

# Exhibition in Cuba, Casa de las Américas, 2015

*"Bob Marley: Time Will Tell"*

## International Reggae Poster Contest (IRPC)

### PRESENTACIÓN

En el marco de las celebraciones por el setenta aniversario del natalicio del destacado compositor y cantante de reggae jamaicano Bob Marley, se presentó en La Habana, por primera vez y con la colaboración especial de la VP Records, una selección de más de treinta carteles de diseñadores internacionales dedicados a su figura. Como parte del trabajo del *International Reggae Poster Contest*, múltiples artistas de todos los continentes han rendido tributo a quien es uno de los personajes más singulares y reconocidos de la cultura jamaicana, caribeña y mundial.

Sus fuertes lazos con el movimiento rastafari, con la utopía garveyana del *Back to Africa* y con la libertad, han servido de base a las exploraciones creativas de artistas de setenta y nueve países de todos los continentes. El predominio de íconos de

la cultura rastafari como el león; los colores rojo, amarillo, verde y negro; los *dreadlocks* o la letra de sus canciones pueden identificarse en algunas de las propuestas que forman parte de la muestra. Algunos carteles apuestan por un diseño sobrio y simbólico; otros, por la explosión del color y la simbiosis de múltiples referentes. La apertura de la exposición tuvo lugar durante el Seminario Especial *Bob Marley: Time Will Tell*, dentro del Coloquio Internacional "La Diversidad Cultural en el Caribe", el lunes 18 de mayo en las salas Manuel Galich y Contemporánea de la Casa de las Américas.

*Reggae was the music that was heard far and wide because it carried with it the aspirations of a new generation determined to stand on its own two feet and be counted. Reggae was and will always be the music of the "I," the "I" of "I am here." It gladdens my soul to see a whole new generation from all different places around the world adopting Reggae as the vehicle that could carry their own reality.*

TED BAFALOUKOS,  
Director of "Rockers"  
Andros 2014



International Reggae Poster Contest (IRPC). Courtesy: Michael Thompson

The International Reggae Poster Contest (IRPC)<sup>1</sup> is an initiative designed to celebrate positive international reggae culture. The contest highlights the globalization of reggae and the resounding impact of its message. The contest was founded by Michael Thompson and Maria Papaefstathiou in 2011. The umbrella term "reggae," as used by the organizers of the

<sup>1</sup> Please invited to visit: <http://www.reggaepostercontest.com/> or <https://www.facebook.com/InternationalReggaePosterContest?ref=ts>

International Reggae Poster Contest, encompasses all the popular Jamaican musical genres: Ska, Rocksteady, Roots Reggae, Dub, Dancehall and the unique Jamaican Sound System.

The primary reason for organizing the poster contest is to construct an international platform to showcase a far-reaching vision: the erection of a world-class Reggae Hall of Fame museum and performance center in Kingston, Jamaica, that celebrates the voice, vision and vocabulary of Jamaican popular music. The ideal architect for this grand enterprise is Frank Gehry, a name synonymous with inspiring architectural design that stimulates urban transformation. The International Reggae Poster Contest is the start of a global campaign that takes advantage of the powerful tools of social media and creative expressions through the medium of the visual arts. The other important objective of the IRPC is to help raise awareness of the Alpha Boys' School, a vocational institution for underprivileged youths, located in the heart of Kingston and founded in 1880 by the Sisters of Mercy. This school is a great Jamaican success story, producing some of the most notable legends in the history of Reggae, including Don Drummond of the Skatalites, the singer Desmond Dekker and Yellowman, one of Dancehall's first superstars.

MICHAEL THOMPSON was born in Kingston, Jamaica, and now lives in Easton, Pennsylvania, United States. He studied graphic design at the Jamaica School of Art, now the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing



Arts in Kingston. Themes of the anti-apartheid movement and the struggles in Latin America were evident in his earlier designs, drawings and paintings (1970s – 80s). During that period, he won two successive poster competitions, which gave him the opportunity to participate, with the Jamaican delegation, in the 11th World Festival of Youth and Students in Havana, Cuba in 1978, and in Moscow in 1985. He describes his visit to Cuba as “an

amazing experience and a tremendous opportunity.” There, he was introduced to the Cuban poster designs created by ICAIC (Cuban Film Institute) OSPAAAL (Organization for Solidarity with the People of Africa, Asia, and Latin America) and Casa de Las Americas. Michael's visit to Cuba, and his exposure to Cuban posters created by these organizations greatly inspired his poster design aesthetics.

Michael uses his art effectively with social media to stimulate awareness globally, and to spark conversation about many social and political issues. He uses poster art to express solidarity or protest issues that he feels passionate about: war, global poverty, racism, peace, justice, “One Love,” and the environment. He also designs posters celebrating and promoting his historical roots and cultural Jamaican heritage, such as Jamaica's popular music, Reggae.

Michael's creative expressions are influenced strongly by Jamaica's popular music and culture, primarily from the golden period of the 1960's through 1980s. His Reggae poster project on Flickr is an effort to reawaken a sense of greatness and celebration of one of the world great music; the richness of this genre being a deep source of inspiration for his art. Over the years, he has designed numerous posters covering Ska, Rocksteady, Dub, Roots Reggae and Rocksteady captured with an exuberant and colorful style. Michael's posters have drawn much international attention and have been exhibited in International exhibitions. His Reggae posters are now on tour in Europe with the Reggae Movement Exhibition.

MARIA PAPAESTATHIOU, from Athens, Greece was the first one who embraced the idea for an



international Reggae Poster Contest and accepted to partner with Michael in creating the contest. Maria has been a practicing graphic designer since 1996. She graduated and received an award for poster design from the Faculty of Fine Arts and Design of the Technological Institute of Athens.

She has been focusing her research on poster design and particular on social poster design and recently exploring portrait design ([www.itsjustme.net](http://www.itsjustme.net)). Her most recent poster project is a series of designs on a subject that is dear to her heart, the collection celebrates the personalities of Greek traditional and popular culture. These include actors, singers and musicians; specially performing Rebetiko and Laiko music, this is an ongoing project. Maria specializes in the field of coffee-table books, book-cover design, currently works as an Art Director at publishing house Stamoulis Publications S.A. Maria Papaefstathiou is also the creator of [www.GRaphicART-news.com](http://www.GRaphicART-news.com), a blog for graphic designers and photographers, focusing on high quality designs and art photography. As a poster designer her posters have been selected and exhibited in several countries around the world, through the Mandela Poster Project, Green+You-Pray for Japan, Green+You-Pray for Africa, Intl. Reggae Poster Contest, "Innovation for Education", 10th International Festival "Jazz w Ruinach", "ε/Design your Expression", "W|Design for life", "1st international poster festival of Shenzhen", "Right to Decide".

Maria and Michael firmly believe that Reggae music has the power to bring generations, nationalities and communities together. This international calibration drawing creative people from around the world to participate in the contest; an excellent example of the global "One Love" message that Bob Marley sung about. *"We believe that poster art and Reggae music is a perfect marriage to stimulate and inspire designers from around the world to create amazing art that will become iconic visual masterpieces for future generations to admire and to learn from. It is a wonderful way to show the global appreciation for the powerful music."*

Grand Contributors:

CAROLYN COOPER is an international consultant on culture and development. She is the author of two influential books, *Noises In the Blood: Orality, Gender and the*



*'Vulgar' Body of Jamaican Popular Culture; and Sound Clash: Jamaican Dancehall Culture At Large.* She is the editor of the award-winning *Global Reggae*. She currently teaches at the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica, where she is a professor of literary and cultural studies.

PATRICIA CHIN: with more than 50 years in the music business, Pat Chin has always been a champion for innovative, independent music and a pioneer among women in the music industry.



From the retail store and distribution business, founded with her late husband Vincent "Randy" Chin in their native Kingston, Jamaica, the Chin family was present at the birth of reggae music. In 1979, the family moved to their business to Jamaica, NY in the NYC's Queens borough and adopted the moniker "VP" (for Vincent and Pat). As a woman in the male dominated world of reggae, Miss Pat (as she is affectionately known) nurtured the business and relationships with artists, producers and suppliers in Jamaica and an ever growing customer base. Miss Pat is the face of VP Records and continues to serve as a powerful female leader who continues to inspire her artists, customers and her community.

Under her leadership, VP Records has created a reggae empire and contributed to the careers of countless artists including Shabba Ranks, Sean Paul, Etana, Maxi Priest, Gyptian, Bunji Garlin, Beenie Man, Lady Saw and Mavado among others. With the passing of Vincent Chin in 2003, the next generations of the Chin family have taken on leadership of the day-to-day operations as Miss Pat works to expand her legacy through helping others. To commemorate the 35th anniversary of VP Records in the United States, Miss Pat has collaborated with celebrated graphic artist and philanthropist Michael Thompson to establish the VP Records Reggae Archive, a mobile exhibit of the history of reggae.



Their vision is to find a permanent home for the exhibit establishing a legitimate reggae museum. With her unique spirit and indefatigable energy, Pat Chin continues her musical journey.

The International Reggae Poster Contest (IRPC) exhibited 36 brilliant Bob Marley posters at the “Bob Marley: Time Will Tell” symposium held at Cuba’s historic Casa de las Américas, located in the beautiful Art Deco Vedado district in Havana. The week-long exhibition and symposium were part of the larger International Colloquium on “Cultural Diversity in the Caribbean”, held from May 18-22. The winning poster entries on display represented designers from a variety of countries including the 2014 top winners Enrico Varrasso (Sweden), Avi Marciano (United States), Dariush Allahyari (Iran), and the 13th place winner, Wendy Guerra from Cuba.

The guest line-up attending the opening included Prof. Horace Campbell, Syracuse

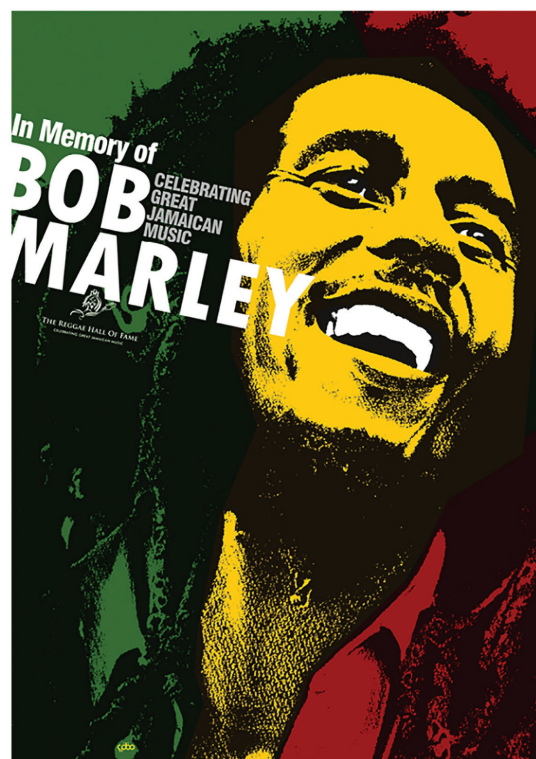
University; Prof. Carolyn Cooper, University of the West Indies, Mona; Prof. Yolanda Wood, Director of the Centre for Caribbean Studies, Casa de las Americas; Prof. Samuel Furé Davis, University of Havana and Mrs. Patricia Chin, co-founder of VP Records. Michael Thompson, a.k.a. Freestylee, spoke about the contest vision toward a Reggae Hall of Fame in Kingston, Jamaica. Michael created the official *Bob Marley Time Will Tell* poster and signed copies of the postcard for those attending the opening. After the exhibition, all the posters on display will be placed in the archives of Casa de las Americas. The IRPC is proud to donate the 36 posters to the rich collection of art, literature and music that comprises the permanent collection.

*Comité Organizador  
Programa Interdisciplinario de Estudios  
Caribeños de Postgrado*

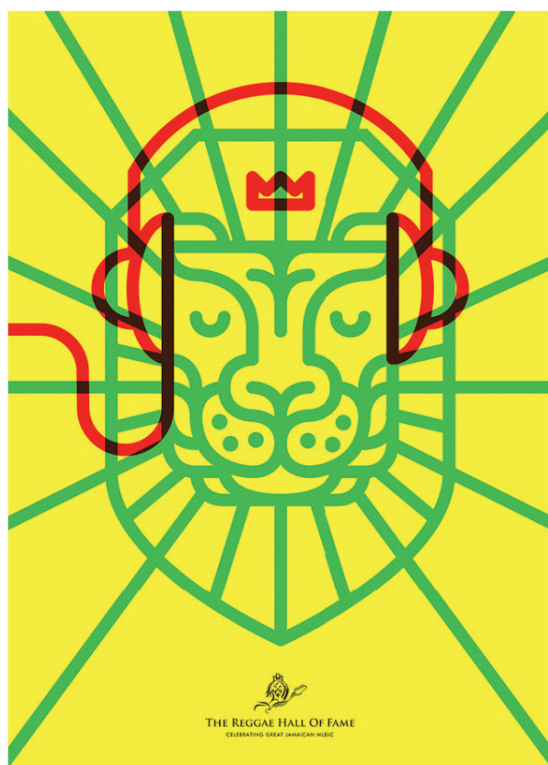
*Winners Posters, courtesy Michael Thompson:*



Byoung Il Sun, South-Korea



Mohammad Mozafari, IRAN



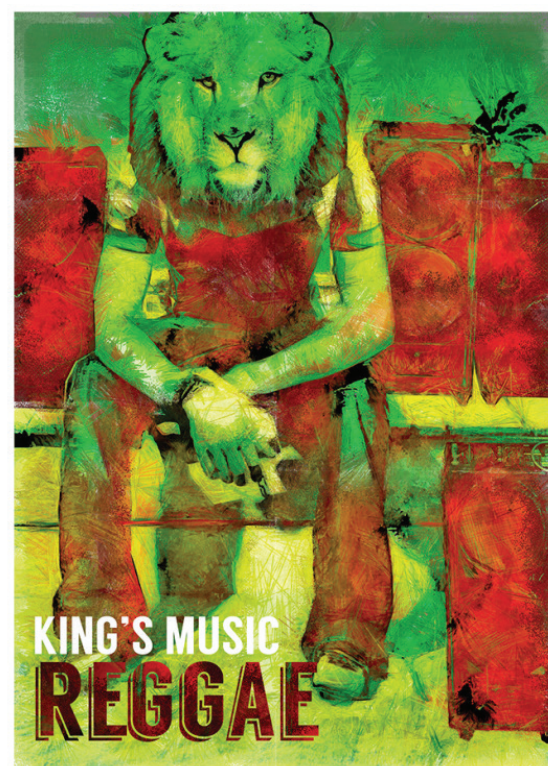
Andreas Wikström, SWEDEN



Caio Sponton, BRAZIL



Jack Pugh, VENEZUELA



Wendy Guerra, CUBA