Whiplash
HANK LEVY
Arranged by ERIK MORALES

INSTRUMENTATION

Conductor
1st Eb Alto Saxophone
2nd Eb Alto Saxophone
1st Bb Tenor Saxophone
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
Bass Trombone
Guitar Chords
Guitar
Piano
Bass
Drums
Auxiliary Percussion
Vibraphone (Optional)
NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

Whiplash is a rock-style chart composed by Henry J. (Hank) Levy (1927–2001) and was the opening cut on the trumpeter/bandleader Don Ellis’s album entitled Soaring which was released in 1973. An innovator in both jazz composition and jazz education, Levy’s charts were known for their odd time signatures and complex rhythmic subdivisions. I highly recommend the director and the band listen repeatedly to the original Don Ellis version and the Alfred Music/Belwin Jazz demo track of this arrangement. This Belwin chart is available for listening at www.alfred.com/downloads.

This arrangement features a fast 7/4 meter. The original composition also featured 14/8 but I simplified it in this arrangement for practical purposes. Most of the chart follows the eighth note subdivision of [2+2+2+2+3+3] or 2/4 + 2/4 + 6/8 with the speed of the eighth note remaining constant. I recommend rehearsing this chart at a slower tempo and gradually increase the tempo as the band becomes more comfortable.

Articulation is critical throughout this chart—pay attention to the staccatos. For the solos, there is only one chord change, so that should free up the soloist to focus on solo development. The soloists should pace themselves, build and catch the rhythmic pattern accents. Direct the soloists to relax and be free to express!

The fun begins at measure 85 where the chart introduces mixed eighth note subdivisions. The changes in subdivisions are marked clearly in the score and parts to simplify the learning process. In every instance, the conducting pattern should follow the flow of the rhythmic subdivisions. Although the voicings and voice-leading differ from the original, this arrangement retains the original form. A majority of inspiration was taken from the original chart Levy arranged for Don Ellis and his very large band which included strings and a French horn.

A comment about conducting, try to avoid a symphonic approach by attempting to conduct each beat; instead, strive to outline the rhythm pattern as you conduct. The simpler, the better!

This chart looks harder than it is to play. You and the band will discover that after some time spent in these time signatures, the patterns are logical and flow quite well. The following is an easy exercise to try with the entire ensemble. Have everyone clap on the first eighth note of every subdivided beat beginning with the primary pattern of [2+2+2+2+3+3]. Then, once this is comfortable for the band, repeat the exercise with the other subdivisions beginning at measure 85. Do this until everyone can cleanly execute the exercise comfortably as an ensemble. By doing this exercise the players will gain a better understanding of the music.

Enjoy!

—Erik Morales

Erik Morales began his composing career shortly after graduation from high school in south Florida. He studied composition at Florida International University, and completed his bachelor’s degree at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Accessible at all levels, the music of Erik Morales has a unique melodic and harmonic vocabulary that appeals to audiences worldwide. His published works encompass a large variety of styles and settings, including works for concert, orchestral, jazz and chamber ensembles and have been part of featured performances across the globe. Mr. Morales currently teaches and plays trumpet professionally in the New Orleans area, in addition to maintaining an active composing and conducting schedule.
WHIPLASH

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