

Arrangement classes



- 2nd April 2008
- Carefully written down by Nikola Kołodziejczyk (<http://music.thinkbay.net>)
 - What can be expected here:
- Ed Partykas view on history of big-bands
- Illustrated by short music examples
 - (Basie – Moten Swing)
 - When we are talking about the composition for big band is very good to talk about the HISTORY of big bands.

Who do You listen to?



- Follow the track back from Maria Schneider
 - Count Basie and Duke Ellington – important. Ellington (died 1974) had individuals:
 - Johnny Hodges
 - Harry Carney
 - (Billy Strayhorn)

Ellington, Basie and others



- Ellington tradition is VERY closely associated with the soloists.
 - His most important recordings: Far East Suite, and Such Sweet Thunder.
- Basie – swing, groove, blues
 - Composition based on improvised riffs.
 - Collective form to arranging and composing. (Moten Swing)
 - Still very traditional, swinging, jazz-based.
 - Became very important.

West Coast



- Woody Herman
- Buddy Rich
- Stan Kenton
 - Great Leader, not so great arranger.
- Bill Holman
 - Propably the most important arranger of all time.
 - Arranged for Stan Kenton, then for himself.
 - Because- arranging style he developed in 19 50ties:
 - Crispness in writing
- After Holman:
 - Bob Florence
 - Gorden Goodwin (increasingly popular)
 - Big Bands became a music to listen to

Derived from Basie:



- Thad Jones/Mel Lewis (Vanguard Jazz Orchestra)
- Bob Brookmeyer
- Jim Mc Neely
- Maria Schneider
- Sammy Nestico – inbetween East Coast(Basie) and West Coast(Kenton)
 - He wrote in style for Basie, but it was all composed properly

Characteristics



- Rhythm
 - Still very very swing in language
- Blues Language
 - Tradition is used
- Harmonic Language
 - No flat fifths
 - Occasional Nine
 - Very Conservative
- Orchestration
 - Brass voicings are playing only four part voicings, tripled by sections.
 - Trumpet and trombones were doubling in octaves

Thad Jones (1960s)



- Flugelhorn player at Basie's
- He started the change
 - Very important because he took the Basie tradition and expanded it
 - Flat sharp 9
 - 11s, 13s
 - Trombones taking the base intervals,
 - trumpets taking extensions
 - Soprano saxophone
- Continued to develop further
 - Cherry Juice:
 - Huge step forward in history of jazz arranging
 - Basie is almost gone
 - Large intervals, anger in the brass.
 - Pieces are getting longer

Vanguard Jazz Orchestra



- Thad Jones/Mel Lewis
- Bob Brookmeyer
 - After Thad moved to Denmark to lead Danish Radio Orchestra in 78
 - Next big step
 - Took expanded harmonic world of Thad
 - Even 11 notes in the voicings
 - Guess what, some notes overlap (sharp over flat)
 - "Hello and Goodbye"
 - Rhythmic flow is conversed in bright swinging, with very colorful changes.
- 1994 – New Art Orchestra (Germany)
 - Part of a suite for Gerry Mulligan: "Jig"
 - Modal harmonic concepts

Europe now



- Great opportunities now for composers and arrangers in Europe.
- Europe is somewhat ahead of the States in some degree.
 - Bob Brookmeyer New Art Orchestra
 - Vienna Art Orchestra
 - WDR/HR/NDR Big Bands
 - Brussels Jazz Orchestra
 - Zurich Jazz Orchestra

Getting Your music played



- You have to promote Yourself
- Start Your own band
 - Nobody will make it for Yourself.
 - Basie asked Thad to make arrangements for him
 - For example Groove Merchant
 - Soprano saxophone
 - It was too modern for Basie, so he made his own band.
 - Maria Schneider too.
 - Really – everybody had to.
- If you start Your own band and invest in it, then after some effort people will ask You to write something for them.

Recent Past



- Maria Schneider
 - She was taught by Brookmeyer
 - Than she was convinced to form a band
 - First album – Evanescence
 - Flutes, Woodwinds, Modal harmony.
 - Listen to "Greenpeace"

Indepth view



- Gil Evans
 - Horizontal structures
 - Making sure that each part is interesting melodically
 - You can put very much everything harmonically if your arrangement is interesting melodically
 - Thinking in terms of tension and release, rather than blue notes
 - Leave out the 3rd, the 7th, search for sound.
 - Bill Dobbins – "Linear approach" covers it slightly.

Modern view cd.



- Counterpoint
 - Classical counterpoint is very important for jazz composing nowadays.
 - Layer melodic ideas on top of each other, even not as a counterpoint.

Form



- Becomes important
- Expanding forms
 - AABA is overused
 - "Moving rondo – ABCX BCDX CDEX" used in bigband form by Jim McNeally
 - **Simpliest form of getting out of AABA is making a vamp of some form**
 - Speed the form up or down (compression)
 - Rhythmic tricks (6-4-4, 3-4-4 bar constellations)
 - Use open parts in contrast to arranged ones.

Orchestration



- Flutes, bass clarinets, wood
- Changing the sound:
 - velvets
 - Mutes
 - FHS
- Combining colors
 - Use Different cups and instruments play one melody
- Experiment!

Modern insights cd.



- Harmonic language
 - It's getting simpler nowadays, frankly
 - Opposing to Brookmeyer's craze
- Section writing
 - Mixing example
 - In order of lines:
 - Harmon trumpet, cup trumpet, flute, clarinet
 - Flugelhorn, Trombone, Tenor sax
 - Bass Clarinet , Bass Trombone, Baritone

Beyond the frontier



- Extreme Dissonance
 - Voicings: Little rubs – many dissonances
- Extended Orchestration
 - We are products of our environment
 - Take musicians and instruments You have at hand. Write only what You know and love
- Modern (Pop/Electro)
 - "Limbic System Files"
 - New record of Ed Partyka's work
 - Concept of new sound for Big Band
 - With electronics, DJ, Drum backing tracks - all mixed with the sound of modern Big Band

Influences



- You need to find Your way
- Know the tradition
 - Explore teh beggining
 - Your music will get the weight and meaning with context, so assimilate it.

Examples



- If You like Buble's arrangers and contemporary smoothers:
- Try Nelson Riddle
 - Who wrote for Ella
 - He invented the style of vocal-backing arrangements
 - Others to see
 - Billy May
 - Gordon Jenkins