The Cambridge Companion to Duke Ellington

Duke Ellington is widely held to be the greatest jazz composer and one of the most significant cultural icons of the twentieth century. This comprehensive and accessible Companion is the first collection of essays to survey, in-depth, Ellington’s career, music, and place in popular culture. An international cast of authors includes renowned scholars, critics, composers, and jazz musicians. Organized in three parts, the Companion first sets Ellington’s life and work in context, providing new information about his formative years, method of composing, interactions with other musicians, and activities abroad; its second part gives a complete artistic biography of Ellington; and the final section is a series of specific musical studies, including chapters on Ellington and songwriting, the jazz piano, descriptive music, and the blues. Featuring a chronology of the composer’s life and major recordings, this book is essential reading for anyone with an interest in Ellington’s enduring artistic legacy.

Edward Green is a professor at Manhattan School of Music, where since 1984 he has taught jazz, music history, composition, and ethnomusicology. He is also on the faculty of the Aesthetic Realism Foundation, and studied with the renowned philosopher Eli Siegel, the founder of Aesthetic Realism. Dr. Green serves on the editorial boards of The International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music, Haydn (the journal of the Haydn Society of North America), and Проблемы Музыкальной Науки (Music Scholarship), which is published by a consortium of major Russian conservatories, and is editor of China and the West: The Birth of a New Music (2009). An active composer, he received a 2009 Grammy nomination for his Piano Concertino (Best Contemporary Classical Composition) and a commission offered jointly by 13 of America’s major concert wind ensembles, which resulted in his 2012 Symphony for Band.

Image on the back cover shows (front row, left to right) Fred Guy’s guitar, Junior Raglin’s bass, Duke Ellington, Sonny Greer; (second row) Otto Hardwick, Juan Tizol, Ray Nance, Harry Carney, Betty Roché, Rex Stewart, Ben Webster, Wallace Jones, Lawrence Brown; (back row) Harold “Shorty” Baker, Johnny Hodges, Chauncey Haughton, Joe “Tricky Sam” Nanton.
The Cambridge Companion to

DUKE ELLINGTON

EDITED BY
Edward Green
Manhattan School of Music

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
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David Berger, a jazz composer, arranger, and conductor, is recognized internationally as a leading authority on the music of Duke Ellington and the Swing Era. Conductor and arranger for the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra from its inception in 1988 through 1994, Berger has transcribed more than 750 full scores of classic recordings, including more than 500 works by Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn. The David Berger Jazz Orchestra has performed all over the U.S. and Europe as well as on TV and for movies.

Andrew Berish is Associate Professor in the Humanities and Cultural Studies Department at the University of South Florida. His book Lonesome Roads and Streets of Dreams: Place, Mobility, and Race in Jazz of the 1930s and 40s was published in 2012. His essays on Duke Ellington and Tin Pan Alley, Depression-era "sweet" jazz, and gypsy-jazz guitarist Django Reinhardt have appeared in Musical Quarterly, Journal of the Society for American Music, and Jazz Perspectives. His research focuses on jazz, American popular music, and musical performance as a spatial practice.

Benjamin Bierman is Associate Professor of Music at John Jay College, CUNY. His primary area of scholarly interest is twentieth-century American music, including jazz, blues, R&B, pop, and concert music. He has essays in the books Pop-Culture Pedagogy in the Music Classroom and The Routledge History of Social Protest in Popular Music, and the journals American Music Review and Jazz Perspectives. Upcoming publications include the textbook Listening to Jazz. In his compositions, Bierman incorporates elements of jazz, blues, Latin music, and the Western art music tradition. Also active as a trumpet player, he has performed with such diverse artists as B. B. King, Archie Shepp, Machito, Celia Cruz, Johnny Copeland, and Stevie Ray Vaughan.

Anthony Brown, a composer, percussionist, ethnomusicologist, Guggenheim Fellow, and Smithsonian Associate Scholar, is Artistic Director of the Grammy-nominated Asian American Orchestra. He has composed music for critically acclaimed, award-winning film documentaries, theater productions, dance companies, and musical ensembles internationally, and has collaborated with Max Roach, Cecil Taylor, Zakir Hussain, Steve Lacy, David Murray, Anthony Davis, and the San Francisco Symphony. Dr. Brown has served as Curator of American Musical Culture and Director of the Jazz Oral History Program at the Smithsonian Institution, and as Visiting Professor of Music at the University of California, Berkeley. His book GIVE THE DRUMMER SOME! The Development of Modern Jazz Drumming is forthcoming.

Anna Harwell Celenza is the Thomas E. Caestecker Professor of Music at Georgetown University. She has published on a wide array of topics, from Liszt and Mahler to Scandinavian music and jazz, and is currently completing a book about jazz in Italy between the world wars. In addition to her scholarly work, she has served as a
writer/commentator for NPR’s *Performance Today* and has published eight children’s books, including *Duke Ellington’s Nutcracker Suite* (2011).

**Bill Dobbins** is a professor of jazz studies at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. From 1994 through 2002 he was principal conductor of the WDR Big Band in Cologne, Germany. As a pianist, composer/arranger, and conductor, he has collaborated with Clark Terry, Chuck Israels, Red Mitchell, Phil Woods, Dave Liebman, Gary Foster, and Peter Erskine. His publications include *Jazz Arranging and Composing: A Linear Approach* and *A Creative Approach to Jazz Piano Harmony*. His books of transcriptions include *Chick Corea: Now He Sings, Now He Sobs* and *Clare Fischer: Alone Together/Just Me*. His recent CDs include *J. S. Bach: Christmas Oratorio*, which he arranged and conducted, with the King’s Singers and the WDR Big Band.

**Will Friedwald** writes about jazz and nightlife for *The Wall Street Journal*. He is the author of eight books on music and popular culture, including *A Biographical Guide to the Great Jazz and Pop Singers*, *Sinatra: The Song Is You*, *Stardust Melodies*, *Tony Bennett: The Good Life*, and *Jazz Singing*. He has written over 600 liner notes for compact discs, received eight Grammy nominations, and appears frequently on television and other documentaries.

**Benjamin Givan** is Associate Professor of Music at Skidmore College. His publications on jazz history and theory have appeared in journals such as *Musical Quarterly*, *Theory and Practice*, *The Journal of Musicology*, and *Journal of the American Musicological Society*. He is the author of *The Music of Django Reinhardt*.

**Edward Green**, editor of this volume, is a professor at Manhattan School of Music, and is also on the faculty of the Aesthetic Realism Foundation in New York. A wide-ranging musicologist, with published essays on such diverse figures as Guido d’Arezzo, Gustav Mahler, Stephen Foster, Harry Partch, Anton Reicha, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Dr. Green serves on the editorial boards of *The International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, *Haydn* (the journal of the Haydn Society of North America), and *Проблемы Музыкальной Науки* (Music Scholarship), published by a consortium of major Russian conservatories. He is also the editor of *China and the West: The Birth of a New Music*. Well known as a concert composer, he has received – among other honors – a 2009 Grammy nomination for his Piano Concertino (Best Contemporary Classical Composition). His recent commissions include one jointly offered by 13 of America’s leading concert wind ensembles – resulting in his *Symphony for Band* (2012).

**John Howland** is professor of music history at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Trondheim, Norway. His research and writings explore arranging traditions across popular music and jazz-related orchestral idioms. He is the author of “*Ellington Uptown*: Duke Ellington, James P. Johnson, and the Birth of Concert Jazz” (2009); the former editor and co-founder of the journal *Jazz Perspectives*; and the editor of both the forthcoming book *Ellington Studies* (Cambridge University Press) and an Ellington-focused double issue of *Musical Quarterly* (2013).
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Stephen D. James, the son of Duke Ellington’s only sibling Ruth, grew up traveling with his uncle and the band. He trained in composition and percussion. As an adult, James helped manage the band, sat in on drums on occasion, and served as vice president of the family publishing company, Tempo Music.

J. Walker James is a writer, researcher and former award-winning journalist who has assisted Stephen James with writing, archiving, and research related to Duke Ellington since 2007.

Jeffrey Magee is Professor and Director of the School of Music at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. He is the author of The Uncrowned King of Swing: Fletcher Henderson and Big Band Jazz (2005), which won the Society for American Music’s Irving Lowens Award, and Irving Berlin’s American Musical Theater (2012). He has published several articles on jazz and popular music in Jazz Perspectives, Journal of the American Musicological Society, Musical Quarterly, and other periodicals. He is the founder and co-editor of the book series Profiles in Popular Music.

Dan Morgenstern retired in 2012 after 36 years as director of Rutgers University’s Institute of Jazz Studies, one of the world’s largest archival collections of jazz materials. He was editor of Metronome, Jazz, and Down Beat; has won eight Grammy awards for Best Album Notes; and received ASCAP’s Deems Taylor Awards for his books Jazz People and Living with Jazz. Raised in Vienna and Copenhagen, he came to the U.S. in 1947. He remains active as a writer and consultant on jazz.

Marcello Piras, a musicologist and independent researcher born in Rome, has published a book on John Coltrane; dozens of essays for scholarly reviews, books, and periodicals; translations of books by Gunther Schuller, Elijah Wald, and others; and entries for the Grove Dictionary of American Music. He has held master classes on black notated piano music performance practice and has lectured in Italy, Germany, Switzerland, the U.S., Canada, Mexico, and Brazil. From 2001 to 2002 he was a visiting scholar at the Center for Black Music Research in Chicago and Executive Editor of the MUSA scholarly edition series. He currently lives in Mexico, studying the black influence on Baroque music and working on an Afrocentric music history from the Stone Age to the present, integrating paleontology, evolution, brain phylogenesis, linguistics, and archaeology.

Brian Priestley is a freelance music journalist and musician, now based in the Republic of Ireland. A contributor to numerous periodicals and reference works, he has published biographies of Charles Mingus, Charlie Parker, and John Coltrane. As a performer he was based in London for many years, and his four albums – the most recent being Who Knows? (2004) – have all included adaptations of Ellington material. As far back as 1972 he played piano in the Alan Cohen band, recording one of the earliest recreations of Black, Brown and Beige, part of which he was responsible for transcribing.

Evan Spring, Associate Editor, is a freelance editor and jazz historian. In 2003 he became managing editor of the Annual Review of Jazz Studies (ARJS), a scholarly journal published by the Institute of Jazz Studies. In 2011 he transformed ARJS into an open-access online publication, the Journal of Jazz Studies. He holds an
MA in Jazz History and Research from Rutgers University-Newark, and for 22 years hosted a jazz program on WKCR-FM New York, interviewing over 200 musicians.

Walter van de Leur, a jazz musicologist, received his PhD from the University of Amsterdam in 2002 for his research on Billy Strayhorn, published as *Something to Live For: The Music of Billy Strayhorn* (2002). He conducted extensive research at the Duke Ellington Collection in Washington, D.C., under two consecutive Smithsonian Institution fellowships, and researched and catalogued Billy Strayhorn’s musical legacy in the repository of his estate in Pittsburgh. This research led to four CDs by the Dutch Jazz Orchestra with hitherto forgotten works by Strayhorn (Challenge Records). Van de Leur is Research Coordinator at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam, and Professor of Jazz and Improvised Music at the University of Amsterdam.

Trevor Weston’s honors include the George Ladd Prix de Paris from the University of California, Berkeley, and a Goddard Lieberson Fellowship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He received fellowships from the MacDowell Colony and the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts. Dr. Weston completed his BA at Tufts University and received his MA and PhD from the University of California, Berkeley. His primary teachers were T. J. Anderson and Olly Wilson. Dr. Weston is currently Associate Professor of Music at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey. He served as department chair from 2011 to 2014.

Olly W. Wilson was born in St. Louis, Missouri, where he played jazz piano with local groups. He was a member of several orchestras as a string bass player, including the St. Louis Philharmonic. He has held faculty positions at Florida A&M University, Oberlin Conservatory, and – from 1970 until his retirement in 2002 – the University of California, Berkeley. His compositions, which include chamber works, orchestral music, and works for electronic media, have received awards from the Guggenheim, Koussevitzky, Rockefeller, Fromm, and Lila Wallace Foundations; the National Endowment for the Arts; and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Among the symphony orchestras which have commissioned and/or performed his music are those of Boston, Chicago, New York, Moscow, Cleveland, St. Louis, Detroit, Houston, Oakland, and San Francisco. He has been a Visiting Scholar at the University of Ghana, the Fromm Composer-in-Residence at the American Academy in Rome, and a Resident Fellow at the Rockefeller Foundation Center in Bellagio, Italy. In 1995 Dr. Wilson was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters.
Acknowledgements

There are many people I want to thank for the coming to be of this book. I am grateful first to Vicki Cooper of Cambridge University Press, its editor in charge of publications in the fields of music and drama, for her enthusiastic support. When I proposed a book of essays to her that would show why Duke Ellington was America’s most important composer, she welcomed the idea heartily. I am thankful as well to Fleur Jones, the editor at Cambridge who supervised the production of this Companion. She has been a model of good cheer and thorough professionalism. There are many others at the Press who helped see this book through to publication, and while I do not know most of their names, in behalf of all the authors of this book, I want to express our appreciation for their work.

As readers of this *Companion* will see, the writings in it range widely in terms of style, methodology, and jazz notation. Ellington, who wanted soloists of highly varied temperaments and musical backgrounds to join together in his band, I think would approve! After all, one of the important new things in jazz was this: composers welcoming the spontaneous, creative, musical commentary of others on their work. That, at its best, is the meaning of improvisation, and some of the very best improvisation in jazz history happened within the Ellington band. I invited the many authors of this book to participate in the same spirit – only commenting not through music, but through words with critical insight. The goal was, through their very different perspectives, to bring forth as richly as possible the meaning within Ellington’s music. I thank them all for it. There are two others I wish to mention, each of them originally slated to be a contributor to this *Companion*: Annie Kuebler and Michael James. Sadly, both died before they were able to submit their writings. They are, and will continue to be, greatly missed.

I am grateful to Jazz at Lincoln Center, which houses the Frank Driggs Collection, for the photos of Ellington and the band that now grace the front and back covers of this Companion. And the publishers and I particularly thank the Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers University for permission to reproduce our frontispiece photo. IJS archivist Tad Hershorn first drew my attention to it: a photo embodying the joy of music-making, and showing the older Ellington still possessed of the gusto and vibrancy of his youth. While every effort was made, here and elsewhere, to identify the sources of all material used in this volume, and to
Acknowledgements

trace all copyright holders, it has not always been possible. If any omissions are brought to our notice, the publishers will be happy to include appropriate acknowledgements in any subsequent edition of the book.

I want to thank my dear wife, Carrie Wilson, for her warm and careful thought about this book – in fact, about all my work, both as a scholar and as a composer. She has made my expression in each field stronger, and I love her for this – and for much more. I am also deeply fortunate in having Barbara Allen and Anne Fielding as my colleagues in the teaching of music at the Aesthetic Realism Foundation. Our many lively, probing conversations about music have been an ongoing joy in my life. They also made many keen and useful suggestions about how to present Duke Ellington’s work in the clearest and most honest light. They made this book better.

The greatest thing that happened to me, as man and musician, was learning from Eli Siegel, the founder of Aesthetic Realism, that art and life explain each other. “All beauty,” he taught, “is a making one of opposites, and the making one of opposites is what we are going after in ourselves.” The first critic of music to explore the meaning of this great principle was Martha Baird, and I was privileged to be her student. I have also had the inestimable honor of studying with Ellen Reiss, poet, critic, and Chairman of Education at the Aesthetic Realism Foundation. To say all the ways her teaching has deepened my capacity to be an honest critic of music and a true scholar would take me far beyond the confines of an Acknowledgements page.

I conclude with this: as a young musician, I was oriented strongly toward the classical European tradition. I liked jazz greatly, but – to be honest – did not think it had the same size of meaning, emotional heft, that I loved in Bach, Beethoven, Prokofiev. Among other great things Eli Siegel did for me was to open up my mind and heart to welcome beauty wherever it happened. He was the first critic to say, clearly, and decades ago, that Duke Ellington is the greatest composer of America. He inspired me to test that statement: to dig into the music, and report sincerely on what I heard.

That was many years ago. It was the early 1970s. This book is a result, and I am glad to say, I think in the writing within it, in all the chapters in their own ways, Ellington’s greatness shines through.

Edward Green
Duke Ellington chronology

E V A N  S P R I N G

For the most part, the dates given for specific compositions in “Notable Recordings” indicate the first studio or concert recordings intended for commercial release. For albums, the designation of “LP” or “CD” indicates how the material was first issued commercially. Some of the compositions listed below were written, in whole or in part, by Billy Strayhorn or others in the Ellington band.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Life and Career</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>Edward Kennedy Ellington born in Washington, D.C., on April 29 to Daisy and James Edward Ellington.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>Ellington enters Armstrong High School and studies graphic arts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>Ellington travels to Philadelphia, is impressed by local pianist Harvey Brooks, and starts teaching himself piano with assistance from his mother. Writes first composition, <em>Soda Fountain Rag</em> (possibly in 1915).</td>
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<td>1916</td>
<td>Ellington forms a band with school friends.</td>
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<td>1917</td>
<td>Trumpeter Arthur Whetsol and saxophonist Otto “Toby” Hardwick join band, which also plays with local banjoist Elmer Snowden. Duke studies piano with Oliver “Doc” Perry, and begins romance with Edna Thompson.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>Ellington marries Edna Thompson on July 2.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Ellington forms his first professional band, and also starts a booking agency and sign-painting business. Duke and Edna’s son Mercer Kennedy Ellington is born March 11. Duke meets drummer Sonny Greer, and studies harmony with Henry Grant.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>Ellington makes first trip to New York with Sonny Greer, Otto Hardwick, Arthur Whetsol, and Elmer Snowden. There he meets James P. Johnson again, as well as Willie “The Lion” Smith.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>Ellington continues to find success in Washington, D.C., as a dance band leader and booking agent.</td>
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<td>1923</td>
<td>Along with Greer and Hardwick, Ellington joins the New York-based band of clarinetist Wilbur Sweatman. In July, Ellington and a band led by Elmer Snowden begin working at Barron Wilkins' Exclusive Club in Harlem. Duke’s wife Edna comes to New York and works as a showgirl at Connie’s Inn. In September, Snowden’s group starts playing at the Hollywood Club on Broadway. In late fall, Snowden breaks with the band, which becomes “The Washingtonians” under the leadership of Ellington and Greer, and features James “Bubber” Miley and Hardwick. Ellington’s first recording, on July 26, is an unissued test pressing by Elmer Snowden’s Novelty Orchestra.</td>
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<td>1924</td>
<td>The Washingtonians continue to perform at the Hollywood Club and also tour New England. Sidney Bechet joins the band briefly. The Washingtonians record their first disc in November: Choo Choo and Rainy Nights (Rainy Days)</td>
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<td>1925</td>
<td>The band continues to work at the Hollywood Club, now known as the Kentucky Club. Banjoist Freddie Guy replaces George Francis. In May, the revue Chocolate Kiddies opens in Berlin, Germany, with a score written partially by Ellington and lyricist Jo Trent. Ellington meets composer/bandleader Will Marion Cook, who becomes a mentor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>Joe &quot;Tricky Sam&quot; Nanton and Harry Carney join the band, which continues working at the Kentucky Club. Ellington meets Irving Mills, who becomes his manager. November 29: East St. Louis Toodle-O (adopted as band theme), Birmingham Breakdown</td>
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<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>Wellman Braud and Rudy Jackson join band; Harry Carney rejoins. Ellington’s recording career expands dramatically. Engagement at the Cotton Club begins December 4. Barney Bigard joins band. April 7: Black and Tan Fantasy October 26: Creole Love Call</td>
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<td>1929</td>
<td>Cootie Williams replaces Bubber Miley; Juan Tizol also joins band, and Otto Hardwick leaves. Likely year for orchestration studies with Will Vodery. At Vodery’s recommendation Ellington’s band appears in Florenz Ziegfeld’s revue Show Girl from July to December. In summer they appear in the short film Black and Tan. Dancer Mildred Dixon moves in with Ellington and his mother, father, and Ruth.</td>
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<td>1930</td>
<td>The band appears in the Cotton Club’s spring revue, The Blackberries of 1930, and performs for two weeks on Broadway with Maurice Chevalier. The band appears in its first Hollywood film, Check and Double Check, and plays at an NAACP benefit on December 7. June 4: Jungle Nights in Harlem August 26: Ring Dem Bells, Old Man Blues October 14: Mood Indigo</td>
<td></td>
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<td>1931</td>
<td>In February, Ellington ends regular association with the Cotton Club and heads on an 18-week tour. On Christmas Day, the band plays a “Battle of Music” with Fletcher June 16: Echoes of the Jungle</td>
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<td>1932</td>
<td>Ivie Anderson and Lawrence Brown join band; Otto Hardwick rejoins. Tours cover the West Coast, New England, and Midwest. In November they perform for Percy Grainger's music appreciation class at New York University.</td>
<td>February 2: It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing), Lazy Rhapsody September 19: Ducky Wucky</td>
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<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>Band returns to Cotton Club for spring revue, and makes nine-minute short film, Bundle of Blues. On June 12 they begin their first European tour at London's Palladium; Duke meets several members of the royal family.</td>
<td>February 15: Merry-Go-Round, Sophisticated Lady July 13: Harlem Speaks September 26: Rude Interlude December 4: Daybreak Express</td>
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<td>1934</td>
<td>The band goes to Hollywood and appears in the films Murder at the Varnishes and Belle of the Nineties; also tours West Coast. In December Rex Stewart replaces Freddie Jenkins.</td>
<td>January 9: Stompy Jones, Delta Serenade January 10: Solitude</td>
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<td>1935</td>
<td>Wellman Braud replaced by Billy Taylor and Hayes Alvis; for a period the band functions with two bassists. The band appears in a short film, Symphony in Black, which includes the young Billie Holiday in her screen debut. Ellington's mother dies May 27, and Duke composes an extended work, Reminiscing in Tempo, in her memory.</td>
<td>April 30: In a Sentimental Mood September 12: Reminiscing in Tempo</td>
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<td>1936</td>
<td>Engagements include week-long stays at the Apollo Theater in New York, the Howard Theater in Washington, and the Paramount Theatre in Los Angeles, plus four weeks at the Congress Hotel in Chicago. In December, small-group recordings that feature band members as leaders begin with &quot;Rex Stewart and his Fifty-Second Street Stompers&quot; and &quot;Barney Bigard and his Jazzopaters.&quot;</td>
<td>February 27: Clarinet Lament (Barney's Concerto), Echoes of Harlem (Cootie's Concerto) December 19: Caravan December 21: Black Butterfly</td>
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<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Ellington and the band are featured in five numbers in the Hollywood film The Hit Parade. They return to the Cotton Club in spring, then continue extensive touring. Ellington's father dies October 28.</td>
<td>April 22: Azure September 20: Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue, Harmony in Harlem</td>
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<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>Herb Jeffries joins band, which has engagements in Boston, Chicago, and Los Angeles. Ellington signs exclusive contract with RCA Victor in March. Ray Nance replaces Cootie Williams in October. On</td>
<td>March 6: Jack the Bear, Ko-Ko, Morning Glory March 15: Congo Brava, Concerto for Cootie May 4: Cotton Tail, Never No Lament, Bojangles May 28: Dusk</td>
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| 1941 | On January 1, ASCAP, in a dispute with the radio networks, bans the playing of its music on the radio; Ellington turns to Billy Strayhorn and his son Mercer for new material. On February 9, Ellington delivers speech, "We, Too, Sing 'America,'" to a black congregation in Los Angeles, celebrating the contributions of African Americans to the nation's culture. Strayhorn's *Take the 'A' Train* becomes (and remains) the band's theme song. In July, Ellington's first full-length stage show, *Jump for Joy*, opens in Los Angeles, closing in September. | July 22: *Harlem Air Shaft, All Too Soon*  
September 5: *In a Mellotone, Warm Valley*  
October 1: *Pitter Panther Patter, Mr. J. B. Blues*  
(duets with Jimmie Blanton)  
November 2: *Day Dream* |
| 1942 | Barney Bigard leaves the band in June. Ivie Anderson is replaced by Betty Roché. Jimmie Blanton dies July 30. American Federation of Musicians' strike against record companies begins August 1. In September the orchestra is in Hollywood to film *Carols in the Sky* and *Revelle with Beverly*. Harold "Shorty" Baker joins band. | January 21: *C Jam Blues*  
February 26: *What Am I Here For?*  
June 26: *Main Stem*  
September 28: *Goin' Up* |
| 1943 | The orchestra performs at Carnegie Hall on January 23 in a benefit for Russian War Relief, premiering the long form work *Black, Brown and Beige*. Rex Stewart and Ben Webster leave band; Taft Jordan and Jimmy Hamilton join. Extended engagement at the Hurricane Club on Broadway. On June 7 Ellington appears at Negro Freedom Rally in Madison Square Garden. Second Carnegie Hall concert on December 11, premiering *New World A-Comin'*. | January 23: *Black, Brown and Beige*  
December 11: *New World A-Comin'* |
| 1944 | Juan Tizol leaves band. Ten-week return engagement at the Hurricane Club begins in March. Al Sears and Cat Anderson join. In December Ellington, for first time since beginning of AFM strike, resumes recording for commercial release. Third Carnegie Hall concert on December 19, premiering *Blutopia and Perfume Suite*. | December 1: *I'm Beginning to See the Light*  
December 19: *Blutopia, Perfume Suite, Air Conditioned Jungle* |
| 1945 | West Coast tour from January to March. Series of radio shows for the U.S. Treasury begins in April and extends to October 1946. Three-month engagement at Club Zanzabar (formerly the Hurricane) in New York begins in September. Oscar Pettiford joins band. | July 31: *Esquire Swank*  
November 24: *I'm Just a Lucky So and So* |
July 10: *Pretty Woman*  
November 25: *Happy Go Lucky Local* |
December 27: *The Clothed Woman* |
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<td>Concerts on December 26 and 27 include premiere of <em>The Liberian Suite</em> in honor of that nation’s centenary.</td>
<td>February: <em>At the Hollywood Empire</em> [CD] September 1: Subor</td>
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<td>1950</td>
<td>In March the orchestra records in Hollywood for 15-minute film <em>Salute to Duke Ellington</em>. European tour from April to June includes France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Italy, West Germany, Denmark, and Sweden. Paul Gonsalves joins band by November.</td>
<td>January 21: <em>Harlem, Monologue (Pretty and the Wolf)</em> December and various dates in 1952: <em>Ellington Uptown</em> [LP]</td>
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<td>1953</td>
<td>Constant touring continues, with no engagement longer than two weeks. Louis Bellson replaced by Butch Ballard. Charles Mingus fired from band after his altercation with Juan Tizol. Ellington switches record labels, from Columbia to Capitol.</td>
<td>February 8: <em>In Hamilton 1954</em> [CDs] April 13: <em>The 1954 Los Angeles Concert</em> [CD]</td>
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<td>1954</td>
<td>John Sanders joins band. From October 15 to November 8, Ellington’s orchestra is part of Norman Granz package tour with Gerry Mulligan, Dave Brubeck, and Stan Getz.</td>
<td>March 16: <em>Night Creature</em> premiered at Carnegie Hall</td>
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Duke Ellington chronology

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| 1957       | In March Ellington appears on Edward R. Murrow’s TV program Person to Person. On April 28 Ellington’s Such Sweet Thunder suite, relating to works of Shakespeare, premieres at Town Hall, New York. | April–May: Such Sweet Thunder [LP]  
June: Ella Fitzgerald Sings the Duke Ellington Songbook [LPs]  
September–October: Ellington Indigos [LP] |
| 1958       | Ellington participates in episode of educational TV series, The Subject Is Jazz, aired March 26. Carnegie Hall concert on April 6 includes Ella Fitzgerald. During a European tour in October and November, Ellington is presented to Queen Elizabeth II at the Leeds Festival. | February 5: Come Sunday (with Mahalia Jackson)  
March–April: At the Bal Masque [LP]  
April 2–3: The Cosmic Scene [LP]  
July 3, 21: Newport ’58 [LP]  
September 9: Toot Suite |
February 20: Back to Back [LP with Johnny Hodges]  
February 25, April 1, 14: The Queen’s Suite  
August 9: Live at the Blue Note [CDs]  
September 8: Festival Session [LP] |
May–June: Piano in the Background [LP]  
June 28–30: Peer Gynt Suite  
July 14: Unknown Session [LP]  
July 22: Hot Summer Dance [CD]  
September 24: Suite Thursday premiered at Monterey Jazz Festival |
April 3–4: Louis Armstrong & Duke Ellington [LP]  
July 6: First Time: The Count Meets the Duke [LP] |
May 1: Featuring Paul Gonsalves [LP]  
August 18: Duke Ellington Meets Coleman Hawkins [LP]  
September 17: Money Jungle [LP with Charles Mingus and Max Roach]  
September 26: Duke Ellington & John Coltrane [LP]  
December–January 1963: Afro-Bossa and Recollections of the Big Band Era [LPs] |
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| 1963      | Two-month European tour from January to March, and one-month European tour from late May to late June. Ellington writes music for Canadian production of Shakespeare’s Timon of Athens. He also presents a show, My People, for the Century of Negro Progress Exposition in Chicago. U.S. State Department sponsors the orchestra’s tour of the Middle East and India which is cut short by John F. Kennedy’s assassination. | February: The Great Paris Concert [LPs]  
February 22: Duke Ellington’s Jazz Violin Session [LP]  
February 28, March 1: Serenade to Sweden [LP]  
August: My People [LP] |
| 1964      | European tour from February to March. First tour of Japan starts in June and lasts three weeks. Ellington receives honorary doctorate from Milton College on November 24. Mercer Ellington joins band as road manager and trumpeter. | January 14: At Basin Street East [CD]  
April: Ellington ’65 [LP]  
September: Mary Poppins [LP] |
April: Concert in the Virgin Islands [LP]  
July 28: Duke at Tanglewood [LP]  
September 16: A Concert of Sacred Music [CD]  
December 26: Concert of Sacred Music [LP] |
| 1966      | Ellington writes film score for Assault on a Queen. On January 23, the band leaves on five-week tour of Europe with Ella Fitzgerald. Ellington receives President’s Gold Medal from Lyndon Johnson in Madrid on February 23. In April, the orchestra represents the United States at the World Festival of Negro Arts in Dakar, Senegal. Tour of Japan in May. Ellington writes music for Milton College production of T. S. Eliot’s Murder in the Cathedral. | May: The Popular Duke Ellington [LP]  
July 18: The Pianist [piano trio LP]  
Late July: Ella and Duke at the Côte d’Azur and Soul Call [LPs]  
December 19–21: The Far East Suite [LP] |
| 1967      | Ellington’s wife Edna dies January 15. Two-month European tour begins mid January. In late March the band joins a three-week Jazz at the Philharmonic package tour of the U.S. Billy Strayhorn dies May 31. Ellington receives honorary degree from Washington University, St. Louis. | March 15: The Intimacy of the Blues [LP]  
August, September, November: ... And His Mother Called Him Bill [LP]  
December 11–12: Francis A. and Edward K. [LP with Frank Sinatra] |
January 26: Yale Concert [LP]  
November 5: Latin American Suite [LP] |
April 29: All-Star White House Tribute to Duke Ellington [CD]  
November 25, 26: 70th Birthday Concert [LPs] |
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<td>1972</td>
<td>Longest tour of the Far East to date includes Japan, the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Australia, and Fiji. The orchestra continues to tour constantly around the U.S., though Duke has extended gigs at New York’s Rainbow Grill in Rockefeller Center with a smaller band.</td>
<td>April 10: <em>Live at the Whitney</em> [CD] December 5: <em>This One’s for Blanton</em> [LP]</td>
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<td>1974</td>
<td>Ellington continues touring and plays his last date with the band on March 22 in Sturgis, Michigan. Three days later he is admitted to Harkness Pavilion at Columbia-Presbyterian Hospital for treatment of cancer. In the hospital he continues working on an opera, <em>Queenie Pie</em>, and ballet, <em>Three Black Kings</em>. Paul Gonsalves dies May 15. Tyree Glenn dies May 18. Ellington dies May 24. The funeral service is held May 27 at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York, with over 12,000 in attendance.</td>
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