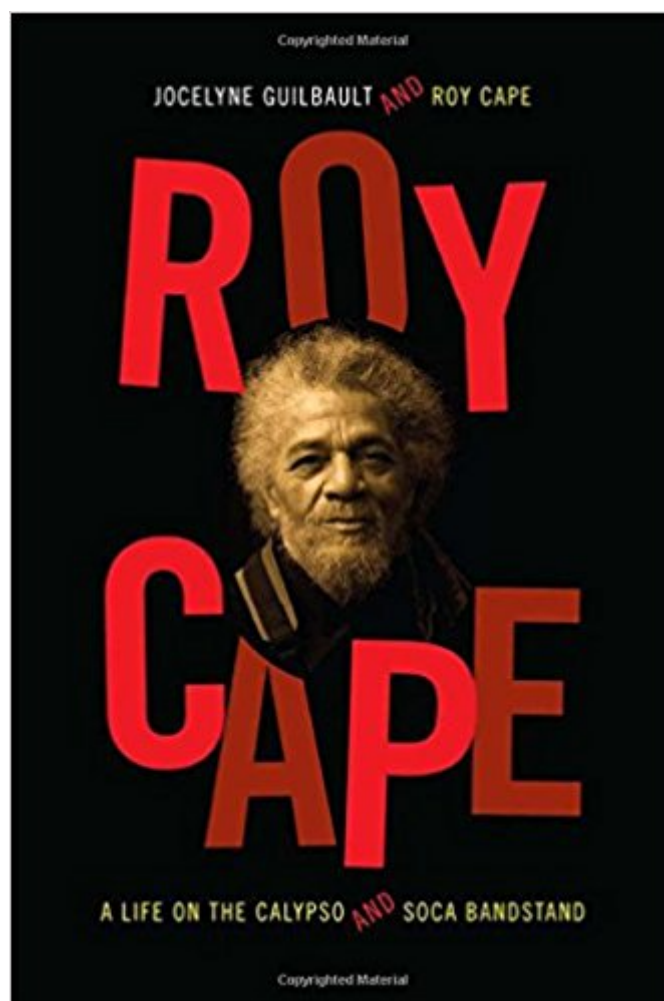


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# Roy Cape: A Life On The Calypso And Soca Bandstand



## Synopsis

Roy Cape is a Trinidadian saxophonist active as a band musician for more than fifty years and as a bandleader for more than thirty. He is known throughout the islands and the Caribbean diasporas in North America and Europe. Part ethnography, part biography, and part Caribbean music history, *Roy Cape* is about the making of reputation and circulation, and about the meaning of labor and work ethics. An experiment in storytelling, it joins Roy's voice with that of ethnomusicologist Jocelyne Guilbault. The idea for the book emerged from an exchange they had while discussing Roy's journey as a performer and bandleader. In conversation, they began experimenting with voice, with who takes the lead, who says what, when, to whom, and why. Their book reflects that dynamic, combining first-person narrative, dialogue, and the polyphony of Roy's bandmates' voices. Listening to recordings and looking at old photographs elicited more recollections, which allowed Roy to expand on recurring themes and motifs. This congenial, candid book offers different ways of knowing Roy's labor of love—his sound and work through sound, his reputation and circulation as a renowned musician and bandleader in the world.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"This book is one of a kind, a bold and imaginative text that promotes new ways of thinking about music as a social activity. The narrative and analytic sections are beautifully written in clear, concise prose. The oral testimonies that permeate the book are filled with memorable phrases and remarkable insights. The quality of the photographs and the original and generative readings that

accompany them will make Roy Cape a cherished possession for many readers." (George Lipsitz, coauthor of *The Fierce Urgency of Now: Improvisation, Rights, and the Ethics of Cocreation*) "Roy Cape is a true delight. It is an engagingly written portrayal of the interplay of Roy Cape's musicianship and life, demonstrating how his social relations on the bandstand are inextricably connected to the way he lives in the world. I like the way that the book moves from the conventions of biography to a lively exchange between Cape and Jocelyne Guilbault, and then becomes increasingly adventurous, only to slow down again before the poignant afterword." (Ronald Radano, author of *Lying Up a Nation: Race and Black Music*) "The book is rich in the details of Cape's life and his times. . . . Recommended." (T. E. Miller *Choice*) "This is a superb book on a much-neglected area of world music: the pivotal role played by the bandleader, who for too long has remained in the shadows." (Charles de Ledesma *Songlines*) "The unique style of interweaving storytelling and anthropological research with the voices of Roy Cape, the subject of this work, and Jocelyne Guilbault, an astute ethnomusicologist, is both refreshing and exciting.... Roy Cape: A Life on the Calypso and Soca Bandstand is a mustread for all researchers, students, aspiring musicians, and aficionados of popular music in general and of Caribbean music and popular music culture in particular." (Donna P. Hope *Journal of Anthropological Research* 2016-02-01) "Jocelyne Guilbault... is one of the few non-Caribbean ethnomusicologists who has researched Eastern Caribbean music as if she is an insider, particularly from the perspective of band members rather than headline singers. Together in unique collaboration, this matched pair has created a short book that both illuminates the career of a pivotal musician and constructs a refreshing approach to narrative, dialogic ethnomusicology." (Donald Hill *American Anthropologist* 2016-03-01) "Roy Cape: A Life on the Calypso and Soca Bandstand is a successful path finding experiment in terms of its content as well as of its form. In departing from traditional or conventional biography towards the multivocal, multimodal presentation of Roy Cape, the book alters researchers to the fact that they, like Nobel-Prize winner Derek Walcott, need to create new metaphors for and forms of communicating our collective (musical) experience." (Louis Regis *The World of Music* 2015-02-01) "[A]n admirable collaboration, both in producing new perspectives to existing Caribbean scholarship and in demonstrating that there is still much to learn from 'behind the scenes' of the West Indian carnival music industry." (Amelia K. Ingram *Latin American Music Review* 2016-09-01) "[W]hile reading Roy Cape, readers may end up feeling as though they are sitting around a coffee table in Trinidad with Guilbault and Cape, passing around old pictures and telling school stories or reminiscing about bands, sometimes with friends dropping by to lime (laugh, joke, drink, and tell stories)." (Gage Averill *Musicultures* 2016-06-01)

Jocelyne Guilbault is Professor of Music at the University of California, Berkeley. She is the author of *Governing Sound: The Cultural Politics of Trinidad's Carnival Musics* and *Zouk: World Music in the West Indies*. Roy Cape (born in Trinidad in 1942) is an internationally renowned calypso and soca musician and bandleader. He has toured widely, played on hundreds of recordings, and released eight albums with his band Roy Cape All Stars.

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