

Marley, the Man, the Message, the Music

by Rosaland Fonville

It is ironic that music so beautifully composed in actuality was given birth from the oppression and suffering of a people in a nation endowed with a majestic beauty of its own. Reggae music is called "heartbeat" music because its beat is likened to that of the heart. While listening to Reggae, one will hear heavy African drumming and other hand-made instruments as well as the electric sound of guitar, keyboards and bass, etc. Listeners will also hear lyrics that tells of history, human suffering and then rise, with inspirational and even gospel overtones.

The melodic rhythm of African music to the soulful sound of the West Indies created the rich blend of Reggae. The lyrics collaborate with the instruments and serve to draw more and more Reggae music lovers because it is through the lyrics that the education becomes more profound.

Bob Marley is considered the Father of Reggae, a consideration which has not been disputed publicly by anyone. Marley was born in St. Ann's Jamaica. He learned music from other elder musicians and he learned his faith from elder Rastafaris. He acquired the soulfulness of his trade from them both,

and from the Ible (Bible). Through his own suffering and consciousness, gained partly from an inconsistent childhood and a soulsearching young adulthood, he put his stamp and style on the music. His son, Ziggy, stated in an interview with Music Monitors, that he is adamantly opposed to the pedestal his father was put on by the media. "He did not become that still. All the people put him on, making him that. Him still just a man. Anda very homely man. Even if somebody put you on a pedestal, you don't be on it. You just be normal."

From Marley, emerged many others seeking to tell their own story by way of Reggae music. From as early as 1979, Reggae has made its own mark in the music industry, that is described as a sound to be reckoned with. In Stephen Davis' book entitled Bob Marley, Marley says..."We deal with creative power, yunno? And out of it you get rockers, reggae, rock steady, every kind of music, and creative thing which is roots... Well, reggae music is a music created by Rasta people, and it carry Earth force, people rhythm... it is a rhythm of working people,

movement, a music of the masses, seen?

There are few nations that at one time or another cannot relate to a level of war, reconstruction, oppression, suffering, civil and political distress. Just



as the Rock sound from the latter 60's to early 70's depicted a vital change in our own nation, Reggae music tells that of Jamaica as well as many other nations that fit the same bill. Majesty Emperor Haile Selassie's speech to the League of Nations on African resistance and unification was set to music and the song "War" did evolve. "And until the ignoble and unhappy regime that now holds our brothers in Angola, in Mozambique and Souther Africa in sub-human bondage has been

topped and utterly destroyed everywhere is War"

Marley's awareness of the international struggle against racist governments not only in Jamaican but african as well identified great support for the movement; ...Until that day, the African continent will not know peace. We Africans will fight, if necessary, and we know we shall win as we are confident in the victory of good over evil. Everywhere is War!"

Give thanks-our brothers and sisters in South Africa have stood strong and as of this print they are experiencing a freed Nelson Mandela who won victoriously in a free election that place him as president of his beloved South Africa! We all salute you and raise our fists high in the air for you South Africa.

Folks who attend a Reggae concert or a show attend for may reasons. Some are interested in a different musical experience, while others simply love the music and beat. Then there are those who know that the conscious-raising experience is likened to the spiritual experience received at a church.

Music can and does have a positive effect for the growth of our youth, the

sustaining of our history and the recognition of our elders; those who paved the way for a better nation.

There is love for many famous and not-so-famous musicians and songwriters for the love they bestow to the masses. Bob Marley not only christened the music industry with this very cultured sound, but he had also breathed life into many people young and old who watched, protested against and defied Babylonian attitudes. Yes, we love Robert Nesta Marley, the Man, the Message, the Music.

Reggae music is highly conscious and spiritual. Roots Reggae is from the beginning, from the roots of our struggle. The music if for spiritual uplifting in addition to entertainment; music to dance to and congregate with those who seek the same peace and harmony, one love, one heart, one destiny, for the masses which is the initial groundwork in which Reggae was born.

Emperor Haile I Selassie I, Jah Rasafari- is Reggae. The two are inseparable when we speak of ground work, Marley and Reggae. Marley writes in song... "Jah Give!, Children yeah, Jah Jah Live!, Children yeah. The truth is an offense, but not a sin, Is he who laughs last, is he who win, is a foolish dog, bark at a flying bird, one sheeple must learn, children, to respect the sheperd, Jah Live!... Fools saying in their heart, Rasta your good is dead, But INI know, children, dread shall be dread, a-dread, Jah L i v e !

(L) Tim Bess,
local promoter
poses for AC
Phoenix Photo.



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