

Traditions & Beliefs

A Publication of the Initiative for the Study of
Religion and Spirituality in the History of Africa and the Diaspora (RASHAD)
Volume 12, Issue 1, Winter/Spring 2018

SPECIAL BLACK MUSIC MONTH ISSUE

The Jazzy Journey to Duke Ellington's Washington's



By Regennia N. Williams, PhD

In 2008, for reasons that some of my faculty colleagues and students could not understand at the time, I enrolled in an undergraduate **“Writing about Music”** course—despite the fact that I had already earned my doctorate and tenure. I went on to spend the next 15 weeks listening to and thinking, reading, and writing about the public reception of **Duke Ellington's Sacred Music**. As it turned out, that course was the first leg of a 10-year journey

through a fascinating chapter in jazz history and Black culture.

That jazzy learning journey has taken me across America, over the airwaves, and into communities in Africa, Asia, and Europe. In recent historical moments, that journey provided the inspiration for this special **2018 Black Music Month** issue of the *Traditions & Beliefs* newsletter.

In addition to **thanking the friends and family members** who have taken at least part of this journey with me, I would like to invite everyone to spend some time reminiscing with me about the place of jazz in the history of the **Praying Grounds** and **RASHAD** initiatives, watching the new PBS **“Jazz Ambassadors”** documentary film, listening to more jazz during Black Music Month, and celebrating the fact that the complete manuscript for *Washington, D.C., Jazz*—that book project that I have been telling you about for almost two years, is in the hands of the project editor at Arcadia Publishing.

Going forward on this journey, **Edward Kennedy Ellington (1899-1974)** gets top billing in my next major publication on music history, because ten years is too long to keep a Duke waiting! 🎵

“COME SUNDAY”
Reception of Duke Ellington's
Sacred Music, 1943-1968

Submitted Thursday, May 8, 2008

Regennia N. Williams
Writing about Music - MUS112
Cleveland State University
Spring 2008
Dr. Lily E. Hirsch, Instructor



Duke Ellington's Liturgical Jazz

Cleveland State University Professor Regennia Williams teaches a course 'African-American History Through Sacred Music.' The day's class focused on the music of Duke Ellington, including the...

C-SPAN.ORG

The above image is a still from a 2011 C-SPAN lecture on “Duke Ellington's Liturgical Jazz.” The full program is available online at <https://www.c-span.org/video/?298338-1/duke-ellingtons-liturgical-jazz>.

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1943: A Requiem



**Saturday, August 13, 2011
Cleveland State University**

Cleveland Chautauqua presented a staged reading of Nathaniel Rhodes' "1943: A Requiem (More Than a Pretty Face)," a new work inspired by the lives and artistic legacies of Lena Horne, Zora Neale Hurston, Duke Ellington, and Billy Strayhorn. (Cover photo by Nathaniel Rhodes.)

From Grace Cathedral to Trinity Cathedral and Beyond!

Featuring Ellington's Sacred Jazz, Gospel, and More!

A Project of "Come Sunday" @ 70: Duke Ellington's Sacred Jazz in World History and Culture
c. 1943 – 2013



Duke Ellington at Cleveland's Public Auditorium (1960). James Gayle, Photographer. Courtesy CSU Library Special Collections.

Two "Harvest Time" Concerts!

Saturday, September 28, 2013

Pre-Concert Reception

5:25-5:55 p.m.

Performance, 6-7:30 p.m.

Featuring the *Spiritual Gifts Choir*,
Drene Ivy, *Dr. Sharon Brown-Cheston*,
and *Mariama Whyte*

Trinity Cathedral

2230 Euclid Ave
Cleveland, OH 44115

*Freewill Offering



Sunday, September 29, 2013

Pre-Concert Reception, 2-2:50 p.m.

Performance, 3-4:30 p.m.

Featuring the *Ivy-Cheston Piano Duo*

First Unitarian Church

21600 Shaker Blvd (at Belvoir Circle)
Shaker Heights, OH 44122

*Freewill Offering

For more information, contact:

Dr. Regennia N. Williams

at r.williams@csuohio.edu or (216) 523-7182.

You may also visit www.ClevelandMemory.org/pray/.

Made possible, in part, with support from the Multicultural Action Committee of the First Unitarian Church and the East View United Church of Christ and the following CSU Offices and Departments: Vice President for Institutional Diversity, CLASS Dean's Office, Department of History, the Michael Schwartz Library, and the Ohio Humanities Council, a state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



Ellington's music was front and center during a series of public programs commemorating the 70th anniversary of his orchestra's Carnegie Hall debut and the world premier of **Black, Brown, and Beige**, which included an instrumental version of "Come Sunday." (1960 photo of Duke Ellington by James Gayle; courtesy of the CSU Library Special Collections.)

WORLD WAR II: HISTORY, ART, AND MEMORY

ROUEN, FRANCE

Short Program, University of Rouen
Spring Break 2012

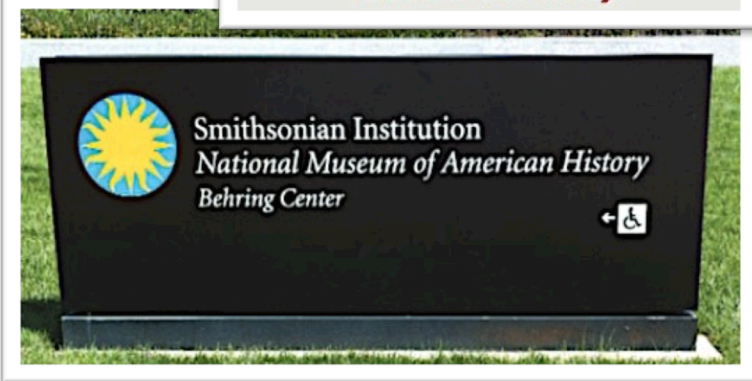


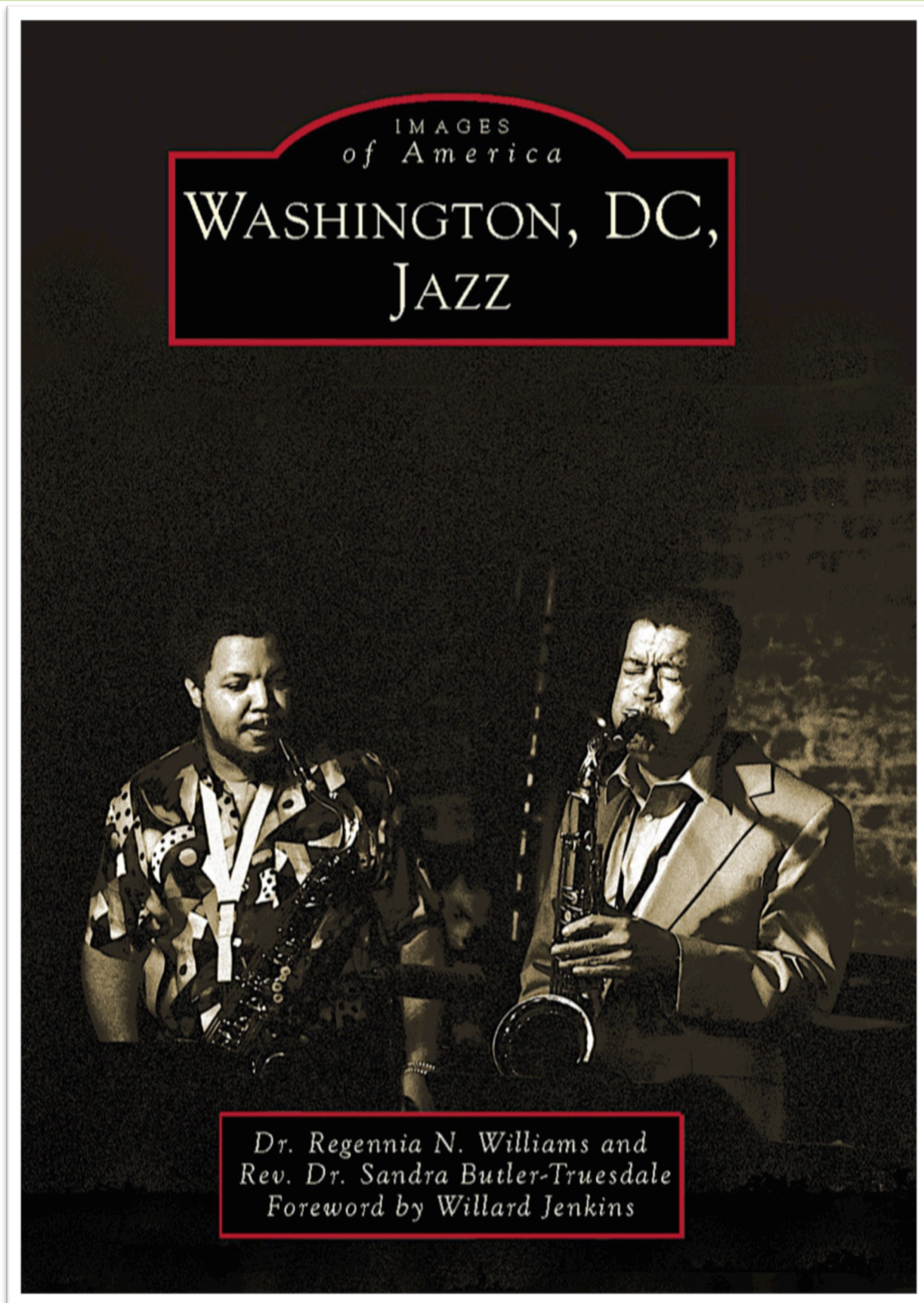
**The Duke on the Queen's Court:
Come Sunday**



From the Archives . . .

The RASHAD / Praying Grounds archives are replete with visual evidence related to the place of Ellington's music in world culture—and the research activities that have revealed new information about that music. Included here are (clockwise, from the bottom) a sign from the National Museum of American History, where the Ellington Papers are housed; Carl Van Vechten's 1958 photo of composer and Ellington Orchestra arranger Billy Strayhorn, a 2012 project newsletter featuring stories on CSU's Rouen, France partnership and my 2012 conference presentation on Duke Ellington; Nathaniel Rhodes' 2016 photo of Queen Esther Marrow (alto soloist for the world premier and subsequent recordings of Ellington's 1965 Sacred Concert), and the playbill from the world premier of Prester Pickett's "The Duke on the Queen's Court: Come Sunday," which focused on the composer's friendship with the "Queen of Gospel," vocalist Mahalia Jackson. --RNW





*This book cover features Michael Wilderman's photo of saxophonists Ron Holloway (left) and Buck Hill performing at Blues Alley. (*The above image is a pre-publication mock-up, and the appearance of the actual cover may be slightly different.)*

**GREAT NEW
DOCUMENTARY
FROM PBS!**



Duke Ellington arrives in Lebanon during his 1963 State Department tour of India and the Near and Middle East. Credit: Courtesy of the J. William Fulbright Collection, University of Arkansas Libraries.

The Jazz Ambassadors

**Premiered Friday, May 4 at 10 p.m. on PBS
Streams May 5 through June 1 on pbs.org and app**

The Cold War and Civil Rights movement collide in this remarkable story of music, diplomacy and race. In 1955, as the Soviet Union's pervasive propaganda about the U.S. and American racism spread globally, African-American Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. convinced President Eisenhower that jazz was the best way to intervene in the Cold



Louis Armstrong and his wife Lucille pose in front of the Sphinx near Cairo, Egypt in 1961. Credit: Courtesy of the Louis Armstrong House Museum.

War cultural conflict. For the next decade, America's most influential jazz artists, including Dizzy Gillespie, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman and Dave Brubeck, along with their racially integrated bands, traveled the globe to perform as cultural ambassadors. But the unrest back home forced them to face a painful moral dilemma: how could they promote the image of a tolerant America abroad when the country still practiced Jim Crow segregation and racial equality remained an unrealized dream? Told through striking archival film footage, photos and radio clips, with iconic performances throughout, the documentary reveals how the U.S. State Department unwittingly gave the burgeoning Civil Rights movement a major voice on the world stage just when it needed one most. Leslie Odom, Jr., narrates.

Production Credits:

The Jazz Ambassadors is a co-production of THIRTEEN

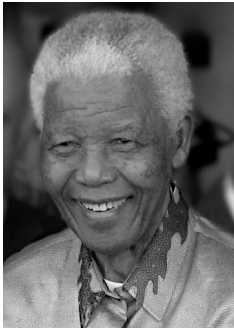
Productions LLC for WNET and Antelope South Limited and Normal Life Pictures, in association with the BBC and ZDF, in collaboration with Arte. Directed by Peabody Award-winner Hugo Berkeley and produced by Emmy-winner Mick Csáky. For THIRTEEN: Benjamin Phelps is coordinating producer, Julie Anderson is executive producer and Stephen Segaller is executive in charge.

Underwriters:

Major support for *The Jazz Ambassadors* was provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities. Additional support was provided, in part, by Jody and John Arnhold, The Fong Family, Dr. Edward C. Mapp, and public television viewers.

About WNET: WNET is America's flagship PBS station and parent company of THIRTEEN and WLIW21. For more information visit <https://www.thirteen.org/13pressroom/press-release/the-jazz-ambassadors/> or <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jazz-ambassadors/>

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS



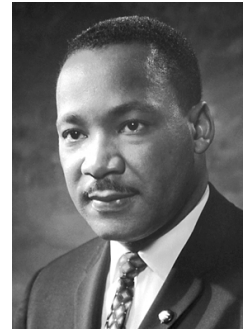
**Nelson “Madiba” Mandela,
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the
New Millennium: Social Movements 2.0**

for

The Journal of Traditions & Beliefs

2018 Issue

Regennia N. Williams, PhD, *Editor-in-Chief*



President Nelson “Madiba” Mandela (1918-2013) and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968) were among the most influential leaders in 20th-century social and political history. Today, many years after the heyday of the Anti-Apartheid Movement in South Africa and the Modern Civil Rights Movement in the United States, the legacies of these Nobel Peace Prize laureates remain at the center of debates about non-violent protest, civil disobedience, armed resistance, police reform, free speech, voting rights, economic empowerment, the value of Black lives, and other matters, especially among millennials—some of whom question the relevance of 20th-century movement strategies for 21st-century activists.

In 2018, the RASHAD Center, Inc. will observe the 100th anniversary of the birth of Nelson Mandela and the 50th anniversary of the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by publishing a commemorative issue of *The Journal of Traditions & Beliefs (JTB)* titled “**Madiba, Martin, and the New Millennium: Social Movements 2.0.**” Publishable manuscripts will reflect the diverse viewpoints of scholars, artists, and activists diverse viewpoints on the evolving role of various religious, spiritual, cultural, and political traditions in New Age activism. The list of possible topics includes, but is not limited to, “Moral Mondays and the Fusion Politics of the Rev. Dr. William Barber,” “Faith and Social Activism in the Age of President Donald Trump,” “Religion and Race in the New South Africa,” “Church, State, and the African National Congress;” “Non-Profit and Non-Governmental Organizations in Recent Social History, c. 1968-2018,” and “Grassroots Activism and Cultural Nationalism from Soweto to the District of Columbia and Beyond.”

JTB, a peer-reviewed open access journal, publishes scholarly articles, essays, creative writing, book and film reviews, and K-12 curriculum materials. Manuscripts for articles and essays should be **typewritten, single-spaced**, no more than 15 pages in length (including Turabian-style footnotes and bibliography), and prepared using *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (University of Chicago Press, 8th Edition). Poems, book reviews, and the introductions to lesson plans should not exceed 750 words.

For consideration, please submit all manuscripts by August 18, 2018 via the journal’s official website, <http://engagedscholarship.csuohio.edu/jtb/> (creation of a password protected account required). Authors will be notified of final decisions by October 31, 2018.


If you are interested in writing a book or film review or have other questions or concerns, please review the information in the “Policies” section of the *JTB* website, and contact Dr. Regennia N. Williams at regennia@gmail.com or r.williams@csuohio.edu.

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President Mandela - South Africa The Good News / www.sagoodnews.co.za [CC BY 2.0
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The Journal of
Traditions & Beliefs

RASHAD Initiative for the Study of Religion and Spirituality in the
History of Africa and the Diaspora

Editors

Editor-in-Chief: **Regennia N. Williams, Ph.D.**, Cleveland State University Alumna

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This journal is a scholarly publication of the Initiative for the Study of Religion and Spirituality in the History of Africa and the Diaspora (RASHAD). Each volume of *The Journal of Traditions & Beliefs* embraces a different topic. The target audience includes college and university faculty members, adult learners, and teachers with an interest in the arts and humanities.

Visit <https://engagedscholarship.csuohio.edu/jtb/>.

Regennia N. Williams, PhD, *Founder and Editor*

The Center for the Study of Religion and Spirituality in the History of Africa and the Diaspora (RASHAD)

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