



## **FIREMAN**

**Kendrick Lamar pokes fun at Drake's Iceman as feud continues**



## **CARNIVAL FEVER**

**Inside: A list of Toronto Mas Bands and where — and how — to find them to play mas in 2026**

A costume from Carnival Nationz 2026 presentation, La Copa Mundial II



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# \$100M LOSS

## Judge slaps down Diddy's lawsuit against NBC over controversial documentary

The judge dismissed every claim filed against the film 'Diddy: The Making of a Bad Boy.'

Sean "Diddy" Combs just took a major legal setback after a New York judge dismissed his \$100 million defamation lawsuit tied to a controversial documentary. According to reports exclusively reported by AllHipHop, Judge Phaedra F. Perry-Bond threw out every claim filed against NBCUniversal, Peacock, and Ample LLC over the film Diddy: The Making of a Bad Boy. The documentary premiered on Peacock on January 2, 2025. The ruling marks a decisive win for the media companies and a significant loss for the Bad Boy mogul.

Diddy initially argued that the documentary caused "substantial reputation and financial harm," pointing to several claims made within the film. Among his concerns were suggestions that he was connected to the deaths of figures like Kim Porter, The Notorious B.I.G., Heavy D, and Andre Harrell, as well as an alleged attempted murder involving Al B. Sure!. He also challenged statements from an interviewee accusing him of engaging in sexual misconduct, including claims involving underage girls and secret recordings.

However, the court ultimately found that NBCUniversal did not meet the threshold of "gross irresponsibility." This was the legal standard required for a defamation claim to move forward in this case. In her ruling, Judge Perry-Bond emphasized that the documentary presented multiple perspectives rather than pushing a single narrative.

The judge also noted that the film included



### Diddy claimed the film was defamatory. The Judge disagreed

factual context and counterpoints. Including official reports clarifying the causes of death for several individuals mentioned. For example, the documentary cited a coroner's report confirming Kim Porter died of lobar pneumonia. Additionally, autopsy findings showed Heavy D passed from a pulmonary embolism and Andre Harrell from heart failure.

The judge further argued that Diddy's reputation had already been impacted prior to the

documentary's release. Moreover, referencing existing lawsuits, viral footage, media coverage, and a criminal indictment. Because of that, she found it unlikely the film alone caused additional measurable harm.

"The documentary demonstrates a carefully curated and nuanced approach," Perry-Bond stated, adding that it allowed viewers to form their own conclusions based on a range of viewpoints.

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# KNOW WHAT YOU WANT & Move Forward

Have you ever wanted something so badly, and still found yourself hesitating? You know you want to move forward. You know you want to speak up. You know you want to stop shrinking, stop second-guessing, stop holding yourself back, and yet something in you still pulls away. If you know that feeling, you are not alone. I think most people know it more than they want to admit.

Sometimes we are quick to call that fear, laziness, or lack of confidence, but a lot of times it is something deeper than that. A lot of times it is an old belief quietly sitting underneath everything, shaping how we feel, how we react, and what we think is possible for us. The tricky part is that these beliefs do not always come in loudly. Sometimes they do. Sometimes they sound like, I am not good enough, or, I always mess things up. But many times they are quieter. They show up as overthinking, procrastinating, hesitating, people-pleasing, staying silent, talking yourself out of trying, or feeling guilty for wanting more.

It is a little like driving with one foot on the gas and the other on the brake. Part of you wants to move. Another part of you is scared to. And before long, you just feel stuck and do not even know why.

That is what a limiting belief can do. It can sit there so quietly that you think it is just your personality. You think, this is just how I am. I have always been like this. I am just careful. I am just not that kind of person. But a lot of times, that is not the truth. A lot of times, it is just something you learned and then kept carrying.

A limiting belief is really just a story you have come to believe about yourself, other people, or life. It can sound like, I am not enough. People cannot be trusted. I always get overlooked. It is safer not to be seen. If I make a mistake, I will be judged. I should not ask for too much. I have to work twice as hard to be accepted. And after a while, those stories stop feeling like stories. They start feeling like facts.

That is where the problem begins, because once something feels true, you stop questioning it. You build around it. You make decisions from it. You protect yourself through it. It shapes how much you speak, how much you trust, how much you receive, how much you allow yourself to hope for, and how much of yourself you let the world see.

Some beliefs lift us. Some beliefs help us grow. They help us trust ourselves, take healthy risks, and keep going. Limiting beliefs do the opposite. They make life smaller. They make you pull back when you should step forward. They make you doubt yourself when there is no real reason to. They make you settle for less, accept less, and expect less.

A lot of these beliefs do not just appear out of nowhere. They often come from that monkey mind of ours trying to make sense of pain, trying to protect us, and sometimes getting us into trouble by making up stories around what happened. That is what the mind does. Something hurts, and the mind tries to explain it. But the story it comes up with is not always true. It is just familiar.

Maybe someone corrected you so much growing up that now some part of you believes nothing you do is ever enough. Maybe you were ignored, and now some part of you feels your voice does not matter. Maybe you were rejected, and now some part of you expects people to leave. Maybe you were made to feel too much, and now some part of you keeps trying to be less. That is how these things begin. The mind tries to make meaning out of what happened. It says, This hurt, so I need to be careful. This happened, so it must mean something about me. That was painful, so I should never let that happen again. And just like that, something starts taking root.

It is like planting a seed and forgetting it is there. Life goes on. Time passes. But underneath, something is growing. Then one day, it starts showing up in your reactions, your choices, your relationships, your fears, and the way you

keep holding yourself back.

Once a belief is there, it starts looking for proof. If deep down you believe you are not enough, you will usually notice criticism more than support. You will remember mistakes more than progress. If you believe people always leave, you will become sensitive to distance, silence, or a change in tone. If you believe it is not safe to be seen, you will notice judgment and barely let in encouragement. That is how a belief gets stronger. It filters what you notice until you start thinking this is just the way life is.

That is why limiting beliefs can feel so real. Not because they are true, but because they have been repeated and reinforced for so long that they feel familiar. And familiar can feel very convincing.

These beliefs do not stay only in the mind. They shape behavior, and behavior shapes life. If you believe you are not enough, you may over-prepare, over-give, or hide. If you believe it is not safe to be visible, you may downplay your gifts or wait for permission that never comes. If you believe you have to please others to be accepted, you may keep saying yes when you mean no, then wonder why you feel drained and unseen. If you believe love must be earned, you may keep choosing people who make you work for what should come naturally. This is why people keep repeating the same patterns and do not always understand why. The pattern keeps showing up because the belief underneath it has not changed. And that does not mean you are weak or broken. It usually means something deeper is still running underneath the surface.

One question that can open a lot is this: What would I have to believe in order to keep reacting this way? What would I have to believe to stay silent here? To over-explain myself? To accept less than I really want? To keep making myself smaller? Sometimes the answer comes quickly. Sometimes it takes honesty. But very often, the belief is there if you are willing to look.

And no, these beliefs are not al-



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Dianne Ojar



ways formed by one big dramatic event. Sometimes they are formed slowly, over time. Through criticism. Silence. Comparison. Feeling unseen. Feeling like you had to earn love. Feeling like you had to be easier, quieter, better, smaller. Sometimes it was not even what happened. Sometimes it was what was missing.

That is why some people say, "I have always been this way." But many times, that is not who they are. That is what they learned. And what is learned can be changed.

That change begins with noticing. The moment you can say, This is not just who I am. This is something I learned, something starts to open. You create a little space between you and the story. Then you can start asking better questions. Is this really true? Where did I learn it? What has it cost me? Who would I be without it?

From there, change takes repetition. The mind needs new evidence. New choices. New experiences. It needs moments where you speak up, trust yourself, hold a boundary, or stop abandoning your own truth. Not fake positivity. Not pretending. Just a different way of responding, again and again, until the old story stops feeling like the only story.

The real takeaway is this: limiting beliefs are powerful not because they are always true, but because they often go unchallenged for years. But once they are seen, they start losing some of their grip. You are not the belief you learned. You are not the fear you absorbed. You are not the story that came out of your hardest moments. Those things may have shaped your patterns, but they do not have to shape the rest of your life.

Dianne Ojar is an author, speaker, transformational guide and Kuan Yin Lineage Holder with professional credentials through the American Board of Hypnotherapy and the American Board of Neuro-Linguistic Programming.

# DOGFATHER BACKLASH

## Snoop faces fan fury after bringing a child on stage during stripper performance

For Snoop Dogg's entire career, he's been under fire from folks who believe he's giving the youth the wrong message.

It was perfectly fitting to have Snoop Dogg join Ice Cube, Too \$hort, and other performers at Colorado's Red Rocks Amphitheatre at the "4/20 On The Rocks" event. But the occasion sparked controversy for non-marijuana-related reasons. At one point of his set, Snoop brought out a young fan alongside a stripper for "Drop It Like It's Hot," which drew a lot of backlash.

While many folks saw this as a wholesome moment, others blasted him for subjecting the child to share the stage with a stripper. Fans also criticized the girl's parents for allowing her to attend in the first place.

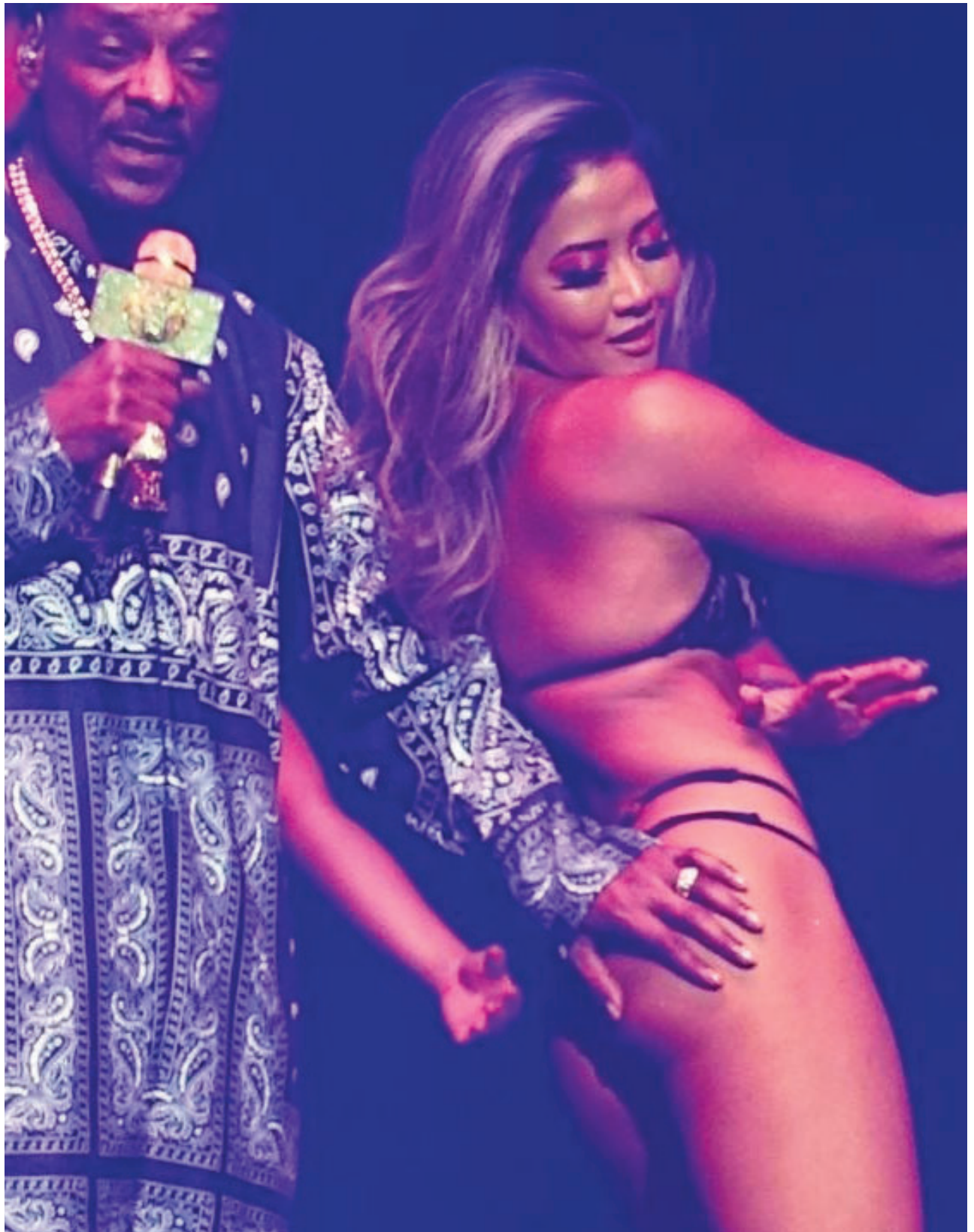
Amid all this conversation, Tha Doggfather reportedly stepped into Hollywood Unlocked's comments section on Instagram to respond to their coverage of the backlash. "Under fire [thumbs down emoji] her father let her get on stage [thumbs up emoji]," he wrote. "She was dancing all night. I let a fan have fun her parents were there sorry try again. Carry on." The Long Beach legend isn't worried about perception, but rather defended his real-life decisions.

In other Snoop Dogg news, his biopic is shaping up. He recently revealed that Outer Banks star Jonathan Daviss will play him in the upcoming film based on his life, which will come out sometime in 2027. Craig Brewer will direct the project.

This is a very exciting development for the hip-hop icon, and a huge step for Daviss' burgeoning career. We will see how the movie shapes up, as biopics usually get a bad reputation. After all, the reception to the new film Michael tells you all you need to know.

Elsewhere, Snoop Dogg just dropped his 10 Til' Midnight album in connection to his film of the same name. The movie stars Ray Vaughn, G Perico, and other big rap names.

With all this in mind, it's clear Snoop's twilight years remain as active as ever. New music, new movies, and new controversies around ap-



Snoop Dog with a stripper on stage

propriateness, the youth's impressionability, and artistic responsibility. He's enjoying every step of the way, and stepping out to shut back-

lash down from his critics. Whether or not that's enough as an "apology" is in the eye of the beholder.

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# Fireman vs Iceman

## Kendrick Lamar tries to steal Drake's thunder, tweeting about a new album

Jokes about Kendrick Lamar stepping on Drake's "ICEMAN" album with "Fireman" went viral on Twitter, and they are making both fan-bases livid.

For as many differences as Kendrick Lamar fans and Drake fans feel like they have with each other, both sides are equally susceptible to rage bait. Amid the rollout for the latter's new album ICEMAN, some parody posts about Kendrick stepping on this LP with a project of his own, Fireman, are resulting in more than just laughs on social media.

If you somehow haven't seen it yet, HFR Podcast shared an A.I.-generated depiction of K.Dot with volcano aesthetics on Twitter. This was after Drizzy finally confirmed the release date for ICEMAN. As if that wasn't enough, HFR Podcast also took to Twitter to share one of those cringe-inducing A.I. slop songs that turns the simple phrase "I am Fireman" into an EDC-ready progressive house snoozer of a beat drop.

It was very funny for many, and it quickly gained traction among both artists' hardcore fans. Some Lamar fans actually believe he will do something to challenge the 6ix God or that Drake fans are behind the jokes, whereas OVO supporters are blasting Kendrick listeners for believing this or trying to get some clout amid ICEMAN's rollout. Also, they took the opportunity to further clown the Compton lyricist, and so did the other side.

Elsewhere, other updates on Kendrick Lamar and Drake's beef have little to do with ICEMAN. Instead, they refer to the latter's defamation lawsuit against their label UMG for releasing the former's "Not Like Us" diss track. The Boy and his legal team are currently appealing the suit's dismissal in court.

Beyond that, we will have to see what dots fans connect to K.Dot on the upcoming album. After all, if a Drizzy bar is not a direct diss, it's most likely a subliminal. But at least the Fireman joke led to developments outside of this



**Kendrick Lamar — long-standing beef with Drake**

beef's context. Fans also made similar jokes about, for example, a Snoop Dogg album called Weedman and an Eminem album called White-

man. Elsewhere, other rappers are still talking

about Kendrick Lamar and Drake's beef. Most recently, The Game explained why he backed the 6ix God during the fight and not his Compton colleague. So this discourse won't die any-time soon.

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# Just Missed It!

## Nicki Minaj runs late for White House shooting dinner

Nicki Minaj spoke out after the reported shooting at the White House Correspondents' Dinner, for which authorities have a suspect.

Nicki Minaj has been getting a lot of backlash for her support of United States President Donald Trump in recent months. Despite fans' pushback, she entered that world even more, even reportedly securing an invite to the White House Correspondents' Dinner on April 25.

It looks like Minaj was running late to the event, which meant she wasn't there when a reported shooting derailed the dinner.

According to Hollywood Unlocked on Instagram, she took to her TikTok page to share a video of her face in a car, which was moments after news of the shooting broke.

The Trinidadian superstar captioned the post with a U.S. flag emoji and a prayer hands emoji. Several social media reports purportedly confirmed she was running late and never made it to the event, which was at Washington, D.C.'s Hilton Hotel.

Nicki hasn't said anything else about this situation at press time, so we'll see if that changes in the near future. It looks like officials rescheduled the event, so perhaps she will get to attend the White House Correspondents' Dinner eventually.

Elsewhere, Nicki Minaj has other issues to handle. Her former manager recently accused her of discovery abuse in his assault case, whereas her political stances and feuds continue to generate headlines. But throughout it all, the Young Money alum is standing tall against opposition.



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A lock of hair from Bob Marley is accompanied by an autograph from the singer

# THE HAIR IS RARE

**Bob Marley's dreadlock expected to fetch £25,000 at auction**

A rare dreadlock from reggae legend Bob Marley is expected to sell for up to £25,000 when it goes under the hammer next month, offering collectors a unique piece of music history.

The 1.5-inch lock of hair — taken during a 1978 appearance on Top of the Pops — will be auctioned by JC Auctions. It is believed to be the first authenticated piece of Marley's hair to be offered publicly since 2003.

According to auction officials, the hair was obtained when a teenage fan approached Marley following a performance at BBC Television Centre in June 1978. Marley and Bob Marley and the Wailers had just performed their single Satisfy My Soul.

The fan recalled that Marley appeared amused when she asked to take a piece of his dreadlock.

"After Bob Marley had finished singing, myself and a friend went up onto the platform where he was performing. He was chuckling away and I asked if I could take off a piece of his hair," she said in a statement. "He just kept nodding and chuckling... so I twisted a

piece of his dreadlock off. And he of course gave me his autograph as well."

The autograph — valued at approximately £4,000 — is included with the dreadlock as part of the auction lot. Paul Fraser of JC Auctions said interest in Marley memorabilia remains strong, noting the scarcity of authentic items linked to the reggae icon.

"Demand is strong for Bob Marley memorabilia. He died so young, there just isn't much around," Fraser said. "Marley ignited global awareness of Rastafarianism and dreadlocks, and brought the religious significance of the hairstyle to the world's attention. This lock is the physical embodiment of that legacy."

The dreadlock is among more than 50 rare historical items featured in "The Memorabilia Auction," which runs online.

Marley, widely regarded as one of the most influential figures in reggae music, continues to attract global interest decades after his death in 1981, with collectors increasingly seeking personal items connected to the Jamaican music icon.



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# GUYANA STYLE

## Four Points by Sheraton opens to much fanfare along Heroes Highway

Guyana has officially opened the Four Points by Sheraton hotel along Heroes Highway in Georgetown, marking another major addition to the country's rapidly expanding hospitality sector.

The multimillion-dollar property was com-

missioned at the end of April by President Irfaan Ali, and features 172 rooms, a swimming pool, sports facilities, an event hall, as well as restaurant and bar amenities. The interior design incorporates elements of Indigenous culture, reflecting local heritage in its aesthetic concept.

President Ali described the investment as a strong signal of confidence in the Guyanese economy, pointing to the government's broader push to expand tourism capacity and attract large-scale international events.

He noted that 11 international conferences and about six major sporting events are scheduled for Guyana this year, underscoring the need for increased hotel room availability.

"We are going after larger and larger op-

portunities for the country," he said.

Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce Susan Rodrigues echoed the sentiment, saying the property reflects growing global interest in Guyana's tourism sector.

Hotel owner Mauricio Van Dam credited support from the Government of Guyana and the Inter-American Development Bank for helping bring the project to completion, expressing optimism about the country's long-term economic outlook.

"As we meet people, institutions, and see what's unfolding, we become convinced of the enormous long-term potential of this country," he said.

The hotel had already begun welcoming early guests.

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# RANKING VEX

## Cutty Ranks sues publishing company for US\$3M over royalties

Veteran Jamaican dancehall artist Cutty Ranks has taken legal action over what he claims are millions of dollars in unpaid royalties tied to the global hit “Dame Tu Cosita.”

The deejay, born Philip Thomas, has filed a lawsuit against Payday Publishing, the dance music company owned by Patrick Moxey, alleging that he has been underpaid by at least US\$3 million for his role in the record’s success.

Cutty Ranks, who is both a co-writer and featured artist on the track alongside Panamanian producer El Chombo, says the dispute stems from agreements signed around 2018, when the song experienced a massive resurgence.

Originally released in 1997 on El Chombo’s *Cuentos de la Cripta 2* album, “Dame Tu Cosita” found new life more than two decades later after a viral video featuring a dancing green alien captured global attention. The renewed buzz prompted a reworked version of the track, along with a remix featuring international stars Karol G and Pitbull.

The reboot proved to be a commercial juggernaut, topping Billboard’s Hot Latin Songs chart and peaking at No. 36 on the Billboard Hot 100, cementing its place as one of the most recognizable crossover hits to emerge from the dancehall-reggaetón space.

However, despite the song’s success, Cutty Ranks claims he has not received his fair share. According to court filings, the artist entered into licensing agreements with Payday Publishing, which reportedly promised to administer his composition rights and pay him at least 75 percent of royalties generated. Ranks now alleges that the company failed to honor those terms and did not provide proper accounting of earnings.

“Plaintiff and defendant had an agreement... Defendant has failed to remit such sums and has failed to provide an accounting,” his attorney, Catherine Gibson, stated in the lawsuit, adding that the breach has resulted in significant financial losses. The dancehall veteran also revealed that he issued a notice of default to the company last year, but claims the matter remained unresolved, prompting the current legal action. In addition to seeking damages, Ranks is requesting that Payday cover his legal fees.



Cutty Ranks

# HORNIN'

## Hit song leads to new studio for Toronto's Miguel Maestre

Miguel Maestre is closing the distance between inheritance and ambition.

The Canada-born musician was raised on T&T culture by his father, St Augustine-born parandero Antonio "Spanish" Maestre, and spent years performing in the family's parang band in Toronto before carving out his own lane in soca.

That lane has kept pulling him back toward Trinidad and Tobago, where he has been steadily trying to plant himself closer to the heart of the genre. Earlier this year, Maestre and fellow Canada-born singer This Is Kash, Vikash Nalpoo, spent two months in T&T during Carnival, performing their single "Hornin'" at more than 30 gigs together.

Now, with the recent opening of his modern Mystery Music studio in Toronto, Maestre is pushing that connection even further, proving that Caribbean music can be made abroad and still impact the islands.

"I want people to focus on—I am a Caribbean son, proving that the diaspora can create from anywhere abroad," Maestre told the Kitcharee during a virtual sit-down on Thursday evening. "You don't necessarily need to live in a Caribbean country. You just need to make good solid music."

That conviction has been shaped as much by where he lives as by where he comes from.

For years, Maestre said, being based in Toronto was treated like a weakness, as though distance from the Caribbean automatically made the music less valid. He does not see it that way. To him, Toronto's diversity has been one of his biggest creative advantages.

"Living in Toronto is actually a big benefit and advantage," he reasoned. "Years ago when I was first starting off in soca music, I used to hear people say—you're a foreigner, you're so far away, what kind of music comes out of there? There's no soca, no soca artistes, whatever."

Instead, he said, the city has widened both his ear and his ambition.

"Toronto is so diverse because you have every single culture here; it's very multicultural," he said. "You'll have Afro, dancehall, hip-hop, soca, chutney. Some of the songs right now are actually genre-less. You hear a rhythm or you hear a vibe, you're like, is that Afro or is it dance-



*Story and photo courtesy Trinidad Express*

### Maestre and fellow Canada-born singer This Is Kash, Vikash Nalpoo

hall or is it soca?"

That openness has also changed how he approaches music. Over the last few years, he said, he has been writing differently and leaning into a broader range of sounds.

"I started changing the approach to the music I did. Doing different songs with different beats, different instrumentation, rather than just the sweet soca that I'm accustomed to," he revealed. "So, I think this new Miguel is actually all about just being more diverse in the type of songs I'm doing."

After spending Carnival 2025 in Trinidad, Maestre returned to Toronto still buzzing from what he had heard on the road and during the fete season. One producer in particular stuck with him.

What followed was less a formal writing

session and more of a creative lime that turned into their hit single "Hornin'".

Soca fans on both side of the Caribbean Sea immediately caught the double meaning, and within weeks "Hornin'" had racked up massive traction across TikTok, Facebook and Instagram.

If "Hornin'" gave Maestre a hit, Mystery Music is giving him a base. He returned to school during the Covid period and earned a diploma in audio engineering and music production, then set his sights on building a space where he could create whenever inspiration hit.

But the studio is not only for him. He has already welcomed artistes like Bajan soca queen Alison Hinds and T&T acts Young Bredda, Shal Marshal, Viking Ding Dong, Swappi and Tony Prescott to his recording booth.

# A HIT MEK

## New book fills sweeping gaps in Jamaica's musical and cultural identity

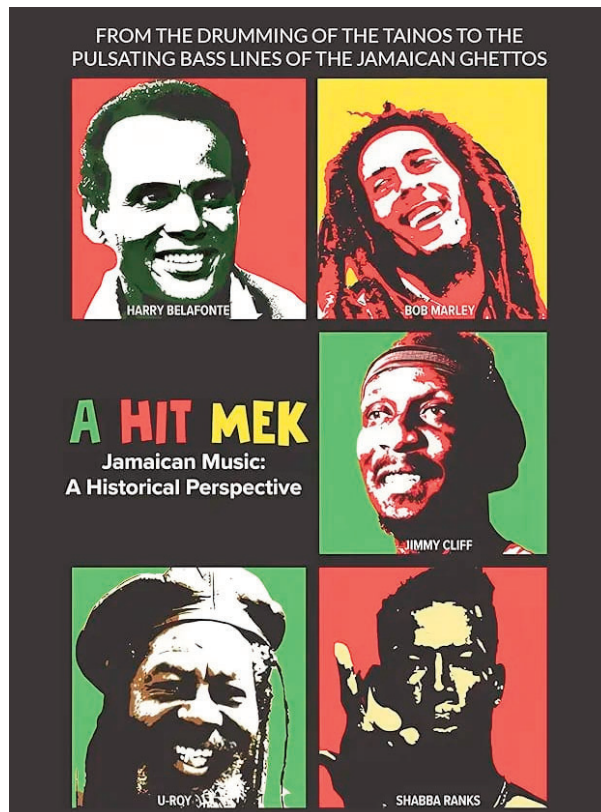
The doors to everything culturally embedded in how music defines Jamaica's identity have been flung wide open by author Rohan Budhai in his 560-page journal on Jamaican music, *A Hit Mek*.

If you thought the chapters on Jamaica's epic and engaging musical history had already been closed, this book invites you to think again. It offers a sweeping narrative that re-opens conversations and fills gaps in the country's musical story.

A pun and play on the popular local phrase "A It Mek" — also the title of a hit song by Jamaican singer Desmond Dekker — the publication presents a provocative account of what the term in Jamaica's vernacular truly represents, offering rationale for key developments and cultural shifts. As it unfolds, *A Hit Mek* is arguably the story of what has long remained untold.

In his stirring foreword, Clyde McKenzie, music consultant and author who has written extensively on Jamaican music, notes that Budhai "provides functional interpretations of critical historical events, showing the connections between the various Jamaican music genres and how history shaped them and played an essential role in their course."

More than historical documentation, the book is a vivid dramatization of the evolving ways of life of a people whose music reflects trials, triumphs, rhythm, and rhapsody. Readers are taken along a sweeping timeline that begins in the late 1490s, with seafaring explorer Christopher Columbus in 1492 encountering — rather than discovering — indigenous Taino tribespeople intermixed with Africans in the region. Importantly, they already possessed their own musical styles, including drumming, call-and-response singing, and various instruments, many influenced by African traditions.



*A Hit Mek* explores the Anglo-Spanish influence of Jamaica's enslavers and its impact on the island's musical journey. It examines the tragedy of the slave trade and its effect on Africans in the New World. The book probes the music of the Tainos, Maroons, enslaved Africans, and indentured peoples, while tracing defining artforms including Kumina, Folk, Mento, Calypso, Festival music, Ska, Rocksteady, Reggae, and Dancehall. It also examines the global impact of Jamaican sound systems.

The publication further salutes the thousands of contributors to Jamaica's many musical styles, highlighting the roles of Afro-Jamaicans, Lebanese/Syrian-Jamaicans, Chinese-Jamaicans, and Indian-Jamaicans, as well as Jamaican bands, radio stations, and entertainment organizations that helped advance the music.

The book notes that Mento was the first recognizable local music form and the first to be electronically recorded in Jamaica. However, its origin remains disputed by cultural

icons and intellectuals such as the late Rex Nettleford and Rosario Budhai, a former member of the Cuban National Choir, who argued that Mento is a Cuban genre. The word "mento" itself is Latin-derived, from *mentar*, meaning "to call out" or "to mention."

Jamaica's music, at every critical stage, has been about calling out — telling stories that must be mentioned throughout the passage of time. *A Hit Mek* highlights how music has played the very notes of Jamaican life and lifestyle.

Reggae, arguably, has done so like no other artform — a rhythm of resistance, resilience, and identity. The book notes that Reggae has been influenced by Jamaica's West African legacy, R&B, Jazz, Soul, indentured peoples, and European music, linking Jamaican music to Afro-Anglo, Afro-American, Afro-Cuban, and Afro-Caribbean heritage.

Budhai, who became involved in music production as a teenager before establishing his own record label, Howlers International Music, said his research revealed that much of the historical perspective of Jamaican music had been omitted from previous books.

He raised questions about the music of the Roman Catholic Church introduced by Columbus, Anglo-English music traditions, indigenous Taino music, and pre-Columbian African influences. He also explored the music of the Moors who later transitioned into Maroons, West African enslaved peoples, and indentured Africans who came to Jamaica after Emancipation.

As a result, Budhai said he realized that many aspects of Jamaica's musical heritage had not been fully examined, expanding the scope of his research.

The publication, available on Amazon, also offers Spanish, French, and Portuguese editions.

# TORONTO MAS BANDS

## ...and how to find them. Play mas in 2026!

*Disclaimer: the following bands are listed with their last known information and addresses. Use the contact info or websites to find out their locations for 2026, as mas camps often shift from one address to another.*

### Allure Carnival

Allure Carnival is the youngest band in North America that represents the youth, but also values the older demographics for the Toronto's Caribbean Festival. Millennials to Millennials while bringing a new essence to the Mas culture. This is the official injection of the youths! Welcome Allure Carnival!

Website [allurecarnival.ca](http://allurecarnival.ca); Instagram @allurecarnival; Contact Email [contact@allurecarnival.ca](mailto:contact@allurecarnival.ca); Contact Phone Number (647) 391-9049

### Carnival Nations

Carnival Nationz is an eight-year-old organization which produced its first band of 600 masqueraders entitled "Dis is Paradise" in 2005. In so doing, they created history by being the only band ever to capture the most coveted festival award "Band of the Year" in its inaugural year.

CNz is made up of 3 bandleaders, each of whom bring something different to the business: Marcus Eustace, world renowned designer who has coped the "Carnival King of Trinidad & Tobago" nine times; Dwayne Pitt is well recognized as one of the best Caribbean DJs and promoters in Toronto (and in fact across North America and the Caribbean) who began plying his trade and earning his stripes back in 1994; and Bryce Aguiton who is one of the most innovative and marketing savvy promoters in Toronto's Caribbean landscape.

Website [carnival-nationz.com](http://carnival-nationz.com); Instagram @cnzinc; Email [info@carnival-nationz.com](mailto:info@carnival-nationz.com); Contact Phone Number (416) 565-4079

### Freedom Mas

Freedom Mas Band is the 1st Jamaican Mas Band in the Toronto Caribbean Carnival. They design and manufacture small and large Carnival costumes and Pan-African Artifacts.

Website [freedommasband.ca](http://freedommasband.ca); Instagram @freedommasband; Contact Email [contactus@freedommasband.ca](mailto:contactus@freedommasband.ca); Contact Phone Number +1 (289) 233-3890

### Epic Carnival

Formerly known as Durham Mas, Epic Carnival has a large selection of gorgeous costumes for the Toronto Caribbean Carnival.

Website [epiccarnivalexperience.com](http://epiccarnivalexperience.com); Instagram @e.p.i.c.carnival; Contact Email [epiccarnival2018@gmail.com](mailto:epiccarnival2018@gmail.com); Contact Phone Number



(416) 618-1302

Address 44 Rolark Dr. Unit#2, Scarborough, ON, M1R 4G2

### Saldenah Mas

Louis Saldenah Mas-K Club has captured the Band of the Year honors 16 times. Formely led by veteran mas man Louis Saldenah, the leadership has now passed to his sons.

Website [saldenahcarnival.com](http://saldenahcarnival.com); Instagram @saldenahcarnival; Address 390 Consumers Rd., North York, ON, M2J 1P8

### Lavway mas

Lavway Mas is a non-profit organization in Toronto that is dedicated to promoting and preserving the rich Caribbean carnival culture in the city. It is a beacon of Caribbean pride, unity, and

creativity, with a mission to design, create, and engage the community through the tapestry of the Caribbean.

Website [lavwaymas.com](http://lavwaymas.com); Instagram @lavwaymas; Address 328 Consumers Rd, North York, ON M2J 1P8

### Lux Carnival

LUX Carnival Escape Inc. is one of Canada's premiere cultural ambassadors and carnival bands that support our communities and its ever changing landscape. LUX is also Canada's first Caribbean carnival band to feature and highlight kids with special needs.

Website [luxcarnival.com](http://luxcarnival.com); Instagram @luxcarnival

### Suga Cayne

Suga Cayne is Toronto's premiere boutique Caribbean costume design and production company. All of our designs are the pinnacle of unique, handcrafted creations that are layered and infused with innovative fabrication technique and intentional storytelling.

Website [sugacayne.com](http://sugacayne.com); Instagram @sugacayne

### Sunlime

Sunlime Canada Cultural Group is dedicated to celebrating the rich and vibrant Caribbean culture through costume design, storytelling, and experiences.

Website [sunlime.ca](http://sunlime.ca); Instagram @sunlime-mas

### Tribal Carnival

Tribal Carnival is one of the most successful International Carnival Mas Bands of this decade. Founded by Dexter Seusahai & Gail Seusahai, and Managed by Celena Seusahai, it attracts over 1800 masqueraders annually. 2019 Best Medium Band Award

Instagram @tribalcarnival; Contact Email [inquires@tribalcarnival.com](mailto:inquires@tribalcarnival.com); Address 3401 McNicoll Ave, Suite #8 Scarborough, ON M1V 4B7

### Toronto Revellers

Bandleader and NBA star Jamaal Magloire started the Toronto Revelles as a cultural non-profit organization, that aims to contribute to the multicultural landscape of Canada by promoting, celebrating and exploring the rich cultural diversities and traditions of the Caribbean culture.

Revellers won the 2025 Band of the Year Competition.

Website [torontorevellers.com](http://torontorevellers.com); Instagram @torontorevellers; Contact Email [info@torontorevellers.com](mailto:info@torontorevellers.com); Address 80 Midwest Rd. Unit#6, Scarborough, ON M1P 4R2



**Jermaine Chubby Clarke was lead singer of the popular band Kollision**

# KOLLISSION!

## **Popular band lead singer shot dead in shocking St Kitts attack**

Popular vocalist Jermaine ‘Chubby’ Clarke, lead singer of the Kollision Band, was shot and killed in what police have described as an execution-style attack in Keys Village during the early hours of April 5, sending shockwaves across St. Kitts and Nevis.

According to the Royal St. Christopher and Nevis Police Force, the incident occurred around 12:30 a.m. when Clarke, 39, of College Street, was seated in his vehicle with a female passenger. One or more armed assailants reportedly approached the vehicle and opened fire, striking Clarke multiple times.

Authorities said Clarke sustained numerous gunshot wounds in what investigators believe was a targeted killing. Police reports indicate that

as many as 11 bullets were fired during the attack.

Both Clarke and the female passenger were transported by private vehicle to the Joseph N. France General Hospital. Clarke later succumbed to his injuries. The female occupant, though not shot, sustained injuries during the incident and remains under medical care.

Crime Scene Unit officers recovered items of evidential value as investigators intensified efforts to identify and apprehend those responsible. Police are urging anyone with information to contact the nearest police station or call Crime Stoppers at 707.

Initial reports indicate that Clarke had just concluded a performance in Keys Village before

the shooting occurred.

The killing has sparked an outpouring of grief across the Federation, particularly within the entertainment community. Government Minister with responsibility for Sports, Small Business, Entrepreneurship, Cooperatives and the Creative Economy, Samal Duggins, confirmed Clarke’s death in an official statement issued Sunday.


Duggins described Clarke as more than just an entertainer, calling him “a spirit, a presence, and a voice that brought joy, energy, and connection to so many.”

Condolences have also poured in from the National Secretariat for Human Security and Wellbeing, which expressed deep sadness.

# PHOENIX Paws & Claws Rescue and Sanctuary TT

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- Alpo Red bag chow
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-  Kale
- Lettuce
- Pak choi
- Callaloo bush
- Master mix rabbit concentrate 

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The Foundation for Heritage Preservation and Legacy Creation  
Chequing Account #2838003

Or Whatsapp message  
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1-868-758-1823

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# Ernie called home

**Legendary Jamaican singer passes away after cardiac surgery**

Ernie Smith, the Jamaican singer-songwriter whose smooth, easy-listening style helped define the sound of local radio in the 1970s, has died. He passed away on April 23 at the University of Miami Hospital after being ill for some time, according to his manager Joanna Marie Robinson.

His wife, Claudette Bailey Smith, told Observer Online that he died following “cardiac incidents.” Earlier this week, she revealed that he had undergone a surgical procedure on April 9, two days after being admitted to hospital, and had been placed in the Intensive Care Unit. Although the surgery was successful, she said the 80-year-old was “heavily sedated” and placed on a ventilator in his final days.

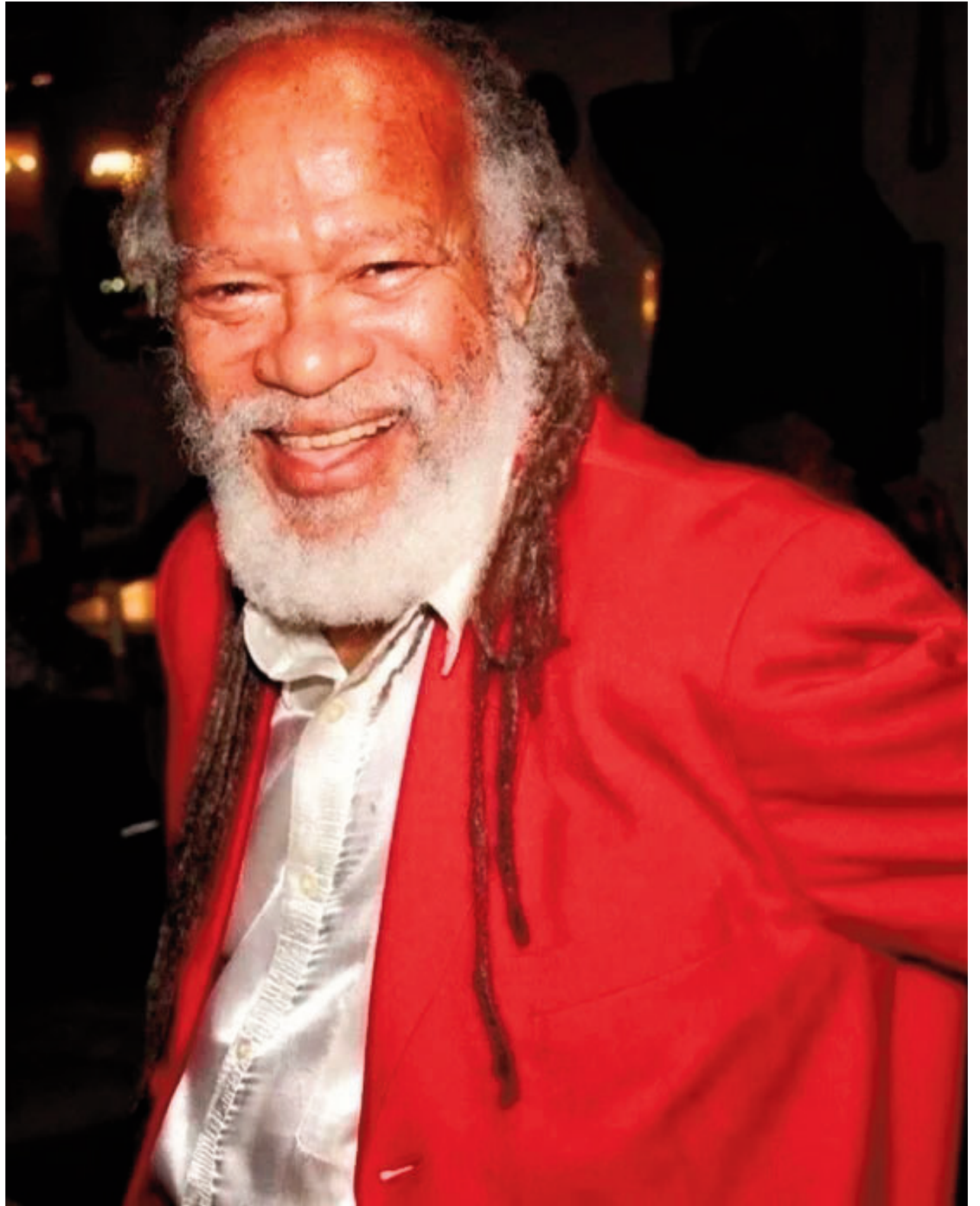
Born in Kingston in May 1945 and raised in St Ann and May Pen, Smith’s musical journey began early, encouraged by his father who played guitar and bought him his first instrument at age 12. After leaving school, he played guitar in The Vandals in Clarendon, St Ann, and briefly considered a career as a radio announcer before turning to songwriting and recording at Federal Studios.

He would go on to become one of Federal Records’ leading acts under producer Richard Khouri, recording alongside artists such as Pluto Shervington, who died in 2024. Smith’s breakthrough came in the late 1960s with tracks including Bend Down, followed by hits such as Ride on Sammy, One Dream, and Pitta Patta, the latter becoming one of his signature songs.

His laid-back, melodic sound offered a contrast to the militant roots-reggae movement of the era, dominated by figures such as Bob Marley, Peter Tosh, and Burning Spear.

A major international milestone came in 1972 when Life Is Just For Living won the Yamaha Music Festival in Japan. The song, originally written for a Red Stripe commercial, later became the title track of an album released on Trojan Records in 1974. Smith was also awarded Jamaica’s Badge of Honour for Meritorious Service in the Field of Music in 1973.

Beyond his signature hits, Smith also recorded Duppy Gunman, I For Jesus, and Sun-



**Ernie Smith — lived in Canada for a while**

day Coming Down, and found success with covers of international songs as well as songwriting contributions to competitions such as the Festival Song Contest.

In the mid-1970s, he briefly relocated to Canada amid growing political tension, later moving through North America while continuing to record gospel-leaning and easy-listening material. After returning to Jamaica in the 1990s, he resumed recording and performing, becoming a

familiar figure on the live music circuit once again.

Smith’s career saw renewed collaborations in later years, including a 2025 version of Pitta Patta with Ed Robinson that entered the South Florida reggae chart. He also released new material into the 2000s, including the album Country Mile in 2008.

He is survived by his wife, three daughters, two sons, and one grandchild.



# NO COMPENSATION

## Court orders Patrice Roberts to pay Canadian management firm for services

A High Court judge in Trinidad and Tobago has ordered soca artist Patrice Roberts to pay her former Canada-based management company more than US\$30,000 for services provided while briefly managing her career.

Justice Robin Mohammed ruled that Soca Bookings Incorporated was entitled to compensation for services rendered to the 40-year-old artist between 2015 and 2017, despite shortcomings in its contractual claim.

The judge found that the company was entitled to US\$35,472, representing reasonable compensation for management services provided and cash advances made on Roberts' behalf to help further her career, along with interest.

However, the court also determined that the Ontario-based company owed Roberts

US\$10,367.88, representing proceeds from digital sales of her music collected while it managed her, plus interest.

A separate claim for US\$11,600 linked to a music video shoot was dismissed after the court found insufficient evidence that the expenditure had been incurred.

The dispute arose from an oral management agreement reached in February 2015. Under the arrangement, the company provided what it described as full artiste management services, including bookings, branding, recording arrangements, and international promotion.

While both parties agreed that a contract existed, the High Court found that key terms were never clearly settled, particularly whether management fees were immediately payable or only after the venture became profitable.

Justice Mohammed accepted Roberts' position that fees were to be deferred until profitability was achieved, something the company failed to prove.

"The management fees were only payable once the venture became profitable and the Claimant has not established...that that threshold was ever reached," Justice Mohammed ruled, noting that the soca artist "retained all financial benefits... and in those circumstances cannot in equity be permitted to benefit from the Claimant's work without compensating it".

Both parties were also awarded pre-judgment interest and legal costs. The judge indicated that the sums may be set off, which would result in Roberts paying a reduced balance of US\$25,104.12, along with TT\$26,983.71 in costs.



Lisa Hanna — going into beauty products after stint in Jamaican politics

## She's a Beauty

Former Jamaican parliamentarian and 1993 Miss World, Lisa Hanna is stepping into a new chapter following her departure from politics, launching a luxury skincare line aimed at redefining how people approach aging.

Hanna, who retired from Parliament last fall after 18 years of service, has introduced Lisa Hanna Beauty, a seven-product skincare collection built around what she describes as an “aging intelligently” philosophy. The line is currently available directly to consumers and at The Spa by Equinox Hotels in New York.

Rather than promoting anti-aging as a battle, Hanna says the brand embraces the idea that aging reflects growth and experience.

“People are often told to fight aging or reverse it, but I believe you’re not less with time — you’re more,” she said to WWD, explaining that the products were designed to work with the skin’s natural processes.

The collection features the brand’s proprietary quantum ReCP technology, which blends lipids, vitamin C, and matrikin peptides. According to the company, the formulation is designed to support skin regeneration and improve hydration and texture.

Products in the range include:

- Hydra Dew Elixir
- Advanced Balance Cleanser
- Fade Balm for dark spots

The Serum, designed to refine texture and boost hydration

- The Moisture Crème
- A shimmering face and body oil

Prices range from approximately US\$50 for entry-level items to US\$130 for the premium serum.

Despite entering a crowded global beauty market, Hanna expressed confidence that her brand can compete internationally. She projects

that Lisa Hanna Beauty could generate more than US\$1 million in sales within its first year.

Hanna’s move into beauty follows a diverse career path. Raised in rural Jamaica, she won the Miss World title in 1993 at age 18 and became a goodwill ambassador for the United Nations Development Programme the same year. She later transitioned into politics, serving nearly two decades in Parliament.

She also currently operates the Lisa Hanna Foundation, which focuses on education, mental health, and housing support initiatives in Jamaica. Hanna said five percent of profits from the beauty line will go toward supporting the foundation’s work.

Looking ahead, she revealed plans to expand the line with additional products, including a face and body exfoliant and a vitamin-rich lip treatment, expected to launch within the next year.

# A KILLER ROAD

## Kingston, Jamaica gives Bounty the keys to the city — and a street

Dancehall legend Bounty Killer is set to receive one of Kingston's highest civic honors, as the Kingston and St. Andrew Municipal Corporation (KSAMC) moves to formally recognize his towering contribution to Jamaican music and community development.

The resolution, recently passed by the municipal body, will see the veteran deejay awarded the Key to the City of Kingston, while a road in his community of Seaview Gardens will also be renamed in his honor—a fitting tribute that recognizes his legacy both in the cultural landscape and in the community that helped shape him.

Supporting the resolution, Councillor Patrick Roberts praised the artist's remarkable longevity, noting that sustaining relevance at Bounty Killer's level for more than three decades is a rare feat. Since bursting onto the scene in the early 1990s with his gritty delivery and socially conscious lyrics, the deejay, born Rodney Price, has become one of dancehall's most influential figures—helping to define the genre's modern sound while mentoring a generation of stars.

Often referred to as “The Warlord,” Bounty Killer has built a catalog of anthems that includes classics such as “Look,” “Fed Up,” “Down in the Ghetto,” and “Poor People Fed Up”—songs that balance hardcore dancehall energy with pointed social commentary. His impact extends beyond hit records; he is widely credited with helping launch the careers of major acts, including Vybz Kartel and Mavado, and even championing the early rise of international superstar Rihanna.

His accolades over the years reflect that influence. Bounty Killer has earned multiple international award nominations, including recognition at the Grammy Awards through collaborations and projects tied to reggae's global footprint, while also collecting honors from Caribbean and diaspora institutions. His Verzuz clash with Beenie Man in 2020 reminded global audiences of his relevance, drawing millions of viewers and reaffirming his place among dancehall royalty.

Beyond music, the honor also recognizes his longstanding philanthropic work. Through the Bounty Killer Foundation, the deejay has supported back-to-school initiatives, provided aid to vulnerable communities, contributed to health

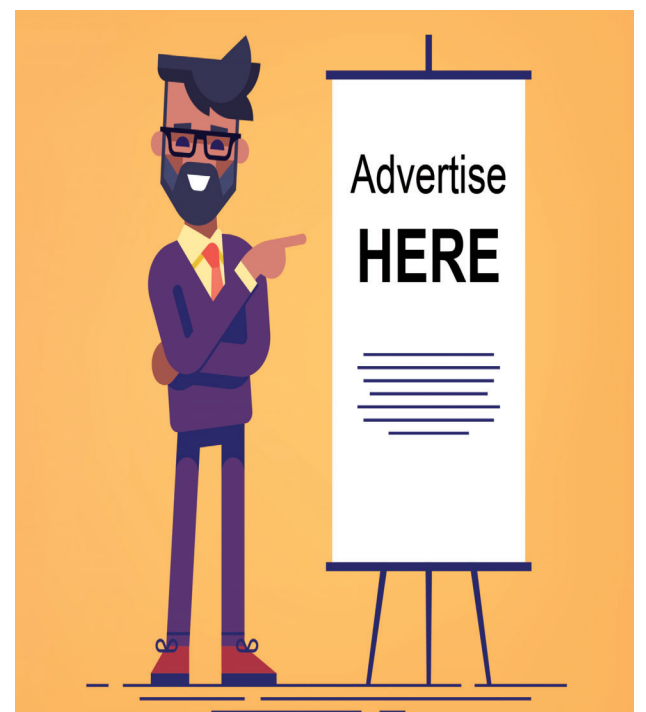


**Bounty Killer — honoured for his philanthropy**

and social welfare efforts, and consistently used his platform to advocate for Jamaica's underserved. His charitable outreach, often focused on inner-city youth and community upliftment, has become a defining part of his legacy.

For many, the civic recognition is long overdue.

The renaming of a road in Seaview Gardens carries particular symbolism, paying homage to the community that nurtured one of Jamaica's most formidable cultural ambassadors. Coupled with the Key to the City, the honors reflect not only Bounty Killer's achievements as an entertainer, but his broader role as a voice of the people and an architect of dancehall's global reach.





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