

“Big Dorothy” (Composed and Arranged by Jim Mick)

Note from the composer:

As a band leader who is tasked with putting together the program/set list/concert I’ve always felt the need for charts that fill a certain gap in programming. We all like to open and close our set with a “barn burner.” We also try to insert a ballad toward the middle of the set to change it up. This leaves “the gap” in our program that really needs to be filled with charts that are NOT barn burners or ballads but rather medium to “up” tempo charts that engage the audience in such a way as to create interest as well as deliver big applause!

I’ve discovered that a well-crafted “story” creates a context for the music that allows the listener to engage in the piece and clearly be able to visualize the “story” as the music unfolds. I also believe that if the “story” contains a little humor, it becomes even more effective and engaging.

This then is my reasoning for providing you with a solid story to be told as an intro prior to playing “Big Dorothy.”

“Big Dorothy” – The Story:

Big Dorothy was born Dorothy Willamena Munchak in Memphis, TN. She was blessed from birth with gorgeous blond hair and chestnut brown eyes but, on the other side of the equation, was always larger and bigger than all the other kids...at every age ...and by a lot!

She was given the bass trombone in middle school band because she was the only kid who could reach 7th position AND hold all the hardware upright. Living in Memphis, she became infatuated with the blues....which made sense because you’re not allowed to immerse yourself in the blues unless you’ve lived in Memphis, Chicago, St. Louis or Kansas City! 10th grade was when she fell into disfavor with her high school band director because she insisted on “swinging” all eighth notes in concert band and orchestra.

She lettered in high school football all four years and was named all state in Tennessee as a linebacker. She gave up a Division One scholarship to play football at Auburn to study trombone performance at Julliard School of Music. While studying at Julliard, Dorothy regularly visited her Grandpa Willie (her namesake responsible for her middle name.) Willie often regaled her with stories of jazz in NYC in the 1940’s when black jazz musicians began to adopt the rhythmic styles of Cuban musicians who had made their

way to the city. During these storytelling sessions, Willie was forced to sit on Dorothy's lap because the other way around was just not feasible. Thus began her infatuation with Afro Cuban music.

She decided to take a year off after graduating from Julliard with a doctorate in trombone performance to learn more about and actually experience the blues. She set out travelling by bus, heading south to get the full on blues experience. During a quick layover in Roanoke, VA, she heard three kids playing trombone in an alley. She quickly grabbed her bass trombone from under the bus and asked the kids if she could sit in, secretly thinking she could show them a thing or two about the intricacies of the blues. While playing along, she was suddenly inspired by a recollection of her Grandpa Willie's stories of the 40's in NYC to push the kids into an Afro Cuban version of the blues. This story begins in that alley in Roanoke, VA.....

NOTES for the Director:

This is an opportunity (optional, of course!) to provide a bit of theater if your bass trombone player is willing. While reading/telling Dorothy's story, the bass trombone player will be secretly putting on a long, blonde wig. At the end of the story, he/she is introduced and remains standing, carefully observing and nodding approval as the other three trombones play the intro. Dorothy remains standing while playing her part all the way to Letter B. Now sitting, Dorothy stands only to play the one bar solos in bars 28, 32, and 37-40. Dorothy then becomes a sitting member of the section in bar 41.

The second solo section at Letter G goes into a double time swing "feel" and back to Afro Cuban at H for BOTH solos

SCORE

Big Dorothy

Jim Mick

Swing $\text{♩} = 124$

A

(Drum Solo)

ALTO SAX

1

2

TENOR SAX

1

2

BARITONE SAX

TRUMPET

1

2

3

4

TROMBONE

1

2

3

4

BASS

GUITAR

DRUM SET

Solo - Brushes

(End Solo)

(Brushes) (No solo but "busy")

Fill

Fill

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

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A9

ALTO SAX
1
2
TEN. SAX
1
2
BAR. SAX

TPT.
1
2
3
4

TBN.
1
2
3
4

BASS
GTR.

D. S.

9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16