

Basic Detail Report



Sophisticated Man

Date

March 1961

Medium

Gelatin silver print on ektalure paper

Description

Photograph of Duke Ellington taken by photographer Leigh A. Wiener during recording at Columbia Records and used as an ad for Ellington's new album "Piano in the

Foreground" in the New Yorker. Wiener recalls the day the photo was taken: "There was a break in the session and I went over to Duke Ellington to tell him how much I enjoyed his music. 'Thank you,' he said, 'you're very kind.' 'Alfred Eisenstaedt would envy me tonight,' I told Ellington. 'Who's he?' asked the gentle man, 'and why would he envy you?' 'Eisenstaedt is a fine photographer,' I replied. 'He works for LIFE and one of his favorite "tools" besides his camera is a ladder.' 'Really?' asked Ellington. 'Why?' 'He feels too many people go through life seeing the world at five foot, two inches,' I answered. 'A ladder helps him see different.' 'I like that,' said Ellington. 'Me? I like to see my boys and I like my boys to see me.' He laughed. 'If you want to be like your friend from LIFE, help yourself. There's another ladder over there.' As he pointed to a corner of the studio, he added, 'ladders are meant to be shared. Have yourself some fun.'"

Dimensions

16 × 20 in. (40.6 × 50.8 cm)