

## NEWS & REVIEWS

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comes from the African Brothers Band of Ghana, with their consistently good *Me Poma*. And Tou Le De, a group from Central African Republic, has a popular new offering, *La Vielle Marmite*.

Among the finest productions to come out in recent months is Orchestra Victoria's *Okosi Ngai Mfumu* album with a particularly unforgettable cut, "Sans Preavis," and a stunning new single by Bopoli Mansiamina (see separate review). Other Zaire/Congo hits new to the scene in recent months include Wuta Mayi's latest, *Tout Mal Se Paie Ici Bas*, *Amour Fou* by Kanda Bongo Man, *Rare Chocs* from Vonga Aye, Tshala Muana with *Koumba*, Pablo Lubadika's *Concentration*, and an lp just out (unpreviewed) by Lita Bembo. Both Mbilia Bel and Tabu Ley Rochereau have albums dedicated to their joint U.S. tour of late last year, although neither is a live recording. Bel's features a dazzling title cut, "Bagerants Ya Mabala," but the overall content of the release is not as powerful as her earlier 1984 contributions. And Tabu Ley's, which is also a quality production, nonetheless suffers by comparison to his masterpiece, *Femme d'Autrui*, of several months before.

On the purely negative side, there are at least a couple of records currently in circulation that deserve less flattering attention. Manu Dibango, as usual, has come out with another westernized number that only proves Africans can be as commercial as anyone else if they make the effort. But the worst of all — every bit as bad as last year's ridiculous *Let Me Love You* by Bunny Mack from Sierra Leone — is *Highlife Time* by George Darko. It's not highlife, and it is a waste of time. Considering all the good material that is constantly coming from the Motherland, these ought to be easy to ignore.

—Elizabeth Sobo

### LONDON RUNNINGS By C.C. Smith

**DATELINE: London.** Thomas Mapfumo, the long-awaited, highly revered revolutionary Zimbabwe musician will perform live at the 100 Club on November 23 and at South African ex-patriate, musician and promoter Julian Bahula's new club, **The-Forum**, on December 12. Mapfumo's tour kicks off in Hamburg as part of a whole month of African music, including dates by **Ladysmith Black Mambazo**, Phillip Tebane, Manu Dibango, **Sam Mangwana**, Tokoto Ashanty, **Akendengu** and many others. Where's my passport? . . . Also, watch for a new Mapfumo lp on Earthworks . . . Mose Fenfan's band TP Somo Somo is the talk of the African scene in London at the moment . . . **Tony Allen**'s new hot and heavy dance ep, *Never Expect Power*

*Always*, is due for release by Earthworks the first week in November (See interview elsewhere in this issue.) Tony plans to start doing live gigs with his own band soon (can your heart stand it?). . . . **Souzy Kassey**a has signed with Earthworks for two lps, and a 12" which we should see this month. The wonderful *Le Telephone Sonne* was the first Zaire record to crossover in France and was a huge hit this summer . . . There's a new lp out by Highlife International on Sterns of sophisticated highlife-jazz . . . Earthworks has also put forth an absolutely killer new lp by **Dele Abiodun** called *Confrontation*, recorded in Nigeria and mixed in London. It is, if possible, even harder than Sunny Ade's *Aura*, and carries some incredible, serious dub mixes. If these guys aren't careful, they'll reinvent funk . . . Reggae-wise, **Frankie Paul** performs for the first time in London on October 27, and **Michael Palmer** on October 28. The new **Aswad** lp will be the biggest selling reggae lp of the year other than Marley's *Legend*, according to one observer . . . **Misty in Roots** are recording a new album . . . The **Twinkle Brothers** may tour Europe soon . . . **Mikey Dread** and **Winston Reedy** have signed with **UB40**'s label, Dep International . . . **ATTENTION NYC POSSE:** English journalist Charles DeLedesman will be visiting NYC in late November to interview NYC reggae radio DJs and explore the crucial reggae scene of the Apple for an article. Hands across the H<sub>2</sub>O and all that. Drop us a card here at the *Beat* and let us know if you can help Bro. Charles experience the fullness of NYC reggae . . . In love and Oneness . . .



### DOUBLE TROUBLE Lijadu Sisters (Shanachie, 43020, U.S.)

Identical twins, identical throats, sweetly soaring, steady and subdued: These are the Lijadu Sisters. Hailing from Nigeria, where they have put out four albums, Kehinde and Taiwo Lijadu stepped up to London for this painless Afroslick production, featuring six songs of laconic

niceness crooned in unison over propulsive martial bass, articulate talking drums, and periodically pesky synthesizer. The songs are perky, memorable, and pleasing and you will find it hard to resist swaying gently in their soothing vocal breeze.

All of the songs have faint gospel overtones, with "Orere—Elejibo" and "Not Any Longer" standing out. Not that there's any filler on this lp — although each cut is a fairly extended groove, every moment is expertly sustained, and other than some pedestrian keyboard coloring, *Double Trouble* is a record the Lijadu Sisters can be proud of.

An added bonus to *Double Trouble* are Tunde Harrison's amusing liner notes, which reveal that the Lijadu Sisters are liberated, independent, and sly. Unmarried, with four children between them, the sisters won't say which one of them is mother to which child, and in general they answer questions playfully and evasively. When the reporter inquires about the sister's lovers, their response is: "We are not dead. Not yet. We are living beings. To live and to love is the essence of our lives. If you don't have someone who loves you, you are dead. If we didn't have lovers how come we compose love songs?" The elliptical logic of the Lijadu Sisters' responses carries over to the music on *Double Trouble*—a misleading title, by the way. There's no trouble in any of these songs.

—Matt Groening

### OUTCRY

Mutabaruka  
(Shanachie, 43023, 1984)  
**PRESSURE DROP**  
Oku Onuora & AK7  
(Heartbeat, HB-26, 1984)

The term "dub poetry" is one that lately has been coined to describe the work of those writers, poets and artists who talk over music, often, but not always, reggae music. This term is limiting in that although the music is an integral part of it, the thrust and importance of the work are in the words that these word warriors project and the images they conjure. Artists such as Linton Kwesi Johnson, Benjamin Zephaniah, Sister Breeze, and the late Michael Smith are known for their uncompromising and militant stance on social issues and a myriad of subjects ranging from women's rights to everyday life in their respective home areas of London and JA. And now two of Jamaica's finest poets have released albums that represent all and more that has come to be known as "dub poetry."

One artist, Mutabaruka, follows the success of his first album, *Check It!* with the equally phenomenal and long-awaited *Outcry*. From the opening poem, "Prisoners," based on a statement by Malcolm X, to the