



V&A

# THE BOOK LIBERATOR

## Plunder, Presence, Perpetuity

### 5 August 2016

### 18.00 – 21.45

### [www.vam.ac.uk/events](http://www.vam.ac.uk/events)

The V&A, and other UK heritage institutions hold a number of Ethiopian artifacts that were seized under the reign of Queen Victoria. During a military raid in 1868, General Sir Robert Napier ransacked Emperor Tewodros II's fortress at Magdala. Regalia, manuscripts, religious antiquities and more were plundered and auctioned to the highest bidder.

During the 1980s Ras Seymour Maclean campaigned tirelessly to 'liberate' nearly 2000 books from British institutions to reclaim part of Africa's stolen legacy and identity. Explore this and the many stories behind these 'spoil of war' and the future of the Ethiopian 'Fatherland'.

View sacred art from Ethiopia and items associated with the Napier invasion; hear the Majesty and the Movement keynote speech with Dr Robbie Shilliam, and panel discussion with Ras Shango Baku; debate the taxonomy of reparations with Esther Stanford-Xosei and Kofi Mawuli Klu; create a personal symbol of 'peace and love' with artist Jackie Mwanza; immerse yourself in Nyabinghi prayers, narratives and songs with the Ras Messengers & Nile Valley Art Ensemble; and embrace a pulsating dub and roots Reggae soundtrack with Ras Digby (Sir Jessus Sound) and Mistah Brown (Tighten Up Crew).

#### **This event commemorates five key epochs in the Ethiopian and Rastafarian calendars including:**

- 50th Anniversary of His Imperial Majesty Emperor Haile Selassie's visit to the Caribbean (1966)
- 80th Anniversary of Haile Selassie's address to the League of Nations (1936)
- 100th Anniversary of Haile Selassie's coronation as Negus (King) Ras Tafari (1916)
- 120th Anniversary of the Battle of Adwa against Italy led by Menelik II in 1896
- 140th Anniversary of the birth of Zewditu I (1876), Empress of Ethiopia 1916-1930.

*In celebration of the 2015–2024 International Decade for People of African Descent  
In collaboration with Rastafari the Majesty and the Movement UK  
Jointly organized with Black Cultural Archives (BCA) for 'Rastafari in Motion' exhibition*

**Free admission**  
Victoria and Albert Museum  
South Kensington,  
Knightsbridge Buses C1, 14, 74 & 414