

About our project

The Reggae Sunsplash Preservation Society was founded by two professors at St. John's University in Queens, NY in 2015. Douglas Green was one of the partners who created the original Sunsplash music festival in Jamaica in 1978. Cameron Weber is a cultural economist and historian, and prior to PhD studies was the chief of financial oversight at the US State Department. Douglas owns more than 300 professional quality Beta and U-matic films from 1978 to 1994 of Sunsplash performances. The purpose of the project is to preserve, digitize and stream this historic footage. Artists captured on film during this foundational period for reggae as an artform include Peter Tosh, Bunny Wailer, Burning Spear, Marcia Griffith, Toots and the Maytals, Yellowman, Gregory Issacs, Third World, Steel Pulse, Dennis Brown, Ziggy Marley, U-Roy, Black Uhuru, and Culture and many others. The project will help preserve and build the legacy of the Sunsplash artists.

The Society is seeking \$35,000 in donations to assist with this effort. The funding will go towards website and database development, streaming services and the purchase of hardware and software for digitizing and archiving. We will also be working with our students to catalog the film and to digitize the film with metadata, and with watermarks to create authenticity value in the that many of the Sunsplash performances have been bootlegged with poor quality. Archival protocols for AV digitization have yet to be developed so the project will also contribute towards building "best practices" for professional AV digitization.