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VP RECORDS HIGHLIGHTS THE VERY BEST OF MORGAN HERITAGE

This must-have compilation chronicles the favorites, highlights, and rarities celebrating the talented family's Journey Thus Far.



Since their 1997 VP Records debut *Protect Us Jah*, Morgan Heritage has shined as one of reggae's best bands. The accomplishments of the group and individual members are formidable; as songwriters, producers and a touring band. This family of talented performers has released eight studio and two live albums which has extended the audience and definition of Reggae. This finely honed modern roots identity, which has made Morgan Heritage one of Reggae's most enduringly successful acts, is showcased throughout this greatest hits CD/DVD compilation, **The Journey Thus Far** in stores October 27th. This comprehensive disc features the group's finest recordings to date, plus two previously unreleased tracks. It also features concert footage of The Morgans performing in Senegal and Gambia plus nine of the group's most popular videos.

The CD commences with the title track from "Protect Us Jah" a simple yet heartfelt prayer for spiritual strength sung over Bobby Digital's brilliant reworking of the "Heathen" rhythm, i.e., the instrumentation from the Bob Marley song by that name. From the same album, "Let's Make Up" demonstrates the group's flair for love songs and features Una's lead alongside her brother Gramps. "Liberation" is the name of the song and rhythm track taken from Morgan Heritage Family and Friends Volume One, released in 1998 on the family's HMG label. Produced by the group alongside their father Denroy, several artists voiced on the rhythm including Capleton and Jah Cure but none was more significant than the Morgan's tune, a stirring tribute to the durability of conscious reggae music. Heritage reached out to celebrated producer Bobby "Digital" Dixon for his production acumen on their international breakthrough release "Don't Haffi Dread", released by VP in 1999. "Don't Haffi Dread" remains one of the most requested in the group's hit filled repertoire with its easily sung, catchy refrain "*you don't haffi dread to be Rasta*" (that is, you don't have to wear dreadlocks to observe the tenants of the Rastafarian faith). "It's not everyone with dreads who embraces the faith of Rastafari and its not every Rastaman that have dreadlocks," lead singer Peetah explained.

The exquisite "Down By The River", taken from Heritage's fourth album "More Teachings", released by VP in 2001, is an anthem of renewed spirituality sung over producer Dean Fraser's flawless remake of the 1965 "What Kind of World" rhythm, popularized in a hit by The Cables. The group's self produced "Meskal Square", so named for the main square in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the birthplace of Christianity and the spiritual home of Rastafari, conveys the central importance of Ethiopian Emperor and Rastafarian Savior His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie as well as Christianity in their lives. "Jah Seed", also produced by Morgan Heritage, is a sensitively sung allegiance to "*the light and leader of all things, the glorious king*" Jah Rastafari.

The Morgan's returned to Bobby Digital, with whom they have created some of their most outstanding tracks, for their 2003 VP Records release "Three In One". The romantic "She's Still Loving Me" has an irresistible country and western flavor that seamlessly dovetails with the band's roots reggae sensibilities while the contrast between Peetah's emotional tenor and Gramps' soulful baritone make this one of the group's most requested tunes. "A Man is Still A Man" is characterized by gentle harmonies, a rocking bass heavy rhythm and a timeless message that is expressed with renewed vigor.

Also from "Three In One" is the group's remix of their dance-reggae hit "Jump Around", a tribute to reggae that evokes Bob Marley's 1979 disco hit "Could you Be Loved" as laminated with a 21st century punk edge. Layers of crunching guitars played by Benji Madden of the punk group Good Charlotte are punctuated by Mr. Mojo's vivaciously rapped verse, which typifies the multi-genre inspirations that color the Morgans brand of contemporary roots music. Among those influences is punk rock, which they were heavily exposed to as one of the featured acts on the punk leaning Vans Warped Tour in 2002 and 2003.

Two of the biggest reggae hits of 2004/2005 were produced on enormously popular one-drop rhythms by Donovan “Don Corleon” Bennett and included on Heritage’s 2005 VP Records release “Full Circle”. Peetah earned cheers from women everywhere as he rebuffed the advances of “Your Best Friend” on the “Drop Leaf” rhythm while “Tell Me How Come?” on the “Seasons” rhythm forcefully decries the injustices that abound in Jamaica from the continual fight against Rastafari, to the discrepancy in education offered to rich and poor children, to the preponderance of guns in ghetto areas although none are made there, all of which is embodied in the song’s affecting chant: “*Life is so unfair, this is what we swear.*” Gramps’ robust lead drives “I’m Coming Home” produced by Robert Livingston for Big Yard Productions, one of several songs the group has written about the loneliness that accompanies life on the road, something they are quite familiar with as one of reggae’s busiest touring acts.

From the group’s 10th Album “Mission in Progress” released by VP in 2008, “Brooklyn and Jamaica” produced by Shane Brown, draws gritty parallels between reggae’s birthplace and the borough of kings, home to the largest population of Jamaicans off of the island. “Nothing to Smile About” produced by Kemar “DJ Flava” McGregor, presents a heart wrenching look at the incongruity between the opulent resorts of tourist Jamaica versus the impoverished conditions endured by the majority of its citizens, underscored by Peetah’s poignant delivery. The sensual “Love You Right” produced by Everton Hardware (better known as Singing Melody) and Michael Steer demonstrates the group’s romantic side, an aspect of their identity much appreciated by their numerous female fans.

Two previously unreleased Morgan Heritage tracks appear exclusively on The Journey Thus Far: “Here To Stay”, produced by Kurt Riley, is a one-drop reggae love song, that pledges a lifetime of devotion, despite the problems inherent to any relationship. “Guards Up” produced by Frenchie (of the UK’s Maximum Sound) offers a forceful commentary on increasing violence in Jamaica and updates the traditional Flower Drum Song rhythm, in a further realization of the group’s “Rockaz” sound.

The Journey Thus Far demonstrates Morgan Heritage’s collective building process and their extraordinary evolution from a precociously talented teen aggregation into one of contemporary Reggae’s most powerful sonic and lyrical forces. Throughout their profound journey, Morgan Heritage has pioneered Jamaican music’s popularity in such far flung locales as the Seychelles Islands in the Indian Ocean to the rural Northern U.S., where many residents had never even heard the word reggae prior to their appearances there and they’ve made roots reggae relevant to a generation of fans who weren’t yet born when Jamaican icons such as Bob Marley, Peter Tosh, and Dennis Brown were touring the world.

TRACKLISTING

1. Protect Us Jah
2. Let’s Make Up
3. Don’t Haffi Dread
4. Reggae Bring Back Love
5. New Time, New Sign
6. Liberation
7. Down By The River
8. Jah Seed
9. Meskal Square
10. She’s Still Loving Me
11. A Man Is Still A Man
12. Jump Around (Remix)
13. Tell Me How Come
14. I’m Coming Home
15. Your Best Friend *featuring LMS*
16. Brooklyn & Jamaica
17. Love You Right
18. Nothing To Smile About
19. Here To Stay*
20. Guards Up*

Bonus DVD Footage

- Africa Is Calling
- Nine (9) Music Videos

*Newly released bonus tracks

To download press materials and hear music; click on the link: <http://www.vprecs.com/morganheritage.vp>