



Chasing Freedom: The Life Journeys of Harriet Tubman and Susan B. Anthony, Inspired by Historical Facts

By Nikki Grimes

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Nikki Grimes offers a glimpse into the inspiring lives of Susan B. Anthony and Harriet Tubman, with breathtaking illustrations by Michele Wood!

What if Harriet Tubman and Susan B. Anthony sat down over tea to reminisce about their extraordinary lives? What would they recall of their triumphs and struggles as they fought to achieve civil rights for African Americans and equal rights for women? And what other historical figures played parts in their stories? These questions led Coretta Scott King Award winner Nikki Grimes to create *Chasing Freedom*, an engaging work of historical fiction about two of the nineteenth century's most powerful, and inspiring, American women.

With breathtaking illustrations by Coretta Scott King Award winner Michele Wood, *Chasing Freedom* richly imagines the experiences of Tubman and Anthony, set against the backdrop of the Underground Railroad, the Civil War, and the Women's Suffrage Movement.

Additional back matter invites curious young readers to further explore this period in history--and the larger-than-life figures who lived it.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 3–6—"History is often taught in bits and pieces, and students rarely get the notion that these bits and pieces are connected," writes Coretta Scott King Award-winning author Grimes in her author's note. Here, she and fellow Coretta Scott King-winning illustrator Wood imagine an afternoon tea conversation between suffragette Susan B. Anthony and Underground Railroad conductor Harriet Tubman, where the women take turns relating interconnected stories from their lives. Each spread, including a page of text and a full-page illustration, tells a single anecdote, including personal turning points in each woman's life and major historical events, such as John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry. In keeping with both activists' strong religious convictions, God and biblical references are invoked often, and Wood's painterly illustrations feature patterns inspired by American patchwork quilts and traditional African motifs. Back matter includes short biographies, additional notes, a bibliography, and an author's note. Textual voice and bold pictorial color are strong, and Anthony's and Tubman's goals maintain relevance at a time when gender and race issues continue to be newsworthy. Skirting the edges of fictionalized biography can be tricky. Although Anthony and Tubman did meet repeatedly, Grimes states that this extended conversation comes purely from her imagination. Younger readers, who may not realize this immediately, may need guidance distinguishing the historical facts from the fictionalized musings. Audiences willing to embrace the unusual concept, though, may view this as a vanguard piece in an engaging newform that mixes nonfiction with historical fiction.—Jill Ratzan, I. L. Peretz Community Jewish School, Somerset, NJ

Review

Praise for *Chasing Freedom : The Life Journeys of Harriet Tubman and Susan B. Anthony*

* "Audiences willing to embrace the unusual concept may view this as a vanguard piece in an engaging newform that mixes nonfiction with historical fiction." -- *School Library Journal*, starred review

* "Ready-made for reading aloud in three voices (Anthony, Tubman, and a narrator), this handsome picture book offers an original take on these significant Americans and fresh insights into their times." -- *Booklist*, starred review

* "A tremendous opportunity for children to understand what these women worked so hard to accomplish--one succeeding and one coming close." -- *Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

Talkin' About Bessie (written by Nikki Grimes and illustrated by E.B. Lewis)

A Coretta Scott King Honor Book

"While fictional, this is a fine piece to use to set a tone or inspire more research into Coleman's life. It could also serve as an exceptional writing model for students." -- *School Library Journal*

I See The Rhythm (written by Toyomi Igus and illustrated by Michele Wood)

"Wood's vibrant paintings are based in historical detail, and resonate with emotion. The color choices, postures of the figures, as well as the expressions on their faces, reflect various aspects of African-American music; the pictures broadcast joy, innovation, and exuberance in the face of systematic oppression." -- *Kirkus Reviews*

Going Back Home (written by Toyomi Igus and illustrated by Michele Wood)

"Through vivid, mosaiclike paintings, Wood skillfully depicts her African-American family, her rich heritage, and ethnic motifs. ... The full-page, full-color reproductions are arrestingly beautiful." -- *School Library Journal*

About the Author

Nikki Grimes won a 2014 Coretta Scott King Honor for *Words with Wings*, and she is the author of *BronxMasquerade*, which won the Coretta Scott King Award. Nikki is also the author of four other Coretta Scott King Honor books: *Talkin' About Jessie*, *Jazmin's Notebook*, *The Road to Paris*, and *Dark Sons*. She won the 2006 NCTE Award for Excellence in Poetry for Children. Nikki lives in Corona, California. Visit her online at www.nikkigrimes.com.

Michele Wood is a painter, illustrator, and designer. She won the American Book Award for *Going Back Home* and the Coretta Scott King Illustrator Award for *I See the Rhythm*. Michele lives in Atlanta, Georgia. For more information, go to www.michelewood.com.

Users Review

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having that book? If I were you I will go to the publication store hurriedly.

Jonathan Solis:

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