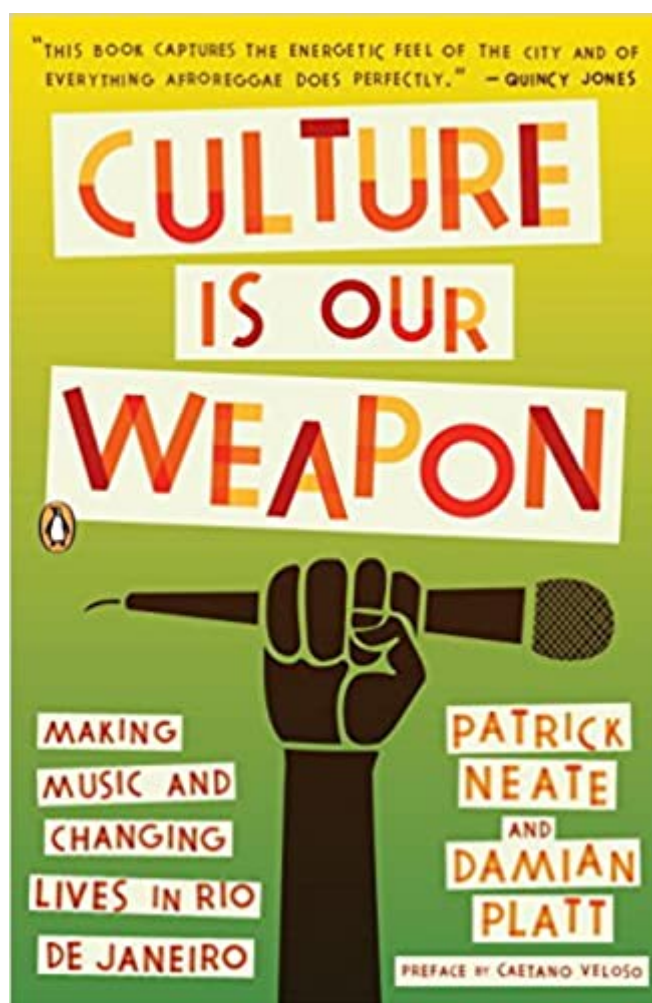


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Culture Is Our Weapon: Making Music And Changing Lives In Rio De Janeiro



Synopsis

An inspiring mission to rescue young people from drugs and violence with music. At a time when interest in Brazilian culture has reached an all-time high, and the stories of one person's ability to improve the lives of others has captured so many hearts, this unique book takes readers to the frontlines of a battle raging over control of the nation's poorest areas. *Culture Is Our Weapon* tells the story of Grupo Cultural AfroReggae, a Rio-based organization employing music and an appreciation for black culture to inspire residents of the favelas, or shantytowns, to resist the drugs that are ruining their neighborhoods. This is an inspiring look at an artistic explosion and the best and worst of Brazilian society.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Examines the music and cultural tumult of the Brazilian favelas with a clear eye. ... Neate and Platt bring a deeply curious outsider's perspective to Rio, and the book moves easily from cocktails on elite balconies to government offices to the dangerous favela streets. ... [They] tackle complex political issues without it ever feeling like they're delivering a lecture, partly because they weave in the voices of people involved." -Los Angeles Times "What makes the AfroReggae story compelling is the blend of idealism and realism that Jose Junior, the founder, must have to work in his environment: the idealist view that culture can actually provide the first rung or two on a ladder that will help kids escape the violence and poverty of these slums, and the realistic assessment of what needs to be done to make that happen." -John Schaefer, WNYC Music Hub "The stories depicted

here are suspenseful and horrifying, but more importantly, inspirational, as one group strives to bring peace to what is otherwise a war zone." -Weekly Dig (Boston) "Neate and Platt do an excellent job of capturing the captivating energy and many conflicting emotions of the favela communities through first-person accounts." -Daily Texan "As the book weaves through both the culturally rich and violent realities of Brazil, the reader in turn oscillates between admiration and absolute horror. ... [Culture Is Our Weapon] offers a rich background on the corrupt, political reality in the country-it explores the way in which music in general has played a role in Brazilian's lives and delves into the individual lives of favela residents, giving a unique perspective on the way social classes function." -Columbia Spectator "Platt and Neate ask people internationally to think about the images and stories we hear about Brazil, not just the poverty and oppression, but the stories that are often hidden beneath the surface. Those stories are of the social revolutions that the people of these communities are creating, and the ways they are finding success." -Daily Vanguard "The work of AfroReggae of changing a community through the arts is inspirational. ... When I finished this book there is no doubt in my mind that the arts can save a community." -Reading in Color "An inspiring book about the good things happening through Grupo Cultural AfreReggae. ... [A] tale of the people of Rio and the power of music to celebrate ethnic diversity, level social inequality, and provide hope for the oppressed community." -Mom Most Traveled

Patrick Neate is the author of the National Book Critics Circle Award winner *Where You're At*, as well as four novels. Damian Platt lives in Rio de Janeiro and works with AfroReggae. Caetano Veloso is a musician, writer, and political activist. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

It was good to read a book about people making a real difference for the people of the favelas. Much luck to AfroReggae.

The importance of the arts could not be better advocated than this compelling story woven with the bitter reality that exists in the poor neighborhoods of Rio de Janeiro. The reader is given a clear background of the conditions, both current and the necessary historical context, to explain how the gripping sounds of AfroReggae is succeeding in reaching across ethnic, racial, and class barriers in Brazil. This promising success story is an interesting book for music enthusiasts, visitors of this area of Brazil, non-profit organizations, and those believing in the power of the arts, particularly music, to enable positive change in communities whether affluent or poor. One improvement to suggest is a

glossary of terms be added to the back of the book to help those that take a more leisurely time in their reading. All terms needing explanation are given clearly at the bottom of each page, but this can be cumbersome to look for if coming back to the book after several days.

I read Neate's "Where You're At..." a few years ago, and thought it was great. As a music lover and working professional in the music industry I found it to be an informative read with insight into pop culture around the world, and of course Hip Hop. I came across this book while browsing the Kindle store and knew I wouldn't be disappointed with it, having read Neate's work before. Just like "Where You're At" Neate provides the reader with enough information and history to stay relevant and interested. There was a lot of new information to me, but I never felt like I was reading a high school history book. I found this a great educational and eye opening read. If you're a fan of his work, I'm sure you'll enjoy this also. Or for anyone interested in culture and ethnic studies give this a shot.

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