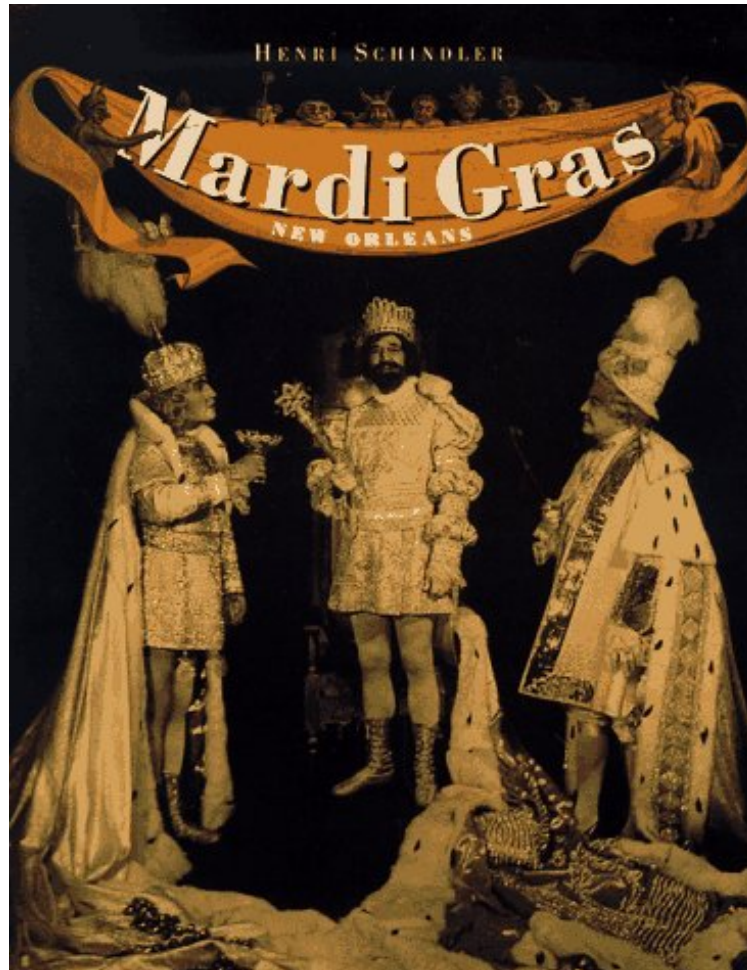


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## Mardi Gras New Orleans

*Henri Schindler*

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**Henri Schindler : Mardi Gras New Orleans** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mardi Gras New Orleans:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. A Must Read During Carnival's 150th Anniversary By Patience Schindler's magnum opus, *Mardi Gras New Orleans*, is the perfect guide as we embark on the 150th anniversary of the New Orleans Carnival celebration--a must read for any serious or curious observer of the New Orleans scene. The focus is the history of the celebration, going back to its origins in ancient Greece and Rome, and the Druid Festival of the Sun with its own "boeuf gras" long before the Christian Lenten observance decreed a "farewell to meat" (carne vale). With glorious photography by former Carnival Queen Tina Freeman, and archival photographs, Schindler paints a fascinating verbal picture of the post-classical European roots of the modern celebration, and the effects of the Venetian and Bourbon French rulers on the ancient feast. Focusing on the colonial, Creole and ultimately American development of Carnival, Schindler leads the reader to the pivotal moment in that

history, the formation of the Mystick Krewe of Comus--the event that brought order out of the chaos of the early celebration and gave the New Orleans carnival its present form. Drawing on the words of early governors of the city, nineteenth century print media, celebrities of the time and noted authors such as Grace King and Eudora Welty, he weaves an unforgettable portrait of New Orleans during the period from its colonial days through the early twentieth century, tracing the birth of the organizations that followed the Mystick Krewe, and outlining some of the traditions unique to each. Whether depicting the rise of the Rex Organization, the mystery of the life of artist and float designer Carlotta Bonnezeaux or sharing the literate satire of carpetbagger rule provided by the 1873 Comus and Momus parades, Schindler never disappoints. Not only does he reflect on the history of the old-line carnival, but Schindler also offers a rare insight into the fascinating development of the African-Creole carnival, and the contributions of both former slaves and free people of color to the celebration. Schindler records the contributions of the African-American benevolent societies, and of the Mardi Gras Indians with their unique oral history, music and elaborate costumes. Schindler was able to draw upon the resources of some of the most active devotees of the New Orleans Carnival in drawing back the curtain on the "real" Carnival and in framing this impressive and highly readable classic history. Readers seeking more detailed information and even more glorious color plates of the artistic side of the celebration will be pleased by Schindler's Treasures of the Golden Age series, including gorgeous tomes devoted, respectively, to Invitations, Float Design, Costumes and Jewelry.<sup>3</sup> of 3 people found the following review helpful. A Sumptuous Book By Scott A. Garver Mardi Gras New Orleans is the triumphant work of the eminent New Orleans native Henri Schindler. For decades Mr. Schindler has designed some of New Orleans' most beautiful and opulent Mardi Gras Pageants and Balls. His esthetic joyfully conjures the "Golden Age" of Mardi Gras..... an incomparable era which this book chronicles and captures. The fabulous, beguiling images of this book (many of which were unearthed by Mr. Schindler, and seen by New Orleanians - and the world - for the first time when this book was published) compliment - at times manage to compete - with Mr. Schindler's poetic and witty prose. Never before has the subject of Mardi Gras in New Orleans been treated with the thorough scholarship and research that this volume displays. Make no mistake, however. While the scholarship and historical detail of this book are unimpeachable, this is no dry academic work. It reads as effervescently as the gilded papier-mache' chariots it celebrates. This book for New Orleanians is a validation. For those unfamiliar with the city or its great festival, this book is a revelation. For the Artist and the Esthete this inestimable book is a treasure.<sup>35</sup> of 36 people found the following review helpful. A loving look at the history of an unique celebration By A Customer Henri Schindler is a devotee of New Orleans Carnival. He served as the last float designer for the Mistick Krewe of Comus, the originator of thematic New Orleans Carnival parades, until the Mistick Krewe was driven from the streets in 1992 by government interference. Rather than focus on this end, Mr. Schindler writes evocatively of the glory days of carnival, the "last butterfly of winter". It is at once stylish, historical, and moving- a must have for every carnival afficiendo. You come away not seeing just a drunken debacle, but an appreciation for a local celebration, rich in traditions, social history and the artists who helped create it. Complete with extraordinary photo-plates.

From Twelfth Night (6 January) to Mardi Gras, New Orleans lives for her Carnival - a brilliant season of balls, revelry, costuming, and parades. Carnival artist and historian Henri Schindler offers a stunning panorama of Mardi Gras' evolution and its exuberant diversity - the early Creole cavalcades; the torchlit processions of the Mistick Krewe of Comus; the rise of Rex, King of the Carnival; fabulous tableaux balls, Carnival royalty; Storyville and the Baby Dolls; Les Mysterieuses, the first female society; and African-American creations - the Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club, and Mardi Gras Indians.