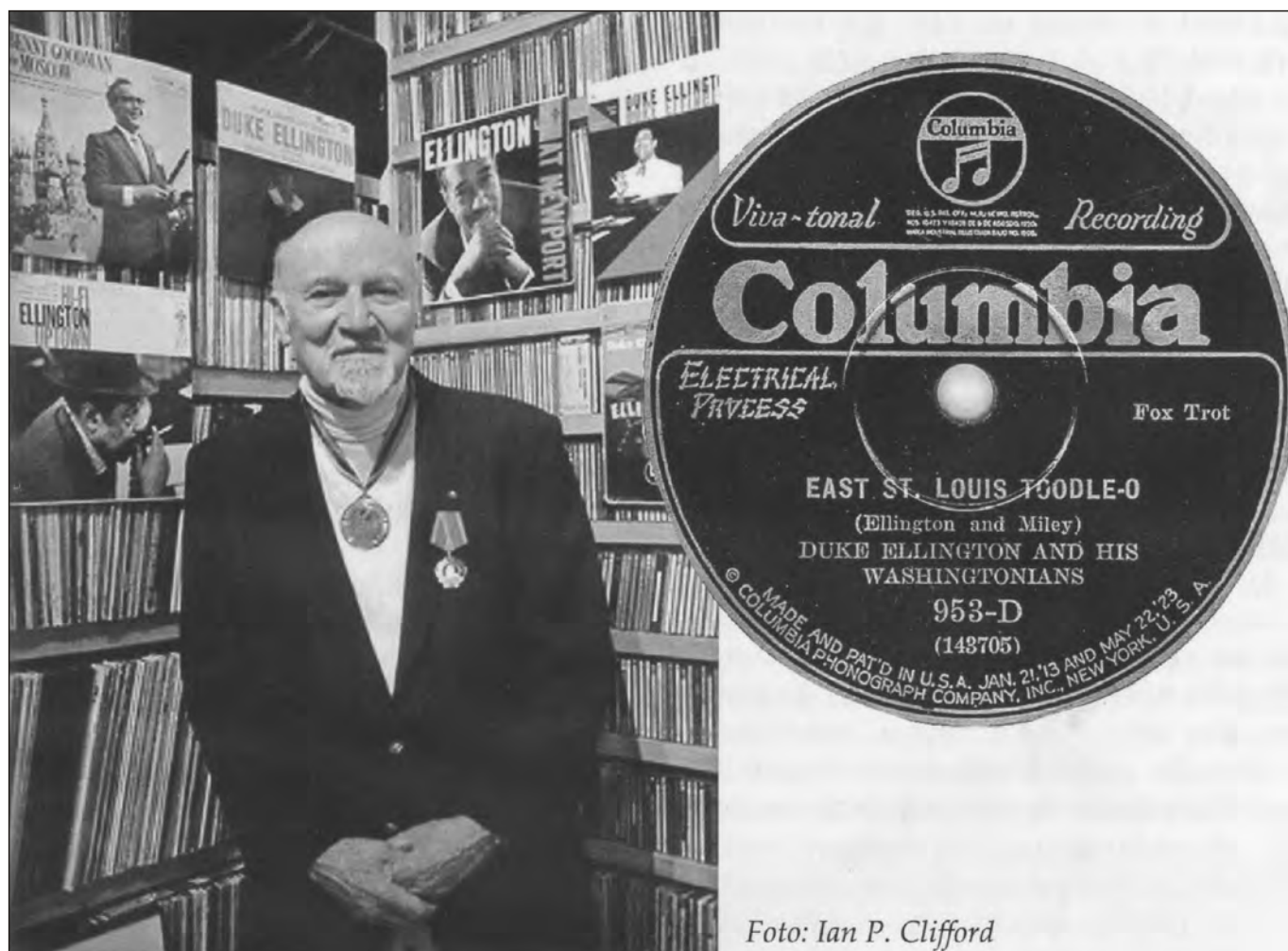




BLUE LIGHT

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DUKE ELLINGTON SOCIETY (UK)
VOLUME 19 NUMBER 4 • WINTER 2012-13



GEORGE AVAKIAN: ELLINGTON ON COLUMBIA

Nil Significat Nisi Pulsatur

HONORARY MEMBERS OF DESUK

In alphabetical order

Alice Babs
Art Baron
Buster Cooper
Herb Jeffries
John Lamb
Vincent Prudente
Monsignor John Sanders
Joe Temperley
Clark Terry

Derek Else

HONORARY MEMBERS SADLY NO LONGER WITH US

Bill Berry (13 October 2002)
Harold Ashby (13 June 2003)
Jimmy Woode (23 April 2005)
Humphrey Lyttelton (25 April 2008)
Louie Bellson (14 February 2009)
Joya Sherrill (28 June 2010)

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Deadline for acceptance of copy for the next issue of *Blue Light* (Volume 20/1) is Friday 1 March 2013

INDEX

Inside Front Cover: Editorial

- 1 George Avakian
- 2 On Record
- 6 In Brief. Columbia 1950s box
- 7 Eric Hobsbawm
- 8 Ellington On Columbia
- 14 Celebrating Duke In Perpetuity. Unique Jazz reissues
- 15 Sjef Hoefsmit
- 16 Eddie Harvey: Welcome Duke
- 17 Keep On With Those Requests. Juan Tizol: Two Songs With Words.
- 18 Ellington Disc Jockey In 1948. Dating Music On The 1943 Fitch Broadcast.
- 19 Events Calendar
- 20 Ads; Contacting DESUK

Inside Back Cover: Treasurer's And Membership Secretary's Report
Back Cover: DESUK Committee Minutes

BLUE LIGHT

NEWSLETTER OF THE DUKE ELLINGTON SOCIETY (UK)

Editorial

A long account by the eminent record producer George Avakian dominates this *BL*. He unravels with expertise and insight the complex story of Duke's relationship with Columbia Records, its antecedents and subsidiaries. The tale goes right back to 1926, and in the later stages, from 1947 on, George was an active participant. As he explains, he was already becoming involved at the end of his student days, but World War Two was a rude interruption, for him as for many millions of others. Personal involvement changes the character of George's account without affecting its absorbing interest. He ends it with his own departure from Columbia, though Duke remained contracted to the company for several more years.

*

Before recording Duke himself George was active in unearthing and issuing recordings which had languished in the vaults for years, unissued. In addition to my introduction to his account and by George's own preface, the page opposite has a couple of examples of this invaluable aspect of his activities, music from the 1930s which he first brought to the light of day in the late 1940s. There are many more, and each one is a reason to be grateful to our distinguished contributor.

*

The story of Ken Harrison's attempt to obtain information about the 'special editions' 78 he had just acquired illustrates how much we have lost with the death of Sjef Hoefsmit. Sjef referred the question straight on to the expert on recorded Ellingtonia down to 1942, Steven Lasker, and enlightenment followed swiftly. For a fuller account go online to <http://www.depanorama.net/dems> and you will find DEMS Bulletin 10/3-10. The loss of Sjef was a grievous blow, and a personal one for me. *Jazz Journal* invited me to write a short obituary for their November issue, and an expansion of what I said there is on p15.

*

Two distinguished Ellington enthusiasts in this country, musician Eddie Harvey and historian Eric Hobsbawm, died in the autumn. They are commemorated on, respectively, pages 16 and 7.

*

Subs. for 2013 are due on 31 December. On the Inside Back Cover (blue), Victor spells out in detail how to renew. Don't send cheques to me at Great Barton. Donations (always welcome) help to keep the UK's ducal flag flying. As I've said before, if you joined during the year you should now have all four *BL* issues in vol. 19, as Brian Koller has (see p18). If you're still missing any, let me know.

*

Finally and on behalf of the Officers and Committee, I'd like to wish you all the very best for Christmas. This is the last time I say this as *BL* editor, and if I add that I'm saying it with mixed feelings, you'll know what I mean.

Roger Boyes

Ed: *It is with great pleasure that I include George Avakian's account of Duke Ellington's recording career with Columbia Records in Blue Light. George's long experience as a Columbia employee and his direct involvement in Duke's recording activities with the company in the 1940s and 1950s make his account a decidedly personal one, with many fascinating insights. The article previously appeared in the Bulletin of DESUK's sister Society, the Duke Ellington Society of Sweden, in 2010. There George prefaced it with this note:*

With the rise of acetate and tape recording in the late 1940s, the interspersing of numerous concert and broadcast releases in between actual recording sessions makes it difficult to follow Duke's career as a contracted recording artist even by linking the most helpful guides in tracking Duke's association with Columbia. I have assumed that most readers are familiar with the changes of ownership of various labels, such as Columbia to American Recording Corporation (ARC) to Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) to Sony Music. I have also scattered a few related observations, mostly from my own experience as a Columbia executive (1946-1958).

George's account begins on page 8



Moonlight Fiesta disc from 1948



Tough Truckin' disc from 1947

DESK member **Ken Harrison** acquired this **Moonlight Fiesta** disc in 2010 and brought it to the attention of Sjef Hoefsmit at DEMS. Sjef consulted Steven Lasker, who responded in *DEMS Bulletin* 10/3-10: 'This Ellington disc was released in 1948. These discs were aimed at the collector's market, and were sold at a premium price. The series was produced by George Avakian, "American Record Corporation," which is printed on the labels, is a bit of an anachronism, as the name had more or less been phased out by "Columbia Recording Corporation" (from 1939) and then "Columbia Records" (from 1946).' **Moonlight Fiesta** is coupled with **Jubilesta** (20 September 1937).

Tough Truckin', coupled with **Indigo Echoes**, was issued a year earlier (1947). This Columbia (red label) issue was its first release. The 5 March 1935 session was the last on which Wellman Braud played bass with the Ellington Orchestra.

None of the four sides on these releases had been previously issued.

ART TATUM-BEN WEBSTER THE ART TATUM-BEN WEBSTER QUARTET

Ed: *This is the complete text of Simon Spillett's JJ review of the classic 1956 session. See BL 19/3 p5 where I cut out the entire central paragraph while copying it into the template. It would be quite unacceptable to leave it in that truncated form, uncorrected. I haven't repeated the familiar track and personnel details. Three alternate takes, plus four Webster titles and one Tatum solo from earlier sessions, make up the 75-minute CD. Refer to BL 19/3 p5. My apologies to Simon, to Jazz Journal, and to you all, for my sloppy editing.*

Phoenix 13145

Here's material that is currently doing the rounds on at least three different CDs, each with slightly different contents. Phoenix's version has all the known alternate takes from the Tatum-Webster summit and adds as makeweights an unrelated set with the urbane Wilson, and a single Tatum solo. Despite these bonuses it's the seven tracks that comprised the original Verve LP that demand the closest attention.

On paper it may well sound disastrous. Tatum wasn't a natural accompanist and by the mid-50s Webster was already well on his way to a style that favoured space over bluster, but somehow, occasionally improbably, it actually works, largely because neither man tries to compromise. Tatum's rococo exercises are all there, filling bars to the brim with slippery harmonic asides and cascading filigrees of melody, whilst Webster outlines a programme of familiar standards with characteristic relaxation. Admittedly, most of the themes come out sounding much the same, but there's a glorious inevitability in both protagonists' playing.

Night And Day may well be the highlight, but it's a close-run thing. And in one of those what-ifs that jazz fans love, one is left wondering what Tatum may well have achieved had he lived on (this was his last recording). The additional tracks are another matter, with Wilson undemonstratively shadowing the tenorist through four exquisite ballads. *Sophisticated Lady*, featuring Brown's sumptuous *arco* bass, is definitive. Wonderful as it is to have all this music in one place, it does beg the question of why no label has yet attempted a multi-disc anthology of Webster's work for Norgran and Verve, surely a major oversight.

Simon Spillett

MARK MASTERS ENSEMBLE ELLINGTON SAXOPHONE ENCOUNTERS

Esquire Swank; The Line Up; Lawrence Brown Blues; We're in Love Again; Ultra Blues; Used to Be Duke; Jeep's Blues; Get Ready; Love's Away; Rockin' in Rhythm; Peaches (The Peaches Are Better Down The Road); The Happening

Gary Foster, Pete Christlieb, Don Shelton, Gary Smulyan (reeds), Bill Cunliffe (p), Tom Warrington (b), Joe LaBarbera (d). Mark Masters (arr.) California, 15 January 2012

Capri 74118-2

Ellington Saxophone Encounters features twelve pieces associated with Ellington, including two well-known known gems by the Maestro (*Jeeps Blues* and *Rockin' in Rhythm*) along with tunes by Jimmy Hamilton, Harry Carney, Johnny Hodges and Paul Gonsalves. All of these provide effective vehicles for extensive blowing excursions for this top-flight West Coast sax ensemble. This group was organised and led by Mark Masters (who also serves the community as President of the American Jazz Institute), who also did the arrangements, which give a nod to Duke without ever attempting to emulate or recreate him, settings which allow this bevy of capable soloists to shine.

These soloists include veteran LA reedsmen Gary Foster, Pete Christlieb and Don Shelton, as well as the crack rhythm team of pianist Bill Cunliffe (ex-Buddy Rich) former *Tonight Show* bassman Tom Warrington and drummer Joe LaBarbera, who has sidemanned with everyone from Chuck Mangione and Bill Evans to Tony Bennett.

It's a line-up about which you might say: that's not a bad start at all. But the real star of the show, and the only non-West Coaster on the date is New Yorker Gary Smulyan on baritone sax. Soloing on virtually every track, he tenders heartfelt readings of Harry Carney's *We're In Love Again* as well as a provocative Jimmy Hamilton ditty *Ultra Blue*, a loping swinger full of chromantic chord sequences that provide so much delight and shade for the soloist to bask in. Gary rises to the challenge with aplomb. Arguably the top modern baritonist in jazz today, Smulyan completely owns a contemporary melodic vocabulary enhanced by a flawless technique but offset by possessing a full and glowing tone that embraces the listener in its warmth and burnished quality.

Other highlights include a lesser known Ben Webster composition, *Love's Away*, (originally recorded by Ben

with Teddy Wilson, Ray Brown and Jo Jones in 1954) given an updated reading by the wistful yet occasionally blustery tenor of Pete Christlieb. Let us also not overlook the essential role of the Dukian clarinet, handled more than deftly by Don Shelton throughout the date. His three refreshing choruses on Hamilton's *Get Ready* as well as his obbligato work throughout *Peaches* go a long way to exemplifying this.

A super disc from start to finish, *Ellington Saxophone Encounters* evokes the best of Ellington and Smulyan in a unique and successful collaboration.
Frank Griffith

DUKE ELLINGTON MY PEOPLE: THE COMPLETE SHOW



Jungle Triangle #1; Come Sunday; Will You Be There?/99% Won't Do; Ain't But No (*sic*) One; David Danced...; Heritage (My Mother, My Father And Love) #1; After Bird Jungle; Montage; My People (Soap Box); The Blues Ain't...; Blues At Sundown; Walking And Singing The Blues; Working Blues; My Man Sends Me; Jail Blues; I Love My Lovin' Lover; Jungle Triangle #2; King Fit The Battle Of Alabam; King; Purple People; What Colour Is Virtue?; Purple People – Music; Piano Blues Overture; Strange Feeling; Heritage (My Mother, My Father And Love) #2 (79:08)

Collective Personnel: Bill Berry, Ziggy Harrell, Nat Woodard, Ray Nance (tp); Britt Woodman, John Sanders, Booty Wood (tb); Russell Procope, Rudy Powell, Harold Ashby, Pete Clark, Bob Freedman (reeds); Jimmy Jones (p, cond.), Billy Strayhorn (p, cel.), Joe Benjamin (b), Louie Bellson (d), Emmanuel Abdul Rahim aka Juan Amalbert (cg), Joya Sherrill, Lil Greenwood, Jimmy McPhail, Jimmy Grissom, Irving Bunton Singers (vo.), Bunny Briggs (taps); Richelle Le Noir Guilmenet, Duke Ellington (narr.). Directed by Duke Ellington. Chicago 20, 21, 27 August 1963.
Storyville 101 8430

A little context first, as *My People* isn't very widely known. The show was Duke's contribution to a 1963

Chicago Exhibition, *A Century Of Negro Progress*, celebrating the centenary of Lincoln's emancipation proclamation. It was a project dear to the heart of Ellington, who had marked the event already twenty years earlier in *Emancipation Celebration* (*Black, Brown And Beige*). The exhibition was not a success; by 1963 the black community was far more concerned with taking action to secure a fairer future than with reflecting on past victories. The Ellington Orchestra stayed on the road during the show's season (late August); Mercer said the budget was insufficient to hire it. But as the CD's personnel indicates, the specially assembled *My People* band heard on these recordings included ex-, near-, and future Ellingtonians, and also Ray Nance and Russell Procope, on loan.

In the context of the Ellington *oeuvre*, *My People* is a way station on the road from *Black, Brown And Beige* to the Sacred Concerts. Duke used music from the 1943 work in *My People*, specifically *Come Sunday*, *Montage* (*Light*, the closing passages of *Black*), and *The Blues Ain't...*, sung in 1963 by Joya Sherrill, who had been Betty Roché's successor on the piece back in the 1940s. And he recycled music from *My People* in the *First Sacred Concert* (1965).

Recordings were made during the show's run, and a limited selection appeared on an LP, (Contact CM-1), subsequently re-released on LP (Flying Dutchman) and CD (Red Baron). All the recordings eventually came into the care of Danish Radio with the rest of Duke's stockpile tapes, and it is on these that Bjarne Busk has drawn for this Storyville release, launched at the 2012 conference in Woking. These recordings did not try to recreate the Chicago pageant in the studio. Rather, they are of compositions created for the pageant. As with the *Drum Is A Woman* and *Sacred Concerts* recordings, there is a theatrical, 'live-event' side to *My People* which studio recordings cannot capture.

On the other hand, the Storyville CD is authoritative; in addition to co-producing it, Bjarne supplies the detailed, perceptive notes. And he has arranged the recordings to reflect the sequence of events as performed back in 1963. Barbara Wright-Pryor, who produced the 1998 revival of the show at the Regal Theatre, which I saw, told Howard Reich of the *Chicago Tribune* then that she recalled the original production 'virtually from beginning to end'. Tracks 1 to 21 of the new CD deviate only in minor respects from the sequence in the 1998 printed programme. This is as close as the studio recordings can get to the real thing.

The opening *Jungle Triangle*, dominated by the percussion, would be recycled in the incidental music for *Timon Of Athens*, as the clarinet feature *Skillipoop*. In addition to the clarinet, we hear from Bill Berry's trumpet. The next five tracks comprise music from *Black* and fresh material, much of it choral; all of it would reappear in the 1965 *Sacred Concert*. The fifth,

Heritage, is not to my taste, but the speeded-up *Come Sunday* which precedes it, *David Danced...* certainly is. I was always intrigued by Whitney Balliett's description of Bunny Briggs' dancing in Grace Cathedral: 'a series of rapid soft-shoe steps, backed by soft organ chords, a muted trumpet, and a children's choir. The effect was eerie and unique and enchanting'. It is good to hear it on this CD.

A beautiful slow feature for Rudy Powell's clarinet, *After Bird Jungle*, is followed by *Montage (Light)*. This leads into *My People*, a monologue familiar enough from Duke's TV interviews, here delivered 'preacher's oratory' style with congregational responses. I prefer the conversational approach of other versions.

A lengthy exploration of the blues follows, *The Blues Ain't...* from *Brown*, followed by a series of numbers familiar from Ellington recordings of the late 1940s and 1950s. The focus is on Joya Sherrill, Lil Greenwood and Jimmy Grissom, with fine contributions from Ashby, Nance and others. Harold compares very well to his illustrious predecessors Webster and Sears, on *The Blues*.

After an extended reprise of *Jungle Triangle*, the focus moves to the politics of race. *King*, heard in choral then up-tempo instrumental versions, has to do with the recent violent clashes in Birmingham Alabama. *Purple People* is a short allegorical tale in which the purple people and the green people fight until they are all dead and their mingled blood is neither purple nor green, but red. It is narrated by Joya Sherrill's daughter Richelle, and Joya herself returns, with the choir, for the closing *What Colour Is Virtue?*

The best of four supplementary tracks is Strayhorn's lovely, subtle *Purple People - Background Music*. *Piano Blues Overture* is a 'lowdown' instrumental from the fine quintet which accompanies some of the blues vocals. The reworking of *Strange Feeling (Perfume Suite)* was written for the show but not used. An alternate version of *Heritage* has Jimmy McPhail instead of Joya.

The Chicago exhibition may have had limited appeal to a generation more intent on a robust approach to Civil Rights, but *My People* leaves us in no doubt how Duke felt. It includes some of his most overt political statements. Suggestions at the time that Ellington was less than sympathetic to the aims of the progressives have no basis in fact. Unlike *Jump For Joy* twenty years earlier, he and his Orchestra didn't take part in the Chicago show, but it was in every sense his production.

The drawbacks are the narrative content, where Duke's evident sincerity doesn't make up for his shortcomings with words; and the limitations of his choral writing. This is by no means the best of Ellington, but *My People* is a key work (if flawed) in the growth of an important side to his artistic purposes.

This carefully prepared CD, with much previously unissued content, is a great advance on earlier issues, and essential for the Ellington specialist.

Roger Boyes

BEN WEBSTER

THREE CLASSIC ALBUMS PLUS

CD1: (*Blue Saxophones*) (1) Tangerine; La Rosita; Cocktails For Two; Shine On Harvest Moon; You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To; Blues For Yolande; Maria; It Never Entered My Mind; Prisoner Of Love. (*Soulville*) (2) Soulville; Late Date; Time On My Hands; Lover Come Back To Me; Where Are You? (78:50)

CD2: (*Soulville* – ctd.) (2) Making Whoopee; Ill Wind. (*The Soul Of Ben Webster*) (3) Fajista; Chelsea Bridge; Charlotte's Piccolo; Coal Train; When I Fall In Love; Ev's Mad; Ash. (*Sophisticated Lady* – selection) (4) All Too Soon; Love Is Here To Stay; It Happens To Be Me; My Funny Valentine; You're Mine You; Sophisticated Lady; Love's Away (77:55)

Ben Webster (ts) with: (1) Coleman Hawkins (ts); Oscar Peterson (p); Herb Ellis (g), Ray Brown (b); Alvin Stoller (d). LA 16 October 1957. (2) as (1), but omit Hawkins; Stan Levey (d) replaces Stoller. LA 15 October 1957. (3) Art Farmer (tp); Harold Ashby (ts); Jimmy Jones (p); Mundell Lowe (g); Milt Hinton (b); Dave Bailey (d). NYC July 1958. (4) Tony Scott (cl); Teddy Wilson (p); Ray Brown (b); Jo Jones (d) plus strings; Ralph Burns (arr.). NYC 30 March 1954.

Avid ASMC 1038

On Avid releases you get the contents of at least three albums by top-class musicians, carefully re-mastered sound, and interesting booklets (usually consisting of sleeve-notes from the original LPs) all for an extremely reasonable price. What's not to like? Well, casting around for something, I'd have preferred to have the sessions in chronological order. There, that's the critical bit done.

Now for a discographical bit: I've seen the session with Hawkins dated as 16 December 1957 and March 1959. To the best of my knowledge, the date given by Avid is correct. I believe the session was first released as part of a 2LP set, and later issued on its own in the UK as *Blue Saxophones*, subsequently being re-released as *Coleman Hawkins Encounters Ben Webster*. CD versions under both titles are still available, one with a couple of alternative takes, including a false-stereo version of *Yolande*.

Webster started out as a disciple of Hawkins, but determined to forge his own distinctive style when someone told him he'd got Bean's off pat. This 1957 encounter displays both their continuing affinities (not least their ability to keep both mainstreamers and boppers happy) and their differences. Put (over)simplly, the Hawk thinks more vertically, the Frog more horizontally, yet both are capable of marvellous melodic improvisation,

and both can dig deep. Instead of an ego-driven cutting contest, which could have been more exciting but probably less satisfying, we hear two masters doffing their hats to each other in richly-deserved respect.

The previous day, minus Hawkins and with Stan Levey on drums instead of Stoller, Webster cut *Soulville*. The session finds Webster at near-as-dammit his superb best: he was (in my view) most enjoyable when being gloriously nasty on a blues, or breathing skeins of plush velvet on a sumptuously schmaltzy ballad. On this session he visits both ends of the spectrum, and produces a lot of extremely tasty, fluent, highly inventive work in between. The set is worth having for this session alone.

On both these sessions Peterson demonstrates that, despite the floridity of his style, even when playing behind other soloists, he was a supportive and inspiring accompanist, and he and his cohorts are at their bluesily superlative best on *Soulville*.

The Soul Of Ben Webster finds bop and mainstream co-habiting very happily. With an expanded front line, including an on-form Farmer, Webster gets less space, but again, as with the Hawkins tracks, it's fascinating to compare and contrast him with another tenor, this time Ashby, 16 years his junior and later to be regarded as his rightful successor in Ellington's orchestra. The marathon *Piccolo* is a marvellous slow blues, and *Chelsea Bridge* always fitted Webster like a velvet glove.

The set is completed with all but three of the tracks from *Sophisticated Lady*. These arrangements with strings do him no favours. Nonetheless, there is still much to relish in his phrasing.

Barry Witherden

Ed: It is inevitable that, in a magazine like *Jazz Journal*, which aims to cover the whole spectrum of jazz CD issues, reviews have to be edited from time to time, because of pressure on space. This happened in the case of this Avid review, so when Barry offered me his full text, unedited, I was happy to run it here.

DUKE ELLINGTON LEGACY WITH HOUSTON PERSON - SINGLE PETAL OF A ROSE



Dedication (spoken); Single Petal Of A Rose; Happy Go Lucky Local; (In My) Solitude (v); Johnny Come Lately*; Home Grown; Blood Count; In A Mellow Tone (v); Upper Manhattan Medical Group; (Just) Squeeze Me (v); Lush Life; After Hours; Love You Madly (v)*; Lotus Blossom (72:11)

Edward Kennedy Ellington II (elg); Virginia Mayhew (ldr., ts, cl, arr.*), Jami Dauber (tp); Noah Bless (tb); Houston Person (ts); Norman Simmons (p, arr., spk.); Tom DiCarlo (b); Paul Wells (d); Sheila Earley (pc); Nancy Reed (v). New Jersey, 21/22 September 2011
Renma Recordings 6403CD

The Ellington grandson laconically calls Duke's musical legacy 'the family business' and this captivating session shows how well and how imaginatively it's being looked after. An eclectic repertoire has been summoned up from the huge Ducal-Strayhorn roster, the earliest possibly the much-played *Mellow Tone* (1940), along with the delightful *Happy Go Lucky Local* from the 1946 *Deep South Suite* and the beautifully handled *Single Petal...* (*Queen's Suite*, 1959).

Many have grappled with the challenge of arranging – or rearranging – Ellington for different combos. Pianist Norman Simmons, whose solo treatment of *Single Petal...* oozes easy elegance, is responsible along with musical director Virginia Mayhew for most of these bright 10-piece charts. The exotic rhythms of *Solitude*, with one of several spellbinding vocals by Nancy Reed, shows a bold approach which still respects the composer's vision.

Houston Person, as special guest, takes his solos with magisterial warmth: but among the soloists who might be new to you are trumpeter Jami Dauber who has a great Bubber Miley growl in her repertoire, preaching tenorist Mayhew and smooth-sliding Noah Bless. Mayhew opens *Solitude* with some lovely, liquid clarinet in the hushed ensemble passage, making this the standout ballad interpretation of the session. Duke's grandson restricts himself to a modest rhythmic role and drummer Wells supported by Earley's congas sets the most inviting tempi. Lovers of Ellington's rich musical imagination (and who isn't?) should be knocked out by this scrumptious session.

Anthony Troon

STOCKPILE REISSUES

In November's *Jazz Journal* Graham Colombé reviewed a 2CD set on Music Club Deluxe, MCDLX 167, titled *Duke Ellington – The Private Collection*, selected from the ten late 1980s 'stockpile' CDs which appeared first on LMR/Saja, later on Kaz. Graham was unimpressed with the selection (over-emphasis on Gonsalves and Hodges, under-exposure of Williams, Brown and others), programming ('a sequence of a

dozen slow tracks...leaves the listener desperate for a change of pace'), and sketchy annotation: 'Dates are given but no personnels, and the notes are no match for Stanley Dance's helpful comments on the original issues'. But his review also brought news of the forthcoming reissue of all ten *Private Collection* CDs on the same label, so members who are in need of the ten 'stockpile' CDs are advised to pass over this flawed selection and acquire them all when they appear. Is it too much to hope that Music Club Deluxe will live up to their ambitious name and offer with the full set proper, accurate annotation, by someone who knows about the music?

In Brief

BEN WEBSTER WITH BILLIE 1950s...

Ben Webster enthusiasts may be interested in a recent reissue of the mid-1950s Norman Granz Billie Holiday sessions in which Ben Webster and Harry Edison joined Billie's regular pianist at the time Jimmy Rowles, and several variants of the Granz 'house' trio. By this stage Billie's voice was the ghost of what it had been, but there's lots of top-drawer Webster. **Phoenix 13154**

...AND LIVE IN VIENNA 1972

Ben's fans will also welcome the issue of a latter-day session with an on-form Webster recorded in Vienna in 1972. *Jazz Journal's* reviewer Barry Witherden has some reservations about the sound quality and the accompanists, but none about Ben's playing. Mainly standards, but *Li'l Darlin'* and *After Supper*, two of Neil Hefti's compositions for the classic *Atomic Mr Basie* LP add variety, as does Jimmy Hamilton's *Big Shoe* from the Hodges-Ellington *Side By Side* LP. **Domino 891219**

VIRGINIA MAYHEW - MARY LOU WILLIAMS

If Annie Kuebler's piece on Duke and Mary Lou Williams in the last *BL* (p10) whetted your appetite for more of Mary's music, you should consider a Virginia Mayhew CD in which the saxophonist explores the composer's repertoire in a quartet/quintet context. Bruce Crowther reviewed it very favourably in September's *Jazz Journal*. Virginia arranged two tracks on the Ellington Legacy CD on the same label reviewed above (p5). *Mary Lou Williams – The Next 100 Years*. **Renma 6402CD**.

THE VILLAGE OF THE VIRGINS

This stately piece from *The River* crops up in a piano trio version by the Vijay Iyer Trio in a recent album titled *Accelerando*, which has won plaudits in *Down Beat*. Iyer, whose parents migrated from India to the USA in 1960, is based in the San Francisco area.

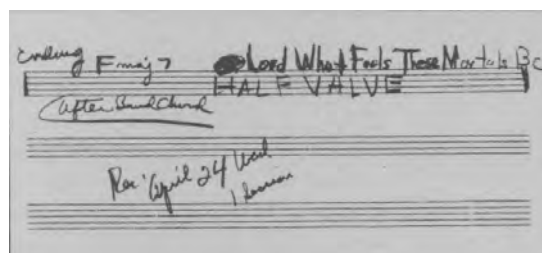
DOIN' THE FROG

A new issue from Frog Records, *The Washingtonians/Rare and Early Duke Ellington Sessions 1924-1928* has twenty-six titles, from *Choo Choo* and *Rainy Nights* (Nov.1924) to *Sweet Mama*, *Stack O'Lee Blues* and *Bugle Call Rag* (9 Jan 1928). Duke-lym's informant Don Brown observes: 'Believe me, this music has never sounded so good'. No Victors. Details are on the Frog Records website.

1950s COLUMBIA BOXED SET

By November people on the 'duke-lym' list had received pre-ordered copies of this new release (see *BL* 19/3 p5: *In Brief*). The faked applause on *Bal Masqué* has been removed in a remix, to general approval though the remix itself is not to everyone's liking. *Such Sweet Thunder* appears to be another straight copy of the twelve tracks as programmed on Phil Schaap's centennial issue, i.e. with the stereo take of *Up And Down*, *Up And Down*, lacking Clark Terry's 'Lord What Fools...' quote (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act III Scene 2, line 115). Thus, the fear I voiced in my review of the United Artists set (*BL* 19/1 p5) is unhappily confirmed. This Columbia is yet another reissue of the suite on which the mono take with the famous quote is replaced by the stereo one without it.

Lest anyone should think that 'Lord What Fools These Mortals Be' is less than essential to *Such Sweet Thunder*, here's the relevant annotation on Clark's part:

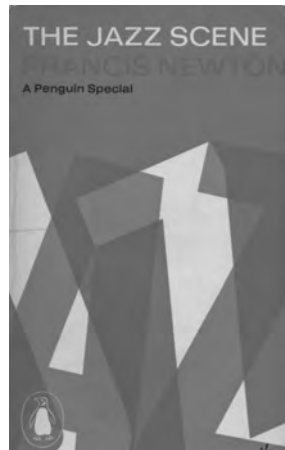


The quote is very obviously the composer's intention, and as such it was noted down by the designated performer, Clark. Any issue not using the take which has it fails to reflect that intention. It's as simple as that.

Sony did issue the 'correct' take with 'Lord What Fools...' on a Columbia Legacy CD, CK85935 titled *Ralph Ellison: Living With Music*, around ten years ago. This is not a *Such Sweet Thunder* issue, but an anthology produced to accompany the eponymously titled book of Ralph Ellison's jazz writings. The book, well worth seeking out, includes Ellison's excellent 1969 essay on Duke, *Homage to Duke Ellington on his Birthday*. But the take needs to be restored to its context, in the suite to which it belongs. **RB**

WANTED: DESUK member Fred J Wadsworth wants tapes/CDs of Duke Ellington in concert with Ella Fitzgerald. Contact Fred at 46 Hereford Walk, Basildon, Essex, SS14 3RE, if you can assist him.

Eric Hobsbawm



The historian Eric Hobsbawm, CH, died on 1 October. Born in 1917 in Alexandria, Egypt, where his father worked in a shipping office, Eric spent his childhood in Vienna, followed by two years in late-Weimar Berlin. Unsurprisingly, these two politically charged cities radicalized the youngster, who arrived in England in early 1933, very soon after Hitler came to power. Hobsbawm reached London in time to prepare for university entrance at Cambridge, yet another highly politicized place in the 1930s. After the disruption of war service (a further formative influence, since it brought him into contact with ‘ordinary’ working people who moved in circles far removed from Hobsbawm’s metropolitan intellectual milieu), a distinguished career followed, spent largely at Birkbeck College in the University of London.

1933 was also the right time for the gangling teenager to be initiated into another lifelong interest, jazz. In the 1950s he became the *New Statesman*’s jazz critic under the *nom-de-plume* Francis (think ‘Frankie’) Newton, and in 1960 he published a Penguin Special, *The Jazz Scene*. The book ranged more widely and deeply than most other books on the subject at that time, which were usually either potted histories or musicians’ memoirs. When *The Jazz Scene* was reissued years later, it was under Eric’s real name.

Eric’s exposure to jazz back in 1933 began in the best possible way, when he experienced the Duke Ellington Orchestra, live, on 16 June at Streatham, south London. Here, written seventy years later, is his account of that initiation. Hobsbawm wrote:

‘The sort of teenagers who were most likely to be captured by jazz in 1933 were rarely in a position to buy more than a few records, let alone build up a collection. Still, enough was already being issued in Britain for the local market: Armstrong, Ellington, Fletcher Henderson and John Hammond’s last recording of Bessie Smith. What is more, shortly before the trade dispute stopped American jazz-players from coming to Britain for some 20 years, the

greatest of all the bands – I can still recite its then line-up from memory – came to London: Duke Ellington’s. It was the season when Ivy Anderson sang *Stormy Weather*. Denis [Preston, a cousin] and I, presumably financed by the family, went to the all-night session (“breakfast dance”) they played at a Palais de Danse in the wilds of Streatham, nursing single beers in the gallery as we despised the slowly heaving mass of south London dancers below, who were concentrating on their partners and not on the wonderful noises. Our last coins spent, we walked home in dark and daybreak, mentally floating above the hard pavement, captured for ever.



Streatham Locarno c1930

‘Like the Czech writer Josef Skvorecky, who has written better about it than most, I experienced this musical revelation at the age of first love, 16 or 17. But in my case it virtually replaced first love for, ashamed of my looks and therefore convinced of being physically unattractive, I deliberately repressed my physical sensuality and sexual impulses. Jazz brought the dimension of wordless, unquestioning physical emotion into a life otherwise almost monopolised by words and the exercises of the intellect’.¹

In the late 1950s Hobsbawm’s cousin Denis Preston would become a key figure in the development of recorded jazz and popular music in Britain, in his role as ‘recording supervisor’ for Lansdowne Jazz, and more widely. ‘Trad.’ and skiffle were two fads with which he was strongly associated. He worked with the gifted, if flawed, producer Joe Meek. Johnny Parker’s rolling blues piano, the ‘hook’ which made Humph’s *Bad Penny Blues* a hit in 1956, and which resurfaced years later in the late Beatles hit *Lady Madonna*, was one of their influential and enduring successes.

Two others whose first exposure to American music was to Duke in London in 1933, at an even more tender age than Eric’s, were the Ertegun brothers, Nesuhi and Ahmet, who went on to found Atlantic Records. They were the sons of the Turkish ambassador to London at the time. Their father was later posted to Washington DC, taking the boys with him to the USA. The long-term repercussions of Duke’s 1933 visit to this country would be a rich field of study for a cultural historian. **RB**

¹Eric Hobsbawm, *Interesting Times* (Little, Brown, 2002)

Ellington On Columbia

by George Avakian

Tracing Duke's contracts is difficult. Early contracts are mostly lost, and it is not easy to penetrate the understandable veil of secrecy exercised by companies and artists' representatives. Fortunately I negotiated a number of his contracts during my years as a Columbia executive (1946-1958).

Certainly Duke was not signed to exclusive contracts during his earliest years. Through 1931, he switched labels in a manner which suggests that his recording rights were controlled entirely by his manager of the time, Irving Mills, who was also a booking agent and who enjoyed a certain amount of flexibility in placing his artists on competing labels – sometimes not even bothering with pseudonyms.



Defining what is meant by 'Columbia Records' is not easy. Because the Columbia and Brunswick labels were owned by the American Recording Corporation (ARC) between 1931 and their final separation in 1939, I believe that the linkage must be considered as having begun with Duke's recording session for Vocalion, a Brunswick subsidiary, on 29 November 1926.

The date is significant on several other levels as well. Earlier that month, Mills heard the Ellington band at a little club on West 49th Street and signed Duke to a management contract the very next day. The two sides released on Vocalion 1064 were the first recordings that clearly defined the Ellington sound, both compositionally and in the arrangements: *East St Louis Toodle-Oo* and *Birmingham Breakdown*. The artist identification on the labels, 'Duke Ellington and his Kentucky Club Orchestra', was also significant, because broadcasts from the club brought their music to the new and important radio audience.

After two more singles with Vocalion and two for the parent Brunswick label, Duke appeared on Columbia for one session (22 March 1927) before returning the following month to Brunswick, apparently in

continuation of Mills's freedom to move Duke easily from label to label.



Victor

By 6 October 1927, Ellington's record sales and broadcasts had evidently caught the attention of Victor, the largest American record company, which recorded four sessions with Duke, interrupted by the Okeh session that included Jabbo Smith's appearance on *Black And Tan Fantasy*. The Ellington Orchestra's most significant move during this period came on 4 December 1927, when it began its tenure as the house band at the Cotton Club, which established it as a major musical force. The Victor session of 19 December also marked the first appearance of 'Duke Ellington and his Cotton Club Orchestra' on a record label.

For the next four years, Duke's free-lance recording continued with a kaleidoscope of releases – many under pseudonyms – which are well documented.

On 9 December 1931, the American Recording Corporation acquired both Brunswick (from Brunswick-Balke-Collender, the leading manufacturer of billiard and pool tables) and Columbia (from the Columbia Gramophone Company) along with their subsidiaries. When ARC was bought by the Columbia Broadcasting System on 1 January 1939, CBS re-established Columbia as a major label, while continuing Brunswick and Vocalion until contracts for the rights to those names were allowed to expire.

At this point, Mills apparently decided that an exclusive Brunswick contract was best for Duke. Beginning with the landmark *It Don't Mean A Thing...* session of 2 February 1932, he kept Duke on that label except for finishing up a commitment with Victor on 3 and 9 February until a year later when Duke made a session for EMI (Electrical and Musical Industries) of England, on 16 February 1933. Since EMI represented Brunswick in Europe at the time, it may well have been an amicable exception rather than a break in Duke's contractual flow at Brunswick. The next interruption was equally brief. While Duke was in England in July 1933, he did a session for Decca, a British label (Jack Kapp, longtime director of pop recording for Brunswick in the U.S., started the American Decca label in late 1934).

Mills had become one of the most powerful artist agents in the business. Even though he continued to place his artists most often with Brunswick and its subsidiaries, he returned Duke in September 1933 to Victor, the elite label of the time. This lasted for a year, until Duke came back to Brunswick with the wonderful *Solitude/Moon Glow* session under a new Brunswick contract dated 1 September 1934. Renewals followed regularly for the next five and a half years.



Master

During the last half of 1936, Mills decided to launch Master Records, which would headline Ellington, as a 75-cent label, with Variety as a 35-cent subsidiary. He brought in Helen Oakley (soon to be Mrs. Stanley Dance) as his principal recording director. Distribution in the United States was arranged through ARC, but Mills held out for full foreign distribution by EMI instead of just selected items. It was a rare miscalculation; no foreign labels agreed to release his product, so there was no foreign income. In July 1937 the Master label was dropped, followed by Variety in October, in favour of a return to the Brunswick and Vocalion labels.



On 1 January 1939 the Columbia Broadcasting Company bought ARC and its artist contracts. With the brilliant Edward (Ted) Wallerstein spirited away from Victor, CBS revived the Columbia label in September, this time at 50 cents, much to the anguish of Victor, which remained at 75 cents. To add insult to injury, the new Columbia pop label was red, which Victor unsuccessfully claimed was an infringement of its copyrighted classical Red Seal label. None of these label changes broke the sequence Mills had started in 1932.

The Brunswick and Vocalion labels were soon phased out, because CBS, having embraced the Columbia name for recordings as well as broadcasting, chose to let the sales on those labels drop below the figure established in the 1931 ARC purchase from Brunswick-Balke-Collender as the annual minimum number of units sold in any given year as a requirement for retention of the rights to the Brunswick and Vocalion labels. Decca picked up the rights to the Brunswick and Vocalion names, though not the masters made since December 1931, which remained CBS-Columbia property. Columbia replaced Vocalion with OKeh as its 35-cent label.

Back to Victor

In early 1940 the biggest breaking-off in Duke's career took place when he split with Irving Mills, who had guided Duke from his early days at the Kentucky Club. Apparently Duke, for the first time, asked to see the books of Mills Music. His contracts with Mills were quietly terminated and Ellington immediately signed with Jack Robbins of Robbins Music as his new publisher and the William Morris agency for management and booking. The Mills-Columbia contract was also cancelled and Duke returned on 6 March 1940 to Victor (now beginning to be known as RCA-Victor).

This was the start of the Webster-Blanton period, although both men had joined Duke a few months earlier. *Ko-Ko* and *Cottontail* led the way to a revival of Duke's fortunes. Even though the record industry was forced to reduce production drastically as war clouds loomed and the Japanese army invaded Malaya in December 1941, cutting off 90% of the world supply of shellac – the most vital ingredient in the manufacture of 78-rpm discs – RCA kept Duke under contract until 3 September 1946.

Musicraft, a new specialty label, signed Ellington for a series of sessions between October and December, 1946, but Duke was without a record contract until Columbia's California office signed him on 30 July, 1947.

Duke, me and Columbia

I had first met Duke the day after I graduated from the Horace Mann School in June 1937, when a classmate's family invited me to a private concert at his parents' Westchester County country club. My first professional contact with him came in 1940 when I released the first Ellington album ever, as part of Columbia's Hot Jazz Classics (the industry's initial series of jazz reissues in the form of annotated 78-rpm albums). As with the first Louis Armstrong album, I included some previously unreleased masters that had lain forgotten in the company's vaults, which delighted Duke as much as it had Louis. A lifelong friendship developed with both my idols, even though I was drafted into the army in 1941 and saw them only once or twice thereafter until my return from the Pacific war in February 1946.

A month later Columbia Records invited me to not only revive the Hot Jazz Classics reissue series, which I had worked on once a week during my last year and a half in college, but to join the pop A&R staff on a full-time basis. Columbia's re-signing of Duke in California raised my hopes that I might one day record him in the studio.

This finally happened on 22 December 1947 at Liederkrantz Hall on 58th Street, starting with the single of *On A Turquoise Cloud*. Two days later *The Liberian Suite* marked the first of several long Ellington works which I had the pleasure of producing, much to his joy but to the dismay of the salesmen, who always wanted to know, 'when is Duke going to create his next *I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart*?'



I continued recording Duke, whose contract was renewed for two years on 30 July 1950. By then I was no longer an untested member of the A&R staff. Mr. Wallerstein had put me in charge of a new department, Popular Albums, as well as the International department, which the war had rendered virtually dormant. The development of the long-playing record soon changed my life, as well as the nature of the recording industry. By 1951, LP had overtaken the pop single worldwide as the most profitable type of record release.

It was during this period that Columbia gave Duke the right to record for Mercer Records, a label named after his son, who had composed *Things Ain't What They Used To Be*, one of the band's new theme songs. (The other of course was Billy Strayhorn's *Take The A Train*.) This was an amicable arrangement which pleased Duke and represented no competition to Columbia, as Mercer Records had very modest public distribution. In fact, I even supervised a couple of these sessions for Duke, at no charge.

This arrangement led to an unexpected dividend. During an engagement at the Rainbow Ballroom in Fresno, California, Duke had a local engineer make a recording of Louie Bellson's composition *Skin Deep*, intended for Mercer Records. (Duke and Mercer assured me the date was 29 February 1952 – it was in a leap year – which contradicts both Nielsen and the magnificent

New DESOR by Luciano Massagli and Giovanni Volonté.)

During appearances at a couple of sound-equipment shows in the mid-west, Duke arranged to have the unreleased recording used as a demonstration disc for new speakers. The reaction was wildly enthusiastic. Hearing the tape, months later in New York, inspired me to purchase it for inclusion in a new Columbia LP, stressing the term 'Hi-Fi' in the album title.

The balance of that set, Columbia CL-830, was done at our 30th Street Studio in New York, actually a few days after Duke's two-year contract of 1950 had expired. Here is what happened.

Not long after Mitch Miller joined Columbia to run the pop singles department, he established a schedule of two releases a week. Sometimes I might add a third, such as by Duke, which was especially useful for air play as most disc jockeys were not yet featuring album tracks. Eventually Mitch protested that this distracted from the weekly 'push' on his new singles. He particularly singled out Duke, who was always anxious to promote his recordings on the radio, at a time when disc jockeys were not playing many album tracks.

This conflict came to a boil while I was negotiating a renewal of Duke's contract, just as we were poised to take advantage of his sudden popularity with high-fidelity equipment manufacturers. Neither Mitch nor Duke would budge on the singles issue, so I arranged to complete the *Hi-Fi Ellington Uptown* album under a short-term 'date' contract. This still left some time open on the second side of the LP, which I filled with *Controversial Suite*, left over from 1951, in part because the sales department never liked Duke's long compositions. The music fit the high-fidelity concept, and it also gave Duke and me a private chuckle, because of the timing of its release during the controversy over single-record releases.

Capitol

1953 arrived and disc jockeys had begun to play album tracks extensively, but this did not change Duke's desire to have singles released. He remained without a contract until Capitol promised him full promotion including singles. To my dismay, the very first recording Duke made under his new Capitol contract was *Satin Doll* – exactly the kind of single the Columbia salespeople had been hoping he would do for the last several years!

I had had a similar experience with Toots Thielemans. In 1948 my brother Aram had become his friend in Brussels and Paris, and he persuaded me to sign Toots when he first came to America. Nothing happened in the first year of his contract, and I did not pick up the option. And when Toots signed with Verve, what was his first recording? You guessed it – *Valse Bluesette*! We have laughed about it all throughout our sixty-odd years of close friendship.

Duke's two-year contract with Capitol did not affect our long-standing personal relationship. As 1955 drew to a close, I spoke to Duke about two projects. Rosemary Clooney had wanted to make an album with Duke. She had a feeling for jazz, and I felt that her poignant interpretation of *Hey, There* indicated that she and Duke might be a good fit. Duke agreed, and said he'd even write a new work for the LP, which became the album title, *Blue Rose*. Another date contract was signed for the project.

A colleague at Columbia at the time was Irving Townsend, whom I had met when Benny Goodman introduced us during his engagement at the 400 Restaurant on Madison Avenue in 1946. 'You'll like him,' said Benny. 'He got out of the Navy just about the time you got out of the Army; he's a good clarinetist too.' Irv and I became good friends. He struggled for years as a free-lance writer, but succeeded mainly in collecting an impressive number of rejection slips from the very best magazines – *Atlantic*, *New Yorker*, *Saturday Review*, you name it. When an opening for a copywriter developed in the Columbia publicity department, I got Irv the job, and in the intervening years he became the advertising manager.

By 1955, my two departments – Pop Albums and International – had become the most profitable divisions of any American record company. The successes that Ted Wallerstein had brought with LP, and his successor Jim Conkling with his faith in the ultimate power of popular albums and the concept of company-owned distributors, had not greatly changed the tight budgeting that Columbia had got used to when the company was lagging behind Victor and Decca in the mid-forties. I was working night and day with my two departments (and enjoying it despite only nominal raises in salary each year despite their enormous growth) but the only way I could get more assistance was to arrange for Cal Lampley, a tape editor in the engineering department's night shift, to come into Pop Albums after I successfully recommended a replacement for him – none other than Teo Macero, who had impressed me with his musicianship while playing with Charles Mingus, who paid Teo the rare honour of performing his music alongside Mingus's own.

Meanwhile Townsend knew I needed still more help. He had been present at several of my sessions, and felt that he too could produce records if he had the opportunity. It was an idea I should have recognized myself. I invited Irv to come more often to the studio, and between us we found a replacement, just as I had with Lampley.

I decided that the Ellington-Clooney collaboration would be the best way to start Irv as a producer. Both artists, I assured him, were thorough professionals who were easy to work with. A snag developed in the early planning, but it also contributed to my conviction to give Irv the assignment. This was the fact that Rosie, as we all

called Miss Clooney with great affection, was pregnant in Los Angeles, with no possibility of being able to travel, and Duke was coming to New York with no prospect of an early return to California. The solution was to send Irv and Billy Strayhorn to Los Angeles to work with Rosie in picking the songs and setting the keys. Duke and Billy would then prepare the arrangements, which would be recorded in New York without the vocals, and Billy and Irv would return to Los Angeles to rehearse Rosie and supervise the overdubbing of her voice.



I explained the process to Irv while the backgrounds were being recorded at 30th Street, assuring him that it would be even easier than recording a vocalist in the usual way. Everything worked like a charm, and the album turned out well.

All this is background to the second idea I discussed with Duke in the winter of 1955-56. This was inspired by my having accepted an invitation a few months earlier from the New Orleans Jazz Club and Dr. Edmond Souchon (a banjo-plucking dentist and jazz enthusiast whose creation of a new set of false teeth – commissioned by Louis Armstrong – had made possible the comeback a few years earlier of the legendary trumpeter Bunk Johnson) to bring Turk Murphy's band from San Francisco to headline what would be the first New Orleans Jazz Festival.

At first I thought that this was like 'bringing coal to Newcastle', but the Louisianans explained that the local music had degenerated into a kind of Middle Period Tourist Dixieland, whereas Murphy had come to symbolize The Real Thing. Doc Souchon had no budget for transporting Murphy's band all the way to New Orleans, but fortunately this took place at the time that Columbia's publicity director, Debbie Ishlon, was working with the Helena Rubinstein cosmetic company in the promotion of a new shade of lipstick.

Although Turk was only a small part of the promotion, Mme. Rubinstein agreed to defray the cost of our bringing him to N.O. from S.F. in exchange for a credit in the album annotation. Columbia's principal beneficiary was Dave Brubeck, who agreed to make an album called *Jazz: Red Hot and Cool*, which was the name of the new lipstick. I'm sure you've seen the album cover, with a

languorous model, Suzy Parker, draped over Dave's piano. (Her lipstick still looks to me like just plain red.)



In New Orleans I thought of going for a two-LP set (the second LP would feature local musicians), but Doc Souchon was right – there was no ‘name strength’ to speak of in the Crescent City at the time, so I settled for having the venerable trombonist Santo Pecora sit in with Murphy during a set to be recorded on board a riverboat. This almost failed when we discovered that the battery-driven electricity on board Captain Joe Streckfus's *S.S. President* ran down, giving a new but unwelcome meaning to the slide trombone. Fortunately Peck's gig at the Famous Door on Bourbon Street did not start until well after we returned to the pier, and the set was completed by plugging our equipment into a dockside outlet.

Newport 1956

Meanwhile Duke had made an arrangement to do two LPs for Bethlehem Records in February 1956, but that did not stand in the way of the second idea I had for him. Having pulled off what has often been considered the first recording ever at a jazz festival (the 1952 Paris concerts starring Sidney Bechet and Charlie Parker were not billed a festival, but would have qualified), I decided to go for the grand prize – multi-LP set at Newport by Columbia artists, including Duke Ellington premiering a special composition I would ask him to write for the occasion.

I had been on the advisory board of the Newport Jazz Festival from the start, and saw that it was in financial difficulty despite its well-publicized beginnings. Its main support came from Louis Lorillard, whose family's fortunes had begun in 1760 with the founding of the American Tobacco Company. Louis and his wife Elaine, who originated the idea of the festival, had engaged George Wein to produce it. The financial report at the last board meeting had been discouraging. Why not plan to record Columbia artists at Newport in 1956, and persuade the company to donate a substantial sum to the festival for the right to do so?

The first step was to persuade Columbia to come up with a figure. Goddard Lieberson, who had replaced Conkling as president at Columbia, approved a

\$25,000 donation. The Lorillards were ecstatic; they recognized at once the long-range value of a set of Columbia recordings publicizing the Festival worldwide, adding ‘if we had enough money, we would pay Columbia to record it!’ George Wein's initial reaction was ‘I wasn't going to invite Duke back for a third year if he's going to feature the medley of his old hits, but I'll book him if he really writes a new piece.’ I assured him that that was my priority also – I would absolutely need fresh repertoire from Duke, as well as everybody else.

The last step was to ask Duke if he could compose a new work in time, dedicated to the Festival – ‘something we might call the *Newport Jazz Festival Suite*’. Duke's response was, ‘Strays and I always have something we can cook up by then.’ He agreed to another date contract for Newport, and with that start I lined up Louis Armstrong, Dave Brubeck, J.J. Johnson and Kai Winding, Eddie Condon and a small group under Buck Clayton.

Then two days before I left for Newport, Lieberson urged at the end of a meeting with the sales department that I cancel the idea of recording at Newport in favour of calling in the artists to repeat their repertoire in the studio, because of the risks of one-shot outdoor recording, particularly as the Festival had announced that there would be no refunds or postponements in case of rain.

‘The payment to the Festival is still OK’, he said, ‘but not the risk of unusable results’. I pleaded that a far more likely result could be some inspired live performances. (Of course I had no idea until minutes before the Ellington musicians went on-stage that Duke had a surprise that would spark the band – the last-minute *Diminuendo And Crescendo In Blue*).

Only an impassioned plea by the sales manager Hal Cook saved the day. His main argument was not merely that I had worked hard to make this unique idea possible, or that we had announced our plans publicly, but that ‘this has never been done before – and we are Columbia; we do things that nobody has ever tried.’

And oh yes, the first set, with Eddie Condon, was successfully recorded in a howling rainstorm during which the musicians never took off their raincoats, Eddie never opened his guitar case, and the piano top remained closed. (I put a mike under it).

The day before Duke was to arrive at Newport, he called me to say that because of the lack of rehearsal time there would almost certainly be flaws in the performance of the Newport suite. Could I book a studio the Monday after Newport, in case anything needed to be re-recorded and patched into the live performance? I assured him we could, but what if somebody bought the recording and complained that he did not hear the wrong notes he had heard at the concert? Duke had a ready answer: ‘Just ask him if he would have been willing to buy a recording with mistakes in it!’

Well, you all know what really happened. Duke was so pleased by the way the engineers and I saved the day that the rest is history – including unfortunately the notorious annotation which appears in the Columbia 2CD edition. It is packed with unbelievably transparent false statements from start to finish. My lawyer, who still represents the estates of Jimi Hendrix, John Lennon and Miles Davis, told me: ‘Don’t sue. You can’t lose, but Phil Schaap has no money, and Sony is so complicit in publishing libellous statements that their own files disprove, that they will delay and file appeals forever, hoping that at your age’ (79 at the time) ‘you will run out of money, or drop dead, whichever comes first.’ Luckily the Sony Music executives who permitted this to happen are no longer with the company, and so after all these many years the truth will eventually come forth.

Duke was so grateful that he accepted the three-year term contract of July 10, 1956 which I had prepared to replace the date contract – without a guarantee of single releases, which we both felt no longer mattered.

There was a bit of a flap during Townsend’s recording of either *Drum Is A Woman* or *Such Sweet Thunder* – I wasn’t present during those sessions, and I don’t remember which, but it was probably the latter. A dispute arose between Irv and the engineers about how the stereo version was to be recorded for possible future use. (At that time Ampex had given us an experimental stereo recorder, which was run simultaneously with the usual ‘A’ and ‘B’ monaural reels. Unfortunately this unit was not available for Newport 1956.) When Duke found out that a stereo version of that session might never be possible, he asked me to come back and replace Irv as his producer.

I talked him out of it, not just to protect Irv, but because I knew that I was planning to leave Columbia very soon, and I did not want to leave Duke with an unresolved problem. Fortunately that blew over, and I resigned with a clear conscience on my 39th birthday on March 15, 1958. It was a convenient Friday, and also made a nice bracket with the day Mr. Wallerstein had hired me to start the Hot Jazz Classics – Washington’s Birthday in 1940.

Such Sweet Thunder

Incidentally, I always regretted that I did not have time to produce *Thunder* myself. I would especially have enjoyed writing the story of its first performance. Some time in the fall of 1956, my wife (violinist Anahid Ajemian) and I planned a series of four concerts to be presented at Town Hall in New York. Each programme would present classical artists in the first half, and jazz artists in the second half, interpreting a particular aspect of music in their own medium. Her manager suggested an overall title of *Music For Moderns*, and I decided to ask Duke to write a new 40-minute suite for the first programme, to be performed opposite a performance of

Kurt Weill’s *Concerto for Violin and Wind Instruments*, conducted by Dmitri Mitropoulos with Anahid as the soloist. I still have the guest list chart for that concert. Miles Davis had G-6 and G-8 in the parterre.

Soon after Duke accepted the commission, he called to say that he and Strayhorn would not be able to complete a new work in time. ‘We’re still working on a suite for the Shakespeare Festival in Stratford, Ontario,’ he said. ‘Maybe they’d like to have the premiere at Town Hall in New York. Call the director and ask him.’ He not only agreed, but he accepted my invitation to come to New York and speak before the work was performed. Duke knew that as an English Literature major at Yale, I was familiar with most of Shakespeare’s plays. He asked me to come up with a title for the new suite. ‘Easy!’ I said. ‘The first line of *Twelfth Night* is “If music be the food of love, play on.” It’s even spoken by a Duke, named Orsino.’ ‘Too obvious’, said Duke. ‘We should find something more subtle.’ I bought three copies of a cheap edition of the complete plays, and suggested that we divide the search among us. Duke covered the first 14 plays, Irv the next 14, and I took the remainder, plus the sonnets and poems.



It was Duke who came up with *Such Sweet Thunder*. They are the last words of a speech by Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons, in the middle of Act 4 Scene 1 of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. When I looked it up I understood at once why Duke had chosen it: “I never heard so musical a discord, such sweet thunder!”

After I left, Duke signed a new three-year contract on July 10, 1959. He continued with similar renewals until his relationship with Columbia came to an unexpected end. By then, Clive Davis was president of the company when he decided in October 1972 to cancel all contracts of Columbia jazz artists except for Miles Davis – something I was very familiar with, because I was Keith

Jarrett's manager at the time. The company had just picked up his option for a second year, and we were in the midst of discussing a live recording of Keith's first unaccompanied piano concert, which I was about to produce at the Mercer Arts Centre in Greenwich Village. Columbia paid Keith the minimum guarantee for the cancelled second year, and I worked out new contracts for him with Impulse and, for unaccompanied recordings, ECM, a new company just started by Manfred Eicher who came to the solo concert and liked what he heard. I made the concert recording myself, but Keith thought he could do better in the future, so it was never released.

Nevertheless, Manfred – who spoke almost no English at the time – signed Keith to a contract that I drew up in German with the help of my high school *Sprachlehrbuch*. The last time I saw Davis was a couple of years later. I greeted him with one word: 'Kölnkonzert'. He never spoke to me again.

Oh, I enjoyed that story so much I forgot about Duke and the end of his Columbia career. The singer Joni James was outside Davis's office when she overheard the last conversation Duke had with him. 'Duke, we're cancelling your contract,' Davis said. 'You don't sell records.' 'Excuse me', Duke replied, 'my job is to make records. Your job is to sell them.'

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CELEBRATING DUKE IN PERPETUITY

A small corner of England hopefully will be forever Ellington... A commemorative plaque featuring in part the Ellington 2012 Conference in Woking has been unveiled by the town council at the completion of its in its town square redevelopment.

The metallic tablet includes the conference among activities supported by the council as part of *Celebrate Woking*, its arts and sport project inspired by the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the London Olympics.

Under the heading **Duke Ellington Conference**, the citation reads: **"For five days during May 2012 Woking hosted the 21st Annual Duke Ellington Conference at the H.G. Wells Conference and Events Centre. Delegates from across the globe visited the town to celebrate one of America's most influential composers of the 20th Century."**

The plaque was a complete surprise to me. As Woking organiser of the conference I can report that within two weeks of its installation around 20 people had approached me to say they had seen it. This makes me feel very proud.

It is a large and solid-looking plaque mounted under cover on a wall at the side of the square. If as I hope it escapes the attention of vandals it should last indefinitely.

Geoff Smith

UNIQUE JAZZ REISSUES

Ray Hunter (Bournemouth) has alerted me to a recent (26 October) Membran issue of a 10CD boxed set of live performances from the mid-1940s to early 1970s, which were formerly on the bootleg label Unique Jazz, initially on LP. Ellington interest centres on three of the ten. CDs 1 and 2 have most of the music (the medley and the Hibbler vocals are omitted) from the 31 August 1947 Hollywood Bowl concert, and CD10 has selections from 22 July 1960 at Mather Air Force Base; some of these duplicate an earlier Red Baron CD, *Hot Summer Dance*. The other seven discs have 1953 Basie airshots from Birdland, some with Prez guesting; mid-40s Calloway remotes from the Zanzibar; 1960s Monk – quartet and an octet including Clark Terry; the classic Miles-Trane quintet with Kelly, Chambers and Cobb; and two stellar 'all-stars' groups. One, with Jay and Kai et al. from 1958, has Oscar Pettiford on bass; the other has Eldridge, 'Jaws' and others in 1972, propelled by Louie Bellson.

Turning to the sound on these recordings Ray writes: 'I can confirm that they have been cleaned up very, very well. I have played the first Duke, the first Basie, and the Cab Calloway and for radio broadcasts they are very good. The Duke stuff from 1947 is as old as I am, and really clear and a powerful performance to boot. I can remember seeing reviews of Unique LPs and sound quality was sometimes not their greatest virtue. Rarity value seemed to be more why they issued them, on cheap pressings probably'.

Ray paid under £10 for the set. At that price this is a 'must' if you are without the valuable Ellington material, even if you have no interest in any other jazz at all. At the time of the 1947 concert Ellington was starting to record again after an enforced gap precipitated by Musicraft's demise. The Mather AFB dance merits a complete issue, properly annotated, but the reissue of these selections is better than nothing, in spite of the irritating duplications with *Hot Summer Dance*.

RB



UNIQUE JAZZ CD OF PART OF THE 1947 HOLLYWOOD BOWL CONCERT

Sjef Hoefsmit

Sjef Hoefsmit, DESUK member, editor of the *International Duke Ellington Music Society Bulletin*, Ellington connoisseur and specialist record collector, died on 2 September, aged 83, following a recurrence of a cancer for which he had undergone surgery early in the year.

Sjef began collecting Duke's recordings during the German occupation. It was no easy task at that time, and the experience must have helped him develop the persistence and single-minded determination with which he pursued his enthusiasm after the War. He became a completist, though his record collecting did not exclude the live experience. Once Duke began touring in post-war Europe, Sjef always caught his appearances in The Netherlands and Belgium.

He combined the acquisitive instincts of the collector with the generous impulses of the sharer. Inevitably he subscribed to the *DEMS Bulletins* when Swedish collector and discographer Benny Aasland launched these in 1979, initially to supplement his *Waxworks of Duke Ellington* discographies for 'advanced collectors'. Before long, Sjef was a regular contributor, becoming ever more centrally involved. He took over the editorship when Benny died in 1996, and continued to give of his time and energies unstintingly, in the cause of Ellington scholarship.

Sjef was involved in the annual Ellington conferences from their earliest days. He never joined an organizing committee, but he did all he could to publicize and support them. His constant presence, soberly dressed, 'correct' in the French sense in demeanour, but radiating boyish enthusiasm and excelling at one-to-one communication, were a key element in the conference mix. He was generous and courteous with his time for everyone who approached him, expert or not. He was very sociable.

He recorded the entire daytime programmes (though not the music). He and Benny always produced – jointly, each prepared one side – a souvenir C90 *Azure* cassette of rare recordings from their collections to give to participants. After Benny's death Sjef continued this tradition until the last annual conference in 2000. *Azure* tapes were also given to DEMS members at Christmas each year. The tapes, 31 in all, are another manifestation of his generosity of spirit. Of necessity they were discontinued, once DEMS ceased to have a dues-paying membership when the *Bulletin* went on-line.

Professionally Sjef ran a printing business, but he abandoned printed *Bulletins* at the end of 2003. Going on-line freed him from financial issues and the chores of printing, collating and mailing. The entire 34-year series is now freely available to all. With the coming of the internet he also followed closely the on-line Ellington discussion group Duke-Lym, where he was a patient

corrective, answering queries, and providing with concision, tact and courtesy the facts to temper inaccurate or ill-considered contributions. He was a rather modest and self-deprecating person, I felt, though at the same time incisive and a stickler for accuracy.



SJEF HOEFSMIT, KLAUS STRATEMANN, EDDIE LAMBERT at the 1983 Ellington Conference. Photo: Ted Hudson

His wife Milia once said to me he was obsessive. I agreed, adding that this was also almost certainly what kept him active and in good health. His daughter Babette reports that, when her father retired to his Ellington 'den' the family would say he was 'off to see his mistress'. Sjef would have enjoyed the echoes of Ellington in their description of his activities. After Milia's death in 2005 his Ellington interests occupied him virtually full-time until he began his fight with cancer last year.

He placed great value on freedom, and I am in no doubt that this goes back to his boyhood experiences in the Nazi Occupation. Everything Ellington had to say about the importance of freedoms resonated with Sjef, I'm sure. He enjoyed living on the border between his country of birth and Belgium, where he lived. His house was built to his own specification, he explained with quiet pride. He turned its location to his and DEMS' advantage, slipping across the border to mail the *Bulletins* because of the cheaper Dutch postal rates. He took us along a street in Antwerp lined with fine early twentieth-century residences, no two of them alike. 'This wouldn't happen in Holland', he said, 'they'd all be the same'. He liked the range and number of Belgian beers: 'there are lots of beers in Holland too, but they're all the same. Only the labels are different'.

In 1996 Sjef, who usually confined his own *Bulletin* contributions to points of information, wrote: 'Duke's music is gentle, spiritual, humorous, intelligent, self-conscious...' (I'm sure he meant 'self-assured'), '...sometimes even proud, but most of all it is full of love for the fellow human beings'. He was applying these attributes to his friend Benny, but they apply with equal force to Sjef himself.

Roger Boyes

Sjef Hoefsmit, b Rotterdam (The Netherlands) 22 February 1929, d Meerle (Belgium) 2 September 2012

Eddie Harvey

Eddie Harvey, trombonist, pianist, arranger, composer, author and teacher, died on 9 October in Twickenham, London. At first he was a revivalist trombone player, but by 1950 he had switched to modern jazz. I saw Eddie with Woody Herman's Anglo-American Herd in 1959, though I think I'd already seen him the year before, when Don Rendell's Jazz Six toured the country as the warm-up band for the MJQ. He spent much of the 1960s with Humph, and then took up teaching, becoming a distinguished jazz educator and writing *Teach Yourself Jazz Piano*. Eddie was indeed beyond category. This review, dating from 1950, the time of his move to modern jazz, reveals a gifted, perceptive Ellington commentator. **RB**

Welcome Duke

Duke Ellington and his Orchestra

The Beautiful Indians

(Part 1) Hiawatha (Part 2) Minnehaha Parlophone R.3088

a record review by **Eddie Harvey**

reproduced from Jazz Illustrated, vol.1, no.7, for the loan of a copy of which I am grateful to Frank Harvey.

So Duke Ellington is in Europe again. He will not be playing here of course, as that would be putting British musicians out of work. Well, if I had the chance to hear him in this country, I'd have no objection to being out of work for a week.

No doubt the writers of the many articles I have read during the last few years accusing Duke of becoming 'arty' and 'non-jazz' are not interested in hearing his music, but I certainly am, because, in my humble opinion, I consider that he is the greatest artist that our music has yet produced.

He obviously doesn't stay up nights worrying about these criticisms, because he is continuing what he started over twenty years ago; developing and experimenting with his music, unaffected by any particular outside trend, but nevertheless absorbing certain aspects to suit his own purpose. I wonder whether Duke will ever pack up and try psychiatry? I doubt it.

The two sides entitled *The Beautiful Indians* are typical of the tone poems that Duke has written in recent years. A life time's study and practise of writing for 'dance band' instrumentation has equipped him with sufficient knowledge to obviate the necessity of borrowing instruments from the classical sphere in order to add colour to his music – unlike many writers in the popular music sphere. Even the wordless vocal effect he uses on the second side is a revival of the idea he used many years ago when Adelaide Hall was with the band.

The first of these sides, **Hiawatha**, has an Indian War Dance atmosphere with the principal figure portrayed by Ben Webster's tenor saxophone. A percussive piano introduction by Duke sets the mood for Webster's full toned and elegantly controlled solo, backed by the varying hues of woodwind and brass. The clarinet choir proves that the instrument more than deserves its place in modern jazz music, contrary to the current opinion in some quarters.

The harmonic complexity of the brass writing does not possess the blatantly exhibitionistic tendencies of the 'wall of sound' school, and also though the section is small in comparison with the usual Kenton football team, the variance of colour displayed is far greater than that heard in the progressive league.

The second side is named **Minnehaha** and features the amazing opera-trained voice of Kay Davis, who appeared with Duke when he visited this country last year. Although she has had this training the inflections she introduces into her wordless song show she has not forgotten her jazz heritage. The background for the beautiful melody Miss Davis sings is mostly sustained saxophone chords, combined with intricate bass writing. Lawrence Brown continues the theme on trombone for a few bars with impeccable taste, allowing Kay Davis to continue. She ends with a difficult coda consisting of solo voice, followed by a voice and clarinet duet, in which the singer pitches intervals seldom heard for voice outside modern classical music.

The only faults I found here were Kay Davis' last note, which is obviously too low for her, and the final Dick Barton chord, which I found incongruous, but easily forgivable.

RB: *A couple of questions. British enthusiasts in 1950 would be familiar with the singing of Kay Davis from her 1948 tour with Duke and Ray Nance. But had her wordless soprano been heard on record before? Her two best-known recordings in this vein were issued here, but was that earlier or later than this Parlophone release? **Transblucency** (1946) came out on HMV B9794, and **On A Turquoise Cloud** (1947) appeared on Columbia DB2591. Is it possible to deduce release dates from these issue numbers?*

*Eddie's confusion of Al Sears with Ben Webster is also interesting. Al actually shares composer credits with Duke on **Hiawatha**, and both are credited on the label of Musicraft 464, where Al is also named as featured soloist.*

*Duke's denigrators were already scribbling away by 1950, to Eddie's evident annoyance. The restrictive ban which kept the Ellington Orchestra out of this country that year deprived British audiences of the opportunity to hear **The Tattooed Bride**, among much other fine music.*

Keep On With Those Requests

I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart

Among the gratifying continuations of Ellington 2012 in Woking have been mentions and links in *Jazz Record Requests* on BBC Radio 3, now presented by Alyn Shipton.

The standout mention on 23 June was for *Lady Of the Lavender Mist* (Cornell, 10 Dec 1948), requested by a listener, Wendy, who had been prompted to contact Alyn after hearing his exemplary selection of Ellingtonia on 19 May. This was the day when the conference received unprecedented advance exposure on what is probably the UK's best jazz broadcasting platform.

The *Jazz Record Requests* website and Alyn himself proclaimed the show was "focussing on the week's upcoming Ellington conference in Woking" and the items included were *Drop Me Off At Harlem*, 17 Feb 1933 for me, to draw attention to one of our conference logos, 'Drop Me Off At Woking'; *The Duke*, Dave Brubeck Quartet, 3 Jul 1958; *Chequered Hat*, 24 Oct 1971; *East St Louis Toodle-Oo*, Claude Bolling group, 10 Dec 1948; and *The Jeep Is Jumping*, Hazel Scott Trio, 21 Jan 1955.

To state the blindingly obvious, if you want to ensure Ellington continues to feature on this show (which has proved to be a gateway into our music for countless listeners over the decades) you have only to ask Alyn. Give him a selection of recordings if you like. I am sure he will drip-feed them in. And do tell Alyn - and *Blue Light* - why you are asking. I know that you will be pushing at an open door. **Geoff Smith**

Tony Bennett on his Painting

Ken Steiner (Seattle) found this comment by Tony Bennett, in an interview in the *Huffington Post* titled *The Zen of Bennett*.

'I paint every day and I started as a young child drawing pictures with chalk on the sidewalks of my hometown in Astoria, Queens. My whole life I have had a passion to sing and paint but it was Duke Ellington who encouraged me; [he] told me it was best to have two creative outlets, not just one, so he encouraged me to really get serious about painting'.

Things You Read In The Papers:

From the Manitowoc (Wis.) Herald Times, 14 Feb 1935

Q. Where was Duke Ellington born. What popular songs has he written?

A. Born at Washington DC in 1899. Among his most popular songs are *Soda Fountain Rag*, *Moon Indigo* and *Black and Tan Fantasy*.

Thank you to **David Palmquist** (Vancouver)

Juan Tizol: Two Songs With Words

Earlier this year **Basilio Serrano** posted words for two Tizol songs on the on-line discussion group Duke-lym. He wrote:

'Lou Singer prepared the lyrics below for *Gypsy Without A Song* shortly after Tizol composed it. Singer wrote lyrics for other tunes as well. The lyrics are easy to sing to with the Ellington version. Lou Singer also prepared the lyrics for *Lost in Meditation*. He was a known lyricist.'

A Gypsy Without A Song

*Since you are gone the nights are so long,
I'm like a gypsy without a song.*

*Day after day I just drift along
Just like a gypsy without a song.*

*You were ev'ry campfire, ev'ry violin.
Now how can my song begin?*

*And so until you come back to my arms just
where you belong
I'll be a gypsy without a song.*

The second was *Bakiff*, originally recorded in 1941. In 1944 Lee Gallet and Sy Schwartz prepared the lyrics below for the Tizol/Ellington classic. They are less easy to fit to the Victor recording. Try them with Ray Nance's full solo chorus (AABA) and later Tizol's own part-chorus (ABA), perhaps reduced from AABA to trim the recording for 78rpm issue (a check with the Standard Transcriptions recording might confirm that, or otherwise).

Bakiff

*Golden Bakiff on your altar of love,
I have offered dreams laid at your shrine.*

*Clouds of sweet incense uncoiling above,
Merged with dreams Bakiff,
Dreams of that love of mine.*

*Now I'm all alone, for my love fled away,
Stealing all my dreams, so I pray....*

*Oh, Golden Bakiff, though I know love is brief,
Give me back a dream even for just a day.*

Gypsy Without A Song (no preceding 'A') appears with Singer's lyric, properly accredited, in a volume of sheet music I have, titled *The Great Music of Duke Ellington*, and published by Belwyn Mills in the 1970s.

Basilio's book *Juan Tizol – His Caravan Through American Life and Culture*, was published in May by Xlibris Corporation. It is available in hardback and paperback and will be reviewed in *BL* soon. **RB**

Ellington Disc Jockey in 1948

Ed: *As we know, 1948 was not an easy year for Duke. The second recording ban had rudely interrupted his new Columbia contract, entered into the previous August. The Swing Era and the big bands were in terminal decline, and with the rise of TV the ballrooms themselves were threatened by changing patterns of social behaviour. Jazz was riven by revivalist and modernist factions, and other developments were marginalizing it within popular music. It is known that from time to time Duke dabbled in the role of disc jockey on the radio. In this interview he talks about it, in this challenging year. When our member **David Palmquist** (Vancouver) unearthed it and posted it on duke-lym in September I thought it deserved to reappear in print. It appeared in the Zanesville (Ohio) Signal of 13 March 1948. Zanesville's population is c25000, similar to that of the town in which I grew up. The likelihood of the Bingley Guardian running an interview with Duke Ellington, in 1948 or any other year, is slim. The interview follows:*

I wondered why Duke Ellington had become a disc jockey. So I asked him.

Why, I asked the big fellow, did he bother to find time for a disc programme when he was already up to his keyboard in such chores as leading his fine band, taking it on nationwide tours, arranging, composing, running a music publishing firm?

'The answer is simple', the Duke replied, sitting back and chatting for intervals of three and a half minutes each, which is about the time it takes for each recording. 'Music, in any form, spells enjoyment for me. With a disc programme of my own I can play and hear any records that appeal to me. That means a chance to promote the careers of composers and performing musicians who might not ordinarily get a hearing. Not because they lack talent but simply because they aren't considered sufficiently well-known or perhaps are considered too difficult for the public to digest.

'I've tried a few innovations myself during the years, and I'm convinced the public generally can sift the good from the bad. Music, like anything else serving a useful function, must change and improve with the times. The way music was played 20, even 10, years ago, was wonderful for its time. But conditions and moods are different today and men with fresh ideas should be encouraged. And the listener soon decides which ideas have lasting merit.'

The Duke put on a Benny Goodman recording and leaned back again. He said that, paradoxically, not enough OLD things are heard on the average disc jockey show. So-called semi-classical or symphonic items are more stimulating and rewarding than many of the modern mishaps being waxed.

'One more thing', he said, as I started putting on my coat, 'I've always believed the enjoyment of the listener can be increased by a brief explanation of the 'whys' and 'hows' of what is being attempted by a recording artist or composer. Call it verbal programme notes if you like. It's an accepted procedure in opera and symphony fields, and has helped popularize serious music. It's too seldom employed in platter playing.

'So these are just a few of the things I've tried to put over. They may not be sensational or revolutionary. Call them just educational, without academic irritation. And it's sure fun having the chance to try them out.'

Dating Music On the 1943 Fitch Broadcast

In October **Brian Koller** wrote:

Dear Roger

I am the fortunate recipient of the latest edition of *Blue Light*, having joined DESUK a month or two before. You write that "If you have joined DESUK during 2012, you should have copies of BL 19/1 and 19/2, as well as this one. If you haven't, contact me at Great Barton and I'll sort it out."

You must forgive me for sending an email instead, since it is faster and a buck cheaper to write an email. But, naturally, I would not like to miss out on the two prior issues of *Blue Light* for the year 2012.

While I am writing, I would like to comment on the BL 19/3 p14 request for the *New DESOR* numbers for CD2 tracks 13 to 24 of the *Treasury Shows* Vol. 16. These are:

13) 4319a; 14,17,20,23) 4319xd; 15) 4319xa;
16) 4319xb; 18) 4319xc; 19) 4319b; 21) 4319c;
22) 4319e; 24) 4319d. Taken from:
<http://www.depanorama.net/desor/1011.pdf>

I replied: I'll get them both into the post for you, Brian, probably straight after the weekend. Thank you for the details regarding the sources of the Fitch bc. This is where I shall really miss Sjef. I prepared the DETS 16 notes for Mona in February/March, when Sjef was recovering from his surgery, and so did not feel able to bother him. As her deadline came up before he resumed DEMS correspondence, I had to leave the loose end untied.

I never became involved in collecting and printing off the *New DESOR* corrections sheets, essentially because I always seem to be on the go with other things. So I don't have this resource at my fingertips, which is a matter for regret now Sjef is gone. I shall try to sort out how to access them on-line. Many thanks.

EVENTS CALENDAR

In general, we announce live performances by bands with DESUK connections, and/or a repertoire with an Ellington element. Not all performances listed here will be strongly Ellingtonian. Ed.

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. 9 Feb, 13 Apr, 8 Jun, 9 Aug, 12 Oct, 14 Dec. For details contact Antony Pepper. Tel.: 01342 314053; email: ap@antonypepper.com.

Manchester Jazz Society:

Meets Thursdays 8.30pm at the Unicorn, Church Street, off Oldham Street, M4.
Contact Peter Caswell on 01942 671938.

28 Feb 2013, Video night : Duke Ellington in Montreal 1964. *Peter Caswell*

TDES (New York):

meets Wednesdays. St Peter's Church, Lexington Ave at 54th St, NYC, 7.30pm. 16 Jan, 20 Feb, 20 Mar, 17 Apr, 15 May, 19 Jun. For more info contact Roger Boyes

Laurent Mignard Duke Orchestra:

www.laurentmignard.com
Sat 30 Mar: Athis-Mons (env.Paris) (91)
15-27 May: on tour in China
Maison du Duke: www.maisonduduke.com

New Delta Big Band:

Lord Napier, 111 Beulah Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey CR7 8JG. First and third Thu. 8.30-11pm. Free Tel: 020 8653 2286

Harmony In Harlem:

Sat 9 Mar: New Cut Arts Centre, Halesworth, Suffolk.
Contact Michael Kilpatrick:
01223 833062
www.harmonyinharlem.co.uk

Dave Burman:

Weds. Southampton Arms, Highgate, London.

Kinda Dukish:

Thursdays, 8.30pm, British Oak, Pershore Rd., Stirchley, B'ham B30 2XS
Contact Mike Fletcher on
0121 444 4129
mike@efletcher.fsworld.co.uk

Frank Griffith:

Tu 15 Jan: FG/w/Henry Lowther 5. 8.30pm. Lord Rookwood, 314 Cann Hall Road, Leytonstone Road. E11 3NW. £5 Tel: 0208 989 8129.
Tu 31 Jan: FG/w/*Jazz at the Movies*- Jo Eden, vo, Chris Ingham p, Mick Hutton b, George Double d. 8pm. The Stables, Stockwell Lane, Wavendon, Milton Keynes, MK17 8LU. 01908 280800. £15.
www.stables.org
Mon 11 Feb: FG Quintet. Portsmouth Jazz Society, 8pm, The Inn Lodge, Burrsfield Rd, Portsmouth, PO33 5H. w/Adrian Fry tb, Spike Wells d, Terry Seabrook p, Mark Hodgson b.
Sun 7 Apr: FG/w/ *Jazz at the Movies* as 31 Jan. 8pm. Colchester Arts Centre, Church Street, Colchester, Essex CO1 1NF. £10.
www.colchesterartscentre.com
Fri 24 May: FG Trio, 1-2pm, Roberts Room, Brunel Univ., Kingston Lane, Uxbridge UB8 3PH. Free.
www.brunel.ac.uk/artscentre

The Big Chris Barber Band 2013:

Jan and to 3 Feb: touring in Germany
Fri 15 Feb: Birmingham Town Hall (Chris meets Acker). 7.30pm. Tel: 0121 345 0600.
Sun 17 Feb: Gravesend, Kent. Woodville (Civic Centre). 7.30pm. Tel: 01474 337774.
Thu 21 Feb: Manchester. Bridgewater Hall. 7.30pm. 3Bs (Barber, Bilk, Ball).
Fri 1 Mar: Colston Hall Bristol. 6.30pm.
Fri 8 Mar: Grantham. Meres Leisure Centre. 7.30pm. 3Bs. Tel: 01780 763203.
Sat 16 Mar: Pinner (Middx). Pinner Parish Church (Pinner Jazz). 8pm. Tel: 0208 429 1260.
Thu 23 May 2013 Tivoli Theatre, Wimborne, Dorset

Future BL Copy deadlines:

Vol. 20/1: Fri 1 Mar. 2013

Vol. 20/2: Fri 7 June 2013

Vol.20/3: Fri 6 Sep 2013

Vol.20/4: Fri 30 Nov 2013



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COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Quentin Bryar, Frank Harvey, Phil Mead, Geoff Smith

2013 Membership Subscriptions and other matters.

It is always a bit daunting reminding members that their subscriptions are due just as the annual Christmas rush is underway but we have again held the fee at £20 to encourage a positive response. I hope that you continue to enjoy your quarterly copy of our newsletter "Blue Light" and possibly some of the other benefits of membership. In the London area these include a bi-monthly musical afternoon at the Civil Service Club in Whitehall which is advertised on the events page of our web site together with other events that may be of interest to members. If you know of any such events or you want to organise something yourself locally let me know the details and I will endeavour to publicise them in similar fashion. Since the web site can be accessed by anyone with a computer the information will be available to the general public living outside the M25 in the UK and indeed anywhere else in the World.

I am hoping to be able to post such information to members who do not have access to a computer but although services such as this may not take much time that time is not always available to provide them. On such occasions a little help would be welcome and any offers from members to provide it or maybe to develop additional services will be gratefully received. Contact me at the postal or Email address below if you have any good ideas or any time available to help the Society.

2013 Subscription Payments

Members who pay their subscription fee annually and who have not yet paid for the period 1st January to 31st December 2013 are reminded that your £20 subscription should be paid by 31st December 2012

Payment can be made by;

A cheque drawn on a sterling bank account made payable to **DESUK**. Post it to the **DESUK Treasurer at 38 Thurlestone Avenue, London N12 0LP**, (to assist in recording your payment it would be helpful if you could write your membership number on the back of the cheque and your name if it is not displayed clearly on the front)

Standing Order or Bank Transfer to DESUK at Santander Bank, Sort Code 09-01-55, Account number 15478709 or

PayPal:- Using the "Send Money" facility quoting Email address desuk@victor.waitrose.com (commission charges are paid by DESUK, not you).

Overseas members can pay using a Sterling International Money Order

Email Addresses. We can save money on postage if we can Email messages to you, so if you have an Email address and have not yet supplied it to us we would be grateful if you could do so.

Donations are always welcome. If you wish to make a donation to the Society in addition to your subscription an acknowledgement of this will be published in the next issue of Blue Light.

Victor Lawrance

MINUTES of the DESUK Committee Meeting held at the Penderel's Oak Tavern, High Holborn, London, on 7th July 2012

Present: Peter Caswell (Chair), Catherine Coates, Victor Lawrance, Roger Boyes, Frank Harvey, Phil Mead, Antony Pepper, Geoff Smith

1. Chairman opened the meeting at 1 pm and welcomed everyone to the new location.
2. Apologies had been received from Chris Addison and Quentin Bryar.

3. The Minutes of the meeting on 24/3/2012 were approved.

4. There were **no matters arising** from the Minutes.

5. Officers' reports.

a. Treasurer/Membership Secretary (VL): PC thanked VL for his previously circulated report. VL advised he had had some success in getting late subs in but there were still some unpaid. He requested that the committee approach people known to them to encourage payment and this was agreed. No decision on life membership had been taken at the AGM and VL was recommending that life membership should be discussed. Current life membership is £200. VL recalled that there had been 3 new life memberships taken out during the last six months and taking this into account it was agreed that life membership should continue to be offered, that a factor of 10 was right for life membership and that if/when annual subscriptions went up the life membership subscription would rise in line.

VL confirmed he had problems contacting people unavailable by email and BL returns were his only indication that details might have changed. Donations from life members were asked for by letter some years ago. Any further attempt on these lines would need to be very tactfully handled. DESUK Merchandise: AP explained that there had been a page on the website listing merchandise and Derek Else had dealt with requests for items. When DE left, the merchandise was been split up. RB has the back copies of BL. The merchandise page has now been removed from the website. It was agreed that VL would update the list he had prepared before Ellington 2012 and that items should be made available for members attending the AGM 2013.

b. Blue Light Editor (RB): RB had nothing further to add to his report which had been previously circulated, other than to stress that the schedule for 19/3 is fixed and the deadline is absolutely strict.

c. Publicity (CA): PC had spoken with CA recently. CA was having a few problems at present, but had hoped to send in his report prior to the meeting.

Unfortunately this had not been possible. However, CA hoped to be back on track shortly.

d. Meetings organiser/Website (AP): Plans were now under way for the next London meeting. Examples from the Woking Conference will be played at the August meeting. AP has been streamlining the website. He confirmed that CA has access to the site and access can be given to someone else. Following a lengthy discussion, it was agreed that VL would oversee the Members page and that general enquiries formerly fielded by RB would now come to CC who would deal with each as appropriate. It was agreed that VL would liaise with CA as regard the Events; and that AP would also liaise with VL to update him on website protocol.

6. ELLINGTON 2012. GS said the biggest question arising from the conference is – where do we go from here? AP felt it had been a very positive event and thanked DESUK for its support. Committee members gave their views which were very complimentary. It was agreed GS would provide RB with a paragraph for BL on the Alyn Shipton programme. On finances from the conference, GS said that they had just about made it. There was a debt of gratitude to Woking Council; there are a couple of outstanding things which may mean a small profit. The pledged money from DESUK will not be needed. Maggie Black had mainly funded the Claude Bolling inclusion. PC will write to Woking council to thank them for their support and in particular for the use of the Council Chamber for the AGM. CC confirmed the letterhead will be available soon.

7. AGM 2012. These had been emailed to everyone and will be discussed over the next future dates, including the possibility of an electronic version of BL.

8. A.O.B. a. Tony Faulkner MSS: RB confirmed no change, these are still stored at his address. b. Enquiries on-line *via* dukes-place@duke-lym: Dealt with earlier (as part of 5d above) and enquiries will now go to CC.

9. Dates and venues for future meetings:

The next meeting will be on **SATURDAY 27th OCTOBER 2012** at 12.30 for 1 pm prompt. The Punch Tavern or at Penderel's Oak (to be confirmed well before the meeting).

The meeting was declared closed at 3 pm.

C.Coates 10th July 2012.

These Minutes approved at Committee Meeting 27/10/2012. The draft Minutes of the 27 October meeting will be discussed at the Committee's next meeting, on 26 January 2013.