

By Michael Turner

DENNIS BROWN'S Musical Legacy

Dennis Brown recorded for so long that it's hard to believe that he was only 42 years old when he died. It's also scarcely believable that he could have recorded in such prodigious amounts; whereas pop stars seem to burn out by their fifth album, Dennis recorded over 200. (Thanks to Lee O'Neill for this statistic.) At least 80 percent of these albums were made in the latter half of his 30-year career, largely throwaway efforts with a brief shelf life, but Dennis Brown's reputation had long since been secured by the wonderful music that he recorded in his prime. Dennis had been singing professionally from childhood, and the sustained affection he received from his audience was due in part to never seeming to outgrow his youthful joy in performing. But beyond his sunny personality, Dennis' esteem was earned by the masterfully performed hits that became part of our collective experience. Lover's rock, pop, dancehall, and especially roots—Dennis wrote and performed it all, with a happy voice seldom hinting at life's darker side.

In preparing this overview of his recording career, I decided to solicit the help of the knowledgeable participants of the Internet newsgroup **rec.music.reggae**, querying them as to their favorite Dennis Brown singles. As I suspected, the group most fondly recalled Dennis Brown's music of the '70s; in fact no songs selected were recorded after 1984. There was surprising consensus about song titles, although over 40 titles were mentioned, "Sitting and Watching," "Wolves and Leopards" and "Here I Come" were by far the most popular.

Perhaps (Studio One)

Dennis first began singing on stage at age five, and like fellow prodigies Delroy Wilson and Freddie McGregor he began his recording career at Studio One. Between 1969 and 1972 he recorded approximately 30 titles for Coxson Dodd, most of which are collected on albums *No Man Is an Island* (1970) and *If I Follow My Heart* (1971). Listening to these performances one is startled by his precocity although much of the material selected by Coxson did little more than demonstrate his versatility, insipid numbers like "Little Green Apples" and "Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head." Nonetheless it was at Studio One that Dennis recorded some of his signature tunes like "If I Follow My Heart" and "Created by the Father." And there were a few great songs: his authoritative cover of the Four Tops' "Your Love Is Amazing," the beautiful "Something Is Bugging Me," and (my favorite) "Perhaps." Originally a bolero written in Spanish ("Quizaz") by Cuban composer Osvaldo Farrés in the 1940s, Coxson probably knew this song as the huge '50s hit recorded by Nat "King" Cole, a singer as much admired in Jamaica as he was in America. It might have been presumptuous for the youngster to invite comparisons to Cole, but their interpretations are completely different. Nat's is wry comment on spurned advances ("You always tell me perhaps, perhaps, perhaps"), while Dennis' bubbles with a youngster's unstoppable optimism.

How Could I Let You Get Away (Crystal)

Dennis was a supporting act when American soul acts like King Curtis, Nina Simone and Junior Walker toured Jamaica, and is said to have torn up the show. No recordings of these performances have ever surfaced, but his recordings with producer Derrick Harriott showcase him as a great soul singer. In the early '70s Harriott was having great success with reggae covers of soul songs like "Shaft" and "People Make the World Go Round," often performed by Brown's friends the Chosen Few, and Dennis recorded an album of similar material. Harriott's recordings were the first to really capture Dennis' vocal charisma, establishing him as a rising star. The best-remembered of these songs is probably the cover of the '50s hit "Silhouettes," but I never tire of hearing his version of the Spinners' "How Could I Let You Get Away" with its clever arrangement and delirious harmonies.



PHOTO BY LENI SINCLAIR



PHOTO BY DAVE BROWN



PHOTO BY LENI SINCLAIR

Concentration (Derrick Harriott)

I'll always have a soft spot for "concentration," because it was one of the first "hard" reggae songs I heard. I got started in reggae via Third World and Bob Marley, both pretty slick and smooth styles. I bought Dennis Brown's Money in My Pocket Trojan album when I found it at a bargain price in the local reggae section, but I didn't really know what to expect. I was lying in bed with my girlfriend the first time I listened to the album, and "Concentration" was the second song after "Money in My Pocket" itself—I remember sitting up and saying "Wow, this is GREAT!" Dennis' voice was so confident and smooth, but the riddim was so rough and RAW! I also really like the song for the great interplay of voice and flute. Killer Dennis Brown, and to think he was just a teenager at the time.

—Jesse I
rec.music.reggae

Things in Life (Lloyd Daley)

*"There are good times and bad times too
So have a little faith in what you do
Today you're up, tomorrow you're down,
Thank God you're still around."*

The Cheater (Randy's)

*"Remember that Friday night
When you stole the clothes off my line"*

Although Dennis recorded mostly with Niney and Joe Gibbs throughout the '70s, he did record a few things for smaller producers, such as "At the Foot of the Mountain" for Herman Chin-Loy, "Let Love In" for Phil Pratt, and "One Day Soon" for Prince Buster. "The Cheater," with its odd lyrics, remained a part of his repertoire for years, and demonstrates his lovely falsetto. There was also a brief stop with Lloyd "Matador" Daley, where he recorded two savory confections: "Things in Life" and "Baby Don't Do It," both of which demonstrate Dennis' maturing artistry supported by typically fastidious Matador productions featuring Herb Alpert-like horn arrangements.

Westbound Train (Niney)

"I'll be taking the westbound train, I'll be going to a place where there is happiness...."

—The Wretched of the Earth AKA mtpeto

"That was mine, too! It's the best breakup song ever."

—sistercarol
rec.music.reggae

Dennis was an established hitmaker, but it was his collaboration with producer Niney the Observer in the mid-'70s that really vaulted him into the uppermost tier of Jamaican artists. Leaving behind pop covers, Dennis

began making the sort of roots music that was just then becoming popular, creating some of his most enduring songs.

As Brown told The Beat's Chuck Foster: "That was where most of the greater songs came about because Niney and I used to share a house....In the evenings we would sit down and try and write songs. We would go around to various clubs and see what the people would be dancing to and then we would come up with some idea of making records, what types of rhythms to make for the people there."

[from Foster's *Roots Rock Reggae*]

"Westbound Train" is instantly recognized by Chinna Smith's guitar intro, borrowed from Teenie Hodges' opening to Al Green's massive soul hit "Love and Happiness." Jamaican producers like Lee Perry and Niney were now using American music as sources of inspiration rather imitation, and this record has a much dirtier sound than anything coming out of Memphis. Ironically, Hodges says of this time:

"I had bought a house in Nassau and the band hadn't had a vacation in two or three years, so I suggested they send the whole band down there so we could study reggae. Hi Records wouldn't do it. We never got the vacation, and there's no reggae influence in our music, but we were trying to do something different."

—Robert Gordon, *It Came From Memphis*, (Faber & Faber)

Wolves and Leopards (Niney the Observer)

*"Time to separate the sheep from the wolves
We're at the crossroads and this is the time of decision
Too much informers, too much tale-bearers."*

"I love the murky, muted sound of the rhythm track, and of course Dennis' vocal is a pure sufferer's cry. I like a lot of his work with Niney in fact. Really a nice combination. DB had such great timing and intonation; he just really knew how to sing a song. A real shame he's gone."

—Christopher Durning

The Wolf and Leopards, Visions and Words of Wisdom trilogy of albums stand apart from all of Dennis Brown's work. They are superior albums. Very few artists will ever be able to recreate the combination of inspiration, creativity, lyrical thought, musicianship, and overall power.

—Timothy

Tenement Yard (Niney)

*"Living in the tenement yard is not a simple task oh no,
Sometimes coffee sometimes tea in the tenement yard
To survive down there woad, can be a man's only trade."*

I picked it as my "cultural" selection because of several factors, some of which don't have directly to do with Dennis Brown. Rhythmically, it is a juggernaut, and the production has a smoky ambience which is reminiscent of Scratch. Brown at his best sings with empathy and understanding about life that most of us can only read about, life in a tenement yard. Also, there's a terrific

Continued on page 68

DENNIS BROWN'S Musical Legacy

Continued from page 67

cameo dj chant by someone who is basically lost to history: Ninoy remembers him only as "Buckner," it's said in the liner notes. It seems so typical of Jamaican music. Some cat comes off the street and delivers a crucial passage, and the musicologists among us are left to search for the credit and to listen with respect to the brilliant coalescence of it all.

—Gregory Stephens

Whip Them Jah (Ninoy)

"Only dread will come over

Babylon can't get over.

So whip them Jah Jah Jah whip them."

I like "Whip Them Jah" because it's a real strong roots vocal performance, very heartfelt. And the track and production are tops."

—Al Kaatz

Dennis was an underrated songwriter. Although a child of the middle class, some of his best songs were closely observed lyrics about life in the ghetto, exemplified by "Tenement Yard," and by tunes like "Ghetto Girl," "Cup of Tea," "Tribulation" and "Give A Helping Hand." "Whip Them Jah" demonstrates his ability to deliver a message of indignation, yet the effect is quite different from similar songs like Junior Byles' "Beat Down Babylon" or Yaba Yu's "Blood A Go Run." No matter how zealous the lyric, Dennis' singing expressed little of the rancor expressed by his contemporaries.

Money in My Pocket (Joe Gibbs)

"Money in my pocket

But I just can't get no love."

This was one of his first big hits, recorded in 1973. Later in the decade the Joe Gibbs label succeeded Channel One as Jamaica's most popular, and Dennis settled in as its flagship artist, with dozens of hit singles and at least six top-selling albums. It was through his success with Gibbs that he came by his appellation "The Crown Prince of Reggae." Much of this music was a continuation of the roots music Dennis had done for Ninoy (in fact many of the Ninoy singles were recorded at the Joe Gibbs studio), but heading into the '80s he added equal measures of lighter material like his massive 1983 hit "Love's Got A Hold on Me."

Created by the Father (Joe Gibbs)

I like the positive message and the riddim of "Created by the Father."

Especially when Jah Shaka spin it in his sound, tunes that I chose to be the best ones. Still, there are plenty of them. Albums like *Visions*, *Words of Wisdom* and also "Joseph's Coat" are among my favorites. "Joseph's Coat of Many Colors" was one of my first reggae records ever, and that's why I like it very much.

—Olli

Love Has Found Its Way (Joe Gibbs & Willie Lindo)

This is a far more sophisticated song lyrically and musically and Willie Lindo's arrangement is one of my all-time favorite reggae arrangements, with several layers of harmonies and rhythms that create an endlessly interesting listening experience. Working within this arrangement (which in itself is unusual because most Jamaican singing is done on top of the rhythm track), Brown displays an extraordinarily high degree of craft, creating a rich, creative context for the lovely lyrics. It's also a song that was a constant part of the background during my first trip to Jamaica. "How Can I Leave" is a rough, edgy expression of passion. "Love Has Found Its Way" is more sophisticated and a greater expression of musical/vocal skill that expresses a more positive message. Both songs are great and both are very, very different from each other—so the fact that the same singer sang both is extraordinary.

—Papa Lee

The early 1980s saw the full fruition of Dennis' talents. In addition to weighty roots tunes like "Promised Land" and dozens of dancehall hits, he attempted to reach a larger audience via three albums released on the U.S.

A&M label. These were *Foul Play* (1981), *Love Has Found Its Way* (1982), and *The Prophet Rides Again* (1983). I hadn't played these albums in over a decade, and at first the dated synth washes were a slight hindrance to enjoyment, but I soon rediscovered music that in many ways they was the best of his career. Certainly he never sang better. These albums were obvious labors of love that unfortunately did not sell well enough to satisfy A&M. But they were successes on their own terms and now sound quite opulent in comparison to today's reggae albums.

How Can I Leave (Joe Gibbs)

I first heard "How Can I Leave" at a Dennis Brown stage show and I swear that he was singing "How Can I Leave Jah" and at the time (1978) that interpretation was far more likely. When I obtained the 12" version of the song, though, everything changed. The lyrics turned out to be a confused mixture that combined a confession of unlimited romantic love and abject fear that love would end (and haven't we all lived through that). The way Brown sang the song brilliantly made both the passion and the fear absolutely real and his singing also opened the door for a "How Can I Leave Jah" interpretation with only minor lyric changes. After all, isn't this what it's all about—Love and fear of love? By the way, I've always found the supercharged rhythm, led by an insanely addictive cheesy synth riff (Robbie Lyn, maybe?) to be irresistible. And, not so incidentally, this is one of the first songs that my wife flashed on that was a big Jamaican hit and not a crossover, U.S./U.K. styled reggae song.

—Papa Lee

A True (Joe Gibbs)

"To enter the kingdom of His Majesty

On earth you gotta live in perfect harmony

A true, A true."

I always had a soft spot in my heart for "A True" (b/w dub "Nuh True"); a minor-key and somewhat sentimental tune with a steppers beat typical of Brown's Gibbs/DEB period...

—WinnerEJ

If You Want My Loving (Joe Gibbs)

I think it is called "If You Want My Loving," the lyrics are something like,

"If you want my loving,

if you want my sweet sweet loving,

if you want my kissing,

if you want my sweet sweet hugging,

tell me that you love me,

tell me that you love,

open your heart to me,

tell me that you love me"

a murder tune, trust me, i wish i could find what i did with it.

—Christopher Edmonds

Three Meals A Day (Joe Gibbs)

"Three meals a day

Got no rent to pay

Got no wife to obey

Sitting in a two by four

Looking through an iron door

Down in hell

I can never get used to the smell

I'm talking about detention."

Pure power! —Colin Bird

Let Me Love You (Joe Gibbs)

"I've got this love to give you

Just say you'll accept it please."

A great lover with a massive dub on the B side.

—General Burning

The Joe Gibbs studio band, led by bassist Lloyd Parks, mostly recycled Studio One riddims but did create a few memorable originals. This is my favorite Joe Gibbs single, a lovely "dim the lights" tune with a yearning vocal

answered by a mournful organ. I should also mention the equally heartfelt answering tune "My Wife (Is A Part of Mi Life)" by the late Lu Lepke.

Concrete Castle King (Joe Gibbs)

"Too many days we stand in the rain and sun
Waiting for the bus that never comes
You pass by in your fancy car....."

I don't think it was ever released as a single but my favourite track is "Concrete Castle King" from the Visions LP at Joe Gibbs. It's a real impassioned plea to the rich on behalf of the "sufferah." One of my everlasting memories was seeing the rich folks' villas with their enormous satellite dishes along Mountain View Avenue in Kingston. A grossly obscene contrast to downtown where people live so rough.

—Filthy Rich

To the Foundation (Gussie Clarke)

"Yet the fool thinks he knows it all
Here comes later, he will stumble and fall
He goes down for a reason
Jah is giving him a beating
To the foundation he will have to go down....
I've got to get myself together
Can't afford to let my faith go....
We are living in the love of the Father
Living in the house of the Almighty."

Of the dozens of songs I listened to in preparing this article, "To the Foundation" struck me as the most autobiographical. It's well known that Dennis was a sincerely religious man, and it's also common knowledge that he was also plagued by extreme habits. Perhaps his dualities were destructive, but I think it more probable that his music appealed to us because they expressed the same dichotomies that are within us all.

Sitting & Watching (Sly & Robbie)

At first, I have to confess that DEB is not one of my favorite singers. In fact, I've find it very hard to name any reggae singer who's above all other singers—and DEB was no exception (to be honest there are plenty of utterly duff recordings among them). To me it's the combination of production, rhythm and the impression of the singer which makes a song worthwhile. The reason why I picked up this record is because it contains all the necessary elements to soothe my ear: loaded with exemplary musicianship and a great song. Tasty but not too syrupy. I can't resist the charm of "Sitting and Watching," which is like taking a musical bubble bath (courtesy of excellent Sly & Robbie production, which IMO anticipated the rise of digital music half a decade later).

—Juha Vaahtera

"Sitting and Watching" always gets a crowd shout when spun.

—DJ Spleene

As Juha points out, Dennis's work on the Taxi label anticipates the digital dancehall revolution which was a few years to come. Sly and Robbie's productions were pretty minimal, basically just a drum machine, a repeating guitar figure and a few synthetic rhythm effects, but the swooping vocals made this and the following selection massive hits.

Revolution (Sly & Robbie)

Yeah, that's always been one of my favorite Dennis tunes. And in an alternate version:
"If you want revolution now
You've got to build the foundation."

—M.C. Gregory

"Revolution" is just a great song thru and thru.
"Do you know what it means to have a revolution?
And what it takes to make a solution?"

"Everybody a talk 'bout revolution, but do they know what it means? The lyrics within are just great and timeless. The song just always spoke to my beliefs and my thought pattern, always thought if only our youth could hear, really hear the message within the song. I suppose it doesn't hurt either that it's on one of reggae's more popular rhythms of all time.

—Koqui

Promised Land (Dennis Brown & Aswad)

"Riding on the king's highway
From Cairo to Kenya
To the promised land"

"Revolution" might also be my all-time overall favorite song. "Promised Land" is a close 2nd. Both tunes are powerful and just hit you right there.

—Shok

If This World Were Mine (Tad's)

"If This World Were Mine" has always been a personal favourite, so much so that I "acquired" it from my brother's record collection!!

—Frankie G.

I was living in England in the early '80s and can remember the excitement stirred by every new Dennis Brown release. He was recording in New York, Jamaica and London, flooding the airways with hits, all voiced with enthusiasm and skill. Of these I'll only mention some of my favorites: "Come On Over" and "They Fight I" for Jammy's, "I'm Lost Without You" for Striker Lee, "The Crazy List" for Gussie Clarke, "How Sweet It Is" and "If This World Were Mine" for Tad's, and duets with Gregory Isaacs ("Let Off Supm"), John Holt ("Wildfire"), Al Campbell ("Hold Tight"), and Freddie McGregor ("Ragamuffin"). The reader can undoubtedly add many more. Heading through the '90s the quality of his music became increasingly dilute, but I'm sure younger dancehall fans have their own list of Dennis Brown favorites. Which brings us to the record most mentioned by our contributors. Dennis had recorded "Here I Come" for Niney in the early '70s, over a rather odd Moogish instrumental recorded in England. In one of the few examples of a dancehall tune besting its original, Dennis reintroduced the tune in several mixes in 1982, on both the Tad's label and his own Yvonne label.

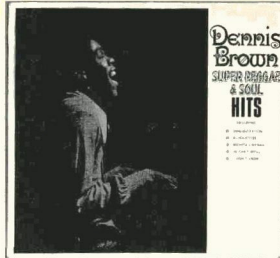
Here I Come (AKA Love & Hate) (Dennis Brown)

"My head is unannointed
And my cup runneth over
Surely goodness and mercy
Shall follow I all the days of my life.
Love and hate, could never be friends,
Oh no o, o, o, o, oh no, o, o

That HAS to be the wickedest intro anyone EVER had for a song!! Big up, D. Brown, every time!!"

—Auntie Sim

Continued on page 89



Dennis Brown's 1972 album, *Super Reggae & Soul Hits* (Trojan TRLS 57), recorded at Federal and Harry J studios, was embellished with these informative but typographically challenged liner notes by producer Derrick Harriott, here reproduced word for word:

Remember that youth only ten years old who use to forward himself on stage shows at the Carib Theatre? "Seen I" you mean Dennis Brown.

Well he is now sixteen years old and awarded in 1972 three awards most promising singer from Record Retailer, Swing Magazine and El Suzie Au-Go-Go.

Dennis started singing at the age of five born from a musical family his father Arthur Brown is a script writer, and actor appearing in many plays on stage and T.V. and his brother Basil Brown a local comedian popularly known as Man Man. In the popular radio series Life In Hopeful Village now resides in the U.S.A.

Dennis was formerly a resident vocalist with the Falcons and Soul Syndicate bands, appeared on many big shows throughout Jamaica including Smashville 68 starring the late King Curtis and the Sweet Inspirations he also appeared at the National Arena in June 1972 with Junior Walker and his all Stars and Nina Simone. Dennis proved to be the hot favourite of the local section of the show bringing screams from the girls and cheers from the men. His ambition is to be a devoted musician covering Singer, Composer and Arranger up to recently in September 1972 Dennis had five records on the charts with two in the top ten one reaching number one (a rare feat), listen to Dennis Brown on this LP Super Hits doing some of his originals like Concentration, I didn't Know which stand out as powerful sounds, listen to his versatility on Silhouettes and the beautiful styling he does on Wichita Lineman. Dennis writes most of his songs and is guided in his music career by Derrick Harriott his producer, good luck to the talented Dennis Brown and I am sure after listening to this L.P. you will be a devoted fan, RIGHT ON.

secular music deter me. The voices become musical instruments and as such are enjoyable without necessarily being comprehensible. (As a teenager I remember thinking that half of the lyrics of Bob Dylan and Van Morrison were meaningless stream-of-consciousness stuff, and that never seemed to stop us from enjoying their music.) Therefore it follows that even if the listener is not particularly interested in the religious message behind the songs it can still be great music.

The biggest problem with Congolese religious music is the use of synthesizer and programmed drums as a replacement for guitars and drum-kit. **Jolie-Detta et frère Martin-Wolf-Souviens-toi de Moi** (Arme Lourde ALP 05) has no guitars at all but is still a great cd of stirring gospel rumba. Jolie Datta is a female singer with an impressive pedigree. She initially found fame in Mimi Ley's Afro International, progressed to Bozi Boziana's Anti-Choc before making a couple of super recordings with Franco's OK Jazz. It's good to hear her sweet voice again after an absence of nearly 10 years.

I reviewed Debaba's first two Evangelical solo releases in Vol. 17 #3 and his third, **Debaba, Babylone** (No label, no cat. number; distribution Peco's Brother CIE), recorded in London, has come out as an uncataloged cd for sale within the Evangelical Church. It's another powerful *rumba saccadé* release; that is to say that it is a kicking dance record, with the former Choc Stars vocalist fronting a conventional three guitar/drums/keyboard band with the vocal backing of five Evangelical sisters. Always one of my favorite secular singers, Debaba's conversion to religious music has taken nothing away from his vocal prowess.

A major vocal revelation for me in the last few years has been the religious chanteuse **Annie Ngwe Mobejo**. Her three cds *Dieu a tant aimé le monde* (Ngoyarto NG 040), *Roi Vainqueur* (Ngoyarto NG 046) and *Concert d'au revoir* (distribution MPS, EPP 28) are a mixture of straight rumba, rumba saccadée, and gospel-influenced ballads in about equal proportions. All three are worth owning since she has a convincing voice and she performs with good musicians (Debaba, ex-Rochereau musicians Freddy Fumunani and Massamba Rumaru, and guitarist Golly). The third release was recorded live and shows how powerful the Congolese religious genre can be.

Even better than Annie Ngwe Mobejo is **Marie Misamu, Who's That Girl** (Glenn GM312041) who sounds very much like my favorite female singer Déesse Mukangi. Accompanied by the voice of Debaba this cd is made up of seven guitar/vocal rumbas and just one ballad. The important factor, though, is Marie's magnificent voice which really deserves far greater exposure than it is receiving by singing solely in church.

(Anyone wishing to contact me or to send cds for review and airplay can write to Martin Sinnock, P.O. Box 406, Croydon, CR9 1XR, England; e-mail: MHS@weatherrallnorth.co.uk. Sorry, but I am too busy transcribing to have a Web site.)

MOROCCAN ROLL

Continued from page 40

Cherry is the son of the late trumpeter Don Cherry, so he's right in the family lineage of progressive jazzsters who went to Morocco and got hip. His dad performed with Gnawa avatar Hassan Hakmoun on the epochal *Gift of the Gnawa* album, and Hakmoun returns the favor on a dissonant harmelodic track called "Moroccan Garage" on the son's new album, *The End of A Century* (Tonga CD8402). Harmelodic music was invented after the late writer Bob Palmer (may his soul play on forever in the Garden of Allah, with a good rhythm section) took Ornette Coleman up to Jajouka in 1973, and it's nice to see another generation keeping the flame alive. ★

BRAZIL BEAT

Continued from page 33

explores various sides of Brazilian culture with folkloric celebrations, religious processions, and nods to great bossa and MPB composers; yet she avoids standards. Her style takes on shades of Portuguese lyricism without losing the warmth that makes her so genial, and although a little anxiousness can be felt in this recording, her technical excellence does not falter. The percussion of Nana Vasconcelos is a wonderful grounding force here. A remarkable young voice still discovering and defining itself, Mônica Salmaso is one to watch.

Following hot on the heels of the controversial *Bossa Cuca Nova*, and forging ahead in the same direction, comes *Brasil 2mil: The Soul of Bossa-O-Nova* (Six Degrees 6570361017-2). Now what in sam hill is "boss-o-nova"? And whoever thought they could get away with debauching sacred terminology like that anyway? Well, how's this... think of it as the hippest rave you could ever hope to go to. You're chillin' with the inner circle of who's who. Drum-n-bass grooves mix with familiar staccato guitar chords and the languid voices of Daude, Vinicius Cantuaria, Bebel Gilberto and Lenine. And you've got a tingly feeling from the herbal concoction they gave you at the bar. There are some neat surprises in this over-styled compilation: a live recording of "Amor de Muito" from Chico Science and Nacão Zumbi at a show in L.A. (only slightly enhanced), and Arto Lindsay's "Ridiculously Deep" is pleasantly unpredictable. Other attempts at remastering magic are less successful. Case in point: Virginia Rodrigues and house music should never be anywhere near each other. This disc was a real *multirão*, or group effort by an international team of artists, producers and record company heavyweights, in a headlong race toward the New Millennium, where ostensibly technology will be God and niche markets exist for everything. And to their credit, a lot of kids will probably hear bossa nova in the clubs like this before they ever would have run across it in its original form.

[VK DS Productions, P.O. Box 1001, Bondi Junction, NSW, Australia 1555; fax: (02) 9300-8123. Contact Mara and Beto at brazilbeat@earthlink.net.]

DENNIS BROWN'S MUSICAL LEGACY

Continued from page 69

Yes; on the Earl Chin special there is footage of Dennis at 1990 Sunsplash; he gives this intro to "Love and Hate" and the crowd goes "nuts!"

—Chris D.

"Here I Come" (Tad's version, not Observer)... the one he opens every show with.

—Joshua B

"Here I Come" Yvonne's Special 12" U.K. (Close to Tad's version, but even better). On the intro, nuff forwards inna dance fi di one! Forwards got so loud and fierce it frightened the engineer! (He ducked and asked me "what's the matter?") (LOL)

—Auntie Sim

I thought about what licked me most about the favorite D. Brown songs and recalled a Strand Theater show here in Boston from 1986. D Brown & Lloyd Parkes with We The People as well as Tinga Stewart, Ninjaman, Admiral Tibet and others. I was fresh out of high school and went with two friends to Uphams Corner in Dorchester and shelled out the astronomical sum of \$25 and went in at about 7 p.m. and took seats in the front row. There were 5 people inside, that's it. Perhaps 20 more came in during the next hour to hour and a half. The curtain was down and there was only the sound of the local reggae program, WERS-FM over the house system.

Well, we were getting nervous and started to check out the place. We tracked down a promoter and asked him what artists were there and could we talk to them. He introduced us to Tinga Stewart, who was exceedingly polite and eventually took us backstage to talk some more. BTW, the show was supposed to have started a half hour before we met Tinga, that's why we were getting nervous. So, when we got backstage we see the stage and there's nothing set up there, nothing! Tinga says he hasn't seen any other artists yet, also. Well, about two hours later, Dennis Brown walks in. He starts asking for the promoter and before we know it, we're listening to quite a set of negotiations right there in the hallway backstage with all of We the People on one side and Tinga and ourselves on the other side of DB and the dibby dibby promoter. It got rather heated, DB contending he was supposed to be sent an advance and the promoter saying he only had 40-some paying customers, etc.

Eventually, somehow, for what figure I can't conceive of, Dennis said OK, we'll go on and play for one hour. The show went on, but Tinga didn't sing. Ninja, and Tibet and others never showed either, but Dennis did a wicked set, after it took We the People about an hour to set up, so when he hit the stage it was 12:30! He opened with "Here I Come," and after seeing all it took and sitting in the theatre waiting for sooooo long, the opening lines really hit hard. That show really moved me, to know that Dennis was only singing for love, I mean there were maybe 100 people in a 2000-capacity theater. We hung with him and Parkes after the show and were astounded by his humility and his humor in what was not the best of circumstances. His passion propelled my friends and I to go to JA for Sunsplash that year, and then the next and then the next, etc.

—Brian Keyo