



Smithsonian

*National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center*

Guide to the John Gensel  
Collection of Duke Ellington Music

NMAH.AC.0763

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
<b>Title:</b>	John Gensel Collection of Duke Ellington Materials
<b>Date:</b>	1950-1979
<b>Identifier:</b>	NMAH.AC.0763
<b>Creator:</b>	Gensel, John Morgen, Joe Ellington, Duke, 1899-1974
<b>Extent:</b>	1.5 Cubic feet (5 boxes)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	Papers relating to Duke Ellington, once owned by Ellington's publicist Joe Morgen: Morgen's correspondence, much of it relating to appearances by Ellington; photographs; some financial records; some music manuscripts of Ellington's; concert and theater programs; a film of Ellington at the White House in 1969 when he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Nixon; and press releases and newspaper and magazine articles.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

The collection was donated to the Smithsonian Institution in 1993 by John Gensel. The collection was turned over to the Archives Center in October 2000, with the Deed of Gift being signed in January 2001 by Gensel's widow. It is unknown clear how the materials came into the possession of Father Gensel from Joe Morgen.

### Processing Information

Collection processed by Will Crafton, undated.

### Preferred Citation

John Gensel Collection of Duke Ellington Materials, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

### Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

### Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

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## Biographical Note

Rev. John Garcia Gensel, a Lutheran minister at St. Peter's church in New York City, 1956-1993, was a close confidant and spiritual presence within the New York jazz community. Conducting evening jazz vespers from 1965 until 1993, Gensel was able to develop close ties with New York's jazz musicians and their families. He believed that jazz was the best music for worship because it spoke to the existential nature of the person playing it. Along with conducting his jazz vespers, Gensel also officiated at weddings, baptisms, and funerals for much of the jazz community, including those of Duke Ellington, Thelonious Monk, John Coltrane, Miles Davis, and Dizzy Gillespie. Duke Ellington, a close friend and confidant, dedicated part of his Second Sacred Concert, *The Shepard (Who Watches Over the Night Flock)* to Gensel.

Joe Morgen, described as a fast talking Broadway-beat publicist, was hired by Ellington in 1957 to manage his public relations. Although he was disliked by Billy Strayhorn and perceived by others as graceless and aggressive, Ellington nonetheless overlooked Morgen's weaknesses. In his memoir *Music Is My Mistress* Ellington wrote, "I think he does a great job. He is an extraordinary individual, and I always say he is a man who doesn't have the tiniest facet of the devious in his makeup". Regardless of his reputation, Morgen proved highly adept at regaining media attention for Duke Ellington's music through features published in publications such as *Look*, the *New York Times*, and *Newsweek*. Phoebe Jacobs, head of promotion for the Basin Street Nightclub, said, "Joe Morgen made all of that happen. He sold everybody on Ellington." Morgen remained loyal to Ellington long after his death by working with his foundation to produce a benefit show and tribute to Duke to help raise money for the Ellington Cancer Foundation.

### Sources

Fuller Up: The Dead Musicians Directory. Rev. John Gensel, 80, Pastor of Jazz Community' [www.geocities.com/SoHo/Lofts/7219/revjohngensel.html](http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Lofts/7219/revjohngensel.html).

Ellington, Edward Kennedy Duke. *Music is My Mistress*. New York: Double Day, 1978. 435. Hajdu, David. *Lush Life, A Biography of Billy Strayhorn*. New York: Farrar, Strauss, & Giroux, 1996. 166-169.

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## Scope and Contents

The collection consists of material compiled by Joe Morgen as an employee of Duke Ellington from 1957 to 1979. This includes correspondence, some of Morgen's personal financial records, photographs, magazine articles, and newspaper clippings about Ellington. In addition there are public relations and biographical sketches about Ellington, a 35mm film of Ellington at the White House when he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Nixon, and an acetate reference recording of *AAfro-Bossa*.@ There are also materials not related to Ellington that include miscellaneous sheet music from the *AJudy Garland Show*,@ documents for the 1960s program *AYouth Wants to Know*,@ some 45 rpm commercial and test sound recordings of Mary Lou Williams performing some of her music, broadsides of various jazz musicians printed on black cloth, and other unidentified documents.

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## Arrangement

The collection is organized into eleven series:

- Series 1: Joe Morgen Correspondence and Personal Papers
- Series 2: Photographs, Slides, and Negatives
- Series 3: Judy Garland Show Sheet Music
- Series 4: Ellington Materials
- Series 5: Sound Recordings

- Series 6: Biographical and Press Related Materials
  - Series 7: Programs, Invitations, and Flyers
  - Series 8: Publications
  - Series 9: Magazine and Newspaper Clippings
  - Series 10: Film Reel, Duke Ellington at the White House
  - Series 11: Miscellaneous
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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

### Types of Materials:

- Black-and-white photographic prints -- Silver gelatin -- 1950-2000
- Clippings
- Correspondence -- 1950-2000
- Music -- Manuscripts
- Press releases
- Programs
- Programs -- Concerts
- Theater programs -- 1950-1990

### Names:

- Ellington, Duke, 1899-1974

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Joe Morgen Correspondence and Records, 1946-1979

**Scope and Contents:** Eight folders of Joe Morgen's personal and business correspondence, 1954-1979. The correspondence is arranged chronologically by date. Much of the correspondence directly relates to Morgen's public relations work for Ellington. Also included is a copy of a contract signed between Morgen and Evelyn Tripp in 1948, Morgen's hotel bills from the Hotel Capitol where he stayed in the 1950s, phone bills (1976-1978), and his telephone and address book.

Box 1, Folder 1	Correspondence
Box 1, Folder 2	Correspondence
Box 1, Folder 3	Correspondence
Box 1, Folder 4	Correspondence
Box 1, Folder 5	Contract: Morgen-Waxman Assoc. Inc. & Evelyn Tripp
Box 1, Folder 6	Hotel Bills from the Hotel Capitol
Box 1, Folder 7	Phone Bills
Box 1, Folder 8	Telephone and Address Book

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## Series 2: Photographs, Slides, and Negatives, 1960s-1970s

Scope and Contents: Nine folders containing undated and unidentified photographs, slides and negatives of Duke Ellington and band members that appear to document performances and activities from the 1960s to the 1970s. The folders are arranged alphabetically by subject.

Box 2, Folder 1	Photographs: Ellington
Box 2, Folder 2	Photographs: Musicians Playing
Box 2, Folder 3	Photographs: Publicity Photos
Box 2, Folder 4	Photographs: Publicity Photos
Box 2, Folder 5	Photographs: Publicity Photos
Box 2, Folder 6	Photographs: Publicity Photos
Box 2, Folder 7	Photographs: Joe Morgen
Box 2, Folder 8	Photographs: Miscellaneous
Box 2, Folder 9	Negatives: Ellington

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## Series 3: Judy Garland Show Sheet Music, 1963-1964

Scope and Contents: Nine oversized folders containing sheet music from the 1963-1964 Judy Garland television show. With the exception of Ole' Man River, each folder contains a full score to each song to the Judy Garland Show. The provenance of this music is unclear.

Box 3, Folder 1	Do What You Do
Box 3, Folder 2	Give My Regards to Broadway
Box 3, Folder 3	I Wish You Love
Box 3, Folder 4	Life is Just a Bowl of Cherries
Box 3, Folder 5	Ole' Man River, pt. 1
Box 3, Folder 6	Ole' Man River, pt. 2
Box 3, Folder 7	Puttin' on the Ritz
Box 3, Folder 8	San Francisco
Box 3, Folder 9	Life is Just a Bowl of Cherries

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## Series 4: Ellington Materials, 1950s-1960s

Scope and Contents: Four folders of miscellaneous material, dating from the 1950s through the 1970s, directly related to Duke Ellington's writings on the Sacred Concerts and his speech before the NAACP in 1957.

Box 1, Folder 1	Business Record: Tempo Music Hall Catalog of Ellington Recordings
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Box 1, Folder 2	Ellington Award: NAACP Scroll of Honor Freedom Fund Dinner
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Box 1, Folder 3	Ellington Writings
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Box 1, Folder 4	Ellington Writings: Sacred Concerts
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## Series 5: Sound Recordings, 1960s-1970s

**Scope and Contents:** Four 33.3 rpm and five 45 rpm sound recordings. Included herein is an undated acetate reference recording of Duke Ellington's Afro-Bossa, one dated and four undated Mary Lou Williams 45rpm commercial releases and test pressing, an undated "Happy Sweets" Edison acetate reference recording of Sweetenings, and an undated Martial Solal commercial recording of Jazz et Cinema. The recordings are arranged alphabetically by performer or title when a performer is unidentified.

Box 4, Folder OD.1	Ellington Acetate Reference Recording, 33.3, Afro-Bossa, side 1; Song List: Angu, Ragtime Cha Cha, Absinthe, Moonbow, Sempre Amore, Silk Lace
Box 4, Folder OD.2	Ellington Acetate Reference Recording, 33.3, Afro-Bossa, side 2; Song List: Tigress, Afro-Bossa, Volupte, Empty Town Blues, Pyramid, Eighth Veil
Box 4, Folder OD.3	Happy Sweets Edison Acetate Reference Recording, 33.3, Sweetenings
Box 4, Folder OD.4	Mary Lou Williams Commercial Release 45, 1973, Side 1: Chief Natoma from Tacoma; Side 2: Joe
Box 4, Folder OD.5	Mary Lou Williams Commercial Release 45, Side 1: It's a Grand Night for Swingin'; Side 2: My Blue Heaven
Box 4, Folder OD.6	Mary Lou Williams Commercial Release 45, 1976, Side 1: You Know Baby; Side 2: Pittsburgh
Box 4, Folder OD.7	Mary Lou Williams Test Pressing 45; Side 1: My Blue Heaven; Side 2: It's a Grand Night for Swingin'
Box 4, Folder OD.8	Mary Lou Williams Test Pressing 45, Side 1: My Blue Heaven; Side 2: It's a Grand Night for Swingin'
Box 4, Folder OD.9	Martial Solal Commercial Recording Jazz et Cinema, French recording
Box 4, Folder 1	Supplementary Materials, Jazz et Cinema record sleeve and Afro Bossa record description

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## Series 6: Biographical and Press Related Materials, 1966-1977

Scope and Contents: Three folders containing press releases about various Ellington performances and events, including governmental releases about his tour of the Middle East in the 1960s. The material is arranged chronologically.

Box 1, Folder 1	Biographical and Press Related Materials, 1960-1963
Box 2, Folder Unknown	Biographical and Press Related Materials, 1971-1977
Box 3, Folder Unknown	Biographical and Press Related Materials, undated

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## Series 7: Programs, Invitations, and Flyers, 1963-1973

Scope and Contents: Three folders containing programs, invitations, and flyers spanning from 1963 through 1973 documenting Ellington's performances of his Sacred Concerts and honors received from the White House and Yale University. The material is arranged chronologically. Undated material appears at the end of the series.

Box 1, Folder 1	1963-1969
Box 1, Folder 2	1973
Box 1, Folder 3	undated

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## Series 8: Publications, 1962-1978

Scope and Contents: Three folders containing articles written about Ellington in various magazines such as Jet and Stereo Review. Also included is the book New York, N.Y. An American Heritage Extra on the History of the Nation's Greatest City, that contains a brief write up about Duke Ellington. The material is arranged chronologically.

Box 5, Folder 1	Various pamphlets and magazine articles
Box 5, Folder 2	Book: New York, N.Y. An American Heritage Extra on the History of the Nation's Greatest City
Box 3, Folder 3	Record sleeve Xerox copy of A Tribute to Duke

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## Magazine and Newspaper Clippings, 1966-1974

Scope and Contents: Three folders containing mostly undated newspaper and magazine clippings about Duke Ellington. The material is arranged chronologically. Undated material appears at the end of the series.

Box 5, Folder 1	1966-1974
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Box 5, Folder 2-3	undated
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## Series 10: Film Reel Duke Ellington at the White House 35mm EC English Print, 1969

### *Reel OF0763.1*

Scope and Contents: 35 mm color film documenting Duke Ellington receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Nixon at the White House in 1969. The original film in poor condition and unavailable for viewing.

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## Series 11: Miscellaneous, 1950s-1970s

Scope and Contents: Six folders of unidentified material unrelated to Duke Ellington. This material includes include information about the television program *Youth Wants to Know*,@ silk screen prints of popular musicians on black felt, photo copies of unidentified sheet music, and miscellaneous flyers for Margaret Tynes.

Box 5, Folder 1	Broadsides: images of Dizzy Gillespie, Dexter Gordon, Duke Ellington, and Billie Holiday
Box 5, Folder 2	Margaret Tynes Flyers
Box 5, Folder 3	Music Xerox copies
Box 5, Folder 4	Passionate Extremes script
Box 5, Folder 5	Youth Wants to Know TV show clippings, schedules, and program
Box 5, Folder 6	Miscellaneous

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