

CBS 94418



Duke Ellington

And His Orchestra

Piano in the Background

Happy Go Lucky Local
What Am I Here For
Midriff / Kinda Dukish
Rockin' in Rhythm
Main Stem / Perdido
I'm Beginning to See the Light
It Don't Mean a Thing
Take the "A" Train

STEREO

CBS



CBS

PIANO IN THE BACKGROUND
DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

SIDE 1

CBS 84418

Stereo



33 T.

A

- 1 - HAPPY GO LUCKY LOCAL 2'58
(B. Strayhorn - D. Ellington) Tempo Music, Inc.
- 2 - WHAT AM I HERE FOR 4'02
(D. Ellington) Robbins Music Corp.
- 3 - KINDA DUKISH 5'50
(D. Ellington) Tempo Music, Inc.
- ROCKIN' IN RHYTHM (D. Ellington - I. Mills - H. Carney)
Mills Music, Inc.
- 4 - PERDIDO 6'45
(H. Lunik - E. Drake - J. Tizol)
Tempo Music, Inc.

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PIANO IN THE BACKGROUND
DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

SIDE 2

CBS 84418

Stereo



33 T.

B

- 1 - I'M BEGINNING TO SEE THE LIGHT 2'03
(D. George - J. Hodges - D. Ellington - H. James) Alamo Music, Inc.
- 2 - MIDRIFF 4'20
(B. Strayhorn) Robbins Music Corp.
- 3 - IT DON'T MEAN A THING (IF I Ain't Got That Swing) 4'26
(I. Mills - D. Ellington) Mills Music, Inc.
- 4 - MAIN STEM 4'09
(D. Ellington) Robbins Music Corp.
- 6 - TAKE THE "A" TRAIN 5'26
(B. Strayhorn) Tempo Music, Inc.

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PIANO IN THE BACKGROUND DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

Side I
Happy Go Lucky Local
What Am I Here For
Kinda Dukish
Rockin' in Rhythm
Perdido

Side II
I'm Beginning to See the Light
Midriff
It Don't Mean a Thing
Main Stem
Take the "A" Train

TRUMPETS: Ray Nance
Willie Cook
Andres Meringuito
Eddy Mullins
Gerald Wilson

SAX: Aaron Bell

THROMBONES: Lawrence Brown
Britt Woodman
"Bootsy" Wood
Juan Tizol

DRUMS: Sam Woodard



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SAKES: Johnny Hodges
Harry Carney
Paul Gonzales
Jimmy Hamilton
Russell Procope

PIANO: Duke Ellington

The "Piano Player" in the Ellington band is a sometime thing. On the bandstand and the concert stage, Duke strides between the piano and the band. He manages to be "on" in both positions, shouting encouragement, grinning at the audience, often playing piano as he does everything else—totally. But there have been many Ellington performances on records during which Duke never went near the piano. In fact, he often likes to call himself "the executive" and sit in the control room during a performance.

But it is as a pianist that Duke exists as a musician. He composes at the piano, and he teaches the band at the piano. He heads for the piano in any room he enters, and no hotel room he ever lived in is without one. He even talks to the band by playing to them, calling them back from intermissions, demanding attention, pleading, and jamming with anyone who happens to be on hand. And his piano style ranges, during the course of any evening, from Ellington delicacy to rent-party stride.

This album keeps Ellington at the piano all the way through. It features the band in many of its most exciting instrumentals, and it swings like mad, but in front of each tune is one piano chorus, and the last word at the end of every number is a pianistic one. You'll know when it is over that the leader of this band is a piano player, and not too far in the background either.

Happy Go Lucky Local—This is the famous section of Duke's *Deep South Suite* which describes a Southern train. It features Jimmy Hamilton on clarinet, Russell Procope making like a train whistle on alto sax, and the full band. And, if it reminds you of another number, look up the copyright date on this one.

What Am I Here For is a wonderful Ellington song almost forgotten by the band until this recording. The piano begins, of course, and then the full sax section plays. "Bootsy" Wood's plunger trombone solo follows, and then Duke and Ray Nance recall their original solos. Paul Gonzales' tenor solo comes next, followed by trombones and, as Duke often shouts, "everybody."

Kinda Dukish and **Rockin' in Rhythm**—For the past few years, Duke has been playing his *Kinda Dukish* as a piano introduction to **Rockin' in Rhythm**, and now they are re-

corded together for the first time. Neither needs much comment, except to remind you that Harry Carney has the clarinet solo, "Bootsy" the trombone solo, and the finale pits the "pep section" of Ray Nance, Willie Cook and "Bootsy" against the full band, with Andres Meringuito on top of the brass.

Perdido is to jazz what coffee is to breakfast, and we decided to make it one more time in a way that will possibly end all other *Perdidos* for some time to come. The arrangement is actually two arrangements put together. The first, after Duke's piano introduction, is a Jimmy Hamilton-Clark Terry chart for small band. The second is a full band arrangement by Gerald Wilson that won't stop. It features Hamilton on clarinet, Nance and Cook alternating in the trumpet section, Gonzales on tenor sax, and, after the full band returns, Harry Carney's baritone. And, it ends, as only it should, with Sam Woodard's elbow sliding across the snare while the rest of the band sit poised for the last explosion.

I'm Beginning to See the Light is a new, up-tempo arrangement by Bill Mathies of the famous Ellington standard, and it alternates between piano and full band.

Midriff is a Strayhorn composition never before recorded in America, although, like many other gems, it has been yellowing in the books for many years. Piano, brass, saxes enter in that order, and the trombone solo is by Lawrence Brown. The fine example of the Hodges-led sax section follows, after which Aaron Bell solos into the last chorus.

It Don't Mean a Thing, another Bill Mathies arrangement, begins with Duke's foot tapping, following with Duke's piano. Solos are by Johnny Hodges, Ray Nance, Jimmy Hamilton, Paul Gonzales, and Lawrence Brown.

Take the "A" Train—We decided to record a full version of "A" Train for a number of good reasons. It fits the format of this album, beginning as it always does, with several choruses by the piano player. It features, all the way, Ray Nance on muted and open horn, and for once it ends an Ellington performance.

The piano used for this album has three more keys than regular pianos, allowing Duke to play ninety-one keys instead of eighty-eight. He wants you to know that he played them all madly.

Tring Townsend

COVER PHOTO: GORDON PARKS

SIDE I - HAPPY GO LUCKY LOCAL—Tempo Music, Inc. (ASCAP) 2:28
WHAT AM I HERE FOR—Robbins Music Corp. (ASCAP) 4:26
KINDA DUKISH—Tempo Music, Inc. (ASCAP) and ROCKIN' IN RHYTHM—Mills Music, Inc. (ASCAP) 5:50
PERDIDO—Tempo Music, Inc. (ASCAP) 6:45

THE SELECTIONS ARE FOLLOWED BY THEIR PUBLISHERS AND TIMINGS

SIDE II - I'M BEGINNING TO SEE THE LIGHT—Alamo Music, Inc. (ASCAP) 2:03
MIDRIF—Bill Mathies (ASCAP) 3:20
IT DON'T MEAN A THING—Mills Music, Inc. (ASCAP) 4:26
TAKE THE "A" TRAIN—Tempo Music, Inc. (ASCAP) 5:09
TAKE THE "A" TRAIN—Tempo Music, Inc. (ASCAP) 5:28