

An Interview by Stacey Lane

KATE MICUCCI

Make It and Share It

Weird is not bad. Weird is great. It's fun to be silly and it's fun to have fun.

Kate Micucci wants to put a smile on your face. That's her goal for all her artistic projects, and she's not afraid to be silly to do it.

She gets excited when she's writing a new song. She lights up when she has a paintbrush and a blank canvas. She loves acting in movies and TV shows—and enjoys voicing characters like Velma in *Scooby-Doo* and Webby in *DuckTales*.

After her son was born, Micucci decided to share her joy by making her first children's album. *My Hat* celebrates the wonderfully weird and looks at the everyday in new ways.



... starting young

Micucci read *Cricket* magazine when she was a kid, and now she's in it!

What made you want to make music?

My mom is a piano teacher, so music was always in my house. Since the age of four, piano lessons were a part of my life every day.

With piano having such a big role in your childhood, why did you choose to play the ukulele?

I was visiting my aunt and uncle in Hawaii. I was missing my piano. My grandpa took me to the music store and bought me my first ukulele. Little did I know it was going to be such an important part of my life.

How do you start creating a new song?

A phrase with a little melody just hits me. Then I'll go: Wait. What was that? Hello. I'll talk to it a little bit and figure out if it's a song.

My brain works with melody first. That comes in waves. Usually, that first verse and chorus come together out of nowhere.

Let's Go!

From music and comedy to puppetry and picture books, Kate Micucci brings imagination to everything she creates.



Let's See It!

Micucci is also a visual artist. She paints murals and takes things that were thrown away and turns them into art.

I figure out the lyrics after that, once I know what I am writing about. Then I have to figure out the rest, like a puzzle.

"A phrase with a little melody just hits me. Then I'll go: Wait. What was that? Hello. I'll talk to it a little bit and figure out if it's a song."

What inspired one of the songs from your album *My Hat*?

Even the most whimsical ones come from something that I experienced. "Mr. Moon" came from when I was driving down the road. I watched a full moon look like it fell into the ocean. I thought to myself, what are the fish thinking right now?

From CRICKET Magazine, July/August 2026, © 2026 Cricket Media, Inc.

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Let's Listen!

Mikey can be heard saying, "That's great, Mom!" at the end of the "King of the World" recording.

What's one of your favorite lyrics on the album?

One of my favorite lyrics is from "King of the World." I say, "Finally, I get to finish this song."

I started writing "King of the World" 12 years before I had a kid in my life. I thought, I am writing this for my son. I am going to stop and work on this once I actually have a son. So, I had "King of the World" living in my head for a long time. Then when I had Mikey, I could finish writing the song for him.

I sing it to him every night before bed.

What has been most exciting about releasing *My Hat*?

One of my most exciting days ever was the first time we performed the album live at Bob Baker Marionette Theater. I had a whole band behind me. My son was playing guitar next to me. The puppets were dancing around me. All the kids were jumping. It felt like this is what I want to do. This is the best thing ever.

I love performing because you get this immediate reaction when you look out and see people smiling or kids wiggling in their seats. Then I know the thing I made that I am sharing is connecting with other people. That is the ultimate goal.

What would you say to someone who's afraid to share what they make?

You don't need much. With just a pencil and paper, you can express whatever you want to express. You can make a song easily. You don't even need an instrument. You can make a song with your voice and drumming or whatever you have at your house to make noise.

It doesn't have to be perfect to share it, as long as you feel like it is something worth sharing. Keep making things. Share what you make and bring joy to people.

If you could give your nine-year-old self some advice, what would you say?

Don't quit. There will be days when you don't want to practice the piano. But just keep at it. You will be so glad you did. 

PUPPET POWER!

The album cover for *My Hat* and the music video for the title song feature a puppet named Camille. Micucci has been performing with Camille for 25 years. Camille is the inspiration for the puppet in Micucci's new picture book, *The Monster and Puppet Show!*

Micucci says she is drawn to puppetry because she enjoys giving life to lifeless objects. Since she was a kid, she has been making puppets and putting on shows. Doing different voices for her puppets led her to doing animated films and TV shows.

Isn't it nice to make a thing?
Anything you wanna make,
Think of the joy
that thing
will bring
to everyone
you know!

—Lyrics from "Isn't It Nice"

