

*Presents*

JAZZ LINES PUBLICATIONS  
**BLUES IN THE DARK**

ARRANGED BY OLIVER NELSON

PREPARED BY DYLAN CANTERBURY AND ROB DUBOFF

**FULL SCORE**

JLP-9973

COMPOSED BY JIMMY RUSHING AND COUNT BASIE

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THIS ARRANGEMENT HAS BEEN PUBLISHED WITH THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE ESTATE OF OLIVER NELSON.

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THE JAZZ LINES FOUNDATION INC.

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## **BLUES IN THE DARK (1967)**

### **Background:**

Oliver Edward Nelson was born on June 4, 1932 in St. Louis, into a musical family, as is often the case with jazz greats. His brother was a saxophonist who played with Cootie Williams and his sister was a singing pianist as well. He began to learn piano as a child, moving on to saxophone a few years later, and eventually played in what were then called “territory bands” in the St. Louis area. Johnny Hodges was his idol and he worked hard at becoming proficient at the alto saxophone before joining Louis Jordan’s big band as an altoist and arranger as the 1950s began. During the bulk of the decade he served in the Marines in the Far East and then returned to St. Louis to study music. It was during these years that he was exposed to many kinds of music, apparently being especially moved by the Tokyo Philharmonic, and his endlessly curious and fertile mind was stimulated to begin creating what would be some of the greatest music in jazz history.

The next few years were extremely productive, as Nelson spent a lot of time in New York City, working as the house arranger at the legendary Apollo Theater, playing with Erskine Hawkins, Wild Bill Davis, Louie Bellson, Quincy Jones, and briefly with Duke Ellington and Count Basie, and leading several small group sessions for Prestige, which featured greats such as Kenny Dorham, Eric Dolphy, Roy Haynes, and others. His growing mastery of writing and arranging led to what was to become his crowning achievement, 1961’s *The Blues and the Abstract Truth*.

When one listens to this timeless, phenomenal album, the beauty of *Stolen Moments*, the first and most famous track, instantly captivates, and starts the listener on a journey that is rarely equaled in the canon of jazz. The style and harmonies used on this record became Nelson’s trademarks, combining rare originality and developing brilliance. As amazing as the compositions and orchestrations are, one is also enthralled by the lineup that seemingly only Oliver Nelson could assemble: Eric Dolphy, Freddie Hubbard, Bill Evans, Paul Chambers, and Roy Haynes, with George Barrow on baritone. A true all-star lineup; incredible virtuosity and diversity of styles, and with everyone in their prime. Building a lineup like this truly speaks to Oliver Nelson’s ambition and dedication to creating truly unique and original sounds. Jazz Lines Publications is extraordinarily proud to publish this record’s arrangements in their entirety, engraved from the original arrangements hand-written by Oliver Nelson.

Later in 1961 he recorded *Afro-American Sketches*, his first full recording of original big band material, exploring racial and political themes which would always mean a great deal to him. In 1967 he recorded the ambitious *Musical Tribute to John F. Kennedy: The Kennedy Dream*, a big band recording devoted to J.F.K. and using excerpts of his speeches.

During the 1960s he continued to create ambitious soundscapes as a leader as well as for others in the jazz world, as his talents had become incredibly in demand. He arranged for Cannonball Adderley, Sonny Rollins, Eddie “Lockjaw” Davis, Johnny Hodges, Buddy Rich, Stanley Turrentine, Irene Reid, Gene Ammons, and others. Jazz Lines Publications has published some of his works that were done for Wes Montgomery as well as six of the songs he arranged for Thelonious Monk’s big band album of 1968, which remain of singular importance as big band versions of some of Monk’s most beloved compositions. Jazz Lines Publications also plans to publish the arrangements of *Peter and the Wolf* as recorded by Jimmy Smith.

Nelson moved to Los Angeles in the mid-1960s, aspiring to break into the lucrative world of movie and TV scoring. He continued to perform and write in both the small group and big band formats, and also worked with such mainstream stars as Nancy Wilson, James Brown, the Temptations, and Diana Ross. His film and television work became more and more time-consuming, as his creativity, speed, and capacity for work were legendary. He is perhaps best-known in this idiom for his creation of the hugely well-known theme from the *Six Million Dollar Man*, but he worked on *Columbo*, *Ironside*, and many other projects as well, and also arranged Gato Barbieri’s music for the film *Last Tango in Paris*.

Sadly, the pace and volume of his work during this period most likely contributed to the decline of his health, and in one of jazz's greatest tragedies, he passed away suddenly in late October 1975 at the very young age of 43. While the press reports claimed it was a heart attack, Kenny Berger cites Oliver Nelson, Jr. as claiming it was actually pancreatitis. He also left a great educational legacy, which is embodied by his landmark book *Patterns for Improvisation*. It is an exhaustive collection of improvisational jazz patterns in various meters and feels with his comments and suggestions, and it is a very popular book because it helps spell out some of the basic building blocks of the 'jazz language.'

Oliver Nelson was a musician whose work was beloved by jazz fans and also by his peers and the general public. So many of the era's greatest musicians clamored for his arranging skills. Hollywood and television treasured his amazing compositional and arranging abilities on multiple levels - not only could he create memorable scores and soundtracks, but he could do it in the grueling time frame required by that genre. His compositions were always unique, and often his style is instantly recognizable. He was grounded in the blues, but heavily influenced by classical music as well. He used whatever instruments and doubles that were necessary to bring to life the complex orchestrations he heard in his head; it has been said that his writing was very demanding on musicians, using various clarinets and flutes, oboe, English horn-whatever it took to carry out his complex visions.

He composed for small ensemble and big band; he wrote symphonic works and authored a seminal jazz text; he wrote for film and television and worked with some of the biggest stars in the American musical pantheon. He did it all, and he did it all before he was even 44 years old. This was a true renaissance man of music, and one the world sadly misses, but one who left an incredibly rich, broad, and diverse catalog behind, which contains something for everyone. His music is majestic, beautiful, and powerful; it moves, enlightens, and educates; and perhaps most telling of all, it challenges not only the listener and the student, but also some of the greatest musicians in the world as well. Oliver Nelson is a giant figure in American music, and Jazz Lines Publications is proud to have the honor of publishing some of his most important creations.

### **The Music:**

*Blues in the Dark* was originally performed by legendary blues shouter Jimmy Rushing with the Count Basie Orchestra in the 1930s. This version, however, comes from an Oliver Nelson-arranged session in 1967. Although Rushing was nearing the end of his life, his powerful voice wasn't diminished in the slightest, and Nelson's harmonically rich and moody style served as an exquisite compliment to the singer's unmistakable style.

### **Notes to the Conductor:**

The arrangement is quite simple from top to bottom, and is essentially the same melody repeated twice with a trombone solo (courtesy of Dickie Wells on the original recording) sandwiched in at measure 33. The horn backgrounds are not technically challenging, but feature some dense harmonies that need to be played in tune in order to work. The main difference between the vocal choruses is that the first has a brief horn shout interlude at measure 17, which should be played in as Basie-esque a way as possible despite the modern harmonies. It is important to remember that every ensemble note, whether written backgrounds or solo fills, should serve the purpose of supporting the vocalist at all times.

This publication is not a transcription - it has been prepared from Oliver Nelson's original score and the set of parts used during the recording session.

### **Acknowledgements:**

Jazz Lines Publications is proud to continue its relationship with Oliver Nelson, Jr. in bringing the work of his father to print for performance and study.

**Dylan Canterbury and Doug DuBoff**

- October 2019

Blues In The Dark

Arr By ON.

Blues In The Dark

Jimmy Rushing

Feb 9th

Feb 10th

Capital Studios At 8:PM  
Bob Thiel Impulse Records

Sam, Make Two Piano Parts,  
one will be for piano, one for  
organ

Arr By ON.

Here is the outer cover of Oliver Nelson's score for *Blues in the Dark* complete with recording date information and instructions for the copyist.



Arranger O Nelson TITLE Blues in The Dark Jimmy Rushing Page ①

① Buckets (easier) 2. Tacit 2nd Time Col

Trumpets 1 2 3 4

Trombones 1 2 3 4

Guitar (Copy chords) Bb7 Eb9 Bb7 Bb7 (Funky)

Piano Copy chords

Slow

Vocal Starts

①

Here is the first page of Oliver Nelson's score for *Blues in the Dark*, recorded by Jimmy Rushing with the Count Basie Orchestra.



Alto Saxophone

# Blues in the Dark

Handwritten musical score for Alto Saxophone. The score is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked 'easier 2' and 'Tacit 2nd Time'. The score is divided into sections A, B, and C. Section A (measures 1-13) features triplet eighth notes and a 'No Vib' marking. Section B (measures 14-27) includes a 'Solo X Number of Bars' instruction and a 'No Vib' marking. Section C (measures 28-35) includes a 'Solo X Number of Bars' instruction and a 'No Vib' marking. The score ends with a 'Fine' marking and a circled measure number 36.

Empty musical staves for Alto Saxophone, consisting of ten blank staves. The first staff has a circled measure number 36 and a 'Fine' marking above it.

Above is the original alto saxophone part for *Blues in the Dark*.

# BLUES IN THE DARK

RECORDED BY JIMMY RUSHING WITH THE COUNT BASIE ORCHESTRA

COMPOSED BY JIMMY RUSHING AND COUNT BASIE

ARRANGED BY OLIVER NELSON

PREPARED BY DYLAN CANTERBURY, ROB DUBOFF, AND JEFFREY SULTANOF

## SCORE

SLOW SWING ♩ = 70

The score is for a 4-measure phrase in 4/4 time, marked 'SLOW SWING' with a tempo of 70. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The vocal line is silent. The saxophone section (Alto, Tenor, Baritone, Trumpet 1, Trumpet 2) plays a melodic line with triplets and accents, marked *mp* and 'NO VIB. (SIM. THROUGHOUT)'. The Trombone and Organ (Opt. Piano) are silent. The Bass line features a walking bass pattern with triplets and a cross-stick. The Drums play a simple pattern with triplets and a cross-stick.

1

2

3

4

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5 AD-LIB BLUES MELODY  
RUSHING'S VOCAL HAS BEEN TRANSCRIBED AS AN EXAMPLE

Vcl. Kind treat-ment make me love you, be mean and you'll drive me a - way. Kind treat-ment make me love you, be mean and you'll drive me a - way.

A. Sax.

T. Sax.

B. Sax.

TRPT. 1

TRPT. 2

FILLS BEHIND VOCAL

Gtr.

OPT. TACET TO 21

Org.

Bs.

Dr.