STRIKE UP THE BAND

Music and Lyrics by GEORGE GERSHWIN and IRA GERSHWIN
Arranged by LISA DESPAIN

INSTRUMENTATION

Conductor
1st Eb Alto Saxophone
2nd Eb Alto Saxophone
1st Bb Tenor Saxophone
2nd Bb Tenor Saxophone
Eb Baritone Saxophone (Optional)
1st Bb Trumpet
2nd Bb Trumpet
3rd Bb Trumpet
4th Bb Trumpet (Optional)

1st Trombone
2nd Trombone
3rd Trombone (Optional)
4th Trombone (Optional)
Guitar Chords
Guitar (Optional)
Piano
Bass
Drums

Optional Alternate Parts
C Flute
Tuba
Horn in F
(Doubles 1st Trombone)
1st Baritone T.C.
(Doubles 1st Trombone)
2nd Baritone T.C.
(Doubles 2nd Trombone)
NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

Strike Up the Band is a swing chart. It begins with a pattern set up by piano, bass and drums. This introduction sets the mood and feel for the entire chart so make sure those rhythm players are locked in on that opening pattern. Rehearse it slower if necessary then gradually increase to the desired tempo. When the guitar player enters in measure 9, he or she should continue with the same feel. The tempo marking can vary from what is marked, and playing the chart slightly faster should give it a little more energy.

The melody is stated by the trumpets and answered by saxes and trombones. Direct the players to observe the articulation carefully especially in unison sections. Moving lines in the inner parts should be brought out to be heard. The dynamics gradually increase naturally with a peak at measure 37 when the ensemble plays together.

For the tenor sax and trumpet solos, the written solo is the default. I recommend that the soloists play and learn the written solo, but also experiment with improvisation. The process begins by first knowing the melody from memory in the section of the tune where their solo occurs, learn the notes in the chord progression, then become familiar with the sound of the chord progression roots. These steps will provide a few basic tools toward the art of improvisation.

Saxes should dig in for the solo at measure 57, especially the first syncopated entrance. Notice the marcato or rooftop accents (vation), these are played detached but not staccato. Give the note some length, think “daht.” At measure 65, the band has a stop-time section for the drum solo. The drumset player will likely embellish the written solo. Make sure the drum solo is in the style of the chart.

Next, at measure 73 is an interlude that should begin $p$ and naturally increase in volume as the sections enter and intensity builds. The ensemble can bring out the brief modulation toward the end and play the last measure with confidence. Detached and solid, especially the last note.

Enjoy!

–Lisa DeSpain
Conductor

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor 1

Tenor 2

Tenor 3

Bass

Pf.

Gtr.

Bass

Drums

Ens.