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## METROPOLITAN DESK

## Swaying, and Marching, to a Latin Beat

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The collective shrieks of hundreds of thousands of fans sounded like the wowl of a windstorm blowing along Fifth Avenue yesterday.

"My friends are not going to believe this!" Brittany Arroyo, 16, of Farmingdale, N.J., screamed to no one in particular when she caught a glimpse of Marc Anthony and Jennifer Lopez, the husband-and-wife team of Hollywood stars who led the Puerto Rican Day Parade along its 42-block route.

Brittany got up at 4 a.m. and caught an early train to the city with an aunt and two cousins, scoring a prime viewing spot between 44th and 45th Streets, against one of the barricades that lined the sidewalks.

Ms. Lopez, in a tight-fitting gold dress, and Mr. Anthony, the parade's grand marshal, were besieged by paparazzi and ended up needing a makeshift escort. A group of Guardian Angels and uniformed police officers locked arms around the couple, but disbanded on 69th Street, where Ms. Lopez and Mr. Anthony hopped on the back seat of a Corvette convertible, which carried them the rest of the way.

The parade, one of the city's largest, went on largely without a glitch, except for a float that stalled near 74th Street, delaying the procession at least 15 minutes. Coincidentally, the float had been promoting the coming movie "El Cantante," starring Ms. Lopez and Mr. Anthony, who plays Hector Lavoe, a Puerto Rican salsa singer who died of AIDS.

On the streets surrounding the parade route, though, the police were kept busy directing traffic. They also arrested at least 50 people, some of whom were wearing the black and gold of the Latin Kings, on various charges, including disorderly conduct.

The Latin Kings have tried to portray themselves in recent years as an advocacy group championing Hispanic culture and pride, but law enforcement officials call them a violent street gang. They were set to march in this year's parade as one of the last of the organized contingents, just as they have in the past two years.

However, a group of Latino correction officers, the New York City Department of Correction Hispanic Society, withdrew their participation on the eve of the event when they found out they would have to march behind the Latin Kings, according to Samuel Martinez, the society's vice president. The group's withdrawal was reported by The Daily News yesterday.

"We cannot follow the same criminals whose influence we try so hard to eliminate from the city's jails," Mr. Martinez said. "We asked the parade organizers to change our placement, but they refused."

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The parade's chairman, Ralph Morales, could not be reached for comment. Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg said at a news conference that he did not know that the Latin Kings had been invited to march. He said he told Mr. Morales two things: "One, it should not be the city's business to tell parade organizers who marches and who can't march. And two, if I were him, I would not have invited them."

None of the controversy served to dissuade Capt. Alex Parrilla, who works for the Correction Department at Rikers Island, from displaying his Puerto Rican pride on Fifth Avenue. In his navy-blue dress uniform, Captain Parrilla stopped near 45th Street and performed a show for the people who lined up 10-deep on the sidewalk.

He put his right hand on his belly and his left arm in the air, as if he were holding an invisible dancing partner. Then, he swayed to the rhythm of salsa music that blared from one of the passing floats.

"I give him a perfect 10," said Madeline Rios, 43, of Asbury Park, N.J. "He sure knows how to move."

The police had no reports of injuries at the parade yesterday. In 2000, dozens of women were sexually assaulted in and around Central Park.

By and large, residents and business owners along Fifth Avenue heeded the mayor's request not to erect barriers around their buildings, as they did in the past. Some building owners have said the barriers were meant to prevent unruly paradegoers from causing damage, but event organizers say the practice is racist.

Several candidates for governor -- Eliot Spitzer, Thomas R. Suozzi and John Faso -- showed up to shake hands with prospective voters. Few spectators, however, gave them much attention.

Waving flags big and small, the paradegoers covered Fifth Avenue in a sea of red, white and blue, the colors of the Puerto Rican flag.

All eyes were on Mr. Anthony, Ms. Lopez and the parade's many other stars, including actress Rosie Perez and salsa pioneer Willie Colón, and Wisin and Yandel, who sing reggaeton, a tangle of Spanish rap and Jamaica dance-hall reggae.

"This is not a time to think about serious stuff," said David Rincón, 27. "This is a time to party, whether you're Puerto Rican or not."

Photos: Puerto Rican flags of all shapes and sizes adorned the parade on Fifth Avenue yesterday, and some, like the one worn above, were waving even without the benefit of a strong breeze. (Photographs by Patrick Andrade for The New York Times)(pg. B1); Marc Anthony and Jennifer Lopez marching with Mayor Bloomberg and Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton. (Photo by Hiroko Masuike/Associated Press)(pg. B3)