

THE
SCOTTISH NATIONAL
JAZZ ORCHESTRA
DIRECTED BY TOMMY SMITH

In An Ellington Mood



December 2023



In An Ellington Mood

Recreating Duke Ellington's music has become one of the Scottish National Jazz Orchestra's greatest successes. The album *In the Spirit of Duke*, recorded on tour in Scotland during October 2012, captures the internationally acclaimed, award-winning orchestra at its best, delivering the authentic Ellington experience in the repertoire spanning the jazz legend's entire career.

Now, joined by vocalist Lucy-Anne Daniels and with meticulous attention to period detail, including the stage set-up, the sartorial elegance, specially sourced period brass mutes and scores specially transcribed from Ellington concerts, *In an Ellington Mood* presents exhilarating and satisfying orchestral jazz.

Hits including 'Take The 'A' Train', 'Rockin' In Rhythm', 'It Don't Mean A Thing', 'Satin Doll' sit alongside movements from 'The Queen's Suite' and extracts from Duke Ellington & Billy Strayhorn's daring re-interpretation of Edvard Grieg's 'Peer Gynt Suite'. This concert features the vocalist, Lucy-Anne Daniels, who draws inspiration from Betty Carter, the gospel duo Mary Mary, and Amy Winehouse, and adds an extra-special emotional flair to *In An Ellington Mood*.

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If you enjoyed tonight's concert, please consider becoming a **Friend of the SNJO** and help support the future of jazz in Scotland. We welcome new Friends at any time.

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PROGRAMME NOTES

The music of Duke Ellington and his co-writer Billy Strayhorn has become one of the Scottish National Jazz Orchestra's specialisms.

Under its founder and musical director, Tommy Smith, the orchestra presented its first Ellington programme in 1997, two years after its formation. Then, in 2013, the album *In the Spirit of Duke* followed. Recorded on tour the previous year, this helped to further establish the SNJO's credentials internationally with glowing reviews on both sides of the Atlantic.

"We wanted to capture the music in concert because it always comes to life onstage in the white heat of spontaneity and with the audience making their presence felt," says Smith. "I think the band's exuberance particularly comes across on those recordings."

Smith was given some insight into life with the Ellington band in 1999 when he was invited to tour with the Ellington Legacy Orchestra in Switzerland and given the chair once occupied by one of the great Ellingtonians, tenor saxophonist Paul Gonsalves. The Ellington Legacy Orchestra included trombonists Brit Woodman and Buster Cooper, bassist Aaron Bell and trumpeter Barrie Lee Hall, who had all spent time touring with Ellington, and Smith enjoyed listening to their reminiscences. "It was also a joy to hear them playing their hearts out every night and I tried my best to swing as hard as I could for as long as I could, even if in such illustrious company you feel overwhelmed but elated simultaneously," Smith adds.

As a result of playing with musicians with a direct connection to the Ellington legacy and following many hours spent studying Ellington and Strayhorn's methods, Smith has sought to give audiences as close to the true Ellington experience as possible. Until now this has been solely instrumental in

content. However, in a break from the orchestra's previous Ellington concerts, this latest celebration of Ellington's genius will see the orchestra joined for part of each concert by the exceptional young vocalist Lucy-Anne Daniels.

Still in her early twenties, Leeds-born Lucy-Anne Daniels has already appeared at prestigious jazz venues including Ronnie Scott's and Dizzy's Jazz Club in New York. She has also sung with the National Youth Jazz Orchestra, including a celebration of the life and music of Amy Winehouse, and her background in gospel music is a particularly apt asset for singing Ellington's songs.

"Duke Ellington has been a key figure in jazz for almost a hundred years," says Smith. "His music has been an inspiration across numerous eras, from providing the rhythm for dancers in the 1920s and popularising jazz during the swing era to playing with the then younger generation including Charles Mingus and John Coltrane in the 1960s and beyond. He continues to challenge and reward the young musicians who are emerging today."

As with previous concerts of Ellington's music, the SNJO will again apply meticulous attention to period detail. This includes recreating the Ellington Orchestra stage set-up, embracing their sartorial elegance, using specially sourced period brass mutes and playing musical scores specially transcribed from Ellington concerts.

"We want to involve people in as close as possible to a genuine Ellington performance," says Smith. "There are obvious differences in personnel, of course, but the intention is to make the music come alive similar to the way it blossomed whenever the Duke Ellington Orchestra rolled into town."

© Rob Adams

PROGRAMME

Black & Tan Fantasy / Creole Love Song

In The Hall Of The Mountain King

Jack The Bear

Le Sucrier Velours

Daybreak Express

Concerto For Cootie

Satin Doll

A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing

I Like The Sunrise

It Don't Mean A Thing

Anitra's Dance

The Single Petal Of A Rose

Kinda Dukish / Rockin' In Rhythm

INTERVAL

In A Mellow Tone

Mood Indigo

Nutcracker Suite

Prelude To A Kiss

I Ain't Got Nothing But The Blues

Imagine My Frustration

Passion Flower

Let's Do It

Take The 'A' Train

Sunset & The Mockingbird

Diminuendo & Crescendo In Blue

THE ORCHESTRA

Reeds

Martin Kershaw

Helena Kay

Tommy Smith

Konrad Wiszniewski

Bill Fleming

Trumpets

Brinley Heywood-Snell

Sean Gibbs

Tom MacNiven

Lorne Cowieson

Trombones

Kieran McLeod

Liam Shortall

Michael Owers

Rhythm

Peter Johnstone

Calum Gourlay

Alyn Cosker

DUKE ELLINGTON

Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington (1899 – 1974) was one of the most significant jazz musicians of all time. He was a composer, bandleader, pianist and arranger who took jazz from its localized roots and crafted it into a uniquely American art form.

Ellington enjoyed a comfortable upbringing in Washington DC, and began piano lessons at the age of seven. He became a proficient player and, by the time he reached his teens, he was playing regularly at middle-class house parties and society gatherings. He moved to New York in his early twenties where, sometime in September 1923, he and his seven-piece band secured a residency at the ‘Hollywood Club’ on Broadway. That engagement lasted about four years, until a better offer came in from the famous Cotton Club in Harlem.



At the Cotton Club, Ellington’s band expanded from seven to eleven pieces, largely because they were required to play a variety of music for the club’s revues. These shows featured comedy, dance, vaudeville, burlesque, and ballads, and demanded high levels of musicianship and versatility. A weekly radio broadcast from the club aided national exposure, and it was about this time that Ellington’s recording career began in earnest. A string of hit records followed, but these successes became harder to sustain as the swing era took hold. In the USA, Ellington’s refined, aesthetic approach had narrow appeal compared to the dance bands of the time, but his music still had an audience elsewhere.

The Ellington band’s visit to Scotland and England in 1933, and mainland Europe the following year, was a response to their increasing popularity across the Atlantic. It also proved a major publicity coup, boosting Ellington’s credentials as a serious bandleader at home and abroad. Ellington’s ambitions for jazz were, nevertheless, greater still. A turning point came in 1936, when Billy Strayhorn joined Ellington as an arranger. Together they produced some of Ellington’s most memorable work. Throughout the 1940’s, and aided by Strayhorn, he began to concentrate on longer, more developed pieces of music. He drew from classical styles for inspiration, but crafted them into jazz suites, often with challenging themes.

Ellington tried to continue forging new ideas, but ultimately he was unable to take his audience, and even some of his musicians with him. The period of hiatus that followed was broken in spectacular style with a comeback performance at the Newport Jazz Festival in 1956. This revived his career almost overnight, and led to the recording output that Ellington long sought; one where effusive jazz and artistic vision are synonymous. The outcome is jazz history that is preserved in outstanding recordings, film soundtracks, concert footage, and television appearances. Ellington’s greatest legacy, however, is some of the most cultivated jazz music ever written.

Awards and formal recognition of Ellington’s achievements are curiously few, but they are of the highest order. Duke Ellington won only a single Grammy for a lifetime’s work, but he also received The Presidential Medal of Freedom, The National Order of the Legion of Honour, and a posthumous Pulitzer Prize in appreciation of his contribution to music and art.

SNJO ARTISTIC DIRECTOR TOMMY SMITH

Born in Edinburgh in 1967, Smith began his prolific career at 14 when his quartet won Best Band, and he received the Best Musician Trophy at the 1981 Edinburgh Jazz Festival.

A year later, he was invited to appear on the TV show 'Jazz

at the Gateway' with Niels Henning Ørsted Petersen and Jon

Christensen; toured with the European Youth Jazz Orchestra,

and recorded his quintet for BBC Radio. At 16, he released

his 1st album, Giant Strides and studied at Berklee with financial assistance from Sean Connery.

He joined Gary Burton's quintet after a recommendation from Chick Corea, toured worldwide, and recorded on ECM's album Whiz Kids. Smith has documented over thirty solo albums for Blue Note, Linn, ECM and his own Spartacus Record label; toured 50+ countries, composed over 300 works, and collaborated with musicians, poets, and visual artists, including Arild

Andersen, Scofield, MacCaig, Alan Davie, Kenny Munro, Jaco, Wheeler, DeJohnette, Liz Lochhead, Christine de Luca, Trilok, and poet Edwin Morgan whom he developed a unique artistic relationship in 1996, collaborating on 55 works of poetry and music.

In 1995 he established the SNJO and ensured its progress until funding began in 1998. He founded the TSYJO in 2002 to provide an educational opportunity for the country's best young jazz musicians and fought to establish the first full-time jazz course in Scotland. In 2009 Smith was appointed head of Jazz at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and became Professor in 2010.

Smith has been awarded numerous jazz accolades from the BBC, British UK Parliamentary, and Scottish Jazz Awards. His contributions to Jazz were recognised nationally when in 1998, he became the youngest-ever recipient of an honorary Doctorate from Heriot-Watt University in recognition of his extraordinary artistic achievement. He subsequently received honorary doctorates from Glasgow Caledonian and Edinburgh Universities. In 2019 he was given an OBE for services to Jazz by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

tommysmith.scot

LUCY-ANNE DANIELS

Lucy-Anne Daniels is a vivid storyteller, creative improviser, and fierce performer, whose sound is grounded in the vibrant worlds of gospel and jazz.

Her powerful interpretation of lyric and effortless control of melody, captivate; inviting you to partake in the drama and humour, intimacy and connection of a musical communion.

At just twenty-one, she has dazzled audiences at notable venues across the UK and further afield in Paris and New York.

Lucy-Anne is boldly making her mark on the UK jazz scene and beyond, as one to watch.

"...very impressive was the extremely talented Lucy-Anne Daniels, whose soulful vocal delivery breathed new life into the songs." - Cambridge Independent

"Seemingly effortless vocals... amazingly skilful" - Northampton Chronical & Echo



THE ORCHESTRA

The Scottish National Jazz Orchestra (SNJO) is considered by many to be one of Europe's foremost contemporary big bands.

Founder/Director Tommy Smith established the SNJO in 1995 as a not-for-profit organisation with a crystal-clear artistic vision and core values of versatility, discipline and expression. The SNJO is dedicated to promoting jazz as a pre-eminent art form through performances, original compositions, recordings, and educational outreach programmes. This commitment extends to the task of developing promising young jazz musicians through the ranks of The Tommy Smith Youth Jazz Orchestra.

The SNJO repertoire has included re-imaginings of works by the great, the good and the gigantic, including Weather Report, Herman, Rich, Carter, Strayhorn, Goodman, Kenton, Basie, Gillespie, Mingus, Jaco, Corea, Monk, Metheny, Shorter, Miles and Coltrane. They have also recorded vivid interpretations of Mozart, Prokofiev, Piazzolla, Gershwin and Ellington to rave reviews, alongside a remarkable re-reading of Miles Ahead, an ECM-tinted set on Celebration and Tommy Smith's suites, World of the Gods, Torah, and Beauty & the Beast. The SNJO has built a growing library of original compositions underpinned by a deep understanding and appreciation of improvisation.



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Support from individuals underpins much of our ability to bring exciting projects to our audiences. Every contribution plays an important role in the future of the

orchestra allowing them to produce new jazz works, original recordings, education projects and exhilarating concerts.

Further details of benefits can be found at snjo.co.uk/friends where you can register online. Alternatively complete the short form below and send it to our orchestra manager. **Thank you.**

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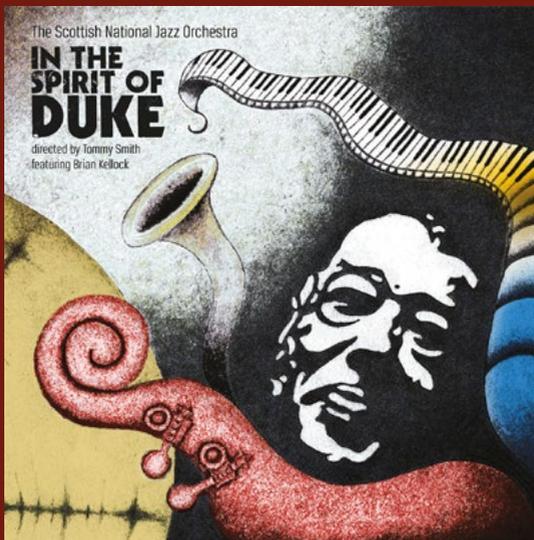
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IN THE SPIRIT OF DUKE



"SNJO's best display ever"

– **The Herald**

"There will be few better records than this released this year - or any other year! SNJO, led by Tommy Smith and recorded live on their 2012 Scottish tour, pay homage to the Duke and, in doing so, somehow manage to put their own stamp on it."

– **Lance Liddle**



"It is testimony to both the band and the music that it all emerged sounding freshly-minted."

– **The Scotsman**



– **The Telegraph**

Available from snjo.co.uk

TOMMY SMITH YOUTH JAZZ ORCHESTRA

The Tommy Smith Youth Jazz Orchestra has become synonymous with energetic performances that channel the creativity and excitement of big-band jazz, celebrating legendary jazz composers.

Since Tommy Smith formed the youth orchestra in 2002 to create a free educational opportunity for Scotland's best young jazz musicians, it has forged over 125 masterful young musicians, many of them acclaimed award winners who have gone on to have successful national and international careers.

Please join us at any of the dates and enjoy a relaxed afternoon with these talented young players.

"the orchestra's current members' energy and enthusiasm will ensure that the future of jazz is alive and well." - Sandy Brown Jazz

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