

Toodle-Oo and other staples of the band's repertory during these years, *Black and Tan* was recorded several times. On the recording of 3 November 1927, Bubber Miley was on one of his temporary leaves from the Ellington band. Jabbo Smith filled in, but one of the sections originally played by Miley was covered on this date by Nanton. The blues spot that Nanton normally filled was played with particular distinction on this session (Example 2-2).

EXAMPLE 2-2

The musical score for Example 2-2 is presented in three staves, all in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 4/4 time signature. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 112. The first staff (measures 1-3) features a Bb chord and lyrics: "tight plunger", "o", "u growl", and "wuh wuh". The second staff (measures 4-6) features Bb7 and Eb chords and lyrics: "wuh", "wa wa", "wa wa wa wa", "a - - - - - (no tongue)", "a", and "a - -". The third staff (measures 7-9) features F7, Bb, F7, and Bb chords and lyrics: "(whinny)", "wa wa wa wa - a wa", "wa wa", "wa-a-a", and "wa wa". Performance instructions include "tight plunger", "u growl", "(no tongue)", and "(whinny)".

Nanton's first two measures are played into "tight plunger," that is, the plunger was held very close to the bell of the instrument. On the first note of measure two, however, the plunger is opened considerably more than on the other notes of this phrase. A heavy growl starts in measure three, and the plunger opens just slightly to produce an "u" sound, followed by three muffled sounding "wuh's." These turn into more characteristic "wuh's" in measure four as Nanton opens and closes on each note through the end of measure five. The repeated triplet figure of measure six is played with the plunger held somewhat open throughout. It also seems that no tongue was used in measures six through eight.

In measures eight and nine, Nanton performed one of his most distinctive plunger effects ever. No established musical

TIZOL BAKIFF 41

A INTRO (MB) 10 BRBS

B

C

10

Tizol's part for his own composition *Bakiff*, written in his own hand.
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EXAMPLE 4-3

♩ = 76 A^{o7} B^{b-7}

3

A^{bΔ} A^{b7} G⁷ G^{b7} F⁷ B^{b7}

6

E^{b7} A^{bΔ} A^{o7}

After 16 measures out, Brown returns with the final eight measures of the chorus.

A^{o7} B^{b-7}

3

A^{bΔ} A^{b7} G⁷ G^{b7} F⁷ B^{b7}

6

E^{b7} A^{bΔ} (D^b) A^{bΔ} A^{o7}

EXAMPLE 6-4

♩ = 180

Sw

5

10

14

18

3

time [see Chapter 4]. Woodman tried the same thing, but once he got up in front of the band, his plans would desert him and something completely different would come out of his horn. Finally, in 1957, he went to Ellington and told him that he didn't want to play any more improvised solos. Woodman felt that he wasn't doing justice to the solo spots. Ellington continued to give Woodman written solos, but no longer pushed him into playing improvised solos, at least on recording sessions. Hearing his recorded solos with Ellington some years later (he didn't listen to them at the time they were made), however, Woodman declared himself to be "halfway pleased."

Whatever his own reservations, Woodman made significant contributions to the Ellington band as a jazz soloist. Nonetheless, it might well be argued that Woodman's greatest musical contributions to the Ellington legacy were his exceptional section playing and his astonishing performances of written solos.

When Chuck Connors switched from tenor to bass trombone shortly after he joined the band in 1961, Ellington and Strayhorn had a new resource at their disposal. Their use of Connors as a new color in several different settings is discussed in Chapter 7. Even towards the very end of his career Ellington was devising new ways of using the section. Shown in Example A-9 is an excerpt from *Afrique*, the third section of *The Afro-Eurasian Eclipse* from 1971. In a figure that repeats a number of times, Ellington has ingeniously used the three trombonists as a section, but given each an independent part, with an individual sound. Over an insistent tom-tom beat, the top two parts – probably Malcolm Taylor on the higher part and Booty Wood on the lower – are scored in plunger, close together, but rhythmically discrete, while the bass trombone closes each four-measure phrase with a powerfully played octave leap. The figure is not played exactly the same way each time. Sometimes the second part comes in a bar later, or drags its figure.

EXAMPLE A-9

Taylor?
 Wood?
 Connors
 bass trombone

♩ = 174
fp
 open slowly
 ba - u wa

One can take just about any cross-section of Ellington's writing for the full band from any period of his career and find interesting scoring for the trombone section on any of hundreds of selections.

Chapter III
The Unique Juan Tizol

“Twelfth Street Rag” (Example 3-1) is on *Early Ellington: The Complete Brunswick and Vocalion Recordings of Duke Ellington, (1926-1931)*, Decca Jazz (MCA and GRP) GRD-3-640. It is also available on Classics 605 (1930-1931). The original big band recording of “Caravan” (Example 3-2) is on Columbia/Legacy discs *The Essence of Duke Ellington* (CK 47129) and *16 Most Requested Songs* (CK 57901) and the Ken Burns set (CK 61444). Example 3-3, “Battle of Swing” is on the CD set put out by CBS on its Portrait Masters label, *Braggin’ in Brass, The Immortal 1938 Year* (R2K 44395) and the compilation *The Duke*. It is also on the Smithsonian record set *Duke Ellington 1938*, now part of the larger set mentioned above, P6 15079, and the CD *An Introduction to Lawrence Brown: His Best Recordings 1929-1944*, on the French Best of Jazz label, Best of Jazz 4040. Tizol’s solo work on “Come Sunday,” from *Black, Brown and Beige* (Example 3-4 and 3-4A) is, of course, on the same Prestige release listed above (2PCD 34004-2), the 1943 Carnegie Hall concert.

The four-part *Reminiscing in Tempo*, which features so much of Tizol’s playing with various sections is on Columbia/Legacy CK 48654. Some of Tizol’s compositions can be heard in their original versions on *Duke Ellington Small Groups, Volume 1* (Columbia/Legacy C2K 46995) featuring the original “Caravan,” “Moonlight Fiesta,” and “Jubilesta.” Other compositions for the big band include “Conga Brava,” “Bakiff,” “Moon Over Cuba,” and “Perdido” on the two Bluebird *Blanton-Webster* sets, (5659-2-RB and 82876 50857 2, which also include Tizol’s performance on “Chelsea Bridge”); “A Gypsy Without a Song” and “Lost in Meditation” are on Portrait Masters R2K 44395.

Chapter IV
Lawrence Brown,
the Virtuoso

A milestone in the Lawrence Brown discography was the 1996 release of *An Introduction to Lawrence Brown: His Best Recordings 1929-1944*, on the French Best of Jazz label, Best of Jazz 4040. It includes “The Ramble,” recorded with Paul Howard’s Quality Serenaders, “I’m a Ding Dong Daddy,” recorded in 1930 with Louis Armstrong, and many of the solos discussed in this chapter. They include: “Ducky Wucky,” “Slippery Horn” (1933), “Bundle of Blues,” “Sophisticated Lady,” “There is No Greater Love,” “Yearning for Love (Lawrence’s Concerto),” and “Rose of the Rio Grande.” Also on this disc are several other cuts with Ellington and dates with Lionel Hampton and Rex Stewart. (It should be noted that one cut from this disc, “Battle of Swing,” does not feature Brown at all, rather the soloist is Juan Tizol.) Selections cited in the chap-

Register of Ellington's Trombonists

The following trombonists are known to have played with Duke Ellington's Orchestra. In this alphabetical listing, each player is followed by the dates of his time with Ellington. Only the barest of biographical information is presented here. For the players who spent significant time with Ellington, reference is made to the chapters in the text in which they are discussed. For further biographical information, consult the various editions of Leonard Feather's *Encyclopedia of Jazz*, John Chilton's *Who's Who in Jazz*, *The New Grove Encyclopedia of Jazz* and other standard reference books.

John Anderson. Fall 1923-early 1924. See Chapter 1.

Bernard Archer. Late summer 1943. Spent several weeks with the band as a replacement for Juan Tizol late in the summer of 1943. Shortly before, Archer had worked with Claude Hopkins and Eubie Blake.

Art Baron. August 1973-1975. See Chapter 8. Since leaving the Ellington band, Baron has carved out a distinguished career in New York, including work with a group known as "The Duke's Men." With the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra and other groups, he has been called upon to re-create the solos of Tricky Sam Nanton and other plunger specialists.

Lou Blackburn. Early 1961-December 1961. See Chapter 7. After leaving Ellington, Blackburn worked the studio scene in Los Angeles. In 1973 he formed an innovative group called Mombasa, which featured African musicians and was a mix of African and Western music. He died in Berlin, Germany, 7 June 90.

Lawrence Brown. Early spring 1932-January 1951, May 1960-New Year's 1970. See Chapters 4, 7 and 8.

Henderson Chambers. July 1957. Chambers, an eminent veteran of many name bands during the Swing Era, subbed for Quentin Jackson sometime during the two weeks the band played at the Blue Note in Chicago in July 1957.

Jimmy Cheatham. Summer 1971. Cheatham, now a prominent jazz educator, filled in for Chuck Connors for a short time in the summer of 1971.

The following chart shows the trombonists who worked in the Ellington band during Ellington's lifetime, with the dates when they began and the dates when they were replaced. The chart does not pretend to show the comings and goings completely precisely (the period of 1959-1961 is especially problematic), but it does give a good overview of the situation in the section. The dateline is not exactly to scale. Players listed in parentheses were very short term replacements who were not regular members of the band.

