

THE DUKE ELLINGTON LEGACY

The Duke Ellington Legacy, initiated by Ellington's grandchildren Edward Kennedy II, and his sister, Gaye Ellington, in 2003, is dedicated to keeping Ellington's music alive and growing in the 21st century. Featuring top New York City-based musicians, the Ellington Legacy is a swingin', smokin', imaginative and spiritually enticing group.

The Legacy is not a repertoire band. Pianist/chief arranger Norman Simmons, and saxophonist/arranger/band leader Virginia Mayhew create new interpretations of the music from the Ellington canon, both the familiar and the less-often heard.

In addition to the Legacy's fresh take on the music, guitarist Edward Ellington tells stories from his time on the road with his grandfather, and vocalist Nancy Reed, singing the lyrics in her beautiful and soulful way, adds a not-so-often heard side of Duke's music.

The Ellington Legacy's debut CD, "Thank You Uncle Edward", with special guests Wycliffe Gordon on trombone and Ellington alumni Joe Temperley on baritone saxophone and bass clarinet, received lots of airplay and many great reviews.

In addition to performing at festivals and in concert halls and clubs, the Legacy makes a special effort to reach out to young people by exposing them to the music and working with them in seminars and concert preparation. The members of the Ellington Legacy have extensive experience teaching all levels of musicians, and are available for artist-in-residencies, workshops, and other educational situations.

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THE DUKE ELLINGTON BIG BAND

Formed in 2009 by Edward and his other sister, Mercedes Ellington, the Duke Ellington Big Band (D.E.B.B.) had its debut performance at a thrilling outdoor concert in Central Park.

With the Legacy band members as its core, the D.E.B.B. features many of NYC's greatest musicians, including alto saxophonists Jerry Dodgion (Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, Frank Sinatra, Count Basie, Herbie Hancock) and Bobby Porcelli (Tito Puente, Machito, Mongosantamaria), tenor saxophonist Patience Higgins (Wilson Pickett, Mercer Ellington, Muhal Richard Abrams), and trombonist Clarence Banks (Count Basie, Dizzy Gillespie, Frank Sinatra).

Performing arrangements written especially for the D.E.B.B., the band brings exciting new insights into the music.

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Booking: Please contact Virginia Mayhew at booking@dukeellingtonlegacy.com. For additional resources, please visit us online at www.DukeEllingtonLegacy.com.