



Roots Reggae idealists **Rebelution** start 2009 off on the right note, with its ballot being cast for reigning kings of modern day roots reggae. *Bright Side of Life*, **Rebelution's** sophomore effort, is everything you look for in a roots reggae record.

After 2008's colossal reggae hit and its debut LP, *Courage To Grow*, the Santa Barbara quartet really finds themselves really settling into the position and sound it crafted for themselves on its first record. *Bright Side of Life* shows the band maintaining this "sound." The only thing that seems to have changed is their playing is much tighter (I'm sure having 2008's highest selling reggae record doesn't make you want to change much).

Keeping their feet firmly in the roots reggae door, while slowly but surely realizing they can experiment with heavier bass lines and harder drums, the band is incorporating a sound that is outside the realm of typical roots reggae.

What surprised me most here on this new effort is the instrumental track, *Dubzilla*. Now it's not the overall sound of the song that surprises me. It's what instrument you feel is being showcased. In this case, keys. **Rory Carey**, really steps up his musicianship on this tune, and not with his typical reggae key playing. No, no my friends, it's the heavy line that continues all throughout the song, it really adds structure to the quality of the song. And he wraps it up at the end with this synth-y 20 second or so line that closes the song smoothly and without flaw.

Also, note the pedal use on *Dubzilla* from 1:02 to 1:08, it's not a long time, it's not even an intricate use of the pedal or even great use. It's just unique for a reggae band, it just sort of seems to fit there.

The band is playing tighter than ever, it's got a hit record on their hands, all in all it seems 2009 seems to also be another great year for **Rebelution**. I'm starting to see a trend. Most people celebrate birthdays every year. **Rebelution** celebrates hit reggae records, it's their thing.

Notable tracks: "*From The Window*", "*Bright Side of Life*" & "*Dubzilla*"

By Iain Axness