



**DUKE  
ELLINGTON**  
**"REMINISCING IN TEMPO"**  
Classic Recordings, Vol.3: 1932-1935

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COMPACT  
disc  
DIGITAL AUDIO

NAXOS  
JAZZ  
LEGENDS

IC 05537

8.120589

GEMA

ADD

1. Merry-Go-Round 2. Slippery Horn 3. Dallas Doings 4. Rude Interlude  
5. Dear Old Southland 6. Daybreak Express 7. Delta Serenade  
8. Stompy Jones 9. Ebony Rhapsody 10. My Old Flame  
11. Moonglow 12. Indigo Echoes 13. Tough Truckin'  
14. Truckin' 15. In A Sentimental Mood  
16. Reminiscing In Tempo (Parts 1-4)  
17. Showboat Shuffle

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NAXOS  
JAZZ  
LEGENDS

# DUKE ELLINGTON



## REMINISCING IN TEMPO

CLASSIC RECORDINGS VOL.3: 1932-1935

## DUKE ELLINGTON

### “Reminiscing In Tempo” Classic Recordings, Vol.3: 1932-1935

“It is impossible to like jazz without liking Duke Ellington. Yet I know I have puzzled or annoyed Duke’s many admirers by my criticisms of his bands and his music ... My biggest argument with him concerned his failure, certainly his inability, to get people up on a floor to dance ...”

– John Hammond (On Record, 1977)

To a 1930s producer like Hammond, bands that actively encouraged dancing were a sure boost to record sales. As he explains, during the late 1920s and early 1930s the all-black Ellington band remained virtually exclusive to New York’s prestigious society establishments whose all-white clientele would not fraternise with Negroes. From the Kentucky Club on 49th Street and Broadway he progressed to Harlem’s Cotton Club where similar clauses applied and where, like that of his successor Cab Calloway, his was one of the few black bands to make it through the Depression – a survival surely not entirely undue to large record sales, whether or not all purchasers actually danced to them! Notoriously outspoken over the pigeon-holing of his music, Ellington regarded the label “jazz” as too restricting a classification. Yet, far from being mere gut-bucket music for jiving (despite their frequent dance-like animation and obvious commercial inspiration) his creations are generally as classically reserved and sophisticated as was their creator.

Born in Washington, DC, on 29th April, 1899, White House butler’s son Edward Kennedy Ellington enjoyed the benefits of a genteel, respectable upbringing and education. After his first piano lessons at seven, he was inspired to study and master harmony and by his teens was already honing tunes for his instrument and had made the Howard Theatre a “second home” where he could feast his ears and eyes on the “acrobatic” playing of Luckey Roberts and other exemplars of post-ragtime stride.

His father, James Edward Ellington, hoped that his son would keep the piano as a pastime and become a professional graphic artist instead. Duke left technical college in 1917 and briefly ran his own sign-painting business but later that year made his solo piano debut and was soon gigging in Louis Thomas’s band at society venues.

In 1918, Duke formed a trio, Duke’s Serenaders, which offered sophisticated jazz to Washington’s “select patrons” and in 1922 moved to New York where he could observe at closer quarters the stride playing of James P. Johnson and Willie “The Lion” Smith. By the close of 1923 he had formed the Washingtonians with trio colleague Elmer Snowden (1900-1973) and scored the revue *Chocolate Kiddies*. Through his residencies until 1927 at New York’s Holiday Inn (and briefly the Kentucky), and also via radio, without abandoning ‘Jungle’-style hot jazz, he began to exploit the public’s growing interest in dance music. At the Cotton Club, his 12-piece largely satisfied a demand for both and, by the time ‘Harlem’s Aristocrat of Jazz’ had left to tour the States in early 1931, it not only catered to the dance market but was also a top concert attraction. Salaried on a par “approximately equal to the best symphonic wages” it grossed almost \$50,000 per week and, while breaking all previous box-office records, offered the more thoughtful listener essays in instrumental tone-painting through which, Duke hoped, jazz might finally acquire a certain merited dignity.

The phase which began after 1931 was the most productive of Ellington’s career, a unique period of creativity and activity. By late 1933 again briefly ensconced in the security of the Cotton Club, his band – now augmented to six brass, four reeds plus a four-man rhythm section – had traversed the USA from coast to coast and taken Europe and London by storm and already, during 1934, so many outstanding Ellington numbers of the three-minute pop-tune variety (charted versions of “Creole Rhapsody”, “Rose Room”, “Sophisticated Lady”, for example) were beginning to trigger a parallel interest in certain non-dance items more accurately classified as mood-music.

In the wake of various 1934 chart successes featuring solos by Hodges and others – notably “Cocktails For Two” (No.1) and *Moon Glow* and “Solitude” (both No.2) – a number of more “studied” Ellington jazz tone-paintings, including *Daybreak Express* (a No.20 in February 1934), *Merry-Go-Round* (a No.6 in June 1935) and *In A Sentimental Mood* (a No.14 in July 1935) began to find their way into the US popular charts. And these, as well as *Showboat Shuffle* and the extended *Reminiscing In Tempo*, probably prompted Hammond to remark (in *Downbeat* magazine) that the Duke’s latest records on Brunswick “had hardly any of the old-time Ellington sincerity and originality”, while confessing in the same breath that he would nonetheless rush out and “buy them all”!

*Peter Dempsey, 2001*

1. MERRY-GO-ROUND (Ellington)  
Duke Ellington and his Famous Orchestra  
(Columbia 35837; mx W 260549-2) Recorded 15th February, 1933, New York 2:47
2. SLIPPERY HORN (Ellington)  
Duke Ellington and his Famous Orchestra  
(Columbia 37299; mx B 11865-A) Recorded 18th May, 1932, New York 3:09
3. DALLAS DOINGS (Ellington)  
Duke Ellington and his Orchestra  
(Victor 24431; mx BS 77026-2) Recorded 26th September, 1933, Chicago 2:53
4. RUDE INTERLUDE (Ellington)  
Duke Ellington and his Orchestra; Louis Bacon, vocal  
(Victor 24431; mx BS 77025-1) Recorded 26th September, 1933, Chicago 3:10
5. DEAR OLD SOUTHLAND (Creamer-Layton)  
Duke Ellington and his Orchestra; Louis Bacon, vocal  
(Victor 24501; mx BS 77199-1) Recorded 4th December, 1933, Chicago 3:32
6. DAYBREAK EXPRESS (Ellington)  
Duke Ellington and his Orchestra  
(Victor 24501; mx BS 77201-1) Recorded 4th December, 1933, Chicago 2:54
7. DELTA SERENADE (Kortz-Mills-Ellington)  
Duke Ellington and his Orchestra  
(Victor 24755; mx BS 80144-2) Recorded 9th January, 1934, Chicago 3:13
8. STOMPY JONES (Ellington)  
Duke Ellington and his Orchestra  
(Victor 24521; mx BS 80145-2) Recorded 9th January, 1934, Chicago 3:03
9. EBONY RHAPSODY (Johnston-Coslow)  
Duke Ellington and his Orchestra; Ivie Anderson, vocal  
(Victor 24622; mx PBS 79155-2) Recorded 12th April, 1934, Hollywood 3:25
10. MY OLD FLAME (Johnston-Coslow, from the soundtrack of the film *Belle Of The 90s*)  
Duke Ellington and his Orchestra; Mae West, vocal  
(Biltmore 1014 and private pressing; mx PBS 79181-1)  
Recorded 23rd April, 1934, Hollywood 3:10

11. MOONGLOW (Hudson-deLange-Mills)  
Duke Ellington and his Orchestra  
(Brunswick 6987; mx B 15912-A) Recorded 12th September, 1934, New York 3:00
12. INDIGO ECHOES (Ellington-Mills)  
Duke Ellington Sextet  
(Columbia 37297; mx B 16976-2) Recorded 5th March, 1935, New York 2:48
13. TOUGH TRUCKIN' (Ellington-Mills)  
Duke Ellington Sextet  
(Columbia 37297; mx B 16975-2) Recorded 5th March, 1935, New York 3:03
14. TRUCKIN' (Bloom-Koehler)  
Duke Ellington and his Famous Orchestra; Ivie Anderson, vocal  
(Brunswick 7514; mx B 17975-A) Recorded 19th August, 1935, New York 2:55
15. IN A SENTIMENTAL MOOD (Ellington-Mills)  
Duke Ellington and his Famous Orchestra  
(Brunswick 7461; mx B 17406-A) Recorded 30th April, 1935, New York 3:13
16. REMINISCING IN TEMPO (Ellington-Mills)  
PART 1 3:17  
PART 2 3:08  
PART 3 3:12  
PART 4 3:10  
Duke Ellington and his Famous Orchestra  
(Brunswick 7546/7; mx B 18072-1, 18073-1, 18074-2, 18075-1,)  
Recorded 12th September, 1935, New York Total 12:47
17. SHOWBOAT SHUFFLE (Ellington)  
Duke Ellington and his Famous Orchestra  
(Brunswick 7461; mx B 17407-1) Recorded 30th April, 1935, New York 3:01

## Personnel

16th May 1932 & 16th February 1933: Duke Ellington, piano; Arthur Whetsol, Freddy Jenkins, Cootie Williams, trumpets; Joe Nanton, Lawrence Brown, trombones; Juan Tizol, valve trombone; Johnny Hodges, clarinet, soprano & alto sax; Harry Carney, clarinet, alto & baritone sax; Otto Hardwick, alto & bass sax; Barney Bigard, clarinet, tenor sax; Fred Guy, banjo, guitar; Sonny Greer, drums

26th September 1933, 23rd April 1934 & 12th September 1934: Duke Ellington, piano; Arthur Whetsol, Freddy Jenkins, Cootie Williams, trumpets; Joe Nanton, Lawrence Brown, trombones; Juan Tizol, valve trombone; Johnny Hodges, clarinet, soprano & alto sax; Harry Carney, clarinet, alto & baritone sax; Otto Hardwick, clarinet, alto & bass sax; Barney Bigard, clarinet, tenor sax; Fred Guy, guitar; Wellman Braud, bass; Sonny Greer, drums

4th December 1933 & 9th January 1934: Duke Ellington, piano; Arthur Whetsol, Freddy Jenkins, Cootie Williams, trumpets; Joe Nanton, Lawrence Brown, trombones; Johnny Hodges, clarinet, soprano & alto sax; Harry Carney, clarinet, alto & baritone sax; Otto Hardwick, clarinet, alto & bass sax; Barney Bigard, clarinet, tenor sax; Fred Guy, guitar; Wellman Braud, bass; Sonny Greer, drums

12th April 1934: Duke Ellington, piano; Arthur Whetsol, Freddy Jenkins, Cootie Williams, trumpets; Joe Nanton, Lawrence Brown, trombones; Johnny Hodges, clarinet, soprano & alto sax; Harry Carney, clarinet, alto & baritone sax; Barney Bigard, clarinet, tenor sax; Fred Guy, guitar; Wellman Braud, bass; Sonny Greer, drums

5th March 1935: Rex Stewart, cornet; Johnny Hodges, alto sax; Harry Carney, baritone sax; Duke Ellington, piano; Wellman Braud, Billy Taylor, bass

30th April 1935: Duke Ellington, piano; Charlie Allen, Freddy Jenkins, Cootie Williams, trumpets; Rex Stewart, cornet; Joe Nanton, Lawrence Brown, trombones; Juan Tizol, valve trombone; Johnny Hodges, clarinet, soprano & alto sax; Harry Carney, clarinet, alto & baritone sax; Barney Bigard, clarinet, tenor sax; Fred Guy, guitar; Hayes Alvis, Billy Taylor, bass; Sonny Greer, drums

19th August 1935: Duke Ellington, piano; Arthur Whetsol, Cootie Williams, trumpets; Rex Stewart, cornet; Joe Nanton, Lawrence Brown, trombones; Juan Tizol, valve trombone; Barney Bigard, clarinet; Johnny Hodges, clarinet, soprano & alto sax; Harry Carney, clarinet, alto & baritone sax; Otto Hardwick, alto & bass sax; Ben Webster, tenor sax; Fred Guy, guitar; Hayes Alvis, Billy Taylor, bass; Sonny Greer, drums

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8.120589

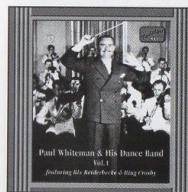
12th September 1935: Duke Ellington, piano; Arthur Whetsol, Cootie Williams, trumpets; Rex Stewart, cornet; Joe Nanton, Lawrence Brown, trombones; Juan Tizol, valve trombone; Barney Bigard, clarinet; Johnny Hodges, clarinet, soprano & alto sax; Harry Carney, clarinet, alto & baritone sax; Otto Hardwick, alto & bass sax; Fred Guy, guitar; Hayes Alvis, Billy Taylor, bass; Sonny Greer, drums

Transfers and Production: David Lennick.

Digital Noise Reduction: Graham Newton

Photo of Duke Ellington, c. 1935, © Hulton/Archive

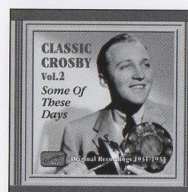
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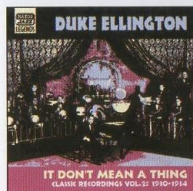
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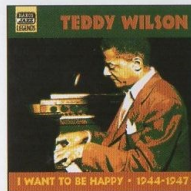
#### David Lennick

As a producer of CD reissues, David Lennick's work in this field grew directly from his own needs as a broadcaster specializing in vintage material and the need to make it listenable while being transmitted through equalizers, compressors and the inherent limitations of A.M. radio. Equally at home in classical, pop, jazz and nostalgia, Lennick describes himself as exercising as much control as possible on the final product, in conjunction with CEDAR noise reduction applied by Graham Newton in Toronto. As both broadcaster and re-issue producer, he relies on his own extensive collection as well as those made available to him by private collectors, the University of Toronto, the International Piano Archives at Maryland, Syracuse University and others.

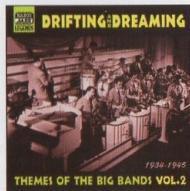
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NOTES AND FULL RECORDING DETAILS INCLUDED

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