

insight&sound

NEW YORK—REGGAE: ONLY A MOTION AWAY (PART 1)

(There's a new kind of music in the air. And it has reached the States via Paul Simon and Paul McCartney. The Musical form is known as Reggae, and with the summer of '72 just around the corner, it could easily blossom into a major musical happening. Part one of this two part series will endeavor to discuss some of the background elements of Reggae, while the concluding segment will delve into the artists, groups and personalities responsible for developing that musical form. Series will conclude next week.)

It's always difficult to describe a new kind of music. Especially, a kind of music that really must be felt to be appreciated. We're all familiar with Jazz and Blues because those forms had their roots planted in American soil. Because those forms have been around now for years. But Reggae (pronounced reg-gay) is quite different. Reggae music takes root in Jamaica. It is, basically, likened to country music only in that a majority of all the Reggae songs will deal with telling a story or relating a personal experience. Very little time is devoted to philosophy, politics or environment as is characterized by much of our own music.

The tempo of most Reggae songs never vary. One can best get the feeling of the Reggae tempo by thinking of a metronome with the pendulum swinging smoothly and precisely to and fro. Never varying. Always keeping the exact timing-gracefully. And almost mechanical. In fact, Reggae songs, because of their precision, always sound like perfect recordings when in album form. They sound as though great care was taken to produce each track—but in actuality, each group is capable of producing this tightness 'live' by assigning each member of the group a specific musical function.

HOLLYWOOD—RICHARD NADER: ROCK AND ROLL IS HERE TO STAY

In town for a couple of days, readying things for last week's opening of his Rock and Roll Spectacular at the Flamingo hotel in Las Vegas, promoter Richard Nader was able to devote an hour to **Cash Box** and breakfast. In, as it turned out, that order. Nader is a busy person. In the process of being polite and informative to us, he spent far too little time on the Continental Hyatt House's kosher bacon and eggs (this is, after all, Hollywood).

The Flamingo engagement is Nader's first excursion into Las Vegas; he feels that the city will attract exactly the right audience for his nostalgia-filled presentations. "We're using the Nevada Room. It's not the main room or the lounge, it's the convention room; larger than either. We're setting up tables and chairs in a cabaret-style arrangement, and will be able to seat 2,200." Featured acts are **Chuck Berry**, **Bo Diddley**, the **Shirelles** and **Gary "U.S." Bonds**.

Later this year, Nader will have four revival shows on the road simultaneously, including his first European tour. He has certain stars, who will headline, and books the remaining acts accordingly. A show with **Chuck Berry** or **Little Richard** topping, for instance, would possibly feature more black acts than one headed by **Jerry Lee Lewis**, whose show would be more country-rock oriented.

Nader has had his share of problems with the mammoth spectaculars; arguments over billing are far from rare, and there's an occasional artist who wants to present new material. "What they don't realize is that the fans have come to hear the old songs. When a performer tries to present his 'new side' to them, they become very resentful. The audience also demands a high degree of professionalism from the acts. If there's a lot of fooling around between numbers, the audience just won't stand for it.



Paul Simon: The new



Richard Nader: The old

To get a more defined analysis of Reggae music, I spoke with **Les Harsten** of Leslee Productions who had visited Jamaica several times during the past three months to record both Jamaican and American artists. Based on his conversations with many of the top Reggae groups with whom he had been working, Harsten had these comments to make about the nature of Reggae music: "Reggae could be defined as an original form of Jamaican music characterized by an intense, personal and emotional expression and a driving rhythmic force. Though the songs are usually personal, lots of symbolism is used as is evidenced by the song "Meagre Dog" done by **Byron Lee** and the **Dragonaires** in which one best friend turns on another—thus, 'meagre dog turn around and bite you. . . ."

"The rhythm of Reggae music," Harsten continued, "is consistently medium tempo, almost swaying, and the driving rhythmic forces are produced by having the group members use lots of simple instrumentation such as striking a break drum with a drum stick. Also effective are their use of the percussion instruments such as tambourine, maraccas and wood blocks."

Though Reggae music is by no means new, its presence will soon be felt in full force during the coming months. Already, three major artists, **Paul Simon** (Mother & Child Reunion, Me & Julio Down By The Schoolyard); **The Rolling Stones** (Sweet Black Angel); and **Paul McCartney** (Love Is Strange) have given us a taste of their interpretations of Reggae.

Next week's story will explore many of the more popular Jamaican Reggae bands and will discuss how Reggae has developed in Jamaica and what future it has in America.

kenny kerner

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We asked Nader the future of the rock revival trend. "It won't last. Something new happens every ten years, and it's always on the fourth year of the decade. Rock and roll came along about that time in the fifties, and **The Beatles** hit in 1964. I was ready to bring along the Rock and Roll Spectaculars then but had to wait until the British Invasion died down. By the fourth year, people have settled into the decade, and the styles for the ten years can be pretty well set. Fashions, entertainment, everything." Preparing, then, for the 1974 apocalypse, Nader has a number of non-rock revival projects under way, none of which he is in any particular hurry to discuss at this point.

todd everett

CASH BOX'S TOP HYPES OF THE WEEK—Contrary to what you may have read elsewhere, there is more than one female master cutter at work in the U.S. Two here in Los Angeles are the Hersch sisters, Hildegard and Christina. Originally from Germany, where they worked in studios, they came to L.A. to seek their fortunes. Hildegard now works at Capitol, and Christina at United Artists. Christina is the master-cutter of the two. She works on many U.A. projects and does a lot of **Ike Turner's** custom work, according to **Dino Lappas**, studio chief. Christina also mixes and is responsible for the current **Monk Higgins** single.

Doug Williams has opened his Hound Dog Studios, allegedly the only recording studio in Topanga Canyon. It's currently 8-track, with eight more being added in the near future.

Michael Ochs has resigned from his position as manager of west coast publicity for Columbia Records. He has held the job for three years. In an exclusive **Cash Box** interview, Ochs revealed his plans to become ". . . a professional surfer." When surf's down, Ochs explained, he will continue as west coast editor of **Crawdaddy**. He is also working to complete a book ". . . on the industry."

Hardwick, disk jockey on Seattle's KVI, has left the city with a party of 50 listeners for a three-week photographic seminar in the Fiji islands. The group, each furnished with a Minolta camera and three lenses as part of the package, will be receiving instructions on their use on the way out. Picture-taking stops in Nandi, the Vatukoula Gold Mines, Nananu-i-ra, Suva and the Yasawa and

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