

GREGORY RABESS



NEW HIT SINGLE Tet Kalbas



AVAILABLE ON ALL MAJOR DIGITAL PLATFORMS



Gregory Rabess - *Wochla*



Tèt Kalbas

Gregory Rabess-*Wochla* is pleased to release a new single to coincide with Emancipation Celebrations 2021 in Dominica.

The single entitled *Tèt Kalbas* (Calabash Head) speaks to the issue of identity, the crushing and reshaping of cultural and spiritual identity as part of the enslavement of African people here in the Caribbean and elsewhere during the period of plantation slavery and colonial rule; the 'mental slavery' which Bob Marley referenced in *Redemption Song*, a condition perpetuated by the colonial education system and much evident today in terms of the negation of African culture, spirituality and identity, the *black skin white mask* syndrome so well articulated by Frantz Fanon. This strategy of reshaping identity was also applied to indigenous people, indeed all colonized peoples, as part of European colonial expansionism in the Americas, Africa and Asia.

In Dominica's creole culture *tèt kalbas* refers to a stupid, empty-headed, brainless person. The song *Tèt kalbas* recounts the poisoning of the mind carried out by the *beke* (white man) using the calabash analogy in which the *beke* removed the brain matter of the enslaved or colonial subjects as may be the case and replaced it *kaka kalbas*, the pulp of the calabash, a poisonous material. This 'poisoning' of the mind spanned various generations during plantation slavery and in the post-Emancipation period and continued in more modern times via colonial education and via western media particularly US television in the era of globalization. Today, many people suffer the effects of that poisoning of the mind. The song issues a call to get your act together, remove the poison be it 'white power', 'white powder', whatever and know your roots and culture, fill yourself with the liberating power of knowledge.

Musically the song draws on the *chanté mas* (carnival song) tradition and the liberating power of Dominican and Caribbean music. Credits: Gregory Rabess, vocals, author, composer. Producer: Krishna Dada Lawrence, Recording Studios: Dadamanufacture, Leroy Wadix Charles: Executive producer.

Tet Kalbas is available on all major digital platforms.

Gregory Rabess Discography

Albums

- Wochla 1992
- Metdjel (Lyrics Master) 2000
- DA Birthday Song 2008

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TET KALBAS

I met this lady
Somewhere in Roseau city
Something she said to me
got me thinking seriously
Music was playing on the radio
It was a bele we know so well
She say this music sound devilish,
something straight outa hell
I tried to explain to her
That's we roots and culture
music straight out of Africa
But no, she wouldn't hear
Bondye o
Sa ki wive fanm sa a o
Well I had to tell her

Chorus

Di beke mess up you head (x2)
He full it up with kaka kalbas
and you think you have so much mwèl
Di beke mess up you head (x2)
He full it up with kaka kalbas
and you think you have a sèvèl
Woy woy woy woy (x 3)
Kaka kalbas se pa mwèl
Woy woy woy woy x3
Kaka kalbas pa sèvèl

It all started in slavery
As part of colonial strategy
To enslave we physically
They had to mess we up mentally
and now after all these century
We still seeing the legacy
Some people in mental captivity
They have a kalbas lèspwi
well if you have kaka kalbas up there
check yourself my broder
if you have kaka kalbas upstairs
Check yourself my sister
Bondye o
Si w se yon tèt kalbas o
Well I have to tell you

Chorus

Rap

tèt kalbas ou defidjiwe
Lèspwi w dechiwe
Ou pa menm konnèt
ola ou ye, kimoun ou ye
Lapo nwè fidji mas beke
Kaka kalbas an tèt ou a
Tiwe sa, jete sa
And get yourself together
Get conscious my broder
Get real my sister
Know your roots and culture
Knowledge is power
Liberating power

Sa ou di a
Ou simye wete kon sa
Epi tet kalbas ou a
Gason ou se on zèzè
Ay lave tèt ou
Mwen menm k ay kouwi mas
Mwen lib, mwen k ay fete
libèwte

Gregory Rabess - Profile

Gregory Rabess is a musician, poet, author/composer, creole activist and communication specialist of Dominica. He is also known by his artistic name *WOCHLA*, after the signature hit song of his first album of the same name. Multi-talented and versatile, he plays several musical instruments including guitar and steel pan. He has produced three albums *Woch-la*, *Metdjel* and *DA Birthday Song* and in addition, *Mizik Séwinal*, a recording of Christmas séwinal music by *Bann Akayo* and co-wrote a music tribute to the late PM Rosie Douglas 'Your Flame Keeps Burning On'. A master lyricist and composer, his songs have been recorded by top local artistes including Ophelia, Hunter and King Hurricane. A calypso writer to boot, he wrote and composed the 1994 Road march winner 'Tiwe-yo' and 'Kwa-la', the following year. His more recent calypso offerings include *Fake Patriots* and *Rise Up Again* performed by Jerd Dorsette (Genius).

Gregory Rabess was a member of the creole jazz group *Mantra* of Dominica, *Playboys* of Martinique and *Nostalgia Steel Band* of London, United Kingdom. He is a founding member of *Bann Akayo*, a top jing ping band from Atkinson. His career as a solo artist began with the release of *Wochla* in 1992. Since then, he has performed at special events and festivals in Dominica, Guadeloupe, Martinique, St.Lucia, Cuba, United Kingdom, France and Seychelles.

Gregory Rabess is also a leading commentator and critic on creole music and culture. Over the years, he lectured, gave media interviews and wrote numerous articles on Dominican music and culture including a chapter in the landmark book *Zouk: World Music in the West Indies*, (by Jocelyne Guibault) published by University of Chicago Press, 1993.

A trained communications expert and video producer, his work in media focuses on documenting and promoting Dominica's cultural heritage. He produced the weekly popular television programme *Kon Lanbi* and a radio programme *Creole Night*. He has served as commentator for DBS Radio's outside broadcasts at events such as the World Creole Music Festival and Calypso monarch finals.

In recent years Gregory Rabess has been focusing on Caribbean jazz music fusion projects including *Woplaz* (bele jazz) and *Creole Romance* (steel pan jazz). He is currently developing a *Bouyon fusion* repertoire.

Gregory Rabess has won several awards for his work in promoting music, *Kweyol* language and culture. These include DFC Award of Excellence in 1999, DFC Recognition Award in 2003, Dominica Cultural Ambassador, Paris Reunion, 2009 and Golden Drum Award in 2010 and the Meritorious Service Award in 2020.

Rabess Videos

Gregory Rabess You Tube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7mEj7dXCWTFIEQ33r8W0w>

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/people/Gregory-Rabess/100018445775746/>