

composed several masterworks, including "Concerto for Cootie," "Cotton Tail" and "Ko-Ko." Some of his most popular songs included "It Don't Mean a Thing if It Ain't Got That Swing," "Sophisticated Lady," "Prelude to a Kiss," "Solitude" and "Satin Doll." A number of his hits were sung by the impressive Ivie Anderson, a favorite female vocalist of Ellington's band.

It was Ellington's sense of musical drama that made him stand out. His blend of melodies, rhythms and subtle sonic movements gave audiences a new experience—complex yet accessible jazz that made the heart swing. Ellington's autobiography, *Music Is My Mistress*, was published in 1973. Ellington earned 12 Grammy awards from 1959 to 2000, nine while he was alive.

On May 24, 1974, at the age of 75, Ellington died of lung cancer and pneumonia. His last words were, "Music is how I live, why I live and how I will be remembered." More than 12,000 people attended his funeral. He was buried in Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx, New York City.



One of Duke Ellington's more unusual albums of the '50s, this live session finds the orchestra performing such songs as "Got a Date with an Angel," "The Peanut Vendor," "Indian Love Call" and even "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf." Amazingly enough the music works quite well for Ellington and his all-star orchestra manage to transform what could be a set of tired revival swing into superior dance music and swinging jazz. While certainly not the most essential Ellington record, *At the Bal Masque* is a surprise success.

A major figure in the history of jazz music, Duke Ellington's career spanned more than half a century, during which time he composed thousands of songs for the stage, screen and contemporary songbook. He created one of the most distinctive ensemble sounds in Western music and continued to play what he called "American Music" until shortly before his death in 1974.

Born on April 29, 1899, Ellington was raised by two

talented, musical parents in a middle-class neighborhood of Washington, D.C. At the age of seven, he began studying piano and earned the nickname "Duke" for his gentlemanly ways. Inspired by his job as a soda jerk, he wrote his first composition, "Soda Fountain Rag," at the age of 15. Despite being awarded an art scholarship to the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, Ellington followed his passion for ragtime and began to play professionally at age 17.

In the 1920s, Ellington performed in Broadway nightclubs as the bandleader of a sextet, a group which in time grew to a 10-piece ensemble. Ellington sought out musicians with unique playing styles, such as Bubber Miley, who used a plunger to make the "wa-wa" sound, and Joe Nanton, who gave the world his trombone "growl." At various times, his ensemble included the trumpeter Cootie Williams, cornetist Rex Stewart and alto saxophonist Johnny Hodges. Ellington made hundreds of recordings with his bands, appeared in films and on radio, and toured Europe on two occasions in the 1930s.

Ellington's fame rose to the rafters in the 1940s when he



# Duke Ellington at the Bal Masque

- 1 Alice Blue Gown 3:02**
- 2 Who's Afraid Of The Big Bad Wolf 2:53**
- 3 Got A Date With An Angel 2:25**
- 4 Poor Butterfly 3:40**
- 5 Satan Takes A Holiday 3:15**
- 6 The Peanut Vendor 3:33**
- 7 Satin Doll 3:48**
- 8 Lady In Red 2:49**
- 9 Indian Love Call 3:36**
- 10 The Donkey Serenade 2:13**
- 11 Gypsy Love Song 3:54**
- 12 Laugh, Clown, Laugh 3:03**

Piano - Duke Ellington  
Alto Saxophone - Johnny Hodges  
Baritone Saxophone - Harry Carney  
Bass - Jimmy Woode  
Clarinet - Jimmy Hamilton  
Tenor Saxophone - Paul Gonsalves  
Trombone - John Sanders, Butter Jackson  
Trumpet - Shorty Baker  
Trumpet, Flugelhorn - Clark Terry  
Violin, Trumpet - Ray Nance

Recorded live by Columbia in Miami  
March 20, 24, 26, 31, and April 1, 1958

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