

TRICKY LOFTON & CARMEL JONES WITH THE ARRANGEMENTS OF GERALD WILSON



Gerald Wilson

Arranged By – Gerald Wilson
Bass – Leroy Vinnegar
Drums – Ron Jefferson
Piano – Frank Strazzeri
**Trombone – Bob Edmondson,
Frank Strong, Kenny Schroyer**
**Tricky Lofton, Lou Blackburn,
Wayne Henderson**
Trumpet – Carmell Jones
Producer – Richard Bock



Carmell Jones



BRASS BAG

From time to time, Gerald Wilson seemed like one of Los Angeles' better-kept secrets, an unusually skillful, imaginative, and charismatic bandleader who hadn't received his due outside the West Coast. His arrangements were distinctive, often complex voicings and harmonies, rooted in swing and bop, yet always forward-looking and energetic in tone. He liked to play around with structures, which contributed to the restless quality in much of his music, and being a bullfight aficionado, he was one of the first arrangers to make use of Spanish influences. He was consistently able to attract top-rank musicians to his bands, who played with immaculate precision and brio for the flamboyantly gesticulating maestro.

Upon moving from Memphis to Detroit with his family in 1932, Wilson studied music in high school and played with the Plantation Music Orchestra before undergoing the formative experience of his life, working with the Jimmie Lunceford band from 1939 to 1942. Replacing Sy Oliver as arranger, conductor, and trumpet soloist, Wilson learned his craft in the Lunceford band, after which he took off for Los Angeles to play with the bands of Les Hite, Benny Carter, and Willie Smith. Wilson organized his first big band in 1944, which sported an intriguing blend of swing and bop and featured musicians like Melba Liston and Snooky Young. But it only lasted three years, and after playing for Count Basie and Dizzy Gillespie in 1947 and 1948, Wilson quit the music business for a while to try his hand in the grocery trade. After a tentative return as a bandleader in 1952, it took a while for him to gradually ease his way back into jazz full-time; he even made appearances as a TV actor.

In 1961, after experimenting with a workshop band for four years, Wilson formed a new orchestra that made a string of successful albums for the Pacific Jazz label throughout the '60s, featuring soloists like Harold Land, Teddy Edwards, Bud Shank, Jack Wilson, and Joe Pass. One tune that he wrote for the Moment of Truth album, "Viva Tirado" (later reprised on Live and Swinging) became a surprise hit single for the Latin rock group El Chicano in 1970. He scored films and TV programs, worked as an

arranger for recordings by singers such as Al Hibbler, Bobby Darin, and Johnny Hartman, contributed arrangements to the Duke Ellington band, and wrote music for the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He also started a series of hugely entertaining and informative classes in jazz history at California State University, Northridge (then San Fernando Valley State College) in 1970, moving them to UCLA in 1992, and had his own radio program on L.A.'s KBCA-FM from 1969 to 1976.

State Street Sweet Wilson continued to lead big bands off and on through the '80s and '90s, as well as running the orchestra for Redd Foxx's NBC shows and serving as one of the Los Angeles jazz scene's more revered elder statesmen. In 1995, he commemorated more than half a century as a leader by releasing *State Street Sweet*, a vigorous tribute to the durability of his work, and scoring a solid hit at the Playboy Jazz Festival. In 1996, Wilson's life's work was archived by the Library of Congress, and in 1997 he completed *Theme for Monterey*, a piece commissioned by the Monterey Jazz Festival. In 2003 he recorded *New York, New Sound*, his debut for Mack Avenue Records, which went on to receive a Grammy nomination in the Best Large Jazz Ensemble category. Several albums for Mack Avenue followed with *In My Time* in 2005, *Monterey Moods* in 2007, and *Detroit* in 2009. In 2011, Wilson released his fifth Mack Avenue album, the classical-themed *Legacy*. However, his health began to decline with his advancing years, and, after contracting pneumonia, Gerald Wilson died at his Los Angeles home in September 2014 at age 96. An excellent hard bop trumpeter,

Carmell Jones would probably have been much better-known today if he had not moved to Europe in the mid-'60s at the height of his career. After military service and two years at the University of Kansas, Carmell Jones led a band in Kansas City (1959). The next year, he moved to Los Angeles where he recorded a couple of albums as a leader for Pacific Jazz and made records with Bud Shank, Harold Land, Curtis Amy, and most significantly Gerald Wilson's Orchestra (1961-1963). Jones toured with Horace Silver for a year (1964-1965), recording the original version of "Song for My Father" with Silver before moving to Berlin. Although quite active in Europe, Carmell Jones was largely forgotten by the time he moved back to Kansas City in 1980; however, a 1982 album for Revelation helped remind a few listeners how good he still was.

TRICKY LOFTON & CARMEL JONES

WITH THE ARRANGEMENTS OF GERALD WILSON

- 1 Brass Bag 3:49
 - 2 Canadian Sunset 5:39
 - 3 Angel Eyes 4:14
 - 4 Ow! 6:49
 - 5 Celery Stalks At Midnight 5:22
 - 6 Mood Indigo 5:21
 - 7 Moten Swing 5:26
 - 8 Bluer Than That 3:20
- Total Time: 40:00

Recorded at Pacific Jazz Studios, Hollywood, California 1962



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