



THE **DEMS BULLETIN**
DUKE ELLINGTON MUSIC SOCIETY - SWEDEN

1982/2

APRIL MAY

SNADER TELESCRIPTONS MYSTERIES

In response to the request in Bull81/5, I'll try to comment on some of the "mysteries" on p. 9, re the Snaders. I have done extensive - though as yet incomplete - research into all Snader telecriptions that I know of. There were c. 1500, by more than 400 performers. To the jazz fan - even the broadminded one - only a fraction of these are of interest. My main efforts were concentrated accordingly, on big bands, some vocalists and vocal groups. I have seen quite a few of the films, have heard many, many more of the soundtracks, and have tried to check against them, as many of the various LPs as I could get hold of.

ABOUT THE ELLINGTON SNADERS SPECIFICALLY

Unfortunately, I have not seen and/or heard copies of all the LPs with Ellington Snader soundtracks on them. So without having listened to some of them (see below!), I cannot be too specific in my answers. However, on a general basis I can say, that in all instances where different "takes" of Snader soundtracks were reported to me, for instance in the case of Nat King Cole's telecriptions, I have been able to prove without a doubt that all differences were the result of speed irregularities and/or editing. It would be most surprising, if real alternates were to turn up. There is no indication in any of the sources available to me that more than the known Snader telecriptions were preserved, or soundtracks thereof.

There are some oddities, like genuine color Snaders (rare), while the majority - as you know - is b&w, but even those odd ones have the same soundtrack as their b&w counterparts. In addition, Snader lists do show only one production number for each film (title) and there is no indication of alternate films with different footage. I do not doubt Aasland's impression that he saw different footage from the one he has in his own collection, when he was shown Dave Chertok's films, but I would doubt that the soundtracks would be different. By all accounts, the Snader films were produced like any other film: Soundtrack was pre-recorded, and then the band was filmed, miming and acting, whichever one prefers. They were shot with different cameras, and any differences in footage - to my thinking - would have to be attributed to differences in editing of the footage. Of course, this is my biased opinion, with regard to the footage alone.

As far as the soundtracks are concerned, I am firmly convinced that for a given film (production) number, the same identical soundtrack was always used. In a budget conscious industry like the one we're concerned with here, anything else would be unrealistic.

However, as pointed out in the beginning, I would have to be able to compare the different LPs to decide if there are any differences or not. I can, however, give the following definitive comments, because these are based on simultaneous hearing of the respective tunes/versions:

MOOD INDIGO, as on Kaydee-7 is fully identical to the corresponding Snader soundtrack (and I believe the New World version will be also). The structure in DESOR may or may not be correct/incorrect: Aural evidence is my proof.

ELLINGTON SNADER SOUNDTRACKS ON LP's

	<u>Camay 3038</u>	<u>Camay 3043</u>	<u>New World 5043*</u>	<u>Coronet 275*</u>	<u>Kaydee 7</u>	<u>Crown 2022*</u>	<u>Premier 9039*</u>
CARAVAN	X	X	X	X			
VIP'S BOOGIE		X	X				(See
SOPHISTICATED LADY	X	X	X	X			comments
MOOD INDIGO	X		X	X	X		below)
THE HAWK TALKS	X	X	X				
THE MOOCHE		X	X	X	X		
SOLITUDE	X	X	X	X			

Crown and Premier are believed to be identical to the Coronet LP. Also, the Italian "OS-157"* seems identical.

* Copies of these LPs are wanted by me for inspection.

TAPES

Pulse 5091 has contents identical to Camay LP ("Solitude" different - see below)

Pulse 5093 has only one Ellington Snader soundtrack: "Caravan", the remainder being by different bands.

(Ctd. from front page):

CORONET
STEREOPHONIC
PRODUCT OF PREMIER ALBUMS, INC.

**DUKE ELLINGTON
AND HIS ORCHESTRA**

33 1/3 RPM

LONG PLAYING
PRINTED IN U.S.A.

CARAVAN
SOPHISTICATED LADY
MOOD INDIGO
THE MOOCH
SOLITUDE

CX/8 276-A

COMMENTS ON SINGLE TITLES

SOLITUDE: It's now established that the piano intro mentioned in Bull81/5, p.9, is found on the soundtrack to the respective Snader film. It was edited for the various LPs that it appears on. However, not yet having heard LP Camay 3038 "DUKE MEETS THE LADIES", which in composition of titles is identical to the Pulse tape. I cannot be certain if on the LP the piano is intact as on the Pulse tape.

VIP'S BOOGIE: Threesome is a title that appears quite frequently when the combination VIP'S BOOGIE/JAM WITH SAM is indicated. In Snader sales lists, however, and in Duke's announcement on the telescription soundtrack, VIP'S BOOGIE is the title used. Yet, there is no mention of JAM WITH SAM, which seems to be taken granted always, as a component of the performance. (K Stratemann)

DEMS comments: Many thanks to Dr. Stratemann for the above survey. During a recent film show in Stockholm a couple of Snader telescriptions were included, "Caravan" and "Sophisticated Lady". Because of a big screen the acting and sound could be compared in detail. It turned out that at least for these two selections we can state for sure - no doubt - that the sound and the camera shooting were made simultaneously.

And for THREESOME we can add some light: This number, consisting of two parts, was, as far as we know, for the first time featured at the famous Metropolitan Opera House concert, January 21, 1951. The purpose was to provide background for a dancer group. The dancers were two men and a girl and the subject of their dance was, as Duke put it, "the old triangle, danced by a threesome". Later, when recorded for Columbia the first part was named VIP'S BOOGIE and the second JAM WITH SAM. From then on they were variously referred to as THREESOME and/or VIP'S BOOGIE and JAM WITH SAM. We are also able to give additional info (not commonly known) re the Duke Snader telescriptions: The following four selections, at least, were used in the Syndicated TV Series, "Showtime At The Apollo", with an added introduction to each by Willie Bryant, acting as MC, and applause were dubbed in: VIP'S BOOGIE, MOOD INDIGO, CARAVAN, and SOPHISTICATED LADY. Thus it can happen you will hear versions confusingly with a spoken presentation and applause not to be found on the original source.


We have urged Mr. Hoefsmit and Mr. Carmack to help Mr. Stratemann with copies from the wanted LP versions, but anyone else in the position to add help in this Snader soundtrack matter is asked to contact Mr. Stratemann (he is willing to pay all expences, or trade rare Ellington Material). The address is as follows:

Dr. Klaus Stratemann, Hallenstrasse 8, D- 4994 PREUSS. OLDENDORF, West Germany.

HOW ABOUT THIS ? - ADDITIONAL MYSTERIES

Crown CRS 2022 "DUKE ELLINGTON & BOBBY FREEDMAN" (British pressing 1970): The first side states "DUKE AND HIS ORCHESTRA" with the following 5 selections: CARAVAN/SOPHISTICATED LADY/MOOD INDIGO/THE MOOCH/SOLITUDE, the second side "THE MUSIC OF DUKE ELLINGTON - Bobby Freedman & his Orchestra" playing: It Don't Mean A Thing/Dark Dawn/Green Pink And Plaid/Jane /Humdrum. Same info on sleeve and label(s), but my copy plays on the supposed sides the Cat Anderson & The Ellington All Stars, NYC, 1959-titles: The Mexican Bandit/Chelsea Bridge/Lovlinessence/A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing, continued on side two: Acetuate/Summertime/Like Dig/Between Someplace. Are all CRS 2022 copies made this way? (U Renberg)

DEMS comment: Our copy is as false as yours. If all copies are the same we don't know. Further help is wanted, so please tell us what your own copy looks like - and really contains!

<p style="text-align: center;">OUT OF PRINT DEMS BULLETINS</p> <p>The following back issues are all out of print. They will not be re-printed, but xeroxed copies may be had for SEK (S.Cr.) 1:50 per page.</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>79/1</td> <td>2 pages</td> <td>(5 are of current interest)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>79/2</td> <td>10 pages</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>79/3</td> <td>6 pages</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>79/4</td> <td>4 pages</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>79/5</td> <td>8 pages</td> <td>(7 are of current interest)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>80/1</td> <td>10 pages</td> <td>(8 are of current interest)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>80/4</td> <td>8 pages</td> <td>(7 are of current interest)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>81/1</td> <td>7 pages</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>81/2</td> <td>7 pages</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>81/3</td> <td>5 pages</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>81/5</td> <td>9 pages</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	79/1	2 pages	(5 are of current interest)	79/2	10 pages		79/3	6 pages		79/4	4 pages		79/5	8 pages	(7 are of current interest)	80/1	10 pages	(8 are of current interest)	80/4	8 pages	(7 are of current interest)	81/1	7 pages		81/2	7 pages		81/3	5 pages		81/5	9 pages		<h2 style="text-align: center;">THE GREAT MUSIC OF DUKE ELLINGTON</h2> <p>Our member Don Swenson feels we should put attention to this piano album "THE GREAT MUSIC OF DUKE ELLINGTON".</p> <p>Should be easy to order through your local Music/Book Shop, or you may use the address mentioned below.</p> <p>DEMS obtained its copy years ago bought at a Stockholm music store.</p> <p>We certainly agree with Don - it is an album well worth having.</p> <p>DOVER PUBLICATIONS, INC.,</p> <p>Original sheet music for 42 great songs: In a Sentimental Mood, Caravan, Satin Doll, Boy Meets Horn, It Don't Mean a Thing (If it Ain't Got that Swing), Take the "A" Train, Sophisticated Lady, Mood Indigo, I'm Just a Lucky So-and-So, Everything But You, Don't Get Around Much Anymore, Solitude, and 30 more! A sheet music collection of these songs would cost you 15 to 20 times the price of this book. 42 songs with lyrics. 143pp. 9 x 12. 20757-9 Paperbd. \$8.95</p> <div style="text-align: right;">  </div>
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180 VARICK STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10014



We simply cannot resist showing this still with Duke playing the accordion on the movie set of "MURDER AT THE VANITIES"

DUKE IN THE PICTURE

● It is generally stated that Otto Hardwick is not among the Ellington personnel which recorded the soundtrack to the 1934 Paramount film "MURDER AT THE VANITIES". However, he was present when the Ellington orchestra arrived in Hollywood and was photographed next to its train (photo in my possession). Also, and more important, he is clearly visible among the saxophonists in a picture shot during production of the film (see Ulanov: DE - His Life And His Music). A second photo exists of almost the identical set-up, also shot in rehearsal or shooting of the 'Rape Of A Rhapsody' sequence, Hardwick not present.

Conclusion: Hardwick was present during early stages of the films production. If one assume that soundtrack pre-recordings took place before the actual shooting started, then it would appear possible that Hardwick was among those participating in the soundtrack recordings. For the next Paramount film, which was made immediately after "Murder", "BELLE OF THE NINETIES", Hardwick's place was

taken by Marshall Royal, as evidenced by a well-known photo taken on the Paramount lot (from which, for unknown reasons, Cootie Williams is missing). (K Stratemann)

DEMS comments: The generally stated thing is mainly a misunderstanding. OH is present both on soundtrack and in picture. This is true for "Ebony Rhapsody" whilst "Cocktails For Two" and "Live And Love Tonight" are played by a 'studio band' in the picture.

Both "Cocktails" & "Live And Love" were a little later recorded for Victor by DE&HO (12Apr34) and on this occasion OH was out (ill) replaced by Marshall Royal, who also subbed one week for OH, as reported in a contemporary paper. This info leads us to wonder a little about the accurateness concerning the date 23Apr34 often stated for the soundtrack recording of "BELLE OF THE NINETIES". Thus we think further research is required. By the way, at this date Lawrence Brown is back again.

(ctd. next page) —

NEW RELEASES



● D.E.T.S. TREASURY SHOW No. 16 July 28, 1945

A Train(theme) & Intro./Teardrops In The Rain/Frustration/
/(Bond promo)/Everything But You/Nine-Twenty Special/ Moon
Mist /Rockin' In Rhythm / (Bond promo) / Every Hour On The
Hour & Stn break / A Train(theme) & Return / MEDLEY: (a)
Intro., (b) In A Sentimental Mood, (c) Black Beauty, (d)
Sophisticated Lady, (e) Caravan, (f) Solitude, (g) I Let
A Song Go Out Of My Heart/(Bond promo)/Trumpet In Spades/
/Just A-Settin' And A-Rockin' / Go Away Blues/(Bond promo)/
/One O'Clock Jump & Close

Broadcast origin: From the stage of the State Theatre,
Hartford, Connecticut.

● D.E.T.S. TREASURY SHOW No. 17 August 4, 1945

A Train(theme) & Intro. / Dancing In The Dark / Downbeat
Shuffle/(Bond promo)/Tonight I Shall Sleep/Esquire Swank/
/Creole Love Call / I Miss Your Kiss / Riff Staccato (& Bond
promo) & Stn break/A Train(theme) & Return/Passion Flower/
/Frantic Fantasy/Air Conditioned Jungle/ On The Sunny Side
Of The Street / Metronome All Out / Everything But You (&
Bond promo) / Solid Old Man & Close

Broadcast origin: From ABC Radio City Studios, N.Y.C.

● D.E.T.S. TREASURY SHOW No. 18 August 11, 1945

A Train(theme) & Intro. / What Am I Here For? / Blue Is The
Night / (Bond promo) / The Wish I Wish Tonight/Someone & Stn
break/A Train(theme) & Return/Harlem Air Shaft/Out of This
World / (Bond promo) / Midriff / Everything But You / Ring Dem
Bells / The Mood To Be Wooded / (Bond promo) / Emancipation
Celebration & Close

Unknown origination.

DEMS comments: Still another bunch of DETS LP's with mat-
erial never used except partly for some AFRS ET's and the
following three titles, Downbeat Shuffle/Esquire Swank /
/Metronome All Out, once included on a 10" Blank Label LP.

This is the first time you'll be able to enjoy the good
sounds, all of it, on microgroove. Do it!

(Words reached us that there are still disturbances in the
Meritt distributions to Europe. Because of this, DEMS
members, who still haven't received ordered material from
the Meritt Record Society, can inform DEMS in a letter to
us. We will then make a "sum up" and send it over to
Meritt as a base for corrections on the matter.)

✓ RCA CPL-2-4098
(2-LP Set)

"SOPHISTICATED ELLINGTON"

SIDE A: 10May66 Sophisticated Lady / 9May66 I Got It Bad /
/ 21Jan42 Perdido / 11May66 Mood Indigo / 14May45 It Don't
Mean A Thing / 26oct27 Black And Tan Fantasy

SIDE B: 10Jan34 Solitude / 15Mar40 Do Nothin' Till You Hear
From Me / 30oct28 The Mooche / 26oct27 Creole Love Call /
/ 15May46 I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart / 14May45 In A
Sentimental Mood

SIDE C: 15Feb41 Take The A Train / 16Jan31 Rockin' In Rhythm
/ 9Jul46 Just Squeeze Me / 30Jul45 Dancers In Love / 26Nov45
I'm Just A Lucky So-And-So / 10Jul46 Hey, Baby

SIDE D: 11May45 Caravan / 4May40 Don't Get Around Much Any-
more / Cotton Tail / 28Jul42 Hayfoot, Strawfoot / 26Aug46
Beale Street Blues / 10Jul46 Pretty Woman (D Miller)

As the album title suggests this is material used in the
still current "Sophisticated Ladies" musical (see Bull
81/2, p.5). Contrary to the RCA "DE's Sophisticated Ladies"
release (see Bull81/4, p.4) this LP set consists of real
DE recordings., original ones mixed with later versions.
Oddly enough there are no notes of any kind on the sleeve,
but thanks to Mr. Miller we know the dates as mentioned
above in connection with the various selections.

DUKE IN THE PICTURE (ctd. from previous page):

● Considerable confusion seems to exist among Ellington
discographers and others, as to when the Paramount short
"SYMPHONY IN BLACK" (w. Billie Holiday) was made and where.
Earlier sources (both books (Ulanov) and discographies),
quite logically, assumed that the film was made more or
less simultaneously with the above mentioned 2 feature
films, in early 1934, in Hollywood. However, in recent
publications (Millar's Billie Holiday discography among

them) it is stated that the film was made in 1935, at
Paramount's East Coast Studios in Astoria, Long Island.
This is definitely true for the Billie Holiday footage in
the film. But she is never seen at the same as the Elling-
ton band, which, by the way, is augmented to a total of 24
musicians on screen, and it is still possible that the
Ellington footage for this short film was filmed in Holly-
wood, in early 1934. Again, can anyone comment on this?
(K Stratemann)

LP's FOR SALE - S.Cr. 30:-/each:

- Tax m-8010 "BRAGGIN' IN BRASS / DE 1936-1939"
- Tax m-8012 "COTTON CLUB STOMP / DE 1937-1939"
- Tax m-8023 "BARNEY GOIN' EASY / BB 1937-1939"
- Tax m-8037 "DUKE ELLINGTON - THE TRANSCRIPTION YEARS"

Only for DEMS members. For your information:
Each "SMALL PACKET" can contain up to 3 LPs.
This is the most economical way sending LPs
air mailed. Small Packets can be forwarded
everywhere, except within Sweden.
DEMS' sending costs may be deducted from your
deposit.

... and don't forget our Azure LP-431 "DUKE AT
THE HURRICANE" (2 complete broadcasts - 3 April & May
1943). Members may order up to 3 copies, S.Cr. 30:-/ea.

(Please note the new price!)

DEAR DEMS MEMBER:

MONEY TRANSACTIONS with DEMS must be addressed
and payable to:

Birgit Åslund
Box 4026
S- 175 04 JÄRFÄLLA
Sweden

Note: Under present circumstances no Bank Checks can
be accepted with a Swedish Bank involved. This
is deeply regretted.

Note: All prior open reel tape offerings are still,
for the time being, withdrawn.

Your Balance (S.Cr.): **58.65**
DEMS Bulletin **0:-**

Postage/Exp **2:20**
Remaining deposit: **56.45**

The following article was published in THE NEW YORKER, January 11, 1982:

JAZZ

American Masterpieces

ABOUT half the sixty-six numbers recorded by the Duke Ellington orchestra for Victor Records between March 6, 1940, and July 28, 1942, are masterpieces of American music. It is still not altogether clear why this exuberant and unique flowering took place. The surrounding musical soil was sandy, and the Ellington band itself had been going through dry times. The rhythm section was inert, the arrangements often had a staccato, old-fashioned sound (toy-soldier muted trumpets, ornate saxophone writing), and the ensemble playing was imprecise. Even such fine numbers as "Riding on a Blue Note," "Blue Light," "Barney Goin' Easy," and "Portrait of the Lion" seemed inconclusive. In 1939, things began to stir. The composer and arranger Billy Strayhorn joined the band, and by the end of the year he had begun to take hold. Ellington left his old, tenacious manager, Irving Mills, and went with the William Morris agency. He also left Brunswick Records, whose sound was closed and soupy, and signed with Victor, whose sound was clear and open. The band made a heartening European tour (black jazz musicians were already going to Europe to be revitalized; indeed, they were often overwhelmed by applause and kindness), and the bassist Jimmy Blanton and the tenor saxophonist Ben Webster became part of the band. Blanton, who was just twenty-one, was the first modern bassist. He had a beautiful tone and unshakable time, and he was the first bassist capable of "melodic" improvising. He woke the band up rhythmically. Webster was thirty, and he had been with Ellington briefly, as well as with Andy Kirk, Fletcher Henderson, Cab Calloway, Benny Carter, and Teddy Wilson. ("I always had a yen for Ben," Ellington says in his autobiography.) All the big black bands except Ellington's had tenor-saxophone stars. Basie had Lester Young and Herschel Evans; Andy Kirk had Dick Wilson; Fletcher Henderson had Coleman Hawkins; Cab Calloway had Chu Berry. But Ellington's major saxophone soloist had been



the alto and soprano saxophonist Johnny Hodges. Webster enriched the band tonally, and he brought it new intensity and emotion. In return, Ellington built "Cotton Tail" and "Just A-Settin' and A-Rockin'" around Webster, and gave him an invaluable opportunity to sit beside Hodges in the saxophone section and absorb his gracefulness. Within a year or so, Webster, already on the verge of being first-rate, was the equal of Young and Hawkins. So the band was complete. On trumpets were Wallace Jones, Rex Stewart, and Cootie Williams (replaced late in 1940 by Ray Nance); on trombones Juan Tizol, Lawrence Brown, and Tricky Sam Nanton; on reeds Otto Hardwicke, Barney Bigard, Ben Webster, Johnny Hodges, and Harry Carney; and in the rhythm section Ellington on piano, Fred Guy on guitar, Jimmy Blanton on bass, and Sonny Greer on drums.

Ellington's 1940-42 masterpieces have strong jazz characteristics—improvised or partly improvised solos, jazz timbres (plunger mutes, growls, instrumental tonal peculiarities), and a regular sounded beat. They also have classical characteristics—fixed solos (originally improvised solos, which gradually became set), concertolike forms, and complex scoring, some of it rivalling Berlioz's. And they were entirely original in their instrumental combinations and in their odd, often surprising structures. Ellington used the twelve-bar blues and the thirty-two-bar a-a-b-a song form, but he decorated them with intricate introductions and codas, with interludes and transitions, with key changes, with hair-raising dissonance. Much of the time, his materials appeared to dictate his forms. "Sepia Panorama" has an "arch" form. The first chorus lasts twelve bars, the second chorus lasts sixteen bars, the third lasts eight, and the fourth twelve; the fifth chorus repeats the fourth chorus, the sixth repeats the third, the seventh repeats part of the second, and in the eighth we are back at the first chorus. "Concerto for Cootie" has an eight-bar introduction, and the first chorus is thirty-six bars long (two ten-bar sections

and two eight-bar sections). A two-bar transition leads into the second chorus, which is sixteen bars. There is an eight-bar recapitulation of the first ten bars of the first chorus and an eight-bar coda. Ellington (and, increasingly, Strayhorn) wrote most of the materials. Ellington had considerable help from his sidemen, who would contribute a melody here and a bridge there, and who often groused about not getting more credit. He also reworked chestnuts like "Chloe" and "The Sidewalks of New York," and occasionally he built a new structure on old chords: "In a Mellotone" was based on "Rose Room," and "Cotton Tail" on "I Got Rhythm." He wrote several different kinds of pieces. There were programmatic or descriptive pieces, like "Just A-Settin' and A-Rockin'," "Harlem Airshaft," and "Dusk." There were tone poems, like "Blue Serge." There were rhythmic exercises, like "The Giddybug Gallop," "Ko-Ko," and "Jumpin' Punks." There were plain old blues, like "Across the Track Blues" and "C Jam Blues." And there were miniature concertos, like "Concerto for Cootie" and "Jack the Bear."

How does one of these marvels go? Here is "Ko-Ko," a minor blues and no relation of Charlie Parker's "Ko-Ko," made five years later. It starts *in medias res*. Sonny Greer gives a couple of quick timpani beats, and Carney goes immediately into a chuffing sustained note in his low register—his house-moving register—and is backed by the trombone section, possibly salted with one trumpet. The introduction lasts eight bars. In the first chorus, which is twelve bars, Juan Tizol plays a simple but ingenious six-note figure that is pursued closely by the reed section in such a way that it sounds like a continuation of Tizol's figure. Tizol starts the sentence and the reeds finish it. In the next two choruses, twelve measures apiece, Tricky Sam Nanton, using a plunger mute, solos against offbeat muted trumpets and the reed section, which plays a sighing three-note figure. Greer punctuates on his tomtoms. In the fourth chorus, also twelve bars, the reeds come to the fore with the same figure they used in the first chorus, and the trumpet section supplies "ooh-wa"s. Ellington himself surfaces from behind, throwing runs and crazy note clusters into the air. The twelve-bar fifth chorus is intense and climactic. The trumpet section plays a repeated long-held note (one of the trumpets, probably Williams, uses a

plunger mute) while the saxophone section, broken into two groups, plays accented figures and a melody parallel to the trumpets. The dissonance is almost overpowering. Then the reeds and trombones slide into an eight-bar interlude, pausing for several two-bar breaks by Blanton. In the seventh chorus, the trumpets again play long-held notes, and the saxophones play a countermelody. Carney returns in the final chorus with his very low chuffing note, backed by the trombones. The reeds climb abruptly into view and disappear into a closing full-band chord. The atmosphere of the number is rough and hustling and metallic. There are few treble sounds, and there is little delicacy. The piece bullies us. It sets out to be abrasive *and* lyrical, and it succeeds. It is also almost completely an ensemble piece—a kind of concerto for orchestra.

All this is by way of saying that the Smithsonian Collection (the record label of the Smithsonian) is well along in its masterly Ellington reissue project, begun six years ago. Four albums have been released—"Duke Ellington 1938," "Duke Ellington 1939," "Duke Ellington 1940," and now "Duke Ellington 1941." Each of the first two albums has thirty titles and two alternate takes, and although Ellington's strengths are evident, nothing prepares us for what happens at

the start of the 1940 album. This includes twenty-eight selections and four alternate takes. At least seven numbers are mediocre, but weak Ellington was superior to almost everything else in popular music. The four duets that Ellington did with Jimmy Blanton (how fine for the young Blanton, how selfless of Ellington) are in the album, and there are two takes of "Mr. J. B. Blues." The 1941 album has twenty-four selections and eight alternates, and it has even more lacklustre material. Fourteen of the numbers are radio transcriptions made around the same time as the Victor sides, and they don't add much to our Ellington knowledge. (How much better to have put in the ten or eleven classic sides—one is the surging "Main Stem"—Ellington made in 1942 before a union-imposed recording ban, which lasted into 1944, brought his great creative splurge to an end.) But there are tracks from two "soundies," which were three-minute films made for jukeboxes equipped with tiny screens. The first is a furious (but truncated) "Cotton Tail" and the second is an easy "C Jam Blues" notable for the longest drum solo (twelve bars) that Greer, an infrequent soloist, ever recorded with Ellington. His drums always sounded superb. He rarely used the muffling pads on his snare drum or tomtoms, and he kept his drumheads very tight. The result was a sharp, ringing, bravura tone.

His solo crackles. It is played mostly on his snare drum, although he inserts one fast round-the-set explosion. It is staccato and rocking, and he matches his friend Sid Catlett. The 1940 and 1941 albums include other delights: the rattling swing of "Jack the Bear," "A Portrait of Bert Williams," "In a Mellotone," and "Jumpin' Punkins," which has a lot of snappy two-bar Greer breaks; the tonal depths of "Dusk" and "Blue Serge;" the almost ecstatic shout by what sounds like the full band between Hodges' solos on "Never No Lament;" Cootie Williams' fury on "Harlem Airshaft" and his acidulous preaching on "Never No Lament;" all of Ben Webster's solos, and particularly his classic statement on "Blue Serge," with its incredible growling near the end; and the noble, sly, affecting work of Tricky Sam Nanton, who was in frequent, first-rate evidence in 1940 and 1941.

The liner notes are long and exhaustive. Gunther Schuller did the first set, James Patrick the second, Larry Gushee the third, and Gary Giddins the fourth. Gushee's have a nice combination of humor, musicology, and metaphor. Gushee also invented the invaluable schematic diagrams of the numbers in the 1940 and 1941 albums. They map, as far as it is possible, Ellington's labyrinthine musical mind. —WHITNEY BALLIETT

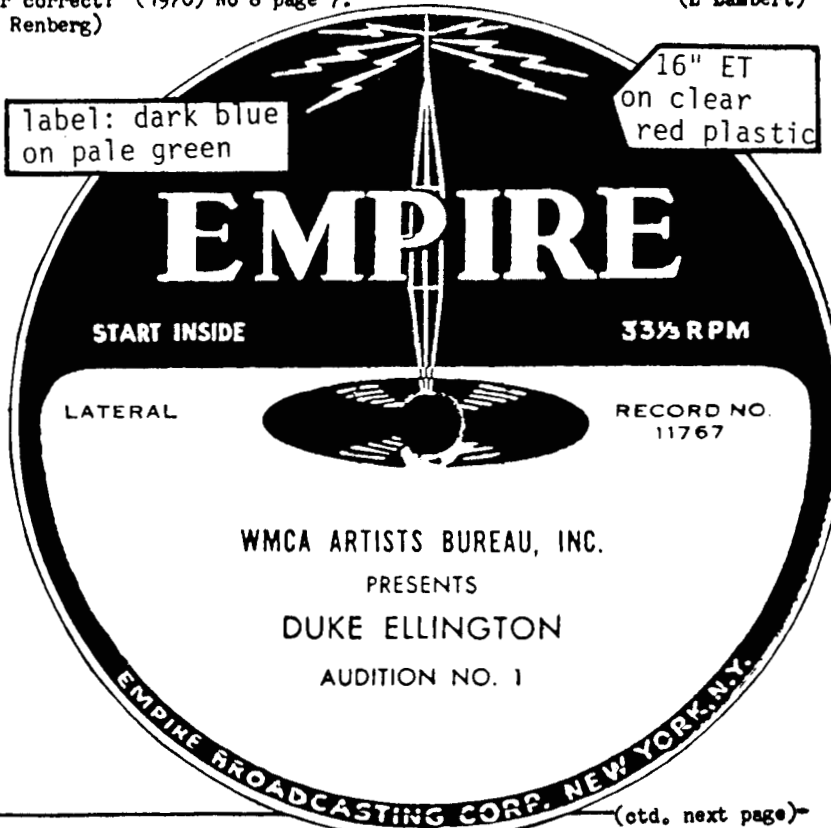
CORRECTIONS / ADDITIONS / DISCUSSIONS

● WHOSE BUNNY ?? - Bunny Hop Mambo on WRC TP-86 is no Duke-item, but whose Bunny is it? Did Voce (or was it Dance) tell us in Jazz Journal a few years back that it is Ray Anthony's band playing? Can anyone confirm or correct? (U Renberg)

● Decca DL-710176 (see Bull81/5, p.2) with Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra was recorded on 28 May 1970. Source: Stanley Dance in Lightly And Politely, Jazz Journal Vol 23 (1970) No 8 page 7. (E Lambert)

● New found: EMPIRE 16" transcription. For side one see label shown. Reverse same, but AUDITION NO. 3. Not listed in DESOR, but obviously the first of the regular series of the dj shows that were introduced by the live-broadcast show of December 29, 1947. Presumably WMCA hoped to syndicate the show to other radio stations and offered this ET as a sample; a second ET was likely issued also, with sides 2 and 4. Total show time: One hour. Probably DE prerecorded scores of shows at one time, likely having done the first group in Dec 1947, possibly in the same week in late December. The show ran daily on WMCA, at least for a few weeks, one can assume, but I'm not aware that it was picked up of syndication. (Certainly not in Toronto). (Ed Hausmann)

● I recently found an DE INTERVIEW, probably late Dec '46, on a dub from original 16" station acetate, made at Earle Theatre, Philadelphia, for a local jazz radio show. Anncr not known. This interview runs without break, but was later brooken down and intersperced with records for the broadcast. Also not listed in DESOR. (Ed Hausmann)



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