

# Ellingtonia

Newsletter Of  
*The Duke Ellington Society*

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Courtesy Carlyle Productions

Theodore R. Hudson, Editor

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Web Site: [depanorama.net/desociety/](http://depanorama.net/desociety/)

## Schwartz Leaves Archives Center

Renaissance Man was the inevitable term used by Archives Director John Fleckner to describe Scott Schwartz at a farewell reception for him at the Smithsonian Institution in September. While we know him best as archivist, Scott is also a boat builder and sailor, musician and music teacher, photographer, and author of scholarly studies, including an academic book on the religion of so-called "snake handlers."

After ten years of distinguished service in the Archives Center, Scott left to accept a tenured associate professorship of library administration and archivist of music and fine arts at the University of Illinois. (In our October issue, we erroneously reported that he was going to another university. We shamefacedly apologize for our clinker.)

Dr. Scott worked extensively on the Ellington and related collections and on other major holdings, including the Ella Fitzgerald and the more recently acquired Benny Carter materials.

In addition to his duties as archivist, Scott was the Archives Center's webmaster, computer guru, and genial Mr. Fixit for its sometimes fractious audio-visual and other archival equipment. It was in this connection that at the farewell event, he donated a toolbox full of goodies for the Center. An accomplished guitarist, Scott practiced daily during his lunch break and often performed at Smithsonian functions, as he did for his "farewell" event. So, as a second departing gift, he left a CD, *Scott Schwartz and Andrew McEvoy: The Stafford Guitar Consort*, McEvoy being a pupil of his.

## Van de Leur Earns ARSC Prize

More congratulations are in order for our member Walter van de Leur. *His Something to Live For: The Music of Billy Strayhorn* (Oxford University Press) tied for the 2003 "Best Research in Recorded Jazz" award by the Association for Recorded Sound Collections for 2002 publications.

Annually since 1991, ARSC has recognized "outstanding writing and research about recorded sound." For these awards it typically examines more than 100 worthy books, articles, and liner notes pub-

## November Meeting: The Jack, Jerry & Duke Trio

by Mac Grimmer & Peter MacHare, Program Coordinators

A special treat is in store for us at our November meeting—a program by Duke's Number One fan! Our member Jerry Valburn, in the mid-fifties decided to become not just collector of Ellingtonia, but a "completist," including records, programs, photographs, memorabilia, ephemera, etc.—in a word, everything. After 40-odd years, he sold what was by then a huge collection to the Library of Congress, where it now resides. He also traveled with the band on occasion, was present at many of Duke's recording sessions, and is responsible for many record releases of the band, most of which would be otherwise unavailable.

Jerry's sonic partner—the third member of this trio, the sound engineer responsible for getting the recordings ready for release—is our own Jack Towers. Jack & Jerry have been doing this for decades, and their latest project is the "Treasury Show" series, now in the midst of multi-volume release.

Jerry and Jack, recently the subject of a program by the New York chapter, will present our November program. We will hear about—and hear—some of the projects they worked on together, how it happened, and what's next!

Originally scheduled for last November but postponed until this year, the program starts promptly at **8 pm on Saturday, November 1**, at our usual meeting place, the **Grace Lutheran Church at 16th & Varnum Streets, NW**. Don't miss this exciting evening, **THE JACK, JERRY & DUKE SHOW!**

The public is invited.

lished the previous year.

Richard "Dick" Spottswood, well-known to a number of our long-term members, was honored by the association with a "Lifetime Achievement Award." Certificates of Merit were presented to others for achievements in a variety of styles, among them classical, Caribbean, country, jazz, rhythm and blues, and sacred.

## **“Ellington Weekend” in Portland, Oregon = Joy!**

### **Ellington and Strayhorn Works Used in World Communion Service**

by Theodore R. Hudson

Words and music by Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn were integral to the regular Order of Service at the First United Methodist Church in Portland, Oregon on Sunday, 5 October, World Communion Day.

The Reverend Janna Steed, who had come from Iowa for “Ellington Weekend,” was the guest preacher and soloist. Observance of this special ecumenical Day includes prayer for a “global church . . . to bring love and joy.” Accordingly, in a thoughtful, illuminating, ultimately inspiring sermon entitled “Visions of a New World,” she invoked particularly Ellington’s “New World A-Comin’” vision—“a place . . . where there would be no war, no greed, no categorization, no nonbelievers, where love was unconditional, and no pronoun was good enough for God.”

With the exception of set pieces and two other selections, Ellington’s and Strayhorn’s was the only music in the service. A dulcet “In a Sentimental Mood,” by a jazz ensemble, was the music for the procession led by the host pastor, the Rev. Arvin Luchs, from the church’s narthex into the main sanctuary. Before this formal opening of the service, the instrumental group provided prelude music for the gathering worshipers.

For the Introit, Rev. Steed sang “Heaven.” The morning Anthem by the Chancel Choir was “Three Settings of Freedom” that incorporated Ellington’s Four Freedoms tribute to Strayhorn. For its Choral Prayer the choir sang “Father Forgive” with recitative from the Second Sacred Concert, the Choral Response to which was “The Lord’s Prayer” by a quartet. During the offertory, guest pianist Dan Knight played Duke’s “Meditation.” As the response to the Scripture Lesson the jazz ensemble rendered “The Shepherd.”

As background music during the solemn administration of the sacraments that followed her sermon, the ensemble played and Rev. Steed sang “T.G.T.T.,” “Come Sunday,” and “Almighty God Has Those Angels.” For the Postlude, they played “Take the ‘A’ Train.”

The well-rehearsed Chancel Choir sang with conviction and diction that Duke would have admired; the instrumental ensemble (two lyrical trombones, alto saxophone, and rhythm section) was sensitive to and obviously enjoyed the music, and the acoustics were very good.

Some in attendance were visibly moved by the sheer beauty and spirituality of the music. Our impression, shared by others, is that those not familiar with what they heard left with heightened awareness of the artistry of

*(Continued on page 5 under “Ellington Weekend”)*

### **Exciting Ellington Sacred Concerts Warmly Received**

by Ben Pubols

The focus of Ellington Weekend in Portland, Oregon, consisted of three performances of selections from the three Ellington-Strayhorn Sacred Concerts, all taking place in the sanctuary of the First United Methodist Church of Portland.

Directors Gil Seeley and Michael Brockman ably led the Oregon Repertory Singers, the Seattle Repertory Jazz Orchestra, and soloists Marti Mendenhall, soprano, Nichol Eskridge, alto, and James Caddell, baritone.

The three concerts took place on the evening of Saturday, October 4, and the afternoon and evening of Sunday, October 5. According to our Reverend Janna Tull Steed, who provided introductory commentary at each of the three concerts, “The performances were superb, and each one was better than the one before.”

This reviewer attended the Sunday matinee, and found it to be simultaneously exciting and spiritually moving. Many of the seventeen pieces on the program were new arrangements by Mr. Brockman or the Danish arranger John Hoybye. Highlights included the opener, “In The Beginning, God,” sung by the articulate, deep-voiced baritone, James Cadell, and “Heaven,” ably sung by soprano Marti Mendenhall. “The Freedom Suite” included Julius Williams’s stirring narration of Billy Strayhorn’s Four Freedoms. “Tell Me It’s The Truth,” animatedly sung by Seattle gospel vocalist Nichol Eskridge, had the whole sanctuary, choir and audience rocking in time with her rhythm. Caddell and Eskridge provided a vocal duet on “Don’t Get Down On Your Knees.”

Following intermission, we were treated to Duke’s “Reflections in D,” a piano solo by Randy Halberstadt, with Strayhorn’s “Lotus Blossom” effectively interpolated. There were two contrasting interpretations of “Come Sunday,” the first sung by the choir, the second by Mr. Caddell, as well as two contrasting interpretations of “The Lord’s Prayer,” by Ms. Eskridge and by the choir. A highlight for me was “David Danced Before the Lord,” with Jay Thomas on trumpet and tap dancer Terry Brock providing energetic and dynamic counterpoint. Janna later learned that Ms. Brock had studied with Bunny Briggs and performed with Mercer Ellington—a nice link to the original Concert of Sacred Music, as Janna put it. The concert concluded with “Praise God and Dance,” with Ms. Mendenhall, Ms. Brock, instrumental soloists and the entire ensemble. There were numerous standing ovations, both throughout the afternoon and at the close of the program.

*(Continued on page 5 under “Ellington Weekend”)*

*From the Duke Ellington Society of Sweden:*

## Ellington Conference in Stockholm, Sweden in May, 2004

For four days during May the music of Duke Ellington will once again dominate Stockholm. On May 13-15 2004 a conference will take place in Stockholm on the music phenomenon Duke Ellington - music history, influences today, members of the Ellington orchestra and other related topics.

Nine years ago, in 1994, a very big conference, Serenade to Sweden, was arranged in Stockholm with participants from all over the world. Several former members of the Ellington band through the years took part in the program, which included a gala concert in the Stockholm Concert Hall.

Our Swedish singer Alice Babs with her excellent Ellington qualifications took part that time and this time she will again be one of the leading participants.

The old Jazz Music Hall, Nalen will be the center for this year's Ellington arrangements and one of the evenings will be dedicated to our world famous singer Alice Babs.

After the success of the 1994 Conference many people have been praying for a new meeting in Stockholm and this is our response. Real connoisseurs of the Duke from various parts of the world will join us and share with us their knowledge of Duke Ellington and his music. These include the following confirmed lecturers: **George Avakian**, who worked for Columbia Records in the forties and fifties and was Duke's contact at that company, **Brian Priestley**, author and musician, and Ellington scholar **John Hasse** of the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C. Participating from Sweden will be music scholars **Jan Bruér** and **Lars Westin**, with their perspectives on "Ellington in Sweden". **Steven Lasker** is an authority on Duke Ellington, with particular emphasis on the early years and a long time collector and discographer. **Patricia Willard**, Washington, public relations, research and editorial counsel, worked with Duke Ellington 1949-1974, **Bjarne Busk** from Denmark (works with the Duke Ellington stockpile given to Denmark by Mercer Ellington) and **Claude Bolling**, composer/bandleader/musician from Paris. **Andrew Homzy**, Canada, musician/orchestra leader (we understand he will talk about the Togo Brava Suite). Late news is that the Billy Strayhorn-specialist **Walter van de Leur** is positive to come.

They have all answered positively to come as speakers at the Stockholm conference. We are also anticipating further responses from other experts

Alice Babs will tell about her experience in working with the Ellington orchestra, in particular - according to plan - the Sacred Concerts.

The conference will not only be speeches and lectures. From the stage of Nalen beautiful music will be heard in the evenings. **Alice Babs** will sing together with the **Nils Lindberg Third Saxes Galore** including some of the best saxophone players from Sweden.

Participants from around the world as well as from the Scandinavian countries are registered for the conference. It is being organised by the *Duke Ellington Society of Sweden* on whose website <http://www.ellingtonsweden.com> you will see updated information on the conference.

The provisional schedule runs as follows:

Get-Together-Party	Wednesday, May 12	18.00 o'clock	at Hotel Scandic Sergel Plaza
Day program with speakers	Thursday, May 13	09.00-17.00	at Nalen
Day program with speakers	Friday, May 14	09.00-17.00	at Nalen
Evening program: surprise Concert	Friday, May 14	19.30-22.00	at Nalen
Day program with speakers	Saturday, May 15	09.00-17.00	at Nalen
Evening program: Closing dinner	Saturday, May 15		

At the closing dinner there will also be music played by Kustbandet, whom everybody enjoyed so much in 1994.

We shall explain how to pay for the conference in the next Bulletin we send to you if you send us an email contact, or if you send us your postal address or fax number.

Our address is: Duke Ellington Society of Sweden, Skogstorpsvägen 39, 191 39 Sollentuna, Sweden  
 Email: [goran.wall@ellingtonsweden.com](mailto:goran.wall@ellingtonsweden.com)  
 Homepage: <http://www.ellingtonsweden.com/>  
 Telephone: 0046-8- 965234  
 Fax: 0046-8-965234

We are informed that the conference will also receive U.S. official support through the U.S. Embassy in Stockholm.

**19<sup>th</sup> ELLINGTON CONFERENCE, MAY 12-16, 2004  
REGISTRATION FORM**

Name/Signature	Name
.....	.....
Address	Address
.....	.....
.....	.....
Email	Email
.....	.....

		<b>Qty</b>
Conference Registration	ea. SEK 1400:- (appr USD 175:-)	.....
Banquet (price excl. wine)	ea. SEK 360:- (appr USD 45:-)	.....
Alice Babs Celebration at Nalen 5/14 fee for Spouse:	ea. SEK 500:- (appr USD 63:-)	.....
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>SEK</b>	.....

The amount to be paid latest on December 31, 2003 to:  
Svenska Handelsbanken , SE-106 70, Stockholm Sweden A/C No. 1160 284 083 992 or  
IBAN: SE9560000000-0002 8408 3992

The registration form to be mailed to:  
Duke Ellington Society of Sweden  
c/o Göran Wallén, Skogstorpsvägen 39, SE-191 39 Sollentuna, Sweden  
or by email as an attachment to goran.wallen@ellingtonsweden.com or by fax: +46 8-653 2440.

**Booking of hotel room:**  
We have made a preliminary booking of rooms at the following hotels:  
Scandic Hotel Sergel Plaza (Hilton Group): 80 single + 20 double rooms.  
Address: (Brunkebergs Torg 9, SE-103 27 Stockholm, tel 08-517 26300, www.scandic-hotels.com  
KOM Hotel: 20 single + 20 double rooms  
Address: Döbelnsgatan 17, SE-111 40 Stockholm, tel 08-412 2300, www.komhotel.se

Room booking for dates: May 12 - May 16, 2004 ..... single room / ..... double room

Sergel Plaza:	Single room	SEK 1.790:-	(appr USD 218)	per night	5/12 + 5/13
	"-	SEK 1.390:-	(appr USD 170)	"-	5/14 + 5/15
Double room	SEK 1.990:-	(appr USD 243)	"-	5/12 + 5/13	
	"-	SEK 1.550:-	(appr USD 189)	"-	5/14 + 5/15
KOM Hotel:	Single room	SEK 1.020:-	(appr USD 124)	"-	5/12 + 5/13
	"-	SEK 820:-	(appr USD 100)	"-	5/14 + 5/15
Double room	SEK 1.200:-	(appr USD 146)	"-	5/12 + 5/13	
	"-	SEK 1.050:-	(appr USD 128)	"-	5/14 + 5/15

Payment for the hotel room shall be made directly to the hotel with Credit Card.

Credit Card information is required to make the hotel room booking valid:

Credit Card Type AMEX/Mastercard/VISA/ (Please mark type of card being used)

Credit Card No. .... Expiry date .....

The last cancellation dates are:  
Sergel Plaza: March 12 2004. The following day the cost for the room will be charged to the credit card.  
KOM Hotel: April 10 2004. The following day the cost for the room will be charged to the credit card.



The registration form to be mailed to: Duke Ellington Society of Sweden c/o Göran Wallén, Skogstorpsvägen 39, SE-191 39 Sollentuna, Sweden or by email as an attachment to goran.wallen@ellingtonsweden.com or by fax: +46 8-653 2440

## Another "Contingent" a Possibility?

Remember when we had a "Baltimore Contingent," so named by our affable late president Terrell Allen? Its ostensible leader was Leo Hunt. Well, with potential leaders in major cities of the Pacific Northwest we have the makings of a "contingent" there. For example, Ben and Lillian Pubols and Bertha "Bee" Pine live in Portland, Oregon; Ken Steiner is in Seattle, Washington; and a goodly number of other Ellington-Strayhorn devotees reside in this part of the country and in nearby Western Canada.

## Awardee Performed in Area During Break

Young bassist Thomas Williams, one of our two Student Fund winners in 2002, was active during his summer break. Patricia Braxton, who conceived of our Student Fund and coordinated the Ronnie Wells benefit concert to establish it, informs us that before he headed back to college in Michigan, Thomas played at Washington, DC-area venues, including Ellington's Coffee Shop (on Capitol Hill), the HR-57 Jazz Preservation Center, Twins Lounge, and Blues Alley.

## Quotation of the Month

*Felix Grant: . . . over the years the [Ellington] band has had a certain kind of sound. You hear it and you know it's the Ellington band.*

*Otto Hardwick: That's correct.*

*Grant: And, of course, one of the reasons obviously for that was the fact that when somebody joined the band...*

*Hardwick: He gave something of himself.*

*Grant: That's right, and probably stayed around for, oh, about thirty years.*

*Hardwick: Something like that. He has never fired anyone since he's had a band. Neither has he hired anyone. . . . We did the hiring.*

-- Interview by Felix Grant on WMAL,  
Washington, DC, 29 April 1964.

## Record Producer's Death Evokes Praise Amid Sadness

Karl Emil Knudsen, head of Storyville Records and Jazz Media Aps publications, passed away in Copenhagen, Denmark on 5 September. As are his other releases, his Ellington CDs are highly regarded because of their intrinsic artistry, informed liner notes, and high technical standards. Among his in-progress projects at the time of his death were the Ellington Treasury Series of recordings and a definitive discography of Louis Armstrong.

Among Knudsen's best known publishing projects was Klaus Stratemann's monumental *Duke Ellington: Day by Day and Film by Film*. His widow describes Knudsen as "one of Klaus best friends." Annie Kuebler predicts, "So many of us knew and loved Karl Knudsen. And those of you who didn't will benefit." Dan Morgenstern, head of the Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers, describes him as "a publisher of discographies of the highest quality" and the most unpretentious and straightforward of men. . . ." A highly respected record producer himself, George Avakian notes, "Karl was the last remaining super-champion of traditional jazz in Europe. It was he who released the latest great body of Ellingtonia ..." Ken Steiner fondly recalls that when he and his family were in Copenhagen last summer, Knudsen most graciously hosted them about the town.

In gratitude and respect, we extend to Mr. Knudsen's family and other loved ones our sincere sympathy.

## Quick Quiz

Every now and then we learn of interests and activities of our members that are not associated with music. Can you fill in the following blanks about several of them?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ is a former Miss [major U.S. city].
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ at one time was the chef on a television cooking series.
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ won first prize in a Washington *Post* photography competition.
- 4) A major street in [major European city] is named after \_\_\_\_\_, a former sports star.

## Ellington Weekend

(Continued from page 2)

### Communion Service

Ellington and Strayhorn and, more important, with lifted spirits.

As we know, great art continually "gives," or reveals itself. Thus, for those familiar with them, in this setting "secular" "In a Sentimental Mood" was reverential and "A'-Train" evoked triumphant joy. Makes one want to listen anew to, say, "Dusk," "Isfahan," or "Elos."

### Sacred Concerts

As Duke would have wanted, the music incorporated both reverence and playfulness. The audience was quiet and attentive during the more serious pieces, and both the choir and audience tapped their feet and swayed with the rhythm of the more upbeat numbers.

All left with a feeling of exuberance, exhilaration, and spiritual uplift. A wonderful afternoon for all.

## "Dramatis Felidae" (To Use Our Man's Term in *MIMM*)

### About Our Members

#### Mark Harvey

The Reverend Mark Harvey's Aardvark Jazz Orchestra, in its 31st season, announced its fall program, which begins with a September concert at Williams College featuring a new composition by him and excerpts from Ellington's *The River*. A performance in Cambridge, Mass. is scheduled for October, and the orchestra's annual Christmas concert, which the Boston *Globe* has described as a "venerable holiday tradition," is set for December in that city.

#### Annie Kuebler, Scott Schwartz

To the list of our members confirmed to present at "Ellington 19" in Stockholm next May, add Annie Kuebler and Scott Schwartz..

#### Peter Robinson

"Robinson builds, constructs his work by juxtaposition, scumblings, layering and repetitions of color. Like a jazz composer such as the great Duke Ellington, the painter makes his works come alive... With the finesse of a musician, he reconciles bold constructions of color patterns with strategically nuanced modulations of space." Thus reads a passage in the catalog for "Explorations of Space and Color, 1950-2003," an exhibit of art by Peter Robinson that began in September and runs through 14 December at the Gallery of Art at Howard University. Talks by Peter there are scheduled for 9 November and 14 December, 3-5 pm. Several of our members own paintings by him.

#### Ken Steiner

"I'm just happy she goes to a school where she'll hear the band working on 'Jump for Joy' while she's eating lunch," writes proud parent Ken Steiner about his daughter, Elizabeth. A precocious harpist who plays in its regular orchestra, she attends Seattle's Garfield High School, whose Jazz Band won the prestigious Essentially Ellington competition in June sponsored by Jazz at Lincoln Center.

#### John Edward Hasse

Summer was a busy time for John Hasse. In July he delivered the opening address at the "Hot and Cool" jazz conference in Toulouse, France, and spoke on "Leadership Lessons from the Jazz Masters" at the annual convention of the International Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus in Kansas City. In August at a ceremony in suburban Lost Angeles, on behalf of the Smithsonian, he accepted two clarinets from Artie Shaw. His initiative Jazz Appreciation Month is cited in a commendation of the National Museum of American History in Congress' PL 108-72.

#### Steiner, Steed, Pubols, Pine, Hudson

Locals Bertha "Bee" Pine and Ben and Lillian Pubols, Janna Steed from Iowa, and Ted and Geneva Hudson from Maryland attended the Ellington Weekend events in Portland, Oregon in October. Ken Steiner was scheduled to come from Seattle, Washington, but because of a sudden illness in his family cancelled the day before. Janna, of course, was a key participant in the programs (see page 2).

## Images of Duke Performed by Others

by Gina Rollins, Secretary

Our October 4 meeting featured videos of other musicians interpreting Duke. From his collection of about 130 laser disks of musical performances, Ted Shell shared samples from 12 featuring various artists playing or singing Duke's works.

Ted started the evening with a 1986 performance of "Take the 'A' Train" by Sarah Vaughan and an all-star ensemble including Dizzy Gillespie, Herbie Hancock, Al Hirt, Maynard Ferguson, Ron Carter and Chuck Mangione. We heard two Count Basie selections, "In a Mellotone," from 1987 and "Things Ain't What They Used to Be," from the 1977 Montreux Jazz Festival. Montreux also was the setting for Ella Fitzgerald in an evocative rendition of "I Let a Song Go Out of My Heart," and Benny Carter leading "In a Mellotone."

We went back in time a little to view two Ben Webster performances, "C-Jam Blues" from 1959 and back-to-back sessions of "Chelsea Bridge" and "Perdido" from 1965. There was a 1988 set of Wynton Marsalis leading "Caravan" and solo of his celebrated pianist, Marcus Roberts, playing "Single Petal of a Rose." We heard a Modern Jazz Quartet performance of "Rockin' in Rhythm" with vibraharpist Milt Jackson carrying the trademark rhythmic line originally shared by Harry Carney on saxophone, Cootie Williams on trumpet and Barney Bigard on clarinet in Duke's 1931 recording of the piece. Pianist Keith Jarrett offered solo interpretation of "Things Ain't What They Used to Be," and we also heard a non-Duke performance by the Oscar Peterson Big 4, taped in 1983.

The performances underscore that Duke's music will always remain alive and relevant! Thanks, Ted, for the visual cornucopia.

## To Join The Duke Ellington Society

Simply send a check payable to

The Duke Ellington Society, Inc. to us at

PO Box 15591, Washington, DC 20003, USA.

You and we will be glad you did. Dues remain a bargain:

Renewing Member, \$30; Couple, \$50; Student, \$5;

and a special rate for a Brand-New-Member, only \$20

### THE DUKE ELLINGTON SOCIETY, INC.

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