



DUKE ELLINGTON & HIS ORCHESTRA

RARE 'LIVE' RECORDINGS 1952-3

**METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE,
NEW YORK
5TH JANUARY 1952**

**UNKNOWN LOCATION
MARCH 1952**

**THE ARMORY,
YAKIMA, WASHINGTON
29TH APRIL 1952**

**MCELROY'S BALLROOM,
PORTLAND, OREGON
30TH APRIL 1953**



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CLARK TERRY



HARRY CARNEY



BETTY ROCHE



JIMMY GRISSOM

CD 1

5th January 1952 Metropolitan Opera House, New York

1. The Hawk Talks (Louis Bellson) Campbell Connelly & Co Ltd.
2. Frustration (Duke Ellington) Campbell Connelly & Co Ltd.
3. Sultry Serenade (Duke Ellington) Campbell Connelly & Co Ltd.
4. Sophisticated Lady (Mitchell Parish, Irving Mills, Duke Ellington) Sony ATV Music Publishing (UK) Ltd.
5. Perdido (Juan Tizol, Ervin Drake, Harry Lenk) Campbell Connelly & Co Ltd.
6. I Got It Bad And That Ain't Good (vocal Betty Roche) (Duke Ellington, Paul Webster) EMI United Partnership Ltd.
7. A Tone Parallel To Harlem (Duke Ellington) EMI United Partnership Ltd.
8. Take the 'A' Train (Billy Strayhorn) Chrysalis One Publishing UK Ltd.
9. Medley :
 VIP's Boogie (Duke Ellington) Campbell Connelly & Co Ltd.
 Jam With Sam (Duke Ellington) Campbell Connelly & Co Ltd.
10. Monologue (vocal Duke Ellington) (Duke Ellington, Jimmy Hamilton) Campbell Connelly & Co Ltd.
11. Blues At Sundown (vocal Jimmy Grissom) (Duke Ellington) Copyright Control
12. Skin Deep (Louis Bellson) Universal/MCA Music Ltd.
13. Medley:
 Don't Get Around Much Anymore (Duke Ellington, Sidney Russell) Chelsea Music Publishing Co Ltd,
 EMI United Partnership Ltd.
 Mood Indigo (Duke Ellington, Barney Bigard, Irving Mills) EMI Music Publishing Ltd.
 I'm Beginning To See The Light (Harry James, Duke Ellington, Johnny Hodges, Don George) Redwood
 Music Ltd., Campbell Connelly & Co Ltd.
 Prelude To A Kiss (Duke Ellington, Irving Mills, Irving Gordon) Lafleur Music Ltd.
 It Don't Mean A Thing (Duke Ellington, Irving Mills) EMI Music Publishing Ltd.
 Solitude (Duke Ellington, Eddie De Lange, Irving Mills) Lafleur Music Ltd., Bug Music Ltd. (GB)
 I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart (Duke Ellington, Irving Mills, Henry Nemo, John Redmond) EMI
 Music Publishing Ltd.
 Don't Get Around Much Anymore (Duke Ellington, Sidney Russell) Chelsea Music Publishing Co Ltd,
 EMI United Partnership Ltd.

CD 2

1. Tulip or Turnip (vocal Ray Nance) (Duke Ellington, Don George) Universal/MCA Music Ltd.
2. Basin Street Blues (vocal Ray Nance) (Spencer Williams) EMI Music Publishing Ltd.

March 1952 Unknown location

3. Primping At The Prom (Duke Ellington) Campbell Connelly & Co Ltd.
4. Johnny Come Lately (Billy Strayhorn) Copyright Control
5. Moonstone (Duke Ellington) EMI Music Publishing Ltd.
6. Time On My Hands (Vincent Youmans, Mack Gordon, Harold Adamson) Memory Lane Music Ltd., Campbell Connelly & Co Ltd., Warner Chappell Music Ltd.
7. Margie (Con Conrad, Russel Robinson, Benny Davis) Redwood Music Ltd., Memory Lane Music Ltd.
8. Chelsea Bridge (Billy Strayhorn) Copyright Control
9. Midriff (Billy Strayhorn) State One Music Publishing UK

29th April 1952 The Armory, Yakima, Washington

10. Phalanges (Louis Bellson, Clark Terry) Moncur Street Music Ltd.
11. VIP's Boogie (Duke Ellington) Campbell Connelly & Co Ltd.
12. Solitude (vocal Jimmy Grissom) (Duke Ellington, Eddie De Lange, Irving Mills) Lafleur Music Ltd., Bug Music Ltd. (GB)
13. Summertime (vocal Jimmy Grissom) (George Gershwin, Ira Gershwin, Du Bose Heyward, Dorothy Heyward) Warner/Chappell North America Ltd.
14. My Little Brown Book (vocal Jimmy Grissom) (Billy Strayhorn) Chrysalis One Publishing UK Ltd.
15. Good Girl Blues (vocal Jimmy Grissom) (Duke Ellington) EMI United Partnership Ltd.
16. The Hawk Talks (Louis Bellson) Campbell Connelly & Co Ltd.
17. Take the 'A' Train (Billy Strayhorn) Chrysalis One Publishing UK Ltd.
18. Happy Birthday To You (Mildred Hill, Patty Hill) Keith Prowse Music Publishing Co Ltd.

CD 3

1. Ting-a-ling (Louis Bellson, Charles Shavers) Campbell Connelly & Co Ltd.
2. Sophisticated Lady (feat. solo Ray Nance violin, Harry Carney bass clarinet) (Mitchell Parish, Irving Mills, Duke Ellington) Sony ATV Music Publishing (UK) Ltd.
3. C Jam Blues (Duke Ellington) EMI United Partnership Ltd.
4. Passion Flower (Billy Strayhorn) State One Music Publishing UK

30th April 1953 McElroy's Ballroom, Portland, Oregon

5. Happy Go Lucky Local (Duke Ellington, Billy Strayhorn) Copyright Control, EMI United Partnership Ltd.
6. Summertime (feat. solo Cat Anderson tpt) (George Gershwin, Ira Gershwin, Du Bose Heyward, Dorothy Heyward) Warner/Chappell North America Ltd.
7. Warm Valley (feat. solo Paul Gonsalves sax) (Duke Ellington, Bob Russell) EMI United Partnership Ltd., Campbell Connelly & Co Ltd.
8. Sultry Serenade (feat. solo Brit Whitman tbn) (Duke Ellington) Campbell Connelly & Co Ltd.
9. Hi Ya Sue (feat. solo Jimmy Hamilton sax, Quentin Jackson tbn) (Duke Ellington) EMI United Partnership Ltd.
10. Sophisticated Lady (feat. solo Harry Carney bass clt, Ray Nance vln) (Mitchell Parish, Irving Mills, Duke Ellington) Sony ATV Music Publishing (UK) Ltd.
11. Things Ain't What They used To Be (Mercer Ellington, Ted Persons) Campbell Connelly & Co Ltd.
12. The Hawk Talks (Louis Bellson) Campbell Connelly & Co Ltd.
13. C Jam Blues (feat. solo Ray Nance vln, Brit Woodman tbn, Russell Procope clt & sax) (Duke Ellington) EMI United Partnership Ltd.
14. Tenderly (Walter Gross, Jack Lawrence) Chappell-Morris Ltd.

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Personnel:

CD 1 & CD 2 Tracks 1, 2 5th January 1952 Metropolitan Opera House, New York
CD 2 Tracks 3-9 March 1952 Unknown location
Cat Anderson, Willie Cook, Clark Terry (tp); Ray Nance (tp, vln, vcl); Quentin Jackson, Juan Tizol, Britt Woodman (tb); Jimmy Hamilton (cl, ts); Russell Procope (as, ss, cl); Willie Smith (as); Paul Gonsalves (ts); Harry Carney (bar, cl, b-cl); Duke Ellington (p, narrator, announcements); Wendell Marshall (b); Louie Bellson (d); Jimmy Grissom, Betty Roche (vcl)

CD 2 Tracks 10-18 & CD 3 Tracks 1-4 29th April 1952 The Armory, Yakima, Washington
As above but Hilton Jefferson (as) replaces Willie Smith

CD 3 Tracks 5-14 30th April 1953 McElroy's Ballroom, Portland Oregon
As above, but Rick Henderson (as) replaces Hilton Jefferson, and Butch Ballard (d) replaces Louie Bellson. Betty Roche not included.

This release comes from the archives of the San Francisco Traditional Jazz Federation (www.sftjf.org) which are lodged with the Archive of Recorded Sound at Stanford University in California. The archive comprises a collection of jazz recordings amassed during the 1950s and 1960s by broadcaster Ken Ackerman, and widely known as the Ackerman Tapes. The collection was largely forgotten about until 2006, when it was salvaged by Bill Carter and Dave Radlauer of the SFTJF. Most of the open reel tapes were transferred on to digital media by Dave Radlauer.

Trapeze Music and Entertainment Ltd. are able to release this collection by arrangement with Bill Carter and are very grateful for the opportunity to bring these recordings, some of them previously unreleased in any form, and others previously only available on vinyl in piecemeal fashion, to market in this form for the first time. We are intending that we will have a regular programme of jazz releases on our Acrobat label derived from this fount of rare gems.

The exact provenance of these recordings has been established with reasonable certainty, primarily through reference to the excellent and generally definitive Lords Discography (www.lordisco.com), an ever-reliable guide, a subscription to which is an essential investment for jazz researchers and enthusiasts. We have used this source along with another fascinating and authoritative web site, www.ellingtonia.com, which lists his performances and indicates if and where the recordings have been released.

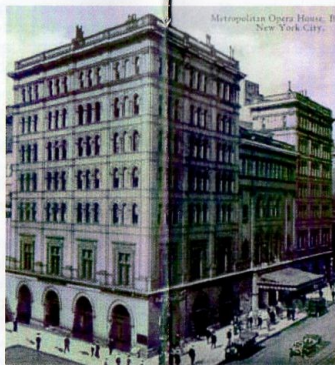
The information that came with the Ackerman recordings from the archive indicated that the tracks on CD 1 and the first two tracks on CD 2 were from a show in Portland Oregon, with a pencil note that read "Metropolitan OH Jan. 5th 1952". A reference to Lords confirmed that the orchestra indeed performed at New York's Metropolitan Opera House on that date, and the track sequence, with a couple of minor inconsistencies, lines up between the two. According to both sources, only one track from this concert, "Basin Street

Blues", has previously been released, on a Stardust LP 201, and on a Black Label CD BLCD8028. We are confident that the rest are being made available for the first time.

What is presented here on the face of it appears to be a complete recording of the concert. The first half of the show appears to end with "Take The A Train", which follows the performance of the lengthy work "A Tone Parallel To Harlem" – Ellington's announcement makes that reasonably clear, not least as the announcement before the next track "VIPs Boogie" begins with Ellington saying "We start our second half...". This makes sense, as it means that each half lasts for about 45 minutes. In Lords Discography, "Tulip Or Turnip" and "Basin Street Blues" are placed before "Skin Deep", but on the Ackerman recording which appears to be continuous and seamless at this point, they clearly follow the Medley which apparently closes the main programme, and these two tracks are introduced as encores.

However, an entry on another authoritative web site, www.ellingtonia.com/1951-60.html, tells a slightly different story. It also has "Tulip Or Turnip" and "Basin Street Blues" before "Skin Deep", and also shows "Do Nothing Till You Hear From Me" and "Once There Lived A Fool", both with Jimmy Grissom vocals, between "Blues At Sundown" and "Tulip Or Turnip". There is no explanation for the absence of those tracks – the Ackerman recordings are split between "tracks" at this point, so it is impossible to judge the continuity from "Blues At Sundown" to "Skin Deep", so it is perfectly possible that there were other tracks which for some reason were not included as they were for some reason unavailable or technically unacceptable. Nevertheless, the continuity of Ellington's announcement

following the medley and introducing the encore with "Tulip or Turnip" on the Ackerman recordings seems inescapably logical and technically authentic, so we have stayed with that interpretation.



The Metropolitan Opera House

One inexplicable issue is the presence in the Ackerman recordings of an incomplete version of "Take The A Train" between "I Got It Bad And That Ain't Good" and "A Tone Parallel To Harlem". It is an odd version, lasting just over a couple of minutes, incorporating considerable tempo variations, and being suddenly cut off before the end. It bears no musical relation to the version which ends the first half of the show, and is not referred to in either of the discographies. The situation is not helped by the fact that on the Ackerman recording, the applause at the end of "A Tone Parallel To Harlem" also cuts off suddenly, and the recording goes straight into the first piano notes of "Take The A Train". We have not included the "rogue" version of "Take The A Train", as it is hard to see any logic for its being part of the show at this point, but it is something of a mystery.

Although we would have preferred to keep the different shows on separate CDs, the respective lengths made this impossible within the 3-CD set format, so what we believe to be (from Duke's announcement) the encore tracks from the Metropolitan Opera House concert are the first two tracks on Side 2.

The Metropolitan Opera House in those days was located on Broadway, and had been built in the early 1880s when the Metropolitan Opera Company was established. It was demolished in 1967 after the current MOH had been opened in the Lincoln Centre the previous year.

Tracks 3-9 on CD 2, according to the Ackerman archive notes, came from a dance date at McElroy's Ballroom in Portland Oregon on an unknown date. This would have seemed plausible, as in 1952 Ellington started making regular trips to the north-west in the spring, often doing a show on or around his birthday on 29th April – indeed, CD 3 does include tracks from a show at McElroy's on 30th April 1953. However, as we explain below, in 1952 he did a birthday show at a completely different venue. Both the Lords and Ellingtonia listings note a recording from an unidentified location in March 1952, the first seven tracks of which accord with the sequence of titles in this section of the Ackerman recordings.

Five of these seven tracks, based on the Lords data, were variously released in piecemeal form on LPs on Stardust (201), Sunburst (501), Folkways (FJ2968), Skata (502) and another referred to as (Sp)JB54-9285/86, but have not been released together in one place or on CD before, as far as we can tell. The remaining two tracks – "Primping At The Prom" and "Midriff" – do not seem to have been released in any form before, according to the Lords entries, and this is confirmed by the Ellingtonia information. "Primping At The Prom" cuts in very abruptly at the start – this is how it appears on the original source.

Why the Ackerman archive only has the first seven tracks, and none of the 19 others from the rest of what looks like a very long show, which have variously been available on the LPs mentioned above, we do not know. We could possibly have sought out some of these, but our self-imposed remit here is to release the Ackerman material as it was made available to us, rather than mix and match it with material from other sources.

As far as the location is concerned, we know that Ellington played in Fresno, California on 29th February 1952, in Los Angeles on 14th March, then in Salem, Oregon on 22nd March. The tour continued at Seattle Civic Auditorium on 25th March, before ending at the Yakima Armory date noted below on 29th April. It

is very likely that it was somewhere in the north-west – possibly even his subsequently regular haunt of McElroys Ballroom, but we do not know.

Tracks 10-18 on CD 2 and tracks 1-4 on CD 3 were once again stated in the Ackerman notes to be from a stage show at McElroys Ballroom in Portland, Oregon, with no date available. However, the track sequence accords directly



Gene Vincent and The Bluecaps at Yakima Armory

with a recording listed in Lords Discography which took place at "The Armory", Yakima, Washington State on 29th April 1952. The venue, assuming it is the same place, is still listed on web sites as a "Multi-Purpose Room" at Washington State National Guard – Yakima Armory. It is an imposing building, and was certainly used for concerts, as there is a picture of Gene Vincent and The Bluecaps playing there in 1956. It is still used for community events, according to local on-line event diaries.

The tracks in the Ackerman archive accord directly with the listings in both discographies. Many of the tracks were released on the LPs noted above, or on two other LPs Jazz Guild (Canada) 1004 and Phontastic (Sweden) NOST7614, but have never been on CD. In addition, of the 13 tracks, four are previously unreleased in any form – "V.I.P.'s Boogie", "My Little Brown Book", "The Hawk Talks" and "Take The A Train". "Take The A Train" cuts in very abruptly at the start – this is how it appears on the original source.

The rest of CD 3 comprises a selection of tracks from the dance date a year or so later at McElroy's Ballroom in Portland Oregon on April 30th 1953 mentioned above. There were around 45 tunes in the programme, of which there are ten tracks on this CD, in two blocks of six and four respectively. A further track, "All The Things You Are", is referred to in the Ackerman notes as having audible tape damage, and although the damage is relatively slight, for timing reasons we would have needed to go to our higher-priced 4CD category to accommodate it, so we have chosen to omit it (you can just hear Ellington



McElroy's Ballroom, Portland, Oregon

calling "All The Things You Are" to the band as the next tune during the applause at the end of "Tenderly" which closes the collection. There was also a further track in the Ackerman archive, an unreleased version of "VIP's Boogie", but once again tape damage was such that it is cut off after three minutes and does not merit inclusion – probably the reason it has remained unreleased.

Not surprisingly, given the short timescale within which most of the recordings were done, a few tunes appear more than once – "The Hawk Talks",

"Sophisticated Lady", "Sultry Serenade", "C Jam Blues" and, not surprisingly, "Take The A Train" – and it's a chance to listen closely and see how different or otherwise the performances are in the varying contexts.

These performances came at an interesting and in many ways difficult period for the Ellington band. The late '40s had seen a dramatic decline in the fortunes of the established big bands, not only because of the financial privations of post-war austerity, but also the increases in musician costs occasioned by the AFM recording bans, and many of the large outfits had ceased to operate. Some of them had re-invented themselves as smaller, more flexible R&B or jump blues combos, as the styles of music popular in the juke joints moved on, while in the jazz market bebop had taken hold, with musicians brought up in the swing era seeking creative freedom in adventurous small group formats. The reduced size of the R&B and bebop groups was popular with club owners, who saw the opportunity to reduce costs.

Ellington had been one of the most prolific and successful of the big bands of the '40s, with the Duke himself, along with the likes of Billy Strayhorn and other composers within the ensemble, regularly turning out musical three-minute gems for the juke box and record store markets. Increasingly, however, Ellington was looking to explore the potential of longer works, as the long-playing record became more widely accepted, and had composed works for full-length stage shows like "Black, Brown And Beige" although with mixed response from the market.

All of this was somewhat at odds with the financial and practical demands of the business, and in the early '50s the Duke tried to keep true to his established approach while coping with the dramatic changes in the industry. In 1950 he had composed another long work "Harlem", the score of which he presented to President Harry Truman, a renowned music fan, in 1951, and a performance of which is included in the New York Metropolitan Opera House concert on CD 1 of

this set. However, in the absence of international tours, movie appearances and extended residencies and tours in the USA, and with television not having provided the expanded opportunities that Ellington had hoped for, the band were obliged to make the best of the available one-night stands and radio shows that the market offered.

It was in this environment that the performances included in this collection took place – a variety of one-nighters across the country comprising auditorium concerts and dance dates in clubs and ballrooms. It was not really until their legendary performance at the Newport Jazz Festival in 1956 that the Ellington Orchestra re-established a pre-eminent place in the market and was able to reach mass audiences once more.

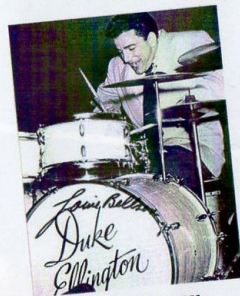
Nevertheless, recordings such as these capture a finely-honed ensemble, the line-up of which was remarkably stable over the 15 months or so which the recordings cover, comprising top-class musicians and soloists performing a book of arrangements developed over years of recording and touring in a variety of contexts, and with a leader and orchestra adapting their approach to the environment, from the formality of an Opera House concert to the looseness of a ballroom dance date. As such, the collection offers a fascinating and entertaining insight into one of the great big bands of the era simply doing what they did best.

Paul Watts

2013



RAY NANCE



LOUIE BELLSON



PAUL GONSALVES & DUKE ELLINGTON



ACTRC00033

ALSO AVAILABLE

TEDDY BUCKNER & HIS ALL STARS



*Live at The Club Hangover,
San Francisco
June & July 1955*

PREVIOUSLY UNRELEASED RADIO BROADCASTS

KID ORY'S CREOLE JAZZ BAND



*Live at The Club Hangover,
San Francisco
October 1954*

7 OR 15 TRACKS COMPLETE RADIO BROADCASTS PREVIOUSLY UNRELEASED ON U.S.

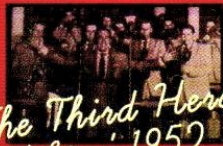
THE LATE TATE & FINE'S ALL STARS



*Live at The Black Sheep,
San Francisco 1961*

PREVIOUSLY UNRELEASED RADIO BROADCASTS

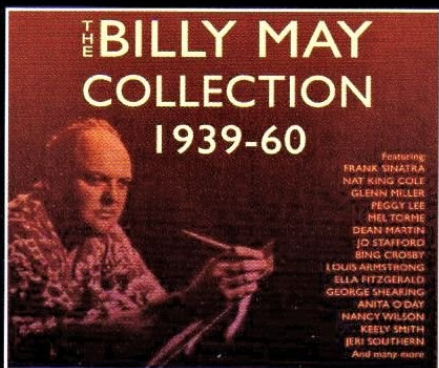
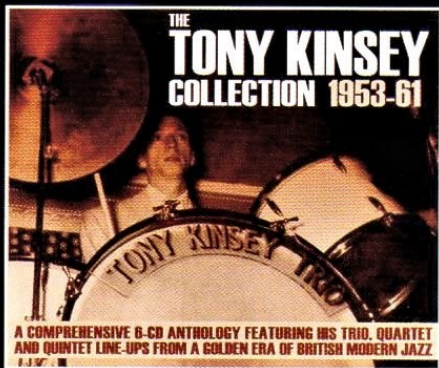
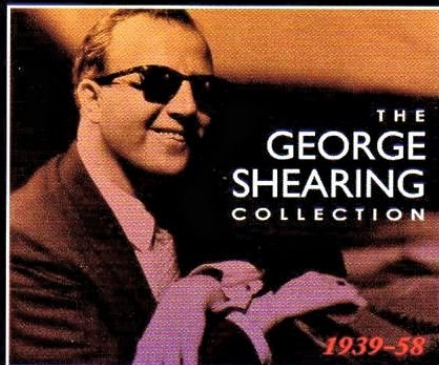
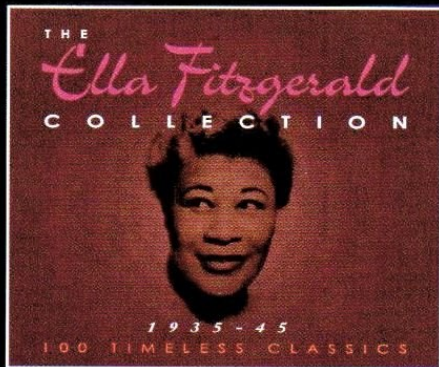
WOODY HERMAN



*The Third Herd
'Live' 1952*

PREVIOUSLY UNRELEASED 'LIVE' RECORDINGS

ALSO AVAILABLE



**DUKE
ELLINGTON
& HIS ORCHESTRA**
RARE 'LIVE' RECORDINGS 1952-3

CD 1



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CD 2



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CD 3



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DUKE ELLINGTON & HIS ORCHESTRA

RARE 'LIVE' RECORDINGS 1952-3

CD 1

5th January 1952 Metropolitan Opera House, New York

1. The Hawk Talks 2. Frustration 3. Sultry Serenade 4. Sophisticated Lady 5. Perdido 6. I Got It Bad And That Ain't Good (vocal Betty Roche) 7. A Tone Parallel To Harlem 8. Take the 'A' Train 9. Medley: VIP's Boogie, Jam With Sam 10. Monologue (vocal Duke Ellington) 11. Blues At Sundown (vocal Jimmy Grissom) 12. Skin Deep 13. Medley: Don't Get Around Much Anymore, Mood Indigo, I'm Beginning To See The Light, Prelude To A Kiss, It Don't Mean A Thing, Solitude, I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart, Don't Get Around Much Anymore

CD 2

1. Tulip or Turnip (vocal Ray Nance) 2. Basin Street Blues (vocal Ray Nance)

March 1952 Unknown location

3. Primping At The Prom 4. Johnny Come Lately 5. Moonstone 6. Time On My Hands 7. Margie 8. Chelsea Bridge 9. Midriff

- 29th April 1952 The Armory, Yakima, Washington
10. Phalanges 11. VIP's Boogie 12. Solitude (vocal Jimmy Grissom) 13. Summertime (vocal Jimmy Grissom) 14. My Little Brown Book (vocal Jimmy Grissom) 15. Good Girl Blues (vocal Jimmy Grissom) 16. The Hawk Talks 17. Take The 'A' Train 18. Happy Birthday To You

CD 3

1. Ting-a-ling 2. Sophisticated Lady 3. C Jam Blues 4. Passion Flower

30th April 1953 McElroy's Ballroom, Portland, Oregon

5. Happy Go Lucky Local 6. Summertime 7. Warm Valley 8. Sultry Serenade 9. Hi Ya Sue 10. Sophisticated Lady 11. Things Ain't What They Used To Be 12. The Hawk Talks 13. C Jam Blues 14. Tenderly

The recordings in this collection come from the Ackerman tapes, an archive held in Stanford University in California comprising 'live' jazz recordings, many previously unreleased. The recordings come from four separate 'live' performances by the Duke Ellington Orchestra, with three from Jan-Apr. 1952, including a concert at New York's Metropolitan Opera House, previously unreleased in any form, apart from one track. Several tracks from the other two 1952 performances have never been released, while the remainder have only ever been on vinyl. In all, of the 45 tracks, 20 are previously unreleased, 15 have only appeared on vinyl, while the other 10 have been on various CDs, now generally unavailable, we believe. It is a snapshot of a great orchestra under an iconic leader during a period when the big band market had been hit by post-war austerity and the emergence of bebop and R&B small groups, and one-night stands like these were its bread-and-butter work. We are sure that it will provide a welcome addition to the collections of Duke Ellington and big band enthusiasts.

ACTRCD9033

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