Jazz at Lincoln Center Library

Solitude

Composed by DUKE ELLINGTON, IRVING MILLS and HARRY CARNEY

Transcribed by MARK A. LOPEMAN

As recorded by Duke Ellington and His Orchestra on September 12, 1934

Transcribed by Mark A. Lopeman for Jazz at Lincoln Center

FULL SCORE

This transcription was made especially for *Essentially Ellington*:
The Second Annual Jazz at Lincoln Center High School Jazz Band Competition 1997.

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ESSENTIALLY ELLINGTON
Annual High School Jazz Band Competition & Festival

Jazz at Lincoln Center

Instrumentation:

Conductor
Bb Clarinet
Alto Sax 1
Alto Sax 2/Soprano Sax
Tenor Sax
Baritone Sax
Bb Trumpet 1
Bb Trumpet 2
Bb Trumpet 3
Trombone 1
Trombone 2
Trombone 3
Guitar
Piano
Bass
Drums

Original Recording Information:

Solitude by Duke Ellington (3:11)
Recorded 9/12/34, New York
The Chronological Classics 1933-35
(#646; Brunswick 6987; French)
Arthur Whetsol, Freddy Jenkins, Cootie Williams, trumpets; Joe "Tricky Sam" Nanton, Lawrence Brown, trombones; Juan Tizol, valve trombone; Barney Bigard, clarinet & tenor sax; Johnny Hodges, soprano & alto saxes; Otto Hardwick, alto & bass sax, clarinet; Harry Carney, baritone sax; Fred Guy, guitar; Wellman Braud, bass; Sonny Greer, drums. Soloist: Bigard.

Special thanks to Brent Wallarab and Jon Faddis, Scott Munson, David Schumacher, and Insomnia Music Services.

Rehearsal Notes:

- One of the instrumental combinations that Ellington used throughout his career was the trio of muted trumpet, trombone and clarinet featured in the first chorus of *Solitude* (also the well-known *Mood Indigo*). Typically the trombone is the least prominent of the three voices. The clarinet, voiced in the low register, achieves a full and "woody" quality without forcing. The intended meditative quality is enhanced by a plainness of sound and phrasing that permits the three disparate tone colors to blend into one.

- All of Ellington's sidemen played in the ensemble with dark, warm and vibrant sounds, with matched vibrato. The ensemble in the first half of the second chorus is scored with four-note chords, with the melody on the bottom of each chord. No special effort needs to be made to make the melody more prominent: however, first the melody is doubled in baritone sax and valve trombone (with Ellington, the baritone saxophone generally was extraordinarily prominent at all times); second, the more important consideration is blend.

- A similar mind set governs the ensemble in the bridge (B_2). Again, the baritone sax is one of the instruments to which the lead (melody) is assigned, and with Harry Carney (Ellington's baritone saxist), this insured that the melody would predominate. If your players can phrase together - blending and playing in tune - the effect should be fine.

- Notice the deception in the last eight measures. The ensemble appears to move towards a climax (m. 57-58), which is avoided (m. 59); only to be topped by the sudden swoop up of the saxes, led by the soprano, which culminates in the highest and loudest note in the piece (m. 60), played with great intensity.

- After this effect the end of the recorded version seems unsatisfactory and one senses that in performance Duke would have at least embellished the ending with some conclusive arpeggio or other figure.

- Time in this piece is critical. Horns must lock into the rhythm section's time; if not, the total effect will be off. Make sure students don't drag the tempo.

- Nothing will improve the ability to play Ellington's music more than listening to Ellington records. At a very minimum, it would be desirable that the students be familiar enough with Ellington's sound world to recognize the principal soloists, have a good rhythmic feel, sense of phrasing, and an overall sense of the profoundness of feeling pervading all of Ellington's work.

– Mark Lopeman & Jon Faddis

Notes from Wynton Marsalis:

Solitude, one of Ellington's greatest ballads, teaches bands how to play at a slow dance tempo. That's especially important for the rhythm section. Think of people slow dancing at a party when you play. The horn players may have a tendency to drag the tempo - they should think of sitting on top of the rhythm section instead of inside the rhythm section. The brass is challenged to play in tune with pixie/cup mutes. Practice and listen.

The baritone sax solo at letter C doesn't have to be played exactly as written (like Harry Carney played it). Ellington does some unusual voicing at letter E: he has the lower voices - the bari sax and 3rd trombone - take the lead. Make sure the entire band listens for those voices and balances accordingly. At the bridge, letter G, all the horns play exactly the same rhythm, which is a great challenge for them. Practice slowly at first and make sure that everyone's listening.

It is important to make the band aware of the change of events in the arrangement, and to explain to their various functions - call, response, harmonic background, melodic lead - at each section.

JE9717C

SOLITUDE

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Irving Mills and Harry Carney
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Ballad A

Bb Clarinet — soli — *mp*
Alto Sax. 1
Alto Sax. 2 (Soprano Sax.)
Tenor Sax.
Baritone Sax.

Trumpet 1, 2, 3 — plunger with pixie | mute in tight or very tight cup mute — soli — *mp*

Trombone 1, 2, *3 — plunger with pixie | mute in tight or very tight cup mute — soli — *mp*

Guitar — Db | Bbm sim. | Gb | Gbm Fm | Gb Fm | Fm Ebm | Db

Piano**

Bass

Drums — brushes

*** Trombone 3 is played on a valve trombone on the original recording.**
**** The bass and guitar parts are cued in the piano part.**

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