

**Jazz at Lincoln Center Library**

# **SUGAR RUM CHERRY**

**FROM "THE NUTCRACKER SUITE"**

**BY PETER ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY**

**ARRANGED BY DUKE ELLINGTON AND BILLY STRAYHORN**

**Transcribed by David Berger for Jazz at Lincoln Center**

**F U L L S C O R E**

This transcription was made especially for *Essentially Ellington* 2004:  
The Ninth Annual Jazz at Lincoln Center High School Jazz Band Competition & Festival.

Major support for *Essentially Ellington* is provided by  
The Jack and Susan Rudin Educational and Scholarship Fund,  
Surdna Foundation, Danny Kaye and Sylvia Fine Kaye Foundation,  
Verizon Communications, and Verve Music Group.

Additional support is provided by The Heckscher Foundation for Children, the National  
Endowment for the Arts, Citigroup Foundation, the Ella Fitzgerald Charitable Foundation,  
The Charles Evans Hughes Memorial Foundation, The New York Times Company  
Foundation, Gail & Alfred Engelberg, Elroy and Terry Krumholz Foundation,  
Robert E. and Elizabeth Anne La Blanc Foundation, and other generous funders.

Jazz at Lincoln Center and Warner Bros. Publications gratefully acknowledge the cooperation and support pro-  
vided in the publication of this year's *Essentially Ellington* music series:  
EMI Music Publishing, Famous Music Corporation & Mr. Irwin Z. Robinson, Hal Leonard Corporation,  
Music Sales Corporation / Tempo Music Inc., WB Music Corp., the George Gershwin Family Trust  
and especially the Estates of Duke Ellington and Mercer Ellington.

**ESSENTIALLY  
ELLINGTON**

Annual High School Jazz Band Competition & Festival

**J@zz**

Jazz at Lincoln Center

## NOTES ON PLAYING ELLINGTON

At least 95% of modern-day large ensemble jazz playing comes out of three traditions: Count Basie's band, Duke Ellington's band, and the orchestrations of small groups. Those young players interested in jazz will be drawn to small groups for the opportunity to improvise and for practical reasons (it is much easier to organize four or five people than it is 15). Schools have taken over the task (formerly performed by dance bands) of training musicians to be ensemble players. Due to the Basie Band's popularity and its simplicity of style and emphasis on blues and swing, the better educators have almost exclusively adopted this tradition for teaching jazz ensemble playing. As wonderful as Count Basie's style is, it doesn't address many of the important styles developed under the great musical umbrella we call jazz. Duke Ellington's comprehensive and eclectic approach to music offers an alternative.

The stylistic richness of Ellington's music presents a great challenge to educators and performers alike. In Basie's music, the conventions are very nearly consistent. In Ellington's, there are many more exceptions to the rules. This calls for greater knowledge of the language of jazz. Clark Terry, who left Count Basie's band to join Duke Ellington, said, "Count Basie was college, but Duke Ellington was graduate school." Knowledge of Ellington's music prepares you to play any big band music.

The following is a list of performance conventions for the great majority of Ellington's music. Any deviations or additions will be spelled out in the individual performance notes that follow.

1. Listen carefully many times to the Ellington recording of these pieces. There are many subtleties that will elude even the most sophisticated listener at first. Although it was never Ellington's wish to have his recordings imitated, knowledge of these definitive versions will lead musicians to make more educated choices when creating new performances. Ellington's music, though written for specific individuals, is designed to inspire all musicians to express themselves. In addition, you will hear slight note differences in the recording and the transcriptions. This is intentional, as there are mistakes and alterations from the original intent of the music in the recording. You should have your players play what's in the score.
2. General use of swing phrasing. The triplet feel prevails except for ballads or where notations such as even eighths or Latin appear. In these cases, eighth notes are given equal value.
3. There is a chain of command in ensemble playing. The lead players in each section determine the phrasing and volume for their own section, and their section-mates must conform to the lead. When the saxes and/or trombones play with the trumpets, the lead

trumpet is the boss. The lead alto and trombone must listen to the first trumpet and follow her. In turn, the other saxes and trombones must follow their lead players. When the clarinet leads the brass section, the brass should not overblow him. That means that the first trumpet is actually playing "second." If this is done effectively, there will be very little balancing work left for the conductor.

4. In Ellington's music, each player should express the individuality of his own line. He must find a musical balance of supporting and following the section leader and bringing out the character of the underpart. Each player should be encouraged to express his or her personality through the music. In this music, the underparts are played at the same volume and with the same conviction as the lead.
5. Blues inflection should permeate all parts at all times, not just when these opportunities occur in the lead.
6. Vibrato is used quite a bit to warm up the sound. Saxes (who most frequently represent the sensual side of things) usually employ a heavy vibrato on harmonized passages and a slight vibrato on unisons. Trumpets (who very often are used for heat and power) use a little vibrato on harmonized passages and no vibrato on unisons. Trombones (who are usually noble) do not use slide vibrato. A little lip vibrato is good at times. Try to match the speed of vibrato. Unisons are played with no vibrato.
7. Crescendo as you ascend and diminuendo as you descend. The upper notes of phrases receive a natural accent and the lower notes are ghosted. Alto and tenor saxophones need to use sub-tone in the lower part of their range in order to blend properly with the rest of the section. This music was originally written with no dynamics. It pretty much follows the natural tendencies of the instruments; play loud in the loud part of the instrument and soft in the soft part of the instrument. For instance, a high C for a trumpet will be loud, and a low C will be soft.
8. Quarter notes are generally played short unless otherwise notated. Long marks above or below a pitch indicate full value: not just long, but full value. Eighth notes are played full value except when followed by a rest or otherwise notated. All notes longer than a quarter note are played full value, which means if it is followed by a rest, release the note where the rest appears. For example, a half note occurring on beat one of a measure would be released on beat three.
9. Unless they are part of a legato background figure, long notes should be played somewhat *fp*, accent then diminish the volume. This is important so that the moving parts can be heard over the sustained notes. Don't just hold out the long notes, but give

them life and personality: that is, vibrato, inflection, crescendo, or diminuendo. There is a great deal of inflection in this music, and much of this is highly interpretive. Straight or curved lines imply non-pitched glisses, and wavy lines mean scalar (chromatic or diatonic) glisses. In general, all rhythmic figures need to be accented. Accents give the music life and swing. This is very important.

10. Ellington's music is about individuality: one person per part—do not double up because you have extra players or need more strength. More than one on a part makes it sound more like a concert band and less like a jazz band.
11. This is acoustic music. Keep amplification to an absolute minimum; in the best halls, almost no amplification should be necessary. Everyone needs to develop a big sound. It is the conductor's job to balance the band. When a guitar is used, it should be a hollow body, unamplified rhythm guitar. Simple three-note voicings should be used throughout. An acoustic string bass is a must. In mediocre or poorly designed halls, the bass and piano may need a bit of a boost. I recommend miking them and putting them through the house sound system. This should provide a much better tone than an amplifier. Keep in mind that the rhythm section's primary function is to accompany. The bass should not be as loud as a trumpet. That is unnatural and leads to over-amplification, bad tone, and limited dynamics. Stay away from monitors. They provide a false sense of balance.
12. Solos and rhythm section parts without chord changes should be played as is or with a little embellishment. Solos and rhythm section parts with chord changes should be improvised. However, written passages should be learned because they are an important part of our jazz heritage and help the player understand the function of his particular solo or accompaniment. Soloists should learn the chord changes. Solos should not be approached as opportunities to show off technique, range, or volume, but should be looked at as a great opportunity to further develop the interesting thematic material that Ellington has provided.
13. The notation of plungers for the brass means a rubber toilet plunger bought in a hardware store. Kirkhill is a very good brand (especially if you can find one of their old rubber ones, like the one I loaned Wynton and he lost). Trumpets use 5" diameter and trombones use 6" diameter. Where Plunger/Mute is notated, insert a pixie mute in the bell and use the plunger over the mute. Pixies are available from Humes & Berg in Chicago. "Tricky Sam" Nanton and his successors in the Ellington plunger trombone chair did not use pixies. Rather, each of them employed a Nonpareil (that's the brand name) trumpet straight mute.

Nonpareil has gone out of business, but the Tom Crown Nonpareil trumpet straight mute is very close to the same thing. These mutes create a wonderful sound (very close to the human voice), but they also create some intonation problems that must be corrected by the lip only. It would be easier to move the tuning slide, but part of the sound is in the struggle to correct the pitch. If this proves too much, stick with the pixie—it's pretty close.

14. The drummer is the de facto leader of the band. He establishes the beat and controls the volume of the ensemble. For big band playing, the drummer needs to use a larger bass drum than he would for small group drumming. A 22" is preferred. The bass drum is played softly (nearly inaudible) on each beat. This is called feathering the bass drum. It provides a very important bottom to the band. The bass drum sound is not a boom and not a thud—it's in between. The larger size drum is necessary for the kicks; a smaller drum just won't be heard. The key to this style is to just keep time. A rim knock on two and four (chopping wood) is used to lock in the swing. When it comes to playing fills, the fewer, the better.
15. The horn players should stand for their solos and solis. Brass players should come down front for moderate to long solos, surrounding rests permitting. The same applies to the pep section (two trumpets and one trombone in plunger/mutes).
16. Horns should pay close attention to attacks and releases. Everyone should hit together and end together.
17. Brass must be very precise when playing short notes. Notes must be stopped with the tongue, à la Louis Armstrong!
18. Above all, everyone's focus should remain at all times on the swing. As the great bassist Chuck Israels says, "The three most important things in jazz are rhythm, rhythm, and rhythm, in that order." Or as Bubber Miley (Ellington's first star trumpeter) said, "It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing."

## GLOSSARY

The following are terms that describe conventions of jazz performance, from traditional New Orleans to the present avant garde.

**Break:** within the context of an ongoing time feel, the rhythm section stops for one, two, or four bars. Very often a soloist will improvise during a break.

**Call-and-response:** repetitive pattern of contrasting exchanges (derived from the church procedure of the minister making a statement and the congregation answering with "amen"). Call-and-response patterns usually pit one group of instruments against another. Sometimes we call this "trading fours," "trading twos," etc., especially when it involves improvisation. The numbers denote the amount of measures each soloist or group plays. Another term frequently used is "swapping fours."

**Coda:** also known as the "outro." "Tags" or "tag endings" are outgrowths of vaudeville bows that are frequently used as codas. They most often use deceptive cadences that finally resolve to the tonic, or they go from the tonic to the sub-dominant and cycle back to the tonic: I V/IV IV #IV<sup>o</sup> I (second inversion) V/II V/V V I.

**Comp:** improvise accompaniment (for piano or guitar).

**Groove:** the composite rhythm. This generally refers to the combined repetitive rhythmic patterns of the drums, bass, piano, and guitar, but may also include repetitive patterns in the horns. Some grooves are standard (i.e., swing, bossa nova, samba), while others are manufactured (original combinations of rhythms).

**Head:** melody chorus.

**Interlude:** a different form (of relatively short length) sandwiched between two chorus forms. Interludes that set up a key change are simply called *modulations*.

**Intro:** short for introduction.

**Ride pattern:** the most common repetitive figure played by the drummer's right hand on the ride cymbal or hi-hat.



**Riff:** a repeated melodic figure. Very often, riffs repeat verbatim or with slight alterations while the harmonies change underneath them.

**Shout chorus:** also known as the "out chorus," the "sock chorus," or sometimes shortened to just "the shout." It is the final ensemble passage of most big band charts and where the climax most often happens.

**Soll:** a harmonized passage for two or more instruments playing the same rhythm. It is customary for horn players to stand up or even move in front of the band when playing these passages. This is done so that the audience can hear them better and to provide the audience with some visual interest. A soli sound particular to

Ellington's music combines two trumpets and a trombone in plungers/mutes in triadic harmony. This is called the "pep section."

**Stop time:** a regular pattern of short breaks (usually filled in by a soloist).

**Swing:** the perfect confluence of rhythmic tension and relaxation in music creating a feeling of euphoria and characterized by accented weak beats (a democratization of the beat) and eighth notes that are played as the first and third eighth notes of an eighth-note triplet. Duke Ellington's definition of swing: when the music feels like it is getting faster, but it isn't.

**Vamp:** a repeated two- or four-bar chord progression. Very often, there may be a riff or riffs played on the vamp.

**Voicing:** the specific spacing, inversion, and choice of notes that make up a chord. For instance, two voicings for G7 could be:



Note that the first voicing includes a 9th and the second voicing includes a b9 and a 13. The addition of 9ths, 11ths, 13ths, and alterations are up to the discretion of the pianist and soloist.

## THE FOUR ELEMENTS OF MUSIC

The following are placed in their order of importance in jazz. We should never lose perspective on this order of priority.

**RHYTHM:** meter, tempo, groove, and form, including both melodic rhythm and harmonic rhythm (the speed and regularity of the chord changes).

**MELODY:** what players play: a tune or series of notes.

**HARMONY:** chords and voicings.

**ORCHESTRATION:** instrumentation and tone colors.

—David Berger

Special thanks to Andrew Homzy for editing the score.

# SUGAR RUM CHERRY

## INSTRUMENTATION:

Reed 1 - Alto Sax	Trombone 1
Reed 2 - Alto Sax	Trombone 2
Reed 3 - Clarinet	Trombone 3
Reed 4 - Tenor Sax	Bass
Reed 5 - Baritone Sax	Drums
Trumpet 1	
Trumpet 2	
Trumpet 3	
Trumpet 4	

## ORIGINAL RECORDING INFORMATION:

**Composer:** Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

**Arrangers:** Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn

**Recorded:** June 3, 1960, in Hollywood, CA

**Time:** 3:05

**Master Number:** RHCO46675

**Original Issue:** *Duke Ellington and His Orchestra: The Nutcracker Suite*  
Columbia CL1541 (mono)/CS8341 (stereo)

### Currently Available on CD:

*Duke Ellington/Three Suites*

Columbia CK 46825

**Personnel:** Duke Ellington, piano; Willie Cook, Eddie Mullens, and Andres Meringuito (a.k.a Andrew Ford), trumpets; Ray Nance, cornet; Lawrence Brown, Booty Wood, and Britt Woodman, trombones; Juan Tizol, valve trombone; Johnny Hodges, Russell Procope, Jimmy Hamilton, Paul Gonsalves, and Harry Carney, reeds; Aaron Bell, bass; Sam Woodyard, drums.

**Solo:** Paul Gonsalves, tenor sax.

## REHEARSAL NOTES:

- **Sugar Rum Cherry** comes from the Ellington/Strayhorn interpretation of *The Nutcracker Suite*. In the original ballet this is the **Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy**, but in the American vernacular she becomes the **Sugar Rum Cherry**, which I conjure up to be the woman who has a bit too much punch at the office Christmas party and becomes the seductive center of attention. The operative word here is “seductive”: this piece is seductive from beginning to end—all tease. That’s the point.
- Notice how Paul Gonsalves’ use of subtone on the tenor sax adds significantly to this understated sensuality. Notice also the relaxed dynamics throughout the band. Although we are playing low to medium dynamic levels, we should never let the intensity lag. There is some serious passion here, but not the rah-rah type.
- Sam Woodyard’s interesting drum pattern is played with the hands rather than sticks, brushes, or mallets. This is a way of obtaining an intimate groove and supporting the mood created in the rest of the orchestration. Although Sam doesn’t vary the pattern at all, some deviation might be an option. But no matter how this part is approached, one thing is certain: we need consistent swing eighth notes.
- With the drums playing at a subdued dynamic level, this is a good opportunity for the bass to shine. Although I generally don’t recommend using an amplifier for this type of music (see general notes), that caveat goes double for this piece. Where chord changes are notated, the bassist may play Aaron Bell’s lines or create his or her own. Where there are no changes, I suggest playing Strayhorn’s original lines as notated.
- Although this is not a technically difficult piece by any means, it is very easy to play badly. The fewer notes on the page, the more exposed each note becomes. Dynamic balances, intonation, and perfect synchronization of swing phrasing are very important to the success of any performance of this piece. The reed duets should be expressive with slight crescendos and diminuendos where musically appropriate. I say slight so that this won’t be overdone; remember the subtle nature of the mood at hand.
- The pep section (with plunger brass) has a great opportunity to be expressive, utilizing dynamics, vibrato, and plunger manipulation. The speed of opening and closing of the plungers can change the meaning of the phrase. Generally, the plungers are opened slowly in this piece to add to the seductiveness.
- This arrangement is a great example of making an interesting three-minute piece out of two nearly identical eight-bar phrases. After the four-measure drum ostinato sets up the groove, we hear the eight-bar melody. The four-bar drum intro is then inserted before the altered and reorchestrated return of the melody at **B**. The 32-bar tenor solo has an AA A'A' form (eight measures each). At **G** it is back to the drum intro, which is followed by a fade ending using terraced dynamics.

### COMMENTS FROM WYNTON MARSALIS:

- The saxophones playing the melody must be stylized without being corny. Saxophone sixteenth notes on beat 4 should be carefully shaped and phrased.
- The pep section parts beginning at **C** are difficult to shape. Work together toward common phrasing.
- Tenor soloist: get to the piano and close to the changes!

**Preview Only**  
Legal Use Requires Purchase

CONDUCTOR

Jazz at Lincoln Center Library - Essentially Ellington  
**SUGAR RUM CHERRY**  
from "The Nutcracker Suite"

Composed by P. I. Tchaikovsky  
Arranged by Billy Strayhorn and Duke Ellington  
Transcribed by David Berger

Slow swing ♩ = 94

A

Reeds 1 Alto Sax

2 Alto Sax

3 Clarinet

4 Tenor Sax

5 Bari Sax

Trumpets 1

2

3

4

Trombones 1

2

3

Bass

Drums

Snares off - Fingers on drums

mf

HH w/foot

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral format. It features five staves for reeds (Alto Sax, Clarinet, Tenor Sax, Bari Sax), four for trumpets, three for trombones, one for bass, and one for drums. The key signature is D major (two sharps) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked 'Slow swing' with a quarter note equal to 94 beats per minute. The score begins with a rehearsal mark 'A'. The reed parts have some initial notes, while the brass parts are mostly rests. The drum part includes a 'Snares off - Fingers on drums' instruction and features triplet patterns on the snare and hi-hat.

Preview Only  
Legal Use Requires Purchase

Sugar Rum Cherry

The musical score for "Sugar Rum Cherry" (page 2) features the following parts:

- Alto:** Two staves. The top staff has a treble clef and a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The bottom staff has a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps (F#, C#), with a dynamic marking of *mf*.
- Clar.:** Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F#, C#).
- Tenor:** Treble clef, key signature of two sharps (F#, C#).
- Bari:** Treble clef, key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#).
- Tpt. 1-4:** Four staves, all with treble clefs and a key signature of two sharps (F#, C#).
- Tbn. 1-3:** Three staves, all with bass clefs and a key signature of two sharps (F#, C#).
- Bass:** Bass clef, key signature of two sharps (F#, C#).
- Dr.:** Drum set notation with a key signature of two sharps (F#, C#). It includes triplet markings over the first two measures.

B

The musical score for page 3 of 'Sugar Rum Cherry' (Section B) features the following parts and notation:

- Alto:** Two staves with treble clef and key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The top staff contains rests, while the bottom staff has a melodic line.
- Clarinet:** Treble clef, two sharps key signature. Melodic line with various note values.
- Tenor:** Treble clef, two sharps key signature. Melodic line with some rests.
- Bari:** Treble clef, two sharps key signature. Melodic line with some rests.
- Tpt. 1-4:** Four staves with treble clef and two sharps key signature. All staves contain rests.
- Tbn. 1-3:** Three staves with bass clef and two sharps key signature. All staves contain rests.
- Bass:** Bass clef, two sharps key signature. Melodic line.
- Dr.:** Drum set notation with a double bar line and a 3/4 time signature. The first measure shows a triplet of eighth notes, followed by rests and quarter notes.



Sugar Rum Cherry

**C**

Alto

Alto

Clar.

Solo D#m7-5 C#7 D#m7-5 C#7 F#m7 D#m7-5 C#7 F#m B7 E7

Tenor

Bari

Tpt. 1

Plunger w/mute  
Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa

mf

2

3

Plunger w/mute  
Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa

mf

4

Tbn. 1

mp Plunger w/mute  
Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa

mf

2

3

mp

Bass

Em A7 D7

Dr.

Sugar Rum Cherry

D

Alto

Alto

Clar.

Tenor

Bari

Tpt. 1

2

3

4

Tbn. 1

2

3

Bass

Dr.

D#m7-5 C#7 D#m7-5 C#7 F#m7 D#m7-5 C#7 F#m B7 E7

Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa

Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa

mf

mf

As is Em A7 D7

3 3

Sugar Rum Cherry

**E**

Alto

Alto

Clar.

Tenor

Bari

Tpt. 1

2

3

4

Tbn. 1

2

3

Bass

Dr.

Chords: C°, C#7, F#m, F#7, F#°, Bm6, F#m, D7, C#7-9, F#m, Ab7-9

Lyrics: Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa

Sugar Rum Cherry

F

Alto

Alto

Clar.

Tenor

Bari

Tpt. 1

2

3

4

Tbn. 1

2

3

Bass

Dr.

Sugar Rum Cherry

Alto

Alto

Clar.

Tenor

Bari

Tpt. 1

2

3

4

Tbn. 1

2

3

Bass

Dr.

Ab7 Db7 F#7 B7 C#7 C#7 F#m

Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa

Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa Wa

F#7 B7 E7 A7 F#7/B B7 Em

Solo

G

Sugar Rum Cherry

[H]

Alto

Alto

Clar.

Tenor

Bari

Tpt. 1

2

3

4

Tbn. 1

2

3

Bass

Dr.

*mf*

*mf*

*Em*

(Sxs)

3

3

Sugar Rum Cherry

Alto

Alto

Clar.

Tenor

Bari

Tpt. 1

2

3

4

Tbn. 1

2

3

Bass

Dr.

*mp*

*p*

*pp*

*mp*

*p*

*pp*

*mp*

*p*

*pp*