

ESSENTIAL  
MASTERS OF JAZZ

DUKE  
ELLINGTON



BLACK AND TAN FANTASY  
THE MOOCHE  
BATTLE OF SWING  
COTTON TAIL  
TAKE THE "A" TRAIN  
& MANY MORE

Un quart de siècle après sa disparition, Duke Ellington semble avoir trouvé sa vraie place dans l'histoire de la musique. L'épreuve du temps est cruelle à l'égard de nombreux artistes qui avaient de leur vivant trouvé chez leurs contemporains une admiration universelle. Ellington a certes goûté pendant près d'un demi-siècle les fruits du succès. On a cependant vite oublié qu'il dut lutter tout au long de sa carrière pour faire entendre et apprécier une musique trop originale pour plaire à tout le monde et très souvent en avance sur son temps. Dès la fin des années vingt, les sonorités du style *jungle* heurtent les oreilles délicates. Au début des années trente, on accuse le Duke de tourner le dos au "vrai jazz" quand il manifeste le souci de travailler la forme et de sortir du cadre trop étroit pour lui du 78 tours de trois minutes (écouter à ce propos la **Creole Rhapsody**). On lui fera le même reproche quand il composera des œuvres de longue durée comme la suite **Black, Brown and Beige**, dont ne seront enregistrés pour le disque que quelques extraits (écouter la plage 18). On lui fera ensuite grief de se reposer en concert sur quelques succès inoxydables, alors que c'est à la demande d'une bonne partie du public qu'il devait les rejouer, en les renouvelant d'ailleurs sans cesse (cf. **Black And Tan Fantasy**, donnée ici dans une de ses premières moutures, remodelée cent fois au fil des ans). En fait, le génie d'Ellington éclate aujourd'hui sans discussion à l'écoute des chefs-d'œuvre réunis ici, autant de modèles indémodables de pure et simple beauté (**Blue Light**), d'invention (**Diminuendo And Crescendo In Blue**, six minutes de riches variations sur le simple blues de douze mesures...), de grâce (**Portrait Of The Lion**) ou de swing (**Harlem Air Shaft**)... Et, tout au long de ces vingt pièces, très modeste sélection pour une première approche d'une œuvre considérable, une modernité et des audaces qui n'ont pas fini de surprendre : les dissonances de **Koko**, les couleurs inouïes de **Saddest Tale**, le piano avant-gardiste du maestro dans **The Clothed Woman** et, entre **Diminuendo** et **Crescendo**, la mise en scène somptueuse des solistes dans **Concerto For Cootie** et **Battle Of Swing**, la puissance d'évocation de **Daybreak Express** et de **Happy-Go-Lucky Local** (deux trains : un rapide et un tortillard), le thème prémonitoire de **Cotton Tail**, l'utilisation de la voix dans **Creole Love Call**, **The Mooche** et **Hot And Bothered**, et mille autres splendeurs multiples à débusquer au détour de chaque mesure...

A quarter of a century after his disappearance, Duke Ellington seems to have found his place in the history of music. The test of time can be cruel to many artists whose contemporaries showed universal admiration for them when they were alive, and it's true that Ellington tasted the sweet fruit of success for more than fifty years. But this would be forgetting that he fought throughout his entire career for his music to be heard and appreciated – it was too original to please everyone, and it was often music well in advance of its time.

At the end of the Twenties, the sounds of the *jungle* style were jolting delicate ears. At the beginning of the Thirties, the Duke was accused of turning his back on “real” jazz when he showed interest in working on the form of his music, getting away from the (for him) too narrow frame of a 78 rpm recording that lasted only three minutes (listen to **Creole Rhapsody**). The same criticism was levelled at him when he wrote lengthy works such as his **Black, Brown And Beige** suite, only a few excerpts of which were put on record (see track 18). Another reproach was that his concerts were limited to performances of tried and tested hits – forgetting that it was mainly his audiences who requested these tunes – a criticism which ignores the constant reinvention produced by Ellington when he performed them. In this respect, one should listen to **Black And Tan Fantasy**, a tune remodelled one hundred times over the years, but presented here in one of its earliest versions.

Today, in fact, Ellington's genius is unquestioned. The masterpieces collected here are as many timeless models of pure and simple beauty (**Blue Light**), inventiveness (**Diminuendo And Crescendo In Blue**, six minutes of rich variation on a simple twelve-bar blues...), grace (**Portrait Of The Lion**), and swing (**Harlem Air Shaft**)...

And throughout these twenty selections, which represent an extremely modest choice for a first approach to Ellington's considerable opus, there shines a modern and audacious spirit which still takes us by surprise : the dissonance of **Koko**, the incredible colours of **Saddest Tale**, the maestro's avant-garde piano on **The Clothed Woman**, and, between **Diminuendo** and **Crescendo**, the sumptuous settings created for the soloists in **Concerto For Cootie** and **Battle Of Swing**, the powerful evocativeness of **Daybreak Express** and **Happy-Go-Lucky Local** (the first a fast train, the latter the opposite), the premonitory theme of **Cotton Tail**, the way the voice is used on **Creole Love Call**, **The Mooche** and **Hot And Bothered**... and a thousand other splendours to be discovered just round the corner of each and every bar!

**THE WASHINGTONIANS:** Louis Metcalf, Bubber Miley (tp); Joe "Tricky Sam" Nanton (tb); Rudy Jackson (cl); Otto Hardwick (as); prob. Harry Carney (bar, as); Duke Ellington (p); Fred Guy (bj); Mack Shaw (tu); Sonny Greer (d)

1. **Black And Tan Fantasy** (D. Ellington, B. Miley) *New York, 7 April 1927*  
Solos: Hardwick, as – Miley, tp – Ellington, p – Nanton, tb.

**DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA:** Louis Metcalf, Bubber Miley (tp); Tricky Sam Nanton (tb); Otto Hardwick, Harry Carney, Rudy Jackson (cl); Duke Ellington (p); Fred Guy (bj); Wellman Braud (b); Sonny Greer (d); Adelaide Hall (voc).

2. **Creole Love Call** (D. Ellington, B. Miley, R. Jackson) *New York, 26 Oct. 1927*  
Solos: Hall, voc – Miley, tp – Jackson, cl.

**DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA:** Louis Metcalf, Arthur Whetsol (tp); Tricky Sam Nanton (tb); Johnny Hodges (as, cl); Barney Bigard (cl, ts); Harry Carney (bar, as, cl); Duke Ellington (p); Lonnie Johnson (g); Fred Guy (bj); Wellman Braud (b); Sonny Greer (d); Baby Cox (voc).

3. **The Mooche** (D. Ellington) *New York, 1 October 1928*  
Solos: Miley, tp – Bigard, cl / Johnson, g – Cox, voc acc. by Johnson, g – Miley, tp / Hodges, as – Miley, tp.
4. **Hot And Bothered** (D. Ellington) *New York, 1 Oct. 1928*  
Solos: Hodges, as – Whetsol, tp – Guy, bj (break) – Miley, tp / Cox, voc – Bigard, cl – Johnson, g – Hodges, as – Bigard, cl.

**DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA:** Arthur Whetsol, Freddy Jenkins (tp); Tricky Sam Nanton (tb); Juan Tizol (v-tb); Johnny Hodges (as, ss, cl); Barney Bigard (cl, ts); Harry Carney (bar, as, cl); Duke Ellington (p); Fred Guy (bj); Wellman Braud (b); Sonny Greer (d, voc).

5. **Creole Rhapsody** (D. Ellington) *Camden, 11 June 1931*  
Solos: Part 1: Bigard, cl – Ellington, p – Bigard, cl – Williams, tp – Hodges, as – Ellington, p – Whetsol, tp.  
Part 2: Ellington, p – Hodges, as – Ellington, p – Bigard, cl – Williams, tp – Bigard, cl.

**DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA:** Freddy Jenkins, Arthur Whetsol, Cootie Williams (tp); Louis Bacon (tp, voc); Lawrence Brown, Tricky Sam Nanton (tb); Johnny Hodges (as, ss, cl); Otto Hardwick (as, bar); Barney Bigard (cl, ts); Harry Carney (bar, as, cl); Duke Ellington (p); Fred Guy (bj); Wellman Braud (b); Sonny Greer (d).

6. **Daybreak Express** (D. Ellington) *Chicago, 26 Sep. 1933*  
Solos: Hodges, as – Williams, tp – Jenkins, tp.

Same personnel as previous, except Juan Tizol (v-tb) added; Jenkins (tp) out; Guy (g); Carney (bcl)

7. **Saddest Tale** (D. Ellington) *New York, 12 Sep. 1934*  
Solos: Bigard, cl – Ellington, talk – Nanton, tb – Hodges, as – Williams, tp – Carney (bcl) – Ellington, talk.

**DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS FAMOUS ORCHESTRA:** Wallace Jones, Cootie Williams (tp); Rex Stewart (cnt); Lawrence Brown, Tricky Sam Nanton (tb); Juan Tizol (v-tb); Johnny Hodges, Otto Hardwick (as); Barney Bigard (cl, ts); Harry Carney (bar, cl); Duke Ellington (p); Fred Guy (bj); Billy Taylor (b); Sonny Greer (d).

8. **Diminuendo And Crescendo In Blue** (D. Ellington) *New York, 20 Sep. 1937*  
Solos: Williams, tp – Carney, bar – Ellington, p – Bigard, cl.

9. **Battle Of Swing** (D. Ellington) *New York, 19 Dec. 1938*  
Solos: Bigard, cl – Stewart, cnt – Bigard, cl – Tizol, v-tb – Stewart, cnt.

10. **Blue Light** (D. Ellington) *New York, 22 Dec. 1938*  
Solos: intro Ellington, p – Bigard, cl – Brown, tb – Ellington, p.

- 11. Portrait Of The Lion** (D. Ellington) *New York, 21 March 1939*  
Solos: intro Ellington, p – Stewart, cnt – Hodges, as.
- DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS FAMOUS ORCHESTRA:** Wallace Jones, Rex Stewart, Cootie Williams (tp); Lawrence Brown, Tricky Sam Nanton (tb); Juan Tizol (v-tb); Johnny Hodges (as, ss); Otto Hardwick (as); Barney Bigard (cl, ts); Ben Webster (ts); Harry Carney (bar, bcl, cl, as); Duke Ellington (p); Fred Guy (bj); Jimmy Blanton (b); Sonny Greer (d).
- 12. Koko** (D. Ellington) *Chicago, 6 March 1940*  
Solos: Tizol, v-tb – Nanton, tb – Blanton, b.  
Same personnel as previous.
- 13. Concerto For Cootie** (D. Ellington) *Chicago, 15 March 1940*  
Solos: Williams, tp.
- 14. Cotton Tail** (D. Ellington) *Hollywood, 4 May 1940*  
Solos: Williams, tp – Webster, ts – Carney, bar – Ellington p.
- 15. Harlem Air Shaft** (D. Ellington) *New York, 22 July 1940*  
Solos: Nanton, tb – Williams, tp – Bigard, cl.  
Same personnel as previous, except Ray Nance (tp) replaces Williams.
- 16. Take The "A" Train** (B. Strayhorn) *Hollywood, 15 Feb. 1941*  
Solos: intro Ellington, p – Nance, tp.
- DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA:** Shelton Hemphill, Taft Jordan, Cat Anderson (tp); Ray Nance (tp, vn), Tricky Sam Nanton, Claude Jones, Lawrence Brown (tb); Johnny Hodges, Otto Hardwick (as); Al Sears (ts); Jimmy Hamilton (cl, ts); Harry Carney (bar, bcl); Duke Ellington (p); Fred Guy (g); Alvin "Junior" Raglin (b); Sonny Greer (d).
- 17. Black, Brown And Beige** (Excerpts) (D. Ellington) *New York, 11 Dec. 1944*  
**Work Song** - Solos: Carney, bar – Nanton, tb – Hardwick, as.  
**Come Sunday** - Solos: Nance, vn – Jones, tb – Ellington, p – Hodges, as.
- DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA:** Francis Williams, Taft Jordan, Harold Baker, Shelton Hemphill, Ray Nance, Cat Anderson (tp); Lawrence Brown, Claude Jones, Wilbur De Paris (tb); Johnny Hodges, Russell Procope (as); Jimmy Hamilton (cl, ts); Al Sears (ts); Harry Carney (bar); Duke Ellington (p); Fred Guy (g); Oscar Pettiford (b); Sonny Greer (d).
- 18. Happy-Go-Lucky Local** (D. Ellington) *New York, 25 Nov. 1946*  
Solos: intro Ellington, p / Pettiford, b – Procope, as – Nance, tp – Ellington, p / Pettiford, b – Sears, ts – Anderson, tp – Pettiford, b.
- DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA:** Harold Baker (tp); Johnny Hodges (as); Harry Carney (bar); Duke Ellington (p); Junior Raglin (b); Sonny Greer (d).
- 19. The Clothed Woman** (D. Ellington) *New York, 30 Dec. 1947*  
Solos: Ellington, p.



01-BILLIE HOLIDAY



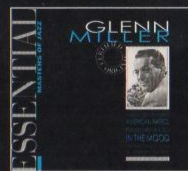
02-DIZZY GILLESPIE



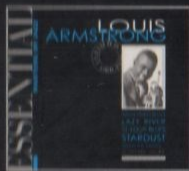
03-ELLA FITZGERALD



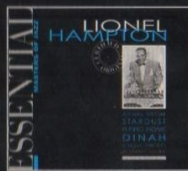
04-FRANK SINATRA



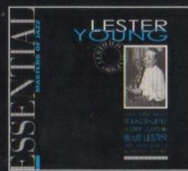
05-GLENN MILLER



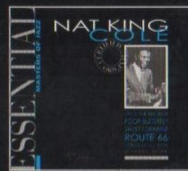
06-LOUIS ARMSTRONG



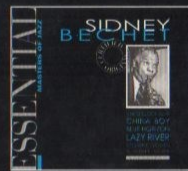
07-LIONEL HAMPTON



08-LESTER YOUNG



09-NAT KING COLE



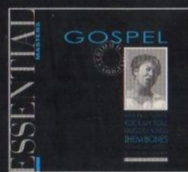
10-SIDNEY BECHET



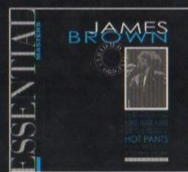
11-BOB MARLEY



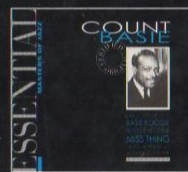
12-EDITH PIAF



13-GOSPEL



14-JAMES BROWN



15-COUNT BASIE



16-CHARLES TRENET



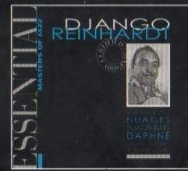
17-CHANSONS D'HIER



18-DUKE ELLINGTON



19-MUSETTE



20-DJANGO REINHARDT

ESSENTIAL  
MASTERS OF JAZZ

DUKE  
ELLINGTON

EMCD 18

BIEM MCPS

MADE IN EEC

UNAUTHORISED PUBLIC PERFORMANCE BROADCAST AND COPYING OF THIS DISC PROHIBITED. ALL RIGHTS OF THE MANUFACTURER AND THE OWNER OF THE RECORDED WORK RESERVED.

RECORDING ARTS & MEDIA 7, P 1998. PROPER RECORDS. C 1998.

ESSENTIAL

# DUKE ELLINGTON

1. Black And Tan Fantasy .....03'19"
2. Creole Love Call .....03'11"
3. The Mooche .....03'14"
4. Hot And Bothered .....03'19"
5. Creole Rhapsody .....08'36"
6. Daybreak Express .....02'56"
7. Saddest Tale .....03'18"
8. Diminuendo And Crescendo In Blue .....06'03"
9. Battle Of Swing .....02'57"
10. Blue Light .....02'46"
11. Portrait Of The Lion .....02'31"
12. Koko .....02'46"
13. Concerto For Cootie .....03'23"
14. Cotton Tail .....03'12"
15. Harlem Air Shaft .....03'01"
16. Take The "A" Train .....02'57"
17. Black, Brown And Beige .....09'06"  
Work Song  
Come Sunday
18. Happy-Go-Lucky Local .....05'29"
19. The Clothed Woman .....02'54"

total time: 01 15'17"

Proper Records

BIEM|MCPS

Made in EEC



*media 7*

EMCD 18 M7 817

DUKE ELLINGTON

EMCD 18