

ENTERTAINMENT **HAPPENINGS** ENTERTAINMENT

Grassroot News, N. W.—Reggae superstar Peter Tosh mystified Portland Saturday night with the revolutionary rhythm of rastafarian music. "Rasta is not a religion. It's a traditional way of life. Those who know Christ and are followers from the earth are rastafarians. It's nothing new—until historians smuggled themselves into Africa and wrote books and called it Christianity. Western Christianity used every strategy to eliminate the reality of the real Christianity. But it has been reborn in this dispensation of time. This is what the Rasta man represents. A manifestation of the prophecy of Christ in these times." Tosh explained what rastafarian means. The rasta way of life is also the visible symbol of the restlessness, the frustration, the discontent, the hope, and the creativity of the Jamaican masses for whom society has no place except at the bottom of the socio-economic heap.



PETER TOSH

by Lanita Duke
Grassroot News Service

The lyric of Tosh contains statements like *Stand up for your rights, and No matter your complexion you're an African*. With words directed towards those of African descent it would seem that a Black record company would produce and promote Reggae. "Many people who are Black in this country are being functioned by some white industry. It is better to use the white man in his own land than to use the Black man to do the things I want him to do in the white man's land. If he wanted to stop it he could stop it if the Black man was doing it. But when the white man does it he would have to investigate."

Tosh is marketed by Rolling Stones records which is ironic, because as quiet as it's kept, rock got its creative push from another form of African influenced culture, Blues. "That's the way it goes," Tosh begins. "Every producer is in the same category of the society. Because they are all the same people. I've been searching for years to find someone who loves reggae music. Before they dealt with me on a productive level they were dealing want him to do in the white man's land. If he wanted to stop it he could stop by it. They had to get close to someone who knows the architect of reggae music."



PETER TOSH (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Tosh hooked up with Rolling Stones Records after meeting the indescribable Mick Jagger. "I did a peace concert in Jamaica and Mick Jagger was there. He appreciated my performance and we began to talk business. It sounded progressive and I tried it out and so far, so good."

Peter Tosh's development and talents grew out of his involvement with the King of Reggae, Bob Marley. "We came together for a spiritual reason. Jah put us together. We were to accomplish certain spiritual missions with one divine force. We formed in 1960 and started recording in 1962. The group was together for ten to twelve years. After this experience I came to the conclusion to get some experience on my own and find what's in me and who I was supposed to be. Every tub has to stand on its own bottom."

The Northwest authority on Reggae music is Pablo Innis, the Soul Rebel on the roots, rock, reggae radio show on KBOO, FM. "Peter is just now coming into his own. His impact won't be felt until one or two years from now. The fact that the concert was sold out tells me Reggae is here to stay. Peter's music reflects the conditions of the times and his own personal experience."

Pablo answered as to why whites are bopping to the music of Africa on a wider range than those of African descent. "Some of them still look at Blacks as entertainers. Just look and listen and you can see that it's more than entertainment. To some the message is just for that moment and that's it."

Tosh elaborates, "The Black people are not to be blamed. It's the media and society. Because of what Reggae means it is being incriminated, discriminated and its rights are being violated by every angle. It's part of the system to keep Reggae music in the back and under the bottom. But Reggae music has a magnetic psychology and spiritual force. Irrespective of the barriers of what they try to do to keep it out of the eyes and ears of the people, reggae music has its own potential, so it will move any barriers. Reggae music will force you to accept it."



LA TOYA JACKSON

Keeping It All In the Family

Attractive, young La Toya Jackson needs no introduction to music fans around the globe who know her as the middle child in one of the most famous entertainment families in the world—the Jacksons. Along with brothers Tito, Jackie, Jermaine, Marlon, Randy and Michael, and sisters Maureen and Janet, La Toya has entertained international audiences as part of the Jacksons' universally-acclaimed stage show. With her self-titled debut album, released last year, La Toya demonstrated the talent she had shown on numerous concert tours with her family at the prestigious MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas, as well as on The Jacksons' summer variety television show.

With the release of her second LP, *My Special Love*, La Toya looks ready to attain the stardom associated with her famous and talented family. On the first single, "Stay the Night," co-written by Ken Gold and Billy Ocean, La Toya sings with sensual passion the song's urgent plea, while proving more than capable of turning the lilting dance rhythms of the self-penned (co-composed with sister Janet) "Camp Kuchi Kai" into a steamy serenade. Producer Ollie E. Brown even contributes a pair of tunes, "Fill You Up" and the sizzling "Summertime With You." Marlon, Randy, Tito and Jackie wrote the LP's finale, "Special Love," which builds gradually into a moving climax. *My Special Love* shows that La Toya Jackson is growing into one of our finest song stylists.

The fifth of nine children, La Toya grew up in Gary, IN., and then Los Angeles, when the family moved there in the mid-'60s. While her father Joseph put the five boys through grueling rehearsals in their quest for stardom, La Toya grew up in an environment of music, singing and dancing. "It was only natural for me to pick that up," she recalls. "But I never expected to be part of the show. I wouldn't dare want to work that hard, but it's certainly paid off."

In fact, La Toya didn't become part of the act until 1972, "when I was drawn into it all at once," she claims.

Sister Janet was brought into the band at that time, too, so the family could expand its stage show.

"I was extremely shy as a youngster," recalls La Toya. "Oh sure, we would all get together and sing country and folk songs around the house. We all loved Sam Cooke and Michael used to listen to James Brown and the Temptations all the time."

The act the Jacksons brought to Las Vegas included back-up vocals by La Toya as well as her intricate choreography. Later on, she did background vocals for the Jacksons' summer variety series on T.V. and then travelled throughout the States with the family's show.

"At first, I didn't care for performing," admits La Toya. "But eventually, I got the urge to do it myself."

A shy, private person who only recently moved into her own apartment, La Toya didn't really decide to break out on her own until just under two years ago, when she sat in the living room, watching another singer on television. At the time, La Toya was attending college, studying for a law degree at Northridge in Southern California.

"My father asked me if I thought I could sing like the girl on television and I answered, 'Sure!' " she says. "I believed the time was right, and it was what I really wanted to do."

And so, Joe Jackson hustled La Toya off to the studio with producers Ollie E. Brown and Larry Farrow, and they recorded *La Toya Jackson*. Brother Michael loaned his hand as producer of the single, "Night Time Lover," co-penned with La Toya, and the beautiful singer's career was off and running.

La Toya, who's devoted to her new fans all over the world, likes Stephanie Mills, Chaka Khan and Diana Ross, but has a style that is distinctively her own.

And where does La Toya see herself in the future? She insists on wanting to continue singing, writing more original material and performing in glamorous showcase settings like Las Vegas. She is also interested in pursuing an acting career, when the time is right.

"I think the members of the Jackson family are now striving to establish their own individual careers," observes the attractive entertainer. "Everyone wants to do a solo album or get involved with producing other artists."

With the release of *My Special Love*, her impressive follow-up to her stunning debut, La Toya Jackson has taken another step towards achieving a stardom commensurate with that of her famous and talented family.

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