



**Sonia Collymore's Juno Award  
2005**

# “And the Winner Is...” Reggae Music Awards Around the World

**by Russell Gerlach**

Time was when the only big awards shows we'd see were Grammys for music and Oscars for movies. As a reggae fan, you probably asked, "Why do I see all these awards shows for movies, music, fashion, etc. and nothing for reggae?" Well, reggae awards shows are alive and well, and increasingly getting exposure as part of both the mainstream ceremonies we view on TV or attend in person in the U.S. Canada, the U.K. and the Caribbean. Here is your guide to the annual awards.

The most prestigious reggae award given in the U.S. in the last 20 years has been the Grammy Award for Best Reggae Album ([www.grammy.com](http://www.grammy.com)). The first Reggae Grammy was won by Black Uhuru in 1984 for Anthem when the category was added to the award line-up with the help of reggae historian, Roger Steffens. The Grammy is voted on by over 15,000 National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences music industry members. Over the years, winners include Ziggy Marley and the Melody Makers, Shabba Ranks, Shaggy, Burning Spear, Bunny Wailer, and this year's winner, Toots Hibbert, for his True Love CD, after three previous nominations.

With the evolution of reggae music, there has been talk within the Recording Academy of adding a Dancehall Reggae category in addition to Reggae, which would be welcomed by many. We also don't get to see the award presented live during the telecast which is frustrating to all who want to see their favorite artist get up and accept the award with a speech. The over 105 categories presented on one day each February are many, but we'll keep hoping the Reggae category will get its due for TV coverage.

Another of the long-running U.S. awards shows held each May, is the International Reggae and World Music Awards produced by Chicago-based Martin Interculture Ltd. Luciano was the big winner at the 24<sup>th</sup> annual awards held in New York City, May 7<sup>th</sup>. He took home four awards for Best Album/CD for Serious Times, Best Male Vocalist, Most Cultural Entertainer and the Emperor Haile Selassie I Award for Spiritual Service through Music. Other multiple-award winners were Wyclef Jean, Toots Hibbert, Beenie Man, Rupee, Tanya Stephens and Elephant Man who won two each.

The 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Reggae Soca Awards will be held in Florida in September. The awards are usually held in the springtime, but have moved back, with the beautiful venue of Broward Performing Arts Center in Ft. Lauderdale, FL hosting the successful awards

produced by Hi Class Promotions. Beres Hammond and Morgan Heritage were among last year's big winners.

Canadian reggae singer, Sonia Collymore, was announced as the 2005 JUNO Award winner of Best Reggae Recording for her debut CD, What You See is What You Get, at the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual JUNO Awards held April 3, 2005 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The Juno Awards are considered by the music industry as the Canadian equivalent of a Grammy. It was the second JUNO Award win for Sonia ("You Won't See Me Cry" single won in 2003). Canadian artists, Leroy Brown, and the band, The Sattalites were top winners in 2004.

In the U.K., the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual MOBO (Music of Black Origin) Awards will be held this October in London. Sean Paul and Wayne Wonder have performed and won the last two years for Best Reggae Recording.

Jamaica also has its own version of the Grammys, with the annual Jammies held in Kingston that started in the '80s. Unfortunately, the last Jammies awards ceremony was held in the mid '90s. Another consistent awards ceremony is the Jamaican Federation of Musicians Awards, with ceremonies in Montego Bay, Ocho Rios and Kingston. Artists who took home awards last year were Dean Fraser, Richie Spice and Sizzla for Album of the Year.

A new awards show is the BIGGA Caribbean Music Awards. Iyah Ites Promotion will be hosting it November 2005 in St. Croix. The awards acknowledge persons within the music industry who have contributed towards Caribbean music.

**Reggae Awards Calendar:** May 2005 - Jamaica Federation of Musicians Awards; May 2005 - 24<sup>th</sup> Annual IRAWMA Awards - New York City - [irawma.com](http://irawma.com); June 2005 - Toronto Reggae Music Awards - Toronto, Canada - [canadianreggae-world.com/TorontoReggaeMusicAwards](http://canadianreggae-world.com/TorontoReggaeMusicAwards); September 2005 - 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Reggae Soca Music Awards - Broward Performing Arts Center - Ft. Lauderdale, FL - [reggaesocamusicawards.com](http://reggaesocamusicawards.com); October 2005 - 10<sup>th</sup> Annual MOBO (Music of Black Origin) Awards - London, England - [mobo.com](http://mobo.com); November 2005 - 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Bigga Caribbean Awards - St. Croix, Virgin Islands - [iyahites\\_stcroix@yahoo.com](mailto:iyahites_stcroix@yahoo.com); February 2006 - 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Grammy Awards - [grammy.com](http://grammy.com); March 2006 - Canadian Reggae Awards - Canada - [canadianreggaemusicawards.com](http://canadianreggaemusicawards.com); March 2006 - Washington DC Reggae Awards - [dcreggaearwards.com](http://dcreggaearwards.com); April 2006 - Juno Awards - Canada - [juno-awards.ca](http://juno-awards.ca) ♡

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