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# **PACHECO AND CHARANGA: IMITATION, INNOVATION, AND CULTURAL APPROPRIATION IN THE TÍPICO TRADITION OF NEW YORK CITY**

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## ABSTRACT

In this article the performance practice of Afro-Cuban dance music is explored and discourses surrounding creativity brought to bear on questions surrounding innovation and stylistic development. A case study of Dominican-born Johnny Pacheco, charanga flute player and cocreator of the term 'salsa,' enables issues including imitation, innovation and cultural appropriation to be explored within the context of *típico* charanga performance in midtwentieth-century New York. Critiqued by Juan Flores as a 'traditionalist'<sup>1</sup> and by John Storm Roberts as a 'revivalist,'<sup>2</sup> Pacheco's musical contributions have often been overshadowed by his considerable entrepreneurial activities. Rather than examine his work as a record producer and entrepreneur, therefore, Pacheco's earlier work as a charanga flute improviser is explored to demonstrate that, *pace* Roberts and Flores, his improvisational style illustrates a particular New York performance aesthetic rooted in *clave* aesthetics and the rich musical culture of the Bronx; an aesthetic which is related to, but distinct from, earlier Cuban role models.

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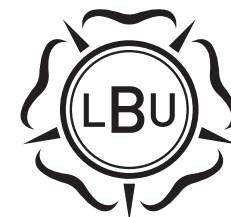
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