

2024

Remembering Duke

Featuring

Lucy-Anne Daniels

& SCOTTISH NATIONAL JAZZ ORCHESTRA

directed by **TOMMY SMITH**



Opening Act:

Tommy Smith Youth Jazz Orchestra

NOVEMBER 2024

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Remembering Duke

One of jazz's greatest composers, Duke Ellington continues to inspire the SNJO. With music representing his fifty years as a bandleader, performed with vitality, swing and meticulous attention to detail, these concerts showcase this titan's depth and diversity.

Prefaced by the Tommy Smith Youth Jazz Orchestra reinvigorating Ellington classics and rarities, including Caravan, Brasilliance, Carnegie Blues, Purple Gazelle, and Sophisticated Lady, the SNJO follows its internationally acclaimed album, In the Spirit of Duke by honouring Ellington masterpieces with vibrancy and featuring special guest, vocalist Lucy-Anne Daniels's gospel-fired delivery.

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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 long-time composing partner, Billy Strayhorn) has been an ever-present touchstone for the Scottish National Jazz Orchestra since its inception.

Among the SNJO's earliest concerts were celebrations of Duke. There have also been the 2012 recording in the Spirit of Duke, which earned praise internationally from many of jazz's most experienced and erudite commentators, and further concerts devoted to work that spanned Ellington's fifty-year career and provides an unstoppable current in jazz's carrying stream.

"Duke Ellington has been an inspiration to musicians and composers across the musical spectrum for almost 100 years," says SNJO founder and musical director, saxophonist Tommy Smith. "The breadth of his writing encompasses songs that were the pop music of the day and hugely descriptive suites that compare with works in the classical canon in terms of ambition."

It's not just the SNJO that Ellington's music has permeated. This concert will form one of the biggest - if not the biggest - Ellington celebrations ever undertaken in Scotland, thanks in no small measure to the SNJO's youth wing, the Tommy Smith Youth Jazz Orchestra opening the evening.

Duke is in the TSYJO's DNA, too. The first recording the TSYJO released, *Exploration* (2007), featured Duke's *Cottontail*. This was followed on by *Emergence* (2011) which contained the tracks *In a Mellow Tone*, *Mood Indigo*, and Strayhorn's theme tune for the Ellington orchestra, *Take the A Train*.

"It's wonderful to witness young players finding their way into playing jazz

through Ellington as generations before have done," says Tommy Smith. "The musicians from these recordings may have moved on but the ones who have picked up the baton are fully aware of the high standards required to play this music. When you consider the developments that have arrived since we formed both the SNJO and the TSYJO, things that we now take for granted such as social media, the lasting qualities of Ellington's music becomes even more admirable."

The quality of these two orchestras that Smith has nurtured should also be acknowledged. Just recently, radio presenters in America's musical heartlands, in Georgia and Louisiana, have broadcast recordings by both bands enthusiastically alongside jazz's indigenous masters and in one case TSYJO has provided the programme's theme music.

For *Remembering Duke*, the Tommy Smith Youth Jazz Orchestra will reinvigorate Ellington classics and rarities, adding to the SNJO's command of highlights from throughout the master's repertoire and songs from our special guest, Lucy-Anne Daniels.

"We're looking forward to playing this great music, which has so much depth and character, and to giving the audience an experience that will be authentic in every way in terms of staging, attire and equipment as well as the music," says Smith. "We don't flatter ourselves that we become the Duke Ellington Orchestra but in paying attention to these details and getting into character as far as is possible, we strive to deliver performances that measure up to a unique and timeless repertoire." © Rob Adams

PROGRAMME

Take The 'A' Train

Satin Doll

I Ain't Got Nothing But The Blues

It Don't Mean A Thing

Carnegie Blues

Sonnet To Hank Cinq

A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing

Caravan

Day Dream

Nutcracker Suite

In A Mellow Tone

TSYJO

Reeds

Rosalind Orrs
Arda Daltaban
Gerard O'Neil
Zoe Downs
Jess Koffie
James Steele

Trumpets

Leo Brychta
Eva Young
Gavin Lee
Liam O'Neill
Alex Kelly

Trombones

Aaron Singh
Marcella Boyle
Owen Pickering

Rhythm

Cielo Matta
Simon Mercieca
Sam Cleary
William Ewins
Ashwari Panesar
Timmy Allen
Garry Simpson
Rebecca Gibson
Finlay Mackenzie

Laura Oghabon (vocals)

PROGRAMME

SNJO

Reeds

Martin Kershaw
Helena Kay
Tommy Smith
Konrad Wiszniewski
Bill Fleming

Trumpets

James Davison
Sean Gibbs
Tom MacNiven
Lorne Cowieson

Trombones

Kieran McLeod
Michael Owers
Owen Pickering

Rhythm

Peter Johnstone
Calum Gourlay
Alyn Cosker

Black & Tan Fantasy

In The Hall of The Mountain King

Le Sucrier Velours

Daybreak Express

If You Could See Me Now

Let's Do It

Sophisticated Lady

Cotton Tail

Don't Get Around Much Anymore

Imagine My Frustration

Passion Flower

Brasiliance

Purple Gazelle

In A Mellow Tone

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.



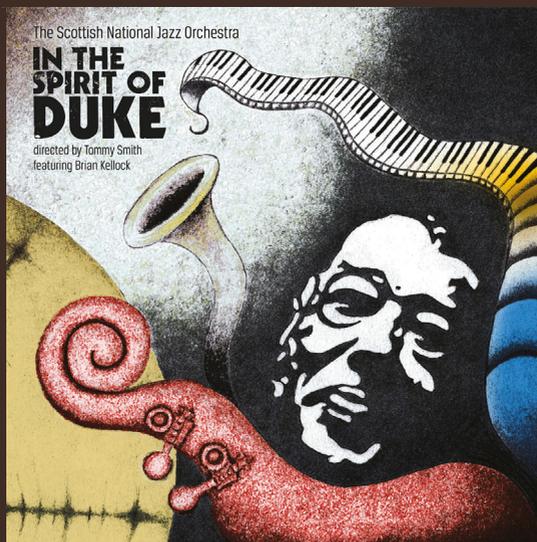
At the Cotton Club, Ellington’s band expanded from seven to eleven pieces, largely because they were required to play a variety of music for the club’s revues. These shows featured comedy, dance, vaudeville, burlesque, and ballads, and demanded high levels of musicianship and versatility. A weekly radio 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.

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

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.

tommymsmith.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



SCOTTISH NATIONAL JAZZ 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.



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

18 JAN 2025

Cumbernauld
Lanternhouse

19 JAN 2025

Birnam
Birnam Arts



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