

# The Canadian Reggae (Cover Story)

## Music Awards: The man behind it all

### WINSTON HEWITT

by: Bernard Augustine Cooper

This last February in Toronto, Canada, history was made when the grandest tribute ever was paid to the man who shall be remembered as the King of Reggae and who was responsible for making reggae music a major force in the international market. If Bob Marley himself were there to witness it, I am sure he would have been delighted. History was made when the first Annual Canadian Reggae Music Awards took place at the Triumph Sheraton Hotel before a capacity crowd "who came away satisfied, and, indeed, optimistic about future editions of the ceremonies which recognize the best in Canada's reggae music industry."

The driving force, behind such a 'solid gold' presentation which brought together an oversize crowd of fans and musicians, was a man some people refer to in his own right as an "institution" and who must himself be listed as having "contributed" so much to the growth of Black music, Mr. Winston Hewitt.

Winston, a man I have come to know personally, is a giant of a man in personality, ability and actual performance. He is a doer, not a blabbermouth. Hewitt owns his publishing company "Dynamusic", has his own record label "Boss Records" and produced an admirable list of up coming reggae stars, including Carlene Davis, Pauline Jones and Dice Fernandez.

In the last Canadian Black music Awards presentation in 1983, Hewitt was himself nominated in 5 categories which included one in the top Record Label Category, Producer of the year's Best Single of the year for his not "Everynight" single. His skill as a producer also won him nomination for his work on Pauline Jones' "Sweet Sexy Eyes" and Jackie Edwards' album "The Dynamic Jackie Edwards." He chooses not to compete in the Annual Canadian Reggae Music Awards show.

Tony Wong, writing recently about Winston Hewitt: "The Consummate Reggae Producer," feels that although recognized as one of Canada's best Reggae musicians, Hewitt probably has his biggest market in Europe,

where he has held concerts in Paris, London and Amsterdam. Hewitt has undeniable international appeal as he has had a top ten hit in Japan and a trophy from an Italian Music festival testifies to this.

The "Winston Hewitt sound" is described by Tony Wong most fittingly as "varied and rich". On a typical album, one can hear the influences of rock, reggae, country, Western and blues. Hewitt calls his music "Lovers rock reggae", and easy listening sound that many die hard "roots-reggae" fans have, according to Wong, mistakenly dismissed as "watered down" reggae, or reggae without a message. But Hewitt does have something to say in his music; his themes expound social rather than political topics. Perhaps, if it is possible to divide our thoughts between two different types of music we may be able too, to see Brooke Benton or Solomon Burke's influence on Hewitt when he performs certain love songs.

As part of our cover presentation in this issue, Winston Hewitt shares the spotlight with International acclaimed Entertainer, Performer Tina Turner.

There is a reason for this. Reggae is known to influence pop music as many singers and groups incorporate this pulsating beat. One of the most recent examples of this phenomenon is Tina Turner's Grammy Award winning song "What's Love Got To Do With It?" which has a reggae beat.

As Diane Liverpool, Secretary of The Black Music Association (Toronto Chapter) puts it, "Bob's music and songs touched millions of people around the world including youth in the slums of Kingston, Jamaica, music lovers in North America and Europe, and the guerillas who were fighting in preliberated Zimbabwe", which was released in 1979".

Do you recall the rest of the story?

"A year later, independence won, Zimbabwe Prime Minister Robert Mugabe invited Bob Marley and the Wailers to perform at the official Independence Day Ceremonies on April 18, 1980.

I suppose one can see now how im-

portant a magazine cover can be. As publisher of TREND I ask you to see the two faces on this present cover of our magazine as being some further representation of tribute to the man who made Reggae possible - We salute you Bob Marley.

Already, the second Annual Canadian Reggae Awards is well on its way to being a success. It is to be held on Sunday, February 16th, 1986 at the Skyline Hotel, 655 Dixon Road, Rexdale, Ontario. Countless of local and International Reggae stars are being featured. I certainly will be there as a spectator and fan of course.