Jazz Lines Publications

Presents

FOR ALL WE KNOW

ARRANGED BY ROB MCCONNELL

PREPARED FOR PUBLICATION BY ROB DUBOFF, DYLAN CANTERBURY, AND JEFFREY SULTANOF

FULL SCORE

JLP-60107

Words by Sam M. Lewis
Music by J. Fred Coots

This Arrangement Has Been Published with the Authorization of the Estate of Rob McConnell.

FOR ALL WE KNOW (2002)

Background:

Rob McConnell was one of the finest composer/arrangers of the 20th century. And his is a unique story. As writer/lyricist Gene Lees (himself a Canadian) once told me, "Rob is one of very few people born in Canada who is known all over the world who didn't have to go anywhere else to become famous. Musicians such as Oscar Peterson and Kenny Wheeler, and actors such as William Shatner and Lorne Greene became famous by touring or moving to the U.S. or England. Rob stayed home for the most part." And became a musical legend!

McConnell was born in Toronto in 1935 and took up the slide trombone in high school (later switching to the valve trombone). He studied with Gordon Delamont, a legendary educator and author of several books on theory, arranging and composition that are still in use. McConnell once gave an interview stating that he and Delamont had a highly contentious relationship, Delamont wanting McConnell to do something his way, with McConnell refusing.

McConnell came to New York in 1963 and worked with several bands, most notably with fellow Canadian Maynard Ferguson, who was leading a popular big band at the time. Instead of staying, he returned to Toronto to become part of the active studio musician pool for recordings, radio and television. The Boss Brass was originally made up of trumpets, trombones, French horns and rhythm section, and focused more on pop songs than jazz. Its first album was released by RCA Canada in 1968. By 1971, a saxophone section was added, and by 1976, the ensemble had 22 musicians. The band made several albums which were only available in Canada. Despite the lack of widespread availability, copies were heard by musicians all over the world, and word was soon out that an incredible big band was making striking, original music, played by Toronto's finest musicians. By 1979, some of these albums finally found distribution in the United States. From that time on, McConnell was encouraged to tour, but he always refused given the huge expense of carrying all those players, and his insistence on working with his regular ensemble instead of using substitutes. In 1981, a gig on the west coast was arranged, and resulted in many appearances at clubs, concerts and festivals all over the world. These were usually sellouts.

McConnell won five Juno Awards, three Grammy Awards, was elected to the Canadian Hall of Fame in 1997, and was made an officer of the Order of Canada in 1998. He lived and worked in Toronto except for a brief period in 1988 when he moved to Los Angeles to teach at the Dick Grove School of Music. In the last years of his life, he concentrated on a tentet rather than the large band. He continued to play and write until he passed away from liver cancer in 2010.

McConnell's music runs the gamut of emotions, from wildly funny to very romantic. It is quirky and often goes in unexpected directions, but it always knows where it is going. His manuscripts are clean and meticulous, and his work is inventive, inspiring, surprising, and always swinging.

Jeffrey Sultanof

- October 2021

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RECORDED BY THE ROB MCCONNELL TENTET

SCORE

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