



DUKE ELLINGTON

his piano and his orchestra at the

BAL MASQUE



COLUMBIA
LIMITED EDITION

DUKE ELLINGTON
His Piano and his Orchestra
at the BAL MASQUE

LE 10077
STEREO

SIDE 1
XSM 44944

1. ALICE BLUE GOWN - J. McCarthy - Tierney
2. WHO'S AFRAID OF THE BIG BAD WOLF
- F. E. Churchill - Bonall
3. GOT A DATE WITH AN ANGEL - C. Grey -
M. Miller - Tunbridge - Waller
4. POOR BUTTERFLY - J. Golden - Hubbell
5. SATAN TAKES A HOLIDAY - Clinton
6. THE PEANUT VENDOR
- Gilbert - Sunshine - Sirock

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SIDE 2
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1. SATIN OOLL - Ellington
2. LADY IN RED - Dixon - Wrubel
3. INDIAN LOVE CALL
- Harbach - Hammerstein II - Friml
4. THE DONKEY SERENADE - Wright
Forrest - Friml - Siothart
5. GYPSY LOVE SONG
- H. B. Smith - Herbert
6. LAUGH, CLOWN, LAUGH
- Lewis - Young - Florida

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Alice Blue Gown
Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?
Got a Date with an Angel
Poor Butterfly
Satan Takes a Holiday
The Peanut Vendor

Satin Doll
Lady in Red
Indian Love Call
The Donkey Serenade
Gypsy Love Song
Laugh, Clown, Laugh

A couple of seasons ago the Ellington band was encamped at the Americana Hotel in Miami Beach, playing nightly, except Sunday, in the hotel's own beautiful supper club, the Bal Masque. Duke, always adaptable to his environment, played for dancers in the best dance-band tradition and began referring to himself and his fifteen jazz-poll winners as "Duke Ellington, his piano and his orchestra." And, playing this new role to the utmost, he introduced new arrangements featuring himself at the piano, playing of all things, other people's songs.

And, inspired by the room's masquerade decor, Duke fashioned his own musical masquerade of twelve couples. Alice and the wolf, an angel and Satan, a butterfly and a peanut vendor, a satin doll and a donkey, the lady in red with her Indian, and a gypsy and a clown all paraded by, while Duke, dressed like Carmen Cavallaro, sat at the piano and hosted the party. This is the recording of that famous affair, featuring the full Ellington band and soloists in a program of a dozen danceable standards, all in costume, never dressed quite like this before.

For instance, *Alice Blue Gown* leads the way into the Bal Masque, with

Duke's piano in the foreground and a satin sax chorus by Johnny Hodges. As the dancers around the bandstand applaud, the wolf in an Ellington arrangement arrives. *Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?* is possibly the least likely song you'd ever expect to hear Duke's band play, and so, of course, they played it, with solos by Clark Terry on trumpet and Paul Gonzalves on tenor saxophone. And it swings like mad.

Duke presents *Got a Date with an Angel* first with saxes and muted brass in the Hal Kemp tradition, then he comes as close as he ever does to playing someone else's melody on the piano, and finally abandons the tune entirely to romp through a last chorus. *Poor Butterfly* features Jimmy Hamilton on clarinet, with Ray Nance on violin and finally Gonzalves on tenor saxophone. *Satan Takes a Holiday* begins at both ends of the piano and later takes off with Harry Carney on baritone saxophone, and the whole band. The final masquerade on this first side is the familiar *Peanut Vendor*, with Ray Nance on trumpet, and a wild Latin rhythm.

Intermission at the Bal Masque gives Duke time to change from a blue

and green plaid jacket to a red and yellow one, while his guests stroll out to the Americana pool and wonder how cold it is in New York. Then it's time for the rest of the masquerade, led this time by Duke's own *Satin Doll*, the newest of the Ellington tunes to become a standard. It features Duke and Jimmy Woode on bass and describes a girl who, as Duke has pointed out, is as pretty on the inside as she is on the outside.

Next is *Lady in Red*, with solos by Jimmy Hamilton on clarinet and Clark Terry on flugelhorn. *Indian Love Call* features Duke's wonderful piano obligato, with Shorty Baker's trumpet, Jimmy Hamilton's clarinet, and the trio of "Butter" Jackson and John Sanders, trombones, and Harry Carney, bass clarinet. As an encore for Jackson, he plays *Donkey Serenade* as a trombone con plunger solo. *Gypsy Love Song* is Victor Herbert's classic, and Duke features his own gypsies, Ray Nance on violin and Johnny Hodges, alto saxophone, in what announcers call a haunting rendition. Finally, Harry Carney plays the clown in *Laugh, Clown, Laugh*, with more of Ellington's piano interludes, a swinging finale to this very special masquerade.

In recording Duke Ellington at the Bal Masque we've satisfied at least three types of requests Duke has had. For you who have asked why he doesn't play more piano, he does. For you who like to dance, here are a dozen danceable performances by a band which likes to play for dancers. And for all of you who didn't think *Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?* could swing, now you know it can.

IRVING TOWNSEND