

DEMS 09/2-15

**Highly recommended recently released CD:
Juste Une Trace AMOC305369175646 “Duke Ellington Is Alive” (2009)**

Recently my friend Claude Carrière was so thoughtful as to introduce DEMS Bulletin to Laurent Mignard, who wrote me a nice letter and sent me a copy of his latest — actually the first — CD by his “Duke Orchestra”. This orchestra was founded by Laurent in 2003. It gives concerts four times a year at Duke’s Place (a warehouse in Paris, called “La Maison de Duke”) but there are many more concerts elsewhere during the year. Everything one could wish to know can be found on the Internet at www.laurentmignard.com and if you select “presentation” (in English) you will have a pdf file downloaded that contains answers on every possible question.

Laurent was nine years old when Duke died. It is a great comfort for Ellington fanatics of my age to see (and hear) that a completely new generation shows so much respect for Duke’s heritage. Laurent’s group of dedicated musicians succeed in recreating Duke’s music, allowing people who have never heard Duke live, listen to his compositions like we had the great fortune to listen to them many times in the last century. There was a very well responded inquiry by Jo Ann Sterling on the Duke-LYM list to share memories of live performances of Ellington in the past with the list members.

Laurent’s **CD is simply overwhelming**. I have never dreamed that it would be possible to come that **close to the original Ellington performances**. If you want to hear Ellington live, **go to Paris**. If you do not believe me, try to find a copy of this **marvelous CD**.

The orchestra consists of Franck Delpout, Franck Guicherd, François Biensan and Richard Blanchet on trumpet; Jean-Louis Damant, Guy Figlionlos and Guy Arbion on trombone; Didier Desbois, Aurelie Tropez, Nicolas Montier, Fred Couderc and Philippe Chagne on reeds; Philippe Milanta on piano; Bruno Rousselet on bass and Julie Saury on drums. For the CD “Duke Ellington Is Alive” Fred Couderc was replaced by Christophe Allemand, and Patrick Bacqueville was invited to do the vocal.

The selections: 1. *Ko-Ko*; 2. *Harlem Airshaft*; 3. *Black and Tan Fantasy*; 4. *Kinda Dukish* and *Rockin’ in Rhythm*; 5. *Sophisticated Lady*; 6. *Madness in Great Ones*; 7. *Half the Fun*; 8. *Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue*; 9. *Isfahan*; 10. *The Eighth Veil*; 11. *It Don’t Mean a Thing*; 12. *Ad Lib on Nippon*; 13. *Take the “A” Train*.

Tracks 1, 8, 10, 11 and 13 were recorded at Maisons Lafitte - salle Malherbes - on 16Jan09.

The other tracks were recorded at Versailles at the école Sainte Geneviève Ginette on 7Jan09.

The bottom line of the text says: “Merci à Duke Ellington et Billy Strayhorn pour leur heritage, leur vision et leur humanité.” I would add: “**Thank you “Duke Orchestra” for keeping Duke alive.**”

Sjef Hoefsmit

<http://www.depanorama.net/dems/092c.htm>