



Five Quills signs Annemarie Anang's 'joyful' debut picture book

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I Am Nefertiti 'teaches children to embrace their name and identity'



Independent children's publisher Five Quills has signed *I Am Nefertiti*, a debut picture book celebrating identity and belonging. Founder and publisher Daniela Schneider signed world and ebook rights directly from author Annemarie Anang, and bought Natelle Quek's illustrations through agent Alice Williams. The picture book is out on 2 June.

I Am Nefertiti follows a young girl who joins a children's band for the first time. But when the band leader struggles to pronounce her name, she nicknames her 'Nef', and the more Nefertiti is called 'Nef', the more she shrinks. When the other children in the band realise the problem, with their help, the band leader learns to pronounce Nefertiti's name. Together they rebuild her confidence, and the band can resume their rehearsal, with Nefertiti able to keep the beat.

Anang is a Londoner born to Ghanaian parents. She is an actor and singer, and a former primary teacher. She said: "I am very excited about my debut children's book. I wanted to write so that my daughter could see herself represented as the main character in picture books - a main character that does all the fun, exciting, interesting, hilarious and ambitious things her white counterparts do. ALL children should be able to see themselves reflected in stories. As a teacher for ten years, I understand how this helps children to grow with confidence and to love and value themselves - vital for healthy development and mental well-being."

Schneider said: "I'm very excited to be publishing *I Am Nefertiti*. Alongside Annemarie's empowering and heartwarming story, Natelle's vibrant illustrations echo the movement and rhythm of the music and visually depict Nefertiti's emotions with clever use of scale and perspective. This joyful picture book teaches children to embrace their name and identity, to celebrate how unique and special they are, and also shows the



importance of having the support of their peers and adults in their lives. I hope the book will appeal to many children and their parents, but in particular those children whose names or surnames have been mispronounced, made fun of or shortened by teachers or peers."

Illustrator Natelle Quek has illustrated young fiction for Abrams and Anna Kemp's 2021 retelling of *The Little Mermaid* (Puffin).

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