

JOHNSTONE

ROOTS REGGAE MUSIC

BIOGRAPHY

JohnStone is a roots reggae band from the D.C. area. Over seven years performing together, JohnStone has assembled an arsenal of crucial roots-influenced original compositions, complemented by tasteful covers saluting their favorite reggae artists. Winner of several DC Annual Reggae Music Awards and nominee for best reggae band in the annual Washington Area Music Awards, JohnStone has appeared with Burning Spear, Toots & The Maytals, Third World, Sister Carol, Yellowman, The Itals and many others. JohnStone mission is to continue expanding its geographic range to include new venues throughout the US and international markets. The band plays venues of all types, including festivals, nightclubs, weddings, cruises, house parties and more.

Flexible, friendly, easy to work with!

BOOKING INFORMATION

Contact JOHNSTONE about performing at your next event!

JohnStone Reggae Band
PO Box 33752
Washington DC 20033
Tel: (703) 501-4138
info@johnstonemusic.com

Visit www.JohnStoneMusic.com for performance schedules, music clips, and merchandise, including the band's albums: "Innocent Children," "Eyes Open," and "Eyes Open – DUB."

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS

International Appearances

JohnStone has supported the following international acts: BURNING SPEAR, TOOTS and THE MAYTALS, THIRD WORLD, YELLOWMAN, THE ITALS, THE MEDITATIONS, & SISTER CAROL.

Venues Played

JohnStone has performed at many venues in several geographic markets over the years. A few of these are:

California: The Attic, Santa Cruz ♦ Crow's Nest, Santa Cruz ♦ Club Six, San Francisco ♦ Ukiah Brewing, Ukiah

Delaware: Dogfish Head Brewery, Rehoboth Beach ♦ Starboard, Dewey Beach

Maryland: Seacrets, Ocean City ♦ University of Maryland, College Park ♦ Towson University, Towson ♦ Recher Theatre, Towson ♦ Fletcher's, Baltimore ♦ Nicks Fish House, Baltimore ♦ Hood College, Frederick ♦ Santa Fe Café, College Park ♦ Woodmont Country Club, Rockville ♦ McGinty's Public House, Silver Spring ♦ Bushwallers, Frederick

New York: Lion's Den, NYC ♦ Saint Lawrence University, Canton ♦ Hilton Ballroom, Lake Placid ♦ The Hoot Owl, Canton

North Carolina: Charlie Brownz, Wilmington

Virginia: State Theatre, Falls Church ♦ One Love Peace Festival, Fredericksburg ♦ Jewish Mother, Virginia Beach ♦ Alley Katz, Richmond ♦ Rhodeside Grill, Arlington ♦ Hermitage Country Club, Manakin

Washington DC: Zanzibar ♦ DC9 ♦ American University ♦ Eighteenth Street Lounge ♦ Chief Ike's Mambo Room

Awards

- ♦ Song of the Year 2005 "Shashamane Land" – DC Reggae Music Awards
- ♦ Song of the Year 2001 "Live On" – DC Reggae Music Awards
- ♦ Songwriter of the Year 2001 – DC Reggae Music Awards
- ♦ Washington Area Music Awards – Best Reggae Band nominee 2001-2007

Interviews and Reviews

♦ The Beat ♦ Fox 5 News ♦ On Tap ♦ Voice of America Radio ♦ BBC Radio ♦ WPFW 89.3 FM ♦ The Eagle (AMU) ♦ Reggae-reviews.com ♦ Worldmusiccentral.org ♦ DCReggae.com ♦ Rastafaritoday.com ♦ DCSka.com

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Members

FOR PHOTOS, REVIEWS AND MORE, VISIT www.JohnStoneMusic.com

Andre White — Lead Vocals, Rhythm Guitar

A native of Jamaica, songwriter, and dynamic performer, Andre has developed a vocal style which captures many elements of the 1970's heyday of roots reggae in Jamaica. With songs that are geared toward determination, truth, and humanity, White captivates his audiences with his stage presence, putting every ounce of his small stature into his singing. Musical influences include: *Winston "Burning Spear" Rodney, Max Romeo, Jacob Miller, Bob Marley and David Hinds (Steel Pulse)*.

After leaving his hometown of Kingston to pursue a degree at St. Lawrence University (where he dominated NCAA Division III soccer with his goal-scoring), White teamed up with fellow band-mate Brendan DeMelle to form *Zion Express*- a powerful, all-original, roots rock reggae band which performed extensively in the upstate New York area in the late 1990s. After receiving his degree in Psychology and Sociology, White moved to DC and linked up with drummer Alfred Adams. DeMelle moved to DC in May of 2000 to reunite with White, and together the threesome quickly established the core of *JohnStone*. Manekin started bubbling with the band in the autumn of 2002, and Crandall joined on sax in the spring of 2005.

Alfred Adams — Drums, Vocals

Born in Guyana where every possible genre of music is played and appreciated, Adams has, at some point, dabbled in all of those genres but has spent the past six years playing Ska, Rocksteady and Reggae in the DC area. Prior to *JohnStone*, Adams was a member of the local Ska outfit *Down Beat Rulers* which in 1996 opened for *The Skatalites* and *The Toasters* at *9:30 Club* and *The Capitol Ballroom* respectively. In 1997, Adams was a member of the roots reggae-flavored *Cornerstone*, which was the featured reggae act for the Annual *Taste of DC* festival. Adams has a solid understanding of reggae drumming and holds down a wicked beat, while guiding the *JohnStone* rhythm section in new directions every night with his creative flare. Adams also sings backing vocals which complement Nicholas' lead, and sings lead vocals on several *JohnStone* hits, including *SHINE, INNOCENT CHILDREN, NEVER EVER, AND TROD YOUR OWN*.

Brendan DeMelle — Bass

Originally trained by jazz legend *Michael Musillami*, DeMelle has performed on both coasts of the US in a variety of musical settings. DeMelle's creepy, percussive basslines color Nicholas' lyrics and meld with Adams' beats, creating a unique reggae sound. Prior to relocating to DC to regroup with college band-mate Nicholas, DeMelle performed with *Easy Big Fella*, Seattle's Ska sensation, playing live shows throughout the Northwest. DeMelle appears, along with his brother Jeff - a seasoned reggae bassist currently playing with Clinton Fearon and Boogie Brown Band - on *Easy Big Fella's* 1999 *Tasty Bits and Spicy Flicks* album, available on the MoonSkaNYC label. Captivated by reggae music since he was 10, DeMelle incorporates all the elements of the great reggae bassists while holding onto his own unique style of playing, and also singing some backing vocals. DeMelle wrote *JohnStone's* *BUSY STYLE*, one of the band's many original songs.

Joe Manekin — Keyboards

A native of Northwest Baltimore, Manekin is a classically-trained piano player who joined *JohnStone* in September 2002. While he is a relative newcomer to the reggae game, Manekin knows how to color *JohnStone* just right. He previously played keys with *The People*, a Northern Virginia-based roots reggae band. With *JohnStone*, Manekin provides classic piano and organ, while also adding some unique flavor with various vintage and rare sounds. His musical taste is eclectic: if it's good music then he probably digs it. Some reggae keyboard influences include *Jackie Mittoo, Tyrone Downie, Gladdy Anderson* and many others. A few other players Manekin admires include *Herbie Hancock, Robert Walter*, and of course, *Stevie Wonder*.

Benjamin Crandall — Saxophone

A Yellow Springs, Ohio native, Crandall picked up the saxophone at the age of 10. Throughout high school he performed in local street festivals, cut his teeth in the Dayton jam-session at Jazz Central, and spent his Summers as a student at Friends Music Camp (FMC) in Barnesville, OH. After high school, he continued his music education at Central State University and University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music (CCM), and returned to FMC as an instructor, teaching saxophone, jazz improvisation, and music theory. He graduated from CCM in 2000 with a degree in Jazz Saxophone Performance. Crandall has lived in Washington, DC, since November 2000, where he has played jazz, reggae, hip hop, funk, and gospel gigs in a variety of settings and venues, including churches, street corners, night clubs, private parties, and weddings. Crandall joined *JohnStone* in the Spring of 2005, adding harmonic counter lines and fiery jazz-inspired solos. Over the years, Crandall has had a number of saxophone teachers including Tucki Bailey, Randy Hall, Martha Hyde, Dr. William Denza, and Rick VanMatre. His musical influences include John Coltrane, Brandford Marsalis, Stevie Wonder, Bob Marley, The Roots, Roy Hargrove, and Joni Mitchell.

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MUSIC REVIEWS

"CONSCIOUSLY EDIFYING AS REGGAE GETS"- WORLD MUSIC CENTRAL

Innocent Children (JohnStone Reggae LLC JSIC, 2007) I raved about the debut album by Washington DC-based reggae band JohnStone, and for good reason. Eyes Open was a great release with seemingly limitless staying power: I found myself listening to it repeatedly while other reggae CDs on my shelf gathered dust. The group's follow-up, Innocent Children, likewise proves a keeper worth revisiting. Produced with assistance by R. Jalani Horton from noted Virgin Islands reggae outfit Bambu Station, Innocent Children finds JohnStone in a noticeably more serious, almost brooding vibe compared with Eyes Open. Saxophonist Benjamin Crandall, upgraded from guest player to full-time member, colors many of the tracks with moody, jazz-laced solos, and the songs themselves are as pensive as they are grooving. The title track addresses the evils of children being conscripted into military service, while "Trode your Own," "Doubt" and "Wanted" sing of personal struggles and the strength to carry on through them. Even the relative rays of sunshine ("Keep Climbing," "Happy Day") are textured with cautionary tones that get to the heart of you even as your head bobs to the beat. But lest I mislead anyone, let me state unequivocally that this album is not a downer by any means. JohnStone proved with their last disc and this one that their music is as consciously edifying as reggae gets. Their instrumental chops are full of nimble expertise, the shared lead vocals of guitarist Andre White and drummer Alfred Adams brim with no-nonsense conviction and when all's said and done, you'll forget your troubles and dance. Just be sure to cool down and take the advice of the concluding "Be Thankful," a Ben Harper-ish acoustic piece that lays it all on the table.

By Tom Orr (www.worldmusiccentral.org)

"A CURE FOR REGGAE FANS" - REGGAE-REVIEWS.COM

After releasing one of the best (and perhaps most overlooked) reggae albums of 2005, JohnStone seeks to make a big splash with the follow-up, seeking the aid of Bambu Station lead singer and all-around musical magician Jalani Horton in recording Innocent Children. Not that they needed the magic touch that the Virgin Islands has produced reggae-wise over the past several years, but recording in that inspirational land certainly didn't hurt. Listening to Innocent Children is like stepping into a time machine and transporting yourself back to the age of classic roots harmony. "Peace and Love and Harmony" and "Clinton's Lament" in particular recall the heyday of Israel Vibration, with rich, layered vocals and a laid-back, rural vibe. The instrumentation is likewise lovely; we get a couple of nice dubs (aided by the mixing of veteran Jim Fox, who has worked with -- you guessed it -- Israel Vibration), plus extended musical riffs such as the jazzy saxophone intro to "Black Spirits Swells." As the name indicates, Innocent Children is topical -- the title track inspired by a news report of children recruited to fight in Haiti -- and often mournful, but the tender "Your Love" and "Doubt" showcase the group's lovers side in fine style. JohnStone is a sure cure for reggae fans lamenting that the music isn't what it used to be. Those of you who didn't pick up their debut should not miss this train again. Buy a ticket for a marvelous ride at johnstonemusic.com.

"ROOTSY AND VIBRANT"- THE BEAT MAGAZINE

JohnStone offers a personal perspective on their debut disc Eyes Open (JohnStone Reggae LLC). With vocals and writing credits mainly shared between guitarist Andre White and drummer Alfred Adams this four-or-five piece (four members are credited but five appear in the photos) self-contained band offers a sound that stands on its own without identifiable influences in song, structure or style. The vision laid out in songs like "Black Paradise", "The Awakening", "Shashamane Land" and "Strong to Say" avoids standard clichés and is augmented by the steady keyboards of Joseph Manekin and bass and backing vocals from Brendan DeMelle. Other musical elements are added by guest percussionist Chet Nunoo-Quarcoo and sax man Benjamin Crandall. Rootsy and vibrant, they really hit their stride on "Shine", which could easily be mistaken for a lost Studio One Larry Marshall cut. Also available is a corresponding Eyes Open Dub. [www.johnstonereggae.com]

by Chuck Foster

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