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ONE

WORLD

TRIBE

*...an Afro-beat, funk, reggae,
latin and world beat orchestra with
a myriad of musicians, dancers and extra's.*



...One World Tribe
was *created* with the premise
of bringing together musicians
of various racial and ethnic backgrounds
in order to break down
social and racial barriers.

With members hailing from Africa, Jamaica and Puerto-Rico, One World Tribe is a true multicultural ensemble.

Kennedy Thompson: *Vocals, Keyboards and Percussion.* With a bachelors degree from the D'Angelo School Of Music to his credit, Thompson founded OWT with the vision of bringing together various music styles. An established figure in the Northwest Pennsylvania music scene, Kennedy is a former member of the Erie Philharmonic and Chamber Orchestras.

Mike Chin: *Bass.* Hailing from Montego-Bay Jamaica, Chin provides an understanding of many Carribean music styles for the Tribe. Chin was also a founding member of the critically acclaimed group Chill Factor.

Preach Freedom: *Vocals and Percussion.* With a background in gospel and r&b, Preach has brought his talents as an arranger and composer to dozens of gospel programs in Northwest Pennsylvania and western New York. Preach is also a serious student of Afro-carribean music and culture and has been a visionary in melding more traditional American styles with World Music.

Dynamq: *Vocals and Keyboards.* Originally from Sudan, Dynamq grew up in Nairobi, Kenya. Dynamq brings to the Tribe the ability to sing in many different African languages (Swahili, Arabic, Latuka, etc). Dynamq also performs as a keyboardist for the legendary reggae star Eek-a-Mouse.

M'Baye Rama Diagne: *Vocals, Djembe and Talking Drum.* Hailing from Senegal, West Africa, M'Baye is a master drummer who brings a knowledge of West African Rhythm and traditions to the OWT family. He has performed and studied with legends, including residencies with the renowned Katherine Dunham.

Frank Singer / chelaBOP: *Hiphop Vocals, Guitar, Guitar-Synth, Keyboards.* Graduating Magna Cum Laude from the prestigious Berklee College of Music, Singer brings a unique ability to compose music in odd meters with an approach towards a linear concept. Experienced in Jazz, Classical Composition, and World Music, Singer represents the diversity and multiculturalism of New Jersey. chelaBOP has been HipHop for over a decade.

Ringo Brill: *Congas, Percussion.* Brill began studying congas in the '80's. In 1993, after a trip to Cuba, he helped found the 12/8 Path Marching Band, which has become an established part of the Buffalo music scene. His performing credits include; Diaspora Drumming, Eulipson, Abundance, and Bobby Previte's Voodoo Orchestra West. Ringo currently teaches Afro-Brazilian percussion at the Buffalo Contemporary Dance Studio.

Mark Collicchia: *Drum Set.* Having a Bachelor's degree in music from the University of Buffalo, Mark is one of the most sought after drummers in upstate New York.

Kenny "Funkystroke" Hollis: *Guitar.* With a masters degree from the streets, Kenny is a true keeper of the scrolls when it comes to funk and r&b guitar styles.

PERFORMANCES

Depending on your budget, One World Tribe can present a show with anywhere from 8 to 20 performers including professional dancers.



LETTERS

May 8, 2003



AT DISCOVERY SQUARE

Katie West
Pennsylvania Performing Arts on Tour
Suite 301
1811 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Katie:

I am writing in support of the PennPAT roster application for One World Tribe, an Erie-based, culturally diverse music ensemble. We have presented One World Tribe on several occasions. They are an energetic, and multi-talented group which always pleases the audience. They perform a combination of original compositions and reggae/soul/Latin standards rendered in original arrangements.

In my experience One World Tribe has always been professional and easy to work with. Pre-performance communications are good, and they have provided quality photographs and press materials for promotion. One World Tribe would be a good addition to the PennPAT roster.

411 STATE STREET
ERIE, PA 16501-1106

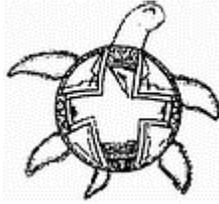
814/459-5477
FAX: 814/452-1744

www.erieartmuseum.org
contact@erieartmuseum.org

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Vanco", is written over a light blue grid background. The signature is fluid and cursive.

John Vanco
Director



Katie West, Director
Pennsylvania Performing Arts on Tour
1811 Chestnut Street, Suite 301
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Ms West,

I was very excited to hear that **One World Tribe** will be applying for inclusion on the Pennsylvania Performing Arts roster.

The very first *Amerimasala* featured *One World Tribe* for one of their first public performances. Since that initial outing, the "Tribe" has become Erie's favorite and arguably best band. Some say the best ever band. Also, their popularity has grown to other cities such as Buffalo and Rochester.

Over the years, the caliber of *One World Tribe* performances at the *Amerimasala* has always been comparable to the most outstanding artists Erie has ever seen, including PPAT registered *Spoken Hand*.

The strength of the "Tribe" is the truly global mindset of the group. The members' musical expertise reaches the full spectrum. Some of their musical influences are infused in jazz. Some members play in chamber orchestras. A few were weaned on Sly and the Family Stone and the Beatles. While some were growing up with Tupac, P. Diddy, and hip-hop, a couple other members were growing up in East Africa among the rhythm of the djembas.

The versatility, professionalism and the fact that some of them have experience teaching, conducting workshops and working with youth groups makes *One World Tribe* an outstanding candidate for inclusion on the Pennsylvania Performing Arts on Tour roster.

If you have any questions feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lynn Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Lynn Johnson, founder and director
Amerimasala

Susan Sanford-Watson
500 Hawley St.
Lockport, New York 14094
(716) 439-5866

To Whom It May Concern:

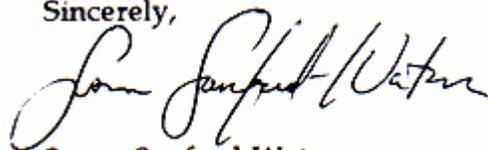
May 9, 2003

Last year I took on the inspired task of creating a multicultural arts and community festival for Lockport City School district, at which I am an English as a Second Language teacher. We named it the Unlty Festival and our intentions were to educate citizens and students about the diversity of cultures they could explore and share within this community. We hoped to engender an atmosphere of acceptance and positive curiosity about the possibilities that exist outside the realm of one's individual life experience and home culture.

Because of its tremendous reputation in the commuinity, the Unity festival committee decided to contact the band, One World Tribe, to be the highlight of our festival. We all completely agreed that a band of such caliber would serve as a draw for many people and as a cohesive communication of our message of unity. Much to our delight and surprise, the well-known and very busy band readily signed on. Even more astounding was that they offered to play for free, with the district paying only for their expenses, such as gas and equipment rental costs. Making arrangements with Mr. Kennedy Thompson, I found that educational programs are a priority for the band. An event like the Unity Festival had never taken place in our city and we had no way of anticipating what sort of turnout we would have. As people flooded into the Festival, we discovered that many had come particularly to see One World Tribe. Those who had not heard them before quickly became fans. The auditorium was filled with people of *every* age, race and religion, most of them unable to restrain themselves from dancing or tapping their toes. Just as we had hoped, the words of their songs connected perfectly with the concept of the festival. For several weeks after the event, I continually received messages from attendees praising the festival, and especially, One World Tribe. The administrators of the school district were extremely pleased with the educational nature of the band's performance.

In a small city like Lockport, the realization of our new diversity is only now beginning to set in. When One World Tribe performed at our Festival, they helped people to see diversity as the blessing that it truly is, to be celebrated and shared. I couldn't have found a better representation of community-building in the form of a band than One World Tribe. I thank them for making our first multicultural festival a successful, educational, community experience. One World Tribe most definitely deserves support to continue their efforts to unify our schools and communities.

Sincerely,



Susan Sanford-Watson

One World Tribe

c/o Mr. Kennedy Thompson

5333 Washington Ave.

Erie, Pa. 16509

Dear Kennedy,

I don't do this often, but I just wanted to make sure you knew how much we appreciated One World Tribe coming all the way to Rockford, Il. for our annual "On The Waterfront" festival.

Although the band had not performed here before, and were booked just from bio info and listening to your "The World Today" CD, I could not have imagined a better experience! The capacity crowd loved you, and I was grinning like a kid the entire time.

The main things I like about One World Tribe are the range of styles you're good at, and also the ease with which you pull it off, without appearing routine. You all appear to love playing, and it shows. It's refreshing to see a band that plays together as much as you having a good time.

Although we try not to repeat bands in consecutive years, so we can present the widest range of styles, I'd like to think you're on our "short list" of bands to come back soon. I hope the band enjoyed it as much as we did.

Please keep in touch, and let me know if there is ever anything I can do for you.

Thanks,

Craig Nagus

Ethnic Village Stage Chairman

On The Waterfront Festival

308 West State St.

Rockford, Illinois 61101

815-964-4388



Mt. Lebanon School District

March 11, 2005

To Whom It May Concern:

This past year Kennedy Thompson and *One World Tribe* presented a week of performances for all of the elementary school students in Mt. Lebanon School District. This involved touring to our seven buildings and performing on stages, in gyms, and multi-purpose rooms.

The performances of *One World Tribe* exceeded our expectations in every case. The performers were professional and easy to work with. They were flexible and adapted to the different space. Most important of all, the quality of the show was wonderful!

Our students were exposed to a mix of Latin, reggae, African and jazz stules in a performance that was fun, energetic, and educational. I would recommend *One World Tribe* as an outstanding group that would be an asset to a school's cultural arts program and an enriching experience for all students.

If you would like any additional information please feel free to contact me at (412) 563-5080 or ctapgh@aol.com.

Sincerely,

Mark Field
District Cultural Arts Chair

PRESS

Press Quotes

"From reggae to soul, Jazz to salsa to African pop, they cover styles like water covers the globe"; Dave Richards, Erie Daily Times.

"The musicianship is impeccable and One World Tribe keeps the energy level poppin"; Jamie Moses, Buffalo Art Voice.

"One World Tribe's Unity & Diversity has more soul, brims with more vitality, than half the discs that pass for music on corporate labels"; Doc Rock, Erie Daily Times.

"One World Tribe is tighter than any band that comes thru town, much less any band from town"; Randy Baumann, WDVE Radio Pittsburgh.

"They mistrust power, decry poverty and violence, urge tolerance and respect of peoples differences. And yet - beyond the lyrics - they say all this by the simple act of standing together on stage making music"; Doc Rock, Erie Daily Times.

"The band also had quite a stage show augmenting the basic octet with 3 or 4 dedicated percussionists and a quintet of dancers that moved like a combination of holiness parishioners and an African chorus line"; Buffalo News Gusto.



One World Tribe's 'Unity and Diversity' has more soul, brims with more vitality, than half the discs that pass for music on corporate labels.

BY DOCTOR ROCK

On Broadway, Savion Glover brings da funk, brings da noise and it's good, very good. On *Unity and Diversity*, Erie's One World Tribe not only brings da funk and da noise but da reggae, R&B, dancehall, rap, African chant, Latin, rock, and enough horns and cookin' percussion to get an entire island chain moving.

And it's good, very good. This disc has more soul, brims with more vitality, than half the discs that pass for music on corporate labels. Jam-packed with 74 minutes of music, *Unity and Diversity* shows off One World Tribe's many faces and facets to astonishing effect.

To be sure, it's not only a big band - with ten members - but a mighty diverse one. Members boast credentials in a variety of musical genres, including classical, jazz, reggae, rock, Latin, funk and R&B. With One World Tribe, they find a way to bring all those under one roof in a joyous, celebratory way.

What ties it all together - more than the world-music tag - is a common vision. Their assorted songwriters - and pretty much everybody contributes - ascribe to a similar world view. It's a we're-all-in-this-together thing, so let's-get-along utopianism; a belief that one universal truth governs us all. They mistrust power, decry poverty and violence, urge tolerance and respect of people's differences. And yet - beyond the lyrics - they say all this by the simple act of standing together on stage, making music. It's one thing to preach unity and harmony, regardless of race and sex and religion, and another to actually DO it, play it live, loud and proud.

AND DID THE DOC SAY THEY PLAY it good, very good? Musicianship here is first-rate, ditto the production and mixing.

And, despite all the different styles on display, the songs are tightly focused. One World Tribe doesn't make the mistake of cluttering up songs with too many styles, thereby creating an unlistenable mess. They use a lot of instrumentation but everything works for the song, not against it. And each song has a strong stamp and identity, though a few - especially "Mosi Oa Tunya" - stretch out to good effect. Arrangements are a strong point, not a weakness, with One World Tribe.

"No Justice, No Peace" salutes Marley-style reggae with an in-the-pocket verve, thanks to Chin's deep-burbling bass and DeBoe's warm back-up vocals. Preach - a toaster up there with Toastmaster - also shines on the exuberant, horn-powered reggae opener "Go Forward," which has a nice, rippling piano break, and the more playful "Mr. Gahnja Mon."

The Doc also likes the furious scratch-funk of "Who Gets the Money?" and breezy, groove-laden "Money Don't Make It Right," an R&B pleaser. One World Tribe throws longtime fans a bone by doing the Meter's "Keep on Struttin'," in a re-worked version that really cooks. Take it to the bridge? Take it to the bank: This jaunty/funky version swings like a night on the town. And "Maria Caracoles," a peppy, Latin-fueled burner sung in Spanis, works in any language. It's got some squalling guitar and a jazzed-up ending.

Guest star Terrance Simien provides stellar accordion work on the sassy "We Are One," which features scorching congas, some African chanting, and intense rhythmic undertow. OWT's rhythm section, by the way, is stellar.

With "Mosi Oa Tunya" and "Rio," One World Tribe widens its horizon, exploring jazzier terrain. The former also dives deeply into African chant and features an extended horn solo. It's a complex, fascinating track, one of the Doc's favorites. "Rio" has an airier feel, sort of Santana meets Manhattan Transfer, and closes with a jazzy jam.

The only cut the Doc doesn't much care for is the King's X remix of "No Justice," delivered in rapid-fire rap. But the reggae-tinged title track closes the disc on a bubbly, upbeat note. You gotta like a song which encourages you to sing, "no more lawyers." And when it kicks into percussive overdrive, it really lifts off, showing One World Tribe's musicality and inventiveness.

With *Unity and Diversity*, One World Tribe has produced one mighty good disc that might have some folks thinking they're from Erie, Jamaica, or Erie, N.Y., not Erie, Pa. It's a first-class package from a classy band.

'UNITY AND DIVERSITY' by One World Tribe.
Doctor Rock's rating: **** out of four.



ONE WORLD TRIBE

Randy Baumann

The first time I saw One World Tribe, I thought that a Jim Henderson production had come to town. The Tribe definitely display characteristics of Dr. Teeth's band. Their stage presence is so awesome, it doesn't matter that less than a handful of soundmen (and rooms, for that matter) are able to capture what is actually happening on stage. The vibe is there, and the tunes are audible enough to figure out that this band is tighter than any band that comes through town, much less any band from town.

The fact is, One World Tribe is a compilation of some of Erie's best musicians, and this shines through on their long-awaited debut CD, *Unity And Diversity*. I can say without hesitation that this is the best locally produced CD I have ever heard, by far. A mixture of reggae, jazz, funk, rap, Latin, R&B and world beat, *Unity And Diversity* is a polyrhythmic ride through each genre that can be a visually rewarding experience (if you let it) as it is an aural one. Percussion drives, but never smothers the bouncing, sometimes odd-metered melodies, complete with multi-layered vocal harmonies that are so precise it's spine chilling.

You would need a pretty elaborate abacus to keep track of the number of different musicians

featured on this disk, and producer Rusty Jackson herded them together with sheepling-like consistency. He lets everyone step up, without stepping on the numerous feet of the Tribe. Most notable guest performance is from Louisiana Zydeco aficionado Terrence Simien. His vocal/accordion performance on the War-like "We Are One" makes this track one of the strongest on the disk. Other stand out guest appearances include M'Baye Rama Diage (a master drummer from Senegal), as well as more than a few popular regional talents.

Make no mistake about it, the Tribe are the real deal. Consisting of Preacha - lead vocals and percussion, Kenny Hollis - licks (guitar and tongue), Mark Marchant and Matty Walker - percussion and percussion, Brad Amidon - drums, Mike Chin - bass guitar, Kennedy Thompson - keyboards and percussion, and Frank Singer - keyboards and saxophone, the Tribe are quickly becoming known as one of the tightest bands in the region. With such elaborate instrumentation, it would be easy for OWT's songs to be cluttered down with too much of everything. Herein lies the most impressive aspect of *Unity And Diversity*. When 'less is more' can be a good rule of musical thumb, with the Tribe, more is more. Percussion patterns abound beneath, above, and around each tune, only to compliment each other, some so subtle that they only become apparent after hearing the disk a couple of times.

The opening cut, "Go Forward", is a Reggae in 5 tune that has unshakable horn hook, while OWT's "Keep On Struttin'" (based on the Meters' "Chicken Strut"), a standout during their live set, will have you unconsciously clucking like a chicken thanks to Kenny Hollis' impersonation. Very impressive is Brad Amidon's composition "Mosi Oa Tunya", which is as intricate rhythmically as anything on the disk. Mike Ohm, lead guitarist for Plato's Cave,

guests on this cut and lays tasteful licks over the pounding progression. That's the thing about the disk that I dig the most, the songs OWT don't play live that are on the disk are as strong and stronger than the tunes we've heard grow through their live performances. Songs like "Money Don't Make It Right" have been in OWT's set for a couple of years, and don't lose anything in the studio recording, but songs like "We Are One" which are freshly written, sound as if they have been played live and had time to grow into their final form.

"Who Gets The Money" is a Singer/Preach song that proves that Frank Singer is capable of just about anything musically. He plays piano like Keith Jarrett or Chick Corea on acid; fast, furious, and right on. What's really sick is that he's probably as good a guitar player as he is a keyboard player. Any song on this disk he had a hand in writing is a gem. Preach's vocals command attention on songs like the title track "Unity And Diversity" and "Go Forward". Like the rest of the band, his vocals adapt to the style of the song they're playing with Zelig-like ease. Whether it's rap ("Keep On Struttin'"), reggae ("Mr. Gahnjah Mon") or R&B ("Money Don't Make It Right"), Preach and the Tribe have change-up ability that Phil Niekro would be jealous of.

One World Tribe also is not afraid to take chances on this disk. The Latin cover "Maria Caracoles", which Santana had covered in the seventies, is done sweet justice with Enrique Lozada at the vocal helm. The fact is, it just seems like they're taking chances with a tune like this, in reality, the musical ability of each member of the Tribe is on such a higher plane than any other local band, that a tune like this is a breeze. Mike Chin's "Wanty Wanty" has a unique poetic license applied to it. Chinisms? Chinish? Chin-ese? Chinnigan? Call it what you like, it works, as does everything else on this spectacular debut disk.



One World Tribe: 'If the music is good, they're going to come out'

MANY STYLES, ONE BAND

'I wanted to see what the reaction would be when ...the first song was reggae and the next song was funk. Would people accept that?' Five years later, they're still saying yes to Kennedy Thompson and One World Tribe.

BY DAVE RICHARDS
STAFF WRITER

One night after Chick Corea and Orign helps initiate the new Pepsi Amphitheater, One World Tribe takes over. No one's happier about that prospect than Kennedy Thompson, the Tribe bandleader.

"He's one of my favorite artists!" exclaimed Thompson. "I've seen Corea like four times. Chick Corea's Elektric Band is one of my bands. Yeah, I'm going to be in the front for Chick Corea."

Musical adventurers such as Corea and Carlos Santana inspire Thompson and One World Tribe, the long-running Erie crew that refuses to play favorites with musical genres. From reggae to soul, hip-hop to funk, jazz to salsa to African pop, they cover styles like water covers the globe. For Thompson, that's the natural path to follow, the only one that makes sense.

"I was always a person who was into so many things," said Kennedy. "I could never understand how people couldn't like more than one style of music. My taste was so varied. I wanted to hear all those other things. I was into Latin music. Anything with a strong rhythmic presence, I was there."

Thompson remembers making an Earth, Wind and Fire record his first musical purchase. He attended Cathedral Prep, then studied music at Mercyhurst College, where he continued widening his range. His CD collection spans a wild, woolly gamut from AC / DC to McCoy Tyner, John Coltrane to Rolling Stones, Eddie Palmeri to Rolling Stones (sic). Thompson was determined to incorporate his varied tastes into one band. Why pick one style when you can do them all?"

"I wanted to see what the reaction would be when a band went on stage and the first song was reggae and the next song was funk or whatever," he said. "Would people accept that?"

Five years later, dance-mad, arm-waving crowds supply the answer. Yeah, mon.

ON TWO SEPARATE NIGHTS, more than 700 people turned out to see One World Tribe at the new Docksider. In Buffalo - at Broadway Joe's and the Calumet - crowds from 300 to 700 regularly turn out. That crowd covers as wide a range as their music, too, from professors to students, from bankers to hippies.

"We have a very diverse crowd," said Thompson. "Matty [Walker] and I went to Cleveland to the Parliament-Funkadelic show to promote George Clinton [at the Warner last November], and we were like 'Does this crowd remind you of anyone else's crowd? Yeah. *Ours.*' It's similar to the Clinton and P-Funk All-stars crowd, really diverse."

Makes sense, considering this band appeals to so many tastes. That stew never sits still, either. Senegal-born drummer M'Baye Diagne has become a permanent guest Tribesman, of sorts. Whenever not previously engaged, Diagne - who lives in Buffalo - joins the Tribe.

Continued on next page

ONE WORLD TRIBE will appear Friday at 10 p.m. on the mainstage of the Erie Summer Festival of the Arts at Liberty Park's Pepsi Amphitheater, West Bayfront Parkway. Admission is free.

CONTINUED FROM 17-S

ONE WORLD

"We're doing more West African music since M'Baye is becoming more of a factor in the band," said Thompson. "We're doing a lot more of his stuff and incorporating his influences into the band - West African pop, that kind of thing. He pretty much is in the band; it's just not official, you know? He brings a lot. He's real energetic, real charismatic."

One World Tribe - still raising funds for a follow-up to "Unity and Diversity" - plans to introduce a few new songs on Friday night at Pepsi Amphitheater. They include the reggae warning "Babylon Falling," the millennium funk romp "2000 Party," and "Resistance," which Thompson describes as "kind of jazz, kind of funk - a fusion tune. It's really a strange kind of tune, but with some rocking in it and a Hendrix feel to it."

WHEN ONE WORLD TRIBE plays, anywhere from eight to 12 members will gather on stage, depending on the size of the horn section. But the core group includes Thompson (keyboards, vocals), Brad Amidon (drums), Kenny Hollis (guitar), Frank Singer (keys), Matty Walker (percussion), Ron "Preacha" Williams (lead vocals), and Diagne, if available. They come from different musical backgrounds, different ethnic groups, and range in age, too.



One World Tribe: Still raising funds for a 'Ugity and Diversity' follow-up

But they share a common spirit and vision. Thompson said One World Tribe - like Corea, Santana, and Bob Marley, his musical heroes - aims to uplift and inspire.

"Those people are the true rebels," said Thompson. "People like Santana are not afraid to stand on the hardest issues. ... He has always been positive in his music, he speaks to consciousness and upliftment. And that's what we're about. So no matter how dark things get and how dark the world of music gets, [we consider] Santana and Bob Marley and those people to be the light in the darkness."

Lately, Thompson sees a newer artist forging a similar path as his heroes. He hopes Lauryn Hill sparks a trend away from negative music.

"Most music coming out now is about destructive things," said Thompson. "I see some of this stuff, and I'm like, 'How can these people be into this?' Some of it is really scary. I don't want to name names, but you know who's saying what, and that stuff's scary. Some kids don't have too many things to turn them in the right direction, and they're getting an earful of that stuff, and it's not right."

"But once in awhile a new artist comes along like Lauryn Hill who represents a lot of positivity in what she's doing. And she's rare. She proves you can come out and be positive and sell records. That gives you hope."

ALIVE, WELL, AND JAMMIN'

Not only is One World Tribe not defunct, it's breaking into newer and larger markets and celebrating a new CD.

BY DAVE RICHARDS
STAFF WRITER

One World Tribe will play not once but twice this weekend to celebrate the release of its second CD, "The World Today."

That's a lot of shows for a band that's defunct.

It's a joke! And not a good one, if you ask Kennedy Thompson, the Tribe's leader. If you really want to rattle his cage, if you want to rile him up, all you need to do is mention words like "defunct," "break-up," or "split" in the same sentence as One World Tribe.

"Please let the people know we have not broken up," Thompson pleaded in a recent interview. "People in Erie are caught in this myth. Everywhere I go, they're like, 'What's up with One World Tribe? Did you break up?' No. We just don't play in Erie as much as we used to."

They're not home as often because they're expanding their base. The band frequently travels to Syracuse, Albany, Rochester, and Schenectady, N.Y., and is also starting to build a Philadelphia following. In Pittsburgh, the Tribe recently played a sold-out show with Schleigho at the Beehive Theatre. In Buffalo, they're kings, frequently drawing crowds of 400 to 500.

"There's a lot of places you go to get to when you're a band that's trying to be a regional band and a national band," said Thompson. "You've got to cover a lot of markers."

Might as well, since they cover nearly the entire musical world. What sets the Tribe apart is its dazzling stylistic virtuosity. From swirling African pop to stone-cold funk to Latin grooves to reggae to soulful ballads to jazz-fusion, the band incorporates just about everything while retaining its rhythmic intensity and proud social consciousness.

"The World Today" exudes an even stronger world-music feel than the band's 1997 debut, "Unity and Diversity." The irony: This wasn't supposed to be the follow-up.

The Tribe has long planned a concept CD entitled "Armed and Dangerous" that will feature more hip-hop elements than they've ever put down on disc. But that project wasn't coming together fast enough.

"We're still trying to get all those [hip-hop] influences together and get that down to a fine art, so to speak," said Thompson. "But we were still anxious to put something out. ... We had some extra tunes, quality tunes, so we were like, 'Let's put something out [in the meantime].'"

AT FIRST, ONE WORLD TRIBE envisioned a short EP. What emerged was something more, a seven-song, 40-minute dance party that cooks up a rhythmic storm. Thompson credits the disc's energy and exuberance to how they recorded it at Midtown Studios at Forward Hall. They cut the whole thing in just two days, overdubbing the vocals only. All other instruments were recorded live - no band-aids, no touch-ups, nothing.

"We wanted to get more of a feel of everyone playing together and responding to each other," said Thompson. "When you do things in the moment, it's a little fresher. Sometimes, if you do what we did, if there's mistakes, you just leave them [in] and that's part of the fabric. That's the way Thelonious Monk was. He never wanted to do more than two takes. If there was a mistake on the second take, you just had to live with it forever. He once said when he got past two times the feel was gone."

And with One World Tribe, it's nothing if it doesn't have that feel.

The result feels like a live CD, minus crowd noise. Songs like "Twambie Tjue" - which brims with a hot Cuban / samba undercurrent - and the soaring, elastic title cut exude an earthy vigor that shows off this band's intuitive synchronicity. Parts of the ultra-funky "World Today" sound like vintage Sly Stone - if Sly was still writing killer hits, that is.



Tribe: 'We wanted to get more of a feel of everyone playing together'

Meanwhile, "Tell Them" serves up righteous reggae and the percussion-driven "Unity a Parte" opens with tribal drums before segueing into an intriguing blend of bossa nova and samba. Meanwhile, Frank Singer cuts loose with some funk-infected guitar work. It's a tune that starts intense and keeps building, like "Remain in Light"-era Talking Heads.

"World Today" also features some rippling piano in the sparkling, Latin-rocker "No Looking Back," while "Resistance" opens in a churchy gospel / R&B vein. "Touba (Holy City)," M'Baye Diagne's bouncy, infectious groove of African reggae, closes the CD just as it began - on a highly danceable note.

NOW, WILL A LABEL TAKE A chance on One World Tribe? In an era of teen pop, where does sophisticated world-beat music fit in?

"It's going to take a label that has some vision to try to push some different stuff at radio," said Thompson. "Because our stuff is a little different. But I think it'll sell. I have no doubt if you play some of this stuff and let it sink into people's heads, it'll sell a couple million copies, easy. But radio is so in a box with its format, it doesn't want to try anything new. They're scared to put anything new on the air."

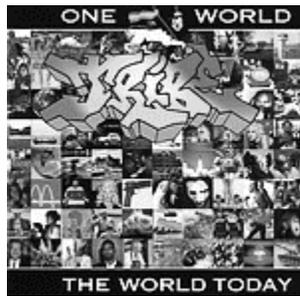
But One World Tribe - together six years, despite an oversized lineup that can range from 11 to 13 members - will stay the course.

"We haven't reached our goals," said Thompson. "[When] you know you can't reach your goals, then it's time to go on. We're trying to take our music everywhere."

One World Tribe plays with Sonic Garden, a Buffalo-based Grateful Dead cover band, on Saturday at Docksider. On Sunday, they'll take part in a big Gifts for Kids benefit show at Forward Hall, open to all ages. That show also features Storey, Rd., Sam Hyman and Boyd Baker, and the Frog Tree Gorge Band.

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THE WORLD TODAY One World Tribe

In 1973 reggae singer Jimmy Cliff set the music and cultural world afire when along with a cast of amateur actors he starred in a film set in obscure Jamaica featuring local musicians playing a virtually unknown music. *The Harder They Come* firmly established reggae and opened the door for other world beat music. Twenty-eight years later, and long after the death of third-world superstars like Bob Marley and Toots, world beat music is as vital and inspiring as ever.

One World Tribe, one of the area's most popular live bands and a major proponent of reggae-funk-world beat music, has just released *The World Today*, a collection of seven stunning original tunes. The sound quality on this CD is probably the best I've heard all year; the clarity of the mix and the separation of instruments is remarkable considering there are over 12 musicians including seven singers, six percussionists, a couple keyboards, two guitars and a bass. The musicianship is impeccable and One World Tribe keeps the energy level poppin', just as they do in their live shows. This is the CD to spin when you want everyone at your party to get off their butts and start sweating. Outstanding songs include "Touba" a mid-tempo grooving tune with right-on world rhythms, a beautifully clean guitar solo, and completely unintelligible lyrics (probably because they're in a foreign language). The tune is written by percussionist M'Baye Rama Diagne. Another great song is "Tell Them", a "message" reggae tune as authentic as anything Yellowman, Peter Tosh or any of the masters have put out. "Resistance" is worth noting, too, for its great vocal harmony and inexorable pulling rhythm. While influences from Marley to Earth, Wind & Fire can be heard on *The World Today*, the songs are all fresh and the CD should be a welcome addition to anyone's collection.

Gusto

**Boss
reggae**

**BY GARRAUD
McTAGGART**

News Contributing Reviewer

Western New Yorkers were favored with near-ideal weather conditions for an outdoor concert by one of the finest of the old-guard reggae artists still alive, Burning Spear.

The sky was blue and cloudless over an audience that might very well have been one of the biggest (and perhaps the liveliest) in this year's Lafayette Square series.

It was a remarkable confluence of meteorological conditions, infectious rhythms and an enthusiastic, pumped-up crowd.

Winston Rodney, known around the world as Burning Spear, proves his greatness every time he and his band set foot on stage.

Those mighty Wailers, Bob Marley and Peter Tosh, may be gone, but their fellow traveler is still around, fueling reggae's incendiary grooves and beats with his righteous voice and a historical perspective and purity of art lacking in many of the current day toasters and boasters.



BILL WIPPERT/Bufalo News

One World Tribe's Preach Freedom at Thursday at the Square.

Words and music are one in Burning Spear's art.

In Thursday's show they audibly showcased Third World political concerns in addition to preaching aspects of Rastafarian doctrine, providing a lyrical double axis around which songs like "Marcus Garvey" and "Calling Rastafari" revolved.

There was a sense of majesty and sureness of purpose to Spear's show.

The band, a tautly focused outfit with a killer horn section and a powerful, pulsing drum/bass combo, laid down a basic riff as the mighty man started by exhibiting a kind of static charisma for the first few songs.

A little further into the program, Spear expanded his personal space to include the set of congas and percussion toys to his right, bending the other rhythm players to his own vision before returning to center stage for more vocalizing.

The singer then retreated, seemingly, into his own world, caught up in the moment and circling like a dervish in slow motion, before returning, like a true professional, to a song's lyrics right when the rhythm required it.

The whole process was timelessly organic yet subtly powerful in its execution.

In many ways, One World Tribe, based in Erie, Pa., was a perfect choice to open up the show for Burning Spear. They shared a similar, if less well-formed, political dynamic but also showcased a musical backdrop that included reggae stylings alongside snippets of juju, calypso, soul horn bands from the 1970s and Parliament/Funkadelic.

In fact, their putative lead guitarist (there is a veritable host of multi-instrumentalists in the band) seems to draw heavily on the influence of George Clinton's string benders, Gary Shider and Eddie Hazel, especially in songs like "No Justice, No Peace" and "Money Don't Make It Right."

The band also had quite a stage show, augmenting the basic octet with three or four dedicated percussionists and a quintet/sextet of dancers that moved like a combination of holiness parishioners and an African chorus line.