

INSTRUMENTATION

Conductor

1st El Alto Saxophone

2nd El Alto Saxophone

1st Bl Tenor Saxophone

2nd Bl Tenor Saxophone

El Baritone Saxophone (Optional)

1st Bl Trumpet

2nd Bl Trumpet

3rd B_b Trumpet

4th Bb Trumpet (Optional)

1st Trombone
2nd Trombone
3rd Trombone (Optional)
4th Trombone (Optional)
Guitar Chords
Guitar (Optional)
Piano
Bass
Drums

Optional Alternate Parts

C Flute Tuba Horn in F (Doubles 1st Trombone) 1st Baritone T.C (Doubles 1st Trombone) 2nd Baritone T.C. (Doubles 2nd Trombone) 3rd Baritone T.C. (Doubles 3rd Trombone)



NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

"R U Chicken" is a fusion/funk chart that is high-powered from the word go! This is the most modern of my "Chicken" charts yet, and it really rocks from the very beginning line all the way until the last three punch chords.

Begin rehearsing this chart by working with the rhythm section and the opening groove at measure 8. The bassist should pay very close attention to the articulations. Be sure the drummer understands and captures the snare/kick drum pattern. Both are essential to allow this funk groove to feel comfortable.

After the groove is established and secure, begin working the melody at measure 8. The opening melody in the saxes is tricky, and I recommend asking the students to sing or clap out rhythms first and then play it. As always, articulations are very important. If a note is not marked short, it should be played legato, especially the sixteenth notes. When you add the brass kicks in the background, be sure these notes are punched but not too short or staccato. Direct the brass to really nail these figures, and ask the drummer to kick them hard as well.

At 22, the volume and intensity will come down a bit. Balance the trombones so the bass and bari sax melody can be heard. The trombones should play a slight crescendo/decrescendo with each two-measure phrase.

After the AABA form of the tune is locked in, go back and rehearse the intro phrase. Be sure students don't overblow or overarticulate the opening line. The drummer's fill works well when played as written.

The solo section at measure 43 starts out with a modal sound. Soloists may take this opportunity to take the solo(s) a little more "outside" if desired—but not just random notes. The soloist must always know the form, the chord progression, and the notes in the chord and related scale. The suspended chords can be approached with a Mixolydian (dominant scale) or a pentatonic approach. Caution the background parts to stay under the soloist until around measure 67. Repeat back to measure 43 for additional solos. Opening up solos works well in this type of chart.

The drum solo at measure 75 is really more of a setting of the groove. It is important to capture the snare and kick drum pattern in this section. The tenor saxes and guitar should note that the line at measure 79 is similar but not identical to the melody. After each section comes in at 79, direct them to drop the volume a little on their repeats. This will help each new section be heard more clearly. Trumpets at measure 83 should be very legato with no breaks except as noted. If possible, stagger breaths as necessary in this section.

Measure 87 can be a little challenging. Rehearse this in two- and four-measure phrases, breaking down each section and making sure to point out to the horns how and why their rhythms line up with each other. It will really help if first the drummer simply plays time instead of fills. Then once the horns are secure, have the drummer begin to add his or her solo measures. It is important that the drum fill before the D.S. decrease in both volume and in complexity. I suggest asking the drummer to think about where the D.S. is going when he or she begins to work on this section. Know the musical road map. The coda is very similar to the ending.

I hope you have a blast with this one. I thoroughly enjoyed writing it.









Kris Berg is active as a clinician/artist for Yamaha and is the director of jazz studies program at Collin College, Dallas, Texas. A superb arranger, Kris's charts have sold thousands world-wide. Kris received both his bachelor's and master's degrees in jazz studies from the University of North Texas, where he directed jazz ensembles and taught big band arranging.



































