

KENDOR MUSIC PRESENTS

Don't Git Sassy

style: moderate shuffle
duration 5:00

by Thad Jones

INSTRUMENTATION

Full Score
Alto Sax I/Soprano Sax
Alto Sax II
Tenor Sax I
Tenor Sax II
Baritone Sax
Trumpet I
Trumpet II
Trumpet III
Trumpet IV
Trombone I
Trombone II
Trombone III
Trombone IV
Piano /Guitar (2 copies)
Bass
Drums

EXTRA SCORES & PARTS AVAILABLE

THAD JONES

Thad wrote his first jazz arrangement at age 13 when he was a trumpet player in his uncle's band in his native Pontiac, Michigan, along with brothers Hank (piano) and Elvin (drums). In the 1940's he served in the army, led a band of his own, and played with other bands before joining the Count Basie band in 1954. Nine years later he left Basie and began arranging for singers, small groups, and the big Harry James Band.

In 1965 Thad and drummer Mel Lewis formed their award-winning jazz orchestra. For the next 13 years this amazing band became an American jazz institution. They played Monday nights at the Village Vanguard in NYC on an almost continuous basis, won countless polls in "Down Beat," and recorded a series of albums that remain popular today, including "Consummation," "Central Park North," "Live At The Village Vanguard" and "Suite For Pops."

In 1979 Thad moved to and settled in Copenhagen, where he conducted the Danish Radio Big Band and later formed his own Eclipse big band featuring an illustrious mix of players from America and Europe.

TO THE DIRECTOR

Thanks for your interest in this great music. These rehearsal notes are meant as an adjunct to the most important work, fun really, of listening to the recordings or better still, attending a live performance. We've tried in this small space to give the student (that includes all of us) a few hints and awareness of opportunities to improve the performance.

First would be our primary objective, and that is to swing. This music is an out-growth of music that was meant for dancing and when it's right, it makes you feel like moving. All the harmonic and rhythmic sophistication of Thad Jones and the other great writers, from Fletcher Henderson to Jim McNeely, occur in the framework of great time. To this end, we need to be comfortable playing our parts so that we can concentrate on connecting with the other parts of the ensemble. The suggested tempo markings represent the tempo that the composition was played at the time of Thad's departure from the band in 1979 and generally are the upper end of the scale. The arrangement can definitely be played slower, and should be if that makes it easier to swing. The VJO doesn't always play these pieces at the same tempo, as it's fun to experiment.

Don't Git Sassy is an eight bar blues in the key of Db. Students should practice in all keys, but when deciding to work out of your comfort zone of 3 or 4 keys, get to Db first. There is a great deal of music for jazz musicians in this key, especially those tunes that began life as a big band arrangement, as the first trumpet doesn't have to play so high to get the octave or 5th in this key. Probably a third of Ellington/Strayhorn works are in Db. This is also a shuffle, which, like this key, must be addressed by any developing jazz musicians, and which will have a positive effect on other areas of your playing. The melody is simple, but the development is wonderful in the last 3 or 4 choruses, bouncing back and forth between saxes and brass. That brass chorus that leads into the last chorus has some intervals and notes that are surprising (typical Thad in other words), so this must be sounded out and practiced. This is especially important since it's largely unison. The trumpet solo has a written background, but the tenor background was a riff that Thad made up on stage. Use this or make up your own. The early band was great at this, with Thad and Brookmeyer. The VJO does it less than they did, but you should work at it. Just be careful not to overwhelm the soloist by being too busy.

One more note before turning it over to David Demsey for some particulars. Most all questions of balance, blend and dynamics can be answered by simply knowing as much as possible about the music you are playing. What's the form of the tune? Are you playing the melody, a counter melody, a background? Who are you playing with? What's the chord and your position in it? You'll find even more questions and answers, and if you stay with it, you'll know why we're still, after decades of playing this music, engaged and dedicated to it. And remember, it's supposed to be fun.



Kendor Music, Inc.

MUSIC PUBLISHER

21 Grove Street • PO Box 278
Delevan, New York 14042-0278 • U.S.A.
www.kendormusic.com

HISTORICAL AND REHEARSAL NOTES

This is one of Thad Jones' most iconic arrangements. *Don't Git Sassy* recalls the energetic, hand-clapping tradition of a church camp meeting, and the energy level stays strong throughout. This new edition of Thad's work is taken directly from the original ink parts Thad handed out to the band in 1967, and from Thad's original pencil score now housed in the Thad Jones Archive at William Paterson University, where Thad served as Founding Director of Jazz Studies.

The key to this arrangement is its rhythmic style - a hard-driving shuffle. In a shuffle, a constant snare pattern is in tandem with the ride cymbal, all with a very tight "skip beat" played close to each upcoming downbeat. The sax and brass figures are tight, always playing their upbeats to lock in with the ride cymbal/snare skip beat. A great description of this time concept comes from the legendary Basie alumnus Frank Wess, who once said, "That accent is not on the upbeat of four, it's just before one!"

As with many Thad Jones arrangements, a number of key stylistic elements are not printed on the original chart. The rehearsal comments below are taken from recorded performances of the original recording by the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra, and from more recent Vanguard Jazz Orchestra recordings. This arrangement can be performed at the deepest level when band members are hearing these great recordings in their minds as they play.

- The opening piano solo at Letter A is shown as a written melody solo. However, in performance this section is improvised. There are open repeats from A to B, with the melody played as the first and last of those repeats. Any big band solo plays a role; the intent of this solo is to build toward letter B. Notice in the recordings the techniques used to create that intensity, as played by soloist Sir Roland Hanna and the great pianists who followed him in that chair.
- The melody of this tune is only eight measures long, almost like a chant. The first quarter notes in Letter B (1st & 5th measure) are short and separated but fat; the half notes that follow are held out strongly until the downbeat of the next measure. In the 3rd measure of Letter B, the dotted eighths on beats three and four are clipped off, shorter than the sixteenths that follow them.
- Letters C and D form a giant crescendo, building in intensity to the next melody statement at Letter E. The unison Db in the trombones shouldn't be too loud at first; save it for later in the crescendo.
- There are three solos in this arrangement. In the mood that Thad creates, they're almost like sermons. The trumpet solo begins at Letter F, with backgrounds added at Letter G and H, then continuing after the backgrounds stop in another open section at Letter I, as if the soloist refuses to stop! An equally high-energy tenor sax solo follows at Letter K, with backgrounds at L. Soloists should do their homework on these sections by listening to the recordings. Some of Thad's soloists rely mostly on blues/gospel vocabulary, while others play more

over the chord changes; going back and forth between the changes and bluesy language makes a strong solo.

- In Letter M and N, the saxophones should imitate the style of Thad's saxes, using every opportunity to inject the blues into their phrasing. The overall rule here is "higher equals louder," with the peaks of each line accented, and the lower points de-emphasized or ghosted. The saxes should have Thad's section in their mind's ear as they play. Playing along with the recordings will teach more than any written list of directions.
- Letter O is a debate between saxes and brass in counterpoint, building into the final head at Letter P.
- In the final tag, the saxes play the dotted eighth-sixteen figures in measures 137-140 the same as earlier at Letter B: short dotted eighths, long sixteenths. The trumpets should take their cue from the recordings on the shakes in measures 140-142; these are tricky to get just right (not too much, not too little, or too fast or slow). There is no better model for this than Snooky Young, legendary lead player for Count Basie before he joined Thad and Mel's band.
- Have the horns rehearse the rhythmically unified lick in the last three measures. Put some space after the half note and dotted quarter in measure 143, make the marcato notes short but fat. The drums have a huge setup of the downbeat of measure 145.
- This chart is a "blow" for the brass, with lots of high Eb in the trumpets. Save their chops by rehearsing this last section down an octave. If your brass section can play this section with the right energy, swing and articulation at 8vb, then they'll be fantastic when they take it up high.

Significant recordings/videos of *Don't Git Sassy*:

- Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra, *Live At The Village Vanguard* (recorded 4/28/67) Solid State SS18016
- Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra, *Basie, 1969: Swiss Radio Days Volume 4* (recorded 9/69, released 1996) TCB 02042
- Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra, *In Europe* (recorded 2007) ITM 920004
- *Jazz Casual* (recorded 4/22/68, released as DVD, 2013) Idem Video

David Demsey
Coordinator of Jazz Studies
Curator, Thad Jones Archive
William Paterson University

SCORE

Don't Git Sassy

Composed and arranged
by Thad Jones

MODERATE SHUFFLE ♩=148

(A) REPEAT AD-LIB

ALTO SAX I / SOPRANO SAX
ALTO SAX II
TENOR SAX I
TENOR SAX II
BARITONE SAX
TRUMPET I
TRUMPET II
TRUMPET III
TRUMPET IV
TROMBONE I
TROMBONE II
TROMBONE III
TROMBONE IV
PIANO/GUITAR
BASS
DRUMS

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

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(B) **(C)**

Acto Sax I / Soprano Sax

Acto II

Tenor I

Tenor II

B. Sax

Trp. I

Trp. II

Trp. III

Trp. IV

Tuba I

Tuba II

Tuba III

Tuba IV

STAGER BREATHING

STAGER BREATHING

STAGER BREATHING

STAGER BREATHING

Pho./Gtr.

Bs.

(BAND)

17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32

D^b A^b-7 D^b7(b9) G^b7 G^o D^b7 G^b7 F^b B^b7 E^b7 E^b7 A^b7 A^b7 D^b A^b-7 D^b7(b9) G^b7 G^o C⁷ D^b7 D^b7 E^b7 E^b7 F^b7 G^b7 A^b7 D^b7 D^b7(b9) G^b7 G^o C⁷ G⁷ C⁷ F^b B^b7 E^b7 D^b7 E^b-7 E^b7 F^b4 G^b A⁷ D⁷ G⁷ G^b7 C⁷4 F⁷ B^b7 B^b- E^b7 E^b7-D

(D) **(E)**

Alto Sax I / Soprano Sax
 Alto II
 Tenor I
 Tenor II
 B. Sax
 Trp. I
 Trp. II (EAD)
 Trp. III
 Trp. IV
 Tbn. I
 Tbn. II
 Tbn. III
 Tbn. IV
 Piano/Guitar
 B.S.
 Drs.

33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48

Chord progression for Piano/Guitar:
 D^{b7} A^b-G^b G^b C⁷ F⁷ B^{b7} E E^{b7} E^o D^b D^{b7} G^b G^b C^{b7} F⁷ B^{b7} E^{b7} A^b G^b A^b D^b A^b-7 D^{b7}(B^b) G^{b7} G^o D^{b7} G^{b7} F^b B^{b7} E⁷ E^{b7} A^b A^{b7} D^b A^b-7 D^{b7}(B^b) G^{b7} G^o D^{b7} C⁷ B^{b7} B^{b7} G^{b7} F⁷ E⁷ E^{b7} D^{b7} D^{b7} C⁷

REPEAT Ad-Lib **(F)** **(G)**

Acro Sax I/
Soprano Sax

Alto II

Tenor I

Tenor II

B. Sax

Trp. I

Trp. II

Trp. III

Trp. IV

Tbn. I

Tbn. II

Tbn. III

Tbn. IV

Pho./Gtr.

Bc.

Dr.

SOLO

(F) **(G)**

REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64

(H) **(I) REPEAT Ad-Lib**

Acro Sax I / Soprano Sax
Acro II
Tenor I
Tenor II
B. Sax
Tpt. I
Tpt. II
Tpt. III
Tpt. IV
Tbn. I
Tbn. II
Tbn. III
Tbn. IV
Pno./Gtr.
Bc.
Drs.

65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80

*(Musical notation includes notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as *f* and *mp*)*

(Chord progression for Tpt. III and Pno./Gtr. includes: A7, D7, G7, C7, F7, Bb7, Eb7, A7, D7, Gb7, G9, Db, F7, Bb7, Eb7, A7, D7, D7, Gb7, G9, Db7, Bb7, Eb7, A7, D7, Gb7, G9, Db, Cb7, Bb7, E7, Eb7, A7, Db)

(J) **(K) REPEAT Ad-Lib** 1st x ONLY TO SOPRANO SAX

Acto Sax I / Soprano Sax
Acto II
Tenor I
Tenor II
B. Sax
Trp. I
Trp. II
Trp. III
Trp. IV
Tbn. I
Tbn. II
Tbn. III
Tbn. IV
Perc./Gtr.
Bc.
Drs.

81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96

Chord progression for Perc./Gtr. and Bc. (measures 89-96):
 D^{b7} A^{b7} D^{b7}(B^b) G^{b7} G^o D^{b7} G^{b7} F⁷ B^{b7} E⁷ E^{b7} A^{b7} A^{b7} D^b A^{b7} D^{b7}(B^b) G^{b7} G^o D^{b7} C⁷ B^{b7} B^{b7} G^{b7} F⁷ E⁷ E^{b7} D⁷ D^{b7} C⁷ D^{b7} G^{b7} G^o D^{b7} B^{b7} E^{b7} A^{b7} D^{b7} G^{b7} G^o D^b C^{b7} B^{b7} E⁷ E^{b7} A^{b7} D^b

Chord progression for Bc. (measures 89-96):
 D^{b7} G^{b7} G^o D^{b7} B^{b7} E^{b7} A^{b7} D^{b7} G^{b7} G^o D^b C^{b7} B^{b7} E⁷ E^{b7} A^{b7} D^b

Chord progression for Tenor Solo (measures 89-96):
 D^{b7} G^{b7} G^o D^{b7} B^{b7} E^{b7} A^{b7} D^{b7} G^{b7} G^o D^b C^{b7} B^{b7} E⁷ E^{b7} A^{b7} D^b

L GRAND 2M **M**

Sopr. Sax Solo

Alto II Sax Solo

Tenor I Sax Solo

Tenor II Sax Solo

B. Sax Sax Solo

Trp. I *mf*

Trp. II *mf*

Trp. III *mf*

Trp. IV *mf*

Tbn. I *mf*

Tbn. II *mf*

Tbn. III *mf*

Tbn. IV *mf*

Phx./Gtr. *mf*

Bc. *mf*

Dr. *mf* (BAND) Sax Solo

E^{b7} A^{b7} A^o G⁷ C⁷ F⁷ B^{b7} E^{b7} A^{b7} A^o G⁷ C⁷ F⁷ B^{b7}

D^{b7} G^{b7} G^o F⁷ B^{b7} E^{b7} A^{b7} D^{b7} G^{b7} G^o F⁷ B^{b7} E^{b7} A^{b7} D^{b7} G^{b7} G^o F⁷ B^{b7} E^b E⁻ E^b A^{b7}

97 98 99 100 101 102 103 104 105 106 107 108

Soprano, Alto II, Tenor I, Tenor II, B. Sax

Trp. I, Trp. II, Trp. III, Trp. IV, Tbn. I, Tbn. II, Tbn. III, Tbn. IV

Pho./Gtr., Bc., Drs.

109 110 111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119 120

①

P TO ALTO 2ND 2nd x ONLY

Sopr. Alto II Tenor I Tenor II B. Sax. Trp. I Trp. II Trp. III Trp. IV Tbn. I Tbn. II Tbn. III Tbn. IV Pno./Gtr. B. Cl. Dss.

121 122 123 124 125 126 127 128 129 130 131 132

Chord progression for Pno./Gtr. and B. Cl.:

- 121: D⁷(9)
- 122: G⁷ G^o F⁷ B⁷ E⁷ A⁷(9)
- 123: D⁷ G⁷ C⁷ F⁷ B⁷ E⁷ A⁷
- 124: D⁷ G⁷ C⁷ F⁷ B⁷ E⁷ A⁷
- 125: D⁷ G⁷ C⁷ F⁷ B⁷ E⁷ A⁷
- 126: D⁷ G⁷ C⁷ F⁷ B⁷ E⁷ A⁷
- 127: D⁷ G⁷ C⁷ F⁷ B⁷ E⁷ A⁷
- 128: D⁷ G⁷ C⁷ F⁷ B⁷ E⁷ A⁷
- 129: D⁷ A⁷ D⁷(9)
- 130: G⁷ G^o D⁷ G⁷ F⁷ B⁷ E⁷ E⁷ A⁷ A⁷

FINE

1 2

Acro Sax I / Soprano Sax

Acro II

Tenor I

Tenor II

B. Sax

Trp. I

Trp. II

Trp. III

Trp. IV

Tuba I

Tuba II

Tuba III

Tuba IV

Pho./Gtr.

Bc.

Drs.

133 134 135 136 137 138 139 140 141 142 143 144 145 146

$D^{\flat} A^{\flat} \rightarrow D^{\flat} B^{\flat} | G^{\flat 7} G^{\flat} | C^{\flat 7} D^{\flat 7} D^{\flat} D^{\flat 7} | E^{\flat 7} E^{\flat} F^{\flat} G^{\flat 7} G^{\flat} A^{\flat 7} | B^{\flat 7} B^{\flat} C^{\flat} D^{\flat 7} D^{\flat} E^{\flat 7} | E^{\flat 7} E^{\flat} F^{\flat} G^{\flat 7} G^{\flat} A^{\flat 7} | A^{\flat 7} A^{\flat} G^{\flat 7} G^{\flat} F^{\flat} E^{\flat} | G^{\flat 7} G^{\flat 7} F^{\flat} E^{\flat} E^{\flat 7} D^{\flat} | D^{\flat 7} C^{\flat} B^{\flat} B^{\flat 7} A^{\flat} | A^{\flat 7} G^{\flat 7} D^{\flat} G^{\flat} C^{\flat} | D^{\flat} G^{\flat 15} C | F^{\flat} B^{\flat 7} E^{\flat} | E^{\flat 7} D^{\flat} \# | D^{\flat} \# |$