

Freedom Sounds

The original Skatalites Band members were: Don Drummonds, Rolando Alphonso, **Lester G. Sterling**, Tommy McCook, Jackie Mittoo, John “Johnny Dizzy” Moore, Jerry “Jah Jerry” Haynes, Tony Brevit, and Lloyd Knibbs. These were the most prominent individuals responsible for the creation of Ska Music and its evolution into Rock Steady, which morphed into what is today universally known as Reggae Music. Many have tried to capture or replicate the emotions, spirit, sincerity, integrity, and authentic quality of sounds associated with the liberal styles of the Skatalites, but to no avail. No renditions can capture their essence, and the unique quality of their “Original Authentic Sound.”



The Skatalites talents were manifested through their instruments, a “facade” behind which the social trials and injustices associated with the individual ills of their times created many challenges. Music became a source of inspiration and hope. Many of the band members faced social, political, socio-economic, and personal hardships during their musical journeys. However, once considered societal outcasts, music was to be their pathways to redemption. It evoked each individual’s inner genius, and became a conduit to channel their creative energies, into a fortified musical bridge.

Their instrument resonated to each individual’s essence and echoed vibrations of organized rhythms and beats, which evolved into their “Freedom Sound,” a sound that would transcend their expectations, aspirations, and fragile physical existence. The Skatalites unique musical creations cascaded beyond the boundaries of time, prejudices, ethnicity, creed, religion, culture and race. Their legacy in music (Ska, Rock Steady, Reggae, and Dance Hall) left a hallmark in the universal language of organized sounds, music, as a means of conveying messages of hope for the despondent.

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