



DUKE ELLINGTON

"HAPPY REUNION" & "NEW MOOD INDIGO"

- 1 WAY BACK BLUES 3:25
(Duke Ellington)
- 2 WHERE'S THE MUSIC ? 3:13
(Duke Ellington)
- 3 RUBBER BOTTOM 2:46
(Duke Ellington)
- 4 PLAY THE BLUES AND GO 4:34
(Duke Ellington)
- 5 IN A MELLOW TONE 3:14
(Ellington, Gable)
- 6 HAPPY REUNION 3:29
(Duke Ellington)
- 7 DIMINUENDO AND CRESCENDO IN BLUE 7:19
(The Walling Interval) (Duke Ellington)
- 8 NEW MOOD INDIGO 4:43
(Duke Ellington, Barney Bigard, I. Mills)
- 9 JUMP FOR JOY 3:10
(Vocal by R. Nance) (Ellington, S. Kuller, Paul Francis Webster)
- 10 THE FEELING OF JAZZ 4:16
(Ellington, G.T. Simon, Bobby Troup)
- 11 WEST INDIAN PANCAKE 3:57
(Duke Ellington)

- 12 VELDT AMOUR 2:50
(Duke Ellington)
- 13 WINGS AND THINGS 2:31
(Johnny Hodges)
- 14 IN THE ALLEY 3:45
(Louie Bellson)
- 15 SASSY 3:31
(Aston Bell)
- 16 UGH 2:58
(Chick Corea)
- 17 PORTRAIT OF PEACE 3:58
(Mercer Ellington)
- 18 MACK THE KNIFE 2:34
(Vocal by Ray Nance) (Kurt Weill, Berthold Brecht, Marc Blitzstein)

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Produced by Duke Ellington Bill Putnam
Engineer: Bill Putnam/Remo/Rco: Thelie Ken Robertson
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The *New Mood Indigo*, here issued for the first time, was recorded in 1964, the original version in 1930. During the thirty-four years between, the original had been recorded many times and played nearly every night by Duke Ellington's orchestra in a manner and at a pace that became traditional. Its mood of dreaming melancholy dominated a lazy tempo.

There were, of course, plenty of precedents for a treatment with "new" in the title, such as *The New Twister*, *The New King Porter Stop*, *The New Moten Stop*, and Ellington's own case, *The New Birmingham Breakdown* and *The New Black and Tan Fantasy*. Usually, however, they did not depart very decisively from the old original, but were more a matter of adjusting to enlarged instrumentation or updating orchestral coloration in line with fashion.

In this instance, the performance begins more or less as expected with Russell Procope's clarinet stating the theme, but then one becomes aware that the rhythm section is doubling the tempo, and suddenly Johnny Hodges is up and away, swinging as *Mood Indigo* was unaccustomed to being swung. But at first even he sounds surprised, like someone on very hard ice who has not had his skates on for months. By the end of his first chorus, he is bearing down on the cutting edges, and in the second he swoops about with his customary assurance. Then it is Cat Anderson's turn for two choruses, with plunger and at a more modest altitude than usual. Famous for pyrotechnics, he did not offer get opportunities to play in this one, but he makes the most of this one in an excellently constructed solo. Paul Gonsalves's swaying, subtle tenor is next, and swinging hard until the band comes in on the bridge of his second chorus for a blazing orchestral climax. Here the mood is more like vermillion than indigo, but suddenly we are returned to the drifting clarinets of the introduction.

No doubt there will be cries of outrage from the faithful and accusations from pundits to the effect that Ellington had no business treating one of his masterpieces with such disrespect. He would likely have answered that his men enjoyed a change as much as anyone else, and that as a vehicle for improvisation his familiar number stood up rather well.

Jump for Joy, *The Feeling of Jazz* and the closer, *Mack the Knife*, were made two years before *The New Mood Indigo* as part of a project Ellington did not complete. He had recorded the material for an album which featured Paul Gonsalves as soloist throughout, and he intended doing the same for Ray Nance, another of his favorite people. Nance was the most versatile member of his band, but here we get only the cornetist and singer, not the violinist or dancer. On the first title, a misleadingly solemn piano introduction is followed by a passage for an ensemble consisting of Cat Anderson, the trombones and the reeds, with Jimmy Hamilton on clarinet. After Nance's cornet statement and infectious vocal, Procope is the enterprising alto soloist, followed by a quick vocal reprise.

The Feeling of Jazz is taken at a slightly slower tempo than the previously issued version, but the soloists are the same: Johnny Hodges, Lawrence Brown using a felt mule, and Ray Nance the plunger. The important horn backgrounds were played by Bill Barry, Roy Burrows, Chuck Connors, Jimmy Hamilton (clarinet), Russell Procope, Paul Gonsalves and Harry Carney (saxophones), Hamilton joins the conversation between Hodges and Brown in the last chorus.

West Indian Pancake is primarily a showcase for Paul Gonsalves's tenor, but it has many other intriguing facets. Following the leader's playful introduction, the doubles answering one another are Hamilton (clarinet) and Gonsalves versus Procope (alto) and Jerome Richardson (baritone). The latter pair also answer Hamilton's solo clarinet before Gonsalves returns for his final statement, Richardson, incidentally, was substiting for Harry Carney who arrived unaffiliated in time for the next performance, having driven in that day from St. Louis. *Veldt Armour*, which features Lawrence Brown, is something of a curiosity. The *veldt* usually refers to the great grassy plains of South Africa, which Ellington never visited, but no doubt he had heard of romantic affairs in that setting. Like the preceding number, *Veldt Armour* is of unusual construction and was introduced during the band's 1956 European tour. Brown's trombone brings out its jaunty character admirably.

Wings and Things was inspired by a Washington restaurant of that name and written by Johnny Hodges in 1965 for a record date with Wild Bill Davis. It is a happy blues, and of the blues Hodges was a grand-maitre. Over Sam Woodard's stirring shuffle, he blows commandingly in a let-the-god-times-roll vein. You can hear Ellington set the tempo vocally, but you must listen very hard to hear any piano at all. Why? Because he was enjoying the music and dancing to it in the studio.

The next four titles are from a small-group session supervised by Mercer Ellington. An unusual guest at the piano is Chick Corea, then twenty-four and just beginning to make a name for himself. *In the Alley* is a rather high-class alley, and it was written and arranged by Louis Bellson. All four horns are at it. Sassy is the work of bassist Aaron Bell, it's engaging, country-inspired theme and an unorthodox format stimulate Ray Nance into an exceptionally spirited performance. *Ugh* was Corea's contribution to the date and it is gracefully played by Gonsalves and the rhythm section only. Cootie Williams, who had dropped by the studio while the waltzing was in progress, listened to the first take with interest and then observed over the intercom: "You must establish the melody when you return, Paul." Many people failed to appreciate how serious a musician Cootie was, but Gonsalves did not, and took his advice following Corea's imaginative solo. *Portrait of Peace* was written by Mercer Ellington as an admiring tribute to the ailing Billy Strayhorn. Following Corea's pretty introduction, Hodges's *Differenc* also gives the poignant number the kind of treatment Strayhorn so much enjoyed.

Finally, to end on a festive note, there are Ray Nance and the full band on *Mack the Knife*. His serio-comic vocal over the band's vigorous accompaniment would undoubtedly have brought a smile to the face of his old, Louis Armstrong, who, more than anyone else, brought Kurt Weill's song to the jazz audience's attention.

STANLEY DANCE

In a companion to this album, *All Star Road Band Volume 2* (FDC5011), some reasons were given for Duke Ellington's liking for Chicago. There were many others. Not only did live Anderson pay him in that city, but after opening with her at the Oriental Theatre on Friday, 13 March, he broke the ad-lib house record. Returning a month later on Friday, 13 March, he broke that record, too. Not only that he became a "pook-kick-cham," but he was confirmed in his belief that Thirties, and especially Friday the Thirteenth, represented good luck. Accordingly, he had no qualms about being Thirteenth on the bill at the London Palladium in 1933, nor in flying over the Andes to Santiago on Friday the Thirteenth in September 1968.

Chicago was then, if you like, the source of a superstition, but it was associated in Ellington's mind as a good luck city, and one of its citizens, of whom he always spoke with especial warmth, was Bill Putnam. "Rounder, boulder, recording engineer, and President of Universal Recording Studios," as he described him in his autobiography, Superb recording was done in those studios, as you will hear, but just as important was their atmosphere and the friendship that grew in them. So whenever he was in Chicago, and whenever he had the opportunity, Ellington would take the band—or sections of it—and record additions to what he called "the stockpile." The two sessions on this album are examples of the music made there, and fortunately much more of it yet remains to be released.

Why *Beck Blues* is a blues in mood, but a blues only in the sense that many songs used to be called blues that were not, like *Wang Wang Blues*, *Wabash Blues*, *Jazz Me Blues*, *Sugar Blues*, *Limehouse Blues*, *Farewell Blues* and, more recently, *Paris Blues*. Such titles, needless to say, were often determined by the melancholy content of the lyrics. In many famous compositions, the classic twelve bar blues was supplemented by themes of different lengths, as in *Beale Street Blues*, *Basin Street Blues*, *Aunt Hagar's Blues*, *Royal Garden Blues*, *Weary Blues* and *St. Louis Blues*, not to mention *Bygones Call Rag* and *Black and Tan Fantasy*. Conversely, genuine twelve bar blues like *Cine O'Clock*, *Jump and Things Ain't What They Used to Be* were not called blues at all. Duke Ellington was, of course, well aware of these practices and set no precedent with this number whose chords are reminiscent of an old, cherished standard in the popular AABA song form. Taken at an easy, relaxed tempo, it sings yearningly of mellow yesterdays, perhaps even of a "fractured romance" that is no longer a source of pain. After a piano introduction and an eight bar statement by the band, Jimmy Hamilton proceeds to embellish the simple theme. Then Johnny Hodges adds to the story with his customary authority before the ensemble returns to end the first chorus. Next it is Clark Terry's turn. He opens in *Beck Blues*'s half-valved style and suddenly changes the musical climate as though he were a happily impassioned preacher in the pulpit. Hamilton, returning above the horns, seems in accordance with Terry's moralizing and say, "You can go now!" Amen and out. Sam Woodard, excellently recorded throughout, uses brushes to very good effect, sometimes as though he were remembering Kaiser Marshall on *Knocking it Up*.

Who's the Muse? is a heartfelt lament, like several of the performances made by small groups under Johnny Hodges' leadership. There is nothing typical of Ellington in the title, because it was always miraculous how he could create masterpieces of this kind in the studio with music he had brought the church back in here, as they always liked to do, the sanctified sound being, he believed, one that satisfied. After an impeccable dialogue by Hamilton and Terry, four sections of the first chorus are repeated, each doubtless having been assigned a mental letter of identification: "After E go back to D, then to A, B and C." There is no performance quite like this one in the whole canon of Ellington's music.

Rubber Bottom takes to the nursery and an Ellington version of carefree, good times—music for a kind of armless ball. The bright tempo is like a reward for Terry and Hamilton, consummate technicians both, and Johnny Hodges has to extend himself. When "modernists" made ridiculous comparisons and treated him good-humoredly, he used to say, "Well, I played pretty fast on Giddybug Galkip." He might have cited Rubber Bottom, too.

Play the Blues and Go is very aptly titled. It was the way many of Ellington's small-band sessions ended. Johnny Hodges was always ready to play the blues and go, in both senses of the latter verb, and this tempo suits him better. John Sanders, rarely called upon to solo, is happy to oblige, and Clark Terry and Jimmy Hamilton embroiled with their usual vivacity and skill. Sam Woodard's brushwork is impressive here in a lengthy work-out, phrases once started are always completed satisfactorily and nothing is ever left up in the air.

The whole session's coloration and unfamiliar texture were clearly dictated by the instrumentation and personnel. The second session is almost like overhearing four men playing for pleasure in private. In a Mellotron is taken at a happy but slightly pushing tempo. There are brief memories of Ben Webster, but no regrets, and Paul Gonsalves soon has a grip on the number. It is a relaxed interpretation in four four, yet it leaves one feeling that the saxophonist might perhaps have benefited from more varied underpinning, fairly simple, straight statement of the theme, then an elaboration followed by exploration, followed by some "mainstream" emphasis, and ending with his charting a somewhat new course.

Happy Reunion is a torch song like *The Man I Love* or *It's the Talk of the Town*, of a kind uncommon from Ellington. It should undoubtedly have had lyrics, when it could easily have become—and could still become—a popular hit. Gonsalves gives it his best shot and puts a lot of feeling into the release. His approach is more volatile and sophisticated than that which Coleman Hawkins, for whom the number might have been written, would have given it with his big sound and surging emotion. Premiered publicly at the Newport Festival on 3 July 1958, it was almost too intimate a piece for such an outdoor event. Recorded later that month in Columbia, its great merits tended to be passed over in favor of more flamboyant performances.

The version of the "wailing interval" from *Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue* runs to thirty-one choruses, four more than in history-making role at Newport in 1956. On that occasion the appreciation Paul Gonsalves especially prized came from Paul Desmond, who told him, "What you and the band played was the most honest statement that night." Unlike the musicians, critics have tended to express patronizing reservations about it, as though it were a mere flageolet and an easy achievement. In later years, through constant repetition, a certain amount of zeal and spontaneity inevitably went out of its performance, but here, with just the band's superb rhythm section and no hype or vociferous, screaming crowd, Gonsalves lays down a definitive version. He was fully prepared. Not that the routine was "thought out," but by this time he could close his eyes and let go with no risk of dying up. There was always a considerable, improvised element in the way he took care of this "interval," and he did not resort to signposts to prepare the way for what was to come. Yet when conditions were right, as here, it was relatively effortless, and he could return to his chair undefeated, by no means a scant force. As Ellington well knew, he was one of the greatest tenor players jazz has produced.

Stanley Dance

FDC 5007 DUKE ELLINGTON "HAPPY REUNION" & "NEW MOOD INDIGO" EPM

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Personnel : 1-2-3-4 Recorded in Chicago — March, 1957 :
DUKE ELLINGTON : Piano • **CLARK TERRY** : Trumpet • **JOHN SANDERS** :
 Valve Trombone •
JIMMY HAMILTON : Clarinet • **JOHNNY HODGES** : Alto Sax • **JIMMY**
WOODE : Bass • **SAM WOODYARD** : Drums •

5-6-7- Recorded in Chicago — June, 1958 :
DUKE ELLINGTON : Piano • **PAUL GONSALVES** : Tenor Sax •
JIMMY WOODE : Bass • **SAM WOODYARD** : Drums •

8. **DUKE ELLINGTON & HIS ORCHESTRA** :
DUKE ELLINGTON, piano ; **COOTIE WILLIAMS**, **CAT ANDERSON**, **HERBIE**
JONES, **MERCEUR ELLINGTON**, trumpets ; **LAWRENCE BROWN**,
BUSTER COOPER, **CHUCK CONNORS**, trombones ; **JOHNNY HODGES**,
RUSSELL PROCOPE, **JIMMY HAMILTON**,
PAUL GONSALVES, **HARRY CARNEY**, reeds ; **PECK MORRISON**, bass ;
SAM WOODYARD, drums. Japan,
 June 1964.

9-10-18. **DUKE ELLINGTON & HIS ORCHESTRA** :
DUKE ELLINGTON, piano ; **ROY BURROWS**, **BILL BERRY**, **CAT**
ANDERSON, **RAY NANCE**, trumpets ; **LAWRENCE BROWN**, **LEON COX**,
CHUCK
CONNORS, trombones ; **JOHNNY HODGES**, **RUSSELL PROCOPE**, **JIMMY**
HAMILTON, **PAUL GONSALVES**, **HARRY**
CARNEY, reeds ; **AARON BELL**, bass ; **SAM WOODYARD**, drums. New York,
 July 3, 1962.

11-12-13. **DUKE ELLINGTON & HIS ORCHESTRA** :
 As (8), except **JOHN LAMB**, bass, replaces **MORRISON**, and on *West Indian*
Pancake **JEROME**
RICHARDSON, baritone saxophone, replaces **HARRY CARNEY**. New York,
 March 29, 1966.

14-15-16-17. **THE MERCER ELLINGTON SEPTET** :
RAY NANCE, cornet ; **JOHNNY HODGES**, alto saxophone ; **PAUL**
GONSALVES, tenor saxophone ; **HARRY**
CARNEY, baritone saxophone. **CHICK GOREA**, piano ; **AARON BELL**, bass ;
LOUIE BELLSON, drums. New
 York, January 5, 1966.

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