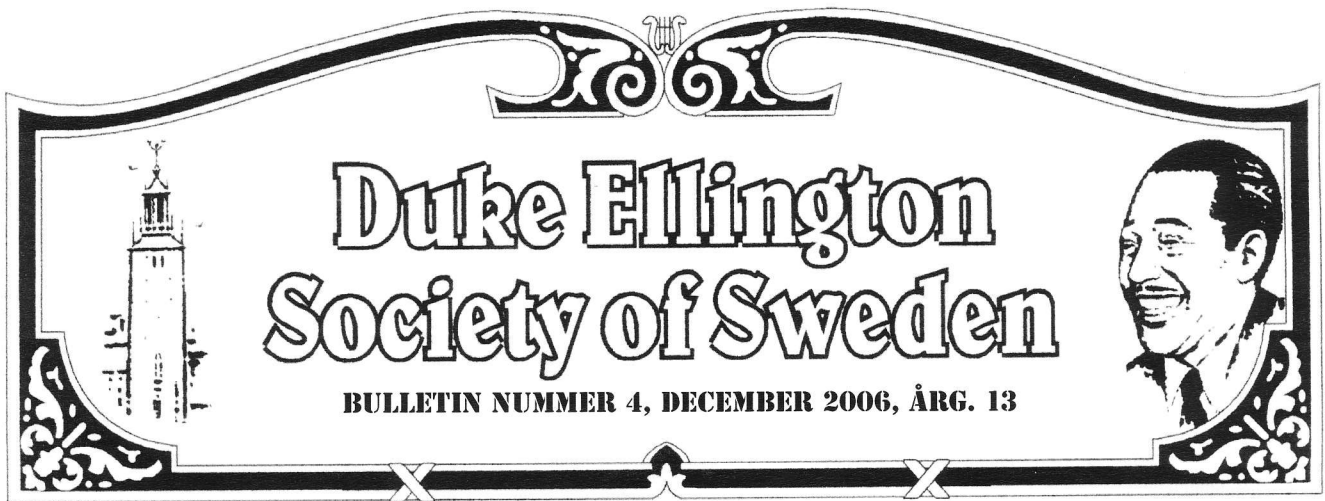


Duke Ellington Society of Sweden

BULLETIN NUMMER 4, DECEMBER 2006, ÅRG. 13



Sonny Greer med sin imponerande uppsättning slagverk. En lång intervju börjar på sid 9. Detta foto liksom de på sid 9, 11 och 12 har vi lånat av Rolf Dahlgren.

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Det senaste SAMI-mötet den 9 oktober med framträdande av den nya gruppen STRAYBOYS lockade en publik på 45 personer, som dessutom fick höra ett kåseri av Alf Laver om trombonisten Lawrence Brown. Vår styrelsemedlem i Sandviken, Anders Asplund, hade lockat med sig 7 personer från Sandviken, ett lovvärt initiativ, som jag hoppas skall mana till efterföljd av andra utanför Stockholm.

I förra ledaren berättade jag att jag skulle försöka ta mig till London och lyssna på Mose Allison samt träffa kollegorna i DESUK. Det blev ett fullspäckat veckoslut. Två kvällar med Mose Allisons musik plus en intervju med Mose, som finns i detta nummer. Den 23 september var jag på ett möte med London Jazz Society, som huvudsakligen bestod av medlemmar från DESUK, Duke Ellington Society UK. DESUK har enbart ett musikmöte per år, vilket är årsmötet. På de andra mötena – lördagar kl. 14-17 brukade det vara ca ett 10-tal personer. De blev därför ganska imponerade av DESS aktiviteter och ut-

tryckte att de ville ha mera kontakter med oss i framtiden. På söndagen var jag på en jazzkonsert i förorten Ruislip Manor tillsammans med Anthony Pepper (som tagit bilden av Mose Allison i detta nummer) samt Vincent Lawrance från DESUK.

Musiken spelades av NYJO, National Youth Jazz Orchestra, som funnits i 40 år och med musiker i åldern 15-25 år. Orkestern leds sedan många år av Bill Ashton, som dessutom själv skriver det 40-sidiga "News från NYJO". Bill Ashton brinner för NYJO, som har bl.a. Humphrey Lyttelton som Honorary Vice President. Målsättningen är att ge talangfulla unga musiker en möjlighet att spela i ett storband i skolor, konserthus och teatrar, samt att introducera och sprida jazzen för skolbarn och en större publik. Besök gärna deras hemsida www.nyjo.org.uk. Bill Ashton föreslog att jag skulle kontakta brittiska ambassaden i Stockholm för att ordna spelningar för NYJO i Sverige.

Vi arbetar för att behålla den höga kvalitet som blivit vårt signum i Bulletinen och på SAMI-mötena. De kostnader som det innebär redovisades på årsmötet den 20 februari. Årsmötet beslutade att ändra medlemsavgiften för 2007 till 200 kronor. Medlemmar utanför Sverige betalar USD 40. Vi hoppas att detta inte ställer till besvär för medlemmarna nu vid årsskiftet.

Till DESS Jan Falk

Sponsorer sökes!

Vår förening, DESS, har nu mer än 10 år på nacken. Då den startades 1994 kunde man se framåt med tillförsikt, bl. a. därför att ekonomin tycktes säkrad för ett antal år framöver genom att pengar donerats som stöd för verksamheten. Verksamheten går dock med underskott år efter år, varför det är osannolikt att föreningen finns kvar i nuvarande form om 5-6 år. Detta trots att vi bedriver verksamheten helt ideellt och försöker spara på det mesta. För att få denna att gå ihop skulle krävas avsevärt högre medlems- och mötesavgifter när vi inte anser oss kunna minska på kostnaderna för levande musik eller lokalhyra i samband med medlemsmötena. Vi vill också kunna erbjuda Bulletinen till så hög kvalitet som möjligt samt på sikt också en bra hemsida för de som inte kan besöka medlemsmötena så ofta, d.v.s. medlemmar som inte bor i Stockholm med omnejd. Styrelsen för DESS önskar därför knyta kontakt med sponsorer som skulle kunna hjälpa

oss att få ett bättre grepp om den långsiktiga ekonomin inom föreningen. I detta sammanhang skulle exempelvis följande aktiviteter kunna komma i fråga:

- 1 -Sponsring av tryckkostnaderna för Bulletinen – 4 nummer per år, endera en sponsor för helåret (SEK 36.000 inkl porto), eller en för varje enskilt nummer av Bulletinen
- 2 -Sponsring av orkestergager i samband med att vi har levande musik på medlemsmötena (SEK 7.000-15.000 beroende på storlek på orkestern och inkl lokalhyra)
- 3 -Sponsring av vår hemsida (SEK 5.000 per år)

Inte bara styrelsen för DESS utan även medlemmarna skulle sätta stort värde på att få höra av Dig som har de rätta kontakterna inom näringslivet eller med privatpersoner som skulle kunna tänka sig att sponsra vår verksamhet. Kanske skulle du kunna sammanföra oss med intresserade parter! Det skulle betyda mycket om vi fick någon som ställer upp! I gengäld kan vi erbjuda reklamutrymme i vår bulletin.

Styrelsen

STRAYBOYS – en debut med mersmak

Den för tillfället bildade gruppen STRAYBOYS charmade ett välbesökt DESS-möte 9 oktober 2006 med sitt lysande spel. De flesta i den ungdomliga gruppen var nya bekanskap för publiken, som överraskades av fina tolkningar av gamla Strayhorn- och Strayhorn/Ellington-melodier (Strayhorn har givetvis inspirerat orkesternamnet).

Kapellmästare Nils Jansson – till vardags trumpetare hos Fredrik Norén och i egna gruppen Pachanga – hade samlat en kvintett med medmusikerna Klas Lindqvist på altsax – hörd på DESS-koncert tidigare – Calle Bagge piano, Kenji Rabson bas och Moussa Fadera på trummor.

Gruppen öppnade med Billy Strayhorns *Rain Check* och fortsatte med flera av hans mest kända melodier, som *Blood Count* och *Upper Manhattan Medical Group* (eller U.M.M.G. – "Umgha" i musikerkretsar) och med *Take The "A" Train* som avslutande extranummer. Som Nils Janssons favoritmelodi presenterades balladen *Isfahan* från the Far East Suite och som en favorit hos basisten Kenji Rabson – amerikan bosatt i Sverige – tolkades *Something To Live For*, en melodi från det sena 30-talet.

Klas Lindqvist altsaxspel har en pondus och idériedom, som spontant fångar varje lyssnares intresse. Nils Jansson spelar trumpet med trygg frasering och en ton som av och till når skimrande klarhet och han är nu etablerad som en av de stora trumpetarna i den svenska jazzen. Calle Bagge är det senaste stjärnskottet i den skara unga begåvade jazzpianister som vi har omkring oss – rolig att lyssna på och han blir bara bättre och bättre. Bas-/trumduon Kenji Rabson och Moussa Fadera, de minst kända hos publiken, var för de flesta också den största positiva överraskningen. De levererade ett stadigt rytmiskt underlag för gruppen att formligen "segla fram" på - ibland med en swing som förde både medspelare och lyssnarna till en högre upplevelsenivå. Kenji Rabson spelar med en intressant genuin bas-ton och han bjöd även på flera fina solon.

Som kan inträffa med god musik omvandlades under af-tonen gruppens budskap till en helhetsupplevelse utöver det vanliga och uppfylla härav ville vi lyssnare höra mera – genast eller en annan gång snart igen. Kort sagt STRAYBOYS framträdande var en debut med mersmak.

Text: Håkan Skytt



Mose Allison, Roy Babbington and Paul Clarvis at Pizza Express 2006. Photo: Antony Pepper.

Mose Allison in Soho Park

Talks with Mose Allison in Soho Park 23rd September 2006

By Jan Falk

During the last 5-6 years Mose Allison has regularly played at the Jazz Club of Pizza Express in London. For a number of years I have had the desire to go there and listen but because of work priorities it did not happen until now.

There are three jazz musicians that have had the most influence on my interest in jazz: Jelly Roll Morton, with his New Orleans style, Mose Allison with his own songs like "Parchman Farm" and his piano playing that led me to "Do Nothin' Till You Hear From Me" and "Don't Get Around Much Anymore" and thus to Duke Ellington and his music.

So on Friday the 22nd September 2006 I went to London and in the evening I called Mose and asked if he could give an interview to me as being the Chairman of Duke Ellington Society of Sweden. The proposal was not new to him as this was prepared two months before with emails to his web site. He replied that I could call him at noon the next day. Later in the evening at Pizza Express I was told by the head master that Mose Allison is rather shy and reluctant to give interviews, but he had promised to meet me.

But first the concert. When you have Mose Allison's records, the live performance is just a quality degree "higher" as you can see the action of him and in this case his London co-players Roy Babbington on double bass and Paul Clarvis on drums. In the intermission they confirmed my remark that even though they have played with Mose Allison for a number of years they have to follow Mose's actions, because they don't know what changes he may make for the evening, an intermission or a twist he didn't do yesterday or at the rehearsal. Nevertheless, when they were let free in solos they had a positive "drive" proving that they are qualified to be suitable "assistants" to Mose.

In the first part Mose played a number of Southern Ballads like "Just Like Livin' ", "Fools Paradise" and "Tell Me Something". The second part started with a piano ballad and then after some numbers came the peak of the night – Duke Ellington's "Do Nothin' Till You Hear From Me" with lyrics by Bob Russell. This statement is not only made be-

cause of the "biased" preferences by me and my guest from London Jazz Society/Duke Ellington Society UK, Mr. Victor Lawrance, but also from the response by the audience, that at this premier night was complete, that is to say some 100 persons. We also got other favorites like "The 7th Son" and "Your Mind Is On Vacation". However, Victor's summary of the music evening was:

Inspired lyrics, great musicians.

If you ever need life support – phone Mose!

I can only agree.

For a full record of the music played I refer to the two discs recorded on Blue Note at Pizza Express in 2000 named "The Mose Chronicles – Live in London, Volume 1" and Volume 2 respectively. Most of the tunes played Friday-Saturday 22-23/9 are on these CD:s.

The next day we met a quarter past noon and on Mose Allison's request we were sitting in the tiny Soho Park. It was a nice, warm day, approx 23 degrees C, and it was not until I checked my memory when I came home that the nice bird singing so beautiful for us was a nightingale. I'm not a journalist and I was a little nervous about the outcome of the interview. Beforehand I had written down just four questions concerning his contacts with Duke Ellington and his music and Mose's own way of writing songs. Luckily, because of the positive contact I got with Mose Allison, we had almost an hour of interesting exchange of views, and they turned out to be similar for both of us.

The first two questions were

What was your first contact with Duke Ellington's music and did you have any meeting with Duke Ellington?

Mose's first contact with Duke Ellington's music was from the radio in his home in Tippo, Mississippi during the 2nd World War, when there were live broadcasts with the band. He has always been a fan of Duke's music and considered him to be the best composer of tunes to appeal to Mose. First time he saw Duke Ellington's orchestra live was in Denver, when Mose Allison was in the Army.

Later in the 1960's they played at the same jazz festival in Ostia Bay, Long Island, New York. He and Duke met, but they never really talked to each other. However, Mose knew Mercer Ellington and they were also playing together at a Duke Ellington Festival in Michigan in the 1970's, where there were 4-5 bands including Mose Allison's and the Duke Ellington Orchestra.

Then I asked

Which Duke Ellington song do you normally play apart from the two most well known "Do Nothing..." and "Don't get around..."?

Mose said he also plays "I Ain't Got Nothing But The Blues" and "I'm Just A Lucky So And So", but above all he likes the lyrics by Bob Russell in "Do Nothin' Till You Hear From Me" with the ending "... and you never will".

My fourth question was

Your songs normally have a "twist" or a double meaning showing part of your life philosophy and your odd sense of humor. Are you studying the human behavior?

Mose confirmed this and we continued to talk about the first disc I had of Mose Allison, which was an EP called Local Color. The most distinct song on that record was "Parchman Farm" with its ironic text and the twisted ending: "I will sit here for the rest of my life.... and the only thing I did was to shoot my wife". (Please, women's lib, note that it was the absurd "twist" in the text that appealed to me). Mose told me that Parchman Farm was a "mystical place", a prison in the vicinity of his home town Tip-po in Mississippi. He continued: "In my early years I had a drummer that had some problems with alcohol and drugs and this drummer eventually ended up at Parchman Farm for some time". This got Mose to think about the prison with the song as a result. The prisoners were at the time when he wrote the song forced to work in the fields. Then in the 1960's the prisoners sued the state in order to be released from the forced work in the fields – and the prisoners won. Accordingly Mose removed Parchman Farm from his repertoire as the content was not "relevant" any longer.

Mose said that he always tries to concentrate the lyrics on phrases with a double meaning. He also studied the reality as it comes out in literature. For example the idea to the song "Fool Killer" Mose got from a short story by Stephen Vincent Benét, who got a Pulitzer Prize for the well known war poem "John Brown's Body". Other songs are also based on literature like "Let It Come Down" that has its origin from a line in Shakespeare's "Macbeth".

Then I turned to the song "Your Mind Is On Vacation And Your Mouth Is Working Overtime", which I believed was dedicated to all politicians in the world. Mose said that I was not the first person, who thought so, but even though he uses the song with this interpretation today it was not originally the case. The first years - "too many", he said - were really hard before he got himself a name. He was playing in restaurants and in clubs and he was singing – but he didn't get any attention, people were just continuing to talk as if he was not there. So, one night he was fed up and wrote the song with his audience that night in mind – and they didn't notice!

This led to a new question

Do people in Europe understand your texts?

In England it mostly works well, Mose said. The audience in the Scandinavian countries also know English quite well to understand the lyrics. One night in Sweden, however, the audience was completely silent and didn't laugh when he sang one song. They evidently did not understand the irony in "You say you are jogging, but I say you are running around". Germany is difficult because a big part of the audience do not have enough knowledge of English. It is for the same reason impossible for Mose Allison to play in France and other south European countries like Italy and Spain. Canada works well – except for Montreal, where the people also are speaking French.

This led me to ask about Mose Allison's thoughts about the future of Jazz as the "jazz-generation born in the 1930's to the 1950's are getting older.

Mose meant that it is a completely different scene now than in the 1950's, when every city had jazz clubs and the possibilities to play were larger than now.

Will the Jazz die?

Mose responded that he doesn't know if that gradually will be the case. However the great performers could be characterized by that they were

- spontaneous melodic inventors
- instrumentally recognized personalities

- and they knew how to swing

Today, Mose said, there are not much expressions in the performances. He meant that he is the only one still playing in the Southern tradition like Jimmie Lunceford who really could play a "slow drag" from the South.

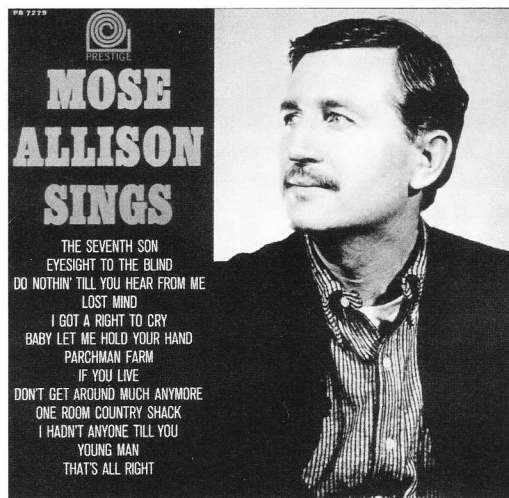
New instrumental artists and most young players are more interested in the technology and the "execution" of the music than to be "swinging individualists". (For me there is also a problem with the modern way of hearing and non-listening, with pop music played as "musak". Mose Allison has made a song "I Can't See For Looking". I think it's time for a new song "I can't listen for hearing – all that noise").

How long will you continue to play?

Mose said that he still enjoys playing and he is very satisfied with the cooperation he has in London for a number of years with Roy Babbington and Paul Clarvis. He also has a number of similar support groups all over the USA, like New York, Washington, Chicago, San Diego and Los Angeles and San Francisco where he has two groups. He prefers to perform 6-10 days at the same place and has cut down on the "one-nighters", because the travels take too much energy. Some tours are made with his wife, Audre as company. He is still working some 120 nights per year and will in spite of his 78 years of age continue as long as he can. "It took me 55 years to create my audience" Mose said, "so I better stick to them and continue to play."

He used to play in Sweden like in 1959-60, when he played 2-3 weeks in the "Harlem" room of Nalen in Stockholm and in the 80's, when he played for a week at the "Sky Bar" of the Royal Viking Hotel in Stockholm. Mose Allison ended the interview by saying that he should be pleased to come back to Sweden and gave me his personal phone numbers....

© Jan Falk 2006



"Mose Allison Sings" LP recordings from 1957 - 59 reissued by Prestige 2006.

ELLINGTONIA UP-TO-DATE

av Bo Scherman

Nya Ellington-CD

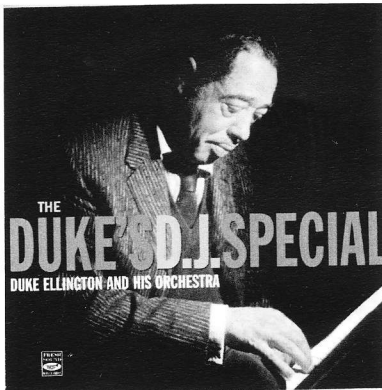
Nedanstående nya volymer i DETS-serien förtecknades i DESS-bulletinen 2006/2. De har fortfarande inte kommit ut på marknaden, men jag tar med dem igen med korrigerad av ett pris och återkommer på nytt då de kommer ut. Enligt Mona Granager, som är ansvarig för Storyvilles produktioner, har man prioriterat "Masters of Jazz"-serien (se tre utgåvor nedan), men då den är utgiven komplett står DETS 903 9013 och 9014 närmast på tur.

Duke Ellington, The Treasury Shows Vol 13 (Treasury Broadcast No 24 22.9.45; No 25 6.10.45; The New Zanzibar, 24.9.45; 11 tidigare utgivna spår). *DETS 903 9013 (2 CD). 2 CD 280:-

Duke Ellington, The Treasury Shows Vol 14 (Treasury Broadcast No 26 13.10.45; No 27 20.10.45). *DETS 903 9014 (2 CD). 2 CD 280:-

Ellingtons inspelningar för Sesac 1959 har funnits på flera LP och CD, även på Fresh Sound, som nu ger ut dem på nytt.

Duke Ellington, The Duke's D.J. Special (Sesac, 1959). *Fresh Sound FSRCD-0410. 175:-



Duke Ellington spelade i augusti 1967 på Rainbow Grill i New York med en mindre grupp ur sin stora orkester, en oktett med Cat Anderson, Lawrence Brown, Johnny Hodges, Paul Gonsalves, Harry Carney, Ellington, John Lamb och Steve Little. Av de radiosändningar som CBS gjorde därifrån har

några kommit ut på LP och CD. Nedanstående nya CD på märket Gambit är från en sändning som tidigare gavs ut på det italienska märket Moon MCD 049-2.

Duke Ellington Octet, At the Rainbow Grill 1967 (17.8.67). *Gambit Records GAM 69248. 149:-

Mosaic ger inte bara ut stora boxar utan har nu även lanserat en serie med enkel-CD, som inleds med en Ellington-utgåva.

Duke Ellington's Spacemen, The Cosmic Scene (1958). Original-LP:n på Columbia plus en extra tagning av Jones, ursprungligen på en singel-45:a och en tidigare utgiven tagning av Body and Soul. Dessutom är det den första utgåvan i stereo. Det går att beställa den från Skivfynd Jazz och Blues, men eftersom Mosaic inte ger rabatter till återförsäljare blir priset relativt högt. Den kan även beställas från producenten info@mosaicrecords.com. Förhoppningsvis kommer moderbolaget Sony Music att ge ut denna CD och distribuera den i Sverige. I så fall blir priset betydligt lägre. *Mosaic MCD-1001.

Duke Ellington: The Complete 1936-1940 Variety, Vocalion and Okeh Small Group Sessions. Denna högtintressanta 7-CD-box, med nya ljudöverföringar av Steven Lasker, är aviserad men ännu ej utgiven. Jag återkommer med detaljerad information. *Mosaic MD7-235.

Naxos fortsätter sin serie med Ellingtons studioinspel-

ningar kronologiskt i urval till mycket lågt pris och numera med bättre ljudöverföringar än tidigare.

Duke Ellington, Vol 9 Black, Brown And Beige, Original 1943-45 Recordings. *Naxos 8.120809. 65:-

Duke Ellington, Vol 10 Air Conditioned Jungle, Original Recordings 1945. *Naxos 8.120810. 65:-

Duke Ellington, Vol 11 Time's A-Wastin', Original 1945-46 Recordings. *Naxos 8.120810. 65:-

Storyville gav för många år sedan ut en LP- och CD-serie under titeln "Masters of Jazz". Nu har man

återupplivat serien med utökade versioner av de tidigare volymerna, och i vissa fall med helt nya sammanställningar. Allt har funnits på tidigare Storyville-CD. Se även under "Nya CD med Ellington-musik spelad av andra".

Duke Ellington, Masters of Jazz Vol 1 (The Hurricane Club, Carnegie Hall, New York, 1943, The Hollywood Empire, Los Angeles, 1949, Goutelas, Frankrike, 1962). *Storyville 101 8501. 120:-

Nya CD med Ellington-musik spelad av andra

Anthony Braxton, Concept of Freedom (+ Duke Ellington) Performed by... (kvintett, 2003; en komposition av Braxton + Freedom No. 1, 4 & 6 från Ellingtons Second Sacred Concert) *Hatology OGY 614. 199:-

Ahmad Jamal, I Remember Duke, Hoagy & Strayhorn (trio, 1994). Denna CD har funnits länge men återlanseras nu av Telarc i serien "Discover Jazz" till betydligt lägre pris än tidigare. *Telarc CD-83339. 89:-

Ellington sidemen

Americans in Paris, Vive le Jazz! All Tracks Recorded in Paris. Dizzy Gillespie, Gigi Gryce, Art Farmer, Lee Konitz, Mary Lou Williams, Stan Kenton, Zoot Sims, Roy Eldridge, Don Byas, Coleman Hawkins, Benny Carter, Buck Clayton, Dicky Wells, Eddie South, **Rex Stewart**, Mel Powell, Bill Coleman, Sidney Bechet. 30 – 50-tal. *Castle Pulse PDSCD 599 (2 CD). 75:-

Charlie Barnet, Town Hall Concert Featuring Clark Terry (6.12.47 + 4 bonusspår: studioinspelning, Apollo, 1947 med en sextett inkluderande Clark Terry och Fred Zito). *Hep CD 81. 135:-

Charlie Barnet, Live at Basin St. East '66, Featuring Richie Kamuca, **Clark Terry**, **Willie Smith**, Jimmy Cleveland and Nat Pierce (arr Bill Holman & Billy Byers; 2 tid utg spår). *Hep CD 2005. 160:-

Coleman Hawkins, The Essential Sides Remastered 1929-39, Featuring: Red Allen, Benny Carter, **Rex Stewart**, Don Redman, Fats Waller, Spike Hughes, Jack Hylton and Many, Many More (förstklassiga ljudöverföringar av Ted Kendall - den definitiva CD-utgåvan från mästarens tidiga period utanför Hendersons orkester och åren i Europa 1935-39). *JSP CD 295:-



Clark Terry, *Swahili*, Plays the Arrangements of Quincy Jones (1 CD = 2 LP Clark Terry, "Swahili", Emarcy, 1955 + **Jimmy Hamilton**, Urania, 1954). *Lonehill Jazz LHJ 10244. 120:-.

Ben Webster-Harry Edison, Complete Quintet Studio Sessions (hela LP:n "Ben & Sweets", Columbia, 1962 + 4 spår från Mundell Lowe, "Porgy & Bess", Camden, 1958). *Lonehill Jazz LHJ 10257. 120:-.

Ben Webster-Harry Edison, Complete Sextet Studio Sessions (= 2 LP "Sweets", Clef, 1956 + "Gee, Baby, Ain't I Good To You", Verve, 1957 + 6 spår från Woody Herman, "Songs for Hip Lovers", Verve, 1957 + 4 spår från Red Norvo, "Some of My Favorites", RCA, 1957). *Lonehill Jazz LHJ 10258. 2 CD 240:-.

John Coltrane, *First Giant Steps*, Featuring: Dexter Culberston, Norman Poulshock, **Johnny Hodges**, **Lawrence Brown**, Call Cobbs, John Williams (Coltranes första inspelningar på altsax, 1946 + en konsert med **Johnny Hodges**, 1954). *RLR Records RLR 88619. 149:-.

Ben Webster. *Masters of Jazz Vol 4* (m Kenny Drew, Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen, Al Heath, Pori Jazz Festival, Finland, 1967 & m Teddy Wilson, Dexter Gordon, Sahib Shihab, Kenny Drew, Al Heath etc, Danmark, 1968-70). *Storyville 101 8504. 120:-.

Clark Terry, *Masters of Jazz Vol 5* (Paris, 1959, Montmartre Club, Köpenhamn, 1975, 1980, e.j.'s, Atlanta, 1981).

Telarc har sänkt priset för en del av sina tidigare CD-utgåvor under rubriken "Discover Jazz", däribland nedanstående två titlar, som har Ellington-intresse.

Louie Bellson and his big band with special guest Clark Terry. *Live from New York* (1993). *Telarc CD-83334. 89:-.



Oscar Peterson, Clark Terry, Benny Carter, Ray Brown. *The More I See You*, with Lorne Lofsky, Guitar, Lewis Nash, Drums (1995). *Telarc CD-83370. 89:-.

Bubber Miley, *Rare Recordings 1924-31* (Texas Blues Destroyers/Six Black Diamonds/Kansas City Five/**Duke Ellington**/Clarence Williams/ Leo Reisman). Mycket intressant material, men producenten har gjort ett par hårresande

misstag: de två versioner av St. Louis Blues som uppges vara Warren Mills 20 december 1928 respektive Leo Reisman 1931 är Kansas City Five c. november 1924 respektive Leo Reisman 10 december 1937, den senare inspelad drygt fem år efter Mileys död! *Vintage Music Productions VMP 0161. 170:-.

Duke Ellington på DVD

Duke Ellington, *Berlin Concert 1969* (+ en konsert från Amsterdam, 1958) (75 min, färg & sv/v). *Impro-Jazz IJ 509. 175:-.

Duke Ellington, *London Concert 1964* (+ en konsert från Zürich, 1959) (76 min, sv/v). *Impro-Jazz IJ 510. 175:-.

Jazz Shots from the East Coast Vol 1 (Bill Evans, Ahmad Jamal, Phil Woods, Thelonious Monk, Johnny Griffin, Oscar Peterson,

Duke Ellington, Keith Jarrett, Jimmy Smith, Roland Kirk (92 min, sv/v & färg) Jag har ännu inte haft möjlighet att se denna DVD, som innehåller tre titlar med Duke Ellington: Mood Indigo, Sophisticated Lady och Take The A Train. De två första skulle kunna vara från det ofta utgivna TV-programmet "Ken Murray Show" 19.5.1951, men jag återkommer med bättre information i bulletinen. *Eforfilms 2869052. 240:-.

Priserna som är angivna efter katalognumren är de som gäller i min butik. Kontakta mig gärna med kompletteringar, andra kommentarer och frågor.

Medley

... **Back to music**. It makes practically everybody fonder of life than he or she would be without it. Even military bands, although I am a pacifist, always cheer me up. And I really like Strauss and Mozart and all that, but the priceless gift that African Americans gave the whole world when they were still in slavery was a gift so great that it is now almost the only reason many foreigners still like us at least a little bit. That specific remedy for the worldwide epidemic of depression is a gift called the blues. All pop music today – jazz, swing, be-bop, Elvis Presley, the Beatles, the Stones, rock-and-roll, hip-hop, and on and on – is derived from the blues.

A gift to the world? One of the best rhythm-and-blues combos I ever heard was three guys and a girl from Finland playing in a club in Krakow, Poland.

The wonderful writer Albert Murray, who is a jazz histo-

rian and a friend of mine among other things, told me that during the era of slavery in this country – an atrocity from which we can never fully recover – the suicide rate per capita among slave owners was much higher than the suicide rate among slaves.

Murray says he thinks this was because slaves had a way of dealing with depression, which their white owners did not: They could shoo away Old Man Suicide by playing and singing the Blues. He says something else which also sounds right to me. He says the blues can't drive depression clear out of a house, but can drive it into the corners of any room where it's being played. So please remember that.

Foreigners love us for our jazz. And they don't hate us for our purported liberty and justice for all. They hate us now for our arrogance.

Kurt Vonnegut: A Man without a Country (2005)

Daynce of the Peckerwoods

Detta är titeln på en nyutkommen bok författad av Michael H. Price. Den består av en sammanställning av 30 intervjuer som Price gjort med diverse artister som huvudsakligen har en Texas bakgrund eller i varje fall uppträtt i Texas. Av dessa intervjuer är det bara två som behandlar artister jag känner till, nämligen Ornette Coleman och Herb Jeffries. För oss Ellingtonvänner är det naturligtvis kapitlet om Herb Jeffries som föranleder ett omnämnande av boken.

Kapitlet om Herb Jeffries baseras på en intervju som gjordes 2003 då Herb uppträdde på ett hotell någonstans i Texas. Artikeln kretsar huvudsakligen kring Herbs karriär som filmskådespelare i fyra filmer som delvis spelades in i Texas under 30-talet. Filmerna var *The Bronze Buckaroo*, *Harlem On The Prairie*, *Two-Gun Man From Harlem* och *Harlem Rides The Range*. En femte film var planerad men Herb gav preferens till sin just påbörjade sångarkarriär. I artikeln beskriver Herb bakgrunden för filmernas tillkomst, nämligen det faktum att man ville göra Westernfilmer med svarta skådespelare och naturligtvis riktade sig filmerna till den färgade publiken. Man kan se dom som en parallell till skivbolagens "race records". Herb var ju inte särskilt svart i sin framtoning men som han säger i intervjun så kan man ju inte se i en svartvit film att han har blå ögon och med litet färg på skinnet och cowboy-hatten rätt nertryckt över håret så kan han utan vidare framstå som en svartare man än vad han i verkligheten var. I artikeln nämns också det faktum att Herb föddes som Umberto Balentino och i hans ådror finns etiopiskt, fransk/canadensiskt, irländskt och italienskt blod. Men Herb har alltid betraktat sig själv som en svart man.

Referenserna till Duke Ellington är få i artikeln men det kan vara värt att här återge Herbs beskrivning hur han blev engagerad av Duke:

"I was standing in front of the bandstand, in that full Western-movie get-up, a walking advertisement for my movies. Duke spotted me and suddenly said to the audience: "Well, looky here: If it isn't the Bronze Buckaroo in the flesh!" Then to me he called: "Why don't you come up and sing a few songs, Herbert?". That was surprise enough, but then Duke called me backstage and asked: "So what are your plans looking like?". I said, well, I guessed I'd go back to Hollywood and make some more of those cowboy movies. And Duke grinned and said: "That's too bad, 'cause I was going to offer you a job". I said, well, then, I guessed it was time for me to change my plans."

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E-mail: music.mentor@lineone.net.

Website: <http://musicmentor0.tripod.com>.

Text: Bo Haufman

Dear Jan & all at DESS I have read, with interest, Jan's introduction, translated into English, from the DESS Bulletin 3/05 and am contacting you to say that I regret that I am not, at present, interested in becoming, again, a DESS member. The reason is that, not being able to read Swedish, I can only guess the contents of the bulletin apart from the Photographs. If the bulletin could be fully translated into my native language, I would be interested but, as you are probably aware, an Englishman is the most unlikely person in the world to learn another language (even American!!!). I

am a member of DESUK. The following is a brief introduction to myself:-

I am a 66 year old man living in Salisbury, a cathedral city in the South of England. You may be acquainted with a fellow citizen of our fair city called Dennis Dimmer who has one of the finest Duke Ellington collections in the UK. I am unable to compete with him on this, although my Ducal collection is pretty extensive. I first became an Ellington fan/listener from my early childhood when I found a 78rpm recording of "Battle of Swing/Dinah's in a Jam" in my parent's record cabinet. What it was doing there, I haven't the least notion, but it whetted my appetite to find out more. My first acquisition was a 10" LP of the "Highlights of the 1940 orchestra", a Christmas present that I wore almost through to the second side. I then bought, on a five shilling a week payment system from the local record shop, the UK issue of "Ellington at Newport" and, from then until the present time have continued to add to my Duke collection with an emphasis on the 1950's onwards having over 400 lps & 100 cds now on my shelves. While writing this email, I am listening to the complete Newport cd set, which has had such an interesting story about the live or studio recording controversy.

Again, my regrets at not being able to join your society but I wish you all the very best for the New Year

John G Pinder. raver@pinder.force9.co.uk.

Dear John, thank you for sharing your views on being a member of DESS and your decision not to remain a member. The proportion of articles in English will vary from time to time but you will find this year's issues to have not only reissued but also original material to a larger extent than earlier.

We certainly welcome correspondence from other members abroad on what they find useful with membership in DESS. And don't forget, you are all welcome to our concert evenings with live Ellington music and presentations by scholars at least four times a year. And the donations asked for are very low.

Your story about how your interest for Duke's music started is very nice and we would like to see more of the same kind from others.

The Bulletin staff.

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IAJRC – för samlare av jazzmusik

The International Association Of Jazz Record Collectors, IAJRC, är en USA-baserad sammanslutning av människor med intresse för att samla inspelad jazzmusik oavsett stilart, tidsperiod och inspelningsform. De inspelade samlarobjekten må vara skivor, band, filmer och vad som nu kan tänkas. IAJRC, som grundades 1964, vill enligt sina ambitiösa stadgar verka för kontakter mellan samlare och underlätta för dem att finna intressanta inspelningar, böcker, artiklar m.m. av intresse inom området. En allmän ambition att sprida kunskap om jazz i alla dess former uttrycks också i stadgarna. IAJRC har genom åren producerat ett antal egna skivutgåvor med återutgivning, tidigare på LP, numera på CD.

Den aktuella katalogen innehåller åtskilligt av intresse, bl.a. en CD med tidigare outgivna pianosolon av den fine och alltför sällan omtalade pianisten Herman Chittison. Den Ellington-intresserade kan notera en CD med upptagningar av orkestern från en festival i Connecticut den 28 juli 1956, således bara några veckor efter den famösa konserten under festivalen i Newport. Repertoaren här är också delvis densamma, bl.a. spelas hela *Newport Jazz Festival Suite*

och *Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue* med Paul Gonsalves långa solo. Denna CD innehåller också nummer av bl.a. Willie "The Lion" Smith och Buck Clayton.

IAJRC ger ut en tidskrift, *The Journal*, med fyra nummer per år och insiktsfulla artiklar i jazzanknutna ämnen som t.ex. "Portrait of George Lewis" och "Irving Mills – Record Producer: The Master and Variety Record Labels". Ytterligare ett exempel på artiklar som publicerats där är "In Duke's Head", som återges i denna bulletin och innehåller intressanta intervjuer med Sonny Greer och Russell Procope.

Den som vill ha ytterligare information om IAJRC finner detta på internet där organisationens hemsida har adressen: <http://iajrc.org>. Där får man veta t.ex. att årsavgiften för medlemmar utanför USA är 40 dollar per år, något som bl.a. innebär att man får den innehållsrika tidskriften och möjlighet till gratis annonsering där. Det går också bra att skriva till en europeisk representant för organisationen som finns i England under adress IAJRC Attn: Mrs. Barbara A. Sparling, 51 Ashtree Road, Bitterne Park, Southampton SO2 4LY, England.

Thomas Erikson



Kalender för DESS Bulletin och SAMI-möten 2007

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Hej DESS-vänner!

Säg i Bulletin Nr 3/06 en inramad text om skivan "Sophisticated Lady" med Charlie Norman Trio och medverkan av Lee Gaines (på LP SIR TK-792). Vet någon var jag kan få tag på denna inspelning – helst om den finns överförd till CD?

Hälsningar, Birgitta Schitzmann, tfn 08/667 26 57 (ej dator).

C:a 530 Ellington- och ellingtonrelaterade 78:or till salu styckvis eller en bloc. Begär förteckning och prisuppgift från bo.haufman@telia.com eller tfn 08/663 74 95

Välkomna /Bosse Haufman

"In Duke's Head"

by Michael P. Zirpolo

I've always enjoyed rainy summer evenings in New York City. The gigantic landmarks are partially shrouded in clouds and fog and rain. This particular night, in the late 1970s, a friend and I had decided to go and hear a trio led by the blind pianist **Brooks Kerr**. Kerr had received a lot of publicity after Duke Ellington's death in 1974. He had graduated from the Julliard School of Music, studied with Willie "The Lion" Smith, and had gotten to know Ellington. He had assisted the maestro in various ways, and like so many others before him, he had become unable to resist the gravitational pull of Ellington's music and personality. His entire life became a study and expression of all that was Ellington. He got to know seemingly everything about Duke, and never hesitated to expound on his favorite subject on the bandstand between numbers.

As interesting as Kerr seemed, what caught my attention was the fact that in his band were two gilt-edge Ellingtonians: the drummer **Sonny Greer**; and the alto saxophonist/clarinetist **Russell Procope**. Together, these two had witnessed the entirety of Ellington's career. Greer had been with Duke long before the formation of the Cotton Club band. He had met and began to work with Ellington in Washington, D.C. in 1920, and remained Duke's drummer until 1951. He was approximately four years older than Duke (no one ever knew Greer's age, and he guarded the secret), so in 1920 he would have been about 25. Now he was past eighty. Russell Procope, born in 1908 in New York City, had gone to school there with Benny Carter. He later worked with a succession of top-grade bands including Carter's, Fletcher Henderson's, Tiny Bradshaw's, Teddy Hill's, and most notably, with John Kirby's sextet from 1937 to 1943, when he entered military service. He joined Duke's band in 1946, and remained until Ellington's death. Now, he was about seventy.

As our taxi wended its way toward the First Avenue club, we passed near the ornate metalwork of the Queensboro or 59th Street bridge. The bridge itself was illuminated by floodlights and street lamps, but only partially visible through the falling evening mist. The club, then called Gregory's, was situated on the corner of First Avenue and East Sixty-Third Street. It seemed like most of the club occupied the sidewalk, with a sloping roof extending out from the brick facade on the First Avenue side of the building around the ninety degree bend along the Sixty-Third Street side. As we entered, we went around a corner, then back onto the sidewalk, but under a roof with windows extending all the way down. The three musicians were placed against the building's brick exterior wall facing out toward the windows. That night there were maybe fifteen or twenty people in the place, mostly casually dressed upper east siders, who seemed unaware of the fact that the two elderly men sitting before them had been witnesses to and participants in the entirety of one of the greatest musical careers in American history.

Sonny Greer

It was Greer who first caught my attention. He sat ramrod straight on his drummer's stool, high above his tiny drum set. He played with his arms almost straight down from his shoulders. He was nattily dressed, and always had a smile on his face. As played, he spoke to each patron who entered, the length of his remarks varying from a cheerful "good evening" to me, to a full-blown conversation with someone he evidently knew.

None of this affected Russell Procope who sat serenely with his horns on their stand at the ready. Kerr was doing all the work, playing some obscure Ellington opus in stride-style piano.

We listened to two sets, which ran the gamut from "Soda Fountain Rag" to "Creole Love Call" to "Solitude" to "Come Sunday" and beyond. Then I approached Greer. Standing away from his drums, he resembled a jockey; tiny, slim, energetic. We exchanged pleasantries. I told him how I enjoyed Duke's music, and especially how I enjoyed his drumming on the many Ellington recordings I had. He caught me by surprise when he said: "Duke wanted color. That's why I had the chimes and gong and so forth. I designed that big set of equipment, and the Leedy Drum Company out in Indiana built it for me. We needed that in the theaters we played in. And, God, did we ever play the theaters. Hundreds of them. It was vaudeville. We were part of the stage show. We worked with dancers, comedians. We started in the late twenties. Back then, it was taken for granted that musicians were in show business, just like the dancers, singers, comedians. We were like a big extended family. We would work with each other, run into each other around town and on the road. Show business was not a job, it was our way of life. We were proud to be in show business. We were proud to take the stage. We worked hard to get the audiences to enjoy what we were doing. Today it's different, man. Musicians think they're not in show business. They don't care what the audience thinks, which is ridiculous. The first theater we played in was the Palace Theater here in New York. When I left Duke in 1951, we were still playing in theaters, though by then it had slowed down considerably. Television was starting to come in. Even when I didn't use all that equipment,



and just played drums and cymbals, Duke still wanted color. He'd say, 'now Sonny, would you brighten it up back there a little, please?'. He felt the bass should provide the pulse, the drums the color. And, of course, they should never fight each other."

After a few questions about the Cotton Club days, Greer lingered for a moment and mentioned a name with which I was not familiar: Fredi Washington. "She was the most beautiful woman I have ever seen. She had gorgeous skin, perfect features, green eyes, and a great figure. When she smiled, that was it! She worked with us in a little movie we did called *Black and Tan*. She also danced in front of the band at the Cotton Club, damn near naked. She upset a lot of us because it was torture watching that woman writhe around night and night. Later, she married Lawrence Brown, from Duke's band, who was a handsome guy. When they walked down the street together, heads turned, believe me!"

I then mentioned the name Irving Mills, and Greer was off again. "Irving Mills was a very aggressive manager. He pushed us into a lot of places where black entertainment had never been presented before. He did the same with Cab Calloway. We went all over this country north, south, east and west. And it was all segregated then. But when we broke down the wall somewhere, there was no big fanfare. We went in and did our job, then moved on."

"Irving did wrong when he put his name on so many of Duke's songs. But Duke looked at it like it was sort of a bonus that Irving was giving himself. And Duke felt he was entitled because he had made Duke a star, got his music published and so forth." "But as much as Irving Mills pushed Duke's career, no one pushed it harder than Duke himself. Duke had to appear before the public. We worked so much it was ridiculous. Theaters, films, shows, dance dates, records I don't think any band toured more than we did. I thought I was going to die when I quit the band in 1951, I was so tired. But Duke kept on going for another twenty-three years! He just had to, that's all there was to it."

Greer returned to his drums for the next set, then returned to our table to chat a bit longer. "I think that Duke started getting disenchanted with Irving Mills in 1938, when we were at the downtown Cotton Club. We were there for three months." (This location was in midtown, on Broadway and 48th Street. It later housed the Latin Quarter, and is now gone. The original Cotton Club, where the Ellington band became famous in the late twenties, was in Harlem, on Lenox Avenue at 142nd Street.) "He began to think that Mills was not giving him the attention he deserved. This was right after Benny Goodman had played in Carnegie Hall. Duke started thinking if Benny Goodman can play in Carnegie Hall, why can't I? And Irving wasn't able to get Duke in there. Duke went to the hospital to have an operation after we left the Cotton Club. I think he brooded over this because when he came out, things were cooler between him and Irving. Also, Irving's record labels, Variety and Master, had not been successful, and we were recording on Master. Duke was not happy that our records were not getting proper distribution. After we went to Sweden the next year, it was all over between Duke and Irving Mills."

"Then some good people began to join us. Billy Strayhorn, Jimmie Blanton, and Ben Webster came into the band within a short time. And we finally got back onto the Victor record label. Duke was very happy to be on the Victor label again. At that time, Victor was like the Cadillac of records. We were the only black big band on Victor. That was stipulated in Duke's contract. Other black big bands had to be issued on Bluebird, which sold for 35 cents. Victors sold for 75 cents."

I next asked Greer if he thought the 1940-42 Ellington band was the best of any time he was with Duke. "Not necessarily. In the late 1930s we had a great band. We had great music and great soloists. You'll never find anything better than 'Braggin' in Brass'. We did 'Steppin' Into Swing Society', 'A Gypsy Without a Song', 'I Let a Song Go Out of My Heart', and 'Battle of Swing'. Back then, it was a big thing for two bands to be booked at the same place, and try to play each other down. No one, and I do mean no one, ever played down the Ellington band. I don't care if they were black, white, or green, we would wash them away. Duke would toy with them, and come on with something smooth, then we would build and build. By the time we were through, there was nothing left for them to do, but pack up their horns and go home."

"Johnny Hodges was the most popular soloist in the band. He was always just great. His sound, his swing, his ideas. He just connected with the audiences. And his consistency was unbelievable. Rex Stewart was also a very exciting musician. He played cornet, not trumpet. Rex was a giant, man, and a big influence on guys like Roy Eldridge and Dizzy Gillespie. It's too bad people have sort of forgotten about him today. Cootie Williams played trumpet like Louis Armstrong, but was great with the plunger mute. I don't think Cootie Williams ever forgave Duke for hiring Rex. I believe Cootie's jealousy of Rex is what caused him to leave the band."

"The three trombones were as different as it was possible to be: Lawrence Brown could play ballads and swinging jazz. Juan Tizol got a sound out of his valve trombone that no one else could. Joe 'Tricky Sam' Nanton used the plunger mute to get effects that had never come out of a trombone before. Barney Bigard was unique on clarinet. We had two good basses at the same time: Hayes Alvis and Billy Taylor. Otto 'Toby' Hardwick led the saxophones, and Wallace Jones the trumpets. And of course Harry Carney was there on baritone sax. Ivie Anderson was our very popular vocalist."

"All of these people, except the two bassists, who were replaced by Jimmie Blanton, were still a part of Duke's 1940 band. Cootie left at the end of 1940, and was replaced by Ray Nance, who not only played good trumpet, but played good violin and danced too. We never had a tenor soloist before Ben Webster, and he just blossomed with Duke. Let's just say a great band got greater when those guys arrived."

"I think Billy Strayhorn was the biggest single factor in making the band greater. He took a big load off Duke by helping with the arranging. Duke had more time to work on things after Billy arrived. And Billy's writing was terrific, right from the start. He impressed Duke because he had had schooling, and Duke didn't. Duke hated schooling where he was concerned. He learned by doing and was constantly experimenting. But in others, he admired it. He sent his son Mercer to Julliard to learn about music. Mercer learned all the rules there, then his father taught him how to break them.

But Billy knew what to do with what he had learned in school. He knew just how to fit his writing to the band. Duke placed a lot of confidence in Billy's ability almost immediately. And Billy's big chance came when that ASCAP-BMI dispute stopped Duke's music from being broadcast on radio. Duke was an ASCAP member, Billy wasn't. So Duke told Billy to start writing originals for the band, which he did. Many great things came out of that first batch of Strayhorn compositions, including 'Take the A Train'."

"I guess my favorite time with Duke's band was when we were in Hollywood in 1941. We went out there to play at the Casa Manjana, did some one-nighters up the west coast,

and some in the south, then went back to Hollywood for the show 'Jump for Joy'. It ran for ten weeks. Once again, Duke was way ahead of his time with this kind of satire. In 1941, most white people did not see the humor in 'Uncle Tom's Cabin is a Drive-In Now!'"

"After the war started, we worked harder than ever. In addition to the constant touring, we did the movie 'Cabin in the Sky' at MGM with an all black cast including Ethel Waters and Lena Horne. Lena was another great beauty who was just starting to make a name for herself then. She loved Billy Strayhorn, but that could never go anywhere because he was a homosexual."

"Duke finally made it to Carnegie Hall in 1943. He had written 'Black, Brown, and Beige' for the occasion. It was an extended work that ran over 45 minutes. We returned to Carnegie Hall about once a year until 1948. I think we did six or seven Carnegie Hall concerts in the forties."

"Duke was also involved in quite a few things without the band in the late '40s. He and Billy Strayhorn wrote the music for the Broadway musical, 'Beggar's Holiday'. Duke had a radio show called 'Dial the Duke'. He went to England in 1948, I believe, with Ray Nance and Kay Davis, who was then the female vocalist with the band."

"While Duke was gone, which was for a couple of months, I worked with a small group led by Johnny Hodges here in New York. Billy Strayhorn wrote the arrangements and played piano. That little band swung and the people who heard it liked it. We liked it too because it was so different from what we were doing with Duke. That was the seed for what eventually took Johnny Hodges, Lawrence Brown, and me out of Duke's band in 1951."

"About the last interesting thing I did with Duke was our extended tour of Europe in the spring of 1950. We played something like 75 concerts in 76 days. I couldn't handle it any more, so we brought along a relief drummer by the name of Butch Ballard. When we got back, we were all completely exhausted, but there were more one-nighters and theaters to play. Right after we premiered Duke's extended pieces, 'Harlem' and the 'Controversial Suite' at the Metropolitan Opera House here in New York, Johnny, Lawrence, and I quit. We probably would have died of exhaustion if we hadn't."

As Greer returned to the bandstand for an abbreviated last set, I realized I would have to return the next night to talk with Russell Procope. After the last note sounded, Kerr was quickly assisted into a taxi by a bartender. Greer and Procope followed him out of the door, and vanished into the night.

Russell Procope

The next day was sunny, hot, and humid. By the time we got to the club that evening, it was still steamy. The coziness of the club the night before had turned into closeness. Nevertheless, the trio performed in much the same manner as on the previous night, though I recognized some different tunes.

After the first set, Russell Procope left the bandstand and went out to the sidewalk for a breath of air. I joined him. To break the ice, I told him how much I liked the sound of his clarinet. I mentioned the recording of '4:40 Blues' that had been made during Ellington's seventieth birthday celebration in England. He didn't recall it. "The blues is the blues. Just name a key." I quickly sensed that Procope was not the extrovert Greer was.

I then asked Procope about the circumstances surrounding his joining the Ellington orchestra. "Duke started trying me out in the fall of 1945, right after I got out of the service. Toby Hardwick would not show up from time to time. For



me, it was like being a baseball player getting a tryout with the Yankees. In my eyes, Duke Ellington was the very top of the world of music. I felt that way then, and still feel that way. But, I didn't get hired right away. In April of 1946, I finally got the call. I was told to meet the band on its way from Washington, D.C. to Springfield, Massachusetts. Hardwick had walked off the stage at the Howard Theater in Washington. Nobody knew if he was coming back. He never did."

"My job was to play first alto. Duke had a good clarinet soloist in Jimmy Hamilton, and of course a great alto soloist in Johnny Hodges. But gradually, Duke started giving me solos on clarinet because my sound on clarinet was so different from Jimmy's. And my whole approach to the clarinet was different from his. He was a great technician who had a sound almost like a symphony man. My playing was more gutbucket. I never did play many alto solos because Johnny took care of that, and when he wasn't there for a while, there was Willie Smith and Hilton Jefferson, both of whom were excellent soloists."

"The first crisis in the band after I joined was when Joseph Nanton died in his bed in San Francisco. We were on tour in California when it happened. It was very disturbing, like losing a brother. To work with a man every day, and to see him playing on the bandstand one night, then for him to be dead the next, well it was a shock."

"Shortly after that, we made a movie of Duke's 'Perfume Suite' with some puppets. It seems strange now, but at the time, I thought the movie - it was really a short subject - was pretty good."

"Throughout the rest of the '40s, we did mostly one-nighters, with some theaters too. The theaters were for a week at a time usually, though I remember working for a month at a time at the Paramount Theater here once or twice. We played Carnegie Hall three times in the '40s after I joined the band, and made another movie short called 'Symphony in Swing'."

"My first big European tour with Duke came in 1950, when we went there for over two months. This was the first

of many tours that took me all over the world with him."

"After Johnny Hodges, Lawrence Brown, and Sonny Greer left, Duke had to scramble to get replacements. Eventually Juan Tizol came back on trombone, and Willie Smith on alto, and Louis Bellson on drums. By that time, we had Clark Terry, Cat Anderson, Ray Nance, and Willie Cook on trumpets, and Paul Gonsalves on tenor. The band was crackling but business was going down."

"We got involved in some of those package tours about then. I think we did a couple for Norman Granz, who was responsible for Johnny Hodges leaving Duke's band. Duke held a grudge over that for many years, and finally he and Norman Granz had a blowup in the 1960s.

"Probably the low point was when we played out in Flushing behind ice skaters. Duke had to lay off some of our guys and hire musicians out of local 802. And there were strings and a harp. It was pretty bad."

"Things got better after we played at the jazz festival in Newport, Rhode Island in 1956. Somehow, parts of that concert were recorded by Columbia. We were not recording for Columbia, or anyone at that time, but eventually part of our concert there came out on Columbia records. Then Duke got his picture on the cover of Time magazine, and good things started to happen again. He was on the Edward R. Murrow TV show, which also was a big deal. In short, Duke started to get a lot of attention again, so the band got busier, and we made more money. Johnny Hodges also came back, and I can't tell you what a joy it was to hear him again. But, after he came back, he would do strange little things on the bandstand, like pretend to count money when Duke was playing a tune Johnny thought he had written, but Duke ended up the composer of it. He was putting Duke on, and I think Duke enjoyed it because he loved to put people on."

"We did 'A Drum Is A Woman' on network TV, and that was very unusual for a black band then. We also did about two months in Europe at that time. After that, the overseas tours started to run together because there were so many of them. We edged out of show business a little, and into politics a little. Duke wasn't too happy about it because he wasn't a politician. But he figured that it gave us good visibility, so when we would get back to the old grind of one-nighters, we could get even more money. He was right about that, but he did get caught up in the political games just the same. When he didn't get the Pulitzer Prize, he was upset and hurt. All of us in the band knew that Duke Ellington the musician didn't need the Pulitzer Prize. Everybody in the music business knew that he didn't need the Pulitzer Prize. But Duke Ellington, the human being, needed the Pulitzer Prize. And he was hurt when he didn't get it."

"Still, Duke made the most of all that. He had more diplomatic skills than most of the diplomats we worked with

on those State Department tours. We often succeeded in projecting a good image in spite of some of those people. But if we were handled badly, Duke would get revenge by putting these people on. They took everything he said at face value so it was pretty easy. We all used to laugh about it."

In Duke's head

Procope looked through the windows of the club and Greer began gesturing him to come in. He excused himself with the promise he'd finish the conversation after the next set.

When he and I resumed our places out on the sidewalk, I asked him about the film, 'Anatomy of a Murder'. "Yes, I remember doing the sound track for that. I enjoyed the experience because that was the first time I did what so-called studio musicians did. But that little taste was enough to tell me I would not have enjoyed doing that sort of thing day to day."

"Even though we were very busy in the later '60s, we could see that Duke was slowing down, especially after Billy Strayhorn passed. Billy had done a lot of writing for us, and many times, his work would go uncredited. When he was gone, Duke tried to do his work and Billy's. That was too much even for Duke Ellington. Then, when we lost Johnny, we all realized that it would only be a short time until there wouldn't be an Ellington band anymore."



Duke's wonderful saxgroup of 1950; From left: Alva McCain jr., Johnny Hodges, Jimmy Hamilton, Harry Carney, Don Byas, Russell Procope.

"But we underestimated Duke. He had the strongest willpower of any human being I have ever known. He just kept going until he went to the hospital for the last time. We were in England and Scotland at the end of 1973. He would go backstage during our concerts and rest. He was sick, sicker than we realized. Then, at the same time, Duke's doctor, Arthur Logan, died. I think Duke was closer to Arthur Logan than to just about anyone else on earth. Arthur's death broke Duke's spirit."

"We came back here and played some one-nighters, then went into the Rainbow Grill over the holidays. While we were there, Duke went to the hospital to have some tests done. It was clear that he was sick, but nobody told us what his illness was. After the Rainbow Grill, we went back out on the road again. As incredible as it now seems, Duke came back on the road with us. He collapsed at a concert in Washington, D.C., but kept on. Finally, after he insisted on playing two concerts in one day in Michigan, he could no longer go on. That was in March, 1974."

"I enjoyed every day I was a member of the Ellington band, even though it was grueling trying to keep up with Duke. But I knew I was a part of something that was very special, something that would never die. But the biggest joy I had, and I think the other musicians had too, was the music. Duke constantly surprised me. Musically, I could never predict what was going on in Duke's head."

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