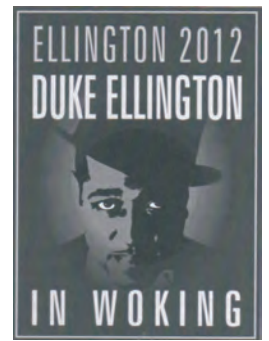
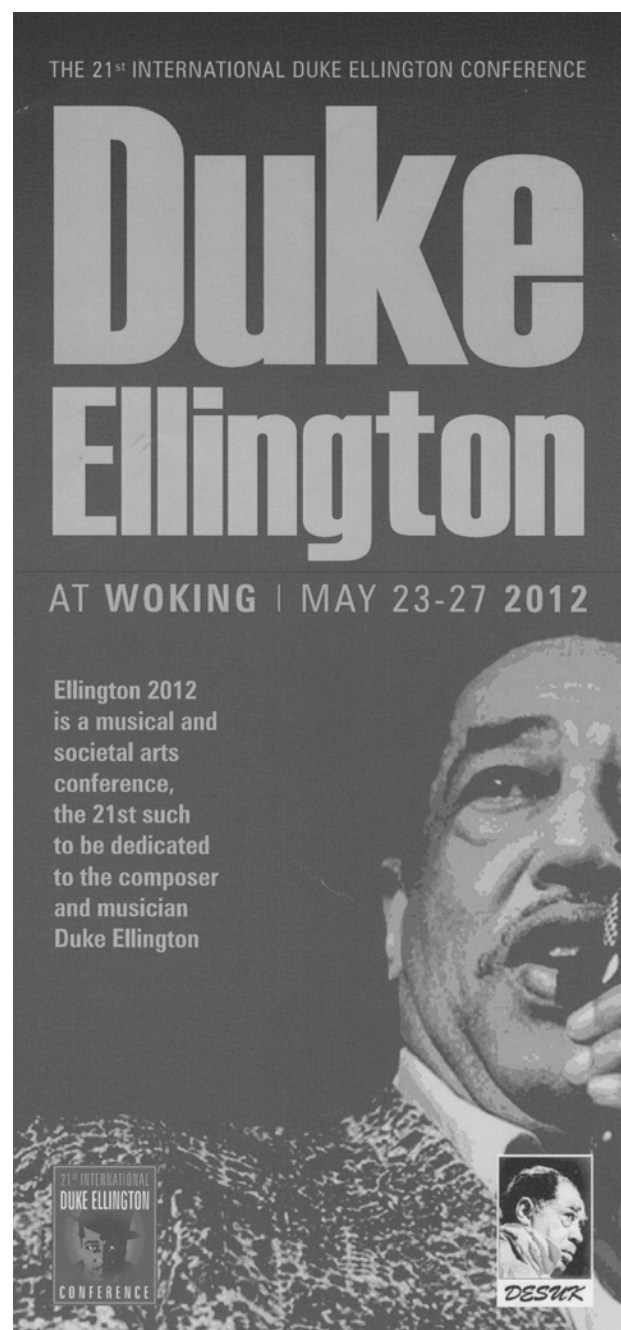




BLUE LIGHT



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DUKE ELLINGTON SOCIETY (UK)
VOLUME 19 NUMBER 2 • SUMMER 2012



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 19/3) is Friday 7 September 2012

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BLUE LIGHT

NEWSLETTER OF THE DUKE ELLINGTON SOCIETY (UK)

Editorial

I am sorry that you are receiving your *Blue Light* late. I had to delay the deadline in order to receive copy about the Woking conference in late May, and this in turn delayed *BL*'s further preparation. Congratulations go to Geoff Smith, Antony Pepper and all who assisted them in putting together Ellington 2012. It was a very happy and friendly occasion, due in no small part to Geoff's ability to convey enthusiasm, efficiency and informality in an engaging combination at all times.

A big thank-you is also due to the officers and elected members of Woking Council, especially those who assisted Geoff unstintingly with practical support in time, energy and resources. Geoff reports that, as well as being a cultural and social success, Ellington 2012 broke even financially. Five pages (pp7-11) of reports in this issue cover many of the good things on offer at Woking.

I found much, both in the presentations and in the music, that was stimulating, and as ever, the 'hidden' programme, renewing friendships and making new acquaintance, was very enriching. Little things went wrong, as they are bound to do, but my only real reservation concerns the low level of support E12 generated within DESUK and more widely. As Geoff reports on another page, there was no lack of good publicity. It seems there is no longer any substantial appetite for such an event these days, in this country.

*

In addition to Woking, and the usual reviews of CD releases, *BL* 19 2 includes reports on a particularly wide range of recent performances of Duke's and Ellington-inspired music around the country.

*

I was tempted to ignore completely the performance by *Echoes Of Ellington* of *The Queen's Suite* at the Marlborough Jazz Festival on 13 July. Pete Long's outrageous blurb in the Festival's programme claims it 'has never been performed till now', and promotes himself as 'the force behind the rediscovery of this fabulous piece of music'. Hying up his band as 'one of the greatest UK swing orchestras of all time' is one thing, but erasing the performance history of the suite in this country (Oldham 1988; Royal Festival Hall 1989; twice in London in recent years), and discounting the efforts of Bob Wilbur, the Ellington'88 committee, and others who worked to bring it to life, in order to claim it as a 'world premiere' and his 'rediscovery', is really not on.

Nevertheless, it is good that this lovely work is being performed again, so the details appear on our Events Calendar (p19). Members who live within striking distance of Marlborough should go.

*

For members who join DESUK late in the year the request to renew for the next year comes soon. Please bear in mind that annual membership is for the *calendar* year, and that you receive all four issues of *BL* in that year's volume, no matter when during the year you join. All annual subscriptions expire on 31 December.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

A few personal notes on our AGM and other Woking matters



We were honoured to hold our Annual General Meeting on the morning of Sunday 27th May in the state-of-the-art Council Chamber of Woking Borough Council. The official minutes will, of course, be published in a future edition of *Blue Light** but a few words here will keep you informed until then. The seven committee members who were able to attend sat at a large raised desk facing members seated around two semi-circular tables. Everyone had a personal microphone which could be switched on when they wished to say something. There was also a button by the chairman's right knee to silence anyone speaking out of turn but this, being the civilised group we are, was not needed!

The most important decision was, after a detailed debate, to adopt unanimously our new constitution to be published in a forthcoming edition of *Blue Light** which now replaces the previous "rules". The current committee were re-elected unopposed and there was a useful discussion on possible future activities.

For the first time in my memory there were, excluding committee members sitting at the high table, more overseas members present than UK-based members. There were two reasons for this:

- (i) many of our London-based members chose not to come to Woking at all, even for a part of the 5-day event, which was disappointing considering their past support for our central London AGMs.
- (ii) several conference delegates chose to attend the official walking tour of historic Woking which is a regular Sunday morning feature led by a local historian. This was understandable, particularly as H G Wells fans could learn about his Woking haunts and influences.

Elsewhere in this edition you will be able to read reports on some of the conference highlights but there is one traditional aspect of the opening ceremony which is worth mentioning. The Eddie Lambert memorial gavel, last deployed at the London conference in 2008, was passed on to the organising chairman Geoff Smith who, after declaring the conference open, presented it to the mayor of Woking, Councillor Michael Smith, who arranged for it to be displayed in the council offices for the duration of the conference. The gavel is now lodged on permanent display under glass along with many other Woking artefacts, awaiting the next stage in its continuing deployment.

Our sincere thanks are due to Woking Borough Council Chief Executive Ray Morgan OBE and all his highly motivated staff at each of the venues made available. Finally we must thank Geoff Smith and Antony Pepper for all their months of planning and administration. A gargantuan task!

Peter Caswell

***Editor's note:** In order not to overload any single *BL* with too much DESUK business, and assuming other pressures don't prevent it, I intend to publish the DESUK Constitution in 19/3 and the Draft AGM Minutes in 19/4. Let me know if you'd prefer to receive them the other way around.

ELLINGTON 2012 MERCHANDISE

Conference programme and mini colour leaflet programme: £2

Metal conference logo pin badge with butterfly clasp: £4

A3 conference poster: £2

Conference commemorative CDs: Music of Ellington 2008 double CD: £10

The Queen's Suite (Guildhall Jazz Band, recorded at Ellington 2008): £8

Pay by cheque made out to Ellington 2012 and send to E12, 2 Julian Close, Woking, Surrey GU21 3HD.

Please add £1 for postage

DUKE ELLINGTON BIG BANDS LIVE: DUKE ELLINGTON ORCHESTRA

Take The "A" Train; Johnny Come Lately; Swamp Goo; (K)nob Hill (Mount Harissa); Eggo; La Plus Belle Africaine; Rue Bleue; A Chromatic Love Affair; Salome; The Shepherd; Tutti For Cootie; Freakish Lights (Blood Count); Kixx. (73:41)

Cat Anderson, Cootie Williams, Herbie Jones, Mercer Ellington (tp); Chuck Connors, Lawrence Brown, Buster Cooper (tb); Johnny Hodges, Paul Gonsalves, Harry Carney, Russell Procope, Jimmy Hamilton (reeds); Duke Ellington (p); John Lamb (b); Rufus Jones (d).

Liederhalle, Stuttgart, Germany. 6 March 1967
JazzHaus 101703

This is the very welcome CD from Duke's 1967 tour, trailed by Roger Boyes in last quarter's *Blue Light* (Vol 19 No 1). It is especially welcomed by me, as the first time I saw Duke live was on his one and only appearance in my home town of Dundee as part of this tour on 15 February 1967.

"New" recordings by Duke have, for obvious reasons, dried up in recent years, and as Roger stated, not much of his 1967 European tour has seen the light of day. This one was recorded as a broadcast by Südwestrundfunk of Stuttgart, Mainz and Baden-Baden, Southwest Germany and issued on the newly formed JazzHaus label. JazzHaus state that "the SWR archives are possibly the most comprehensive reservoir of unpublished live jazz recordings worldwide: 3000 hours of footage in stunning sound quality" and if this recording is anything to go by, I look forward to hearing more. I have already purchased a 1959 Benny Goodman and a 1977 Gerry Mulligan (both excellent) and no doubt I will be buying many more in the future.

Some of the above tracks were issued years ago on an obscure French album (Jazz Band EB-411) which also contained three tracks not on this recording (*Up Jump, Wild Onions* and *Drag*) [recte four tracks – it also included a full length *"A" Train* – Ed]. This is not the complete concert (although at 74 minutes it is most of it) nor is it in the correct running order. The latter point is somewhat of a blessing as the last track, *Kixx*, is a ten minute drum solo and if, like me, it is not to your liking or taste (OK in a concert hall (just) but not in your own living room) you can always stop the CD.

The recording quality of this album is excellent and as good as many studio recordings of the same period. All the titles will be familiar to Ellington aficionados

as to a greater or lesser extent they have been issued elsewhere over the years. The exception may be the extended drum solo *Kixx* which, according to Tom Lord, was only issued as a short, very short, drum solo, again by Rufus Jones, on the Impulse album *Live At The Winery* recorded in 1972.

It is always good to have another recording of *La Plus Belle Africaine*, as the only previous versions are also live recordings, Duke never having made a studio recording of this title.

All the usual suspects have the opportunity to solo, Gonsalves (*Mount Harissa*); Carney and Hamilton (*La Plus Belle Africaine*); Brown (*Rue Bleue*); Anderson (*Salome*); Williams (*The Shepherd* and *Tutti For Cootie*); Hodges (*Blood Count*). No need to comment further as there are no surprises here but none the less good to hear them again in this setting.

All in all, this is as I said a welcome release, and a must for all serious Ellington collectors.

Grant Elliot

DUKE ELLINGTON PIANO IN THE BACKGROUND

(4) *Happy Go Lucky Local*; (3) *What Am I Here For?*; (1) *Kinda Dukish/Rockin' In Rhythm*; *Perdido*; *I'm Beginning To See The Light*; (3) *Midriff*; (1) *It Don't Mean A Thing*; *Mainstem*; (3) *Take The 'A' Train*; (1) *Lullaby Of Birdland*; (4) *The Wailer*; (2) *Dreamy Sort Of Thing*; (1) *Lullaby Of Birdland*; (5) *Misfit Blues*; *Schwiepti*; *Zweet Zursday*; (6) *Lay By* (76:11)
(1) Willie Cook, Ray Nance, Eddie Mullens, Andres Merenguito (tp); Booty Wood, Britt Woodman, Lawrence Brown (tb); Juan Tizol (vtb); Jimmy Hamilton, Russell Procope, Johnny Hodges, Paul Gonsalves, Harry Carney (reeds); Duke Ellington (p), Aaron Bell (b), Sam Woodyard (d). LA, 31 May to 26 June 1960. (2) Billy Strayhorn possibly repl. Ellington (20 June). (3) Omit Tizol (28-29 June). (4) Add Gerald Wilson (tp) (30 June). (5) Matthew Gee (tb) and Paul Horn (alto) replace Woodman and Hodges. Hollywood 10 October 1960. (6) Same, except Nance plays violin.
Essential Jazz Classics EJC 55521

Most of this music comes from a 31-day period of intense recording activity for Ellington at a time when he was being encouraged to feature himself more as a pianist. (In addition to the first 13 tracks here this brief period produced the reworkings of the *Nutcracker Suite* and *Peer Gynt* as well as a handful of songs from Milt Grayson).

The original *Piano In The Background* LP was made up of the first nine tracks in this programme and highlighted the leader's piano extensively in introductions, solos and (sometimes very brief) codas.

The compilers have imaginatively added four tracks recorded at the same time which also have plenty of piano and could have been intended as possibilities for the LP until it was (perhaps) decided to restrict the contents to well-known, previously recorded compositions. (Strayhorn is given as the pianist on *Dreamy* although Ellington was perfectly capable of the gentle touch demonstrated therein. Certainly the claim in the notes that Strayhorn played on two of the original LP tracks is clearly incorrect.)

The last four tracks constitute *Suite Thursday* which was a salute to John Steinbeck. Appropriately again, this has plenty of space for the pianist as well as many subtly arranged and beautiful passages for the reed section. Scattered throughout the whole CD are excellent solos from Gonsalves (particularly good on the two versions of *Lullaby Of Birdland*) and Nance, Hodges and Brown. These distinctive and distinguished players, together with an abundance of individualistic pianism, make this a highly appetising prospect for those with a taste for Ellingtonia. (Don't be put off by the rather strange booklet which reprints reviews that described the band as "not really in sparkling form" and complained about Woodyard's "exasperating" drumming!)

Graham Colomé

DUKE ELLINGTON PIANO IN THE FOREGROUND

(1) *I Can't Get Started*; *Cong-Go*; *Body And Soul*; *Blues For Jerry*; *Fontainebleau Forest*; *Summertime*; *It's Bad To Be Forgotten*; *A Hundred Dreams Ago*; *So*; *Searching (Pleading For Love)*; *Springtime In Africa*; *Lotus Blossom*.

(2) *All The Things You Are* (2 takes). (3) as (2). *Piano Improvisations Nos. 1-4*. (4) *Dancers In Love*; *Prelude To A Kiss*; *In A Sentimental Mood*. (77:23)

Duke Ellington (p) with: (1) Aaron Bell (b), Sam Woodyard (d). LA, 1 and 2 March 1961. (2) Jimmy Woode (b), Sam Woodyard (d). NYC, 10 October 1957. (3) as (2) NYC, 20 March 1957. (4) Wendell Marshall (b), Butch Ballard (d). LA, 3-4 March 1953.

Essential Jazz Classics EJC 55551

Piano recordings, solos, duets or trios, survive from throughout Duke's career, and this was the second LP dedicated to the purpose. It dates from eight years after the 1953 Capitols, but was only issued a couple of years after recording. *Searching/Pleading* resurfaced in the 1972 Norman Granz session with Ray Brown, as the third movement of the *Fragmented Suite*. The sessions included the earliest known *Lotus Blossom* (*Charlotte Russe* apart); though lovely, it was not included on the original Columbia LP.



There are three standard songs. *I Can't Get Started* and *Body And Soul* start innocuously enough but develop considerable astringency. *Summertime*, a song which can provoke the best and also the worst in interpreters, is another matter altogether, a

percussive fragmentation which turns Gershwin's lullaby into a sultry nocturne drenched in brooding menace. A worse setting for encouraging a baby to sleep could scarcely be imagined, and the final chord – the terrifying three-in-the-morning knock on the door – only underlines what's gone before. Eddie Lambert wrote: 'Sinclair Traill claimed that Ellington had once told him that this performance was his reaction to the war in the Congo'. If it was, he was very angry.

There are two blues. *Blues For Jerry* opens with an in-your-face declaration which anticipates the *Chinoiserie* of the *Afro-Eurasian Eclipse*, then settles into a probing mid-tempo exploration; Bell is superb. Duke's slow, reflective *So* is in Eddie Lambert's view 'probably his greatest blues solo'. The brief *Fontainebleau Forest* offers four twelve-bar choruses of impressionistic piano against *arco* bass (no drums).

It has been argued that this LP marks the beginning of Duke's overt interest in Africa. *Cong-Go* and *Springtime In Africa* both suggest this, in content as well as in title (though caution is required here; both titles were added after the recording, following deliberations by Ruth and Mercer Ellington and Stanley Dance). *Cong-Go* makes the link through rhythmic insistency. *Springtime* does it less obviously; it is an aubade pregnant with potential, in which the bass carries much of the argument.

It's Bad To Be Forgotten (also known as *MG*) and *A Hundred Dreams Ago* are Ducal songs without words, slight-seeming at first, but deeper on closer inspection. *Pleading For Love* (which is how I know this frequently mis-titled piece) is another slight excursion with depth, this time in the manner of *Dancers In Love*, one of three 1953 trios offered as a filler – not very helpfully for Ellington collectors, who will always want the 1953 Capitols complete.

More enterprising programming might have yielded *New York City Blues* and *The Clothed Woman*, or the elusive alternate take of *Piano Improvisation No. 1*, from the second filler, the 1957 piano trios, which first appeared around thirty years ago on LP. Two readings of *All The Things You Are*, dating from the time of the *Ellington Indigos* recordings of standard songs, are widely divergent in content, though structurally similar. An intro. leads into a rhapsodic first chorus against *arco* bass and cymbal swishes, then a second chorus, in-tempo at first, reverting later to the

rhapsodic style. The four March tracks are titled simply **Piano Improvisation Nos. 1-4**. The first is a long excursion over a brisk eight-bar bass vamp with a somewhat martial flavour. Two blues follow, one a strutting outing over a typical Woodyard shuffle, the other slower, more reflective. **No 4** is a raggy stride piece which in 1943 cropped up in **Beige** at ca. bar 70, and which Duke revealed in later years to be **Bitches' Ball** from ca. 1915. I am pleased to have these on CD, though they have reappeared on earlier CD issues, from Lone Hill and from Sony/CBS themselves. See Graham Colombe's review, *BL* 17/1 p5.

The original sleeve note is supplemented by an excerpt from Charles Melville's interesting 1959 interview with Duke for *Jazz Journal*, and a new piece by Bernard Lee. Lee attempts little, which is just as well, since he writes of Butch Pollard, and has Aaron Bell on drums for Duke's 1966 trios with John Lamb. He also revives the old confusion of **Pleading For Love** with **Yearning For Love** (1936). The discographical notes are happily free of Lee's gaffes, and the CD generally is well produced and presented.

Roger Boyes

REX STEWART JAZZ AT STEREOVILLE

I'm Beginning To See The Light; Do Nothin' Till You Hear From Me; Alphonse And Gaston; I Gotta Right To Sing The Blues; Walkin' My Baby Back Home; When Your Lover Has Gone; I Knew You When. (43:17)
Rex Stewart (c), Cootie Williams (tp); Lawrence Brown, J.C. Higginbotham (tb); Coleman Hawkins, Bud Freeman (ts); Hank Jones (p). Billy Bauer (g), Milt Hinton (b), Gus Johnson (d). Ernie Wilkins, Joe Thomas (arr.). NYC, 30 April, 1957.

Blue Sounds BMCD 818

There are mainstream jazz sessions that were better than this one, but I can't think of any at the moment. The original idea of pairing similar horns in competition was a brilliant one, and engendered the original name of the album, *The Big Challenge*. The brutish label here was given to it when it was first released on Urania. Despite the fact that the title is used to indicate that this version is in stereo and the original was not, no doubt readers will reject the usurper and stick to the original.



The vital catalyst is Hank Jones. He instils crucial lightness to the band sound. Another pianist would almost certainly not have been so sensitive. He and Bauer play by instinct, and give the soloists from an earlier era a perfect platform to improvise at their best. The alternative take of **Baby** is not as good as the one originally issued and the recording balance is different with the piano accompaniment being too prominent. However, everyone plays different solos, so it's good to have.

Over its many reissues the album was hacked about. Sadly this is the hacked about version. **Alphonse And Gaston** is a wonderful jousting ground for the various partnerships. In its original it concluded with a climactic switch into a half tempo **St Louis Blues** coda. Here that is excised by a fade out. The sound is excellent, a big improvement on earlier versions.

This stereo issue has the edge on Fresh Sound FSR-CD77, which without the second take of **Baby** runs for 37:58, but includes the complete coda to **Alphonse And Gaston** (the label here claims to be Urania, but I believe it to be Blue Sounds, which seems to be a division of Fresh Sound). If it hadn't been for the chopping about subsequent to the recording, this would have had five stars. Another could well have been subtracted for the lousy playing time.

Steve Voce

DUKE ELLINGTON MEETS COLEMAN HAWKINS AND JOHN COLTRANE

(1) *Limbo Jazz; Mood Indigo; Ray Charles' Place; Wanderlust; You Dirty Dog; Self-Portrait Of The Bean; The Jeep Is Jumpin'*; (2) *The Ricitic*; (3) *In A Sentimental Mood*; (4) *Take The Coltrane; Big Nick*; (5) *Stevie; My Little Brown Book*; (4) *Angelica*; (5) *The Feeling Of Jazz* (74:10)
Duke Ellington (p) with: (1) Coleman Hawkins (ts); Ray Nance (ct/vn); Lawrence Brown (tb); Johnny Hodges (as); Harry Carney (bs/bcl); Aaron Bell (b); Sam Woodyard (d). New Jersey, 18 August 1962. (2) as (1) but Brown, Hodges, Carney out. (3) John Coltrane (ss/ts); Bell (b); Elvin Jones (d). New Jersey 26 September 1962. (4) as (3) but Jimmy Garrison repl. Bell (b). (5) as (3) but Woodyard repl. Jones (d).

Impulse 06007 5334729

It seems a long time ago (it is) since I first enjoyed these sides in their British incarnation on HMV. Some of Impulse producer Bob Thiele's ideas have, over the years, divided critical opinion. However, back in the mid to late 1960s, I found little to complain of in these one-off meetings between Ellington and two of the most distinctive and consequential of all saxophonists in jazz. (Equally I found little to complain about in the April 1961 sessions which Thiele had set up with Ellington and Armstrong). The soul-wounding **In A**

Sentimental Mood and *My Little Brown Book* feature some of the most transcendently reflective, spaciouly wrought phrases Coltrane ever committed to disc, over Ellington chords and lines of impeccable touch and taste.

The lyrical Coltrane of *Crescent* has always meant more to me than the eyes-upturned intensity of his post-*Ascension* forays (much as I respect that intensity) so the tempered nature of his often blues-charged work here – whether caressed by the polyrhythmic Jones or kicked along more straightforwardly by Woodyard – falls on welcoming ears, along with every judiciously sprung note from the ever-elegant Ellington.

The inimitable presence of Hodges on the sides with Hawkins ensures that the blues get sufficient soaring exposure (try *Ray Charles' Place*, *Wanderlust* and *The Jeep Is Jumpin'*) in an album which begins on a relaxed calypso note and ends with a nudgingly sweet touch or two or three of Latin, courtesy of Ellington, Nance and Hawkins. *Self-Portrait Of The Bean* has bar after bar of the sort of simultaneously rounded depth and mellow lyricism of totally authoritative sound and phrase from Hawkins that reminds one just why it was that the creator of such classic sides as *Body And Soul* and *Picasso* was long the favourite saxophonist of Eddie Cook, previous, long-serving editor of *Jazz Journal* and a saxophonist himself.

While neither album could be called anything like an overall classic, there is plenty in each which will continue to reward seasoned enthusiast and newcomer alike. The only thing that disappoints is the unreadable, minuscule presentation of the original liner notes by Stanley Dance.

Michael Tucker

THE GREAT SUMMIT: LOUIS AND DUKE Essential – really! - Jazz Classics EJC55536

Vic Bellerby's brief review of this reissue in June's *Jazz Journal* dismisses the inclusion of *Duke's Place* from the 17 December 1961 *Ed Sullivan Show* as 'quite unnecessary'. Not so. It and its companion track *In A Mellotone* were only ever available on an obscure LP many years ago (Pumpkin 109). For many Ellington completists the EJC issue, which includes both, really *is* essential.

The purpose of the joint appearance by Louis and Duke on the 17 December TV show was to promote the LP, recorded for Roulette at the beginning of the previous April and at this point in the process of being released. Joe Darensbourg and not Barney Bigard was the clarinetist, and Irving Manning was the bassist, instead of Mort Herbert. Apart from the seventeen Roulettes, and *Long Long Journey* from an early 1946 Leonard Feather pick-up group session for Victor, this recording from the Ed Sullivan Show is the only other known surviving occasion when Louis and Duke were

recorded playing together. EJC's reissue of both the tracks it yielded is most welcome.

PAUL GONSALVES WITH SONNY STITT

Impulse have reissued in their 'two albums for one' series the 1964 *Salt & Pepper* session in which Paul Gonsalves joined Sonny Stitt in a tenors-in-tandem outing with Hank Jones, Milt Hinton and Osie Johnson. Jones and Johnson also accompany Stitt on the companion set from 1963, *Now!*, on which another ex-Ellingtonian, Al Lucas, takes over on bass. Issued under Stitt's name on 06025 2780956.

POLL WINNERS

Mosaic's 11CD boxed set of the Ellington Orchestra's 1932-1940 recordings topped the *Jazz Journal* reviewers' Top 10 Reissues category for 2011. Other issues featuring in individual reviewers' Top 5s included the 1952 Crystal Gardens set on Hep, Columbia's reissue of *Black, Brown And Beige*, the Webster/Hodges 1960 Jazz Cellar recordings (Solar), and the second Hodges 1950s set from Avid.

Meanwhile Poll Winners Records has *another* reissue of the 1958 *BB&B* (PWR 27286), and a reissue of *Such Sweet Thunder*, plus *Harlem* and the *Controversial Suite* (PWR 27285).

BEWARE!

Don't try to introduce the grandchildren to the pleasures of Ellington with a new issue from *Rough Guide*. Graham Colombé wrote of it in the March *Jazz Journal*: "What a disappointment! One track from the 20s, nine from the 30s, six from the 40s and four from the 50s are combined in a seemingly random order... There's...no commentary at all on the music selected and Otto Hardwick's limp delineation of *In A Sentimental Mood* as an opener is surely not the best way to attract the newcomer to Ellingtonia for whom this release was apparently intended. A 'bonus' CD has another haphazard selection of a dozen tracks by musicians supposedly 'contemporaries with, and influenced by, the legendary Duke Ellington'. What he would have made of the inclusion in such a category of Jelly Roll Morton and Oscar Peterson I'll leave to your imagination. I'm amazed that the *Rough Guide* people couldn't find someone to sort out a coherent introduction to Ellington instead of this unhelpful potpourri".

STUTTGART LIEDERHALLE

6 March 1967

Here, in performance order, are the recorded titles played at the Stuttgart Liederhalle on 6 March 1967, as listed in *The New DESOR, Duke Ellington's Story On Records 1924-1974* (Milano 1999, page 470). Their unique DESOR numbers are DE6736a-u.

Four asterisked titles are not on the new CD, but were on the old LP to which Grant Elliot refers in his review on p2. Titles not in italics still remain unissued.

Take The "A" Train (theme), Johnny Come Lately, Swamp Goo, Mount Harissa (Knob (recte Nob) Hill), Up Jump*, Rue Bleue, Girdle Hurdle, A Chromatic Love Affair, Salome, Wild Onions*, La Plus Belle Africaine, Take The "A" Train (theme)

Take The "A" Train*, Eggo, The Shepherd, Tutti For Cootie, Kixx (The Biggest And Busiest Intersection), Blood Count (Freakish Lights), Things Ain't What They Used To Be, Drag*, Medley

Many enthusiasts may feel we have enough "A" Trains, *Things Ain'ts*, and *Medleys* already to make the ones not included on the new CD dispensable, though Duke has been known to slip a surprise into the *Medley*, as on two occasions in the 1969 European tour when he quotes briefly from his 1924 song *Jig Walk*. But the continued non-release of *Girdle Hurdle*, the Jimmy Hamilton clarinet feature, is a matter for regret, as there are not many issued versions of that piece to choose from. Also, and as Frits Schjøtt wrote in his letter in the last *BL*, there is added value for the enthusiast of having the *entire* recording, in apparent performance order, as listed here. Would many prospective purchasers of the Jazzhaus CD have jibbed at the extra cost of buying it as a 2CD set, with shorter playing time on each disc, in order to have the complete recording from the concert? I doubt it.

Members who are not familiar with *The New DESOR*, the massive two-volume Ellington discography compiled by Luciano Massagli and Giovanni M Volonté may wish to have the reference DE6736a-u explained. DE means simply that the session in question is a Duke Ellington recording session. The first two numbers indicate the year in which the session took place, in this case 1967. The following two figures identify it as the 36th session from 1967 from which recordings survive (in addition to studio recordings, these may be from live concerts, as at Stuttgart, or other performances, or radio or TV broadcasts, or films. The criterion for inclusion is that Ellington took part. The letters identify individual pieces played (including, on studio recordings, takes).

RB

MY DESERT ISLAND DUKE

selected by David Deacon

I may be fooling myself, but I like to think that the 1940s Victor recordings of *Concerto for Cootie, Ko-Ko* and *Work Song* are so deeply etched in my memory that I need not take recordings of them with me to the island.

I claim eight discs, the number allowed by Roy Plomley and Kirsty Young.

1: *Prelude to a Kiss* (1973). Any words of mine would be clumsy in response to the playing and inter-play of these master craftsmen: Duke Ellington, who is dying, Joe Pass, Ray Brown and Louie Bellson

2: *La Plus Belle Africaine*. The 1966 Antibes recordings feature bassist John Lamb who also memorably played this beautiful composition at the 2008 London Ellington Conference.

3: *Imagine My Frustration* In this live Stockholm performance the same year, Ella Fitzgerald's and the band's raunchy, bluesy attack are at one.

4: *My Funny Valentine*. I hear tenderness in Jimmy Hamilton's playing - and joy and lust in Quentin Jackson's. The saxophone and trombone ensemble work is delicate. The Bethlehem studio session has better sound balance and does justice to Sam Woodyard's contribution; but the live 1958 London performance has me on the edge of my seat - and I can picture the wonder of the Kilburn Gaumont State cinema.

5: *Passion Flower*. The spontaneity and ensemble voicing of the 1949 Hollywood Empire performance appeal to me a touch more than the more dramatic 1956 studio recording for the *Blue Rose* album.

Three 1940 live Fargo recordings -

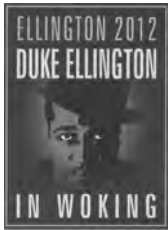
6: *Bojangles* gets me dancing.

7: *Harlem Airshaft* makes me smile.

8: *Across the Track Blues* The 1940 Victor recording introduced me to Ellington and Barney Bigard. And then later in life I found I could eavesdrop on the band playing the number with more of a loose swing, which makes me listen afresh.

Tomorrow, my mood may be more indigo or uptown and the choices would reflect that, but *Across the Track Blues* would remain, I think.

Ed: *Thanks David, but you jolly well can't claim eight. Everybody else has limited their choice to five. Either do it yourself in time for the next BL, or I'll do it for you, and buns to Plomley and Young.*



“Come Sunday, would you drop me off in Woking?”....

by **Wendy Lawrence**

....and that is exactly what my husband did. DESUK members will know immediately that this meant that I was heading for the final day of the 21st International Duke Ellington Conference held in the town between 23 and 27 May.

On an already extremely hot day I was duly deposited at the wonderfully cool municipal offices for the society’s AGM, where matters such as a revised constitution, the future of *Blue Light* and subscription fees were among a number of topics discussed by a small gathering of British and overseas members.

The group then joined fellow conference delegates for brunch at The Lightbox, an award winning gallery and museum where entertainment was provided by Simon Cook and his trio, guest musicians and jammers. Other attractions within the building included an exhibition of paintings by Sheila Healey (now in her 96th year), a history of Woking, and pieces from the extensive Charles Ingram collection of twentieth century British art. Having had breakfast at home around 7.30am I was disappointed that the café offered only hot meals and a selection of cakes, no light snacks or sandwiches. So not wishing to miss the music, I hoped a lemon muffin would keep me going for a few more hours.

It was only a short walk from there to the H G Wells Centre where presentations and concerts had been held over the past four days. London filmmaker Corine Dhondee did not appear so her afternoon slot was taken-up by Louis Tavecchio whose earlier screening of a lengthy unedited 1964 interview with Duke Ellington filmed for CBC in Toronto, had experienced technical problems after about twenty minutes. Byng Whittaker, the show’s host and CBC’s most knowledgeable announcer, chain-smoking and slouched in a chair, casually asked questions of the Duke prompting reminiscences, opinions and, most importantly, a lot of piano playing accompanied by John Lamb on bass and, in the shadows, drummer Sam Woodyard. Shot mainly in close-up the film revealed the maestro in an extremely relaxed and jovial mood throughout. The camera was eventually focussed on Sam Woodyard who needed little encouragement to play a brilliant solo piece to conclude the meeting. However, that was not the end of this extraordinary film. The last few minutes, apparently not previously seen by Tavecchio, showed the studio artist adding finishing touches to sketches he had made of Duke during the interview – I wonder where they are now?

Eunice Malloch then introduced a film documenting the first British Study Group conference held in



**Peter Caswell, Remco Plas, Geoff Smith
Woking 27 May 2012**

Photograph: courtesy Wendy Lawrence

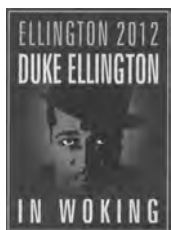
Oldham, 1985. Highlights were informal interviews with clarinettist Jimmy Hamilton, whose birthday was first celebrated at this event, and trumpeter Willie Cook. I was saddened to be reminded by the film of all those friends I had made at earlier conferences who are no longer with us including Jerry Valburn and the charming Klaus Stratemann.

There followed a two-hour break enabling delegates to rest, chat or venture out into the town for some much needed air before gathering again for the evening banquet. Diners were served an extremely tasty and well-chosen three-course meal that was accompanied by a continual supply of bottled water in an attempt to combat the consequences of an ineffective air-conditioning system. Ladies fanned themselves with programmes and gentlemen wiped their brows, but not even the discomfort of the intense heat could detract from the marvellous music performed after dinner by pianist Claude Bolling.

Accompanied by drummer Vincent Cordelettes and bass player Pierre Maingourd the 82-year-old Parisian composer, arranger and bandleader entertained us with a delightful programme of Duke’s music calling, in true Ellington finger-snapping tradition, for audience participation in *Dancers in Love* – click, click, click, click! As Mercer Ellington commented in 1989 “Thank goodness he [Bolling] helps to keep the genius of Duke Ellington alive”.

This excellent concert concluded what delegates told me had been a most enjoyable conference. Throughout the daily events memorabilia in the form of posters and lapel pins were on sale alongside Ellington 2012 t-shirts specially commissioned by delegate and speaker Ken Steiner, the proceeds from which were very generously donated to conference funds.

I do so hope we can all look forward to being dropped off at another study group meeting in the not too distant future.



PERFORMANCE

A DRUM IS A WOMAN GUILDHALL JAZZ BAND AND SINGERS Directed by MARTIN HATHAWAY

**H G Wells Centre, Woking
Thursday, 24 May 2012**

The Mayor of Woking, Cllr. Michael Smith, and his council did the conference proud on the evening of its first full day, with a drinks reception followed by a good dinner in the Wells Room. The room was converted into a sort of giant restaurant/cabaret which proved an ideal after-dinner setting to hear the Guildhall Jazz Band's swinging and convincing performance of the rarely performed Ellington-Strayhorn collaboration *A Drum Is A Woman*.

Using Tony Faulkner's charts, the kids in the band played the often challenging music with relaxed confidence and charm, and Martin Hathaway, Head of Jazz at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, deserves plaudits for producing just the right mixture of discipline and fun. Sadly, there was no harp, but the singers were outstanding, and Sam Merrick handled the narration with great style. Overall, the evening showed the piece stands up on its own, without the need for dancers, as a fine example of the slyly complex and ironic Ellington world view, and with some great music.

Given the constraints of its origins as a television special for the *US Steel Hour* in 1957, there are no places for soloists to really stretch out, but Martin Hathaway fixed this by reprising *Hey, Buddy Bolden* as an encore. The trumpets all took solos on the 12-bar section originally played (brilliantly) by Clark Terry, as did the otherwise little-employed violinist Richard Jones; then the singers, Jo Wallfisch, Ben Cox, Fran Mead, Sam Merrick and Martynas Vilipisauskas – joined by Martin Hathaway – traded scat choruses and fours to great acclaim.

Duke Ellington often cited *A Drum Is A Woman* as one of his most significant achievements, and it comes from the golden mid- to late-fifties period (Newport, *Such Sweet Thunder*, the *Time* cover, etc.) that not only put him and the orchestra back at the forefront of their musical field but also firmly established their importance in a wider cultural context. Obviously, an all-black TV special represented a major event in 1957.

*

Earlier in the day, there was an open discussion in the conference of *A Drum Is A Woman*, with mention of its origin in the history of jazz project *It's All True*

which Orson Welles proposed to Ellington in 1941 but which never came to fruition. As Irving Townsend, producer of the LP *A Drum Is A Woman* recorded in 1956, put it in an article *Ellington In Private* (*Atlantic Monthly*, May 1975): "One explanation of Ellington's prolific output is that he never abandoned an idea just because nobody reacted favourably to it."

There was also discussion of the 1957 CBS programme being made as a test of a colour TV process, as is stated by David Hajdu in his book *Lush Life*. The kinescope of the original programme which is available for viewing at the Paley Centre in New York is in black and white.

Steven Lasker, however, told the conference that original 'tapes' of *A Drum Is A Woman* were sold at auction recently, raising the prospect that a colour version might exist, perhaps on some sort of film since it would seem that colour videotape recording was not yet possible in 1957. According to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Color_television, RCA, the parent company of CBS's rival broadcaster NBC, had by the mid-fifties already developed the NTSC colour process, which was compatible with existing black-and-white TVs and became standard in the U.S., although colour television did not fully take off commercially until the 1960s.

Quentin Bryar

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

As part of the Ellington 2012 publicity campaign conference organisers Antony Pepper and Geoff Smith searched the Internet for any road, building or residence in Woking named 'Ellington' where an advantage might be gained from a leaflet drop.

Finding a house carrying that name Geoff visited and explained his reason for calling. Obviously interested in knowing whether the owners were fans of Duke he asked why the house was so named. The lady explained that her husband was born in Ellington, Northumberland, and they had decided to name their new home after his birthplace.

However, as a direct result of Geoff's impromptu visit the couple joined us for the conference banquet on Sunday evening, and during the meal we further discovered that when they bought the property it was called 'Duke's Gate'. So were the previous owners fans? Apparently not – their dog, named Duke, had died around the time a new gate was being installed.

Wendy Lawrence

Ed: *Two other Ellingtons are near Masham, N Yorks., and near the A1 at Bampton, Cambs. Duke's father migrated to Washington from N Carolina. Surnames were commonly taken from place-names, and slaves commonly took the names of their owners.*



DUKE IN WOKING **23-27 May 2012**

by **Geoff Smith**

It is not over. As I write a week on from our conference, messages are still coming in and many matters need attention – not least addressing *Blue Light*'s deadline.

Obviously as co-organiser, I will not attempt any form of critique or detailed report of any of the presentations or concerts. What follows are my immediate, random and highly selective conference afterthoughts plus a few news items which may be of more than transient interest. It is very much hoped that delegates and others will delve further for *BL* purposes into what the presenters had to say. I personally think that many of the conference sessions deserve coverage in all of our international Ellington print and internet journals. We shall see.

As with the conference itself, there is a need for us all to continue to play a part. If you liked, or even disliked, a particular presentation then do think about writing about it. That way we can keep it all going for the love of Duke.

It is reasonable to say that the 21st conference was a success in its cultural, fraternal, and community relevance, and artistic goals

The entire proceedings and associated concerts were recorded by co-organiser Antony Pepper and, together with some conference papers, will be archived in various ways. The Civic Reception performance by the Guildhall Jazz Band, narrator, and full battery of singers, of *A Drum Is A Woman* has already gained status as an important interpretation of the piece by virtue of its execution and comprehensiveness and will hopefully be made available as a CD. It could even become regarded as a standard reference recording of the work after that of the composer himself. It is certainly much longer than previously published versions and is in what is believed to be the proper sequence with *Pomegranate* slotted in between *You Better Know It* and *Madame Zazzy*.

I am proud to say that thanks to Woking Borough Council and our own constant monitoring of spending, the conference paid its way as a stand-alone event. After Ellington 2008 it had been suggested by more than one old hand that these study group conferences were now effectively dead and consigned to history. We proved otherwise but it would not have been possible without Woking Council and its "Celebrate Woking" scheme, tied in with Woking being an Olympic host borough.

Excellent pre-event publicity material was produced and we had good and repeated advance coverage in the

local media, BBC Radio 3 *Jazz Record Requests*, Jazz FM's *One O'Clock Jump* big band programme, and in a *Jazz Journal* editorial. We took six successive months of ads in *Jazz In London* giving increasing detail of our conference programme as it was firmed up, but it was not cost-effective as far as we could tell.

Woking was by far the smallest host town yet for the conference. It was attended in whole or in part by 64 delegates from the UK, USA, Canada, Ireland, France, Sweden, The Netherlands, Denmark, Italy, and Belgium. Many were accompanied by spouses and family members. Most stayed in central Woking hotels. Some UK delegates travelled in daily. No detrimental reports were received; numerous unexpected expressions of delight and pleasure about Woking, its facilities, and its people, were made.

Inspired by Woking, delegates from the Netherlands and Sweden are now discussing among themselves who should stage the next Duke Ellington Conference and when that might happen.

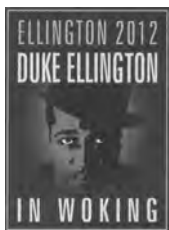
The public concerts and events open to non-delegates were greatly appreciated and were a success in spreading the word in the local community about the conference and Duke. The musicians appreciated they were appearing before a knowledgeable and discerning audience. Their fine performances, the result of special programming and preparation work for us, reflected this. Every concert ended with many of the audience according the musicians standing ovations.

Woking trumpeter and college music teacher Phil Singleton was commissioned to write *Portraits In Brass*, a five-part piece based on the styles of Bubber Miley, Cootie Williams, Rex Stewart, Shorty Baker, and Clark Terry. Many delegates praised the performance of this by Singleton's professional quartet as one of the conference highlights. I have invited Phil to expand on his pre-concert introductory talk about the piece for possible use in *BL*.

"Duke Ellington In Woking" enamel pin badges, posters, CDs of the Guildhall Band's performance of *The Queen's Suite*, and t-shirts, were produced as mementos of the Woking occasion, and sold well.

A new Storyville CD *My People, The Complete Show* was launched at the conference by Mona Granager, who was a delegate. Co-producer Bjarne Busk gave background details on the 40 per cent of extra music taken from the Mercer Ellington stockpile at Danish Radio. Copies available contained stickers with the "top hat" picture from the conference logo surrounded by the words "Launched at Ellington 2012 Woking".

Italian musicologist and jazz historian Luca Bragalini received a standing ovation from delegates for his report on discovering the score of what he claimed to be Duke's "last and neglected opus", *Celebration* (1972). He has had it recorded with a big



band and symphony orchestra and intends to include the disc with his forthcoming book on Ellington's symphonic work. An extract from his video recording was played, shown for the first time in public. The 28 minutes work itself had not had been heard in public since an unrecorded

live performance in 1974, said Bragalini.

Ken Steiner (Seattle) reported on uncovering contemporary press research which might place Duke's earliest recordings as being in 1923, when Duke and the Elmer Snowden Washingtonians may have been the band recording as the Beale Street Five. Steven Lasker joined in to throw the question out into the audience. Ken also showed Woking a new discovery, a 1923 ad on the Grand Opening of the Hollywood Club which featured the prophetic enticement: "Featuring special music by Duke Ellington".

Darius Brubeck showed a video interview with his father conducted on 20 October 2011 especially for Woking. Filmed at his home, the 91-year-old Dave spoke on his friendship and professional relationship with Duke and the mutual admiration that existed between them. At the start of his concert I interviewed Darius further on this for the benefit of those who had not been present earlier. Darius then presented his own interpretation with his quartet of the full programme of Dave's 1958 Newport

Jazz Festival *Ellington Night* performance when Duke was reputedly listening in the wings.

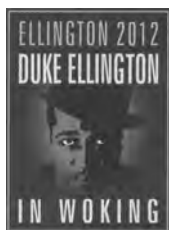
Author and composer Prof. David Schiff (Portland, Oregon) expanded on the central theme of his new book *The Ellington Century*, linking classical, jazz, and popular music genres and placing Ellington at the centre of the musical interaction. David was among many who positively raved over the Guildhall Band's *A Drum Is A Woman* rendition. He wrote in my copy of his book: "What a thrill to hear such a great performance".

Prof. Matt Cooper (La Grande, Oregon) described and played his own transcriptions of Ellington's piano music from 1928-73 covering what he defined as three distinct style periods, and linked to the original records and darting at speed between the lectern and the Yamaha grand to play his examples with huge aplomb and expertise. He and his high school classmate Frank Griffith played a lunchtime duo session for delegates.

Here is a personal memory from me: I had thought about doing a short on-stage interview with Claude Bolling about his Ellington friendship. I approached him between courses at the pre-concert conference dinner, showing him our mini-programme leaflet which quoted Duke's reference to him in *Music Is My Mistress*. Not understanding, Claude beamed, reached for a pen, and wrote his signature right across the paragraph to which I was trying to draw his attention. I returned the smile, gave him a heartfelt "*Merci*", and retreated to my table.



Ed: This is the C.G.Conn photograph to which Mike Coates refers in his article on the page opposite



WHO WAS IN THE STUDIO ON 29 JANUARY 1924?

by Mike Coates

Duke Ellington Conferences include learned presentations on many features of Ellingtonia and Woking was no exception. Delegates were treated to illustrated musical examples of piano and clarinet aspects; Eunice Malloch's recollections of a previous Oldham meeting; David Schiff on his new book; a newly discovered Ellington composition, discovered after the Maestro's death; and many other excellent talks. What does not occur too often is the inclusion of a mystery, one which requires not so much the combined abilities of Sherlock Holmes, Wallander, Hercule Poirot, Columbo and Maigret, as those of Delaunay, Rust, McCarthy, Lord, Bruyninckx and other discographical investigative cats.

Speaker Ken Steiner set the tone for the "whodunit" with his subject title – *Wild Throng Dances Madly in Cellar Club II*. His supplementary title, *Duke Ellington and the Washingtonians 1923 – 1927 as Viewed in the Contemporary Press*, put the presentation much more into perspective. As the British TV Commercial says: what you got was exactly what is said on the tin.

Ken's area of research is combing through the American press for information relating to Ellington on a day to day basis. Thus itineraries, changes to personnel – sometimes on a short term basis, recording dates, transport arrangements and other similar details relating to Duke's activities are "clues" avidly absorbed by our intrepid investigator. Does he require a magnifying glass like Holmes, I wonder?

This is painstaking work requiring much dedication, and Ken is to be congratulated on the very important contribution which he makes to the library of Ellington data which continues to build up. The presentation therefore was highlights from various newspapers and publications which related to the period in question. From a publication put out by musical instrument manufacturers C. G. Conn in circa 1925 was an illustration of Elmer Snowden's Washingtonians, currently performing at the Hollywood Club. Intriguingly, the group are stated to be recording artists for Victor and Cameo Records. The same photograph also used in a newspaper report (*New York Clipper*, 22 Feb 1924), confirms the residency at the Hollywood, but with no reference to Snowden. Inveterate Ellington scholars will know that at this time Snowden's leadership was in question, with some of his activities being questioned by other members of the band. Obscure detail to some perhaps, but the consequent change in leadership was a major milestone in Duke's story. Mr Steiner's illustrations brought it all to life.

By autumn 1925 Ellington's group was featured at the Kentucky Club. Here the vicissitudes of working musicians'

activities were underlined with a series of cuttings which reported fires, potential lockouts and other disruptions which related to the venues' interests. From one of these cuttings came Ken's title *Wild Throng Dances Madly*...

Anyone studying this section of Duke's career can refer to the late Mark Tucker's book, *Ellington: The Early Years*. But to see the events unfold from reports as they happen does add impetus and perspective to the written word. Ken brought to life those halcyon days of moonshine, bootleggers, hoodlums and nefarious goings on. So different to the sun drenched streets of Woking outside, I thought.

This excellent presentation underlines the co-operation of collectors in this constant search for information. The legend accompanying the C. G. Conn photograph – Victor and Cameo Records – presented the mystery. Cameo does not feature in the Ellington discography before the later 20's. Yet Elmer Snowden's Washingtonians are clearly stated to be Cameo artists. Along with Steven Lasker, who was also present, Ken outlined the chronological sequence of Ellington's activities at this time. Picking up on collectors' magazine *VJM's Jazz and Blues Mart's* suggestions that Cameo 498, *Sobbin' Blues*, is not by Sam Lanin as stated on the label, and tracing the Washingtonians' movements for circa January 1924 the two researchers suggested that Duke's group may be responsible for the disc. If so, it is an important discovery in early Duke recordings.

Tantalisingly the newspaper reports did not confirm such a date was made. The record was played to the assembled cognoscenti for appraisal but I have to report from the brief discussion I had with a few other delegates that there was no unanimous agreement. Was it the work of Ellington or not?

From *VJM's Jazz and Blues Mart* 162, Winter 2012 p16

BEALE STREET FIVE ON COMEO
Cameo 553, *Who Is The Meanest Girl In Town?* (Josephine (mx 820-C) is an item that has long puzzled the Editor. ADBORAF lists it as a Sam Lanin item, but it isn't! It really is a five-piece band (unlike other Cameo Beale Street 5s), and comprises ss, mel, p, bj and d. This instrumentation suggests the Fosdick brothers, Gene and Dudley, and it certainly does sound like them in comparison to their slightly earlier Voc sides. Mark reports that *Josephine* has a fine whole chorus mellophone solo and should be listed in JR. If that isn't mystery enough, the preceding matrix number, 819-A, is *Sobbin' Blues*, issued on Cameo as the Broadway Broadcasters, generally a pseudonym for Sam Lanin groups on Cameo, and which ADBORAF claim is by the same group. Mark has heard this and confirms it is by a larger group, possibly not Lanin's band (there is a bass sax present), BUT has a mellophone obbligato and a break, presumably by Dudley Fosdick! Does anyone have any thoughts on who is responsible? (Note: the Beale Street Five was also was a pseudonym for the OM5 on Lincoln-AvD)

Ed: For what it's worth (and I'm not at all conversant with mid-20s recordings), to my ear the sax solo immediately evoked the shade of Otto Hardwicke. Saxophone experts listening to Sobbin' Blues should note that it is widely reported that in the early years Otto favoured the C-Melody instrument, now defunct.

On (Or Around) Duke's Birthday **29 April 2012**

Duke's birthday was widely celebrated this year. Leland Farley in southern California and Bill Saxonis in Albany NY hosted their usual celebratory radio tributes. For the thirteenth successive year Bill appeared on 21 April on Bill McCann's Saturday morning jazz programme on station WCDB and on the internet at www.wcdbfm.com. He included excerpts from interviews with Richard Gale, the son of agent Moe Gale who owned the Savoy Ballroom, and with French horn player Willie Ruff.

In Toronto Brian Barlow hosted a programme on community radio station CJLX.FM on 28 April. Lee Farley's celebration, on his *Jazz Explorations* programme on the University of California, Riverside's station KUCR FM, took place on 1 May, at 11am, Pacific time. www.kucr.org.

From Iowa, Janna Steed reported that the liberal arts Grinnell College staged parts of the Sacred Concerts music during the weekend of 20-22 April, at the college itself on the Friday and in Des Moines on the Sunday following.

In New York on the afternoon of 29 April the annual celebration of Duke's birthday took place at Central Park NE, on the corner of 5th Avenue and 110th St., where the Duke Ellington statue is located. Mercedes Ellington, Duke's granddaughter, hosted this two-hour programme of live big-band music with singers and dancing.

Meanwhile, and much closer to home, Mike Westbrook was busy in South Devon, achieving an ambition he'd nursed for many years, with a band he has assembled of gifted and committed musicians from south-west England – a performance on Duke's birthday of his 1984 composition *On Duke's Birthday*. 29 April being a Sunday this year, 2012 was the year to do it.



Mike Westbrook Big Band

PERFORMANCE

TWO FOR THE DUKE

A WEEKEND OF DUKE ELLINGTON-INSPIRED MUSIC with THE MIKE WESTBROOK BIG BAND

**Yellow Room, Hannah's at Seal Hayne
Newton Abbot, Devon. 28 and 29 April 2012**

Saturday 28 April, 8pm. *The Big Band Is Back!*

First Set: The Mooche; Jones; Tender Love; Stormy Weather; Manje; Brazilian Love Songs; I Got It Bad; Creole Love Call; Johnny Come Lately.

Second Set: East St Louis Toodle-00; Something To Live For; We Free Kings; Lush Life; Caravan; Tulip Or Turnip; Mood Indigo (encore).

Sunday 29 April, 3pm.

A Birthday Tribute To Duke Ellington

On Duke's Birthday. 1: Checking In At Hôtel Le Prieuré. 2: On Duke's Birthday 1. 3: East Stratford Too-Doo. 4: On Duke's Birthday 2. 5: Music Is...

Stan Willis, Roz Harding, Gary Bayley, Lou Gare, Sarah Dean, Ian Wellens (reeds); Mike Brewer, Andy Stark, Dave Holdsworth, Sam Massey (tp/flh); Sam Smith, Dave Hankin, Bob Cronin (tb), Stewart Stunnell (bb/tb); Lewis Riley (p/keys), Marcus Vergette (b), Coach York (d), Kate Westbrook (voice, picc., bamboo fl), Mike Westbrook (p, MD). On 29 April, Siri Frost played cello and Brian Moore replaced Andy Stark.

Seal Hayne is an Arts Centre situated in peaceful countryside in a former agricultural college, about an hour's walk along quiet back roads from Newton Abbot station. I'm glad I walked rather than take a taxi because the weather for the rest of the weekend was appalling. But apart from the rain, the setting was idyllic. And there was nothing to complain about in the music.

The Saturday concert explored the rich Ellington-Strayhorn legacy, along with other pieces it has inspired. From the opening passages of *The Mooche* two things were apparent: the Ellington-Strayhorn musical legacy would be filtered through Westbrook's own sensibility; and its spirit would be evoked with care and respect, firmly based on Mike's love of it as a life-long formative influence. *Jones* segued into a slow elegiac ballad, *Tender Love*. Kate sang *Stormy Weather*; then came a Chris McGregor piece *Manje* (meaning 'now') and an original, *Brazilian Love Songs*, with lyrics by Kate. *I Got It Bad* was a duet between Kate and Mike, and *Creole Love Call* found the scored clarinets passages delivered by scored saxes. An extraordinarily free-wheeling dissection of *Johnny Come Lately*, inspired by a Cecil Taylor-Steve Lacey version from a 1960s Newport Jazz Festival, ended the first set.

East St Louis Toodle-Oo and *Something To Live For* followed the break, and yielded to Roland Kirk's *We Free Kings*, bass-led Mingus-style. *Lush Life* opened with a lovely a capella cadenza from Lou Gare, and continued as a duet for Kate and Mike. A terrific *Caravan* was the finale with everything – pace, exotic percussion, what looked to me like a bamboo piccolo flute, amazing textures – a perfect summation of all that had gone before. In the event Mike followed it with a wind-down number, as Duke had at Newport in 1956 – *Tulip Or Turnip*, sung by Kate, who sang again on a short, very affecting encore, *Mood Indigo*.

On Sunday afternoon we heard *On Duke's Birthday*. In his correspondence with me earlier in the year Mike had talked about performing parts of this monumental work; in the event he presented it all, with a break after the third movement, *East Stratford Too-Doo*. The enhanced-conventional big-band deployed at Seal Hayne necessitated modifications to the instrumentation on the 1980s recording. Adapting the alto clarinet part to Ian Wellens' bass clarinet is easy – altissimo register apart, the larger instrument encompasses the alto's range completely. Less obvious is what you do with the violin part in the absence of a violinist. The solution took various forms, including Roz Harding's keening alto (*Checking In...*) and the tenors of Gary Bayley and Lou Gare.

A cellist on the other hand is essential for the many passages drawing on the English-pastoral tradition, and Siri Frost's playing was beautiful in all the contexts in which she was deployed. In general though, I'm not inclined to single out individual contributions – everyone tackled this long, demanding work with dedication and unwavering commitment. If a soloist's flight became too garrulous and 'note-y' for my taste, there was always lots to occupy the attention in the rich textures and voicings. The performance was a resounding success, received with great enthusiasm in a Yellow Room which was filled to capacity.

The dedication and commitment of the musicians stems of course from the leader and composer, and Mike must have been well pleased with how this occasion went and how his ensemble, in the main made up of local players, approached his monumental tribute. There can have been no better tribute on Duke's 113th birthday. This was an extraordinarily satisfying pair of concerts. They, and the band performing them, should be on the roster of jazz festivals around the country this summer. **RB**



available on
hatOLOGY 635, from
www.westbrookjazz.co.uk

PERFORMANCE

DUKE ELLINGTON SACRED MUSIC STAN TRACEY ORCHESTRA YORK MINSTER



A North-East-based blogspot called *Bebop Spoken Here* reported that Stan Tracey's Orchestra played Duke's Sacred Music in York Minster on Wednesday 21 March. I heard Stan's presentation of this music twenty years or so ago at Durham, where Canon Bill Hall had been instrumental in commissioning the work in the first place. It was an unforgettable experience in that grandest of all English cathedrals, and the performance in York Minster (another of my favourite places) was evidently equally good. In the warm March weather it must have been a wonderful evening.

The band on 21 March comprised: Clark Tracey (cond.), Stan Tracey (p), Andy Cleyndert (b), Mike Smith (d), Guy Barker, Mark Armstrong, Tom Walsh, Bruce Adams (tp), Mark Nightingale, Alistair White, Pete North (tb), Jay Craig, Simon Allen, Alan Barnes, Sam Mayne, Mornington Lockett (reeds), Norma Winstone, Niall Hoskin (vocals), Junior Laniyan (tap dancer), with the St. Peter's School Choir and St. Peter's Choral Society; Paul Miles-Kingston (Director of Music St. Peter's School).

Stan's version harnesses the music to the ritual, and a large congregation, some 1500 people, took part in the service, a Eucharist starting at 7pm. Russell's report concluded: 'The rhythm section of Mike Smith and Andy Cleyndert working alongside the man himself ensured it swung all night long. Opera singer Niall Hoskin shared vocal duties with the magnificent Norma Winstone (*Come Sunday* a highlight among highlights). During communion Stan Tracey played a *Meditation* of infinite variations and the service concluded with Junior Laniyan tap dancing up the nave (a thousand camera flashes!). A triumph!'

RB, with thanks to Russell.

BOOK REVIEW

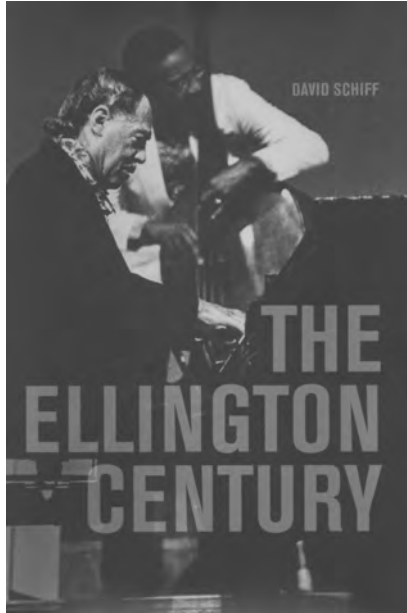
THE ELLINGTON CENTURY

David Schiff

University of California Press, 2012

xiv+320 pp, incl. notes, bibliography, index

ISBN 978-0-520-24587-7



Since around the centenary of Duke Ellington's birth in 1999, and probably for some time before then, he has been called with increasing frequency one of the greatest of 20th century composers, even the greatest. Such assertions don't add up to much in themselves. Ranking great cricketers or actors or artists, in order from greatest to great-but-least-great, is in the end a game; fun but it doesn't mean much. The important point about the list of great composers is that the field from which it is compiled now includes Ellington at all. There will still be people who feel it shouldn't, but the fact that it does becomes ever more securely established.

The importance of David Schiff's new book, the most stimulating contribution to the Ellington literature I have encountered since Eddie Lambert's *Listener's Guide*, is that it buttresses the assertion with detailed consideration of the achievements of those other composers, Ellington's colleagues. That Ellington dominates the field of jazz composers has been a given since at least 1940. He was probably accepted as a significant songwriter even earlier, though Alec Wilder judges him a minor figure in this field, in his 1972 book *American Popular Song*, a dismissive assessment which Schiff challenges forcefully and convincingly. My uncle, not a jazz enthusiast but a good enough pianist to have accompanied the action of silent films in the 1920s, knew all the great Ellington hits of the 1930s. But terms like 'jazz composer' and 'songwriter' bring us up against

categories. Ellington always insisted his music was beyond category, no doubt with just such tags in mind.

Schiff has the critical apparatus to support the assertion. Two years after the Pulitzer Prize board, headed by the president of Columbia University, had rejected its music jury's recommendation to award Ellington the Prize, Columbia granted Schiff a two-year fellowship to read English at Cambridge. At Clare College he quickly switched to the Music Tripos, which involved six three-hour exams testing no taught courses, no prescribed activities, no classes in musicianship. Candidates were given beginnings of pieces – from Guillaume de Machaut in the 14th century to François Poulenc in the 20th – and required to complete them, on the spot, in the examination hall.

I'm saying all this to make the point that Schiff knows a thing or two about composing. The title of his book, *The Ellington Century*, invites us to ponder the fact that, while World War I took place as he grew up, and Soviet communism collapsed after his death, from 1924 to 1974 Duke's career encompassed the century's heart. The title suggests a chronological approach; not at all, it's a thematic one, and it doesn't go over familiar territory. The chronology is taken as read. Schiff's concern is the achievement.

An overture, titled *Such Sweet Thunder*, sets out the book's aim, to consider Duke's work in its musical context – Berg, Bizet, Fats Domino, Stravinsky – to say nothing of the wider culture (Eliot's Shakespearean Rag, 'Dagmar-bumpered V-8s', are referenced in the earliest pages). It places Billy Strayhorn briefly and accurately in the frame. Four chapters consider four aspects of Duke's work: first colour, then the key musical elements of rhythm, melody, harmony. The subjects of the four chapters are subtitles of four Ellington compositions, respectively *Blue Light*, *Cotton Tail*, *Prelude To A Kiss*, *Satin Doll*.

A brief entr'acte, titled *Sepia Panorama*, considers Duke's artistic purposes, what he was here for, from the growing boy imbibing the content of Washington DC pageants, to the dying septuagenarian proclaiming his faith in the world's cathedrals. 'My People' and the African American experience was the motivator. To compose *Chichester Psalms*, an 18-minute work, Leonard Bernstein could take a year's sabbatical from the New York Phil. No such luxury came Ellington's way; he was rarely away from the band, composed in the small hours after long nights on the bandstand, and was well aware of the thwarted ambitions of his mentors Will Marion Cook and James P Johnson. Three further chapters consider Duke's music under three headings, *Love*, *History*, *God*; again, each title has an Ellington composition as its supertitle, respectively *Warm Valley*, *Black Brown And Beige*, *Heaven*.

This is a scholarly book, closely argued. But it is very readable – Schiff is a journalist as well as a composer and academic. There are no musical examples to baffle those who don't read music. For many of the compositions discussed (not all) Schiff provides valuable guides, of the sort that are helpful while listening to the recordings. Ellington works for which Schiff supplies such guides include *Blue Light*, *Cotton Tail* and parts of *Black, Brown And Beige*; and there's a fascinating extended tour through the whole of *Such Sweet Thunder*. Other composers' works include Ravel's *Valses Nobles Et Sentimentales*, parts of Bartok's *String Quartet No 2*, Davis's *Freddie Freeloader*, and Copland's *Appalachian Spring*. I found the chapter on harmony hard going (the author warns that 'from here on things get a little technical'), but we reach easier terrain before long. The persistent will be amply rewarded, and the open-minded will gain fresh insights into music they know and introductions to music, probably including whole areas of music, previously overlooked.

Here are a few details to ponder. Pages 160-162: A short discussion on *Reminiscing In Tempo* covers John Howland's recent research stemming from his examination of the score. But it also discloses that back in 1935 an English critic, Leonard Hibbs, observed that side 4 of the recording bore a close resemblance to the AABABA form of an extended (32 to 48 bars) popular song, and seemed to be complete within itself (Howland's 'template'). *Reminiscing*'s severest critics in 1935, Hammond and Hughes, are dismissed briefly and effectively. Page 157: Ellington's music, like much of the music of Mozart and Chopin, is night music. Pages 249-252: Schiff sees *five* sacred concerts, not three, arguing that two proto-sacred concerts anticipated the so-titled three with which we are familiar. It will surprise no-one that one of these is *My People* (1963), Duke's apotheosis, if you will, of those Washington pageants of his boyhood. The other is the Columbia *Black Brown And Beige* recording of 1958 – actually, as Schiff points out, it's a rerecording of *Work Song, Come Sunday* and *Light*, followed by Mahalia Jackson's vocal *Come Sunday* and her *23rd Psalm*. In this undertaking did Ellington begin to overtly address his God through his music. It was interesting to read Schiff's assessment of the 1958 Columbia immediately after reading Mike Westbrook's eloquent description of its spiritual plane in *Blue Light* 19/1.

There are many more insights for the reader to savour (and occasionally to quarrel with). A single lucid paragraph sums up Lena Horne's problem with Hollywood, and so with her own career as an actress. A few pages later there's an equally brief and lucid analysis of *Reminiscing In Tempo* and the *Perfume Suite* as declarations of love. Consider Ellington as Othello, black superstar, and Strayhorn as 'the impish fairy Puck'. Consider: 'the lack of published scores

fuelled rumours that Ellington lacked the techniques of the trained composer, a slander develop at great length in James Lincoln Collier's mean-spirited biography'. Consider the baneful shadow which D W Griffith's racist *Birth Of A Nation* (1915) cast over the history of twentieth-century America, and the careers of Ellington and every jazz musician. Schiff sheds light on Ellington's problem with Gershwin.

I hope the examples I've mentioned here will be enough to convince you that many fresh insights await the reader of David Schiff's book. While it doesn't always yield them easily, he writes very well, and with concern for the reader. As always, persistence brings rewards. I found few errors of fact, and far fewer editorial typos than is often the case in books nowadays – nothing to distract attention from the argument. This is a well-constructed, cogently argued addition to the Ellington literature which is most welcome.

Roger Boyes

This review first appeared in DEMS Bulletin 12/1.

"Ellington's gift for translating visual colours into tone colours set his music apart early on." Schiff, p13

LEONARD HIBBS

David Schiff's presentation to the Woking conference reminded me that in his consideration of *Reminiscing In Tempo*, (pp 160-63 of *The Ellington Century*) he refers to 'the English critic Leonard Hibbs' who 'soon after the recording appeared ... astutely pointed out that side four approximated the AABABA form of an expanded popular song and sounded complete in itself'.

Hibbs' observation anticipated by 75 years John Howland's views on the composition's structure argued in his 2009 book *Ellington Uptown* (see *BL* 17/1 p10), and based on his examination of Duke's MS scores in the Smithsonian. Howland states that the self-standing side 4 of the original 78s served as a template for sides 1-3.

Hibbs is a name I first came across over fifty years ago in the first book on Ellington I read, the one edited by Peter Gammond. In his chapter *Analysis Of Genius* Vic Bellerby supports his impressionistic view of *Echoes Of The Jungle*, a 'concerto of spectral shapes and visions', by quoting Leonard Hibbs' observation:

'Here we enter the Lob's Wood of jazz.'

The sentence always stuck in my memory.

As I know nothing else about Hibbs, at the end of David's talk I asked if anyone could tell me any more about him, and also where would I find Lob's Wood? No response came from the floor, but afterwards I was told Hibbs may have worked for Decca (UK) Records. As I was promised information, I'll report further in due course.

RB

The *Chronological List of the Compositions of Duke Ellington* reproduced on the page opposite appeared in the lavish programme – it was priced at one shilling – which was sold to attenders at Duke's 'Farewell London Concert' on 16 July 1933 at the Trocadero Cinema, Elephant And Castle.

For the band it was a long goodbye. A week at the Birmingham Hippodrome followed the concert, and the last UK appearances of all in 1933 were at the Winter Gardens and the Westbrook Pavilion in Margate on 23rd, after which Duke and the band sailed for mainland Europe. They would tour Europe in 1939 and again in 1950, but twenty-five years would elapse before they played again in London, in 1958.

The *List* does not correspond with the one which begins on page 493 of *Music Is My Mistress*. This is not surprising, since the *MIMM* list shows the compositions in order of copyright, and so is not a chronological list of compositions. It seems safe to assume that whoever compiled the *List* – Irving Mills or a member of the Mills staff?; one of the concert promoters? – based it on the dates of recordings, with input from the composer. What else would there have been to go on, in London in 1933? The fact that *Creole Rhapsody* appears twice, as the version-in-progress recorded for Brunswick and as the completed composition recorded for Victor supports the assumption.

It's an intriguing list in a number of ways. We know *Jig Walk* dates from 1924, hence '1925 and earlier'. But it is odd that the other three songs on which Duke collaborated with Jo Trent for the show *Chocolate Kiddies* are not listed. *Parlour Social Stomp*, a band piece with three strains, and not to be confused with the song *Parlour Social Deluxe*, was recorded in 1926. The other three titles dated to 1925, much more familiar, were all first recorded in 1926. So was *Birmingham Breakdown*, the companion piece on the Vocalion *East St Louis Toodle-Oo*, but here dated erroneously to 1927. Similarly *Blue Bubbles* and *Blues I Love To Sing*, both recorded in 1927, are here dated to 1928.

It is a surprise to find *Jubilee Stomp*, *Take It Easy* and *The Mooche* dated to 1926. None of the three was recorded until 1928. The 1927 list has no surprises apart from *Birmingham Breakdown*, though *Hot And Bothered* and *Sweet Mama* were not recorded until 1928. Apart from *Blue Bubbles* and *Blues I Love To Sing*, already mentioned, the short 1928 list has no surprises, though *The Duke Steps Out* was not recorded until 1929. The omission of *Cincinnati Daddy* and *Sloppy Joe* from the lengthy 1929 list is surprising, as is the inclusion of *Blues With A Feeling*, already recorded in late 1928. *Swanee Shuffle* is a surprise entry; in New DESOR it is credited to Irving Berlin.

The 1930 list, another long one, opens with *Jolly Wog* and *Jazz Convulsions*, both recorded in 1929, as were *Breakfast Dance*, *Lazy Duke*, *Jazz Lips* and *Blues Of The Vagabond*. The omission of *Jungle Blues* and *Sweet Jazz O'Mine* is surprising.

The 1931 list is short, reflecting the impact of the Great Depression. *I'm So In Love With You* and *Shout 'Em Aunt Tillie* (thus spelled) had been recorded in 1930, the former at the end of the year, and *Tillie* in June. However, the significant surprise entry here is *It Don't Mean A Thing...*, in the year before it was first recorded, even though Ivie Anderson was already in the band in 1931. It is strange that Duke failed to commit it to disc immediately, if that's the year he really did write it, and perhaps a reflection of the lack of opportunities to record in 1931, possibly because of a slump in economic activity, possibly because the Ellington Orchestra was now out on the road and often far away from cities where record companies had a presence. Steven Lasker suggests in his essay accompanying the Mosaic 11CD 1930s set that it may have been recorded in 1931, on 11 August in Chicago for Brunswick, in a version which was rejected and then, alas, lost.

Blue Mood and *Moon Over Dixie* are surprise omissions from the 1932 list of pieces attributed to Ellington. The absence of *Clouds In My Heart* is less surprising, as the recording remained unissued until 1947. *Slippery Horn*, first recorded in 1932, appears on the 1933 list.

This final list is also short. *Cotton Club Shim Sham* is one of several alternate titles for *Merry-Go-Round*. *Ev'ry Tub* was retitled *Hyde Park* for the recording in London for Decca (UK). *Jive Stomp* and *Slippery Horn* had been recorded in 1932. *Dragon's Blues* is much more familiar as *Bundle Of Blues*. Its alternate title listed here, *Sugar Hill Blues*, hitherto unknown to me, is not mentioned in New DESOR.

Finally, what is *The Monkey*? The question has been asked before but I don't recall it being answered. The title is known from other printed lists on 1933 programmes (Margate, Sunday 23 July is one). It appears in 1939 too, on the list in the Antwerp programme for 6 April. See BL 16/3, page 17.

It does not appear in the list of compositions which starts on page 493 of *Music Is My Mistress*. This is based on the order in which the copyrights to the compositions were registered with ASCAP. So it does not seem that *The Monkey* was registered with ASCAP at all, at any rate not under that title. It is strange that a title which crops up repeatedly as an Ellington composition in 1933 printed programmes, and which turns up again in 1939, seems otherwise unknown, unrecorded and apparently unreferenced in any other way.

Roger Boyes

Chronological List of the Compositions of DUKE ELLINGTON

1925 and earlier

Parlor Social Stomp
Immigration Blues
The Creeper
East St. Louis Toodle O
Jig Walk

* * *

1926

Jubilee Stomp
Take It Easy
The Mooche

* * *

1927

Black-and-Tan Fantasy
Birmingham Breakdown
Song of the Cotton Field
New Orleans Low Down
Hop Head
Sweet Mama
Down Our Alley Blues
Creole Love Call
Hot and Bothered
Washington Wobble

* * *

1928

Black Beauty
Awful Sad
The Duke Steps Out
Blues I Love to Sing
Blue Bubbles
Swampy River

1929

Harlem Flat Blues
Doin' the Voom Voom
Rent Party Blues
Misty Mornin'
Blues with a Feeling
Saturday Night Function
High Life
Flaming Youth
Cotton Club Stomp
Stevedore Stomp
The Dicty Glide
Saratoga Swing
Swanee Shuffle
Wall Street Wail
Haunted Nights
Mississippi Moan
Beggar's Blues

* * *

1930

Jolly Wog
Jazz Convulsions
Double Check Stomp
Blues of the Vagabond
Old Man Blues
Ring dem Bells
Rockin' in Rhythm
Syncopated Shuffle
Lazy Duke
Big House Blues
Rocky Mountain Blues
Breakfast Dance
Jazz Lips
Mood Indigo
Sweet Dreams of Love
Jungle Nights in Harlem
Sweet Chariot

1931

Creole Rhapsody (10-in. version)
Creole Rhapsody (12-in. version)
Echoes of the Jungle
The Mystery Song
It Don't Mean a Thing
Shout 'Em Aunt Tilly
I'm So In Love With You
It's Glory

* * *

1932

Lazy Rhapsody
Blue Tune
Blue Ramble
Best Wishes
Blue Harlem
Baby When You Ain't There
Swing Low
Ducky Wucky
Lightnin'

* * *

1933

Jive Stomp
Merry Go Round
(Cotton Club Shim Sham)
Ev'ry Tub
The Monkey
Drop Me Off at Harlem
Slippery Horn
Dragon's Blues
(Sugar Hill Blues)
Sophisticated Lady

PERFORMANCE

Norwich Jazz Party Holiday Inn, Norwich Airport Saturday to Monday 5-7 May 2012

The enthusiasm of Ann and Gerry Brown and Brian Peerless brought us all back to the Lancaster Suite of the world's hippest airport hotel (for a few days at the start of each May), and another jazz marathon with a star-studded roster of musicians. I still think it's all too much. Do we really have to start before lunch? But I go back each year. There are friendships to renew now, and Norwich joins Christmas, Easter and birthdays as an event on the annual calendar.

We heard Duke's and Billy's music in many contexts, some of them surprising. Rossano Sportiello opened his delightful solo set with *Lush Life*. A short, beautifully scored *Solitude* graced a set in which Harry Allen, Ken Peplowski, Karen Sharp and Alan Barnes celebrated the Four Brothers. *Mood Indigo* cropped up in Alec Dankworth's exploration of the music of his father's landmark early 1950s Seven. In a duet session with Rossano, Jim Galloway, playing a baritone on loan from Karen, offered the lovely *Black Butterfly*, the neglected *Azure*, and a *Lush Life* which inevitably recalled the moving version Duke and Carney recorded at the end of one of the 1967 Victor sessions for *And His Mother Called Him Bill*.

In *Happy Reunion* Alan and Ken presented, in addition to the title track, *Sweet As Bear Meat*, *The Mooche*, and Leroy Lovett's *Latino* from their eponymous Woodville CD reviewed in *BL* 18/1. At Norwich Enrico Tomasso, Adrian Fry and Karen completed the front line, supported by John Pearce, Alec Dankworth and Bobby Worth.

The final session of all, simply titled *Duke*, was yet another child of the restless brain of Alan Barnes, whose unstinting efforts on behalf of the entire weekend's programme were rightly acknowledged in the closing ceremonies which followed. Alan had assembled a stellar big band. On reeds Ken and Harry Allen joined him, along with Bob Wilber on soprano and Karen Sharp in Carney's chair. The trombones were Adrian Fry, Ian Bateman and Roy Williams, and the trumpets Alain Bouchet, Warren Vaché and Enrico Tomasso. The lack of a fourth trumpet was rectified on the spot when a seventeen-year-old local player, Tom Clay-Harris, was drafted in, with his father's consent (given because he didn't have an A Level paper the following day). A Level, May-level! Tom must have had the experience of his young life so far, sitting alongside Enrico in the section and taking his turn with the others in the sequence of short trumpet solos towards the end of *Rockin' In Rhythm*. And Enrico

himself must have been recalling the occasion in the 1960s when, as a seven-year-old trumpet prodigy, he welcomed Louis Armstrong to Yorkshire for his season at Batley Variety Club.

Rossano Sportiello was at the piano. In contrast to the lightness of touch of his solo recital earlier in the day, evident most notably in his lovely Mozart-based variations on *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star*, he evoked with complete conviction the depth and resonance of Duke's fuelling band pianism, what Gunther Schuller once described as 'playing deep in the keys', particularly in the solo break leading into the out choruses of *Ko-Ko*, and again on *Raincheck*. Alec Dankworth and Bobby Worth, both well versed in this music from Alan's Ellingtonian Octet, completed the line-up.



Rossano Sportiello

It was all too good to be true of course. Ellington's music (and Strayhorn's perhaps even more) often moves in unexpected ways. A familiar masterpiece like *Ko-Ko* is much more than a straight-down-the-line twelve-bar blues (despite being fundamentally just that), and can catch out even the least unwary. Add to the music's inherent subtleties the fact that the band came to it with minimal preparation time at the end of three long and intensive days' playing, and that familiar pieces were opened up to create space for soloists, and it is unsurprising that even this gifted ensemble lost its way at times.

Like *The Mooche*, *Sweet As Bear Meat* and *Happy Reunion* on the earlier set, *Ko-Ko*, was based, I imagine, on Tony Faulkner's octet score commissioned by Alan. It, *Harlem Airshaft* and *Raincheck* formed the 1940-41 core of a set which was topped-and-tailed by *Ring Dem Bells* (Rossano supplied the chimes) and *Kinda Dukish-Rockin' In Rhythm* (Karen supplied Carney's solo clarinet passage). Two ballads provided the contrast. *Sultry Sunset*, the 1946 Musicraft for Hodges, featured Alan's alto. Though itself rarely revived, it is mainstream stuff compared with Harry Allen's feature, Strays' arrangement of *I've Just Seen Her* from the 1962 Columbia LP *All American In Jazz*, long neglected and usually dismissed as unworthy.

Despite the lack of rehearsal time the set was a bold and stimulating final flourish to the weekend.

Organizing and hosting such an event is stressful as well as exhilarating, and the NJPs won't go on for ever. So sign up soon if you want to experience one. Next year's, the seventh, will be on the equivalent weekend, 4-6 May. **Roger Boyes**

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.

DE Suk London Social Meetings:

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

TDES (New York):

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

Jazz at Café Society: w China Moses, Gwyneth Herbert and Alex Webb Orch., with Frank Griffith. 16-21 July 8pm, Tricycle Theatre, 269 Kilburn High Road. London, NW6 7JR. 0207 328 100.
jazzatcafesocietyinfo@gmail.com or www.tricycle.co.uk

Echoes Of Ellington: Marlborough Jazz Festival, Awdry Bailey Douglas Priory Marquee, 19 July, 7pm. Programme includes *The Queen's Suite*, *The Tattooed Bride*.

Laurent Mignard Duke Orchestra:

www.laurentmignard.com

Sat 11 Aug: Pertuis (84)

Sat 29 Sep: Provins (E of Paris) (77) This is part of a two-day Duke Festival on 28-29 September.

Sun 30 Sep: Bagnoles-de-l'Orne (64) Centre d'Animation 17h30

Fri 14 Dec: Boulogne-Billancourt (Paris) (92) Carré Bellefeuille

30 Mar 2013: Athis-Mons (env.Paris) (91)

Maison du Duke: www.maisondu duke.com

Harmony In Harlem:

Sun 1 Jul: William Westley School, Whittlesford 5pm.
Openair family picnic

Waresley (Cambs.) summer Cream Tea day. Details tbc

Sat 6 Oct: Arts Centre, Haverhill, Suffolk tbc

Sat 13 Nov (prov.): Cottenham Vill. Coll. Cambs.

Contact Michael Kilpatrick on 01223 833062

www.harmonyinharlem.co.uk

New Delta Big Band:

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

Dave Burman:

Weds. Southampton Arms, Highgate, London.

Kinda Dukish:

Thursdays, 8.30pm, British Oak, Pershore Rd., Stirchley, B'ham B30 2XS

Sat 21 Jul, Spotted Dog, Digbeth, B'ham B12 6NH. 4.15pm.

Contact Mike Fletcher on 0121 444 4129

mike@efletcher.fsworld.co.uk

Frank Griffith:

Thu 26 July, FG Nonet with voc. Atila Huseyin, Ealing Jazz Festival. 9pm, Walpole Park, Ealing London W5. www.ealing.gov.uk/ealingsummer

Mon 31 July: Nonet at The Vortex, 9pm, 11 Gillett St, London, N16 8JH. 0207 254 4097.

www.vortexjazz.co.uk. £10

Sun 5 Aug: FG w Simon Cook Trio. 12.30pm, Lion Brewery, 104 Guildford Road, Ash, Surrey, GU12 6BT

Sat 18 Aug: FG with Alexander Stewart at the Canary Wharf Jazz Festival. Canada Square Park

Fri 14 Sep: The Polo Sticks w/FG, Julian Stringle, Rob Fowler cl, Richard Pite d, Rob Rickenberg-b, Martin Litton p. 12.30pm. Spice of Life, 6 Moor St, London, W1. 07870 915682.

www.spicejazz.co.uk. £8.

Sun 21 Oct: FG Big Band, w/Tina May vocals. 8pm, Phyllis Court Club, Marlow Rd, Henley, Oxon., 01491 570500. www.phylliscourt.co.uk

Wed 14 Nov, FG Big Band, Bulls Head, Barnes.

8.30pm. 373 Lonsdale Road, SW13 9PY. 0208 876 5241. www.thebullshead.com. £12.

The Big Chris Barber Band 2012:

Th 2 Aug: Ham Marquee, Sidmouth, Devon. 8pm

Mon 6 Aug: Snape Maltings, Suffolk. 7.30pm

Sun 19 Aug: Stables, Wavendon, nr M Keynes. 8pm

Sat 25-Fri 31 Aug: Germany

Sun 9 Sep: National Concert Hall, Dublin. 8pm

Fri 14 Sep: Winston Churchill Hall, Ruislip, W London. 8pm.

Sun 16 Sep: The Mill at Sonning, Reading. 8.15pm

Th 27 Sep: Luxembourg Conservatoire, Lux. 8pm

Fri 28 Sep-Sun 30 Sep: Germany

Future BL Copy deadlines:

Vol. 19/3: Fri 7 Sept. 2012

Vol. 19/4: Fri 23 Nov. 2012

Vol. 20/1: Fri 1 Mar. 2013

Vol. 20/2: Fri 7 June 2013



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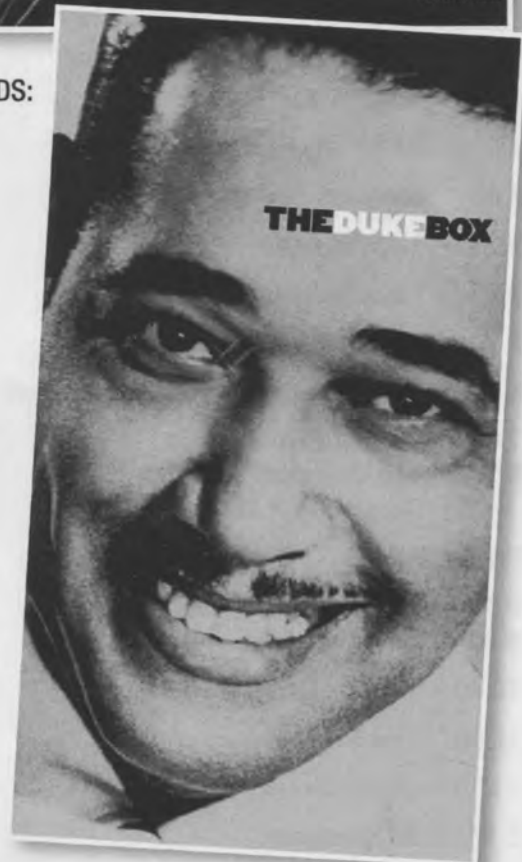
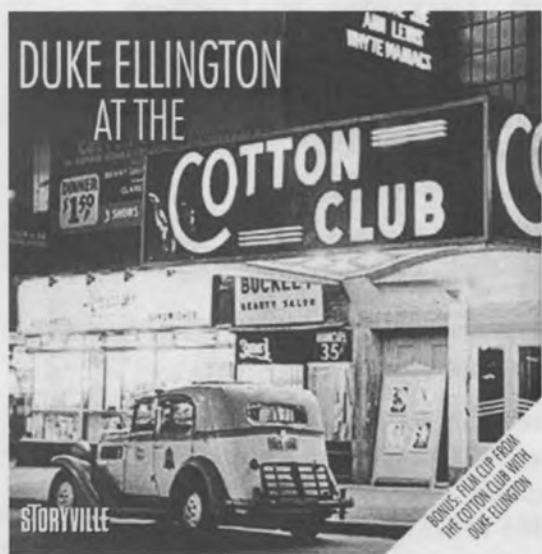
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LAUNCHED AT DUKE ELLINGTON WOKING 2012



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AT THE HURRICANE	TREASURY SHOWS VOL 1 – 15



TREASURER'S NOTES

Woking Conference and AGM

Those of you who missed the Woking conference missed a very enjoyable four days with excellent presentations and lots of wonderful music. Even my Treasurer's report to the AGM was received amicably by members and the members present made some useful contributions to the debate on membership fees and the problems raised by the lack of income from life members.

New Members

We extend a warm welcome to new members

Sheri Tullah, Leland Farley and Bob Littlefair

Donations

Donations to the Society are always welcome and I would like to thank **Chris Addison, Ian Bradley, Wayne Clutton, David Hastings, Richard Partington, and Kath. Whale** for their generous contributions.

DESUM, the Current Financial Situation

A copy of the Final Accounts for 2011/12 will appear in the next *BL*. It will show a marginal overspend of £334.33p so we have been trying to find ways of saving money and increasing income.

Postage Costs

To assist in ensuring that our costs are kept to the minimum we purchased a stock of stamps ahead of April's increased UK postage costs.

At the AGM it was suggested that an online copy of *BL* could be made available for members who might prefer this to the present hard copy delivered by post. I would be interested to hear your opinions.

We can save on postage by communicating by Email where possible so if any members have not yet supplied an Email address could you contact me at desuk@victor.waitrose.com to provide one.

Since there is a risk that the information on my files related to life members is out of date I am hoping to send life members a questionnaire to assist in ensuring that they receive their copies of *BL* regularly and that we can communicate with them when we need to. An obvious priority here will be a plea for donations

Annual and Life Membership Fees

If I interpreted things correctly there was broad agreement at the AGM that annual members have been shouldering an unfair proportion of the cost of running the Society for some time but that we cannot alter our commitment to retaining the terms offered to life members when they joined.

I am hoping that retaining the £20 Annual Membership fee will retain members and encourage new recruits to assist in ensuring that we have adequate annual income from this source but this will need to be reviewed at the next AGM.

Late Subscription Payments 2011/12

I have sent a *Final Reminder* for unpaid subs. due on 31st December 2011 to members who have supplied Email addresses. A letter will be sent to those who have not. Payments can be made by:

Cheque payable to DESUK drawn on a Sterling bank account. Send to:
DESUM Treasurer, 38 Thurlstone Avenue, London N12 0LP

Standing Order or Bank Transfer to DESUK at Santander Bank Sort Code 09-01-55 A/c no. 15478709

PayPal (commission charges are paid by DESUK, not you)

For overseas members, a Sterling International Money Order (US Dollar cheques are not acceptable).

Derek Else

Although not firing on all cylinders (his hearing has declined somewhat and his mobility is limited), Derek is receiving care and attention from a physiotherapist in addition to treatment by his doctor. When I visited him recently he was in good spirits and sorting out of his collection books, music and CDs to ensure that they can be retained in safe storage should the need arise. His Johnny Hodges obsession remains intact. He courageously encouraged me to accompany him playing "Come Sunday" on clarinet on my alto. Suffice it to say that I need a little more practice.

If you have any messages for Derek or wish to pay him a visit his address is, as ever, 47 Yoxley Drive, Ilford, Essex IG2 6PX. or Email de@derekelse.com).

Victor Lawrance
DESUM Treasurer

MINUTES of the DESUK Committee
Meeting held at the Punch Tavern, Fleet
Street, London on **Saturday 28th January**
2012

Present: Peter Caswell (Chair), Chris Addison,
Roger Boyes, Quentin Bryar, Catherine Coates,
Victor Lawrance, Phil Mead, Antony Pepper

1. Chairman's opening remarks: at 1 pm
Chair welcomed members and confirmed that
the resignation of Roger Middleton from the
Committee left a vacancy for the post of
Membership Secretary. VL had agreed to take
on this responsibility until the AGM. VL would
prepare a short paper on this.

2. Apologies for absence: Apologies had
been received from Geoff Smith and, during the
meeting, from Frank Harvey (a train accident on
the way having foiled his intention to attend).

3. Minutes of 15th Oct 2011 were approved.

4. Matters arising: Item 4 - CC confirmed a
letter sent to Cleo Laine had evoked no response
as yet. Item 8 - VL confirmed he was still
pursuing the issue of merchandise. Item 5
Constitution - RB had circulated his suggestion
for the additional sentence on Membership Fees.

5. DESUK Constitution. PC expressed his
thanks to VL for his work on this. Committee
considered the suggested format and
amendments were incorporated and agreed as
per the attached document.

6. Future plans and activities: a) Ellington
2012. AP presented the report from GS and
noted that only around 5/6 further registrations
were needed to present a minimal conference.
45 delegates were already registered. He urged
members to use all avenues to publicise the
event. RB confirmed first page of BL edition
prior to Woking will be dedicated to it. DESUK is
underwriting the conference by £1,500. No
donations have been received from any other
source thus far. RB cautioned against DESUK
being "swamped" by the conference. In
response to AP's request for funds to be
provided up front which would be returned if a
profit on the event was made, it was agreed this
could only be considered if AP would submit a
costed request in writing to the treasurer. b)
Other - nothing to report.

7. Officers' reports. a. Treasurer. VL spoke
to his report. Improved communication with
members was vital but the cost of this to those

without email facilities was high. He suggested a
donations plea on one side of A4 with news
items on the other. VL will draft proposed budget
headings; anything that was going to cost money
should be submitted *before* the next meeting on
24th March. AP confirmed that Derek Else had
set up a sinking fund for Life Members'
donations. RB agreed to copy VL with a letter
devised by RB and David Deacon specifically
intended for Life Members. To a suggestion that
Life Membership should be withdrawn, PC said
this could not be decided at this meeting and
asked for a written submission. VL suggested
buying stamps in advance and a stamp log book.
PC thanked VL for his report. b. Publicity Officer
- CA spoke to his report, complimenting RB on
his excellent and useful DESUK "potted history".
It was agreed that CA would follow up on the
various issues laid out in the report (Arts Council
Lottery Funding; HoC Jazz Appreciation Group -
John Prescott a possible contact here; Online
publication - CA would liaise with RB on this). c.
Blue Light editor - nothing to add to report
already circulated. d. Meetings Organiser. AP
noted that while numbers at London meetings
remained stable, it was hoped to vary the type of
presentation (e.g. video days) to try and attract
more people. e. Webmaster. AP confirmed the
site was updated and hosting had already been
paid for - cost is £75 p.a. It was agreed CA
would assist AP in website matters.

8. Any other business. 1. For the meeting on
24th March. PC advised that committee members
should indicate whether they wished to stand for
re-election; and Secretary should note an
Agenda item of *Tony Faulkner Collection/Library*
to be listed under Matters Arising. AP advised
he had additional items for the library.

2. For the AGM, AP said people should be given
full opportunity to be nominated for the
committee and names be given to the secretary.

9. Future dates: Committee - Sat 24 March at
Punch Tavern. AGM - 10am Sun 27 May at
Woking. Dates beyond the AGM to be agreed by
the new committee.

The meeting was declared closed at 3.25 pm.

Catherine Coates
Minutes Agreed, 24 March 2012