FELIX GRANT COLLECTION, 1935-1985  
(4.3 cu. ft: 6 DB)

**Biography**

Felix Grant (February 22, 1918-October 13, 1993), a renowned jazz disk jockey dubbed Washington, D.C.’s “Mr. Music” and recipient of the U.S. Navy Commendation Medal for his service during WWII, was born in New York and developed a deep passion for America’s jazz as a young man listening to local radio broadcasts and visiting Manhattan’s numerous jazz nightclubs. He attended LaSalle Academy and first worked for a New York advertising agency as a messenger. Near the end of the war Grant was transferred to Washington D.C.’s Coast Guard headquarters and in 1945 took an announcing job at WWDC-AM.

Grant eventually became a fixture of Washington, D.C. radio, working for such stations as WMAL-AM, WRC-AM, and WDCU-FM. During the 1950s and 60s his WMAL radio show called “The Album Sound” gained popularity in the D.C. area for its unique mix of jazz, blues, and Latin music. Grant’s diverse play list helped him gain listeners from all different races long before the end of segregation in Washington, D.C. Native Washingtonian, Duke Ellington, was a particular favorite of Grant’s and his music was often featured during Grant’s shows. In 1953 Grant took a position at WMAL and in 1984 joined WDCU where he remained until his death. In January of 1996 the University of the District of Columbia opened the Felix E. Grant Jazz Archives, a collection of audiotape and archival records documenting Felix Grant’s life and career. The collection forms the core of one of the nation=s leading jazz research facilities.

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For more information contact the Archives Center at archivescenter@si.edu or 202-633-3270
Scope and Content

The Felix Grant collection consists of commercially produced Duke Ellington phonograph recordings that were collected by Grant during his career as a premier disc jockey. The recordings are arranged alphabetically by title. In addition, there are miscellaneous newspaper clippings and correspondence, consisting of press releases, that were removed from some of the album sleeves, and book abstracts from books and dissertations about Ellington. This material is arranged alphabetically, and is located at the end of the collection. The record company label, catalog number, and release date are included in the container list. Many of the albums are promotional copies which Grant obtained at radio stations where he worked. Of special interest are “...and his mother called him Bill” and “Anatomy of a Murder”, two albums that are considered to be among Ellington’s best. Also of note are a Japanese pressing of “Ella at Duke’s Place” and a 1986 pressing of “Money Jungle” that features tracks not on the original release, as well as a program order from an Army Blues salute to Ellington included in the second series.

Provenance

This collection was donated by Felix Grant to the National Museum of American History on May 16, 1991.
Ben Nicastro and Scott Schwartz, August 15, 1996
NMAH
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Container List

FELIX GRANT COLLECTION OF DUKE ELLINGTON
PHONOGRAPH RECORDINGS, (1955-1989)
(4.3 cu. ft.: 6 DB)

Box 1

5. “…and his mother called him Bill”, RCA Victor, LSP-3900 (1968)
6. “At the Bal Masque”, Columbia, C2 1282 (n.d.)
7. “At the Cotton Club”, RCA, CAL-459 (1958)
8. “At His Best”, RCA Victor, LPM-1715 (1959)
10. “At Newport (w/Buck Clayton)”, Columbia, CL 933 (n.d.)
15. “Birth Of Big Band Jazz, The” Riverside, RLP 12-129 (n.d.)
18. “Blues In Orbit”, Columbia, CL 1445 (n.d.)
22. “Collages”, MPS, MS-21704 (1973)
24. “Concert In The Virgin Islands”, Reprise, R-6185 (n.d.)

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Box 2


Box 3

1. “Ellington ‘65,” Reprise, R5-6122 (n.d.)
6. “Ellington Sidekicks”, Epic, LN 3237 (n.d.)
8. “Ellingtonia >56,” Morgan, MGN 1055 (1956)
11. “Festival Session” Columbia, CL1400 (n.d.)

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15. “Great Times!,” Riverside, (1964)
17. “Greatest Hits Recorded Live In Concert”, Reprise, RS-6234 (n.d.)
18. “Great Paris Concert, The” Atlantic, SD 2-304 (1973)
21. “Historically Speaking”, Bethlehem, BCP60 (n.d.)
22. “Hot In Harlem”, Decca, PL 79241 (n.d.)
27. “Jazz Party,” Columbia, CL 1323 (n.d.)
28. “...and John Coltrane,” Impulse, Stereo A-30 (n.d.)

Box 4

3. “Mary Poppins”, Reprise, RS-6141 (n.d.)
4. “Masterpieces By Ellington” Columbia, CL 825 (n.d.)
9. “Mood Indigo”, RCA, ADL2-0152(e) (1973)
11. “My People”, Contact, CS-1 (n.d.)
15. “North of the Border”, Decca, DL 75069 (n.d.)
17. “Nutcracker Suite” Columbia, 32 16 0252 (n.d.)

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23. “Pretty Woman” RCA Victor, LPV-553 (1968)
27. “Rockin= In Rhythm” Decca, DL 79247 (1970)

BOX 5
1. “Second Sacred Concert”, Fantasy, 8407/8 (n.d.)
5. “Side By Side”, Verve, 821578-1 (1958)
6. “Side By Side” Verve, MG V-8345 (n.d.)
7. “Such Sweet Thunder” Columbia, CL 1033 (n.d.)
12. “This Ones For Blanton”, Pablo, 2310-721 (1975)
15. “Unknown Session”, CBS, JC 35342 (1979)
17. “Will Big Bands Ever Come Back?”, Reprise, R-6168 (n.d.)
21. “Yale Concert” Fantasy, 9433 (1973)

Box 6
1. Army Blues Salute to D.E. Program Order, February 10, 1980
3. Correspondence, 1976-1989
4. IAJE Conference Program, January 10-13, 1991

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