

ONLINE AUDIO GUIDE 6.6

CUMBIA

title: “Así lo grita Totó” (That’s How Totó Shouts It)

composer: Nicolás Hernández Pacheco

language: Spanish

performing forces: members of Los Gaiteros de San Jacinto: voice (Rafael Castro Fernández), gaita hembra (Toño García), gaita macho (Nicolás Hernández Pacheco), tambor alegre (Adolfo Rodríguez), tambor llamador (Rafael Rodríguez), tambora (Joche Plata), guaches, maraca. (A large maraca is played with one hand by the gaita macho player, who fingers the gaita with the other hand.)

form: strophic, with introduction and interludes

function: performance, community dancing

source: *Un fuego de sangre pura* (Smithsonian Folkways Recordings CD 40531, 2006)

Listen for:

- duple meter
- strophic form (four verses, with introduction and interludes)
- occasional ornamentation in vocal line, rather modest
- timbres (gaitas, the different drums)
- syllabic setting
- brief moments of call-and-response singing
- ostinato in tambor llamador, on the beat

Timing	Structure and text	What happens
00:00	Introduction	gaita 1 starts out with first part of main melody (a), slightly ornamented
00:03		maraca and guaches enter
00:06		gaita 2 enters, (a) repeated
		drums enter with a short “call” by the tambor llamador and the tambor alegre and establish the basic pattern heard throughout
00:12		shouts of performers
00:13		second part of main melody (b) in gaitas
00:17		(b) repeated
00:23		(a)
00:29	Verse 1 (a) Lindo que suena el tambor y la gaita se llena de encanto	voice sings same pitches as gaita

00:35	repeat of (a), including words	voice continues on same pitches as gaitas
00:40	(b) Y así lo grita Totó—¡uepa! Voy a la fiesta de El Banco.*	
00:47	repeat of (b), including words call and response	
00:53	(b1) Voy a la fiesta de El Banco. Voy a la fiesta de El Banco.	
00:58	repeat of (b1), including words	
1:04	Interlude	<p>various melodies in gaitas</p> <p>shouts</p> <p>the maraca (played by the gaita player) takes an active role, interacting with the tambor alegre</p>
1:33	Verse 2 Lindo que suena el tambor y la gaita lleva su delicia	voice sings same pitches as gaita
1:38	repeat of (a), including words	voice sings same pitches as gaita
1:44	(b) Y así lo grita Totó—¡uepa! Pa'que lo baile Patricia.	
1:49	repeat of (b), including words	
1:56	(b1) Pa'que lo baile Patricia, pa'que lo baile Patricia.	
2:01	repeat of (b1), including words	
2:06	Interlude	<p>gaita, melodies (a) and (b)</p> <p>tambor alegre improvises with the gaita melody</p>
2:29	Verse 3 Cuatro paquetes de vela y una botella de ron	voice sings same pitches as gaita
2:34	repeat of (a), including words	voice sings same pitches as gaita
2:40	(b) Voy a invitarle a mi negra—¡uepa!	

2:46 2:52 2:57	Pa'que baile cumbión. repeat of (b), including words (c) Pa'que baile cumbión.* Pa'que baile cumbión. repeat of (c), including words	
3:03	Interlude	Shouts “¡Prende la vela que me quemo, negra!” percussion intensifies with faster note values Maraca and tambor alegre play a variation together
3:20	repeat of Verse 1, including words b1 repeated multiple times	flourish on gaita

Note: El Banco is a town in Colombia on the Magdalena River. A “cumbión” is a really special cumbia.

The author thanks Brian Rice for assistance with this guide.

English translation:

Verse 1

The drum sounds fine,
the gaita is full of charm (repeats).
And that’s how Totó shouts it—yeah!
I’m going to the party in El Banco (repeats).

Verse 2

The drum sounds fine,
and the gaita is lovely (repeats).
And that’s how Totó shouts it—yeah!
So that Patricia dances (repeats).

Verse 3

Four packets of candles
and a bottle of rum (repeats).
I’ll invite my old lady—yeah!
So that she dances one heck of a cumbia (repeats).

Consider:

- The strophic form of this selection is quite regular: three verses, with each verse containing related phrases. Verses are separated by interludes. What if, in performance, an ensemble wanted to expand the boundaries of the form? What would be some possible strategies?

- Evaluate the vocal quality of the solo singer.
- Does the form of this selection risk monotony or does its simplicity help ensure that participants will focus on the dance?

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