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BLACK AND WHITE SERIES

the works of

# DUKE

**INTEGRALE**

**VOLUME 15**



***DUKE ELLINGTON and his Orchestra***



RCA

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

Side 1

1. **Solitude**  
(D. Ellington - E. De Lange - I. Mills) (BS 066.605-2) 3:27
2. **Bakiff**  
(J. Tizol) (BS 001.283-1) 3:23
3. **Are you sticking?**  
(D. Ellington) (BS 061.284-1) 3:03
4. **Are you sticking?**  
(D. Ellington) (BS 061.284-2) 3:01
5. **Just a settin' and a rockin'**  
(D. Ellington - B. Strayhorn) (BS 061.285-1) 3:34
6. **The giddybug gallop**  
(D. Ellington) (BS 061.286-1) 3:30

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

Side 2

7. **The chocolate shake**  
(D. Ellington - P. Webster) (BS 061.318-1) 2:51
8. **I got it bad**  
(D. Ellington - P. Webster) (BS 061.319-1) 3:17
9. **I got it bad**  
(D. Ellington - P. Webster) (BS 061.319-2) 3:22
10. **Clementine**  
(B. Strayhorn) (BS 061.338-1) 2:56
11. **The Brown-skin gal**  
(D. Ellington) (BS 061.339-1) 3:09
12. **Jump for Joy**  
(D. Ellington - P. Webster - Kuller) (BS 061.340-1) 2:50

This fifteenth volume in the series "THE WORKS OF DUKE ELLINGTON" opens with the second, unissued take of Duke's solo version of **Solitude**, and covers the period May to July 1941. The 1940-1941 era was a particularly happy one for the Ellington Orchestra. It saw the longest-serving soloists such as Johnny Hodges, Harry Carney, Barney Bigard and Lawrence Brown joined by fascinating new personalities with talent to match their temperamental men of the calibre of Jimmy Blanton, Ben Webster and Ray Nance. This infusion of new blood had been most significantly typified by the arrival of Billy Strayhorn, the importance of whose role with the Ellington band must always be emphasized.

This particular 1941 period was marked by an event of which the importance has not always been sufficiently stressed, one which was to have profound repercussions on Ellington's work in the years to come—the musical revue, "**Jump For Joy**". As the summer approached, the Ellington Orchestra was once again on tour in the western states. At this same time a group of Hollywood writers and actors was preparing to launch a show destined to destroy the stereotypical, pejorative image of the American negro portrayed by the cinema and theatre. Duke Ellington without hesitation agreed to take part, thus revealing his full support for the show's basic intention. With "**Jump For Joy**" came the final condemnation of the old Uncle Tom, but instead of using violent or objectionable means, it was decided to wield a much more subtle, yet often more effective arm—satire.

"**Jump For Joy**" announced as "a sun-tanned rev-u-sical", had Duke Ellington and Hal Borné as principal composers. Paul Webster was the main lyric writer, but Sid Kuller also made an important contribution. However, the show was a remarkable example of teamwork, constantly evolving according to the ideas and criticisms of all its writers and artists. Thus, Langston Hughes, immortal author of "**The Ways Of The White Folks**", had the opportunity to provide some of the words, and Mickey Rooney was added to the list of composers. The Ellington musicians were well featured, with each soloist given ample opportunity to display his talent. Tex Stewart was notable on **Concerto For Klarnets**, his half-valve technique much in evidence. Herb Jeffries sang **The Brown-Skin Gal In The Calico Gown** and **Jump For Joy**, and Ivo Anderson **I Got It Bad** and **Rocks In My Bed**. But the show featured a



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wealth of artists amongst them were Dorothy Dandridge; Joe Turner shouting the blues on **Shhh! She's On The Beat!**; Maxine performing **Bl! Blip, Chocolate Shake** and a parody of Katherine Hepburn's **Wonderful Smith**; the dance trio, Sailer and Pan; another remarkable dancer by the name of Garbo; and many, many others who went to make up an outstandingly brilliant cast.

With this show Duke Ellington discovered a justification of his life as composer and itinerant black musician, as well as an opening to provide a more positive affirmation of the originality of negro-American art. An interesting detail is that, as was usual for him, he composed a large part of this revue with incredible speed. Within the space of a single night's journey from Salt Lake City to Los Angeles he wrote **The Brown-Skin Gal, Jump For Joy** and **I Got It Bad**.

But the impact of the show was due as much to its social potential as to the quality of its music, and it left a lasting impression upon all those who saw it. The most widely held opinion was that it was twenty-five years ahead of its time, and now, thirty-five years later, its theme is still totally topical. Amongst the most corrosive numbers were **Sun Tanned Tenth Of The Nation**, **I've Got A Passport From Georgia (and I'm going to the USA)** and **Uncle Tom's Cabin Is A Drive-In Now**. One of the aims of the authors was to do justice to all minorities, even beyond the immediate context of the American negro; thus, one scene featured three young blacks singing Jewish songs in a tailor's shop.

"**Jump For Joy**" played for about three months at the Mayan Theater in Los Angeles, but scarcely moved beyond the frontiers of California. America's involvement in the second World War brought a premature end to this particularly heart-warming and useful experiment. Revived in Miami in 1958, but for a mere three weeks due to differences between its financial backers, "**Jump For Joy**" deserves a renewed revival, for its topicality is still keen and its credibility intact.

Unlike "**Beggar's Holiday**", produced five years later and of which most of the music has disappeared into almost impenetrable obscurity, a part of this Ellington musical has managed to survive on records. Hence the present album features **Jump For Joy**, **Chocolate Shake** and **I Got It Bad**, the latter title having since

DISCOGRAPHICAL NOTES

- 1) : Edward "Duke" Ellington, piano solo. New York, May 14th, 1941
- 2) 3) - 4) - 5) - 6) : Wallace Jones, Rex Stewart (tp); Lawrence Brown, Joe "Tricky Sam" Nanton (tb); Juan Tizol (vb); Otto Hardwick, Johnny Hodges (as); Ben Webster (ts); Harry Carney (bs, ss, sb); Barney Bigard (cl, sl); Edward "Duke" Ellington (p); Fred Guy (g); Jimmy Blanton (b); William "Sonny" Greer (dr). Hollywood, June 5th, 1941
- 7) : B) - B) : Same as 2), except "Duke" Ellington plays p. and celesta and Ivo Anderson (voc) is added. Hollywood, June 26th, 1941, 10) - 11) - 12) : Same as 2) with Anderson (voc) and Herb Jeffries (voc) added. Hollywood, July 2nd, 1941

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become a standard. Herb Jeffries is vocalist on **The Brown-Skin Gal**, whereas the title number, **Jump For Joy**, exists in two different versions, enabling us to compare the respective vocal talents of Herb Jeffries and Ivo Anderson. We render the words with intelligence and bring out their irony, whereas Jeffries seems impervious to all subtlety and seems merely intent on showing off the prowess of his own voice. It is the Jeffries version which closes the present volume, the second take with Ivo being the opener on Volume 16. The orchestra is remarkably present on these recordings, with Harry Carney, Johnny Hodges and "Tricky Sam" Nanton at main soloists and a powerful rhythm section led by Jimmy Blanton and Sonny Greer.

Let us now look at the other titles featured in this album, **Solitude** having already been mentioned in the notes to Volume 14. First, there is an oriental fantasy in the Juan Tizol manner, against a background of Asia Minor. **Bakiff** features Ray Nance's very personal, gaily-tinged violin. Then, **Are You Sticking?** offers Barney Bigard the chance to display his impressive skills on clarinet and to remind us, should need be, that in 1941, just as in 1929, his was one of the major voices amongst all those responsible for transcribing the Ellington genius into music. **Just a Settlin' And A Rockin'** features the stylish Ben Webster in a thoroughly appropriate setting, further soloists being Ray Nance, "Tricky Sam" Nanton and Barney Bigard. **Clementine**, which has nothing to do with the Creamer and Layton hit, is a Billy Strayhorn composition which swings intensely as the different sections of the orchestra respond to each other's call—it reveals Johnny Hodges and Rex Stewart at their best. **The Giddybug Gallop** is one of those up-tempo pieces which Duke occasionally liked to feature, as, in the past, he did **Tigger Rag** or **Merry-Go-Round**; it provides the opportunity to test the musicians' loose, with shouting brass work, and solos by "Tricky Sam", Johnny Hodges and Barney Bigard. The wealth of solo talent in the Duke Ellington Orchestra was not simply a matter of chance; Duke, even if often aided by good fortune, chose his men with meticulous care. With them, and writing with them in mind, he made 1941 a landmark year, one in which the profusion of successes was quite remarkable.

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