



Manchester  
13 October 2015

# Manchester School of Samba

## A Brief History



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“THIS IS AN ORCHESTRA. A BODY OF MUSICIANS DEDICATED TO A BELIEF IN A PARTICULAR KIND OF MUSIC” STAN KENTON

“DELICATELY, SHE EXPLORED EVERY INTERSTICE IN THE RHYTHM, DANCING FIRST TO THE LIGHT METAL INSTRUMENTS, THEN TO THE DRUMS, RESHAPING THE MUSIC INTO MOVEMENT AND MAKING ALL IT'S DIFFERENT PARTS VISIBLE: THE SONG LINE'S RISE AND FALL, THE CHANGES IN THE RHYTHM...” “SAMBA” BY ALMA GUILLMORPRIETO

**Manchester School of Samba (MSS)** is **Anthony Watt** trading as Manchester School of Samba Musical Director and Manager of an arts organisation formed in 1995 to foster the appreciation of **Brazilian culture** through rhythm and dance. I am at the centre of a community focused on carnival art forms which anyone can join. We have up to 100 strong annual membership including dancers, a bateria (body of drummers), a brass section, costume makers and puppeteers (to order).

We meet weekly at Sacred Trinity Church, Chapel Street, **Salford**, to learn new pieces dance and have fun together!

Currently there is a regular attendance of around 40 people who come to dance to (led by Danny Henry) and/or play a variety of Brazilian rhythms (led by Tony) including **Samba, Samba-Reggae, Ciranda, Coco, Afoxé** and **Mara-catú**.

Our membership, all of whom live in the Northwest, comes from all walks of life. It includes both amateurs and professionals and of course, occasionally a few Brazilians. This is a bunch of people who enjoy what they do and who through their skill and ability generate something of the spirit and atmosphere of a Brazilian Carnival rehearsal. Everything is played in a serious but light-hearted way, and we strive to make it an inclusive body.

## What we've done!

- Directly or indirectly the initiated of at least eight of the Northwest's Community bands.
- Developed a special relationship with certain other community art forms and projects (or art forms used by communities), especially Manchester 5000, The Saint Luke's Arts Project and the Manchester Gegantés.
- Provided courses for City College Manchester (Basic & Intermediate Brazilian Percussion).
- Provided motivational & recreational activities for **corporate clients** (Halifax, MFI, Rossetti & Radisson Hotels, Strutt & Parker, BGF Corporate).
- Worked with other professional arts organisations (**The Whalley Range All Stars, Community Arts Workshop, Swamp Circus Theatre, St. Luke's Arts Project**).
- Although we only have 80 to 100 members at present we have seen over 800 people as members over the 20 years we've existed. MSS is not a Social Club or a Band or a Community Group it's **ALL THREE**. It attempts to involve itself in the local community in a way similar to a Brazilian Samba School or Afro Bloc.

## Community Work

Firstly through our involvement in Manchester 5000 we have helped to start Samba Schools in many of the districts of Greater Manchester as well as playing in a few local and national carnivals. **We remain at the centre of the Samba scene here in NW England.**



Secondly through our work for Salford Education & Advisory and Salford, Halton, Wigan and Manchester Schools we have completed projects which resulted in a show or permanent band. This particular combination of art forms in education and community art has great utility. **It can leave a lasting legacy.**



We have found the **injection of a Brazilian Carnival tradition into pre-existent local celebrations** can create something even more vibrant and spectacular. For example when we worked with Bridgwater Carnival from 2005 to 2007.

We have been **animating Manchester City centre for the last 20 years** initially by simply busking for a couple of hours occasionally on a Saturday, latterly through being booked to play or as part of **The Manchester Day Parade**, much to the appreciation of the majority of locals (we now discover).



## Educational Work

Writing and provision of courses for **Manchester 5000** which has influenced the development of Brazilian style percussion in this country.

Writing and provision of courses for **Mancat & City College** (now **The Manchester College**) which has influenced the development of Brazilian style percussion in Greater Manchester and the Northwest of England and led some people to seek further tuition from other local & International organisations.

Our **Wednesday night sessions** which have inspired the formation of other organisations (Boom or Bust, Sambangra & Liverpool Samba School for example).

Provision of facilitators for other professional organisations both at home and abroad (Redondo Musica Amsterdam and Hochschule für Musik und Theater, Rostock for example).

**We have also provided a Social focus for a large number of people both here in NW England and further afield.**

**MSS** have played a wide variety of events and venues, both in the surrounding region and further afield, and have been seen by thousands of people.



Drumming and dancing has been used by many cultures worldwide to bring people together, be that to celebrate or commemorate, and the Brazilian mode is very accessible. This is a style of music and dance designed to bring people together and forget about other aspects of life and simply celebrate being alive! Over the years we have found it can be used to enhance and enliven existing celebratory occasions or foment new ones. The more in tune with each other the performers are through the medium of the music the better able they are to express themselves using music, dance, costume and animated puppets with melody as the icing on the cake.

Considered "best moment" (Select Magazine) of the opening night of "Hard Times" at Club Nato in Leeds, we returned on a regular basis and also played regularly at "Freak" at the **Hacienda**, Manchester (where we saw in the New Year '97 - to wild applause from the crowd!).

**La Vanguardia** of Barcelona considered us the highlight when we played their Mercé!

We have paraded at the biggest Street Carnival in Europe, **The Notting Hill Carnival** since 1996, four times as part of the Amnesty International's troupe.

As part of an ACE sponsored touring project we came 3<sup>rd</sup> in **Notting Hill Carnival 2006** in the category "Large Band" by parading as the advance guard of **Masquerade 2000**.



## What we could do for you!

**Manchester School of Samba (MSS)** is a pool of people interested in **Carnival** styles, in particular **Brazilian Percussion** and **Culture**, rhythms, and pieces that can be performed in any context, on the street or indoors.

We can offer performances and/or workshops in a number of different formats, according to your requirements:

**1) The Whole School: Giant Puppet, 10 Dancers Brass section** and up to 25-strong (or more) **bateria**

**2) MSS Small School: BATERIA & Dancers**

A 15-25-piece percussion band which can include a small brass section.

**3) CLUB/CAFÉ BAND**

A 10+ piece band comprising elements of the above, suitable to play a PA type set, indoors or outdoors as required by the promoter. re-

**4) “Pagode Group”**

Five musicians play a variety of rhythms and songs from Brazil.

**5) ONE DAY WORKSHOP**

One Drum Tutor and an assistant and enough instruments for a 30 piece Bateria. Two sessions comprise one day each lasting at least 1 1/2 hours both morning and afternoon.

One Dance tutor and one or more percussionists. Two sessions comprise one day each lasting at least 1 1/2 hours both morning and afternoon.

**6) HALF DAY WORKSHOP**

One Drum tutor and enough instruments for a 30 piece Bateria. One session lasting at least 1 1/2 hours, morning, afternoon or evening.

One Dance tutor. One session lasting at least 1 1/2 hours, morning, afternoon or evening.

“FOR ONE THING, IT DOESN’T HAVE SAMBA,” I SAID, MEANING THAT IT COMPLETELY LACKS THE CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINED EPISODES OF INTENSE UNAMBIVALENT JOY.” “SAMBA ALMA GUILLMORPRIETO

## Our Gigs To date Include



- Two Fashion shows for **Flannels** held at the **Royal Exchange** in '95 and '96.
- The **Castlefield Carnival Manchester '95**, **Boothstown Festival '98/99**, **Prestwich Carnival '99 & 2000**, **Blackpool Puppetry Festival '02**, **Eurocultured Festival '08**, **Hungry Pigeon Festival '09**, **Garden City Festival '10**, **Brazilica 2011-15**, **Manchester Day Parade 2010 - 15**, **Dig The City & The Geronimo Festival '15**.
- The pre-match entertainment at the first match of the **'95** season for **Manchester City FC**, and pre-match entertainment at **Eastlands Stadium '03**, opening of **Newcastle United's 2000 Season**, **Leigh Centurions RLFC '05**, **Hull Kingston Rovers '08**,
- **Gordon Banks Statue** unveiling at Britannia Stadium, Stoke with **Pelé** and **Archbishop Desmond Tutu** (he thanked me „for all the lovely music“) '08, **Rugby Union Grand Trafford Stadium '09**, **Bolton '09 & '10**, **MU Family Fun Day**
- **Alderley People's Festival '95**, **Blackburn**, **Bradford Infestival '97/'98 & 2000**, opening parade for **The Peepuls Centre '05**, support for **Massive Attack** for **Beck's Fusions**, **Manchester '08**, **Whitworth Art Gallery '09, '10, '13**, **“The Storming”** of **The Cornerhouse** to close it 2015.



**Final at Old Wanderers '01, '14.**



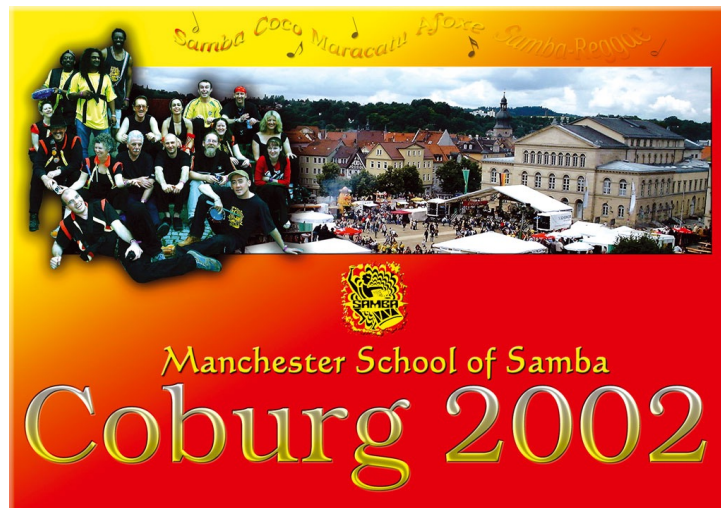
**'96 & '97, internationaling parade for**



- Code for the opening of **"In The City '95"** at which we appeared on **Janet Street-Porter's Live TV** cable channel. A poster advertising our club night **"Ipanema"** appeared in the background on **Granada's Coronation Street** in 2000! **Strictly Come Dancing** in 2008, **Britain's Got Talent** in 2010 and **BBC World Service Sports-world** October 2015.
- Providing street entertainment in **Crewe town centre** in '95/ '97 & 2000 as part of the "Streets Alive" Festival. **Lytham Club day '01**, appeared in **Carlisle's** Summer Festival '98, 2000 & 2015, **Coventry Carnival** 2001-3, **Kendal Carnival '03 & '05**, **Adlington Carnival '15**.
- Opening event of the **Manchester Festival** in **Castlefield** October '95. Opening & closing events of the **Bridgewater Hall's ¡Hola Cuba! Festival** in 2000. **Drum slam** with Sambangra for the opening ceremonies of **The Lowry Centre** in 2000.
- The **Samba School's Christmas Party** at **Band On The Wall** In December '95 and '97 & '98. Annual appearances there to 2000. Recent residency at **Revolucion de Cuba, Manchester '13 & '14**.



- **Streets Ahead Festival, Drogheda Samba Festival** (premier one in Eire), **Redondo International Samba Festival '99, Toulouse Encontro '99, Coburg International Samba Festival 2000-7.**



- **Euro '96 Festival, Church of England Bishop's Conference** entertainment 2000, **Boss Model Agency's Halloween Party** in costume '98, workshops and performances as part of **Brazil 40° '04** for **Selfridges** in Birmingham & Manchester.
- The centre of The **Manchester 5000** development project from '96 to 2000 (same Musical Director, Anthony Watt) which culminated in a performance of 1,200 drummers, 100 dancers and a 20 piece brass section in Castlefield Events Arena, Manchester in 2000 working with a Mestré from **Olodum**. The **Eardrummers** in '96-'98 and **Parade of the Senses** in '97 working with **The Whalley Range All Stars** (Musical Director Anthony Watt, Choreographer Danny Henry), **Nzi Dada** with **Xumo Ronaldo '02**.



- **Nato night-club in Leeds**, for the **“Hard Times” DJs** - Voted ‘best moment’ by Select Magazine.
- **The Mardi Gras Carnival Parade** ’95 to 2000 - voted joint best community float with St. Luke’s Arts Project in ’95. Best Amateur Band in the **Lord Mayor’s Parade, Manchester** in 2000.



- **The “Mas” Drum Festival** in Stoke on Trent ‘01. Anthony wrote the parts and was the **Musical Director** for a mini Encontro of 10 Samba Schools.

- **Barcelona Mercé** ’96, **Belfast Sea Change Festival** ’97 **Disability World Paralympic Games** opening ceremony **Birmingham** ’98 and **Notting Hill Carnival Parade London** ’96 to 2005 {’96 to 2000 for **Amnesty International**}, **Commonwealth Games** ’02 **Olympic Opening Party** in Manchester ‘12.