

# "Simulated Improvisation" in Duke Ellington's *Black, Brown and Beige*

Jazz-Institut Darmstadt

BY WOLFRAM KNAUER

Table 1

FORM OUTLINE OF THE FIRST MOVEMENT "BLACK" FROM "BLACK, BROWN & BEIGE" (RECORDING: BOSTON, JANUARY 28, 1943, PRESTIGE P 34004)

"WORK"

	64	114	211	
Exposition and composed variations of the <i>Work Song</i> theme	Baritone saxophone solo (Harry Carney), partly with orchestra arrangement; composed solo voice	Trumpet break; trombone solo (Tricky Sam Nanton), interrupted by single orchestra statements; composed solo voices	Out chorus: quote of the <i>Come Sunday</i> theme ("religioso")	
eight-bar theme complex				
E <sup>b</sup> major	1 = / B <sup>b</sup> major	E <sup>b</sup> major / C major / D <sup>b</sup> major	E <sup>b</sup> major	
226	266	290	298	
Exposition of the A-section from <i>Come Sunday</i> , arranged variants (orchestra, solo trombone). Contrasting interlude of the saxophone ensemble	Violin solo (Ray Nance); chorus-like structured "simulated improvisation" on the A-section of <i>Come Sunday</i> . At the end: layer-like addition of trombone, trumpet and double bass	Interlude	<i>Come Sunday</i> . Complete theme (AABA) played as alto saxophone solo by Johnny Hodges. Only slight embellishments of the original composition	Stadt Darmstadt
E <sup>b</sup> major / F major		Modulation D <sup>b</sup> major		
330	346 362	394	402	
Trumpet cadenza and signal (Intro)	Orchestra riffs as preparation for the following theme	Trumpet solo (Rex Stewart) over an orchestra riff	Orchestra-"coda", riffs from <i>King Porter=Stomp</i>	Bass solo (Junior Raglin) Asymmetrical phrase units, composed solo voice
D <sup>b</sup> major	D <sup>b</sup> major =			
423	435	456	472	482
Blues arrangement (12 bars) for the saxophone ensemble	Reprise of <i>Come Sunday</i> : bridge in the clarinet; different arrangement of the A-section	Blues arrangement composed trombone solo (Lawrence Brown)	<i>Come Sunday</i> A-section played straight as a trombone solo (Lawrence Brown)	"Montage": <i>Work Song</i> (trumpets) <i>Come Sunday</i> (trombones)
B <sup>b</sup> major				
496	512		546	
Overlapping of the A- and B-sections from <i>Come Sunday</i> ; reduction to 12 measures followed by a short interlude	Swing arrangement in 32-bar song form; "wa-wa" riffs comparable for instance to Ellington's <i>Old Man Blues</i> as well as other typical Ellington arrangements		Coda with split-off riffs and riff-segments; sudden end	
B <sup>b</sup> major / C major	(G major) A <sup>b</sup> major			

Table 2. *Black, Brown & Beige* Movements

Movement Titles	Alternative Titles
<i>Black</i>	
"Work Song"	
"Spiritual" .....	"Come Sunday"
	"David Danced" (1963, 1965)
"Light" .....	"Montage" (1963)
<i>Brown</i>	
"West Indian Dance" .....	"West Indian Influence"
"Emancipation Celebration" ..	"Proclamation of Emancipation"
	"The Lighter Attitude"
	"Old Folks"
	"Y.G.O."
	"Youth"
	"Youthful Awkwardness"
	"Graceful Awkwardness"
"Blues" .....	"The Blues Ain't"
	"Mauve"
<i>Beige</i>	
"Sugar Hill Penthouse" .....	"Creamy Brown"
	"A View from Central Park" (1965)
	"Cy Run Rock Waltz" (1965)
	"Symphonette" (1971)

Table 3. *Black, Brown & Beige* Discography

This discography lists all known Ellington recordings of *Black, Brown and Beige* and, as well, some important performances that were not documented on record. Only the labels of the first issue are listed and no personnel is given except where important to conceptual changes of the music.

Rye High School, New York, 22 January 1943: <i>Black, Brown &amp; Beige</i>	Not recorded
Carnegie Hall, New York, 23 January 1943: <i>Black</i> <i>Brown &amp; Beige</i>	(unissued) Prestige P 34004
Symphony Hall, Boston, 28 January 1943: <i>Black</i> <i>Brown &amp; Beige</i>	Prestige P 34004 (unissued)
Concert, Chicago, 1943: <i>Black, Brown &amp; Beige</i>	(not recorded?)
Hurricane Club, New York, 31 August 1943: "West Indian Dance" "Emancipation Celebration"	(unissued)
Hurricane Club, New York, 7 September 1943: "West Indian Dance" (unissued)	
Hurricane Club, New York, September 1943: "West Indian Dance" "Emancipation Celebration"	(unissued)
Carnegie Hall, 11 December 1943: "West Indian Influence" (slightly shortened)	Ember EMBD 2001
New York, 11 December 1944: "Work Song" (slightly tightened) "Come Sunday" (2 takes)	Victor 28-0400 Victor 28-0401
New York, 12 December 1944: "The Blues" (3 takes) shortened at beginning "Three Dances: (West Indian Dance/Emancipation Celebration/Sugar Hill Penthouse"; shortened arrangements)	Victor 28-0401 Victor 28-0400
Carnegie Hall, New York, 19 December 1944: "Work Song" "The Blues" "Three Dances" (all as perf. on 12 December 1944) - "Come Sunday" (concluded by "Light")	Prestige 24073

New York, 4 January 1945: "Carnegie Blues" (3 takes; combination of the trombone arrangement from the interlude of "The Blues" and a short trumpet-arrangement from "Light")	Victor 20-1644
Civic Opera House, Chicago, 25 March 1945: "Work Song" (all as perf. on 19 December 1944) "Come Sunday" "The Blues" "Three Dances"	Joyce LP 1053 B - -
New York, 14 April 1945: "Come Sunday"	Ariston RI 12029
400 Club, New York, 21 April 1945: "Three Dances (as perf. on 19 December 1944) "The Blues"	FDC 1011
Percy Jones Hospital, Battle Creek, Michigan, 2 June 1945: "Come Sunday"	Fairmont FA 1003
Apollo Theatre, New York, 30 August 1945: "Carnegie Blues"	Fairmont FA 1003
Radio City Music Hall, New York, 7 July 1945: "Carnegie Blues" (as interlude between "Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue")	Fairmont FA 1010
New York, 8 September 1945: "Carnegie Blues"	V-Disc 558
Club Zanzibar, New York, 18 November 1945: "Emancipation Celebration"	Joyce LP 1071
Carnegie Hall, New York, 4 January 1946: Spiritual "Come Sunday" (incl. "Light") "Work Song" "The Blues"	Prestige P 24074 - -
Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, 30 April 1947: "The Blues"	Stardust 204
Hollywood Bowl, Los Angeles, 31 August 1947: "Come Sunday" "The Blues" "Emancipation Celebration"	Unique Jazz UJ 003 - -
Los Angeles, 5 & 12 February 1958: <i>Black</i> (complete) "Come Sunday" (with lyrics, Mahalia Jackson) "Come Sunday" (violin-piano improvisation) "23rd Psalm" (with Mahalia Jackson)	Columbia CL 1162 - - -
Olympia Theatre, Paris, 23 February 1963: "The Blues Ain't" Reprise R 6234	
Paris, 1 March 1963: "Come Sunday" (with lyrics, Alice Babs)	Reprise R5024
McCormack Place, Chicago, 20, 21, 28 August 1963, <i>My People</i> : "Come Sunday" (with lyrics) "David Danced" (Bunny Briggs, tap dance) "Montage" "The Blues"	Contact CM (SS) 1 - -
Toronto, Canada, 2, 3, 4, & 5 September 1964: "The Blues" "David Danced" (Bunny Briggs, tap dance)	Rarities RAR 29
New York, 4 March 1965: "Black" (work song) "Come Sunday" "Light"	LMR 255 926-2 - -
Chicago, 31 March 1965: "West Indian Dance" "Emancipation Celebration"	LMR 255 926-2
Chicago, 18 May 1965: "Cy Runs Rock Waltz" <i>Beige</i> (shortened) "Sugar Hill Penthouse"	LMR 255 926-2 - -
Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York, 26 December 1965, <i>Concert of Sacred Music</i> : "Come Sunday" (with lyrics) "Come Sunday" (and "Light") "David Danced" (Bunny Briggs, Tap dance)	Victor LPM 3582 - -
New York, 6 May 1971: "Symphonette" "The Blues"	Pablo 2310-787 LMR 255 926-2