About the Artists

Paulo Padilha e Bando perform a popular form of music from Brazil called samba. Paulo is known for his clever lyrics that tell the story of daily life as an artist in the bustling Brazilian city of São Paulo. However, the lighthearted melodies and upbeat rhythms are captivating even to those who don’t speak Portuguese, the official language of Brazil.

With twenty years of teaching experience, cultural research, and rhythmic expertise, Paulo Padilha e Bando is a group of master musicians that love to share their passion for music and Brazilian culture with students of all ages.

Members

Paulo Padilha  Guitar, vocals
Samba Sam  Percussion, vocals
André Magalhães  Sound engineer, percussion, vocals
Dani Zulu  Percussion, vocals, dance
Leo Mendes  Guitar, electric bass, vocals

Samba

Samba is a style of music and dance that began with enslaved African people in the state of Bahia, Brazil. The music is primarily played with cavaquinho, a guitar-like instrument, and a variety of percussion instruments. The distinctive rhythms are an essential part of samba.

Samba has remained a vital part of Brazilian culture in part because of the samba schools, or “escolas de samba,” throughout the country that teach this musical and dance tradition. Each school represents a neighborhood or region with its own unique style of samba, and the schools compete against each other as part of the annual Carnival celebration. The competitions are a point of pride for the whole community, and preparations often begin soon after the previous year’s celebration. See the Country & Culture study guide for more information about Carnival.

Video

Watch Paulo explain the musical elements of samba in several educational YouTube videos that he calls Samba Drops.

Learn more at artsmidwest.org/worldfest
Paulo Padilha e Bando  Brazil

Surdo
Pronounced SOOR-doo. The surdo, or surdo de primeiro, is an upright barrel drum that provides the low boom sound in samba music. This is the heartbeat of samba. The surdo is often played with a mallet and the performer’s hand, but in some styles it is played with two mallets.

Cavaquinho
Pronounced cah-vah-KEEN-you. The cavaquinho is a four-stringed instrument played with a pick. Though shaped like a guitar, the cavaquinho is tuned differently and is smaller in size. The instrument was originally from Portugal, but it has become associated with Brazil due to its significant role in samba music.

Video
Click here to watch videos of Paulo and his ensemble performing and talking about their instruments. Do you see any of the instruments above in his videos?