

Duke Ellington - The Nutcracker Suite (1960)

Written by bluesever

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Duke Ellington - The Nutcracker Suite (1960)



1. Overture 3:19 2. Toot Toot Tootie Toot (*Dance Of The Reed-Pipes*) 2:28 3. Peanut Brittle Brigade (*March*) 4:36 4. Sugar Rum Cherry (*Dance Of The Sugar-Plum Fairy*) 3:04 5. Entr'acte 1:51 6. The Volga Vouty (*Russian Dance*) 2:52 7. Chinoiserie (*Chinese Dance*) 2:50 8. Dance Of The Floreadores (*Waltz Of The Flowers*) 4:03 9. Arabesque Cookie (*Arabian Dance*) 5:43 Musicians: Duke Ellington – piano Willie Cook, Fats Ford, Ray Nance, Clark Terry - trumpet Lawrence Brown, Booty Wood, Britt Woodman - trombone Juan Tizol - valve trombone Jimmy Hamilton - clarinet, tenor saxophone Johnny Hodges - alto saxophone Russell Procope - alto saxophone, clarinet Paul Gonsalves - tenor saxophone Harry Carney - baritone saxophone, clarinet, bass clarinet Aaron Bell - bass Sam Woodyard – drums

When Ellington signs a record contract in 1960, he teams up with fellow musician Billy Strayhorn, and the two composers create a new spin on Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Suite. The classical masterpiece is a holiday favorite and tinkering with something so well known is a bit risky. Ellington's band is not keen on tackling it, but he is not dissuaded. Even the record executive is skeptical until he hears the band recording in the studio. This fictionalization of Ellington and Strayhorn's daring collaboration is well told, and the illustrations convey the hip, cool feeling of the time. An author's note provides more information, and a CD of the piece is included. Anyone who pops the CD in for a listen is sure to see Ellington as the jazz giant he was. Music teachers will love this package to compare and contrast versions of the Nutcracker, thereby helping children understand what the classical and jazz genres are. ---
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