

Sonic Tourism In Haitian Rara

a talk by

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**3/27/15
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12:25 pm**

Event co-sponsored by Departments of Musicology, Africana Studies, American Studies and the Center for Latin American Studies

For Haitian tourists, the sound of music not only evokes feelings of “home,” but also creates a sense of national connection, or “long-distance nationalism,” that allows diaspora Haitians to participate in Haitian life despite living abroad. One action that long-distance nationalists take to connect to their homeland is to consume the sounds of Haitian Rara through “sonic tourism.” Specifically, Haitian Rara bands extend the local performance of Rara to Haitians abroad through the circulation of audio recordings that create an ongoing connection between Haiti and the Haitian diaspora. By participating in this transnational economy, diaspora Haitians are helping their home country and providing a means for Haitians abroad to engage in political action across national boundaries.



Michael Largey is Professor of Musicology at Michigan State University. An ethnomusicologist and folklorist specializing in the music and culture of Haiti, Largey is the award-winning author of *Vodou Nation: Haitian Art Music and Cultural Nationalism* (University of Chicago Press, 2006) and is a co-author (with Peter Manuel and Kenneth Bilby) of the revised and expanded edition of *Caribbean Currents: Caribbean Music from Rumba to Reggae* (Temple University Press, 2006). His most recent book is titled *Haitians in Michigan* (Michigan State University Press, 2010). Largey earned his M.A. and Ph.D. in folklore and ethnomusicology from Indiana University.