

who began a long tenure as commissioner of the NFL while still in his thirties.

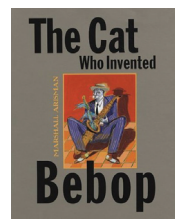
Aside from the players, a/k/a the “meat on the hoof,” technology begins to impact the game’s development. Rand reports on the first use of computers in evaluating talent, as well as the great god television, which would help finance the league, especially beneficial for small-market teams.

Rand pays tribute to Bert Bell, Rozelle’s predecessor as commissioner, who died in 1959. Like Moses, Bell was able to see the “promised land” from the distance, but was unable to be there for the festivities.

Sports is the ideal environment for hyperbole. It seems every other book these days features the words “best” or “greatest” or “forever” in their titles. In this case, however, the sentiment—if not the actual phrase—is most appropriate. (October) *Ron Kaplan*

## Children

### PICTURE BOOK



#### The Cat Who Invented Bebop

**Marshall Arisman**  
Creative Editions, Hardcover  
\$25.65 (32pp)  
978-1-56846-152-6

This whimsical story imagines the invention of bebop music as the production of jazz-playing cats who “were so cool they had their own language.” It chronicles the adventures of one Stringbean McCoy, a “cool kitten” born to a family “as square as boxes” who “loved him but not his music.” Readers will laugh at Stringbean’s inexplicably imaginative invention of bebop music by playing his saxophone using his forelegs to play one tune and his hind legs for another.

As a “cool kitten,” Stringbean studies music with Pops, a “cool cat” mentor whose gentle encouragement helps him learn to play only the right notes even when his saxophone squeaks loudly and often. By the time Stringbean graduates from “Catsville High,” he is a good musician, even though he still plays “too many notes at a time.” He saves his money until he has enough for a train ticket from his home in the Mississippi Delta to New York City. Caught in his first snowstorm, he meets Cat-Dance Johnson, who points him to a jazz club called the Blue Devil Lounge. Summoning all his courage, Stringbean climbs onstage and begins playing with the band. His debut goes well, until he begins a solo and notices that it is neither cool nor fast enough. His moment has arrived: “Still playing the melody of ‘Don’t Start Me Talkin’” with his front paws, Stringbean strips off his shoes and, with his hind

paws, plays the notes to a completely different song, “Mississippi Blues.” Electrified by the new sounds, the other band members are quick to follow suit, thereby inventing bebop and changing jazz music for all time.

Author and illustrator Marshall Arisman is an internationally known artist who chairs the M.F.A. program at the School of Visual Arts in New York City. One of the foremost illustration teachers in the United States, he paints, sculpts, and writes, and his documentary, *Marshall Arisman: Facing the Audience*, is due out soon. A saxophone player just like Stringbean McCoy, he clearly understands how art and music can connect, especially for young children for whom one medium can generate interest in another. His other children’s book is *The Wolf Who Loved Music*. (September) *Elizabeth Breau*



#### The Last Black King of the Kentucky Derby

**Crystal Hubbard;  
Robert McGuire, illus-  
trator**

Lee & Low Books,  
Hardcover \$17.95 (40pp)  
978-1-58430-274-2

Isaac Murphy, Willie Simms, Jimmy “Wink” Winkfield: few people recognize these names or know they were victorious black jockeys. Winkfield, the subject of this book, was born in 1882 in Kentucky, and started riding horses at sixteen. He eventually won two consecutive Kentucky Derbies: one in 1901 while riding His Eminence and the other in 1902 while riding Alan-a-Dale. Robert McGuire, who has illustrated biographies of Frederick Douglass and Amelia Earhart, uses oil paintings to depict jockeys on horses racing toward the finish line. A moving illustration shows a teary-eyed Winkfield sitting triumphantly upon His Eminence, as the crowd cheers behind him.

After two major victories, “Wink was a genuine star...[and] he was feeling confident when he mounted a horse named Early in the Kentucky Derby on May 2, [1903].” Though “Wink could almost taste victory,” he won second place, and failed to earn the third consecutive win he was hoping for. Racism, segregation, and the decline of interest in the sport drove black jockeys away from American horse racing, resulting in Winkfield’s longtime distinction as the last black jockey to win the Kentucky Derby.

In an afterword, the author, a 2006 Amelia Bloomer Project Award winner, explains that Winkfield was eventually honored for his accomplishments. This book, with its informative introduction, is a teaching tool for children eight to ten years old that can be used to discuss an overlooked part of American history. Perhaps one day someone else will earn Winkfield’s crown. (August) *KaaVonia Hinton*



#### Lucky 13: Survival in Space

**Richard Hilliard**  
Boyd’s Mills Press, Hardcover  
\$16.95 (32pp)  
978-1-59078-557-7

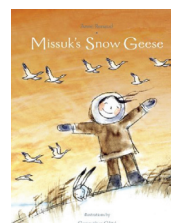
As a boy in 1930’s Wisconsin, Jim Lovell spent his free time reading stories about astronauts and mysterious planets. Forty years later, Jim would find himself in the midst of a real-life space adventure that held the entire world captivated and nearly cost Jim and fellow astronauts Fred Haise and Jack Swigert their lives—the 1970 Apollo 13 mission. Through clear, concise text and beautiful, two-page illustrations, author Richard Hilliard makes this tale of bravery and tenacity accessible to children between the ages of six and twelve.

The first pages of the book follow Lovell from boyhood through his career as a U.S. Navy pilot, to his acceptance as an astronaut in 1962 and his 1968 mission in Apollo 8, the first mission in which astronauts orbited the moon. The remainder of *Lucky 13* is devoted to the Apollo 13 mission.

Readers are led through the selection of the three astronauts, then on to the moment when, in a dramatic illustration, Apollo 13 launches on April 11, 1970. Each stage of the ensuing journey is described in successive spreads that slowly increase with intensity as Mission Control in Houston and the three astronauts begin to realize that the explosion that occurred outside the Command Module two days into the mission has seriously damaged the spacecraft and has put the three men in grave danger.

Hilliard has authored several other children’s picture books focusing on space, including *John Glenn*, and *Neil, Buzz, and Mike Go To the Moon*, an IRA Notable Children’s Book and a James Madison Book Award nominee; his expertise demonstrates itself fully in *Lucky 13*. Hilliard’s illustrations perfectly complement the text on each page and manage to help young readers understand the complexities of the problems experienced by the Apollo 13 astronauts without being either overly technical or frightening. Sidebars throughout the book give older or particularly interested readers more information about the page’s topic.

Hilliard writes and illustrates the Apollo 13 incident with artistry and humanity. This account is an excellent supplement for elementary grade space travel studies or for individual children interested in the exciting world of space. (October) *Michelle Kerns*



#### Missuk’s Snow Geese

**Anne Renaud  
Genevieve Côté,  
illustrator**  
Simply Read Books,  
Hardcover \$16.95 (36pp)  
978-1-894965-82-8