

KENDOR MUSIC PRESENTS

Little Pixie II

style: up tempo swing
duration 8:50

by Thad Jones

INSTRUMENTATION

Full Score
Alto Sax I
Alto Sax II
Tenor Sax I
Tenor Sax II
Baritone Sax
Trumpet I
Trumpet II
Trumpet III
Trumpet IV
Trombone I
Trombone II
Trombone III
Trombone IV
Piano /Guitar (2 copies)
Bass
Drums

EXTRA SCORES & PARTS AVAILABLE

THAD JONES

Thad wrote his first jazz arrangement at age 13 when he was a trumpet player in his uncle's band in his native Pontiac, Michigan, along with brothers Hank (piano) and Elvin (drums). In the 1940's he served in the army, led a band of his own, and played with other bands before joining the Count Basie band in 1954. Nine years later he left Basie and began arranging for singers, small groups, and the big Harry James Band.

In 1965 Thad and drummer Mel Lewis formed their award-winning jazz orchestra. For the next 13 years this amazing band became an American jazz institution. They played Monday nights at the Village Vanguard in NYC on an almost continuous basis, won countless polls in "Down Beat," and recorded a series of albums that remain popular today, including "Consummation," "Central Park North," "Live At The Village Vanguard" and "Suite For Pops."

In 1979 Thad moved to and settled in Copenhagen, where he conducted the Danish Radio Big Band and later formed his own Eclipse big band featuring an illustrious mix of players from America and Europe.

TO THE DIRECTOR

Thanks for your interest in this great music. These rehearsal notes are meant as an adjunct to the most important work, fun really, of listening to the recordings or better still, attending a live performance. We've tried in this small space to give the student (that includes all of us) a few hints and awareness of opportunities to improve the performance.

First would be our primary objective, and that is to swing. This music is an out-growth of music that was meant for dancing and when it's right, it makes you feel like moving. All the harmonic and rhythmic sophistication of Thad Jones and the other great writers, from Fletcher Henderson to Jim McNeely, occur in the framework of great time. To this end, we need to be comfortable playing our parts so that we can concentrate on connecting with the other parts of the ensemble. The suggested tempo markings represent the tempo that the composition was played at the time of Thad's departure from the band in 1979 and generally are the upper end of the scale. The arrangement can definitely be played slower, and should be if that makes it easier to swing. The VJO doesn't always play these pieces at the same tempo, as it's fun to experiment.

Since there's virtually no introduction, John Riley makes it a point to clearly delineate the tempo on the opening two measures so the saxophones get off to a secure start.

Little Pixie II presents some unique challenges for the brass section, namely eight different parts with little doubling playing eighth notes at tempo. It's a real ear training exercise with lots of chromatic movement and even repeated notes, so that it's imperative for the players to practice their parts individually and in sectionals. When doing this, try to maintain the habit of swinging. Make it feel good even when practicing along.

Different soloists can be substituted or added, and background riffs can be developed but keep them simple, as you want to support not supplant the soloist.

One more note before turning it over to David Demsey for some particulars. Most all questions of balance, blend and dynamics can be answered by simply knowing as much as possible about the music you are playing. What's the form of the tune? Are you playing the melody, a counter melody, a background? Who are you playing with? What's the chord and your position in it? You'll find even more questions and answers, and if you stay with it, you'll know why we're still, after decades of playing this music, engaged and dedicated to it. And remember, it's supposed to be fun.

The Vanguard Jazz Orchestra



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HISTORICAL AND REHEARSAL NOTES

This historic arrangement was one of “the original seven” that formed the repertoire of the original Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra (now the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra). To this day, in the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra band folders, *Little Pixie II* is #5 in the book. This new edition is taken directly from the original ink parts that were on the stands at the band’s debut performance in February 1966, now housed in the Thad Jones Archive at William Paterson University, where Thad served as Founding Director of Jazz Studies.

These original seven charts were commissioned by Count Basie for an entire album of Thad Jones’ music – but Thad’s voicings and ideas were “modern” enough to Basie’s ears that he never made the record, instead suggesting that Thad start his own band. The rest is history! Nevertheless, *Little Pixie II* still maintains that swinging Basie mindset, and should be rehearsed that way. Its basic foundations are a relaxed but powerful rhythm section with a driving ride cymbal beat and crisp hi-hat, underpinning saxes and brass that are tight, and always on the back of the beat. The saxes and brass play their upbeats as late as possible, locking in with the tight ride cymbal skip beat. A great description of the Basie time concept comes from the legendary Basie alumnus Frank Wess, who once said, “That accent is not on the upbeat of four, it’s just before one!”

The title *Little Pixie II* comes from the fact that Thad’s 1966 big band arrangement for Basie was actually his second version of the tune. In 1963, Thad had already written a five-horn version for the Louie Bellson album *Thunderbird* (released in 1966) that featured not Thad, but Harry “Sweets” Edison on trumpet, trombonist Carl Fontana and flutist/saxophonist Sam Most.

Little Pixie II is Thad’s melody based on the chord changes of *I Got Rhythm*, in the key of Ab. The arrangement all occurs over repetitions of that 32-measure AABA form until its ending. This arrangement is closely related to another Thad Jones Ab rhythm changes tune, *Tip Toe*, the first Bellson version of *Little Pixie* is played at a much slower tempo almost identical to that of *Tip Toe*. In fact, an earlier, unrecorded Thad arrangement of *Tip Toe* for Harry James actually uses *Little Pixie*’s famous opening brass cluster chord!

As with many Basie arrangements, a number of key stylistic elements are not printed on the original chart. The rehearsal comments below are taken from recorded performances of the original recording by the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra, and from later recordings and performances by the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra. This arrangement can be performed at the deepest level when band members are hearing these great recordings in their minds as they play.

- The opening brass voicing must have an exaggerated forte-piano attack, both from Trombone IV on the downbeat and the rest of the brass section a half-beat later. This

exaggeration is all the more important because the brass are muted.

- The saxes will gain a great deal from listening to the original recordings of the melody at Letters A and C. The figures should not drag, with no breaths during the rests in the first three measures. The higher pitches are emphasized, and the lower pitches are “ghosted” or de-emphasized. The marcato figure in measure 7 is played straight eighths, in almost a double-time feel; everything else swings.
- At measures 11-12, the trombones play the first two syncopated notes short.
- In the melody bridge at Letter B, saxes should play the glissandi quickly and land together; measure 15 is a bluesy figure that should be slurred, with beat two slightly scooped.
- Following the melody chorus is three full choruses of a trading “competition” between the saxes and brass. They trade eight-bar phrases at Letters D, E, and F, then gain intensity as the piano/guitar lay out for letters G, H, I and J, further intensifying as the trading interval shortens to fours at Letters K, L and M, and finally the sections are all “talking at once” at N. Thad’s mastery of substitute chord changes and intense section writing is showcased all through this section. Let the recordings listed below be a guide to master the articulation, dynamics and style of these historic passages - not a small task, but well worth it. In general, accent the higher notes in the lines, and “ghost” or de-emphasize the lower notes. Take special note to play the brass accents in measure 1 of Letter L. At Letter M, exaggerate the loud first note and the two-bar decrescendo that follows in measures 109-110 and 111-112.
- In the shout chorus that begins at Letter P, the first eight measures are a crescendo; exaggerate the unexpectedly quiet start in measure 189 (a nod to the Basie style) and build to beat 2 of the first and second endings, measures 193 and 197.
- The drummer (originally Mel Lewis) is featured in the arrangement’s ending. The two-bar solo in measures 211-212 that introduces the return of the melody at Letter R should be a decrescendo; the short solos that follow in measures 220-221, 222-223 and 225-227 should be always in time and in the style of the horn lines.
- The final trombone cluster voicing should be conducted; listen to the various recordings below to get the timing just right for the 4th trombone entrance.

Significant recordings of *Little Pixie II*:

- Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra, *All My Yesterdays* (2 CDs and 89-page booklet; recorded 2/7/66 and 3/21/66; released during the 50th anniversary week at Village Vanguard jazz club) Resonance HCD2023
- Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra, *Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Live At The Village Vanguard* (recorded 4/28/67) Solid State SS18016

David Demsey
Coordinator of Jazz Studies
Curator, Thad Jones Archive
William Paterson University

SCORE

Little Pixie II

Composed and Arranged by Thad Jones

UP TEMPO SWING ♩ = 120-126 (A)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Alto I

Alto II

Tenor I

Tenor II

B. Sax.

Trp. I

Trp. II

Trp. III

Trp. IV

Tbn. I

Tbn. II

Tbn. III

Tbn. IV

Pno./Gtr.

Bs.

Drs.

13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28

Chord symbols: F#7, F7, D#9, E#7, A#7, E#-A#7, D#9, D-G#7, C-7, F7

©

Alto I

Alto II

Tenor I

Tenor II

B. Sax.

Trpt. I

Trpt. II

Trpt. III

Trpt. IV

Tbn. I

Tbn. II

Tbn. III

Tbn. IV

Pano./Gtr.

Bs.

Drs.

29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44

Chord progression: A^b C⁷F⁹ B^b-B- E A⁹ A^bG^b F⁷ B^b-B- E⁷ A⁷D⁷ D^b F G^b C- G^b7 F⁷ B^b- E⁷G⁷A⁹ E^b9 A^b A^b B^b-7 B^b C- G^b F B^b- E⁹ A- D⁷ D^b7 G^b9 C- F⁷ B^b- E^b7 A^b

Score for Little Pixie II, page 4. The score includes parts for Alto I, Alto II, Tenor I, Tenor II, B. Sax., Trp. I, Trp. II, Trp. III, Trp. IV, Tbn. I, Tbn. II, Tbn. III, Tbn. IV, Pno./Gtr., Bb., and Dss. The music is in 4/4 time and features a large watermark reading "REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED".

Measure numbers 45 through 56 are indicated at the bottom. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings (e.g., *mf*, *f*). Chord symbols are provided for the piano/guitar part: C7(b9), G-, C+7, F7, C-, F7, F-, Bb7, Eb7, F7, Bb7, Eb7, Ab, F7, Bb-, Eb, Ab, F7, Bb-, Eb.

Rehearsal marks E and F are present at the beginning of the Alto I and Alto II staves respectively. The Dss. part includes a section marked "STICKS" starting at measure 53.

Act I

Act II

Tenor I

Tenor II

B. Sx.

Sopr. I

Sopr. II

Sopr. III

Sopr. IV

Ten. I

Ten. II

Ten. III

Ten. IV

PNO./GTR.

Bs.

DR.

G

H

FOR PRODUCTION ONLY

57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71

①

Alto I

Alto II

Tenor I

Tenor II

B. Sax.

Trpt. I

Trpt. II

Trpt. III

Trpt. IV

Tbn. I

Tbn. II

Tbn. III

Tbn. IV

Pno./Gtr.

Bs.

Drs.

72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84

Alto I

Alto II

Tenor I

Tenor II

B. Sx.

Trp. I

Trp. II

Trp. III

Trp. IV

Tbn. I

Tbn. II

Tbn. III

Tbn. IV

Pno./Gtr.

Bs.

Drs.

85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96

Alto I

Alto II

Tenor I

Tenor II

B. Sax.

Trpt. I

Trpt. II

Trpt. III

Trpt. IV

Tbn. I

Tbn. II

Tbn. III

Tbn. IV

Pno./Gtr.

Bs.

Drs.

97 98 99 100 101 102 103 104 105 106 107 108

Chord progression: A^{b7} D^{b7} D^o A^b F⁷ B^b- E^{b7} A^{b7} G^b-G-

Score for Little Pixie II, page 9. The score includes parts for Alto I, Alto II, Tenor I, Tenor II, B. Sax., Trp. I, Trp. II, Trp. III, Trp. IV, Ton. I, Ton. II, Ton. III, Ton. IV, Pno./Gtr., Bb., and Dss. The music is in 4/4 time and features a large watermark reading "FOR PREVIEW ONLY REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED".

Measure numbers 109 through 122 are indicated at the bottom of the page.

Chord progression (Pno./Gtr.):

G- C⁷ D^b- G^{b7} F^{#+}- B⁷ C- F⁷ F- D^{b7} B^b- B- F⁷ E- E⁷ A⁷ B^b- E^{b7} A^b F⁷ B^b- B⁷ D^{b7} E^{b7} A^b F⁷ B⁹ E^{b+7}

0

Alto I

Alto II

Tenor I

Tenor II

B. Sx.

1st X ONLY ON CUE: BACKGROUNDS FOR SOLOS

1st X ONLY ON CUE: BACKGROUNDS FOR SOLOS

1st X ONLY ON CUE: BACKGROUNDS FOR SOLOS

1st X ONLY ON CUE: BACKGROUNDS FOR SOLOS

1st X ONLY ON CUE

1st X ONLY ON CUE

1st X ONLY ON CUE

1st X ONLY ON CUE

Pano./Gtr.

Bs.

Dr.

123 124 125 126 127 128 129 130 131 132 133 134 135 136

Chord progression: A^b B^b-7 E⁹ A^b B^b-7 E⁹ A^b A^b7 D^b D^o A^b/E^b F⁷ B^b-7 E^b7 A^b F⁹ B^b9 E^b9 A^b F⁹ B^b9 E^b9

FOR PREVIEW ONLY

REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

137 138 139 140 141 142 143 144 145 146 147 148 149 150 151 152 153 154 155 156

(DRUM SOLO)

ALTO I

ALTO II

TENOR I

TENOR II

B. SO.

TRP. I

TRP. II

TRP. III

TRP. IV

Tbn. I

Tbn. II

Tbn. III

Tbn. IV

PNO./GTR.

Bs.

Dr.

Solo

157 158 159 160 161 162 163 164 165 166 167 168 169 170 171 172 173 174 175 176 177 178 179 180 181 182 183 184 185 186 187 188

P

①

201 202 203 204 205 206 207 208 209 210 211 212

213	214	215	216	217	218	219	220	221	222	223	224	225	226	227	228
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