Duke Ellington Meets Coleman Hawkins (1995)

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1.Limbo Jazz 2.Mood Indigo 3.Ray Charles' Place 4.Wanderlust 5.You Dirty Dog 6.Self Portrait (Of the Bean) 7.Jeep Is Jumpin', The 8.The Ricitic 9.Solitude
Musicians:
* Duke Ellington (piano)
* Coleman Hawkins (tenor saxophone)
* Aaron Bell (bass)
* Lawrence Brown (trombone)
* Harry Carney (bass clarinet, baritone saxophone)
* Johnny Hodges (alto saxophone)
* Ray Nance (violin, cornet)
* Sam Woodyard (drums)

Duke Ellington and Coleman Hawkins were both involved in unusual collaborations in the early 1960s, often with much younger musicians: Ellington with Max Roach and Charles Mingus (Money Jungle) and with John Coltrane; Hawkins with Roach and Sonny Rollins. As surprising as any of those inter-generational sessions, however, is this 1962 meeting between Ellington and Hawkins, if only because it hadn't happened before. With a band of Duke's greatest veterans--alto saxophonist Johnny Hodges, baritone saxophonist Harry Carney, trombonist Lawrence Brown, and Ray Nance on trumpet and violin--it's classic small-group Ellingtonia with one essential difference. "Limbo Jazz" and "The Ricitic," pulled together for the occasion, are playful tunes with touches of lounge Latin. The latter becomes a delightful dialog focused on Nance's violin and Hawkins and Ellington's inspired accompaniment. The finest moments come with "Mood Indigo," a beautiful vehicle for Hawkins's warmly rambunctious tenor, and "Self-Portrait of the Bean," an Ellington-Strayhorn tribute that Ellington only finished in the studio on the day of recording. Rising to the special moment, Hawkins invests the ballad with extraordinary depth and grace. *--Stuart Broomer*

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