

Duke Ellington Book Launches As World Premiere of His Most Controversial Work Hits the Stage

Armin Lear Press and Orlando's Steinmetz Hall Bring Groundbreaking Ellington Story and Music to Audiences

ORLANDO, FL, UNITED STATES, January 26, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [DUKE ELLINGTON](#): THE NOTES THE WORLD WAS NOT READY TO HEAR shatters and elevates perceptions of who Duke Ellington was in terms of musical and cultural significance. Borne of a unique collaboration of Karen S. Barbera and [Randall Keith Horton](#), this book is part of a major event: the world premiere of Ellington's only full-length orchestration of *Black, Brown and Beige* and *Sacred Music* at Dr. Phillips Center, Steinmetz Hall on January 26, 2022.

Karen Barbera and Randall Keith Horton were strangers who met on a train. A cordial conversation led to an eight-year collaboration to tell new and enlightening stories about Duke Ellington and to bring his forgotten masterpieces back to life. The results are concerts and this book—a biography of both Ellington and Horton centered on their unique relationship and the musical and cultural importance of *Black, Brown and Beige* and *Sacred Concerts*.

The book illuminates the historical significance of the compositions that helped create a

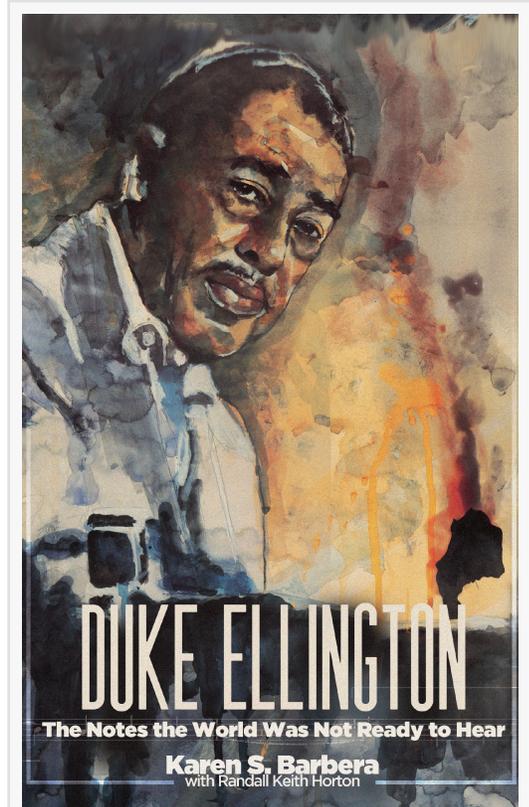
“

A moving celebration of Duke Ellington's boldness, sophistication, and pioneering genius.”

Publishers Weekly

paradigm shift in American music, race relations and culture. It is an engrossing story of “mysterious callings” that led Ellington to choose Randall Keith Horton as his assistant composer, conductor, and pianist in 1973, and the author's serendipitous connection to Horton.

Known as the king of swinging Jazz, throughout his 50-year career Duke Ellington also shattered racial barriers and



Duke Ellington Book Cover

stereotypes, bridged cultural divides, helped audiences feel their shared humanity, and dared people to imagine--if even for just one evening--a world without categories. Along the way he believed it possible and imperative to elevate Jazz and American composers on par with their European counterparts.

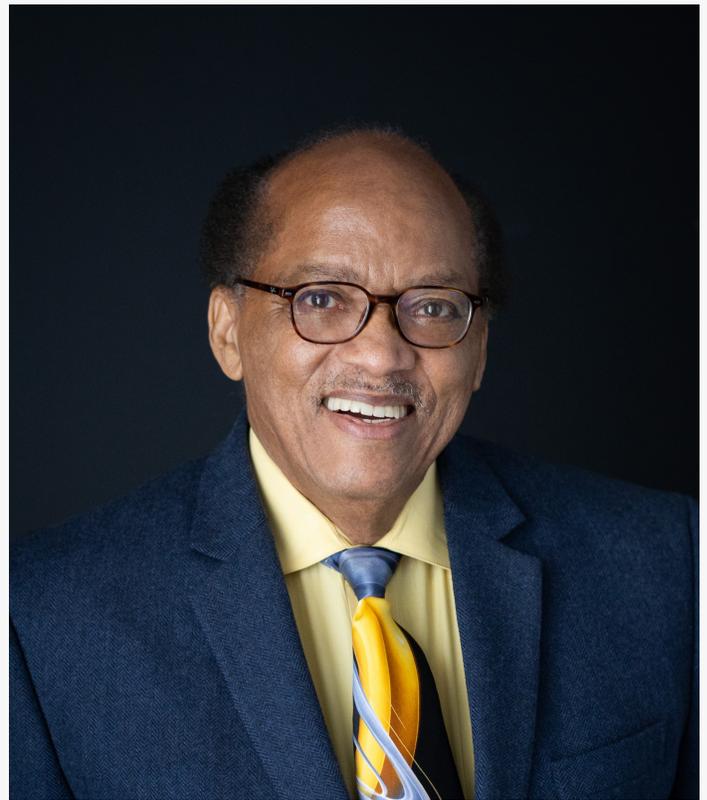
Like a true pioneer, Duke Ellington took risks to provide music that audiences needed to hear, and in doing so, set lofty expectations for a country that was ill prepared to live up to them during his lifetime.

"This fascinating, page-turning, nearly unbelievable story shines a light on one fellow Ellingtonian's struggle to bring to life the music the world needs to hear." --Mark McCoy, PhD, Princeton Entertainment Group

"In telling the story of Randall Keith Horton's ongoing odyssey to repay a musical debt to Maestro Duke Ellington, Karen Barbera has written her own *Strangers on A Train*, but with a genuine meeting of minds, an optimistic finish, and a twist in the ghostly presence of Ellington, whose spell is ever present. Horton, a conductor-composer-arranger-pianist, worked for Ellington for little more than two weeks nearly half a century ago (superbly rendered here in detail at once hilarious, inspiring, and heartbreaking), and it put him on a lifelong mission to present four neglected Ellington masterpieces: *Black, Brown and Beige* in a Concerto Grosso adaptation and concert performances of the three Sacred Concerts. Barbera alternates biographies of Ellington, Horton, and each of those four works, adding something genuinely new and enlightening to the buckling shelves of literary Ellingtonia." --Gary Giddins, Jazz critic and author of *Visions of Jazz* and *Bing Crosby: Swinging on Star*



Author Karen S. Barbera headshot



Randall Keith Horton

"DUKE ELLINGTON: THE NOTES THE WORLD WAS NOT READY TO HEAR is a heavily footnoted, well-researched foray into the world of musical composition, interpretation, and choice that considers not only Ellington's opus productions, but [Duke's former composer, conductor and pianist Randall Keith] Horton's process of lending them new life and relevance. As Horton interprets these works, conducts orchestras, and refines his vision for translating Ellington's most unique pieces, it's evident that this is as much about Horton's life and professional challenges in the musical world as it is about Ellington's musical legacy. Barbera does justice to both, entwining lives, music, and social challenges and capturing each for audiences who may have relatively little technical musical background, but who will appreciate the many insights on how compositions are interpreted and brought to life. While jazz music fans will be the obvious target audience for DUKE ELLINGTON: NOTES THE WORLD WAS NOT READY TO HEAR, it should prove just as inviting and educational for collections strong in musical biography and American civil rights history." --Diane Donovan, Midwest Review, January 2022

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Maryann Karinch

Armin Lear Press

+1 970-577-8500

[email us here](#)

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