

Billy Strayhorn

Vol. 66

LUSH Life

Satin Doll
Take The "A" Train
Blood Count
Chelsea Bridge
Drawing Room Blues
Isfahan
Johnny Come Lately
Little Brown Book
Lush Life
Raincheck
UMMG
A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing



Book & CD Set

by Jamey Abersold Jazz

CONTENTS

- | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|---|
| 1. <i>Take The A Train</i> | 5. <i>Lush Life</i> | 9. <i>Johnny Come Lately</i> |
| 2. <i>UMMG</i> | 6. <i>Isfahan</i> | 10. <i>A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing</i> |
| 3. <i>Chelsea Bridge</i> | 7. <i>Drawing Room</i> | 11. <i>My Little Brown Book</i> |
| 4. <i>Satin Doll</i> | 8. <i>Raincheck</i> | 12. <i>Blood Count</i> |

INTRODUCTION i

DISCOGRAPHY ii

 CONCERT KEY Songs & Chord/Scale Progressions 1

 Bb INSTRUMENT Songs & Chord/Scale Progressions 19

 Eb INSTRUMENT Songs & Chord/Scale Progressions 33

 BASS CLEF INSTRUMENT Songs & Chord/Scale Progressions 47

Cover Photo by Duncan Schiedt

Cover design by Jamey D. Aebersold

Copyright © 1995 by Jamey Aebersold Jazz, Inc.

All Rights Reserved Printed in U.S.A. International Copyright secured

All copyrights used by permission

No portion of this book may be reproduced in any way without express permission from the publisher.

INTRODUCTION

If there ever was a man who was underrated and publicly underappreciated, it was Billy Strayhorn. He was classically trained but came under Duke Ellington's spell as a teenager when he first heard the band. Several years later, in 1938, he approached Ellington about a job, playing several pieces for him that he'd written for a high school band including *Lush Life*. Ellington took him on as a lyricist, but soon Strayhorn was demonstrating a level of composition and arranging talent that even he himself had been unaware of. He became a virtual alter ego to Ellington, even occasionally playing piano with the band. They worked together with a rapport verging on the telepathic until Strayhorn's death in 1967.

Of the three collaborations with Ellington on this record, *Drawing Room Blues* is the least formal, recorded by the composers as a piano duet in 1946. *Satin Doll* is a four-square 32-bar song that has been a jazz staple since the Ellington band recorded it in 1953; Johnny Mercer's outrageously hip lyric was added in 1958. And *Isfahan*, named for the Persian city (now in Iran), is the most formal of the three, written in 1966 as part of the "Far East Suite" to feature altoist Johnny Hodges. *Lush Life* took a long time to catch on. There is only one documented performance of it by the Ellington orchestra, and that was a Carnegie Hall rendering in 1948 (a decade after Ellington first heard the piece) by the band with Strayhorn at the piano and Kay Davis singing. But Nat King Cole's 1949 hit with Pete Rugelo's arrangement established the song as a standard. In stark contrast was *Take The A Train's* immediate success following its 1941 debut. The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP), to which Ellington belonged, was at war with radio broadcasters, and effective January 1, 1941, ASCAP songs could not be broadcast. Strayhorn recalled in a 1966 interview, "When we (the Ellington band) opened at the Casa Manana on January 3rd, we had air time every night but could not play our library. We had to play non-ASCAP material. Duke was in ASCAP, but I wasn't. So we had to write a new library, and *A Train* was one of the numbers."