

LEE

SCRATCH

PERRY

Lee Perry, crucial producer, genius, madman, guerilla priest of reggae, has been the single person most responsible for the development of reggae since the mid '60s. His music career began with Coxsone Dodd's Downbeat Sound System as DJ, talent scout, and finally, producer and arranger for the majority of singles coming out on the Studio One labels. In 1968, a dispute with Coxsone resulted in his first hit record, *People Funny Boy*, for Joe Gibbs. With the establishment of the Black Ark Studio, Scratch's full potential was realized, both on records of his own artistry, and in his work with most of the major Jamaican reggae musicians of his time.

His work with the early Wailers had a profound influence on the development of their sound, from the early *Soul Rebel* days through the 1977 *Punky Reggae Party* release. Supposedly Marley named his record company Tuff Gong in tribute to Scratch, who used "The Gong" as one of his many aliases.

His most productive period seems to have been 1976-77, in which he released eight albums for Island/Mango: *Super Ape*; *Garvey's Ghost*; *To Be A Lover*, by George Faith; *Party Time*, by the Heptones; *Colombia Colly*, Jah Lion; *Police and Thieves*, Junior Murvin; *War in a Babylon*, Max Romeo; and *Punky Reggae Party 12"* 45 by Bob Marley.

Always eccentric, Scratch has become increasingly strange since about 1978, when he allegedly dropped acid in Holland. The prevailing theory is that he pretended to be crazy to escape creditors, contracts and hangers-on, and perhaps carried it too far. My own theory is based on the image of the man in the recording studio, earphones blaring, spliff smoking, dubbing and overdubbing. One too many versions, and he forgot which one was reality.

Genius is always closely associated with madness. Whatever the cause, he has developed his own universe and cosmology. In the following articles, we are given a glimpse into the mind of The Upsetter.

by CC Smith

Upsetter Talking

Interview by Doug Wendt

The following 'interview' with Lee Perry was recorded in January of 1982 at his home in Kingston, JA. When I pulled up to the house the first thing I noticed was the graffiti all over everything. Scratch had written his own style stream-of-consciousness rap all over the fence, on the car in the driveway & on the house. Trevor Roots, toaster & pilot for my travels amongst the musicians the musicians of Kingston, ran in ahead to check for Scratch and told him that the Midnight Dread was out front.

Scratch came out, shook hands and scrutinized my radio business card. Since he was anti-dread at the time, the title of my radio show on the card seemed to put the possibility of an interview in question. "I don't want to do interview" he spoke abruptly as I plugged my mic into the Superscope hanging on my shoulder. "Do you have any papers?" he asked, and then went into his house when none were located. He came back out with a portion of herb on top of a piece of grocery-bag brown paper. When still no papers were found he tried to roll his brown paper spiffically around the herb. When this didn't work easily enough Scratch suddenly tossed the whole shebang into the wind and in the same motion grabbed the mic from my armpit, shoved it into his mouth and started to rap non-stop. By the time I got my tape rolling I blurted out the first of only three questions, for this was to be what I later called a live-a-tribe (not a diatribe) with Scratch conducting a tour of the premises. Luckily I was set up to be portable as Lee took me by the tethered mic out to the front sidewalk where various piles of ash, glass, dirt, etc. were significantly piled. Then into the house/studio where stacks of tapes were stashed, all the time Scratch walking and talking . . .

DW: *Is this the Black Ark?*

LP: Well, this is the Black Ark studio of course, it's more than the Ark, it's the power

plant of righteousness, the heart of his Imperial Majestic Majesty Emperor Haile Selassie I, the conquering lion, the ever-living kind, David who fling all stones. I'll not build up the night of the living dread, I'll build up the life of the living life because I are the yazzus Christus, Jessus the greatest.

I never pretend, I never join people, I don't deal with things that I don't know about. I want all life to be good, I'm thinking about good life, nothing dread, I don't support nothing dread, dread fuck up as far as I'm concerned and I'm dealing with life. Cleanliness is godliness, a clean hand and a pure heart speaking. I join no one I have no friend, I'm a lonely man with my family. I follow no one, I follow the light, cause the light are the almighty God.

I whisper and worship the earth where we get all our food from. I love water where we get our hold spirit from. I love the sun which give us light to see, right? I love the stone and I'm always sure and my stone is super sure, right?

My name is King David, I love to fling stone. Right? My papa is King Solomon Emperor Haile Selassie I the black gorilla king, Super Ape, right? He can change into a lion, a monkey, a leopard, any thing. He has the power to do anything, right? He is the capricorn right? He is he sagitarius right? He's the every-fucking thing.

DW: *Who is wizzy wizzy? (a figure referred to by Scratch in NY in '81)*

LP: Well as he say he's the one who change things and change time. I wonder who is. He's so great and people keep wondering who the hell is God I'm wondering who is God even though I am so close to him, he's such a powerful man. He change time, he change things, he do everything, right? So why you see Scratch is here because Scratch is dealing with nothing else but the truth. Scratch is not joining coup with nobody. Right? Cause the only thing I know is God, you could say well talk about God is history which is truth. Talking about, aw right, the sinner, cause everything is great that's how powerful His Majesty is. A stone. I'm the stone that the builder refuse who are the head cornerstone, the living truth. A man who stand firm predominate always never

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miss, he always talks, word creator right? I'm speaking about the power and the background of herbs who art the immortal creator who create all words. I'm speaking of the background of coconut palm trees Imperial Majesty who roll thunder and flash lightning, who create all sounds. And I'm talking about His Imperial Majesty who form the cloud and ride upon the winds, King Arthur. The first heat that he draw is the immortal sword Excalibur, World without end I'm speaking.

I don't guess I talk straight and I don't think when I'm talking because I never lie. I swear I never lie I hope I never talk again the arks a gotta dump me if I ever tell a lie, which I can tell a lie of the word of god is the seal of my lips, the seven seas of His Imperial Majestic Majesty Emperor Haile Selassie I. Second and a rate and first by none other than Imperial that stand predominate. Fire you write the Ten Commandments, are the wizzy wizzy.

Heh heh heh heh heh heh heh heh. I smoke some shitty cigarette... Right, these are the signs you see here are the art right? Words are powerful that forms and takes on flesh art also lives forever. Right you sy the almighty is a stone, stone that you fling that is connected perfectly and cannot wrong, that's connected and can control the twelve tribes of Israel from Cape to Cairo, from Renald to Timbuktu right? Here art the immortal sheriff, he is invisible. The face of the clouds, that's why your looking at me talking to you now. Breath of life form white smoke signal. That's the nostril of Abraham right? The king of creation I'm talking about. Now I'm talking about this is acid, flying acid, this form another cloud different from the ganja cloud. Right? This can be dangerous cloud. This is a killer you know there. We call it cancer in other words. Or we could bless it and smoke it and nothing happen. I bless my cigarette when I want to smoke it. But callie weed I can take the chance and smoke it anytime because I know it is perfect. HBut anytime because I know it is perfect. But this is a chance, this is death, and herbs is life. So whenever you smoke cigarettes you smoking death, and you smoke herbs. Come and give me a light. Give me a light. DW: "Scratch is going to try to smoke some death here. (As I hand him a Craven, popular brand of Jamaican cigarettes) Craven choke puppy." LP: Now, what the allness is about is what you do and how you do it. That is seven and that signify the seven days Sunday Monday, Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday right? This signify my rod. Whenever I stomp my foot something go wrong somewhere if the people are not together, so they better get themselves totally together because I never report lies I report truth.

This is Sun. There is no other Sun but this Sun because I are the black Sun Jesse, an explosion of righteousness. How about that? Heh heh heh heh heh heh! People call me Jah X and Jah X means the eXecutors of wrong and the declarator of righteousness in so many forms a man could explode. I could explode like a dynamite in a world of truth because I art the teacher, I

even teach this. (I won't give you any icture you know).

As you can see on the sidewalk there, I draw a cutglass and mark King Scratch with a pyramid. That mean I am the King of the Road. I say I am the King of the Road, I control the Atlas road map. Leah black alla leotarus the allahjahlalamoseslamishi wondering this is Amharic. Right, he's black and sits up in the air in the green gold and red. He's the ruler of all control. Like I'm talking to you now I'm controlling California and Isa baba, Ethiopia and all the universe. Cause breath of my life my teacher my Ecuador. That's words you don't understand because they are speech that beyond. Is I'm talking about the other half, the half that has never been written in book, because I don't follow the book, I follow the Earth which are my teacher. The earth is the lord and the fullness thereof and the world and day that dwell the earth. Check it out. Heheh Wow! I give you a little more a little while.

Well you see now my brother hitched to my microphone and I am greater than the microphone. I talk unto next Kingdom come on the microphone. Me and my microphone goin round and round. Wah. This is ashes, I worship fire because fire are the writer of the Ten Commandments. He teach me to draw arts and all those things. Fire say 'Moses write these books.' They respect Moses who write all these books but they want to live off Moses' wrod. Well, I ain't gonna live off Moses word anymore. Right OK? Go and learn to write so much for yourself and read some words and stop thiefin' the bible and workin' obeh on your brother right. We are talking about Jesus is a soul man so that make me separate. I'm defending soul strictly. S-O-U-L Power. How about that.

It isn't what you defend but like I would say I have this in my hand...

But this is the night of the living life speaking not the night of the living dread because I am not supporting any fucking dread. How about that. Heh heh heh. Well I'm free to speak. I'm not in bondage, I'm not afraid of anyone, I am untouchless. Right. I'm super clean off a clean hand and pure in heart I speak whatever I want to speak without talking or thinking what I want to say. Right!!

And this is the ark of the covenant, the holy trinity of the almighty god almighty, one son, the king immortal speaking, the godfather of drum and bass, right. Is me who ride revelatin horse and judge everything. Do rey me fa so la ti do A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Mount Zion, thats me. Heavy. Flash lightning and roll thunder, brimstone and fire, earthquake, rain, it is I, the lord, God almighty. Who love it live, who don't like it gonna feel it. That's it. This is the ark speaking, not even me, speaking through me. Heh heh.

DW: What about these tapes? (stacked against the walls in his house)

LP: The ancient scrolls. Conquer everything. Politicians? I don't check for politicians. Politicians are saps. I call them governors of wrongs and administers of crimes. I curse all fucking politicians even

though they don't like this on the radio, you play it cause they can't do anything. Time and history manifest, right? And time and history record the doom of Babylonian system. I am a black culture man, super art, super tart, super mind. That's me right? I think above the ordinary, no one can hurt me cause I am indispensable at this or disindispensable. I am an island cause this is the island of the gods, Jamaica, the head of the globe, right.

And I am speaking from my father throne room where I'm standing. I'm standing on the staff and I'm standing on my horse which you cannot see because it is invisible to human eye. How great thou art, that's the word. HA HA HA HA HA. How great thou art Emmanuel King Perry. Speaking of the history king that create music that createth itself. Speaking of the history king that createth words that formeth themself. Speaking of the history king that createth words that form itself. Didn't you hear words flying like peas? Open eyes, the public eyes, the public truth. I didn't even have to think, I don't hedge I keep talking. I can talk words. Words, words, words, words, words, words. The beginning of the alpha, the beginning of the genesis to revelation. My favorite psalms were Blessed the man who walketh not in the councils of the ungodly, and sound not in the ways of sinners and sinners in the seat of the scornful. You know what is de laws is in the law of the almighty Jah, I'm talking about Judah Lion, the living fire, right? I'm talking about the King of Israel, right? I'm talking about music, I'm talking about words, I'm talking about what I'm talking about words, sounds, power. I'm talking about the time for me, the black man, to have lots of fucking money. Right. That's what I'm talking about. Heh heh heh heh - nothing else.

I want a good life, drive a big car, I wanta drive a Rolls Royce, fly a Concord, and maybe I wanta have about 144,000 ships pulling in moneys to feed the hungry children. How about that? Yeah, right! When the pot not bubbling the children face is sad, and while the pot is bubbling on the fire the children feeling glad. The Mama laughin' and Papa laughin' "Hi what's goin on darling? Is everything OK?" "Well when there is no food Ya Ya Ya Wah Wah Uh?" So I want a good time, that's all I'm talking about. I'm saying fuck off with all ministers of crime, fuck off with all governors of wrongs. A clean hand and a pure in heart that's the song I'm going to sing a new song Mr DJ man Good evening Heheheh heh...

Now where is your place? San Francisco? Well I wanta say hello and good evening to all of the people in San Francisco. Especially the Mama who keep the children happy until Papa come home from work saying Hi! Bye Bye see you later Heh or I'll see you in person sometime. Doug: We hope so; Give thanks Scratch.

GREETINGS FROM
 **THE UNIVERSE**

Scratch On The Edge

Wayne Jobson Remembers

Interview by CC Smith

WAYNE JOBSON of *NATIVE* worked with Lee Perry in 1977 to produce a demo tape, and again in 1979 on an album which was never finished. Here, he reminisces about some of Scratch's antics during that time:

The Black Ark had kind of broken down, and he had some more equipment coming in to fix up, but it was still functional. He had painted up everywhere with x's and everytime I went to visit him I had to carry a bunch of green bananas, cause he said that bananas were God, and he would bow down before the bananas. He had painted the entire wall, the ceiling, everything in the whole place with minute little x's, so like one square foot of the wall might take him an hour to do. Every detail have an x, he didn't leave any space, the whole place was x'd. Everything was Jax, J-A-X.

Then one week he said it had to be green, he said green was a holy color. But he always said red was evil, so one week he painted everything green and then the next week he painted everything gold, and he just kept changing the color and painting up the whole place, and x-ing it up.

So I kind of figured by then that he was slightly going off, but he was always off, so it wasn't strange, once he could come up with the music. So eventually now we were ready to do the album, and he kept on, couldn't get the equipment, he run us up the wall, but he hadn't gotten it yet. So I went there and I said "Scratch, what's the truth now, why won't you go for the equipment?" And he said, "Well, to tell you the honest truth, the equipment is there, I can get it, but..." And all the other guys who are around his yard now, you have all these kind of worshipers who are just around his yard, seen. He have these huge herb plants growing right around his place, on the main road, with the police passing by and they're afraid in there because they know he's crazy, so they don't want to go say anything to him. His electricity bill hadn't been paid, nothing have been paid but everybody was afraid to go in and say anything to him, so he was just complete king. So all these people at the gates you know...

Well, the truth is that the battery in his car is dead and he said it is a sign from Jah that he can't go anywhere. So he had been sitting in the yard for three months, and he wasn't going anywhere. People had to go get the food and all that. His wife Pauline had left and gone to the country, and he was just there with the kids, and they weren't really eating properly. He had money, you know, he wasn't starving, but he just didn't want to go anywhere, so he wasn't gonna go, he wasn't gonna step foot outside the yard, because it was a sign from Jah that the battery was dead. So eventually I just went, buy a new battery, bring it, give it to him. When I give him the battery, all of the people

in the yard say, "Whoa, you don't know what you've done. This is a miracle! Now, he'll leave the place!" So eventually he got the stuff, he put the battery in the car, drove, got the stuff, fixed up the Ark...

Then another story, somebody told me this, I didn't see it, but somebody said he got some money from Island to give to him, and they took it and they said, "Scratch, here is some money from Island," and he said, "No man, that's not money, that's peas." And they said, "No, man that's money," and him say, "Hey, bring the pot, we're gonna cook the peas." So they say, "Scratch, you can't, it's money," and he just took one of the notes and put it in his mouth and chew it up, and say, "See that, it's peas..."

But you know, even with all of this he still kept his musical head together, and up to this day I still want to do an album with him...

A lotta people have told me that they don't really think he went off, he just went on like that to get rid of all the people, cause he had so much people comin around him and that if everybody thought he was insane they would leave him alone, also he would be able to get out of all his record deals...

The Outerview

Excerpt from *Reggae International*

by Stephen Davis and Peter Simon

The correspondent found him recording an album for Joe Gibbs in late 1981: "At the studio Lee had any number of small children who fiddled with instruments, the board, and headphones with alarming proficiency while the session went on. Occasionally Lee would space out and his wife would take over, doing much of the actual work. While singing, Scratch had laid out before him and around him the following items: Sagittarius horoscope, a small gold-painted statue of a lion, a set of hand exercise grips, a book on Buddhist yoga, a note pad full of lyrics, several Lee Perry records with weird phrases scrawled on the covers, a hammer, a pink plastic airplane, a grater, a book on space oddities and a couple of other objects that were beyond identification. He had a gym bag in the corner full of other personal talismans which I did not dare investigate. He wore a blue denim suit with the top open, a number of copper chains and ornaments, a blue guitar cord around his neck, and no shoes. During the session he stood on books and occasionally annointed his feet with some clear, sweet-smelling liquid from a small rum bottle. The session included several Bob Marley tunes, to which Lee improvised new lyrics. The phrase "Coconut Excalibur" was repeated frequently. Despite his eccentricity, Perry was very coherent in giving instructions to the musicians, and very demanding. He knew exactly what he wanted. His singing sounded like a Jamaican Curtis Mayfield on acid reading transcripts from Bellevue Hospital..."

How did you get the name Upsetter?

Because I am the Upsetter. That's the answer for itself. I am the Upsetter. One take onto himself what he think he is, and I think I know I art the Upsetter, so I am the Upsetter.

Excerpted from Reggae International by Stephen Davis and Peter Simon, Rogner & Bernhard, 1982. Used by permission. c 1982, Stephen Davis and Peter Simon.

Discography

by CC Smith

This discography represents only a small part of the Upsetter's prodigious output. I have not even begun to grapple with all the singles he has been responsible for, but I am collecting as much information as I can for the definitive Lee Perry discography. Anyone with a significant Lee Perry collection should contact me immediately.

The lps listed here are those credited to Lee Perry or the Upsetters. He has also worked with over 40 other artists, including Max Romeo, Junior Byles, Heptones, Wailers, Jah Lion, Slickers, Prince Jazzbo, Junior Murvin, Congos, Dr. Alimantado, Augustus Pablo and Mikey Dread.

The Best of Lee Perry and "The Upsetters" - Lee Perry & The Upsetters
Star, PTLPI023

Revolution Dub - Lee Perry and The Upsetters
Cactus CTLP112

Cloak and Dagger - Lee Scratch Perry and The Upsetters
Black Art TSLP9001

Scratch and Company, Chapter 1 - The Upsetters
Clocktower, LPCT0114

Blackboard Jungle Dub - The Upsetters
Clocktower LPCT0115

Super Ape - The Upsetters
Island ILPS9417 (1976)

Double Seven - The Upsetters
Trojan TRLS70 (1976)

Roast Fish Collie Weed and Cornbread - Lee Perry the Upsetter
Lion of Judah (1978)

Return of the Super Ape - The Upsetters
Lion of Judah LP1R0001 (1978)

Scratch on the Wire
island ILPS9583 (1979)

Africa's Blood - Lee Perry
Trojan TBL166 (1980?)

The Return of Pipecock Jackxon - Lee "Scratch" Perry
Black Star Liner BSLP9002 (1980)

The Upsetter Collection - The Upsetters & Friends
Trojan TRLS195 (1981?)

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LEE "SCRATCH" PERRY

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Heart of the Ark - Lee Scratch Perry
Seven Leaves SLLP1 (1982)

Mystic Miracle Star - Lee "Scratch" Perry
Heartbeat 06 (1982)

Two most recent releases (I have my doubts that Scratch had anything to do with them. Anyone with info on these lps, please contact me at the address on the back page):

Black Ark in Dub
Black Ark international BALP 4000
(London, 1983)

Lee Perry Presents Megaton Dub
Seven Leaves SLLP2 (England, 1983)

ITAL SOUNDS

Continued from page 4

The Hollywood Palladium, respectively).

Until very recently, there's been a real shortage of records available from local reggae artists in Los Angeles. Seeing a need to be fulfilled, Robbie, Debbie and Milt formed American Music primarily as a vehicle to further develop and promote Angelian reggae.

Stan Rankin' Turner is moshin' it up all over de place with his April release on Patois Records, *Sea & Land*, which is rising up

charts in Jamaica, Belize and Japan as well as here in California, New York and Texas.

Stan comes from a family full of musical entertainers spanning from the days of the Quadrille to the reggae of today - Stan's cousin, *Capitan Simba*, has an album out in England on the Greensleeves label and will be here in southern California soon.

At the age of 15, doing Sunday afternoon auditions at such studios as Coxson, JJ's and DukeReid, Stan was helped out a couple of times by Bob Marley, who would give the young artists tips on guitar chords, song arrangements, etc.

To focus his energy on getting *Sea & Land* really happening, Stan is currently without a permanent band. He recorded *Sea & Land* with musicians Touche on bass, Finger on drums, Brian Macintosh on keyboards, Lester Far I on lead guitar, Leon on rhythm guitar, Doug on horns and Lite Charmers singing backup vocals. Engineered by George Raymond, the album was recorded at the Music Lab in Hollywood, co-produced by Stan and daughter Donna.

Scorcher's getting lots of new music together for us in a variety of ways. He has a 12" out on Scorcher, one of his two record labels (the other is Eye on JA) - Scorcher All Stars with Mikey Sinclair. He's also working toward getting his own album out in March of '84, and is in the process of producing a Canadian-based Jamaican group, The Webber Sisters. To support the September release of a Webber Sisters 12" (the album will be out around Christmas time), Scorcher will be bringing the group to this country for a tour. He'll be spending

the month of July in JA checking new trends in music, producing, recording and promoting. He's even working in the studio with an L.A.-based Mexican band, Cahabra - Scorcher likes all kinds of music, and we can look forward to hearing lots of it from him in the very near future.

I & I WORKS

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Winnie: That little rastaman come on, and him say we going kill the Pope, as you said, there was lightnings and thunderings and I say "Praise Haile Selassie I Rastafarl." Yes I.

Hank: Well that's about the end of the show here today. I give thanks and praises you could be here today.

Winnie: Rastafarl live.



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