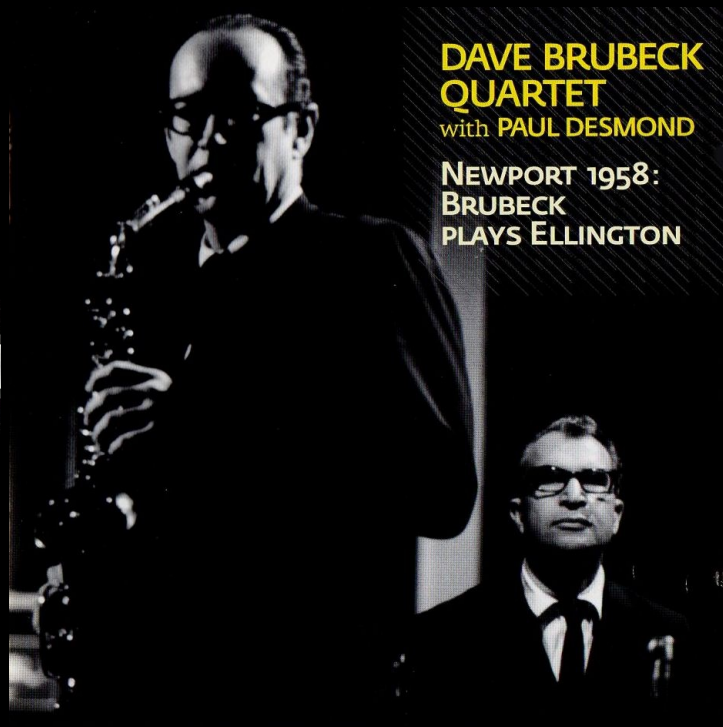




**DAVE BRUBECK
QUARTET**
with PAUL DESMOND

**NEWPORT 1958:
BRUBECK
PLAYS ELLINGTON**

 **GAMBIT**
RECORDS | 69322



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The Dave Brubeck Quartet with Paul Desmond, Gene Wright and Joe Morello had been together for about a year when the State Department hired them for a "goodwill" tour of Europe in early 1958. The group made the trip across the Atlantic and performed on two continents for audiences in England, Germany, Scotland, Denmark, Belgium, Holland, Turkey, Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq. "Jazz represents freedom under discipline, great discipline and great freedom for creativity, that's why it's so important to America", said Dave Brubeck during an interview. "The President Eisenhower sent us on a cultural exchange", added Brubeck. "We were one of the first groups to go behind the Iron Curtain. We went to Poland, Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Ceylon, Iran, and Iraq. I learned a lot about music and talked with the musicians from the various countries. I have lived through a war that killed 60 million people. I saw a lot of things that made me want to—in a small way—try and get people to think of peace as the only solution for the world to survive." The tour also featured a stop in Poland, which required a journey into communist-controlled East Berlin. Because of a State Department snafu, the group didn't have the necessary visas.

“You Mister Kulu?’ And I said, ‘No, Mister Brubeck’. And he said, ‘No, you Mister Kulu.’ And I said, ‘No, I’m Mister Brubeck’. So he took out a Polish newspaper and there’s a picture of me. And under it, it says, Mister Kulu. So I figured it out – ‘Mr. Cool Jazz’, that’s what Kulu means.

A tour official found a way to get papers, but collecting them required a risky illegal journey through Berlin’s Brandenburg Gate and into communist territory. “I was supposed to be in Madame Gunderlach’s trunk to go through the gate”, Dave explains, “and of course, there were plenty of signs telling you not to go through. Many people that had gone through into East Germany disappeared for about six months or longer. So I didn’t want to be in that position.” Brubeck refused to ride in the trunk, but did crouch down in the backseat and was dropped off at a big, non-descript building. “I sat there for two hours alone in this bare room”, he said. “And this guy, very shabbily dressed came and sat next to me. He said, ‘You Mister Kulu?’ And I said, ‘No, Mister Brubeck’. And he said, ‘No, you Mister Kulu.’ And I said, ‘No, I’m Mister Brubeck’. So he took out a Polish newspaper and there’s a picture of me. And under it, it says, Mister Kulu. So I figured it out – ‘Mr. Cool Jazz’, that’s what Kulu means. He thought that was my name. But he had the papers for me to continue on through East Berlin into Poland.” Right after the tour, on July 3, 1958, Brubeck made his usual performance at the Newport Jazz Festival. What was unusual was the program, consisting mainly of Duke Ellington tunes or tunes closely related to the Duke’s band, like “Things Ain’t What They Used to Be”, composed by Duke’s son Mercer Ellington, or “Flamingo”, a ballad that, although not composed by Ellington or any of his relatives, had been in the Duke’s repertoire since the early forties, usually as a feature for singer Herb Jeffries. (The presence of Joe Benjamin replacing Wright

on bass is also unusual as he was a veteran player from Ellington's band whose recorded works with Duke date from 1951 to 1973. Benjamin would also be the bassist on the next sessions by the quartet, which produced the album *Jazz Impressions of Eurasia*.) Brubeck's Newport homage came two years after Ellington's thundering comeback on the same Newport stage where Paul Gonsalves knocked the audience out with his endless choruses on "Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue". "The Duke" had first been recorded by Brubeck for his 1955 album *Jazz: Red, Hot and Cool*. It was Brubeck's musical tribute to Ellington, and became one of the pianist's most famous tunes ever. A jazz standard, it has been recorded dozens of times by the likes of George Shearing, Bill Evans and Miles Davis. The Newport '58 recording of "Things Ain't What They Used to Be" is the first to appear in Brubeck's discography and the only existing rendition by the classic Desmond-Brubeck Quartet (the broadcast version from the same day mentioned in the original liner notes remains unissued and is unlisted in discographies. Whether or not the recording still exists locked away in a vault somewhere remains unknown). The same can be said about "Jump for Joy", which doesn't appear anywhere else on Brubeck's list of works. Both "Flamingo" and the third dance of the "Liberian Suite" would be recorded in the studio by the quartet a few days later (on July 28, 1958), to be included on the album *Jazz Impressions of Eurasia*. (Although the studio date for the latter album was recorded later than the Newport LP, they were both issued at the same time and both contained Joe

Benjamin on bass as previously stated. For this reason it was mentioned in the original liner notes.) The Newport recordings appear to be the only existing live versions of these tunes. "Perdido" had been recorded by Desmond and Brubeck live at Oberlin College, in Ohio, on March 2, 1953, and issued on the album *Jazz at Oberlin* (Ron Crotty was on bass and Lloyd Davis on drums in this early version of the quartet). The Newport '58 reading is the second and last by any Brubeck unit. This is also the only version of "C Jam Blues" by the famous quartet. Brubeck would record this tune in Mexico in 1967, sharing the piano with Thelonious Monk! The concert ends with a few bars of "Take the 'A' Train". However, to end our CD and close Brubeck's homage to Duke, we have added a complete version of the famous signature tune. The bonus track on our CD, "Take the 'A' Train", was recorded a few months before Newport '58 at a Berlin concert from the "goodwill" tour. This classic Billy Strayhorn composition became the sign off theme for the Duke Ellington orchestra both in broadcasts and concerts. Brubeck recorded this tune for the first time in 1954 and performed it frequently during the fifties. Don't miss Paul Desmond's Bach quotations during his long and exciting solo!

A final comment about Townsend's original liner notes. Although nobody denies the merit and quality of the Brubeck quartet's music, critical reviews such as this one surely added to the controversy over the fame (and the publicity) of some white musicians in comparison to their Afro-American counterparts.

Surely Miles Davis, Thelonious Monk and Ellington himself resented such commentaries, for it was obvious then as now, that Brubeck's contribution to jazz couldn't in any possible way be compared to that of Ellington, who had already been making jazz history for over three decades by this point. It was certainly unthinkable to consider the possibility of a "homage to Dave Brubeck" played by the Ellington band. The same must be applied to such phrases as "Morello has done more to justify the drums as a solo instrument than anyone in jazz", which seem to deliberately ignore the contributions of such musicians as Sidney Catlett, Art Blakey, and Max Roach, to name just a few. It must be said, however, that probably none of the members of the quartet approved such thoughts. In fact, this is indeed Brubeck paying homage to Duke.



Joe Morello

Jordan Stewart (2009)



Dave Brubeck, 1954

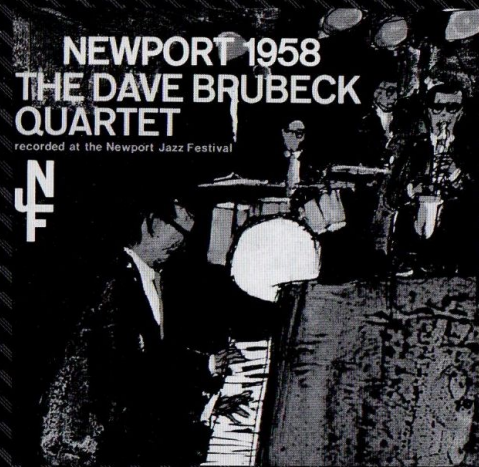
ORIGINAL LINER NOTES:

NEWPORT 1958 THE DAVE BRUBECK QUARTET

Freebody Park, Newport, Rhode Island, must by now be as familiar to record buyers around the world as it is to thousands who have made the annual July journey to the Jazz Festival. The scene, then, is the same. The time, Thursday, July 3rd, 1958, Ellington Night at Newport with the program at its midpoint.

The choice of Dave Brubeck as one of the jazz stars to salute Duke with ducal music at Newport was, perhaps, even more apt than the Festival directors knew, for Dave not only respects Ellington and understands him as few musicians do, he seems to parallel Duke in many ways. I find in his attitude toward music, his performance and composition of jazz many points that remind me of Duke. Dave, for one thing, is an originator who fits no category and is bound by none. While jazz is his main product at the moment, there are many indications that it will not always be, and certainly his musical horizons have expanded steadily and always in surprising ways. And he has the courage, the curiosity, the humor, and the honesty it takes to rival Duke as one of the giants of twentieth-century jazz.

Dave's artistic maturity and the course of his progress in music are clear to anyone who buys his many last albums. He was an innovator from the start, but it is apparent now that what at first seemed to be a jazz original within the



framework of the modern jazz style has managed to remain unique, while at the same time becoming identified, not with a contemporary facet of jazz but with the whole of the jazz art.

Like Duke, Brubeck has the rare ability to bring jazz along with him, to do what he wants to do whether he happens to fit into an established pattern or is obliged to create a new one. And then, just when you are wondering whether he may have left jazz too far behind, Brubeck swings with the power and simplicity of the best jazz traditionalist. I believe Brubeck's career in jazz, like Duke's, will be a long and dynamic one, and that we haven't even begun to hear what he has to offer. Like Ellington again, Brubeck won't make his money duplicating past successes, for both Dave and Duke have little interest in doing what has already been done well. This is the attitude that compels progress.

In the past few months I've listened to Dave playing his music to widely diversified audiences. He could always fill a hall with young jazz fans in or recently graduated from the nation's colleges, but it has now been proven that he can also draw capacity crowds ranging from teenagers in the gallery at Birdland to dignified swingsters twenty-five out of the Paramount Theatre. In a single year Brubeck has played for audiences throughout Europe and most of Asia, including such unlikely places as East Germany, Poland, Turkey and India. (See his *Impressions of Eurasia*).

/// Duke stood with me listening backstage to the Brubeck set, and as it ended he wondered aloud how he could follow such a resounding tribute to himself and his music. He was pleased and flattered by Brubeck's wonderful bow to him, and I think Dave, too, felt that the challenge had been met.

He has played at jazz festivals on both coasts and in concert halls in forty cities in between. His is still the most popular small unit in jazz, but while it was once thought that a Brubeck fan was somebody who had graduated from college within the last ten years, it now appears that Dave's audience is as young, as old and as large as Duke's.

Brubeck's Newport appearance paid tribute to Ellington, and his program was made up of music by or associated with Duke. (Actually, only "Jump for Joy", the "Dance", and "C Jam Blues" have Ellington's name on the music, but with one exception all are tunes identified with Ellington. The exception, of course, is "The Duke", which was written by Brubeck.)

Brubeck played "Things Ain't What They Used to Be" twice that night last July. The first time during the pre-concert broadcast, the second during the concert. Both versions are wonderful, and long discussions were held before the choice was made for this album. We chose the concert version over the broadcast version, which, incidentally, contained more exciting choruses by Dave, because the concert version has a delightful tribute to Johnny Hodges by Paul Desmond. You'll hear him recalling "Rabbit" in his opening solo, then returning to his own delicate style again. Joe Benjamin plays the fine bass solo. "Jump for Joy" opens with a piano figure based upon the original melody from Ellington's famous

show (Joy, which included such classics as "I Got It Bad", opened and closed on the West Coast almost before anyone got a chance to see it, but there is talk of reviving it once again.) Desmond adds his own melodic inventions over the piano figure and goes on to solo. After Dave's exceptional choruses, the piece ends with Brubeck and Desmond once again playing their favorite game of counterpoint.

The first side ends with "Perdido", Juan Tizol's jazz anthem. Paul, Dave, and Joe Benjamin solo liberally, and then, with Joe Morello, they play four-measure alternating solos until Brubeck and Desmond follow each other out in a final, sailing chorus.

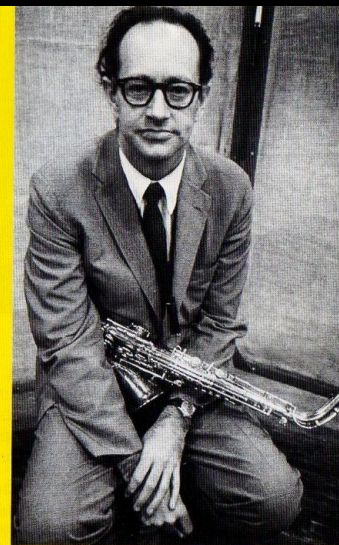
"The Duke" is an uncanny reminiscence. It recalls Duke immediately and subtly, and provides further insight into the understanding Brubeck has for Ellington. That it should appear in his Newport tribute to Ellington is natural, and because this version includes extended improvisation by the quartet for the first time on records, we have once again made it a part of a new Brubeck album. The Ellington melodic and rhythmic characteristics are present most of the time, and I'm now determined to see how it would sound played by the Ellington band.

"Dance No. 3" is a Latin-flavored dance still played from time to time by Ellington

and it is particularly effective by Brubeck, thanks to excellent solos and to Joe Morello's fine drumming.

A ballad long associated with Duke because he introduced it is "Flamingo", again rumba-flavored until the solos begin. Brubeck presents the melody first, after which he and Paul improvise delightful solos.

The Newport set ends with Duke's "C Jam Blues", a jumping blues based on two notes and a favorite of jazz players for years. And it's time for Joe Morello to have his say. He introduces the number and then takes over most of the way in another of his fascinating drum solos. Morello has done more to justify the drums as a



Paul Desmond



solo instrument than anyone in jazz, and he has done it by playing music on drums. His playing combines music and rhythm, with improvisatory freshness and brilliant dynamics, all played on a collection of drums and cymbals with such good humor. Dave returns to the melody for the last chorus and slips quickly into Ellington's "Take the 'A' Train" to end the number.

Duke stood with me listening backstage to the Brubeck set, and as it ended he wondered aloud how he could follow such a resounding tribute to himself and his music. He was pleased and flattered by Brubeck's wonderful bow to him, and I think Dave, too, felt that the challenge had been met. Dave and I stayed then to hear Duke, and perhaps you will too. You'll find his Newport performance recorded as *Newport 1958, Duke Ellington*.

Irving Townsend



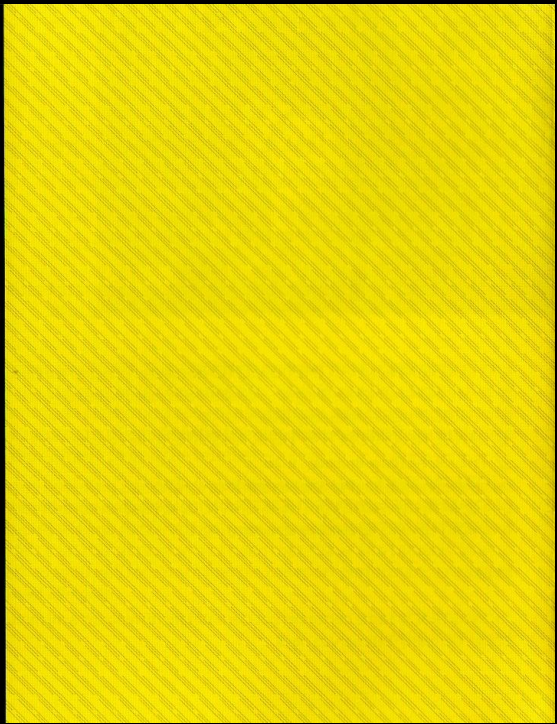
PAUL DESMOND, alto sax
DAVE BRUBECK, piano
JOE BENJAMIN, bass
JOE MORELLO, drums

Recorded live at the Newport Jazz Festival,
Newport, Rhode Island, July 3, 1958.

- 1/ THINGS AIN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE (Mercer Ellington-Ted Parsons) 7:03
- 2/ JUMP FOR JOY (Duke Ellington-Sid Kuller-Paul Francis Webster) 5:21
- 3/ PERDIDO (Tizol-Drake-Lengsfelder) 12:50
- 4/ DANCE No. 3 FROM THE "LIBERIAN SUITE" (Duke Ellington) 6:29
- 5/ THE DUKE (Dave Brubeck) 6:26
- 6/ FLAMINGO (Edmund Anderson-Ted Grouya) 6:26
- 7/ C JAM BLUES into TAKE THE "A" TRAIN (Duke Ellington-Barney Bigard/Billy Strayhorn) 4:51
- 8/ TAKE THE "A" TRAIN (Billy Strayhorn) 19:21*

TT: 68:50

*BONUS TRACK: Same personnel but Gene Wright (b) replaces Benjamin.
Berlin, Germany, February 22, 1958.



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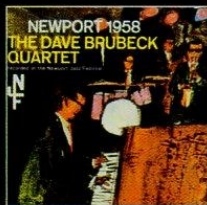
DAVE BRUBECK QUARTET with PAUL DESMOND

NEWPORT 1958: BRUBECK PLAYS ELLINGTON

This release presents the complete long unavailable 1958 Newport performance by the Dave Brubeck Quartet. Professionally recorded, the set was devoted to Duke Ellington related tunes (including "The Duke", Brubeck's homage piece to the master). A long version of "Take the 'A' Train" – Ellington's signature theme composed by Billy Strayhorn – recorded that same year in Berlin, has been added as a bonus.

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See 16-page booklet for complete information.

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PAUL DESMOND, ALTO SAX
DAVE BRUBECK, PIANO
JOE BENJAMIN, BASS
JOE MORELLO, DRUMS

Recorded live at the Newport Jazz Festival,
Newport, Rhode Island, July 3, 1958.

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