

"ELLA FITZGERALD"

A LEGEND IN HER TIME

Many of the adjectives used to describe Ella Fitzgerald's voice seem designed for the 16 year old who won the series of talent contests in Harlem that began her career. "Fresh," they called it, and still call it. Infectious and happy. Innocent. Girlish. It must be eternal youth, or something close to it.

Eternal youth is only part of Ella today. Critics talk about a new mellowness of her voice. An added dimension to her ballad singing in particular.

The praise is as undiminished as the voice. In fact, as time goes by, they both seem to get stronger. "She is the best equipped vocalist ever to grace the jazz scene," wrote British music critic Benny Green, "having a freakishly wide vocal range, literally perfect intonation, and an acutely sensitive ear for harmonic changes...There is to her voice a lilting lullaby quality which renders even commonplace material moving."

Bing Crosby said it more succinctly, "Man, woman or child, Ella is the greatest."

If a career can be measured by its statistics, then Ella's as a pop/jazz vocalist is unbeatable. Her more than 100 albums have sold more than 25 million copies. Down Beat named her best female jazz singer eighteen consecutive years.

Ella's tours have taken on something of the flavor of triumphal marches in recent years. Newspapers herald her arrival with prominent photos and



Ella Fitzgerald -- "The First Lady of Jazz" -- brings her magic to Portland on June 12 for a joint concert appearance with the Duke Ellington Orchestra conducted by Mercer Ellington. Show will benefit The Oregon Association of Hospitals Foundation. Tickets priced at \$15.00, \$12.50 and \$10.00 -- are on sale at Portland Civic Auditorium Box Office and at all the usual Portland outlets. Two performances are scheduled -- at 7:00 and 10:00 p.m. -- for the only Ella and Ellington appearance together scheduled for the United States in 1980.

stories. "Thank you for coming back," they say, "why did you stay away for so long?" Sold-out performances. The critics stalk the dictionary for new words of praise in more languages than you hear in the U.N. There's hardly a country in the world where Ella isn't known.

In a very short time Ella was becoming nationally famous through late night radio broadcasts and recording with Chick Webb, at first skeptical of the young girl from Yonkers, Webb, by now was sufficiently won over to have become Ella's legal guardian, and for a time she lived with him and his wife.

Here's Benny Green's succinct appraisal of a career that has delighted the world: "With the possible exception of Louis Armstrong, Ella is the most widely celebrated of any jazz artist, a jazz specialist whose singing evolved naturally into a broadly popular style, so appealing the world has more or less fallen at her feet."

A piece like this should really end with Ella speaking for herself. "I sometimes ask myself," she says, "Where am I going? What am I doing - for myself and for others? Well, God gave me a voice. He gave me something with which to make other people happy. There must have been a reason."

There must have been. We can think of a lot of reasons. But the simplest seems to make the most sense. Joy. Pure joy.



Mercer Ellington conducts the famous Duke Ellington Orchestra -- "The All-Time International Favorite" -- in a joint Portland concert with Ella Fitzgerald. This teaming of two jazz immortals is the only appearance together for the artists in the United States this year. Tickets for the June 12, 7:00 and 10:00 p.m. performances are priced at \$15.00, \$12.50 and \$10.00 and are available at The Civic Auditorium Box Office and at all Portland outlets.

WALKING IN FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS

The day after his father's funeral in May, 1974, Mercer Ellington took the orchestra to Bermuda as previously committed to play at IBM's Golden Circle Convention. It was a hard decision to make, and hard to fulfill, but in doing so Mercer faithfully maintained a tradition established by Duke Ellington during his five triumphant decades as a bandleader.

Since that time, Mercer has been at pains to maintain that tradition musically as well as professionally and ethnically. The band's library contains all the famous compositions and arrangements, and he has steadily reactivated items in it that had become less familiar through neglect in recent years. His father was so prolific that there was inevitably a tendency to emphasize the "new one" at the expense of the past. It is now possible to see his majestic output in some kind of perspective and to restore classics to the prominence they deserve. This Mercer is systematically doing, and he is also able to spring enlightening surprises by playing compositions written by his father that were never publicly performed.

With the Ellington Orchestra under Mercer's leadership, Duke Ellington's music will continue to be a healthy and joyous element in twentieth-century life.

Mercer Kennedy Ellington, composer, arranger and trumpet player, is the son of Duke Ellington. He was born in Washington, D.C., on November 3rd, 1919. An association with his father's orchestra began when he was eight years old.

Growing up as the loyal son of an internationally famous father entailed both rewards and frustrations. Mercer's own individual talents, particularly as an arranger and a composer, were inevitably overshadowed by those of his father. Nevertheless, such creations as *Things Ain't What They Use To Be*, *Jumpin' Punkins*, *John Hardy's Wife*, *Blue Serge*, *The Girl In My Dreams*, *Pass Me By*, *Moon Mist*, *Maroon*, *Got My Foot In The Door*, *Ruini*, *Broadway Babe*, *Indelible*, and *Be Patient* testify to his creative ability.

Many of these numbers, incidentally, can be heard in an excellent MCA album (349) entitled *BLACK AND TAN FANTASY*, made under Mercer's name with an all-star band.

AMA Family Day and Night Care Program proudly announces a Gala Anniversary banquet in honor of our ten years of service to children and families of the community, June 13, 1980, at 6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m., Westminster Presbyterian Church 1624 N.E. Hancock. Guest speaker: Associate Director Headstart Bureau, Henlay Foster. Donation \$12.00 per person. For ticket information call 285-0493.

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As a child remember looking through the show window at the candy inside? We all want peace, love and harmony but each have that glass between us and the goodies. We press our nose to the glass and we are so close and yet so far away. Just as the candy isn't the answer to nutrition for the child, as adults we too may be looking on the wrong side of the glass. When one moves from the glass love will find them.

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