



## **Boogie Like a Mudbug, Groove to the Bamboula Rhythm, and Learn “How To Dress a Po’ Boy”** **Johnette Downing and Scott Billington Explore Louisiana Culture with Album**

### **SWAMP ROMP**

All-Ages Dance Party Traverses the Rich Music and Culture of New Orleans and Beyond;  
Available in Time for Mardi Gras 2019!

*New Orleans, December 3, 2018* – Inviting her many fans to “pass a good time” in the new year, Johnette Downing, a multi-award-winning and internationally touring musician, author, and former educator, will release *SWAMP ROMP* on February 15, 2019. This festive “Louisiana Dance Party” is Downing’s first project with partner Scott Billington, a GRAMMY Award-winning record producer and musician. Featuring a stellar array of Louisiana musical talent, *SWAMP ROMP* arrives in plenty of time for Mardi Gras celebrations. The first single “How To Dress a Po’ Boy” (also the title of Downing’s latest picture book) is available now from [www.johnnettedowning.com](http://www.johnnettedowning.com).

Five years in the making, and debuted publicly at [a recent GRAMMY Museum concert](#), this record is an homage to the place, people, music, and culture that both Downing (a New Orleans native) and Billington hold dear. A tasty mélange of musical styles is reflected in these 15 original child-friendly songs (and one adapted traditional Cajun tune). The physical album includes 16 pages of lyrics and colorful liner notes, offering teachers and families a colorful resource for learning about Louisiana’s rich heritage.

The *laissez les bon temps roulez* spirit comes alive with the first title track, a jaunty harmonica-laced “swamp pop” party song. From there, Johnette and Scott take listeners for a ride through the landscape of Louisiana roots music, from New Orleans R&B to Cajun to traditional jazz. Supporting musicians include Irma Thomas, Roddie Romero, Joel Savoy, James Singleton, Doug Belote, Lee Allen Zeno, Matt Perrine, Wilson Savoy, Jake Eckert, C.R. Gruver, “Washboard Chaz” Leary, members of the Dirty Dozen Brass Band (Roger Lewis, Kevin Harris and Kirk Joseph), members of the Dukes of Dixieland (Kevin Clark, Craig Klein and Tim Laughlin), the McCrary Sisters and members of the ReBirth Brass Band (Keith Frazier and Derrick Tabb).

“What a thrill to record these songs with such world-class musicians,” says Downing, who herself is known as the “Pied Piper of Louisiana musical traditions.” Adds Billington, “These are all people I’ve known and loved working with over the years. This is the real deal; we tried to capture as many Louisiana musical styles as we could with this record.” In working together, Downing and Billington were able to meld her heritage and educational work, with his extensive community of roots musicians. Billington enlisted longtime collaborator Steve Reynolds as recording engineer for *SWAMP ROMP*. “There were so many smiles and so much laughter as we recorded these songs,” he says. “I had to pinch myself that we were able to gather so many absolutely great musicians to participate.”

Sonically sophisticated to please grown-up ears, *SWAMP ROCK* was created with the youngest listeners in mind. Downing’s three-decade career as a family music performer and recording artist has caught the attention of critics and fans around the country. Some of the songs on her previous ten albums reflect her Louisiana upbringing. “In some ways, *SWAMP ROMP* is the culmination of all I’ve been doing and creating for children,” Downing says. She advises her listeners to “take off your shoes and roll up the rug. It’s time to Swamp Romp!”

Johnette and Scott will share the new songs at the New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park on December 7<sup>th</sup> and St. Nick Fair on December 8<sup>th</sup>. Johnette will be launching her new book ***Who Got the Baby in the King Cake?*** at the Louisiana Children’s Museum on December 15<sup>th</sup>. The song for the book appears on *SWAMP ROMP*. More concerts and music videos are planned to celebrate the release of *SWAMP ROMP* during 2019. To extend the cultural learning, Downing is developing an activity guide for classrooms and

playgroups. Visit [www.johnetteandscott.com](http://www.johnetteandscott.com) or [www.johnettedowning.com](http://www.johnettedowning.com), and follow the group on Facebook for the latest news.

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**EDITORS:** CD and digital review copies of *SWAMP ROMP* are available upon request.

[Stream the songs on Soundcloud](#). Photos are available [at this link](#).

## Track Listing **SWAMP ROMP**

By Johnette Downing with Scott Billington

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|--|---|
| 1. Swamp Romp 2:02                               | 9. Gather Something Sweet 1:57            |
| 2. Who Got the Baby in the King Cake? 2:07       | 10. Your Best Pair of Shoes 2:44          |
| 3. Mudbug Boogie 3:45                            | 11. How to Dress a Po' Boy 2:54           |
| 4. It Wasn't Me (The Possum Song) 2:35           | 12. Crawfish Etouffée 1:46                |
| 5. Poor Worry Anna 3:01                          | 13. Get Ready, Get Set, Let's Groove 3:07 |
| 6. J'ai Vu le Loup, le Renard et la Belette 2:35 | 14. Our Ox carts 2:41                     |
| 7. Mississippi River 2:18                        | 15. Stand Up, Jump Up 2:40                |
| 8. Bamboula Rhythm 3:21                          | 16. Star in My Sky 2:08                   |

### More about Johnette and Scott

**Johnette Downing** developed a love of music at an early age. When she was a child in New Orleans, her tuba- and violin-playing father and her saxophone- and piano-playing mother took Johnette and her siblings to the French Quarter on the weekends. They would stand in the doorways of clubs listening to jazz and ragtime. Her passion for roots music and for sharing music with children, in the same way her parents shared it with her, led Johnette to become what the media have called the “Musical Ambassador to Children” and the “Pied Piper of Louisiana Music Traditions.” Over her 30-year career, Johnette has performed on five continents and has received 24 international awards for her 23 children’s books and ten recordings. In 2017, Johnette received the Louisiana Writer Award, and a 59th Grammy® Awards Participation Certificate for co-writing and singing back-up vocals on the Grammy® Award-winning record *Porcupine Meat* by blues legend Bobby Rush, which was produced by Scott Billington.

**Scott Billington's** multifaceted career in the music business began when his mother traded a book of Green Stamps for a harmonica, which she gave the 11-year-old as a Christmas present. By the time he was 16, he was performing in New England coffeehouses and clubs. Pursuing his love of blues and roots music, Scott went to work for Rounder Records in the mid-1970s. He has since produced over 100 albums of roots-oriented music for Rounder and other labels, which have won three Grammy® Awards and 12 Grammy® nominations. Other awards include the Sweet Soul Music Award (Italy), the Keepin' the Blues Alive Award (Memphis), the *Offbeat* Lifetime Achievement Award (New Orleans), and the Slim Harpo Award (Baton Rouge). In recognition of his work in Louisiana, Scott was appointed a Louisiana Colonel by Governor Edwin W. Edwards. His performances with Johnette as a family music duet again bring his harmonica skills to the fore.

Johnette and Scott met nearly 20 years ago at a New Orleans music conference, where they immediately recognized their mutual passion for Louisiana roots music. After a long friendship, they married in Italy in August 2013. Making family music as the duo “Johnette and Scott” came as naturally as breathing.



