

TED KURLAND ASSOCIATES

DUKE ELLINGTON ORCHESTRA

biography



The history of jazz is the Duke Ellington Orchestra. This statement holds great argument in reference to this band. For over 50 years, Duke Ellington was at the forefront of jazz. Everyone knows the stories, the people, the performances. All have become legendary, gothic folklore, so to speak. Duke Ellington has been recognized and hailed as "America's Greatest Musical Composer" that has ever lived. With over 5000 songs written, the sheer breath and quality of material more than support that statement. Duke possessed a keen eye for talent, intuitive musical intellect, an ability to inspire musicians, and the talent to write music in a way that proved itself uniquely original. His debonair quality, well-mannered politeness, and congenial smile welcomed everyone and beckoned them to the "Ellington Mystique".

Upon Duke's death, his son, Mercer Ellington, took up his father's "good fight" to continue leading the band on its musical crusade. Without a doubt one of the seminal jazz figures of the last twenty-five years, he had his father's eye for talent and musical prowess. Venturing out on his own, Mercer was successful as a writer, arranger, producer and musical director. He allowed for the Duke Ellington Orchestra's continued success. He wrote for the band, played in the band, was conductor, booking agent, and even band manager. He was a prime example of the adage "If you want something done right – do it yourself".

Paul Mercer Ellington was born in 1978 with the genetic makings of a jazz legend. Born in Denmark, as the grandson of Edward Kennedy (Duke) Ellington and the son of Mercer Ellington, Paul is continuing the musical tradition that was bestowed upon him by his prodigious family.

From the time Paul was a toddler, he intently observed his father compose and play music. At the tender age of 8, Paul accompanied his father on tour to Japan, on what would be his official beginning of a musical career. It was at that point that Mercer Ellington turned to his second generation Ellington and stated, "Son, this is all yours, make sure you keep it going".

Following the untimely death of his father in 1996, Paul knew in his heart and soul that he wanted to keep the Duke Ellington Orchestra alive. His versatility has stretched across a variety of instruments including the drums, trumpet, percussion, and his passion for piano and composition. All of these talented attributes, are sculpting him into one of Jazz's greatest assets. Paul's live performance credits have encompassed Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center, the annual Newport Jazz Festival, the Blue Note nightclub and several European and Japanese and Brazilian tours.

Jazz aficionados can rest assured - the Ellington legacy continues to live on.

current tour

Available for touring throughout the 2002-2003 season.

173 Brighton Avenue, Boston, MA 02134 • (617) 254-0007
Domestic Fax: (617) 782-3577 • International Fax: (617) 782-3524
E-mail: agents@tedkurland.com • World Wide Web: www.tedkurland.com

current: 2/8/01