

Nickolas Diaz

Mr. Scott

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Final Essay Kurt Elling

Kurt Elling is an American songwriter and singer. He is known worldwide for his baritone jazz and vocalese style, where vocalese is where the singer imitates an instrumental part. Elling was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1967. Much of his early life was influenced by religion, singing and a variety of instruments. His true passion for jazz came when he was in university studying for his master's degree in philosophy of religion. During graduation he decided to do small time gigs at a club, when his mentor Karl Johnson advised him to do it full time and Elling dropped out with one credit remaining to graduate which shows how passionate he is. After that he mainly did a bunch of small gigs, such as weddings and parties until he hit it big by signing with a big producer called Blue Note, and his debut *Close Your Eyes* in 1995 which made him famous. His career finally took off after that and he is still producing music to this day as his last album released last month called "Goin' to Chicago". Elling has won many awards, such winning Best Vocal Jazz Album, ten Grammy Awards, and International Jazz Artist of the Year. In addition he has performed throughout the world, such as Europe, the United States and parts of South America. Personally what I like most about him is his style of singing, such as elongating his voice to imitate the mood which allows him to express his mood whether it is introspection, conveying warmth, or intensity. He also does a great job of telling a story, many of which are influenced by his experiences in his life such as life in Chicago or his family. In the end I really enjoyed listening to Kurt Elling as he is a great singer who often sways the audience.