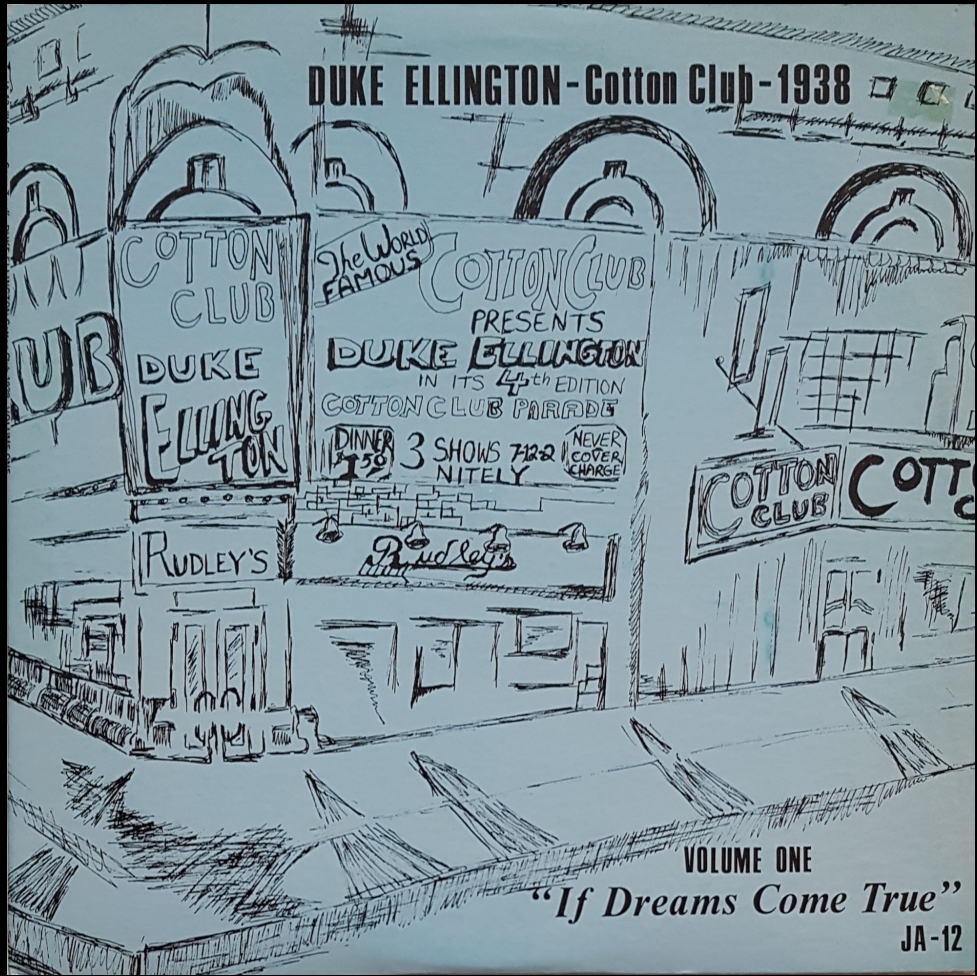


DUKE ELLINGTON-Cotton Club-1938



VOLUME ONE

"If Dreams Come True"

JA-12

JAZZ ARCHIVES

SIDE ONE
JA 12

VOLUME ONE
731124

"If Dreams Come
True"
DUKE ELLINGTON
Cotton Club-1938

1. HARMONY IN HARLEM
2. DINAH
Vocal by the trio
3. AT YOUR BECK and CALL
Vocal by Ivie Anderson
4. IF YOU WERE IN MY PLACE
5. OH, BABE! MAYBE SOMEDAY
Vocal by Ivie Anderson
6. DOWNTOWN UPROAR
Duke Ellington & His Orchestra

JAZZ ARCHIVES

SIDE TWO
JA-12

VOLUME ONE
731124

"If Dreams Come
True"
DUKE ELLINGTON
Cotton Club-1938

1. IF DREAMS COME TRUE
2. BIRMINGHAM BREAKDOWN
3. YOU WENT TO MY HEAD
Vocal by Ivie Anderson
4. ROSE ROOM
5. THE GAL FROM JOES
6. RIDING ON A BLUE NOTE
Duke Ellington & His Orchestra

THE ELLINGTON - Cotton Club - 1938

731124

VOLUME ONE JA-12

"Some of the fellows around there didn't have very high hopes for our staying there... The waiters were giving odds on our getting thrown out after three or four days, something like that, and we stayed there five years..." Such was Duke Ellington's recollection, in 1964, of the early days at the Cotton Club.

In retrospect, the Ellington band had a good many things going for it in December of 1937. For one thing, the band had only recently come under the management wing of the unjustly maligned Irving Mills. Mills' contacts in the recording and entertainment business, his publishing enterprise and his flair for publicity made it possible for Ellington to give his full attention to the development of Duke Ellington and the Duke Ellington orchestra into a universally saleable product.

The evolution of the Ellington style - what has been christened "jungle music" - was very rapid from the time of Bubler Alley's joining the band. Mills' talents as composer and soloist came on the scene at what developed into precisely the right time, first to stimulate Ellington's musical thinking into a direction which resulted in the jungle style, and secondly as a soloist whose effectiveness was not matched until the appearance of Ben Webster. It is significant that virtually the only tunes still played from those very early days are those on which Wiley was a collaborator.

If important, Wiley was not the only influence on Ellington's musical thinking; every musician who has joined the band has left his mark on the Ellington style. But this matter of influence is a two way street, and the influence of Ellington upon his musicians, collectively and en masse has been even larger. An almost uncanny ability to sense potentials of performance (often not recognized by the musician himself) and to write music leading to the flowering of such abilities has been one of the factors which has kept the personnel of the Ellington orchestra amazingly stable.

By mid-1932 the band personnel had settled as to numbers at six brass, four reeds and four rhythms; this was the basic group, one which might be varied from time to time by the addition of a man or so. With the exception of the trumpets, the men who would be with the band in the late thirties and early forties were with it in the early thirties. Arthur Whetsol would leave, to be replaced, ultimately, by Wallace Jones; Freddie Jenkins' seat finally would up in the hands of Rex Stewart. Trombones remained the same: Lawrence Brown, Juan Tizol and Joe Nanton. The reed section consisted of Otto Hardwick; Johnny Hodges, Barney Bigard, and Harry Carney. Welfman Braud's bass chair was being held down by Billy Taylor come 1938; Taylor was the survivor of a brief experiment with a two bass, five-man rhythm section. Other rhythm included the leader, Fred Guy and Sonny Greer.

These, then, were the forces with which Ellington developed his writing and arranging talents in a long series of brilliant recordings which demonstrate increasing mastery of orchestral writing. In many ways the most interesting of these are the forerunners, those one or two-of-a-kind spots, tunes without apparent obvious ancestry, tunes which state, but do not necessarily resolve problems. A glimpse of the sound of the band in the forties, after the addition of Ben Webster, for instance, can be heard in the 1934 records of *Live and Love Tonight* and *I Met My Waterloo*. And in 1931 Ellington produced, in the first chorus of *The Mystery Song*, a vignette which remains just that to this day.

It was during the Cotton Club stand of 1938 that the material on this record (and a companion, Jazz Archives JA-13) was recorded from broadcasts. Ellington himself, appeared to be ready for new fields of exploration; economic considerations dictated that instead he buckle down and produce a score for the Cotton Club Parade, preferably one with as many hits as possible; this stand was, after all, quite possibly the only regular air exposure the band would have during the year.

In the resulting score, the straining for a big hit is rather apparent, and one did, in fact, materialize - *I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart* achieved success independent of the Cotton Club Parade score, from which it had been dropped in favor of *Swingtime* in Honolulu.

If Ellington felt bored and frustrated, the band was up. They were back home in New York for what looked to be an extended stay, and they were working at a time when many musicians were doing their playing in headlines. The high spots are apparent in Ivie Anderson's singing as they are in the solos of Hodges, Williams, Stewart, Bigard and Brown.

Three titles from the broadcast of March 24th will be found here. "Dinah" is an experimental arrangement that developed into the more advanced composition - *Dinah's In A Jam*. The vocal trio consisted of Carney, Alvis and Williams; soloists are Stewart and Brown, both playing muted. *If You Were In My Place* features an outrageous slap-tongue solo by Brown and a swinging, driving statement from Rex Stewart. *Oh! Babe, Maybe Someday* had become, since being recorded in 1936, a standard vehicle for Ivie Anderson; here it receives the standard treatment, with solos by Cootie Williams and Johnny Hodges.

A slight majority of the recordings made by the Ellington organization in 1938 were by the small groups. These were featured regularly in the broadcasts, and from that of April 17th is *Downtown Uproar*. This is a Cootie Williams group and offers a particularly fine sample of Williams' burnished open horn style. Nanton sounds as much like Kid Ory in his smoky offering as it is possible for this highly individual artist to sound like anyone else; Hodges is heard on soprano sax, and Harry Carney is a one man rhythm section. *You Went To My Head* offers Ivie Anderson singing against an advanced-sounding sax back-ground.

Harmony In Harlem was recorded by the band in September, 1937, and was evidently something of a favorite in the band's book. The piece features Johnny Hodges and Cootie Williams. (Another performance, in a somewhat more baroque vein, will be found on Jazz Archives JA-13). *Harmony In Harlem* was revived on one of the Ellington European tours in the early sixties "...at the request", we are informed, "...of Hugues Panassié"; although Cootie was by that time back in the band, the revival was a Hodges showpiece all the way.

The same May 1, 1938 broadcast also produced an Ivie Anderson vocal on a number never recorded by the band, *At Your Beck and Call*. Ivie, the Ellington band's paramount vocalist does her usual competent job, backed by what sounds like a stock arrangement.

Again from the May 1st, one of the high spots of the entire series, back-to-back performances on *The Gal From Joe's* and *Riding On A Blue Note*. Both of these tunes had been recorded at the session of February 2nd, only a few weeks earlier. *Riding On A Blue Note*, while primarily a Cootie Williams tour-de-force, also features Hodges on soprano sax; Williams plays splendidly, both muted and open. *The Gal From Joe's* is a performance unmatched by any previous issue. The beat laid down by Sonny Greer prompts the suspicion that *Joe's*' must have been on one of the burlesque circuits.

The May 15th broadcast offers *Birmingham Breakdown*, much like the record, but with fascinating mini-variations in the solos, which are by Hodges, Williams, Carney, and Bigard. *Rose Room*, the Barney Bigard showpiece, closely follows the 1932 record arrangement but is heard here in the full sound of the live broadcast pickup.

If Dreams Come True, the beautiful Edgar Sampson melody will be found no less than three times on this and Jazz Archives JA-13. Two versions are instrumental, sounding very much like a stock arrangement; the third is by Ivie Anderson, backed by a somewhat different arrangement. The instrumental version herein is from the broadcast of May 15th.

J.H. IGO

SIDE ONE

HARMONY IN HARLEM	May 1st, 1938	(Mills-Ellington-Hodges)
DINAH	Mar. 24th, 1938	(Alvt-Lewis-Young)
AT YOUR BECK AND CALL	May 1st, 1938	(Buck Ram)
IF YOU WERE IN MY PLACE	Mar. 24th, 1938	(Nemo-Mills-Ellington)
OH, BABE! MAYBE SOMEDAY	Mar. 24th, 1938	(Ellington)
DOWNTOWN UPROAR	Apr. 17th, 1938	(Cootie Williams)

SIDE TWO

IF DREAMS COME TRUE	May 15th, 1938	(Sampson-Goodman-Mills)
BIRMINGHAM BREAKDOWN	May 15th, 1938	(Ellington)
YOU WENT TO MY HEAD	Apr. 17th, 1938	(Meyer-Emmerich-Bernier)
ROSE ROOM	May 15th, 1938	(Williams-Hickman)
THE GAL FROM JOES	May 1st, 1938	(Ellington-Mills)
RIDING ON A BLUE NOTE	May 1st, 1938	(Ellington-Mills-Redmond)

PERSONNEL:

Trumpets - Wallace Jones, Rex Stewart, Cootie Williams - Trombones - Joseph "Thicky Sam" Nanton, Juan Tizol, Lawrence Brown - Reeds - Barney Bigard, Johnny Hodges, Otto Hardwick, Harry Carney - Rhythms - Duke Ellington, piano; Fred Guy, guitar, Hayes Alvis and Billy Taylor, bass; Sonny Greer, drums. Vocal trio on "Dinah" by Harry Carney, Hayes Alvis, and Cootie Williams. All other vocals are by Miss Ivie Anderson.

Small group on "Downtown Uproar" consists of: Cootie Williams, Joe Nanton, Johnny Hodges, Harry Carney, Duke Ellington, Hayes Alvis and Sonny Greer.

Cover Art: Lari Valburn

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