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CARIBBEAN LITERATURE



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Caribbean Literature

The literature of the Caribbean is exceptional both in language and subject. More than one and a half million Africans were brought to the Caribbean between the 15th and 19th centuries. Today, their descendants are active in literature and the arts, creating works with strong and direct ties to traditional African expressions. This literary connection, combined with the tales of survival, exile, resistance, endurance, and emigration to other parts of the world, makes for a body of work that is essential for the study of the Black Diaspora—and central for our understanding of the New World and the legacy of colonialism.

And yet the works are often hard to find or altogether lost. Thomas MacDermot's *Becka's Buckra Baby* (1904), for example, is said to mark the beginning of modern Caribbean writing, and yet many of the world's major libraries have no copies. Even today, as authors from the region struggle to get their works published, access to this body of literature is difficult.

Caribbean Literature from Alexander Street Press remedies this, with more than **100,000 pages of poems, novels, short stories, manuscripts, and related content**—including interviews, photographs, archival materials, and other formats—carefully located and secured from archives and rare book libraries, licensed from local publishing houses, and received from the authors themselves.

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Through themes of innocence, exile and return to the motherland, resistance and endurance, engagement and alienation, self-determination, and domination, *Caribbean Literature* provides a powerful new tool for postcolonial studies and reaffirms the region's importance in the context of all literature.

The collection reaches from 1800s to the present, representing writers from the entire Caribbean region, including Barbados, Guyana, Belize, Cuba, Suriname, French Guiana, Haiti, and Jamaica. Where possible, we include the complete written works of each author, including previously unpublished manuscript materials. Kwane Dawes (Ghana-Jamaica), George Lamming (Barbados), V. S. Naipaul (Trinidad), Ismith Khan (Trinidad), Jan Carew (Guyana), Alejo Carpentier (Cuba), Guillermo Cabrera Infante (Cuba), Roger Mais (Jamaica), Derek Walcott (St. Lucia), Edgar Mittelholzer (Guyana), Leon Gontran Damas (French Guiana), René Depestre (Haiti), Edgar Cairo (Suriname), Dionne Brand (Trinidad), Jean Rhys (Dominica), Denis Henriquez (Aruba), E. Kamau Brathwaite (Barbados), and Hugo Pos (Suriname) are among the hundreds of writers included.

The collection also includes supporting interviews in which the writers share their thoughts about literature and life, as well as select audio files, reference materials, journals, and dictionaries.

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