El Abrazo
By Alan Baylock

INSTRUMENTATION
Conductor
1st Bb Clarinet
2nd Bb Clarinet
1st Bb Saxophone
2nd Bb Saxophone
E Flat Alto Saxophone
1st Eb Tenor Saxophone
2nd Eb Tenor Saxophone
1st Bb Trumpet
2nd Bb Trumpet
3rd Bb Trumpet
4th Bb Trumpet
Piano
Bass
Guitar
Drums

As performed by the Alan Baylock Jazz Orchestra
NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

El Abrazo was written in memory of an amazing young man from Gahanna, Ohio named Shane Albaugh. He was one of those rare people who was loved and appreciated by everyone who knew him. He was an accomplished musician, and was known for his friendly smile and his large hugs! Unfortunately, Shane passed away due to a heart defect just before his senior year in high school. The musical pulse and the beginning and end of this piece represent Shane's heart, and the music that follows reflects his love for life. Special thanks to Kelly Shellhammer, Shane's band director, for commissioning this work. In English, El Abrazo means “The Embrace.” I sincerely hope you enjoy playing it.

Before playing this piece, please listen to the recording that my big band (Alan Baylock Jazz Orchestra, Prime Time) released a few years ago. It’s on Alfred’s website (alfred.com/downloads) and is also on YouTube, Spotify, iTunes, and many other outlets.

Everything should be played very smoothly and musically during the introduction in mm. 1–31, and then again at the end in mm. 199–end. The piano pedal should remain down from mm. 1–12, and then again from mm. 199–208. Otherwise, standard jazz and Latin phrasing and articulations should be applied. Pay particular attention to the staccato because the tendency will be to play that articulation too long—keep it tight and clean. Caution the drummer to execute the transitions between the swing and Latin feels (and vice versa) seamlessly, and of course, make sure the tempo stays the same! For the greatest effect, be sure all of the dynamics both large and small are exaggerated as it will make your band sound mature and polished.

The first dynamic peak occurs in mm. 107–111, so make sure the melodic passages that begin in mm. 40, 68, and 80 aren’t too loud. Similarly, the ultimate peak occurs at mm. 196–198.

Once again, thanks for purchasing and performing El Abrazo. It’s a piece very near and dear to my heart.

—Alan Baylock