

JAZZ LINES PUBLICATIONS

*Presents*

**NUTCRACKER SUITE**

**(7. DANCE OF THE MIRLITONS)**

RECORDED BY THE GLENN MILLER ORCHESTRA

ARRANGED BY DAVE WOLPE

**FULL SCORE**

JLP-7962

MUSIC BY PETER ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

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THE JAZZ LINES FOUNDATION INC.

PO Box 1236

SARATOGA SPRINGS NY 12866 USA

# GLENN MILLER ORCHESTRA SERIES

## NUTCRACKER SUITE (7. DANCE OF THE MIRLITONS) (1997)

### **Glenn Miller Biography:**

“A band ought to have a sound all of its own. It ought to have a personality.” – Glenn Miller

Alton Glenn Miller was born in Clarinda, Iowa on March 1, 1904. But it was in North Platte, Nebraska, several years later that Glenn actually got his musical start when, one day, his father brought home a mandolin. Glenn promptly traded it for an old battered horn, which he practiced every chance he got. In fact his mother worried, “It got to where Pop and I used to wonder if he’d ever amount to anything.”

In 1923, Miller entered the University of Colorado, although he spent more time traveling to auditions and playing where and whenever he could. After flunking three of his five courses one semester, Glenn dropped out to concentrate on his career as a professional musician.

He toured with several orchestras and ended up in Los Angeles where he landed a spot in Ben Pollack’s group, a band that included a guy named Benny Goodman. Here, Miller also got the chance to write some arrangements. Arriving in New York City, he soon sent for, and married his college sweetheart, Helen Burger in 1928, and for the next three years, earned his living as a free-lance trombonist and arranger.

Miller played and recorded with the likes of Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey (who on several of their records, featured an up-and-coming singer by the name of Bing Crosby), Gene Krupa, Eddie Condon and Coleman Hawkins. In addition, during that time, Glenn cut 18 sides for Goodman, and also worked for radio studio conductors like Victor Young, Carl Fenton and Jacques Renard. In 1934, Miller became the musical director of the Dorsey Band, and later went on to organize The Ray Noble Orchestra, which included such players as Charlie Spivak, Peewee Erwin, Bud Freeman, Johnny Mince, George Van Eps and Delmar Kaplan, among others.

In April 1935, Glenn Miller recorded, for the first time, under his own name. Using six horns, a rhythm section and a string quartet, he recorded *Moonlight on the Ganges* and *A Blues Serenade* for Columbia. But selling only a few hundred records, he continued his position with the Noble Orchestra. In 1937, Glenn Miller stepped out to form his own band. There were a few recordings — one for Decca and one for Brunswick — a couple of week-long stints in New Orleans and Dallas, and many one-nighters, but it was not to be. Though the group would play one more date several days later in Bridgeport, Connecticut, Glenn gave his men their final notice on New Year’s Eve at the Valencia Ballroom in York, Pennsylvania. Broke, depressed and having no idea what he was going to do, he returned to New York City.

It is said that Miller could never remember precisely the moment he decided to emphasize his new reed section sound. But it was during this disheartening interim, that he realized the unique sound — produced by the clarinet holding the melodic line while the tenor sax plays the same note, and supported harmonically by three other saxophones — just might be the individual and easily recognizable style that would set his band apart from all the rest.

Formed in March 1938, the second Glenn Miller Orchestra — which would later include the likes of Tex Beneke, Marion Hutton, Ray Eberle, Paul Tanner, Johnny Best, Hal McIntyre, and Al Klinck — soon began breaking attendance records all up and down the East Coast. At the New York State Fair in Syracuse it attracted the largest dancing crowd in the city’s history. The next night it topped Guy Lombardo’s all-time record at the Hershey Park Ballroom in Pennsylvania. The Orchestra was invited by ASCAP to perform at Carnegie Hall with three of the greatest bands ever — Paul Whiteman, Fred Waring and Benny Goodman — and created more of a stir than any of them.



There were record-breaking recordings, as well, such as *Tuxedo Junction*, which sold 115,000 copies in the first week. *In the Mood*, and *Pennsylvania 6-5000*, all appearing on the RCA Victor Bluebird label. In early 1940, *Down Beat Magazine* announced that Miller had topped all other bands in its Sweet Band Poll, and capping off this seemingly sudden rise to the top, there was, of course, *Glenn Miller's Moonlight Serenade* radio series for Chesterfield cigarettes which aired three times a week over CBS. In 1941, it was off to Hollywood where the band worked on its first movie, *Sun Valley Serenade*, which introduced the song — and soon-to-be million selling record — *Chattanooga Choo Choo*, and featured the Modernaires and the Nicholas Brothers. Then came *Orchestra Wives*. But the war was starting to take its toll on many of the big bands as musicians, and the rest of country's young men, began receiving draft notices.

On October 7, 1942, Alton Glenn Miller reported for induction into the Army and was immediately assigned to the Army Specialist Corps. His appointment as a Captain came after many months of convincing the military higher-ups that he could modernize the army band and ultimately improve the morale of the men. His training complete, he was transferred into the Army Air Corps, where he ultimately organized the Glenn Miller Army Air Force Band. Miller's goal of entertaining the fighting troops took another year to be realized, but in late 1943 he and the band were shipped out to England.

There, in less than one year, the Glenn Miller Army Air Force Band engaged in over 800 performances. Of these, 500 were broadcasts heard by millions. There were more than 300 personal appearances including concerts and dances, with a gross attendance of over 600,000. But Glenn was not to participate in the final six months of these activities.

In the Fall of 1944, the band was scheduled to be sent on a six-week tour of Europe and would be stationed in Paris during that time. Miller decided to go ahead, in order to make the proper arrangements for the group's arrival. And so, on December 15th, Glenn Miller boarded a transport plane to Paris, never to be seen again.

In his book *Glenn Miller & His Orchestra*, George Simon wrote this about the man: "His favorite author was Damon Runyon. His favorite book was the Bible. Spencer Tracy and Olivia de Havilland were his favorite movie actor and actress. His big loves were trout fishing, playing baseball, listening to good music, sleep and money. His pet hates were bad swing, early-morning telephone calls (he liked to sleep from 4 am to noon), and the phrase 'goodbye now.' His favorite quotation, one he stated, was not from the Bible, nor from Runyon, but from Duke Ellington: 'It Don't Mean a Thing If it Ain't Got that Swing!'"

## **Background:**

*(from the liner notes to the LaserLight CD release)*

At last...and so long overdue...the 'sound' and the 'swing' of the Glenn Miller Band of the forties...the songs and holiday joys of Christmas...a celebration by dedicated alumni of the Glenn Miller Orchestra. A Tribute.

It's over eighty years since the immortal Glenn Miller disappeared just before Christmas on December 15, 1944. His Orchestra, in the too-short run under his personal leadership, had recorded only one Christmas song (*Jingle Bells*, October 20, 1941). Dedicated fans around the world are certain that had he lived through World War II, he would have recorded a complete album of the best-loved music of the holiday season.

It's over fifty years now since the original idea for this collection took root. It was no brainstorm dreamed up by marketing experts, no conclusion reached after a survey of potential sales with no great anticipation of financial rewards. The seed for this memorial was planted on a band bus — the Glenn Miller Orchestra bus — circa the late 1960s. Dale Thompson and Richy Barz, then members of the road band (Buddy De Franco was the leader) were sitting next to each other. As often happened, the conversation got around to the "What-do-you-think-Glenn-would-be-recording-now-if-he-was-still-around?" stage. One or the other sputtered: "How about an album of Christmas songs?"

Through the years though, that big band bus and similar conveyances that carried the Glenn Miller Orchestra (kept alive and swinging and ever-popular under the aegis of the late David Mackay, Glenn's attorney, and his son, David Mackay, Jr.) acted as a 'cocoon' while the idea blossomed. Every musician who toured with those Miller organizations was inoculated with the dream including John La Barbera, one of the trumpet players on that same bus.

As time passed, the feeling for such an album grew and grew and grew.

Two decades later, Richard Wilhoyte, one of the horde of Glenn Miller buffs around the world, heard about it all from Dale. His instant reaction: "Let's do it...now!"

So the 'WBLT' combination came together and took hold. (No, 'WBLT' is not diner shorthand for "with bacon, lettuce, and tomato." It simply stands for Wilhoyte, Barz, La Barbera)

and Thompson.) A list of desirable players was drawn up. There were a few requisites: musicians had to be working currently, only alumni of the Glenn Miller Orchestra would be recruited, each individual had to have recognized and outstanding talent, each veteran had to be able to take a leave-of-absence from his current gig, and, of course, be available to come to New York to record.

The reaction from each and every alumnus called was immediate, “Of course! Count me in. When? Where?” So they headed from Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., Nashville, Pittsburgh, Florida, Rochester, Eastern Pennsylvania, and Sydney, Australia to join the players already in New York City.

The average age of this band was about 40, the length of time each player performed with the Glenn Miller Orchestra ranges from six months to seven years. Larry O’Brien (originally with the Miller unit led by Ray McKinley) was himself the leader just a few seasons back, and was once again. The experience involved in recreating the authentic Miller sound totalled more than 102 years. Familiarity. Feeling. Lasting enthusiasm. Wish fulfillment. A reunion. Dedication. Commitment. A celebration of the past and present.

Look at the repertoire here. 21 Christmas standards that were around when Glenn was still alive and more recent compositions he might have recorded if he had not been lost. Plus a brand-new contribution, by members of this group – the title song of the album.

*In the Christmas Mood* - 65 minutes of musical memories, of good cheer, of the most enduring sound of the Swing Era big bands arranged and performed by alumni of the Glenn Miller Orchestra - the collection that each Miller Orchestra member is certain is the album Glenn Miller would have recorded....if only he had had the time.

This is music that will live forever. Orchestral and vocal magnificence. Gratification. Joy!

The first recording, *In the Christmas Mood*, was released under the LaserLight label in 1991. It was so successful that a second recording, *In the Christmas Mood II*, was produced and later released in 1993. Then, in 1997, *In the Nutcracker Mood* was released featuring big band adaptations of the Tchaikovsky classic ballet accompanied by other holiday favorites. By the close of the Christmas season of 1996, *In the Christmas Mood* received a Platinum Record Award (sales exceeded 1,000,000 units) and *In the Christmas Mood II* received a Gold Record Award (sales exceeded 500,000 units) and eventually all three recordings have sold over 3,000,000 units.

### **Acknowledgements:**

We would like to thank Dale Thompson, the family of the late Dave Wolpe, and WBLT, LLC for granting us permission to publish this arrangement.

From the Glenn Miller CD 'In the Nutcracker Mood'

# NUTCRACKER SUITE

(7. Dance of the Mirlitons)

PETER ILYICH TSCHAIKOWSKY

Arranged by Dave Wolpe

## SCORE

**(MODERATELY)**  
♩ = 116

The score is arranged for a jazz ensemble. The saxophone section (1st and 2nd Eb Alto, Tenor, and Baritone) plays a melodic line with dynamics ranging from *mf* to *f*. The brass section (1st-4th Trumpet and Trombone) provides harmonic support with a 'To Cup' instruction. The guitar and piano parts feature complex chord voicings such as  $B^b$ ,  $F$ ,  $GMIN7^{(65)}$ ,  $C^7$ ,  $C^9$ ,  $F$ ,  $B^bM1^6$ ,  $G^7$ , and  $C^9$ . The bass line includes a 'SOCK' instruction, and the drums play a 'SIMILE' pattern.

