

HOPE ROAD

FORTY-FIVE

REVOLUTIONS

PER MINUTE

JAMAICAN POPULAR MUSIC IS REBEL MUSIC. KINGS MUSIC.

UPSETTER MUSIC. DANCE MUSIC. HEART BEAT OF A PEOPLE MUSIC.

IMPROVISED MUSIC. FIRST-WORLD, SECOND-WORLD, THIRD-WORLD MUSIC.

GHETTO PEOPLE MUSIC. PLANTATION MUSIC. REVIVAL MUSIC.

FOUR HUNDRED YEARS OF SLAVERY MUSIC.

CALL AND RESPONSE MUSIC. REVOLUTION MUSIC. SCRATCH MUSIC.

SKA MUSIC. ROCKSTEADY MUSIC. RUDEBOY MUSIC. LOVERS ROCK MUSIC.

REGGAE MUSIC. ROOTS MUSIC. TOASTERS MUSIC. DUB MUSIC. DIGITAL RIDDIMS

MUSIC. DANCEHALL MUSIC. DEEJAY MUSIC. ELECTRONIC MUSIC. RAGGA MUSIC.

JAMAICAN POPULAR MUSIC IS RANKING MUSIC. CHANGING SAME MUSIC.

TRENCHTOWN ROCK MUSIC. BETTER MUST COME MUSIC. SLENG TENG MUSIC.

MY BOY LOLLIPOP MUSIC. ROCKERS MUSIC. DUB POETRY MUSIC.

GOOD VIBRATION MUSIC. DINKIE MINNIE MUSIC. CLASH MUSIC. VERSION MUSIC.

CLASH MUSIC. SAMPLED MUSIC. SELECTOR MUSIC. RUB A DUB STYLE MUSIC.

SUFFERATION MUSIC. HAUL AND PULL UP MUSIC. ROUGHER THAN ROUGH

MUSIC. RIGHT NOW IS TOMORROW STYLE MUSIC. UNIFYING MUSIC.

RIGHTEOUS MUSIC. WORD SOUND MUSIC. MASH UP MUSIC.

RASTAFARI MUSIC. SOUND SYSTEM MUSIC. SPACE MUSIC.

HOPE ROAD— FORTY-FIVE REVOLUTIONS PER MINUTE IS JAMAICAN MUSIC.

HOPE ROAD

FORTY-FIVE REVOLUTIONS PER MINUTE

SLAVE QUEEN, LOSE THE SHACKLES
FROM YOUR MIND

SLAVE QUEEN, REMOVE THE SHACKLES
FROM OUR MINDS

I TOO WAS BLIND, BUT NOW I SEE

I HAVE RELINQUISHED SLAVERY
MENTALITY.

(JUDY MOWITT, SLAVE QUEEN)

Hope Road is a multi-layered visual and sound exhibition exploring the birth, development, and significance of Reggae music and its sub genres from post-colonial era to present time. How and why this music formed in a politically and economically tattered Kingston ghetto is a testimony to the power and experience of this music.

Within a few short years, Reggae, with its allegiance to change, created a strong cultural and global identity while at the same time forging a powerful and crucial substrate for the new modernity of pop music culture to embrace and build upon.

This exhibition will explore this new ideology of sound with its bold musical strategies, which profoundly changed acoustic engineering and sound technology concepts. The museum experience will transport audiences on a sonic journey using state of the art sound technology, recreating early experiments in the Jamaican sound process to the DJ culture of today.

EXAMPLE OF EXHIBITION EXPERIENCE

THE SOUND PALETTE ROOM— DECONSTRUCTED SOUND

Sound beam technology will be both a powerful and engaging tool for this exhibition. Its ability to focus and target sound to a participant's ear drum rendering it a "virtual speaker" and allowing an intimate and unencumbered sound experience with no external sound pollution is key. This technology will emulate and conjure the excitement of early Jamaican Sound System music, which was specifically produced to enjoy in an open air, under the stars venue.

A darkened portion of the exhibition will house an atmospheric space that will consist of projected, softly-focused lights that create a rippling effect. These visual vibrations will act as guides allowing participants to meander randomly from one pool of light to the next. Within each pool a separate and contained acoustic experience will exist. These "sound bites" or "sound fragments" will consist of-tune—riff—basslines—poetry—verse—word sound—digital riddims—Dub poetry—echo. These deconstructed extractions will be essences of sound *energy*, and at the same time reflect the always moving, changing, gathering process which is the core *spirit* of Jamaican popular sound culture.

For example:

First pool—Nyabingi drumming

Second pool—Rasta chanting

Third pool—Sounds of stones smashing against each other. Natural sounds are relevant to Dub's soundscapes and texture process experiments created by Lee Perry.

Fourth pool—Classic Reggae baseline

This playful collection of tune—rhythm—word sound—Dub poetry fragments will create a sonic palette, "sampling" significant acoustic "building blocks" of the Reggae sound process engaging audiences in an informative yet mysterious approach.

Hope Road will stretch your ears and mind allowing a new perception of Jamaica's musical approach and profound contribution to the global pop sound culture of today. This exhibition will resonate with Reggae's radically modernistic attitudes and abstract textures. The bold and iconic images of Dennis Morris, one of Reggae's great reportage photographers, will allow audiences intimate insight into the huge cast of artists and technicians who were, and continue to be, major contributors in this ever evolving sound process.

The My Boy Lollipop Room will pay homage to the women of Reggae through a series of projected portraits filmed in a "talking head" format. Mothers, artists, Dancehall queens, producers, and writers will respond on camera to one question.

The Upsetter Room will be an installation of sound studio objects and genre specific toys including Nyabingi drums; instruments, traditional and warped; transistor radios; adapted sound system speakers and turntables; microphones; tape loops and tracks; 45 rpm manufacturing process replication; the early Casio keyboard that launched the Jamaican sound process

of the '80s into the digital era, thus changing music forever; mixing boards of the great King Tubby, father of Dub; and a significant collection of technology and instruments used from the early '60s to late '90s. Most importantly, this room will reflect the creative "tinkering" nature of these sound artists who adapted existing equipment, thereby pushing their sonic visions to the limit. This process led this tiny, impoverished island into producing its *tomorrow* sound *today* concept, making it the third largest music producer in the world.

SOUND ACTIVATED

The complete exhibition experience will live in the world of sonic and visual projection and be a monument commemorating Jamaica's liberating sound process.

A process fueled by the dedicated Jamaican spirit that forged its own popular music out of scraps creating a cultural weaponry through which sound and lyric sustained a belief in physical, mental freedom, equal rights, social change, and a cultural identity.

Jamaicans retained their African belief systems in spite of violent uprootings from their homelands and being forced into plantation slavery, which was brutal in the extreme. Unlike other parts of the Caribbean and the United States, Jamaican slaves were treated like machines. White masters ruled with the complete absence of any form of Christian charity believing that by reducing slaves to subhuman status, they could deprive them of any sense of humanity or spirituality.



Instead of allowing this cultural vacuum to occur, the slaves drew upon African memories, themes, and images. The only things they brought with them. For centuries they continued to chant their native chants accompanied with drums and ancestral dances.

Peter Tosh referred to Jamaica's history as Four Hundred Years of Slavery. HOPE ROAD—Forty-Five Revolutions per Minute will tell the story of a disenfranchised people who endured slavery, colonization, crippling poverty, and a political history steeped in blood resulting in forced mass migration to other countries.

Reggae became Jamaica's first expression of popular culture, permeating the Caribbean diaspora and eventually exploding into international mainstream. From early innovations in the natural sound realm of Ska, Rocksteady, and Roots Reggae to the deep immersion in the profound sound explorations of virtual/digital electronic sound space and the unnatural world, this music continues its allegiance to vibrant and transforming soundscapes. Reggae, with its many subgenres, established a Jamaican identity that for the first time recognized the plight of the ghetto poor and in turn, created a sound track for the world's oppressed.

SHITUATION— SUFFERATION— WHY JAMAICA?

**“IF YOU FEED THEM VIOLENCE THEY’RE
GOING TO BE VILE ...**

**IF YOU FILL THEM WITH LOVE THEY’RE
GOING TO BE LOVELY.”**

LUCIANO

A brief history of how and why Jamaica retained its African belief system in spite of the violent uprooting of Africans torn from their West Africa homelands and a colonial attempt to obliterate all cultural ties will be documented in the exhibit and is outlined here.

The British pulled out of Jamaica when there was absolutely nothing left for them to exploit. The sugar industry had collapsed when cheaper European beet sugar replaced Caribbean cane sugar, bauxite had been exploited to the max, and lucrative deals had been made with big American hotel chains for prime real estate. All that was left to look forward to was high unemployment and increasing trade deficits.

Jamaica gained its independence from Britain in 1962, only to find itself struggling with its legacy of slavery and colonialism. Michael Manley's Peoples National Party (PNP), with its socialistic attitudes of spreading power and wealth, provided a voice for this nation's dispossessed and acknowledged the nation's overwhelming African heritage as part of the new postcolonial Jamaican identity. Roots Reggae formed the soundtrack of the Manley era. Meanwhile, the U.S. became increasingly uncomfortable with

Manley's pursuits of opening diplomatic channels with Cuba.

Manley's government ultimately collapsed from a number of factors including fluctuation in trade and social instability caused by a devalued currency. Travel agents discouraged their clients from going to Jamaica, thereby crippling the industry on which the island depended on for its survival. The cultural re-awakening in Jamaica reflected changes in the world at large. Cultural and political consciousness was on the rise in many developing countries inspired by the nearby Cuban revolution and the civil rights and Black Power movements in America.

All of this was taking place in a period when Africa was being revitalized in a diasporian consciousness, channeling cultural memories of African roots. From the teachings of Marcus Garvey, Rastafarians embraced the concept that Africa was the site of repatriation for a people in exile.

Marcus Garvey said "Look to Africa when a black king shall be crowned for the day of deliverance is at hand." The Rastafarians interpreted the crowning of Haile Selassie of Ethiopia as the fulfilling of this prophecy. Considering Jamaica's long-standing economic hardships and the violence that accompanied its social change, it is no surprise that Jamaicans longed for another home.

Edward Seaga and Michael Manley's bloody rivalry for political control in the '70s brought gunmen and poverty, forcing Jamaicans to seek work outside of Jamaica. Between 1980 and 1990, 213,805 Jamaicans came to the U.S.—9% of its population. This massive migration inflicted wounds bearing a strong resemblance to slavery's forced partings and resulting in children growing up without fathers or mothers. This pain of separation has become a fixture in the island's soulscape.

Trench Town, slums, and shantytowns were all that were left. It was in all this misery that Reggae grew.

WORD SOUND

When Jamaica won its independence from Britain in 1962, political and cultural independence was still a work in progress. Large sections of the island's upper and middle class opposed, and continue to oppose, the use of the Jamaican language in favor of the "proper" English of the colonial "mother country"—Britain.

Jamaican language evolved as a mix of English, the island's colonizing language, and African, the language Africans brought to Jamaica through the Atlantic slave trade. This unique combination of English and African words tempered by the retention of African grammar and syntax was spoken with an accent similar to the rhythm of Mento, a Jamaican form of calypso, from at least the early twentieth century until the '60s. The bold, conscious use of Jamaica's rich language and folklore by Bob Marley and other Roots Reggae artists during the '60s and '70s represented a post-colonial identity for Jamaicans.

Songwriters of the Roots Reggae era, approximately 1968-1985, drew directly from the reservoir of African-Jamaican poetic word play that had been defended and nurtured by poet Louise Bennett, the godmother of Jamaica's folklore during the thirty years leading up to the island's independence. Bennett gave the initial post-colonial Roots Reggae generation permission to be proud of Jamaican language and its poetic usage. Her poetry rebelled against colonialism offering revolutionary political concepts as well as addressing many social issues such as the "color bar" and "deadbeat bachelor fathers." She consistently opposed critics who would have Jamaica adhere to the colonial status quo invalidating the Jamaican language with its extension to the African-



Jamaican culture. In 1944, she wrote the extraordinary poem “Bans O’ Killing.” In this poem she addresses the “killing of a language” and puts “proper” English under scrutiny. She informed the critics that to kill the Jamaican dialect, they must first put to death fundamental aspects of English. “Yu haffi kill de Lancashire/de Yorkshire, de Cockney... Yuh wi haffe tear ... out Chaucer, Burns ... an plenty Shakespeare an ... ef yuh drop a ‘h’ yuh might haffe kill yuhself”

Bennett’s popularity at the grassroots level was extensive in the immediate post-independence decades. It was virtually impossible for a child to grow up in Jamaica during the ‘50s, ‘60s, and ‘70s and not be familiar with her work in creating art out of the people’s language. As a result, the Roots Reggae generation of poets and songwriters breathed in Bennett’s verse like oxygen during their youth. Her belief in the power of language as essential to expressing the passions of her people’s hearts preserved a foundation and provided building blocks inspiring artists to carry on rhythmic themes of liberation.

REDEMPTION SONG

This section of the exhibit is an overview of seminal artists, movements, their contributions to early popular Jamaican music, and Marcus Garvey, the champion of Black culture, and his profound influence on the Rastafarian movement.

It will include:

- Count Ossie’s drum ensemble with his distinct Nyabingi hand drumming and his influence on early Ska.
- Don Drummond’s revolutionary trombone playing and the significance of his jazz-influenced improvisational approach on Reggae.
- My Boy Lollipop’s Millie Small and other bold and influential Reggae sistas and mothers.
- U-Roy the Toaster and his contribution to Rap culture.
- Bob Marley’s artistry and poetic lyrics, which built on the above icons’ influence and his music legacy on the Caribbean diaspora.
- The significance of the film “The Harder They Come” by Perry Henzell.
- Sound Systems—the model and the eternal litmus test for success.



IN THE BEGINNING

In the late '50s, Trojan Record's founder, Arthur "Duke" Reid, drove Trojan brand trucks around Kingston with huge, refrigerator-size speakers blasting his innovative collection of Jamaican music. This led to the urban legend of how the name of the sound system and record label developed. Duke, who was a former policeman in the Kingston ghetto, maintained a "rough and rude" staple of villains for what he claimed was "protection," but in reality it was everybody else's set who needed protection from his crew. Their main function was one of aggression: storming rivals' parties, frightening off crowds, and smashing amplifiers and turntables.

In this same era, Sir Coxsome Dodd's "Downbeat" system with its more jazz-influenced and "showmanship" style became Duke's archrival and the two systems competed for audiences. It would be safe to say that any culture of violence associated with Kingston dancehalls can be traced back to these early days. A new language was created that remains intact today for this Dancehall culture. The rivalry was "a clash" where you would "mash up" or "murrdah"

the other system with wicked music at devastating volume. Showboating in flashy capes, Duke Reid would make an entrance with western-style belt holsters accessorized with cross bandoliers of bullets. He would fire into the air announcing his arrival. "Bullet, bullet, bullet" remains a powerful chant in Dancehall music of today.

Most of the greats in Roots Reggae had a beginning in the early Sound Systems. Bob Marley worked for Sir Coxsome Dodd as a clerk screening records and telling Dodd which sounds to emulate. This was invaluable for Marley's development as a recording artist and performer.

Like the Trojan horse, these stealth sound systems were able to be in plain sight while changing the cultural operating system of the Jamaican world. Sound systems were portable discos, inexpensive mobile platforms for different experimental styles. Their nomadic nature remains unique to the Jamaican sound experience process. To reflect from a 21st century perspective, these early sound systems can be viewed as the predecessor of the iPod.

REGGAE— SUB GENRES— INFLUENCES ON MUSIC AND CULTURE IN THE U.K., U.S., AND CANADA

During the '60s, early recordings of Jamaican folk-songs called Mento music and the mobile sound systems of Duke Reid, Prince Buster, and Sir Coxsome influenced the distinct, danceable music called Ska. In 1964, Ska singer Millie Small's debut single "My Boy Lollipop" became the first international Jamaican hit priming the way for male Jamaican singers who followed.

There is great significance to this hit. The irrefutable fact is that a young female Jamaican artist was the first to enjoy mainstream success. She was brought to London, England to record at Chris Blackwell's newly found Island Records.

The revenue that this "fluke" (which it has been referred to) produced, gave Island Records the kind of profile in the British music industry that led to the signing of Steve Windwood and other major rock acts. This success eventually allowed Island Records to sign Reggae stars Jimmy Cliff and Bob Marley.

Ska was relatively quickly displaced by Rock Steady in the mid '60s. American R&B, with its rich harmonies and emphasis on vocals, seduced

Jamaica with its heritage of singing. Silky Rock Steady melodies with three-part singing trio structures allowed group of people to come together to sing. The ghetto had more singers because singing was what people did to pass time and soothe the spirit.

If Ska could be considered the birth and Rock Steady the adolescence of '60s Jamaican music, then the Reggae era of the '70s was the coming of age. Rock Steady was basically American music that Jamaicans had adapted to island soul music. The arrival of Reggae represented a re-Jamaicisation of the island's musical output with a far greater degree of nationalism than had been the case with Ska. A larger group of musicians were attracted to this new form for its vocals and Reggae's advancement was further precipitated by electricity.

Fundamentally, the move to Reggae was triggered by the electric bass and organ. Moving away from the stand up acoustic bass allowed a more aggressive sound, which moved it to the front of the mix. This new mix forced a different relationship with the drums, which would eventually dictate Reggae's directions for many years to come. It is no surprise that many musical directors and arrangers are bass players. The electric organ clearly defined the lines between this new style and the previous. Early keyboards were primitive and required a stabbing motion on the sticking keys giving Reggae its early jerky quality.

By the early '70s, affordable studio equipment became available allowing better sound effects and greater acoustic range. Small studios were springing up everywhere trying to fill the great demand for new records. Immediately, a massive broadening of Jamaican music's scope of ideas was felt throughout the islands musicians. Reggae returned the Jamaican music to its people.

ROOTS AND GOOD VIBRATIONS

The Roots period of the early '70s was a time when Jamaican music was taking on the world on its own terms. Economic conditions were at an all time low and unemployment was at an all time high. The ghettos were filled with the disenfranchised who had plenty of time on their hands to become more involved with Rastafari. It was believed in the Rasta community that this was a period of divinity; that circumstances conspired to prevent people from working, therefore enabling them to devote themselves to all things spiritual.

Bob Marley and the Wailers were progressive Rastafarians. Marley's songs of the '70s were the voice of the many woes associated with ghetto life in Trench Town. His music drilled way below the surface of western popular music tastes. His rhythms and words eased barriers of language and culture, so that even the globe's most marginalized citizens embraced the Rastaman's vibration. Bob Marley and the Wailers was the first Jamaican band to be marketed in the Rock Star model. Within in the American music industry they gained accolades including:

- "Exodus" album by Bob Marley and the Wailers was voted by Time Magazine as album of the century.
- Bob Marley song writer of the century.
- "One Love" song of the century.

DUB/VERSION AS FORM AND EXTENDED PLAY

KING TUBBY AND LEE PERRY

Dub music flourished during the Roots Reggae era. Dub's significance as a style lies in the deconstructive manner in which sound engineers remixed Reggae songs applying sound processing technology in unusual ways to create unique, new pop sounds. Dub marks a time when record producers and engineers became the new sound artists.

It could be argued that Dub artists were initially influenced by the standard American 45 record. Flip-sides often carried the instrumental version of the hit single and in Jamaica, this instrumental version held the most interest for Dub artists. Roots music was heavily suffused with lyrics, with a strong emphasis on singing and refrain. It was serious music in nature with religious and spiritual conviction. Dub engineers brought a different attitude to Jamaican music. These new uninhibited, playful musicians recycled old Roots songs by fragmenting, removing narrative, and creating skeletal, reverberating soundscapes that left a structural uncertainty dependant on echo and reverb for form. It has been described as when good vibrations turn noirish.

These new arrangements resonated with the age of the refugee and balanced on the edge of performance art. Shadows of popular themes existed in a musical graffiti creating sonic spaces and conceptual nuances that allowed auditory room for the "unspoken." Dub's acoustic experiment ventured into minimalism and

created a new modernity reflecting the artists transition into technology and “rhythm science.”

Within Dub expression, another side of spirituality was released. Early recording pioneers in their studios with new technology and gleaming consoles conceptualized a laboratory, spaceship, temple, or shaman’s hut. Lee Perry described his Black Ark Studio like a spacecraft. He could hear the space in the tracks ... he was making space music.

This new form played endlessly with mix. Artists such as Scientist experimented with building a mix on the instrumental tracks and letting them “bleed” onto other tracks. Most often a “bleeding” drum track was fed through a reverb unit, resulting in a spooky, alien sound that evoked images of drums being beamed from another planet or the vocalist existing in a world other than the musician’s or even the listener’s. This was all a creative response to the fragmenting culture these artists existed in. The new music responded to feelings of disenfranchisement compelling a response by retooling sound as a mystical weapon against creative extinction.

DIGITAL ERA AND SLENG TENG

Until 1985, Reggae music was characterized with a fat bassline. It was unimaginable that the musical form could exist without it, but true to Reggae’s nature of always looking for a way to keep changing, King Jammy produced “Under Me Sleng Teng.” The sound was an adapted rhythm from a simple Casio keyboard and proved to be a major creative watershed on the road from Roots to Dancehall. Not only did the sound launch King Jammy’s career, but it liberated a host of sound artists from dependence on major studios.

With a keyboard, sequencer, and drum machine, everything could be done at home. The incredible popularity of Sleng Teng changed the direction of

sound stylistically, economically, and shifted a musical allegiance to technical ability rather than musical ability.

From trade school backgrounds, Jamaicans were well equipped to become acoustic, electronic “tinkers.” Pumped up rhythms on drum machines fueled dancehall audiences giving Jamaica’s dancehall a new techno flavor.

JAMAICAN DEEJAYS AND DANCEHALL

“GIVE ME TWO TURNTABLES, AND I WILL MAKE YOU A UNIVERSE”

PAUL MILLER, AKA DJ SPOOKY

By the beginning of the 1980s, there was a generation of youth coming of age who knew little other than Roots Reggae and were aware that it was increasingly irrelevant to their lives. After a decade of piety and righteousness, the only economic, social, and political changes that had taken place were for the worse. Chanting down Babylon simply didn’t work anymore. It was time to have fun and bring back a more sensual and “bawdy” element to the music. To do this, young Jamaicans reenacted a recurring theme of retreating from the existing musical trend that was no longer true to their conscious experience. To Jamaicans, Roots had become pop music that paid more attention to the western marketplace than the West Kingston sound systems.

Jamaica was now in the digital era so why not keep costs low and reduce the need for often-argumentative session players by opening the door to refreshing, interactive, personality-driven artists called deejays. This being Jamaica, musicians looked to their past to find the new. Sound system opera-

tors began dusting off classic Rock Steady rhythms, freshening them up with a young deejay “toasting” over the top. This simple system brought the performer and the crowd together by creating responses in a communal way. Tired of “sufferation” these artists only wanted to “nice up the dance” with outrageous sexual or political statements. Such carrying on created enormous competition amongst deejays to keep the music “ghetto-centric,” so that the doors of communication between audience and entertainer were kept open and most importantly, that the music would stay in the dancehall and not move into the mainstream.

With considerable assistance from technology, high speed mikes, “oinks,” and “ribbits,” gold-chained performers pushed producers to delve deeper and deeper into their new computers to find more challenging backing tracks: the antithesis to Root’s culture. With the advent of Sleng Teng, the bassline had been removed, and producers such as King Jammy were duty bound to completely ditch the bassline and replace it with sheer volume and “in your face” impact.

Early deejays such as General Echo, Eek-A-Mouse, and the incomparable Yellowman put the music right back in touch with the moods of the streets, in exactly the same way Dillinger and Big Youth had done ten years previously. Shabba, Ninja-man, and Tiger influenced incredible performances

from Elephant Man, who believed in the importance of putting on a good stage show, exciting the audience, and keeping everybody on the vibes!

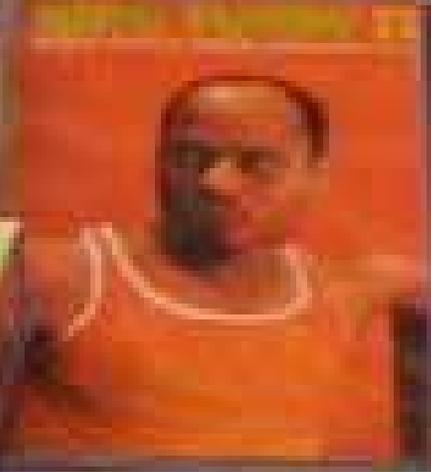
But Dancehall too was to have many incarnations; the good vibes started with artists such as the albino Yellowman who would usually be shunned in Jamaica by everyone including family, but went on to become a mega star in the Dancehall underground. But with this kind of popularity, producers knew it was time to take it out of the dancehall and record it.

The early, innocent days of Dancehall were a lot of things and not all were great. However, those early days did put the music back in the hands of the artists, keeping their souls in touch with the process, and this still holds true today. When big acts such as the Stones or No Doubt need that extra dimension of soul, they come to Jamaica and seek out such artists as Bounty Killer to boost their music with the real Dancehall flavor.

It is no surprise that the emergence of Dancehall Reggae reinstated Reggae into the mainstream without essential compromise. Jamaican music has made itself heard across the world to such a degree and with such apparent ease, that it makes you wonder why other music hasn’t done so. Why? One word ... spirit.

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TUBBY M
NUTS BAD
DANGEROUS



HOPE ROAD

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