
THE DUKE ELLINGTON SOCIETY, CHAPTER 90

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NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 1993

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ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY ON JANUARY 8

A large turn-out is expected for Chapter 90's annual seasonal party on **January 8, 1994**, at the **Party Room of the Park Sutton Condominium, 1900 Lyttonsville Road, Silver Spring, Maryland**, starting at 8:30 p.m. Members are looking forward to traditional fun, food, friendship, and, of course, music.

The festive occasion will be a reunion of sorts, as a number of members who for various reasons have found it difficult to attend meetings regularly will come to celebrate the beginning of the Society's new calendar year. There is no special assessment for the event. Each member may invite three guests.

SEASONS GREETINGS

Our president, Ted Shell, and his wife, Marian, wish members and friends a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

FEBRUARY MEETING WILL FEATURE MEMBERS' CHOICES

The format for our February meeting guarantees a variety of music, for all members and guests, rather than one person, will provide the music. Including commentary and music, each contribution will be limited to six minutes. The music may be on audio cassette or compact disc. Members who use cassettes may put their comments on their tapes.

Directions:

The Park Sutton is on the corner of 16th Street and Lyttonsville Road in Silver Spring, about 1/2 mile from the District. You may park on the street or on the lighted lot behind the building.

From D.C.

Go north on 16th Street, NW, past the District line (the circle where North Portal Drive and Eastern Avenue meet). As you continue, you will see on your right the Spring Shopping Center; Lyttonsville Road will be the next street on your left.

From Military Road, Eastern Avenue, North Portal Drive, or East-West Highway
Go north on 16th Street.

From 495 (the Beltway)

Take the Georgia Avenue exit south toward Silver Spring; after two lights, bear right onto 16th Street; after the next light, continue one block to Lyttonsville Road on your right.

Come early, party hearty!

Unknown work for *Anatomy of a Murder* at Smithsonian Archives

Walter van de Leur

As Ellington relates in his autobiography, movie-director Otto Preminger asked him to do the film score for *Anatomy of a Murder*. The movie boasted James Stewart in the leading role, together with a guest role by Joseph N. Welch, the famous lawyer who stood up against McCarthy during those ill-famed trials. Lee Remick starred as the female protagonist, although Preminger's initial choice had been Lana Turner. When Turner found out that she was not going to wear any glamorous dresses in her role as Laura Manion she made a big scene, and Preminger replaced her with Remick.

Ellington's acceptance of Preminger's invitation was probably made easier by the excellent conditions Preminger provided: an apartment up on Sunset Boulevard, overlooking Beverly Hills and Los Angeles. Ellington recalls that they "spent the whole time partying" but according to Pat Willard "there was no party, Duke and Billy were working very hard."

The Ellington archives at the Smithsonian Institution hold ample evidence of how hard Duke and Billy worked for the score. After having viewed the movie, during which Ellington took notes on the back of a music sheet, they designed the musical plan. The female protagonists, Laura Manion and Mary Poland were given their own themes, matching their characters and situations. Through transformations and various arrangements the themes travel through a wide range of moods. Listen for Laura Manion's theme in *Flirtibird*, *Almost Cried*, *Upper and Outest* and *Way Early Subtone*, and for Mary Poland's theme in *Midnight Indigo*, *Grace Valse* and *Haupe*. Then there is of course the main theme of the score, with that remarkable bass line, on the manuscripts alternately referred to as *Pie Eye's Tune* or *Polly's Tune* (Paul Beagler). It can be heard in *Main Title and Anatomy of a Murder* and *Upper and Outest*. It was later recorded as *I'm Gonna Go Fishin'*, with lyrics by Peggy Lee.

A tremendous amount of music was not used for the film score and was never recorded either. More than 20 compositions, ranging from a couple of bars to complete numbers, with titles as *Jukebox*, *Chatter-Chatresses*, *Polly A Train* and *Polly Montage* reside at the Smithsonian. Especially Billy's contributions to the score were unfortunate. The majority of his work was not used, and probably fell by the roadside in the edit room. Only *Main Title*, *Haupe* and *Almost Cried* contain sections in Strayhorn's hand, and there are indications that he composed the *Mary Poland* theme as well.

Rab

JINGLE BELLS

Music manuscript in Tom Whaley's hand
in the Ellington Collection,
✓ Courtesy the Smithsonian Institution.



AN ELLINGTON WEEKEND:

DECEMBER 11 AND 12

Contributed by Mac Grimmer

After a Saturday night at the Kennedy Center where Doug Richards' Great American Music Ensemble swung its way through several Ellington "Portraits" and an always fascinating *Nutcracker Suite*, there was more Ellingtonia at the Smithsonian on Sunday.

The taping of Marian McPartland's "Piano Jazz" with guest Bobby Short turned out to be an almost all-Ellington program, with reminiscences of Duke to go along with the music. One of the highlights was Marian's version of "Clothed Woman," a tune that looks both forward and backward. After lulling people into believing they were actually at the Carlyle with several of his patented piano bar renditions of Duke's tunes, Short showed off his considerable instrumental chops with a romping, stomping "Carnegie Blues" to end the program. It will be broadcast sometime early in 1994.

ben

*where do his eyes go
when he plays ballads?*

*higher than smoke
fogging the room,*

*cymbals that rustle
god's earlobes like kisses.*

*a friend says
there's a skylight*

*in his hat
where notes gather*

*then plunge into
the bell of his tenor,*

*while ben gazes longingly
up the skirts of stars.*

*reuben jackson
8/8/93*

MEMBERS ACTIVE

Yes, that was Angela Grimmer whom you saw recently on the phone bank of volunteers for WETA-TV's fund raiser. Did you notice that the Benny Goodman documentary during the telecast included some scenes with Cootie Williams? ♪ ♪ ♪

Continued on page 4 under "Members"

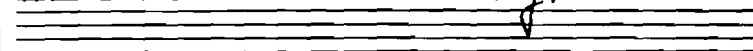
QUICK QUIZ

Titles of Ellington's and Strayhorn's compositions sometimes changed, especially as they evolved or had lyrics added. What were the later titles of the following? Answers are on page 4.

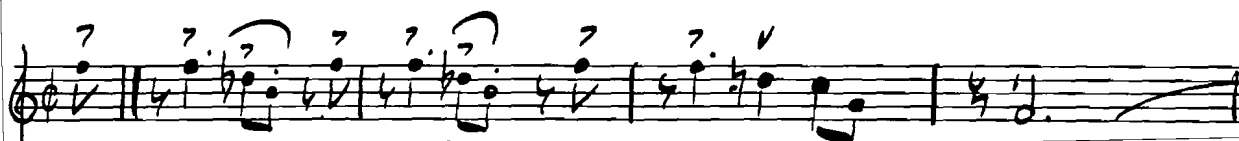
- 1) "Dreamy Blues" (1930)
- 2) "Jungle Triangle" in *My People*
- 3) "Concerto for Cootie" (1940)
- 4) "Never No Lament" (1940)

PAUL

Jingle Bells



Music manuscript in Tom Whaley's hand in the Ellington Collection, Courtesy the Smithsonian Institution.



**DEMS REPRINTS ARTICLES
BY CHAPTER MEMBERS**

We happily report that in its latest issue, *The International DEMS Bulletin* published entire articles from our recent *Newsletters*: "Who Took the 'A' Train?" by Walter van de Leur; reviews of Mark Tucker's and John Hasse's books by Reuben Jackson and Mac Grimmer, respectively; and the lead article, "Ellington '93 Excellent," from our September issue. We can proudly say that Walter, Reuben, and Mac are internationally published critics, can't we! The *Bulletin* is published by Benny Åaslund and the Sweden-based Duke Ellington Music Society.

ANSWERS TO "QUICK QUIZ"

1) "Mood Ingido," 2) "Skillipoop" in *Timon of Athens Suite*, 3) "Do Nothing Till You Hear from Me," and 4) "Don't Get Around Much Any More"

MEMBERS

Continued from page 3

Reuben Jackson continues to write insightfully for the *Washington Post*, including the review of the all-Ellington/Strayhorn concert by Doug Richards and his Great American Music Ensemble at the Kennedy Center. ♪ ♪ ♪ The Louie Bellson Big Band concert in New York on December 16 will be issued on a CD with notes written by Patricia Willard. ♪ ♪ ♪ His assignment at the Smithsonian completed, Walter van de Leur, along with his wife, Ilona Smeets, has returned to The Netherlands. Stay in touch, you two.

**JACK'S AND FARGO'S
BIRTHDAYS CELEBRATED**

A few days before his birthday, Jack Towers was surprised by the singing of "Happy Birthday" and the presentation of a delicious (indeed, gourmet!) cake to him at the Society's November meeting. The celebration was for the 53rd anniversary of Jack's famous recording of Duke at Fargo as well, the historic event having taken place November 7, 1940.

DUKE FEATURED IN RHYTHM RAG

A 1938 Duncan Schiedt photo of Duke at Randall's Island graces the cover of the summer issue of *Jerry's Rhythm Rag*. Inside are reprints of two 1956 articles on Duke. A passage in a reprinted 1938 article from the *New York Times* entitled "Swing Bands Put 23,400 in Frenzy" [at a Randalls Island "carnival"] reads:

... Ellington began sending his "Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue," and a pair of little Brooklyn girls, wearing beer jackets with swing jargon written all over them, ran screaming onto the cinder track to Lindy-hop, only to suffer immediate suppression at the hands of a police sergeant.

By this time the crowd had made its mass dash out of the grandstand and back again. No sooner had peace been restored than the Duke's vocalist, Ivy Anderson, tore off the "St. Louis Blues," leaping high into the air and smacking the Duke on the back. The bull-fiddler "smacked his doghouse" till it groaned, the boys were all jiveing [sic] and the crowd was like jelly.

You would think that by Newport he would have learned better. What a troublemaker, that Duke!