

Paris Washboard
CARAVAN

STOMP OFF CD1347
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P.O. Box 342,
York, PA 17405

- 1 ALL GOD'S CHILLUN GOT RHYTHM [4:42] 2 THE MOOCH [6:25] 3 FROLIC SAM [4:12] 4 DROP ME OFF IN HARLEM [4:27] 5 IT DON'T MEAN A THING IF IT AIN'T GOT THAT SWING [5:50] 6 SOLITUDE [5:35] 7 DANCERS IN LOVE [1:53] 8 PELICAN DRAG [6:06] 9 ROSE OF THE RIO GRANDE [4:45] 10 CARAVAN [5:57] 11 I GOT IT BAD AND THAT AIN'T GOOD [3:56] 12 SQUATY ROO [3:36] 13 MOOD INDIGO [4:44] 14 RING DEM BELLS [4:43]



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NOTES by Louis Mazetier

MERCI DUKE

Je sais. Les mauvais esprits vont nous dire : "Comme beaucoup d'autres orchestres, PARIS WASHBOARD ne se distingue pas par son originalité en enregistrant un disque consacré à l'oeuvre de DUKE ELLINGTON en cette année 1999, centenaire de la naissance du Maître."

Je répondrai d'abord que l'occasion était belle et la cause juste. Et puis le marché du disque de jazz traditionnel où nous sommes confinés est si peu important que l'on aurait tort d'y voir un "coup" publicitaire.

Non. Tout simplement, cet événement a suscité deux choses : d'une part nous nous sommes aperçu que parmi tous les albums que nous avons déjà enregistrés, aucun morceau d'ELLINGTON ne figurait, et cette lacune importante se devait d'être réparée. D'autre part, enregistrer cette musique était un pari à tenter. Pourquoi ?

PARIS WASHBOARD est un petit groupe (4 musiciens) à l'instrumentation inhabituelle qui ne permet pas toutes les combinaisons sonores et restreint particulièrement la part des ensembles en harmonie à plusieurs voix. Le style naturel dans lequel s'exprime chacun des musiciens est celui du Jazz Traditionnel des années 1920-30 (avec, certes, quelques emprunts harmoniques et rythmiques à des formes de jazz plus récentes), et là encore l'instrumentation impose un style. Ces facteurs limitent donc le répertoire, et il n'était pas concevable de choisir par exemple, pour cet album, des morceaux comme *Koko* où la masse sonore et l'am-

biguité harmonique créée par un grand nombre d'instruments sont primordiales.

J'ai donc proposé des morceaux à caractère plutôt mélodique, qui évitaient l'écueil des grosses combinaisons sonores impossibles, et qui nous permettaient de garder notre propre identité tout en honorant un des aspects les plus remarquables du compositeur ELLINGTON.

Evidemment, il se trouve que certains de ces morceaux figurent parmi les plus connus du *Duke*, car le grand public a besoin de mélodie et retient mieux ce genre de composition. Les mauvais esprits (encore eux !) risquent d'y voir un nouveau calcul. Je leur rappellerai cependant que bien peu d'orchestres ont enregistré *Frolic Sam* ou *Pelican Drag* après le *Duke*.

Même si le choix du répertoire était surtout constitué de morceaux plutôt mélodiques, nous nous sommes retrouvés dans un contexte différent de l'habituel, car quelques expositions de thèmes en harmonie à trois voix restaient indispensables (*The Mooch*, *Mood Indigo* et l'interlude de *Frolic Sam* par exemple). Nous avons donc essayé différentes combinaisons, et je me suis harmonisé avec les voix d'Alain et Daniel.

En fait, ce n'est pas par hasard si le groupe n'avait jamais osé toucher au répertoire ellingtonien : il fallait pour chaque musicien autant que pour le groupe, atteindre une certaine maturité, dont l'occasion du centenaire fut le révélateur.

Notre modeste contribution n'apportera sans doute pas grand-chose à l'oeuvre d'ELLINGTON, mais à l'inverse la musique du *Duke* nous comble et nous enrichit chaque jour. Alors MERCI DUKE (oh les mauvais esprits, vous voyez ce que je veux dire ?)

MERCI DUKE

I know. The skeptics will tell us, "Like many other bands, PARIS WASHBOARD is not very original when recording an album dedicated to DUKE ELLINGTON's works this year '99, which celebrates the centennial of the birth of the Maestro."

I'll answer first that the opportunity was beautiful and the cause was right. Then, the Trad Jazz recordings' market, in which we are confined, is so small that it would surely have been fool-hearty for us to make this recording with a view to publicity.

No. Very simply, that event raised up two things: on one hand we realised that among all of our albums already recorded, there was no tune by ELLINGTON, and this important lack had to be compensated for. On the other hand, recording this music was a challenge to attempt. Why?

PARIS WASHBOARD is a small group (4 musicians) with an unusual instrumentation which does not allow all kinds of sonorous combinations, and restricts particularly the share of harmonized ensembles with several voices. The natural style in which each musician finds his own expression is the style of Traditional Jazz of the twenties and thirties (for sure with some harmonic and rhythmic excerpts from some more recent forms of jazz), and there, once more, the instrumentation imposes the style. So these factors limit the repertoire, and it was not conceivable to choose, for example, for the album tunes like *Koko* where the sonorous mass and the harmonic ambiguity, created by a high number of instruments, are so important.

So I proposed rather melodic tunes that avoided the trouble of impossible big sonorous combinations, and allowed us to keep our own identity, but honouring, at the same time, one of the most remarkable sides of ELLINGTON—the composer.

Nonetheless, as it happens some of these tunes are also some of the most famous composed by *The Duke*, as the general public needs melody and remembers more easily that kind of tune. Those with a negative attitude (once more!) might figure this to be another bad idea! I'll remind them, however, that very few bands, since *The Duke* himself, have recorded *Frollic Sam* or *Pelican Drag*.

Even if the choice of the repertoire has mostly been made with rather melodic tunes, our context was quite different as usual, as some introductions of three-part harmonised themes were absolutely essential (for example *The Mooch*, *Mood Indigo* and the interlude of *Frollic Sam*). So we tried different combinations, and I added my voice to those of Alain and Daniel.

In fact, it is not by chance that the group had never dared to consider the Ellingtonian repertoire; it was necessary for each musician, as for the group itself, to reach a level of maturity, of which this centennial became the indicator.

Our modest tribute will probably bring very few to the work of ELLINGTON, but on the contrary, *The Duke's* music gratifies us and enriches us every day. That's why we say MERCI DUKE, and can you (and the doubters) see what I mean?....

— Louis Mazetier

PROGRAM:

1 - ALL GOD'S CHILLUN GOT RHYTHM (Bronislaw Kaper-Walter Jurmann-Gus Kahn) [4:42] • **2 - THE MOOCH** (Duke Ellington-Irving Mills) [6:25] • **3 - FROLIC SAM** (Cootie Williams) [4:12] • **4 - DROP ME OFF IN HARLEM** (Duke Ellington-Nick Kenny) [4:27] • **5 - IT DON'T MEAN A THING IF IT AIN'T GOT THAT SWING** (Duke Ellington-Irving Mills) [5:50] • **6 - SOLITUDE** (Duke Ellington-Eddie De Lange-Irving Mills) [5:35] • **7 - DANCERS IN LOVE** (Duke Ellington) [1:53] • **8 - PELICAN DRAG** (Harry Carney) [6:06] • **9 - ROSE OF THE RIO GRANDE** (Harry Warren-Ross Gorman-Edgar Leslie) [4:45] • **10 - CARAVAN** (Duke Ellington-Juan Tizol-Irving Mills) [5:57] • **11 - I GOT IT BAD AND THAT AIN'T GOOD** (Duke Ellington-Paul Webster) [3:56] • **12 - SQUATY ROO** (Johnny Hodges) [3:36] • **13 - MOOD INDIGO** (Duke Ellington-Irving Mills-Barney Bigard) [4:44] • **14 - RING DEM BELLS** (Duke Ellington-Irving Mills) [4:43] • **TOTAL: 67:29**

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MUSICIANS:

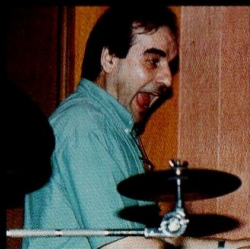
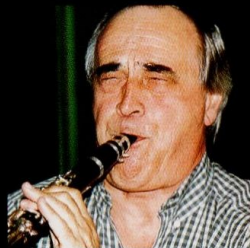
Alain MARQUET / clarinet
Daniel BARDA / trombone
Louis MAZETIER / piano
Gérard BAGOT / washboard

CREDITS:

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Recording Location Studio 1, Paris, Fr.
Recording Engineer Bernard Martin
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TOTAL TIME: 67:29

MUSICIANS:

Alain Marquet – clarinet, bass clarinet
Daniel Barda – trombone
Louis Mazetier – piano
Gérard Bagot – washboard



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