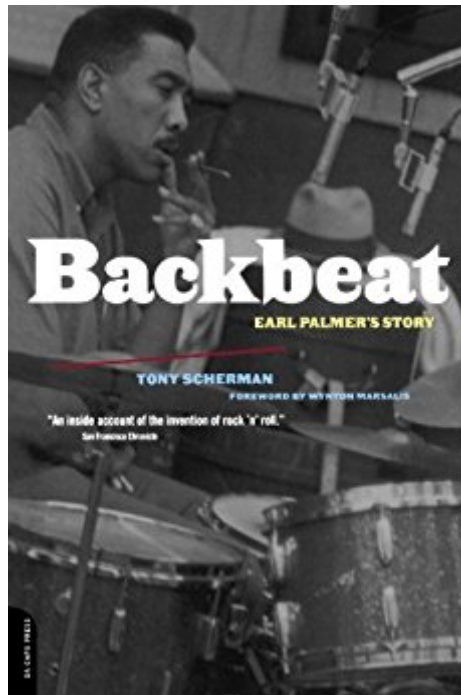




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Backbeat: Earl Palmer's Story



Synopsis

There he is, drumming on "Tutti Frutti," "You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin'," and thousands of other songs. As a studio player in New Orleans and Los Angeles from the 1940s through the 1970s, Earl Palmer co-created hundreds of hits and transformed the lope of rhythm and blues into full-tilt rock and roll. He was, as a result, one of the first session men to be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Palmer's distinctive voice alternates with the insights of music journalist and historian Tony Scherman in an unforgettable trip through the social and musical cultures of mid-century New Orleans and the feverish world of early rock.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Back in the day" I played drums in several rock/R&B bands. Only much later did I realize how much I was learning then from Earl Palmer. The man was EVERYWHERE in '50s through '70s rock, to say nothing of TV themes and movie sound tracks. This book brings it all home. Tony Scherman carries this project off with great skill and feeling. He writes in third-person when sketching in background, then switches to first-person for long sections in which Earl is telling the story, obviously taken from extensive recorded interviews. I expected this to be a book primarily about Palmer's heyday as a first-call studio drummer in Los Angeles. But no, Scherman takes it back to

Palmer's early childhood in New Orleans, painting an exquisitely detailed portrait of a life and upbringing that few readers have ever experienced or could scarcely imagine. He takes us with Palmer to Europe during World War II and relates a hilarious tale framed by the most deplorable racism. Throughout, one aspect of Palmer's personality that shines through is his ability to take poverty, hardship, racism, and stellar success all in stride. He took life as it came at him while summoning his inborn talents to become one of the most successful studio musicians of the 20th century. I thoroughly enjoyed this book from cover to cover. I came away with vastly increased respect and admiration for Earl Palmer.

This is a bio of my kids great-grandfather. I bought a copy for both of them so they can see more history of him from what the family has already told them about him. My son who is 13 now has been drumming on everything in the house since he was able to hold something in his hand to beat on something. Their grandfather and his brother are professional drummers so only naturally should I expect my son to become one. This is a great read and means even more for us since this is family.

One of the greatest and most prolific drummers in history. Palmer's story is a very interesting look at the life of a musician from the days when segregation ruled up through modern popular music. It coincides with America's history from a time when racism was a part of every institution through our continuing evolution toward overcoming prejudice in all walks of American life. Music has led the way, but it's still a work in progress, to be sure. This autobiography is a great read, even if you are not a musician or a music historian.

One of the greatest drummers to come out of New Orleans. A great book with tons of stories about early R&B and Rock and Roll. Plus stories about the rock and pop studio work he did in L.A. Every musician should learn about the history of their instrument and the players that made a difference on that instrument. Earl Palmer was one of them. He laid the groove down and made millions of people dance! Get this book.

A phenomenal book which tells the story of the creation of the United States' popular music from the beginning of the rock 'n' roll era. Earl Palmer is one of the most historically significant, accomplished, knowledgeable, and insightful cultural figures in American history, and his story is an essential part of American history and of American music.

As a drummer and a fan of great music of the fifties, sixties and seventies, this book was a must-read. What a life Earl had! From child dancing prodigy to first-call L.A. session-drummer, Earl Palmer IS the story of Rock and Roll, and any and all forms of recorded music. His approach, his instincts, his professionalism, and his humor are all here in this great bio on a man so important to contemporary music, that most people don't even know it was him playing on their favorite hits, which is a shame. Read this book and let anyone and everyone know that Earl Palmer was THE man that made them dance.

There's so much to get out of this. First of all, you're getting the creation of rock and pop rhythms as we've known that in the 20th Century. Then you're witnessing the odyssey of a black man fired up to survive in the Deep South and seeing that he was going to have to push harder than anyone else. Last but far from least, you learn that at the end of the day, Earl was just a New Orleans musician who was just a regular dude, with all the appetites that that species of human has. It humanizes our idols.

Could have great except for too much detail on his life as a youngster in New Orleans. Would have like more about the music he played and the recording sessions. Still a worthwhile read but could have been a great read.

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