's official designation as "La Isla del Encanto," or the Island of Enchantment.

"La Isla Bonita" appeared on MTV two years after the Puerto Rican boy group Menudo released its *Reaching Out* album and associated music videos. The group's "Like a Cannonball" video, adapted from the first cut on that album, went above and beyond its lyrics with a life-sized arcade game in which the group's singers attempted to dodge a giant ball that threatened to flatten them like pancakes (and did end up rolling over one of the boys after a bit of editing).<sup>223</sup> "Like a Cannonball's" communication of infatuation only scratched the surface of the visual narrative and its extended metaphor for the game of love, one regularly played throughout youth culture. Menudo's image as a boy group whose members retired before the age of sixteen—including a young Enrique Martín Morales, later known as Ricky Martin—appealed to youth around the world, especially to those with cable access.

In addition, Menudo benefited from significant cross-promotion after RCA partnered with Pepsi to design a major advertising campaign. One commercial announced, with wordplay, that Menudo and el mundo (the world) changed to Pepsi, presumably from Coke. Coca-Cola, of course, was made from the same formula and

marketed according to the same strategy—one sight, one sound, one sell—throughout the world, and has, in turn, crossed geographic borders with Coca-colonization from the West to the rest.<sup>224</sup> A series of related commercials visualized the common diversion that surrounded beverages and music, such as sports and food, with Menudo’s performers fore-grounded in the center of each spot. The “age-proof institution with pop appeal”<sup>225</sup> participated in a series of marketing campaigns that featured concert appearances, merchandising agreements and tie-ins with corporations that otherwise had no obvious relations to the general music industry.

The group’s image was not only conveyed in music videos and commercials, but also through telenovelas, defined here as soap operas that gave voice to fictionalized trials and travails among couples, usually in domestic settings. Menudo performed the theme song for the program *Quiero Ser* (I Want to Be), and benefited from the genre’s ability to “turn songs into guaranteed hits” with daily promotion.<sup>226</sup> Telenovelas were not so much re-purposed to sell music as much as Latin/o performers were re-packaged for a visual culture, not only because the genre dislocated songs from the materiality of records and relocated them in a medium designed primarily for the eyes and only secondarily for the ears, but also because many singers eventually became actors (e.g. Ricky Martin). Soap operas were a staple of Latin/o television years before the production of *Los Ricos También Lloran* (The Rich Cry Too), generally acknowledged as the first international telenovela.<sup>227</sup>

Soap opera theme songs produced for global reception reflected the difficulty of defining the “visual parameters of music in space... music lives and transpires in time,

while television lives and transpires in the dynamics of movement, in the image of which sound is merely an auxiliary.”<sup>228</sup> We may go one step further and argue that music television and soap opera theme songs, because of their “visual parameters,” transcended local time for global space. The complex, its general music industry, and RCA encouraged Menudo to identify with a range of locations around the world, for each of these entities expressed interest in the production of culture across networks. Space served as an omnipresent concept that both joined and separated Menudo fans through its discursive structuring around and through the complex, the industry and the group’s label; to be sure, RCA attempted to control the social spaces in which fans consumed Menudo’s music, from television to concerts.<sup>229</sup>

Similarly, select world musicians who crossed-over into U.S. popular culture depended on space for their movements from marginal status to mainstream success;<sup>230</sup> in that sense, musicians’ representations in various parts of the world called attention to media flows and to shifting boundaries of popularity.<sup>231</sup> World music suggested an opposition to mainstream Anglo or European musical formations, and was often conflated with world beats by record labels and retailers for the purpose of categorization.<sup>232</sup> The eighties was the decade in which world music received a great deal of attention by cultural workers and scholars alike, akin to what Reebee Garofalo called a “more conscious strategy for internationalization.”<sup>233</sup>

There were, of course, historic overlaps between Latin/o and world musicians: the former were categorized as the latter before *Billboard* introduced its geographically-based “Hot Latin LPs” chart in 1972. By the mid-eighties, the major labels’ new “Latin”



divisions found firms once again marketing Latin/o musicians in international terms within the U.S., regardless of each artist's or band's birthplace.<sup>234</sup> This meant that a Latina/o musician from New York was often filed in the “world music” or “international” sections of record stores, with obvious financial repercussions. Both Latin/o and world musicians confronted challenges related to remuneration, representation and homogenization. At issue here was a larger commentary on cultural tourism and its interrelated histories of cultural imperialism, racism and ethnocentrism, histories that influenced the degree to which music was appropriated and musicians were recognized.

Anglo representatives of the world music category received much of the criticism for discovering Latin/o musicians and introducing them to audiences around the world, frequently as supporting acts, backing singers or band members. For example, critics accused David Byrne of manufacturing Afro-Caribbean and Brazilian rhythms into world beats: “will the exposure of the music promote mainstream acceptance of the real Afro-Caribbean/Brazilian music? Will it result in better opportunities for Latin musicians, very few of whom have the resources to invest in a production as ambitious as this?”<sup>235</sup> World beats—including some Latin/o music from the pop and tropical genres—were clearly different from local Afro-Caribbean or Brazilian rhythms, in part because of the way in which they were produced, labeled and marketed, but also because of who controlled their production, distribution and reception.

The following block quote from a *Billboard* critic merits full reproduction because it summarizes the reaction of many Latin/o musicians to the world music category:

Are we supposed to be happy they are helping to promote our culture? I don't think so. Why aren't they coming into our community and producing some of our talents? Why don't they help us get on Arsenio Hall, Johnny Carson, or Saturday Night Live so that other Anglos can get the experience and appreciate this Third World music that they have come to love and respect so much? And when they do make those megabucks from their new creations, how much of it will flow into our community? What will we do when Anglo-salsa becomes bigger than the music we have lived and lived for so long? When Latin America swings to Ronstadt and Simon in English and the Salsa Festival at Madison Square Garden is headlined by Byrne? When America says: "Salsa?" Oh you mean like Paul Simon? How will it affect the salsa genre when all its biggest stars are white and singing in English?<sup>236</sup>

This critic questioned who promoted whom, for what purpose and to what ends, and at the same time suggested that something may have been lost in the process. If Anglos were central to the promotion process, then one wondered how Latin/os benefited when their musical innovations were appropriated. Although the critic's prediction that salsa would become bigger than it once was never materialized as far as industry sales were

concerned, the connection to Byrne, Ronstadt and Simon as appropriators was an accurate one. While it proved nearly impossible to classify world music by bracketing specific sounds, styles and rhythms, there was, nonetheless, an obvious classification bias based on ethnicity and nationality. Those who listened to world music may have used it as a substitute for travel, as a kind of passport to the rest of the world without the expenses associated with physical transportation and face-to-face interaction.

Latin/o music's proprietors created new fusions while simultaneously dislocating and uprooting identities with categories complicated by the unique political histories and economic values surrounding them. Part of this reality stemmed from the fact that music genres changed in response to punk rock's metamorphosis into new wave and ultimately new music in the early part of the decade. Genres evolved with the addition of artists that challenged their contours, especially those who borrowed styles from more than one category. As George Lipsitz wrote, "just as some Puerto Ricans and Irish Americans become merengue stars, some Dominicans in the music industry in New York blend merengue with salsa, house, dancehall, and hip hop. Dark Latin Groove, Proyecto Uno, Fulanito, and Los Ilegales bring together Dominicans, Puerto Ricans, and other Latinos to create hybrid music with no identifiable geographical home."<sup>237</sup> The permanent homelessness or impermanent displacement that resulted from musical fusion as a diasporic concept compelled cultural workers to create a transnational market for Latin/o music with three new genre blends.

In 1985, *Billboard* displaced Latin/o music from the six cities that had framed the Hot Latin LPs chart for thirteen years—New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Antonio,

San Juan and Miami—and re-placed its musicians into three new super-genres: pop, tropical and regional Mexican. The pop super-genre included baladas románticas and música internacional (romantic ballads and world music); tropical signified salsa (see Chapter III) and cumbia—a dance noted for its use of the tambora, or bass drum—from the Caribbean and beyond; and regional Mexican embraced corridos—news ballads—and norteño music, with its accordion and bajo-sexto (sixth bass with 12 strings) from both sides of the border. These sub-sets certainly did not exhaust the universe of the pop, tropical and regional Mexican super-genres, but they did glimpse their variety. As we will learn in the second part of this chapter, however, regional Mexican was the only industry super-genre whose representatives continued to value localized sounds, as its geographic-ethnic name implied. Afro-Caribbean artists and their independent labels certainly followed suit, though not as “tropical” performers.

*Billboard* reporter Enrique Fernandez claimed that the new chart structure would “group albums by genre rather than region” in response to “suggestions from the Latin market: a compromise which fit the wide—even dizzying—range of Latin genres into three manageable categories. They reflect the direction the market is taking, and should provide a fairer and more accurate way of measuring what’s hot in Latin music.”<sup>238</sup> Any critical reader must have wondered what these “suggestions” looked like, which groups made them (e.g. retailers, promoters, or distributors), and how they provided a “more accurate” measurement. This chapter argues that underpinning these suggestions and the decision to change the chart in 1985 was an overarching logic of globalization and a discursive structuring of the general music industry’s Latin/o activities from the generic

space of Miami. The desire to expand the U.S.-Latin market beyond six cities was deeply entrenched in that logic and structuring, but also in the realities of migration and the increased mobility of music media as material technologies and institutional entities. From *Billboard's* vantage point, the eighties was an appropriate time to structure the charts according to universal spaces more than particular places, a decade in which flows and crossovers were signposts for a neoliberal world system.<sup>239</sup>

Prior to the introduction of the pop, tropical and regional Mexican super-genres, Latin/o listeners and voters were “stuck with an apples-and-oranges situation where MOR [Middle-of-the-Road] ballads, funky Afro-Caribbean beats and mariachi bands would be lumped together. The new categories solve[d] this problem.”<sup>240</sup> The new super-genres, however, exacerbated rather than eradicated the problem since tropical now included everything from Brazilian samba to Cuban salsa. The term’s generic connotations positioned samba and salsa alongside sub-genres such as cumbia, with origins in Colombia, and merengue and bachata, both derived from the Dominican Republic, with little regard for the ways in which each style related to the other rhythmically, instrumentally or otherwise. Re-placing the sounds of samba, salsa, cumbia, merengue and bachata into one generic space of tropical seemingly de-emphasized the particularities of each sub-genre’s geographic, linguistic and ethnic identities, such as cumbia’s history as dance music from Colombia’s coastal and African communities, with lyrics that revealed local concerns.<sup>241</sup>

As one National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS) representative insisted, the tropical title was “the only way of classifying all the

Caribbean-based sounds like salsa, merengue, cumbia, as contrasted to Mexican regional [sounds and their] clear Mexican roots.”<sup>242</sup> Absolute statements such as these, however, did anything but further critical thought on an inherently relative situation. Listeners instead lacked a cohesive and coherent narrative for making sense of what tropical meant in the social imaginary, in and of itself or in relation to pop and regional Mexican. The new super-genre triad not only disassociated tropical and regional Mexican from pop’s inscription in popular culture by symbolic design and real deed, but also restricted openings for sub-genre crossovers. *Billboard’s* decision was foreshadowed two years earlier when the NARAS tripled its “Latin” category coverage with a new voting process that encouraged different styles of “Latin” music to compete within the same three super-categories for Grammy awards.<sup>243</sup>

The pop, tropical and regional Mexican super-genres bore out the definition of genre in Jacques Derrida’s terms, as a kind of “participation without belonging—a taking part in without being part of, without having membership in a set.”<sup>244</sup> In other words, Latin/o musicians did not necessarily, at least from their vantage points, belong to the universe of these categories or the dominant cultures entrusted with their care structures, yet nonetheless consented through their participation. The hegemonic categories, then, were exclusive rather than inclusive: they kept certain ideas, images and behaviors out and others in by virtue of their differences, real or perceived. These super-genres were uneasily connected to Other categorical systems of oppression, such as nationality, ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, class and language, many of

which evinced long histories of exclusion from the dominant white establishment and its mainstream media holdings.

Genres “valorize certain points of view at the expense of others, and while categorization is an inevitable facet of social life, there are consequences,”<sup>245</sup> such as marginalization; to that extent, “music is [sometimes] marginalized as a consequence of the general marginalization of the people with whom it is associated.”<sup>246</sup> As we will see in the next section, while the general music industry temporarily returned to the midpoint of the local-sound-to-global-sight spectrum with the band Los Lobos, the Latin/o music industry focused on regional and local sounds with the musician Ramón Ayala.

### **Regional and Local Sounds**

The last section evaluated pop, tropical and world music in the cases of the Miami Sound Machine, Menudo and David Byrne; this section will analyze two different examples of the regional Mexican super-genre, defined here as *Billboard’s* designation for styles from México, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California. While the pop, tropical and world music super-genres superseded their geographies (excluding local productions such as Afro-Caribbean music that did not carry the “tropical” title), this was not the case for regional Mexican, a category identified primarily by geography and ethnicity. Interestingly, *norteño*—a sub-genre of folk music from northern Mexico based in the diatonic accordion and the *bajo sexto*, or twelve-string bass guitar—has

been referred to as conjunto (the term for an ensemble or group) north of the border, partly because of norteño's southern roots relative to the U.S.<sup>247</sup>

Throughout the decade, the general music industry often disregarded regional Mexican sub-genres like norteño and ranchera—a rural style of Mexican music with guitar, horns and emotive singing—because rural troubadours singing about hardships did not seamlessly translate into bubblegum images for audiences outside of the region; the irony here, of course, was that regional Mexican artists have historically sold more albums than their pop or tropical counterparts in the U.S.-Latin market.<sup>248</sup> The super-genre emphasized Spanish-language lyrics and traditional melodies from the U.S.-Mexican border region. One band from East Los Angeles—Los Lobos—epitomized the general music industry's temporary shift from the global-visual end of the spectrum to the midpoint. Los Lobos was exceptional in its ability to attract the interest of the general industry and, in this case, the Warner-owned Slash Records. Not surprisingly, the band, to some extent, depended on images to cross-over into new markets and onto new charts, though it also worked with a series of independent labels less invested in building a global brand at different points before and after the eighties.

The group—comprised of David Hidalgo, Louie Pérez, Cesar Rosas, Conrad Lozano and Steve Berlin—started out as an ensemble that emphasized Tejano, ranchera, and mariachi with two trumpets, two violins, una vihuela (a small five-string guitar), una jarana (a larger five-string guitar), and un guitarrón (a four-string acoustic bass guitar). Los Lobos contributed to the Chicano Movement and supported the United Farm Workers in an attempt to “redefine ‘Mexican’ music in East Los Angeles.”<sup>249</sup> The band's



initial and then intermittent regionalism was highlighted on its first album—*Del Este de Los Angeles* (Just Another Band from East Los Angeles)—and again more than a decade later on *The Neighborhood*, which foreshadowed later songs such as “The Road to Gila Bend,” Arizona from *The Town and the City*. By the second half of the eighties, however, it became increasingly difficult to find East Los Angeles venues that would host local bands, mostly because many clubs and concert halls changed hands or closed down completely.<sup>250</sup>

Los Lobos had already begun to play fewer wedding receptions and community fundraisers in restaurants and bars by the mid-eighties. The band was in the process of refining its sound by incorporating genres familiar to Anglo audiences into its repertoire, such as rock, folk, country and the blues (its members were heavily influenced by the blues guitarist Albert Collins) while remaining true to its traditional Mexican roots. Hidalgo, Pérez, Rosas, Lozano and Berlin began to integrate English language lyrics with rock styles, an essential combination for crossover success: “Rock and roll became their principal visa into the white establishment.”<sup>251</sup> This is one reason why it was able to attract the interest of a major label.

The group achieved trans-regional recognition after the release of *How Will the Wolf Survive* on Warner’s Slash Records in 1984. Indeed, the album marked the group’s “entry into the mainstream market... Los Lobos were receiving more votes for interpretations of Mexican music than were the major Mexican artists such as Vicente Fernández and Juan Gabriel at the Grammy Awards,”<sup>252</sup> a reality that brought the relationship between authenticity and ethnicity to the fore. The question of whether a

band from Los Angeles could authentically interpret traditional Mexican songs for mass consumption was answered in the affirmative after critics heard Los Lobos perform and learned more about its members' understated history as "serious students of the music of Mexico."<sup>253</sup>

The band made a name for itself outside of the southwest with the crossover hit "La Bamba" in 1987, an eponym for the major motion picture soundtrack that accompanied the real life events of the late Chicano singer and songwriter Ritchie Valens, his girlfriend and their families (see Chapter II); the film earned Los Lobos praise and criticism at once for selling out to reach a larger audience.<sup>254</sup> Although the group gained crossover status outside of the southwest with "La Bamba's" top position on Billboard's *Hot 100* chart, and with its appearance on the Adult Contemporary, Mainstream Rock and Country Singles charts, pageantry and glamour were by no means of primary importance to Los Lobos; the group instead "integrated into the subconscious of the American mind without the burden of negative images of ethnicity"<sup>255</sup> often associated with pop performers. As David Reyes and Tom Waldman have noted, they did "not fake their style of dress" to comply with a generic image, nor did they "hide from their Mexican-American origins"<sup>256</sup> with any façades or false pretenses in music videos.

The music video for "La Bamba" presented an interesting case in point.<sup>257</sup> While much of it featured stock footage—incorporated for promotional purposes—of the film's actors (e.g. Lou Diamond Phillips, Esai Morales, Rosanna DeSoto and Elizabeth Peña's characters) modeling flashy clothing and driving fancy cars, the clips were juxtaposed

against Los Lobos singing on a small stage at a local fair. Throughout the video, the band was psychologically and physically absorbed in the lyrics, melody, harmony and texture of the song; to be sure, Hidalgo, Pérez, Rosas, Lozano and Berlin did not convey any formal awareness of the film with nonverbal cues for the sake of narrative continuity. The neon lights of the carousel behind an unadorned stage faded out in the final thirty seconds of the video to signal the end of the performance. The band's members, now dressed-down and seated where the audience once stood, began to play the song's instrumental fade-out with only the cleanup crew in sight. It was at this point that nothing but the music mattered; another way of saying this was in the end, nothing but the non-amplified and stripped-down sound remained. The show may have been over, but the music continued. "La Bamba" can be read as evidence of the band's location at the midpoint of the local-sound-to-global-sight spectrum, for the music video included both modern and traditional elements that converged with and diverged from each other at different moments, almost a micro-story of the band's career.

In contrast to the general music industry's support of Los Lobos from the midpoint of the spectrum, Latin/o music industry accordionist and singer Ramón Ayala did not budge from the spectrum's local-sonic end during his career; in other words, he did not cross-over onto other *Billboard* charts or into mainstream U.S. popular culture with any semblance of a trans-regional or visual campaign. Ayala's Spanish-language lyrics instead captured the site-specific struggles of Mexican immigrants, laborers and the working class.

After he launched the Bego label, Ayala signed a recording contract with Freddie Records in 1974; based in Corpus Christi, Freddie was an independent label that specialized in recording regional Mexican musicians. Ayala was Freddie's first exclusive, and, by all published accounts, "kept the label afloat"<sup>258</sup> as one of its top-selling artists throughout the seventies and eighties. Ayala also recorded albums with the band Los Bravos del Norte for DLV, a record label on the Mexican side of the border. He often recorded the same material for Freddie and DLV, released in each country with slightly different titles and cover art. As Cathy Ragland has observed, Ayala either recorded in Texas and took his masters across the border to DLV, or brought them back from Mexico for release on the Freddie label: "there wasn't competition because the distribution was not set up for each company on either side of the border, nor could they sell each other's records."<sup>259</sup>

The accordionist and singer focused on music more than visuals across four decades and one hundred albums. Critics described Ayala as a singer with an "unadorned vocal style," one that was "more nasalized than that of modern conjunto singers."<sup>260</sup> Apart from his vocals, Ayala's accordion technique followed an aged norteno style that developed in Monterrey, though the artist bridged the gap between norteno, conjunto, and Tejano.<sup>261</sup> He focused not on genre names and marketing categories but rather on rhythms and styles of expression specific to the border region.

Instead of genres that crossed multiple spaces, the place-based history of conjunto, norteno and Tejano complemented Ayala's own investment in sound scenes. Places could be thought of as "sites of stability" where social actors like musicians

participated in the construction of musical meaning and invested emotionally in the “immediate locale of human interaction in the particular,” contrasted with space as larger and more general “mobile trajectories through which subjects pass[ed] in their circulation between or among distinct and varied places.”<sup>262</sup> Place also implied a close attachment to local landmarks, coupled with political awareness and community involvement. Ayala exemplified this definition when he hosted charity events and toy giveaways with free musical performances in Hidalgo, Texas and toured throughout the U.S.-Mexican border region.

As the “most popular norteño artist” of the eighties, Ayala performed in Austin, Alice, Corpus Christi, San Antonio and several places in Mexico.<sup>263</sup> The historical richness of local music scenes like San Antonio could not be denied, and thus it was not surprising that the Tejano Music Awards called that city its original home in 1981. Ayala won more than one award from the Texas Talent Musicians Association (the producer of the Tejano Music Awards), including best album and single in 1986 for “Un Rinconcito En El Cielo” (A Little Corner in the Sky). His career reached its apex in the late eighties on *Un Puño de Tierra* (A Fist of Land), an album that featured traditional norteño songs with a rural sensibility. Many of the songs were of interest to the working classes, particularly for their honest depictions of life on the move and the hardships endured by farm hands and service workers. He continued to record well into the twenty-first century, and his strong commitments to local sounds have not wavered. To that extent, Ayala recorded for the Latin/o music industry and had no relationships with major labels.

### **Looking Backward and Forward**

Apart from Ayala's emphasis on local sounds with the Latin/o music industry and its independent labels, local and regional scenes did not matter much to the general music industry and its major labels during the decade. The only exception to this, and a partial one at that, was seen in Warner's support of Los Lobos. The general music industry, as a rule, specialized in manufacturing content like the Miami Sound Machine's *Primitive Love* and distributing it to mass audiences around the world; the general industry was "characterized by spatial agglomeration, concentrate[ed] in a handful of key centers"<sup>264</sup> like Miami. Throughout the decade, Miami was the transnational city from which the industry began to promote its Latin/o music interests across the globe.

MTV arrived in 1981 and subsequently shaped—but did not determine—the identity of the general industry. It was truly "a decade marked by spectacle, on the one hand, and the desire to have it all—to deny denial—on the other."<sup>265</sup> Music videos worked in this spectacular way as a form of ocular pleasure: many of them "exceed[ed] the sonorial performance itself" and "[spoke] for, or even in the place of the musical."<sup>266</sup> Additionally, the general music industry formed new partnerships with creative industries that had no inherent relation to music. Audiences consequently learned how to listen and look to the Miami Sound Machine and Menudo through videos, magazine advertisements, billboard images, promotional tours, t-shirts, beverages and other merchandise.

The National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences introduced the pop, tropical and regional Mexican categories in 1983, and Billboard followed suit two years later by reorganizing its chart to stress genres more than geographies. There were, however, symbolic and pragmatic consequences of that reorganization: what was once understood in the context of a specific place—a musical scene in San Juan—was now further misunderstood by categories that proved far too unwieldy for stocking at retail outlets, let alone for sorting in the minds of Anglo and Latin/o consumers. The new genres were an imperfect attempt at cataloging artists and their repertoires into mutually exclusive categories. In the process of creating and adhering to a new nomenclature, the general music industry's trade press displaced Latin/o artists from the U.S.-Latin market, since "Latin" pop was not equivalent to mainstream pop in political-economic terms. Regional Mexican, of course, was an exception to the trade press' organizational logic: it seemed less generic than tropical and pop (or world music for that matter), in part because its name was at once specifically geographic and ethnic.

Foreign artists discovered by Anglo performers represented an important contrast to the Latin/o music industry's emphasis on local-regional musical cultures. As the crossover genre par excellence, world music represented a form of cultural tourism that offered a neo-colonial refrain with which to reproach Anglo promoters of Latin/o music. Rock and pop crossovers meant that performers not only blended English lyrics with Latin rhythms in narrow terms, but more broadly and importantly, Spanish with English, and Latin/os with Anglos. When Argentine musician Sandro combined the Latin bolero (a slow-tempo ballad) with Anglo-American rock, he demonstrated "the influence of

Anglo-American rock on the modern Latin pop sound,”<sup>267</sup> though this was only one example of an otherwise unequal relationship.<sup>268</sup>

Cultural workers constructed images for artists that corresponded with their own ideas of how pop, tropical, world music and, to a lesser extent, regional Mexican performers should or could look; executives categorized artists to minimize competition with similar musicians on their label, or to maximize competition with comparable performers on another label: “musicians [were] expected to act and play and look in certain ways—promotional photos, record jackets... all taken with genre rules in mind.”<sup>269</sup> As discursive formations, world, pop, tropical, and regional Mexican music reflected and affected the negotiation over meaning not only among cultural workers, but also between texts and audiences. Meaning was exchanged across these various entities and implicated in the production, distribution and reception of culture, from concerts to albums. Audiences responded to categories because they perceived their generic connotations based on conventions established by opinion leaders and other power brokers in the public sphere.<sup>270</sup>

Knowledge gaps surrounded the discourse of Latin/o music and its genres. One columnist noticed “apartheid in the way Latin music was considered by mainstream Americans,”<sup>271</sup> though without any kind of systematic explanation. Another record producer agreed: “Some Anglos I met in the U.S. thought Puerto Rico was a foreign country... before I started producing rock concerts in Puerto Rico there was a lack of knowledge.”<sup>272</sup> Even though the gap seemingly narrowed by the middle part of the decade, other industry boosters continued to observe a lack of knowledge on Latin/o



music or an understanding of what it meant. Through a social process of alterity, one that generally—as least as far as the general music industry was concerned—re-placed local music into global imagery, Anglos with cultural capital defined themselves against Others; on the other hand, identification as a Latin/o musician acknowledged a unique set of histories, socio-cultural backgrounds and struggles for social justice as part of an everyday politics.<sup>273</sup>

In sum, the general music industry identified with the Miami Sound Machine, Menudo and their popular-tropical hybrids at the global-visual end of the spectrum, and with Los Lobos's variant of trans-regional Mexican music at the midpoint of the spectrum, an identity shift that took place between 1984 and 1987. The general industry wouldn't return to the global-visual end of the spectrum until it promoted the posthumous career of Selena and the subsequent Latin boom of the late nineties (see Chapter V). After the Miami Sound Machine, Menudo and Los Lobos crossed over into U.S. popular culture, at least another ten years passed before mainstream audiences once again recognized Latin/o musicians on a large scale. The chapter also discussed the Latin/o music industry's support of norteño singer-accordionist Ramón Ayala as evidence of that industry's continued identification with local and regional sounds.

As we move into the next decade, Chapter V will investigate the conditions that anticipated the Latin boom of the late nineties, with the posthumous fame of Selena, and a string of albums released in the final two years of the decade by performers such as Ricky Martin and Jennifer Lopez.<sup>274</sup> The chapter will argue the boom happened because the general industry's majors simultaneously invested in performers that fit global

crossover images. The albums released by Martin, Lopez and their peers anticipated the first Latin Grammy Awards ceremony in 2000, a program whose site provoked a great deal of controversy in subsequent years between the general and Latin/o music industries. As the next chapter will reveal, the place of the Awards ceremony was not only physical: the decision to hold the ceremony in Miami or Los Angeles was also a symbolic one for major and independent labels alike. The rest of the time, before and after the boom, the Latin/o music industry's independent labels promoted their own artists and groups, such as Los Tigres del Norte.

## CHAPTER V

1990-2000

*“The Anglos most likely to be aware of Los Tigres are those who live in cities where there are radio stations that play Mexican music, or who go to Mexican restaurants that have jukeboxes.”<sup>275</sup>*

Los Tigres del Norte immigrated to California in 1968, some six years after Cesar Chavez founded the National Farm Workers Association to improve labor and living conditions in that state. The band, initially composed of five brothers and a cousin, took a progressive position on immigration rights—documented by a team of lyricists—to support migrants who left Mexico in search of the American Dream and instead found themselves “bathing in and drinking from irrigation ditches and living on riverbanks or under bridges.”<sup>276</sup> Los Tigres came to California in search of work after an injury prevented the brothers’ father from ranching.<sup>277</sup> What they found was a gig in San Jose, and a live radio broadcast that quickly turned into a record deal with an independent label.

Although Los Tigres had successfully crossed the border and released albums more than two decades earlier, by 1990, the band had neither crossed over into U.S. popular culture, nor appeared on any non-Latin *Billboard* charts. Not surprisingly, the group’s Spanish-language lyrics and traditional clothing did not communicate “the right image” for Anglo audiences. As the quote at the top of this page correctly notes, Anglos, if they knew of the band at all, probably heard its records played on a regional Mexican radio station or in a local Mexican restaurant, which spoke to the primacy Los Tigres

placed on aural and site-specific media. To be sure, the group stressed melody more than pageantry, confirmed by a careful observation of its “unadorned stagecraft,”<sup>278</sup> and instrumental innovations simultaneously steeped in tradition.

The first part of this chapter interprets Los Tigres del Norte’s oeuvre as evidence of the Latin/o music industry’s longstanding local and regional identity, both of which continued through the nineties. From the group’s beginning with Fama Records to its signing with Fonovisa (the largest regional Mexican independent label), Los Tigres embraced more than one style of regional Mexican music, such as the corrido and norteño, while remaining rooted in the region. This part of the chapter concludes with a discussion on Tejano and the late Tejano-pop performer Selena Quintanilla. Although Tejano ultimately maintained its regional identity, it was the one regional Mexican sub-genre whose artists temporarily appropriated the glitz frequently associated with pop performers. The sub-genre’s short-term appropriation was exemplified by Selena’s start as a regional performer with the Latin/o music industry and finish as a pop celebrity after her death in 1995 with the general music industry. Tejano returned to its regional roots as soon as it realized that the general industry’s global strategies and synergies did not align with the Latin/o industry’s identity (and that most Tejano artists did not resemble Selena).

Selena’s posthumous career with EMI also signified the general industry’s return to the global-visual end of the spectrum; indeed, her story links the first and second parts of this chapter. Major motion pictures like *Selena*, television networks such as MTV and its MTV-Latino spin-off (later renamed MTV Latin America), and media events

sponsored by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences set the stage for what the popular and trade presses called the “Latin boom” of 1998 and 1999. At this point, Latin/o artists, some of whom had previously recorded in Spanish, released major English-language pop albums, many of which crossed over to the Billboard 200, the Billboard Hot 100, and the Rhythmic, Mainstream and Adult Top 40 charts. With the exception of Ricky Martin, Enrique Iglesias and Shakira, several of these performers—Jennifer Lopez, Christina Aguilera, and Marc Anthony—were born in the United States, yet the general music industry labeled them as international performers with generic ethno-racial identities to reach new markets; additionally, the industry continued to identify primarily with the pop and tropical genres by sanctioning images of Martin’s hips and Lopez’s buttocks. These practices reflected a social discourse that dislocated Latin/os from their homelands and relocated them in international spaces as global performers or world musicians.

The third part of the chapter revisits two major motifs of this work: geography and genre. The Latin Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (LARAS) moved its first Latin Grammy Awards ceremony from Miami to Los Angeles in 2000, largely because the Miami-Dade County Cuba Affidavit prohibited the County from conducting business affairs with an organization that sponsored Cuban artists. Moreover, Fonovisa accused the LARAS of favoring pop and tropical over regional Mexican artists in the air time reserved for live performance and in the number of nominations received (Miami was the unofficial seat of the pop and tropical genres, and Los Angeles was a regional Mexican hub).<sup>279</sup> As we will see, the relocation and accusation touched on the politics of

place and space, and the general music industry's valuation of pop and tropical images over regional Mexican sounds.

### **Before the Boom**

Los Tigres initially signed a record deal with the independent Fama label in San Jose, California.<sup>280</sup> As its first signatory, the group helped Fama find fame: it became the première Spanish-language record label on the West Coast in the seventies. Art Walker, the label's founder, first heard Los Tigres perform on a live radio broadcast from el Parque de las Flores in San Jose; shortly after the broadcast, he brought the band's brothers—lead vocalist and accordionist Jorge Hernández (lead vocals and accordion), Hernán (vocals and bass), Eduardo (bass, vocals, saxophone and accordion), Luis (vocals and guitar), Raúl (vocals, bass, guitar, and accordion) and cousin Oscar Lara (drums)—into a recording studio and assisted with composing, producing and promoting new material. Los Tigres, however, left Fama for Fonovisa, the largest regional Mexican independent label, in the eighties.<sup>281</sup>

Since 1985, the regional Mexican category has included several sub-genres, though this chapter only examines three for their relevance: corridos (news ballads), norteño (a traditional northern Mexican form identified by the prominent use of the accordion and bajo sexto—a baritone twelve-string guitar—bass, and drums), and Tejano (a synthesis of norteño, country and the blues from Texas). Los Tigres modernized norteño with the addition of electric guitars, the saxophone and novel percussive techniques throughout the nineties. The group also incorporated brass

instruments into its repertoire, thereby contributing to *banda*, or music performed by brass bands from rural northwestern Mexico.<sup>282</sup> And yet these steps toward modernization did not mean Los Tigres abandoned tradition, heard in the presence of the brothers' nasalized vocals and use of the *corrido* song form.

A *corrido*—the participle of the verb *correr* (to run)—is a running account of (non)fictive world events. Ballads succeed real news stories in time, but they also convey unpublished news or imaginary tales to their listeners. As Los Tigres' lead vocalist remarked, “sometimes songs are recorded too quickly after the facts. We always try to wait until the end of the story to really know what we will sing about.”<sup>283</sup> The band has referenced religious and folkloric figures in its *corridos*, from extraordinary saints to ordinary sinners, as well as heroes who have contested racism, ethnocentrism, capitalism, and expansionism. Los Tigres have also focused on geographic regions, deaths and working class protests, alongside drug cartels, lords, and guerillas in a sub-genre known as *narcocorridos*.<sup>284</sup>

The band has talked back to police and politicians in its ballads; for instance, Los Tigres critiqued officials in a *corrido* titled “Las Mujeres de Juárez” (The Women of Juárez). Since 1993, Ciudad Juárez has faced undue pressure from femicide, or the murder and mutilation of female bodies, which points to long-term struggles over gender relations and labor rights in Mexican society. Hundreds of battered, raped, tortured, strangled and stabbed bodies have been found by trash heaps, on the sides of river banks, near train tracks, or buried in the desert, an imprecise count that does not account for more than 3,000 disappeared women.<sup>285</sup> The victims have been young, poor, uneducated

and unskilled female laborers at maquiladoras, or factories that import raw materials for assembly and export finished products. More than half of these cases remain unsolved, with perpetrators permitted to roam freely by way of apathetic authorities.<sup>286</sup> “Las Mujeres de Juárez” recognized the ways in which the state refused to solve these crimes: the lyrical voice indicated that “it wouldn’t have suited them,”<sup>287</sup> or the representatives, executives and law enforcers that contributed to the cover-up by not providing information on the whereabouts of the women or their killers.

Although corridos and norteño share some stylistic similarities, they have slightly different histories. The history of corridos spans four periods: the first began with the War of Independence in 1810 and ended with Don Porfirio Díaz’ dictatorship in 1887; the second picked up from that point and concluded with the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution in 1910. The third commenced with the Revolution and ceased in 1930 after a decline from Tin Pan Alley’s competition, and the fourth started shortly thereafter and endures today. The norteño genre emerged in the 1890s, alongside “fluid notions of ethnic and regional identity, national affiliation, home space and sociopolitical associations in both countries.”<sup>288</sup> Los Tigres have since re-interpreted norteño as an aural diaspora of change and continuity on both sides of the border.

Just as the band’s norteño albums cross borders in packaged forms, rituals of affiliation, participation and socialization still matter.<sup>289</sup> After all, what is now global was once local, and we often talk of the latter because of the former’s threats—real or perceived—to ritualized performances. While it is not literally possible to “contain the world in the home,”<sup>290</sup> norteño may still reference particular Mexican and Chicana/o



communities when performed in more than one place for purposes of solidarity and sociality. To that degree, Los Tigres' norteño performances “alter our understanding of the local and the immediate, making it possible for us to experience close contact with cultures far away. Yet precisely because music travels, it also augments our appreciation of place.”<sup>291</sup>

Los Tigres' coterie of composers have penned more than a dozen norteño songs dedicated to locales—from “El Zacatecas” (a state capital in the central part of Mexico) to “Mi Distrito Federal” (the capital of Mexico)—and numerous compositions about people from particular places, such as “El Hijo de Tijuana” (The Son of Tijuana). “Al Estilo Mexicano” (Mexican Style) was composed with specific scenes in mind; consider one of its verses and two additional lines:

Igual me ligo una grandota de Chihuahua  
 En Veracruz le ago la ronda a una jarocho  
 Le robo un beso a una huerita de Durango  
 O en Tamaulipas enamoro a una trigueña...  
 Voy a San Luís a saborear de su Colonche...  
 Igual me ven en Michoacán que por Sonora...<sup>292</sup>

[I flirt with a voluptuous woman from Chihuahua

In Veracruz I court a local girl

I steal a kiss from a blonde from Durango

In Tamaulipas I court a tri-cultural woman (one with dark skin)...

I am going to San Luís (Potosí) to savor your sweet drink...

They see me just as often in Michoacán as in Sonora.]<sup>293</sup>

These lyrics offer a glimpse into the importance of location for the song's lyrical voice. Each woman is identified by her place of origin, and each act of courtship depends on a variety of women from at least five different locales to track the courter's path. Listeners hear an aural map of Mexico in six lines, from the states of Chihuahua (in the northwest), Veracruz (in the southeast) and Tamaulipas (in the northeast), to San Luís Potosí (in the center), Michoacán (in the southwest) and Sonora (in the northwest where the journey began). Though the route sounds circuitous, it does offer some insight into the mobility of the man portrayed by the lyrical voice—perhaps a composite of many Mexican men—and the social imaginary of courtship.

Apart from Los Tigres' contributions to the corrido and norteño, other regional Mexican groups have influenced the trajectory of Tejano throughout its history. Manuel Peña identified a long-term cycle in which the genre shifted back and forth between periods of use value (symbolic power linked to social processes in the region) and exchange value (tied to the influence of global commerce).<sup>294</sup> Mainstream country styles and popular modes of performance that catered to pageantry and beauty provided the impetus for Tejano's temporary shift from use to exchange value in the first half of the nineties: "Tejano musicians who wanted to be competitive on a mass market had to 'decenter' themselves, to disassociate themselves from the community-rooted polka

ranchera- conjunto style and fuse with ‘mainstream’ genres such as rhythm and blues, country and pop.”<sup>295</sup> Artists thus appropriated commercial strategies invented by the general music industry to court a larger listening public.

Several of the genre’s performers moved from small dance halls into larger concert venues and “glitzy night clubs, traversing the gap between regional and local markets and commercial mainstream popular culture.”<sup>296</sup> More than a few Tejano groups projected flashy images to consumers at the request of labels under the influence of cross-media profitability. As Ruben Cubillos, an associate creative director for the advertising agency Inventiva Inc. suggested, Tejano bands began to emphasize showmanship more than musicianship. For example, the groups Xplosivo and Invasión were noticed less for their accordion or guitar playing and more for their matching suits, flashing lights, and elaborate stage sets in concert, in music videos, and on album covers.<sup>297</sup>

Developing a stage presence was especially important for the careers of regional-turned-global Tejano performers. Selena Quintanilla began performing in a family band at weddings, festivals and quinceañeras in Texas before she signed a record deal with EMI Latin in 1990. Five years later, the performer was murdered by the president of her fan club. Major media outlets covered her death in depth, which brought mainstream attention to Selena’s music; indeed, the “Queen of Tejana music”<sup>298</sup> had a bigger following after than before her death. She rose to the top of ten charts in 1995, including the Top Billboard Latin 50 Album Artists, Top Latin 50 Albums, Hot Latin Tracks, Top Pop Latin Artists and Top Regional Mexican albums (*Dreaming of You* was the first

Tejano-pop album to cross over to—and reach the number one spot on—the Billboard 200 chart).<sup>299</sup> Her posthumous publicity skyrocketed with the assistance of newspaper reports, magazine profiles, posters, t-shirts, drag shows, internet sites, television specials and film releases.

The slain star achieved symbolic immortality with home video, concert and interview footage in *Selena Remembered*, later released on MTV and VH1 for the U.S.-Latin market, and the eponymous 1997 film that starred Jennifer Lopez.<sup>300</sup> Indeed, it was *Selena* that prolonged the star's success two years after her death, and set the stage for the Latin boom. The major motion picture was also an ideal medium for showcasing her transnational image, illustrated by the following dialogue from the film:

Abraham (father): *It's indecent...*

Selena: *All the singers are doing it... Madonna, Janet Jackson, Paula Abdul... I'm not a little girl anymore, and I didn't wear anything bad. That's just the fashion right now—on stage, you know, it's entertainment. And we don't want to be old fashioned. And don't you think I look just as good in one of those outfits as Paula Abdul would?*

Abraham: *"You look better, but keep your jacket on."<sup>301</sup>*

This father-daughter dialogue demonstrates the push-pull tensions between progressive and conservative questions of propriety on the one hand, and Anglo, Tejana/o, and Latin/o identity markers on the other. The camera captured a moment in

which Selena re-presented Tejano culture in stretchable terms, evinced in her readiness to trade traditional values for a one size fits all outfit. That readiness was reflected in another dialogue from the film, in which Selena's character remarked: "I want the whole world dancing to my music and wearing my clothes... Pretty soon everybody's going to look like Selena."<sup>302</sup> When EMI Latin offered Selena a chance to cross-over from the Tejano to pop charts, the label downplayed the specificity of her ethnicity with monikers like the "Tex-Mex Madonna," which effectively turned a regional Tejana into a transnational Latina.<sup>303</sup> This was also an example of the way in which the general music industry promoted a regional-Mexican performer in generic terms, which pointed to its identity shift from the midpoint to global-visual end of the spectrum.

With the exception of Selena's posthumous career, however, all signs pointed to Tejano reverting back to its roots as a local and regional Mexican genre with more use than exchange value after 1995: "despite the eclectic mixing, the stylistic and reportorial borrowing, and the blurring of borders in general, despite their efforts to expand from a regional, yet sizable, to a more global market, Tejano remained rooted in local identity... The barriers against a smooth crossover into common-denominator Latin pop seemed impossible to overcome due to the music's rootedness in the particularity of local culture."<sup>304</sup> Tejano subsequently rejoined *norteño* and the *corrido* as regional Mexican sub-genres championed by the Latin/o music industry, just as the Latin boom was about to unfold in the final two years of the decade with the support of the general music industry and its shift to the global-visual end of the spectrum.

### **During the Boom**

Selena was one important forerunner of the Latin boom; as Deborah Paredez wrote, it was “over Selena’s dead body that the Latin boom exploded.”<sup>305</sup> A visual culture framed the boom across multiple modalities, though television proved especially significant; the omnipresence of Univision and Telemundo (see Chapter II), and Sony Pictures Entertainment’s acquisition of the latter in 1998 resulted in the displacement of Spanish language programming for a bicultural and bilingual brand of “Spanglish” on several programs and commercials. Sony and Telemundo had successfully updated the look of Latinidad, just as youth culture found new ways to express itself in the space between Latin/o and Anglo.<sup>306</sup>

MTV Latino, with its focus on international imagery for some twenty countries and territories, regularly programmed a 4 to 1 ratio of English to Spanish-language music videos. Latin/o artists imitated the styles of Anglo performers for continuity with the majority of videos and the parent company’s universal vision (see Chapter IV). MTV Latino initially produced a single feed that reflected the parent network’s international orientation and the general music industry’s desire to “make English language product more popular in Latin America.”<sup>307</sup> The Miami-based network’s pan-Latin approach was to think globally and act locally for all of Latin America except Brazil, which received its own Portuguese-language programming stream. Global rock and pop, in turn, trumped local and regional music videos; the audience for regional Mexican was seen as “unattractive to music executives, promoters and marketers,”<sup>308</sup> profiled as immigrants with low incomes and traditional values. This meant that regional Mexican artists were

absent from the network's lineups and playlists, in no small part because they did not look and sound like Madonna or Nirvana.<sup>309</sup>

In the final few years of the decade, MTV Latino altered its programming strategy to offer more regionalized content from two hubs—one in Mexico City for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, and another in Buenos Aires for South America. And yet this strategy still did not respect the particularities of each cultural context, since local and regional idioms were edited out. Moreover, the network's program directors maintained the aforementioned 4 to 1 ratio of English to Spanish language videos. Despite the local and regional rhetoric of MTV Latino (renamed MTV Latin America), the network maintained its global vision: "for all of the ambiguities and contradictions that appear in implementing a strategy of 'localization,' it appears that MTV Latino serves mainly as a vehicle for promoting US, UK and western European international rock music, and as a one-way vector of transnational advertising campaigns."<sup>310</sup> MTV and parent conglomerate Viacom were reproached for what many perceived to be acts of cultural imperialism, and questions over who controlled the means of production and distribution (and for whom) largely remained unanswered.

Both MTV Latin America and the Latin boom were arguably "tailored to fit the American market and to buttress American cultural supremacy globally in the guise of diversity and multiculturalism."<sup>311</sup> The alliance of Latin/o pop melodies and English-language lyrics permitted multiple performers to cross geo-linguistic borders in spades between 1998 and 1999. Ricky Martin, Christina Aguilera, Jennifer Lopez, Santana and Enrique Iglesias all reached the top spot on *Billboard's* Hot 100 chart in 1999 and stayed

there for more than twenty weeks. According to SoundScan's 1999 Year End Latin Music Distributor Report, 22 million units of Latin/o music sold in the U.S., a 41 percent increase from 1998.<sup>312</sup> These numbers must be interpreted in the context of increasing immigration rates and accurate predictions that "Hispanics" would become the nation's largest ethno-racial minority group by 2003.<sup>313</sup>

The boom offered the popular and trade presses a seemingly new narrative, one that, nevertheless, forgot to remember older pop and rock releases from Jon Secada, Julio Iglesias, José Feliciano, Santana, Desi Arnaz, Carmen Miranda and Xavier Cugat (see Chapters II, III, and IV). As José Behar, EMI Latin's President famously remarked, if "Gloria Estefan opened the door a crack, then Selena pushed it a little further. Then along came Ricky Martin, who blew the door off its hinges."<sup>314</sup> The opening ceremony for the Latin boom, if there was one, was Martin's live performance of "La Copa de la Vida" (The Cup of Life) at the 1998 World Cup in France, more than a decade after his stint with the band Menudo (see Chapter IV).<sup>315</sup> That performance was released on the performer's eponymous album one year later.

Martin was described as a "carefully crafted hologram who put in considerable sweat equity in a cultural workout after his 1999 Grammy Awards appearance."<sup>316</sup> The performer assumed multiple ethno-racial and sexual identities by, on the one hand, attracting Anglo audiences with his sex appeal, and, on the other, engaging Boricuas (those born in Puerto Rico) in a cross-cultural dialogue over what it meant to look Puerto Rican. Both in his live performances and on the *Ricky Martin* album cover, it was not clear whether Martin was black or white, straight or gay. Even with the difficulty of



locating and labeling his ethno-racial and sexual identities, the star reinforced the general music industry's interest in showmanship over musicianship, evinced in the forceful thrusts of his hips, direct eye gazes and other forms of kinesics. The performer earned as much praise for "his looks as for his dancing and singing. Sound [was] only one dimension of the multi-media Ricky Martin pop text,"<sup>317</sup> one with several layers of carnivalesque and campy images mounted by the cultural complex. Apart from his attention to the "seductive powers of illusion and objectification," Martin, along with his record label (Sony), chose an Anglicized surname "as part of his flight to the stars,"<sup>318</sup> a choice often unavailable outside the business of entertainment. The surname shift from Enrique Martín Morales to Ricky Martin exemplified a clear marketing strategy on the part of Sony to brand him as an international star by uprooting him from a particular place, a contrast to Los Tigres' grounding in Mexico, California and the southwestern U.S.

Unlike Martin, Marc Anthony was born in the United States, yet the trade and popular presses described him as an international star that crossed over to the U.S.-Latin market and *Billboard's* mainstream charts. As Anthony remarked, "this crossover thing really displaces me. Like I'm coming in and invading America with my music. I was born and raised in New York, man."<sup>319</sup> Journalists also identified Anthony's future wife as a crossover star, even though she was from New York and did not speak fluent Spanish.<sup>320</sup> Jennifer Lopez, initially a movie star before she became a pop performer, ultimately assumed more than one identity— U.S. citizen, Nuyorican and/or Latin/a— depending on the context or frame. Her body, like Martin's, came to function as a

polysemic medium, one that communicated multiple ethno-racial markers for audiences around the globe.

Cast as the lead in *Selena*, Lopez was critiqued for her portrayal of the Chicana performer. Although she did not share Selena's ethnicity, she responded to charges of inauthenticity by promoting what the cultural complex has always promoted: a generic identity. Lopez pointed to what she and Selena had in common as Latinas, including bodies that were not easily classified as black or white. Indeed, Lopez's body left plenty of interpretive openings for critics in the years that followed: "she performed blackness, whiteness and brownness depending on what her career called for, which positioned her body on a broad representational spectrum in global popular culture."<sup>321</sup> Lopez performed a white racial identity in the 1999 "If You Had My Love" music video while dancing in a light outfit on multiple screens. The album from which that single was released—*On the 6*—featured a cover with Lopez kneeling on a white couch in a beige two-piece against a black background. Interestingly, more than half of her scantily clad body was illuminated by white lights. In contrast, the "I'm Real" video, released two years later, found her working with rappers Ja Rule and LL Cool J on a stereotypical black image. That video took place not in a posh club with expensive mixers but rather on the street with cheap basketballs. It was raced and classed in a way that ghettoized the black extras on the set.<sup>322</sup>

As Frances Negrón-Muntaner has persuasively argued, Lopez's body signified "at least three types of symbolic warfare: showing ass as a sign of pride, kick my ass as a form of revenge against a hostile cultural gaze, and I'm going to kick your ass to offset

the economic exploitation implicated in racism... Jennifer's butt upset hegemonic white notions of beauty and good taste in its signification of the dark and dirty excess of being Latina and Africana: an excess of food (unrestrained), an excess of shitting (dirty), and an excess of sex (heathen) are its three vital signs."<sup>323</sup> While Negrón-Muntaner fingered the typical charges leveled at buttocks (e.g. they do not serve a pure purpose, such as reproduction), Isabel Molina-Guzmán read Lopez's posterior as a marker for a new kind of femininity, one "no longer lowered to the status of dirt."<sup>324</sup> Regardless of how polluted her buttocks appeared by any secular standard,<sup>325</sup> the *derrière* discourse that surrounded Lopez shook up high and low cultural distinctions. Earlier separations between buttocks and breasts, insofar as the latter was somehow purer than the former, or between relaxation and constriction, for that matter, no longer seemed to hold water. Photojournalists assisted in making the taboo less so, and, in the process, disemboweled the conversation on Latin/o music.

Selling Lopez's and Martin's repertoire, as well as the other albums associated with the Latin boom, then, required performers to sport "skintight designer suede and leather."<sup>326</sup> Absent from the journalistic coverage was a discussion of the music itself—its history, its musicians, and their musicianship; writings on vocal timbre or texture were secondary to reviews on the look of performers. Stereotypes plagued Latin/os by reducing *Latinidad* to a bank of tropical, colorful or otherwise festive pictures that foregrounded the body (see Chapters II, III, and IV). This was in keeping with the process of human communication and its search for clarification by categorization. In her groundbreaking study entitled *Latinos Inc.: the Marketing and Making of a People*,

Arlene Dávila reminded us that caricatures of Latinidad are bothersome not just for their categorization but, more importantly, for the resultant effect on social hierarchies and cultural citizenship.<sup>327</sup>

The Latin boom offered scholars and cultural workers alike examples of the ways in which minorities were further marginalized by a neo-colonial language of discovery. In the final two years of the decade, Anglo audiences “discovered”<sup>328</sup> the artists associated with the boom—Ricky Martin, Jennifer Lopez, Marc Anthony, Christina Aguilera, Enrique Iglesias and Shakira—and rediscovered Santana through film, television and large-scale media events. Just as these Latin/os had been (re)discovered as global performers, so too were the world musicians in the Buena Vista Social Club, a super-group of Cuban artists—Ibrahim Ferrer, Compay Segundo, Eliades Ochoa, Rubén González—that Anglo musician Ry Cooder assembled in a trip to Havana. The trip was ostensibly planned to resurrect the careers of legends that faded decades earlier with the Cuban Revolution. Cooder’s project turned out to be a commercial success, with sales of more than a million copies of the eponymous album in its first year, and a Grammy award. The musician returned to Havana two years later to record a solo LP with Ferrer. Film director Wim Wenders captured the sessions, in addition to live performances of the Group, in a 1999 documentary.

Critics claimed that Cooder assembled the group to profit from the album’s release. *The Buena Vista Social Club* album and its filmic re-productions seemingly conflated Cuban music with world music for international audiences, many of whom, presumably, would not have recognized the difference. After all, Cubans were already

familiar with the son style. Some viewed the album's mechanical reproductions as cultural tourism by an Anglo musician looking to authenticate an already authentic Cuban folk culture for western eyes and ears.<sup>329</sup> Those charges echoed earlier ones levied at Paul Simon and David Byrne (see Chapter IV).

As Hugh Barker wrote, "it's never the black native who initiates the successful project, it's always the white European or American who has to come riding in to save the day and make all the glory possible."<sup>330</sup> Barker also acknowledged that Cooder appreciated the styles he appropriated and expressed a genuine desire to learn from the Club's musicians. Barker's ambivalent position represented both sides of the debate—those who interpreted *The Buena Vista Social Club* as an important production for the world music market or as a fabrication from the Cuban vantage point. *The Buena Vista Social Club* may have represented a search for "something more profound than the reality of our own lives in the exotic, nostalgic, foreign and primitive... [where] we hope to find eternal truths lacking in the confusion of modern life. But hunting for authenticity in other cultures or past times is unlikely to cure a perceived lack of authenticity at home. Because wherever you go, you take your own self with you."<sup>331</sup> By this line of logic, the search for real musical culture was pointless when directed outward rather than inward; perhaps real art was closer to home than Cooder otherwise cared to acknowledge.

The general music industry's labeling practices thereby simulated a time-tested discourse that dislocated Latin/os—and Latinidad, for that matter—from particular places and relocated them in international spaces as global performers (e.g. Martin,

Lopez) or world musicians (e.g. The Buena Vista Social Club). The next section analyzes the after effects of the boom, with a close look at the relocation of the first Latin Grammy Awards in 2000 and one regional Mexican label's accusation of genre favoritism in geographic terms.

### **After the Boom**

Reactions to the Latin boom of 1998-1999 were mixed. On the one hand, some observers celebrated the increased attention to Latin/o culture, and maintained that it foreshadowed a bright future for commerce and creativity in the U.S.-Latin market; these boosters understood the boom as a natural extension of immigration patterns. On the other hand, naysayers conceived of the boom in less than glowing terms, as a “dim parade of forgettable pop singers, low calorie entertainers who could barely speak at all (much less speak Spanish), and one annoying tiny Chihuahua whose Mexican accent was actually articulated by an Argentinean actor.”<sup>332</sup> Detractors stressed the importance of identity politics articulated by politicians rather than musicians, as if to suggest that mediated entertainment was not a serious arena for the (re)formation of public opinion on Latinidad.

Identity politics, however, played a crucial role in the general music industry's representation of the artists associated with the boom. Considering that the boom's highly profiled performers—Ricky Martin, Jennifer Lopez, and Marc Anthony—were Puerto Rican (Martin) or Nuyorican (Lopez and Anthony), it came as no surprise that some critics contested the use of the “Latin” as opposed to “Boricua” or “Nuyorican”

modifiers. The geographic connections of Lopez, Anthony and Martin to New York, Puerto Rico and Miami—based on their birthplaces and residences—associated the boom and, more generally, Latin/o music, with a pop-tropical fusion from the East Coast and the Caribbean. There were no major regional Mexican artists from Texas, California or Mexico identified with the boom, except for Carlos Santana, whose career predated the 1998-1999 period by three decades. Even though the sale of primarily regional-Mexican music had sustained the industry until that point,<sup>333</sup> pop and tropical were the super-genres associated with the boom: “this phenomenon is the result of the direct, historical colonial relations between the U.S. and the Hispanic Caribbean. It is informed by the diachronic continuity of dominant representations that have cannibalized local cultural productions, and particularly the music and rhythms that have emerged, ironically, as forms of resistance to those dominant institutions and hegemonic powers.”<sup>334</sup> The boom may have thus been one way to remake the regional-Mexican base of the U.S.-Latin market in the image of social history.

Regional Mexican genres and their artists were not only marginalized during the boom: they were also underrepresented at the first Latin Grammy Awards program in 2000. Following Frances Aparicio, “the systematic exclusion of Mexican-American musical productions from most of the Latin music boom, which is historically informed by their exclusion from national citizenship as ‘illegals,’ has also been duplicated by the hegemonic, Miami-based, Latino musical industry in the first presentation of the Latin Grammy Awards.”<sup>335</sup> The largest regional Mexican independent label (Fonovisa) accused the Latin Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (LARAS) of favoring pop

and tropical over regional Mexican artists in both the number of nominations received, and in the airtime reserved for live performance at the Grammy Awards ceremony. No regional Mexican acts were nominated in the major categories, including album, record and song of the year, and Fonovisa received five nominations among the estimated 200 across 40 categories. Alejandro Fernández—one of Mexico’s biggest superstars—was the only Mexican who performed on the program, and it did not seem accidental that he was under contract with Sony and Emilio Estefan.<sup>336</sup> As Chapters III and IV have discussed, the Estefans represented the global-visual presentations of the Latin/o pop and tropical genres. Emilio and Gloria were thus involved in a contest, whether they wanted to be or not, between styles of music. While their work with Sony could have just been considered good business, it nonetheless had the effect of shifting attention and financial rewards toward the global Latin/o pop and tropical genres at the expense of regional Mexican music.

Fonovisa’s General Manager Gilberto Moreno accused the LARAS of ignoring regional Mexican musicians in favor of those associated with Sony and Estefan, and urged the label’s artists to not attend the ceremony: “this is an Estefan event, and we don’t want to take our artists to a show like that. They don’t represent Latin artists at all.”<sup>337</sup> Abraham Quintanilla Jr., the late Selena’s father, added that Mexican-Americans were “slighted by the Caribbean people who predominate in entertainment in New York and Miami.”<sup>338</sup> Part of the problem may have been that eligible regional Mexican artists did not take advantage of the voting privileges that accompanied their Academy memberships.<sup>339</sup> This was, of course, only one side of the argument that linked the



LARAS' and general music industry's preference for pop and tropical genres with East Coast and Caribbean performers.

The National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS), the parent company of the LARAS, responded to the controversy, insisting that the nominations and performances did not “skew in any direction.” President Michael Greene continued: “I am pleased there is such a wide cross-section of known and unknown recordings... It's obvious they paid attention to the important recordings and not necessarily the most popular ones.”<sup>340</sup> Another representative added that the LARAS was not the Mexican Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, but rather an international organization designed to represent artists from more than one geographic region. The 2000 Latin Grammy Awards was the first multilingual broadcast on a major network (CBS), with presentations in English and Spanish and performances in Spanish and Portuguese. It was also the first time the NARAS considered recordings produced outside of the U.S. as Grammy nominations.

And yet each time an artist arrived on stage to present or accept an award, CBS' cameras immediately cut to Emilio and Gloria Estefan; this revealed an “unspoken yet nonetheless visual economy” in which all Latin/o musicians—including those from California, Texas and Mexico—were “rendered subject to the approval” of the Estefans, whom salsa musician Willie Colón referred to as “the Cuban-American mafia.”<sup>341</sup> Moreover, the politics of place played out during the decision to move the Awards ceremony from Miami to Los Angeles after the Miami-Dade County Cuba Affidavit forbade the County from conducting business with any organization that supported

Cuban artists.<sup>342</sup> Anti-Castro groups also threatened to disrupt the media event over its inclusion of Cuban artists. Journalists, however, cited the aforementioned Latin Grammy nominations for pop and tropical artists as the primary reason for the ceremony's (corrective) move to the West Coast and its subsequent boycott by the Estefans. Trade and popular press reporters thus revealed more than a small detail on where to roll out the red carpet: the power exercised by Emilio and Gloria Estefan over the sound of Latin/o musical culture materialized in their promotion of some styles at the expense of Others.<sup>343</sup>

Cultural workers at CBS were clearly attuned to the Estefan's influence and Sony's long roster of pop and tropical artists from the East Coast and the Caribbean. Estefan was, after all, credited with the crossover successes of Jon Secada, Ricky Martin, Jennifer Lopez, Marc Anthony, and Shakira, among Others.<sup>344</sup> Estefan served as the executive producer of Shakira's first English-language crossover album (*Laundry Service*) one year after the ceremony. One of the album's singles, "Whenever, Wherever," was to "Shakira what 'Livin' la Vida Loca' was to Ricky Martin: the major hit that brought her to English-speaking audiences in a huge way."<sup>345</sup> *Laundry Service* included 13 tracks in English, and four in Spanish so as not to alienate her original fan base. Like Lopez, Shakira was labeled by the general music industry and the cultural complex in multiple terms—as a Latin/a immigrant, Caribbean-Colombian, Lebanese Colombian, and Latin American, depending on the context. These multiple "subject positions"<sup>346</sup> raised questions about the process of becoming a U.S. citizen and the

handling of cultural citizenship in general, as well as the physical and symbolic borders between Colombianidad and Latinidad in the U.S.-Latin market.

In sum, the Estefans' influence on the Latin Boom and the Latin Grammy Awards points to a major motif of this work: the general music industry's shift from the midpoint to global-visual end of the spectrum, seen in "flirting ingénue presenters, shimmying dance steps, low-cut designer dresses and rhinestones galore."<sup>347</sup> As Jose Behar, President of EMI Latin said, "this is an age in which it pays to have a global vision,"<sup>348</sup> and not just as a single company or conglomerate, but as an entire industry with "Latin" divisions.<sup>349</sup> Most of the trade and popular presses' reportage on pop and tropical performers signed to major labels exhibited a clear bias toward coverage of their appearances over their voices.

The Latin/o music industry, however, continued to stress local and regional sounds. Most of the press' coverage of independent musicians tended to emphasize their instrumental techniques or songwriting skills. 2000 was also the year that Los Tigres del Norte set up a foundation to fund local and regional non-profit organizations that "furthered the appreciation and understanding of Latino music, culture and history"<sup>350</sup> with community outreach programs. Additionally, the band's foundation made a major donation to the University of California Los Angeles' Chicano Studies Research Center in the amount of \$500,000 to digitize 32,000 Spanish language recordings in the Chris Strachwitz Frontera Collection of Arhoolie Records. The goal was to preserve folk musical traditions for students and scholars alike.

The Chicana/o music scene in Los Angeles developed around the concept of city life and its associated problems of racism, urbanization, immigration and gentrification.<sup>351</sup> Many of the scene's artists, such as Ozomatli or Quinto Sol, contributed to the regional Mexican sub-genre known as Latin Alternative, a term "coined by record executives to sell music that was, literally, all over the map."<sup>352</sup> Latin Alternative was a slow-burning mixture of traditional Mexican music and Anglo rock, hip hop and electronica, one that demonstrated its staying power long after the boom and a previous incarnation as rock en español (see Chapter II).<sup>353</sup> Recall that Ritchie Valens's rendition of "La Bamba" was considered by many to be the earliest example of rock en español, with its original compositions in the Spanish language. Like its predecessor, Latin Alternative aimed for trans-regional success by associating itself with urban youth culture, post-nationalism and bilateral crossovers. Though the regional Mexican sub-genre sounded either too Latin for English language radio stations or too alternative for Latin/o radio, it eventually found a home on public radio stations.

As the next chapter will discuss, while the identity of the general industry shifted during the last century, the Latin/o industry's identity remained constant, and vice-versa. These shifts were not so much caused but rather influenced by larger political-economic and social-cultural events, such as the advent of rock and roll and the Cuban Revolution. The history of both industries can be explained with references to time and space, dependent on timely events. The chapter will review who controlled, invested in or paid attention to Latin/o music, including labels that led the way by promoting particular artists in particular ways.

CHAPTER VI  
CONCLUSION

**La Coda**

The local-sound-to-global-sight spectrum offered one way to chart the identities of the Latin/o and general music industries during the twentieth century. Recall that identities were defined as the essence of entities such as industries, found in performers' creations of music and image genres across places and spaces. While the general music industry's identity changed, the Latin/o industry's identity stayed the same, and vice-versa. Specifically, when the general industry identified with transnational performers and images between 1926 and 1963, the Latin/o industry retained its identification with the sounds of music rooted in specific places. From 1964 to 1979, as the Latin/o industry moved from one end of the spectrum to the other, only to return to its initial position, it was the general industry that maintained its identification with the midpoint of the spectrum. During the 1980s, the general industry zigzagged from the midpoint to the global-visual end and back again, while the Latin/o industry remained at the local-sonic end of the spectrum. In the 1990s, the Latin/o industry's local and sonic identity continued, and the general industry moved from the midpoint to the global-visual end of the spectrum with the Latin boom. The general industry's identity changed during each interval except 1964-1979, the only period in which the Latin/o industry's identity fluctuated with one label's monopoly and international ambitions.

As each of the chapters have noted, political-economic and social-cultural events influenced the shifts in the industries' identities and their portrayal by artists. In Chapter II, the advent of synchronized sound, the development of new empires across the recording, radio, and film industries, and the tension between innovation and tradition pushed the general industry from one extreme to the other and back to the midpoint of the spectrum. The Cuban Revolution, Brown Power, the Young Lords Movement, rock and roll, pop and disco then swayed the Latin/o industry to different degrees, discussed in Chapter III. By Chapter IV, we noticed that a fusion of salsa and pop with English language lyrics, the anticipated opening of Latin divisions in Miami, and genre differences all affected the general industry's movements. A steady build to a string of synchronized English-language pop releases and rising numbers of Latin/o immigrants in the U.S. impacted the general industry's final relocation from the midpoint to the global-visual end of the spectrum, illustrated in Chapter V. As the discussion proceeded through the chapters, it referenced not only time and space, but also leitmotifs such as the body and tropical tropes, Latinidad and ethnicity, language and identity politics, cultural imperialism and citizenship, immigration and labor, synergies and market structures. These leitmotifs were introduced in Chapter I.

Chapter II provided a detailed description of the general industry's identification with local sounds in particular places like New York City. New York was an important location for record labels like Berliner, Bettini, Zonophone, Columbia and Victor because of its port of entry for migrants from San Juan, Havana and elsewhere. Artists created recordings that reflected the tempos and textures of their communities in melodic

and lyrical content. What seemed most interesting about this period of local production was the emphasis placed—at least in the trade press—on the sound of the music more than on the look of the musicians. Most reportage highlighted the vocal and instrumental qualities of bands and solo artists such as Rosalía Chalía and Eugenia Ferrer, accompanied by discourse on the novelty of the recording technology.

The general industry shifted its identity away from local music toward global images with the advent of synchronized sound on the silver screen after 1926, just as the Latin/o industry's first label was founded to record musicians in specific locales. The general industry's identity had been displaced onto performers such as Carmen Miranda and, eventually, Desi Arnaz. Hollywood's generic geography inspired an attendant shift from particular places to universal spaces, and the dance crazes of the rumba and mambo subsequently produced "spectacular" sights. Genre discourse emerged not only for middle and upper class audiences, but also for the working classes in Texas and Mexico with conjunto. After the advent of rock and roll and the subsequent Cuban Revolution, the general industry turned its attention to primarily non-Latin/o performers, with the exception of Ritchie Valens as a token artist at the midpoint of the spectrum. Although its first label arrived on the scene in 1928, the Latin/o music industry did not form as a collective of independent firms (e.g. Ideal, Falcon) until after the Second World War with the recordings of Carmen y Laura Hernández.

Chapter III continued in the sixties with the local sounds of the Latin/o industry and the emergence of its major independent, Fania Records. Salsa musicians such as Eddie Palmieri and Willie Colón penned lyrics that gave voice to political issues

discussed by the Young Lords Party, including poverty, gangs, drugs, prostitution, and discrimination. Many of these issues surfaced in songs that carried a hard melodic beat known as salsa consciente or conscious salsa. A discernable identity was tied to improvisation on select albums, and to the popularity of local performance venues such as the Cheetah in New York. *Billboard* began to list specific scenes for salsa and other Latin/o music genres after 1972, thereby legitimating the existence of the Latin/o industry with a regular column and new charts segmented by markets in New York, Miami, San Juan, San Antonio, Los Angeles, and Chicago.

By the mid seventies, Fania moved toward the global-visual end of the spectrum. The salsa dura o consciente (hard or conscious salsa) from the Latin/o industry's early years was subsequently displaced to make space for a salsa sensual o erótica (sensual or erotic salsa), one that traded the previous style's streetwise lyrics and social consciousness for an apolitical and universal image of levity. Fania also sponsored a promotion campaign outside of the states to reach international audiences. The Fania All Stars's and Celia Cruz's subsequent albums were not as popular with core fans, and the label was sold at the end of the decade as audiences turned their attention to other genres, including disco and pop. It was at this point that local and regional artists like Little Joe Hernández reminded the Latin/o industry of its roots, to such a degree that the industry reassumed its original identity at the local-sonic end of the spectrum. Local and regional artists like Little Joe continued to support the Brown Power Movement for political and social reform. Just as the Latin/o industry recovered its roots, the general industry, which had ignored Latin/o musicians since the Cuban Revolution with few



“token” exceptions at the midpoint of the spectrum (e.g. Carlos Santana and José Feliciano), made plans to create new Latin divisions in Miami that would capitalize on an emerging salsa-pop hybrid with English-language lyrics.

Chapter IV’s narrative traced the general music industry’s move from the midpoint to the global-visual end of the spectrum in the eighties. Miami was the ideal space from which to launch the careers of Latin/o crossover groups, such as the Miami Sound Machine and Menudo, with visual campaigns that compared them to Anglo stars, and no shortage of commentaries on their bodies. Cross-media synergies supported the Miami Sound Machine and Menudo through MTV, commercials, telenovelas, and billboards. Cultural workers from CBS, RCA and other labels promoted a generic hybrid of salsa and pop, with tropes that complemented an Anglo popular imagination of Latin/os as erotic or exotic singers and dancers from the tropics. The major labels (all except EMI) “farmed their Latin music divisions out as subsidiaries of their international operations,”<sup>354</sup> which had the effect of recasting Latin/o music and its musicians in global terms.

By the mid-eighties, the general industry returned to the midpoint of the spectrum with the regional Mexican band Los Lobos’s fusion of traditional styles with rock, country, folk and the blues. This was also around the time that *Billboard* exchanged its previous scene-specific chart organization for a generic one based not in geography, but rather in super-genres (e.g. pop, tropical and regional Mexican) to reach more than one market. With the exception of Los Lobos, regional Mexican bands usually did not receive promotion from the majors, yet the irony was that super-genre accounted

for more than half of all Latin music sales annually, mostly to working classes of Spanish-speakers ignored by the major labels.<sup>355</sup> In contradistinction, much of the Latin/o music industry's identity was based in the cultural works of regional Mexican and local Afro-Caribbean musicians. Musicians such as Ramón Ayala demonstrated an unadorned stage presence and an affinity for specific music scenes and important political issues.

Chapter V began with an analysis of the Latin/o industry's identification with local sounds. The chapter addressed the ways in which local-regional bands such as Los Tigres del Norte voiced political issues of concern—related to labor and immigration rights—for migrants living throughout the southwest, California and Texas. Musicians who paid more attention to their instruments than to their appearances generally did not cross-over into mainstream U.S. popular culture, especially those who sang in the Spanish language and refused to become the Latin/o equivalents of Anglo pop acts. The genre discussion thread from previous chapters reappeared here with a relevant evaluation of corridos, norteño and Tejano. The latter genre was conceptualized as the most trans-regional of all regional Mexican genres in its temporary shift from use (symbolic power linked to social processes in the region) to exchange (tied to the influence of global commerce) value.<sup>356</sup>

The remainder of Chapter V looked at the general music industry's move from the midpoint to the global-visual end of the spectrum, first in the case of Selena, then with overt emphases on body parts and ambiguous performances of ethno-racial identities by Ricky Martin and Jennifer Lopez during the Latin boom. Lopez—who was

initially a film star—and other Latin/o celebrities were described as international performers by the popular and trade presses, yet many of them, Lopez included, were born in the United States. The English-language crossovers of Martin, Lopez, Marc Anthony, Enrique Iglesias, Christina Aguilera and Shakira were all released within a relatively short span of time; meanwhile, Latin/o immigration rates continued to climb, which only fueled celebrations and preoccupations by different political factions. Following the Latin Academy of Recording Arts and Science's (LARAS) relocation of the first Latin Grammy Awards ceremony from Miami to Los Angeles in 2000, Fonovisa Records accused the LARAS of favoring pop and tropical over regional Mexican artists both in the air time reserved for live performance and in the number of nominations received at the ceremony.

The common thread that runs through all of the preceding chapters is the claim that cultures of musicians produce the identities of the music industries and the cultural identities those industries subsequently create, portrayed by artists with different positions on the local-sound-to-global-sight spectrum. Performers have both shaped and reflected the local identities of aural industries and the global industries of visual identities throughout the twentieth century. On a related note, it is incorrect to regard the music industries as “unmitigated evils that affect the authenticity of a genre.”<sup>357</sup> This study framed the industries neither as hegemonic forces nor as a group of social elites, but rather as examples of the relations among whole and part, general and Latin/o, assimilation and accommodation, integration and segregation, popular and folk.

Less popular genres have forfeited the fight over visibility and its requirements—beautiful bodies and English-language performance—in favor of tradition and authenticity. These genres—including but certainly not limited to *norteño* from Mexico and *merengue* from the Dominican Republic—offer important instruction on how the general industry may return to its roots by promoting harmonies over bodies, and local or otherwise marginalized music that does not fit the global sight of Miami’s sound. The general industry’s performers must find new ways to return to the other end of the spectrum, for if they do not, then the creative contributions that depend on face-to-face communication in particular communities will continue to be placed in jeopardy as digital technologies add efficiency to the business of making music remotely. Indeed, journalists have long observed a generalized “longing for music more rooted in a certain place and produced more honestly,”<sup>358</sup> however immeasurable the referent of truth has become for those in search of it. Additionally, an equitable exchange of musical depth and breadth may be endangered by visuals that not only use but also abuse sound, while popular music shortens to simpler rhythms that do not challenge our appreciation of different languages and difficult structures, evinced in today’s 360 degree recording contracts.

The time has arrived for us to empathize with more than a performer’s visible body. One solution may be to consciously correct our gaze and move from witnessing to auditioning to hear “the body of voice,” or the substantive sounds of spirit and soul in mediated performance. Artists can gradually change the material identities of industries into ideal industries of identities by redefining what we mean by the body, following the

example of singer-songwriters or cantautoras like Lila Downs. Once a disembodied intangible (the immaterial soul) trumps an embodied tangible (the material flesh), the voice develops its own body as matter absent to our naked eyes. The passions are precisely what subtract or add weight to the body of voice, prompting us to flesh-out all that is unseen. Lyrics in multiple languages also add body to the voice in firm and full tones, incarnating the most private parts of all: the soul and the spirit.<sup>359</sup>

This study was, admittedly, limited by time. The next version of the manuscript will include a chapter that covers the first decade of the twenty-first century and the influence of mobile and digital music on the industries' structures and strategies. Patrick Burkart's and Tom McCourt's study of the celestial jukebox and Burkart's work on music and cyberliberties will inform this addition.<sup>360</sup> The manuscript will also benefit from a more nuanced musicological discussion of sound, one that pays greater attention to rhythm, harmony, melody and texture. Additionally, the study will incorporate a longer conversation on the economic aspects of cultural economy relevant to the general and Latin/o music industries, and the identity work performed by their cultural workers. This incorporation will draw on the emerging "media work" literature from Mark Deuze and David Hesmondhalgh,<sup>361</sup> important research that pays attention to the internal worlds of firms in terms of the productivity of personnel, as well as the conditions and experiences of workers, including issues such as alienation and autonomy, affective labor, publicity, privacy and the ways in which self-efficacy fits with the performance of identities already discussed.<sup>362</sup>

An offshoot of this manuscript will integrate thick descriptions of time spent participating alongside and observing performers and other cultural workers. A future study will move in the direction of “fully embedded deep texts and rituals, or bounded professional exchanges that facilitate intra-group relations,” such as work behavior, trade narratives, pitch sessions and informant interviews.<sup>363</sup> Interviews not only reinforce or challenge what we think we already know, but also serve as catalysts for the creation of new knowledge claims. Future interviews are planned with label executives, producers, promoters, programmers, distributors, policy makers, regulators, RIAA, NARAS and LARAS representatives, journalists and, most importantly, musicians. Fans of diverse ethno-racial, generational, educational and geo-linguistic backgrounds will also be interviewed. Access to cultural workers and audience members will be achieved with a growing list of academic and industry contacts.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> For an overview of music industry research, see Arthur Bernstein, Naoki Sekine, and Dick Weissman, *The Global Music Industry : Three Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2007).; Patrik Wikstrom, *The Music Industry* (Cambridge: Polity, 2010).; Geoffrey P. Hull, *The Recording Industry*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004).; Russell Sanjek and David Sanjek, *American Popular Music Business in the 20th Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991). See also Joseph Lampel, Jamal Shamsie, and Theresa K. Lant, eds., *The Business of Culture: Strategic Perspectives on Entertainment and Media* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2005). Robert Burnett's work has been purposely excluded from this list.

<sup>2</sup> For an important exception, see Keith Negus, "The Latin Music Industry, the Production of Salsa and the Cultural Matrix," in *Music Genres and Corporate Cultures* (New York: Routledge, 1999).

<sup>3</sup> For research outside of communication studies, see Deborah Pacini Hernandez, in *Oye Como Va: Hybridity and Identity in Latino Popular Music* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2010).; María Elena Cepeda, *Musical Imagination: U.S.-Colombian Identity and the Latin Music Boom* (New York: New York University Press, 2010).; George Yúdice, "La Industria De La Música En La Integración América Latina-Estados Unidos," in *Las Industrias Culturales En La Integración Latinoamericana*, ed. Néstor García Canclini and C.J. Moneta (D.F., México: Grijalbo Caracas, 1999).; Ana María Ochoa Gauthier and George Yúdice, "The Latin American Music Industry in an Era of Crisis," (Paris: The Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity, UNESCO, 2002).

<sup>4</sup> John Williamson and Martin Cloonan, "Rethinking the Music Industry," *Popular Music* 26, no. 2 (2007). Williamson and Cloonan remind us that the idea of a single music industry is outdated and short-sighted. See also Roger Wallis and Krister Malm, *Big Sounds from Small Peoples: The Music Industry in Small Countries*, *Sociology of Music* (NY: Pendragon Press, 1984).; Richard Spottswood, "Ethnic and Popular Style in America," in *Folk Music and Modern Sound*, ed. William Ferris and Mary Hart (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi 1982).

<sup>5</sup> See John Hartley, "Creative Industries," in *Creative Industries* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 2005).; David Hesmondhalgh, *The Cultural Industries*, 2nd ed. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2007).; Negus, "The Latin Music Industry, the Production of Salsa and the Cultural Matrix."

<sup>6</sup> Patrick Burkart, *Music and Cyberliberties* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2010).

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