

Duke Ellington, the Duke of Jazz

Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington was an American composer, pianist, and bandleader who led one of the most successful and influential big bands in jazz history.

Early life and career

Ellington was born in Washington, D.C., on April 29, 1899. He began playing the piano at an early age, and by the time he was a teenager, he was playing professionally in local clubs.



Who Was Duke Ellington? (Who Was?) by M. D. Payne

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In 1923, Ellington formed his own band, the Washingtonians. The band quickly gained a following, and in 1927, they moved to New York City.

In New York, Ellington's band became one of the most popular jazz bands in the city. They played at the Cotton Club, the Savoy Ballroom, and other famous venues.

Ellington was also a prolific composer. He wrote over 2,000 songs, including some of the most famous jazz standards, such as "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)" and "Mood Indigo."

Later career and legacy

Ellington continued to lead his band until his death in 1974. The band toured the world and recorded over 100 albums.

Ellington was a major figure in jazz history. He was a brilliant composer, pianist, and bandleader. His music has influenced generations of jazz musicians.

Personal life

Ellington was married twice. His first marriage was to Edna Thompson in 1918. They had one son, Mercer Ellington. Ellington's second marriage was to Mildred Dixon in 1947. They had one daughter, Ruth Ellington.

Ellington was a lifelong smoker. He died of lung cancer on May 24, 1974, at the age of 75.

Awards and honors

Ellington received numerous awards and honors throughout his career. In 1969, he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom. In 1973, he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Music.

Ellington was also inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame and the Jazz Hall of Fame.

Legacy

Ellington is considered one of the most important figures in jazz history. His music has influenced generations of jazz musicians, and he is still considered one of the greatest composers of all time.

Ellington's music continues to be played and enjoyed by people all over the world. His legacy will continue to live on for many years to come.

Here are some interesting facts about Duke Ellington:

- Ellington was a very prolific composer. He wrote over 2,000 songs.
- Ellington's band was one of the most successful big bands in jazz history. They toured the world and recorded over 100 albums.
- Ellington was a major influence on other jazz musicians. His music has been covered by many other artists, including Ella Fitzgerald, Frank Sinatra, and Miles Davis.
- Ellington was a lifelong smoker. He died of lung cancer in 1974.
- Ellington was a recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom and the Pulitzer Prize for Music.



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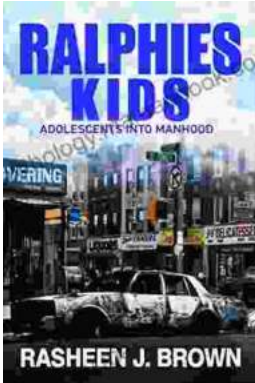
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