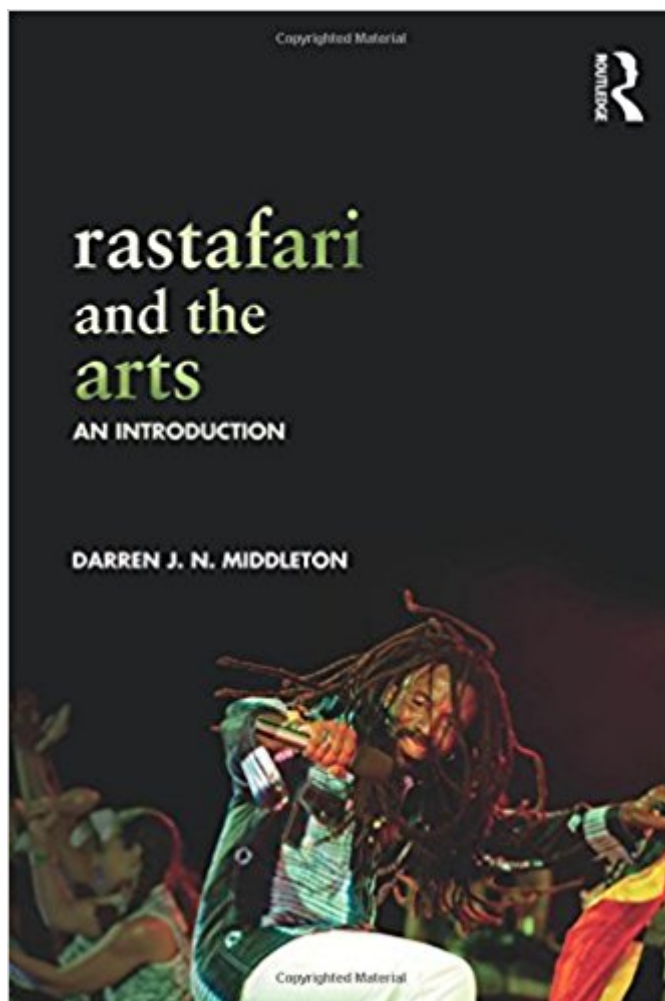


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Rastafari And The Arts: An Introduction



Synopsis

Drawing on literary, musical, and visual representations of and by Rastafari, Darren J. N. Middleton provides an introduction to Rasta through the arts, broadly conceived. The religious underpinnings of the Rasta movement are often overshadowed by Rasta's association with reggae music, dub, and performance poetry. *Rastafari and the Arts: An Introduction* takes a fresh view of Rasta, considering the relationship between the artistic and religious dimensions of the movement in depth. Middleton's analysis complements current introductions to Afro-Caribbean religions and offers an engaging example of the role of popular culture in illuminating the beliefs and practices of emerging religions. Recognizing that outsiders as well as insiders have shaped the Rasta movement since its modest beginnings in Jamaica, Middleton includes interviews with members of both groups, including: Ejay Khan, Barbara Makeda Blake Hannah, Geoffrey Philp, Asante Amen, Reggae Rajahs, Benjamin Zephaniah, Monica Haim, Blakk Rasta, Rocky Dawuni, and Marvin D. Sterling.

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Customer Reviews

"A unique and much needed work. The author's focus on ethnographic/interviews materials as primary source gives the book its own authenticity." Nathaniel Samuel Murrell, coeditor of *Chanting Down Babylon: The Rastafari Reader*, University of North Carolina Wilmington, USA "This book presents an important avenue to understanding a movement that has profoundly influenced contemporary cultural, social and religious thought and action." Barbara Makeda Blake Hannah,

Author of *Rastafari--The New Creation, Jamaica* "Rastafari and the Arts" is a beautifully written, thoughtful, and accessible entry into Rastafari for anyone who is interested in the subject. It is likely to be a "go to" text for classrooms and personal libraries, and the layout of the chapters can be used as a syllabus in themselves. But it is not just for the novice; experienced scholars of Rastafari and Rastafari themselves will find provocative questions and insights in Middleton's book, which rightfully draws the link between Rastafari art and "heart" ("heart"). At a time when "religions" are too often defined by doctrine, this book is an outstanding reminder of the place of experience, expressed publicly and privately in art, as a key to understanding ways of life like Rastafari."

Richard Salter, Oberlin College, USA "These insightful pages carefully analyze the 'visual, literary, and musical' art by or about Rastafari, the trans-national Afro-Caribbean consciousness movement that has supplied an artistic voice of protest to many who have felt disenfranchised. Filled with information, Darren Middleton's major study is a welcomed treasure trove of data as well as a celebration of the creativity of this significant movement." William David Spencer, Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, USA "Professor Middleton has accomplished that rare feat of providing an authoritative text that remains accessible and of immense use to practitioners and theorists alike. This text is one of immense heart, affection and no little scholarly insight and skill. It will remain a seminal resource in the area of Rastafari thought and practice for many years to come." Anthony G. Reddie, Bristol Baptist College, UK "The book's greatest achievement lies in its resolute refusal to stereotype or simplify Rastafari. Middleton has therefore enabled students to engage with the stunning diversity of Rastafari values and practices, and he guides his audience through the artistic worlds of Rastafari with great care and love." Robbie Shilliam, Queen Mary University of London, *Black Theology*

Darren J. N. Middleton is Honors Faculty Fellow and Professor of Religion in The John V. Roach Honors College, Texas Christian University. He has published eight books, received several teaching awards, and he lives in Fort Worth.

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