

RCA

FXM1 7302



BLACK AND WHITE SERIES

the works of
duke

INTEGRALE

VOLUME 19



DUKE ELLINGTON and his Orchestra

Face 1

FXM1 7302

FXM1 7302 A

Duke Ellington

« THE WORKS OF DUKE » Vol. 19

1. I AIN'T GOT NOTHING BUT THE BLUES
(D. Ellington-D. George) 2'40
2. I'M BEGINNING TO SEE THE LIGHT
(D. Ellington-D. George-J. Hodges-H. James) 3'10



3. DON'T YOU KNOW I CARE
(D. Ellington-M. David) 3'05
4. DON'T YOU KNOW I CARE
(D. Ellington-M. David) 2'45
5. I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT YOU
(D. Ellington-B. Russel) 3'00
6. CARNEGIE BLUES
(D. Ellington) 2'40
7. BLUE CELLOPHANE
(D. Ellington) 2'40

Face 2

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FXM1 7302 B

Duke Ellington

« THE WORKS OF DUKE » Vol. 19

- B. BLACK, BROWN AND BEIGE (D. Ellington)
 - a) Work song 4'35
 - b) Come Sunday 4'30
 - c) The blues 4'30
 - d) Three dances 4'30



9. THE MOOD TO BE WOODED
(J. Hodges-D. Ellington) 2'57
10. MY HEART SINGS
(Jambian-R. Herpin-H. Romei) 3'00

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Side 1

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

1. I ain't got nothing but my blues (D. Ellington - D. George) (04 VB 483-1) 2:40
2. I'm beginning to see the light (D. Ellington - D. George - J. Hodges - N. Higgins) (04 VB 484-2) 3:10
3. Don't you know I care (D. Ellington - M. Davis) Unissued (04 VB 485-1) 3:08
4. Don't you know I care (D. Ellington - M. Davis) (04 VB 486-2) 2:46
5. I didn't know about you (D. Ellington - B. Russell) (04 VB 486-4) 3:00
6. Carnegie blues (D. Ellington) (05 VB 12-3) 2:40
7. Blue catfishane (D. Ellington) (05 VB 13-1) 2:40

Side 2

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

8. Black, Brown and beige (a) Work song (04 VC 560-1) 4:38
 (b) Come Sunday (04 VC 561-2) 4:30
 (c) The Blues (04 VC 562-2) 4:30
 (d) Ellington (04 VC 563-1) 4:30
9. The mood to be wooed (D. Hodges - D. Ellington) (05 VB 14-2) 2:57
10. My heart sings (Jambian - R. Herpin - H. Rome) (05 VB 16-5) 3:00

November 1944, the world is still at war, and yet there is a feeling that hostilities are at last coming to an end. There pervades a state of shock and turmoil, and the turbulent music captures this mood.

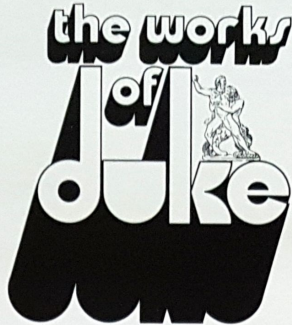
November 1944, the way to the recording studios is once more open, a forerunner of liberation. By December 15, as this nineteenth volume in THE WORKS OF DUKE ELLINGTON records, officially recorded Ellingtonia is again underway.

Much had happened in the Ellington ranks during the intervening season, a silence imposed by a musicians' union recording ban, lasting for over two years. The war years and exacting tours from one end of the country to another had taken their toll; inevitably, new faces had appeared. Chauncy Houghton, mobilised in April 1943, had yielded his place to Eddie Barefield, who, on taking up a stable and financially rewarding post with a radio station, recommended his own successor to Duke; the successor in question, a man whose voice was to be part of the Ellington sound for the next twenty-five years, was Jimmy Hamilton. Hamilton's first job as any consequence dated from his two years with Teddy Wilson in 1940-42. Many critics seemed determined never to recognize his out-and-out jazz qualities; preferring to brand him as a virtuoso with little sense of swing and imagination. Certainly, it was out of the question that Barney Bigard, who in fourteen years had helped to fashion a whole side of the Ellington art, could be simply replaced. But by one objective judgment would admit that Hamilton's playing was far more fluid and alive than it was coldly academic.

Ben Webster had also left the orchestra, in August 1942 it was replaced first by Elmer Williams, an expatriate from the ranks of the Chick Webb and Fletcher and Horace Henderson bands, then by Albert Omega "Al" Sears, who had just left Lionel Hampton. The trumpet section had been augmented, initially by the arrival in June 1943 of James "Taff" Jordan, a Chick Webb alumna, then in February 1944 by Shelton "Scud" Humphill, from the Louis Armstrong camp. Finally, in September 1944, came William "Cat" Anderson, whose explorations of the stratospheric register were to be so humorously and effectively exploited by Duke. Rex Stewart had taken some time off temporarily for a brief spell by the Californian climate. Juan Tizol, drawn by the same West Coast sun, had joined Harry James in April 1944, and was to stay with him for the next seven years. Ray Nance, wearied by exhausting travel schedules, had stepped down for a few months in 1943-44 to form a quartet with bassist Junior Raglin and two guitarists.

Quite apart from his bread-and-butter bookings, during which the orchestra was compelled to play several shows a day, with a repertoire not entirely in keeping with its image, Duke had the satisfaction of inaugurating a series of annual concerts at New York's temple of respectable music, Carnegie Hall, where jazz had first been admitted only some five years earlier. On January 23rd, 1943, closing day of an "Ellington Week" organised to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of his New York debut, there took place the first of these concerts, one which served as the context for some prestigious new works. That day, a forty-five minute suite was presented to the public for the first time. **Black, Brown and Beige.**

Black, Brown and Beige, explained Ellington, "was planned first as a tone parallel to the history of the American Negro, and the first section, **Black,** delved deeply into the negro past. In it, it was concerned to show the close relationship between work songs and spirituals." **Work Song,** the first section of **Black,** is an evocation of the early days of slavery. Over an insistent beat emerges a theme very close to the old chants used by the chain



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gangs to provide a pace-setting, soothing rhythm for their work. There are two sombre, plaintive, heavy-hearted solos by Harry Carney on baritone sax and Joe Nanton on trombone, the latter managing to produce sounds with the plunger mute very close to the wailing lament of the human voice.

Come Sunday, the spiritual theme, was intended, says Duke, "to depict the movement inside and outside the church, as seen by workers who stood outside, watched, listened, but were not admitted; this is developed to the time when the workers have a church of their own. The section ends with promises." Johnny Hodges, on alto, produces an intensely moving, starkly beautiful solo on what is in itself one of the most beautiful melodies in the whole Ellington repertoire.

The Blues (also **Maestro**) is the principal section of **Black, Brown and Beige's** second movement. Over a rhythmic structure unrelated to the original blues—the very basis of negro-African music—Joya Sherrill, with a saxophone interlude by Al Sears, sings a poignant text penned by Ellington himself:

The Blues...
 The Blues ain't nothin'...
 The Blues ain't nothin' but a cold gray day
 And all night long it stays that way.
 'Tain't sump'n' that leaves you alone.
 'Tain't nothin' I want to call me own.
 'Tain't sump'n' with sense enough to get up and go.
 'Tain't nothin' like nothin' I know.
 The Blues...
 The Blues don't know...
 The Blues don't know nobody as a friend.
 Ain't been nowhere where they're welcome back again.
 Low, ugly, mean blues.
 The Blues ain't sump'n' that you sing in rhyme;
 The Blues ain't nothin' but a dark clock markin' time.
 The Blues is a one-way ticket from your love to nowhere;
 The Blues ain't nothin' but a black cupid vein ready to wear.
 'Tain't nothin', cryin', feel most like dyin'...
 The Blues ain't nothin'...
 The Blues ain't...

The Blues is followed by three dances. The first, **West Indian Dance,** is "dedicated to Haitians of the famed Fontanges Legion who came to aid the Americans at the siege of Savannah"; subtitled **The West Indian Influence,** this piece provides a colorful evocation of a happy music. The second dance, **Emancipation Celebration,** was intended by Duke as a "message of joyfulness on the part of the young people, and the bewilderment of the old on that great gettin'-up mornin'." Youth exultantly anticipated a lifetime of glorious freedom, but age, after long, weary years of serfdom, suddenly found itself ironically free to go—but where? Taff Jordan, Joe Nanton and Junior Raglin are the soloists. The third of these dances, and the only part of **Beige** recorded at this time, is **Sugar**

DISCOGRAPHY

- 1) - 2) - 3) - 4) - 5) Shelton Humphill, James "Taff" Jordan, William "Cat" Anderson (tp), Ray Nance (tp, v), Joe "Tricky Sam" Nanton, Claude Jones, Lawrence Brown (tb), Johnny Hamilton (tr), Otto Hardwick (as); Al Sears (ts); Jimmy Hamilton (cl); Harry Carney (bar); Edward "Duke" Ellington (p); Fred Guy (g); Elvin "Junior" Raglin (b); William "Sonny" Greer (dm); Albert Hibbler, Joya Sherrill; Kay Davis (voc). New York, December 1, 1944.
- 6) - 7) - 8) Same. New York, December 11, 1944; c) d) Same. New York, December 12, 1944.
- 9) - 10) - 11) Same except Rex Stewart (tr) added. New York, January 4, 1945.

SOLOISTS

- 1) A. Sears (ts) A. Hibbler, K. Davis (voc).
 - 2) J. Raglin (tb) J. Sherrill (voc).
 - 3) A. Hibbler (voc) J. Hodges (as).
 - 4) Idem.
 - 5) J. Sherrill (voc) L. Brown (tb).
 - 6) J. Raglin (b) A. Sears (ts) L. Brown (tb).
 - 7) L. Brown (tb).
 - 8) a) H. Carney (bs) J. Nanton (sb);
 b) R. Nance (v) J. Hodges (as);
 c) A. Sears (tr) J. Sherrill (voc);
 d) T. Jordan (tp) J. Nanton (tb) J. Raglin (b).
 - 9) J. Hodges (as).
 - 10) J. Sherrill (voc) R. Nance (v).
- [All piano solos by Duke Ellington.]

Hill Penthouse, also known as **Creemy Brown.** It was described by Ellington as "representative of the atmosphere of a Sugar Hill penthouse in Harlem, which cannot be understood or appreciated unless one has lived there. If you ever sat on a beautiful magenta cloud overlooking New York City, you were on Sugar Hill."

The piece presented here, some 18 minutes long, represents only a small part of **Black, Brown and Beige.** However, its principal themes are included and give us an indication of the true importance of the work. Three of the original soloists—Rex Stewart, Ben Webster and singer Betty Roche—had been replaced by the time this recording was made.

Black, Brown and Beige provoked a great deal of controversy. Paul Bowles wrote in the *Herald Tribune*: "Between dance numbers there were 'symphonic' bridges played out of tempo. Nothing emerged by a gaudy pot-pourri of tutti dance passages and solo virtuoso work." John Briggs, in the *New York Post*, claimed: "Mr. Ellington had set himself a lofty goal, and with the best of intentions he did not achieve it." However, specialist magazines were more carefully qualified since, despite its occasional weaknesses of construction (Ellington had received no formal classical training; and, in any case, the work was intended as a fresco, in the form of a suite, of negro-American traditions). **Black, Brown and Beige** remains one of the masterpieces of the greatest composer jazz has known.

Whilst carrying on the expansion of the range of his musical language, the Duke nevertheless continued to produce works of a more customary length and structure, compatible with the 78 RPM record. One of these is **I Ain't Got Nothing but the Blues,** which in addition to the tenor-saxophone of Al Sears, presents two new vocalists: Al Hibbler and Kay Davis. On this track, the beautiful sweetness of the voice in explosive instrumentals, by Duke or the first time, **I'm Beginning to See the Light,** one of the orchestra's great successes, appears here in its original version, one endowed with a perfect tempo and a simple but colourful arrangement making delicate use of clarinets and plunger mutes; **I Didn't Know About You** (a reworked version of **Sentimental Lady**, with the last notes of the original melody modified to fit Bill Russell's lyrics); **Carnegie Blues.** Duke has reverted to some portions of **Black, Brown and Beige;** the theme is in fact the line used by the trombone trio following the saxophone solo on **The Blues,** whereas the trumpet ensemble is borrowed from the end of **Black.**

Blue Catfishane was not issued at the time, although it provides a brilliant demonstration of Lawrence Brown's ample, round trombone, revealing a rare virtuosity and ease of execution. Much more formal in style, **My Heart Sings** shows Ellington's influence. Johnny Hodges in outrageously lyrical mood, his seductive playing, adroitly spurred by the occasional deliberate sharp-edged attack, fits to a stage drama into the language. **My Heart Sings**, the last track of an indispensable album, is an adaptation of a French song by Jambian. Duke recorded again in 1982 with the same line in the star role. A straightforward ascending and descending scale, transformed into a pure gold by the Ellington touch.

Translation by Don Waterhouse. Sleeve note by Claude Carrière. PHOTO: J. P. LELOR. Re-issue produced by Jean-Paul GUTTER.

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