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AUDIO FILES were created using Garritan Jazz and Big Band (JABB) and are available on the Sher Music CD Downloads page, <https://www.shermusic.com/new/downloads.shtml> and also the book's webpage, <https://www.shermusic.com/9798992226331.php>.

1 INTRODUCTION & RHYTHM

The information in this book is arranged sequentially, and the first reading of the material is probably best accomplished in that sequence. But the information wasn't acquired that way, doesn't exist that way in the writer's mind, and won't be used that way by the reader after it has been learned and integrated. We learn things best by immersion, the way we learned to speak our native language as children. Any language that we learn later, through books and courses of instruction, is learned less efficiently. There is no substitute for learning the language of music by writing it, and hearing it played. Unlike learning to fly a plane, mistakes will cause no permanent damage and may turn out to be memorably instructive.

Music notation software and the Garritan Jazz and Big Band (JABB) computer sound samples make it possible to include easily accessible playback of the jazz arranging examples in this book. Together, they allow an arranger who doesn't have easy access to live musicians to examine a variety of musical choices and play back a sketch version of the results. A performance by live musicians is the best feedback, but this method can provide an informative step along the way to finding the sounds and balances that define a composer/arranger's personal style. High quality "sketch" playback can bring the composer/arranger closer to the end product and improve communication with musicians by providing a good representation of a basic interpretation of the notation.

As long as the composer's intention is to achieve results that are recognizable as being in the jazz style, it's essential to have some listening background in the history of jazz arranging, so that elements of existing styles can be used as building blocks for the development of new music. Jelly Roll Morton's march-based polyphony, Fletcher Henderson's early big band swing, the Kansas City tradition as developed by Count Basie's arrangers, Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn's expansive variety of techniques, Tadd Dameron's bebop sounds, Horace Silver's mastery of small group forms, Gil Evans's developments of more typically orchestral ideas, Oliver Nelson, J.J. Johnson, Gerry Mulligan, Bob Brookmeyer, Dave Berger... the list is a long one, and familiarity with successful pieces written by masterful musicians can save a new arranger a lot of time by pointing to effective established techniques.

Of course, the assumption is that a creative musician will go beyond mimicry and use historical precedent as a starting point for new uses of established ideas, but there is rarely a need for a self-conscious search for originality. Most of us will naturally (and often unconsciously) insert enough elements of our point of view to provide the music with its own personality. There is no reason to fear that experience with, and understanding of, historically successful techniques will lead to a lack of creativity. More often than not, familiarity with examples of great music leads to efficiency in achieving the goal of effective personal expression.

Here is an example of a small group arrangement that demonstrates a good balance between regular downbeat pulses and unexpected timing in melodic parts and some of the accompaniment. The drum part includes hints of the double-time pulse, and the figures are integrated into the accompanying texture. Note that the high chord voicings in the piano part occur in momentary spaces where there is no activity in the lead wind parts and are therefore not distractingly intrusive. The first piano chord is voiced to establish the tonality with a sonority that leaves acoustic room for the trombone entrance.

6-4

Concert Score - Note octave transposition for Tenor Sax, as well as the usual octave transpositions for Guitar and Bass.

The musical score is for a jazz ensemble in 4/4 time, marked with a tempo of 54. The instruments and their parts are as follows:

- Tenor Sax:** Features a melodic line with a note octave transposition (indicated by an '8' below the staff). Dynamics include *p*, *fp*, and *f*.
- Trumpet:** Includes a 'CUP MUTE' marking and a dynamic of *f*.
- Trombone:** Includes a 'CUP MUTE' marking and dynamics of *p*, *pp*, and *fp*.
- Guitar:** Features a *G*⁹ chord and a *Gm*⁶ chord, with a dynamic of *p*.
- Piano:** Provides harmonic support with chords and a dynamic of *mf*.
- Bass:** Provides a steady pulse with a dynamic of *mf*.
- Drums:** Includes 'BRUSHES' and 'swish' markings, with a dynamic of *mf*.

Other Considerations for Jazz Pianists

One of the adjustments a listener must make during the progress of a conventional jazz performance is to understand the change from an accompanying role to a solo role in the same instrument. The accompanying sounds have been pushed to the background by the listener's involvement in following the lead line, so when the accompanying voice moves into a lead role, the listener must shift attention to maintain focus on the primary activity. This shift always takes a few seconds, and there is communicative benefit in anything the performer/composer can do to improve the listener's chances of recognizing the changing roles more quickly. To this end, it is useful if there is a noticeable change in dynamics, density of activity, and register, when a pianist moves from an accompaniment into a solo. This is difficult to accomplish if the accompaniment has been as busy as, and nearly as loud as, the following piano solo, and it is made doubly difficult if the accompaniment has been in the same register as the solo.

Within a given chord, some voices are more important than others in indicating harmonic direction or in delineating a secondary line. It's good to remember that "the piano is an orchestra," and a good orchestral accompaniment would not use all the instruments all the time, and they wouldn't necessarily play at the same dynamic level. Bill Evans played chorus after chorus of blues in F, accompanying himself with the five notes between middle C and the A flat below it, one at a time, of course. (I'm not even counting the choruses he performed before bringing his left hand into play at all.) This simple technique left him the option of increasing the density and power of the rhythm by adding two or three more notes to the accompaniment chords and striking them more often when he wanted to communicate an increase in musical energy. If a pianist enjoys the variety and shift in energy level achievable by this technique, might not other soloists also benefit from accompaniments, improvised or written, that were designed this way?