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ELLA FITZGERALD'S CENTENNIAL YEAR COMMEMORATED WITH A GLOBAL *ELLA 100* CELEBRATION

The First Lady Of Song Honored With Several Album Releases Exploring Her Extraordinary Legacy and Remarkable Career

The Ella Fitzgerald Charitable Foundation, Verve Label Group and UMG are pleased to announce some of the major initiatives confirmed as part of this year's *Ella 100* centennial celebration honoring one of the most beloved and influential vocalists of all time, **Ella Fitzgerald**. Throughout 2017 to April 2018, the 100th anniversary of Fitzgerald's birthday (**April 25, 1917**) will be celebrated across the world with prestigious exhibits, a trove of new music releases and myriad independent tributes and concerts.

Verve and **Universal Music** will celebrate Ella Fitzgerald's centennial with a slate of exciting releases throughout the year and into 2018. On April 21, 100 of her most popular songs will be released as a new 4CD box set titled *100 Songs For A Centennial*. The collection, which will also be available digitally, spans Fitzgerald's **Decca** and **Verve** years, beginning with her earliest recordings with Chick Webb and his orchestra in 1936 and culminating with the GRAMMY® Award-winning "Mack The Knife," her famous live recording from 1960 from *Ella in Berlin: Mack the Knife*. Some of the many highlights include "Summertime," "A-Tisket, A-Tasket," "(I Love You) For Sentimental Reasons," and "I've Got You Under My Skin."

Also on April 21, *Ella Fitzgerald Sings The George & Ira Gershwin Song Books*, a collaboration with Nelson Riddle that is highly regarded as the pinnacle of her legendary Song Book series, will be released as a limited edition 6LP vinyl box set. A replica of the rare 5LP set originally released in 1959, the Ella 100 edition recreates for the first time since its initial release the original stereo box set on vinyl, the originally included five lithographs by French impressionist painter Bernard Buffet, as well as the hardcover book, *Words And Music*, which for this

set has been updated with additional historical information and an afterword by noted author David Ritz. The 2017 collection was newly mastered by Ron McMaster at Capitol Studios in Hollywood where the album was originally recorded in 1959 under the supervision of Verve Records founder Norman Granz. A sixth LP enlarges the original 10-inch instrumental EP with orchestra tracks on Side One and additional material from the sessions on Side Two. One of the bonus tracks, a mono alternate take of "Oh! Lady Be Good!," is on vinyl for the first time.



Later in the year, all of Ella Fitzgerald & Louis Armstrong's beloved duets, combining for the first time their Decca singles with three ageless Verve albums and bonus tracks, will be released as a 4CD/digital set titled *Cheek To Cheek: The Complete Ella & Louis Duets*. Further on, Verve will release a new album featuring Fitzgerald's classic vocal recordings accompanied by new orchestral arrangements by the London Symphony Orchestra.

Some of Fitzgerald's most cherished earliest recording will be brought into the digital age when the 300 singles she recorded for Decca from 1935-1955, nearly three-quarters of which never appeared on an album, will be made available digitally in the form they were released (A side/B side) for the first time on March 24. With more than half the tracks making their digital debut, the mammoth collection will be divided into four volumes that will encapsulate Fitzgerald's two-decade-long Decca career. *Vol. 1, 1935-1939* includes songs teenaged Ella recorded as the featured singer fronting the world-renowned Chick Webb Orchestra while *Vol. 2, 1939-1941* features 50 tracks credited to Ella and Her Famous Orchestra, when she took over the Chick Webb Orchestra following Webb's untimely death at age 30. *Vol. 3 1942-1949* covers the 1940s, when Fitzgerald formally became a Decca solo artist in her mid-twenties and *Vol. 4 1950-1955* chronicles the first half of the 1950s before Fitzgerald's manager Norman Granz created Verve Records and brought her on board.

ABOUT ELLA FITZGERALD

Dubbed "The First Lady of Song," **Ella Fitzgerald (1917-1996)** was the most popular female jazz singer in the United States for more than half a century. In her lifetime, she sold more than **40 million albums** and received most every honor a performer could dream of winning, including the Kennedy Center Honor (1979), the National Medal of Arts (1987), France's Commander of Arts and Letters (1990), the Presidential Medal of Freedom (1992) and 13 Grammy Awards. In 2007, the United States Postal Service honored Fitzgerald with a postage stamp.

In her six decade long career, the Queen of Jazz recorded more than 200 albums and roughly 2,000 songs, making her the most recorded female – and the second most recorded – performer in history. Among those recordings are works with some of history's greatest musicians and legendary songwriters.