

RCA VICTOR

POPULAR COLLECTOR'S ISSUE



This
is

Duke ELLINGTON



Do Nothin' Till You
Hear from Me
Jack the Bear
Bojangles
Harlem Air Shaft
Warm Valley
Ko-Ko
Across the Track Blues
Chloe

Form 351192A
Printed in U.S.A.

THE TREASURY OF IMMORTAL PERFORMANCES

LONG **33 $\frac{1}{3}$** PLAY



LPT 3017

THIS IS DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

from The Treasury of IMMORTAL PERFORMANCES

THIS IS DUKE ELLINGTON and his Orchestra

NOTES BY LEONARD FEATHER
Associate Editor, Down Beat Magazine

AMONG ELLINGTON fans the world over, whether modernists, traditionalists, jazz adherents or classical music lovers whose only jazz interest is the Duke, there have been endless arguments about which has been the greatest of the orchestras this towering figure in American music has headed during his quarter-century as a bandleader. Most of these controversies, it can safely be assumed, have ended with a resounding victory for the Ellington orchestra of 1940.

The eight selections presented here were all recorded between March and October of 1940. The band at that time included only two of the men who were still with Ellington in 1952, Juan Tizol and Harry Carney. It contained virtually all the soloists who, during and since their lengthy tenure in the orchestra, achieved the greatest degree of international acclaim and artistic achievement.

All eight arrangements were written by Ellington himself; all but one (*Chloe*) are the Duke's own compositions. In these performances can be found the essence of everything that is unique about this man and the perfectly integrated unit around which he wove his music.

Do Nothin' Till You Hear From Me, one of Duke's most popular song hits, was originally recorded in the version presented here, as *Concerto for Cootie*. Cootie Williams' versatile trumpet found an ideal medium of expression, both in the

open-horn style and in his famous growl manner, in this intriguing orchestration.

Jack the Bear was the first band number written to present Jimmy Blanton, the youthful bassist whom Ellington had discovered a few months before and who, before his tragic death in 1942, was to revolutionize the concept of the use of his instrument in jazz, raising it from the level of a rhythm instrument to one with melodic solo potentialities. The theme, basically a blues on the standard 12-bar format, also introduces great solos by Barney Bigard's clarinet, Harry Carney's baritone and the growl trombone of the late Joseph "Tricky Sam" Nanton.

Bojangles, dedicated by Duke to the immortal dancing star, has a simple 16-bar theme offered first by Duke's piano, with Bigard and the warm, intense tenor saxophone of Ben Webster featured later.

Harlem Air Shaft canters along to the sound of unison saxes, proceeding to a series of breaks; solos are allotted to Rex Steward, Bigard and Cootie.

Warm Valley, its exquisite melody outlined by Johnny Hodges' alto sax, was Ellington's radio theme for some time and is still recalled by many of his devotees as Duke's greatest record ever.

Ko-Ko is a superb cameo of mood music. Basically a minor-keyed blues, it introduces the theme

ON THIS RECORD:
(Date of recording is in parentheses)

(SIDE 1 For Cootie)
Band 1 - *Do Nothin' Till You Hear From Me*
AE 459 (March 15, 1940)
Band 2 - *Jack the Bear*
AE 397 (March 6, 1940)
Band 3 - *Bojangles*
AE 407 (May 28, 1940)
Band 4 - *Harlem Air Shaft*
AE 409 (July 22, 1940)

(SIDE 2)
Band 1 - *Warm Valley*
AE 422 (September 5, 1940)
Band 2 - *Ko-Ko*
AE 399 (March 6, 1940)
Band 3 - *Across the Tracks Blues*
AE 424
Band 4 - *Chloe*
AE 425 (October 28, 1940)

with Tizol's trombone, offers wonderful contributions by Tricky Sam and Blanton with fine inter-lacing of Ellingtonian piano.

Across the Tracks Blues has Bigard's chalumeau-register clarinet, Rex, Lawrence Brown's trombone, and some superlative reed-section voicing.

Chloe, an old popular song, becomes typical Ellington music as Duke uses it for a vehicle to display the talents of Tricky Sam, Bigard, Brown, Blanton, Cootie and Webster.

Wallace Jones leads the trumpets, Otto Hardwick plays alto sax; with Fred Guy's guitar and Sonny Greer's drums they complete the band—and, we might add, in doing so they round out what still remains the completest, most compelling orchestra ever heard in the turbulent history of jazz.

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