

YOUNG JAZZ ENSEMBLE

Off the Beaten Path

RALPH FORD

INSTRUMENTATION

Conductor	1st Trombone
1st E♭ Alto Saxophone	2nd Trombone
2nd E♭ Alto Saxophone	3rd Trombone (Optional)
1st B♭ Tenor Saxophone	4th Trombone (Optional)
2nd B♭ Tenor Saxophone	Guitar Chords
E♭ Baritone Saxophone (Optional)	Guitar (Optional)
1st B♭ Trumpet	Piano
2nd B♭ Trumpet	Bass
3rd B♭ Trumpet	Drums
4th B♭ Trumpet (Optional)	

Optional Alternate Parts

C Flute
Tuba
Horn in F (Doubles 1st Trombone)
1st Baritone T.C./B♭ Tenor Saxophone (Doubles 1st Trombone)
2nd Baritone T.C./B♭ Tenor Saxophone (Doubles 2nd Trombone)

NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

Off the Beaten Path was composed in homage to a big-band style capitalized upon by Neil Hefti, Count Basie, and many other legendary jazz artists. This chart for the young jazz band is designed to be an introduction into the use of brushes, both as a background and solo element, for the learning jazz drummer. Even though the dynamic marking is *mf* at the beginning, keep the ensemble dynamic in perspective to the brushes on the drumset. The rhythm section should strive to be what is called "in the pocket," meaning "in the groove," so the tempo and feel is just right—not too fast, not too slow and each rhythm section player is working together as a team. Regarding attention to the details of the articulation markings, the staccatos are short but not clipped or too short. The *marcato* or rooftop accents are detached and accented—think "daht." Work on releases as well for the wind sections, it will make the band sound more polished. Every rhythm section player (all players) should make it a habit of practicing with a metronome.

Listening is the key to learning jazz style, phrasing, concept, and just about every aspect of jazz and big band jazz. I highly encourage all students (and the director) to have an opportunity to listen to the Count Basie Band (choose any recording). Why? Because the Basie band has a distinctive style and interpretation that cannot be written on the music and listening is the best teacher especially for this particular style of playing and interpretation. The Basie band has a unique way it plays together with a relaxed feel on certain notes and phrases. In addition to any Basie recording example, check out the demo recording of this chart at alfred.com.

While the indication on the chart is for the drummer on sticks at the beginning, another option is for the drummer to begin with brushes at the intro, but only if the band holds back dynamically. At measure 19, the ensemble effect should emulate the sound of playing into a bucket mute, through the use of cup mutes, hand over bell, or playing into the stand—pick one, but make sure all students do the same thing. If bucket mutes are actually available, by all means use them. Play light yet clean and tight throughout this section. The 8-bar drum solo at measure 44 may be opened up as an extended feature if desired. Direct the drummer to play in the style of the chart. At measures 74–75, the drum fill should feature a big build that leads into the shout chorus at 76. The band can open up dynamically at the shout section, but avoid over blowing or losing the style of the piece. The charts quiets down to the end, but "sting" the attack of the final chord, then decrescendo into the release.

For the solos at measure 52, the written-out solos are provided but I encourage players to begin to improvise. There are backgrounds provided, cue as desired.

For the rhythm section parts, piano and bass parts are written out; the drum part is typical in that it shows ensemble accents and hits along with straight swing time. The guitar part has some written-out notes, but primarily has slash marks to indicate comping. I suggest using three- or four-note chords in a quarter-note pattern. For the best sound ask the guitarist to use medium thickness picks which will give the sound a very bright, acoustic quality and hold the pick loosely between the thumb and index finger. Strum straight quarter notes trying to cut off (mute) the sound of the chord right after striking the strings.

Enjoy!

—Ralph Ford



**Ralph
Ford**

Ralph Ford (b.1963) is a composer, arranger, conductor, educator, media creator, producer, writer, radio host, and announcer with over thirty years of experience in these various genres. He is an exclusive composer and arranger for the Belwin division of Alfred Publishing Co., with over 240 titles available worldwide for orchestra, concert band, jazz ensemble, and marching band.

He earned his undergraduate degree in 1986 and his Master of Science degree in 1988 from Troy. He was then appointed to the Troy music faculty where he taught orchestration, arranging, theory, technology, jazz studies, and applied brass followed by his appointment as director of bands, coordinator of winds and percussion, and professor of music. Ralph retired from Troy University in June 2011.

A frequently commissioned composer, his music has been premiered and performed by university, military, professional, community, and school ensembles around the world. Ralph is also in demand as a conductor, clinician, adjudicator, and guest lecturer throughout the United States and abroad.

CONDUCTOR
38677S

OFF THE BEATEN PATH

By RALPH FORD (ASCAP)

EASY SWING ♩ = 182 (♩ = ♩♩)

C FLUTE

1ST E♭ ALTO SAXOPHONE

2ND E♭ ALTO SAXOPHONE

1ST B♭ TENOR SAXOPHONE

2ND B♭ TENOR SAXOPHONE

E♭ BARITONE SAXOPHONE (OPTIONAL)

1ST B♭ TRUMPET

2ND B♭ TRUMPET

3RD B♭ TRUMPET

4TH B♭ TRUMPET (OPTIONAL)

1ST TROMBONE

2ND TROMBONE

3RD TROMBONE (OPTIONAL)

4TH TROMBONE (OPTIONAL)

GUITAR (OPTIONAL)

PIANO

BASS

DRUMS

STICKS

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

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CONDUCTOR

111

- 2 -

OFF THE BEATEN PATH

FLUTE

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TRP. 1

TRP. 2

TRP. 3

TRP. 4

TBN. 1

TBN. 2

TBN. 3

TBN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

TO CUP MUTE (OPT. IN STAND)

TO CUP MUTE (OPT. IN STAND)

TO CUP MUTE (OPT. IN STAND)

TO CUP MUTE (OPT. IN STAND)

TO CUP MUTE (OPT. IN STAND)

TO CUP MUTE (OPT. IN STAND)

TO CUP MUTE (OPT. IN STAND)

TO CUP MUTE (OPT. IN STAND)

TO BRUSHES

BRUSHES

9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18

FLUTE

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TP. 1

TP. 2

TP. 3

TP. 4

TBN. 1

TBN. 2

TBN. 3

TBN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

CONDUCTOR

(44) DRUM SOLO

- 6 -

OFF THE BEATEN PATH

FLUTE

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPP. 1

TPP. 2

TPP. 3

TPP. 4

TBN. 1

TBN. 2

TBN. 3

TBN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

AD LIB. W/ BEUSHES

43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51

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Only

52 REPEAT FOR SOLOS (EXGDS. ON CUE)

FLUTE

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

SARI.

TPT. 1

TPT. 2

TPT. 3

TPT. 4

TBN. 1

TBN. 2

TBN. 3

TBN. 4

GRE.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

SOLO 2ND TIME

SOLO 1ST TIME

UNISON (SEAD.)

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52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59

60

FLUTE

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

SARI.

TPP. 1

TPP. 2

TPP. 3

TPP. 4

TBN. 1

TBN. 2

TBN. 3

TBN. 4

Gtr.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67

TO STICKS END X

STICKS

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FLUTE

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPT. 1

TPT. 2

TPT. 3

TPT. 4

TBN. 1

TBN. 2

TBN. 3

TBN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75

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76 "SHOUT"

FLUTE

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPP. 1

TPP. 2

TPP. 3

TPP. 4

TBN. 1

TBN. 2

TBN. 3

TBN. 4

Gtr.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83

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84

FLUTE

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

BARI.

TPTR. 1

TPTR. 2

TPTR. 3

TPTR. 4

TBN. 1

TBN. 2

TBN. 3

TBN. 4

GRE.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91

TO BRUSHES

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FLUTE

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

SARI.

TPtr. 1

TPtr. 2

TPtr. 3

TPtr. 4

TBN. 1

TBN. 2

TBN. 3

TBN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

BRUSHES

AG L18.

92 94 95 96 97 98 99

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CONDUCTOR

- 14 -

OFF THE BEATEN PATH

FLUTE

ALTO 1

ALTO 2

TENOR 1

TENOR 2

SARI.

TPTR. 1

TPTR. 2

TPTR. 3

TPTR. 4

TBN. 1

TBN. 2

TBN. 3

TBN. 4

GTR.

PNO.

BASS

DRUMS

106

107

108

109

110

111

112

SOLO

LIGHT FILL

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