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A review of the book **Brief History of Black British Art** Frédéric Lefrançois

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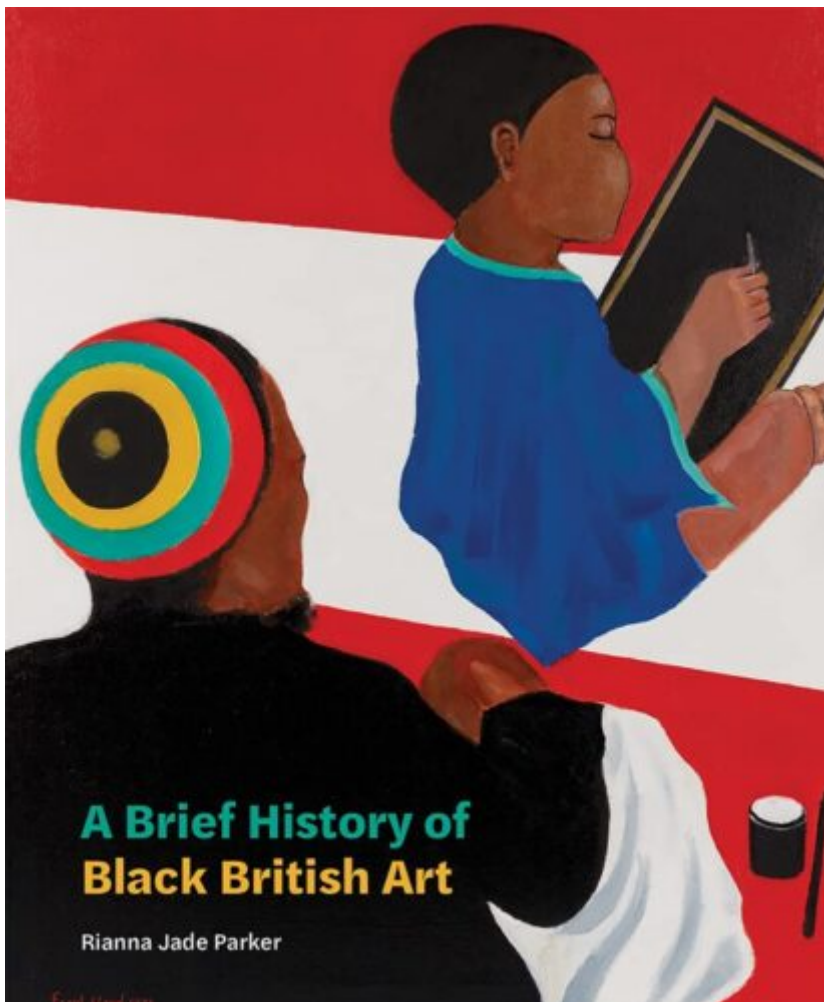


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FEELING BRITISH

Looking into the evolutions of Britishness

A REVIEW OF RIANNA'S J. PARKER'S BRIEF HISTORY OF BLACK BRITISH ART



By Frédéric Lefrançois

Author: Rianna Jade Parker : Publisher: Date; Year: 2021

The special edition of the *Brief History of Black British Art* written by Rianna Jade Parker is a captivating exploration of the rich artistic contributions made by Black artists in Britain throughout history. Thanks to this book, the author will delve into the experiences, struggles, and triumphs of Black artists, shedding light on their invaluable contributions to the cultural landscape of the United Kingdom.

One of the book's notable strengths is its comprehensive approach. It navigates through various artistic movements – painting, photography, the living arts, to name but a few – from the early pioneers to the contemporary artists who continue to shape the narrative of Black British art. Parker skillfully weaves together historical context, personal anecdotes, and critical analysis to provide a nuanced understanding of the challenges faced by Black artists and the artistic expressions that emerged as a result.

The book not only celebrates the achievements of well-known figures, like Grenada-born Denzil Forrester who captured the spirit of a « burgeoning Windrush generation and their children that were fashioning the styles en sensibilities of a new Black British culture ».

It also unveils lesser-known artists who have played a significant role in shaping Black British art. By shining a light on their experiences and perspectives, the author successfully broadens our understanding of the diverse range of artistic practices within the Black British community.

Furthermore, *Brief History of Black British Art* tackles important themes such as identity, race, representation, and cultural heritage. The author's exploration of these topics is thought-provoking and thoughtfully contextualized within the broader socio-political climate of each era. Through this lens, readers gain a deeper appreciation for the complexities and nuances inherent in Black British art and its relationship to broader social issues.

The book is impeccably researched, with an extensive bibliography that allows readers to further explore specific artists or periods in more depth. It is accessible to both scholars and general readers, striking a balance between academic rigor and engaging storytelling. The inclusion of high-quality illustrations and photographs of artworks enhances the reading experience, providing visual examples that complement the text and bring the art to life.

If there is one aspect that could be improved upon, it would be a more in-depth exploration of contemporary Black British art movements and emerging artists. While

the book provides a solid foundation, an expanded discussion of recent developments could have added further depth and relevance to the narrative.

In conclusion, “Brief History of Black British Art” is an insightful and enlightening book that fills a significant gap in art historical literature. Its meticulous research, engaging storytelling, and exploration of crucial themes make it an essential read for anyone interested in the contributions of Black artists to the British art scene. This book serves as both a celebration of their achievements and a call to continue supporting and amplifying the voices of Black artists in the ongoing pursuit of inclusivity and cultural understanding.