

NEW ORLEANS NOSTALGIA

Remembering New Orleans History, Culture and Traditions

By Ned Hémard

Sounds of Summer, New Orleans Style

Benjamin Braddock, played by Dustin Hoffman in "The Graduate", would not have experienced so much post-college malaise had Simon and Garfunkel written about the wonderful "Sounds of Summer" in the Crescent City:

Hello Hansen's, my old friend
I've come to visit you again
Because an ice block softly shaven
Filled a need that I was cravin'
And the flavor that was planted in my brain
Still remains
Within the Sounds of Summer

On Bourbon Street I walked alone
Instead of working on Baronne
No hot soup, I needed vichyssoise
With a cocktail down at Galatoire's
Dancers tapped for cash 'neath the flash of a neon light
All through the night
And touched the Sounds of Summer

And some naked sights I saw
Barkers barking at the door
Hawkers hawking without speaking
Gawkers gawking, peekers peeking
A few femmes flashing flesh on balconies for beads
While no one heeds
The raucous Sounds of Summer

And the outboard motors roared
Alongside sails that swiftly soared
Seagulls hovered o'er Lake Pontchartrain

Serenading us with each refrain
And the lawnmower motors purred as they reached the curbs
Out in the burbs
The humming Sounds of Summer

"Fools", said I, "You're not aware
That Summer Sounds are everywhere
"Good Humor" men might want to reach you
With "Redwing" song that will beseech you"
But the words, like melting popsicles fell
And echoed
In the wells of Summer

The thrill of softball sends a spark
The sounds of sports in City Park
Those evening visits to Brocato's
For some generous gelatos
While the streetcar gently swayed as it passed on through
On the Avenue
The rockin' Sounds of Summer

The Summer Sounds of each fish fry
New Orleans folks have each July
Firecrackers poppin' in the neighborhood
That hot Jazz combo sounded mighty good
And the hum of the window unit working overtime
Felt so sublime
The sizzlin' Sounds of Summer

And the people bowed and prayed
Second-lined at the parade
The message heard while they were drumming
Essence Festival was coming
And a sign said, "The sounds of seduction are cracklin' on the
Barbecue grills
And at Emeril's"
And whispered in the Sounds of Summer

NED HÉMARD

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