



López Cruz, Francisco

Francisco López Cruz is a Puerto Rican musician known as a performer, composer and teacher of traditional Puerto Rican music. Among his most important contributions to the musical culture is the preparation of a curriculum for teaching the cuatro, a traditional Puerto Rican string instrument with which he is identified. He is also known for the research he has done on indigenous folk music, as well as his participation in projects to rescue the traditional string instruments of Puerto Rico, such as the cuatro and the bordonúa.

“Paquito” López Cruz, as he was known, was born in December of 1909 in the town of Naranjito. His fascination with music led him to dedicate himself at a young age to playing the guitar. Later in life, he learned to play other instruments, such as the cuatro, the tiple, the bordonúa, the clarinet, the trumpet and the piano. In 1938, he earned a degree in Education and graduated from the University of Puerto Rico. He later studied at the Julliard School of Music in New York and, in 1953, earned his Ph.D. at the Central University of Madrid.

While studying, he worked as a musician with various groups, including the Cuarteto Victoria, a group led by Puerto Rican composer Rafael Hernández. In 1947, he began teaching music at the University of Puerto Rico, where he also directed the choir of the university's high school. Along with others, he also founded the Ballet Folclórico Areyto. In the late 1960's, he began to offer classes in traditional instruments at the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture.

López Cruz is the author of: *La música folklórica de Puerto Rico* (1967), *El aguinaldo y el villancico en el folklore puertorriqueño* (1958), *Cancionero navideño* (1961), *Música del pueblo puertorriqueño* (1966), *El aguinaldo en Puerto Rico* (1968) and *Método para la enseñanza del cuatro puertorriqueño* (1968). His musical compositions are *Pomponina*, *El coquí*, *Las cogedoras de café*, *Si tú fueras rosa* and *Tú en los pinos*.

He died in San Juan in 1988.

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