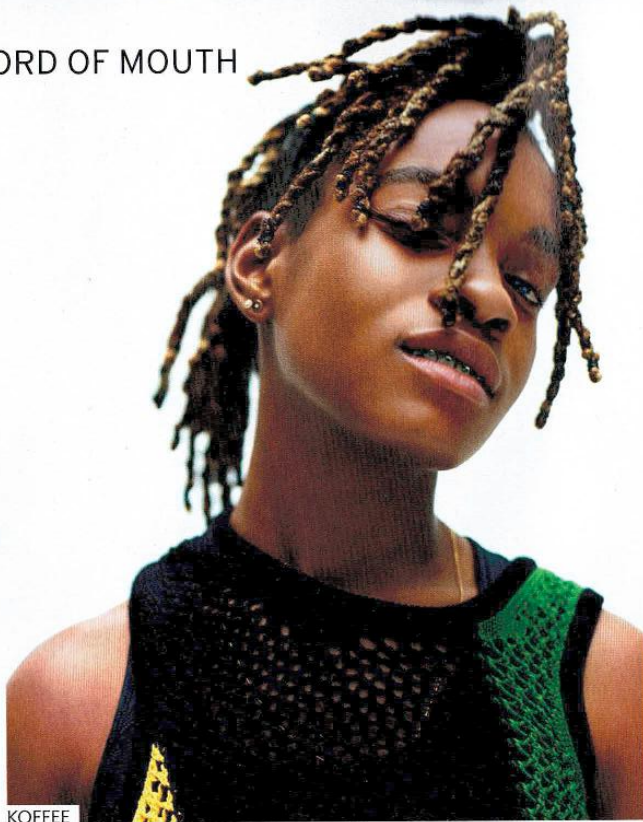


## WORD OF MOUTH

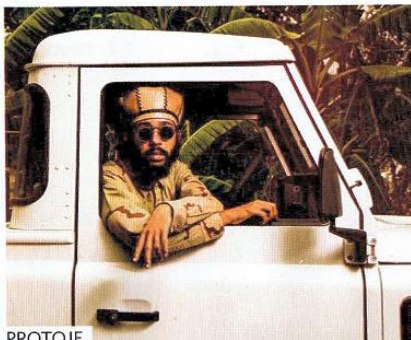


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## REGGAE GOT SOUL

### THE COMEBACK OF JAMAICA'S GREATEST MUSIC SHOWCASE

At the shack-like Bushbar at Geejam Studios on Jamaica's verdant north-east coast, Grammy-nominated reggae star Protoje is drinking rum and Ting with dancehall DJ Assassin and rising British R&B artist Jorja Smith. They're at the legendary spot where Drake, Grace Jones, Amy Winehouse and Björk have all recorded over the years, to trade riddims during a songwriters' retreat. But much of the talk is about roots reggae's return to popularity with Reggae Sunsplash – the festival that hosted Bob Marley in the 1970s and is due to take place this November after an absence of 14 years. 'Reggae has a spirit. No other music is as dedicated to social commentary,' says Protoje, who has been behind the resurgence of peace, love and bouncing beats alongside fellow musician Chronixx. The all-Jamaican line-up is joined by new talent in pint-sized 20-year-old Koffee, who learned to sing harmonies at the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Spanish Town. She had a stellar 2019, topping the Billboard reggae charts for her debut EP *Rapture*, with more than 95 million YouTube views of lead single 'Toast', and wowing Glastonbury with her swagger. 'Reggae has always been about day-to-day life,' she says. 'Bob Marley brought this very Jamaican thing to the whole world. I'm just trying to write what I know, to tune in with my peers; to be positive, and to be real.' BEN OLSEN



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## WHAT'S TAKING OFF AND WHAT'S RUNNING OUT OF FUEL IN 2020

### ✦ ARRIVALS

#### WALKING DOWN UNDER

On Tasmania, Aboriginal-owned Wukalina Walk has recently launched its guided route around the Bay of Fires, putting the focus on both its natural beauty and indigenous background. Meanwhile in New Zealand, the new 35-mile Paparoa Track leads hikers through the karst landscapes, beech and podocarp forests of the Paparoa National Park on South Island's west coast.

#### IRELAND'S WESTERN HUB

Galway takes its turn as European Capital of Culture and one of the high points of a year of cultural happenings includes a gathering of Wild Atlantic Women – Margaret Atwood among them – on 8 March to mark International Women's Day.

#### SOUTH PACIFIC EXPLOITS

The spotlight is being shone on the archipelago of Vanuatu with just-opened sweet and rattan-heavy The Palm House, set on an organic farm on the main island of Efate. To go even more off-grid, adventure outfit Pelorus offers new yacht tours deep into this remote island chain.

### ✦ DEPARTURES

#### ALL-ACCESS AREAS

As part of the ongoing narrative of over-tourism, Denmark's Faroe Islands will close for maintenance for three days this April. Lord Howe Island in the Tasman Sea also sensitively drip-feeds visitors, allowing just 400 per night, while Komodo Island – after renegeing on closing in full – plans to introduce taxes to protect its dragons.

#### STAYING ON LAND

On the other hand, secret islands are opening up as never before, due in part to the launch of new expedition ships and itineraries by thrill-seeking operators. Aqua Blu navigates across the Banda Sea to Indonesia's remote Spice Islands, while Cox & Kings takes curious travellers to spot the seal pups of Canada's Magdalen Islands.

#### THE HERMITAGE TRAIL

On St Petersburg's New Holland Island enclave, developments to turn it into the city's scene-stealing hub continue apace with carefully curated bookshops, globe-hopping restaurants and art installations, plus a new film festival. FIONA KERR