

# "THE DUKE IN WASHINGTON"

## **Langley Field Air Force Base, Hampton, Virginia**

- December 8th, 1943  
The Coca Cola Victory Parade Of  
Spotlight Bands
- (1) DUKE ELLINGTON'S  
INTRODUCTION ..... 0:27
- (2) I WONDER WHY ..... 3:03  
(Tubb) vocal Betty Roche
- (3) GOIN' UP (Ellington) ..... 3:44

## **Naval Training Center, Bainbridge, Maryland**

- July 8th, 1944  
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Spotlight Bands
- (4) ANNOUNCER AND ELLINGTON  
INTRODUCTION ..... 0:35
- (5) G.I. JIVE (Johnny Mercer) ..... 1:36
- (6) AMOR, AMOR  
(Mendez-Ruiz) ..... 2:28
- (7) FRANKIE AND JOHNNY  
(trad.) ..... 2:59

## **Howard Theatre, Washington, D.C.**

- April 20th, 1946  
Duke Ellington's Treasury Broadcast
- (8) THE BLUES (Ellington)  
Vocal Kay Davis  
(Black, Brown And Beige) ..... 7:23
- (9) SONO (Ellington) ..... 5:23

## **The Armory, Washington, D.C.**

- April 20th, 1955  
(A Tone Parallel To) HARLEM  
(Ellington) ..... 13:49
- (11) PERDIDO  
(Tizol-Lenk-Ellington) ..... 6:05
- (12) ALL THE THINGS YOU ARE  
(Kern-Hammerstein II) ..... 4:41
- (13) HAPPY-GO-LUCKY LOCAL  
(Ellington)  
(The Deep South Suite) ..... 5:25

## **Howard University, Washington, D.C. Washington Jazz Festival**

- June 2nd, 1962
- (14) TAKE THE "A" TRAIN  
(Strayhorn) ..... 5:19
- (15) A SINGLE PETAL OF A ROSE  
(The Queen's Suite) (Ellington) 4:15

## **The White House, Washington, D.C.**

- April 29th, 1969
- (16) PAT (Ellington) ..... 3:51

AAD Total time: 71:18

## (1-2-3) DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS FAMOUS ORCHESTRA

*Duke Ellington, piano-arranger-leader; Wallace Jones, Rex Stewart, Taft Jordan, trumpets; Ray Nance, trumpet & violin; Joe Nanton, Juan Tizol, Lawrence Brown, trombones; Jimmy Hamilton, Skippy Williams, clarinet & tenor sax; Otto Hardwick, Johnny Hodges, alto sax; Harry Carney, baritone sax, clarinet, bass clarinet; Fred Guy, guitar; Junior Raglin, bass; Sonny Greer, drums; Betty Roché, vocal.*

## (4-5-6-7) DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS FAMOUS ORCHESTRA

*(same as for 1-2-3) except Claude Jones replaces Juan Tizol.*

## (8-9) DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS FAMOUS ORCHESTRA

*Duke Ellington, piano-arranger-leader; Shelton Hemphill, Taft Jordan, Francis Williams, Cat Anderson, Reunald Jones, trumpets; Ray Nance, trumpets & violin; Joe Nanton, Lawrence Brown, Claude Jones, Wilbur DeParis, trombones, Jimmy Hamilton, clarinet & tenor sax; Al Sears, tenor sax; Otto Hardwick, Johnny Hodges, alto sax; Harry Carney, baritone sax, clarinet, bass clarinet; Fred Guy, guitar; Oscar Pettiford, bass; Sonny Greer, drums; Kay Davis, vocal.*

## (10-11-12-13) DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS FAMOUS ORCHESTRA

*Duke Ellington, piano-arranger-leader; Clark Terry, Willie Cook, Cat Anderson, trumpets; Ray Nance, trumpet & violin; Quentin Jackson, Britt Woodman, John Sanders, trombones; Jimmy Hamilton, clarinet & tenor sax; Paul Gonsalves, tenor sax; Rick Henderson, alto sax; Harry Carney, baritone sax, clarinet, bass clarinet; Jimmy Wood, bass; Dave Black, drums.*

## (14-15) THE DUKE ELLINGTON TRIO

*Duke Ellington, piano; Aaron Bell, bass; Sam Woodyard, drums.*

## *Duke Ellington Birthday Celebration*

(16) DUKE ELLINGTON, PIANO SOLO



When Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington was born on April 29, 1899, the city of his birth, Washington, D.C., had a relatively culturally advanced black community. During his growing up there, it had become "The Culture Capital," that is, *the* epicenter of Negro social, educational, religious, cultural, and especially economic activities in America, and it was this milieu that nurtured Ellington the person and fledgling artist. In the ethos of this time and place, importance was placed on aspiration, honest effort, and dignity—"putting one's best foot forward." The grown and successful Ellington exemplified these values—he had developed his considerable gifts not through happenstance, but through dedication to his chosen field, all the while with dignity. Thus, he was always welcomed home with warmth and pride befitting a beloved son.

*The Duke in Washington* features Ellington the established artist performing in his hometown area. In celebration of the Centennial Year of his birth, it has been produced in conjunction with Ellington '99, the Seventeenth Annual International Duke Ellington Conference, sponsored by Washington, D.C.'s own Duke Ellington Society. Prominent in these recordings are two other native sons, Rex Stewart and Rick Henderson. A third is Otto Hardwick, friend of Ellington's from childhood and an original member of the Washingtonians, as the band was known then. His contribution here is not as a spotlighted soloist, but as a lead alto saxophonist.

#### **Langley Field, Virginia — December 8, 1943**

As did most major bands during World War II, Ellington's from time to time entertained at military bases and war plants. Some of his appearances aired on the "Coca Cola Victory Parade of Spotlight Bands" radio series, one being in December, 1943 from Langley Field, Virginia, a comfortable drive from Washington.

This excerpt from that engagement begins with "**I Wonder Why**," of a genre of yearning ballads with which servicemen could identify. The positive sentiment and a declaration of love at the end redeem the initial indecisive wonder. Better known for her up-tempo scatting on "Take the 'A' Train," here Betty Roché demonstrates her skills as a ballad singer.

"**Goin' Up**," a feature for dancers in the movie *Cabin in the Sky*, is a spirited change of mood that images the rising of repentant sinners toward the heavenly cabin. Early on, Joseph "Tricky Sam" Nanton contributes one of his inimitable plunger passages. (While there is general agreement that he never played "wah-wah," some listeners will hear on this tune "yah-yah," as different from "jah-jah.") Johnny Hodges blows a few hot bars before the ensemble's call-and-response, after which trombonist Lawrence Brown interrupts the festivities to "preach," in a manner that anticipates his call-to-prayer in a later theological context, Ellington's "*Amad*" in *The Far East Suite*. His brief sermon is followed by a joyous congregation of souls led by Ray Nance on violin and taken even higher by Cat

Anderson's appropriately stratospheric trumpet.

#### **Naval Training Center, Bainbridge, Maryland — July 8, 1944**

On July 8, 1944 the Ellington orchestra was again on the "Victory Parade of Spotlight Bands," this time north of Washington at the Bainbridge, Maryland naval facility. This segment begins with a dance tune that would strike a note with servicemen, "**G.I. Jive**." Taft Jordan blows a happy trumpet solo before the band takes over with a chanting swing so suitable for jiving jitterbugs. Rex Stewart's "**Amor, Amor**" [*sic*] is as the announcer says, like one not heard before. Instead of a dulcet melody, it is a spritely showcase of his gently staccato trumpet, replete with his trademark half-valve statements. At first the voice of love is tentative and cautious. By the end the amour is strong and openly declarative.

Stewart, a "homey" by virtue of having grown up in Washington, joined the band in 1934 and stayed until late 1945. In *Music Is My Mistress* Ellington states that Stewart should be remembered not only for his unique half-valve effects, but also for his extremely versatile musicianship. He was versatile in other ways as well: trained chef by avocation and author of articles and the books *Jazz Masters of the Thirties* and, edited by Claire P. Gordon, posthumous *Boy Meets Horn*.

Two famous tragic lovers in American folklore would hardly recognize themselves in Duke's telling of their story in his "**Frankie and Johnny**." In its longer forms really a concerto for piano—or more precisely, for this particular pianist—after a fanfare it goes through rhythmic and emotional changes, supported by strong bass work by Junior Raglin, before the fateful story is brought to its end. A few days later the audience would not have heard such piano gymnastics. During an engagement at New York's Roxy Theater, Ellington was on an elevator there when it dropped a short distance, causing a light globe to crash and cut his hand. Billy Strayhorn subbed for him, but when Duke appeared at the piano for limited periods, he showed one-handed dexterity while a spot shone on the stitched and bandaged other.

#### **Howard Theater, Washington, D.C. — April 20, 1946**

Opened in 1910, the Howard Theater had been a movie house, legitimate stage, and interim church, among other things, before being remodeled in 1931 for jazz-centered, vaudevilian type billings. Ellington was a headliner on its first such show. Its size and configuration made for a certain coziness, so for him to play there was a homecoming of sorts, a visit with friends in a comfortable setting. When he did, it was not unusual for two lines to form outside. One would be patrons along the front waiting to buy tickets, sometimes extending around the corner. The other would be those with tickets in hand waiting to get in, this line stretching in the other direction around the side of the building on past the stage door.

The occasion for this recording is one of the regular Treasury Broadcasts, patriotic appeals for the purchase of U.S. Savings Bonds. Kay Davis, best known for her wordless vocals, sings "The Blues" from *Black, Brown, and Beige*, showing that classically trained sopranos have lived with the blues, too. The sinuous tenor saxophone solo is by Al Sears, who had a relatively short stay with the orchestra. By this example one can appreciate, first, how much Ellington valued highly personal instrumental voices in his band and, second, his ability to use them to best advantage of both individual musician and orchestra. Sears's solo, or obligato, on "The Blues" is one of the most memorable in the entire Ellington oeuvre. On the second Sears interlude, his plaintive voice is answered by Brown's trombone. The trombone chorus that follows, extracted, became the theme for another piece, "Carnegie Blues." Throughout, bassist Oscar Pettiford offers his comments. The other selection from this broadcast, "Sono," is a classic illustration of how Harry Carney's range and distinctive baritone saxophone voice could simultaneously embody stentorian authority and lyrical tenderness.

While the exact date is in question, it is generally accepted that it was during this Howard Theater engagement that Otto Hardwick left the band permanently, a great loss. Ellington reportedly said that when Hardwick left he rewrote the alto leads, for they had been specifically for his tone and execution.

#### **National Guard Armory, Washington, D.C. — April 20, 1955**

Ellington was in Washington again on April 20, 1955, this time for a concert at the National Guard Armory sponsored by a historically black sorority. By then he had created significant extended compositions, not the least of which is "Harlem," described by him as a concerto grosso for his and a symphony orchestra. This ambitious work had been commissioned by Arturo Toscanini for his NBC Symphony Orchestra, with which Ellington performed it. Programmatic, it is intended to parallel sound and other sensory experiences, which Ellington describes in his *Music Is My Mistress*:

We would like to take you on a tour of this place called Harlem. It has always had more churches than cabarets. It is Sunday morning. We are strolling from 110<sup>th</sup> Street up Seventh Avenue, heading north through the Spanish and West Indian neighborhood toward the 125<sup>th</sup> Street business area. Everybody is nicely dressed, and on their way to or from church. Everybody is in a friendly mood. Greetings are polite and pleasant, and on the opposite side of the street standing under a street lamp, is a real hip chick. She, too, is in a friendly mood. You may hear a parade go by, or a funeral, or you may recognize the passage of those who are making our Civil Rights demands. While

"Harlem" is orchestral, "Perdido," once a three-minute piece with embedded solos, by this time is a vehicle for jam session style individual expression. It starts as a showcase

for trumpeter Clark Terry. Then the brass shows its mettle, the reed section gets in some bopish licks, followed by chase phrases by trumpeters Nance, Terry, Willie Cook, and Anderson with trombonist Britt Woodman - all of which ends with a raucous celebration by the full band.

"All the Things [You Are]" brings forward Rick Henderson, a fine technician who shows his absorption of tradition in respect to tone and his conception in respect to the latest music idioms. Once the orchestra has established the setting, until the full group comes back for the closing, his improvisation is supported by the rhythm section of Dave Black, Jimmy Woode, and Ellington. The sparse orchestral score may well have been Henderson's, for he was also a composer and arranger. Among his commercially available Ellington-era creations are "Carney," written for his reed section mate Harry, and "Frisolious Banta"; his section work and other solos can be heard on the *Happy Birthday Duke* CD set. (His arranging for the band presumably did not stop when he left. In the Ellington Collection at the Smithsonian Institution, for example, is a voucher made out to Henderson for arranging "Squeese [sic] Me" for a June 4, 1971 performance in New Jersey.) Several months after this Armory concert, because they did not have local union cards he and several others had to leave the band when Ellington began a summer-long stint at the Aquashow in New York. Later, for a number of years Henderson led the house band at the Howard Theater. He lives a quiet life in his hometown.

Ellington described "Happy Go Lucky Local" as a "tone painting of a train . . . a raggedly little e-flat local that jogs along in a boogie-woogie tempo . . . [with] a fireman who blows the blues on the whistle." Conductor Ellington calls the all-aboard on piano, "first chair engineer" Jimmy Woode releases the brake and opens the throttle, and we're off for a jaunty ride that ends too soon as fireman Cat Anderson gives his end-of-the-line whistle and Woode sets the brake. Enroute, passengers Russell Procope, Nance, and Jimmy Hamilton "talk that talk" on alto saxophone, trumpet, and clarinet, respectively. In introducing "Happy Go Lucky Local" that night, in a to some too gentle reference to Jimmy Forrest's hit "Night Train," Ellington announced that "If by some strange coincidence this sounds like something else you've heard, it is just coincidence because this one was written first."

#### **Howard University, Washington, D.C. — June 2, 1962**

Sponsored by the auspicious U.S. President's Music Committee of the People-to-People Program, the First International Jazz Festival in 1962 had an announced intention to "explore the full spectrum of jazz and indicate its influence throughout the world." Though it featured a plethora (an excess?) of genuine stars, for various reasons, as one headline intoned, "Capital Festival Is Disappointment." Another was more telling: "Jazz Fest a Triumph Only for Ellington." The full Ellington orchestra made three appearances in as many days: with the National Symphony, Dinah Washington, and others; on a night



program of eight headliners; and on an afternoon session with fewer others.

On a fourth day Ellington, with bassist Aaron Bell and drummer Sam Woodyard, was at Howard University on a program of small groups. From this we hear a **"Take the 'A' Train"** that demonstrates his on-the-spot-creativity. As one writer has pointed out, Ellington was more than just a master at knowing which notes to play, how to play them, and how to place them rhythmically. Bell, one of the characteristically excellent bassists who worked with the band, plays an assertive solo, while for both Woodyard provides a shimmering background and occasional propulsive punctuations. The second selection is the regal **"A Single Petal of a Rose,"** on which Ellington's piano is sensitively accompanied by Bell's arco bass and Woodyard's silvery percussion.

***The White House, Washington, D.C. — April 29, 1969***

During a celebration of his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday at the White House on April 29, 1969, Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington received the highest honor a president of the United States can bestow on a citizen, The Presidential Medal of Freedom. President Richard Nixon praised Ellington's "unique style" and "impeccable taste," adding that "In the royalty of American music, no man swings more or stands higher than Duke." In his response Ellington referred to the four freedoms by which he stated Billy Strayhorn lived: "freedom from hate, unconditionally; freedom from self-pity . . . , freedom from fear of possibly doing something that might help another more than it might himself, and freedom from the kind of pride that could make a man feel he was better than his brother or neighbor." This was followed by a Ducal "four-cheek" buss bestowed on the President by the honoree.

The night was filled with music. An authentically all-star band assembled for the occasion played, conducted by Ellington's long-time extractor-copyist Tom Whaley. There were solo performances a-plenty by musician guests. Two others, hitherto and thereafter not known for piano prowess, contributed to the musical goings-on: Vice-President Spiro Agnew rendered "Sophisticated Lady" and President Nixon played "Happy Birthday," reportedly in the key of "G."

When Ellington's time came, he improvised the lissome tune we hear, naming it **"Pat"** for its "gentle, graceful" human counterpart, First Lady Patricia Nixon, who graciously received this musical tribute. The President and Mrs. Nixon having taken their leave at a proper hour, the party nevertheless continued into the wee hours.

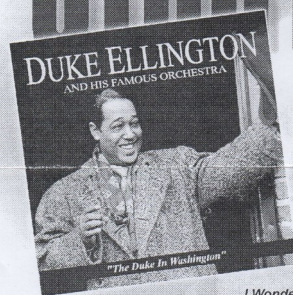
The boy in knicker pants from nearby Ward Place had grown to be a man awarded the nation's highest honor on his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday in the nation's most prestigious house.

*Theodore R. Hudson  
(March, 1999)*

# STORYVILLE

## News

May 2000



### DUKE ELLINGTON

AND HIS FAMOUS ORCHESTRA  
The Duke In Washington

Duke Ellington with Wallace Jones, Rex Stewart, Taft Jordan, Joe Nanton, Lawrence Brown, Clark Terry, Willie Cook, Jimmy Hamilton, Skippy Williams, Johnny Hodges, Harry Carney, Sonny Greer a.o.

*I Wonder Why / Goin' Up / G.I. Jive / Amor, Amor / Frankie And Johnny / The Blues / Sono / (A Tone Parallel To) Harlem / Perdido / All The Things You Are / Happy-Go-Lucky Local (The Deep South Suite) / Take The "A" Train / A Single Petal Of A Rose / Pat.*  
Total Time – 71:18

Duke Ellington was one American patriot who truly – and gladly – symbolized American culture at its finest. Here, in celebration of his 100th birthday, is a collection of rare and exciting live sessions on his home turf around Washington, D.C., produced in collaboration with the International Duke Ellington Conference. These recordings, made between 1943 and 1962, feature Duke, the patriot: boosting the morale of U.S. servicemen during World War II, helping sell U.S. Savings Bonds, promoting Black Pride, and even charming First Lady Pat Nixon at the White House on his 70th birthday.

The music on this CD represents a variety of Ellington constellations – solo piano, trio, and three editions of the Duke's Famous Orchestra. Particularly fine solo contributions are made by Rex Stewart, Betty Roché, Lawrence Brown, Taft Jordan, Ray Nance, Al Sears, Harry Carney, Clark Terry and – of course – Edward Kennedy Ellington, himself.

STORYVILLE STCD 8310  
BARCODE 717101831029

**DUKE ELLINGTON**, « THE DUKE IN WASHINGTON » (Storyville STCD 8310, distribution Night & Day) : Ce CD rassemble des enregistrements publics provenant de six périodes en six endroits différents.

1. – 8 décembre 1943, Langley Field, Virginia. **I wonder why** montre l'aptitude de Betty Roché à chanter les ballades sans être mièvre ni maniérée. **Goin' up**, composé en 1942 pour le film *Cabin in the sky*, fait entendre Tricky Sam au trombone oua oua, J. Hodges, puis Lawrence Brown prêchant au trombone un court sermon, suivi par Ray Nance au violon et Cat Anderson dans le suraigu de la trompette avec des ensembles éclatants.

2. – 8 juillet 1944, Naval Training Center, Bainbridge, Maryland. **G.I. Jive** : Taft Jordan prend le seul solo dans le style de Rex Stewart, le reste de l'interprétation consistant en ensembles très dansants mettant en évidence la souveraineté de Duke sur son instrument, l'orchestre, malgré la mobilisation de plusieurs de ses musiciens. Rex Stewart, unique soliste dans **Amor, Amor**, y démontre d'un bout à l'autre les multiples aspects de son talent. **Frankie and Johnny** est une sorte de concerto pour piano et orchestre réservé à la dextérité de Duke soutenu par la puissance de Junior Raglin à la contrebasse.

3. – 20 avril 1946, Howard Theater, Washington, D.C. **The blues**, morceau de la B.B.&B. chanté par Kay Davis, se charge d'une saveur particulière grâce au style haletant et flexible d'Al Sears au saxo ténor. L'incomparable Harry Carney, qui interprète intégralement **Sono**, joint à sa retentissante sonorité au saxo baryton un délicieux lyrisme.

4. 20 avril 1955, The Armory, Washington, D.C. **Harlem**, célèbre suite orchestrale s'étendant sur 13 minutes, que Duke joua souvent depuis 1951, est connue de tous nos lecteurs. Cette version compte certainement parmi les meilleures. **Perdido** consiste en solos par Clark Terry, suivi d'un « chase » de trompettes entre Clark Terry, Willie Cook et Cat Anderson avec Britt Woodman au trombone. **All the things you are** est consacré à Rick Henderson, bon technicien du saxo alto qui resta chez Duke de mars 1953 à juillet 1955, mais il n'a pas l'envergure des vrais ellingtoniens. **Happy-Go-Lucky-Local** offre la succession normale de cet extrait de **Deep South Suite** : l'alto Procope, le trompette Ray Nance, Hamilton à la clarinette et Cat Anderson qui donne les derniers coups de sifflet sur sa trompette avec les coups de freins de Jimmy Woode à la contrebasse.

5. – 2 juin 1962, Howard University, Washington, D.C. **Take the "A" train** est joué par Duke, Aaron Bell et Sam Woodyard en trio qui se transforme en quartette pendant les premiers chorus, Billy Strayhorn se joignant à la fête, intervenant aussi en solo ainsi qu'Aaron Bell confirmant son efficacité. **Single petal of a rose** est un solo plein de charme par Duke soutenu par Bell et Sam Woodyard dans ce mouvement de **Queen's Suite**.

6. – 29 avril 1969, White House, Washington, D.C. Au cours de la réception donnée par le Président Nixon pour célébrer le 70<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de Duke Ellington, ce dernier improvise avec délicatesse sur un thème qu'il a intitulé **Pat** en hommage à Patricia Nixon.

Cette sélection, choisie avec un soin attentif, est parfaitement reproduite.



STORYVILLE DUKE ELLINGTON The Duke In Washington STCD 8310

# DUKE ELLINGTON *And His FAMOUS ORCHESTRA* "THE DUKE IN WASHINGTON"

*Including Solo And Trio Performances, 1943 - 1969*

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Executive Producer: Karl Emil Knudsen.  
Washington Production: Jack Towers, Jerry Valburn.  
Source Material: Jerry Valburn.  
Digital Mastering: Jack Towers.  
Liner Notes: Theodore R. Hudson.  
CD Production: Storyville Records, Copenhagen, Denmark.  
© 1999 Printed in Denmark.  
*For information on personnel, please see inside!*  
*Cover photo: Duke at the rear door of the Howard Theater,  
February, 1942.*



**STORYVILLE**  
STCD 8310

**COMPACT disc**  
DIGITAL AUDIO

STORYVILLE DUKE ELLINGTON The Duke In Washington STCD 8310