

POSITIVE
VIBRATIONS
S
YEARS
PLATINUM



PHOTOS BY MURRAY CAMMICK

Jah smile on a Western Spring; Dreadlock in a Auckland City; Rastafari for I and I; Bob Marley; Seen! Stone delight on an Easter Monday, as only Jah Music can provide. Ras Bob did it, living up to all expectations. Neither mud nor petrol cuts could detract from such a gathering. The Wailers raised the autumn temperature a dozen degrees.

Marley on stage is rivetting. A Presence. A diminutive figure, he starts off stroking his Les Paul through a couple of numbers, then discarding it as the music takes hold of The Man and his audience, shanking wildly about the stage, locks flying.

Them belly full but we hungry, a hungry mob is an angry mob.

The years, the success, the hype have not eroded Marley's conviction one iota. Put de heathen back deh, on de wall. He bores into the soul. You running and you running and you running away, but you can't run away from

yourself. There is dark anger in "Burning And Looting", and pure joy in "Lively Up Yourself." 'Cause Jah say so.

He says nothing during the performance, except to announce: "We come a long way." Seen, Bob. A long time coming, too. But worth the wait. His message is his music, and he prefers playing football to giving interviews.

Standing still is a physical impossibility. The music makes demands, grabbing you by the scruff of the neck. It could revive a corpse, as the I-Threes join Bob to shake a shapely rump. Get up, stand up. And not just for your rights.

Only Bowie's band has equalled this one for tautness, precision and drive. Reggae rhythm is the hardest in the world to create well. Aston "Family Man" Barrett, Carly and Seeco make it seem effortless.

Junior Marvin is the clown, exhorting the audience to sing, dance, clap, rage, fall on its bum. Everyone loves him. The dual keyboards

of Tyrone Downie and Wire Lindo concentrate on the counterpoint rather than melody. Collectively, The Wailers build a stupendous wall of sound. It envelopes you, whisking you along on a tide of righteous rhythms. We're jammin' in the name of The Lord.

As the concert progresses, Marley works himself into a frenzy. All eyes are on him, as he proclaims his faith and his genius. His intensity is frightening, as he points an accusing finger at the crowd.

You must have done something wrong...

How can you pick the high points in a show like this? The pace never slackens for a moment. There's a tense, menacing "Concrete Jungle", ferocious readings of "The Heathen" and "War/No More Trouble", a beautifully moving singalong "No Woman, No Cry." Every number is perfect, and there are so many others you'd like to hear.

I and I leave well pleased.

Back at the hotel, the Man looks natty in tracksuit top and tweed trousers as he smilingly receives a multitude of gold discs. Everyone else gets in on the act, and he makes no effort to upstage them.

The following morning, it's up and out for a game of soccer, lasting a couple of hours. Short for the Wailers, who have been known to play 12-hour games, often into the wee smalls.

Interviews are politely, but firmly declined. The Man don't wanna talk, but a kid who comes up brandishing a piece of paper is able to interrupt the game momentarily for a signature.

Whither Marley now? Musically, he seems to be marking time at present (witness *Kaya* and *Babylon By Bus*). But the present, as over 20 thousand will testify, is most healthy.

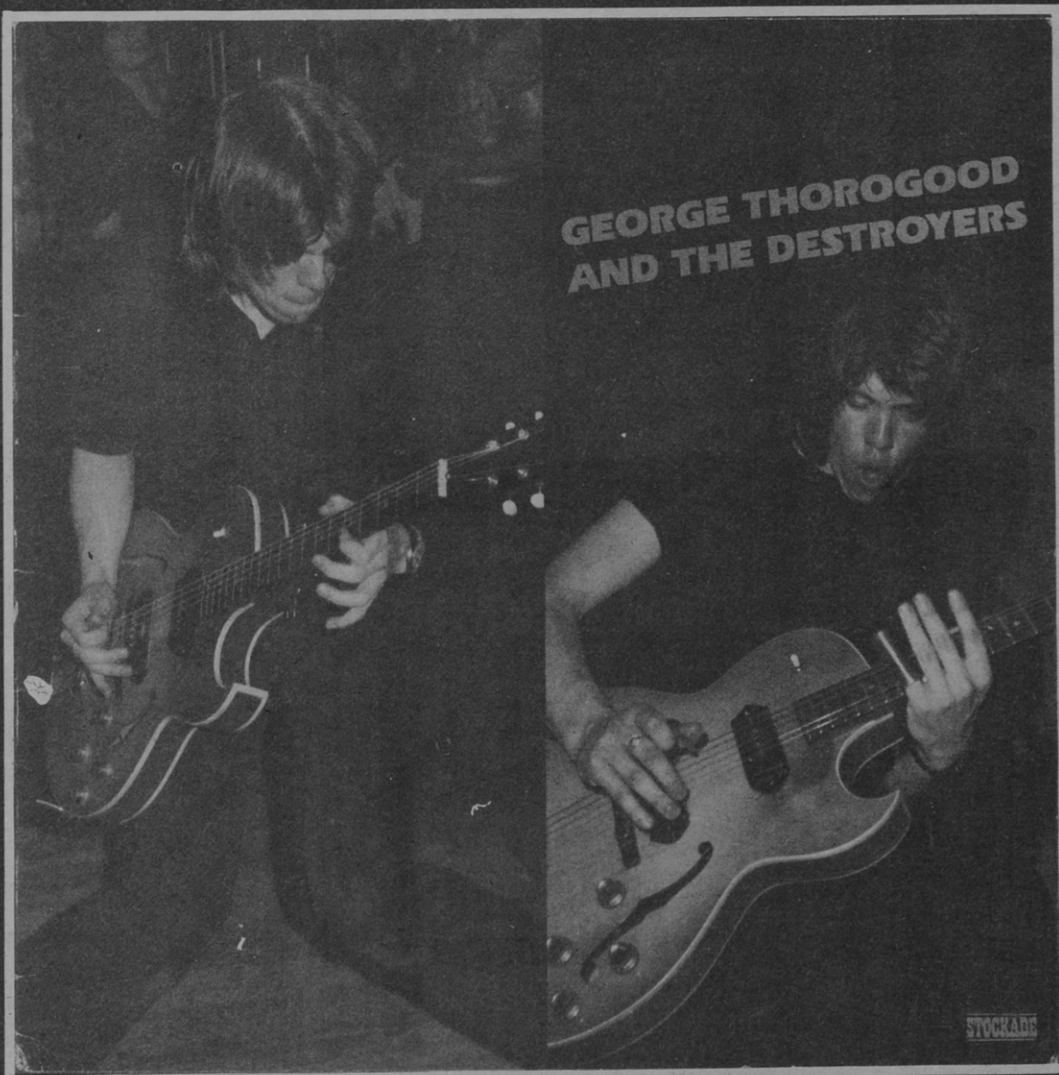
Time alone, oh! Time will tell...

Duncan Campbell

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"If it isn't fun,
it ain't
worth doing."

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