



STEREO 2121704-3

DUKE ELLINGTON

with the **Ron Collier Orchestra**

COLLAGES



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0666 130 S 1
SEITE 1



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DUKE ELLINGTON
COLLAGES

with the Ron Collier Orchestra

1. AURORA BOREALIS (R. Collier) - 10'18
2. NAMELESS HOUR (N. Symonds) - 9'05

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SEITE 2



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DUKE ELLINGTON
COLLAGES

with the Ron Collier Orchestra

1. COLLAGE NO. 3 (G. Delamont) - 2'58
2. FAIR WIND (N. Symonds) - 3'38
3. SILENT NIGHT, LONELY NIGHT
(R. Collier) - 2'59
4. SONG AND DANCE
(G. Delamont) - 9'34

DUKE ELLINGTON

with the Ron Collier Orchestra

COLLAGES

Side One

AURORA BOREALIS (10.18) (a) Ronald Collier
 NAMELESS HOUR (9.05) (b) Norman Symonds

Side Two

COLLAGE NO. 3 (2.58) (c) Gordon Delamont
 FAIR WIND (3.38) (c) Norman Symonds
 SILENT NIGHT, LONELY NIGHT (2.59) (c) Ronald Collier
 SONG AND DANCE (9.34) (c) Gordon Delamont

PRODUCED BY LOUIS APPELBAUM
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 Canadian Association of Broadcasters
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(a) Duke Ellington, piano; Eric Traugott, (b) Duke Ellington, piano; Bill Richards
 Dick Van Eeren, trumpet; Guido Basco, (concert master), Harold Sumburg,
 trumpet and flugelhorn; Fred Stone, Andrew Benac, David Zafer, Samuel
 flugelhorn; Butch Watanabe, Ray Sikora, Hersenhoren, Joseph Sera, John
 trombones; Ron Hughes, bass trombone; Berul Sugerman, violins;
 Mary Barrow, French horn; Stanley Solomon, Robert Warburton,
 Bernard Pittch, alto saxophone, clarinet and flute; Mos Koffman, alto saxophone C. G. Yaselslein, George Horath,
 and flute; Rick Wilkins, Eugene Amaro, tenor saxophones; Gary Morgan, baritone saxophone and bass clarinet;
 Bill Richards, Harold Sumburg, Andrew Benac, David Zafer, Samuel Hersenhoren, Joseph Sera, John Dembeck, Berul Sugerman, violins; Stanley Solomon, Jack Neilson, violas;
 Dan Whilton, C. G. Yaselslein, cellos; Ed Bickert, guitar; Lenny Boyd, bass; Jerry Fuller, drums; Pete Appleyard, percussion and vibes.

Duke Ellington recorded this album in Toronto, with two hand-picked groups of Canadian musicians. It was an altogether unusual event, another "first" in a career distinguished by firsts.

The sessions were part of an extensive project fostered by a committee jointly representative of the Composers, Authors and Publishers Association of Canada (CAPAC) and the Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB), the primary objective being to make the work of Canadian musicians better known. Ellington's participation derived from his appearance at the Stratford (Ontario) Festival, which originally inspired his famous Shakespearean suite, *Such Sweet Thunder*. The musical director at Stratford for many years, Louis Applebaum, was responsible for initiating this international alliance.

"When I first presented the idea to Duke," he told Helen McNamara of the Toronto *Telegram*, "I asked him if he would be willing to have us exploit him on behalf of our Canadian composers."

"Sure," said Duke, without any hesitation. "What do you want me to do?"

When Ellington eventually arrived in Toronto, between concerts in Chicago and Kalamazoo, he explained his presence with typical wit and charm at a well-attended press conference.

"I'm always partial to Canada and Canadians," he was reported as saying by John Norris in *The Globe and Mail*. "The public shows a keen ear and a spirit of independence. Canadians are hard people to brainwash en masse; they listen with sensitivity and are a good audience to play to."

Ever since his first visit in 1931, Duke had known that there were excellent musicians in Canada. He was also aware that problems in communication existed, despite their proximity, between the nation of twenty million people and its neighbor to the south — his own country — of two hundred million.

But now, on this goodwill mission, he entered a musical situation that was not without hazard, for in the past he had been accustomed to playing mostly his own compositions, in his own arrangements, and with his own orchestra. The arrangements and compositions of Billy Strayhorn were hardly an exception, for the collaboration and rapport between the two writers were so close that understanding was complete. When they had occasionally undertaken the performance of other composers' work, they had transformed it in arrangement, and the orchestra had remained Ellington's.

In Toronto, neither composition nor arrangement nor orchestra was his. He came as a guest, to function solely as a pianist.

The works of three composers had been chosen for the occasion. Ron Collier, who also conducted the

orchestra throughout, was born in Coleman, Alberta, in 1930, both of his parents being Canadian musicians. He began to study music when he was 10, first piano, then trombone. In 1943, his family moved to Vancouver, where he joined the famous Kitsilano Boys Band for six years. His professional career began in the same city, and it was there that he developed an interest in composition. He went to Toronto in 1951 to study under Gordon Delamont, playing trombone with the National Ballet and Mart Kenney's band. Later, he formed his own jazz group, which became well known around Toronto and performed in Expo 67. His first major success as a composer came in 1960 with *The City*, a work based on several Canadian poems and written for narrator, singer and orchestra. Twice performed on the CBC Radio Network, it was entered by CBC in the Italia Prize Competition that year. Since then, his *Hear Me Talkin' To Ya, Silent Night, Lonely Night*, and *Jazz Ballet* have all been successfully performed on CBC.

Norman Symonds was born in Nelson, British Columbia, and moved to Victoria when he was 7. After serving with the Royal Canadian Navy in World War II, he began to study music in Toronto during 1946. He studied at the Royal Conservatory, and became a student in jazz composition under Gordon Delamont. His first big success was his *Concerto Grosso for Jazz Quintet and Symphony* in 1957. In 1962, he gave up playing clarinet and saxophone in favor of full-time composition. Since then, his primary interest has been "third stream" composition, which fuses the classical element with jazz, and he has written a number of works for string orchestra and jazz soloist.

Gordon Delamont was born in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, his musical education beginning in Vancouver, where he played trumpet and played in the Kitsilano Boys Band, which his father directed. In 1937, he moved to Toronto, where he often performed as a trumpet player for CBC. He turned his attention to arranging in 1945, when he formed his own dance band. After further study in New York during 1949, he returned to Toronto and taught harmony, counterpoint and composition with great success. He is the author of several widely used books on harmony and composition. His striking compositions include *Ontario Suite, Centum, Three Entertainments for Saxophone Quartet, Portrait of Charles Mingus, and Allegro and Blues*.

The opener, Ron Collier's *AURORA BOREALIS*, was commissioned for the CBC *Television Centennial* show *One Hundred Years Young*, as a jazz ballet. Originally inspired by a set of Eskimo carvings, the score was later revised for the undivided attention of listeners. Full of color and variety, as befits the title, the arrangement employs an

orchestra of eight brass, six reeds, twelve strings, and five rhythm, the soloists being Fred Stone (flugelhorn), Ed Bickert (guitar), Butch Watanabe (trombone), and the visiting pianist, Norman Symonds's *NAMELESS HOUR*, also commissioned by the CBC, is dedicated to the memory of Albert Camus. Here Ellington can almost be heard thinking his way into the music as he fashions a spare commentary before a cool and austere backdrop provided by eight violins, three violas, three cellos, and two double-basses.

On the album's second side, a smaller group is heard — six brass, two reeds, and four rhythm, but the writing is no less imaginative. Gordon Delamont's *COLLAGE NO. 3* is the third variation on an original composition. Butch Watanabe and Bernie Pittch (alto saxophone) are responsible for the unison statement, and after Ellington's intriguing solo in halved tempo there is a return to theme.

Norman Symonds's catchy *FAIR WIND* was written in the '50s and has understandably won a considerable measure of popularity in Canada. Besides Ellington, the two saxophonists take solos, Pittch's clarinet making a valuable contribution to the ensemble.

SILENT NIGHT, LONELY NIGHT was originally written by Ron Collier for a Christmas drama on CBC in 1955. It opens with Stone and Basco dialoguing on their flugelhorn, the main solo responsibility being carried by Stone and the pianist. Gordon Delamont's ambitious but assured *SONG AND DANCE* was written especially for this record. The attractive song theme is contrasted with an unaccompanied piano solo, after which strong dance rhythms underline the same thematic material. Stone and Pittch are again featured.

What had been no easy assignment for the guest of honor, was perhaps best summed up by Norman Symonds in *Down Beat*:

"Working with Duke," he said, "was a memorable experience. I had always respected him, but I had completely underestimated him. He's a musician who has never stopped growing. He utilizes the knowledge and experience of 50 years to build fresh ideas and approaches. He's a virtuoso musician."
 To Ellington's legion of admirers, the album should prove fascinating for its presentation of his piano in an unprecedented context, and for the personal moment — his informal sketch — that adorns the liner. In addition, it provides a handsome introduction to three gifted composer-arrangers, and to the brilliant talents of some of Canada's best players.

STANLEY DANCE



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