



- 1 **MARCH 19th BLUES** (5:26)
(Duke Ellington)
Duke Ellington Music
- 2 **FEET BONE** (2:43)
(Duke Ellington)
Duke Ellington Music
- 3 **IN A SENTIMENTAL MOOD** (3:05)
(Duke Ellington/Irving Mills/Manny Kurtz)
Mills Music, Inc.
- 4 **DISCONTENTED** (3:02)
(Duke Ellington)
Tempo Music, Inc.
- 5 **JUMP FOR JOY** (1:53)
(Duke Ellington/Sid Kuller/Paul F. Webster)
SBK Rollins Catalog
- 6 **JUST SCRATCHIN' THE SURFACE** (3:06)
(Duke Ellington)
Duke Ellington Music/Tempo Music, Inc.
- 7 **PRELUDE TO A KISS** (3:29)
(Duke Ellington/Irving Gordon/Irving Mills)
Mills Music, Inc.
- 8 **MISS LUCY** (3:17)
(Duke Ellington)
Duke Ellington Music
- 9 **UNCONTRIVED** (5:13)
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- 12 **LOVE YOU MADLY** (3:22)
(Duke Ellington)
Duke Ellington Music
- 13 **SHORT SHEET CLUSTER** (2:36)
(Duke Ellington)
Tempo Music, Inc.
- 14 **MOON MIST** (3:27)
(Mercer Ellington)
Tempo Music, Inc.
- 15 **LONG TIME BLUES** (8:39)
(Duke Ellington)
Duke Ellington Music

PRODUCER: DUKE ELLINGTON
Executives In Charge of Production:
Mercer Ellington/ Mel Fuhrman/
Stanley Dance/
Herb Moelis
Produced for Compact Disc by Harry Hirsch
Music Consultant: Bob Carlton
Cover Illustration: Nancy Stahl
Special Thanks To: Samuel J. Lefrak

Personnel:
DUKE ELLINGTON Piano
WILLIE COOK, CLARK TERRY,
RAY NANCE, CAT ANDERSON Trumpets
BRITT WOODMAN,
QUENTIN JACKSON,
JOHN SANDERS Trombones
JOHNNY HODGES Alto Saxophone
RUSSELL PROCOPE Alto Saxophone & Clarinet
JIMMY HAMILTON
PAUL GONSALVES Tenor Saxophone
HARRY CARNEY Baritone Saxophone & Clarinet
JIMMY WOODE Bass
SAM WOODYARD Drums

DUKE ELLINGTON became aware of the importance of records very early in his career, when they served nationally as a form of publicity second only to radio. Internationally, in as much as they extended his fame all around the world, they came first. He was well represented on major labels, but after World War II and a couple of union bans on recording, conditions in the record industry were chaotic. To safeguard his interests, he became a stockholder in the Musicraft company and also invested in the smaller but enterprising Sunrise. After both had failed, he set up his own Mercer label in 1950 and put his son in charge. Then as now, distribution was at once a key to success and a daunting problem. Despite a number of admirable records, Mercer also failed, but the name and license was retained for the purpose of recording what Ellington subsequently referred to as "the stockpile."

The music in this collection, recorded in 1956, was some of the earliest and best committed to it. As the '50s progressed, the 12" LP and the concept of album "themes" came to dominate the record market. Although encouraged by producers to create "extended" works and suites, Ellington continued to write for his band and its individual members as he had always done. "Suite" was a convenient umbrella term in any case, for originally it had been used to describe a sequence of contrasting dance movements, and much of what he created was thus well suited to such compilations. He and Billy Strayhorn were so prolific, however, that not all they wrote could be absorbed into the schemes of the major labels, but Ellington went ahead and recorded it anyway, at his own expense, so that he at least could *hear* how it sounded!

The big band business was by no means healthy in 1955, and he had reluctantly taken a summer engagement with the Aquashow on Long Island. It was not exactly prestigious, but it afforded him the time to write a play, *THE MAN WITH FOUR SIDES*. Then, as the engagement ended, his luck changed. After four years as leader of his own small group, the nonpareil Johnny Hodges came back to him. And on the same day a great new drummer, Sam Woodyard, entered the band. It is not too much to say that the

effect of these two men on the group's morale was comparable to that of Ben Webster and Jimmy Blanton fifteen years before. They were certainly an inspiration to Ellington himself and within a year, at the Newport Jazz Festival, he had scored the greatest single triumph of his career.

The opening MARCH 19TH BLUES, like UNCONTRIVED and the closing LONG TIME BLUES, is typical of the loose, confidence-building performance on which Ellington liked to deploy his star soloists in the studio. In a sense, these are like private recordings, devoid of the kind of flash and glitter that would perhaps have made them acceptable to mass audiences at festivals or in concert halls, and yet they are jazz in its best, quintessential form—relaxed, and swinging with feeling. Named for the date of recording, MARCH 19TH BLUES was also known in its later lives as SLAMAR IN D FLAT and 22-CENT STOMP. It is introduced by Sam Woodyard; the band gets in the groove in three choruses before Johnny Hodges, the consummate blues saxophonist, steps in for two; Ray Nance, Clark Terry and Jimmy Hamilton (on tenor saxophone) take two each; and then the band takes it out, shouting the happy theme enthusiastically.

In this period, Ellington clearly favored the trombone section, which acquitted itself so well on the last number. It is even more prominent on FEET BONE, where the arrangement is concerned with what Fats Waller termed "the pedal extremities." After two rousing ensemble choruses, Hodges sets up everything in masterly fashion, and then the saxophones challenge the trombones. This was the reed section that was to stay together until the death of Hodges, longer than any other—and better than any other—in jazz history. All five men were excellent musicians, but that unique, smoky sound owed so much to those two mainstays Hodges and Carney. Nance has the seventh chorus to himself, and then the ensemble takes over again, the whole performance being driven by Woodyard's inlectious shuffle rhythm.

IN A SENTIMENTAL MOOD showcases Paul Gonsalves' romantic style and tone, and the number was to become identified with him for the rest of his life. Although he always mentioned Coleman Hawkins and Ben Webster as his basic

influences, he was, like the latter, much influenced by Johnny Hodges in his approach to ballads. Note the intriguing sequence of changes in his cadenza-like ending.

DISCONTENTED, also known as BASSMENT and DADDY'S BLUES, is another blues with a catchy and unusual motif. Jimmy Woode, a superior bassist, is heard to advantage; Ellington's piano chorus is distinctive and arresting; and for the last chorus, Hodges is in command, wailing with the ensemble.

JUMP FOR JOY, in this version, was subtitled CLARY, BOX AND BASS, and is primarily a feature for Hamilton, Woodyard and Woode. The clarinetist plays with his customary smooth facility and Ellington brings the band in sparingly for climactic effect.

JUST SCRATCHIN' THE SURFACE is a rousing performance propelled by Sam Woodyard's terrific, earthmoving drums. Mostly ensemble, except for a short Gonsalves solo, it puts the saxophone section in the spotlight again, at first sounding curiously like Basie's and then inimitably itself, with the sound and attack that made its entry on MISFIT BLUES so electric five years later.

PRELUDE TO A KISS was often played by Johnny Hodges, but never better than in this chorus-and-a-half of supreme artistry.

MISS LUCY also bears a strange resemblance to the Basie approach in scoring and sound, but the identity of the arranger has not yet been determined. Ray Nance is the trumpet soloist.

UNCONTRIVED doesn't entirely live up to its title, because Ellington has routinized it so well. Following his piano introduction, there is an amusing figure for the trombones before the soloists take off, in this order: Hamilton, Quentin Jackson (one of Tricky Sam Nanton's worthiest successors), Nance, Ellington, Hodges, Clark Terry and Hamilton again. Terry's solo wittily incorporates "talking" phrases and the band swings the final three choruses with an abandon that would have made Count Basie envious.

SALIN DOLL was not even beginning to be recognized as a hit in 1956. Its performance has to undergo many modifications through the years, but few versions topped this one in which Paul Gonsalves

blows from the heart.

DO NOT DISTURB is a moving ballad on which Nance plays the bridge in the first chorus and the sax section once more takes care of business impressively.

LOVE YOU MADLY is a pop-type song and rather ordinary by Ellington standards, but it is completely redeemed here by Gonsalves' improvisation.

SHORT SHEET CLUSTER features Clark Terry in dazzling form, and shows his impeccable rhythmic assurance no matter how fast his execution. He incidentally indulges himself in some half-valving that momentarily recalls a predecessor, Rex Stewart.

MOON MIST was written in 1941 by Mercer Ellington, who intended it to be a vehicle for Ben Webster. When that musician was late for the session, the solo role was handed to Ray Nance and his violin. Here the original intent is more closely realized, the soloist being Paul Gonsalves, whose tenor saxophone and conception fit the atmospheric arrangement perfectly.

Last, LONG TIME BLUES, so titled because it runs over eight minutes at a slow, insinuating tempo. It's a "bad" blues with a deep, jungle-background sound, and another example of how cleverly and simply Ellington could routine such performances. A recurring passage in which Hamilton's clarinet answers the ensemble bar by bar enhances a sequence of great two-chorus solos by Hodges, Nance, Carney and Hamilton before a band fade takes the music back into the jungle.

Made in Chicago in Bill Putnam's Universal Studios (Ellington's favorite), the excellent recording is a good example of the level hi-fi had attained before stereo. Then the object was to give the listener a well-balanced perspective on the band, as though one were hearing it from a seat in a concert hall, and not, as later became the case, as though one were sitting in the middle of it or right next to the drums.

STANLEY DANCE
(author of THE WORLD OF DUKE ELLINGTON,
Da Capo Press)

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Some uncertainty exists about the December 16th date and one in early January is a possibility.

PRODUCER: DUKE ELLINGTON

This is one in a series of ten albums that, taken together, is the definitive collection of the significant compositions written by Duke Ellington and some other songs long associated with his body of work. These recordings were personally produced by Duke Ellington himself and have remained in his private collection since their completion. Documenting a large portion of his musical work, some of which had never been commercially released, these private recordings are being made available to the public by Ellington's family for the first time.

These classic recordings have been transferred to digital from their original analog form. To keep as close to the original sound as possible, the best equipment has been utilized.

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