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ESSAYS

Picture: C Sound: C Extras: D Music: B-

Somewhat similar to the Koch **Swinging At His Best** set on Duke Ellington we previous covered on this site, this MVD-issued **Stars Of Jazz** series release offers a compilation (versus the CBS TV program it did with Miles Davis we just did) in a series of Snader Telescripts. The tracks here are:

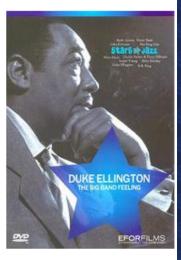
- 1) Sophisticated Lady (Snader #13003; 1952)
- 2) Caravan (#13001)
- 3) The Mooch (#13006)
- 4) *V.I.P.'s Boogie* (#13002)
- 5) Solitude (#13007; vocal by Jimmy Grissom)
- 6) *Mood Ingido* (#13004)
- 7) The Hawk Talks (#13005; featuring Louie Bellson)

8) I Got It Bad & That Ain't Good (Soundie directed by Josef Berne/ Sam Coslow producer)

- 9) Bli-Blip (1952 Soundie)
- 10) *Flamingo* (Soundie directed by Josef Berne/Sam Coslow producer)
- 11) Cottontail (Soundie directed by Josef Berne/Sam Coslow producer)
- 12) C Jam Blues (also from Hot Chocolate)

Both have twelve tracks and nine overlap. It may be similar, but this is more complete and not the run-on of the Koch version. If you have to choose between the two, serious collectors might want to get this one first, though they are both inexpensive and completists will want both. The 1.33 X 1 monochrome picture quality is a bit better here than on the Koch release, but not by much. That also goes for the Dolby Digital 2.0 Mono, which is a bit better here, but this is old audio that is going to need more restoration for future use down the line. The only "extra" is a list of the musicians missing from the Koch, but MVD did not improve much in this respect their set over Koch's either. It does run 43 minutes, or about two or three more than the Koch set, but ultimately the three different songs do not make a big difference. This is the more well rounded information wise and slightly more refined, but I am disappointed by the performance of I Got It Bad & That Ain't Good, which is much better in Robert Aldrich's 1955 Film Noir classic **Kiss Me Deadly**. That is a big problem that prevents it from being above the Koch set. Now, you can choose for yourself.

Nicholas Sheffo



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