

Wynton Marsalis, Artistic Director, Jazz at Lincoln Center

OOP BOP SH'BAM

COMPOSED BY DIZZY GILLESPIE

ARRANGED BY GIL FULLER

As performed by the Billy Eckstine Orchestra

Transcribed and Edited by David Berger for Jazz at Lincoln Center

FULL SCORE

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Seventeenth Annual *Essentially Ellington* High School Jazz Band Program.

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NOTES ON PLAYING GILLESPIE

During the 1940's when bebop emerged and was synonymous with modern jazz, the raging debate focused on whether bebop was revolution or evolution. Nearly 70 years later we can easily see the evolution, but to Swing musicians and the vast public bebop eschewed the accessibility of Swing. This was not music that catered to dancers and 12-year old girls who wanted to learn the words to the songs. Even with the hard edge and excesses of this new music, all its conventions were built on the earlier music's conventions, only taken much further. So if you want to understand Dizzy Gillespie, you need to understand his idol, Roy Eldridge. If you want to understand Roy Eldridge, you need to understand his idol, Louis Armstrong. The more you know about their music and the milieu they played in (other musicians, song writers, arrangers and composers, bands, et al), the more complete picture you will have of the individual.

The overwhelming majority of bebop tunes were contrafacts, that is, new melodies played over the chord changes of pre-existing songs, namely the blues and a handful of standards (*I Got Rhythm*, *Honeysuckle Rose*, *Perdido*, et al). There were two advantages for creating these contrafacts: the rhythm section and soloists didn't need to learn a new chord progression, and it was easier for non-piano playing musicians like Charlie Parker to convey their new tune to the other musicians. For instance Bird could tell his rhythm section to play *Rhythm* while he played the new melody.

Some of the beboppers were more interested in composition. Thelonius Monk is a good example. Although he used the contrafact formula for some of his tunes, he also created a body of tunes with original progressions. Dizzy Gillespie is much like Monk in his diversity: **Oop Bop Sh'Bam** is *Rhythm*, **Things To Come** is based on Gillespie's earlier tune *Bebop* and **A Night In Tunisia** is an original chord progression. The beboppers preferred to spice up the standard chords with 9ths, 11ths, 13ths and tritone substitutes (Db7 instead of G7). Of course Duke Ellington and Art Tatum had been doing this for years, but the bebop aesthetic was to use these harmonies, syncopations and complicated rhythms and chromatic and angular melodies to purposely jar the listener and be controversial. The message was: this is challenging music—pay attention.

Although Charlie Parker was the prime inventor of bebop, Dizzy Gillespie was the most responsible for putting a face on it and popularizing the new music especially to the public. Dizzy used his humor, dress, glasses, jive language, facial hair and (a little later) upwardly bent trumpet to market the music. Besides being supremely cool, Dizzy was also organized and musically schooled. He played piano, arranged and could not only keep a small group together and working, but also led his own big band at different points of his career.

All the beboppers came up playing swing in big bands. This was the common language. Everything we know about playing swing applies to bebop as well, but with some innovations:

1. The functions in the rhythm section are redefined. The piano abandons the “oom pah” stride comping pattern in favor of what has since become a more conversational and melodic/rhythmic role.
2. The guitar is either absent or emancipated from the 4-on-the-floor Freddie Green rhythm role and either functions as a horn or comps like a piano.
3. The bass mainly plays in four in a more linear style and is more featured as a soloist. Oscar Pettiford and Charles Mingus were inspired by Jimmy Blanton's groundbreaking 1940 recordings with Duke Ellington.
4. Where Jo Jones moved the ride pattern from the snare to the hi hat in the '30's, in the '40's bebop drummers moved the ride pattern to the ride cymbal. This coupled with the bass player's quarter notes gives the music more forward motion. Another innovation is the use of the bass drum for accents rather than playing quarter notes with the bass. Some swing players found this disruptive. Iconoclast Lester Young once told a drummer, “Don't drop me no bombs. Just give me some titty boom titty boom”.
5. In general the rhythm section in bebop needs to be more interactive with the horns and less responsible for timekeeping. Since this music is liberated from accompanying dancers, the beat, although steady, need not be as obviously displayed. More virtuosity is required of musicians in bebop than in swing. The tempos are faster since no dancers have to be accommodated and eighth and sixteenth notes are conceived more as melodies than as ornamentation.
6. Although there are even eighth notes every once in a while in swing music, even eighths are much more prevalent in bebop. A basic rule of thumb is: when syncopation is present, play that entire phrase with a swing feel. Most instances that don't involve syncopation will use even eighths. This is not a hard and fast rule, so I encourage listening to recordings to get a feel for the phrasing. Sometimes there can be more than one way to phrase a passage, and they all sound good. Usually one stands out as being authentic.
7. Although the early beboppers (like Dizzy) slurred most eighths and sixteenths, within a few years younger players like Clifford Brown and Clark Terry tongued and doodle tongued (doo-dle-doo-dle, etc.) more. This gives the music more definition and separates the “modern” players from the swing players. The same musical concepts of adding accents, dynamics and

shape to notes applicable to Swing playing carries over to this music. (See the General Notes for Playing Duke Ellington's Music that prefaces all of the Ellington scores in this series).

8. Although there is a certain seriousness about this music, there is always room for humor and blues. And above all swing.

9. Bebop came out of the small group experience and is difficult to pull off successfully with a big band. The tendency is to be too heavy-handed. Make the rhythm section function like a small group and don't let the horns weigh things down.

And always play with lots of energy and fire.

GLOSSARY

The following are terms which describe conventions of jazz performance, from traditional New Orleans to the present avant garde.

Break: within the context of an ongoing time feel, the rhythm section stops for one, two, or four bars. Very often a soloist will improvise during a break.

Call and response: repetitive pattern of contrasting exchanges (derived from the church procedure of the minister making a statement and the congregation answering with “amen”). Call-and-response patterns usually pit one group of instruments against another. Sometimes we call this “trading fours,” “trading twos,” etc., especially when it involves improvisation. The numbers denote the amount of measures each soloist or group plays. Another term frequently used is “swapping fours.”

Coda: also known as the “outro.” “Tags” or “tag endings” are outgrowths of vaudeville bows that are frequently used as codas. They most often use deceptive cadences that finally resolve to the tonic, or they go from the tonic to the sub-dominant and cycle back to the tonic: I V/IV IV #IV° I (second inversion) V/II V/V V I.

Comp: improvise accompaniment (for piano or guitar).

Groove: the composite rhythm. This generally refers to the combined repetitive rhythmic patterns of the drums, bass, piano, and guitar, but may also include repetitive patterns in the horns. Some grooves are standard (i.e., swing, bossa nova, samba), while others are manufactured (original combinations of rhythms).

Head: melody chorus.

Interlude: a different form (of relatively short length) sandwiched between two chorus forms. Interludes that set up a key change are simply called modulations.

Ride pattern: the most common repetitive figure played by the drummer's right hand on the ride cymbal or hi-hat.



Shout chorus: also known as the “out chorus,” the “sock chorus,” or sometimes shortened to just “the shout.” It is the final ensemble passage of most big band charts and where the max most often happens.

Stop time: a regular pattern of short breaks (usually filled in by a soloist).

Vamp: a repeated two- or four-bar chord progression. Very often, there may be a riff or riffs played on the vamp.

Voicing: the specific spacing, inversion, and choice of notes that make up a chord. For instance, two voicings for G7 could be:



— David Berger

OOP BOP SH'BAM

INSTRUMENTATION

Reed 1 - Alto Sax	Trumpet 1	Trombone 1	Guitar
Reed 2 - Alto Sax	Trumpet 2	Trombone 2	Piano
Reed 3 - Clarinet	Trumpet 3	Trombone 3	Bass
Reed 4 - Tenor Sax	Trumpet 4		Drums
Reed 5 - Baritone Sax			

ORIGINAL RECORDING INFORMATION

Composer: Dizzy Gillespie

Arranger: Gil Fuller

Recorded: October 5, 1946 in New York City

Master Number: NSC 164

Original 78 rpm Issue: National 9125

Currently Available on CD: Billy Eckstine: The Legendary Big Band Savoy SVY 17125 (2 CDs)

Currently Available as digital download: Billy Eckstine: The Legendary Big Band - itunes.com

Personnel: Billy Eckstine (vocal, valve trombone); Miles Davis, Hobart Dotson, Leonard Hawkins, King Kolax (trumpet); Walter Knox, Chips Outcalt, Jerry Valentine (trombone); John Cobbs, Sonny Stitt (alto saxophone); Gene Ammons, Arthur Simmons (tenor saxophone); Cecil Payne (baritone saxophone); Linton Garner (piano); Connie Wainwright (guitar); Tommy Potter (bass); Art Blakey (drums); band (vocal).

Soloists: Billy Eckstine (valve trombone; vocal); Gene Ammons (tenor saxophone)

REHEARSAL NOTES

Although Bebop was essentially small group jazz that centered around the virtuosic improvisation of Charlie Parker and his disciples, there has always been a desire to translate this music to the big band idiom. At first this was partially commercially motivated since big bands were popular with the American public in the mid-40's. The first bebop big band was Billy Eckstine's band.

Eckstine was a very popular singer (also very popular with women for his matinee idol looks) who came to prominence a few years earlier singing *Stormy Monday* and *Jelly, Jelly* with Earl Hines' big band. The girl singer and second pianist was Sarah Vaughan. Both Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker played with Hines for a time in 1943. A year later Eckstine formed his own big band to play the new music. The personnel was a virtual Who's Who of beboppers including Miles Davis, Fats Navarro, Art Blakey, Dexter Gordon, Frank Wess and former Hines bandmates Bird, Dizzy and Sarah Vaughan. Tadd Dameron and Gil Fuller created many of the arrangements. Although Mr. B (Eckstine) played trumpet, guitar and valve trombone with the band, he became known for his rich baritone vocals especially

on ballads. His recordings of *A Cottage For Sale* and *Prisoner Of Love* both were Top Ten hit records.

Oop Bop Sh'Bam uses a standard 32-bar AABA song form with an *I Got Rhythm* "A" section and a *Honeysuckle Rose* bridge—a common chord progression in both swing music and bebop. The form of the arrangement is also pretty standard: 4-bar intro (the last two bars are a piano break), 32 bar melody chorus, 4-bar interlude (the last 2 bars of which are a 2 bar solo break), 31 bar solo (the 32nd bar is elided—this is unusual, but it sounds natural in this context), 4-bar solo break for tenor sax, 16-bar tenor solo (AA), repeat the 4-bar intro (but this time the band sings the break in unison), 16 bars of melody (AA) and an 9-bar coda.

The intro starts on the ivm9 chord giving a feeling like we are jolted into the middle of the piece. Although the brass are marked forte, it's usually a good idea to back off the volume on unisons in favor of a good blend, and then play stronger when it goes into harmony and everyone has his own note.

One of the great things about jazz is that in every generation old forms and conventions are re-defined and made to sound fresh. Louis Armstrong popularized scat singing (nonsense syllables) in the 1920's. Twenty years later Dizzy Gillespie composed this tune and put his bebop syllables on it. When the recording of **Oop Bop Sh'Bam** came out, the title became the new hip expression. Who knew what it meant? But it sounded so cool that when I first heard it nearly 20 years later, it was still cool.

The unison band vocal was first popularized by arranger Don Redman and then Sy Oliver. So often the band vocal would answer a solo vocalist (as in Redman's arrangement of Marie for Tommy Dorsey). In **Oop Bop Sh'Bam** the order is reversed; the solo vocal (Eckstine) answers the band, and then the saxes answer the vocals while the brass punch out an harmonically hip bebop turnaround progression. Notice also that the piano also answers the band vocal. This is such a nice touch—especially with the bass playing in 2. I should point out that Dizzy Gillespie also recorded this arrangement with his own big band. The bass plays in 4 in his version, which for me doesn't have the charm and innocence of the 2-beat feel—more driving, yes, but I don't think that is what the message is about on the head of this chart. There is humor in the lyrics and whenever the instrumentalists sing, audiences immediately smile and probably are thinking, "These guys are amateur singers having fun. I could do that". And they often join in. When the rhythm section plays in 2, it makes it easier for us to focus on the melody and words than when there is a bass note on every beat. Also the 2-feel evokes an earlier era and so feels more comfortable and less challenging to the listener.

Very often when the bass is in 2, the drummer will play on the high hat saving the drive of the ride cymbal for when the bass goes into 4. That is exactly what happens at Letter **A**. The high hat is closed so the volume is soft. On the third bar the loud brass come barging in, so the drummer should move over to the crash and ride cymbal and catch the brass rhythms on the snare and bass drums.

Although the bebop drummers were known for taking the ride pattern off the high hat and putting it on the ride cymbal, this piece bridges the gap between swing and bebop. We start on the high hat and then on the bridge move to the ride, back to the high hat for the last 8 (letter **D**). The crash is used for the interlude, and then it is over to the ride for the solos. **●** is back to the closed high hat for the return of the melody and 2-feel. I'm spending all this time on changing cymbals because all too often drummers fail to utilize the different cymbal sounds as a device for subtly pointing out the form to the players and listeners. Also the drummer needs to be aware of the emotional needs of each section of the chart (and every other chart, for that matter) and help the band to convey that feeling and help define the form of the piece. This function is almost as important for drummers as playing swinging time. Well, maybe not quite, but it's one of those things that listeners don't notice, but gives the band a greater range of expression.

Remember to shape long notes. This gives the music forward motion and when the horns bring the volume down, we get to hear the rhythm section swing. Play with lots of accent and if you are holding out a long note play *fp* when followed by a rest. It is exciting sometimes to follow the *fp* with a crescendo when a long note is followed by another note (saxes **H1** and **H5**). These are interpretive choices that experienced lead players add to give the music personality and excitement. You can't do the same thing all the time or it gets annoying and predictable.

I suggest listening to great lead players and make a study of what they do and where they do it. For bebop lead alto playing Phil Woods is a great model. Jay Jay Johnson is the primary trombonist and Ernie Royal has an amazing feel on lead trumpet. Also listen to soloists to hear how they phrase. When we play parts, we are trying to sound like we are improvising and when we improvise, we are trying to sound like we are so definite that we are playing a written part. You can't listen to too much Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie.

Although this transcription is of Billy Eckstine's recording (featuring Eckstine's valve trombone solo), we have included Dizzy's trumpet solo from his own band's recording because it is such a classic solo. Dizzy sings Eckstine's vocal responses as well. It works equally well to play this first solo on valve trombone, slide trombone or trumpet. This will depend on the solo strengths in

your band and the programming of the other charts on a concert. If you have trumpet solos on every chart and no trombone solos, you may want to give the trombone some. Variety is good for the band and for the listeners.

Keep in mind that the bebop musicians all came up playing swing in big bands, so many of the same principles apply: short quarter notes, accents, dynamics, etc. Although the tenor solos at letters **K** and **L**, this also functions as the shout chorus. Punch out those figures with lots of accent in the horns and drums.

This is one of the easier original bebop charts to play, but as you have probably figured out by now, there are all kinds of details that can be dealt with to make your performance swinging, interesting and exciting...and fun. Don't forget to have fun. **Oop Bop Sh'Bam**, you dig?

— David Berger

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CONDUCTOR

Jazz at Lincoln Center Library - Essentially Ellington

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Arranged by Gil Fuller

Transcribed and Edited by David Berger

Medium Swing ♩ = 156

Reeds 1 Alto Sax

2 Alto Sax

3 Tenor Sax

4 Tenor Sax

5 Baritone Sax

Trumpets 1

2

3

4

Trombones 1

2

3

(Opt.) Vocal Solo Trumpet

Valve Trombone

Guitar

Piano

Bass

Drums

Sticks

Ebm⁹ Ab⁹ G⁹ Gb⁹ B⁹ Bb⁹

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