

RCA

FXM1 7201



BLACK AND WHITE SERIES

the works of

DUKE

INTEGRALE

VOLUME 16



DUKE ELLINGTON and his Orchestra

Face 1

FXM1 7201 FXM1 7201 A

Duke Ellington.

« THE WORKS OF DUKE » Vol. 16

1. JUMP FOR JOY
(D. Ellington-P. Webster-S. Kuller) 2'50
2. MOON OVER CUBA
(D. Ellington-J. Tizol) 3'10



3. SOME SATURDAY (R. Stewart) 3'00
4. SUBTLE SLOUGH (D. Ellington) 3'17
5. MENELIK THE LION OF JUDAH
(R. Stewart) 3'18
6. POOR BUBBER
(R. Stewart) 3'18

1,2 : D. Ellington and His Orchestra
3,4,5,6 : R. Stewart
and His Orchestra

Face 2

FXM1 7201 FXM1 7201 B

Duke Ellington.

« THE WORKS OF DUKE » Vol. 16

7. SQUATY ROOT (J. Hodges) 2'24
8. PASSION FLOWER (B. Strayhorn) 3'06



9. THINGS AIN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE
(M. Ellington) 3'37
10. GOIN' OUT THE BACK WAY
(J. Hodges) 2'41
11. FIVE O'CLOCK DRAG
(D. Ellington) 3'10
12. ROCKS IN MY BED
(D. Ellington) 3'05

7,8,9,10 : J. Hodges and His Orchestra
11,12 : D. Ellington
and His Orchestra

Side 1

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

1. **Jump for Joy**
(D. Ellington - P. Webster - S. Kuller) (BS g61 340-2) 2:50
2. **Moon over Cuba**
(D. Ellington - J. Tizol) (BS g61 341-1) 3:10

REX STEWART AND HIS ORCHESTRA

3. **Some Saturday**
(R. Stewart) (BS g61 342-1) 3:00
4. **Subtle slough**
(D. Ellington) (BS g61 343-1) 3:17
5. **Menelik - The lion of Judah**
(R. Stewart) (BS g61 344-1) 3:18
6. **Poor bubber**
(R. Stewart) (BS g61 345-1) 3:18

Side 2

JOHNNY HODGES AND HIS ORCHESTRA

7. **Squaty roo**
(J. Hodges) (BS g61 346-1) 2:24
8. **Pastion flower**
(B. Strayhorn) (BS g61 347-1) 3:06
9. **Things ain't what they used to be**
(M. Ellington) (BS g61 348-1) 3:37
10. **Goin' out the back way**
(J. Hodges) (BS g61 349-1) 2:41

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

11. **Five o'clock drag**
(D. Ellington) (BS g61 684-1) 3:10
12. **Rocks in my bed**
(D. Ellington) (BS g61 685-1) 3:05

This sixteenth volume in the series "THE WORKS OF DUKE ELLINGTON" is composed principally of recordings made during the summer of 1941, the very time that the full orchestra was taking part in the Los Angeles production of "Jump For Joy". It provides an interesting change from the band's regular output, featuring the choice morsels of two small-group sessions led by Rex Stewart and Johnny Hodges.

Stanley Dance's comments are of great interest in this context: "The small band dates under the leadership of Johnny Hodges, Rex Stewart and Barney Bigard permitted the expression of ideas for which the big orchestra was not always ready or appropriate. That this leadership was more than nominal is indicated by the distinctive character of each series of recordings, yet the Ellington presence is felt on nearly all of them. They have shape, flow, and continuity, and only rarely are the rough edges of the "workshop" experiment audible. The sessions served, nevertheless, as valuable proving grounds for material that was often orchestrated later for the main organization."

The importance of Hodges' presence within the Ellington ranks cannot be overstressed. Probably only Coote Williams has managed to the same extent, through an unmistakably personal style, to symbolise so entire a slice of the Ellingtonian art. Hodges' role of alto-saxophonist placed him in the middle of the saxophone section, the centre-spot of the orchestra as seen by the audience, from this strategic position he became the band's undisputed number-one soloist. Despite this he has at times been taken for something of a sham, his highly impassive approach causing him to appear indifferent to the proceedings in which he was taking part. This reputation was further amplified by his lack of enthusiasm for interviews, during which he all too willingly tended to purvey an air of detachment bordering on the cynical. Certainly, his straight-faced retorts did nothing to dispel the opinions of those who were the butt of his ridicule.

This affection, surely a defence mechanism against intrusions into his private life, evaporated as soon as he began to play, every single note he produced irradiating an undeniable warmth. In truth, this

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COMPLETE EDITION VOLUME 16

apparent contradiction between the man and his music was both superficial and misleading. Away from the crowd, in the midst of friends, Johnny Hodges revealed a rare level of kindness and generosity, liking not only to joke but also to hold forth on music and life in general. Perhaps Harry Carney came closer to the truth in depicting him as a shy man, forced reluctantly into the spotlight by the demands of his profession.

Within the orchestra, admiration for Hodges was totally unreserved for his peers he was the typical jazzman. He worshipped Bechet; and, as Coleman Hawkins with the tenor sax, he gave the alto-sax a very specifically jazz-inspired sonority, far removed from the realms of classicism—a sonority which, like Bechet's, was striking for its almost overwhelming, yet always perfectly controlled power. On the other hand, his lyricism was much gentler than Bechet's and permeated by sensuality of every hue. By 1940 he was reaching the peak of his expressive powers, of which the whole romantic dimension is revealed here on **Pastion Flower**, a ballad written by Billy Strayhorn and which Hodges played frequently throughout his subsequent career. In another vein, he always showed a great fondness for compositions of simple structure, taken at medium tempo, which enabled him to make full use of his rich tone and to display the easy flexibility of his phrasing, the subtle elegance of his style and the totally characteristic lightness of his swing. That above all was for him, jazz and his two compositions, **Squaty Roo** and **Goin' Out The Back Way** provide the perfect illustration. Comparing them with the recordings he made at the head of his own band some ten years later, you will notice the consistency of his approach, a firmness in his conception of jazz that has not always been acknowledged. On both these titles, corner-stones of the Hodges chapter within the Ellington story: the support provided by Jimmy Blanton's bass is of exacting precision and presence, and as an added bonus on **Goin' Out The Back Way**, the great Harry Carney on baritone takes a solo which shows evidence of his daily musical contact with the celebrated Hodges alto. The importance of this same July session is further underlined by the first recording of the Mercer Ellington classic,

DISCOGRAPHICAL NOTES

1) - 2) Wallace Jones, Ray Nance, Rex Stewart (tp), Lawrence Brown, Joe "Tricky Sam" Nanton (tb), Juan Tizol (vb), Otto Hardwicke, Johnny Hodges (as), Ben Webster (ts), Harry Carney (ts, as), Barney Bigard (cl, ts), Edward "Duke" Ellington (p), Fred Guy (d), Jimmy Blanton (b), William "Sonny" Greer (dr), with Anderson (voc) and Herb Jeffries (voc) added, Hollywood, July 2nd, 1941.

3) - 4) - 5) - 6) Rex Stewart (tp), Lawrence Brown (tb), Ben Webster (ts), Harry Carney (bs), Edward "Duke" Ellington (p), Jimmy Blanton (b), William "Sonny" Greer (dr), Hollywood, July 2nd, 1941.
7) - 8) - 9) Ray Nance (tp), Lawrence Brown (tb), Johnny Hodges (as), Harry Carney (ts), Edward "Duke" Ellington (p), Jimmy Blanton (b), William "Sonny" Greer (dr), Hollywood, July 2nd, 1941.

11) - 12) Wallace Jones, Rex Stewart (tp), Ray Nance (tp and voc), Lawrence Brown, Joe "Tricky Sam" Nanton (tb), Juan Tizol (vb), Otto Hardwicke, Johnny Hodges (as), Ben Webster (ts), Harry Carney (ts, as, cl), Barney Bigard (cl, ts), Edward "Duke" Ellington (p), Fred Guy (d), Jimmy Blanton (b), William "Sonny" Greer (dr), Ivie Anderson (voc), Hollywood, Sept. 26th, 1941.

ALREADY ISSUED : in separate LPs and in BOXES

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Duke 1 Box of 5 LPs Duke 2 Box of 5 LPs Duke 3 Box of 5 LPs

Vol. 16 FWM1 7201 Vol. 17 FWM1 7204

Things Ain't What They Used To Be, taken at a tempo which to today seems abnormally slow, but on which the complete ease of Hodges' playing is already so much in evidence, this particular track finds Ellington in a very light-hearted mood and Ray Nance sporting his Armstrong hat.

Mention of Armstrong brings us to one of his major disciples. Musician of many facets, instrumentalist of startling virtuosity in the handling and transformation of sound, Rex Stewart here stamps his very distinctive personality on the four small-band tracks under his leadership. **Some Saturday** is imbued with romanticism, **Subtle Slough** with gaiety. The latter piece, under the title **Just Squeeze Me**, was subsequently to become a personal hit for Ray Nance in the role of vocalist. **Menelik**, an unexpected evocation of a king of Abyssinia, provides the opportunity for Rex to descend into the lowest registers of his instrument. As for **Poor Bubber**, a moving homage to the great trumpeter of the twenties, it proves that the memory of James Miller, without whom the Ellingtonian world would never have been what it became, always remained very much alive in the minds of his successors.

The eight small-group tracks are sandwiched between four contrasting titles. The opening two pick up chronologically from Volume 15. **Moon Over Cuba** is a Puerto Rican fantasy by Juan Tizol. Unfortunately, it is a far cry from the vein of **Caravan**, **Perdido** or **Conça Brava**, only Ben Webster manages to salvage something from this piece of such doubtful taste, which, happily, remains one of the rare aberrations in the Ellington repertoire. The last two are the first two from another Hollywood session, on September 26th, 1941. **Five o'clock Drag**, taken at an easy-medium tempo, is with highly appropriate support from Barney Bigard and Johnny Hodges. This session will be completed in Volume 17.

Translation by Don Westhouse

Photo: J. P. Lator

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