



New York-based guitarist, vocalist, and songwriter **Michael LeMorin** was born in Haiti, where he laid the foundation for his Afro-Caribbean jazz sound. His repertoire offers sweet and piquant melodies over lush tropical chords and a cadence that makes the heart—and the feet—dance. Original lyrics, flirtatious and bold, move seamlessly through French, English, and Haitian Creole while exploring the sonic secrets of twoubadou, bossa nova, and other treasures of the Caribbean. In New York City LeMorin has performed for diverse audiences, including his own Haitian community, and he has several recordings to his credit.

LeMorin relocated to the United States in 1980 and settled in the Bronx and then Manhattan's West Village. From 1981 on he played konpa, arguably Haiti's most popular dance band style, with the eminent band DJet-X. In 1986 he performed as well with the Vodou-jazz group Sakad, directed by Nicol Levy, which experimented with the fusion of the sacred sounds of Vodou and jazz and which laid the foundation for Haiti's roots music movement. In 1987 LeMorin founded his own group, Freedom Sound. During this time, he studied voice with Sheila Egan and jazz guitar with Howard Morgan at the Guitar Study Center of the New School. He has studied as well with distinguished Haitian producer and arranger Dernst Emile.

In 1990 Freedom Sound released its first album, *Songs of Freedom*. The album received enthusiastic response in Haiti when the band introduced it there. Radio Metropole promoted the song "O Dei" ("Oh God") and Radio National "Politik" ("Politics") and "Revolution." When Freedom Sound disbanded, LeMorin founded an ensemble with a more international mix that blended reggae with the exuberant sound of Haitian rara. The band played clubs in the West

Village and other Manhattan venues, including SOBs, New Music Cafe, and the Bitter End, and its music received radio airtime.

LeMorin has made appearances at Lincoln Center in connection with his work on Karen Kramer's film *Children of Shadows* (screened at the World Film Festival in Montréal, 2001), at Brooklyn College in a tribute to Haitian singer and composer Guy Durosier, and at the Pan Africa Festival USA in Maryland. On Christmas Eve in 2004 he acted and sang the part of the troubadour Anatole alongside Danny Glover on the stage of Avery Fisher Hall in Mapou Production's groundbreaking play, *How Papa Noel Forgot Haiti*. In 2005 Mapou Productions presented him again at Carnegie Hall—along with Glover, the band Tabou Combo, singer Léon Dimanche, and other notable Haitian artists—in support of *Replant Haiti*, a reforestation effort. He has toured in Japan, South America, the Caribbean, and Canada.

Michael LeMorin's music began to assume its current feel as he blended ingredients of Brazilian samba and bossa nova into a style that preserved both the jazz and the neo-troubadour essences of his work. He organized the Pawòl–Anago band to showcase the sound at various New York venues, and in 2011 he recorded his album *Pawòl*. Following *Pawòl*, LeMorin continued to experiment with quartets and quintets both in live performance and in studio in the lead-up to his newest album, *Li Di Mwen*, released in July 2020. With the exception of LeMorin's fresh arrangement of Claude Marcelin's "Manoucheka," the album offers a collection of original songs spanning the composer's career in New York. Taste the fruits of this work [here](#).

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