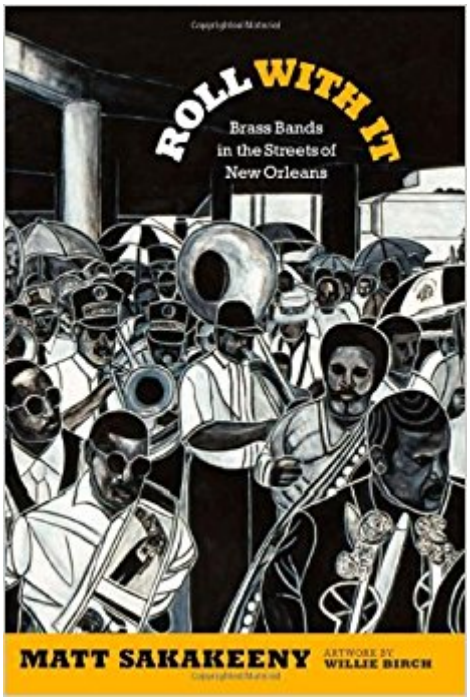
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Roll With It: Brass Bands In The Streets Of New Orleans (Refiguring American Music)



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Synopsis

Roll With It is a firsthand account of the precarious lives of brass band musicians in New Orleans. These young men are celebrated as cultural icons for upholding the proud traditions of the jazz funeral and the second line parade, yet they remain subject to the perils of poverty, racial marginalization, and urban violence that characterize life for many black Americans. The gripping narrative follows members of the Rebirth, Soul Rebels, and Hot 8 brass bands from back street to backstage, before and after Hurricane Katrina, always in step with the tap of the snare drum, the thud of the bass drum, and the boom of the tuba.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ã¢â ¬Å“Roll With It, which includes striking black-and-white illustrations by New Orleans artist Willie Birch, is at once celebratory and saddening: a book of personal stories and a highly researched academic work.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Geraldine Wyckoff Offbeat)Ã¢â ¬Å“Fascinating. . . . The musicians' personal stories are interwoven with historical information, academic reflection, and personal experience, combining to form a highly original work that creates a vivid portrait both of this musical format and the noble but beleaguered city of New Orleans.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Florence Wetzel All About Jazz)Ã¢â ¬Å“As Sakakeeny makes clear, the story of the cityÃ¢â ¬â„¢s brass bands is far more complex than music alone. Beyond its entertainment value, music serves as the Ã¢â ¬Ëœsite where competing social, political, and economic vectors intersect.Ã¢â ¬â„¢ In many ways, these

vectors serve as a microcosm for the problems within the city at large.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Kirkus Reviews)Ã¢â ¬Å“A notable work in that itÃ¢â ¬â„¢s the first critical project to chronicle New OrleansÃ¢â ¬â„¢ bombastic contemporary brass-band scene, the generation of musicians that grew up with century-old hymns in one ear and hip-hop in the other; also, and importantly, itÃ¢â ¬â„¢s a keen, social-justice-minded examination of the turbulent mix of race, economics, culture and tradition in which brass band culture is located.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Alison Fensterstock Times-Picayune)Ã¢â ¬Å“Sakakeeny offers detailed accounts of parades and the inner workings of the bands. The book offers a full picture of their lives and how the cityÃ¢â ¬â„¢s cultural economy works on the factory end. Sakakeeny observes the way the city celebrates its culture and especially its musicians, but the book also exposes the way many of them survive on the same earnings as low-rung service industry workers. ItÃ¢â ¬â„¢s an engaging look street-level look at the bands that so often are used to represent and symbolize the city.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Will Coviello Gambit)"Roll With It is informative on many levels, detailing song structures, jazz history, neighborhood developments, and weaving information together through anecdote and research. It also poses a bigger question: If our city has economically benefitted from selling culture as a post-Katrina resource, are musicians getting what they deserve? Roll With It explores the answer.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Samuel Nelson Where Y'at?)Ã¢â ¬Å“Damn, now thatÃ¢â ¬â„¢s musicology. . . . Among the bookÃ¢â ¬â„¢s other accomplishments, itÃ¢â ¬â„¢s a model of how to write an academic text that can engage a real-world reader." (Ned Sublett)"A new essential in the post-Katrina history of New Orleans, Roll With It is, perhaps, the most astute and clear-headed assessment of how the musical essence of New Orleans is ingrained in the personal and political lives of those who live in that extraordinary city. The brass-band culture detailed lovingly here by Matt Sakakeeny is no mere entertainment to those who understand it, nor is it there as tourist-bait or as a museum piece of quaint tradition. This is New Orleans itself, arguing for itself, and using culture as language and currency. To the extent thus far possible, what has saved New OrleansÃ¢â ¬â œmore than government fiat, or grand economic imperatives, or any hint of functional leadershipsÃ¢â ¬â œis in the street, damn near every Sunday afternoon." (David Simon, creator of the television series The Wire and Treme)"Matt Sakakeeny tells the story of a vibrant, living culture in prose so vivid and moving, it is matched only by the music about which he writes. His illuminating examination of the contemporary New Orleans brass band culture reveals what it means to create great art, to continually mold and revise a tradition, and to try to make a living under an often dehumanizing racial regimeÃ¢â ¬â •a complex urban world where making music can be a matter of life and death. Roll With It not only opens our ears to the music and its urban echoes, but it opens our eyes, enabling us to finally see the people

who make the second line move." (Robin Kelley, author of Thelonious Monk: The Life and Times of an American Original)"SakakeenyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s approach to the tensions between continuity in change in Roll With It: Brass Bands in the Streets of New Orleans, searches past academic theories, tapping many interviews and his own experiences with musicians. . . . Roll With It deserves a wide readership in the post-Katrina boom."Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â (Jason Berry New Orleans Magazine)Ã¢â ¬Å“In addition to chronicling groups including the Rebirth Brass Brand, Sakakeeny provides a revealing look at the daily lives of musicians. . . . Detailed profiles of individual musicians make for a captivating narrative, and the book is beautifully illustrated with artwork by New Orleans native Willie Birch.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Scott Barretta Clarion-Ledger)Ã¢â ¬Å“Fascinating. . . . The musicians' personal stories are interwoven with historical information, academic reflection, and personal experience, combining to form a highly original work that creates a vivid portrait both of this musical format and the noble but beleaguered city of New Orleans.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã Â (Florence Wetzel All About Jazz)Ã¢â ¬Å“Roll With It adds a contemporary perspective to studies of New Orleans culture and music. What emerges from SakakeenyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s book is a portrait of a city that, with all its challenges, still manages to support a vibrant musical culture.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã Â (John Paul Meyers Jazz Perspectives)Ã¢â ¬Å“Roll with It is an edifying, enjoyable, enlightening read and refreshing musical study. It conveys and embodies a vivaciousness, both the authorÃ¢â ¬â„¢s and that of the musical people portrayed throughout the book, a movement through time and place that refuses to slow down or be diverted or silenced." (Ron Emoff American Anthropologist 2015-06-01)Ã¢â ¬Å“This is a volume in which rich ethnographic detail fails to obscure the broader framework of academic theory and personal concern for both the musicians and the music. Roll With It belongs on the reading lists of all those teaching ethnomusicology or ethnography in the modern world, those whose teaching engages with popular music, race, performance, tourism and economy, and those who are concerned about the relationship between their research (or the academic world in general) and the sociopolitical (and economic and racial) realities of the worlds in which we all live.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Gregory Booth Journal of Popular Music Studies)"[T]hose interested in a holistic consideration of musical products and cultural processes will find SakakeenyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s study to be highly engaging and viscerally affecting as it exposes the oppositional forces inherent in a highly venerated Ã¢â ¬â •but highly volatile Ã¢â ¬â •performance tradition." (David Kammerer Ethnomusicology 2017-06-01)

"A notable work in that it’s the first critical project to chronicle New Orleans’ bombastic contemporary brass-band scene, the generation of musicians that grew up with century-old hymns in one ear and

hip-hop in the other; also, and importantly, it’s a keen, social-justice-minded examination of the turbulent mix of race, economics, culture and tradition in which brass band culture is located."--Alison Fensterstock,Ã Â Times-Picayune

Matt Sakakeeny combines a pure love for the music and culture, with an academically trained perspective to show the joys and the challenges faced by New Orleans’ contemporary brass band musicians. A must-read for anyone who loves New Orleans music, or wants a realistic look at the lives of young black men trying to break away from realities of urban life in America.

Really enjoyed this book. Well written, it is a fascinating look at the whole lives of these proud musicians, not sparing details of how hard a life it is trying to make a go in New Orleans. Also, being a tuba player I appreciated the amount of information presented about the New Orlean’s Tuba players. A must read for fans of brass bands or anyone who wants a glimpse of the struggles of poverty in New Orleans.

A well researched and well written book on an under appreciated piece of American culture, music and history. Thank you Matt Sakakeeny for this thoughtful treatise on New Orleans and it’s brass bands.

Wonderful ethnographical piece on the culture of New Orleans Jazz musicians

Roll With It deserves its place among the pantheon of great books about New OrleansKudos to Matt Sakakeeny for keeping it real, smart and alive.

A wonderful in depth analysis. It was even better than expected!

Essential reading for anyone interested in a deeper understanding of black New Orleans.

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