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Reggae Soundsystem: Original Reggae Album Cover Art: A Visual History Of Jamaican Music From Mento To Dancehall



Synopsis

From its early Mento (Jamaican Calypso) beginnings through to the invention of Ska, Rocksteady, Roots, Dub and Dancehall, Jamaican music is one of the richest and innovative veins in popular music. This deluxe publication, featuring hundreds of stunning full-size record cover designs that span the history of reggae music, takes a timely look at the endless visual creativity of reggae record cover designs--iconic, classic, rare and unique artwork spanning 60 years of Jamaican sounds. Reggae Soundsystem! includes a fascinating introductory essay on the history of reggae by Steve Barrow (author of Rough Guide to Reggae and founder of the reggae label Blood & Fire) and is edited by Stuart Baker, founder of Soul Jazz Records.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book, like others from Soul Jazz Books, is a well made, good looking book. The hard cover boards are thick with a glossy paper stock, and the paper stock inside is a dull luster that sets off the album covers nicely. The reproductions are crisp and clean with bright colors. All in all a well made book to add to your library. The large format (about 12" X 12") presents the album covers in close to full size. There's one album per page with a bit of album production information at the bottom. These albums are a good cross section of "original reggae album cover art" as the title says. Beginning with Calypso/Mento (1950's), the album covers tell a kind of history of the music up through the Dancehall period (80's/90's) when the music became really diluted. Covering about 60 years of Jamaican music there's a lot to look at. The various periods and styles of music are under

their respective chapters and titles, with a short essay on that particular style of music. Simply put--if you're a deep fan/collector of reggae music and/or album cover art--this book is for you. This book can sit alongside similar books like the Studio One album art volume (from Soul Jazz), or perhaps the (smaller in size) book on the history of Island Records which contains more than album art. If you own the "Freedom Rhythm & Sound" volume (also from Soul Jazz) that covers jazz album art from the "revolutionary" period in jazz (roughly the 1960's) you have a good idea of what's here. This is catnip for album art/album collectors/Jamaican music fans. A quality book that does what it sets out to do. There's a companion book of sorts, "Reggae Soundsystem The Label Art Of Reggae Singles", that has hundreds and hundreds of full size 45 RPM singles--and most importantly--their labels--from a myriad of companies. Who knew that there were so many record labels on such a small island? But this heavy 480 page volume has a treasure trove of both well known and more obscure labels, all in color. The book is the same quality but has thick soft covers and is slightly smaller in size.

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Great gift.

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