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# Art And Emancipation In Jamaica: Isaac Mendes Belisario And His Worlds (Yale Center For British Art)



## Synopsis

Coinciding with the bicentenary of the abolition of the British slave trade, this multi-disciplinary volume chronicles the iconography of sugar, slavery, and the topography of Jamaica from the beginning of British rule in 1655 to the aftermath of emancipation in the 1840s. Focusing on the visual and material culture of slavery and emancipation in Jamaica, it offers new perspectives on art, music, and performance in Afro-Jamaican society and on the Jewish diaspora in the Caribbean. Central to the book is *Sketches of Character* (1837–38); a remarkable series of lithographs by the Jewish Jamaican artist Isaac Mendes Belisario; the earliest visual representation of the masquerade form Jonkonnu. Innovative scholarship traces the West African roots of Jonkonnu through its evolution in Jamaica and continuing transformation today; offers a unique portrait of Jamaican culture at a pivotal historical moment; and provides a new model for interpreting the visual culture of empire.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“... an ambitious research volume ... [A]n impressive feat of academic research and critical inquiry into areas of English, Jewish and Afro-American heritage, almost unheard of in mainstream narratives on the history of slavery and the Atlantic world.”  
—Temi-Tope C. Odumodu, *Print Quarterly* (Temi-Tope C. Odumodu *Print Quarterly*)

Tim Barringer is Paul Mellon Professor of the History of Art, Yale University. Gillian Forrester is

Associate Curator of Prints and Drawings, Yale Center for British Art. Barbaro Martinez Ruiz is Assistant Professor of Art and Art History, Stanford University.

This truly fantastic exhibition at the Yale Center for British Art is committed to paper in a really great presentation of historical art of Jamaica! Works of Belisario are depicted in a portfolio facsimile of his original publications of Jonkunno dancers, street vendors and 19th century Jamaican characters. Then there is more - a veritable art gallery of Hakewill, Kidd, Duperly, Robertson and other artists who came to Jamaica and left the fantastic views of life in Jamaica. Duperly was an early photographer who left his Daguerreotypes of Jamaica - each one a work of art - the family Duperly (just about all of the sons and grandsons were photographers) left a real tapestry of photographs of Jamaican life and times in the 19th and early 20th century Jamaica. Those who prepared and presented this magnificent book should be commended for an outstanding job which should be in every "Jamaicaphile's" library. (Another great thing being is the price - shall I say it is a treasure worth every penny you pay for it!) A great reference and one that you will enjoy over and over again!

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