



Lesson – *Exploring Rhythm with Salsa*

Companion Video – Danzón No. 2

Suggested Grade Level

Grades 1-4

Objective

Students will be able to identify the musical elements that are found in the Latin tradition of Danzón and salsa. Students will be able to perform the traditional clavé rhythm.

Suggested Materials

- Video of the BPO performing Arturo Márquez’s Danzón No. 2
- Composer fact sheet (provided)

New York State Arts Standards

MU:Pr4.2.1b-4b

MU:Re7.2.1a-4a

MU:Cn10.1.1b-4b

New York State Social Studies Standards

Standard 2: World History

Standard 5: Civics, Citizenship, and Government

Procedure

- 1) Share with students a definition for salsa: The most widely heard and influential form of music from Puerto Rico. The word salsa is translated as ‘sauce’ to denote a style of music and dance that spices and enlivens things. This complex musical genre evolved from a range of influences including Cuban, Dominican, and Afro-Caribbean, but is a uniquely Puerto Rican product. From www.musicofpuertorico.com.
- 2) Play the BPO video of Danzón No. 2 by Mexican composer Arturo Márquez. Danzón is a type of dance that is popular in Mexican dance halls, where the composer discovered Latin ballroom dancing. This performance features dancers Fanny Olaya and Sergey Komar doing a salsa dance to the music. The driving beat found in this music is the “clavé rhythm.” Teach students how to tap this rhythm together, shown below. See if they can find this rhythm within the music.



Lesson – Exploring Rhythm with Salsa (continued)



- 3) The composer of this piece, Arturo Márquez, is from Mexico. Students can learn more about him and this piece with the composer Fact sheet. After reading this, use the following guided questions for exploration and discussion:
 - a) Arturo's father was a mariachi musician. What is mariachi music? What instruments do mariachi musicians play? Where might you hear this music?
 - b) Can you discover any other Latin dances besides the danzon or salsa? Do they use similar or different rhythms?
 - c) Ask students to find a person or a group of people to teach the clavé rhythm. Do you find this rhythm easy or hard to do? Is it an easy rhythm to teach or is it a challenge to teach to others? Why?

Composer Facts



Arturo Márquez was born in Alamos, Mexico in 1950. He is the first born of nine children and he comes from a long line of musicians. His grandfather was a Mexican folk musician and his father was a mariachi musician in Mexico and later in Los Angeles. Because of this, Arturo heard several musical styles growing up that influence his music writing today. When he was young, Arturo's family immigrated to California from Mexico and they settled in

a suburb of Los Angeles. In high school he learned to play trombone, violin and piano. He started composing his own music at the age of 16 and began serious music studies at that time. He moved back to Mexico and attended the Mexican Music Conservatory. He went on to other places throughout the world improving his music writing and his music performance skills.

Arturo became famous outside of Mexico when he wrote a series of pieces for orchestra called, "The Danzones," which are based on the music of Cuba and the Veracruz region in Mexico.

Danzón No. 2 was included on the program played by the Simon Bolívar Youth Orchestra from Venezuela on a tour throughout Europe and the United States. This is an orchestra of young people who have been studying music since they were very young. Because so many people around the world enjoyed hearing this piece performed by these talented students, it became very well known outside of Mexico. In fact, the performances by this orchestra have also inspired many young people in the United



States and around the world to play musical instruments. Arturo Márquez now lives with his family in Mexico City and teaches music at the National University of Mexico.