

PART

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EAP 1-637



RECORDS
RECORDING

DANCE to the DUKE!

DUKE ELLINGTON
AND HIS FAMOUS ORCHESTRA





Young dancers everywhere are discovering what jazz enthusiasts have long known—the irresistible appeal of music by Ellington! Join them... and Dance to the Duke!



PERSONNEL:

Piano: Duke Ellington
Saxes: Harry Carney, Russell Procope, Jimmy Hamilton, Rick Henderson, Paul Gonsalves
Trumpets: Ray Nance, Clarke Terry, Gerald Wilson, Cat Anderson, Willie Cook
Trombones: Britt Woodman, Quentin Jackson, John Saunders
Bass: Wendell Marshall
Drums: Dave Black
Conga Drums: Bob Collier

IN PLAYING ORDER:

C-JAM BLUES April 26, 1954
San Francisco
as listed above

FRIVOLOUS BANTA January 1, 1954 • Chicago
George Jean, trombone;
Wilson out

NIGHT TIME December 28, 1953
Chicago • Wilson out

DANCE TO THE DUKE!

For more than three decades Duke Ellington has conducted a band that has provided a consistent source of exciting, important music—a band that has produced the best in both listenable and danceable jazz. From the earliest days of the Washingtonians, the Jungle band, and the Cotton Club orchestra, to the more recent periods of more complex, more sophisticated sounds, the Duke's band has always had its own personal sound, travelled its own original path, and carved out jazz landmarks that will endure long beyond their time.

The Ellington band has kept pace with and set the pace for many of the changing vogues in popular music. As a composer, Duke has written one popular song after another. His hits are legion. As a leader, he has shaped smoothly performing organizations, and developed the abilities of the men within them. His continual thirst for experiment has produced constant musical development; no two Ellington years sound alike.

Ellington's highly sophisticated jungle style has pleased jazz and classical critics alike. No band of this quality has sold so many audiences, and Duke's hundreds of original orchestrations have won him the acclaim due a composer of international importance. All the selections in this album, recorded between 1953 and 1955, have the mark of Ellington indelibly stamped upon them. Yet each is distinctive, each shows skilled orchestration and the individuality of fine jazz musicians. Ellington's style speaks a language of its

own. Neither pure jazz nor classical, it fuses elements of both into a kind of super-swing.

The origins of jazz have not been entirely obscured in Ellington's music. He has changed the traditional elements only by reconstructing them in terms of the sounds demanded by his times. But with his flexibility he has always retained a strong personal integrity, insisting on the right to change his music whenever he has seen fit, regardless of commercial demands.

The blues tradition can be traced through all of Ellington's music. "C-Jam Blues," an often-recorded Ellington original, is an example of how a blues variation, exquisitely simple in form, can be transformed into a larger, more complex composition. The four-bar main phrase of "C-Jam" consists of only two notes, G and C; the first two bars are all on G. Over what has been called "a definitive example of the walking bass," this tune expands from an empty pair of notes into a fresh, swinging blues.

"Night Time" is an Ellington-Billy Strayhorn original, recorded here for the first time. It is a strange little composition featuring Duke's piano and some outstanding conga drum work by Dave Black. The originality of this miniature dance piece offers indication enough that the long-term team of Ellington and Strayhorn has no equal in the field.

"Frivolous Banta" is from the pen of saxist Rick Henderson. A cute, up-tempo riff, it is an example of big-band jazz at its best, swinging easily, happily, and with light heart.