

**UNITED**   
**REGGAE**

**MAGAZINE**  
#11 - September 2011

**Taj Weekes**  
**INTERVIEW**

**LEE PERRY**  
**HANOUNEH**  
**MARK WONDER**  
**RAY DARWIN**  
**MR. WILLIAMZ**

**Reggae Rhythm and Blues Festival - Reggae's Gone Country**  
**On Tour with the Itals - Ziggy Marley - Chiemsee Reggae Summer**  
**The Revival of the Band and Live Music in Jamaica - One Love Festival**

## ★ EDITORIAL by Erik Magni



### A new generation of reggae musicians in Jamaica

Bob Marley was once asked in an interview if reggae music could successfully be copied outside of Jamaica. He answered “Well, you see, the way I feel about the music is that it can be copied. But it’s the feel. You ask plenty musicians, them know it, but they can’t do it.”

We all know by now that reggae can be copied. There are several successful reggae bands, artists and musicians from around the globe. But Jamaica is the motherland. That’s why it’s great to hear people living in Jamaica say that roots reggae is back on the island. Don’t get me wrong. I love some of the contemporary dancehall coming from my favorite part of the Caribbean. But to hear that a new generation of live musicians is playing reggae makes me shout with joy. I mean, just listen to bands like Rootz Underground, Raging Fyah, The Uprising Roots Band and Dubtonic Kru. They have rough bass lines and that feel Bob Marley is referring to.

Even if reggae nowadays is played successfully all over the world, there is only one Jamaica. Was, is and will always be.

COVER PHOTO BY FRANK BLANQUIN

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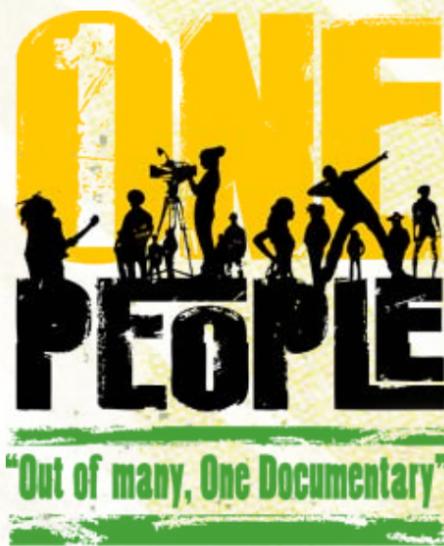
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## The Hit Sound of The Dub Pistols at Midnight Rock

Roots Records kicks off a brand new series of releases where they're asking DJs to dig through their old dub and early dancehall seven and twelve inches to come up with a personal musical journey. The first release – 'The Hit Sound of The Dub Pistols at Midnight Rock' – revolves around the Midnight Rock and Hit Sound labels, run by Jah Thomas and U-Brown respectively. The compiling has been conducted by Barry Ashworth from The Dub Pistols. He has selected 14 tunes from singers and deejays such as Al Campbell, U-Brown and Ranking Toyan. "I loved the opportunity to go back through some of those early, pre-digital dancehall classics and throw so many of them together on this album - I'm a massive fan of Jah Thomas and it was a great opportunity to listen to so much of his work and fashion it into an album. Can I do a volume two?" says Barry Ashworth. 'The Hit Sound of The Dub Pistols at Midnight Rock' was released on digital platforms on August 22nd.

## OnePeople Documentary

OnePeople' is a collaborative documentary to celebrate Jamaica in its 50th year of inde-



pendence in 2012. You're therefore invited to contribute with footage to celebrate Jamaica's global reach 50 years after independence.

"A user-generated documentary such as this depends on the quality and diversity of the submissions and I hope you will all submit to make this a truly historic documentary to celebrate our island in its 50th year," says Justine Henzell, producer. On August 6th, 2011, the question "What does Jamaica mean to you?" was posed with the aim that a global community of creative minded people will respond by uploading a visual representation of their answer to the film's website.

"We know that our tiny island nation has touched many outside of our country, even beyond our Diaspora, and with this project we will embrace anyone who has ever been moved by a reggae song, enjoyed a plate of ackee and salt-fish, been stirred by the words of Marcus Garvey, fell in love watching a Negril sunset or

simply has a point of view," explains Justine Henzell.

A portion of the documentary's profits will be used to create Jamaica's first film fund to enable Jamaican filmmakers to tell their own stories in their own voices.

Submissions will close November 6th, 2011 and the picture will premiere on August 6th, 2012, in Miami, Toronto, New York, London and Kingston.

## Dub Vendor Records 35th Anniversary

An era has come to an end. London's legendary record store Dub Vendor closes the doors to the shop on Clapham Junction as from Saturday September 10th.

On the website the staff writes that the recent events in London have accelerated the decision to concentrate on online and mail order services. This put an even greater significance on the 35th anniversary dance that takes place on Friday September 2nd at the Music Bar in Brixton, London. This star-studded night will be hosted by the Dub Vendor All Stars along with a special guest – former Dub Vendor staff member Roberto Allen of Vibes FM.

Tickets to the anniversary dance are available on [www.dubvendor.co.uk](http://www.dubvendor.co.uk).

## Shake Up the Place by 10 Ft. Ganja Plant

U.S. based mysterious outfit 10 Ft. Ganja Plant – with members from John Brown's Body – drops their new rootsy album 'Shake Up the Place' on August 30th, one year after the conceptual '10 Deadly Shots'.

'Shake Up the Place' assembles ten tunes and features reggae legends Sylford Walker and Prince Jazzbo on one track each. Winston Watson – from The Meditations – provides additional harmonies throughout the journey.

The album is now available on CD, LP and on digital platforms.



## Dudus Coke Pleads Guilty To Racketeering Charges

The 42 year old Jamaican drug

lord, Christopher "Dudus" Coke appeared at a US federal district court in New York yesterday (31st August) to face charges of racketeering and conspiracy to commit assault with a dangerous weapon in aid of racketeering. He pleaded guilty to both charges.

While in court he also admitted to having run the Kingston, Jamaica-based criminal gang the Shower Posse and the Presidential Click, both of which had been major traffickers of marijuana and cocaine in the country. He also told of how he had ordered the purchase of firearms and the importation of those firearms into Jamaica in furtherance to this conspiracy."

Afterwards, US Attorney Preet Bharara said in a statement: "For nearly two decades, Christopher Coke led a ruthless criminal enterprise that used fear, force and intimidation to support its drug and arms trafficking 'businesses'. He moved drugs and guns between Jamaica and the United States with impunity. Today's plea is a welcome conclusion to this ugly chapter of criminal history."

The pursuit of Coke by the US authorities shed light on the links between politicians and gang leaders in Jamaica to which Coke enjoyed substantial protection from the ruling Jamaican Labour Party leader and Prime Minister Bruce Golding whose constituency includes the Shower Posse controlled district of Tivoli Gardens in West Kingston.

Initial indictments for Cokes extradition in 2009 were rejected by Mr Golding who argued that the evidence was flawed. However pressure both at home and internationally grew to such an extent that in the spring of last year he finally succumbed and signed an arrest warrant and this led to a state of emergency being declared as gunmen loyal to Coke barricade the streets of Tivoli Gardens and mounted attacks against the police and security forces, who were accused of using excessive force, and resulted in the deaths of 76 people over four days of gun battles.

Christopher "Dudus" Coke is due to be sentenced on December 8th when he could face up to 23 years in prison.

## #1 by Digitaldubs

Brazilian steppers duo Digitaldubs re-releases their fourth album titled '#1', originally put out exclusively in Brazil as a very limited edition CD. Some of the tunes have previously been released on 7" and on digital platforms. Some might recognize riddims such as 30 Head. '#1' features dubs as well as vocals from veterans Ranking Joe, Earl Sixteen and Brinsley Forde. There are also some Brazilian artists featured – Dada Yute, Jeru Banto and Tiano Bless.

Their fourth album hits the streets as CD, LP and digital download on August 30th.

## State Of Mind by Zion Train

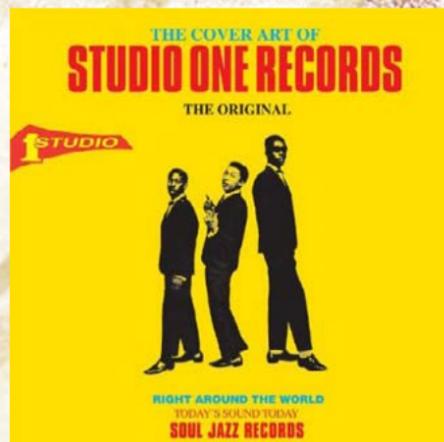
Due out on the 3rd October is the new Zion Train album 'State Of Mind' the official follow up to 2007s Jamaican Reggae Grammy 'Best Dub Album' award winner 'Live as One' and best of compilation 'Dub Revolutionaries' from earlier this year.

From the few previews I have heard so far it will be another blend of reggae and modern dance styles featuring the band's staple ingredients of brass, bass, dubwise rhythms and hard electronic beats combined with few new string additions.

Guest vocalists appearing along with Zion Train's own Dubdadda and Lua are Brinsley Forde of Aswad, on an update of their classic Rainbow Children which has already seen release as a single and the up and coming Jamaican Dub Poetess Jazzmin Tutum on the potent Share The Flame.

Zion Train will begin an autumn tour to promote the album with prospective dates for 2012 already including USA, Japan, Latin America as well as visits to Dubai and the Caribbean.

## The Cover Art of Studio One Records



Soul Jazz Records is about to put out a book on the cover art of legendary label Studio One, owned and run by one of the greatest producers in reggae music – Clement "Coxsone" Dodd (1932-2004).

Studio One is sometimes described as iconic as Motown was to jazz, or Blue Note for Jazz. Several of the most beloved and utilized riddims were originally laid for Studio One by musicians such as Jackie Mittoo and Leroy Sibbles. Riddims like Full Up, Real Rock, Mean Girl and Satta Massagana saw the light at Studio One.

Chris Blackwell – founder of Island Records – has described Studio One as the University of Reggae. And there is some truth to that. Almost every well-known Jamaican artist from the 60's and 70's did recordings for the label – Bob Marley, Horace Andy, Alton Ellis, Burning Spear, The Abyssinians, Sugar Minott and many, many more. 'The Cover Art of Studio One Records' is edited by Stuart Baker and claims to be the first book ever to tell the story of Studio One and the many art-

ists whose careers it launched.

It features hundreds of full-size Studio One record cover designs and original artwork, as well as rare and exclusive photographs, original flyers and artist interviews.

Available on November 30th. File it right next to your copy of 'Stir it Up: Reggae Album Cover Art'.

## Stand Firm by Cen'C Love and Capleton

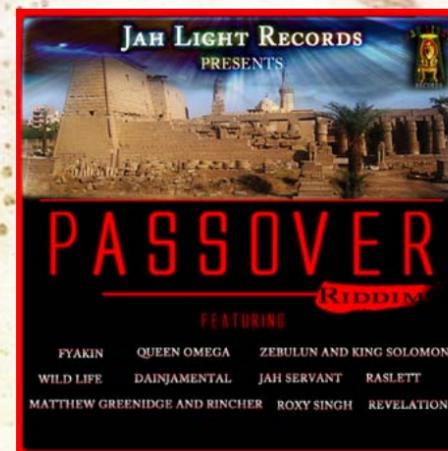
Cen'C Love – daughter of Bunny Wailer – dropped her debut album 'Love Letter' earlier this year.

Now she has put out a new single – Stand Firm on a riddim with the same title – where she has teamed up with the fire man himself, Capleton.

Stand Firm is produced by One Blood Carl and Sheldon "Callibud" Stewart and is currently available from cdbaby.



## The PassOver Riddim



Jah Light Records is surely doing its part to keep Reggae music from out of Trinidad timely and current with its fantastic consistency and activity and, judging by its latest release, things don't figure to be changing any time soon.

The PassOver Riddim follows previous efforts from the label such as the New Day and the Mount Zion I riddims and it, once again, reaffirms the commitment to high quality and righteous works on the part of Jah Light Records.

The PassOver Riddim is a composition marked by a sublimely cool vibes with nearly the perfect amount of edge and bite and it makes an excellent background for several extremely talented vocalists. The real story on the roster of names appearing on this set is that Jah Light has finally linked with; arguably, Trinidad's single most talented Reggae export, the incomparable Queen Ome-

ga, who gives the riddim its mighty title track. Joining the matriarch is a very impressive Fyakin, Dainjamental, Zebulun & King Solomon, Wild Life and others.

Jah Light Records continues to impress with its latest release, the big PassOver Riddim which is set to reach retailers on September 12th.

## New Music from Necessary Mayhem

Curtis Lynch Junior of Necessary Mayhem has two simultaneous releases to see us into Autumn. The first is his Dancehall Style Riddim: a revamp of one of the unstoppable backings of the 80s - The Answer. The other is an EP celebrating his work with Etana, boasting new material plus reworkings of songs we know.



The Etana EP offers a sultry previously unreleased track called Make Love as well as an extended mix of both the vocal and dub to Inner City anthem August Town. Also from her

second album, 'Free Expressions', come Heart Broken (on the Worth Your Weight In Gold) and Dance - exhibiting her demure and confident sides.



Meanwhile the Dancehall Style provides a base for the usual Lynch blend of familiar and fresh talent. On the title piece Tippa Irie takes us through a roll call of sound system heroes, UK and Jamaican, alive and departed. Mayhem Mainstay Mr Williamz gives a typically trancelike performance on the swaggering Set The Standard. Up-and-coming ladies include Dutch model-turned-singer Leah Rosier who showcases a pleasant voice on Do U Like and rapper Stush who supplies the lyrically humorous Call Mi Phone. But most surprising of all is Uncaring, a throwback organ instrumental played by Lynch himself. "I'm a huge fan of Jackie Mittoo" says Curtis, "So I thought it would sound nice to do something like he would if he was here with us".

Both EPs are available for download on 13th September with the Dancehall Style out on vinyl on 6th September.



## Life Teachings by I-Wayne

In the midst of very popular peers such as Tarrus Riley, Queen Ifrica and others rising to prominence over the last few years, it has become somewhat easy to forget that, just a few short years ago, in that very same spot was yet another group of very powerful up and comers. This lot included the likes of Fantan Mojah, Warrior King and a peculiar singer from out Portmore, I-Wayne. After two successful releases with the largest Reggae imprint in the world, VP Records, I-Wayne is back with his third studio set for the label, 'Life Teachings'.

Besides what remains his largest hit to date, the mammoth One Man Can't Satisfy Her, I-Wayne is known as an artist who lifts up righteousness and calls down condemnation on negativity and wickedness wherever he sees it existing and that continues well throughout the new album. Joining the singer along his way is another big name who has enjoyed a sensational rise over the past few years, Roots Princess Etana on Life Joy, as well leading Dancehall lyricist, Agent Sasco who appears on the well spun Fire Song. Listeners should also be aware of the big big title track as well as the very strong and very curious Drugs & Rum Vibes.

The term 'most anticipated' is

completely overused in Reggae and all of music, for that matter but... One of the "most anticipated" albums of 2011; I-Wayne's 'Life Teachings' from VP Records arrives in stores on October 11th.

## Green Light by General Trix

Amsterdam-based singjay General Trix has teamed up with Swedish producer and sound system operator Andreas "Ante" Johansson, from Rough Lynx, on his debut album 'Green Light'.

The album is an excursion into 80's and 90's computerized reggae with influences from hip-hop and digital pop as well as reggae legends Augustus "Gussie" Clarke and King Tubby.

'Green Light' hits the streets today and is tonight celebrated with a release party at Jimmy Woo in Amsterdam hosted by General Trix alongside Rough Lynx.

## No Doubt Riddim

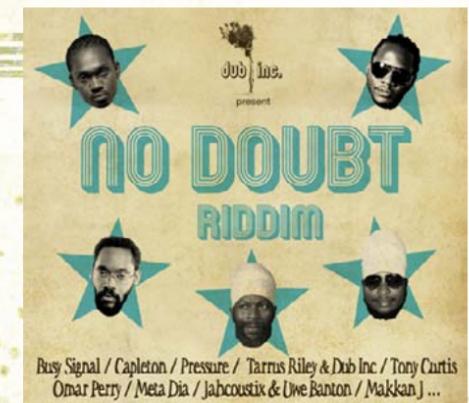
Last year Dub Inc, aka Dub Incorporation, released their fourth studio album 'Hors Controle' (Out of Control), a set that included the Tarrus Riley combination No Doubt.

This tune has now formed the basis for a one-riddim album

titled No Doubt with contributions from Capleton, Omar Perry and Pressure among others.

Worth noting is that Busy Signal also makes an appearance on this one drop riddim. It's a somewhat rare appearance since he hasn't voiced much material in that vein lately.

No Doubt riddim hits the streets as 7", CD and digital download on October 11th.



## Brushy's Acoustic Album

Many people discovered Brushy and his one guitar string in 'RiseUp'. The movie team has just released Brushy debut album. It includes songs that come from the live video recordings that you can see in 'The King Of One String' documentary, plus a studio single called Destiny.

The album is now available for digital download on amazon and iTunes.

At the occasion of BRUSHY's



acoustic album release, United Reggae and RiseUp Entertainment offer you to watch the short documentary 'The King Of One String' exclusively.

It presents the story of Andrew Chin, AKA "Brushy One String". Filled with musical performances by the artist, 'The King of One' String follows Brushy from the dangerous streets, back alleys and crowded streets of Jamaica, as he demonstrates the raw power of hope and courage in a land where he is revered by both young and old.

Brushy soothes the souls and rough hearts with a bright smile and one string.

## Love Inna Mi Heart by Omar Perry

French production duo Bost & Bim has produced a relick of Lee Perry's Words of my Mouth, originally voiced by The Gatherers at Black Ark.

The relick comes in three versions – a vocal cut from Lee Perry's son Omar Perry titled Love inna Mi Heart, a dub version and an instrumental with a lethal saxophone.

These three versions are available as digital download on September 13th.

## C.A.F Studio Allstars - Soul Fighters

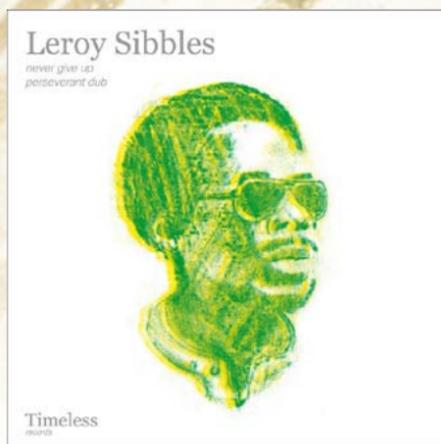
Not many people will be familiar with the name of C.A.F (Catch A Fire) Studios, but this small independent studio in the leafy suburb of Ponders End, Enfield, London, has been responsible for some of the most authentic sounding underground foundation reggae and dub of the past few years such as the Himperial Rockers album 'New Dub Evolution' released earlier this year.

Now the proprietor of this studio The Manor has put together an in house band C.A.F Studio Allstars, who are at this moment working on an album '1 VOLUTIONARY SOUNDS' and as a prelude to its release they are promoting the album with a single 'Soul Fighters' on the Sprinline Jamaica label via Atlanta Street Records which has a bit of a rockers feel to it and is available now to download at all leading stores.

## Never Give Up by Leroy Sibbles

The French brand new label Timeless Records strikes hard with its first release! They've teamed up with Jamaican roots singer Leroy Sibbles to produce the roots version of Never Give Up. This digital classic was

first released in the late 90's on the Record Factory label. It became very popular after being regularly played by the UK's Entembe and Aba Shanti I sounds.



"The collaboration with Sibbles was born after we released Blood in The Streets on my label Kingston Connexion" said Jacques Golub, owner of Kingston Connexion and sister label Timeless Records. "The originality of this new 12" is in relicking a digital cut into roots whereas we usually do the opposite".

This new release launches his new label dedicated to the roots foundation and Jamaican legends: "Timeless is also a label for all good things that will never die, like talents, artists who reached the status of legends, and simply...Love," explained Jacques on the jacket of the vinyl that details the message and purpose of the label. "The love they gave to their works is equal to the time they spent on it (...)".

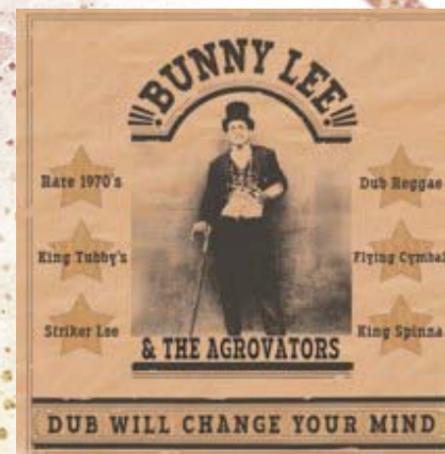
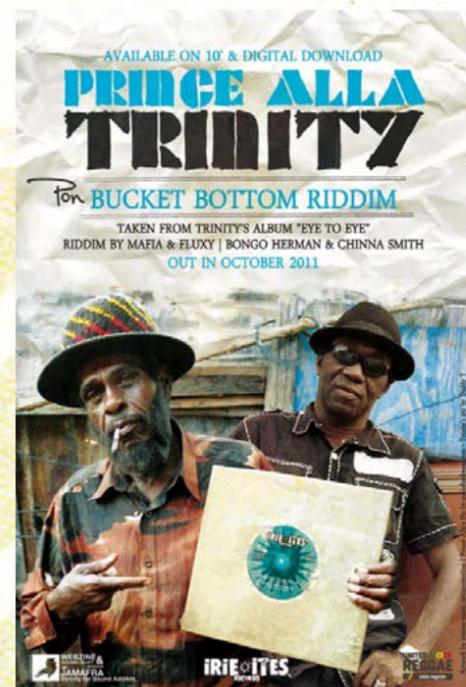
Never Give Up backed by Perseverant Dub is now available

on 12" at all good reggae dealers. Only 500 copies pressed!

## The Bucket Bottom riddim

French production crew Irie Ites is set to put out a tribute to the late Jamaican producer Bertram Brown, the man behind the rough and tough Freedom Sounds label and artists such as Prince Alla and Earl Zero. The Bucket Bottom riddim is laid by Mafia & Fluxy, Bongo Herman and Earl "Chinna" Smith and is a relick of the Prince Alla song of the same name. Prince Alla is also responsible for the title cut.

The riddim also features the talents of deejay Trinity, who has recorded an album for Irie Ites due in early 2012, as well as dub and instrumental versions. The Bucket Bottom riddim will be released in early October as 10" and digital download.



## New Label From The People Behind Blood and Fire

Bob Harding and Dom Sotgiu – formerly of the acclaimed and folded Blood & Fire Records – have founded a new reggae label called King Spinna.

King Spinna is said to have a wider remit compared to Blood & Fire, which means that the label will release anything they deem worthy of issuing. Some releases will be in physical formats, while others will be download only.

The first release is 'Dub Will Change Your Mind' by Bunny Lee & The Agrovators. It's a 14 track album of rarities never compiled on album before. Its cornerstone is dub versions of four little-known Derrick Morgan tracks.

'Dub Will Change Your Mind' is released initially on vinyl only in a pressing limited to 1,000 copies. Subject to demand a CD issue will follow featuring

three bonus tracks. The album, including the CD bonus tracks, will also be available for download from 12th September exclusively on the King Spinna website for a limited period before appearing on other download sites.

## Support the Journey to Jah

For the past five years German film directors Noël Dernes and Moritz Springer have been working on the movie 'Journey to Jah' – a picture that tries to show reggae as an intriguing construct of music, politics and spirituality. They have followed Gentleman and Alborosie as they try to bridge the gap between cultures. They have also talked to artists such as Luciano, the late Gregory Isaacs and Lutan Fyah as well as followed the young, ambitious Terry Lynn around in Waterhouse, one of the numerous ghettos in Kingston. Part of the financing for 'Journey to Jah' is provided by film fund Medienboard Berlin Brandenburg. And this is where you can come in and help to finance the remaining part of the project through crowd funding via Kickstarter. Crowd funding enables production of independent films, and in this particular case helps to close the current financial gap of \$60,000. Kickstarter is an all-or-nothing fundraising service. If the full amount of \$60,000 is not raised, the project doesn't get financed. This means that your contribu-

tion will only be debited if the project reaches the desired amount. The funds will be used for travelling, accommodation, rent of equipment, sound design and mixing, editing and translation. Depending on the size of the donation you can receive a DVD, a T-shirt, a concert ticket or an invitation to the premiere.

## Jahmali's Sounds With Purpose

While it's seemingly been several million years from the last time the very respected and amazing voiced Jamaican veteran, Jahmali, had a new album, that certainly doesn't mean that he's gone totally bereft of big new material. In 2011 he's taken to the mixtape circuit and done so with strength.

Fans can download, for free, Jahmali's hot mixtape, 'Sounds With Purpose', from I Dwell Records & Inborn Productions Inc. on I Dwell Records' Facebook Page as well as Jahmali's Facebook Page.



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## Everything You Want by The Simpkin Project

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Seven piece reggae band The Simpkin Project, based in California, has just released their third full-length album titled 'Everything You Want'. This 14-track reggae album incorporates elements of Americana, rock, pop, and dub.

"This album is a huge progression for us as musicians and in terms of the recording quality and songwriting style," says lead vocalist-guitarist Phil Simpkin, and continues:

"Every member brought something unique to the table, and everyone's ideas were openly expressed and welcomed."

The Simpkin Project formed in 2003 and will be on tour throughout California this fall.

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## Makasound Team Chapter Two

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Nicolas Maslowski and Romain Germa – the duo that founded French label Makasound that went bankrupt earlier this year – have a new upcoming project.

They have been hired by Wagram to establish a label mixing reggae, world music and crossover music. They call it Chapter Two.

The first release is the album 'The Revenge' from multi-instrumentalist Tom Fire due on October 17th. It mixes dub, electro, reggae and pop and features former Makasound artists Matthew McAnuff, Jaque and Derajah amongst the successful French hip-hop artist MC Solaar.

Among the other upcoming projects are Derajah's long-awaited debut album 'Paris Is Burning' recorded with The Donkey Jaw Bone.

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## J Boog's Backyard Boogie

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The currently flaming J Boog is in the midst of a sensational streak in his still relatively young career and 2011 figures to be yet another high-point for the very impressive vocalist as he is set to release his brand new album, 'Backyard Boogie', later this month to much anticipation across the world. Arguably one of the greatest things to happen to Hawaiian Reggae [if not the greatest], J Boog has left a big impression on the

Reggae community as of late through a slew of big singles and this album, should it live it to the hype, could possibly be one of the biggest of the year.

Of course, featured on 'Backyard Boogie' is J Boog's largest hit to date, the massive Don Corleon produced set, Let's Do It Again, but it isn't alone as also featured in the album's sixteen selections are other well known tunes such as Crazy, Mystery Girl and Take It Slow. Were that not enough [and it was], also featuring on the album are Reggae stars Peetah Morgan, Tarrus Riley and Million Stylez.

A sure winner of an album, 'Backyard Boogie' by J Boog is set to reach stores, worldwide, on September 20th.

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## Misty In Roots Announce 10 Date UK Tour

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Misty in Roots have announced that they are about to embark on a 10 date UK tour. Misty, along with Steel Pulse and Aswad, have been one of the cornerstones of British based Roots Reggae since around 1978 when they strode out with songs containing powerful lyrics inspired by economic decline, spiritual awakening and a general awareness of their African culture. They were also during these musically fertile times at the forefront of "Rock Against Racism". An organization that put on pioneering concerts that crossed Reggae with

Punk and New Wave bands and thus opened them up to a whole new audience as they shared the stage with diverse acts like The Ruts, Tom Robinson and Elvis Costello amongst others.

Criminally overlooked by the BBC on their recent 'Reggae Britannia' documentary, their contribution to the British Reggae legacy is indisputable and has helped define UK reggae today.

The 'Respect Due' tour starts on the 30th September at The Picket in Liverpool before taking in many of the UK's major towns and cities. A full list of dates and venues can be found below.

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## Mongst I and I by Midnite

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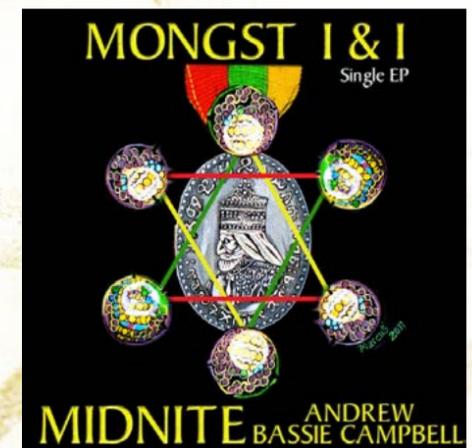
Hyper-productive Midnite from the Virgin Islands is set to release Mongst I&I, the brand new single from their upcoming album 'Kings Bell'. The single will be accompanied by Midnite's first ever music video, a video recorded on location in both Frederiksted, St. Croix, and Kingston, Jamaica.

Mongst I&I is based on a one drop riddim and is a digital-only release featuring the single, the music video, two remixes courtesy of Lustre Kings' Andrew "Moon" Bain and SoundPonics, and a dub mix.

'Kings Bell' is Midnite's first al-

bum with a Jamaican producer, Andrew "Bassie" Campbell, and features Jamaican musicians such as drummers Leroy "Horsemouth" Wallace and Squidley Cole, percussionists Mikey "Boo" Richards and Sticky Thompson and guitarist Earl "Chinna" Smith. The album is mainly recorded at Tuff Gong Studios in Jamaica, with additional overdubs, vocal recording and mixing completed at I Grade's studio in St. Croix.

Mongst I&I and 'Kings Bell' is released through I Grade Records and Andrew Bassie Records on September 27th and November 1st respectively.



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## New Laurel Aitken Reissues and More From Reggae 69 Fan Club

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The Reggae 69 Fan Club, a website which is primarily dedicated to the sounds and inspiration of Jamaican music from 1964-'69, has announced it is about to release a collection of

eight, limited edition 7" vinyls aimed at collectors and lovers of the early reggae scene. The first release being lined up is from the godfather of ska himself Laurel Aitken, with Reggae 69 b/w Big Fight In Hell Stadium, and is going to be limited to just 300 copies worldwide. This will be followed by another classic Aitken release Apollo 12 (Skinhead Invasion) b/w Moon Rock before it is the turn of modern day bands the Irie Beats, Ocean 11, The Delirians, The Revivers, The Impalers and The Soulsteppers to roll out their own brand of Boss Reggae sounds, many of which have been previously unreleased or recorded especially for this collection. All releases will be on the fan club's own Moondust imprint and will be offered in characteristic period styled packaging, with a UK Style centre punch so that they look as well as sound like authentic singles from back in those seemingly halcyon days.

To get a hold of these delightful releases first you have to join the The Reggae 69 Fan Club, you only need an email and to confirm your age. Just for doing this act you will be rewarded with the opportunity to get a free download of the sparkling organ driven instrumental 11 Anõs de Alcohol from Mexico's very own Jamaica 69. Then as the November release date approaches you will be sent an email so you can pre-order your set. The cost for all eight singles is \$45 (plus shipping), or for \$69 there is an option that includes a limited edition

Chema Skandal art print, a Reggae 69 Centre Adapter for all your other old vinyl, plus a sticker/pin and postcard set. Even if you don't own a record player but love those Ska and early Reggae sound s of the late '60s and early '70s it is still worth joining this fledgling club as there are videos, a forum and with the aim to help foster new music from bands around the world you'll get access to exclusive downloads and CD's in time as well as more limited edition art prints. Visit [www.reggae69.com/r69/](http://www.reggae69.com/r69/) to find out more.

(The Delirians Musical-Remedy is due to be the fifth release in the series).

## Soothsayers meet Lutan Fyah and Cornell Campbell

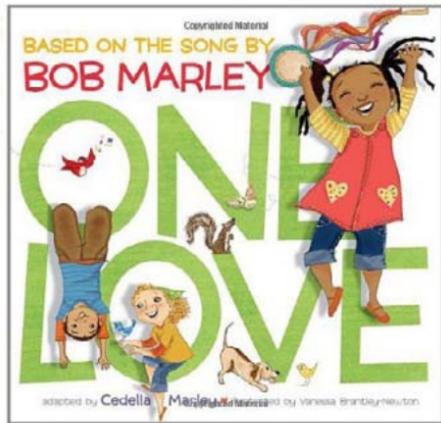
When Soothsayers dropped lovely ballad We're Not Leaving backed with a Cornell Campbell version in August, fans of the group's current reggae direction could rest assured their next album would be a highlight of 2012. Now they have another 7" out on the same beautifully crafted backing, played by their loose band of musical spars Red Earth Collective. The A side comes from one of the most collaborative and well loved Jamaican roots artists - Spanish Town deejay Lutan Fyah. His raw but vulnerable tones are perfect for the

poignant Autumnal rhythm and lyrically he continues the series' departure theme. The B side is the vocal to the Cornell Campbell piece issued in August. Featuring that unmistakable falsetto, it's a strong followup to Soothsayers own cut.

I'm Leaving / I'll Never Leave is out on 7" on October 7th. Grab it while you can.

## One Love by Cedella Marley

Bob Marley's oldest child – the three-time Grammy Award winner Cedella Marley – has adapted the lyrics from her



father's beloved song One Love for a children's book. Its chorus "one love, one heart, let's get together and feel alright" has been the guiding star in her work. The result is a picture book promoting family and neighborhood unity through a girl that enlists her community to help transform her neighborhood for the better. The book bears the same title as the song and comes with colorful illustrations with some collage elements by Va-

nessa Brantley-Newton. 'One Love' is published through Chronicle Books in October.

## The Story of Lover's Rock

Lovers rock is a reggae genre that hails from the UK and has influenced pop and soul artists such as Police and Sade and went global through the likes of UB40 and Maxi Priest. It is also probably the reggae genre that has given women a voice in the predominantly male dominated world of reggae music. Female artists like Louisa Marks, Janet Kay, Brown Sugar, Carroll Thompson led a "girl power" explosion in the early phase of lovers rock. And now you can get to know everything that you wanted to know about lovers rock through the feature length documentary 'The Story of Lovers Rock', a picture that tells the story of an era and a music that defined a generation in the late 70's and 80's. The film combines live performances with some of the kings and queens of lovers rock with comedy sketches, interviews and archive material. Interviews include Denis Bovell, UB40, Levi Roots, Linton Kwesi Johnson and Maxi Priest.

The comedy sketches are provided by the likes of Eddie Nestor, Robbie G, Wayne Rollins and Glenda Jaxson. 'The Story of Lover's Rock' opens at selected cinemas in London on September 28th.

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# ALPHA BLONDY

## **"Not all Africa is a battlefield"**

He was one of the very first reggae artists born in the Motherland. His career spans incredible 29 years now. Seydou "Jagger" Koné, better known as Alpha Blondy and dubbed the Emperor of African reggae, sat down with Valentin Zill in Paris in April to talk about his latest album 'Vision', music in Côte d'Ivoire, his work as a messenger of peace of the United Nations and the difficult process of reconciliation in his home country after years of civil war. While Alpha is getting a bit long in the tooth, the fire in him is burning as hot as ever.

## **The legend from Côte d'Ivoire on music and politricks**

### **What was the vision behind Vision, your 17th studio album?**

A Vision of today, a vision of yesterday and my vision of tomorrow. Musical vision, spiritual vision, and social vision. Which means what I really wanted to say by choosing Vision is my spiritual vision first around me, around the world I'm living in. It's also my vision of the world as seen by the pol



iticians. What I wanted to really emphasize is that politicians have forgotten to take care of the essential of their politics. The human being should be in the center of all politics. And that's not what I'm seeing. They replace human being by money. What I want people to know is money is made for the use of man. But it's not the opposite. That's the vision, the sad vision I have of the world. But I'm still optimistic. I hope that one day the politicians will realize that they're doing the wrong calculation. That they're gonna

replace mankind in the middle of their politics. For instance, I tell you something. How can you imagine that the FAO [Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations] needed 30 billion dollars to eradicate famine on the surface of the earth. So every country, every citizen could eat at least. They did not succeed in getting 30 billion dollars. But when the banks had a problem, they got thousands of billions to take care of that. That's not fair. That's what I mean by we have to recenter the politics and the

politicians. They have to re-center their priorities. The human being is the priority. And that's my vision, one of my visions.

### **You've pre-produced Vision with a mobile studio while you were on tour in various places in Europe, South America and so on. How is your mobile studio set up?**

It's a suitcase, a small suitcase like that. We got computers inside, we got a M-Box inside and a professional mic. In every city we arrived, before going to soundcheck, we had to do something in my bedroom, in my hotel room. So we did that in Europe here, in France I mean, in Germany, in Switzerland. We did it when we went to Marocco. We did some work in Brazil, Argentina. So that gives a special texture to the sounds. The musicians and I were in the mood of a live performance kind of thing. So you can feel that in the record we did.

### **You were in Johannesburg during the soccer world championship. Tell us about the impressions you got there.**

I loved the atmosphere. We went shopping, and all over the place you could hear the vuvuzelas. At the hotel, me and my guys sitting and watching the girls passing by - sexy, sexy, you know, sexy something man (laughing) - so, anyway, all of a sudden a peer with what we call

in French a canoncière - which means she was top-ranking - ... and she was kind of, ok guys, I see you later. And someone in the crowd said "Well, don't forget to protect your vuvuzela before you waka-waka". I found that sentence really beautiful. It was very nicely said. Protect your vuvuzela before you waka-waka. Don't let HIV take your life! That's how the song Vuvuzela was born.

### **Reggae music in West Africa generally seems to function like a newspaper or radio inasmuch as it talks about recent political developments and brings them closer to an audience that often can't read nor write.**

That's true. That's true. Because when you sing in African dialects, people in the village, deep in the country, that's the way they are informed about what's happening. They feel it, they see it, but if they don't have access to the newspaper, if they don't speak French or English... When it's something in Dyoula, they can pick it up. They can understand. It's another dimension of communication. Reggae becomes something that allows people to communicate in different languages, tribal languages, you see.

### **Should music always transport a social message?**

No, it can be a love message.

You don't use reggae as a newspaper (laughs). But reggae talks about everyday life, reality. African reggae talks about the land where milk and honey don't flow, only blood and tears. Voila. That's not new for the people, because they see it. That's what they live sometimes. But not all Africa is a battlefield. No. You can sing love songs, you can talk about happy things, happy events. But African reggae talks more about what's happening in everyday life. And everyday life is not always bright.

### **What are your favorite Reggae artists from Côte d'Ivoire right now?**

In private, I don't know. But I love Ras Goody (Brown), I love Ismael Isaac very much. I also love Beta Simon. They do some very good work.

### **When the civil war started in Côte d'Ivoire, some Ivorians went to Paris and created coupé décalé in nightclubs there. Does that music work for you, too? They don't have a real message to spread, just partying...**

Yeah, coupé décalé at that time had a very positive effect on the minds of the people, because they were very confused, very scared, they were afraid to go out. So coupé décalé was the young kids, you know, who wanted to show off their nice clothes and "We got

money and we show it”, OK. This is a part of the craziness of music. But there was still some reggae going on, you see. And other music. But the coupé décalé, for me, was a very good thing to heal people’s fear.

**Would you say that reggae in Côte d’Ivoire lost out to newer styles like zouglou or coupé décalé?**

I want zouglou to be. I want coupé décalé to be. And I want reggae to be! And besides of that - Ivory Coast, we got so many rhythms and dances. You mentioned a few, but you got the kineh, you got ziglibity, you got - I don’t know, polieh. We have so many dances. All those dances should be. They are there to make people happy.

All dances shall be. Our mission is to make people happy. If we can make people happy with zouglou, thank God. If we can make them happy with coupé décalé, thank God. Because we are here for that, to give happiness around us, to give hope. And I love people to dream!

We’re dream weavers. All musicians are dream weavers. And we wanna do our job. It’s sure that life is not all blood and tears. In life, you got coupé décalé. In life, you also have reggae. So as long as people are happy, we’re satisfied.

**Some Ivorians were disappointed at first when you**

**supported Gbagbo in the elections. But they had a lot of respect for you again when you asked Gbagbo afterwards to step down.**

It’s not because they love me that, you know, I have to do things that always please them. They don’t have to love me. But at least I have to be free to choose who I support and who I don’t. They talk about democracy and they want me to be a victim of their dictatorship. I’m free to choose who I support.

If they’d really love me, they would respect my choice. But they don’t have to try to influence my choice or impose their choice to me. I would never do that. Now those who love me will understand me. And those who don’t love me should f\*\*\* off.

**As a messenger of peace for ONUCI, do you feel responsible for the peace process not turning out as it should have turned out?**

I did my best. I’m not a politician. So in the very beginning, for them to choose me as a messenger of peace means that the danger was there already. It means that all the politicians failed.

For them to choose an artist like Alpha Blondy to become the messenger of peace for the United Nations was a prove that all the politicians didn’t have

enough credibility to defend peace. If the ECOWACS choose Alpha Blondy as a messenger of peace of ECOWACS in the Ivory Coast, it means that the Ivory Coast politicians failed. And I, with the little things I know, I tried to put our pieces together to avoid the war.

But everybody was kind of tired of this Ivory Coast problem. The UN was sick and tired of being accused, France was tired of being blamed. The European community was accused, the international community was accused. In Ivory Coast, our problem was very delicate.

Somebody said “The person who will tell you that he understands the Ivory Coast problem did not get the right explanation.” Because if we get the right explanation, we cannot understand. At my level, I don’t think about yesterday.

I think about today’s results. The war is far from us. The people started going to the marketplace, guys are going to work, salaries are going to be paid, hospitals gonna have medication, children might start going to school, and life goes on. The test that God put in our way, together we’ll overcome everything by the help of the Almighty. But that’s what I want to see: I wanna have a very optimistic vision of tomorrow, and not let what I saw yesterday have an influence, a negative impact on my vision of tomorrow for the people of the Ivory Coast.

**Will there be some kind of reconciliation tour with other artists?**

We have to. Reconciliation tour - I don’t know [There will be a reconciliation tour with Alpha Blondy, Tiken Jah Fakoly, Ziggy Marley and others].

But we have to make reconciliation. Reconciliation is a must. If we want to heal our mental wounds, if we want to erase the bad souvenirs that we collected during this time of crisis, we all have to give our contribution in order to reach perfect and complete reconciliation. We have to talk to each other, we have to forgive. Even if we cannot forget, let’s try to forgive. That’s the mission that all Ivorians have to be submitted to.

**Which measures should be taken on the road of reconciliation?**

Ivoirité should be banned by a law. I’m going to ask the new government for that. They have to ban the concept of ivoirité. That’s very important. Now if they don’t ban the concept of ivoirité, they’re gonna find me in their way.

**Ivoirité reminds me of the fascist German blood and soil ideology.**

That’s ivoirité. I call it negro nazism. It’s when in a Black country, some Black things are

Blacker than the other Blacks (laughs). “I’m more nigger than you!” (laughs).

**On Vision, there is a track called Ma Tête. It is about politicians trying to use you.**

Ya, they all did. When they feel that what I’m saying is going to their favor, then they treat me as if I was a genius. But if I happen not to agree with them, then they treat me as if I was a mental case. So today, you need my help.

Today you need me to come and rescue. But listen to this one, dig this one: Talk to my ass, OK, because my head is sick! Voila. Which means I’m sick and tired of being used by you guys. I’m sick and tired of being humiliated. I’m sick and tired of being insulted by you.

**Do the recent revolutions in some North African countries let you gain hope for Africa’s future?**

Africa is the hope of the human race. You know why? Because the kind of nuclear business in Japan will not happen to the Ivory Coast, to Africa I mean. Tchernobyl - we don’t have nuclear plants! So one day - knock on wood - I don’t want that to happen, but in case that happens, and we have to move 20 million people, where are they gonna go to?

You will see ten million tourists

going to Africa. Because that day, they will realize that the human being, we are one small family. And if we live on this global land, nobody is - how do you say that... Don’t say “This will never happen to me!” Never say that. Because nobody knows tomorrow. What’s happening in Japan today could happen somewhere here. So we got to have land where we can save people and wait until the radioactivity wears off.

They have to find a place to live for those 20 years. That day, they will understand that we all are part of that big human family. That’s the lesson that God will teach us.

**With all the wars going on, Lybia, Afghanistan, Irak, and with man-made catastrophes like the one unfolding in Fukushima, do you sometimes loose your faith in humanity?**

No. Never. You know why? My grandmother said if you’re looking, searching for God and you pass a human being, you’ll never see God again. God is in the building of the world. It’s not that God has built the world and is finished (claps hands). No, no, no. He keeps on building. And he himself is the journalist, he himself is the road paver, he’s himself the mechanic.

He’s the farmer. He’s the pilot. And he is the airplane. And he is the kerosine in the airplane. The Almighty is at work. You

see what I mean? So all those catastrophes belong to the procedure of the building of the world. He's in the brain of mankind, it's God at work. So let's not feel desperate. As the Rastas say: God at the control!

**As Bob Marley put it: "Have no fear of atomic energy, as none of them can stop the time!"**

Exactly! Because God is time. He's not the master of time, no. He is time (in a deep voice). That's one of his names.

**Interview by Valentin Zill  
Photos by R. Deluze**



# Lee Perry

**"Don't want to talk to the devil, me want to talk to God. So you got to put the demon away, so you can understand God fully"**

You're never sure what'll happen when you interview Lee Perry. Since 1999, I've spoken with the reggae originator at least half a dozen times and every time we've connected has been different. The first few times we spoke, Lee rarely broke out of character – almost everything he said was outrageous, stream of consciousness, an exercise in performance art. I thought that's all there was to the public Mr. Perry. Then, while speaking to Clinton Fearon, the former Black Ark bassist and member of the original Gladiators, shared this with me, "If you get past the joking, Scratch is a very sensitive man. A sensitive intelligent man." I think I always knew that, but had accepted that I may never meet the real Lee Perry and only ever have the chance to meet



'Scratch.' Like Bob Dylan, another septuagenarian genius, once said 'I'm only Bob Dylan when I have to be', I sensed that Mr. Perry insulated himself from the public by hiding behind his 'Scratch' persona. Really, after more than four decades in the music business and the inane questions most journalists ask, who could blame him? But, in recent years, something has shifted. I don't know whether it's tied into Perry's decision to quit smoking pot or if his advancing years have made him more careful about communicating clearly in order to preserve his legacy, but the last few times we've spoken, Lee has been patient, clear and sincere – and full of gratitude that his music has survived and found a

whole new generation of listeners. Over the past half decade or so, Lee has been recording and touring with a vengeance. Collaborations with State of Emergency, Andrew WK, Adrian Sherwood as well as 'Rise Again', the long awaited collaboration with Bill Laswell give evidence to a late career renaissance that has few parallels in popular music. (Johnny Cash's prolific series of albums with Rick Rubin recorded in his final years come to mind) I recently arranged to speak with Lee from his home in Switzerland. Here are some excerpts from our conversation.

**Lee, it's good to finally get you on the phone. How are you?**

I'm doing fine. I was inside the bath last time you called me. I am sorry, I didn't hear your call. I was making holy water. But, this is a good time to talk. Which of my records do you want to talk about?

**(Ha Ha) That question says a lot in itself. There aren't many other artists who put out as many records as you do. It must be hard for you to keep track. I wanted to talk to you about 'Rise Again' – the new record you did with Bill Laswell.**

Oh! Bill Laswell. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah..... that man. Hm-mmm. Perhaps it's better that you tell me what you think about this record. To tell you the truth, I've only heard it one time.

**Once! I've been listening to it for weeks.**

Then, I am listening to you now. Tell me what you think.

**Well, you know Bill Laswell –**

Yes, he was recommended to me –

**I really like what he does. He has obviously been influenced by your music. Is that something you picked up on?**

Hmmm.... Tell me more.

**His delays, the incongruous**

**sound collages remind me of some of your work with The Congos. You and Bill sound very well suited to each other – which certainly hasn't always been the case when you've worked with other producers. Do you work with each producer a little differently, or does your vision take over the project and the producer is a kind of facilitator? Or, how do you approach collaboration? You spent most of your career in the producer's seat.**

Ha Ha....That's right. I was the producer, so I work the same with every producer who comes to me.

**So, let's talk about your record with Bill Laswell. It sounds like a very successful collaboration that really mirrors the best of both of your approaches to music.**

OK. Yes, this was the first time I worked with him. It was a practical decision. I would say it was an enjoyable experience because I don't want to be considered just as one type of artist or to work with just one type of artist. I want to be an international artist.

So, 'Rise Again' – this is like a dream come true because I wanted to do some music that would reach out past Jamaica and work with musicians who

aren't from Jamaica to reach the international community. I wanted something a little broader.

**And, Bill Laswell works with a lot of musicians from Africa, India, America – probably people you wouldn't normally have the chance to work with.**

Yeah. I need international exposure and international flavor. This is a man of good taste. If this record became a hit, it would make me very happy.

It would make me happy, too. My favourite track is the collaboration with Gigi, the Ethiopian singer. I love her work and the two of you sound very comfortable singing together.

**Who is Gigi?**

The Ethiopian woman who sung on 'Orthodox'

Does it sound good? You tell me for - let me tell you the truth now. What happened is that I listened to the record one time. When we were recording it, I was on tour and would stop off for a few days and do some voicing. Since then I haven't dealt with it or listened to it. I haven't had much time. I don't know what to tell you. I'm interviewing you now. So you tell me what you think about it? Ha Ha.

**Well, on that track I love when you sing 'I'm an orthodox.' Is there anything about you that**

**is orthodox – you know in the usual sense?**

I'm an orthodox! Orthodox! He-hehe..... The reality is that Ethiopian orthodox – have a huge knowledge - are the original force from Africa. Everything has been copied from Africa. Things have expanded since then. It would be too boring to see only one set of people, but now all the people can get together to form one new group of people. It is wonderful.



**It is wonderful. I find it very interesting that you've only listened to 'Rise Up' once. You must have been very busy. Are you recording again? Touring again?**

I'm not thinking about the next one already. It is no problem for me to have ideas for new songs, but I want to give this one a run of time so people can listen and give me their idea

about whether they like it or not, so I can think about what to record in the future. So, let me interview you about that some more – Tell me about this record some more!

What I think is that the songs sound more like classic Lee Perry than we've heard in a long time. A lot of seventies sounds and Congos type vibes – I think Bill did his homework before he got together with you. He has obviously listened to and understood your music. He recorded some hard hitting sounds for you to sing over.

Yeah yeah – good. This is one of those records that comes out that I never got to know exactly what goes on as it was being made, so I got to listen to it only one time. I came in to voice it and I had only one day, then I went on tour, and then I toured a couple of weeks, got a message, got a copy of the music, got to sing it and then toured a bit again. It was so busy a time, but if you tell me that you love it, I'm so glad that you love it. You've listened to my music for a long time, I think -

**Coming up to 35 years**

Thank you very much.

**You know, it is a very good piece of work. Let's talk about lyrics. Do you walk in with them to the studio, or do you hear the lyrics and improvise around them?**



Well, the sound and I made a positive connection during the creation of this record. The songs sometimes sang their melodies to me. When the songs sing their melody to me, the songs give me the words to sing. So, there was a creative force working with me that telling me the words and I went in front of the mic and the songs told me what to sing, what to say. I am overblessed actually. I am well blessed.

**So, like you sing – the lyrics come from a higher level!**

They come straight to the ears. I hear the voice I hear the melody. I hear a special blessing. That's why I work. That's how I work. I told this to Bob (Marley). Open yourself up. And after I stop smoke and drink alcohol, it all comes to me very clearly. That's the power of the self, and if you disobey, you'll be cut down. Your soul will be cut off. You'll go to the demons.

**I remember you told me once that you used to think smoke and alcohol gave you the lyrics –**

No probably never as far as alcohol. Alcohol never gave me no lyrics. I had to stop the

alcohol by making a sacrifice. In the Black Ark studio we did too much alcohol and cigarettes and Godless smoking, so then I had to make a sacrifice because the smoke and the alcohol made so I couldn't hear the words clearly and it all was confusion. Mixed the holy spirit into music because the holy spirit is the opposite of alcohol. The holy spirit below and the alcohol allows – you've got to be careful.... It's like I had to do something or commit suicide to stop the voices. The wrong voices. Cigarette and alcohol and beer and wine – God himself is a spirit. God is pure and God is clear. So, to see God as a spirit, you have to put the alcoholic spirit away.

**Amen**

The spirit is negative. Don't want to talk to the devil, me want to talk to God. So you got to put the demon away, so you can understand God fully.

**You say you've been blessed, and in terms of creating a body of work, you have been overblessed. When you look back over your career, are you satisfied with what you've brought to life?**

Yes, satisfied. Yep, you could be producing good songs and bad songs because you just want the money. You have to decide these things. You can produce some very bad music and make money, but you have to decide and understand that



God will provide and that you don't have to make bad music. Start to think about the prophets like Moses and the powerful ones and understand what God has given to those prophets. What you need. When you try to reach for that, if you're open to the music, the door will open for you. You find the words you are looking for and the words will have power that will endure. You go into the lock and open the lock. I opened the lock and I don't need the dreadlocks any more. (uncontrolled laughter)

I have the words. I opened the lock and trimmed the dreadlocks. I came to the understanding that dreadlocks themselves cannot rule because dreadlock have become a fashion for many people. It's a hairstyle. All the singers in Jamaica are dreadlocks. All the musicians are dreadlocks. It's a hairstyle! It's a commercial.

Jah didn't tell people that to be holy you need dreadlocks. To

be alive man is what you need. I give thanks to Bill Laswell and his idea about me and his ideas about the facts of life and revelation.

**Something we've talked about before is that you're very hard for some people to pigeon hole. By that I mean that you're a very serious artist in a lot of ways. What you've contributed to our understanding of mixing, sampling has changed music, but I don't think you've received the attention you deserve because you might sing about God and piss and shit in the same song. Do you think people miss the message because of your weird sense of humour?**

Yes, I think that's true, but I also think I talk about nature, too and that is serious. Nature is what we have and what we are losing. Nature is life and

part of nature is that we must have to pee pee. Pee pee. You understand 'pee pee'.

**It's part of life, but why sing about it?**

Pee pee – without it, life would be very bad or very sad. You can't do nothing then. Jah comes to me with music everywhere – on the toilet. On my toilet I hear rhythms. I wrote 'Duppy Conquerer' on my toilet. I wrote the words on the toilet.

**So, did you hold onto the lyrics for a while, or did you write them on toilet paper and run right to the studio to record?**

First time, me have to have a book to write inspirations down, so then I had to think like a computer. I remembered the words – the first ones and wrote them on toilet paper. Kept the toilet paper....

**(laugh)**

It makes you laugh! Good! So as far as lyrics, we are creative computers. It is a system. The next words came after the first words. You have to think like a computer. The first word is A and the last word is Z. So, you can take A-Z-A and call it AZA.

I told Bob this about songwriting. You can create your own words. I want to say that 'A' is the alphabet opened and 'Z' is the alphabet closed. I don't tell

nobody else this – it's how a computer works. I'm explaining it to you. Think like a computer to write songs. So, you say AB and Z again and you have ABA - AZA ABA

So you can say ABBA, Jah Jah. Jah Jah – Roger – Ro Jah. Allah AJA. Allah ABA. That's a computer. That's a new song! So, you try –

(some interactive word play between interviewer and subject. Lines continue to blur between them)

Well, you can construct words like that. Even Bob can't show that – you are the first one to grasp that. Ha ha. He he. We have some new songs.

**Just like that! The thing that impresses me so much every time we speak is how awake and alive you are to creative opportunities in each second of life. I can feel you vibrating over the phone lines.**

I'm never so happy in my life before. Thank you very much for telling me what you think about the record. I want to be able to take this all to the next level. Do you like Bill's music – in itself?

**I do for the most part – depending on the project. His sound reminds me of yours with the paint stirred a little more thickly. He brings out the best in you and you bring**



**out the best in him.**

I think that is true. OK! You take care. Jah bless you.

**And you!**

Until the next!

**Interview by  
Doug Heselgrave  
Photos by Michael Grein**

# Hanouneh

**“Many Jamaicans are very aware of their own Gaza/Gully conflict, and they became interested when I played my tunes about the real Gaza”**

Swedish singer Hanouneh dropped her debut album ‘Love & War’ in February. It’s an album that tells stories of her experiences from the real Gaza set to sounds of roots reggae, dancehall, RnB and hip-hop. Hanouneh is a Swedish singer whose music springs from a broad range of different influences and topics. According to herself she is rooted in jazz and had an upbringing where music was a natural part of life.

me back because of the pressure from being surrounded by skilled people that can value your work.”

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**A Macy Gray Story**  
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She says that she has always created music, but that it took a long time before she started singing professionally. Why she started singing is, according to herself, a Macy Gray story.

“I have heard that her career started when she had to put vocals on a demo with her own compositions, because the original singer did not show up,” she says, and makes an example:

“It was a lot easier when I did jazz with the old folks. Singing covers are not as hard and self exposing as when you sing your own ma-

but that it has also kept



terial.”

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**Moving to Palestine**  
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Hanna Cinthio, Hanouneh’s real name, was born and raised in Skåne, in the southern part of Sweden. When she was 17 years old she left Sweden and moved to Jerusalem and lived with a Palestinian family. She learned Arabic and stayed for several years. In 2000 she got a job at a law firm in Gaza City.

“I was curious about the area. It was a big surprise to experience the environment and the mood during this optimistic and positive time. This was in the year 2000. The people waited for the Palestinian state

to be independent. There was a great belief in the future,” she says, and adds:

“A few weeks into 2001 the whole infrastructure was torn down by the Israelian bombings. People lost their safety and confidence.”

The same year as the bombings she went back to Sweden settled in Skåne again and started to make music.

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**Jamaican interest in the real Gaza**  
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Even though she left Palestine her music is heavily influenced by her experiences from living in both Jerusalem and Gaza

City.

“The influences have been more on content, like awareness and my lyrics. It is not so much in the music. I have yet to explore the oriental music tradition through my own creation. I hope to do it eventually though,” says explains.

Some of her songs have got wide attention. Gaza/New Year’s Eve is about the bombings on New Years Eve during the Gaza war in 2008 and Real Gaza me Seh became something of an anthem during the attacks on the Ship to Gaza convoy in 2010.

Real Gaza Me Seh has also been noted in Jamaica, partly



because of its topic and the meaning of the term Gaza, a term that is used in Jamaica when referring to Vybz Kartel and his posse of artists like Popcaan.

Hanouneh recently got home from her first visit to Jamaica and got the chance to talk about her experiences of the real Gaza, which gained interest among artists and producers.

“Many Jamaicans are very aware of their own Gaza/Gully conflict, and they became interested when I played my tunes about the real Gaza. Interestingly enough, Real Gaza me Seh was well received among both Gaza Empire and Alliance. We were instantly talking about doing a remix of the tune.”

### Swedish production

In Jamaica, dancehall reigns nowadays. And even if ‘Love & War’ is influenced by contemporary Jamaican music, it’s mostly based on one drop riddims produced by mainly Swedish talents, such as Tremendous Lix, Viktorious, Lance-A-Lot and Doobie Sounds. Hanouneh says that the producers have had an enormous influence on the album.

“We have extremely talented producers in Sweden. The ones I have worked with all have their own style, and it has been very fulfilling to work with not just the rootsy and organic



songs, but also with clean and complex stuff, such as Tremendous Lix productions or Viktorious digital dub,” she says, and continues:

“This album is a summary of different collaborations, and I think that it is great that all these different styles are gathered on one album.”

Hanouneh says that it hasn’t been an easy road completing the album. It was much harder than she had expected.

“I worked with a person and our collaboration did not last which meant that I had to put out the album on my own label. I had the intention to rework some of the tunes before the release, but because of the crashed collaboration I had to put them out in the condition they were in. The alternative would have been to screw it all,” she says, and adds:

“On the other hand, it now feels like a great success to have completed everything on my own and keeping control over the final product.”

### Open to new projects and ideas

There are several projects ahead and Hanouneh has many new ideas. She is attracted by the idea of working long-term and focused with one band or with one producer and jointly produce an album.

The first step is however live gigs this summer with The Awakening Band, and she hopes to do concerts outside of Sweden.

“I will also put some effort in a mixtape project that I discussed with some artists and producers when I visited Jamaica. On a longer term I also want to continue recording and put out new music. The collaboration with Tremendous Lix is already going. But I have to wait and see. So far life has been unpredictable and offered a lot of surprises, so I keep all doors open.”

Interview by Erik Magni

# Mark Wonder

“Reggae Sum-fest. I call it “Some Reggae Fest”. How can you have a reggae festival being headlined by a hip-hop artist?”

Mark Wonder - who took his stage surname from Stevie Wonder - was born in Kingston and grew up in Manchester, Jamaica. He originally decided to train to become a jockey but was unable to produce the necessary paperwork and instead found his way into music - recording his first tunes for Jack Scorpio in 1988. In a familiar story for an uncompromising roots artist his debut album ‘Signs Of The Times’ was recorded for a European label, Zola and Zola out of the Netherlands in 1996 and he has continued to release most of his works in Europe rather than his island home. Last year he dropped his fifth longplayer - ‘The True Stories of Mark Wonder and Friends’ - a collaboration with Austrian label IrieVibrations and Jamaica’s Al.Ta.Fa.An. which features a huge number of guest contributions from Sizzla, Gentle-



man, Anthony B, Capleton, Luciano, Junior Kelly and Everton Blender. Angus Taylor spoke to Mark as he was finishing sixth album ‘Working Wonders’ with Bavarian production house Oneness Records - about his music, his love of horseracing and why he feels there is a plot in Jamaica to keep Rastafarian roots artists down...

How did you get so many people to collaborate with you on

### The True Story Of Mark Wonder and friends?

Well, first let me say “Greetings” to the most high. I want to say “Big up” to the artists who’ve lent their talent to this project. I’ve been around in the industry for more than 15 years, so most of the artists, I’ve known them for quite a long time. It wasn’t really hard to get them to collaborate with me, it was just getting the time because everybody had

their own stuff going on and it was just some of it took long time, so that was really hard.

**How long a period of time did it take to get all those people together?**

We had started recording a few singles before ALTaFaAn the producer came up with the concept - the first one was Only the Strong Survive with me, Chezidek and Lutan Fyah. Then there was Still Deh Deh. So after those two singles the producer decided he wanted to do a project with me for ALTaFaAn. At the time I was working on several other projects, so he decided to let me do something different from the rest of the projects that I was working on. Obviously we had to choose the people we wanted to work with, make sure we had the right concept and songs. It took us about a year and a half to really get the project kicking and feeling. The project was ready for a while but we had to make sure we were getting a proper distribution. That's the thing that is hurting reggae the most at the moment - not getting a proper distribution.

**I hear that a lot.**

So it took us until last year for us to really seal up a distribution deal. I'm pretty much grateful for that, you know? The album was produced by ALTaFaAn, it ended up being a collaborated effort between ALTaFaAn and Irie Vibrations from Austria. The project was distributed to

Europe by Groove Attack.

**You also put out a mixtape with Zion Roots from VI which went down very well. Tell me about that.**

Well, it was just a concept that came to me while I was on tour in Europe last year, in France, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, Holland. Whilst stopping over in Germany, Gütersloh to be exact - big up the G Town Massive - I was just toying with the idea of the name Dragonslayer, and I was saying to another person, my touring partner Prince Theo, who was along with me on the tour that I wanted to make an album by the name of the Dragonslayer. So while back I was in Jamaica, after the tour was finished I got hooked up with Zion Roots, who's from St Croix - big up Zion Roots, big up the St Croix massive. Zion Roots is actually living in an estate in Washington - he lives in the United States. The good thing about Mark Wonder is that the music has been making grounds in those parts of the world and I hooked up with Zion Roots. He seems to be a very strong follower of Mark Wonder, so we hooked up and he has done the mixtape for me. I think it has done very, very well.

**Am I right in saying that some of the tunes on that mixtape have not been released yet? I heard one or two that I was like "Where can I find that?"!**

Well, I deliberately was sneaking a few pre-release, you know? We put out some early release stuff to create the concept that we had wanted! We had to sneak in just a few new releases. Hopefully by the end of the year the songs will be out.

**Tell me about this Dragonslayer concept. Do you see yourself as a dragonslayer in the industry?**

Yes, kind of. When I look back on I and I journey through the music, as a being on the earth there is so much hypocrisy going on in the music, so much catastrophe taking place. And I have to do something about certain situations where there's just talking talking and words without works are not sustainable. So I see myself in this time forward as a battler who comes to wipe out certain situations and we get this tool to use which is the word sound. And through the word sound I and I sound I and I trumpet in a melodic vibration and also in like-mind reaching words. In these situations we utter these words. That is I and I tool that Jah Rastafari has given I. Babylon quake because I and I utter it in this time carrying on the works that were started by our brothers before. People like the Wailers - Bob and Peter who came before I and I, Burning Spear, Israel Vibration, The Abyssinians, Jimmy Cliff, Bob Andy. All those great warriors who went out and create an energy, a vibe, you know? Create that vibe that speak very much



about our culture, our struggle, our needs, our wars, our vigil. So I and I in this time is the Dragonslayer, reminding I and I from whence I and I came and that's what this music is all about.

**Do you think that the purpose of this music has got lost in recent times?**

Well, I wouldn't say it was lost, I wouldn't say it was that bad. I'm there and a lot of the other veterans are there, a lot more I and I there. The thing is that basically I can speak of Jamaica. It seems that this roots is lost here in Jamaica and I wonder what is happening. People are now gravitating towards a different type of vibration and living a culture which they are

not, basically. I think there is a plot to get rid of roots but my theory is - how can you kill the root? If you kill the root there will be no future because the root is the foundation and if you kill the foundation and kill the roots then all the branches are going to die. There will be no substance in the other parts of the music if you kill the roots. So I and I duty as the Dragonslayer is to restore the order and be one of those who will be a solid foundation in this time. It's going to take a hefty and mighty lot of work to restore this order so as the Dragonslayer I man in this time step forward free and bold, mighty and strong and as Bob Marley did say "Nah look no help" and him no want no help so I and I ain't going to look no help and just be there to do Jah

works and restore the order.

**There has been a lot of debate recently about reggae in Europe versus reggae in Jamaica. As an artist from Jamaica who records regularly for the European market what is your view?**

I am just very, very sad about the situation. That's why I have come to this realisation that there seems to be a plot to kill this rootical vibration. How can we destroy something so ancient? Something that has a purpose to be recognised throughout the world? This art form, this music, that served to establish us as a nation and as a people. The music that speaks of I and I courage and

I and I livity. The people are gravitating to different vibes and living a culture that they are not. I feel really sad about the situation because when I trod through Europe I see so much roots and people living the culture. Then I come back to Jamaica and it's not so - the radio, the TV, the newspaper. I'll tell you the truth - it all boils down to hypocrisy. The reggae music industry in Jamaica is like a pimp and prostitute game.

### How do you mean?

That's the way I see the industry - a straight pimp and prostitute game. The roots is lost in the middle because the rootsman lives a different culture. He believes in a different situation. He thinks differently, so he is not caught up and involved in the pimp and prostitute game, so the roots gets squeezed. Then you travel the world and you see so much roots. I was in France last year and I went to one session and it was something to behold. I mean back in Jamaica you never have this music in your collection - you never hear this music. They are keeping all the big music festivals, the Reggae Sumfests. I call it "Some Reggae Fest". There is so much heritage and history of roots music and others genres of music like dancehall - and yet still people have to go abroad to get artists - hip-hop artists, R&B artists - to be headliners for a reggae festival. That means there is something wrong. How can you have



a reggae festival being headlined by a hip-hop artist? So I think the people in high places are the ones who are helping to create this situation and pushing the roots aside. We're talking about the media, the radio stations, the television, the newspaper writers, the people who keep shows - what happened to our roots?

### More and more Jamaican roots

### artists are working with European producers. Is this the way it's going?

I can only talk about myself and the last situation I had out of Jamaica is The True Story. There are a lot of people that say they are producing roots music but a lot of them lost the feel. There is no energy, there is no feeling in it. There is no hyper spirituality - it's just

some guy saying "I'm going to make a one drop rhythm". The music has lost its essence but then you find Europeans really putting their heart and soul into it and really taking the music by the scruff of the neck. I am a rootsman and I have to find and sort out my situation so I have to record with roots people in Europe. Most of my things that have been released over the past two or three years have been on European labels. Jamaica is sleeping. Wake up Jamaica! Wake up people of Jamaica!

### What took you to Rastafari as a youth?

Well, from a long time as a youth I trod in the ghetto and I was always inspired by the movement of the Rastafarians - just by the way they live, the way they speak, the whole vibe of their cultural behaviour and patterns. Their spiritual highness and also their kingly character. So after years of growing and living amongst men and people finally I decided that this is a choice that I and I going to make in my life. That whatever change I made in my life this was the sort of vibes that I and I was going to make. So from early I found myself gravitating to this movement, to this culture, to this livity. So it was no surprise that I just found myself one day saying "This is the choice that I am going to make. This is the livity. This is the spiritual heights that I am going to seek and I want to reach". It just hap-

pened naturally. There was no strain, no pain. A lot of it came through wanting to know more about I and I black self. I and I as a nation, as a people, and I and I as an individual.

### As you said in previous interviews you were involved in horse racing as a youth? But fate intervened and set you on the path to music?

Well, as a youth growing up in the ghetto in Kingston the community I resided in had a lot of thoroughbred farms and a lot of people involved in horse racing - jockeys, grooms, trainers. We used to enjoy racing marbles as youngsters - that was a considerable part of our fulljoyment. When we were not going to the track we would go by a complex where there was a factory with corridors where we could race marbles. And from there a lot of us would go down to the track. I would find myself stealing away from school and going over to the track at Caymanas and just hanging around with the whole population of the game itself. We would hang out with a lot of grooms and a lot of trainers and a lot of jockeys. I had a lot of jockey friends and they introduced me to the game in a bigger way. Then the industry started to make a change because back in the day a lot of youths who entered into the game were trying to project themselves so the Racing Commission opened a jockey school. So after hanging out at the stables for a while I decided if I was to be a jockey

that was the route I had to go down because that was the new system set up by the Racing Commission so I enrolled in the jockey school. But as you said, fate put me on another path. The music came calling because the music was always a part of me and I was always a part of the music so I am here today as Mark Wonder, the Dragonslayer.

### You aren't the first reggae artist to have come from that background. Donald Manning from the Abyssinians and Cocoa Tea are involved in the game. Is there anything from being a jockey you can take into music?

You aren't the first reggae artist to have come from that background. Donald Manning from the Abyssinians and Cocoa Tea are involved in the game. Is there anything from being a jockey you can take into music?

### Do you still get involved in horses at all?

Yes. I'm not an avid gambler per se but I just love that fact that I can give credit to the sport of kings because I am a king and it is my sport. So I am into horseracing just as I was in times gone by. The thing is I don't really gamble like I used to but I just take joy in watching the races and I have my favourite jockeys and my favourite trainers. I am just a big fan of the sport and I love it dearly. I still go down to the track now

and again, I catch the coverage on the radio and I still follow the sport a lot.

**You have a new album in production Working Wonders on Oneness Records - what can we expect?**

I can safely say the world can look forward to this album. I have to say big up to Oneness out of Germany and big up Moritz from the Oneness crew who I have been working with as co-producer because I am co-producing this project with my own Battle Axe imprint so this is a collaborative effort between Battle Axe and Oneness Productions. So I can tell you this going to be a gem - listening back to the tracks and getting feedback from others both inside and outside Jamaica. Most of the tracks are mixed. Actually there is a late track that is going to be added and we were just discussing the situation yesterday. It's a track with Sizzla that we are just putting the finishing touches to. We haven't come up with a release date yet for the is project because The True Story is still doing well so there is no need to rush putting it out. We are just biding our time. When you release a project the time has to be right to unleash it!

**Interview by Angus Taylor**



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# RAY DARWIN

**"I love art as a form of therapy!"**

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 out-



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

**How does it feel to get your**

**first album out after all this time?**

Does waiting to exhale explain it? (laughs) I feel very good but even better is the reaction and the response, the magazines

and the internet magazines and the German magazines and writers have been very generous and I fully appreciate it because I put a lot into it and I went through a lot. I felt like there was even more room for improvement but I had to stop at one point and say "OK, this is it!" because I'm a perfectionist and I will keep on improving till 2020! (laughs) But the point that I'm making is that the reviews were very kind, it's very reassuring and I appreciate it.

**You did some of the rhythms yourself and others were compiled from other producers. Is this a deliberate strategy? How did it fall into place?**

I was building a lot of my stuff and I felt that I wanted some fresh blood, some other creative input and the unifying glue would be my songs on other peoples music. It's always good to have variety, as the saying goes "Variety is the spice of life". So I also identified with these rhythms and when I heard them they inspired me. So that was one reason, the other reason was that I calculated to have a multi-production input.

**As you say there's a huge variety from the vintage roots of Nothing Can Touch My '45 through to the modern lovers vibe of Good For You and**

**so on. But one thing that stays the same throughout is the quality of the songs, the vocals and the harmonies. Did you do all the harmonies with yourself? Which classic reggae harmony groups and harmony singers do you admire?**

I used to love John Holt of Paragons, I love the Abyssinians, the Techniques. Those were the groups. I remember The Paragons used to kill me! And then the biggest ones, sorry to say it, but The Wailers (laughs). But I did all my harmonies, yes! I stacked all my harmonies and sometimes, depending on the weather - winter times if I'm a little bit stuffy or sore it was more difficult but when I'm healthy and I do my vocal exercises it was very easy and I love doing colours. I'm a painter so I like harmonic colours, sound colour and also physical colours. It's my hobby. It's the first thing that I've ever done that made me felt special other than singing. I was in the Bahamas to visit my aunt, years ago, and I took a photograph in Harbour Island and one time when I went back to New York I decided I'm going to paint it, to be exactly like. And I did it, I accomplished that goal. That was the first time I felt special, it was from deep inside to know that I had the ability to interpret this, after going through situations and childhood scars that made you not

feel special it was the first reassuring thing. So I love art as a form of therapy and yeah, it's creative, so I like it.

**When you say childhood scars, not wanting to pry into your life, but what kind of trials have you faced?**

I hate to be saying this over and over, I say it a lot, but my father usually told me that I'm stupid like my mom because he has his doctorate in metaphysics that he studied. He's an academic. His whole family is, and my mother never went past high school. But she ran a business for 30 years, very successfully for her husband in Jamaica, so what she didn't make up in academics she had in common sense, to be able to control a business and run it successfully. But for him they had their own issues that they didn't work out and when I moved to New York to live with him he took out his own guiltiness on me by saying things like that. When you tell this to a child, no matter how strong a child is, there's a part of it that stays in him where he doubts himself.

**Is the creative path that you've chosen the kind of thing that he'd approve of?**

He does now but then he wasn't so big on it. It wasn't concrete enough.

**Talking about some of the**

**collaborations that you've done, tell me how did you get the link with Sara Lugo, to sing together?**

I used to stay down in Augsburg and sing with a one drop reggae band down there and I got in touch with the Bavaria/Augsburg clan and eventually I got to meet Sara and I heard her voice, and I was like "Oh my God, wow! This girl is killer!". I don't like to collaborate with people to make me look good because I sing with a big name. I sing with and collaborate with a person because there's something naturally inspiring and the collaboration is natural, it's not put together because of some ego or such. Same thing with Fred Locks. Fred Locks came to me and asked me to write a song for him after he heard People's Choice, and I wrote In This Time for him and he said "Sing it with me!" and that's why I put it on the album because I haven't heard anything from Fred Locks for so long and it's a good song, you know.

**Was there a specific incident that inspired that song?**

Yeah, at the time I was living in Jamaica, after living in New York and then coming to Germany and then going back to Jamaica, it was like I was very aware of every little thing that unfolded on the streets, the interaction, the mentality. I

was just taking it in and it was my concise account of a day today, life in Kingston. It was a simplified, concise look at, like the second verse said, the police and the badman. Somehow it just naturally came together with what Fred Locks was saying and it was another song for peace and love in this time, you know. And even though the time moves along, certain things stay the same, like the incidents and the situations don't change.

**Let's talk about Nothing Can Touch My '45. How did the concept for that come about? Did you write those lyrics?**

Yeah, I wrote all my lyrics. Sheppy and Frank from Love Tank approached me and said they want a song, and Sheppy said "I would like you to sing this about this for me. I want to hear about this, I want to hear about that" and he told me the pointers that he wanted. I then I take those pointers, I went home and write the song. I wrote the song.

**Did they have the rhythm prepared already?**

Yes, it was prepared by Uptones. A guy named Andreas produced it for them. I asked Sheppy at the time, I said "Did you make sure that you buy this rhythm from them and control it?" because I had worked with these people indirectly before and I know

that there's a tendency to be problematic. However it was produced by Andreas and I liked it, but for my album I reproduced it.

**Yes, it's a different mix, isn't it.**

I completely did it over, completely. Nothing from them because I didn't want any problems.

**That's interesting. Do you know where I'm going to go next?**

No?

**How many '45s do you own?**

Ah-haaa! I don't believe it! Jamaica and here, I don't really know, but I have quite a few (laughs).



**Next obvious question, what's your favourite tune from the days of Studio One?**

Oh man! You should ask me what's my favourite 100 Studio One songs. I love some Abyssinians stuff, some old Horace Andy, some Dennis Brown. But the one lately that's been really hitting me that I like is one by Bunny Wailer called Armagiddeon. I love that one but I can't have a favourite because there's so many. I've been singing Silhouette a lot, I've been singing "No more will I roam, yeah, yeah". So that's a difficult one.

**Finally, what's the next album going to be like? Would you like to produce an album entirely from scratch?**

I always make sure I produce my albums. I don't want anybody producing them. It sounds egotistical but I want to control what goes out for me, and this one I'm going to do it all myself. I already have the concept, I have a lot of the songs already, I started working on it already. I don't know what I will eventually call it but I know it's going to be even deeper down in the 70s and 60s to the 80s reggae. Like rocksteady, ska. So I like what Toots does, so it's going to be in that area, and roots. I'm going to up it and I'm going to make sure. Like with this one, you have a lot



of producers but I have a special awareness. It's like you have a person who can buy a Mercedes and dress up in the best clothes and everything and they really have no taste. Then you can have a person who can ride a bicycle and is full of taste. I would consider myself one of those person. I didn't come from wealth but I ride a bicycle and I know I have taste. I use that as a basis to which I create my music, that's why when I say I want to produce this it's not from an egotistical standpoint but from a taste standpoint. A lyrical, musical, tasteful awareness. That's why I didn't want my album to be aggressive, I didn't want it to try and fit in with what's popular. I wanted to be honest and simple but still meaningful and somewhat intellectual but somewhat simple and be real and honest in

terms of my lyrical content.

**Do you have a closing message to give to your fans?**

I just want to say that I do this because I love it, I've been doing it for over 30 years and look how long it took me to do an album. It's not easy when you do it. I'm a loner, I don't walk around with a posse or anything, I'm alone and I just try my best to do music because I love it. I hope they feel the love in it. The things I sing about is from my heart and things I've experienced. I can't change the world but I can change myself, so I'm just going to try to be a better person and if you can - get something from my music it's good, and if you can't, I understand.

**Interview by Angus Taylor**



# MR. WILLIAMZ

**Backstage chat with Mr. Williamz on dancehall culture**

British dancehall deejay Mr. Williamz has dropped several scorching tunes for producer Curtis Lynch in the past years. A few months ago he also put out his debut EP titled 'Last Night'. United Reggae got a chat with him on dancehall culture after his performance at the Öland Roots festival.

Mr. Williamz was born in

**"Lots of youths sing in front of the mirror in the bathroom and then go straight to the studio"**

London, but raised with his father in Jamaica. When he was 16 he moved back to London to live with his mother, and have stayed since.

He says that he has only been in the music business for a few years, but that music has always been in him. He started to go to the dance-

hall from the age of five.

"I grew up in the dancehall. My father was a rasta and had a free mind. He used to give me money so that I could go to the dancehall," he says, and continues:

"I feel blessed to have had the chance. Nuff youth

don't get that opportunity. It was very exciting for me. I was like a sponge."

We sit behind a small table backstage. Mr. Williamz is dressed in white pants, white shirt and a black down jacket. It has started to darken and there are no lights where we sit. But Mr. Williamz keeps his sunglasses on.

## Foundation style

Mr. Williamz hypnotic toasting style echoes old school, and he often mentions Super Cat as an influence during the interview.

"It's an original dancehall style. You can't imitate it or copycat it. You have to grow up in the dancehall to learn it," he says.

Mr. Williamz gives a serious impression and speaks with a thick patois accent.

## Need for dancehall college

He is concerned that reggae singers and deejays nowadays don't get the appropriate teachings, since dancehall culture has started to fade. Especially in Jamaica.

"You've to exercise your talent. Them vibes are missing. Lots of youths don't get to go to dancehall college today. They sing in front of the mirror in the bathroom and then go straight to the studio. You

have to learn how to take a crowd, learn the lyrics," he explains.

He also believes that some topics are for the dancehall crowd's eyes and ears only.

"I don't chat no slackness or foolishness," he states, and continues:

"Slackness is a big topic. I mean, you have x-rated lyrics and you have guys singing about bleaching. That's slackness. Those things are for the dancehall and not for the radio. Now it's on the radio. Previously you could only hear such tunes in the dancehall. Certain songs should only be heard in the dancehall so that kids can't hear them," he explains, and gives an example:

"You couldn't hear Ninjaman on the radio a lot. You had to go to the dancehall."

## Collaborations and upcoming projects

Mr. Williamz has mainly worked with producer Curtis Lynch and has voiced every riddim on the Necessary Mayhem label.

"Curtis has the right feel for the music. It's an original style, foundation style," he says.

He also recently did the YT duet Tribute to Smiley Culture,



where the duo chats:

"Police officer we a demand a answer  
Weh really happen to the great Smiley Culture?  
Cah we nuh want nuh more lies, no propaganda  
Right now a justice we a make a stand for"

"I had to do that tune. His death was of a suspicious and mysterious nature," he explains.

The future is uncertain and Mr. Williamz doesn't want to give any hints of upcoming projects.

"I can't tell you what to expect in the future. It's a movement of the times. I could tell, but then something else is going to happen."

**Interview by Erik Magni  
Photos by Black Baccara**

# The Revival of the Band and Live Music in Jamaica

**“The music industry is a cycle. It’s a new wave of what’s happening now” - Jubba from Dubtonic Kru**

Reggae music is often about solo artists rather than bands or groups, especially in recent years. But something has happened. Live music has had resurgence in popularity in Jamaica, several bands have formed and they’re touring the world. United Reggae has talked to The Uprising Roots Band and Dubtonic Kru to learn the story behind the upswing.

Reggae bands in Jamaica have always been around in one form or another. One of the earliest examples being The Skatalites, a band that later transformed into several different outfits – The Supersonics

and Sound Dimension being just two examples.

In the 70’s other bands emerged, often with a somewhat loose line-up. Members played in several different constellations and changed names depending on the producer or label that hired them.

These bands were often backing or studio bands without a regular singer.

When reggae was digitalized in the mid 80’s the need for bands and “real” musicians decreased. The riddims were laid using keyboards and drum machines instead of using real bass and drums.

Now things might have changed. According to singer Ray Darwin roots reggae is back. And with that said, bands are back.

“People want more roots. Everyone’s going back to the roots, they see the value of roots reggae. Dub roots from Jamaica. There’s a new era of

musicians graduating from the Edna Manley College. Really amazing musicians,” he said to me a while back.

And there are several bands active in Jamaica at the moment; some of them have been playing for many, many years.

## A new cycle

Deleon “Jubba” White formed Dubtonic Kru about 15 years ago with Strickland Stone. He and his fellow band mates recently won the Global Battle of the Bands where they were up against 17 other countries.

“Well, you see, the music industry is a cycle. It’s a new wave of what’s happening now,” says Jubba on the phone from Poland where the Kru recently finished their Celebration tour, and continues:

“Conscious music is at the center stage again. Youths are involved in this movement. But it’s not necessarily the end of the dancehall cycle. And I don’t want to see



an end. It’s all about the evolution of the music. Variety is the spice of life,” he laughs.

Rashaun “Kush” McAnuff is the drummer in The Uprising Roots Band and was literally born into the music business as the son of vocalist and recording artist Winston McAnuff. He and his band have been playing together since 2006 and put out their debut album ‘Skyfiya’ earlier this year.

Kush says he loves foundation music and positive music, and he seems happy about the resurgence of bands and live music in Jamaica. He describes the

factors behind the upswing:

“It’s about revival. The youths don’t pay attention to where reggae is coming from. It’s a call for righteousness and awakening.”

## Equality and family

Being in a band means equality. And when talking to Kush it’s obvious that The Uprising Roots Band has a “no man is an island” mindset.

“Each person is a sound. No one is higher than anyone else. Equality in the group is important. It’s about teamwork and

everyone is important. We’re not a band, we’re family.”

Jubba also mentions the family analogy and adds that a common goal is important too.

“Me and Stone have played together for about 15 years, but other members have changed. We have a common goal – love and passion for music. We’re like a family. A family that plays together stays together,” explains Jubba.

## The Kru promotes live music

Jubba and his Kru are heavily involved in the live scene in Ja-



maica and have worked hard to promote it. Mainly through the yearly concert Bands Incorporated and the regular Friday night show Plug 'N Play.

"We started Bands Incorporated about five years ago. It features upcoming bands and older bands. Not so much solo artists," explains Jubba, and continues:

"Plug 'N Play takes place on Friday nights at the legendary Jonkanoo Lounge at Wyndham Hotel in Kingston. It features as many young artists as possible. We give them a stage and a practice session to increase their live skills. Peer them with older artists."

Several experienced artists

have been part of the Plug 'N Play format to help the younger ones. Some of these being Toots Hibbert, Capleton, Chuck Fender, Ken Boothe, Gyptian and Protoje. An impressive list to say the least.

"You name them, they've probably been there," states Jubba, and continues:

"Some dancehall artists have come through the show. But it's about uplifting music. You have to respect the standard of Plug 'N Play. But it is has not anything to do with segregation. It's about clean vibes."

**"A new generation of musicians from Jamaica"**

Another factor that might have

something to do with the recent upswing is the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts.

"I'm a past student and Edna Manley College did a lot for me, alongside touring and being on the road. It created a good balance for me," says Jubba, and continues:

"The level has increased. The students are able to bond and practice. There's a new generation of musicians from Jamaica," he believes and concludes:

"The number of bands will definitely increase. We are contacted every week. It's shocking and motivating."

**Interview by Erik Magni**

# TAJ WEEKES

**"We only have this one world. There's no place to go to after we've destroyed this one"**

Many current roots reggae artists claim to make music that harks back to the days of old. But not many can claim to have done this in a way so in harmony with modern times as St Lucian born, New York resident Taj Weekes. In just three albums he has carved out a niche for lyrical and musical prowess that invites even the dreaded comparisons with Bob. In 2010 he and his band Adowa released one of the year's best albums in third effort 'A Waterlogged Soul Kitchen', whose unusual title is a reference to the floods in New Orleans. But what is most surprising about Taj is that music is only a small part of his spectrum of activity: he is a published poet, runs a charity, They Often Cry Outreach, and is a mentor to young people in public schools. And, as Angus Taylor found out during a rigorous and open ended discussion in June, there's a lot more to respect and admire about this soft spoken yet quietly confident man than the in-



credible records he makes...  
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**Tell me about your latest album A Waterlogged Soul Kitchen. How do you think that that album progressed from your previous album Deidem?**

After the last album we already knew we could play roots reggae music and what I wanted to do was stretch the music a little bit by including some instruments that are not regularly found in reggae, like cello and violin. So I brought these things in and I tried to switch the subject matter a little further.

**One of the lyrical themes that occurs on this album is violation: violation of people, of countries, of nature.**

When I sat down to write the album there was no clear definition lyrically, the definition was more musically. But I think life, in and of itself, kind of just throws the stories at you and it just kind of came out that way. For the most part reggae is putting a rhythm to a poor man's cry but I think for some reason we've kind of focussed a little too much on the suffering of a particular set of people. I wanted to bring the entire thing into focus. I wanted to bring the

other. My acoustic guitar is always with me so as soon as I start thinking of something I get to the guitar and automatically I play the chord and I would sing [sings] “See I was born of rape” and it would come together at the same time.

**That song illustrates my next question. Melodically it's a very pleasant song but the lyrics are extremely biting. Would you say that musically this album is a lot more pleasant than the last and a lot of the harshness and bleakness has retreated into the lyrics?**

Yeah, I think I agree with you musically. Definitely so musically. But it depends on vantage point. For some people this album was more biting than the other one. I know a lot of the reviews said that, but I don't know if I'd necessarily agree with it because I don't see it as any less biting than the last album. I mean from a story point of view it is probably a more personal story, but then a more worldly story as opposed to dark clouds don't always bring rain, you know? And propaganda war which is more universal. The stories here I think are more personal stories.

**On both albums you end by focussing on environmental disasters. There have been so many disasters, both man-**



**made and potentially man-made disasters happening recently. Are all these things that have happened linked in some way?**

Yeah, I think all of them for the most part are man-made. I think if people realised how close we are, on the brink, there'd probably be a lot more people singing what I sing. But I guess the propaganda machine works very well and we have people watching the commercial radio and TV stations and nobody really realises what's going on. When things happen in the world, whether they be from a terrorist attack or some tsunami or whatever, everybody always kind of seems surprised that it happened, when all it takes is a couple of hours of reflection about what's really going on in the world and you realise that these things

will happen. I think they're all related. I think that we as a people have to realise that we only have this one world and it's not a rented world, it's ours. There's no place to go to after we've destroyed this one. I think if we don't change our plan our children will inherit a wasteland.

**Do you think that Western people are more frightened by disasters in affluent countries, such as Japan, because it reminds them that it could happen to them?**

Definitely. For the most part we're a people who get so caught up with headlines but they tend not to last very long. We like the sensationalism of things happening, wherever. But I think when it happens maybe in the more affluent [countries] because there's

some kind of trade or some kind of equal lifestyle going on with us, that that's when we get a little more frightened. Maybe we need a little more happening in a lot more affluent countries and maybe people will take stock of what's happening, because I mean, really and truthfully, we've forgotten about Haiti, we've kind of forgotten about Chile too. There was a hurricane in St Lucia and for the most part no-one knew about it. But should something happen in England or France or Germany or even the United States then people would definitely pay a lot more attention to it.

**What are your views on fossil fuels and their alternatives?**

It's a funny thing that yesterday was 100 degrees and we were all caught up with our ACs trying to stay cool and I don't think we've realised that what's happening with the world is because of how we use up everything and do the craziness that we're doing with everything across the world. You don't have to be a scientist to realise that we have to get back to the natural ways of doing things because if not, what we're using to have us move along, in the forms of fossil fuels, will kill us off in the end.

**This is something I've asked artists before. Do you think for Africa to get on an equal footing financially with the**

**rest of the world it's going to have to industrialise, and what potential problems will that bring?**

Well, industrialise like the ants, not like the rest of the world has done it. Somebody mentioned to me a while ago, the ants are very industrial yet they're not destroying anything. We need to be industrial in that kind of way, not in the way that we destroy everything and kill it off for the next generation. Industrial and industrialisation has a connotation, to me, of not doing things in a holistic way; if we can in a holistic manner, then great. What's sad about it is, we've destroyed a world, I mean the Western countries, in a particular way. For these countries to catch up, the African countries and the Asian countries, we're asking them not to do what we've done, we the Western world has done. So how are they going to catch up if they don't end up destroying the world? There has to be some middle ground where this can happen.

**You have various charity projects and initiatives such as They Often Cry Outreach that you've spoken of in previous interviews. How are these things going and what new initiatives are you involved in?**

Well, right now we want to go

to Ethiopia to help out with some soccer programmes out there. A very good friend of mine just came back from Ethiopia having adopted two little boys, and we're moving in that direction to help out. We're heading back to the Caribbean to bring back schoolbooks and supplies for the kids because what's happening with the poorer children is that when they get to school and they don't have the supplies they're penalised twice by being sent home again. So we're trying to get schools enough supplies so that when a child shows up without supplies somebody can go in a closet and give him an exercise book and a pencil and eraser, so that he can stay in class and get whatever is being dished out for the day. We'll be in Trinidad in October to give out some balls in Trinidad and Tobago and to talk to some musicians out there about trying to make it happen from an independent standpoint. There are lots of things in the pipe and we're trying to make things happen so we can help out some people somewhere.

**You've also given lectures in school on social responsibility. What does social responsibility mean to you?**

That is the debate: whether social responsibility is an in-born thing or is it a responsibility of corporations? I think the Bible said it clearly: we have to help out each other. So I think char-

ity is something that we should have always done all along had we been brought up with our in-born concept that would not have been a question at this stage.

**How does one reach young people without sounding too didactic or authoritarian given that they aren't being brought up with these concepts?**

By being one of them. I think that if you show people that you are among the least of them, then it's easier to reach them. But if you're coming to them from an elitist point of view or looking down on them in some way then nobody wants to connect with you. People have to see it in your lifestyle and how you move, that you are like one of them. That's when people are most open to listen to what it is you have to offer.

**People who suffer can be quite cynical. Do you ever feel cynical about things?**

I'm sure I must have at some point but what I try to do is seek my higher self from my lower self and come back the following day and hopefully I can overcome that feeling.

**Can you tell me which St Lucian musicians, you admire? Are you familiar with the singer Nereus Joseph in the**

**UK?**

Yeah, the funny thing is that somebody gave me some music about 2 weeks ago and I've been digging it, yeah. I love it. I don't know too many St Lucian musicians who have done other things out of the island. But I tell you the St Lucians I admire - Derek Walcott, for sure. [Darren] Sammy, the captain of the West Indies cricket team. A lot of people probably don't realise that St Lucia has the most Nobel prize winners per capita in the world, so we have some inspirational people, not necessarily musicians, but very inspirational people to look to.

**You gave away a copy of your song Drill for free to mark the occasion of the BP oil spill. You've said in the past that you're not driven by profit. A lot of people nowadays seem to think that music should be given away for free. Have you ever considered giving all your songs away for free? Would that act as a way of giving publicity to your message or is the music a source of funding for your various projects?**

We have considered giving everything away for free, but at the same time we work. The funny thing about it is that people talk about giving away music for free but I don't see anybody else trying to give away

any other services for free. I told somebody this story the other day. I went to a little get together and there was a guitar in the corner and a guy asked me if I would play a song. He happened to be a carpenter, I said to him "There's a hammer in the corner, why don't you fix the cupboard?" It's a funny thing that people don't take into consideration the fact that you have to write these songs, rehearse them, go to the studio, play them a million times, and then most people ask you to give it to them for free. It's not something that we have not considered but the music does finance most of the charity work that I do, so giving it for free would be a little difficult for us.

**Is there a significance to the name of your band given your own Ethiopian heritage?**

Yeah, definitely. Everybody knows 1896, the Battle of Adwa. You know, it's a victorious battle, so the band to me signifies victory for a couple of things. For one I think, and that might be touchy to some people, we're struggling in obscurity simply because we're probably not from the right geographical location. The name of the band, in and of itself, signifies the victory we feel for what we're doing and where we're coming from, and also for my Ethiopian connection.

**When you say you're not in**



**the right geographical location, could you elaborate a bit on that for me?**

Well, we're struggling in obscurity but I've not read a single bad review of any album we've done. We've been doing great work, we've been walking the walk and talking the talk, but I've come across a level of mediocrity in the genre, probably music in general and this reggae music suffers the same fate. What I realise is that people don't know who we are, and I'm hearing music from the source that is mediocre but yet is everywhere.

**You're talking about what's coming out of Jamaica?**

Yes, definitely. I'm not talking about everything coming out of Jamaica but I figure that the general public and a lot of disc

jockeys have this perception that if it comes out of Jamaica it's great. What happened to David Kirton, Rocky Dawuni and Nasio Fontaine and the St Lucian brother you mentioned? We don't get the props that the other people get. Jamaica is the source and you'll always get props to the source. Music has to grow and you cannot keep it locked. We are the fruit from that original tree, yet for some reason we're not being recognised as the fruit. Reggae has grown, it's an international music now, so we're just looking for people to support it. I heard a DJ say "Oh, you didn't send me the music" but you need to do some homework too. If you want to know what's happening in the world you don't look in your kitchen and your living room, you look outside to see what's happening in the world. I did an interview with a brother about 2 weeks ago and he

said to me "How come I don't know who you are?" It's funny the way people blame you for their ignorance. I mean, there might be some blame on both sides, but I don't think I should take it completely.

**Tell me about your next music project. What have you got in mind?**

We're going to Jamaica to record the next album. I've become friends with this brother, Alrick Thompson, he's Sticky Thompson's son. He engineered our show in St Lucia, the St Lucia Jazz. The songs are already written, I wrote all 12 songs, Giant Beast, Desperation, Choked, and there's a tune called Marijuana - my take on how the laws against marijuana have done more harm than marijuana has ever done to anyone. I think it will probably be the most roots album I've done. Though we're still working on Waterlogged. Janjaweed is the next single, which has a really beautiful video which was done by a brother who works for Disney. It's an animated video because we wanted to bring out the story of the Janjaweed but we wanted children and everybody to like it. There's also a project called Betrayed In Reaction, with songs I've written that are not going to be on any album, but we'll just have different artists coming in to add their vibe to it. It's going to be an internet-only release.

**On your website you're described as musician, humanitarian, poet. Could you name me a musician, a humanitarian and a poet who you really admire?**

A poet that I love... I love Derek Walcott, but I also love Dylan Thomas. I love his vibe, I love how he writes, I love what he says. There are lots of great poets, I mean Nikki Giovanni, tons of people, but sometimes you lock into somebody because of their delivery or the connection you make with them or how you were brought up. That's what I love about Dylan Thomas. I love the way he says what he says. A musician that I love...do they have to be alive or dead?

**There are no rules.**

No rules! I don't know if there's one particular person that I admire. I'm a child who grew up in St Lucia with unformatted radio stations, where I listened to Mahler, to Jimi Hendrix, and to Shakespeare. You know who I really love? I love Lord Kitchener. I love Lord Kitchener because of his delivery and his storytelling. He and calypso had the oral storytelling tradition, which reggae took on in the 70s with Bob and Peter and Bunny and Spear and Eric Donaldson and these brothers. I think that's what I have kind of followed up on.

**And finally, a humanitarian?**

A humanitarian... Maybe my stories have really taught me about Jesus. Jesus is my humanitarian. Jesus because he loved his brother as himself.

Interview by Angus Taylor

Photos by Franck Blanquin



# Maximum Sound 2011

**Killer compilation from Maximum Sound.**

UK-based label Maximum Sound, lead by producer Frenchie, went digital last week. The first step was to offer the back catalogue on iTunes, and the other day saw the release of the iTunes exclusive compilation 'Maximum Sound 2011'.

This set assembles 18 dancehall and one drop tunes from 2009 to 2011. And as usual with Maximum Sound there are no fillers here, only killers from the crème de la crème of Jamaican singers and deejays.

I mean, you hardly go wrong with Sizzla, Bounty Killer, Mr. Vegas, Tarrus Riley and Alborosie on well-produced and inspired riddims such as Praise Jahovia (a relick of the Billie Jean aka Get A Lick riddim),



Ghetto State (which incorporates elements from Half Pint's One Big Ghetto) or the most recent addition, Fairground.

Maximum Sound 2011 collects several tunes previously only available as 7" or 12", but it also includes exclusive titles, such as Who You Love from Ce'Cile.

This compilation is without a doubt an essential purchase that will enhance any record

collection.

**Review by Erik Magni**

# 10 Ft. Ganja Plant Shake Up The Place



## 10 Ft. Ganja Plant continue to impress on their seventh album

John Brown's Body is one of the most popular reggae bands in the U.S. 10 Ft. Ganja Plant comprises several members of that outfit, but their music leans more towards authentic 70's roots reggae.

On 10 Ft. Ganja Plant's seventh album – only one year after the concept album '10 Deadly Shots' – they continue to impress with tight rhythms and dubwise arrangements.

'Shake up the Place' contains ten tracks – always ten or eleven on their albums – with several prominent guest artists.

Sylford Walker, Prince Jazzbo and The Meditations certainly

sound very comfortable. Sylford Walker is close to Burning Spear in the apocalyptic My Roots and Prince Jazzbo's flow on the relevant Recession is an excursion back to the 70's.

But 'Shake up the Place' is more than great vocals. Several of the tunes are instrumentals and the musicianship is flawless throughout. Just listen to the harmony between the guitars, piano and organ in the title track or the trumpet solo in Ringers Rock. Pure gold.

'Shake up the Place' shakes up the more than the place – it shakes up the world.

**Review by Erik Magni**



A blend of reggae and funkified catchiness.

## The Caroloregians Fat Is Back

The Caroloregians are from Belgium and their tongue-twister of a name apparently derives from the Latin spelling of their hometown Charleroi.

They have been around since around 2006 when they released 'Organic Coal Beat From The Groovy Mines' on the Grover label. Their sound is very much built around the Hammond organ driven, boss reggae style akin to the Harry J Allstars, and The Upsetters, just

check out that lazy roll of Keep On Moving inspired Noonish.

They also help build a party feel with a big fat slice of funk to which vocalist Matthew Hardison, originally from New Orleans emphasizes with his southern soul twang on the tracks like Donna Donna. From The Congo Square has something of an afro-beat shuffle which owes a lot to The Rimshots Dance Girl while album closer Quagga blends reggae

with a sultry middle eastern vibe.

This album of predominantly instrumental cuts should appeal to fans of bands like The Aggrolites and Greenroom Rockers for its interesting blend of reggae and funkified catchiness.

Available to download from Phoenix City Records and other major outlets.

**Review by Karl Pearson**



# Black Roots The Reggae Singles Anthology

## Black Roots' singles showcase a band in fine form.

My first encounter with UK-band Black Roots was in a record store about ten years ago. The store had the original vinyl press of their album 'In Session' up on the wall and I asked the clerk if I could have a listen.

I enjoyed the album, but since it was expensive I didn't buy it and thought that I could spend my money on other records instead. About a week flew by and I regretted that I had neglected the album. I went back to the store, but the album had been sold and I haven't seen an original vinyl press of that album since.

Luckily enough French label Makasound decided to reissue that particular album as well as an compilation with Black Roots' material entitled 'On the Frontline' a while ago.

Now another compilation dedicated to one of the – if not the – best reggae acts from the UK has been put out. This time by Bristol Archive Records in collaboration with Nubian Records – Black Roots' own label.

'Black Roots - The Reggae Singles Anthology' assembles 16 well-mastered tracks spanning from the early 80's up until 1988, when they were working with Mad Professor.

It includes all of their key early singles, their first EP in its entirety, the three track follow up, the original single mix of The Frontline from the BBC series of the same name and five tracks from later releases, such as singles from albums put out in 1987 and 1988.

Those five tracks are actually what make this album musically different from the Makasound releases. So the key question is – are the five tracks worth having?

The answer is yes. But, they are more pop oriented than the other material. And they sound

a bit more dated.

A 16 page booklet full of previously unpublished photos of the band comes with the album. The initial run of CDs also has an added bonus – a DVD issue of the hard to find live show Celebration from 1986 with Vin Gordon on trombone. This show was recorded at the Bristol Studio and was previously only available on the original self-financed video cassette issue.

If you don't already own the Makasound albums or other Black Roots material you should definitely head over to your local record store. Otherwise this album makes a great complement, especially if you're early and receives the DVD.

'Black Roots - The Reggae Singles Anthology' comes as a limited edition double vinyl, CD and digital download.

**Review by Erik Magni**

# Digitaldubs - #1

## Walking through the jungle with Digitaldubs.

Digitaldubs fourth album opens with nyabinghi flavored digital drums and a slow and heavy bass line. After almost a minute a melancholic melodic kicks in. The mood is wet, warm and thick. It almost feels like I'm walking through a moist jungle.

That's the atmosphere when Brazil meets Jamaica in a studio that could have been Lee Perry's Black Ark.

On '#1' Digitaldubs have invited renowned reggae legends Ranking Joe, Earl Sixteen and Brinsley Forde as well as local Brazilian artists Dada Yute, Jeru Banto and Tiano Bless. These are artists sing intense and earnest about justice, love and spirituality in English and Portuguese.

That's the same recipe as on some of their one riddim albums. On Diáspora riddim, for example, they voiced Lone Ranger and Sylvia Tella alongside Ras Bernardo and others.



On top of the vocal cuts there are of course also heavy roots and steppers instrumentals where the dub effects are very much present. Dub Echoes Theme with its hypnotic bass line and flyers style cymbals is a great example.

Digitaldubs has created on '#1' a rich album with crisp production, but without sounding polished.

I'm thankful to ROIR for picking

up this release from its Brazilian obscurity. If you like Zion Train and Dubkasm this album is a must-have.

'#1' is available as CD, LP and digital download.

**Review by Erik Magni**

# Little Roy Battle for Seattle

## Little Roy wins the battle for Seattle.

Making a concept cover album is not new in reggae music, and that it can be successful is proven by Easy Star All-Stars and their albums 'Easy Star's Lonely Hearts Dub Band' and 'Radiodread'.

Now there is a new cover concept project. But this time commanded by Prince Fatty, the man responsible for Hollie Cook's recent self-titled scorchers.

'Battle for Seattle' is a collection of ten songs originally recorded by Nirvana now performed in a reggae style.

Prince Fatty has assembled some veteran soldiers for the project. Legendary Little Roy takes the lead on the microphone singing better than ever. He's backed by Mafia, from Mafia & Fluxy, Bubblers, from the Ruff Cut band, Junior Marvin, prior with The Wailers, and George Dekker from The Pioneers.

They fight in an old-fashioned style armed with tape and vin-



tage analog equipment. The result is authentic reggae that echoes from the 70's.

To win the battle for Seattle they have taken on some of Nirvana's biggest hits, but also some lesser known tunes such as Very Ape from the 'In Utero' album. Most people will recognize Come as You Are, Heart-Shaped Box and Lithium, even though these versions are far from the originals. The melodies are clearer and so is the

singing and lyrics.

I've never been a fan of neither Nirvana nor grunge, but this album has been on repeat for several days now. Little Roy and Prince Fatty have definitely conquered Seattle and hopefully fans of Nirvana will join their army too.

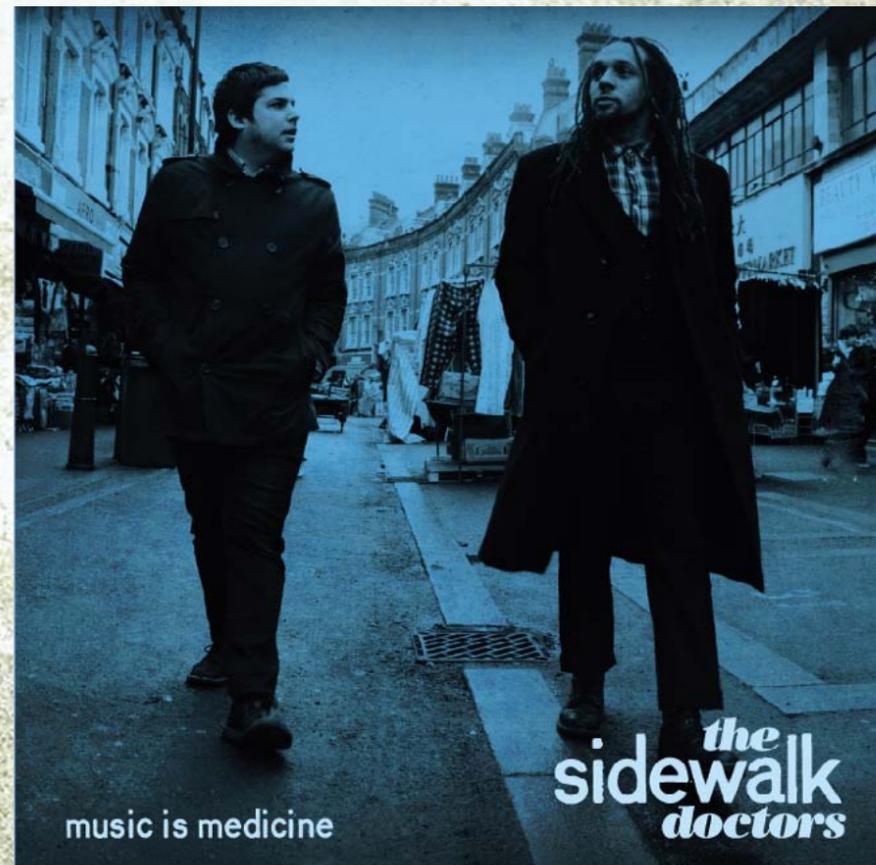
**Review by Erik Magni**

# The Sidewalk Doctors Music Is Medicine

## Vintage inspired sounds to sooth your troubles away.

"Music Is Medicine" claim the Sidewalk Doctors and ain't that the truth, for music is surely the best mood enhancing drug there is and this elixir of 9 intoxicating tracks, that take inspiration from the vintage sounds of Jamaican Ska, Rocksteady and Reggae will certainly sooth your troubles away.

The Sidewalk Doctors are singer Nathan Thomas and instrumentalist Lenny Bignell, who has worked with top UK reggae band Pama International and Acid Jazz Soul stars Lord Large. The duo are now turning the tables and enlisting some help from members of these bands to create this album, that could have come straight out of a dusty old box left in a forgotten Jamaican studio back room, with Sean Flowerdew of Pama and Stephen Large supplying some keys plus bass players Danny Thompson and Andi McClean and despite this fluid line up and presumed over dubs to put it all together the album



has a very live and spontaneous feel. It is similar in style to that of Neil "Alpheus" Martin's 'From Creation' which was released earlier this year, but where as Alpheus revamped many old Studio 1 and Treasure Isle gems these tracks are all totally new and original. Slim Smith is obviously a big favourite of the band with Too Far Gone being inspired by Turning Point and With You leaning towards The Uniques' My Conversation. Bignell's voice also has something of an old time feel

to it with its soft and at times fragile warble evoking memories of Smith himself and many of the old time crooners. Most definitely an album for lovers of those classic sounds, but placed in a modern day setting.

'Music Is Medicine' is available to download now from Phoenix City Records and other major outlets.

**Review by Karl Pearson**

# SuperHeavy

Too many cooks spoil SuperHeavy.



The newest addition to the supergroup notoriety is SuperHeavy. It's the brainchild of Mick Jagger of The Rolling Stones and Eurythmics founder Dave Stewart. Onboard is also soul singer Joss Stone, Academy Award winning composer A.R. Rahman and Damian Marley, whose contribution to this project is the sole reason for this review. One might wonder what Damian Marley is doing in this company. But neither Mick Jagger nor Dave Stewart is a stranger to the reggae genre. Mick Jagger has sung with the late Peter Tosh and Dave Stewart

has worked with Jimmy Cliff. This diverse and eclectic line-up boasts no less than eleven Grammy Awards individually. But can these highly talented and skilled musicians bring forward a consistent album?

Supergroups usually offer a great promise on paper, but at the same time they are often short-lived, as witnessed with groups such as Velvet Revolver, Audioslave and The Traveling Wilburys, even

though the latter suffered from the premature death of band member Roy Orbison. SuperHeavy's self-titled debut album was recorded in different studios all over the world and assembles 12 tunes on the regular edition and 16 on the deluxe version. The sound is thick and bears traces from pop, reggae, electronica, rock, Indian music and so called world music. Reggae is not just present through Damian Marley's vocals. He has brought with him his rhythm section – bass player and composer Shiah Coore and drummer Courtney Die-drick. And they are tight with a

nice groove on several songs.

And it might not come as a surprise that I believe that Damian Marley is the best ingredient in this dish. He has proven before that he is huge in cross-genre collaborations, such as last year's 'Distant Relatives' album. But SuperHeavy doesn't even come close to the spirit and greatness of that effort. SuperHeavy suffers from too many cooks and strays in too many different directions. Even though the first single Miracle Worker proves different.

I'm sure that SuperHeavy had a blast in the studio when recording this album and that the label was thrilled over the idea of a supergroup with Mick Jagger in the front seat. But this set probably works better on paper than in reality.

SuperHeavy hits the streets in the U.S. on September 20th and on September 19th in the rest of the world.

Review by Erik Magni

# The Hit Sound of The Dub Pistols at Midnight Rock



## Fine selection of hit sounds

In the past ten years or so there have been a number of musical celebrities choosing their favorite tunes for compilations. Some of these are mixes while others are straight various compilations. Two personal favorites are DJ Kentaro's 'Tuff Cuts' on Pressure Sounds and Barry Myers diverse 'Barry Myers Presents Scratchy Sounds' on Trojan. Now a new compilation of the same sort has hit the streets. The compiler for

'The Hit Sound of the Dub Pistols At Midnight Rock' is Barry Asworth from The Dub Pistols. His love of roots and dancehall reggae traces back to the 70's. His record bins are probably jam-packed with goodies.

Some of these are presented on this compilation that consists of material from the labels Hit Sound and Midnight Rock, operated by U-Brown and Jah Thomas respectively. The material Barry Ashworth has chosen is a blend of singers, deejays and dub versions mainly from the early 80's and includes many magnificent tunes, whereof most are already easily available on other compilations.

Nearly all tunes are actually on the compilations U-Brown's 'Hit Sound', 'The Lion Roars' and 'DJ Sounds From Uptown' on Roots Records, the same label

behind 'The Hit Sound of The Dub Pistols at Midnight Rock'.

Both U-Brown and Jah Thomas had a good feeling for deep, uncompromising bass lines, as is apparent here. Just listen to U-Brown's own Blow Mr. Hornsman Blow on the Take Five riddim or Early B's amusing History of Jamaica on the Answer riddim.

If you aren't familiar with the Hit Sound and Midnight Rock labels this compilation is a good introduction. But make sure to check out the compilations mentioned above as well. Because both labels dropped some rough and tough material in the heydays of early dancehall.

Review by Erik Magni

# One Love Festival 2011

## A pleasant atmosphere of “stumble around and see what you find”

Last year Dan Wiltshire's One Love Festival became London's first reggae weekender in a decade by moving to Hainault's striking serene Forest Country Park. For 2011 it returned with a bigger stage, a better sound set up, an abundance of flags - and a roster of headline acts chosen for being solid entertainers on these shores.

The festival's sound system flavour stems from its Sussex beginnings - and was evident on Friday night's main stage. An exception was singing drummer Blood Shanti and The Shanti - lites whose beautifully intricate roots rhythms greatly benefitted from the crisp PA. The drums-decks-and-brass dubstep of Jazzsteppa then drew a huge audience that was retained by Mad Professor and his son Joe Ariwa reminding the people of the riots of two weekends past with cries of London's Burning - a new track on the Curly Locks rhythm. Headliner David Rodigan also invoked the recent street violence by closing his crowd pleasing set with Johnny Cash's Ring Of Fire. Later Rodigan was to be found in the always reliable Saxon tent chatting to Papa Levi - who promised he would take the mic on Saturday night. So



instead Friday was topped off by the most interesting of the four big sound areas - the Unity Collective marquee - in the form of a lively dose of jungle from Congo Natty featuring Top Cat and Tenor Fly.

Saturday experienced some early afternoon rainfall yet the meandering mellow mood of the festival endured. The sweet voiced David Boomah offered a high octane jungle

drubbing to the rum shack. United Reggae managed to miss Hollie Cook but spotted her braving the queue for much improved civilian toilets! Meanwhile on the main stage Macka B gave such a fervent performance that some of the revellers climbed over the barrier into the photography pit to dance. The man of a thousand opinions is one of the more ubiquitous acts in Europe as

he and the horn backed Roots Ragga band know how to get the kids onside every time.

Johnny Clarke - with Henry Matic Tenyue and the Dub Asante band - slowed the pace with a hypnotic selection from his vast back catalogue - including Play Fool Fi Get Wise, Crazy Baldheads and Every Knee Shall Bow and Left With A Broken Heart. France's Dub Incorporation were a gamble that paid off, holding the crowd and showing they are incredible entertainers. Less successful was concluding act Finlay Quaye who reputedly had to leave the stage after one song - but on the Saturday the real headliners were in the sound tents. Linval Thompson was a mesmerizing presence in the bar atop sounds spun by Manasseh while Papa Levi, having loitered for two days, finally smashed Saxon over Gappy Ranks specials. Levi told United Reggae “I love the laid back Jamaican vibe of this festival” saying it reminded him of Reggae Geel with less rain!

Fortunately Sunday was all sunshine, broadening the dubby image of the weekend with lovers rocksteady and ska. Christopher Ellis brought on the first surprise guest of the day in Gappy Ranks himself - who at last got to appear at One Love having been stuck in traffic the year before. Don Campbell gathered a devoted

group of ladies to the front with his buttery voice. Even backstage went wild when a purple clad Dennis Alcapone arrived to perform with Trojan Sound System's Earl Gateshead and introduced another special guest in Tappa Zukie who chanted acapella for everyone.

“Do you want to get involved?” asked a bespectacled, ever dependable Ken Boothe of a large yet overawed throng, finishing with Freedom Street and a big Stax style ending from the Ruff Cutt Band. The day eased down gently sound system fashion via the still stunning voice of Susan Cadogan, minus advertised partner Mad Professor but ably assisted by Dalston Italian crew Open The Gate. A true professional, Susan told United Reggae that despite not achieving financial security in her career she was grateful to her fans for their adulation and thanked the organisers for giving her the chance to sing. After a few words from final surprise guest Bunny Lee, a smiling Dawn Penn, (originally billed to be in the bar tent) sang No No No on stage as the crowd swarmed for that last festival defining experience.

The lineups in the various areas had a habit of changing (YT, the Wailing Souls and Andrew Tosh did not appear) so anyone who came specifically to see one act risked

disappointment. But in general, this contributed to a pleasant atmosphere of “stumble around and see what you find”. One Love owes more to the diverse peaceful vibe of the now huge Rototom Sunsplash - which took place the same weekend - than the British reggae fests of times gone by. It seems to be a project that grows slowly rather than the many big extravaganzas that arrive and vanish. Hopefully it will be with us for years to come.

**Report by Angus Taylor  
Photos by Veronique Skelsey & Tracey McTreacle**





## Ziggy Marley in Bologna

### Ziggy Marley played at Estragon Club, Bologna, Italy on August 26th 2011

This 2011 summer has definitely been a “Marley” summer for Europe! Many of the Marley brothers in fact have toured all over Europe performing in concerts and festivals. Italy too has been blessed with the presence of the Marleys, starting from Damian and Julian, than Stephen and Ky-mani, and least but not last Ziggy, that performed in Bologna at Estragon Club in a hot summer night, August 26th.

Ziggy is the oldest of the siblings, he was the founder and

leader of the “Melody Makers” and if you talk about the son of Bob Marley everybody in the world identify him as Ziggy Marley...

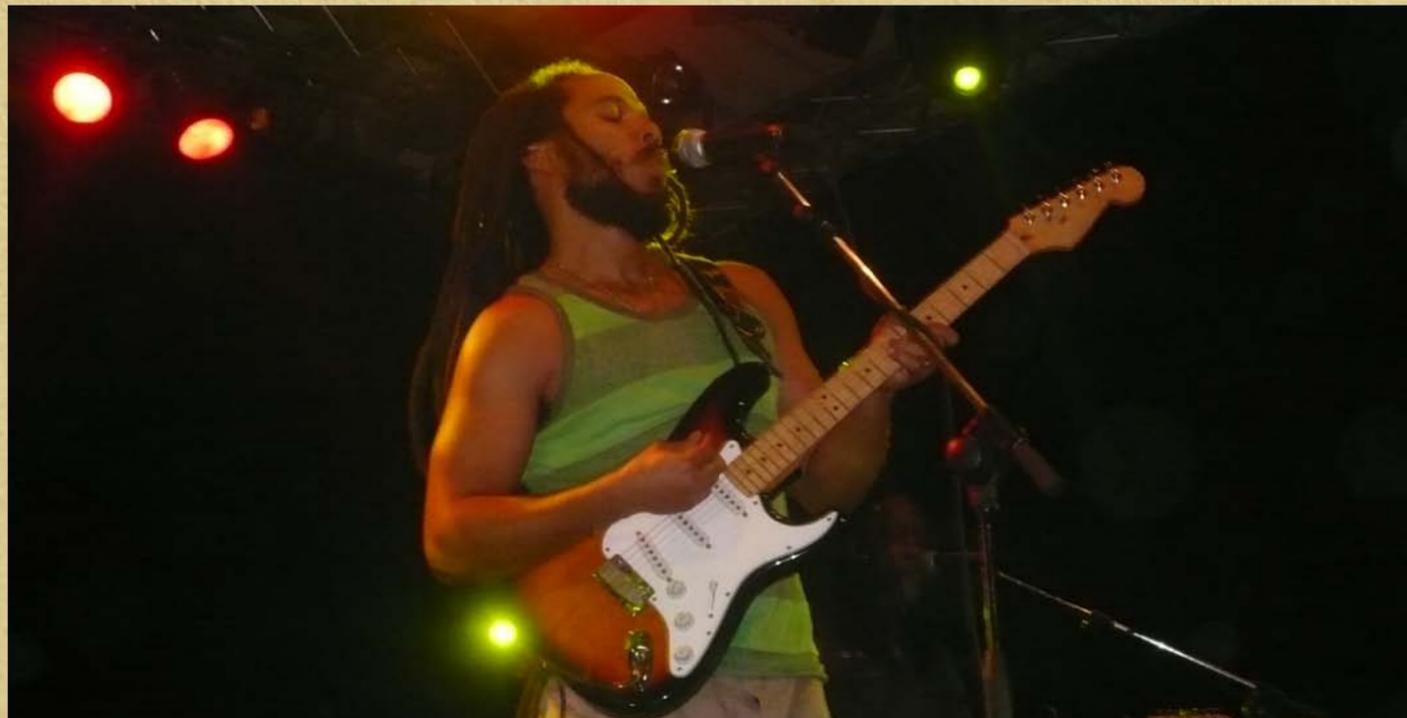
The last time he performed in my country it was in 2007, and the fans were really missing his music and his vibes. This show in Bologna has been the only Italian date for this 2011 European tour, and even if it was a crazy hot summer night, hundreds of fans came from all over Italy.

Temperature and excitement were really hot, and finally Ziggy came on stage singing one of his latest album track Welcome To The World a song written for his newborn Abraham Selassie Robert Nesta, followed by Mmmm Mmmm from the same new album ‘Wild And Free’. The show was

a great mix of new and old tracks of his career as Melody Makers and solo production, such as Tomorrow People, Love Is My Religion, True To Myself, with some great Bob’s oldies like Jammin’, One Love, Pimper’s Paradise, but he also performed many songs of his new work: some of my favourites like Forward To Love and Changes, this last one together with Tracy Hazzard, the wonderful backing vocals that sang doing the part of Daniel “Bam” Marley, the eldest son of Ziggy that features this tune in the album.

It has been a two hours concentrate of great vibes and great music! Blessed Love.....

**Report and photos by Nadia Bestjamaica**



## Singing Melody Presents His New Album

### Singing Melody's listening session for his upcoming new album.

Singer and member of the group L.U.S.T, Singing Melody did an unusual thing recently. The singer invited some of the key media personnel, producers and engineers to a “listening session” at the popular Mixing Lab studios for his soon to be released album, ‘They Call Me Mr. Melody’.

The audience was asked to rate and comment on each of the fifteen tracks after which the first single which is to be released was determined. Additionally, other tracks for the album were determined by the audience. The single is titled Collide and will be released in early October.

Melody’s first solo album in a number of years features top producers such as Dave Kelly, Donovan Germain of Penthouse Records and Lynford “Fatta” Marshall. Another single We Set The Trend was released earlier this year and received success in Europe and was even number one on the Dutch online chart. The album is set to be released in February 2012 and features collaborations with U Roy, Lymie Murray, Stacious and L.U.S.T.

**Report and photos by Steve James**



# Chiemsee Reggae Summer 2011

## The 17th edition of the German festival took place from August 26th to 28th

This year the Chiemsee Reggae Summer started promising on 26th of August with mid-summer temperatures around 35°C. 25 000 visitors celebrated and enjoyed the sun at the river bank beside the campsite and on the festival area.

## Friday Toots & The Maytals, Capleton, Patrice

Iriepathie opened the 17th edition of the Chiemsee Reggae Summer and after them Luciano did a very active show with somersault and huge jumps. Leba, Toots Hibbert's daughter followed with some songs before Toots Hibbert himself entered the stage.

Toots & The Maytals grew from song to song and in the end they had the massive under control. Of course the songs 54-46 That's My Number and Pressure Drop were not missing – just to mention two of his many number one hits!

Capleton, who was assailed previously because of his homophobia, adhered to the fixed code and elated the Chiemsee.

Not only his red glitter suit but also his song selection satisfied the massive. Capleton really knows how to motivate the audience!

The most expected act of this day was anyhow Patrice & The Supowers. Far over the festival area the shouts of joy of his fans were hearable as he entered the stage. The likeable singer captivated with his songs the audience from the first minute on.

At the Tent stage were beside others Susan Cadogan, U-Brown & Prezident Brown and Tippa Irie & The Far East Band on the run.

## Saturday Lee "Scratch" Perry, Ziggy Marley, Perfect, Lutan Fyah

On Saturday morning the festival visitors got a nasty surprise while leaving the tent – the temperatures dropped to only 10°C. It was a downright onset of winter! The bestsellers of Friday were sunglasses and on Saturday it changed to woolen hats!

The experienced Chiemsee Festival visitors had of course gumboots in their baggage that was why the people celebrated despite the rain.

Lutan Fyah and Perfect & House Of Riddim braved the cold and rain, especially Perfect that played a great set. He appeared in crazy colorful clothes and did a funny, active and at the same time engaging concert. Perfect made the people smile and dancing while listening to his sound.

The Hip Hop act from Germany Blumentopf managed to dispel the rain with great freestyle and brought back the sun to the Chiemsee.

The Reggae-Legend Lee "Scratch" Perry, who is living in Switzerland, entered the stage after Blumentopf as usual with fancy shoes and cap. His extravagant appearance and his distinctive Roots Reggae were celebrated by the audience. Lee Perry played nearly every kind of Reggae – from Roots to Dub.

About the probably biggest audience of the weekend Ziggy Marley and Mono & Nikitaman could be pleased. Ziggy Marley played a more quiet concert with a balanced mixture of own songs and songs of his father.

Ziggy elated the massive and it was fantastic to see how the people celebrated his songs. The Dancehall-duo Mono & Nikitaman did a great show until after midnight and heated the massive again on this cold day.

## Sunday Junior Kelly, Linval Thompson, Jimmy Cliff

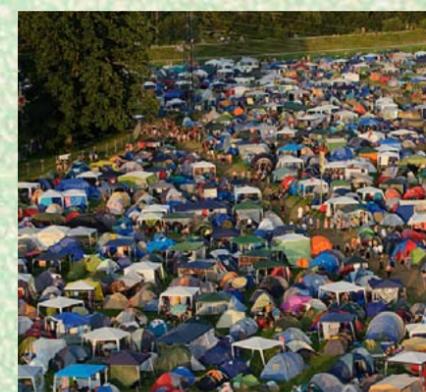
The sun on Sunday was again more gracious and its shafts of sunlight warmed again. Adapted to the reappeared sun the visitors packed away the woolen hats and got the bikini on again. Also the crane for bungee jumping attracted again more people to jump 60 meters down.

The last day of the festival was marked of some German bands, like Ohrbooten or Irie Révoltés. But also Jamaican Reggae-Greats such as Linval Thompson and Jimmy Cliff came to the Chiemsee Reggae Summer.

At the Tent stage sunny Roots-Reggae-Sounds of Jamaica Papa Curvin and Linval Thompson warmed the people. With these two Reggae-Veterans dancing feet were granted!

At the Main stage the good mood on stage came with Junior Kelly. He replaced Mr. Vegas and he showed that he was a good choice for the replacement. Finally the absolutely headliner of Sunday was no one less than the Jamaican Legend Jimmy Cliff. The massive could sing along almost every song together with Jimmy Cliff. With

Report by Viktoria Spratter  
Photos by Michael Grein





# Reggae's Gone Country Album Launch

The launch was at Breezes Negril in Jamaica on August 30.

VP Records recently released its much anticipated CD entitled 'Reggae's Gone Country'. The launch event was held at Breezes Negril and it featured a media conference and performances from some of the artists who appeared on the CD.

The fun evening showcased some of Reggae's finest entertainers including Tarrus Riley, L.U.S.T, Romain Virgo, Freddie McGregor, Busy Signal and Duane Stephenson.

Each individual belted out one of their hits and performed covers to some of Country and Western biggest hits. Led by Executive producer Christy Barber, VP Records Vice President of Marketing, the album has six producers and two recording engineers.

One of the highlights of the night was seeing young Romain Virgo perform with Country great Larry Gatlin.

**Report and photos by Steve James**



## On Tour with the Itals

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

My name is Greg Ward. I have been performing reggae music professionally since 1998, performing with many great artists and musicians. We as touring musicians experience so many interesting things on the road, we would love to share some of them with you. Stay tuned for my upcoming blog, documenting life on the road with a reggae musician. My first blog from the road will be with The Legendary Itals (R.I.P. Lloyd Ricketts and David Isaacs), as Keith Porter and Ronnie Davis tour New England showcasing classic hits such as Play your Part, Rastafari Chariot, and Dis Ya Time.

**Aug 11, 2011**

Hi friends, Greg Ward here, professional guitarist, currently on tour with The Itals. The last tour, a few weeks ago, Lloyd Ricketts joined Keith Porter and Ronnie Davis, as the original Itals lineup, for the 1st time in the United States in over 25 years. This was a beautiful sight to behold. People in audience were overjoyed at this reunion. Lloyd expressed to me how much he loved the vibes and wanted to tour for years to come. Lloyd passed

on to be with our ancestors, a few days later, while in Jamaica getting ready for the next tour. It was a honor and a blessing to be a part of these last two performances by Lloyd Ricketts, Ronnie Davis, and Keith Porter, the original lineup of the Itals. Nonetheless, as Lloyd would have wished, the Itals movement continues. Here are some notes from last week's tour that just finished up.

**Aug 11, 2011  
Washington DC**

The band and myself met up with Ronnie and Keith at 9pm in Washington DC at One World Rehearsal Studio. We hailed up the owner, Kofi and then made our departure for our first show in Rockland ME. Everyone was excited to see one another. We briefly remarked at the mystical ways of JAH's Creation, how amazing it was to have Lloyd a part of the vibration again, and then so quickly be humbled by the swiftness of how things can change. Everyone was in high spirits still and I could tell there was an even more renewed appreciation of the day. We got in the van and made our way towards Rockland ME.

**Aug 12, 2011  
Strand Theatre,  
Rockland ME**

We arrived at 11am, 14 or so hours later in Rockland ME at our hotel.



The accommodations provided by the venue was not too bad. Good, considering that there was a large boat show happening in town and we were told there may be no rooms available. Luckily we got some, and continued to rest for a few hours before sound check. I couldn't sleep very well, so I called down to club to make sure everything was as it should be, which it was. 3:30pm we head down to club for soundcheck which went fine, then everyone came back to the hotel to get their respective dinners.

8:30pm showtime... We arrive at the theatre to behold a full house of anticipating Itals fans. After 10-15 minutes of chill time, the band hit the stage and performed 2 instrumentals (Ram Jam and Satta Massa Gana). The crowd responded well, so I asked them if they were ready for the Legendary Itals from Westmoreland Jamaica. Frenzy ensued and I proceeded to bring out Ronnie Davis and Keith Porter. The band ran through the intro medley, playing excerpts from Give Me Power (tribute to Lloyd Ricketts), Dis Ya Time, Play your Part, and JAH Glory right into the first tune, Smile Natty Smile. The two reggae/Rasta elders appeared on stage and did not stop the high energy until the last song. Playing hits like Call Dread Name, Rastafari Chariot, Peace and Love, Rasta

Philosophy, Dis Ya Time, the crowd was loving every moment. The audience members commented afterwards that two sounded like angels. It's true, these guys are some of the creators of reggae music, and are one of the last remaining groups that continue to represent harmony reggae vocal groups. We said our goodbyes to the audience after Keith and Ronnie, met fans, took pictures, and signed autographs. Tomorrow, Newport Reggae Fest with The Itals, Yellowman, Skatalites, and Bushman. It's going to be nice to see Roops, the bassist we toured with in June. He is playing bass with Bushman for the week. JAH guide.

**Aug 13, 2011  
Newport Reggae  
Fest, Commercial  
Wharf, Newport RI**

We left Rockland ME at 4am to begin our journey to Newport RI. 10am we arrived in Newport, RI. The vibes were high. Some local band were entertaining across the street, people were walking everywhere. Newport, RI is very popular during the summertime. People were beginning to gather in large numbers for the reggae fest. The Itals were going to be the first group to perform. I was glad to see all of the fans in the crowd singing along. Last time we were in Newport, Bill Mur-

ray came out to the show. The band was tight, and Ronnie and Keith kept the crowd going with hit after hit. After the performance, we mingled for a little while and then took off for Putney VT where we rested for the night and next day. Big up Charlotte for being one of the best hostesses ever!

**Aug 14, 2011  
Northampton, MA**

Today we only had to drive 1 hour to get from VT to Northampton. We left in the evening and arrived at 6pm for soundcheck. Interestingly, there were a lot of more 35 and over crowd at this show than most. It was a nice sight, so many original fans coming out to see the group. Show began at 8:30pm. Keith and Ronnie were having a lot of fun on stage I could tell, going back and forth singing old Jamaican hits over top of the riddims we were providing. Finished the show at 10:30pm and began the journey home towards Washington DC.

**Aug 15, 2011  
North Garden, VA**

Returned home for the week. Next weekend The Itals will be at the Hoxley Fest in Wellston MI- Sat and the Grog Shop, Cleveland, OH- Sun.

**Report by Greg Ward  
Photos by Greg Ward and  
Kristin Kolaczowski**

# Reggae Rhythm and Blues Festival 2011

**The festival took place in New York with Tarrus Riley, I-Octane, Bennie Man and Movado.**

Roy Wilkins Park in Queen was the place to be in New York City, on Sunday 4th of September 2011, at the inaugural Reggae Rhythm & Blues Festival.

Undoubtedly, one could tell it was a Caribbean event, as scores of Caribbean flags, could be seen, in exhibit of each Island support. The feeling of Reggae Sumfest hit me, as I approached the gates, familiar faces that I have not seen for man years, musician / artiste the atmosphere was totally captivated by magnetism of brotherly love, all around.

I must applaud the Irie Jam Media Group, for it's superb security measures, patrons moving in and around the event, were doing so orderly. I did not see or learn of any dispute, that warrant the security officers intervention.

As the night drew near, Kenny "Baby Face" Edmonds, gave a stalwart performance, and could do nothing wrong, but sustain his melodious momentum, in pleasing the hungry souls of the audience. Professional / diverse and entertaining are the only words, that can describe his performance, that will remain in the hearts of

many, for some time.

After he left the stage, scores of security, escorted him to his trailer, where he was whisked off, in a extra stretched limo, totally differentiate a super star, for a ordinary performer.

I-Octane hold his own and lived up to his expectation of delivering on a positive note. The singer emphasized on love and cohesive collaboration for building of better communities. His performance shows some level of maturity and if continued in this form, will enhance his career, for international stardom.

Next on stage was Mr. Moses "Bennie Man" Davis, who was honored by Irie Jam Media Group (promoters of the event) for his 3 decades of outstanding contribution to Reggae / Dancehall music. The audience rise to the occasion of Bennie man, as he entered the stage. He was presented the award by US Congresswoman Yvette Clarke.

Bennie Man, accepted his award, and made it clear, that he was unable to perform, and immediately gave them a surprise of Khago. The electrifying energy could be felt in all corners of the park, as Khago burst on stage with his hit single, Na Sell Out. Bennie Man was unable to sing, but this did not confined him from danc-

ing, as he gave them some of his sizzling moves, much to the appreciation of the audience.

A tribute to Joel Chin, the late A&R director and grandson of VP Records founder, who was recently murdered in Jamaica. Joel was a mentor to most Jamaican artiste and was instrumental in singing Beres Hammond and Beenie Man, among other top Jamaican artiste to VP Records.

Tarrus Riley was next, and waited patiently back stage, much to socializing with his fans before going on stage. Apparently his band was not at it's best and the quality sound was lacking. Musician mogul Dean Fraser, beckon to the engineers to find that quality, but to no avail. Tarrus performed, but it was evident that he was disturbed by the technical problems, but delivered as usual.

David "Movado / Gully Gad" Brooks, was the anchor performer, and the audience was hungry for him. Similar to feeding chickens, all was eating the musical food from Gully Gad! He paid respect to Bounty Killer, and assured the audience that there wasn't any feud between him and Bounty Killer, he also made it know that, the dancehall was run by Vybz Kartel and himself.

Movado had it all to himself, and did not waste no time to

show how prepared he was for this. One hit after another, could be heard, as the audience bellowed their voices, with his songs, in awe. He paid respect to the police officers right before he gave the crowd what they were waiting for, Delilah.

Reggae Rhythm & Blues festival, was indeed a success, but unprofessionalism surfaced, when security personnel, prevented press person from going back stage, or in front the stage consistently. It was much to the disgust of myself and other media person, whom continued to complain of the nonsense action of the security personnel. All was well, except for the unprofessionalism of the security, who had no respect or regards for the press media.

**Report by Randolph Fisher  
Photos by Zion Kendall**



# Rototom Sunsplash 2011

**The festival took place in Spain from August 18th to 27th.**

Rototom Sunsplash is simply one of those festivals that really must be experienced in person, in order to fully understand the magnitude of the event. Europe's largest reggae festival takes place over the course of ten days, at a massive site with several stages and all kinds of peripheral activity; the range of sights, sounds and activities on offer is staggering, rendering it several cuts above the rest. The festival has been going for 18 years now, and for most of its existence, was based in north-east Italy, in a beautiful park at the foot of the Alps, but following conflict with short-sighted politicians, moved last year to Benicassim, Spain, a gritty seaside town located between Valencia and Barcelona.

Though the new site is not quite as evocative as the old, it is far larger, allowing for the addition of a number of new venues, the most favoured of which is the Dub Station, a wonderful dome-like space towards the rear of the place, with a top-notch, high-powered sound system that played host to Jah Observer, Channel One, Adrian Sherwood, Iration Steppers, and many more, with residents Blackboard Jungle on hand to make certain every-

thing went as it should, so the space was packed each night, and the vibe always right. In the dancehall arena, there were also nice sets from Youth Promotion, a truncated Saxon Sound, and Brigadier Jerry (with Lampa Dread of One Love selecting), while the ska stage had plenty of rousing vintage dance music from Natty Bo and Earl Gateshead, as well as London's Rootikal crew.

Rico Rodriguez made a guest appearance on the small lion stage, but did not always gel with his backing band, while on the main stage, the anniversary of Bob Marley's passing was heralded by Ziggy, Kymani and Rita Marley, and Linton Kwesi Johnson kept reggae's political content in focus. There was also the usual antics from Shaggy, Mr Vegas, Tony Rebel, Queen Ifrica and Capleton, but the icing on the cake came on the last night, when Michael Prophet, Johnny Clarke and Horace Andy delivered blistering sets that were entirely spot-on, backed by the ever-dependable Dub Asante band, with producer Bunny 'Striker' Lee at the side of the stage as guest of honour.

If you're already a Rototom devotee, I look forward to seeing you there in 2012; conversely, if you have not yet discovered this magnanimous festival, you owe it to yourself to make cer-

tain to be present at the next.

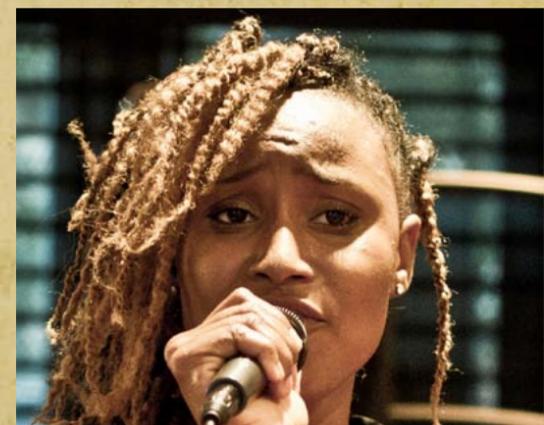
**Report by David Katz  
Photos by Rototom 2011**



# Diana Rutherford in Paris

Diana Rutherford did a showcase at Virgin Megastore in Barbes, Paris on September 16th to present her debut album 'Ghetto Princess', before returning to Jamaica. She performed songs from this album such as Pon Facebook, Rebel and also Hot Gyal and Killing Me Softly.

**Report and photos by Jennyfer Papin**



# 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

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