



OPEN LETTER FROM TRACII MCGREGOR, PRESIDENT – GARGAMEL MUSIC, INC.:

**THE VOICE OF JAMAICA WILL NOT BE SILENCED
REGGAE STAR BUJU BANTON'S RASTA GOT SOUL TOUR IS ON**

[New York, NY/Kingston, JA — September 2, 2009] Gargamel Music, Inc. is pleased to confirm that four-time Grammy nominated artist and Reggae icon, Buju Banton will kick off his **Rasta Got Soul US Tour** on September 12th in Philadelphia. We are all disappointed by the hasty cancellation of a few shows by Live Nation/House of Blues and Goldenvoice/AEG, but fans will be happy to know we have over 30 confirmed shows that are definitely playing and we are working to replace the canceled dates in those markets. Now our team is primarily concerned with setting the record straight on the grossly inaccurate portrait of Buju being painted by certain organizations and then systematically relayed to the masses via the press.

Buju Banton was all of 15-years-old when he wrote "Boom Bye Bye" in response to a widely publicized man/boy rape case in Jamaica. It was not a call to violence. The song was re-released on a popular dancehall rhythm in 1992 and caused a huge uproar after receiving commercial radio play in the States. Following much public debate back then, prominent gay rights leaders *and* Buju decidedly moved on. For the record, it is the only song he ever made on the subject — and he does not perform it today.

Those who have followed Buju Banton's musical journey and have actually listened to his extensive catalog, know of his development into a world-class singer, songwriter and performer who can quietly sell out such prestigious venues as the Theater at Madison Square Garden in New York and Brixton Academy in London. He does not advocate violence. There has never been a shred of violence at any of his live shows. In fact, he commonly preaches against violence – against all people.

Buju's consistently positive messages of peace, love and enlightenment have never been lost in the music. His 1995 Grammy-nominated album *'Til Shiloh* marked a spiritual and musical transformation that yielded the classic narratives "Untold Stories," "Wanna Be Loved" and "Murderer," which personified the horrific increase in gun crimes in Kingston's inner city. His Grammy-nominated *Inna Heights* (1997) garnered numerous comparisons to the late, great Bob Marley.

Long before Hollywood raised its collective consciousness about Darfur, there was Buju Banton wailing about the genocide happening in "Sudan" on 1999's *Unchained Spirit*. His *Friends For Life* (2003) and *Too Bad* (2006) projects were both acknowledged with Grammy nods for Best Reggae Album. Buju's latest roots opus, the independently released *Rasta Got Soul* (2009), has been welcomed with critical acclaim in the US, Europe and Japan.

The artist's love for humanity is not just demonstrated in words but also in deeds. Twelve years ago he responded to the AIDS crisis in Jamaica by launching Operation Willy, an organization focused on raising monies for HIV positive babies and children who lost their parents to the disease. For three years he served as a celebrity spokesperson for Upliftment Jamaica, a US-based non-profit committed to working with underprivileged youth back home.

Yet none of these personal and professional accomplishments matter much to a gay lobby hell bent on destroying the livelihood of a man who has spent an entire career making amends — his way. Sadly, it seems they are much too concerned with waging war against a single artist, rather than elevating their 17-year-old initiative into a larger, more fruitful discussion that could perhaps effect real change.

Gargamel thanks the fans for standing in solidarity with Buju Banton. We encourage all music lovers and Caribbean nationals to continue their support of Reggae by coming out in record numbers to witness an unforgettable live performance by one of its greatest artists ever.

BUJU BANTON LIVE!

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN – New York, New York // Aug. 13, 2009

New York Post

"The entire house bounced when [John] Legend hooked up with dancehall star Buju Banton for "Can't Be My Lover." There was a yin/yang to that pairing as Banton's fast, gritty Jamaican patois gave the reggae number edge, while Legend's mellifluous Marley-like tones eased that roughness."

BICENTENNIAL PARK – Miami, Florida // Feb. 28, 2009

Reggae Report

"Buju stole the show."

BRIXTON ACADEMY – London, England // August 12, 2007

The Evening Standard

"The positive atmosphere [Buju] created might have surprised anyone basing their view of the singer on press coverage vilifying him as a gay-bashing hate monger."

THE MUSIC HALL – London, Ontario // July 6, 2007

Exclaim Magazine

"When the king of reggae finally took the stage, he instantly transformed the restless crowd into his adoring loyal subjects. Devoting much of the first half of the set to his groundbreaking *Til Shiloh* and *Inna Heights* albums he handed the vocals over to the audience for "Untold Stories" and occasionally took time, preacher style, to remind listeners of the socially conscious message underlying much of his music."

THEATER AT MADISON SQUARE GARDEN – New York, New York // May 6, 2007

Global Rhythm

"Buju has sold out Madison Square Garden three times, and if that doesn't magnify this star's power, how about the fact that former New York Knick Patrick Ewing was in attendance with his family? The infamous reggae star blazed across the stage with fancy footwork, while his booming voice carried to the back rows and beyond."

BB KINGS – New York, New York // Oct. 24, 2006

New York Times

"An extraordinarily intense performer, and a surprisingly diverse one...He went from crooning the protest song "Untold Stories" (from his classic 1995 album *Til Shiloh*) to delivering a flurry of wicked lyrics, including some from his new CD *Too Bad* (Gargamel), a pretty good collection of sleek dancehall tracks."

CENTURY CLUB – Los Angeles, California // Oct. 3, 2006

Los Angeles Times

"Banton hit the stage with a burst of energy, efficiently ripping through several songs before getting to "Mr. Nine" a cautionary tale about the havoc guns have brought to his country...Banton's interplay with his smooth backup singers was similar to that Bob Marley had with the Wailers. As Marley did, Banton, through his music and words Tuesday, encouraged people to rally against oppression and become self-sufficient."

STUDIO SEVEN – Seattle, Washington // Sept. 27, 2006

The Stranger

"Banton commanded the attention of everyone in attendance, jumping, high-stepping, and dashing from one side of the stage to the other with the energy (and sweat production) of an aerobics instructor, singing every song with conviction. The set spanned continents and genres, with incorporation of American surf-rock classics and African folk songs, all morphed into a dancehall-reggae template."

MEDIA PRAISE!

FOR THE NEW BUJU BANTON ALBUM:
RASTA GOT SOUL

"An instant classic!" – **All Music Guide**

"Immaculate." – **The Buffalo News**

"Three tracks - the anthemic "Magic City," "I Rise" and "Lend A Hand" - should become immediate additions to his live set, each as spirited and inspiring as those performances." – **Billboard Magazine**

"He owns one of the most powerful voices in Jamaican music. Now Buju Banton proves anew that "Rasta Got Soul," putting his gritty pipes to spiritually fired, R&B-meets-reggae entreaties." – **The Philadelphia Inquirer**

"This 15-track, self-produced disc examines life, love, integrity, empathy, and standing tall with a musical track and vocals that hit the right groove." – **The Toledo Blade**

"The work of a modern master who's learned the lessons from his forebears and has applied them to this impeccable collection of modern roots... Rasta Got Soul is celebratory, inspirational, positive, optimistic and uplifting. It's also well worth the wait." – **Exclaim! Magazine**

"[RGS] delivers a few worthy additions to a catalogue already rife with dancehall and roots reggae classics." – **Skywritings Magazine**

"Dope!" – **Hip-Hop Weekly**