Darien Author Robert Patton Talks at Library About His Latest Novel, 'Cajun Waltz'

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Join us in the Louise Parker Berry Community Room at 7 p.m., Tuesday, June 14 as we celebrate the release of Darien resident Robert H. Patton's forthcoming novel, *Cajun Waltz.*

Snappy and soulful, Robert H. Patton, author of celebrated non-fiction histories, has written a story full of music, dark times, and ultimate triumph with *Cajun Waltz: A Novel*.

Inspired by his passion for Cajun music, an emblematic music of Louisiana, and duck hunting in the Deep South, Patton introduces readers to the cadence of New Orleans, spanning generations of rhythm and suffering.

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The lyrics of a *Cajun Waltz* may be dark as midnight with heartache and trouble, but still the music swings. The same goes for what happens after a shifty musician and a lonely shopgirl let destiny sweep them into an ill-suited marriage in swampy southwest Louisiana on the eve of the Depression.

Love doesn't much figure between Richie Bainard and Esther Block. They build a business together while dreaming opposite dreams of fulfillment. But like a gumbo simmering with peppers and spice, desires finally come to a boil.

Three generations of the volatile clan grapple with the region's economic struggles and racial tensions. The Bainard children, twins Bonnie and R.J. and their half-brother Seth, pursue separate cravings for money, sex, and religion.

The chase in each case runs off the rails thanks to an ex-marine with a soft heart and a brutish devotion; a dazzling young stepmother of mixed race and mixed motives; and a high school tart who proves tougher and truer than all of them.

Ultimately it takes the mass devastation of Hurricane Audrey in 1957 to cleanse the reckless passions. The aftermath is painful but pure, like an old blues song that puts tears in your eyes while you dance.

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— Cajun Waltz is available *through Barrett Bookstore*

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With the dark tempo of New Orleans, Cajun Waltz will sweep you up with setting that always strikes a hopeful note. Involving strong southern women, straight shooting guns, and deep rooted prejudice, Patton's characters are layered showing good people can do black hearted things.

The perfect summer novel to immerse yourself in, Patton will have you tapping along to the beat of his prose with his foray into fiction. I look forward to your thoughts.

About the author

Robert H. Patton holds degrees in literature and journalism from Brown University and Northwestern University. He worked as a Capitol Hill reporter, a commercial fisherman, and a real estate developer before publishing his family memoir, The Pattons, to wide acclaim in 1994. He lived and traveled throughout the South before settling in Darien with his wife.

Editor's note: This article originally was published June 6. The time stamp has been changed to return it to the Home page.