



Alice Babs

**Serenading
Duke Ellington**

Nils Lindberg's
Orchestra

Ulf Wesslén
organ

PROPHONE
PCD 021

ALICE BABS AND DUKE ELLINGTON met for the first time in Sweden in 1963, for a TV show. This was followed, a few weeks later, by a recording date in Paris. Duke had quickly discovered that her voice was a magnificent Ellington instrument. And more than that: after having heard the last take of the session he said: "This voice embodies all the warmth, joy of life, rhythm and tragedy that, for me, is the innermost secret of jazz."

How could this be? One part of the answer is that Duke, through the medium of the gramophone, had been her principal teacher of music ever since Alice was in her teens. Another that she has always been very talented, in fact unique (which Duke acknowledged in his autobiography). There is also something in what she recalled about him. "He said: You can do it—and you found out that you could."

The collaboration with Duke continued and, in 1968, when she was soloist at the premiere of his *Second Sacred Concert*, a New York critic declared that she had become one of the famed Ellingtonians. In 1973 she sang with the Ellington band at the Newport Jazz Festival, and towards the end of that year she was the chief soloist at the presentation, in London's Westminster Abbey, of the new *Third Sacred Concert*.

During two one-nighters in Malmö and Copenhagen, directly following the London

appearance, she and the band collaborated for the last time under the Maestro's direction in a jazz program.

Nils Lindberg, who had greatly impressed Duke at the Malmö and Copenhagen concerts, fronted a big band as pianist/arranger in nine Ellington songs, from *Jump for Joy* with its original lyrics to *There's Something About Me Without You*—a song he had written especially for her, and that Alice is the only owner of.

Duke Ellington died in 1974. On the day of his funeral, when Alice rendering of *Heaven* filled the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine in New York, she was approached by Edmund Anderson who gave her his lyrics *Thank You for Everything*, dedicated to Duke and set to Billy Strayhorn's *Lotus Blossom*. Also Duke's friend, the reverend Gerald Pockock wanted Alice to record this tribute.

About a year later, Duke's nephew Stephen James handed me the lyrics, saying that the next time I produce a recording with Alice I should bear that song in mind. Here it is, together with songs by Duke.

Frank Hedman

(Adapted from the LP liner notes)

THE MUSICIANS

Tracks 1-9

Trumpets: Americo Belotto, Bertil Löfgren, Jan Allan, Håkan Nyquist (also french horn).

Trombones: Torgny Nilsson, Lars Olofsson, Bertil Strandberg, Sven Larsson (also tuba).

Reeds: Arne Domnéus, Claes Rosendahl, Lennart Åberg, Ulf Andersson, Erik Nilsson.

Piano: Nils Lindberg.

Guitar: Rune Gustafsson.

Bass: Red Mitchell.

Drums: Nils-Erik Svensson.

Tracks 10-15

Organ: Ulf Wesslén.

Previously released on Swedish Society Discofil SLT 33233 (*Serenading Duke Ellington*), and SLT 33255 (*Somebody Cares*). Tracks 1-9 were recorded in Studio 4, Swedish Broadcasting Corporation, on November 26 and 27, 1974. Tracks 10-15 were recorded in the St Maria Magdalena Church in Stockholm on December 8 and 9, 1975. Recording engineer: *Ola Kejving*. Cover photo: *Larsåke Thuresson*. Back cover photo: *Gai Terrell*. Inside photo: *Martin*. Producer: *Frank Hedman*. Digital transfers: *Rune Persson*. CD-production: *Erland Boëthius*. (p) 1975, 1977 & (c) 1994. Prophone Records AB, Stockholm. Made in Sweden.



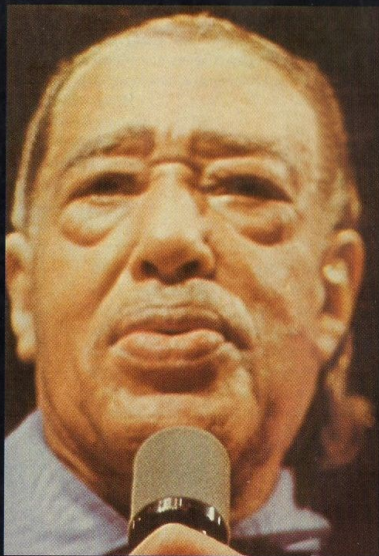
Pianist, arranger & band leader Nils Lindberg.

Alice Babs

Serenading

Duke Ellington

- 1 Lady in Blue 3:32
- 2 Me and You 4:37
- 3 Don't Get Around
Much Anymore 3:54
- 4 Freedom I 3:22
- 5 There's Something
About Me 4:58
- 6 Somebody Cares 4:33
- 7 Warm Valley 5:52
- 8 I Don't Mind 5:24
- 9 Jump for Joy 3:33
- 10 I Like the Sunrise 2:41
- 11 Freedom I & III 2:37
- 12 Somebody Cares 3:12
- 13 Thank You for
Everything 4:15
- 14 Something About
Believing 6:03
- 15 Solitude 4:15



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ALICE BABS

Serenading Duke Ellington

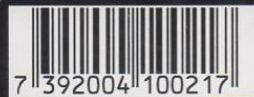
Nils Lindberg's Orchestra

Ulf Wesslén *organ*

1	Lady in Blue	3'32	8	I Don't Mind	5'24
2	Me and You	4'37	9	Jump for Joy	3'33
3	Don't Get Around Much Anymore	3'54	10	I Like the Sunrise	2'41
4	Freedom I	3'22	11	Freedom I & III	2'37
5	There's Something About Me	4'58	12	Somebody Cares	3'12
6	Somebody Cares	4'33	13	Thank You for Everything	4'15
7	Warm Valley	5'52	14	Something About Believing	6'03
			15	Solitude	4'15

Total time: 63'15

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