

# ROOTICAL VIBES

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## The popular re-emergence of "live" studio recording..

Hi...welcome all and hats off to the purists who survived the 20th century's riddim box onslaught in whatever form and stuck to making it with hands rather than fingers. By now it should be clear that I am referring to the latest trend that seems to be hitting the <sup>Music</sup> industry stuck in the doldrums (caused by their own DRUMACHINE) or horse/donkey longitudes for some time now. Everyone seems to have mastered the programming tricks so it's back to playing "live" now....meaning that before, it was "dead"???!?!?!? Computers can definitely arrange things in desired orders faster than man manually can, but since they have no inspiration, they never could replace heartbeat, which is what drives the drums,the powerhouse seat of music. Years ago studios could be booked easily because almost everyone had a PC or Mac and a certain "market" quality could be achieved at home. Now the same "market" is flooded with the same programs...hence the call for "live" recordings. Salsa, rock and C & W resisted, but some roots reggae did dabble but found out that it was not the same thing. So once again from on High...hats off to all those who stayed and will ever remain to pound the traps or percs with hands/sticks and not just finger away at a master keyboard, cutting and pasting piece by piece to "build a riddim". City living does make it difficult to find space to make music, since all space has to be paid for, and time is money. Still, nothing can replace the feeling of listening to a nice take after everyone tried his/her best and it sounds good, but just a final refinetuning after a little spliff does the trick. Solo jobs on Pcmac are also good but it really only boosts the imagination in so far as it is unknown to be a solo job. As soon as it sinks in that what is being heard is a "collage", it changes everything psychologically. If the band overdubs, they stand a greater chance because it's always people involved....give thanks.

## A MANAGER'S DREAM BAND

Yo...this article is supposed to be purely funtastic, meaning that maybe such a band exists but most probably not....First of all, the members. I am sure that less would be best because of logistic and other considerations. So maybe 4 to 5 people would be o.k.. Men? Women? Some managers (men and women) like mixed sexes bands while some others will deal with no women in the group...touring etc. The dream band would be expected to play every day of the week except Mondays, Sundays, Tuesdays, Fridays and Wednesdays...get the point? Practice has to be regular in order to keep up with the changing chartees. When there is a gig, it is known well in advance and the members get paid before...that's how they love it regardless of how much is in the contract. They play for a fixed price per gig. The band is expected to always appear on stage with the prescribed/agreed-upon uniforms and in no way can they play or even attempt to play anything outside tonight's set-list. No drugs or stuffs whatsoever...no groupies and hangers on in the backstage area! Appropriate arrangements are always made for press meetings and the like. The band has to be disciplined to the point that they not get negative publicity through things like problems with the police. Neat, clean and smiling beings ready to entertain and nothing else. Does such an outfit exist? And if so, are they really a "band"? Groups have about three years after formation date, to go through some serious strife. If they stick together and still operate after that period, they don't need no manager. A manager needs them now because they have already learnt to manage themselves.

## DJs AND BANDS ...THE UNKNOWN LINK

Yail Up...everytime you go to a 'Sound', you shake and rattle or just stay quiet toked out, but you have to admit that when the spinner or chanter starts blowing you away, it's because the music sounds good. The spin man knows exactly which tune to put and when....and the mike person just puts the correct lyrics inside with the rightful ride and it just goes crazy. Don't even talk about when the operator just mix by himself with the volume control and it goes and goes until the mike wheel it out to come again. Anyone who knows what a good sound is like, will instantly recognise the vibes that I am trying to portray here. That feeling never comes at the beginning of the session but usually when it gets hot into the action. The vibes just unites the whole hall and some people tend to forget who created the music. The Dee Jays are busy sending us to another world and the spin man adds to the vibes by selecting and stopping at the crucial moments!!!one dub follows another and we just dance out freaky or just stay in the corner,take another pull and check out the vibes. The people who made/create the music have long time ago been paid for their job and it's now in the hands of another crew to use the recordings and send the dance crowd to higher heights.So...there's the link. One hand feeds the other because most times the music makers always get a big up from the chanter's mike and the crowd becomes aware of another name responsible for making the raw material to be used by the hallmen. Seen in that light, it would serve to melt away popular misconceptions held by some regarding artists and DJs..namely that chanters and spinners are not artis because they need the recordings to survive. To this it can effectively be counter argued that the artists get publicity and even draw monies from certain places where the spinners have to list up the night's plays and then pay the collectors who then give the artits a little "quass"..

# IMPRESSUM

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

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# D READ IT ORIAL

Well,...hail up and greetings to one and all who take the time to read...nuff tings going on inna positive way as far as the reggae scene out here is concerned. New labels and collaborations are again making their appearance after the demise of a few that started out a couple years ago but have so far been unable to come up with fresh ital sounds or productions for the waiting public. P.O.T. music has not recently come up with any stuff but the new label in town seems to be "Grooving Smokers". Made up of local DJs and chanters like Sammy Dread and Vido. Most of the other featured artists are sound system operators or young "ragga-hop" buffs. Every day the attempt is being made to score songs for the massive public and the lines are pretty blurred when it comes to making a sellable but sensible song. A quick listen thru on any given day over mainstream radio will surely impress upon the mind the way that everything just mixes with one another especially when the category is defined as mainstream..hip hop ragga rap soul dancehall raggamuffin even the zouks take the heavy mixing vibes and not to mention soca-kouk or socadence or the latest from Dominica ...BOUYON...never heard of it reader? well you read about it here first. While we always think of music in terms of chilling out and nice vibes, we must not forget that it deals with the elements and these days it

## A profile of RVs' contributing writers

Yes I, lots of folks have always wanted to know the "persons" behind the contributing names so i will try to give as much info as is permitted, in order to satisfy the curiosity of some of our readers. To begin, one must understand that these individuals are all lance journalists and do nothing for free. They never attended any school or college to study whatever, but are super conscious persons who will always say it the way they feel that it is true. ...remember that there are always three versions or layers or divisions to most things...beginning middle and end...the holy triangle. All the writers have travelled long distances over the globe and all speak at least three widely spoken languages fluently. These writers are always in touch with diverse interest groups all over the world, all with the same conviction that only higher consciousness can take our world out of its seemingly predestined premature doom into a region of light and enlightenment....but that is another job. The power of words are very real and the contributors regard themselves as mere "agents" or "pens". All they do is tell it like they see, knowing that with so much deception and lies ruling the vast majority of minds, one risks being taken for not serious or just plain mad. The truth always hurts so one must be prepared for pain when dealing with it. Rootical Vibes is was and will remain a timely paper so there are none of the usual constraints that most people have to put up with when dealing like the others. The writers have the freedom to research and publish their views as controversial as they may happen to come. Some have contributed only once and are actively involved in other projects..RV is a source and outlet but never an end in itself. As shadowy as these people may appear to be, readers can be assured that they are living and breathing beings but maybe a little more conscious of the inner and outer workings of the masquerade we witness and go through in our everyday lives and think of it as reality. Some have seen through the veil but how do you explain colour to the blind?

## AFRICAN & REGGAE MUSIC IN BERLIN

Yo...greetings and welcome again to the vibes. For a city with lots of black people and with a good %age of them purporting to be involved in some way or another in the music business, Berlin comes up short of what is usually expected from such a bustling European megapolis. Well, everything else seems to be happening except for the roots vibes that lots of people long and crave for... especially on weekends. There seems to be no such a place where one can always be assured of this or next week's act which will always be something based on roots vibes. Turkish bands or African drummers, all should have a place to resort to, to familiarise others with sounds from afar. The clubs are either filled with party goers or is thrash or death rock tonight and you can always book for Wednesdays or Thursdays!!! Without trying to be euphemistically sarcastic, I would say that more work is needed to establish such a venue. That in itself would be quite an adventure for anyone wanting to go into this business. Smoke is still only tolerable as long as the vans are not parked outside, and I don't see how roots vibes of all kinds would be making music and the bar going fine but the spliffs under manners. That is one of the many oxyMORONIC facts of life that some of us have to deal with daily. So no wonder then that there is no place to go check out the vibes and take in the roots. Concerts come and go in a flash, and if you did not see it in the papers or got a flyer, then you may hear about who was in town last Wednesday or Thursday...whatta pity!! However, the place is teeming with young and established artists. Hybrid Productions tried a Wednesday thing in Kato with new and known DJs but the crowd was just passable...mainly supporters. On a Friday or Sat., the hall would be rammed. So we have to be satisfied with an occasional appearance during Karnival of Cultures or an offbeat gig in the usual bars à la Junction and others. Players are not businessmen, so they are there practicing, making demos, building riddims and hoping that one good day, the "place" will be there where C&DVD release parties will swing, and passing thru greats can be seen and heard. No one knows what the future will bring, but the current "black hole" in which African and Reggae music in Berlin finds itself, will probably give birth to new worlds and stars and all the cosmic niceties....**AFTER THE BIG BANG!!!!**

Jah Love

### TIPS AN QUIPS

Q: When is a door not a door?

A: When it is a jar!!

Q: When is a piece of wood a king?

A: When it is made into a ruler!!

### LAST MINUTE NEWS

New Compilation CD on the streets next March...artists featured Paul St.Hilaire (Tiki), Sugar Minott, Jah Cotton,Willi Williams, Ras Perez, Ras Donovan, Koki, Rod of Iron and a couple others... produced by Rhythm & Sound.....

### NEXT ISSUE

Music and Politics... are they compatible?

The DUB time warp effect.

Why are they banning certain artists