



BLUE LIGHT

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DUKE ELLINGTON SOCIETY UK
VOLUME 20 NUMBER 3 AUTUMN 2013



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DUKE ELLINGTON SOCIETY UK

<http://dukeellington.org.uk>

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Membership of Duke Ellington Society UK costs £20 per year. Members receive quarterly a copy of the Society's journal *Blue Light*.

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- Victor Lawrance, Treasurer

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DESUk London Social Meetings:

Civil Service Club, 13-15 Great Scotland Yard, London SW1; off Whitehall, Trafalgar Square end. 2nd Saturdays of the month, 2pm. 12 Oct, 14 Dec. For details contact Antony Pepper.
Tel.: 01342 314053; email: ap@antonypepper.com

Manchester Jazz Society:

Meets Thursdays 7:45 pm for a prompt 8:00 pm start at the Unicorn, Church Street, off Oldham Street, M4 1PW
Contact: Eddie Little: 0161 881 3995
Email: tmonk52@hotmail.com

Sheffield Jazz Society:

Meets fortnightly at 1.45 pm on Mondays at Meersbrook Park United Reformed Church, Chesterfield Road/Beeton Road corner
Contact: Edmund Gregory: 0114 230 3742
28 Oct: 'Strayhorn by Strayhorn and Others' – Roger Boyes

TDES (New York):

Meets Wednesdays. St Peter's Church, Lexington Ave at 54th St, NYC, 7.30pm. For information contact Roger Boyes

Chris Addison, DESUK's Publicity Officer, is appealing to members to give him contact details for jazz and other music societies that they are aware of in their local area. He will then make contact to tell them of our existence, perhaps offer an Ellington-themed presentation, and encourage their supporters to join us.
Contact details above.

BLUE LIGHT

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Editorial

The very first issue of *Blue Light* I received when I joined DESUK in 2002 contained a transcription of the famous interview with Duke Ellington conducted by Charles Melville. Referring to the hiring of Louie Bellson and the inclusion in the repertoire of *Skin Deep*, *The Hawk Talks* 'and so on', Melville asserted that people asked, "What's Duke trying to do – a glorified Woody Herman or something?"

We have two major essays this issue which discuss that period of Duke's career. On page 14, Brian Koller and Roger Boyes look at a new three compact disc set on the Acrobat label which includes previously unreleased recordings and on page 11, David Palmquist shares his researches into Duke's work and travels during that era which, amongst other blows to the band business, saw the rise of television and the gradual dismantling of the public transport system which served the ballroom circuit. These articles will help you to reach your own conclusions whether this era really was a sort of 'Caldonia in excelsis'.

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*The photograph on the back
cover shows Ivie Anderson with
Duke Ellington and his Famous
Orchestra from the Frank Driggs
Collection.*

Thank you for the many kind words about my first edition as Editor of *Blue Light*. Despite thorough proofreading, the occasional error can still slip through – most conspicuously, the auto-correct function managed to sabotage my attempts to render accurately the Society's Latin motto on the front cover. Member John Postgate was 'dismayed' but in compensation, there is always consolation for any typing errors in terms of the sheer quality of our contributors whose work I am fortunate enough to be co-ordinating. For this issue, for example, it has been my pleasure to correspond with Steven Lasker whose article beginning on page 7 comprises his latest contribution to Ellington scholarship.

I was assembling the final pages of this issue when news reached me of the death of Vic Bellerby, former Chairman of DESUK whose membership number was 001A. We shall remember him with a tribute in the next edition.

Ian Bradley

Eastbourne Again...

Eastbourne Borough Council has decided to commemorate the final officially issued Ellington concert 40 years on with another ducal *Eastbourne Concert* at the same venue, the Congress Theatre.

Pete Long's Echoes of Ellington will headline the commemoration on Saturday 30 November 2013, with alumnus Vince Prudente as a guest artist. The theatre's website says:

As well as being one of the major composers of the century, Duke Ellington made a colossal contribution to the world of popular song and was one of the great piano players in jazz. He was uniquely equipped to become a most effective bandleader with a deep understanding of humanity which permeated every aspect of his work, and marks him out as arguably "the best thing to happen to twentieth century music".

On this, the fortieth anniversary of his final concert in Eastbourne, Echoes of Ellington will recreate the great man's distinctive sound using original music and period instruments. Led by jazz soloist, band-leader and arranger Peter Long, this talented band will reveal the sheer strength of Ellington's music, which continues to energise both performers and audience alike.

The show begins at 7.30pm. Tickets are priced at £18 and £20 Price inclusive of £1 per ticket booking fee. Telephone 01323 412000 or email theatres@eastbourne.gov.uk

It should be quite a night, and there are plans for activities during the day as well.

It is still open to us and the DESUK membership to furnish Andy Tourle, Events Co-ordinator of Eastbourne Borough Council, with any other ideas to celebrate Duke on the day – all right, I know it was 1 December 1973 but what's a day among friends? Were you present? Can you contribute perhaps to the programme notes? Should Pete do *Tiger Rag* and *Hello Dolly* as per 1973 when we know he has a magnificent repertoire of transcriptions of the heavier stuff possibly more befitting the occasion? What, if anything, should DESUK do now and on the day? Let us know. **GS**

ELLINGTON 2014: AMSTERDAM 14 - 18 MAY

The contours of the Ellington conference in Amsterdam (14-18 May 2014) are becoming clearer (writes **Louis Tavecchio**). The program is not yet definitive, but it will probably comprise the following elements:

Presentations/lectures by the authors of four recent books about Ellington: Terry Teachout (his book will be published in November), Matt Cooper (his book on Ellington the pianist will be published this fall), David Schiff (*The Ellington Century*), and Harvey Cohen (*Duke Ellington's America*). Following the individual presentations, the authors will discuss Ellington the man and the musician, and share their views with the audience.

A performance by the Big Band of the Amsterdam Conservatory under the direction of David Berger. They will perform one (or more) larger works by Duke, possibly *Black, Brown & Beige*.

A new arrangement of *Such Sweet Thunder*, to be performed by Calefax, the famous Dutch Reed Quintet. Matt Cooper will give a piano recital of Ellington compositions.

A performance by Dutch violinist and jazz award winner Oene van Geel and his group, inspired by *Duke Ellington's Jazz Violin Session*, Paris 1963 (with,

amongst others, Ray Nance, Stephane Grappelli and Svend Asmussen).

There will be, of course, an 'open call' to Ellington scholars and enthusiasts to give presentations or lectures. Ken Steiner will be among the Ellington scholars making a contribution.

The above programme is provisional and new elements are likely to be added in the next weeks and months. In the meantime, we will keep all of you posted. We hope to launch the website with more (definitive) information in September/October.

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Louis would greatly welcome expressions of interest in attending (and presenting) from DESUK members. As always, it is vitally important to ascertain delegate numbers at the earliest possible stage of the organisation of an Ellington conference. **GS**

Putney Dandridge... Ellingtonian?

By Steven Lasker

The following was sent to DEMS the week before Sjef Hoefsmit passed away:

Out of the blue, Dan Weinstein called me with his observation that the scat vocalist on *Goin' Nuts* (by The Six Jolly Jesters, Vocalion 15843/29Oct29) sounds exactly like Putney Dandridge's vocals on his records of *When I Grow too Old to Dream* (Vocalion 2982/25Jun35) and *With Plenty of Money and You* (Vocalion 3399/1Sep36). Dan is a quintuple-threat professional musician (trumpet, trombone, tuba, violin and vocals) with a vast knowledge of old jazz records and an excellent ear. Yet another reason to consider his suggestion seriously: Listings in the Chicago Defender's issues of 19Oct29 to 23Nov29 (see *A Cotton Club Miscellany*, p17) show that Putney Dandridge was part of the then-current Cotton Club revue alongside Duke Ellington's orchestra and two of the four Washboard Serenaders: Harold "Blinkie" Randolph and Teddy Bunn. (Bruce "Washboard" Johnson probably also took part.)

So who is the scat vocalist on *Goin' Nuts*? Having listened carefully to vocal recordings made at other sessions by five of the Jolly Jesters (Cootie Williams, Freddie Jenkins, Harold Randolph, Teddy Bunn and Bruce Johnson--no shortage of vocal candidates among these Jesters!), I find myself in complete agreement with Dan: The vocalist on *Goin' Nuts* is none other than Putney Dandridge (13Jan02-15Feb46 per Chilton's *Who's Who of Jazz*).

The opinions of others are, as always, invited....

OBITUARY

Jean Bach

Jean Bach, who died in New York on 27 May, was a great Ellington enthusiast and a loyal supporter of and participant in the Ellington conferences, including European ones held in the UK (Oldham and Leeds), and Scandinavia (Copenhagen and Stockholm).

A committed New York City resident – ‘it ruins you for any other place’ – , Jean grew up in the Middle West, in a comfortable, Gatsby-esque background full of music and parties. She attended the upmarket girls’ college Vassar, a short train-ride from Harlem, where she spent a lot of time at the Apollo, a strong formative influence. Eventually she dropped out of Vassar.

Back in Chicago, she knocked on Duke’s dressing-room door during the Ellington Orchestra’s residency at the Congress Hotel in 1936. She told him he and Stravinsky were her favourite composers. Duke replied, ‘I’m jealous of Stravinsky,’ and a lifetime friendship ensued. She attended all but one of Duke’s performances at the Sherman in the autumn of 1940. Jean was at the Victor session at which the Ellington-Blanton duets were recorded. ‘Come around. I have a novelty – a bass player who plays in tune’, Duke had told her.

Bobby Short told Whitney Balliett of *The New Yorker* in 1983: ‘What drew me to Jean was not only her love for Duke Ellington but the fact that she could sing note for note Ben Webster solos and Cootie Williams solos and Johnny Hodges solos...she *knew* Ivie Anderson, my idol...’ She was ‘by far the most elegant and beautiful and sharply intelligent person I had ever met’.

Jean’s marriage to Gene Krupa’s trumpeter Shorty Sherock ended in 1945, but in 1948 she met and married Bob Bach, a TV producer, and became a radio producer herself. With her knowledge of the music, her unrivalled connections and her endless enthusiasm, she also became a fixture on the New York jazz scene. The parties at her Greenwich Village home were legendary.

After Bob’s death in 1985 she acquired Milt Hinton’s home movie of the making of Art Kane’s celebrated 1958 photograph *A Great Day In Harlem*. For this more than fifty jazz musicians had gathered in front of a Harlem brownstone house on East 126th Street at the unlikely hour, for them, of 10 a.m. One of them observed: ‘I never realised there were *two* ten o’clocks in a day’. Jean’s fascination for the photograph, which had hung in Bob’s office, led her to make her own eponymously titled film, supplementing Milt’s footage by interviewing surviving participants. It appeared in 1994 and it won awards.

A second film made in 1997 used outtakes from *A Great Day In Harlem*. It revealed Dizzy Gillespie to be the innocent fall guy for the spitball incident which led to Cab Calloway firing him. His section-mate Jonah Jones owned up to being the perpetrator.

Jean’s awareness of the privileged life she had led resulted in a paperback book of folk wisdom sold in supermarkets: *200 Ways To Conquer ‘The Blues*. Among many other little homilies she advised: ‘don’t leave your bed unmade’.

The presence of committed enthusiasts like Jean, with her detailed knowledge of the New York scene and of the inner workings of the Ellington Orchestra, was a key element in the mix that made the annual Ellington conferences unique.

She’s irreplaceable.

Jean Bach, b 27 September 1918, d 27 May 2013

Roger Boyes

Tony Adkins

At the end of the first day of Ellington’89, my first American conference, I walked alone across the open space of the Washington Mall from the Museum of American History towards the Metro station. In one direction was the floodlit Capitol, in the other, the floodlit white pillar of the Washington Monument. Few people were about, and huddled, shrouded figures of the homeless had settled down on the grass to spend another night under the stars. It put me in mind of the Calcutta *maidan*. The station entrance was closed, dark, so I went round the corner to the Independence Avenue entrance. Here I fell in with four other conference attenders who were also making their way home, Tony and Jean Adkins and their friends, Bob and Doris Rickles. Deep in conversation, we travelled together into the north-western suburbs. It was the first time I’d met Tony, and I became the

grateful recipient of taped excerpts from his recordings of this conference and two earlier ones in Oldham, with his pithy commentaries. We renewed acquaintance at subsequent conferences, right down to London in 2008.

When it became my turn to organize one, in Leeds in 1997, I was strongly urged to invite Tony to be my sound engineer; this was the work he'd done professionally for the BBC. I'm happy to say he accepted. Tony and his assistant Arnie Chadwick took charge of this crucial aspect of the conference, and both were masters of a technology about which I knew nothing. The sound, for the daytime programme and for the concerts, was in the two safest pairs of hands I could have wished for. I am saddened to learn that this astute, laconic Lancastrian has died, and I shall always remember him with affection and gratitude.

Roger Boyes



FORUM

I send my congratulations on the appearance of your first edition. May there be many more. There is a great deal to mull over.

In your editorial you call for 'nuggets of Ellingtonia' and I wonder if the following might qualify.

I have a copy of Caracol CAR-430 (LP) that contains a live recording from San Remo on 22 March 1964. There have been other similar releases on LP and CD. All have been issued as by "Duke Ellington's Jazz Group" and that is how every discography I have seen describes the band. It is absurdly wrong. Who, with any knowledge of Ellington, would suppose that he would make up such a title? If you listen to Duke's introduction, you will hear him say "Giants Group" - a much more fitting title.

In his comments on the Fresh Sound release of Ellington with Coltrane / Hawkins [page 15] Roger Boyes comments on the omission of *Solitude* from "the original LP and the Impulse"[CD]. However, the previous impulse! [sic] CD release, produced by Michael Cuscuna, IMP 11622, did include it - and a fine production it was.

Kind regards and good wishes,

Ron Malings (173A)

OH, WHAT FUN IT IS...

There's really no mystery here (*Black, Brown and Neige in BL 20/2*).

Duke Ellington and his orchestra recorded "Jingle Bells" for Columbia Records on two occasions.

Master CO67173 was recorded 6/1/61, the last title in a session at Columbia's 30th Street studio that went from midnight to three a.m. It was released before Christmas 1961 on a budget album, "Christmas with the Big Bands" (Harmony [US/C] KH32552). The other tracks on the LP are by other artists. This version of "Jingle Bells" has been reissued on CBS(H)88654 and Franklin Mint FM 4001/02.

Master CO67173 (REMAKE) was recorded 6/21/62, the last title from another session held at Columbia's 30th Street studio that went from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. It was released before Christmas 1962 on "Jingle Bell Jazz" (Columbia [US/C] CL1893/CS 8693), a compilation LP by various artists. This version has been reissued on CBS(H)88654, CBS(Eu)62991 and Columbia CK-40166.

Steven Lasker

*Oh, dear. I was sure the title had not appeared until the CBS French 'blue albums'. The irony remains though, that the exchange I quoted from the film parallels - to an extent - the critical reception Duke Ellington's music received in some quarters: the comparison with European Classical music where Ellington was accused variously of either falling short in some way or overreaching himself. The recording of **Jingle Bells** at a session for a Parisian-themed album was a conjunction I could not resist pointing out. **IB***

LEND ME YOUR EARS

My congratulations on a lovely *Blue Light 20/2*. Many very interesting articles.

As to Michael Kilpatrick's question on page 5 I have the following comment.

When a recording with an arrangement that called for a very short sound effect from an instrument normally not available within the band or with nobody free to handle the instrument they had to bring in someone from the outside. Think of Charlie Barnet on *Moonlight Fiesta* from June 16, 1937, with the maracas. Normally it would be too expensive to bring in a professional musician for just a bar or two and also there may never have been time for it.

So in this case of *Sonnet For Caesar* I think it was the band boy handling the cymbal.

I remember when Mercer Ellington and the band paid a visit to Stockholm in the 1990s and late one evening they got time for a recording in a studio at the Swedish Radio. One number called for an extra percussionist and the band boy had to move in. (As far as I know those recordings have never been released.)

Bo Hausman

Donations to DESUK May, June & July 2013

On behalf of the Society I would like to thank John Davies, P. D. Robson, Stuart Emerson and Colin Baker for their generous donations.

With regret we report the deaths of members Klaus Kaempken (268L), Roger Carter (092L), Vic Bellerby (001A) and John Hunt (412A). We extend our condolences to their family and friends

Victor Lawrance, Treasurer and Membership Secretary.

Dating Duke and Edna's Breakup – and the Infamous Slashing Incident

by Steven Lasker

In *Blue Light* 20/2, Terry Teachout dates the incident that resulted in the scar to Ellington's left cheek to 1929. Edna reportedly slashed Duke with a razor in revenge for an affair he was having, supposedly with Fredi Washington. Mercer Ellington, in *Duke Ellington in Person* (p47), wrote, "The cause of my parents separating had really been a torrid love affair Pop had had with a beautiful and talented woman, an actress." Fredi was all of those things. Ellington, Fredi Washington, and the members of Ellington's orchestra worked together in the film *Black and Tan* which was filmed during August 1929. Mercer is alleged to have said: "It was no secret that she [Washington] and my father had been involved, during and after the making of the film *Black and Tan*," which would seem to date the slashing incident to that year. Mercer's alleged quote is found on page 131 of Donald Bogle's book *Bright Boulevards, Bold Dreams* where it is sourced as from A.H. Lawrence's *Duke Ellington and His World*, yet the quote is nowhere to be found in Lawrence's book, nor in Mercer's, which is frankly screwy. (Even had I found the quote in Lawrence's book, I still wouldn't have believed it: In my opinion his book includes so many outright fabrications as to constitute a serious disservice to Ellington studies. For more on this subject, see DEMS 01/2-4.)

That the wound which produced the scar actually predates 1929 is evidenced by a photo of the band from 1928 in which the scar is faintly visible. The personnel depicted and the holly wreath seen in the background date the photo to the Christmas season of that year. This photo has been published at least twice before, in David Bradbury's *Duke Ellington* (p25) and in Harvey Cohen's *Duke Ellington's America* (p41). This is the only photograph I've ever seen of the band with both Bubber Miley (who Cohen misidentifies as Cootie Williams) and Johnny Hodges. I am fortunate to own an original print of the photo, which is cropped here to show Ellington's head alone.

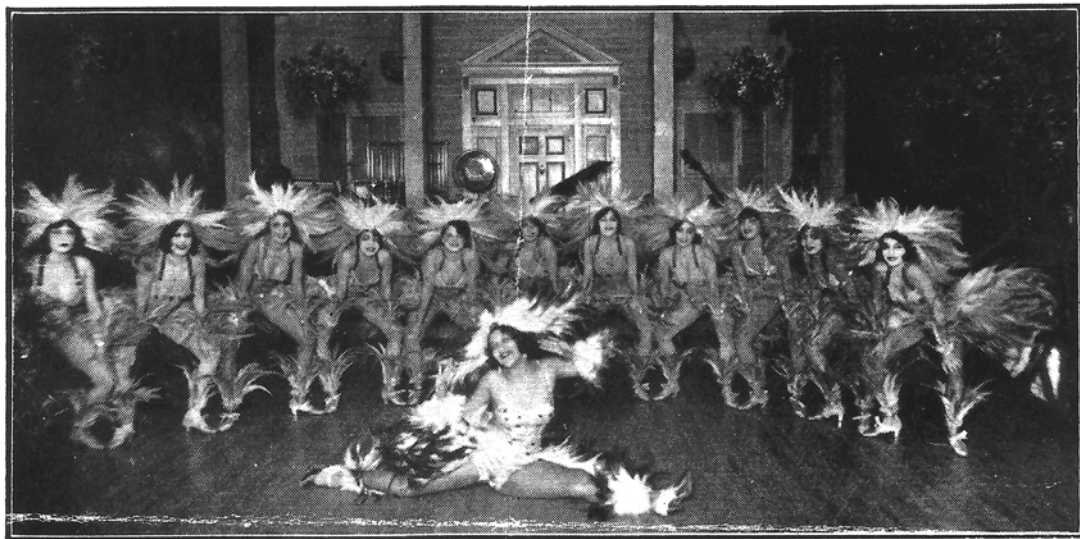


Now, don't you suppose that had Ellington ever shown up at the Cotton Club with a ghastly slash or a large bandage on his cheek, there would be reports about it, if not in the contemporary press, at least in the form of gossip, perhaps surfacing years later, from band members, dancers, Irving Mills, Jimmy McHugh, audience members – somebody? The apparent absence of any such report suggests that perhaps Ellington's cheek wound was sustained prior to his debut at the Cotton Club on December 4, 1927.



Standing (l-r): Joe Nanton, Arthur Whetsel, Harry Carney, Fred Guy, Wellman Braud, Barney Bigard, Freddie Jenkins. Seated: Johnny Hodges, Sonny Greer, Bubber Miley. Holding baton: Duke Ellington. Christmas season, 1928. Photo by Bert Roberts.

Whilst neither Bradbury nor Cohen identifies the location of the photograph above, it is the stage/dance floor of the Cotton Club, with Ellington and his musicians positioned in front of the bandstand – note the risers on the floor behind them. That this is actually the Cotton Club is established by comparison with the photo reproduced below – which originally appeared on the cover of the printed program for the revue *Springbirds*, which opened at the club on March 31, 1929 – and a film clip from late 1930 that can be viewed at www.britishpathe.com/video/duke-ellington



Researchers have made great efforts to reconstruct the band's itinerary for these early years, but the dates from September 8 through October 9, 1927 are mysteriously blank except for October 6th, when the band recorded in New York for Victor. Was Duke slashed during this period? Was he staying out of the public eye until his face was no longer an inflamed and sorry sight? Ellington would have been advised by his doctor(s) to keep his wound clean as it healed, especially given the far higher mortality rate from bacterial infections that prevailed in the era before antibiotics. Makeup applied to a fresh wound might have resulted in an infection, or an uglier permanent scar, and in any case wouldn't completely conceal any stitches – assuming, as I do, that stitches were necessary. For these reasons, Ellington would have been well advised to lie low and take it easy while the wound healed--which brings to mind a title he composed and on January 19, 1928 recorded for the first time, *Take It Easy*.

Mercer doesn't date his parents' breakup precisely, but in his book notes (on p18) they were together as late as the summer of 1927 when he accompanied his parents and the Washingtonians on their New England tour. I can't recall any credible account that places Duke and Edna together subsequent to that.

(There is, however, one account that is not credible: A.H. Lawrence, in *Duke Ellington and His World*, alleges [on pages 134, 135 and 409] that Edna slashed Duke during the summer of 1928, and that Duke recovered at a time when the band was on vacation from the Cotton Club. As evidence, Lawrence supplies a quote he attributes to Sonny Greer that strikes me as an invention, its falsity revealed by reference to the period press items reprinted in *A Cotton Club Miscellany* which document that Duke Ellington and his Orchestra played the club continuously that summer. In actuality, the band didn't get any vacations much less absent themselves from the Cotton Club for any significant length of time until 1930.)

The band's 1927 New England tour ended on September 7th, at which point Duke and Edna returned to New York, while Mercer

presumably returned to Washington D.C., his grandparents, and school. If Duke, who'd been away from New York since June 20th, had a special someone there who wasn't his wife and with whom he yearned to reconnect, don't you suppose he would have arranged their reunion within days of his return, which was on or about September 8th?

Given the known facts and circumstances, I believe it likely that the infamous slashing incident, which resulted in the breakup of Duke and Edna, occurred in mid-September 1927.

Ellsworth Reynolds rejoined the band from October, 10, 1927 until early 1928. Besides playing violin, his duties included conducting, which leads me to suspect that the real reason for his being hired was to draw audience attention away from Duke while the latter's cheek healed. Unfortunately for historians of Ellingtonia, Reynolds didn't address that topic in the several accounts he left of his days with the band, one account being a piece that appeared in the February 1967 issue of *Jazz Monthly*, three others being in the form of letters (copies held here) sent to Frank Driggs (undated), Peter Carr (dated December 17, 1976) and Frank Dutton (dated July 15, 1978). While Reynold's memory of the 1920s was less than perfect in these accounts, particularly in matters of chronology and dates, his observations are still of great interest. Reynolds was originally hired by Ellington in April 1926 to play violin with the band at Ciro's, a night club at 141 W. 56th Street, and the Lafayette Theatre, venues where the band filled in for Leroy Smith's orchestra. Because Ellington's men were required to play the same arrangements as Smith's orchestra, which featured its leader on violin, Ellington added Reynolds, who stayed on with the band for at least part of their next engagement, at the Plantation on Broadway at 50th Street which lasted from May 25, 1926 into late June or early July. Fifteen months later, Reynolds rejoined Ellington for the shows *Jazzmania* and *Dancemania*, which lasted, with interruptions, from October 10 until December 2, 1927. He continued with the band at the Cotton Club into 1928. In his letter to Driggs, Reynolds recalled

that "I was engaged to rehearse the show music and conduct. All nightclubs had full shows in those days, one or two stars, comedians, dance team, line chorus, etc. and tricky show scores – not that Duke couldn't have done the job, and well too – but he was wrapped up in composing new tunes, arrangements looking far ahead into the future and it would have taken up too much of his time sitting through rehearsals (doctoring up the show scores for cut-outs, new bars added, change in tempos, etc.). In those days most leaders attended all show rehearsals to watch out for various changes so that when the band was called in for rehearsals sometimes only for a dress rehearsal – the leader was well prepared to cue the orchestra for changes, additions, etc. I'm only surmising this about Duke, because even during a show rehearsal, he would be in a corner or dressing room composing and arranging numbers for the band to feature. I guess I was his man Friday. ... after two months [at the Cotton Club] Arthur "Sheef" [sic] Whetsel, Duke's original 1st solo trumpet replaced me and Duke decided to conduct." In his article for *Jazz Monthly*, Reynolds similarly recalled that he was at the Cotton Club for two months when he was replaced by Whetsel, but in his letter to Peter Carr he recalled working at the club for only one month: "Duke really didn't need me for his own music, but he didn't like the boredom of rehearsing dancers and acts and especially conducting from a theatre pit.... In early January '28 I left the band and before I left, Barney Bigard (tenor) entered."

Duke Ellington recalled (in the course of a 1971 BBC radio show talk with Stanley Dance quoted in Stuart Nicholson's *Reminiscing in Tempo* on pages 69-70): "Originally I had engaged a violinist who was accustomed to conducting shows, and all the – that was a normal picture in those days, the violinist is standing up, conducting the orchestra for the show, and I found out that I was more familiar with shows with my experience at the Kentucky Club than he was, so I put the piano around in the middle, conducted from the piano."

How does one explain the near-absence of the scar in so many later photos? Brooks Kerr confirms that Ellington regularly used makeup,

a common practice among stage folk then and now. In the course of his long career, Duke must have used enough of the stuff to fill buckets.

The only other recent publication of the revealing photo which graces the dust cover of Terry Teachout's *Duke* was in the book which accompanied 1999's 24-CD boxed set *The Duke Ellington Centennial Edition: The Complete RCA Victor Recordings*. Those who compare the two reproductions will notice that the RCA book shows Ellington's left ear, which is cropped off the cover of *Duke*, but the scars on Duke's face (more than one, actually) are nearly absent from the RCA book, BMG's art department having used some sort of photoshop airbrush effect to lighten and lessen them. The source of the image for both publications was a souvenir programme printed for the occasion of Ellington's January 21, 1951 NAACP benefit concert, held at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City, at which event *A Tone Parallel to Harlem* was premiered. I am fortunate to own a copy of this rare programme – I don't know of any other copies – which doesn't contain photo credits or even a copyright notice. (I've never encountered an actual print of this photo, which I cannot believe met with Duke's approval. Can anyone report such a print – or tell us who took the photo?)

I was able to share this essay with Terry before *Duke* was printed, but it came at such a late stage in the book's production that he was only allowed to make changes that didn't affect the line count, so the optimal solution of inserting and deleting whole paragraphs wherever he liked was no longer available to him. He did, however, manage to insert a source note that cites this article as from *Blue Light* 20/3. Terry comments: "I think this is just right – am most glad to have it in the archival record exactly like this." He's a fan of *Blue Light*, incidentally. Among the acknowledgements found in the afterword to Terry's book is this: "I have also profited greatly from the efforts of the Duke Ellington Society UK, which are published in its own quarterly journal, *Blue Light*."

Take a bow, team DESUK.

DUKE'S ITINERARY

by David Palmquist



I've been researching Duke Ellington's itinerary, building on the summary compiled by Klaus Götting for his own use, but which he has willingly shared with those who asked for a copy. M. Götting's summary encompasses the earlier published itineraries (Stratemann and Vail), thirty years of DEMS entries, discographies, books, etc. and runs well over 100 pages. Yet there are still gaps, and it's fun to try to fill them.

For instance, the 4 March 1949 *Amarillo Daily News* tells us:

"Dance fans from over the Panhandle area will gather at the Nat tonight for a session with the one and only Duke Ellington. The Duke arrived last night from Albuquerque, where he completed an engagement Wednesday night. Yesterday evening, according to Clarence Jackson, manager of the Nat, the hall was nearly sold out..."

This short article yields two previously undocumented appearances, but leads me to a review in the 5 March edition, giving an idea of what it was like:

"THE DUKE A HIT: ELLINGTON'S MAGIC MUSIC KEEPS FANS BUNCHED AT THE STAND

"The Ellington appearance at the dance last night took on something of the atmosphere of a concert. Couples would start dancing and somehow before the number was half over they drifted up to the bandstand until only a half dozen or so were left dancing. Then the orchestra would start a fast-rhythm number and the audience would start dancing again. But the interest in technique always won out, and eventually

the crowd would be at the bandstand again.

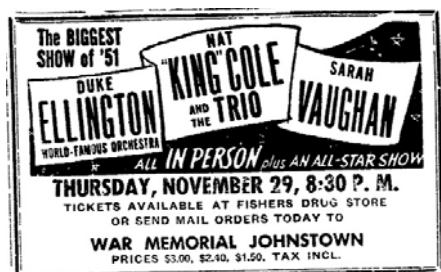
"The lower floor of the Nat was filled to capacity and the upstairs was comfortably filled...Music for the evening included everything from Danny Boy to the hottest boogie-woogie, all performed in the inimitable Ellington Style. With Ellington astuteness, solos were cleverly fitted to the particular numbers. Junior Raglin, conspicuously placed, was an eye-and-ear full with his brass (sic) fiddle."

The Nat Dine and Dance Palace, originally called The Natatorium, had a castle-like façade and was a converted indoor swimming pool along Route 66. In its heyday, The Nat employed as many as 52 staff.

We know the band worked its way back from Los Angeles to Chicago between 28 February (Million Dollar Theatre) and 14 March 1949, (Blue Note).

Probably the same web search revealed a previously unknown gig in Oklahoma City.

The *Ada Evening News*, Ada, Okla., 10 March 1949, said: "Dominic Vietta and Wayne Tolen, who attend East Central State College, spent the weekend in Oklahoma City where they attended a performance given by Duke Ellington and his Orchestra." That was most likely March 6, since Vail has the band playing a dance at the Zebra Room in Tulsa on the 5th.



Tantalizing mysteries arise. The missing dates for *The Biggest Show of 1951* are an example.

On 21 September 1951, Ellington began a tour booked by the Moe Gale Agency. This was an entertainment extravaganza featuring Ellington and his orchestra, Sarah Vaughan and Nat King Cole with his trio. Others were Marie Bryant and her dance troupe, Stump and Stumpy, Patterson & Jackson, Peg Leg Bates and Timmie Rogers. The show was initially set for three weeks with additional dates pencilled in, subject to cancellation. The 6 October edition of *Billboard* said, however, it was now a go-ahead to run until the end of November, that it would probably run through the South and part of the Midwest, and it would not go west of the Rockies.

I believe the show was performed about 70 times, of which the following are now known:

1951 09 21	Friday	Boston, Mass.	Boston Garden
1951 09 22	Saturday	Boston, Mass.	Boston Garden
1951 09 23	Sunday	Boston, Mass.	Boston Garden
1951 09 24	Monday	Worcester, Mass.	Memorial Auditorium
1951 09 25	Tuesday	Providence, R.I.	Auditorium
1951 09 26	Wednesday	Troy, N.Y.	Armory
1951 09 27	Thursday 8:30 pm	Newark, N.J.	Mosque Theatre
1951 09 28	Friday (2 shows)	New York, N.Y.	Carnegie Hall,
1951 09 29	Saturday (2 shows).	Norfolk, Va.	Municipal Auditorium
1951 09 30	Sunday (2 shows).	Richmond, Va. .	Mosque Auditorium
1951 10 01	Monday	Baltimore, Md.	Colosseum
1951 10 02	Tuesday	Philadelphia, Penn.	Arena
1951 10 03	Wednesday	Philadelphia, Penn.	Arena
1951 10 04	Thursday	New Haven, Conn.	Arena
1951 10 05	Friday	White Plains, N.Y.	Westchester County Center
1951 10 06	Saturday	Springfield, Mass.	Municipal Auditorium
1951 10 07	Sunday (2 shows)	Montreal, P.Q.	Montreal Forum
1951 10 08	Monday	Ottawa, Ont.	Auditorium
1951 10 09	Tuesday	Kingston, Ont.	Community Auditorium
1951 10 10	Wednesday	Toronto, Ont.	Maple Leaf Gardens
1951 10 11	Thursday	Kitchener, Ont.	Memorial Auditorium
1951 10 12	Friday	London, Ont.	London Arena
1951 10 13	Saturday	Buffalo, N.Y.	Memorial Auditorium
1951 10 14	Sunday 8:30 pm	Syracuse, N.Y.	Onondaga County War Memorial
1951 10 15	Monday	Rochester, N.Y.	Edgerton Park
1951 10 16	Tuesday	Cleveland, Oh.	Main Arena
1951 10 17	Wednesday	Cincinnati, Oh.	The Gardens
1951 10 18	Thursday 8:30 pm	Charleston, W.Va.	Municipal Auditorium
1951 10 19	Friday	Pittsburgh, Penn.	Arena
1951 10 20	Saturday 8:30 pm	Scranton, Penn.	Sports Arena
1951 10 21	Sunday (2 shows).	Washington, D.C.	National Guard Armory
1951 10 22	Monday	Roanoke, Va.	Municipal Auditorium
1951 10 23	Tuesday 8:30 pm	Richmond, Va.	Mosque Auditorium (return engagement)
1951 10 24	Wednesday	Raleigh, N.C.	
1951 10 25	Thursday	Columbia, S.C.	Municipal Auditorium
1951 10 26	Friday	Atlanta, Ga.	City Auditorium **
1951 10 30	Tuesday	Houston, Tex.	
1951 11 10	Saturday	St. Louis, Mo.	Convention Hall
1951 11 11	Sunday	Kansas City, Mo.	Municipal Auditorium
1951 11 12	Monday 8:30 pm	Des Moines, Ia.	KRNT Theatre
1951 11 15	Thursday	Ann Arbor, Mich.	University of Michigan
1951 11 16	Friday	Troy, Ind.	Hobart Arena
1951 11 17	Saturday (2 shows)	West Lafayette, Ind.	Purdue Hall of Music
1951 11 18	Sunday	Chicago, Ill.	Civic Opera House
1951 11 19	Monday	Davenport, Ia.	Masonic Auditorium,
1951 11 20	Tuesday 8:30pm	Rochester, Minn.	Mayo Civic Auditorium,
1951 11 22	Thursday	Milwaukee, Wisc.	Milwaukee Arena,
1951 11 25	Sunday	Detroit, Mich.	Olympia Stadium,
1951 11 26	Monday 8:20 pm	Canton, Oh.	Canton Memorial Auditorium,
1951 11 27	Tuesday 8:30 pm	Toledo, Oh.	Toledo Sports Arena
1951 11 28	Wednesday (2 shows)	Columbus, Oh.	Memorial Hall
1951 11 29	Thursday	Johnstown, Penn.	Cambria County War Memorial Arena

** A racial incident in Atlanta was mentioned in a blog about Nat King Cole but I was unable to confirm the show played there until Nick Fernandez tracked it down.

There, Jim Crow reared his ugly head. Auditorium management enforced a long-unobserved state law requiring racially separated entrances for public meeting places, and police told the Afro-American patrons they had to use the back door. The *Baltimore Afro-American* reported about 1,000 people tore up their tickets in protest but "more than 4,000 crowded in to see and hear Duke Ellington, Sarah Vaughan and Nat (King) Cole" and "there were 1,500 white record fans with a great big section all to themselves."

The *Baltimore Afro-American* quotes the local promoter as saying he had no advance knowledge of the door arrangements which were new to Atlanta. The arena manager "readily admitted that he made the arrangement, but he was acting on the orders of the City Council Auditorium Committee." The article goes on to say the white members with Ellington and Cole were allowed to perform, contrasting with Birmingham, where the Police Commissioner told white musicians they could not play on a stage with coloured musicians.

In his liner notes to the Hep CD *Duke Ellington and His Orchestra at the Crystal Gardens - 1952*, Andrew Homzy quotes Louie Bellson:

"After I was in the band for a couple of months, Duke said, 'We're going to make a tour down South to do a show with Sarah Vaughan and the Nat 'King' Cole Trio.' I said, 'OK,' and he said, 'Do you know what that means?'"

I was puzzled, so Duke said, 'I can't find another drummer who can do what you do, so I'm going to make you a Haitian.' And I said, 'I'm ready to play music, no matter what.' So I became a fair-skinned Haitian, and I stayed with the band wherever we went."

I've seen nothing to indicate the entourage had any nights off so I believe there were more performances on some or all of these dates:

1951 10 27 Sat	1951 11 03 Sat	1951 11 09 Fri
1951 10 28 Sun	1951 11 04 Sun	1951 11 13 Tue
1951 10 29 Mon	1951 11 05 Mon	1951 11 14 Wed
1951 10 31 Wed	1951 11 06 Tue	1951 11 22 Thu
1951 11 01 Thu	1951 11 07 Wed	1951 11 23 Fri
1951 11 02 Fri	1951 11 08 Thu	1951 11 24 Sat

There seems to have been an undocumented performance in San Antonio between October 29 and November 3. I can find no ads or reviews for it, but two San Antonio papers mentioned it on November 4. One said a local lawyer gave a cocktail party for Ellington and his orchestra "last week," and another talked about the horrible acoustics during their performance, again, "last week."

Here's another mystery I spent quite a while trying to track down without success. The *Zanesville Signal* (Ohio) 5 January 1945 datelined Cambridge, announced Vaughn Monroe entertained the troops at Fletcher General Hospital the previous night. This was the "fourth of such affairs at the hospital, previous entertainment having been furnished by Duke Ellington, Freddie Slack and Jackie Heller" (emphasis mine). Ellington's performance would have been between the summer of 1943, when this army hospital first admitted patients, and November 1944, the last time Ellington was in the midwest before the article was written. The Ohio Historical Society was unable to locate anything, but I bet it's mentioned in the hospital's newsletters, if those ever turn up.

It's also fun to reconcile differences between Stratemann and Vail or to flesh out what they wrote.

Stratemann, p. 346, has the band at State College of Iowa in Ames from May 15 to 18, 1952. I wondered what the nature of the engagement was - vaudeville, dance, concert, several concerts, what? Vail just says on the 15th Duke Ellington and his Orchestra opened a three-day engagement there, and on the 17th says they closed.

The event was the college's Veishea Festival, its homecoming weekend. Lots of gossip columns in papers from nearby towns said who was going to Veishea, but I found nothing about Duke. When I wrote to the college, the archivist sent me a copy of the souvenir programme for the 1952 Veishea festival. I think the turn-around time from enquiry to answer was one working day (I wrote on Friday and received a reply Monday or Tuesday), with hard copy arriving in the mail a few days later.

It transpires that Veishea is huge, attended by high school students and adults from all over the state. The program has our guys playing an open-air concert at 7:30 the first night, followed by a dance in the nearby ballroom at 9:00. The second night they were to play a dance at 9:00, and they performed the last dance of the weekend, too, Saturday, at 8:30.

Oddities arise too. For instance, why was the Biggest Show advertised to start at 20 minutes after the hour in Canton? Weird!

This research leads me down many paths, allows me to read about historical events as current affairs, and forces me to learn a bit of American geography.

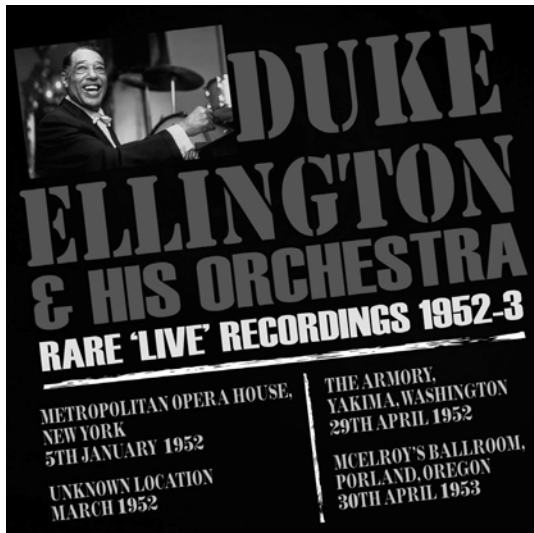
It takes time, but it's fun and gives me something to fill my days with now I'm retired. My thanks to Carl Hällström, Ken Steiner and Klaus Götting for getting me started.



On Record

The reviews by Graham Colomé, Dave Jones and Brian Morton are reproduced with the kind permission of the Editor of *Jazz Journal*.

DUKE ELLINGTON RARE 'LIVE' RECORDINGS 1952-3



CD1: (A): The Hawk Talks (3:12); Frustration (5:02); Sultry Serenade (4:12); Sophisticated Lady (6:47); Perdido (5:06); I Got It Bad (4:06); Harlem (14:35); Take The "A" Train (1:57); V.I.P.'s Boogie/Jam With Sam (7:15); Monologue (Pretty And The Wolf) (3:24); Blues At Sundown (3:29); Skin Deep (8:06); Medley: Fanfare, Don't Get Around Much Anymore, In A Sentimental Mood, Mood Indigo, I'm Beginning To See The Light, Prelude To A Kiss, It Don't Mean A Thing, Solitude, I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart/Don't Get Around Much Anymore (7:55). (75:50)

CD2: (A): Tulip Or Turnip (5:29); Basin Street Blues (6:50). (B): Primping At The Prom (2:34); Johnny Come Lately (2:55); Time On My Hands (5:17); Moonstone (3:11); Margie (3:46); Chelsea Bridge (5:18); Midriff (3:41). (C): Phalanges (4:28); V.I.P.'s Boogie (3:11); Solitude (5:31); Summertime (4:25); My Little Brown Book (3:56); Ballin' The Blues (3:30); The Hawk Talks (6:40); Take The "A" Train (4:52); Happy Birthday To You (0:46). (76:20)

CD3: (C): Ting-A-Ling (4:05); Sophisticated Lady (6:45); C-Jam Blues (5:27); Passion Flower (5:48). (D): Happy Go Lucky Local (5:47); Summertime (2:32); Warm Valley (4:47); Sultry Serenade (4:15); Hy'a Sue (8:24); Sophisticated Lady (5:57); Things Ain't What They Used To Be (8:33); The Hawk Talks (3:30); C-Jam Blues (5:34); Tenderly (4:06). (75:30) (A): Cat Anderson, Willie Cook, Clark Terry (tp), Ray Nance (tp, vn, vcl); Quentin Jackson, Juan Tizol, Britt Woodman (tb); Jimmy Hamilton, Russell Procope, Willie Smith, Paul Gonsalves, Harry

Carney (reeds); Duke Ellington (pn, arr.) Wendell Marshall (b), Louie Bellson (d). Jimmy Grissom, Betty Roché (vcl). Metropolitan Opera House, NYC, 5 January 1952. (B): as (A). Unknown location date, March 1952. (C): As (A), but Hilton Jefferson replaces Willie Smith. The Armory, Yakima, Washington, 29 April 1952. (D): As (C), but Rick Henderson repl. Jefferson and Butch Ballard repl. Bellson. Betty Roché is absent. McElroy's Ballroom, Portland OR, 30 April 1953.

Acrobat ACTRCD9033

Liner notes are by Paul Watts. These recordings are released from tapes compiled during the 1950s and 1960s by Ken Ackerman and archived by the San Francisco Traditional Jazz Federation. Beginning in 2006, Bill Carter and Dave Radlauer of the SFTJF converted the old tapes to digital media. They appear to have minimal mastering, and as a result, there are significant differences in volume during titles. Tape hiss is sometimes evident.

The 5 January 1952 concert at Metropolitan Opera House in New York City is complete except for two titles between *Blues At Sundown* and *Skin Deep*, which are *Do Nothin' Till You Hear From Me* and *Once There Lived A Fool*. Both missing performances include vocals by Jimmy Grissom. Only one title, *Basin Street Blues*, was previously issued, though tapes of the concert have long circulated among collectors. The liner notes omit *In A Sentimental Mood* from the medley but it is nonetheless present on the CD.

The March 1952 concert was held at an unknown location on the West Coast. This release contains the first seven of the 27 titles known from that concert. *Primping At The Prom* and *Midriff* are previously unreleased. Track 2-5 is listed as *Moonstone* but is *Time On My Hands*. The error is reversed on Track 2-6, however, both tracks are present. Surprisingly, the concert has never been fully issued, and its discography is in disarray. I list the titles of the concert below with what I consider to be the best issued source for each title:

Primping At The Prom: Acrobat ACTRCD9033 (CD); *Johnny Come Lately*: Acrobat; *Moonstone*: Acrobat; *Time On My Hands*: Folkways FJ 2968 (CD); *Margie*, Acrobat; *Chelsea Bridge*: Folkways; *Midriff*: Acrobat; *Bensonality*: Folkways; *The Tattooed Bride*: Folkways; *Just Squeeze Me*: uniss.; *Once There Lived A Fool*: Skata 502 (LP); *Blues At Sundown*: Stardust 201 (LP); *Do Nothin' Till You Hear From Me*: uniss.; *Janet/Cotton Tail*: Folkways; *Mood Indigo*: Folkways; *Caravan*: Skata 502; *Moonlight Fiesta*: Stardust; *Love You Madly*: Folkways; *I Got It Bad*: uniss.; *Take The "A" Train*: uniss.; *Deep Purple*: uniss.; *Lady Of The*

Lavender Mist: Skata; *How High The Moon*: Skata; *On The Sunny Side Of The Street*: Folkways; *Fancy Dan*: uniss.; *One O'Clock Jump*: Stardust; *Take The "A" Train*: Stardust.

The rest of CD2 and tracks 1-4 of CD3 include all known titles from 29 April 1952 in Yakima, WA at The Armory. *VIP Boogie*, *My Little Brown Book*, *The Hawk Talks* and *Take The "A" Train* are previously unreleased. *Phalanges*, arranged by Louie Bellson, makes its sole appearance within the Ellington discography. The piano introduction for *Summertime* appears at the end of CD2 track 12 and is repeated at the beginning of track 13.

The 30 April 1953 event was held at McElroy's Ballroom in Portland. This release contains 10 of the 46 titles known. A majority of the dance date has been released on the readily available Laserlight 5CD boxset *Happy Birthday, Duke!*, including all of the titles on the present issue (CD3 tracks 5-14). The Laserlight boxset is well mastered and I prefer its sound quality, though some purists will favour this Acrobat issue since it includes more Ellington stage announcements and lacks the slight echo introduced by the Laserlight CD sound engineer.

Brian Koller

Since virtually none of the programme of the January 1952 Metropolitan Opera House concert has ever appeared commercially before, the first CD is of great importance. This fine 14½ min. *Harlem* is the second known live performance; the first was at the previous year's concert in the same venue. This is the earliest known version of *Perdido* in its 1950s incarnation, as the Clark Terry vehicle it remained throughout his tenure, and it is interesting to hear which of Clark's little formulae on the piece were present right from the start. It's also the first commercial issue of Betty Roché's *I Got It Bad*, and she sings it well. Three other Roché versions survive from 1952, but none of them has been made available, even where other material from the same engagement has. She makes liberal use of a little vocal hiccup which Sathima Bea Benjamin turned into something of a 'trademark' mannerism years later. Many versions of the Carney showcase *Frustration* survive, spanning the years 1944 to 1960. All those I've ever heard are impeccably played, and this one is no exception.

The Hawk Talks is the drums feature Louie Bellson brought with him from the Harry James band. At over six minutes, the version on CD2 from the Yakima Armoury is much longer than the three-minute one from the Met. on CD1, or the one on CD3. This is entirely due to a protracted, some will say interminable, ad lib drums excursion from Louie which needless to say whips the audience into a frenzy. At this time *The Hawk Talks* was yielding to *Skin Deep* as the feature for drums solo, so it's good to have the full-length version on CD2, which clearly reflects its composer's intention. Unfortunately for enthusiasts who approach any protracted ad lib drums excursion with dread, you get another one further on in the programme of CD1, where *Skin Deep* itself has its second surviving airing by the Ellington Orchestra.

'*A' Train* is abruptly cut, eight bars into the first orchestral chorus, and Mr Watts' notes in the inlay booklet mention, and to some degree describe, a 'rogue'

(his word) '*A' Train*, positioned between *I Got It Bad...* and *Harlem* and also cut short after about two minutes. It is impossible to identify this as it has been suppressed from the CD, though the *Manhattan Murals* version, very much in active use in these years, is an obvious possibility. But there's no point in speculating without hearing it. I'm not convinced by Watts on the point, and as he relies on Tom Lord's general discography and not the specialists, *New DESOR* and Timner, there's much that could be done to try to tease out the truth, with the help of these works and the music itself. Also, there are inconsistencies at this point of the programming between Timner (4th Edition) and *New DESOR*. It may be that Timner's 5th Edition, to which I do not have access, will reconcile these.

CD2 opens with two Ray Nance vocals displaced from CD1, and with them there's a lot of stage business involving Ray for you to use your imagination as to what antics he's up to. It moves on to music from two 1952 dancehall dates. From the March one we have the first seven tracks, beginning with a decapitated but beautifully poised *Primping At The Prom*¹, and including three Strayhorn classics from 1942-43. *Chelsea Bridge* is the full three-chorus score as Billy conceived it. *Midriff* has special interest because it dates from quite soon after Lawrence Brown's departure from the band. Britt Woodman, very off-mike, takes over the trombone break which precedes Lawrence's chorus, but Lawrence's solo itself is entrusted to Ray Nance. *Johnny Come Lately* also has Britt in Lawrence's old slot in the release of chorus 1, and Quentin Jackson takes Tricky's old solo in chorus 2. *Time On My Hands* is the feature for Jimmy Hamilton's clarinet which you may know from other 1950s versions. Contrary to what the inlay note states, *Moonstone* is a Hamilton composition and arrangement, and it's a rarity. This version, one of only two known, features Willie Cook. The other was cut for the curious SESAC session of March 1959; solo honours then were split between Jimmy and Shorty Baker.

Margie is even rarer. The 1935 Brunswick recording has been seldom reissued, though it should be familiar to 1930s specialists (an earlier version from 1932 was never issued at all). This one, the only other known *Margie* by the Ellington Orchestra, has half-chorus solos from Clark Terry and Paul Gonsalves.

The rest of CD2 and tracks 1-4 of CD3 have everything we know of from the Yakima Armoury dance date of 29 April. Much of the music from both these dates was issued long ago on obscure LPs, but all of it is new to me. Space prevents me from going into the details. Bellson's boppish *Phalanges* spotlights Clark Terry as well as the drummer. The *Sophisticated Lady* on CD3 is the version featuring Carney on bass clarinet, which we heard Duke starting to announce at the Met. concert on CD1 before correcting himself, presumably when he saw Willie Smith coming towards the microphone. It crops up again on CD3. With Hodges no longer in the band in 1952, to whom would Duke turn to deliver *Passion Flower*? You can find the answer on CD3, track 4.

The balance of CD3 has two chunks, ten tracks in all, from the copious 1953 McElroy's material. All ten, and many others, appeared in Laserlight's *Happy Birthday*

series of five CDs, so CD3 is of less interest than the first two, if you have those issues; the music itself is excellent of course, and it includes Paul's wonderful reading, in the absence of the departed Hodges, of *Warm Valley*. It had recently been committed to disc in one of Duke's earliest recording sessions for Capitol.

A regrettable omission from this Acrobat set is an indication of the length of either individual tracks or of the three CDs collectively. I've pencilled into the inlay booklet my own readings taken from my CD decoder, and I've added these here to each track title, for information. They include introductory announcements and applause (sometimes lengthy), fore and aft of each title.

Despite signs of sloppiness in the annotation (Brit Whitman!), this is a welcome issue, especially for the previously unissued Met. concert, and for the long unavailable excerpts from the spring 1952 dance dates. This Acrobat compilation is a valuable further addition to the coverage of this intriguing year of change and transition on other recent issues, from Hep (reviewed in *BL* 18/4) and Candid (reviewed in *BL* 19/3). If you have all three (and you should), you'll be well equipped to refute those who argue that by 1952 Ellington was a spent force.

Roger Boyes

⁴If you're a stickler for accurate detail, ferret out your copy of *BL* 18/4, turn to page 11, and amend my short list of recorded *Primpin's* as follows: DE5204a 21/3/52: replace 'unissued' with 'Acrobat ACTRCD903'.

DUKE ELLINGTON
BLACK, BROWN AND BEIGE
BUFFALO PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
cond. Jo Ann Falletta

Harlem (orch. Maurice Peress). *Black, Brown And Beige* (Suite) (orch. Peress) – *Black; Brown; Beige*. *Three Black Kings* (Ballet) (completed by Mercer Ellington) – *King Of The Magi; King Solomon; Martin Luther King*. *The River* (Suite) (orch. Ron Collier) – *I The Spring; II The Meander; III The Giggling Rapids; IV The Lake; V The River*. *Take The 'A' Train* (Strayhorn, arr. Ellington (78:30)

Recorded at Kleinhans Music Hall, Buffalo NY, 9-11 May 2012. Soloist on *Three Black Kings*: Sal Andolina (clarinet and alto sax). Soloists on *'A' Train*: Sal Andolina (alto), Tony Di Lorenzo (trumpet), Amy Licata (violin).

Naxos (American Classics) 8.559737

Duke composed *Harlem* at the invitation of Arturo Toscanini, the conductor of the NBC Symphony Orchestra, who was commissioning a programme of orchestral portraits of districts in New York. Thus, a symphonic approach was integral to the work from the start. That said, it remained largely the preserve of the Ellington Orchestra until 1963, when Duke recorded it with the band plus the strings of the Paris Symphony Orchestra for the critically acclaimed Reprise album *The*

Symphonic Ellington. An earlier re-recording than this new one on Naxos is by Simon Rattle with the CBSO (*Classic Ellington*, on EMI Classics, 2000). Perhaps surprisingly, I prefer Rattle's reading to this new one. It seems fierier and jazzier, and it brings off the all-important sanctified feel of the churches theme better. It was orchestrated by Duke's usual orchestrator-for-strings, Luther Henderson, but I don't think that makes much difference. I've heard it at least twice at the Albert Hall Proms, and I don't feel that the strings add much to the piece as realised by the Ellington Orchestra. Both Rattle and Falletta must yield to Duke's 1963 reading, replete with authentic Ellington voices, and free of the closing drums extension which now seems obligatory. Comparisons aside though, it is good that forty years after Duke's death top-drawer conductors are applying their interpretative skills to his music.

Maurice Peress told the story of his suite from *Black Brown And Beige* in his 2004 book *From Dvorak To Duke* (reviewed in *BL* 12/4, p11), and earlier (1993) in the *Black Music Research Journal*. It is a project he had discussed with Duke, who had approved, making specific suggestions. Titling it *Black Brown And Beige* is somewhat confusing. Peress's suite reduces Duke's monumental work to a pared-down *Black* in three movements which on the CD follow each other without pause. The first focusses more on the opening fanfare theme than on the *Work Song* theme itself, with inevitable loss of *gravitas*. The second, slow movement addresses the spiritual themes, and is largely based on *Come Sunday*. Peress makes prominent use of Duke's allusion to *Swing Low Sweet Chariot...*, with its echoes of Dvorak's *New World* symphony. The third movement has elements of scherzo and finale. It draws extensively on another Ducal reference back, to his own *Riding On A Blue Note*, before returning to the opening fanfare and *Come Sunday*.

Duke was composing *Three Black Kings* on his deathbed in the Harkness Pavilion, and it fell to Mercer to complete it after his father died. Maurice Peress attributes the orchestration to Luther Henderson, though Luther is not credited here. The work was intended as an elegy for Martin Luther King, assassinated in 1968, who is the third black king of the title; the others are Biblical, Balthazar of the Magi, and King Solomon. Duke was inspired to write it by a stained-glass window of the Magi in the Basilica De Santa Maria Del Mar in Barcelona, where he was performing a Sacred Concert.

A four-note figure, initially presented on harp, pervades *King Of The Magi*. Its bustling, repetitive character, interspersed with brief pauses, suggests long travel, and a broad contrasting episode perhaps refers to the events at the nativity before the start of the journey home. Harp and solo violin introduce *King Solomon*. A peaceful calm prevails, until contrast comes with a leisurely *bossa*-flavoured episode. Peace returns, eventually segueing into *Martin Luther King*, a stately, sombre progress leading to a closing point of quiet renunciation. It is easy to imagine Ellington visualising his own imminent funeral procession and laying to rest as he was writing this final piece.

The River is a five-movement suite from the ballet which Duke composed for Alvin Ailey in 1970, orchestrated by Ron Collier, a Canadian composer and conductor who had collaborated with Ellington in 1967. Ailey described his own fraught collaboration with the itinerant Maestro in his autobiography *Revelations*. Duke never saw the ballet. Nine sections were issued on one of the ten 'stockpile' CDs released in at the end of the 1980s. *The Spring* is a full minute longer than in Duke's version for solo piano with bass, and in its mid-section at least, a rather more substantial watercourse than a spring. Duke's recording of *The Meander* is by contrast over a minute longer than Collier's orchestration, which dispenses with the piano solos with which Duke frames it, while retaining the flute solos. *The Giggling Rapids* is perhaps the ballet's most familiar movement, and Collier's orchestration hews closely and convincingly to the spirit of Duke's original. At seven minutes *The Lake* is by a considerable margin the longest section, both in Collier's suite and in Duke's original. It must have been difficult to score, since it derives much of its propulsive force from Joe Benjamin's bass, an approach not easily replicated orchestrally. Falletta takes the closing blues, *The River*, at a decidedly brisker tempo than the one Duke set in 1970, perhaps not to the music's advantage. *The River* crops up elsewhere in the Ellington discography, as *Riba* and as *Mainstream*.

Take The A Train has trumpet, alto sax and violin solos, after an introduction which imitates a steam locomotive – incongruously perhaps for a piece celebrating a New York subway line. The arrangement is attributed to Ellington; which one is not specified. It seems slight compared to such extended *A Trains* as *Manhattan Murals* (Carnegie Hall 1948) and the one on *Ellington Uptown*.

Peress conducts his versions of *Harlem* and the *BBB Suite*, plus *Three Black Kings*, on a 1990s CD, Musical Heritage Society 5168303. I don't know it, and I'd like to hear how his readings compare with Falletta's. The Naxos CD's notes offer brief profiles of the orchestra, the conductor, and Duke. They quote Mercer Ellington on the origin of *Three Black Kings*, and Duke on the five movements from *The River*. I've always seen this work as Duke described it, a sequence paralleling the growth of a river with the span of human life, so I'm not convinced by the annotator's attempt to present Collier's suite as a tone-poem about the Mississippi. Duke is also quoted on *BBB*, but as his remarks relate to the work as performed in 1943, they are irrelevant here and will confuse listeners coming to this music for the first time. The assertion that '*A' Train* was a rallying call to duty in World War Two is news to me.

As long as you don't have an aversion to hearing Duke's music scored for symphony orchestra you'll certainly find this Naxos CD of interest. The inclusion of Duke's final composition, *Three Black Kings*, greatly adds to its value.

Roger Boyes

JAMES SPAULDING PLAYS THE LEGACY OF DUKE ELLINGTON

*Take The 'A' Train; In A Sentimental Mood; *Come Sunday; *Caravan; *I Love You Madly; *(I'm Just A) Lucky So And So; **Sophisticated Lady; *It Don't Mean A Thing.* (41:45)

James Spaulding (as, ss, fl, picc), Steve Nelson (vb), Cedar Walton (p), Sam Jones (b), Billy Higgins (d), Mtume (perc). NYC, 1-2 December 1976. *add Avery Brooks (vo). **Spaulding, Jones, Higgins only. **Storyville 101 8423**

James Spaulding recorded with Mercer's Ellington band shortly after Duke's death which occurred just a couple of years before these sessions. Spaulding, having also recorded with both Louis Armstrong and Sun Ra, had the wide frame of reference to play the Ducal music with respect but also with a contemporary accent. And that's what happens on the first two tracks where on alto and soprano the melodies are given due value and improvisations from Spaulding, Nelson and Jones are of appropriate quality.

Things come unstuck on *Come Sunday* where the dour vocals of one Avery Brooks sandwich a double-time alto excursion which has no connection with its surroundings. Brooks is back and unswinging in *Caravan*, spoiling some lively piccolo from the leader which has enthusiastic backing from Higgins and Mtume. "This is so exciting," sings Brooks with a total lack of conviction and his rendering of *Love You Madly* is hardly an improvement. The next track suits him a little better and he was indeed "a lucky so and so" to be invited to participate in these sessions which would have undoubtedly benefited from his absence. (This was his only recording in a jazz context). Some fairly raw and involved soprano points up the lack of emotion in the singing.

As Alun Morgan's original notes indicate, *Sophisticated Lady* is the high spot – six minutes of absorbing flute with the barest of accompaniment and (what a relief) no vocal. Given Ellington's use of Norris Turney's flute a few years earlier, he would certainly have made good use of Spaulding if given the opportunity. Brooks talks through the verse on the concluding track and is followed by wailing alto from the leader which underlines how good this programme might have been if he'd trusted his own talents and not brought in a vocalist whom Storyville haven't listed in the personnel and whose identity has to be deduced from perusal of the notes. It's also a pity, in view of the Ellington connection, that pianist Cedar Walton is kept well in the background.

Graham Colombé

TERRI LYNE CARRINGTON MONEY JUNGLE: PROVOCATIVE IN BLUE

Money Jungle; Fleurette Africain (sic); Backward Country Boy Blues; Very Special; Wig Wise; Grass Roots; No Boxes (Nor Words); A Little Max (Parfait); Switch Blade; Cut Off; Rem Blues/Music (62:26)

Carrington (d), with Christian McBride (b), Gerald Clayton (p), Robin Eubanks (tb), Tia Fuller (as, fl), Antonio Hart (fl), Nir Felder (g), Arturo Stable (perc), Shea Rose, Lizz Wright, Herbie Hancock (vo), Clark Terry (tp, vo), Gabriella Jimono Caldas (kyb). NYC, 2012.

Concord Jazz CJA 3402602

Terri Lyne Carrington is an award-winning drummer, composer and bandleader, who on *Money Jungle* has chosen her sidemen very wisely. Particularly in the funky, hard-swinging, and yet delicate pianist Gerald Clayton, who sounds like the perfect match for Carrington's detailed and yet powerful drumming. In fact, the trio on this record sounds so good that listeners might be left wondering why she found it necessary to add so many additional sidemen (excellent as they are), particularly as the album is intended as a tribute to Duke Ellington's original 1963 (*recte* 1962) trio recording *Money Jungle*.

The track list is similar to Ellington's original, with the notable exception of *Warm Valley*, *Caravan* and *Solitude*, which have been replaced here by originals by Carrington and Clayton. Judging by Carrington's treatment of Ellington's originals here, it seems a shame that the above three tracks weren't also covered.

Money Jungle opens with Carrington's melodic solo drum introduction together with a spoken-word observation about capitalism; the track is peppered with clips from speeches by Martin Luther King Jr., Bill Clinton and Barack Obama. *Fleurette Africaine* has a spoken word/scatting contribution from Clark Terry and Clayton's feather-like piano interjections are complemented by delicate horn harmonies from Eubanks, Fuller, Hart and Clark Terry. Vocalist Lizz Wright adds subtle colouring to the tastefully funky *Backward Country Boy Blues*, and bassist McBride complements Carrington and Clayton throughout the album, offering great solo contributions along the way, notably on *Wig Wise*.

The album concludes with *Cut Off*, a fine Clayton original, where he makes numerous melodic references to Ellington's *Solitude*, followed by *Rem Blues/Music* where Herbie Hancock quotes Duke Ellington. The quality of the recording enhances this fine set, which because of its musical detail makes a great listen on a good pair of headphones.

Dave Jones

MARK LOCKHEART ELLINGTON IN ANTICIPATION

It Don't Mean A Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing); My Caravan; Come Sunday; Jungle Lady; Take The 'A' Train; Azure; Uptown; Creole Love Call; Beautiful Man; Mood Indigo; Indian Summer (58:02)

Mark Lockheart (ts), Finn Peters (as, fl), James Allsopp (cl, bcl), Emma Smith (vn), Liam Noble (p), Tom Herbert (b), Sebastian Rochford (d). London, May 2012.

Subtone ST802

It's great when musicians do the critic's job for him, or make the critic's job unnecessary. "Anticipation" is precisely the right word for this music, its guiding mood and principle. With the Ellington material, one's kept guessing and on the edge of recognition. A simplified (but is it?) line for *It Don't Mean A Thing*, a beautifully camouflaged 'A' *Train*, and a witty reworking of *Caravan* within an original theme of the saxophonist's own devising. It's a measure of his familiarity with and affection for this body of work that I momentarily mistook *Uptown* for something of Duke's too.

The band is of intriguing size and heft. It has all the intimacy of a small combo, but even without brass the three available horns (with Allsopp often providing foundational stuff) offer weight and texture. Smith isn't used to pour Ray Nance syrup on the material; she's a tough rhythmic presence. Noble brings, yes, nobility to the music, and the other rhythm guys are all over what apparently began as a student (dance?) project but which has clearly evolved through careful rehearsal. Herbert ends the set with a line of his own; again *Indian Summer* might well be some forgotten sketch of Duke's.

Lockheart's contribution to the recent Kenny Wheeler/Norma Winstone/London Vocal Project recording *Mirrors* was a timely reminder of just how good he is, but I was impressed here as well by Peters, who might have been tempted to go down a rabbit-hole after Johnny Hodges, but instead keeps his parts clear and above ground without losing any of their magic. Anticipation is an element of the experience of surprise and this album creates the disconcerting sense that you know what the next note or harmonic shift will be, only to be proved delightfully wrong. Faultless.

Brian Morton

SCOTTISH NATIONAL JAZZ ORCHESTRA IN THE SPIRIT OF DUKE

Black And Tan Fantasy/Creole Love Call; In The Hall Of The Mountain King; Jack The Bear; Le Sucrier Velours; Daybreak Express; Concerto For Cootie; Harlem Air Shaft; Prelude To A Kiss; Sepia Panorama; Ko-Ko; Morning Mood; Anitra's Dance; The Single Petal Of A Rose; Kinda Dukish & Rockin' In Rhythm; Sunset And The Mocking Bird; Diminuendo In Blue-Wailing Interval-Crescendo In Blue (72:50)

Tommy Smith (ts, director); Ryan Quigley, Cameron Jay, Tom MacNiven, James Marr (tp); Chris Greive, Phil O'Malley (tb), Michael Owers (btb); Ruairaidh Pattison, Martin Kershaw, Konrad Wiszniewski, Bill Fleming (reeds); Brian Kellock (p), Calum Gourlay (b), Alyn Cosker (d). Recorded live on Scottish tour 24-28 October 2012.

Spartacus STS017

Gunther Schuller rehearsed – and won – the arguments about the artistic merit of recreating Duke Ellington's original charts in concert a generation ago. This new album by the Scottish National Jazz Orchestra,

comprising a selection of performances from their recent tour, is yet further proof of the validity of Schuller's belief such recreation is a vital enterprise.

Last October, I was fortunate enough to attend the performance in Glasgow, from which several of the selections here are drawn. The album is patterned, largely after the concert programme then. Similarly then, too, their playing on the first couple of pieces was a little tentative, almost too polite. On *Jack The Bear*, for example, the listener is reminded of Mercutio's stricture on affairs of the heart: 'If love be rough with you, be rough with love.' The orchestra, and soloists in particular, need to kick the charts around a little more. Playing in the shade of Cootie Williams or Johnny Hodges cannot be easy, of course. The physical stamina and the technical ability to project their personalities through their horns, let alone the originality of their ideas (let's just call it genius) are not footmarks in which, like the pageboy of King Wenceslas, it can be easy to place your own. To a large extent, moreover, these young players are exercising their historical imagination. Even the tone of their leader Tommy Smith in *Prelude To A Kiss* is more reminiscent of John Coltrane than anyone in the generation of Ellington's reed section. Even so, time and again – and particularly when the orchestra hits its stride – the players demonstrate that though they may be travellers in an antique land, their passports are in good order. There is a performance of *Daybreak Express* here that is breathtaking and testament to the fidelity, precision and ability of the section work. The reed section, too, in *Le Sucrier Velours* is worthy of Hodges, Carney et al. It is almost as tender and moving as Tommy Smith's soliloquy on *The Single Petal Of A Rose*.

Brian Kellock on piano brings originality to his contributions, too, rarely availing himself of the vocabulary of Ellington's 'Cubist stride' technique (as one critic dubbed it) but his style sits very congruently with these performances. Ryan Quigley's is a fiery voice, too, in section and solo work.

The repertoire, culminating in the obligatory barnstorming rendition of *Diminuendo In Blue*, *Wailing Interval* and *Crescendo In Blue* is drawn largely from Ellington's post-Newport book but the Orchestra moves adroitly between various eras of the original band's existence, embracing both standards and material which is aired less often. It is a particular pleasure to hear 'live' selections from *The Peer Gynt Suites*. Sonically and artistically, the term 'high fidelity' could have been coined for this album. It will enjoy heavy rotation in your CD player.

Ian Bradley

THE FRANK GRIFFITH BIG BAND:

**With guest Tina May
Holland Park Non-Stop
HEP CD2095**

Our member Frank is indisputably a big star as instrumentalist/improviser, composer, arranger, and leader of his fellow musicians. This I know from happy times

listening to Frank in solo, duo, right on up to full big band.

Which brings us to this CD of his compositions and arrangements of standards. Considering his many facets of talent, where to begin? It has to be the tenor sax and clarinet work of the leader, at once languid, then forceful, and in the standards, at all times respectful of the timeless melodies at hand. *Baby Won't You Please Come Home?* is typical of the Griffith approach, taken as a wistful ballad, *These Foolish Things* similarly. That Frank Griffith is in full command of his instruments and his band is illustrated by the inclusion of *Body And Soul*. I like to think it takes a particular kind of confidence to tackle this beautiful tune with its many traps for the unwary, particularly in the bridge. Griffith weaves in and out of his own backdrop as the band gels behind him.

I like the long lines and arrangements which don't hit you in the face. So, of course, this album, by a musician steeped in Duke Ellington as those at Ellington London 2008 and Woking 2012 conferences can testify, is recommended. May sings on three tracks, all other soloists acquit themselves well, but it is Griffith's show and hallelujah for that.

Production: Frank Griffith, Alastair Robertson. Recorded: 17 August 2010

Geoff Smith

IN BRIEF

BILLY STRAYHORN AND JOHNNY HODGES JUICE A-PLENTY

A Fresh Sound CD, FSR-CD762, couples two LPs, dating from 1961 and 1958, on which Billy Strayhorn arranged and conducted the full Ellington Orchestra (minus Duke of course) on numbers designed to showcase Johnny Hodges. The 1961 set was recorded at two sessions on 11 and 12 December and appeared on Verve V6-8452. The 1958 set was produced for Teddy Reig's Roulette label, on which it came out on LP SR52119. Both sets consist largely, though not entirely, of familiar Ducal standards, and both have appeared on earlier CDs. Hugh Rainey reviewed the Fresh Sound issue briefly in June's *Jazz Journal*.

RB

DUKE ELLINGTON AND JOHN COLTRANE

Yet another reissue of the results of Duke's one-off encounter with John Coltrane in September 1962 has appeared, this one on an Essential Jazz Classics CD, EJC55579. The CD bulks out the LP by adding four earlier Ellingtonian readings from Trane, *Solitude* and *I Got It Bad* from December 1957, *Lush Life* from January 1958, all by his quintet with Donald Byrd and Red Garland; and a *Things Ain't What They Used To Be*, also from September 1957, on which Mal Waldron takes over at the piano and Frank Wess and Paul Quinichette join Trane to for a three-tenors front line.

RB

Performance

Black, Brown and Beige, Guildhall Jazz Band, directed by Martin Hathaway, Pizza Express, Soho, May 18, 2013

Adam Chatterton, Miguel Gorodi, Ewan Gilchrist, Liam Heath (t); Chris Saunders, Nathaniel Cross, Ed Parr (tb); Matt Davies, Helena Kay, Dougal Caston, Tom Bennett, Meredith Dickson (reeds); Alex Maydew (p), Matthew Read (b), Will Glaser (d), Ayesha Ahmed (voice), Stuart Hall (violin)

Martin Hathaway's excellent Guildhall Jazz Band has provided the Society with much splendid Ellington and Strayhorn music over the years, but this was truly something special: a full performance of ***Black, Brown and Beige***, very close in structure to the initial version played by the Ellington orchestra in the 1943 concerts, as issued by Prestige. It is a monumental work, and aside from the notorious mauling that ***BB&B*** received from some critics after the Carnegie Hall debut, its scope may have been one reason why Ellington never performed it in its entirety later in his career.

Heard here in what I was told was the David Berger version "somewhat adapted", it was easy to agree with Alex Ross's remark that ***BB&B*** is "about as sublime and deep as American music gets," and also to regret once again that Ellington did not make a full studio recording in the 1940s.

As a result of its piecemeal recording history and Ellington's recycling of sections of the piece over the years, parts of ***Black, Brown and Beige*** are much more familiar (***Work Song*** and ***Come Sunday*** from ***Black***, ***The Blues*** from ***Brown***) than others. But when played in its entirety, the lesser-known sections come to the fore, particularly during ***Beige***, which had superb contributions from pianist Alex Maydew and a thrilling finale with unison trombones and baritone saxophone which called to mind the 1972 version by DESUK's Alan Cohen and Brian Priestley.

In a piece of few solos (improvised ones, at any rate), jazz feeling in the ensembles is what counts, along with negotiating the many shifts and contrasts in tempo and mood. Here, Martin Hathaway had done a great job with his outstanding group of students, who ranged from first years to post-grad, with one 'ringer' – staff member Stuart Hall in the Ray Nance violin slot.

The saxophone ensemble was sweet in ***Work Song***, underpinned by Meredith Dickson on baritone, and the trumpet section sound was superb, with lovely vibrato. Helena Kay on alto avoided the long shadow cast by Johnny Hodges by letting the beautiful ***Come Sunday*** speak simply and straightforwardly for itself, and trombonist Nathaniel Cross was outstanding in the difficult Tricky Sam Nanton passages, playing with a lovely, melancholy tone.

The Blues was sung with great assurance by Ayesha Ahmed, and other highlights included a very swinging and happy ***Lighter Attitude***. Trumpet solos were shared around the section, with Adam Chatterton and Miguel Gorodi among the standouts. Will Glaser on drums and Matthew Read on bass were superb throughout, and the band reprised ***Lighter Attitude/Emancipation Celebration*** by way of an encore.

Overall, it was a privilege and deep pleasure to hear the full ***Black, Brown and Beige*** upfront and close in a small club setting, and with excellent balance and dynamics maintained by Martin Hathaway.

After the main course, as it were, Vince Prudente joined Matthew Read and Will Glaser to delight the crowd with his piano and trombone playing. Vince played ***Heaven*** and a lovely reading of Strayhorn's ***Passion Flower***, ending the latter on an intriguing chord that he explained "was of course the maestro's thing. It took me three months to figure it out." Martin Hathaway on alto, Ed Parr on trombone, trumpeter Miguel Gorodi and pianist Alex Maydew then joined Vince to jam on ***C-Jam Blues***, ***Satin Doll*** and ***Cottontail*** to wrap up a wonderful afternoon.

Quentin Bryar

Harmony In Harlem, directed by Michael Kilpatrick Jubilee Gardens, Ely, Sunday, 19 May 2013

On the day following our AGM ***Harmony In Harlem*** were entertaining the Sunday afternoon strollers and family parties in the Jubilee Gardens, Ely, a pleasant open space linking the town with the riverbank. After a cold and unpromising week the weather was kind, and people were out in large numbers. I'd estimate that at any time there was an audience of sixty to a hundred, aged from eighteen months to eighty. The level of critical appreciation may have been lower than in the Pizza Express the day before – 'they look very smart and they've got some lovely instruments' – but it's an ideal way to reach out to new, and young, listeners.

EVENTS CALENDAR

It's a couple of years since I last saw Michael Kilpatrick's band in action, and there are new faces in the ranks, but the repertoire remains unchanged – Ellingtonia from the mid-1930s to the 1950s, with lots of out-of-the way pieces you'd never expect to hear live. Two of these are recent additions to the band's book, the r'n'b-flavoured *Bensonality* and *Love Like This Can't Last*. I arrived some way into the first set, catching the end of *Old King Dooji*, then *Serious Serenade*, *Way Low*, *Bensonality*, *Café Au Lait* and *Main Stem*. There were three of Ivie's vocals. Jane Mayo, one of the new faces, sang *Hayfoot, Strawfoot* and *Isn't Love The Strangest Thing?* Drummer Will Keel-Stocker belted out the jazz vocal on *It Don't Mean A Thing* with great élan.

Two 1940 classics, *Harlem Air Shaft* and *Cottontail*, top-and-tailed the second set. Early 40s rarities were *Five O'Clock Drag*, *Me And You* and Strayhorn's *Love Like This Can't Last*. Billy's song is far from conventional, with unusual phrase-lengths and a remarkably free verse of shifting tonality following the chorus. Jane Mayo negotiated its surprising contours admirably. *Me And You* is another 1940 rarity, but it clearly meant a lot to Duke, who returned to it occasionally for the rest of his life. From the mid-1940s came *Happy Go Lucky Local*, Joya Sherrill's *Kissing Bug*, and Strays' wonderful 1946 take on the *Royal Garden Blues*. The thirties yielded *I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart, You Gave Me The Gate...*, and *Dusk On The Desert*, a long-time favourite of mine. It was the B side of the Parlophone *Caravan*, the only Ellington 78 rpm record I ever bought.

Roger Boyes

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Laurent Mignard Duke Orchestra:

www.laurentmignard.com

25 Oct: Chambéry, Jazz Club de Savoie

'Good News'

(Pocket Quartet)

30 Nov: Verneuil en Halatte (60)

'Good News' (Pocket Quartet')

16 Nov: Chelles (77)

'Elln. Panorama' (Duke Orch.)

6 Dec: Rueil Malmaison (92) Th. André Malraux

Maison du Duke: www.maisonduduke.com

Harmony In Harlem:

17 Nov: The Empire Theatre, Butler Road, Halstead, Essex CO9 1LL (Tel: 07778 025490)

www. Empire-theatre.co.uk

Kinda Dukish:

19 Sep, 17 Oct, 21 Nov, 8:30pm: British Oak, Penshore Road, Stirchley, Birmingham B30 2XS

Contact Mike Fletcher on 0121 444 4129

mike@efletcher.fsworld.co.uk

Frank Griffith:

6 Oct: Frank Griffith Sextet, The White Hart, 1 Mile End Road, E4 4TP. 20:00 Tel: 0207 790 2894. Free admission

17 Oct: Frank Griffith with the Hugh Ockendon Trio, Eltham Conservative Club, 20:00

25 Oct: Frank Griffith with the Martin Mickless, The Spice of Life, Cambridge Circus, London, 12:30

16 Nov: *Jazz at the Movies*, The Norden Farm Centre, Maidenhead, SL6 4PF. Tel: 01628 788927

21 Nov: *Jazz at the Café Society Show*, The Arts Depot, North Finchley, London Jazz Festival, 20:00

Keith Nichols and the Blue Devils/ Enrico Tomasso's New Rhythm Band:

24 Nov: *Louis and the Duke in London, 1932-33*, Cadogan Hall, Sloane Terrace, London SW1, 19:00

Pete Long's Echoes of Ellington:

30 Nov: *Duke Ellington 40th Anniversary Concert*, Congress Theatre, Eastbourne. Tel: 01323 412000



BLUE LIGHTLY

Geoff Smith, Managing Editor

The celebration of the life and music of Dave Brubeck, held in The Cathedral Church of St John The Divine, NYC, on 11 May 2013, was a joyous and respectful occasion. While extending best wishes in advance for the event to Darius and Cathy Brubeck, our delegates and presenters at Ellington 2012, Woking, I asked for a copy of the programme, which Cathy brought over for me to a *Brubecks Play Brubeck* performance at Maidstone – wonderful, vital jazz incidentally.

Iola Brubeck's programme article mentions Duke Ellington hearing Dave play in the Bay Area and advising him to go to New York "to be heard". She of course acknowledges that Duke Ellington and Darius Milhaud were the two great mentors in Dave's early career and reminds readers that Dave's evergreen composition *The Duke* was for both composers and originally named *Duke Ellington Meets Darius Milhaud*.

Further on in the programme is an informal picture of Dave with Duke. I've seen this somewhere before although Cathy thinks it is from Dave's private collection. They are two great men of our time. The programme quotes an excerpt from an unpublished memoir in which Dave writes: "I was once asked how I wanted to be remembered. I answered, 'As someone who opened doors'. I believe that I have opened doors for future musicians of every color and ethnicity. I invite them to explore, perfect, extend and move beyond anything I have ever done."

"I am glad that I happened to be born in the 20th Century, into an era known as The Jazz Age and that I was privileged to play a role in its unfolding story."

Surely this could also be Duke speaking?

*

The April 2013 issue of *Mojo* magazine (that's right, reader) has a listing of ten recommended Duke Ellington albums and sets as chosen by readers and some of their writers. For a non-specialist publication they made two decent fists of this self-imposed task.

The double-page colour spread is headed *Duke Ellington: The Shakespeare of Jazz* and the feature's introduction by Fred Dellar tells of Duke's "glorious body of work".

Sensibly, the selected albums do not appear to have been placed in a suggested order of importance although it is perhaps significant that the RCA *Never No Lament: The Blanton-Webster Band* is listed at number one.

The remaining nine, in numerical order, are: *The Far East Suite* (RCA), *Ellington At Newport* complete (Columbia), *...And His Mother Called Him Bill* (RCA), *Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington* (Roulette), *Such Sweet Thunder* (Col), *Money Jungle* (now Blue Note), *Early Ellington 1926-33* three hours set (GRP), *Complete Musicrafts 1946* (Definitive), and *Ellington Uptown* (Col).

A generally favourable reaction was noted when the magazine was passed around the DESUK Committee at its April meeting. I will not comment further but I invite readers to do so through *Blue Light*, perhaps with recommended additions rather than subtractions.

*

The theme of DESUK's London social group's meeting at the Civil Service Club, Great Scotland Yard, on 13 April was Ellington in the microgroove era, the idea being to bring and share LPs and EPs of Duke rather than playing the music in the more usual present-day digital format.

That gave everybody plenty of scope and most offerings adhered to the *Liberian Suite* and afterwards period. "Rogues", and highly acceptable they were, included extracts from the Fargo recordings of 1940, on the Jazz Society double LP, and the unplayable 15 January 1941 transcription disc brought along by organiser Antony Pepper – well, it was on vinyl.

Reason for the afternoon's theme was the recent purchase for the London group of a 33 and 45 rpm record deck, a necessary purchase and true sign of the times given the fact that vinyl sales have risen in the past year by a reported 78 per cent to more than 389,000 discs.

Other music played included *Controversial Suite* on EP, Paul Gonsalves playing *I've Just Seen Her* on the *All-American In Jazz* LP, and, from an Up-To-Date LP, Duke playing and singing *I'm Afraid Of Loving You Too Much* and *Joog Joog* in his hotel room in Detroit in 1950.

It is said that music fans are reverting to vinyl because of its "warmer sound". There was certainly plenty of warmth around at this session.

*

The unsigned *Daily Telegraph* obituary on pianist Cedar Walton (21 August 2013) includes two paragraphs: "In 1955 he moved to New York, but had barely begun to find his way about before being called up for two years' military service. A few days before his unit left for Germany, Duke Ellington's orchestra came to play at their camp."

"For a dare, Walton asked if he could sit in: "The last thing we expected him to say was 'yes', but he did. He said 'Go easy on those keys, young man'." At the end of the number Ellington smiled, saying: "I thought I told you to go easy!" This, Walton later realised, was a "very Ellingtonian" way of paying a compliment."

I have it somewhere filed in my head that Duke did not encourage non-Ellingtonian sitters-in whether illustrious or otherwise. For contractual reasons he sometimes did accommodate them, as with Norman Granz's musicians in *The Greatest Jazz Concert In The World* tour and with Gerry Mulligan at Newport 1958, but he was never that keen. If this is so, it makes the Cedar Walton incident when he was a young pianist, quite remarkable. But perhaps Duke, with his ear on the New York scene, already knew a thing or two about this "young man".

MINUTES of the DESUK Committee Meeting at the Civil Service Club, 13-15 Great Scotland Yard, London on **SATURDAY 13th April 2013**

Present: Peter Caswell (Chair), Chris Addison, Quentin Bryar, Catherine Coates, Frank Harvey, Victor Lawrance, Phil Mead, Antony Pepper, Geoff Smith.

Observing: Ian Bradley.

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks (PC). The meeting commenced at 12.06pm. Chairman welcomed attendees, and introduced IB to the committee. The meeting would be concluded earlier than normal, at 1.45pm, to allow the room to be set up for the London meeting immediately following.

2. Apologies. Roger Boyes had sent his apologies.

3. Draft Minutes of 26th January 2013. With one minor amendment from AP, these were approved.

4. Officers' Reports.

(a) Treasurer/Membership Secretary (VL). The report had already been circulated. VL aimed to close the society's yearly accounts at the end of March and hoped to present at least draft accounts to the AGM. Subscriptions still outstanding numbered 39. It was agreed VL would email contact details for these and each committee member would chase up anyone known to them. PC offered his services as assistant to VL for those occasions when VL felt he needed some help.

(b) Publicity Officer (CA). CA passed round a report outlining some of his activities. He had contacted named individuals at jazz societies and other potential interested parties. A second letter had been sent to Lord Coe and to Ken Clarke, to clarify the society's position, together with a copy of BL. CA requested a small insert in BL asking readers to advise him of any Ellington-related or jazz events and for views on generating publicity. GS confirmed this would be done. QB has been approached to provide a review of the AGM and this was approved by the committee. The Sinatra Society's DESUK advert needs to be updated – FH will deal with this. QB said he had been asked to have Dobell's Exhibition mentioned at the AGM. PC referred to the ongoing situation with the Tony Faulkner archives. The following points and suggestions came out of the ensuing lengthy discussion: (1) FH agreed to contact Michael Fletcher with a view to MF making a short presentation to the committee, at the June/July meeting, on how he might utilise and care for the collection; (2) CA would liaise with MK and RB on the Arts Council proposal; (3) our eminent

associates (and other eminent musicians who purport to be Ellington enthusiasts) could be requested to provide a back-up letter for the Arts Council proposal. It was agreed that all options regarding the TF archives remain open. PC reminded committee that RB also has an archive of BL which is 100% complete. IB confirmed he would be prepared to take these on.

(c) Meetings organiser/Webmaster (AP). There had been a problem with Events on website but this would be sorted out between VL/AP/CA. PC congratulated AP on the content of the website regarding the AGM.

(d) Blue Light GS/IB). RB's report previously circulated was accepted. GS felt the biggest problem was bridging the gap between the RB era and the new team. He asked each member of the committee to email IB with a few sentences on why they are in DESUK – which may or may not be included in BL. GS referred to the death of Dave Brubeck and said it is hoped to publish a transcript of the Brubeck interview shown at Woking in the next edition of BL. RB will give guiding comments if needed for BL20/2.

5. Arrangements for AGM (AP). Committee are reminded to get there at 12 o'clock to assist with setting up etc. A sound man has been arranged. PC will introduce Vince Prudente who will then take questions. PC had spoken with VP yesterday evening (12/4/13) and a programme has been set out to include VP playing trombone solo with the band, also playing with the rhythm section and VP also may play piano. GS confirmed he had contacted Alyn Shipton at Jazz Record Requests regarding the AGM.

6. International Conference 2014 (GS). GS advised that it was highly probable that the European Jazz Capital of Europe (Amsterdam) would stage a conference between 14th-18th May 2014. This is an exciting prospect and further details will be given when these are available. GS requested that DESUK underwrite something as for Woking and PC said this would be an item for the committee meeting in June/July.

7. Any Other Business. There being no other business, the meeting was declared closed at 1.45 pm.

8. NEXT MEETING:

The AGM – SATURDAY 18TH MAY 2013

Venue: Pizza Express, Dean Street, London

C Coates 14th April 2013

Approved 20th July 2013

