



LAKOU MIZIK

Wa Di Yo

Lakou Mizik is a multigenerational collective of Haitian musicians formed in the aftermath of the devastating 2010 earthquake. The group includes elder legends and rising young talents, united in a mission to honor the healing spirit of their collective culture and communicate a message of pride, strength and hope to their countrymen and the world.

Music is at the core of Haiti's sense of identity, and musicians have always played an important role in society, both in documenting the country's history and helping to shape its path forward. Today, a young generation of artists is keeping this tradition alive, narrating the world they live in through music that is made in their neighborhoods, villages and post-earthquake camps. **Lakou Mizik** brings together these musical generations in celebration of the cultural continuum while using Haiti's deep well of creative strength to shine a positive light on this tragically misrepresented country.

The idea for the band was hatched in 2010 on a hot November night in Port-au-Prince. Haiti was still reeling from the earthquake, a cholera epidemic was raging and a political crisis filled the streets with enough tire burning ferocity to close the international airport. **Steeve Valcourt**, a guitarist and singer whose father is one of the country's iconic musicians, singer **Jonas Attis** and American producer **Zach Niles** met in Valcourt's muggy basement studio and agreed that Haiti's music and culture could serve as an antidote to the flood of negativity.

Niles, who ten years previously was part of the documentary film and management team that introduced **Sierra Leone's Refugee All Stars** to the world, had traveled to Haiti to explore ways in which music could help play a role in recovery and empowering social change. According to **Niles**, "I always wanted to use music and the stories of musicians to create a deeper connection to the country than either the one-note negative press or the falsified hope-and-inspiration NGO stories that get pushed to the public." **Niles**, **Valcourt** and **Attis** assembled an exceptional lineup, creating their own musical A-Team, a powerhouse collective of singers, rara horn players, drummers, guitarists and even an accordionist.

Over the next few years, the band honed their electrifying live show, presenting hours long concerts that blended the soulful spirit of a church revival, the social engagement of a political rally and the trance-inducing intoxication of a Vodou ritual. Finally, after building a devoted local fan base, the band headed to the beautiful new recording studio at **Artists Institute** in Jacmel, where **Niles** and **Valcourt** had been working. Home to the country's only music production and audio engineering school, the **Artists Institute** was formed to help develop Haiti's music and film industries.

Two veteran music producers joined the group to help create their debut album: **Chris Velan**, a Montreal singer-songwriter and producer responsible for producing two albums for **Sierra Leone's Refugee All Stars**, and British producer **Iestyn Polson**, famed for his work with **David Gray**, **David Bowie**, **Patti Smith** and others.

The resulting album, **Wa Di Yo**, reflects the African, French, Caribbean and U.S. influences that collide in Haiti. The spirit-stirring Vodou rhythms and call-and-response vocals are supported by the French café lilt of the accordion. Intricate bass lines and interlocking guitar riffs mesh mesmerizingly with the joyful polyrhythmic hocketing of rara horns. These powerful layers are topped by sing-along melodies with inspiring, socially conscious lyrics. The end result is a soulful stew of deeply danceable grooves that feels strangely familiar yet intensely new -- and 100% Haitian.

In Haitian Kreyol the word **lakou** carries multiple meanings. It can mean the backyard, a gathering place where people come to sing and dance, to debate or share a meal. It also means "home" or "where you are from," which in Haiti is a place filled by the ancestral spirits of all others that were born there. Each branch of the Vodou religion has its own holy place, called a **lakou**, where practitioners may come together in the shade of a sacred **Mapou** tree. With **Wa Di Yo**, **Lakou Mizik** invites listeners to join them in their **lakou**, to share with them the historical depth, expressive complexity and emotional range of the Haitian people. Emerging from one of the darkest periods in the history of a country with many dark periods, **Lakou Mizik** presents a feeling of joy, hope, solidarity and pride that they hope will serve as a beacon for a positive future in Haiti.





Steeve Valcourt is the son of Haitian musical legend **Boulo Valcourt** a blues, jazz and roots musician who found fame in the eighties with the band **Caribbean Sextet** and has even played the White House. Steeve grew up partially in Haiti and partially on Long Island where he went to high school and college. Steeve grew up surrounded by the top stars of Haitian music and absorbed it all. He cites influences as varied as **Carlos Santana** and **George Benson** to Haitian protest singer **John Steve Brunache**. His love for Haiti runs deep and while so many Haitians are looking for a way out of the country, Steeve has tasted life in America and now wants only to be in his homeland. Steeve had some fame as an artist with his compa band **Vod'k** but found his niche working with his father producing young artists, often for free. The list of artists that Steeve has produced in Haiti reflects a who's-who of the biggest stars of this generation and they all owe him a debt of gratitude. One can't walk through the streets of Port-au-Prince with Steeve without people calling out greetings from a passing tap tap taxi, being inundated by people wanting to shake his hand or have their picture taken with him. But it's through **Lakou Mizik** that Steeve is finally getting a real star turn of his own - coming out from his dad's shadow and getting the popular respect as an artist that he deserves. Steeve is pushing the rediscovery of traditional Haitian music through **Lakou Mizik** while showing his deep appreciation and respect for those that he learned from. Steeve currently teaches music production and Haitian music history at the Artists Institute in Jacmel.



Jonas Attis was born in Jeremie on the southwest coast of Haiti. Known as "The City of Poets," Jeremie has a history of spawning politically engaged artists. Raised in a musical household with faiths split between Vodou and Protestantism, Jonas was surrounded by many of the country's deep traditions from a young age. He started writing songs as a child - including a local rara band hit when still in his teens. In 1993, Jonas embarked on an ill-fated voyage with his grandmother, a famous leader of a local rara band. They boarded an overcrowded ferry called the **Neptune** that shuttled passengers from Jeremie along the coast to the capital city of Port-au-Prince. When bad weather caused the ship to capsize, the voyage turned into one of the greatest maritime disasters of recent times with the loss of as many as 1500 lives - including Jonas' grandmother. Jonas spent 3 days floating on a barrel of oil, a bucket of charcoal and on the back of a bloated cow carcass before being saved by a Cuban rescue team that brought him back to Jeremie. He arrived on the wharf in Jeremie just as his family was saying their last prayers for him, thinking he was among the many who had perished. In his 20s Jonas moved to Port-au-Prince to follow his musical dreams. He has earned a reputation as a passionate and soulful singer with infectious energy onstage. Though he is often called upon to sing on the hits of other stars, Jonas has developed his own unique songwriting style that blends traditional rara and Vodou with reggae and Haitian pop styles. He is one of **Lakou Mizik's** lead songwriters with lyrics that blend pointed political message with sing-a-long choruses that never fail to get a crowd moving. He says that to this day his grandmother inspires him and he thinks of her every time he is on stage.



Nadine Remy grew up in the Christian evangelical community. Nadine's pure voice made her a star of the church choir and gave her the motivation to go seek out the professional guidance of the legendary Boulo Valcourt - Steeve's father. Boulo, impressed with young Nadine's talent, started giving her lessons and eventually invited her to sing back up for him. During the 2010 earthquake Nadine's house was destroyed. Nadine's family escaped unhurt, but they were forced to move to a displacement camp, then to the dusty new settlement known as Canaan just north of the city. It was during this period that Nadine started collaborating with Steeve, Jonas and Zach on the Lakou Mizik project. At first Nadine's Christian background made it difficult for her to sing songs in the Vodou tradition; she was concerned what her family and peers would think. But with the encouragement of the other Lakou musicians and the eventual support of her family, Nadine has grown into one of the most powerful roots singers in the country.



Sanba Zao (Louis Lesly Marcelin) is a legend of the racine (roots) music movement in Haiti. A founder of the Sanba and back to the earth movements in Haiti, Sanba Zao has been on the musical scene for nearly 30 years. He is not only a master drummer with an encyclopedic knowledge of traditional songs and rhythms; Zao is a ferocious front man with the energy of artists half his age. Zao became involved with the Lakou Mizik project through mutual friends. Originally, he came to give guidance and suggest collaborators, but as time went on Jonas, Steeve and Nadine started seeing him as their mentor and a portal to the lost traditions that they were seeking to revive. Jonas' soulful pop sensibility blended with Zao's deep knowledge of traditions immediately gave youthful rebirth to old songs that had long been relegated to the archives. As the Lakou Mizik collective began to take shape Sanba Zao invited his son Woulele in to the group. Zao is a professor at L'Ecole National des Arts, Haiti's national arts school, and he devotes his life to teaching and promoting the culture and music of Haiti. He is a musical guide and mentor to the younger members of Lakou Mizik and provides the essential cultural foundation for the band's music.



Woulele Marcelin is Sanba Zao's son and he is following in his father's legendary footsteps as a master tanbou player. His prodigious talent build on his father's traditionalism while injecting youthful energy and modern rhythms to the mix. He started playing drums at age 5 and he has quietly become one of the most sought after tanbou session players in the country. While he is pushing into new musical territory, Woulele is deeply respectful of the heritage he has inherited.



Peterson “Ti Piti” Joseph and James Carrier are the young rara maestros that serve as the engine of Lakou Mizik’s rhythm section. Rara is a traditional street music that has remained relevant and vibrant to this day. During rara parades, packs of young men march through the streets, competing for the title of best band. Ti Piti and James are the stars of “Silibo Tet Syel,” a band from the poor neighborhood of Jalousie that sits right next the upscale Pétionville area of Port-au-Prince. Friends since grade school, their parents initially forbade Ti Piti and James from spending time together, but their brother-like bond was unstoppable. Their close relationship makes it possible for them to weave intricate melodies with single-note rara horns. Extremely proud of their craft, Ti Piti and James speak often of the dream of giving the simple rara cornet the same respect as trumpets and trombones. They hope to see cornets in churches and concert halls around the world. Jonas was introduced to Ti Piti and James by a mutual friend in 2009 and started incorporating them into his rara-pop arrangements. Jonas brought them into Lakou Mizik in 2011 and they have become a defining element of the band’s sound.

Lamarre Junior is the Lakou Mizik bassist. He grew up playing in church and continues to lead church bands throughout Port-au-Prince. But for him there is no conflict between Vodou and church music - his faith is something personal - and he is proud to be playing his country’s cultural music.



Belony Beniste learned the accordion from his grandfather while growing up in the small Northern city of Jean Rabel. His earliest repertoire consisted of old Vodou songs and nearly forgotten kontredans rhythms. When he moved to Port-au-Prince in his early 20s he put aside the accordion and began playing keyboard. It wasn’t until he met Lakou Mizik’s original accordionist, the late Allen Juste, that he rediscovered his love for the instrument and it’s potential to be integrated into old and new styles of music. Belony is now one of the country’s most sought after accordion players and is one of the few young accordionists keeping this important part of Haiti’s musical heritage alive.



This album is dedicated
to Allen Juste our beloved
accordion player.
Repoze'w An Pè Maestro!



POZE (STAY CALM)

This song encourages people to keep calm and stay cool no matter what the world throws at them and what people around them say. The chorus is from a traditional song and, in typical rara style, takes a boastful tone. The singer flexes his musical muscles and calls out “don’t challenge us,” with an implicit but unspoken “Or else” hidden in the context. Newly written lyrics chide those that talk behind people’s backs and cast suspicion on the innocent.

Poze, poze moun sa yo, poze wi
Mwen di w poze, poze moun sa yo, poze
Moun sa yo k ap pale m mal
Mwen p ap okipe yo
Pral voye nouvèl ba yo
Mwen di poze

Refrain

Poze, poze moun sa yo poze (bis)
Moun sa yo k ap pale m mal
Pap okipe yo
Pral voye nouvèl ba yo
Poze

Rèt trankil se pi gwo remèd ki gen pou kò, non, non, non
Ou ka pa tonbe sou pa antò, wè wè wè
Mwen pi fò, mfout'onw kal
M'fòn rekò, ou dakò
Aprè kal sa ti kè w bat fò
Ou ka manbe bondye lanmò
Mwen mete w chita poze!

Moun yo wè yo pale
Yo pa wè yo pale
Alèlè yo ye, se sou do m yo ye, an ye (bis)

(Refrain)

Yo la, yo la (yo sispèk) (bis 4 fwa)
Nou voye dlo (nou pa mouye pèsonn oh) (bis 4 fwa)
Yo pale nou mal ase (bis 4 fwa)

Stay calm people, stay calm
I said stay calm, stay calm people!
The people who badmouth me
I don't pay them any attention
I'm sending you this message
Stay calm!

Chorus

Stay calm people, stay calm (x2)
The people who badmouth me
I don't pay them any attention
I'm sending you this message
Stay calm!

Staying calm is the best cure, no, no , no
You can't fall if you are not guilty, yes, yes, yes
I am the strongest, I beat you
I break the record, you agree
After this whooping your little heart beats fast
You'll beg God to end your misery
I'll put you to rest so just sit and stay calm!

People speak about what they see
They speak about what they don't see
They are gossipers. They gossip about me. (x2)

(Chorus)

They are here (looking suspicious) (x4)
We throw water (but it's not to get anybody wet) (x4)
(They badmouth us enough) (x4)

PANAMA'M TONBE (MY PANAMA HAT HAS FALLEN)

One of the most famous songs in the Haitian traditional repertoire. This song is based on an old proverb that stems from the story of Haitian president Florvil Hyppolite, who in the late 1890s, as legend has it, was en route to Jacmel in southern Haiti to put down a rebellion. On the way, his panama hat fell, and soon after he had a heart attack and died. Now in Haiti, whenever someone's hat falls on the ground it means trouble is coming. The songs' chorus says "My panama hat has fallen, please pick it up for me" which is a call for help against the impending trouble. This version takes the traditional story and expands the idea into the larger concept of troubles that Haiti has faced, referencing as far back as the revolution of 1804, and asking the ancestors and elders to help Haiti pick up its metaphorical "Panama hat" so that it can move forward.

Verse

Mwen soti lavil jakmèl, lavale mwen prale
An arivan kafou benèt, panama mwen tonbe (bis)

Refrain

Panama mwen tonbe, panama mwen tonbe
Panama mwen tonbe, sa ki dèyè ranmase li pou mwen, (bis)

(Verse)

(Refrain)

Li tonbe ranmase l pou mwen, sa mwen pral di granmoun yo
Li tonbe ranmase l pou mwen, sa mwen pral di grandèt mwen
Li tonbe ranmase l pou mwen, sa mwen pral konte grandèt yo
Li tonbe ranmase l pou mwen, sa mwen pral di lakou oo

Li tonbe, depi 1804, yo di n libéré,
Li tonbe, chèn nan soti nan pye n' nan tèt nou l' rete,
Li tonbe, se sa kifè peyi n pa ka developé
Se tan k ap pase, se laj k ap monte
Mwen di li tonbe

Li tonbe, depi 1804, yo di n libéré,
Li tonbe, chèn nan soti nan pye n' Nan tèt nou l' rete,
Li tonbe, se sa kifè peyi n pa ka developé, se tan k ap pase
Lakou o

Li tonbe ranmase l pou mwen, sa mwen pral di manman m
Li tonbe ranmase l pou mwen, sa mwen pral di peyi m o
Li tonbe ranmase l pou mwen, sa mwen pral di grandèt mwen
Li tonbe ranmase l pou mwen, sa mwen pral di lakou oo
Li tonbe ranmase l pou mwen

Verse

I am coming from Jacmel's city, heading to Lavalée
Arriving at Bainet Station, my Panama hat falls down (x2)

Chorus

My Panama hat has fallen, my hat Panama has fallen
My hat Panama has fallen, those who are behind me pick it up (x2)

(Verse)

(Chorus)

It has fallen, pick it up for me, what shall I say to the elders
It has fallen, pick it up for me, what shall I say to my ancestors
It has fallen, pick it up for me, what shall I tell to the elders
It has fallen, pick it up for me, what shall I say to Lakou

It has fallen, since 1804 they said that we're free
It has fallen, chains left our feet but stayed in our mind
It has fallen, that's why our country can't develop
Time is passing, we are getting older
I say it has fallen

It has fallen, since 1804 they said that we are free
It has fallen, chains left our feet but stayed in our mind
It has fallen, that's why our country can't develop, time flies
Lakou

It has fallen, pick it up for me, what shall I say to my mother
It has fallen, pick it up for me, what shall I say to my country
It has fallen, pick it up for me, what shall I say to my elders
It has fallen, pick it up for me, what shall I say to Lakou
It has fallen, pick it up for me

ANBA SIKLÒN (IN A HURRICANE)

This song speaks to the frustrations of the Haitian people who often feel that their lives rise and fall at the whims of foreign governments and NGOs who seem to profit during Haiti's hardest moments. The chorus claims that during hurricanes and instability numbers are always shifting – a 7 turns to a 9, a 4 turns to an 8 – a reference to the perceived financial fraud that happens during these times of crisis. The people most deserving receive the least. The verse asks the question, “Why? Why do you laugh at our problems, contribute to our suffering in our times of weakness?” The international community in Haiti does have much to answer for, but the song finally turns to pride in the face of exploitation, “Haiti will change. Haiti will rise up”

Refrain

Pandan n anba siklòn, e ya, e ya
Pandan n nan move tan
Moun yo fè sèt yo tounen nèf (bis)
Pandan n anba siklòn, e ya, e ya
Pandan n nan move tan
Moun yo fè kat yo tounen huit (bis)

Hmmm moun yo fè sèt yo tounen nèf (bis)
Hmmm moun yo fè kat yo tounen huit (bis)

Verse

Pouki w ap trip nan pwoblèm mwen
Kontribiye nan soufrans mwen
Gad jan w pilonnen bonè mwen
Pitye! pitye!
Ki jan ou pilonnen kilti mwen
Pou ki w vle jwi nan feblès mwen
Gad jan w sèvi ak doulè mwen (Pitye!)
Ayiti gen pou l chanje (N a wè l)
Peyi sa a gen pou l vanse (N a wè l)
Ayiti gen pou l monte (N a wè l)
Leve men w di wi pou li (bis)

(Refrain)

(Verse)

(Refrain)

Konsyans, konsyans, konsyans, konsyans

Chorus

In a hurricane
In times of trouble
They turn 7 into 9 (x2)
In a hurricane
In times of trouble
They turn 4 into 8 (x2)

Hmmm they are changing 7 into 9 (x2)
Hmmm they are changing 4 into 8 (x2)

Verse

Why are you laughing at my problems?
Contributing to my suffering?
Look how you steal my happiness
Have mercy! Have mercy!
Look how you walk over my culture
Why do you take advantage of my weakness?
Look how you are using my pain (Have mercy!)
Haiti will change (We'll see it)
This country will move forward (We'll see it)
Haiti will rise up (We'll see it)
Raise your hand and say yes (x2)

(Chorus)

(Verse)

(Chorus)

Conscience! Conscience! Conscience! Conscience!

ZAO PILE TÈ (ZAO STOMPS THE GROUND)

Much of the language in this song uses old Vodou words not often heard anymore in modern Haiti. In this song

Sanba Zao sends out a message to all other Sanbas, or poets who keep the culture and music, to come together alongside all the ancient Vodou spirits to combat the negative forces they face. Sanba Zao stomps the dusty ground, signaling to all these forces to form a “konbit” or “collective” and make things right with the world again.

Se jan n a wè yo, n a wè, n a wè yo
Se jan n a wè sanba yo, nan peyi a, nan lakou yo
Sanba yo an yo lè
Sanba yo an yo lè pou yo, nan lakou yo, nan traka yo, nan vikwa yo
Sanba yo wan ile pou yo

Vodou dyo ou lo nou antre
Dyo ou legba nou rive
Parenn legba papa nou rantre
Rantre n, antre nan lakou a
Rantre n antre nan lakou a
N a limen lanp la, adjamile sa ilé
A masa foula, avan nou sele chwa la
N a ouvè pòt la pou n antre (bis)

Vodou dyo ou lo nou antre
Dyo ou legba nou rive
Parenn legba papa nou rantre
Rantre n, antre nan lakou a

Refrain

Zao, Zao, pile tè a
Zao, Zao, pile tè a pou yo (bis)
Rélé aboudja, rélé mannade, rélé achade,
Sanba dadou, oh pou fè konbit la mache
Zao, Zao, pile tè a
Zao, Zao, pile tè a pou yo (bis)

(Refrain)

It's how we look at them, look at them, look at them
It's how we look at the sanbas in the country, in the courtyards
The sanbas are hanging in there
The sanbas are in their courtyards, their hardships, their victories
The sanbas are there by themselves

Vodou when we get in
Dyo or Legba here we are
Dear Father Legba we are in
Yes, we're here in the courtyard
Yes, we're here in the courtyard
We'll light up the lamps
Before we saddle the horse
We'll open the door to get in (repeat)

Vodou when we get in
Dyo or Legba here we are
Dear Father Legba we are in
Yes, we're in the courtyard

Chorus

Zao, Zao, stomps the ground
Zao, Zao, stomps the ground for them (x2)
Call aboudja, call manmade, call achade
Sanba dadou, oh, to get the collective going
Zao, Zao, stomps the ground
Zao, Zao, stomps the ground for them (x2)

(Chorus)

A mwalaye oh (a mwalaye sanba) (bis)
Se pase m t ap pase yo lonje dwèt sou sanba yo (bis)
Se monte mwen t ap monte, yo tandè vwa simidòr yo (bis)
Oh oh, oh yo (lonje dwèt sou sanba yo)
Eh eh eh (yo tandè vwa simidòr yo)
A mwalaye aysan e (a mwalaye sanba) (bis)

Ki mele n oh, ki sa nou fè yo
Zaila déjà nan kafou a, mannangan nan yo
Zaka bousou dyo, men ginengo yo
Mele, mele, ki mele n avè yo
Zaila déjà nan kafou a, pale avè yo (bis)

Ki mele n oh, ki sa nou fè yo,
Zaila déjà nan lakou a, mannangan nan yo
Zaka bousou dyo, men ginengo yo
Zaka a bousou djo men asento yo
Zaka bousou dyo, men ginengo yo
Zaka a bousou djo pale avè yo
Mele, mele, ki mele n avè yo
Zaila déjà nan kafou a, pale avè yo

Ki mele n oh, ki sa nou fè yo,
Zaila déjà nan lakou a, mannangan nan yo
Zaka bousou dyo, men ginengo yo
Zaka a bousou djo men asento yo
Zaka bousou dyo, men ginengo yo
Zaka a bousou djo pale avè yo

Depi n sot an afrik yo te divise n kon sa
Depi n te sot subaruo kaka voye kon sa (bis)
Devan devan lakou mizik
Devan devan lakou yas
Lakou mizik devan li vire gade dèyè yas (bis)
Pandan l gade dèyè li voye pye l devan yas (bis)

Greetings oh (Greetings sanba) (repeat)
I was just passing by they pointed fingers at the sanbas (x2)
I was just coming up they heard simidòs' voices (x2)
Oh, oh, oh (they pointed fingers at the sanbas)
Eh, eh, eh (they heard the voices of the simidòs)
Greetings (Greetings sanba) (x2)

Who cares? What have we done to them
Zaila is already at the street corner
Zaka positive spirit here are the ginen
Who cares, who cares, who cares about them?
Zaila is already at the street corner, talk to them (x2)

Who cares? What have we done to them?
Zaila is already at the street corner
Zaka positive spirit here are the ginen
Zaka positive spirit here are the asento
Zaka positive spirit here are the ginen
Zaka positive spirit talk to them
Who cares, who cares who cares about them?
Zaila is already at the street corner, talk to them

Who cares? What have we done to them?
Zaila is already in the courtyard,
Zaka positive spirit here are the ginen
Zaka positive spirit here are the asento
Zaka positive spirit here are the ginen
Zaka positive spirit talk to them

Since Africa they divided us that way
Since Subaruo shit happens (bis)
Foreward! Foreward, Lakou Mizik!
Foreward! Foreward Lakou yes
Lakou Mizik is moving forward, and turns to look back, yes (x2)
As it looks back, it kicks in forward, yes (x2)



TANBOU'N FRAPE (THE DRUM BEATS)

The tanbou (traditional Haitian drum) is as much a symbol of Haitian strength and pride as the Haitian flag.

The chorus, “When the drum beats our strength doubles,” gives a sense of how deeply this is felt. The song references sources of national pride and identity throughout – touchstones both geographic and spiritual that only Haitians can truly appreciate.

Ayibobo, laka lakaye
Ayibobo, twa baget, twa legede (bis)

Kote l pase fè tout sanm vibre,
Andan zantray nou li deméré
Kote l frape fè tout moun danse
Ave l nou te chante libète

Tout nasyon an te transfòme
Sou tèt zòtey nou tap danse
Tanbou n' frape gason pa kanpe non
Tout moun nèt konnen se ayisyen nou ye

Refrain
Ayibobo
Tanbou n frape fòs nou double
Manman tanbou libète a
Tanbou n frape fòs nou double
Twa tanbou Mantò Idjaye
Tanbou n frape

Ayibobo, laka lakaye
Ayibobo twa baget, twa legede (bis)

Espri yo n ta pral entèpelé,
Desalin Manze Defile,
Non mwen pa bezwen konn nasyonalite w
Badjou n nan kafou fòs nou double
Nou tout konn kiyes nou ye,
Yon pil manman ak papa libète
Depi w proche wap tou kole tande frè
Paske tanbou n frappe

Amen for our home
Amen, three drumsticks, three kata drum sticks (x2)

Wherever it goes, it gives me shivers
In our guts that's where it lives
Wherever it hits it makes everybody dance
With it we have sung for freedom

The whole nation has transformed
On our tip toes we danced
Our drums hit, men fall down
Everybody knows that we are Haitian

Chorus
Amen
When our drum hits our strength doubles
The mother drum of Liberty
When our drum beats our strength doubles
The three drums Mantò Idjaye
Our drum beats

Amen for our home
Amen, three drumsticks, three kata drum sticks (x2)

We were about to call out the spirits
Dessaline and Miss Defile
No I don't want to know your nationality
We are at the crossroads at dawn and our strength doubles
We all know who we are
Mothers and fathers of Liberty
If you come closer you'll get stuck
Because when our drum hits



(Refrain)

Ou pa konn Lakou Soukri
Ou pa konn Lakou Badjo
Ou pap ka jwenn bout nou
Ou pap ka jwen bout nou
Ou pa konn wout pou w al souvnans
Ou pa konn pik makaya
Ou pap ka jwen bout nou
Ou pap ka jwen bout nou
Ou pa jam konn jete dlo
Ou pa konn di ayibobo
Ou pap ka jwenn bout nou
Ou pap ka jwen bout nou
Pye w pa jam pile yon lakou
Wap pran pòz danse Vodou
Ou pap ka jwen bout nou
Ou pap ka jwen bout nou

Agosi, agola, agoye
Fòs nou double
Kot tanbou m yo, kot kata m yo, kot segon yo
Fòs nou double
Depi nan ginen nèg konsa o
Fòs nou double
Nèg soti an afrik tou konsa o
Fòs nou double
Agosi, agola, agoye
Fòs nou double
Depi nan lakou nou konsa
Fòs nou double

(Chorus)

You don't know Lakou Soukri
You don't know Lakou Badjo
You won't find out our essence
You won't find out our essence
You don't know the way to Souvnans
You don't know Pik Makaya Mountain
You won't know our essence
You won't know our essence
You don't give water to the spirit
You don't say Amen
You won't find our essence
You won't find our essence
You never stepped foot in a Lakou
You pretend to dance Vodou
You won't know our essence
You won't know our essence

Agosi, agola, agoye
Our strength doubles
Where are my drums, my kata, my second drum
Our strength doubles.
Since in Ginen we're like that
Our strength doubles
We came from Africa like that
Our strength doubles
Agosi, agola, agoye
Our strength doubles
We came from the Lakou like that
Our strength doubles

PEZE KAFE (GROUND COFFEE)

A traditional song expressing the frustrations of a young boy wrongfully arrested as he goes to the market to sell coffee for his mother to buy food for the family. The boy panics wondering what he'll tell his parents when he gets home without the money. In this version the band has added new verses to play out the whole story imagining in detail the poor boy's anxiety at having lost the precious goods that would help feed his family. The new verses add character and depth to this age-old song.

Manman m voye m peze kafe o
An arivan mwen sou pòtay
Yon jendarm arête mwen (bis)

Refrain

Mezanmi, mezanmi
Sa ma di lakay lè ma rive
Ou ou ou ou e wa, sa ma di lakay lè ma rive
Manman m pral kale mwen
Papa m pral kale mwen tandè
Sa ma di lakay lè ma rive,
Manman m pral kale mwen
Yo pral ronfle mwen tandè
Sa ma di lakay lè ma rive

Papa m ap tann lajan kafe l o
Bòs Derozye ou se sel temwen
Ki va fè papa m konen
Konen Ki jan sa te pase
Konen ki jan sa te pase

Chodye monte
Kòb gres yap tann o
Mwen pa lòtè pou kafe papa m
Te gaspiye nan gran chimen

(Refrain)

My mother sends me to sell coffee
As I get to the town's port of entry
A policeman arrests me (x2)

Chorus

My friends, oh my God
What will I say when I get back home?
What will I say when I get back home?
My mother will whip me
So will my father
What will I say when I get back home?
My mother will whip me
So will my father
What will I say when I get back home?

My father is waiting for the coffee's money
Mr. Derozye you are my only witness
Please tell him what happened
Please tell him what happened
Tell him what happened

The pot is on the stove
They are waiting for the money to buy oil
I'm not guilty of my father's coffee
Being wasted on the main road

(Chorus)

Yon peze kafe, ki bay kè kase
Granmou mwen voye m
Pa wè rezon pou m pa ale
Kafou bò anba pòtay la jwèt la konplike
Jandam nan tire pye
Mezanmi zen pete
Badjou preske kase
E m konnen frèt manman m pike
Se li ki voye m achète
An verite m pa kapab mize
Derozye ki tap gade
Se li sel ki ka temwanyen l
Mezanmi ede m rele l souple
Derozye o e wa

Bòs derosye vinn rakonte m o
Mwen pa konnen douvan pòt léta
Kouman jandame arèté l la
Chodye desann difé gaye o
Manche djakout mwen, badjou kaze m
M pral konn kisa k pase

(Refrain)

Derozye wo e wa, (4 fwa)

My pops sent me to sell coffee
Which got me in trouble
I had to go
The street corner by the town's entry is a tough place
The policeman got mad
Things went left
Night is about to fall
And I know my mother's whooping hurts
She is the one who sent me
I must be back on time
Derozye was watching
Only he can testify
Please help me call him
Derozye!

Mr. Derozye come tell me
I have never been to the police station
What made the policeman arrest me?
The pots off the stove and the coals are spread
I grabbed my bag as night was falling
I'm going to find out what happened!

(Chorus)

Hey Derozye please! (x4)

PRAN KA MWEN (TAKE CARE OF ME)

Based on a recording that Ethnomusicologist Alan Lomax made of a woman named Francilia in the late 1930s, this is a song that brings all levels of society together, letting us all know that no matter what our station in life we are an important piece of the fabric of our communities.

Iye, iye, iye (bis 4fwa)

Nou tout se moun sou latè e

Sanba yo pran ka mwen, ginen yo pran ka mwen

Fanmi m yo pran ka mwen, zanmi m yo pran ka mwen

Mwen vin sou latè pou m viv an pè tandè

Isi ba sou latè nou tout se yon sèl a dye (bis)

Mesye yo pran ka mwen, medam yo pran ka mwen

Katalye pran ka mwen, tanbouren pran ka mwen

Nou vin sou latè pou n viv an frè tandè

Isi ba n rete kwè nou tout se yon sèl a dye (bis).

Peyizan pran ka mwen, atizan pran ka mwen

Sosyete pran ka mwen, mezanmi pa bliye m

Mwen vin sou latè pou m viv an pè tandè

Isi ba sou latè nou tout se yon sèl a dye (bis)

Mesye yo pran ka mwen, medam yo pran ka mwen

Katalye pran ka mwen, tanbouren pran ka mwen

Nou vin sou latè pou n viv an frè tandè

Isi ba n rete kwè nou tout se yon sèl a dye (bis)

Peyizan m yo, nou tout se moun sou latè e

Atizan yo, nou tout se moun sou latè e

Madan sara m yo, nou tout se moun sou latè e

Sosyete a, nou tout se moun sou latè

Fanmi m yo, nou tout se moun sou latè e

Chofè moto yo, nou tout se moun sou latè

Iye, iye, iye (x4)

We are all one people on earth

Sanba care for me, spirits care for me

My family care for me, my friends care for me

I came on earth to live in peace

Down here on earth, we are all one people (x2)

The men care for me, the women care for me

The kata players care for me, the tanbou players care for me

We came on earth to live as brothers

Down here on earth, we believe we are all one (x2)

Peasants care for me, artisans care for me

Society cares for me, please don't forget me

I came on earth to live in peace

Down here on earth, we are all one (x2)

The men care for me, the women care for me

The kata players care for me, the tanbou players care for me

We came on earth to live as brothers

Down here on earth, we believe we are all one (x2)

My peasants, we are all one on earth

Artisans we are all one people on earth

My female merchants we are all one people on earth

Society, we are all one people on earth

Family, we are all one people on earth

Moto-Taxi drivers we are all one people on earth

IS FA TI BO

This is an original song done in the style of a konbit or workers song. The rolling drums call out to the workers to wake up and get to work. The song is an alarm bell, an urgent call for the country to come together to work and rebuild both literally and spiritually after the earthquake. It's meant to shake people to wake up, look forward and not let another day pass without getting back to the work at hand of moving Haiti forward.

Woule tanbou a pou mwen
Woule, woule tanbou a pou mwen oo
Lakou woule m non, woule m, woule m
Woule tanbou a pou mwen eeee
Anmwe, anmwe, is fa ti bo tande

Kanan kanan is fa ti bo
Mwen di w leve madanm, fò w lévé madanm
Lévé, lévé
Mwen di w léve manman, fò w lévé manman oo
Lévé , lévé

Ti madanm nan griye bon kou kafe
Di nèg lakou a l' lè, pou sonnen lanbi a
Pou eskwad yo ka rasanblé, woy
Mezanmi woy , gad'on lakou manman, woy,
Gad yon bagay papa, woy

Konsa na va bwe yon bon godèt kafe
Avan eskwad là li menm li demaré
Sa pap anpeche nou komanse, ha, ha ha

Woule tanbou a pou mwen
Na woule tanbou a pou mwen o
Fòk nou woule tanbou a pou mwen
Anmwe, anmwe is fa ti bo tanbe

Kanan kanan is fa ti bo (bis 4 fwa)

Roll the drum for me
Roll, roll the drum for me
Lakou roll it for me, roll it
Roll the drum for me, roll it
Oh my God! Oh my God! Is fa tibo

Kanan kana is fa ti bo
I ask you to wake up woman, you gotta wake up woman
Wake up wake up
Wake up mother, please wake up mother
Wake up wake up

The lady roasts enough coffee
Tell the Lakou guy that it's time to blow the lanbi
For the group squad to gather
Oh my God, what a lakou! Mother, please
Here is the thing father

We will have a good cup of coffee
Before the squad starts working
This won't stop us from starting, ha ha

Roll the drum for me
Roll the drum for me
You have to beat the drum for me
Oh my God, Is fa ti bo

Kana kanan is fa ti bo (x4)

Lò moman douz janvye finn pase
Jaden yo rèt atè wi yo pa planté
Kisa ti moun yo pral manje
Sitwayen yo kanpe yo pa pale
La jenès menm ap finn degrengole
Nan ki sa peyi sa prale

Woule tanbou a pou mwen
N a woule tanbou a pou mwen non
Fòk nou woule tanbou a pou mwen
Anmye, anmye, is fa ti bo tanbe

Kanan kanan is fa ti bo (bis 4 fwa)

Iye, eye eye e, aya ya yo, a ye waye iye
Jou bare m, jou bare m, jou bare m
Sa mwen pral di manman mwen
Jou bare m
Jou bare m, leogane mwen t ale
Jou bare m
Jou bare m, nan rara mwen te ye
Jou bare m
Jou bare m, sa mwen pral di lakay mwen
Jou bare m
Jou bare m kote m te ye a, jou bare m
Jeremi tal pran yon tonmtonm
Jou bare m, jou bare m sa m pral di manman m
Jou bare m

Since the January 12th earthquake hit
No one has worked the land
What will the children eat?
The citizens said nothing about it
The youth is lost
What has happened to this country?

Roll the drum for me
Roll the drum for me
You have to roll the drum for me
Oh my God, oh my God, is fa ti bo

Kana kanan is fa ti bo (x4)

Iye, Iye, eye, eye, aya ya yo, ye, aye ie
The day is breaking
What shall I say to my mama
The day is breaking
The day is breaking I went to Leogane and
The day is breaking
The day is breaking, I was dancing rara and
The day is breaking
The day is breaking, what am I gonna say back home
The day is breaking
The day is breaking
Where I was in Jeremie I went to get a tonmtonm
The day is breaking, what I am gonna say to my mother?
The day is breaking

WA DI YO (YOU TELL THEM)

A song of struggle that can be taken either directly in the first person sense or metaphorically speaking for all of Haiti. This is the story of perseverance in the face of all the things that life throws at you. Haitians know struggle more deeply than many – they have come so close to success they can taste it, but it always seems that an “other” tries to block the path. “Wa Di Yo Mwen La Toujou” means “You tell them, I’m still here.” This song is a defiant ode to the uncompromising and proud Haitian spirit.

Te gen tan wè wout mwen ta pral pase a
Mechan yo monte yon pakèt gwo mi pou bare m, pou bare m
Malgre sa m t ap janbe yo rale m, mwen tonbe, mwen tonbe, a yo, a ye
M pa vle rete a tè, nan do m pou yo pa fè sa yo vle, non, non
Sa k pa konpran di m se parese mwen ye
Sa k pa konpran di genm nan m’ te mal atake, a yo
Limyè, enèji e
Zanj bondje klere, klere

Refrain

W a di yo, nèg yo pa gen renmen nan kè yo anko, anko
W a di yo, lavi gen plis sekre ladan l
Wa di yo, mwen la toujou
Wa di yo, mwen la toujou

Dè fwa w leve, wè tout bagay parèt nwa, devan w
Vire gad’onw lòt, k ap triyonfe viktw
Tout otan ou gen lavi, pa sispann batay, ou nan konba e
Lavi a anwo, dè fwa l, pandye tèt anba, a yo
Sa k pa konprann di m se parese mwen ye
M ap di w se pa vre
Sa k pa konprann di genm nan te mal atake
Se pa vre
Limye, oh!

(Refrain)

Kot pil renmen yo tap di w, yo renmen w lan
Gad nan kè yo, pa genyen l vre
Y ap fè w bèl pwomès, epi pòt kè yo kadnase
Pa genyen l vre
Lanmoun enchene, enterè prime, wo anmwey ooo
Pa genyen l vre
Y ap ba w bèl pawòl, gad fon kè ... yo, se pa vre
Pa genyen l vre
Wa di yo (8 fwa)

I’ve already seen the path that I was going to take
The devils put up walls to stop me
Nevertheless I try to cross over, they pull me back, I fall down
I don’t stay down so they don’t do whatever they want on my back
Those who don’t understand say that I am lazy
Those who don’t understand say that I wrongfully attack
Light, energy
Angels of God light up

Chorus

Tell them, that these men have no love in their heart anymore
Tell them, that life has more secret to it
Tell them, that I am still hanging in there
Tell them, that I am still hanging in there

Sometimes you wake up and everything is so clouded
While someone else is triumphing
As long as you are alive, don’t give up the fight, you are in a battle
Life is high but sometimes up side down
Those who don’t understand say that I’m lazy
Let me tell that’s not true
Those who don’t understand say that I wrongfully attack
It’s not true
Light, oh!

(Chorus)

Where is all that love they said they had
Look into their heart, there is no love
They make you beautiful promises while their heart is locked up
There is none
Love is chained over personal interest.
There is none
They sugarcoat you, look into their heart, it’s not true
There is no love
Tell them (x8)

BON TAN (GOOD TIMES)

This song blends traditional and original lyrics and reminds Haitians to stay honest and true with each other because in the end they are the ones who will always be there to look after each other in good times and bad.

Refrain

Bon tan se mwen, move tan se mwen
Na wè sa e (bis)
Pa bliye pawòl nou te pale a
Wa sonje koze nou te koze a
Latibonit gen yon dlo'k travèse manman
Nik' pa travèse papa li (bis)
Ane a ban n lè pou n al etranje
Etranje ban nou dan li
Li pa ba nou kè li (bis)

(Refrain)

Nou fè bon tan, nou fè move tan
Nou bay sajès, nou bay kè kontan tande
N a wè sa ye e, n a wè, n a wè, n a wè (bis)
Nou fè bon tan, nou fè move tan
Nou bay sajès, nou bay kè kontan tande
Ayayay

Mwen di dlo ap desann, lapli ap tonbe
Pale moun yo pou mwen, wè pa wè bagay la gen pou l chanje (bis)
Si oka fè ka map mande charite (bis)
N ap fè lanmou ayizan, n ap fè l avè yo (4 bis)

(Refrain)

Chorus

I'm here in good times, I'm here in bad times
We'll always meet no matter what (x2)
Remember what we talked about
Remember the secrets we told each other
In Latibonit there is a river that crosses its mother
But not its father (x2)
This year gives us the wind to carry us abroad
Foreigners give us their smiles
But don't give us their hearts (x2)

(Chorus)

We make the good times and the bad times
We give wisdom and we give happiness
We'll always meet no matter what (x2)
We make the good times and the bad times
We give wisdom and we give happiness
Ayayay

The flood is coming, the rain is falling
Tell the people, like it or not a change is coming (x2)
If it comes down to it, I will beg for a living (x2)
We'll do it with love my brothers and we'll do it together (x4)

(Chorus)

SE AYITI WI!

This bonus track was Lakou Mizik's 2016 Kanaval Song. It moves from section to section following a common theme, first addressing the difficulties in the country and calling out for help. Both Vodou as well as Christian spirits are referenced. It then moves into reminding Haitians of their proud past, instilling in them the strength be free and take to the streets to demand change, just as their ancestors did in the revolution of 1804.

The song voices sentiments that mirror current events: "Bouke!" they call out – "we are fed up!" They are expressing the frustration of a people who have been given very little choice but to take to the streets to be heard.

Refrain (4 fwa)

Kouzin nou bezwen lwa yo

Kouzin nou bezwen lwa yo

Nap monte bwa kayiman pou fe rasanbleman

Nou bezwin lwa yo

Pou'n trouve la deliverans nou bezwen lwa yo

Bondyè Bondyè Kote'w ye Papa?

Bondyè Bondyè vire je gade yo souple

Ginen yo pale wa yo

Servitè yo tande vwa yo (bis)

Lwa yo pran lari

Ginen yo pran lari

Lespri yo pran lari

Lakou Mizik pran lari

Genlè yo bliye

Genlè yo bliye vre

Nou pral fe yo sonje kalite pèp nou ye

Nou pral fe yo sonje

Nou fe fyete tout pèp nwa sou la tè

Se Ayiti Wi!

Se nou'k te di boulet yo se pousyè

Se Ayiti Wi!

Tankou kòk kalite nou kon gagè nou

Se Ayiti Wi!

Chorus (x4)

Kouzin, we need the spirits

Kouzin, we need the spirits

We are walking up to "Bwa Kayiman" to bring people together

We need the spirits

For us to be delivered we need the spirits

God where are you Papa?

God fix your gaze on us please

The Ginen spirit has spoken

Your servants hear your voices (x2)

Vodou spirits are running free

The Ginen are taking to the streets

The Christian saints are running free

Lakou Mizik is taking to the streets

It seems they've forgotten

It seems they've really forgotten

We'll make them remember how great of a people we are

We'll make them remember

We bring pride to all black people on earth

That's Haiti!

It's we that said the bullets are just dust

That's Haiti!

Like a fighting rooster we know our battlefield

That's Haiti!

Aboli lesklavaj nou fe sa klè
Se Ayiti Wi!
1804 Montre sa nou ye
Yo sezi!
Yo panse nou pa tap sòt nan chèn na
Yo sezi!
Nou fout yo kal sa pou leson
Yo sezi!
Ayiti di'l pap pran presyon
Yo sezi!

Esklav yo pran lari
Libere (x4)

Bouke na rele moun sa yo wi'n bouke
Gad jan'n bouke
Sosyete Baz ilo kè a yo sote
Gwo lwa men nou la devan (bis)

1804 Montre sa nou ye
Yo sezi!
Yo panse nou pa tap sòt nan chèn na
Yo sezi!
Nou fout yo kal sa pou leson
Yo sezi!
Ayiti di'l pap pran presyon
Yo sezi!

Esklav yo pran lari
Libere (4 fwa)

We abolished slavery its clear
That's Haiti!
1804 showed them who we are
They were shocked!
They thought we wouldn't leave our chains
They were shocked!
We beat them to give them a lesson
They were shocked!
Haiti told them it wouldn't take it
They were shocked!

The slaves were freed
Liberated (x4)

Fed up we're shouting out we're fed up
See how fed up we are
We make their hearts jump
Our strong Vodou spirirts carry us forward (x2)

1804 showed them who we are
They were shocked!
They thought we wouldn't leave our chains
They were shocked!
We beat them to give them a lesson
They were shocked!
Haiti told them it wouldn't take it
They were shocked!

The slaves were freed
Liberated (x4)



LAKOU MIZIK

Steeve Valcourt – Guitar/Vocals

Jonas Attis – Vocals

Louis Lesly Marcelin “Sanba Zao” – Tanbour/Percussion/
Vocals

Nadine Remy – Vocals

Lamarre Junior – Bass/Bass Drum

Woulele Marcelin – Tanbour/Percussion

Peterson Joseph “Ti Piti” – Cornet/Snare/Percussion

James Carrier “Ti Malis” – Cornet/Percussion

Belony Beniste – Accordion

Chris Velan – Guitar on 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12 Banjo on 3

Produced by Chris Velan and Iestyn Polson

Recorded at Artists Institute, Jacmel Haiti

Mixed at Planet Studios, Montreal, Canada

Mastered by Tatsuya Sato at The Mastering Palace, New York, NY

Recording Assistance - Azgad Massena and David “Ti Boss” Noël

Cover Photography: Thomas Freteur

Lakou Mizik Logo Design: James Schaaf

Booklet Photography: Zach Niles, Nicolas Jolliet, Isaie Zeek Mathias

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Executive Producers: Steve Bing & Shelley Lazar

Lakou Mizik Management: Zach Niles, Christian Aramy

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*Except 5, 9 recorded at Peristil Mambo Mireille, Jacmel Haiti and

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For a digital booklet with lyrics, photos, videos and more visit:

www.cumbancha.com/booklets



ARTISTS INSTITUTE

www.artistsinstitute.org

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MÈSI ANPIL ZANMI YO NOU!

Se Ayiti Wi! (Kanaval Version)

Mixed by Power Surge Music Group (Serge Turnier)

Produced by Artists Institute, OneWay Productions,
Power Surge Music Group

Se Ayiti Wi! (La La Land Mix)

Guitar - Scott Carney

Mixed by Kevin Ratterman

MÈSI ANPIL ZANMI YO NOU!

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The Stearns Family
Thomas A. Rood
Tim Kelly
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Wally and Barbara Smith

Lakou Mizik is a multigenerational collective of Haitian musicians formed in the aftermath of the devastating 2010 earthquake. The group includes elder legends and rising young talents, united in a mission to honor the healing spirit of their collective culture and communicate a message of pride, strength and hope to the world.

“Wa Di Yo, Nou La Toujou” - “You Tell Them, We’re Still Here”

1 Intro: Morning In Jacmel 0:10

(Traditional)

2 Poze 3:18

(Traditional, Jonas Attis)

3 Panama'm Tonbe 3:16

(Traditional, Steeve Valcourt, Jonas Attis)

4 Anba Siklòn 4:39

(Louis Lesly Marcelin “Sanba Zao”, Jonas Attis, Steeve Valcourt)

5 Bade Zile 1:21

(Traditional, Arranged by Lakou Mizik)

6 Zao Pile Tè 6:37

(Louis Lesly Marcelin “Sanba Zao”)

7 Tanbou'n Frape 4:07

(Jonas Attis, Steeve Valcourt)

8 Peze Kafe 4:13

(Traditional, Steeve Valcourt, Jonas Attis)

9 Pran Ka Mwen 4:03

(Traditional, Steeve Valcourt, Jonas Attis)

10 Is Fa Ti Bo 3:43

(Steeve Valcourt, Jonas Attis, Lion Joint)

11 Parenn Legba 1:45

(Traditional, Arranged by Lakou Mizik)

12 Wa Di Yo 6:33

(Jonas Attis)

BONUS TRACKS

13 Bon Tan 4:15

(Traditional, Jonas Attis, Steeve Valcourt, Louis Lesly Marcelin “Sanba Zao”)

14 Se Ayiti Wi! (Kanaval Version) 5:20

(Jonas Attis, Steeve Valcourt, Louis Lesly Marcelin “Sanba Zao”)

15 Se Ayiti Wi! (La La Land Mix) 5:44

(Jonas Attis, Steeve Valcourt, Louis Lesly Marcelin “Sanba Zao”)

