

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## International Reggae Day 2022 Celebrates 60<sup>th</sup> Years of SKA

June 29, 2022..../ International Reggae Day (IRD), the annual global celebration of Jamaican music culture, will this year, spotlight “60 Years of Ska music”. IRD invites participating media around the world to highlight this important music culture which laid the foundation for Jamaica’s popular music as a global export. It is particularly fitting as Jamaica observes its 60th year of Independence.

The IRD2022 celebration will be powered by participating media through its virtual global media festival, complimented by a digital campaign across all social media platforms supported by key event partnerships hosted in select cities around the world. Participating media in Jamaica and internationally, are invited to spotlight the music and legends of Ska, and highlight the genre’s impact on Jamaican music culture and its global legacy.

Since its birth in Kingston's legendary studios including Sir Coxson's Studio One, Duke Reid's Treasure Isle, Prince Buster's Blue Beat/Voice of the People, Ken Khourie's Federal Records and Leslie Kong's Beverly's Records, the quick tempo of Ska with its distinctive horns, was largely an instrumental music. The singers of the day, from The Maytals and The Wailers to Jimmy Cliff and Derrick Morgan, soon found a way however, to add their distinctive vocals, with many of their releases becoming classics in the genre. The Alpha Boys School which has distinguished itself as Jamaica's oldest music programme, contributed to the training of several key musicians who went onto record and tour with Studio One including members of the Skatalites.

Characterized by a walking bass line accented with rhythm guitar chop (skank) on the off beat and signature horns, Ska was short in duration in Jamaica but long in creativity. From the pioneering genius of Jamaica's first super band, The Skatalites, with ultra gifted foundation musicians including Rolando Alphonso, Tommy McCook, Jackie Mittoo, Ernie Ranglin and Don Drummond were among the early architects of the Ska sound.

The early days of Ska are marked by releases like Monty Morris' 'Humpty Dumpty' produced by Prince Buster in 1961 to his follow-up “Money Can't Buy Life” along with Prince Buster's own releases, 'They Got to Go', 'They Got to Come', 'One Hand Washes Another' and 'Time Longer Than Rope'. Derrick Morgan's 'Forward March', was among the biggest hits in Jamaica in 1962 and is an integral part of Jamaica's independence soundtrack.

Since leaving the shores of Jamaica with the wave of migrants in the 1970s, Ska's second wave, known as Two Tone, hit the UK like a hurricane finding favour with the marginalized youth movement of the time - the mods, punks and skinheads. The unlikely courtship which began in Coventry, yielded a new version of the genre which became known as Ska-Punk, a faster edgier sound that appealed to young people on both sides of the racial divide in the UK.

Artistes who went on to be hitmakers in the genre included the likes of Millie Small whose 1964 cover of Barbie Gayle's My Boy Lollipop, was Jamaica's first commercially successful million selling international hit and remains one of the best selling Jamaican records of all time with over seven million copies sold. Other chart toppers included Desmond Dekker, Stranger Cole, Justin Hinds and Laurel Aiken who were the first ambassadors for the new sound and all enjoyed great success in the UK market and beyond. Ska music was seeded in the UK, Germany and Spain and produced new ambassadors with the likes of The Specials, Madness, The English Beat and later Amy Winehouse, The Busters and Kortatu who went on to enjoy massive popularity playing to stadium sized audiences over the past five decades.

Check out the IRD2022 SKA60 Playlist which includes some of the pivotal Ska recordings in history along with the pioneers and ambassadors of Ska over the last 60 years

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZYtQENwSUM&list=PLAwfFppMwnZka0hi8UBM-VAIC5xmyOTU6&ab\\_channel=FernandoIbarra](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZYtQENwSUM&list=PLAwfFppMwnZka0hi8UBM-VAIC5xmyOTU6&ab_channel=FernandoIbarra)

### INTERNATIONAL REGGAE DAY



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE...June 29, 2022**  
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The third wave of Ska surfaced in the US with platinum bands such as No Doubt, The Mighty Mighty Bosstones, Reel Big Fish and Sublime who dominated the emerging Ska scene in North America during the 1990s. The fourth wave saw homegrown Ska emerging in markets across the planet from Asia to Latin America. Each wave has been supported by the growth of Ska festivals and labels from PAMA to Trojan Records who developed to service the increasingly popular Ska market.

The first of its kind, IRD is an annual 24-hour hybrid global event anchored at [ireggaeday.com](http://ireggaeday.com) on JulyOne. Founded in 1994 by Andrea Davis and proclaimed by Jamaica's Governor General in 2000, IRD is produced by a team of talented creatives supporting a network of media and event partners around the world.

IRD celebrations in the UK are coordinated by BBM/BMC (BritishBlackMusic.com/Black Music Congress) in association with UK stakeholders Reggae Fraternity UK (RFUK), Reggae Global & Culture 2022, Sound System Outernational and Shining Stars. The collective will host a special Zoom conference and DJ mix on JulyOne in addition to media specials and other activities outside of London. Additionally, the third annual IRD UK People's Choice Reggae Music Poll will highlight the Top 20 singles and albums of 2021. This year's Poll will feature a new 'Favourite UK Reggae Riddim' category to provide fans, artistes and industry players, a new opportunity to highlight the work of UK producers and labels. Brent's Deputy Mayor will join IRD Reggae Tree Ambassador under the Reggae tree planted in 2017 for a sidewalk talk

The Canadian Reggae Music Showcase produced for International Reggae Day by Rastafest Inc. and Masani Productions Inc. will be hosted at Toronto's cultural hub, Studio M in Little Jamaica. The showcase will feature artistes from Toronto, Halifax, Ottawa, Montreal, Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver. Other virtual and physical events to be hosted in cities around the world include Birmingham with Mackey Banton from DubForce, Sao Paulo with Rafael Costra, Hawaii session with Dion Lawson from the Lawson King Foundation and new General Huge Ska single being released by DB Brothers Records in Beijing.

Local media houses planning specials for JulyOne include IRIE FM, KOOL FM, FYAH105, Mega Jamz, The Gleaner, Jamaica Observer, TVJ Smile Jamaica, RETV and Hype TV. Overseas media specials include Strictly the Best with Natural Empress on HOT 91.7FM in Nassau, Bogart Radio in South Africa with Don Dada and Tropical Fete's Pat Meschino interview with Reggae My Life Is author Copeland Forbes and his co-writer Clyde McKenzie in New York.

In addition to Ska pioneer salutes, special tributes to the legendary Mighty Diamonds and Ras Denroy Morgan will be featured for International Reggae Day. In tribute to the late Tabby Diamond Shaw and Bunny Diamond Simpson, who both passed away in April 2022, excerpts from the group's 2021 virtual show taped at the iconic Tuff Gong Studios in Kingston, the home of Jamaican music will be showcased.

In tribute to Ras Denroy Morgan, international charity Music for Love International, will release "One Perfect Love", from what would have been his final album. The music project will fund education projects in Africa and Jamaica and for Music for Love's Franco Nannucci, the World Premiere of this song is a message to humanity, inspired by Ras Denroy's words.

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INTERNATIONAL REGGAE DAY FESTIVAL

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