

JAZZ LINES PUBLICATIONS

Presents

BESS, YOU IS MY WOMAN NOW

AS RECORDED BY THE MILES DAVIS/GIL EVANS ORCHESTRA

ARRANGED BY GIL EVANS

PREPARED BY DYLAN CANTERBURY, ROB DUBOFF, AND JEFFREY SULTANOF

FULL SCORE

FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT

JLP-7552

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY GEORGE GERSHWIN, DUBOSE AND DOROTHY HEYWARD AND IRA GERSHWIN

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Gil Evans Biography:

Gil Evans spent his earliest years traveling around Canada with his family, as they were regularly forced to move in order to follow the availability of mining jobs for his stepfather. In 1922 the family settled in Berkeley, and it was shortly afterward that Gil first developed an interest in music, inspired by a Duke Ellington concert he had been brought to by a family friend. His training began with piano lessons, but he largely taught himself through listening to and transcribing from his record collection. While in high school he took jobs in hotels as a pianist, and after graduation he formed an ensemble that would serve as the house band for the Rendezvous Ballroom in Balboa Beach for two years; in 1937 the band relocated to Hollywood, where it provided music for Bob Hope's radio broadcasts. Through his work for Hope, Evans was hired as an arranger for Claude Thornhill's orchestra, whom he continued to work alongside until 1948 - although with an interruption of several years when World War II prompted Evans to enlist in the army.

After his discharge from the military in 1946 Evans settled in New York. His efforts with Thornhill had gained him a solid reputation in the jazz community, leading to his involvement in the Miles Davis nonet in 1948; with this group he recorded the landmark album *The Birth of Cool* between 1949 and 1950, the album being finally released in 1953. During the first half of the 1950s Evans remained largely inactive, focusing his attention on musical study while occasionally arranging for television and radio, and for singers such as Tony Bennett and Johnny Mathis. He resumed his collaboration with Miles Davis in 1956, contributing to the following year's *Miles Ahead* and continuing with several more notable recordings up through the early 1960s. His first recordings under his own name were also made during this period, which would see him established as one of the leading names in the jazz world.

In 1964 Evans had his first of two children with his second wife, and for the majority of the remainder of the 1960s he devoted himself to raising his family. When he became active again in 1969, his work reflected the emerging music of the time, integrating electric instruments into the jazz-ensemble framework. A strong interest in the music of Jimi Hendrix developed during this time, and a record of jazz arrangements of his songs would be released in 1974 after Hendrix's death brought an end to plans for an actual collaboration between the two. Regular touring of the States and Europe continued throughout the 70s and 80s, with most of his recorded output being culled from these performances; several ventures into film scoring were also made in the 1980s, including contributions to *Absolute Beginners* and *The Color of Money*. A residency at the New York club Sweet Basil was established in 1984, which continued until Evans' death in 1988.

The Music:

Miles Davis and Gil Evans, one of the greatest collaborative teams in jazz history, first teaming in 1949 on *Birth of the Cool*, a jazz landmark, began to show interest in *Porgy and Bess* in the late 1950s. Due to the success of Davis and Evans's 1957 *Miles Ahead* LP, Columbia Records, their label, allowed them more freedom in choosing material for future recording sessions. Davis had been delving deeply into modality and symphonic music and ultimately decided to take on *Porgy and Bess* in this context. Evans's unique and considerable orchestration skills and Davis's new dedication to experimentation with modality led their *Porgy and Bess* to become a landmark record in jazz history.

Joined by other like-minded collaborators such as Cannonball Adderley and Paul Chambers, Davis and Evans ultimately created what is considered a classic of orchestral jazz. Evans knew the material very well, and was able to use different musicians and instruments to ideally represent themes in the music. Davis's uniquely beautiful and evocative sound was truly an ideal vehicle to express the emotional impact the work conveys. They created something very new and different, while at the same time staying very faithful to the intentions of its creators.

The song *Bess, You Is My Woman Now* is a crucial plot point in George and Ira Gershwin's opera *Porgy and Bess*; it serves as the moment when the title characters admit and embrace their love for one another. Gil Evans's arrangement for Miles Davis creates a lushly textured atmosphere that still pays reverence to the tenderness of the original piece.

Notes to the Conductor:

The arrangement opens with the trumpet soloist "singing" the verse over the top of some soft, textural backgrounds in the woodwinds and horns. After a brief tuba and bass interlude, the melody begins at measure 16. Throughout this section, it is of utmost importance for the ensemble to observe all dynamics in order to not overwhelm the soloist. The melody continues at measure 24 with some subtle double-time background figures that set up an all-out double time feel in the ensemble at measure 32. The double time feel concludes at measure 36, where a key change re-introduces the trumpet soloist. Once again, it is important for the ensemble to play underneath the soloist throughout this section. A shift in both key and time signatures at measure 48 returns the orchestra to the introductory verse, which should be approached with just as much subtlety and intimacy as it was at the beginning.

The emotional climax of the arrangement begins at measure 56, where the full ensemble takes over the melody briefly, reaching the loudest dynamic level of the entire arrangement. After a brief statement from the trumpet soloist, the orchestra gradually tapers off to a barely audible level for the final rubato statement from the trumpet soloist. Things finish up on a surprisingly ominous note, with the trombones setting up the next movement with an almost funereal chorale at measure 77. The bass player should be advised to play the written notes and improvise a walking line where there are slashes.

Dynamics in all of Evans's music is of prime importance. Minimal miking of the flutes is recommended so that they can be heard, but they must not be louder than the brass. As has been discussed in other Jazz Lines Publications, the original parts for the *Porgy and Bess* album are for four reed players, one of which is an alto sax, the remainder doubling on woodwinds of all sizes and types. Clearly Evans wanted the sound of a brass orchestra with woodwinds as color and acoustic support; he did not conceive these settings for live performance. In the studio, the instrumental balance was worked out so that the woodwinds sounded as Gil wished. For live performances, some amplification is needed so that the alto flutes and bass flute are heard. Please do not over amplify them; they are not meant to be as loud as the brass in ensemble passages.

Doug DuBoff, Dylan Canterbury, Rob DuBoff, and Jeffrey Sultanof

- June 2016

BESS, YOU IS MY WOMAN NOW

RECORDED BY MILES DAVIS

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY GEORGE GERSHWIN,
DUBOSE AND DOROTHY HEYWARD AND IRA GERSHWIN
ARRANGED BY GIL EVANS

SCORE

SLOWLY ♩ = 60

PREPARED BY DYLAN CANTERBURY, ROB DUBOFF AND JEFFREY SULTANOF

The score is arranged for a large jazz ensemble. The instruments and their parts are as follows:

- SOLO TRUMPET OR FLUGELHORN:** Features a melodic line starting in measure 1, marked *mp*.
- WOODWIND 1: ALTO SAX:** Plays a melodic line, marked *pp* and *mf*.
- WOODWIND 2: ALTO FLUTE:** Plays a melodic line, marked *pp* and *mf*.
- WOODWIND 3: ALTO FLUTE:** Plays a melodic line, marked *pp* and *mf*.
- WOODWIND 4: BASS FLUTE/FLUTE:** Plays a melodic line, marked *pp* and *mf*.
- TRUMPET 1-4:** Four trumpets, mostly silent until measure 5, where they play chords marked *mf*.
- HORN IN F 1-3:** Three horns in F, playing a melodic line, marked *pp* and *mf*.
- TROMBONE 1-4:** Four trombones, mostly silent until measure 5, where they play chords marked *mf*.
- TUBA:** Plays a bass line, marked *pp* and *mf*.
- BASS:** Plays a bass line, marked *pp* and *mf*.
- DRUM SET:** Plays a brush pattern, marked *pp* and *mf*, with specific rhythmic notations (4) and (5) in measures 4 and 5.

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RUBATO

A TEMPO

Musical score for 'BESS, YOU IS MY WOMAN NOW' (Page 2). The score includes parts for Solo TPT., Ww. 1 (A. Sax.), Ww. 2 (A. FL.), Ww. 3 (A. FL.), Ww. 4 (B. FL.), TPT. 1-4, HN. 1-3, TBN. 1-4, Tuba, BS., and D. S. The score is divided into sections: RUBATO (measures 6-7) and A TEMPO (measures 8-9). Dynamic markings include *pp* and *mp*. Performance instructions include 'TO HARMON MUTE' for the trumpet parts. The Solo TPT. part features a triplet in measure 6. The woodwind and horn parts have melodic lines with slurs and ties. The bass and drums provide a steady accompaniment.

10

FREELY A TEMPO

SOLO TRPT.

Ww. 1 (A. Sax.)

Ww. 2 (A. FL.)

Ww. 3 (A. FL.)

Ww. 4 (B. FL.)

HN. 1

HN. 2

HN. 3

TBN. 1

TBN. 2

TBN. 3

TBN. 4

TUBA

BS.

D. S.

10 11 12 13 14 15