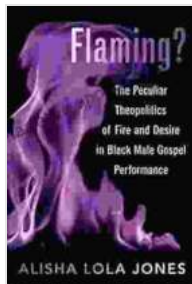


The Peculiar Theopolitics of Fire and Desire in Black Male Gospel Performance



Flaming?: The Peculiar Theopolitics of Fire and Desire in Black Male Gospel Performance by Alisha Lola Jones

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

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In the realm of Black sacred music, the male gospel performer occupies a unique and enigmatic space. Their impassioned renditions of spiritual hymns are not merely performances; they are vessels through which a complex blend of theopolitics, fire, and desire finds expression.

Fire: The Igniting Force



Fire is an intrinsic element of Black male gospel performance. It manifests in the performers' fervent vocals, soaring melodies, and expressive body language. This fire is not simply a physical display; it represents the burning desire for transcendence, connection with the divine, and a transformative experience for both the performers and the congregation.

Desire: The Fueling Emotion

Desire is another powerful force at play in these performances. It is not a selfish or earthly desire but rather a longing for spiritual fulfillment, intimacy with God, and a sense of purpose. This desire fuels the performers' unwavering commitment to their craft and motivates them to pour their hearts and souls into their music.



Desire drives Black male gospel performers to evoke powerful emotions and lead the congregation in worship.

Theopolitics: The Interplay of Religion and Power

The combination of fire and desire in Black male gospel performance has profound theopolitical implications. Theopolitics refers to the intricate relationship between religion and power dynamics within a society. In this context, the Black male gospel performer embodies a unique form of spiritual authority.

Through their performances, they assert their agency and challenge dominant narratives about Black masculinity. They reclaim their place as leaders and influencers within the Black community and beyond, using their music as a platform for social justice and empowerment.

Cultural and Historical Influences

The peculiar theopolitics of fire and desire in Black male gospel performance cannot be fully understood without acknowledging its cultural and historical roots. These performances draw upon African traditions of spirit possession, call-and-response singing, and communal worship.



Furthermore, the experience of slavery and systemic oppression in the United States has shaped the unique ways in which Black males express their spirituality through music. Gospel performance becomes a mode of resistance, healing, and liberation.

Queer Perspectives and Gender Fluidity

In recent years, scholars have explored the intersection of queer perspectives and Black male gospel performance. Some performers challenge traditional gender norms through their fluid body language, vocal expression, and attire, blurring the boundaries between masculinity and femininity.



SATURDAY Apr. 17, 2021
 7:00pm EST LIVE on [facebook.com/NMAAHC](https://www.facebook.com/NMAAHC)

FIRE AND DESIRE

A Conversation on Black Male Gospel Music Performance

 <p>Cheryl James, PhD Author, "Flaming?: The Peculiar Theology of Fire and Desire in Black Male Gospel Performance." @cheryljames</p>	 <p>Malcolm J. Royster, PhD Associate Professor of Musicology, University of Miami @malroyster @malvin13utter</p>	 <p>Bishop Gene Funder, D.D. Senior Pastor, City of Refuge UCC, Oakland, CA @bishop_funder</p>
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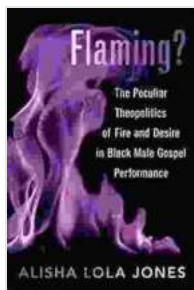
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Black male gospel performance is a space for exploring gender fluidity and challenging societal expectations.

By embracing gender fluidity, these performers not only defy stereotypes but also create a more inclusive and expansive understanding of Black masculinity and spirituality.

The peculiar theopolitics of fire and desire in Black male gospel performance is a testament to the power of music to transcend boundaries, challenge norms, and ignite profound emotional and spiritual experiences. These performances are not just entertainment; they are acts of cultural resistance, empowerment, and transformative connection with the divine.

As society continues to grapple with issues of race, gender, and spirituality, Black male gospel performance offers a rich and nuanced lens through which to explore these complex dynamics. By delving into the fire and desire that fuel these performances, we gain a deeper understanding of the theopolitics that shape our world.



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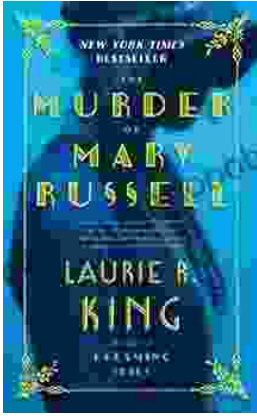
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