

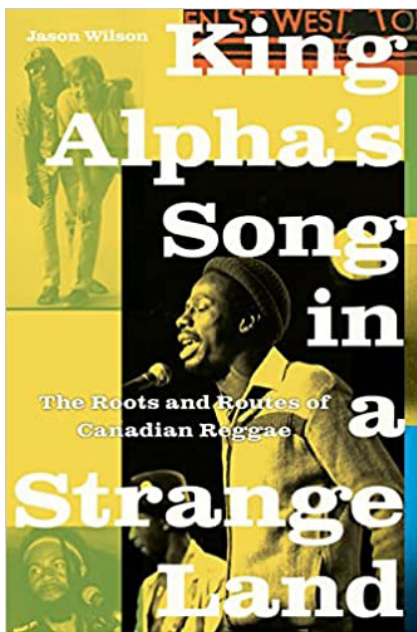
OHS Joseph Brant Award Winner: *King Alpha's Song in a Strange Land: The Roots and Routes of Canadian Reggae*

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The OHS Honours and Awards Committee is pleased to present the 2021-22 Joseph Brant Award to Jason Wilson, for his book *King Alpha's Song in a Strange Land: The Roots and Routes of Canadian Reggae*, published by UBC Press (2020). The Brant Award honours the best book on multicultural history in Ontario.

King Alpha's Song in a Strange Land traces the history of Jamaican migration and culture in Toronto in the 1970s and 1980s, examining broad and important questions of migration, identity, and influence through the lens of reggae's history—its performance, its reception, and the diasporic culture built around the music. Using rich primary sources including over 50 interviews with many of the artists who played a role in bringing reggae to Toronto and sustaining it in the “strange land” of the book's title, Wilson draws on his own experience as a musician, and on the methodologies of history, musicology and migration studies to situate his work within global currents of scholarship on the Black Atlantic. *King Alpha's Song in a Strange Land* envisions reggae music as a series of bridges freely crossed, creating connection among performers and audiences despite differences of race, ethnicity, geography, generations, and culture. The work demonstrates the importance of a distinctive Canadian reading of the “reggae text”—the complex musical, lyrical, racial, and cultural associations that artists of Jamaican background brought to Toronto and developed in new contexts. From its opening paragraphs recalling Marcus Garvey's 1937 Toronto sojourn, to its concluding argument for Reggae music as “an important social space where differences between migrant and host were negotiated...and long-lasting relationships were forged,” the book provides a vibrant narrative that complicates and enriches our understanding of interculturalism in Canada.

The OHS Honours and Awards Committee congratulates Jason Wilson.



Jason Wilson Responds to the Society's Selection



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