



A NITE AT THE
COTTON CLUB
with **DUKE ELLINGTON**
and his Cotton Club Orchestra



EDWARD KENNEDY "DUKE" ELLINGTON

Director, arranger, composer, piano-player

1899 He was born in Washington D.C., on April 29, into a middle-class coloured family. His father, who was a butler by profession, personally took care of his son's education, and encouraged him to take piano lessons at a very early age.

1907 Due to his refined manners, at eight years of age he was nicknamed "Duke". He attended one of the best schools in Washington, achieving very good results and excelling in drawing.

1917 He left school suddenly.

1918 He gathered around him a number of musicians who were to achieve fame in his band: Otto Hardwick, Arthur Whetsol, Wellman Braud and Sonny Greer.

He married Edna Thompson.

1919 His son Mercer was born

He widened his knowledge of harmony, and learned a great deal from listening to the Jazz players passing through Washington.

1921 He visited New York for the very first time where he had the opportunity of meeting his favourite piano-players: James P. Johnson, Fats Waller and Willie "The Lion" Smith.

1923 He returned to New York and settled down there. He formed a group called "Washingtonians" and obtained a 4 year engagement at the "Kentucky Club". With him in the group were Hardwick, Braud and Greer plus two specialists in the use of the mute: Bubber Miley on trumpet and Joe "Tricky Sam" Nanton on trombone.

He wrote his first jungle-style masterpieces ("East St. Louis Toodle-oo", "Black and Tan Fantasy").

1927 He began working together with the impresario-editor Irving Mills.

The group was joined by Louis Metcalf, trumpet and Harry Carney, baritone sax. He tried out the voice of Adelaide Hall, using it instrumentally ("Creole Love Call" - "The Blues I Love To Swing").

In December, Ellington signed a three-year contract with "Cotton Club", the most elegant club in Harlem.

In the exotic environment of the club, among nasty looking characters who went around with guns and big wads of banknotes, surrounded by beautiful negro dancers, "with skin as white as snow", the "Duke", completely at ease, performed in front of an elegant audience including rich businessmen, famous actors, film-stars and celebrated musicians, even classical, such as Stravinsky, Stokowsky and Gershwin, who came especially to hear him. It was in this suggestive atmosphere that Ellington drew the perfect inspiration for his music.

1928 The band acquired strength by the addition of Barney Bigard on clarinet and Johnny Hodges on alto sax ("Hot and Bothered" - "The Mooche"). Freddie Jenkins, trumpet, also joined the band ("Misty Mornin")

1929 Cootie Williams replaced Bubber Miley on the trumpet.

1930 On the road to success, Ellington took part in a film and launched "Ring Dem Bells" which highlighted the musical talents of Cootie Williams.

This was the year he recorded "Mood Indigo", a piece for three voices, assigned to the sonority of Whetsol, Nanton and Bigard.

He left his wife and married Mildred Mixon, a dancer at the Cotton Club.

1931 He composed "Rockin' in Rhythm" for the Cotton Club dancers to dance to.

1932 Lawrence Brown, trombone, and the singer Ivie Anderson joined the band ("It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing").

1933 He composed "Sophisticated Lady". He went on a European tour to London and Paris.

1934-36 Ellington became more and more popular. One success followed another ("Solitude" - "In a Sentimental Mood").

The "Dukes" presented a far-reaching composition dedicated to his dead mother ("Reminisce in Tempo" - 1935).

1937-38 He wrote other masterpieces: "Prelude to a Kiss" and "Caravan", the second of which he dedicated to the

trombone of Juan Tizol.

1939 His partnership with Irving Mills came to an end and he began working with Billy Strayhorn, composer and arranger. Ellington signed on Jimmy Blanton and Ben Webster.

1940 With Strayhorn's arrangements ("Conga Brava" - "Cotton Tail" - "Concerto for Cootie") Ellington's band reached the height of success.

In Autumn, Cootie Williams left to join Goodman's band and his place was taken by Ray Nance. Duke's fans were outraged at this betrayal.

1941 "Take the A Train", composed and arranged by Strayhorn became the band's signature tune.

1942 Bigard stepped out and his place was taken by Jimmy Hamilton. Jimmy Blanton died at 21 years of age. Webster left the band temporarily.

1943 Ellington presented his "Black, Brown and Beige" suite at the Carnegie Hall.

1944-49 During these years, the Duke mainly expressed himself along symphonic lines in search of a cultured image, but his "Suites" were not always favourably received by audiences and the critics. He signed on Cat Anderson, on trumpet ("Trumpet no End") and Oscar Pettiford on bass.

1950 His son Mercer also joined the trumpet section and later took part in the arrangements and organization.

He went on an important European tour, with the same success as before.

"Duke" became a legend in his own time. During each concert he told his audience "I Love You Madly" which drew warmth and enthusiasm.

1951 He presented "Harlem Suite", a work commissioned by Toscanini, at the Metropolitan Opera House.

The band's performance began to suffer after Johnny Hodges and Lawrence Brown dropped out. After so many years with the band, Sonny Greer also left and his place was taken by a white musician, Louis Bellson.

1953-55 Ellington's band was now in a state of crisis and was abandoned by the public in favour of Count Basie.

1956 Johnny Hodges returned to the band.

At the Newport Festival, Paul Gonsalves gave an outstanding performance in an interminable solo composition ("Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue"). Ellington's popularity began to pick up.

1959 He wrote the sound track for the film "Anatomy of a Murder".

1960 He took part in the Monterey Festival.

1961-65 Ellington worked frenetically. He also performed with such modern musicians as Charles Mingus, Max Roach and John Coltrane. He continued to compose music and go on tours in various parts of the world. He wrote religious suites and concertos which were performed in a number of American and English churches, and also worked with European symphony orchestras.

1966 He went on a European tour with Ella Fitzgerald.

1967 On May 31, his close friend Billy Strayhorn died.

1969 Great celebrations at the White House for his 70th birthday with a reception organized by Nixon.

1970 Johnny Hodges died.

1971-73 Despite his age, Ellington worked non-stop.

1974 He celebrated his 75th birthday in a hospital bed at the Columbia Presbyterian Medical Centre in New York. He received mountains of birthday wishes.

He died of lung cancer on May 24, ten days after Paul Gonsalves passed away.

A few months later, his old friend Carney, the most faithful of his musicians, slipped away forever.

His son Mercer tried unsuccessfully to keep the big band together that his father had left to him.

DOIN'THE FROG*New York, December 29, 1927*

Duke Ellington(p/a/dir) Bubber Miley, Louis Metcalf(tp)
 Joe "Tricky Sam" Nanton(tb) Otto Hardwick(bsx) Harry
 Carney(cl/as/bar) Rudy Jackson(cl/ts) Fred Guy(bj)
 Wellman Braud(sb) Sonny Greer(d)

AWFUL SAD*New York, October 20, 1928*

Duke Ellington(p/a/dir) Bubber Miley, Arthur Whetsol,
 Freddy Jenkins(tp) Joe "Tricky Sam" Nanton, Harry
 White(tb) Johnny Hodges(cl/ss/as) Harry
 Carney(cl/as/bar) Barney Bigard(cl/ts) Fred Guy(bj)
 Wellman Braud(sb) Sonny Greer(d)

THE MOOCHE*New York, October 30, 1928*

Bubber Miley and Harry White omitted, Wellman Braud
 plays bb. Rest same.

DIGA DIGA DOO*New York, November 15, 1928*

Duke Ellington(p/a/dir) Bubber Miley, Arthur Whetsol,
 Freddy Jenkins(tp) Joe "Tricky Sam" Nanton(tb)
 Johnny Hodges(cl/ss/as) Otto Hardwick(as/bar) Harry
 Carney(cl/as/bar) Barney Bigard(cl/ts) Fred Guy(bj)
 WellmanBraud(sb) Sonny Greer(d) Ozie Ware, Irving
 Mills(v)

TIGER RAG - PART I**TIGER RAG - PART II***New York, January 8, 1929*

Ozie Ware and Irving Mills omitted. Rest same.

DOIN'THEVOOMVOOM**FLAMING YOUTH****SATURDAY NIGHT FUNCTION****HIGH LIFE (*)***New York, January 16, 1929*

Sonny Greer plays chimes (*). Rest same.

THE DICTY GLIDE**HOT FEET (*)****STEVEDORE STOMP***New York, March 7, 1929*

Duke Ellington(p/a/dir) Freddy Jenkins(tp), Cootie
 Williams(tp/v*) Johnny Hodges/cl/ss/as) Harry
 Carney(cl/as/bar) Barney Bigard(cl/ts) Fred Guy(bj)
 Wellman Braud(sb) Sonny Greer(d)

A NITE AT THE COTTON CLUB - PART I (INTRO / COTTON CLUB STOMP / MISTY MORNIN')**A NITE AT THE COTTON CLUB - PART II (INTRO / GOIN'TOTOWN / FREEZE AND MELT)***New York, April 12, 1929*

Duke Ellington(p/a/dir) Arthur Whetsol, Freddy
 Jenkins, Cootie Williams(tp) Joe "Tricky Sam"
 Nanton (tb) Johnny Hodges(cl/ss/as) Harry
 Carney(cl/as/bar) Barney Bigard(cl/ts) Fred Guy(bj)
 Wellman Braud(sb) Sonny Greer(d) prob. Harmonica
 Charlie(h) comments by Irving Mills.

THE DUKE STEPS OUT*New York, September 16, 1929*

Fred Jenkins omitted, Juan Tizol(vtb) and Teddy
 Bunn(g) added. Harmonica Charlie and Irving Mills
 omitted. Rest same.

BREAKFAST DANCE*New York, November 14, 1929*

Teddy Bunn omitted, Freddy Jenkins(tp) added. Rest
 same.

JUNGLE NIGHTS IN HARLEM*New York, June 4, 1930*

Same.

MOOD INDIGO*New York, December 10, 1930*

Same.

ROCKIN' IN RHYTHM*New York, January 16, 1931*

Same.



A NITE AT THE COTTON CLUB

CD 53304
AAD

with **DUKE ELLINGTON**
and his Cotton Club Orchestra

1	A NITE AT THE COTTON CLUB (Part I)	3:49"
	<i>INTRO</i> (0:30")	
	COTTON CLUB STOMP (Hodges-Carney-Ellington) (1:42")	
	<i>INTRO</i> (0:13")	
	MISTY MORNIN' (Whetsol-Ellington) (1:24")	
2	A NITE AT THE COTTON CLUB (Part II)	4:29"
	<i>INTRO</i> (0:24")	
	GOIN' TO TOWN (Ellington-Miley) (1:24")	
	<i>INTRO</i> (1:06")	
	FREEZE AND MELT (Fields-McHugh) (1:35")	
3	THE DICTY GLIDE (Ellington)	3:09"
4	HOT FEET (Fields-McHugh)	2:35"
5	ROCKIN' IN RHYTHM (Ellington-Carney-Mills)	2:56"
6	MOOD INDIGO (Ellington-Bigard-Mills)	3:03"
7	STEVEDORE STOMP (Ellington-Mills)	2:45"
8	THE DUKE STEPS OUT (Ellington-Hodges-Williams)	3:18"
9	THE MOOCHE (Ellington)	3:29"
10	AWFUL SAD (Ellington)	3:14"
11	DOIN' THE FROG (Fields-Healy-McHugh)	3:12"
12	DOIN' THE VOOM VOOM (Ellington-Miley)	3:08"
13	TIGER RAG - PART I (De Costa-La Rocca)	2:50"
14	TIGER RAG - PART II (De Costa-La Rocca)	2:53"
15	FLAMING YOUTH (Ellington)	3:16"
16	SATURDAY NIGHT FUNCTION (Ellington-Bigard)	3:03"
17	HIGH LIFE (Ellington)	3:06"
18	BREAKFAST DANCE (Ellington)	3:01"
19	DIGA DIGA DOO (Fields-McHugh)	2:53"
20	JUNGLE NIGHTS IN HARLEM (Ellington)	2:56"

Total Playing Time 63'05"



CEDAR
for HIGH QUALITY SOUND



CD 53304

A Nite at the COTTON CLUB

GIANTS OF JAZZ

A NITE AT THE COTTON CLUB

with **DUKE ELLINGTON**
and his Cotton Club Orchestra

1	A NITE AT THE COTTON CLUB (Part I)	3'49"
	INTRO (0'30")	
	COTTON CLUB STOMP (Hodges-Carney-Ellington)	(1'42")
	INTRO (0'13")	
	MISTY MORNIN' (Whetsol-Ellington)	(1'24")
2	A NITE AT THE COTTON CLUB (Part II)	4'29"
	INTRO (0'24")	
	GOIN' TO TOWN (Ellington-Miley)	(1'24")
	INTRO (1'06")	
	FREEZE AND MELT (Fields-McHugh)	(1'35")
3	THE DICTY GLIDE (Ellington)	3'09"
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Total Playing Time 63'05"

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CD 53304
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CEDAR



for HIGH QUALITY SOUND

COMPACT
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GIANTS OF JAZZ

A Nite at the COTTON CLUB

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