





DISC 1

1. INTRODUCTION (1:12) WILLIS CONOVER

- 2. TAKE THE A TRAIN (EXCERPT) (0:45) (B. Strayhorn)
- 3. <u>PRINCESS BLUE</u> (12:18) (D. Ellington) Rec. 7/3/58, Unreleased radio broadcast
- 4. DUKE'S PLACE (2:44) (R. Roberts/B. Katz/R. Thiele/D. Ellington) Rec. 7/3/58, Unreleased radio broadcast
- 5. JUST SCRATCHIN' THE SURFACE (6:24) (D. Ellington) Rec. 7/3/58, Unissued
- 6. HAPPY REUNION (3:21) (D. Ellington) Featuring PAUL GONSALVES: Tenor saxophone Rec. 7/3/58, Unissued
- 7. JUNIFLIP (4:02)

Featuring CLARK TERRY: Flugelhorn Rec. 7/3/58, Unissued

8. <u>MR. GENTLE AND MR. COOL</u> (7:17) (D. Ellington/L. Rembert) Featuring "SHORTY" BAKER: Trumpet;

RAY NANCE: Violin Rec. 7/3/58, Unissued 9. JAZZ FESTIVAL JAZZ (7:08) (D. Ellington/B. Strayhorn)

(D. Ellington/B. Straynom)

Featuring SAM WOODYARD: Drums Rec. 7/3/58, Unissued

10. FEET BONE (3:10) (D. Ellington) Rec. 7/3/58, Unissued

DISC 2

- 1. <u>HI FI FO FUM</u> (7:52) (D. Ellington) Rec. 7/3/58, Unissued
- 2. I GOT IT BAD AND THAT AIN'T GOOD (3:42) (P. Webster/D. Ellington)

Featuring LIL GREENWOOD: Vocal Rec. 7/3/58, Unissued

3. BILL BAILEY, WON'T YOU PLEASE COME HOME (2:55) (H. Cannon) Public Domoin

Featuring LIL GREENWOOD: Vocal Rec. 7/3/58, Unissued

4. <u>PRIMA BARA DUBLA</u> (6:52) (D. Ellington/B. Strayhorn)

Featuring GERRY MULLIGAN, HARRY CARNEY: Baritone saxophones Rec. 7/3/58, Unissued

5. EL GATO (4:43) (W Anderson)

Featuring "SHORTY" BAKER. **RAY NANCE: Trumpets** Rec. 7/3/58. Unissued

6. MULTICOLORED BLUE (6:32) (B. Strayhorn)

Featuring JOHNNY HODGES: Saxophone: **OZZIE BAILEY: Vocal** Rec. 7/3/58. Unissued

7. INTRODUCTION TO MAHALIA JACKSON (1:54) WILLIS CONOVER

8. COME SUNDAY (7:08) (D. Ellington)

Featuring MAHALIA JACKSON: Vocal Rec. 7/3/58. Unissued

9. KEEP YOUR HAND ON THE PLOW (5:20) (Traditional/Public Domain)

Featuring MAHALIA JACKSON: Vocal; MILDRED FALLS: Piano Rec. 7/3/58. Unissued

10. TAKE THE A TRAIN (EXCERPT) (0:31) (B. Strayhorn) Rec. 7/3/58, Unissued

11. JONES (2:28) . Reddon/D. Ellinaton)

4

Rec. 7/3/58, Unissued

Personnel

DUKE ELLINGTON: Pigno PAUL GONSALVES, JOHNNY HODGES,

RUSSELL PROCOPE, HARRY CARNEY: Soxonhones

JIMMY HAMILTON: Saxophone, clarinet

CLARK TERRY, "SHORTY" BAKER, "CAT" ANDERSON, FRANCIS "COOTIE" WILLIAMS: Trumpets

BRITT WOODMAN, JOHN SANDERS, **QUINTIN JACKSON: Trombones**

SAM WOODYARD: Drums

JIMMY WOOD: Bass

t was the biggest, most financially successful jazz venture ever undertaken.

"But musically it often left much to be desired."

Those were the words of critic Dom Cerulli. commenting on the 1958 Newport Jazz Festiva in Down Beat's 11-page cover story. The coverage wasn't off page 2 of a two-page spread when fellow-writer Don Gold added, "The festival's Thursday night opener was characterized by an invasion of record, film, radio, and television interests, with cameras and microphones scattered throughout the stage and audience areas."

In other words, "The festival began with characteristic confusion."

That opening night of July 3rd, dedicated to Duke Ellington, ended in similar fashion. There were the unannounced performances by both the Dave Brubeck Quartet and the Ellington Orchestra, due to radio broadcast arrangements. But the real indianity came later. If you hung on long enough. say till 1:30 the following morning, Ellington and his band were, as Gold put it, still working the "already exhausted audience of 9,700 persons" as the closing act. As another critic noted in the understatement of the evening, "Newport suffered from irregularity on opening night."

Others suffering on that opening night bill included the Ellington Alumni All-Stars, featuring Rex Stewart, the Marian McPartland Trio, and the Miles Davis Sextet. But maybe we should take the perspective of these writers with a grain or two of salt. After all, none of the above artists seemed to really please them, least of all the Miles Davis group. As Gold saw and heard it, the "aroup's solidarity [was] hampered by the angry young tenor of [John] Coltrane... the personification of motionwithout-progress in jazz." What's that saving about aive 'em enough rope...?

Oddly enough, the festival was the subject of a special documentary (no doubt, one reason for all those cameras horning in on the action). Jazz On A Summer's Day, considered by many to be one of the first important films (in color) of an important American jazz event, was the result. More confounding than the chaos and critical reaction, most of the music-a "strange mixture of warped historical sounds, some pleasant and some confusing modern sounds, and an Ellinaton band performance that contained a high technical level, charm, and emptiness, resulting in little of lasting value"was recorded for subsequent release. Special mention should be made of the Brubeck, Davis (and later, singer Mahalia Jackson) sets, And now we have the Ellington program in its entirety. And for the first time.

As with many live recordings, the original Newport 1958 album did not include the entire performance of the Ellinaton band. If you mention the abbreviated intro (and later insertion) to the set, "Take The A Train," nine new sonas have been added to this two-CD package, including two with Mahalia Jackson, Also, the order of sonas performed was disturbed for the LP release. The correct seavence has been restored, albeit with a few additional touches, the most notable being that all the music in this set-with the exception of two tunes, "Just Scratchin' The Surface" and "Prima Bara Dubla"-was previously unreleased. That's right. As if this occasion needed more drama, the original release of Newport 1958 was mostly a facelift. So, for the most part, what you heard on vinyl were actually studio versions of the songs performed live, with the live introductions and audience reactions left in. It was the wonderful world of technology giving you the best the Ellington band had to offer, even if all of it wasn't the real thing from Newport, (Hold onto your original LP-it's become an instant collector's item.) To think all those Ellington scholars knew what they were talking about when they reviewed Newport 1958.

As to why this all happened... well, apparently, Ellington (like some of his Newport reviewers) was less than satisfied with the performances recorded that night and morning of July 3-4. This seems plausible when you consider that it was a program of mostly new material being played, and Ellington might've had second and third thoughts on the band's execution. (In case you were wondering, the album received mixed reviews when released.) Maybe it had to do with the botched circumstances of the program that night. And the actual live recording did contain some distortion and some offmic playing that reminded listeners that the engineers weren't completely in charge. (But, hey, it was a live recording after all.) Stereo was just becoming the rage, and why not take advantage of all the studio had to offer? In any event, a series of re-recordings took place in New York (City a few days after the Newport performances. (A guess as to why "Prima Bara Dubla" was left on is probably because special guest Gerry Mulligan wasn't available.) So, with this practically new release Columbia fesses up (other recordings from that festival are heading down the same road, including the Brubeck and Jackson sets).

With the benefit of history, the music on these discs can be seen with a much wider lens. Obviously. it's impossible to say how this altered program would've been received back in 1959, but hearing the real thing today suggests that Ellington was at home mixing it up with different singers ("Multicolored Blue," with Ozzie Bailey, is the only singing feature on the LP), and operating with his tongue firmly in cheek (listen, after his being introduced, to his calling emcee Willis Conover "Mitch Miller," or the crazy quilt "Jazz Festival Jazz") as he presented this material draped in a variety of blues shadings, all the while featuring standouts like Paul Gonsalves, Clark Terry, and Jimmy Hamilton. Sure, it wasn't At Newport (referring to the famed concert that, for many, reestablished Ellington's greatness after years of so-called decline). Nor. do I think, was it intended to be. And yet, heard next to the younger, more popular sounds of Dave Brubeck and Miles Davis, Duke Ellington's band was swinging and playing *his* music, and, for the most part, sounding just as hip.

Certainly, Ellington had other things on his mind. Since that well-known appearance in 1956, he'd been busy collaborating with partner Billy Strayhorn on two large-scale works, A Drum Is A Woman (completed in '56, a wry, ambitious folk opera about the histories of jazz, the American "Nearo." and the Ellington orchestra, with narration written and spoken by Ellington,), and 1957's Such Sweet Thunder (their take on characters and ideas from Shakespeare, also known as The Shakespearean Suite). In a lighter vein, his Ellington Indigos and Happy Reunion (both '57, the latter not released until 1985) returned him and his band to what was essentially a set of dance numbers and a smallgroup session, respectively. Then there were two other collaborations. Ella Fitzaerald Sinas The Duke Ellington Songbook and his reworking of Black, Brown & Beige with Mahalia Jackson (likely in preparation for the Newport '58 set), topped off by something with the entertaining title, The Cosmic Scene: Duke Ellington's Spacemen.

In such a flurry of recording activity, it's easy to see how a "live date" like *Newport 1958* would seem almost irrelevant, if it was noticed at all. Likewise, and despite all the music in circulation reflected by the above (which does not include the constant touring and special appearances) as well

as the popular ripple effect created by the band's Newport '56 appearance, Ellington was still swimming upstream with scores of fans, writers, and critics. By now, there were two camps of Ellinaton followers: those who changed with him along with new fans, and those who believed his best years were way behind him. For the latter aroup. Ellinaton had convincing words. As he told Nat Hentoff in 1956. "To compare the band of the present with a band of another period involves, for one thing, trying to recall another audience to which that older band was playing. And that band also was playing from another perspective. I don't see the basis for comparison. The audiences are different and we're different in a way. And it really boils down to an ugly thing like-do you have better taste than I do? After all, if these men who perform the music now didn't believe in it, they wouldn't do it."

As far as Ellington was concerned, his music wasn' about reliving the glory years of the Cotton Club, or any other earlier period for that matter. Sure, maybe he could've been raking in the dough with umpteen straight versions of "East St. Louis Toodle-Oo" and "The Mooche," eventually playing Las Vegas and, if he played his cards right, lots of IV. But he had this thing about commerce mixing with art. Again, speaking to Hentoff: "It's that word 'commercial." There's an interest in money, and the money can come quick and in large amounts to day, more so than it used to. A guy comes up, you've never heard of him, and the next day he's making a lot of money. But what counts is following what you started out wanting naturally to do and be."

By the time these performances were done, with few exceptions, the better-known soloists had left the band permanently. Ellington was writing longer pieces, some considered pretentious, eccentric, or just plain boring. After all, what did juzz have to do with a more classical, symphonic approach? (All reasons for dismissing him and fellow cohorts like Strayhorn.) Ellington didn't care for the terms of the debate. Or at least he didn't really let on. Instead, he was "following what [he] started out wanting naturally to do and be."

Perhaps, this explains why the opening evening of the '58 Newport Jazz Festival was called "Duke Ellington night." Among other things, and with a nod to his Newport '56 appearance, it was a kind of endorsement from certain factions for his hanaing tough, for continuing to write challenging, if unwelcomed, music. Because, when all was said and done. Duke Ellinaton, circa 1958, was worthy of such acclaim, and not just because of distant accomplishments; and from this preeminent, nowfive-year-old jazz festival, however disorganized. Listening to Live At Newport 1958 today reminds us that Ellington's sound is eternal, however it is "packaged," and despite the level of inspired execution. As Quincy Jones said, in his breezy, mixed review of Newport 1958 in a 1959 issue of The Jazz Review: "... even when they're just opening

the doors a little and not playing what the band is really capable of, you always know there's *something* there."

A little earlier I mentioned that it's impossible to know how the altered program of the complete concert would've been received back then. That's true if there had only been an LP release of this material. But, as we now know, we do have the comments from the actual concert. To reprise from some of critic Don Gold's comments from the scene (and I'll just list a few to give a flavor): "Among the tunes introduced were 'Scratching [sic] The Surface' (a title which could serve to define Ellinaton's compositional efforts for this festival)"... "an obvious and often silly survey of jazz titled 'Jazz Festival Jazz'"... and "Ellinaton close[d] the evening by kicking off another trivial tune, one he identified as 'Jones.' As the crowd poured out of the park into the night, few inquired as to 'Jones'' identity." Ouch.

If so much flak had been given to the real deal at Newport, why bother with the music presented in this package? Well, as Quincy Jones said, "you always know there's *something* there." Besides, so much controversy is an indication that sparks are or were—flying. And who doesn't like a few sparks now and then? And finally, the level of spontaneity heard here is, at times, infectious.

Indeed, from the improved digital sound that enhances the sense of really being there, to the casual, intimate feel of the band, to hearing those distinctive voices only an Ellington band could have, to what was then new music being performed for the first time (in addition to "Just Scratchin' The Surface," others included "Princess Blue," "Mr. Gentle And Mr. Cool," "Jazz Festival Jazz," "Hi Fi Fo Fum," "El Goto," and "Prima Bara Dubla"), to Duke's working the crowd, to Jackson's unique guest spots, there's a lot to recommend this set to Ducal and non-Ducal fans alike. Overall, when compared with the original LP performances, the music on *Live At Newport 1958* conveys more spirit, life, and excitement, not to mention surprises.

Having said all this, I must weigh in with a few reservations, key among them being easy targets Lil Greenwood and Ozzie Bailey. Granted, it was a festival, with certain liberties taken that might not have been taken otherwise. After all, their appearances did add a certain losseness to the proceedings. But, particularly, inserting the overdone, unjazzy Greenwood on a crowd-pleaser like "Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home" is goofy, let alone obscurantist. Likewise, fellow singer Bailey's goosing "Duke's Place" (a piggyback to the instrumental "C Blues," which became "C Jam Blues") seems unnecessary. And Al Hibbler is missed on "Multicolored Blue."

Despite these vocal concessions, and the occasional sputter inherent to any live performance (e.g., "Jones"), the strengths of this set are many and sweet, indeed. Ellington's "Princess Blue," running over 10 minutes in length, opens the concert as if to say, "Critics be damned, my music goes where it ages, including jolly of England, where the Princess awaits." (Ellington did end up visiting rovalty.) Dispensing with the typical hot opening number, this relatively low-key piece is nonetheless elegant, and a tad symphonic as it develops on different levels. Throughout, a Middle Eastern flavor permeates as Jimmy Hamilton's moody clarinet threads alternate sections of reeds and brass. Then, it's Paul Gonsalves' tenor aiving "Duke's Place" some grit. This guick, medium-tempo swinger finally gets the band's blood in circulation, sort of. Then there's Duke introducing the following tune: "We'll start by 'Scratchin' The Surface." This gradual buildup of songs adds to the drama of a concert—and festival—with snags and jags galore. Sam Woodvard's kick-ass drums finally signal the breaking of sweat as the band continues its journey down blues alley. Again, it's Gonsalves' horn that's featured. (Notice how well Woodvard's ride cymbal work is recorded.)

Again, Ellington turns to Gonsalves (sans orchestra) to elicit the beautiful, burnished colors of "Happy Reunion," a title that may throw a few listeners, given the song's plaintive mood. The peppy "Junifilo" gives us the parched yet warm-andfriendly flugelhorn of Clark Terry, as he carries the band in a mini horn concerto. Shorty Baker's muted trumpet and Ray Nance's sweet Stradivarius violin swing through the lighthearted "Mr. Gentle And Mr. Cool." At this point, the concert starts to reveal itself as a rotating series of solo features, the orchestra taking a back seat. But then comes "a panorama": the Ellinaton/Strayhorn "Jazz Festival Jazz" presents itself as a vehicle for orchestra, something of a quick trip through jazz (note Hamilton's trad clarinet riding high through the Dixie-ish middle section). Likewise, the orchestra as instrument (an Ellinaton cornerstone), with bleeding solo voices, continues with "Feet Bone." Taking its cues from "Skin Deep" (previously a vehicle for Louie Bellson) comes the swinging rocker "Hi Fi Fo Fum," a feature for drummer Sam Woodvard. This piece comes roughly halfway through the concert, no doubt serving as a kind of intermission for some, for others, it was, and is, a sonic break in the action as alternating tender and fierce tom toms carry the day through vet another blues. Skipping over the Greenwood numbers, "house quest" Gerry Mulligan provides an opportunity for "a little choreography," as he joins fellow baritonist Harry Carney for some slouching good fun on "Prima Bara Dubla." Their completely different voices give an interesting study in contrast on instruments normally given over to choruses. Eventually, alternating lines converge as the end nears (hear Hamilton's clarinet atop this bottom-heavy duet). Cat Anderson's "El Gato" serves to further Ellington's "choreography" as Duke brings all four trumpeters front and center. The definitive cooker of the set, its Latin flavor at the outset suggests images of a night club orchestra waiting for Carmen Miranda. "El Gato" serves as the last hot

tune of the concert as "Multicolored Blue," finally featuring alto great Johnny Hodges (behind Ozzie Bailey), returns the show to a more reflective mood.

With minimal orchestral accompaniment, aospel areat Mahalia Jackson enters with a classic rubato version of "Come Sunday." Her slight vibrato and forceful lines hang on every verse. Things get downright spiritual with "Keep Your Hand On The Plow." Accompanied by Mildred Falls, Jackson's treatment with an uptempo 2/4 beat is even more disorienting than "Bill Bailey" (imagine the crowd's reaction). The band doesn't enter till the end with a fivenote refrain that ultimately swings things until Jackson returns with an encore chorus. To the "exhausted" crowd, the unknown closing "Jones" sounds like pure impromptu Ellington, Gonsalves' characteristic wailing providing the soundtrack to Duke's apparent touch of ironic wit as he signs off with his signature. "We love you madly," bestowed upon the exiting throng

And so, a night of swinging blues ends. All kinds of blues. And like the blues, you either love 'em or you don't. Repaired and restored, Duke Ellington's *Live At Newport 1958* is more than ample evidence that great music lives and breathes through all manner of circumstance. And sometimes because of it.

> —John Ephland Down Beat March 1994

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PRODUCER'S NOTE:

The repertoire in this collection was recorded on state-of-the-art equipment in 1958. The fidelity on this recording has not been enhanced by the application of a noise reductions system, thus providing the listener with an accurate sonic representation of the live event. While some over modulation will occur, we believe the spirit of the performance will not be diminished. Every effort has been made to preserve the integrity of the original analog tape recordings. However, the digital transfer and remastering from these sources may reveal imperfections that were inherent in the origiinal recording techniques of that time.

This Compact Disc was manufactured to meet critical quality standards. If you believe the disc has a manufacturing defect, please call our Quality Management Department at 1-800-255-7514. New Jersey residents should call 609-722-8224.



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11. Jones* (2:28)

COLUMBIA



From the historic 1958 Newpart Jazz estival Concerts comes a never-beforereleased Duke Ellington performance. Two compact discs containing 21 live acks, taken from the opening night of uly 3, 1958, is not to be mistaken for the re-recorded versions which were released on the Lp Newport 1958 Duke Ellington and His Orchestra featuring Gerry Mulligan. This is the first release of the complete live concert, in the correct sequence, including two spectacular performances with Mahalia Jackson. As well as radio performances made earlier that day of "Princess Blue" and "Duke's Place."

> * Previously unissued ** Previously unreleased radio broadcast



LIVE

AT

NEWPORT

1958

COLUMBIA/LEGACY