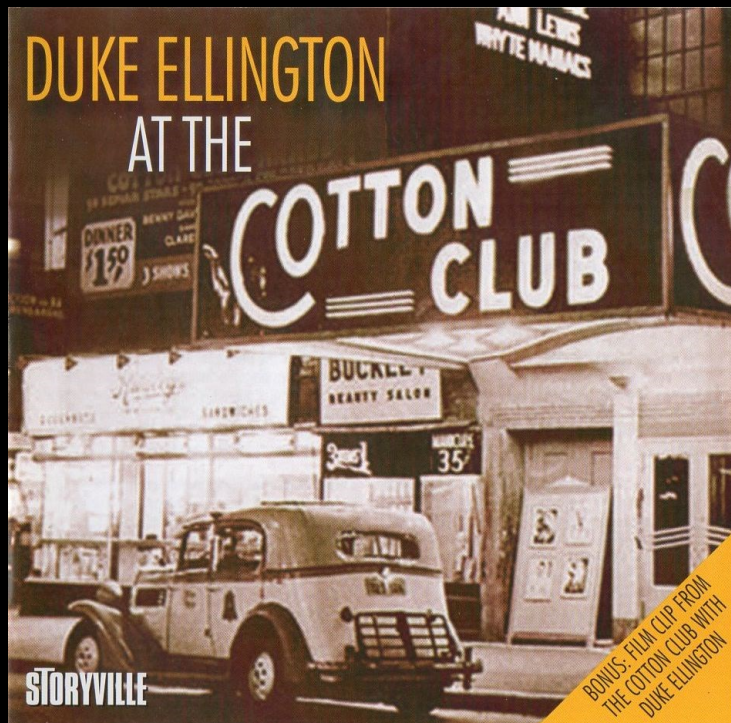


DUKE ELLINGTON AT THE



STORYVILLE

BONUS: FILM CLIP FROM
THE COTTON CLUB WITH
DUKE ELLINGTON

DUKE ELLINGTON AT THE COTTON CLUB

THE ORIGIN OF THESE BROADCASTS

The music on this CD-set owes its existence to, in the first instance, Duke Ellington, composer-in-residence, chief arranger, and sometime piano player for the orchestra which bears his name, and in the second instance to the efforts of Joseph Schillinger, who recorded it from Cotton Club broadcasts.

Schillinger had come to the States from Russia in 1928, bringing with him impeccable academic credits and a reputation as a minor composer. He lectured at the New School for Social Research and was for some time on the faculty of Columbia University, where he taught music, fine arts and mathematics. While at Columbia he devised the method of composition which bears his name and later set up business as a private teacher of composition.

The non-scientific orientation of people such as Mozart did not prevent their composing great music; it could be shown after the fact that their music was susceptible to mathematical analysis and that the mathematical relationships would be found to be fully as harmonious as the sounds. Schillinger's system took into account such mathematical considerations before the fact of composition; this approach would tend to make composition less of a chancey business. If one were to evaluate the

Schillinger system on a pragmatic basis, which is to say, on the number of worthy compositions which have resulted from the application of its principles, a judgment on the value of the method would have to be, on the whole, negative.

Schillinger's most prominent pupil was George Gershwin, and Schillinger adherents claim that "Porgy and Bess" was written entirely under the instruction and supervision of Joseph Schillinger. Gershwin, on the other hand, has said that only certain portions of the Storm Music were indeed written under the precepts of the Schillinger dicta, not the entire opera. Schillinger did have a respectable number of students who normally worked in the popular field, including Mel Powell (who went on to study with Paul Hindemith at Yale), Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, Hal Kemp and Mark Warnow.

In 1940 Schillinger published a slim volume, "Kaleidophone," devoted to modern tone progressions; one suspects that many of the Schillinger pupils were as interested in arranging techniques as in actual composition. In the mid-thirties, Schillinger was moved to acquire what was, by the standards of the time, very high quality recording equipment, and forthwith began the recording of substantial amounts of off-the-air material. The discs were later purchased from the Schillinger estate and thus commenced an odyssey, the end of which the reader knows.

CD 1

Duke Ellington, piano soloist, Paul Douglas, announcer. Broadcast: "Saturday Night Swing Club", May 8, 1937

1. **Swing Session** (Ellington)
2. **Medley: Solitude/In A Sentimental Mood** (Ellington)
Wallace Jones, Cootie Williams, trumpets; Rex Stewart, cornet, Joseph Nanton, Juan Tizol, Lawrence Brown, trombones; Barney Bigard, Johnny Hodges, Otto Hardwick, Harry Carney, reeds; Duke Ellington, piano; Fred Guy, guitar; Billy Taylor, string bass; Sonny Greer, drums; Ivie Anderson, vocal.
Broadcast from the Cotton Club, March 24, 1938

3. **Harmony In Harlem** (Ellington - Hodges)
4. **If You Were In My Place** (Ellington)
5. **Mood Indigo** (Ellington)
6. **Theme: East St. Louis Toodle-0o** (Ellington)
7. **Theme: East St. Louis Toodle-0o** (Ellington)
8. **Oh Babe. Maybe Someday** (Ellington)
9. **Dinah's In A Jam** (Ellington)
10. **If Dreams Come True** (Sampson - Goodman - Mills)
11. **Scrotch** (Ellington)

The small group heard on "Downtown Uproar": Cootie Williams, Joseph Nanton, Johnny Hodges, Harry Carney, Duke Ellington, Billy Taylor, Sonny Greer.
Broadcast from the Cotton Club, April 17, 1938

12. **You Went To My Head** (Bernier - Emmerich - Meyer)
13. **Three Blind Mice** (Trad.)
14. **Solitude** (DeLange - Ellington - Mills)

15. Downtown Uproar

(Ellington)
The small group heard on "Ev'ry Day": Rex Stewart, Juan Tizol, Barney Bigard, Taylor, Harry Carney, Duke Ellington, Billy Taylor, Sonny Greer.
Broadcast from the Cotton Club, April 24, 1938

16. **Dinah's In A Jam** (Ellington)
17. **On The Sunny Side Of The Street** (Fields - McHugh)
18. **Ev'ry Day** (Ellington)
19. **Azure** (Ellington)
20. **Carnival In Caroline** (Ellington)
Broadcast from the Cotton Club, May 1, 1938
21. **Harmony In Harlem** (Ellington)
22. **At Your Beck And Call** (DeLange - Ram)
23. **Solitude** (DeLange - Ellington - Mills)
24. **The Gal From Joe's** (Ellington)
25. **Riding On A Blue Note** (Ellington)
26. **If Dreams Come True** (Sampson - Goodman - Mills)

CD 2

Broadcast from the Cotton Club, May 8, 1938

1. **Oh Babe. Maybe Someday** (Ellington)
2. **I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart** (Ellington)

The small group heard on "Ev'ry Day": Rex Stewart, Juan Tizol, Barney Bigard, Harry Carney, Duke Ellington, Billy Taylor, Sonny Greer.
Broadcast from the Cotton Club, May 15, 1938

3. **Birmingham Breakdown** (Ellington)
4. **Rose Room** (Hickman)

5. **If Dreams Come True** (Sampson - Goodman - Mills)
6. **It's The Dreamer In Me** (Van Heusen - J. Dorsey)
7. **Lost In Meditation** (Tizol - Singer)
8. **Ev'ry Day** (Carney - Ellington)
9. **Echoes Of Harlem** (Ellington)

Broadcast from the Cotton Club. May 22, 1938

10. **Theme: East St. Louis Toodle-Do** (Ellington)
11. **Jig Walk** (Ellington)
12. **In A Sentimental Mood** (Ellington)
13. **I'm Slapping 7th. Avenue** (Ellington)
14. **Lost In Meditation** (Tizol - Singer)
15. **Alabamy Home** (Ringle - Ellington)
16. **If You Were In My Place** (Ellington)

Broadcast from the Cotton Club. May 29, 1938

17. **Prelude In C Sharp Minor** (Rachmaninoff)
18. **Rockin' In Rhythm** (Ellington - Bigard - Carney)

Broadcast from the Konserthuset, Stockholm, April 29, 1939

19. **Serenade To Sweden** (Ellington)
20. **Rockin' In Rhythm** (Ellington - Bigard - Carney)
21. **In A Red Little Cottage** (Frykman - Mills)

Did Duke Ellington make the Cotton Club famous or did the Cotton Club make Duke Ellington famous? This double edged question deserves some thought because the career of Duke Ellington developed into

that of one of the most gifted and influential American composers of the twentieth century. And, the Cotton Club served as a venue which provided profound opportunities although in a racially segregated environment for the development of many talented artists and entertainers, both black and white.

This CD package collects many broadcast recordings from the Cotton Club in 1938. They document the art of Duke Ellington, over a year's time, where audiences personally experienced his power of communication [i.e.] outside the confines of the recording studio and with the inspiring feedback which fuels the accomplishments of most performing musicians. And, as a bonus, we have the last of ten sessions - from a year later and recorded in Sweden which brings us to the end of Ellington's first forty years and the cusp of a new era.

To set the stage, we must remember that on October 28, 1919, the Volstead Act was passed, in the United States Congress - and over the veto of President Woodrow Wilson - which prohibited the manufacture, transportation or sale of alcoholic beverages. This act remained in force until December 1933, when it became void with the ratification of the Twenty-first Amendment. All of this is to say that for fourteen years, there was illicit manufacture and sale of alcohol during the birth of jazz and almost up to the doorstep of the big band era (1936).

In Harlem, the mix of exotic jazz music, energetic and risqué shows, combined with the adventure of

alcoholic defiance, attracted many wealthy and prominent patrons to the doors of night clubs - of which, the Cotton Club proved to be the best and most enduring. The original Cotton Club was located at 644 Lenox Avenue, at West 142nd Street. It was opened in 1922 by Owney Madden, a known gangster, who "took it over" and made it a-new from an establishment called the Club Deluxe (De Lux), which was owned by Jack Johnson, the former Heavyweight boxing champion. After the Harlem race riots in 1935, the original Cotton Club closed its doors on February 16, 1936. A half-year later in September the Cotton Club opened in a new location down town and closer to the Broadway theaters at 200 West 48th Street. This establishment remained in business until June 10 1940.

Note: "On March 19, 1935 employees at a Harlem department-store apprehended a 16-year-old shoplifter and whisked him off to be beaten in the store's basement. An outraged crowd massed on 125th Street, as rumors circulated that the police had broken the arms of a black woman who tried to help the boy [Harlem's blacks]. Rioting ensued for the next day, resulting in two deaths."

Duke Ellington began his tenure at the Cotton Club in 1927 as the house band and occasional composer. However, the main composers were white and included none-the-less great songwriters such as Dorothy Fields, Jimmy McHugh, Harold Arlen, Ted Koehler and Henry Nemo. In 1931, Cab Calloway became the house band and in 1934, Jimmy Lunceford held that position. When the Cotton Club re-opened in 1936, both Calloway and Ellington returned for residencies.

In a given year, there would be various "editions" of Cotton Club Revues or Parades. In his memoirs, "Music Is My Mistress", the Maestro picks up the thread "We were back downtown at the Cotton Club again in 1938, but this time Henry Nemo and I wrote the Cotton Club Revue. We had a wonderful cast and it was a fine production. The score included "If You Were in My Place", "I'm Slapping Seventh Avenue with the Sole of My Shoe", and "The Skrontch" (Scrontch)".

Other Ellington pieces from that show included "Swingtime in Honolulu", "A Lesson in 'C'", "Braggin' in Brass" and "Carnival in Caroline." And something else that Ellington neglected to tell us is that Irving Mills is also credited as lyricist on all seven tunes. Lyrics to "Braggin' in Brass" - imagine that. Something else which Ellington glosses over is that this was "The Duke's First Score and the Greatest Cotton Club Music Ever Written!" - according to an advertising flyer of the time. Of course, there were other musical numbers in the show - 16 in total - including an "Overture", some character numbers, a "Dance Supreme" and "Rhythm in Waltz Time" (featuring the 4 Step Brothers), but these were not specifically credited Ellington pieces. Of course, Ellington's publisher/manager Irving Mills was delighted with the prospects of the show - and working behind the scenes to make it happen - because, he advertised it as "3 Mills scores on Broadway" and rushed out a series of stock arrangements to be bought and played by regional dance bands throughout North America.

In his book, "Duke Ellington Day By Day And Film By Film", Dr. Klaus Stratemann reports that Ellington's contemporaneous recording schedule guaranteed "the conservation on disc of practically all the numbers Ellington had written for the 4th Cotton Club Parade." Stratemann also notes that in a post-prohibition "New York nightclub business which was doing poor business, the Cotton Club proved the surprise of the season, averaging \$30,000 to \$35,000 per week against expenses of \$20,000, according to Billboard (9.4.38p28)."

The first session on these CDs presents Ellington alone on a break between shows, or just prior to his appearance at the Cotton Club. The first piece looks forward to the new dance music of the time in its title, but more interestingly, backwards in its origin "Swing Session" is in fact, one of the Duke's earliest compositions, a teen-aged piece called "Soda Fountain Rag". And a piece on which Ellington played with his first drummer, Sonny Greer, for the last time on 8 July, 1972 in concert at Carnegie Hall at the so called Newport Jazz Festival. The ending introduces some parallel chords which Ellington utilized more prominently in two other compositions - one a "Blue" tune from the 1930s and the other a "Train" tune from the 1970s. "Solitude" was composed in 1934 and "In A Sentimental Mood" dates from 1935. By 1937, these and other Ellington songs had entered the American popular song repertoire and their royalty payments helped the Duke weather the financial difficulties which put many other band leaders out of business after World War II.

The second session finds Duke Ellington and his Famous Orchestra at the Cotton Club on 24 March, 1938.

"Harmony In Harlem" is a minor masterpiece which was lost because of the considerable recognition of the accomplishments of what is known as the "Blanton/Webster Band" of 1940 - as well as Ellington's shuffle from Columbia Records back to RCA Victor. While the Columbia recording of 20 September, 1937 benefits from the better studio ambiance and a more focused performance, this live rendition reconstitutes some passages which were cut to accommodate the three minute limit of a 78 rpm disc. Johnny Hodges leads the sax section on soprano sax and plays a solo displaying virtuoso technique perhaps prodded by the joyful trumpet solo of Cootie Williams.

"If You Were In My Place (What Would You Do)" starts off as a "wanna-be" pop song such as those written by Sam Coslow or Walter Donaldson. Here we encounter the first of the songs Ellington actually wrote for the fourth edition of the Cotton Club shows of 1938. The first chorus verges on the maudlin but saved by the tone and intensity of Ellington's orchestra. The chorus which follows is a "pre-quel" to "Braggin' In Brass" recorded on 3 March, 1938 - and also written for the same Cotton Club show.

The original recording of "If You Were In My Place..." was recorded on 25 February, 1938. Here, Lawrence Brown clucks tongue-twisting staccato phrases from his open-horned trombone in alteration with responses from the straight-muted

brass section. This is impressive brass playing technique on display and in some ways, more difficult than that heard on "B In B". Rex Stewart follows with a solo utilizing phrases which clearly identify his unique identity. The last chorus is a wonderful Otutti passage where Ellington has composed an "improvisation" on the theme and scored it for the entire orchestra. The "jungle style" plungered brass was one of Ellington's innovations. In this piece, we hear it within the model of a popular song type of the day. Note: There is a second recording of this piece - on CD 2 - recorded on 22 May, 1938.

"Mood Indigo" may well be the first popular song composed by a "jazz musician" Ellington would not be happy with that appellation. After Duke's full chorus of piano solo, the arrangement here is more elaborate than the original Hodges leading the sax section on soprano with sweet and muted fill-ins provided by trumpeter, Wallace Jones.

Before Billy Strayhorn's "Take The 'A' Train", Ellington's "East St. Louis Toodle-Do" served, perhaps more appropriately, as Duke's theme song. Here, leaves his drum set to ring some mournful chimes. Cootie, Ivie and Johnny set the stage for "Oh Babe, Maybe Someday". The star of this recording, however, is Ivie (two-and-a-half choruses) - interrupted by Ellington's wonderful orchestral tutti.

Note "the pump" - an orchestration of the left hand part of Ellington's stride-piano introduction heard behind Hodges' solo - and the "futuristic" ending.

A second version, recorded on 8 May, 1938, begins CD 2. Which is the better of the two performances? "Dinah" was first recorded by Ellington in 1932 featuring a corny put-on vocal by Sonny Greer. Here, a suave male vocal introduces the theme in an arrangement which flows with a smooth swing and Kansas City styled riffs behind Cootie Williams' and Lawrence Brown's great solos. The arrangement follows with an abrupt segue into Edgar Sampson's swing-era hit, "If Dreams Come True" featuring Ivie Anderson.

Ivie Anderson is generally acknowledged as Ellington's best singer prior to Alice Babs; all right, Joya Sherrill was pretty good as well. Anderson's lithe voice and unerring swing stand her tall amongst the best singers of the 1930s and '40s. That Ellington played "If Dreams Come True" so many times in 1938, it must have been to assist composer Edgar Sampson who had once played alto sax for the Maestro in the pre-Hodges 1920s. By 1938, Sampson was recognized as a great arranger/composer who was responsible for much of the success for the Chick Webb band. Benny Goodman was so impressed with Sampson's work that he hired him as a staff arranger. On December 3, 1937, Goodman recorded Sampson's tune which went on to become a hit but it had been recorded by Webb in 1934 and again just after Goodman's version. It was probably the corporate power of Goodman which brought success to Sampson however, at a price, since the composer credits are now shared by Sampson, Goodman and the sly Irving Mills. This arrangement doesn't sound like Ellington's writing perhaps Sampson had sent

Duke the chart. In this package are three different versions of "If Dreams Come True". The second one, from 1 May, 1938, doesn't feature Ivie Anderson - but instead, Rex Stewart and Lawrence Brown; the third version is from 15 May, 1938. Call it hemiola or syncopation, "Scrotch" places an accent on the fourth beat of the measure. Surely, it was hoped that this dance, written for the 1938 Cotton Club show, would have become as popular as the "Charleston", the "Black Bottom", or even the "Big Apple". It was first recorded on 25 February, 1938. At the Cotton Club, the Peter Sisters, imported from California, were featured with the entire company in demonstrating the movements of the ill-fated "Scrotch". Cootie plays a seemingly written riff, followed by fully improvised solos from Brown & Bigard.

The third session - 17 April, 1938: "You Went to My Head" is an obscure trifle which only holds our interest by virtue of its two choruses sung by Ivie Anderson. None of the encyclopedic song indexes list this tune. A search of the ASCAP index reveals that the composers were Buddy Bernier, Robert D. Emmerich and Joseph Meyer - who perhaps "sold" the tune by introducing into the lyric: "You went to my head like the haunting rhythm of an Ellington score..." Thankfully, Ellington never wasted any more time playing this tune on any documented recording.

"Three Blind Mice" is less than a trifle. The arrangement doesn't sound like Ellington's work and his orchestra almost sounds anonymous in its interpretation except, of course, for the distinctive

soloists - Cootie, Brown and Hodges (on soprano). Next, we hear Ellington's new, wonderful and elaborate arrangement of "Solitude" - which features Ivie Anderson. A third recording of this arrangement is heard later on in the session dating from 1 May, 1938.

"Downtown Uproar" is played by Cootie Williams' band-within-a-band; it was first recorded on 8 March, 1937. Hodges takes the first solo on soprano. Harry Carney, Tricky Sam and Ellington also have something to say - besides some rare and exuberant drum fills and shouts from Sonny Greer in the last two choruses.

The fourth session - 24 April, 1938: "Dinah's in a Jam" consists of improvised solos and ensemble riffs. That no reference is made to the melody of "Dinah", meant that Duke could claim the copyright in whole - but he never did. You can't copyright a chord progression.

This version of "On The Sunny Side Of The Street" is the first documented Ellington recording of the piece. It was copyrighted in 1930 by Dorothy Fields and Jimmy McHugh - composers working for the Cotton Club. However, some suspect it may have been written by Fats Waller, who allegedly sold the tune outright - for some ready cash. After Hodges' chorus, Ivie pays respects to Louis Armstrong in her interpretation, followed by a solo from Brown. Later, Ellington exclusively featured Hodges playing this piece in his programs until the saxophonist's untimely death in 1970 and a final documented performance featuring Ray Nance in 1973.

"Demi-Tasse" is credited to Ellington and Harry Carney and was first recorded by Barney Bigard and his Jazzopators on 29 April, 1937. This recording is the only other version - except that we get to hear another version from 15 May, 1938, announced with a new title, "Every Day"

Note: It was published as "Ev'ah Day". Rex Stewart and especially Bigard get most of the solo space.

"Azure" is a blue-mood piece which picks up, emotionally, where "Mood Indigo" leaves off. Harry Carney presents an unusually mournful solo of a type rarely heard on the baritone sax. Cootie Williams and Barney Bigard set a festive pace with their solos in "Carnival in Caroline". Ivie Anderson joins the party before Cootie rides out the tune.

The fifth session - 1 May, 1938: A few days prior to this session - April 29 - Ellington's birthday was celebrated at the Cotton Club. And, Ellington historian Dr. Klaus Strateman tells us: "with a matinee party and a special thirty-minute shortwave broadcast in the "America Dances" series, at 4:30 p.m. to England via the BBC."

After this package's second version of "Harmony in Harlem", Ivie Anderson, follows Ellington into a sappy pop tune the lyrics which many, today, will find offensive to women - "At Your Beck and Call". This dog-of-a-tune was written by Eddie DeLange and Buck Ram in 1938. Surely, this was played as favor for the talented and upwardly mobile Buck Ram, who worked for Irving Mills, provided "special" material for the Cotton Club and went on to write

many important hit tunes and manage groups such as The Platters. Surprisingly, "At Your Beck and Call", was recorded by Mildred Bailey, Jimmy Dorsey, Hot Lips Page and Artie Shaw. Buck had puck.

"The Gal From Joe's" might be considered the spiritual predecessor to "Hit The Road Jack" in style and mood. Hodges and the "pep section" get it on - the "pep section being two trumpets and trombone harmonizing phrases while growling and utilizing the plunger over a pixie mute.

"Riding on a Blue Note" is a great feature for Cootie Williams and demonstrates his adoption of Bubber Miley's chair and mastery of the plunger mute as well as his great understanding of Louis Armstrong in the open horn passages.

The sixth session - 8 May, 1938: CD 2 begins with "Oh Babe, Maybe Someday" as noted above and follows with just a clip of "I Let a Song Go Out of My Heart" - note how Carney leads the unison orchestration of the sax section on the theme. In "Music Is My Mistress" [p. 88], Ellington notes: "I Let a Song Go Out of My Heart," written in a little Memphis hotel, was originally in the [1938 Cotton Club] show, but Irving Mills decided it should come out and be replaced by something that had to do with Hawaii. So Nemo and I wrote "Swingtime in Honolulu". But the band played "I Let a Song" on the radio every night, and so did Benny Goodman from the Pennsylvania Hotel. He also recorded it, and "I Let a Song" got to be the big number that year."

The seventh session - 15 May, 1938:
"If you steal, steal from the best." In this case, Ellington borrowed the second strain of "Harlem Strut", a 1921 composition by one of his New York mentors, James P. Johnson, to use as the main theme for his "Birmingham Breakdown" first recorded in 1926 and never again after this version.

"Rose Room" is an old tune from 1917 composed by Art Hickman and dedicated to a New York City ballroom. Ellington recognized the great chord progression this piece has and later utilized that framework for his own "In A Mellotone". Here, a truncated performance begins with the supple clarinet soloist, Barney Bigard, who is followed by the suave Johnny Hodges. Intermingled with Hodges' solo are some wonderfully voiced "tutti" phrases (played by the entire orchestra). There is so little of the original melody that even if "Rose Room" weren't in the Public Domain there would be no need to pay any copyright royalties.

"It's the Dreamer in Me" was composed by another great pre-Hodges alto saxophonist, Jimmy Dorsey. Here is another example of Ellington taking the time to arrange someone else's music - and a charming interpretation by Ivie Anderson with solos by the other, easily identified, Ellingtonians.

"Lost in Meditation" is a tune composed by Juan Tizol. In the second version of "Lost in Meditation" May, 1938, the orchestra "sits" on the first chord extending it while Lawrence Brown makes his way through the band stand to reach the microphone. In the second version, Ivie Anderson sings almost

a-full chorus before the recording fades out. "Echoes of Harlem" takes us to Lenox Avenue and was composed in 1936 as the original and subsequent prototype concerto for Cootie. Here Cootie stretches out far longer than in the studio recording, effectively prodded by his leader.

The eighth session - 22 May, 1938:
"Jig Walk" is an oddity in that it was written in 1925 for a show that went to Europe, "Chocolate Kiddies" and also because Ellington scored the saxes to include Hodges on soprano and Hardwick on bass saxophone. There are many interesting aspects to Ellington's new score for this old piece - such as the pyramid-of-trills from the sax section. Clearly the entire orchestra is energized by this arrangement. It's too bad it was never recorded in the studio.

"In a Sentimental Mood" was supposedly co-composed by Otto Hardwick. Perhaps that's why he is featured in the presentation of the first theme and note that he plays it here on the soprano saxophone. Perhaps what we hear in this performance of "I'm Slapping 7th Avenue" and excised from the studio recording of 11 April, 1938 is a bit of the "Overture" written for the 1938 Cotton Club show.

"Alabamy Home" sounds similar to "Caravan"; the Arabic composition seems to have been composed about six months earlier. Nanton growls; Hodges, on soprano, follows Carney; Ivie sings; and Cootie improvises in an expansive Armstrong-like style however, unusually, utilizing many long-value notes.

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The ninth session - 29 May, 1938:
Ellington seems to have shared a fondness for adapting or adopting pieces by European "classical" composers. Was it fashion or homage? "Black and Tan Fantasy" with it's quote from Chopin's "Funeral March", "Ebony Rhapsody" composed by Sam Coslow, but based on Liszt's "Hungarian Rhapsody", Dvorak's "Humoresque" played by Ray Nance, "The Nutcracker Suite", "The Peer Gynt Suite". Here Rachmaninoff's "Prelude in C Sharp Minor" is presented by the Ellington orchestra but it is not necessarily an Ellington arrangement.

"Rockin' in Rhythm" - with composition credits extended to Barney Bigard and Harry Carney - is one of the few pieces in the Ellington repertoire which was constantly updated throughout Ellington's career - from 1931 (when it was composed) to 1974, the year Ellington died. This particular version might be described as "Art Deco" - streamlined, elaborate-yet-smooth, modern-yet-respectful-of-the-past.

The tenth session - 29 April, 1939:
In the spring of 1939, Ellington took his orchestra on a second tour of Europe. The entire sax and trombone sections were the same as those who had traveled in 1933; the rhythm section had but one change - bassist Billy Taylor replacing Wellman Braud; the trumpet section had the most changes - only Cootie Williams returned - Wallace Jones and Rex Stewart replaced Arthur Whetsol and Freddie Jenkins.

The first tour (1933) found Ellington in a care-free Europe - although Ellington mostly played in England - 46 days - with one day in Holland and 8 days in Paris.

The second tour started in Paris and, within 8 days, doing concerts in Belgium and Holland. The bulk of the tour was spent in Scandinavia - Sweden, Denmark and Norway - for 21 days. Ellington and his orchestra only passed through London to reach Le Havre, France to board their ship to return to the USA.

Fortunately, Ellington was recorded - on his birthday - at the Konserthuset in Stockholm 29 April, 1939. The venue is a blue stuccoed hall which houses the world-class Swedish Royal Philharmonic Orchestra - and like it's American parallel, Carnegie Hall, has been the place of many historic jazz concerts. The Konserthuset is also known as the scene of the annual Nobel Prize ceremonies.

Earlier that day, the Duke had been feted with gifts, flowers and a 16-piece Swedish jazz band. At the concert that night, ten girls paraded onto the stage to sing "Happy Birthday". One of them, the 16-year-old Alice Babs would eventually become Ellington's last major soloist, and in 1994, on the same stage, she would sing "En röd liten stuga" - "In the Little Red Cottage By The Sea" - a Swedish popular tune, the same arrangement which Ellington had written fifty-five years earlier (on Swedish manuscript paper) especially for Ivie Anderson. The English lyrics are credited to Irving Mills who accompanied Ellington on this tour. Undoubtedly, someone provided Mills with a translation of the original text.

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Only three selections were recorded from the concert. Besides "En röd liten stuga", they were "Rockin' in Rhythm" and a new piece written in return for the wonderful hospitality of his hosts, "Serenade to Sweden".

"Serenade to Sweden" begins with a pleasant stride piano intro and moves into the languid theme played by Wallace Jones in what seems to be a Humes and Berg Stonelined Solotone mute. Carney takes half the bridge, followed by the sax section, a full tutti and a coda from Carney. Ellington commandeers the entire second chorus and prepares the third chorus for the equally languid open-horned trombone of Lawrence Brown - who stays very close to the melody. The last quarter of the third chorus is, again, scored for the entire orchestra - featuring the reeds lead by Barney Bigard - and Ellington wraps the whole thing up with some solo piano whirrs and flourishes.

On June 6, 1939, Ellington recorded "Serenade to Sweden" in the studio. The studio version also begins with a piano introduction - which sounds like Billy Strayhorn. The first chorus is essentially the same as the Swedish recording - but the trumpet solo is taken over from the departed Wallace Jones by Cootie Williams - the first eight bars sweetly played in a tight plunger and then Miley's successor begins growling and working his plumber's friend. Instead of a full piano chorus as on the Swedish broadcast, it sounds as if Ellington had pushed his prodigy off the bench to play a short modulation to introduce Lawrence Brown's presentation of the melody - now, possibly using the above mentioned Solotone mute.

"Serenade to Sweden" seemed to have disappeared from the Maestro's repertoire until

1963 when it was fairly often played in quartet with Lawrence Brown - and more occasionally sung by Alice Babs - until Ellington's death.

Many things began and ended with this 1939 tour: Duke entered his fifth decade - remarking that "Life begins at forty; the tour marked Ellington's last association with Irving Mills; Ellington's recording contract with Columbia finished - to be picked up again by RCA Victor; Billy Strayhorn, Ben Webster and Jimmie Blanton were virtually waiting in the wings to join the orchestra on its return; Ellington would literally stop writing for vocalists and arrangements of other-people's-music (that would become Strayhorn's job); Ellington gave up drinking - he retired as the orchestra's undisputed champion; an evil little man, brewing power and hate since World War I ordered his army to invade Poland on September 1, 1939, sparking France and England to declare war on Germany.

Thus, the stage was set for Ellington to move forward - into a new decade, a new and modern world and to become, indisputably, one of the greatest musical phenomena of the 20th Century. Andrew Homzy, July 2005.

The newsreel clip is 80 seconds. It shows the activity on Lenox Avenue in Harlem and a look inside the Cotton Club with a choir of ladies and Duke Ellington with his Orchestra. C. Spring 1933.

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Storyville originally sold imported American records but when the burgeoning post war jazz scene attracted the American jazz artists to tour in Europe and Scandinavia Knudsen seized every opportunity to record his jazz heroes for the label. The Storyville Records archive has a wealth of master recordings by the giants of modern jazz from both sides of the atlantic from the fifties through to the present day.

DUKE ELLINGTON
AT THE

COTTON CLUB

BIEM/nob
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CD 1



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CD 2



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CD 1

1. **Swing Session** 2:00
2. **Medley: Solitude/
In A Sentimental Mood** 3:00
3. **Harmony In Harlem** 3:20
4. **If You Were In My Place** 3:20
5. **Mood Indigo** 2:44
6. **Theme: East St. Louis Toodle-Oo** 1:14
7. **Theme: East St. Louis Toodle-Oo** 0:25
8. **Oh Babe. Maybe Someday** 2:58
9. **Dinah's In A Jam** 2:12
10. **If Dreams Come True** 1:45
11. **Scratch** 1:49
12. **You Went To My Head** 1:42
13. **Three Blind Mice** 3:11
14. **Solitude** 3:28
15. **Downtown Uproar** 3:12
16. **Dinah's In A Jam** 3:26
17. **On The Sunny Side Of The Street** 4:09
18. **Ev'ry Day** 2:45
19. **Azure** 2:46
20. **Carnival In Caroline** 2:50
21. **Harmony In Harlem** 3:35
22. **At Your Beck And Call** 2:22
23. **Solitude** 3:18
24. **The Gal From Joe's** 3:06
25. **Riding On A Blue Note** 2:38
26. **If Dreams Come True** 2:54

Total time: 70:23

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CD 2

1. **Oh Babe. Maybe Someday** 2:51
2. **I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart** 1:31
3. **Birmingham Breakdown** 2:38
4. **Rose Room** 2:10
5. **If Dreams Come True** 2:34
6. **It's The Dreamer In Me** 4:37
7. **Lost In Meditation** 3:53
8. **Ev'ry Day** 2:40
9. **Echoes Of Harlem** 4:40
10. **Theme: East St. Louis Toodle-Oo** 0:58
11. **Jig Walk** 2:02
12. **In A Sentimental Mood** 1:13
13. **I'm Slapping 7th. Avenue** 2:50
14. **Lost In Meditation** 2:45
15. **Alabama Home** 3:32
16. **If You Were In My Place** 2:15
17. **Prelude In C Sharp Minor** 2:56
18. **Rockin' In Rhythm** 3:58
19. **Serenade To Sweden** 5:38
20. **Rockin' In Rhythm** 4:24
21. **In A Red Little Cottage** 5:13
22. **Clip from the Cotton Club** 1:00

Total time: 66:28



Cat # 1038415

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