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Reggae Scrapbook



Synopsis

Guiding us on this colorful book-length journey is one of the men who introduced reggae to America and helped rock the world with its syncopated beat, Roger Steffens. Through lectures, books, magazine articles, radio, and television, Steffens has shared his knowledge of reggae from coast to coast. He is the world's premier archivist and collector of reggae memorabilia, and brings the best of his in-depth interviews with such reggae legends as Peter Tosh, Jimmy Cliff, and Toots Hibbert to this unique scrapbook. Covering topics such as Roots and Ska, Rock Steady, The Golden Age, Rockers, Digital and Dance Hall, and Internationalization, and supplemented with sidebar features on historic figures, styles, and events, The Reggae Scrapbook demonstrates the bold statement made by the rise of this irresistible musical and social force. Already the book is gaining powerful critical comment: "Rich in political, religious and herby context, this lively package is primer for the uninitiated and treasure trove for the fan," raved the San Francisco Chronicle.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Steffens and photographer Peter Simon, two long-time chroniclers of Jamaican music, have emptied their files into a deeply satisfying guided tour of reggae in chronologico-topical form. Simon's photography has been seen in such works as Reggae Bloodlines and Reggae International. As many readers of this magazine know, Steffens has written and lectured extensively about Bob Marley and reggae music and is also co-founder of The Beat. Reggae Scrapbook brims

with the contributors' knowledge as well as their infectious love of the genre and the culture that produces it. And their memorabilia is now ours, in handy facsimile form. Produced in the same vein as James Henke's recent *Marley Legend*, *Reggae Scrapbook* surveys reggae from origins to present and handsomely houses removable reggae artifacts by the fistful. Page after page, *Reggae Scrapbook* delights. If you're like me, you'll get your hands on this and wonder whether to read it properly as one should with all books, from start-to-finish, or consume it giddily, turning at random for the treats. At one point, the *Scrapbook* opens to a splashy little 12-page magazine gummed to the page about the phenomenon of Jamaican dances. Page 43 contains an envelope with three gorgeous postcard-sized photo/illustrations of Haile Selassie. Fastened elsewhere in the book are concert handbills (pages 11, 91 and 129), two panels of peel-away stickers (page 81), miniature reproductions of singles in little white sleeves (pages 85 and 139), some of them autographed by the artists. (Among the latter is Cornell Campbell, who writes a sleeve note correcting a mis-identified 45 of "You're No Good.") Steffens and Simon, mighty repro men for the reggae generation, leave no dead space anywhere in this deluxe volume.

As someone who has been involved in the reggae music scene for over 30 years, I recommend this book to those who want a real feel of the reggae pulse from the Golden Years. This is an enormously entertaining and informative book, filled with information, color, and zest for the world it addresses. The book is the brainchild of Roger Steffans and Peter Simon, two of the greatest and most knowledgeable reggae warriors of all time who are not native to Jamaica, and it brings forth not only a lot of information, but reproductions of a lot of the letters, ticket stubs, colorful record labels, old bumper stickers, promotional materials, etc., etc., from the Third World creative juices that is the reggae scene in Jamaica. The pictures from Simon are unparalleled, as usual. The guy belongs in the Reggae Hall of Fame as the top photographer for the genre, if they ever come up with a Hall of Fame. Be aware that the book does not pretend to be a comprehensive look at anything or the last word on any given topic. Not every star is included, or every movement within the music documented. Lord knows these authors could have done this if they wanted to but the point of the book is to bring forth the vigor and color and richness of the reggae scene through the rich momentos that they had available in their collections. If they did not have the momentos, they did not include the topic/person in the book. What emerges from these two authors/reggae legends in their own right is a lot of interesting material/grist for anyone's reggae mill and some wonderful items that you have never seen and will enjoy thoroughly. The book will also bring back a lot of memories for a lot of readers. It sure did for me!

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