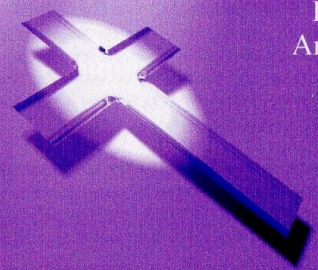




# Duke Ellington

A CONCERT OF SACRED MUSIC  
FROM GRACE CATHEDRAL

Featuring  
Duke Ellington  
And His Orchestra  
Esther Merrill  
Jon Hendricks  
Jimmy McPhail  
Bunny Briggs  
Tony Watkins  
And The  
Herman McCoy Choir



# Sacred Music

### Duke Ellington - Sacred Music

The Music on this disc was part of The 'Festivals Of Grace', a year long series of events to celebrate the completion and consecration of Grace Cathedral in Los Angeles, California. Other events during this period of celebration were performances of Benjamin Britten's War Requiem, a program of interpretive dance to Bach's Christmas Oratorio and various concerts of symphonic and organ music with performances of the Cathedral Civic Theatre. Looking back one has the feeling that there were individuals who felt doubt about the wisdom of using jazz music as a form of worship perhaps seeing it as has been said on many occasions as being the devil's music however as the Then Dean of Grace Cathedral mentioned in his address there is a difference between sacred and profane and many people fail to appreciate the true difference. Profane meaning literally 'in front of the temple' which applied to acts that are not holy and were thus performed outside the temple. Sacred on the other hand applies to holy acts which properly can take place within the temple the criterion being whether an act is an offering to God and it is without doubt that this music meets that standard. As Duke Ellington said at the time...

"I Believe that no matter how skilled a drummer or saxophonist might be, that if this is the thing he does best and he offers it sincerely from the heart in - or as accompaniment to - his worship, he will not be unacceptable because of lack of skill or of the instrument upon which he makes his demonstration, be it pipe or tomtom".

Although Duke Ellington was capable of painting his music on a vast symphonic scale the music heard on this compact disc is not the high flown classical aspiration of Handel, Beethoven or Bach but the simple worship of the common man presenting himself humbly before the face of God. To quote Duke Ellington again...

"If a man is troubled he moans and he cries when he worships. When a man feels

that, that which he enjoys in this life is only because of the grace of God, he rejoices, he sings and sometimes he dances (and so it was with David in spite of his wife's prudishness)". (Perhaps this was also a reference to the startling performance of Bunny Briggs tap dancing on *David Danced Before The Lord*.)

"In this program you may hear a variety of statements without words and I think you should know that if it is a phrase with six tones it symbolizes the six syllables of the first four words of the Bible "In the beginning God," which is our theme. We say it many times ... Many ways".

The full program for this concert also contained the overture to *Black Brown And Beige* from "My People" a choral version of *Come Sunday* sung by The Herman McCoy Choir, a group of traditional spirituals sung by the Herman McCoy Choir, *Tell Me It's The Truth* sung by Esther Merrill and an orchestration by Louie Bellson and Duke Ellington written by Richard I. Purvis director of the Grace Cathedral Choir called *Purvis A La Jazz Hot*. There is considerable damage to these recordings and they are probably not restorable at this time. There were also false starts probably caused by lack of rehearsal Between the Choir and Orchestra and the original running order of the concert was altered because the Herman McCoy Choir had to leave to catch a plane. The real running order has been left as performed and you will become aware of changes as they are announced. Much work has gone into the restoration of this material and I would like to dedicate this labour to the memory of the late Dave Kay of Status Records who first suggested that this work be undertaken.

John Bennett 1997.

**If you have enjoyed this recording and are interested in Big Band Jazz and other nostalgic recordings of the period, you can obtain a Free listing and updates to our catalogue by writing to Submarine, 13 Gardenia Road, Bush Hill Park, Enfield, Middlesex, EN1 2JA, England.**

"I'm certain this is the most important statement we have ever made"

## A CONCERT OF SACRED MUSIC

FROM GRACE CATHEDRAL,  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA,

16th SEPTEMBER 1965

### Personnel

Duke Ellington - Piano  
Louie Bellson - Drums  
John Lamb - Bass Violin  
Harry Carney - Baritone saxophone, Bass clarinet, Clarinet  
Russell Procope - Alto and Sprano saxophone, Clarinet  
Johnny Hodges - Alto saxophone  
Jimmy Hamilton - Tenor Saxophone, Clarinet  
Paul Gonsalves - Tenor Saxophone  
Lawrence Brown - Trombone  
Charles Connors - Bass Trombone  
Buster Cooper - Trombone  
William 'Cat' Anderson - Trumpet  
Cootie Williams - Trumpet  
Mercer Ellington - Trumpet  
Herbie Jones - Trumpet  
Thomas Whaley - Assistant to Duke Ellington  
Vocalists - Esther Merrill, Jon Hendricks, Jimmy McPhail,  
Bunny Briggs, Tony Watkins  
And The  
Herman McCoy Choir

**STATUS**

DUKE ELLINGTON

SACRED MUSIC

STATUS DSTS1015

*"I'm Certain this is the most important statement we have ever made"*

Duke Ellington.

- |  |              |
|--|--------------|
| <b>1. IN THE BEGINNING GOD</b>                                   | <b>19-36</b> |
| (Ellington)<br>Vocals - The Speakin Choir, Louis Bellson - Drums |              |
| <b>2. WILL YOU BE THERE</b>                                      | <b>1-23</b>  |
| (Ellington)<br>Vocals - Jon Hendricks and The Herman McCoy Choir |              |
| <b>3. NINETY NINE PERCENT</b>                                    | <b>2-23</b>  |
| (Ellington)<br>Vocals - Jon Hendricks and The Herman McCoy Choir |              |
| <b>4. AIN'T BUT THE ONE</b>                                      | <b>3-27</b>  |
| (Ellington)<br>Vocals - Jimmy McPhail and the Herman McCoy Choir |              |
| <b>5. NEW WORLD A'COMING</b>                                     | <b>9-56</b>  |
| (Ellington)<br>Duke Ellington - Piano                            |              |
| <b>6. IN THE BEGINNING GOD II</b>                                | <b>4-30</b>  |
| (Ellington)<br>Vocals - Jon Hendricks and the Speaking Choir     |              |
| <b>7. HERITAGE</b>   | <b>3-43</b>  |
| (Ellington)<br>Vocal - Jon Hendricks                             |              |
| <b>8. THE LORDS PRAYER</b>                                       | <b>3-15</b>  |
| (Ellington)<br>Vocal - Esther Merrill                            |              |
| <b>9. COME SUNDAY</b>  | <b>5-30</b>  |
| (Ellington)<br>Vocal - Esther Merrill                            |              |
| <b>10. DAVID DANCED BEFORE THE LORD</b>                          | <b>8-59</b>  |
| (Ellington)<br>Bunny Briggs - Tap Dancer, Vocal - Jon Hendricks  |              |
| <b>11. THE LORDS PRAYER II</b>                                   | <b>3-45</b>  |
| (Ellington)<br>Tony Watkins - a capella                          |              |

All announcements and introductions by Duke Ellington

*Duke Ellington*  
*A Concert Of Sacred Music*  
*From Grace Cathedral*  
*1965*

Produced By Submarine  
Graphics and typeset John R. Bennett  
Co-ordinator Frank Greene

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