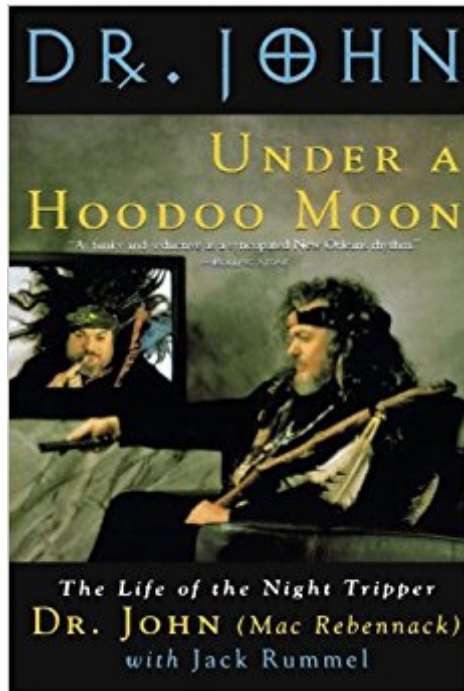




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Under A Hoodoo Moon: The Life Of The Night Tripper



Synopsis

Under a Hoodoo Moon is one of rock's most original and infectious autobiographies. In its pages, Dr. John, the alchemist of New Orleans psychedelic funk, tells his story, and what a story it is: of four decades on the road, on the charts, in and out of trouble, but always steeped in the piano-based soulful grind of New Orleans rhythm & blues of which he is the acknowledged high guru. From childhood as a prodigal prodigy among 1950s legends from Little Richard and Fats Domino to sessions with the Rolling Stones and the Band; from recording studio to juke joint to penitentiary to world tours; from Mac Rebennack to Dr. John the Night Tripper, this is the testament of our funkiest rock storyteller. Full of wit and wordplay, tales of hoodoo saints and high-living sinners, Under a Hoodoo Moon casts a spell as hard to resist as Mardi Gras itself.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As much a tribute to Rebennack's native New Orleans and its vibrant music scene as it is an autobiography, this candid book provides an inside look at the drug-using, hell-raising lifestyle adopted by many rock musicians. Writing in a loose, slangy style with freelancer Rummel, Rebennack, whose albums as Dr. John (*Gris Gris* ; *Gumbo*) helped popularize the distinctively Cajun-influenced music that is now a hallmark of the New Orleans sound, presents a compelling picture of his hometown as a place of enormous musical energy and excitement. We read of all-night jam sessions, quirky local characters and Voodoo rituals (the sobriquet Dr. John is borrowed from an early Voodoo master). Influenced by such New Orleans greats as James Booker

and Professor Longhair, Rebennack hit the road with his first band when he was 16 and, because of narcotics, soon found himself in trouble with the law. He is oddly blasé about drugs and tries so hard to maintain his cool-cat rock 'n' roll persona that he comes across more as a caricature than as a real person. The portrait of Crescent City's music scene, by contrast, has depth. Photos not seen by PW. Author tour. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Rebennack, a.k.a. Dr. John the Night Tripper, was born in New Orleans in 1940. In his early teens he played hooky from Catholic school in order to pitch songs to Little Richard and Art Neville. By the age of 16, he had recorded an album of original songs and developed a heroin habit. Over the next six years, he honed his craft playing for strippers, pimps, junkies, and even a pickpocketing monkey. When the infamous Jim Garrison cleaned up the city in 1962, Mac took a two-year sabbatical at a federal prison in Fort Worth. Upon his release, he headed for California, where his prodigious session work led to his solo career as Dr. John, one of the Sixties' most outrageous and creative performers. Today, four Grammy Awards later and his drug problems behind him, he's still rocking. This no-holds-barred autobiography by the hippest, "fonkiest" cat to come down the musical turnpike is essential for music libraries.- Dan Bogey, Clearfield Cty. P.L. Federation, Curwensville, Pa. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I really enjoyed reading this book & was a quick read. Just so you know, New Orleans is one of my longtime playgrounds and am a fan of New Orleans music, culture & food. So that's where I'm coming from on this review. Anyone with similar interests and fans of Dr. John or curious about New Orleans culture & music history of the 1950s-60s will get a great overview (and "under-view") from Dr. John, who truly lived it. I will warn that anyone who can be easily offended by reading about prostitutes, drag queens, drug usage, alcoholism and voodoo should not bother with this book. Because, that's frequently what it's about! Because that's the real world in a time slice of New Orleans if your life is centered downtown & the French Quarter. It was interesting to know how Mac Rebannack became a living organic part of the New Orleans scene and despite his ups and downs managed to make a long distinguished career for himself, even if New Orleans wasn't the place for it to all happen. Most of the stories are an absolute hoot all with the verbal flair of his own patois-speak. I wondered what happened to the New Orleans scene sometime in the mid-1960s but Mac tells the story as it was; between self-centered black and white segregated music unions' petty

rivalries to the over-zealous Carrie-Nations-ish crusade of famed (ill-famed?) DA Jim Garrison getting the strip and music clubs shut down. This made it very hard for any local musicians to support themselves so they scattered to other cities such as Los Angeles. In L.A. Mac had a circle of expatriates of musical adeptness which could make any musician envious. But once again, a music union caused him grief there, too. That, and multiple crooked personal managers, record company owners & producers which is unfortunately all too common in the music world. I like how the author, after the solo LPs started coming out the chapters are divided as LP "eras". Gives one a good musical perspective in an orderly & informative manner. Now I know why the LP "Remedies" is so weak, despite a few good songs, because it was released without Mac's permission nor involvement! It had some unfinished demos on it, such as the overly long & boring unfinished song "Angola Anthem" on side B. The personal stories about hanging out with Professor Longhair are great, including Fess' own pad home in New Orleans which had a big captain's recliner chair with push buttons for remote functions at that time is just plain cool. I'd probably rate it 4 1/2 stars if were more up to date. I would hope a "volume 2" would come out at some point, starting out where this book finishes because this one was written in the mid-1990s. Hopefully someone will take up that project sometime.

Ok. In full disclosure, as a Creole, as a frequent visitor & lover of New Orleans, as a person who sees the city as a cultural "home", I have long since been a fan of Dr. John, of his music, of his style, his character, his way. I see him as a cultural treasure of our nation. I picked this book up so as to better understand the cultural & musical icon. It delivered on that. However, it also delivered the best lagniappe (something extra) a book has done in a while. This book delivered a page turning, gripping, no holds barred expose of the music industry. The glitz, the glamour, the world tours & after parties? This book unveils the dirty deals, double crosses, substance abuse, misunderstood artistry & misdiagnosed mental illness that is a common core of the industry. Mac lays it bare and reveals all. Having had professional musicians in the family I've always been encouraged to learn & play, but only as an amateur. I see why. This book delivers a cant put down, page turning low down on the biz.

I am a native south Louisiana person and lover of music. Dr. John (Mac Rebbenack) tells his story in his words. This man has been in the rock and roll scene since his teens and has an interesting and colorful story about growing up in New Orleans with it's mixed musical, culinary and religious cultural melting pot all stirred up in a creole gumbo. Amazing stories about New Orleans music,

narcotics addictions, run-ins with the law and how the Dr. John persona was developed and so much more. 5 stars.

I got this book partly because I wanted to learn about Dr. John, but the other reason was because I wanted to learn about New Orleans music in the 50's. At the \$5 used price, it was hard not to. It's entertaining on both fronts, with plenty of stories about the shady characters and wild band mates you would imagine going down in New Orleans at the time. It reads very much like an interview, and he's completely honest about everything and everyone (i.e. his rant on Van Morrison was entertaining). But like every autobiography, some details on certain aspects of his life were not embellished upon. While he does talk a lot about music, he doesn't really ever go into detail as to HOW he learned piano! We know he was originally a guitar player, but his transition to piano was always a mystery to me. Was it immediate, or had he learned bits and pieces before? Did he take lessons and learn how to read, or was it all street-learned? All these questions, and yet he kind of glosses over all those years of learning piano during the 1960's, but goes into great detail about his years of guitar lessons. Oh well. Overall, if you're a casual fan, it's probably something you can skip. But as a huge fan of Dr. John and the New Orleans music scene, past and present, it was a no-brainer for me to buy this.

Dr. John's spirit is alive in this book. It's honest, raw and real. His musicality comes through in his words. If you want to see what's behind his music, this is a good place. If you want to hear what's behind the man, listen to his music. There's a rhythm to the words of musicians. I found the same rhythm in the words of Smokey Robinson and Keith Richards in their books. They bare their souls in their music and can't seem to contain the truth in their words. I just saw him perform recently, and it's means so much more now having seen something of how he became who he is. I hope you enjoy the read.

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