

BRENT
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PRESENTS

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THE A-Z OF

BRENT'S

BLACK

MUSIC HISTORY

BASED ON KWAKU'S
'BRENT BLACK MUSIC HISTORY
PROJECT' 2007 (BTWSC)



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THE A-Z OF BRENT'S BLACK MUSIC HISTORY

This A-Z is largely a republishing of Kwaku's research for the '*Brent Black Music History Project*' published by BTWSC in 2007. Kwaku's work is a testament to Brent's contribution to the evolution of British black music and the commercial infrastructure to support it.

His research contained separate sections on labels, shops, artists, radio stations and sound systems. In this version we have amalgamated these into a single 'encyclopedia' and added entries that cover the period between 2007-2020.

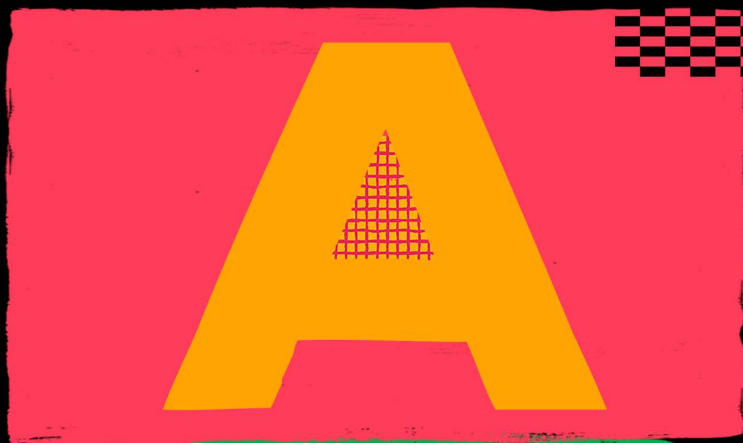
The process of gathering Brent's musical heritage is an ongoing task - there are many incomplete entries and gaps. If you would like to add to, or alter, an entry please send an email to hello@metrolandcultures.com



4 HERO

An influential group made up of Dego and Mark Mac, who act as the creative force; Gus Lawrence and Ian Bardouille take care of business. They started out playing on pirate radio, then set up Reinforced in Dollis Hill in 1989. Through the creative efforts under 4 Hero and various guises, such as Tek 9, Manix & Tom & Jerry, 4 Hero and their label have covered musical styles including jungle, drum & bass, hardcore, hip-hop, techno, breakbeats, and new soul-jazz. Although they were big on the underground scene, 4 Hero signed to the major label Talkin Loud, on which they released two albums: the 1998 Mercury Music Award-nominated *Two Pages*, and the 2001 set *Creating Patterns*. They are a very eclectic act as well as a producing/remixing team, also capable of producing very soulful and elaborate pieces, best demonstrated by their richly orchestrated cover of "Les Fleur". Dego and Mark Mac continue to release music separately, but prolifically through different guises on the Bandcamp music platform.





IS FOR...



ACEN

Crossover hardcore artist/producer active in the early 90s, releasing music on the Production House label. His "Trip II The Moon" rave anthem made it to the bottom reaches of the Top 40 in the summer of 1992.

ADRIAN SHERWOOD

Reggae producer and boss of the On-U Sound record label who used to work in the Pama Shop. Adrian went on to partner with Chips Richards on the Carib Gem shop.

AFRO B

Before he started blowing up on the Afrobeats scene as an artist with hits like "Drogba (Joanna)", he honed his skills as a DJ playing Afrobeats at the NW10 club in Harlesden.

AKABU

Arguably the world's first all women reggae band comprising Vyris Edghill, Barbara Grossett, Paulette Coke, Shelomi Coke, Diane White, Caroline Williams, and Valerie 'Vibes' Skeete, who released their debut album *African Woman Abroad* in 1982. In 1983, Adrian Sherwood produced singer-guitarist Valerie and Vyris on a soul single called "Watch Yourself", which was released under the Akabu name. The following year a remixed version, featuring hip-hop mixing/mash-up pioneers Double Dee & Steinski, was released in the US by the legendary hip-hop label Tommy Boy. After the publicity generated by the single, the band adopted the Akabu name. In 1998 they released a self-titled album on the band's own 'Viva' label. They played at Bridge Park Community Centre's opening ceremony in London, which was attended by Prince Charles.

ALL EARS

A record shop situated at 3 Library Parade, Craven Park, NW10 was a haven for disco, jazz-funk, R&B and soul records in the middle of the reggae heartland. It was started in the mid-1970s by Andy Sojka, whose Atmosfear jazz-funk band used to rehearse in the premises. The previous occupier was also a record shop called Sound Scene. All Ears closed in 1982.

ALPHA INTERNATIONAL

A sound system.

ALTON ELLIS

The Jamaican reggae icon spent much time in Brent, performing and recording for many Brent labels including Pama, Venture and Lord Koos. Aswad member Tony Gad first met Janet Kay at the Gangsterville record shop, where Aswad used to rehearse, and recommended her to Alton Ellis, who provided Janet with her first recording with the 1977 cover of "Loving You". She later duetted with Alton on "Still in Love".

ARAWAK

Arawak, a predominantly reggae stockist, took over the premises vacated by the funk, jazz and soul focused All Ears at 3 Library Parade, Craven Park, NW10. The owner, Patrick Cann, also operated the Arawak label. Dennis Bovell produced a great number of Arawak's releases, including Janet Kay's "Silly Games", which when released on Lightning's Scope label made No. 2 in 1979. Another Arawak artist, Errol Dunkley, also enjoyed crossover in 1979 on Scope with the Top 15 sing-along reggae hit "OK Fred".

AREMA

An early 1980s lovers rock band that released self-produced singles on their own City Boy label. "In Love" was a top reggae tune. Their other releases were "Blow My Mind", "Back A Yard", and "Turn Around". Leroy Wilson is a key member of the Reggae Fraternity UK organisation.

ASWAD

The first British reggae band to be signed by Island Records. Their underground favourite "Warrior Charge", is one of reggae's best instrumentals. The band was awarded the MOBO Awards 2000 Outstanding Contribution To Black Music gong. Although the longest and most commercial phase of this reggae band has been represented by vocalist/guitarist Brinsley Forde, drummer/vocalist Drummie Zeb, and bassist Tony Gad, the others that formed the quintet launched by Island Records in the mid-1970s were bassist George Oban, guitarist Donald Griffiths and keyboardist Courtney Hemmings. If you lived in Brent at the time, you knew that they brought pride to the area, and must have given strength to many African youth at the butt end of Sus laws, which seemingly gave the police powers to disproportionately stop and search African youth. One's only gripe is that Island did not add the socio-conscious "Three Babylon" to their debut album. Today, Aswad are known more for their crossover hits "Shine" and "Give A Little Love" and the 1988 chart-topping "Don't Turn Around", rather than rootsy stuff like "Back To Africa".

ATMOSFEAR

Band started by Kingsbury High School educated musician and All Ears record shop owner Andy Sojka. Atmosfear's first release, the instrumental "Dancing in Outer Space" is a jazz-funk classic.

AYSHA LOREN

A reggae singer active since the late 1990s. Aysha was signed to Jet Star and once opened for Destiny's Child and Jon B. In 2014 she recorded a Mad Professor produced version of Roberta Flack's "I Feel Like Making Love". After some time away from music, she has recently performed with Sir John Holt, Janet Kay and Luciano.



B

IS FOR...



BABY D

Baby D is both the name of the group and the female singer known as Dorothy or Dee, the front of this chart-topping group on the Production House label. During the early 1990s they blended pop, soul and rave music sensibilities. The hits from the 1996 top 5 album "Deliverance" contained the chart-topping "Let Me Be Your Fantasy", and "So Pure" and "(Everybody's Got To Learn Sometime) I Need Your Loving", both of which reached no. 3. They still tour.

BALLISTIC RECORDS

Mo Claridge set up this label, and the Mojo distribution business at 94 Craven Park Road, NW10, a few doors away from the Pama shop where he once worked. Ballistic hooked up a licensing deal with major company United Artist, which allowed it to bring The Royal Rasses' "Humanity", and Jolly Brothers' "Conscious Man" which made the top 50 in 1979, to national prominence.

BEVERLEY SKEETE

A session singer and artist in her own right. In her role as an in-demand session singer, Beverley has covered a wide range of musical styles, from pop, rock and jazz, to R&B. She provided the vocals on Gal Decor's dance track "Passion", which was a top 30 hit in 1992, and on re-release in 1996, went to a top 10. She's sung for the likes of Closer Than Close, Carmel, Robbie Williams and Jamiroquai.

BIG ZEEKS

Self-styled 'Fresh Prince of Harlesden' and rising star in UK dancehall. Best known for the 2019 track "Happy" featuring Grime MC, D Double E.

BLUE MOUNTAIN

Reggae-specialist record shop operated from 1 Library Parade, Craven Park Road, NW10.

BOB MARLEY & THE WAILERS

They were invited to London in February 1972 by their manager Danny Sims to work with Johnny Nash. By the summer, they had literally been abandoned as the CBS record deal yielded poor results following the release of the "Reggae On Broadway" single. Bob lived at 34 Ridgmount Gardens in Camden (where a blue plaque was unveiled in October 2006) in February and March, and April to early June in a Bayswater hotel, before relocating to a house in The Circle, NW10 in Neasden. It was during their stay here that their career boosting Island Records deal was negotiated. The deal was signed in September and the band returned to Jamaica later that year, where they recorded the 1973 albums "Catch A Fire" and "Burnin'", which launched them to international superstardom.

BODY MUSIC

The Harlesden branch of this retail chain operated from 3 Library Parade, Craven Park Road, NW10. That's the same premises that had housed previous record stores such as All Ears and Arawak. Sadly, in 2005, it became the latest of the Harlesden record shops to close down.

BRENT BLACK MUSIC CO-OP

Brent Council part-funded, in addition to providing training in music theory, vocals and musical instruments, it housed a professional studio, plus rehearsal space. It's accessibility meant many local acts could afford to record closer to home, not to mention the odd Jamaican reggae act or even the legendary American spoken word/rap pioneers The Last Poets. Locals such as Longsy D learnt their engineering skills there, as did former Prediction member and now dub producer Trevor 'The Technician' McKenzie. BBMC gained unwanted publicity when it was named in a 1984 Sun article entitled "Loony Lefties In £31 Million Handout", in which it was revealed that BBMC had received a £205,000 grant from Brent's Labour Council administration. Although there are no longer any training activities there, the rehearsal and recording facility continues to operate. BBMC moved from community ownership many years ago. It is now known as the Music Theorem.

BRENT BLACK MUSIC COOPERATIVE REHEARSAL STUDIOS (BBMC)

Brent Black Music Co-op (BBMC) was a community project opened in 1983 and based at 385 High Road, NW10 in Willesden. Now known as Theorum Music Village, BBMC is a rehearsal, performance and recording complex which has played an instrumental role in the evolution of reggae music. Set up with a grant from Brent Council in 1983, the complex has provided training, studio and rehearsal space to numerous local and international acts. Local artist Longsy D learnt his engineering skills there, as did former Prediction member and now dub producer Trevor 'The Technician' McKenzie. Among many others The Last Poets, The Wailers, Gregory Isaacs, Aswad, Big Youth, The Pioneers, Janet Kay and Maxi Priest all rehearsed and recorded at BBMC. Many of the scenes in Julian Henriques' classic cinematic musical *Babymother* (1998) were shot around the complex.

BRIDGE PARK

Known as Bridge Park Community Centre, New Bridge Park Complex, and Bridge Park Community Leisure Centre, 'Bridge Park' is located at 8 Brentfield, Harrow Road and was opened by the Harlesden People's Community Council with support from the Princes Trust in 1987. In its 33 year history Bridge Park has been a music venue, small business incubator and leisure centre. Bridge Park is subject to a controversial redevelopment deal between Brent Council and General Mediterranean Holdings, a Luxembourg registered holding company with several offshore subsidiaries.



C-BIZ

Rapper from Kilburn. Best known for track "The Game's Mine" from 2015, which has 8 million views on YouTube.

CAMELLE HINDS

A fine singer-songwriter, Camelle was the bassist in Central Line, an early 1980s Brit-funk band formed in east London. When the band split, Camelle formed the Hindsight duo with former Central Line member Henri Defoe. Their 1987 album "Pays Like This" was released internationally by Circa/ Virgin. It contained the socio-conscious funk single "Small Change", and the minor hit "Lowdown". Now a Brent resident, Hindsight received some profile on the US R&B scene. Camelle spent many years as Paul Weller's bandleader and bassist. In 1996, Camelle's solo album "Soul Degrees" was released by Victor Records in Japan. One of its key tracks was underground soul classic "Sausalito", which was released as a single in Britain on Bob Jones' Black On Black label in 1995. The track was added to Expansion Records' 1999 release of the "Vibes Alive" album. Camelle, together with Bob, remixed several American R&B records in the 1990s. He has recently been recording with Hinda Hicks, and has got together with members from Beggars & Co. and Light Of The World, to bring the Brit-funk sound back to the London live circuit.

CANDI MCKENZIE

Although she sang backing vocals for reggae acts like Aswad and Delroy Washington, she went the R&B route on her 1980s solo material for the Elite and Cooltempo record labels. The late singer was sister to Bunny McKenzie, a talented bassist and multi-instrumentalist.

CARIB CLUB

A very popular 1970s reggae venue was the Carib Club, also known as Burton's, on account of it being located at the top of the three story building at 168 Cricklewood Broadway, NW2, which was above Burton's tailoring shop. However, its reputation was marred on Friday October 11 1974, when a fracas erupted following the police coming in an attempt to arrest someone. Many punters suffered physical abuse at the hands of the police. That night there had been a sound clash between local sound system Lord Koos, Count Nicks, and Dennis Bovell's Sufferer's Hi-Fi. Dennis was accused by the police of inciting the punters to attack the police officers. He and a dozen punters were charged with causing an affray. The Old Bailey court trial lasted six months, nine were acquitted and three, including Dennis, faced a hung jury. On retrial they were sentenced to three years in jail. However, they were freed on appeal. Their case became a cause celebre, which the now defunct club is best remembered for.

CARIBBEAN MUSIC FESTIVAL

Wembley Arena began life as The Empire Pool, built for the The Empire (now Commonwealth) Games in 1934. In 1969 the pool was used as the venue for The Caribbean Music Festival - Britain's, first reggae festival. The same event the following year was filmed by the film-maker Horace Ove - the footage became the documentary *Reggae* (1971). The show and Ove's film of it featured the music's biggest names of the time: John Holt, The Maytals, Desmond Dekker, The Pioneers, Bob and Marcia and Count Prince Miller, who was also the MC.

CARL DOUGLAS

Jamaican-born artist who had a 1974 international hit single with "Kung Fu Fighting", which topped the British and US charts. The record was produced by Biddu, who produced some tracks for Beacon Records in the 1960s.



CARL PALMER

Commonly known as Mr P, he's the youngest of the three Palmer brothers who founded the Pama label and shop in 1968. He took sole charge of the business when Pama changed to Jet Star in the late 1970s. He continues to run what is now the biggest reggae specialist music business in Britain.

CARLA MARIE WILLIAMS

Songwriter from Harlesden who has written for Britney Spears, Girls Aloud, Naughty Boy and Kylie Minogue. Carla Marie wrote Beyoncé's track "Freedom" from the Lemonade album. She is also the founder of Girls I Rate a - support network and campaign for greater female representation in the music industry.

CARROLL THOMPSON

She shares the "Queen Of Lovers Rock" crown with her friend Janet Kay, on account of her genre-breaking album, "Hopelessly In Love" (1980), which included the title track and "I'm So Sorry", two lovers rock classics. In addition to releasing lovers rock and reggae albums over the years, including three Japan-only albums on Toshiba/EMI, Carroll has worked in the R&B and dance music genres. She was signed to Virgin, where she recorded with Floy Joy, and Paul Oakenfold associated Movement 98, which scored a 1990 top 30 hit "Joy and Heartbreak". She provided vocals on Courtney Pine's "Closer to Home" album, resulting in a minor 1990 hit single "I'm still waiting". She's a songwriter, composer, producer, and voice coach. She continues to perform, often with Janet, on the lovers rock circuit.

CHAMPION RECORDS

At 191 High Street, NW10, behind its white-washed exterior this company has been churning out rap, house and dance music hits since 1980. Co-founded by Mel Medallie, Champion scored some early successes with rap music. It introduced Will Smith to the UK in his guise as DJ Jazzy Jeff and The Fresh Prince, who scored a top 25 hit in 1986 with "Girls Ain't Nothing But Trouble". Champion released Salt N Pepa's first hit, "Push It/Tramp", which went to no.2 in 1988. Champion - who once employed DJ and record producer Paul Oakenfold - is best known for their classic house releases including Raze's "Break4Love" and Robyn S's "Show me Love".

CHEEKY RECORDS

Producer Rollo hooked up his Cheeky label with Champion in 1994, then developed Faithless into an international dance act. Faithless' first album went top 30 in 1996, delivering a Top 5 hit "Insomnia" and a Top 10 hit "Reverence". The massive global success with Faithless led to their Cheeky recording contract being sold in 1999 to BMG, one of the world's major music companies.

CHINA BLACK

A smooth reggae/soul duo of which one half was singer Errol Reid. China Black were signed to major record company Polydor. At the time of the release of their first single, "Searchin", which reached no. 4 in the summer of 1994, Errol was working in Brent Council's planning department. The group enjoyed two further Top 30 singles, and a Top 30 album "Born". Errol still performs.

CHIPS RICHARDS

Trojan promotions man, founded the Carib Gems and Sky Note labels in 1976 following the demise of Trojan. Its earliest success included Carroll Thompson's debut album "Hopelessly In Love".

CHRIS BLACKWELL

This English-born, Jamaican-raised entrepreneur was at the beginning of the Jamaican music industry, where he sold American R&B records to sound system operators, before launching Island Records in 1959. He moved to London in 1962, and again he was at the forefront of Britain's black music development. He initially set up Island Records UK from his flat, and distributed Jamaican ska records from his car. With Dave Battering and Lee Gopthal in the Trojan record company and Musicland/Muzik City enterprises, Blackwell helped develop the British black music infrastructure in the 1960s, something for which they were all recognised by the Black Music Congress in 2003. The London-recorded, Island leased "My Boy Lollipop" was the first ska record to reach the Top 5 in Britain. Island enjoyed huge crossover success with blues and rock acts, although Chris' crowning glory was developing Bob Marley & The Wailers as an album-selling act.

CHUKKI STARR

Harlesden-born reggae DJ started out with the Harslesbridge-based Echo Tone Hi-Fi sound system. In the mid-1990s he recorded for the Fashion label, then displayed his hard yet conscious vibes on the Mad Professor-produced "Ghetto Youths Livivity" album. He's well regarded, though he has been quiet recording-wise, despite having his own Starrdom Products label.

CLASSIC BLACK

A lovers rock band which included singer Margaret Mundie, and singer-songwriter and guitarist Owen Deacon, who wrote their "Hey You" single, and is now a gospel artist. The group's highlights include playing before Prince Charles in south London, and supporting Brit-funk group Loose Ends at a concert in Brent Town Hall.

CLEMENT BUSHAY

A record producer who also ran Bushay's record label. He produced Tapper Zukie's debut album before moving on to become a well known lovers rock producer working with Janet Kay, Louisa Mark and Junior English.

CLUB 31

Jeffrey Palmer's famed 1960s Club 31, also known as Club West Indies, was on Hillside, NW10 in Stonebridge.

COLISEUM

In the 1970s The Coliseum at 26 Manor Park Road, NW10 in Harlesden was a cinema where live concerts were staged. In addition to reggae gigs, some well known punk acts such as The Clash also performed there. It was inaugurated in 1912 as the Picture Coliseum, and closed as a cinema in the mid-1980s. In recent years it has been a pub, but is currently closed. The latest news is that it has been bought by Brent Council, and hopefully will be reopened as a community space.



COUNT SPUTNIK

A sound system.

COURTNEY PINE

He is undoubtedly one of Britain's best-known and innovative jazz musicians. A relative of 1950s and 1960s British jazz tenor saxophonist and composer Joe Harriott, Courtney was one of the leading lights of the Jazz Warriors collective, which featured flautist Phillip Bent, vocalist Cleveland Watkiss and double bassist Gary Crosby and had countless alumni. Their only album, *Out of Many, One People* was, released in 1987. Courtney's tenor and soprano sax work on cuts like "Zaire" and "A Raggamuffin's Tale", both from the 1991 Delfeayo Marsalis-produced *Within The Realms Of Our Dream*, helped cement his reputation within the British jazz scene. However, it was when he moved to Talkin Loud/Phonogram where his experimentations of straight-ahead jazz blended with soul, hip-hop and drum & bass influences on albums like 1996 Mercury Music Prize nominated *Modern Day Jazz Stories* and *Underground*, that his reputation truly transcended the jazz specialist market. He continued to widen the musical envelope when he went the indie route with the 2004 released "Devotion" album by adding reggae and African music - "Osibisa" was an ode to the Afro-fusionists, whose members Mac Tontoh and Teddy Osei, guided the then young musician and his Kingsbury High School mate drummer Frank Tontoh. Courtney, who has enjoyed a measure of critical and commercial success in the US, won the 1996 and 1997 MOBO Award Best Jazz Artist gongs, was awarded the OBE for services to jazz music in 2000 and a CBE in 2009. He received the Black Music Congress' BBM/BMC 2003 Artist, award at Africa Centre "for boldly fusing contemporary styles and giving jazz a decidedly contemporary British identity."

CREOLE RECORDS

Reggae orientated label active in the mid 1970s and early 1980s located at 4 Bank Building, on the High Street in Harlesden, which later relocated to 91-93 High Street. Creole Records was set up by two English men, Bruce White and Tony Cousins, who briefly worked out of Music House with Trojan. They released records across multiple genres. One early commercially successful reggae release was "Ire Feelings (Skanga)" by Rupie Edwards, which charted at No.9 in 1974. Creole also released the first Boney M record "Baby do you wanna bump" which failed to chart. Creole was sold to Sanctuary in 2003 for £1.3m.

CSA RECORDS

Started in 1983, when Clive Stanhope moved the Burning Sounds record business from nearby Harrow Road to 101 Chamberlayne Road, London NW10 in Kensal Rise. It licensed and released a huge number of reggae releases, which are now controlled by the Sanctuary-owned Trojan company.



D-ROY RECORDS

Reggae label operated by producer/artist Delroy Witter a.k.a. D-Roy from the late 1970s to early 1980 at 5 Felixstowe Road, NW10 in Kensal Green. Its catalogue included a couple of Janet Kay singles.

DAMAGE

Signed to Big Life Records, they launched as a boy band with smooth soul hits such as "Love II Love", and the Top 10s "Forever" and "Love Guaranteed" from their 1997 Top 15 album "Forever". After their label closed down, they returned with a harder R&B sound on their 2001 top 20 Cooltempo/EMI album "Since You've Been Gone", which generated the 2000 Top 10 hit "Ghetto Romance" and two Top 15s "Still Be Loving You" and "So What If".

DAMBALA

This band made up of musicians of Caribbean and African descent broke out in 1977-78 with an engaging rock influenced reggae style which owed a lot to Nigerian-born lead guitarist Gus Anyia. Their politically aware single "Zimbabwe" topped the reggae charts in 1978.

DANDY LIVINGSTONE

Jamaian-British reggae singer and producer, best known for his 1972 rocksteady hit "Suzanne Beware of the Devil" and as the writer of "Rudy, A Message to You" which would later become a bigger hit for The Specials in 1979. Both tracks were, released by Trojan. In 1963 Dandy Livingstone cut two tracks at Sonny Roberts' studios at 108a Cambridge Road, Kilburn, which Roberts released on his Planetone Label as "In the Valley" and "I'm in Love" by "The Keynotes". These are some of the earliest ska recordings made in the UK.

DANNY D

The producer and artist also known as Dancin' Danny D. This Brent native has one of the most commercially successful stories. His hats include artist (D Mob, DSM), producer (Cathy Dennis), remixer (Blondie), A&R man (Cooltempo/Chrysalis), and label owner (Slam Jam). Signed by major label FFRR, D Mob blasted into the Top 5 in 1988 with one of the first big and most controversial acid house records "We Call It Acieed". Between then and 1996, the group scored five Top 30 hits, one being "Why", which featured Cathy Dennis. In the late 1980s to mid-1990s, Danny was simply one of the most in-demand remixers. He actually started his recording career releasing records from 1985 on Elite Records under the Danny D and DSM monikers. He is now based in the US where he manages the Stargate pop-R&B/hip-hop production and remix team.

DANNY RAY

A former reggae singer, he also recorded and produced for the Harlesden-based Golden Age Music record label. He's currently an A&R manager at Jet Star.

DAVE BARKER

A reggae and rocksteady singer initially known as David Crooks. His career began in Jamaica where he recorded with Duke Reid, Harry J, Coxone Dodd and Lee Perry. Dave moved to the UK after receiving a phone call from Trojan Records informing him that "Double Barrel", his Winston Riley-produced track with Ansell Collins was heading to number 1. It became the second reggae single to top the charts in the UK for two consecutive weeks. It was also Trojan's first number 1 record. Ansell Collins returned to Jamaica several years later but, Dave Barker continued to live in Brent recording and performing.

DAVE BETTERIDGE

With his prior experience in record wholesaling and distribution, Dave worked with Chris Blackwell in establishing Island Records, and went on to occupy Managing Director positions in major companies such as CBS Records.

DAVE VJ

Dave VJ (stands for Vinyl Junkie) started his DJing career with his turntablist mate Max LX by joining Mastermind, the local hip-hop sound system. They joined the then pirate Kiss FM, and also released some b-boy recordings in the mid 1980s on the Elite and Street Sound labels. When Kiss went legal in 1990, their Kiss FM Rap Show had become one of the most influential programmes on the station.

DAVID JOSEPH

Former Hi-Tension singer-songwriter and keyboardist David started off his solo career on a high with the synthy-funk club classic single "You Can't Hide (Your Love From Me)", a Top 15 hit in 1983, followed by two more minor hits within the following year.

DAVID NATHAN

Before this veteran R&B/soul journalist moved over to the US, he worked in his local Willesden Lane Musicland shop in the mid-60s to earn his pocket-money. He later co-founded one of London's earliest soul record shops and wrote for magazines such as Blues & Soul.

DAWN BAABA ARTHUR

London-born of Ghanaian parentage, Dawn, affectionately known as Babs or Aunty Babs, is a Ghanaian highlife gospel artist. She's recorded a couple of albums, including *Wani Nda Awurade So*. She's also a children's book author, having written two books, including the 2005 published *Portia's Story*.

DAZZLE

Twin sisters Paulette and Claudette Patterson used to sing in the late 1970s/early 1980s reggae band Prediction, before leaving in 1985 to form R&B/dance act Dazzle. They were signed to Jam Today Records, for whom they recorded two albums. Material from both albums have been compiled into one CD available from dazzlemusic.com. Sadly Paulette passed away in 2007.

DELROY WASHINGTON

A highly talented Rasta-imbued singer-songwriter and guitarist, whose mid-1970s Virgin albums *I Sus* and *Rasta*, showed an accessible, funk-infused reggae akin to Bob Marley & The Wailers' version of reggae. The musician's lineup featured members of Aswad. Jamaican-born, he lived in Brent from the early 1960s. Whilst working in the Pama record shop he met Bob Marley, and a friendship developed. Delroy sang harmonies on The Wailers' *Catch a Fire* album and in several subsequent sessions. Delroy released a 1973 Lord Kooos, single entitled "Jah Man A Come", and an earlier version of "Freedom Fighters" as a 1975 single on his Axum label. Delroy passed away in March 2020.

DERRICK TAYLOR

Bassist for the likes of Roachford and Gabrielle.

DIAMOND

A sound system.

DJ GUSSY

DJ who started out on Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation Radio. He later founded Revive FM with DJ Chucky and Cornell Campbell. These days he DJs on Roots FM, a station he also co-founded.

DOC BROWN

Rapper turned comedian and actor. Former member of the Poisonous Poets, who had a non-productive time signed to a major record company. He is the brother of the author Zadie Smith.

DELE SOSIMI

Before leading his own band, this Brent-based British-Nigerian Afrobeat keyboardist, composer and arranger worked, with Fela Kuti in Egypt 80 from the late 1970s to mid-1980s and, with Femi Kuti in Positive Force from the mid-1980s to mid-1990s.

DONAE'O

Rapper and singer who has adapted to multiple styles including house, U funky, grime and road rap. Among others, Donae'o has worked with Tinchy Stryder, Giggs, Calvin Harris and Dizzee Rascal. His latest track, released in March this year, is a collaboration with south London drill rapper, Blanco.

DON CAMPBELL

A smooth voiced reggae singer. Although he continues to record, he made a great impression in the mid-1990s with the Trevor T-produced single "See It In Your Eyes". Don is a former member of reggae band Undivided Roots.

DON LETTS

A DJ, musician and film-maker who was born in south London and now lives in Kensal Rise. Don Letts is credited with taking reggae music to the punk scene at The Roxy club in Covent Garden, during the late 1970s. He presents "The Culture Clash" on Sunday evenings on BBC 6Music.

DON RICARDO

An impressive lovers rock singer-songwriter. His catalogue includes "She's Having My Baby", '181 To Know', and "Love Is The Staff Of Life".

DREAD BROADCASTING CORPORATION

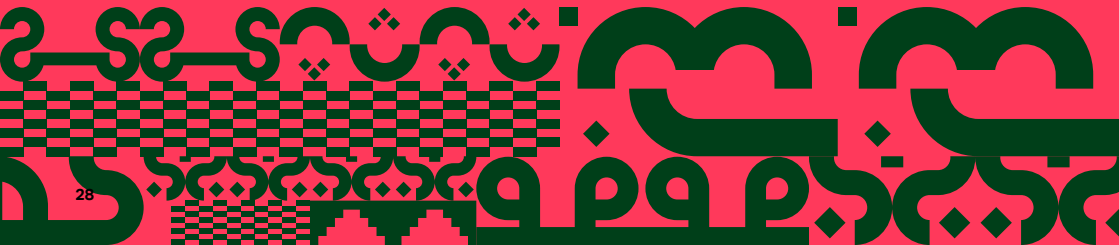
Popularly known as DBC, it was the very first black owned, black music pirate station in Britain. It was founded by the recently departed Lepke, a music fan, and broadcast on medium wave for a few hours at weekends from his house on Aboyne Road, NW10 in Neasden. In addition to presenting, Lepke's sister Miss P became an integral part of running the station. Despite poor strength and reception due to the topography of its Neasden location, the station achieved a legendary status due to its strong brand image and musical menu of reggae, R&B, soca, calypso, jazz and African music, which could not be heard elsewhere. It also offered accessible radio advertising for small businesses. Miss P was soon poached to work on BBC Radio 1. Other notable names that worked on DBC include Neneh Cherry and the author Lloyd Bradley.

DREAMS

Nightclub above the Iceland store at 71-75 High Street, NW10.

DYNAMO

A sound system.





ECHO TONE HI-FI

A sound system.

EKKLESIA

A premier female contemporary gospel group.

ELITE RECORDS

This fondly remembered record label grew out of the need for an outlet to release the recordings of shop owner Andy Sojka's jazz-funk band Atmosfear, which used to rehearse in the premises situated at 3 Library Parade, Craven Park Road, NW10 in Harlesden. Although Atmosfear released several records right into the mid-1980s, only the first single made the charts, upon being licensed by major company MCA. The futuristic instrumental "Dancing In Outer Space" reached no. 46 in 1979. Elite released the earliest records by Level 42, Max LX & Dave VJ's Hardrock Soul Movement, Danny D and Beverley Skeete. The label moved out to Harrow Road, where it added the Jam Today label, whose roster included Harlesden R&B/dance duo Dazzle.

EUSEBE

They featured on the vocals of The Sound Of Shoom's 1990 dance single "I Hate Hate". Hailing from the Willesden/Harlesden area, this family trio - Steve (Saybe), Sharon (Fatcat) and Alison (Noddy), wove an interesting musical cocktail of pop, R&B, funk and a tinge of rock sensibilities. Despite the enthusiasm of their then A&R man, their only commercial success was 1995 catchy single "Summertime Healing", which reached no. 32. Steve went to collaborate with Shaun Ryder's Black Grape, before forming the four-piece rock band Bond, who released the 1998 Sony album *Bang Out Of Order*.



IS FOR...

FAY SIMPSON

Sister of jazz guitarist Ronny Jordan, Fay was one of the singers in the one-time leading British contemporary gospel group Nu Colours, whose 1990s hits on the major label Polydor included "Power" and "Desire", which respectively reached no. 40 and 31.

FAZE ONE

This Harlesden duo, Slepki and Genia, is reputed to have released the first British hip-hop album, *Heroes* which was released in 1987 on the Westside label that popularised electro, hip hop, and rap in Britain. It was owned by Morgan Khan of Street Sounds fame. Their first single, "Layin' Down A Beat", was released in the US in 1986 on rap label Sutra.

FICTION/DESIRE

Desire was the dance off-shoot of rock label Fiction, which achieved commercial success with hip-hop/soul act Double Trouble and ragga/hip-hop artist Rebel MC. In the 1990s its nameplate was on a property at the beginning of Burnley Road, NW10 in Dollis Hill, but there's no confirmation that the record company did operate from there.

FJR STUDIOS

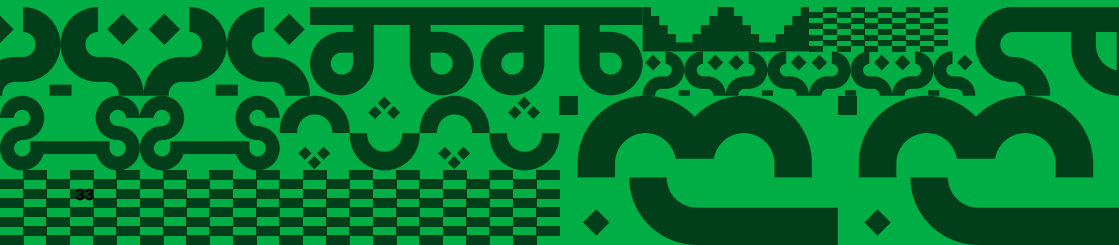
Operating from the mid-1980s until the late 1990s at 1 Herbert Gardens, NW10 in Kensal Gardens was FJR Studios, where all the Production House tracks were recorded. Of course today's proliferation of accessible digital recording technology has reduced the need for purpose-built traditional recording studios.

FLAVA RADIO

This reggae-specialist online radio station is one of a handful still broadcasting from Harlesden.

FREEDOM SOUNDS

A record shop and reggae label based at 206 Church Road, NW10 in Harlesden, which released records by Jamaican artists ranging from Dennis Brown to Frankie Paul.





GANGSTERVILLE

A mid-1970s/80s reggae specialist that operated at 994 Harrow Road, NW10 near the Kensal Green cemetery. Record producer Tyrone's Venture record label operated from the same address. The likes of Aswad rehearsed there before they were signed to Island, and Tyrone licensed the late 1970s/early 1980s Tradition records to RCA at a time when it seemed fashionable for a major record company to have at least, one reggae act.

GAPPY RANKS

The young MC, much admired around the streets of Harlesden, used to be part of the local Sun Cycle crew. Since going solo, he's formed his own Vice Law crew and label, on which he released his "English Weather" mix CD. He gained wider recognition as one of the featured artists, along with US rapper Twista and UK grime artist Lethal B, on producers Kray Twinz's 2005 Top 25 hit and underground tune "What we Do".

GASPER LAWAL

A percussionist and singer, Gasper's added African rhythms to many recordings. His 1995 album *Kadara* featured Osibisa guitarist Albert Bannerman.

GENERAL LEVY

A reggae-cum-jungle DJ born in Central Middlesex Hospital in Park Royal, he scored hits on the reggae scene, such as "Heat" and "The Wig", and major label FFRR/London released a re-jigged version of his second album entitled *Wickedness Increase*. He's best known for one of jungle music's first crossover singles, "Incredible", which made the Top 10 in 1994.

GERRY ANDERSON/ ROY FORBES-ALLEN

Starting off importing and distributing records, Gerry and Roy launched the Hawkeye record company and retail business in Harlesden in 1977, with a young Daddy Ernie helping out in the shop. Gerry and Popsy, owner of the Starlight shop opposite, remain the only original faces still serving from their Harlesden record shops thirty years on. The Hawkeye label originally put out Sugar Minott's single "Good Thing Going", which became a hit in 1982 when it was licensed to major label RCA.

G MONEY

Harlesden-born R&B/hip-hop DJ and news presenter on BBC 1Xtra Radio.

GOLDIE

Before he found fame as a leading light on the drum & bass scene, he worked for the Reinforced label, and honed his recording skills working on Reinforced's productions and remixes.

GRACE CARTER

Hotly-tipped soulful singer-songwriter who grew up between Queens Park and Brighton. Many of her songs draw on a difficult relationship with her estranged father.

GROOVE & A QUARTER

A production team, helmed by the Burke brothers, that came out of the Administrators reggae group. In addition to producing Administrators and several reggae artists, some released on their Groove & A Quarter label, they experienced crossover success by producing former Administrators singer Michael Sinclair's soul album *I Want You Back* for Dome Records. The title track was a street soul classic, whilst "Ain't No Cassanova" made the Top 30 in 1993.



HAWKEYE

This record reggae shop at 2 Craven Park, NW10, opened in 1977 by Roy Forbes-Allen, Gerry Anderson and a young Daddy Ernie, is one of a few 1970s shops still in business. In 2019 Roy 'Hawkeye' Forbes-Allen and Popsy were honoured with International Reggae Day/British Black Music Month awards for being in business over 40 years.

HAWKEYE SOUNDS

A sound system associated with the eponymous shop and label, it still delivers big people sessions.

HI

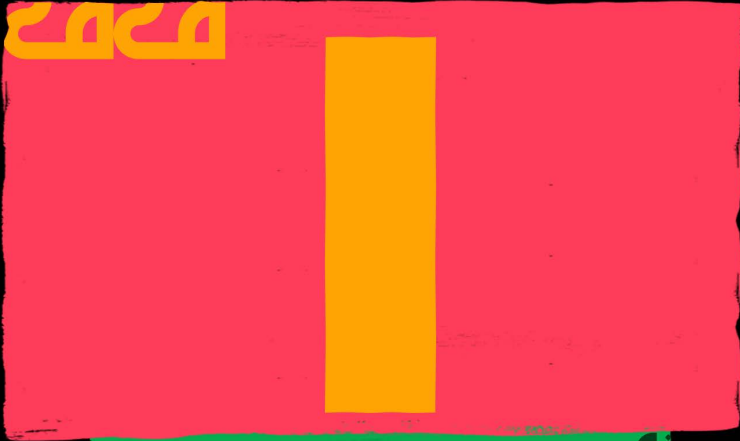
An early 1970s multi-racial soul/funk band that caused some local buzz before Hi-Tension came on the scene. The members included Raj Malkani, who became Production House's label manager. Band later changed its name to The Antilles.

HI-TENSION

Brothers Ken (bass) and David Joseph (vocals/keyboards) from Willesden used to be in an earlier R&B band called Hott Wax which also included Phil Fearon. This band joined forces with another local band, Feedback, before morphing into HI-Tension, which included Paul Mclean (lead guitar), Patrick Mclean (saxophone), David Reid (drums), Paul Phillips (rhythm guitar), Leroy Williams (percussion), and Jeffrey Guishard (vocals/percussion). They worked on producing a demo recording with Osibisa percussionist Kofi Ayivor, their manager and producer of their self-titled album, which was released by Island Records. It just breached the bottom reaches of the Top 75 in 1979. They had two singles, "Hi Tension" and "British Hustle/Peace On Earth", which made no.13 and no. 8 respectively, and had great influence as one of the pioneers of the Brit-funk movement. A second album seems to have been recorded but never released. The band split in the early 1980s.

HOTT WAX

A mid-1970s funk band, it included Phil Fearon, Ken and David Joseph and members of Feedback. The band split into pioneering Brit-Funk band Hi-Tension, and pop/soul band Kandidate.



IS FOR...

INNOCENCE

A short-lived early 1990s act fronted by vocalist Gee Morris, and backed by Kilburn based pop/soul writing/producing trio Jolley/Harris/Jolley. They released two albums, of which *Belief* was a 1990 Top 25 hit, as were the singles "Natural Thing" and "Let's Push It".

ISLAND RECORDS

This major record company is now famed for its pop and rock acts from the 1960s such as the Spencer Davis Group, Traffic, Cat Stevens and Spooky Tooth to current acts like U2, and of course Bob Marley. However Island, which was, founded by Jamaican-raised English man Chris Blackwell, really started going from a residential house in Kilburn: 108 Cambridge Road, NW6. The landlord was Lee Gopthal, who went on to form the Trojan record company and Musicland record store chain with Chris as an equity partner. The label moved in 1968 with Trojan and Gopthal's B&C music business to Music House, 12 Neasden Lane, NW10 in Neasden. It operated from Music House until 1972, when Chris liquidated his Trojan equity and moved the rock music-focused Island company to just outside the borough border at Ladbroke Grove. In the mid-1970s, Island signed Aswad and Hi-Tension, the leading lights on the reggae and jazz-funk scenes.



IS FOR...

JACKIE JONES

A former vocalist in Prediction, she later married record producer Errol Henry, whose production credits include Richard Anthony Davis, Chris Ballin and Lulu. His Intimate label/ production company operated for a time from Empire House in Wembley.

JAMAICA BROADCASTING CORPORATION

After Dread Broadcasting Corporation left Neasden on account of the topography, one of the first Brent-based pirate stations which sprung up from the early 1980s was JBC. Named after the Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation, it operated from 126a Roundwood Road, NW10 in Harlesden. Despite the frequent raids by the radio regulatory agency, its location was not a secret. It transmitted from a TV repair shop run by Challenger, who was also one of the station's presenters. Although illegal, JBC's community-centred spirit meant it was looked upon sympathetically by the DTI - the radio regulatory body. Apparently, when Radio 1 began transmitting on FM, in order not to interfere with the national broadcaster's frequencies, the BBC and DTI actually helped JBC find a new frequency on the FM band. However, during the filming of a Channel 4 TV current affairs programme on pirate radio, the film crew captured a raid on JBC in early 1987! The JBC presenter list included Steve Bernard, the first person to present a reggae show on legal radio (BBC Radio London), Lady V, Soca B, and one Smokey T.

JAMES HAMILTON

A former DJ, he was famed for his record reviews in magazines such as Record Mirror, Music Week and DJ. He had a huge letter box in the door of his house in Norfolk Road, NW10 in Harlesden, through which the 12-inch singles and albums sent to him to review could be dropped. He moved to Nottingham in the mid-90s and sadly, he died of cancer in 1996.

JANET KAY

More than forty years on, Janet is the only British female reggae artist to have reached the national Top 5. Best known for her 1979 no. 2 hit "Silly Games" (in 1990, her re-recorded version made no. 22, and a Lindy Layton version featuring Janet made no. 62), her other Dennis Bovell produced tracks like "Rock The Rhythm" are lovers rock favourites. She shares the 'Queen Of Lovers Rock' title with her friend Carroll Thompson, with whom she regularly works with on the lovers rock circuit. Janet has released several albums on Sony in Japan, where she's a major artist. In British Black Music Month 2007 Janet Kay, Paul Dawkins and Carroll Thompson were recognised at Brent Civic Centre with BBM/BMC (BritishBlackMusic.com/Black Music Congress) Awards for five decades of promoting the British reggae genre known as lovers rock, for putting the borough on the musical map.

JAVA HIGH POWER

A sound system.

JAZWAD

A prolific reggae musician, producer, and remixer, who used to work with the Undivided Roots/Ruff Cutt camp. This well-respected Ghanaian, born Paul Yebuah, has successfully worked in the Jamaican reggae market.

JET STAR

One of the world's biggest distributors of reggae music. Operated from the Pama Records address, 78 Craven Park Road, NW10 in Harlesden from 1978. It then moved to the premises vacated by the Lightning business, at 841 Harrow Road, NW10 near Scrubs Lane. Jet Star moved in 1989 to 155 Acton Lane, NW10 in Park Royal, where it acted as a wholesaler/distributor of all forms of black music. The company folded in 2008 and was bought by Phoenix Music International.



JOEL LARYEA

Former manager of Young Disciples, whose "Apparently Nothing" is a British soul classic. His artist and producer clients included Silent Eclipse and Dodge City Productions. Joel has also worked in A&R (Go Beat/Universal), marketing (Island Records, Disco Volante/Sony Music) and club promotions (Rotation).

JOHN ABBEY

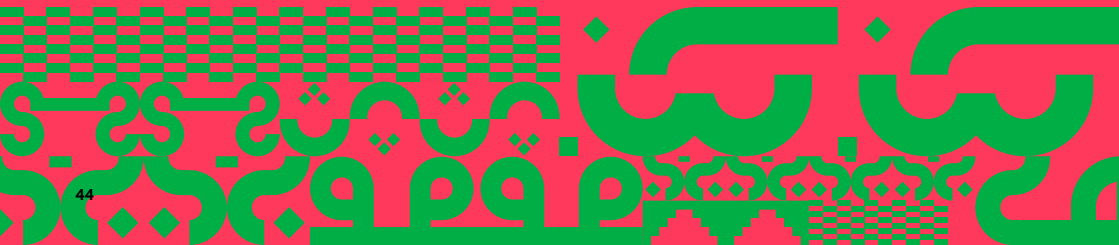
The original publisher of the Blues & Soul magazine used to run the Action R&B/soul label, which was founded in the late 1960s, out of Island/B&C at Music House in Neasden.

JOYCE BOND

Jamaican born ska and soul singer who recorded in the UK for Pama, Trojan/Island, and Beacon. Her 1968 cover of the Beatles' "Ob-la-Di Ob-La-Da" has a contribution by journalist and Beacon press/PR manager Roger St Pierre on the chorus.

JUGGLIN'

Producer Trevor T's label best known for the release of his production of Don Campbell's mid-1990s, lovers rock classic "See It In Your Eyes",.





KANDIDATE

A late 1970s/early 1980s pop-laced R&B band that had the distinction of being signed and produced by the successful pop producer and RAK Records owner Mickie Most. Their hits included the 1979 Top 15 ballad "I Don't Wanna Lose You". Its members included ex-Hott Waxxers Phil Fearon, and Neasden resident Tambi Fernando, who went on to become a successful producer. Tambi's hits included Pepsi & Shirlie's 1987 no. 2 hit "Heartache". In the same year, he also co-produced with Phil Dorothy Galdez's club fave "One Love", which was released Stateside by A&M.

KAREN-JOY LANGLEY

Editor/publisher of the 1990s specialist magazines 'Soul Trade' and 'Reggae Trade'.

KANYA KING

In 1996, she started Music Of Black Origin (MOBO), Britain's most prestigious and longest-running black music awards show. The show has been staged in different venues in and outside of London. Incidentally, the first such awards was the Black Music Awards, started in 1992 by Harlesden-based record label and community radio owner Mark King. The third BMA was staged in 1994 at the now defunct Wembley Centre, where winners included M Beat ft General Levy, Don Campbell and Omar.

K-KOKE

Rapper from Stonebridge active since 2010. Real name Kevin Georgiou. Best known for his appearance on, Charlie Sloth's Fire in the Booth in 2011 which has 16M views on youtube. Has since collaborated on tracks with numerous artists including Rina, Rita Ora and Maverick Sabre.

KLASSIQUE

Reggae and R&B shop started by Choice FM reggae presenter Daddy Ernie in the mid-1980s at Unit 13 in Wembley Market on Lancelot Road, HA0. It moved in the early 2000s, to 22b Harrow Road, HA9 in Monks Park.

KLIK RECORDS

Record shop and label started by ex-Trojan executives Desmond Bryan and Joe Sinclair in the mid-1970s at 2 Library Parade, Craven Park Road, NW10, following the collapse of Trojan. Among its brief mid-1970s releases were two influential reggae DJ albums: Big Youth's *Dread Locks Dread* and Tappa Zukie's politically-aware *MPLA*.

KOFI AYIVOR

Ghanaian-born percussionist, composer and producer has lent his talents to Brent acts covering different genres – he was percussionist in the African/world music-fusion band Osibisa, producer of Brit-funk Hi-Tension's eponymous album, reggae/lovers rock band Tradition's *Runaway Love* album.





LADY SOVEREIGN

A much-touted white female grime rapper from Chalk Hill signed by major label Island-Universal in the UK, and in 2006 by Jay-Z to Def Jam US. Lady Sovereign's star burned brightly - she opened for The Streets, Dizzee Rascal, Gwen Stefani and appeared on the David Letterman Show, but has not released any material since 2009.

LASCELLES JAMES

Saxophonist who has played with Boney M and Spear of Destiny.

LENNIE THE LION

A sound system.

LEPKE

Brother of Miss P and Rita Marley, Lepke started Rebel Radio, which changed its name to Dread Broadcasting Corporation (DBC), in 1979 by broadcasting on Sundays from his Aboyne Road, NW10 back garden. The initial menu of reggae was soon broadened to include a wide range of black music. Lepke was the founder of the first African-owned black music pirate station in Britain.

LIFE FM

Community radio station which broadcasted from Stonebridge precinct, NW10, and was awarded local community radio license in 2006. It changed its name to Bang when it moved to its present Harlesden location, where it operates as Beat London 103.6 FM. It's taken over the old Choice FM's mantle as London's hip, contemporary black music station, particularly with the emergence of home-grown genres such as afrobeats and grime.



LIGHT OF THE WORLD

One of the British jazz-funk pioneers, the band started in 1978. Although their records were not massive crossovers, their influence on Britain's emerging jazz-funk scene was enormous. The original members were David 'Baps' Baptiste (trumpet), Canute 'Kenny' Wellington (trumpet), Paul 'Tubbs' Williams (bass), Jean Paul 'Bluey' Maunick (guitar), Neville 'Breeze' McCreith (guitar), Everton McCalla (drums), Chris Etienne (percussion) and Peter Hinds (keyboards). Brent members include Peter, who also featured, in the Atmosfear lineup, and trombonist Nat Augustin. Following the release of their second album, *Round Trip*, which very briefly reached the bottom end of the Top 75, the band split in 1981. Baps, Breeze and Kenny became Beggar & Co., and Bluey, Tubbs and Peter formed Incognito. LOTW released the 1999 album *Inner Voices*, which featured Camelle Hinds on vocals.

LIGHTNING RECORDS

Record wholesaler/distributor formed in late 1970s, which operated at 841 Harrow Road, NW10 near Scrubs Lane. Lightning released Culture's classic roots reggae album *Two Sevens Clash* in 1977. In 1979 they had commercial success with 'Althea and Donna's "Uptown Top Ranking", Janet Kay's "Silly Games" and Dennis Brown's "Money in my pocket".

LINDSAY WESKER

A soul music anorak, he became a journalist on the Black Echoes newspaper in 1981, and was instrumental in the launch of Kiss FM and its then associated Free magazine, which morphed into Touch. He's been an A&R manager for a few record companies, including Warner Music. A soul DJ, he was one of the presenters on Kiss FM when it was a pirate and then legal station. He became manager of Dazzle, and married one of the twins. A former head of music at (legal) Kiss FM, he signed Dorothy Galdez to A&M Records before she found crossover fame as Baby D. He was a programme manager at MTV where he introduced the MTV Base strand. His job entailed deciding which videos got playlisted. He presents on the Mi-Soul radio, where Kiss co-founder Gordon Mac has re-grouped several ex-Kiss DJs.

LIZ MITCHELL

Lead singer of Boney M, a hugely successful Euro-Caribbean, disco-reggae group created by German record producer Frank Farian in 1975. Formed in Berlin, the four original members were Liz Mitchell and Marcia Barrett from Jamaica, Maizie Williams from Montserrat, Bobby Farrell, a performing-artist from Aruba. Mitchell attended Chamberlayne Road School, now called Kensal Rise Primary School. Boney M had numerous hits in the late 1970s including "Rivers of Babylon", "Daddy Cool", "Rasputin" and "Mary's Boy Child".

LLOYDIE CRUCIAL

A dancehall DJ, instrumentalist and producer, who's also Djed over jungle and hip-hop backing. He is also an actor and model.

LONDON APOLLO

Located at 375 Willesden High Road and opened by Jeffrey Palmer. Fitzroy and the FX family organise a big people's monthly session there.

LONGSY D

Born Andrew Long, this producer and artist gained studio experience working as an engineer at the Brent Black Music Co-op studio and was also a drummer in the Co-op's band. He was one of the first to fuse ska with acid house in the late 1980s. "This Is Ska", a hit on the underground, finally reached the bottom end of the Top 60 in 1989. It got a US release on the Warlock hip-hop label.

LORD KOOS

Record producer and sound system man who ran his eponymous sound system and record label from his home at 7 Fortunegate Road, Harlesden, NW10 in the 1970s.

LOVE VENDOR

One of the earliest Brent-based sound systems was Sonny Roberts Love Vendor, which entertained the newly arrived Jamaican immigrants around London in the early 1960s. It was his desire to acquire some dubplates to play on his sound system that led him to setup Planetone, the first African-owned recording studio and label in England.



MANNY NORTE

A DJ. Manny DJed on BBC 1Xtra for four years, before moving to DJing on Kiss 100 FM. Manny won the MOBO Award 2004 gong for best DJ. Currently DJs on Capital Xtra. He's been repping his Ghanaian heritage by wearing kente at events, such as the MOBO Awards.

MARIA LAWSON

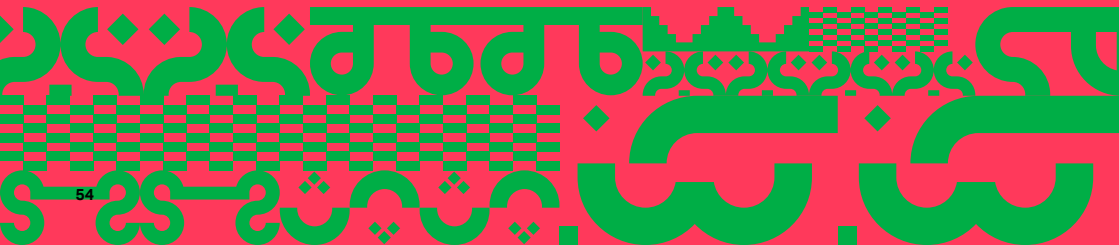
A singer and songwriter from Stonebridge Estate who made it to the last five places in the 2005 X-Factor TV talent competition show. She got signed to Sony BMG's Phonogenic label, on which she released an accomplished eponymous pop/ soul album in 2006.

MARK ANTHONY

An unsung Harlesbridge community worker who started the forerunner to the MOBO Awards - the Black Music Awards in 1992. Although others may know him by a different name, he's also a record label and community radio owner.

MASTERMIND ROADSHOW

Pioneering hip-hop DJing sound system that formed in 1975 as 'Mighty Conqueror', with a reggae music policy. Many have passed through - Max LX and Dave VJ are the better known names. However without the likes of Lewis 'Big L' Benn, Danny 'DA' Simpson, Leroy 'Dawg' Vaz, Floyd 'Smasher' Powell, Steve 'Garfeel Da Clown' Daly, Richard 'Fall Guy' Roach, and Herbie 'The Mastermind Herbie' Ladley, perhaps hip-hop may not have spread as quickly as it did in Britain. In addition to playing in local clubs such as London Apollo Club in Willesden, or on Stonebridge estate, Mastermind members remixed and compiled seminal electro and hip-hop records for the Street Sounds compilations. It started performing at Notting Hill Carnival in 1979.



MAXINE NIGHTINGALE

This Wembley-born pop/R&B singer performed locally before she was initially signed by Pye Records, which released a few singles from 1969. After signing to United Artists, she scored two massive mid-1970s hit singles including "Right Back Where We Started", a UK Top 10 and US Top 5. The latter was the title track of the first of her three United Artists released albums. US-based for several years, she still occasionally performs.

MEL MEDALIE

Managing Director of one of the longest surviving dance labels of the 1980s, Champion Records. Founded in 1980, Mel's company's survival can be put down to his astuteness in moving with the different musical times, from rap, house to whatever the dance music flavour of the day is. Mega-sellers like Faithless and Dido also helped, not to mention that being initially tied to a record importing business meant that he could gauge the sales potential of an American import, before committing to licence it.

MELISSA SINCLAIR

The Gmag (formerly Gargamel) editor/publisher was in a lovers rock girl group called Black Harmony, whose cover of "Don't Let It Go To Your Head" was released on Lightning's Laser label in the UK, and the "Radical Roots Re-edit Vol. 6" remix in the US on the Roots Radics label.

M HUNCHO

Anonymous, savvy, mask-wearing rapper rumoured to be from Kilburn. M Huncho makes trippy, hypnotic auto-tuned rap music that he dubs "trapwave".

MICHELLE GAYLE

From acting in children's TV programmes in the late 1980s, she played the role of Hattie in the BBC TV soap *Eastenders* during the early 1990s. She transformed her national exposure on the soap into a successful recording career. Signed to major company RCA, she kicked off in 1993 with the Top 15 single "Looking Up". In 1994 she had a Top 5 single "Sweetness", taken from her eponymous debut album released in the same year. A second album, the Top 20 hit *Sensation*, was released in 1997. Twice BRIT Award-nominated Michelle then moved to EMI, where despite having a strong management team, her recording career faded.

MIKEY KOOS

Son of Lord Koos, Mikey is a community radio and concert promoter. He runs the Authentic Real Music reggae promotions company and Unique Radio.

MIGHTY WARRIOR

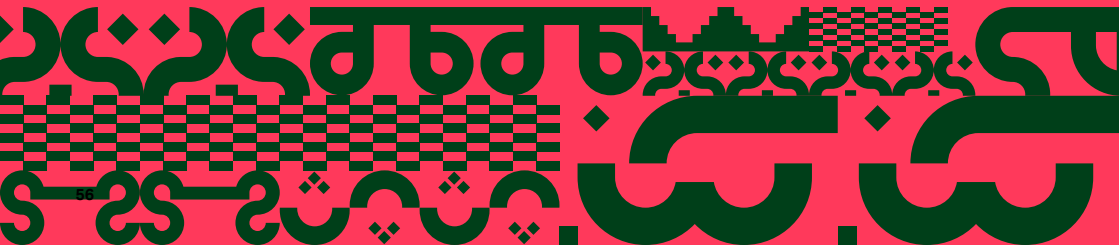
A sound system.

MILTON SAMUEL

An Antiguan businessman, who after producing a few records for labels such as Decca, started Beacon Records in 1967. The Willesden-based label's first release, The Show Stoppers classic "Ain't Nothin But a House Party", immediately hit the charts at no.11, thanks to the efforts of Milton's carbon paper salesman, who were made to turn their attention to selling vinyl.

MIS-TEEQ

A commercially successful female trio which included Harlesden girl Sabrina Washington. Mis-Teeq started off with "Why", originally an R&B track, which, with a UK garage remould, reached the Top 10 at the start of 2001. They enjoyed six further Top 10 hit singles and two Top 5 albums. Curiously, soon after Reprise Records released their first US album, which was culled material from the British albums, Mis-teeq announced the group's split in 2005.



MISS P

This congenial presenter and sibling of Rita Marley helped her brother Lepke to establish Dread Broadcasting Corporation (DBC) as an influential black music pirate station, before being poached by BBC Radio 1 in the mid-1980s to present the 'Culture Shock' reggae show.

MISTY IN ROOTS

Although this rootsy band is associated with Southall, key members came from Brent, and they used to rehearse in a shed in Harlesden and perform locally. Formed in 1975, they released the 1979 *Live At The Counter-Eurovision* album on their People Unite label.

MO CLARIDGE

He started off working in the Pama shop before eventually opening his Mojo distribution and Ballistic Records business a few yards away at 94 Craven Park Road, NW10 in 1976. For a brief period in the late 1970s, Mojo was a major competitor to Jet Star as a reggae distributor.

MOJO

Operating from 94 Craven Park Road, NW10 in Harlesden, Mo Claridge's company blazed as a key reggae distributor for a couple of years in the late 1970s to early 1980s.

MORGAN STUDIOS

Morgan Studios was situated in Willesden at 169 High Road, NW10. It started in the 1960s, and became known as Power Plant in the 1980s and then Battery Studios in the 1990s when it was owned by Zomba, which operated from offices across the road, and also ran the locally-based Dreamhire studio equipment hire business. Delroy Washington's mid-1970s albums *I Sus* and *Rasta* were recorded there, as was Omar's 1992 *Music* album. Incidentally, in 1975, two Morgan studio engineers going under the name Typically Tropical scored a no. 1 with the pop-reggae novelty hit "Barbados". Today the studios go by the name of 'Assault and Battery', are part of the international Miloco chain of recording studios.

MR DRASTICK

Rapper hailing from the Neasden/St Raphael's area. He dropped the self-released *The Gladiatorial Passion Vol. 1* mix-tape CD in 2005. It was a big seller due to street sales made by Mr Drastick and his brother and manager Pharoah Biggs. Mr Drastick featured on the "North Weezy" video.

MUSICLAND/MUZIK CITY

These now defunct chains of record shops were set up by Trojan boss Lee Gopthal through the mid-1960s to early 1970s. After door-to-door and mail order sales, Lee began opening shops across London. These included 13 High Road, NW10 in Willesden Green, which also acted as the retailing headquarters. Shops opened and closed quite frequently. Brent areas serviced by this chain included 42 Willesden Lane, NW6, 153 High Road, NW6 in Kilburn, and 30 Station Parade, NW10 in Kensal Rise.

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IS FOR...

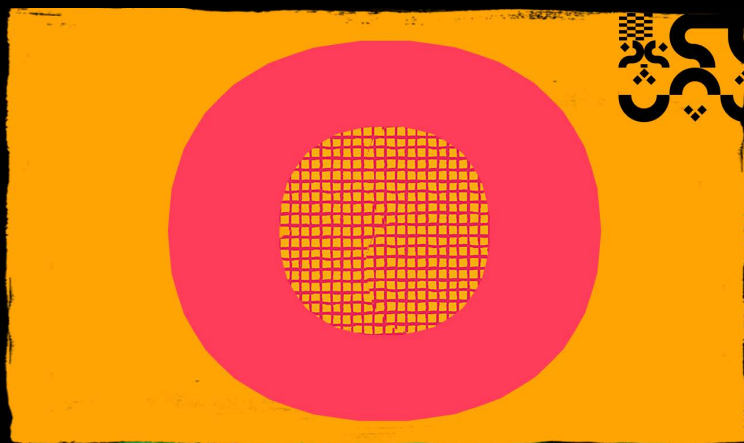


NINES

One of the biggest figures in British rap. Signed to XL Recordings with two top-five albums to his name. Relatively elusive for the last two years. His real name is Courtney Freckleton

NYANISIS

A 1980s reggae act.



IS FOR...

OMAR

A classically trained multi-instrumentalist, Omar started releasing records in his teens on his father Byron Lye-Fook's Kongo label. He's best known for the 1990 classic soul single and album *There's Nothing Like This*.

OMEGA RADIO 104.1FM

Started in 2011, this station adds a strong pan-Africanist history and culture, plus community awareness, particularly around gang warfare, gun and knife crime, to its talks, reggae and other black music shows. Station owner Uncle leads an after-school programme that gets youngsters to safely cross the streets.

ORBITONE/SPINDLE RECORDS

Sonny Roberts resurfaced in the music business around 1973, after his Planetone studio/label closed down in the early 1960s. By being close to Willesden Junction train station at 2 Station Offices, Station Road, London NW10, Sonny's shop initially stood away from his Harlesden High Street/Craven Park Road competitors. It also sold a wider selection of material - it focused less on reggae and more on soca, calypso, middle of the road R&B/soul, gospel and African music. It took over 78 Craven Park Road when Jet Star moved down to Harrow Road. The Orbitone labels operated from the same premises.

OSIBISA

The pioneering African music band was formed in 1969 by three Ghanaians Teddy Osei (saxophone), Sol Amarfi (drums) and Mac Tontoh (trumpet), a Nigerian Lasisi Arnao (percussionist/tenor sax), and three Caribbean musicians Wendel Richardson (lead guitar), Robert Bailey (keyboards) and Spartacus R (bass). Group leader Teddy had been in a number of highlife bands in his native Ghana from the late 1950s, such as The Comets, which included Teddy's brother Mac. Teddy arrived in London in 1962 planning to study music. In 1964 he formed an African-fusion band called Cat's Paw, before further developing the highlife, soul and R&B fusion to good effect with Osibisa, which was formed in 1969. Signed to MCA Records, they broke through the rock market with their self-titled album, which reached no. 11 in 1971. The same position was reached with the 1972 follow up *Woyaya*. During the throes of the disco era, they scored a couple of hit singles, of which "Sunshine Day" made the Top 20 in 1976. However, their first performance on BBC TV's Top Of The Pops was on account of an album feature slot, and they performed the brass and percussion driven "Music For Gong Gong", which although released as a single did not chart. Osibisa was a great live band that toured extensively across the world particularly in the 1970s and '80s. Teddy has recruited new members with whom, he occasionally performs. One of the early band members, percussionist Kofi Ayivor produced Hi-Tension's self-titled debut album, which made a brief appearance, at the bottom of the Top 75. Having delivered two hit records including the 1978 Top 10 hit "British Hustle", Kofi also worked on the mixes of one of Tradition's albums, *Alternative Routes*.

OWEN DEACON

This Harlesden-based singer-songwriter and guitarist used to be a member of lovers rock band Classic Black. He's released two albums: *Crossover* and *My God, Mon Ami*. In 2005, Owen, who's also been a backing vocalist for the likes of Aswad, Dennis Brown, and Delroy Wilson, launched the *Crossover* album with a filmed concert in a Harlesden church, which featured Donna Gardier and Noel McKay on the bill. Now sporting a huge, grey beard, he still records and performs, fusing gospel and secular with reggae, folk and blues influences.



PAMA

The Pama label was set up by the Palmer brothers. It started in Harrow in 1967. According to Carl Palmer, a) the label was started to facilitate the release of recordings in Britain of Jamaican artists championed by singer Alton Ellis, and b) the first release on Pama was by Alton Ellis. In fact, the first record was Carlton Alphonso's *Where In This World/Peace Makers* (PM 700). As Pama moved to its 78 Craven Park Road, NW10 base in 1968, perhaps what Carl meant was that the first record released on Brent-based Pama was by Alton Ellis - *The Message/Some Talk* (PM 707). Between 1968 to 1973, Pama was the main competitor to Trojan. Max Romeo's 1969 Top 10 placement of "Wet Dreams" on the Unity label was Pama's biggest crossover hit. Nevertheless, some of the seemingly underground records sold in huge quantities. Junior English's 1973 "Daniel" single is said to have sold over 60,000 copies without entering the pop charts. The company went through a hiatus during the mid-1970s, partly due to the downturn in the demand for reggae music. After releasing a few records in 1975, it cut down on issuing new material and morphed into Jet Star, which focused on wholesaling and distribution from 1978.

PAMA RECORDS

The shop opened in 1968 at 78 Craven Park Road, NW10 in Harlesden, from where the Pama labels operated. It stocked ska/blue beat, rock steady, reggae, in addition to some R&B, soul and gospel material.

PATRICK CANN

Owner of the Arawak label, and the one-time Harlesden-based Arawak record shop, which operated at 3 Library Parade, Craven Park, NW10 in Harlesden during the early 1980s. He was the first to sign and release Janet Kay. Although he produced some of his catalogue, Dennis Bovell produced a great number, including Janet Kay's "Silly Games".

PAUL DAWKINS

Lead vocalist and musician Paul Dawkins played with George Oban and Brinsley Forde, before they established Aswad. He went on to form the lovers and roots band Tradition, with whom he recorded several albums and singles. He started a solo singing career in the early 1980s recording for Venture and local labels including Arawak and Starlight. Paul continues to perform solo, or with other members of Tradition.

PEOPLE SOUND

A sound system.

PHIL FEARON

A former member of Hott Wax and Kandidate. He emerged after Kandidate folded, initially as Galaxy, then Phil Fearon & Galaxy. The first single "Dancing Tight" reached the Top 5 in 1983. His hits included another Top 5, "What Do I Do", and the 1986 hit "I Can Prove It". The first of his two albums, *Phil Fearon And Galaxy*, was a Top 10 hit in 1984. After the demise of his solo career, Phil started the FJR studio and Production House label, which released many underground singles, and a few crossovers by Acen, and Baby D, who happens to be Phil's missus. Anyone remember that back-flip Phil did on 'Top Of The Pops' which nearly went wrong?!

PHOEBE ONE

This female rapper had a lot of respect on the underground with her rap, R&B and reggae material. She scored her own hits with "Doin' Our Thing/One Man's Bitch" at the end of 1998, and the following year reached the Top 40 with "Get On It". Phoebe won the 1998 MOBO Awards winner for best act - then the only female to have won in this category.



PLANETONE/ORBITONE

British black music pioneer Sonny Roberts opened Planetone record company in 1962. It operated from 108 Cambridge Road, NW6 in Kilburn. It released ska material by the likes of Rico Rodriguez and the Marvels. Sonny resurfaced in the music business around 1973 after Planetone closed down in the early 1960s. He ran his group of labels, mainly Orbitone and Tackle, from the same premises as his record shop, initially at 2 Station Offices, Station Road, London NW10, and then when Jet Star moved out, 78 Craven Park Road, NW10. Its successes include African music by jazz tinged hornsman Peter King, and Nigerian Afro-funk group Nkengas. The latter released two 1973 albums, *Destruction* and *Nkengas In London*. Middle of the road soul artist Tim Chandell sold loads of his albums without even breaching the bottom end of the national charts due to sales going overwhelmingly through niche and non-chart returning stores. Tim is reputed to have sold over 50,000 copies of his 1977 album *Loving Moods*. However Orbitone label tasted chart success with two hit singles by Judy Boucher, of which "Can't Be Without You Tonight" reached no.2 in 1987.

PREDICTION

A late 1970s/early 1980s reggae band signed to north London based Santic Records. The band's vocalists included the Patterson twin sisters, who left in 1985 to form R&B/dance act Dazzle. One of the Prediction members, rhythm guitarist Trevor McKenzie, became a recording engineer at the BBMC studio around 1984-89.

PRESIDENT DOWNBEAT

A sound system.

R

IS FOR...

RAJ MALKANI

He was a member of a few local bands, of which Hi gained a bit of a buzz a year or so before another local band, Hi-Tension, sprang up in the mid-70s. Raj supplied the photo, local paper coverage, and a flyer for a 1975 gig that can be seen on the Ephemera page. Raj was one of three friends, including Phil Fearon, who founded the Production House record company. He acted as the label manager and director, and was involved in the writing and production of the early releases until the creative process had to give way to the running of the business.

RAY WILLIAMS

Middle of the road/soul singer-songwriter and owner of the Vasko label and shop. The title track of the *Growing Old* album has been a favourite across Britain, and parts of west Africa.

REGGAE TREE

Officially planted on July 1 2018 to mark International Reggae Day by Dawn Butler MP, and Councillors Muhammed Butt, Orleen Hylton and Lloyd McLeish, the tree stands in front of the Hawkeye record shop in Craven Park Road, and across from the Starlight Records shop. The Reggae Tree, an initiative of Kwaku BBM, UK co-ordinator of IRD, aims to add to Brent's cultural landscape and IRD kicks off with a gathering around the tree, which symbolises Harlesden, Brent as the capital of reggae in Britain.

RIANNA SCIPIO

Before finding fame as Britain's first black weather presenter on LWT in the early 1990s, Rianna presented shows on two Brent pirate radio stations, Time Radio and Fresh FM.

ROBBO RANX

DJ and radio presenter. Robbo Ranx honed his skills with the Tipperstone sound system, which he founded with school friends in 1986. He presented the Dancehall Show on BBC Radio 1XTRA for 12 years before setting up his own online radio show.

ROGER ST. PIERRE

The first press/PR manager at the Willesden based Beacon indie label. Starting in 1967, he worked with the label before setting up his independent St. Pierre Publicity business, which was retained by Beacon. He promoted Lightning acts, including Althea & Donna's 1997 chart-topping "Uptown Top Ranking". He wrote and narrated Horace Ove's 'Reggae' documentary, and contributed backing vocals on Joyce Bond's 1968 cover of The Beatles "Ob La Di, Ob La Da".

RONNY JORDAN

A well-respected and melodic jazz guitarist in the George Benson vein, he had a hit single in 1992 with 'So What!'. He started his musical career in Harlesden performing gospel music. He was the brother of former Nu Colours member Fay Simpson

ROOT JACKSON

A co-founder of the Black Music Association. Hailing from Huddersfield, he was signed to Willesden-based Beacon Records in 1967 as part of the pop/R&B duo Root & Jenny Jackson. He has kept links with Brent through recording, performing, and his business base. He was a partner in Kongo Dance, which launched the careers of Omar and Vanessa Simon. When his duo broke up, Root joined other bands, including FBI band, who were pioneers in the 1970s Brit-funk movement. Root continues to gig on the blues and R&B circuit with the reconstituted UFBI band.



ROOTS FM

This award-winning reggae-specialist community radio station has been operating from Harlesden since 1999.

ROYAL LOUNGE

Venue at 397 The High Road, Wembley which, for the last 8 years, has been a big venue for raves and parties.

RUFF CUTT

Well respected reggae band, who have backed the cream of reggae artists on stage and in the studio. Key members include musician/producer Tony Ruffcutt.





SAVANA

Jamaican born, British-based reggae artist. In 2004, he crossed over from the reggae market into the national charts when his Jet Star single "Pretty Lady" reached no. 48. He also picked up the 2004 Urban Music Award reggae gong.

SHOLA AMA

Although her famous discovery story locates her at Hammersmith tube station, she lived with her grandmother in Kensal Green throughout the beginning of her recording career. Her first single, a cover of "You Might Need Somebody", finally got a commercial release in 1997 by major record company Warner Music, and went straight into the Top 5. A feat achieved by the followup single "You Are The One That I Love". The 'Much Love' album, released in the same year went into the Top 10. Several Top 30 singles followed, including the Top 10 Glamma Kid collaboration "Taboo". Surprisingly, the richly produced 1999 follow-up album did not chart, and plans to release it in the US were scrapped when the artist went through some personal problems. Shola Ama won the Brit Awards for Best Female and MOBO Awards' Best Newcomer and R&B gongs in 1998.

SIDNEY CROOKS

Former member of Jamaican reggae group Pioneers, whose 1971 Trojan single "Let Your Yeah Be Yeah" reached no. 5. He settled in Britain, where he had success as a producer. He operated the Harlesden-based Golden Age Music record label and shop in the mid-1970s.

SILVER STAR SOUND

A sound system. Silver Star Sound provided youth-orientated dancehall reggae in the clubs. They have generated a growing fan base all over the world, performing in Sweden, Italy, Germany and Finland, plus others. Silver Star's Gussy Young (son of DJ Gussy) presents a show on The Beat 103.4 FM.

SILVER SPOON CLUB

Popular venue, particularly for reggae events, which was located on South Way, behind Wembley Stadium.

SINCLAIR

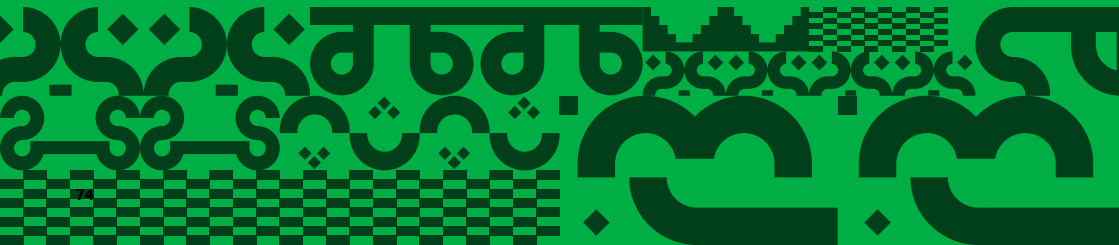
Former singer in reggae group Administrators, Michael Sinclair turned to soul music, as demonstrated on his street soul classic "I Want You Back" single and the album of the same name, which generated the 1993 top hit "Ain't No Casanova", and minor hits in "(I Wanna Know) Why" and "Don't Lie".

SIX BY SIX

One of the first soul sound systems was the Kensal Green-based Six by Six, which started in the early 1970s. It was run by Paul Fearon and Michael Baumont. It introduced soul and R&B sounds to Notting Hill Carnival in the 1970s, and held down a residency at the Roxy.

SONIA FERGUSON

Lovers rock singer, who covered a number of soul songs, such as "Just For Your Love" and "Oh Baby Baby" in the late 1970s on the D-Roy label.



SONNY ROBERTS

A 1950s immigrant, Sonny's place in British black music needs to be recognised for a number of reasons. Having started one of Britain's first sound systems, Love Vendor, the need for exclusives to play on that sound system led him to eventually set up the first black-owned record label and studio, Planetone, in 1962. Renting a basement at the now demolished 108 Cambridge Road in Kilburn led to the landlord Lee Gopthal entering the music business, and Chris Blackwell moving into the same building and re-launching Trojan Records with Lee. Sonny recorded several Caribbean and African musicians during Planetone's short-lived existence, including the likes of trombonist Rico Rodriguez, ska singers The Marvels and Dimples Hinds. When Sonny returned to the music business in the early 1970s trading on Station Road, NW10 near the Willesden Junction station in Harlesden as Orbitone, he released a range of music styles. From African music (Peter King and Nkengas), soca (he popularised soca, playing and selling it at Notting Hill Carnival), to middle of the road soul, of which his Tim Chandell albums sold very well. However his only crossover came in 1987 when soul-tinged reggae singer Judy Boucher scored two Top 20 hits - "You Caught My Eye" reached no.18, "Can't Be With You Tonight", made no. 2 and the album of the same name breached the charts at the bottom end of the Top 100. This level of success was no mean feat for a small label without any serious marketing or distribution to speak of! His Spindle record shop took over 78 Craven Park Road, NW10 in Harlesden when Jet Star moved out. He officially received his 2003 BBM/BMC Foundation Builder certificate on his 2006 visit to London from Jamaica, where he is now based.

SPARTACUS R

The original Osibisa bassist, Spartacus left soon after the band broke internationally. Whilst living in Kensal Green, he self-released the folky and socio-conscious *Africa I See* album on the Zara Music label. An avowed pan-Africanist, having seemingly abandoned music, he later wrote and published Afrocentric books. He also published the pocket-sized Global Africa Pocket News (GAPNews) in the mid-1990s, which he developed into the internet-based GAP Radio.

SPIN-IT

This shop, based at 13 High Road, NW10 in Willesden Green, which had been going since the 1970s, stocked R&B, soul, dance and chart records. It closed down in 2005.

ST RAPHS SOLDIERS

A rap crew from around St Raphael's Estate.

STARLIGHT RECORDS

This label was owned by Popsy and Desmond Bryan, the owners of the Starlight record shop. They shared the same premises at 17 Craven Park Road, NW10 in Harlesden. In addition to releasing reggae material produced by the label owners, they were the outlet for many Jamaican producers, such as Prince Jammy, Winston Riley, and Bunny Lee, which were spread across the Starlight, Black Joy and Black Music labels.

STARLIGHT RECORDS

This shop, based at 17 Craven Park Road, NW10, was part of Trojan/B&C's Musik City retail outlets. When the Trojan/B&C companies folded, a trio, including present day manager Popsy, took it over in 1976. A reggae-focused stockist, it also sold its own releases on the Starlight, Black Music and Black Joy labels. In 2019 Popsy and Roy 'Hawkeye' Forbes-Allen were honoured with International Reggae Day/ British Black Music Month awards for still being in business for over 40 years.

STEVE CARMICHAEL

Former writer-producer and member of R&B duo The Affair , who set up the gospel label/studio Heart Music at Designworks in Harlesden during the early 2000s.

STORM

A female lovers rock group which included local girl Anita, who had a Top 40 hit in 1979 with their cover of the Diana Ross' Chic-written hit "It's My House" on the Scope records label.

STUDIO EXPRESS

A sound system.



SUGABABES

This group is perhaps the most commercially successful to come out of Brent. The original pop-R&B group was formed when 13 year old Kingsbury friends Kiesha Buchanan and Mutya Buena mooted the idea of forming a band with Siobhan Donaghy in 1998. They were signed by major label London Records, and their first single, "Overload", was a Top 5 hit. But although they had three further Top 30 hits, the no. 26 chart placing of their debut album *Overload* did not impress London, who subsequently dropped the act. The lesson from the Sugababes story is that A&R and record company folks are not infallible. Another major label, Island Records, signed up the band, and despite several lineup changes, which left Kiesha the only original group member, they became a mega-selling act. Their tally of four chart-topping singles include "Freak Like Me" in 2002 and "Push The Button" in 2005, plus a 2002 no. 2 album, *Angels With Dirty Faces*, a 2003 no. 3 album, *Three*, and a 2005 no. 1 album *Taller In More Ways*. Sugababes won Best Dance Act at the 2003 BRIT Awards.

SUN CYCLE

A large dancehall collective from the Stonebridge area led by producer Dolomite. They have worked with rock group Texas and Sunship.

SWEETIE IRIE

British reggae singer, DJ and television presenter. Briefly signed to Mango, a subsidiary of Island Records, Sweetie Irie released his debut album *DJ of the Future* in 1991. In the early 00's he collaborated on several UK garage tracks and presented Channel 4 'Flava' show with Ms Dynamite. Sweetie is still performing and recording - in 2019 he collaborated on "N.R.G.", a track with Canadian house producer Neon Steve.

SYLVIA TELLA

Known as 'The First Lady Of UK Reggae', Sylvia's a competent soul/R&B singer, who's also sung with pop and rock acts such as The Blow Monkeys and Pop Will Eat Itself. In 1998 she featured on LD Jam Inc's Longsy D-produced soul/reggae single "Special Way".



TAIO CRUZ

British singer, songwriter and record label owner raised in Kensal Rise and best known for "Dynamite" - one of 2010's most successful tracks. Among others Cruz has written for Olly Murs, David Guetta, Will Young and Cheryl Cole and Usher.

TC CURTIS

He came out of the gospel scene and after playing with many short-lived gospel and secular bands, he enjoyed, commercial success in the mid-1980s as a singer-songwriter, producer and owner of the Hot Melt label. His club hits include "Body Shake" which was released in 1981 on the then very influential west end-based Groove Production, before he released subsequent records, such as "Bump And Slide" and "Slave Of Love", on his own label. "You Should Have Known Better", which featured local group Galaxy on backing vocals, reached no. 50 in 1985. It was released in the US on Madonna's label Sire.

THE BEAT 103.6

The Beat is a radio station broadcast from Harlesden. It has taken Choice FM's mantle as London's hip, contemporary black music station, particularly with the emergence of home-grown genres such as afrobeats, grime and drill. The Beat (previously known as Bang) started out as Life FM a community radio station in Stonebridge precinct, NW10. It was awarded a local community radio license in 2006.

THE CIMARONS

Reputed to be the first self-contained British reggae band. The band formed in the mid-1960s around the Harlesden and Queens Park areas. For many years they were the backing band of choice for many visiting Jamaican reggae acts touring Britain. Although their 1974 Trojan debut album *In Time* was recorded in Chalk Farm, it was remixed at Morgan Studios in Willesden. Their albums *On The Rock*, released on Vulcan in 1976 and *Live*, released two years later on Polydor, are examples of some of British reggae's finest moments.



THE RAVER

A sound system.

THE ROXY

The Roxy Theatre for a brief period from the mid-1970s served as a live venue at Craven Park Road, NW10 in Harlesden. It occupied the old, Odeon cinema, which opened in 1937 and closed in 1972. A block of flats called Odeon Court now occupies the site.

TIM CLARK

Before establishing his reputation as the manager of British pop star Robbie Williams, Tim started off working in the Island Records store room in Kilburn.

TIME RADIO

During the mid 1980s, Time Radio operated openly from 74a Harlesden High Street, NW10 in Harlesden. In fact, the front door was left unlocked, so that there was no need to break it down to conduct a DTI raid! Its 24 hour service pretty much mirrored JBC's, though perhaps it had a higher profile. Time Radio was able to provide live outside broadcasts, such as coverage from Notting Hill Carnival. Time was started by Ronald Amanze, who operated a number of community radio stations from 74a, including Irie FM, Madina, People's Sounds and WLR, and provided space for recording studios operated by Ruff Cutt, Lloydie Crucial, and Wayne Marshall and Orlando Gittens. 74a needs its place in Brent black music history to be told!

TONY RUFFCUTT

Seasoned reggae musician and producer, this former member of Creation Rebel is a member of the Ruff Cutt Band.



TONY STRATTON-SMITH

Before launching the recording careers of the likes of Genesis, Peter Gabriel, and the Charisma label, this former music journalist worked for Trojan distributor B&C.

TRADITION

A local roots and lovers band, which like, Aswad, used to rehearse in the Gangsterville record shop in Kensal Green. They were signed to Venture Records by producer Tyrone, who also owned the shop from which the label operated. Venture began putting out Tradition material from 1976, including the 1977 *Moving On* album, where songs like "Every Little Bit Of My Heart" reflected the lovers side, and "(Africa) Our Forefathers' Land", the roots and culture side.

TRAFFIC JAM

Pirate radio station, also known as Traffic Radio, operated from the Stonebridge Estate area. Among its diet of reggae programmes was Fanny B's 'The Afrobeat Show'.

TREASURE ISLE

A sound system.

TREVOR DIXON

Lovers rock singer, best known for the track "Woman of Moods" released in 1988 by Groove and A Quarter Records, and distributed by Jet Star.

TREVOR STARR

A guitarist who was part of a contingent sent by the Jamaican government to promote reggae music in the UK during the early 1970s. Signed to Trojan Records, he has played with many reggae legends including Jimmy Cliff, Desmond Dekker, Dave and Ansell Collins, and Bob Marley.

TREVOR T

Former record producer and owner of Jugglin' label, on which his production of Don Campbell's lovers rock classic "See It In Your Eyes" was released in the mid-1990s.

TROJAN RECORDS

Trojan Records was founded in Kilburn in 1968 and later operated from a now-demolished warehouse called Music House on Neasden Lane. During its heyday in the late 60s and 70s Trojan popularised ska, rocksteady, reggae and other forms of Jamaican music. In 1970 alone, Trojan released 500 records. The music connected the windrush generation with Jamaica, and gave numerous new subcultures across the UK a soundtrack. The popularisation of Trojan's music owed much to the budget-price Tighten Up compilation series which was available in high street shops across the country. Trojan's ska releases became the music of the original skinheads, and reflected an intermingling of Jamaican rude boy culture with white working class subcultures in British cities. Last year, a documentary was released to mark the 50th anniversary of the label.

TUBBY T

Dancehall MC from Harlesden who scored two Top 50 hits, including 2002's socio-conscious "Tales Of The Hood". Tubby T (real name Anthony Robinson) tragically suffered a stroke and died in 2008, aged 33.



UNDIVIDED ROOTS

A 1980s lovers/reggae band which featured Don Campbell on vocals, and musicians Carlton 'Bubblers' Ogilvie, Tony 'Ruffcutt' Phillips, and Fish Brown, who became members of the Ruff Cutt band. Undivided Roots released an eponymous album on Island in 1990.

UNIQUE FM

A pirate radio station. It used to operate from a Harlesden building with reinforced doors to thwart raids, but it has later moved to a different location in the borough. Although illegal, their service was called upon by the police and Council agencies when they wanted to appeal directly to the community.



IS FOR...

VASKO RECORDS

A record label set up by middle of the road/soul singer-songwriter Ray Williams in the mid-1970s to release his material, which includes popular ballads "Growing Old" and "Emily". Vasko also released material by saxophonist Ray Anthony. It operated from the same premises as his record shop at 219 Church Road, NW10 in the Church End area. A compilation of Ray's Vasko tracks has been released on Jet Star's Charm label as a best-of album entitled *Bedroom Music*.

VIGILANTE

A sound system.

VIVIAN JONES

Well respected veteran lovers rock and roots singer-songwriter. Coming to London from Jamaica as a pre-teen in 1968, he first lived in Willesden, before moving to Alperton. From the mid-1970s, he started his musical career with a number of Brent-based bands – the Spartans and Mighty Vibes, labels such as Virgo Stomach and Cha Cha, and the Undivided Roots (later to become Ruff Cut), produced and released Vivian's debut album *Bank Robbery* in 1983. Vivian has been releasing his material on his own Imperial House label since the early 1990s.



WHAT'S YOUR FLAVOUR

A restaurant-cum-club located further down the road at 135-137 High Street, NW10. Sadly, although there was a community campaign to keep it going, it has closed down.

WINSTON FRANCIS

This Jamaican-born singer had established his name back home before settling in England. Winston became popular in the UK with his first album, *Mr Fix It*, and his cover of the pop classic "California Dreaming". He credits UB40 for receiving substantial publishing royalties only after the band covered his "Mr Fix It" song, which he first recorded for Coxsone.



IS FOR...

ZOMBA

Zomba was a giant in the music industry and operated quietly from its blue and white painted two-story head office on 1 Maybury Garden, NW10 in Willesden. It operated from this base for over twenty years, and grew to become the world's largest independent music company, covering all areas of music - rap, R&B, gospel, pop, and rock and operated across industry sectors - recording, publishing, management, distribution, studio and recording equipment hire, not to mention having its own operations across all key international territories. Started by two white South Africans, Clive Calder and Ralph Simon, the Zomba company was named after a city in Malawi, while the premier label, Jive, was named after South Africa's popular music style called "township jive". Soon after setting up Jive in 1982, the label opened the year with its first British chart-topping single Tight Fit's cover of "The Lion Sleeps Tonight", a song based on an old South African, song called "Wimoweh". Zomba released important records by Billy Ocean, Wee Papa Girl Rappers and scored the first big UK Garage crossover hit with Shanks & Bigfoot, who reached no.1 in 1999 with "Sweet Like Chocolate".

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