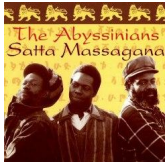


The Abyssinians - Satta Massagana (1993)

Written by bluelover

Tuesday, 05 February 2013 17:12 - Last Updated Sunday, 24 April 2016 11:32

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Original album Forward To Zion (1976): 01. *Declaration of Rights* (B.Collins) – 3:28 02. *The Good Lord* (D.Manning, M.Planno) – 3:24 03. *Forward Unto Zion* (B.Collins) – 3:45 04. *Know Jah Today* (B.Collins) – 2:55 05. *Abendigo* (L.Manning) – 3:33 06. *Y Mas Gan* (L.Manning) – 3:41 07. *Black Man's Strain* (B.Collins) – 2:44 08. *Satta Massagana* (B.Collins, D.Manning, L.Manning) – 3:29 09. *I And I* (L.Manning) – 3:33 10. *African Race* (D.Manning) – 2:53

1993 Heartbeat re-issue:

11. *Leggo Beast* (B.Collins) – 3:10 12. *Peculiar Number* (D.Manning) – 3:58 13. *Reason Time* (L.Manning) – 2:55 14. *There Is No End* (L.Manning) – 3:22

Personnel: - Vocals - Bernard Collins, Donald Manning, Lynford Manning - Drums - Mikey "Boo" Richards, Leroy "Horsemouth" Wallace, Sly Dunbar - Bass - Val Douglas, Robbie Shakespeare - Guitar - Micky Chung, Earl "Chinna" Smith - Keyboards - Geoffrey Chung, Clive Hunt, Tyrone Downie - Horns - Clive Hunt, Jerome Francique, Llewellyn Chang - Flute - Clive Hunt

This is one of those legendary reggae albums that's easier to admire than enjoy. There's no doubt of its importance: if you had to pick the five most influential Rasta anthems of the 1970s (and Jah knows there have been few if any since then), the title track of this album would be one of them. So, most likely, would "Declaration of Rights," which has been remade in countless different versions. And the Abyssinians themselves are a fine vocal trio. If they're not as sweet-sounding as the Mighty Diamonds, and not as tight and compelling as the Heptones, they do have a fierce and intense spirituality that is pretty compelling in its own right. But all that said, this is an album that takes some time and adjustment to enjoy. For one thing, every single song is taken at exactly the same tempo. Reggae is a music that is built on subtle differentiation (or, as philistines and Babylonians might say, it all tends to sound the same), and that means that it's important to sow a little variety wherever you can. It's also true that the group's spiritual intensity sometimes leads the harmonies to, shall we say, wander in the wilderness a bit. But the deep religious conviction of the songs and singers, as well as that unchanging, loping, serene groove, will begin to draw you in after a few listens. --- Rick Anderson, Rovi

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