



## TAJ WEEKES BIOGRAPHY

Taj Weekes is an enigma... on the one hand deeply serious and intensely passionate about his worldviews and on the other hand a gentle and humble man with a quick and easy smile. Driven to inspire conscious thought and provoke discussion through his poignant poetry and lyrics, Weekes says, "I write from the heart and I speak about issues that move me. I believe that's what really matters."

Born and raised on the island of St. Lucia, Weekes grew up the youngest of ten children in a family where music was ever present. "We were always singing and playing in my house. My father was an incredible singer... we took that from him." By age five, Weekes was singing in church and by the age of nine, he and his brothers had formed a band, playing in local talent shows, the town hall or parish centers around the island.

Weekes would painstakingly write down the lyrics from songs he heard, often tinkering with the words in a song to make them his own creation. "From the time I started writing," he said, "I did my own thing. I was always attracted to the lyrics in the songs and would listen to people like Lord Kitchener and the Mighty Sparrow. They were like town criers telling the stories of the day. Reggae is what you call the poor man's cry. It's music you can sit and listen to. It's listening music."

Weekes grew up blissfully unaware of category or genre - to him, great music was, and still is, great music no matter what the style. "My musical influences were quite varied, 'cause the radio stations played all kinds of music. There were no formats, so we grew up listening to everything from reggae to calypso to classic rock and classical music."

Weekes soon felt confined by the borders of St. Lucia and left home to fulfill his musical ambitions in North America. There he formed his band Taj Weekes and Adowa and label Jatta Records. Weekes and his band Adowa unite a true social consciousness with an unforgettable reggae groove. Blending in elements of acoustic roots rock and afro-folk simplicity, the band's vibrant sound defies genre and has garnered critical acclaim and a wide audience across the globe.

To date, the group has released two full-length albums, **Hope and Doubt** and **Deidem**, which won "Best Reggae Album" at the Just Plain Folks Music Awards and was shortlisted for a Grammy Award. The band released their much-anticipated third CD, **A Waterlogged Soul Kitchen**, in August 2010. AWSK presents a set of fresh reggae songs laced with acoustic strings, guitar, violin and cello, and splashes of soulful harmonica for an album that challenges listeners to redefine common perceptions of reggae and where it's heading as a genre.

Always striving to bring awareness to the issues he is passionate about, Weekes founded his charity, They Often Cry Outreach (TOCO), in 2007 to improve the lives of underprivileged children in the Caribbean through sport, enrichment, educational and wellness programs.

Named a Goodwill Ambassador by the International Consortium of Caribbean Professionals and recognized by a division of the United Nations, Weekes addresses issues such as global warming, casualties of war, domestic and youth violence, diabetes and health, poverty and the welfare of children through both his music and his charity.

**Media Contact:** Sarah Scott - Jatta Records - Tel: (805) 403-5973  
Email: sarahscott@jattarecords.com Website: TajWeekes.com, TheyOftenCryOutreach.org