



## Ella Fitzgerald: The Tale of a Vocal Virtuosa

By Andrea Davis Pinkney

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**Ella Fitzgerald: The Tale of a Vocal Virtuosa** By Andrea Davis Pinkney

Ella Fitzgerald began her life as a singer on the stage of the Apollo Theater when she was just seventeen years old. Her rich voice and vocal innovations brought her fame and a remarkable career than spanned half a century and won her generations of fans around the world. Acclaimed author Andrea Davis Pinkney has told Ella's inspiring story in the voice of Scat Cat Monroe, a feline fan whose imagined narrative sings with the infectious rhythms of scat. Two-time Caldecott Honor winner Brian Pinkney's dramatic perspectives and fantastical images offer a jazzy improvisation all their own.

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## **Ella Fitzgerald: The Tale of a Vocal Virtuosa** By Andrea Davis Pinkney Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

#### From Publishers Weekly

The talented husband-and-wife team behind Duke Ellington turns to jazz biography once again, this time showcasing the First Lady of Song. Narrated by Scat Cat Monroe, a feline in a zoot suit, the book spins four "tracks" on Fitzgerald's life, from her childhood in Yonkers performing on street corners, to her discovery at a 1934 talent contest at the legendary Apollo Theatre to her move into the "ping-pong rhythms" of bebop. Whether swinging at the Savoy "to a house packed tighter than the A train" or breaking the racial barrier at many clubs ("Ella's popularity showed them that a true star has no color it just shines"), the singer's career is expertly framed to fit a picture book format. The prose, while occasionally labored, swings to a syncopated beat and piles on the synesthesia ("Ella rolled out a tune sweet enough to bake"; "Her voice was quick-fried rhythm, with a brassy satin twist"). Brian Pinkney turns out some of his best work yet. Rendered in a pleasingly high-contrast palette of pastels, the scratchboard illustrations are invested with magical realism, complete with dancers flying off the pages and topsy-turvy musicians. A particularly memorable spread about Ella's hit "How High the Moon" launches her into space on a trumpet with Dizzy Gillespie. A "skippy-hop-doo-dee-bop" picture book. Ages 5-9.

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#### From School Library Journal

Grade 1-4-Scat Cat Monroe, a feline who earned his name by knowing the "Queen of Scat," tells her story from "small-town girl to the First Lady of Song." The text, divided into four tracks (chapters), highlights Fitzgerald's early days in Harlem, singing with the Chick Webb Orchestra at the Savoy, and performing bebop with Dizzy Gillespie at Carnegie Hall. In a playful, conversational tone, this work nearly sings the rhythms of scat. Lively words and phrases like "Her voice was quick-fried rhythm" and "her scat swung to cloud nine and back" are scattered throughout. Brian Pinkney's distinctive scratchboard-and-acrylic paintings evoke the rhythm of the text and invite readers along on the ride. They will enjoy finding Scat Cat himself on most of the spreads. Bright colors, jazzy words, and energetic artwork bring the music of scat and Fitzgerald to life. A page of biographical information is included. This beautifully rendered tribute to the "Vocal Virtuosa" will be a welcome addition in all libraries.

Shauna Yusko, King County Library System, Bellevue, WA

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#### From [Booklist](#)

\*Starred Review\* Gr. 3-5, younger for reading aloud. "She sang like tomorrow wasn't ever gonna come." Introducing himself as a feline fan--a hepcat--who was there throughout Fitzgerald's musical career, purple-suited Scat Cat Monroe (who gets credit on the title page) narrates this picture-book biography that captures the "vocal virtuosa's" energy and genius. The lengthy text, filled with jazzy colloquialisms, keeps its focus solidly on the music, describing the thrill of Fitzgerald's performances in language that rhymes and slides with the swinging beat of its subject and places readers at the center of the action. Younger children won't understand the sense in many of the phrases, but heard aloud, the rhythm in the words will give them a feel for the music; older readers will enjoy both the similarities to rap and spoken-word poetry: "Bebop was jazz on the wild side. . . . It was *slam-bamming* on the *flitter-tip*. It was ham-cock-jabber. Fever. Pitch." In his familiar scratchboard style, Brian Pinkney shows the kinetic excitement and joy in swirling portraits that spin and blaze with cool colors and eye-popping patterns. Cue up the music and read this one out LOUD. *Gillian Engberg*

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## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Charlie Bowers:**

Book will be written, printed, or illustrated for everything. You can realize everything you want by a publication. Book has a different type. As we know that book is important factor to bring us around the world. Alongside that you can your reading skill was fluently. A guide Ella Fitzgerald: The Tale of a Vocal Virtuosa will make you to possibly be smarter. You can feel much more confidence if you can know about every thing. But some of you think which open or reading a book make you bored. It isn't make you fun. Why they could be thought like that? Have you seeking best book or appropriate book with you?

#### **Timothy Hawkins:**

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#### **James Jackson:**

The guide with title Ella Fitzgerald: The Tale of a Vocal Virtuosa has lot of information that you can understand it. You can get a lot of benefit after read this book. This specific book exist new understanding the information that exist in this guide represented the condition of the world today. That is important to you to find out how the improvement of the world. This particular book will bring you within new era of the the positive effect. You can read the e-book in your smart phone, so you can read this anywhere you want.

#### **George Bash:**

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