

# JAZZ LINES PUBLICATIONS

*Presents*

THE JEFFREY SULTANOF MASTER EDITION

## MOON DREAMS

AS RECORDED BY CLAUDE THORNHILL

ARRANGED BY GIL EVANS

EDITED BY JEFFREY SULTANOF

## FULL SCORE

FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT

JLP-8122

WORDS BY JOHNNY MERCER  
MUSIC BY CHUMMY MACGREGOR

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JAZZ LINES PUBLICATIONS

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# MOON DREAMS - NOTES

## Background

The Claude Thornhill Orchestra was an ensemble that had a unique approach: a vibrato-less sound mass as support for the leader's piano stylings. Not that Thornhill didn't like adventurous music (he'd composed a piece in 1941 called **Portrait of a Guinea Farm** which was pretty advanced). But by 1947, he wanted a more straight-forward band that played ballads and music for dancing.

After the war Thornhill virtually turned over the ensemble to Gil Evans with regard to its musical direction, showing up for work but little else. Evans was going through a period of self-study: going to the New York Public Library and borrowing records and scores of the music of Prokofiev, Stravinsky, Bartok and a particular favorite, Ernest Bloch (composer of the cello concerto **Schlomo**). Between arranging pop songs and commissioning scores from the top young arrangers of the day, such as Gerry Mulligan, George Russell and John Carisi, he was expanding his musical vision by arranging Charlie Parker and Miles Davis bebop lines and incorporating his expanding musical vocabulary into his scores for the band. This can certainly be seen in part of a ballad medley of **Easy Living, Everything Happens to Me**, and **Moon Dreams**.

## The Music

Instrumentation for this setting is: 3 flutes, clarinet, alto sax (dbl. clarinet 2), 2 tenor saxes (1st dbl. clarinet 3, 2nd dbl. bass clarinet 1) baritone sax (dbl. bass clarinet 2), 3 trumpets, 2 French horns, 2 trombones, tuba, guitar, piano, bass, drums). Recognizing that not all band directors have access to French horns and a tuba, a set of alternate parts have been included that substitute trumpet 4 and trombone 3 for the 2 French horns and trombone 4 for the tuba.

For a brief period in mid-1947, the Thornhill Orchestra included three flutes, and this medley can be dated based on the inclusion of these instruments (the arrangement can be played without them). Evans makes the most of the flutes in this setting; they add another color and a shimmering, velvety top to the ensemble sound. At the same time, the last part of **Moon Dreams** has to be one of the most complex pieces written for a dance band in the ensemble's history. One wonders whether the entire medley was played in public, or simply cut at bar 40. It was not recorded during Evans' life; however, recently the Dutch Jazz Orchestra recorded the complete medley on their release **Moon Dreams: Rediscovering the Music of Gil Evans and Gerry Mulligan**.

**Moon Dreams** was clearly an important musical milestone for Gil Evans. There is strong evidence to suggest that it was the first arrangement written for the Miles Davis Nonet (later to be called the **Birth of the Cool** ensemble). This is the only Evans arrangement for the **Birth of the Cool** session with a clarinet part, as he originally wanted Danny Polo from the Thornhill band to be included (the alto sax part is an exact transposition of the clarinet part). Evans chose an already-written setting to modify for the smaller ensemble, partly to show the other arrangers how to approach the instrumentation of the ensemble (the goal being to get the Thornhill sound with a smaller group). That he would have revisited the complex final eighteen bars of **Moon Dreams** says a lot for Evans' continual re-thinking and revising his own work, as he would later on with different versions of **Jambangle, Blues for Pablo**, and **La Nevada**.

## Notes for the Conductor

Those who know ***Moon Dreams*** from the Miles Davis Nonet recordings are in for some wonderful surprises. The full band version is even more lovely and colorful than for the smaller group. It is also more difficult, primarily because the larger ensemble demands different sensibilities from the players as well as the conductor.

The first thing that must be dealt with is the balance of the ensemble itself. Have the ensemble play the first chord and hold it, listening for any instruments that stick out. Once the conductor fixes the balance, proceed to the next chord. The conductor can choose any held chord in the piece as a warm-up any time the piece is rehearsed so that the ensemble can be reminded of the Thornhill sound.

As has been pointed out elsewhere in notes for other Evans/Thornhill arrangements in this series, Evans wrote contrapuntally vs. chordally, considering the line first. Musicians have commented that one of the reasons they love playing his arrangements is because he writes interesting parts that cross at times (look at most trombone parts he wrote for Thornhill). At the same time, he frequently wrote a five-part harmony that was doubled an octave below, creating some striking soft dissonances. The only way to deal with these is to have your students listen carefully as well as maintain accurate tuning. In an age where ensembles have played Bob Brookmeyer and Maria Schneider, this should not be too difficult.

The last eighteen bars are pure counterpoint, and should be rehearsed in groups with the same musical lines (marking up the score with different color highlighters might be useful). The groupings of five must be played evenly.

## Acknowledgements

Writer/Editor/Professor Walter van de Leur, whose editions of the music of Billy Strayhorn are among the most important documents in the modern era of historically and musically accurate jazz ensemble editions, was kind enough to forward his edition of the ***Easy Living, Everything Happens to Me*** and ***Moon Dreams*** medley that he prepared for the Dutch Jazz Orchestra. Even though he and I came to very different conclusions at times based on Evans' score (and I was able to locate a copy of the original based on information Walter supplied), his 'second opinion' was invaluable.

A score of the nonet version of ***Moon Dreams*** is available in the publication ***Birth of the Cool***, published by Hal Leonard (HL-00672452), edited from the original parts in Evans' hand. Parts are available from Jazz Lines Publications (JLP-8010).

**Jeffrey Sultanof**

- ***October 2009***

SCORE

**MOON DREAMS**  
(AS PERFORMED BY CLAUDE THORNHILL)

WORDS BY JOHNNY MERCER  
MUSIC BY CHUMMY MACGREGOR  
ARRANGED BY GIL EVANS  
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(A) SLOWLY ♩ = 70

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This musical score is for the piece "Moon Dreams" and is page 5 of the score. It is arranged for a large ensemble including woodwinds, brass, and piano. The score is written in 4/4 time and features a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The music is divided into measures 5, 6, 7, and 8. Dynamics such as *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *f* (forte) are indicated throughout. The piano part includes a section marked "(Solo)" in measure 8. The bass line includes a section marked "(B)" in measure 8. The guitar part provides harmonic support with chords such as Gma7, G6, A6, G6, Em9, Dma9, F#m7, Ebma9, Dma9, and D6.

FL. 1  
FL. 2  
FL. 3  
CL.  
A. Sx.  
T. Sx. 1  
T. Sx. 2  
B. Sx.  
Tpt. 1  
Tpt. 2  
Tpt. 3  
Tpt. 4  
Hn. 1  
Hn. 2  
Tbn. 1  
Tbn. 2  
Tbn. 3  
Tbn. 4  
Tuba  
Gtr.  
PNO  
BASS  
D. S.

5 6 7 8