

Duke Ellington's



EPV 1060

DUKE ELLINGTON
CAT ANDERSON
WILLIE SMITH
PAUL GONSALVES
LOUIE BELLSON

CARAVAN
THE HAPPENING
CAT WALK
MOONLIGHT FIESTA

vogue





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Mercer Records
**DUKE ELLINGTON
 AND THE CORONETS**

1. Caravan (Ellington, Tizol, Mills)
 (featuring Willie Smith, alto)
2. The Happening (Gonsalez-Ellington)
 (featuring Paul Gonsalvez, ten. sax.)

1. Laffleur
 & Sons
 2. Campbell
 Connelly

**EXTENDED
 PLAY**

(VFP 117)
EPV1060



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Mercer Records
**DUKE ELLINGTON
 AND THE CORONETS**

3. Cat Walk (Bellson-Ellington)
 (Featuring "Cat" Anderson, tp.)
4. Moonlight Fiesta (Tizol-Ellington)

3. Campbell
 Connelly
 4. Mills Music

**EXTENDED
 PLAY**

(VFP 118)
EPV1060

45

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Duke Ellington and the Coronets

131-

"Cat" Anderson (*tp*); Juan Tizol (*tb*); Willie Smith (*alto sax*); Paul Gonsalves (*tenor sax*); Duke Ellington (*piano*); Wendell Marshall (*bass*); Louis Bellson (*drums*); Billy Strayhorn (*organ*, on *Caravan* only). New York, May, 1951.

1. CARAVAN
2. THE HAPPENING

Duke Ellington's soloists have always reflected various facets of his imagination. In addition to being jazz artists in their own right they are members of the Ellington orchestra, playing music composed for performance by a particular group of musicians. His solos must be not merely a personal expression but also fit into the general character of the composition.

For this reason Ellington has always chosen his musicians with especial care. They need to be men whom he can trust to improvise in a fashion that will blend with his ideas as a composer. Over the years the Ellington orchestra has changed its personnel far less than any other band: Johnny Hodges stayed 23 years, Tricky Sam Nanton 20 years, while Harry Carney joined Ellington in 1926 and is still playing with him.

This record presents a newer generation of Ellington soloists. All are small-band performances with the emphasis upon solo jazz, but the music still keeps a typically Ellingtonian sound and pattern.

Caravan was composed by Juan Tizol, Ellington's Puerto Rican trombonist, and first recorded by the orchestra in 1937. The present version swings a great deal more than any preceding one. After Tizol himself has stated the sultry theme, Willie Smith improvises a brilliant, lyrical solo on alto saxophone. A principal soloist and arranger with Jimmy Lunceford's great band of the 1930's, Willie Smith is an alto sax player to be ranked with Hodges, Carter and Parker. Billy Strayhorn augments the group on organ for the final sonorous chord.

Paul Gonsalves joined Ellington in 1950 after

3. CAT WALK
4. MOONLIGHT FIESTA

working with the bands of Count Basie and Dizzy Gillespie. His forceful, thrusting tenor saxophone drives its way all through *The Happening*.

The trumpet played with a plunger mute has always been a feature of Ellington's music since Bubber Miley created the style back in 1926. Cootie Williams took over this role from Miley and the latest in the line of Ellington growl-men is Willie "Cat" Anderson, who first joined the Duke in 1944. His virtuoso playing, with its full range of mute effects, is featured in *Cat Walk*.

Although Juan Tizol has worked with the orchestra since 1929, he cannot really be regarded as an Ellington soloist. His valve-trombone, with its bland tone and restrained phrasing, is often used to state a theme but only rarely has he improvised a solo. In collaboration with Ellington, however, Tizol has composed several exotic tunes. One of these is *Moonlight Fiesta*, a colourful piece in which "Cat" Anderson and Willie Smith play solos against a background of shifting Latin-American rhythms.

A great deal of the swing that distinguishes these performances comes from the drumming of Louis Bellson and the bass-playing of Wendell Marshall. Bellson, the only white musician to play with the Ellington orchestra, started out in Ted Fio Rito's band, later working with Benny Goodman and Tommy Dorsey. He had been drumming with Harry James when he moved into the Ellington band in 1951.

The youngest musician on the session, Wendell Marshall was born in St. Louis in 1927. He joined the Ellington orchestra in 1948, replacing Oscar Pettiford.

CHARLES FOX.

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