

booklist

International sweethearts of rhythm.
Producers: Greta Schiller, Andrea Weiss,
Rosetta Reitz, and Rebecca Reitz. Directors:
Greta Schiller and Andrea Weiss. The
Cinema Guild, 1697 Broadway, New York,
NY 10019. 1986. 30min. Film, \$425. All
video, \$295. All rental \$55.

Called the International Sweethearts of Rhythm, this all-female, predominantly black band barnstormed the country during the post-Depression years, playing to packed nightclubs, theaters, and auditoriums. Recalling those swinging, halcyon days, former orchestra members tenderly remember the adulation of fans, the group's camaraderie, and, of course, the cramped tour bus accommodations. Not all was perfect, though, as this racially diverse group also reflects on the difficulties of nonstop travel, especially in the segregated Deep South. Yet one effervescent singer, who still belts out a tune reminiscent of earlier days, treasures the memories of Louis Armstrong's interest in her talents. Numerous black-and-white stills, newspaper articles, and show programs as well as outstanding performance footage intertwine with the affectionately rendered interviews from band members, other musicians, and fans. An enjoyable mood and nostalgia piece for public library audiences familiar with "the greatest girl band in America." Adult. SEB.

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