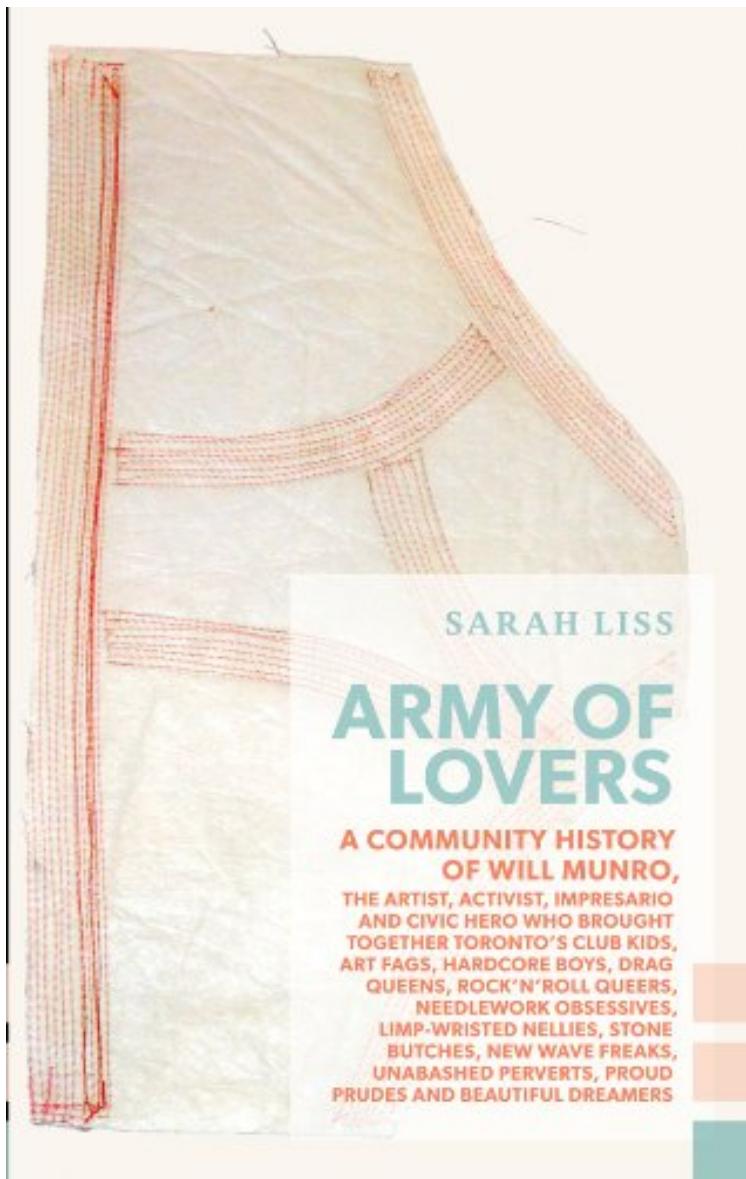


## Army of Lovers: A Community History of Will Munro (Exploded Views)

Sarah Liss

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**Sarah Liss : Army of Lovers: A Community History of Will Munro (Exploded Views)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Army of Lovers: A Community History of Will Munro (Exploded Views):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This Charming ManBy Suzinne BarrettReview is for Kindle edition.

This is a heartfelt and well written biography of Will Munro, DJ, party organizer, gay activist, artist and Y-front designer based in Toronto, Canada. He's largely unknown in the States, but he was quite a celebrity in Toronto. Seems Will's a complicated man, and maybe a little on the uptight side. He eschewed drinking and drugging but wasn't defiantly straight edge. Will came from a large and volatile family. So, like many before him, Will found inspiration and solace in the arts: music, fashion and art installations. Will held a regular party called "Vazaleen" (a play on "Vaseline") at his club where he showed his dedication by working hard and putting in long hours. To start the week, they had "Morrissey Mondays," named after the controversial singer, formerly of The Smiths. Not being your typical gay man, Will Munro didn't really connect intimately with anybody for quite a while until he met Peter Ho. Our subject at hand is difficult to characterize. Although he's gay, he doesn't like gay bars or the gay pride parade. He resists house music, and deems people on the club scene "weird." Hello, isn't that the point of going to clubs - the freak show? Famous (or semi-famous depending on your perspective) names like singer for the punk band The Gossip's, Beth Ditto, and the outrageous international performer, Peaches, contribute their stories. The life of Will Munro is revealed via an oral history format. You hear the voices of club goers and friends on the scene and as well as Will Munro's family. Some nice photographs are included, and it's through these photographs that one can witness the blossoming of our man of the hour. First there's the tow headed Boy Scout on stage receiving an honor, followed by a pubescent and spiky haired defiant punk and finally there's the Canadian gay icon in various (and sometimes hilarious) costumes and in drag. Would recommend for any and all interested in the Toronto club scene, those looking to make their mark on local nightlife and people wanting to get involved in gay activism. Without including any spoilers, in the end it's a bittersweet story. Full disclosure: this reader was provided an advance copy through netgalley.com.

In the spring of 2010, Toronto lost one of its most important queer civic heroes. Weaving together interviews and stories, *Army of Lovers* is a biography of Will Munro and a document of a galvanizing period when various subcultures — the queer community, the art scene, the independent music universe, the grassroots activist enclaves — came together.

"With her characteristic insight, elegance, wit and generosity, Sarah Liss gives us the first, important account of Will Munro — one of the most important queer artists, activists, promoters and community builders Toronto has ever seen. His impact, memory and influence loom large, and Liss is one of the few people I'd trust to tell his story the way it should be told." — Michael Cobb, Professor of English and Sexual Diversity Studies at the University of Toronto and author of *Single: Arguments of the Uncoupled*"Will was pretty much the perfect role model. He was such a one-of-a-kind person. He really understood that throwing parties and shows is a part of creating community and that it can be dirty and crazy and chaotic, but also inclusive and positive and creative rather than destructive." — Beth Ditto, *The Gossip*"Even in his passing, [Will] is still transforming things." — Luis Jacob, artist (*Toronto Star*)"Munro's work is about nothing so much as life and inspiration, in their purest forms." — David Balzer, Canadian Art'Army of Lovers is so fascinating it's already earned a place on the mandatory reading lists of high school and university queer-studies courses, in my opinion. Its pages should be torn out of the book and wheatpasted on every weirdo kid's locker in every high school in every suburban hellhole.' — Keith Cole, *Xtra!*'Through her reconstruction of the past, Liss proves she is a gifted storyteller deeply moved by her subject matter, approaching [Munro's] legacy like a meticulous curator.' — Stacey May Fowles, *The National Post*' . . . The most productive force of Army lies not only in conveying the community history of a queer, whimsical, superstar community builder, but in its very documentation through collective memory. Army gives us a different history of queer life in Toronto that must be remembered in order move forward.' — Lambda Literary of Books