

JAZZ LEGEND SERIES

 **Belwin JAZZ**
a division of Alfred

Mid-Riff

BILLY STRAYHORN

Edited and Transcribed by JEFF LINDBERG

INSTRUMENTATION

Conductor	1st Trombone
1st E♭ Alto Saxophone	2nd Trombone
2nd E♭ Alto Saxophone	3rd Trombone
1st B♭ Tenor Saxophone (Clarinet)	4th Trombone (Optional)
2nd B♭ Tenor Saxophone	Guitar Chords
E♭ Baritone Saxophone	Guitar
1st B♭ Trumpet	Piano
2nd B♭ Trumpet	Bass
3rd B♭ Trumpet	Drums
4th B♭ Trumpet	

NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

Billy Strayhorn's 1944 composition "Mid-Riff," built on swing-era idioms while incorporating early bop vocabulary, was ahead of its time. In this respect, it was not unlike Duke Ellington's earlier "Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue" (1937). Because of the newness of their styles, both works initially may have seemed idiomatically unfamiliar to many of the players. Over the years, performances of these works by the Ellington Orchestra benefited not only from numerous readings, but also because the ensemble's performers became more versed in a modern, bop-influenced performance practice.

For this reason, in addition to the original manuscripts from the Billy Strayhorn Repository, I have used as a primary source the 1967 recording of "Mid-Riff" (*...And His Mother Called Him Bill*, RCA Victor LSP 3906). The four-beat bass throughout, Duke's wonderfully conceived piano solo, and the relaxed rhythmic flow of the band on this recording indicate—as with the orchestra's 1950s performances of "Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue"—that the ensemble had caught up fully with the composition's innovations.

Mid-Riff's first theme, stated by the trumpets, is a very angular, "Dukish" melody based on a short, repeated riff of the kind Duke often utilized. This stylistic inclination of Duke's was noted during one of many discussions with my colleague and friend Andrew Homzy, Professor Emeritus of Music at Concordia University in Montreal and preeminent Ellington scholar. Concerning compositional differences between Ellington and Strayhorn, Homzy suggested that Duke's approach to melody is more "riff-like," whereas Strayhorn tends to deploy longer, more through-composed melodic lines.

Although such general conclusions about composers and their art can be risky—one can always find exceptions—I believe Homzy's observations were astute and that ample evidence supports his conclusion. For example, Ellington's quintessential "Don't Get Around Much Anymore" includes riff-like motifs at whose ends the melody note (the third of the tonic chord) falls consonantly within the harmonic structure, sectionalizing the horizontal flow. By comparison, in Strayhorn's "Take The 'A' Train," the wonderfully dissonant $\flat 5$ ($A\flat$) of the D7 chord in mm. 3–4 acts as a leading-tone to $A\sharp$ in m. 5, resulting in an uninterrupted eight-measure arch.

In light of these conclusions, it is no wonder that Duke loved "Mid-Riff." Numerous Ellington Orchestra recordings of the work, including recordings of live performances and the inclusion of "Mid-Riff" on *...And His Mother Called Him Bill* (dedicated to Strayhorn just a few months after his death), bear this out. Yet one can see, and hear, that Strayhorn also stays true to his personal approach to melody: for example, the third measure of "Mid-Riff" ends with an $A\sharp$ atop a G9 chord, thus delaying resolution and subtly directing the melody to the $B\flat$ chord in m. 5.

Conductors who wish to present a historically informed "Swing Era" interpretation of the present edition can achieve this by: 1) asking the bass player to play a 2-beat bass pattern instead of a 4-beat pattern during the statement of the main theme (mm. 17–47 and mm. 141–163); 2) asking the drummer to play on the hi-hat instead of the ride cymbal during mm. 17–47; 3) asking the trumpets to add "rips" into each of the accented notes in the statement of the first theme between mm. 17–29, mm. 41–46, and mm. 141–146; and 4) asking the trumpets *not* to play the cheerful closing riff between mm. 149–164, because it does not appear in any of the original Strayhorn manuscripts and was added only in later recordings.

—Jeff Lindberg, April 2014

Jeff Lindberg is Artistic Director of the Chicago Jazz Orchestra and Professor of Music at The College of Wooster in Ohio, where he serves as Music Director of the Wooster Symphony Orchestra and Director of The College of Wooster Jazz Ensemble. With more than 100 transcriptions performed by artists and ensembles such as the Count Basie, Woody Herman, Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks, and Chicago Jazz Orchestras, Dave Brubeck, Joe Williams, Al Grey, Milt Hinton, Clark Terry, Kenny Burrell, Roy Hargrove, and others, Lindberg is widely recognized as one of the most respected, accurate, and prolific transcribers of ensemble compositions and arrangements heard on original jazz recordings.

WILLIAM THOMAS STRAYHORN

If you are familiar with the jazz composition, "Take the 'A' Train," then you know something about not only Duke Ellington, but also Billy "Sweet Pea" Strayhorn, its composer.

Billy was born in Dayton, Ohio, in 1915 and was attracted to the piano from the moment he was tall enough to reach the keys. The family soon moved to Pittsburgh where Billy began piano lessons. He played the piano everyday, sometimes becoming so engrossed that he would be late for school. He also played in the high school band. He then enrolled in the Pittsburgh Musical Institution where he studied classical music. As a result, he had more classical training than most jazz musicians of his time.

Strayhorn joined Ellington's band in 1939, at the age of 22. Ellington liked what he saw in Billy and took this shy, talented pianist under his wings. Neither one was sure what Strayhorn's function in the band would be, but their musical talents had attracted each other. By the end of the year Strayhorn had become essential to the Duke Ellington Band; arranging, composing, and sitting in at the piano. Billy made a rapid and almost complete assimilation of Ellington's style and technique. It was difficult to discern where Duke's style ended and Billy's began. The results of the Ellington-Strayhorn collaboration brought much joy to the jazz world.

The Strayhorn pieces most frequently played are Ellington's theme song, "Take the 'A' Train" and Ellington's signatory, "Lotus Blossom." Among Strayhorn's many brilliant compositions, a few classics are: "Chelsea Bridge," "Day Dream," "Johnny Come Lately," "Rain Check" and "Clementine." Some of the suites on which he collaborated with Ellington are: *Deep South Suite* (1947), the *Shakespearean Suite or Such Sweet Thunder* (1957), an arrangement of the *Nutcracker Suite* (1960), and the *Peer Gynt Suite* (1962). Strayhorn and Ellington composed the *Queen's Suite* and gave the only pressing to Queen Elizabeth of England. Two of their suites, *Jump for Joy* (1950) and *My People* (1963), had as their themes the struggles and triumphs of blacks in the United States. Both included a narrative and choreography. The latter, Strayhorn conducted at the Negro Exposition in Chicago in 1963. Another suite similar to these two was *A Drum Is a Woman*. The *Far East Suite* was written after the band's tour of the East, which was sponsored by the State Department.

In 1946, Strayhorn received the Esquire Silver Award for outstanding arranger. In 1965, the Duke Ellington Jazz Society asked him to present a concert at New York's New School of Social Research. It consisted entirely of his own work performed by him and his quintet. Two years later Billy Strayhorn died of cancer. Duke Ellington's response to his death was to record what the critics cite as one of his greatest works, a collection titled *...And His Mother Called Him Bill*, consisting entirely of Billy's compositions.

CONDUCTOR
42591S

MID-RIFF

By Billy Strayhorn
Edited and Transcribed by Jeff Lindberg

MEDIUM-UP SWING ♩ = 164

1st Eb ALTO SAXOPHONE

2nd Eb ALTO SAXOPHONE

1st Bb TENOR SAXOPHONE
(CLARINET)

2nd Bb TENOR SAXOPHONE

Eb BARITONE SAXOPHONE

1st Bb TRUMPET

2nd Bb TRUMPET

3rd Bb TRUMPET

4th Bb TRUMPET

1st TROMBONE

2nd TROMBONE

3rd TROMBONE

4th TROMBONE
(OPTIONAL)

GIITAR

PIANO

BASS

DRUMS

TENOR SAX

AS PLAYED BY DUKE ELLINGTON
SOLO

HI-HAT

2 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

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CONDUCTOR

- 2 -

MID-RIFF

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPR. 1

TPR. 2

TPR. 3

TPR. 4

TEN. 1

TEN. 2

TEN. 3

TEN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

END SOLO

SNARE

25

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPT. 1

TPT. 2

TPT. 3

TPT. 4

TEN. 1

TEN. 2

TEN. 3

TEN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32

Legal Use Only

Preview

Requires Purchase

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

CONDUCTOR

- 5 -

MID-RIFF

33 SOLI VIS. - 5 -

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPR. 1

TPR. 2

TPR. 3

TPR. 4

TEN. 1

TEN. 2

TEN. 3

TEN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

TO CLARINET

33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40

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Q#119 Q#117 Q#119 Q#117 F#9/C B9(#5b5)

Q#119 Q#117 Q#119 Q#117 F#9/C B9(#5b5)

Q#119 Q#117 Q#119 Q#117 F#9/C B9(#5b5)

CONDUCTOR

- 6 -

MID-RIFF

41

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPT. 1

TPT. 2

TPT. 3

TPT. 4

TEN. 1

TEN. 2

TEN. 3

TEN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

SOLO (G7 SCALE)

OPEN

OPEN

OPEN

OPEN

B \flat 6 G7 C7 F9 B \flat 6 G9 C7 F7 B \flat 6 G7 C7 F9 B \flat 6 B \flat 6 B \flat 7(1006)

B \flat 6 G7 C7 F9 B \flat 6 G9 C7 F7 B \flat 6 G7 C7 F9 B \flat 6 B \flat 6 B \flat 7(1006)

B \flat 6 G7 C7 F9 B \flat 6 G9 C7 F7 B \flat 6 G7 C7 F9 B \flat 6

41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48

CONDUCTOR

(CLARINET LEAD)

- 7 -

MID-RIFF

49

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPT. 1

TPT. 2

TPT. 3

TPT. 4

TEN. 1

TEN. 2

TEN. 3

TEN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

EVEN

SWING

OPEN

SOLO

(AS PLAYED BY LAWRENCE BROWN)

49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56

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- 8 -

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPT. 1

TPT. 2

TPT. 3

TPT. 4

TEN. 1

TEN. 2

TEN. 3

TEN. 4

GR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

57

58

59

60

61

62

63

64

65

- 9 -

MID-RIFF

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPT. 1

TPT. 2

TPT. 3

TPT. 4

TEN. 1

TEN. 2

TEN. 3

TEN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72

CONDUCTOR

- 10 -

MID-RIFF

73

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPR. 1

TPR. 2

TPR. 3

TPR. 4

TEN. 1

TEN. 2

TEN. 3

TEN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80

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89

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPT. 1

TPT. 2

TPT. 3

TPT. 4

TBN. 1

TBN. 2

TBN. 3

TBN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96

CONDUCTOR

- 13 -

MID-RIFF

97

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPT. 1

TPT. 2

TPT. 3

TPT. 4

TEN. 1

TEN. 2

TEN. 3

TEN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

97 98 99 100 101 102 103 104

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ADD RIMS 2&4

Chord symbols: Bb, G7, C9, F15, Bbm9, Bbm7, F9(#5), Bbm, G7(b9/b5), C9, F15(b9), Bbm, C7(b9), C67, F11, Fmaj9

CONDUCTOR (105)

- 14 -

MID-RIFF

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TRP. 1

TRP. 2

TRP. 3

TRP. 4

TBN. 1

TBN. 2

TBN. 3

TBN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

105

106

107

108

109

110

111

112

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CONDUCTOR

- 15 -

MID-RIFF

113

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPR. 1

TPR. 2

TPR. 3

TPR. 4

TBN. 1

TBN. 2

TBN. 3

TBN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

113 114 115 116 117 118 119 120

Chorus

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CONDUCTOR

- 16 -

MID-RIFF

121

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPR. 1

TPR. 2

TPR. 3

TPR. 4

TBN. 1

TBN. 2

TBN. 3

TBN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

121 122 123 124 125 126 127 128

8^b G7(b9) C7(b9) F7(b9) 8^b G7(b9) C7(b9) F7(b9) 8^b Gmi7 C7 F9(#5)

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BAR.

TP. 1

TP. 2

TP. 3

TP. 4

TBN. 1

TBN. 2

TBN. 3

TBN. 4

Gtr.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

129 130 131 132 133 134 135 136

CONDUCTOR

141

- 18 -

MID-RIFF

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPT. 1

TPT. 2

TPT. 3

TPT. 4

TBN. 1

TBN. 2

TBN. 3

TBN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

137

138

139

140

141

142

143

144

STRAIGHT MUTE

1/2 PLUNGER

SOLO

HI-HAT

CHORDS: C7, F15(b5), G7, C7, F9, Bb6, G9, C7, F7

CONDUCTOR

- 19 -

MID-RIFF

149

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPR. 1

TPR. 2

TPR. 3

TPR. 4

TBN. 1

TBN. 2

TBN. 3

TBN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

145 146 147 148 149 150 151 152

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CONDUCTOR

- 20 -

MID-RIFF

(157)

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPT. 1

TPT. 2

TPT. 3

TPT. 4

TEN. 1

TEN. 2

TEN. 3

TEN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

153 154 155 156 157 158 159 160

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CONDUCTOR

- 21 -

MID-RIFF

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPT. 1

TPT. 2

TPT. 3

TPT. 4

TEN. 1

TEN. 2

TEN. 3

TEN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

161

162

163

164

165

166

167

168

TO CLARINET

SOLO

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CONDUCTOR (169)

- 22 -

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPT. 1

TPT. 2

TPT. 3

TPT. 4

TEN. 1

TEN. 2

TEN. 3

TEN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

OPEN

BACK-BEAT

EVEN

MID-RIFF

169 170 171 172 173 174 175 176

*ON THE 1967 RECORDING, ...AND HIS MOTHER CALLED HIM BILL, ELLINGTON SLAMS THE KEYBOARD WITH BOTH ARMS ON THE DOWNBEAT, SUSTAINING THE CLUSTER.

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