

## **25<sup>th</sup> International Duke Ellington Study Group Conference** **Birmingham City University and Royal Birmingham Conservatoire** **25-27 May 2018**



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CONSERVATOIRE

The 25<sup>th</sup> International Duke Ellington Study Group Conference will be held by Birmingham City University and Royal Birmingham Conservatoire on 25-27 May, 2018.

The Annual General Meeting of the Duke Ellington Society UK will be incorporated into the proceedings as has been the tradition at several international conferences in the past.

It is very exciting to welcome the International Ellington Conference back to the UK, the first time such a gathering has been held here since the Woking conference in 2012.

The conference is happening thanks to the generosity shown by Jeremy Price, Head of Jazz at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and director of the Conservatoire's Ellington Orchestra. The conference will be organised jointly with Birmingham City University and thanks are also due to Tim Wall, the Associate Dean for research in the Faculty of Arts, Design and Media, Dr Nicolas Pillai, a research fellow specialising in jazz and visual culture and Nick Gebhart, Professor of Jazz and Popular Music Studies and Director of Research in the Birmingham School of Media.

Dr Pillai is the lead organiser of the conference and we publish in the column opposite his initial thoughts about the scope of the event. Whilst the conference is being organised and hosted by Birmingham City University and the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, the organisers are very keen to embrace the tradition established by international conferences past with a mix of research by Ellington aficionado, presentations by discographers and collectors as well as academic papers. There will be live music, too, of course, presented by some of the finest young musicians studying in the UK, the members of the Ellington orchestra. We hope members of DESUK will respond with enthusiasm to what promises to be a superb event.

We wanted to let members of DESUK know about the conference as soon as we could so that they can 'save the date'. A Call for Papers will be issued imminently and details of the cost of registration and accommodation will be published soon. If you would like to be updated with information as soon as we have it, please contact DESUK:

[desuk@dukeellington.org.uk](mailto:desuk@dukeellington.org.uk)

### **The 25<sup>th</sup> International Duke Ellington Study Group Conference** **In the Beginning, Duke:** **The Three-Day Ellington Summit** **25-27 May 2018**

Birmingham School of Media, the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and the Duke Ellington Society UK

Over the course of the twentieth century, Duke Ellington was canonized as one of the key figures in 20<sup>th</sup> century American music. However, his influence reaches beyond jazz into almost every significant form of artistic expression. This conference invites speakers to reappraise the aesthetic, social and political impact of Ellington, his orchestra, his compositions and collaborators. Through consideration of Ellington as a global phenomenon, we seek to interrogate the narratives that have shaped the written history of jazz and the frameworks through which popular music has been viewed. The conference aims to forge a new beginning for Ellington studies, which collides traditional academic research with performance-based analysis and methodologies drawn from across the humanities.

The three-day event will be located within the state-of-the-art Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, which boasts a 500-seat concert hall, a 150-seat recital hall and the purpose-built Eastside Jazz Club. Alongside themed panels of speakers, the event will showcase two concerts by the Conservatoire Ellington Orchestra and host the Duke Ellington Society UK Annual General Meeting.

Abstracts for papers should be in the following format: 300 words + 100 words biography. The conference fee will include refreshments throughout the event and tickets to the two concerts.

#### Suggestions for paper topics:

- Ellington and black history
- New methods of analysing group composition
- Ellington and creative leadership
- Studies of specific concerts or recording dates
- The Ellington Orchestra on radio, film and television
- The practice of discography and Ellington's presence within the archive
- Studies of Ellington fandom and collector culture
- Ellington on the road
- The repertoire's revival and on going life in music education
- Ellington as transnational figure
- Collaborations with other key artists, musical and non-musical
- Ellington within the music industry, interaction with managers and labels
- The historiography of Ellington
- Ellington and the Western classical tradition
- The challenges of performing Ellington's work today
- Ellington and divinity