

Black music show goes on the road

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London gigs a smash hit

by JAH
SCORCHER

with You're Lying — DJs Lorna Gee and Rankin Ann, Sister Audrey, Slim Linton and the Mad Professor

To round-up the four nights of music, King Sounds and the Israelites, Junior English and Pato Banton appeared at the All Nations Club in Hackney.

DJ Pato Banton's delivery and charm melted the hearts of the people in the hall.

Junior English and his backing band, known as Amlack (from Birmingham), were tight and Mr English changed from soul to reggae with the utmost professionalism.

King Sounds and the Israelites closed the show with their usual dynamic performance.

The main objectives of the Road Show are to provide an opportunity for black promoters to manage and market black music; to provide a platform for young black musicians to perform; and to train a number of young black people as stage managers, publicity officers, lighting and sound operators and promoters.

THE GLC Race Equality Unit launched the Black Music Road Show, with a series of live gigs around London.

The first was at the Town and Country Club (formerly the Forum) with Linton Kwesi Johnson, Abacush and Awaara.

The performances were of a very high standard, especially from LKJ who had the audience responding to every poem he delivered.

With the Dub band providing the music, his first delivery was Dread Beat And Blood. Then he went through titles like Bass Culture, Raggae Fi Peach (a song dedicated to Blair Peach) and Di Black Petty Booswhah.

The following night at Acklam Hall, Ladbroke Grove, there was a combination of Afro-Asian music, featuring Hi-life International, Heera (Asian group) and Dade Krama.

Then it was the Apollo Club, Willesden, with the Ariwa Posse, featuring Sandra Cross — at the No 1 spot in the Reggae charts



Dynamic action from King Sounds

LADIES' NIGHT

NOV/30/1985

LIVE

Ariwa Posse, Apollo Club, 15/11/85

THE Mad Professor's Ariwa stable has been rapidly churning out lover's rock records this year but don't let it be said that the studio's musical output is restricted to that kind of music; if ever proof of that was required, we got it at the Apollo Club on the third night of the GLC/Wilf Walker Black Music Roadshow.

Technical hitches aside (the sound-check was late and thus the whole show was knocked off schedule) the flow of talent was impressive and un-interrupted. Black Steel, a group which gets its name and dynamics from its leader, (a multi-instrumentalist-cum-vocalist) laid the

ground for Slim Linton (Sandra Cross's brother) to voice a smoother-than-smooth version of Slim Smith's 'Falling In Love' (so nice he started it twice).

The crowd was thick on the dance-floor, when lady once Ranking Ann took up the running; for some obscure



Lorna G.

reason, she's never been a fashionable name to call, but skanking in deadly black and venting her fire with a song called 'Who Do Men' she earned a deserved rousing reception. Performing with two backing vocalists, elegant Sister Audrey played a brief but

entertaining set which she topped off with her latest single, 'I Love You.' Lorna Gee, a toaster who can sing, cut a brash and confident figure as she ran through a brace of songs including 'Got To Find A Way.'

But it was left to Sandra Cross to climax the show; sure, she needed time to settle into her stride, but when she did, she let rip with that ever so certain voice of hard rounding things off with 'You're Lying' and 'County Living' — definitely a singer who's progress ought to be monitored. It was a triumphant night for Working for London ensemble. archive.indiv.com

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ETHNIC ARTS ARCHIVE

LINTON KWESI JOHNSON *Sounds* 30/11/85 Kentish Town Town And Country Club

LINTON KWESI Johnson – known simply as LKJ to those with the correct proportion of streetcred flowing through their veins – is preaching to the converted tonight. Surely no one here really needs to be told of the evils that take place in the backs of police vans or awakened to the cavemen prejudices which still poison the streets. They are young and they know.

That doesn't diminish the power of what he has to say, though. The words in themselves are important, and the way Linton strings them together is nothing short of genius.

In the foreground is the man himself, looking sharp in a suit and talking sharper in that angry sermonising voice of his. In the background, Dennis Bovell's Dub Band pounds out precisely the right music – supporting, not suffocating the words. This is poetry come alive; not the dusty old rhymes that are taught so dryly in schools.

Which is why it is sad that this was one of his last few gigs before retiring from performance and recording. In times like these, there is a need for a voice like Linton Kwesi Johnson's, to give expression to emotions which millions feel but cannot explain. They need the reassurance and always respond with grateful applause. It's just a shame that the people who really need to have their eyes and minds opened are always absent.

GEOFFREY S KENT

Nov/30/85 NME

BLACK MUSIC ROADSHOW is a training scheme set up by the GLC's Race Equality Unit in conjunction with Wilf Walker of Black Productions. It's basically a series of London-area concerts promoting black and Asian artists which, at the same time, gives young black Londoners the chance to be trained in all aspects of the music business – press and publicity, stage management, P.A., lighting and concert promotion. Among artists who have so far participated in the project include Linton Kwesi Johnson, Abacush, King Sounds, Junior English and Pato Banton. The next series of concerts is: "Rappers Meet Toasters" at Tottenham Municipal Hall with Krew Sound, Dizzy Heights, Sweet Perfection, Sista Culcha, Cinderella, Pepi Irie etc. (6 December); Bob Andy and Winston Reedy at the Upper Cut Club, E.7 (7); Miss Mehvish and Bali, plus poets Mahmood Jamal and Ahmed Faraz at Southall Havelock Centre (8); and The Cool Notes and LW5 at Brixton The Fridge (9).



BLACK ECHOES 30/NOV/1985 On the road again

THE GLC's Black Music Roadshow continues with the following events.

Rappers Meet Toasters with Krew Sound, Sista Culcha, Dizzy Heights, Cinderella, Live To Break, Cherry Lickshot, Sweet Perfection, Pepi Irie, Freshski, Olive Rankin, Human Beat Box and Horseman at Municipal Hall,

Town Hall Approach Road, Tottenham N15 (December 6).

Bob Andy, Winston Reedy, Blaze, at The Upper Cut Club, 18-20 Strowston Road, London E7 (7).

Miss Mehvish, Bali, Mahmood Jamal, Ahmed Faraz at the Havelock Centre, Havelock Road, Southall, Middlesex (8).

ARIWA POSSE Apollo Club, Harlesden

WITH the Mad Professor at the mixing desk, The Ariwa Posse demonstrated their clever way of combining artifice and biology by mixing fluttering hearts and sexual politics, showbiz glamour and hard reggae rhythms.

Slim Linton was the Master of Ceremonies and he proved to be the last word in contagious charm combining the best bits of Cary Grant and Frankie Paul. Whenever the show started to slow, Slim kept things bubbling with a ready wit and a sharp tongue and in the process demonstrated that you don't have to be severe and sexist in order to be sexy. The acceptable face of reggae masculinity.

Ranking Ann was next on the mike. With a snappy delivery that made verbs ring and nouns breathe, she laid into the Mr Bit Stuffs of the reggae world and their misogynist ways. Sister Audrey followed and continued the attack on the men with "Populate". Backed by two singers (a Florence Ballard and a Weather Girl) she combined showbiz razzmatazz with feminist affirmation.

Lorna Gee has a voice that brushes the back of your neck as it passes but a stage persona that is reserved, perfectly chilled and subject to fits of remoteness. But it's the voice that remains with you in the end, its subtle shading, its dynamics, its brilliant modulation.

Number 1 on the reggae charts and number 1 in my heart, Sandra Cross finished off the night with a set of sheer inspiration exhaled. Sandra plays the sort of lovers rock that fits neatly into your everyday life, giving ordinary gestures and banal emotions a sort of grandeur. She may still be a bit gauche on stage but tonight's version of "You're Lying" brought the house down.

FRANK OWEN