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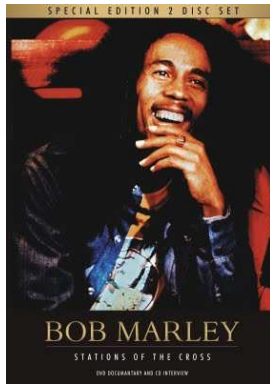
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Bob Marley: Stations Of The Cross DVD Review

December 11, 2009 by [Christina](#)
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Bob Marley – Stations Of The Cross (GMVS 2003/Pride Publications 2009) is a sensitive exploration of a [musician](#) and Third World spokesman (thought by many to have also been a mystic and a prophet) who was, in the words of former Jamaican Prime Minister Michael Marley, “one of those people who comes about once in a generation...who through his own genius makes it a part of the universal art of the world.” This is both a 62-minute documentary DVD and a 77-minute CD set, with the latter containing parts of many interviews by journalists with answers from Bob Marley himself talking about his early life in Jamaica, playing live in America, his musical inspirations, Rastafara as his religion and many other topics. The DVD contains rare footage from private collections and interviews with loved ones, friends and associates, and journalists.

Bob Marley was born Robert Nestor Marley in Nine Miles, Jamaica, on February 6, 1947, to his mother, Cedella Booker, and his father, a white Englishman who played no part in his life. Cedella moved to Trenchtown, Kingston (where a large mural notes Marley as legendary) when he was in his teens. Bob escaped the poverty and violence of Kingston through his music and the practice of Rastafara. He sang the praises of Rastafara while making people aware of their ills, joys and dreams and uniting all people as brothers, “no matter whether they be black, brown, yellow or white.” He was also against The System (the Babylonian Vampire) which he felt corrupted people, and in his famous [song](#) “Small Axe” he sang “If you want to be the tree/We are the small axe/Ready to cut you down.”

The DVD is distinctive because of its carefully chosen interviews. One of his childhood friends, Sticks, claims that Bob was ahead of city musicians because he had the country, nature and time in him from when he lived outside the city of Kingston. “His childhood was not unique but his desire to sing and perform and offer up hope was” the narration tells us, and Bob gave up his training as a welder to form the band The Rude Boys, which later, with [Peter Tosh](#), became The Wailers, “calling themselves The Wailers because it was said they were all born crying,” (and in the CD Bob states that “there is no man so big that he was once not a baby”). Tony Calder, formerly a [Rolling Stones](#) manager, describes seeing him in a concert in Jamaica before he became famous: “We went to see Bob in a place like a hangar or a school or a factory with 2,000 other people, hot, steaming and sultry and the air was filled with smoke. He played for two and a half hours and I was the only white person there.”

Bob was signed to [Island Records](#) by Chris Blackwell in 1972 (for the first time using a great studio sound system to record) and in 1973 his album “Catch A Fire” gave The Wailers national recognition, and the rest is history, a history you can follow closely by watching this DVD! It was said by his friend Patrick Nelson that “when he became a millionaire the money didn’t change him, it changed the people around him.”

Political unrest in Jamaica made politicians try to use popular Bob Marley as a pawn to garner votes, and there was an assassination attempt at Marley’s home on November 26, 1975, where he and his wife Rita, among others, were injured and where his manager Don Taylor leaned over to take a bullet for him! After this event Bob had to leave Jamaica. At his funeral (after his death by cancer in 1983 at the age of 36) Edward Seaga, once a record promoter himself and then the Prime Minister of Jamaica, gave a eulogy noting four of his songs: “Trenchtown Rock – the symbol of his life; “No Woman No Cry” – his comforting hand of compassion; “One Love” – his vision of peace and unity; and “Rasta Man Vibrations” – his deep mystical faith.” He was inducted into the [RockNRoll](#) Hall Of Fame in 1994.

This remarkable DVD/CD set contains so much more than one review could ever encompass. Not only for the [reggae](#) aficionado but for all of those interested in the story of a self-less musician who, as the narration tells us, “during his brief lifetime almost single-handedly brought the sound of reggae and Rasta to the world but despite his

fame never lost touch with his humanity, his roots or his vision of a more just world for all people regardless of race, creed or color.”

Grade: A

Running Times: DVD 62 minutes and CD 77 minutes

Produced and directed by Ray Santilli

Narrated by Tim Hain

With Cedella Booker, Ziggy Marley, Sticks, Tony Calder, Nattie Rebel, Patrick Nelson, Bunny Melody and others

DVD Review by Christina of Music Room Reviews

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