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New Orleans Bicycles



Synopsis

Nostalgia for how the city was prior to Katrina, and hope for those ways to return.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

this will be an odd review in that i really really loved the writing but found the photos, ah, uh, well..uninspired.... i know that seems odd in that the book is a collection of photos i be thinkin'.well anyway, best of luck. also it is indeed difficult for me to write anything negative about anyone's most likely full hearted and hard worked book or art or ...so i say this in all kindness..ichabod craig IV

This small scale but very heady book published by the always excellent firm of Mark Batty Publisher is not only an entertaining, beautifully designed and produced series of images of bicycles, but it is also a cultural study of a city antiquarian in nature and hanging on to a rich past by its fingertips. Photographers and writers Nicholas Costarides and Mary Richardson wandered this great mecca for bohemians for a year and a half - before Katrina's heinous visitation - falling in love with the city's preoccupation with the bicycle, the primary mode of transportation in this flat and poverty stricken lady of a city. They discovered that not only were bicycles a proven means of peripatetic survival but that they also became symbols for the people who owned them, people whose pride and idiosyncrasies flavor the appearance of these timeworn bi-pedals, releasing torrents of information and fantasy to the searching eye and mind. Mary Richardson opens the book with a comment 'On Spinning Wheels' which reads like an extended poem. 'These are not just bicycles, they are extensions of personalities, tainted with the grime of the city. And they are individuals in the rawest

sense' ... 'It's a life that can't exist outside the schizophrenia of unlimited limitations. New Orleans bicycles: the crippled potential, the lust to keep pushing down the same old streets, the looks of peace as they're chained and bound to their city, and the knowledge that it's just a short distance to their destination, but lack of motion can be paralyzing.' The book is then graced with the formal foreword by Andrei Codrescu, the author 'New Orleans, Mon Amour: Twenty years of Writing from the City' which segues into countless photographs of some of the strangest, most humorous, sentimentally stained bicycles imaginable. Costarides and Richardson have photographed panoramas of sidestreets, bicycles chained to posts, intimate details of the decor and personality imposed on these time honored modes of transportation, and the peculiar accoutrements that offer such strong personalities to the bikes and their owners. The photographs are richly colorful and immaculately reproduced on quality paper. The design of the book is by Costarides and is not only of the highest quality of concept and execution, but it also uses some fascinating imprints on the pages of writing that subtly introduces the grime of the city we are about to visit. The book ends with an Epilogue entitled 'On Katrina' and leaves the reader with the sense of resilience that New Orleans will never die but will prosper BECAUSE of the tragedy. It is as moving as the book is entertaining. This is a superb character study presented in the top of the class manner. Bravo!

Grady Harp, January 07

I really love this small book. The pictures let you write your own story. Who owns the bike with the full size rocking horse or black raven on the handle bar, and who attached an old vaccum cleaner as a tailpipe? Who secures a 3lb, 15yr old bike with a 50lb chain? The beautiful photography, design, and writing showcase the quirky, weird underside that makes New Orleans unique.

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