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No17 1983

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The Prince of Juju Music

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Zambia rocks on - Steve Black

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AFRICA music

THE INTERNATIONAL ENTERTAINMENT MAGAZINE



Lady Asabia: After so many years of handwork Eugenia Asabia Cropper suddenly emerged to become one of the Ivory Coast's top stars. ***Africa Music*** Special Correspondent Eric Ashie II was recently granted an interview at her Abidjan home. **Page 27.**

African Music: Todays African music needs positive exposure not only to the outside world but also importantly to fellow Africans. Dean Disi presents the case for an African Continental Music Market. **Page 6.**

Africa Music record scene: Our enigmatic International Features Editor Ian Watts gives his usual incisive comments and views on the current record releases. You may not agree, but you will be entertained. **Page 20.**

Zambia: After President Kaunda banned foreign music on Radio Zambia (a trend the rest of Africa must follow) Zambian musicians are set to expose their talents to the world. Francis Nwanza reports from Lusaka. **Page 4**



CONTENTS

Zambia's Emergent Sounds 4
Africa Continental Music Market . . . 6
Les Stars shine in Cote D'Iviore. . . . 10
King of the Congo Sound 12
Steve Black set for major breakthrough. 14
Segun Adewale: The Prince of Juju Music 18
Record Reviews 20
Piracy War Hots Up 23
Rogers All Stars Super Groups. 24
Lady Asabia strikes gold 27
International Scene 29

Published by:
Tony Amadi International Ltd,
30B Tabley Road,
London N7 0NQ
Tel: 01-607 9623
and
Tony Amadi Nigeria Ltd,
PO Box 1060,
Kadiri Close,
Alausa-Ikeja,
Lagos, Nigeria

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PRODUCTION:

Design Consultants:
Cire Print & Publishing Services
Kenton, Middx.

Colour Separations:
Vienna Studios,
London

Photosetting by:
KMWS Graphics,
London

Printed by:
Plymouth Web Offset Ltd,
Plymouth

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Zambia's Emergent Sounds

After President Kaunda banned foreign music on Radio Zambia (a trend Nigeria and the rest of Africa must copy) Zambian musicians are set to expose their talents to the world.

by Francis Nwanza in Lusaka

We have been on the slow train
let's jump off and face the rain

JOHN ZULU, 24, an unrecorded but talented reggae artiste of **H20 Fantasy** rather poetically explains the mood of Zambia's musicians today. Decades have come and rolled past but never leaving strongly sprouting a sound identifiable as Zambian; always leaving foreign music firmly anchored on the scene.

For Africa, generally, now is the time for forging ahead, with more vigour, its music as it has finally drilled its way into the Western pop consciousness; especially through the names of the likes of Sunny Ade, juju music reigning king, and Nigerian rebel/musician Fela Anikulapo-Kuti.

For Zambia, particularly, it is the time when many are re-appreciating the now strongly emerging music deeply rooted in traditional rhythms blended with some contemporary sounds, more so the Congolese-rhumba — Kalindula.

Kalindula in Luapula Province refers to the dance involving the wriggling of waists. With a strong rhumba bass-line, Kalindula is a dance music, music which can go on and on with nobody wanting it stopped. The best counts more than the message. When lyrics become prominent then they are usually an attack on social misdemeanours from corruption, prostitution and general immorality. Women are more often than not the targets for the attacks.

On wax usually the message is on Side A and Side B sends women; even when attacked, sensually gyrating and men, too, dancing. The music has fast become popular in bars, taverns where juke boxes continuously blare out the sounds and where one too many people spend 80 per cent of their time "elbow raising" — beer guzzling.

There is roots Kalindula using mostly traditional instruments and contemporary Kalindula which has more western instruments than there is local instruments.

Leading names in contemporary-Kalindula are the **New Crossbones**. Twice they have been voted best band of the year (1981, 1982) in the Zambia Daily Mail Music Polls. The highest musical body, National Music Industry Committee, in 1981 voted the **New Crossbones** as the most promising band, and last year's best band. The band has also been chosen to represent Zambia at the Second Pan-African Youth Festival in Tripoli, Libya, last month.

Other leading names include the *Five Revolutions* who opened the way for contemporary-Kalindula; Ackim Simukonda, a compelling, soulful vocalist and multi-instrumentalist; John Mwansa, who can rightly claim to have enticed many into it when he composed one of the country's ever best-selling singles and 1980 best song entitled "Mukamfwilwa", (Widow); **Afro Mods Band** whose "Chibale Musende" is hailed as one of the best Kalindula songs.

Blind singer Spokes Chola who does roots-Kalindula, and originator of commercial roots-Kalindula never can be left out although he has now been white-washed by two emerging bands which have found themselves on top of the charts — **Chinsali** and **Serenje** bands.

Choral music

And growing in popularity is choral (church) music. Choral music market in Zambia is sparkling bright. Albums of church choirs sell more than disco records at times. For the last three years the National Music Awards for the best selling albums have gone to choirs. And impressed by local choral music Japan has invited a Zambian choral group, **Heritage Singers**, to tour that country for two weeks.

Heritage Singers led by a school inspector in Ministry of Higher Education, John Mwesa, is the leading choir. The best recording choir is the **Malaila Catholic** church choir. Other leading choirs include the **Butemwe Singers, Mikomfwa Baptist church choir.**

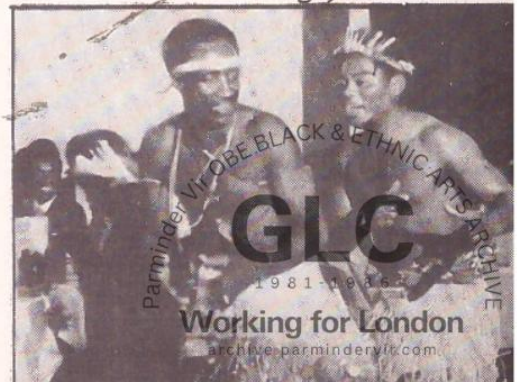
"Choral music has a lot of potential in Zambia," says Grego Stewart-Smythe, promotions man at the country's biggest record company Teal Record Company Zambia Ltd.

Traditionally music, rich and varied, always went at high speed with the Kalimba, string-bass plucking, drum beating, xylophone playing and feet stumping men; and hand-clapping, and gyrating or shoulder-shaking, singing women.

The high-speed train changed gears when, in the fifties, highlife with origins in Ghana, West Africa, and jive of **Spokes Mashane** set in only to be ejected later in the sixties by the emergence of Beatlemania, a craze that swept through the width and breadth of



Above: President Kaunda presenting
Below: Kalindula Kings, New Crossbo



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Zambia which has an area of 752,614 square kilometres. The Beatles remain the single foreign band to have caused so much discordance to the development of indigenous Zambian sounds that every band in the land wanted to imitate them.

Beatlemania

Every music fan sang the Beatles songs, dressed in the Beatles fashion, combed Beatles-like. Radio airplay was much given to the Beatles music. The influence was so great that acoustic guitars in the hands of the legendary Alick Nkhata, Isaac Mapiki — to name a few who were building Zambian sounds — fell from their hands.

A hotch potch of other musicians, mostly rock groups, in the names of Grand Funk, Led Zeppelin, Deep Purple, Rolling Stones, Black Sabbath, Santana; and soul brother number one James Brown further trampled on local music. The Zambian scene was a pop, rock, soul, jazz-funk fusion, punctuated by congolese-rhumba.

Warning bells were sounded in the mid-seventies: Zambian music development had lost direction and would die if efforts were not made to resuscitate it.

President Kenneth Kaunda, himself a musician who during the independence struggle cycled around villages with a guitar slung on his back occasionally stopping to sing both political and religious songs, steered the music ship in the right direction.



l award to Muriel Nwamba.



A most dramatic announcement was made in 1975 — the ban of foreign music on Radio Zambia. The ban led to the mushrooming of local bands, emergence of old ones that had gone into limbo intent on doing their own thing although most still remained with foreign influence.

Best producer

The indomitable and versatile **Great Witch Band** led the way right into the recording studio. Earlier recordings by Zambian bands rarely showed respect to the animal called balancing mostly because individual musicians always wanted to out-do the others in a band.

The Great Witch Band has survived to become the best and disco-oriented band in the country. The band had even been invited to hold performances in Zimbabwe and Botswana where they charmed audiences.

Its recent "Movin On" album is heralded as a masterpiece. Shaddick Bwalya who produced it was awarded by the National Music Industry Committee the National Music Award for being the best producer of 1981. The record is selling well in southern Africa. Shaddick Bwalya told me: "The best sales figures are in South Africa."

Over-all, the best selling artiste is Nashil Pitchen Kazembe. In his fourties, Kazembe, who has much East African rhumba influence has for years topped the charts as top selling artiste. His records, also sell in South Africa. The cool, rather soft-spoken star is producer for Teal Record Company Zambia Ltd (which is short of producers) as well.

Fast emerging to join such big names as Miriam Makeba, Letta Mbulu is West Germany based Zambian songbird Anna Mwale, 22. The dimunitive Anna has to her credit two internationally selling hits "Kabuku" and "Mama Mwale". "Kabuku" is selling in 14 European, American and African countries.

Riot police

"My desire is to do what is mine; and African music is what is mine," said Anna who is about the only performing musician who forces the presence of police in full riot outfits when she is jamming in the country's capital, Lusaka.

Anna Mwale's childhood friend, Muriel Mwamba, bound for United Kingdom, is another leading female songbird. She has a voice that sinks in and soothese one's heart. A talented cabaret artiste who has twice won the country' yearly best cabaret awards. Since the awards were incepted she has been winning, hands down, the best female vocalist award.

Other versatile bands include the Broadway Quintet Band whose keyboardist and band leader, Tonny Maonde, 44, was recently voted best instrumentalist of 1982; the Big Gold Six, 1980 most presentable band and 1981 best band.

The country with a rough estimated population of 30,000 musicians has only one record manufacturing company, Teal Record Company Zambia Ltd which has roots in Zimbabwe and South Africa. Over 80 per cent of the records on the local market are produced by the company, some under licence from EMI, WEA, Gallo, Teal Zimbabwe, RCA. The company grew following the ban (which has since been lifted) on foreign music on country's only radio station. Teal is owned by the multi-million business conglomerate Lonrho.

Lusaka-based dB Application is the country's major recording studio; with Zambia Broadcasting Services studios and Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines' Malachite Film Unit studios being only support studios.

Monopoly

And a new record company "of Zambians, by Zambians, for Zambians" called Tabayensu Musical Enterprises is planned for formation sometime this year. Tabayensu is to be headed by a local businessman, Chris Mwanalushi, and a popular local artiste, Rikki Ililonga, who often records in Denmark "because I get a raw deal here".

With dread locks, easily irritable Rikki — when announcing plans to form the new record company — said from the British Caledonian-run posh five star hotel in Lusaka (Pamodzi Hotel) that the intention was to "try and break the current monopoly by foreign companies in the manufacturing of tapes, records, and recordings". A quite frustrated musician, Rikki added: "Local musicians have been frustrated by the monopolistic musical recording companies."

John Zulu, the reggae artiste of H20 Fantasy which is about the best local reggae outfit is confident about the future of Zambian music particularly. He, again, poetically jibes:

When I go to sow some seeds / I don't expect no pay / Cause I know it won't be long / before its harvesting day / So you keep laughing at me / but the joke will turn on you □

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Dean Disi presents the case for an

Africa Continental Music Market

AS I DISCUSSED the task of breaking African music internationally last issue, several side issues relevant to its advancement and general well-being weighed very heavily on my mind.

Top of these issues was the need for a continental distribution network as a primary market for African music.

African countries are so isolated from each other in music trade that what is pop in say Cameroun is not known to Nigeria its next door neighbour.

Even record companies do not know what sort of artistes and records are being released in other African countries. They are completely blind on each other's catalogue.

Yet, the entire continent is so culturally interwoven that the black African feels at home anywhere in black Africa. The food may vary but reaction to rhythm is the same.

The cultural similarities amongst Africans is such that what is a hit in one country could be a hit in all other countries.

But somehow, either by design or by sheer lack of enterprise, record companies in Africa have failed to exploit this potential.

Benefits

The need for a continental music market need no longer be over-emphasized if Africa is to realise the full benefits of her music.

One cannot be talking of breaking African music in the developed music scenes outside Africa when the music cannot even find its ways into the continental market.

It is thus a big pity that in 1983, music business enterprise in Africa still remain victim of the tradition set by the colonial record companies whose mission in Africa was merely to create an extension market for their music.

Then they traded directly from Europe with the various African countries where they set up. They regarded African music as jungle music only fit for Africans and argued that it was the same all over Africa. There was therefore no reason for them to create product flow lines within the continent let alone export to Europe.

Today, that colonial logic holds as African music has now become relevant in the scheme to sustain music as an essential trade commodity world-wide.

Today's African music need positive exposure not only to the outside world but also and importantly to fellow Africans.

Records companies in Africa, especially the indigenous ones should break away from that obnoxious tradition that restricts their operations to their national boundaries. They should now launch out to initiate bilateral trade relations with other African countries.

Let's make it possible for Nigerians to have access to the popular music of Kenya, of Zimbabwe, of Ghana, of Senegal, etc — and vice versa.

Let African groups tour the continent regularly to popularise their music and act.

Let's see more African record companies attend such annual international music market places as MIDEM in France and the MUSIC EXPO in the U.S.A., and such discussion forum as the annual International Music Industry Conference (IMIC).

Regional Market

As a matter of fact, time is also ripe to evolve an African regional market and discussion forum for exchange of products and ideas: the reason being that whereas some variety of African music may not make sense to the European or American, it could to most other Africans.

Let such things as currency restrictions rampant in most African countries not bother the will to mobilise African music. Africans should feel free to invest their earnings anywhere in Africa.

For short, let us evolve a primary market for African music in Africa. It is viable and worthwhile for the advancement of African culture. And so be it!

Intrepid producer

To my friends at Island Records and all those interested in prospecting African music, hear this: "In Africa, sound motivates dance and dance inspires sound", says intrepid producers, Aned Isid of Nigeria.

That in effect is saying that for traditional African music to be fully appreciated, it should be presented sight-and-sound.

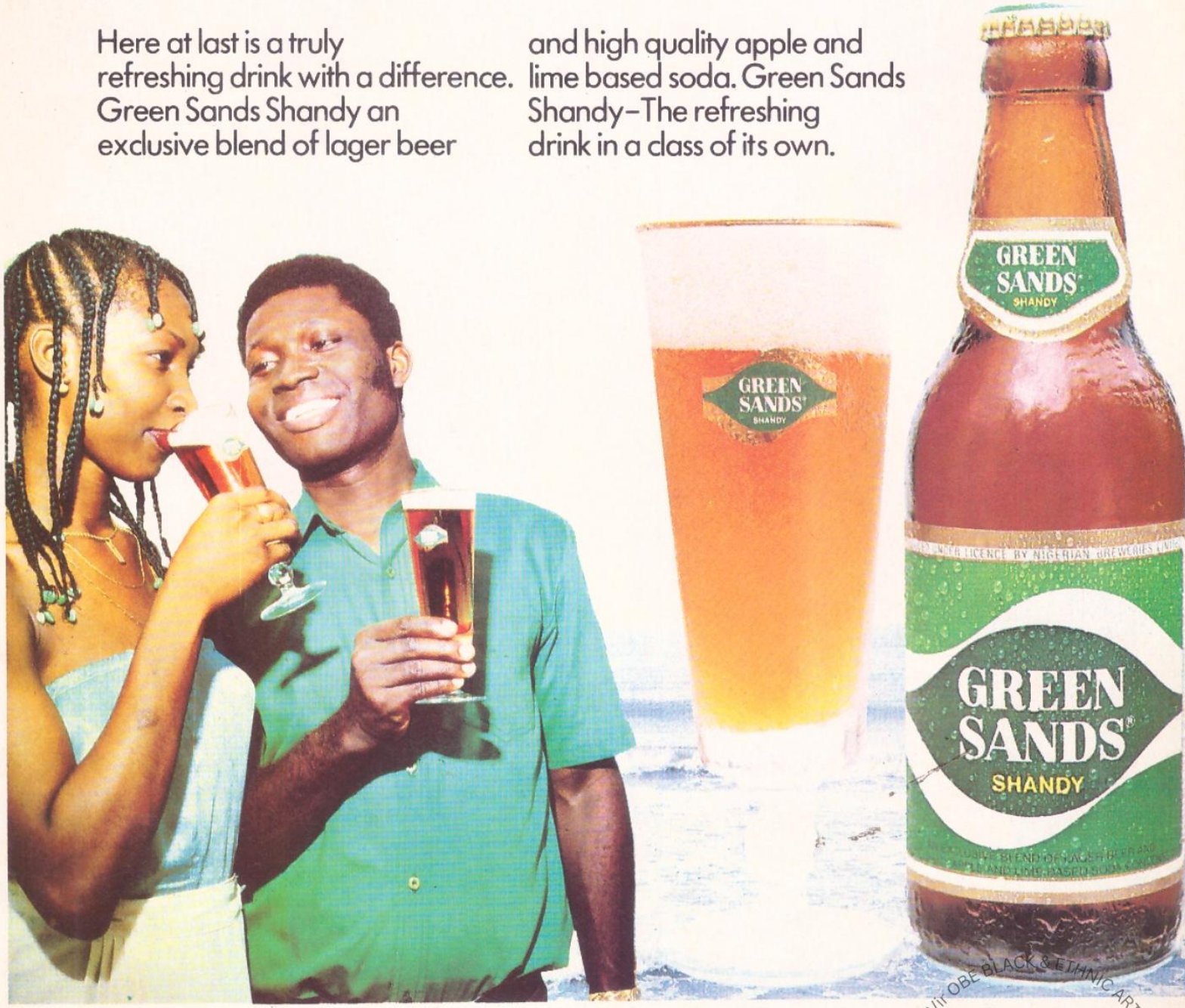
This applies also to contemporary African music. Sunny Ade or Fela for instance will go down well any day on video album. Check them out. □

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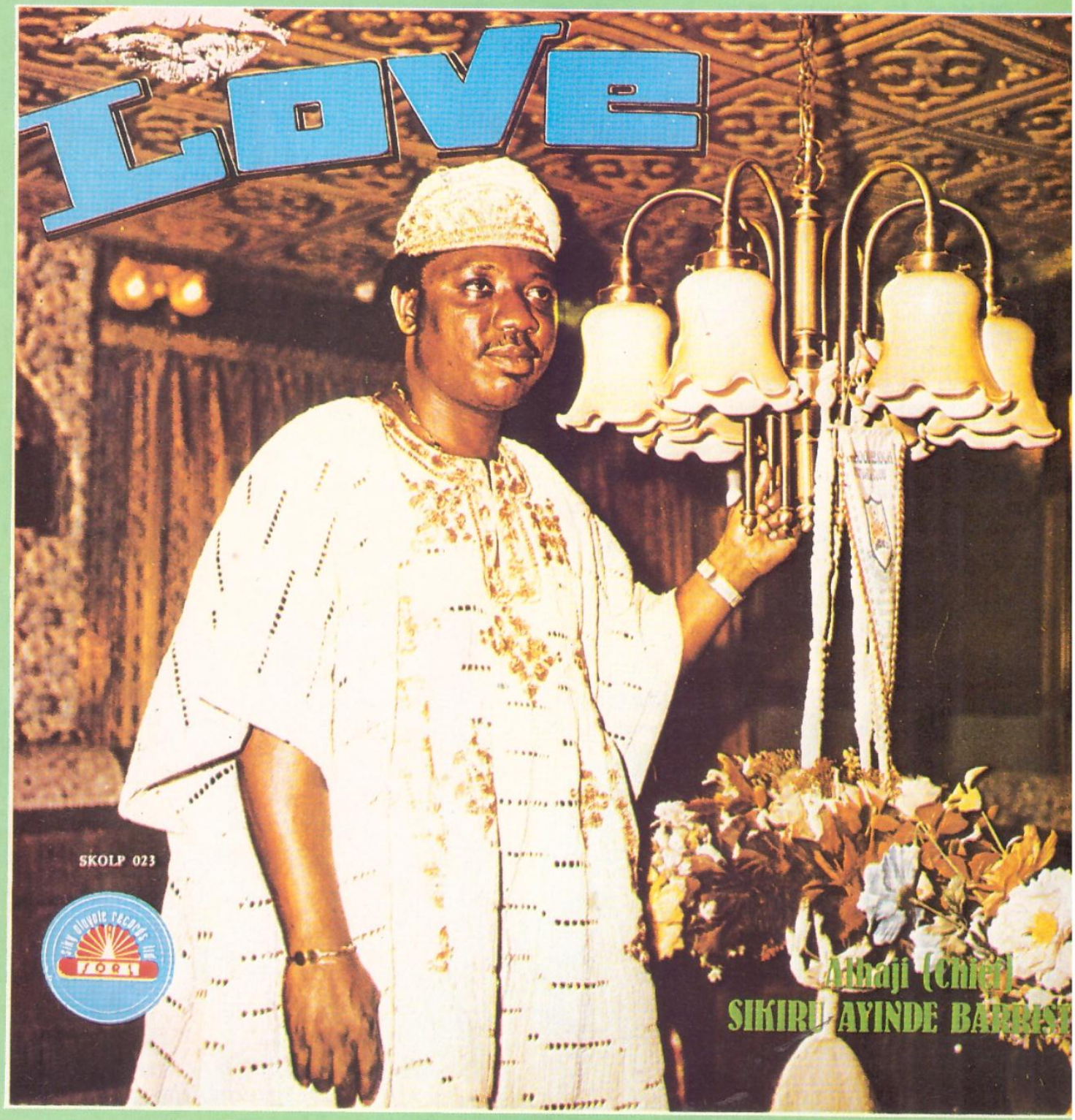
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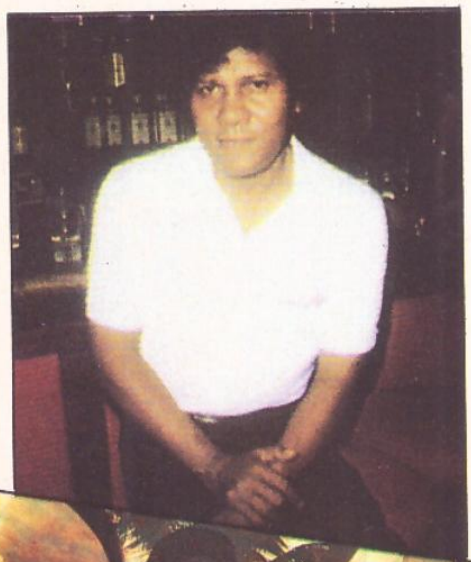


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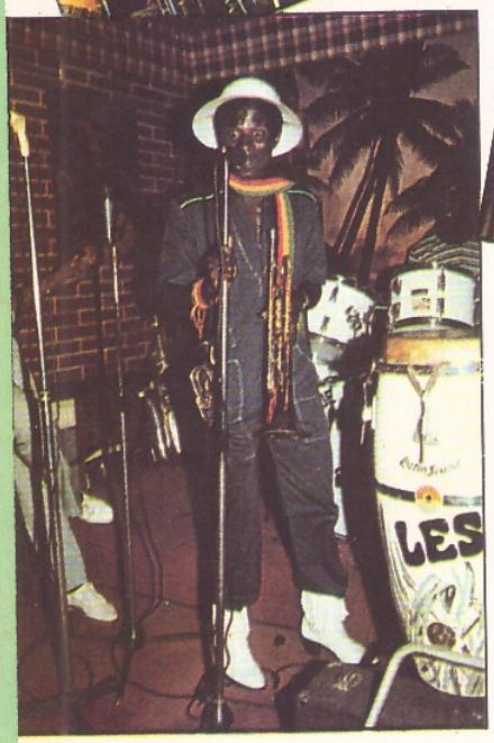
Les Stars shine in Cote D'Ivoire

by Eric Ashie II













LES STARS is about the only group in Abidjan which is really out to break the myth that it's difficult to form a musical group to stay on for long to play professionally. There are however other groups who though are together, prefer playing outside the country more than in night clubs. Musicians including Les Stars usually play on contract basis for say between 3 to 6 months at the numerous hotels scattered around the city.

Unlike Accra at dance halls like Tip Toe, Apollo Theatre, Metropole where bands perform daily for fees, Abidjan sticks more to resident club bands than one night stands. The Accra system has to a larger extent created the lack of dance bands.

Les Stars is being run by the management of La Canne A Sucre, the most popular night Club in Abidjan at the moment. The club is always fully packed each night due to the wonderful performances of Les Stars. I talked to the Manager of the Club Mr Gerard Bergicourt 38, who is also an ex member of the Les Stars. Gerard is a musician of high repute and plays almost all the musical instruments on the bandstand except the keyboards, and sings beautifully as well.

The group have a very wide repertoire ranging from pop to jazz, Latin America etc. They make sure they satisfy the different nationalities who turn up at the club each night, from Tuesdays through to Sunday every week. They are a set to watch — precision, dedication and discipline is their hallmark. Everyone is a master on his instrument and you should hear them play. What is so peculiar about them is they play to the instinct of the crowd and you could see dancers spraying CFA notes on them throughout the show.

Gerard comes from Mauritius Island in the Indian Ocean. He started singing at the age of 10 and went professional at 17. He has been in the Ivory Coast for thirteen years. He has travelled to Rhene Island, Madagascar, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Zambia, France, Niamey then to Abidjan finally to form Les Stars in La Canne A Sucre with 4 other musicians from Mauritius. Gerard is married to a French girl Bridgit and has a son Romuald. He is quite content with the other African musicians he is working with and wish them to work even hard. Asked what his feelings are about Ivorian musicians in general he says, "they are good and there is room for improvement".

Michel Bagoe (Singer) 334

He came to the Ivory Coast about a year ago on the invitation of La Canne A Sucre management to play French and Latin-American numbers for the group. He started singing at the age of ten and left his country Martinique to do sessions in Paris, Beligum, Gabon and Senegal. His idol musicians are Aicha Kone, Boncana Maiga of the Ivory Coast, Miriam Makeba, Fela Ransone-Kuti, James Brown, Peter Tosh, Nat King Cole and Eddie Grant. He is married t

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Francois and has a very beautiful daughter Katty.

Vincent Kwawukume (Virgo) 2nd Trumpeter

He came to the Ivory Coast in 1979 after playing for a church band in Anloga in the Volta Region of Ghana where he was born on September 16th 1958. Later he joined the Vis A Vis band which took him to the Ivory Coast. He became a recording session man for sometime before he joined Les Stars in December last year. His advice to Ghanaian musicians in particular is to work hard to release more albums as their Ivorian counterparts are doing presently.

Serge Alves (Capricorn) Bass Guitar

Born 16th January in Guinea Bissau, he came to the Ivory Coast after playing with different groups in Darkar. He started with the bass and is a master of the instrument now. He has been playing with Les Stars for 6 years and is very content with other members of the group. He was inspired by Manu Debango, Fela Kuti and Mariam Makeba. Outside Africa he digs Julio Inglesias. Serge has 2 children.

Bibie Brew (miss) Singer

The only lady member of Les Stars and a very prominent one at that. What makes her prominent is that she captivates her audiences both young and old with her dynamite voice when she grabs the microphone to perform. A Ghanaian Ambassador's daughter who had the chance of travelling outside Ghana at an early age and realising her field was the arts she made all efforts to improve. She did a lot of stage performances, T.V. shows etc wherever her parents travel to. Finally when they came back to Ghana she got involved in the musical scene and did a lot of TV and live shows. One I remember well was the Overdrive Show she did with Hayford brothers at the British Hall in Accra. What she is lacking is doing her own numbers. "I am seriously working on that and I hope to work it out with Les Stars for recordings," she said. She has however done a lot of session work for various artistes in both Lome and Nigeria. She has been with Les Stars for about 4 months now and is not doing badly at all. She is married with a daughter to Mr Kofi Adu also a renowned keyboard player.

Basemba Bernsisiko alias Bemba (Libra)

Leader and lead guitarist of Les Stars. Born 3rd October 1953 in the Southern part of Senegal, he has lived in the Ivory Coast for 5 years. Before then he played with a group in Germany for several years. He came to the Ivory Coast to play for Les Stars and has since been with them. Asked what advice he would give to young and up coming musicians in Africa, he said "They should not quit the job they have undertaken to do but to work harder than before in order to achieve their aims". He is planning to do some recordings in the very near future. He is married with a child.

Ricky Evans Devie Yao (Taurus) 1st Trumpeter

Born 23rd April 1959 in the Volta Region of Ghana. He came to the Ivory Coast to learn more in his chosen field and admits wholeheartedly that he has learnt a lot since joining Les Stars. In Ghana he played with the Volta Pioneers, The Kingpins, Dutch Benglos, C.K. Mann and Eredec. He then left for Liberia to join the Liberian Dreams. He came to Ivory Coast about 2 years ago and thinks Ivorians are good and need to work hard to improve on what they already know. He still has plans to travel to the States. He is single.

Simon Gabin (Virgo) Alto Sax

Simon was born in September 1939 and has been playing the Sax since 1972. He comes from Martinique and is married with 4 children. He was a businessman before turning professional. His sister happens to be the owner of the night club so he seriously went into music order to help out at the club. His favourite Africans musicians are Manu Dibango, Miriam Makaba, and E.T. Mansah. He also digs Ray Charles.

Sly Jones (Aries) Singer

He is known in private life as Kwamina Otto, a Fanti born in Winneba in the central region of Ghana 31 years ago. Sly took up singing in Accra with the Sakumo Sounds, Eredecs, Sweet Talks, Dutch Benglos before travelling to the Ivory Coast in 1980 to join Les Stars on contract. He plays disco, reggae and hard rock numbers for the band. He intends to do his own recordings soon. Sly is married and has a daughter Nana Amoakoa Otto.

Edward Sledge Gyempeh (Gemini) Keyboards

Born to Mr & Mrs Gyempeh in Kumasi Ashanti Region of Ghana, Sledge as he is known by fans came to the Ivory Coast about 4 years ago after playing with the Tip Toppers, Great Tops, Cadillacs and Barbecues. He came to Abidjan with the aim of recording an album but was not successful. He however, intends to try again in the near future. "I have learnt a lot on the keyboards since coming down to Abidjan. I found the training very tough but I was really determind to make it so I stayed on and worked hard to master my instrument. Now I can play any repertoire", he said. His idol musicians are Fela Ransome Kuti, Ebenezer Obey, Jerry Hansen, Asabia Cropper and Jimmy Hyacinthe. Sledge, an ex-student of Ebenezer Secondary School in Accra has as his hobbies, Table Tennis, Soccer and films.

Napoleon Anderson (Capricorn) Congas

A Ghanaian born 37 years ago in the Western Region of Ghana. He started serious music in 1963 after completing school in 1962. He first joined the Uhuru Band then Beach Melodians, Broadway Band and Hougas Extraordinary. In 1971 he left with the Super Stars of Darkar to the Ivory Coast where he has been up till now. He played for a lot of local groups before joining Les Stars. He started it all as a traditional drummer in the chief's palace in the Ahanta Traditional area in the Western Region of Ghana. his favourite musicians are "Osibisa, Bailley Spinto of the Ivory Coast, and Barito and Mongus Santa Maria of Cuba. He wishes to make a solo album soon as he could purchase himself a set of African drums. He is married with 2 kids and digs soccer and films during his leisure hours.

Nobby Amarfio (Aquarius) Drums

Born in Accra Ghana on 22nd January 1949, Nobby, a junior brother to Osibisa's Sol Amarfio, started playing on his own with empty boxes and cans. He joined the Ell Chicos band (a school group) during his student days at the Ebenezer Secondary in Accra. After School he joined the Pick Ups Band in the Western Region of Ghana. He later played with the Bonafides, Barbecues, Black Beats, B'Soyaya Extra O' and Wantu Wazuri all of Accra. He toured The U.K., Holland, Germany, Seychelles, Benin, Togo, Liberian and is now with the Les Stars since 1981. He has learnt a lot since joining Les Stars and has intentions of doing a solo album soon. His advice to fellow African musicians is that "they should learn to play more of African music." His idol musicians are Sol Amarfio who has been encouraging him all along, Emmanuel Rentoz also of Osibisa Eddie Donkor and Gyedu Blay Ambolley all of Ghana. Nobby is married to Miss Majorie Bruce of Accra with 4 children. □

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King of the Congo sound

by Graeme Ewens

THE distinctive ringing guitars, light vocal harmonies, multi-layered percussion and tight brass arrangements from the Congo region have long been a familar element of African pop music, thanks largely to the efforts of Luambo Makiadi the man from Zaire known across the continent as Franco.

For 25 years the man has loomed so large over the Francophone music scene that it might have been named after him. He has dominated the record charts in many countries and has provided work experience for busloads of musicians. Now Franco has plans to conquer America.

In anticipation of a September tour of the USA and a possible future visit to Britain, *Africa Music* tracked down Franco in Paris, the city where he and many other African musicians make countless records for the African market. He speaks no English and this writer's French is sparse, but Franco is a communicator and several truths were revealed, along with the big man's opinions on music without frontiers. Basically it doesn't matter what language you speak the music can be understood.

Franco is a big man now, with a presence to match his reputation. He is expressive of hand and face, showing concern and wit as he runs through his story, which begins at the age of 15 with a harmonica and a gang of street kids. he quickly organised his musical collaborators into a supporters' band for the local football team Vita Club, taking the role of Presidente de Coordination. This early experience as a band leader complemented his musical education as a guitarist and singer.

In 1956, the 6th of June to be precise, Franco inaugurated the now-legendary band TPOK Jazz — Tout Puissant Orchestre Kinoes de Jazz, whose name has since become synonymous with Congo music. After consolidating a reputation at home, their first disc for the international market was released in 1961 after Zaire's independence. From then on record production was centred in Brussels and later Paris which is now the hub of the francophone African music scene.



Franco, alias O.K. JAZZ of Zaire: consistently overpowering sound

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Guidance

While he has become the undoubted, yet uncrowned, King of the Congo, Franco is anxious to explain that he did not invent the style and he credits another great bandleader Kabaselle Tshamala aka Kalle Jeff, the Grand Kalle, with his early inspiration and guidance. Kabaselle, who died earlier this year in Kinshasa after several inactive years, was known to all as the Grand Master of Congo music.

In the early 1950s his band Surboum African Jazz had begun to synthesize a new music combining elements of jazz, African folkloric music and Afro-Cuban music, which was itself the result of previous combinations of Latin and African music. Franco credits his mentor with initiating the use of modern instruments, particularly electric guitars and horns. Kabaselle made hundreds of records distributed all over Africa by Decca, and among the musicians who came through his ranks were Tabu Ley aka Rochearu, with whom Franco recently recorded a tribute to Kabaselle.

Others who went on to individual glory were Doctor Nico, Serge Essous and the multi-faceted Manu Dibango who played on over 100 African Jazz singles on which he used the solo breaks to develop his jazz techniques on saxophone and organ. The structure of many of the songs was Latin, with rhumbas, merengues and boleros proving immensely popular. Cha-cha-cha Independence was a trans-african hit, popular during celebrations in many countries.

By the 1960s Kabaselle's popularity was being challenged by the younger Franco and Le TPOK, whose string of singles on the African label were just as well distributed by Decca. Franco emphasises though, that he played 'after' Kabaselle and they were always friends rather than rivals.

Many of Franco's most popular singles which were pumped over almost all Africa by the powerful transmitters of Zaire radio can be found on the series of compilation albums 'Authenticities TPOK Jazz', which bears close comparison with his later work.

Technique

Central to the congo sound are the guitars, vocals and horns parts and although there is heavy western influence on the instrumentation, Franco claims that the music is not just derivative of the westernized Cuban music heard on the radio after World War 2 by many African musicians including Sunny Ade and Manu Dibango. While the Spanish GV label is often cited as an early influence on African pop, Franco suggest the horn and rhythm players are simply echoing the original Africanisms on different instruments — the 'Latin sound' of the horn arrangements is the natural way to play with the singing style.

Franco also points to a specific source for the congo guitar technique which combines interrelated influences. Around 1935 a sailor named Dondo Daniel was travelling round the African coastline with his guitar in hand and an ear open to different music. When he returned to the Congo a new sound was born.

Although the music has been refined over the years it has changed little — the maturity of the musicians and technical developments have made it sound more melow. Although the jazzy sounds of solo saxophone are slipping out of prominence, there is still room for improvisation but less space for solo virtuoisity. it is collective music, with even the harmonized lead vocals and masterful guitar licks integrated into a well-refined sound.

Confrontation

Franco does not believe in changing the music for his new English-speaking audiences. As he says 'it is what we play, what we sing and dance to — what we understand. It is our music and people must accept it for what it is'. He does believe in using music as social commentary on the world he sees, finding inspiration in the preoccupations of daily life which sometimes leads him into controversy. On occasion his satirical songs have been taken too literally by the important people he refers to.

The mythical status of Franco is compounded by such tales of confrontation with authority, as it is by the supposedly iron rule which he exercises over his musicians. He is an authoriative figure, possibly a hard man, but he is also a sensitive musician responsible for some of the most delicate and joyful music.

Those who don't understand his lyrics, mostly in Lingala, must miss something because the man obviously has a sense of humour and must have a gift for turning a lyric. But African music comes in many languages and he says it has no frontiers — which in the case of Franco & TPOK is a masterly understatement. □

Kanda Bongo Man

KANDA Bongo Man, the hot young Zairean singer who was this season's darling of fashionable Paris, hit Britain for two shows in July, giving Londoners their first chance to experience the heat and rhythm of soukous — the up-tempo dance beat from the musical crossroads of Africa.

The energetic singer danced his way through two very short performances of numbers from his second album 'Djese', which has already begun to sell in Britain and which he was here to promote.

The strictly high speed soukous is Kanda's contemporary version of Congo music. His heroes were Tabu Ley Rochearau and Petit Soki, but his generation have changed the music into something of their own. As he explained, the



rhumba music of the older generation begins with a slow dance and then changes pace to a faster straight into the faster bits. He also cut out horns and generally streamlined the sound, although Kanda still claims nostalgia for the rhumba roots of Zairean music.

The band he brought to Britain were not a regular unit but Paris session men who played as tight as a fist. Guitarist Ringo Star was the crowd's favourite as he set up his clear-toned 'ringing' riffs, answered by keyboard player Koffi. A brilliantly crisp drummer, bass, rhythm and percussion players and two dancers completed the line-up.

Kanda, who was delighted by the warmth of his reception, said he wished to record in Britain sometime — on his way to his declared aim of becoming an international celebrity.

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Steve Black set for major breakthrough

by Tam Fiofori

STEVE BLACK, can be introduced as a young and still-active veteran of the contemporary music scene in Nigeria, whose pioneering efforts contributed in shaping a particular facet of Nigerian pop music.

Known variously as a singer, drummer and bandleader, Steve Black has been active on the scene for more than a decade, and has done some remarkable things as well as played with the top pop bands in Nigeria.

Steve Black is a very assertive Leo. He was born on July 21, 1954, to parents from Benin City. He grew up with his parents and attended primary school in Abeokuta and Ibadan in the then Western Region. On the creation of the then Mid-Western State, his father a psychiatric nurse, was transferred from the famous Aro Hospital in Abeokuta to the first psychiatric hospital in the new region.

There, Steve finished his primary education, and then attended secondary school in Lagos. The music bug bit him hard whilst still in secondary school. According to him, he knew "that that was music in him", and music was what he wanted to play. So, he quit secondary school in 1968, to become a musician.

Admitting to many musical influences, Steve Black credits his father as playing the key role in making him become a musician. His father was an avid record-buyer who also had a very good stereo system. Being continuously exposed to the latest records; highlife and other types of music, Steve and his brothers and sisters soon picked up singing. He recalls that many times they didn't know the name of the artists, but by listening to their records they could sing along with the vocalists in the bands.

In 1968, he met Aigbe Liberty and joined his band the Liberton Aces as a singer and maracass-player. Bassist Kola Adio of the Warmers invited Steve to join their band then resident at the Talk Of The Town nightclub in Lagos. He then moved North to Zaria where he played with the Moonrakers. 1968 and 1969 are years he spent concentrating on building up his name in the then Northern Region. Back in Lagos in 1970, he had a spell with the Clusters International, and then met Tee Mac, and became a member of the Afro Collection.

Skill

Until he left the Tee Mac Afro-Collections in 1972, he was still a singer and only played maracass. But his reputation and skill as a singer had grown enormously. He had become the lead singer of Clusters International when Johnny Haastrup left the band, but when both of them joined the Afro-Collection, Steve Black was the lead singer and Johnny Haastrup played keyboards. And so, when Steve Black remarks that he has played with a lot of good musicians, his track record is a glowing testament. Historically, the musicians he played with in these years, were the originators of a distinct brand of Nigerian pop music.

The Clusters International with Laolu Akins on drums and Berkley Jones on guitar, later became two-thirds of the world famous BLO. Laolu Akins and Berkley Jones, were members of Ginger Baker's band Salt that performed at the 1972 Munich Olympic Games Music Festival. By 1972, Steve Black was back in the North with the band he co-started, the Moonrakers. The Moonrakers is now the very popular El Cados. In the Aigbe Liberty Libertone Aces with Steve was little Felix Liberty playing congas. Steve remembers big brother Aigbe always encouraging Felix to learn to play other instruments. Today, Felix is the superstar singer dominating the Lagos RN2 radio pop charts.

The Clusters, Afro-Collection, Moonrakers, Ofo, Funkees, and their generation of Nigerian young musicians created the foundations and directions for the form of Nigerian pop music that became known as Afro-Soul and Afro-Rock.

Having listened to great singers like Otis Redding, James Brown and Wilson Pickett as well as singing along with their records as a kid, Steve Black is very unbashful about admitting how deeply these singers shaped his own singing style. And today, having gone through Afro-Soul, Afro-Rock and Afro-Funk, he admits that his musical background is still Pickett.

Being the reconstruction years and with oil booming, musical activity was phenomenal and financially lucrative in the early seventies. Yet Steve and his colleagues had other thoughts and plans. "At that time we were thinking about building a very strong musical industry, like having a very strong rhythm created from here. Then we started doing things like Afro-Rock, and it went on and on until things changed". The early seventies also saw the Nigerian National popular music-Highlife peaking. Fela was laying down the roots for the next form of popular music — Afrobeat. How did Steve and his colleagues fit into this scene and why didn't they play Highlife or Afrobeat at this crosspoint?

Afro-Funk

According to Steve, "Highlife was really dying, and what made Highlife die was that young people were listening to a lot of pop music like the Beatles and Rolling Stones, because this was what we got on the radio. And everybody knew about these tunes like the Stones' I Can't Get No Satisfaction, started turning the kids on. And if you were a bandleader at that time, and you wanted to play for the kids who went out a lot and had money to spend, you had to give them what they wanted, and they didn't want Highlife. So that was how we saw ourselves playing pop music at that time, jamming and going a step further by infusing the Afro touch into it to create Afro-Rock. Fela was fast moving out and going into Afrobeat with a heavy beat, and by 1971 the Highlife stars had faded".

The difference between Afro-Rock and Afrobeat in Steve's view, is that "Afrobeat has a steady rhythm with heavy percussion and is not too much into fancy rhythms like Afro-Rock which is lighter and fanciful. In AfroRock, you can have four bars and then go fancy, then a guitar player bursts out with a solo, then more fancy stuff like syncopations. With its steady rhythms and heavy percussion, the main message in Afrobeat is the singing and the way the singer puts his lyrics across. AfroRock has more to do with electrical

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equipment".

The Afro-Collection was the first AfroRock group in Nigeria, and folded when Tee Mac went back to Switzerland. Steve tried his hand at forming a band in Benin City, but when this didn't work he moved back North to play with the Elcados. Next time out, Steve Black was playing AfroFunk.

Moving to AfroFunk was a natural progression for Steve. He points out the relative growth of American pop music. "The Americans, went from Rhythm and Blues to Soul Music and now they are into Funk and Disco. We also want to progress and not stay put there at AfroRock. We are not too western, we do not want to be western in our music. We play funk with a lot of African fusion into it; not a lot of percussion as such, but the arrangement is African. The riffs are African but the beat is funk, so as to move the kids. This is very important. You have to watch the kids, because they buy the records, they know what they want and you can't force what they don't want on them".

Although a pioneer in creating Nigeria's tenny-bop music, Steve Black made his first record in 1974. A single, 'Fun In The Street', it was released in 1975 by EMI. Because he came from the tradition of live-performances, Steve believes he and his colleagues moved towards the recording studios as from 1974. By this time, Steve was also playing congas and drums. He signed on with Decca, and recorded his first LP — 'Village Boogie'.

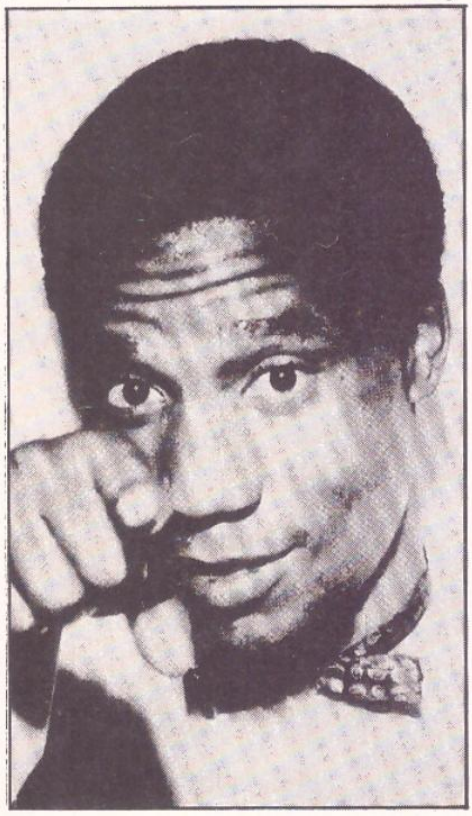
In his own words, 'Village Boogie' a seven-track album, "is a record of African fusions in a modern setting with a bit of funk". Boogie, the title track, is an instrumental piece of heavy horn riffs, flute, melodies in-between with changes of key to create pure danceable AfroFunk". With Steve playing drums and singing the lead vocals, the band included stars like Kenneth Okololo on bass, Pierre Lezek on guitar, Gboyega Adelaja on keybords, Sharp Mike on trumpet, Eji Oyewole on alto and soprano tenor saxophone and Lekan Animashawun on baritone saxophone. 'Ego Noye', sung in his own Bini dialect is done in a disco-funk medium. For Steve, disco is dance music, "so anything that can really make people dance, is Disco".

'Brand New Wayo', was a track that got a lot of airplay, and the message and music was very well accepted. "Brand New Wayo, meaning Brand New Trick, is about people sitting at home every day planning on how to rip people off out there in the streets".

All-Star Band

'Step Out When You Are Down', is Steve Black's appeal to those who have been up there for so long, to step out and give others a chance. 'When You Know What's Wrong', is a reggae sung in Yoruba and English, advising that action and not other people solve problems. 'Fun In The Street', is also included on this album.

When Tee Mac came back and revived the Collection, Steve was again the lead singer in an all-star band with such talent as Mike Collins on drums, Kenneth Okulolo on bass, Jimmy Lee on guitar (all three, former members of Johnny Haastrups short-lived but very



popular and innovative band — Monomono), Sharpe Mike on trumpet, Gboyega Adelaja on keyboards, and many more.

In early 1978, Tee Mac again decided to fold up the Collection. It was then Steve Black decided that he would never again play in someone else's band, until he was able to put his own band together. To achieve this goal, he became a session musician. He went into the studios, as a session man, playing drums and percussion with anybody who wanted to do an album and could pay him. In his two years as a session man, Steve reckons he played on as many as well over forty-five albums, on different instruments in different studios, and on different labels.

Steve played on records by Cloud Seven, Apostles, Eric Kol, Chris Okotie's first two albums, BLO, Christiana Essien, Franca, and many more. Most of these albums became major hits. Generally, because there isn't a strong musicians' union yet, the studios and labels fix their own session rates; a situation Steve Black deplores. He also thinks that session men are not given the full credit they deserve, especially as their contributions are in many cases instrumental in making some records hits.

In 1981, Steve Black was back in Kaduna, trying to secure equipment for a new band. Luckily, he met two young men of Geomos Enterprises who had some equipment as well as a nightclub The Palace, and they happily put these facilities at Steve's service. A trip back to Lagos was needed to recruit musicians. And so Steve Black now works out of Kaduna, leading his band called DEDICATION.

Appeal

Dedication is a seven-man outfit, with two horns, one guitar, one bass, one keyboard, a drummer and Steve. It is a multi-national band. Guitarist Piere Lezek, trumpeter Petty Spyke and bassist Henry Williamson are Camerounians, drummer Frank Dada and keyboardman Seth Amamoo are from Ghana, and trumpeter Uzo Roxy and Steve Aiwansedo Black founder, leader, lead singer and drummer / percussionist, are Nigerians. Talking about Dedication's music, Steve says, "Our brand of music I'll simply call Dance Music with a message; with meaningful lyrics". Steve Black has a new album released last July called 'Happy Birthday to U'. The band's rhythm he describes as "African dance rhythm with horn riffs".

Steve's music appeals mostly to young people; the students and young lecturers between twenty-one and thirty-five with some staunch fans in their forties, fifties and odd sixties. Yet there are also some young people under twenty-one whom he feels are not tuned into his music. But like the seasoned musician that he has become, Steve Black is well aware of the many factors that regulate big success for any band in Nigeria or elsewhere today. Earlier this year, he visited London and was a guest of many radio shows. He also gave interviews. At least one critic commented: "Here is a budding young musician who knows where he is going and just about how to get there". And that alone is a lot of achievement. □

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SEGUN ADEWALE

The Prince of Juju Music

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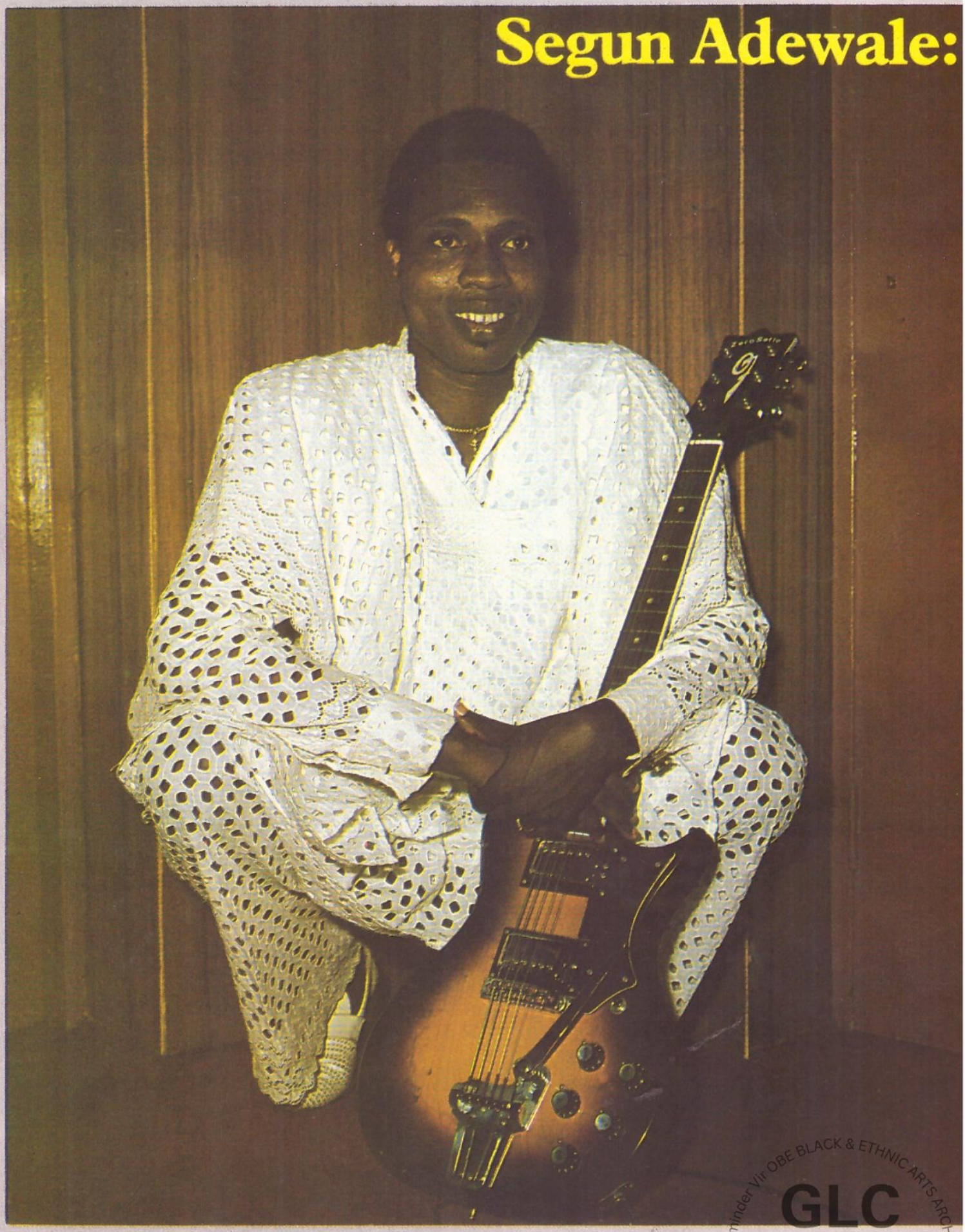
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Cover Story

Segun Adewale:



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The Prince of Juju Music

If Sunny Ade is accepted worldwide as the king of juju music, then the crown prince of juju is certainly Segun Adewale, the handsome, easygoing jujustar who is poised for international exposure and recognition.

He first burst into the limelight when he signed to record marketing whizz kid Ola Kazzim of Ibukun Orisun Records in Lagos and set up the first juju duo with Sir Shina Peters in the early seventies. Then they broke and he went into a successful solo career under the Kazzim tutelage from where he can be deemed a successful act ever since.

Now Segun Adewale is in the middle of completing his own global strategy in the lines Sunny Ade took and also creating a new sound he hopes will sweep the world. This strategy is not necessarily in competition with master guitarist Sunny Ade, but as one of his aides put it "to follow Sunny's footsteps" to superstardom.

When *Africa Music* contributing editor Ndubuisi Okwechime cornered Segun at his Record company offices in the heartland of Lagos, the Nigerian capital, he found a quiet, nearly shy lad who knows where is going and how to get there.

Segun Adewale's music is youthfully exciting with bubbles of beautiful rhythm which at once distinguishes him from the rest of the young cadre of juju musicians floating around western Nigeria and threatening to unseat the powerful Sunny Ade and Ebenezer Obey from their exalted thrones.

After a long interview with Segun Adewale in between recording sessions as Afrodisia studios in Lagos, he cabled the following report:

JUJU IS MAGIC. Juju is the unexplained mysticism of the African Science. But juju is music, a percussive Nigerian rhythm, wrapped around the Yorub people's folklore and brought, through generation of adaptations, to a level of world acceptance. The origin of Juju music dates back to the beginning of the Yoruba race itself, where even in courts and palaces, drums heralded the presence of Kings and announced chieftaincy activities. Then the "Joo-joo-joo" sound of the gbedun (talking drums) made life very rhythmic and added party fellings to livelihood.

Along the line of history, different musicians have brought changes to the music but not the trends in its local acceptance. There had been the period of solely drums and percussions. Later, westernised musical instruments brought pop-star-like players to the juju front, with Sunny Ade and Ebenezer Obey fronting the campaign. Later, the frenzy spread and more youthful players got into the scene. Amongst such is Segun Adewale who, as a mark of the changing pattern of play, says he has evolved a new style of juju tagged YOPOP. He explains this as the, "popular Yoruba music, and it's a fusion of African percussions, highlife (the real Jazz(and cutting across Jazz

• *Continued on p.22*

Profile of the juju prince

by Ndubuisi Okwechime, Contributing Editor

THE LAST thing Pa Joseph Adedeji Adewale from Oshogbo, Oyo State, Nigeria, hoped his son Segun, to become, was a musician. But when destiny as it were, decied to point the music way to Segun Adewale, even his overbearing father became a tool to this effect. For, while Segun Adewale sat with other members of his family, every evening, in those days about 19 years ago, and his father sang and played the guitar, the lad thereby received his earliest lessons in what now becomes his "only means of livelihood".

This setting more than anything else, built in him, an uncompromising interest in the music which helped in resisting even his father's later attempts at stoping his music career. Then, Pa Joseph Adewale, thought "music was a career for drop-outs". In Segun's words, "my interest in music started in those days, when my dad gathered us in the evenings and entertained us with songs and twanged his guitar in accompaniment. While I grew-up therefore, I developed a liking for good music. Later my taste grew beyond daddy's treatment of music as a mere hobby".

So, after high school and despite his father's dream of a medical doctor son, Segun opted for the only thing he loves every much to do, music. Denied as it were, of initial support, capital or moral, he started off as an apprentice musician with a country-band called Chief S. L. Atolagbe and His Holy Rainbow.

Survival for an apprentice musician without a regular source of income in the city of Lagos, where Segun had taken refuge from his father's wrath, was a lot cumbersome. Segun says, "to keep my soul and body together, I played the motor-boy (bus-conductor) a while". But later, and with inspirations from I. K. Dairo, a local juju musician, Segun eventually opted for music, and for starters, he co-sang with Chief S. L. Atolagbe in the latter's band.

Much later, in 1973, he started his own band "the super stars band", which made a recording of an L.P. "Kogbodopa finna-finna," in the same year." This first experience as a bandleader, ended within a year. He got back however into big time music, this time as a composer and vocalist for another top juju musician, Prince Adekunle and his 'Western Brothers Band'. This, provided Segun with the much needed exposure, both at home and abroad. from a U.K. tour and constant Nigerian outings. Again, this experience ended abruptly and Segun says, "with support from my good friend, Shina Peters, I put together again, another band and called Shina-Adewale and the Super Stars International", Even that attempt too, ended sooner than expected as it became difficult for two captains to effectively steer a ship. A splinter group of this incidence is now "Segun Adewale and the Super Stars International". And the musician, Segun Adewale, hopes to storm the world with this band.

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Record Reviews

by Ian Watts



The African Dawn: Besiege The Night

THE African Dawn are a collective of five poets and artists from Zimbabwe (two), Senegal, Kenya and Ghana who fuse together different aspects of their common African cultures on a pan-African level. The group was formed in 1980 and are based in London, but take their recitals and workshops all over Britain. On this, their debut album, they perform some fourteen poems arranged to traditional African music. The scope of their material ranges from oppression and apartheid in South Africa through to the struggling peoples in El Salvador and Palestine, and also includes a poignant poem about women. The group writes all its own poems and fuse their intricate prose with traditional African instruments such as Ewe and brekete drums, mbira (thumb piano), bamboo flutes, kora, Kyenee (cowbell), and other indigenous percussion instruments. The Palestine struggle is written into a wry adaptation of the 23rd Psalm ('. . . Zionism is my shepherd . . .'), whilst 'Lewisham' recounts the horror of the murder of 13 Black children in Lewisham, south London, and re-applies it happening in Soweto, Atlanta and Brixton. Recorded and produced by the group on their own label, its strong heady message is a laxative for those with empty minds.

(AD 100)

Phyllis Hyman: Goddess Of Love

IF SINGER Phyllis had any say in her selection of the two producers here, she certainly made a good choice. Assembled together are top producers Narada Michael Walden and Thom Bell. Narada opens the album with three of his own compositions, two of which could well become disco successes; 'Riding The Tiger' and 'Goddess Of Love'. Both songs are energetic uptempo rockers that have similar features of meaty bass lines, and surging keyboard riffs, with catchy hook lines sung with passion by Phyllis. Walden's third song is the plaintive ballad 'Why Did You Turn Me On'. Thom Bell's six productions on the other hand are all carefully woven ballads with neat but subtle horn and string arrangements. He manages to project Phyllis' strong vocals from moody expression to silky tenderness as required for his arrangements with comparative ease. The best results of this are heard on 'We Should Be Lovers', 'Let Somebody Love You', and 'Falling Star'.

(Arista 205 543)

Shalamar: The Look

SHALAMAR'S long awaited follow-up album to their highly successful predecessor 'Friends', is in some ways a disappointment; it would appear that the group have decided upon a more rock and pop orientated sound, moving away from their more familiar, but predictable, disco beat. Songs like 'Dead Giveaway' the first hit single from the album, 'The Look' and 'Disappearing Act' indicate however that commercially they may be on the right track with increasing sales. Their songs have a strong rock feel with emphatic guitar riffs, pronounced keyboards and crashing drums creating disjointed rhythms. The only glimpse of the old, funkier sound is heard on 'Over And Over' a beautiful song with haunting melodies. However, lead singer Howard is in good vocal form on most songs, but particularly on the ballads 'You're The One For Me', 'Closer', 'Right Here', and 'You Won't Miss Love (Until It's Gone)'.

(Solar 960239)

Herbie Hancock: Future Shock

MUSIC and Mr Hancock never stay still for too long and the latest development in the discos has been electro-funk, a music that owes more allegiance to synthesisers and computers than anything else before. Added to this are various special effects such as electronic voices and scratching effects caused in its natural state by start/stopping records on their turntables; now it's all done by computers. Herbie's an innovative keyboard genius who's taken to this new music with great alacrity and skill and produced an early hit with the song 'Rockit'. Like most of the album it's a spacey funk song that incorporates all the new music technology of memory moog synthesisers, vocoders, synares, and emulators, which all adds up to unusual but finely textured funk. Other songs such as 'Earth Beat' have a mo melodic quality to them with th rhythm sometimes broken down, inte rupted or disjointed with instrumen and effects added and changed at wil Five of the six compositions are writte by the trio of Bill Laswell, bas Michael Beinhorn, synthesisers, an Hancock on keyboards and othe assorted electronic instruments. Th music is definitely an acquired taste tha takes time to appreciate but does have sublimal quality to it. However with th advent of the space age, the album' cover of a desolate and sparse plane deems the music much more appro priate for dancing astronauts.

(CBS 25540)

Kid Creole & The Coconuts Doppelganger

THE zany Kid and his gang are bac once more with a fun-filled action packed set of twelve non-stop songs Kid Creole's (August Darnell) band wa formed in 1980 and consists of himself the manic percussionist Coati Mund (Andy Hernandez) and three slinky female backing singers, The Coconut (one of whom is his wife). This, thei fourth album, is another compelling mix of blues, Latin American, soul and disco styles into a lively medium. The lively opening song 'The Lifeboa Party' sets the mood for 40 minutes o fun. The album has many highlights but my favourites are; the Latin carnival style 'Survivors' with its accompanying congo percussion and Spanish lyrics; the bluesy jump-up 'Call Me The Entertainer'; the highlife Afro flavoured 'There's Something Wrong In Paradise'; the soulful romp 'Seven Year Itch' and the robust singalong showbiz number 'Broadway Rhythm'. The three girls take lead vocals on 'Distractions', but most attention remains on the Kid who performs his songs with an air of brash confidence.

(Island ILPS 9743)

Dennis Brown: The Prophet Rides Again

AN INNOVATIVE new album from the crown prince of reggae. In between recording consistent hit songs for the reggae charts, Dennis assembles every few months or so a selection of music with lighter, more commercial songs for international audiences. Thus side one of this album has funky soul music aimed at the feet, whilst side two has middle weight reggae designed for the head. Dennis has such a rich soulful voice that he rides the ballads 'Save A

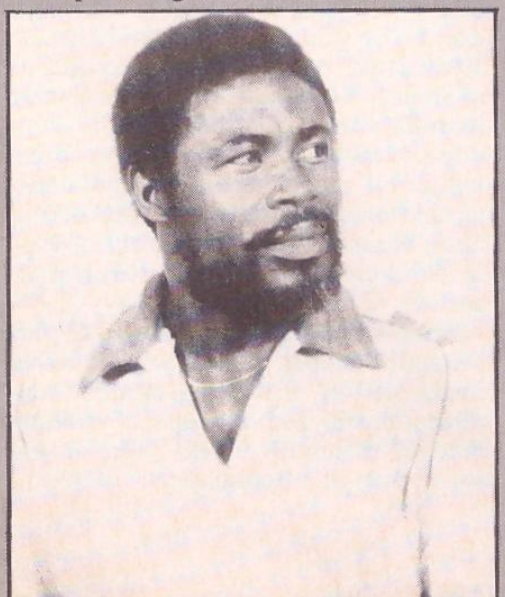
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Record Reviews

Little Love For Me', and 'Wonders Of The World' with much credit. Although on the opener 'Out Of The Funk' he does sound a little uncomfortable. It's on side two that Dennis really settles down and delivers some entertaining reggae. 'Shashamane Living (Country Living)', and 'Historical Places (Ethiopia)', which is partly sung in Amharic, were both inspired by Dennis' recent trip to Ethiopia and are dedicated to the people of Ethiopia. The top track on side two however is the excellent title track 'The Prophet Rides Again'. An album of beautiful songs.
(A & M AMLX 64964)

Mohammed Malcolm Ben: African Feeling

THIS album marks the first official release from Stern's, London's oldest established African record centre now under energetic new management. That Ben should become their first artist was entirely fortuitous and a tribute to his skills. He approached them with master tapes he'd produced in Accra at the Ghana Film Studios. Stern's liked the quality and sound of the music, and decided to bring ahead their own plans to release music on their own label. Singer and musician Ben has been making music since 1970, most notably with T O Jazz and more latterly as producer of the African Brothers band, and is also a prolific author with over 30 books to his credit. The album originally started out as a project for the African Brothers but was later changed into a solo set for Ben. It has four songs which all explore Ben's deep pan-Africanist views and it is dedicated to fallen 'Black warriors' in Africa and overseas. The opening song 'Preservation Of Humanity' concerns the growing build up of nuclear arms and calls upon the international powers to stop making missiles and instead turn to making food and create peace. The production is clean and clear with Ben singing his message over a wall of highlife rhythms. The next two numbers 'Zimbabwe' and 'Turn Me Loose' are also galloping highlife numbers led by intricate guitar playing and contain infectious horn patterns that entice and encourage dancing. The songs feature passionate vocals from Ben who argues for Namibia's independence and about countries remaining truly non-aligned once they have achieved it. The last track 'Reconciliation' once again has attractive horn patterns, but these do not overshadow Ben's singing and playing percussion and talking drums. The most striking feature of the album perhaps, is that all the lyrics are sung in English thereby allowing his music an international ear. (His earlier material with the African Brothers band was all sung in Twi). Overall the mix works well on this thoughtful first release from Stern's.
(Sterns 1001)



Sandra Reid: If Dreams Were Real

THE term lovers rock is the all embracing category that is usually applied to describe mainly female lightweight pop reggae. Although lovers rock's balmy sweetness has not appealed to all, this bright debut set from Sandra should win her many new fans. The winning factor in her music is the fine quality of her voice, and a superb production from keyboard player Anthony Brightly. Not normally an admirer of lovers rock I was impressed with Brightly's subtle mix of synthesisers, guitars and bass into a mellow wall of sound with Sandra's vocals added on top, enlivening what could have been just another lovers rock set. Her voice has a melodic edge that is noticeable on 'Ooh Boy' a popular reggae hit of last year. In addition to love themes her soulful voice also works well on heavier songs such as Bernard Collins' reggae classic 'Equal Rights', and Dennis Brown's 'Here I Come'. Other enjoyable cuts are 'Don't Go', 'Don't Tell Me Tell Her', and 'Yes I'm Ready'. An album of easy listening reggae that's not too sweet for the ears.
(SGLP 001)

John Holt: Police In Helicopter

JOHN HOLT was the quintessential reggae balladeer of the mid-1970s. His lush reggae songs became classics appealling to all ages. With this new set, Holt has undergone a complete metamorphosis. Gone are the flashy shirts and smart afros only to be replaced by dreadlocks and ganja, as pictured on the cover of this new album. Naturally his music has undergone a similar change. The title track, a popular hit in the reggae charts, tells the story of a massive crackdown on ganja farmers by police and soldiers in militant fashion, whilst John threatens retribution by burning down the sugar cane crop. The whole scenario is played over a lethal rhythm supplied by the Roots Radics Band. In the producer's chair is Henry 'Junjo' Lawes who always manages to get the best out of the Radics as well as his singers. John still sounds deceptively smooth though whether he is singing Rasta numbers ('Reality' and 'Chanting') or love songs ('Private Doctor'), nor the irreverent 'Beach Party'. His inimitable vocals are given good backing harmonies from Al Campbell, Tony Tuff and the Tamlins. Some tracks are rather average but on the whole it's a welcome return from Holt in fine stylee.
(Greensleeves GREL 58)

Donald Byrd: The Blue Note Collection

DONALD Byrd is one of Jazz music's greatest trumpeters with a dazzling career that spans some thirty years and includes playing alongside such luminaries as Art Blakey and Thelonius Monk. Between 1973 and 1976 he compiled five albums for the legendary Blue Note label that pioneered the art of fusing jazz with what is now known as funk. At the time this new style was treated with bewilderment and horror by some jazz 'purists' unused to seeing their music mixed so freely with new forms. Nowadays of course it has become an accepted norm and new styles keep the music changing. From those five albums fifteen tracks have been carefully selected as being representational of that era onto this double album. Some people will no doubt be familiar with the track listing, whilst for others it will be a nostalgic review of an interesting era. The tracks include: 'Places And Spaces'; 'Where Are We Going'; 'Wild Life'; 'Changes (Makes You Want To Hustle)'; 'Wind Parade'; an abridged version of the Temptations' classic 'Just My Imagination'; and a live version of the seminal jazz-funk classic '(Falling Like) Dominoes'. Altogether it's a marvellous selection of music with Donald featured on trumpet, flugelhorn and some solo vocals with not a blue note in sight.
(Liberty LCSP 1867013)

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● *Continued from p.19*

chords but still relying on the vocals for its melody."

This is Seguns' attempt at internationalising his music, borne on the belief that "juju music, has over the years appeared domant because of its players little attempt at cutting across frontiers".

To keep up his particular beat, Segun not only composes his songs, but arranges and produces them. He believes however, that specialisation in these various stages of music making, will go a long way to boost sound production particularly and the music industry generally. The musician then spoke extensively on juju music. He says, "a thorough understanding of the Yoruba language is a major contention in juju music playing. Its proverbial lyrics make it almost impossible to b sung in any other language effectively. He however agrees, that "if melody i maintained, foreign languages coul effectively go well in juju". That, in hi belief, depends on the calibre of th musicians concerned.

He attributes, the present juju break through in the international market t "the stage-craft and modern adaptation of today's juju musician, who more tha anything else, now add the like of th pop stars stage craft to their hithert drab styles, in order to appeal to wester tastes". With such energeti performance, backed up with its juic rhythms, juju music will definitel blaze the trail for a long time to come

Segun's adventurism into leasing band started two and a half years ag and within this period he says "I hav played night club engagements an most important, toured extensivel within the country". Furthe commenting on Nigerian musician' road performance, he says "promoter here are too profit oriented. in a bid t achieve the big profit margin, th audience is often left out o considerations thereby creating a ba image for the artiste in terms o audience reactions".

As a lasting solution, the musicia feels that there must be a good under standing between the artiste and thei promoters, and what is more, terms o signed agreement, must be kept to th letter".

Meanwhile and pending such a tim that artiste / management relationshi would improve. Segun now operates hi own records label, "Segun Adewal Records" which has a lot of suppor from Alhaji M. Ola Kazzim, owner o Mut-Mukson Records company, tha nurtured Segun to his present stand an Segun implores recording companies, t seize the golden chance already lai down by Sunny Ade and Islan Records, to project Juju music outsid of Africa. This, he said, "would ensur its solid acceptance in the west".

He would, personally, do everythin within his capacity, to prove to the res of the world that the Sunny Ade myth i not a 'flash in the pan'. And that "there is definitely more and hotter stuff from home".

From someone who has vowed to play music for as long as he lives, the world might yet be witnessing another juju phenomenon and perhaps a stronger hold of the music called juju, on the world map of entertainment. □

Segun Adewale's Discography

by Ndubuisi Okwechime

SEGUN ADEWALE has at least seven long playing records to his credit. A break down of some of these releases reveals a progressive effort by the musician to achieve a definite standard. A random sampling of five of these albums, including the latest, runs thus:

First, Mut-Moksons Trading Company, Ltd, remains the artiste's sole distributor.

The album titled *'OPE YE BABA'* SARP1 and includes the hit tune — *OLUGBALA SALABOMI,* is played along the typical juju line. That is, a back ground of tenor and rhythm guitars harmony, augumented by heavily charged bass riffs and rhythmically sustained by the group of taling drums which maintained a steady beat with occassional improvisation from the lead drummer.

Mention must also be made of Segun's melodious voice in rendering the lyrics throughout the album duration. The title track OPE YE BABA was delivered with much dexterity that confirms Segun's singing talent.

The occassional guitar solo and fine application of the trap drums gives the production a jazzy feeling while at the same time confirming Segun's production role.

A second album, *SARP 2* is a slight improvement from the first, with the noticeable change in the inclusion of guitar synthesizers.

In this album the guitar solo is more frequently introduced while the trap drums now plays a complimentary role with the bass line. The vocals remain the same, marvelously keeping up the melody of play.

There is also the album title *IRAWO TIWA LODE, VERSE 9.* This is more of the Yoruba blues type. In it all the instruments combine beautifully while retaining the laid down rhythm.

The back ground guitar works are punctuated here and there, with soft pads of both the trap and talking drums.

However, somewhere in the album there is a change of tempo to suit the lyrical melody.

A fourth album which marks the beginning of Segun's new creation, *YOPOP*, is titled *ENDURANCE* and labelled SARP3. This album is a reminder of Fela's a frobeat as the bassline now takes — up the role of keeping a steady beat, from the talking drums. The beautiful use of the tenor guitar is also a step on the Afrobeat direction.

Again in this album particularly on the Side B, the native blues rhythm is evoked with a lot of lead ballard singing frequently augumented with sonorous choruses. The bass and the drums creditably maintained a regular tempo all through the album.

The fifth album reviewed is his latest *ASE (AMEK)* SARP 5 with a special track dedicated to the nation Nigeria.

This is easily the best effort so far made at internationalising his music. Segun employs a lot of the unwritten style of jazz especially with ever playing synthesizer guitars in the back ground, mingling effectively with the marccas (shekere) and agogo (cowbell). In this album, allowance was made for a drum solo, perhaps to provide danceability.

The outstanding part of the album probably is the Side B, which include the title track *ASE*. Here there was a modern transformation of the popular Yoruba 'Dadakuada' music. Perhaps a further attempt at indigenising the music came in the use of local sing-songs as the mainstream of guitar works. Expectedly the tempo here is a little bit fast.

The title track *ASE*, tries a fusion of the 'dadakuada' rhythm with afrobeat. The result is a slower tempo with a marked resemblance to the Yoruba masquarade festival rhythms. This effort wins a wider acceptance as many indigene will find something to take away from it.

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Piracy War Hots Up

by John Kariuki

FOR THE first time in its piracy fighting the international federation of producers of phonograms and videograms is now looking at Africa as an endangered region and listed the continent as an intensive area of anti-piracy combat.

Stating this, the IFPIs, anti piracy co-ordinator Mick Edwards who was in Nairobi earlier this year to have an on the spot check on the extent of piracy in Kenya and advise the local IFPI body on measures to counter the increasing piracy menance in the country, warned that failure to take swift action at this stage could mean the demise of the Kenya record business as a viable trade.

During his short stay in Kenya, Edwards attended an urgent meeting convened by the national body in which record producers agreed to sign a letter of compliance with the IFPIs code of conduct, pledging not to engage in any acts of copyright infringment.

In the meeting it was agreed that the fight could not be won without the cooperation of all involved in the record trade, whose actions have at times directly or indirectly encouraged the perpetuation of piracy acts.

The four hour long meeting was told of certain established record producers suspected of engaging in acts of piracy most of them using high speed cassette copiers to duplicate music from both record and cassettes.

Mick Andrews, Kenya's national chairman was later to say that it is evident from the meeting that most of the local record producers have known more about the piracy activities than they have cared to say. But we hope that from now on, all producers will assist in the anti piracy war.

He then went on to critise a generally advanced view that piracy only affected the major companies with huge foriegn catalogue and said that there was evidence to show that the sales even on locally produced product had suffered as a result of the increases on counterfeiting.

A victory against piracy, he said is a victory for all, adding "all we are striving for is the restoration of a healthy business climate in the record industry". During the same meeting, the government was called upon to join the anti piracy battle with the federation officials citing the huge losses on sales tax, import duties and government revenues.

Concern was drawn on to the fact that despite the amendment of the copyright act early last year introducing prison sentence for offenders, there was still no police action on the fight against counterfeiters.

The meeting expressed hope that the criminal investigation department in the Kenya police would step in and assist in the battle.

Much of the local piracy has been through copying the records onto cassettes or cassette to cassettes with record industry estimates putting the extent of piracy as chipping close to 50 per cent of the total record business.

On the foriegn catalogue the industry has over the years experienced an ever increasing flood of high quality pirate records and cassettes most of them smuggled into the country from the Far East and the Middle East, but the IFPI has been unable to ascertain their actual source.

The flow of counterfiets increased after the government ban a year ago of record and cassette importation and several in local music shop openly displayed pirate records and cassettes both recorded and blanks.

Alarming upswing

In a press conference afterwards, the anti piracy coordinator analysed the piracy growth in the African continent terming it as alarming and on the upswing. Nigeria he said leads in the rate of piracy with the industry there, losing close to 75 per cent of business to counterfeiters. In view of the seriousness of the situation there he said, the IFPI has opened a full time anti piracy co-ordination office ran by an IFPI official with services of a full-time lawyer.

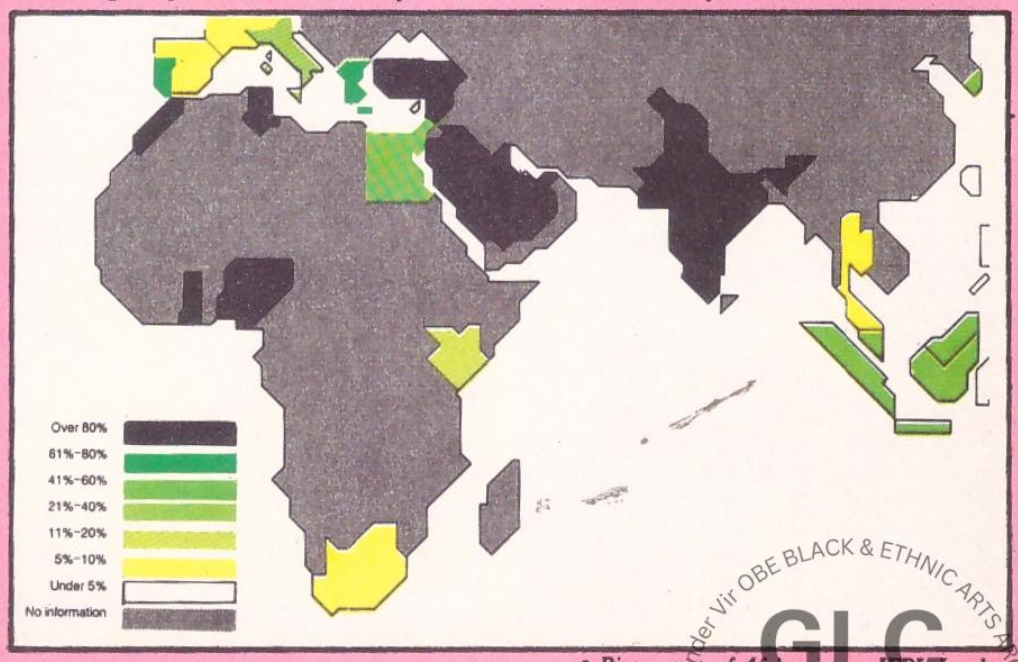
Political hostilities among African countries was also said to have a hand in aiding the growth of piracy in the African region. Inter-state piracy he said is very much alive in Africa as it is in other continents, and we are hoping for increased inter governmental co-operation in fighting it.

It was gathered that the Egyptian government has a standing 250 man anti piracy squad.

The federations biggest task now he said was to persuade governments in African countries to take a more active role in fighting what is generally considered as the scourge of the record industry.

AIT Records

Mick Andrews who is also the Managing Director of AIT records has done a trimming job on his record company by chopping off the companys distribution wing. He said that from April, all the company's catalogue will be distributed through Polygram. Refuting widely circulated rumours that the company was selling out, Andrews clarified that the move would not alter the companys functions in Kenya record industry. □



• *Piracy map of Africa source: IFPI, London*

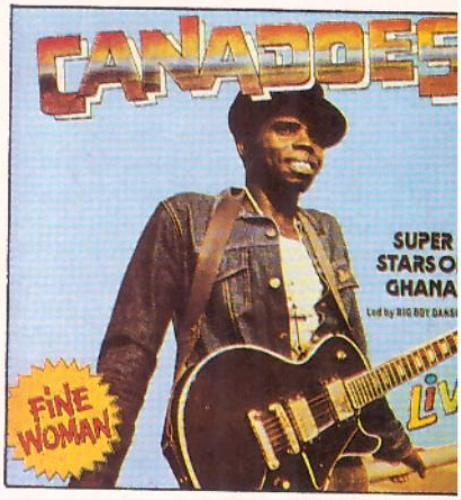
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Rogers All Stars

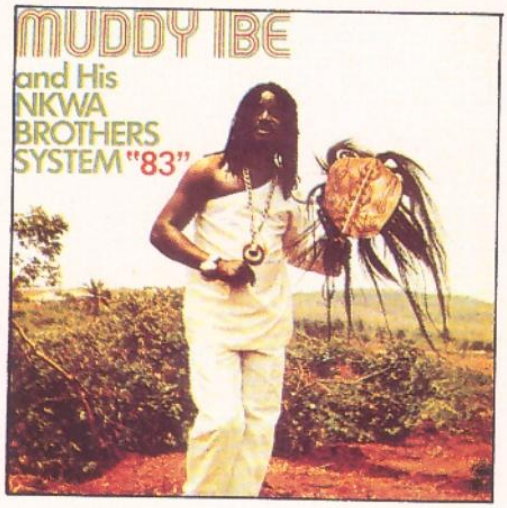
Super Group

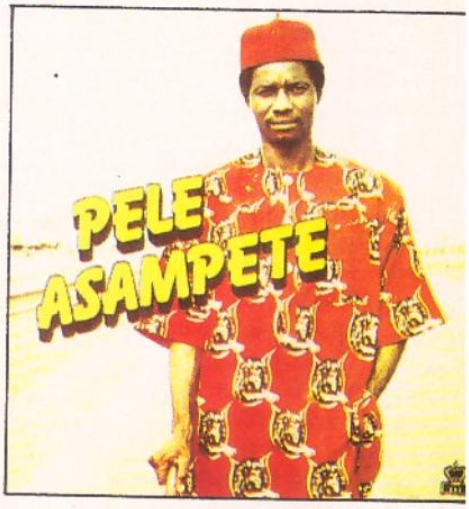




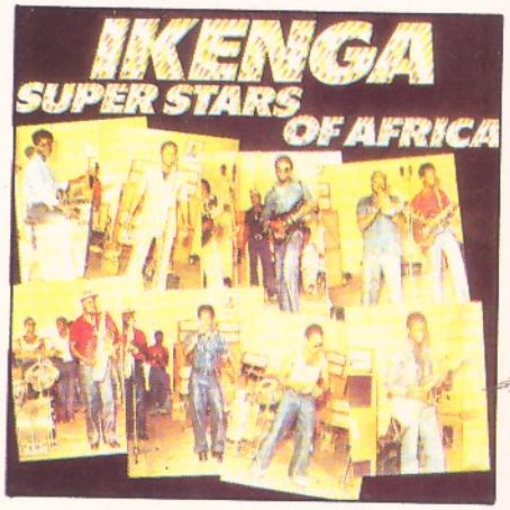


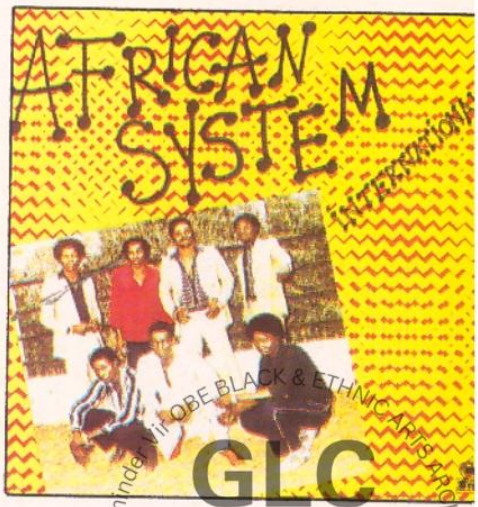












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The Rogers success story

IT is not in every case that very sophisticated and highly organised recording studios are sited in the urban areas in Nigeria. In the village of Umuokpu, in Awka local government area of Anambra state of Nigeria, is located an ultra modern 24-32 track recording studio of Rogers All Star recording company. The man behind the Rogers success story is a dynamic young man of 37, Chief R E Okonkwo — the Ide of Umuokpu. The recording company, which was incorporated in 1977, did not start full recording until about 1979.

Ever since then, the company has been able to produce and market the records of great artists like Prince Nico Mbanga, Pete Asampete, Okukuseku later national band of Ghana and a host of other artists.

Through the tireless efforts of the Managing Director, Chief Okonkwo, the company has succeeded in making some breakthrough in the international markets, particularly in France, The United States, and the UK. Parading very experienced and capable hands in their studio, like John Malife, the engineer in charge, who was formally with DECCA; Remmy Njoku, formally with Tabansi records, and a chain of others, Rogers All Star recording company has made more strides in their few years of existence than most of the older recording companies.

According to Chief Okonkwo, the company has very serious plans in the pipeline for expansion, and to include waxing of their products within the next two years.

With the help of the company, most of the hidden talents in our localities are now being discovered, encouraged and promoted. Chief R E Okonkwo, the MD is married with four kids, of three boys and a girl.

A one time music star, he organized the Kenya superstars of the early 70s. He is widely travelled, and is a registered member of the Mechanical Copyright Protection Society Ltd of London (MCPS) and also has most of his artists as members of the PMAN and SASEM.

At the rate the company is moving the sky is going to be its limit.

Nkem Obu.

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Lady Asabia strikes gold



AFTER so many years of hard work Eugenia Asabia Cropper suddenly emerged to become one of Ivory Coast's top stars. She was put to a strenous voice test, critically analysed, passed with distinction and warmly embraced by the Ivorian public, young and old despite her being Ghanaian.

A video screened specially for me proved this. Asabia has finally made it! Clad in the rich Ghanaian traditional kente outfit, with her soprano sax tucked majestically under her armpit to be used when the need arises, she turned on thousands of people including the Ivorian President himself at the 3rd Golf Meeting show in Yamoussokro (the President's village) on 4th March 1983 and proved her merit as a talented singer. She indeed made Ghana proud! AFRICA MUSIC Special Correspondent ERIC ASHIE II was recently granted an interview with 26 year old Asabia at her Abidjan home. Excerpts:

AM: For how long have you been in the music business?

AS: For ten years now. I started professional music at the age 18. Before then my elder brother Eugene was playing for some groups in Accra and I frequently jammed with them to give my first kicks. I later had the chance to visit Togo where I did sessions with some popular Ghanaian musicians at Pussycat Night Club. The crowd appreciated my performances and that was the beginning of my career.

AM: What happened after that?

AS: I got picked up by the Sweet Talks and was brought back to Accra to be signed on for 2 years. I toured Ivory Caost with the group during this time. After my contract I joined the Black Hustlers and again came to the Ivory Coast only to be discovered by one Daniel Cuxac, President of Disco Stock International Consult, a record producing firm and got signed on immediately for recording. Daniel actually did a good job on me. For two solid years he moulded me into a formidable act before taking me to the studios to record my debut album.

AM: What brand of music do you specialise in?

AS: Refined highlife I will call it. The material on my debut album delves into the depths of the music of the people of Ghana. It is a tribute to all ancient musicians who boldy went out to experiment, mold and improve our music for the enjoyment of Africa and the world. For a time in the recent past Ghanaian musician has gone out of his way to exploit and experiment new ideas in music. But there was something always missing in the music — the traditional touch has been lacking. It is my ardent wish therefore to go back to the roots of our forebearers to collect what material I could lay hands on to refine and bring it back before the world once more.

AM: Have you had the chance of travelling outside the Ivory Coast with your music since you released the first album?

AS: Oh, I have had so many chances but I am not prepared for that now.

AM: Why is that?

AS: The reason is that I do not want to play with musicians who could not understand my type of music. I would prefer musicians who are more inclined to the highlife music no matter which part of Africa they come from, and not until I get hold a set of them I would prefer to say out. My brother Eugene and I are planning to purchase a set of musical equipment to enable us have a permanent outfit.

AM: Your brother... are you into this business with him musically or is he here to manage your affairs only?

AS: Both. Eugene has been so dear to me I don't even know how to express my gratitude. He has worked hours on end daily to help arrange my music and manage my affairs in all aspects. He has really been the greatest inspiration behind my success, not forgetting Koo Nimo who had it not been him I wouldn't have switched on from copyright music to my own creations, Mr Niikewi an ancient master musician who helped considerably in releasing my debut album and a host of other Ghanaian musicans.

AM: Have you been undertaking any live performances in the Ivory Coast?

AS: Quite a lot. After the album has been released, I had the chance to do so many live shows. Even of late I performed together with other Ivorian stars in Yamoussokro the Ivorian President's village during a Golf meeting.

AM: Do you play any musical instrument apart from singing?

AS: Yes, I play the Soprano Sax.

AM: That is very surprising! Who taught you how to play?

AS: I first learnt to play the flute when I was very young. But it was in Germany when we went on a tour that I picked the soprano sax after our hornsmen deserted us. It was Eugene who encouraged me to do it and I have not regretted a bit.

AM: Do you play during concerts?

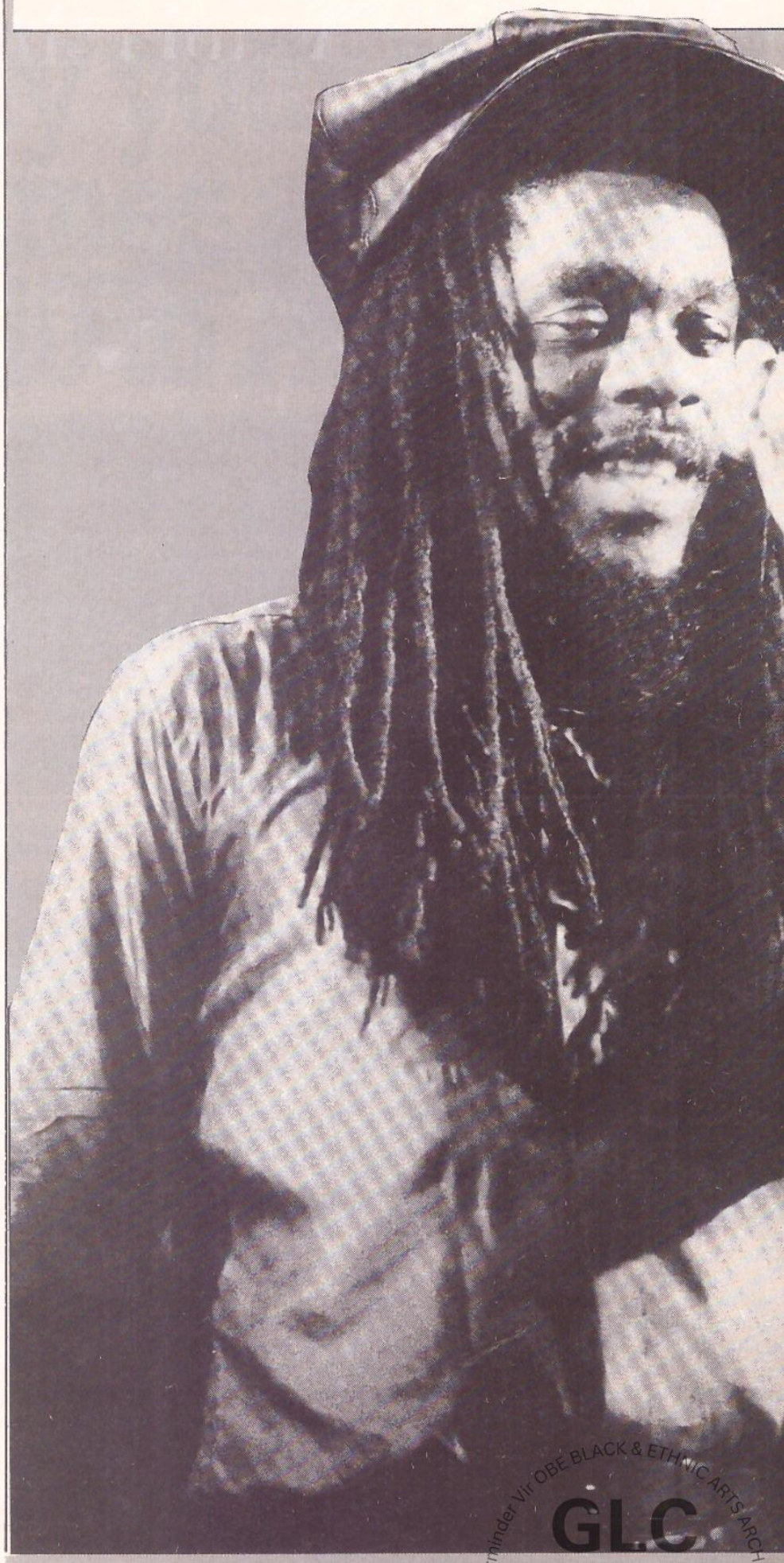
AS: Oh yes! I am a master on it now and I tell you, people marvel when they watch me perform.

● *Continued on p.28*

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• *Continued from p.27*

AM: Are you married?
AS: No I am not. I will when the right guy comes my way.
AM: How long have you been signed on by Disco Stock Int. Consult?
AS: For 2 years.
AM: Are there plans to export your music?
AS: Yes. In the US, Europe and other African countries
AM: What is the sales trend like locally?
AS: It is selling hot and I feel really proud about it all.
AM: Have you plans of releasing another album in the near future?
AS: Oh, I'm sorry I have not yet told you about my second release with Sam Manguana and Jimmy Hyacithe. It was released in January this year, and is also doing fine in the charts.
AM: Eugene, what are your musical plans. Do you plan to go solo as well now that your sister has made it?
EU: I have decided to go solo but that would be outside the Ivory Coast.
AM: I am surprised Eugene, I would have stayed on to help my sister if I were to be in your shoes.
AU: Well... I would give it another thought.
AM: Good! What have you to say to this Asabia?
AS: Look Eric, I need Eugene more than anyone else so if he decided to stay and help me I think I would get to higher heights.
AM: Which part of Ghana do you come from?
AS: I am a Ga-Adangbe and comes from Krobo in the Greater Accra Region.
AM: Which female singer in Ghana do you admire most?
AS: Charlotte Dada.
AM: What are your views about Ivorian musicians and how are you cooperating with them musically?
AS: They are not bad to work with at all. They are very kind and are always ready to help when the need arises. There are few competitors here and there but as I said before I do my own thing and I'm very content about the crowd's appreciation.
AM: Could you mention some of these musicians you admire?
AS: Look, I dig the lot of them. They are all great to me.
AM: Do you wish to go home one day to contribute your quota to the arts?
AS: Of course! I left home to learn and gain more experience and so when I feel fully satisfied with my aim I would go back and help. □



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Dennis Brown: Crossing Over

by Michele Churchill

DENNIS BROWN is enjoying a good deal of success at present. Not only with "Love Has Found Its Way", but with a whole string of singles released on various labels, local and import. Two of them, "Lovelight" on his own Yvonne's Special label, and "A Little Bit More" on the Joe Gibbs label, were featured in reggae charts, while "Hold On To What You've Got" on Sly and Robbie's Taxi label and Island Records re-release of "Sitting and Watching" sold very well. Incredibly, all of these records reflect the high standards we've come to expect of Denis Brown.

For a man who has been singing professionally for nearly two decades, it is not a matter of overnight success. Even so, Dennis is amazed at how quickly the public has responded to "Love Has Found Its Way". He told *Africa Music* correspondent Michelle Churchill:

"I was visiting London, with no plans to do shows, and I really didn't expect the record to happen so fast — it took me completely by surprise. The vibe was so tremendous, with people asking me to do shows all over the place, so I decided to play.

"Usually, I tour with a nine-piece band, but I felt it would take too long to send for then, so I decided to rehearse and play with the Studio One Band, who were in town backing Freddie McGregor."

Sadly, such a show presents something of an organisational nightmare and doesen't look like happening. However, Dennis's last two shows, planned for Brixton, were advertised as featuring an equally impressive lineup of singers, including some of the Studio One singers plus the marvellous Ijahman Levi and superbly talented Johnny Clarke. Since Dennis signed with A & M Records, he has released two albums — "Foul Play" and the recent "Love Has Found Its Way" — and both indicate he is moving into the "soul" field.

New York Funk

"When I go into a recording studio now, I have to record A & M. They tell me what they want and I try to reach that height, that level or whatever. On 'Foul Play' we tried to inject something of the New York funk sound and still keep a 'roots' feel, whilst on 'Love Has Found Its Way', I think there is a song for everyone's taste. It is not a compromise for me or for the musicians. Most of the musicians involved are always seeking for something new as well and they can play almost anything and make it sound like the original."

Nevertheless, Dennis is concerned about the "roots" market: "I cannot forget them, even if they are the minority. But what they want is to hear me sing over bass and drums. They will still get hold of the bass and drum tracks and create 'dubs', not to release, but to play on the sound systems at dances."

This may not make such sense to anyone who in unfamiliar with the way the Jamaican music scene works. For instance, listen to what Dennis has to say about some of his unreleased songs: "I have a lot of material that is recorded, but not released. People in Jamaica get hold of the drum and bass tracks of these sessions to make dub plates and play them at dances. Then, when people start asking for these records and can't buy them, they get hold of the music and lyrics as well, and get someone to make cover versions. All the money goes into their pockets, and none into mine."

Such a practice would not be possible in America, England or in most other countries, but as Dennis says: "The recording industry in Jamaica is unique. There is nothing like it anywhere. It is something unbelievable." For many reggae lovers, it is this extraordinary, anarchic behaviour which makes reggae, in all its guises, so appealing, and it is for this reason that many reggae fans feel concerned when one of their favourite artists signs a deal with a so-called legitimte, Western-orientated record company. Dennis is very clear as to why he made such a decision:

Roots market

"I have never sold so many records in all my life, never had so much recognition. Selling records is the main thing and that is where my head is at now. But, as I've already said, I do not want to forget the 'roots' market and that is why I have put 'Lovelight' out on my own label. To be frank, there are certain dances where you will not hear a song like 'Love Has Found Its Way', but you would hear a song like 'Lovelight' — it has a more rootsy feel."

Another advantage of having signed with a major company is that it allows Dennis to do large-scale American tours, which require a lot of money up-front: "Last year we did 42 shows in 10 weeks in America, playing 31 cities. A & M subsidised the tour, which was good, and this helped us to cope. On tour, you always have problems, but despite all the problems and the hangups, we still managed to carry the tour through.

"We played the last date with Third World in Toronto, Canada. Bob (Marley) had just died and reggae had become even more infectious. Like cancer, it started spreading all over." Dennis agreed that there are pockets of reggae in almost every City these days and added:

"But the fans are not just Jamaicans. There are Jamaicans hanging out in certain cities, but most cities we played the audience were Americans. In fact, we find at most our concerts, it is not only blacks... there is a mixed audience and the whole atmosphere is good, because there is no prejudice on racialism there."

There are Rastas who would not appreciate these sentiments, and even some who totally equate white people with Babylon: "You do have a lot of Rastafarians who try to be really hard, and come down hard on people without understanding. With understanding, if one is living in terms of the Bible, you would know there is only one body of people called the Twelve Tribes of Israel, which really accepts everyone.

'In my Father's House, there are many mansions and everyone that is called by His Name, Jah Rastafari! They say'to know is the greatest thing'. A lot of these bredrens may not have done their research properly. We all know that we have been through hell- our fore-parents have been through hell, through your ancestors and so forth, but we understand why it happened and we give praises for existing now. We are being accepted now. Equal rights and respect stand for everyone — that means regardless of colour, race or creed. Equal rights is still the urge.

"Wherever you go in the world Canada! Israel is there; New York! Israel is there Grenada! Israel is there.

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We are gathering together — we do not come to fight skin, flesh and blood, but spiritual wickedness in high and low places. So it is just a matter of lacking that knowledge, which is the greatest thing."

Happy-go-lucky

I felt compelled to press Dennis on the subject of Haile Selassie, as the Rasta belief in the divinity of Haile Selassie is the main cause of concern for African people who feel otherwise drawn to the Rasta way. As for the people who criticise Selassie, Dennis says:

"There is a saying that a King is never honoured in his own country, and maybe what people expect of you is not what you're doing. A lot of people are just happy-go-lucky and expect because you are in a position to do so and so, you must just hand it down to them.

But the prophesy in the Bible shows that, by the sweat of a man's brow, he will eat bread. A lot of people want things 'easy come, easy go' and are not prepared to put in all that effort to reap the sweetness of their labour and you find, nine times out of ten, that it is those people who belittle-others because of their own stubborn-ness, their own stiffnecked-ness... (Dennis realised there was a certain harsh edge to what he was saying, paused then broke into a compassionate laugh)... So give praises to them, because a man is a fool to the things he doesn't know. Have pity on them and hope they will pick up their errors.

Talk of "kingly characters" brought Gregory Isaacs to mind. Gregory had said very nice things about Dennis when speaking to *Africa Music* earlier last year. What did Dennis have to say about Gregory?

Dennis laughs: "The same things he said about me. He is like my adviser... he is always advising me. Actually, he was the first person to open my eyes, not in one way, but in more ways than one... and I give thanks to him for that... and success for him always. He is a... a brother."

Finally, I told Dennis that it seemed he had adapted well to his "legitimate" record company, A & M, but I wanted to know how they had adapted to him:

"I think I am the type of person they can get along with very easily... as a person, not only just as a musician. I have been around the American A & M people more, and they can relate to me and I can relate to them quite easily. I just try to make myself available. I think we cope well." □

The Temptations: Surface Thrills

THE Temptations have been together a long time now: they have out-lived six American presidents, the Vietnam war, the high-days of Motown, and the disco-explosion. The Tempts sang about lost loves, discrimination, political corruption, and about 'partying-down'. These songs are now classics and the group has become an institution, a part of the American culture. In 1982 many rediscovered the Tempts due to a reunion they had with 2 former members, David Ruffin and Eddie Kendricks.

The reunited group toured the United States from coast to coast and also released a 'Reunion' -LP which became a super-success album. The song 'Standing on the Top' was released as a single and scored high on many chart-lists throughout America. The Tempts came together at the beginning of the sixties. Eddie Kendricks and Paul Williams (who died at a young age) came from Birmingham (Alabama) to Detroit hoping to bring their old group the Primes back together.



In Motown-city they came into contact with Otis Williams, Melvin Franklin and Elbridge Bryant former members of the Otis Williams & the Distants band. Together they formed a group, The Temptations. 'In 1963, Bryant left the group and was replaced by David Ruffin. The group's first hit 'The Way You Do the Things You Do' was produced by the talented youngman Bill Robinson, better known as 'Smokey'.

The hit 'The Way You Do' was the beginning of a period in which good music was produced. The songs 'My Girl' and 'Get Ready' undoubtedly call up cherished memories among many Temptations fans. Hundreds of groups were inspired by The Tempts: they imitated their act and their sound. And why not, everyone knew that The Tempts were the best. Years went by, and two members of the original formation, David Ruffin and Eddie Kendricks, chose for a solo-career. Paul Williams committed suicide in 1972.

Advertisements were placed for three new members. The replacements turned out to be great admirers of the group and were willing to do anything to keep the Tempts in existence. Dennis Edward, who joined the group in 1968, considered his predecessor, David Ruffin, to be his greatest example. Damon Harris, with The Tempts since 1971, worshipped Eddie Kendricks to such an extent that he did everything possible to resemble Eddie. Damon even smelled like Kendricks.

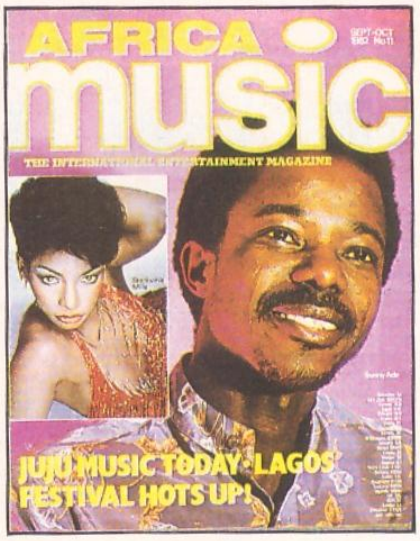
Glen Leonard saw his boyhood-dream come true in 1975. Along the years, The Tempts have worked with various well-known producers such as, Smokey Robinson, Berry Gordy and Thom Bell. Producer Norman Whitfield was the big man behind the all-time successes 'Papa Was a Rolling Stone' and 'Masterpiece'. These songs caused radical changes in the existing norms of that period.

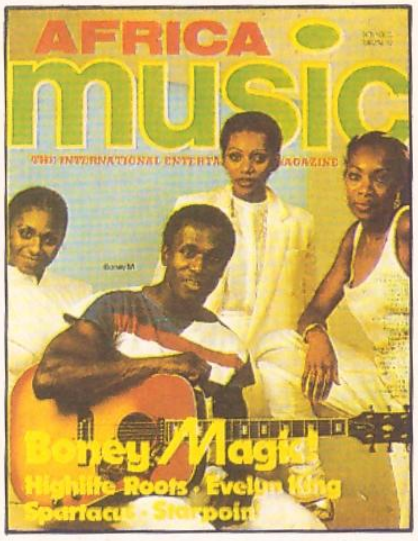
The new Lp 'Surface Thrills' has just been released. This album proves that The Tempts are keeping up with the times. The title-song is a rock-orientated number. The ballad 'Love on My Mind Tonight' will also be released as a single. The up-tempo title 'One Man Woman', 'The Seeker', 'Bring Your Body Here' and 'Made in America' show that The Tempts are reaching back to their roots. In short, super-soul from a legendary super-group. Eddie Kendricks and David Ruffin are back again on their solo-route, but the magic is still present among The Tempts of 1983. □

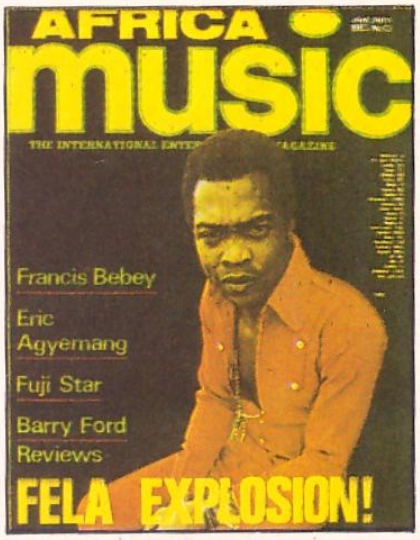
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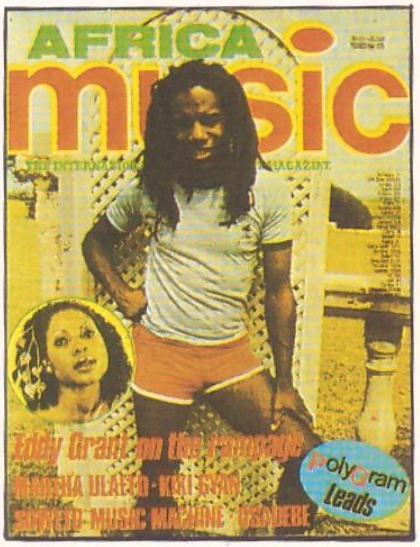
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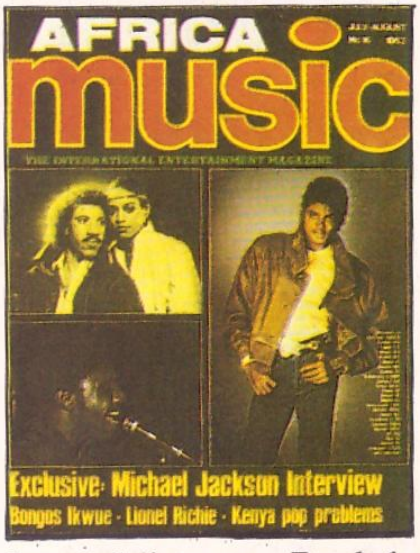












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