



DUKE ELLINGTON
THE PRIVATE COLLECTION

VOLUME SEVEN
STUDIO SESSIONS
1957 & 1962

1. THINGS AIN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE (3:17)
2. SOMETHING SEXUAL (2:16)
3. THE RIFF (2:25)
4. BLUES (2:12)
5. WALLING 'BOUT (2:47)
6. I COVER THE WATERFRONT (3:26)
7. BLUES A LA WILLIE COOK (4:02)
8. SLOW BLUES ENSEMBLE (3:10)
9. CIRCLE OF FRIENDS (2:12)
10. PERIODO (3:12)
11. THREE TRUMPS (2:46)
12. DEEP BLUES (3:29)
13. THINGS AIN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE (Instrumental) (6:50)
14. PARIS BLUES (2:48)
15. I'VE GOT IT BAD (AND THAT AIN'T GOOD) (3:15)
16. CIRCLE BLUES (5:45)
17. PERIODO (Instrumental) (3:15)
18. THE SKY FELL DOWN (4:29)
19. COTTONTAIL (3:03)
20. PASSION FLOWER (4:22)

PRODUCER: DUKE ELLINGTON

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DUKE ELLINGTON

THE PRIVATE COLLECTION

VOLUME SEVEN
STUDIO SESSIONS
1957 & 1962

1 **THINGS AIN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE** (3:17)
(Mercer Ellington/T. Persons)
Tempo Music, Inc.

2 **SOMETHING SEXUAL** (2:16)
(Duke Ellington)
Duke Ellington Music Co.

3 **THE RIFF** (2:23)
(Duke Ellington)
Duke Ellington Music Co.

4 **BLUER** (2:12)
(Duke Ellington)
Duke Ellington Music Co.

5 **WAILING 'BOUT** (2:47)
(Duke Ellington)
Duke Ellington Music Co.

6 **I COVER THE WATERFRONT** (3:26)
(Johnny Green/Eddie Heyman)
Warner Bros. Music

7 **BLUES A LA WILLIE COOK** (4:02)
(Duke Ellington)
Duke Ellington Music Co.

8 **SLOW BLUES ENSEMBLE** (3:12)
(Duke Ellington)
Duke Ellington Music Co.

9 **CIRCLE OF FOURTHS** (2:12)
(Duke Ellington/Billy Strayhorn)
Ellington Music Co., Mills Music

10 **PERDIDO** (3:12)
(I. Drake, J. Tizol, P. Lengsfelder)
Tempo Music Inc.

11 **THREE TRUMPS** (2:46)
(Duke Ellington)
Duke Ellington Music Co.

12 **DEEP BLUES** (3:29)
(Duke Ellington)
Duke Ellington Music Co.

13 **THINGS AIN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE (Instrumental)** (6:50)
(Mercer Ellington/T. Persons)
Tempo Music

14 **PARIS BLUES** (2:48)
(Duke Ellington)
S B K Robbins Catalog

15 **I'VE GOT IT BAD (AND THAT AIN'T GOOD)** (3:15)
(Duke Ellington, Bob Russell)
S B K Robbins Catalog

16 **CIRCLE BLUES** (5:45)
(Duke Ellington)
Duke Ellington Music Co.

17 **PERDIDO (Instrumental)** (3:15)
(I. Drake, J. Tizol, P. Lengsfelder)
Tempo Music Inc.

18 **THE SKY FELL DOWN** (4:29)
(Duke Ellington)
S B K Robbins Catalog

19 **COTTONTAIL** (3:03)
(Duke Ellington)
S B K Robbins Catalog

20 **PASSION FLOWER** (4:22)
(Billy Strayhorn)
Tempo Music Inc.

Personnel:

DUKE ELLINGTON/BILLY STRAYHORN Piano
WILLIE COOK/CLARK TERRY/CART ANDERSON/RAY NANCE/ROY BURROWES/BILL BERRY Trumpets
QUENTIN JACKSON/BRITT WOODMAN/JOHN SANDERS/LAWRENCE BROWN/LEON COX/CHUCK CONNORS Trombones
RUSSELL PROCOPE/JOHNNY HODGES/JIMMY HAMILTON/PAUL GONSALVES/HARRY CARNEY/HAROLD ASHBY Reeds
RAY NANCE Coronet
PAUL GONSALVES Tenor Saxophone
JIMMY WOODS/AARON BELL Bass
SAM WOODYARD/SONNY GREER Drums
MILT GRAYSON Vocal

PRODUCER: DUKE ELLINGTON

Executives in Charge of Production: Mercer Ellington/Mel Fuhrman/Stanley Dance/Herb Moelis
Produced for Compact Disc by Harry Hirsch
Special Thanks To: Samuel J. Lefrak
Cover Illustration: Nancy Stahl

As explained in notes to earlier sets in this series, Duke Ellington began to assemble what he called a "stockpile" of studio-recorded sessions during the 1950s. The purpose of this was more experimental than commercial. The sessions enabled him to hear what he had written the previous night, to try out new pieces with his chief virtuosi, and also, later, to get a musical return from these musicians on regular salary during the band's occasional lay-offs. Beyond that was his own pleasure in playing in comparatively informal circumstances, where fresh and valuable ideas were so often germinated in the flow of spontaneous improvisation.

Chicago where the 1957 sessions in this collection were recorded, was the city that contained his favorite club and favorite recording studio, respectively Frank Holzfleind's Blue Note and Bill Putnam's Universal Recording Studio. Of all his many acquaintances, Holzfleind and Putnam were two of the relatively few of whom he always spoke in terms of the warmest respect and friendship.

Because of an A.F. of M. ruling, Chicago had a working week for musicians of only five days, so on the off days, Mondays and Tuesdays, the band—or a section of it—would often find itself at Universal. The date of the first session in this set has not been definitely determined, but it can safely be said that 1957 was the year when the idea of the stockpile as an ongoing enterprise took shape in Ellington's mind. The first dozen titles here are from three different sessions, all recorded that year and all at Universal.

The two opening numbers are from a date that was not otherwise successful. Ellington had been trying out a vocal group whose doowopping failed to gel with the band. **THINGS AIN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE** was frequently played to sign off at the end of a program, but it begins this one because it is a strong instrumental featuring an on-form Paul Gonsalves in the role that was traditionally Johnny Hodges'. It is Hodges, however, who stars throughout the strangely titled **SOMETHING SEXUAL**. In his time he was responsible for many performances that unsubtly merited the adjective, but this one appears to be more spiritual or soulful than sexual. The vocal group makes a fortunately modest and unobtrusive background contribution as Hodges pursues his serene course.

The next two sessions involve an odd combination of three trumpets, tenor saxophone and rhythm, permitting a fascinating glimpse of conditions in an

Ellington workshop. In the three decades since their recording, a little tape deterioration occurred and, despite the valiant efforts of Jack Towers and Jerry Valburn, this is slightly noticeable on one number, but it was decided to include all ten performances here because of their unusual interest.

THE RIFF, crisp and commanding at a brisk tempo, makes a good introduction to a session that primarily features Paul Gonsalves in different blues contexts. The three trumpets launch him into five volatile chases and then act as a kind of cheering section behind him.

BLUER relates to a number on which Clark Terry was to distinguish himself in **A DRUM IS A WOMAN**. Here the blues vehicle serves for another long improvisation by Gonsalves, Terry being heard solo only in the first chorus.

WAILING 'BOUT also features Gonsalves, relatively briefly on the blues connector of **DIMINUENDO AND CRESCENDO IN BLUE** that made his long ride the sensation of the 1956 Newport Jazz Festival. Here the rhythm section provides a curious kind of two-chorus diminuendo on its own.

Great as Gonsalves was on the blues, **I COVER THE WATERFRONT** returns him to what many considered his forte, the ballad. He invests this number—and it was always one of his favorites—with a yearning melancholy that builds to a conclusion of passionate intensity.

BLUES A LA WILLIE COOK is from a session made a little later in the month. The title is accurate, although Cook's four moving open choruses are effectively enframined by sympathetic, dery-muted statements from his friend and section-mate, Ray Nance.

SLOW BLUES ENSEMBLE uses all four horns as Ellington continues to demonstrate the limitless potential of the blues. Clark Terry leads them forcefully and takes the only solo chorus in brilliant and exciting fashion.

CIRCLE OF FOURTHS offers great scope for virtuosity. Ellington was, of course, familiar with the nature of the bebop revolution, but not too happy with its effect on the tonal values he had long esteemed. In Terry and Gonsalves he had two musicians who could execute as fast as their counterparts in the bop ranks while still maintaining good tones. Here he lets them go at up tempo in four-bar chases, together, in alternating solo choruses, back to fourth, and then out together in a final shout.

PERDIDO tended to become Clark Terry's private

preserve when he was in the Ellington band. With Gonsalves's assistance, he is very much in command in this version, in bold solo choruses and in an amusing, confident duel with drummer Sam Woodard.

THREE TRUMPS gives the three trumpets a chance to shine, singly and together. In the first chorus, Terry takes the bridge, in the last, Ray Nance; in between, Cook, Nance and Terry have a solo chorus each. Ellington had a liking for trumpet tournaments of this kind, perhaps remembering jam sessions in Harlem long before. In the climactic spot, Terry's surpassing virtuosity stands him in good stead, but the less flamboyant styles of the other two trumpets register convincingly.

DEEP BLUES is an extraordinarily funereal blues in which Ellington's deep-down piano and Gonsalves's sub-tone tenor create a uniquely MISTERIOSO atmosphere. Impromptu performances of this kind often contained the germs from which better known works grew, but so prodigal was Ellington of ideas that they were also often forgotten.

A second version of THINGS AINT WHAT THEY USED TO BE brings us to 1962 and an octet whose rhythm section has a very different character to what Ellington fans had been getting accustomed. That is because Sonny Greer had returned to his old position for the session in place of an ailing Sam Woodard. The number was, of course, perfectly familiar to him and he immediately imparts something of his own cheerful spirit to it. This certainly seems to suit his old companions—Johnny Hodges, Lawrence Brown and Ray Nance—very well, for they swing out as happily as if they were playing this blues for the first time. As does Paul Gonsalves, too!

PARIS BLUES was in all probability the reason Ellington called this particular session. The song was usually heard as an instrumental, but here the lyrics are given a dramatic airing by the deep-voiced Milt Grayson. Billy Strayhorn takes over skillfully at the piano, while Hodges and Nance sit this one out. Brown and Gonsalves provide sombre backgrounds and Greer adds a little rhythmic zest.

I GOT IT BAD is a showcase for Harry Carney's sumptuous baritone saxophone. Just this one take was made, without preparation and without warning to the soloist. But Carney, as no one knew better than Ellington, was always as consistent as he was conscientious.

CIRCLE BLUES was the way Ellington liked to end sessions of this kind when there was time available, in familiar territory (like C JAM BLUES without the

breaks), and his happiness is apparent in the powerful piano playing. Preparations for this were minimal, too. The musicians were grouped around one mike and the leader simply pointed to each in turn for his solo—Carney, Nance, Hodges, Brown, Gonsalves. Had this been heard by Ben Webster, there was one comment he would surely have made: "That's Sonny Greer, and he's swinging!" He didn't agree with the drummer's critics and was always firm in his support.

PERDIDO, made five years after the earlier version on this record, has the band in full cry and those two good friends, Nance and Gonsalves, ably taking care of solo duties that had formerly been Clark Terry's prerogative.

THE SKY FELL DOWN also showcases Ray Nance, probably the most versatile of all the musicians Ellington ever hired. Here he plays emotion-filled open horn in a rich arrangement that suggests Strayhorn's hand, as does the piano playing. The unique sound of the saxophone section has the singing warmth, tinged with sadness, that made it so outstanding in the soundtrack of the movie, PARIS BLUES. It was, indeed, one of the band's chief glories until the death of Johnny Hodges in 1970.

PASSION FLOWER was one of the most popular of the somewhat exotic vehicles Strayhorn wrote for Hodges in succession to Ellington's WARM VALLEY. A mildly unfortunate result of their success was the fact that they tended to typecast Hodges in the public's mind as a purveyor of this kind of material, whereas he also remained a peerless blues player and an adept at swinging improvisation in any jazz context. This version of PASSION FLOWER is nearly half as long again as the original and it displays his remarkable tone, control and sensitivity to great advantage against sonorous backgrounds and the composer's elegant piano accompaniment.

COTONTAIL was first made famous with Ben Webster and his tenor saxophone in the starring role. Here, the role falls to Jimmy Hamilton and his clarinet. His technical facility was such that the fast tempo proved no great challenge, and the performance makes for an intriguing contrast with the original. Note that Ellington is back at the keyboard. A "band pianist" PAR EXCELLENCE, his strong touch is massive as compared with Strayhorn's, but then, of course, his purpose was usually to direct and control rather than to decorate and embellish.

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

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Chicago, January 1957
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Chicago, January 17, 1957
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14. **PARIS BLUES** (2:48)
New York, March 29, 1962
15. **I'VE GOT IT BAD (AND THAT AIN'T GOOD)** (3:15)
New York, March 29, 1962
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New York, March 29, 1962
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New York, May 28, 1962
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New York, May 28, 1962
19. **COTTONTAIL** (3:03)
New York, May 28, 1962
20. **PASSION FLOWER** (4:22)
New York, June 6, 1962

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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