

# WORLD MUSIC

## HAITI

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WD-HT1 Haiti 1979

### LA GROTTE

Creole – Compas – Humor – Vocal & Instrumental

**Comp:** Ti ROLAND ([LY-WD17](#))

**Perf:** MAUD & TI-ROI

Maud (vocal)  
Henri Tignat [aka. Ti-Roi] (keyboards)  
M. Montreuil (synthesizer))  
Claude D. Hesley (guitar)  
R. Laurent (bass)  
Almando Keslin (drums & tambora)

**Prod:** Jean & Janine Hogarth

**Prod. Co:** J. J. Records; Port-au-Prince

**Rec. Co:** Audiotek Sound Studio

**Time:** 4:16

**LP:** LA GROTTE

J. J. 104 (stereo)

12" 33rpm (Sd 1 – Bd 1)

**Notes:** The *compas* (from the Spanish meaning beat or rhythm) is a musical genre derived from the meringue, the national music of Haiti that people have been dancing and singing since the 1800s. One of the most distinctive characteristics of compas music is the consistent pulsating beat (tambora drum), a trait common to many styles of Caribbean music. Compas has a slower beat and dance than merengue. (Anon. n.d.)

A rhythmic dance song, sung in Creole, where the chorus repeats the words “la grotte [cave]” twice. The lyrics were kindly transcribed and translated to French by Wislande & Ifaunia Joseph.

One needs to wait for the chorus at the end to find out what the song is all about. It tells the story of a Haitian girl who won't listen to her parents. Every Saturday morning she takes 4 hours to go to Mass where she prays to the Virgin Mary. But the Virgin gets angry because the girl had been telling her parents that if they prevented her from praying to the Virgin she will lose her happiness. In the end the chorus tells the whole tale and we find out that the “cave” is Mr. Rolo's place –

REFRAIN:

Ti rolo se pè a,  
la kay li se grot la  
Lili notre dame nan  
bonheur a nan 9 mwa.

REFRAIN:

Résultat : Monsieur Rolo, c'est le père  
chez lui, c'est la grotte  
Lili c'est le notre dame  
le bonheur est dans 9 mois.

CHORUS:

Result: Mr. Rolo is the father  
his place, it's the cave  
Lili is our lady  
happiness is in 9 months.

The use of synthesizers here is not purely ethnic, but the music is ethnic enough.

**Ref:** Anon. n.d., Compas Music, [Wikipedia](#)

La Grotte, Haiti, [konpa.info](#)

Joseph, Wislande & Ifaunia 2013, Transcription & Translation of the Lyrics, Nov. 2013, Paris, France

Maud & Ti-Roi, La Grotte LP, [Discogs](#)

Mirtil, Emmanuel 2006, Maud et Ti-Roi, [MusiqueHaiti](#)

