

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

CONCERT IN THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

DUKE ELLINGTON
RECORDS
DS-841



PRINTED IN U.S.A.



DUKE ELLINGTON
AND HIS ORCHESTRA
CONCERT IN THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

1. **ISLAND VIRGIN** — 4:20
(Strayhorn/Ellington; Tempo Music/ASCAP)

SIDE ONE

DS-841

2. **VIRGIN JUNGLE** — 3:12
(Strayhorn/Ellington; Tempo Music/ASCAP)

3. **FIDDLER ON THE DIDDLE** — 3:10
(Strayhorn/Ellington; Tempo Music/ASCAP)

4. **JUNGLE KITTY** — 2:55
(Strayhorn/Ellington; Tempo Music/ASCAP)

5. **THINGS AIN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE** — 2:50
(Mercer Ellington/T. Persons; Tempo Music/ASCAP)

6. **BIG FAT ALICE'S BLUES** — 3:48
(Strayhorn/Ellington; Tempo Music/ASCAP)

© 1981 TREND/DISCOVERY RECORDS, Box 48081, Los Angeles, CA 90008



DUKE ELLINGTON
AND HIS ORCHESTRA
CONCERT IN THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

1. **CHELSEA BRIDGE** — 3:40
(Billy Strayhorn; Tempo Music/ASCAP)

2. **THE OPENER** — 2:45
(Elwin Fraser; Tempo Music/ASCAP)

3. **MYSTERIOUS CHICK** — 3:11
(Strayhorn/Ellington; Tempo Music/ASCAP)

4. **BAREFOOT STOMPER** — 2:48
(Strayhorn/Ellington; Tempo Music/ASCAP)

5. **FADE UP** — 3:36
(Jimmy Hamilton; Tempo Music/ASCAP)

SIDE TWO

DS-841

© 1981 TREND/DISCOVERY RECORDS, Box 48081, Los Angeles, CA 90008

DUKE ELLINGTON

1899-1974 AND HIS ORCHESTRA

CONCERT IN THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

DS-841

SIDE 1

1. ISLAND VIRGIN 4:20
(Strayhorn/Ellington; Tempo Music/ASCAP)
2. VIRGIN JUNGLE 3:12
(Strayhorn/Ellington; Tempo Music/ASCAP)
3. FIDDLER ON THE DIDDLE 3:10
(Strayhorn/Ellington; Tempo Music/ASCAP)
4. JUNGLE KITTY 2:55
(Strayhorn/Ellington; Tempo Music/ASCAP)
5. THINGS AIN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE 2:50
(Mercer/Ellington/T. Persons; Tempo Music/ASCAP)
6. BIG FAT ALICE'S BLUES 3:48
(Strayhorn/Ellington; Tempo Music/ASCAP)

Whatever this master touched, as we know, invariably turns to Ellington. Never the less, in the final analysis, there is nothing more like Ellington than Ellingtonia itself, and that is what we are privileged to hear in this album. None of the music stems from an outside source; all of it originated within the band, written by Duke and/or his associates. This relieves us of the burden of deciding how successfully some work or other has been translated into Ducal terms, for the leader and the band are working from start to finish on their own terms.

Four of these works constitute the *Virgin Islands Suite*, inspired by a visit, "We spent several days in the Virgin Islands," said Duke. "We wrote some of the music while we were down there, and finished it shortly after we returned home.

"We found a certain flavor there, musically and otherwise, that is genuinely unique and completely independent. The people get into a comfortable groove, never aggressive—no theatrical-type animation is needed. I hope we have expressed some of these attitudes in our music."

Two of the movements, *Island Virgin* and *Virgin Jungle*, feature the clarinet of Jimmy Hamilton. The former is a gently calypso-flavored light and beguiling piece; *Jungle* is faster, with Sam Woodyard's drums establishing the mood at a faster tempo.

Fiddler on the Diddle, featuring Ray Nance's violin, reflects the relaxed, easy-going quality Ellington found in the islands. The tightly-knit work of the saxophone section, which today has the same personnel it had two decades ago, offers mellifluously persuasive proof of the old adage that the band that stays together plays together.

The *Jungle Kitty* turns out, as you might expect, to be a fully grown cat, also known as William Alonzo (Cat) Anderson. An Ellington off and on since 1944, Cat was more than a mere high-note specialist (and there is nothing very "mere" about that either). He was an artist capable of an extraordinary range of moods and sounds on the instrument. The minor-mode *Jungle Kitty* offers a compelling reminder of his nonpareil virtuosity.

This album includes two new versions of Ellington standards both originally recorded in 1941. *Things Ain't What They Used to Be* was first waxed (in those days they really used wax) by a Johnny Hodges contingent out of the band, and it is the timeless and matchless Hodges who is featured in this buoyant treatment. *Chelsea Bridge*, one of Billy Strayhorn's early masterpieces, was once a framework for the tenor saxophone of Ben Webster. The soloist is Paul Gonsalves, whose style and sound, especially on ballads, owe a debt to Ben despite their distinctive personality.

Ellington said, "We were in a sort of tongue-in-cheek mood when we recorded this album. That's how we arrived at the idea of using word-play on the titles of various Broadway shows. In addition to *Fiddler on the Roof*, which of course gave us *Fiddler on the Diddle*, we were inspired by *Tiny Alice*, who became *Big Fat Alice*; *Fade In*,

SIDE 2

1. CHELSEA BRIDGE 3:40
(Billy Strayhorn; Tempo Music/ASCAP)
2. THE OPENER 2:45
(Elini Fraser; Tempo Music/ASCAP)
3. MYSTERIOUS CHICK 3:11
(Strayhorn/Ellington; Tempo Music/ASCAP)
4. BAREFOOT STOMPER 2:48
(Strayhorn/Ellington; Tempo Music/ASCAP)
5. FADE UP 3:36
(Jimmy Hamilton; Tempo Music/ASCAP)

Fade Out, for *Fade Up*; and *Barefoot in the Park* provided the title for *Barefoot Stomper*."

Big Fat Alice is a hip and earthy lady, it would seem. Starting with a groovy slow blues piano introduction by the maestro, this proceeds to a series of magnificent blues choruses by Johnny Hodges. A reminder for those who have been detoured along the way: this is how the alto saxophone was designed to sound, and this is what is meant by the blues.

Fade Up, written by clarinetist Jimmy Hamilton with Duke, incorporates a touch of shuffle rhythm, some minor blues by Duke, and some cohesive reed teamwork as well as a few moments with Cootie Williams. *Barefoot Stomper*, featuring Paul Gonsalves, is one of those basic, swinging themes that sometimes provides a point of departure for informal Ellingtonia.

Speaking of the *Mysterious Chick*, Duke remarked enigmatically: "She's probably out of Baker Street" (another Broadway show title). Another of the unmistakably Ellingtonian timbres, that of Lawrence Brown's trombone, is heard from at length. A younger member of the trombone section, the brash and compelling Buster Cooper, is heard in *The Opener*, co-written by Cootie Williams. Cat Anderson works up a slow burn on this one and finally goes up in smoke.

The bottom of these liner notes might be an appropriate place for a word about the low man on the Ellington tonal spectrum, who provides a firm foundation for the band's every venture. John Lamb, from Philadelphia, is one of the finest of contemporary bass players.

In keeping with Ellington's Broadway mood, another current show title will provide us with our finale, representing as it does the emotion of all us feel for the unique splendor and affectionate warmth of the Ellington orchestra's sound:

L.D.V.

-Leonard Feather-

PERSONNEL

Cat Anderson — trumpet
Cootie Williams — trumpet
Richard Williams — trumpet
Herbie Jones — trumpet
Ray Nance — trumpet and violin
Lawrence Brown — trombone
Buster Cooper — trombone
Chuck Connors — trombone
Russell Procope — alto sax and clarinet
Johnny Hodges — alto sax
Jimmy Hamilton — clarinet and tenor sax
Paul Gonsalves — tenor sax
Harry Carney — baritone sax
Sam Woodard — drums
John Lane — bass
Duke Ellington — piano

Recorded in New York City April 14, 1965
Previously Released on Bepko Records *6185
Reissue Produced by Albert L. Marx
AN ALBERT MARX PRODUCTION
Remastered by Dave Elsworth, KM Records, Burbank
Cover Art by Patrick Blackwell
Album Design by Lenora Hennessey, KM Records, Burbank
Also on DISCOVERY: Ben Webster with Strings DS-818
© 1981 Trend Records, Inc.

DISCOVERY RECORDS

Box 48081
Los Angeles, CA, 90048

Produced under license from Warner Bros. Records, Inc.