

ETERNAL



homage to Bob Andy

I

Stepping out of the tent, staring into the Somerset sky; so many stars - innumerable, countless. I get to thinking of one of them; the amount of times his iridescence has given me pleasure: innumerable, countless.

How many times, in moments of self-affirmation, have I listened to 'My Time'? Innumerable, countless. How many times, saddened by the world, have I heard 'Fire Burning? Innumerable, countless. How many times, yearning to revisit Africa, have I played 'I've Got To Go Back Home'? Innumerable, countless. How many times have I paid verbal tribute, to the one called Bob Andy? Innumerable, countless.

II

Whether it's when I've seen him live at the 02 Academy or at Hootenanny – or video clips on the screen, words come to me...

If Elegance could speak, I know she would talk of Bob Andy. Her twin sister called Class, would speak of him too. Dignity also, if she could, would sing a ballad in his name. And I know that if able to chant, Wisdom would eulogise his light, undiminished by the onslaught of age.

III

When they give out gold medals to the makers of melody, alongside Bob Marley and Freddie McGregor, Bob Andy's name will be there; at the top of that wonderful listing, that shimmers and sparkles, with the brilliance of their respective songbooks.

IV

Let the Bob Andy Parade begin. Let the spirits of song and joy, intertwine and enthrall. Let the young drummer have his time, as his proud grandmother taps a tambourine beside him. Give full reign to the voice of the woman - and to the girl who joins her in harmony. Bring colour, bring tenderness. Bring a shaker or cowbell: bring everyone to the Bob Andy Parade.

V

At the t-junction of creativity, where lyric, melody and rhythm meet, I saw you Bob Andy, at the intersection of beauty.

VI

In the Music Hall of Fame, as you walk through the shrine, you'll see tributes to Bing Crosby and to Elvis Presley; so I'll put a marker in the spot - awaiting a statue, in homage to Bob Andy.

VII

At the gathering to hear Bob Andy speak, reserve the first rows for the youth; let them be the closest to him: to be the full recipients of his blessings.

VIII

We have been honoured to have had you here with us, Bob Andy; but when its time to leave us physically, I know the ancestors will be happy, waiting to say "Well done"; happy, waiting to receive you with open arms. Blessed are the ancestors, who will have your daily presence.

VIII

I step back into the tent, after my celestial meditation, with deepened assurance; that in the Roots Constellation, the star called Bob Andy, will continue to glow: eternal.