Click on link to listen to Dr. Rita Marley's Earthstrong tune!
Alfarita Constantia Anderson was born on July 25, 1946 to parents Cynthia “Beda” Jarett and Leroy Anderson. She is affectionately called ‘Rita’ an abbreviated version of her birth name Alfarita. During Rita Anderson’s early childhood her parents separated and she was adopted by her Aunt, Viola, a well-respected seamstress. They lived in Trench Town Kingston.

From a tender age, Rita Anderson aspired to be a nurse and attended the Bethesda School of Practical nursing. However, God had destined for Rita Anderson to be the ”Queen of Reggae” and assigned her a mission to bless the world with song. As a child Rita Anderson often entertained her father Leroy “Papa Roy” Anderson with song while he worked. In her childhood Rita Anderson also competed on a program called "Lanamans Children's hour" hosted by a musical veteran called Vere John. Rita Anderson emerged the winner with a magnificent rendition of "Our Father-Lord’s Prayer by Mario Lanza." A song Rita Anderson’s aunt taught her. Little Rita Anderson always delighted her Aunty Viola with that song while she sewed.

She formed the musical trio The Soulettes. During Rita
Anderson’s teenage years she made the acquaintance of a local Trench Town youth, Robert Nesta Marley (Bob Marley) and love, faith and music became their bond. On Feb 10, 1966 they were married and their lives became forever entwined.

Internationally, the name Marley is synonymous with reggae music and Jamaican culture,. It is no coincidence that the talented young Rita Anderson was destined to become an integral part of the musical Marley family. Bob Marley is the King of Reggae and his wife Mrs. Rita Marley provided him with vocal support as a member of the I-Threes. Mrs. Rita Marley also forged an extraordinary career as a solo artist.

As the Matriarch of the Marley Family, Mrs. Rita Marley wears many hats and has been instrumental in the initiation and completion of great works internationally, regionally and locally. In 1986, she had the vision and wisdom to transform Bob Marley’s house at 56 Hope Road in Kingston, Jamaica into the Bob Marley Museum. It is in her capacity as Founder and Chairperson of the Robert Marley Foundation; the Bob Marley Museum; the Bob Marley Trust; the Bob Marley Group of Companies and the Rita Marley Foundation - that Mrs. Rita Marley continues to make manifest her commitment to the works of her husband, Bob Marley; her children (including the GRAMMY Award winning Ziggy Marley & the Melody Makers); and her people - by fulfilling her mission to enlighten, educate and entertain through her philanthropy and music. With her purchase of the former Federal Records at Marcus Garvey Drive and subsequent relocation of Tuff Gong International to this new address - this organization is now a leading record manufacturing and distribution company in Jamaica, the Caribbean and the world.

"The aged be protected, the infants nourished and cared for.” These are indeed the words that inspire the vision that drives and propels Mrs. Rita Marley - and which have sustained her status as a spirited force and an ambassador of love and of reggae music.

Mrs. Rita Marley is a member of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Her baptismal name is Ganette Mariam. It means Paradise of St. Mary. Mrs. Rita Marley is head of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Building Fund. Its main project is the erecting of a Cathedral at their Maxfield Avenue address, where she has also established the Berhame Selassie Home for the Aged.

Mrs. Rita Marley has adopted 35 children in Ethiopia, and works assiduously to impact their lives in a practical and positive manner.
Her donation of arable land to the Rastafarian Nyabinghi group in St. Toolies, Clarendon has encouraged their self-supporting ideology. Mrs. Rita Marley also gives continuous support of food, clothing and medical supplies to people of poor communities.

As a benefactor of countless humanitarian causes, her works extend outside of Jamaica and has reached as far as Africa. In year 2000 Mrs. Rita Marley was enstooled as Nana Afua Adobea 1 (Queen of Development) in Konkonkuru, Ghana. As patron of the Konkonuru Methodist Schools in the Aburi Mountains of Accra Ghana, Nana, as she is affectionately called, assists over 200 children of the Konkonuru Methodist Schools. She is always soliciting assistance for the children and the Konkonuru community. Nana Rita has successfully spearheaded the repairs to the main road. As well as the provision of bore holes to supply safe and clean water. Nana Rita has built the Alpha & Omega Home for the Aged and a clinic to serve residents of Konkonuru.

Mrs. Rita Marley's musical career has seen the production of four successful albums: Who feels It Knows It, Harambe, the 1992 GRAMMY nominated album We Must Carry On, and Spectacle For Tribuffalos, and also the classic reggae album, Beginning, with the I-Threes. Her sizzling 1982 hit "One Draw" created shockwaves around the world and was a massive bestseller. With over two million copies sold. The song made music history as the first reggae single to top the Billboard Disco Charts. It was re-released in April 2014 under Shanachie Records.

Mrs. Rita Marley’s live performance has been captured on the Marley Magic videotape as a memento of the 1996 concert, which broke attendance records for the annual Summer Stage Concert in Central Park, New York.

Her most recent album Sunshine after Rain features tracks produced by her son Stephen Marley, Sly and Robbie, Grub "Asley" Cooper, Denis Charles and Wyclef Jean. Mrs. Rita Marley has extensively toured the Caribbean, Africa, Japan, Canada, the Americas, South Pacific, Australia, the United Kingdom and Europe. Her appearance with the I-Threes, the Wallers and her children The Melody Makers - for a performance with the Fugees at the 1997 GRAMMY Awards marked the first time that any reggae artiste performed for a GRAMMY audience. In 2003 Mrs. Rita Marley toured the South Pacific islands of Tahiti and Noumea. This undisputed Queen of Reggae has performed at the Reggae All Stars concert in Nassau, Bahamas.

In 2011 she delivered a stellar performance at Europe’s biggest reggae concert, the Rototom Sunsplash European Reggae Festival in Spain. The following year, Mrs. Rita Marley captivated fans at the Garance Reggae Festival in France.

Mrs. Rita Marley O.D. (Queen of Reggae) upholds the artistic and cultural standards of reggae and continues to take it to new heights. Her music reflects the versatility and diversity of reggae through the smooth blends of Gospel, Rhythm & Blues, Jazz and Soca. About the message in her music, this Queen Mother declares: "The message is joy, loving and living together, no fighting, no war. Reggae is the heartbeat of a person. It’s the people’s music. Everywhere you go you get

There will always be music
the same response from black and white alike,"...and as sung on the Harambe album "Wouldn't it be nice to have my kind of war, where the weapons would be love and peace and harmony?"

Her autobiography ‘No Woman No Cry’ published by Hyperion, was launched in Europe and Africa and is available worldwide. It is printed in both English and Spanish. Translations will be printed in Swahili, French and German.

Mrs. Rita Marley has been the driving force behind keeping the Legacy of her husband Bob Marley alive and one major activity is the Bob Marley Birthday Celebration each year. In 2005, Mrs. Rita Marley staged celebrations both in Jamaica and Africa under the theme “Africa Unite.” That year, the festivities took place in Ethiopia. In 2006, the celebration was held in Ghana. The event was held in South Africa in 2007 and in Jamaica from 2008 to present.

Mrs. Rita Marley is a proud, vibrant, confident Jamaican woman who is thankful for her many blessings and continues to give back to the two societies she loves dearly, Jamaica and Africa.

In 1996 the Jamaican government awarded her the Order of Distinction (OD) for her outstanding works and accomplishments, which are numerous. In 2004, Mrs. Rita Marley was awarded Personality of the Year in Ghana in recognition of her work through the Rita Marley Foundation. In November 2011 Mrs. Rita Marley O.D was awarded the prestigious Honorable Marcus Garvey Lifetime Achievement Award at the Caribbean American Heritage Awards in recognition of her outstanding charitable contributions. Mrs. Rita Marley O.D was bestowed the Living Legends Awards at the 2012 African International Media Summit (AIMS) in Malawi. The International Women’s Forum honoured Mrs. Rita Marley O.D in May 2012 with the Leading Light Award for her work in music and charity. In August 2013 Mrs. Rita Marley O.D. received an honorary Ghanaian citizenship from the government of Ghana, West Africa for her philanthropic work with assisting the poor and needy. Mrs. Marley was inducted into the Caribbean Hall of Fame in October 2014 for her outstanding work in preserving Jamaica’s music and culture. The African Union Diaspora Africa Forum awarded Mrs. Marley a Living Legends Award on September 12, 2015 for philanthropic works through the Rita Marley Foundation and for spearheading the preservation of Bob Marley’s legacy. On October 30, 2015 Mrs. Rita Marley was conferred an Honorary Doctor of Letters Degree (LLD) by the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica for her invaluable contributions to the Jamaican music industry as a singer, producer, performer and entrepreneur. In May 2016, Dr. Rita Marley was selected one of The 100 Most Influential Contemporary African Diaspora Leaders by International Diaspora Engagement Network Platform. In received the 2017 JaRIA Honour Award in the Iconic Female Artist category. The prestigious University of Fort Hare in South Africa, conferred Dr. Marley an honorary doctorate degree in September 2017. For significant philanthropic works, through the Rita Marley Foundation, and for great musical works.

Mrs. Marley has built a globally recognized empire with the Marley family and, by extension, the spread and reach of Brand Jamaica as a related and intertwined category. She has twelve children, over sixty grandchildren and three great grandchildren.
David Salmon's Epic Essay Earns 1st place

David Salmon

Wolmer’s Boys’ High School, 1st place Winner 5th Annual RMF(JA) Essay Competition

Topic: “Every man thinks his burden is the heaviest, because they feel the pain. Who feels it knows it. But, don’t sit by the window gazing at the moon, get right up and move”.

Lyrics from Dr. Rita Marley’s song, ‘Who Feels It, Knows It’.

According to the award-winning British television series, The Crown, “History was not made by those who did nothing.” These words capture this essayist’s attention and succeed in embodying Dr Rita Marley’s song, “Who feels it knows it.” The song posits that every individual views their challenges as paramount in comparison to others due to the potentially excruciating nature of the victims’ experiences. However, instead of wallowing in the consequences of past burdens, “Who Feels it, Knows it” serves as a call to action to victims suffering under the yoke of their circumstances. One should produce actions to solve problems; without hindrances; there can be no triumph and without problems, there can be no success. By dealing with one’s own unique pain or burden, true strength is shown, as suffering is necessary in order to produce an impactful legacy of action.

Quite often, when one experiences suffering a popular response is to look at the moon or the heavens and cry out in agony. This simplistic response often ignores the full complexity of pain and why each person feels his or her burden is the heaviest. As the song states, “[Those] who feels it knows it.” Each individual possesses numerous idiosyncratic qualities that make him or her immune to various degrees of pain. An athlete, for instance, may think that maintaining fitness is the heaviest burden to bear due to the prerequisites of his profession. While we the onlookers might not recognize the true extent of the athlete’s burden, Dr Marley unites us by appealing to our shared struggles, the burden of fear. She intends to rally individuals like the aforementioned athlete and ourselves to take action and think outside of the box in order to nullify the ill-conceived burdens victims endure.
When challenged in the right direction, this burden of pain can be channelled into meaningful actions. Meaningful action leads to change which can only occur when one is fearful of existing in present circumstances as pain contributes to an individual’s triumph. Therefore, Marley’s song serves as a call to action. An exemplary figure who demonstrated these qualities was Mahatma Ghandi, whose promotion of non-violent protests achieved greater rights and ultimately self-rule for India. Ghandi had the opportunity to live a successful life as a lawyer. However, instead of gazing at the moon while enduring the pain of British colonialism, he challenged the status quo. He knew the potency of that pain compounded with hunger strikes, yet, he got up and moved. He invigorated India’s national consciousness and moved crowds. If Ghandi had allowed his pain to cloud his judgement, then even Jamaican independence would be undermined. Thus, the notion of getting up and moving that is posited in Marley’s song continues to reverberate by individuals in history.

Additionally, she makes a resounding challenge to the “victim mentality” that has taken Jamaica’s future hostage. The greatest challenge that this country faces, is that we as a people are afraid of trying. These fears resonate with the populace to the core of their being. Everyone experiences fear whether the fear of the unknown or the fear of failure. This is echoed by former US President Franklyn D. Roosevelt, who stated, “Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is...fear itself.” This burden proves to be the heaviest as it paralyses the hapless victim resulting in their inaction, thus limiting future opportunities. This is the mentality that Dr Marley preaches against. If the enslaved Africans merely looked at the moon and succumbed under the yoke of slavery, then there would be no emancipation. Their rebellious actions accompanied by undying resilience to the colonial onslaught ensured their freedom. While the intensity of pain can increase as a consequence of taking action, it is through these experiences that individuals learn resilience and the strength to continue on life’s journey despite the metaphorical roadblock that can hamper personal development. Working through pain forms the catalyst for meaningful resilience.

Likewise, Dr Rita Marley’s song also poses as a reflection of her journey to success. She experienced her own challenges or perceived burdens such as financial constraints. A burden is simply a label that the mind creates. For example, a rock can be seen as a significant burden especially when placed on the back of a climber. Everyone sees the weight and the climber’s discomfort. However, that “burden” reveals the climber’s inner strength. After relinquishing that weight, he is stronger than ever. Painful loads become assets when one keeps moving forward as it serves as weights when one participates in the exercise of life. Marley’s song encourages that exercise. It creates the environment to build muscles of mental maturity and fortitude. This mental fortitude encouraged her tenacity and consequently she was able to wade through abandonment and financial burdens from a very young age through to the early years of her marriage. She understood that lack of finances is a debilitating hindrance. Yet, she persevered and uplifted herself and her family through pursuing her music. She did not stare at the moon with eyes of hopelessness and despair; she practiced fixity of purpose. Therefore, it can be argued that her music is a reflection of her own life and the motivations that guided her.

Conclusively, every individual believes their challenge is unique due to the pain they experience. However, the intense pain can be a catalyst for a rewarding triumph as burdens manifest themselves into blessings. If history were laid hostage by those who gazed at the moon and did nothing then it is a fact that the world would possess a less inclusive environment. Albert Einstein’s words, “The world is a dangerous place, not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing,” is represented in “Who Feels it Knows it.” Rita Marley’s song serves as a rallying cry for anyone especially youth to take action and contribute to a meaningful future.
Essay Competition Finalists Awarded Prizes
July 6, 2018

1st place winner—David Salmon (Wolmer’s Boys’ High School) awarded prizes by Rosemary Duncan (Manager, Rita Marley Foundation (JA))

2nd place Ruwenzori Ra (Ardenne High School) presented with prizes by Ms. Beverley Lashley (CEO, National Library of Jamaica & Judge, RMF(JA) Essay Competition)

3rd place Adjaynae Billings (Ardenne High School) & Dr. Kadamawe Knife (Lecturer, University of the West Indies, Mona_Judge, RMF(JA)Essay Competition)

Cheque presented to Essay Competition winner, David Salmon, Wolmer’s Boys’ High School

Front from left—Ms. Beverley Lasley, 1st place winner David Samon (Wolmer’s Boys’ High School), 2nd place—Ruwenzori Ra (Ardenne High School), 3rd place—Adjaynae Billings (Ardenne High School)

Where happy people meet

Harambe
July–November 2018
Mighty Little Musicians Showcase Talents

In keeping with its mission to create opportunities for children in economically challenged communities, the Rita Marley Foundation (JA), implemented music lessons programme at the Holy Trinity Basic School, Maxfield Avenue. Students, ages 5-6, learned the recorder, drums and vocals.

The instructor, acclaimed musician, Mr. Astley 'Grub' Cooper. Recipient of Dr. Rita Marley & Rita Marley Foundation's 2017 award, for contributions to Jamaica's musical heritage.

The students are sharp and serious. They quickly memorized theoretical and practical concepts. In fact, the little learners also have big dreams of careers as professional musicians. The vocalists passionately chant 'One Love' with added lyrics 'Love God, Love People, Love Life.' They magnificently belt out 'Harambe' by Dr. Rita Marley and glowingly sing 'Maxfield Avenue.' The latter, an original piece composed by Grub Cooper.

Recorder players work fingers with agility on their instruments. While drummers beat with fervent enthusiasm.

The students energetically showcased their titanic talents at graduation, on Thursday, June 28, 2018, before beaming family, friends and other guests.

1: Recorder Players

2: From left: Music Instructor Astley 'Grub' Cooper presented with token by Rosemary Duncan, Manager at Rita Marley Foundation (JA)

3: Drummers

4: Vocalists

There'll always be a beat
South African High Commission(Jamaica) on board as partner for Rita Marley Foundation(Jamaica) Public Speaking Competition. Slated for next February 2019. It is an oratory event among high schoolers. That seeks to develop articulate orators who could represent Jamaica at any platform or forum.

Ms. Rosemary Duncan, Manager, Rita Marley Foundation(Jamaica) and Mr. Tyrone Gunnie, Actg High Commissioner, South African High Commission(Jamaica).
Self Esteem Workshop
Mary's Child Home for Adolescent Mothers

On April 21, the Rita Marley Foundation (JA) in collaboration with South African High Commission (JA) presented a workshop titled, 'Trial & Triumphs of Women,' to vulnerable mothers (12-18 years) at Mary's Child Home. It focused on determination, despite circumstances. Facilitator, Mr. Tyrone Gunnie, Actg High Commissioner, South African High Commission (JA), opened with moving narratives about his personal life. A younger sister who ended her life at 12, after being abused by a group of men and beaten by her father to whom she reported the incident. Another sister became a teen mom at 15. Thankfully, persevered and is now a successful woman.

Mr. Gunnie then showed a biopic about a South African girl's struggles for identity and acceptance in apartheid South Africa. Everyone watched the downhearted movie of a determined Sandra Laing. A white girl who looked coloured. She suffered severely for those features. Tormented and expelled from an all white boarding school in Piet Reieif. Despite being born to white biological parents, the government reclassifies Sandra race as black.

At 17, Sandra accepts that she will never be recognized as white. She falls in love and marries Petrus. A black vegetable seller. Sandra's white family is a upset. Thus begins a turbulent relationship with both parents; particularly her father, Abraham.

From birth, Sandra's parents raised her as a white girl. She lived a very comfortable life at home. Upon marriage to Petrus, Sandra experiences the harsh realities of life for black South Africans. She moves to a depressed ghetto with no electricity nor pipe borne water. Their zinc huts and makeshift shops constantly bulldozed and razed at the command of the apartheid government. Thus Sandra, now a mother of two is always on the run with her family. Petrus becomes physically abusive. Sandra with her children flee from him too, in search of her parents.

When apartheid ends in the early 1990s, South African news outlets renew interest in Sandra's situation. The white girl, born coloured. The publicity leads to reunion with her now elderly mother. Sandra's deceased father bequeathed monies with which she started a business.

At the close of the film, most were extremely touched and teary eyed. The young women expressed Sandra's determination despite all odds, resonates with them.

P.S: For safety & security reasons, faces of Mary's Child Home residents cannot be shown.
Rita Marley Competition Winners Voice Their Concerns To University Heads

Not many high schoolers have the opportunity to meet, in person, heads of the top universities in the English speaking Caribbean[ for discourse, guidance and advise in preparation for tertiary level education. Seven finalists from Rita Marley Foundation (JA) 2018 Public Speaking Competition & 2017 Essay Competition were gifted that opportunity on April 9, 2018. The outstanding students, York Castle High School’s Joel Lyn, Wolmer's Girls' High School's Tamoy Campbell, Immaculate Conception High School's Tanisha Francis, Wolmer's Girls' High School's Kuan Kera Wheatley, Jamaica College's Rolando Alberts, Wolmer's Boys' High School's Trevon Fletcher and Wolmer's Girls' High School's Danelle Mathews, held buoyant and indepth discussions with Dr. Stephen Vasciannie, President of University of Technology and Dr. Dale Webber, Pro Vice Chancellor of Graduate Studies & Research, University of the West Indies.

The high schoolers look forward to pursuing careers in technology, medicine, law, politics, business and linguistics. Each came equipped with questions and requesting answers for attainment of academic and professional success. To the extent that the courtesy meetings, each initially scheduled for 45 minutes, ran way beyond the stipulated times. Thankfully, the luminaries were flexible and accommodating. Both expressed they were highly impressed with the calibre of students. The youth also addressed socio-cultural issues affecting Jamaica and the wider world.

During discussion with Dr. Vasciannie, the high schoolers voiced a preference for coed schools over single sex schools. The former they said, enables students to develop the best in themselves. They asserted that single sex schools should have a coed culture, with subjects such as home economics and theatre arts on curriculum at both boys' and girls' schools.

Ms. Nadine Thomas, teacher at Wolmer's Girls' High School, shared that before 2011, most girls were going into Arts. In 2012, most were venturing into sciences. She believes, "students career paths are influenced by socialisation. What students are pushed to do."

The students also put forward their views on gender bias and discrimination. Some stating it would never end. They vocalised that although more women are at primary, secondary and tertiary institutions, more men are in the workforce.
Wolmer's Boys' High School teacher, Mrs. Karen Gobern, expressed that "some young men are from single parent families. Tasked with responsibility as financial providers upon completion of high school. For this reason, they seek work first and education in later years. Society caters to moulding the girl child. While it harbours the belief that boys must man up."

Towards the close of the meeting, Dr. Vasciannie issued the following advise "preparation at university is to fight the world's fight. To help others succeed. School is for us to be able to help others." He also encouraged the students to apply for Rhodes scholarships and furnished information for application.

Dr. Webber provided detailed data concerning U.W.I- its history, faculty, mission, vision. He also guided students on subject selection to assist with their career paths. Dr. Webber, Dr. Hayes (Tourism Studies, U.W.I) and Ms.Stephenson (Admin Officer, Research, U.W.I) reiterated that "education is the best tool for upward mobility." They encouraged students to "do what you love; not what makes the most money. What you love will lead you to money. Some students are failing because they are pursuing their parents dreams. The careers their parents want them to pursue. Not what the student loves."

Both luminaries, Dr. Vasciannie and Dr. Webber, lauded the Rita Marley Foundation's works with the youth. Student, Kuan Kera Wheatley, asserted "the competition empowers and encourages participants to voice their opinions in a formal setting and to influence others." Rolando Alberts added, "we are not a silent generation. We have a platform to voice our thoughts." The group also toured of the Bob Marley Museum.
Art Supplies for St. Isaacs Basic School

The Rita Marley Foundation (JA) in collaboration with Ms. Leigh Ferguson gifted St. Isaacs Basic School, Three Miles, with an array of art supplies—crayons, glue, paper, markers, pencils and glue.

Principal, Ms. Taylor expressed significant gratitude to Ms. Ferguson, Dr. Marley and the Foundation.

Students immediately put the stationery to use; creating exquisite artwork.
We Cherish Our Elders
Rita Marley Foundation (Ghana)

Whenever church bells ring
Where children play and sing
Jamaica Fire Equipment Ltd & Rita Marley Foundation (JA)
Donate Fire Extinguishers

On Tuesday, June 26, 2018, Jamaica Fire Equipment Ltd collaborated the Rita Marley Foundation (JA) for donation of two fire extinguishers to the Home for the Aged and Ganette Mariam Hall at the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Maxfield Avenue. Both facilities have been in operation for several years, without that vital equipment. EOC representative, Mr. Everald Hemmings, extolled the Rita Marley Foundation (JA) and Jamaica Fire Equipment Ltd for their support and assistance.

In any little town you wait around
There'll always be another song