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Andrew Lamb Trio New Orleans Suite

Engine

By [Lyn Horton](#)



Paying tribute to the population of New Orleans in the wake of hurricane Katrina which struck in August of 2005, the Andrew Lamb Trio recorded *New Orleans Suite*. Remixed and re-released five years later, *Suite* allows saxophonist Andrew Lamb, drummer Warren Smith and bassist Tom Abbs to remind everyone that the people who survived the hurricane still struggle, without homes or communities. Their way of life disappeared in the winds and waters of the tempest and their cries for help go unheeded, the reasons attributable to the endless politics that stifle the area's recovery. Introducing and creating the disposition of the music is a poem recited by drummer Smith, whose words to "Dyes & Lyes" directly point to the sources of inaction, in the person of former President George W. Bush.

The music implies the blues, but not a completely demoralized state. The bass and drums are largely responsible for maintaining the character of the record. The bass tonalities are deep; the pizzicatos strong and healthy; the smooth and thorough bowing contributes to the texture of the music at hand. Smith's rattles, chimes, triangle, wood clappers, toy xylophone, and other percussion instruments in addition to his drum set diversify the sound, yielding the lively unpredictability in the music's flow. A bellowing gong introduces "Song of the Miracle Lives;" a blown whistle and marching snare figures combine to form "a second line" theme in the last "Aftermath Healing."

Having composed music that unfolds a credible story, Lamb plays sax, clarinet, flute and harmonica, which become the dramatic voices, even though it is Smith's actual voice that is heard throughout the record. As in the expressively intense "Rescue Me," the horns sing of the displaced and disenfranchised, weakened by the unavoidable tragedy which Katrina bore.

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