

Transcript

Speaker 1

Music is an open letter to the world. Music don't carry any colour. You hear it and you like it.

Speaker 2

The seeds for what we take for granted, this multicultural society that we live in now, they were really formed on the dance floor back in the day in the late '60s, early '70s.

Speaker 3

This was something which just came from left field. We knew about Soul, we knew about Tamla Motel. But this one just sort of slipped in, like a Trojan horse.

Speaker 1

Trojan have a massive collection of Jamaica gold. I call these records gold.

Speaker 4

Come on, baby, let the good time roll Come on, baby, let me through your soul Come on, baby, let the good time roll Roll all night long Come on, baby, yes, this is it This is something that just can't miss Come on baby let the good time roll Roll all night long Come on baby while the thrill is on Come on baby let's have some fun Come on baby let the good time roll Roll all night long.

Speaker 5

This is the Caribbean. It's full of islands, thousands of them.

Speaker 6

Let's go to Jamaica, one of the bigger islands.

Speaker 7

Juke read the children. He started off as a policeman. He retired from the force and started a liquor store business. Juke could leave his business place open. And nobody don't go in there and take out nothing. He was a no-nonsense man. But Joe Creed, he had one of the best heaviest song in Jamaica. Duke Reed's song was Duke Reed and Trojan. Probably after the Trojan house. The song system bring everybody together, dancing and celebration. It become a way of life. You start me in the business and give me free shoe the time. Most of these pioneers gone from sound system days. Only a few of us leave.

Speaker 4

Here come the Georgia! Here come the Georgia! Here come the Georgia.

Speaker 7

Tonight, tonight at Forrester's Hall you will be dancing to. It's mightiness, joke with the children and all that. Those guys could run Jamaica, you know. All of these songs come up and everybody start being in competition with one another.

Speaker 4

Walking with my baby, she got red big feet.

Speaker 7

She long-- You have two ***** of down deep.

Speaker 4

But she's my baby. Not love her just the same You have.

Speaker 7

King Edward the Giant. That was another song. He's still alive.

Speaker 4

Caledonia.

Speaker 8

Caledonia The toning system actually changed the whole concept of entertainment from live band to music by record. Mama didn't know what Caledonia was putting down, so I'm going down to Caledonia Nobody seems to realize that the Ace of reggae came from me having the songs to say. But the children that we used to play in Jamaica in the '50s were American records.

Speaker 7

When the rhythm and blues dried up now, they start making their own records to play on the sound system. It's going to become my industry now.

Speaker 9

They used to call me Licker Richards. Shrew me Imitate Licker Richards. They said, Richards, you know, you're Juke Weed doing some addition to recording. I said, Yes. I said, We're Juke Weed, what was that? They were at Band Street and Charles Street. I said, Okay, I didn't have a song ready. When I went there, I saw this man and said, Mr. Reid, I heard that you're doing audition for Artiso. And he said, Can you sing? I said, Yeah. I said, Well, sing. I said, Okay, then. I want a girl to dance with me I want a girl to

romance me I want a girl who cares for me Oh, my darling, won't you let me be? Oh, oh, pretty baby, will you dance with me? And they recorded it the Thursday.

Speaker 4

I want a girl to dance with me. I want a girl to romance me.

Speaker 9

It's Saturday. I hear my song for the very first time on radio. I start running around the place. I'm calling everybody. Listen, this is me, Derek Mayer sing. Oh, God. I think I was in heaven. Because I say, if this is heaven, Lord, let me die here.

Speaker 4

Dance with me Blue man.

Speaker 9

They used to call me the hit maker and the hit breaker. Because all of a song become number one songs.

Speaker 7

Duke Reed knew what he wanted. Duke makes some of the biggest hit in Jamaica. start up, he's now we call him the King of Skier. The name Skier was a guy named Clu J. He had his band and He was trying to explain to his musician, make the guitar go, Skia, Skia. And one said, Well, play Skia now, the name Skia.

Speaker 5

Skia music is a up-tempered music, because we need something to bounce. We use the guitar, you know, to give you that chick. But the solidity behind that is the bass, man, with that pattern.

Speaker 9

When it hit you, you got to move. The rhythm of that music, it just keeps you moving.

Speaker 7

This guy is a lively music. But no one plays . is the backbone, it is not Jamaican music.

Speaker 5

There is an air of expectancy as the moment approaches for the arrival of Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret at the ceremonies which will mark Jamaica's attainment of independence.

Speaker 9

When Jamaica get independent in 1962, everyone was there, and they danced that night. Everybody rubbing up on one another, you know. It was a very great night.

Speaker 7

Kingston was fun, you know, much loving in Jamaica. Plenty of them start migrating to England here. go to a lot of send-off part when I was growing up and things like that.

Speaker 8

It is the first time that people knew that they could just pay a passage and go to England.

Speaker 6

For this is the arrival of more than 400 happy Jamaicans. They've come to seek work in Britain and are ready and willing to do any kind of job that will help the motherland along the road to prosperity. They're all full of hope for the future, so let's make them very welcome as they begin their new life over here.

Speaker 9

And most of the record that were made, the local music by Jamaican people. Then the whole culture of the sound system migrate to England. They now start what we started.

Speaker 10

My mum, there was a broken marriage, So she got fed up and went to London. And I joined her about two years after. Bits of it was a bit rough. The weather. What does it mean in the weather? You don't forget those things. I remember arriving, I think it was Victoria Station or something like that. And my mama wasn't there. I said, what's going on here? I hailed a taxi and went to Forest Gate.

Speaker 5

London is a city of change and contrast. River Thames reflects the brooding centuries of history and the bright swirl of today, life. Said Dr. Johnson, When a man is tired of London, he's tired of life.

Speaker 1

I heard that England had a lot of money and a lot of facility, that it was paid with gold. My parents decided to bring me to England. I didn't want to come. When I come here, I give a lot of trouble to go back to Jamaica, you know, because I didn't like it. When I was in Jamaica growing up, I had a lot of fruit trees that I could climb. The sea, I could go and swim in and go to the river and play cricket with my friends. That was a mental strain to miss all of those younger days in Jamaica.

Speaker 11

I was a rude boy, but I also was very ambitious. I'm in a scene, I could get myself killed or end up in prison. So they took me out and, you know, come to England, I thought I'm gonna have a better life at that time, and it was worse. The young white kids, they don't know. They're not used to black people. Gulliwald used to call me brochhead. When you come into school, things on the bench, like peanuts and bananas, these are the things the kids I used to do. You know, kids are crazy, you know? It was a very, very bad experience, but it's making me tough. Because of this, I ended up doing boxing.

Speaker 4

Straight All right, let me see you try it now.

Speaker 11

The other guys was boxing for sport, but they was boxing for revenge. Like an animal, they beat a dog every day, he's gonna bite you one day, you know?

Speaker 2

They're a nuisance when you've got to walk past them in the streets, they won't move.

Speaker 6

So you wouldn't be too happy if one moved in next door to you? I shouldn't be happy at all.

Speaker 4

Why would deport them? They're nothing but a scourge on the good land.

Speaker 11

When I come to be the school champion, it's all gone. They never call me out their name, they say the champ. So I got to fight with my face to get some kind of respect and it turns out okay, you know. I'm still living and some of my friends are dead. You know, when Teddy Boyz killed a lot of them in those days, you know?

Speaker 1

When I come here, I sign on at the youth exchange in Balham. I wanted us to go back to Jamaica so much, I have to go and get myself a job. So one day, pulled the card out, and the card said, NCP, no colored people. All of those card, they couldn't send me as a Jamaican to those job. The Jamaica music was what keep us going. If we want to know what music make in Jamaica, we have to go to the sound system. And at the same time, the sound system is all in our culture. We end up in basements that where we're coming from. In any little dump, anywhere we clean that out and put some boxes. Some people clear out their house.

Speaker 10

Every two weeks or so, he would have a dance, right, and he would clear the furnitures out. And big boxes come in, and boom, yeah, session.

Speaker 4

You said it So are you blazing fire You.

Speaker 10

Couldn't go to the wide clubs, you know, simple, you know. So that's Natural thing, you'll make your own fun.

Speaker 4

They were all sung by you And now we have about two.

Speaker 10

I remember neighbors would call the police. They're playing this jungle music. Yeah, she was, yeah.

Speaker 4

But wait I were with you.

Speaker 10

Music was the thing that gives you a lift each day.

Speaker 4

Live and let others.

Speaker 10

Live As a young Jamaican in Britain, you know, or wherever you came from, like a black person, right? It was all music. Yeah.

Speaker 1

Yeah, music was the only life that we have, you know, we could go and enjoy ourselves. And that's how the record start to get big, start to know, and the sound system start to play, people start to love it, you know what I mean?

Speaker 4

Stick on a stone can break my bone Evil sitting on a throne But words from your mouth can't hold me too What are you going to do?

Speaker 10

I met Lee Gopfeld first in 1963. I just left school and, you know, we became, in a sense, friends. And he had this mail order thing going where he was selling a lot of West Indian records. Owen Gray, Jackie Edwards, Prince Buster, Derek Morgan, all those big guns. Lee gave me a box of records. The weekend, I sold them off. So I remember calling up Lee on the Tuesday. He says, Lee, record's finished. He said, What? I said, You see, you got to come on weekend, coming weekend for more, right? So I went, sold him off again the following weekend, you know. Jamaican music, yeah, it was a piece of home, don't it?

Speaker 12

I'm Chris Blackwell, who wants to start Island Records, and part of my job was a specialist buyer and seller of West Indian Records. Lee had this building, 108 Cambridge Road, and when we moved in there, Island Records, in the very early days, he saw an opportunity because we were a Jamaican music company.

Speaker 4

My Boy Lollipop You make my go giddy up You are a sweet as candy You're my sugar dandy.

Speaker 12

For My Boy Lollipop, Amelia Small, sold four million worldwide, and even sold in places like Ecuador.

Speaker 4

Because you don't bring me My.

Speaker 12

Heart Lee was an Asian Jamaican, but he was a businessman. Put in some ways obviously did attract these attention to the West Indian market, because they thought, Well, maybe this is an opportunity to get into the business, so that's how it really sort of happened.

Speaker 1

Millie Small Record, My Boy Lollipop, it's a cover version. But it did well, you know. to see one of our Jamaica lady from Clarendon in the chart.

Speaker 4

I love you, I love you, I.

Speaker 10

Love you so The mail order business expanded so much that he started a record shop in Wilson Lane. I think it was called Musicland. And it was about six shops. It was a comfort zone for, you know, westing in England, you know? So in those days, records sold like, like I said, hotcakes. League Ups was instrumental in getting me started in my music career.

Speaker 4

I want to know what this gathering means I want to know what this gathering means to me. Life's a conference going on.

Speaker 7

Well, I know a lot about rude boys. I grew up in that era. Rude boy does a lot of things. Most of those old-time rude boys, they were followers of Joe Creed and Cox's songs and King Edwards. Some of them is thieves, some of them is old prisoners, some of them are reformed. There was like gods and kings in all them days.

Speaker 4

Try to know the right from wrong. Wise eyes are certain.

Speaker 13

Rude Boy then was classified as one of these rough guys. Cap pulled down in face that you cannot hardly recognize them. Honey, just do what he feels when he wants to.

Speaker 9

Like I know of one. His name was Busby. He's a rude boy. He come to me and him said, Look, everybody that sing about Rude Boy, I don't hear you sing about a Rude Boy yet. I want you to sing a Rude Boy song off me. And I want it this weekend. Because I'm having a dance and want that song to play. And that was when I make Rudies Don't Fear. On the night of the dance, he gave it to the DJ guys.

Speaker 4

Rude is in court now, boys. Rude is in court.

Speaker 9

Rude is in court. 12 o'clock in the night, the guy put on his sock and said, Give me a box of beer.

Speaker 4

Now this court is in session. And I order all you rude boys to stand.

Speaker 9

I went to reach tougher and tough, strong like lion, and then just take up a beer and crash against the one and say, High on.

Speaker 4

Rougher than rough Tougher than tough Strong like lion We are high on Rudies don't fear No, boys, rudies don't.

Speaker 9

Fear Three girls were standing on stairs, and so I just go upstairs and start wet them up with the beer. He saw a little boy coming front time with a gun. You name Busby? When he look and see the little guy with a gun, the guy hand shake in a heart. Meanwhile, he get a gunshot from another side, right into him here and kill him.

Speaker 4

Rooties don't fear No, boys, rooties don't fear Rude is not being known, boys Rude is not being...

Speaker 10

In England, you started hearing about these rude movies. It became a thing that everybody wanted to do a rude voice on. So it came to me one day, why not me?

Speaker 14

Stop your running about It's time you straighten right out.

Speaker 10

Stop your running around Time you straighten right out Stop your running around Making trouble in the town Oh, Rudy, yeah A message to you, Rudy A message to you My song wasn't big enough, as we say, The Rude Boy. I was talking to them and say, Hey, cool it, you know? Think of your future, something like that.

Speaker 4

A message to you, Rudy A message to you Something like that.

Speaker 10

I remember I got a phone call from Lee Goppel, and he said, Come and see me. I'm starting up something, and I want you to be part of it. I said, Yeah, very great.

Speaker 7

Island and League Uptall, the two guys them get together. League Uptall was a gentleman. And I knew his grandfather from Jamaica. I knew him in the record business and as a gentleman that help us out a lot in Mandy Betridge. Before I come to England,

plenty of my friends come over that I grew up with, so this was an opportunity to come and see. I came here February 1968. It was strange because, you know, I'm cold. When a man laugh, he used to like him smoking a cigarette, but the time was so cold. The Great Dear Betridge that I tell him, you know, he came and picked me up in a little car named MG. We go to Cambridge Road.

Speaker 12

The 1960s were recovering. It was the first time when people had a bit of money in their pocket. Everything was, you know, up for sale, basically. We decided to merge whatever talents we had as music people, and it was a convenience for all of us. And so it was a coming together, really, of one of those events.

Speaker 10

I ran into Bunninglee for the first time. And we got on good, and Lee was juggling with names to name the company.

Speaker 7

When they was wondering what to call the new company now.

Speaker 10

And Bonnie looked at me, and I looked at Bonnie, and somehow he said, What about Trojan Records? I said, Yeah, great. And that was it, bang.

Speaker 7

Trojan was the most appropriate thing because Juquery the Trojan. Juquery make good records, you know. So when Trojan label found up here, it was a plus.

Speaker 10

Having a label in England, it should be great. I did my first session about two months after that when he got full. And I think my, I think an album of mine was the first. album that came out on Trojan if my memory served me right.

Speaker 7

After that I went back to Jamaica and when I start making a lot of songs.

Speaker 1

Well it was good when Trojan set up we could say yeah reggae I got a home.

Speaker 15

In this country, in 15 or 20 years time, the black man will have the whip hand over the white man.

Speaker 2

Well, I can already hear. The chorus of execration. How dare I say such a horrible thing?

Speaker 10

I came across prejudice, of course, you know. There are too many few people here. Yep. That was a shock.

Speaker 1

Why Enoch Powell make a speech like that? We still see some of it, what he was saying in the streets of England. And in fact, we never like him after that.

Speaker 4

Sick it up, mister. Yeah, what I say, sir, yeah, yeah.

Speaker 5

Well, Rock Steady was slower reading.

Speaker 4

Hands in the air, sir.

Speaker 8

We can come to take over. Yeah, then you will get no hurt, mister, no, no, no. I'm a different kind of rude boy, a musical rude boy. I'm the inventor for the word Reggie.

Speaker 4

I said yeah I said yeah What they say What they say Do you hear I say yeah Yeah, yeah This is what they say This is what they say Do you believe I would take something with me And give it to the policemen I wouldn't do that And if I do that I would say sir.

Speaker 8

Reggae was there playing all the time for a good while without anyone know that it's reggae, you know. I'm not a fool to hurt myself We used to have a song in Jamaica called Streggae.

Speaker 9

The girl not looking good, we call her Streggae.

Speaker 8

So maybe I take it from that word, from Streggae to reggae.

Speaker 4

Oh yeah, give it to me one time.

Speaker 9

Well, I heard a lot of people talk about reggae track. Bonnie Lee says he first. Tooth says him first. Everybody say them first. They even brand me as the first reggae, because I heard that the first reggae track was him seven letters. I don't know how true that was, because really I don't study those things. I just sing to a rhythm. This is my last letter, baby.

Speaker 4

I just can't write to you anymore.

Speaker 7

My poor little finger's sore This is one of the early reggae tunes.

Speaker 4

I'm facing the floor.

Speaker 7

I remember I put out this song and this was an early label with children.

Speaker 4

So we hope we break.

Speaker 7

I can never leave the music. The skier and the bass and drum is the foundation. It's the organ truffle, that is what we call reggae, reggae. You hear the organ? 'Cause that was the new theme, the new song. That was the, that's reggae song. The organ truffle don't make no boos or nobody tell you. that shuffle not in the music is not reggae.

Speaker 4

I was all alone and blue Tuesday I wrote again, babe I said I love you one, two.

Speaker 10

One The word reggae started to being used a lot, right? Reggae, reggae, reggae. The Jamaican stuff came up, but there was this thing of wanting to create a British sound. out of the Jamaican stuff, you know, which we did.

Speaker 4

Reggae, reggae, reggae, reggae Reggae, reggae, reggae, reggae Lady Go make the action begin Lady Come make the action begin, ooh Come make me reggae, reggae inna yu jege Come make me reggae, reggae inna yu jege.

Speaker 10

We were doing our own brand of reggae, which the English kids love. Things like reddit wine, reggae in the jege.

Speaker 4

Lady Me no wanna bang around Lady.

Speaker 6

I didn't work for Trojan until 1968 or '69, I should think. My first job at Trojan was as a production manager, and I was dealing with the factory and ordering the records and the labels and record covers and stuff like that, you know? The pirate stations would play records pretty consistently if they were popular in the clubs. This wonderful Radio 1 on 247 meters. But BBC playing the records was quite problematic to begin with. The music was really looked down upon by sort of the music established.

Speaker 1

Reggae go through a lot of victimization in the beginning, you know. None of the major radio stations, 70s coming down would not touch reggae. I hear even Tony Blackburn, he said that reggae was rubbish. We, the sound system in England, we persevere with this music because we love it.

Speaker 2

Do you think this is a great handicap to the music, the way that it seems to be fashionable at the moment for disc jockeys to knock it? I think one of the papers were trying to knock it is classifying it for the... the BBC or, you know, they classify reggae, but I don't think the public classify it that much.

Speaker 6

They just buy if they like.

Speaker 1

Any tune that Trojan release, I would get it. As long as I go over there to the Trojan office, they gave it to me. I didn't have to pay for it.

Speaker 6

One of the rather wonderful things about the Jamaican music business is the pre-release. They just do a limited pressing with just a white label, a blank label. It goes

back to the sound systems in the 50s in Jamaica. And they will go out to the sound systems. It was test marketing. Certainly by the late 60s we put out certain things on pre-release just to see if the sound systems would play if the clubs liked it. Dream last night Lee's a businessman first and foremost, but I think he had a pretty good ear for a commercial record, for a good tune. Stay with me I rode through the valley with a princess by my side That you can be Duchess did the reggae, reggae, reggae last night

Speaker 14

Pirate radio, when it first started, it's like someone had turned the light on. I'll never forget we're sitting out the back one summer, drying ground come whatever playground at the back of the flat and listening to the radio. And here in 007, Desmond Decker. It was like a message from another planet. Just listen to this. This is just great. You know, and that kind of differentness, that's what really got us going. It was a very, very marked audience who wanted, you know, black people, obviously, you know, working class white kids as well. And as it was ours. My hair cut really short, summer '68, like everyone did. Tom the Barber on Maple Road used to specialise in the haircut.

Speaker 7

Now, the skinheads were some young guys wearing braces and some big boots, and they were the old boys in England. They can identify with it.

Speaker 10

Eighty-five percent of the West Indians were working class, and the skinheads, they were working class kids.

Speaker 16

It was that sort of time where it was just crying out for something new. And really it was a rebellion against the long hair and the horrible flower power music, you know. Why do you think the greasers are so different to you? Because they're dirty and stinky and they've got long hair. It was a sense of belonging. You belong to that sort of skinhead group and you followed it all the way through. You don't deviate. It was like joining the army, really, in a way. I suppose you had an instant group of friends. And if you went to another town or another place and there was another group, you instantly got on, it.

Speaker 14

Wasn't cheap. Even if Ben Sherman was 3 guineas. Get a pair of shoes from the Squire shop, 8 guineas. But that's over 2 weeks' wages if you were just working. Or even if you had a proper trip, that's half your wages.

Speaker 12

The skinheads. kicked it off out of the Jamaican market. It was quite small in the beginning, and it was also like a lot of specialist sounds, not really considered outside of the halls.

Speaker 1

Reggae music really makes sense, 'cause look, skinhead come and endorse it and like it, you know? We are trying to play it for the people to love it. And then the skinhead come, yeah, I did like the skinhead, you know what I mean? Skinhead did come and love up the reggae. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Speaker 11

The music was always there from a little boy. Even when I was a little root boy in Jamaica, it's always to do with music. One of my greatest ambition to sign with Trojan, because the most of the greatest Jamaican artists was on Trojan records.

Speaker 4

To the moon hop Mix it with the kangaroo Jump Mix it with the kangaroo Jump.

Speaker 11

Derek Morgan came up with this song called Moon Hop. At the same time, men just supposed to be landing, just landing the moon. And then Graham Goodall said to us, You guys have so many skinhead fans, why don't they write something about the skinheads? I swear in my life right now, drop dead right now, we didn't write one lyric. I just went in the box and started to talk.

Speaker 4

I want all your skin is together upon your feet.

Speaker 11

Put your braces together and your boots and your feet. And give me some of that old moon stamping. And the same week they release it, it just take off.

Speaker 4

Get ready. We've got three million miles to reach on the moon. So let's start getting happy now. Ready? Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Speaker 16

Skinny Moon Stomp was an anthem that Trojan had produced. There were skinheads on the front of the album, so people bought it, but it was the track.

Speaker 4

Now, before we reach on the moon, fellas, we gotta make sure that everything is quick and small.

Speaker 11

We said the skinheads didn't beat the black people. the black people like us, because they haircut what they have. We brought us from Jamaica. We used to call it skiffle.

Speaker 4

Brush your teeth, because the man on the moon looking different from man on the earth.

Speaker 11

Without the British skinheads, because of them, not really music is still going on up to this day.

Speaker 4

My name is KLM. Right. And remember, I'm the boss. You can see, look on my foot. Or my feet, whatever you want to call it, you can see I've got the biggest boots. That's all right. Now.

Speaker 14

I brought a few records along today. Just been a couple of them for you. This is Tighten Up by The Untouchables. It's an early Lee Perry record.

Speaker 7

Tail and record could not hold me down. Trojan record lift me up and harm me with crowns. Head of white could be shaped. Well I'm the stress ferry, the upsetting upsetting. Look at Marie. And I'm the star of the Trojan Arch on the ride. My song just goes to people over London and they see it like that.

Speaker 6

In '69, we started the Tighten Up series of LPs. They were sort of collections of the last few months' best-selling reggae 45s.

Speaker 12

Tighten Up was money. It was a moneymaker. We put a compilation together, and it proved very successful.

Speaker 16

Well, it was the tracks that was on there. The Tighten Up albums were all good. Every one of them was good. It was probably the best group of albums, I think, that they actually did, you know?

Speaker 5

The Return of Jungle, like you know. It was like here.

Speaker 17

Scratch was a genius. He knew exactly what he wants. Even though he could not play any instrument, he could tell you and describe to you what he wanted.

Speaker 5

It's a dream, comic music, magic music.

Speaker 14

Everyone had to have Tight Knut Volume Two. We had every popular hit, Return to Django, Longshot Kick the Bucket, and everyone carried it under your arm. That was a real, that was more sudden the singles in the charts. That was the thing that really popularized the music, because everyone, every house you went into, there was a copy of Tight Knut Volume Two.

Speaker 18

All of a sudden this new format called reggae comes about and we were at the right place at the right time to capitalize on it. When we recorded Long Shot Kick the Bucket, one take. One take. Yeah, and to me, Long Shot Kick the Bucket is a household name in London and across the universe. It's big. Massive, massive, massive, massive and it's still selling.

Speaker 3

I'd never ever heard ska music before and I didn't grow up in an environment because I had older parents and my parents were white because I'd been adopted. My introduction to ska music since I was the only black kid in school, was via the skinhead kids who came from Dragnum. And when you got to the fifth or the sixth form, you had a room in there that you could go to. There was an old red dance set in there, and they would bring records in, normally Trojan ones. There seemed a rightness about it because offbeat music just makes you want to dance. It doesn't matter whether it's kind of black people, white people, Asian people, whatever. And I think that that's what ska music, rock steady music, reggae music, you call it what you will. That's what was offered to this country, this colorless, post-war, gray, fairly miserable meat and potatoes. country.

Speaker 4

Well, I'm gonna tell you Get up in the morning Slaving forever So that every month can be fed.

Speaker 5

I mean, he was powerful.

Speaker 12

Desmond Jacob, definitely. brought the whole music persona to people's attention.

Speaker 16

It was just so exciting to see him on stage and to be in that venue. It was such adrenaline.

Speaker 5

I knew that our music wasn't only entertaining. Before the show started, we were all inside and Desmond gonna go on stage. And he had on this nice knitted tie. I said, Desmond, take off the tie. Norman, you have to go on stage presentably. I said, Yes, but right now you see. And just as he hit the stage, A group of young kids, white kids. They mop the stage and hang on, and it's tired. And I've never seen a black man turn red before.

Speaker 4

Nurse, oh, nurse Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh So that every mouth can be.

Speaker 6

It opened the floodgates, really. It was really the first really big reggae record.

Speaker 15

I was living in Rugby and TV was on, you know, with a little aerial. That's when Desmond Decker came on. And as soon as I saw it, I goes, Oh, there's a black person on TV. There was no black singers on TV then. He had a presence on stage. I guess he was a rude boy as well, but not the gangster rude boy. He looked rude and he dressed rude. He looked cool, and I wanted to be like him. I was a bit of a lad growing up. Neville. Rude boy, bad boy. Like my dad used to say, Be of yourself, boy. Rude boy. I used to rude. Rougher than rough, tougher than tough. Hey! On my way to Bambery Cars! Hey, I see a monkey pan of white tars! I have ring panning fingers, and best panning tour.

Speaker 4

Ay, ay, ay Ay, ay, ay Tell your baby I'll be not the big monkey man.

Speaker 15

When I came here, I felt like there was a difference about Black British. My dad used to talk about it, You have to behave yourself. It's not like being in Jamaica.

Speaker 4

I'll be there, I'll be there.

Speaker 15

There was all the racism at the time. It's the white parents who used to say, stop hanging around with those black kids, right? That's the only thing. But the kids themselves, we used to get on great. I took straight to them, they took straight to me. I had that thing in me. I just used to get on with anybody.

Speaker 4

I understand You're turning out won't be on me No, I know.

Speaker 15

We're Trojan and stuff that we used to play every year a lot. The white kids used to get into it, and they wanted to be part of it. So that was great, because then we used to integrate with each other.

Speaker 4

It's that lie It's that lie, never tell me.

Speaker 15

We didn't think it was going to be massive. We just was doing it because that's how we felt as young kids growing up.

Speaker 4

Now I know that Now I understand Now I understand Now I know that Now I understand
You're turning now on behind me Aye, aye, aye Aye, aye, aye.

Speaker 2

You know, I guess the early Jamaican music for my parents would have kind of reminded them of back home, a place they'd like to return to. But the music that was evolving out of ska and rock steady that would eventually form a large part of the Trojan catalogue was the soundtrack for my generation, and we weren't going anywhere.

Speaker 4

Wonderful world Beautiful people You and your girl This could be pretty But underneath this There is a...

Speaker 2

I actually heard all my first Trojan hits in my local youth club, which was in Stockwell. You know, things like Double Barrel, Liquidator, Long Chop, Kick the Bucket. You know, we'd be in our Skinner gig, 'cause Skinner was the lit back then, and we're talking about the fashion version, not the fascist version that emerged later. You know, black and white kids were united through their love of music and style. And invariably, a lot of that music was the Trojan stuff. I'm what you call first-generation British-born Black. We really didn't know where we fit in. And then we looked at Jamaica, and we were of Jamaica, but we weren't quite Jamaican either. So it took a long time for this Black and British to actually mean something.

Speaker 4

I love a wonderful world, yeah Beautiful people, yeah You and your girl, yeah Which could be pretty, yeah Go and beneath the sea, hair is sweet.

Speaker 13

Young, gifted and black Oh, what a lovely, precious feeling To be young, gifted and black Open your heart to what I mean In the whole world, you know There's a million boys and girls Who are young, gifted and black And that's a fact Precious dream

Speaker 4

To be young, gifted and.

Speaker 13

Black Open your heart At the time in Jamaica, there was a consciousness, you know, a black power consciousness going around, and everybody was wearing afro. I think it was my idea to do a version of that song. It just took off and everyone loved it. And even some of the musicians are just saying, You know, we must listen to marshals sometimes. Waiting for you Yours is the place that's just to be gone.

Speaker 4

When you're feeling really low Yeah, there's a great truth you should know.

Speaker 3

Living in Romford was quite a strange place to live. I used to call it the breeding ground of the National Front. People I knew were no different from a lot of other white working-class families in this country at the time, all harboured racist attitudes. Young, Gifted, and Black gave a positive identity to so many young black children in this country at that time. That was the first time, really, that I felt there was a positivity about being black. It was just like a song, there was just no arguing with it. We must begin to tell our young.

Speaker 4

There's a word waiting.

Speaker 5

For you April 26th, 1970.

Speaker 3

Empire Pool, Wembley, London.

Speaker 5

The event, the Reggae Festival. 10,000 people came from all over the country. 10,000 young black and white kids.

Speaker 4

Ought to be young.

Speaker 5

Younger feeling black Oh how I long to know.

Speaker 13

Performing that song, wow. I felt as if I was in heaven. Reggae music, I think, now, is an expression of your liberty, your lifestyle. People sing about what they live. And we are all one people at the end of the day.

Speaker 5

Yeah, man, those time was brilliant. Music was proper, artists was proper. The respect, the discipline, oh, it was so nice, you know? And the crowd that was there, oh, boy.

Speaker 11

Well, for me, that was the biggest crowd I've ever seen. That place was full with black and whites. White on that side, skinny, skinny girl and so on, and mods and all this other stuff, on the other side, black people. But everybody was shouting at the same time. So with the visualized, it was fantastic. When I come out there, you know, I come out as a rude boy as well, you know, you know, with no shirt on and braces and boots and flip flop. I didn't sing, the band was doing an instrument, and I was dancing and shouting like, You Roy.

Speaker 4

Ice fall, ice fall.

Speaker 11

And you can see the people really getting into it. And the musician was also having fun as well. You'd have to be there to see that. It was a great, great feeling. And from there on, it makes me feel Good. At least I created something in my life what takes on the old world?

Speaker 10

It was dynamic. All those people were having hits. Yeah, boom time for reggae. Those two years, '69, '70, '71. Fantastic year. Patrodin records.

Speaker 6

It sort of indicated a cultural shift. It crossed over from the immigrant population to the population at large. We were just so busy, there was so much stuff being sold.

Speaker 12

We were astonished that they'd gone into this, you know, huge success because we'd started it almost out of a convenience and now we were actually a mainstream record company.

Speaker 6

Most of the time, these new releases wouldn't even get put away where they were supposed to go because we knew they were going to go out again so quickly. There's just endless amount of great records and it just seemed like it was unstoppable.

Speaker 12

We had the opportunity to start. talking to the BBC and saying, Look, this is happening. Number one for.

Speaker 6

Six weeks running, and it really is quite nice to have a brand new number one record, particularly when it's as good as this. So here is Dave and Ansel Collins with their number one song, which is called Double Barrel, isn't it? You forgot, didn't you?

Speaker 17

Here it is right now. We went to Joe Gibbs' recording studio. The track was played. And I couldn't get the vibe on it. I just couldn't. I tried and I tried. His brother, Sir Dave, just imagine that you were on the highest mountain in the world, and you feel gigantic. When he said that, what came to me was, I am the magnificent. And I'm back from the crack of a salt balls, most fun on it, screwing it, sound of soul.

Speaker 4

I am W-O-O-O, and I'm still here again.

Speaker 17

And I got my \$20 and left the studio. I never thought about it again. Myself and the Sensations and Johnny Osborne, we guys were singing outside on the street. We got a phone call from Trojan? Huh. I think it was Lee Guptall. With Winston. finished talking on the phone, he came outside to us. He says, Guys, that was a phone call from Trojan, saying that it seems as if Double Barrel is going to hit the number one slot in the charts.

Speaker 4

You can get it if you really want.

Speaker 18

At the time Trojan was the Motown of reggae music.

Speaker 5

We did come to take over the whole world.

Speaker 6

Reggae was really selling in phenomenal quantities. It was relentless.

Speaker 1

We have created a generation and lover of reggae music. Alton Ellis, Hit and Trojan, John Holt, name it. Trojan have got all the artists.

Speaker 10

I can remember Trojan having five records in the top 40 at one stage, you know, and that is something, doesn't it?

Speaker 7

You succeeded 24/7, I was being in the studio because Trojan put it out. Yeah, I understand.

Speaker 4

Rome was not built today Opposition will come.

Speaker 13

Your way Well, everything was happening so fast, I never had time to even pinch myself and say, Where did all this come from? Because we were touring the entire England.

Speaker 4

You can get it if you really want.

Speaker 18

We grew up and down the country, I can remember some of the names and we went to like, County Durham, Birmingham, Leeds, Lansing, Pensions, Manchester, Sheffield. I remember going to the New Quay. I just remember just dipping my toe in the water. In the middle of summer.

Speaker 13

We were just having a wonderful time.

Speaker 10

You can get it if you really Trojan made money. What happened to the money after a while? Don't ask me. I don't know. You know, I.

Speaker 2

Don't remember hearing reggae on the radio at all until the early 70s when Trojan scored like back-to-back hits. And they were clever because what they did was they started to overdub original Jamaican tunes with strings. They kind of sweetened the sound.

Speaker 18

Instead of making like, you know, just the ethnic, just raw reggae, they had strings. which give it that icing like on the cake and, you know, send it way off.

Speaker 4

You keep telling me yes But you don't mean it You keep telling me no And try to lean it.

Speaker 18

Aiming at the commercial side of the music and the market. That had everything commercial written all over it.

Speaker 4

Let you hear me And you know me know now.

Speaker 7

When strings go on its own, they have to pop. And when a reggae tune about strings now, it can identify with the soul music.

Speaker 6

String arrangements, they're ruining reggae. Young Gifted and Black was maybe the first record we put an arrangement on. We did it with some Lord Jimmy Cliff stuff too. Certainly if you sweetened a record a little bit, there was a greater chance of getting it

played. I mean, it was just a commercial, obvious thing to do. It was a bit like saying, I'd like to have a raise.

Speaker 12

The demand that had generated out of the 70-71, 18 months excitement of the skin, everybody thought, not all of us, thought that now we should go, as it were, into the mainstream of music.

Speaker 8

What happened is the young English people, kids, skinheads, they loved the ***** reggae. Radio station didn't. Radio station associated with us being violence. So the producers begin to try to become commercialized by making it poppy with strings and arrangements. Now and then you get a very special record like Everything I Own.

Speaker 5

You sheltered me from storm Kept me warm Kept me warm You gave my life to me Set me free We have to be strong when you're in music. You have to persevere. The finest tears I ever knew Good Lord So you have to just do what you're doing and love what you're doing.

Speaker 4

And I would give anything I own Give up my life, my heart, my own.

Speaker 5

Children released this song in England and I got a telegram saying that everything I want is in the charts. So I went up and I did a Top of the Pops Boom, it went to about 19. Another Top of the Pops, in the Top 10. Another Top of the Pops, in the five. Another Top of the Pops, number one.

Speaker 4

I would give anything I own Give up my life, my heart, my own And I would give anything I own Just to have you back again Just to...

Speaker 8

The two proudest days of my life to that date was the day when Jamaica got independence and the first day Ken Boots on the Top of the Pops. It was one of the all-time big really hit.

Speaker 12

There was a gold rush of people producing records. And the problem was that we didn't really know what was happening. It was an 18-month period, and it just so happened it

was a golden period in terms of what the Jamaican market was putting out musically, you know. guys were coming up with the right tracks and the right songs, and we were hitting the charts with it, but it faded away, unfortunately.

Speaker 10

Looking back, they were just excited, you know, put out this, put out this, because they used to put about six, seven records out every week, and there was a lot of record for one company, one small independent company, right? And then maybe that is the reason for the downfall, you know.

Speaker 6

We put out a lot of records, and some sold and some didn't. Just the amount of product the Trojan was putting out, obviously some just felt sort of stillborne from the presses and just stuck there on the shelves. Shelf space is valuable. So you can't have stock sitting around that's not selling. We were liable for the tax. of all the records, we had to destroy them.

Speaker 10

Like in most business, you know, a group of guys, you're like a family, right? Trojan Records was like that at first, but money is a tricky thing.

Speaker 12

The company had got to the size It had to feed itself. You couldn't go back to 1968. Trojan was a mess. I mean, I was to blame as much as anybody else there, because, you know, we were not being disciplined. We weren't saying, No, you can't do that. I mean, you know, the success or failure was built by the success, and nobody had the guts to say, Stop, this can't happen. Lee got himself, you know, there was never a huge amount of money flooding around in that company. It was, you know... And of course it went sideways, unfortunately.

Speaker 2

By 1975, Trojan kind of disappears from the map. I think it was just a cultural climate, people wanted something different. And all of a sudden, the music in Jamaica got a lot harder, a lot more militant, a lot more politicized.

Speaker 10

After the strings, right, died down, right, there was this thing, the roots music, there were more roots music coming on the scene. They weren't living up to what was happening, the changes, right?

Speaker 8

Glee Gopher was a fine human being, a man of substance, He is a magical man in my life. They outplayed Lee. They shafted him, what they'd done. And it was just so sad to see his outcome. And how he came to go down, because he had one financial controller for his group of companies. They went to Seoul Square to have a liquidated final meeting. Everyone was invited to come to see who is going to stay, who is going to build. We didn't even know the company was going to take over yet. Then they called League of the Land and said, Lee, I've got one question to ask you.

Speaker 9

Are you an Indian?

Speaker 8

Lee said, Yes, I'm an Indian. He just said, Well, if you're an Indian, why are you trying to run an empire? You should be running a greengrocer shop. Tears just flowed down from Lee up to his eyes. He just stood up there. Couldn't move.

Speaker 10

I was driving one day. I remember North Circular Road. I stopped and someone said, Hey, Trow's going to go on bus. I said, David? Yeah, liquidation. I met Lee at Kingsbury, roundabout. There was a pub there, right? They said, Oh, Danny, I'm sorry, but I don't know what happened, you know, but we'll pick ourselves up. Well, of course, you know, there was no picking up. It was a very sad moment, you know, for people. The only black record company in England.

Speaker 9

Trojan is a name, will ring. I will never stop ringing in reggae music because there was India from the beginning.

Speaker 6

I thought it was really important culturally, artistically, and I really, I knew deep in my bones that the people were going to be collecting these records for a long, long, long time.

Speaker 12

Trojan is part of a sort of social history of music in this country. No question about it. It did bring people together.

Speaker 14

Trojan's Impact is indescribable. They were the catalyst that introduced the majority of the English population to Jamaican music.

Speaker 2

Ever since Trojan became the soundtrack for what was the first multicultural movement in this country, the Skin Aids, it's managed to kind of have a presence all the way through up to the turn of the millennium, where the whole punk rock thing exploded in the late '70s. They were all well aware of the whole Trojan catalogue.

Speaker 3

I would cite The Clash were the forerunners of the idea that white people and black people could make music together. And two-tone, I think, made that kind of flesh. It was white people and black people within the same band, on the same stage.

Speaker 15

To see a black and white band in those days, it looked kind of weird, but then once it got popular, it just didn't matter.

Speaker 2

A lot of the sonic experiments that were created are now part of the fabric of popular music. You know, the emphasis of beats, the development of rap, and most importantly, bass.

Speaker 8

It's come from Jamaica and it's come from love. So love is the key.

Speaker 7

The music It's like water, no color, right? So anybody or everybody can like it.

Speaker 2

If nothing less, the impact of reggae speaks volumes about the possibilities of culture to kind of bring people together. You know, church didn't do that, government didn't do that, politics didn't do that, music did that.

Speaker 4

It is you. It is you, you Oh, yeah I say praise your job Oh, praise you Oh, yeah, praise you