

JAZZ LINES PUBLICATIONS

Presents

WHISTLE BLUES

ARRANGED BY MILTON ORENT

AND MARY LOU WILLIAMS

EDITED BY JEFFREY SULTANOF

FULL SCORE

JLP-8889

BY MILTON ORENT AND MARY LOU WILLIAMS

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WHISTLE BLUES (1947)

Background:

The music of Mary Lou Williams is a rich tapestry spanning seventy years of sounds and styles of American music. As she was a pioneer in so many ways, it is with great honor that Jazz Lines Publications has been able to reach an exclusive agreement with the Mary Lou Williams Foundation to make her music available to be studied, played and enjoyed.

Born Mary Alfrieda Scruggs in Atlanta, Mary Lou showed talent at the piano from a very early age. Her family moved to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania when she was five, and by the age of eight, she was already known in the neighborhood for her piano skills. She was already on the road with a tent show by the age of thirteen. The leader of the band, saxophonist John Williams, would become her husband when Mary Lou was only sixteen.

Williams joined the band of T. Holder, but he was 'fired' by his sidemen over money issues, and the band was taken over by bassist Andy Kirk. Headquartered in Kansas City, the Kirk band would be Mary Lou's musical home for many years. Not only did she play piano (for many years, Kirk's was the only major big band with a woman instrumentalist), she became Kirk's musical director, and such titles as *Mary's Idea*, *Walkin' and Swingin'*, *Scratchin' the Gravel*, and *The Lady Who Swings the Band* are considered big band classics.



Mary Lou left Kirk in May of 1942, and traveled with her husband, trumpeter Shorty Baker, who was a member of Duke Ellington's band. She composed and arranged quite a few pieces for Ellington, including an arrangement of *Blue Skies* that was later called *Trumpets No End*. Settling in to New York, she continued to arrange and compose for the top bands of the era while playing piano at Barney Josephson's two night clubs, Café Society Uptown and Downtown. Josephson even helped her get her own radio show on WNEW. During this period of major changes in jazz called 'bebop,' her apartment became a 'salon' for the leaders of the movement, including Dizzy Gillespie, Tadd Dameron, Bud Powell, and particularly Thelonious Monk, whose own creativity blossomed under her influence and encouragement.

She was also experimenting and discovering on her own and with Milton Orent (a bassist and composer whose own music was quite advanced for its time). With help from Orent, one of her most important compositions was presented during this period, *The Zodiac Suite*. First presented at Town Hall on December 31, 1945, the performance was privately recorded. Three movements were performed with the Carnegie Pops Orchestra, and Mary Lou arranged parts of it for Dizzy Gillespie's 1957 appearance with his big band at the Newport Jazz Festival.

WHISTLE BLUES

(notes continued)

She began performing in Europe in 1952 and lived there from 1953-4. But by this time, Williams grew despondent over her career's lack of direction, fewer opportunities to play piano and write, and the alcohol and drugs permeating the jazz world. She turned to religion for a new direction, and converted to Catholicism. She was baptized on May 7, 1957.

The rest of her life was devoted to raising money for musicians in need, and performing and composing jazz and religious music. In this she was assisted by a fan named Peter O'Brien, who was a Jesuit priest. He became her spiritual adviser and business manager, and oversees the Mary Lou Williams Foundation today. Mary Lou's career soared; she became a professor of music at Duke University in 1980, and was the recipient of awards, celebrations and honorary doctorates. She passed away on May 28, 1981.

The Music:

Williams wrote *Camel Hop* and *Roll 'Em* for Benny Goodman while she was still with Andy Kirk's band, and in late 1946, Williams started writing for him again. At the time, he had his own radio show with pianist Victor Borge, and in 1947, he would begin a new recording contract with Capitol Records. Goodman recorded Williams's *Lonely Moments* and *Whistle Blues*, a novelty that was recorded a few times during 1946 and 1947. Although the original parts exist for the Goodman version of *Whistle Blues*, we have decided to issue the stock arrangement of this piece instead. It is very similar to the recording made by Milt Orent's orchestra for Moe Asch's Disc label (Asch would later create the legendary Folkways label), and is a more interesting treatment of the material.

The original publication has a bit of history. In 1947, Goodman's publishing company Harman Music issued both *Lonely Moments* and *Whistle Blues* as octavo-sized stock arrangements with Goodman's image on the cover. The copyright notices on both are credited to Harman, but this was an error. It is believed that Goodman thought that he was buying the copyrights themselves and released the stocks with that understanding, but Williams refused to sell them to him. Both publications were promptly withdrawn. I was fortunate to obtain copies of both from Gene Goodman, who ran Goodman's publishing company (the actual owner of the company was Harry Goodman, who'd played bass for Benny during the thirties).

Milt Orent is co-credited as composer of *Whistle Blues*, and he may be a co-arranger of this version.

Notes to the Conductor:

For ease of reading, the sections where the entire band whistles have been notated in concert. Because it was common practice to arrange a stock so that it could be played by a smaller band, the second and third trumpet and trombone parts have frequent voice crossings. This publication presents the parts as originally written.

Acknowledgements:

Special thanks to Fr. Peter O'Brien for making an agreement with Jazz Lines Publications so that Ms. Williams' music can finally be properly published, and to Ann Keubler, who spent many months cataloguing and archiving Mary Lou's papers, which were acquired by the Institute of Jazz Studies in 1999.

Jeffrey Sultanof

- May 2011

WHISTLE BLUES

SCORE

MUSIC BY MILTON ORENT AND MARY LOU WILLIAMS
ARRANGED BY MILTON ORENT AND MARY LOU WILLIAMS
EDITED BY JEFFREY SULTANOF

MEDIUM SWING ♩ = 150

①

BROADLY

ALTO SAX. 1
mf *f* *mf* *f* *ff*

ALTO SAX. 2
mf *f* *mf* *f* *ff*

TENOR SAX. 1
mf *f* *mf* *f* *ff*

TENOR SAX. 2
mf *f* *mf* *f* *ff*

BARITONE SAX.
mf *f* *mf* *f* *ff*

DIRTY

TRUMPET 1
mf *ff* *ff*

TRUMPET 2
mf *ff* *ff*

TRUMPET 3
mf *ff* *ff*

DIRTY

TROMBONE 1
mf *ff* *ff*

TROMBONE 2
mf *ff* *ff*

TROMBONE 3
mf *ff* *ff*

GUITAR
f
Fm7 G7 G^b7 Fm7 G7 C7⁽⁹⁾

PIANO
f

BASS
f

DRUMS
f (4)

A. Sx. 1 *mf* *f* *ff* *To CONCERT KEY*

A. Sx. 2 *mf* *f* *ff* *To CONCERT KEY*

T. Sx. 1 *mf* *f* *ff* *To CONCERT KEY*

T. Sx. 2 *mf* *f* *ff* *To CONCERT KEY*

B. Sx. *mf* *f* *ff* *To CONCERT KEY*

Tpt. 1 *ff* *To CONCERT KEY*

Tpt. 2 *ff* *To CONCERT KEY*

Tpt. 3 *ff* *To CONCERT KEY*

Tbn. 1 *ff* *To CONCERT KEY*

Tbn. 2 *ff* *To CONCERT KEY*

Tbn. 3 *ff* *To CONCERT KEY*

Gtr. *Fm7* *G7* *C7(b9)* *C7(b5)* *C7(b9)* *D7(b9)* *C7(b9)* *ff*

PNO. *ff*

Bs. *ff*

D. S. (6)

(A)

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral format. It includes staves for:

- A. Sax. 1
- A. Sax. 2
- T. Sax. 1
- T. Sax. 2
- B. Sax.
- Tpt. 1
- Tpt. 2
- Tpt. 3
- Tbn. 1
- Tbn. 2
- Tbn. 3
- Gtr.
- PNO.
- Bs.
- D. S.

Each saxophone and trumpet part begins with a 'WHISTLE' instruction and a dynamic marking of *f*. The guitar part features a series of chords: F^6 , F^7 , B^b6 , $B^b m^6$, F^6 , B^o7 , B^b6 , and $C7^{\#5}$. The piano part includes triplets and a dynamic marking of *mp*. The bass part has a dynamic marking of *mp*. The drum part is marked with '(PLAY TIME) (BRUSHES)' and a dynamic marking of *mp*. The score is divided into measures 9, 10, 11, and 12.

A. Sax. 1

A. Sax. 2

T. Sax. 1

T. Sax. 2

B. Sax.

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tpt. 3

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tbn. 3

Gtr.

PNO.

B.S.

D. S.

F6 F7 B^b6 B^bm6 F6 B^b7 B^b6 G7^(b9)G^b9

(8)