

## MIDWEST RECORD

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### ACROBAT

ELLA FITZGERALD/The Collection 1938-45: I remember getting a record on Folkways that was nascent Fitzgerald as a featured singer with Chick Webb. If I was drawing a blank then, do you know who Webb is now? I thought so. I remember seeing Fitzgerald in some movie when TV was only a few channels and more aggressive stations ran old movies all night and there she was on a bus singing "A Tisket A Tasket". It was a WTF moment for my young head. Such an august singer singing such jive ass crap? She probably hadn't met Norman Granz yet. Here we get another look at her early days nicely and generously spread over 4 discs. This collection of early Decca sides has been batted around some over the years, from authorized to unauthorized, but this set finds Acrobat doing Fitzgerald justice, cleaning up the old tapes and showing that she was loaded with gumption and drive before becoming the queen of the songbook. It's not definitive but it's a great look at things to come.

CHRIS SPECTOR, Editor and Publisher  
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