



## DVD REVIEW

### Various Artists

#### Deep Roots Music 3

MVD (510)

Grade: ★★★

The final volume of the "Deep Roots Music" series brings to DVD parts five and six of an early '80s British TV documentary on Jamaican music.

Narrated by Mikey Dread, the series was seriously flawed, but fascinating nonetheless.

"Part Five — Money in my Pocket" is almost incoherent, and, without subtitles, possibly incomprehensible to U.S. audiences. Initially, it explores the links between politics and reggae but soon loses the plot by its insistence on tying in Bob Marley at every opportunity. The confusion is heightened by the scattershot approach of live concert footage (Wailers, I-Threes), interviews and footage of an "Opportunity Knocks"-style radio program.

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However, when it skews off to Dennis Brown, his studio performances and a cappella singing during an extended interview made this a must-see show.

"Part Six — Ghetto Riddims," in contrast, is more straight-forward, a look at the music from street level. Unfortunately, the artists featured within are never named, except for DJ Charlie Ace, and he's not performing, instead selling singles from his mobile record shop. We do, however, get eloquent street-corner philosophizing, a band rehearsal, and the island's off-the-cuff audition process.

The latter takes place in the backyard of

producer Jack Ruby's studio, with both young hopefuls and veterans delivering their songs either a cappella or accompanied only by acoustic guitar. Unbelievably, this was how many of Jamaica's stars were discovered right up to contemporary times.

The scripts are weak and the editing awful, but the footage is utterly captivating. The knowledgeable will gain much insight through it alone, while the novice will learn little but still find much of interest.

— Jo-Ann Green