

WORLD MUSIC

VENEZUELA

WD-VE1 Netherlands 2000

LA CUEVA DEL MATO

(THE CAVE OF THE LIZARD)

WD – Traditional – Erotic – Vocal & Instrumental

Comp: (Traditional)

Perf: SON DE CHUAO

Esteban Borges, Ementerio Morillo, Martin Caballos,
Juan José Carruyo, Luis Urbina (vocal & chorus)
Victor Yuñes Castillo (paila drum & conga)
Reinaldo Chavez (cumacos & bongos)
Anderson Escalante (congas & cumacos)
Dennys Guerra (cumacos)
Abelardo Chavez & Anibal Lopez (palo)

Prod: Bartolemé Duysens

Prod. Co: Pan Records; Leiden, Netherlands

Rec. Co: Fiore Studio; El Paraiso, Caracas

Rec. Date: Jan. 2000

Liner Notes: Bartolemé Duysens (8-page Booklet)

Time: 7:20

CD: SABOR A CACAO – THE TASTE OF CACAO

Pan 187CD (Tk 6)

Notes: A traditional Afro-Caribbean percussion piece from the city of Chuao in the Miranda Province of the Cocoa Coast in north central Venezuela.

The liner notes explain this traditional chant – “In *La cueva del mato* the steamy rhythm is fully unleashed and the musicians appear to go into a collective trance. This is one of the oldest and most typical dances of Chuao. The movements illustrate the lizard’s search for a hiding-place. Men walk on all fours and move like a lizard as they try to enter a sheltered place located in the body of their female partner –

‘Make a circle for the dancers to begin.

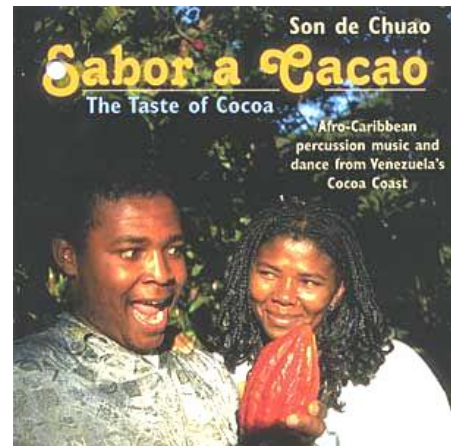
Throw yourself on the ground and look for the cave!

Look for it upwards and downwards,

Put your head inside and stick out your tongue.’ “

This dance is further described – “In it the male dancer mimics a lizard, creeping on its four legs towards the shelter of the cave, licking with its tongue and making acrobatic movements to accomplish its goal. The female partner tries to avoid penetration by the lizard. Witnessing these dances, one can imagine why the Church and secular authorities have always tried to repress and even prohibit them, and punish those who perform them.” This frantic dance piece has insistent percussions and a constantly repeated chant, which goes on and on for over 7 minutes.

Regarding the percussion instruments used here – “The cumaco [drum], which may be up to two meters in length, is placed on the ground. The player then sits on the body of the drum and strikes the skin with both hands... Behind the player’s back, one or two other players bend down to beat rhythms with wooden sticks – known as palos... – on the wooden body of the drum. Together these players produce the specific sound of the cumaco.” (Liner Notes)



One audio clip [Allmusic](#) provided a rapid chant where “Cueva del Mato” was repeated in a frantic manner backed with much percussion while the other on [Amazon](#) had a different segment of this frenzied piece. This may well be the same piece, “La Cueva del Mato,” billed as a rare field recording by the Drummers of Chuao, which was aired on BBC Radio 3 on July 10, 2004 during the program, “The Hidden Music of Venezuela.”

Ref: La Cueva del Mato, BBC Radio 3, bbc.co.uk

Son de Cacao, Sabor a Cacao CD, [Abeillemusique](#)

Son de Cacao, Sabor a Cacao CD, [Allmusic](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

Son de Cacao, Sabor a Cacao CD, [Amazon](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

caveinspiredmusic.com