

PILGRIM'S PERSPECTIVE

NEWS, VIEWS and REVIEWS

by Papa Pilgrim

WORD. "Where can I get books about Rastafari and/or Reggae music?" is a frequently-asked question. Steven Stempel has the answer. In the introduction to the One Drop Books mail-order catalog, offering books and videos of "Rastafari, mystical truth and Reggae,"

Stempel writes: "My primary purpose is to make available as much material as possible." Inside, he lists some forty-two publications and a half-dozen videos available by mail order. Catalogs are free from One Drop Books, DH Station, Box 20391, New York, NY 10017. If you are "willing to express your irie views," RastaMon Times wants to hear from you. Volume 2, Issue 14, in tabloid format, provides information, interviews and reviews as well as opinions and poetry submitted by readers. Cover price is \$2 per issue from The RastaMon Times, PO Box 12882, Milwaukee, WI 53212.

SOUND. The Ganglords, a Swiss band presently residing in Jamaica, pride themselves as "the hottest upcoming ragga backing band." Formed in 1988, the band has developed a career of backing Yard vocalists in Europe and Jamaica. A recent remix of Frankie Paul's 1991 hit "Thanks and Praises" on the 7-17 Marshals' label has been on my radio show playlist for the past two months. The jungle mix B-side blends nicely with the A-side, creating an eerie, almost new age effect. If this 7" single is a precursor to an album, pray give us both sides, back-to-back. The Ganglords can be reached in Jamaica at Studio 2000, 16A Worthington Terrace, Kingston 5; tel: 809-968-8334; in Switzerland at PO Box 541, 8021 Zurich, tel (41) 1 241 18 10.

Neville Duncan served a youthful musical apprenticeship as percussionist and chef under Burning Spear. If Neville cooks as well as he sings, I want to sit at his dinner table. *Freedom*, his debut CD, is a ten track cultural feast needing neither appetizers nor hors d'oeuvres. It is an album where each track can stand alone, and, when taken as part of a larger musical menu, lends credence to the concept of "music good enough to eat." Titles such as "Jah Jah Help Us," "Survival" and "Babylon" represent the album's flavor and are served over the Jahpostles' riddim section of Cecil Hardy on drums and Devon

Bradshaw on bass. To pay your compliments to the chef, contact FLC Productions/VIBBESUOH Records, PO Box 551890, 20222 NW 42nd Court, Miami FL 33055; tel. 305-624-7515, fax: 305-624-4011, e-mail: <jahyatta@ix.netcom.com>.

In 1991 I wrote a review of Shagnatty's second album, *Dreadlock Patrol*. My final comment in that review was "More please!" When the post brought Dizzy Society to my door, my muttered "It's about time" was overshadowed by a big smiley feeling. I liked them then, I like them now. Shagnatty's Arizona base, on Kaya Court, has served them well. Living in desert country, with roots firmly set in the knowledge of Rastafari, permits them a joyous and creative artistic freedom. Their roots are American and so is their music. Thematically and stylistically, Dizzy Society follows *Dreadlock Patrol* with "message music of spirituality, celebration and politricks" melding "ska, rock, country and folk into a listenable and danceable form of American Reggae."

From the heartwarming "My Father's Song" (damn near a century old), to the frightening "Have Chem Will Travel (I specialize in toxic waste)" Dizzy... stays true to "The Reason We Sing (in the glory of the Most High)." Available from Jah Works Music, 10441 N. Kaya Ct., Maricopa, AZ 85239, tel: 602-531-4525.

Witnessed live, Chicago's Roots Rock Society (RRS) is an exciting act to behold. RRS sing and dance lively, educating and entertaining with a captivating stimulation lending itself to a "glad-I'm-here" vibe. The result of RRS' nine years of togetherness is altogether pleasing, whether heard onstage or via the studio. I suspect that even their rehearsals and sound checks would sell if marketed. *Again!*, the group's third release, is a pleasant disappointment. Coproduced by RRS founder Stan Champion and David Axelbaum, this album well-samples the group's versatility, creativity and musicianship, on all four tracks. Therein lies the disappointment. An 18 minute CD/EP is simply not enough. Fans of RRS must hold them to their press release promise of "more in the future," letting them know that "soon come" is too long to wait. [Starstruck Productions, PO Box 10713, Chicago, IL 60610, tel: 312-994-6756].

A late arrival is last year's *Teach Me Love Me* from the New Orleans based Shepherd Band. Now in their 15th (!) year, this debut album successfully melds the lyrical influences of Marley with the musical styles of Steel Pulse. Ten tracks follow the album title's lead with an educational five and five for lovers. The "teaching" songs might

