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Shared Darkness
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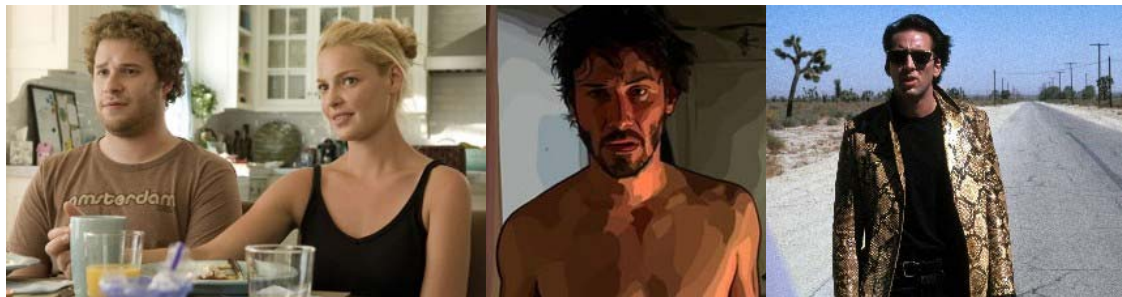
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Earth Day Celebration: A Reggae Tribute to Garnett Silk



This entry was posted on 5/19/2007 8:15 AM and is filed under [DVD Reviews](#).



With a rich and emotive voice, **Garnett Silk** began his career as a child toaster, and rose to become one of Jamaica's most astonishing singers — an exciting young talent from the 1980s dancehall scene. International stardom on a bigger order seemed in the cards, but **Silk's career and life were cut cruelly short, however, as he perished in December of 1994, while trying to rescue his mother from a house fire.** Each year, now, the Garnett Silk Foundation coordinates an Earth Day Bash in his native country to honor his name and celebrate his music.

Comprised of 74 minutes of concert footage from the eponymous foundation's 2003 Earth Day Bash, this disc features a lengthy list of artists that includes Ras Fire, Doniki & Steady Ranks, The Rastareens, Edi Fitzroy, Aaron Silk, Anthony Cruz, Lehbanculah, Chuck Fendah, Richie Spice, LMS, Turbulence, Lukie D, Ras Shiloh and Sizzla Kalonji. The gathering is substantial, but also maintains a backyard BBQ party feel — something aided by the single camera approach used to capture the footage here. For the most part, this works, as it's clearly filmed on high-grade digital video. Occasionally, though, the operator(s) pan out into the crowd or mis-rack focus, cutting you out of the action for several seconds. And when a flag-waving fool keeps clouding your vision of Richie Spice's act, you're left wishing for an editor and/or director to provide you with a cutaway.

The energy throughout this disc is high, but the performances vary rather wildly in quality. Chuck Fenda is the reggae equivalent of a carnival barker, and it's a tiresome act. Mixed-sex collective LMS is sort of a poor man's Fugees, but they bring a cool vibe to their set. Likewise, Suga Black weighs in nicely with "A Change is Gonna Come" (a track not listed on the disc's accompanying song list), and then segues into an interesting cover of "Let It Be." **The problem is, the song — like many on this disc — is cut off, mid-tune.** With such a packed roster, we sometimes don't get full tunes, and certainly not entire sets. It makes for a frustrating experience,

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ultimately. It's additionally strange that there's not a cover of "Hello Africa," Silk's biggest hit.

Presented in a 1.85:1 widescreen aspect ratio, and housed in a regular Amray case, this region-free disc is anchored by stereo and surround sound audio mixes, both of which sound a bit tinny at times, the result, perhaps, of the concert's soundboard being placed too close to its stage speaks. Slightly flickering, motion menu screens give way to song selections or a "play all" function, but there are unfortunately **no special features contained herein**. Some sort of behind-the-scenes material on the concert would have been nice — and seemingly not too difficult to throw together, given all the warmth for Silk — or even a text biography for relative reggae newcomers. Alas, this disc remains a specialized entry. **C- (Concert) C- (Disc)**

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