

October 2022

Book Review: Only Wanna Be with You: The Inside Story of Hootie & the Blowfish

Stacy L. Winchester
University of South Carolina - Columbia

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/scl_journal



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Winchester, Stacy L. (2022) "Book Review: Only Wanna Be with You: The Inside Story of Hootie & the Blowfish," *South Carolina Libraries*: Vol. 6: Iss. 2, Article 7.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51221/sc.scl.2022.6.2.7>

Available at: https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/scl_journal/vol6/iss2/7

This Book Review is brought to you by Scholar Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in South Carolina Libraries by an authorized editor of Scholar Commons. For more information, please contact digres@mailbox.sc.edu.

Book Review: Only Wanna Be with You: The Inside Story of Hootie & the Blowfish

Keywords

music, bands, 1990s

Only Wanna Be with You: The Inside Story of Hootie & the Blowfish

Tim Sommer

Published April 28, 2022

University of South Carolina Press

Columbia, SC

ISBN: Hardcover 978-1-64336-275-5

eBook 978-1-64336-276-2

Price: \$26.99

Stacy Winchester, Research Data Librarian at the University of South Carolina.

As Research Data Librarian at UofSC, Stacy advocates for open science, open data, and helps researchers preserve, share, and find data for research.

Music journalist Tim Sommer was working as an Artists and Repertoire (A&R) representative in 1993 when he signed Hootie & the Blowfish to the Atlantic Records label. In *Only Wanna Be with You: The Inside Story of Hootie & the Blowfish*, Sommer calls on years' worth of personal experiences with the band, interviews with group members, their friends, acquaintances, and a treasure trove of documents to which he was provided access, to create a compelling picture of one of the 1990's most iconic musical groups. The book follows Hootie from its foundations in the 1980s through 2020. Sommer's mix of anecdotes and well-researched history brings the reader backstage for the story of this band.

In *Only Wanna Be with You*, Sommer creates a narrative that is a pleasure to read. As the author traces the band through the years, he includes their signing with Atlantic Records, the huge success they enjoyed during the mid-1990s, the more difficult years that followed, a hiatus, several members' solo careers (including Rucker's rise to fame as a country artist), the band's tremendously successful 2019 Group Therapy Tour, and their most recent recordings.

This book would not be complete without a discussion about racism and Darius Rucker's impact on equality in music. Woven throughout the story, and specifically addressed in Chapters 35 and 36, is a discussion of how Rucker, as the African American lead singer of Hootie & the Blowfish and a country recording star, has inspired others and opened doors. As Sommer states: "Darius Rucker just being Darius Rucker is an enormous political statement, a profound act of courage" (223).

The book contains several special components. A discography is included at the end covering the years 1990 – 2020. This appendix serves as a handy reference for readers wishing to flip back and forth while connecting their favorite songs and albums with time periods and events discussed in the body of the book. It does not include solo works released by any of the band members, including Rucker. Chapter 12 incorporates 15 images, printed in black and white, with annotations providing interesting and sometimes humorous context. Another section of potential interest can be found in Chapter 17. The author provides remarks about each of the tracks included on *cracked rear view*, Hootie's debut album. These notes include information about the songs, quotes from band members, and more.

This title is an excellent choice for public libraries and the popular reading collections of academic libraries in South Carolina and beyond. The book's intended audience, fans of Hootie & the Blowfish both old and new, and music lovers of all types will undoubtedly enjoy recounted stories of the band's journey. Given his many years working and traveling with Hootie, Sommer proves to be an excellent source for, and teller of, this enjoyable tale.