

JOHNNY COOL AND THE ISLE OF SIRENS

by Johnny Copasetic

New Rudies Begin Hear

This is about the words. In particular about some elements common to the lyrics of North American R&B, and Jamaican Ska. So Skinhead music jams a rude boot between the pages of this book, in an attempt to show that it has always been an adventurous and 'progressive' force in Pop. But who cares who found it first? Who cares what the name is? **RUDIES DON'T CARE.**

Now Reel On

Ska - and Reggae, Rock Steady, otherwise Bluebeat - is the popular music of Jamaica. It and R&B, the popular music of Black North America, are two intimately associated and interacting branches of a common root. These two branches and their interactions are presented here as a coherent progressive movement in Pop Music. This is done by looking in depth at the work of two representative figures, one from each branch, and their innovations. These two figures are Curtis Mayfield on the R&B side and Prince Buster on the Ska side. Such other figures as seem to be relevant to this development will be included as we go along, but it is not intended to write a history of the music, or an across-the-board survey of current developments, and the boring wastes of discographies and obscure records will be avoided.

For the purpose in hand it is best to consider the common origin of the two branches as being in the Rock and Roll era of the 1950s. In fact the two branches were already distinct at that time, but it was then that the pop record became big business, and the use of electric instruments and amplification was widespread. At that time the heavy two-to-the-bar offbeat which was the legacy of boogie and blues really came into its own in the records of such people as Fats Domino and Chuck Berry. It was this feature of the increasingly widespread American records

which was the initial influence of R&B on the musicians of Jamaica. Other influences on those musicians were of course not North American – there were plenty of indigenous ones: calypso and the steel bands of Trinidad for example. In North America too there were influences other than the blues and boogie, in particular gospel singing and jazz. Because of these differences the two branches obviously developed differently; but the Jamaican musicians continued to be influenced by and to be aware of the developments of North American soul music and R&B.

To set the stage for the two developments we must look at their common ground, Rhythm and Blues around 1955–1960. Two records will do to establish this shared vocabulary. Wilbert Harrison's *Kansas City* is a paradigm rock record, and could almost be Ska, it has such a pronounced offbeat. But by far the more significant record is Chuck Berry's 1955 first hit record *Maybelline*. It also has the pronounced offbeat but most important of all it demonstrates another powerful influence that Chuck Berry had on all pop music, white and black, from that time on. Chuck Berry's statement is twofold. First, his lyric in this and all of his songs is full of object references, places, journeys and distance. None of that was new in itself: the White American folksong and the Black American blues, and American literature in general are full of place-names, and journeys. Look at the songs *Portland Town* and *Highway 61*, or at *Huckleberry Finn* for that matter. It was not new, but it was new for Pop. Pop added its own definitive message – that you can speak about the generalities of life in terms of the precisely named objects that surround and delight those who live it – cars, juke boxes, cream-soda, hi-fi, hi-heeled sneakers, and freeways – and the activities of that life – driving, arriving, dancing and rhythm reviews.

His other influence is in his delivery. The best examples of this are in his later work, in for example *Memphis Tennessee*. The scansion of Chuck Berry's lines is always exact, and his delivery matches this in its perfect attention to rhythm. In *Memphis* it is this, coupled with his wry voice, his understatement, that gives the song its great sadness.

Chuck Berry was by no means the only bearer of this message. It doesn't matter whether it was he personally who brought the good news to those who followed or someone else. He stands as an outstanding exponent of the common source of our two developments.

Starting From Chicago

In 1958 Curtis Mayfield and Jerry Butler formed the Impressions and began long and influential careers in the music. Both of them had experience in gospel groups and it was this training that was the prime influence on Mayfield's music, as it was on all the groups and singers in what is usually called Soul music.

They made some records in Chicago, and Jerry Butler soon went solo. Curtis Mayfield wrote many of their songs in this Chicago period. The songs are mainly love songs of the 'won't you forgive me/look my way' kind, extremely well put together. At this time Curtis Mayfield started to write and produce records for other people. His first was for a woman called Jan Bradley and the song he wrote *Mama didn't lie* serves to introduce the first of the themes which run through his work. The song is written from the point of view of a young woman who has found out that her mother was right all along – men *are* all the same, only after one thing. This simple tale reflects two of his themes: firstly the wisdom of age, secondly the sense of lost innocence. These two themes occur again and again in later development.

At this point the Impressions started to record for ABC Paramount, where their first record was *Gypsy Woman*, their first hit since the Jerry Butler days. This record introduces a third quality in Mayfield's work, that of allegory, and the appearance of archetypal figures, acting out a small story-like episode.

'From nowhere through a caravan
Around the campfire light
A lovely woman in motion
With hair as dark as night
Her eyes were like that of a cat in the dark
That hypnotised me with love
She was a gypsy woman
She was a gypsy woman . . .'

She goes on to dance with all the men and finally vanishes, unaware of the love of the stranger.

Another similar record of that period is *Minstrel and Queen*. In this a minstrel of low degree declares his love to 'the Queen with no King'. It doesn't say how it all works out. The song is not very good: Curtis Mayfield undoubtedly has a weakness for the 'I love you too/Honest I do' type of weak couplet. But the first line *is* striking – 'Queen Majesty, may I speak to thee,' where the doubling up of the royal title emphasises the distance and

impersonality of the Queen. It has some of the irony of *Duke of Earl*, Gene Chandler's old hit. (Gene Chandler was later to record many Curtis Mayfield songs.) Both of these records were very influential in Jamaica. We'll come back eventually to that line from *Minstrel and Queen*.

These few songs described so far already show themes strikingly different from the mainstream of R&B/Soul music. The concrete imagery of Chuck Berry (wipe the windows, check the oil, check the tyres, dollar gas) is a million miles away, but this is true of most Soul music by now. The difference in Curtis Mayfield's songs is that a new imagery of 'classical' archetypes takes its place. Another difference is that Curtis Mayfield writes story songs, as Chuck Berry did (*Nadine*, *Johnny B. Goode*), a tradition maintained in country and western music but increasingly less common in R&B/Soul music. These themes are all present in one remarkable song: *Isle of Sirens*. He wrote it in the first Chicago period, about 1960, though he and the Impressions didn't record it until 1967. There is an absolutely awful Jerry Butler recording of it, made around 1960, which has Curtis somewhere in the background. Jerry Butler was completely at odds with Mayfield over songs like *Minstrel and Queen* and *Isle of Sirens* and obviously hated this one. The later Impressions recording of it is superb, with Curtis Mayfield's distinctive guitar rolling behind, and some beautifully restrained strokes of harmony from the other Impressions.

There's a story
Of beautiful women,
On an island in the sea,
Who called to me
Sailing by . . .

And as we stayed on our course
I could hear them calling me,
And Lord, I can't stand
That beautiful cry.

Keep course,
Cried the captain.
Ignore them, let them be,
Straight ahead,
Cried the captain.

Sail on by and stay free,
Remember laws of mutiny.

And as we moved
The voices got louder,
They sing beautiful things in my ear,
I must go to that island of women,
I must see these creatures I hear,
Love is bright, and desires
Have no fear.

Keep course,
Cried the captain
Straight ahead, you stubborn man
We're all lonely cried the captain.
Take heed from an old man
For you don't understand.

Old man, your information
Makes no sense to me
Till the rock came
Of temptation,
And desires are heaven to me,
And off he leaped
Into the sea.

Keep course, cried the captain,
Keep course, cried the captain
Keep course.

The three themes picked out above are all shown in this song. The archetypal figures of the Captain and the Sirens, the authority of the old man, and the inevitable loss of innocence in experience: 'and off he leaped into the sea'. It's the sort of thing that many people are trying to do these days, Van Morrison for example.

After the *Gypsy Woman* period two things happened. Firstly Mayfield joined forces with an arranger called Johnny Pate and produced some of the Impressions' best work including *Isle of Sirens*, *I'm Still Waiting* and *People Get Ready*, which harks back to his gospel-singing experience. He also produced and wrote other people's songs. One of the first and greatest of these was Major Lance, who recorded many Mayfield songs. One of these,

Um Um Um Um Um Um is fairly well known. It was covered at the time by an English group. A young man comes across an old man sitting on a bench in a park who will say nothing but 'Mmm, mmm, mmm, um, um, mmm'. Later on in the song when the boy is older, he understands the reason for the old man's moan:

'Now that I'm a man
I think I understand
Just why everyone should sing this song:
(Listen to me sing)
Mmm, mmm, mmm, um, um, mmm.'

Just as Chuck Berry in *Memphis* conveys pathos by strict adherence to rhythm in a song with perfectly regular metre, so Mayfield and Major Lance between them do the same. Curtis also sings on the record, and the whole thing is so tight it sounds like double tracking. Another Mayfield/Lance co-operation which shows this is *Rhythm*. This is a very simple dance song of the 'come on and do the -' kind. It is a type very common in R&B - an exhortation to dance some dance, the jerk, the pony, shotgun, boogaloo - there are millions of them, and it's a totally understood form of the medium. *Rhythm* takes this familiar form and treats it as a totally abstract one. No dance is mentioned, just the abstraction of all dances: rhythm. The chorus, presumably Mayfield and odd Impressions, comes in on every other line with the exhortation. Major Lance weaves his way in and out of them with beautifully free phrasing, always coming back to the beat laid down by them and the orchestra, which plays a steady clip-clop beat like a syncopated cowboy horse.

Chorus: 'You can beat the drum
ML: Lord, all you want to
Chorus: Let the bongos play
ML: And I dance all night and day
Chorus: When the music flows
ML: Lord I never want to go
All: Rhythm, Rhythm, Rhythm
ML: In my bones,
Everytime the music carries on
Lord, I feel like
All: Rhythm . . .'

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This control of rhythm - 'there can be no beat without rhythm' - and Major Lance's wistful voice make the song one of great sadness and loneliness. The contrast between form and message is as if a painter were to take some familiar and totally understood form in his medium, such as classical landscape, and paint a face with it.

Curtis Mayfield knows exactly what he is doing. He is a master, in complete control. Whether in his own recordings with the Impressions, or in other people's records, nothing in the vocal and instrumental arrangements is redundant, and the result is always a clean, spare sound. Even his weak cliché couplets ('Waiting for the rising sun/Everyone was having fun' - *Gypsy Woman*) have their place in his songs. (A couplet which looks weak on the page, may be perfectly right in a song if it occurs at a point of low tension or establishes a metre.) His command of harmony and antiphony of the gospel-influenced chorus is tremendous, and a fine example of this is in his production of the Fascination's *You'll be Sorry*. His more recent work carries all of this on. An interesting new factor is a political content in his recent songs, for example *Choice of Colours*, and *Mighty Mighty, Spade and Whitey*. This social content has become predominant in his work now that he has started a solo career, and no longer records with the Impressions. In such recent works as *We The People Who Are Darker Than Blue* the fantastical archetypes of *Isle of Sirens* and *Minstrel And Queen* are replaced by political ones. One example in particular offers triumphant evidence that the new songs follow on from the old. In the bitter and ironic *Miss Black America*, on his first solo album, the figure of the black beauty queen X ('You're so beautifully equal') has both a personal and a political side to it.

Meanwhile (Last Train To Skaville)

To consider the development of Jamaican music in the same period we must go back again to the source - the triple message of rhythm, content and delivery which was carried by Chuck Berry in the late 50s and early 60s.

The translation of this into Jamaican music placed huge rhythmic emphasis on the offbeat. The result was, in the early sixties the emergence of a lot of music using the same instrumental line up as the American records - piano, bass guitar, guitar, drums and brass, occasional harmonica - but with a totally different sound. First of all, instead of having all the

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rhythm instruments playing the downbeat and maybe just piano providing offbeat, the position was reversed. *Everybody* played the offbeat, except maybe one instrument which carried the downbeat – presumably so that the offbeat could be heard to *be* offbeat. Secondly they had beautiful brass players playing wonderful jazz-influenced solos using notes and scales which were strange to R&B and R&B-based pop, in particular in their use of the major seventh and sixth.

The forms they used were often based on the calypso and the 32 bar pop song rather than on the North American 12 bar paradigm and its extensions; but the message of Chuck Berry and the early R&B performers had been absorbed. The songs were full of topical cultural references. Many of these were political. In particular many of these were connected with the Ras Tafari cult.

This is a very diverse body of religious and political belief, taking its name from Hailie Selassie, otherwise Ras Tafari, the Emperor of Ethiopia. It has its origins in the 'Back to Africa' movement of Marcus Garvey, and has some claim to be the origin of Black Power. Its adherents believe that they are the descendants of the people of Abyssinia and that they should return to Africa, where Hailie Selassie, the ruler of a Black Empire has divine status in a promised land. It is often necessary to know about this phenomenon and the vocabulary of the belief to understand what the songs could possibly be about.

The songs themselves were generally either love songs of a kind familiar in the rest of pop music or songs with some kind of political commentary. This latter is to be contrasted with North American soul music (but not with blues) and presumably reflects the influence of the calypso tradition. But this 'politics' is conveyed in the images of such beliefs as Ras Tafariism, in the images of an isolated island nation and those of a culture of poverty. The images are of promised lands, exiles, messiahs, of strikes, working mornings and shanty towns. The Biblical imagery of the Israelite's exile in Egypt is also common.

In the period between 1960 and 1970 the music was referred to successively as Ska (in this country Bluebeat), Rock Steady, and Reggae. These refer to dances rather than to music and it is, not always easy to say what the distinction is. Broadly speaking the later the record, the less the outstanding emphasis on simple offbeat and the more the other beats (except the first) are introduced, reflecting an increasing effect of indigenous influences, like calypso, and of 'uptown' R&B and Soul. It was at the begin-

ning of this period that Prince 'Buster' Campbell came to fame. He was a boxer and a sound-system man, or DJ, before he became a singer, and he was born in 1938.

The Young Mods' Forgotten Story

This article is above all about the relevance to people in this country of R&B and Ska. It is therefore fitting to consider, before we go on, the people who were really responsible for discovering it and keeping it alive in this country. They were the Mods.

In the early 1960s there was a revival of interest in R&B, which until then had been temporarily eclipsed. This rediscovery was not solely on the Mods' part, but they were in the discotheques and bought a lot of the records, and were the driving force, though many other people took part. They were young, single, and relatively wealthy. In the main, they were Southerners, coming from the grey, outlying districts of London, like Watford and Harrow. They wanted the best and brightest things for their money, and they decided for themselves what they were. They had style. They were the first generation to have known nothing of the war and rationing, and this may have been what made them different. The R&B revival which they partly brought about was not a particularly radical innovation. R&B had always been there and was part of the accepted public musical vocabulary, despite its eclipse. The real right of discovery belonged to the previous generation. The Beatles and the Stones were the same music, albeit watered down and more acceptable, before they went off in their own directions, which are not our concern here. The real discovery of the Mods was Ska, which had been introduced to this country by the West Indian immigrants.

In about 1962, when the R&B revival was well under way and the Beatles were in full swing, there was a brief boom in Jamaican music. In England at that time it was called Bluebeat. As far as the rest of the community was concerned it was fairly short-lived, though the papers made much of it – they were very concerned with the Mod phenomenon at that time. For one thing, the Beatles had happened. For another the American R&B records were better made and in a fairly familiar idiom, whereas bluebeat records were issued in excessive numbers and were often badly made. Moreover, the music was pretty wildly unacceptable. The heavy offbeat made it sound like a parody of the crudest rock

and roll, the words were often unintelligible, and when intelligible were often either obscene or seemed to hint at some kind of political menace veiled behind extraordinary foreign imagery. To the populace as a whole, used as they were to post-Buddy Holly pop music, it was rather revolting. They could afford to ignore it because there was other good music around.

The Mods however, took it for their own for precisely these qualities that everyone else rejected, plus of course the fact that it was good music, fantastic for dancing to. The really remarkable fact is that unlike the rock and roll revolution of the 50s and the R&B revival of the 60s, which were quickly assimilated into the musical vocabulary of the whole population, Ska remained in isolation as the music of an outgroup minority. It has remained so to date. There are now some signs that the assimilation into the main culture is occurring – but that is getting ahead of the story.

Johnny Cool

From the beginning, Prince Buster was a most important figure in Ska, and he spans practically the whole development. In the first Bluebeat boom Prince Buster arrived along with many other people who are still going strong, such as the Maytals, Owen Gray, Laurel Aitken, and Millie. (Millie was the only one who had hit records. She was small, gorgeous and very good, but her hit songs – *My Boy Lollipop* and *I'm Falling In Love With A Snowman* – were not the sort of thing you theorise about.)

Prince Buster's early songs were purest Bluebeat: a raucous offbeat and lots of good brass players (Prince Buster always had good musicians – Georgie Fame's band did sessions for him). They were always well sung and clearly articulated, which last was unusual in records of that time. Two of them will do to introduce several of Prince Buster's characteristics. *Sodom and Gomorrah* is a political tirade couched in the metaphor of the Israelites' exile in Egypt. The oppressor is addressed as Prince Pharaoh. 'Are you afraid to own your own name? You shall be destroyed like Sodom and Gomorrah.'

'... Your kingdom was destroyed, because
You were the son of King Pharaoh.
And I was Moses
Who led my people through
The Red Sea.
With a rod in my hand

I will stretch forth my hand
And the true king was delivered
From the hand of the wicked
Pharaohs.

You ARE Prince Pharaoh
Are you afraid to own your own name?
You shall be destroyed, like Sodom and Gomorrah.'

There are many other songs of this period which are directly political. *Watch it, Blackhead* is about the allegedly unfair proportion of wealth in the hands of the comparatively recent Chinese immigrants to the West Indies. *Ska school* – which begins with the Prince singing the alphabet to the tune of *Auld Lang Syne*, a forcible if not quite pleasing reminder of the breadth of his musical influences – is about illiteracy.

The second song, *Madness*, illustrates the elliptical nature of many of Prince Buster's songs. Like the situation between oppressor and oppressed in *Sodom and Gomorrah* the relation between the accuser and the defender of madness is minimally described. (Though it was probably quite clear in a Jamaican context what the situation referred to was.)

'... Madness, madness, they call it madness
Madness, madness, they call it madness
I'm about to explain
That someone is using his brain
Madness, madness, they call it madness

Propaganda ministers
Propaganda ministers
I've got an aim in view
I'm going to walk all over you

Madness, madness, I call it gladness
But if this is madness, man I know I'm filled with gladness
It's gonna be rough rough
It's gonna be tough tough
And I won't be the one whose going to suffer. ...'

But still more important, even these early songs illustrate the quality of allegory that was brought out in Curtis Mayfield's work, the description of situations in terms of archetypal figures.

We said that this was a continuation of Chuck Berry's message that songs should be particular and detailed, in terms of objects and individuals rather than generalities. This is the function of Prince Pharoah, Moses, and the Israelites in *Sodom and Gomorrah* as it was that of the old captain and the sirens in *Isle of Sirens*. The 'propaganda ministers' in *Madness* have precisely this quality of definiteness in an otherwise very abstract song.

It is not just fanciful to identify this factor with the influence of Curtis Mayfield. It is obvious that allegory in song is not a preserve of Mayfield alone. It is also clear that its presence in both men's work owes a lot to the influence of religious parables, rather than just to direct influence from one to the other. Nonetheless, Prince Buster's later development shows explicit influence.

The development of Ska as a whole was to greater complexity of rhythm, and to certain content peculiar to it alone. In terms of content there was among all performers a tendency to centre songs on archetypal mythical figures. This tendency showed itself in two ways. First there were lots of records taking as their titles films, and film heroes, and law-breakers; these were mainly instrumentals with shouted catch-phrases. An example is *Lawless Street*: 'John! Leave your guns alone! This is Lawless Street.' Heartbreak Hotel and Desolation Row in a nutshell. Prince Buster did one of these called *Al Capone* (pronounced Kerpown) interspersed with such cries as 'Don't call me Scarface! My name is Kerpown! Al Kerpown!'

The other way the tendency showed was in a figure unique to the West Indies, the rude boy, or rudie. The rude boy is a super-cool hooligan, and he always wins, he's so cool. He is very dear to the West Indian and Skinhead heart. James Bond is the rudie par excellence. So, by a strange equation, is Andy Capp. Probably the best known Ska record of all 007 (*Shanty Town*), by Desmond Dekker, concerns Bond. The rudies' crimes in the songs are almost always looting, shooting and, curiously enough, 'bum showing'. Several records portray the court-room trials of rude boys. In one of these, *Rougher than Rough (Rudies in Court)*, by Derrick Morgan, the judge's opening remarks are answered by the chorused rebuttal 'Your honner . . . rudies don't care!', and they walk out free. Prince Buster portrays a similar scene in *Judge Dread (Judge Hundred Years)*, but with the roles reversed. Judge Dread says 'I am the rude boy now . . . and I don't care' and hands out enormous sentences to the accompaniment of a quiet, depressed sounding chorus (the jury?) 'You're rough . . . you're tough . . .'. In a stunning second episode he lets them all

off again and comes down to dance in the court. All the time the band plays a steady tonic-subdominant-dominant riff very common in the Ska of the time (compare 007 or *Owe me no pay me* by the Ethiopians).

'I want to see you dance
Let me see you dance
My name is Judge Dread
And if I leave my chair
And come down to dance
I'm not going to look ashamed
I am a judge
And I know the dance. . . .'

Prince Buster's further developments are many. He continued to produce political songs (*Taxation*), and lewd songs (*She was a Rough Rider*, *Big Five*, and *Wind and Grind*). He used American Soul influenced choruses, and always made fine music. He made versions of Soul standards, including those of Curtis Mayfield (*Grow Closer Together*). The most important of these developments is shown by two of his greatest works, *Ghost Dance* and *Johnny Cool*.

The story songs with simple repetitious accompaniment like *Judge Dread* and the instrumentals with elliptical occasional vocal interjections such as *Al Capone* are the spring-board for this development. Jokes as these songs are, the freedom of form that they afford is quite unusual. The isolated phrases in *Al Capone* and the other songs of that kind like *Lawless Street*, which arrive completely without context, carry because of their ambiguity a great weight of image and meaning. This ambiguity due to ellipsis is a common thread throughout Ska. Prince Buster's great innovation was to take the story song from – the repetitive background as in *Judge Dread* or *Ten Commandments* – and write songs in phrases and passages having the ambiguity and consequent impact of the isolated phrases of *Al Capone* or the later *The Scorcher* – of which the sole verbal phrase was 'Don't watch that, watch this. It's a scorcher . . . Reggae child.' These new songs were made up of apparently disconnected passages of varying lengths. Some involved a sequential story-like character. Others were fragments from elsewhere. Yet others were more or less everyday phrases. Like William Burroughs and Bob Dylan, Prince Buster has a fine ear for the sound and rhythm of the casual phrase, the mainspring of Rock and Roll.

You Dug Him Before. Dig Him NOW

The simpler of the two records in which he does this is called *Ghost Dance*. It is simpler because it does have a main theme, although no story as such. The theme is that it is an open letter to his friends back in Jamaica, written/sung from abroad. The instrumental backing is a simple alternation of tonic and sub-dominant harmonies, a 'story song' backing even simpler than that of *Judge Dread*. A ghostly voice in the background slides eerily from high to low notes and Prince Buster declaims. It is almost impossible to write down this song. For one thing it is full of proper names that I don't know how to spell. For another from time to time throughout the song the Prince utters an explosive exhalation somewhere between a belch and a snort – impossible to transcribe. The isolated phrase 'Ghost Dance' occurs throughout like the catch phrase of *Al Capone* and the other instrumental songs. The rest of it is in the form of a letter to a friend asking for messages to be sent. 'Give him my regards. Tell him Prince Buster says "Hello".' At the end he sends the same message to two brothers: 'We grew together, please send them my regards. Tell them Prince Buster says "So long. Sorry we had to go, so soon." If music be the food of love, then I'll forever sing on, and fast as all, will soon get back my ship. Ghost Dance. . . .'

Prince Buster's complete technical mastery has the same result here as Curtis Mayfield and Major Lance's *Rhythm*. *Ghost Dance*, however inadequately represented on the printed page, establishes the kind of thing Prince Buster is doing. It shows the use he makes of the rhythms of everyday phrases, the effect of the phrase with no context, the effect of *sequence* without a *story*. An analogy that may supplement the very limited description possible in prose may be drawn between these songs and the strip cartoon *Krazy Kat* of George Herriman. In these strip cartoons three characters, Krazy Kat, Ignatz Mouse, and Offissa Pup live out their eternally triangular existence in a desert-like landscape which capriciously changes from frame to frame between day and night, flat and curved, near and far. They are surrounded by objects of character ambiguous as between vegetables and artefact, building or landscape, and by everyday things in incongruous juxtapositions.

Ghost Dance is as John the Baptist to *Johnny Cool*, the Prince's two-part masterpiece. In the first half we hear of the birth of Johnny Cool. There are two singers and the persona of Johnny Cool seems to oscillate between them. First it's Prince Buster

who is Johnny Cool and who tells us of his birth and early life in a sort of Marlon Brando mumble.

' . . . But my friends there,
you know, they call me
Johnny.
They mean, you know, Johnny
Cooooool.
Oh, so you mean Johnny Cool?
Yes –
Where are the girls?
I mean, you know, Johnny
Rough.'

The metamorphosis of Johnny Cool as Johnny Rough is only the first of successive guises.

Next the first of several lyrical themes makes its first entry and is repeated:

'I beg you be cool
Johnny Cool
I beg you be cool
Johnny Cool,'

and the life of Johnnie Cool continues to murmured asides and encouragement from the second voice.

' . . . everyone so hot
and me feel so cool. . . .'

The second, third and fourth themes then make an entry in succession, first:

'I wonder if you'll love me
At the party
Tonight
Then meet me on Dark Street
Everything
is alright'

followed by a scat theme, and finally the fourth theme:

'Queen Majesty, why don't you speak to me. . . .'

This, slightly transformed, was the line that was singled out from Curtis Mayfield's song *Minstrel and Queen* typifying Mayfield's use of archetypal figures. We saw that the double royal title is a device introduced precisely to underline the remoteness of the queen. This line constitutes a verification of the thesis of this article that these two developments in music are parallel and represent a single identifiable movement, for all their superficial differences. Prince Buster's song concerns the archetypal Rude Boy figure, Johnny Cool, and he has chosen as one of his contrasting themes a corresponding figure from Curtis Mayfield's work. We knew all along that he was aware of Mayfield's work, because he sang his songs. Here he affirms that he understands it, and recognises its closeness to his own. Even the reversal of the second half of Mayfield's line is conscious – in the second entry the line is exactly as Mayfield wrote it.

A second entry of the first theme ('I beg you be cool, Johnny Cool') concludes the first part of the record. In the second part a second voice announces that he is Johnny Skolanski and that his friends call *him* Johnny Cool. A new entry of 'we all beg you be cool' is followed by a new theme:

Johnny music sweet
But dance can't keep
Johnny listen this
Sweet.

The various themes then repeat in altered forms and altered order. New relations between the themes are brought out. Finally a fragment of each of the five themes is stated in rapid succession and the record fades out on a final repetition of the Curtis Mayfield theme.

This work, with its combination of all of the factors discussed in this presentation sums up and concludes the argument. In effect, this record and the Curtis Mayfield/Major Lance *Rhythm* are the argument.

Ghost Dance

To Tony the Mod, Rick, Al, Liz, Mod Pete, Rory and all the Rudies – sorry we had to go, so soon.

Acknowledgements

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Rougherences

Most of the facts (but none of the errors), concerning Curtis Mayfield's career were taken from: Burns, P. 'The Curtis Mayfield Story', *Blues and Soul Magazine*, 1968, Nos. 13 to 18.

An extensive account of Rastafarianism can be found in: Smith, M. G. et al. *The Ras Tafari Movement in Kingston, Jamaica*, 1960, West Indies Univ. Coll. Institute of Sociology and Economics.

Prince Buster appears on labels distributed by Melodisc. Several albums are available on Bluebeat and Fab. Best bet is probably 'Fabulous Greatest Hits', Fab MS1, which includes *Judge Dread* and *Ghost Dance*. Like nearly all Ska albums, it's cheap. *Johnny Cool* is a single, FAB 11. Most of the other Ska records turn up on one or more compilation albums.

The Impressions' early VeeJay material is available on Joy label, again cheap. Middle period A.B.C. Paramount recordings are on H.M.V., and their latest work, also Mayfields solo recordings are on Buddah. *Isle of Sirens* is on LP H.M.V. CLP 3631, 'The Fabulous Impressions'. *Miss Black America* is on 'Curtis', Buddah 2318 015. Records by other R&B artists are nearly all available as reissues, often on cheap albums, with one exception. Major Lance's records are not available in this country. They were issued here on Columbia, and are hard to find, though they may be available as imports. It would be nice if whoever it is would do something about this.

Playlist 4

JOHN COLLIS (of the Flies Revue, and *Time Out*)

1. Shangri Las. 'Remember (Walkin' in the Sand).' (Kama Sutra 45.)
2. Buddy Holly. 'Because I Love You.' (Coral 45, 'B' side.)
3. David Ackles. *Subway to the Country*. (Elektra.)
4. Gene Chandler. 'Duke of Earl.' (Columbia.)
5. Ronnie Hawkins. 'Who Do You Love.' (Columbia 45.)