**EAGLE ROCK**

**“COUNT BASIE THROUGH HIS OWN EYES”**

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|  | 10:00:01 | **WHILE RESEARCHING THIS FILM** **WE UNCOVERED HOME MOVIES** **PRIVATE LETTERS AND PHOTO ALBUMS****WHICH COUNT BASIE AND****HIS WIFE CATHERINE PRESERVED BUT****NEVER MADE PUBLIC** |
|  | 10:00:09 | **THESE ITEMS CAST A NEW LIGHT****ON BOTH THEIR LIVES****THEY ARE SHOWN IN THIS FILM****FOR THE FIRST TIME** |
|  | 10:00:20 | V/O:*My princess, are you looking at your mother as she’s reading this note of love from your daddy? It’s been a hard trip and I’m very tired, but I have to make it and I will. I love you, Diane.* |
| **Aston:** GARY GIDDINSBasie Essayist and Jazz Critic | 10:00:38 | GARY GIDDINS:I don’t think very many people knew anything about Basie’s private life, where he lived, how he lived. You heard rumours all the time, but he just managed to be one of the most famous people in the world without anybody really knowing very much at all about him. |
| **Aston:**DANCE OF THE GREMLINS |  |  |
| **Aston:**JOHN WILLIAMSSaxophonist, The Basie Band | 10:01:10 | JOHN WILLIAMSHe had this saying “I like my band to think of me as just one of the guys”, and don’t you ever believe that he was just one of the guys in the band. Don’t you ever think that he was not in control. That’s when you made a mistake. He was the boss. |
| **Aston:**QUINCY JONESMusical Arranger, The Basie Band | 10:01:31 | QUINCY JONES:Look now, this guy - it’s called style, and if you’ve got style, man, you know, and no matter what anybody else does, you know, you’re going to blow them away. |
| **Aston:**SCOTTY BARNHARTDirector, The Count Basie Orchestra | 10:01:41 | SCOTT BARNHART:When you have a personality that treats men like men first, then musicians, that shows the musicians he was genuinely concerned about them as a human first. And when you can get that connection then anything after that you’re going to get the best. |
| **Aston:**DICKIE’S DREAM |  |  |
|  | 10:02:19 | GARY GIDDINSI think of Basie as bringing the Wild West into American music. There is so much adventure, so much improvisation, there’s so much risk taking. It violates so many of the basic standard ideas that were popular in jazz. |
| **Aston:**APRIL IN PARIS |  |  |
| **Aston:**NORMA MILLERDancer, The Basie Band | 10:02:42 | NORMA MILLER:Give me the beat. [hums beat] Give me the beat. As I said, you could walk to this. If this don’t move you you’re just dead. That’s what Basie had. |
| **Aston:**WILL FRIEDWALDJazz Critic and Biographer | 10:02:54 | WILL FRIEDWALD:And people were influenced by Basie, they were inspired by Basie. When Basie created that sound that was the alpha and the omega, because that captured the notion of swing better than anything else ever could or ever would. |
|  | Title | **COUNT BASIE** **THROUGH HIS OWN EYES** |
| **Aston:**1975 |  |  |
|  | 10:03:31 | V/O:*I’d been enjoying a great time with my band over the past decades, and I’d woken up from one of those catnaps I’d been slipping into on the trip from London to Liverpool. I found myself remembering things from my childhood days, fragments I’d be putting together for a book about my life. Because what I saw in the back ends of tenement houses were those clothes lines. I saw all that laundry strung out in the breeze, and my mind flipped from England all the way to Red Bank, New Jersey, a few years before the Great War, and to my mother - god rest her soul - who used to do the washing for well-to-do families around town. And how I used to hug her and promise that when I grew up she’d never have to do that anymore.* |
|  |  | **THE KID FROM RED BANK** |
|  | 10:04:25 | *I was born in Red Bank in 1904. My mother’s name was Lilly Ann and my father’s was Harvey Lee Basie. He was a coachman and caretaker to Judge White, who owned one of the big estates, but my father’s job didn’t last long because the automobile was coming into fashion. So he grew his own business.*  |
|  | 10:04:51 | *I was sent to the local school, but I’m sorry to say it was a drag as far as I was concerned. I could hardly wait to get out of there, so one day I did.*  |
|  | 10:05:10 | *When the carnivals came to Red Bank I used to go down there and frustrate the hell out of myself dreaming about leaving town with them. I can see still the tents and acrobats and the merry-go-rounds. I’d do anything to be where all that fantasy stuff was happening.* |
|  | 10:05:31 | *I also heard there was a war in Europe going on around that time, but it didn’t mean much to me. But there was an army tune called ‘Bugle Blues’, which I’d get a whole lot of mileage out of, because one day something happened to the piano player in our local movie theatre, so I made my way down to the piano. All I had to do was watch the screen and accompany the story. I’d taken a few lessons, but now I could invent my own themes.* |
|  | 10:06:08 | *I knew I had a lot to learn about life and I was ready. It was time to get out of Red Bank and music was my ticket.* |
|  | 10:06:26 | *Travelling to Liverpool that afternoon, past the washing lines, I realised now I’d been able to go beyond anything I had had in mind as a child. And I started putting down a few memories of things that really mattered in my life - like I promised my mother.* |
|  |  | **THE KING OF QUEENS** |
|  | 10:06:49 | *The first house I could really call my own was in Addisleigh Park in Queens.*  |
| **Aston:**AARON WOODWARD IIIClose Family Friend | 10:06:55 | AARON WOODWARD III:The community’s called St. Alban’s, specifically Addisleigh Park. St. Alban’s was a middle class to upper middle class African American community. And Joe Louis, Lena Horne, Brook Benton, Babe Ruth, Count Basie, these people live in the same neighbourhood. |
| **Aston:**1962**Aston:**Count Basie’s Home Movies |  |  |
|  | 10:07:26 | V/O:*We made a home there for Catherine and me and our beautiful daughter, Diane, my princess. May she never have to walk alone.* |
| **Aston:**PAMELA JACKSONClose Family Friend | 10:07:38 | PAMELA JACKSON:He was funny. He had a sense of humour. We never thought in terms of him being Count Basie. It wasn’t until later years that we really realised who he was and how famous he was. Everything centred around Diane. In later years I’ve heard the term cerebral palsy, so I would suspect that they’re attributing Diane’s affliction to some form of cerebral palsy. |
|  | 10:08:21 | Many families back in the day was ashamed of it and put their children who were disabled or mentally challenged in institutions. But for them they made life at home just like any other family would make life for a child. |
|  | 10:08:40 | AARON WOODWARD III: Diane is a special human being in terms of the magnetism between Diane and her mother and her father. That was a very strong, strong, strong bond. They loved each other. They understood each other. They understood the nature of the work that he did. They especially loved and adored Diane Basie. And they wanted Diane to live a normal life like everybody else.  |
|  | 10:09:20 | Dad would just like to be quiet and be cool. He didn’t want to be harassed. He was off, he was home. And plus, he’s like a fish out of water, because home is not the road. But mostly he wasn’t there. |
| **Aston:**JOHN WILLIAMSSaxophonist, The Basie Band | 10:09:39 | JOHN WILLIAMS:We literally lived on the bus. We worked at least 46, 47 weeks on the road.  |
| **Aston:**HAROLD JONESDrummer, The Basie Band | 10:09:48 | HAROLD JONES:At one time I did 67 one nighters in a row. And then we had a day off and then we went right on back. |
|  |  | **LIVING THE BLUES** |
| **Aston:**DEE ASKEWManager, The Basie Band | 10:09:59 | DEE ASKEW:How do you live on a bus for that period of time? And that’s the way it was for 50 years. It’s a long time to be travelling by bus across country, and then you’re also away from you family. |
| Archive |  | COUNT BASIE ON THE ROAD |
|  | 10:10:32 | V/O:*Angel, today there is rain and your daddy is lonely. We just got into town and you can really say it’s a day for the blues and I got ‘em.* |
| **Aston:** I LEFT MY BABY1957 |  |  |
| **Aston:**SCOTTY BARNHARTDirector, The Count Basie Orchestra | 10:11:04 | SCOTTY BARNHART:The Count Basie Orchestra is a blues based orchestra. You could hear the blues, you could hear all levels of the blues through the pain of it, but the optimism of it too. |
| **Aston:**GARY GIDDINSBasie Essayist and Jazz Critic | 10:11:25 | GARY GIDDENS:Jimmy Rushing reminded everybody who was listening to that band that this is a band really steeped in blues. He gives that band that looseness, that feeling that somehow it’s still being invented.  |
| Archive |  | COUNT BASIE ORCHESTRA |
|  | 10:12:11 | V/O:*The indignities we experienced on the road over so many years of touring were impossible for some of us to forgive and others to forget.*  |
|  | 10:12:20 | DEE ASKEW:I was born and raised in Alabama in the South, so I know what it was like living through segregation and everything and not being able to go into certain places to eat. |
| **Aston:**DOLORES HUGHESWidow of Bill Hughes,Musician in the Basie Band | 10:12:31 | DOLORES HUGHES:You could come in there and play for four hours, but after your rest period you go in the bus or somewhere because there was no place for you.  |
| **Aston:**QUINCY JONESMusical Arranger, The Basie Band | 10:12:42 | QUINCY JONES:We’d go to the South and we had this white bus driver to help us so we could eat. And so we’d finish the gig about 1 o’clock in the morning and get on the band bus, and we’d stop at six different cities, small cities. He said it’s too dangerous, I can smell the white nationalist attitude there. And we get to Dallas, Texas at about 6.30 in the morning, at dawn, and from the biggest church in Dallas there’s a rope hanging around the steeple with an effigy of a black dummy saying keep going, don’t stop here. It was tough, man. And Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, you can’t believe how it was. White and coloured drinking fountains. I mean horrible. I mean it ain’t much better now. |
|  | 10:13:36 | And we had to sleep in a funeral parlour with four bodies in caskets. We couldn’t get in a white hotel. It was ridiculous. Ridiculous. |
|  | 10:13:52 | JOHN WILLIAMS:Basie had had all of those experiences but he was not an angry person. He said look, don’t ever be angry, it’s self-destructive. |
| **Aston:**GREGG FIELDDrummer, The Basie Band | 10:14:03 | GREGG FIELD:I think probably when he was made to walk in the back door he didn’t see it as a reflection on him, he saw it as a reflection on the people that were asking him to walk in the back door. |
|  | 10:14:15 | QUINCY JONES:Every day we used to say not one drop of my self-worth depends on your acceptance of me, because we would not stand for somebody else making us feel inferior. No way. I ain’t going for it. |
|  | 10:14:34 | V/O:*Thinking back over those years of travelling I can’t remember when I had not experienced discrimination, that’s how the world was ever since I started performing back in the ‘20s, and I didn’t let it bug me. You knew it was there, but every time you walked out and realised you were in New York City you felt a big thrill just from being there.* |
|  |  | **FIRST STEPS TO FAME** |
| **Aston:**1924 |  |  |
|  | 10:15:05 | JOHN WILLIAMS:He and his buddies on Saturday night they would go to New York City from Red Bank, and walk around and let people see them. That was before he made a living as a musician. |
|  | 10:15:23 | V/O:*The Alhambra Theatre in Harlem had the biggest stage shows I’d ever seen, but the only section you could sit in was the Peanut Gallery.* |
|  | 10:15:38 | *At that time I didn’t yet think of myself as a jazz musician, but I was a ragtime piano player for sure. I went on the road with Vaudeville shows.* |
| **Aston:**1926 |  |  |
|  | 10:15:58 | V/O:*When each show came to the end I was so excited about going to the next gig that instead of getting into bed I used to look out the train window most of the night. That was music to me.* |
|  |  | **THE BLUE DEVILS** |
|  | 10:16:21 | V/O:*It was a mid-summer morning out in the Mid-West when at first I thought I was hearing a phonograph record.* |
| **Aston:**JONES LAW BLUESThe Blue Devils Band**Aston:** 1929 | 10:16:32 | *I never heard anything like that band in my life, or the blues played like that. That day was the turning point of my career.* |
|  | 10:16:51 | *The Blue Devils wore uniforms, like a baseball team. In those days you had to. You had to be pressed and clean and everything shined up.*  |
|  | 10:17:04 | *But the biggest problem of my whole career was how to move into the number one orchestra in the West., Bennie Moten had so many big time connections and so much political pull, how the hell could I connive my way in there? I’ll just say I didn’t intend to let anything stop me, and that should tell you something about Bill Basie.* |
|  | 10:17:32 | *Those Kansas City years should fill a major part of this book because they informed everything that followed. It was where I learned you don’t have to kill yourself to swing. Play like you play, play like you think, then it’s you and that’s when I started getting my own band together and experiencing just how exciting life on the road can be.* |
|  |  | **BECOMING A LEADER** |
| **Aston:**1933 |  |  |
|  | 10:18:09 | DOLORES HUGHES:Mr Basie was always ambitious, but music I think was his love. Other than his family music was his love, and he just wanted to put it out there for everybody to enjoy. And he was very particular I think about the members that he had come into his band. And if your personality did not agree with his and you could not mesh with the rest of the guys in the band you were gone. It was a family organisation. |
|  | 10:18:42 | JOHN WILLIAMS:You’re talking about a man with great musical taste - innate, inherent musical taste, and he had the unique ability to choose music and choose writers who would be compatible with the style that he wanted. |
|  | 10:19:08 | V/O:*When the big Depression came on we almost had to give up. There weren’t enough gigs around town to keep all the bands together. It was rough out there.* |
|  | 10:19:19 | *The fellas got pretty upset with the mess we were in, and I must admit I was ambitious enough to prove I could make it as a leader. That was around the time I first called myself Count Basie.* |
| Archive i/v | 10:19:37 | COUNT BASIE:Well, that happened in Kansas City seven years ago, and I had a little programme there, and along with a little combination and they tried to - they were trying to think of a name as a gimmick name to call the combination. So one of the announcers said well, we’ve got a Duke of Ellington, an Earl of Hines, a King of Jazz and a Baron of Lee. So let’s name this guy as the Count of Basie. |
| **Aston:**ONE O’CLOCK JUMPThe Count Basie BandFirst Recorded 1937 |  |  |
|  | 10:20:20 | GARY GIDDENS:One of the most famous pieces in all of jazz is ‘One O’Clock Jump’. ‘One O’Clock Jump’ was just a head arrangement of various riffs, and they used to call it ‘Blue Balls’. And they were in a recording studio and the MC asked them what’s the name of that and he wasn’t going to say that, so he looked at the clock and it was one o’clock, and he said “oh, that’s the ‘One O’clock Jump.’” |
|  | 10:21:09 | So much of what Basie did then is really based on this attitude of freedom and incredible swing, and it has an almost buccaneer quality that distinguishes it from even the best of the New York bands in that period. And it was the greatest assemblage of soul as you can imagine for that period. I mean every seat there was somebody in there who was a great player. |
| **Aston:**1937 |  |  |
|  | 10:21:42 | When Basie came East everybody knew that there was something new going on. |
| **Aston:**NORMA MILLERDancer, The Basie Band | 10:21:50 | NORMA MILLER:Basie came out of the shadows and came into the bright… into the light when he came to Harlem and he came to the Savoy Ballroom.  |
|  | 10:21:58 | JOHN WILLIAMS:They tried everything at first - when Basie first came on to the scene - to destroy his band, and he never - he was never bitter about it. It was widely known that there were people who didn’t want him to succeed and he succeeded. |
|  | 10:22:21 | NORMA MILLER:The Savoy was the one place that was devoid of discrimination, segregation, no racism at all. I mean that was not even allowed. |
|  | 10:22:38 | It gave me the freedom to be who I am. I could dance on a dancefloor. |
| Archive |  | COUNT BASIE ORCHESTRA |
|  | 10:22:50 | V/O:*We really had a ball at The Savoy. It was the home of happy feet. The people who came there to dance were out to swing. Getting onto the dancers is a very important part of being a band leader. They call me the “King of Swing Kings”.* |
| **Aston:**AIR MAIL SPECIAL |  |  |
|  | 10:23:12 | GARY GIDDENS:Basie reinvented swing. He reinvented jazz rhythm. The rhythm section was like a magic carpet, and once you got into it you felt like you were literally floating on the dancefloor, even if, like me, you really couldn’t dance. |
|  | 10:23:28 | NORMA MILLER:The dancers loved Basie. That was what was so mystifying. He took the same music and gave us another dimension. |
|  | 10:23:46 | V/O:*I finally began to feel, and I mean get a really deep feeling about the difference that fate had made in my life. I wasn’t Bill Basie, the piano player from Red Bank anymore. From now on, for better or worse, I was Count Basie and my name was up in lights on Broadway.* |
|  |  | **HARLEM SWEETHEART** |
|  | 10:24:14 | V/O:*But while staying in New York I saw a very beautiful girl who, a few years later, was to become my wife. Her name was Catherine Morgan and she was one of the three Snake Hip Queens.*  |
|  | 10:24:29 | AARON WOODWARD III:He’s playing at a club somewhere and he sees he dancing, and he’s admiring her and saying things he shouldn’t be saying. And she’s like yo, get this piano player from outta here, you know, get him away. She’s cute. As a matter of fact, she’s fine. And plus she’s an athletic woman, she’s smart and she’s sweet, but she’s really, really, really, really quick. So she captured his heart. |
|  | 10:24:58 | V/O:*The first time I tried to meet her she wouldn’t actually speak to me. Later on she used to watch the band from the bar at the back every night. But she wouldn’t let me buy her a whisky, said she’d been warned against me.* |
|  |  | **IT’S A WAR BABY** |
|  | 10:25:23 | V/O:*But sometimes, you know, fate intervenes just when you’re looking the other way and takes you off in a whole different direction.* |
|  | 10:25:32 | V/O:*When the Second World War hit those were pretty turbulent times for me and the band. It was a struggle to keep the guys together. Getting drafted was a big concern for everyone. As for me, I have to admit, I wasn’t going anywhere.* |
|  | 10:25:53 | WILL FRIEDWALD:During World War II, especially, Basie was the home front, Basie represented American culture. Basie was the band that everybody wanted to dance to. |
|  | 10:26:08 | V/O:*We even managed to swap the ballroom for the movie stage, with a few supporting roles in Hollywood - like ‘Hit Parade’ of 1943.* |
|  | 10:26:24 | *It had a very beautiful dancer called Dorothy Dandridge. I’ve always loved making movies.* |
| Archive |  | DOROTHY DANDRIGE & COUNT BASIE |
|  | 10:26:55 | V/O:*By that time, Catherine Morgan and I had decided to get married. I finally talked her into it. It was years since I first spotted her as a 15 year old Vaudeville dancer. I’m not saying there weren’t a few others during that time, because there are too many people who knew better. But I wanted her to give up her career as an entertainer and become my wife. I knew how rough it was out there trying to make it all by yourself, especially if you’re a woman. I just wanted her to settle down and make a home so we could have a family.* |
|  | 10:27:32 | *By that time, Catherine and I were expecting our child. I can still see her carrying our Diane. I’ll never forget what a special thrill it was for me to be bringing my family home that day.*  |
|  | 10:27:55 | JOHN WILLIAMS:At first they thought Diane was a normal child. And then later on the doctors told Mrs Basie that she would never walk.  |
|  | 10:28:06 | PAMELA JACKSON:She could not speak, but her mother was so devoted to her that she taught her how to walk. And she also taught her how to say a few words - “mama” and “byebye”. And that was the extent of her ability to verbalise. |
|  | 10:28:29 | QUINCY JONES:He was on the road all the time, and I used to go swimming at his pool and all in Corona with his daughter. She couldn’t even communicate with me. You know, it was so sad. They say a father’s only as happy as his saddest child. He kept it private, but I could tell it was really upsetting him. Of course it is, it’s your daughter, man. |
|  | 10:28:58 | AARON WOODWARD III:Diane had had the latest of everything, the best of everything, and the latest haircut and clothing and doctors. And Diane did all kinds of things that she wasn’t supposed to do. She wasn’t supposed to be able to walk, but she could walk. She wasn’t supposed to be able to swim, she could swim. But by the strength of her mum’s personality she was able to do those things. |
|  | 10:29:27 | PAMELA JACKSON:They told me that they didn’t expect her to live past 21 and that’s why she would never consent to putting her in to an institute. That she would always keep her at home, and she did. So emotionally I’m sure that it was very stressful at times, and especially around other children. And after a while you realised that this is all it was going to ever be. But just to see her smile, you know, was enough. |
|  | 10:30:04 | Uncle Bill treated her just like any other father would treat a daughter. She was never slighted. For them she was their total priority. |
|  | 10:30:19 | JOHN WILLIAMS:Maybe it was his trust in God, it was God’s will that they have this little girl who was disabled. Who knows, you know, where one gets the inner-strength that they need. |
|  | 10:30:35 | PAMELA JACKSON:Diane was their building blocks that kept them together, that made life easy, because even though she was handicapped or mentally challenged they loved her. They loved her.  |
|  |  | **A HOME ON THE HIGHWAY** |
|  | 10:31:07 | AARON WOODWARD III: You have to understand something about Count Basie, Diane is the centre, and what he tried to convey to Diane was that he loved her. When he wasn’t there she’s constantly in his mind and in his heart. That never changed. |
|  | 10:31:25 | V/O:*In those days we were spending up to 10 months a year away from home. We’d talked the local Greyhound dealer into letting us use their bus. For the next 30 years the bus was second home for me and the band.* |
| **Aston:**HAROLD JONESDrummer, The Basie Band | 10:31:41 | HAROLD JONES:The bus was really - well, I don’t know if I could say everything that happened on the bus, because sometimes back then the guys I knew would smoke a little bit of that medical marijuana, because they were around before it was illegal. So the guys would go in go the bathroom back in there, and have a little puff back in there. And there would be all kind of airsprays going on. The airspray was enough to kill you. |
| **Aston:**DOLORES HUGHESWidow of Bill Hughes,Musician in the Basie Band | 10:32:13 | DOLORES HUGHES:What was on the bus stayed on the bus, you didn’t really discuss the guys and some of the stuff that went on. |
| **Aston:** CARMEN BRADFORDSinger, The Basie Band | 10:32:21 | CARMEN BRADFORD:Basie, when he introduced me to them when I got on the bus, he said “gentlemen, this is our new little girl - what’s your name, honey?” And he went like this, he went like this when we were on the bus, “don’t even think about it”, kind of pointing at certain guys in the band, you know. |
| **Aston:**GREGG FIELDDrummer, The Basie Band | 10:32:43 | GREGG FIELD:I don’t know anybody outside of maybe being in the military where you spend so much time with people, where you’re working, eating, sleeping. You’re always together. |
|  | 10:32:54 | CARMEN BRADFORD:We all had our share of “I’m sick of looking at you”. You know, what are you going to do? You have to go and do your job. |
|  | 10:33:06 | HAROLD JONES:Oh, that bus we could do 500 miles and some guys never hit their seat, ‘cos in the back of the bus they would either play cards and then they’d play the dice game called Four, Five, Six. Basie loved all the games. The guys would get a little irritable sometimes because say they were playing cards, I said well, I’ll raise you $2, there’s Basie with the money, well, I’ll raise you $10. Sometimes Basie would exude or he’d put out his power of the money, so you’d either have to back out, you know, or put up more money. |
| **Aston:**NORMA MILLERDancer, The Basie Band | 10:33:44 | NORMA MILLER:He was just a good guy. He didn’t give a damn. He liked to smoke the weed and everything else and you enjoyed it sitting there in the corner with him. Basie was a regular guy. |
| **Aston:**QUINCY JONESMusical Arranger, The Basie Band | 10:33:53 | QUINCY JONES:He liked to just hang and be funny. You know, he liked to party.  |
| **Aston:**Count Basie’s Home Movies |  |  |
|  | 10:34:00 | HAROLD JONES:We could get off the bus at the hotel, Basie’d go inside, change clothes, come right back down and get a taxi to the horse track. And he loved the races. Yeah, that was his thing, the action.  |
|  | 10:34:18 | QUINCY JONES:He loved anything that he could gamble with - anything. And he’d play horses while he’s playing roulette and craps and blackjack and everything else, you know, in three different cities. He was addicted. |
|  | 10:34:50 | DOLORES HUGHES:He lost a lot of money.  |
|  | 10:34:55 | V/O:*Sometimes you have to gamble, I mean gamble on yourself if you’re going to get what you want. I’d always say let’s just see what happens when something cropped up that might get me a little closer to where I wanted to be.* |
| **Aston:**DEE ASKEWManager, The Basie Band | 10:35:10 | DEE ASKEW:And at that time there were a lot of orchestras, a lot of big bands on the road, and the Count Basie Orchestra demanded a higher fee than the other artists. And that’s where the road manager would come in. Mr Basie wouldn’t pick up the money, the road manager would get the money, cash, and give the guys their pay in cash. |
|  | 10:35:30 | V/O:*As far as other band managers I’ve had over the years I’ll just say that all of them could talk a lot and count that money and separate it. And every time you found a mistake it was always in their favour.* |
|  | 10:35:43 | NORMA MILLER:But it was a living, and it was just a living. I did one-nighters with Basie, and I’ve asked God, if you ever get me out of this, please never let me do this again. |
|  |  | **HITTING THE BIG TIME** |
|  | 10:36:01 | V/O:*Well, it was about time for lady luck to smile on the Count Basie Orchestra, and she did just that when ‘April in Paris’ hit the jukeboxes. In fact, it became so popular so quick that wherever we went that number was our calling card.* |
| **Aston:**APRIL IN PARISFirst Recorded 1955 |  |   |
| **Aston:**JOHN WILLIAMSSaxophonist, The Basie Band | 10:36:32 | JOHN WILLIAMS:He would mould the band into what he wanted it to be by moving personnel in and out and finally making a unit that sounded like one instrument. He had a great ability to whip that band in shape so that after a while you felt like you were all breathing together and phrasing together. |
| Archive |  | COUNT BASIE ORCHESTRA |
|  | 10:37:11 | V/O:*The main thing about being the chief is that you get to call the tunes and set the tempo and the mood. You can’t have but one leader. That’s why I tell my band keep your eyes on the piano player, the sparrow. He don’t know nothing, but just keep your eyes on him and we’ll all be together.* |
|  | 10:37:39 | SCOTTY BARNHART:The Count Basie Orchestra is driven by its rhythm section - bass, piano, drums and guitar, and everything else sits on top of that. |
| **Aston:**SCOTTY BARNHARTDirector, The Count Basie Orchestra | 10:37:53 | So it’s just a big wall of sound, but it’s on the floor, then it’s on the walls. Then when we really begin to play it’s everywhere. And every musician and orchestra can feel it, and there’s no greater feeling than that. And it’s a strange thing sometimes when you’re standing there on stage and you’re playing and all of a sudden you can feel it go down your spine. And when the band is swinging, oh, man, there’s nothing like that. Mr Basie, what can you say? |
| Archive |  | COUNT BASIE ORCHESTRA  |
|  | 10:38:34 | GARY GIDDENS:Audiences loved it. He made the room come alive. |
|  | 10:38:42 | And he did it only with music. He didn’t talk, he didn’t entertain, he didn’t get up and make jokes, he never talked at all. I mean you hardly ever heard him say a word. |
|  | 10:38:53 | WILL FRIEDWALD:You know, Basie never really, even when he gave interviews, he never really talked about his personal life or, you know, even put on a facade of a personal life, like Duke Ellington. |
| **Aston:**TVNZ Interview | 10:39:05 | INTERVIEWER:Are you going to give us more details and be able to find out about you, in the past about your early life? You haven’t given us terribly much information.COUNT BASIE:I’ve given you everything you asked me.INTERVIEWER:Yes. No, but about your early life and about your personal life.COUNT BASIE:Oh, yes. Well, personal life, yes, I’d sort of like to do that myself if you don’t mind. |
|  | 10:39:26 | GREGG FIELD:Basie didn’t like to talk about himself. But somebody got him to talk, and they said how do you want to be remembered? And Basie said “nice guy”. Not I hope they like my piano playing, I hope they like my band. You sensed his wisdom and it was completely communicated through the notes he was playing. |
| **Aston:**I NEEDS TO BEE’D WITHArranger: Quincy Jones |  |  |
|  | 10:40:05 | GARY GIDDENS:Anybody can play a note on the beat. Basie can play it on, off, before, after. He knows exactly where to play it to give the band a shove in the right direction. |
| Archive |  | COUNT BASIE ORCHESTRA |
|  | 10:40:32 | GARY GIDDEN:But just by him being there and controlling the rhythm as he did, everybody slipped into Basie time, and suddenly what seemed a generic big band arrangement now it seemed like something that only could have been written for Count Basie. |
| Archive |  | COUNT BASIE ORCHESTRA |
|  | 10:41:02 | QUINCY JONES:He’d tell me, young blood, black music business there’s hills and valleys. The hills are the analogy for success and valleys is when you’re paying your dues and it’s not so good. And he said that’s when you find out who you are by making mistakes in the valleys, and he was right. Mistakes are what help you grow. |
|  | 10:41:28 | SCOTTY BARNHART:Basie also inspired other musicians who probably thought that there would be no way out of all those bad things that were happening to minorities in this country, because he was the first African American to win a Grammy, and from a cultural standpoint when you add in what the African Americans had been going through in this country, not being able to vote, being brutalised, that was a major achievement. |
|  | 10:41:53 | BONNIE GREER:What Basie was doing for African Americans through his music was more than matched by Catherine’s involvement in the women’s movement in support of civil rights. |
| **Aston:**PAMELA JACKSONClose Family Friend | 10:42:05 | PAMELA JACKSON:She belonged to several social groups. One was a group called the Rinkeydinks. The membership was musicians’ wives. |
| **Aston:**Count Basie’s Home Movies |  |   |
|  | 10:42:23 | PAMELA JACKSON:They were not only a social group, but they were a charitable group, and they raised money for scholarships for young African American students to help defray the cost of a higher education. |
|  | 10:42:41 | They gave dances and they gave fundraisers and they gave parties. They were socialites |
| **Aston:**AARON WOODWARD IIIClose Family Friend | 10:42:53 | AARON WOODWARD III:Ma was aggressively going after that stuff, but dad wasn’t trying to be a civil rights person. He wasn’t hiding from it, so dad was just in the flow. He’s Count Basie and so everybody’s coming to him, no matter who they are. Ma, on the other hand, she’s aware of what’s going on and she’s trying to change it, trying to get it improved. There’s a big difference in how they’re thinking. |
| **Aston:** Filmed by Catherine Basie1963 |  |  |
| **Aston:**BONNIE GREERAuthor | 10:43:21 | BONNIE GREER:Women were the front-line organisers but, most importantly, women were the ones who pushed Martin Luther King to actually do this work. And people like Catherine Basie were people behind the scenes, but they were very much known in the community as being the leaders. |
| Archive  |  | CIVIL RIGHTS RALLY  |
|  | 10:43:53 | PAMELA JACKSON:She gave up her time so that Martin Luther King could continue his speech that particular day, on the march on Washington in 1963. |
|  | 10:44:06 | BONNIE GREER: *“Dear Mrs Basie, I join with the New York Urban League in saluting you as one of the outstanding women of our time. Your selfless devotion and your sincere humanitarian instincts have created for you a great circle of admirers across our nation. Martin Luther King Jr.”* |
|  | 10:44:31 | SCOTTY BARNHART:Everybody couldn’t march, everybody couldn’t be standing next to Doctor King, and I think that people like Basie, like Duke Ellington, other great artists too, they did what they could with understanding what their role was. I thought that Basie probably thought to himself his best contribution to that was to continue to tour. Although there are some photos of him holding a picket sign, I actually have one. |
|  | 10:44:57 | I think he understood very clearly you could say more in a solo with a plunger on a blues for two courses than you can shouting at somebody that’s protesting you. |
| Archive  |  | COUNT BASIE ORCHESTRA |
|  |  | **REACHING FOR THE MOON** |
|  | 10:45:40 | V/O:*When you’re on the road so much of the time it’s impossible not to miss the family. I was always writing Diane as though she could understand my words.*  |
| Archive |  | COUNT BASIE PHOTO ALBUM |
|  | 10:46:25 | V/O:*Diane had grown into a teenager by now, but there were lots of kids out there who didn’t care anything for jazz anymore. They thought we were an intermission band. But rock ‘n’ roll was not our thing. We didn’t fit that scene in any kind of way.* |
|  | 10:46:48 | *So what we did was we hooked up with a sensational new jazz trio - Lambert, Hendricks & Ross. They were beginning to create quite a stir. They put into words what our instruments were already playing note for note.* |
| Archive |  | LAMBERT, HENDRICKS & ROSS |
|  | 10:47:23 | WILL FRIEDWALD:Count Basie was the unique figure that pushed all these ideas just about as far as they could go. The idea of swing, nobody could swing harder than Basie. The only guy that was able to improve on it was Basie himself. Now when Sinatra formed his own record company, Reprise, one of the things he wanted to make a point to do was to go out and get Basie himself, because Sinatra was a fan of Basie from the very beginning of his career. |
| **Aston:**I’VE GOT YOU UNDER MY SKINFrank Sinatra with The Basie Band 1965 |  |  |
|  | 10:48:15 | WILL FRIEDWALD: There was a certain social hipness that Sinatra’s working with a black band, which in the 1960s meant something that we take for granted now, but it wouldn’t have been taken for granted in the middle 1960s. |
|  | 10:48:35 | NORMA MILLER:The first time we played Vegas we had to do a show and sit in the dressing room the whole time between shows. We couldn’t go out and mingle or nothing, we had to stay in the dressing rooms. Can you imagine being that confined? Vegas was the most prejudiced place you could… you couldn’t even go into… It was worse. |
|  | 10:49:02 | COUNT BASIE:And one year Sinatra stopped all of racism in Vegas, and he told the guys that if anybody even looks at one of the band members funny he’d break both of their fucking legs. [chuckles] And he’d protect us. Basie, Sammy and myself. |
| **Aston:** SAMMY DAVIS JnrJamming with The Basie Band |  |  |
|  | 10:49:36 | V/O:*The stars we accompanied sure loved us. But the critics were saying that the band was becoming predictable, too choreographed, too dependent on the arrangers who wrote for it.* |
|  | 10:49:59 | QUINCY JONES:You adapt everything to the personality of the people you’re working with, and that’s the only way to do it. It’s a lot to eat, you know, because you have to be daddy, psychiatrists, babysitter, everything. You had to do it all. |
|  | 10:50:15 | V/O:*I’ll take a chance with anything Quincy brings in. Arrangers like him don’t just write for an instrument, they write for the musician who plays it. They know everyone and everything about the band, and how I like to do things.* |
|  | 10:50:34 | SCOTTY BARNHART:Basie, although he did have these select arrangers writing for him he still was the last word on what happened with that arrangement. He could ask them to leave something out, oh, we don’t need that, pick this out or put this in a different spot. So although you would have Quincy and Frank Foster and these gentlemen writing for him he still had the last word, because he knew what he wanted. |
| **Aston:**FLY ME TO THE MOONArranger: Quincy Jones |  |  |
|  | 10:51:29 | QUINCY JONES:We used to call Basie the Picasso of jazz because he’d know how to use space. That cat could do more with two notes, man, than anybody. “I love - splank, splank, splank - you.” |
| Archive  |  | FRANK SINATRA  |
|  | 10:52:00 | QUINCY JONES:Buzz Aldrin played the first music on the Moon when they went in 1969. |
| Archive |  | MOON LANDING FOOTAGE |
|  | 10:52:17 | WILL FRIEDWALD:A small step for mankind, but a giant leap for Count Basie. |
|  |  | **TO EUROPE AND BEYOND** |
|  | 10:52:36 | JOHN WILLIAMS:If you don’t think he’s a survivor, travel with him making one-nighters all over the world. Phew, what a survivor. |
| **Aston:**Count Basie’s Home Movies |  |  |
| **Aston:**1970 | 10:52:54 | V/O:*It’s a big thrill for me all those overseas tours. The reporters, photographers glad to see us and knowing so much about our music. You didn’t get much time to relax, though I was never big on sightseeing. Meeting royalty with Frank. Margaret was the one who made the Royal family hip to what the band was about. And as for Ella, she just knew how to go out there and be wonderful.* |
|  | 10:53:24 | DOLORES HUGHES:The Count Basie Orchestra was always known as a family orchestra, because he cared much for the guys in the band. If you had a problem then you could come to Basie with it and he would try to help you solve it. |
|  | 10:53:42 | GREGG FIELD:You were on the road how many days a year - over 300. How do you have a marriage when you’re gone most of the time? And it was a challenge for guys, honestly. You know, we’re all human beings. |
|  |  | **IN THE DOG HOUSE** |
|  | 10:54:00 | V/O:*I’ll admit that while on the road I have been “Peck’s Bad Boy”. And so I spent a lot of time in the dog house, and that’s the way I’d rather leave it. You can’t be a bad boy as often as I have been without getting caught every now and again.* |
|  | 10:54:19 | PAMELA JACKSON:Oh, she would get angry with him at times, and she would put him out every so often and then she would call me and she said take the car and go and get dad. So I would have to go to the hotel and go get him and say you can come home now. She’s letting you back in to the house now. And he would just get the biggest grin on his face, you know. Oh, I can come back home now? I said yeah, you can come back home now.  |
| **Aston:**Count Basie’s Home Movies | 10:54:51 | Whenever there was as misunderstanding between her and Uncle Bill she would go buy her a new mink coat or a mink stole or a sable shawl. She’d go and change the stone in her wedding ring just so it cost him some money. She changed that stone ‘til it was almost 10 carats. She loved luxury.  |
|  | 10:55:19 | AARON WOODWARD III:Catherine Basie carried a pearl handled .38 revolver. Catherine Basie would fight you if it was necessary. She would. But she would go and she would try to bring people together - white people and black people. People with money, people without money. She was a magnet and she knew how to talk to people and she knew how to put people in their place. But not that dad wasn’t aware, he’s not hiding. He stood up, he was strong when he needed to be, but he was a band leader. And not only was he a band leader, he was an icon in his generation. So he kind of embodies the hope of a community, the hope of a people. |
| **Aston:**1975 |  |  |
|  | 10:56:16 | V/O:*Dear Katie, I hope you, Diane and the gang are okay. I’m fine, but having a hard time sleeping up here. Sure wish you were here. I’m being a very good boy for a change and instead of the cards, dice and one-armed bandits I’m putting my story in place.*  |
|  |  | **SUNSET YEARS** |
|  | 10:56:44 | V/O:*We moved down to the Bahamas after selling our house in Queens, and that really was the start of something big for me, for just me and Katie and our daughter Diane and Graf the puppy. That’s when we really started living as a family. It was our house of happiness.* |
| Archive  |  |  COUNT BASIE HOME MOVIES |
|  | 10:57:24 | QUINCY JONES:He was a very simple man, very simple man. And he was burdened with the negative aspects of his life, like his daughter’s disabilities No, it was rough. But he knew how to transcend it, you know, he did. And he was a positive person, so he always lived above it.  |
|  | 10:57:49 | But Basie was my absolute brother. I loved that man. |
| **Aston:**Reunion with The Blue Devil’s Band1979 |  |  |
|  | 10:58:01 | WILL FRIEDWALD:People were influenced by Basie, they were inspired by Basie. When Basie created that sound that was the apogee of the swing era, that was the ultimate expression of that kind of music. That captured the notion of swing better than anything else ever could or ever would. |
|  | 10:58:27 | V/O:*Life’s a bitch, and if it ain’t one damn thing it’s something else. It’s like being a prize fighter, you roll with the punches and you don’t let anything stop you if that’s what you want to be.*  |
| Archive | 10:58:53 | AUDIENCE:Thank you, Count Basie.COUNT BASIE:That’ll be $4. |
|  | 10:59:01 | **COUNT BASIE CONTINUED TO TRAVEL****WITH HIS ORCHESTRA UNTIL****HIS DEATH IN 1984****CATHERINE DIED ONE YEAR****BEFORE HIM IN 1983** |
|  | 10:59:11 | **THE COUNT BASIE ORCHESTRA****LED BY SCOTTY BARNHART****CONTINUES TO TRAVEL THE WORLD** |
|  | 10:59:19 | **END CREDITS** |