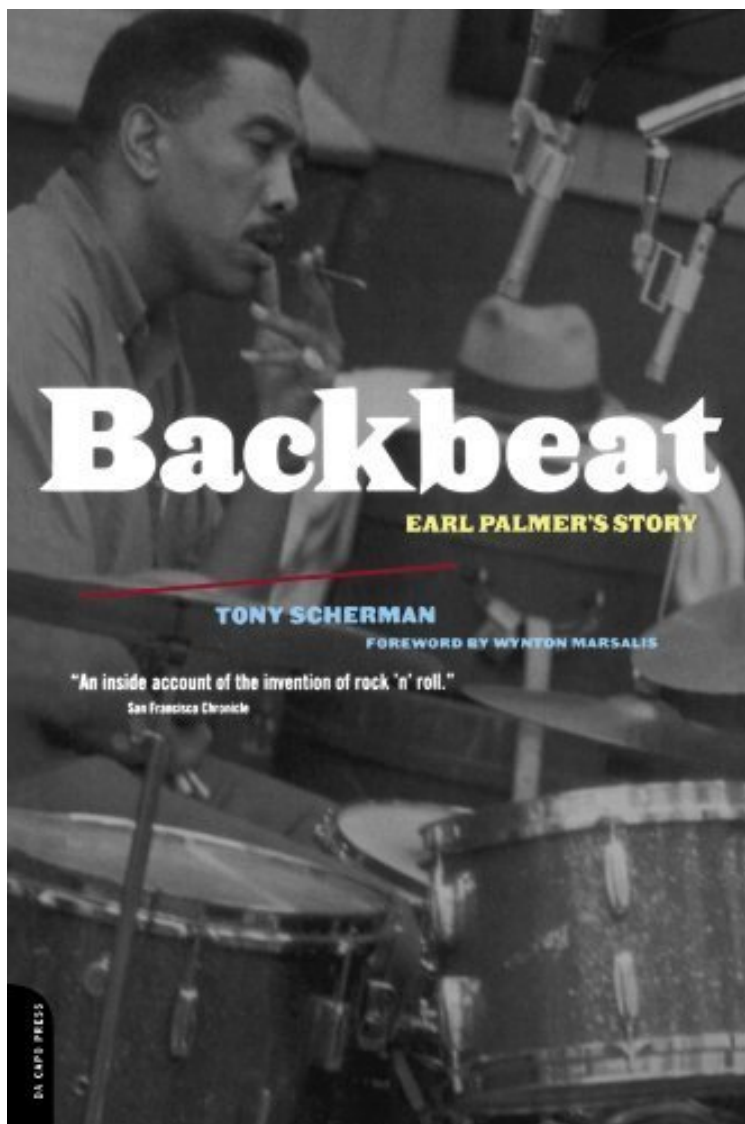


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Backbeat: Earl Palmer's Story

Tony Scherman

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Tony Scherman : Backbeat: Earl Palmer's Story before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Backbeat: Earl Palmer's Story:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A beautifully told story about a most worthy subjectBy Customer"Back in the day" I played drums in several rock/RB 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. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This is a great read and means even more for us since this ...By Paulicea 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. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. One of the greatest and most prolific drummers in history By Doc Holliday 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.

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.

.com By the time Earl Palmer moved from New Orleans to join the Los Angeles session musician Mafia in 1957, he'd already had a couple of careers in entertainment. As a kid tap dancer in black vaudeville, he saw the country, crossing paths with the likes of Art Tatum and Louis Prima before embarking upon a stint in the segregated World War II Army ("You was always running into stuff you didn't like. At first you took it. After two years you ready to hurt somebody"). Back in Louisiana, he took up work as a jazz drummer, little knowing that he'd soon be part of a revolution in music. As a regular on the scene, Palmer played on the seminal sides by Little Richard, Fats Domino, and many other RB and early-rock roll performers. Marked by a preternatural sense of propulsion and delightfully sly fills, Palmer's drumming was an indispensable part of shaping the new sound. By the '60s, he was working with Sinatra and Phil Spector, playing jazz (his first love) in clubs and contributing to dozens of movie and TV soundtracks (you'll hear him next time you watch *Harold and Maude*, *Cool Hand Luke*, or a rerun of *M.A.S.H.* or *The Odd Couple*). Backbeat is an incisive, frequently hilarious read that opens doors on recording studios, show business, and race in America. -- Rickey Wright From Publishers Weekly Earl Palmer, the New Orleans jazz musician who became one of rock and roll's great drummers, is a name known chiefly to connoisseurs. By transforming rhythm and blues' lope into a powerful headlong thrust, he propelled hits by Little Richard, Fats Domino, Sam Cooke, Ritchie Valens, Ike and Tina Turner, Ricky Nelson, the Beach Boys, the Supremes and the Mamas and the Papas, among others. Moving to Los Angeles in 1957, Palmer practically lived in the studio for the next dozen years, co-creating hundreds of hits as drummer or arranger, though never sharing royalties or credits. Between sessions, he played big-band pop and jazz with Sinatra, Gillespie, Basie and Ray Charles, besides doing film and TV soundtracks. In a vibrant oral autobiography, Scherman (who edited *The Rock Musician* and co-edited *The Jazz Musician*) lets Palmer tell his own story through interviews, adding chapter introductions and meticulous, informative endnotes that often amount to brief essays. Born in 1924, Palmer joined his mother and aunt on the black vaudeville circuit around age eight as a professional tap dancer. In World War II, he issued live ammo to his noncombatant mates during training (so they could shoot back at racist whites); tried to go AWOL before shipping out; and took a two-week joyride through France. A great raconteur, at once hip, opinionated and irreverent, Palmer reels off stories and lets the good times roll. This exhilarating book offers a rare first-person window on the New Orleans musical scene from honky tonk to bebop, the insular world of black vaudeville, the bitter combat experience of African-Americans during WWII, and rock's early days. 32 photos. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal From his show business debut at the age of five, tap dancing with his mother and aunt in the last days of black vaudeville, Earl Palmer grew up to become the beat of popular American musical culture. After a stretch in the service during World War II, Palmer returned to his native New Orleans and began drumming with Dave Bartholomew's legendary band. By the time the rock'n'roll era was in full swing, Palmer was right there, playing with Little Richard, Fats Domino, and Sam Cook. In the 1960s he made a comfortable living as one of Los Angeles's top studio musicians. His behind-the-scenes influence continued to be felt

through his work with the musician's union. He was instrumental in seeing to it that musicians received royalties when Hollywood started using oldies as a standard part of the soundtracks of the 1980s. Music writer Scherman's "as told to" style is rich with anecdotes and stories, some of the most amusing being the ledgers from Palmer's session work with acts from Jimmy Durante to Bonnie Raitt. Entertaining and informative; recommended for all public libraries. A Dan Bogey, Clearfield Cty. P.L. Federation, Curwensville, PA Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.