

# 2007 Okayplayer Awards



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## Rwandans Pay Tribute To Lucky Dube

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Kigali, Rwanda – Thousands of Rwandans gathered at Kigali's Amahoro stadium Saturday evening to pay tribute to South African singer Lucky Dube, who was killed in Johannesburg last month.

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## Bob Marley Documentary Coming

# Soon



\*The Bob Marley documentary “Africa Unite” will arrive soon in U.S. theaters thanks to Palm Pictures, which has acquired all North American and U.K. rights to the acclaimed work by filmmaker Stephanie Black.

The feature follows three generations of the Marley family as they take their first trip to Ethiopia for a landmark concert commemorating the late reggae icon’s 60th birthday.

The film also includes rare footage of Marley and many of his original recordings on the soundtrack.

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## Cipes and the Revolution CD Release



“Reggae is the weapon of the future,” explains Greg Cipes about The Conscious Revolution, the debut album from his group Cipes and the People. “It’s the music that unifies everyone and everything.”

An accomplished actor on hit TV shows House, Ghost Whisperer, Without a Trace and Deadwood, a voiceover artist on Disney Channel’s W.I.T.C.H. and Super Robot Monkey Team Hyperforce Go! along with Cartoon Network’s Teen Titans and a professional junior surfer, the Florida-born Cipes comes from a show business family. His grandparents both acted

professionally and his father was a TV director who became successful in real estate, then traveled extensively with his family, often taking them to the Bahamas , where Cipes heard reggae music for the first time.

“I was divinely placed in a position to see how the music made those living in poverty feel so good,” he says. “The culture and the warmth of the people always intrigued me.”

Citing reggae, hip-hop and rock as his main influences, the 27-year-old packed up his yellow Nissan Xterra and moved to Los Angeles to study directing at USC, but dropped out within weeks when he landed a pilot at Warner Bros.

“Music has always been part of my life,” he says, citing such disparate inspirations as Bob Marley, the Doors, Sublime and Miami bass rappers 2 Live Crew, whose battle for freedom of speech attracted a young Cipes as much as their music. “But it only started to take this form seven years ago.”

The album’s lead single, “Free Me,” is also the first song Cipes ever wrote seven years ago, inspired, he says, by his dog Timber and the spirit of Bob Marley.

“I called on Marley spirit to work its way through me,” he says. “I couldn’t even sing growing up. I just prayed to him to let me spread his message and be a conduit of his love, power and wisdom. And it happened.”

“I’m talking to Mother Earth in the song as a female whom I’ve disrespected. And this is my plea to heal that relationship. The other element is my own earthly relationships with women. My heart has been broken at least four times. But I’ve never stopped loving. I don’t regard women as the opposite sex anymore. I wasn’t always strong enough to do that. But I’ve vowed not to have sex until I’ve found my one true partner out there.”

Cipesâ€™ music is part of his Conscious Revolution, his attempt to unite peopleâ€™s beliefs and bring them together. â€œI do everything in the service of God,â€ he says, explaining that he no longer drinks, smokes, watches TV, goes to the movie, listens to the radio or has sex. â€œIâ€™m being lifted up so I can shed light on others who have the knowledge, experience, heart and drive to unite cultures, religions and races. Reggae is all about the positive message, the positive vibration. Itâ€™s a music that unifies everyone and everything.â€

The video for â€œFade Awayâ€ gives a plug for Save the Earth, while â€œJah Peopleâ€ is inspired by Marleyâ€™s assertion that â€œGod loves everyone.â€

â€œGod is part of every one of us,â€ he explains. â€œWhether itâ€™s Jesus, Mohammed, Buddha, Krishna , Jah or Allah. Iâ€™m a firm believer in experiencing all religions so you can understand where everybody is coming from, so you can communicate from a compassionate place. I may not know anything, but I understand everything.â€

The albumâ€™s musical styles range from the hip-hop dancehall toasting of â€œ0nes Up,â€ featuring Houston rapper Big Boss, and the Two-Tone speeded-up ska of â€œPain,â€ which tells the story of visiting an ex-girlfriend in the middle of the night and getting picked up by the police, to the singer/songwriter balladry of â€œFly,â€ detailing his decision to leave Florida and go to California. â€œThatâ€™s about letting to and putting myself in Godâ€™s hands,â€ he explains. â€œThis album, produced by newcomer and friend. 23 year old Greg Whitman, is about unifying all races, religions and genres of music. All of those things are in me.â€

Cipes and the People has coalesced into a core 11-person line-up, which includes two horn players, three back-up singers, lead guitar, bass, keyboards and a DJ. The band was featured in the MTV show Twentyfourseven, which spurred more than 200k

people to check out their music on MySpace, where they were the site's #1 unsigned reggae band earlier this year.

For Cipes, it's not about either fame or success, but bringing people together. "Music is a celebration, a time for people to rejoice in their connections," he says. "At our shows, we have hippies, hip-hop heads, rockers and Goths. We're uniting people that ordinarily wouldn't come together because our message is so universal.

"God is everywhere and everything. When you start seeing God that way, you can act and perform from a place of power, positivity, focus and peace. I want people to realize they have a choice. We're at a place and time where many people think it's too late. That humanity is doomed. But that's not the case. There is a fork in the road and we will turn the right way. God will empower us to make the correct decision. All we're doing is channeling his divine energy and healing into these songs."

Although he admits ganja was once a holy sacrament for him, he realizes now, it was just a bridge. "I began receiving messages, both mental and physical, that I didn't need it any more," he explains. "I appreciate my connection to ganja. It influenced me in such a positive way, I want to show respect for this plant, this medicine, which is what it is. But I'm more on a health tip now. Part of my reason for not smoking anymore is I'm so spiritually connected to Marley, he told me, during his lifetime, he smoked enough for the both of us."

As for his current celibacy, Cipes claims, "Sex distracts you from your goal. You take your eye off the ball, and the ball is now in my court. And never again will I take my eye off the ball. Unless I'm married, I won't have sex. In my experience, when I've given up things, I get things in return. I realize my life in this body is temporary. To do everything I do, I've had to give up things. My music's my

girlfriend. I make love to my music now.â€

Music is just a means to an end for Greg Cipes. Cipes and the Peopleâ€™s Conscious Revolution is just beginning.

â€œLife seems to fly away today,â€ sings Cipes on â€œ Free Me. â€ â€œI woke up in the morning/And things donâ€™t feel the same.â€

The Conscious Revolution aims to change your life.

â€œWith you by my side/We will win the fight/In the battle of dark and light,â€ he declares in â€œFade Away.â€

â€œYou are love, your soul is love, and that never fades away,â€ concludes Greg. â€œItâ€™s God telling us heâ€™s walking with us, that weâ€™re not alone. The Conscious Revolution is about letting people know they have the power to create their own reality. When you start implementing that in your life, you will see the change. I just try to do the right thing because everything is connected. And nothing good comes easy.â€

Certainly nothing as good as The Conscious Revolution.