

ZIGGY MARLEY

Album Notes

After two decades as the driving creative force behind The Melody Makers - a triple Grammy-winning act which includes his brother Stephen and two sisters Sharon and Cedella - Ziggy Marley has stepped out on his own with his first solo album. *Dragonfly* is a work of startling originality and musical diversity.

Never content to rehash the success of his past, Ziggy uses *Dragonfly* to explore new ground and create his own distinctive musical identity as a solo artist. "Working on my own gave me a chance to take my time and experiment a lot," says Ziggy. "It took one year to finish this record - it's the longest I've ever worked on one album. It's different when you're on your own. At some point it's scary, and then at another it's a drive that makes you focus more."

Ziggy also felt it was time for a change of scene. He wrote the album's songs in Jamaica but recorded them in Miami and Los Angeles. "As an artist I need to experience different things, to see the world and have different energies. It helps me grow as a person to be outside my element."

Evidence of that growth is everywhere on *Dragonfly*, a record with strong messages including the title track, which belies its sprightly, upbeat rhythms with a story told from the perspective of animals seeing what mankind has done to the Earth. On the funky reggae tune *I Get Out*, the lyrical focus is on breaking free of bondage, whether it's artists being creatively pigeonholed by record companies or people freeing their minds from stereotypes and other limitations.

An irresistible fusion of reggae and hip-hop drives *True to Myself*, a charming celebration of self-respect, while the hard-rocking *Shalom Saalam* tackles the Israeli/Palestinian conflict (the title juxtaposes the Hebrew and Arabic words for peace). In *Looking*, Ziggy turns up the Jamaican sunshine factor while reflecting on an endless quest for happiness and spirituality. In *The Name of God* is a no holds-barred assault on the global hypocrisy of religious warfare, a driving rock song that surges with an emotional plea for an end to the separation of people by religions of any name.

Dragonfly's focus on political as well as personal strength is further plumbed in *Rainbow In The Sky* using a syncopated reggae groove and funky horn arrangements to deliver a message of hope and self-determination. The album's most personal song is *Melancholy Mood*, whose slow groove matches its introspective lyrics examining Ziggy's struggles with heartbreak and sorrow, and his meditative approach to healing these emotions.

Good Old Days is a much-needed dose of anti-nostalgia, a wake-up call that today will soon be the past, and that the present must be savored in the moment. *Never Deny You* is a prayerful love song that fuses elegant cello arrangements and a steady R&B beat to communicate Ziggy's own undying commitment to his Rastafarian faith. *Don't You Kill Love* brings the album into its most dreamy moments as the music shifts into swirls of keyboard pads, sitars and breathy synthesizers in a prayer for non-violence.

