



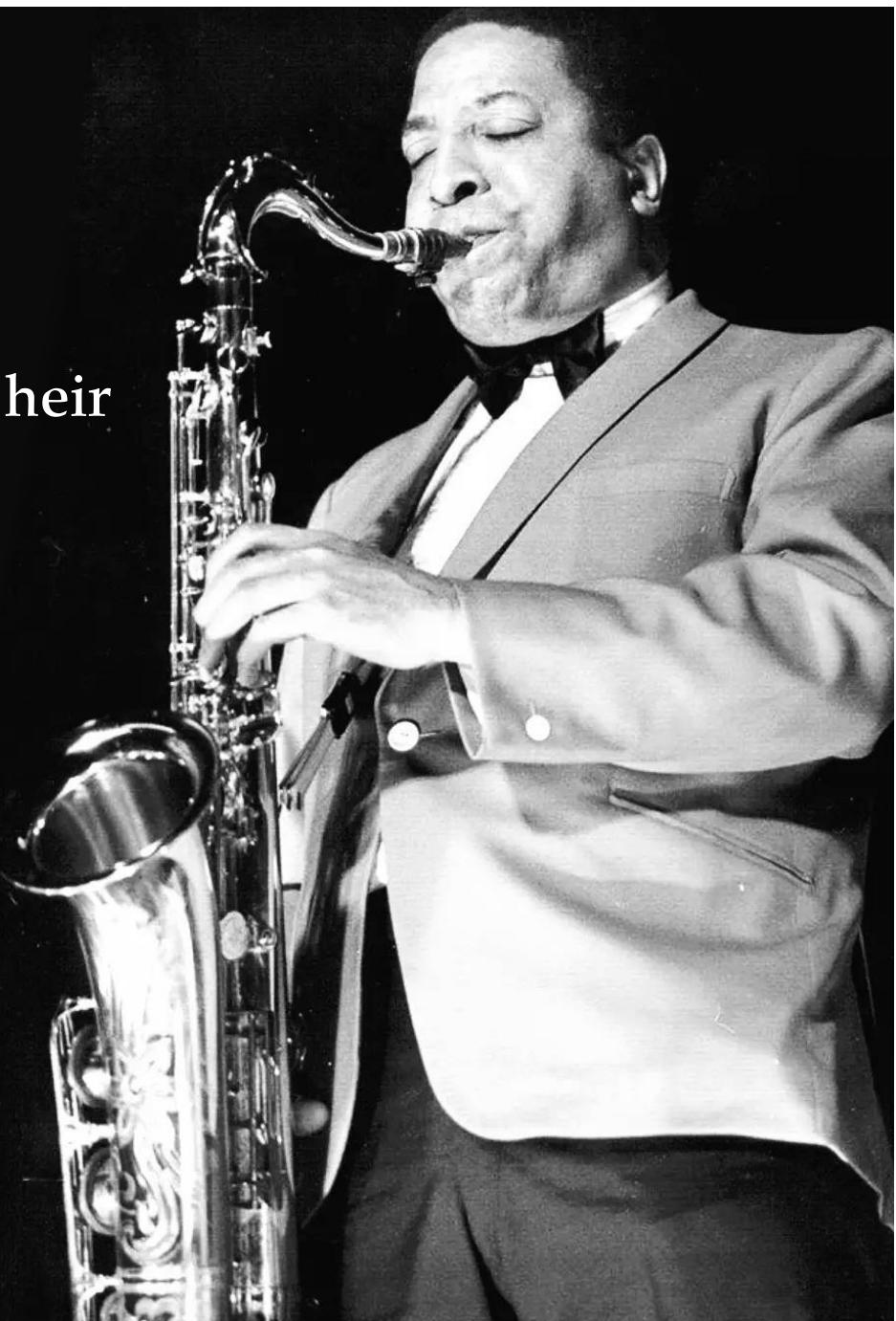
Duke Ellington Society of Sweden

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Harold Ashby

Ben Webster's heir



I detta nummer

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A Good or Bad IDEA?

När detta läses börjar sommaren närm sig sitt slut och jag hoppas våra medlemmar kunnat njuta av den. I Sydeuropa har höga temperaturer uppmätts men här i Sverige har sommaren ändå varit ganska normal. Forskarna varnar för att framtida somrar kan bli mycket heta, men vår vana vid "hot music" kanske kan hjälpa oss att uthärda?

I vår föregående Bulletin, som innehöll ett referat från konferensen i Paris, nämnades att vissa personer önskade se tillkomsten av en "International Duke Ellington Society". Det är inte första gången ett dylikt förslag har framförts. Redan på 1990-talet propagerades för bildandet av en internationell förening, men motståndet var tydligt och någon sådan förening kunde inte bildas.

Nu har idén kommit upp på tapeten igen efter ett förslag framfört av Marilyn Lester. Dagen efter konferensen i Paris samlades ett antal deltagare, inklusive undertecknad, för att diskutera frågan.

Nya medlemmar

DESS hälsar följande nya medlemmar välkomna i vår illustra förening:

Daniel Andresen, Rehovot, Israel
Steven Bowie, Pasadena, CA., USA

Gunilla Lönegren, Motala
Bernard Villiers, Boulogne, Frankrike

DESS behöver fler medlemmar.
Inspirera Dina vänner och
bekanta att också vara med!

Laurent Mignard ledde förhandlingarna och det beslutades till slut att man skulle vidare undersöka möjligheten att bilda en internationell förening.

De närmast följande veckorna var aktiviteten ganska hög. En e-postgrupp omfattande cirka trettio personer bildades, och ett stort antal mejl cirkulerade inom gruppen med olika förslag om hur föreningen skulle fungera och avsikten med den. Till att börja med skulle ett namn på föreningen skapa och man enades om namnet IDEA – International Duke Ellington Association.

Inledningsvis var aktiviteten mycket hög och det argumenterades för att en förening som IDEA skulle bäst kunna sälja namnet Duke Ellington till en större allmänhet och framför allt få en yngre publik att uppskatta Duke Ellington. Det påpekades av flera att det redan existerar ett stort antal websidor och bloggar, som utför just detta, bl.a. vår egen ellington.se. Själv anser jag att det ligger på de lokala Ellingtonföreningarna ute i världen att sprida intresset för Ellington och de bör få all support de kan få i sin strävan att göra detta.

Det har nu gått drygt tre månader sedan mötet i Paris efter konferensen och mejlen inom IDEA-gruppen blir allt glesare. Mitt intryck är att det saknas en person, som är villig och tillräckligt kunnig att leda en internationell förening. Dessutom har man inte fattat några beslut om hur IDEA skall finansieras. Emellertid hölls ett ZOOM-möte i juli för ett antal inbjudna deltagare. Antalet hade nu reducerats från de ursprungliga trettio till cirka dussin och där DESS representerades av Ulf Lundin. Jag, liksom flera andra föreningsordföranden, ansågs inte behöva delta. Ett beslut som tydligt fattades var att Marilyn Lester skall skapa en informationsplats på nätet

med adressen "ellington.info". Det återstår att se vad den kommer att innehålla. Den ledande gruppen tycks utgöras av Laurent Mignard, Loren Shoenberg, Ken Steiner och Marilyn Lester och man tycks dessutom ha etablerat en kontakt med Paul Ellington. Vi kommer att hålla våra medlemmar löpande underrättade om hur denna IDEA utvecklas,

Charlie Barnet, som var en stor Ellingtonbeundrare, spelade 1939 in ett antal nummer han kallade "The Duke's Idea", "The Count's Idea" och senare även "The Right Idea". Man kan ha många synpunkter på meningen med en internationell förening, men jag skulle vilja kalla förslaget för "The Bad Idea"?

I denna Bulletin hittar ni även en kallelse till vårt nästa medlemsmöte den 16 oktober. Då bjuder vi på levande musik av Leo Lindberg, det nya stjärnskottet på den svenska jazzhimlen som det står i kallelsen. Men om man så vill kan man säga att Leo Lindberg inte är något nytt stjärnskott. Trots sin unga ålder om 24 år har han varit verksam i nästan 10 år. Då, för 10 år sedan, var han ett stjärnskott. De av våra medlemmar, som brukar frekventera SWEJS, känner honom sedan länge som föreningens huspianist. Jag hoppas få se en stor anslutning till medlemsmötet. Ta gärna med någon bekant.

Till DESS, I Love You Madly,



Bo Haufman, ordförande DESS

Duke Ellington at Hurricane Restaurant 1943

Den 1 april 1943 påbörjade Duke Ellington och hans orkester ett längre engagemang på Hurricane Restaurant i New York. Det var ett mycket lyckat engagemang för orkestern, som varade ända till den 23 september. Initialt var bandet engagerat för en sex veckors séjour, men orkestern drog publik och uppdraget förlängdes successivt och vid varje tillfälle kunde Ellington höja sitt arvode. Ellingtons succé ledde till att hans boknings agent William Morris Agency kunde fördubbla orkesterns arvode.

En av fördelarna med engagemanget på Hurricane Restaurant var de regelbundna radioutsändningarna via Mutual Broadcasting System. Ett flertal av dessa har bevarats och finns utgivna på ett otal olika etiketter, men flera är fortfarande utgivna. Tidskriften Metronome innehöll ofta en spalt, som gick under namnet "Radio Reviews", och under rubriken "Fifteen Minutes Pass In Five" kan man läsa följande recension från Ellingtons broadcast den 15 april. Recensent är signaturen "Roland":

♦♦♦

Aside from the fact that I fall into the category of Duke's staunch admirers, I can't see how anyone with a fair capacity to appreciate good modern dance music could fail to find this remote broadcast exciting. In these days of stereotyped arrangements and instrumental treatments, Duke's air shots are refreshing. The mood he immediately establishes with his own harmonic digressions is maintained intensely throughout the program. The impact of startling instrumental ideas provokes the listener into uninterrupted attention. Fine timing and pacing result from Duke's long years of showmanship. And the driving, undeniable reaction to the perfect tempos completes a rare listening experience.

The general pattern of the air shot is characterized by the way it moves almost



uninterruptedly with the economically effective announcements and comments of the announcer superimposed. The theme *Take The "A" Train* segued without stopping and without changing tempo into *What's The Good Word Mr. Bluebird*, which is a good tune for the excellent singing of Betty Roché. Highlighted was the fine solo trumpeting of Harold Baker. Without stopping, and still in the same tempo, Duke led into a new one by the musically fabulous Mr. Strayhorn – *Leventeen*. A real beat throughout, Johnny Hodges' playing beautifully relaxed (personally, I like his Jazz passages so much better than his ballad treatments), the sax team well blended and singing brilliantly, and always Duke's fine piano which the engineer picked up with perfect balance on this night. Segue again, albeit a change in tempo, into the more languorous *When The Violins Were Playing*. This opened with Ray Nance on violin playing in expressive ballad style. Nance continued with background for Jimmy Britton's vocal. Jimmy comes over much better on the air than in person, I am glad to say. Nance's violin ended the arrangement amidst a pastoral effect that was very unique. The tune itself was unexciting. Next came the pick-me-up

which is typical of Duke's fine pacing sense in programming – *C Jam Blues*. The balance of the band was superb on this. The drums were heard when needed and each section was clearly defined when featured. These items of program pacing and technical balance determine so much the general effect of the air-shot that all band leaders should profit by the results Duke gets by controlling these factors. The tempo was perfect. I wish Duke had messed something up on this show, at least it might have kept this review from monotony.

The last number on the show is the always welcome *Don't Get Around Much Anymore*. The highlight among soloists Hodges, Duke, Stewart and Lawrence Brown was Brown, who really punched out his trombone solo with even more virility than usual. The fifteen minutes had passed in five.

♦♦♦

Ellington valde som synes några ovanliga nummer i denna korta radioutsändning. S.k. "songpluggers" hade troligen påverkat honom att framföra nummer som *What's The Good Word Mr. Bluebird*, som faktiskt finns listad i New DESOR från en tidigare Hurricaneutsändning. *When The Violins Were Playing* finns dock inte listad bland Ellingtons framföranden och vi kan säkert vara utan den. Recensenten nämner en komposition av Billy Strayhorn – *Leventeen*. Någon komposition med det namnet existerar inte och det är troligen fråga om ett hör- eller stavfel. Det torde röra sig om *Clementine*.

Recensionen illustreras med en bild på Betty Roché varunder man kan läsa: "Betty Roché is a new name to most listeners, but as reviewer Roland points out, her vocals are a fine feature of Duke Ellington's broadcasts. Betty's a 23-year-old Wilmington, Del., girl whom Duke found with the Savoy Sultans."

Bo Haufman

Harold Ashby

Ben Webster's heir

By Peter Gardner

"I was a little intimidated, but I made it through OK because Ben was such a nice cat." That was how he remembered his first ever jazz recording. The feeling of being "a little intimidated" was understandable. When Harold Ashby made his first jazz record as a tenor saxophonist, he was playing next to someone who had been the tenor saxophone star with the Duke Ellington Orchestra and was already a legend amongst jazz fans, Ben Webster. Over the next few years Ashby would record with other famous Ellingtonians, like Johnny Hodges and Lawrence Brown, he would appear in orchestras organised by the Duke's son, Mercer, and now and then again he would get a call from the Duke himself to come and cover for an ill or ailing sideman. Ashby duly received the title "an Ellington reserve" from the jazz critic and Ellington scholar, Stanley Dance.

Ellington's saxophonists tended to stay in the band for decades and longer, but in 1968, after a quarter of a century with the Duke, Jimmy Hamilton decided the time was right to withdraw to the slower and calmer-paced life of the Virgin Islands. So, ten years after first recording with Ben Webster, and having served his time and paid his dues, Harold Ashby replaced Hamilton and became a full-time member of the Duke Ellington Orchestra. He would join an outstanding reed section of legendary performers, Harry Carney, Russell Procope, Johnny Hodges and Paul Gonsalves. Ashby's solo opportunities would be few, but they were valued by Ellington, and in the years that followed they would become more and more significant.

Kansas, Chicago, New York

Harold Kenneth Ashby was born on 21st March 1925 in Kansas City, Missouri, a city that would soon become one of the most important jazz centres in America.



Young Harold took up the clarinet at the age of thirteen and soon joined two of his older brothers in the Lincoln High School Orchestra. By the age of seventeen Ashby was studying the tenor saxophone at a vocational school, going to dances and hearing the musicians who would become his mentors. He heard Count Basie with Lester Young, Erskine Hawkins with Paul Bascomb and Duke Ellington with Ben Webster, whom he soon got to know.

When America entered the Second World War, Ashby was called up for the Navy. He would serve for over two years, mainly in Chicago, where he was able to renew his friendship with Webster, who had left Ellington and was now playing in Chicago's Downbeat Club. Unfortunately, Ashby no longer had the tenor he had played in Kansas. "When I was in the Navy I pawned my horn, 'cause I was gambling" is how he explained his

horn's absence. When he came out of the Navy in December 1945, gambling, particularly on dice and pool, were still dominant forces in the young man's life, but he wasn't a successful gambler. Someone told him he would be better off going back to the saxophone and soon he was playing with local groups and two of these groups were led by musicians with excellent jazz connections, Tommy Douglas and John Jackson.

However, it was the evolving blues scene that captured Ashby's attention and, when it came to the blues, his home city did not compare with what Chicago had to offer. "In Chicago, in the early '50s, I started playing with Willie Dixon and Memphis Slim" and "I used to make records for Chess", Harold later recalled, and Chess Records had such stars as Willie Mabon, Otis Rush, Jimmy Witherspoon, Lowell Fulson and Sonny Boy Williamson on its books.

A move to New York in 1957 helped Ashby renew his friendship with Ben Webster, but times had become difficult for the blues tenor player who was now in his thirties. Ashby talks of being out of work, out of money and learning to survive by "fasting, and just drinking water". Fortunately, Webster was able to help out financially as well as offering Ashby a place to stay in the house he was sharing with blues singer Big Miller. This was the time Webster introduced Ashby to Ellington and to members of the Ellington Orchestra and, it is reported, was able to get Ashby some work at the Apollo Theatre. At a time of need, Webster proved to be a good friend indeed.

Recordings before the Duke

Webster first recorded with Ashby in July 1958, the tracks originally appearing on the Verve LP, *The Soul of Ben Webster*. For most listeners, the two memorable pieces on the album are Webster's solo outing on *Chelsea Bridge* and *When I Fall In Love*, but Ashby has his moments, particularly on the gentle blues, *Charlotte's Piccolo*. It is clear from this early jazz session that, while Ashby's sound is derived from Webster's, what results is softer, gentler and more subdued than Webster's rich resonance. Both tenor men are emotional players, but whereas Webster sounds as if he is excited to have found the girl of his dreams, Ashby sounds as if the girl he dreamt about has left him. Jazz authority Chip Defaa would later write that with Ashby, "There's often, in his sound, the quality of a lament."

On three occasions in 1959 Ashby appeared with a group of Ellingtonians plus an all-star rhythm section, including Less Spann and Gus Johnson to record the album *Colours In Rhythm*, under the direction of Mercer Ellington. As Mercer searches for a style, several soloists do their best on twelve short tracks, with Ashby being his individual self when given the opportunity. December 1959 found Ashby in Rudy Van Gelder's famous studio, but he was not there to record a jazz album. He had teamed up with two blue stalwarts, Willie Dixon and Memphis Slim, and was helping make the album *Willie's Blues*. It is inter-



resting to compare Ashby's performance alongside Dixon with his earlier outings with Webster. With the blues singer Ashby gives us more heavily tongued forcefulness than when he played with Ben, but the sadness of a lament is never far away.

Less than a year later, Ashby was again benefitting from knowing members of Ellington's orchestra when he was recording with Johnny Hodges. The session was held on 8th and 9th September, and, according to recording authority, John Clement, the album that was being recorded was intended to be released as *Hodges by Hodges*, since it consisted mainly of Hodges' originals. In the company of several members of what was then the Ellington band, Ashby, makes telling and tasteful solo contributions to three of the nine sides intended for the album. Alas, it was a few years before these sides were released. They did eventually appear on the second LP of a 2-LP set, *The Smooth One*. Ben Webster is the tenor player in the first of these LPs not released until 1979.

In the early '60s Ashby also recorded with another Ellington star, Paul Gonsalves. *Two from Duke* was recorded in 1960 and '61. It involves music from two sessions. In one Ashby is the only horn with a rhythm section that includes Jimmy Jones, in the second, Ashby plays alongside Gonsalves with a rhythm section that has Sir Charles Thompson on piano. The influence of Webster on both tenor players is evident, but while Ashby brings sadness and resignation to his playing,

particularly in the upper registry, Gonsalves blows with more aggression and muscularity, as if he has something to prove. *My Buddy*, a solo outing for Ashby, is, I would say, the pick from this LP.

Another album, *Tenor Stuff*, from January 1961, has Ashby and Gonsalves exploring, in their unhurried ways, standards like *Out of Nowhere* and *Midnight Sun*. Ray Nance joins them on *You Can Depend on Me* and *Just Squeeze Me*. All in all, this is easy, untaxing music with Ashby again coming over as the gentler, less assertive of the tenor soloists. Given his blues background, one might have expected Ashby to have been the more dominant, pugnacious player. It is a pleasant surprise to find he gently coming to the fore.

In March 1965 Ashby was back in Van Gelder's studio recording with several Ellington sidemen under the leadership of Lawrence Brown. The album they recorded was called *Inspired Abandon*, but consists in the main of well-known, rather than abandoned, Ellington material. The following January, Ashby was again in the company of Ellingtonians, plus the exceptional Earl Hines, recording the album *Once Upon a Time* for Impulse.

With the Duke

It is usually reported that Ashby became a full-time member of the Duke Ellington Orchestra in 1968 when Jimmy Hamilton retired. Ashby himself is much more precise: "I started working with Duke regularly on July 5th 1968



when Jimmy left." Friday 5th July was the second day of the 1968 Newport Jazz Festival and Ellington and his orchestra were on stage for the evening session. Ashby remembered the date precisely. Perhaps we have grown used to some of Ellington's sidemen, particularly those with long associations with the Duke, becoming casual about or indifferent to precise details. Ashby belonged to that group of Ellingtonians that had what George Wein described as "a love for Duke so real as to be nearly tangible." Indeed, Ashby had nothing but respect for Ellington: "Duke was a great man, a great individual. I was very fortunate to be able to play with him." After biding his time 'in the reserves', Ashby was not going to forget the exact date he became a full-time member of the Duke's band. He was also going to reacquaint himself with the clarinet, not so he could replace Hamilton, but at least he would play ensemble passages.

Though many might have thought that, after forty-plus years of leading an orchestra, Ellington would be slowing down, the Duke was still writing suites, preparing for Sacred Concerts and touring extensively. His musicians were kept on their toes. In September 1968, with Ashby as part of the reed section, the Ellington Orchestra began its first ever tour of Central and South America, a tour celebrated in the Duke's *Latin American Suite*, most of which was recorded two months later, with Paul Gonsal-

ves taking the tenor solos. In 1969 Ashby was with the orchestra in Europe where he often soloed on *BP Blues* and competed with Gonsalves and Norris Turney on *In Triplicate*, as he did in Manchester on the recording sessions that would produce Ellington's *New Orleans Suite*. Ashby soloed with great dignity and passion on *Thanks for the Beautiful Land on the Delta*, a composition that, as Stanley Dance observed, expresses "the importance of the religious element in New Orleans life". Alas, an event amongst the musicians would soon overshadow their music. Two days before they met for the second recording session for Ellington's new suite, Johnny Hodges died. Ashby had played alongside the extraordinary alto player for only a few short years.

In February 1971 the Ellington Orchestra was back in the studio to record Ellington's eight-part suite *The Afro-Eurasian Eclipse*. After Ellington's spoken introduction – a piece of Ducal prose never to be taken seriously – Ashby soloed with rhythmic muscularity and energy on the suite's opening segment, *Chinoiserie*. This would become one of his regular concert pieces alongside the Duke's *Just Squeeze Me* and the evergreen *I Can't Get Started*. A few months later, after a trail-blazing four-week tour of Russia, the Ellington band was again in the UK and Ashby was recorded soloing on *Just Squeeze Me* and *Naturellement*, the second part of the Duke's *Togo Brava Suite*.

In October 1972 Ashby was once

more in the studio with the Ellington Orchestra, this time recording Ellington's *Uwis Suite*, which had been written for an Ellington festival held earlier in the year at the University of Wisconsin. Gonsalves was not present, and Ashby soloed on the opening piece of *Uwis* and on the closing segment, *Loco Madi*. He had become an important part of the orchestra.

Towards the end of 1973 the Ellington Orchestra began an arduous tour that would involve playing in sixteen countries in five weeks and would include a *Sacred Concert* in Westminster Abbey and a Royal Command Performance in the presence of Queen Elizabeth II. For part of the tour Gonsalves was again ill and Ashby was the tenor soloist at several concerts and at Westminster Abbey, playing with his usual passion and blues feeling.

The year that followed was full of sad news. Joe Benjamin, Ellington's bass player, was involved in a car crash and died in January. Paul Gonsalves passed away in May, a few days later Ellington himself died, and in October, Harry Carney, the foundation of the Duke's reed section since 1927, also passed away. Mercer Ellington somehow kept an Ellington band on the road, but, as Ashby put it, "It was Duke Ellington's band and when Duke died it wasn't his band anymore. I left in February 1975."

After the Duke

The musical career that Ashby enjoyed after leaving the Mercer Ellington Band was almost as long as the one that preceded it. After Mercer there would be another twenty-eight years of festivals, guest appearances and recordings, and, though there would be significant differences between some of the musicians he played with, for the most part, when he did record, Ashby was with those who shared his values and vocabulary.

For a short time after leaving Mercer, Ashby was a sideman in Sy Oliver's orchestra and he followed this with a few dates for Benny Goodman. In May 1978 Ashby toured Europe with a small outfit of ex-Ellingtonians. Members of the group recorded for the Black and Blue label in Paris. Cat Anderson was leader on the album *Plays W.C. Handy*. The al-

bum *Chelsea Bridge* had Booty Wood as leader. *Scufflin* with Ashby as leader, featured Ashby and Wood supported by Raymond Fol, Aaron Bell and Sam Woodyard. *Scufflin* is dominated by Ashby originals, though one of its standards, Jobim's *Quiet Nights*, shows how the former blues player was widening his appeal. Just a few months later, at what was said to be his "first American date as leader", Ashby with Don Friedman, piano, George Mraz, bass, and Ronnie Bedford, drums, recorded in New York for the Progressive label. The album, initially called *Presenting the Harold Ashby Quartet*, has a mixture of Ashby originals and standards, including a delightful foot-tapping version of *Days of Wine and Roses*, with Mraz and Ashby sharing an opening duet, though the alternate and differently arranged take of the ballad is also well worth a listen.

There seems to have followed a period where, while there were no studio recordings, there were tours with the Junior Mance Trio and with groups involving Jay McShann and European festivals provided a welcome home for the tenor player whose greying hair and broad shoulders, as well as his rich tone and choice of material, told audiences they were in presence of a musician of maturity and taste. He was part of George Wein's Newport Jazz Festival All-Stars that were recorded in Switzerland in May 1987. Sharing the stage with Scott Hamilton and Al Cohn did not dampen Ashby's spirit, and he soloed with great sensitivity on *Mood Indigo* and with rebel-rousing passion on *Things Ain't What They Used To Be*. A little over a year later, on the Oslo Jazz Festival, having proved to be one of the visiting stars on the festival's stage, Ashby teamed up with the trio that was in Oslo to back Joe Williams, and made the album *The Viking* for the Norwegian Gemini Records. The title track was an Ashby original, but the Duke's music was never far away. *I Got It Bad* and *Solitude* are two of this excellent album's eight tracks. Interestingly, the back of the album says that for bookings, one should contact Harold Ashby, and this is followed by his New York address and phone number. Clearly Ashby was looking for work.



Two years would go by before Ashby was leading in a recording studio again. The album *What Am I Here For?* was recorded in November 1990 and featured Ashby with Mulgrew Miller, piano, Rufus Reid, bass, and Ben Riley, drums. Some might have thought these accompanists were too modern for a soloist whose style can be seen as indebted to the 1930s, but, borrowing from Mark Gardner, who wrote the album's detailed notes, this is an album where styles "jelled" with "melodic maturity" and swung with "discretion and good taste". The tunes are either Ellingtonian masterpieces, like *Prelude to a Kiss* and the title track, or worthy members of The Great American Songbook. "For Ashby enthusiasts this may be considered as good as it gets", was one critic's appraisal of this album, to which I would add: and there is nothing at all wrong in being an Ashby enthusiast.

Just a few months later Ashby was with organist Wild Bill Davis in Paris recording for Black and Blue. Their album *Out of Nowhere*, recorded on 2nd February, 1991, features Ashby on six of its twelve tracks, but his emotionally charged tenor playing suffers, perhaps from under-recording, and from an organist with whom Ashby rarely seems to engage. The organist appeared to have "had a bit of an off day" was one reviewer's assessment of Wild Bill's efforts. There were better results back in America, when in July 1991 Ashby paid another visit to Van Gelder's studio. In

the company of Richard Wylands, piano, Aaron Bell, bass, and drummer Connie Kay, Ashby recorded the album *I'm Old Fashioned*. Years earlier Ellington used the phrase "soul-saturated" to describe Ashby's playing. Reviewer Chip Deffaa thinks the Duke's phrase is most "apt" for this album. One surprise here is that one of the compositions Ashby has selected is by Ellington, though the title track and other well-worn masters, like *Couette* and *Memories of You*, mean he is never out of his comfort zone. Listeners shouldn't be either.

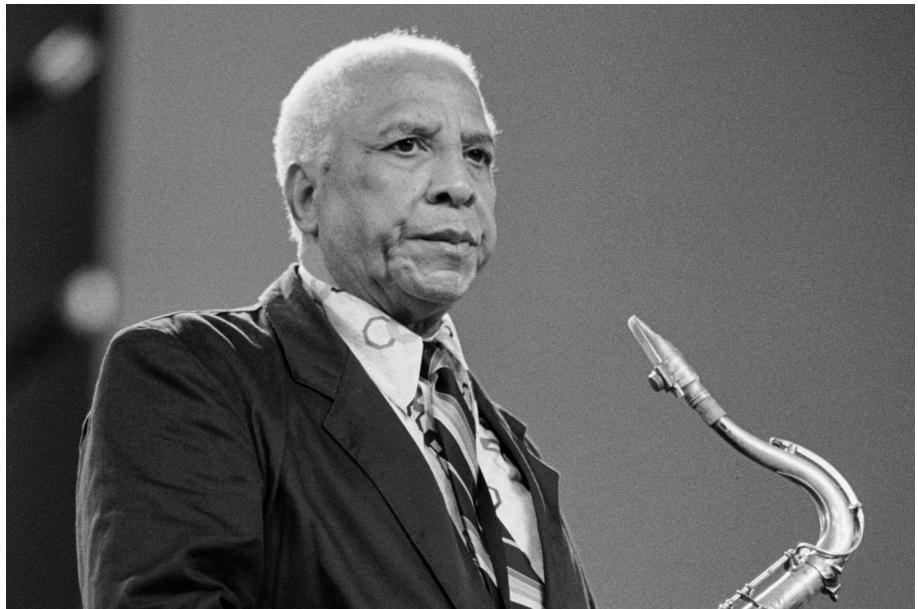
The following year, Ashby was playing with the Chris Barber Band in Holland, but I gather that when he had the opportunity to record for the Timeless label, Ashby decided he wanted a pianist in the rhythm section, something Barber didn't have. Archie Shepp was touring at the same time and Ashby borrowed Shepp's rhythm section. The album, *On the Sunny Side of the Street*, with Ashby, Horace Parlan, piano, Wayne Dockery, bass, and Steve McRaven, drums, was recorded in Monster, Holland, in January 1992. It is interesting to listen to Shepp's musicians adapting to Ashby's unhurried romanticism on *It's the Talk of the Town* and *These Foolish Things* and coming through with flying colours.

Ashby made at least one visit to the recording studios in 1994. It was to make a few tasteful contributions to Milt Hinton's album, *Laughing at Life*, and two years later Ashby was in the studio with Branford Marsalis and James Carter ac-

companying Benny Golson on Golson's tribute to several major saxophonists. The album was called *Tenor Legacy*. Ashby plays on five of the album's ten tracks, and his contribution on *My Old Flame* (dedicated to Zoot Sims) and *Lover Come Back to Me* (dedicated to Ben Webster) show he was still playing with moving eloquence. On the latter track, Golson observed "Harold seemed to reach into nowhere and touch Webster's essence."

In the winter of 1998, at the age of 73, an age when even the most respectful of commentators might suggest a performer's best achievements are in the past, Ashby made two albums. These were probably his first recordings as leader since he fronted Archie Shepp's rhythm section in Holland, and, according to more than one critic, by the time of the second of these recordings Harold was sounding a little frail and tired. At the earlier session on 13th November 1998, Ashby plays several Ellington standards plus two originals with reverence and respect. The resulting album, *Harold Ashby Plays Duke Ellington*, with Lloyd Mayers, piano, Earl May, bass, and Leroy Williams, drums, serves as a warm mark of gratitude, with the tenor player's original, *Four Kisses*, expressing the depth of his appreciation for his great bandleader. The album, *Just For You*, recorded a few weeks later, features tenor playing that, to my ears at least, is less secure than it was in November, but the soul of the musician still shines through. The rhythm section of pianist John Hicks, bassist Keter Betts, and drummer Jimmy Cobb provides wonderful encouragement throughout, and Billy Strayhorn's *Lotus Blossom* is the gem amongst this album's selections.

My research indicates that Ashby recorded one more album as leader. The album, titled *Ash*, consists of Ashby originals, several of which are blues, was recorded in December 2000. The rhythm section this time has Hilton Ruiz on piano, Andy McCloud, bass, and Victor Jones, drums, and it provides sensitive backing to a leader who seems to be trying his best, often playing with great sincerity, but the full-toned boldness and sadness of earlier days is gone. Vic Bellerby, writing in *Jazz Journal*, suggests the



leader "does not reveal enough personal tone and phrasing to justify continuous listening" for the length of the album. I would suggest, *pace* Bellerby, that personal tone and individual phrasing are there, but they are delivered by an elderly saxophonist. After a life on various roads, and at the start of a new millennium, Harold was showing his age. A respectful listener could still learn from this album.

By now Ashby was one of the last surviving members of any Ellington reed section. Those who interviewed him in his later years speak of someone who was leading a simple but contented life. He enjoyed accepting engagements, though he was no longer looking for work. He was strict with his diet and his fridge was well stocked, not with beers, but with fruit juices. He had a few carefully chosen LPs, reflecting the fact that over the years his love for Ellington, Webster and Hodges had remained undiminished. Those who played with him during this period speak of his lack of ego and his committed professionalism. Going out of his way to steal the limelight or encroach on your solo space were not part of his nature, but, even if the power was reduced, his blues-grounded musical sincerity meant that he was a musician who commanded respect and audiences' appreciation.

But ill health was never far away. There are reports of him summoning his resources for a memorable appearance at the Ellington Conference in Ottawa in

1990 and, still recalling Ellington's music, appearing with The Duke's Men in Kansas in September 2002. Maybe this was his last public performance.

Harold Ashby suffered a heart attack in May 2003 and died on Friday June 13th 2003 at St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital in Manhattan. He was 78 years old and had been playing the tenor saxophone as a professional musician for over fifty years.

A distinguished blues performer who made impressive recordings in Chicago, Ashby's spell as a full-time Ellingtonian began with him having few solo openings. Yet, when opportunities arose, Ashby didn't disappoint. Demanding tempos and delicate ballads, just like the blues, were under his fingers and within his command. And, after the Duke, he proved himself to be a big-toned, swinging and emotional player that festival goers embraced with enthusiasm. Over the fifty years or so of Ellington's band-leading, there were more distinguished and more influential reedmen in Duke's ranks than Ashby, no one would deny that, but this late-comer sustained a tenor style of warmth and passion long after Ellington's band had ceased looking handsome. He was probably the last of a great line. Ashby came late, but he was not a disappointment.

This article was originally published in DESUK's Blue Light 2/2021. With Peter Gardner's consent it is republished here.

Två herrars tjänare

I jazzhistorien är det speciellt två orkestrar som går till historien för sin kvalitet i olika sammanhang. Det rör sig om Duke Ellingtons och Count Basies orkestrar. Det fanns naturligtvis flera orkestrar som gjorde sina avtryck i historien, men de nämnda torde vara de som betytt mest för storbandens utveckling i konkurrens med många andra band. Ellingtons och Basies band var diametralt olika i sin attityd till storbandsjazz även om många likheter också existerade. I detta sammanhang kan det vara intressant att konstatera att det fanns ett antal musiker som under sina karriärer spelat i båda orkestrarna och här listas några av dem:

Paul Gonsalves anslöt till Count Basies orkester i augusti 1946 efter att ha blivit utmönstrad från armén och efter ett engagemang med Sabby Lewis orkester. Han skulle stanna hela tre år hos Basie och han utgjorde den andre tenoristen tillsammans med Buddy Tate och senare med Wardell Gray. I oktober 1949 lämnar han Basiebandet för spel med Dizzy Gillespie innan han i augusti 1950 påbörjar sitt långa engagemang hos Duke Ellington.

Quentin Jackson lämnade Duke Ellingtons orkester den 21 oktober 1959 för att i stället ingå i Quincy Jones orkester och showen "Free And Easy", som hade

en olycklig turné i Europa. I början av 1961 ersätter han Al Grey i Count Basies orkester. Grey hade drabbats av en skada och kunde inte resa med orkestern. Basie kunde säkert inte hitta en bättre ersättare för Grey än just Quentin Jackson. Båda var specialister på att hantera sordiner. Man kan inte låta bli att ställa sig frågan vad det var som fick Jackson att lämna Ellington. Om det var det slitsamma reseendet så var det säkert inte mindre av den saken hos Quincy Jones och Count Basie.

Rufus "Speedy" Jones – hade ett förflytet hos bl.a. Maynard Ferguson innan han hamnade hos Count Basie åren 1965 till 1967. Under dessa år var han dock stundtals ersatt av andra batterister som t.ex. Sonny Payne. Åren 1968 till mitten av 1973 ingick han i Duke Ellingtons orkester. Det är värt att notera att han praktiserade metoden att spela med två baskaggar redan under tiden med Ferguson.

Clark Terry – ingick i Count Basies orkester under hela tre år 1948 till 1951 varefter han startade sin långa sejour hos Ellington som varade ända till slutet av 1959. Under denna tid skapade han sig ett namn och han var en mycket efterfrågad trumpetare, som under de följande åren gjorde hundratals inspelningar i olika konstellationer.

Willie Cook – Med vissa uppehåll ingick Willie Cook i Ellingtons trumpetsektion fr.o.m. slutet av 1951 t.o.m. 1961. Han skulle därefter sitta in i bandet vid olika tidpunkter fram till 1973. Som den uppskattade förstetrumpetare han var ingick han i Count Basies orkester under ett år 1981.

Louie Bellson – I juli 1962 råkade Sonny Payne ut för en trafikolycka och var borta från Count Basies orkester i ett halvår. Louie Bellson ryckte då in som hans ersättare under denna tid. Men dessförinnan ingick han i Duke Ellingtons orkester 1951-1953. Han deltog i både Basies och Ellingtons orkestrar framdeles när problem uppstod med att fylla platsen bakom trummorna.



Willie Cook och Clark Terry.

Booty Wood – hade två perioder i Duke Ellingtons orkester. Den första varade ett år 1960 och den andra litet längre perioden omfattade åren 1970-1972. Under åren hos Ellington utvecklade han sin plunger-teknik, och när det var dags att ta plats i Count Basies orkester åren 1979-1983 var det som sordin specialist.

Al Killian – Satt drygt två år i Count Basies orkester i början på 1940 talet men hamnade åren 1948-1950 i Duke Ellingtons orkester. Han tog ofta på sig rollen som höjdtrumpetare men hade därutöver mycket mer att erbjuda. Han gick en alltför tidig död tillmötes kort efter det att han lämnat Ellingtonbandet.

De ovan nämnda är några av de mera markanta namnen som varit engagerade i de två orkestrarna, men det fanns avsevärt fler som haft kortare eller längre engagemang hos de två orkesterledarna som t.ex. Butch Ballard, Aaron Bell, Don Byas, Jimmy Forrest, Matthew Gee, Al Hibbler, Yvonne Lanauze, Skeets Marsh, Charlie Rouse, Ernie Royal och Gerald Wilson. Även Ben Webster hade kortare samarbeten med Count Basie.

Bo Haufman



Quentin Jackson.

Duke Ellington in Denmark 1950

By Sven-Erik Baun Christensen

Further to my article focusing on Ellington's cooperation in 1950 with Orson Welles (DESS-Bulletin 2, 2023), the following deals with Duke's time in Copenhagen and the reception of the six concerts played in Denmark, based on contemporary reports in daily newspapers.

Duke Ellington's 1950 tour of Europe lasted from April 4 until June 30, with concerts played in eight countries: France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Sweden and Denmark.

Coming only a few years after the end of WW2 and of the German occupation of Denmark in May 1945, Ellington's second visit to Denmark (the first was in April 1939) was a sensation in music and entertainment circles. It was covered by both national and local Danish newspapers, and Duke's movements outside of the concert venue were followed by Copenhagen daily newspapers, not least the tabloid 'B.T.' which seems to have had a reporter and photographer on Duke's trail for most of his time in Copenhagen. Duke's name even appeared in B.T.'s popular cartoon strip 'Carlt',ⁱ where with Carlt (a Copenhagen bicycle messenger boy) is frustrated at not having obtained a ticket for Duke's concerts.

The Scandinavian leg of the tour began with four concerts over two days in Copenhagen. Duke and the band arrived in the evening of Tuesday May 30 by train from Hamburg – 45 minutes late – and were greeted at Copenhagen Central Station by music from a local wedding music band playing *Solitude*, Bruno Henriksen's Orchestra playing *Mood Indigo*, and a large and enthusiastic

crowd. With the help of a police escort Duke reached the Palace Hotel, where the B.T. photographer managed to follow him all the way into the bathroom, getting a picture of a tired, very hungry, but still smiling Duke in the bathtub. With his hotel room packed with visitors, musicians and hotel staff, Duke suc-

1st in K.B. Hallen. After Wednesday evening's concerts Duke and his musicians had been invited to the Restaurant 'St. Thomas' by an old acquaintance of Duke's from the U.S., guitarist Bertel Skjoldborg, whose band was playing there. Danish State Radio quickly reacted to news of this, and recordings of

Duke, Jimmy Hamilton and Don Byas playing with the Danish musicians were made. A 20-minute excerpt of the material recorded was broadcast by Danish Radio on June 3rd, unannounced in the newspapers' radio programs, as part of a programme of dance music from Tivoli's restaurant 'Dansetten', played by the orchestras of Bruno Henriksen and Bror Kalle.ⁱⁱ

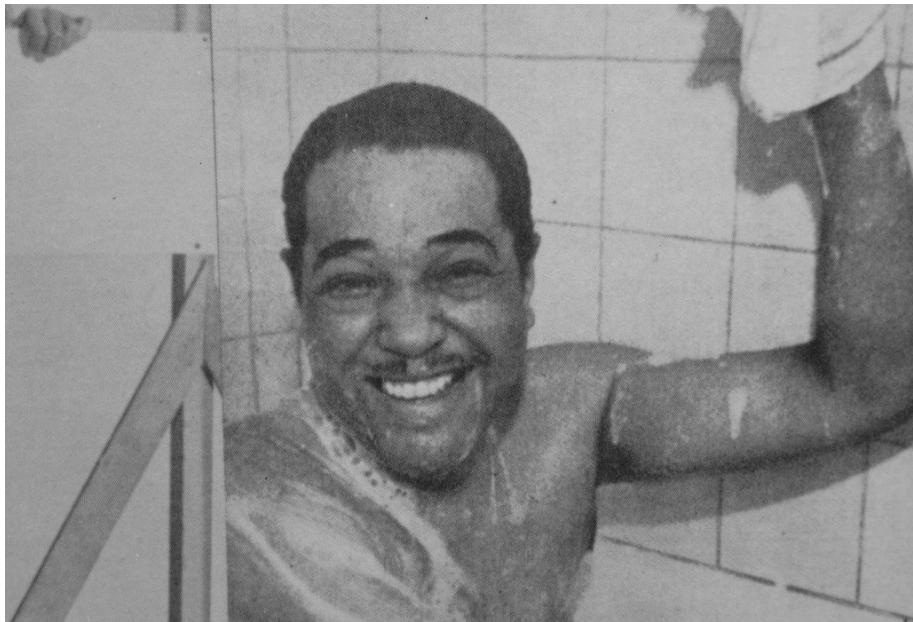
On Thursday afternoon Ellington took time to visit the Tivoli Gardens again, riding the balloon wheel, trying the Tivoli ice cream and enjoying the sun, with the B.T. reporter and photographer in tow. On the way, Duke charmed a little girl who had his picture taken with him and afterwards trailed after him until he had to lead her back to her smiling mother. The resulting B.T. photo spread 'Duke's Day in Town' also included shots of Ray Nance in his hotel room in his pyjamas, Nelson Williams 'playing the piano backwards' and Duke and Kay Davis together.^{iv}

After the last Thursday concert, around midnight on June 1st, Ellington took a walk in the inner city of Copenhagen and happened to pass by the University, where around 3000 students were gathered in celebration of summer and the University's 471 year's anniversary (sic!). Music for dancing was provided by a band led by Danish pianist-composer-orchestra leader Børge Roger Henrich-



ceeded in obtaining something to eat – a shrimp sandwich and a cold beer – before being dragged away by an American secretary and an insistant Kay Davis to catch the last 20 minutes of singer June Richmond's performance in a show at the nearby Dagmar Theatre. The evening ended in the Tivoli Gardens, where Duke finally had a more substantial meal and declared himself happy with everything except the cold weather.ⁱⁱ

The four concerts took place on Wednesday May 31st and Thursday June



sen, and when Ellington unexpectedly appeared in the University courtyard, curious to see what was happening, he was lifted up on the stage to 'a deafening ovation'.^v Ellington sat down to the piano, the band joined in, 'a wonderful jam session' ensued, and a smiling Ellington left after inviting all the students to his concert in Copenhagen on Tuesday the 6th. The next day, Friday June 2nd, Duke moved on to Sweden to play a concert in Malmö, just an hour's sailing time away from Copenhagen, on the Swedish southern coast.

The four Copenhagen concerts had been a success with both audiences and reviewers; 'Duke Ellington gave us the World's finest jazz' ran a headline in B.T.^{vi} Based on the large audience support, and with Ellington having a day free between concerts in Sweden, two extra 'benefit concerts'^{vii} in K.B. Hallen had quickly been scheduled for Tuesday June 6th. Ellington had promised to play requests from the audiences; these were to be mailed to B.T.'s Editorial Desk and the tunes getting the most votes would be submitted to Ellington. However, while Ellington was away playing in Sweden from June 2-4, the benefit concerts were cancelled. This happened partly because of disappointing ticket sales, but equally because a circle of jazz fans in the towns of Randers and Aalborg, see-

ing a possible chance of bringing Duke to Jutland, on June 3rd telegraphed the manager for Ellington's Danish concerts, Ingvar Blicher-Hansen, an irresistible economic offer for two concerts in Aarhus (Denmark's second-largest city) on June 6th. This was swiftly agreed and arranged; according to reports in the local press Ellington declared himself delighted to be playing in Jutland. Two major local newspapers carried largely well-informed articles about Ellington, Strayhorn and the band members on the day of the concerts^{viii} and a larger than



Gave til Aarhus fra Duke Ellington Duke Ellington indspillede efter Konerten i Aarhus-Hallen i Aftes en Grammofonplade i Hammerschmidt's Optagelses-Studie i Aarhus. Pladen, der er en Gave til Rundskuet i Aarhus, omfatter to af Duke Ellingtons kendte Melodier: 'Mood Indigo' og 'Sophisticated Lady' — en Leukkerbisen for Jazz-Tilhængere. Pladen vil blive fremstillet i 10 Eksemplarer, der hørtoades blandt Købene af Aarets Rundskuehæfte, Her ses Duke Ellington i Hammerschmidt's Optagelses-Studie i Aarhus. Til højre for ham staar den aarhusianske Hyggeplanter Finn Albertsen.

usual ad was inserted in both. Still, the short notice and the summer heat meant that the two concerts did not draw full houses. Audiences were enthusiastic and

reviews very positive; 'Unforgettable evening with Duke Ellington' ran one headline.^{ix} Among the 2500 who did attend was 15 year-old Frits Schjøtt, whose entertaining account of the experience can be found on TDWAW2.^x

After the concerts Duke was off to a local recording studio where he recorded two piano solos, *Sophisticated Lady* and *Mood Indigo* as a 'Gift to Aarhus from Duke Ellington'^{xi} to be pressed in ten copies and raffled off at the city's annual fair, and had fun accompanying impresario Blicher-Hansen's singing on one tune^{xii} as well as singing and playing *I'm Afraid of Loving You Too Much* by himself.

Ellington's next visit to Denmark was in 1958, playing two concerts on November 7 in K.B. Hallen. Nine more visits would follow, and enthusiasm for Duke Ellington and his music would remain high, but such spectacles as newspaper reporters and photographers following at the heels of Duke through Copenhagen were never to be seen again.

Footnotes

ⁱ Carlt (comic strip). B.T. (Daily newspaper), 1.6.1950, p.15

ⁱⁱ 'Sulten Ellington kom til Byen. B.T. 31.5.1950, p.8

ⁱⁱⁱ All other sources consulted for this article place the recordings as having been made after the Wednesday concerts, on 31.5. A newspaper article on the day of the broadcast, however, explicitly states that they

were made on Thursday 1.6. ('Duke Ellington i Radioen i Aften'. Berlingske Aftenavis, June 3, 1950, p.2). It is likely, as pointed out by Erik Wiedemann, that the recordings were made after midnight, in the early hours of Thursday 1.6. (E.W.: Duke Ellington i Danmark : en diskografisk ekskurs. Musik & forskning, Bd.13, 1987/88, p. 57-69)

^{iv} Duke's Dag i Byen. B.T. 2.6.1950, p.14

^v 'Hamm': Rektor magnificus: 'Og saa danser vi'. Politiken (Daily newspaper), 2.6.1950, p.6

^{vi} Profit from the Benefit Concerts was to go to summer camps for Copenhagen children.

^{vii} Jazzens ukronede Konge og hans sorte Følge. Aarhus Stifts-Tidende (Daily Newspaper), 6.6.1950, p.10

^{viii} Konge I 25 Aar. Jyllands-Posten (Daily newspaper), 6.6.1950, p.12

^{ix} Uforglemmelig aften med Duke Ellington. Demokraten (Daily newspaper), 7.6.1950, p.3

^x Frits Schjøtt's account of attending one of the Aarhus concerts as a 15-year old can be found on David Palmqvist's TDWAW2, date Tuesday 6.6.1950.

^{xi} Gave til Aarhus fra Duke Ellington. Aarhus Stifts-Tidende, 7.6.1950, p.8

^{xii} Listed in DESOR (DE5006d) as *I Met a Little Miss*

The Duke Ellington Giants

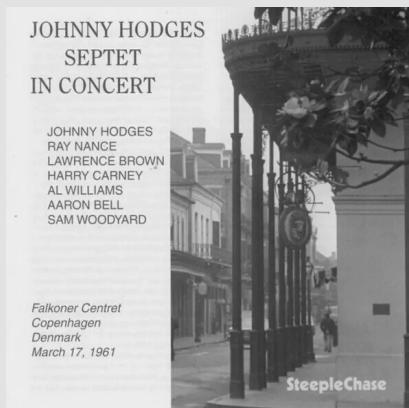
**Johnny Hodges Septett
in Concert: Falkoner
Centret, Köpenhamn, Dan-
mark, 17 mars 1961. Steep-
leChase SCCD 36507.**

'The Duke Ellington Giants': Johnny Hodges (as), Harry Carney (bar), Lawrence Brown (tb), Ray Nance (tp, vcl, vn), Al Williams (p), Aaron Bell (b), Sam Woodyard (dms)

Under 2022 initierade det danska bolaget SteepleChase en serie utgåvor av tidigare utgivna inspelningar från konserter på Falkoner Centret i Köpenhamn. I denna serie har nu en CD släppts från konserten den 17 mars 1961 med en grupp Ellington-musiker, som på initiativ av Norman Granz turnerade i Europa, medan Duke var upptagen med arbetet med filmen "Paris Blues".

Gruppens konserter annonserades av Norman Granz i pressen som "An evening with The Duke Ellington Giants". Liksom tidigare utgåvor av konserter från turnén presenteras dock denna CD under Hodges namn som ett erkännande av hans status som det största och mest "säljbara" namnet bland Duke Ellingtons musiker.

Repertoaren känns igen från flera av de andra utgåvorna från turnén, Stockholm 14.3. (Ariston LP/Storyville



CD), Paris 18.3. (Fremeaux CD) och Berlin 22.3 (Pablo 2CD); det enda "nya" spåret är Carneys *Sophisticated Lady*, med hans "circular breathing". De fyra blåsarna delar ganska lika på solutrymmet; Hodges har fem, med *On the Sunny Side of the Street* och *I Got It Bad* som välkända höjdpunkter, Carney och Nance vardera fyra och Brown tre. Gruppen är samspelet, och stämningen bland musikerna avslappnad, t.o.m munter när Johnny Hodges råkar ut för några "squeaks" vid framförandet av *Things Ain't What They Used To Be*.

Gruppens "gäst", pianisten Al Williams, som inte är påverkad av att ha spelat låtarna hundratals, om inte tusentals gånger levererar lyhört och uppfinningsrikt ackompanjemang utan att försöka imitera Ellington. Hans inledande solon i *Perdido* från Köpenhamn, Paris och Berlin är mycket olika;

i Falkoner Centret får han ett extra korus, och lyckas infoga ett citat från *In an English Country Garden*.

Jämförande avlyssning av de fyra konserterna avslöjar inga skillnader i arrangemangen. Tempot ändras dock i några fall under turnén; *The Jeep Is Jumpin'* spelas i Stockholm betydligt långsammare än senare. De namnkunniga solisterna har framfört dessa nummer under många år i Ellingtons orkester, men här ges tillfälle att avlyssna nyanserade fraseringar och tolkningar.

Inspelingen, som påstås ha gjorts av Falkoner Centrets ljudtekniker, är av utmärkt kvalitet. Det välskrivna inlägget är författat av den amerikanske jazzskribenten Neil Tesser, och som han skriver, kunde man bara önska sig att musikerna hade släppt tyglarna lite och avvikit från det fastlagda programmet.

För de som inte har eller aldrig har hört musik från The Duke Ellington Giants konserter rekommenderas denna CD utan förbehåll. De som känner till en eller flera av de andra släppta konserterna kommer att kunna bedöma själva behovet av inspelingen av ännu en konsert med gruppen, men jag kan inte föreställa mig att någon beundrare av Johnny Hodges och de andra "Giants" kommer att bli besviken över att bekanta sig med Falkoner Centret-konserten.

Sven-Erik Baun Christensen

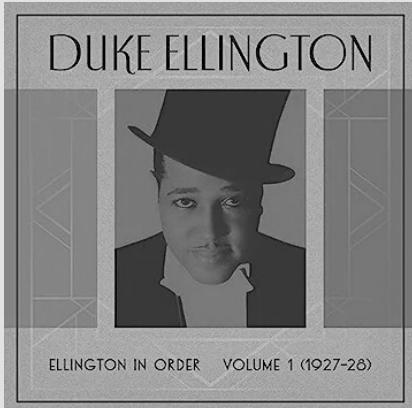
Ellington In Order

Sony Music sitter på mycket Ellington-material. Det har rättigheterna till allt som spelats in på t.ex. Okeh, Victor, RCA och Columbia inklusive underteckneter till dem. Därför är det en viktig och välkommen nyhet att Sony Music bestämt att ge ut kronologiskt alla inspelningar av Duke Ellington som företaget äger. Det sker under namnet "Ellington In Order" och den första

volymen dök upp på nätet i mitten av juni. En speciell aspekt av projektet är att materialet ges ut i DSP-format så att de kan strömmas av digitala tjänster som Spotify, Apple Music, Tidal, Deezer, Qubuz och YouTube. Man måste alltså prenumerera på någon av dessa tjänster och det kostar i allmänt mellan 100 och 200 kronor beroende på vilken ljudkvalitet man vill ha. På Qubuz

kan man också köpa albumet i formatet 44.1 kHz 24 bits vilket är lite bättre ljudmässigt än CD.

"Ellington In Order" leds av jazzproducenten Chuck Granata. Han har tidigare gjort en liknande serie med Doris Day-inspelningar. Ellingtonspecialisten och DESS-medlemmen Ian Bradley har intervjuat Chuck Granata om projektet och utdrag ur intervjun



finns både i hans Facebook-inlägg och på hans Ellington Live-webbplats

(<https://ellingtonlive.blogspot.com>).

”Ellington in Order”, Volume 1 (1927-28) innehåller 43 nyigen ”remastrade” spår inspelade för Columbia, Victor och OKeh mellan 1927 och 1928. Allt material finns dock tillgängligt på CD sedan tidigare, dels i den stora RCA-boxen (CD 1 och 2 upp till spår 4) och dels i boxen OKeh Ellington.

”Ellington in Order” saknar dock – liksom RCA- och OKeh Ellington-boxarna – tagning C av *Black and Tan Fantasy* inspelad den av Okeh den 3 november 1927. Den finns dock med på t.ex. volume 3 i serien Duke Ellington

Complete Edition. ”Ellington in Order” saknar också inspelningarna för Pathé- och Cameo-sessionerna från slutet av 1928, men de finns med på volume 4 av Duke Ellington Complete Edition. Skälet till att de saknas är att Sony Music inte äger rättigheterna till dem.

Det är med spänning jag väntar på fortsättningen. Kommer Chuck Granata att ha tillräckligt med muskler för att få fram ur Sonyarkiven det material som Phil Schaap misslyckades att få Sony att ge ut till 100-årsjubileet av Ellingtons födelse.

Ulf Lundin

Joya Sherrill

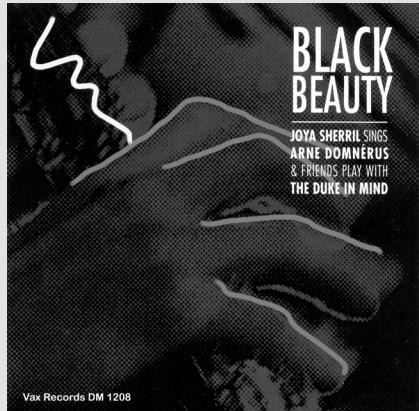
Joya deltog i Ellingtonkonferensen i Stockholm 1994 och året därefter gjorde hon ett återbesök i Stockholm och Anders R. Öhman passade då på att göra några inspelningar med henne tillsammans med den svenska jazzeliten. En CD gavs ut (Phontastic 8834) där producenten även plockat ner från hyllan ett antal nummer med Arne Domnérus och hans orkester från andra tillfällen. Speciellt skall nämnas *Don't You Know I Care* och *Almighty God*, som Domnérus tillsammans med Ulf Wesslén spelade i Mariakyrkan i

samband med konferensen 1994. Alla melodier som spelas är Ellington/Strayhorn-kompositioner.

Av okänd anledning marknadsfördes denna CD inte särskilt aktivt av Phontastic, kanske för att namnet Sherrill var felstavat till Sherril? Det är därför glädjande att VAX Records nu skapat en möjlighet att återuppleva denna intressanta musik.

Albumet publiceras endast som digital musiktjänst och kan streamas via <https://orcd.co/blackbeauty>

Bo Haufman



ville försöka etablera sig som sångare. Allt detta var dock en del av Ellingtons verklighet och något han tvingades att leva med. Att förändra historien är att göra den falsk. Vad blir nästa steg? Skall solon i Ellingtons produktion elimineras eller manipuleras för att låta bättre? Vad skulle konstvärlden anse om museer runt om i världen började ”förbättra” konstverk av Rembrandt och van Gogh? Jag skulle protestera precis som jag vill göra mot denna utgåva av förfalskad Ellingtonmusik.

Bo Haufman

The Expurgated Ellington

Med utskicket av DESUK:s medlems-tidning Blue Light (Volume 30 Number 1 Spring 2023) medföljde en CD med ovanstående titel. Upphovsmannen Graham Colombé har uppenbarligen alltid retat sig på de sångare som medverkade i många av Ellingtons tidiga inspelningar. Visst kan man hålla med om detta. Det kan ofta upplevas något besvärande att höra Irving Mills, Dick Robertson, Chick Bullock m.fl. framföra sina vokalinslag på ett dominerande och påfrestande sätt. CDn innehåller 33 nummer från åren 1928 till 1931 och

med dagens teknik har Colombé lyckats eliminera alla sånginslag från dessa inspelningar. Emellertid har han något inkonsekvent behållit Baby Cox vokal i *I Can't Give You Anything But Love* från den 30 oktober 1928. Tekniskt är det mycket bra gjort och vid en hastig avlyssning märker man inte att vokalinslagen är raderade. Men personligen tycker jag inte om detta sätt att hantera arvet efter Duke Ellington. Med största sannolikhet var Ellington tvingad av Irving Mills att ackompanjera den tids populära sångare och Mills själv

Medleys beyond category

When we think about Duke Ellington's medleys, it's usually the one containing all his hit songs, performed at every concert, that springs to mind. The reason for playing those long medleys was probably both economical and practical. Playing all his famous songs in 15-20 minutes left more room for his new compositions.

In 2022, Leila Olivesi made a presentation on Ellington's medleys at the online meeting that Ulf Lundin put together. She spent most of the time talking about the three vintage oldies, *Black and Tan Fantasy*, *Creole Love Call* and *The Mooche*. These three numbers were put together in a medley in 1958 and remained in the repertoire for the rest of Duke's career. The medley has been a favorite of mine since I discovered Ellington's music in the late 90s, and I think it's a work of genius. More on that later. Leila's presentation not only reminded me of an old favorite, but also made me think a lot about Ellington's medleys. He was often accused of making music consisting of bits and pieces that he joined together. From what I know, Igor Stravinsky worked much the same way, shuffling around small sections of music until he found the combination he liked the most. Listening again to his famous ballet *Petrushka* recently confirmed that. The difference is, that Duke did this at rehearsals and in the recording studio, whereas Stravinsky did it at home.

Ellington put together a lot of medleys during his career, and I believe studying them can tell us something about how he worked as a composer. One of Duke's most famous compositions, *Rockin' in Rhythm*, as it was performed from the mid 50s and on, is actually a medley consisting of three tunes: *Kinda Dukish* (1953), *Rockin' in Rhythm* (1930) and *Dallas Doings* (1933). Despite that, it's rarely thought of as such. The reason, I think, is because they are joined so well together that it sounds like one piece.

The Japanese Medley

An interesting composition to look at in this context is *Ad Lib on Nippon* from

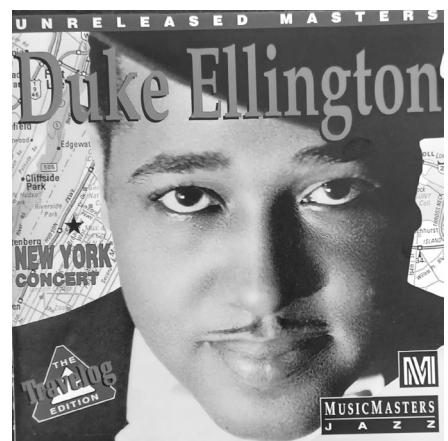
The Far East Suite (RCA Victor - LSP-3782). It consists of 4 movements: *Fugi*, *Igo*, *Nagoya* and *Tokyo*, that are joined together to make one piece, but can we also describe it as The Japanese Medley? At least two of the four movements had some life on their own as well. *Igo* was used in the *American Airlines Astrofreight System* film in 1964 and is released on the CD: *Theatre – TV – Cinema by Maison du Duke* (MDD 011). *Nagoya* exists in a 8 min solo piano recording also from 1964, and is available on *The Piano Player* released by Storyville (101 8399).

Ellington did a great job connecting the four movements. *Fugi* for example, with its unusual ascending theme of three fifths and two minor sixths, ending on the dissonant B flat over A minor, is perfectly resolved by *Igo* with its descending theme. The tempo change is a welcome contrast as well.

The Blues Medley

On May 20, 1964 Ellington did a piano recital at Columbia University in New York, and on that occasion he played something called *The Blues Medley*. According to the CD: *New York Concert* by Music Masters (01512-65122-2), it consisted of three tunes: *Happy-Go-Lucky Local*, *John Sander's Blues* and *C Jam Blues*, but two more well known themes: *B Sharp Blues* and *Tutti For Cootie* are also part of this medley. Duke didn't play these 5 tunes in the usual medley fashion, one song after the other, but instead he goes back and forth between them. This also involves three different key signatures, with the result that we hear *John Sander's Blues* in both A flat and C major. From *Tutti For Cootie* he only plays the C minor theme. It's a pleasure to listen to how easily and elegantly he combines the various themes with a little ad libbing in between.

An interesting comparison is *Things Ain't What They Used To Be* from *The Duke Plays Ellington* album (Capitol T-477). This is also a trio recording, but even if it's not a medley, they still have a lot in common. Instead of playing an improvi-



sed solo after the theme presentation, he continues to play blues themes, or riffs if you will, much in the same way as in the medley. The difference is that these themes are not established as independent tunes as far as I know. From the same album comes *B Sharp Blues*, which he plays in a similar manner. That tune, by the way, ended up being part of *C Jam Blues*, which can be heard on the album *Blues in Orbit* (Columbia CS 8241)

The Theme Medley

The 1947 Carnegie Hall concert (Prestige P-24075) contained a couple of unusual medleys. One was named *Theme Medley* and consisted of four tunes: *East St. Louis Toodle-oo*, *Echoes of Harlem*, *Black and Tan Fantasy* and *Things Ain't What They Used to Be*. The transitions Ellington makes here are equally surprising and coherent to my ears. After *East St. Louis*, *Black and Tan* is played over the bass line from *Echoes of Harlem*. Then we get *Echoes* in complete form followed by *Things Ain't*. But instead of presenting the new theme right away, we get a trombone solo by Lawrence Brown. Then the medley concludes as expected.

A more well known medley is *I Let a Song Go Out of My Heart* and *Don't Get Around Much Anymore*. Here the primarily ascending melody of *I Let a Song* is answered by *Don't Get Around's* primarily descending melody, much like *Fugi* and *Igo*. The chord progressions are also quite similar.

A more obscure combination is *Take the "A" Train* and *Harlem Airshaft*. Ellington played that medley on a 1955 TV show, which can be found on the CD: *Special Occasions* released by Maison du Duke (MDD 013). We only get the intro and first A section of *"A" Train*. Ellington then makes the transition simply by speeding up the tempo, and it works surprisingly well.

The three vintage oldies

Ellington's greatest medley, to my ears, is the combination *Black and Tan Fantasy*, *Creole Love Call* and *The Mooche*. It's clearly very carefully planned, and the transitions between each song are very smooth and elegantly done. Ellington must have been very satisfied with it, because it stayed in the book for around 13 years.

Black and Tan is played as usual until we get to the trumpet solo. Ellington then makes a smooth transition to *Creole Love Call*, simply by letting the trombones play the new theme as a background to the trumpet solo. Then the trumpet solo ends, and the three clarinets takes over the theme. Next, the band jumps straight to the solo clarinet theme.

The transition to *The Mooche* is also worth noticing. Most arrangers would make a transition to the first theme of the new song in this situation. Ellington had a much better idea. The clarinet solo from *Creole* ends in a short cadence, and then the band jumps to the clarinet duet from *The Mooche*. This is the work of a genius mind. First of all, it sounds coherent because the clarinet solo continues, the tempo is the same, and it's still based on the blues. Secondly, it adds variety to the arrangement because it's now a clarinet duet, it's in a new key, and it's a new theme. After the duet, the band jumps to the beginning of *The Mooche*, and then the medley ends as *The Mooche* usually does.

Composing methods

All this tells us a lot about Ellington's working method. He must have had very limited time to compose due to his performing career, and therefore invented ways to compose very fast. One of the shortcuts he used was the blues. Instead of making new chord progressions

all the time, he always had the option to use the 12 bar blues as a starting point. That way he avoided getting stuck, staring at a blank piece of paper.

Ellington also used other chord progressions that he didn't make himself. A few that springs to mind are: *Tiger Rag*, *I Got Rhythm* and *Rose Room*. The possibilities and limitation that these structures provided, inspired him and many others to make new pieces. And once you have some material to work with, you're in business as a composer.

Another shortcut was the reuse of his own material. *Riding On a Blue Note* became part of *Black from Black, Brown and Beige*. A section from *Blue Tune* was modified and reused in *Loco Madi* from the *UWIS Suite*. And thanks to Michael Kilpatrick's reconstruction of *Bool*, we now know that part of it was reused in *It's Freedom* from the *Second Sacred Concert*. The question is, does that make these compositions medleys?

Since the medleys consist of familiar material, it's very easy for us to follow how he connected different ideas. When he composed *Dallas Doings* and *Kinda Dukish*, I think his starting point was *Rockin' in Rhythm*. At some point later, he saw the potential of combining them. The same goes for *C Jam* and *B Sharp Blues*.

But what about pieces like *The Clothed Woman* and *Sepia Panorama*. Although they are masterpieces, they consist of several contrasting sections, and one may well get the impression that perhaps they were not meant to be put together from the beginning. This is, of course, only conjecture, but Ellington could easily have composed the various sections without having thought in advance that they should be joined together into one composition.

Conversely, you can hear the *Black and Tan Fantasy*, *Creole Love Call* and *The Mooche* medley as one of Ellington's extended compositions. The way he has put the three tunes together is beyond category to my ears. The first time I heard these three numbers was actually in that medley, and I remember that it was not so easy to hear where one ended and the other began. Maybe it's time we take Ellington's medleys more seriously.

Rasmus Henriksen

Tony Bennett in memoriam

Tony Bennett gick ur tiden den 21 juli i en ålder av 96 år. Han var en av de stora amerikanska sångarna i samma skola som Frank Sinatra, Mel Tormé, Dean Martin m.fl. Hans stora nummer var *I Left My Heart In San Francisco*. Han hade tydliga jazzinfluenser och uppträdde vid flera tillfällen med både Count Basie och Duke Ellington.

Första gången han samarbetade med Ellington var den 26 april 1966 då de medverkade i en TV-show kallad "The Grammy Award Show". De båda sammanstrålade igen den 28 februari 1968 för ett framträdande i "Tonight Show". Nästa tillfälle är i april 1968 när Bennett och Ellington tillsammans gör en turné i mellanvästern. Mycket material finns bevarat från ett tillfälle i Madison, WI.

Sista tillfället de båda uppträder tillsammans är i Ed Sullivan Show den 6 april 1969. Dessa framträdanden finns bevarade men inget av dem har hittills publicerats.



Tony Bennett hyste en stor beundran för Duke Ellington och han umgicks stundtals med honom under privata former. Han står även nämnd som kompositör till *Be Cool And Groovy For Me* tillsammans med Ellington och Cootie Williams.

Tony Bennett hade ytterligare en sträng på sin lyra. Han var en dukig målare och målade ett känt porträtt av Ellington, som vi ser på bifogade bild.

Bo Haufman

Flamingo

By Mike Zirpolo

As 1940 was coming to an end, Duke Ellington was in a tizzy. He was member of ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers), having been accepted into that very closed society in 1935. This was more, far more, than an honorary society. Membership in it was a key economic component for any successful composer. A substantial part of Ellington's earnings each year came from royalties ASCAP collected for Duke and paid to him. Duke definitely did not want to do anything that would jeopardize his excellent standing in ASCAP. Here is a summary of Duke Ellington's problem:

ASCAP, America's largest musical performing rights organization, was determined to extract more money from the radio networks for the privilege of airing songs written by its members, on whose behalf ASCAP collected and distributed performing-rights fees. The networks responded by setting up a competing organization called BMI (Broadcast Music Inc.). ASCAP's catalogue amounted to some 1.250.000 songs, including nearly all of the top hits of 1940. The radio boycott of ASCAP songs went into effect on January 1, 1941, forcing bands that performed on the radio to play either BMI controlled or public domain songs during their programs. Soon every bandleader was frantically commissioning arrangements of traditional tunes, folk tunes or classical melodies.

Duke Ellington was an extraordinary person, in addition to being a great musician, composer, arranger and bandleader. His creativity extended into all of those aspects of his life, and many others. By the beginning of 1941, Ellington had been a bandleader for over fifteen years. He had during that time confronted and overcome myriad challenges that would have defeated a lesser person, and would continue doing so for the next thirty plus years. He devised a solution for the ASCAP boycott challenge that was uniquely Ducal.

On January 3, 1941, Duke Ellington and his band opened an engagement at



the Casa Manana, a popular Los Angeles nightspot in the Culver City district, not far from the MGM movie studio. Billy Strayhorn later provided a bit more context: "When we opened, we had airtime every night, but could not play our library. We had to play non-ASCAP material. Duke was in ASCAP, but I wasn't. So we had to write a new library."

Mercer/Strayhorn contributing

Probably for reasons of telling a good story as much as anything else, Duke made this statement to the press: "After spending \$8.000 for a musical education for my son, I will now have a chance to realize the returns. Mercer will sit at my right hand during 1941 and write compositions under his own name. He'll do much arranging as well as composing." Although Mercer Ellington would in fact assist with the creation of some new music for the Ellington band, the vast majority of new music that was written at that time for the Ellington orchestra was written by Billy Strayhorn.

Duke was well aware of the approach of the ASCAP boycott long before January 1, 1941. Nevertheless, he did not really deploy Strayhorn and Mercer to begin writing new music until the Ellington band was en route to California

by train at the very end of 1940. While on that train trip, Strayhorn either composed and/or composed and arranged many pieces that soon would be a part of the Ellington band's book of arrangements. These included: *After All*, *Chelsea Bridge*, *A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing*, *My Little Brown Book*, *Passion Flower* and the most famous of all Strayhorn compositions *Take The "A" Train*. Slightly later *Rain Check*, *Clementine*, *Rocks In My Bed* and *Someone* were being performed by the Ellington band. Mercer Ellington, a very bright young man with an excellent musical education, was learning how to interact productively with two musical geniuses; his father and Billy Strayhorn.

The first recording

Duke Ellington had incorporated Tempo Music in 1940, after he freed himself from music publisher Irving Mills's various enterprises. Soon, Duke began publishing new compositions written by him and by Billy Strayhorn through Tempo Music, Inc. As the ASCAP imbroglio approached, Duke aggressively recruited other young and/or unknown composers to sign contracts with Tempo. Among those he signed were Ted Grouya and Edmund Anderson. One of the first songs they submitted to Tempo Music was *Flamingo*. In preparation for the ASCAP boycott, Duke had Billy Strayhorn write an arrangement on *Flamingo*. Grouya and Anderson were not members of ASCAP.

Strayhorn's arrangement on *Flamingo* arrived in the Ellington band's book in late 1940. Upon first seeing what Strayhorn had produced, Duke was impressed, and quickly recorded the arrangement. Nevertheless, he was too busy to organize his thoughts about this latest example of Strayhorn's work, and express them cogently until shortly before his death. This is what he said then: "Flamingo was a turning point in vocal background orchestration, a renaissance

in elaborate ornamentation for the accompaniment of singers. Since then, other arrangers have become more and more daring, but Billy Strayhorn really started it all with *Flamingo*."

Walter van de Leur, the preeminent expert on critical analysis of Strayhorn's music, has written at length about Billy's arrangement of *Flamingo*. He devoted five pages, including musical notations, to his review of what Strayhorn did with *Flamingo*. Here are some of his observations: "*Flamingo's initial bars are an exposition rather than an introduction, as they present the song's characteristic opening interval – 'Flamingo' spelled out by the trombone and echoed by the trumpet – as well as the main rhythmic cell that is one of the arrangement's unifiers. On a subliminal level, this exposes the tonal ambiguity Strayhorn explores in the arrangement, pointed up by grating layers of saxophones and brass and a low-register repeated polytonal chord. This creates a dissonant texture. As the vocal chorus draws to an end, Strayhorn starts the first half of a complex thirty-two bar transitory section that will modulate from Db to A via Ab and F, and back to Db. All modulations build on the song's original material.*"

Herb Jeffries later revealed that only at the recording session did Strayhorn suggest to Jeffries; "He suggested that I do that oh, oh, in there, and do that modulation down through it. He really directed that whole record."

Strayhorn's impact on young arrangers was great. Gerry Mulligan later recalled: "I was part of a small community of very young musicians and arrangers, and we paid a lot of attention to who was doing what with all of the bands. When Strayhorn came on the scene, he just blew us away, because he was doing very complicated, sophisticated things, yet they didn't sound complicated to the ear at all, they sounded completely natural and very emotional. To bring all that complexity to bear and have it be so beautiful was something incredible to everyone who knew anything."

At the recording the solo trombone and trumpet parts in the exposition/introduction are played by Lawrence Brown and Wallace Jones. Drummer Sonny Greer's accompaniment using brushes, including his perfectly placed cymbal swishes, is understated but co-

lourful. Duke's piano accompaniment is likewise a superb enhancement to the vocal as well as everything the band does. Herb Jeffries's vocal chorus, as well as the vocalise mentioned above, are excellent. Jeffries had a rich, resonant voice, a fine sense of pitch and a supremely relaxed delivery, all of which are well utilized in this performance. The solos after the vocal chorus are by Lawrence Brown on cup-muted trombone and Johnny Hodges on alto saxophone. The singing first alto saxophone part was played by Otto Hardwick. Brown's trombone and Duke's piano are heard in the coda. The pointillistic trombone trio notes Strayhorn scatters throughout the arrangement are particularly felicitous.

Signing with Capitol Records

Duke Ellington had returned to recording for Victor in early 1940. His association with that company continued until September 3, 1946, and overall was very successful. He then made what turned out to be a large mistake by signing to record for the upstart Musicraft label, making the first recordings for that label on October 26, 1946. Shortly after that, Musicraft went bankrupt. By September 1, 1947, Duke was recording for Columbia. The relationship lasted through 1952, when Columbia did not renew Ellington's contract. He then signed with Capitol early in 1953 and made his first recordings for that label on April 6, 1953. That affiliation lasted until May 19, 1955.

To set the recording Duke Ellington made of *Flamingo* for Capitol Records on April 9, 1953, in context, I will cite to the liner notes to the wonderful 1995 collection of Duke's mid-1950s recordings for the Capitol label gathered, remastered and reissued by Mosaic. Those notes were written by Duke's long-time friend and biographer Stanley Dance.

"The period during which Duke Ellington and his Orchestra recorded for Capitol (1953-1955) was a difficult one for jazz in general and big bands in particular. The effect of World War II, still felt on the national economy, had been prolonged by the war in Korea. Many of the pre-war venues, where big bands played usually for dancers, had ceased to exist, and lengthy engagements at those that remained were seldom possible, with

the result that arduous one nighter tours became more than ever a way of life for most musicians in the big bands. Considerable competition was also forthcoming from smaller groups playing in the related Rock and R&B idioms. Promoters found that the heavy beat these groups favoured, when strongly amplified, drew crowds of young people in the unlikeliest places, even former garages. The reduced size of these bands constituted a big savings in terms of wages, transportation and hotels, so that more profit for the promoter was assured. Restrictions imposed under wartime conditions, had diminished the pre-war popularity of dancing, and television now offered alternative entertainment in the home. A couple of recording bans during the previous decade, which most musicians disagreed with, had further boosted the po-



Herb Jeffries and Jimmy Blanton.

pularity of singers at the expense of instrumentalists. But besides the different forms of competition, changes within jazz itself contributed to the decline of big bands."

Dave Dexter, Capitol's A&R-man, later wrote that Ellington wanted to hear his music "... on the jukeboxes, and the radio, and playing over the p.a. systems of shops and markets." In retrospect, we have come to understand that these ideas were becoming less and less realistic as the 1950s progressed. I suspect that Duke himself was well aware of this at the time. He was trying to keep his band working at least 340 days a year and had seen first-hand how increasingly difficult that had become in the years just before he signed with Capitol.



Duke instructing Ray Nance.

The second recording

The arrangement Billy Strayhorn did on *Flamingo* for this new Capitol recording is totally different from the one he had done for the original Victor recording in 1940. The primary difference is that there is no vocal in this arrangement. The melody of *Flamingo* is celebrated in this performance by Duke's always interesting pianistics, Ray Nance's violin and Paul Gonsalves's tenor saxophone. Behind those solos Strayhorn provided a shifting series of exquisite backgrounds that give the music a contemplative quality.

The performance starts with a brief introduction which leads into Ellington's

very personal melody exposition. Strayhorn deploys the reeds, at first with Jimmy Hamilton's clarinet, then without, and the open brass, played most gently, to create soft, lush cushions of sound behind the Maestro's piano. After this, Paul Gonsalves leads the modulation into Ray Nance's violin solo, his tenor saxophone sound swathed in warm brass. For the first sixteen bars of Nance's solo, his violin sound is enveloped by the soft reeds. Then comes a brief, but magnificently effective upward modulation started by the reeds and completed by the brass, that suggests the sun breaking through clouds on a balmy spring day. In the

following climactic sequence Nance's violin is accompanied by both the reeds and the brass together in a thicker, more ambiguous sonority. Gonsalves then returns in different key via Nance's (and Strayhorn's) sleight-of-hands modulation, with his glowing tenor saxophone sounds and a melodic paraphrase, now being accompanied by the three open trombones. Gonsalves plays a softly descending figure which lead to Ellington's return for an aphoristic finale.

This performance of *Flamingo* presents a sophisticated yet superbly listenable arrangement of a memorable melody, played with complete mastery by the Ellington band.

Postscript

Despite Duke's brilliant recording of *Flamingo* and a number of other excellent recordings for Capitol, his association with that label was a commercial failure. During the time Duke was recording for Capitol, he came as close as he ever would to giving up his band because of a general lack of interest in his music. But he persevered, and by 1956 was at the beginning of an Ellington renaissance, where his popularity around the world would increase greatly. This last golden age of Ellington would continue from the late 1950s until his death in 1974 and produce much remarkable music.

Mike Zirpolo is running a website "Swing & Beyond" with lots of interesting studies of music by various orchestras from the Swing Era. Go to: www.swingandbeyond.com. The above article plus the music can be found in the blog. We are grateful to Mike for his letting us quote his article.

DESS website

The DESS website has been subject to a restoration over the past months but is now back on the web. It looks different than before but all the content from the old DESS website is there and the Internet address continues to be "ellington.se". However, it may take some more time to have the site properly organized, but we will do our best to publish

some good articles during this period.

The website is designed to be an Ellington galaxy with the purpose of making it as easy as possible to find information about Duke Ellington – his life and music – and enjoy his musical achievements. It will reflect the development where individual Ellington websites and social media groups of

different kinds have become important vehicles to keep the Duke Ellington legacy alive, together with the few Ellington societies still active.

We will use the rest of the year to test if our concept works and are happy to be part of any dialogue about the best way forward.

Ulf Lundin

Brunswicks misstag

DESS-medlemmen och den tillika internationellt erkände diskografen Björn Englund har gjort oss uppmärksamma på ett, som han kallar, "lyckat misstag" av Brunswick 1931.

Det är mycket som kan ske vid skivutgivning. Många gånger har man tagit fel matris och skivan får en felaktig titel. Duke Ellington råkade ut för detta någon gång i början av 1930-talet när man pressade om en skiva, som tydligen sålt så bra att en ny upplaga behövdes. Det rörde sig om Brunswick 6093, som innehöll den första versionen av *Creole Rhapsody* i två delar från den 20 januari 1931. Vid denna omissnöjd ersattes del 2 av en tidigare kasserad och outgiven titel av Frankie Trumbauer, där han även sjöng, vilket kanske var orsaken till kasseringen och att en omtagning med en professionell sångare gjordes två månader senare.

Tidiga upplagor av Brian Rusts Jazz Records 1897-1942 listar enbart en titel från denna session och datering bara till

"april 1931" (utan dag). Det rörde sig om den kasserade titeln *Bass Drum Dan* (av Trumbauer), som bara utgavs på engelska Brunswick 1225 (Rust uppger felaktigt 01225). Den omtogs senare på Columbia den 17 augusti 1932. De övriga titlarna togs om den 24 juni 1931.

Så här ser sessionen från New York den 10 april 1931 ut:

- C 7693-A/B/C, *Georgia On My Mind*. Kasserad (provskiva finns av -A)
- C 9694-A eller -B, *Bass Drum Dan*, Brunswick (E) 1225
- C 7695-A/B, *Honeysuckle Rose*. Kasserad (Brunswick 6093)

Rust nämner inte att Brunswick 6093 är en Ellingtonutgåva. Han nämner inte heller under Ellington något om felpressningen. Matrisnumret för *Creole Rhapsody* del 2 är E 35040-A och hur man kunde ta C 7695 i stället är obegripligt. Frånsett Trumbauers sång (backad av flicktrion The King's Jesters) är detta en mycket

bra version med fint kornettspel av Andy Secrest (Rust anger felaktigt Nat Natoli), trombonisten Bill Rank och inte minst Trumbauer själv med sin vackra ton och känsliga gliss. Titeln finns på YouTube.

Något om A/B-sidor

Runt 1908 började skivbranschen gå över till dubbelsidiga skivor och man ville indikera vilken sida som skulle provspelas för presumtiva kunder genom A/B, 1/2 eller I/II. Edisons vertikalgraverade Diamond Discs var nästan 1 cm tjocka och där använde man R (Right) respektive L (Left). Brunswick strök undre katalognumret på B-sidan (se etikett på YouTube).

1926 började Lindströmkoncernen i Berlin spela in elektriskt och man indikerade detta genom en asterisk under katalognumret på Beka, Columbia, Odeon, Parlophon m.fl. (Även på sena Elophon i Sverige.)

Björn Englund

Gazell 1003

I augusti 1929 spelade Duke Ellington och hans Cotton Club Orchestra in filmen "Black And Tan" för RKO Productions Inc. I filmen spelas flera av Ellingtons vid den tiden mest kända kompositioner, bl.a. *Black And Tan Fantasy*. Musiken från filmen har på senare tid givits ut på ett flertal skivmärken, men för samlare har den svenska Gazell 1003 utgjort ett mysterium. Denna utgåva skall enligt diskografierna innehålla *Black And Tan Fantasy* från nämnda film. Men i samband med pressningen av Gazell-skivan skedde vissa misstag. Ett antal skivor innehöll i realiteten musik med Bunta's Storyville Jazz Band, som spelar *Ice Cream* och *Careless Love*. DESS-medlemmen Björn Englund har gjort ett närmare studium av förhållandet och rapporterar följande:

Den 14 oktober 1949 spelade Bunta's Storyville Jazz Band in *Ice Cream* (GRC 3)

och *Careless Love* (GRC 4), som utgavs på Gazell 1003 i december samma år.

Troligen 1949 utgav den franska piratmarknaden Anthologie du Jazz en 30 cm 78a (AFG 8) med fem titlar ur Duke Ellingtons superba 1929-kortfilm "Black And Tan". 1950 gav amerikanska piratmarknaden Jay ut en 25cm 78a (Jay 4) med utdrag ur samma film. Det är okänt om Jay 4 är dubbdat från AFG 8 eller filmens ljudband. 1950 gav Gazell ut en andra version av 1003 med samma innehåll som Jay. Den hade emellertid etiketterna för Buntas version och även samma matrisnummer! Då den var dubbdat bör den förutom GRC 3/4 även ha matrisnummer av typ RTJ-xxxx-GA/xxxx-GA.

Svenska Radiotjänst gjorde nämligen många dubbningar för Gazell av amerikanska skivor (även från 30cm till 25cm) och bokstaven "G" var Radiotjänsts kod

för dubbning. Detta är bara spekulationer eftersom varken Bo Haufman eller Björn Englund har sett eller avlyssnat någon av de tre skivorna. Björn vill minnas att det fanns en presentation av Ellingtonversionen i ett nummer av Gazells tidskrift "Jazz-Guide". Det underliga är att Benny Åslund i sin "The Wax Works of Duke Ellington" (1954) hävdar "The 10" is the more exhaustive version"! Jag undrar om det är feltryck för 12" – Speltiden för 10" (25cm) är 6 minuter och för 12" (30cm) 10 minuter.

Bo Haufman träffade vid ett tillfälle Gazells ägare John Engelbrekt och frågade om Gazell gett ut något av Duke Ellington men fick ett nekande svar. Detta tyder på att piratversionen var förbehållen en mindre intern krets och kanske pressades i 25, 50 eller 100 exemplar.

Björn Englund/Bo Haufman

KALLELSE!

Duke Ellington Society of Sweden kallar härmed sina medlemmar till medlemsmöte.

Måndagen den 16 oktober 2023

PLATS:

Franska Skolans aula,
Döbelnsgatan 3, Stockholm.
Portkod för kvällen: 1610.
Entrén öppen från kl. 17.00.
Entréavgift: 150:- i kontanter eller
via Swish.



Leo Lindberg.

annan musik med anknytning till Ellington. En personlig betraktelse på Duke Ellington och hans musik. Kanske känner flera av oss igen sig? Om tiden tillåter avslutar Göran med några intressanta videosnuttar ur Anders Asplunds samlingar.

Tidsangivelserna är ungefärliga.

Tag gärna med Dina vänner och bekanta till mötet. Det är viktigt för oss att besöksantalet blir så högt som möjligt för att ekonomin skall gå ihop. Viktigt är att alla köper lotter, helst skall hela ringen gå åt.

PRELIMINÄRT PROGRAM 2024:

25 mars – Medlemsmöte och årsmöte

29 april – Duke Ellingtons 125-årsdag firas. Vi återkommer härom.

14 oktober – Medlemsmöte

Ulf Lundin har planerat för ett antal DESScaféer under hösten: 11 september, 9 oktober, 13 november och 11 december. Vid varje tillfälle kommer något tema kring Duke Ellington att behandlas med medverkan av olika medlemmar. Allt sker via ZOOM och alla medlemmar blir löpande underrättade om exakt tidpunkt och innehåll.

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