

RCA

FXM1 2072



the works of

duke



INTEGRALE

VOLUME II



DUKE ELLINGTON and his Orchestra



Face 1

FXM1 7072

FXM1 7072 A

Duke Ellington

« THE WORKS OF DUKE » Vol. 11

- 1 MY GREATEST MISTAKE (J. Fulton - J. O'Brien) 3'25
- 2 SEPIA PANORAMA (D. Ellington) 3'23



- 3 SEPIA PANORAMA (D. Ellington) 3'19
- 4 THERE SHALL BE NO NIGHT (C. Shaller - A. Silver) 2'11
- 5 IN A MELLOPHONE (D. Ellington) 3'16
- 6 FIVE O'CLOCK WHISTLE (R. Gannon - J. Myrow - G. Irwin) 3'17
- 7 V'ARM VALLEY (D. Ellington) 3'14

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Face 2

FXM1 7072

FXM1 7072 B

Duke Ellington

« THE WORKS OF DUKE » Vol. 11



- 8 PITTER PANTHER PATTEN (D. Ellington) 3'07
- 9 PITTER PANTHER PATTEN (D. Ellington) 3'00

- 10 BODY AND SOUL (Heyman - Sour - Eyton - Green) 3'04
- 11 BODY AND SOUL (Heyman - Sour - Eyton - Green) 3'10
- 12 SOPHISTICATED LADY (D. Ellington - I. Mills - Parish) 2'54
- 13 SOPHISTICATED LADY (D. Ellington - I. Mills - Parish) 2'43
- 14 Mr J.B. BLUES (D. Ellington - J. Blanton) 3'03
- 15 Mr J.B. BLUES (D. Ellington - J. Blanton) 3'12

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Side 1

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

- 1. My greatest mistake**
(J. Fulton - J. O'Brien) (BS 054-024-1) 3:25
- 2. Sepia panorama**
(D. Ellington) (BS 054-025-1) 3:23
- 3. Sepia panorama**
(D. Ellington) Unissued take (BS 054-025-2) 3:19
- 4. There shall be no night**
(G. Shaley - A. Silver) (BS 053-142-1) 2:11
- 5. In a melotone**
(D. Ellington) (BS 053-142-1) 3:18
- 6. Five o'clock whistle**
(R. Gannon - J. Myrow - G. Wein) (BS 053-142-1) 3:17
- 7. Warm valley**
(D. Ellington) Unissued take (BS 053-143-1) 3:14

Side 2

DUKE ELLINGTON AND JIMMY BLANTON

- 8. Pitter panther patter**
(D. Ellington) Unissued take (BS 053-504-1) 3:07
- 9. Pitter panther patter**
(D. Ellington) (BS 053-504-2) 3:00
- 10. Body and soul**
(Heyman - Sour - Eytton - Green) Unissued take (BS 053-505-2) 3:04
- 11. Body and soul**
(Heyman - Sour - Eytton - Green) (BS 053-505-3) 3:10
- 12. Sophisticated lady**
(D. Ellington - I. Mills - Parisi) Unissued take (BS 053-506-1) 2:54
- 13. Sophisticated lady**
(D. Ellington - I. Mills - Parisi) (BS 053-506-2) 2:43
- 14. Mr. J. B. Blues**
(D. Ellington - J. Blanton) (BS 053-507-1) 3:03
- 15. Mr. J. B. Blues**
(D. Ellington - J. Blanton) Unissued take (BS 053-507-2) 3:12

With his eleven-volume line in series "THE WORKS OF DUKE ELLINGTON" we remain in the year 1940, with recordings made during the period from July to October. Whereas the Second World War was ravaging Europe on one side of the Atlantic, on the other side America was living a remarkable economic resurgence, unaware that a year later the events of Pearl Harbor would draw her irrevocably into the immense Holocaust. Difficult though it may be to accept such disparities of destiny whereby, depending upon the will of the elements or of man himself, one section of mankind is confronted by atrocity whilst the other is unconcernedly living its own peaceful existence, we are obliged to recognise that such a situation is one of the most permanent realities of humanity itself.

There is therefore nothing surprising in the fact that America's big bands were becominging and multiplying in 1940, and that the Swing Era was at its height. The Ellington orchestra, (revised if, indeed, need was) by the arrival of Billy Strayhorn and important new releases, was producing great recordings at an ever-increasing rate. This volume presents the 1940 orchestra, at its usual impeccable level, on the first side and, on the reverse side, piano-bass duets from a session that took place on 1st October 1940. These musical conversations between Duke Ellington and the "boy wonder" Jimmy Blanton are here offered complete, since we have included both takes of each title, the one already familiar to collectors and the unissued version. This will surely be an important event for those immemorial Ellington devotees who have followed our re-issue project right from its inception with such gratifying consistency and interest.

The tracks included in the full band include three Ellingtonian classics: **Septia Panorama**, **Warm Valley** and **In a Melotone**. For **Septia Panorama** Ellington, the impressionist, has sought his inspiration among the multiple facets of negro life in the back quarter of New York, much as he did for **Martin Armatark**. Jimmy Blanton and Harry Carney (yet another Ellingtonian now so sadly taken from us) are much to the forefront here, with Carney exhibiting his usual rich, forthright, powerful tone. Ben Webster, too, is conspicuous by that efficacy of expression which is so typical of his Ellington period. Duke himself intervenes on piano, but, when the sax solos to add his own touch of melancholy to this urban landscape.

Warm Valley, on the other hand, offers a landscape which is much more rustic; it is the musical equivalent of a valley in the American north-west. The tale included here, the first, is a rarity. The others were not cut until the session of the 17th October 1940 and, because of the abundance of recordings from this period, we have had time to re-sign ourselves to separating the takes despite the indisputable link that exists between them. We trust that your finances will stretch to Volume 12 which will

the works of Duke Ellington

COMPLETE EDITION VOLUME 11

include takes two and three. Although Rex Stewart is also heard, the principal soloist on **Warm Valley** is Johnny Hodges who eventually became so identified with this work that he would even on occasion refer to it as his tune. It was indeed a turning point in the famous alto-saxophonist's career. His ability, of which inflexion was one of the principal elements, became more and more refined with the passing years, but never before did the sensuality of his lyricism attain such fulfurement. With this recording, Johnny Hodges' specialty invariably became the slow ballad, a form at which he was to excel and know no equal, and with which he was to discover the undisputed section of the public. **Warm Valley** is thus the first link in the chain which leads to **Daydream**, **Passion Flower**, **Sultry Sunset** and so many other titles. Johnny Hodges displays another aspect of his talent, that of the fluent and relaxed swingman, on the celebration **In a Melotone**; here Cootie Williams, too, shines forth with a well constructed muted trumpet solo. This number is typical of the swing era and highlights in remarkable fashion the various melodic sections, together with a rhythm line in which the understanding between Jimmy Blanton and Sonny Greer reigns supreme. **In a Melotone** was to know a curious career: after remaining a purely Ellington number for the best part of fifteen years, it was tested upon by all and sundry, from such eminents as Count Basie and Jimmy Smith right through to a whole host of the most obscure groups, to become a heavily featured jazz standard.

The orchestra's vocalisation on two tracks: **Here, Jellyfish on There Shall Be No Night** and **Andy Anderson on Five O'Clock Whistle**. The lyrics on this by Andy Anderson vocal refer, rather cursorily, to the conditions of factory life; solo honours are shared with Rex Stewart. This leaves the final mention on Side 1 for the opening track of the record, **My Greatest Mistake**, a piece devoted mainly to the talents of trombonist Lawrence Brown.

In discussing Side 2, it is necessary once again to emphasize the totally original personality of bassist Jimmy Blanton, a youngster who flashed like a melotone through the history of jazz; his life as a man and as a musician was already finished at an age when most people are just beginning to live. Duke discovered him by chance, playing in a local band down in St. Louis when the Ellington orchestra was on occasion there. Engaged on the spot, Jimmy Blanton was assigned within the space of a few moments to reveal an unexpected, new dimension to the already physically substantial instrument that is the string bass.

Despite the undoubted talents of certain of his predecessors, it has to be admitted that, until the arrival of Blanton, the bass was used simply to provide rhythmic support, solos being mere extensions - and generally very brief ones - at that - of the

DISCOGRAPHY

1) - 2) - (3) Wallace Jones, Rex Stewart, Charles "Cootie" Williams (tbl), Lawrence Brown, Joe "Tricky Sam" Nanton (tb), Juan Tizol (vbr), Johnny Hodges (as, ss), Otto Hardwick (als), Don Webster (ss), Harry Carney (ba, bc, cl, cd, sax), Barney Bigard (cl, bs), Edward "Duke" Ellington (p), Fred Guy (g), Jimmy Blanton (b), William "Sonny" Greer (dr), New York, July 24th, 1940.
4) - 5) - 6) - 7) same except add Lee Anderson and Herb Jeffries (voc), Chicago, September 5th, 1940.
8) - 9) - 10) - 11) - 12) - 13) - 14) - 15) - Edward "Duke" Ellington (p), Jimmy Blanton (b), Chicago, October 1st, 1940.

DISCOGRAPHICAL NOTES

The trumpet solos are played by "Cootie" Williams in **Septia Panorama** and in **a melotone**, by Rex Stewart in **Five o'clock whistle** and **Warm Valley**, and by Wallace Jones in **There shall be no night**. As for the trombones, Lawrence Brown is heard in **My greatest mistake** and Juan Tizol appears briefly in **Septia panorama**. Jimmy Hodges, Ben Webster and Harry Carney play all solos of respectively alto sax, tenor sax and baritone sax. Lee Anderson is the vocalist in **Five o'clock whistle** and Herb Jeffries in **There shall be no night**.

ALREADY ISSUED :
in separate LPS and in BOXES
Duke 1 Box of 5 LPS
 Vol. 1 731043
 Vol. 2 741028
 Vol. 3 741029
 Vol. 4 741039
 Vol. 5 741048

Duke 2 Box of 5 LPS
 Vol. 6 741068
 Vol. 7 741085
 Vol. 8 741114
 Vol. 9 FPM1 7002
 Vol. 10 FPM2 7047

accompaniment. If bassists today are granted the same solo ranking as, for example, wind instrumentalists, it is entirely due to Jimmy Blanton. Although it is true that many great bassists have since explored the instrument much further, it would be wrong to credit Blanton solely as a pioneer. For it is evident that we could long speculate on what Blanton might subsequently have created, had lubriculous not snatched him prematurely from us. His 1940 recordings already reveal an admirable precise sense of construction, a tremendously rich melodic invention, a faultless rhythmic sense and a deep, broad tone, capable of inspiring his co-musicians and listeners alike. His work with the low, although inevitably less supple than the pizzicato, proves that he was by no means prepared to be discouraged by difficulty.

Duke Ellington, frequently under-estimated as a pianist, is careful in these duets to provide the best possible framework for Blanton's creative ideas, often deliberately relinquishing himself to a background role. This does not prevent us from being able to admire his brilliant sonority and powerful playing on **Pitter Panther Patter**, on which the two partners show perfect understanding, playing intricately with superbly precise responses. The two classics, **Body and Soul** and **Sophisticated Lady**, the latter dedicated by Ellington to a school mistress, are both given a bowed introduction by Blanton before being happily explored pizzicato. All three aforementioned titles are unquestionably more successful, because more clearly evolved and executed, on the second take. **Mr. J. B. Blues** is the surprise feat of the end. The two versions are of very different construction and, although on both of them Ellington intentionally pushes Blanton to go one better, the results are interestingly divergent. The first take respects a certain cohesion in the stimulating dialogue between the two musicians and is more tightly knit. The second take, on the other hand, is permeated by a touch of recklessness which catapults the musicians beyond their initial intentions, resulting in a riotous feast with no holds barred. This track reveals the Ellington of those ecstatic evenings led by those who knew Duke well. At these duets carried but on four Ellington compact discs - and three especially Jacques Hesse - but they should also be a much wider public into the world of Ellington.

In the preparation of this Volume 11, our particular thanks go to G. Debrose and J. Vialour who head the long list of faithful cohorts.

Alexandre Radio

Translation by Don Walfelhouse

Photo J.P. LELCIR

Re-issue produced by Jean-Paul GUITER

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