

Clinton Fearon

If you know reggae music, you know Clinton Fearon. Clinton Fearon is counted among Jamaica's most talented musicians by peers and professionals in the Reggae music industry. His infectious bass riffs, guitar licks, percussion accents and powerful vocals make Clinton Fearon a living legend amongst reggae musicians and fans.

Coming from a rich musical history, Clinton Fearon is born in St. Andrew and grew up deep in the hills of St. Catherine, Jamaica. He discovered music singing alone among the trees and later singing at the Adventist church in the country. He settled in Kingston when he was about 16, working on the roads and playing music for himself. At 17 Clinton founded his first group, The Brothers, looking for opportunities to play around Studio One and Treasure Isle.

At the end of 1969 Clinton met Errol Grandisson, who was looking for a guitarist to replace David Webber inside The Gladiators. Clinton pass an audition with Albert Griffiths and becomes the third Gladiator at the age of 18. He was a member during 18 years, playing bass, singing harmonies, and, alongside Albert Griffiths, writing and singing some of the most beautiful songs of the group (*Chatty Chatty Mouth, Richman Poorman, On The Other Side, Can You Imagine How I Feel, Let Jah Be Praised and many more*).

Fearon was a house musician for Coxsonne Dodd's Studio One and Lee "Scratch" Perry's Black Ark Studio, and composed many lasting bass lines for Yabby You, Jimmy Riley, Max Romeo, Junior Byles and others.

In 1987, The Gladiators were touring in the US. At the end of the tour, they had some excess time on their visa so some of them decided to stay and to make some money playing around Seattle. With them Clinton Fearon co-founded the reggae band The Defenders, and settled in Seattle since then. Fearon wrote the lyrics and sang lead vocals on The Defenders' EP, *Chant Down Babylon/Rock Your Bones*; the effort reached #14 on The Reggae Route Top 20 (CMJ New Music Report, 1989) and on radio and magazine charts around the country.

With international credits including *Roast Fish and Cornbread* (Black Ark Studio, produced by Lee "Scratch" Perry) and *Chatty Chatty Mouth* (produced by Prince Tony on the album *Trenchtown Mix Up* and later released on Tabou 1's *Back to Roots*), Fearon released his first compilation of original songs, *Feel the Spirit*, in 1990. In 1994, *Disturb The Devil*, a collection of 13 songs written and produced by Fearon, quickly received critical acclaim around the globe.

Mystic Whisper was released in early 1997 (Peacemaker Records) and was immediately voted the Number One Release by Reggae Vibes/CRM Radio 102.7 FM (in cooperation with RUNNetherlands) and selected #2 Independent U.S. Release by the prestigious international music magazine, Reggae Report. Pure roots reggae, *Mystic Whisper* once again proved Fearon's versatility as he delivered a variety of themes in the sweet style that has become his signature.

What A System (Kool Yu Foot), mixed by renowned Jamaican engineer, Scientist, was released in June 1999. A double CD with a full disc of dub, it garnered four star reviews worldwide and was voted #3 New Album of the Year by Full Watts magazine.

Soon Come (Kool Yu Foot) was released in May 2002 and was quickly named Album of the Month in September 2002 by French reggae publication, Ragga.

In 2004 came the release of the *Live At Reggae Bash DVD* (Sankofa Blackstar), a live performance from Lyon, France, capturing Clinton's charismatic and powerful live show. That same year saw the release of the highly acclaimed *Give And Take* (Kool Yu Foot).

Mi An' Mi Guitar (Kool Yu Foot), released in 2005, is Clinton's brilliant acoustic collection. It demonstrated that Clinton's spirit and songwriting skills could stand tall all alone (just "mi and mi guitar"). Both *Give And Take* and *Mi An' Mi Guitar* received rave reviews, including two from Beat Magazine's Ted Boothroyd, who named *Give And Take* the number one reassurance of reggae's revitalization and reinvention. He also compared Fearon's artistry in *Mi An' Mi Guitar* to Picasso's.

November 2006 bring the release of *Vision* (Kool Yu Foot) with Clinton Fearon's message full of hope. For the first time since Gladiators, Clinton is playing his bass lines on his songs. *Vision* also counted Nelson Miller on drums (Burning Spear drummer) and Winston Watson (Meditations) to complete the harmonies alongside Ire. Still on bass, Clinton Fearon release his first dub album in 2008, both on cd and lp, *Faculty Of Dub* (Kool Yu Foot). 15 lessons with Clinton Fearon and sound engineer Mel Detmer on the mixes.

In 2010 Clinton Fearon presents his masterpiece, *Mi Deh Yah*. This time Clinton his playing bass on every tracks. Release first in France on the French label Makafresh, *Mi Deh Yah* was album of the month on Nova Radio, UnitedReggae.com, Reggae-Vibes.com, Coup de Coeur FNAC. *Mi Deh Yah* is released in August, 28th in the US.

Clinton Fearon is playing with seven musicians within Boogie Brown and in acoustic performances in solo or with his guitarist Mark Oi. They are playing in Washington state in the US and touring in California, Alaska, Montana, Oregon, Idaho, Utah, Colorado, Texas, Louisiana, Vermont, Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Guam...

You can see the name of Clinton Fearon on headlines for many important musical events such as Reggae Rising Festival, Bumbershoot, Sierra Nevada Festival, Lafayette Jazz Festival, American Folk Festival, Lowell Folk Festival. Clinton Fearon is also touring in foreign countries, mainly in Canada, Brazil and France. In 2010 Clinton is touring in Europe with Inna Di Yard crew alongside guitarist Earl Chinna Smith in acoustic performances. They played at Dour Festival and Reggae Geel Festival in Belgium, Barbican Theatre in London, Garance Reggae Festival in France, Reggae Jam in Germany.

Clinton Fearon is counted among Jamaica's most talented musicians by peers and professionals in the reggae music industry. His infectious bass riffs lead the way; whether playing bass or guitar or percussion, singing lead vocals or providing background harmonies, Fearon has earned his reputation as the "backbone" of The Gladiators. What he has already accomplished – and what he continues to create – is so significant that, unlike many band members who have been a part of a famous group, Clinton Fearon's musical contributions are sure to live on.

" My music is roots reggae from the island of Jamaica. I grew up deep in the hills, up in St. Catherine, surrounded by nature, beauty and hard work. Even as a child, I knew I wanted to be a musician and began my career singing in church and at school, and eventually built my own guitar! As a teenager, my journeys took me to Kingston where I met many musicians and eventually began writing and recording music. The Skatalites, Motown artists and Jamaican musicians who came before me all influenced my music. I write from my heart. The world is full of inspirations...nature, people, politics, love. I write about them all. My music is good for the soul - always with a message of hope and betterment for tomorrow. It's good for dancing, good for listening and appeals to the young and old." **Clinton Fearon**

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