



The Ghetto Swinger: A Berlin Jazz-Legend Remembers

Coco Schumann

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“From his early enthusiasm for American jazz in Berlin cabarets to his membership of Terezin’s celebrated Ghetto Swingers and surviving Auschwitz through his music, to post-war appearances with the likes of Dizzy Gillespie, jazz remains a constant in a remarkable life story. [...] Illustrated by a fascinating range of photographs.”

– The Jazz Rag (UK)

“It is rare and beautiful that someone can play with such sadness—and with such musical humor.”

– Abendzeitung München (Germany)

“The recently published, never-before translated book by “Coco” Schumann traces his journey from Berlin’s pre-war nightlife to a band in Auschwitz and back to Berlin – and doesn’t miss a beat. [...] Look for this unusual book.”

– Israel National News

“An interesting and enlightening read. The passion and the clarity with which Schumann recalls his past experiences, playing with some of the greats, surviving World War II, his internment, are all very evident. I felt like I was listening to the gregarious great-uncle with stories almost too good to be true, other than the fact that they really are. This book very much feels like a conversation carried on between Schumann and anyone passionate about music.”

– Reading for Sanity (USA)

“A spirited and colorful story about the art of humor, as well as the power of hope in circumstances where there is no hope. Even in the Auschwitz death camp music gave Schumann hope, and he gave it to others in the message of his music.”

– Satakunnan Kansa (Finland)

“Why should you read this book? Coco Schumann takes you on a trip through his life and the history that surrounded it. This book not only gives a new perspective on World War Two, but provides a closer look at the jazz scene of the twentieth century as well. Schumann grabs your interest and lets you witness his beautiful, humorous and shocking experiences from up close.”

– BLVD (The Netherlands)

Coco Schumann’s career as a jazz and swing musician spans more than seventy years and is replete with honors. But for decades Schumann bore his wartime experiences as a Holocaust survivor in silence, with only the pleasure of composing music and performing for live audiences to ease the burden of his most haunting memories. In his memoir, Schumann recounts the vibrant underground club scenes of Berlin in the years surrounding World War II as well as providing backstage glimpses into Berlin’s famous nightlife, where he shared the stage with such jazz notables as Helmut Zacharias, Tullio Mobiglia, Toots Thielemans, and American visitors like Louis Armstrong, Dizzy Gillespie and Ella Fitzgerald. At the same time, *The Ghetto Swinger* offers Schumann’s harrowing testimony from 1943-1945 about daily life inside Theresienstadt (Terezín) and Auschwitz, and provides readers with the important perspective of a Jewish Holocaust survivor who remained in Germany after the war.

In his home country, Schumann is a celebrated personality. But until now, his life story hasn't been accessible to English-speaking audiences. Featuring rare photographs and an Afterword by Weimar- and Nazi-era culture scholar Michael H. Kater, *The Ghetto Swinger* is an engrossing historical document as much as it is a heartwarming memoir.

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