

DUKE



NOTTINGHAM

**BAND
CALL**



WORLD RECORD CLUB



W T

SPEED 33 1/2

TP. 86

W.7280

Chappell
M.O.P.S.
O. Connelly

BAND CALL

- 1. 12th Street Rag. 2. Isle of Capri.
- 3. Chile Bowl. 4. All Day Long.
- 5. Bunny Hop Mambo. 6. Satin Doll

Duke Ellington & His
Orchestra

MADE IN ENGLAND
THE WORLD RECORD CLUB LTD.

WORLD RECORD CLUB



TP. 86

SPEED 33 1/2

W.7281

Chappell
M.O.P.S.
O. Connelly

BAND CALL

- 1. If I Give my Heart to you.
- 2. Blue Jean Beguine.
- 3. Echo Tango. 4. Band Call.
- 5. Blue Moon. 6. Smile

Duke Ellington & His
Orchestra

MADE IN ENGLAND
THE WORLD RECORD CLUB LTD.

TP 86

BAND CALL
ELLINGTON

BAND CALL

Duke Ellington and his Orchestra

TP 86

BAND CALL
ELLINGTON

Side I

1. 12th Street Rag
2. Isle of Capri
3. Chile Bowl
4. All Day Long
5. Bunny Hop Mambo
6. Satin Doll

Side II

1. If I Give My Heart to You
2. Blue Jean Beguine
3. Echo Tango
4. Band Call
5. Blue Moon
6. Smile

The Ellington band reached one of its great peaks in 1940. This was the period that gave us an extraordinary series of miniature masterpieces, played by what many consider to have been the finest band Duke ever had. The first half of the 1940's was still a fine time for Ellingtonia, despite the recording ban (1942-44), and some major changes in personnel. But by the end of the decade things were not so good. Conditions of work for big bands in the U.S. were getting progressively difficult. In 1950 Ellington was virtually the only man to have a full jazz orchestra in regular activity. There was also disaffection in the ranks, culminating in the bulk departure, in 1951, of Johnny Hodges, Lawrence Brown, and Sonny Greer. Duke made adroit replacements; but there is no doubt that the unsettled conditions affected the band's output during 1951 and 1952, although the acquisition of Willie Smith, Juan Tizol and Louis Bellson from the Harry James band improved matters considerably. Smith in particular, one of jazz's great section leaders, pulled the rather ragged saxophone team together. He did not stay long, but his influence continued to be felt.

By 1954, the foundations of the modern Ellington band were firmly laid. The crisis period had passed, and subsequent changes in personnel were absorbed without undermining the band's character. It was still without Hodges, who did not return until 1955; and around the same time, the Sam Woodard-Jimmy Woode rhythm team came in. But during 1953/4 the band played with renewed enthusiasm and confidence. Few great Ellington originals came from these years: most of the material consisted of "standards" (some of it on the surface

pretty unsuitable) presented in a thoroughly Ellingtonish manner. Duke himself was very happy with the results. He is a man who frequently enjoys making play with the materials of his art; and it is clear that both he and the band took a warm pleasure in making these recordings, with their forthright swinging quality, their frequent sly digs at the popular music scene of the day, and the opportunity they gave to the soloists to show their paces. If there is no new *Ko-Ko* or *Jack the Bear*, there is the strongest impression of a working band (the world's best, as always) enjoying its work in the studio in the most positive manner.

Whenever the Ellington band plays, whether it plays Duke's own music or not, it is quite unmistakable. This is because the Ellington voicings are entirely original, the scores touched with his own creative imagination. Thus a "pop" tune often becomes transformed into a miniature Ellington tone poem; and a flamboyant, extravert, boply swinging effusion has a natural abandon and leadership no other big band seems quite able to capture. And there is humour in Duke's music, too—a sense of sheer fun that communicates itself through the whole band, and the audience.

Not everyone can take Duke's inconsequential trifles with an easy mind. Such things as *Isle of Capri*, *Bunny Hop Mambo*, *Twelfth Street Rag Mambo*, put a very expression on the faces of the righteous. But Duke is not a righteous man—at least not in that sense. He does what he likes, and he usually gets away with it. As a fact, he has always had a liking for Latin-American, dating way back from the fiesta opening and closing of *Jazz Conventions* (1929), and the jazz rumba *Marcy* of

1930. Tongue-in-cheek? Maybe. But it's a good check to have a tongue in—especially if it's Duke's!

Another side of the picture is the frequent use of the singer, Jimmy Grissom. At this time Grissom can pass from the pleasantly rhythmic style of, say, *Ballin' the Blues*, to the ghoulishly sentimental. Singers have never been a strong point with Duke—largely because the band is so good. But this is a general problem; only a handful of jazz singers are up to the best Ellington standard; and they have appeared no more than intermittently with him. But Grissom is considerably featured here. His abilities are in evidence on the small group version of *Blue Moon*, which has Duke and Billy Strayhorn, Nance (violin), Marshall and Black, backing Grissom.

More authentic Ellingtonia comes with Strayhorn's *All day long*, *Duke's Band call*, *Chile bowl*, and a version of the delightful *Satin doll*. (The admirable bass player here is Wendell Marshall.) Also the engaging Ellington/Cat Anderson *Blue jean beguine*. Most of the soloists have a good blow: Willie Cook on *All day*, Terry on *Chile bowl*, Hamilton and Anderson on *Bunny hop*—and so on. Indeed, many of these tracks are settings for the soloists, after the familiar manner. And Duke's piano is prominently (and rewardingly) featured. Close knit orchestral scores are not used to a great extent. And that in itself gives the album its character, as much as anything. One thing is sure: Duke never stands still. Every period in the band's history shows him working in some purposeful direction. And this set is no exception.

BURNETT JAMES

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- Clean the record surface with a slightly damp cloth, or use any of your dealer's recommended cleaning materials.

Do not use a stylus which is in any way worn or faulty. The recommended expectancy may be taken as not more than 40 hours playing time for a sapphire, and 2,000 hours for a diamond. Remember that a stylus may already be worn beyond a safe point before increased surface noise makes this audibly apparent.

Store this record upright in the protective inner and outside cases, or perfectly flat, but in an dust-free, conditions, as possible. When handling, hold the outside rim, with the finger-nails; do not touch the playing area if this can possibly be avoided.

THE WORLD RECORD CLUB LIMITED
PARKBRIDGE HOUSE LITTLE GREEN RICHMOND SURREY

Made and printed in Great Britain

TP 86

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