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"Champion, we a real Champion!" (Yellowman)

This one goes out to all real people! You are badly needed in a time where fake has become so common it almost seems normal. Fake news, fake accounts, fake lashes... the list goes on and on. When did mankind stop to be satisfied with the real thing?

Fortunately, we at **Regaeville.com** value real music, real pictures, real artists and real information - for 10 years now! July 1, 2019 marks our decennial jubilee, so this **Festiville** edition is a special one. That's why we, once again, compiled a real treasure chest to guide you through the upcoming summer, providing you with a list of more than 100 festivals.

Of course, next to informing you about these fervently awaited live shows, we take a close look at established and upcoming artists and their music. 40 years after winning the Tastee's Amateur Talent Contest and starting a stellar career, the real **Yellowman** is back with a full studio album, the first one in 15 years. Released under his daughter **K'reema**'s label *Yellow Baby Music*, it prompted us to talk to the King of Dancehall about his career and **No More War**.

Marcia Griffiths and Max Romeo, both of them remarkable veteran artists, have their say, too, and introduce their albums Timeless and Words From The Brave respectively, while Jah Cure chats about Royal Soldier. Real Soundsystem Soldiers (World Clash Winner 2005), **Sentinel** are featured in their 20th anniversary year, and style-kings The No-Maddz talk about the decade-long experience of their Dub Poetry Art Collective and their new album. Hitherto lesser known names in a Reggae context are interviewed as well: GReeeN (a German newcomer who is about to release the Irievibrations Records collaboration Smaragd) and Peter Webber (a British director who captured the Inna De Yard project on film).

Really and truly, there is a lot to discover in here. And that you, dear readers/listeners/followers, are an inquisitive bunch is evident by the amount of subscribers our YouTube-Channel has.

You are champions - stay real! BIG UP!



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SATURDAY JULY 20, FESTIVAL NIGHT 2

BUJU BANTON, BERES HAMMOND, PROTDJE, ROMAIN VIRGO, CHRISTOPHER MARTIN, JAH 9, DALTON HARRIS, ETANA













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ON FIRE

BY URSULA 'MUNCHY' MÜNCH
PHOTOS BY KURT WRIGHT & ALT MULTIMEDIA:
TONY-ANN DAVY AND CESAR BUELTO

While their number of band members decreased to a duo, the team surrounding **The No-Maddz** has expanded. For their upcoming album **Heaven On Earth** they took background vocalists, a number of prestigious feature artists like actor and director **Idris Elba**, and the progressive producers **Walshy Fire** of **Major Lazer**, and **Beres Hammond's** daughter **The Wizard**, on their musical trod. **Munchy** spoke to **Sheppie** and **Evie** about their project, set for release this summer.



Why did you choose to work with Walshy Fire and The Wizard for your new album? What impact did they have on the works?

Sheppie: Walshy did a lot of work with the other artists coming up on the album. He did some mixtages earlier and those mixtages were pretty cool. Me and Evie were reasoning about them and how much we loved the mixtages. So it's been a while in the making with us and Walshy. We never actually got to sit down until we came around to this project. We had some music from before and we re-recorded them at the Geejam Studio with Mountain Lion Music, the bredrin Keno. We went through some productions where we actually remade some of the tracks. Take for instance the track The Trod. That one is a beautiful remake. After those few days at Geejam, we took the project to **Walshy**, sent the files to him and **The Wizard**. They listened through, started to cut and chop and play and style it with their manners, so it's really a collaborative effort where we did our part of the work and they did their part of the work. I remember the first time we had a conversation with **Walshy** after he listened to our project, and he did a cartwheel in the living room. He said that the project made him feel like he wanted to get up and do something. It gave him energy. We met someone who understood the work that we put in.

Were Walshy and The Wizard given entire creative freedom or did you have some discussions? You two are still the creative directors of Heaven On Earth.

Sheppie: You can't give nobody freedom, freedom is there. But yes, it's a project that we've been working on. I love when people are able to express whenever I am working with them. Because I want the freedom to express as well and I don't really want limitations, I want to try new things. But you can't express out of the parameters, because the parameters already put them into that particular groove. They selected what they wanted out of the myriad of music we sent them and then we worked on those, put what we were hearing, then we gave that to them. They kept some, and some of them they stripped them

down all together and remade them. That was the process I was really looking forward to. The ones they kept, me and **Evie** were familiar with them, but the ones that they stripped down - and they went into different musical fields with some of those, that was pretty cool. I really enjoyed that process.

How would you describe the music and sound of the eleven tracks in your own words? I discovered some Dub, some Hip Hop, Reggae, as well as some intriguing samples and futuristic sounds...

Evie: At the listening party **Walshy** was trying to tell the people that it's really nothing that you expected, it's not the regular music, it's something that you can't put in a box. You just have to open your mind like an umbrella. So I would say it's **The No-Maddz**' music, same way.

Being the No-Maddz do you feel kind of obligated to present something different from what everybody else does?

Evie: It's past obligation. There was a consensus that we were going to go very Reggae. And as the process evolved we didn't even know what it was really. It's not even by choice. It's what we represent, it's just roots music in an original form.

What did you focus on lyric-wise? Did you follow a concept or did it fall in place naturally?

Sheppie: I would say definitely both. Before the studio we were preparing, actually from way down, even before 2016 we were preparing the ideas of the songs, the lyrics, and who and what No-Maddz represent, that will always come out when we put forward our material. So, yes it was deliberate, it's really a proposal, somewhat a business proposal and somewhat for us a request to focus more on our similarities, and to open conversation with ones we did not normally open conversations with, and to move forward with a forward state of mind. It has elements of reparatory justice in it, repairing the damage that was done. It has elements of the mind, also the love of life and the love of family within

that whole mix. But it also has the rich roots of Dub Poetry. And as you know Dub Poetry is really the observer, the social comment, the **No-Maddz** travelling.

As dub poets, how do you approach music and writing songs differently? Would you write lyrics independently from the melodies? Give the words a bigger role than the sound? **Sheppie:** I think it's total balanced. We have been writing Dub Poetry more often than anything else. Dub Poetry is musical poetry. So you can tell the story within the language and the music that comes with it. But the music comes as a thought, as a sound within thought. When that process starts it comes with various patterns, it comes with various sounds, as colours as well, and it paints a picture before you. I personally cannot say how other persons would think when they are constructing their art, but for me personally in my small corner, it's more of my surroundings, and then something speaks to me and I interpret what I'm hearing. It's not like we went out and planned on doing an album that has these elements of social construct but it happened because of our social construct and we just kind of interpreted what was laid upon us, our consciousness.

Why did you do over the songs Wha Dis, The Trod, and Mountain Lion, that you released on previous records like Sort Out Yuh Life Jamaica!? What is different from the earlier versions?

Evie: Given the evolvement of The No-Maddz it was even necessary for us to build an archive of the sound that we now have, which is me and Sheppie. And then it's much more collaborative effort in terms of vocals and input towards the project. Back then we were not willingly selfish, but we were more selfish with the production because we were young and finding the identity. So now it's a good vibe where we got to have other expertise, input, and ways of looking at it. So that works. It's like being an actor and going through the many different experiences with different directors to express yourself differently.







Sheppie: I also think that not everyone heard the ones we put out in our early days. They are still there, so you can hear the contrast. And we can see how we progress. Because now we are examining the same thing. Many people don't get that chance to do things over. So we look at it in a way where we presented it in one way at a time and then we got the opportunity based on the power of these songs, poems, renditions. The tracks are long time music songs that we used to play at Jamnesia from 2007. To remake them was such an honour. We wouldn't have it any other way. It never finishes. A song is like a painting, like a river with many tributaries.

Evie, you just mentioned it: the band now consists of two members. How come? Where did the way lead the other former members?

Evie: I can only tell what I am sure about, and I am only sure about the Don Shepherd

and myself. We've been doing it for a while, about two decades since High School. I think it's just a matter of everybody growing up and it reached a stage where we had to decide to hang on to the dream because our passion for it didn't wear out yet. Especially in terms of the formation, the idea of it. The No-Maddz deserve to be seen and heard by everyone. It deserves to be a part of the creative world because it is significant in terms of what it represents, or what it could represent for future people, future artists or creative persons, what it represents for the industry. It's always special to be in a lane like this where you can be an artist that is memorable and really touching so many different terrains and performing arts, bringing the industry together by the way we approach the different disciplines and put them all together. Just like the Africans did back in the days.



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Being a duo now, has it made things like decision-making easier or is it harder to carry the workload with only two people? What do you consider the benefits of the new band format?

Evie: Well, it's kind of obvious when you have a table with just two legs instead of four... We have a lot of help from various people. It's like a tree whose roots don't get destroyed, so it grows new branches and pushes forward same way. We give thanks for the strength that we get so far from our team, also the energy that Walshy Fire and The Wizard came in with. It's a family vibe. We have a lot of youngsters that help us with our social media too. It's a different time now, the social media landscape changed and how you approach the industry is always evolving. It gives us an opportunity to stay closer to the youths, which is very exuberant and life full filling.

As you mention others... You have some guests on the record. Who is on board on songs like Babylon Paper, Wretched, Clarkz Like Dis and Beat Them Down, and why were they featured?

Sheppie: We figured it was the time for it and it all happened very naturally. Take for instance the song Wretched. That song was originally called **Electric Ones** and we renamed it and worked on it. The Wizard was in the studio and she said she wanted a different hook for this song. I was in Indonesia at the time and Evie sent it to me. I worked on a few hooks, sent them in, but they just weren't saying much. Then **Evie** asked "Do you think we should ask **Kumar** to sing on it?" He listened to the song and he came up with the lines because he was reading **The Wretched** Of The Earth by Frantz Fanon at that time. It is so topical that he just picked the title and turned it into a hook. That was so beautiful and it just happened spiritually.

Take for instance with Idris Elba, who is on the album as well. Myself and Idris were in California working on the **Yardie** film. We were in the studio and had just finished the ADR, the voiceover and he said he was going to another studio, if I wanted to come. I said "Sure, what you talking about?" We jumped into an Uber, went to the studio and he was playing this Hip Hop beat. He asked me if I can work with this and I said "How you mean?" The beat was playing, we were all in the studio writing and Idris said "Yo, do the hook!" So I was doing the hook, **Beat Them Down** and all of that. When it was time for the album I reached out to him and asked him to send me the project because I wanted to include it. He was happy to do so, sent it to us and we chopped it up, and me and Evie went back into the studio to do some more verses, make it nice, and yeah, that's what we got. The song **Beat Them Down** was very topical for the album as well because it is saying beat down oppression. So we allowed divine principle to lead us. When something like that happens it's a gift. It's a little nugget from the universe within your journey. **Evie** and I didn't ask for it verbally but we wanted something like that for the album. Idris is very similar to us because of the art form that we all do. He's into music, we're into music. He's into fashion, we're into fashion. He's into film, we're into film. So it was just a perfect collaboration.

You worked with Idris Elba also as actors for the film Yardie. How did you first meet him and how did you get to collaborate with him for both the film and your track Beat Them Down? How is working with him?

Evie: I met Idris throughout the whole Yardie process. I auditioned and when Idris came to Jamaica it was a surprise because they didn't tell any of the actors about him before. When I came into the room, to my pleasant surprise it was him. He quickly broke the fourth wall of the hype and the celebrity because he is such a cool dude, a nerd, and an actor's director. And he is a



super cool bredrin, so the relationship was easy. As **Sheppie** just said we are kind of the same type of artists, just no-maddic about the talent, not afraid to be involved in anything.

Sheppie: Actor's directors like him, actors who also direct, are sensitive of both areas. They know what's going through the actor's psyche in a particular situation and they have an awareness of how they would structure the environment to make the actor shine best in it. That's also a talent to see these things.



Just like Idris, you have many facets: you are actors, musicians, dub poets, authors... how do you see or introduce yourselves?

Sheppie: No-maddic man! Every one of us has to be No-Maddz, are No-Maddz, and will continue being No-Maddz because when you stop being a No-Madd that is when you decide not to grow and not to learn. That is why this name has been with us for over two decades. Sometimes, honestly, we try to run from ourselves. But as Kumar says "If you run from yourself, you will lose." Our music represents what we think about, who we are and what we feel. That's why we do the music and share it. We are not trying to glorify any particular thing. Or maybe we are... we are glorifying balance and the no-maddic nature of life.

Evie: It is a responsibility, a purpose that we feel, in compatibility with other iconic Jamaican culture representatives like Miss Louise Bennett who is an author, a dub poet, actress, singer... Ranny Williams, Harry Belafonte, Jimmy Cliff, Horsemouth, who was so encouraging because he showed us that it's not limited. That's the direction we want to represent.

What else is coming up, for instance in terms of music videos? A visual for the single In Town is on the way already...

Sheppie: Yes, and another one for **Wretched** is coming up. It is a very special one we shot in Indonesia with **Kumar**.

Heaven On Earth is a big title. Why did you choose it?

Sheppie: Is it really? Is it a big title?

Evie: It's a massive title!

Sheppie: All of our titles have this grand feel, like film feel. They are supposed to be synced with a feature film or something. It is not necessarily very deliberate. When we realised it, we started to make it deliberately but initially I guess it's a state of our mind, our mindset. Because we are in theatre and

INTERVIEW THE NO-MADDZ 17

how we were schooled as well. We see things maybe a bit grander. With **Heaven On Earth** it's really the idea of balance and accepting what is. The idea of being in the present moment totally, which is very hard for most of us to do. That's the kind of feel **Heaven On Earth** represents.

Is there anything you would like to add to this interview?

Sheppie: Please subscribe to our YouTube channel to follow the Nomaddic Movement!

Evie: I am just inviting everybody to give us their support. We can't do without that and our music is not lacking of deserving that.

WALSHY FIRE PRESENTS THE NO-MADDZ - HEAVEN ON EARTH Summer 2019

On the north coast of Jamaica, about a 15 minute car ride east of Port Antonio, lies the beautiful town of San San, where among beautiful resorts, the Geejam Hotel is the one most close to paradise. Attached to this complex are the **Geejam Studios**, where **The No-Maddz** have recorded their brand-new album.

A number of people have played key roles for this album, while the number of band members has decreased from five to two. Apart from co-productions by Major Lazer's Walshy Fire, The Wizard, and Mountain Lion Music, fans can expect features with former Raging Fyah vocalist Kumar (Wretched), actor-director Idris Elba (Beat Dem Down), and close friend Atiba (Babylon Paper). With their second album, the remaining No-Maddz members Sheppie & Evie are top of the line among 21st-century Jamaican avant-garde and expressionist sound design and music composition. Although their music is generally hard to identify as Reggae at first glance, Heaven On Earth is quintessentially a Rasta album. Ideas of de-colonisation, repatriation and reparation penetrate this LP. That heaven is not a place in the sky, but an on-earth condition is a notion as old as Rastafarian philosophy itself. The Christian doctrine promising after-death heaven for the enslaved has been rejected by Rastas ever since.

Like a mission statement, the first song gives the album its name and pretty much represents the above-mentioned train of thought. Having worked with female back vocalists for the first time,



No-Maddz sounds more complete, balanced, and powerful than ever. The African centeredness of this album is substantiated by frequent recitations of Psalms and speeches, for example on **The Tred** (Psalm 86).

recitations of Psalms and speeches, for example on **The Trod** (Psalm 86), or **The Chant**, where both Psalm 126 and Haile Selassie's 1963 Call to African Leaders are recited, accom-

panied by a Nyabinghi drumbeat.

Such traditional folk music forms, however, are an exception. They more or less set the foundation for all the different styles of music that are put together. Dub Poetry continues to dominate the art of **The No-Maddz**. Backed by a variety of styles, their lyrics reflect socio-cultural and historical situations in and around Jamaica. Among all these traditional topics, pop culture has found its place on the tune Clarkz Like This. The popularity of the shoe is put to music with autotune on a dancehall beat à la Major Lazer. The musical versatility on this album is just amazing. Listening to Wha Dis, you may ask yourself the very question from its title. Songs like Babylon Paper carry an unmistakable 90s Hip Hop flair, **The Wretched** is basically House-Funk, **Hold It** pays tribute to "the sound of Dub", and one of the few songs that have a definite Reggae feel is The No-Maddz In Town, a homage to Barrington Levi's Murderer.

A mind-boggling album, full of inspiration, positive stories, positive views, historical discourse and, unimaginable creativity.

by Christian Moll



PETER WEBBER

GOING INNA DE YARD





DOWN THE REGGAE RABBITHOLE

BY ANGUS TAYLOR
PHOTOS: BORSALINO PRODUCTIONS
& NICOLAS BAGHIR MASLOWSKI

Musically, Jamaica punches above its weight in proportion to its population. And likewise, films about Jamaican music - from **The Harder They Come**, to **Rockers**, to **Babylon** - have made an international impact well beyond their budgets.

This year sees the release of the latest in a distinguished line of reggae features - the documentary **Inna De Yard**. Helmed by British director **Peter Webber** (Girl With The Pearl Earring, Hannibal Rising) **Inna De Yard** tells the story of the group of veteran and younger Jamaican musicians who tour acoustically under the same name. Shot on location in Jamaica and France, it stars lead veterans **Cedric Myton**,

Winston McAnuff, Ken Boothe and **Kiddus I** (40 years after his role in **Rockers**) plus a cast of supporting characters. It's a film that does not shy away from the harsh realities of life in Jamaica while maintaining a celebratory tone.

Angus Taylor (who recently interviewed McAnuff about the accompanying Inna De Yard soundtrack) Skyped with Webber while he was in Tunisia filming an upcoming television project. A reggae fan and born story-teller, the director needed little prompting to share his memories of making the film - especially the off-camera experiences that fed into what he captured on screen.

How did you get involved in the Inna De Yard project?

There's a two-part answer to this. I got into reggae when I was 15 years old for two reasons. One is that I lived in West London, so the music was around me because there was a large West Indian community. And obviously from running around in the [Notting Hill] Carnival.

But the moment it clicked was because of **The Clash**'s first album. I was a good little teenage punk, so the only music in those days you were allowed to listen to was reggae. All of a sudden you were forbidden to listen to my old **Bob Dylan** and **Pink Floyd** records. I heard their version of **Police And Thieves** and thought "God, this is amazing. What is this?" and went off to find the original **Junior Murvin**.

From there I just fell into a rabbit hole. I particularly liked dub. I bought a load of those **Scientist** albums with various mixes and stuff. I just started exploring and went through the whole canon: **Burning Spear**, the **The Gladiators**, **Dr. Alimantado**, the list goes on and on. I listened constantly really, but very much to what is the golden period for me, which comes to an end sometime in the early 80s. So the ground had been prepared.



I'd been working with a producer **Gael** on a film in Colombia called **Pickpockets**, which is on Netflix. He came to me and started talking to me about this group that were getting together, **Inna De Yard**, this project had been signed in France and was starting to get a lot of attention. So that was the first introduction, and then he realised I had an enthusiasm for reggae so he started setting the wheels in motion. He said listen "Do you want to come over to Jamaica and see if there's a film in it?"

INTERVIEW PETER WEBBER 21



(laughs) And there's only one answer when someone offers you a trip to Jamaica!

Had you been to Jamaica before?

I hadn't been to Jamaica beforehand because in a way I knew what would happen. I'd end up sitting in a hotel like a tourist and being really frustrated. The Jamaica in my head was so much more vibrant and alive, and a time capsule really. I didn't want to spoil my fantasy.

So I arrived at Kingston airport, getting into a van, being driven down to meet the first of the musicians. I'm a bit jet-lagged and I say "Where are we going then?" "Oh meeting the one of the musicians" and I say "Who is that?" "Cedric" and I go "Cedric Myton? Cedric Myton of The Congos?" Because one of my go-to albums way back when, one of the first ones I bought, was Heart Of The Congos. An amazing album.



I'm sitting in **Cedric**'s backyard and he's cooking red snapper and handing me Red Stripe and it's like a flashback to the Notting Hill carnival. That was genuinely the beginning of a fantastic journey. Meeting these amazing guys and getting a chance to hang out with them for a couple of months, follow the process of making the film and delve into their lives.

You've talked in previous interviews about the influence of French cinema - obviously this project is a French-funded project. Have you have you been influenced by Caribbean films and literature in your life?

There's a few reggae films that have been really influential. **The Harder They Come**, **Rockers**, there's **Countryman**. There's not so many but they're films I've watched again and again. There's a whole world that is conjured up by reggae musicians that I love. One of the great things for me going over to Jamaica was because I used to love that **Dr. Alimantado** album **Best Dressed Chicken**

In Town. I stared at that cover for years. So

going over and being able to stand in the spot where the cover was taken and also talk to someone and find out "What does that picture mean? What's this newspaper? What's this, what's that?" Finding out the iconography if you like. If you're interested in it, then it's a fascinating process. But I couldn't claim to be influenced more widely by Caribbean culture.

When you approach a documentary do you look at it like a drama where you say "These are the main characters, these are the supporting characters and these are the incidental characters"?

It does work out that way and it happens in a threefold process. When you make a film, in essence you make it three times. The first time you make it is when you're writing it or researching it. You try and work out: Who'll work musically? And who will work narratively and emotionally? Who's got stories that are compelling? Where is the heart of the film? So you come up with something on paper.

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Email: anchor@cwjamaica.com anchormedia@cwjamaica.com qussieclarkemusicgroup@gmail.com Then you go out and shoot and you have all the issues you have with shooting. Some people might not be as good interviewees as you thought they were. You have the problems of actually pinning some of these guys down because they're maybe not the best timekeepers in the world! I suppose it's a combination of being musicians and being Jamaican and a healthy intake of herb as well! You gather what you can, you do your best, you roll with the punches and gather a bunch of material, and by then the film's already moved on from the first phase of developing and writing.

Then you go into the edit and that's really where the film comes together in documentaries. That's where you start crafting it and selecting your bits of interview and trying to find a structure and hone the story. It's an iterative process. Each time the film changes and grows and starts to tell you what it wants to be

Who are the four main characters? Winston, Kiddus, Cedric and Ken?

They're the four main characters, at the centre of the film. And **Judy Mowatt**, of course sorry, who's not on the poster and she should be. She's the other major one. I was very happy - it took a lot of effort to get her. **Var** and **Derajah** are probably the two main supporting characters of the film.

Kiddus was in Rockers. Did he bring any of his experiences as a seasoned film performer to the set?

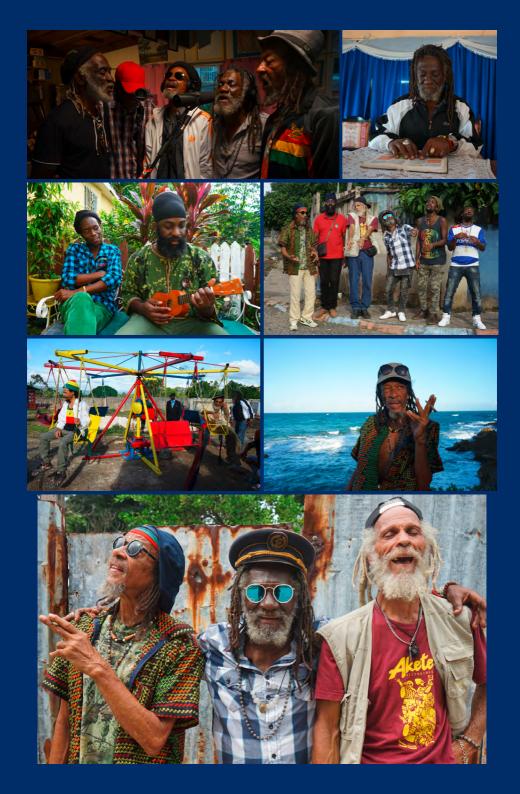
It's obviously affected his life a lot and changed the course of his career. It raised hopes for an internationally successful career that didn't actually happen - both because of what he's like as a person and what the business is like. But I wouldn't say that he came on thinking that he knew it all about film. All of these guys have done a fair amount because they've made video clips and stuff like that. They're performers and larger-than-life personalities. They have personas that they project as entertainers

What I wanted to try and do was lift the curtain a little bit and try and find the real people behind that and the real experiences that influence their music. Their music is so powerful and so heartfelt and rooted in a very strong culture and a tough set of living circumstances. You've spent time in Jamaica. It can be violent, there's a lot of poverty. There's a lot of positivity and amazing people there but it's a tough place to live. Especially if you're poor. So I was trying to really understand a bit more about that.

You talk about lifting the curtain and Winston said to me that you got a lot out of him and the other artists in the interviews. He said "Peter makes you spill your guts". The main characters are very honest about their tragedies and personal failings. Ken talks about his problems with drugs, which is something that he told me before, but Winston talks about the circumstances of the death of his son in a way that I've never heard him talk about in interviews.

There's a couple of things. We did a lot of interviewing, you know? And it would take a while to really get to the heart of it. You have to know what you want. You have to understand the kind of film you're making. We were making something that was to do with music but I wanted it to be more than that and speak to a wider audience, not just reggae fans. Hopefully it will please reggae fans though! So I knew that I wanted to burrow down into the trials and tribulations. The sufferation that they've been through.

A lot of it is just down to spending time. I came over some weeks before we actually started shooting. I spent time with them and got to know them and I think I got them to trust me. They could see I had a passion and enthusiasm for the music and that it came from a genuine place. Not an exploitative place in terms of what I wanted to do. So you build trust over a period of time. You don't start off with those difficult questions. One other thing on a much more personal level is that the film is dedicated to my brother who died.



I saw the dedication at the end of the film credits.

He died suddenly and unexpectedly at the very beginning of production. He is my only sibling and it was a real blow. So I was in quite a dark place because of that. I flew back for the funeral after the first week of production. Literally flew in, went to the funeral got on a plane and went back again and was filming. And I was talking to them about that. They're older guys, they're wise, they've been through things themselves. I think maybe especially with **Winston**, talking to him about how you deal with the loss of a close family member and exposing your own vulnerabilities, it's just a natural human interaction.

Certainly, it changed the film because the experience changed me and it made for a better film. Although it's a very hopeful, bright and feel-good film we touch on darker things. And I don't know that I would necessarily have gone there in the same way. I might have ska-

ted across the surface. In that way it feels very personal to me. Not only because the music's been so important in my life but because of a particular emotional journey that I was on at the time.

It sounds like you were dealing with grief at a time when Winston had been dealing with grief for some years now. So had Derjajah with the loss of his sister. Then Wesley from the Viceroys and Bo Pee the guitarist passed away just before the release of the soundtrack album.

Bo Pee was great. He was a lovely warm character. But **Bo Pee** was clearly a rock for those guys. He was very solid. He was a fantastic guitar player. There was something very warm about the man.

The loss of both him and **Wesley Tinglin** as well, from **The Viceroys** - so shortly after making the film - in a way felt like a bit of a valediction of the film. That we were lucky



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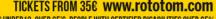
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that we got there in a period of time because clearly these guys are not going to be around forever. They know that and this film I hope will become part of their legacy.

Since you shot the film Jamaica has become quite a popular film location. The new James Bond film is being shot there.

Yeah and **Idris Elba** had just been there making his directorial debut **Yardie**. Listen, it's not without its challenges shooting in Jamaica! But it is a fantastic location. It has a kind of magic to the island. You've got the geography itself with the rolling small hills and intense beauty, some of it's mountainous, and you've got these fantastic jungles. But rubbing up against that you've got some really harsh sides of the country and something I tried to capture is the contrast. So we're not just off in beautiful tourist Jamaica. Whether in Trench Town or Mongoose Town, there's a lot of grit there as well.

In the title sequence we try and tell that story. Because we start off with the classic vision of beautiful Jamaica. You're flying over the coast-line and everything but then you suddenly transition and you're going over a much poorer part of town. This drone shot that sees into

people's houses and backyards and so you realise the other side. So you're just trying to make something that didn't ignore those realities. Part of my mission was to try and unveil what's really there rather than the idealised version for a tourist board commercial.

The film begins with the piano tuner and great session keyboard player Dennis Jah D Fearon. Winston said he was surprised but very happy with the way you started the film with him.

I met him when I came to do the first period of research. They were doing a couple of days recording then and so when I was up there early one morning - because they don't turn up that early, as you might imagine! - this guy just came wandering in and I got to talking with him. He clearly wasn't going to be a major character but there was something very distinctive about him. I found him a fascinating character, very warm and there was this kind of practical musical aspect where he was getting the piano together with this ramshackle box of tools and old rusty strings and stuff. It felt very Jamaican, very "make do" in that way.

So I set up that sequence and shot it and when we were making it, it just seemed wrong to

bang in with the musicians. I wanted to do something in terms of the story, set up the notion that a recording session process was about to begin and start with a minor character and with a set of images that maybe weren't the classic Jamaican images. We're up in the hills, it's misty and this guy appears out of the mist and it's got something atmospheric to it. It was a way of gently coming into the film and easing the audience into it, getting them to settle into a certain rhythm and a certain pace.

The end scene where Kiddus throws the record - how many times did you have to do that?

(laughs) Funnily enough that was when I had cut the film together and then my cameraman was over in Jamaica doing something else. I didn't shoot that during the original part of shooting. We got to the end of the film and I thought "We just need a little grace note or something". So I rang him up and I said "Look he tells this great story - do you think you can set this up for me?" So those two guys went off and did it. And it was great. It was just the little lift I was looking for at the very end of the film. Like a little in-joke really.

You mentioned Judy Mowatt. When I interviewed Winston he said he had a very conscious need for the second album to have more women involved. Obviously that's something that the film industry has been under pressure about for some years now.

It was important to me because when I started putting the lists together of the musicians and talking to the record company about who was going to be involved with the album there were no women on it. And I met **Jah9** who I found really interesting. Very sharp, very switched on, very political. Because we were doing this thing about pairing a younger generation with an older generation, we started to discuss who we could get too.

Judy was our first choice. There were other people like **Sister Nancy**. There were various other people we could have approached but it seemed like **Judy** was the best bet. **Jah9** was a great fan of hers. It took a while because when we turned up at her door, shall I say that she took a little bit of persuading! She's not really in the music business so much anymore. She's a churchgoing lady. She's got a lovely quiet life, so she was cautious. But once she realised she could trust us and we were coming from a good place then she collaborated with full force.

I was really surprised when we had a little drink, a small wrap party at the end. All the guys were there, which I was expecting, but I was very happy that **Judy** came along and joined us to raise a glass of white rum to toast the end of the film. I found her a great interviewee. She's more focused than the guys to be honest. I don't know whether she's had some kind of media training but she's really good at it. Disciplined in her answers. She's not a smoker, so you haven't got that thing where it's a bit difficult to keep people on the straight and narrow when you're trying to get a specific answer! With **Judy** it wasn't like that at all and her interview was great.

Out of the four main characters - have you bonded with all of them? Did any of them make a particular impact on you?

They all do in a different way. I think that the nice thing about the film is that each of them brings a distinctive view of life and has a distinctive character.

Cedric when he says he's an angelic being, it's true. He's kind of away with the pixies in a most marvellous way. Kiddus has taken more knocks than the others and as he says in the film he's a volatile person and he's quick to speak his mind. He has a temper but he's got a righteousness about him and he's very super well-read and engaged with the world. Kiddus, if you like, is a rebel. I don't know what you would call Cedric - like a choir boy in a way, because he has a wonderful innocence about him.

Winston, as you can see with his two little gorgeous little kids, he's a family man. He's



very grounded. He's got his house and his bit of land around there. There's something grounded and warm about him and in a way he's the beating heart. There's something about his personality that helps ground the project.

Ken Boothe is a different kettle of fish because I think he's been so successful and he's the most showbiz of them. There's something old-school about him and it's more difficult to get beyond his professional persona. It's not that he's cautious actually - it's just that he'll let you in so far and no further. You know from having interviewed him. You have to spend a bit of time.

One of the things I loved about talking to the younger guys like **Var** and **Derajah** is that they've grown up with reggae as one of a number of different musical strands in Jamaica so it's nice to see a group of younger musicians still playing that tradition and listening to it. I had thought a lot of that has gone and was lost and was just kept alive by fans. But the spirit or the heart of reggae is still beating.

The film is probably going to draw some comparisons with Wim Wenders Buena Vista Social Club, as a film about veteran musicians coming together. Were you inspired by that film and do you mind the comparison?

I don't mind people making that comparison at all! You must be joking! It's an insanely successful film! They sold 15 million albums and the film was Oscar nominated. I hope we get anything by association with that! I think there are comparisons. I know the film well. As a music fan I've watched it a lot. I think it's different for a number of reasons though. And the reasons are more to do with the different cultures of those islands and the different historical journeys those islands have taken. I think **Buena Vista** was about music that much of the world at the time, apart from that maybe the Hispanic community, had forgotten about. So there was this explosion of discovery. These musicians' voices were being heard for the first time in a worldwide context. I think that that's not the case with reggae because it was so popular in the 70s. People know the musical form worldwide so I don't think it's as much of a revelation. But I think the heart of my film and the heart of **Wenders**' film are in a similar place. They come from a passion for a place, Cuba in his instance, Jamaica in mine, and a passion for a people, for a music, for a culture. These islands are very close together, although they're incredibly different because of their histories but there are some similarities as well. So that's absolutely fine for people to say it reminds them of it. I take that as a badge of honour.



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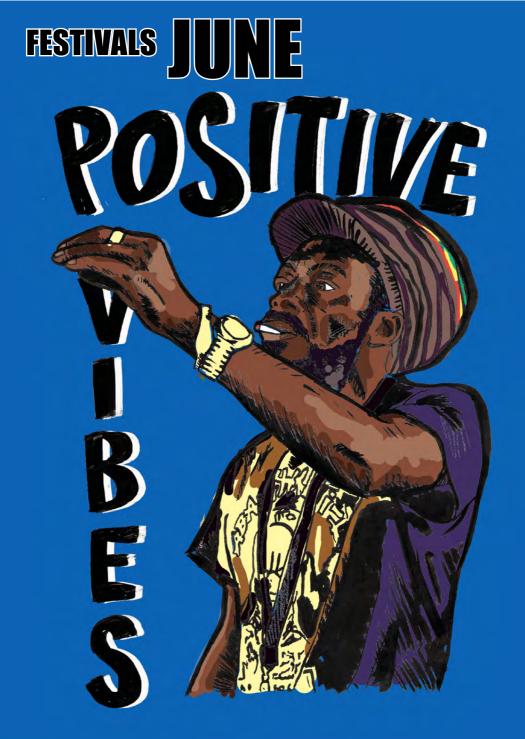
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FESTIVALS JUNE 2019 33



Victoria Ska & Reggae Festival



19. - 23. June

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Ruhr Reggae Summer



19. - 22. June

Chronixx_Inner Circle_Groundation_ Jah9_Etana_Toke_Warrior Sound_ Jugglerz and many more...





34 FESTIVALS JUNE 2019



Zion Station Festival



20. - 23. June

Jah Shaka_Kenny Knots_Black Omolo_ Ras Muffet_Sista Awa_Gladdy Wax_ and many more...



Texas Reggae Beach Clean-up



21. - 22. June

Chris Boomer_Saltwater Slide Kaya Kotura Triecation and many more...





FESTIVALS JUNE 2019 35





Afrikanisches Kulturfest



21. - 23. June

Etana_Anthony B_Mal Eleve_ Jah Pirates Band and more...



Nowa Reggae



21. - 23. June

Twinkle Brothers_Linval Thompson_ Jah9_Mellow Mood_Roy Panton_Sentinel Sound_ and many more...

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36 FESTIVALS JUNE 2019



St. Kitts Music Festival



26. - 30. June

Buju Banton_Popcaan_Omari Banks_ French Montana and many more...



Bergamo Reggae Sunfest



27. - 30. June

Johnny Osbourne_Agent Sasco_ BG All-Stars_and more...





FESTIVALS JUNE 2019 37



Dub Station Festival



28. - 29. June

King Shiloh Sound System_ Blackboard Jungle_Aba Shanti-l_ and more...



Ithaca Reggae Fest



28. - 29. June

Mykal Rose with Sly & Robbie_ Giant Panda Guerilla Dub Squad_ Double Tiger_and more...





38 FESTIVALS JUNE 2019



Couleur Cafe



28. - 30. June

Gentleman_Sean Paul_Groundation_ Kabaka Pyramid_Samory I_ Hollie Cook_Protoje_ Tiken Jah Fakoly_ and many more...



Roots Up



30. June

Black Omolo_Marley's Ghost_Tribal M_ Mighty Emmanuel & Lion Shiloh_ and more...





FESTIVALS JUNE 2019 39



Groovin in the Park



30. June

Beres Hammond_Third World_ Sizzla_David Rodigan_Michael Bolton_ and more...



Canadian Reggae Sunfest

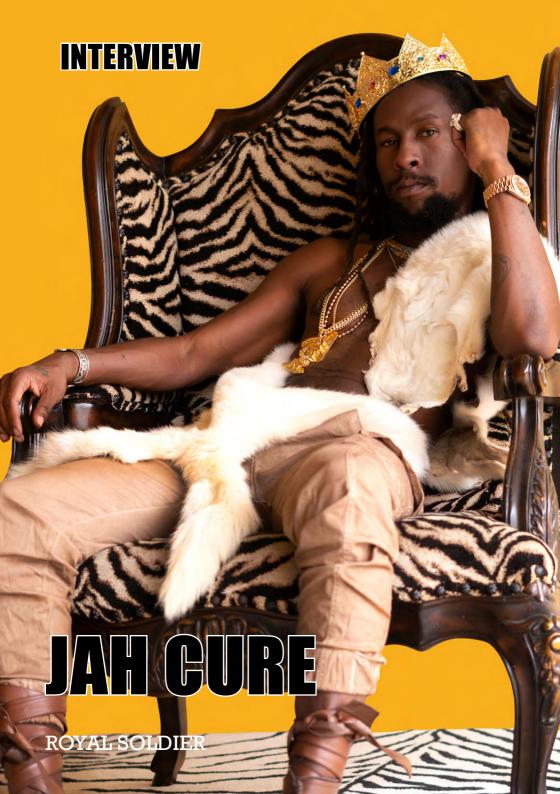


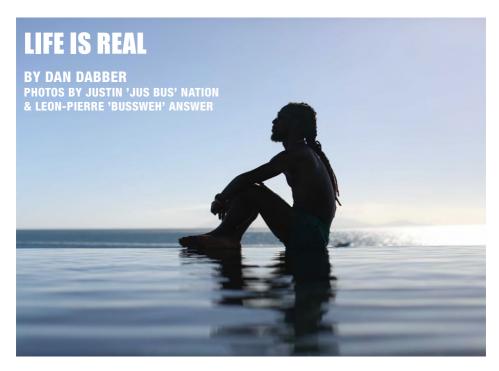
30. June - 1. July

Sanchez_Tarrus Riley_I Octane_ Barrington Levy_Luciano_ I Wayne_and more...









Jah Cure has been at the forefront of Jamaican reggae music for 22 years due to his incredible talent and relentless work ethic. From the time Beres Hammond produced and released his debut single, a duet with Sizzla called King In This Jungle, Cure has proven that he can compete and collaborate with Jamaica's most revered vocalists and consistently put out some of the best music in the genre.

Jah Cure entered the scene in '97 and became Reggae's hottest young prodigy, recording and releasing three albums while imprisoned - Free Jah's Cure: The Album, The Truth in 2000, Ghetto Life in 2003 (also produced by Beres Hammond), and Freedom Blues in 2005. True Reflections... A New Beginning was released in 2007, just three days after Cure was released from prison. The success of the albums and the controversy surrounding his imprisonment kept the young singer in the spotlight, despite his

incarceration. "*Free Jah Cure*" became a rallying cry. Not even prison bars could contain the artist's larger-than-life persona.

Never one to be boxed in, **Cure**'s music slowly spread off the island and into R&B and Hip Hop markets for decades, earning him music industry clout in the US, even though he does not have a visa to travel there. His influence on the US hit a high-water mark in 2015 when his last album, **The Cure**, earned a Grammy nod for Best Reggae Album.

In the build up to the new album, **Cure** has released multiple singles and videos, including collaborations with **Phyllisia Ross** (**Risk It All**), **Popcaan** (**Life Is Real**), and **Damian "Jr. Gong" Marley** (**Marijuana**). **Jah Cure**'s new album, **Royal Soldier**, is slated for release on August 30th (VP Records). During a recent chat about the new project, **Dan Dabber** had a chance to speak with him about **Royal Soldier** and much more.

When I heard the new album, I was impressed by how unique the overall vibe is. How would you describe the sound of this project?

Well this one I named it **Royal Soldier** just to give it a royal vibe, but it is a mixture of everything.

The last album was only a single **Jah Cure**, so I call it **The Cure**. This one is, you know, me and friends. A lot of people. Me and **Capleton**, **Yami Bolo**, **Junior Reid**, **Popcaan**, **Tory Lanez**, **Damian Marley**, **Mya**, **Melanie Fiona**.... It's just a diverse album with a mixture of different things... Creativity, you know? Nothing sounds alike, or even close.

Are there any producers or musicians on Royal Soldier that you were particularly happy to have on the project?

Well, yeah, my bredrin **Riff Raff**, [aka] **Llamar Brown**. He's a youth that I liked to work

with on this project. Definitely, as a producer... Because what I don't produce, I co-produce. I mean everything, no matter who's producer on it, because I still play my part. Because the guy will come with this beat, but I will do everything else - analyse the beat and put the artist on it that I would want on it. I like to work with **Riff Raff** and then there was one dude called **Padrino** from the Bahamas that I work with. He's cool, you know what I mean? And this guy called **BDA** from the Bahamas too... I work with two or three Bahamian producers on it.

One thing that stands out to me about Royal Soldier is the wide variety of featured artists. They represent different countries and genres and cultures. I assume many of these collaborations are recorded hundreds, or maybe thousands of miles apart. How does the process work in a situation like that?



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It's basically that somebody's got to start it. If I have a hook... And I just make sure that I have a hook that this person would like and this person would like. As long as you have a hook first, you send them the MP3 and they listen. And so technology and miles apart make music work.

And then some people we will be able to fly in, and we'll meet and we'll put the song together... Together in the studio. Or we have to end up sending it to someone, from miles apart, and they put in their part. Like me and Mya, we record together. Me and Damian Marley, we record together. Me and Tory Lanez, we didn't record together. Me and Melanie Fiona, we didn't record together. But me and Capleton, Yami Bolo, Junior Reid, we recorded together. It's how it is and how it works.

I think there's a nice mix of current and classic vibes on Royal Soldier. I think Street Kings with Junior Reid, Yami Bolo, and Capleton is a great example of that. There's even a Half Pint sample in the hook, but everything's flipped into something new and fresh.

Yeah, man... I bring back some of the legends with a mixture of *this* time. Because a lot of people are just remaking their songs, you know? People are remaking their songs, but they're not really *remaking* something. Some people are remaking the beat, but they're not remaking the entire song with the artist to say "Yo, let me just make that song over there... The artist, for this beat..." You know what I mean? It's nice to use back some classic beats or create something in that sense.

Yeah, man... I enjoyed that aspect of the album immensely. I imagine Junior Reid, Yami Bolo, and Capleton must have had some sort of influence on you throughout your career.

Yeah, definitely... Definitely. **Capleton** is like a big brother. He takes care of us until we can find our own way. And **Junior Reid** is always showing me crazy love. He's always "Yo, man. You remind me of me when I was young. You remind me of **Hugh Mundell**." When I was younger, the first time **Junior Reid** saw me he said "Yo, you remind me of **Hugh Mundell**, man."



And he's always giving me support, everywhere. He said "Yo, I like your sound." It's like he's saying that there's a lot of artists that comes through that have something stable... And he said "Yeah, you're one of them that comes through with the sound. You have this sound, you know?" He said "Yami Bolo has the sound. Mykal Rose has the sound." There's a sound... Like there's a wave of artists that come through with a sound. So he's always telling me about how I have this sound. And he's saying that it's the wailing sound.

And then Yami Bolo is always showing me love, way before I make it big. I used to see Yami Bolo and hang out. And I used to admire Yami Bolo - buy his CDs and just listen to him all day, man. And when I grow in the music, Yami Bolo becomes like a brother and he respect me so much. I flew him in, he stayed at my house for one week. And, you know, I get him to deliver... Him and Junior Reid in the studio at once. I put Capleton on it after. And Capleton said to me "How did you get Yami Bolo and Junior Reid on it at once?" Because it's really not easy to get these people together like that, you know?

Another track that updates something from the past is Magic featuring Tory Lanez, which pays homage to Beres Hammond, who was a mentor of yours early in your career. You know, **Beres** is my daddy, so I make a little **Beres Hammond** twist. You know, and **Tory Lanez** loves it too because it's a n old famous dancehall beat.

This track is really killer. Can you tell me a little bit about how you and Tory put it together and why you were inspired to borrow those specific lyrics from Beres?

Well, it was a friend of mine that came up with the idea. He's called **Padrino**. He's a producer. He came up with the idea and I said "I like it!" Alright, we'll work together and we'll put it together". And it comes out good! Everybody was happy.

I certainly am...

[laughs] Yeah, when **Beres** heard it, he was happy too. I just did have to do a little adjustment, but **Tory Lanez** was happy. I just wanted **Tory Lanez** on it. When I hear it, I just think **Tory Lanez**. And when I connect with **Tory Lanez**, he was super happy, man. I never know that he was such a big fan too. And his mother is a big fan.

When I saw **Tory Lanez** for the first time... When we met physically... Because I just connect with him and said "Yo, we need to do this song." And a friend of mine called **Dru** - thanks to **Dru**. He made the hook up. He's from Canada. He's part of my management team and things.

And then I meet **Tory Lanez** one on one session at one of my bredrin birthday party in the Bahamas, that my bredrin put together. He flew me in with **Tory Lanez** and a couple of us.

So I was on the hotel floor and I saw someone said to me "Hey, are you **Jah Cure**?" And I'm like "Yeah. What's up with that?" And he's like "Yo, mi **Tory Lanez** brother, man. I think **Tory Lanez** want to see you." And I'm like "Are you kidding me? Bro, you know how long I want to meet with **Tory**?" Because it's hard to communicate with him by phone.

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So when I go by the room, I see this little short dude, man. And he was smoking [laughs]. And because we talk on the phone, he knows me, but we never met physically, and he's like "Yo, man, my mom wants to talk."

He called his mother. It's like 2 a.m. in the morning. And I'm like "Yeah, man? For real?" And he's like "Yeah, man. My mom is the biggest fan of **Jah Cure**." I was really amazed. And he was like "Man, I love this song. This is so special and exciting." He was going on and on and on. So, I was happy to know that he was happy. I'm really excited about this track. And he calls me all the time. We're trying to get the video done, right now. Got to get on top of things. We've got to get the video out.

But, yeah, the **Tory Lanez** track, I'm enjoying that one. I love that. It's one of my favourites I think, on the album.

Is there any bit of advice or insight that Beres shared with you back in the day that you still think about regularly in 2019?

Of course! Of course! Every day of my life! He said "Sing the song like it's the first and the last you're recording the song. Because once it's out there, it's out there forever and it can't be undone." Just always put in the work. that's why when you're singing a song you just put your soul in, you know? Put your soul into the song.

How did you first discover that you had a talent for singing?

I've been through a lot of struggle, man, growing up as a youth in the ghetto. You know what I mean? We just like singing. We were just hanging out with our friends. And when rough times reach us, and people were like "Yo, you got a nice voice." One night, there was a singing competition going on in my community. I entered and I came first. My mother



JULY 3 - O2 ACADEMY ISLINGTON - LONDON (UK)

JULY 4 - MONTREUX JAZZ FESTIVAL - MONTREUX (CH)

JULY 5 - FESTIVAL AU FOIN DE LA RUE - SAINT-DENIS-DE-GASTINES (FR)

JULY 6 - MELKWEG - AMSTERDAM (NL)

JULY 7 - SUMMERJAM FESTIVAL - KÖLN (DE)



was looking for me in the house, and she's like "Where is this boy?" But she heard my voice somewhere in a sound system down the street, so she realised that I wasn't in the house. I was missing. [laughs]

And I'm telling you, the next day I win a food basket. I went to Sandals hotel, me and the second-place winner. We had lunch and a few things like that. I take the food basket to my house and I said to my mother "Yeah, I'm going to be the breadwinner. This is the first sign. This is the first sign of me going to be the breadwinner, because I win this food basket and I take it to the house." [laughs]

One thing I think you might have a unique perspective on... Vybz Kartel has managed to stay on top of the dancehall charts by continuing to record music while incarcerated. You were a pioneer in this respect...

Yeah, I'm the first person to ever done that in the history of the world. That's history. No one had ever done that before. I'm the first person.

That's incredible! And I think people have a lot of questions about how that works. Could you describe to me a little bit about the recording process while you were in prison? What sort of equipment was available? What kind of limitations did you have?

How my thing worked, when I was down there... They have a band. Because we get sponsored from Food For The Poor and a lot of big corporations like that. [They] send stuff to the prison institution, so we have a set-up system. We have a PA system. And I would ask officers to help me get cables and adapter wires. I would ask them to purchase for me. It's nothing illegal, because it's part of the system to help the system inside. That way we can make music.

And then I asked a friend to bring me a thing called Mini-Studio. I don't know if they still making them. Mini-Studio. The one that I know was made by Roland.

How I discovered this Mini-Studio, I was inside of the prison, and one guy wanted me to do some dub. And he brings his own system



because he knows it's in prison and we don't have the kind of studio that we would want. He would bring his stuff, and then we'd work out the dub, and he'd pay me. But he brought this new equipment and I was like "Wow! That's so compact." It's like the size of a laptop, but thicker. So I asked to get one. And a friend of mine who supports me, he made his own records at the time, he sent me one and I start to use it to record. We started making music, then comes **Longing For** and some of the [other] songs.

So your friend brings you this piece of gear... Would you have to leave it in the music room with the instruments and PA? How often would you get access to it?

No, it's inside my cell.

Wow! Really?

Yeah, because it's a little personal item and I just keep it in my possession.

That's outrageous. I never would've thought you were recording those tunes in your actual cell.

Yeah, man...

So, it's no secret that you're a man who has often been swept up in controversy, and we've seen your name show up in headlines with what appears to be more frequency in recent years. How is it different to manoeuvre through controversy in the age of fake news compared to the years before social media?

Well, I don't know what to tell you. Just things happen in life. We live our life, and when you're famous, you can't do anything wrong because you're not human. We make mistakes, man. People always not getting it. We do the same things, man. We're all shopping at the same store. So things happen...

Some of us, because nobody knows us... Nobody gets to see the skeletons in their closets. Because they're not famous. But when you're famous, your skeletons get famous too. Your skeletons in the closet, they put on their suits and they come out. That goes along with the fame. It's a part of your life. You have to carry them with you. We have to just [be] grateful for who we are, and sometimes it's just the struggle that made us into who we are.

You know, things happen, but we always seem to correct our life. But still those who are big

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enough, famous people, always have controversial lives... Some of us. Most of us.

You know, sometimes things just happen. You just get caught up in your social media. Because now, social media is a courtroom, you know? It's where your case gets tried. So people judge you even if you're right.

That's heavy stuff, man... To finish on a lighter note, Rihanna is reportedly working on a Reggae album that will be released sometime this year. Is there any chance that you will have a feature on that album? And how do you think a high-profile Pop-Reggae album like that will impact Reggae artists in 2019?

It'll be good. Because, you know, Rihanna's from the Caribbean, and she's related, and she *loves* Dancehall. She posted up a lot of Dancehall artists... Whining up, dancing to them songs. She grew up to them. She grew up on my music, **Beenie Man** music, **Bounty Killer** music. So, it's nothing new. If she's giving back some of the support to Dancehall, that would be so good.

Is she someone that you had contact with in the past?

Yeah, man... Me and her met at a party and took pictures. I did have some pictures up on my Gram. I just clean up my Gram and may have thrown them away... But me and her party together in Barbados.

Your last album was nominated for a Grammy... Do you think Royal Soldier will be the one that wins it for you?

I have a strong feeling so... [laughs] The Grammys are just something that excite me. I just find excitement in going into the Grammys. Because, you know, I don't have a US visa. And I was nominated for the first time, so it was a good thing for me to go there. You don't need a visa to come through the speakers. I say that before in music...

It's just, good music. If you can't reach there, at least you can reach the people. And now, in the social age, man, you can get famous and sit in a wheelchair and don't even left your house.

JAH CURE - ROYAL SOLDIER VP Records - August 30, 2019

"I'm on the verge of making history, ain't nobody stopping we, we're on the move right now!"

With these words, **Siccaturie Alcock** aka **Jah Cure** introduces his new album **Royal Soldier**. After his last album **The Cure**, which even earned him a nomination for the Grammy 2016, the artist has obviously been working

diligently on expanding his style even more, surprising us with a new and modern but consistent sound, despite the many producers who participated in the album's creation.

That music is a constant and undeniable force within him, the singer has already proven in the past. Despite all obstacles, **Jah Cure** has continually released songs and albums.

One of the major differences from his last release which was strictly **Jah Cure** (as the name **The Cure** implies), **Royal Soldier** has an impressive array of features. While some of them are well-known household names in Reggae music (we'll come back to those later), most others are immensely interesting artists who, for some reason or other, are not yet standing in the international spotlight, at least in a Reggae context.

Mya, for instance. Apart from an appearance on Beenie Man's *Girls Dem Sugar* and a joint appearance with Wayne Wonder on Reggae Sumfest in 2011, she hasn't been on the international scene much, but she's definitely an artist to look out for. On the meltingly smooth *Only You* (produced by Llamar "Riff Raff" Brown), she manages to create a sweet and tender vibe in duet with Jah Cure. Likewise, Canadian R&B singer Melanie Fiona adds some powerful vocals on *Work It Out*, while Miami-based Phyllisia Ross casts her spell on the lovely *Risk It All*.



Produced by Bahamian Tracy "BDA" Knowles, both Pretty Face and Eyes On Your Body praise female charms, though the latter is a bit more diverse due to the inclusion of Dru, Sketch Carey & Alx. Also from the Bahamas, Rory Bowe aka Padrino produced My Wish, based on a famous dancehall riddim re-lick and bowing to Cure's mentor Beres Hammond. whose

lines of *I Wish* are quoted here, complemented by Canadian rapper **Tory Lanez**. **Padrino**'s second contribution is *Life Is Real*, and with **Popcaan** as featured guest, we reach the aforementioned Reggae celebrities.

Produced by Frederick Seymour and Anwar McDonald, Damian "Jr. Gong" Marley features prominently on the laid-back *Marijuana*, a different kind of ganja tune. Last but not least, *Street Kings* unites four phenomenal singers and is definitely a gem of the album, not so much riddim-wise, but undeniably in the vocal section. Bringing Yami Bolo and Junior Reid in the studio together must have made for a historical recording session already, and capturing "the Fireman" Capleton on the track just tops it off beautifully.

Apart from these collaboration, **Jah Cure** is on his own on some of the tracks as well, which is a big plus for his most fervent fans. Soft chords are struck in **Brighter Day** and the rootsy **Don't Walk Away**, while the danceable **Telephone Love** as well as the reflective title track **Royal Soldier** round off the diverse playlist.

With this release, **Jah Cure** proves to be on the move more than ever and, according to a statement by the artist in our recent interview, we can expect some fine visuals for at least one of the tracks soon! **by Gardy Stein**





TIMELESS MEMORIES

BY ANGUS TAYLOR PHOTOS BY DAVID I. MUIR

Ground-breaking female singer **Marcia Griffiths** celebrates her 55th year in music in 2019. She's commemorating the anniversary with a tribute album to the label where she first started as a child star: **Studio 1**.

But she's not revisiting her own **Studio 1** hits such as **Feel Like Jumping**, **Words** or **Tell Me Now** - nor those of her duet, and former romantic, partner, **Bob Andy**. On **Timeless**, released by **Tad's Record**, and assembled by **Marcia**'s favoured dancehall-era producer (and **Studio 1** fanatic) **Donovan Germain**, she's covering some of her favourite artists who joined her at "the Jamaican Motown" during its 60s "golden age".

Angus Taylor, who has interviewed Marcia about her full career elsewhere, spoke to her on the subject of Studio 1 while she was riding a tour-bus with Gentleman on the outskirts of Hamburg. She shared her memories of the artists and songs she chose for Timeless and why they mean so much to her.

Your new album Timeless is all Studio 1 covers of your favourite artists. Can you tell me how you decided to do this album?

Coming out of the stable of **Studio 1** as a female, **Studio 1** to me is like a pot of gold. It is where all the golden songs were created. With all that good music coming out of **Studio 1** I just wanted to relive th ose beautiful songs. I love and cherish all those songs. There are so many more, so these are just a few of the songs I chose to put on this album, not including anything that I did. That's how the whole concept came about.

Donovan Germain is a great admirer of Studio 1 owner Coxsone Dodd. He sees him as his biggest influence...

Yes, because most of the rhythms done by different artists on the **Penthouse** label are **Studio 1** rhythms. For example, **Beres Hammond** has a couple of tracks from **Studio 1** which he has different songs on, and even the **Answer** rhythm that I did **I Shall Sing** on, just to name a few. So **Donovan Germain** really admires the **Studio 1** production.

Can you tell me your memories of how in Spring 1964 you went from being a little girl singing at your front gate to the Carib Theatre and then to Studio 1?

Those are memories I'll cherish as long as I live. I remember the morning I went to Carib Theatre. I remember walking on that stage, one young little skinny girl just 99lbs, not knowing what to expect after getting such a fight. Because when **Phillip James** of the **Blues Busters** went to ask **Byron Lee** if I could perform there, they refused. **Phillip** insisted that I come on the stage.

I was waiting on the guitar to start **No Time To Lose** which was a very popular song in
Jamaica by **Carla Thomas** and it was just
a whole lot of shuffling. Being young and
inexperienced I looked around at the band
and saw them smiling. Then a voice said to
me "Little girl, you'd better start singing".
That's when I started the song all by myself.
And they had to follow me. And [the reaction]
was overwhelming. They wanted me to come
back and do the same song!

I was taken that very same morning from Carib Theatre by a guy called **Linford Anderson** to **Studio 1**. I never did any audition. I went straight in the studio and recorded the song called **Wall Of Love**, written by this guy who was living in the same place we were living in Hannah Town. He was supposed to sing harmonies on the song but he got nervous and in the end I did it all by myself. That song is still on tape, never released.

I just started recording and it was like a 9-to-5 job at **Studio 1**. I met Sister **Rita**, **Bob**, **Peter**. **Bunny Wailer** used to hold my hand and drop me off at Little School which is kindergarten. He was the only person I knew there. **Mr Dodd** was so overwhelmed with my voice. He tried everything, doing collabs with myself and **Bob Marley**, with **Owen Boyce**, **Jeff Dixon** and the great **Bob Andy**. But it was not until 1967 that I had my first hit song **Feel Like Jumping**. And I had **Words** also doing well, by myself and **Jeff Dixon**.

It was like a family affair at **Studio 1**. Whichever artist was recording we would go in and sing harmonies. Because it was just two-track, the voice and the rhythm would go on one time, so we had to do it right. If **Bob Andy** was recording or the **Heptones** or **Ken Boothe**, whoever was there, everyone would just do harmonies. It was just a beautiful, happy family.

The first track on the album is a cover of the Cables' What Kind Of World. Did you know Keble Drummond, Elbert Stewart and Vincent Stoddard very well?

Oh, very well! We were all familiar friends. We used to converse. I know them very well. Most of the artists whose songs I recorded, I know them very well.

That song was one of the first bass lines that Leroy Sibbles played on at Studio 1. And the next track is the Heptones Baby Be True. Tell me a bit about your memory of working with Leroy, Barry and Earl...

Wow, the **Heptones**. We were all close together. We would just reason day-to-day when we'd see each other. I thought that was such a talented group - whether **Leroy** was leading or **Barry**. Everything that they did always seemed to be a hit song. So I admired that group even from that time. Because they always had something really good.

Then you have two tracks on the album by Delroy Wilson – Once Upon A Time and True Believer. Delroy was a child star like yourself





and a real singers' singer. I guess he must have been there a couple of years before you arrived at Studio 1.

Delroy was one of the few artists that I really admired for his natural God-given talent. **Delroy** would never sing the same song in the same style twice. He was full of music. He would just take the song and style it in his own way. He loved to slur and do ad libs. I rated **Delroy** from when I heard him as a young little boy. I said "This guy is truly talented". He was one of my favourites as a singer.

And then you sing two songs by Carlton and the Shoes - Love Me Forever and Love Is A Treasure. They were a group who had fantastic intricate harmonies.

Yes. As a matter-of-fact **Carlton** himself came into the studio at **Penthouse** to do a harmony on one of his own songs that I recorded. We still communicate so he did a harmony when I recorded **Love Me Forever**

The other song by Carlton, Love Is A Treasure, is the namesake of a different song called Love Is A Treasure by Freddie McKay. Freddy did that song for Treasure Isle but also recorded for Studio 1. Did you know Freddie McKay well?

Freddie McKay was a very humble guy. He didn't speak a lot. He was very talented as well but he was one of these one-away brothers who never talked much. But when the time came for him to go in and do what he had to do, he would do it to the best of his ability. That's how I remember him.

You also cover I'm The Toughest - tell me about your memories of Peter Tosh.

I had to live with **Peter** at **Studio 1** every day, so I knew him so well. **Peter** was one of these guys that you didn't joke around with. He would just tell you like it is. With **Peter**, **Bob** and **Bunny**, these three strong, militant guys, as a young girl at **Studio 1**, you'd know you had to walk on the straight and narrow line. Because you knew they were always watching you.

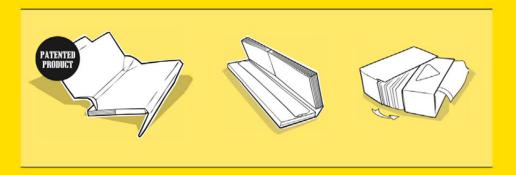
So **Peter** himself was very to the point. He was one of these arrogant guys. But he had this the other side that was very sweet. You could sit and reason with **Peter**. He was one of the guys who always plays the guitar. Just like **Joe Higgs**. He would play guitar for auditions for other artists. And even when we were in the studio for **Wailers**. But you had to understand **Peter** to get along with him, you know? He was just unique. He was different from everyone else.

You also covered the song Your Love by Larry and Alvin. The great Larry Marshall was one of the first people to sing on a reggae rhythm at Studio 1.

Your Love is one of my favourite songs on the album. I love that song. Larry and myself were very close. He was such a nice guy. Most of these guys that I met at Studio 1, were all humble guys - just hungry to have something going on and music was all these guys knew. This was how they expressed themselves.









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And up until the last time I saw Larry he was so humble. He was one of my favourite persons to even talk to.

You also do a Ska Medley on the album. The first song in the medley is a duet with Toots on his I'll Never Grow Old. I interviewed you in 2017 and you told me you had just recorded that with him.

Oh Lord. Toots is one of my favourites from way back when. I usually joke with his daughters and say "I could have been your mother!" Because **Toots** is someone that we were very close to. I have a love for Toots. I respected his talents so much. He had something in him that I've never seen in any other artists. That deep revival spiritual thing he had about him. He was so soulful that he would just connect. I just connected with **Toots** very easily because he is spiritual. Because of where he was coming from. That particular vibe that he had. Up until this day he never lost it.

You also sing two songs by Jackie Opel -You're No Good and Cry Me A River. Bob Andy also told me he was very influenced by Jackie.

Wow. I can't even find the adjective to describe **Jackie**. My goodness, **Jackie** was one of the talents that I loved. That guy had a voice like a powerhouse. He was a short guy but he was so powerful. We just admired Jackie. He was from another island... Barbados! Every song he did, I loved it. There are some songs that you know you can't better them. But you love them so much that you just want to express yourself doing them. I don't think there is anyone that could better Jackie's version. **Jackie** is one of the talents like a **Delroy Wil**son. This little guy was so powerful. Really powerful and talented.

You cover the Wailers' Jailhouse in the medlev. Let's talk about your memories of Bob and Bunny. After Studio 1 you joined Bob in



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the I Threes with Rita and Judy. You worked with Bunny on your hit Electric Boogie – which birthed the Electric Slide dance.

Wow, my memories of **Bob** stretched out far. I always say I'm so thankful that I recognised how this man was. Ever since I met him I thought this man was just so unique, in another world. His eyes would tell it all. You saw that desperation. He just wanted to tell his story to send it into the world, the four corners of the Earth

And there is no doubt in my mind that he was truly sent by Almighty God to do the work he did. **Bob** was one of these guys who you just couldn't help really admiring because he was so unique in anything he said and everything he sang. He was the voice of the people and this is one of the reasons why people can relate to everything that he sings about. **Bob** was special and always will be in my life.

Bunny and I now, we used to live in the same area in Hannah Town. When I was just a little girl at my gate **Bunny** would walk up Oxford Street and I'd wait for him. He would hold my hand, take me to kindergarten and let me off and he would continue on to his Big School. I remember sometimes he used to have more lunch money than some of the other kids and I used to get a little change from him as a little girl.

We grew up together so even when he separated from the **Wailers** we were always in touch. That is one of the reasons why **Electric Boogie** came about with **Bunny**. So we really go way back. I was very comfortable going to **Studio 1** and seeing that at least someone was there that I knew. So **Bunny** and I were always close.

Can you tell me a bit about your memories of Alton Ellis? You cover his Rocksteady.

This goes back to the reason why I really wanted to do this album to sing those **Studio 1** classics. **Alton** was another powerful, talented brother. His sister **Hortense** and I go way back too. She was one of the first female

singers out there to perform. And **Alton** and I, most of the **Studio 1** artists and I, were very close because I admired their talents so much. As a young girl being in the **Studio 1** stable. I used to see it as Iamaica's Motown.



Alton used to have hit after hit after hit. I remember he was singing with a guy named Eddie and he had a song called Muriel which was Jamaica's favourite! I remember my two other sisters, all three of us went to a bar to punch that song [in the jukebox] and we got such a beating from our father that night! Just to hear that song Muriel. I've been admiring Alton from that day.

Let's talk about Ken Boothe - you cover his Home Home?

Ken that's my real... I'm not going to say favourite because most of these guys I really love and they are all my favourite. But Ken and I are very close up until this day. Ken has the most unique sound. You hear Ken Boothe and you know this is Ken Boothe. You don't have to wonder who this is. He's just different. And he had a train load of hit songs in Studio 1.



Sometimes I wonder if there was a vibration in **Studio 1** with the artists, that was just different. I guess the atmosphere brought out the best in everyone. Everyone was just sincere. So genuine and innocent. We weren't thinking about money. Nobody was, I don't think, at that time.

I wanted to ask you about one song that you chose - My Guiding Star by Joe White. That's a rare tune - quite hard to find.

Yes, it is, you know? (laughs) Joe and I recorded at the same stable with Mrs Pottinger, High Note. And Joe was one of these guys that you had to sit back and observe. Because he just moved differently from everyone. He had a couple of songs that I really loved - Every Night was one of my favourite songs. I don't think that was Studio 1, so that's why I never ended up doing that song. But Joe was really up there where I'm concerned, as someone with God given talent. I respect God given talent. I really do.

You also recorded Declaration of Rights by the Abyssinians. Donald Manning is the brother of Carlton (from the Shoes). I'm guessing that song must have come out around the time that you were leaving Studio 1 for Harry J?

Yes! But that song has a deep message. Those brothers the **Abyssinians** weren't just normal, you know? They were very deep, just like **Bob and the Wailers**. They would sing about things that were real and truthful. Things that are happening in people's lives. People could relate to the message the **Abyssinians** always tried to convey to the world.

Because I truly think if we are given the opportunity to communicate to the world, we should send a positive message that we could teach and educate and uplift through the medium of the music. So I really did admire that group for sending up the message to unite the world and to make positive change.

And finally tell me about your memories of John Holt who sang the final track you covered – Stranger In Love?

Such talent. **John** and I did a beautiful collaboration as well [**When The Lights Are Low**]. **John** was one of these guys that most people just love because of his talent and his melodious voice. His voice was so soothing. **John** would just open his mouth and he'd just capture the hearts of people. I met him when he first started working with the **Paragons** because that's the same group that **Bob Andy** was working with. **John** and I and his wife became very close and we were like family.

As a matter of fact, every one of these artists I've covered, I didn't choose them because these particular artists were close to me. But it just happened that all of these artists that did these beautiful songs that will live forever - we were like one family. I was so connected to every one of them. And I'm truly happy and proud and honoured to be able to do these songs all these different artists. I'm thankful that I can still be here and at least pay tribute and do the **Studio 1** tracks.

There are no covers of female artists on the album. You've talked in the past about how you were really one of the only female artists recording when you first started. But this summer you are performing at Oland Roots festival in Sweden headlining an all-female line up of reggae artists and selectors.

Well, it's funny you say that. Because in my 55 years I can truly say to the world, that I'm truly thankful to have inspired, I could say almost every female, generation after generation that came in the business. And I'm not saying it because I want to say it. I'm saying it because they said it first. That I was their inspiration and their role model.

And I did cover songs from **Doreen Shaffer** who is one of the female singers that sang with the **Skatalites**. It's not on the album but I did cover two of her songs. I think I did them at **Penthouse**. At the time I started I think there was only she and **Hortense**. And



Hortense was not doing a lot of recordings. It was mainly stage shows. So **Doreen** was the one that was there when I started and **Phyllis Dillon** was at **Duke Reid, Treasure Isle**.

So the only female singer then that I could remember was **Doreen**. I did cover two of her songs because she was one of my favourite sisters from way back. She has such a nice soothing voice as well. And **Dawn Penn** was another singer that came [to **Studio 1**]. I think she came after but she had that song **No No No**. I think she did an album there. **No No No** is one of the biggest songs. I didn't want to really touch that song again because on its own it's good.

I do respect all these other females. And I am the one who always tries to encourage a lot of the promoters "Why don't you guys promote more females in the business?" Because it's so male-dominated with the shows. I usually tell promoters "This is something that's different-let's do something all female". I am not going to tell them to put me as a headliner. Because I am just so humble, I just want to be a part of it. I'm truly thankful that God has preserved me so I can be still sharing the stage with this generation and I managed to cut across age barriers. So I am looking forward to anything that a lot of the sisters are involved in.

I will always be a part of that.

MARCIA GRIFFITHS - TIMELESS

Tad's Record - June 14, 2019

Ooooh that warm, welcoming mood music can put you into! Especially music as laden with the positive vibes, memory and sheer magic assembled on **Timeless**, the new album from **Marcia Griffiths**. The Queen of Reggae has lost nothing of her fascination, to the contrary - it seems that the older she gets, the more emotion she is able to transmit in her songs.

With 55 years in the biz, she has a lot of tales to tell. Though the special thing about this release is that she didn't rely on her own vast catalogue for its compilation, but carefully chose 15 tracks by great artists she encountered on her musical journey. Conceived as a tribute to **Studio 1**, these "golden treasures", as she calls them in our interview, were re-arranged and produced by **Donovan Germain** and published by **Tad's Record**.

From the well-known descending keyboard pattern of The Cables' What Kind Of World to the touching beauty of John Holt's Stranger In Love, the album invites us to take a ride down Reggae's timeless memory lane. Nothing is left out: the genre's up-tempo beginnings in the infectious Ska Medley are as much part of the listening experience as its successor Rock Steady by Alton Ellis (and equally well represented by Ken Boothe's Home) and



heavy Roots in **The Abyssinians' Declaration Of Rights**.

The latter's conscious lyrics find their equivalent in the **Peter Tosh** livication **I'm The Toughest**, whereas most other songs deal with love, sweet love. And this is the subject for which **Marcia**'s voice seems predestined - her performance in **The**

Heptones' Baby Be True, Joe White's My Guiding Star and especially Cry Me A River (originally sung by Jackie Opel, a top-vocalist from Barbados, not Jamaica, who passed away much too young) is simply phenomenal.

A special place must be held in Ms. **Griffiths**' heart by the artists who are represented with two songs, **Delroy Wilson** with **Once Upon A Time** and **True Believer** as well as **Carlton and the Shoes** with **Love Is A Treasure** and **Love Me Forever**, in which **Carlton** himself is singing the harmonies. Featuring the young Jamaican artist **Zagga**, a fresh approach is taken on the **Larry & Alvin** track **Your Love**. And just like that, **Marcia Griffiths** created an opus that makes some lesser known **Studio 1** classics available to the international Reggae community. To complete the **Timeless** tour, we suggest that you search for and listen to the originals as well – hail all veterans!





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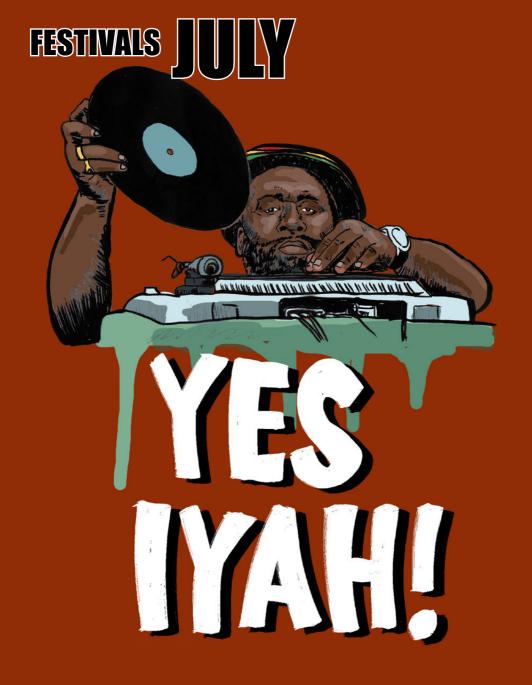
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Musa Cascais



4. - 6. July

Capleton_Dub Inc_Horace Andy_Morgan Heritage_Fantan Mojah_Queen Ifrica_ Samory I and more...



Pyrene Festival



5. - 6. July

Horace Andy_Marcus Gad_ High Tone and more...





68 FESTIVALS JULY 2019



SummerJam



5. - 7. July

Buju Banton_Jimmy Cliff_Popcaan_ Alborosie_Protoje_Kabaka Pyramid_ Samory I_Agent Sasco_Koffee_Richie Spice_and many many more...



Roots Reggae Festival



5. - 7. July

Lee Scratch Perry_Tonton David_ Rod Taylor_Bob Wasa_Romeo K_ and more_





FESTIVALS JULY 2019 69



Big Ship Music Fest



6. July

Freddie McGregor_Marcia Griffiths_ Everton Blender_Glen Washington_ and more...



Sun Splash Reggae Festival



7. July

Buju Banton_Protoje_Richie Spice_ Anthony B_Queen Ifrica_Agent Sasco_ and more...





70 FESTIVALS JULY 2019



Öland Roots



10. - 13. July

Koffee Marcia Griffiths Dezarie Etana Hollie Cook Xana Romeo Etzia and more...



Big Reggae Festival



10. July

Alborosie_Tairo_L'entourloop_ and more...





FESTIVALS JULY 2019 71



Gracy's Bash



13. July

Al Campbell_Mafia & Fluxy_Dr. Ring Ding_ D-Flame_Sista Gracy_Anthony Locks_ and more...



Ostroda Reggae Festival



11. - 14. July

Queen Ifrica_Agent Sasco_Samory I_ Gentleman's Dub Club_Marcus Gad_ and many more...





72 FESTIVALS JULY 2019



Mandrea Music Festival



11. - 14. July

Prince Fatty & Horseman_ MungoʻsHi Fi_Electric Jalaba_ Indian Man_and many more...



Dub Camp Festival



11. - 14. July

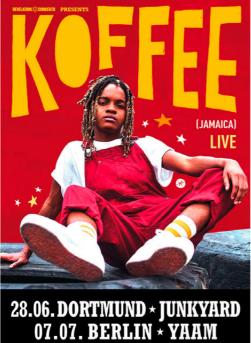
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Reggae Im Hanffeld



13. July

Jahcoustix_Ganjaman_Yah Meek_ Andrew Murphy_Uwe Banton_ and more...



Reggae Family Festival



12. - 13. July

Manudigital & Lt. Stitchie_ Devi Reed_Jah Legacy_ and more...







Sunrise Reggae & Ska Festival



12. - 14. July

Alpha Blondy_Anthony B_Koffee_ Chuck Fenda_Stylo G_Marcus Gad_ Jaya The Cat_and more...



Levitate Music and Arts Festival



12. - 14. July

Damian Marley_SOJA_Steel Pulse_ Stick Figure_Common Kings_ lya Terra_and many more...







Lakesplash



12. - 13. July

Turbulence_Skarra Mucci_ Soom T_Awa Fall_Unlimited Culture_ and more...



Bomboklat Festival



12. - 14. July

Alborosie_Attila_Lion D_ and more...







Rastaplas Festival



13. - 14. July

Dezarie_Postman_New Kingston_ Mellow Mood_Uwe Banton_ and more...







Bababoom Festival



13. - 20. July

Johnny Osbourne_Morgan Heritage_ Lion D_Mungo's Hi Fi feat. Eva Lazarus_ Channel One Sound System_ and more...



Reggae Sumfest



14. - 20. July

Buju Banton_Chronixx_Beenie Man_ Bounty Killer_Protoje_Romain Virgo_ Dalton Harris_Elephant Man_Etana_ Warrior Sound_and many more...







Festival De Neoules



18. - 20. July

Dub Inc_Tiken Jah Fakoly_ Daddy Mory_I Woks_ and many more...



Zion Garden



18. - 20. July

Broussai_Mungo's Hi-Fi feat. Charlie P_ Black Ship and many more...







Afrika & Karibik Fest



18. - 21. July

La Brass Banda_Mono & Nikitaman_ Rootz Underground_Mokoomba_ GreeeN_and more...



Seasplash Festival



18. - 21. July

Lee Scratch Perry_Mad Professor_ Scientist_Ras McBean & Soulcraft_ Dub Pistols and more...







Eastrock Reggae Festival

FREE CAMPING RESERVIERUNG UNTER eastrock O

FREY alpenland

Cinex M ROSSIAGER & AND CANNA



19. - 20. July

Anthony B GreeeN Rekall Zamunda **Iriepathie Jahcoustix Uwe Kaa** and more...





ALBOROSIE

05.07 • (FR) • FESTIVAL MEGASCENE

06.07 • (FR) • TRAD'IN FESTIVAL 07.07 • (DE) • SUMMERJAM 10.07 • (FR) • BIG REGGAE FEST

20.07 • (FR) • FESTIVAL LES COURANTS 26.07 • (FR) • BAGNOLS REGGAE FESTIVAL 01.08 • (RO) • UNTOLD FESTIVAL 02.08 · (DE) · REGGAEJAM

04.08 • (FR) • NOMADE REGGAE FESTIVAL 09.08 • (FR) • NO LOGO 10.08 • (UK) • BOOMTOWN 11.08 • (FR) • FESTIVAL AUX CHAMPS

15.08 • (AT) • AFRIKA TAGE

25.07 • (FR) • BAGNOLS REGGAE FESTIVAL 24.08 • (CH) • OCTOPODE FESTIVAL

UNNY DREAD

25.07 • (FR) • BAGNOLS REGGAE FESTIVAL 04.08 • (FR) • ELECTROBOTIK FESTIVAL

CHANNEL ONE

22.06 • (FR) • JAMAJCAN DOCKS DAY #3 01.07 • (CO) • ROCK AL PARQUE FESTIVAL 12.07 • (DE) • SUNRISE FESTIVAL 14.07 • (FR) • DUB CAMP FESTIVAL 25.07 • (FR) • SUMMER VIBRATION

26.07 • (FR) • BAGNOLS REGGAE FESTIVAL DAWA HIFT SOUND SYSTEM

29.06 • (FR) • DUB'N'FLAVIAC 27.07 • (FR) • BAGNOLS REGGAE FESTIVAL 02.08 • (FR) • FOREZTIVAL

31.08 • (FR) • FESTIVAL LABELVALETTE

25.07 • (FR) • BAGNOLS REGGAE FESTIVAL

26.07 • (FR) • SUMMER VIBRATION 04.08 • (FR) • REGGAE SUN SKA 09.08 • (FR) • NO LOGO 17.08 • (CH) • PLEIN LES WATTS

05.07 • (PT) • MUSA FESTIVAL 06.07 • (FR) • PYRÈNE FESTIVAL 26.07 • (SW) • UPPSALA REGGAE FESTIVAL

JAH9 & THE DUB TREATMENT 21.06 • (DE) • RURH REGGAE FESTIVAL

22.06 • (ES) • NOWA REGGAE FESTIVAL 23.06 • (UK) • AFRICA OYÉ 22.08 • (ES) • ROTOTOM SUN SPLASH 24.08 • (CH) • OCTOPODE FESTIVAL

21.06 • (FR) • URBAN GUINGUETTE 29.06 • (FR) • LES ARTS OSÉS

06.07 • (FR) • KOL'EN ZIK 13.07 • (FR) • DUB CAMP FESTIVAL 02.08 • (FR) • NOMADE REGGAE FESTIVAL 03.08 • (FR) • FOREZTIVAL 09.08 • (FR) • NO LOGO

22.06 • (IT) • ZION STATION FESTIVAL 13.07 • (FR) • DOUR FESTIVAL 14.07 • (FR) • DUB CAMP FESTIVAL

14.07 • (PL) • OSTRODA REGGAE FESTIVAL 25.07 • (FR) • BAGNOLS REGGAE FESTIVAL 28.07 • (UK) • JAZZ CAFÉ 03.08 • (BE) • REGGAE GEEL

20.07 • (UK) • REASONS FESTIVAL (DI SET)

28.06 · (DE) · FUSION FESTIVAL
28.06 · (FR) · KAMPAGN'ARTS
30.06 · (FR) · GAROROCK
40.70 · (FR) · LA PLAGE GLAZ'ART
05.07 · (FR) · AU FOIN DE LA RUE
06.07 · (FR) · SLAP FESTIVAL
70.70 · (FR) · FIESTAS DE SAN FERMIN
11.07 · (CA) · FIESTIVAL D'ETÈ DE QUEBEC
12.07 · (CA) · FINA DE MONTRÈAL
13.07 · (CA) · KULTRUN WORLD MUSIC

ENTOURLOOP
T TROY BERKLEY & N'ZENG

28.06 • (FR) • RENCONTRES ET RACINES 29.06 • (FR) • GAROROCK 30.06 • (DE) • FUSION

10.07 • (FR) • BIG REGGAE FEST 14.07 • (PL) • OSTRODA REGGAE FESTIVAL 19.07 • (FR) • FESTIVAL D'ÉTÉ DE VALENCE

18.08 • (ES) • ROTOTOM SUN SPLASH

MAD PROFESSOR 13.07 • (SP) • FESTIVAL AFRICA REGGAE 20.07 • (GR) • COSMOPOLIS FESTIVAL

MARCUS GAD & TRIBE

22.06 • (FR) • JAMAICAN DOCKS DAY #3 06.07 • (FR) • PYRENE FESTIVAL

30.07 • (FR) • MONTELIMAR AGGLO FESTIVAL 02.08 • (FR) • FOREZTIVAL

15.08 • (FR) • PLACE AUX ARTISTES

01.09 • (UK) • ONE LOVE FESTIVAL

SKARRA MUCCI

12.07 • (CH) • LAKESPLASH FESTIVAL

20.07 • (NL) • ZWARTE CROSS FESTIVAL 10.08 • (FR) • NO LOGO BZH

17.08 • (IT) • ARIANO FOLK FESTIVAL

06.07 • (FR) • THE SMELL OF GRASSE 13.07 • (CH) • LAKESPLASH FESTIVAL

SOOM T & THE STONE MONKS

24.08 • (UK) • INTO THE WILD GATHERING 25.08 • (UK) • SHAMBALA

13.07 • (DE) • SUNRISE FESTIVAL 14.07 • (PL) • OSTRODA REGGAE FESTIVAL

07.08 • (UK) • BOOMTOWN

25.07 • (UK) • JAZZ CAFÉ

HE TUFF LION 23.08 • (FR) • FESTIVAL TRUCA TAOULES

24.08 • (FR) • REGGAE RENAMONT
25.08 • (FR) • MUSIQUES EN CHAMPAGNE
30.08 • (FR) • BRIN DE ZINC
31.08 • (FR) • FESTIVAL BNC

EEDING DUI

23.06 • (FR) • FREE MUSIC FESTIVAL 29.06 • (FR) • FESTIVAL DÉMON D'OR 10.08 • (FR) • NO LOGO

22.06 • (B) • LES AFRONAUTES 12.07 • (FR) • HARMONIC FESTIVAL 21.07 • (FR) • FESTIVAL SIROCCO 31.07 • (HÚ) • OZORA FESTIVAL 10.08 • (DE) • ANCIENT TRANSE FESTIVAL 15.08 • (AT) • AFRIKA TAGE 16.08 • (NL) • LOWLANDS FESTIVAL

29.06 • (FR) • FESTIVAL DÉMON D'OR 13.07 • (FR) • DUB CAMP FESTIVAL 19.07 • (FR) • RE-VIVRE(S) FESTIVAL

AND MANY OTHER ARTISTS ON MANY OTHER FESTIVALS ON W W . T A L O W A



Reggae Na Piaskach

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19. - 20. July

Rootz Underground_Dubska_ Johnny Rockers and more...



Irie Vibes Roots Festival



19. - 20. July

Uwe Banton_New Kingston_ Jahmbassador_Salomon Heritage_ Fishermen_and more...







Weedbeat Festival



19. - 21. July

Million Stylez Jamaram Bermooda illBilly HiTEC Berlin Boom Orchestra and more...



Wilkswood Roots Reggae Festival



19. - 21. July

Benjamin Zephaniah Johnny Osbourne Macka B Dubheart Roots Jukebox and more...







Reeds Festival



19. - 21. July

Morgan Heritage_Cali P_Anthony B_ Talco_Micah Shemaiah_ Alpheus & The Najavibes _ and many more...



Ruhr Reggae Summer



19. - 21. July

Wyclef Jean_Patrice_Charly Black_ Dub FX_Jahmiel_Skatalites_ New Kingston_ManuDigital & Lt. Stitchie_ and many more...







Boom Reggae Festival



19. - 21. July

Echo Minott Raphael Lasai Afrikan Simba Road Duck **Blend Mishkin & Roots Evolution** and more...











Jerk Jam Festival



20. July

Shola Ama_Grooverider_ MC Brother Culture_Tippa Irie_ King Hammond and many more...



Bayfront Reggae & World Music Festival



20. July

Ky-Mani Marley_Kabaka Pyramid_ Demarco and more...







Simmer Down Festival



21. July

Pato Banton_Horace Andy_ Johnny Clarke_and more...



San Diego Reggae Vegan Fest



21. July

Third World_The Movement_ lakopo_Prime Livity_Empress Akua_ Quinto Sol_and more...





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Jamaican Jerk Festival



21. July

Christopher Martin_Capleton_ Shenseea Bunji Garlin and many more...



LB27 Reggae Camp



23. - 27. July

Buhman_Mellow Mood_Samory I_ Paolo Baldini Dubfiles_Junior Roy Indica Dubs & Danman_G Ras & The Brigadiers_and many more...







Hill Vibes Reggae Festival



24. - 27. July

Busy Signal Junior Kelly Tanya Stephens Agent Sasco **Chuck Fenda Everton Blender** and many more...



DAFUCHAMAN

Freedom Fighter

"Freedom Fighter, the new album by Middle Buxton raised Da Fuchaman. Well versed in penning his own socially conscious lyrics, this is the fifth album for the roots reggae heavyweight.

The thirteen tunes that form Freedom Fighter are creatively produced by House of Riddim and showcase the soulful voice of Da Fuchaman, Highlights include 'the sound killer tune Pull Up My Selecta with its steel quitar intro and hook and cheerful and catchy chorus and verse' - Christian Moll.

The album is one for the collection for those loval to roots reggae. Stand out tunes include Trying to make ends meet, Dem Nu Clean and Jamdown Mi Come From. You will have to fight hard to not sing with Da Fuchaman to these well-crafted tunes."



NEW ALBUM OUT NOW!









Book Da Fuchaman and his Fire Blaze Band dafuchamanmusic@gmail.com





Da Fuchaman



Roots & Culture Festival



25. - 28. July

Don Carlos_Lion D_Raphael_Samory I_ and many more...



Bagnols Reggae Festival



25. - 27. July

Third World_Tiken Jah Fakoly_ Morgan Heritage_BusySignal_ Eek A Mouse_Don Carlos_ Queen Ifrica_and many many more...







Summer Vibration Festival



25. - 27. July

UB40_Patrice_Keziah Jones_ Sinsemilla_Raggasonic_Panda Dub_ Marina P_and many more...



Uppsala Reggae Festival



26. - 27. July

Alpha Blondy_Johnny Osbourne_ Horace Andy_Junior Kelly_Dub Inc_ and many more...







MayJah RayJah Music Festival



26. - 27. July

Damian Marley_SOJA_Kabaka Pyramid_ Mike Love_Iya Terra_Preston Lee_ City Side and more...



Reggae in Wulf



26. - 28. July

Busy Signal_Fantan Mojah_Dub Inc_ I-Fire_Miwata_Junior Kelly_ Mellow Mood Lila Ike and more...







Beguee Fest



26. - 27. July

Natty Jean_Natural Mighty_ Motolo_Ka-Ras Zik_Jah Express_ and more...







NorthWest World Reggae Festival



26. - 28. July

Prezident Brown_Nattali Rize_ Hempress Sativa_Dubtonic Kru_ Jah Sun_The Lambsbread_Aaron Nigel Smith_and many more...



Black Forest On Fire



27. - 28. July

Anthony B_Rootz Underground_ Naaman_Vanupie_Memoria_ Banda Senderos_and more...







Hastings Reggae Festival



27. July

Dawn Penn_Musical Youth_Aswad_ Lee Scratch Perry_General Levy_Gardna_ and more...



Reggae Rotterdam



28. July

UB40_Wyclef Jean_Alborosie_ The Wailers_Spice_Elephant Man_ David Rodigan_Lee Scratch Perry_ and more...







DMV Summer Fest



28. July

Beres Hammond_Capleton_ Ding Dong_Shenseea_Bunji Garlin_ Voice and more...



Border Splash Benefit Concert



31. July

Buju Banton_Richie Spice_ Eek A Mouse_Major Mackarel_ and more...







Enter The Dancehall



31. July - 1. August

Busy Signal_Bushman_ Tanya Stephens_Lila Ike_ Keida and more



IMPRINT

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REGGAEVILLE.com

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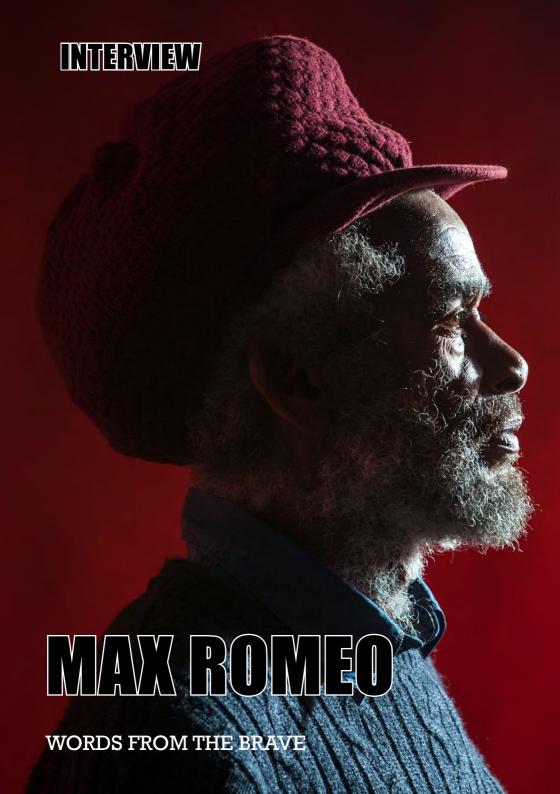
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SONGS FROM REALITY

BY ANGUS TAYLOR PHOTOS BY VALENTIN CAMPAGNIE

Veteran roots reggae singer Max Romeo releases his new album Words From The Brave on June 28th. It coincides with Max's 55th year in the business (incidentally Marcia Griffiths, also interviewed in this magazine, celebrates the same milestone.)

Issued via France's **Baco Records** and using the mainly-French band, **Roots Heritage**, **Words From The Brave** is a reggae record in the traditional sense. It features blazing horns and guitar solos (you can tell from the stagey showmanship that **Roots Heritage** are **Max**'s backing band). However, it is less apocalyptic than 2016's doomy, heavy **Horror Zone**, produced by England's **Daniel Boyle**. Although **Max** has lost none of his taste for social commentary since his classic 1976 **Lee Perry**-produced LP **War Ina Babylon**, here he also showcases a light-hearted side with the humorous **Do The Penguin** featuring his son **Azizzi**.

Angus Taylor spoke to **Max** on the phone at his Jamaican home, farm and studio in Linstead, St Catherine. **Max** had the flu so his answers were brief. But true to the name of the album he kept the self-censorship to a minimum.

Greetings, I hear you're not well...

Yeah man, I've just been hit down by the flu. I'm glad it's a written interview and not a vocal thing.

How are things going generally since you finished the album?

I'm lining up some promotion on it. I'm supposed to do some tours I think at the beginning of September. I'll start running a few gigs around on it.

This is your 55th year in the music business. What happened 55 years ago that made you start on the path of music?

Well, I tried everything and I realised I'm too weak and I'm too cowardly to steal so I must find something! And if it wasn't music it would be the church! Luckily, I chose music and it worked out for me! (laughs)

The first place you started singing was for Ken Lack at Caltone. You were in the Emotions with Kenneth Knight and Robbie Shakespeare's brother, Lloyd. You had a hit with your first song...

Yes that's right. I'm Going To Buy You A Rainbow. It was number two on both charts. It never made number one but it was number two for a while. In those days you had to pay for the number one spot but I didn't have the money!

Nothing changes, I guess! Then after you left the Emotions you became lead singer for the Hippy Boys – who would become the Upsetters and the Wailers band.

Well, it was the time for me to go out on my own. **The Emotions** were like **The Drifters** - when the lead singer developed we would cut him loose and get another one. Like in the case of **[Max**' replacement] **Audley Rollins**.



INTERVIEW MAX ROMEO 101

At some point **Audley Rollins** left. So it was that type of situation where if you can make it on your own why bother yourself with a group?

So then I was singing with **Aston Barrett** and **Carlton Barrett**. **Lloyd Charmers** was playing keyboards at the time. We did a few gigs around Kingston but you know, in Jamaica nothing stays together for too long. Money always mashes it up. And that was the demise of that

You joined Bunny Lee's camp. How did you know Bunny Lee?

I knew **Bunny Lee** from long days. From when we were 18 or 20. We lived in the same community of Greenwich Town, West Kingston for years and we kind of mellowed out in those times.

And he gave you the name Max Romeo?

Yes, he actually told me I should use that name and I did. And it worked out. They said I was someone who liked to thrill the girls and things like that. So they chose Romeo from Romeo and Juliet and said "Hey you use that name". But I'm not Romeo, I'm Cyrano. Cyrano knows how to talk to girls! (laughs)

Cyrano was a poet - he had lyrics!

Yes, I started writing poems in the school and writing compositions about objects. That's where I get my writing skills.

Derrick Morgan told me that he and various other singers refused to sing Wet Dream for Bunny Lee so he pressured you to sing it...

He threatened me. At the time his was the camp that was going so I couldn't leave the camp. I wrote the song but I didn't want to do it. I said I didn't really appreciate that type of image - singing about the sex things because I was worried about my grandchildren and great grandchildren if I'm around that long! (laughs) I decided to stick to roots and culture. I wanted to sing roots songs and that's where I am until now. He said if I don't sing the song, I can't stay in the camp, so obviously it's no big deal. It was a mega hit. (laughs)

When you worked with Lee Perry and Bunny Lee there was a while where you recorded some tunes under the name Johnny Stud.

Yes, that was an attempt to change my name to a stud because I was singing all the sex songs. But I didn't have that profile – I'm too marga to be a stud!

Then you moved into protest songs. You did Let The Power Fall which was adopted by Michael Manley's political campaign.

Yes, I love to do protest songs. I love to call people's attention to so what's happening in the world. That's one of my favourite ways of writing: songs about the suffering of people and things that politicians do that are out of place. That's how I prefer to work. Because not many people are doing that. None of them are brave enough. **Bob Marley** got brave and started it and he nearly got killed or whatever. But hey, I'm 75 in November. I've lived my life already so it's no big deal! (laughs)

You sing about politicians on the first track from your new album The World Is On Fire. Manley's political opponent Edward Seaga, the leader of the Jamaican Labour Party at that time, died very recently. Did you know him well?

Yes, every musician or singer had some interaction with **Seaga**. Because he was the guy who actually spent the time to pay attention to us and to the industry. Until **Michael Manley** came along and tried a little thing as well. But **Seaga** was the guy who actually I would give praise to for establishing Jamaican music. He was a producer before he became a politician.

Yes, he started West Indies Records Limited.

I'm sad to see him go. I liked that guy. I never voted for his party because I don't vote. But I liked him. (laughs)

You recently gave a couple of interviews where you talked about the lack of compensation for your album produced by Lee Scratch Perry for Island Records, War Ina Babylon. When I asked you about this in 2016 you said you preferred not to comment about it. Why did you decide to talk about it now?

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Well I was asked a few questions and I don't see why not. I just answered a few questions on the subject. It's not my favourite thing because I'm a little embarrassed to tell people that my number one album in my whole career is not beneficial to me financially in any way. I was tricked by **Island Records**. I don't know how they did it because I'm not a guy who's easily tricked but they tricked me! (laughs)

But you and Scratch are still pretty good friends these days. You worked together on your album Horror Zone and you've hung out together through the years...

Yeah man, we're inseparable you know? Sometimes he gets on my nerves, saying things about me that are not so. But he's still a bosom friend man. I like **Scratch**. I could never say anything bad about **Scratch** lest he say bad about me – which he doesn't say anymore! (laughs)

Another good friend of yours is the singer I Kong. I believe you recently took part in a forthcoming documentary about him...

Yes, I did a little thing for him on it. I Kong is a friend of mine from the years when we were youths singing in Jamaican groups [The Emotions and The Jamaicans]. I know his brother, his mother, everybody, so we keep that bond together. He was doing this project and he asked me for my participation. Who am I to say "No"? This is I Kong you know? So I did it.

You also took part in the Argentine project Sly and Robbie vs the Roots Radics - The Final Battle album.

Well I don't really have the in-depth of how this thing came about. I know I was contacted by the producers to do a thing on it and normally I don't say "No"! It's promotion so why should I say "No"? (laughs)

Your new album talks about problems in the world like your previous album Horror Zone. But you've also got some lighter songs about romance and dancing as well. Would you say things have improved in the world since you did Horror Zone?

No, not really. It's just that you have to temper it down a little because these leaders nowadays don't take the truth. They're not humorous. You say the wrong thing and you'll get executed. I know it's named **Words From The Brave!** (laughs)

Last time we did an interview in 2016 you said some things about then presidential candidate Donald Trump. What do you think of him now?

You know something? I'm going to reserve my opinion because he's really disappointed me. I don't want to go any further with that! (laughs)

In the song Have You Ever Hit Rock Bottom you ask the listener if they've ever experienced homelessness. I'm assuming you're talking about your real experience?

Real experience, walking the streets of New York. For a short time, society forced me out and I couldn't handle it. So I know what standing around a drum pan with a fire warming your hands is about because I've done that. I've lived on the streets. I've slept on the sidewalk. It's reality. I was homeless for a couple of months and then I decided to come back to Jamaica. I executed humility because when you're down you have to be humble and then people will lift you back up. Thanks to France they lifted my hand and helped me right back up.

You've spoken before about how much France has helped your career. For your new album most of the rhythms are played by French musicians.

The whole album was done by **Roots Heritage** band. They played for me as the **Charmax** band on the road. They play as the **Charmax** band when they're backing me. But seeing that they have something now I just said "Each one help one. Let's use **Max Romeo** and the **Roots Heritage** on this tour"

They also have an instrumental album on the rhythms but they let me use them first for mine and they're coming later with theirs. They have really good instrumentals on the



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tracks. Most of the tracks were made for instrumentals. I took them and wrote these songs for them because tracks like these can't just go as instrumentals - they have to carry a message. They are loaded with message you know?

There's one track that Roots Heritage don't play on - The Farmer's Story which you did with Jallanzo from Dubtonic Kru at your Red Ark studio in Linstead. Tell me about why you did that song to help the farmers. I believe you are a farmer yourself.

That's right. Personal experience again. You spend a lot of money to do the crops and when you're ready to sell it, you just take what you get and it's just the guy selling it on the marketplace who makes something. They don't make a killing but they make 10 times more than I make! (laughs)

When you say that "Heaven Is Six Feet Under" in the song Heaven - what do you mean?

Wow, I knew I was going to buck up into problems with that track! (laughs) Let me explain it to you. Every time I go to a funeral when they finish reading over the dead, they take you to the cemetery and they do another sermon where this time they tell you that this man's on the right-hand side of God in Heaven. Then they put him down in this hole 6 foot by 6 foot.

So I'm saying to myself "If you've gone to die, you must be down there". Everyone is 6 feet under and we're all going to go there. So it doesn't make sense to clap hands everyday, praying and things like that, if you're going there. We're all heaven-bound. It's three strikes and you're out. The first strike you're born, the second strike you live and the third strike you die. We all are on strike two, waiting for strike three, my brethren. You can't escape. That's the way it is.



NOUVELLE-AQUITAINE - FRANCE

2_{ND}/3_{RD}/4_{TH} AUGUST 2019

BUJU BANTON • ZIGGY MARLEY MORCHEEBA • DUB INC • PATRICE ALPHA BLONDY • TIKEN JAH FAKOLY CALYPSO ROSE • TAÏRO FEAT. YANISS ODUA & TIWONY & BALIK • THE SKATALITES FEAT. STRANGER COLE DON CARLOS • CABALLERO & JEANJASS • FLAVIA COELHO ISEO & DODOSOUND • LINVAL THOMPSON • TRINITY • U BROWN BIFFTY • DJ VADIM & JMAN • MAD PROFESSOR FEAT. SCIENTIST BOOBOO'ZZZ ALL STARS FEAT. MAX LIVIO & NAE & JOSS BARI SINAI SOUND SYSTEM • BRIGANTE PARTY WITH ATILI & HIGHER LIGHT & MANA & PRENDY & GREEN CROSS & ADAM PARIS & G RHYME BISOU • IRIE ITES • CLOSING BY EXORIA FEATURING ISHIBAN & KALKI • ACKBOO FEATURING RAS MYKHA • 4.20 SOUND FEAT. DOUGY • KAYA NATURAL • I SENS & TWAN TEE • S'N'K • •

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INTERVIEW MAX ROMEO 105



So what do you have planned for the rest of strike two?

I'm not going to ease up man. Right now, I'm in the studio with one of my sons, little **Rolley**. We're doing a combination with me and him. On the EDM type of rhythm. We don't know how it's going to turn out but we're working on it.

We should also talk about your son Azizzi who appears on Do The Penguin. How did you come up with the penguin dance?

It came from my drummer in **Charmax** music. He got injured one time and started walking like a bloody penguin! I was taking the piss out of him and I was singing "Do the penguin" as he was walking so that's where that came it's from. It's reality again. (laughs)

You were in London in May. You did a concert with Big Youth and Eek-A-Mouse – the Mighty Diamonds were supposed to be there but they didn't show

That's right. It was a little mini tour. Six shows across England. All sold out. I'm waiting on this tour to do for this album. Hopefully it will materialise. I'm saving all my energy to attack it. I think we're going to start to work in September. So I'm glad that if I'm getting the flu, I'm getting it now - not in September. (laughs)

Your daughter Xana told me in an interview of couple of years ago that it was very difficult to get conscious reggae music played on the radio in Jamaica. It reminds me of what you said about having to pay to get to number one in the charts back in 1964.

It's still the case. Because... this is my opinion now, I don't want them to get on my case about it, but payola is one of the main things in Jamaica that has mashed up the music. Because a lot of guys who can find the money can't make the music. So they carry money to the music to the radio station and make a bag of crap! And big it up like this is a big thing and the next week it's dead. You don't hear it again.



That's what they're doing, mashing up the business and overtaking and shadowing out the roots and culture music. The **Bob Marley**, the **Jacob Miller**, the **Peter Tosh**, myself and all of us who are advocating for Jamaica. They edit us out. And you're seeing **Vybz Kartel**, this and that, some people talking. I don't know, it's chaos man. I hope they get it together and sort it out.

Vinyl is taking a turn but there's nowhere in Jamaica to print a vinyl. No way down here you can print a vinyl. Because my company was a vinyl company and I had to just throw it down for a while. Because presses can't sell because I'm not singing about gun and punanny - just culture.

I interviewed Johnny Clarke and he said that he was glad when the vinyl thing went down in Jamaica. Because producers used to use the pressing plants to make pirate copies of the records when nobody was looking.

It's not easy to pirate a vinyl. You need a stamper, you need a pressing plant, all kind of process. The CD, you need nothing - you just buy it. That's what destroyed the music. The CD-ROM and then you go on YouTube and you

can have all of my music for nothing. When you buy a vinyl, you run a CD off it. If the CD is damaged you run another one because you have that vinyl for life.

The new album has a real live instrument sound with lots of horns and rock guitar.

Yeah because I'm not cleaning up any money. So I can spend time and do my thing the proper way. Put the right orchestration into it, a little segue here, a little this there, to make it colour a little bit. So you can enjoy it when you're listening.

These guys... look these guys clean up some drugs money. I can say worse than that about them. So therefore, they pick artists who have no demand upon them and know nothing about publishing and all these things. So that's how they get all of these inferior things from **Junjo Lawes** days on down. Pure inferior product. It's France that took on music now and try to keep it at a level. Out here? No - gun and punanny. It's not going anywhere and it won't leave the airport. I tried to take it abroad and it fails. It has to stop.

INTERVIEW MAX ROMEO 107

MAX ROMEO - WORDS FROM THE BRAVE

Baco Records - June 28, 2019

Well done to St. Ann's native **Max Romeo** on his impressive new 10 track album. **Romeo** may have over 30 albums and 70 single releases to his credit, but this work will surely rank amongst the best from a true legend of reggae, whose career dates all the way back to the 1960s. Mainly recorded at **Romeo**'s **Red Ark** studio in St. Catherine's, Jamaica, from the opening brass-fu-

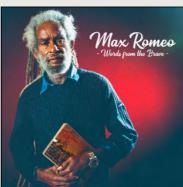


plative Thank God track, this is a quality product.

The album is characterised by a selection of themes based upon his life journey - like that of Ivan/
Jimmy Cliff in The Harder They Come - from his country home to the capital Kingston, in search of fame and fortune. After a life laced with a host of ups and downs Romeo, now a wiser man, takes the opportunity on this album to offer some good guidance and warning words to the generations coming behind him.

Indeed, Romeo is well placed to offer such words of wisdom and to comment upon the ups and downs of life. Whilst his 'ups' may include numerous hits like Chase The Devil (which was covered by the likes of Jay-Z and The Prodigy) and working with the Rolling Stones, it's often forgotten that he passed some of the 1980s working in a store in New York, before being rescued by the late John Holt.

The personal dimension is clearly evident on a number of tracks. For example, **Say Yes** – which opens with a short but scorching guitar solo, before the brass boys take over – is a throwback to the days when **Max** was named '**Romeo**' by his girlfriend's father. The track tells the tale of engaging in the rituals that precede a romantic liaison. Notably, the good news is that there is nothing too



risqué in the lyrics, along the lines of some of his earlier work that saw him banned from various venues (and BBC airplay)!

The 'personal' is also apparent in the touching (and tremendous) **The Farmer's Story** track, which bemoans the plight of the farm labourer, who "bends his back in the sun all day" doing "so much work for so little pay", only to be exploited by the

"the higgler" (i.e. the trader) who "puts his money in the bank". From his childhood days working on the sugar plantations, to his current pursuit as a part-time farmer - and one of the few Rastas who admits to keeping pigs! – **Romeo** is well placed to comment on the poor farmers' plight.

A recurring theme in the compilation is the plight of the oppressed, which serves as a reminder of **Romeo**'s left-wing leanings, as reflected in his support for the Jamaican socialist People's National Party back in the day. This bent is especially evident in the **Have You Ever Hit Rock Bottom, Words From The Brave** and **Eve of Destruction** tracks.

For some years now **Romeo** has been passing the torch (both in live performances and the studio) to the younger generation, as evident again here via inputs from **Azizzi** on **Penguin** and his other son **Romario**'s bass guitar inputs. Of course, **Romeo** himself is blessed with a smooth, soul-searching vocal style and fortunately it comes to the fore on all tracks. Allied to guitar solos, brilliant brass inputs, vocal harmonies and perfect piano pitches, the backing French-based **Roots Heritage** band do full justice to his vocals.

Well done **Max**, it's been a while since we heard from your recording studio, but it's been well worth the wait!

by Gerry McMahon



SETTINEL SOUND

THE EVERLASTING SOUND

20 YEARS ANNIVERSARY

BY DAN DABBER PHOTOS BY FOTOBNOID

In 2005, a German sound system called Sentinel broke through geographical, cultural, and racial barriers to make history as the first European sound to win World Clash - the highest competition in the land when it comes to traditional, Jamaican-style sound clashing. Calling themselves The Everlasting Sound, Sentinel's journey to dubplate domination was a relatively short one, as they rose quickly over a 6-year span and only played their first overseas clash in 2003. Although **Sentinel** has cycled through multiple line-ups over the years, founders Elmar Jäger and Nadia Hentschel have remained the backbone of the sound system, and they are proving why their sound is The Everlasting Sound in 2019, as Sentinel celebrates its 20th year.

After a high profile split with **DJ Meska** and **Shotta Paul** in 2012, **Elmar** and **Nadia** recruited a new MC, **Allgi**, a new DJ, **Daniel**, and a guy who does a bit of both, **DJ Olde**, to run their sound. **Olde** left in 2017 and a new member,

Erik Liftedson joined the following year, but the highly capable duo of **Daniel** and **Allgi** have been the ones consistently touring the world as **Sentinel** for the last seven years, and it doesn't appear that *The Everlasting Sound* is in any danger of running out of steam.

In honour of **Sentinel**'s 20th year, **Dan Dabber** recently sat down with **Elmar**, **Allgi**, and **Daniel** (the latter two fresh off a short stint of gigs in Israel) for a chat about their sound's origin and evolution. Although each of the three has a completely different personality, one gets the feeling just through speaking with them that they work in harmony like a well-oiled machine.

Sound system fans can catch **Sentinel** in the Dancehall Area at the iconic **SummerJam** festival in Cologne, Germany this July, along with other top shelf German sounds like **DJ Meska** and **Shotta Paul**'s **Jugglerz** outfit and Cologne's own Dancehall OGs, **Pow Pow**.

Elmar, what was your inspiration behind starting Sentinel?

Elmar: We had local parties here in Stuttgart [in] the early 90s. It was Ragga Jungle - like DJs from the UK, and friends of ours were also promoting parties where Ragga Jungle was being played.

Later we had some small sound systems from here in Stuttgart, in the local area. Mainly it was these guys that had been to Jamaica. They had travelled to Jamaica some years before me, and [were] buying records there. Or they were married to a Jamaican, but they were living here. So they would just spin records and talk over it. They had a local radio show where they would play some Reggae 45s.

I mean, you can't even really call them sound systems. These were more or less just selec-

tors. [But] they really have the juggling vibe into it - this symbiotic energy between the MC and the DJ. The MC would make a speech and build up some tension, and then the DJ will do the mix and fling the next tune on the riddim. And it hits just like a bomb and connects to that speech that was made before. So this concept and how they executed it, those early sound systems in Germany, it really was an inspiration for me.

Who was the first artist to voice a dub for Sentinel?

Elmar: I voiced it in Mandeville in a small studio somewhere, and the guy was called **Fish Tea.** I don't know what he's about now. He was there, and it was more like a spontaneous action. I saw there was a sign by the studio that

said dubplate recording and I just went there. And I heard the guys doing [a] dubplate session. When you go to a studio as a sound man, of course all the artists there will jump on you like prey to have their dubplates recorded. And I was like "Yeah, well, I got some money here. Why not cut one?"

Of course I had the dubplate cut right away. It was two cuts, on **Answer Riddim** and **Sleng Teng**, from the singer there. Still have them somewhere. That was back in like '98.

How was Sentinel received on the global clash scene when you first took your thing out of Europe?

Elmar: You have this thing now called cultural appropriation, but in those days, it was [not] that anybody would approach me and accuse me of appropriation or anything like that. The opposite was the case. They love that we picked up Jamaican music and played it on our own. Because it's their thing, but they don't claim it for their own. Of course not. Everybody can do it. I mean it's music. It doesn't belong to anybody.

I never made it look silly or made a mockery of it. Nothing like that. I respected the music culture. I loved it. It was authentic. I loved it for its directness, for its versatility. And the people really felt that, so they didn't ever have any urge to feel pissed off by us playing this music. Never heard it, except from some sound systems that had realised that they could not keep up against **Sentinel**. So they draw the racism card on us at some point in the dance. But, no, generally the [Jamaican] people always loved it that people from abroad cherish their music culture.

Always playing in Jamaica we had [an] underdog card and we always played it. And it benefited us. They did not expect anything from us, but the dubs we played and the lyrics we wrote for the dubplates and the speeches that we delivered... We have this element of surprise coming with us, just like **Mighty Crown** had years before.

So, I cannot really say anything bad... But, now-adays, it's really weird and it's bringing the world apart. It's not bringing people together.

That's what I got to say about it, you know. And I mean there are some very valid points about putting focus on cultural appropriation in general, but not with us.

Daniel and Allgi, what was your impression of Sentinel Sound before joining in 2012?

Allgi: As a kid who was really into the Dancehall music and the culture by that time. Sentinel was like the biggest thing. I mean, of course, there are other big sounds like Supersonic and Pow Pow, but Sentinel really stood out because [in] 2005, they won the World Clash. It was just crazy. And from that day, **Sentinel** was the biggest thing for me. And even before it, they were a super crazy sound. Daniel: At that time, there was no social media, so nobody knew how the German sound is going to look or what kind of songs they play. Maybe they heard an audio here and there, but in 2019 they stream on Facebook or Instagram almost every event. There is no more surprise. They're going to know who you are. They're going to know what kind of songs you play. The element of surprise is kind of gone, and I think that [it] was a whole different story in the early 2000s.

I was travelling a lot to dances when I was in my early twenties. We drove every weekend to another city to a dance. I knew **Elmar** from long time. He called me on a Thursday evening and ask me if I could play with him the following day and I said "Of course I'm going to do it." That's how it started.

Elmar, how has clashing changed since you started Sentinel 20 years ago?

Elmar: I followed it throughout the years that I had been active in the clash world, but other things in [my] life became more important. And to clash on a global level like **Sentinel** did, this is not something you do as a side job. You focus really, really hard on it. You follow tunes, listen to tunes, and you have to voice constantly dubplates.

We could only voice that many dubplates because Reggae and Dancehall was BIG in Germany. You had dances everywhere, literally in every little town where people come



2020

10.01.

11.01.

17.01.

18.01.

30.01.

GRAZ, PPC

WIEN, ARENA

NÜRNBERG, HIRSCH

LINZ, POSTHOF

KÖLN, LIVE MUSIC HALL

OBERHAUSEN, TURBINENHALLE 2

HERFORD, X

HAMBURG, GROSSE FREIHEIT 36

HANNOVER, CAPITOL

36 **12.02**.

14.02.

15.02.

20.02.

21.02.

22.02.

31.01. 26.02.

01.02. 27.02.

2. 28.02.

13.02. 29.02.

LEIPZIG, TÄUBCHENTHAL

BERLIN, ASTRA

KIEL, MAX

ROSTOCK, M.A.U. CLUB

MAGDEBURG, FACTORY

MÜNCHEN, BACKSTAGE WERK

FRANKFURT, BATSCHKAPP

STUTTGART, LKA LONGHORN

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together. This music culture was really all over, you know? Even in the smallest cities, you had sound systems coming up and playing 45s, or later on CDs, and picking up that Reggae-Dancehall sound system style.

[Sentinel] played *every* weekend. Every weekend, Friday and Saturday were set. Sometimes we had four or five shows after one another, so we earned some good money through this and a big proportion of that money went back into dubplate voicing for the next clash that was coming up. Then we could keep up that level in voicing dubplates and being competitive in the clash sector. I've been there, I've done that, and I want to move on to different things in life and put more energy and focus on these other things, apart from being a sound killer or something like that.

I mean, big up everybody who still keeps up the clash thing... [But] I really have to admit that to look at it nowadays, how it's going down, it's not the same excitement that I used to witness and I used to be part of back in the days. But, hey, if it brings fun to them, you know, it's great.

This question is for everybody. What's your favourite Sentinel dub of all time?

Allgi: It's hard to pick one. Can I pick two? My favourite dub from since before I was there is the Junior Byles, Fade Away, because it's just a wicked song and it's kind of a big tune for **Sentinel**. I love the song. I love the artist. When I saw **Elmar** playing that song, it gave me goose-bumps when I was a kid. And, nowadays... A song that I voiced... I would say it's the Super Cat, Permit Fi Gun dubplate. I voice that dub for **Sentinel** and I flew into Barcelona where that session was. It was the first **Super Cat** session since the 90s. I was in the studio and, after the studio, the next day. I went to the football game in Barcelona - Barcelona vs. Rome - in the big, legendary football stadium in Barcelona with Super Cat. It was just such a great experience. I like that





dubplate very much, and I'm happy with what he delivered in that session. I'm proud of that dub

Daniel: I'd say that **Maxi Priest** and **Shabba Ranks** on **Mr. Bassie Riddim...** Yeah, that's what I like. **Mr. Bassie Riddim** is a hardcore riddim and I love those kind of old school riddims. I mean, **Shabba Ranks**, **Maxi Priest...** That's Champions League.

Elmar: My favourite **Sentinel** dub is our dubplate cut from **Beres Hammond**, **Warriors Don't Cry**.

So, Elmar, what does the future look like for The Everlasting Sound?

Elmar: You don't have to ask *me*, because I've been living in the future of **Sentinel** for the past six or seven years already. I'm not really playing the sound actively [anymore]. I mean I play like two or three Sentinel shows a year.

Ok, then... Daniel and Allgi, how would you say the Sentinel dances have changed since you took over?

Allgi: Well, you have to take into consideration that seven years ago the music was different, the scene was different, so you can't really compare **Sentinel** from seven years ago to

Sentinel now. The scene is not where it was back in the day, but Sentinel is still one of the sounds that can give the people top-notch entertainment. This didn't change. If there's Sentinel on the flyer and you go to that party, you know that it's going to be high class entertainment. But, of course, it changed in how we've got to play for the people now. And back in the day, especially when you look at this whole dubplate thing, back in the day people used to come out to see Sentinel play dubplates. They don't want to hear that no more. This has nothing to do with Sentinel. This has to do with people not being interested in that part of the culture anymore.

Daniel: There is no benefit in investing thousands of dollars in dubplates in 2019. We don't hustle. We don't sell weed. We just have our part-time jobs and play our sound on the weekend. The people in the dance, like the majority - about 80% - they don't give a shit if you play a dubplate or the regular version. I think they even prefer the regular version because they can sing along. And the other 20%... I like having those people in the dance too, but you don't play for the 20%. You have to play for the 80% because they're going to pay the bill at the end of the day.

SENTINEL SOUND



THE EVERLASTING SOUND







35 THE ANNIVERSARY - RELEASED MAY 8, 1984 28 MINHON COPIES SOLD WORLDWIDE

THIS IS LOVE

NO WOMAN NO CRY COULD YOU BE LOVED THREE LITTLE BIRDS BUFFALO SOLDIER GET UP STAND UP

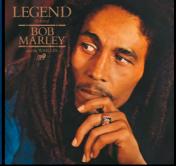
STIR IT UP



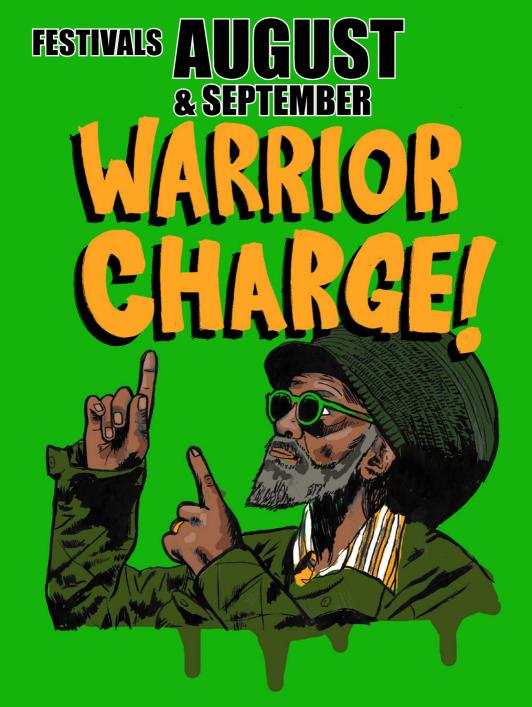
Including:

ONE LOVE/PEOPLE GET READY I SHOT THE SHERIFF WAITING IN VAIN REDEMPTION SONG SATISFY MY SOUL EXODUS **JAMMING**











Afro Nation



1. - 4. August

Buju Banton_Busy Signal_Wizkid_Burna Boy_Femi Kuti_Davido_D'Banj_and many more...



African Music Festival



2. - 4. August

Fantan Mojah_Mo'Kalamity_ Sona Jobarteh_and more...







One Love Reggae Festival



2. - 3. August

Morgan Heritage_Anthony B_ Lee Scratch Perry_Marcia Griffiths_ Israel Vibration_Etana_Skatalites_ and more...



Reggae Geel



2. - 3. August

Buju Banton_Busy Signal_Beenie Man_ Richie Spice_Agent Sasco_Burna Boy_ Kranium_Warrior Sound_David Rodigan_ and many more...





FESTIVALS AUGUST 2019 121



Nomade Reggae Festival



2. - 4. August

Alborosie_Israel Vibration_ Biga Ranx_Brother Culture_ Anthony B_The Congos_ Tiwony Keida and more...



Reggae Jam



2. - 4. August

Alborosie_Busy Signal_Morgan Heritage_ Everton Blender_Tanya Stephens_ Jo Mersa Marley_Kumar_Israel Vibration_ Memoria_Rootz Underground_ and many many more...







Reggae Sun Ska



2. - 4. August

Buju Banton_Ziggy Marley_Dub Inc_ Patrice_Alpha Blondy_Don Carlos_ Linval Thompson_and many more...



Boomtown Fair



7. - 11. August

Chronixx_Kabaka Pyramid_UB 40_ Gentleman's Dub Club_Natty & The Rebelship_Super Cat_Marcia Griffiths_Sevana and many many more...







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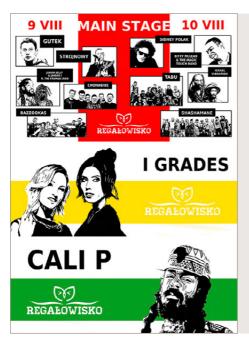


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OUT NOW!



Regalowisko Bielawa Reggae Festival



8. - 10. August

Junior Kelly_Israel Vibration_Cali P_ Bitty McLean and more...

Bielawa, Poland



No Logo Festival



9. - 11. August

Tiken Jah Fakoly_Ziggy Marley_ Winston McAnuff_Don Carlos_ Patrice_Alborosie_Yaniss Odua_ Linval Thompson_Jahneration_ and many more...





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FESTIVALS AUGUST 2019 125



No Logo BZH



9. - 11. August

Alpha Blondy_Patrice_Raggasonic_ Israel Vibration_The Congos_ Anthony B and more...



Afrika Tage - Wien



9. - 26. August

Ziggy Marley_Alborosie_ Jo Mersa Marley_Third World_ Slightly Stoopid and many more...







Keep It Real – On The Boat



10. August

Protoje and more...





Overjam Reggae Festival



15. - 18.August

Alborosie_Israel Vibration_ Junior Kelly_Zion Train_Queen Ifrica_ Wicked Dub Division and many more...







Sardinia Reggae Festival



15. - 18.August

Morgan Heritage_Mellow Mood_and more...







Plein Les Watts



15. - 17. August

Morgan Heritage_Jah Mason_ Don Carlos_Turbulence_Treesha_ and many more...



Rototom Sunsplash



16. - 22. August

Chronixx_Busy Signal_Queen Ifrica_ Marcia Griffiths_Jo Mersa Marley_ Linval Thompson_Israel Vibration_ Morgan Heritage_Slightly Stoopid_ Ziggy Marley_and many more...





FESTIVALS AUGUST 2019 129



Rastafest



17. August

Mighty Diamonds_Johnny Clarke_ and more...



Reggae On The Mountain



17. - 18. August

Steel Pulse_Julian Marley_Matisyahu_ Third World_Pato Banton_Hirie_ Mike Love_and many more...







Uprising Festival



23. - 24. August

Dub Inc_MS. Lauryn Hill_Eek A Mouse_ Jo Mersa Marley_Horace Andy_ Hollie Cook_Romain Virgo_and many more...



Bomboclat Festival



23. - 24. August

Busy Signal_Spice_Afro B_Serani_ Jo Mersa Marley_Pow Pow Movement_ and more...







Reggae Rise Up Music Festival



23. - 25. August

Stephen Marley_Rebelution_ Slightly Stoopid_Matisyahu_ The Green_Collie Buddz_ lya Terra and many more...







Reggae Lake Festival



24. - 25. August

Ziggy Marley_Alpha Blondy_Jah Cure_ Busy Signal_Don Carlos_Third World_ Jo Mersa Marley_and more...



Rebel Music Festival



24. - 25. August

J Boog_Julian Marley_SOJA_Katchafire_ Fortunate Youth_EarthKry_Mike Love_ and more...





FESTIVALS AUGUST 2019 133



Reggae On The Rocks



24. August

Rebelution_Morgan Heritage_ Protoje_Collie Buddz_and more...



House Of Common



26. August

Jimmy Cliff_Ziggy Marley_Madness_ David Rodigan_Horace Andy_ and many more...







One Love Festival



30. August - 1. September

Yellowman_Warrior King_Gully Bop_ lba Mahr_Benjamin Zephaniah_ Dub FX_ Marcus Gad_Dawn Penn_ Admiral Tibet and many many more...



CLIPPER







Dry Diggins Festival



30. August - 1. September

Slightly Stoopid_Rebelution_ Tribal Seeds_Steel Pulse_Protoje_ Fortunate Youth_Josh Heinrichs_ and more...







Tropic Jam Festival



30. August - 1. September

Afrob_Raggabund_Jahcoustix_ Superjam_Uwe Banton_Dr. Ring-Ding_ Vitamin X_Denham Smith_ Basstone Sound and more...







One Love Festival



30. August - 2. September

Shabba Ranks_Sizzla_ Exco Levi_Mavado_Cham_ and many more...



R.I. Reggae Festival



31. August

UB40 feat. Ali Campbell & Astro_ Shaggy_New Kingston_The Green_ Mighty Mystic_Mike Love_and more...







One Love One Heart Reggae Festival



31. August

Anthony B and more...



Reggae Summer Night



7. September

Bushman_Fantan Mojah_ The Herbpirates_Top Frankin Sound_ and more...







One Love Cruise



20. - 22. September

Line-up to be announced...



Falmouth Reggae Festival



28. - 29. September

David Rodigan_Johnny Osbourne_ Misty In Roots_YT_Reggae Roast feat. Brother Culture and more...







Roots On Route 66



28. - 29. September

Long Beach Dub All-Stars_Arise Roots_ The Steppas_Fluid Foundation_ Nattali Rize_Eli-Mac_E.N.Young_ Conkarah_and more...



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YELLOWAN

KING OF DANCEHALL

NEVER SURRENDER

BY GARDY STEIN
PHOTOS BY OMAR JOHNSON & JAN SALZMAN
ILLUSTRATIONS BY OKSANA SLOBODANIUK

If ever there was a living legend, it's this man: Winston Foster aka Yellowman! Obviously, he found a way to transform every blow life deals him into a burst of creativity. Abandoned as a baby because of his obvious albinism which is considered a curse in rural Jamaica, he grew up in an orphanage, constantly ridiculed by his peers. But did he turn bitter? No, he turned to music as a valve for his energy, started to deejay on diverse soundsystems and, in 1979, won the Tastee's Amateur Talent Contest with his unique voice, irresistible humour, puns and considerable charm. After a stellar career in the early 80s (the fact that he produced as many as 10 albums a year even won him an entry in the Guinness Book of World Records), tragedy struck again when he was diagnosed with skin cancer in 1983 and an operation to remove a tumour robbed him of half his jawbone three years later. But did he resign? No, he dedicated more time to fitness and physical health, a fact that becomes evident in his stage shows today. And as if the fact that he is still touring

INTERVIEW YELLOWMAN



to release an album called **No More War.**Created in collaboration with his daughter **K'Reema**, herself an aspiring singer, it reflects his mature outlook on life. No more slackness, no slippery allusions, but conscious and instructive lyrics set the tone. **Gardy Stein** took the chance to converse with this one-of-a-kind artist, brushing on early experiences in the business, private matters and, of course, the upcoming album:

I think there is no introduction needed for Yellowman. Still, I'd like to ask you about your early beginnings. What was your motivation to start singing?

wouldn't be enough to consolidate his lega-

cy, he went back to the studio after 15 years

It's like... good feelings. Singing always made me happy. When I started to listen to others like Daddy **U Roy**, **Big Youth** and many more, it made me want to sing too.

The first sound you started to follow was probably Sister Ignatius' Sound, the then headmistress of Alpha Boys School. Can you tell us about your early exposure to Dancehall?

That's not the first sound I followed, but one of them. I used to start deejay on sound-systems like **Aces International** from St. Thomas, **Gemini** in Kingston, sometimes with **Virgo International**, **Stone Love** and many more.

One of the first producers you worked with was Henry "Junjo" Lawes. Can you tell us what kind of person he was?

He was a good producer. He knew the hits! He used to come to the dance and listen to the singers. When I was on the soundsystem, he would say "That is the music I want!".

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It was good to work with him, because he is a guy who knew exactly what the people want. We became friends also, we used to hang out after work and go places together.

I read somewhere that he even gave you a BMW once, is that true?

Yes.

Who do you miss most from back in the days? Like Junjo, many artists have been killed or passed away.

There is a lot of artists I used to know, like **Dennis Brown, Bob Marley**, people like **I-Roy** and many more who pass away already. And just recently **Frankie Paul**.

May they all rest in peace! Your success in the early 80s caused a big festival like Reggae Sunsplash to install a Dancehall night in 1984, because people wanted to see you perform. How did that feel?

Yeah man, just great! Because Dancehall was the new thing in that time, so it get very popular. They have the first Dancehall night at Reggae Sunsplash, it started from there, until now. It was a good experience to perform there, my first big show in Jamaica!

And after that, you just kept recording. I read that you are also involved in charity work - can you tell us what you are doing?

Well, you know, I do a lot of charity concerts, we do them for UNICEF and for the American Cancer Society and for the Cancer Kids in America. We don't have an organisation, we just do concerts, and we do recordings and whatever the records sell we give it to Unicef or the others.

Wow, that's great. Big respect for that! You are also very active on social media channels like Instagram. What do you think about this new way of communicating?

It's good and bad. It's good because it's easier to communicate, to reach the people. We artists now, we don't have to fight for the radio stations anymore, because we have the social media and it's more easy now to

promote yourself, so that's very good. I'm on Instagram and on Facebook also.

On your Instagram channel, I saw a lot of posts about the upcoming album, No More War. The first album in 15 years! What was the motivation for this release, to pick up recording again?

Well, there's not too much good Reggae music coming out of Jamaica anymore. So, I have to bring back this style now! Because, some of the new music I'm hearing, they call it Reggae but it's not Reggae. I think it's good when I'm back in the recording scene again.

Who is the producer of the album?

My eldest daughter, **K'reema**! The album is released on her label, **Yellow Baby Records**. She started it recently, she's the creator.

K'reema is a promising singer as well, and you even went on tour with her already. Did you train her to do music?

No man, she's a talented person, so it came naturally. I didn't tell her or teach her, she just got it! She continues the legacy. But, you know, the bass player of the band, he's trying to take the legacy too. But I'm not going to allow him (laughing in the background - obviously, the bass player was following the interview).

Are any of your other six children musically inclined?

I've got two sons who are in the music as well, they are doing good. The others, no.

You mentioned the bass player, can you say something about the musicians on the album, the band you recorded with?

Well, we had to use some musicians from Jamaica, because the **Sagittarius Band** is too far. We live in Jamaica, they live in Florida, you know. And since the album was recorded in Jamaica, we took some musicians from there.

In your early days, you freestyled even when recording. Did you use this approach for the new album as well?



Normally, I don't write songs, I just go to the studio, I listen to the riddim, I voice that's how I create. Some of the songs on the album, I freestyle too, but some of them, my daughter and I write them together, and my youngest son also.

Apart from K'reema in Better Days and Love Who You Want, there are some other features. Can you introduce them?

On **Rootsman**, we have **Abijah**. He is my brother-in-law, **K'reema**'s uncle. He is a singer. Do you remember that song called **Oh**

This Will Be A Revelation (sings)? That's Abijah. Then there is another feature on Border, that's a guy who is a detective in Jamaica, a policeman. The other guy on Border, he lives in California they call him Ganesh. He looks like a younger me, you know. A lot of people think it's my son, you know?

And then I got my musicians around here, I don't know what happened to them, maybe they don't take their medication or something... (laughs with people in the background)

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Talking about the issues you sing about, they are very diverse. Which one is most important?

No More War, that's a very important message. It's my favourite song on the album, the message I want to bring across. I want all the people to be uplifted in peace and love and harmony and listen to the music, because music is life, you know. I also like the song Sex Education, I think it's important to talk about it, too.

No Woman Tonight is on the Real Rock Riddim - do you have a special connection to this riddim or why did you choose to use it?

Real Rock! I've been doing that song for years live on stage, but I never recorded it. It is a favourite amongst the audience everywhere I go, so I decided to put that song on the album.

What about Reggae Lullaby, who was it written for?

My daughter wrote that song, actually. It was written for my grandson.

The album cover is not finalised as we do this interview, but I saw some nice album artwork already on your Instagram channel. Each picture held a story about black soldiers in different wars of the world. Where did you find out about these stories?

It was my daughter and her husband, they researched it and let me know the history, about the Tuskegee Airmen, the USCT Freedom Fighters, the Buffalo Soldiers... check it out!

You mentioned earlier that you are not satisfied with the recent musical output of Jamaica. What's your vision for Jamaican music now that Reggae has been added to the official Unesco Cultural Heritage List?

Jamaican music becomes what it became already with **Bob**Marley and Peter Tosh and Jimmy Cliff, Mighty Diamonds, Third World, Dennis Brown, Alton Ellis, The Heptones, Lee Scratch Perry and many more, you know. It's all there!





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Do you think that the return of Buju Banton will have an impact on the Jamaican music business?

Well, **Buju** will always have an impact, from before he was incarcerated he had an impact! But, you know, it's been a good while and I hope he will keep it up long enough.

Have you met him since he's back?

No, not yet. I'm trying to wait until everything quiets down a bit.

Apart from singing and recording, what do you enjoy doing?

Sometimes I play basketball and I do a lot of workout. I also visit a lot of friends and deal with my children and the grandchildren.

How many do you have, if I may ask? Nine!

Wow! So you have great people around you.





Another personal question, if you don't mind, did you ever try to find your parents?

No. They tried to find me but I don't know if they are my real parents. My family, that's my wife and my children and my grandchildren. And I have good musicians around me also. The bassie and the drummer... I work with them and I tour with them.

Which artists would you like to work with?

Well, we talked to **Sean Paul** already, and we talk to **Slightly Stoopid** and some other artists, so there are things coming your way, watch out.

Wow, so you are not getting tired of music at all?

No, I'm not tired! Music is my life, you know, that's the only thing I do!

In my opinion, you are setting a really great example for musicians and singers to follow. What you've been through, and still you never gave up, I think a lot of the younger artists can learn from you and follow your path. Do you have any advice for them?

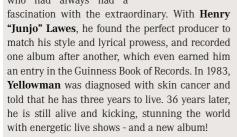
Well you know, it's just like... if you do music, it's music. No gangster thing, no crime, no drugs, just music! That should always be the first reason why you are doing this, it should just be music.



YELLOWMAN - NO MORE WAR

Yellow Baby Music - July 19, 2019

First things first: we are talking about a legend here, a legend who contributed to the foundation of a whole genre. Just like **Bob Marley** carried Reggae into the world, **Winston Foster** aka **Yellowman** introduced Dancehall to an international audience. Bursting onto the turbulent Jamaican sound system scene in 1979, he was an instant hit with the locals, who had always had a



Its title heralds a mature, sincere artist: **No More War** is a claim made by many others before him, but really and truly, it can't be said enough. Recorded, mixed and mastered at **Anchor Studios** in Kingston, the real pusher behind the release is **Yellowman**'s eldest daughter **K'reema**. An aspiring singer herself, her father is the first artist she signed on her freshly-founded label **Yellow Baby Records**.

Not only is she sitting in the organiser's chair, she also takes an active part in the creation of the album. She is featured on **Better Days**, **Love Who You Want** and **Family Affair**, as well as singing backing harmonies on many others and her clear, melodic voice definitely helps to smooth out some of the audible shortcomings of **Yellowman**'s vocal apparatus. The physical inhibitions the singer suffered after surgery took away part of his jaw do impair his voice, but can't stop him from singing,



as the tender **Kiss Me Each Morning** and a livication to his grandchildren, **Reggae Lullaby**, show.

In contrast to these softer tones, the artists' Dance-hall socialisation shimmers through in **Welcome To Jamaica**, including a shout-out to the genre's veterans, and especially in **No Woman Tonight** on the **Real Rock** riddim, a version recorded for the first time on an album. It is evident that **Yellowman**

hasn't lost his humour - neither in **Sex Education** and **Rubber Rubber**, a funny but instructional cover of **Shaggy**'s **Mr. Boombastic**.

Teachings have become a significant part of Yel**lowman**'s musical convictions, as the title track No More War and the pensive Religion on the joyful **Nanny Goat** riddim let us know - both treat important and topical issues. Apart from the omnipresent K'reema, other features include Abijah in the Ganja-tune Rootsman, and Border with the two singers **Desmond Brown** and **Ganesh**. Musically, the album is on a high level due to a great performance of the instrumentalists involved, an impressive list sporting talents such as Wayne "C-Sharp" Clark and Dorian Nashar Green on drums, Danny "Axemon" Thompson (bass). Richard Folks and Simeon Stewart (keys), Stingray on horns and the recently deceased Winston "Bo Pee" Bowen on guitar, among others. And although a few tunes don't quite live up to the standards previously set (e.g. Family Affair or Love Who You Want), No More War is a must for all fans. Addressing them directly in his final Thank You, Yellowman takes a touching leave: "Hello my beautiful people and my wonderful fans, this song is for you! Thank you for your loyalty, thank you for supporting me through the years".

by Gardy Stein



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IRIE VIBRATION

BY GARDY STEIN PHOTOS BY ARTHUR REWAK I VISUAL DESIGN

Who comes to mind when asked about German Reggae? **Gentleman** and **Seeed** most likely, maybe **Sebastian Sturm**, **Martin Zobel**, **Jahcoustix** and **Nosliw**, if you dig a little deeper. And although there are many young talents in this country, few were able to take the step beyond regional renown to international attention.

Out of the blue, an artist called **GReeeN** made his appearance recently, a prodigy with hardly any background in Reggae but a massive fan-base pooled up almost overnight, and everything it takes to really break big. Blessed with a clear, perfectly pitched voice that makes autotune redundant, a stage presence that makes some established artists look dull, a creativity that makes his lyrics soar and good looks that make fans scream with rapture, the well-trained eyes and ears of **Irievibrations Records**' brothers **Syrix** and **Professa** spotted him and took **Pasquale Denefleh** under their wings.



After a spectacular tour last year, the dreamteam of **GReeeN** and the **Iries** is now about to drop their second joint studio project, an album called **Smaragd** (German for 'emerald'). **Gardy Stein** met the young man in Hamburg during his family visit to talk about what we can expect from the release, how he experienced his first ever work trip in Jamaica and, most of all, what made him the person he is:

Greetings GReeeN! Please introduce yourself - where do you come from and what were your first steps in music?

I'm **GReeeN**, written with three Es so that people can find me better online - that's really the only reason (laughs). My journey started in 2006, in my room. I'm coming from the Hip Hop corner actually, I listened to a lot of **Tupac** and **Cypress Hill**, 90s Hip Hop, and in 2006 the German Rap scene started to grow. A friend of mine said "Hey let's try this too, I wrote this poem, I think we can do it." And I was like "Cool, I will write a poem as well, let's rap it!" We were looking for some beats and rapped our poems on them - these

were our first musical attempts. It sounded like crap (laughs), until the moment when I was told something by the older brother of my friend. I was 17 at the time, he was maybe 26, and he only said one thing: "Make sure that your rhymes hit the beat!" So, from then on I worked on my timing. Then we moved to a small town called Grünstadt ['grün' is German for 'green'] and I had to leave all my friends behind. I was pretty much alone, and it was a difficult time for me. My mother had a new boyfriend and my sister was diagnosed with a life-threatening heart disease at age 13. That was the time when I started to smoke weed, because it was a way for me to escape.

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It pushed my worries away somehow and allowed me to dive into the world of music. So, I was there in my room and all I needed was a beat, my mind forming lyrics, and a mic. We didn't have much money, and instead of investing in a driving licence, I saved every penny and bought the AKG C2000B. Since then I do music! I took it very seriously and told myself "That's it, this is what I want to do, that's why I'm here!"

Your lyrics have a certain ring to them, you use very special words and phrases. Are you a very literary person?

After my family moved I still went to the same school as before because it was my last year. I had to travel two hours to get there every morning, and back home in the afternoon. But because of this long train ride I started to read. I really started to understand the value of books, people sometimes spent their whole life researching and writing about a certain subject and you can absorb it in a few hours

What did you read?

Robert Betz, Eckhart Tolle, Bobo Schäfer... psychology books mostly, NLP (Neuro-linguistic Programming), books that have to do with the Placebo Effect and the Subconscious and so on. Also novels, fantasy and such, because sometimes I had to escape to another world.

How did your way lead you to Reggae?

I come from Hip Hop, and I love Boom Rap, head-nodding beats and such, but I also love **Hans Zimmer**, movie soundtracks and Reggae music, also Techno and Electro. In fact I love every kind of music except Schlager and German Folk Music. I think that's why I had a hard time settling down with a genre. I started out writing Hip Hop and Rap tracks, but also Rock and Pop, I never went only in one direction, I like so many different kinds of music, there are no borders for me. So I felt like a pinball for a long time. In 2010 I wrote my first Reggae song called **Musikliebe**, me and my friend, we even did a video for it at SummerJam (laughs).

The artist **GReeeN** really came into existence in 2013, when my friend decided to leave our musical project after five years of walking through the streets giving away CDs, contacting other bands and clubs and so on, old school. We had called ourselves "The Red One and The Green One", and now only the green one was left.

GReeeN started out with Battle Rap, I went back to my roots, I went into battles, that was like a kind of martial arts for me. Wordplay, finding lyrics on the spot, that was a challenge. Well, I wasn't **Eminem** and I didn't always win, but people liked it, they encouraged me and said "Go on, do music!" and that's what I did.

How did you link up with Irievibrations?

Around 2016, I had a little slump, I had some offers from labels but I wasn't sure if I could trust them and such. Then one day I saw a video of a street musician on YouTube, who took a hard Rap text and put it to a Reggae beat with his guitar. I was really impressed, and I looked for a beat online and I just freestyled on it at home with lyrics by Gzuz, 187 Straßenbande, just for fun. I didn't have a team in the sense of manager, video producer, I had to do it all on my own, so I bought a camera and set it up, connected the mic, pressed record and started to jam. That was my first Reggae cover and it went viral. I did another cover, and then somehow a lot of people started to follow me.

Then Michi [Michael Lechleitner, Iriepathie & Irievibrations Records] published a post asking people who they would like to see at the next Eastrock Festival in Austria, and a lot commented "GReeeN". They started to check me out online because they hadn't heard of me, and then they asked if I wanted to play. A few weeks before the festival I had a gig in Vienna and invited them over and that's when we met for the first time. There was just that spark, you know how when you meet people and you like them immediately that's what happened with these guys. And the rest is history!





Yes, I was completely blown away by your joint performance last year in Hamburg's Gruenspan! Now you started to work together, and this year they even took you to Jamaica. It was your first time there, right?

Yes, it was crazy! I mean, for them it's almost a second home, for me it was a completely new experience! The first three days we spent at the North Coast in a hotel, just chilling and acclimatising. On the way there, of course we first got some herbs, and this was the best weed we got during the whole trip, really! Anyway, we had our cozy room and rolled up a spliff, and then we decided to go to the beach. It was around midnight. Now, don't laugh, I took off my shoes, went to the water, and as soon as I put my feet in, maybe after 3 seconds or so, my foot started to burn. The funny thing was, I didn't know what it was, I thought maybe I have a cut or so and it stings in the salt water. But no, it was a fucking stinging jellyfish. The only one we came across during the whole time, and it caught me on that first night! Welcome to Jamaica (laughs). We have it all on video, we made a Iamaica Vlog.

After that, we went to Port Antonio to start working on the videos. It wasn't a holiday, you know, we were there to work. Our house was in the middle of the jungle and you could look down to a famous beach, but we couldn't go there because they prepared the area for the next James Bond shoot. So we had to look for another beach, which wasn't that easy, because either the beaches are part of private property or you have to pay to get in. Finally we found one, there was a guy called Mike, we drank all day at his bar and he cooked for us. That was the best food I ate there, rice and chicken.

After shooting on the beach, we drove around a lot to look for nice locations, and once we came to a clearing that was fenced off, with horses. They told me to hold the camera and run across the meadow with the horses into the jungle. I wasn't so sure about that, I didn't know if there were snakes or whatever (laughs). But I did it anyway, I ran into the jungle there, the others stayed in the car, and then I was standing all by myself in this jungle - that was one of the most amazing



ALBOROSIE * BUSY SIGNAL * MORGAN HER **ENDER * TANYA STEPHENS** HUCK FENDA * JUNIOR TION * DUANE STEPHENSON ROOTZ UNDERGROUND * UTAN GR **BIG YOUTH + LLOY** BERNARD COLLINS (ABVSSII KIDDUS I + KUSHART LEROY "HORSEMOUTH" WALLACE **ROYAL SOUNDS * GEORGE NOOKS * WARD 21** FEAT. LUKIE D + SINGING MEI THRILLER U + TONY CURTIS MONO & NIKITAMAN * I-FIRE * DR. RING DING MILLION STYLEZ* BLACK DRODHET * EES **UWE BANTON * GANJAMAN * SOFA CONNECTION DENHAM SMITH * TREESHA * DAMAGE SKONGDEM** UNLIMITED CULTURE * MEMORIA * JOSEPH BLUE GRANT JAHBAR I * VIDO * YELLOW UMBRELLA * REGGAEHASE BOOOO SENTINEL * SENSI MOVEMENT * SOUNDQUAKE * BARNEY MILLAH **BASS STATION * ZION TRAIN * ILLBILLY HITEC * IDREN NATURAL** DANMAN * NISH WADADA * RAS DIVARIUS * BRAINLESS SOUND BLESSED LOVE * SHERIFF'S SOUNDDATROL * CITY LOCK

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moments of the whole trip. I'm really a nature lover, and I find it so important to spend time in nature, and there everything was green, all around me!

This was for the video of Smaragd, right?

Yes, exactly. We also went to some waterfalls, a guide brought us there, it was like paradise! I couldn't really enjoy it though, I had to pose in front of the camera the whole time, from morning to night.

What was your most impressive experience?

Apart from the jungle you mean? (laughs) After Port Antonio, we had to finish the second video, **Roll It Up**, and for that we went to Negril, but I didn't really like it there. The best thing there was that we were able to go to a ganja farm, that was really cool. It was up in the hills, really beautiful, a rural area where you could see how the locals live. We were allowed to shoot in their fields, that was exciting. The crazy thing was that the guys

who took us there had some bad-ass guns, so it felt a bit strange at first, but they were really nice and friendly people.

We drove around a lot, looking for a location to shoot, and sometimes we got lost and came through some really remote villages. That was amazing and exciting, the way the houses were snuggled into the nature there.

What shocked me, though, was the plastic waste all over. Sadly that's an issue in many beautiful places of the world. Jamaica has such a breath-taking nature, but it seems like no one really cares, so this is definitely an issue. But generally, it was a great experience to be on that island, really.

You mentioned the two videos you shot in Jamaica, Roll It Up and Smaragd. Both are part of your upcoming album Smaragd. Was it produced completely by Irievibrations Records?



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Not all of the tracks, no. **Syrix** is the executive producer and sent me his beats, and **Slick** sent me some as well, so these are my two main producers. Half of the tracks are by **Syrix** and the other half by **Slick**, and **Autostrada**, that's by producer **Sebastian Arman**.

Markus and I worked on every track, even when the beat was sent by **Slick**, we worked in the studio and arranged it a bit. **Markus** is like a big brother to me, a brother I found, and we can work really well together. His brother reminds me of my big brother, that's why we make a good team, I think. **Michi** knows how to take me because I am like **Markus** (laughs).

When did you guys start work on the album?

That's the most crazy part. I came back from the tour last year, then I had five days with my family, and then in January I went straight to Vienna. Within two months, the whole album was written and recorded! 10 or

12 tracks didn't even make it to the album, so I already have some material for the next release.

The Intro captivated me straight away, this one sentence "Believe in something big - in yourself!", a topic that is reflected again in my favourite track Wunderschönes Wesen [Beautiful Being]... Why is it so important for you to include these motivating messages in your work?

In my opinion, people need this. I've been through some really hard times myself, and I never came across a sentence like "believe in yourself" in the music I listened to. I read a few books maybe, but I want to put this message in music for all to hear. I want to have success because I want to show the people "Look, everyone has the power to form his or her life, everyone has an inner emerald, a treasure you carry within you", subconsciously, so to say. I want to build up the people. Life can be hard, but still... giving up might seem like the easiest way sometimes, but in

the long run you will land in a depression, and a depression is such a waste of potential. I want to shake people awake, when there is someone who says "I am ugly, I'm no use, no one loves me." I want to tell them "You are a powerful being, you can change the world if you want to!" and it's true! Why should only a few people carry the power to change the world? Are they different from us? No. they just activated something inside, trained their mind to have that power, but this is within us all! Combined with time and knowledge, with science and the belief in your idea, you can reach everything. It's easier if you have a strong team, but the most important part is you.

There was a phase when I wrote sad songs when I felt sad, but I felt even more sad than before. So I started to turn the tables, writing positive lyrics when I felt down. And these songs helped me so much, it was almost as if I was my own psychologist. I told myself to be strong, to believe in myself and not rely on others. Even if you ask God to help you, you have to start with yourself, because God is within you. That's why I write songs like Wunderschönes Wesen, to pass on this mantra to others. It's not the only track like that that I wrote or will write. I want to reactivate the people, I want my fans to be the heroes of tomorrow who save this planet from destruction by the military powers. The man in the street is not small!

I think it works, you reach the people. Reading the comment section under some of your songs, a lot of fans say how your music helped them get up again.

That's the reason I write and publish these songs. For ten years, I only made music for myself, but I went public to motivate and activate them! People come to me after concerts and tell me "Your music is the reason why I didn't kill myself", and this for me... I know what I have to do!

One of the impressive things about you is that you put a lot of yourself in your songs. 8 Jahre



[8 Years] sounds very autobiographical, for instance - is it?

Yes, this one is 100% real and true.

And Honey Rider - what does this metaphor stand for?

Honey Rider is taken from a James Bond movie, she was one of the first ever Bond girls. She is the one who comes out of the ocean. In this song, I describe how I have arrived, how I'm at a place I always wanted to be, but the journey goes on, and by my side is a woman I love and I can share that journey with. Honey Rider is not only my girlfriend,



however, but also the people who listen to the track. The song speaks to you! I like the ring of that name, so **Honey Rider** is also like a pet name for my fans.

Adler [Eagle] is also a very beautiful song, my son likes it a lot. What was the motivation in writing this song?

It was the last track created. While I recorded all other songs, I knew that... you know, I have a healthy egoism when it comes to my own life. I am very determined and go my way and I don't let myself be stopped. I know that this behaviour might hurt people who

are close to me, because they want me for themselves, but I don't have time! I have to go my way, and when this way leads me to Vienna... I am an eagle!

I fly around the world and I have people who are 600 miles away and I still feel connected with them. And if I meet them, it is as if we met yesterday, that for me is true love and true friendship. Many people are hurt when they don't see the person they love for a long time, and **Adler** is an homage to these people and also to myself, saying, "If you want to be my friend or even my partner, you have



to know that I am an eagle". For years, I've spent a lot of time with myself, so I can deal with alone-time really well, but most people can't, they feel lonely when they are on their own. I want to express that you shouldn't depend on another person for your own happiness, because once that person goes away, whatever the reason may be, you will fall into a deep hole if you have no other pillar to stand upon.

I will make a track one day about that, too, which will be called **The Pillars**. When you build pillars in your life, the thickest one should be your health. Another one is friends and family, another one your career, hobbies, passions... and then, when one of these pillars breaks down, your career for instance, the others will still carry you. This is very important.

Which other songs are important to you?

Pharmazeug [Pharma-Stuff]. It's about how, sadly, money and profit is always put before health by the big pharmaceutical companies. It's about how cannabis is still not acknowledged for its medicinal values and how users are still pigeonholed for using it.

Also, Lieg Am See... next to Roll It Up, that's the most Reggae-ish tune on the album. I really like that one as well. Which other songs will come out as videos?

Honey Rider and **Autostrada**, that's the most stand-out track, I think. Although... the whole album is a nice mixture of styles actually. I couldn't settle on only one direction! (laughs)

Well, for me that's the nice thing about it! What are the next steps? Are you planning a new tour? Will you play at any festivals during the summer?

Yes! I'll perform at the Frequency Festival in Austria and at SummerJam in Germany. I'm so looking forward to this one! Summerjam 2010 was one of the reasons that got me started in Reggae, where we shot the video for **Musikliebe**, and I got infected with the vibes there. I told myself, one day you will perform here!

Also, I think I can reveal that **Smaragd** will not be the only release this year. There will be a tour as well!

INTERVIEW GREEEN 161

GREEEN - SMARAGD

Irievibrations Records - June 28, 2019

"All the green of nature is concentrated within the Emerald." (Hildegard of Bingen)

The emerald, a green gem stone, is said to represent youth in the age of man, symbolising hope and the future, renewal and growth. It is thus the perfect match for artist **GReeeN**, who embodies a fascination with many of these properties

and especially its colour in his name. **Pasquale Denefleh** by birth, he is a true self-made artist, having built up his career from scratch, without wealthy or famous parents to pave his way. Maybe that's why he is so damn real, authenticity oozing from his every word and beat. The encounter with Vienna's production stronghold **Irievibrations Records** gave him wings two years ago, and the current release **Smaragd** is the second outcome of this collaboration.

Again, executive producer **Syrix** contributed most of the tracks, while mastermind **Slick** created the other half. Actually, the only piece that was added by another talent called Sebastian Arman is **Autostrada**, a song that feels and sounds as if taken from a road movie. Let's start this journey!

After a jolting intro, **Ab Jetzt** is an encouragement to follow your passions in life, as every one of us has the strength and brains to achieve something special. "From now on, every day is a good day!" This kind of empowerment is prevalent throughout **GReeeN**'s work, especially on this release. My personal favourite **Wunderschönes Wesen** talks about the problem of missing self-love, resulting in low self-esteem, depression or even suicide. The singer insistently tells us to make sure you love yourself, be strong and accept what you cannot change because it makes you unique.

Of course, **GReeeN** wouldn't be the herbalist he is if he didn't sing about the weed. Both **Roll It Up**, a melodic prompt to smoke, and the title track **Sma**-



ragd, on a powerful beat, come with amazing visuals with lots of green, shot during a most recent stay in Jamaica. Take a look!

A more serious examination of the subject is initiated in **Pharmazeug**, discussing the sad reality of big pharmaceutical companies concentrating on marketable (chemical) solutions instead of re-

lying on natural products or even teaching people how to strengthen their inner self-healing powers. **Honey Rider**, taken from the first Bond girl in the 1962 movie, describes the feeling of having arrived at a place you are comfortable with. "See the world with your heart!"

With a beautiful slavic guitar pattern and a melodic hook-line, **8 Jahre** is a very intimate, auto-biographic piece that paints an accurate picture of teenage life in a small German town. Of the remaining three songs, each one is a jewel indeed. **Freunde** on the distinctive guitar pattern of **No Woman No Cry** is an ode to those people who are the most important in life, next to family. Discussing the difficulty of successfully handling a relationship as a busy artist, **Adler** is an honest claim for the personal freedom needed sometimes: "I need you, but I need me as well. I am an eagle, baby, can you live with that?"

Probably the most Reggae of all, **Lieg Am See** celebrates these carefree moments we spend with loved ones, weed - and nature. "Nature calms me, here I don't know what fear is..." The lyrics stress **GReeeN**'s connection to Mother Earth once more, an earth without which we couldn't exist. Memba that!

Smaragd is a strong example of how German Reggae can sound like when experts are at work. Thank you, team **GReeeN**, for putting this out for the world to hear!

by Gardy Stein





































164 ALBUM-REVIEWS 2019

VARIOUS ARTISTS - RED GOLD GREEN & BLUE Trojan Jamaica - July 12, 2019

Over the years there have been numerous - often successful - attempts at getting reggae artists to cover songs from other genres in a reggae fashion. However, there have been far fewer attempts at getting these artists to cover songs from beyond their native genre in the original format.



Hence, this 13-song collection is a valiant attempt to break that mould, with the cream of the reggae crop putting in an appearance on a blues, soul, and rhythm and blues selection. The album features such legendary luminaries as Mykal Rose, Toots and his Maytals, Freddie McGregor, Big Youth and Kiddus I, all enabled by the enduring fulcrum of the talkative and talented gentleman that is Sly Dunbar on drums with his more reserved sidekick Robbie Shakespeare 'shaking the sofa' on bass.

The collection sees classics from the likes of Muddy Waters, Peter Green, Howlin Wolf, Bo Diddley, Elmore James and many more given the top treatment. Hence, the addition of 'blue' to the reggae/rasta red, gold and green colours in the album's title.

Mykal Rose contributes three fine tracks to the compilation. And you know that when Rose contributes, it's harder to get it wrong than right! And so it is, when he opens the set with I Put A Spell On You - with Ernest Ranglin (yet again!) stealing the show on guitar. Thereafter, Rose slows the pace with his cover of 44 Blues, before Bad Luck Shadow allows Starkey and Chin's guitar inputs to occasionally decorate but mainly decisively dominate the track.

Big Youth's take on **Temperature** is to treat it in a characteristically raucous fashion, in a manner that will appeal to all comers. Whilst **Toots and the Maytals**' treatment of **Man of the World** does what he and his cohort have been doing wonderfully well - in a crossover fashion - for decades. **Andrew Tosh** also puts in an appearance, as he

belts out **Don't Go No Further** with some aplomb. The album closes with a stomping **Big Youth** on **Gunslinger**, followed by **Kiddus I**, who comfortably meets the challenge posed by the **Sun Is Shining**.

A novel feature of the compilation is **Shakespeare**'s attempt at the vocals

on Bring It On Home, Wang Dang Doodle and Just Your Fool, though Freddie McGregor manages the genre-switch much more comfortably on his cover of Come On In My Kitchen, with Dunbar's electro drums driving the show and Leroy 'Horsemouth' Wallace riding shotgun on drums and organ. Baby Please Don't Go is also given delightful treatment, with a comely and confident cheekiness by Phylea Carley – the Caribbean's first Speakeasy recording artiste – with Dunbar again driving the song at a hot percussive pace.

Overall this is a welcome and novel venture, spearheaded by the new **Trojan Jamaica** label, founded by drummer and son of **Ringo Starr**, **Zak Starkey** and Australian vocalist/producer **Sharna 'SSHH'**, with the renowned **Youth** overseeing the production process based in Ocho Rios.

Described as an "evolution of roots, rock and reggae, combining contemporary artists with a number of Jamaica's musical pioneers", it's fair to say that a slew of reggae artists accord blues and soul music with a career-defining influence on their musical development. Or as **Mykal Rose** puts it "We always liked blues. That is how we get the feel because blues and reggae and rock music is similar with energy". Putting it succinctly, **Starkey** explains that the idea was to have "blues lyrics cut Jamaica style".

So, if crossover is your thing, this compilation must find a way to your musical inventory. If not, then a respectful nod to the ongoing process that spawns new music is a must.

by Gerry McMahon

I-TAWEH - RELOAD September 2019



Recorded in California and Jamaica, I-Taweh returns to a full-length album format with Reload and it is a delightful blending of roots reggae with the authenticity of the island origins and West Coast influence of instrumen-

tation. This is truly an **I-Taweh** project, despite the variety of session players throughout, as the singer also serves as multi-instrumentalist; from bass, guitar, and keys to percussion. Even so, the consequence is a record that feels deeply connected to its creator, yet never indulgent or without the nuance and influence of his band.

The album opens with a tribal call of percussion and responding guitar on **Danger Zone**, during which **I-Taweh** sings, metaphorically "I walk alone." It's a heavy sentiment that belies the following 15 tracks darting between the arresting brass and attacking electric guitar of **Reggae Lion** and the toppling beat of **Another Bram Bram** with the singer warning us all to be careful. A floating flute colours the sun-splashed **One Day** and leads to the brightening, nearly ska-like **Home Sweet Home**.

The middle third of **Reload** touches on peace and gratitude, then into the easy-back chair of reggae on a couple - **Sunshine in My Eyes** and **Rolling Stone**, and calls back to Kingston on **No Mediocre Vibe**. The latter gives the listener pause just long enough to conclude **I-Taweh** has never been one for a mediocre vibe. The title track shifts into the quieter **Not Just in Memories** and its bubbling organ, before the throwback '80s groove of **Reggae Greetings**.

After Jah Will comes the proper finale before the bonus dubs, and perhaps the album's highlight, Code Red (Wi Tired) with its steady, stripped back acoustic and the perseverance of staying up in a down world. Three dubs close out Reload, with Reload Nyabinghi Dub being the strongest of the trio. With this latest, another conscientious and detailed outing from I-Taweh, the singer has firmly implanted himself as one of the genre's modern classic artists.

by Larson Sutton



including the hit single "Empress Sativa" by Duane Stephenson and Lutan Fyah

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BANDA SENDEROS - OASE

June 28, 2019

Oooh, new beginnings are so exciting! How a band/producer/ artist starts a song has, at least for me, a tremendous influence on the way I perceive their music. In the case of **Banda Senderos**, their new album **Oase** drops on virgin ears, as I seem to have missed their debut **Mobulu** in 2015 and every single since – it's about time to catch up!

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The group formed 2012 in Essen, a rather large industrial city in Germany's coal belt, and has grown into an impressive multicultural, nine-headed live sensation with roots in Germany, Chile, Poland and Congo. Their current oeuvre is a joint venture with producer **Guido Craveiro**, whose proficiency has already accompanied celebrated artists such as **SEEED**, **Cro** and **Dub Inc**.

But back to the beginning. **Mala Vena** not only has a creative radiophonic onset, it's also a perfect starter, flooding our ears with that special "Reggae/Dancehall/Pop/Cumbia-Fusion", as the band describes their output. And with bass!

Bass is a pleasant characteristic permeating most of the tracks in one way or another. In the Peter-Fox-like **Es Wird Gut** ("It will be fine"), for instance, it drones so compactly that it creates a pinching atmosphere, while in **Schicksal** ("Fate"), it is a continuous massage underscoring the passionate homage to their home town.

Both **El Tiempo** and **Respect** start auspiciously, the musical elements used making them a fascinating listening experience, but somehow I can't really connect with the singers' lyrics (too many forced rhymes for my taste) and timing. However, that's a rather subjective perception, and the equally extant linguistic diversity (we hear German, Spanish, French and English) deserves praise.



What sounds like an acoustic-style piece during the first notes of **Weg Von Mir** ("Away from me") develops into a pacy lovesong, describing a fiery relationship. **Sinkende Sonne** ("Sinking Sun") continues the summer vibes with some Latin guitar, and on a groovy Reggae-beat, the title-track sings about **Oase**, that haven or happy place every

one of us needs to recharge. An instant favourite of my son, **Elefanten** compares the musical impact of the band to a herd of elephants, inviting all listeners to stomp along.

When it comes to features, **Banda Senderos** didn't hesitate to add more talent to their already large group. **Sonne In Die Stadt** ("Sun in the City"), which is being promoted as a single and will be out on video soon, features Rap-duo **257ers** and a **Marley**-snippet. **Jamaram**, another German band, is heard in **Lass Sie Reden** ("Let Them Talk"), while **So Ist Das Leben** ("That's Life"), probably the oldest track, was released as single in 2016 with Columbian band-sensation **Doctor Krápula**.

Oase is a good-mood, summer-treat you should allow yourself, even if you don't speak German (or Spanish). It might be less profound and serious than other Reggae albums, but it's truly remarkable because of the fine live instrumentation (and the beginnings of the songs), so let's give it up for David Fiege (guitar), Julian Kühn (drums), Jens Kolpatzik (trombone), Dominik Ohlmann (trumpet), Johannes Hartogh (saxophone), Pascal Wenske (bass), Jacek Brzozowski (keys) and of course singers Seba Campos and Dan Brown!

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DENHAM SMITH - OLD SCHOOL

Buff Baff Records - June 28, 2019



When experienced Reggae musicians from Gentleman's backing band Evolution, Josi Coppola, Fabian "Odi" Zepezauer, and Frank "Pollensi" Pollak recently got together to found their label Buff-Baff records, they must

have thought "We can't build a house without a foundation".

With the Denham Smith album Old School, they start the journey right where the story began. This album is a homage to the heyday of Jamaican Reggae in the 60s and 70s, a vintage production dedicated to the roots of the genre we love. With Denham Smith on the microphone and **Dean Fraser** as head of the brass section, the new-born label has found the perfect men for the job. Denham's tenor has the timbre of a Sugar Minott, the soulfulness of an Alton Ellis and melody lines that evoke memories of The (early) Heptones. His skilful and experienced voice allows him to cover the thematic and musical range of the respective styles with ease. Six of the nine songs on the record are One Drops, with the exceptions of I Still Love You, a Lovers Rock on a Rock beat, Dready a mid-tempo Rockers, and Heaven Only Knows which comes in with a spherical Rockers groove and a driving bassline. In songs like Troublemaker Girl. Love Is At Your Door or Waiting. **Denham** hardly sings a phrase that is not refined by elegant R'n'B lines or decorated with gospellike ornaments. Natty carries a Rub-a-dub vibe when Denham takes the role of a singjay in the tradition of U-Roy, while Work It Out represents the Rocksteady period within the foundation era. The role of the **Philophon Studio** in Berlin, where Old School has been recorded, is significant for the authentic Studio One sound on this album. The place is packed with vintage equipment, of which recording engineer Benjamin Spitzmueller and producer Josi Coppola knew very well how to take advantage of in order to create this unmistakable, nostalgic expression on Denham Smith's Old School, the first child of Buff Baff Records.

by Christian Moll

MUNGO'S HI FI X EVA LAZARUS – MORE FYAH Scotch Bonnet Records - July 19,2019



With some releases, you simply know that they are fire. In the case of More Fyah, this knowledge is not transmitted by the title alone, but by the combination of a promising artist, renowned producers and obvious professionals at

work in both press and cover art work.

Mungo's Hi Fi have provided the world with high quality releases for more than 15 years now, and their associated label Scotch Bonnet Records stands for top international collaborations and vinyl love. Eva Lazarus has hit the scene more recently, enthusing audiences all around the globe.

From the first notes of **Dub Be Good To Me**, it's clear that we're in for a treat. It is rare that cover versions are better than the original, but this dubby adaption of the 80s S.O.S. Band hit definitely is. Mungo's concept of re-interpreting classics is taken to highest heights in Babylon Raid. The Max Romeo evergreen Three Blind Mice in itself is worth any remix anyway, but nothing prepares you for the sheer joy when that bass grips you at 00:43! In fact, that grip will hug you tight until the last notes of the final Bad Gyal. Due to the amazing variety of the ten tracks, each one is a new discovery and will appeal to the different emphases of your musical taste, be it a lively Ska beat in We Weren't Made For This, informing us that we were made for bigger things than that 9 to 5, or a calm and pensive but extremely powerful mood in Warrior Code.

For the title track, I just want to say thank you. More Fyah combines the good old Dancehall vibe so few modern productions manage to evoke, with a club-worthy dubstep bass and Eva's vocal delivery spicing up the track. In stark contrast, Amsterdam chimes in with a more relaxed, almost soulful flavour, while Light As A Feather, introducing Kiko Bun, nods to the traditional feel-good quality of Reggae.

No way you can pick a favourite here. **More Fyah** is an incredible display of talent and love for music, a gem for which everyone involved deserves biggest respect!

by Gardy Stein

168 ALBUM-REVIEWS 2019

OLIVIA FLOWERS - INCANDESCENCE June 2019



Raised in the Deep South of the United States, Olivia Flowers came to Canada in 2012 to become a backing singer for the Jamaican-Canadian Reggae project King Shadrock. A move to Paris a year later marks the beginning of her solo

career. In France she met Moritz von Korff (Dub Inc./Oneness Records) and Derek 'Musicalist' Johnson (Dub Asante), both crucial contributors to her album. The link to Moritz eventually resulted in the 2017 Oneness production Unda Wata, the first hint towards an upcoming debut album.

Even though nine of the ten tracks on the album were mixed and produced at 31db Studios in Paris, the early child **Unda Wata** pretty much represents the Rock-inspired direction this record would take. That some songs on her album show strong American inspirations or have a downright Country touch may be due to **Olivia**'s love for Blues and Soul, or simply her upbringing in the United States and her early experiences in Gospel choirs.

Such influences surface more in some songs than in others. On My Mind has a touch of Jack Johnson with its lightweight acoustic guitars and back vocal harmonies borrowed from Bob Marley's Johnny Was. The Light is basically a Country song characterised by a Western guitar riff meeting a Reggae bassline. Blending in well with such stylistics is the albums last song A Change is Gonna Come, a calm and thoughtful 6/8 ballad, which is - like The Light - complemented with some natural traverse flute lines. On Heavy Load Olivia's distinct vocal colour and expression meet a One Drop Roots Reggae Riddim and articulate dub-poetic lines amidst gospel-like backing vocals. Feeling The Same distinguishes itself by the drum's more digital attire, while the remaining songs round off a well-balanced Reggae album, which has - like the music of Bob Marley and his contemporaries - experienced a strong influence from the forces of American genres.

by Christian Moll

DUANE STEPHENSON – EXILE TO DREADITES Fall 2019



Growing up in a community like August Town, an area in the east of Kingston frequently shaken by violence and crime, in which its hard working residents often find themselves burdened by the misdeeds of criminals, is not easy.

Still singer **Duane Stephenson** always kept the faith and motivation to create music of encouragement and love. Testimony of his positive spirit is **Exile To Dreadites**, his fourth studio album.

Produced by the artist himself along extraordinary guitarist Lamont "Monty" Savory and keyboard player Llamar "Riff Raff" Brown a musically and lyrically strong piece was created that boasts rich, organic Roots Reggae combined with thoughtful lyrics about love, equality, righteousness and spirituality.

Powerful, bright horns open the album with I Man Arise, an uplifting piece to bring love, light and truth into a "world who needs music", before Live As One works as a reminder to ignore race, complexion, or the shape of the nose and instead overcome all borders to unite. Tracks shift from smooth and soulful love songs like Remember Love and the saxophone-decorated Nice Place to militant hymns such as Dready A Lion or the guitar driven Children In Exile.

On all the 13 tracks **Duane Stephenson** manages the balance between serious and heavy-weight topics, content and even lessons; and a delightful, joyous musical experience, quite remarkably. **Exile To Dreadites** makes one think, laugh and cry, of course dance, and always enhances strength and motivation to make our world a better place in times where one could easily surrender looking at wars and politricks.

Reggae has always been social commentary and spirit music, a path that **Stephenson** follows with skill and style and accompanied by the finest of Jamaica's musical fraternity to feature on this record. **Exile To Dreadites** is as timeless as its genre, a Reggae classic with global messages to which everyone can relate, hopefully earning the recognition it deserves.

by Munchy

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