

Duke Ellington chronology

EVAN SPRING

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.

Year	Life and Career	Notable Recordings
1899	Edward Kennedy Ellington born in Washington, D.C., on April 29 to Daisy and James Edward Ellington.	
1913	Ellington enters Armstrong High School and studies graphic arts.	
1914	Ellington travels to Philadelphia, is impressed by local pianist Harvey Brooks, and starts teaching himself piano with assistance from his mother. Writes first composition, <i>Soda Fountain Rag</i> (possibly in 1915).	
1915	Ellington dubbed “Duke” by a friend for his elegant clothes and piano playing. Ruth Ellington, Duke’s only sibling, born July 2.	
1916	Ellington forms a band with school friends.	
1917	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.	
1918	Ellington marries Edna Thompson on July 2.	
1919	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.	
1920	The second child of Duke and Edna dies at birth. Ellington meets James P. Johnson in Washington, D.C., and plays Johnson’s composition <i>Carolina Shout</i> for him.	
1921	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.	
1922	Ellington continues to find success in Washington, D.C., as a dance band leader and booking agent.	

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1923	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
1924	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: <i>Choo Choo</i> and <i>Rainy Nights (Rainy Days)</i>
1925	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 <i>Chocolate Kiddies</i> 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.	
1926	Joe "Tricky Sam" Nanton and Harry Carney join the band, which continues working at the Kentucky Club. Ellington meets Irving Mills, who becomes his manager.	November 29: <i>East St. Louis Toodle-O</i> (adopted as band theme), <i>Birmingham Breakdown</i>
1927	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: <i>Black and Tan Fantasy</i> October 26: <i>Creole Love Call</i>
1928	Arthur Whetsol rejoins band; Johnny Hodges joins. Ellington separates from his wife, Edna, and his mother moves in with him. Freddie Jenkins joins band.	March 21: <i>Black Beauty</i> October 1: <i>The Mooche</i> ; also first recordings of Duke as solo pianist: <i>Black Beauty</i> and <i>Swampy River</i> November 22: <i>Misty Mornin'</i>
1929	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 <i>Show Girl</i> from July to December. In summer they appear in the short film <i>Black and Tan</i> . Dancer Mildred Dixon moves in with Ellington and his mother, father, and Ruth.	January 8: <i>Tiger Rag</i> (parts 1 and 2), <i>Doin' the Voom Voom</i> January 16: <i>Saturday Night Function, Flaming Youth</i> March 7: <i>The Dicty Glide</i> December 10: <i>Wall Street Wail</i>
1930	The band appears in the Cotton Club's spring revue, <i>The Blackberries of 1930</i> , and performs for two weeks on Broadway with Maurice Chevalier. The band appears in its first Hollywood film, <i>Check and Double Check</i> , and plays at an NAACP benefit on December 7.	June 4: <i>Jungle Nights in Harlem</i> August 20: <i>Ring Dem Bells, Old Man Blues</i> October 14: <i>Mood Indigo</i>
1931	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	January 8: <i>Rockin' in Rhythm</i> January 20: <i>Creole Rhapsody</i> (Ellington's first extended work) June 16: <i>Echoes of the Jungle</i>

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	Henderson's orchestra and McKinney's Cotton Pickers in Detroit.	
1932	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.	February 2: <i>It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)</i> , <i>Lazy Rhapsody</i> September 19: <i>Ducky Wucky</i>
1933	Band returns to Cotton Club for spring revue, and makes nine-minute short film, <i>Bundle of Blues</i> . On June 12 they begin their first European tour at London's Palladium; Duke meets several members of the royal family.	February 15: <i>Merry-Go-Round, Sophisticated Lady</i> February 17: <i>Drop Me Off in Harlem</i> July 13: <i>Harlem Speaks</i> September 26: <i>Rude Interlude</i> December 4: <i>Daybreak Express</i>
1934	The band goes to Hollywood and appears in the films <i>Murder at the Vanities</i> and <i>Belle of the Nineties</i> ; also tours West Coast. In December Rex Stewart replaces Freddie Jenkins.	January 9: <i>Stompy Jones, Delta Serenade</i> January 10: <i>Solitude</i>
1935	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, <i>Symphony in Black</i> , which includes the young Billie Holiday in her screen debut. Ellington's mother dies May 27, and Duke composes an extended work, <i>Reminiscing in Tempo</i> , in her memory.	April 30: <i>In a Sentimental Mood</i> September 12: <i>Reminiscing in Tempo</i>
1936	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 "Rex Stewart and his Fifty-Second Street Stompers" and "Barney Bigard and his Jazzopatens."	February 27: <i>Clarinet Lament (Barney's Concerto)</i> , <i>Echoes of Harlem (Cootie's Concerto)</i> December 19: <i>Caravan</i> December 21: <i>Black Butterfly</i>
1937	Ellington and the band are featured in five numbers in the Hollywood film <i>The Hit Parade</i> . They return to the Cotton Club in spring, then continue extensive touring. Ellington's father dies October 28.	April 22: <i>Azure</i> September 20: <i>Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue, Harmony in Harlem</i>
1938	Arthur Whetsol and Freddie Jenkins leave orchestra due to illness. In March, the band headlines the <i>Cotton Club Parade</i> , scored completely by Ellington. Duke is romantically involved with Beatrice "Evie" Ellis and moves into her apartment. In December he meets Billy Strayhorn in Pittsburgh.	February 2: <i>The Gal From Joe's</i> March 3: <i>I Let a Song Go Out of My Heart</i> March 28: <i>Jeep's Blues</i> June 7: <i>Pyramid</i> June 20: <i>A Gypsy Without a Song</i> August 9: <i>Prelude to a Kiss</i> August 24: <i>The Jeep Is Jumpin'</i> September 2: <i>Boy Meets Horn</i> December 20: <i>Wanderlust</i> December 22: <i>Blue Light (Transblucency)</i>
1939	Billy Strayhorn joins band. Crowd of 12,000 hears Ellington perform at NAACP annual ball on February 11. European tour extends from late March to early May. Ellington ends relationship with Irving Mills and signs with new management and publishing company. Jimmie Blanton joins band in October; Ben Webster joins in December, expanding reed section to five.	March 20: <i>Subtle Lament</i> March 21: <i>Portrait of the Lion, Something to Live For, Solid Old Man</i> April 29: <i>Serenade to Sweden</i> August 28: <i>The Sergeant Was Shy</i> October 14: <i>Weely</i> November 22: <i>Blues, Plucked Again</i> (first duets with Jimmie Blanton)
1940	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	March 6: <i>Jack the Bear, Ko-Ko, Morning Glory</i> March 15: <i>Conga Brava, Concerto for Cootie</i> May 4: <i>Cotton Tail, Never No Lament, Bojangles</i> May 28: <i>Dusk</i>

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	November 7, the band is privately recorded in top form live in Fargo, North Dakota.	July 22: <i>Harlem Air Shaft, All Too Soon</i> July 24: <i>Sepia Panorama</i> September 5: <i>In a Mellotone, Warm Valley</i> October 1: <i>Pitter Panther Patter, Mr. J. B. Blues</i> (duets with Jimmie Blanton) November 2: <i>Day Dream</i>
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 <i>Take the "A" Train</i> becomes (and remains) the band's theme song. In July, Ellington's first full-length stage show, <i>Jump for Joy</i> , opens in Los Angeles, closing in September.	February 15: <i>Blue Serge, Take the "A" Train, Jumpin' Punks</i> June 5: <i>Bakiff, Just a-Sittin' and a-Rockin'</i> June 26: <i>I Got It Bad</i> July 2: <i>Jump for Joy</i> July 3: <i>Things Ain't What They Used to Be, Subtle Slough (Just Squeeze Me)</i> September 26: <i>Chelsea Bridge, Bli-Blip</i> December 3: <i>Perdido</i>
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 <i>Cabin in the Sky</i> and <i>Reveille with Beverly</i> . Harold "Shorty" Baker joins band.	January 21: <i>C Jam Blues</i> February 26: <i>What Am I Here For?</i> June 26: <i>Main Stem</i> September 28: <i>Goin' Up</i>
1943	The orchestra performs at Carnegie Hall on January 23 in a benefit for Russian War Relief, premiering the long-form work <i>Black, Brown and Beige</i> . 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 <i>New World A-Comin'</i> .	January 23: <i>Black, Brown and Beige</i> December 11: <i>New World A-Comin'</i>
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 <i>Blutopia and Perfume Suite</i> .	December 1: <i>I'm Beginning to See the Light</i> December 19: <i>Blutopia, Perfume Suite, Air Conditioned Jungle</i>
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 Zanzibar (formerly the Hurricane) in New York begins in September. Oscar Pettiford joins band.	July 31: <i>Esquire Swank</i> November 24: <i>I'm Just a Lucky So and So</i>
1946	Fourth Carnegie Hall concert on January 4. Otto Hardwick leaves band. Joe "Tricky Sam" Nanton dies. Carnegie Hall concerts on November 23 and 24 include <i>Deep South Suite, Beggar's Holiday</i> , a reworking of <i>The Beggar's Opera</i> , opens December 26 on Broadway with score by Ellington and Strayhorn.	January 4: <i>Magenta Haze</i> July 10: <i>Pretty Woman</i> November 25: <i>Happy Go Lucky Local</i>
1947	Ellington signs with Columbia Records in June. Tyree Glenn joins band. Carnegie Hall	December 24: <i>Liberian Suite</i> December 27: <i>The Clothed Woman</i>

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	concerts on December 26 and 27 include premiere of <i>The Liberian Suite</i> in honor of that nation's centenary.	
1948	Oscar Pettiford leaves band. In July, Ellington, Ray Nance, and Kay Davis travel to England to perform, leaving rest of orchestra behind due to British union restrictions. Wendell Marshall joins band. Sixth annual Carnegie Hall concert on November 13 includes premiere of <i>The Tattooed Bride</i> .	November 13: <i>The Tattooed Bride</i>
1949	Fred Guy leaves the band. In February they record 15-minute film <i>Symphony in Swing</i> in Hollywood. In April they make first TV appearance on CBS program <i>Adventures in Jazz</i> .	February: <i>At the Hollywood Empire</i> [CD] September 1: <i>Snibor</i>
1950	In March the orchestra records in Hollywood for 15-minute film <i>Salute to Duke Ellington</i> . European tour from April to June includes France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Italy, West Germany, Denmark, and Sweden. Paul Gonsalves joins band by November.	September–November: <i>Great Times! Piano Duets</i> [LP with Billy Strayhorn] November 20: <i>Love You Madly</i> December 18: <i>Masterpieces by Ellington</i> [LP]
1951	<i>Harlem</i> and <i>Controversial Suite</i> premiered at New York's Metropolitan Opera House on January 21 in benefit for NAACP. Johnny Hodges, Lawrence Brown, and Sonny Greer leave orchestra; Ellington "raids" Harry James's band to replace them with Willie Smith, Juan Tizol, and Louis Bellson. Later, Britt Woodman joins, followed by Clark Terry and Willie Cook.	January 21: <i>Harlem, Monologue (Pretty and the Wolf)</i> December and various dates in 1952: <i>Ellington Uptown</i> [LP]
1952	Willie Smith replaced by Hilton Jefferson, and Betty Roché rejoins. November 14 tribute to Duke at Carnegie Hall features Billie Holiday, Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Stan Getz, Ahmad Jamal, and the Ellington orchestra.	March 25: <i>The Seattle Concert</i> [LP] July–August: <i>Live at the Blue Note</i> [LP]
1953	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.	April 6: <i>Satin Doll</i> December 3: <i>Kinda Dukish</i> December, January 1954, June 1954: <i>Ellington '55</i> [LP]
1954	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.	February 8: <i>In Hamilton 1954</i> [CDs] April 13: <i>The 1954 Los Angeles Concert</i> [CD]
1955	Wendell Marshall replaced by Jimmy Woode. On March 16, Ellington's orchestra premieres <i>Night Creature</i> at Carnegie Hall with the Symphony of the Air. With bookings hard to come by, Ellington provides musical background for the "Aquacade" show, with ice skaters and dancing water fountains, in Flushing Meadows, New York, from late June to early August. Sam Woodyard joins band, and Johnny Hodges rejoins. Duke's contract with Capitol Records expires.	March 16: <i>Night Creature</i> premiered at Carnegie Hall
1956	In February, the orchestra records for the Bethlehem label. Ellington signs again with Columbia Records. Triumphant	January: <i>Blue Rose</i> (with Rosemary Clooney) [LP] February 7–8: <i>Historically Speaking: The Duke and Duke Ellington Presents</i> [LPs]

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Year	Life and Career	Notable Recordings
	performance at the Newport Jazz Festival on July 7 rejuvenates Ellington's career. The orchestra plays concerts at the Shakespearean Festival in Stratford, Ontario, for first time. In August Ellington appears on cover of <i>Time</i> magazine.	July 7, 9: <i>Ellington at Newport</i> [LP] August 18: <i>Live from the 1956 Stratford Festival</i> [CD] September, October, December: <i>A Drum Is a Woman</i> [LP]
1957	In March Ellington appears on Edward R. Murrow's TV program <i>Person to Person</i> . On April 28 Ellington's <i>Such Sweet Thunder</i> suite, relating to works of Shakespeare, premieres at Town Hall, New York. On May 8, his "jazz spectacular" <i>A Drum Is a Woman</i> is broadcast nationally on <i>The U.S. Steel Hour</i> .	April–May: <i>Such Sweet Thunder</i> [LP] June: <i>Ella Fitzgerald Sings the Duke Ellington Songbook</i> [LPs] September–October: <i>Ellington Indigos</i> [LP]
1958	Ellington participates in episode of educational TV series, <i>The Subject Is Jazz</i> , 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: <i>Come Sunday</i> (with Mahalia Jackson) March–April: <i>At the Bal Masque</i> [LP] April 2–3: <i>The Cosmic Scene</i> [LP] July 3, 21: <i>Newport '58</i> [LP] September 9: <i>Toot Suite</i>
1959	Ellington's theatrical show <i>Jump for Joy</i> briefly revived in Miami Beach, Florida. Duke records <i>The Queen's Suite</i> , presses a single LP, and sends it to Buckingham Palace. Ellington composes his first full-length film score for <i>Anatomy of a Murder</i> . In September, he receives Spingarn medal from NAACP for "highest or noblest achievement by an American Negro." Booty Wood joins band. European tour from September 11 to November 3. Clark Terry, Harold "Shorty" Baker, Cat Anderson, Quentin Jackson, and John Sanders leave band.	February 19: <i>Ellington Jazz Party</i> [LP] February 20: <i>Back to Back</i> [LP with Johnny Hodges] February 25; April 1, 14: <i>The Queen's Suite</i> August 9: <i>Live at the Blue Note</i> [CDs] September 8: <i>Festival Session</i> [LP]
1960	On March 2 the band opens long engagement at the Riviera Hotel in Las Vegas, where Ellington meets Fernanda de Castro Monte, who becomes his mistress. Aaron Bell replaces Jimmy Woode, and Lawrence Brown returns. In November Ellington travels to Paris to compose music for the film <i>Paris Blues</i> . On December 29 he records with French musicians for production of <i>Turcaret</i> .	May–June: <i>Nutcracker Suite</i> May–June: <i>Piano in the Background</i> [LP] June 28–30: <i>Peer Gynt Suite</i> July 14: <i>Unknown Session</i> [LP] July 22: <i>Hot Summer Dance</i> [CD] September 24: <i>Suite Thursday</i> premiered at Monterey Jazz Festival
1961	Return extended engagement at Riviera Hotel in Las Vegas in January. On March 7 Ellington flies to Paris to resume work on <i>Paris Blues</i> . He composes music for TV pilot of <i>Asphalt Jungle</i> . In September he cancels concert in Little Rock, Arkansas, when he learns it would be segregated. Ellington and Louis Armstrong appear on <i>The Ed Sullivan Show</i> December 17.	March: <i>Piano in the Foreground</i> [LP] April 3–4: <i>Louis Armstrong & Duke Ellington</i> [LP] July 6: <i>First Time: The Count Meets the Duke</i> [LP]
1962	Duke gives solo piano recital at Museum of Modern Art, New York, on January 4. Buster Cooper joins band. Contract with Columbia Records expires. Cootie Williams returns after absence of 22 years. In November Ellington signs with Frank Sinatra's Reprise Records, also serving as the label's jazz A&R man.	January, February, June: <i>Midnight in Paris</i> [LP] May 1: <i>Featuring Paul Gonsalves</i> [LP] August 18: <i>Duke Ellington Meets Coleman Hawkins</i> [LP] September 17: <i>Money Jungle</i> [LP with Charles Mingus and Max Roach] September 26: <i>Duke Ellington & John Coltrane</i> [LP] December–January 1963: <i>Afro-Bossa and Recollections of the Big Band Era</i> [LPs]

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Year	Life and Career	Notable Recordings
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 <i>Timon of Athens</i> . He also presents a show, <i>My People</i> , 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: <i>The Great Paris Concert</i> [LPs] February 22: <i>Duke Ellington's Jazz Violin Session</i> [LP] February 28, March 1: <i>Serenade to Sweden</i> [LP] August: <i>My People</i> [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: <i>At Basin Street East</i> [CD] April: <i>Ellington '65</i> [LP] September: <i>Mary Poppins</i> [LP]
1965	Four-week European tour begins in January. Pulitzer Prize committee recommends special citation for Ellington, but is overturned by board of directors. The orchestra closes the "Festival of the American Arts" concert at the White House on June 14. Ellington's work <i>The Golden Broom and the Green Apple</i> debuts July 30 at Philharmonic Hall, New York. Ellington's <i>Concert of Sacred Music</i> debuts at Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, and is performed many times thereafter.	January: <i>Ellington '66</i> [LP] April: <i>Concert in the Virgin Islands</i> [LP] July 28: <i>Duke at Tanglewood</i> [LP] September 16: <i>A Concert of Sacred Music</i> [CD] December 26: <i>Concert of Sacred Music</i> [LP]
1966	Ellington writes film score for <i>Assault on a Queen</i> . 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 <i>Murder in the Cathedral</i> .	May: <i>The Popular Duke Ellington</i> [LP] July 18: <i>The Pianist</i> [piano trio LP] Late July: <i>Ella and Duke at the Côte d'Azur and Soul Call</i> [LPs] December 19–21: <i>The Far East Suite</i> [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: <i>The Intimacy of the Blues</i> [LP] August, September, November: <i>...And His Mother Called Him Bill</i> [LP] December 11–12: <i>Francis A. and Edward K.</i> [LP with Frank Sinatra]
1968	Ellington's <i>Second Sacred Concert</i> premieres January 19 at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York. On March 27 an Ellington octet performs at the White House for President Tubman of Liberia. Jimmy Hamilton leaves band, later replaced by Harold Ashby. Tours of South America and Mexico in September. The orchestra records music for a documentary film, <i>Racing World</i> . Ellington is appointed to the National Council on the Arts in November.	January–February: <i>Second Sacred Concert</i> [LPs] January 26: <i>Yale Concert</i> [LP] November 5: <i>Latin American Suite</i> [LP]
1969	Orchestra records music for the film <i>Change of Mind</i> . Ellington honored at the White House with a 70th birthday party and presented with Medal of Freedom by President Richard Nixon. Ellington receives honorary doctorate	April 25: <i>Up In Duke's Workshop</i> [LP] April 29: <i>All-Star White House Tribute to Duke Ellington</i> [CD] November 25, 26: <i>70th Birthday Concert</i> [LPs]

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	from Brown University. Short tour of the Caribbean and Guyana in June. European tour, starting late October, includes first performance in the Soviet bloc (Prague). Lawrence Brown retires from band; Norris Turney, Wild Bill Davis, and Victor Gaskin join.	
1970	Tours of Far East, Australia, and New Zealand in January and February. <i>New Orleans Suite</i> is premiered at New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival. Johnny Hodges dies May 11. American Ballet Company premieres <i>The River</i> , with music by Ellington and choreography by Alvin Ailey, on June 25. Five-week European tour begins June 28. <i>The Afro-Eurasian Eclipse</i> premiered at Monterey Jazz Festival September 18.	April 27, May 13: <i>New Orleans Suite</i> [LP] May 28: <i>The Golden Broom and the Green Apple</i> [on LP titled <i>Orchestral Works</i>]
1971	Ellington inducted into the Swedish Academy of Music on March 12. <i>Goutelas Suite</i> premiered at Lincoln Center, New York, on April 16. Ellington receives honorary doctorates from the University of Wisconsin, during a residency for the orchestra, and St. John's University in Jamaica, New York. Three-month tour abroad, including first performance in the Soviet Union, begins in September. New band members include Harold Minerve and Johnny Coles.	February 17: <i>The Afro-Eurasian Eclipse</i> [LP] April 27: <i>Goutelas Suite</i> [on LP titled <i>The Ellington Suites</i>] October 22, 24: <i>The English Concerts</i> [LPs]
1972	Longest tour of the Far East to date includes Japan, the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Australasia, 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.	April 10: <i>Live at the Whitney</i> [CD] December 5: <i>This One's for Blanton</i> [LP]
1973	Ellington is awarded the <i>Ordre national de la Légion d'honneur</i> by the French ambassador in New York on July 8. Ellington receives honorary doctorates from Columbia University and Fisk University. His autobiographical book, <i>Music Is My Mistress</i> , is published in the fall. <i>Third Sacred Concert</i> premieres at Westminster Abbey, London, on October 24. The orchestra performs in Zambia and Ethiopia, where Ellington receives the Emperor's Star. Ellington's doctor, Arthur Logan, dies November 25.	January 8: <i>The Big Four</i> [LP] October 24: <i>Third Sacred Concert</i> [LP] December 1: <i>Eastbourne Performance</i> [LP]
1974	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 Pavillion at Columbia-Presbyterian Hospital for treatment of cancer. In the hospital he continues working on an opera, <i>Queenie Pie</i> , and ballet, <i>Three Black Kings</i> . 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.	