

Music World Salutes The Duke

Duke Tells Of 10 Top Thrills In 25 Years

By DUKE ELLINGTON

New York—I have been asked to list the ten events that seem most memorable to me out of everything that has happened since we originally opened at the Cotton Club.

This is a task of considerable magnitude, since we have been fortunate enough to be on the receiving end of a large variety of honors. If I recall certain events and pay tribute to certain beautiful people I may be unconsciously offending certain other beautiful people. However, I shall search my mind for the ten occasions that stand out as personal memories.

Main Stem

Of course, our values today are greatly changed, but in those days there were certain things you had heard about that you always wanted to experience, and one of these was playing the Palace Theatre on Broadway. It meant reaching the peak for any artist who worked vaudeville, since the Palace was the ultimate in that field. So perhaps our first very big moment after the Cotton Club opening was the day we first played the Palace, in 1929.

Lights Out!

We opened the show with *Dear Old Southland*. I remember the men hadn't memorized their parts on this, and the show opened on a darkened stage. When I gave the downbeat, nothing happened—the men couldn't see a note! Then (Turn to Page 7)

Music Names Ring Film Bell

Hollywood—In a new indication of the movie box-office power of music names, Columbia producer Jonie Taps has signed the Bell Sisters to share top billing with Dick Haymes and Billy Daniels in his next major film musical, *Melancholy Baby*.

In addition, former Freddy Martin singer Merv Griffin has been set with Warner Bros. by Bullete Durgom; Peggy Lee is reportedly solidly in at Warner Bros. as a result of *The Jazz Singer*, with Mike Curtiz calling her his biggest find since Doris Day; and Rosemary Clooney has been rushed into a top role with Bob Hope in *Here Come The Girls*.

New York—MGM Records has announced the formation of a subsidiary label Lion Records. First release is an LP by Tommy Tucker entitled *Designed For Dancing*. It will set Lion's low-price policy retailing at \$1.69 plus taxes.

'Down Beat's' Five Star Discs

POPULAR	
LES BROWN	<i>Musical Weather Vane LP (Coral 56077).</i>
*FOUR ACES	<i>Album (Decca A-917).</i>
*FOUR ACES	<i>Just Squeeze Me (Decca 28390).</i>
*VERA LYNN	<i>Yours (London 1261).</i>
*PERRY COMO	<i>To Know You</i>
	<i>My Lady Loves To Dance (Victor 20-4959.)</i>
*TONY MARTIN	<i>Dance Of Destiny</i>
	<i>Sleepy Time Gal (Victor 20-5008)</i>
JAZZ	
LOU DONALDSON	<i>Cheek To Cheek (Blue Note 1598).</i>
DUKE ELLINGTON	<i>Smada (Columbia Okeh 6911).</i>
WOODY HERMAN	<i>Terrific (Mars 100).</i>

RHYTHM AND BLUES

*THE CLOVERS	<i>Hey, Miss Fannie (Atlantic 977).</i>
*TAB SMITH	<i>You Belong To Me (United U-131).</i>

CLASSICAL

*ANTHONY COLLINS: New Symphony Orchestra	<i>Williams & Elgar: Music for Strings (London LL583).</i>
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PORTRAIT OF THE DUKE—A Study by Bob Parent

Editorial

'Beat' Congratulates A Genius —Edward Kennedy Ellington

By HAL WEBMAN
(Editor-In-Chief)

How can one congratulate genius? Certainly it is more appropriate to be thankful for genius, for out of genius the world is bound to gain either esthetically or materially. Thus we must be thankful for Edward Kennedy Ellington, the only Duke I know who is truly a King!

For the Duke has delivered to the people of the world from his genius a still-fertile flow of esthetic delights. Measured in terms of giving pleasure, his music has done as much to comfort and unburden his fellow man as has any man's in our time. Measured in terms of

social significance, his music has spoken an international language in behalf of his race. His music says that any man, regardless of the color of his skin, is capable of artistic genius and contribution.

Thus we are thankful for the Duke on the celebration of his 25th year as a major American composer and conductor. Yet we must at the same time be awkward and congratulate him, for attaining a Silver Jubilee is an achievement which society has decreed shall be a moment for congratulatory accolade.

We Are Proud

Down Beat is proud that this issue will preface two weeks of national celebration of the Duke's anniversary. We are proud too that we were influential in the hatching of a full-fledged "Ellington Silver Jubilee."

It was our Leonard Feather who made the initial suggestion of the idea to Sidney Mills, general manager of the Mills Music publishing firm, which owns the greatest bulk of the Ellington copyrights, and whose founder, Irving Mills, played perhaps the most significant role in the development of Ellington.

So the idea was planted. The last week in August Sidney Mills (Turn to Page 8)

The Full Ellington Story Up To His Silver Jubilee

By LEONARD FEATHER

New York—They didn't think Duke Ellington was quite competent to conduct the show when he opened at the Cotton Club on the auspicious night of Dec. 4, 1927. They put a violinist, one Ellsworth Reynolds, in front of the orchestra, to wave his hands and scrape a fiddle and help this fledgling band play properly for the acts.

We Regret...

Because of the exceptional quantity (and we might modestly add, quality) of the feature material in this special Ellington issue, certain regular features have had to be omitted owing to pressure on space. They include:

Where The Bands Are Playing
Songs For Sale
Feather's Nest
Instrument Instruction Columns

Turning The Tables
Ragtime Marches On
Classics In Capsule

News, too, has had to be condensed, much of it appearing in the *Strictly Ad Lib* department on page 19.

"The conductor's communication with my jazz musicians just wasn't good semantics," smiles Duke. "So, after a couple of nights, I knew the show, and I just turned the piano around and started conducting—with my head, my shoulders, my eyebrows, my hands..."

Today the violinist is forgotten, but the name Duke Ellington started to build that night is known to literally hundreds of millions of people. And the Cotton Club opening is being recalled now in Ellington's Silver Jubilee, and in this commemorative issue of *Down Beat*.

Never No Lament

The Ellington story began April 29, 1899, when a son was born in Washington, D.C. to James Edward and Daisy Kennedy Ellington, and was named Edward Kennedy Ellington. Duke's father at that time was a butler; later he became a Navy blueprint maker.

Ellington Sr. was a happy man; his wife was a beautiful but puritanical and intensely moral woman. Between them they gave little Edward the best upbringing they could in segregated Washington, saw to it that he had piano lessons from the age of seven, and succeeded in making his a happy childhood, never obstructed by poverty or frustration.

At Armstrong High School in 1914, young Edward showed some talent for drawing. At the same time he studied both with Armstrong's music teacher and with Henry Grant, a private teacher. By 1916 he had listened to the ragtime piano players of the day and had played his first professional job, at True Reformers Hall in Washington, working from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. for 75 cents.

It's Glory

Duke was still in his teens when he was making a good enough living. (Turn to Page 15)

Ballroom Ops Set Program To Revive Dancing

Chicago—More than 1,200 ballrooms will join the nation's leading bandleaders, music publishers, record firms and booking agencies in a program designed to get the public out of the living room and into entertainment centers where dancing predominates.

Resurrection of the "dancing era" will start at the high school and college levels, and move through all phases of American life, operators, in attendance at the National Ballroom Operators Association convention here recently, decided.

Among the promotions being discussed are local, regional and national dance contests, development of new dances to keep pace with inaugurations in musical presentations by bands, and a concerted effort to teach the new dances to the greatest possible number of people through classes which would range from regular school courses to paid instruction periods in regular dance schools.

Kirk Hayes, Oakland, Calif., ballroom operator, will head the committee appointed by the NBOA, to further explore the dance promotion activities to be undertaken by that organization.

New York—Discovery Records has purchased a flock of masters of European jazz sides, release of which will be underway in this country by next month. Included are two sides by Arne Domnerus' Swedish stars.

Don't Forget To Vote In The 16th Annual
POPULARITY POLL
(See page 19)

Duke Carnegie Concert Set

New York—Negotiations were completed here last week for what promises to be a highlight of the current Ellington Jubilee celebrations—a concert by the Duke at Carnegie Hall.

The affair has been set for Nov. 14 at 8:30 and midnight, promoted by Patricia Music, new publishing outfit that has also been dabbling in concert promotions (including the Big Show at Carnegie Oct. 11).

Instead of a straight Ellington concert, the show will be an all-star one with one of the strongest line-ups of jazz names presented at Carnegie.

Acts already set include Billie Holiday, Charlie Parker with strings, Dizzy Gillespie, Stan Getz and the Ahmad Jamal trio.

The entire program will be broadcast from coast to coast on the NBC network, marking the first time that a complete jazz event at Carnegie will have been aired.



EDWARD KENNEDY ELLINGTON had already earned the nickname of "Duke" by the time he was 10 years old, when the first picture above was taken. By the time the next shot was made Duke was a successful bandleader play-

ing at parties in Washington, D.C., a married man and father of the three-year-old Mercer. Next he's seen at the age of 24, posing with his father and his old banjoist colleague Freddy Guy. Last shot at right shows the Duke

in the first glow of New York success, when his band moved into the Kentucky Club at 49th and Broadway. The Washingtonians, as they were called then, made their first records during that era, in 1926.



AT TOP ABOVE is the Duke with Paul Whiteman, known in the 1920s as King of Jazz. During Ellington's Kentucky Club days the Whiteman band was a block away at the Palais Royal; Paul and his men used to come over often to hear Duke's embryonic star package. Center shot shows Duke with Orson Welles and Cab Calloway. Cab, like Duke, was an Irving Mills property in the height of his bandleading era. Welles, a long-time Duke fan, emceed the 1946 *Esquire* concert featuring the Ellington, Herman and Nat Cole outfits. Below, Ellington is seen with J. J. Robbins, who published many of his big songs in the 1940s; Dominic Savino; and Oscar Levant.

Stars, Sidemen & Scribes Salute Duke And His Discs

By HAL WEBMAN
(Editor-in-Chief)

Below these introductory remarks and scattered throughout this Silver Jubilee of Duke Ellington issue of *Down Beat*, you will read dozens of brief articles under dozens of honest-to-goodness bylines of dozens of the most illustrious names in show business and the music world.

These are not press agent pipe dreams. These are authentic personal statements made exclusively to *Down Beat* by script or by telephone and transcribed here word for word as submitted. In some instances pressure of time prevented the inclusion of comments with the record lists. We asked each of these specially recruited contributors to submit a brief personal appraisal of Duke Ellington—the man, the musician, the composer. And we asked each to submit his or her list of five favorite Ellington recordings. The results of these inquiries are what these bylined articles represent—the collated opinion of most of the most important people of our business of one of the most important individuals of our time.

I also asked my staff, which is comprised of the most formidable set of music reporters, reviewers and critics on the scene today, to submit their own appraisals and favorite-disc lists. When we finally collected all of the statements and lists, we took a count of the titles and came up with a list of the favorite Ellington favorites, and this list will be found on this page.

By Woody Herman

Duke Ellington's music, and Duke Ellington the man, have been the greatest single influence—inspiration might be a better word—on my own musical life ever since I started to blow a horn. To me the most important thing about Duke is the unvarying musical integrity that has marked everything he has ever done. At no time has he made any concession in the interests of mere commercialism. As to his later concert works, I'm sure he has succeeded in accomplishing exactly what he was aiming at. And that is the basis on which his music should be judged.

- Warm Valley* (Victor)
- Jumpin' Punkins* (Victor)
- I Got It Bad And That Ain't Good* (Victor)
- Cotton Tail* (Victor)
- The Hawk Talks* (Columbia)

By Billy Eckstine

A lot of water has gone under the bridge since the old Ellingtonia days. But the Duke is still around. I mean he's here, up with everybody today and the guy hasn't changed. Times may have changed, and there's a new era in the entire music business—but Ellington is the same personally and musically

as he was when he was combining his fame as a composer and great bandleader. The guy just about acts like he writes. He's got a sophisticated type of personality about him and he reflects it in every one of his compositions. If you study closely his ballads and his lighter tunes with a bounce, you'll still find there is a lot of class in both types of melodies.

The Duke became known all over the world as a wonderful bandleader—and I respect him as such, but, personally, I like to think of him as a great composer. Naturally, I might feel this way because I am a singer and must depend on great songs to satisfy the public's desire, as well as my own. But under any circumstances, I would still tip my best "golf hat" to the Duke for furnishing me with a lot of pleasant moments and, more than that, some wonderful memories with such great records as those I have picked.

- Caravan* (Columbia)
- Sophisticated Lady* (Victor)
- Prelude To A Kiss* (Brunswick)
- Do Nothing Till You Hear From Me* (Victor)
- Warm Valley* (Victor)

By Stan Kenton

My ambition is to give as much in my life as has Duke. *The Blues* (from *Black, Brown, and Beige*) (Victor)

- Take The "A" Train* (Victor)
- Jack The Bear* (Victor)
- Flamingo* (Victor)
- C Jam Blues* (Victor)

By Ted Heath

(*Britain's No. 1 leader*)
To my mind, Duke is still the only creator of true jazz music in the history of jazz.

His music and his band have a distinction of their own, and although there have been copyists, nobody has ever managed to catch the atmosphere of Duke Ellington's band and Duke Ellington's music.

I think his music has contributed an enormous amount to the field and technique of jazz. Without a doubt, it is the most generally liked in the world of dance music today.

Why? Because he never goes above the people's heads. Always, Duke kept with the people—and particularly the Negro people. In England, his music is regard-

Ellington Box Score

It is a significant tribute both to the quality and quantity of Duke Ellington's works that 108 different titles were named by the 50 and more celebrities who submitted their lists of five favorite Ellington records.

The following is the results of *Down Beat's* polling to find the favorites of the Ellington favorites:

1. *Mood Indigo, Sophisticated Lady* (tied with 15 mentions each.)
2. *Solitude* (13)
3. *All Too Soon* (12)
4. *Take The "A" Train* (11)
5. *Warm Valley, Cotton Tail* (tied with 10 each.)
6. *Jack The Bear* (9)
7. *Ring Dem Bells* (8)
8. *I Got It Bad, Black & Tan Fantasy* (tied with 7 each.)
9. *Caravan, The Hawk Talks* (tied with 6 each.)
10. *Chelsea Bridge, East St. Louis Toodle-Oh, Flamingo, and The Mooche* (tied with 5 each.)

ed almost with reverence, and is the most widely played and quoted music in its field.

Quite recently, my band played a programme of Duke's music at the London Palladium, where the Ellington orchestra first appeared in 1933. And the boys in the band found it the most satisfying music they had played.

It is, in our estimation, beyond compare. Frankly, I doubt if there will be anyone to touch Duke in our time. We're certainly waiting for him to revisit these shores.

By Jackie Gleason

Ellington is Wellington without Waterloo.

By James B. Conkling

(*President, Columbia Records, Inc.*)
It will be hard to add to the congratulations and praises reaching Duke on this great anniversary from his many friends and admirers—people, in most cases, who know the Duke and his work better than I.

As a member of a record company that is terribly proud to have recorded this great artist at several past intervals—and again, today—I can only say that recording Duke Ellington gives us a musical purpose for existence. Historically, his records will outlive most of what we make in the popular or jazz idiom.

(Turn to Page 3)



THE TURNING POINT in Duke's career was the advent of Irving Mills, seen in first shot above, who heard him at the Kentucky Club in 1926, set him with Victor records and set up Duke Ellington, Inc., which gave Irving and

Duke 45% each, a lawyer 10%. Next pic shows Duke with some of his voluminous wardrobe, always the keynote of his elegance. In third picture, taken in Italy on his last European tour, he is seen with tall, lovely Evie Ellington.

the former Bea Ellis, who was a Cotton Club girl when they met in 1939. At right, Duke with son Mercer, writer of Moon Mist and other Ellington standards, currently in charge of Mercer records and of disc jockey exploitation

(Jumped from Page 2)

Apart from the record company, may I, as an individual whose tastes are sometimes more musical than commercial, express a very frank opinion. I have listened to Duke many times on records, on the stage, and in ballrooms. In my opinion, no record company, including our own, has really captured the spirit and sound of this great organization, as it is heard in a ballroom. Many of the records are good and will preserve for coming generations the dominant role that Duke Ellington has played in the creation of American music. (Has it ever occurred to you that Duke Ellington records will be played 200 years from today?) Still, his real greatness, unfortunately, has not been captured in the groove—to some degree, this is the fault of the record companies and to some degree, it is Duke's.

It is my hope, in closing, that the first 25 years are only the beginning for Duke and that he will continue on to even greater heights in coming years. His contribution to American music as a leader, musician and composer has been tremendous. But we need Duke and his influence for many, many more years.

- Ring Dem Bells (Victor)
- Just Squeeze Me (Victor)
- Royal Garden Blues (Capitol Transcription)
- Tiger Rag, Parts I & II (Brunswick)
- Pussy Willow (Brunswick)

By Milton Berle

I've known and admired Duke Ellington since way back in the Cotton Club days, when Dan Healy and I used to emcee the Sunday night guest shows there. He is one of the truly great all-around artists in the business. He was one of the first guests on my television program and he's been on half a dozen times since then.

Duke shouldn't be called a duke—he should be called a king.

- Ring Dem Bells (Victor)
- Solitude (Victor)
- East St. Louis Toodle-Do (Victor)
- Warm Valley (Victor)
- Mood Indigo (Columbia)

By Lionel Hampton

When I was a kid, I heard Duke do Ring Dem Bells, and he really did ring a bell for me, 'cause from that time on he was my favorite musician, bandleader and composer all rolled up into one. The Duke is just one of those great pillars of jazz. He always comes up with just enough happiness in his songs to make you feel good.

In my opinion, two of Ellington's compositions, Sophisticated Lady and Black, Brown and Beige will be classical music in the next century, just as Beethoven and Brahms are today.

Duke has changed his band personnel many times, but he still manages to slip in that smart sound that identifies him with his own special kind of music. In simple words, the Duke always did

Duke's Own Favorites

For many years Duke Ellington's answer to fans, disc jockeys and interviewers who asked him to name his own favorite Ellington records has been: "The one coming up."

When Down Beat approached him to select his five preferences, his first comment was "The five coming up." But eventually he broke his long-standing rule of evasion and drew up a list of records for which he has the most personal affection. It happens to run to a total of 11 records. It follows:

- Birmingham Breakdown (1927, Brunswick)
- Old Man Blues (1930, Victor)
- Creole Rhapsody (1931, Victor)
- Reminiscing In Tempo (1935, Brunswick)
- Showboat Shuffle (1935, Brunswick)
- Harmony In Harlem (1937, Brunswick)
- I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart (1938, Brunswick)
- Something To Live For (1939, Brunswick)
- Country Gal (1939, Columbia)
- Flamingo (1940, Victor)
- The Brownskin Gal (1941, Victor)

"wail" for me. I'm curious to hear what he'll come up with next when he writes a song, and although I know he'll compose plenty more hits, I'll never forget my favorites.

- Ring Dem Bells
- Don't Get Around Much Anymore
- I Don't Mean A Thing
- Sophisticated Lady
- Do Nothing Til You Hear From Me

By Arthur Fiedler

I believe Duke Ellington has been a very active and deciding factor in the evolution of jazz. I remember presenting him with a plaque in honor of his achievements at a Symphony Hall concert several years ago, and I regarded it as a privilege to participate in that occasion.

I have, incidentally, conducted his Sophisticated Lady at many Boston Pops concerts. I know him to be an excellent musician and a fine man, and certainly wish him continued musical success.

By Norman Granz

Ellington has been the greatest cat for big bands. Nothing ever capped him for real progressive jazz. I hope he goes further—in his own style.

By Sammy Kaye

Duke Ellington has been one of my favorite composers for as long as I can remember. His music is really great and the test of this greatness will be its long life. Mood Indigo and Sophisticated

Lady are examples of Ellington classics which will endure this test of time. His music shows evidence of being written from the heart. It is the kind of music that appeals to everybody which is another reason for its greatness.

- I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart (Brunswick)
- Sophisticated Lady
- Mood Indigo
- Black & Tan Fantasy
- Pardido (Victor)

By Mitch Miller

The Duke is timeless. The freshness of ideas—the warmth of conception—the gentleness of his nostalgia—are so overwhelming, that the music business would be pretty dry today were it not for his outstanding contributions.

A man from Mars could never tell the year of composition or performance, and the contributions he has made will influence music and musicians for generations. As I said before—the Duke is timeless.

By Hal McIntyre

Anyone who has ever listened to any of my bands knows how I feel about Ellington. I can't think of anyone who has exerted more influence on American music (and me) than the Duke. I was once very complimented when Duke told me that he not only liked the sound of my band but admired most the fact that we played in tune. Five favorite records? It would take me weeks to narrow it down to five. Let's just say, any five Ellington compositions!

By Les Brown

He's just the greatest—that's all. My hat's off to a genius. The Duke has always been the most advanced music personality I have ever known. From the very beginning right up to now, he always has been at least 10 years ahead of all of us, his greatness as an artist and musician equalled only by his modesty as a great man and a gentleman—Mr. Ellington.

- Drop Me Off In Harlem (Brunswick)
- Cotton Tail (Victor)
- The Mooche (Okeh)
- Prelude To A Kiss (Brunswick)
- Take The "A" Train (Victor)

By Peggy Lee

Duke Ellington's musical expression is so individual that it will never be replaced. He is, and will continue to be, a part of our American heritage for generations to come.

- Warm Valley (Victor)
- A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing (Mercer)
- Tip Toe Topic (Capitol transcription)
- The Flaming Sword (Victor)
- Jumpin' Punkins (Victor)

By Percy Faith

Duke Ellington definitely is a pillar in the modern American dance idiom. His songs are completely off the beaten track and his was (Turn to Page 5)



BING AND DUKE, seen in the above picture, are long-time friends and mutual admirers; in fact, one of the first celebrated two-star-team records was a 12-inch disc of St. Louis Blues cut in 1932 by the Ellington Orchestra and Crosby. In center picture is Duke's partner on a much later collaboration, the Woody Herman tie-up that produced Cowboy Rumba on Columbia a couple of years ago. Bottom shot shows Duke with the late Bill (Bojangles) Robinson and Louis Jordan at the opening of the Zanzibar on Broadway in the mid-1940s. Duke spent several seasons at this location (Broadway and 49th), first when it was known as the Hurricane, later when it became the Zanzibar.

12-Tone Lulu'll Kill You If You Don't Watch Out

By ROB DARRELL

Now, you may've heard tell of wild wimmen, boys, but you don't know from nuttin' if you don't know Lulu—the *ne plus ultra* in plain, fancy, and super witchiness! (Replace the "w" or drop it entirely, and you can't go wrong.)

Be thankful it ain't *her* nudgin' over from the next bar-stool or givin' you the eye in the lobby . . . For Lulu not only spells S-E-X in boldface, she's also Trouble with a capital T, and Death was a very final period. It's risky even to meet her as the (excuse the expression) heroine of the incredibly gifted and tortured Alban Berg's opera of the same name, which starts out appropriately in a zoo . . . runs through a violently tabloid series of love-killings . . . and was intended to wind up (Berg never quite finished it, and no wonder!) with Lulu's finally getting what was coming to her from a well matched boy-friend, Jack the Ripper.

"This is an opera? . . . You call this music?" . . . you'll probably demand after about 30 seconds of strenuous ear-bending to Columbia's SL 121 (3-12" LP's), starring a superb performance by Ilona Stein-gruber with a dozen or so lover-victims and the Vienna Symphony under Herbert Hafner.

Complete Degradation

Or maybe you'll quote the old *Punch*-line of earlier, calmer days of "modern" music, "Oh, for the good old tunes of Debussy and Strauss!" But if you're a glutton for aural punishment, you'll stick with, rather than just stick, the twelve-tone-system cacophonies . . . And first thing you know (especially if you follow the German sung-and-spoken story in the enclosed libretto), you'll find the nasty stuff's actually getting under your skin . . . Before you come to, snaky-eyed Lulu and her sordid affairs will have you hypnotized. Try it all over again (if your health and nerves are good), and you're likely to find the savage yapping and snarling in the orchestra somehow metamorphose into music, which, while it certainly ain't purty, has got plenty of some strange kind of tonal "it." You may be shocked . . . you may be affronted . . . you'll perhaps feel you've really learned the facts of complete degradation for the first time . . . But you'll certainly never be quite the same again.

A Human Document

Never mind what Mozart—or your dear old Auntie in Dubuque—might say . . . Even sheer dirt, of both the human and tonal varieties, can yield riches to a genius. And that Berg was—in long, unwashed spades! This, boys, is a human document . . . and Freud himself never scraped more clinically into the deepest roots of humanity. It's also some of the most extraordinary music ever written . . . an experiment in new tonal resources, you might call it, except that there's nothing at all "experimental" in its surgically skillful contrivance.

Well, I've warned ya . . . proceed at your own risk! But if your ears (and intestines) are too tender for such rough fare, you'll miss a psycho-pathological experience, wholly unique, wholly unforgettable, and wholly terrific in the most literal sense of the word.

Better not let the girl-friend or little woman in on it, though. Chances are they'll cover their ears and howl for mercy. But if they ever should get interested in Lulu and her bagful of cutely fatal tricks . . . head for the woods, man, and don't spare the horses! Lulu's pals generally don't live long enough to learn to enjoy their own misery!

Inspiration, Technique Vie For Bruch Honors

Poor Maxie Bruch! . . . Worked like a dog for some 80 years . . . wrote a whole library of scores in almost every form . . . and today he's remembered almost exclusively by his First Violin Concerto in G minor. And that—except to fanatical fiddlers and their cat-gutty friends—is as ripe, firm, artificial golden and smoothly spreadable a hunk of butter as ever was milked and churned in musics most sanitary dairy farm!

You can have it. But if you want it right now, you've got a tough choice between two new prize packages that push the famous old cartons right off the LP grocer's shelves: one by Heifetz with the London Symphony under Sargent (RCA Victor LM 9007), the other by Francescatti with the N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony under Mitropoulos (Columbia ML 4575).

Either sounds unbeatable by itself. But after carefully licking the last dribblings off my beard, I've got a Solomon's choice. If you're a fiddler (pro, student or fan), you can't miss Jascha's master-lesson on how a fiddle is played—but to perfection. The only catch is that such immaculate, fine-spun tone, to say nothing of the rather intellectual, certainly non-impassioned interpretative approach, just ain't suited to music as emotional (not to say greasy) as this . . . Besides, Sargent contributes an overly modest orchestral background, rather thinly and dryly recorded for all its clarity.

On the other hand (besides the usual four fingers and a thumb), Zino may not play with such technical perfection (though he's certainly not sloppy), but he's got

fire and passion—and spreads the butter real thick and with a flourish. And his orchestra, always allowing for Dimitri's tonal crudities, isn't afraid to speak up . . . and speaks very impressively in far richer and more concert-hall-natural reverberant recording. Heifetz for fiddling, then; Francescatti for the Bruch Concerto. And you can skip both backside-Jascha fine-apins himself practi-



TRUMPETS NO END—that's how Duke used to describe the brass bash that developed out of the arrangement Mary Lou Williams gave him of what was once *Blue Skies*. It might also apply to this picture, taken during the Ellingtonians' last European wanderings.

Premature Ellington Fan Pays A Mature Tribute

By ROB DARRELL

It was just over 25 years ago, not long after I began writing for publication, that I reviewed (under the pseudonym "Rufus") my first Ellington record. Within the next few years, he and his music came to play a major part in my life.

And though later on my work and thinking took me into other fields, though I had no opportunity to write about the later Ellington releases, the electrifying impact of his earlier works never has been forgotten. To this very day it has stimulated and enriched my whole aesthetic sensibility and philosophy.

By Deems Taylor

Duke Ellington is one of the few so-called "bandleaders" for whom I have a thorough respect as a musician as well. I have known his band ever since the Cotton Club days, and he has always been in a spot all his own. I think his stature as a composer is even more important than his role as a bandleader.

- Black & Tan Fantasy
- Creole Love Call
- Solitude
- Sophisticated Lady
- Mood Indigo

cally into nothingness in one of Saint-Saens' shallowest works, the D minor Sonata, Op. 75, with Emanuel Bay in the inconsequential piano part. A dumb choice for a Bruch coupling! . . . but Zino fares little better with the doxy Beethoven Romances, Opp. 40 & 50 . . . nicely enough done (if you can stand such inane caterwauling) to Jean Morel's Columbia Symphony accompaniments.

The Ellington Effect

By BILLY STRAYHORN

In 1934, in Pittsburgh, I heard and saw the Ellington band perform for my first time. Nothing before or since has affected my life so much. In 1939, I became his protégé, enabling me to be closer and see more. His first, last and only formal instruction for me was embodied in one word: observe. I did just that, and came to know one of the most fascinating and original minds in American music.

Ellington plays the piano, but his real instrument is his band. Each member of his band is to him a distinctive tone color and set of emotions, which he mixes with others equally distinctive to produce a third thing, which I like to call the Ellington Effect.

Here's How He Does It

Sometimes this mixing happens on paper and frequently right on the bandstand. I have often seen him exchange parts in the middle of a piece because the man and the part weren't the same character.

Ellington's concern is with the individual musician, and what happens when they put their musical characters together. Watching him on the bandstand, the listener might think that his movements are stock ones used by everyone in front of a band. However, the extremely observant may well detect the flick of the finger that may draw the sound he wants from a musician.

By letting his men play naturally and relaxed Ellington is able to

Classic Faves: 4 Duke Ellington

Following is a list submitted by Duke Ellington of his special preferences in classical music.

- Ravel: *Daphnis and Chloe*
- Delius: *In A Summer Garden*
- Debussy: *La Mer*
- Debussy: *Afternoon Of A Faun*
- Holst: *The Planets*

markable and still remembered phonographic journal, *Disques*, published by H. Royer Smith Co. of Philadelphia.

It Still Stands

That was 30 years ago, but it's a privilege and a pleasure to reaffirm what I wrote then:

"The most striking characteristic of all his works, and the one which stamps them ineradicably as his own, is the individuality and unity of style that weld composition, orchestration, and performance into one inseparable whole . . . To me the most brilliant fights of Rimsky's or Strauss's orchestral fancy are equalled if not surpassed by many passages in the Ellington records,—a blazing parabolic trajectory, tail-spin and swoop, of clarinet, saxophone, or whole woodwind choir; a delicate birdlike fluttering or vigorous statement of the piano; a monkey-like chatter and stutter of the trumpets; a pattern, half-melodic, half-rhythmic, used *ostinato* fashion on the tubular

Rob Darrell's Five

- Hot And Bothered (Okeh)
- Black Beauty (Brunswick)
- Blues I Love To Sing (Victor)
- Daybreak Express (Victor)
- Ellington Masterpieces (Columbia LP)

bells, cymbals, or suddenly percussive piano . . .

Great Moments

"To me again there is absolutely nothing in popular music, all too little in any music, that touches the uncannily twisted beauty, the acrid pungence of nostalgia which Ellington in his great moments achieves . . . Working within his small but wholly personal range, Ellington to me is one of Proust's great artists 'who do us the service, when they awaken in us the emotion corresponding to the theme they have found, of showing us what richness, what variety lies hidden, unknown to us, in that great black impenetrable night, discouraging exploration, of our soul, which we have been content to regard as valueless and waste and void.'"

Memorial Cottage Planned At Scene Of Blanton's Death

Hollywood—Dr. Leonard Stovall, head of L.A.'s Stovall Clinic and attending physician to the late Jimmy Blanton, the brilliant young bass player who played with Duke Ellington here in 1941 and died near here in August of 1942, is planning a campaign to erect a cottage at the Outdoor Life & Health Association as a memorial to Blanton.

The Outdoor Life & Health Association maintains a sanitarium and medical center at Duarte, a Los Angeles suburban community. It was there that Blanton died. Another well known patient, one who recovered, was pianist Joe Sullivan.

Dr. Stovall told *Down Beat* he recalled Blanton very clearly although he was only one of many patients he was treating at the time.

"The disease was just too far advanced when he came to us," said the doctor, "but he remained cheerful and seemingly hopeful to the very end. He was an inspiration to all of the patients there and I'm sure he helped others. When we knew the end was near, we sent for his mother, a pianist, incidentally, who played for dances around their home in the East, and she came out to be with him when he died."

probe the intimate recesses of their minds and find things that not even the musicians thought were there.

Lately, personnel changes have prompted the comment that what I call the Ellington Effect has been replaced by something different. This, I believe, comes about from listening with the eyes instead of the ears. The same thing has happened every time there has been a change during my stay, and, even before my time, the advent into the band of the very people who have left brought forth the same remarks.

The same comment accompanied my arrival, but has long since simmered down to a whodunit game indulged in by the band (which always puzzles me, because I think my playing and writing style is totally different from Ellington's).

The Ellington Effect has touched many people, both listeners and performers, princes and paupers, the loved and the unloved, and will, as long as there is, and after there is . . . Ellington.

Stars, Sidemen And Scribes Offer Tributes To Ellington

(Jumped from Page 3)
one of the first bands to acquire a unique orchestral "sound" through the medium of orchestration, which was at once commercial and progressive.

I enjoy everything that Duke has recorded and list the following compositions as my favorites:

- Mood Indigo**
 - Solitude**
 - Lady Of The Lavender Mist**
 - Dancers In Love**
 - I Was Sitting On The Fence**
- I am not sure that the last mentioned composition is the correct title. Several years ago, the Duke was to be my guest on the "Carnation Hour." He had not quite completed the suite in which this piece was included, but I insisted that he play it with me even if I had to do the orchestration over the telephone—which we did!—from a very sketchy sketch which I had in

front of me during the telephone call.

By Ralph Flanagan

Whenever anyone has asked me who my favorite band was, I've always said Duke Ellington. From the time I first started hearing records the Duke was my idol and I guess he always will be. To me, Ellington set the stage for everyone who followed from Kenton to Lombardo, because in his 25 years the Duke did everything in the way of tempo, voicing, dynamics—everything. He set the stage for the big dance band era back in the late 30's as well as the concert era which began in the 40's. I think the entire industry owes him a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid in full measure. I am sure that the entire world will remem-

ber Ellington when the rest of his contemporaries are forgotten.

- Solitude (Victor)**
- Cotton Tail (Victor)**
- Take The "A" Train (Victor)**
- C Jam Blues (Victor)**
- Don't Get Around Much Anymore (Victor)**

By Lena Horne

I cannot discuss Ellingtonia in terms of comparing whether his "blue" period was better than his "misty, ethereal" phase, or whether his folk-lore Americana is better than his present endeavors, because the over-all influence and stature of the man and his music is too tremendous. All over the world Ellingtonia is still the measuring stick of maturity in jazz music.

- Chelsea Bridge (Victor)**
- Raincheck (Victor)**
- Black, Brown & Beige (Victor)**
- Liberian Suite (Columbia)**
- Mood Indigo (Victor)**

By Lennie Tristano

Ellington's greatest contribution has been his use of orchestral color and his ability to set up an atmosphere for a mood. I've heard him use just a clarinet, trumpet and rhythm section and he'd give you the feeling of a whole setting. There was a lot of feeling in the band. They were able to create a mood and sustain it, something you can't say about many modern records. Also some good men came out of the band, especially Jimmy Blanton. Then too, those around Ellington merit a great deal of credit: Hodges, Strayhorn, and all the others.

Favorite Ellington records: Any five that feature Jimmy Blanton.

By Russ Morgan

(One-time supervisor on many of Duke's Brunswick sessions)

First, let me go on record by acknowledging Ellington's feat of maintaining a sincere musical approach and not prostituting his artistic integrity during these 25 years. Ellington's name and his

music bring back wonderful memories of my own "non-commercial" days. Back in that Brunswick era, I don't think any of us realized that some of the Ellington "originals" would be standard catalog material today. The Duke not only wrote to last, he played them the same way. Like all of the really great musicians, the Ellington sound has a timeless quality. Five all-time favorites. That is a tough order. Let's see—

- Sophisticated Lady (Columbia)**
- Mood Indigo (Columbia)**
- Solitude (Victor)**
- Do Nothing 'Til You Hear From Me (Victor)**
- Caravan (Columbia)**

By John Hammond

Duke Ellington was the first composer-conductor to bring Negro blues to a general audience. For nearly thirty years he has brought a creative, highly original talent to the building of bands, composition, and the extension of American musical influence. More than any other man he is responsible for the development of the band business as we know it today.

- Baby When You Ain't There (Brunswick)**
- Rocky Mountain Blues (Okeh)**
- Lazy Rhapsody (Brunswick)**
- Black & Tan Fantasy (Perfect)**
- Bojangles (Victor)**

By Frank Sinatra

In the modern school that we have reached through all the various phases of jazz, Ellington has been one of the great contributors; he has provided the basis for orchestral music in this field. Of course, I've known him for many years and admired him as a great person too.

- Cotton Tail (Victor)**
- Johnny Come Lately (Victor)**
- Jack The Bear (Victor)**
- Warm Valley (Victor)**
- Liberian Suite (Columbia)**

By Erroll Garner

Duke is a genius. As the years went down, above Kenton and everybody, he has had a tremendous amount of different sounds, modern sounds. Today he has one of the greatest bands in the business, though as usual, it may take the public a little time to get with it.

Duke has also contributed some really great tunes. Between him and Strayhorn it's a beautiful combination. I also think Duke is a wonderful pianist, not necessarily for strings of solos, but for his chord constructions and the things that he feels. All I have to say finally is I hope to get a lot more chance to hear Duke in person.

- The Hawk Talks (Columbia)**
- Chelsea Bridge (Victor)**
- Take The "A" Train (Victor)**
- All Too Soon (Victor)**
- V.I.P.'s Boogie (Columbia)**

By Ralph Burns

I've been an admirer of Duke ever since I started in music. I owe so much to him. I went through an Ellington phase in my own writing, while I was with Charlie Barnet. Duke and Claude Thornhill have provided the two great original orchestral sounds. I guess all bands have been through an Ellington period at one time or another. Choosing five favorite records is a tough process of elimination.

- Cotton Tail (Victor)**
- All Too Soon (Victor)**
- Chelsea Bridge (Victor)**
- Bakiff (Victor)**
- I Got It Bad (Victor)**

By PeeWee Russell

Ellington has always been identified in my mind with precision and perfection. It's in his music, it's in the fact that he's always had the very best men in his band.

There's one comparison I'd like to draw. Duke's bands have always reminded me of the great Goldkette band as it was with Bix, the Dorsey brothers and the others. It was a band that had a pride of organization, a desire always to (Turn to Page 13)



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By Irving Mills

I Split With Duke When Music Began Sidetracking

By IRVING MILLS

(As told to Charles Emge)

Hollywood—The story of my long association with Duke Ellington, an association which covered the period which he rose from obscurity to a position of eminence in the music world that was completely unique, is of special interest at this time. There are many factors in the story that could be of help to those who are trying at present to re-vitalize the music business, which we all know has been in a slump, both financially and artistically.

Naturally, many readers will want to know why our long and happy business relationship came to an end a few years ago. In connection with that, I want to state first that our close friendship and personal relationship never has come to an end. Every

it as possible around Duke's band and his music. The budget, incidentally, did not provide for a band as large as Duke felt he needed—10 pieces. I paid the salaries of the additional musicians out of my share of the project. I did it gladly, because I had complete faith in Duke Ellington and firmly believed that together we were launching something more than just a dance orchestra.

Something New

I was convinced that we were launching a great musical organization especially designed to interpret something new and great in American music—the music of Duke Ellington.

And I was never more sure of it than I am now—on the 25th anniversary of that event.

For those who are active in any branch of the management or booking business nowadays, I want to stress the fact that I never thought of the organization as just a dance band, even though it was completely successful as such in those days. Nor did I ever think of Duke as just a band leader, a songwriter, or personality, though he was indeed all of them.

Campaign Objective

For me, the development of Duke Ellington's career was an over-all operation consisting of much more than merely securing engagements for him or selling his songs. Anyone could have done that. My exploitation campaign was aimed at presenting the public a great musician who was making a lasting contribution to American music. I was able to guide Duke Ellington to the top in his field, a field in which he was the first to be accepted as an authentic artist, because I made his importance as an artist the primary consideration.

Mutual Admiration

What was equally important about that meeting was that Duke felt that in me he had found not only someone capable of handling his professional career but someone who also understood and thoroughly appreciated the significance of his creative efforts as a musician.

Shortly after that, when I was producing a new show for the Cotton Club, I built as much of

The Other Side

Duke Ellington, the biographical book, tells a story of the Mills-Duke parting that differs greatly from the Irving's account. We quote:

The immediate cause of the separation . . . was "lack of attention." That was Duke's complaint and that of his associates . . . Then there was the afternoon Duke walked into Mills' office. "May I see my books?" he asked one of the secretaries . . . After better than an hour's poring over the books of Duke Ellington Inc, he got up slowly, adjusted his jacket and tie, put on his hat and overcoat and walked out of the office. He never returned.

I never tried to persuade Duke to sacrifice his integrity as Duke Ellington, the musician, for the sake of trying to find a short-cut to commercial success. There might be something there for some of today's personal managers, booking agents and press agents to think about.

Limited Perspective

Too many of them think solely in terms of developing and exploiting musicians as commercial attractions.

I think Duke will agree that I did give him sound advice when he himself was in doubt as to what represented his best work. Many great musicians have turned out material that was not up to their best standards.

I felt that one of my important functions with Duke was to be in the recording studio when we were putting out those records, which were to make him a unique and important figure in music, and see to it that nothing went into a record that did not add to his stature as a musician. I wanted every Ellington record to have that quality that in later years would rightfully earn the tribute we express when we say: "This is the real Duke Ellington!"

On The Wrong Track

When I withdrew from my managerial relationship with Duke,



ABOARD THE "OLYMPIC", the Ellington band and Irving Mills were greeted by Jack Hylton, British impresario and handleader who brought the band on its first trip to Europe in 1933. In addition to Hylton, Mills, the Duke and Ivie Anderson, pic shows all the 1933 personnel except Sonny Greer. Cootie, Whetsol and Jenkins; Nanton, Tizol and Brown; Hodges Hardwick Bigard and Carney; Guy and Braud are all in the picture, taken by Melody Maker photographer Jack Marshall.

it was because I sensed that Duke had fallen into a different attitude toward his music, and was taking off in what I thought was a wrong direction. For an example—not necessarily his best—let's take his *Reminiscing in Tempo*. It had many good things in it, and one of these days Duke will go back and extract the good things from it and use them to better advantage. But that recording never should have been released. It was one of the points which Duke lost touch with the huge, loyal following that loved genuine Ellington music.

Trying To Expand

I did not try to stop Duke, because I understood exactly what he was trying to do. He was trying to break out of what he thought were bonds placed on his creative ability by the patterns in which he had been working. Those of us who know and love the real Duke Ellington feel that his mistake was turning from the idiom, so well exemplified by the five records (see supplement) I have selected as my favorites, to the concert works to which he has practically confined his writing in recent years.

But those of us who know and understand Duke, also know why it was important—even necessary—for him to try that path.

We'll Be Reunited

Now Duke has had his fling. I think he now knows more clearly where his best efforts should be

By Johnnie Ray

Ellington is one of the tremendous people. Musically speaking, who can argue with the man? Notice how the public doesn't get his message right away. Every big song by the Duke that I can recall happened only after the public had been exposed for some time. Look at the way they have lasted.

Mostly I like the earlier Ellington. *Take The "A" Train* is my prime favorite, I guess you would call that the middle period. *Ring Dem Bells*, remember that? Hamp had a good record on Victor, using Cootie on trumpet along with some of the Duke's sidemen. Come to think of it, it has been too long since I listened to some of the Ellington records in my own collection.

- Take The "A" Train* (Victor)
- Ring Dem Bells* (Okeh)
- The Mooche* (Victor)
- I Got It Bad and That Ain't Good* (Victor)
- Flamingo* (Victor)

directed. One of these days we'll be back together again. It almost happened the last time he came out to the Coast. When he's ready, I'll be glad to start all over again with Duke Ellington, and to assist him to gain his proper place as one of the most important figures in contemporary music.

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Left: Ray Anthony, with Archie Freeman at his "Knob Tension" outfit. See and hear these sensational new drums at your dealers, or send for latest drum literature. Address department 1119.



WORLD'S FINEST DRUMMERS' INSTRUMENTS

DOWN BEAT

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Ellington Recalls European Tour, Carnegie, Met Concerts And Other Career Highlights

(Jumped from Page 1)

somebody called for the lights and the show went on.

The next highlight, I believe, was our trip to the west coast to make our film movie. It was the Amos and Andy feature, *Check And Double Check*, and we did *Ring Dem Bells* and *Three Little Words*. Later, of course, we were in Hollywood for *Murder At The Vanities*, Mae West's *Belle Of The Nineties* and several other pictures; but there was a special kick out of making our screen debut.

We took time out from the Cotton Club to make *Check And Double Check*. Aside from that, we were at the club right along from our opening in December, 1927 until early in 1931. We doubled into Ziegfeld's *Show Girl* and various theatre dates. All that time, we were on the air from the Cotton Club.

On the Air

Broadcasting was a lot simpler in those days; you didn't have to clear all your numbers a day or two in advance. I can remember times when Ted Husing would turn around to me in the middle of a broadcast and say "Duke, how about playing so-and-so?" and we'd go right into it.

The next big moment was our opening night at the London Palladium. This was a night that scared the devil out of the whole band, the applause was so terrifying—it was applause beyond applause. On our first show there was 10 minutes of continuous applause. It was a tremendous thrill. In fact, that entire first European tour in 1933 was a tremendous uplift for all our spirits.

Europe was responsible for the next big kick I can recall, too. It was my birthday celebration in Stockholm, April 29, 1939. I was awakened by a 16-piece band from the local radio station which marched into my hotel room serenading me with *Happy Birthday*. All day long, at the hotel and at the Concert House where we were playing, huge bouquets of flowers kept arriving, and hundreds of people flocked to the dressing room. The whole audience rose to sing *Happy Birthday* and there was a ceremony onstage, followed by a big banquet for the entire orchestra and numerous guests at the Crown Prince Cafe. It all brought a very glowing ending to our second European tour.

Two years later, in 1941, we got a very special kick out of the opening of *Jump For Joy*. This was the revue in which the whole band took part. A number of critics felt this was the hippest Negro musical and has remained so to this day. We had some great lyrics for our songs, thanks largely to Paul Francis Webster; some fine writing by Sid Kuller, and such artists as Marie Bryant and Paul White, Joe Turner, Herb Jeffries, Dorothy Dandridge and Wonderful Smith.

The Three B's

The sixth important occasion was the first Carnegie Hall concert—first of what turned out to be an annual series. This enabled me to present my *Tone Parallel* to the history of the American Negro, *Black, Brown and Beige*, which as originally presented at Carnegie ran about 50 minutes.



THREE LOVELY LADIES graced the 1945 Ellington vocal line-up at New York's 400 Club; l. to r. Joya Sherrill, now raising a family in New York; Kay Davis, in married retirement in Chicago, and Marie (no relation) Ellington, who's now Mrs. Nat Cole.

We only recorded excerpts from it for the RCA Victor album, but the entire concert was recorded privately and we hope some day to have this recording released generally so that everybody can hear *B, B & B* in its original form.

That first night at Carnegie was the only time in my life that I didn't have stage fright. I just didn't have time—I couldn't afford the luxury of being scared. Dr. Arthur Logan, an old friend and our personal physician, was standing around backstage handing out pills to everybody in the band. He even took one himself. He offered one to me and I refused it. I wasn't nervous—not at all. But I did walk onstage without my music. Somebody signalled to me from the wings that they had it—but I didn't need it anyway; I remembered it all.

Carnegie Annual

This first concert, in January 1943, turned out to be a milestone that paved the way for other regular concert series, so that by now an annual jazz concert at Carnegie has become a permanent thing

for several other organizations. One thing that hasn't been duplicated, however, is the audience we had on that opening night and at our subsequent concerts. The quality of the appreciation, the attentiveness of the entire crowd of 3,000 people to every note we played, was a model of audience reaction that has proved hard to duplicate.

At the time of that concert, too, the music business celebrated a national Ellington week, and during the performance at Carnegie we were privileged to receive a plaque inscribed by some of our well-wishers from every branch of music—among them John Charles Thomas, William Grant Still, Deems Taylor, Marian Anderson, Albert Coates, Kurt Weill, Dea Dixon, Aaron Copland, Paul Whiteman, Benny Goodman, Count Basie, Earl Hines, Artie Shaw, Morton Gould and Marjorie Lawrence.

Esquire Jazz

There was a similarly jubilant occasion in January 1945, when we took part in the annual *Esquire* jazz awards concert, at the

Philharmonic Auditorium in Los Angeles. Most of the presentations of "Eskies" to individual winners were made by Hollywood personalities. Billy Strayhorn received his from Lena Horne, mine was presented by Lionel Barrymore.

There was another great evening, in 1949, when we played at Robin Hood Dell in Philadelphia with this beautiful 96-piece symphony orchestra, conducted by Rias Case, wrapped around ours.

I spent a lot of time listening, that evening, when I should have been playing. I wrote a bop thing for them, using the same jump-blues theme we recorded on one of the small band dates as *Who Struck John*. They played it perfectly.

Harlem

Ninth on our list of significant moments would be the concert at the Metropolitan Opera House early last year. Our audience numbered over 3,500 including Mayor Impellitteri, who paid a special tribute to us onstage, and we introduced a new concert work, *Harlem*, which I later performed with the NBC Symphony orchestra.

Tenth and last, I recall with special delight another Philadelphia story—this one was the annual Musical Festival held by the Philadelphia Inquirer at the Municipal Stadium, with a tremendous show for an audience of 125,000 people, all admitted free. There were, if I remember right, three symphony orchestras as well as Benny Goodman, Perry Como, Mindy Carson and a big Indian war dance routine. I was especially impressed by the fact that when I did *Monologue* I had the whole audience giggling—and believe me, it's quite impressive to hear 125,000 people giggling.

Then There Was . . .

It is a somewhat arbitrary decision to select ten events over a 25-year span, but these are the ones that came to mind. Of course, I could go into many details about some of the great people we've met through the years.

(Turn to Page 18)

Dear DUKE:

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Counterpoint

Lost In Meditation

By NAT HENTOFF

I can best express my feelings about Duke Ellington's persistently rewarding contributions to jazz by use of double analogy. Like William Faulkner in terms of contemporary writing, Duke has been unparalleled in his ability to lithograph and sustain emotional states in terms of music.

These have varied from the surface, sometimes even the meretricious, to the profoundly personal and painfully honest and have included sheer physical glee. He has been important in other ways, but for me his talent for exploring the intricate, contradictory emotions we all share with varying degree of awareness is what insures Ellington's permanency.

One consistent line of detraction of Ellington has maintained that Duke was himself never too vital a factor, that he built his reputation on the gifts of the men in the band, that he was at best a catalyst and at worst an exploiter.

It's Still Duke's Touch

The best succinct answer to this I've seen appeared in an article on Ellington in the French magazine *Jazz-Hot* in February of 1950. Guy Montassut and Jean Gruyer pointed out: "Duke is always present behind his images, behind his orchestra. It is he who speaks and his accent, his particular touch is always felt."

"Also," they continued, "before speaking of technique, of formulae, of evolution, we'd like to make it clear that no matter how far you push analysis and commentary, there is always a primal element which must correct all generalizations: that is the taste, the sensibility, the imagination and the honesty (goodwill) of the artist."

Anachronisms

"This 'bon vouloir,' the continual experiments of this indefatigable searcher serve to explain why you have to be careful not to get confused in chronology with regard to the Duke. For example, *Stomp Look and Listen* of 1947 makes one think of records made over 10 years before that, and one finds strange modern notes in Ellington records of 1928."

As a result of this unique mixture of the advanced and the past

in the work of Ellington, he has not always had a widely appreciative public. For years it was an axiomatic saying among musicians that Duke was ten years ahead of his time, but there have always been some experimental musicians who have complained that Duke only affected contemporary idioms, that he actually had evolved over the years in only a very limited way.

Comparisons Are Hazardous

There has been an amount of truth in both contentions. And that is the crux of any attempt to discuss Ellington's work as a whole. His work doesn't fit into prearranged categories of style and influence and time periods. Through

(Turn to Page 17)

Silver Jubilee

(Jumped from Page 1)

phoned me with his plan to run off an Ellington celebration for two weeks beginning Oct. 24. On the spur of the moment, I told Sidney that *Down Beat* should and would do everything it could to help make the celebration a memorable one.

An Issue Is Born

Thus this issue was born. And born on short notice. We had but five weeks from that phone call to deadline for this issue (and two other *Down Beats* to put to bed in between). My entire staff made this project a work of love, and the results are in these pages to behold. There is no press-agented dogma in the issue, and of this

accomplishment, considering the size of our staff and the time we had to work in, we are mighty proud.

Since we started to work on this issue and to talk about the Ellington Silver Jubilee, we have been pleased to behold the many beautiful things that have been happening to the Duke as a direct result of these efforts and those of Sidney Mills.

The Results

Disc jockeys, as well as live radio and TV, all over the country have programmed extensive Ellington tributes running the entire two week period. Duke, who at this moment is working at the New York Paramount theater, was scheduled to be given a "night" over WNEW disc jockey Art Ford's Milkman's Matinee. RCA Victor Records has dug into its files and collated an album of cut-out Ellington recordings. Columbia Records, his current disc affiliation, has put into the works several Ellington projects.

Back to Harlem

Duke will be back in Harlem, on the site of the Cotton Club, the scene of his first major engagement, the engagement which in this issue is being celebrated. He will work at the Savoy Ballroom for a week in December, with a possibility that the old Cotton Club (now the Club Sudan) will again be the Cotton Club for the night of Dec. 4, the actual opening date of the Ellington engagement there in 1927.

Insurance Policy

And there will be a concert at Carnegie Hall to honor and feature the Duke (see story page 1). And there will be many other events, many we know about and others which are just being dreamed about.

There is one other factor which we feel is significant, one that we feel will insure that the Duke will be well tended so that the possibility of the Golden Jubilee is not a remote dream. And that factor is Joe Glaser, the man whose Associated Booking Corp. currently is guiding the Duke's career.

Ellington Favorites

Following are lists of five favorite Ellington records from key personalities who submitted them without any accompanying comments:

Charlie Barnet

Tappin' Seventh Avenue With The Sole of My Shoe (Brunswick); *Lightnin'* (Brunswick); *Jack The Bear* (Victor); *All Too Soon* (Victor); *Echoes of Harlem* (Brunswick).

Dizzy Gillespie

Chelsea Bridge (Victor); *Warm Valley* (Victor); *Ko-Ko* (Victor); *Congo Brava* (Victor); *Air Conditioned Jungle* (Musicraft).

Benny Goodman

Awful Sad (Brunswick); *East St. Louis Toodle-oo* (Victor); *Cotton Tail* (Victor); *The Mooche* (Brunswick); *Creole Love Call* (Victor).

Fletcher Henderson

Three Little Words (Victor); *East St. Louis Toodle-oo* (Victor); *I'm Satisfied* (Brunswick); *Warm Valley* (Victor); *Flamingo* (Victor).

Johnny Hodges

Braggin' In Brass (Brunswick); *All Too Soon* (Victor); *Flamingo* (Victor); *Jack The Bear* (Victor); *Rocks In My Bed* (Victor).

Elliot Lawrence

Translucency (Victor); *Monologue* (Columbia); *Cotton Tail* (Victor); *Trumpet No End* (Musicraft); *The Hawk Talks* (Columbia).

Guy Lombardo

Sophisticated Lady (Columbia); *Solitude* (Victor); *I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart* (Brunswick); *Caravan* (Victor); *I Got It Bad And That Ain't Good* (Victor).

Charlie Parker

All Too Soon (Victor); *Harlem Airshaft* (Victor); *Jack*

The Bear (Victor); *The Hawk Talks* (Columbia); *Jumpin' Punkins* (Victor).

Billy Strayhorn

Giddybug Gallop (Victor); *Battle Of Swing* (Brunswick); *Moon Over Cuba* (Victor); *Chelsea Bridge* (Victor); *Please Forgive Me* (Brunswick).

Barry Ulanov

All Too Soon (Victor); *The Flaming Sword* (Victor); *Jack The Bear* (Victor); *Sepia Panorama* (Victor); *Cotton Tail* (Victor).

Dave Barbour

Sultry Serenade (Columbia); *Warm Valley* (Victor); *Day Dream* (Hodges, Victor); *Cotton Tail* (Victor); *All Too Soon* (Victor).

Shep Fields

Swamp Fire (Victor); *Sophisticated Lady* (Columbia); *Take The "A" Train* (Victor); *Mood Indigo* (Victor); *Solitude* (Victor).

Harry James

In A Sentimental Mood (Brunswick); *Pyramid* (Brunswick); *Echoes Of The Jungle* (Victor); *Portrait Of The Lion* (Brunswick); *Sultry Serenade* (Columbia).

Mercer Ellington

Blue Goose (Victor); *Serenade To Sweden* (Columbia); *Giddybug Gallop* (Victor); *Mood Indigo* (Brunswick); *Jack The Bear* (Victor).

Lawrence Welk

Caravan (Columbia); *Perdido* (Victor); *Sophisticated Lady* (Columbia); *Mood Indigo* (Brunswick); *C Jam Blues* (Victor).

Spotlight on SAL SALVADOR



SAL SALVADOR, now playing great guitar with Stan Kenton, has versatility enough to please the crowds all the way from Radio City Music Hall to the Downbeat Club. Sal, formerly with the Terry Gibbs



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The Duke's Men, Past And Present

SOME BRILLIANT MUSICIANS have been and still are members of the Ellington band. At right and left are just a few of the notables who have made their marks as instrumentalists with the Duke. At left are clarinetist Jimmy Hamilton, pianist-arranger Billy Strayhorn (see his story on Duke on page 4), trombonist Lawrence Brown, now with the

Hodges all-stars, Ray Nance, and The Rabbitt, Johnny Hodges. At right are Joe (Tricky Sam) Nanton and Arthur Whetsol, Jimmy Blanton, the great bassist, Harry Carney, Rex Stewart, and Sonny Greer. Only Hamilton, Strayhorn, Nance, and Carney remain—the others (with the exception of Blanton) all are out on their own.



1930 THE FIRST MOVIE was the occasion for this picture, taken on the RKO lot in Hollywood during the making of *Check And Double Check*. L. to r. Tricky Sam, Juan Tizol, trombones; Freddy Jenkins, Cootie Williams, Arthur Whetsol, trumpets; Duke, Sonny Greer, Freddy Guy, Wellman Braud,

rhythm; Harry Carney, Johnny Hodges, Barney Bigard, saxes. Hodges, Cootie now have own bands; Tricky, Whetsol are dead; Braud, Greer are gigging around New York; Bigard, Jenkins are living in California; Carney and Tizol are with Duke today.



1942 GREATEST VICTOR RECORDS were made by the Ellingtonians around this time, before the first recording ban in August of that year. Trumpets are Harold Baker, Rex Stewart, Wallace Jones, Ray Nance; trombones Lawrence Brown, Tricky Sam and Tizol; below are Sonny Greer, Ben Webster,

Chauncey Houghton, Johnny Hodges, Freddy Guy, Otto Hardwick, Harry Carney, Duke, and Junior Raglin. This is the band as it appeared in *Cabin In The Sky*, made many appearances at war bond rallies, and cut *Sherman Shuffie*, *Sentimental Lady*, *Hayfoot Strawfoot*, *A Slip Of The Lip Might Sink A Ship*.



1951 "STARS ON PARADE," a U.S. Army recruiting radio show, presented Ellington Moods with Fred Robbins as deejay. Nance is at mike with violin; Tizol standing by. In the usual order, saxes are Paul Gonsalves, Jimmy Hamilton, Willie Smith, Russell Procope, Harry Carney. Trombones

Quentin Jackson and Britt Woodman. Trumpets are Harold Baker, Cat Anderson, Nelson Williams. Only changes since then are Hilton Jefferson, Willie Cook and Clark Terry, who have replaced Smith, Baker and Williams. Last-named is now living in Paris; Baker is free-lancing in New York; Smith is with JATP.



DOWN BEAT

RECORD REVIEWS

Records in the popular and rhythm-and-blues sections are reviewed and rated in terms of broad general appeal. Records in the jazz section are reviewed and rated in terms of their popular musical merit.

Records in the popular and rhythm-and-blues sections of interest from the musical standpoint are marked with a sharp (#), or, if exceptionally interesting, a double sharp (##).

Ratings

★★★★ Excellent, ★★★ Very Good, ★★ Good, ★ Fair, ★ Poor.

Louis Armstrong

- ★★★ *I Laughed At Love*
★★★★ *Takes Two To Tango*

Love is an amusing coverage of the Sunny Gale hit, but the studio orchestra leaves awkward gaps and adds nothing to the mood of Satchmo's voice and horn, appealing though they are. *Tango* doesn't have this handicap; the band is still pretty dire, but never enough to extinguish the sparks emanating from Louis, who really has a ball with these lyrics. (Decca 28394.)

Georgie Auld

- ★★ *Early Autumn*
★★ *You Belong To Me*

More of Georgie's money-conditioned gushy tenorisms set to a pair of day's leading ballads (*Autumn* is bidding and *Belong* has made it) with a vocal assist from Jud Conlan's Rhythmaires. By now it's become a formula and a proven dollar collector. (Coral 60845.)

Les Brown

- Clouds*
Heat Wave
Rain
Let It Snow
Blue Skies
Ill Wind
Stormy Weather
Lost In A Fog

Album rating: ★★★★★

By all odds, this is the finest album turned out by a dance band this year! And not only is it a grand musical experience, but it is a pleasure to report that it will be a commercial success to boot.

Framed around a packaging idea titled "Musical Weather Vane," the LP features eight "weather" tunes, most of the titles rather ominous in descriptive value though the total result is a delightfully sunny 30 minutes. The arrangements (by Skip Martin and Frank Comstock) are wonderfully economic; there's not a wasted bar in the album. They are the zenith of good taste, are superb for dancing, are ideally designed to allow for a wealth of wonderful modern-designed jazz solos by Brown's excellent collection of musicians. And these solos are worked into the whole so that each improvisation takes on a meaning to the whole, very much in the manner that the Ellington band solo work used to fit into that band's patterns.

The soloists are uniformly expert. Dave Pell on tenor shines, as do Ray Sims on trombone, Geoff Clarkson on piano, Jimmy Zito (and possibly Wes Hensel) on trumpet, Tony Rizzi on guitar, and Sal Libero on clarinet.

It has often been said that Les Brown is the most underrated of band leaders. It's perfectly true. Perhaps it's because Les has built with his band a precision machine, and this sort of perfection through the years is the sort of thing that comes to be taken for granted. Whatever the reason, it's unfair. Les has a band that can unashamedly and sincerely be called a great band. This album should go a long way toward reminding one and all of its greatness.

And, incidentally, for a band that is as methodically handled and as superbly disciplined as is this one, it gets a wonderful swinging beat.

There's only one thing left to say. Whether you buy it to dance to, or to tap your toes to, or to be booted by its jazz solos, or to admire the drive and cohesion of the ensemble work, or for splendid interpretations of splendid standard tunes, by all means get this album. It's really that wonderful! (Coral 56077.)

Freddy (Dinky) Cole Trio

- ★★★ *Mama Didn't Raise No Crazy Kids*
★★★ *The Joke Is On Me*

Nat's kid brother makes an encouraging disc appetizer with this pair of trio sides. He plays and sings, but particularly sings, very much like Nat; his material is good, and he gets a nice strain of humor running through the beatful defense of his own sanity. *Joke*, on the other hand, recalls, both lyrically and in mood, a song called *This Will Make You Laugh* which endeared Nat to many fans during his embryonic Decca days. (Topper 204.)

Nat "King" Cole

- ★★★★ *Faith Can Move Mountains*
★★★★ *The Ruby And The Pearl*

This is a powerful commercial coupling for Nat! Though records of both songs are already on the market by some top-line stars, Nat's magic with a lyric, his warmth, and skill should go a long way to make this one of Nat's biggest records. Les Baxter backed on *Ruby* while Nelson Riddle lined up the orch-chorus for *Faith*. (Capitol 2230.)

Bing Crosby, Jane Wyman, Andrews Sisters

- Just For You*
On The 10:10 From Ten-Ten Tennessee
He's Just Crazy For Me
I'm Checking My Heart
Zing A Little Zong
Maiden Of Guadalupe
I'll Si-Si Ya In Bahia
Live Oak Tree

Album rating: ★★★★★

Though studio-made, this amounts to a soundtrack album of eight of the key songs from the forthcoming Crosby-Wyman flicker, *Just For You*. The sides have already made their appearance singly. Collectively they stack up as pleasant fare, with *Zona* the standout item, mainly on the strength of a wonderfully frothy effort by Bing and Jane.

When the picture hits the market, this package could easily develop into a top-selling proposition just on the basis of tie-in possibilities with showings of the flicker. (Decca DL 5417.)

Curtain Call

Ted Lewis

- ★★ *When My Baby Smiles At Me*
★ *Wear A Hat With A Silver Lining*

Eddie Cantor

- ★★★ *Now's The Time To Fall In Love*
★★★ *Makin' Whoopee*

Jimmy Durante

- ★★ *Start Off Each Day With A Song*
★★★ *Inka Dinka Doo*

Sophie Tucker

- ★★ *Some Of These Days*
★★ *Life Begins At Forty*

Bing Crosby

- ★★★ *I Surrender Dear*
★★★ *When The Blue Of The Night Meets The Gold Of The Day*

Andrews Sisters

- ★★★ *Bei Mir Bis Du Schan*
★★★ *In Apple Blossom Time*

Ink Spots

- ★★★ *If I Didn't Care*
★★★ *Do I Worry?*

Mills Brothers

- ★★★ *Tiger Rag*
★★★ *Paper Doll*

Decca pruned its catalog to prepare a series of re-releases it calls "Curtain

Call". The records obviously fall into two categories: the songs of the great vaude stars and the records of the great singing stars. Some of these sides date back 15 or more years, have been superbly re-recorded to bring up levels and build body. It depends on how nostalgia works on you whether you will be interested in these reissues or not. Chances are that a great many people will become nostalgic. (Decca DU-1500 through 1507.)

Johnny Desmond

- ★★★ *Stay Where You Are*
★★ *Nina Never Knew*

Johnny sings the stuffings out of *Stay*, a pleasant sort of contemporary publisher plug ballad. He does well with the *Nina* tune as well, the latter a cleverly constructed ditty though one that's a bit too sophisticated for the general market. Tony Mottola backs John on both sides, flashing just a small sample of his guitar ability on *Nina*. (Coral 60848.)

The Girl Friends

- ★★ *If I Didn't Love You So*
★★ *Don't Say You Love Me*

It's been a long time in coming and now that it's here, we'd just as soon it had remained a theory! Yes, we finally have a female Ink Spots! Gail Girard does a fair enough female facsimile of Bill Kenny for the lead voice; and an unbilled chick does the narrative against a backbone of harmonizing vibrato.

The songs are both of the old-timey, neo-barbershop ballad type; neither seems to be of more than minor importance, actually are the type that really do grow on trees. (Coral 60843.)

Neal Hefsti-Frances Wayne

- ★★★★ *Somebody Loves Me*
★★★★ *Mean To Me*

The Hefstis continue to produce first rate dance platters. *Somebody* is enjoying revival because of the Betty Hutton movie of the same name. Frances sings both songs beautifully.

Somebody is a particularly appetizing slicing. It's handled as a slow ballad with a beat, features Neal doing a really fine turn in a short trumpet solo, sort of Bobby Hackett-ish with modern overtones. If there's enough promotion put behind this record, it could score quite readily. (Coral 60840.)

Eddie Heywood

- If Dreams Come True*
Perdido
Stormy Weather
Chloe
Memories Of You
Cheek To Cheek
Stompin' At The Savoy
It's Easy To Remember

Album Rating: ★

It's Easy To Remember is the title of this LP, and of one of the tunes in it. Of the music, we must regretfully report that it's easy to forget. Eddie Heywood, who some seven or eight years ago had a piano style that was as fresh and attractive as that of the little band he led, has deteriorated from style to mannerism, from spontaneity to synthesis. The beat that can be said of this collection is that it makes innocuous background music. (MGM LP E135.)



BATTLING OUT HITS in more senses than one at present is Les Brown, whose Coral album *Musical Weather Vane* gets double rave from the record review department—the two musical sharps as well as the five stars for commercial potential.

Frankie Laine-Jo Stafford

- ★★★★ *Piece A-Puddin'*
★★★★ *Setting The Woods On Fire*

The dynamic duo should click off another winning coupling with this one. *Puddin'* is a follow-up to *Hambone*; *Woods* is a country item stirred by Hank Williams, the hottest hillbilly in the country. Both sides are backed by Paul Weston's country buddies; Norman Luboff's choir pitches in for the *Puddin'* side. Stacks up as a pair of pseudo-exciting sides that push but don't swing. You can smell the juke box coin while they spin. (Columbia 39867.)

Peggy Lee-Gordon Jenkins

- ★★★★ *River, River*
★★★★ *Sans Souci*

This winning combination should have another hit disc to their credit by the time *River* has worn its way. It's a truly haunting ballad, a good song, a forceful Bob Russell lyric. And Peggy's warm, intimate, soulful reading of it is enhanced by one of Jenkins' really standout accompaniments, wherein he matches his sensitivity to the meaning of the song and establishes the perfect mood. It's possible that this effort may be a trifle above the average listener's head, but good exploitation could overcome that.

Sans Souci is written by Peggy in collaboration with Sonny Burke, is a synthetic sort of tune which registers strongly on the first hearing because of a striking arrangement, but grows thinner with each additional spin. Peggy sings it well, of course. (Decca 28395.)

Art Lowry

- ★★★ *You Darlin'*
★★★ *Dardanella*

A pair of oldies are brought back in bright dance arrangements, semi-mickey style. Staccato ensemble vocalizing adds to the juke box lure of *Darlin'* while Lowry's sophisticated boogie piano figure propels *Dardanella*, an instrumental. (Columbia 39869.)

Billy May

- ★★★ *Orchids In The Moonlight*
★★★ *Fat Man Mambo*

A typical Billy May item, sax slurs and all, lifted out of his LP, is coupled with a competent mambo on which the May effects are conspicuously absent. (Capitol 2227.)

Mitch Miller

- Kalamazoo To Timbuktu*
The Sea Of The Moon
Tsena Tsena Tsena
Au Revoir Again
Song Of Delilah
Autumn Leaves
Green Sleeves
Keep Me In Mind

Album rating: ★★★★★

This a collection of eight of Mitch's singly issued sides, with chorus and French horns very much prominent. Actually, the most enticing feature of the set is Mitch's own oboe and English horn playing; he's spotted himself most liberally on *Moon*, *Autumn* and *Delilah*. Spotted as vocalists on some of the individual selections are the Paulette Sisters, Burt Taylor and Peter Hanley.

The LP liner notes credit Mitch with having "brought the French horn into popular music in a big way." The author should have taken time out to study in Columbia's own catalog the work of Claude Thornhill before handing Mitch a bow, though certainly he is entitled to plenty of bows for many of the other ideas he has introduced to the pop record field. (Columbia CL 6222.)

George Shearing

- ★★ *It's Easy To Remember*
★★ *Love, Your Spell Is Everywhere*

George has found the solution to his the-records-all-sound-alike" problem. He now has a record released as "George Shearing Quintet" which actually is a pair of vocal sides by Teddi King, his protegee with the quintet only taking a 16-bar interlude on each side. Teddi shows promise, though a hornless quintet featuring vibes is hardly the best blend for a vocal background. Her sound is light and pleasing, her style promising, her intonation not yet perfect. (MGM 11316.)

Jeri Southern

- ★★★ *The Ruby And The Pearl*
★★★ *Forgive And Forget*

Jeri, despite Cole-Laine-Come coverage on *Ruby*, should grab off a small hunk of action on the song on the strength of this being the only female version, and a genuinely good one it is too. *Forgive* is a current music publisher plug item.

has several records around on it, doesn't measure up as a big winner, draws a warm, intimately styled reading from Jeri. Norm Leyden backs her with a pair of tasty studio orch accompaniments. (Decca 28426.)

Sarah Vaughan

- **** *Mighty Lonesome Feeling*
- *** *Sinner Or Saint*

Sarah blends voices with the Percy Faith choir to start out the Sammy Gallop ballad effectively. She gets just a little too cute toward the end, otherwise it's one of her better recent efforts musically and commercially. *Sinner* is a new ballad by Irving (*Be Anything*) Gordon. Conventional. (Columbia 39673.)

Margaret Whiting

- *** *Outside Of Heaven*
- *** *Mons Together*

Maggie, who hasn't been heard from in some time, is in fine voice for her latest coupling. *Heaven*, a promising new Tin Pan Alley product, is treated in typical Whiting fashion—straight singing, song salesmanship, a minimum of tricks. *Together*, the fine oldie, is handled with a bit more drama, is set in a stirring Latin-designed background provided for Maggie by her husband, Lou Busch. (Capitol 2217.)

Victor Young

- ** *Look Ahead Neighbor*
- ** *All American Rainbow*

A couple of fairly routine patriotic ditties receive befitting rousing treatment from Young, whose abilities are far and away too great for him to be toying with material that should be left to lesser talent despite the fact that he wrote *Rainbow*. (Decca 28423.)



STILL RIDING HIGH with her big solo hits *You Belong To Me* and *Jambalaya*, Jo Stafford is currently gaining more record momentum through her newly five-starred duet release with Frankie Laine, *Piece A-Puddin'*. Says Jo: Hail Columbia!

to this collation of piano solos with rhythm. The choice of tunes is as estimable as their interpretation; the rhythm, on the upper tempos, has the surprise advantage of a snare drum supplementing the bongos, creating a smoother beat.

Although these are essentially jazz performances, they are also a high grade of cocktail-piano music, and as such will serve the same background purposes for which so many piano LPs are designed. The last title, by the way, is Rubinstein's *Melody In F*, Hazel-Scotted up very acceptably. (Capitol H-332.)

Bill Davis

- *** *Alexandria, Va.*
- *** *Ooh-Ah-De-De-De*

The Virginia tribute is a jumping instrumental with good solos by Davis and composer-guitarist Jennings. Backing, a brainchild of drummer Chris Columbus, is a blues which the trio sings wordlessly. Jennings in his how-blue-can-you-get mood is a delight. (Okeh 6913.)

Lou Donaldson

- **** *Roccus*
- **** *Cheek To Cheek*

Even more impressive than his previous release is Donaldson's exciting performance on *Cheek*. With this disc he emerges as perhaps the greatest alto man of the Parker school since Bird himself. Horace Silver has a good piano chorus, but you hardly even notice it, because you're busy reflecting on the terrific alto work that has preceded it. *Roccus* is a highly attractive Silver original. (Blue Note 1598)

Duke Ellington

- **** *Smada*
- *** *Come On Home*

Smada is the latest in Duke's series of titles dedicated to disc jockeys (it's Los Angeles' Joe Adams, spelled backwards). The first new Strayborn original in ages, it's a simple, swinging thing, catchiest of its type since his *A Train*. Jimmy Hamilton shares honors with the band throughout, reminding us again that neither De Franco nor Goodman can claim to have said the last word in the jazz clarinet vocabulary.

Home is a minor blues, lyrics by Duke, introducing Jimmy Grissom, who sounds like a cleaned-up Al Hibbler—which isn't bad. (Okeh 6911.)

Woody Herman

- **** *Terrisita*
- *** *Blues In Advance*

It's hard to choose between the *Terrisita* Ralph Burns scored for his own band on the Mercury *Free Forms* LP and the new orchestration for Woody, which features mostly ensemble and some well-incorporated piano by Nat Pierce. This one is beautifully integrated, using the three-minute form as effectively as did Burns' *Bijou*.

The reverse sounds like a hillbilly song

trying to sound like a blues, and frankly, that's the way Woody sings it. The band, luckily, gets in a few powerful punches, and there's some fine work by the unbilled trombonist, Urby Green. Ironic that after all the fuss about Capitol's failure to give Woody's sidemen due credit on its recent reissues, Woody doesn't even do it himself with his own record company! (Mars 100.)

Art Hodes

- Jug Head Boogie*
- Jack Daily Blues*
- Blues 'N' Boogie*
- Feelin' At Ease*
- Careless Love*
- Low Down Blues*
- Blues For Jelly*
- K. M. H. Drag*

Album rating: **

Three of these numbers were not previously issued, which will doubtless be interesting news to Hodes collectors. The best sides are *Low Down* and *Jug Head*, recorded in April, 1944, thanks to the presence of guitarist Jimmy Shirley.

Others sprinkled through these sides include Max Kaminaky, Albert Nicholas, Omer Simeon, Sandy Williams and Baby Dodds. When you come down to essentials, there's only 12 bars of music in the whole LP, but they sure repeat it plenty of times. (Blue Note LP 7021.)

Illinois Jacquet

- **** *Port Of Rico*
- *** *Somewhere Along The Way*

Count Basie seems to be making hits for everybody except himself. First it was the Paul Quinichette sides for which he sat in so successfully. Now it's Illinois Jacquet, for whom the Count's Hammond organ, teamed with Jacquet's tenor at its tastiest, turns *Port Of Rico* into one of those rare products that can be called delightfully simple and simply delightful. It's nothing but an ad lib blues, and, in this particular genre, it's one in a hundred. The ballad overleaf is handled adequately but it definitely the minor side of this disc. (Mercury 89001.)

Bibi Johnson-Thore Swanerud

- *** *How High The Moon*
- ** *Tout De Suite*

Waxed in Sept. 1949, before she came here from Sweden and cut her name to Bibi Johns, *Moon* features Bibi in a top-inspired vocal so different from Ella's that it's obvious she hadn't heard the Fitzgerald version at the time. Her silky tones and wide range, combined with an unusually legato approach to bop singing, make this an interesting curiosity. The coupling is an instrumental by pianist Swanerud's sextet, with Ove Lind on clarinet, Jimmy Nieltrom on vibes and Rolf Berg on guitar. Nice, light, mild modern jazz. (Savoy 965.)

Thelonious Monk

- Four In One*
- Who Knows*
- Nice Work*
- Straight No Chaser*
- In Walked Bud*
- Humph*
- Suburban Eyes*
- Ask Me Now*

Album Rating: ***

A good, representative assortment of



"GREATEST SINCE PARKER", says the record review department of Lou Donaldson, young New York alto man whose Blue Note slicing of *Cheek To Cheek* earns him a five-star nod. Donaldson has recorded with Thelonious Monk, Milt Jackson.

six originals by Monk, one standard (Gershwin), and *Suburban Eyes*, which is Ike Quebec's version of *All God's Children Got Rhythm*.

Personnel includes Milt Jackson, Sahib Shihab, Idressa Suliman, Art Blakey et al (Al McKibbon, of course). (Blue Note LP 5009.)

George Wallington

- **** *Love Beat*
- **** *Red, White & Blue*

New sounds, new sounds! *Love Beat* has Chuck Wayne playing the comely melody on a mandola, which sounds like Pettiford's pizzicato cello, slightly higher. Coupling is a trio side by Wallington, Mingus and Roach. With the defection of Bud Powell from the active ranks, Wallington may well inherit his mantle as the #1 bop pianist. Despite the synthetic flag-waving quotes, this is an exciting, intensely swinging side. (Prestige 783.)

Ben Webster

- *** *King's Riff*
- *** *Old Folks*

Two more sides from the *You're My Thrill* date, with Maynard Ferguson playing surprisingly well on *Riff*, which also has some fair Webster tenor, Gerry Wiggins' piano and Benny Carter's excellent, but off-mike alto. (*King* in the title is Benny's nickname.) *Old Folks*, which the label accredits to Robison Willard (no relation to Robeson Paul) is Ben in his soulful mood, but it's by no means another *Thrill*. (Mercury 8298.)

RHYTHM & BLUES

Records in this section are reviewed and rated in terms of broad general appeal. If they are of interest from the musical standpoint, they are marked with a sharp (#), or, if exceptionally interesting, a double sharp (##).

Paul Bascomb

- ** *Mumbles Blues*
- ** *Nona*

Mumbles is a fair voral blues about a girl with diction troubles. *Nona* is a Sam Lowe instrumental which Bascomb first cut when he was in the Erskine Hawkins band in 1940. (Mercury 8299.)

Arnett Cobb

- *** *Someone To Watch Over Me*
- ** *The Sky One*

The Gershwin ballad gets a slow run-down from the tenor star, with unusual vocal group background supporting his horn, not quite in the Chris Powell-George Auld manner. *Sky* is a Lucky Thompson instrumental with an interesting trombone solo by Dickie Harris. Filed under jazz, this would rate at least three stars. (Okeh 6912.)

Duke Henderson

- ** *Lucy Brown*
- ** *Country Girl*

Henderson's a first-rate blues shouter; *Country Girl* is just a notch superior as material than is *Lucy Brown*, thus the difference in ratings. Small blues band backing is fine and cleaner than most group work in the genre. (Specialty 442.)

Joe Liggins

- *** *Going Back To New Orleans*
- **** *Cryin' Over You*

Liggins "Honeydrippers" have developed into one of the few permanently established r & b units in the business, can be depended upon to come up with an occasional hit, always turns out discs with an eye out for the dance market. *New Orleans* is a rhythm ditty, treated with a bounce and a Liggins vocal, should have its greatest value in and around the Crescent City.

Cryin' is a blues moaned effectively by Liggins, follows a slow blues formula peculiar to this group, should be at least a moderate hit. (Specialty 441.)

Hal Singer

- **** *Frog Hop*
- **** *Indian Love Call*

Tenorman Singer was one of the early entries in the honk market, still turns out the same sort of stuff after several years of trying. *Hop* is a medium blues loaded with riff clichés, has some small semblance of melody, a good beat for dancers, should score in juke boxes.

Reverse is a tenor sax version of the Slim Whitman yodel (and hit) interpretation of the classic standard. Singer's schmalzy tenor (sticking all the way to the melody) is backed up by a whining Hawaiian guitar. Rounds out a musically unexciting, but commercially satisfying disc. (Savoy 861.)

JAZZ

Records in this section are reviewed and rated in terms of their musical merit.

Louie Bellson

- The Jeep Is Jumpin'*
- Passion Flower*
- Punkin'*
- Johnny Come Lately*
- Eyes*
- Rainbow*
- Sticks*
- Shadow*

Album rating: ****

For this session, sponsored by Gene Norman, two non-Ellingtonians (Wardell Gray, tenor, and John Graas, French horn) teamed with six Duke men (Strayhorn, Carney, Tizol, Willie Smith, Clark Terry and Wendell Marshall) to produce an interesting array of small band jazz items. *Eyes* and *Shadow* are Bellson originals, with a credit to Buddy Baker as arranger and conductor. *Punkin'* and *Sticks* are by Shorty Rogers, the latter a percussion display by Louie, technically great but musically pointless. *Rainbow* is an interesting new Tizol piece featuring the composer.

Wardell Gray and Clark Terry share the ad lib spotlight on *Jeep*. Clark and Willie assume the old Hodges mantle on *Passion Flower*.

Ensemble work is slightly less than perfect. In sum this is a good effort that falls slightly short of producing anything startling—and we're still waiting to hear a disc on which the great Clark Terry really does himself justice, even though an inkling of his originality does seep through here occasionally. (Capitol LP H348.)

Beryl Booker

- **** *Love Is The Thing*
- *** *Stay As Sweet As You Are*

Beryl out-Garners Erroll on *Stay*, which gets a good beat aided by Oscar Pettiford and Johnny Collins. *Love* is slower and more typical of what Beryl can do. Incidentally, this is a great standard, one that deserves a full-scale revival both for pop and jazz purposes. (Mercury 8297)

Nat "King" Cole

- Rose Room*
- Laura*
- Sombody Loves Me*
- If I Should Lose You*
- Penthouse Serenade*
- Polka Dots And Moonbeams*
- Down By The Old Mill Stream*
- Once In A Blue Moon*

Album Rating: ****

It's a pleasure to be able to review a Nat Cole release under "Jazz", and a compounded pleasure to report that even under "Pop" it would get the same four stars, plus two sharps.

Penthouse Serenade is the title allotted

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The Blindfold Test

Morton Gould's Tour Of Ellingtonia

By LEONARD FEATHER

Nationally respected as a composer and conductor in that expansive middle ground between the popular and classical fields, Morton Gould is one of the many contemporary writers who have been keenly aware of jazz.

Only 38 years old, Gould started playing the piano 34 years ago and is remembered by many as a child prodigy. He has written everything from symphonies to a viola concerto, a *Boogie Woogie Etude* and the show, *Billion Dollar Baby*.

For Morton's blindfold test I brought out a cross-section of items representing Duke Ellington across a 25-year span, plus a couple of sides by other artists playing Ellingtonia. He was given no information, either before or during the test, about the records played for him.

THE RECORDS

1. Duke Ellington & His Orch. *Cotton Tail* (Victor).

I like that. I like the piece—I like the variation on it—I like it because it has a sort of natural, healthy kind of vitality and I think that the playing has a good deal of it too. It's a certain organized spontaneity which happens to appeal to me. I must confess that the number is not familiar to me. The sax and piano solos struck me as very well done and also the ensemble work—it has a cleanness without getting too tight. The term "organized spontaneity" that I use might be a little contradictory, but it just has a feeling of patness and structure. I'd give it four stars.

2. Duke Ellington & His Orch. *Black & Tan Fantasy* (Brunswick). 1927.

That sounds like an oldie to me. What's that, an old Ellington? Well, I like that one too. This sounds familiar to me—I know it. I think that is a wonderful example of a piece that has a lot of substance in its way. I think it has wonderful satire—and satire to me is serious—as against a gag or just a slapstick kind of approach. I think this has a real, almost classical purity in its lineal definition of the melody and texture, and I find it wonderfully imaginative in a very simple and concise way. It sounds, of course, dated, but I think that the intrinsic merit of it certainly isn't damaged. I'd give it five stars.

3. Duke Ellington & His Orch. *Black & Tan Fantasy* (Victor). 1945.

Well, this, of course, obviously is a different sound—a different mechanical approach and different as far as texture or musical substance goes. What impressed me on the other record was the imagination and freshness in relation to that period of time—something that still has a certain kind of freshness and intriguing quality. Now this new one is richer sounding and the texture is different—for instance, this has a number of contrapuntal places where there are very nice things done—so that to me these are two different approaches.

In this one there are conscious ostinatos and set figures against which a solo instrument plays off. This seems to me a much more self-conscious kind of version. I must say that I wouldn't attempt to evaluate which is better. All this is a very personal thing, and to me the first version of this that you played had, for some strange reason, a fresher impact.

I would give this one three and a half stars.

4. Andre Kostelanetz. *Mood Indigo* (Columbia).

Well, you've really put me on the spot



Morton Gould

with this one, because this is an aspect of music that you either like or you don't. Not that I'd imagine purists would holler bloody murder at this. From that point of view, from the so-called point of view of purity—which I don't happen to agree with exactly—this doesn't have the authenticity, the integrity of the other records that you played for me; authenticity in terms, let's say, of a real rhythmic pulsation—the shifts, the transitions from section to section—but on the other hand if you go on the premise that music can function on many different planes, for many different purposes, it's legitimate to say that there's no reason why a big orchestra should not be able to play like Duke Ellington. They obviously can't play Duke Ellington in a manner that a small combination would play it, and a big orchestra immediately assumes an organized individual approach by whatever conductors doing it. From the point of view of a big orchestra playing popular music, I like this. I think it has generally a good sound, a richness. It should be natural for me to have, perhaps, different ideas or a different conception of how to score this, or how to treat this in terms of a big orchestra. But I think that this is, considering the objective, very well done. Four stars.

5. Duke Ellington & His Orch. *Solitude* (Columbia). 1950 (from *Ellington Masterpieces LP*).

Well, I like this the least. This seems to have a lot of forced passages in it—muddy. Even dubious harmonic structure within the frame of what the harmonic idiom is. It doesn't have the tightness and compactness that I personally am sympathetic to in this kind of rendition. Was it Ellington himself? It seems to wander too much and also it gets soft in a lot of places. Harmonic clichés and attempts to expand this and go out of certain bounds. I'm sympathetic to the tune, and to the feeling of the tune, but I think that they've blown it up too much and that they've gone overboard from many aspects, and also, a lot of it is just not well performed. It's not authentic—some of the har-

monic disruptions—it's as bald as that. I'd give this two stars.

6. Duke Ellington & His Orch. *Rose Of The Rio Grande* (Brunswick).

I'm neutral on this. I don't know, this seems to have some very interesting spots—towards the end there there's an ensemble mixture of rhythms that's very interesting—there's some good solo work also; but, for some reason or other this sounds dated to me—it doesn't make a point to me one way or another. The singer didn't particularly do anything to me. (It's probably somebody I should fall off my chair at!) The whole thing really doesn't do too much to me. There are patterns that were hot stuff some years back; I don't know whether this was done at that time or whether this is just a reflection of that kind of pattern, but it doesn't stimulate me—doesn't excite me. I would say one and a half.

7. Charlie Ventura. *It Don't Mean A Thing If You Ain't Got That Swing* (Victor).

Well, this doesn't excite me too much, frankly. It doesn't have the tightness of Ellington. There seems to be a lot of loose rhythms in there—it doesn't have a rhythmic integration unless it's the kind of rhythmic thing that'll lose me—that is subtle and I didn't get, but offhand it just doesn't sound strong even though it makes a point. The overall impression is that the thing simply seems to be spasmodic in its rhythmic pattern. I think fair, two.

8. Charlie Barnet. *Caravan* (Apollo).

I don't know whether that was Ellington or not. I think I remember the old Ellington record where there was a trombone—Tizol. I would say that it's possible it's Ellington but I doubt it offhand. It doesn't have some of the fantasy that Ellington always manages to get in and also, generally I think Ellington has a capacity to get these effects very simply. But I did like this. I would rate it three stars.

9. Duke Ellington & His Orch. *Smada* (Columbia). 1952.

Well, I'd give this five stars. The clarinet is excellent. I think it's what I call healthy, and has, I think, an excellent variation; and it's compact—it has integration and continuity. I'm thrown by the sound—it's obviously a new sound—it's deceptive. Even Goodman's clarinet can change on a record—this could possibly be Goodman—I don't know what he's been doing lately with a big band, if anything. It has some of that same kind of stark virility of Ellington's, but just from a quick listen and so on, I would say no, unless Ellington has a new sound. Five stars.

Afterthoughts by Morton Gould

I don't know Duke Ellington too well personally, but naturally I've known his music the way anybody has who's been alive. I've known it all my life, practically.

Ellington at his best has a kind of disciplined freedom of expression that I've always found very striking and exciting. And he often gets his effects by very simple means.

What's interesting to me, too, about Duke, is that his very old records have this wonderful contemporary quality. I've listened to some of them in recent years and I've never tired of them. They still have that revealing quality, that freshness. That is a great tribute to the real value of Ellington's work.

Down Beat covers the music news from coast to coast and is read around the world.

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Tributes To The Duke

(Jumped from Page 5)
 play better because all those individualists knew they were creating something by working together.
 So with Duke you have the feeling that when a man comes into the band, he feels like a new man with the New York Yankees. That's what Ellington has done—he's built an achievement that would make anyone proud to be associated with it."

By Charles Emge

The only standard by which a creative musician should be measured is the extent of his influence on, and his contributions to, the over-all structure of the music of which his is a part. I am one of those who believes that Ellington's period of greatness has passed, as all things pass. But the important elements in his music remain as a permanent part of the music of yesterday, today, and tomorrow. To a creative musician, that is the only goal worth striving for. Ellington has achieved it.

- Rockin' In Rhythm* (Victor)
- The Mooche* (Victor)
- I Got It Bad* (Victor)
- Creole Love Call* (Victor)
- Jack The Bear* (Victor)

By Hal Webman

If it is at all possible to pass over the endless hours of pleasure that Duke Ellington's music has given me, I would do so only to rhapsodize on the man's contribution toward creating an understanding for his race by doing best what he knows best—and that is being a musician and a gentleman.

- Black and Tan Fantasy* (Victor)
- Tootin' Through The Roof* (Columbia)
- All Too Soon* (Victor)
- Liberian Suite* (Columbia)
- I Don't Know What Kind Of Blues I've Got* (Victor)

By Gordon Jenkins

Much to my regret, I've never had the opportunity to be very close to the Duke; not in a personal way, that is. Musically, I've always felt sympathetic waves between Ellington's type of arrangements and my own. There's a certain kind of "adness" in Duke's compositions that is said by some to be characteristic of my stuff.

One in particular, and old record called *Rude Interlude*, has a feel to it that is depressing in a very pleasant sort of way. I could retire if I had a dollar for each play I've given that side, and I am forced to admit that I've brazenly used some of those chords to my own advantage.

Ellington has been a valuable contributor to our music for many years, and in the current market of tuneless junk, a new Ellington melody would stand out like a laughing pallbearer.

- Rude Interlude* (Victor)
- Dallas Doings* (Victor)
- Sophisticated Lady* (Columbia)
- Take The "A" Train* (Victor)
- Solitude* (Victor)

By Buddy Morrow

Ellington, the man who has made music for so many years, has throughout this time made major contributions without end, and was perhaps one of the first men to recognize the full potential of the jazz idiom in lasting quality. Speaking for myself, I remember when every new Ellington record was a lesson in taste, progress, inventiveness and just wonderful music. Certainly the man has earned a place in my mind as a leader who will be long remembered, respected, and always a storehouse for the newest and best in modern music.

- Warm Valley* (Victor)
- Take The "A" Train* (Victor)
- Mood Indigo* (Victor)
- The Hawk Talks* (Columbia)
- Azure* (Columbia)

By Lizzie Miles

I like good music and Duke Ellington writes and plays good music. Back in the 20's, Fats Waller was always in demand to play piano for the singers. Fats played for me. He was fine but he would rather play for gin at a house party. At that time, Duke was just getting started. He played some, but most of us thought his ideas were 'too modern.' He wanted to play things that people wouldn't get to know until years later. He is still doing that. People catch up with one thing he is doing and he is already gone on to something new. He is some man.

- Mood Indigo*
- Ring Dem Bells*
- Take The "A" Train*
- Sophisticated Lady*
- It Don't Mean A Thing*

By Leonard Feather

It would be easier to choose one's five favorite Ellington years than five favorite records out of hundreds that have, in their respective ways, equal claims to inclusion. The five years I'd choose would be 1929, 1938, 1940, 1951 and, if I may be so bold, 1953. But a strong predilection for the third of these years prompts four-fifths of the following list.

- All Too Soon* (Victor)
- The Flaming Sword* (Victor)
- Warm Valley* (Victor)
- Ko-Ko* (Victor)
- Someone* (Victor)

By Mike Nevard

As a youngster, I went through all the usual phases. Louis, Benny, Hampton, Duke. Duke was the one that stuck. There was always so much quality in his music—the music he wrote and arranged, and the music of his band. His earliest compositions, played today, still have form and melodic interest.

Structurally, his arrangements have always been complete. Only the harmonies and some of the phrasing supply those chronological clues. On records, I prefer the

"middle period" Duke. Five favorites? Impossible to assess. But five of my faves—

- Drop Me Off In Harlem*
- I Got It Bad And That Ain't Good*
- Things Ain't What They Used To Be* (Hodges)
- Come Sunday* (Black, Brown & Beige)
- Cat Walk* (Coronets)

By George Hofer

Duke Ellington's music has sustained a potent effect on me from the first time I heard the band in 1927 to the last time recently. Between *Animal Craekers* on Gennett in 1926 to *The Hawk Talks* last year his records have had an unending originality, power, and a beautiful thing called "the Ellington sound." His development through the years has been a progressing thing with the changes causing no pain.

- The Sergeant Was Shy* (Columbia)
- All Too Soon* (Victor)
- In A Mellow Tone* (Victor)
- Black & Tan Fantasy* (Okeh)
- Reminiscing In Tempo Part 2* (Brunswick)

By Joe Delaney

As he has with everyone else, Ellington has exerted quite an influence upon my thinking both in and out of the music business. Like many, I can trace a parallel course between the Duke's development and the moulding of my own musical taste. I don't feel that Ellington has yet been accorded his proper place in American music, and I trust it shall occur within his lifetime. No one has contributed more than this man, and extremely few as much.

By Henry F. Whiston

(Producer, Canadian Broadcasting Corp., Montreal; Canadian correspondent for Down Beat.)
 To say Duke is jazz is ridiculous; to say he has done more for the music as a whole than has any other figure past or present is closer to the truth. He has dug up

the earth around the roots of jazz, oh so gracefully taken his share and planted it in richer, more fertile soil so that more people in all walks of life may take it to them and say they feel jazz. The blossoms now bloom in every democratic country where the folk can have their choices.

- Main Stem* (Victor)
- Jam With Sam* (Columbia)
- Kissing Bug* (Victor)
- Liberian Suite* (Columbia)
- Don't Get Around Much Anymore* (Victor)

By Jack Tracy

I didn't see Duke at the Cotton Club 25 years ago, I didn't accompany him to Europe, and I was about 1200 miles away when he made his first appearance at Carnegie Hall. In fact, the greatest emotional impact I ever received from an Ellington band happened less than two years ago.

It was a one-nighter in Chicago just after he had lost Hodges, Brown, Greer, et al, and people were seriously wondering what would happen with Ellington now. But they had no reason for disappointment—it was a revitalized, powerful, rocking band that night, one which just wouldn't quit. The crew had that undefinable added class to it that we can find only in Ellington orchestras and the New York Yankees. They have both been overwhelmingly dominant in their fields for the last 25 years.

- Cotton Tail* (Victor)
- Jack The Bear* (Victor)
- Take The "A" Train* (Victor)
- Main Stem* (Victor)
- Pitter Panther Patter* (Victor)

By Andre Kostelanetz

Duke Ellington is one of the truly inspired American musicians. His music is of importance, not only to the United States, but also to every other country in the world. I am honored to be one of the many who are congratulating Duke Ellington on his 25th anniversary of outstanding musical contributions.

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RCA Victor Records

Reminiscing In Tempo— Ned On Early Ellingtonia

By NED E. WILLIAMS

For a chap who never professed to play jazz, Edward Kennedy Ellington has created more than his share of the stuff in the quarter century career which this issue of *Down Beat* acknowledges. Duke's story always has been that he and his boys are attempting to project the music of their race, nothing more, nothing less. The fact that it has turned out to be the bulk of the great jazz created in this particular period is purely co-incidental.

This will not be an attempt to document the history, musical or otherwise, of Duke Ellington. Duke dislikes biography or even the men-

tion of it, which is why he withdrew his collaboration on Barry Ulanov's book before the first few chapters had been completed. "My story isn't finished," he will say. "Why should any attempt be made to write it down?"

Blue Ramble

So this will be just a rambling reminiscence of the more than 20 years in which I have been privileged to call Duke Ellington my friend, more than half of them in close association.

I first heard the Ellington band in 1927, which was the year it made its debut at the famous Cotton Club in Harlem. That year I was the press agent for the celebrated song team of Van & Schenck, and for the Silver Slipper, where Gus and Joe were appearing in the heart of Times Square.

Dan Healy was the producer of the floor show at the Slipper, and it was as his guest that I visited Harlem. We were driven there by an affable member of the Slipper mob, Johnny Irish, who had his girl friend with him, the dancing star of the Slipper show, Ruby Keeler, who a few months later became the bride of Al Jolson.

Awful Sad

I can't say that I was too much impressed with the Ellington crew

on that visit. It definitely didn't have the form and the polish that it acquired later, of course. I was bewildered by the elaborate floor revue at the Cotton Club, even then comparable with the top Broadway musicals, and fascinated by the dispatch and lack of commotion with which a belligerent drunken guest was subdued and evicted by the club attaché.

The next time I heard Ellington was three years later on the stage of the Oriental theater in Chicago. That occasion was memorable for the rendition of *Mood Indigo* by the original trombone, clarinet, trumpet combination, Tricky Sam Nanton, Barney Bigard and Artie Whetsol. It never has sounded the same since.

The Duke Steps Out

Duke's opening date for that engagement was Friday the thirteenth, which fixed that date as a lucky one in his normally superstitious mind, for he played that same theater five more times in that one year, with an increased gross business each return. To this day a Friday the thirteenth is his favorite date to make decisions, sign contracts or open engagements.

Ellington's superstitions have not always operated as advantageously as this one. He never has appraised his friends and associates solely on their traits or their merits. An individual usually is regarded as lucky or unlucky to him, depending upon the state of Ellington's fortunes at the time.

Me and You

Thus he often has not enjoyed full advantage of some friendships because those concerned were loyal enough but unfortunate enough to have stayed close to Duke during rugged periods. Others, comparatively less worthy, sometimes have received undue regard because they have been on hand in prosperous times, even though not directly responsible for the good fortune.

Generally speaking, however, Duke, a deeply religious soul, has been singularly loyal to friends and far above average in his devotion to members of his family and to relatives.

Subsequently I was to hear the

fabulous Ellington band on countless occasions, in rehearsals, recording sessions, theaters, one-nighters, and in the Cotton Club during its hey-day. There was the early era in which the Duke had just received general fame, when Paul Whiteman and his arranger, Ferde Grofe, visited the Cotton Club nightly for more than a week, finally admitted that they couldn't steal even two bars of the amazing music.

Ready Eddy

There was the unforgettable night when Ethel Waters stood in the spotlight, with the Ellington band pulsating behind her, and sang, for the first time in public, a song by Harold Arlen and Ted Koehler called *Stormy Weather*. I heard Ed Sullivan introduce Arlen on television the other night, merely as the writer of *Over The Rainbow!* Oh, well.

Then there was that later night at the Cotton Club, when the entire brass section of the Ellington band arose and delivered such an intricate and unbelievably integrated chorus that the late Eddie Duchin, usually a poised and dignified musician, actually and literally rolled on the floor under his table in ecstasy.

Admiration

Duke always has had a penchant for pinning nicknames on those most closely associated with him, usually nicknames that stick. Thus Freddy Jenkins, the little trumpet player who held the uninhibited spot in the band later graced by Ray Nance, became Posey. Johnny Hodges, alto star now out on his own, still is called Rabbit by those closest to him.

The late Richard Jones, Duke's valet for years, jumped out of the call of Bowden, and Jack Boyd, erstwhile manager of the band, whose given name is Charles, for no explainable reason was always just Elmer to the Duke. It was Elmer in turn who dubbed Ellington as Dumpty, and I can't remember when I've called him anything else in direct communication.

It may be a signal honor, but Duke went into a big corporation routine for me, never addresses me nor refers to me except by my first two initials, N.E. Another leader, while playing trumpet for Ellington, won the name which he still uses professionally, Cootie Williams, and there are many other instances.

For favored feminine acquaintances, Duke lapses into the old southern custom of adding May to everything, Daisy May, Evie May, Willie May, no matter if the resemblance to your own given name is very slight. Even the antiquated revolver, toted around in the trunks

possible hold-ups (no one knows who would use it) always has been designated Sweetie May.

Another odd instance of the 13 (Friday or not) superstition in the Ellington make-up comes to mind. It was the year that he was writing, with the collaboration of Henry Nemo and others, the entire score for a Cotton Club show. He had completed twelve songs, but he decided that unless he turned out 13, it wouldn't be lucky.

So he composed a thirteenth song, which strangely enough never was presented as a production number in that show, since the producer and the dance directors already were spinning on their heels with the wealth of Ellington material. But it was played regularly on the nightly broadcasts from the Cotton Club.

It was called *I Let A Song Go Out of My Heart*.

Speaking of song titles reminds me of the amusing go around we experienced with radio censorship about 15 years ago, when we were celebrating Duke's 10th anniversary in music business (and his birthday) with a matinee party at the Cotton Club and a special broadcast to England through the aid of the troupe for years against

facilities of B.B.C.

We had cleared the numbers for the broadcast in customary fashion when this worried girl assistant phoned from the station. They were in serious doubt, it seemed, about the propriety of two of the titles scheduled, *Hip Chick* and *Dinah's In A Jam*.

My efforts to assure her (and the censor board) that the *Hip* in the first title had nothing to do with hips, and that the jam version of *Dinah* was not even remotely connected with pregnancy were unavailing. Since both were instrumental numbers, we switched the titles to more innocuous ones, and played them anyway.

I've often wondered since about the condition of the wigs of the busy radio censors if they ever learned the truth about the significance of such recorded titles as *The Skrontch*, *T.T. On Toast*, *Warm Valley*, and others.

My former staff at *Down Beat* expressed an opinion about me earlier this year, and I quote: "We suspect that he has only one strong musical conviction—that Duke Ellington is the greatest thing that ever happened to American jazz."

They were so right—and still are!

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The Duke Ellington Story

(Jumped from Page 1)
 ing, doing sign-painting by day and gigging with bands by night, to enable him to be married, in July 1918, to Edna Thompson, whom he had known since their grade school days. The following year, Mercer Ellington was born. By 1919, supplying bands for high-class parties, Duke was making from \$150 to \$200 a week. His friends and companions on many early jobs were Otto (Toby) Hardwick, who was playing bass when Duke assembled his first "Washingtonians" in 1917, but soon switched to C Melody sax; William (Sonny) Greer, the flashy drummer who had just come down from Long Branch, N.J., the late Arthur Whetsol on trumpet, and Elmer Snowden on banjo.

In 1922, when Wilbur Sweatman sent for Sonny Greer to join his band, the Washingtonians made their first trip to New York—Duke, Sonny, Toby, Snowden and Whetsol. Sweatman, it turned out, didn't have much work. The result

was the much-reported occasion when the five immigrants had to split a hot dog five ways. There were plenty of kicks, meeting the big pianists of the day at rent parties, drinking in plenty of good music and not-so-good liquor; but finally, when Duke found \$15 lying on Lenox Avenue, he bought three tickets and, with Sonny and Toby, returned to Washington where there would always be work.

Harlem River Quiver
 But in the spring of 1923 Fats Waller stopped off in Washington, talked New York to the men, and before long they were on Lenox Avenue again. They worked first for Ada Smith, whom Europe came to know later as the fabled-brick-top; and through her influence they worked, under Snowden's nominal leadership, at Barron's at 134th street and Seventh Avenue.

Leonard Harper, a Harlem dancer and producer who was then organizing a show for the Hollywood, a basement cafe at 49th and

Broadway, helped to get them the job at this, their first downtown spot. Freddy Guy, formerly band-leader and banjoist at Earl Dancer's Oriental Cafe, took Snowden's place; Duke became the leader; and the Hollywood became the Kentucky Club. The Washingtonians spent four and a half years in this and similar spots, with occasional excursions to New England in the summer, during those rough, hard-drinking days of early prohibition. The Washingtonians were doing well enough; they even made records for such labels as Gennett, Pathe, Harmony, Perfect.

Dicty Glide
 On some of the records Ellington experimented with as many as three saxophones, two trumpets, trombone, piano, banjo, bass and tuba. He cut the familiar blues and stomp forms into simple but original orchestrated patterns. As he enlarged his band, he expanded his ideas for fresh voicing, new guises for old themes. Something approaching an original sound was evolving.

Irving Mills noticed it when he heard the Ellington treatment of *St. Louis Blues*. Mills was a song publisher who got into personal management seriously as a result of his meeting with Duke. Within a couple of months of the encounter the band had recorded for Columbia, Okeh and Victor, had played its first important theatre and one-nighter dates.

Jimmy McHugh, who was writing the scores for the Cotton Club shows, was the man who persuaded the Cotton Club owners to hire the Ellington band. He knew that Duke could do justice to his music. The Cotton Club shows, in those days of Harlem glamor, were lavish productions, the costing budget alone running to \$15,000 a show. Duke was set for the big time.

Cotton Club Stomp
 Although it has often been said that Duke enlarged his band for the Cotton Club, actually he had already increased his personnel to 10 men some months earlier: Bubber Miley and Louis Metcalf on trumpets, Joseph (Tricky Sam) Nanton on trombone; Harry Carney on alto and baritone, Toby Hardwick on alto and clarinet, Rudy Jackson on tenor and clarinet; Duke, Freddy Guy, Sonny Greer and bassist Wellman Braud.

It was during the Cotton Club years that Duke Ellington and His Orchestra acquired their prime identifications—the originality of the music and the tonal color-

ations; the constancy of the personnel, with the new sidemen who were to be Ellington pillars for a decade, maybe two; the flock of records, made when the band had become so much in demand that it recorded for every label under a different pseudonym while actually under contract to Victor. On Brunswick, it was the "Jungle Band"; on Okeh, the "Harlem Footwarmers."

Echoes of Harlem
 Through these records, too, Duke became a big name in many foreign countries where the interest in hot jazz was more intense, more cultist and more effective than in the prophet's own country, where much of his honor was imported from England, France and Belgium. Indeed, it was the critics in those countries who published the first long articles and books, on jazz in general and Duke in particular, that lent an important aura of international prestige to

curial New Orleans clarinet, from 1928 to 1942; Johnny Hodges, peerless in the alto realm, from 1928 to 1951; Lawrence Brown, the Hodges of the trombone, from '32 to '51; Sonny Greer from the very beginning until last year. These are samples of the Ellington sideman longevity that became legendary in the transitional world of jazz. Many who left (most of them to start their own combos) returned after an absence of months or years—among them Ray Nance, Cat Anderson, Harold Baker, Juan Tizol, and singer Betty Roche, who recently came back after eight years away from the band.

Truly Wonderful
 In view of the effect of the current band business situation on his payroll problems, it can't be the money that lures them all back. It's the Ellington legend, their feeling for the man and his music, the sense of belonging that is a part of being one of the Ellington clan.

Inevitably, with the inroad of years, the defections have been more frequent of late. Today Carney alone remains of the 1927 band; Ray Nance joined 12 years ago. Several others, notably Louie Bellson, have received offers of much more than they are earning now, but refused to leave Duke.

Altitude
 At the age of 53, Edward Kennedy Ellington still has the greatest jazz orchestra; the only orchestra respected, and sold prodigiously on records (and sought constantly for personal appearances), in other countries and continents; the only orchestra for which a special tribute such as this *Down Beat* issue could have been assembled, for whom sincere, heartfelt tributes could be elicited from so many men in so many fields, in classical and popular music alike.

Yet Duke Ellington today is a worried man. Despite the fairly substantial income from his songs, he still travels with his band, struggles to keep his men united, still lacks the sponsored radio or TV show to which he should have been entitled for so many years. "I don't think anybody today is interested in who's in the band," he says. "We could have at least eight scale musicians and nobody would notice the difference; instead of which we have the biggest 52-week-a-year payroll in the world. I keep these great men together just because I like to listen to the band myself."

I Didn't Know About You
 We disagree. We think people want to know, and are therefore stating right here and now, that the Ellington personnel today comprises Cat Anderson, Clark Terry, Willie Cook and Ray Nance, trumpets; Juan Tizol, Quentin Jackson and Britt Woodman, trombones; Hilton Jefferson and Russell Procope, allos; Paul Gonsalves, tenor; Jimmy Hamilton, clarinet; and Harry Carney, baritone; Wendell Marshall, bass; Louie Bellson, drums; Jimmy Grissom and Betty Roche, vocals; Billy Strayhorn write-hand man.

"The record situation today is horrible," says Duke, who is on the same label as a dozen big-selling singers. "I don't think it's because the public's taste has declined. It's just that people are so trusting. Americans are accustomed to getting the cream in everything else, why shouldn't they assume they're getting it in music too? So they swallow whatever's being fed them—and I don't know what percentage of the people at

By Dave Garroway

It's a pretty trying task, picking out five favorite Ellingtons, but I guess it's a lot easier than having to pick five I don't like. It seems to me that all Ellington records are part of one magnificent whole. It doesn't make much difference what the titles are . . . it's all one big beautiful sound.

The Blues (from *Black, Brown & Beige*) (Victor)
Dancers In Love (Victor)
East St. Louis Toodle Oo (Victor)
Hi Ya Sue (Columbia)
Trumpets No End (Musicraft)


his domestic reputation.

Much of the rest of the Duke Ellington story can be traced through his own account, starting on Page 1 of this issue, of the principal events that have become its major milestones. The importance of Ellington was something unique in jazz, unique in all of music, during the 1930s, when even the rise of "swing music" as a national fad, of Benny Goodman and Count Basie as national names, could not unseat him from his ducal throne; and in the 1940s, when the similar advent of bebop failed to shake him from his pinnacle. Ellington band and his sidemen have won innumerable awards in the *Down Beat* poll, the *Esquire* poll; more awards in more polls than any comparable figure or orchestra.


Don't Get Around Much Anymore
 A feature of the Ellington edifice that made it incomparable for most of these years was its solid foundation. No earth tremor of dissension ever altered its facade; no economic storm ever shattered its structure. Duke and the men stuck by each other, and Duke's almost unchanging orchestra was the instrument he learned to play so beautifully.

Cootie Williams, who replaced the late Bubber Miley as the "growl trumpet" specialist but proved himself a brilliant all-around hornman, lasted from 1929 to 1940; Barney Bigard, the mer-

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THE Tone Heard 'Round the World

Carney Sole Survivor Of Original Ellingtonians

New York—In the Duke Ellington orchestra on Dec. 4, 1952, there will be one sideman who was with the band Dec. 4, 1927, the night of the original Cotton Club opening that cued the current Silver Jubilee celebrations.

That lone survivor is Harry Howell Carney, who joined the band on alto saxophone in June 1927, switched shortly after to baritone, and has retained to this day his reputation as a peerless exponent of the big horn.

Harry, a Boston lad who had worked with local bands during vacations, was supposed to return to high school after working the summer with Duke. Both Ellington and Freddy Guy had to use all their diplomacy with Carney's parents to get the 17-year-old lad on the road at all, assuring him that no harm would befall their son.

Not the Typical 'Cat'

Their promise was sustained to an extraordinary degree. Carney grew up to be a quiet-living, dependable person with absolutely none of the comic or amoral characteristics conventionally associated with musicians. (Ever since a couple of years after he joined the band, he has been happily married to the same girl and is within sight of his silver wedding celebration.)

Carney is constantly running into people who think he must be much older, though his 42 years hang lightly on him; it's just the quarter-century with the band that conflicts with his youthful appearance.

Harry remembers the first night he played with Duke, at Nuttings-On-Charles, Mass. It happened to be a first night also for his high



Harry Carney

school colleague Toots Mondello, who was debuting with Mal Hallett's orchestra, playing opposite Duke in a battle of music.

Uncertainty

He remembers well the opening night at the Cotton Club and the atmosphere of uncertainty that surrounded the band's status there.

"So many people resented our displacing the band that was there before us, the Missourians—that was the band Cab Calloway took

By Cole Porter

To my mind, Duke Ellington has been perhaps the most important figure in bringing forward indigenous elements in American music.

Through his forceful musical personality and his stupendous musical aggregations, he has taken the music of New Orleans and other American popular music out of the hands of a select coterie of admirers and made it available to the great American public.

*Mood Indigo
Black & Tan Fantasy
Sophisticated Lady
Caravan
Solitude*

over later.

"We used to hang out at the Band Box on 131st street, jamming and playing cards—and we were always running into rumors that the band was on notice."

The rumors resembled the reports of Mark Twain's death. Except for time out in Hollywood to make *Check And Double Check*, the Ellingtonians remained at the Cotton Club incessantly for three and a half years—a healthy location

duration even by 1927 standards. And they doubled and tripled into theatres, shows and various other jobs.

Europeans Hippest

Carney points out that in those days, before records and disc jockeys became major factors, it was the band's sustaining broadcasts that made its name nationally. But records were what made the band world famous; records created European audiences that, in Carney's opinion and that of most of the band, are more selective and intense in their enthusiasm than present day audiences in this country.

Of his own records, Carney has few preferences among the actual Ellington band sides because his role has usually been limited to a chorus at most (*The Golden Feather*, on Musicraft, was a rare exception); but he was very happy with the Ellington-supervised sides for Norman Granz' *The Jazz Scene* album—*Sono* and *Frustration*, both featuring Carney with strings—and with the dates made under his own name for the HRS label.

Spurns Outside Offers

Carney has had only one lengthy vacation in the entire 25 years. When Duke made a European tour without the band in 1948, the Carneys spent the summer in Old

Duke Steps Out

Special award for the Ellington tribute of the year should be given to Damon records, independent label which recently released a cutting by Shanna Crockett of *I Got It Bad And That Ain't Good*. Label lists the composer as Jake Ellington.

Orchard Beach, Maine. But Harry doesn't complain about the infrequency of vacations or even the increasing incidence of one-nighters. Nor does he pay any attention to the offers that come in from other bandleaders. A combination of friendship, security and musical satisfaction have kept him on the job in which he started as Duke's virtual ward and wound up, musically and morally, the firm foundation-stone of the Ellington orchestra. —Tom

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A Duke Discography

Following is a listing, compiled by George Hoefler, of all known records by the full Ellington orchestra made since publication of Charles Delaunay's Hot Discography, plus a few made prior to that time that were not listed by Delaunay.

- SYMBOLS: V—RCA Victor. C—Columbia. CL—Columbia long playing. M—Musicraft. (un)—unissued. *Vocal by Woody Herman.
- 1/4/45 Blue Cellophane V (un)
 - 5/10/45 Prelude To A Kiss V WPT11, LPT 1004
 - 5/11/45 Black And Tan Fantasy V WPT11, LPT 1004
 - 5/11/45 Caravan V 20-3291, WPT 11
 - 5/11/45 Mood Indigo V WPT 2
 - 5/11/45 In A Sentimental Mood V 20-3291, WPT 11
 - 5/11/45 Sophisticated Lady V WPT 11, LPT 1004
 - 5/11/45 It Don't Mean A Thing V WPT 11, LPT 1004
 - 5/15/45 Solitude V WPT-4, WPT11, LPT 1004
 - 5/15/45 I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart V WPTLL, LPT1004
 - 5/16/45 Jumpin' Room Only V 20-4281
 - 5/16/45 Black Beauty V (un)
 - 7/24/45 Perfume Suite—Balcony Serenade V 20-4711
 - 7/24/45 Perfume Suite—Strange Feeling V 20-4711
 - 7/30/45 Perfume Suite—Dancers In Love V 20-4712
 - 7/30/45 Perfume Suite—Calatrava V 20-4712
 - 11/26/45 Long, Strong And Consecutive V (un)

- Mid '46 Prelude To A Kiss V Disc 701
- Mid '46 Ring Dem Bells V Disc
- Mid '46 In A Jam—Down Beat Shuffle Jazz Selection (French) 532"
- Mid '46 Let The Zoomers Doodle—You Oughta Jazz Selection (French) 534"
- 7/9/46 Suddenly It Jumped V 20-3135
- 7/10/46 A Gathering In A Clearing V 20-4281
- 7/10/46 You Don't Love Me No More V (un)
- 7/10/46 My Honey's Lovin' Arms V 20-3135
- 7/10/46 Hey Baby V (un)
- 8/26/46 Back Home In Indiana V (un)
- 8/26/46 Blue Is The Night V (un)
- 8/26/46 Lover Man V (un)
- 8/26/46 Just You, Just Me V (un)
- 9/3/46 Ghost Of A Chance V (un)
- 10/23/46 Diminuendo In Blue M 511
- 11/23/46 Golden Cresc—Sultry Sunset V Disc 742
- 11/23/46 Deep South Suite V Disc 750
- 11/23/46 Magnolia Dripping With Molasses V Disc
- 11/23/46 Hearsay (Or, Orsen Welles) V Disc
- 11/23/46 Nobody Was Lookin' V Disc 759
- 11/23/46 Happy-Go-Lucky Local V Disc
- Early '47 I Can't Give You Anything But Love V Disc 795
- Early '47 It Don't Mean A Thing V Disc
- Early '47 Sophisticated Lady V Disc
- Early '47 On The Sunny Side Of The Street V Disc
- 8/11/47 Hy's Sue C 38234, CL 6024
- 8/14/47 Lady Of The Lavender Mist C 38235, CL 6024

- 8/14/47 Women, Women, Women, C 38576, 1-331
- 9/1/47 It's Monday Everyday C 38165
- 9/1/47 Golden Cresc C 38236, CL 6204
- 9/1/47 Put Yourself In My Place Baby C 37957
- 9/29/47 The Wildest Gal In Town C 37957
- 9/29/47 *Cowboy Rhumba C 38950
- 9/29/47 *I Fell And Broke My Heart C (un)
- 9/30/47 Don't Be So Mean To Me Baby C 38295
- 9/30/47 Antidishabitmentarianism C 38295
- 10/1/47 It's Mad, Mad, Mad C 38295
- 10/1/47 Ya Gotta Crawl Before You Walk C (un)
- 10/1/47 Maybe I Should Change My Ways C 38576
- 10/2/47 Kitty C (un)
- 10/2/47 Brown Penny C (un)
- 10/6/47 Sultry Serenade C 38363
- 10/6/47 Boogie Bop Blues C (un)
- 10/6/47 Stomp, Look And Listen C English B2504
- 10/6/47 Air Conditioned Jungle C 38165
- 10/6/47 Three Cent Stomp C 38237, CL 6024
- 11/11/47 Progressive Gavotte C 38237, CL 6024
- 11/11/47 He Makes Me Believe C (un)
- 11/14/47 Take Love Easy C 38519, 1-266
- 11/14/47 I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me C (un)
- 11/14/47 How High The Moon C 38950
- 11/14/47 Singin' In The Rain C 38464, 1-203
- 11/18/47 Do Nothing Till You Hear From Me C 38363
- 11/20/47 Don't Get Around Much Anymore C 38464, 1-203
- 11/20/47 Once Upon A Dream C (un)
- 11/20/47 It's Love I'm In C (un)
- 12/22/47 I Could Get A Man C 38519, 1-266
- 12/22/47 On A Turquoise Cloud C 38234, CL 6024
- 12/24/47 Liberian Suite—Four Parts C CL 6073
- 12/30/47 A Woman And A Man C (un)
- 12/30/47 The Clothed Woman C 38236, CL 6024
- 12/30/47 New York City Blues C 38235, CL 6024

- 1948 I Like The Sunrise V Disc 858
- 1948 New York City Blues V Disc 871
- 1948 Ellington Mood V Disc 833
- 1948 Air Conditioned Jungle V Disc
- 1948 Anti-Dishabitmentarianism V Disc 843
- 1949 You Of All People C 38606, 1-369
- 1949 Creole Love Call C 38606, 1-369
- 1949 The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise C 30195, 38789, 1-610
- 1949 Joog Joog C 30195, 38789, 1-610
- 1949 (This is taken from old movie soundtrack. Recorded for short around 1927 never before released.)
- 1949 Black And Tan Fantasy two parts Jay 4
- 1949 Good Woman Blues C 1-486
- 1949 On The Sunny Side Of The Street C 1-486
- 1949 B Sharp Boston C (un)

12/19/50 Mood Indigo—Sophisticated Lady C ML 4418

- 5/10/51 The Hawk—Fancy Dan C 39428
- 5/10/51 Jam With Sam—V.I.P.'s Boogie C
- 5/24/51 Ting-a-ling C (un)
- 5/24/51 The Eighth Veil—Monologue C 39496
- 5/24/51 Brown Betty C (un)
- 8/7/51 Please Be Kind C
- 8/7/51 Deep Night C
- 8/7/51 Don't Take My Love C (un)
- 8/7/51 Rock Skipping C (un)
- 12/7/51 The Bend C (un)
- 12/7/51 Tone Parallel To Harlem C (un)
- 12/7/51 Al-Avantin C (un)
- 12/11/51 Quidado C (un)
- 12/11/51 Duet C (un)
- 12/11/51 Something To Live For C (un)
- 12/11/51 Bensonality—Blues At Sundown C 39712



IVIE ANDERSON SANG with Duke from 1932 to 1942, died in 1949 in Los Angeles, was Duke's greatest singer to many.

Counterpoint

(Jumped from Page 8) both his more creative and his sometimes disappointing stages, Duke has always remained himself and any attempts to judge him by contemporary comparisons have been quite hazardous.

It is only recently that I have felt Ellington has lost some of his individuality. His present band is a swinging unit, but somehow it's not immediately Ellington. For the first time it's possible to turn on the radio, hear a record and not be sure right away whether it's Ellington or not.

Won't Last Long

I doubt that this stage, one of many varying resting places in the history of Ellington in jazz, will last very long. Like any supremely gifted creative artist, Duke will have to assert the indelible primaturity of his musical personality on his band eventually, or he will have ceased to be a generative figure in jazz.

As I said, though, it's a lot like tightrope walking to write about Duke during any of his modulations in musical language. It's a lot easier and truer to look over his 25 years of playing an orchestra as his instrument and repeat what you'll read elsewhere in this issue—all of us would have been poorer had Duke not influenced a quarter century of music with the impress of his individuality.

The Duke Sums Up

But the best way to evaluate Duke is to quote a statement made by him in Paris two years ago when he saw a large part of the public there just wasn't digging his band. His statement is a summation of his own achievement in jazz:

"Jazz," said Ellington, "can not be limited by definitions or by rules. Jazz is above all a total freedom to express oneself. If one single definition of this music is possible, that's it."

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The Hot Box

The Odd Adventures Of Ellington Disc Collectors

By GEORGE HOEFER

There have been many collectors of hot jazz who specialized in the records of Duke Ellington, and excluded the work of all other jazz artists from their shelves. These discophiles obtained rare items by other jazz artists to trade for more Ellingtons. Their allegiance to the Duke has been a rare tribute to Edward Ellington's music for many years.

Duke Ellington collecting has been a full, interesting, and exciting activity since the late '20s. Duke and the various small groups attached to his band have been in almost every recording studio in the country now existing and many of those who have become defunct in the last 25 years. An Ellington collection contains close to 100 different labels and 25 or more pseudonyms for studio recording groups definitely identifiable as Duke Ellington and band. There have been such titles as the Harlem Footwarmers, the Washingtonians, Memphis Hot Shots, Six Jolly Jesters, Ten Black Berries, and the Whoopee Makers, to mention a few. Well known Ellington side men like Johnny Hodges, Barney Bigard, Rex Stewart, and others lent their names to many small recording groups whose work was essentially Ellingtonian.

Complications

It has been a consistently fascinating game to follow the recording activities of the Duke. He has made so many different versions of some of his jazz classics such as Mood Indigo and the Black and Tan Fantasy that collecting them

alone becomes an involved game to those bitten by the Ellington bug.

As far as can be definitely established Duke's first recording was made in late 1925 in New York for the Perfect label. The band was under the name of Duke Ellington's Washingtonians and waxed Trombone Blues and I'm Gonna Hang Around My Sugar. Several years ago John Steiner unearthed a nickelodeon roll in an unusual bar in Chicago, owned by a man named Valente, who has made a hobby out of collecting nickelodeons for many years. These ancient curios are on display in Valente's Chicago bar and John borrowed a roll attached to one of the machines. The tune was Jig Walk and the piano sounded enough like Duke to inspire John to forward it to Duke for identification. Ellington confirmed the fact that he had made the roll but was unable to give the exact date. This may have predated the late 1925 recording session by the band.

Hind-mythical Duke

One of the more amusing incidents of the many that have occurred in relation to Ellington's colorful recording career happened back in 1947, when an Iowa hot jazz collector bought a Hindemith album of Ein Kleine Kammermusik. He sat down and listened blissfully to two sides but when the third side started he jumped up in amazement. The music coming out of his machine was undeniably that of Duke Ellington and his orchestra playing a jazz melody unfamiliar to the collector.

A few weeks later the Ellington band played Cedar Rapids and Duke and Barney came out to listen to the side. They couldn't name the tune either. Duke remembered he had written the melody while waiting for a train in Rockford, Illinois. George Avakian of Columbia records finally identified the number as Dusk in the Desert. The error was made on a few albums by mistake in pressing the Hindemith due to a similarity of master numbers. Dusk in the Desert carried master num-

Duke's Story

(Jumped from Page 7)

There was my meeting with the Pope, on my last visit to Europe, when the Pope had a great deal to say to me, but I must have been overawed because later I didn't remember a single thing he had said. There was my private audience with President Truman, whom I found very affable and very musically informed. There was the party in London when I fluffed off the guy who kept asking me to play Swampy River, and then found out he was Prince George. Later that evening the Duke of Windsor (then Prince of Wales) sat in with us on drums and surprised everybody, including Sonny Greer.

Sincerity

There was the time we were playing the downtown Cotton Club in 1937 when Leopold Stokowski came in alone and listened to our band. Later he discussed our music and invited me to attend his concert the next evening, when I heard him conducting the Philadelphia orchestra at Carnegie Hall. But I don't want to go on name-dropping, because what has impressed me most through all these years has been not the renown of these people, but the sincerity of their interest in our music, and the interest of all the audiences who have helped to make our achievements possible. I can best sum it up by saying that the days since that long-ago Cotton Club opening have provided 25 years of eminently happy memories.

ber M651, while the number covering the correct Hindemith work was AM651.

From Duke To Prints

There have probably been several practically complete Ellington collections. Charlie Mitchell of Oak Park, Illinois, up until he moved to China to live, had a complete collection of Ellingtonia. When he lacked one record, an obscure item on a Blu-disc label. He offered a hundred dollars for a copy, any copy. The record was obtained, but the strain of keeping a complete run-down on Duke's recording was too much. He sold the entire collection and moved to China to live, and is now collecting Oriental prints.

Stories and anecdotes relating to Duke and his records could go on forever. Anybody starting out at this time to accumulate a complete Ellington library would have a life's work cut out for him. Many of the more obscure items have found themselves into private collections. There are probably very few out of print Ellington records lying around loose any-

Swingin' The Golden Gate

Duke Excites, Mystifies Without Any Pretention

By RALPH J. GLEASON

San Francisco—We were standing in the lobby during the intermission of Duke Ellington's magnificent concert at the War Memorial Opera House last February talking to Andre Previn. "Duke Ellington is unquestionably one of the four greatest modern composers," Previn said, and listed Stravinsky, Prokofiev and one other, it may have been Milhaud. "Stan Kenton stands in front of a thousand fiddles and a thousand brass, makes a dramatic gesture and every studio arranger can nod his head and say 'oh yes, that's done like this.' But

Huh?

Boston—For the first time a Boston classical critic wrote long and seriously about a jazzman. The innovator was the Herald's Rudolph Elie; the subject was Lennie Tristano. The verdict: "... the Tristano music is interesting and important but lacking in what might be called trajectory."

Duke merely lifts his finger, three horns make a sound and I don't know what it is!

And you know, that's so true. Here we have a man who without pretense, without fanfare and without any fancy packaging whatsoever, has consistently over a quarter of a century produced music that could stand on its own feet anywhere with any one. Duke played several things that evening, I don't even remember their names, but he introduced them casually, lifted his little finger and the most beautiful sounds in the world came from that stage. It was superb.

Greatest Front Man

Sure there have been bad mo-

ments. I remember a horrible week Duke played at the Fox here a couple of years ago. But that was the exception. I also remember a great night at the ballroom on Fillmore street when Duke never left the piano; a magnificent Labor Day weekend at the Palisades; unbelievable concerts; undying records and, bar none, the greatest presence in front of a band in history.

It seems to me that the whole world, not just America jazz musicians, owes a great debt to Edward Kennedy Ellington for what he has given us these past 25 years. Even his early records, which you almost need an adapter to listen to now, still have their moments; the great bands of the 30s and the 40s were without equal and their host of records will give me joy for life. Even when the old band was petering out, with Sonny at his last moments, it was still a great band. How many times have you listened to the Columbia Masterpieces LP? No matter, you'll find something new each time.

As Nat Cole said once, "Duke will always be 25 years ahead. He was doing things ten years ago they haven't caught up to today." Amen. Writing about music is at best a frustrating thing, but these stumbling words are more frustrating because they are only a slight indication of the tremendous respect and admiration I have for the Duke. Long may he live. His music will live forever, the product of true musical royalty—the Duke.

On The Ball?

New York—With the advent of the Silver Jubilee celebrations for Duke Ellington, and the attendant honors such as this issue of Down Beat, his Carnegie Hall concert and numerous other impending nationwide publicity breaks, this would appear to be a banner season for sales of Barry Ulanov's biographical book, Duke Ellington, which was published in 1946 by Creative Age Press but is now owned by Farrar, Straus & Young.

However, a Down Beat representative who called the publisher at presstime was astonished to learn that not only was the company unaware of the celebrations, but also that the book was out of print and there were no plans to reprint it!

Blistex advertisement for relief of cold sores and blisters.

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Strictly Ad Lib

Woody Herman, though he has been recording for his own company, Mars, will slice a dance LP for his former disc company, MGM . . . Herbie Fields will return to records via Coral; he recorded with a big band . . . The Hartford, Conn., Record Festival, held the week of Sept. 29 and sponsored by the Record Industry Association, was successful and will be the forerunner of a series of similar all-music festivals to be held in other cities . . . Nat Shapiro will head a music publisher wing set up by Atlantic Records . . . The Larry Geers retired from the dance band one-nighter promotion business; they operated in Fort Dodge, Ia. . . Former maestro and booker, Barry Winton, has formed his own discery, Rosemay . . . Former Decca recording man, Bob Stephens, is back in the business after years of semi-retirement with his own California-based Vogue Records.

Mario Lanza was served with papers in a suit filed by MGM pictures charging breach of promise and asking \$3,195,888 in damages . . . Les Brown's band will resume with Bob Hope on radio on the evening show when it resumes in November; previously the band was set for Hope's once monthly TV stint . . . Tony Pastor's crew

will fill two weeks vacated by Ray Anthony on the Cafe Rouge itinerary, opening Jan. 12, with Ray now due in Jan. 26 . . . Bernie Mann recorded for Columbia . . . Alvin Stoller is the new drummer with Billy May . . . Radio City Music Hall conductor Raymond Paige was forced to rehire four musicians he fired following a Local 802 action . . . Teddy Napoleon has become Al Martino's pianist . . . ASCAP introduced its new publisher payment system with 55 percent of the pay-off based on performances, a move long ago predicted in *Down Beat*.

SAN FRANCISCO: Freddy Martin inked to play the Mural Room of the St. Francis at the end of October . . . Billy May at the Richmond Auditorium laid a terrific bomb, playing to less than 600 people . . . Red Norvo Trio did excellent business at the Black Hawk; he was followed by Stan Getz, who did likewise . . . Mary Ann McCall worked a month at Fack's with the Cal Tjader quartet.

BOSTON: George Wein's Mahogany Hall seems to be a quick success . . . Dave Brubeck played Storyville week of Oct. 2 with Art Tatum in on the 9th as a soloist sans trio . . . Savoy changed bands on Oct. 10 with Wilbur DeParis' Rampart Street Ramblers trekking in from Ryan's . . . **LONDON:** England's Federation of Jazz Organizations is rudderless after a double-edged sensation. A new bloc of pro-modernists were elected, then found the balloting was not legal. New election will be held in November . . . Bing Crosby made his first appearance before a British audience when he joined Bob Hope in a charity concert at the Stoll . . . Jack Parnell is battling to hold onto his star tenorist, Ronnie Scott, who has eyes to form his own combo.

NEW ORLEANS: Fourth Annual New Orleans Jazz Club concert went off happily on Sept. 28 in the Crescent City (full report next issue) . . . Russ Morgan brought out the SRO sign at the

The Story Of Duke Ellington

(Jumped from Page 15)
The producing end are really interested in what the people want. It's a highly political situation. If one is not well connected, one can lose a lot of loot trying to keep up."

Afro-Carib Ethnics
Duke's views are not all so gloomy. He enjoys finding new talent. He calls Bellson "the most phenomenal musician I've heard in the last five years." He raves about the Chicago organist Les Strand, whom he recorded for his son's Mercer label recently; he's enthusiastic about Shearing and Peterson. He is preparing some new works for his Carnegie Hall concert. As often happens, he has the titles ready before the music; weird titles. *Afro-Carib Ethnics* and *Kissy-Pink Mustache*.

He is the last person in the world you would call unassuming. He assumes (rightly) that false jazz gods have been built who are being worshipped by youngsters whose counterparts 10 years ago would have worshipped Ellington. He knows that true progress in jazz must go along the lines he has shown in the longer works he has written in recent years—*Black, Brown An Beige; New World A-Coming; Blutopia; Harlem; The Tattooed Bride*. He refused to substitute second-hand Stravinsky and mildewed Milhaud for genuinely progressive jazz. But sticking to his beliefs is becoming expensive. He could sit down on his ASCAP income, stay home and write, organize a band just for one three-month concert tour every year and be much better off, physically and financially.

Why doesn't he do it? Because the Ellington Orchestra means as much to Duke as it has to so many of us for so many years. Like us, he just doesn't want ever to be without it.

Roosevelt's Blue Room . . . Fats Pichon will not return to New Orleans this year; enjoying his Caribbean stint too much . . . Johnny Otis and Little Esther package played a jam-packed one-nighter here recently.

CONTEST RULES

Send only ONE ballot. All duplicate votes will be eliminated.

In selecting your band vocalist, vote only for singers currently working as employees of a bandleader. In selecting your singers in the second ("Favorites") section, vote only for singers who are not employed by a bandleader now, but are working as singles.

Every living artist is eligible. Do not vote for artists who are deceased except in the "Hall Of Fame" category, where you may select any artist, living or dead.

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(NOT working as a band vocalist)

Female Singer.....
(NOT working as a band vocalist)

Instrumental Combo.....
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