



What Is Non Returning Status?

Non Returning Status is a project that began as a photo journal by George Washington Rogers, IV documenting the life and spiritual philosophies of the Natti Love Joys, a reggae band living in the mountains of East Tennessee. The project has since developed into a complete multimedia experience, including over one thousand photographs taken over the course of three years, a series of videos documenting the lifestyle and spirituality of the band, and music by the Natti Love Joys themselves.

The Book

Non Returning Status: A Biographical Journey in Pictures

“Everything in the world arises, changes and perishes; nothing remains constant for even a single moment.”

Non-Returning Status.

The Supreme Endeavor.

The highest desire to attain perfect illumination. No longer bound by earth’s undulating tide of birth and death, rebirth is no longer sought.

To overcome pain, sorrow, greed, attachment, desire.

Nobly seeking the narrow path by prayer, meditation and deep thought.

Never to return again.

Non-Returning Status.

Nirvana.

Enlightenment.

Peace.

Om.

Amen.

About The Author



George Washington Rogers, IV

“Karma is more real than anything else in the world, Cause & Effect.”

Jah- T

I’m at this mega department store waiting in line for the cashier and notice that there are hundreds of people enclosed around me waiting in line as well. Patiently. I think about the lives behind each set of eyes I stare into. People watching/reading. It gives me insight into who each stranger is and what he or she is about. I note that out of all the people I read I realize that each individual is his/her own favorite person. Meaning that everything anyone ever does is to simple serve thysself.

This work is my exit.

I’m all about experiencing and documenting the authentic experience.

Untainted by false pretenses and sponsorship bias.

My work is my art and my art is my life. There are no coffee breaks, no paycheck, no insurance, and no security. And that’s the way it has to be to keep it as real and authentic as possible. Your schedule changes on a whim, whether it’s going to Jamaica for a touring gig or covering a music festival that was a late booking.

Everything that I have has gone into this work. No grants, no scholarships, no handouts. I’ve produced this work solely with my own means to assure the quality and authenticity of the subject matter. I believe in the message, the music, and most importantly the people that I have documented and become family with.

The experience, at the cost of all my savings, is the most valuable thing I have ever received. Photographs act as a memory saver. I am the memory man. Creating a catalog, documenting treasure and being metamorphosed physically, mentally, and spiritually by letting go of all pretenses and becoming one with the moment.

The qualitative research for my work has taken over four years of ethnographic acquired data living

and touring with the Natti Love Joys as well as studying and participating in Buddhist, Rastafarian, and Voodoo practices and rituals that has historical origins spanning over two millennia. This immersion let me gain a deep insight into the souls of my fellow artists. Experiencing the spectrum of emotions ranging from birth and death, weddings and engagements, as well as personal Successes and failures.

Intuition and understanding are my two most valuable tools in exploration of reality. I am creating the image of their counterculture. My photographs act as a visual travel diary.

Non Returning Status is about keeping a non conceptual frame of mind and opening up to reality and seeing the world as it is, free of confusion and bias. Accepting that everything is impermanent and always changing and that to exist is to suffer. *Non Returning Status* is my meditation to the testament of being aware of the present and more wholeheartedly engaged with life and its wonder and less distracted and dissipated.

- George Washington Rogers, IV

Rogers is a graduate from The University of Tennessee with a dual Masters in International Business and Converging Media. His work deals with looking for the authentic experience in everyday reality through the use of audio, video and photography. He is also a published author, whose works include [4 Walls](#) (2007), [Eyes of the World](#) (2009) and [Non Returning Status](#) (2009). Rogers has also produced and directed a number of award-winning films that include [Atrophy](#) (2003), [Transmissions](#) (2004), [4 Walls](#) (2007), and [Eyes of the World](#) (2009).

Please visit George's official website at www.WashingtonIV.com

The Documentary

To accompany the release of the *Non Returning Status* photo journal, Brass Knuckles Productions has released a series of video clips documenting both the creation of the book and the history of the Natti Love Joys. Along with original footage shot by author George Rogers, the documentary also consists of archival clips of both Jah-T and Marla before they formed the Natti Love Joys, a series of abstract/viral videos that capture the essence of the material, interviews with Jah-T about his Buddhist philosophy, and of course, live performances by the band.

In order to make *Non Returning Status* a complete multimedia experience, these short video clips were produced and added to the internet during 2008 and the beginning of 2009. This website was launched in January of 2009 when the remaining video clips were added to the web to complete the documentary.

The video clips are available to [view online](#) and will subsequently be available on DVD. This documentary was compiled and executive produced by George Rogers and Brian Greer. All archival footage used with the permission and blessing of the Natti Love Joys.

Natti Love Joys Bio



Based in the mountains of East Tennessee, the Natti Love Joys are a roots rock reggae band that perform classic reggae as well as their own hybrid form of modern, eclectic reggae. Fronted by Anthony “Jah-T” Allen and Sonia “Marla” Allen, the Nattis create a rich sound that is grounded in rich cultural history. Once practitioners of voodoo, Marla and Jah-T are now both ordained Universal Life Church priests. Their music and philosophy blends Rastafarianism, Christianity and Buddhist dharma.

Vocalist and bassist, Jah-T, comes straight from Kingston Jamaica, where reggae music originated. Jah-T trained under the legendary Cedric Brooks during the golden age of reggae in the late 1960s. He also became a core member of such legendary acts as The Congos and led New York City's hottest roots reggae act, Itopia.

Vocalist and keyboardist, Marla, came out of Brixton, England where she was born to Jamaican parents. Marla's journey began in her early teens when she, Sonia Abel, formed the lovers rock group, the Love Joys. The Love Joys quickly became a hit sensation in Europe. At that time, Jah-T was playing at the legendary Wackies studio in the Bronx, where the Love Joys were recording. Marla and Jah-T met and decided to record an album together, *Two Loves in my Life*, but eventually the pairs collaboration led to combining Marla's Love Joys and Jah-T's natti vibe, to form the Natti Love Joys.

The Natti Love Joys are also the founders of [Camp Reggae](#), a reggae musical festival based out of the mountains of Isabella, Tennessee that celebrates the outdoors and promotes the importance of family.

Links:

- [Camp Reggae: Natti Love Joys Official Site](#)
- [Official MySpace Page](#)
- [Natti Love Joys Entry on Wikipedia](#)