

SUBATOMIC SOUND

Artist: Lee "Scratch" Perry & Subatomic Sound System

Title: "Super Ape Returns To Conquer"

Label: Subatomic Sound

Catalog #: SS033

Format: CD, Digital, & Vinyl 12" (tracks 2-11 only)

Release: Sept 22, 2017

Genres: Dub/ Roots Reggae/ UK Steppers

Tracks: 1) New Ark Subatomic Energy

2) Zion's Blood

3) Chase the Devil | feat. Jahdan Blakkamoore & Screechy Dan

4) War Ina Babylon

5) Dread Lion

6) Patience Dub

7) Super Ape

8) Curly Dub (Sing Along Jah Jah Children)

9) Underground Roots | feat. Ari Up of The Slits

10) Dub Along | feat. Screechy Dan

11) Three in One (Go Deya) | feat. Screechy Dan

12) So It Conquer

13) Croaking Lizard (dubstrumental mix)

14) Black Vest (dubstrumental mix)

15) Super Ape (dubstrumental mix)

16) Dread Lion (dubstrumental mix)



SONG MOOD, STYLE, & GENRE SUMMARY

Reggae classics/ Big tunes: Chase the Devil, War Ina Babylon, Underground Roots

UK Steppers/ 4x4 beats: Super Ape, Curly Dub, Dread Lion, Go Deya, Patience, Dub Along

Deep mystical Black Ark dub vibes: Super Ape, Curly Dub, Patience, Zion's Blood, Dread Lion & dubstrumentals

Sunny feel good, roots reggae vibes: Dub Along, Go Deya, War Ina Babylon, Black Vest, Croaking Lizard

Heavy African/Ethiopian Jazz influences: Super Ape, Curly Dub, Dread Lion, Zion's Blood, Super Ape dubstrumental, Dread Lion dubstrumental

SONG DESCRIPTIONS, LENGTHS, BPM, & KEYS

1) New Ark Subatomic Energy [Length: 0:33 Tempo: N/A Key: N/A] This short introduction is a portal for the listener to enter the consciousness of Lee Perry and the concept for the album, opening the gate to sounds from live shows, from nature, and his mission statement to combine his mystical Black Ark studio vibes with New York city Subatomic energy to create a new sound for the 21st century based on the dub Perry invented in Jamaica in the 1970s. Ambient noise from Perry & Subatomic live shows in Jamaica and the USA give way to the ocean in Negril, Jamaica as Perry announces, "I'm walking in water right now" a stones' throw from his birthplace 81 years before. A Pisces who claims his father is King Neptune, Perry says that every night while he sleeps, he turns back into a fish. In the day, his boots are his boats, transporting him over the earth. Climbing out of the ocean and into a tree in front of his home, his New Ark, Perry bangs stones together and swings from a branch shouting "Super Ape!" three times loudly. He then announces that reggae was his ransom which he gave away to Bob Marley in exchange for the freedom to develop his next great idea: Dub! Master percussionist Larry McDonald lays down the trance inducing African pulse to summon the ancestors and Emch dubs the sound into the ether. *Without the crossover promotional financing that catapulted Bob Marley and reggae to the forefront of global consciousness in the 70s, dub has had a slower grassroots development that eschewed commercial success, but instead germinated in the hearts and minds of musicians and producers across nearly every genre from hip hop to electronic music to punk rock and is carried on by sound system operators throughout the world.*

2) Zion's Blood [*Length: 4:24 Tempo: 67/134bpm Key: A minor*] The roots of the mystic spiritual vibes Scratch conjured up from Africa and was known to have instilled in the likes of Bob Marley are here combined with Subatomic Sound's pulsing 21st century sub bass and 909 kick drums guaranteed to rattle massive bass bins like the latest trap or dubstep track while maintaining a deep meditation. *"Zion's Blood is flowing through my vein, and I&I shall never work in vein/ African blood is flowing through my vein/ and I&I will never fade away"* is repeated like a mantra throughout the song, upending typical song structure and in many ways capturing the essence of Scratch's creativity and ideology, reclaiming his lost African history through musical production, inventing the genres of reggae and dub to establish his reputation, but refusing even at 81 years old to stop innovating. Rebuilding this song with no samples from the original, it was critical to capture the magic of the original like the introductory heavy tom toms and whistle that announce the arrival of the Super Ape and the majestic African horns signal the royal Emperor H.I.M. Selassie who Scratch claims to be his spiritual twin (notice the resemblance of their faces). The Wes Montgomery style guitar lines in the original are further developed here by Emch and the regal horns lines, though produced in gritty and vintage Black Ark fashion, are pushed to the forefront to pump up the energy and highlight the African roots of the composition.

3) Chase the Devil | feat. Jahdan Blakkamoore & Screechy Dan [*Length: 3:20 Tempo: 77.5/155bpm Key: A minor*] *"Lucifer son of the morning, I'm gonna chase you out earth!"* One of the most memorable beginnings to any song, one of the most sampled, and one of the most classic in tunes in reggae, Scratch wrote "Chase the Devil" for singer Max Romeo, but in his typical fashion did several remixes and dubs of it, one of which was the hit "Disco Devil" sung by Scratch, and another called "Croaking Lizard" with chatting vocals, chatting being what Jamaicans called the rhythmic speaking which would later in the USA become rap music. All those concepts are tied together in this version with Brooklyn's Jahdan Blakkamoore nailing the opening vocal, Scratch adding new verses to taunt Satan and NYC dancehall don Screechy Dan chatting inna classic Jamaican party rocking style while Emch recreated the music with impeccable reverence to the genius original Black Ark production but with heavy 808 kicks, sub-bass lines, and dubwise congas from Larry McDonald guaranteed to move a 21st century dancefloor. "Chase the Devil" has been sampled and referenced in countless popular tunes across genres, recently by **Kanye West & Jay Z** on "Lucifer" all the way back to the 90s rave anthem by **The Prodigy** called "Outer Space".

4) War Ina Babylon [*Length: 5:19 Tempo: 65/130bpm Key: G major*] Lyrically timely and always a crowd favorite in a live show or DJ set, this version of the reggae classic "War Ina Babylon" has Subatomic Sound System mixing an old school one drop beat into a thumping 909 kick & snare, a reggae bass line mixed into modulating electronic sub-bass, and impeccably reincarnated horns, guitars, and percussion build on Scratch's original influences, introducing stylistic elements of Jimi Hendrix and a new, key-modulating bridge section that veers into Malian blues and features the African kora. Scratch originally wrote the song for singer Max Romeo and included a dub remix "Black Vest" on his original Super Ape album with featured sparse chatting vocals and new horn lines. All those elements are tied together here with Scratch adding new lyrical themes to address current issues with corrupt government, police shootings, and religious leaders while Screechy Dan sings all the vintage Heptones harmonies.

5) Dread Lion [*Length: 4:32 Tempo: 67.7/135bpm Key: A minor*] Deep mystical Black Ark roots dub vibes with majestic horns and chanting vocals evolve into a heavy 4x4 steppers beat and growling electronic bass lines. Another classic and often sampled opening, a fluttering flute accompanies Scratch announcing the jungle lion, core to his philosophy of the indomitable power of nature, before a massive drum roll, heavily effected in signature Black Ark style, gives way to a horn section fit for a king and guaranteed to get lighters in the air. Upending typical song structure in favor of a vocal mantra and dubwise chatting, the hypnotic chorus of voices alternately chants "The roots!" "Dread Lion, king of the jungle, king of the forest, strong like iron". Subatomic Sound extends Scratch's original African influence with Troy laying down blistering Ethiopian jazz inspired sax solos while Emch flips the original laid back beat into a hard charging sound system steppers beat with

heavyweight sub bass and some modulating electronic buzz saws. Scratch adds new lyrical ideas about revolutionary rasta figures like Marcus Garvey and Emperor Selassie, imploring the youth to wake up, to fight, and not give up their rights.

6) Patience Dub [*Length: 3:59 Tempo: 64/128bpm Key: A minor*] One of the headiest and most signature Black Ark style dub tracks, Subatomic Sound System reinvents the music with a horn section mixed up front in what sounds like a classic hip hop track sample you might think comes from a deep Isley Brother cut. Emch flips the beats and bass as the song progresses to go from an old school reggae meditation to a full tilt 4 on the floor steppers beat with wobbling basslines to create a throbbing sound system dub. Meanwhile Scratch adds free form vocals to what had been an instrumental on the original album, extolling the virtue of patience, evoking almost David Lynchian images of a “black river alligator killer”, and essentially dabbing on his past Jamaican rivals like Coxsone, Tubby, and The Skatalites who are dead, gone, or stagnant while he continues to conquer.

7) Super Ape [*Length: 6:20 Tempo: 61/122bpm Key: A minor*] “*This is the ape man/ trodding through creation/ are you ready to step with I-man?*” The title track of the album is reimagined as a pulsing bass fueled four on the floor journey, trodding through creation with the Super Ape, while Scratch proclaims the healing power of music, of vibration, of meditation, and of dub, perfect dub equals perfect love -- synchronicity with nature. Super Ape is Scratch’s metaphor for the power of nature, the power of the sky manifested by the hurricanes with their thunder, lightning, wind and rain that frequently decimated Jamaica. In a time of environmental crisis, the song serves as a reminder of the fragility of humanity in the face of nature and how little we understand about the mystery and magic of nature exemplified by the jungle, the sea, and the elements. Though a self-identifying Rastafarian, Scratch is also very much a naturalist and a vegetarian. Sampled by Murs & 9th Wonder on “Are You Ready”.

8) Curly Dub (Sing Along Jah Jah Children) [*Length: 6:06 Tempo: 62/124bpm Key: A minor*] “Curly Dub” features a bold steppers beat and unlikely swaggering jazz bass line that get turned up and taken on a psychedelic trip back to Africa. Though reggae is often identified by its signature bass lines, Scratch upends convention on this composition with a massive walking jazz bass line originally over a four on the floor steppers beat (somewhat groundbreaking in the 1970s) that is redone by Subatomic Sound in heavyweight fashion with tight 808 house kicks, big belly sine wave bass, and an added energy boost from improvised Ethiopian sax solos – extending the original American jazz influence all the way back to Africa. Screechy Dan reincarnates Scratch’s original vocals that harken back very clearly to the vocal phrasing style that Scratch famously nurtured in Bob Marley. Scratch blends his spirituality with signature humor, proclaiming “I am free” and that he is black Moses, here to free the people, imploring the to feel it, smell it, and taste it. Scratch was a huge influence on the Beastie Boys, one of the few respected artists also known for their humor, who featured Scratch on their track Dr. Lee Phd.

9) Underground Roots | feat. Ari Up of The Slits [*Length: 4:27 Tempo: 72.5/145bpm Key: F minor*] The ganja tune “Underground Roots” originally mostly instrumental, features Ari Up, pioneering singer of the first all-female UK punk band The Slits, joining Scratch on vocals for an exploration of the metaphor of underground roots and culture. Sadly it this was Ari’s last recording session, shortly before she passed away, recorded not long after her live performance with Scratch, Subatomic, & Dubblestandart in NYC. Ari and Joe Strummer of the Clash dated in the early days of UK punk. Ari introduced him to reggae and even taught him some guitar chords. The Clash brought the Slits on tour with them and scored a big hit cover Lee Perry’s “Police & Thieves” track, later asking Perry to remix their dub album “Black Market Clash”.

10) Dub Along | feat. Screechy Dan [*Length: 2:50 Tempo: 68/136bpm Key: A major*] “Come Along” delivers the pure feel good reggae vibes made that made Scratch famous for his collaboration with Bob Marley, like transporting you straight to sunny Jamaica with bare feet on a sandy beach next to the ocean. Screechy Dan drops a new chatting verse shouting out his favorite Brooklyn and Jamaica neighborhoods, summoning the vibes

of Jazzbo or U-Roy as a tip of the hat to the fact that Scratch was the first to ever record chatting on a song. The diaspora of Jamaicans to New York City, which Screechy Dan was part of, led to chatting over dubs at sound system parties which was the precursor to what would later become rap music in the Bronx. Often rappers ranging from Talib Kweli to Foxy Brown shout out Screechy. Foxy name drops him in her hit “Oh Yeah”.

11) Three in One (Go Deya) | feat. Screechy Dan [*Length: 4:59 Tempo: 72/144bpm Key: D dorian*] “Three in One” is a brilliant combination of Scratch’s American jazz and soul influences with the pure feel good reggae vibes made famous by Scratch for transporting you straight to sunny Jamaica. Subatomic Sound upped the energy of the music flipping it from a classic one drop to a steppers beat half way through the song. Screechy Dan kills the main vocals with a Curtis Mayfield style falsetto inviting the listener to “lick the chalice” and hailing up ancient “African knowledge” while following that up with classic Jamaican chatting verses summoning the vibes of Jazzbo or U-Roy as a tip of the hat to the fact that Scratch was the first to ever record chatting on a song. Omar delivers almost Miles Davis style trumpet solos that blend American jazz with a pinch of Nuyorican Fania salsa. Scratch does his own chats on the spiritual tip and drops some sweet melodies of his own closing it out with “Jesus Christ return to paradise” suggesting the need for spirituality to return to Jamaica and set things right in the wake of dancehall raggamuffin gangster culture. Chatting over dubs at sound system parties was the precursor to what would later become rap music in the Bronx.

12) So It Conquer [*Length: 1:59 Tempo: 145bpm Key: F minor*] Scratch exits the album on this track same as how he started, a pulsing African percussion beat swirls out of the ocean and onto the stage as Screechy Dan leads a massive crowd participation during an encore of Subatomic Sound System “Black Ark Vampires” track, hailing up Lee Scratch Perry & Subatomic Sound System. Finally Scratch closes the gate behind him as he walks off stage and back into the ocean in Jamaica announcing “So it came, so it saw, so it conquer” off to sleep once again with his father King Neptune. “I’m walking in water right now” are his final words that Emch twists them up in a swirl of Space Echo feedback

13) Croaking Lizard (dubstrumental mix) [*Length: 3:16 Tempo: 77.5/155bpm Key: A minor*] The classic “Chase The Devil” riddim was remixed in dub as Croaking Lizard on the original 1976 Super Ape album and on this reincarnation Emch extends the original Wes Montgomery influenced guitar lines to create a melody throughout the song, while dubbing Larry McDonald’s masterful conga playing and other elements the reupped heavyweight riddim throughout.

14) Black Vest (dubstrumental mix) [*Length: 5:12 Tempo: 65/130bpm Key: G major*] The classic “War Ina Babylon” riddim was remixed in dub by Scratch as “Black Vest” on the original 1976 Super Ape album and on this completely instrumental reincarnation Emch adds impeccably reincarnated horns, guitars, and percussion build on Scratch’s original influences, introducing stylistic elements of Jimi Hendrix, jazz influenced sax solos, and a new, key-modulating bridge section that conjures Malian blues and features the African kora.

15) Super Ape (dubstrumental mix) [*Length: 6:21 Tempo: 61/122bpm Key: A minor*] The title track of the album is reimagined as a pulsing bass fueled four on the floor journey, trodding through creation with the Super Ape Removing the vocals uncovers the layers of guitar, horn, and melodica lines underpinning the melodies, and gives the dub echoes room to stretch out over the riddim, taking the high energy meditation to a next level.

16) Dread Lion (dubstrumental mix) [*Length: 4:32 Tempo: 67.5/135bpm Key: A minor*] Deep mystical Black Ark roots dub vibes with majestic horns and chanting vocals evolve into a heavy 4x4 steppers beat and growling electronic bass lines. Removing the vocals uncovers the layers of guitar, horn, and melodica lines underpinning the melodies, and gives the dub echoes room to stretch out over the riddim, taking the high energy meditation to a next level.