



## MUSIC PHILL JUPITUS

### Misty in Roots: Roots Controller

REAL WORLD/REGGAE



**PLAY MISTY FOR ME**  
Misty in Roots, the band that recorded John Peel's all-time favourite album

**H**aving been asked to mark the anniversary of John Peel's passing by picking out an album that he influenced me to buy, I realised that there's barely a corner of my record shelves he didn't touch. Here was a broadcaster who could play Ivor Cutler before Extreme Noise Terror, sweep into Roy Orbison and then go to something by Lee "Scratch" Perry – and it would all make perfect sense. Weeknights, ten until midnight, the airwaves would be an irresistible and exotic mix of sounds, interspersed with his velvety Liverpool drawl.

But that's just when he got to *me*. I'm sure there are those of you who heard him at weekends, on the World Service, or even when he lived in Texas.

That someone with so broad a love of all things musical could select one album above all others seems somehow contrary, but John Peel did. And I know, because I asked him. 1979's *Misty in Roots Live at the Counter-Eurovision* was the album: it's sadly no longer available, but two of its best tracks,

*Man Kind* and *Ghetto of the City*, live on in the excellent retrospective collection *Roots Controller*.

Misty in Roots were always aware that the message of their music was key, and were vocal proponents of conscious reggae. *Roots Controller* is a great look at the three-decade-long career of one of British reggae's seminal bands. At John's funeral I wasn't at all surprised to see them quoted in the order of service booklet. They'll also be playing at the Royal Festival Hall on Wednesday, alongside New Order, the Fall, Super Furry Animals and Laura Cantrell, as part of the international tribute to John. Highlights can be heard on Thursday on Radio 1.



Phill Jupitus presents BBC 6 Music's breakfast show

#### TO ORDER

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