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# Sweethearts Of Rhythm: The Story Of The Greatest All-Girl Swing Band In The World



## Synopsis

In the 1940s, as the world was at war, a remarkable jazz band performed on the American home front. This all-female band, originating from a boarding school in the heart of Mississippi, found its way to the most famous ballrooms in the country, offering solace during the hard years of the war. They dared to be an interracial group despite the cruelties of Jim Crow laws, and they dared to assert their talents though they were women in a "man's" profession. Told in thought-provoking poems and arresting images, this unusual look at our nation's history is deep and inspiring.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars 14 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,064,584 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #35 in [Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Music > Jazz](#) #241 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Musical](#) #687 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > United States > 1900s](#)

Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 5 and up

## Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Grade 4 Up  
•Nelson's syncopated poetry jives perfectly with Pinkney's layered watercolors in this look at the famous all-girl African-American swing band that toured the U.S., breaking attendance records, from 1937 to 1946. Nelson speaks in the voices of the band's instruments, reminiscing about their glory days from the shelves of a New Orleans pawnshop, recalling the excitement of the road and the difficulties of Jim Crow. Her poetry evokes the rich wail of swing music with varied meters, rhyme schemes, and free verse, calling up memories of the Dust Bowl, World War II, rationing, segregation, and music that momentarily lifted its listeners above hardship. Pinkney employs graphite, color pencil, watercolor, and collage in lusciously hued illustrations depicting night clubs, dancers, Victory Gardens, marching soldiers, and musicians in a

vibrant volume that will be just as useful in high school history and English classrooms as for upper elementary general reading, not to mention music and art at any level. A chronology of the Sweethearts' history enhances the poetry.~•~Joyce Adams Burner, National Archives at Kansas City, MO END

"Nelson brings her signature poetic treatment of history to this outstanding collaboration...The book...is a stellar integration of art and text." --Kirkus"Nelson's syncopated poetry jives perfectly with Pinkney's layered watercolors...a vibrant volume." --School Library Journal"[A] book with rich rewards." --Horn Book

I guess I was expecting more of a history but this is an art book with very slight text, nothing greatly informative. However, it would be a wonderful gift for a young girl who has shown any interest in jump jazz of the past, as it certainly reveals a slice of women's history in the swing band scene.

A book of impressionistic verse and dynamic illustration celebrating one of America's overlooked swing bands, the International Sweethearts of Rhythm. While it has the appearance of a book aimed at children the underlying research is substantive. The chronology and bibliography, although not exactly accurate, are most welcome updates to the literature on this band. Young band musicians should find it inspirational. Jaded jazz historians might find it a useful point of departure.

My aunt got to see them when her husband was in the service in New York in World War 11, I had not realized that they were an all female international band composed of mostly black women, and women of different races which would darken their skins with make-up to appear black.It is an eye opening book written in swing.

Gorgeous poems by Marilyn Nelson, told from the perspective of the instruments. Watercolor illustrations by Jerry Pinckney are magnificent.

The film was very good, but the book as always is much better and more informative.

Excellent book of poetry! My favorite poem is Improvisation - from the format of the text to the content - it is pretty neat!

This isn't a bad book really. It's just not what I expected. I was looking for history and this is poetry. The illustrations are cool.

After awakening to the artwork of Jerry Pinkney at the Norman Rockwell Museum, I found this book a wonderful combination of music, poetry and paintings. His whimsical way of catching moments is sheer magic.

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