



# Serious T'ings a Go Happen: Three Decades of Jamaican Dance Hall Signs

*Maxine Walters*

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An unofficial history of Jamaican dance hall music told through its graphic design, *Serious T'ings Gonna Happen* brings together more than 200 original posters and signs from the early 1980s through today, drawn from the poster collection of Jamaican film and television producer and director Maxine Walters. Jamaican dance hall emerged out of reggae in the late 1970s and brought with it a new visual style characterized by bright colors and bold, hand-drawn lettering. One-of-a-kind, hand-painted posters advertising local parties and concerts have become a ubiquitous part of Jamaica's landscape, nailed (illegally) to poles and trees across the island. Over the past three decades Walters, who has been called "the queen of Jamaican dance hall signs," has amassed a collection of some 4,000 of these street posters, advertising local "bashments" held at bars, on beaches and in primary schools. Treated by most Jamaicans as simply a fact of life, the dance hall poster has until recently received little careful, critical attention; this volume begins to rectify that with essays by Vivien Goldman and others, alongside the posters themselves, reproduced one to a page in full color. The book also includes liner notes by and interviews with Muta Baruka and Mikie Bennett of Grafton Studios, and Tony Winkler, author of *The Lunatic*, as well as a compilation of original dance hall tracks curated by Mikie Bennett and Rory of Stone Love.

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