

# ROOTICAL VIBES

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Berlin Reggae Runnings

Free Zer (0) Euro

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ROOTICAL VIBES is a timely paper checking on reggae and related scenes in and around Berlin and beyond.

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## How to cross over the Mainstream

*Yes I, sounds like swimming lessons, but actually this should be a short essay to aid musicians in getting their music heard by the larger listening public. Most of the radios with large and far reaching audiences only play pre-programmed stuff that's already been heard all over the years or something "new" that has just landed "in the charts". Most of the times it's just a remake of an oldie, but the youth have no idea and so they think that they're hearing originals. CDs are produced today at the rate of thousands per minute, so it is reasonable to assume that a very small percent will ever make it to the larger public's ears. People hear all about internet radio and ipod and i-tunes, but nothing gives a song the big push like constant radio airplay. So how does a free-thinking/playing modern artist gets his or her creations out there? Here comes the point which has nothing to do with music per se. Some "experts" advocate making a complete and targeted study of radio programming staff and get to slip by through acquaintances outside the general music circle..e.g. car mechanic or sports teacher. Through these "contacts", a slide through may be possible. Lots of roots riddims ahve made it to the "top100", but sometimes if not always cloaked with wishy washy lyrics and/or mixed or rather overdosed with electronica to make it sound more "modern". Lots of artists will agree that the mainstream only needs to be **CROSSED**. Staying there for too long will cause one to be shifted downstream to the ocean. When the river reaches the ocean it then becomes the sea and there can be no more trace of it . Roots music has already crossed the mainstream and is now safely on the "other" side. Lots of aspiring wannabees think only of reaching the mainstream, dust up and things o.k. Lots of roots #1ers never come back with a second #1...Maybe one #1 is enough.*

Ari Ree

## Cadence guitar & keyboard techniques

*Yo.....all guitarists and keyboarders can plug in and try to follow a "new" vibes. If you're already a good cadence player then you can chill out. I know for sure that those who can do it real good can be counted on one hand. To name a couple...Coe, Brisbane....anyway, like was stated in a previous "Rootical Vibes" issue, playing cadence is not the same like chapping reggae. Call it Zouk or Soca or whatever you want, when the riddim hits you, you must move!!! How do the guys get their instruments to "bounce" with the riddim like that? The first thing to understand is that there is no set or prescribed way or method of playing. It all comes from the feel. Do not take this sentence lightly....No teacher can teach how to feel, so here we are with a "problem". That's why certain musics, like certain languages, cannot or have not yet been "written" so that each and every nook and cranny has been turned upside down, inspected, noted and maybe could be available for a price. I repeat it's not chap chap, so music theorists and sheet writers can come up with all kinds of diagrams, but they will never be able to import the feel that makes this type of playing so special. Every other bar will give a different mood, so is just go inna it. As far as guitar goes, the right hand doing the "brushing" must be light and sensitive. Those familiar with early Groovers recordings will surely know what I am talking about. Keyboardwise, the player must master the secret of using the left hand (with a darkish tone, assuming that the keyboard can be split) as a cushion for the right hand which actually defines the hits. Here again, every other song has its vibe, so a keyboarder's hands just keeps flying away in a pumping kind of motion. Learning to play this particular style of music is a challenge to those who have never seen a Carnival band hit the road, or heard a steelband jamming this year's roadmarch. Without the experience of the social reality behind these musics, the instrumentalist has to dig deeper to get the vibes. Books, videos and other tools do help to get the message across, but nothing can replace the live experience.. So...those interested should visit that area of the Caribbean where this beat still flows. In Dominica it's called cadence, Guadeloupe and Martinique, known it as zouk, and Trinidadians call it soca. Give it a try, musicians out there...it's worth it.*

Kabwitt

## The Reggae-Drummer shortage

Greetings to all...it's a known fact and much discussed subject, but here we will try to see where we are today in 2006 regarding the plight of drummers brought on through the use of sequencing. Police get less and less calls about noisy drummers in apartments because nowadays everybody computer up the scene and the others in the building can have their peace while hell breaking loose in the headphones. Everybody happy, but all the music programmed now, and so products lining up the shelves but to play the songs in gigs is something else. The programs execute the parts with so much precision that most drummers have problems to play what was recorded. So we have a real shortage of drummers on our hands especially in the ragga department. Lots of the intricate riddims give the boys headache, and only a few can really follow. It comes, but after lots of practice and perseverance. Some drummers prefer to stick to roots sounds while others' kits cannot be played by anyone else.....samplers etc....There is nothing as boring as seeing a so called roots group.....three natty upfront on mikes, horns, bass and the whole works except for the fact that there is no drummer.The PC man just has to mouse in the beats. Drummers usually need some rest after touring or else is muscle problems down the road . Most good drummers are always engaged in more than one band or project. Since they really do not have to be present for the recording, most of their time is spent on the road and they get burnt out pretty fast....that's why there is a drummer shortage....burnt out from both sides.

Dr.O.T.Yozott

### DREADITORIAL

Yes readers...with every passing day comes the realisation of things of a "higher" or "other" nature which tends to gradually pervade our by now badly in need of refreshing image-beliefs and concepts of our lives and those around us. We seem to long for the days when music was also a medium for fair and proper social comment and expression. Anti-war songs could be heard all over the radio, and when the war was "won", we went back to songs about love and peace. Today's war may never finish, and no songs are heard about that on any radio whatsoever. Those we hear have nothing to do with protest or anti-war sentiment. On the contrary, nudity and its associated behaviour is now part of the mainstream's daily offering to us and our kids. Lots of today's musical aspirants come out with the hope of getting that crucial exposure via the main media, but never seem to think of a way to get out of it...with sometimes sorry consequences. "Artists" with zero knowledge of basic music rules is nothing uncommon in today's world...computers do it all...to the detriment of humans.

### WATERING THE ROOTS OF REGGAE

Hail up and big up to all roots fans, players and readers. With most of the crowd gone into high tech trickno, the purists remain true to the authentic sounds which uplift and give inner strength. Nowadays for a music to be deemed "good", it has to pass thru gadget after gadget after gadget, and in the end it sounds so perfect that it tends to disturb our ears, as we live in a not so perfect world. The real roots don't need all these things to shine out. Lyrics alone should be able to put everything else into proper perspective. With a good meditation as the force behind a creation, joyful sounds will eventually emerge as music itself exists beyond dimensions that we are consciously aware of. Reggae is still in the process of writing its history, so there is still lots of room for innovation as well as space for detractors and those who are just there for the ride. As a vehicle for social commentary, there will always be issues of the day. With the world situation as it currently is, more should be heard from the voices stifled by the mainstream. One way or another, roots music must be given encouragement and support in all possible forms. In so doing, the tree will be able to survive the harsh and dry times we feel coming. After the crash, the roots will be able to start from scratch. gadget based creations will have to go back to the basics....and start all over again.

Ras Zékal

### KWEYOL LESSON #3

Yo... this is the third in a series aimed mainly at arousing the interest of the worldwide public to this little known, spoken and understood language. Rootical Vibes Vol. 5 # 2 contains some prior insight. In Kwéyol the present continuous tense is used to express ongoing action. "ka" is placed immediately before the main verb. Examples using some common verbs....mangé= to eat...fimè= to smoke...dansé= to dance....Mwen ka dansé= I am dancing...Ou ka fimè= you are smoking...yo ka mangé= they are eating. "ka" is also used to express basic truths and personal habits....lalin ka kléwé= the moon is shining...lapli ka tombé= It's raining (rain is falling)....Fred ka dansé bien = Fred dances well. When expressing emotional attitudes, verbs like enmé = to like (or love) and simyé = to prefer, work without the "ka" ... eg: Mwen enmé Domnik = I love Dominica . Yo simyé pwéson = They prefer fish. In Kwéyol, questions are asked by raising the tone of the voice at the end of the statement. ... eg: Nou ka apwann Kwéyol = We are learning Kwéyol. Nou ka apwann **Kwéyol**? = Are we learning **Kwéyol**? Questions are formed by placing "Es" before the sentence .... eg: Ou ni tan = You have time. Es ou ni tan? = Do you have time? "Wi" (yes), and "Non", (no) are used to answer questions ... eg: Es nou ka alé jodi? = Are we going today? Wi, nou ka alé jodi. Yes, we are going today. Non, nou pa ka alé jodi = No, we are not going today. Some interrogations used in asking a question.... ki = Which? kisa = What? ola and ki koté = Where? kitan = When? kilè = What time? pouchi and pouki = Why? kimoun = Who or whom? kimanyè = How? kommen = How much or How many? kouman = How come or How is it that? In Kwéyol, adjectives usually come after the noun they qualify ... eg: Yon nomm = A Man. Yon nomm ho = A tall man. Some adjectives that follow the nouns (sal = dirty, cho = hot, swèf = thirsty, las = tired, nèt = clean) ... eg: Yon vil sal = A dirty town. Yon chimiz nèt = A clean shirt. Es ou ka santi las? = Are you feeling tired? A number of adjectives usually precede the nouns they qualify... (ti = little, small, gwan = big, mové = bad, bon = good, vyé = old, bèl = nice) ... eg: Yon fam = A woman, Yon ti fam = A small woman. Ba mwen yon ti bo = Give me a small kiss. Yo ni yon mové chien. = They have a bad dog. Domnik ni bèl flè = There are beautiful flowers in Dominica (Dominica has nice flowers). Dick sé yon vyé nomm = Dick is an old man. O.K. So much for now. Next time we will cover colors, numbers and how to tell the time..... Big up, Mala.

Touloulou

## **TIPS & QUIPS**

Believe those who are seeking the truth...  
doubt those who find it.

A man and his wife were on a fishing trip in a non-fishing-zone. While he was ashore grilling, the wife took the boat and went back on the river to read a book. The police then came and asked what she was doing. "Reading a book", she replied. The police : "You are in a non-fishing-zone, so I have to take you in and charge you". "But I am not fishing", she replied. "No, but you have the equipment". "If you do so", she said, "I'll have to charge you for rape". "But I haven't touch you!", he muttered. " No, but you have the equipment!!!...."

Gravitation is not responsible for people falling in love.

## **NEXT ISSUE**

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**Dub International**

**Ital Food in Berlin,  
the Caribbean contact**

**News from the Local Scene**

**German Reggae Bands**