

Grounation Becomes Annual Event

The Jamaica Music Museum, a division of the Institute of Jamaica, is announcing the second Reggae Month educational and community outreach programme, and further announcing that this year's theme is 'Jamaica and the Global Perspective: Music, Culture and Badness'.

The series is scheduled for the four Sundays of February (3, 10, 17 and 24). Along with the presentations are musical performances, relevant to the themes of the day as well as that of the symposium in general. The concept of Grounation originated with the Rastafari Brethren, who, as part of their rituals, would meet at camps such as that of drum maestro and Rastafarian leader Oswald 'Count Ossie' Williams' at his Wareika Hill, east Kingston site. There the brethren would "reason" about various topics of interest – social, political (local and international), religion, among others; cook, feast and also partake in the ritual of herb smoking. DEEP IMPACT As part of the grounation, they would also hold musical sessions – music inspired by their Afro-Jamaican roots, spirituals, chants, mento, kumina, etc., and jazz; eventually creating a form of music called Niabinghi. These sessions subsequently heavily influenced the later musical genres of ska, rocksteady and reggae. Given the deep impact of Rasta music on the development of Jamaica's musical genres, the Jamaica Music Museum chose to honour Count Ossie and the Rastafarian contribution and to use "grounations" as a model for the annual celebration of Reggae/Black History Month in February. A series of "reasonings" are scheduled for this year's celebration covering topics related to music, culture and community and how they have impacted local and international culture both positively and otherwise. Some of the panellists and presenters already confirmed are Dr Clinton Hutton, members of the late Count Ossie's band and community, including Brother Samuel Clayton and Bro Douglas Mack, who both went on the mission that paved the way for the visit of His Imperial majesty, Emperor Haile Selassie, to Jamaica in 1966. Also slated are Toots Hibbert of the Maytals and Richard Khouri of Federal Records, a foundation in the music industry