

UNITED 
REGGAE

MAGAZINE #20 JUNE 2012

**Perfect
Mutabaruka
Foundation**

- *Makeda Dread's WorldBeat Center*
- *Damian Marley*

Robbie Shakespeare

*"Sly was playing the drums just
like how I would always tell
other drummers to play"*



BY ERIK MAGNI

Original cover photo by Wonder Knack



Here's to another 50 years

The Beat, Natty Dread, Irie Up and Woofah are four reggae magazines that have ceased publication in recent years. Why? Declining sales, tough macro economic conditions affecting advertising and subscriptions and new ways of consuming both music and literature are some of the reasons.

Even though the publishing business has been robbed of some strong titles, reggae music might stand stronger than ever before. Jamaica has in recent years been challenged by both Europe and the U.S. as the main provider of quality productions.

But we – United Reggae, LargeUp, Riddim Magazine, Echoes, IrieZine, Reggaeville and many others – need you. We need the support from both our readers and our main providers of ideas, such as labels, producers, promoters and artists. Without you several of us might need to cease publication as well.

Reggae music has challenged the conventions in the music industry for 50 years, and we all need to help each other to keep the fire burning for at least another 50 years.

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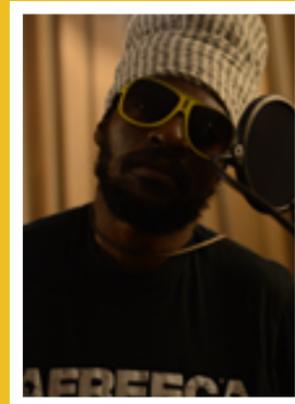
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PORTRAIT

Makeda Dread's WorldBeat Center



Harmony, Melody and Style

by Erik Magni

'Harmony, Melody & Style' is the latest reggae release on Soul Jazz Records. It tells the story of lovers rock – from its sound system beginnings, its commercial explosion at the start of the 1980's and its underground continuance into the next decade as the founding producers continued to absorb and mutate American soul, disco and rare grooves into a distinctly British reggae sensibility. The album includes both classic and rare tracks and comes with exclusive photo material and extensive liner notes with interviews with the artists, musicians and producers who helped define lovers rock. 'Harmony, Melody & Style' is available as a double CD with slipcase and as two limited edition separate volumes of double-vinyl, both with heavyweight card gatefold sleeves.

Reggae Roast Reach 10

by Karl Pearson

Out now, on 12" vinyl and digital format is the milestone tenth release from the Reggae Roast label. Titled Show Babylon the cut features the vocals of a true legend in Jamaican Reggae Linval Thompson, who first hit the scene with the self-released No Other Woman way back in the early 1970's. With over a dozen albums to his name he also cut his mark as a producer working with artists including Dennis Brown, Fred-

die McGregor, Barrington Levy, Eek-A-Mouse, Gregory Isaacs, The Wailing Souls, Triston Palma, Cornell Campbell, Johnny Osbourne, The Viceroy's, and Sugar Minott. This time though production duties, as well as chipping in with a version and dub, fall to a man who may not perhaps be regarded as legendary yet, but is well on his way, Nick Manasseh who has been deeply involved in the development of the UK roots scene for the past two decades. As seems to be the norm now with Reggae Roast productions there is also a dubstep remix which is performed by the highly rated Dutch producer TMSV who recently remixed My Burdens for Foundation Sound.

A Good Word From Brother Culture

by Karl Pearson

Available now on limited edition 7" vinyl and digital download from Roots Garden Records is Brother Culture Good Word produced and mixed by Nick Manasseh. The single follows on from his previous Roots Garden release in 2006 Darker Side Of Town and is a remixed and transformed version of Red Eye which originally featured on his acclaimed 2008 LP 'Isis'. Brother Culture's fast chat style and militant lyrics come spiritually equipped as he chants against the dogma and wickedness that divide so many, on top of a sinister digi dancehall/roots backdrop. On the flip is Manasseh's Dub The Word an atmospheric and heavyweight dub-wise outing with retro 80's drum sound and deep keyboard bass line contrasted by futuristic synth lines, choral backing vocals and cinematic layers sure to keep dubheads nodding and roots dances rocking.

Scrub A Dub Release Their Latest Installment

by Karl Pearson

On May 7th Mungos Hi Fi / Scotch Bonnet released the latest installment of their dub step imprint Scrub A Dub. It

will be as hard as they come double A-side plate featuring the mighty Eek-A-Mouse, with some Anarexol styled warbling, on one of their most requested and heaviest tunes yet Hire and Removal (refix). The flip side will feature Solo Banton's re-lick of his Kung Fu Master, originally recorded with Disrupt on their Music Addict EP for Jahtari. This time though he'll be aided by some sweet vocals from Ruben Da Silva. Completing the set is The Drunken Dub that takes the already foreboding beat to a deeper, darker place. The release is available on 180g, 12" Vinyl and digital format, visit www.scotchbonnet.net for more info.

Roy Wilson Has Died

By Erik Magni

Jamaican singer Roy Wilson has died at the age of 72, after being ill for some time. In the 60's he was part of the acclaimed duo Higgs & Wilson, together with Joe Higgs. Higgs & Wilson's debut single Manny Oh, produced by Edward Seaga, who later became Jamaica's prime minister, was a smash hit. The duo later moved on and worked with Coxson Dodd having several other hit songs, including How Can I Be Sure and There's A Reward. The duo split up in the mid 60's when Roy Wilson moved to the U.S. Joe Higgs continued his musical career and became a mentor for Bob Marley and also recorded several highly praised albums.

Springline Come Fi Conquer

By Karl Pearson

The first up is 'Flash It Dubwise' from Yabass Yaba Radics. This is his 3rd album via Springline and is the final part of a three 'bootleg style series' set of releases that have a very back to basics feel that tips a hat to the early eighties sparse dub genre, popular with dancehall chatters as background tracks for do their thing over, with slightly wacky mixing giving it a DATC feel.

The second album is 'Foundation' by The Manor and is the follow up to 2010s 'Revelation Congo' also released through Springline. It sees a more mature Manor taking a rootsier path yet still covers a variety of 'genres' there's the earthy, organic of the nyah-bingi style, traditional early Wailers sounding cuts plus the addition of brass with the dulcet sounds from the trombone. Drummie dan (ex The Exploited, The Pogues, Creation Rockers) provides drums on four of the tracks and Roots Temple stable mate 'Chazbo Chong' also turns up with his harmonica. Third but by no means least is the David Powell Experience with 'Spooky Dub', another artist who is releasing his second album with the label. This follow up to 'Night Bus Dub' has a whirly spooky 2-Tone vibe alongside more electro chill leaning cuts plus there's a couple of the more 'vintage' style dubs and even a mad spacey funk work out and all on just 8 tracks! All these releases are available now via the Come Fi Conquer web site as well as iTunes, Amazon and Spotify. Also from May 21st CDs will be distributed and stocked by Roots Lab Intl.

Mek It Run by Dennis Bovell

by Erik Magni

The 75th release by UK reissue label Pressure Sounds is 'Mek it Run', a dub set by UK producer and musician Dennis Bovell. The 16 tracks are new mixes of songs originally recorded between 1978 and 1986. All tunes have been sourced from original master tapes and are remixed by Dennis Bovell at Mad Professor's Ariwa studio in London. According to Pressure Sounds' web site Dennis Bovell came up with the idea when he found a stack of boxes containing old two inch multi-track analogue master tapes, some dating back to the late seventies. He selected some likely looking titles that never had the dub treatment and arranged a slot in Mad Professor's studio. The cream of the UK's reggae session players are featured on the album and there are also a couple of vocal guest appearances by I Roy. The 16 tracks are spread over a double vinyl and single CD with sleeve



notes by Steve Barker, photos by Adrian Boot and David Corio and artwork and illustrations by John Simms who was responsible for the graphics for the Two Tone label.

Borderline Riddim Remix

By Erik Magni



French production crew Irie Ites have teamed up with UK producer Russ Disciples to give a new flavor to their Borderline riddim released about six years ago. Russ Disciples has given vocals from Luciano, Ras Mc Bean, Lutan Fyah and Lorenzo a fresh treatment in a step-pers style. These tunes are now available on vinyl and each is followed by its dub version.

Trojan Honour Duke Reid With A Limited Edition 7" Vinyl Boxset

By Karl Pearson

1962 was a fascinating time for Jamaica; the country gained independence from Great Britain and was now also finding its own musical independence

in the sound of Ska after having been predominantly dancing to U.S R&B at the dancehalls. One of the main exponents of forging this new sound was the former policeman turned liquor store, recording studio and the famed Treasure Isle label owner Duke Reid. Trojan Records in his honour are now releasing a limited edition 7" vinyl boxset featuring 8 faithful reproductions of some of the Duke's most precious musical gems from Ska's heyday era of the mid-sixties, with each of these 7" singles making its first official release outside of Jamaica in this format.

The titles and artists of the singles will be:

SINGLE #1:

- A. Renegade - The Zodiacs with The Baba Brooks Band
- B. Duck Soup - The Baba Brooks Band

SINGLE #2:

- A. The Last Time - The Sensations with Tommy McCook & The Supersonics
- B. Portrait To Don - Tommy McCook & The Supersonics

SINGLE #3:

- A. Samphey Man - The Rio Grandes
- B. Special Event - The Baba Brooks Band

SINGLE #4:

- A. Don't Trouble People - Alton Ellis & The Flames with The Baba Brooks Band
- B. Alcatraz - The Baba Brooks Band

SINGLE #5:

- A. I Found My Love - The Sensations with The Baba Brooks Band
- B. Western Flyer - Baba Brooks Band

SINGLE #6:

- A. So Long - Lester Sterling with The Baba Brooks Band
- B. After A Storm - Justin Hinds & The Dominoes with The Baba Brooks Band

SINGLE #7:

- A. What You Gonna Do - The Techniques with The Baba Brooks Band
- B. Tribute To Don - Roland Alphonso with The Baba Brooks Band

SINGLE #8:

- A. Teach The Youth - Justin Hinds & The Dominoes
- B. Windfall - Tommy McCook & The Supersonics

Good and Simple by Joey Fever

by Erik Magni



Swedish dancehall singjay Joey Fever is back with a new EP, following his debut album 'In a Fever' released on Tippra Iré's Lockdown label a year ago. 'Good & Simple' collects six tracks in the dancehall vein produced by Emir "Youthman" Kobilic, a singer and producer regarded as one of the fastest rising stars on the Swedish reggae scene. The release of the EP has been preceded by the anthemic single Ti Li Boom. 'Good & Simple' is available as digital download on platforms worldwide.

Reasonin' by Rod Anton

by Erik Magni

After an acclaimed four track EP released in February, French/Portuguese singer Rod Anton and his backing band The Ligerians arrive with their debut album 'Reasonin'', an album recorded in France and Jamaica with guest vocalists such as Max Romeo, The Congos and Vaughn Benjamin from Midnite. 'Reasonin'' collects 14 tracks and revolves around the notion of reasoning', described in the press release as a form of communication, reflection and exchange between individuals seeking to attain wisdom. This notion of reasoning' is also defined by tracks like We Go Reason, the interlude Reasonin' With The Congos and the album's outro. 'Reasonin'' hit the physical and digital shelves as CD and digital download on May 21st.

Respect Jamaica 50th

by Erik Magni

The IndigO2 Arena, on the Greenwich peninsula in London, is to host a spectacular twelve-day event to help celebrate the 50th anniversary of Jamaica's independence. Appearing on stage will be some of the most iconic reggae, ska and dub artists from the Island that despite its size has left an indelible mark on the music business as a whole. It starts on the 26th July with Damian Jr. Gong Marley and runs through to August 6th where Jimmy Cliff and Oneness, Derrick Morgan, Max Romeo, the Gaylads and Bob Andy will bring things to a close with the help of David 'Ram Jam' Rodigan keeping the party going until late. In-between will be appearances by such artists as Lee 'Scratch' Perry, Yellowman, The Abyssinians, Tarrus Riley, Horace Andy and Raging Fyah amongst others. Also running in parallel with this at the same venue is The Best in Jamaican Comedy at Proud2. This event will feature 'The Jamaican Magnificent 7', a stand up comedy show highlighting the variety of Jamaican heritage comedians in UK today. 'Laugh Jamaica 50' featuring Ity and Fancy Cat, who'll deliver some classic musical comedy with special guest comedians direct from Jamaica. The cult underground hit play 'My Big Fat Jamaican Funeral', that illustrates how funny, exciting and dramatic a Jamaican funeral can really be. Satire with 'Me My Wife and Her Next Door', an amusing and funny story of the nosy neighbour meddling in a Jamaican couples happy life with some dire consequences and 'Jamaican Dons of Comedy' a best of the best of Jamaican heritage comedians with tales of what it means to originate from the famous island in the sun. Finally just before all this begins on 24th July and going all the way to 22nd October is Messenger: the Bob Marley Exhibition at the British Music Experience (BME) which they say is an "exhibit to explore Marley's role as the catalyst to the reggae revolution, as well as his influence on music and culture over the past three decades."



Springline Jamaica Meets Uncle Fee Dubplate Style

by Karl Pearson

This 10 Track vocal album put together by Springline's Gipsy and Black Harmony Sound System DJ Uncle Fee showcases the two stables Jamaican archives. Back in around 2007 Soundman Fee came back from a trip to Jamaica with a bag full of dubplates. The following year he pressed 1000 10" plates from one of these by the artist Whitebird aka SingingBird entitled "ShoBeDoBe" while the rest have all remained unreleased until now. There are a further 2 cuts from Whitebird plus 2 from the uprising vocalist Eldermire. All the Uncle Fee cutss were voiced and mixed at President Brown's Studio in

Ocho Rios, JA and are reportedly just a taster of more to come from the UF label archives. The Springline side of things come from Telford 'Tilly Roots' Nelson, formerly of Culture and who as a solo artist released the album 'On The Rock' in the early 90s along side some highly sought after 7" JA singles on the Sonny Fudgie Label. Telford voiced some dubplates for Springline Jamaica during 2009 which were mixed at Music Shop JA on a riddim provided by renowned roots riddim maker Flow Production in Switzerland. Last but by no means least is Meeko Diamond's cut 'People Get Ready' that was given to Springline Jamaica as a gift from the band The Reggae Bubblers who reside in the Virgin Islands. This Bubblers cut, 'Come On Natty Dread', first appeared as a download single on Springline Jamaica 3 years ago and finds it's official re-release on this album.

Release the Hounds by Da Grynych

by Erik Magni

Curtis Lynch – UK producer and owner and founder of the Necessary Mayhem and its several subsidiaries – follow-up his dub EP 'Dubstrumentals' with his debut dub album under his alias Da Grynych. It's titled 'Release the Hounds' and boasts seven dub tunes. "I wanted to experiment with different sounds and styles," says Curtis Lynch in a press release, and continues: "Dub is a way I can express myself without the restriction of basing it around the classic structure of a vocal, concentrating more on the instrumentation."

The A side on the vinyl edition features dub versions of Necessary Mayhem vocal tracks which have been making waves over the past few months, such as Possessed by Tarrus Riley and Our Music by Macka B. Dubs exclusive to 'Release the Hounds' can be found on side B. These include tunes such as Ravers, a track by latest Necessary Mayhem Black signing Killa Mosquito, and Tuff, which has been as described by Curtis Lynch as a sound system set tester. 'Release the Hounds' drops on LP and digital download on June 12th.



Three New Riddims From Frenchie

by Erik Magni

French producer Frenchie – nowadays resident in London – has just released three new scorching riddims on his Maximum Sound imprint. Most Royal is a fresh original in a steppers style

played by Frenchie and Lenky with vocal cuts from Tarrus Riley, Ce'Cile, Christopher Martin, Sizzla and Assassin aka Agent Sasco. Rude Bwoy Be Nice is a recut of Ini Kamoze's Sly and Robbie produced England Be Nice with added horns and different overdubs. Vocal duties are handled by Captain Sinbad, Yami Bolo, Mr. Vegas and Tarrus Riley. Leggo di Riddim is a recut of the rock-

steady classic Let Me Go Girl, originally sung by the late Slim Smith and produced by Bunny Lee. Behind the microphone you'll find Da'Ville, Tarrus Riley, Christopher Martin, Captain Sinbad, Ras Demo and a combination between Ce'Cile and Slim Smith. The tunes are out on 7" and each riddim comes with an instrumental.



Cutty Ranks New EP

by Erik Magni

Veteran rock-stone voiced deejay Cutty Ranks has recently dropped the three track EP Full Blast on his own imprint Philip Music. With the title track Cutty Ranks gives a gritty take on the reality of living in the urban jungle of Kingston bringing a message of non-violence and justice. This digital released EP is

a taste of Cutty Ranks' new album coming later this year. Cutty Ranks started his career at the famed Techniques and Penthouse labels where he cut hits such as Press the Trigger, Limb by Limb and Stopper and he has also been criticized for his slack lyrics and his glorifying of violence. In 2000 he released the album 'Back With a Vengeance' produced by King Jammy, a set where he ventured more into hip-hop.



Richie Spice New Album

by Erik Magni

After acoustic sets from Clinton Fearon and Tarrus Riley yet another reggae artist drops an album in this vein. Richie Spice is expected to put out his addition to this nowadays popular genre before the end of the year. Free is the first single from the yet to be titled album and was released in May. "I am very excited about this new album that I am working on, it's an acoustic album. I want to give the fans something different with this album. They have been requesting this a long time now, everywhere I go fans are always asking me to do an acoustic album," says Richie Spice in a press release.



Thrillah by Easy Star All-Stars

by Erik Magni

Following up on the successful reggae tribute albums of 'Dub Side of the Moon', 'Radiodread' and Easy Star's 'Lonely Hearts Dub Band' comes Easy Star All-Stars reggae adaptation of the greatest selling record of all time – Michael Jackson's 'Thriller'. Easy Star's 'Thrillah' brings back several of the reggae stars from previous albums, such as vocalists Michael Rose, Luciano and Mojo Morgan. The album will be preceded by the July 10th digital release of the Billie Jean EP, which includes two album tracks, along with non-album remixes and a dub version. "We've always tackled the greats – The Beatles, Pink Floyd, Radiohead – but while we wanted to take on another huge album, we also wanted to blaze new trails.

In Thriller we found those new trails in a number of firsts for the series: the first album by an American artist, the first non-concept album, the first R&B/soul record, as well as the first release from the 80s," says Easy Star Records co-founder Lem Oppenheimer in a press release about selecting Thriller. "For me, I was most excited for Thriller," comments pro-

-ducer, arranger and guitarist Michael Goldwasser, and continues:

"I was always more of an R&B/soul and reggae kid growing up and I have an intense personal connection to Michael Jackson's music. Writing the arrangements for this album was a cool challenge. I didn't have to try to make non-dance music into dance music as on our previous albums because the original Thriller is so danceable already, but I needed to find ways to make each song groove in a different way from the original version. I didn't want any of the arrangements to be obvious in that regard."



Easy Star All-Stars take on the King of Pop's classic album hits the streets on August 28th.

Summerjam 2012 Ready To Reggae

by Gerard McMahon

The 27th 'Together As One' themed SUMMERJAM reggae festival at Fuhlinger Lake in Cologne, Germany takes place between Friday July 6th and Sunday July 8th next. Fusing Germanic efficiency with Caribbean ease, the line-up contains the cream of the crop of reggae's many manifestations. Rightly topping the bill and championing the 'roots' selection comes Burning Spear and his Young Lions. After his recent exhilarating (and emotional) Californian appearance, this eagerly anticipated event is Spear's seventh SUMMERJAM and third show of 2012 - and his first in Europe this year. Bringing up the dancehall dimension hot on the heels of his new album launch comes chart topper Sean Paul and the 'tomahawk technique'. And if that's not enough Beenie Man will do Dancehall too. The festival's proceedings will be brought to a close (on the Sunday night) by the popular, warm and engaging Stephen Marley - fresh from his 2012 Grammy award for best album. And for those looking for variety and an all-round high excellence reggae ensemble look no further than Alborosie and his Shengen clan. Given the festival's 'Together As One' motif it is also apt that the all-important African angle is covered courtesy of the tip-top Tiken Jah Fakoly and Mali chartbusters Amadou and Mariam. Whilst the Marley-inspired SOJA bring their popular sounds from America alongside Groundation, Midnite and U-Roy – representing the roots of reggae. This will contrast with Protoje's 'new kid on the block' contribution live and direct from Jamaica. And to ensure that there is no musical discrimination Nneka will cater for those drawn to the hip hop soul sound. Both Danakil and Irie Revoltes will bring a welcome French sound to the setting, complemented by Germany's Max Herre and the German-Indonesian influence of Sebastian Sturm and Berlin's Boom Orchestra. With 2 main stages and a dancehall arena (catering for nearly 50 performances), together with a host of ancillary activities running round the clock, this event's only downside is what you'll miss should you decide to take a nap in the Chill Out Zone! So whatever your style, it sure seems like SUMMERJAM is a 'must do' for the real reggae rockers.

Mentality by SOJA

by Erik Magni

U.S. reggae giants SOJA has just released in Europe their first digital EP in order to make the ball rolling before the European release of their fourth full-length album 'Strength to Survive', an album produced by John Alagia and inspired by Bob Marley's 'Survival'. This EP and the album are already available in USA. "That's the greatest reggae album ever made", states front man Jacob Hemphill in a press release, and explains: "It has the best bass lines and the best lyrics ever heard on one record. Marley wrote it after he went to Africa. I was 13 or 14 when I listened to it for the first time and it triggered all these long-forgotten memories of when I lived in Africa as a kid. My dad was an IMF representative in Liberia in the late 80's. I remember when the coup first started. My family had to hide in these iron bathtubs for three days because the military was shooting at everything. I was seven and that was one of my first memories. So Africa was always a big part of our lives. It defined our family, in a way. Music came right after that, so, for me, music was always tied to Africa and music was always something powerful."

The EP collects six tunes – Mentality, Not Done Yet, the acoustic She Still Loves Me and three versions of Everything Changes – and is currently available on digital platforms. The song Mentality is also available as free download



Make it Gwan Riddim

by Erik Magni

Flash Hit Records from South France has just released their first production – the Make it Gwan riddim. A taste of the riddim was featured on Skarra Mucci's album 'Return of the Ragga-muffin' released in April. The newly released one riddim compilation collects 15 cuts in a digital roots style from

artists such as Lutan Fyah, Carl Meeks, Pressure Busspipe and YT, whose What Dem Sellin also will be available on his upcoming album 'Revolution Time'.

Chiemsee Reggae Festival 2012

by Karl Pearson

The annual Chiemsee Reggae Festival that takes place at Übersee in the rural district of Traunstein, Bavaria, Germany will this year be held between Friday 24th and Sunday 26th August. With two stages the line up is strong and varied as ever with the likes of Beenie Man, Gentleman, Anthony B, Shaggy, Tarrus Riley and Sean Paul all appearing on the Main Stage amongst many others. The Tent stage has a more diverse selection of acts that features Jamaican dancehall veterans Half Pint, Barrington Levy plus the sweet falsetto voice of Cornell Campbell along with new comers such as Raging Fyah, Queen Omega, Fantan Mojah and Hollie Cook plus more 2-Tone and Punk influenced acts like Germany's The Busters and the UK's The Skints. For more information and a full list of who is on and when visit:

www.en.chiemsee-reggae.de

Jungle Skunk riddim

by Erik Magni

Irievibrations Records out of Vienna recently put out the 'Freedom Fighter' album from the powerful chanter Anthony B. And now it's time for yet another release, but this one is a one riddim compilation with nine cuts – of which six are previously unreleased – from reliable veterans and upcoming superstars. Luciano's Hard Road, Konshens & Delus' Call the Police and Anthony B's Defend My Own are included on their albums for Irievibrations, while the tracks from Raphael, Mojo Morgan, Ka-



baka Pyramid, Perfect, Iriepathie and Ras Muhamad are new recordings on the Jungle Skunk riddim. The one riddim album is currently available currently available as digital download.

Storms Of Life by Silly Walks Discotheque

by Erik Magni

Silly Walks Discotheque is one of Germany's foundation reggae sound systems and was founded in 1991. Under the name Silly Walks Movement, Oliver and Joscha – the founders – made an impact on the reggae scene with productions for Gentleman, Capleton, Tanya Stephens, Turbulence and Lutan Fyah. Now they're celebrating a twenty-year milestone with the production of the album 'Storms Of Life', a set that collects 16 original and exclusive songs by a varied bunch of performers, including Konshens, Luciano, J Boog and Exco Levi. 'Storms of Life' is currently available on CD, LP and digital download.

Rebirth by Jimmy Cliff

by Erik Magni



In December last year veteran singer Jimmy Cliff dropped the acclaimed EP 'Sacred Fire'. It was produced by award-winning U.S. punk rocker Tim Armstrong of Rancid fame. Now the pair have recorded a 13 track album together – 'Rebirth'. It's Jimmy Cliff's first album in seven years. 'Rebirth' features the brand new single One More and a version of the classic Clash song, Guns of Brixton. "I was inspired to re-visit my musical past and decided to go back to my roots on this record, Rebirth is a new chapter in my life and signifies a rebirth in my career and all I have left to accomplish," says Jimmy Cliff in a press statement. 'Rebirth' will be available

from 16th July, and as a teaser you can download the single One More by clicking here. It's only available until June 27th, so get it for free while you can.

Freedom Time by Zvuloon Dub System

by Erik Magni

Zvuloon Dub System is an eight piece band based in Israel and is influenced by a variety of music styles, such as Ethiopian jazz, rare grooves from the 70's, American soul, funk and jazz, alongside with Israeli mizrahi (Mediterranean) music. They formed six years ago and dropped their self-produced, self-recorded, self-mixed and independently released debut album 'Freedom Time' in April. 'Freedom Time' collects ten previously unreleased songs written and composed by the band along with a reggae version of Jimi Hendrix's Voodoo Child and Nah Give Up, a combination with top Jamaican deejay Ranking Joe. The album is currently available as digital download and CD. The vinyl version is expected to drop in July or August.

I'm Free by Bunny Marrett

by Karl Pearson

Bunny Marrett has been involved in the UK reggae scene since the 70's, but his output has been limited to two tracks on a 12" in 1981. Up until now. Bristol Archive Records has found his jazz influenced debut album 'I'm Free' recorded in 1986, an album that was released on June 18th 2012. The press release describes Bunny Marrett as an influential figure on the Bristol reggae scene with compositions recorded and released by both Black Roots and Delroy Ogilvie. Bunny Marrett was born in Jamaica, and moved the UK in his teens where he got involved in the local sound system scene as well as the local jazz scene. The vinyl edition of 'I'm Free' contains the 1986 album as it was envisioned – four vocals and two dub versions. The CD issue adds the two tunes issued in 1981 on a 12".

Garance Reggae Festival 2012 Final Line-up

By Karl Pearson



The 21st Garance Reggae Festival at the Arthur Rimbaud Park in Bagnols-sur-Cèze, France, which runs from Wednesday the 25th to Saturday 28th July, has now announced its final confirmed line-up along with who's appearing where and when. The festival offers up a great selection of acts that will celebrate the 50th anniversary of Jamaican independence and pay a fitting tribute to this remarkable Island whose musical influence has reached the four corners of the globe. On the main stage Wednesday will be the I-Threes featuring Rita Marley, Marcia Griffiths and Pam Hall, Jamaican Legends with Ernest Ranglin, Monty Alexander, Sly & Robbie and also Bob Andy, Derrick Morgan, The Gaylads, Lloyd Parks and We The People Band plus Jamaica All Stars, a band formed by French director Pierre-Marc Simonin after his "Portraits of Jamaican Music" documentary in 1998. A group with a fluid line-up that has included debut young musicians and veterans like Johnny Dizzy Moore, Justin Hinds, Scully Sims, Sparrow Martin and Bunny Wilson who'll be bringing to the stage a journey to the heart of the origins of reggae. In Dub Station Corner, joining Blackboard Jungle who'll be appearing each night, are OBF, King Alpha and Dubkasm with

Solo Banton. On Thursday it's the turn of Johnny Osbourne, Groundation, Israel Vibration, Chezidek, Leroy Smart, Biga Ranks, Mr Vegas plus new to the bill Senegalese, jazzy voiced, vocalist Daba Makourehah who has previously worked with the Rockers Disciples and is now preparing her debut album. While Dub Station Corner will host King Jammy Vs. Mad Professor. For Friday you've got Alpha Blondy, Beres Hammond, The Abyssinians, Freddie McGregor, Diana Rutherford and The Mighty Diamonds. In Dub Station Corner it's Downbeat The Ruler Vs. Soul Stereo. Saturday closes with Morgan Heritage, Sizzla, Cocoa Tea, Raging Fyah, Turbulence, Derajah and Donkey Jaw Bone and Magano, a female vocalist who has backed the likes of Bunny Wailer, Michael Rose and Warrior King but is now going solo. With Aba Shanti-I, Rootsting and Murray Man supporting Blackboard Jungle. More



Ginjah Live Pon Di High Grade Sound

By Erik Magni

Soulful Jamaican singer Ginjah hosts High Grade Sound's latest mixtape 'Live Pon Di High Grade Sound – 100% Dubplates'. As the title indicates the mixtape is made up of dubplates only. Ginjah turns up on 15 of the 35 tracks. Other artists include Sizzla, Jah Cure and Capleton among several other notable performers. 'Live Pon Di High

Grade Sound – 100% Dubplates' is available for free at High Grade Sound's website.



Menny's Book Of Riddims

By Erik Magni

U.S.-based singer Menny More of Easy Star All-Stars proclaimed last year that he had decided to pursue a solo career, and a few months later his solo debut 'The Journey' was released. Only a year later his sophomore album 'Menny's Book of Riddims' is slated for the CD shelves and digital outlets. The project has involved more than 40 musicians, engineers and guest artists. Included are for example efforts from Michael Rose, Philip Fraser, Soljje, Ben Bow and the Easy Star All-Stars. The concept of the album is to showcase Menny More's vocals over riddims from the early days of Studio One all the way up to present day riddims from the likes of Lustre Kings and Rugged & Prez. Menny More was born in Jamaica as Junior Morrison and emerged on the music scene in 1991 with the single Longie Longie. He has since recorded for producers such as King Jammy, Don One, Bobby Digital and Steely and Cleve. In 2004 he joined the Easy Star All-Stars. 'Menny's Book of Riddims' hits the streets in July 2012.

Electro-Reggae by Sherkhan and Likkle Devon

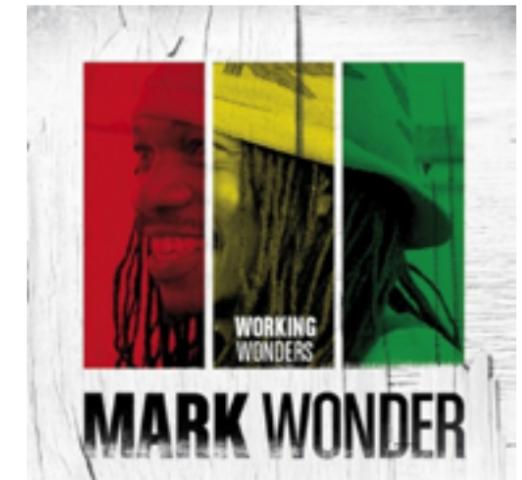
By Erik Magni

French producer Sherkhan – nowadays resident in Kingston – has in recent years produced a broad variety of riddims ranging from dancehall and one drop to more acoustic ones. For his latest production he has teamed up with Electric Entourage and moved in a new direction – electronica. Hard Rain is an electronic club banger fused with dancehall energy. It's voiced by Likkle Devon who at times sounds a bit like Michael Rose. Currently available as digital download at Bandcamp.com.

Mark Wonder's Working Wonders

By Erik Magni

Gospel influenced Jamaican singer Mark Wonder's fifth album 'Working Wonders' is produced by Moritz von Korff and Benjamin Zecher from Oneness Records out of Germany. It hosts 15 tracks in a conscious roots rocking mood and includes combinations with Mikey Melody, Natural Black and Sizzla. Stay tuned for a CD and digital version on June 29.



“Through education comes knowledge and through knowledge comes change”

Interview by Erik Magni
Photos by Franck Blanquin

Groundation is one of most successful reggae bands coming from the U.S., and their progressive style influenced by funk and jazz has a huge following in their home state of California and in Europe. ‘Building an Ark’ is the band’s latest set, and United Reggae got the opportunity to chat with front man Harrison Stafford about the album and the importance of education.

GROUNDATION

Knowledge is the key for Groundation’s Harrison Stafford

Groundation was formed 14 years ago by singer/guitarist/lyricist Harrison Stafford, keyboard player Marcus Urani and bass man Ryan Newman. The outfit began their journey on the campus of Sonoma State University of Jazz.

Since the band’s inception they’ve toured 30 countries on four continents, released seven studio albums independently and collaborated with veteran reggae artists such as Pablo Moses, Don Carlos, Ijahman Levi, The Congos and Apple Gabriel, formerly of Israel Vibration.

But that’s not all. The founding members joined forces with Jamaican drummer Leroy “Horsemouth” Wallace and Grammy nominee Will Bernard in 2008 to form the side project ‘Rockamovya’. Last year Harrison Stafford also released the solo album ‘Madness’ under the name Professor.

‘Building an Ark’ is the band’s latest album, released on the small French label Soulbeats in Europe and through reggae giant VP in the U.S. And in March Groundation visited France to promote the album.

“It’s hard work, but I feel strongly about the music, and we get a very positive response,” explains Harrison Stafford over the phone.

Trial and error

Harrison and his fellow band members started to work on the album in 2011 and recorded it in November and December. He explains he has learnt a lot over the past 14 years, and that ‘Building an Ark’ tells a story through the music, through the solos and through the arrangements.



“It involves everything from intros, outros, big moments, instrumentation and layering,” he says, and explains how the recording process works:

“Learning from trying.”

That sums up Groundation’s sound very well. Their albums usually feel created through jamming and using the creative impulses in the studio. And according to Harrison ‘Building an Ark’ was recorded then and there. The recipe for success is knowledge.

“Know your instrument and understand the instrument” he says, and continues explaining the process of a solo:

“It expresses the moment. It has a beginning and end, and a conclusion.”

Bringing people together

Harrison speaks and argues like an academic. He is verbal and gives thorough answers. When I ask about the title of the new album he reasons for several minutes about bringing people together and learning from different cultures. He wants to create and find a place where good people can reside.

“No ganja songs, no party songs. It’s about concerns and mindfulness,” he explains, and continues:

“Bring everybody into the ark and bringing people together. We build this ark together.”

But bringing people together, bringing different cultures together is easier said than done in a world where tensions between several countries have increased in the past months.

“There are so many ways of seeing the world,” he explains, and continues:

“Democracies and republics, Muslims and Jews. There’s a great division. But I can tell you the concerns and hopes that people are experiencing. There is a unity in the world.”

Knowledge is the key

Harrison wants to create a unity between people of different religion, color and nationality. He aims to put an end to division. His solution? Knowledge.

“Through education comes unity and



knowledge of different cultures can create unity," he says, and explains:

"You need to be able to tell the right from wrong. Through education comes knowledge and through knowledge comes change. Knowledge is the key. Greater education needs to happen."

Surprise and challenge

With 'Building an Ark' Groundation wanted to do something they haven't done before.

"We wanted to surprise ourselves and challenge ourselves. You want to be creative and recognize when you repeat yourself."

To be able to do it they spent a lot of time with their instruments. And for Harrison himself it seems so easy

when he describes it.

"I always feel inspired, I sing, I create music."

Only the beginning

'Building an Ark' is in the same vein as their previous six albums. It's an eclectic melting pot of roots reggae, jazz, funk, salsa and soul spiced with pop melodies and intricate arrangements. And through VP Records' huge distribution capacities it can reach new audiences and target groups.

Whether VP will be able to bring 'Building an Ark' to the Billboard list and on rotation on commercial radio stations remains to be seen. The competition is fierce to say the least.

But according to Harrison Stafford Groundation will continue to go

against the grain in a world where a four minute song seems never ending and where everything needs to be easily digested. Harrison puts it eloquently.

"14 years is only the beginning."

"If I was approached by Sly & Robbie to make an album I would do it"

Interview by Angus Taylor
Photos by Root Cultjah

Anyone who knows Perfect understands he has many sides. And just as in 2009 he followed up his highly rootsy second album for IrieVibrations 'Born Dead With Life' with the lovers of 'Karma' for his own Chalice Palace Records, now he has countered last year's equally organic and cultural sixth effort with Lustre Kings 'Back For The First Time' with another American produced effort for Seattle's Dynasty Records 'Journey Of 1000 Miles'. It's a more digital release than the vintage musicianship of 'Back For The First Time' and contains sojourns into pop like the Lady Gaga name-checking Roll With The Billionaires. But, as he explains to Angus Taylor, while stopping in Massachusetts after his European tour, it's all part of a wider plan of diversification for the Perfect brand - including some forays out of music into smoking paraphernalia...



PERFECT



Your new album is called *Journey Of A Thousand Miles* - the meaning?

Every step you take in life is a journey. And apart from the musical side of Perfect there's also a personal side. Over the years there have been a lot of ups and downs combined musically and personally when it comes to my career so this album is just thinking of how I have trod over the years up until now.

What kinds of ups and downs have you faced in your career?

You have politics in the business - that's number one. Sometimes you think you could have done more or been much more of a household name so to speak. Problems with record companies, promoters and sometimes people who come along and call themselves managers or advisors. Music is just like any other job out there - it's just that when you get off stage from performing for the people a lot of people don't know what happens next.

However, the reggae business does seem to have more than its fare share

of hangers on and managers. Why?

Yes, I do agree on that. Firstly it's because reggae was officially born in the poor man's backyard. And at the time when reggae was born it was a breadbasket for a lot of uneducated people who often never had jobs and probably dropped out of school early. So this was a way to earn a dollar for them and keep bread on the table. Personally I don't think reggae has really graduated from that stage. You've had people who have come along and tried to move it to another level but reggae is still "out of the office" so to speak. It's not well structured. That's partly why it has the effect it has on people - because it's not a business like hip-hop or R&B.

How is it different?

A Hip-hop artist can do a single this year and then a followup single the next couple of years! He's on tour, record sales are going on, he's getting drawn into his publishing and everything's all set - because hip-hop is structured as an "in the office" business. Reggae wasn't structured like that. It was born into the hands of less fortunate, uneducated, under privileged - people who have been brutalised by the system. So that whole essence still lies around the music we call reggae until today. So many people see reggae as a hustling zone. You have a lot of people who don't have any idea about reggae itself and they still step into it. And as a result of that, you have people who come into the so called business of reggae and try to give it a help but when they get into the meat of it they see it's not structured like an official business. You've had business people over the years who have tried to privately invest into it - some have worked out and some haven't. The majority of them have stepped back. So you have different people who try to enter into the business to see what it's all about - some come in with a good heart and others don't. The ones that don't come with a good heart - they mess things up worse.

What do you think is the solution? Is there any solution needed? Or does

the lack of structure give a degree of creative freedom and access for people that other more systematized forms of music wouldn't allow?

Artists need to be more educated about the whole business of music. Because whether you like it or not or you think it's real or not, it is a fact that there is a business side of music. So if you're not educated about it then it's possible you won't get the mileage you're looking for out of this.

Taking the title of your album literally, you've done a lot of travelling in your career. When you were young and growing up in St Ann, did you think you were going to do as much travelling as you've done today?

I knew I was going to travel a lot. Because back in Jamaica you have what they call the Revival Group. It's a religious group - there's a Pocomania order, a Revival order, it's coming from Africa. In Jamaica people see them as also being Obeah, black magic people. So if someone fell sick and said an evil spirit was upon them the Revival Church is one of the first churches they would take those people to try to get them back together. And in that order you have a Mother Woman - like a chief. Now, when I was young, about 15 years old and going to High School, there was a Revival Group that used to come to the square in Browns Town. I was always kind of scared of those people. One Friday afternoon I was coming from school through Browns Town when the chief, the Mother Woman - who was wearing red when the others were in white - she just pointed at me and said "You! Come here!" I was a bit scared but people were like "Oh! The Mother Woman, she called, so go!" She said "Let me see your hand" and said "You're going to go all around the world. You're going to fly like a bird. Go fly fly fly!" When I'm on a plane sometimes I flash back to that and she was right!

You spent a while working with European producers on your albums *Born Dead With Life (IrieVibrations)* and *French Connection (DJ Sherkhan)* and now you've completed your sec-

ond album in a row with an American producer - first *Lustre Kings* and now *Dynasty Records*. Is there any plan to that or is it just where you land and how it happens?

It's just that when you're on the road you meet different people, go in different studios with different producers and stuff. It so happened I was in Oregon when this label in Washington heard I was in America and wanted me to voice two singles. Then they were interested in voicing two more songs so we went up there and had a good session so we now had four songs. They were young guys, very talented, and while we were there the idea of an album came up. So the same afternoon we started working on it. All the songs for the album

“Hip-hop is structured as an “in the office” business... reggae is still “out of the office” so to speak”

were separate from the four songs that we voiced because we just got into a creative moment and started coming up with lots of ideas and concepts and took it from there!

This album is a lot more digital than your previous album *Back For The First Time with Lustre Kings*. Is every album the chance to show a different side of Perfect?

That is what I always try to do. You don't want your albums to be monotonous for the fans. If a fan has your albums in their house they should be able to listen to you depending on the moment that they're in. Some days you just wake up and want to hear a different type of rhythm - something relaxing or something popular. Sometimes when you're driving down the highway we just want to hear something different. So what I'm trying to

do is make myself available for that moment. Because I have fans who are not just lovers of reggae, they are lovers of other genres too, and I don't think it's a problem if you want to listen to another genre today and Perfect is in that genre too as one of the artists that you love. I think it's going to be so good that you can play him in a different genre and smile about it.

Let's talk about a couple of the tracks on the album. The song *One Week* - is going away into seclusion for one week a metaphor or do you actually do that?

That is the life that we lived. Living back in Bamboo when we used to link up with the Bobo elders we used to just venture out of the community for a week or two and just be in the hills farming. Sometimes it was just to get away from Babylon because no matter how small our community was we always thought it was so called Babylon for us. Sometimes we would seven or nine miles away into the jungle because there was a dense woodland in the Bamboo area that reaches right back to Nine Mile where Bob Marley is from. So we used to go seven to nine miles into the dense wood forest and just camp out with herbs and fuljoyment and just be free and exalt the name of The Most High and give thanks and praises.

And when you returned into the community - did you feel different?

Whenever we reached forward into the community you'd feel so strong. It was like a breath of fresh air because you have grown spiritually, physically and mentally. Because you'd get to think properly when you were away from the so-called system and you'd go deep and commune more with your acceptance and the whole African vibe that was in the air. So when you'd reach into the community again there would be a big smile on your face so sometimes people would wonder what you were so happy about and why! But it was just being free for a moment before coming back into the system and watching the people and knowing everyone could be free and live this life.

Have you got any plans to go to Africa this year?

I have never been to Africa. I went as far as the Aegean but I haven't been to what is now called Africa. Plans are in the making to go to Africa. Personally I haven't officially booked for a show in Africa yet but I have had promoters making suggestions and having ideas about flying me in and keeping a show down in Africa. But it has never been an official booking so who knows maybe this year I will go to Africa.

Let's talk about another album track, Dinner Time, where you talk about the lack of meat in your diet. On a typical day what would your diet consist of? Have you ever been in a situation when you were on tour and unable to get the food your diet required?

In the morning time I would usually be eating fruits or cereal - because I like eating cereal too. A tofu sandwich or some type of vegetarian sandwich. But I'm a person who likes to eat differently on different days. Some days I'll just have fruits alone. I don't really get stuck on one type of meal. Recently I was on tour for two days and just having fruits. There was plenty of food that was of my type that I could have eaten but I was just feeling for fruits. In France and Italy it can be a bit tricky for food because the majority of the restaurants aren't open until 6 o'clock in the afternoon. Sometimes you are there for the whole day and you can't get a solid meal so you have to partake of fruits or vegetables or some warm drink, some tea and bread until the restaurant is open.

You've recently been on tour in Europe where you stopped off in Amsterdam before heading over to California. What do you think of the way the marijuana smoking is under pressure from the Dutch government while California is now a centre for



medicinal marijuana? Is one door closing and another opening?

Amsterdam is always one of the places in the world where everybody looks forward to going because it's a marijuana haven for tourists and everybody who uses it. I was there and I heard about the situation where they're trying to close down on visitors buying stuff in the coffee shops but fortunately I was able to step into a coffee shop and had no problems. I think it's probably in the making for them to take that drastic action but I don't think it would be a good look for Amsterdam and I think the economy will definitely lose some money. It just won't be the same Amsterdam. It would just be another European country so to speak. Fortunately I have heard that Czech Republic is opening up and have started doing coffee shops for visitors as well as locals. So if Amsterdam is closing down the Czech is opening up. And as you say California is also open. As the good book says "when one door is

closed, many more open."

These things must be doubly important since you recently started marketing your own smoking paper line - Perfect Papers.

I'm such a huge fan of marijuana so I thought it was very good to do something for marijuana. Perfect Papers was an idea I introduced to my manager Susan [Deleon] and she thought it was a good idea. I introduced it to Ziggi from out of Slovenia who has been a friend over the years and he thought it was really terrific and we just took it from there. I have to say enough respect to Ziggi for making the idea a reality and to Dynamo out of France for doing the design. A lot of people have been gravitating to them - I had four hundred packs on tour and they all sold out! I had to hide a pack just so I had some for myself! The people were crazy about them in Germany. I was in Austria when there was this big Free Marijuana march and I brought them out there and immediately everything was finished! People were lining up to buy the papers! It's a good look Angus and right now I'm tasking my manager to get an international distributor to bring them worldwide.



"Rastafari started out as a resistance against imperialism and colonialism"

**Interview by Ras Morgan
Photos by Steve James**

Mutabaruka is one of the emblematic character, in Jamaica who knew, through the year, how to keep his presence and his Rastafari beliefs in front of the scene! This can be through the music that he spread, through his radio show on Irie FM, or even through his TV show 'Simply MUTA'.

In this interview, done on Irie FM compound in Kingston, Mutabaruka talks about Rastafari and it's spreading, but he also make a statement about the present Jamaica and it's dancehall music culture. As usual he is not going around the corners to express his vision and understanding of what is taking place in this world!

MUTABARUKA



When did you find yourself as a rasta?

Well, from my teenage.

Could you tell people what is Rastafari about?

Rastafari is liberation, a black power movement, spiritual nucleus, started out as a resistance against imperialism and colonialism. The former slave were taught that England was the mother land, and Rastafari help to shape a consciousness into a liberation through Pan-Africanism. Evolve from Marcus Garvey to Leonard Howell who is the founder. It's a liberation movement and a lot of people who find themselves in an oppressive state take on themselves that Rastafari is living, so you have people all over the world who can identify Rastafari.

How did Rastafari movement evolved from then to now?

It evolve through we have more informations, now we have other things that confront us inna this system ya, and through what we say, informations coming to us, so we can move and evolve from them time, 40's, 50's.

We fight for a recognition where Rasta was never recognized, them say we are fool and stupid, so we use a secular music Reggae music, to project Rastafari culture and philosophy, so even though we have no church, we use the music, we don't have no school, we use the music and though we no have nowhere to go and learn about Rastafari, but through the the cultural expression, people gravitate toward it and recognize themselves in it. So we move to an international level where people all over the world gravitate toward Rastafari, so Rastafari mind set and consciousness lend itself to new ideas, new thinking, and what was inside of Jamaica is now, all over, seen and recognized as what they call a "new religion", and we give the world a certain form of cultural expression that a lot of people in the western world never have I mean, like locks, locks is not unique to Rasta but Rasta help to shape that

mind set into people so that people now locks and feel no way, even some people now locks and have no connection to Rastafari, but it coming through that evolution of Rastafari outhere, because there was a time in Jamaica when the only people who had locks were Rasta.

So we give Jamaica a brand, even though they try to go around it, because Rastafari is the Jamaica's brand through the work of certain man like Bob Marley who allow people to come to Jamaica, and to look again to Jamaica, even though a lot try to shift out of it and don't recognize it, but we rise and rise to a level to what we could call visibility so that nobody can now ignore! So we have a lot to project and we examine Africa, because when we were going to school, it was just "black people came here as slave" but we never did know nothing about Africa so we though that Africa start at slavery, but now everyone know that Africa much more older than Europe or any other places, Africa gave birth to mankind, Itiopia, even the Bible tell you that the River Nile coming from the garden of eden is running through Ithiopia.

Africa is the birth place and that is what Rastafari come to expose to the world now and we move to that information gathering! So Rasta tells the people about Africa, tell the people about food and what to eat, there was a time when they use to call us rabbit and mock we, but now a lot of people trying to become vegetarians because they see it valuable. Rasta during a time was the only man in Jamaica that don't eat meet! So it's e who came and show the people the livity about how to live and be healthy!

And when political party divide people over the years, it's Rasta who came and give them a slogan, one love, one heart, to bring them together again and now that slogan is well recognized, it's I and I, not me and you, because me and you are two people but I and I is one! You see there is no manifestation of life which is not of the one, the tree, the bird, the bee, they all are the manifestation of that same

life! So Rasta tell them it's I and I now! So when man connect to I and say Haile Selassie I, now some say, "but Haile Selassie is a man", yes and man is God, you see, we nah believe in a supernatural power who sit on the sky and come pon earth and and that you can see only when you die! What we say is that it is now, because when you dead, you dead; and nobody can tell you what happen to you when you dead!

So we have to make use of the life we have now, I mean if you can't love when you are alive, who you gonna love when you dead? That is what Rastafari come to show and it still manifest the same thing His Majesty Selassie I. Africa, Africa for Africans, Itallivity, recognition of I and I. So Rastafari don't change!!

What do you think of the Jamaican music of today?

All right, you see, from the music change, from Reggae music to Dancehall, there is an element in dancehall that seem to step back instead of go forward!

So where Rastafari did dominate the Reggae scene, Rastafari don't dominate the Dancehall scene! So the consciousness that was reggae and the consciousness that allow people like you to come to Jamaica, is not necessarily in the dancehall, the dance hall is more a materialistic perspective of the Jamaican culture; and when Reggae offering something of liberation, the dancehall offering something of materialisation, materialism.

So now you have a hole heap of youth who are so misleded, again the nearly of America, a lot of it come from the influence of America, where them divert the consciousness from Rastafari into the materialism of America so the influence of America is deeply embodied in the dancehall music, you can see it by the way the youth them dressed, the mannerism and even the beat, it's not straight dancehall, it's kind of hip hop dance hall fusing, nothing wrong with the fusion cause Jamaican music always mix from them time.

But now, the lyrics, which pushed Jamaica outside is not here anymore so people outside of Jamaica are very disappointed, Jamaican music was like a beam of hope and a light to the world. So when people reach a certain state of depressive, them could look to Jamaican reggae and feel uplifted and powerful, but now it more carry you down! So now, it's mostly foreigners like African and Europeans who keep that Reggae beat, even if dance hall penetrated there, them still to hear the original roots music! Look, 30 years Bob Marley left and he still sound like a new artist, when you play Bob marley in a dance, him don't sound like an old sound? But you see, you can hardly play old dance hall music, it comes like toilet paper and that why so much of it come out one time. You see now, one artist have so much tune coming out at the same time, that as a radio DJ, I feel embarrass, I don't know which one to play, and now, there is a follow thing that is happening, if one sing about money, everybody sing about money, if he sings about bad mind, everybody sing about bad mind.

Now it look like there is no experience, when the artist them were singing about a certain level of consciousness, and, a level of speech, experience of environment, well, the dancehall artist is going through his experience but he don't think about that, he more think about how he's gonna burst, and whatever make him burst, he will sing pon it! So there is a difference between Reggae and dancehall, beat different and we see some young youth that don't know the value of Word Sound and Power, because what you say define you, so you don't have to talk no foolishness. So now many people outside and inside of Jamaica are disappointed, but still you have youth that hold unto the real roots!

What would be your statement concerning Jamaica?

American thinking with a third world living! So you see people dress up out there, fashion clothes and thing, but when you see how them leave it

needs more to be desired, cause they are so materialistic that they don't think about their spirit, they think about their body, so many people out there are just like cimetary, scepulturs, where people put flowers upon the dead body! Nuff people look happy because a lot of party going on, but when they come from dance, go home and lock the door, it's pure ignorance and vexation. Plus the two political parties has not been able to give the people what they want because they still maintain the eurocentric system of governance. Look we have independence since 50 year and we still have a governor general that represent the Queen of England! They think that Jamaican, and rasta are a set of ignorant people and they try to hold we with a certain system and hold we under a certain order and discipline to satisfy the neo colonialism mentality!

You see the neo colonialism is well embodied in the political system of Jamaica! Even if 85 or 90% of the people in power are originated from Africa, none of them never go study to Africa, in order to develop a political system that can fit the people in them consciousness, but instead of that they go Europe and try to bring a democratical thing that don't even work in England! Everyday we hear things a gwaan in England and still we a try to keep the same system pon a majority of people to are rebelious against that system, and them don't know how to put it pon the people, so they use some oppressive ways, you can see it on TV, you can see it at church, because church is one of the most oppressive way them use, politique tell the people that if them behave good, they will have a good life, and pastor tell you that if you live good, you will a have a good death! So that is the tricks they use to them Christianity and democracy! so them set the thing in a circle, and nobody can show them nothing out of the circle and when you try, like Rasta do, they say you mad!

So when you tell them to look to Africa, they say that "no you have to look something of the day", but Marcus

Garvey done tell them already "a tree without knowledge of their history is like a tree without roots"!

When they look to Africa they see sufferation and all thing, so they are afraid to look forward to it, but they have to understand that Africa is a continent composed of 53 countries, and that not so long ago, Europe was devastated by war and killed one another! Every continent have their time! But now them corrupt everywhere with them politics, but still you have people that wake up because people don't have no trust in this political system! So I don't know but Jamaica is in a position that it need someone to rock the boat so that we not going to make the same mistake again and again! So now when Rasta use to say they don't mix with politic, now you have Rasta who start create their own political parties because that is a necessity! Like now you have Rasta that teach at school when our children could not go school! So the change is here with the silent revolution, cause it's not with bomb and gun but through culture! So them embarrass because Rasta don't have no leader so them don't know who to kill to stop it! Rastafari Haile Selassie I is our leader and them say he's dead so them can kill him again to stop this revolution!

What vision would you have for Jamaica?

Well, I don't have really no vision, all I could say is Rastafari and Marcus Garvey!

What is your favorite reggae song?

Well it's not one, Babylon System of Bob Marley, Bunny Wailer, the Black Heart Man, Babylon Burning of Bob Andy, She's Royal by Taurus Riley... Nuff of them.

Do you still tour?

Yeah man, during the Olympic I will be in England for 12 nights of reggae, I will tour in Europe too in August, I was in Austria last December! so we still tour, not as often as before but we here pon the road!

“Sly was playing the drums just like how I would always tell other drummers to play”

Interview by Angus Taylor
Photos by Wonder Knack

Robbie Shakespeare is one of reggae's bass masters and one half of its most prolific and successful rhythm section - Sly & Robbie. Raised in East Kingston, his family home was a rehearsal and hangout spot for a variety of upcoming musicians and singers. Picking up the guitar first, he gravitated to the bass having been inspired by the music of Jackie Jackson of Treasure Isle and the guidance of Aston "Familyman" Barrett. When Barrett became the anchor of the Wailers, Robbie joined his old band the Hippy Boys, even stepping in to lay some crucial bass-parts for the songs Concrete Jungle and Stir It Up on the album 'Catch A Fire'.

A busy session man by the mid 70s Robbie found his ideal match in Sly: who he brought into Bunny Lee's house players the Aggrovators and into Peter Tosh's Word Sound Power band. Having ascended from a residence at the mighty Channel One studio via their own Taxi label to reggae's first major rhythm section production house - setting the tone for Steely and Cleve and Mafia and Fluxy - the duo became Chris Blackwell's musical handymen of choice, backing Grace Jones, Bob Dylan, Joe Cocker and Gwen Guthrie. Their forward thinking has seen continued success in dancehall, movie soundtracks and even video games. United Reggae reached out to the Riddim Twins Drumbar and Basspeare as they were about to team up with fellow legends Ernest Ranglin and Monty Alexander for a summer tour of Europe. As deep as his basslines, Robbie seldom grants interviews, letting his erudite and verbose partner Sly do most of the talking. So it was an honour for Angus Taylor to speak to the great man about his music as well as his love of food, film, and the things that make him laugh, discovering the half of Sly & Robbie that has only rarely been told...



**ROBBIE
SHAKESPEARE**

The beginning

What was your first music experience? Is it true that your brother Lloyd gave you your first acoustic guitar?

That acoustic guitar was always about. Anybody could come and pick it up and play it. My brother Lloyd, him and Maxie Romeo, Leroy Brown and Audley Rollins they sang as the Emotions. They would be rehearsing every day and there would be one or two acoustic guitars there so you could just join in. You know, you come every day, you loiter, take a spliff, you pick up a guitar and play - might be some poom poom or pom pom, might be right or it might be wrong but you just touch it and fuck around because you're not really playing anything because you can't really play nothing! (laughs) But then with Familyman, that's where it really started.

How did Familyman come into the picture?

Familyman used to come round to my yard because my gate was a gate where they used to sell herbs. So God bless herb smokers and herb smoking and God bless herb - because that's why I am here doing what I am doing now. And when Familyman came round there it was bam bam bam. One evening I was there going about my business when I saw him there rehearsing with a band named the Hippy Boys who I would soon be following closely and going in that same direction. When I saw him playing his thing I said "Wait". Because I was always attracted to bass you know. I was attracted to guitar and drums. I was attracted to every instrument but the sound from the bass that time there hit me and I said "Shiiiiit". I said to him "I wan fi learn how to play this thing. You haffi teach me". And he said "Bwoy, I'm just learning myself yunno", so I said "We're going to haffi learn together then". Then the next morning he woke me up and started giving me some bassline lessons.

When did you first go to the studio?

I used to carry his brother Carlie's drums into the studio. And then any

time I got a chance I would try to sneak in! Because the studio in those days was not like now when anyone can come in. The producer would say "Who this?" and Carlie would say "My lickle friend yunno" and the producer would say "Well mek him wait outside, I and I in our musical element now". It used to be the thing so when I'd helped Carlie set up his drums I would have to go outside and wait. If I would see Familyman I would look and try to see as much as I could what he was doing with his hands before I had to go. But the thing with Familyman was whatever I would do in the day he would then come back over to my yard in the evening and then show me it.

Just as Familyman helped you, you helped other musicians and artists. Once you met Sly you recommended him to Bunny Lee and Peter Tosh, giving him two of his big platforms?

What happened was - before I met Sly we used to play for everybody. Recording was the thing for me. Aggrovators, Upsetters, Joe Gibbs All Stars, everybody, but it was mainly with different musicians. I used to have Tin Leg or Horsemouth or Benbow or Santa as the drummer - a whole lot of variant drummers. Now Aggrovators was one of my main things where we would go in the studio with me Chinna and Santa - the main Aggrovators at that time. But I also used to play in a band in the evenings with Santa and Soul Syndicate and some weekends where we used to play in a club and then I used to have a little band in Spanish Town which would rehearse called Big Relation. They were contracted to play at a club where another band used to play. I can't remember the name of the band but they left...

The Fab Five?

The Fab Five, right! And the club was called... not Tit For Tat...

Evil People?

Yeah, you know more than me! (laughs) And while there, Bernard Touter Harvey who now plays with

Inner Circle said "We should go next door and check out my friend Sly" and I said "Who name Sly?" and he said "Sly lickle drummer from over there". So we went over to the Tit For Tat club and there was Sly on the drum. And I said "Yeah, him bad" because he was playing the drums just like how I would always tell the drummers I would play with to play - he was just doing it and doing it easy and good. So seeing as we used to take studio work like an everyday thing, the next day and I went and checked Bunny Lee and said "Striker. I see a drummer. Bad. We could try him?" So Striker said "Yeah man", booked the time and called him and the first thing we played everyone went "Yeah yeah!" and started jumping up and down in the studio and everything so Sly & Robbie started right there and were well tight! Then now I was in Peter Tosh's band was in charge of getting the musicians so I said "We go for Sly".

Have you listened to the recent Peter Tosh reissues with the outtakes from those sessions?

I think I tried to listen to them the other day but I never finished! (laughs)

Today

Tell me about the album you've been working on with Shaggy. You've known Shaggy for quite a while. So what made you decide to come together for a full album?

Me and Shaggy were in Australia together and we were talking about it. And the more the idea got shipped out the more people got interested and said "Yeah yeah yeah!" Then it was just a matter of time until when Shaggy had some time and we had some time for it to lock it in. So the time came and we started working on it. I can tell you, so far it sounds wicked wicked wicked!

Has the experience brought you closer together?

Me and Shaggy are family for life

man. Trust me, me and Shaggy are Libran and me and Shaggy cool cool. So I don't think the relationship between me and Shaggy can ever mash up or anything. He's too good of a person, you know? You need more people like him in the business. Like him and Beres Hammond.

Tell me about the albums you are doing with Bitty Mclean and Brinsley Forde which have been an even longer time coming. They're finished now?

Well I got the hard drive from Bitty a couple of weeks ago but I haven't got around to listening to it yet. He just sent a hard drive with the tracks and I have to listen to it and do a rough mix and check everything is all right or if I need him voicing over something or adding a little thing to it I will. The Brinsley Forde tracks them sound wicked but I think when Brinsley sent us the hard drive and we listened to it in the studio and contemplated the next move I didn't like some of the voice. It had Autotune on and I didn't like that. People like Brinsley Forde don't need Autotune. To me Brinsley is too good of a singer to use that. I don't know how that came about. It's just a matter again for him and ourselves to lock in and come and voice them the right way.

TV AND FILM

You did the sound track to Third World Cop and Alexander Mello's Brazilian Film Hildete. Your music has also been used in films like Speed 2 Cruise Control and in TV series The Wire and Miami Vice - have you got any more work like that planned?

We don't really plan. What happens is sometimes people just ask us to do it. Like the other day someone asked us to do a Peter Tosh soundtrack. We just finished a Bob Marley documentary movie and the same people are going to do a Peter Tosh and they want us to work on that. I don't know what the title of the Peter Tosh one will be but the Bob Marley one is called Legend I think.



Your voice was used on the game Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas. Have you any plans to work in video game soundtracks?

If they ask us, then yes we would gladly go and do it!

Do you have much time in your busy schedule for watching films and TV for pleasure?

Sometimes late at night I do try to look at some movies when I come in from the studio. That is my recreation really.

I try to look at some movies when I come in from the studio. That is my recreation

What's your favourite genre of movies? Do you like Westerns?

(laughs) Actually I was just looking at one now. One with Audie Murphy called The Texan (1966). I also love sci-fi and I love action but I also love the Food channel!

Sometimes I like to try it out myself. I use cooking as a pastime you know? I'm getting good at it! (laughs)

How did you get into making music for comedy in 2008 when you made the backing track for the Saturday Night Live Adam Samberg sketch Ras Trent? Have you met anyone like Ras Trent in real life or is he a larger than life cartoon character?

You have a lot of characters like him in real life! (laughs) That came through

Erik Eger who is a kind of semi manager for us who lives in California. We did some tracks in Jamaica and then he voiced it and chopped it out to use it. Yeah he sent it to me. (laughs) But that one did make me laugh!

THE BASS

Recently, on stage with Ernest at the Blue Note for example, you've been using the Fender Jazz bass - which Familyman has been known to use. Do you favour any particular bass or is it just the right bass for the right job at the time?

Let me tell you the basses I really favour. First it was a Hofner - which I still play every so often because it has a unique sound that no other bass has. Likewise Fender has a sound that no other bass has. I was a Fender fanatic. With a Fender, wherever I am going I can tell them to rent a Fender and I can play it and get my sound from it. But the real bass for me is a bass named Schecter and also the Paul Reed Smith. PRS usually only make guitars but somehow I wound up with a PRS bass - the baddest bass that I can pick up right now. That and the Schecter eight string bass of doom! (laughs)

At what stage in a track do you generally like to add the bass to a song?

If all the musicians are in the studio there and then I am good to go. But if we are using a drum machine it takes time to programme and find the right sound with Sly. So I make them do the drum track and if we are doing more than one I try to get them to do as much as possible so if they want to put the chords on it they can. But once the drum track is there I can go next. It depends on what sort of song though. If it is a singing song I need a little vocal on there to guide me through. So drums, maybe vocals and then I go next.



MUSIC TASTES

What's the greatest Treasure Isle tune of all time?

(big laugh) Well, a lot of Treasure Isle songs were wicked. You have [John Holt] Stealing, you have [Upsetters] Lock Jaw, all the Pat Kelly and the Techniques, all of the John Holt, all of the Alton. There isn't really any one favourite Treasure Isle for me. Treasure Isle songs they're just bad! Just like Studio 1 had a unique sound and it was bad - it was just like that. Every Treasure Isle you hear you say "Wow"! (laughs)

Who's your favourite American soul singer of all time?

Well, you have so many of them too! It depends. You can't have one because each one has a different flavour. You have Gladys Knight and the Pips, you have Temptations, you have Curtis Mayfield - he's one of my favourites in the Impressions. Elvis Presley is bad too. Sam Cooke. The Drifters whether with Ben E King or one of the others...

The Drifters had so many different line ups they are like a genre in themselves.

Yeah! Exactly. There are so many that

there's not one you can point your finger at. There's a combination of many different ones. You have Marvin Gaye. He'd just come down the line and you'd just be murdered! (laughs) Even Joe Cocker. Joe Cocker used to kill me in the studio! I would look on him and say "The way you sing you're not going to make that note" and he would make it with ease and kill me! Joe is one of my favourites too. And Gwen Guthrie. Oh man she was second to none! I couldn't stay in the studio when that woman was singing! When she opened her mouth it was like an angel. Not just one but like a choir of angels together. I can't even place her as a singer - I tell you man, she is just bad!

What's your greatest rock'n'roll band of all time?

One of my greatest rock'n'roll bands is the Rolling Stones because they are just bare raw rock'n'roll! You also have a group out of Canada named Rush - tough!

You're a fan of Geddy Lee's bass playing?

Yeah! Geddy Lee is bad! And you have a couple more. Metallica I love. Metallica are bad. Again, with rock I listen to them for different reasons. One of my main kinds of music right now is just the blues. I like Roger

Trout. Joe Bonamassa. And from the old time there's Guitar Slim, BB King is bad, and a lot of the time Ruth Brown. A lot of the time I am listening to Satellite Radio and I can't see the name but then the music will just grab me.

Final question, what is it about all the time people you work with - whether it's a Sinead O'Connor, a Bob Dylan, a Chezidek, a Chantelle Hernandez - that makes you say "Yes, I can work with this person?"

You just called one of my favourites again - Bob Dylan! (laughs) Now Bob was one of my all time writers and singers from a long time. The way Bob Dylan put words together was very unique and masterful. When we worked with Bob, he worked the way we work. He'd just go in the studio and start playing and we'd just jump in. There wasn't any pressure from him - you'd more pressure yourself to make sure you get the right thing. Which I do, mostly every session, to get the right thing, the right flavour, the right mix. And because we were born in a reggae town and played in a reggae town you have to get the thing out and sounding in a way where no man will say "Cho! It's reggae man" you know? So we add a little uniqueness to it because we want to get it the right way.

Mr. Vegas Sweet Jamaica

Mr. Vegas satisfies all tastes.

Review by Erik Magni

Many reggae and dancehall fans were probably struck by surprise in late November last year when international dancehall star and MOBO award-winner Mr. Vegas started the Save Foundation Reggae Music petition with the words "reggae music is dying, it's being replaced on our airwaves by hip-hop sounding beats."

As a long-time fan of 60's and 70's reggae I celebrate this initiative, but was nonetheless also surprised.

Mr. Vegas then decided to take things a step further and announced the release of his first reggae album – a celebration of Jamaica's 50 years of independence. However, he soon realized that his dancehall fans might be disappointed. So in order to satisfy all tastes he decided to drop a double album instead – one aimed for one drop reggae enthusiasts and one for his dancehall followers.

'Sweet Jamaica' was the first single off the album, put out in late 2010. The new album is aptly titled after that particular tune.

The double album boasts a juicy 32 tracks – 16 flavored in foundation style with hints of ska, lovers rock, early reggae and rocksteady as well as another 16 tunes branded by his usual energetic dancehall style.



The majority of the reggae tracks are new acquaintances with a mix of fresh originals, versions and straight covers, while the dancehall album contains several of his recent dancehall bangers, including Bruk it Down, Whine for Me Baby, Certain Law and Beautiful Life. However, the brightest shining light on the dancehall disc is Let the Music Play where Mr. Vegas puts on a UK old school MC:ing style reminiscent of Tippa Irie or Papa Levi.

'Sweet Jamaica' is a broad effort that aims to satisfy a wide range of reggae fans. And even though some of the reggae covers could have been left out, this album certainly showcases a vast genre and a gifted and versatile artist.

Black Roots All Day All Night

A polished set worth reissuing.

Review by Erik Magni

When talking about vintage UK roots reggae, groups such as Aswad, Steel Pulse and Misty in Roots usually come up. One of my all time favorite UK roots reggae outfits from the 70's or early 80's is however Bristol's Black Roots, a group whose debut album from 1983 includes eight rock solid tunes.

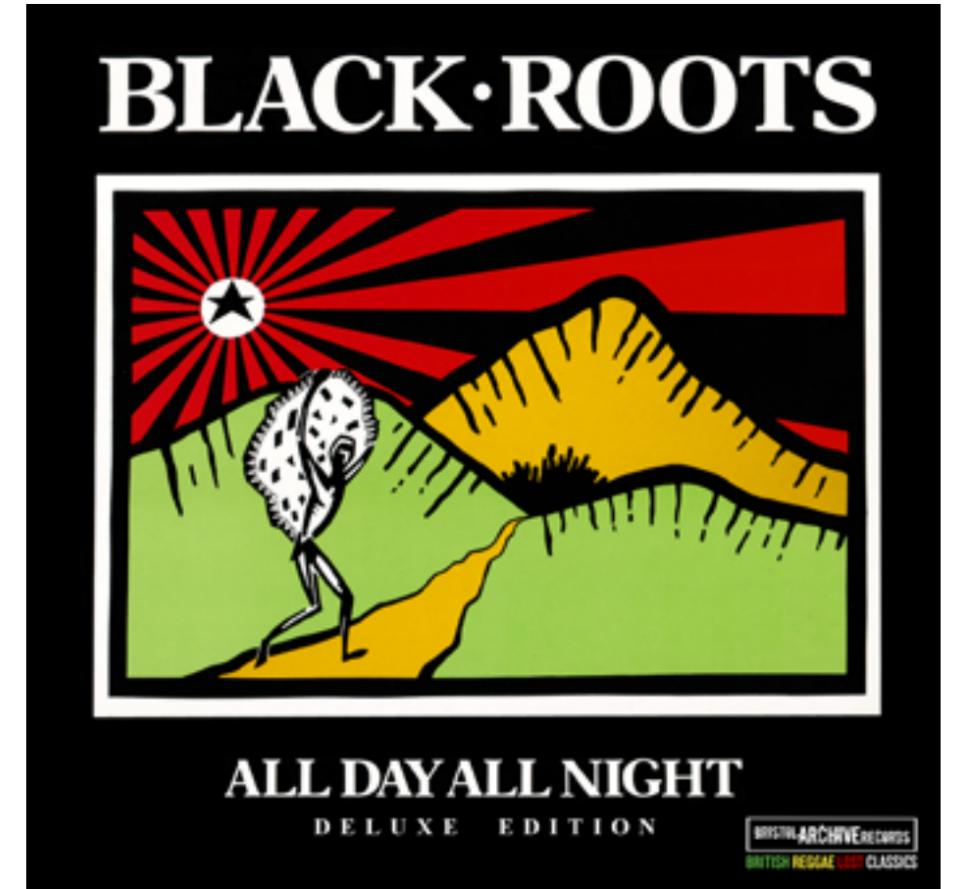
Last year British label Bristol Archive Records teamed up with Black Roots' own Nubian Records in order to drop the critically acclaimed 'Black Roots – The Reggae Singles Anthology', a set collecting several immensely strong tracks.

Now Bristol Archive Records have once more been allowed into the Black Roots/Nubian tape vaults.

This time it's about a 25th anniversary deluxe CD edition of the group's fourth album 'All Day All Night', a set where they teamed up with Mad Professor and moving away from their original sound for a more polished version, embracing new technology and production techniques to present a more – at the time – contemporary UK sound.

The music may have been brought up to date, but the lyrics concerned the same themes of social and historical justice that define the roots genre.

'All Day All Night' originally in-



cluded twelve tunes, and this deluxe edition adds another six – five dub versions and an extended 12" mix of Pin in the Ocean.

'All Day All Night' is certainly worth reissuing, even if it sounds a bit more dated than their earlier and more roots oriented material. But even if lavish synthesizers are over-used on some tracks, you can't go wrong with the breezy nonchalant vocals in Realize or the mighty horn riff in Pin in the

Ocean.

Bristol Archive Records have as usual paid attention to detail and to complement the remastered music, the booklet includes many previously unpublished photos of the band.

Harry Chapman and Ragnam Poyser Must Go Down (2001)

Some tunes don't have to wait decades to become legendary. Such is the curious case of this 7" from 2001 that failed to attract attention upon release... Only to be heavily sought after 11 years later. Producer Paul Hussey opens up about its unusual path.

Review by Seb Carayol

Zimbabwe-born British producer Paul Hussey is still puzzled. The 7-inch he released a little over a decade ago had never done anything, really, until he made a video for it last year and exposed its excellence to a YouTube world that couldn't fathom it had missed such a gem, for such along time. "Not done anything", as in: "We pressed 200 copies I believe," Paul—who has no links to singer Winston Hussey—reminisces today, "but only maybe 70 got circulated at the time. I gave some to Jet Star, some to Blacka Dread in London. It was hard to get things moving back then, and I had other things going on in my life as I had just moved back to London from Jamaica." A scarcity that helped, later, other people: in 2012, his Harry Chapman/Ragnam Poyser tune reaches regularly the 100-pound mark on eBay... And it's not only the rarity thing: for once, this cult is totally deserved on a musical standpoint: lead by the one example of perfectly balanced electric guitar riff/UK stepper crossover riddim, Chapman lets his Garnett-like voice take the tune towards higher heights, all beefed up by a solid Ragnam Poyser deejay section.

It all came together sometime in 1999 on the Jamaican North



Coast, where Paul was then running UB40's studio. Rightfully thinking his brother had the necessary talent to record, Harry Chapman's sister introduced him to Paul. Upon first hearing the Maypen singer—whose stage name is a nod to Tracy Chapman—, Hussey knew. After all, he had been in Jamaica for seven years on a long-term vacation, courtesy of his former boss at Falconer studio in London, so he knew when talent was worth recording. Good thing he did. Chapman had the lyrics ready, went for a voice

test. It ended up being the one Hussey used on Must Go Down: "It was so good. I knew any other attempt would have sounded different." Chapman was reluctant at first. But after hearing Hussey's final mix, he loved it and Must Go Down was ready to go up to the pressing plant...

Keith Hudson Rasta Communication and Furnace

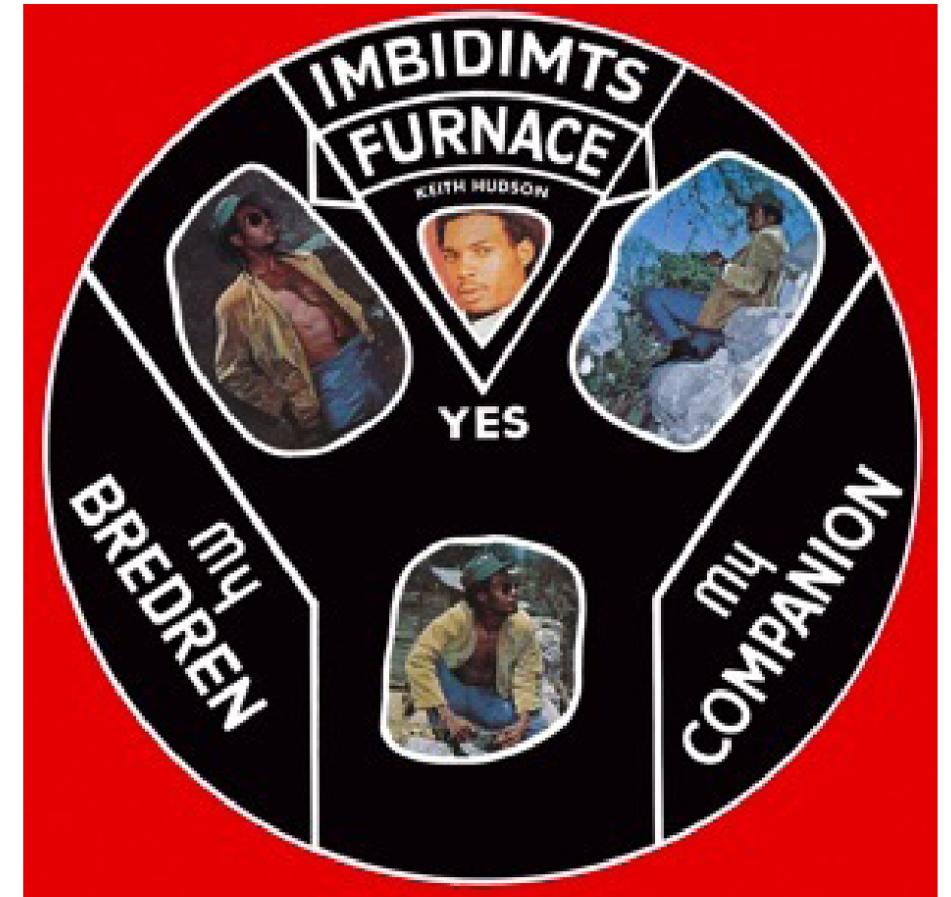
Keith Hudson galore.

Review by Erik Magni

Almost 30 years after his untimely death only 38 years old, the one and only Keith Hudson is perhaps hotter than ever before. Greensleeves has recently reissued a deluxe two CD version of his 'Rasta Communication' album and Sunspot has reissued his first album 'Furnace'. On top of this Vincent Ellis and Jean Scrivener have published an illustrated Keith Hudson discography in the form of pdf files on a DVD-ROM. It contains a comprehensive listing of albums, singles, compilations, riddims and productions of other artists as well as cover art and additional information.

Keith Hudson is a key artist in the development of reggae and a producer, songwriter and arranger with a uniquely deep and atmospheric style. His first hit song was Ken Boothe's excellent Old Fashion Way released in 1968, and Keith Hudson was also the producer who provided Big Youth with his breakthrough hit – the Honda motorbike tribute S. 90 Skank.

'Furnace' was originally issued in 1972 on Hudson's own Inbidimts label and includes twelve tracks with riddims supplied by relentless Soul Syndicate band and vocals courtesy of Dennis Alcapone, U-Roy Junior and Keith Hudson himself, who has an unorthodox and non-melodic singing style, not to everybody's taste. The exquisite sleeve notes to 'Furnace', pro-



vided by the aforementioned Vincent Ellis, give a detailed overview of the album and a comment to each of the twelve tunes. Five years after the release of 'Furnace' Keith Hudson dropped the dub album 'Brand', also known as 'The Joint'. It was oddly enough released a year before its vocal counterpart 'Rasta Communication'. Both of these albums are now put out in a deluxe two CD package complete with several hard to find bonus cuts and extended versions, including the previously

unreleased dub version to I Broke the Comb. The riddims on 'Rasta Communication' are sparse and strained, and uses only guitar, bass, drums and keys. The vocals are solely handled by Keith Hudson, and the mixes on Rasta Communication in Dub are edgy and grim. Keith Hudson's music may not be for everyone, but these albums show an artist and a producer with an individual style and many years ahead of his time.

Various Artists Soul Jazz Records Presents Studio One Sound

The great sounds of Studio One.

Review by Erik Magni

The fruitful collaboration between UK's Soul Jazz Records and the legendary Studio One label has resulted in yet another fine compilation, this one with a rather generic title though.

Studio One Sound is a fresh collection of 18 tunes recorded between 1964 and 1979 compiled by reggae specialist Oxman with sleeve notes by Rob Chapman, author of titles such as 'Never Grow Old: Studio One Singles Listing & Rhythm Directory'.

This genre spanning album gathers several hard to find gems in the rocksteady, ska, dub and roots mood with singers and groups such as Rita Marley, Slim Smith and the Wailing Souls handling microphone duties.

With Studio One Sound you'll get your hands on Anthony "Rocky" Ellis' Double Minded Man, one of four songs he recorded for Studio One, The Martinis' cover of Smokey Robinson & The Miracles' I Second That Emotion and Ras Michael & The Sons of Negus' funky Good People without paying a visit to your bank.

The warm and distinctive sound of the Brentford Road studio is carefully mastered and the sound quality is excellent throughout. Studio One Sound



is a must have and gives a good overview of the label's extraordinary output.

Da Grynch Release The Hounds

The dub-hound has another trusted master in the UK.

Review by Angus Taylor

No rhythm series from England's Necessary Mayhem family of labels is complete without its dub from producer Curtis Lynch's flipside alter ego Da Grynch. So this canine-titled full dub album (the follow-up to his 'Dubstramentals' EP) comes as no surprise. At seven tracks long, younger listeners might feel it barely qualifies as an album in duration. But time was when a classic dub set could fit on a 12 inch record. That's not the only thing that's retro about this release. The artwork, by Israeli collective My Lord, follows their usual homage to Tony McDermott's Scientist albums of the 80s. The music, like everything Necessary Mayhem, channels a love of Jamaican and British reggae's past through present "bass culture" (the fairly nebulous categorization of reggae with its bottom-heavy sound-system-driven progeny styles). Just as this collection mixes material known to Lynch's singles buying faithful with rhythms from future releases, so it also blends familiar aspects of dubs gone by and increasingly unusual elements over the course of two sides. Side one is the more traditional face. There's a white noise textured dub to Possessed by Tarrus Riley (different than on the EP to his Lloyd Charmers sampling backing of the same name) that experiments with changing the pitch of the iconic Tubbys style test tone on the snare. Phaser Dub is the flip to Brinsley Forde's Can't Take No More - already released on single on Lynch's Maroon sub-



sideary. Starting with a sample of a youthful Brinsley in the climactic soundclash scene of the film 'Babylon' it peaks with a squelchy tape delay. Likewise Our Dub is the flipside to Macka B's Our Music as heard on the Gorilla rhythm EP. Side two is where dub gets pushed into more interesting places. Ravers Dub, co-produced with mysterious dubstep influenced collaborator Killa Mosquito, is a skittish, active and futuristic sounding excursion with heavily-delayed drums. The strangely-catchy Tuff Dub brings Lynch's background as jungle selector to the table via its frenetic beats. According to Lynch both backings will be the focus

of further activity later in the year. Cadburys Dub is the version to Ziggi Recado's Rumours, only cut in "dub special" form before. The other big British dub recent release is Pressure Sounds' remix compilation by Dennis Bovell, 'Mek It Run'. And despite the digital instrumentation here, there is a similarly jazzy urbane "London" feel to Bovell (who, of course soundtracked the movie 'Babylon', mentioned above). Wearing its influences - quite literally - on its record sleeve, yet busy enough for Lynch's dancehall fans not to get bored, Release... suggests the dub-hound has another trusted master in the UK.

Webcam Hi-Fi Feeding My Faith

Webcam Hi-Fi put the B in boom.

Review by Rrik Magni

There are a bunch of European producers that have managed the craft of making vintage roots reggae or early dancehall from the 70's and 80's sound contemporary, vital and fresh. Roberto Sánchez of Lone Ark and Ryan Moore of Twilight Circus Dub Sound System are two examples.

Fredread of Webcam Hi-Fi is a third, and probably not as well-known as the other two. He is based in South France and has since 2004 produced numerous riddims voiced by artists such as Earl Sixteen, Tony Tuff and Ranking Joe. The debut album of Webcam Hi-Fi – 'Livity is My Temple' – dropped in 2009, and now it's time for a follow-up.

'Feeding My Faith' is written and produced by Fredread and also recorded and mixed by himself in his own studio.

His dynamic, powerful and organic riddims owes much to early 80's productions by Sly & Robbie, and the analogue effects and syndrums are hypnotizing. Especially the dub versions, which follow singers ranging from El Fata's and Trevor Junior's rub a dub style to the mystical laid-back Lyrical Benjie.

'Feeding My Faith' is an album with live instrumentation including beautiful brass and flute and it catches your at-



tention on the first listen and keeps you skanking throughout the twelve tracks on the limited edition LP or the 17 for the digital download version.

Highly recommended.

Winston Reedy Make A Change

Winston Reedy goes back to his roots.

Review by Erik Magni

UK singer Winston Reedy was part of The Cimarons in the 70's and early 80's, a band that made the excellent roots album 'On the Rock'. When the band split up Winston Reedy went solo and released a bunch of very successful lovers tunes, including Dim the Light and Paradise in Your Eyes.

Now he's back where it all started – roots reggae. 'Make a Change' is his brand new album. It's done in collaboration with French band The Donkey Jaw Bone, who last year worked with Derajah on his debut set 'Paris is Burning'.

'Make a Change' is in the same meditative rootsy vein. Its 15 tracks are mostly based on original live recorded riddims with sublime horns arrangements. But compared to the Derajah set it has one big difference. Winston Reedy himself.

He is a very competent vocalist. He sings with confidence, his tone is gentle and he sounds laid-back. It's soothing and natural.

Winston Reedy also shows his versatility in Thy Kingdom Come, where he takes on a more deejay influenced approach accompanied by an intense flute.

'Make a Change' should appeal to roots romancers worldwide, and is currently available as digital download and CD. UK singer Winston Reedy was part of The Cimarons in the 70's and early 80's, a band that made the



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The Skatalites in Oakland

Echoes of Kingston reverberate in California on April 27, 2012 at The Uptown, Oakland, California

Report and photos by Lee Abel

The original Skatalites only existed from 1964 to 1965, but left such an enduring legacy that the face of Jamaican music was forever altered. With reunion gigs in the 80's and touring in the 90's, a whole new generation of youth in America and Europe had the chance to see the aging pioneers. Tommy McCook and Roland Alphonso both passed in 1998, but the band, and the music, continued on.

The Echoes of Kingston Tour proudly showcased the last surviving member of the original band, Lester Sterling. (Sadly, Lloyd Brevett, stand-up bass player, passed just one week later on May 3rd, 2012.) In Oakland, we also had the added pleasure of Norma Fraser's lovely voice and spirit.

With such classic songs as A Message To You Rudy, Christine Keeler, James Bond, and Israelites, the current touring members of the band (below) did an excellent job and were well appreciated by the packed, enthusiastic crowd.



Joshua Moses and Dan Ratchet in Bristol

After their recent reissues, Bristol artists are back on stage.

Report and photos by Andrew Thompson

Joshua Moses performed in Bristol on May 26th with support from Dan Ratchet. Both artists recently reissued their music on Bristol Archive Records. Check out the photos of the event backed by The R.A.S. Band.



Tarrus Riley in San Francisco

Tarrus Riley headlines San Francisco Carnaval's after party at The Mezzanine on May 27th.

Report and photos by Lee Abel

San Francisco's Mission District explodes with feathers, drum beats, and scantily dressed dancers every year for Carnaval. This year's theme was "Spanning Borders: Bridging Cultures" and it was exciting to see Tarrus Riley's image posted everywhere along the celebration route, as headlining the multi-culti evening.

Other musical genres represented included Los Rakas, a Spanish rap duo from Oakland, and Sambaxe, Brazilian inspired dancers and musicians. The club was packed by the time Dean Fraser, saxophonist extraordinaire, blew on to the stage, and a wall of woman (all colors, ages, sizes) crammed up against it, eager to touch "Mr.

Love's Contagious". Tarrus, and the entire band, gave an outstanding performance. He danced, jumped, and reached out throughout the night. Covering both classic songs like She's Royal and Protect The People, he also treated us to new work off his latest album, 'Mecoustic'. Superman was the night's highlight for many, as he scanned the crowd, making new eye contact and squeezing a different hand with each repetition of "Yes, you're beautiful".

It was great to see so many different cultures in the house, from Shaka Zulu Pickney to all around the globe. Reggae unites, and Tarrus has proven himself to be a worthy reggae ambassador. Give thanks.



Damian Marley in Guyana

Check these photos of Damian Marley at FAM Festival.

Report and photos by Empress K

The First Annual Food, Arts and Music (FAM) Festival at the National Stadium in Guyana featuring Damian "Jr. Gong" Marley on Saturday 5/26/12 - celebrating Guyana's 46th Year of Independence and Jr. Gong's first appearance in Guyana. Damian's set also included Ghetto Youths International recording artiste Black Am I and surprise guest Wayne Marshall.



The Skatalites

in Bristol

Check these photos of the ska band in UK.

Report by Rob Lovell
Photos by Andrew Thompson

The current line-up of legendary ska band The Skatalites performed live in Bristol on May 16th at the Trinity Centre, Lawrence Hill with support from Resonators. The pioneering ska group are out on the road celebrating the 50th anniversary of Jamaican independence and their own 48th anniversary of being a band. Saxophonist Lester Sterling, now the only original member of the band, alongside Doreen Shaffer who sang with the band in the early days, heads up the band that is currently on tour.

It was great to see so many different cultures in the house, from Shaka Zulu Pickney to all around the globe. Reggae unites, and Tarrus has proven himself to be a worthy reggae ambassador. Give thanks.

The full line-up includes:

Lester Sterling – alto saxophone (original member)
Doreen Shaffer – vocals (original singer)
Azemobo "Zem" Audu – tenor saxophone
Andrae Murchison – trombone
Kevin Batchelor – trumpet
Val Douglas – bass guitar
Natty Frenchy – guitar
Cameron Greenlee – keyboards
Trevor "Sparrow" Thompson – drums

Earlier this month Skatalites founding member and bass player Lloyd Brevett died in Jamaica aged 80 after suffering a series of seizures. In the Jamaica Observer former Prime Minister PJ Patterson said: "While the magical horn section of the Skatalites drew most of the interest and crowds — and Lloyd Knibb, with his innovative drumming was a magnet — it was Lloyd Brevett who quietly provided the mesmerizing backbone to the Skatalites sound. Brevett... was always self-effacing, but confident and assured. His fingers danced on the double bass at a furious tempo as he locked in with Knibb to create the hypnotic beat that would become ska."



Sugar Minott

Earthday

On Friday May 25 Dancehall singer Sugar Minott would have celebrated his 56th birthday.

Report and photos
by Steve James

Members of the music industry and fans of the late singer all gathered at his Youthman Promotion studio, located on Robert Crescent in Kingston, to join in the celebration of his Earth Strong. The venue was packed to capacity with both local fans and a strong contingent of Japanese supporters. It is often said that Sugar Minott was one of the first persons to take Reggae music to Japan.

The celebration lasted until the wee hours of Saturday morning with music being provided by Fire Links and Black Pepper, Errol Dunkley's sound system. Among the highlights of the night was the performance of Little John, Beenie Man, Beres Hammond, Sizzla & Mikey General who appeared on stage simultaneously. Among the other performers were Tony Rebel, Pashon, Errol Dunkley and several more. The event demonstrated that Sugar Minott's music is still strong and he is far from being forgotten.





Life Festival 2012

Reggae comes to life in Ireland!

Report and photos by Gerard McMahon

Ireland's proud reggae tradition marked yet another memorable occasion on the last (sweltering hot) weekend in May. Fronted by Iration Steppas (Mark Iration with Danman), the Disciples (Russ D. and Jonah Dan), Murray Man and Dubkasm - under the driving force of Rootical Jason's sound stacks - the massive danced and pranced their way through a thoroughly enjoyable weekend by the lake in County Westmeath in middle Ireland.

Though the LIFE festival (in its seventh incarnation) is reknowned for its techno, trance, electro and psytrance stages, it is heartening to see that the legacy left by Bob Marley and his entourage (in Ireland) so many years ago persists. Earlier versions of this famous festival hosted Max Romeo, the Mad Professor, Johnny Clarke, Zion

Train, Michael Prophet and many more. And so it was befitting that a host of indigenous reggae talent should supplement and assist the main performers this year, with Cian Finn, Dub Investigation, Worries Outernational, Madu and Brigadier JC amongst others leaving their indelible and promising marks on proceedings.

Rootical Jason, based in Galway in the west of Ireland, has been to the fore in maintaining reggae's presence at this and numerous other festivals/sessions around the country for almost 20 years. Having worked with Jah Shaka, Gussie P., Earl 16, Brother Culture and many many more, his experience is invaluable in ensuring that the various strands all come together to (as Bob did say) 'make it work'. The reputation of the mighty Rootical soundsystem continues to soar and will long outlive him.



Romain Virgo Album Launch

The Jamaican singer launched his album in Kingston on May 30th

Report and photos by Steve James

Romain Virgo launched his sophomore album, 'The System', inside a packed Emancipation Park recently.

The fifteen track album consists of some solid reggae songs and sees Shane Brown and Donovan Germain producing most. A number of artistes turned out to give their support to Romain who was discovered through a local televi-

sion program that seeks to unearth new talent. Among the performers were Sherieta, Brown Sugar, D Major, Tameka & Konshens. Those who spoke about their interaction with Romain had nothing but praise to give the young upcoming singer, others even comparing him to some of our musical greats. Another highlight was when the singer called his mother out of the audience to sing along with him. After a night of great performances the launch was brought to a close with Romain doing a few tracks off his new album.







Makeda Dread's WorldBeat Center

Makeda 'Dread' Cheatom turned an old water tower into a major reggae venue drawing larger audiences in San Diego, California.

Article and photos by Madonna Ostrye

Dressed in colorful African attire, signature dreads and dazzling smile, Makeda "Dread" Cheatom stands outside of her WorldBeat Center located inside San Diego, California's Balboa Park mingling with the community. Her fulfilled youthful dream as a music promoter has culminated in making reggae music accessible to the parents and children of San Diego for

the past twenty years. Currently, Makeda is the go-to person for local reggae artists to fine-tune their craft enough to warrant a place on the WorldBeat stage with hopes of national and global exposure that many San Diego reggae performers have enjoyed since their beginnings at WorldBeat.

The center itself is an old water tower transformed into a major music setting with the rotunda periphery

of a mini museum displaying artistry and portraits of Nefertiti, Emperor Haile Selassie, Marcus Garvey, and Bob Marley. International flags blanket the venue over a vegetarian café, a gift shop, and a second floor green room for performers. A history and appreciation of roots music knows no boundaries in Makeda's WorldBeat Center—her determination to provide a venue for world music is the reason reggae now thrives in San Diego with larger au-



-diences every year. Jamaicans, Ethiopians, Brazilians, Sudanese, Senegalese, Somalis, Panamanians, Mexicans, Indigenous Americans and New Age are but a few of the groups who make WorldBeat their center of community pride and artistic expression through music, dance and art instruction. Meditation, yoga and nutrition classes in their ethno-botany garden, also meet weekly at WorldBeat. With all the endeavors offered at WorldBeat, the music stage personifies all the love Makeda's projects entail—a community's love and appreciation for roots music is evident as most of the equipment has been donated to the nonprofit, which has been her life, her world, and her love since the late 1960s.

Early in her twenties after an education in business and culinary arts, Makeda launched a successful vegetarian restaurant and a music promotion business in San Diego, where she grew up and shared her visionary community spirit. Her nonprofit WorldBeat Enterprises led her in search of a location when she discovered an old Balboa Park water tower that substituted as a police storage unit for stolen bikes. She proposed her vision to the City of San Diego and finally after four years of bureaucratic battles, political and racial strains, along with Makeda-like determination, she got the keys in June of 1995 to the water tower that now has become the spectacular WorldBeat Cultural and Music Center and the most popular scene for reggae music.

In order to showcase roots' artists,

Makeda streams live concerts from WorldBeat on her One World TV/ Radio site at www.onereggae.com in addition to her own radio reggae night broadcasts. A concert that recently streamed live was the Skatalites, the Jamaican ska band on their "Echoes of Kingston" tour, for a mere \$15 at the door. This Jamaican sound, punctuated by two saxophones, a trumpet, trombone and a rhythmic percussionist who communicate their ska sounds with the drums and guitars, pulsated throughout WorldBeat like a cultural festival on the streets of Kingston. One member of the original band travels and performs around the world ensuring their original music endures. And here at WorldBeat this historic Jamaican band thrilled a youthful San Diego eclectic audience. This one example of the rich music culture Makeda brings to San Diego via WorldBeat Center is but a drum beat in the vast world of music performing every week at this unassuming location just a block south of the world renowned San Diego Zoo.

Once Ruben Seja, long-time friend of Makeda's, fellow music promoter and all around carpenter, cleared out the water tower and rebuilt

the inside, WorldBeat became the center for free or minimal cost concerts for the community. Makeda commenced to bring world music to San Diego, initiating a strong presence of reggae, sparking larger audiences and launching the careers of many now globally traveled reggae groups like Big Mountain with lead singer, Quino, who attributes much of his success to Makeda. As a teenager Quino actually washed dishes at her restaurant and like Ruben, another long enduring friendship ensued. Makeda mentors many young teenagers to work for her, helping them build productive lives learning the very business skills she demonstrates in all her accomplishments. This altruism earned her the title of community 'Mom'.

On Earth Day at the outside stage of WorldBeat, Quino shared with the audience his humble beginnings with Makeda as she happily stood beside him introducing his smooth Latin reggae sounds that mesmerized the massive audience into a group rhythmic motion as One Love. Although years in age between the two, there stood Makeda and Quino epitomizing the quintessence of WorldBeat, locked in history, hard work, longevity, music, culture, love





World Beat Center



Reggae artist Johnny Osbourne with Derek Brown, keyboard for Shoreline Rootz taking a break in WBC cafe

and the soulful heartbeat of San Diego.

Quino's reggae followed another engaging free concert with Jamaican reggae artist, Johnny Osbourne, who performed days earlier at San Diego's House of Blues. Through their long friendship Makeda booked him for her Earth Day celebration bringing the outside stage area to an historic sing-a-long setting as audience members mouthed the words to Johnny Osbourne's legendary reggae hits echoing rich melodic lyrics throughout WorldBeat's Balboa Park.

In addition to Quino and Big Mountain, local reggae groups like Shoreline Rootz, Tribal Theory, Salvia

Real, Revival, Gov. Tiggy and Piracy all performed for free due to their loyalty to Makeda, who, over the years, has brought them much exposure with old and new energetic audiences in love with reggae. Each year Makeda honors great leaders, artists, activists, and musicians, like Marcus Garvey, Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. and especially a day of Tribute to Bob Marley and the Reggae Legends. Other festivals include International Dance Day, Kwanzaa, and the Day of the Drum, just this past May 20th. Being so close to the border of Mexico, Makeda also created a sister WorldBeat Tijuana Center that further honors the "Legends of Reggae".

During an Earth Day reggae con-

cert on WorldBeat's inside stage, a young white man in his mid-twenties sat at the thatched-roofed tiki corner, revealed that he has come to WorldBeat since he was seventeen just to hear free concerts. He grew up down the street, appreciating a place that welcomes everyone regardless of age, race, religion, ethnicity—the ultimate community center and his second home.

A male volunteer shares a moment about his reason for coming three to five days a week to WorldBeat with his two toe-head toddlers. He's a stay-at-home dad who wants his children to appreciate a multicultural life. He feels his volunteer work in the garden with his children provides a stimulating education

and playful experience for their development. On Earth Day the family eats together enjoying a local reggae band, as if they're dining at their own kitchen table.

After almost twenty years of this thriving renovated water tower, Makeda and the community tirelessly fought a recent city plan to demolish WorldBeat to pave a road through the park. Makeda's self-determination once again prevailed to save this enriching cultural center that has enhanced the cultural diversity of San Diego and widened the audience for reggae music—WorldBeat will remain open. As in her life story of struggle and perseverance no battle ever stifled Makeda "Dread" Cheatom from ac-

complishing her youthful dream to build and keep a One Love, One WorldBeat Community Center.

For more information on classes, entertainment and events at WorldBeat Cultural Center visit their website at www.worldbeatcenter.org and on Facebook.

UNITED REGGAE

MAGAZINE

Artists - News - Articles - Forum - Videos - Photos - Music - Mixes

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

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