



NATTY DREAD INTERNATIONAL: A REGGAE JOURNEY OF RESILIENCE AND INSPIRATION

BY RAS BANAMUNGU

KIGALI, RWANDA – Natty Dread International, a renowned reggae artist and peace activist, has etched his name in the annals of the music industry through a remarkable journey filled with highs and lows, perseverance, and a commitment to spreading messages of peace and love through his music.

Natty Dread International's early roots in the music industry can be traced back to 1990, when he embarked on his musical odyssey. Born as Raphael Mitali in 1964, he is commonly known by his stage name, Natty Dread, which has become synonymous with his iconic reggae persona. His journey in music and activism is a story of passion, resilience, and unwavering dedication.



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One of the significant milestones in Natty Dread's career was his East Africa Tour in 1995/96, where he had the privilege of performing alongside Cedella Booker, the mother of the legendary Bob Marley. This tour not only enriched his musical experience but also deepened his connection to the reggae icon, Bob Marley.

In May 2020, Natty Dread International made headlines when he revealed that he owns personal belongings of Bob Marley, including a jacket, showcasing his deep admiration and respect for the reggae legend. Natty Dread's connection to Bob Marley runs deep, not only through his music but also through the memorabilia he treasures.



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However, life hasn't been all sunshine for this reggae maestro. In 2023, it was revealed that Natty Dread was battling prostate cancer and undergoing treatment in Hamburg, Germany. His journey as an artist and peace activist has been intertwined with personal challenges, but he remains resilient in the face of adversity.

More than just his distinctive dreadlocks and reggae music, Natty Dread International is known for his Rastafarian beliefs, which he proudly ascribes to. His journey is a testament to the cultural and spiritual influences that have shaped his music and his commitment to promoting messages of unity, love, and peace.



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Natty Dread International's impact on the Rwandan music scene is profound. He first visited Rwanda in 1996, and quickly rose to fame after reinterpreting the song "Ab' Iwacu Muraho" originally composed by FPR Inkotanyi. His unique blend of reggae and his devotion to his craft have left an indelible mark on the music landscape in Rwanda.

Natty Dread's journey in the music industry has not only been about performing on stage but also about spreading his messages of peace and love to the world. He has used his music as a medium for positive change, earning recognition as a peace activist.



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As Natty Dread International continues his fight against cancer, he remains an inspiration to many, showing that even in the face of adversity, the power of music and the commitment to promoting love and peace can be a guiding light.

Natty Dread International's story is one of musical passion, personal challenges, and an unwavering commitment to spreading messages of unity and peace. His journey serves as a beacon of hope for aspiring musicians and a testament to the enduring power of reggae music in touching the hearts and souls of people worldwide.