

JAZZ LINES PUBLICATIONS

Presents

THE JEFFREY SULTANOF MASTER EDITION

ARABESQUE

AS RECORDED BY THE HARRY JAMES ORCHESTRA

ARRANGED BY JACK MATTHIAS

EDITED BY JEFFREY SULTANOF

FULL SCORE

FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT

JLP-8731

MUSIC BY CLAUDE DEBUSSY

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ARABESQUE – NOTES

Background:

Harry James was leading a not-too-successful dance orchestra despite having excellent singers such as Frank Sinatra and later Dick Haymes. James' ex-boss Benny Goodman had invested in James' orchestra, and by early 1941 asked for his money back as he thought that if he waited, there would be no money left. James had added a string quartet to his orchestra in January of that year, and his popularity was about to soar – he recorded an old song that displayed none of the virtuosic technique he had, or the jazz sensibility he'd shown on numerous Goodman records and with his own band, just his huge, beautiful sound ringing out on *You Made Me Love You*. The record became one of the few million sellers of that era. Movies and sponsored radio shows followed, and suddenly Harry James had one of the most popular bands in show business, big enough to rival Glenn Miller's band. In fact, when Miller disbanded to join the army, it was the James organization that Glenn recommended to take his place on the Chesterfield radio show.

The Music:

By 1941, James employed such arrangers as Jimmy Mundy, Gray Rains, Alvin (Leroy) Holmes, and Dave Matthews, but his chief arranger for several years was Jack Matthias (1915-1987). Very little is known about this fine arranger/composer. We do know that he played piano for the Jerry Blaine Orchestra in 1937, wrote for James starting in 1940, was president of ASMA (American Society of Music Arrangers) in the late 1950s, and was given arranging credit for the piano/vocal publication of Frank Sinatra's hit "That's Life" in 1964, something rarely done for sheet music.

Harry James' main motivation for additions to his book was simple: if he liked something, he wanted to play it. He later commented about this in the liner notes to one of his last albums, where he said that his band played country songs if they were good, and that he didn't care about categorization. In putting together his book with strings, James balanced pop songs with original pieces and adaptations of classical music. *Arabesque* was a popular piano piece by then, composed between 1888 and 1891. *Clair de Lune* was also arranged for the James orchestra, as well as *Golliwog's Cakewalk*. It is believed that Matthias arranged *Arabesque* and *Clair de Lune*, and Alec Wilder arranged *Golliwog's Cakewalk*.

The instrumentation of this arrangement was for single strings, four reeds, six brass including James and rhythm section, suggesting that the setting was made early in 1941. By the time of the August 4, 1941 recording of *Arabesque*, James had added another trumpet to the orchestra, but did not alter the orchestration of this piece; perhaps he recorded it as an afterthought, just as Benny Goodman recorded Jimmy Mundy's *Cherry* at the tail end of a Columbia session (and this was an arrangement Benny didn't even like!). There are no surviving airchecks of *Arabesque*, and the Columbia recording was never issued. There are two possible reasons:

- 1) It ran over four minutes and was far too long for a 10" 78 (there is even a cut in the recording, from bars 73-90, which is a D.C). It would have to have been released on a 12" 78, something Columbia was probably loath to do even for James. The larger-sized record could not be used in jukeboxes, and James did not have a "B" side for a possible release. It was finally issued on an unauthorized CD emanating from France.
- 2) The performance is tentative and does not show off the orchestra at its best.

The original score does not seem to exist, and the parts were missing a 3rd trumpet part. To prepare this setting for publication, the 3rd was transcribed from the recording.

Notes to the Conductor:

First the good news: Matthias arranged this piece in a very straightforward manner that serves the music well. Now the bad news: To remain true to the music, he kept the original keys of E and A Major for this arrangement (wisely, he creates a key change at letter E to C Major for ease of reading, since the original music has accidentals at this point).

The first thing that I thought of when I examined the original parts of this setting was *intonation problems*. Writing woodwind and brass parts in the keys of F# and B Major when strings were present was asking for trouble (and note the saxophones at letter G). Most professional musicians in big bands did not have the best of instruments, and had to 'humor' notes to get them in tune. The James reed players didn't have clarinets in A, the choice to this day for orchestral compositions written in keys with sharps. So intonation is the main challenge here, with balance so that the low clarinet parts don't get swallowed up a close second; try to have at least 8-12 strings for best effect.

Since this arrangement was clearly written to be danced to (and if you are not convinced, look at the bass and drum parts), please resist the temptation to add rubatos.

Jeffrey Sultanof

-April 2010

SCORE

ARABESQUE

(RECORDED BY HARRY JAMES)

MUSIC BY CLAUDE DEBUSSY
ARRANGED BY JACK MATTHIAS
EDITED BY JEFFREY SULTANOF

(A) MODERATELY ♩ = 100

The score is arranged for a jazz ensemble. The woodwinds (Clarinets 1-3 and Bass Clarinet) play a melodic line starting in the third measure. The strings (Violins 1-2, Viola, and Cello) provide harmonic support with sustained notes and triplets. The guitar and piano play chords and rhythmic patterns, with the piano featuring a 'SOLI' section. The bass and drum set provide the rhythmic foundation, with the bass playing a steady eighth-note pattern and the drums using brushes.

Instrument parts include:
 CLARINET 1 / ALTO SAX. 1
 CLARINET 2 / ALTO SAX. 2
 CLARINET 3 / TENOR SAX. 3
 BASS CLARINET 4 / BARITONE SAX. 4
 TRUMPET 1
 TRUMPET 2
 TRUMPET 3
 TROMBONE 1
 TROMBONE 2
 TROMBONE 3
 VIOLIN 1
 VIOLIN 2
 VIOLA
 CELLO
 GUITAR
 PIANO
 BASS
 DRUM SET

Chord symbols: $F^{\#}m$, B^9

Performance markings: (SOLI), (BRUSHES), (Acco), mp , mp , mp , mp , (4)

Measure numbers: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral layout. The instruments and their parts are as follows:

- Cl. 1:** Features a melodic line with triplets and a *mp* dynamic marking.
- Cl. 2:** Features a sustained note with a *mp* dynamic marking.
- Cl. 3:** Features a sustained note with a *mp* dynamic marking.
- Bs. Cl. 4:** Features a sustained note with a *mp* dynamic marking.
- Vln. 1 & 2:** Feature sustained notes with a *p* dynamic marking.
- Vla.:** Features a sustained note with a *p* dynamic marking.
- Vlc.:** Features a sustained note with a *p* dynamic marking.
- Gtr.:** Features a rhythmic pattern with chords: E, C#m, E, C#m, F#m, C#m.
- PNO.:** Features a rhythmic pattern with chords: E, C#m, E, C#m, F#m, C#m.
- BASS:** Features a rhythmic pattern.
- D. S.:** Features a rhythmic pattern with a ⁽⁴⁾ marking.

The score is divided into measures 7 through 12. Measure 11 includes a ⁽⁴⁾ marking above the double bass staff.

This musical score is for the piece "Arabesque" and is page 4 of the score. It features a variety of instruments: Clarinet 1, Clarinet 2, Clarinet 3, Bass Clarinet 4, Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, Violoncello, Guitar, Piano, Bass, and Drums. The score is written in a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a common time signature. The woodwinds and strings have melodic lines with dynamic markings such as "Cresc." and "p". The strings include triplets and slurs. The guitar and piano parts are primarily accompaniment, with the piano part including chordal structures and bass lines. The guitar part includes a section labeled "A" and "F#9". The drums part shows a steady rhythmic pattern. The score is divided into measures 13 through 18.