

JAZZ LINES PUBLICATIONS

Presents

SABRE DANCE

AS WRITTEN FOR THE CLAUDE THORNHILL ORCHESTRA

ARRANGED BY GIL EVANS

PREPARED BY JEFFREY SULTANOF AND ROB DUBOFF

FULL SCORE

FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT

JLP-7198

MUSIC BY ARAM KHACHATURIAN

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SABRE DANCE (1947)

Background:

In many ways, Claude Thornhill led an avant-garde society dance band. Like such leaders as Henry King and Ted Fio Rito, he played piano as his ensemble accompanied him. More often than not, the tempos were slow to medium, and the music styled for dancing. In the early years, the ensemble was known as a 'sweet' band that sometimes played more ambitious music. Even Gil Evans's settings of *There's a Small Hotel* and *I Don't Know Why (I Just Do)* could have been played by King or Fio Rito.

When Thornhill re-formed his orchestra after serving in the Navy, Evans rejoined and became musical director. The band continued the format that had made it successful before the war, but Evans had grown musically, and his scores were more challenging. Within the framework of piano/leader accompanied by orchestra, Evans created some of his most impressive work. Some of his scores incorporated bebop, improvised solos from the instrumentalists in the band and harsh dissonances; some were ambitious such as Evans's interpretations of classical themes such as *Spanish Dance*, *Arab Dance*, *La Paloma*, *Maids of Cadiz*, *The Troubador*, and this arrangement of *Sabre Dance*. Eventually Thornhill became disenchanted with Evans' experiments, and by 1948, Evans left.

The Music:

There were a number of adaptations of classical pieces in the band's book; *Arab Dance* from *The Nutcracker Suite* was written in 1941 but recorded in 1946. Pieces by Schumann, Delibes, Mussorgsky, Grieg, and Brahms were also arranged for the band. This adaptation of Aram Khachaturian's *Sabre Dance* from the 1942 ballet *Gayane* was probably written sometime in 1947 for the performance and radio broadcast at the Glen Island Casino of that same year. It appears that this arrangement was never performed.

Notes to the Conductor:

This turns out to be one of Evans's more difficult and complex arrangements for Thornhill. As with much of Evans's music, instrumental blending and shading are crucial to making this music sound right. Often instruments are unexpectedly paired together. As such, the musicians need to be sensitive to whom their playing with and work to blend rather than cut through the sound. All dynamics should be exaggerated: pianissimo should be barely heard; fortissimo should be very loud. Contrast is one of the main ingredients in Gil Evans's writing. The guitar part has been modified from the original: often Gil Evans wrote unplayable voicings for the guitar; these have been altered to make them playable. In addition, optional alternate parts for the two Horns in F have been included (trumpet 4/trombone 3); however, it is strongly recommended that this arrangement be performed as-written.

Jeffrey Sultanof Rob DuBoff

-January 2015

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Picc.
Fl.
2 Fl.
Wd. 1 (Cl.)
Wd. 2 (Cl.)
Wd. 3 (T. Sax.)
Wd. 4 (T. Sax.)
Wd. 5 (B. Sax.)
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1
Hn. 2
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tuba
Gtr.
Pno.
Bs.
Dr.

This musical score page includes the following parts and details:

- Picc.**: Piccolo part with melodic lines and slurs.
- Fl.**: Flute part with melodic lines and slurs.
- 2 Fl.**: Second Flute part with melodic lines and slurs.
- Ww 1 (Cl.)**, **Ww 2 (Cl.)**: Clarinet parts with melodic lines and slurs.
- Ww 3 (T Sax)**, **Ww 4 (T Sax)**: Tenor Saxophone parts with melodic lines and slurs.
- Ww 5 (B. Sax)**: Baritone Saxophone part with a lower melodic line.
- Trpt. 1**, **Trpt. 2**, **Trpt. 3**: Trumpet parts with melodic lines and slurs.
- Hn. 1**, **Hn. 2**: Horn parts with melodic lines and slurs.
- Tbn. 1**, **Tbn. 2**: Trombone parts with melodic lines and slurs. Includes markings for **GLISS.** and **(OPEN)**.
- Tuba**: Tuba part with rests and measure numbers (4) and (7).
- Gtr.**: Guitar part with rests and measure numbers (4) and (7).
- PNO.**: Piano part with rests and measure numbers (4) and (7).
- Bs.**: Bass part with rests and measure numbers (4) and (7).
- Dr.**: Drum part with rests and measure numbers (4) and (7).