

# UNITED REGGAE

MAGAZINE  
#10 - July/August 2011



Sumfest - Summerjam - One Love Festival - Sierra Nevada World Music  
Reggae Summer Fest - Öland Roots - Dour Festival - Reggae On The River  
Amsterdam Reggae Festival - Uppsala Reggae Festival - Reggae Sumfest

## United Reggae Magazine #10 - July / August 2011

Want to read United Reggae as a paper magazine? Now you can...

In addition to the latest United Reggae news, views and videos online each month you can now enjoy a free pdf version packed with most of United Reggae content from the last month.

# ★ EDITO by Erik Magni

Summer is a time for recreation – and festivals

Summer is for many people a time for relaxation, contemplation and for visiting and spending time with friends and family that you don't see as much during other parts of the year.

But the summer is also a great time to catch up on music, and to attend concerts, especially the many festivals in Europe and the U.S. In the tenth issue of United Reggae Magazine, which covers both July and August, we have visited festivals and concerts from France and Sweden to the U.S. and Jamaica. We have witnessed – and captured on camera – spectacular performances and interviewed artists backstage. You can read some of these interviews in this issue, while many, many more will be published in the coming weeks and months.

So stay tuned. We also have the usual interviews and reviews. Find out why David Rodigan was dressed as Elvis in the Ninjaman Clash, how Perfect ended up recording with Zion I Kings and Sizzla's reaction when he heard Mista Savona's Fire Dragon riddim for the first time.

The past months have also treated us with many fine releases, several of these actually debut albums. My most played song for the past two months is New York Minute taken from Ray Darwin's eagerly anticipated debut album People's Choice. Other highlights include Hollie Cook's self-titled album, described by herself and her label as tropical pop, and Joggo's energetic Modern Rockers Vol.1. If you have been disconnected for the past two months, then this jam-packed issue is the perfect catching up. Enjoy!

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## A Step Closer / In and Out of Love by Bitty McLean

Bitty McLean – one of the sweetest voices out of the UK – has teamed up again with veteran musicians and producers Sly & Robbie. Their fruitful relationship resulted in the acclaimed ‘Movin’ On’ set released in 2009. The new single is titled A Step Closer / In and Out of Love and is just as smooth and lovers oriented as you would expect. Their warm and deep riddims suit Bitty McLean’s fragile and crooning voice very well. Along with the vinyl release, a CD will hit the streets. It contains the single and three additional tunes from the Movin’ On album.

## Anthony B and Konshens Beat Dem Bad

Having already sewn up an at least solid 2011 with the release of the big album from Luciano, ‘Rub-A-Dub Market’ and a nice set for the Sweet-Baby Riddim, outstanding Austrian imprint, IrieVibrations have turned their attentions to 2012 when they’ll deal a full album for Reggae star Anthony B. The album, ‘Freedom Fighter’ is set to reach stores early in the year and they’re already working with its infectious first single Beat Dem Bad, which features another

favourite of the label, Konshens, alongside Anthony B. Listeners can get their very first taste of Anthony B - 2K12 when Beat Dem Bad arrives in digital stores on July 1.



## One Pants by Doniki

Vinyl-heads will remember British producer Matt Downs releasing rhythms like Jah Glory and the Everbless in 2006. CD buyers may recall his tune Higher Level with Zareb being featured on the 2008 Greensleeves Spring sampler. Now Downs has a new 45 out on his Lionvibes label: a mournful digital piece voiced by the singer Doniki titled One Pants backed with a serious dub. Produced by Downs, recorded at Cell Block studios in Kingston, JA, with a mix by Alkemist on the Sufferers rhythm built by session drummer extraordinaire Kirk “Kirkledove” Bennett, One Pants is out now - available at the Lionvibes website.

More releases - including a full length concept album of instrumentals - are soon to come...

## Jayaben Riddim From Sama Roots Records

Based in Sheffield England Sama Roots Records, who were responsible for the popular Light Switch riddim championed by Channel One Sound-system last year, will this month be releasing their second riddim. The Jayaben riddim is named after Jayaben Desai the Asian worker who led a walkout, by around 100 mainly Asian, female employees at the Grunwick Film Processing Laboratories in Willesden, North London on Monday 23rd August 1976 in a row about working conditions, pay inequality and institutionalised racism within the company. The dispute by the women, who became known in the press as “strikers in saris”, lasted more than two years where there were frequent confrontations between hundreds of trade unionists and the police. Despite the fact that they eventually lost the dispute it proved to be a seminal moment in British industrial history, drawing attention to the overlooked plight of female migrant workers. Desai, who died just before Christmas last year at the age of 77 was considered remarkable for her defiance of the stereotyping of south Asian women as subservient and for being a strong and eloquent leader. A photograph of her confronting a row of police officers, a handbag dangling from her arm, became

one of the iconic images of the 1970s and this music is their tribute to her. The riddim harks back to those troubled times and is in the classic roots reggae mould of the ‘70s. It is produced by Fullness from, the South Coast’s premier Reggae band, Dubheart who formed in 1999 and have played many festivals and clubs around the UK and Europe, as well as supporting and working with great artists like The Wailers, Easy Star All Stars, Vibronics, Zion Train, Macka B, Don Letts and many more. There are two Vocal cuts on the riddim, the first The Wicked is a conscious affair by the brother and sister duo Rootsamala who recently impressed with their version of Forward To Jah and other works with the BDF band.

The second One Family is from Ghetto Priest who is known for his far-out lyrics and tells listeners not to ignore reality as he warns “don’t abandon current affairs, put no trust in millionaires”. Both of these cuts have lyrics that Desai I’m sure would have related to and agreed with and so act as a fitting reminder to what she stood for and worked so hard to achieve. There is also a mix of the riddim featuring the Fullness Horns and an elegant dub version by Nick Manasseh.

## The Bogle Riddim

The Bogle is the name of the new stripped down, dirty bass

shaking riddim from Mungo’s Hi Fi that will be out on an 180g vinyl 12”, via Scotch Bonnet Records on 4th July.

There are two vocal cuts, one from the undiscovered raw talent of Jamaican I Bogle and the other from UK veteran toaster Kenny Knots. A straight, untouched riddim version and a dub of Kenny’s Gimme Gimme completes the track listing.



## Trojan Presents Its 10th Limited Edition Single

The 10th single in Trojans strictly limited edition range is to be the catchy little dance number ‘You Are the One’ performed by Caltone regulars, (Max) Romeo & the Emotions flipped with Phil Pratt’s ‘Girls Like Dirt’.

Both of these tunes are taken from the early summer of ‘68, when Jamaican musical tastes were starting to change from the lilting sound of Rock Steady to the more rugged style that would eventually morph into

the world recognised genre of Reggae. It was also the time when respected label owner Blondel Calnek aka Ken Lack was slowing down the issuing material with just occasional sessions, primarily overseen by either Bunny Lee or Phil Pratt producing a number of fine, if commercially unsuccessful 45s and it is from one of these sessions, before Lack finally locked up shop and emigrated to the United States, that these two cuts come and finally get a first official UK release after more than four decades.

The single, pressed on high quality vinyl and bearing the celebrated Big Shot imprint, is strictly limited to a run of 400 so visit the Trojan store before they run out!

## Ba Lari Senn is online now!

Ba Lari Senn is a webzine launched yesterday. It is about reggae and dancehall news from Martinique and Caribbean Islands. It is written in French and features articles, interviews, photos, vidéos, news releases, sound systems and concerts in Martinique. Discover it now at Balarisenn.net!

## Soothsayers - We're Not Leaving

Anyone who has missed the sounds of South London’s Soothsayers since their 2009

third album 'One More Reason' and its 2010 companion 'Red Earth Dub' will have been cheered by two uploads on their Soundcloud this year. First came the deep roots vocal Hard Times, performed live and released, in dub form, on the last longplayer, followed by the poignant ballad We're Not Leaving - their most touching slow number since their Mellow Baku collaboration Hold On.



Now We're Not Leaving is due for official 7" release backed with a special mix by Manasseh (a member of 'Sayers Red Earth Collective band in all but name) featuring the voice of none other than Cornell Campbell in dub.

Recorded at Prince Fatty's studio in Brighton with the flip-side cut at Bunny Lee's base in Kingston, We're Not Leaving is out on August 1st and for download on August 15th. An extended version of Cornell's piece will be released on 12" in late September (plus recordings with Lutan Fyah and Earl 16) with a full album coming in 2012...

## RiseUp screening for 48 hours exclusively on United Reggae

RiseUp, a documentary on the Jamaican underground music scene, has toured festivals and special events around the world screening in over 25 countries and winning awards such as the AFI/DISCOVERY SILVER-DOCS Best Music Documentary Award. It has also been broadcast in U.S. TV earlier this year. But we thought that this great documentary deserved a wider audience so that everyone could be able to watch it.

That's why United Reggae teamed with RiseUp Entertainment to show you the TV version of the movie (60 min) for free over 48 hours and also give you the opportunity to BUY the original 90 minute theatrical version, before its official release, exclusively on United Reggae...

## Dubmatix Debut Album Free Download

'Champion Sound Clash' was released in 2004 and is a modern dub album with a variety of styles and tempos. It spans from the rootsy Blade & Challice and the hip-hop-tinged 20,000 Leagues Beneath the

Dub to the Hotel Costes styled El Diablo Dub or the Bossa Nova influenced Island Sun with its memorable guitar and flute hook.

If you don't already have this album you should definitely head over to Dubmatix Souncloud spot and check it out. The free download offer ends at August 6th.

## Walk Alone by General Trix

Romanian born Amsterdam-resident General Trix drops the first single as free download. It is taken from his upcoming album 'Green Light' - set for release in September.

Walk Alone is in an 80's digital vein and the rocking riddim suits General Trix's heavy patois singjay-style well. The production is carefully handled by Swedish soundman Ante Lynx for Rough Lynx Productions.

## King Jammys Studio New Look

King Jammy's Recording Studio has a whole new look from the street since all of the family labels, a family portrait and typical sound system scene were painted on the outer walls in preparation for the recent launch of Sizzla's 'The Scriptures' album, produced by King's oldest

son, Lloyd 'John John' James Jr.

The old gate has been covered with split bamboo and a BIG Jammy's label painted around the doorway. Yes, that's the King himself you see in the doorway or sitting across the street keeping an eye on what's going on in the neighborhood. Big things are happening here, right now and in the months to come. Stay tuned...

## The River Niger Riddim

Out now on 10" vinyl is The River Niger Riddim, a mighty slice of modern roots reggae from Roots Hitek Music of Feltham, Middlesex, England.

To add vocals to it they have teamed up once again with Princess Linn, the former member of the Royal Rasses camp that worked extensively with Prince Lincoln Thompson, to deliver the uniting anthem Rally. The other vocal cut on the riddim 'Lift Up' is courtesy of Murray Man, who owns and runs the Mellow Vibes Music Company in Birmingham. A very prolific artist and producer in his own rights this is just one of a number of songs he has done with Roots Hitek music.

Also available is a dub of the riddim plus River Niger Horns from Digistep the multi talented saxophonist and musician who produces for the Dubkasm label and can be found here supplying tenor sax and flute.



## The People's Choice? Ray Darwin

Better late than never! A few years back, the sensational Ray Darwin made his presence known on one of the highest levels of Reggae music via his huge breakout hit tune, People's Choice and it was at least presumed that an album would be forthcoming - And it was true...

Oddly enough, however, it's taken a few years to manifest, but now Darwin releases to the masses his fittingly titled album, 'People's Choice', via Joe Fraser Records. Even in a delayed fashion, the album figures to be very well received by many of the same fans who caught on to the big single,

particularly given the fact that Joe Fraser is known as a label specializing in a very healthy brand and blend of old school Lover's Rock and Roots music, which is Darwin's specialty. Unsurprisingly the album is sprinkled with recognizable classic riddims which push Darwin in a fine direction.

Also recognizable is the duo of guest artists with which Ray Darwin collaborates on the album - The venerable Fred Locks chimes in on the anthem-like In This Time and the incomparable and the wonderful German star, Sara Lugo beautifies the sublime Good For You.

The wait is over! After four years or so of waiting, Ray Darwin's album, 'People's Choice,' is in stores now on CD and for digital download, courtesy of Zojak Worldwide.



## Trojan Records Announcement

Trojan Records have just made a big announcement that they are to release a deluxe 5 disc box set featuring 123 tracks across five themed CDs that showcase the hits, artists, producers and labels, as well as an entire disc of rare and unreleased gems.

Not content with that they are also giving away with it a 50 page book that tells the story of this remarkable label's history in fascinating detail from its launch in the summer of '68, right up to the present day, with revealing contributions from many of the company's

key personnel plus a foreword from Rhoda Dakar (the Body-snatchers/the Special AKA). The set is further embellished with original photographs, rare memorabilia and other relevant ephemera including four reproduction double-sided post-cards of original rare Trojan flyers and promotional material from the sixties and seventies plus a Trojan window sticker.

To coincide with this historic release they have also announced that they will be re-launching Trojan's classic fan club. Originally established in the 1970s as a means for the company to interact directly with its most ardent fans, the Trojan Appreciation Society offered exclusive product and involved fans in the label's

activities and to carry on this tradition anyone who buys the box set and registers it with the newly re-launched Trojan Appreciation Society will receive an exclusive 12 track bonus digital album.

Both the album and the fan club go live on the 19th August and with the box set reasonably priced at £29.99 this is sure to be a must for any fan. For more information visit the Trojan website.

## Fairground Riddim

The always reliable producer Frenchie has dropped another great riddim, this one is called Fairground, and is a nice piece of energetic modern roots reggae. It's voiced by I-Octane, Konshens, Luciano and Fantan Mojah, and is now available as 7" in all good record stores. In late July it will also be made available as digital download on iTunes. Maximum Sound has had some great releases in 2011. In April the label dropped the acclaimed riddims Sound Exterminata, Ghetto State, with elements from Half Pint's 'One Big Ghetto', and Skateland Killer, based on Eek-A-Mouse's 'Star, Daily News and Gleaner'. If you're curious on how Fairground riddim sounds you can listen Maximum Sound's megamix of the riddim below, which also includes cuts from Chris Martin, Cecile and Zinc Fence featuring Stylo G.

## New Release From Jah Seal

Berlin based Irieland Music in partnership with One Drop Music and Planet Earth Studios has just brought out a new release from Jah Seal, who delivered us the excellent and varied album 'Itopia' in 2008, called Slow and Deep on 7" vinyl.



This single, on a one drop, is a great slice of modern roots reggae that started life on the Irieland Soundsystem as an exclusive dubplate mix of the instrumental Eins Drei Dub, which is on the flip and was originally recorded early in 2010 in Jamaica by Josie Bigfinga Coppola with Hopeton Hibbert, son of the legendary Toots, on bass. Keyboards and guitars were then overdubbed in Berlin before Jah Seal recorded the vocal version early this year. Eins Drei Dub is also going to be appearing on the forthcoming dub LP by Bigfinga and Aldubb. Available now from [www.one-drop.de](http://www.one-drop.de)



## Ce'Cile's Jamaicanization

Currently available on etailers is the latest single from Reggae/Dancehall diva, the very easy on the eyes Bad Gyal Ce'Cile - Singing This Song - from Kingstone Records. The catchy tune, which finds the artist celebrating the wonderful man in her life, is produced by Ben Bazzazian and is digitally distributed through the ultra-active Zojak Worldwide. Singing This Song, of course, is only the warning shot from Ce'Cile's forthcoming and hotly anticipated full length album, 'Jamaicanization'.

Also from Kingstone [and Zojak], the album is, arguably,

her most high profile release to date and is also going to have a legitimate claim to being her finest piece of work to date. Along with the extensive work of Bazzazian, who helms much of the album, listeners can also look forward to well known pieces such as Woot Woot, Nah Stress Over Man, Step Aside and others which feature backing work from the likes of Tony 'CD' Kelly, Stephen McGregor, Chrome and Ce'Cile, herself. Also, fans should delight with a trio of big combinations - Featuring oft-collaborator of Ce'Cile's, the impressive Christopher Martin, one of Europe's biggest Dancehall stars, Million Stylez and dominant lyricist, Agent Sasco [aka Assassin].

If you cannot wait at all, Sing

ing This Song [with Accapella and clean riddim versions] is available now while 'Jamaicanization' - the brand new and scalding hot full release from Ce'Cile reaches stores on August 2.

## Sara Lugo is Locked Away!

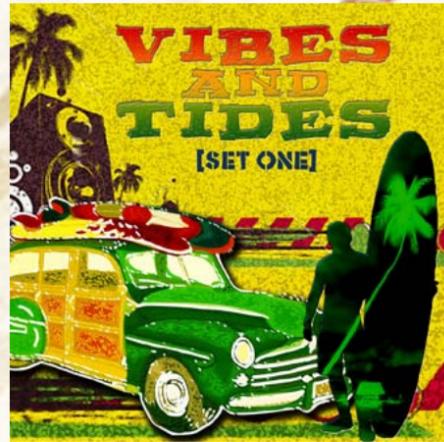
Just in case you've continued to exercise extremely poor judgment in not picking up her outstanding debut album, 'What About Love', brimming German Reggae star, Sara Lugo, is giving you yet another reason to do just that in the way of releasing an EP for her new single off the project, Locked Away. Along with the original version of the tune, which was ran by Loomis Green, the EP set features a fantastic new and more 'Reggae-centric' track which is touted as the "single version". Also, there is a Dubstep remix courtesy of El Wharton and, perhaps most interestingly, a dubbed out version of Locked Away appears courtesy of Lugo's lead producer, Umberto Echo.

Fans can also look forward to seeing a very well done video for the track! The EP release of Sara Lugo's latest single, Locked Away, is in stores right now. So get it!

## Vibes and Tides Set 1

Mango Seed Music recently

put out the 16 track compilation 'Vibes and Tides - Set One' with tracks from both new and veteran artists and producers.



You'll find the sweet soulful voice of Bunny Rugs along with Sizzla's chanting. The majority of the tunes are by singers in the – just like Bunny Rugs – soulful vein. Jah Cure, Tony Curtis and Maxi Priest just to name a few.

'Vibes and Tides' is a great introduction for new reggae listeners that want to get more acquainted with the sounds, or for the older ones that just need some sweet vibes.

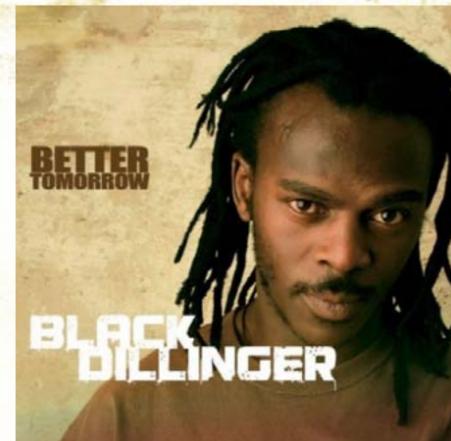
## Black Dillinger's Better Tomorrow

Always impressing South African light, Black Dillinger, links up with aspiring, but already well solid, Austrian imprint, RichVibes Records to deliver his latest set, 'Better Tomorrow' which is currently in stores now. The eighteen-track

album, Dillinger's third, follows two excellent sets in 'Live & Learn' and 'Love Life' should find a very welcome audience as the fiery African chanter has amassed a very impressive and loyal following thus far, which only figures to grow in response to the new release.

Besides featuring combinations with the likes of Jahson and Ward 21 & Tifa, the album is also noted for featuring the blazing former single, Volcano Erupt.

Have a listen for yourself - Black Dillinger's brand new album, 'Better Tomorrow' is in stores now.

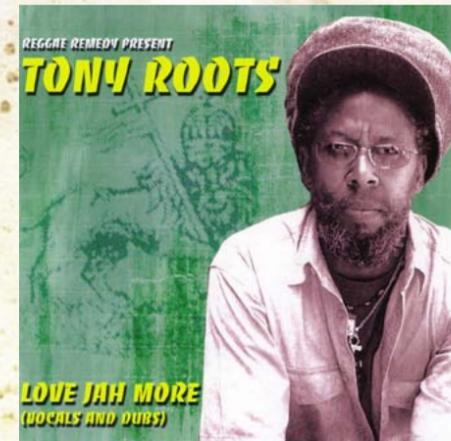


## Tony Roots Loves Jah More

The Jamaican born UK based singer Tony Roots has released a new longplayer in showcase format.

It's a collaboration with Parisian production house Reggae Remedy titled 'Love Jah More'.

Tony's cultural messages on seven vocals meet the clapping snares and blazing horns of seven dubs - including an update of the Revolutionaries' Mean Girl/I Need A Roof. Love Jah More' is out now.



## The London Intl Ska Festival 2012 Band Competition

The promoters of the London International Ska Festival 2012 are running a competition to enable one lucky band or solo artist, from anywhere in the world the chance to perform at next years festival.

After the resounding success of last years festival, which included many well established artists like Ken Boothe, Marcia Griffiths, Dave & Ansell Collins, Owen Grey, and Rico they want to make a big part of the forthcoming festival as an opportunity to introduce new artists and they'd like the public to help them choose one act.

If you are Ska inspired solo artist or part of a Ska inspired band from anywhere in the world and want to enter The London Intl Ska Festival 2012 Band Competition all you have to do to is email your band name to enquiries@rockersrevolt.com with a weblink to your music (myspace/facebook/youtube/soundcloud). Please put '2012 Band Competition' in the subject line. All entries must be from the band/management themselves and be submitted by 31st August 2011.

20 bands will then be short-listed and posted online for the public to vote for their favourite. Voting will take place between 1st September 2011 - 30th November 2011 and the band with the most votes wins.

If you are lucky enough to win your prize will be an opening slot on at The London International Ska Festival 2012, with all travel/hotel expenses paid. The festival takes place 3rd - 6th May 2012 across the Sheperd's Bush Empire, Brixton Academy and the Islington Academy.

## Jonahgold Rewards Unselfishness

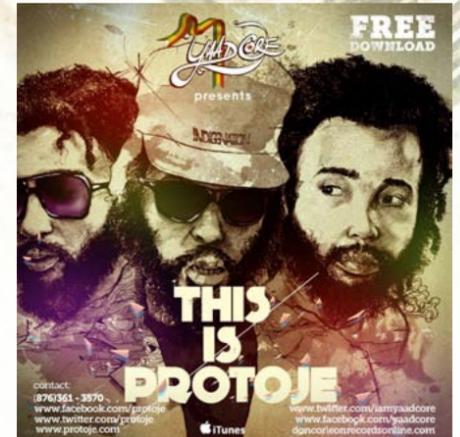
Swedish producer Jonahgold has decided to promote and reward unselfishness. The compensation for doing a good deed is, of course, the act in itself, but also Sheya Mission's

acclaimed debut album 'Nine Signs & Heavy Bliss' released earlier this year.

It is very simple. You undertake one unselfish act and tell Jonahgold about it by sending a picture or a line where you describe the good deed. This goes on for the rest of the year.

You can send your unselfish contributions by Jonahgold at jonahgold /at/ goldheartmusic.com.

## This Is Protoje



Prior to Protoje's debut album 'The Seven Year Itch' an album sampler mixed by selector Yaadcore was released. The sampler had five Protoje songs intertwined with dashes of the singer's commentary about each of them.

Now the pair has created another mixtape, but with less talking.

'This is Protoje' contains 23 tracks from Protoje's catalog, where of two are dub versions of Wrong Side of the Law and Dread. You should also pay

special attention to track 19 – Our Time Come. It's previously unreleased and has producer Don Corleon singing the hook.

'This is Protoje' is available as a free download over at Protoje's website.

## Maximum Sound 2011



UK-based label Maximum Sound, lead by producer Frenchie, steps into the digital age and releases an exclusive iTunes compilation titled 'Maximum Sound 2011'.

The new compilation holds 17 killer tunes from artists such as Sizzla, Tarrus Riley and Busy Signal on a variety of different dancehall and one drop riddims, including Skateland Killer, Ghetto State and Praise Jahovia.

Several of the tunes haven't been available on digital platforms until now, which makes it an essential purchase for non-vinyl buyers. Keep an eye out on August 21st, when it hits the streets.

Maximum Sound has also fortunately enough decided to release their new Fairground riddim as well as the back catalogue on iTunes. And this is a real treat. If you don't own riddims such as I Know My Herbs, Jah Powers and Blackboard already you should definitely head over to iTunes.

## Trojan Release A Double 'Double Barrel'

To coincide with their soon to be released new 5CD box set 'The Story Of Trojan Records' the company are bringing out their latest limited edition 7" vinyl featuring two songs taken from it.

The songs both ride on one of the biggest selling Reggae records of all time, Double Barrel which went all the way to the top of the national charts in the UK in March 1971 and featured two of the island's most gifted performers, keyboard maestro Ansel Collins and the immensely versatile singer Dave Barker.

The first of these cuts is a revisit from Ansel Collins who created this organ driven instrumental Double Or Nothing soon after its original release. The second take is from Robert 'Dandy' Thompson who utilised the track on a couple of sides, including this DJ cut that highlighted his toasting skills Double Barrel Man.

Both of these cuts have been lying dormant in the Trojan vaults for 40 years and will finally see issue on the classic Techniques imprint, but with just a limited run of 500 copies.



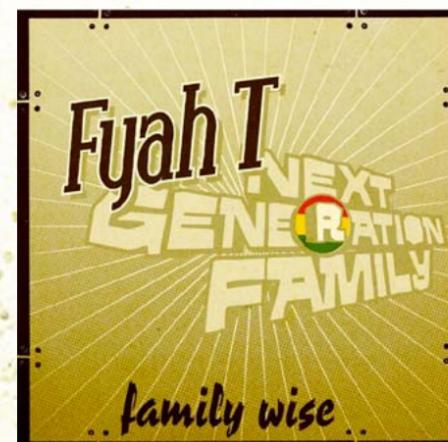
## Joel Chin Murdered

Joel Chin, long-time A&R manager for VP records, was shot and killed at his Stony Hill home last night, Tuesday, August 16th. Details are still sketchy and a motive for his murder has not yet been determined. The thirty five year old Chin was the grandson of Vincent & Pat Chin, co founders of VP Records. Chin had relocated to Jamaica some two years ago after spending several years working out of VP's Queens, New York office.

As A & R manager of VP Records he was integrally involved in the release of some of their biggest hits including the Reggae Gold and Strictly the Best series, 'Parables' and 'Contagious' by Tarrus Riley, 'No Holding Back' by Wayne Wonder, 'Moment in Time' by Beres Hammond and

many more. He was well entrenched in the VP Records organization and made a strong contribution that helped elevate several young artistes to the next level in their music careers. He has been credited for signing Sean Paul to the VP which album turned out to be a tremendous success for the company selling over 7 million units. He will be sadly missed.

## Familywise by Fyah T



Fyah T, a talented singjay, multi-instrumentalist, composer, songwriter and band leader out of Munich, is set to drop his debut album 'Familywise' on September 2nd. The title describes how the album was produced, but also an attitude towards life, where family is important. The set holds 15 righteous and conscious roots reggae tunes, two of which are combinations with Lutan Fyah and Jah Mason respectively. All riddims are executed by Next Generation Family. Over these riddims Fyah T sings about greedy governments, advocates for more humane ways of interaction

and shallowness.

## Man Free, Documentary about Jamaica

'Man Free' is a new documentary – shot mostly between 2003 and 2004 – about the life of everyday people in Jamaica. The stories are told by the people themselves, among them a taxi driver called Master Blaster, a young woman who runs her own bakery and the soulful one string singer Brushy, who you also met in the documentary 'RiseUp'. It's not all about reggae or having a good time. Jamaica is a land with conflicts and struggles, where many people fight for a better life. Young and old come together to battle politics, crime, violence and drugs. 'Man Free' is narrated by the late film director Perry Henzell and also includes the last documentary footage of him before he passed. This legendary director is probably best known for the cult movie 'The Harder They Come', which starred a young Jimmy Cliff.

'Man Free' launches on iTunes in October.

## Gimmie Di Bass by Taddy P

Taddy P is a musician, songwriter and producer hailing from Jamaica. His progressive sound is diverse and combines roots reggae riddims with bluesy melodies and soulful vibes.

On August 23rd his sophomore album 'Gimmie Di Bass' reached the streets as CD and digital download. This 15 track set features collaborations with a number of both well-known and more unknown singers, including Maxi Priest, Shaggy, Tanya Stephens and Beniton the Menace. And of course also several irresistible bass lines courtesy of Taddy P.

## Sizzla Hospitalized after a Bike Crash



Miguel Collins, popularly known as Sizzla was involved in a motor vehicle accident last night, Wednesday, August 24th. Reports are that he was riding a bike in the Runaway Bay, St. Ann area when he was hit by a motor vehicle which did not stop. He was rushed to the St. Ann's Bay Hospital where he later underwent surgery. The DJ who was in the St. Ann area rehearsing for a show suffered a broken hand, injuries to his ribs and lungs. Early this morning he was flown into a Kingston hospital to undergo further observation and treatment.

## Etana Joins Penthouse Records Team



Considered by many specialists as the most talented female singer in Jamaica – she won the EME Awards 2011 in the category “female vocalist of the year” five months ago – Etana has just got a management deal with Penthouse

Records owner Donovan Germain. This deal should allow her to uplift her international career.

“Etana is expected to be at the forefront of the Reggae battle and I am gonna be working very hard to help her accomplish her goals” said Germain.

Traveling the globe this summer performing on the world’s largest reggae festivals and planning another European tour in October and November. “The Strong One” will be back in Penthouse studio during au-

turn to complete her third album which will be released by VP Records next year.

## Reggae's Gone Country

Reggae giant VP Records has teamed up with Warner Music Nashville on the upcoming compilation ‘Reggae’s Gone Country’. As indicated in the title, this 14 track compilation is about country hits covered by reggae artists such as Beres Hammond, Luciano and Etana supported by reggae and country musicians. “Reggae’s Gone Country is taking some of Jamaica’s favourite classic American country songs and putting their beats and whole instrumentation around it while still having that root of country. It is this crazy cool idea,” says John Rich of the multi-platinum selling country duo Big & Rich and the winner of this year’s Celebrity Apprentice. The album opens with Romain Virgo’s rendition of the Gatlin Brothers’ 1979 hit California, with Larry Gatlin himself contributing vocals, while Busy Signal offers a rendition of Kenny Rogers’ country-pop Grammy Award-winning The Gambler.

According to Cristy Barber, Vice President of Marketing and Promotions at VP Records and a Grammy nominated producer for the 2003 dancehall reggae-hip hop compilation album Def Jamaica, country has been a part of Jamaica’s musi-

cal catalog for years. “Everyone from 20-year-old kids to their grandparents listen to country in Jamaica. People are always so shocked when I say this, but the music plays such an important role in the Caribbean,” states Cristy Barber. Cristy Barber also hopes that these renditions will introduce and educate music fans everywhere to the talent that exists in Jamaica. ‘Reggae’s Gone Country’ drops on August 30.

## The Sensimilllionaire Riddim



Austrian band and production crew House Of Riddim will release their new riddim The Sensimilllionaire on September 9th. Among their previous productions you’ll find Natty King’s latest album ‘Born to Be Free’ as well as the Hot and Camel riddims. The Sensimilllionaire Riddim includes cuts from artists such as Jah Mason, Ras Zacharri and Zareb, and will be available on the usual digital platforms.

Buxna Artist Agency & United Reggae present

# Etana

on tour in October/November 2011



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Photo by Jennyfer Papin

Promoters:



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# SYLFORD WALKER

**"I went to Europe to do a show and read in a magazine that Sylford Walker is dead!"**

The languid chanter Sylford Walker has often been compared to Burning Spear - with whom he shares some stylistic traits. Yet Sylford always had his own approach - sounding off the cuff and unplanned while somehow just right for the rhythms he rode. He got his start voicing for Joe Gibbs in 1975 cutting the hypnotic Burn Babylon and the mystical Jah Golden Pen. A one away tune with Clive Hunt then gave way to what is now his most famous collaboration - a series of tunes cut in 1978 with the singer turned producer Glen Brown. At the time, however, these did not get a Jamaican album release and it was only in 1988 - long after Glen had gone to America and Sylford's career had stalled - that Greensleeves issued the remarkable 'Lamb's Bread', followed by the 2000 Blood & Fire reissue 'Lamb's Bread International' with Weldon Irie. Sadly Sylford was in-

jured in a car crash in 2002 and is currently unable to leave Jamaica due to VISA issues. Even so, he has a new album in the works with young US producer Carson McPullish. Angus Taylor spoke to him at his rural St Thomas residence about his plans for the future and the ups and downs of his tough life...

## Where were you born?

Penlyne Castle in St Thomas but I didn't really grow up there. I grew up in the ghetto part of the city. When I was a babe I left my mum to live with my grandmother and in my boy days I was with my mother but I ran to be in the city at around 13.

## How did you get into music?

My brother, trust me, I loved music from schoolboy days. I did school concerts and sang in church but then when I ran away from country to town and being around these rebels smoking my herbs the cops came to hold me with a spliff.

I went to Central and spent one year for that spliff in jail. That's how I built my song "It's a long long long time I man burn



up the Collie Weed" [Burn Babylon].

## How did you get into Rasta?

Well it is a part of the vibes where the love of music and the roots and culture that is in me going towards life, that is the only way of I seeing it. It was the 12 Tribes Of Israel with Dennis Brown because we were close brethren and Dennis a lot of little man joined the 12 Tribes so I ended up getting baptized and joining. But I don't really go to the assemblies because I am now living in the country. Since I left Switzerland [where he stayed with Asher Selector] I got a change of living.

## How did you record for Joe Gibbs?

With Mr Gibbs I had come from jail and been walking looking

for a producer and none of the producers would look at me. I went to Mr Gibbs and he sent me to his engineer Errol Thompson and that's where I broke away. I built that song [Burn Babylon] and I sang [Jah] Golden Pen because he told me Burn Babylon wasn't selling and there was nothing going on with it.

## How did you come up with those lyrics?

Jah Golden Pen was more like a church song from my boy days. It used to say (sings) "WRITE MY NAME UP THERE... YOU GOT TO PUT YOUR FINGER ON THE GOLDEN PEN..." and because I was living in "South" at Gold Street I saw that song as gold. That was one of my biggest songs in England. That and Burn Babylon. All around the world! When I was in Jerusalem and all over if I don't sing those songs there is no show! (laughs)

## How did they do in Jamaica?

Well it was going on but it seems they never wanted I to know the whole secretness and switch of the business. In London and in Jamaica it was playing on the radio station for maybe two or three months but there was nothing coming from it.

## Why did you leave Joe Gibbs?

Well the system wasn't right and I was suffering. I was going to a little music school

where I couldn't even change my clothes. I thought there was nothing in music. It was only after I went to Europe and saw people from all over saying "Sylford, you are great and legendary and thing" so I take up the work now in hand.

## What did you do for a living when you weren't making music?

I was just boiling some roots. I went to my bredda and buy 22 different roots so then it becomes powerful. It was just juggling for everybody who needed a bottle of roots but it was cheap. But I still sent my kids to school and had restaurant where I'd cook up a little Ital food.



for a producer and none of the producers would look at me. I went to Mr Gibbs and he sent me to his engineer Errol Thompson and that's where I broke away. I built that song [Burn Babylon] and I sang [Jah] Golden Pen because he told me Burn Babylon wasn't selling and there was nothing going on with it.

### **Why did you only do one tune, Bad Bad Bad, with Clive Hunt?**

He carried me down to the maximum. Told me nothing was going on but when I go to Europe I see all those songs selling and I got nothing from them. Now I hear they gave him 17 shots and he's still alive - because his name's Clive! (laughs)

### **How you meet Glen Brown?**

That's another poison man! (laughs) I and him were living on the same street. Lobban Street in the eastern part of town. Then while I was going to Joe Gibbs he told me he had some rhythms he would like me to voice - some King Tubbys rhythms. I went with him and voiced them and then went away!

### **You also knew the late great Freddie McKay who sang many great tunes but sadly passed away before the roots veteran revival. What was he like?**

Freddie was a man who was a humble soldier and a very great

singer. Him, Horace Andy and Dennis Brown - we all used to move together. Until maybe the love of people, laughing people and don't like guilty people suffer Freddie dead. One of his biggest songs that a lot of people here know - the elders like we - was Dance This Ya Festival. Great festival song. This is the thing in Jamaica - there is no one to see you until you either get on top or die.

### **Why was your Lambs Bread album not released in Jamaica? Most people didn't hear it until it was released by Greensleeves in 1988.**

It didn't release in Jamaica but it released in New York. Then he made me a lot of promises where he would link me with Greensleeves until I heard he sold me out to Greensleeves. I wasn't able to live in the country where I am now until Blood and Fire gave me £1000 [for the 2000 reissue Lambs Bread International].

### **Tell me how you came up with songs like Lambs Bread, Chant Down Babylon and Africa Homeland?**

After I did Burn Babylon everyone was saying they needed a different high grade song so I sang Lambs Bread. That and all those songs were voiced in King Tubbys studio. Tubby was a good man. A very great engineer and a man who tried to see you did your work well.

### **Your work sounds improvised. Do you write your songs down or just respond to the rhythm?**

Yes I. It was just vibes. I'm good at that way. Very much creative that way. As soon as Glen came up with the rhythm and I listened I had something to put to them. That was how it went for me and him. He never wrote any song for me and I never wrote one on paper.

### **And when you sing the songs live do you remember what you sang? Do you keep them in your head?**

Yes I've got it all because once it comes out it is always in my mind.



### **People have compared you to Burning Spear. Which singers did you admire?**

(laughs) The right man you call! Spear! It was Spear, Horace Andy, Dennis Brown, Bob Andy - great guys. The all powerful. Also Alton Ellis and Ken Boothe. But my favourite was Spear. I was more like him which is why they beat me down saying it [Burn Babylon] was Spear when it was me.

### **Why did Glen leave for New York in 1979?**

He went because his wife was up there. He gave me a lot of promises that he would do this for me and let me reach and things but after a while I realized he sold me out to Greensleeves.

### **Have you had any contact at all since he left?**

He tried to but I didn't want anything from him at all. Not even to hear his voice. I thank him for what he has done but he can go to hell. I never heard anything about these songs after I recorded them until I heard them again. Or maybe when I did I thought people wouldn't even listen. It's not like now when I know the music turns hearts more. I was just trying to be what I wanted to be.

### **You also recorded for the Art and Craft label and producer Stafford Douglas with Jah**

### **Stitch doing a recut of one of your Glen Brown tunes Deuteronomy as Books Of The Old Testament as well as I Love You in 1979-1980?**

That is the next great song that I have. I had that song even before Burn Babylon and Golden Pen. It was another one from my bible days. But listen - Books Of The Old Testament was first done for Paul Clough but he died in New York. I did three songs for Paul Clough. Books Of The Old Testament, God Love and one I have never heard released by the name of Rally Around Jah Red Green And Gold.

I did Tra La La La La [I Love You] for the brethren you're talking about now in London.

### **So why does it say "produced by Stafford Douglas" on the Art & Craft 12?**

That's the trick. Because I'm in Jamaica and don't know what's going on they just did what they wanted to do. I don't even know who named that. Maybe if I saw him again I'd have some food, brother! (laughs)

### **By this time we're getting to the 1980s. What did you do for a living then?**

I was just boiling some roots and it moved to the people just like the songs. I had three girl children and all of them are big now so now I leave it alone and

took the music more seriously. All over the world I see that it is Sylford they are talking about.

### **Did part of that come from the Blood & Fire release in 2000? Tell me about that...**

They linked me and released and that was when everyone else realized about Sylford. He was here in Jamaica for a little time and he told me what was wrong.

They gave me £1000 and I took it and started a home here. It is in Yallahs St Thomas but I never heard anything more from him again.

### **Tell me about your car accident in 2002.**

I was living in South and then at the same time not really knowing what is next. Then my friend called me to go to Old Harbour to help him deliver some ice on a truck. When I got there they left me to come out of the truck and when I came round the corner there was a car that hit me and mashed me up.

But give thanks that my life was spared and I can walk. That was the time they wrote in a magazine that I had died because when I went to Europe I saw I was meant to be dead. That was when Joe Gibbs asked for me and said "You been dead a long time" so that might be what made my shows so powerful there.

**So tell me about your second period of recording for Joe Gibbs after the crash...**

Mr Gibbs said I must do an album for him and he will give me \$250000 and I ended up doing 200 more songs for him. We put out an album by the name of Nuti Nah Gwan. At the same time I went to Europe to do a show and read in a magazine that Sylford Walker is dead! But I did my best there and have been there five times.

**So when Asher Selector brought you for some shows in 2004 that was when you realized there was an audience for you?**

The thing that made me realize was these songs I did from the beginning like Golden Pen, Burn Babylon and even Lambs Bread. Those were the songs that Asher Selector was playing and then he sent for me from Jamaica in about 2004. I went there five times then Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, all over the world, man.

**Did you consider linking with Welton Irie for a tour?**

I can find him but he was not that much. When I was going to Switzerland he was going to Germany. So maybe they wanted I and him to go but by that time I was on Asher's programme so I could never reject it.



**How did you feel when Joe Gibbs passed away in 2008?**

I went to his funeral and the engineer's. Errol's was bigger than Mr Gibbs! (laughs)

**How come you can't leave Jamaica now?**

I don't know. Maybe I need some help from a good agent who can help me send down the documents and things because when I went to the embassy that little spliff is still a problem. I'm trying now to get some money to go the police high place and then clean off that record. Because I have seen men murder people who can fly every day! I don't know what's wrong. I went to the embassy and they turned me down. There was a brethren in Mount Vernon named Hira who was trying to get me for some record business but when he sent for me he didn't send a work permit so I could never go. Brethren right now I'm looking to find a godfather.

**You released an EP United in April 2011 with Carson McPulish and I believe there's an album coming right?**

He's supposed to get back to me about doing an album. You know that song reached number one? Rocky [Joe Gibbs son] sold me out. Mac sent some money to Rocky to get Sylford. Rocky gave me \$1000 Jamaican and told me he wanted me to do one song for him. When I did the song I found out it is not his own! So my nephew who is my manager saw what was happening on the internet and got in contact with Mac. So we are working on an album but I also almost have finished an album for myself named My Time Has Come. Eight songs are finished but I don't have the collateral to do the other four songs. I'm trying to put out 12. But we have kind of run out of collateral so we are stuck until I can get some work and help myself.

**Interview by Angus Taylor**

# DUB AKOM

**"We begun as a band, and the label started in 2007"**

**Being in Dub Akom means a busy time**

One of this summer's best riddims comes from the southern part of France. Stars such as Konshens and Lutan Fyah ride the pulsating hip-hop-tinged Bonafide riddim. Dub Akom is the production crew behind it. And they have more things on the stove - backing Pressure, Etana and Protoje on some of their European tour dates. United Reggae got a chat with David, drummer and producer.

Dub Akom is a label, backing band and production crew based in Marseille, in the southern part of France.

I reach David on the phone, and he speaks excellent English with a heavy patois accent.

"Marseille is different than Paris. It's no business city. It's the sea and the sun," he says, and



continues talking about the local reggae scene:

"It's getting better. There are some local bands, but no big scene. It's hard to make events here. Artists don't stop in Marseille when they're on tour," he concludes.

Faby - bass player in Dub Akom - is also present during the interview. David asks her questions in French when he needs to find the right words.

"We begun as a band, and the label started in 2007. Murray Man was the first artist we recorded," explains David, and continues:

"Then we did the Vitamin riddim

in 2008 featuring Jah Mason, Lutan Fyah, Natty King and Edge Michael. After that we did the Highlight riddim with Pressure, Jah Mason, Natty King and some youths from Jamaica. These two releases resulted in a two riddim album put out on CD."

## The story of Bonafide riddim

Bonafide riddim is Dub Akom's latest riddim. It was first released as the single Weak from Konshens.

"We had some good response and we said like 'yo, it's time to make a series on it'."



sent him the riddim.”

## Busy through the summer

This summer seems jam-packed for Dub Akom. They are the backing band for several Jamaican artists coming to Europe for festivals and other gigs. Previously they have worked with Jah Mason and Lutan Fyah. This year Pressure, Etana, Burro Banton and Protoje will be added to the list.

“It’s odd sometimes just being the band,” says David, and explains what makes a great backing band:

“It’s important when the artist come to have rehearsal time. But we almost never rehearse with the artist as we don’t have the time,” he laughs:

“The artist must feel good about the structure and the riddim. It must sound good for the artist.”

Dub Akom managed to find some great artists to voice the riddim. Both newcomers and more well-known ones to voice the riddim. Both newcomers and more well-known ones.

Two of the more interesting new names were South African singjay Jahnett Tafari and Ricardo Clarke from Bahamas. David explains how they got in contact.

“We have worked with Black Dillinger [also from South Africa] before and one day I sat behind my computer watching a Black Dillinger show on YouTube and saw Jahnett Tafari. He had some good feeling, so I looked him up on the Internet and linked with him. I sent the riddim and he came back with this huge cut. Maybe we’ll record some new cuts with him,” he says, and adds:

“I already knew Ricardo Clarke. He has made music with a friend of mine, so I tested and



Dub Akom begun the festival season on June 25th with Sun Seine Festival 2011 where they had to back Chezidek, Lyricson, Anthony John and Jah Marnyah.

“It’s challenging,” says David:

“You have to know 15 or 20 tunes by each artist. The artist usually sends us the playlist and then we discuss it.”

## New productions this fall

After the summer when things have cooled down Dub Akom will go on with production again.

“We have recorded Jah Mason and Queen Omega on a new dancehall riddim. It will hopefully be released in September or in October.”

**Interview by Erik Magni**  
**Photos by Jennyfer Papin**

# Mista Savona

## Mista Savona puts Australia on the reggae map

Jake “Mista” Savona is the leading reggae producer from Australia, and the first to consistently travel to Jamaica to record some of the country’s most acclaimed singers and deejays. United Reggae got an early morning chat with this well-educated and humble producer.

Australia is not necessarily known for its burgeoning reggae and dancehall scene. Rather pop music and artists and groups such as Kylie Minogue and INXS.

Reggae is according to Jake Savona regarded as a mostly underground style in Australia and is not in the mainstream consciousness yet.

“The scene is fairly small here”, explains Jake Savona over the phone, walking through a park in Sydney in the middle of the day, while I have just woke up and am preparing for breakfast.

**“Sizzla loved the riddim. He jumped around and kept hitting the CD player when I played it in his yard”**



## Started early

Jake is a classically trained musician and has been playing keyboards such as the piano and Hammond organ from the age of six.

“Playing keyboards gives you different skills. It gives you melody, harmony and composition techniques,” he says.

He learned to play reggae by himself through trial and error, listening to records and also through friends. And he says that the music expertise in Australia is very good.

“I have many inspirations. Augustus Pablo, King Tubby and Lee Perry. That mid 70’s sound. But also the late 90’s and early 2000’s sound, like the Diwali and Coolie riddims. Not much

of the music from Jamaica today. It has too much auto-tune and is too generic,” he says and adds:

“I also love electronic music, world music, and vintage Bollywood music.”

## Begun with dub

Jake first became interested in dancehall and modern reggae when living in Brixton for a month in 2000. And he clearly remembers when he heard dub for the first time.

“First time I heard real dub was at someone’s house in deep downtown London. Horace Andy was there in person singing, and there were speakers on all the walls,” he laughs, and continues:

“I went back to Australia and started making hip-hop beats with reggae influences.”

## Travelled to Jamaica

In 2004 Jake visited Jamaica for the first time, and his first recording there was with Anthony B. Since then, he has been back two times – in 2008 and last year.

While in Jamaica in 2008 he recorded some of the vocals for the wicked Fire Dragon riddim, a clever interpretation of the classic Drum Song riddim.

“I’m a vinyl collector and for that riddim was inspired by Korean music and kung fu soundtracks. The bass line in Drum Song was itself inspired by old 50’s Latin American stuff. My version is in a totally different style. It is Arabic and Middle Eastern sounding,” he says.

The riddim was voiced by chanters such as Burro Banton and Sizzla.

“Sizzla loved the riddim. He jumped around and kept hitting the CD player when I played it in his yard,” he says, and continues:

“He is an amazing guy. Moody and inspired. Reminds me sometimes of Johnny Depp’s character in Pirates of the Caribbean. A brilliant character with amazing vocal ability.”

Jake also reveals that he has recorded a full length album with Sizzla, hopefully due later this year. It is a reggae album with some hip-hop, dancehall and dubstep influences.

## Important messages

Mista Savona’s latest album is the compilation ‘Warn the Nation’. It has been available in Australia for a year, and was recently released in Europe and the U.S through Soulbeats Records in France.

The music was mainly recorded in Australia, while most of the

vocals were laid in Jamaica.

The album’s core messages are concerned about the state of the world today and the environment. This is obvious in tunes such as Clean Air Clean Country by Burro Banton and Why Does the World Cry by Sizzla.

“Why do the same things happen again,” asks Jake rhetorically, and continues:

“I want to put out music with a message. Not necessarily about girls, money or consumerism. Plenty of people are already doing that.”

Warn the Nation also features the late Alton Ellis on Chant Rasta Sound. Jake remembers the recording which took place in London.

“It was amazing. Alton heard it [the riddim] and loved it. He went through a news paper to get the words going. I have also done a yet to be released combination with Sizzla on that tune.”

Jake says that he is already planning his next trip to Jamaica, and once the Sizzla album has dropped internationally he will go back and voice another set from the top Jamaican singers and deejays.

**Interview by Erik Magni**

# Phillip Fraser

**“In those times artists weren’t getting no money. That was why the music was so good”**

Phillip Fraser was a mainstay of the roots reggae scene that centred around the Greenwich Town area of Kingston in the late 1970s and early 1980s. He played a central role in the development of Bertram Brown’s Freedom Sounds and Errol Don Mais’ Roots Tradition labels, singing classic cultural and love themed singles including You’re No Good, Come Ethiopians and Mr Wicked Man. Yet where some of the Greenwich Town singers like Rod Taylor and Earl Zero left Jamaica and have been fairly prolific abroad, the distinctive voiced Rastaman has preferred to stay in Kingston and record for his own Razor Sound label. Angus Taylor spoke to this crucial veteran about his long and distinguished career in music and the neighbourhood that he

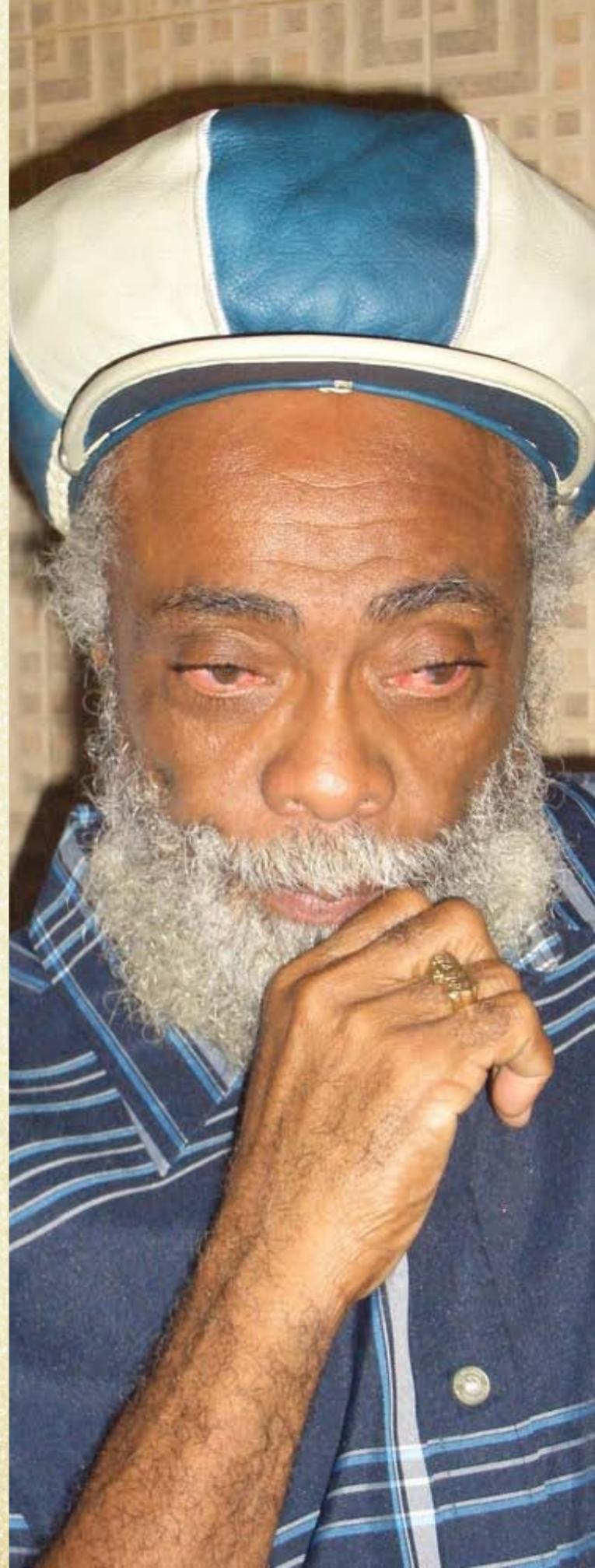
helped bring to fame...

**You were born in Whitfield Town but you are associated with Greenwich Town/Farm area.**

I was born in Whitfield Town but in Greenwich Farm I grew. I was just born in Whitfield Town and never even stayed there. I spent my whole life in Greenwich Farm so really I was born there but officially I was born in Whitfield Town. I was just a child so I never really understood why we moved but in those times my family never really owned a place so they had to move up and down.

**What were your first experiences that got you into music?**

It was something I was born with when I check



it. You see my father was one of Jamaica's number one dancers. His name was Sparky and he used to dance with another man as Sparky & Pluggy.

Then in Greenwich Town when I was young I used to take some match boxes and try to build a turntable. I'd get a bottle stopper, which was round like a record and dig out the inside and I just put the round part on a match stick, bore it and put it on the match box like a turntable. I remember doing these things as a little boy.

### **That was because you were influenced by sound system?**

Yes, that was my little idea for my own sound system! And then, living in Greenwich Town I used to hang out with Slim Smith. But before Slim Smith even, I used to be at a place called Club Bohemia doing a little talent show business - me, Johnny Clarke and Mighty Diamonds. So I used to go on a lot of talent shows singing foreign songs like Wild Flower, Help Me Make It Through The Night and those tunes and ended up winning a couple of these talent things. That was because I could manage those types of tunes well because I was a real listener of a lot of foreign songs.

### **Who was your favourite foreign singer or song?**

My favourite singers were Sam Cooke as number one artist for me (just as Slim Smith is my

number one local artist) then Jerry Butler, Curtis Mayfield. And it goes on like that because I always tried to listen to the top ones all the while so I know where I stand. Because I never went to music school - it was born into me. So for my training and things like that I had to listen to people that are singing real and if you can sing these people's songs you know what you're doing.

### **What was your favourite sound system?**

My favourite sound system was one from Greenwich Town named Echo Vibrations because that was the sound where we all started. Peter Ranking, General Lucky, Phillip Fraser, Michigan and Smiley; that was our sound before we launched out and started singing for any other. Echo Vibrations used to play in Greenwich Town every Wednesday and that was the first sound I ever saw that used to play in the day. Pure night sounds used to play and it was the first sound that had day sessions.

### **Prince Alla told me he used to look up to Slim Smith. Did you used to do the same?**

Slim Smith had a babymother in Greenwich Town so he used to often be in Greenwich Town whereas Striker Lee used to live in Greenwich Farm and he was a big producer so all the artists used to come to Greenwich Farm. But Slim Smith

was my idol because his babymother was my brethren's sister so we used to be in the same yard. When Slim Smith would come he was singing with Lloyd Charmers and Jimmy in the Uniques and they would rehearse and I used to just sit down and listen and smoke them chalice and be like wwooooooah, because the man can sing you know? Then me and him became close and he would carry me to town where he lived and introduced me to Roy Shirley and people when I just a kid. So I idolised Slim Smith because when I listened to all the voices that came out of Jamaica and compared them to his voice I realized he had the real voice!

### **What was Slim like?**

He just a humble person the same as me. I never saw him in any violent thing nor ignorant nor nothing. That man just smoked his pipe and had his guitar and sang.

### **So it must have been quite a shock when you heard of his death.**

Yes, it was a shock because we used to see each other when Bunny Lee and him were driving up and down. I was just a kid and they were bigger men and I'd see them going to the studio with people like Cornell [Campbell]. Then suddenly I heard that Bunny Lee left Slim at his house and he was complaining saying he was sick but the people took it for a joke.

They claimed he said he saw somebody at the window and he thumped out the glass and bled to death by the time people came back and found him. So it was a shock.

### **What was the first tune you recorded?**

It was a song named This Time Won't Be Like The Last Time which was recorded by ourselves - Freedom Sounds my little brethren [Bertram Brown]. A guy named Tony Mack who was around Bunny Lee, a bigger man than us, he knew the business and showed us how we could do it. The Soul Syn-

dicate band was in Greenwich Farm at the time because Chinna [Smith] and all those guys used to rehearse on 9th Street. While they were rehearsing Tony Mack said we could go to the studio, take some money and buy a tape because we didn't even know that. So when he told us Mr Brown was working so he became the producer, bought the tape and booked the studio time so we and Soul Syndicate went to Dynamic Studios. I recorded This Time..., Single Man, Mr Blue Bird and we started working on coming up with an album. That was how the Freedom Sounds label started.

### **Who influenced you to embrace Rastafari?**

Well, to be honest listening to the music when we were small like Bob Marley and Burning Spear, talking about Africa and things like that. Then we grew up in an environment where it was pure Rasta that surrounded us as little youths, smoking pipes, cooking Ital food, and we would sit down and read our bibles every day - it was how inspiration came. We came to realize about His Imperial Majesty, how Africa was for all of us and these things. So you understand it was an in-born thing but we were around people that made it come out





**Tell me more about your involvement in the Freedom Sounds label.**

Well Freedom Sounds is really me, Bertram Brown, Prince Alla and Earl Zero. I was the one that really started it as I told you when my friend Tony Mack introduced me and Bertram to buying the tape and taking Soul Syndicate to the studio. So that's how it started. We used to go to King Tubbys to do the voicing but before that we used to go to Channel One to make the rhythms with Soul Syndicate. That was how Freedom Sounds and all those labels started. That's how Corner Stone started, that's how Roots Tradition started. I helped start all those labels because we were all youngsters in Greenwich Town, all of the same age group.

**It was on the Roots Tradition label that you also brought back your inspiration Slim Smith's Never Let Go in 1979.**

Definitely. Once Freedom Sounds was up and running, Don Mais was another youth from Greenwich Town who was working at the time. It was only me, Prince Alla and Earl Zero who have never done any work outside of music! (laughs) Don Mais was working so he had a little fund that he could spend as a producer. So we went into the studio same way and licked this rhythm. He looked upon me and said, "Phillip Fraser. You love Slim Smith we have to

do a Slim Smith tune today!" so we just went in there to Channel One with Soul Syndicate and made the rhythm and then went to Tubbys and voiced it. When I voiced it I didn't even like it because I thought I was singing too flat! But everyone said, "No man! You're comfortable! It bad!" By this time no one really knew Slim Smith did the original. Even to this day people still say it's I who did the original. That's because the Slim Smith one was on a Studio 1 LP.

**That rhythm became very big in the dancehall in the 80s.**

Yes! All of a sudden it just blew away and became the biggest thing! I'd say, "Bwoy, it's a joke this because some of the tunes I sang in a high pitch that I love and see my pitch is right - it's not that. It's Never Let Go run everything!"

**You also recorded Come Ethiopians in 1978 on the same rhythm to Rod Taylor's Ethiopian Kings and both became big hits.**

Yes, it was Rod who laid the rhythm and about two days after he did I was listening to it. Through reading the bible a lot I just came up with this concept of Come Ethiopians whereas Rod Taylor sang Ethiopian Kings. I just came up with it out of my own head because in those times I never used to write music on paper. I'd just hear the rhythm while smoking,

cooking Ital food and just having a vibes - and lyrical content would just come! I'd hear a tune and just sing! (laughs)

**That tune did very well in England too. How did you come to spend some time over there?**

The first time I came wasn't on music. I had some relatives over there and my aunt died in 1970-something and I just came for the funeral. When I went back again Sugar Minott was there with a couple more people and I spent some time there - me and Toyman staying with a guy named Rusty. Now Rusty would look for shows for us and I met Silver Camel who put out Blood Of The Saint [10" in 1982].

I ended up spending a year out there and having two kids up there and doing a whole heap of shows to get myself popular because I wasn't that popular. Then when I came back to Jamaica I was the hottest thing because Never Let Go was mashing up the place!

**What did you think of the reggae being made in England?**

At the time all the reggae being made in Jamaica was exported to England. America at the time wasn't getting reggae music so England was like the next headquarters of reggae after Jamaica. The LP I did with Earth and Stone wasn't released here but it was in England. Most songs producers used to

do here were automatically released in England. Now it is like a different thing because they have kinds of changes: Ragga and all those kinds of things. I don't know that because I only know roots rock reggae!

**You did some recording for Junjo Lawes when you came back. What was he like to work with?**

I did some recording for Juno Lawes but they never released them except on dubplate. He was a nice youth and I miss him. He was a very nice quiet brethren. He was the first producer who would give artists money and carry them to foreign. He gave artists enough because in those times artists weren't getting no money.

They'd just get a bag of crackers and a piece of cheese and go in the studio. That was why the music was so good. Now artists get everything and the

producer is afraid to talk to them because now producers aren't even producers - they just have money. In our time producers were real and all artists wanted to do was sing good songs and hear ourselves upon the radio and feel good.

**Tell me about your memories of Scientist who you worked with on many occasions.**

Yes, well most of the tunes we did at Freedom Sounds and Roots Tradition were mixed by Scientist at Tubbys. Tubbys was a place that you could go to voice and mix while the rhythm laying happened at Channel One.

You could voice and mix there too but Tubbys just had that sound! Scientist was just a little youth and we were all young so we'd just try to experiment. So eventually that was how he got the name Scientist because he was just experimenting and experimenting with songs.



**You produced your own album in 1984, I Who Have Nothing and you recorded two combinations with Tristan Palmer. Was that what inspired you to break out with your own label later?**

Yes, I did some work with Tristan Palmer on the Black Solidarity label. Then in the 90s I decided I was going to break away from everyone and have my own label Razor Sound because I showed everybody how to have a label when I worked with them but I never got the right justice. Better I have my own label. So I just come with my own label now and put most things on there.

**How did you react to the changes in the music in the 80s and 90s?**

I never really reacted. There were producers who wanted me and more artists to come on what I would call "racehorse rhythms" that would get up and run and they wanted me to say anything and everything but I wasn't into that. So I decided to just keep cool and stay with my label and record what I feel is the right thing to record. So people weren't seeing Phillip Fraser enough because I didn't want to go on those rhythms. I did a couple for Jammys but he didn't release many. He released a various artists album with me and Big Youth with my tune called I'm Holding On. I didn't get the right justice there either because you go

into people's camp and they have their favourites. So it was all these things that made me decide to have my own label so I could get the right justice and people could hear the things I have in my head. I'm not going to record Phillip Fraser and put it down - I'm going to put it out! (laughs) Not like people like Bobby Digital who put it on the shelf. I must give credit to a man named Barry Clarke from Afro Eagle label. In the 80s he put a tune with me he wrote called Please Stay and it was a big song to follow up Never Let Go.

**Did you consider a move to Europe like Rod Taylor?**

No, even though all my brethren did and I have two kids out there. I never considered living in no foreign country like Europe or America or nowhere. I have been to all of them but my roots is Jamaica and my feel is Jamaica. Because what I understand is when an artist lives overseas the respect is not there anymore because you have to know how to condition yourself. A guy sees you at this club and at that club and then sees you at the racehorse shop so you become cheap. By the time someone puts you up for a show people say, "I seen Phillip Fraser at that race track. I see him at the party last night!" But when they here "Phillip Fraser live from Kingston, Jamaica" it's more exciting and more appealing. So I never try to leave. All of my brethren did: Sammy Dread was going good after I

did Never Let Go. The first song he sung out of his mouth was African Girl and it was a hit and then he went to England and across to New York and Sammy never came back. Then Michael Prophet and Earl Zero did the same. Only me and Prince Alla are still here! I see Alla every day at the studio where I am.

**Are there any plans for more music in the works?**

Definitely. I'm still doing some recording right now. I put out an album No Escape with my son Ras Fraser Junior who is a very cultured little youth coming on. He has a couple of songs out there playing and things. Also there's a compilation with me and him, father and son, Roots Man Time. We have seven tracks each. My next project is keeping myself healthy, still singing. I did a show in New York on Christmas Eve which Jah Life put on as a vintage thing with Big Youth and couple more artists like that. For the future, I'm not running down this thing because the music alone shall live, but what I see going on is pure rat race. So I just keep myself healthy, fresh, fit and nice, still doing my private recording in my own studio. I just recorded a song with my son for a radio station in Canada and they sent it on to a radio station in England where it is getting some good play.

**Interview by Angus Taylor  
Photos by Charles Le Brigand**

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# Perfect

**"We are injecting that one drop medicine into the veins of the people"**

Since we last spoke to Perfect, the fiery performer from Bamboo St Ann's has released fifth full length effort 'Back For The First Time' with Californian production house Lustre Kings - a return to the organic roots sound that made his name. Working with the Lustre Kings team of producers - Andrew Bain, Laurent Alfred, Nick Listrani and David Goldfine - he has once again created a contender for the best album of the year. The time seemed right to hear from one of our most passionate and eloquent past interviewees so Angus Taylor caught up with Perfect shortly after he had stepped off a plane in Poland on his two month European tour. He had just entertained a rainsoaked but joyous crowd at Ruhr Reggae Summer and performed second single HIM Smile in Stuttgart on the day of Haile Selassie's birth. Together they discussed his globetrotting recording habits, the quest for authenticity in reggae music, the misfortunes of two of his favourite artists and why he has yet to commence a long term project on the island he calls home...



**Is Back For The First Time a concept album and if so what is the concept?**

Well, it definitely is a concept album and the concept is Perfect going back to the authentic side of Perfect. Because over the years I have played with different genres of music and

different producers from locations around the world so we just decided that for this album we were going to have a very rootical authentic approach to it. Bringing back the same vibe you got from the original Perfect songs like How Come, Handcart Bwoy, Black Marcus and all those songs.

**What was the process of making**

**the album like? Did the Lustre Kings team come to you with some rhythms or did you come to them with songs and they built the rhythms behind you?**

I would say it happened both ways. This album started about two years ago. I was up in California for the first time in Santa Cruz and I met Lustre Kings after doing a concert. At that time he just wanted to voice a couple of singles so I took the rhythms from him and I went back to Jamaica and recorded the two singles. Then, after sending the songs to him, I got about another five rhythms from him a week later. So after I recorded two out of those five songs I was already thinking about doing an album. Their rhythms were very special - the composition of the rhythms, the vibe and the whole arrangement just wasn't another ordinary rhythm that I felt like doing a single on. Somehow the rhythms motivated me to start an album.

**A few years ago you were working with European producers. Now lots of Jamaican artists do that and you've gone to America instead.**

Each time I do an album I think about trying to create something new with somebody new. And as I said before rhythms from Lustre Kings, which is the same stable as Zion I Kings, productions are not just the

regular one drop rhythm you will hear. The composition is very unique and intense and has a lot of detail to it. So it is the rhythm that inspires the artist. A rhythm can make you write a good song or a bad song. A rhythm can bring out the best in you. And this is what I was hearing - Lustre Kings rhythms were bringing out some melodies from me which I haven't heard in a couple of years. When you hear those horns - it's not like some kid who gets a little synthesiser bass from a keyboard and a little drum track off a computer with just a little bang of a piano. There's not really much to experiment with on something like that. But when you hear the sax and guitars coming in it sends your brain all over the place. So it's not about how I've said it before but how I'm going to say it again.

**Since we last spoke there has been a lot of talk in the Jamaican media about losing control of reggae to foreigners.**

Music is universal. Jamaica is the land in which this beautiful music which we call reggae was born. But we also have to understand that the Europeans have been listening to our stuff for a lot of years and they have almost perfected it, so to speak. When it comes to the more authentic sound of reggae - and it's a bit sad to say but - it is more prevalent right now in Europe than Jamaica. Because if you should check

the productions that have been coming out of Jamaica recently the majority of them are crossover stuff, so the producers are experimenting right now and there's nothing wrong with that. But the majority of producers are experimenting with crossover music and putting a little of the dancehall and reggae flair into it more than producing the authentic roots one drop reggae vibe there. You know, I have never been approached by a Jamaican producer to do an album?

**Why?**

Probably it's because of my message or the type of music I do. They know that Perfect is one of them Groundation. We come to hold Groundation music - no matter how we might experiment for one or two days with something else we are here to maintain roots. There is a saying right now that goes "If it not live, it's dead" which I think is really true. Either it's live or it's dead. It can't be half live or half dead. So the producers in Jamaica are experimenting because the US has a lot of influence on Jamaica - but they should be doing right now is being done by European producers.

**You yourself finish your album with a totally up to the minute "trancehall" track. Is there a danger that roots reggae will become like the blues - controlled by foreign enthusiasts and critics who get to**

**decide what is and isn't authentic? "No Autotune", "no R&B". Won't this put the music in a museum?**

I don't think so Angus. The reason is because you're always going to have artists around who will be willing to hold a rootical vibe. You're always going to have a Jah Mason, a Lutan Fyah, a Perfect, a Fantan Mojah, an Anthony B, a Sizzla, a Jah Cure - the list goes on. No matter how you might hear us experiment with something else for a minute it's just to show the listener or the fan we can do that and we are well-rounded in the music. I'm not a reggae-cian - I'm a musician. But the authentic vibe we hold on to - we're just not letting go. I even had a meeting with a couple of artists recently - Lutan Fyah and Jah Mason - and we decided to really give back the people some of that authentic one drop vibe that everybody thinks is slipping away from the business. That is what we are trying to inject back into the music. That is why this album is called Back For The First Time. We are injecting that one drop medicine into the veins of the people.

**Speaking of which, there are some great musicians on the album like Dean Fraser and Earl Chinna Smith.**

Yeah man. Because Lustre Kings came to Jamaica and did some work there also. This album was recorded between



Jamaica, California, New York and St Croix. It was mixed in St Croix, mastered and some overdubs done in New York, much of the recording for the album was also done in California and Oregon - Hold On Buju and Smile were recorded at the studio in Oregon. Then Slave Driver and other songs were recorded in Jamaica at Anchor where you had Dean and Ch-

inna doing work on some of the songs there.

**Why is there only one guest vocal combination on this one compared to your previous album French Connection which had Sizzla, Zamunda, Lutan Fyah? Was this deliberate?**

This was deliberate. In fact I didn't want any combinations on this album because I can do it by myself and I wanted to do it by myself. But Ginjah is an artist with talent and a terrific voice. He's a younger artist than I am in the business and I just ran into him at the studio when I was playing the rhythm - which I had got ten minutes before. I had downloaded it and put it on my iPod and was playing in my car just parked up outside the studio. Ginjah stepped over and said "That riddim sounds great - whose is it?" and I told him it was for some producers in California and it was actually for my new album. He was like "It bad" so I said "Listen to it. If you come up with something good we do something together for my new album". Ten minutes later I was standing at a restaurant and I heard him singing out of his voice! So the studio was right there so I said "Go do your part. I'm going to smoke a joint and then come and do mine". We booked the studio time. I was outside for five or ten minutes then I went in and did my piece and it was mixed the same night. The whole song was done in less than 45 minutes. The chemistry was right and I didn't fight it.

**You're on your fifth album now - how would you say you have developed since Born Dead With Life when we spoke last?**

To be honest I haven't really changed vocally or lyrically

because our message remains the same throughout the passage of time. The message of the Rastaman is equal rights and justice, upliftment for the people and positive words for the listener so I don't think my lyrics have changed that much. When it comes to my vocals I have learned to use my voice more efficiently on different types of rhythms. I listen to a lot of stuff. People will see Perfect pull up at the gas station and who am I listening to? Amy Winehouse. See me pull up the next morning and I'm probably listening to James Brown. In a month's time you might see this Rastaman pull up at the gas station playing a Beatles CD. So from listening to a whole bunch of stuff my head is crowded with billions of melodies and I improvise on them. Because of out of one melody comes melodies if you know what to do.

**As a fan of Amy Winehouse you must have been saddened by the news of her death this weekend.**

I'm sad. I'm really sad. I really loved Amy. Trust me, I really think I'm one of Amy's biggest fans and that sounds so impossible. A Rasta artist saying Amy Winehouse. But I'll say it again. Amy Winehouse was such a sweet heart. I really admire her music. I really admire her lyrics. I really admire her style. Her tone was so incredible. And regardless of her cocaine activities or whatever, I really don't care about that, I'm talk-

ing about her as a singer. I'm not getting into her personal life. I really miss Amy and I also think she is sadly missed by a lot of people in England and all over the world.

**There's a similar sentiment in your song Hold On Buju. It's not about what he did or didn't do - it's about missing a person and his music.**

Yeah! Guilty or not guilty - that's our Buju. Regardless of what the system has to say, Buju's ours. He's a son of the soil and he will always be ours, good or bad, rich or poor, that's our little Buju. If your kid did something wrong this morning, it's still your kid. And if your kid did something right the other day, it's still your kid. You have to compromise regardless, guilty or not guilty the world misses Mark Myrie, just like the words said.

**How did you celebrate Haile Selassie's birthday on Saturday 23rd July?**

I was alone on Saturday. First in the day time I had a show in Stuttgart which was tremendous with a nice turnout and during that set I paid tribute to His Majesty with the song HIM Smile. I'm not lying when I say it's the most beautiful song I've heard about His Majesty and not because I did the song. I've never heard anybody who chose that topic - singing about His Majesty's smile. People sing about the positive side of

him - his consciousness, his bravery, his kingship - but I've never heard anything about His Majesty's smile. So I think it was so stupid for me to sing about His Majesty's smile but it came out as a very nice song and I really, really love this song. So after I paid tribute to His Majesty during the set I was alone and because it was an early show at about 3 o'clock in a day festival it was really a holy vibe for the rest of the afternoon.

**You were a vocal critic of George W Bush. How do you feel about president Barack Obama?**

It's just a new face for the same system. I feel no different. What should I say? A black George Bush? Probably. That's a nice way of saying it - a black George Bush. Things haven't really changed. They still remain the same. He still has to answer to the so called "elites", so he's a new face for the same system. I feel no way. I'm the same victim.

**My friend Jess interviewed you and first drew my attention to that fact that you put as much work into your outfits as your music. Is clothing important to you?**

Yes, it is. Clothing is very important. It helps you to create the thing you are trying to create. The way you attire yourself helps to bring out the best in

you also. Because feeling good is also looking good. I also admire His Imperial Majesty Emperor Haile King Selassie I The First for always looking so royal in his attire. I think as an artist it is really good to be looking good. I learned from an early age that whenever you leave your house as an artist you've got to leave looking good. If you only have one pants and one shirt you wash it out, iron it, starch it, put it together and make sure you step out clean and neat - because you never know who you're going to walk into. It might be you're not booked for a show but you'll

never know what will happen. You could be walking down the street and there is a car stopping with ten tourists from France that want pictures right away because the driver of the car knows you and says "There goes Perfect!" It isn't good to not look good in a picture. I don't think so. So it's really important to get yourself together and look good for the people.

Interview by **Angus Taylor**  
Photos by **Christian Bordey**  
and **Michael Patton**



# MAFIA & FLUXY

## "Beres Hammond calls us Harmony House UK!"

Leroy "Mafia" Heywood and David "Fluxy" Heywood - out of Tottenham, North London, UK, - are Britain's most famous reggae rhythm section come production team. They grew up around their uncle's Wizard Hi Fi and in the mid 70s formed their school group the Instigators - catching the attention of neighbour and local scene eminence Fatman who helped link them with the best and brightest vocal talent of the day. Their success as a backing band and as rhythm makers for labels like Chris Lane's iconic Fashion imprint snowballed until 1987 when they forged their eponymous label, travelling to Jamaica to record for Sugar Minott and eventually Donovan Germain and Beres Hammond. Lately, the dynamic duo have been touring Africa and the UK with Luciano, playing the One Love Peace Festival with John Holt, and releasing critically acclaimed albums with both veterans like Little Roy and newcomers in Adele Harley. The brothers' impenetrable synergy as a musical unit is matched by their habit of finishing each other's sentences!

Angus Taylor met them outside their regular weekly session at West London's Stingray Studio to talk over what has been a varied and truly remarkable career.

**How did you get into music? Your uncle Ivan had a sound...**

Mafia: We had a sound system in the house which we grew up with and he had all the tunes from the ska tunes coming to the rocksteady. Me and Fluxy used to take them - and these were the days of paraffin heaters and lino - and we used to slide on them and use them as skateboards! But growing up listening to all that we knew all the new tunes, anybody used to sing a tune and I'd say "I know that tune", you know what I mean? So we had a good knowledge of tunes. We knew who Toots & The Maytals were, Prince Buster, Desmond Dekker, Pioneers, Skatalites, Bob Marley - we grew up listening to all of them.

Fluxy: We were getting pre-releases from Jamaica and UK releases from his sound system box and would stand on a chair and play them. So the knowledge flowed from there.

M: Yeah we used to rush home and whoever got to the turntable first, that was his evening sorted!

**So it was sound system first before music.**

F: Yeah. And then my mother bought him...

M: ...a guitar for five pounds from a friend of mine. Because we used to go the Tottenham school and there was a school band that used to play in music lessons and I used to say "They wicked". Then I said to my mates "I want to be a producer" and they kind of laughed!

**Why a producer?**

M: Well at that time we'd met Bunny Lee and people like that, we knew Fatman. We liked the stuff Striker was putting out but we couldn't play any instruments then so when my mum bought me the guitar just before the six weeks holidays I used to put on albums and rehearse and practise off of them until I found it was the bassline I was playing. That was what I picked up. I couldn't do the chords and everything so I was playing the notes of the basslines to all the tunes and I was picking them up quick and learning

them fast.

**Timing is quite important performing on a sound system, so was that good early schooling for you as a rhythm section?**

F: Yes, absolutely.

**So how did you go from that to drums?**

F: After Mafia learned to play the bass he said "You're going to have to learn to play the drums you know". So I continued listening to the music and just tapping along. I had a homemade drum kit - some bamboo sticks and a speaker for a snare drum, a bicycle lamp for a hi-hat and an odd shaped microphone we would plug into a speaker and step on so - boom! - it would give me the kick drum! Until later on in life my elder brother bought me a drumkit and we just played along to songs, any tune that was out. Most of the stuff was Bob Marley and Burning Spear and Aggrovators, Bunny Lee stuff - that top three was like that. We also started to play along with funk stuff like Ohio Players and all that.

**So we're talking mid 70s now.**

F: Right on.



**So is that why you called your first band the Instigators - after the Aggrovators?**

F: Exactly - because we when we built the band we said we had to have something that ended "T-O-R-S"! So Instigators came out of the bag! Instigators was Mafia & Fluxy on drum and bass, our elder brother Dingle played guitar, Tony Cooper, who's now called Skully played keyboards, the leader sing was Toyin Adekale but it went over to Courtney Bartley who recently passed away, and the guitarist's name was Redeye.

**How did you get your names?**

M: Back in the day they used to say "Yuh bad on guitar. Yuh bad on bass" so I'd say "Oh, bad, Mafia" - simple as that.

F: My name came about when

we were rehearsing a track in our parents' bedroom. We'd set up for our rehearsal and were about to record a track so I counted them in and did a drumroll and everyone started laughing! I said "What's so funny?" and they said, "Bwoy, that drumroll sounded kinda Fluxy yunno!" and it kinda stuck from there!

**How did you link Fatman?**

F: Fatman lived up the road so every minute we were having rehearsals in the house we used to put it on cassette. King Jammys used to stay at Fatman's house so we used to knock on the door and say "Listen to this! Listen to this!" and Jammys would say "Yuh good yunno, but keep practising!" We knew deep down he was saying we weren't really ready yet! But they took it quite serious though until

Fatman came to a point where he managed us. We then started to play a residence at a club called the 100 Club in Oxford Street and all the artists from Jamaica like Trinity, Al Campbell, Clint Eastwood, Barrington Levy started to do shows in there and we were the support band. So that was how we got to know artists as well - that was our introduction. The band then grew until we became a backing band as well backing people like Cornell Campbell, Sugar Minott, Johnny Osbourne and all those artists who came over from Jamaica so we were known to those artists and they started saying we should come over to Jamaica. In about 1987 we drew for our Mafia & Fluxy label because we knew artists now and we thought if Sly & Robbie had their Taxi label when they were doing Black Uhuru we could do the same with our Instigators - we were going to call it Mini-Cab label! But then we thought that was a bit too close and went with Mafia & Fluxy.

**Tell me about your first music related trip to Jamaica.**

M: It was in 1987 when we went to do Maxi Priest in Sunsplash. But because of the backing we knew artists like Sugar Minott and Bunny Lee and they were glad we were out there. So again, me and Fluxy started recording over

there - the first time was using Sugar Minott's studio. We laid the first set of tracks with Pablove Black on keyboards who just came and jammed with us and it was really good.

**How did you start working for Penthouse?**

M: We got introduced to Penthouse by an artist by the name of Sugar Burke.

F: We were at Bunny Lee's house and he said "I'm going to bring you to Penthouse's manager. He needs you guys".

M: But at the same time Germain had a good relationship with John at Dub Vendor so John must have told him that we were coming over as well. The first time we did a session was for Wayne Wonder and it was massive. The studio was packed with people. Everybody wanted to hear these Englishmen's sound so we had to be on it!

F: Can you imagine like a dancehall! The studio was packed and it was a big studio! There was a load of people watching and we were in one corner on our own. It was like being on a stage! And then the man said "Let me see what you can do. Wayne Wonder, here's the mic. Let's see what's going to happen out of this." You could hear mumbling "Damn English mu-

sicians, English man, let's see that they can do".

M: So Wayne Wonder started singing, I found the chords to the song he wanted to do and Flux started tapping up the beat same time. We whacked it out quick and everyone started tapping their feet and nodding their heads.

F: And me and Mafia were nudging each other now going "We've got 'em. We've got 'em!" That was our way into Penthouse. After then we didn't look back.

**You often work with people who are skilled producers themselves. Does it ever become like too many cooks?**

F: No, I'd say us ourselves are very good to work with. If we have an input we would say it but we wouldn't drill it in and go "No no no - it should be like that". With most producers they just say "Give me a Mafia & Fluxy feel" or something! They just leave it down to us so then me and Mafia will have a talk and say "Shall we go here? Shall we go there?" Some producers will say we should play it a certain way but we avoid the "too many cooks thing".

M: It's either that or an artist will sing a song and we build the rhythm behind them. Or someone comes with a series

of tunes to lick over.

**Do you ever get phased by working with big artists or have you been around it for so long that it doesn't matter anymore?**

M: Yeah it is like that but back in the day when we were first doing a tune with Gregory Isaacs...

F: Wow! That was like "Man"! When we first did Gregory that was like big time phase! But now it's like "Hey"...

M: ...Bring it on!

**You work in all styles from roots with Sip A Cup to One Drop and Dancehall with Frenchie - who you know from Fashion days - to lovers with Adele Harley to R&B.**

M: Yeah, we want to expand it even more. We like to experiment and do some fusion stuff as well. For our dancehall style we put a lot of input from the UK club scene and use those kind of Lady Gaga-ish sounds as well. In Jamaica a lot of people are just starting to do that now.

**Is there any kind of music that you don't like that you'd never put into your productions at all?**

F: (laughs)

M: (laughing) Everything is a challenge so there isn't really any music we don't like.

F: Music's music - that's all we know.

M: So if Take That wanted us to produce them tomorrow - bring it on!

**Tell me a bit about the Little Roy album Heat you did earlier this year.**

F: You know what? We met up because we were doing a Bob Marley tribute at Jazz Cafe and when we were rehearsing me and Mafia looked at each other and said "He's worth doing an LP with". So we called him over and said "Roy, we're at Stingray on Tuesdays so come down". He came down the following Tuesday when we weren't even expecting him and we laid a track...

M: Two tracks.

F: Yeah two tracks. We had such a wicked vibe in there. Everything was live - I set up the drums and everything, Mafia got the notes and Roy would sing. We just clicked and said "Let's go for an album". Live horns, live percussion, everything 100% live. Ideal artist.

M: Yeah we're on the next one

now with him. Same vibe. And we've got one now with the Pioneers.

**Are you on Little Roy's Nirvana covers album?**

M: I played on that one.

F: Yeah Mafia played on that one. Roy said he really wants to take his time with our one because he's got the Heat one and he's got the Nirvana one so we can go easy.

**He's recorded some of his songs many times - he's quite a perfectionist - but he's been saying he prefers the songs he recorded with you to the way they were recorded back in the day.**

F: Yeah, he kept telling me that and I thought "Yeah, right..." but it's nice to hear that. I felt really good about that.

M: It was nice to work with him and George Dekker of the Pioneers.

**And how about your work with Adele? How did that come together?**

M: We actually met her on Myspace. I went on her page and said I liked her stuff because two of the rhythms on her page were ones me and Fluxy laid. She'd done one

for Pickout and one for Mikey Brooks. So we started talking after that and said "Why don't we get together and do some tracks?" Her voice is great and whatever I throw at her she delivers and she just takes it her own way. I could give her the Satta Amassagana rhythm and she hasn't heard the rhythm before but she likes it and she'll write to it. That's what I like about her. She doesn't come with the same old melodies - she just takes it somewhere else.

**Who is your main production inspiration?**

F: Bunny Lee, Donovan Germain...

M: Sly & Robbie.

F: Obviously Sly & Robbie.

**What's the main part of what you do - playing live or in the studio?**

M: It very much balances because we're in the studio and we get called away for a tour then we're dying to get back in the studio. If we're in the studio for a while and nothing's going on we're dying to do a tour!

**Who is your favourite artist to record with of all time?**

F: My personal favourite is Beres. We have a nice vibe when we make songs together. He's

got a serious input and he listens. We and Beres went back from Penthouse days and we kind of clicked. We worked with him here there and everywhere. But when he rose up he didn't knock us back or anything. Every time we went to Jamaica he said "Come up to Harmony House. Let's do something tonight now!" The last trip we were producing his artists for him for Harmony House - we're always welcome up there. He calls us Harmony House UK!

M: Garnett Silk was a good one as well.

F: And Buju Banton - he is very good to work with in the studio. He has got some nice ideas.

**And who do you like touring with?**

F: At this present time I would say Luciano.

M: And we used to tour with Soul II Soul. That was great when we supported James Brown in Germany.

F: He was cool. He was nice man.

**How many tunes would you estimate you have worked on?**

F: Pffffttt!

M: (laughing) Wow!

F: How many people are there in the world?

M: I could never name it.

F: (laughing) That goes unan-

swered! When we first started I was trying to count and then we got more popular and ran out of zeroes!

M: There's a whole heap of rhythms we worked on for people like Al Campbell and Jah Shaka that haven't even touched the street yet. We used to play for Al Campbell every Wednesday at our studio in Tottenham [which closed in 2006] - we used to fill up a tape every week.

**What projects should we look out for in the future?**

M: We've got another Adele album we're working on, another Little Roy album we're working on, the R&B to Reggae series, a Pioneers album, a tribute to Jackie Mittoo album...

F: We've got some Gregory Isaacs that hasn't been released yet which we need to work on.

M: We need to catch up on our mixing. We've done a lot of recording but we're behind on that.

**Who's still on your list to work with?**

F: You know who I would really like to work with? Bunny Wailer. If Bunny came here right now I'd say "Let's do an album right now!"

**Interview and photo by Angus Taylor**



# TIWONY

**"We are dynamic. I make music with passion. I'm not subject to the calculations of record companies"**

Tiwony is a Guadeloupe-born artist, active since the 90s, and a member (with Black Kimbo Original B Lyai, Luzdi and Fefe Typical) of Blackwarell Sound System, Champion Sound System of France in 2003, which he has led since 1999. His new album 'Cité Soleil' was released in May. It's a very heterogeneous album which allows us to appreciate the talent of Tiwony, as it evolves from reggae to dancehall to gwo ka to nyabinghi and beyond...

**Your new album 'Cité Soleil' was recently released. Who worked on it with you?**

First, I worked with my usual crew : Blackwarell, which is my family. It is a label, a collective and a soundsystem. I started this album before my mix tape 'Viv La Vi'. I wanted something different, something I could take to a higher

level.

D & H production, brithers from Rennes who are a composing duo and also do a lot of remixes, worked with me on Never Give Up with Konshens. They also mixed several tracks. They are very versatile and have produced riddims with very different styles.

Tyrone Downie (ex Wailers),

did arrangements on several tracks (My continent, So Special).

There are also productions by my cousin Original B who is part of Blackwarell, some by Scandalize from Guyana who is part of the group Damaniak, then Kaprisson who also made one instrumental, as well as Jaly Beats, Jean Marc Guiose and Don Dada ...

In the end we tried to make something open and have fun with everything.

This album was recorded and composed by France, Jamaica and Africa.

**Which guests feature on the album ?**

My father Vicky Edimo, did the track So Special about mothers. There's also Konshens with the track Never Give Up.

Then there's Winston McAnuff, who was like a father to me in Jamaica. He first brought me there to do the mix, and he found himself in the studio when we mixed a track. He liked the vibes of the song and we decided to do a duet. He sang it in an original way.

I did a song with Anthony B and Gyptian, which began with an Anthony B demo. He suggested I could sing on it with him. The track was remixed by Marc from Animal sound. Speedy, a brother and



very promising singjay, is also present on the album.

Da Brain from Senegal I met at the studio from Dider Awadi (Positive Black Soul), has recorded African Whine. It's a big tune now in Senegal.

The guest appearances happened as and when we met. Nothing was planned in advance, in general it is an exchange.

**On this album you worked with your father (successful bassist Vicky Edimo), how did you find working with him?**

We did one track together. He also did some backing vocals, and was musical director on some songs.

We were partners. After seeing I took music seriously, he accepted I could do it for a living job, although he knows

that even successful musicians don't make much of a living. We do great things together whether recording music or playing on stage like at the "Festival des Arts Nègres" that took place in Senegal.

**There is a wide diversity of sound on this album, it seems like you have no musical limits?**

It's all about the vibes. I grew up with lots of different music. All of which inspires my flow. I've never had boundaries. I listen to zouk, rap, R'n'B. During a trip to Jamaica, I realized that even in the motherland of reggae music, the brothers listened to a lot of different things.

Even Bob showed us the way without limits. It is more often in France that there are fixed genres. And it does not serve the music.

**Will you perform this new album live?**

I do have dates for the album. There is a tour with Turbulence and on June 9th, I did doing a very special gig at Cabaret Sauvage in Paris.

**"Cité Soleil" is the name of a district in Haiti. Is the choice of this title a way of paying tribute to the Haitian people, affected by an earthquake in 2010?**

I came up with the title before the earthquake, but it's also a way to pay tribute to the Haitian people. "Cité Soleil" is one of the largest ghettos in the Caribbean. I saw a documentary "Ghosts of Cité Soleil" produced by Wyclef Jean (of the Fugees), which touched me deeply. We see people like this every day. As I always say, "much love and so much hatred." I also wanted to big up every ghetto in the world.

I'm going over there for a charity show. I had very good vibes with the people. The song "Pitit Toussaint" was made in direct response to the earthquake. Haiti has a special place in history thanks to Toussaint Louverture, who is known for being the first Black leader to have defeated the forces of a European colonial empire in his own country, and establish the "First Republic of a black people"

**You are very productive and active on the Internet (myspace, skyblog, facebook ...) and always offer us new tracks, some even for free download. Do you think this is a way out of the music industry crisis?**

We are dynamic. I make music with passion. I'm not subject to the calculations of record companies. When I like a rhythm, I make a song. Every day

we try to do different things. Internet is a new communication tool to interact with the public, so it helps to have a fast turnaround of new tracks. I've made contacts throughout the world through the internet - in Chile, the USA and I have even done shows in Canada.

**What is the future of music today and more specifically the reggae and Caribbean music scenes?**

We always have had to cope with the crisis in the world of reggae music, so this are just little changes. We can now benefit from new broadcast networks, which allows us to move forward in parallel.

There may be a lack of structure which could be improved on the business side. In the Caribbean the talent is there - we have to sort the logistics.

When I see the lineups of the major reggae festivals in France, I wonder why they are inviting artists from Jamaica when they could schedule an evening just with Francophone artists. Their loss. Promoters should not be afraid to invest on the French artists.

**You supported French hip-hop group NTM for their 2009 reunion. How did it feel to open for them and how did it come about?**



NTM for me was always anti Establishment. They have always been an inspiration for me, through their lyrics and their music. They always said aloud what others thought and whispered. We had already worked with Joey Starr producing BOSS (Boss Of Scandalz Strategyz) and the Ragga Connection compilations. I also opened the Joey show in Olympia. It was a new audience for me but I got very good feedback from the public.

**After the success of the first 2 albums, will there be a new album in collaboration with**

**Fefe Typical?**

We are always together and we already have new songs. But we are not ultimately a group. We might do things together but we have two distinct careers. This is my big brother, so he was one of the first to hear this album and give his assessment.

**You travel a lot. You have pictures on your Myspace of you in Jamaica, in Africa and Haiti. How do you choose your destinations?**

I often leave the country to

do music, to record or play a show. But visiting Africa was more about my spiritual journey and identity. I wanted to set foot in the cradle of humanity. I've also been to islands like St. Martin, Antigua and St. Thomas for "gatherings" of all the houses of Rastafari (Nyabinghi, Bobos ...) for prayer, Bible studies, and to discuss future prospects for the Rastafarian movement. It was outside of music, but often I developed relationships that eventually led to professional projects.

**Interview and photos by Franck Blanquin**

# DAVID RODIGAN

**“When I first broadcast in Jamaica I realized the true power of radio”**

David Rodigan has been called many things in his life: an ambassador for reggae, a showman, a legend. But in factual terms he has to be one of the best known broadcasters and selectors in the music. The son of a treasury officer from a mining village in Kirkcaldy, Scotland, David was born in Hanover and grew up in Libya as a small child and as a teenager in Oxford. In the early 1970s he defied his father's wishes and trained as an actor before his love of both performance and reggae got him a job at BBC Radio London. In 1983 he visited Jamaica where Barry G challenged him to a clash live on air, a event that began his second career as a soundclash champion, travelling the world to take on all comers. Now approaching his 60s, and in a climate of reduction for specialist radio, Mr Rodigan has become more outspoken at what he sees as a bad patch for Jamaican recordings, increasingly supporting foreign artists like Collie Buddz, YT and Alborosie, and the dubstep movement in

the UK. An appearance before young dubstep fans at the London superclub Fabric led to the release of his 'Fabric Live 54' cd where all kinds of Jamaican and Jamaican-inspired music are given typically seamless mix - proving that while Rodigan definitely has the tunes it's still what he does with them that counts. Angus Taylor spoke to David in the spring at the studios of Kiss FM where he presents their Sunday night reggae show.

**You've been getting more and more into dubstep recently – what has dubstep done for the UK reggae scene?**

What it's done is introduced people to the likes of King Tubby, Lee Perry, Errol Thompson - the engineers, the sound system, the dub engineers of Jamaica, via the music. Because if you discover dubstep you must progress - and I think people do naturally investigate beyond the perimeters of the music as it is. And certainly the reason I've been booked at dubstep gigs is quite specifically to play dub music (not all night!) that I've collected from back in the day so I think there is a direct lineage connecting King Tubby with Caspa, Breakage, all these people. There's a fusion. What King Tubby and the people like him, the engi-

neers in 1972-73 were doing was and is similar to what's happening now. There's something about the breaking down of rhythms and the rebuilding of them which is basically what dubstep and dub in its original form are - that excites people. And in an environment where people are gathered together in hundreds and thousands (and similarly in the drum'n'bass experience) it is a bass experience. It's not really a vocal experience.

**What do you like about it?**

There's something about the culture which when I've seen and been to dubstep things, the energy current that's created by the music is phenomenal. And I think that they - the young dubstep audience - have identified that in reggae and dub music - and it's led them also into rubadub. Now you and I know what that is and why it's an important part of Jamaican music. Modern dancehall doesn't have that element: the bass, the breakdown, the bounce, the depth - it's too energized. Dubstep, dub music and rubadub music from the 70s and 80s has that. So there is a direct connection and you can hear it and feel it in the music. And I think it has had a profound effect on reggae because I've noticed now when I'm playing at my gigs - and

some of them are not necessarily reggae gigs, more dubstep or drum'n'bass gigs - and I'm playing elements of traditional reggae and the crowd is going crazy. You Can Get It If You Really Want by Desmond Dekker is hardly a dubstep record, it's hardly even a dub record, but I tell you what - when it's played it gets a phenomenal forward. Because there's something in that song and many songs like that - whether it's Abyssinians Satta Amassagana I mean you know you love the music - that brings something out in people in terms of its soul, its content, and the essence of it. When you hear it it's like “What was that?”

**Who was into dubstep first – you or your sons?**

Oh, the boys! My eldest son first, Jamie, who has a sound system called Extra Stout and then subsequently Oliver who is four years younger than him. Extra Stout is my son and three other chaps who love Rubadub. Probably what really sums it up Angus would be this, and I've probably told you this before but about 3 years ago I went into my son's bedroom and he was horsing around with that Stop That Train rhythm and I asked him why and he said because it just blew him away. That rhythm was made in '67. Lynn Tait and the Jets. (imitates guitar sound) I remember the first time I ever heard it was when I was at the movies and I went to see The Harder They



Come and it was a Brixton cinema and everyone was talking and they had subtitles - it was a bizarre experience. But that sequence when Ras Daniel Hartman's walking down the track and the guitar goes and “Forward and fyaka” I said “What is this?” I remember there was something so haunting about it. And my son when we has 17 got the same experience to such an extent that he created

that song which is on the Fabric album – he cleared it with Derrick Harriott- and he built his melody on top of it. I said to him, “why did you do it?” and he said “that guitar you know (imitates guitar again) and the way that rhythm drops” – Lynn Tait and the Jets – what a band. Priceless.

Last time we spoke you were unhappy with the state of reg-

-gae. Has anything improved in terms of new artists and tunes.

Yes I think it has. I'm particularly impressed with the album from Protoje which I think is very refreshing. I like the Nyabingi rhythm which rolled out at the end of last year from the TOK camp. I'm enjoying the new Steven and Damian Marley tune Jah Army, there's a Mavado tune I quite like called Pepper, it's a relatively new rhythm by Stephen McGregor called the Pepper rhythm. There's also a Stephen McGregor and Vybz Kartel – I almost want to wash my mouth out.

### **(laughs) Why?**

I find a lot of Vybz Kartel stuff sickening because of the subject matter but this one is a warning to young people to avoid dangerous drugs – I forget what it's called [Careful] but it's a one drop rhythm and I

like the way it's been recorded. Stephen McGregor is very talented – I'd hardly say he was a genius but maybe they've put that title on him. Because he's young and he's obviously very astute when it comes to working with technology because that's clearly his strength. Possibly in Jamaica they're quick to give someone a title if they're impressed – and he comes from a great heritage from Freddie. I'll just quickly look at my playlist here [looks in bag] – (must remember to send that birthday card!) the Etana I'm really enjoying her People Talk but I haven't heard the album. I've heard it's weak in places. Also Beres Hammond's Keeping It Real, a couple of tracks on the Apple Gabriel album I'm enjoying. I like that Shaggy with Mavado – Girls Dem Love We – I like that. And even though it's an old rhythm I'm enjoying Macka B's 45 on that old 54 46 rhythm "Nothing But The 45"

talks about vinyl. It's already shaping up to be an interesting year so far. A couple of nice versions on that message rhythm from Don Corleon – one or two things on there.

### **Since the 90s you've been involved in soundclash. What does soundclash mean to you?**

The essence of soundclash appeals to the ultimate collector. It is essentially about people who are so obsessed with the music that they will go almost to any lengths to record something that they have as an exclusive or customised or branded song for themselves. So in essence they will go and get new versions of popular songs recorded personally for them by the artist. That is slightly obsessive behaviour. It's a bit like a musical boxing match and if you weigh in at the right weight with the right number of dubplates in your right class – whether featherweight, middleweight (I think the boxing analogy works) it's a bit of a blood sport and the people that come to it want to see action and they want to see a result – they want to see somebody winning and somebody losing. And similarly there are supporters for each sound system who turn up en masse. Sometimes they're brought in buses by the sound system. There are one or two solo sound selectors but essentially it's a team work and usually consists of three or four people in a team who work together. There's a

lot of work involved in it – of cutting dubplates and specials and going to the trouble of finding the artists and booking studios. And then the essence of it on the night is to basically show your skills as a mixer and with speeches that reflect what you're talking about in terms of music and what you're about to play against your opponent. So it's a musical boxing match and if it's performed correctly in the traditions of it, it can be a lot of fun. If it descends into a slanging match it can be unpleasant.

### **There's an upward mobility aspect to soundclash isn't there? The new people taking on the establishment.**

I agree completely and without the new element the music can only be considered to be an old boys network and that's not acceptable. I frequently encourage new artists and sound-systems. I've always done so. I think it's wrong to hate on young sound system selectors as some sound systems do. It's a sin. It's just so unfair. We need new selectors. We need ideas. We need new young blood to come in and take a look at it to turn it on its head. If we don't have that it won't progress. The only thing I would say is I feel sorry for some young sound systems because it's impossible for them to get vintage dubplates because the artists have died. And that makes it unfair for the older sound systems. Frequently I deny and refuse

to clash with younger sounds because I don't want to be put in a position – and for a number of years I've refused to do the Riddim Clash in Germany – for the simple fact that I didn't want to be seen to be, without sounding pretentious, showing off or bigging up my chest saying "I can beat all you guys" because I have nothing to prove. Certainly not to young sound systems. I think they should be clashing with each other and that world should develop in its own way. The old boys network – there is a danger with that of it being "here we go again". How many times can we hear some of those old dubs? I think that's why the sound system clashing has peaked and now fallen off without doubt.

### **You started as an actor. You seem to love performing.**

I knew when I was much younger that I enjoyed performing. Elton John summed it up brilliantly when he was interviewed recently by saying, "Yeah I love showing off. And so does Rod Stewart and Mick Jagger. Three of the biggest show offs in show business." When he said that it struck a chord with me. There is an element of showing off in the extreme version of entertainment because it requires a personality that changes when you go out on stage. I think Robbie Williams said there is a moment on stage when his mad brother joins him. I identify with that because people often say to

me "the man we see waiting in the wings is not the man we see in a sound clash. Something happens." I'm aware that something happens but I'm quite sure what it is. I've never been able to fully explain it but I know there is a change out there whether it's just sheer adrenalin that pumps through the body because there is a big adrenalin rush when you go out there – facing 2000 people or 200 it doesn't matter. You have to entertain.

### **How has your theatrical training helped you?**

OPP – other people's problems. In the theatre you're taught never bring your problems onto the stage because the public are not interested in seeing them. They've come to see Crown Matrimonial or Henry VI Part 2 or The Tempest and they don't want a miserable looking actor to come on because he's just had an argument with his girlfriend. They're not interested. When you walk on stage, you are there to entertain. I realized that when I first did a school play which was Our Town, the Thornton Wilder play. I had a character called the Stage Manager, a narrator. The first night I did that I will never ever forget it. I was sixteen and I knew, standing on that stage and performing that part, that this was something I really really wanted to do. I dreamed of working in the theatre and I was told "you can't do it, you can't do it, you can't



do it” so I finished my A Levels and went and studied Economics because I was told I couldn’t even think about being an actor, it’s ridiculous. After six months of studying economics I was going absolutely stir crazy and I ended up working at Whitbread’s in Chiswick on a summer break, thinking “I’ve got to go back for my second year – I just can’t do it”. I booked myself into classes in Holborn at the City Literary institute. They did acting, speech and movement classes four nights a week. I was there every night, realizing that I wanted to pursue theatre. I started going for auditions and was offered a place in East 15 acting school. I attended LAMDA and didn’t get offered a place, I attended Webber Douglas auditions, and I was offered a place at Rose Bruford and snapped it up and don’t regret a moment of it.

### **Is that why you do things like dressing as Elvis for the Ninjaman Clash in New York in 2007?**

(laughs) Yes I think so. I remember that. I was clashing with Ninjaman and I knew that Ninjaman loved costumes so I was going to wear a ninja costume but then I thought “no, that’s too predictable. He’ll probably come in a ninja costume.” I was on tour in Japan and on a bullet train and the guy in front of me had a laptop and the host of this Japanese TV show had the most ridiculous Elvis and

he was like 22 but it was ridiculous. And I thought, “Elvis... clash with Ninja... No it’s ridiculous”. That night, having dinner with Mighty Crown in an Italian restaurant in Osaka they were playing “You’re caught in a trap” Elvis. I said, “this has got to happen”. And I made the decision in Japan that I would do Elvis to clash Ninja. I came back here – actually got an official Elvis costume with the wig and everything – because in previous incarnations I’ve been an Indian Taxi driver and I go to theatrical costumers and get costumed up – I’ve even been a jockey in a horserace in various clashes over the years.

### **You have made over 40 albums and now there is a new generation of artists. Do you consider yourself a veteran?**

I wouldn’t say that. I leave that to you and the people. I consider myself a messenger, a humble servant, a father, as a role model. People are looking unto me. But to give myself titles saying I am a veteran I think is really presumptuous. I leave that to the people and just keep doing my work. I didn’t come to claim titles. I came to see the sheep to spread messages! (laughs) I would say I’m a shepherd. I would say I’m a priest. I would say I’m a king. I would say I’m a humble servant. I would very much say I’m a prophet. I’m a teacher. But a veteran? I don’t think that’s for me to claim. Leave something for the people to decide!

(laughs).

### **The camera people go running over when they see you coming on? How did you keep it secret?**

I was outside freezing cold in a truck, waiting to come in because I couldn’t let anyone see me. Ninjaman won the toss so he went first and played his 15 minutes and I heard them saying “this is the last song from Ninjaman” and they were phoning me saying, “this is the last song, get in here now”. So I knocked on the stage door of this big place in Queens – the Amazura – and the security opened the door and tried to shut it again because they thought I was a headcase – guy standing out there in an overcoat and an Elvis costume. I banged it and said, “let me in please. I’m Rodigan” and then someone else saw and said, “that’s Rodigan” so they let me in and I hid in a cupboard for a few more minutes. And then I had a dubplate with Richard Asprey an actor saying “we’re terribly sorry but David Rodigan is unable to perform tonight but he has sent a substitute selector from Las Vegas and I ran on as Elvis. I decided I would sing my own dubplate – I don’t know if that’s on the video but I sing “Ninja you caught in a trap, you can’t get out, Rodigan will kill you”.

### **You play regularly in London but you also play a lot**

### **in towns and cities outside. Those scenes are very diehard and committed aren’t they?**

I think when you live in a small community, a small town and some small cities I think the environment can breed a very intense passion. I remember living in Oxford where I was reared from my teenage years and we were very passionate about rocksteady and ska and soul. We were devoted. We had our scene and went to our clubs like the Bridge in Wheatley and those places. I think because it’s harder to get and you look to London as the hub, the heartbeat, the beacon, but often the scene is more intense in a local community and more accessible as well.

### **What does the future hold?**

As long as the phone rings and people want to book me I will always perform because Ken Dodd said “when you’re counting success don’t count money, count happiness” and he made a song called Happiness, The Greatest Gift That I Possess. I’m very happy doing this and I’m stealing Ken Dodd’s lyrics here but they interviewed him on Newsnight a few months ago and when they tried to bring up the word retirement he said, “Don’t you dare use that word!” and they said “why” and he said, “retiring is something people do when they’re sick and tired of doing what they’ve been doing and they start doing what

they’ve always wanted to do. What I’ve always wanted to do is to make people laugh so I’m not retiring”.

### **That’s playing out and as we know touring is having a resurgence in the current climate. What’s the future of radio?**

Radio is always going to be there. It’s an immediate medium in the way Youtube is immediate but it’s even more so because it’s talking to someone. That’s the thing I’ve always loved about radio from when I first joined BBC Radio London. What they taught me there in my first tuition lesson in how to be a broadcaster was “You are being invited into someone’s home. Please behave accordingly. If you’re invited into someone’s home you wouldn’t start shouting or screaming at them. You would behave with dignity and respect. Be informative when it’s necessary to be informative. Do not be patronising. In being informative you are probably confirming something the listener already knows and if they don’t know they are learning it but don’t do too far down that road. Carefully choose the songs you are playing and be aware of the fact that they are precious and never crash a vocal.” That still stands and radio will always stand because of that. Why do I say this? Because when I first broadcast in Jamaica I realized the true power of radio. That Saturday

night in 1983 when Barry G challenged me to a clash at 8 o’clock during the news when I was supposed to be co-hosting the show with him, was a pivotal point in my career because he said Jamaicans love a contest. So from me just playing some songs and saying “I’m David Rodigan” it became a clash with Jamaica’s number one. Next day when we drove down to Belmont because we had a big show in Belmont where Peter Tosh was born – all you heard as we drove was cassette recordings from the night before. That showed me the power of radio particularly in a country like Jamaica where hardly anyone had a television in the early 80s in Jamaica and reception was limited but most people had radio. In The Harder They Come you’ll see a sequence where there was a guy walking down the street – just a long shot, not a character in the film – and he’s got the transistor radio to his ears. And if you go to Antigua you’ll see people on the street listening to the cricket on transistor radios – now that was the original rhythm box. You could hold it in your hand walk around with it. That is the instant power of radio is it not? And I don’t think radio will ever die. Pictures in the mind.

[Interview by Angus Taylor](#)

[Photos by Christian Bordey](#)

# QUEEN OMEGA

**"My upcoming album shows places where I haven't been before"**

## Queen Omega advocates culture to the people

Queen Omega is a singjay hailing from the Caribbean islands of Trinidad & Tobago. She has put out five albums and a sixth on the way. United Reggae met her backstage at two in the morning after her performance at Swedish reggae festival Öland Roots.

She hails from Trinidad & Tobago's second largest city San Fernando, located on the southwestern part of Trinidad. It's a city known to be the country's industrial capital.

She was raised in a musical family and grew up listening to soul artists like Aretha Franklin, Anita Baker and Whitney Houston, as well as jazz and the traditional music of Trinidad. At the age of nine she began entering local talent shows.



She was later drawn to Rastafari and started writing lyrics with roots and reality.

Her self-titled debut album was recorded in London with producer Mickey D and released in 2001. It was followed by 'Pure Love' in 2003 and 'Away From Babylon' in 2004.

On her fourth album – 'Destiny' – she began working with French producers Bost & Bim. Together they developed her vocal technique further switching to a more singjay oriented approach.

'Destiny' was released in 2005 and she has since then put out 'Servant of Jah Army', yet another

strong album effort. She has also dropped lots of strong singles, mainly for European producers and labels.

## Toured the world

During the years Queen Omega has toured the world, and has visited Europe many times.

"It is great to be here. It's my second time in Sweden. Last time was a festival as well. This time I'm going in and out," she says. Queen Omega sits in a sofa backstage after her well-attended performance at Öland Roots. It's two in the

morning and she's going back to Trinidad in a matter of hours.

## The reggae scene in Trinidad & Tobago

We begin talking about the reggae scene in her homeland.

"The reggae scene in Trinidad & Tobago is growing," she explains, and continues:

"But we need to work on the industry. There are no proper labels, no infrastructure. We need money, investors, promotion. The usual stuff," she laughs.

There are certainly some great reggae artists coming from Trinidad & Tobago. But not many are well-known. Queen Omega mentions artists such as Jah Melody, Marlon Asher and Million Voice.

## Dancehall is taking over

Queen Omega is concerned that dancehall is taking over.

"The radio is pushing dancehall. They're pushing it to the people. But people love culture. Trinidad loves culture,"



she says, and adds:

"Dancehall has some positive and some negative sides. But it's the same over and over – having money, being rich. But everybody is irie, there's no fighting among one and other."

## New album on the way

During her long career she has worked a lot with European producers. She explains why.

"I like Europe. Europe loves culture. I'll never stop coming here. It's natural to come here. There's a request for Queen Omega," she explains, and reveals her upcoming plans:

"I'm working on a new album right now. I only need a few more tracks. It's produced by High Fly Music out of France and

is on a higher level. It shows places where I haven't been before. I'll tell you about the I. It's a product for the people."

## Mark Wonder reveals upcoming project

During the interview Jamaican singer Mark Wonder sits beside Queen Omega. He has also performed at Öland Roots.

He has been rather silent during our chat. I ask him about his upcoming projects.

"I've recorded an album with Oneness out of Germany. It's finishing right now and I'm working on getting the thing together," he reveals.

Interview by Erik Magni  
Photos by Anna Thunander

# Dub in HD Don Corleon



## Don Corleon's tough dubs.

Jamaican producer Don Corleon – famous for mellow riddims such as Changes and Seasons – has just put out hard hitting dub album consisting of ten tunes.

The selection ranges from the tough Ghetto Life in Dub on a relick of the Baltimore riddim to the softer Drop

Leaf riddim.

The Don has ripped apart the tunes, put emphasis on the bass and the drums and then put them together again. His usual polished style is nowhere to be found and this album certainly showcases a brand new sound from this acclaimed producer.

'Dub in HD', as the album is titled, has a contemporary sound and Don Corleon has

stated that he used Pro Tools when mixing the tunes. He has managed to put a whole new level of energy in the songs, something that gives them new character and new life.

Jamaica has not been in the forefront when it comes to dub in the last ten years or so. It would be great if other young Jamaican producers took interest in one of the foundational reggae genres, and a genre that has influenced several artists in other genres, most notably in the house and electronica vein.

Please let this album be the beginning of a new trend.

Review by Erik Magni



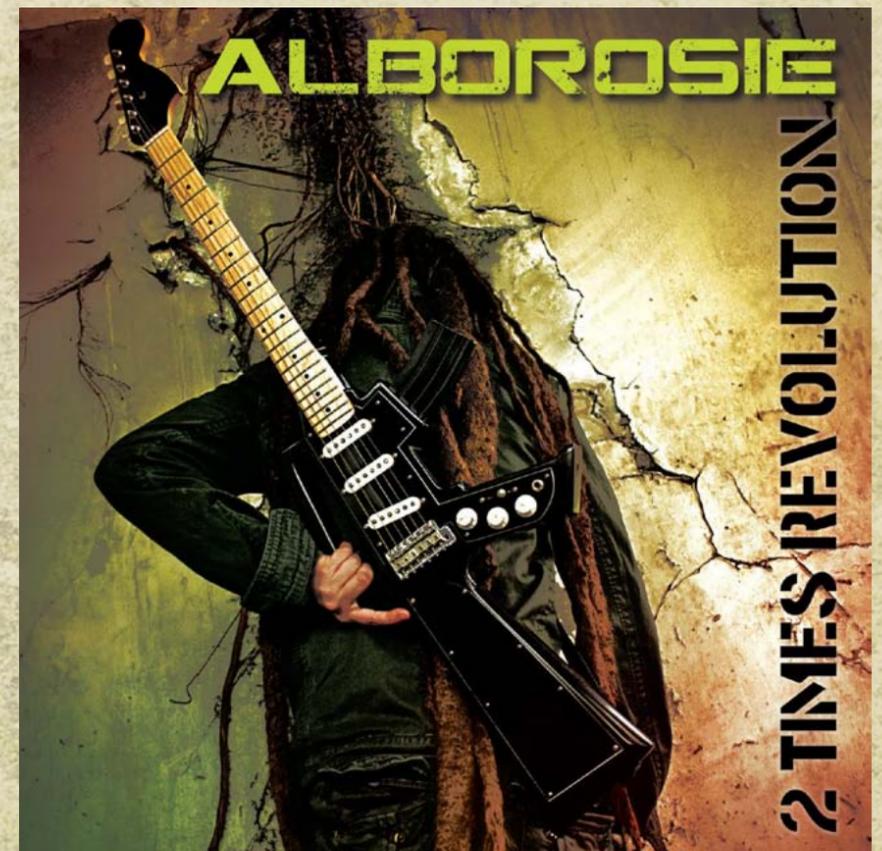
# 2 Times Revolution Alborosie

## Alborosie makes you smile.

Italian-born Jamaican resident Alborosie is back with '2 Times Revolution', his third album to date. It is jam-packed with his distinctive heavy patois sing-jay-style and has influences from Europe, the Caribbean and North and South America.

'2 Times Revolution' is both accessible and complex. Accessible because of the infectious melodies and grooves on tunes such as the sun drenched Grow Your Dreads with its wicked piano or the rolling Soul Train. Complex because of the many styles, influences and novelties utilized. However, that is also one of the album's several strengths.

Because this is an album that makes you happy. And it is obvious that Alborosie has had a blast in the studio when he recorded and produced '2 Times Revolution'. Raggamuffin is



probably the best example. Or the Manu Chao-like La Revolution with its acoustic guitar and melancholic trumpet.

The digital release of this album features the bonus track Games. Be sure to check that one out. It is a great 80's inspired tune somewhat similar to Games People Play, originally recorded by Joe South, but

covered to great effect by Bob Andy in the late 60's/early 70's.

If this album will start one or two revolutions remains to be seen. But if this is the soundtrack to the revolution you will certainly find me in the front-line along with Pupa Albo. Viva!

Review by Erik Magni

# Modern Rockers Vol. 1 Joggo

## Joggo adds his star to the lights of Dutch & Surinamese Reggae

It seems to be occurring more and more - A new and interesting name on the Dutch Reggae scene will give the world a reason to pay a greater level of attention to the country which has been literally brimming with big vibes for the past few years. The latest addition to attempt to make his name to the rest of the world from an already very impressive pack currently headlined by the awesome Ziggi Recado and featuring the likes of Maikal X and Smiley is an artist who may very well prove to bring a similar level of attention to the country of his heritage as Joggo manages to create a project of which Suriname Reggae fans can be proud, with his debut album 'Modern Rockers Vol. 1'. As the title of the album [which is produced by Dutch-Surinamese label, Dredda Records] would suggest, this is an project which is much like Joggo himself - geared towards a more old school approach of making Reggae. Such a tune, directly speaking, gets the album up and going, DJ Play

Me Some Roots. This song is sure to gain an audience amongst the multitude of like-minded fans, who long, like Joggo, for an era of Reggae which has now passed. Also, it should be said that it's one of the finest written selections on the whole of the album and it sets a lyrical tone, as far as quality, which is maintained throughout the project. The song on the album which is likely to garner the 'lion's share' [pun intended] of concentration from fans is the stirring Strong Like Lion, which features Joggo alongside Jamaican star, Turbulence, as well as Jah Decko, who is the album's producer. Anytime you can find you Turbulence at or near the top of his game, you have a guaranteed big tune and he impresses to no end on the track.

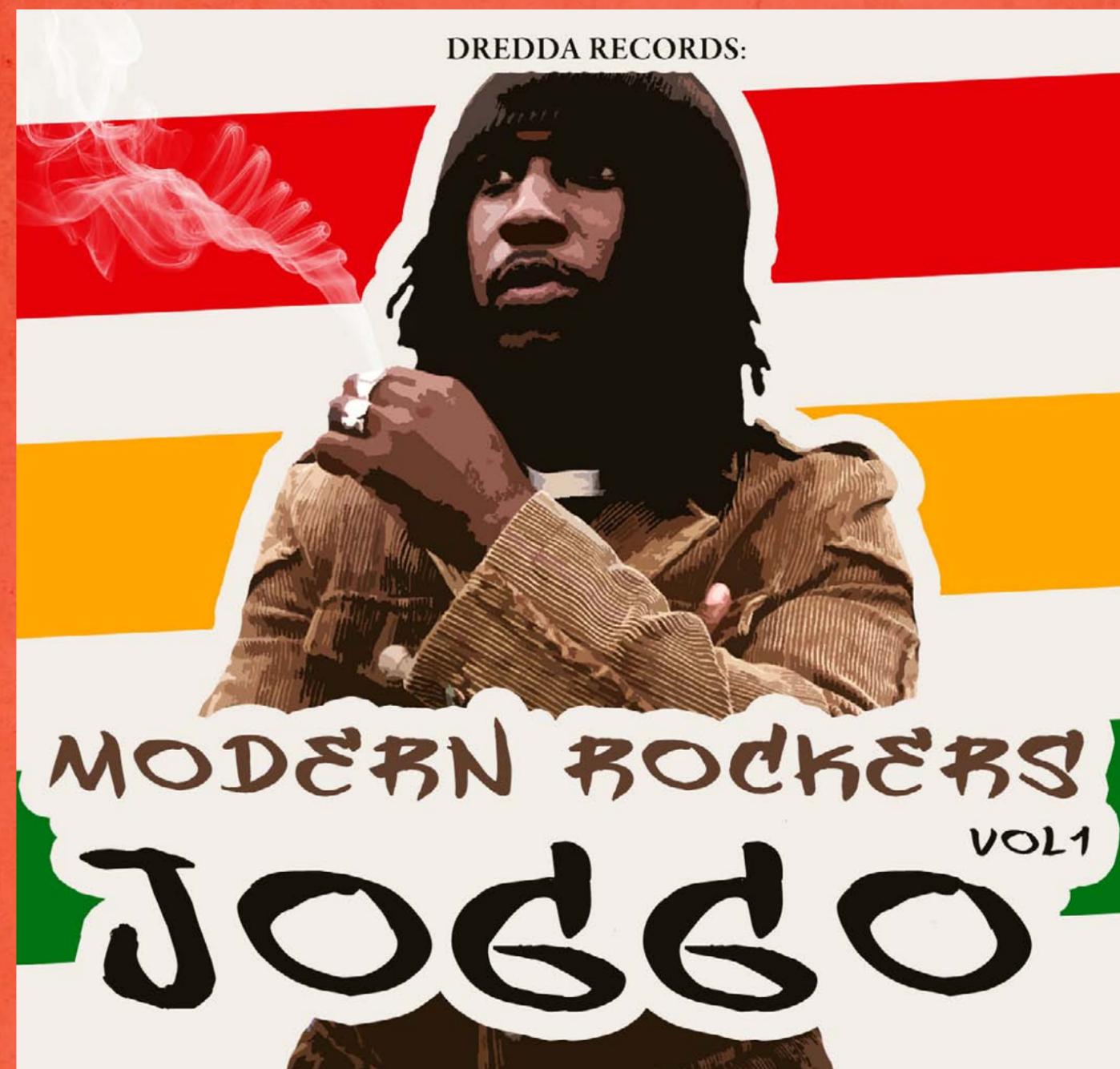
"Yow, dem seh Zion is a state of mind, I'm not saying they're wrong But I know there is a place where my people belong Ethiopia awaits The Conquering Lion Hey Dredda Youths come sing Rasta's song"

-Turbulence from Strong Like Lion. The album's other combination, I Am Blessed, is one of several strong love songs which are to be found throughout 'Modern Rockers Vol. 1'. The tune features

another Dutch artist, Mr. Patze and is a very upful and excellent vibes. The same could be said for the previously heard Strong Black Woman, which is the only none Dredda produced track on the album - This one chiming in on the Paradise Riddim from the boiling Dutch label pairing of Jah-SolidRock and Not Easy At All. Also present are strong lover's sets Love You Like No Other and the powerful You Don't Know, the latter of which is simply a different level of music from your standard type of track and it finds Joggo urging more application of love in the prevailing sense, rather than 'merely' for the sake of a lasting relationship. The tune also finds the artist delivering one of the greatest lines of the entire album -

"When things badder, you haffi think twice  
LOVE IS A NATURAL REMEDY OF LIFE"

Still, it's difficult to not find the album's closer, I Wonder, to be the real class of the love song on the album. From beginning to end it is just a stunning piece of romantic Reggae music. The entire album reaches its peak in a somewhat unusual manner as in the midst of wholly more potentially



identifiable material such as the captivating Peace & Love, the previous heavy antiviolence single, Gundown, and the very Steel Pulse-esque and historical, Jah Jah Nevah [all of which make up some of the biggest moments to be found here] - Is the somewhat unassuming, but entirely MASSIVE I & I Know. On a very easy and laid back tune, Joggo manag-

es to run the listener through a musical gamut of emotions which is nearly flawless!

Really the only critique to be made for the album, as a whole, is that it only contains eleven tracks. However, should this one prove to do well, perhaps the proverbial gates may open and the rest of the world can get a taste of the works of

names such as Kenny B, Koyeba, Little Guerrier and others doing big vibes for Surinamese Reggae. So, while the wish is that there was more of this one, what is present is mighty work and perhaps a bit forward-reaching as well - 'modern rockers' indeed.

Review by Ras Achis

# Dub Revolutionaries Zion Train

**2CD "best of" from one of the most forward thinking British reggae influenced acts of the last 20ish years**

Zion Train... 'Dub Revolutionaries'? Well first off I wouldn't call a lot of their music "Dub", a moniker that I feel is way over played in reggae music with just about everything that is an instrumental applying the name to make it sound cool, and secondly revolutionary? Acts like the Ragga Twins, Longsy D or the Beatmasters with their 1989 mix of Skacid that featured on Ska Train, the B-side of hit Hey DJ I Can't Dance beat them to the punch, but Zion Train have sure picked that ball up and run with it further than anybody else and been one of the most forward thinking, and yes in a way revolutionary, British reggae influenced acts of the last 20ish years with their blend of reggae and electronic, techno, rave sounds.

The album itself is a 2CD best of which has been compiled by lifelong Zion Train colleagues Maken of Warsaw and Les Earthdoctor of Wales rather than the band, though of course they did give their full cooperation and thus included are some vinyl-only rarities and a never before released radio session for John Peel.

The opening three tracks on disc 1, Dub Power and Dub To Power, taken from their 1992 debut album 'Passage to India' followed by Ross Ice Shelf, are what could be described as typical digi dubs with a mellow laid back feel that wouldn't sound out of place on many of today's albums of this ilk by the numerous bedroom studio based artists out there that populate the internet. However tracks like Eagle Ray, Fly and War In Babylon which cranks up the BPM up will have most reggae fans running and screaming to the exit, as they leave the reggae virtually to one side and go for a full house/club/dance vibe. The frenzied ska induced Dance of Life and Baby Father featuring YT show how well the two genres can work together,

while Babylon's Burning that samples the vocals of the late Malcolm Owen, who scored a top 10 hit with the song in 1979 with punk band The Ruts is something of a car crash that is probably best forgotten.

It would be easy to dismiss this album as out-dated and indeed I do find that house music, as a genre does not age well. This is also where, by the bands own admission, they sometimes fail to connect with people because they fall into that trap of too housey for the reggae crowd and too reggae for the house crowd, but if you are more open minded in your approach to music then Zion Train may have something to offer you. They have always stood by their guns and made music that they are proud of and have never bent to seek popular appeal and for this I applaud them.

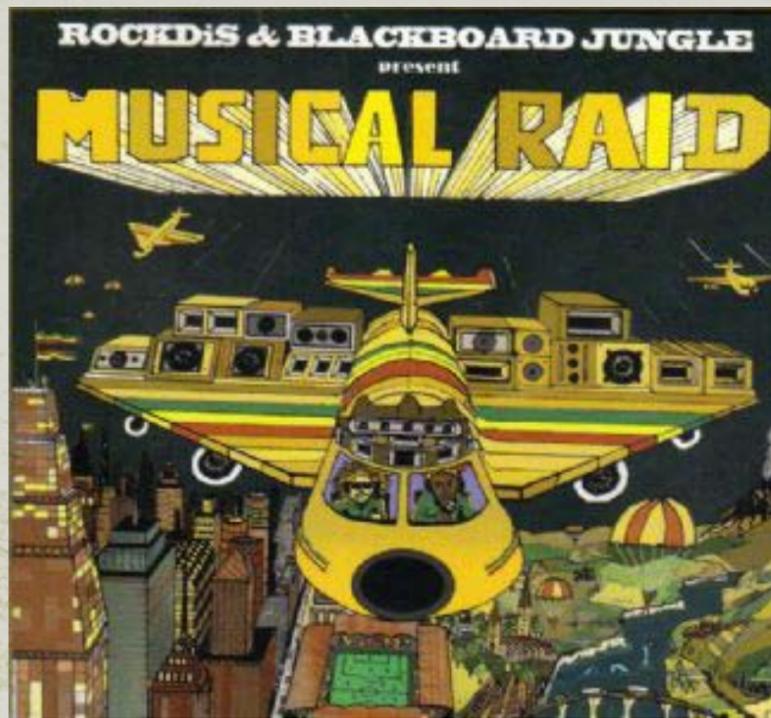
This album is a decent retrospective look at Zion Trains previous varied and boundary pushing work and with a new album reportedly out in the autumn this collection acts as a nice prelude to its release



This album is a decent retrospective look at Zion Trains previous varied and boundary pushing work and with a new album reportedly out in the autumn this collection acts as a nice prelude to its release

some interest as to where they may go next.

**Review by Karl Pearson**



# Musical Raid RockDis and Blackboard Jungle

**Musical Raid is a hidden gem.**

RockDis aka The Rockers Disciples and the crew behind Blackboard Jungle sound system, both based in France, have sneaked out the excellent roots reggae compilation 'Mu-

sical Raid'. It assembles ten vocal cuts and five dub versions of the heaviest sort.

The vocal duties are mostly handled by fairly unknown singers, like Daba, Anthony John and Mo'Kalamity. The most well-known names are probably Prince Malachi from

Jamaica or African Simba from the UK.

Regardless of the singers previous credits all tunes are solid, and the production is loaded with distinct influences from the late 70's Channel One sound.

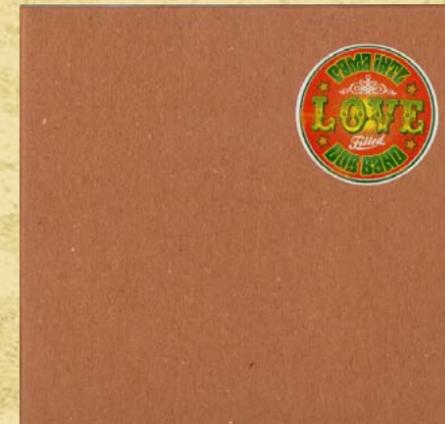
Standout tracks include Reality Souljahs' Born Again where the singer goes Marvin Gaye over a thunderous steppers infused riddim, Christine Miller's Signs of the Times with a nicely pumping organ or Prince Malachi's apocalyptic Jah Fire.

This compilation is a must have for fans of contemporary reggae firmly rooted the 70's.

**Review by Erik Magni**

# Love Filled Dub Band Pama International

**Soul-fuelled,  
dub-induced  
Roots, Rockers  
and Reggae**



Originally released on CD and vinyl via their own label Rockers Revolt in 2008, after leaving Trojan Records where they'd become the first band in 30 years to sign to the illustrious label, Pama International's 'Love Filled Dub Band' is due to be re-released in digital format, by new record label Phoenix City as part of their opening salvo of releases. The album, which was their fifth at the time, found them really starting to hit their stride, and it gave you exactly what it said on the tin, a musical mix of "Soul-fuelled, dub-induced Roots, Rockers and Reggae". Not always one for the reggae purists, but their mix of Studio One, Black Ark, King Tubby with

Stax flavoured funk and soul with punk and 2-Tone ideology thrown in, they created their own unique style and brand which always promoted reggae in a positive way. Lyrically the album is fairly conscious dealing with the "one love" ideal and the multitude of troubles in the world today. From environmental global disasters and war, to violence on the streets and the wasteful consumerism that plagues our society. Don't however let this put you off as the tunes are not all doom and gloom, but try to raise the spirits with a party vibe that begins with the funky, soul fuelled reggae of, Wherever You Lead. Former single Highrise, used to spearhead a campaign tackling the issues of gun/knife crime within our communities, rides a slowed down version of the Cherry Oh Baby riddim and features guest vocalist Michie One (one half of the London Reggae duo, Louchie Lou & Michie One), while The Specials guitarist Lynval Golding takes lead vocals on his self penned Wonder Wonder. In fact Lynval appears on all of the songs with other guest appearances littered throughout. There is the trombone of Rico Rodriguez MBE, Sir Horace Panter of The Specials on bass and sax player Paul Heskett who was

a member of 2 Tone one single wonders the Swinging Cats. There are, as the album title suggests also a couple of dub versions nicely scattered across the album rather than following straight on in the shape of Orgon will Follow (Wherever You Lead) and, Lovely Dub (Lovely Wife) both keyboard driven classics that evokes memories of Studio One house band Sound Dimension. This album was probably the best album from Pama with keys man Sean Flowerdew and vocalist Finny, the two constants in the band; they have been together since the late 80s when they were with ska band The Loafers, in fine form. The production by Sean with the aid of John Collins, who was also behind the desk for The Specials seminal Ghost Town, is crisp and solid with the band having something of an edgier sound than with earlier releases. It was lauded by a lot of the music press, MOJO, Echoes and so forth on initial release and featured in many peoples Top 10 Reggae albums of 2008 including those of Record Collector and Total Music mag so if you didn't get this first time round it would be churlish of you to miss out again!

**Review by Karl Pearson**

# The Free The World riddim

Single riddim album from the Reality Shock production house.

This single riddim album from UK DJ Kris Kemist's Reality Shock production house was recorded at the House Of Hits studio in Spanish Town, Jamaica and features vocal performances from some of the islands leading reggae artists including Jah Mason, Junior Kelly, Lutan Fyah, Jah Mali, Tony Curtis and more that all deliver in fine style. This very percussive original roots/steppers riddim track is powered along by the drumming of the legendary Leroy "Horsemouth" Wallace, star of the 1978 film "Rockers" and is supplemented by tambourine and scraper, with a choppy rhythm guitar for melody and keys adding bright accents here and there. As with a lot of Reality Shock riddims it has something of an old time feel, yet remains sounding fresh. Lyrically, as you may expect from a riddim of this name, the songs are strikingly conscious and none more so than Emanuel Stain & Coolant's opener that delivers



condemnation to a world full of "politricks". Breaking away from the conscious style and giving the riddim a lighter edge with a more lovers vocal are female vocalists Honey B and Nateesha Stream who both give powerful and soulful performances on Crazy Love and Give Love respectively. I'm not usually a lover of single riddim albums as no matter how good its component parts are after hearing the same riddim six times in a row I do tend to wilt,

but then on the other hand if you didn't put all these cuts in one place then many could be overlooked and this would be unjust as this album serves as a great testament to all the vocalists here that they manage to make the riddim sound their own and a testament to the quality of the riddim itself that it works so well with all the different vocal styles on display.

Review by Karl Pearson

# Back For The First Time Perfect

Perfect goes back to the roots - and it's no bad thing.

Two years have passed since the last album by Bamboo St Ann's Greg Rose, also known as Perfect. The flamboyantly dressed Bobo Ashanti deejay-singer has been a big believer in the results yielded by roots-oriented Jamaican artists working with European producers and is one of the most explosive live performers on the continental festival scene. His second "concept" album, 'Born Dead With Life' with Austria's IrieVibrations, was hands down the finest longplayer of 2008 - and while neither of the follow-ups have been quite as extraordinary as that felt at the time, he maintained a good standard with the hip-hop roots of 'French Connection' with Kingston based Frenchman Sherkhan. Now he has unveiled this intriguingly-titled set with respected US production house, Lustre Kings, who were behind Jahdan Blakkamoore's 'Babylon

Nightmare', arguably the best concept album of last year. The Kings' glossy lavishly-produced rhythms are not a million miles away from those of Irie Vibrations and the overall feel of the two albums is distinct but not dissimilar. Horns and militant drumbeats abound. Angry



missives like the anti-politician piece Fakers and Slave Driver (which manages to pay tribute to Prince Lincoln in its lyrics, Bunny Wailer in its Armagideon-like rhythm, and Peter Tosh in its dedication) cohabit with uplifting cultural material such as "picture of Selassie" song HIM Smile and the stoical reality chant Eye Wata. The latter is delivered in a style reminiscent of Buju Banton - the subject

of dread slow single Hold On Buju, which speaks for many in stating "guilty or not guilty, the whole world miss Mark Myrie". There's also some romance in Cece Peniston do-over Naturally and, of course, the obligatory herb tune in Never Gonna Stop. On the uncharacteristically dancehall title track Perfect even invokes Jahdan saying "Babylon you're MY nightmare" - while matching Jahdan's gift for mimicry with an impersonation of the Congos' Cedric Myton at the start of the melodica daubed Doom's Day. The only genuine guest appearance comes from former Beres protégé Ginjah on marching "success against the odds" combination Mash Up Di Ting.

The promo copy arrived at quite short notice but it doesn't take many listens to detect another quality album from Perfect. Although, it might feel like he is going back to familiar territory here after the musically diverse 'French Connection', it's hard to quibble when he does it so well.

Review by Angus Taylor

# Invasion Of The Mysteron Killer Sounds

## Impressive look at the sounds & influence of digital reggae music.

Back in 1984 King Jammy came across the Casio MT-40 keyboard. He plugged it in, switched it on, chose one of the auto rhythms called rock which was based around the old Eddie Cochran hit 'Something Else', hit one of the tiny keys on the left hand side that added a bass melody and the shape of reggae music was changed forever as what emanated from the little built in speaker was what would become known as the 'Sleng Teng' riddim.

The Casio MT-40 back then was like electronic punk rock in that it now enabled a lot of ordinary people with no musical ability to easily and relatively cheaply, it retailed for around £100 pounds, make music with all sorts of sounds from trumpet to glockenspiel, add drum

beats and of course bass melodies and do all types of exciting things, I should know I had one back then as well!

Anyhow history lesson over this 2 CD, 35 track collection, compiled by Soul Jazz's Stuart Baker and Kevin 'The Bug' Martin embraces, past, present and future sounds of digital reggae and dance music that at times paints stark almost post apocalyptic visions in your mind, can draw you into an almost hypnotic trance like state or just makes ya wanna move. Disc 1 is down to The Bug and Steely and Clevie's hip hop flavoured opener 'Streetsweeper' certainly falls into the latter category as it's precise, crisp beat has something of a parade ground drill feel about it. Lenky's 'Diwali', celebrates the victory of good over evil to a beguiling Bhangra / Bollywood beat, while Fira's 'Hummer Version' feels like a creepy mix of Halloween and Blade Runner. In amongst all the various styles of disc 1 there is also an appearance by the irrepressible Tippa Irie with the Grynch

on the more traditional dancehall sounding 'Electro Agony in Dub'.

Disc two, with Stuart at the controls, has more to offer digi-reggae fans as some familiar names and riddims stand out. The daddy that started it all 'Sleng Teng' is mashed up with panache by King Tubby on 'Fat Thing Version' and Sly Dunbar leaves Robbie to team up with Christopher Birch on the frenetic space age dancehall styled 'Corners Boy'. Prince Jazzbo and Pliers follow a different path as they take old Studio Riddims riddims 'Heavenless' and 'Give Me The Right' and very subtly add digi touches on 'Great Stone Version' and 'I'm Your Man Dub'. The best mix of old and new for me however is by Henfield and Shadowman, a couple of artists that are new to me, with their cut 'Babatunde' which uses the hook line from the 'Slaving Riddim', probably best known for its use on I Roy's 'Blackman Time', to create a very contemporary, digi – organic, dancehall hybrid number with a classic twist that is

just dying for a "chat".

Soul Jazz have over the years garnered quite a name for themselves when it comes to compilations, go listen to their Studio One or Dynamite series for proof and this impressive look at a musical genre that is sometimes cheaply regarded as being cold and soulless completely disproves that theory. The cuts here are varied and exciting slices of technological wizardry and with the majority of songs coming in at just over 3 minutes none out stay there welcome. Although not what I'd call a regular reggae album the traditions and influence of it can be felt in every electronic beat and note and highlights the profound influence that digital reggae music has over many modern dance music styles.

[Review by Karl Pearson](#)

## INVASION OF THE MYSTERON KILLER SOUNDS



DOUBLE CD COMPILED BY  
KEVIN MARTIN (THE BUG)  
& STUART BAKER  
(SOUL JAZZ RECORDS)  
WITH LIMITED EDITION  
GRAPHIC NOVEL  
BY PAOLO PARISI

FEATURING:  
KING JAMMY  
ROOTS MANUVA  
THE BUG  
SOUTH RAKKAS CREW  
DIPLO  
STEELY AND CLEVIE  
KING TUBBY  
HARMONIC 313

PRESENTED IN  
**3D**  
DANCEHALL  
DIGITAL  
DUB

SOUL JAZZ RECORDS

# Deeper Revolution Mo'Kalamity

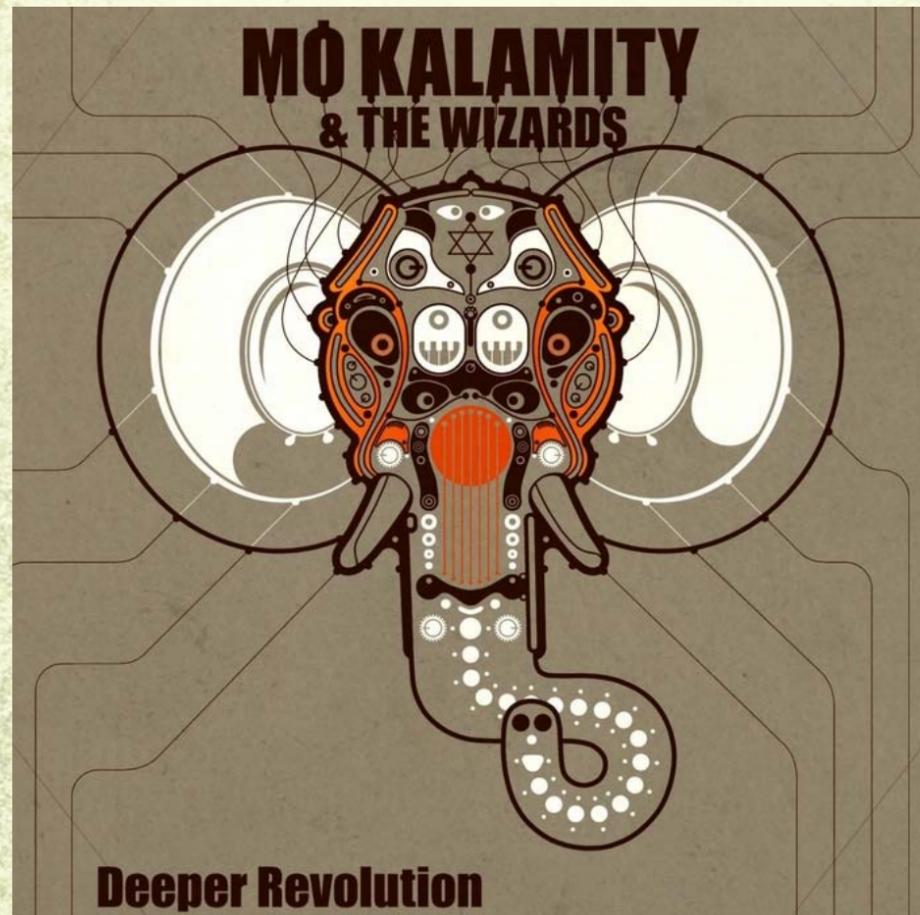
Deeper Revolution takes time to appreciate.

Mo'Kalamity is a singer who originates from the small republic of Cape Verde. Nowadays she resides in Paris, where she has recorded her two albums – 'Warriors of Light', put out in 2008, and 'Deeper Revolution', originally released in 2010 with poor distribution.

Fortunately enough the label realized that 'Deeper Revolution' had potential and decided to release it more properly this past spring.

'Deeper Revolution' is a roots reggae album composed and written by Mo'Kalamity herself and produced by L'assos Pikante, who had the same duty on the debut. It assembles 14 tracks whereof one is an echoing dub version of the rolling Inner Peace.

The riddims are easygoing, often with deep bass lines and heavy percussion work. Check Autour de Toi, the nyabinghi-styled title track or Walls with



its memorable chorus.

But the thing about this album is Mo'Kalamity's distinctive voice. It has a fragile jazz tone. It is cool and laid-back. Often like whispering with low energy. Her voice is best suited for lower notes and it does sound off-key at times.

A revolution doesn't come easy.

It takes time to go through with. And same goes for this album. But once you have dedicated yourself to it, your world won't be the same.

**Review by Erik Magni**

# Words Of Wisdom Vernon Maytone



**Vernon Maytone is still in fine form.**

Remember the great vocal duo The Maytones? They recorded some great tunes with producer Alvin Ranglin in the 70's. Songs such as Boat to Zion, Madness, Zion Land and Money Worries, also featured on the 'Rockers' movie soundtrack. Anyway, lead

singer Vernon Buckley, aka Vernon Maytone, is nowadays living in Canada and runs his own label – Music Life Movements – together with his cousin Everton Phillips. Last year the label collaborated with Dutch producers Manu Genius and Marc Baronner from Not Easy At All Productions, the same producers responsible for acclaimed albums from Chezidek, Earl Sixteen and Apple Gabriel. The result was an album titled

'Foundation Compilation – Reggae Series vol.1' with performers such as Ken Boothe, Leroy Sibbles and the late Sugar Minott. Their collaboration obviously worked out fine since they have teamed up for the album 'Words of Wisdom'. This album is almost a solo album from Vernon Maytone. It collects 15 tunes, where of three are duets with Linval Thompson, U Roy and Vernon Maytone's son Dillon Buckley, who turns out to be an above par rapper. The U Roy duet was featured on 'Foundation Compilation', Show us the Way was originally put out in 1979 on the 'One Way' album and some of the riddims have been heard on other Not Easy At All productions.

'Words of Wisdom' is however a well-produced modern roots reggae album. Vernon Maytone's heartfelt singing is just as great as it was in the 70's and suits the polished live-played riddims nicely.

I've been a long-time fan of The Maytones and I've previously praised Not Easy At All's productions. So don't get fooled by the gangsta hip-hop album sleeve and check out 'Words of Wisdom'.

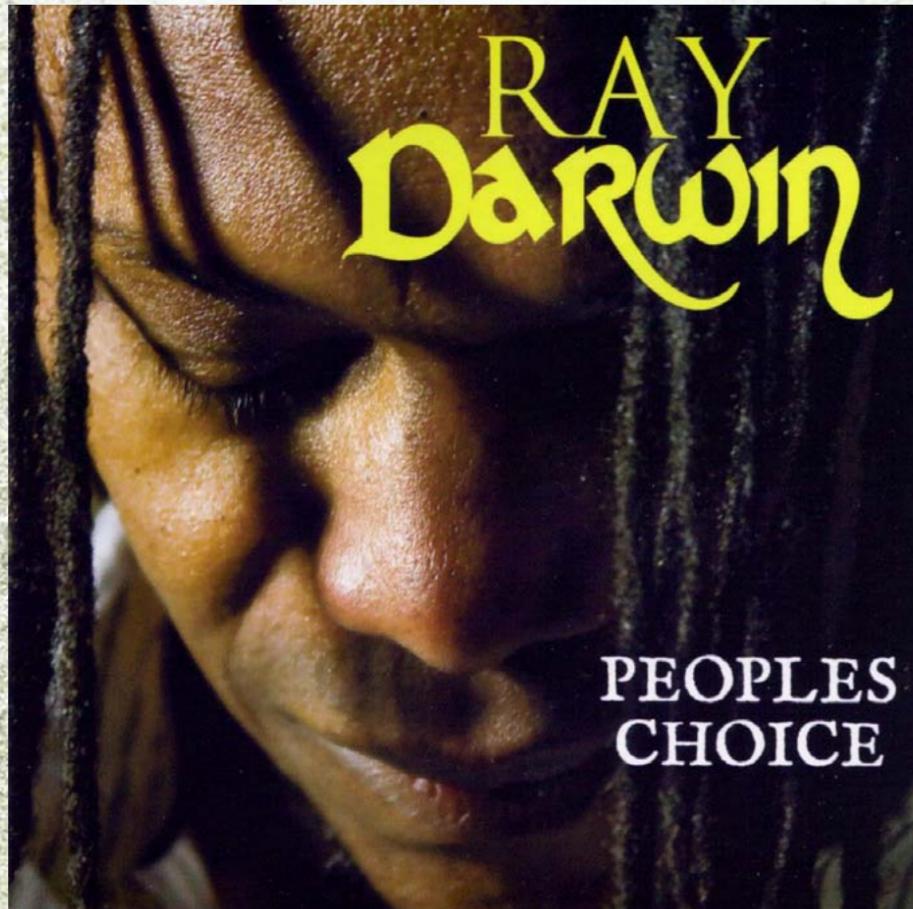
**Review by Erik Magni**

# The People's Choice Ray Darwin

## I choose Ray Darwin.

My first encounter with Jamaican singer Ray Darwin was through BMC's excellent reggae mixes. First the People's Choice mix in 2007 and then the celebratory (Nothing can Touch) My 45 mix in 2009. Both named after the Ray Darwin tunes by the same names.

Even though both tunes received great response when issued Ray Darwin hasn't been over exposed at all. He has actually been rather quiet over the years. Until now. His debut album with its boisterous title 'People's Choice' reached the streets on July 19th. It compiles 15 tracks recorded in Germany, Italy, Jamaica and the U.S and is produced by Ray Darwin himself, sometimes with a little help from Piet Abele, Rootical Records, Philip Meckseper and Lloyd Campbell. The latter is also responsible for putting out 'People's Choice' through Joe Fraser Records, a label recognized for some fine lovers rock and roots reggae. 'People's Choice' gathers both relicks and original riddims.



The former includes the title track, a version of the Mean Girl riddim originally recorded at Studio One, and New York Minute, a superb cut of The Wailing Souls Jah Give Us Life. Ray Darwin is a great singer in the soulful Beres Hammond vein. Sometimes on fire, but never aggressive. Sometimes a crooner, like in the Sara Lugo duet Good for You.

Therefore it's a shame to ruin the singing with auto-tune, which is the case on the strong album opener Time Flies.

Despite the too heavy use of auto-tune on some tunes, this is a strong album that needs your support. Do I as do and give Ray Darwin your vote.

**Review by Erik Magni**

# Ghetto Princess Diana Rutherford

## Diana Rutherford is a pop princess from the ghetto.

Diana Rutherford has made some excellent efforts on French producer SherKhan's riddims in the past years. Now the pair has made the album 'Ghetto Princess' together, an album that assembles 16 urban tunes.

But first things first. 'Ghetto Princess' is neither a straight reggae nor a straight dancehall album. This is a popish RnB album with some notable exceptions. The dancehall excursion Hot Gyal is one such.

'Ghetto Princess' is rather in the same vein as Jason Mraz or Bruno Mars. But with a lot more attitude.

It's radio friendly, stylish and often with infectious hooks and bass lines, even if the riddims and beats at times are minimal. Just listen to Caged on the Sufferah riddim.

Diana Rutherford sings with a



sexy diva approach and with authority. She's at her best when sounding fierce and angry, as in Beware, where she warns that your best friends are your worst. Or in the straight gospel tune The Treasure with its grand chorus and harmonies.

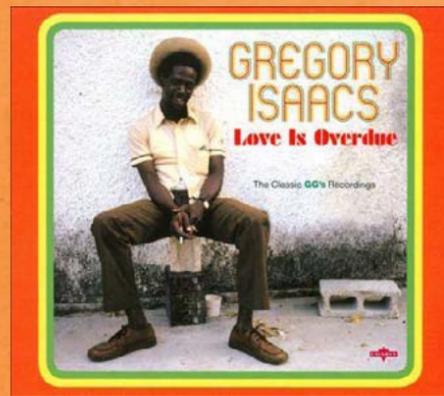
This album will probably disappear under mainstream radio's radar. And that's a shame. Sev-

eral of the tunes would most likely appeal to a young urban audience that is continually fed with the latest Nicki Minaj, Flo Rida and Keyshia Cole.

**Review by Erik Magni**

# Love Is Overdue Gregory Isaacs

The very essence of reggae.



The loss of Gregory Isaacs to lung cancer on 25th October last year at the age of 59 was both a heavy blow and the close of an era for music. Right up to his final live performance at the Big Chill Festival near Malvern, England, thousands flocked to experience his legendary charisma and stage presence - which remained undiminished 'til the end.

Isaacs was hugely prolific for his own African Museum label, started at the turn of the 70s with Errol Dunkley, as well as for a roll call of top producers through the years. In the aftermath of his departure it is then unsurprising that his early

catalogue should be reissued for posterity. And this double CD collection of his album and single sessions for Alvin "GG" Ranglin - that yielded wedding and christening staple Love Is Overdue in 1974 - is a nicely packaged indication of what made Gregory great..

A gifted, deceptively simple, songwriter, the Cool Ruler, like a painter, dabs and strokes his wonderful voice over the stripped down brittle yet supple rhythms of Soul Syndicate and then the more militant work of the Revolutionaries. And whilst his image as a crooner for the ladies is well represented on the aforementioned title piece, there is some gentle but compelling religious and cultural material here too. A perfect example is the soaring prayer Happiness Come, where Gregory promises to sing for the Lord and you believe him 100%.

Where disc one is all Gregory's writing, the heavier late 70s sounds of disc two showcase his ability with cover versions such as Alton Ellis' Breaking Up and Tyrone Davis' Can I Change My Mind. There's also one of

few minor key offerings, The Border, recently given an essential cover treatment itself by the Birmingham singer Peter Spence.

In his excellent sleevenotes John Masouri likens Isaacs to Sam Cooke in his style and his control of his music. Vocally, however - though he spawned a couple of knowing imitators - there was nobody quite like him. The closest comparison from the world of soul is perhaps his Mississippi contemporary Syl Johnson who, while distinct, possessed the same plaintive pleading tone to his voice.

If you haven't grown up with Gregory it may take a listen or two to tap in to the full brilliance of what he's doing - but tap in you must. For if someone asked to be played the very essence of reggae music - without frills or affectations - this would be it.

Review by Angus Taylor

# Hollie Cook

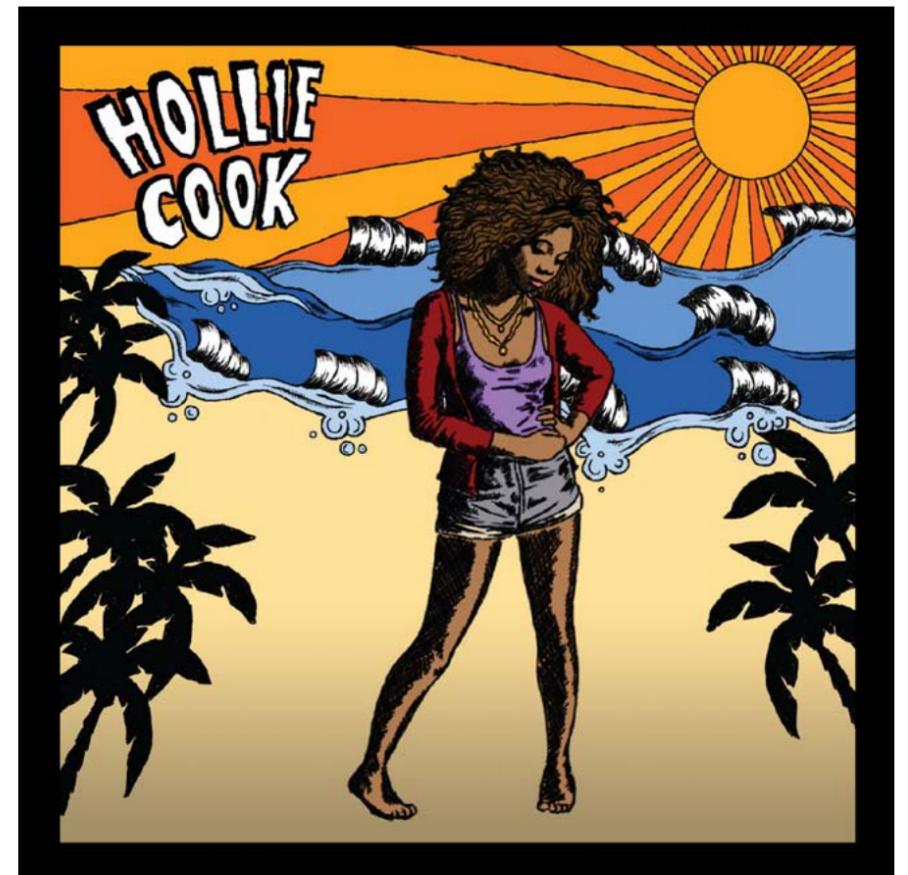
Beautiful debut album from Hollie Cook.

British singer Hollie Cook has music in her blood. She is the daughter of Paul Cook, former drummer in legendary punk band Sex Pistols.

But luckily enough her musical path has headed in a different direction, and has lead her into the arms of Mike Pelanconi, aka Prince Fatty, a talented producer and engineer as well as an expert in vintage recording techniques.

Hollie Cook has contributed on both Prince Fatty albums. And her contribution has been welcome, very welcome indeed. Her tracks Milk & Honey, from 'Survival of the Fattest' put out in 2007, and That Very Night in Dub, from 'Supersize Me' released last year, were among the standout tracks.

Her self-titled debut album bears all of Prince Fatty's best ingredients – old school sounding reggae and dub without sounding traditional or boring.



Check Sugar Water, a smart cut of Scientist's Dangerous Match 1, a dub version of Johnny Osbourne's Love is Universal.

The first single of the album That Very Night captures the feeling nicely – pulsating, dark and a bit psychedelic. Her British voice is delicate, breezy and creates an intimate atmosphere.

The album is also hosted by

some well-known musicians, most notably George Dekker of The Pioneers and Dennis Bovell. The most prominent guest is however Horseman, a deejay with a style reminiscent of the great Lone Ranger.

This is certainly a truly enjoyable experience from start to finish.

Review by Erik Magni

# The Story Of Trojan Records

**123 track, 5CD box set covering the hits, artists, producers, labels and unreleased gems, rarities & oddities.**

Trojan is a name that personified reggae in the UK during the late '60s and early '70s and since its heyday back then and the advent of CD's it has had its name somewhat sullied as various companies have held the rights to its immense catalogue and flooded the market with lots of brash and fairly tawdry releases. Over the last twelve months or so present owners Universal Music have gone along way in putting the some gloss and pride back in to this one of the most important reggae labels ever with their limited edition 7" vinyl series, of obscure and previously unreleased material, re-issued classic albums on CD in their original guise and brought out an improved 'Trojan Presents' 2CD albums series. Now, on August 29th, they about to re-

lease a 123 track, 5CD box set 'The Story Of Trojan Records'.

A lot of you may be thinking why do I need another 'Story Of', after all as already mentioned this labels back catalogue has seen many extensive releases and 'Story Of's' before. Well where this one differs is that it has been lovingly compiled by Laurence Cane-Honeysett, the Jamaican music specialist and author of 2003's 'Young, Gifted and Black: The Story of Trojan Records', who has included along with a selection of the big hits many tracks that are making it on to CD for the first time, some that have been unavailable since their original release in Jamaica and 20 that are completely unreleased and unheard until now plus there is the addition of a 50 page book, with a foreword by Rhoda Dakar, the former singer with The Bodysnatchers and The Special AKA. It is also reported that the book is embellished with lots of original photography and other facets of memorabilia. Plus you get 4 original reproduction double-sided postcards recreating flyers and original promotional material, a Trojan Window Sticker and, if

you register your box set with the newly invigorated Trojan Appreciation Society online, you can get your hands on an exclusive 12 track bonus digital album. I would like to tell you more about these goodies but like you I'm afraid I'll have to wait until its release to find out more. I can however tell you a bit about the CDs which I presume is why most people would want this set in the first place anyway!

The 5 discs are broken down into categories with the first disc being titled "25 Big Ones - UK Hits". The tracks here run chronologically from The Upsetters Return Of Django, a #5 hit in October '69 through to penultimate track Ken Boothe's Crying Over You that reached #11 in December '74. Nearly all of the songs in between went high in the UK Top 40 with many going top 10 plus both Dave and Ansell Collins and Ken Boothe making it all the way to the summit with Double Barrel in March '71 and with Everything I Own in September '74 respectively. There are however two exceptions here that didn't make the Top 40 but are still iconic none the

as believe this song failed to chart at all on original release.

The second disc "Reggae Greats - The Artists" shows that back then just about anybody who was anybody in reggae had a song released through Trojan. There is the ever popular Bob Marley & The Wailers with Stir It Up, the sweet vocals of the Prince of Reggae himself Dennis Brown on Meet Me At The Corner and the DJ styles of Big Youth on Natty No Jester and URoy for Black Heart.

"The Big Shots - The Producers" is the title of disc 3 and highlights the strength of production talent on Trojan's illustrious roster from legendary names like Harry Johnson, Joe Gibbs, Lee 'Scratch' Perry and Leslie Kong among others. Disc 4 is the "A To Z Of Trojan - The Labels". Trojan had many numerous subsidiary and imprint labels from Action to Lee Perry's Upsetter with which the company had a distribution deal for the UK. There was also Pressure Beat which dealt with many Joe Gibbs productions, Moodisc for the works of Harry Moodie, the ultra rare Peoples Reggae Series that as far as is known only had one release but the more widely known Big Shot, Attack, Horse, Song-

bird and many more.

Finally disc 5 is "Unreleased Gems, Rarities & Oddities". Some of the tracks here ride on popular Trojan hits like Ansel Collins organ driven instrumental Double Or Nothing and Dandy's Double Barrel Man, no prizes for guessing what they are versions on. Then there is the not so obvious Mama by Nora Dean on the Liquidator riddim. There are a couple of funky reggae numbers I Can Win by Bob Andy and a guitar plucking instrumental cover of I Shot The Sheriff from The Gladstone Band. There is some nice early reggae from Earl Lawrence on a Another Day Is Dawning, the sweet falsetto sounds from an early Flick Wilson track Black African Woman and what could maybe be best described as the basis for lovers rock as Marcia Griffiths puts her dulcet tones to My Love.

I dare say there are a few of you who will look through the track list of this album and ask why is that song not included or why have they picked that, but when you have a vast array of classic songs and hidden gems to choose from you could easily produce another three or four 'Story Of's' and still not

please everybody. I feel the tone is right and as a lot of Trojan songs are already out there then the inclusion of these rarities and unreleased tracks make this a worth while investment and if the book is half as good as the song choice then this Trojan Story should be sitting proudly in any reggae fans collection.

**Review by Karl Pearson**



## Horace Andy in Los Angeles

**Jamaican singer Horace Andy played at The Dub Club, The Echoplex, Los Angeles, California on June 22.**

reggae artists. Horace gave a fantastic performance, dancing energetically throughout the show. He did newer songs and older classics that thrilled the massive crowd. This was the set list as Horace wrote it:

**Report and Photos  
by Jan Salzman**

The Dub Club was packed with fans, this night, awaiting the performance of reggae veteran, Horace "Sleepy" Andy, whose works date back to the early 1970's to present. His nickname, Sleepy, is aptly shown in his trademark sleepy eyes, which barely open...even for posed pictures. He was backed by local musicians, The Gumption Band, who drove a pounding reggae riddim all night long. Horace has a massive discography...too long to mention in this review as he has been a prolific songwriter and singer for the duration of his career. Thanks to a copy of the set list, which was provided by renowned reggae archivist Roger Steffens (who got to it before I could), so that I could provide you, the readers, with an accurate accounting of the night's performance. There were a number of favorite songs performed that Horace has recorded on multiple CD's including: Skylarking, Zion Gate and Elementary. One of my fave's was Money, which he sang near the beginning of his set. Horace's high pitched voice is so recognizable...sweet and unique among all



## Sierra Nevada World Music Festival 2011 Part 1 (USA)

**Country Roads, Sierra Nevada Music Festival 2011**

*"Take me high above the mountains, let me fly on the wings of love" - Duane Stephenson, Misty Morning*

The mystical hills of Anderson Valley are best known for vineyards, sheep ranches and apple orchards- with one exception. Every June, Anderson Valley becomes the home of the Sierra Nevada World Music Festival, a professionally crafted, family oriented weekend, culturally rich in music, diversity and goodwill. The tight winding drive from Ukiah to Boonville is rich in color, a wild frontier of golden grass, coney dark pines tinged with an occasional splash of crimson blooms. Nature's glorious display of red, gold and green elegance is an appropriate harbinger to a spiritually charged musical revival infused with abounding fellowship of friends, family and Rasta-Fari.

*"Our singing and dancing is always for prayer, a blessing and never for war" - Clayton Duncan, Pomo Tribal Elder*

In honor of the summer solstice, in tribute to the Pomo Native Americans and in the spirit of unity and world peace, three days of world class performers are perfectly choreographed across two stages



from 11 a.m. until the wee hours of the next morning. There is no rest for the weary. As soon as the stage shows end, an early morning dancehall begins on both Friday and Saturday nights starring international sound system dj's such as Stone Love with Jah 9 and Jah Love Music with Brigadier Jerry. The dancehall is quick to jam up and boogie down for several more hours into the morning mist.

This year's legendary line-up offered a wide range of classical roots artists including a rare performance by Pablo Moses, Studio One artists The Cables, ska and mento veterans, The Jolly Boys and the beloved Horace Andy. As an additional compliment for highly inspired roots devotees, old time rock steady dj's Winston Reedy, Dennis Alcapone and

Brigadier Jerry further captivated the massive crowd who began skanking and singing out to favorite reggae hymns. SNWMF fans have come to savor these special moments, to witness the deeply treasured old time vintage performers, especially with many legends passing over the past few years.

Saturday night, headliners Steel Pulse and Toots and the Maytals rocked a full house revealing a catalogue of historical hits, couched as a sentimental journey of hard driving riddims. Leba Hibbert, Toots' daughter opened his set, while Junior Toots joined later for a special father son combination. On the Village stage, the elegant Thomas Mapfumo, known as the "Lion of Zimbabwe," poetically delivered caustic social



sensitivities around the failings of humankind, they also present the opportunity of hope and empowerment for a better world.

Artistic professionalism and conscious messaging were crucial as modern day favorites took to the big stage. Duane Stephenson, promoting his latest release 'Black Gold', delivered a smooth and inspiring set, highlighting his soulful voice and deep lyrical introspection. Duane's delivery proves his reputation as a profoundly insightful and talented songwriter. Romain Vir-



go bounded on stage with his major hit Mi Caan Sleep and the crowd went wild. Anthony B, Prezident Brown, and Col- lie Buddz fired up the crowd with frenetic intensity. Their conscious sermons met with a waving sea of red, gold and

green flags.

With any show this large, there were many acts I was not able to catch such as Rebelution, Tribal Seeds, Reggae Angels, Rupa and the Angel Fishes, The Expanders, Saritah, DJ Leydis, Ozomatli, Mambo This and Jesus Diaz Y Su QBA. I was able to see short but excellent segments of 7th Street Showcase, and a mix of Dub-skin with Alcyon Massive. Massive respect goes out to all of these artists who I am unable to write about and yet, who contributed to the overall success of the festival. The backing bands such as New Kingston, Gumption and others supported the show with perfection and true rootical style.

The Sierra Nevada World Music Festival is far more than a three day music event. It is a magical time and place where the best of human kind is reflected in the community of people who perform and attend. Photographers, writers, vendors, and volunteers unify in spiritually charged collective consciousness. Producers, Warren Smith, Gretchen Franz and Jennifer Buchanan each year create a mythical experience that fills the souls of the people. Their work and vision will be treasured for generations to come.

**Report and photos by Sista Irie**



commentaries in Chimurenga style, to a spellbound crowd. Like many other outspoken singers whose messages promote social activism, Thomas Mapfumo was banned by his own government due to his outspoken stand on revolutionary struggles. Vusi Mahlasela, hailing from the Mamelodi Township of South Africa, acoustically sang of painful change and political manifestations resulting from a sick and perverted apartheid regime. His soulful set clearly defined why he is considered "The Voice" within a country whose social change came with violence, destruction and racial turmoil. Taj Weekes and Adowa left a mark deep in the hearts and minds by sharing his potent messages through moving ballads inspired by environmental disasters, human apathy, ravages of war and child abuse. Spiritual griots, Vaughn and Ron Benjamin, known collectively as Midnite teach to royal ancestry of African knowledge and discipline. Although these lyrically potent artists engage in skillful poetic messages, enhancing

## Sun Seine Festival 2011

(France)

**Chezidek, Lyricson, Anthony John and Jah Marnyah played at this new French festival on June 25th.**

The first edition of Sun Seine Festival in France (La Chapelle St Ouen) took place this week-end.

This festival was presented by Anthony John and Flyroots Production.

On Saturday the line-up was:

Jah Marnyah with tunes such as A New Day (Bonafide Riddim) and Stormy Weather, Anthony John with Ready or Not and Rock the Boat, Lyricson with Blessings and Bad Load and Chezidek with Secret Enemy and Burn De Ganja.

French band Dub Akom backed all these artists.

Sunday (which I could not attend) Anthony John gave us an acoustic stage, followed by the performance of Ras Zacharri backed by My Name Is Band.

In the countryside, under the summer sun, the vibration was perfect.

See you next year for the second edition!

**Report and photos  
by Jennyfer Papin**



## Sizzla Album Launch

### What a Whoa release!

The naysayers said you couldn't have an album launch outside of New Kingston, that the press wouldn't travel to the historically troubled neighborhood of Waterhouse, especially when the Sumfest launch was taking place the same night. But both the artist and the producer felt strongly that where the music was created, so should it be presented to the world, and they couldn't have been more right. June 29 was the night that both the press and the disciples of Rastafari came together to celebrate the release of Sizzla Kalonji's new album 'The Scriptures', together with the King himself and his family at King Jammy's Recording Studio. Everything at the studio was fresh-up and spotless, the entire block had bright, newly white-washed curbs and was the picture of respectability.

Right from the very start, you knew the party would be special when the artist himself was one of the first to arrive. This was his night to celebrate the fruits of a year-long recording and mixing process shared with his close bredren and producer, Lloyd 'John John' James Jr., and I guess he didn't want to miss a moment of it. Labor of love doesn't even begin to describe the care they put into the creation of this wonderful body of music.

The courtyard of the studio had



been covered in album posters for the occasion but by the end of the night, all of those posters would come down to be autographed by Sizzla, as he accommodated the many, many request for his words of wisdom. Journalists a-plenty were granted video-taped interviews and countless photos were taken of Sizzla and his friends and well-wishers.

Things really peaked when Sizzla performed almost the entire new album and I don't think anyone enjoyed the exuberant performance any more than Sizzla himself. Joy was the theme of the night and this party was certainly one worth taking, to quote one of the songs from the album. The catering was supplemented by contributions from Rum Bar and thoroughly enjoyed, in addition to a sublime conch soup prepared by King's wife Iris and of course, a never ending

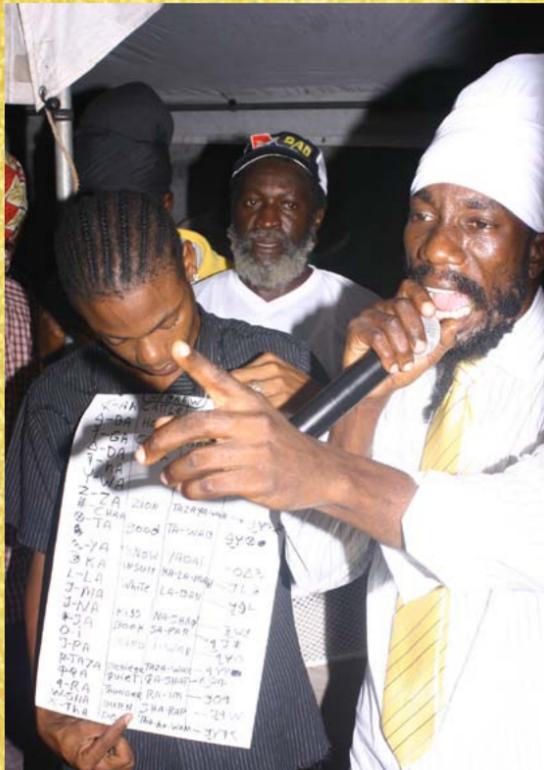
supply of Guinness and Red Stripe. The sacred herb was in plentiful abundance and you could witness other label heads and staff of the album's digital distributor, Zojak World Wide, all enjoying themselves right along with Sizzla and his entourage as the party moved on to DJ-ed music that had the crowd up and dancing on the ballroom floor to many classic Sizzla tracks.

At one point when I thought the artist was leaving the party after about six hours, he instead held an impromptu prayer service outside the gates of the studio for the many youths of the neighborhood who had come to listen. An hour or so later, when it seemed like the party was finally winding down, Sizzla and John John were inspired to head upstairs to the studio to record a new song, where they were joined by Capleton. This celebration

would not, could not, have been as sweet in one of the typical New Kingston hotel venues for launches and although it was expected that much of the crowd would move on to the Sumfest launch, that didn't happen, everyone was having too much fun to leave. I can't help but believe that other album launches to come will take the party to the people at the spacious temple to reggae music that is King Jammy's Recording Studio.

'The Scriptures' album is available at all fine etailers in digital format and is physically distributed exclusively by Ernie B at ebreggae.com.

**Report by Susan de Leon**  
**Photos by Locksley Clarke**



## Josey Wales and Little John pay tribute to Sugar Minott

**JahRevelationMuzik meets Youth Promotion sound with some very special guests.**



Almost one year after the passing of Lincoln "Sugar" Minott the sense of loss remains undimmed. The filling of the front room of the Hootananny (London, UK) for his tribute show just three days shy of the anniversary of his departure on July 10th 2010 was testimony to that.

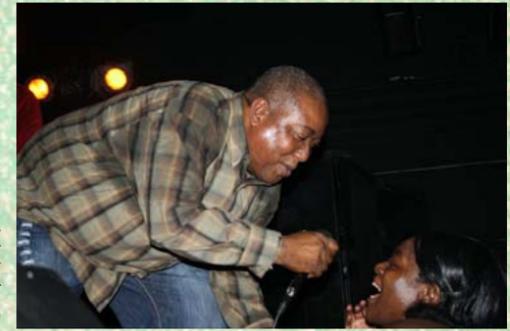
Promoter Cecil Reuben's own sound JahRevelationMuzik, featuring MC Trooper and Brother Culture played a very serious selection - indicating that this was a unique event. They were followed by Mr Shorty, Daddy Ants and Colorman of Minott's Youth Promotion crew, who started with exclusive cuts by Michael Rose before letting fly with their fallen mentor's hits like Good Thing Going and Never Give Jah Up. Though the Hootananny was only sparsely attended at ten thirty when the "away" sound first took the stage, within an hour attendance had swelled and the back

of the venue was opened to make room.

The latecomers were vindicated when Jamaican veterans Little John and Josey Wales emerged at half past midnight for the first PA of a six city UK tour. John, an imposing figure dressed in a voluminous check shirt, joked he was "not so little" anymore. Yet he was still in sweet voice and let lucky female audience members sing into the mic.

"The Colonel" Josey Wales, attired in a red t-shirt and gold chain, provided a gruff counterpoint, chanting messages of racial unity and Jamaican patriotism in his grainy tones. He also supplied the crowd with humour, asking the by then crowded stage to watch his drink and making statements too risqué to be published here! Honourable mentions in the warm up included singer Original Thriller and London's own deejay Daddy Ranks.

Despite a very late start for the headliners on a weeknight, the people of Brixton and the surrounding area turned out and stayed to do Sugar's memory proud. Half empty reggae nights even for important occasions are an all too common phenomenon in London but the Hootananny and their team continue to be the exception to the rule.



**Report by Angus Taylor**  
**Photos by Theresa Emmanuel**

# Stand Up For Love Summerjam 2011 (Germany)

## Such a wide variety of music and such a wide variety of visitors!

With the slogan "Stand Up For Love" the Summerjam-Festival 2011 started on the first weekend of July. It was the 26th edition of one of the best European Reggae festivals.

### Friday – Tarrus Riley, Patrice, Busy Signal, Barrington Levy

Sara Lugo opened a weekend full of music and good mood. She managed to give the people a perfect start. Austria's Iriepathie followed after her.

Just a few meters away on the Red Stage Dub à la Pub, a ten-man Reggae-Ska group, played before Holland's Reggae artist number one Ziggi Recado entered the stage. He convinced the massive from the first minute on.

Ce'Cile presented adjacent to Ziggi Recado her new album 'Jamaicanization'. With her hot Dancehall rhythms she inspired everybody. Boys and girls from the audience were allowed to enter the stage and to shake their hips with Ce'Cile. With the English, French and Kabyle singing of Dub Inc it got multicultural. Their mixture of Arabic sounds, Hip Hop, Dub and Reggae is typical for them and unique. A fantastic stage setting offered Patrice as the first day headliner on the Red

Stage. A huge picture of wood was placed behind the musicians and a big curtain with a big eye staring at you fell down during the first song. Patrice showed that he was in a very good mood; he even climbed up the stage trestle. His famous tunes Soulstorm and Everyday Good were sang along of an enormous massive.

At the Green Stage the program was changing in the afternoon because John Holt's show was cancelled. Andrew Tosh performed two songs (Equal Rights, Johnny B. Good) backed by Tarrus Riley's musicians with the famous Dean Fraser on saxophone. After Andrew Tosh, Duane Stephenson entered the stage and sang for the audience his Soul Reggae. Tarrus Riley presented some songs of his latest album 'Contagious' and enthused with them the Summerjam.

In contrast to Tarrus Riley's sound Busy Signal continued with fast Dancehall and hurling helicopters. But he also delivered some calm covers, for example Number One of Gregory Isaacs.

Contemporaneous to Patrice it was Barrington Levy's run as headliner on the Green Stage. He put a great massive under his spell with his Reggae and originally Dancehall vibes.

### Saturday – Anthony B, Alpha

### Blondy, Jimmy Cliff

Unfortunately the weather on this weekend was a bit too cloudy and cool, that's why the beautiful "Fühlinger See" didn't invite the people to take a swim. But some didn't let them stop! Also the spirit of the Summerjam braved the weather!

The program on Saturday on the Green Stage started with two powerful Reggae and Ska groups from Barcelona with Che Sudaka and from Argentina with Karamelo Santo. The American Hip Hop artist Atmosphere and the German Irie Révoltés, which are known for their intoxicating Live-acts, continued. Marteria and Madcon prepared the scene for Culcha Candela, a German Reggae-Dancehall-Hip Hop group.

The Red Stage started into the day with Illbilly Hitec, I-Fire and Samy Deluxe. The latter attracted with his German Rap a big audience. Samy Deluxe presented a lot of songs of his soon published album 'Schwarz Weiß'. The Dancehall-Duo Mono & Nikitaman came with their album 'Unter Freunden'. At the moment there is no German speaking Dancehall act which attracts the people more than these two likeable singers.

Afterwards the first main act of the day was celebrated by the

people. After a short delay Anthony B entered the stage and provided a fantastic and energetic show. Beside well-known hits such as Police he presented his album 'Rasta Love'. He also sang Buju Banton's tune Not An Easy Road to support his detained friend.

Now it was up to Alpha Blondy. He performed under a wonderful sunset his song Jerusalem. The sound and the spirit during his concert were perfect! Big respect!

After these two notable Reggae greats the massive waited with joyful anticipation for Jimmy Cliff, the veteran performer of Jamaica. He played his endless hits in front of celebrating people. The audience sang along at almost every tune, like Wonderful World, Beautiful People and You Can Get It If You Really Want. Enormous exaltation appeared at the first notes of Many Rivers To Cross. Jimmy Cliff lived up to his name and made the day perfect!

The one who was not yet tired could celebrate until the morning hour with Pow Pow Movement and Sentinel in the Dancehall Arena.

### Sunday – The Congos, Max Romeo, Lee 'Scratch' Perry, Ziggy Marley

On Sunday Who Dat!? and Heckert Empire started at the Red Stage while Mellow & Pyro

and The Busters opened the program on the Green Stage.

On time to the breaking open of the cloud cover and under blue sky The Congos took the massive by storm with their charismatic singer Cedric 'The Congo' Myton and his background singers "Ashanti" Roy Johnson, Watty Burnett and Kenroy Fyffe. The Congos shared a slot with Max Romeo and Lee 'Scratch' Perry, like often recently. Max Romeo followed soon with his tunes One Step Forward and I Chase The Devil. The musician and producer Lee Perry inspired the massive with his crazy appearance as well as with his music. His new album 'Revelation' is finding clear words against the system. At the end of the slot they came altogether on the scene to celebrate the tune War Inna Babylon.

Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue, a master on trombone and trumpet, followed. His funky and jazzy rhythms were elating. The French singer Ben l'Oncle Soul convinced the audience with his Soul à la Motown and a perfect choreography with his background singers.

Joy Denalane did the closing of the festival on the Green Stage with strong-voiced Soul and R'n'B of her new album 'Maureen'.

Contemporaneous to The

Congos, Max Romeo and Lee 'Scratch' Perry, at the Red Stage Gappy Ranks fired up the massive and cleared the way for the Jamaican newcomer Romain Virgo. Both did a fantastic show with a powerful sound.

Ayo brought more smooth notes on the scene with her album 'Billie-Eve'. Her touching as well as expressive voice was moving.

Ziggy Marley continued with his albums 'Love Is My Religion' and 'Wild and Free'. He gets on the family tradition with his music successfully. Beside numerous tunes of his own Ziggy Marley elated also with songs of his famous father Bob Marley.

As a grand final of the Summerjam 2011 the "Voice of Senegal" entered the Red Stage. Youssou N'Dour addicts with his album 'Dakar-Kingston' beside African sounds predominantly to Reggae music. With Tyrone Downie on keyboards he fascinated the massive of the festival.

Such a wide variety of music and such a wide variety of visitors (about 28.000) that it would be nice to do it all over – Stand up for Love!

Report by Viktoria Spratter  
Photos by Michael Grein



## One Love Festival 2011 (French Guiana)

**On 17th and 18th June, the second edition of One Love Festival took place in Baduel stadium in Cayenne, French Guiana.**

The young artist Protoje performed the songs from his debut album 'Seven Year Itch.' He is a very talented songwriter and has matured into a talented performer. He was accompanied by his cousin and producer Don Corleon.

Queen Ifrica did an extraordinary performance and her positive energy won't be forgotten by the Guianese massive.

Just off a tour in Brazil, Tarrus Riley was the headliner of the June 17th show. He gave a stellar performance in front of 1500 fans singing hit after hit including his recent Never I Leave. Conductor Dean Fraser performed amazing saxophone solos that thrilled the fans. Great showman that Tarrus is, both he and the Guianese crowd braved the rain and didn't become disheartened. He told us that the next continent that he will be traveling is Africa, beginning with Gambia.

On June 18th, the show began with veteran Barrington Levy. Always consistent, Mr Levy lived up to his reputation and had the crowd singing along with him, knowing every word. The 4500 fans present on the

second day of the event especially enjoyed his hit Be Strong and once again embraced every word. Dancehall aficionados were pleased to witness one of the best ambassadors and showman... Shaggy. He sang his classic tunes and songs from his new album. Shaggy's style and personality pleased the women and they loved his Jamaican dance steps.

A big thanks to the whole One Love Festival team and especially to soccer player Florent Malouda, the promoter of the event.

**Report by Frederic Weinum  
Photos by Claudia Berthier**



## Sierra Nevada World Music Festival 2011 Part 2 (USA)

**A huge success and a wonderful family experience!**

*After Sista Irie report about the festival, enjoy a second one by Gail Zucker with Lee Abel as photographer.*

The Mendocino County Fairgrounds in Boonville, California was host to the 18th Annual Sierra Nevada World Music Festival on June 17-19, 2011. No wonder it is said to be one of the best world music festivals anywhere and if you've never been to this area, you are missing a real treat! The days are warm and sunny and the nights, fresh & crisp.

My first experience at SNWMF was so enjoyable, I'm already thinking about when I can return to the lovely little town of Ukiah, California, just over the mountains from Boonville.

The three day Festival consists of two stages and a late night Jamaican dancehall. Friday night Brigadier Jerry gave a stellar performance on stage and later in the Dancenhall joined by veteran JAH LOVE selector Ilawi. Taj Weeks & Adowa hailing from St. Lucia performance was spiritual and vibrant. Pablo Moses did an energetic set.

Saturday started in the early afternoon with the Cables, a Jamaican foundation group

My Sunday started off with



with hits such as What Kind of World and Baby Why. The audience loved Romain Virgo they seem to know all the lyrics to his songs. He was backed by Gumption Band and they rocked it! He is so fresh on the scene and his lyrics are relevant to what's going on in Jamaica. Horace Andy gave a supreme performance followed by Midnite and the Jolly Boys. Toots and the Maytals were next. The set began with his daughter, Leba Hibbert. It seems like Toots doesn't age at all. He is so fit with endless energy. Then a treat, Junior Toots joined the stage and father & son did a duet of 54-46.

Steel Pulse energized the stage with all of their hits. They were surely a crowd favorite.

My Sunday started off with

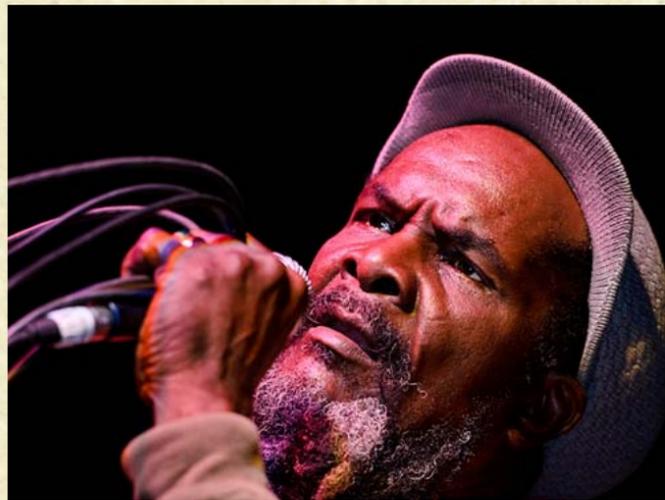
Dennis Alcapone the legendary Jamaican deejay who migrated to England in the 70's and made quite a name for himself. Duanne Stephenson's gentle spirit makes him one of the best recent artists and he didn't disappoint his fans. President Brown's lyrics and relevancy to the times made his stage presence exceptional.

Anthony B's energy and positive vibez exuberated the audience. His performance was so energetic and exciting. He sang most of his hits.

It was impossible to see every artist as two stages were happening at the same time, the Valley Stage was the larger stage and the Village Stage much smaller. One had to really plan their days as to which artists they wanted to take in and enjoy themselves. There was so much happening for children also: face painting, balloons and activities. Drumming and endless varieties of foods from all nations were plentiful.

The Sierra Nevada World Music Festival is a wonderful family experience! See you next year!

**Report by Gail Zucker  
Photos by Lee Abel**



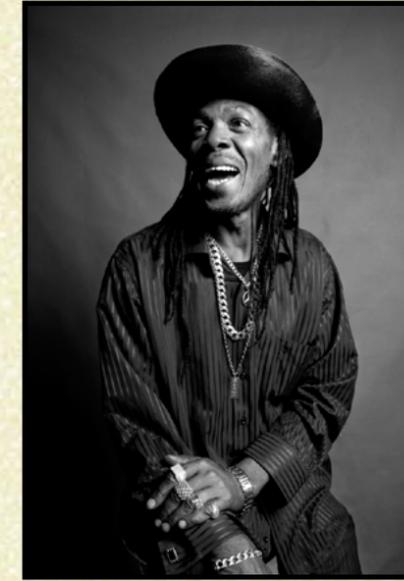
## Reggae Summer Fest 2011 (France)

Check the portraits from artists that played at the French festival.

The fourth edition of Summer Reggae Fest took place near Saint Malo in France on July 8th and 9th, 2011. The festival, powered by Legal Shot sound system, invited some Jamaican and UK veterans (Johnny Clarke, Michael Prophet, Jimmy Cliff, Horace Andy, Aswad and Martin Campbell) as well as upcoming artists (Ziggi Recado, Alborosie and Diana Rutherford) to perform in Brittany. Like previous years, the audience could go from the sound system corner to the "Live stage". A very exciting part of this 2 day festival was probably the soundsystem area. Indeed here, singers and deejays such as Johnny Clarke, Echo Minott, Al Campbell, Shinehead and Martin Campbell could show their skills alongside new comers like female singjay Soom T and French Pupa Jim (of Stand High Sound). They mashed up the versions on David Rodigan, OBF, Channel One (UK) and Legal Shot selections.

Check these portraits from photographer Christian Bordey. He photographed most of the artists that played at the festival alongside some background pictures.

Report and photos by Christian Bordey



# Öland Roots 2011 (Sweden)

## Cool and casual at Öland Roots festival.

Öland Roots is Sweden's coziest festival and has grown a lot in recent years – from being a fairly small festival with mainly Swedish acts to a well organized event with two stages with several foreign artists, this year boosting Junior Kelly, Etana and Queen Omega among many more. This was the eleventh festival and it was sold out for the fifth year in a row.

The setting of the festival is beautiful. The premises are located in the woods just next to the beach on Öland, an island in the southern part of Sweden.

The crowd is a vital mix of young and old people, and several have dreadlocks and African inspired clothes. Only vegetarian and vegan food are served and it's also a kind of family vibe, since there are lots of children. The secluded area for drinking beer probably adds to that.

This year Öland Roots took place Friday to Saturday July 15-16th. But it had a sneak start on Thursday night when All Out Dubstep and Curfew Steppas played on the beach between 1.00 and 4.00 in the morning. And those beach parties also take place on the two other nights. This year with Sweden's Safari Sound, Million Vibes and Ashman as well as

Dutch Herb-A-Lize It.

### Several Swedish acts on Friday

On Friday it rained during the day, but that didn't stop the attendees from partying and dancing to mainly Swedish bands and artists, such as Stures Dansorkester and Glesbygd'n. The crowd was also treated rising dancehall star T'Nez as well as Queen Omega and Mark Wonder who were on a short European tour and luckily enough dropped by Öland.

T'Nez performed at 8.00 pm, a usually awkward time at a festival. Most people are away eating, drinking and preparing for the night. The crowd was therefore pretty thin in the beginning of the set. But T'Nez raw energy and charismatic appearance had people running to see him perform a string of up tempo dancehall hits.

Mark Wonder and Queen Omega had the last slot on Friday night. Due to some sound difficulties Mark Wonder took stage at a quarter to one, 45 minutes after schedule. His Garnett Silk like aesthetics and gospel-infused voice swept me off my feet for about 45 minutes. It's a bit sad though that he was off-key during his last tune.

Queen Omega took stage after Mark Wonder and was also supposed to perform for 45

minutes. But the sound difficulties made her show 15 minutes shorter. Despite the troubles she made a wicked performance and owned the stage from start to finish. She has an authority few come close to and a treasure chest full of mind-blowing tunes.

### Great performances from start to finish on Saturday

Saturday started off in fine style, and the sun was shining when Hanouneh performed her hip-hop/dancehall influenced roots reggae.

And the strong performances replaced one another. Jah Turban, Joey Fever, Mr. Williamz, Etana, Million Stylez and Junior Kelly were all in great shape.

Joey Fever took over the smaller Roots stage in the late afternoon. His Jah Cure styled singing and UK styled MC:ing was appreciated by the crowd. His voice seemed a bit tired though since he had been warm-up for Busy Signal in Stockholm and Malmö the two nights before. Therefore the best song parts were in deejay style rather than straight singing.

Mr. Williamz probably had the festival's hardest slot. Saturday between 7.45 and 8.45 pm. The crowd was very thin, which is very unfortunate. Mr. Williamz – backed by UK-producer Curtis Lynch – made a solid 30 minute set where

he performed all of his Curtis Lynch produced tunes. Mr. Williamz has attended dancehall school, which was very obvious during the set. During the last 30 minutes Mr. Lynch juggled some of his own material.

Etana has one of the sweetest voices in contemporary reggae music and she performed an impressive string of hits during her one hour show. She set the mood with Jah Chariot from her debut album followed by tunes such as Mocking Bird, August Town and I'm Not Afraid. She spiced up her own catalogue with a vast number of cover songs, whereof three from Bob Marley. She also did a nice a cappella introduction to Rivers of Babylon, originally performed by The Melodians.

The vastly talented Million Stylez took stage at 10.45 pm in front of a huge cheering crowd. He jumped onto stage to Love We a Deal With. But this version sounded like it was on speed. And this was actually for every tune on his set. The pace was high and the temperature rose when he invited Joey Fever to perform alongside him on Young Gunz, and the same for Mr. Williamz during Police in Helicopter.

Junior Kelly rounded off the festival. And what a concert this tall rastaman from Spanish Town did. He was backed by The Roots Harmonics Band

– their fifth act during the festival which makes them something of a house band at Öland Roots – and two background singers. He performed nine songs in a row before saying something to the crowd. Then he was at it again. His songs of freedom and justice were performed in a hard tempo and he often only did two minutes of each tune. A great finish to a mighty fine festival.

Report by Erik Magni  
Photos by Anna Thunander



## Junior Murvin and Willie Williams live in London

**Two voices, two bands, one great evening.**

Two weeks after Little John and Josey Wales took Brixton back to the eighties in tribute to Sugar Minott, the late seventies were in style at the Hootananny once again. On an unusually hot summer night two veteran singers, each of whose biggest hits were covered by punk group the Clash, demonstrated a still scorching mutual ability to entertain. Introduced as “a legend of Studio 1” by promoter Cecil Reuben, the St Ann parish-born Willie Williams answered in kind. Attired in white, he sang on a series of rhythms launched by the label: Rockforth Rock (The Unification), Heavenless (Music Maker) and of course, Real Rock (Armageddon Time). To the drum and bass of the Hootananny’s own Artist band, he brought his knees up to his chest for tough steppers fare like Messenger Man and Home Sweet Home. All that was missing was his self-produced classic Unity, originally released on the In Land label. But having attended Haile Selassie’s birthday celebrations the night before he had this unity message for the audience “You can’t love the Creator unless you love the person in front of you” delivered in his trademark cool drawl. He



was followed by Junior Murvin, dressed in a red, yellow and blue dashiki, who cut a less active yet equally riveting figure on stage. Starting with one of his greatest Lee Perry recordings, Roots Train Number One, he caused the venue to erupt at the first sound of his falsetto voice. But as well as hits like Badman Posse (for Mikey Dread) and Cool Out Son (for Joe Gibbs) he also shared his passion for American crooners Ben E King and Nat King Cole, whose lower registers he was perfectly able to imitate. It is his unblemished falsetto, however, that found him fame and when he held the long notes

the people went wild. On returning to the spotlight to sing Police and Thieves, the anthem of the troubled 1976 Notting Hill Carnival, the message was not lost after 35 years, with crime and police brutality still in evidence. He was ably backed by Desmond Dekker’s 007 Band. PA support came from the UK’s Bunny Melody who braved the heat in leather trousers. As well as new single Just Go, he gave an impressive rendition of Cliff Richard’s Miss You Nights - as reworked by Lloyd Brown on his last album ‘Cornerstone’.

**Report by Angus Taylor**  
**Photos by Theresa Emmanuel**

## The Itals and Kenyatta Hill in Norfolk

**AT&T Reggae Solstice Rocked Towne Point Park.**

The AT&T Reggae Solstice produced by Festevents, a non-profit organization, took place in Norfolk, Virginia on Saturday July 9, 2011. The event was a peaceful, positive celebration with a waterfront backdrop on a weather perfect day. Kenyatta Hill opened the night with a voice resembling that of his late father. Kenyatta has stepped in to complete many of his father’s songs and has now made a name for himself in the industry as a talented and likeable artist.

The celebration continued with the legendary Itals, who throughout the decades have given us quality, well-loved music like Herbs Pirate, Smile Knotty Dread, In A Dis Ya Time, Let Dem Talk and Rasta Philosophy. 2011 marked the reunion of the original three Itals, Keith Porter, Ronnie Davis and Lloyd Ricketts (RIP), for their first tour in over 15 years. With big smiles and tight harmonies, their energy and vibes seemed to radiate throughout the crowd at the park. This iconic trio grooved and satisfied the well diverse fan base, who chanted the songs along with the Itals. Good, conscious reggae music



is loved by many and comes with a message of love, oneness and peace. Clearly, we all need more of that!

In the words of the late, great Joseph Hill “I’m not afraid to hold Jah, not in any crowd”.

**Report and photo by Cree**

## Dour Festival 2011 (Belgium)

**Check out the photos of the 23rd edition of the Dour Festival.**

Sun, rain, mud and storm, every kind of weather you were faced with while the Dour Festival. And like the weather the music was also multisided. In 4 days over 200 bands were playing on 7 stages on one of Europe's biggest festivals. It took place in Dour, Belgium near the French boarder from July 14th to 17th.

This year a lot of reggae artists came to present their music to the audience. Johnny Clarke, Horace Andy, Israel Vibration and Anthony B were on stage as well-known reggae greats. Groundation even played two times, one time with their "Tribute to Bob Marley" show and one time with their own songs. They fascinated the festival-goers and after 10 minutes of uninterrupted exultations they came back on stage.

Some upcoming reggae singers such as Alborosie, Duane Stephenson, Tarrus Riley with Dean Fraser and Busy Signal also performed in front of an elated crowd.

Check out the photos of the 23rd edition of the Dour Festival!

**Report by Viktoria Spratter  
Photos by Michael Grein**



## Garance Reggae Festival 2011 (France)

**"We wanted to pay tribute to original reggae, conscious reggae and to this generation of artists who created it"**

Burning Spear, Horace Andy, Johnny Clarke, Max Romeo, Ken Boothe, Twinkle Brothers, Third World... From July 27th to 30th, reggae veterans gathered at Bagnols-sur-Cèze, France, for the 20th edition of Garance Reggae Festival. On the menu: "strictly reggae" and, most of all, "strictly roots".

"It's the heart of this music", says Jérôme Levasseur, local coordinator of the festival. "We wanted to pay tribute to original reggae, conscious reggae. And to this generation of artists who created it". On opening night, Burning Spear gave a powerful concert lasting more than 2 hours. Also on the bill was Studio One Revue, a tribute to the mythical label of the 60's and 70's. "We thought to build this Studio One Revue from long time. We did it thanks to Fatta of French Soul Stereo sound system who works with artists like Lone Ranger and Carlton Livingston for several years". The festival-goers, most of them not born during the golden age of Studio One – discovered some of the deejays and singers that contributed to the label's success: King

Stitt, Prince Jazzbo, Dillinger, Willi Williams, Dawn Penn, Jim Brown and also Alpheus, last signing of Clement "Coxsone" Dodd, in the late 90's.

But roots doesn't necessarily mean old. The new generation was also present at Bagnols-sur-Cèze with artists such as Gyptian, Queen Ifrica, Protoje, Midnite, Junior Kelly and Lutan Fyah. There was also the "Dub Station Corner", dedicated to UK dub and fat bass fans. Powered by the two heaviest French soundsystems, Blackboard Jungle and OBF, it featured Jah Shaka – UK scene icon – and King Jammy – renowned producer who launched digital reggae with his famous Sleng Teng in 1985 – that made the audience vibrate with their serious selections. French artists and dancehall artists were absent from the Festival (except one French band, Danakil). "It's only the second edition in Bagnols. We wanted to strike hard. The heart of our artistic choice, it's the Jamaican reggae. It's the reason why French people come to the festival". Indeed, the French are well-known even in Kingston to be serious roots reggae connoisseurs. "The movement grew up year after year. At the beginning of the 80's, there was only 1% of White people and 99% of Africans or West Indians in reg-

gae concerts in Paris. I saw the audience mix up progressively. Nowadays, youths of 17 years know the roots music I listened to 30 years ago!".

Regardless, this music is ignored by big labels and media. The reason? a lot of clichés associated with reggae. "In first position, the cliché of weed. People prefer reduce the thing and only see Rastas smoking spliffs and being stoned... We never talk about the real thing: a militant music, politically and socially engaged".

48.000 people came to Garance Reggae Festival this year. It's enough to be sanguine for the future, according to Jérôme Levasseur. "In the 80's, no French reggae group could play Reggae. Several variety singers tried, but it sounded bad. Only Serge Gainsbourg succeeded because he worked with Sly & Robbie. Since the early 90's, bands began playing reggae rhythms and developed them. Hundreds of groups and sound systems exist today in France. Today Jamaican artists appreciate working with some French backing bands like Dub Akom (that backed Protoje, Pressure, Lutan Fyah and Gyptian on July 30th) or No More Babylon who play with Ken Boothe".

**Report by Maral Amiri  
Photos by Jennyfer Papin**



## Reggae Sumfest 2011 (Jamaica)

Check out these photos of Reggae Sumfest with Gyptian, Cocoa Tea, Beres Hammond, Movado, Vybz Kartel and many more.

The 19th staging of the greatest reggae show on earth turned out to be more successful than ever. Reggae Sumfest 2011 kicked into high gear with dancehall night on Thursday, July 20 with several current top DJ's play to a packed venue. Every artiste put their best foot forward but Cecile, Khago, Kip Rich, Konshens, Bounty Killer and Movado especially thrilled the crowd. Spice with her unique fashion style and collaboration with US singer Maya also deserve special mention as did I-Octane who a big hit and masterfully kept his audience on a high. The DJ of the moment, Vybz Kartel, closed the show however the build-up did not live up to the crowd expectation. Despite the late cancellation by R Kelly on International Night 1, the show went extremely well. Reggae greats Cocoa Tea and Bunny Wailer were called in as last minute replacements for the R & B singer. In the end they turned into a splendid performance. Tanya Stephens delivered her usual witty lyrics and singer extraordinaire Beres Hammond was

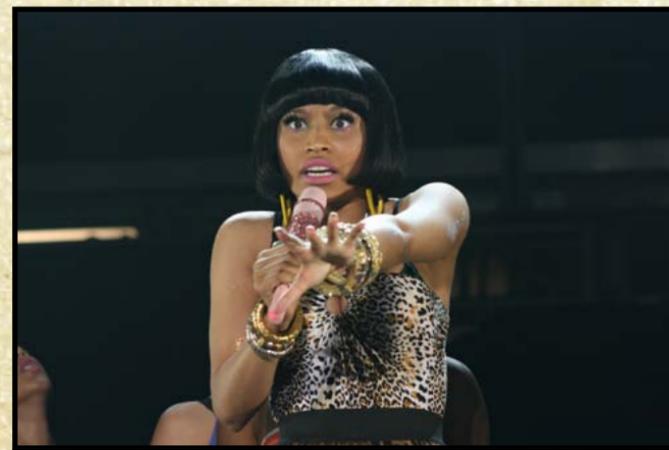


honoured by the organizers for his 35 years in the reggae music industry and his contribution to Reggae Sumfest. International Night 2 was headlined by US Rapper Nicky Menaj who performed to a jam-packed crowd. Apart from her performance being short, she was well received by the crowd who

could accompany her lyric by lyric. Other artistes who made the festival a truly memorable one were Wayne Wonder, Jah Cure and Gyptian. The dynamic reggae band Chalice brought down the curtains to Reggae Sumfest 2011.

**Report and photos  
by Steve James**





# Uppsala Reggae Festival 2011 (Sweden)

## A musical feast at Uppsala Reggae Festival.

The biggest reggae festival in the Nordics took place in Uppsala – an hour north of Stockholm – on August 4-6. The eleventh consecutive festival had more domestic artists than ever, but also boasted huge international acts such as Gyptian, Mr. Vegas and The Heptones.

In 2010 Uppsala Reggae Festival celebrated its tenth anniversary and had a best of the best line up. This year the festival's management had followed the same path as the years before – some of the biggest Jamaican dancehall and roots artists, both newcomers and veterans.

This year also had a separate scene for dance, called Dance4Life, where there were workshops and dance shows. The management described it as “a giant step into the new decade with a focus on street dance, dance performances and dance parties.” And it was obviously a good idea since the younger audience showed up in the tent to learn new steps and styles.

Each year between 15,000 and 20,000 people attend the festival. And it's no surprise that so many people show up. It's easy to reach, it's clean, it's safe and has a mix of both reggae aficio-

nados and people who happen to live in Uppsala or just like festivals and great music.

But the majority of the crowd probably comes with one or more artists mind. Several where therefore vastly disappointed when Toots Hibbert had to cancel his show in the last minute due to a missed flight in London. Yared Tekeste, founder of Uppsala Reggae Festival, was immensely disappointed since he had been trying to get Toots Hibbert to the festival for years.

### Thursday: Leroy Sibbles enjoyed the stage

The festival started out in fine style with Romain Virgo on early Thursday evening. He was backed by a DJ, and showed the crowd that it doesn't take much more than an angel's voice and Donovan Germain produced songs to make a solid performance.

Three other youngsters took stage just after. Protoje, backed by his cousin and master producer Don Corleon, did a mature set with a nice surprise – Don Corleon took the microphone and sang the hook to the unreleased tune Our Time Come. A wicked song with a hip-hop type of beat.

Don Corleon and Protoje are touring with Pressure. He took stage just after Protoje. Unfor-

tunately his microphone was set a little low and his singing was also a bit off-key at times. But he did justice for strong tunes such as Ghetto Life, Be Free and Love and Affection.

Legendary vocal trio – nowadays duo – The Heptones rounded off the evening with a 75 minute set that consisted of so many classic tunes that I lost count.

Leroy Sibbles took bass duties for a few riddims and did a hefty version of The Drifter. It's impressive that he still has such a great voice, and when he danced off stage it seemed like he wanted to return for another set of songs.

### Friday: Mr. Vegas is the ultimate energy source

Norris Man was the first out on the second day of the festival. He was backed by Kapten Röd's band, and the crowd was rather thin. Probably because it was early in the day.

Kapten Röd took stage afterwards. He is one of the biggest Swedish reggae artists and managed to attract a huge crowd that sang along to his political lyrics full of social commentaries.

After his more than one-hour performance, the crowd was waiting for roots veteran Johnny Clarke. He treated the audi-



ence a musical feast. Full of his most well-known hits from the 70's. His band played the festival's deepest bass lines, so loud and deep they forced me to pick up my ear plugs.

Johnny Clarke has a remarkable strong voice and a set of songs that would make other artists envious. He did classic flying cymbals tunes such as None Shall Escape the Judgment and Enter into His Gates with Praise. The only question is – why did the bass player hide behind the amplifier for most of the show?

The two last acts on Friday – since Toots Hibbert cancelled – were in the contemporary vein.

Richie Spice seemed distant for the first part of his set, but managed to pick it up in future sing a long classic Yap Yap.

Mr. Vegas did the festival's best performance. His hour long set included dancehall

classics such as Heads High and Hot Gal Today. He is hugely popular among the ladies, and when he took off his shirt the screaming was almost deafening. Mr. Vegas charisma and energy on stage is so intense that Germany could easily replace their nuclear plants and use him as a power source.

### Saturday: Highly impressive from Queen Ifrica

Saturday is at first all about veterans. At least it seemed like it. Ken Boothe, aka Mr. Rocksteady, had the main stage for one hour early in the evening. His gritty singing still sounds like it did in the 60's and 70's. At least for the majority of the show. When he did his classic Freedom Street, he didn't manage to reach the high notes. But his set was nonetheless solid.

According to the concert schedule Tony Rebel would have been up next. But some familiar Queen Ifrica tones reached my ears. It must have been confusing to many as she and Tony Rebel switched times in the playing schedule without the festival making us aware of it in advance.

Queen Ifrica is such a talented artist. She can sing, and then suddenly switch to deejay mode where she sounds like a more furious Buju Banton or Bounty Killer. Highly impressive.

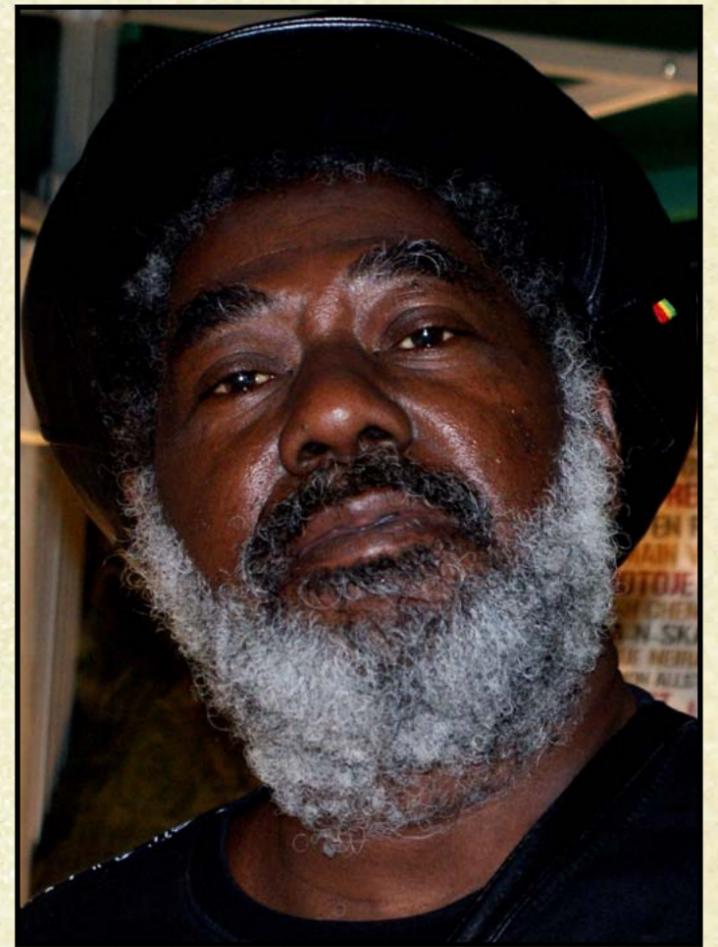
She is followed by Tony Rebel,

who takes us for a musical journey back to the 90's and then onwards to the present. Tunes such as Jah is by My Side, Fresh Vegetable and Pretenders Paradise get the crowd cheering and singing along, even though the sound quality could have been better. The Garnett Silk tribute Splashing Dashing is also somewhat disappointing. It's a great song, don't get me wrong, but I would have preferred the actual Garnett Silk duet Christian Soldiers.

Many of the female part of the audience had been longing for Gyptian. However, he seemed unfocused for a long part of the show and he also invited Nitty Kutchie on stage for a substantial portion of his one hour set. Even if Gyptian seemed to be somewhere else during part of the concert, he had the area in front of the stage boiling when he did his monster hit Hold Yuh.

Elephant Man, the energy God, rounded off the festival with an bouncy performance where he, just as Mr. Vegas, had dancers on stage.

Report by Erik Magni  
Photos by Anna Thunander



# Marcia Griffiths in Los Angeles

**Marcia Griffiths performed at The Dub Club, The Echoplex in Los Angeles, California on August 10, 2011.**

Marcia Griffiths is undoubtedly the “Queen of Reggae”. Her illustrious career has spanned more than four decades with many massive hits to her credit. Working with the famed Coxsonne Dodd in the mid-sixties, Marcia started her brilliant career, first working as a solo artist, then teaming up for duets with Bob Andy in “Bob and Marcia”, which spanned 1970-1974. In 1974 Marcia formed the “I-Threes”, the magnificent backing singers for “Bob Marley and the Wailers”, where she performed until Bob Marley’s untimely passing in 1981. Marcia sparked a dance craze in 1989 with The Electric Boogie having the dance The Electric Slide, which is a line dance, sweep the US. This is just a little history of this wonderful singer who played to a packed audience at the Dub Club in Los Angeles, California.

Anticipation was in the air for this more than an hour performance. We were treated, about two weeks prior to this night, to a performance of the I-Three’s at the Hollywood Bowl. Now was Marcia’s moment to shine as the incredible solo artist

that she is.

Marcia blazed onstage in a colorful, red, gold and green dress to the song Childish Games, from her 1997 CD, Land of Love. She has a vast repertoire to draw on for her performances and she gave us a taste of her history. This woman can dance, too! Another favorite of mine that she performed was Fire Burning, from her ‘Indomitable’ CD. I was able to retrieve a set list at the end of the night from the bass player (thanks bassie), so you can peruse the list to see how many wonderful hits that she performed. Marcia paid homage to the late Desmond Dekker when she sang the song Israelites, and closed the main portion of her set with Bob Marley’s Buffalo Soldier and Could You Be Loved. Of course, she was brought back for an encore by the incredibly enthusiastic crowd. Her encore was Dreamland and then she brought down the house with her smash hit Electric Boogie; during which she brought people onstage with her to perform the Electric Slide. Marcia kept us rocking throughout the night! I loved this show and was impressed with Marcia’s consistent high energy. You go girl! Thanks for a wonderful and inspiring night!

**Report and photos by Jan Salzman**



## Reggae On The River 2011 (USA)

**The festival took place in California on the 16th & 17th July.**

Tucked far away amongst the redwood trees, on a bend in the Eel River, Reggae on the River celebrated its 27th festival in a memorable fashion. Boasting two days of solid reggae music, Humboldt County's only reggae festival paid tribute to reggae's roots in Jamaica, Africa, South America, and more. This year, with unforgettable performances from Rootz Underground, Seun Kuti, Human Rights, Gondwana, J Boog, Edi Fitzroy, Queen Ifrica and Tony Rebel, and the kickoff collaboration tour of Ky-Mani Marley and Gramps Morgan, the festival lived up to the hype it has maintained since the 90s.

With a variety of performers on two different stages (a new edition to this year's festival), Reggae on the River provided hippies, businessmen, and doctors alike with a greater appreciation for music. From Edi Fitzroy jumping off the stage and performing in the midst of the crowd, to J Boog's blend of reggae, r&b, hip hop, and Polynesian soul, to Gondwana's representation of Spanish reggae from Chile, to Rootz Underground's overly-packed performance on the small stage, all music lovers were content.

This year's crowd was pumped

and ready for the dynamic performance of Gramps Morgan and Ky-Mani Marley who brought down the house Saturday night. The collaboration of the two members of the greatest reggae families, the Marleys and the Morgans, exceeded all expectations and kept the audience dancing late into the night, chanting for more. Gramps' soulful lyrics and reggae roots mixed with Ky-Mani's hip hop beats and tribute to his father were the perfect ending to a spectacular day on the river.

A plethora of food and beverages was available to satisfy all vegan, vegetarian and carnivore needs, from the ever-popular Jamaican Jerk chicken to traditional Greek gyros and the local fire station's ice cream stand. Unique vendors provided the newest and greatest fashion, including feather hair extensions, exotic clothing, jewelry, and wooden furniture.

On Monday we drove south through the magnificent, mysterious redwood forest, still basking in Reggae's positive vibes. Feeling inspired and alive, we started planning for ROTR 2012.

**Report by Alexis Anne  
Photos by Lee Abel**



# Stephen Marley and Toots and The Maytals in Paris

**The artists played in Paris on August 16th to close the summer season of "La Place du Glazart".**

It was a beautiful summer evening at "La Plage du Glazart" where they chose reggae music for the last concert before closing the doors until next summer.

A large audience awaited for the doors to open to see Stephen Marley, the prodigal son, presenting his second album released in June, 'Revelation, Part 1, The Root of Life.' Toots and the Maytals, a veteran of the reggae scene was also on the promising bill.

Everyone was not inside when Stephen Marley opened the show. He started with a song from his father Punky Reggae Party with a bluffing mimicry and the audience reacted with much excitement. He continued with Chase Them from his first album and then some from his new one: No Cigarette Smoking (in my Room), Selassie is the Chapel and Break Us Apart. The audience enjoyed the live set and the energy was electric.

The set list covered a wide variety of his father's tunes, maybe a little too much for my taste. They included Three Little Birds, Could you be Loved, and Buffalo Soldier.

Stephen also delivered a medley of his raggamuffin tracks, Traffic Jam and Mission but these songs were definitely lacking the presence of Damian Marley.

The set was cut short, barely a half an hour. After his final tune he cursed "Bumbaclot" as if he wasn't ready to end his performance.

It was a short concert, but of great quality even if we would have preferred that he played more of his own repertoire than those of his father.

After a long intermission, it seemed they were trying to get the sound right, Toots appeared on stage. His daughter Leba opened the show with one of her original tunes.

Toots entered, as always smiling and dynamic. He began his set with Pressure Drop and continued singing his hits from his extensive career such as Louie Louie, What a Bam Bam, and 54-46 was my Number.

It was a beautiful evening and we had the pleasure of enjoying a live concert. If only Stephen Marley's set was a little longer and less time between his set and Toots, the evening would have been perfect.

It was a good time that Mediacom and the Glazart has promised, and in times of shortage of reggae concerts in Paris we

can not complain.

**Report and photos by Franck Blanquin**



## Reggae Sun Ska 2011

(France)

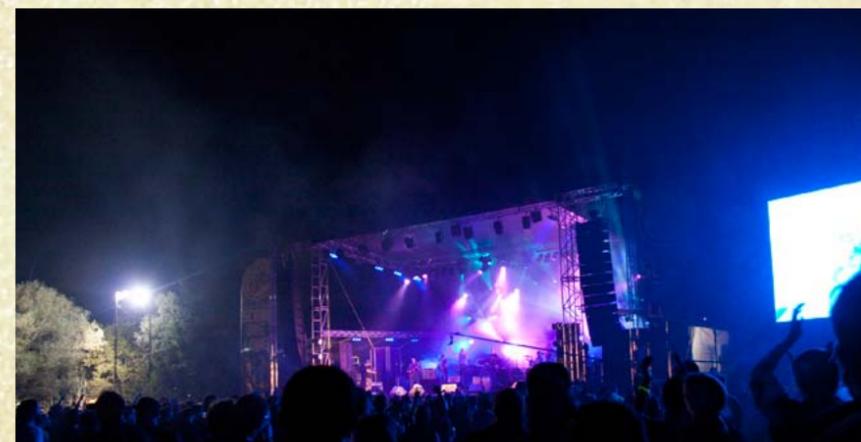
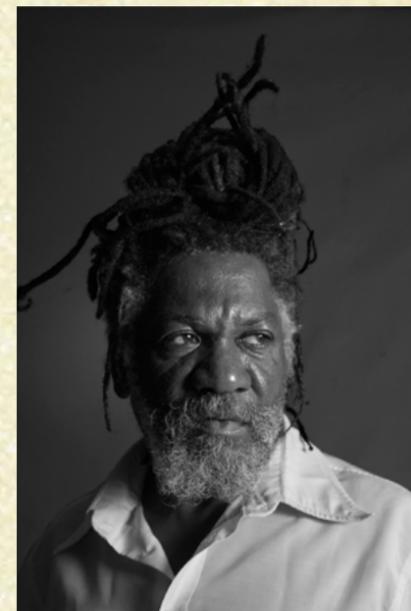
**Check the portraits from some of the artists that played at the French festival.**

The 14th edition of Reggae Sun Ska took place in Pauillac in South West France from August 5th to 7th, 2011. The festival featured artists such as Etana, Luciano, Takana Zion, Stephen Marley, Admiral T, The Heptones, Big Youth, Professor and many more.

In three years the festival has changed location three times - due to high demand, thanks to the quality of their music selection. This year Reggae Sun Ska took place over a period of three days, and took place on three stages, two with live bands and one focused on sound systems.

There was also an off site festival, which was set up along the estuary of the Gironde. There you could watch the movie 'The First Rasta' by Helene Lee, and also discussions by Bob Marley archivist Roger Steffens.

**Report by Christian Bordey  
Photos by Christian Bordey and Agata Wolanska**



## Barrington Levy in Paris

Barrington Levy is actually in Europe and he played in Paris at Cabaret Sauvage on June 28th. He was backed by French Roses Band. Support was provided by Kenyon and Alerta Kamarada, warm up by Soul Stereo Sound System.

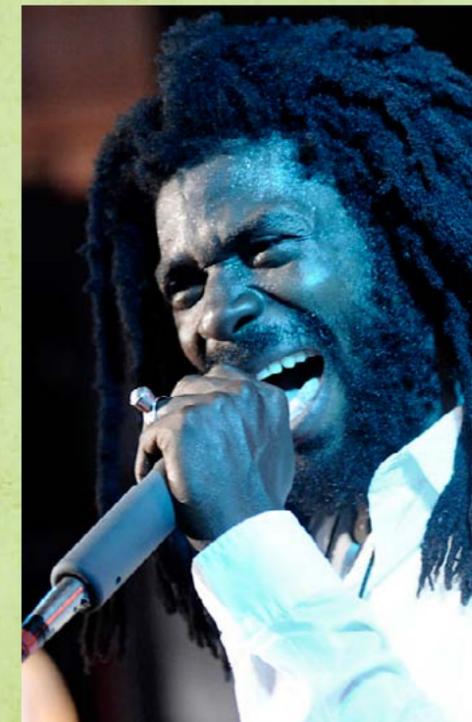
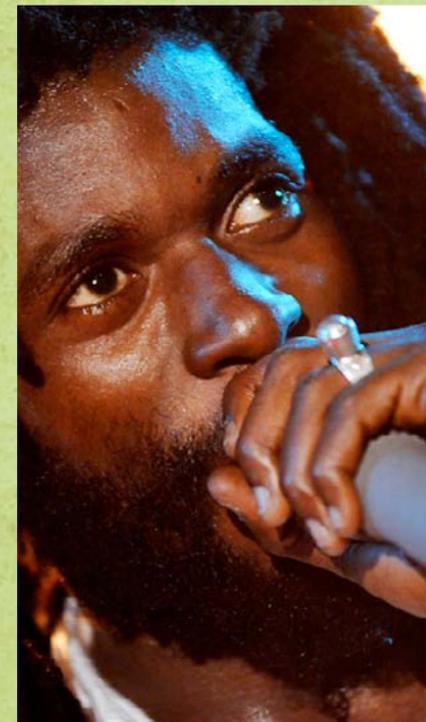
Photos by Franck Blanquin



## Takana Zion in Paris

Takana Zion played at New Morning, Paris on May 10th. Here are the photos from the show.

Photos by Frank Blanquin



# Amsterdam Reggae Festival 2011

On Sunday July 31st the Amsterdam Reggae Festival helded its first outdoor edition at the NDSM Werf in Amsterdam. Gentleman, Midnite, Junior Kelly, The Skatalites, Ken Boothe, Romain Virgo, Third World, Lutan Fyah and Ziggi Recado performed on the main stage.

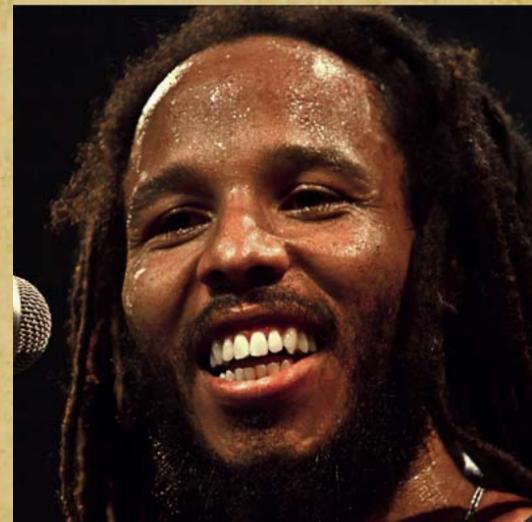
Photos by Paco Van Leeuwen



## Ziggy Marley in Paris

Ziggy Marley is on European tour to promote his new album 'Wild and Free'. On July 4th, he played in Paris at La Cigale. Ziggy sang tunes from his new album such as Personal Revolution, Reggae in My Head, Forward to Love ... He also played his repertoire of classics like Love is my Religion, Justice, Tomorrow People. Of course, he performed songs from his father, the legendary Bob Marley (Stir it up, Pimpers Paradise, Lively up Yourself ...). At the encore, there was a special guest, the female singer Yael Naim who sang a duet with Ziggy on Is This Love. A concert that lived up to our expectations... The Rastaman vibration is positive !!!!

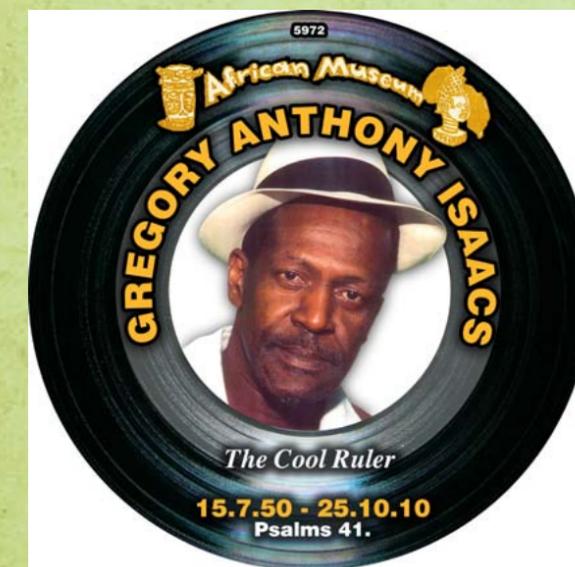
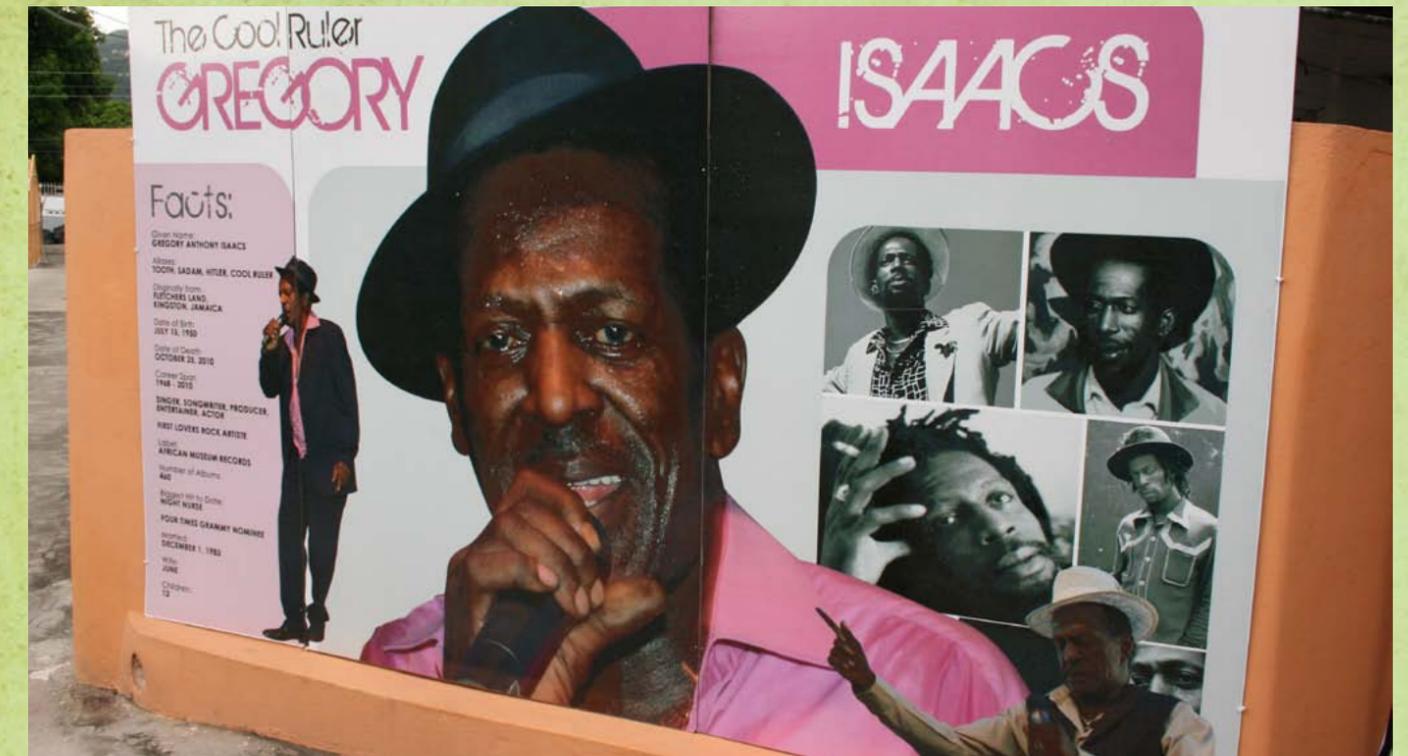
Report and photos by Emmanuel Parata



## Gregory Isaacs 61th Earth Day

On July 15th, family, friends and members of the music fraternity celebrated the 61th birthday of the Cool Ruler, Gregory Isaacs. The day started with a ceremony being officiated by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church at the Dovecot memorial cemetery. A series of drumming and chanting led by Bongo Herman and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church followed. The event also included the laying of a new headstone at the tomb of the late singer. The celebration continued at the singer's residence in Kingston where close friends continued to remember the life and music of one of Jamaica's greatest entertainers. The Gregory Isaacs Foundation which was recently launched is assisting the Walkers Place of Safety which caters to children that are homeless and mentally challenged.

Report and photos by Steve James



# UNITED REGGAE

MAGAZINE

Artists - News - Articles  
Forum - Videos - Photos - Music

United Reggae is an online magazine created in October 2007 and dedicated to reggae music. It has the intention of offering a real international platform of information on this rich and healthy music. Our aim is to promote and spread the inspiring and healing vibrations of Reggae music and culture.

United we stand, Divided we fall... join us!

## Conception, design and creation

Xavier Simacourbe & Camille Monchicourt

## Special thanks to:

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