

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.

The World numbering system has been explained as I understand it. There is an interesting mystery in the World numbering system and on the released program transcriptions that I have not been able to solve. Many times you will notice a single selection was assigned two designated release numbers (such as the 6049-50 example I have been using, *Rockin' In Rhythm*) and the recording is one continuous long take. I have been unable to determine just where the breaking point in length earns it two numbers. Notice that *I Wonder Why*, Take four was issued under a single number 7699 (3:35) and *Ain't Misbehavin'* earns two numbers, 6822-3 (3:37) and one for *Rose Room*, 6691 (3:43) and two for *Three Cent Stomp*, 6499-6500 (3:27), and the inconsistencies occur outside the Ellington sessions.

World was recording at 33 1/3 r.p.m. speed in 1934 and getting excellent sound, they used vertical grooving, the transcriptions played inside-out as did the glass masters and the session BB sixteen-inch discs. They achieved the best sound by a transcription company. After cutting the program transcriptions using the glass masters, they also produced one-sided tests of the BB program discs. They had red lettering on a white label and usually were identified handwritten with only the selection numbers and no mention of the artist. The program releases were two-sided with red labels and were identified by the artist (sometimes it was a pseudonym) and the selection numbers and the timings. The vinyl used for the pressings was also red in the early days, but later changed to black vinyl. The red vinyl pressings have an offensive odor, and they are difficult to scratch. (Continued on CCD-104)

— Wendell Echols

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA - 1943 & 1945

World Transcription recordings were made for broadcast purposes and were sold to radio stations on 16" 33 1/3 r.p.m. discs. They were produced by World Broadcasting Systems, Inc., the largest of several transcription firms which flourished in the 1930s and 1940s. They were pioneers in the use of advanced recording techniques, using unbreakable LP discs years before they were available to the public. World Transcription issues differed from later microgroove discs in that they were vertically cut and played from the centre outwards. The World recording method was to cut two glass based 33 1/3 r.p.m. discs, one a 'safety' in case of damage to the other. Most of the glass discs of the Duke Ellington World Transcription recordings have survived and this fact allied to the high quality of the sound engineering at the sessions has enabled Jack Towers to achieve a sound quality which is greatly superior to contemporary recordings of the Ellington band. This quality was achieved on commercial discs only during the LP era, and even then only by those companies which took the kind of care which World Transcriptions had lavished on these early and middle forties sessions.

World Broadcasting Systems became a division of Decca Records before the December 1943 recordings were made and it was seldom that any recordings made by World were released on Decca. These were not! Since commercial recordings were not licensed for radio broadcast, radio still depended on the flow of material coming from the transcription manufacturers such as World, Lang-Worth, Standard, MacGregor, Thesaurus, Associated, etc. The musicians union relented in their policies and when radio began to play commercial recordings, the transcription services began to lose ground. Decca sold the music library, spoken word, jingles (the remaining most salable recordings) to a Philadelphia company who, in turn, sold it to ZIV who continued to record new material into the 50s. Ziv finally sold the rights and company to CRC/World, a company whose interest was mainly in the jingles. In the mid-60s George Buck acquired ownership of all the material, except the jingles, from CRC/World. Buck's Circle label began to release the World Broadcasting material in 1979.

The series of nine Circle LPs was the first official public release of these Duke Ellington recordings, which can now be heard on compact disc in the original sound

quality. Not only have the glass discs been carefully preserved under George Buck's stewardship, but George and Wendell have discovered dozens of unissued alternate takes from these sessions. They contain music which was heard by the band and the engineers only and then locked away in the archives. Now they can be heard by jazz lovers the world over rather than just by two dozen or so privileged people. These alternate takes are valuable in two ways. Firstly they offer the Ellington student the opportunity to hear the band at work, to hear the adjustments in the music as the band strive for an ideal take. Secondly they mean that the collector who just wants to hear one version of a given number can choose a different version on each hearing thus avoiding the loss of spontaneity which some listeners feel when listening to the same recorded performances over and over again.

The first ten tracks of this third volume complete the recordings which Duke Ellington made for World Broadcasting in 1943. The clarinet trio appears again behind the soloist on the volume three opener, *Somebody Love Me*, this time with Harry Carney on bass clarinet. This is another of the *Variation On Themes* and Lawrence Brown is featured using a felt hat as mute and playing with superb melodic poise. *Jack The Bear* and *Harlem Air Shaft* offer new interpretations of two of Ellington's 1940 masterpieces. Junior Raglin, one of the great Ellington bassists, re-creates Jimmy Blanton's role on *Jack The Bear* and the solos by Jimmy Hamilton, Ray Nance, Harry Carney and Joe Nanton develop the musical argument. The superior recording quality brings out all the details in the score, while the performance is inspired by some wonderful playing by the rhythm section. The band and the rhythm section in particular are again in inspired form during the three performances of *Harlem Air Shaft*. The rolling saxophone breaks in the second chorus are perfectly executed and they are backed by exciting drumming by that master Ellingtonian Sonny Greer. The soloists here are Rex Stewart and Jimmy Hamilton, taking over roles originally created for Cootie Williams and Barney Bigard. But fine though the solos are these are ensemble triumphs. They typify the wonderful music which Duke Ellington recorded for World Transcriptions in 1943.

Ring Dem Be11s is one of Duke's numbers which has been a standard for many years. Here the original 1930 arrangement is used unaltered and it is curious to note how the piece is changed by the different fashions in phrasing prevailing thirteen years after the score was first recorded. The soloists are Hamilton, Hodges, Carney, Nanton, Hodges again in a chase chorus with Ray Nance's scat singing and finally Nance on muted

trumpet Duke Ellington first recorded *Rose Room* in 1932, but then the piece seems to have disappeared from his library until its unexpected and welcome revival here. His recording was for Brunswick as the backing to *It Don't Mean A Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing*, a tune included in Circle's previous volume two. In neither of the *Rose Room* versions is the countermelody heard which was to become *In A Mellow Tone*. The original arrangement of *Rose Room* featured Barney Bigard's clarinet and here, after Duke's piano introduction, Jimmy Hamilton plays the theme over ooo-wa-ooo-wa trumpets as Bigard had done a decade earlier. A mood of lazy, relaxed swing is achieved and this is maintained in Lawrence Brown's solo, which replaces Duke's piano chorus heard on the old recording. Instead of using the clarinet against the concluding brass statement, as he had done in 1932, Duke here calls on Johnny Hodges on alto to take over the obligato role. This he does in masterly fashion, with a sly reference to Barney Bigard's liking for the trill. The alternate take precedes World's choice take. Next we have Duke's *Variations on a Theme of Waller*. This version of *Honeysuckle Rose* was eventually a major showpiece for Jimmy Hamilton. Perhaps the least praised of Duke Ellington's compositions are those delightful pieces which he creates for the band to simply swing relaxed seemingly casual. In fact, these are a uniquely valuable part of the Ellington heritage. One such item is the final recording from the session of December 1, 1943. *Chopsticks*, co-arranged with Mary Lou Williams, has never before been recorded and features a beautiful piano passage by Duke and two punching solos by Taft Jordan, an ideal trumpeter in such a context.

Ellington did not return to the World Studios until thirteen months later, on January 2, 1945. The band changed a little in that a new talent had joined the trumpet section in the person of Cat Anderson, Juan Tizol had been replaced by Claude Jones in the trombone section, and Al Sears, a very direct swinging tenor player, had replaced Elbert Williams in the reeds. Betty Roché had also left and a new girl singer had joined, nineteen-year-old Joya Sherrill, a very rhythmic vocalist with a fine way of projecting a lyric.

The session begins with two complete versions of Billy Strayhorn's *Midriff*, the first take which was unissued lasting almost a minute longer than the version chosen by World for release. These are performances much superior to the commercially recorded one on 1946, although here perhaps the brutal abruptness of the ending is not so well-caught as on some later recordings, for example that of 1956. But *Midriff* is a joy, with

The Third Of Five Volumes In The Duke Ellington World Broadcasting Series

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA - 1943 & 1945

(Recorded December 1, 1943, New York City)

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|--|------|
| 1. SOMEBODY LOVES ME (N-1058-1, World 6693)
<i>(Buddy DeSylva and Ballard MacDonald - George Gershwin)</i> | 1:31 |
| 2. JACK THE BEAR (N-1059-1 World 6694) <i>(Duke Ellington)</i> | 3:12 |
| 3. HARLEM AIR SHAFT (N-1060-1 unissued) <i>(Duke Ellington)</i> | 3:09 |
| 4. Take two (N-1060-2, unissued) | 3:11 |
| 5. Take three (N-1060-3, World 6679) | 3:12 |
| 6. RING DEM BELLS (N-1061-1, World 6910)
<i>(Duke Ellington - Irving Mills) Vocal, Ray Nance</i> | 3:04 |
| 7. ROSE ROOM (N-1062-1, unissued) <i>(Art Hickamn - Harry Williams)</i> | 3:26 |
| 8. Take two (N-1062-2, World 6691) | 3:45 |
| 9. HONEYSUCKLE ROSE (N-1063-1, World 6681)
<i>(Thomas Waller - Andy Razaf)</i> | 2:22 |
| 10. CHOPSTICKS (N-1064-1 World 6682)
<i>(Arranged by Duke Ellington and Mary Lou Williams)</i> | 2:08 |

(Recorded January 2, 1945, New York City)

- | | |
|---|------|
| 11. MIDRIFF (N-2994-1, unissued) <i>(Billy Strayhorn)</i> | 4:07 |
| 12. MIDRIFF - Take two (N-2994-2) | 3:21 |
| 13. I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT YOU (N-2995-1, unissued false start)
<i>(Duke Ellington - Bob Russell) Vocal, Joya Sherrill</i> | :27 |
| Take two (N-2995-2, unissued false start) | :24 |
| Take three (N-2995-3, unissued incomplete take) | 1:07 |
| 14. Take four (N-2995-4, World 6819) | 2:40 |

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|---|------|
| 15. I'M BEGINNING TO SEE THE LIGHT
<i>(N-2996-1, unissued false start)</i>
<i>(Duke Ellington, Harry James, Johnny Hodges, Don George)</i>
Vocal, Joya Sherrill | :53 |
| 16. Take two (N-2996-2, World 6830) | 3:06 |
| 17. THE MOOD TO BE WOED (N-2997-1, World 7805-6)
<i>(Duke Ellington - Billy Strayhorn)</i> | 4:22 |
| 18. BLUE CELLOPHANE (N-2998-1, unissued false start)
<i>(Duke Ellington) featuring Lawrence Brown, trombone</i> | :17 |
| Take two (N-2998-2, unissued false start) | :21 |
| 19. Take three (N-2998-3, World 7220) | 3:03 |

(Recorded January 3, 1945, New York City)

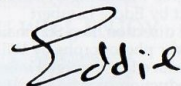
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|--|------|
| 20. SUBTLE SLOUGH (N-2999-1, unissued false start) <i>(Duke Ellington)</i> | :13 |
| 21. Take two (N-2999-2, unissued) | 2:34 |
| 22. Take three (N-2999-3, World 7219) | 2:47 |
| 23. HIT ME WITH A HOT NOTE (AND WATCH ME BOUNCE)
<i>(N-3000-1, unissued false start)</i>
<i>(Duke Ellington - Don George) Vocal, Joya Sherrill</i> | :55 |
| 24. Take two (N-3000-2, unissued) | 2:32 |
| 25. Take three (N-3000-3, unissued false start) | :15 |
| 26. Take four (N-3000-4, World 8749) | 2:27 |
| 27. THE AIR-CONDITIONED JUNGLE
<i>(AKA "THE AIR-MINDED JUNGLE") (N-3001-1, unissued)</i>
<i>(Duke Ellington) featuring Jimmy Hamilton, clarinet</i> | 4:08 |

Fred Guy's rhythm guitar unusually prominent in the rhythm section. Lawrence Brown plays the solo trombone passages in magnificent fashion and the chorus for the saxophones, with Johnny Hodges leading, is also beautifully realized. This is the kind of chorus in which one of the sections plays a series of variations in the style of an improvised solo. It is a particularly fine example of a pattern which goes back in Ellington's music to the *Misty Morning* of 1928. There is a similar chorus for saxophones in *Three-Cent Stomp* which appears on the second of these World Broadcasting volumes. The second tune recorded in the 1945 sessions is one of several pop songs, mostly written by Duke and his associates, originally as instrumentals featuring soloists, concerto-style. These pop tunes feature a very wide range of mood and plenty of musical variety. Bob Russell gave this one a lyric and a new title. There are three aborted takes and the final issued performance of *I Didn't Know About You*. The earlier instrumental version, titled *Sentimental Lady* is a part of the 1943 sessions for World and appears on Circle's volume one of this series, and it is impeccably performed by Johnny Hodges. This new version is warmly sung here by Joya Sherrill and features Lawrence Brown on trombone. Another familiar Ellington hit follows: *I'm Beginning to See the Light* is a mid-tempo swinger, with rhythmically potent playing by the band in a first chorus full of subtle tone colors. Joya Sherrill handles the vocal chorus in an admirable manner on a performance which has much more vigor than that on the Victor record of the song. Connoisseurs of Ellington's music will find several differences between this long version of *The Mood To Be Woood* and Victor's version. It would be too long even for a 12" 78 r.p.m. disc. This is a Johnny Hodges showcase and the great alto saxophonist is at his most voluptuous, describing the rich melodic curves in a sensuous manner and with the most exquisite of all saxophone tones.

Blue Cellophane, brings us back to Ellington's concertos. This is one written for Lawrence Brown. After two brief false starts, both the soloist and orchestra give a superior account of the piece when compared with the previously issued version. Brown's performance on this track is one of his finest documented. *Subtle Slough* started life as an instrumental piece at a Rex Stewart contingent recording session in 1941 and ended up as *Just Squeeze Me*, one of Duke's standards on which Ray Nance vocalised for years for our delight and amusement. Here the *Just Squeeze Me* arrangement is heard but without the vocal which was added the following year. The false start opening has Duke's piano, which is absent from the two complete takes which follow. The slightly

longer take three, is clearly the better. The brief trumpet outburst at the start is by Taft Jordan, while the final chorus is graced by fine Johnny Hodges solos. *Hit Me With a Hot Note (And Watch Me Bounce)* is a typical forties pop song delivered by Joya Sherrill with functional backing from the band. It actually took four swings to get an acceptable *Hit*. The second take, which is a complete one, was probably rejected because Joya's final note was not quite perfect to the end. Ellington proves to be always considerate in assuring that his soloists and vocalists are recorded at their best. This is ever evident throughout the World Series where we can observe his studio personality and hear the multiple takes made until it is right.

It becomes more and more apparent with each release of this Duke Ellington Series that when George Buck purchased the World Broadcasting material ownership from CRC World back in the sixties, the Duke Ellington sessions rank alongside the very rarest gems he acquired. We must thank him for making it all available.



— Eddie Lambert (1985)

PERSONNEL (December 1943)

Cornet: Rex Stewart

Trumpet: Wallace Jones, Taft Jordan, Ray Nance, Harold Baker

Trombone: Lawrence Brown, Joe Nanton, Juan Tizol (valve-trombone)

Reeds: Otto Hardwick (as), Johnny Hodges (as), Elbert "Skippy" Williams (ts),

Jimmy Hamilton (cl, ts), Harry Carney (bar sax, cl)

Violin: Ray Nance

Piano: Duke Ellington

Guitar: Fred Guy

Bass: Junior Raglin

Drums: Sonny Greer

Vocalist: Ray Nance

(January 2 & 3 1945):

Cornet: Rex Stewart

Trumpet: "Cat" Anderson, Shelton Hemphill, Taft Jordan, Ray Nance

Trombone: Joe Nanton, Claude Jones, Lawrence Brown

Reeds: Jimmy Hamilton (cl, ts), Johnny Hodges (as), Otto Hardwick (as), Al Sears (ts), Harry Carney (bar sax, cl)

Violin: Ray Nance

Piano: Duke Ellington

Guitar: Fred Guy

Bass: Junior Raglin

Drums: Hillard Brown

Vocalist: Joya Sherrill, Al Hibbler, Kay Davis

Originally recording by World Broadcasting, Inc. New York City

Remastering by Jack Towers

Digital Mastering by Parker Dinkins for MasterDigital

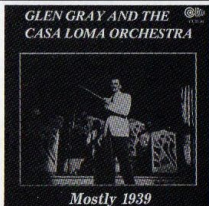
Text by Eddie Lambert

Art direction, Reg Stagmaier

Cover photographs by William Gottlieb

Produced by George H. Buck, Jr.

Production coordinator, Wendell Echols



CCD-36
GLEN GRAY AND THE
CASA LOMA ORCHESTRA
MOSTLY 1939
KENNY SARGENT - PEE WEE HUNT

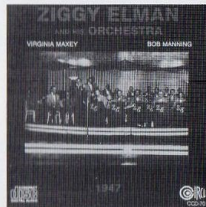


CCD-19
CLAUDE THORNHILL AND HIS
ORCHESTRA, 1941, 46, 47
FRAN WARREN - DICK HARDING

CCD-5
HARRY JAMES AND HIS
ORCHESTRA - 1941
DICK HAYMES, VOCALS

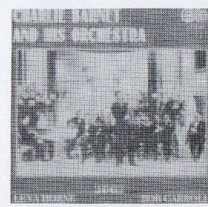


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CCD-70
ZIGGY ELMAN AND HIS
ORCHESTRA - 1947
BOB MANNING - VIRGINIA MAXEY

CCD-25
HAL KEMP AND HIS ORCHESTRA 1934, 36
SKINNAY ENNIS - BOB ALLEN
KAY THOMPSON & RHYTHM SINGERS



CCD-65
CHARLIE BARNET AND HIS
ORCHESTRA - 1941
LENA HORNE - BOB CARROLL

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CCD-103

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA, VOLUME THREE

CIRCLE



The Third Of Five Volumes In The Duke Ellington World Broadcasting Series
DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA - 1943 & 1945



CCD-103

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA, VOLUME THREE

CIRCLE

(Recorded December 1, 1943, New York City)

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------|
| 1. SOMEBODY LOVES ME | 1:31 |
| 2. JACK THE BEAR | 3:12 |
| 3. HARLEM AIR SHAFT | 3:09 |
| 4. Take two | 3:11 |
| 5. Take three | 3:12 |
| 6. RING DEM BELLS vocal, Ray Nance | 3:04 |
| 7. ROSE ROOM | 3:26 |
| 8. Take two | 3:45 |
| 9. HONEYSUCKLE ROSE | 2:22 |
| 10. CHOPSTICKS | 2:08 |

(Recorded January 2, 1945, New York City)

- | | |
|---|------|
| 11. MIDRIFF | 4:07 |
| 12. Take two | 3:21 |
| 13. I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT YOU
vocal, Joya Sherill | :27 |
| Take two | :24 |
| Take three | 1:07 |
| 14. Take four | 2:40 |
| 15. I'M BEGINNING TO SEE
THE LIGHT vocal, Joya Sherill | :53 |

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|---------------------------|------|
| 16. Take two | 3:06 |
| 17. THE MOOD TO BE WOODED | 4:22 |
| 18. BLUE CELLOPHANE | :17 |
| Take two | :21 |
| 19. Take three | 3:03 |

(Recorded January 3, 1945, New York City)

- | | |
|--|------|
| 20. SUBTLE SLOUGH | :13 |
| 21. Take two | 2:34 |
| 22. Take three | 2:47 |
| 23. HIT ME WITH A HOT NOTE
(AND WATCH ME BOUNCE)
vocal, Joya Sherill | :55 |
| 24. Take two | 2:32 |
| 25. Take three | :15 |
| 26. Take four | 2:27 |
| 27. THE AIR-CONDITIONED JUNGLE
(AKA "THE AIR-MINDED JUNGLE") | 4:08 |

NOTE: Not all takes are complete performances.

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