

JAZZ LINES PUBLICATIONS

Presents

I'VE GOT BEGINNER'S LUCK

RECORDED BY ELLA FITZGERALD

ARRANGED BY NELSON RIDDLE

PREPARED FOR PUBLICATION BY ROB DUBOFF AND JEFFREY SULTANOF

FULL SCORE

FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT

JLP-9470

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY
GEORGE GERSHWIN AND IRA GERSHWIN

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THE JAZZ LINES FOUNDATION INC.
PO BOX 1236
SARATOGA SPRINGS NY 12866 USA

I'VE GOT BEGINNER'S LUCK (1959)

Background:

Ella Fitzgerald was born on April 25, 1917, in Newport News, VA. She began her climb to becoming the 'First Lady of Song' with the Chick Webb Orchestra in New York City in 1935. Following Webb's death in 1939, she became the focal point of the band. She continued her Swing Era ascent with several bands during the early-to-mid 1940s, and later honed her famous scat singing during her time with the Dizzy Gillespie Big Band. She showed the world that she could eloquently adapt her vocal prowess to any style of jazz, developing her scat style to accentuate bebop and act as another improvising horn in the band.

In 1947, Ella married bassist Ray Brown, with whom she fell in love while both were with Gillespie. Brown was working on producer/impresario Norman Granz's Jazz at the Philharmonic tours, and Granz signed her on, later becoming her manager. By the mid 1950s, reaching the peak of her powers, Ella had become very comfortable with bebop; perhaps too much so. She began to thirst for new challenges, and Granz helped influence her to begin her Songbook series, which would ultimately encompass eight sessions from 1956-1964, using the arrangers Nelson Riddle, Billy May, Paul Weston, Buddy Bregman, and the team of Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn on their Songbook record. Granz's idea was to record albums that would each take an in-depth, fresh look at the music of one of America's greatest 20th century composers or composing teams, beginning with Cole Porter in 1956. These recordings became an unprecedented look at the Great American Songbook and viewed together are seen as one of the great landmarks of 20th century American music.

In 1959, arranger Nelson Riddle was at the top of the arranging world, internationally famous, having worked with Nat King Cole, Judy Garland, and others, and was best-known for arranging some of the all-time greatest works of Frank Sinatra, including *Songs for Swingin' Lovers* and *A Swingin' Affair*. Riddle and Fitzgerald had never worked together, and their musical marriage was a seemingly obvious one, especially for a canon such as that of the Gershwins. Recorded in several sessions during the first seven months of 1959, the project became the largest of Fitzgerald's career, and was further enhanced by the support of Ira Gershwin, who apparently contributed lyrics to some songs which had previously lacked them in finished form. As with other entries in the series, both well-known classics and rarities were recorded, resulting in a wonderfully thorough presentation. The completed project received universal acclaim, and *But Not For Me* received the 1960 Grammy Award for Best Female Pop Vocal Performance. In perhaps the greatest testament to the brilliance of Ella Fitzgerald and the interpretations of the Gershwin Songbook created by she and Nelson Riddle, Ira Gershwin has been famously quoted as saying, "I never knew how good our songs were until I heard Ella Fitzgerald sing them."

Ella Fitzgerald Sings the George and Ira Gershwin Songbook was the high point in the series of songbook packages produced by Norman Granz for the Verve label. There had been four such projects beforehand: boxes of songs by Cole Porter, Rodgers and Hart, Duke Ellington, and Irving Berlin. Granz decided to make the Gershwin box the most ambitious of all of them: 5 LPs plus a 7" limited edition bonus disc that included Riddle arrangements of Gershwin instrumental compositions. This project had the enthusiastic cooperation and participation of lyricist Ira Gershwin who attended the recording sessions and re-wrote lyrics for the occasion. This was the first songbook session that Nelson Riddle participated in. Granz had wanted Riddle to arrange music for the previous songbooks, but he was unavailable at the time.

Notes to the Conductor:

This publication is based on the original Nelson Riddle pencil score. The arrangements from this session, along with the ones Riddle wrote for Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin, work best when the whole ensemble - including the conductor - has that 'laid back' swing feel. The xylophone part has been cued in the piano part in the event this instrument is not available. In addition, alternate reed parts (that avoid flute and clarinet doubles) and an optional synthesizer part (in place of the strings) have been included. However, to achieve the desired affect we strongly encourage the conductor to have the reed players observe the doubles and to use strings when possible. This arrangement was recorded by Ella as-is; there were no form or note changes from the original score.

Doug DuBoff and Rob DuBoff

- December 2013

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SCORE

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY GEORGE GERSHWIN AND IRA GERSHWIN

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RUBATO ♩ = 80 APPROX.

Vocal

At an - y gamb - ling ca - si - no from Mon - te Car - lo to Re - no they tell you that a be - gin - ner comes out a win - ner. Be -

Reed 1: Flute/Alto Sax. *Flute*

Reed 2: Flute/Alto Sax. *Flute* *p*

Reed 3: Clarinet/Tenor Sax. *Clarinet* *p*

Reed 4: Clarinet/Tenor Sax. *Clarinet* *p*

Reed 5: Clarinet/Baritone Sax. *Clarinet* *p*

Trumpet 1 *Cup Mute*

Trumpet 2 *Cup Mute*

Trumpet 3 *Cup Mute*

Trumpet 4 *Cup Mute*

Horn in F

Trombone 1 *p*

Trombone 2 *p*

Trombone 3 *Cup Mute* *p*

Bass Trombone *p*

Violin I *p*

Violin II *p*

Violin III *Div.* *p*

Viola *p*

Celli *p*

Guitar

Piano

Bass *arco* *p*

Xylophone

Drum Set

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

I'VE GOT BEGINNER'S LUCK

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9

Vox. *gin - ner fish - ing for floun - der will catch a sev - en - teen - pound - - er;*

Tbn. 1 *To Cup Mute*

Tbn. 2 *To Cup Mute*

B. Tbn. *To Cup Mute*

Vln. I *p*

Vln. II *p*

Vln. III *p*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *p*

solo

mf

9 10 11 12

Vox. that's what I al - ways heard and al - ways thought ab - surd, but now I be - lieve ev - ry

Rd. 1 (Fl.) *mp*

Rd. 2 (Fl.) *mp*

Rd. 3 (Cl.) *mp*

Rd. 4 (Cl.) *mp*

Rd. 5 (Cl.) *mp* To Bass Clarinet

Hn. *legato p*

Vln. I *mp* Div. Unis. *p*

Vln. II *mp* Div. Unis. *p*

Vln. III *mp* Div. Unis. Div. *p*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *p*

Bs. *p*

13 14 15 16 17 18