

Dear Collector,

It is our privilege to present these five volumes of Duke Ellington and his Orchestra which originated in the World Broadcasting New York Studios during 1943 or 1945. Duke Ellington never enjoyed his music being categorized as jazz or pop or classical, and he was correct in doing that. His voicings were unique, his melodies highly inventive, his rhythms infectious, and his approach to his musical mistress was his own: his music was *Ellingtonia*. And here in these five volumes are some wonderful examples of his genius as a music maker and composer offered on commercial recordings for the first time. We welcome *Ellingtonia* to our *Circle of Bands*.

— George H. Buck, Jr.

(Continued from CCD-101)

It was a very exciting experience when I found that I had located the final disc of the sessions. Some were the test pressings of the session. Some were glass masters... one of them with a crack that you can hear if you listen persistently searching. We waited until George and Eleanor Buck planned a trip to Jack Towers' home in Virginia. I think that George carried the box in his lap all the way so that the glass discs would not be damaged. Jack called me in a few days and said, "Well, you got it all!" I was afraid to even touch a needle down on the discs when I found them so I had to wait for cassettes to come from Jack. Hearing them was even a bigger thrill than finding them. In some cases I had found the takes of the same tunes from two control boards. You could hear the difference some times and since the independent technicians starting and stopping the turntable would pickup differing conversation before and after the music, Jack included everything possible.

Each selection recorded was assigned yet another number and these ran consecutively also and they had to be assigned when plans were made for the program transcriptions that were to be sent to subscribing radio stations. There was music on both sides of the program discs and each side was assigned a BB number... and they appear to be in a higher numerical series than the series used for the recording masters. The example we are using, CCD-10 cut four, *Rocking' In Rhythm* was assigned selection numbers 6049-50. It received two selection numbers because of its length (over three-and-a-half minutes?) and BB 38042 which contained numbers 6049 through 6053, five numbers but only four selections... usually there were five numbers and five selections on each side of the discs. The selections of a program disc seldom reflect recording sequence or even date. The other selections on this particular side were: 6051, BB 37667, A Slip Of The Lip; 6052, BB 37653, Blues Skies; and 6053, BB 37667, Go Away Blues. (Continued on CCD-103)

— Wendell Echols

## DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA - 1943

The Duke Ellington Orchestra always had the widest ranging repertoire of any big band in or out of the jazz field. This repertoire covered everything from popular songs to concert works and the series of recordings which Duke made for World Transcriptions in 1943 and 1945 reflects this diversity of musical material. On the present CD for example, we have two new Ellington instrumentals, two popular ballads by other writers, an Ellington song, a Fats Waller standard, a Mercer Ellington blues and a revival of Juan Tizol's *Caravan*. Other revivals in the World Transcription series go further back, *Creole Love Call* from 1927 being the earliest composition used.

In 1943 and 1945 many of the masterpieces of the early 1940s were still a regular part of the band's performing repertoire. These include *C Jam Blues*, *Main Stem*, *Jack The Bear* and *Harlem Air Shaft*, all of which appear in this series, while earlier Ellington classics which receive new interpretations include *Rockin' In Rhythm*, *Mood Indigo*, *It Don't Mean A Thing* and *Ring Dem Bells*. Songs by other composers receive typically diversified treatment: Irving Berlin's *Blue Skies* is given a contemporary big band arrangement by Mary Lou Williams; George Gershwin's *Summertime* is a ballad feature for Albert Hibbler; Vincent Youmans' *Tea For Two*, Fats Waller's *Ain't Misbehavin'* and Gershwin's *Somebody Loves Me* are parts of a sequence of Variations On Themes designed as showcases for individual soloists; and *Rose Room* and *In The Shade Of The Old Apple Tree* are classic Ellington arrangements from the early 1930s. There are Ellington concertos: *Boy Meets Horn* and *Frantic Fantasy* for Rex Stewart and *Sentimental Lady* for Johnny Hodges are examples. The pop songs include Duke's big 1944 hit *I'm Beginning To See The Light* and his masterly *I Ain't Got Nothin' But The Blues*, one of the greatest ballad scores of all time. Of the Ellington concert works, we hear *The Magazine Suite* (consisting of *Downbeat*

*Shuffle, Esquire Swank* and *Metronome All Out*) and the only extant studio recording of *Bluetopia*, a piece used regularly as a concert opener at this time. Ellington the pianist is featured in duet with bassist Junior Raglin in *Pitter Panther Patter* as well as in countless vital contributions as band pianist. The vocal presentations range from Al Hibbler's ballads to Ray Nance's humorous and swinging vocal features. Overall, this series presents a wide spectrum of the creative talents of one of the greatest and most prolific artists of the twentieth century.

Volume One of the Duke Ellington World Transcription recordings ended with a previously unknown take of Duke's Main Stream. Ray Nance and Harold Baker come in for Dizzy Gillespie for the second day of this 1943 recording marathon. *Main Stem* is a swinging up-tempo blues with a great Hodges solo and some mercurial Rex Stewart at the start. A poised Jimmy Hamilton is followed by two contrasting trombone soloists - Tricky Sam Nanton (muted) and Lawrence Brown. On the second complete take (Take number three) which opens volume two the full arrangement is used with the tenor saxophone solo restored and played by Elbert Williams. Like *Hop - Skip - Jump* on volume one, *Main Stem* was issued on V Disc. Mercer Ellington and Luther Henderson wrote the wartime song *A Slip Of The Lip (Can Sink A Ship)* and the lyrics, of course, sound very dated. There is nothing dated at all about the way in which Ray Nance sings with such infectious swing. He is backed by a totally sympathetic band and the solos by Ray on trumpet and Johnny Hodges on alto are highlights of what is undoubtedly the best recording of a song which was heavily featured by Ellington at this time. *Three Cent Stomp* was introduced to the record buying public via the band's 1947 recording, but in fact the number was written some years earlier. This 1943 version is longer than the Columbia recording and features solos by Harold Baker, Joe Nanton, Ray Nance (muted), Junior Raglin, Rex Stewart and Elbert Williams. Because it is just one of a myriad of Ellington scores it is easy to overlook the sheer

mastery of the musical thinking in a piece like *Three Cent Stomp*. Diverse musical ideas, marvellous band work and rich solo personalities are blended perfectly. Take three, the version which was selected for issue on a radio transcription disc is a powerful performance with solos from Harold Baker, Tricky Sam Nanton, Ray Nance, Junior Raglin, Rex Stewart and Elbert Williams.

The next three selections are devoted to vocal features for Betty Roché, one of the finest vocalists Duke ever employed. Beautiful pitching, a warm voice, sensitive phrasing and intelligent interpretation are features of her singing. For reasons which are not obvious Ellington never featured Miss Roché on any of his well known songs and with a couple of notable exceptions the recordings from both her spells with the band are of un-remarkable material. Of the three songs here only *Go Away Blues* is by Ellington; it is a jivey little song which was revived in later years by Jimmy Rushing. *I Wonder Why* and *I Don't Want Anybody At All* are ballads which feature beautiful vocal interpretations. The former has a touch of Lawrence Brown's trombone and the three takes emphasize the skills and professionalism of the very gifted Betty Roché.

Now comes one of the *Variations On Themes*. The featured soloist on these was usually a member of the brass section and the orchestral backing usually featured a clarinet trio, with Harry Carney's bass clarinet prominent. Both of these ingredients are heard here, the soloist in *Ain't Misbehavin'* being Harold Baker who gives a superb demonstration of tasteful and melodic variation. Next comes Mercer Ellington's *Things Ain't What They Used To Be* in a full band version which features solos by Taft Jordan and Lawrence Brown as well as the great Johnny Hodges. The tempo here is closer to the 1941 original than most full band versions, while the Hodges diminuendo closing is an attractive feature which disappeared in later years. *Baby, Please Stop And Think About Me* is another Ellington composition. Although the title may suggest otherwise

# The Second Of Five Volumes In The Duke Ellington World Broadcasting Series

## DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA - 1943

(Recorded November 9, 1943, New York City)

- |   |      |
|---|------|
| 1. MAIN STEM ( <i>Duke Ellington</i> )  | 2:55 |
| Take three (BB 37667 - A Cl-3 World 6501)   |      |
| 2. A SLIP OF THE LIP (CAN SINK A SHIP)  | :50  |
| (BB 37667 - A Cl-4 unissued incomplete)   |      |
| ( <i>Mercer Ellington - Luther Henderson, Jr.</i> ) Vocal and trumpet, Ray Nance        |      |
| 3. Take two (BB 37667 A - Cl-5 World 6051)  | 3:32 |
| 4. THREE-CENT STOMP ( <i>Duke Ellington</i> )   | :38  |
| (BB 37667 - B Cl-1, unissued false start)   |      |
| 5. Take two (BB 37667 - B Cl-2 unissued)  | 3:27 |
| 6. Take three (BB 37667 - B Cl-3 World 6499-6500)                                       | 3:24 |
| 7. I WONDER WHY (BB 37667 - C Cl-1 unissued incomplete)                                 | 1:23 |
| ( <i>Mae Iris Davis</i> ) Vocal, Betty Roché  |      |
| 8. Take two (BB 37667 - C Cl-2, unissued)   | 3:39 |
| 9. Take three (BB 37667 - Cl-3 unissued incomplete)                                     | 1:51 |
| 10. Take four (BB 37667 - C Cl-4 World 7699)  | 3:35 |
| 11. GO AWAY BLUES (BB 37667 - D Cl-1, World 6053)                                       | 2:01 |
| ( <i>Duke Ellington</i> ) Vocal, Betty Roché  |      |
| 12. I DON'T WANT ANYBODY AT ALL<br>(IF I CAN'T HAVE YOU) (BB 37667 - D Cl-2 World 6020) | 3:14 |
| ( <i>Herb Magidson - Jule Styne</i> ) Vocal, Betty Roché                                |      |
| 13. AIN'T MISBEHAVIN' (BB 37667 - D Cl-3, World 6822-3)                                 | 3:37 |
| ( <i>Thomas Waller - Henry Brooks - Andy Razaf</i> ) Trumpet, Harold Baker              |      |

- |   |      |
|---|------|
| 14. THINGS AIN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE                               | 3:16 |
| (BB 37668 - A Cl-1 World 6503)                                      |      |
| ( <i>Mercer Ellington - Ted Persons</i> )                           |      |
| 15. BABY, PLEASE STOP! AND THINK ABOUT ME                           | :19  |
| (BB 37668 - A Cl-2, unissued false start) ( <i>Duke Ellington</i> ) |      |
| 16. Take two (BB 37668 - A Cl-3, unissued)                          | 2:42 |
| 17. Take three (BB 37668 - A Cl-4, World 6021)                      | 2:36 |
| 18. CARAVAN (BB 37668 - B Cl-1, World 7700-1)                       | 4:39 |
| ( <i>Duke Ellington</i> ) - <i>Juan Tizol</i>                       |      |

(Recorded December 1, 1943, New York City)

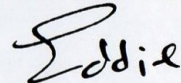
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|--|------|
| 19. IT DON'T MEAN A THING<br>(IF IT AIN'T GOT THAT SWING) (N-1055-1, unissued) | 2:39 |
| ( <i>Duke Ellington - Irving Mills</i> ) Vocal, Ray Nance and Taft Jordan      |      |
| 20. Take two (N-1055-2, unissued)  | 2:40 |
| 21. Take three (N-1055-3, World 6692)  | 2:42 |
| 22. JOHNNY COME LATELY (N-1056-1, World 6683)                                  | 1:43 |
| ( <i>Billy Strayhorn</i> )   |      |
| 23. Take two (N-1056-2, unissued)  | 1:40 |
| 24. CREOLE LOVE CALL (N-1057-1, incomplete)                                    | 2:05 |
| ( <i>Duke Ellington</i> )  |      |
| 25. Take two (N-1057-2, incomplete)  | 1:41 |
| 26. Take three<br>(N-1057-3, World 6689-6690)                                  | 4:26 |

this is an instrumental piece: the solos are by Ray Nance, Jimmy Hamilton, Taft Jordan and Elbert Williams. This is a brisk up-tempo performance with scoring which is rather conventional for Duke, but the band is on form and by take three they are swinging mightily. The final item for November 9th is the revival of Juan Tizol's *Caravan* from 1936. The composer is heard in the theme statement and both Jimmy Hamilton and Ray Nance contribute first recorded versions of solos which they were to play thousands of times over the next twenty five years. Hamilton is statuesque and mock-oriental, Nance swinging, humorous and also mock-oriental. The solos highlight here, however, is 32 bars of open trumpet by Harold Baker; Shorty was only rarely featured on this number and he makes the most of his opportunity here in a solo which must be ranked among his finest. Over the years, Duke Ellington made many widely differing versions of *Caravan*; this is one of the best.

The pace changes with three performances of *It Don't Mean A Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing* that most philosophical of Ellington titles. These are the only recordings on which Ellington used Taft Jordan's vocal talents; he sings alternately with Ray Nance in the opening chorus. After a blistering interpretation of the theme by Tricky Sam Nanton the same two musicians return for an instrumental exchange, with Nance on violin. Note the orchestral backing here, how perfectly it supports the soloists. In the final chorus Elbert Williams is heard briefly before the whole band roars out an affirmation of the music's message. In later versions of this arrangement the tenor soloist blows over the ensemble throughout this final chorus, so this is the recording on which Duke's orchestral climax can best be heard. A condensed version of *Johnny Comes Lately* follows and the essence of this Billy Strayhorn jump number is captured perfectly in these two performances: Tricky Sam Nanton and Harry Carney have brief solos.

Duke looked back sixteen years for the next number, his ever popular *Creole Love Call*. The first take breaks down during the clarinet solo owing to an

unfortunate fluff, while the second ends earlier following uncertainties during the trumpet solo. The complete version which was used by World Transcriptions is a marvellous interpretation of an Ellington classic. Wallace Jones provides the trumpet responses in the first chorus and the later trumpet solo; the solo clarinet is by Harry Carney and the trombone duet is played by Juan Tizol and Lawrence Brown — the earliest growl trombone is, of course, by Tricky Sam. There is some microphone reverberation during the clarinet solo on this final take, but the engineers were clearly not worried. Neither was I.



— Eddie Lambert (1985)

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#### PERSONNEL (November 9, 1943)

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**Cornet:** Rex Stewart

**Trumpet:** Wallace Jones, Taft Jordan, Harold Baker, Ray Nance (and violin)

**Trombone:** "Tricky" Joe Nanton, Lawrence Brown, Juan Tizol

**Reeds:** Jimmy Hamilton (cl, ts), Johnny Hodges (as), Otto Hardwick (as)

Elbert "Skippy" Williams (ts), Harry Carney (bars)

**Piano:** Duke Ellington

**Guitar:** Fred Guy

**Bass:** Junior Ragland

**Drums:** Sonny Greer

**Vocalist:** Betty Roché, Ray Nance

#### (December 1, 1943):

As above add Taft Jordan (vocalist)

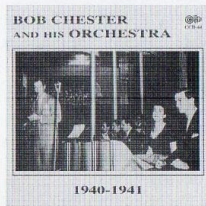
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 Digital Mastering by Parker Dinkins for MasterDigital  
 Text by Eddie Lambert  
 Art direction, Reg Stagmaier  
 Front cover photograph by William Gottlieb  
 Produced by George H. Buck, Jr.  
 Production coordinator, Wendell Echols

Our appreciation to the United States Postal Service who allowed us to reproduce the beautiful, impressive Duke Ellington — Genius commemorative stamp on this album. The twenty-two cent stamp which was made available April 30, 1986 is a far cry from the three-cent stamp Mr. Ellington paraphrased in his November 9, 1943 recording of his composition *Three-Cent Stamp*.

Thanks also to Joe Godfrey who helped us at the Post Office



**CCD-112**  
**CHARLIE BARNET**  
**AND HIS ORCHESTRA**  
 1942

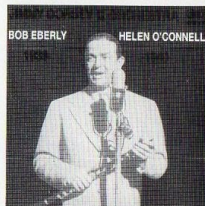


**CCD-44**  
**BOB CHESTER AND HIS**  
**ORCHESTRA, 1940-41**  
**DOLORES O'NEILL, BETTY BRADLEY,**  
**BILL DARNELL**

**CCD-14**  
**JOHN KIRBY AND HIS ORCHESTRA, 1941-42**  
**CHARLIE SHAVERS, BUSTER BAILEY,**  
**BILLY KYLE**

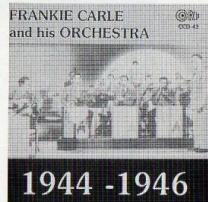


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**JIMMY DORSEY AND HIS**  
**ORCHESTRA, 1939-1940**  
**BOB EBERLY, HELEN O'CONNELL**

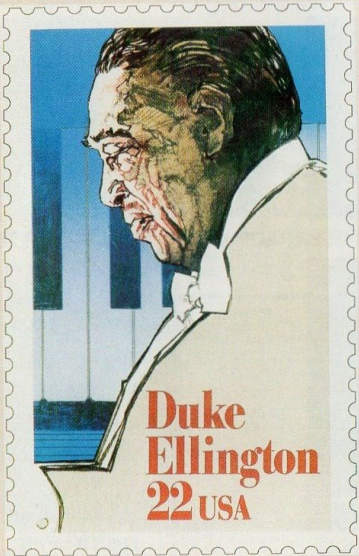
**CCD-60**  
**COUNT BASIE**  
**AND HIS ORCHESTRA**  
**1944**



**CCD-43**  
**FRANKIE CARLE AND HIS**  
**ORCHESTRA, 1944-1946**  
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CCD-102

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA, VOLUME TWO

CIRCLE



The Second Of Five Volumes In The Duke Ellington World Broadcasting Series  
**DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA - 1943**



CCD-102

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA, VOLUME TWO

CIRCLE

(Recorded November 9, 1943, New York City)

- |   |      |
|---|------|
| 1. MAIN STEM - Take three                             | 2:55 |
| 2. A SLIP OF THE LIP<br>vocal, Ray Nance              | :50  |
| 3. Take two   | 3:32 |
| 4. THREE-CENT STOMP                                   | :38  |
| 5. Take two   | 3:27 |
| 6. Take three   | 3:24 |
| 7. I WONDER WHY vocal, Betty Roché                    | 1:23 |
| 8. Take two   | 3:39 |
| 9. Take three   | 1:51 |
| 10. Take four   | 3:35 |
| 11. GO AWAY BLUES vocal, Betty Roché                  | 2:01 |
| 12. I DON'T WANT ANYBODY AT ALL<br>vocal, Betty Roché | 3:14 |
| 13. AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'                                 | 3:37 |
| 14. THINGS AIN'T WHAT THEY<br>USED TO BE              | 3:16 |

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| 15. BABY, PLEASE STOP!<br>AND THINK ABOUT ME | :19  |
| 16. Take two                                 | 2:42 |
| 17. Take three                               | 2:36 |
| 18. CARAVAN                                  | 4:39 |

(Recorded December 1, 1943, New York City)

- |   |      |
|---|------|
| 19. IT DON'T MEAN A THING<br>vocal, Ray Nance and Taft Jordan | 2:39 |
| 20. Take two  | 2:40 |
| 21. Take three  | 2:42 |
| 22. JOHNNY COME LATELY  | 1:43 |
| 23. Take two  | 1:40 |
| 24. CREOLE LOVE CALL  | 1:41 |
| 25. Take two  | 2:31 |
| 26. Take three  | 4:26 |

NOTE: Not all takes are complete performances.

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