

The Essential
DUKE ELLINGTON

OCTOBER 1st 1928 to JANUARY 8th 1929

All instrumental recordings in chronological order



VJM TIMESPAN — THE LIVING HISTORY OF JAZZ



VLP.74

VLP.74-A

MCPS

Made in U.K.

Side 1

Mono

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The Essential Duke Ellington, 1.10.28 - 8.1.29

1. MOVE OVER (Ellington) (3.04)
2. HOT AND BOTHERED (Ellington) (3.16)
3. THE MOOCHE (Ellington/Mills) (2.51)
4. HOT AND BOTHERED (Ellington) (2.46)
5. MOVE OVER (Ellington) (2.57)
6. THE MOOCHE (Ellington/Mills) (3.12)
7. LOUISIANA (Razaf/Schafer/Johnson) 3.03
8. AWFUL SAD (Ellington) (3.16)
9. THE MOOCHE (Ellington/Mills) (3.32)
10. I CAN'T GIVE YOU ANYTHING BUT LOVE (Fields/McHugh) (3.04)

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VLP.74

VLP.74-B

MCPS

Made in U.K.

Side 2

Mono

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The Essential Duke Ellington, 1.10.28 - 8.1.29

1. NO, PAPA, NO. (Spivey) (3.22)
2. BANDANNA BABIES (Fields/McHugh) (3.20)
3. DIGA DIGA DOO (Fields/McHugh) (2.58)
4. I MUST HAVE THAT MAN (Fields/McHugh) (3.24)
5. THE BLUES WITH A FEELIN' (Ellington) (3.14)
6. GOIN' TO TOWN (Ellington/Miley) (2.56)
7. MISTY MORNIN' (Ellington/Whetzel) (3.20)
8. HOTTENTOT (Fields/McHugh) (2.29)
9. MISTY MORNIN' (Ellington/Whetzel) (2.40)
10. DOIN' THE VOOM VOOM (Ellington/Miley) (3.10)

1,2,3,4,10 L. Wright 5,7,9 F.D.H.
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Side 1

1. MOVE OVER (a) 401176-B (Ellington) 3.04
2. HOT AND BOTHERED (a) 401177-A (Ellington) 3.16
3. THE MOOCHEE (b) 108446-1 (Ellington, Mills) 2.51
4. HOT AND BOTHERED (b) 108447-2 (Ellington) 2.46
5. MOVE OVER (b) 108448-1 (Ellington) 2.57
6. THE MOOCHEE (c) E-28539-A (Ellington, Mills) 3.12
7. LOUISIANA (c) E-28360-A (Razaf, Schaffer, Johnson) 3.03
8. AWFUL SAD (d) E-28441-A (Ellington) 3.16
9. THE MOOCHEE (d) 47799-2 (Ellington, Mills) 3.32
10. I CAN'T GIVE YOU ANYTHING BUT LOVE (e) 48102-2 (Fields, McHugh) 3.04

Side 2

1. NO. PAPA, NO (e) 48103-1 (Spivey) 3.22
2. BANDANNA BABIES (f) 48166-2 (Fields, McHugh) 3.20
3. DIGA DIGA DOO (f) 48167-2 (Fields, McHugh) 2.58
4. I MUST HAVE THAT MAN (f) 48168-1 (Fields, McHugh) 3.24
5. THE BLUES WITH A FEELIN' (g) 401350-D (Ellington) 3.14
6. GOIN' TO TOWN (g) 401351-E (Ellington, Miley) 2.56
7. MISTY MORNING (g) 401352-D (Ellington, Whetzel) 3.20
8. HOTTENTOT (h) 108532-3 (Fields, McHugh) 2.29
9. MISTY MORNING (h) 108533-3 (Ellington, Whetzel) 2.40
10. DOIN' THE VOOM VOOM (h) E-28539-A (Ellington, Miley) 3.10

Personnel and recording dates:

- (a) DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA: Duke Ellington (piano, arranger), Bulker Miley, Arthur Whetzel (trumpet), Joe 'Tricky Sam'anton (trombone), Johnny Hodges (clarinet), tenor saxophone, Sonny Greer (saxophone), Barney Bigard (clarinet, tenor sax), Fred Guy (baritone), Lonnie Johnson (guitar), Wellman Braud (bass), Sonny Greer (drums), Baby Cox (drums) (Victor-Harmon).
- (b) THE MOOCHEE MAKERS (a) (a) without Johnson and Cox. Recorded in New York on October 1st 1928.
- (c) DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS COTTON CLUB ORCHESTRA: as (a) but without Johnson and Cox. Recorded in New York on October 17th 1928.
- (d) DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS COTTON CLUB ORCHESTRA: as (a) but without Johnson and Cox. Recorded in New York on October 17th 1928.
- (e) DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS COTTON CLUB ORCHESTRA: as (a) but without Miley and Johnson. Braud plays brass here. Irving Mills (local) added. Cox and Mills sing in 'I Can't Give You Anything But Love' only. Recorded in New York on October 20th 1928.
- (f) DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS COTTON CLUB ORCHESTRA: as (a) but with Freddy Jenkins (trumpet). Oze Ware (alto sax, baritone sax), Oze Ware (soprano), Baby Cox (alto sax, baritone sax), Oze Ware (soprano). Recorded in New York on October 20th 1928.
- (g) THE WHOLE LOT TAKES (a) (a) without Cox. Recorded in New York on November 22nd 1928.
- (h) THE WHOLE LOT TAKES (b) (a) without Cox. Recorded in New York on November 22nd 1928.
- (i) DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS COTTON CLUB ORCHESTRA: as (a) but without Cox. Recorded in New York on January 8th 1929. Sometimes spell Woom (Victor).

Although the twenty titles contained in this volume cover just over three months in Ellington's recording career during the winter of 1928/29, there is much good music to savour, and several instrumental queries to consider. These I shall endeavour to clarify chronologically as they arise. The first two items on side one comprise the Okeh session of 1st October 1928, which commenced on VLP73. Miley takes the opening and closing solo on "Move Over", although Whetzel plays a short bridge passage midway through the performance. Nanton plays a forthright open trombone solo, followed by Johnson's guitar and Bigard's clarinet. "Hot and Bothered" is the performance that so intrigued Conrad Lambert early in the thirties. So much was made of it at the time that it can only conclude that it was considered mandatory for jazz to carry some form of sponsorship from a respected member of the classical fraternity, a kind of "seal of approval". This viewpoint seems to me somewhat misguided. Certainly music of this quality is perfectly capable of standing on its own merit. Having said that, the performance itself, in spite of being extremely exciting, contains several minor slips. I am surprised that it appears to be the only take recorded. During the chase chorus, both Miley and singer Baby Cox interpret it as the wrong moment, and the hurried break by Bigard later has the rhythm section all at sea for a brief period. The complete solo rundown in Hodges, Whetzel (briefly), Miley/Cox, Bigard, Johnson and Hodges again.

The next three selections are from a session for Cameo. Would that these fine performances had the advantage of the vastly superior Okeh recording. "The Mooche" has Miley front and back, Ellington plays the second stram solo, Bigard is very low register, and Hodges and Miley have a wonderful spirit chorus. "Hot and Bothered", which follows, is also lower and less frantic than the Okeh version, and find it suppler. All the soloists are in fine form over a steadily relaxed rhythm, and the sequence is the same as for the Okeh version, but without Cox and Johnson, of course. "Move Over", after this second recording, was never heard again in a recording studio, although an important item in the Ellington repertoire. Solos are the same as for the Okeh, but omit Johnson.

"The Mooche" appears again as the first of three titles recorded for Brunswick. This is a really fine version, following the same solo sequence as before, except that after the Miley/Hodges split chorus, Hodges takes off for a further twelve bars solo. "Louisiana", an excursion into Whitehead/Beiderbecke territory, is quite pleasing, with solos from Miley, Nanton, Hodges and Bigard. "Awful Sad", the third title, in this first and only recording, is seldom mentioned, but remains, in my view, a major Ellington composition and performance from this period. The style Whetzel is unique in this kind of setting, and in addition to solo clarinet, Bigard is heard from on tenor for two bars during Carmo's solo on alto.

Much confusion surrounds the Victor session which follows. Five titles were cut on 30th October 1928, matrices 48100/48101 are by singer Oze Ware accompanied by several band members and Ellington himself, and are not included here. Leaving aside the numerical confusion (47799 to 48100 seems quite a jump) it is clear that Miley is not present on this session, but why not? Could it be Freddy Jenkins, who had joined the orchestra a short time before? The alto solos on this session have also been the subject of much theorising. It has been suggested that Hodges too is not

present, but this really is nonsense. So, let us consider.

Yet another version of "The Mooche" to commence. Easily distinguishable from the other performances by the full use of temple blocks by Greer, this also passes all the trumpet responsibilities to Whetzel, who appears to have fought the Victor silence engineer and lost. The remaining solos are by Bigard and Hodges. "TGYBAB" has Whetzel playing the first chorus, but another trumpet can be heard playing the obbligato behind Mills' vocal. Then it's Nanton for sixteen bars, scur from Baby Cox for sixteen, with Hodges playing almost straight melody in the final chorus. "No Papa No" has just a four piece front line plus rhythm with tuba replacing string bass. After an intro from Bigard and Carmo on clarinet, up comes that trumpet again, slightly off pitch, Bigard, an alto solo, and Nanton. This is presumably what started all the Hodges controversy, but the alto in this case is by Carmo.

Another Victor session follows, with Miley reinstated, and Jenkins and Hardwick both present. All three items are songs from "Blackbirds of 1928", vocals are by Oze Ware and Irving Mills, and here is the solo breakdown: "Bandanna Babies", Miley, Ellington, Bigard, Hodges and Nanton. "Diga Diga Doo" - Nanton, Miley (with strong backing by Braud) and Hodges. "I Must Have That Man" - Miley (with occasional support from Nanton), Ellington-Bigard (duet), Hodges and Carmo.

The next session from Okeh brings the Ellington composing magic back into play. "The Blues With A Feelin'" opens with clarinets by Bigard and Carmo, with solos by Nanton, Hodges (on soprano), and Miley. "Goin' To Town", with composer credit shared by Ellington and Miley, appears for the only time on record, with solos by Miley, Hodges, Nanton, Carmo, Hodges again (stop time break) and Bigard towards the close. "Misty Morning" (written by Ellington and Whetzel, contains one of the latter's greatest recorded solos. It is a beautiful composition, and sports Johnson's greatest guitar (questioned) solo on tenor.

Two more from Cameo are next. "Hottentot", a Harlem show tune of uncertain origin, has a complex sequence of solos and ensembles, as follows: Bigard (clarinet introduction) Nanton (trombone break), Jenkins (trumpet), Hodges (trumpet), Bigard (clarinet), Bigard (clarinet), Nanton (8 bars), Bigard (clarinet), 8 bars) Ensemble (16 bars) Hodges (alto - 8 bars) Ensemble (8 bars) Hodges (alto) coda. This is one of Ellington's lesser known recordings, bright and very typical of the period, up stands up well alongside the Okeh version, in spite of the inferior recording. Solos once again by Whetzel and Bigard on tenor.

To complete this present volume, there is just enough space to include the opening selection from the last Brunswick session, "The Voom Voom". This is a lovely piece of writing with relationships found elsewhere in jazz composition. Henderson's "Comin' And Goin'" to mention just one example. Once again the solo sequence is complex, as follows: Miley, Hodges, Miley, Whetzel (bridge passage), Miley, Carmo/Nanton (duet), Miley, Ellington, Bigard and Miley.

Sleeve Design: Stephen Hill / Shadow Creative
(from an idea by Steve Lane)
Sleeve Note: George Ellis

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Production: Steve Lane and Trevor Bennell.
Source Material: John Wadley, George Ellis and John R.T. Davies

SPECIAL NOTES

This compilation includes different takes only where some significant musical variation is involved, such as changes of solo, soloist or arrangement, where a better solo is available, or where the original recording is of such poor quality that a new recording is needed to make the album listenable. Where two recordings are available, one may be preferred to the other for technical or artistic reasons, or where the original recording is of such poor quality that a new recording is needed to make the album listenable. Where two recordings are available, one may be preferred to the other for technical or artistic reasons, or where the original recording is of such poor quality that a new recording is needed to make the album listenable.

Owing to the age and state of the original recordings used in the production of this record, some surface noise and other imperfections are inevitable. Modern transcription techniques combined with skilled transferring have enabled us to overcome the worst aspects of this problem, whilst retaining the full of the original sound. We are confident that any remaining deficiencies will not impair your enjoyment of these important performances.

For free detailed lists of available items, write to
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VLP
74

Made in U.K.

DUKE
ELLINGTON

OCTOBER 1928
to
JANUARY 1929

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32 KENTON LANE, KENTON,
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ENGLAND.