

THE DUKE ELLINGTON SOCIETY, CHAPTER #90

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MAY-JUNE 1993

LET'S PICNIC!

We are hoping for full participation by members at our annual picnic on Saturday, July 17th at the Shells' summer home at Lake Caroline. Each member may bring two guests.

For the community tables, each member is asked to bring enough food to be cooked or warmed over charcoal for him/herself and guests. Beer, sodas and ice will be provided by the Society. BYOL. Plates and eating utensils will also be provided.

You may play tennis, badminton, horse shoes, cards. Go boating. Swimming. Lounging. Whatever.

The Shells' phone number at Lake Caroline is 1-804-448-0330.

Directions: Take I-95 south 70 miles to the Ladysmith exit. Make a right turn at intersection, go one (1) mile. This will bring you to Route 1 at a traffic light. Make a left turn onto Route 1, go one and one-eighth mile (1 1/8) mile to Lake Caroline (a sign will be on the right). After leaving the gate, travel about 25 yards to the next intersection, Lake Caroline Drive. Turn left onto Lake Caroline Drive and follow the yellow line in the road for three (3) miles to the Shell gasoline sign. You're there.

HEAR RARE MUSIC AT THE JUNE 5TH MEETING

Our last formal meeting until September will be at 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 5 at the Omega Fraternity House, 13th and Harvard Sts., N.W.

Jack Towers will present a special program featuring highlights from three broadcasts: Art Ford's WNEW program of May 10, 1947 saluting the 20th anniversary of Duke's "big-time" career, with selected Ellingtonians supplying the music; Big Miller's November 21, 1961 broadcast, same station, featuring *Suite Thursday* by the full band; and a January 14, 1964 occasion at Basin Street East on which Billy Strayhorn sings (!?) his "Lush Life."

During a brief business interim, we will elect officers for the coming program year, July 1993 through June 1994.

As usual, there will be refreshments for you. Come on time for an enjoyable evening. (And why not bring a prospective member as a guest.)

In past years, several members stayed overnight at the nearby Comfort Inn in Carmel Church, Virginia and returned to the Lake on Sunday morning. To make reservations, call 1-800-228-5150.

**REVIEW: "TRIBUTE TO DUKE
ELLINGTON AND BILLY STRAYHORN"**

by Walter van de Leur

Over the last decade performers and listeners alike gradually have become aware that there is more to Ellington and Strayhorn than the handful of classics everybody knows. But it is rare that one gets to hear the original arrangements. Not only are the originals hard to get--few musicians know about the Ellington Collection, and the material can be accessed only after extensive research--but the music is unbelievably hard to play. To unearth original orchestrations and to get them played by some of the top professionals, the staff of the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra deserves nothing but praise.

For a full house at the Smithsonian on May 9, David Baker conducted a program of fine selections of Duke's and Strays' compositions. With "Ko-Ko," "The Mooche," "Raincheck," "Blood Count," "Caravan," "UMMG," and more, the orchestra demonstrated over and again the splendor of the music that these two men wrote. For someone who knows this music only from records, it was a revelation to hear the richness and warmth of the arrangements when played live.

But, probably unwillingly, the orchestra demonstrated something else: there is no way of outdoing any of the Ellington bands. With extra musicians to take care of the solos and each and every chair on the stage taken by renowned professionals, the Masterworks Orchestra at times was fighting its way through the scores. This

QUICK QUIZ

1. Who reputedly intoned "Bread cast upon the seas comes back as buttered toast"?
2. Before he concentrated on the clarinet, Jimmy Hamilton played a brass instrument professionally, including a stint in an orchestra in which Dizzy Gillespie was a member. Name the instrument.
3. Jimmy Lunceford had a popular vocalist whose nephew later sang with Ellington. Who were these relatives?

Answers on Page 4

PEOPLE ARE STILL TALKING

--about the programs at our last two meetings. In April, Debora Richardson and Reuben Jackson presented an interestingly narrated slide show, "Tall, Tan, and Counted: The Papers of Duke Ellington," about the Smithsonian's collection. In May, Walter van de Leur gave an illuminating comparative analysis of the formal approaches of Ellington and Strayhorn to their composing and arranging.

is certainly due to Duke's and Strays' orchestrations, where practically anything goes. More than once I have seen original scores in the Archives that simply deny any instrument's limitations, and no sensible arranger would take the risk of war with his musicians by handing out the kind of parts that was the everyday practice of Duke. From that perspective one cannot but admire the performance given by the orchestra. The band swung and managed to cover the entire range of Ellingtonian moods from the lightest humor to the deepest emotion.

The Masterworks Orchestra had to play the unplayable and had to compete with the best jazz orchestra ever. Baker and his men pretty much succeeded in that.

SMITHSONIAN PRESENTS
JAZZ MASTERWORKS
ORCHESTRA CONCERTS

Recent concerts of Ellington and Strayhorn music by the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra have been enthusiastically received by both critics and attenders. The group is co-directed by David N. Baker and Gunther Schuller. The orchestra's summer schedule is:

June 12 - 2 & 8 p.m. and June 13 - 1 & 4 p.m.

Music of Duke Ellington, Artie Shaw, Paul Jordan, and Count Basic - Schuller conducting

July 3 - 2 & 8 p.m. and July 4 - 1 & 4 p.m.

Music of Duke Ellington, Don Redman, Earl Hines, and Lionel Hampton - Schuller conducting

July 31 - 2 & 8 p.m. and August 1 - 1 & 4 p.m.

Music of Duke Ellington and Dizzy Gillespie -- Baker conducting

August 28 - 2 & 8 p.m. and August 29 - 1 & 4 p.m.

Music of Duke Ellington, Tommy Dorsey, Harry James, and Hal McIntyre -- Schuller conducting

All performances will be in the Carmichael Auditorium, National Museum of American History, Constitution Avenue between 12th and 14th Sts., N.W. Admission is free, but tickets are required for each concert. Limited to two per person, tickets will be available at the site one hour in advance of each performance.

Programs are subject to change without notice. To check before going, call 202-357-2700 for information.

Memorabilia

The following bit of nostalgia was culled from Ted Shell's library. It appeared in the *Afro-American* newspaper April 25, 1971.

**Ellington feted
on birthday**

Dr. and Mrs. Theodore A. Shell and the Duke Ellington Jazz Society honored Duke Ellington upon the occasion of his 72nd birthday at their residence.

The Ellington organization appeared at the Shoreham Hotel last week and the party was given after the last show on Friday night.

In attendance were "the Duke", Stanley Dance, the outstanding Jazz writer and critic; Don Byas, the great saxophonist currently featured at the "Blues Alley;" band members—Harry Carney, Paul Gonsalves, "Chuck" Connors, Harold Minerva, Norris Turney, the famous organist—"Will Bill" Davis, and singers Miss Bobbye Gordon and Tony Watkins.

Music was culled from the Doctor's most complete collection of Ellington tapes and records, reputed to one of the most complete extant.

Also present were percussionist Billy Taylor and

Mrs. Taylor, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Ellis, Mr. and Mrs. Terrell Allen, president of D.E.J.S.; Father and Mrs. John Bianchi, Judge John Fauntleroy, Miss Anne Ledgister, Miss Anne Sacre, Miss Dorothy Sutton, Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Frazier, Mrs. Dunbar Butler, Roland Bradley;

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Criddell, Jerry Carrier, Don McCathran, William Flemming, Mr. and Mrs. James Lyons, Mr. and Mrs. Victor Glindmeyer, Mrs. Juanita Hardwicke, Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Tillet, Leon Vogel, Mrs. Lydia West, Miss Miriam Thompson, Mrs. Katherine Freeman, and Theodore Shell Jr.

GARRETT ART FAIR

The works of many artists and craftsmen are to be displayed at the third annual Garrett Park Art and Craft Show May 7, 8, 9, 1971, in the Town Hall, 10814 Kenilworth Ave.

Do you have some memento, some bit of memorabilia, some remembrance? Share it.

SEE / HEAR ELLINGTON'S *THE RIVER*

We just heard that Alvin Ailey's American Dance Theater will choreograph Duke's *The River* during its engagement at the Warner Theatre, June 9, 11 and 12. Phone 301-808-6900 for tickets and details.

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. Sonny Greer, savant, sage, and wielder of weighty words
2. Trumpet, as in "Trumpet Joe," a Hamilton nickname
3. Dan and Jimmy Grissom

How did you score? 3 = "[You're] Just a Lucky So-and-So"; 2 = O.k., big deal, so you didn't cheat; 1 = Next time, don't embarrass yourself, cheat; 0 = So what do quizzes prove, right?

ELLINGTON '93

Get your reservations in soon for the International Ellington Conference, August 11-15, at the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza Manhattan. You may use the reservations form below.

Plan to join your fellow Ellingtonites for Ellington '93 starting with a reception on Wednesday evening August 11th and ending with the bus tour on Sunday, August 15, 1993. **To fully enjoy the conference, staying on site at the Holiday Inn is highly recommended. Please use the registration forms below and send all to Wally Schaap at Ellington '93, P.O. Box 253, JAF Station, New York, N.Y. 10116-0253 U.S.A. For further information, call 1-800-988-7473.**

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Send check or money order written to Ellington '93, payable in U.S. Dollars for **\$150.00 before May 31, 1993** and thereafter \$180.00. Send to the Ellington '93 address listed above.

Name _____

Name on Badge _____

Address _____

City _____

State/Country _____

Postal Code _____

Phone (day) _____ Night _____

Your registration fee includes a souvenir registration packet and admission to all daytime presentations and all evening concerts, including the banquet and dance. The Sunday bus tour is extra.

HOTEL RESERVATION

A special discounted rate has been arranged for Ellington '93: **\$U.S.132.00 per night single or double.** The deadline for this low rate is June 30, 1993. Also send this form with your registration at the same time to the address listed above.

I need _____ single rooms/_____ double rooms
for _____ nights.

Arrival date _____

Departure date _____

Credit card number _____

Expiration date _____

Signature _____

I do not expect to stay at
the Holiday Inn _____