Upper Manhattan Medical Group

BILLY STRAYHORN
Arranged by MIKE KAMUF

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
Vibraphone (Optional)
NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

Billy Strayhorn composed “Upper Manhattan Medical Group” in the mid-1950s for his frequent musical collaborator, the great Duke Ellington. Duke’s 1967 recording …And His Mother Called Him Bill includes this tune and has inspired me for many years.

My arrangement opens with a quote of Dizzy Gillespie’s composition “Woody ‘N You” and quickly makes use of both the melodic material from the tune’s bridge and the melody of the tag for the introduction. The melody chorus makes use of brushes in the drums and cup mutes in the brass. Throughout this chorus, the ensemble should avoid overpowering the melody of the tune. Saxophones should agree on the mezzoforte of the bridge melody at m. 37 so that the parts are equally balanced.

Measure 53 begins a solo section that I have designated as a 1st trombone solo the first time and a 2nd trumpet solo the second time. Brass should open up after playing mm. 53–57. Drums should gradually switch back to sticks beginning around m. 77 so that sticks are used the second time through. Guide solos are provided; however, students should be encouraged to improvise on the chord changes. If desired, this section could be opened up to allow these solos to stretch out and/or additional soloists to play.

A chorus of development begins at m. 86. Alto saxophones and trumpets play bebop-style lines over stop time and accompaniment figures from the ensemble. At m. 102, tenor saxophones and trombones 1 and 3 take over the line and begin a dialogue with the altos and trumpets. This passage ushers in a restatement of the opening “Woody ‘N You” quote, as well as a variation of the tune itself. In the 1st tenor saxophone solo passage that begins at m. 114, the melody of the tune’s tag becomes the bass line (similar to the passage in the introduction). Here, the background figures are layered on: trombones 1 and 3 enter at m. 123; altos, 2nd tenor, guitar, and vibes at m. 132; and trumpets at m. 139. This section should build in intensity until the shout chorus, which begins at m. 146. The intensity level drops back slightly at m. 157 for the trombone section soli. This passage should build back up and propel the ensemble into the peak point of the arrangement at mm. 165–168. A tag section begins with the alto and tenor sax line after beat 3 in m. 168; voices are layered on to build back up to the end of the arrangement. You may elect to have the 1st tenor solo over the tag figure from mm. 169–184. The chart ends with a brief four-bar statement that recap the tune’s opening melodic material.

I hope you and your students enjoy studying and performing this arrangement.

—Mike Kamuf

Mike Kamuf holds Bachelor of Music degrees in both jazz performance and music education from Youngstown State University and a Master of Arts degree in instrumental conducting from George Mason University. Mike’s compositions and arrangements have been performed by numerous jazz artists and ensembles including the Woody Herman, Glenn Miller and Tommy Dorsey Orchestras; the USAF Airmen of Note, the USAF Notables; the Navy Commodores, James Moody, Eddie Daniels, Terell Stafford, Bill Watrous and Nick Brignola. Mike has performed with the Woody Herman and Tommy Dorsey Orchestras and the Alan Baylock Jazz Orchestra. He served as assistant principal trumpet of the Youngstown Symphony Orchestra from 1989–92. Currently, Mike leads his own jazz octet in the Washington D.C. area.

Mike is the director of instrumental music and music department chairperson at John T. Baker Middle School (Damascus, MD). Under his direction, the groups consistently receive high ratings at music festivals, have commissioned four works for concert band and have performed at MENC regional conferences. Mike has been selected to direct the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Senior Honors Jazz Band, the MCPS Junior Honors Concert Band.

Please visit Mike’s website at: www.mikekamuf.com