



Piano Starts Here: The Young Art Tatum

By Robert A. Parker

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Regardless of whether they've heard of jazz or Art Tatum, young readers will appreciate how Parker uses simple, lyrical storytelling and colorful, energetic ink-and-wash illustrations to show the world as young Art Tatum might have seen it. Tatum came from modest beginnings and was nearly blind, but his passion for the piano and his acute memory for any sound that he heard drove him to become a virtuoso who was revered by both classical and jazz pianists alike. Included in the back matter is a biography and bibliography.

From the Hardcover edition.

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Piano Starts Here: The Young Art Tatum By Robert A. Parker **Bibliography**

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Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review Parker, who illustrated Jan Greenberg and Sandra Jordan's *Sibert Honor Book Action Jackson* (2002), contributes both words and pictures in this heartfelt portrait of jazz great Tatum. Parker pushes the limits of the book's nonfiction cataloguing by speaking in the pianist's first-person voice, but an author's note and a solid bibliography set the episodes in a framework of established facts. The vibrant scenes, in Parker's familiar style of scratched ink lines and watercolor washes, show young Tatum playing at home for his dancing parents, at church for a full choir, and at local clubs, where he is discovered and his international career begins. In some images, crowds of dancers and musicians create a swirl of animated motion; in others, Parker sets Tatum, who was nearly blind, against a deep, moody, abstract background of shifting colors. Throughout, the simple, direct language shows the power of the music for both Tatum and his listeners. "When I am at the piano . . . I play clouds of notes, rivers of notes . . . I forget that my eyes aren't good. I have everything I need." Cue up the music; children will best appreciate this beautiful tribute with an earful of Tatum at the keyboard. Grades 2-4. --Gillian Engberg

Review

Starred review, [Kirkus Reviews](#), December 15, 2007:

"Fusing Parker's artistic talent and passion for jazz (he's a musician, too), this sensitively embellished biography is totally on time."

Starred review, [Booklist](#), February 2, 2008:

"The simple, direct language shows the power of the music for both Tatum and his listeners."

Starred review, [School Library Journal](#), February 2008:

"Breathing life into words about music for young children is never easy, but Parker makes it appear effortless."

Review, [The San Francisco Chronicle](#), February 24, 2008:

"It's a joyful portrait of an innovative artist who was peerless in music ... A jazz musician himself, Parker brings a deep love and understanding to his subject."

About the Author

Robert Andrew Parker has illustrated numerous acclaimed books for children, including the Caldecott Honor Book *Popcorn and Ma Goodness* by Edna Mitchell Preston, the *Boston Globe-Horn Book* Award winner *Cold Feet* by Cynthia DeFelice, and *Action Jackson* by Jan Greenberg and Sandra Jordan, which received six starred reviews and was named a Robert F. Sibert Honor Book. Mr. Parker is a jazz musician. He lives in West Cornwall, Connecticut.

From the Hardcover edition.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Lawrence Elam:

Spent a free a chance to be fun activity to complete! A lot of people spent their free time with their family, or their friends. Usually they doing activity like watching television, planning to beach, or picnic inside the park. They actually doing same every week. Do you feel it? Do you wish to something different to fill your own personal free time/ holiday? Could possibly be reading a book may be option to fill your no cost time/ holiday. The first thing that you'll ask may be what kinds of guide that you should read. If you want to try look for book, may be the e-book untitled Piano Starts Here: The Young Art Tatum can be very good book to read. May be it might be best activity to you.

Brian Pena:

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Dolores Mann:

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