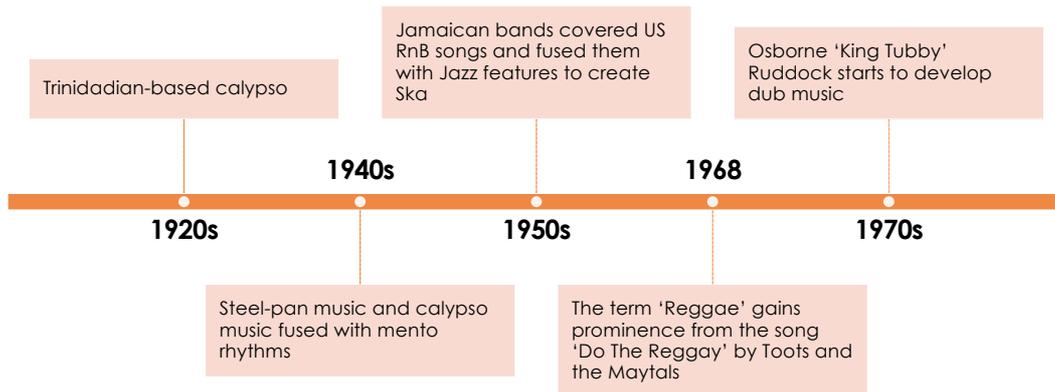




# Reggae, Ska and Dub

History and  
Development

# Origins



1920s – Calypso was the most popular genre of music in the Caribbean

1940s – Mento was a type of Jamaican folk music with rhythmic influences from Africa (Harry Belafonte – Jamaica Farewell)

1950s – Added features such as a brass/horn section (The Wailers – Simmer Down)

- Spawned the Jamaican Sound System Industry where DJ's would strap large PA speaker to a truck and ride around the country playing the latest sounds

- Ska travelled to London in to 50s and 60s and was known as Bluebeat

1970s – Reggae songs appear on the US top 40 (Desmond Dekker – Israelites)

- Used a dub machine to get rid of the vocals on a track
- Used large amounts of reverb and delay

Toasting vocal style (originated with DJs improvising spoken intros to songs and 'toasting' the crowd)

Vocals used call and response

# Ska

## Main Artists

- UB40
- Madness (*House of Fun* – 1982)
- The Specials
- Desmond Dekker (*The Israelites* – 1968)
- The Beat



- Pictured: Desmond Dekker
- Ska first emerged in the 50s-60s with a similar sound to reggae but a muck faster tempo (roughly double speed)
- Speed slowed down towards the end of the 60s (rock steady) before developing into Reggae
- The late 70s saw a revival of this style of music, merging it with styles like Punk
  - Seen in the UK through bands like UB40 and Madness

## Reggae Main Artists

- The Skatalites
- Alton Ellis (I'm Still In Love – 1967)
- Bob Marley & The Wailers (Could You Be Loved – 1980)
- Jimmy Cliff
- Burning Spear
- Dennis Brown
- Gregory Issacs (Night Nurse – 1982)
- Damian Marley



- Pictured: Damian Marley

# Dub

## Main Artists

- King Tubby (*King Tubby Meets Rockers Uptown* – 1976)
- Lee 'Scratch' Perry (*Disco Devil* – 1988)
- Scientist (*Enjoyment Dub* – 2013)



- Pictures: King Tubby
- Mainly instrumental music using just drums and bass
  - Used by DJs to 'toast' over
- Large amounts of reverb

# Technology & Production

- Bass is very thick and heavy
- Drums have noise gates applied to them
- Snare is often tuned tightly
- EQ on the staccato keys and guitar
- Extensive use of reverb and delay



- Pictured:
- EQd attenuated higher frequencies and boosted lower frequencies, heavy compression used, sits quite high in the mix
- Noise gates isolate the drums to give them a 'punchier' sound
- Snare tries to emulate the sound of a timbale from Cuba
- EQ made to sound unnaturally thin
- Extensive reverb and delay used to create a sense of space