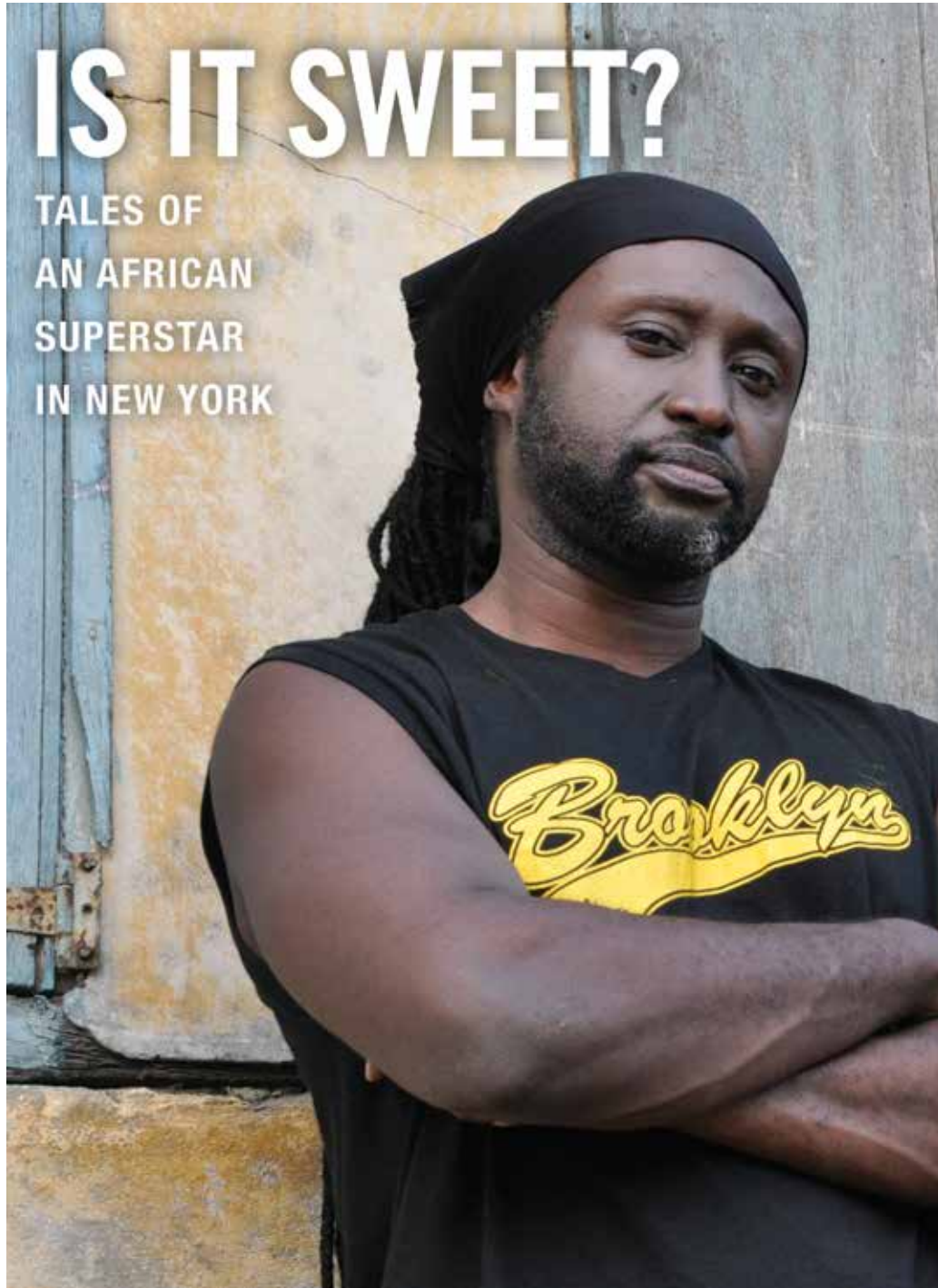


HIPLIFE MUSICIAN REGGIE ROCKSTONE EXPERIENCES THE UNEXPECTED STRUGGLES AND PLEASURES OF LIFE AS AN ANONYMOUS AFRICAN SUPERSTAR ON THE FRINGES OF A COSMOPOLITAN AMERICAN CITY.



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IS IT SWEET? TALES OF AN AFRICAN SUPERSTAR IN NEW YORK

A documentary by Jesse W Shipley

Reggie Rockstone is a celebrity rap musician in Accra, Ghana, where he inspired a young generation of musicians and continues to draw huge crowds. But when he comes to New York to play for the Ghanaian community, he experiences the unexpected struggles and pleasures of life as an anonymous African superstar on the fringes of a cosmopolitan American city.

This film is an experimental documentary built around the spaces, humor, and sounds of African hip-hop music in America. It presents a series of intimate portraits of Reggie and his group of collaborators and friends as they travel, perform, and debate politics, race, and stardom.

IS IT SWEET? Is a follow-up to director Jesse W. Shipley's LIVING THE HIPLIFE which documents the birth of popular hiplife and Hip-Hop music in Ghana by following Reggie Rockstone's rise to fame—and in the process examining political and social transformation for a youth generation in Ghana.

Jesse Weaver Shipley, Ph.D. Sociocultural Anthropology, University of Chicago, is Associate Professor of Anthropology, Coordinator of Africana Studies, and a member of the Peace, Justice, and Human Rights Program at Haverford College. He has conducted field research in Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Britain, and the United States. He is the author of LIVING THE HIPLIFE: Celebrity and Entrepreneurship in Ghanaian Popular Music (Duke University Press 2013) and TRICKSTER THEATRE: The Poetics of Freedom in Urban Africa (Indiana University Press, 2015). He is a filmmaker and visual-performance artist with recent work including feature documentaries LIVING THE HIPLIFE: Musical Life in the Streets of Accra and IS IT SWEET?: Tales of an African Superstar in New York, the multi-channel video installations "Black Star" and "Investigated" (with Khadija von Zinenburg Carroll), and experimental films "High Tea." Journal articles include publications in Public Culture, American Ethnologist, American Anthropologist, Social Text, Cultural Anthropology, and Anthropological Quarterly. He is completing two new book manuscripts, one on the historical relationship between public culture, political spectacle, and charismatic leadership, and the other on global parody. His other new research examines boxing and football as transnational sports.



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