

# Reed, Ishmael (1938-) Encyclopedia Article

## Reed, Ishmael (1938-)

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.



# Contents

<a href="#">Reed, Ishmael (1938-) Encyclopedia Article.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Contents.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">Reed, Ishmael (1938—).....</a>	<a href="#">3</a>



## Reed, Ishmael (1938—)

Ishmael Reed, regarded as one of the greatest satirists in America since Mark Twain, is also one of the best known multi-faceted writers of the twentieth century; his titles include novelist, poet, publisher, playwright, literary critic, songwriter, editor, television producer, founder of the multicultural group Before Columbus Foundation and There City Cinema, and essayist. In 1967, he changed the American literary scene when he published *The Free-Lance Pall-bearers*, a novel that set the tone and aesthetic for the eight novels, five collections of poetry, four essay books, and several anthologies that followed. With a writing technique called Neo-HooDoo Aesthetic or Neo-HooDooism, a multicultural style based on Voodoo and African-based religious beliefs which he mixed with elements from other cultural traditions, Reed has consistently supported multiculturalism and argued for a multicultural society in the United States and the world over. Though literary critics have been baffled by his innovative techniques, which include combining several seemingly non-related elements from different time periods into his writings—one novel, *Mumbo Jumbo* (1972), for example, contains photographs, drawings, footnotes, quotes, and a partial bibliography—he has been nationally and internationally recognized as the Charlie Parker of American Fiction. In June 1998, Ishmael Reed received the MacArthur Foundation Award.

### Further Reading:

Bruce, Dick, editor. *Conversations with Ishmael Reed*. Jackson, University Press of Mississippi, 1995.

McGee, Patrick. *Ishmael Reed and the Ends of Race*. New York, St. Martin's Press, 1997.

Reed, Ishmael. *Writin' Is Fightin': Thirty-Seven Years of Boxing on Paper*. New York, Atheneum, 1990.

———. *Mumbo Jumbo*. New York, Atheneum, 1972.

———, editor. *Multi America: Essays on Cultural Wars and Cultural Peace*. New York, Viking, 1997.