

Modern Editions of  
Trombone Features by  
Nathaniel Cleophas (N.C.) Davis  
(1888-1972)

Preparing New Arrangements - Summer 2020

By Aaron Hettinga



<https://aaronhettinga.com>

## N.C. Davis's Band Works:

The original band parts for these pieces were all found on BandMusicPDF.org:

Title:	Year:	Publisher:
"Oh Slip It Man"	1916	N.C. Davis, Nashville, Tenn.
"Mr. Trombonology"	1917	N.C. Davis, Nashville, Tenn.
"Miss Trombonism"	1918	C.G. Conn Ltd., Elkhart, Ind.
"Master Trombone"	1919	Carl Fischer, New York
"Trombone Francais"	1921	Carl Fischer, New York

*All pieces are available as Solo Trombone with Piano Accompaniments and as Concert Band arrangements through Cherry Classics Publications. <https://cherryclassics.com/>*

## Part I: Project Origins

Douglas Yeo's series of articles on the racist history behind "Lassus Trombone" and Henry Fillmore's Trombone Family came to my attention in early July of 2020. I'd long known about the questionable history of the Fillmore works, but never realized the true extent of it until reading that blog post. I almost immediately discontinued sale of my "Teddy Trombone" brass quintet arrangement from my own website. With all the present societal disquiet regarding race relations, I'm proud to consider myself an ally for racial equity, and would be disappointed in myself if I didn't contribute in whatever small ways I'm able, especially when they're as simple as discontinuing a product from an online store. Even though others may not know or care about where those silly tunes came from, now \*I\* know, and that's enough for me.

Also in Yeo's article was an open invitation for arrangers to take on modern editions of works by N.C. Davis, a mostly unknown African-American composer of a century past. I already had a passing familiarity with these works having done a number of "smear" arrangements about a decade ago. BandMusicPDF.org has long been one of my starting points for arrangement fodder and I had a bit of an early-20th-century band music streak kicking around for a time that had me digging up smears to arrange. Davis's works were among those I'd downloaded at the time but I opted instead to write arrangements for Mayhew (M.L.) Lake's "The Booster" and Arthur Pryor's "Razzazza Mazzazza" (who could resist such a title?!) at the time, along with Fillmore's "Teddy Trombone." Since Yeo's invitation seemed to be blazing out at me in bright red letters, I made contact with Gordon Cherry, the publisher interested in bringing modern editions of these works to print.

Within a few days I'd knocked out an arrangement for Trombone Solo with Piano Accompaniment of Davis' "Miss Trombonism." Gordon was pleased enough with the work I'd done and asked me to do the same for the remaining four pieces by Davis so I got straight to work. The full set of Trombone/Piano arrangements was completed within two weeks.

Upon completion of that first arrangement I was asked to provide a bio for the composer which brought me to a virtual dead end. I figured I'd only need to take a few minutes to find a Wikipedia article and paraphrase my own version but after about an hour's scouring of the internet I still had almost nothing to go on. I needed help to find some sort of biographical info, and I recruited a researcher colleague who has a knack for finding things in old archives. I let him know what I was up to and he managed to scrape together a number of old newspaper clippings and copyright registries in very short order which got me the necessary info to write this short biography:

*Nathaniel C. Davis was a cornetist, educator, bandleader, composer and later publisher at the N.C. Davis Music Company of Nashville, Tennessee.*

*During the 1910's he Taught at Nashville's Fisk university having instructed the notable trumpeter Doc Cheatham. He also taught with the Tennessee School for the Blind as well as serving as President and educator for the Traveling Conservatory of Music that he formed.*

*In the social scene, Davis was involved with a number of African-American organizations: he was elected member of the executive committee of the Colored American Legion and served for a time as secretary of the Colored State Fair Association*

*Besides leading and performing with his own N.C. Davis band, he was also known as Music Director and General Manager of the Lebanon Band and later served as music director with the Gantry Brothers Circus Band.*

*Davis' Trombone Family of compositions consists of 5 known pieces written for concert band between 1916 and 1921, of which Miss Trombonism (1918) was the third.*

Before the end of the same week I'd first read Yeo's article, went on to write an arrangement, and ended up getting fast-tracked to release, Douglas Yeo himself contacted me to commend the work I'd already done and we compared notes on the historical information we had independently pieced together so far on Mr. Davis. I hadn't yet come across anything about his military service in the First World War that led him to compose "Trombone Francais" as tribute to his time overseas. His superior writing quickly deposed the biography I wrote, but my humble bio served as the start of the new Wikipedia article that we each contributed toward improving. Maybe this will give future researchers the headstart that we didn't have this time around. It gave me quite the lift to find my work so well-received, and I undertook a sort of mission: here's a composer who didn't stoop to racist cartoons as promotional materials to sell his work. Unfortunately, a century on, those very works remain mostly unknown. Let's see if we can bring them out into the light!

## Part II: Arranger's Observations

### Characteristics of the Pieces:

"Mr. Trombonology" and "Miss Trombonism" are both rather march-like. While there is some syncopation present, it's not extreme. In fact, there's a recording made by The Peacherine Ragtime Society Orchestra that takes "Mr. Trombonology" at a blazing circus march tempo that doesn't feel at all out of place for this one.

"Oh Slip It Man" and "Trombone Francais" are more clearly of a much slower syncopated Ragtime style here. I find it mildly curious that these two also happen to be the "bookend" pieces, the first and last published. Additionally, these are the only two of this family of works that have four distinct strains. The other three all repeat the second strain as the second half of the TRIO.

"Master Trombone" seems to be the hybrid of the bunch. Marked as "Tempo do Rag," it would not be well served at a fast tempo even though a good portion of it remains rather March-like in the vein of "Mr. Trombonology" and "Miss Trombonism." Those portions could end up feeling quite lifeless if taken too slowly, but the more syncopated strains would become quite the technical challenge if the tempo were taken too quickly.

The introductions themselves are an additional minor curiosity. Most of the pieces use basically the last 4 measures of the first strain as the piece's introduction (basically..."Master Trombone" slightly twists this into a fermata on the dominant). "Oh Slip It Man" instead pulls from the end of the second strain. This one further breeches protocol by not adding a flat to change the key signature at the start of the TRIO. It comes about at the next strain afterward, so I suppose it gets there eventually.

A unique feature of "Mr. Trombonology" is the shouted/sung section at the end. While "Oh Slip It Man" contains a rhythmic shoutout of the title near the end, "Mr. Trombonology" covers the entire final strain of the trio. I opted to show the lyrics in the Piano accompaniment, as well as expanding its appearance in the band parts. I additionally prepared an SATB sing-along sheet to include with the Band edition...maybe a future school band's performance can bring in its choir to also participate!

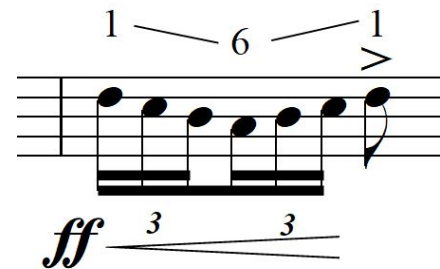
"Master Trombone" appears to be the only entry with no subtitle, humorous or otherwise. I added "Another Characteristic Trombone Smear" as it's slightly unique but still seems to fit in well enough with the style of the others.

While all of these pieces are meant to feature trombone smears (and all, in fact, begin with one), it was a relief to find a bit of a unifying feature *besides glissandi*: All five pieces introduce an

"Eighth - Eighth - Sixteenth - Dotted Eighth" rhythm in the melody at some point in the TRIO. This is nothing too profound on its own, of course, but after a couple weeks straight of hammering at these, it's kinda nice to uncover *something* new.

## Gliss Notation:

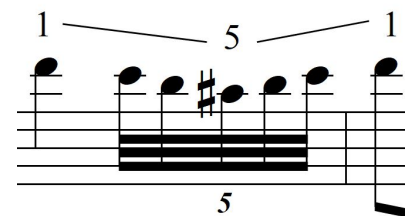
Only two pieces ("Miss Trombonism" and "Mr. Trombonology") are even partially notated with slide positions and/or lines above/below the staff as originally published. The others have no gliss cues beyond slurred 16ths. This can't even be attributed to differences in house styles between the different publishers involved at the time since these two were each released through different publishers, so who knows what was driving the choices here. At Gordon Cherry's request after a bit of notational trial and error, we opted to go with "slide positions and straight lines without slurs" as it gave the cleanest look and clearest communications of intent. We all thought best to avoid the squiggly line style gliss markings in these new editions.



Another curiosity: The Peacherine Ragtime Society Orchestra recording of "Mr. Trombonology" finds the player choosing in a few places to legato tongue a few passages that I labeled as glisses. Who ya' gonna trust?

"Trombone Francais" additionally has a unique feature near the end of the 2nd strain where trombonists are provided with grace notes. I opted to give gliss notations to these for the soloist part but totally understand how a player of the day might not have glissed those at all (much like the "Mr. Trombonology" observation above).

Where possible, I opted to display glisses as 16th note triplets beamed with a single connective beam in the middle per beat rather than sextuplets. It's just too easy to mistake a "6" over the beam as a suggestion of 6th position. In "Mr. Trombonology" I found it amusing that some quintuplet marks did indeed happen to match up with their respective center notes also in fifth position. How convenient!



In contrast, the Fillmore pieces all seem much more March-like, with nowhere near as much of the syncopated ragtime style as found in the Davis works. Not that the ragtime syncopation is fully absent from all the Fillmore pieces, of course, but they don't seem to be nearly as pronounced. This may just be splitting hairs as far as style is concerned, but it was pleasant to have a little variety when doing so many similar arrangements back-to-back. The Fillmore publications also have much more consistent gliss notations, as do most other works from the era.

There's a whole big chunk of the 2nd and last strains of "Master Trombone" that *could* be glissed, but they're pretty much all sets of half steps...nothing that would require any alternate position cues so I've just left them slurred. Also related, in those same sections, there are some whole steps involving D naturals that feel out of place that I've carefully compared against the original parts and they seem intentional. I even experimented by bumping them all up to half-step intervals and that doesn't feel right either...just a chunk of weird writing either way so I've left them as they were originally set.

Through all 5 of these pieces, there are no instances of harmonized glisses anywhere beyond an occasional octave doubling in the 3rd Trombone part. Even though I seemed to remember Fillmore's "Lassus Trombone" as having harmonized glissandi in the 2nd strain, a review of the original parts shows that all are unison in this respect. The Dave Wolpe Big Band arrangement adds harmony to glisses all over the place, and the Florida State Marching Band recording of the Fillmore march also adds harmony in that 2nd strain. Perhaps these modifications found their way into later editions, but I haven't yet come across them. To me, the first strain of "Oh Slip It Man" gives the greatest temptation to add gliss harmonization...that may very well find its way into the forthcoming Concert Band arrangement.

## Arranging Process:

In writing derivative arrangements of existing works, I've found that my workflow is most efficient if I'm able to have all of the original source materials available as a full score in my score writing software (Finale) as I begin. Since I've not yet found a reliable enough scanning solution to migrate dozens of individual band parts to full score without major editing anyway, I start off my new arrangement by getting to know the piece through data entry and proofreading before analyzing and distilling the broader elements down to their basics. On occasion I have reduced full works to a condensed score as an extra clarifying/focusing step en route to preparing the final arrangement. Often this can be helpful, but was unnecessary with this series of works.

There have been at least \*some\* typos in the original published parts for every single one of the dozens of band works I've transcribed to score over the years so I won't take the time to enumerate every one of them encountered with these Davis works. They're just gonna be there. Often, it's not too difficult to corroborate what "should" be correct, often from an equivalent transposed part (T.C vs. B.C. Trombone or Baritone parts) or similar lines doubled in other parts altogether. Often one option stands out from the others as a typo over the course of filling out the whole score, but sometimes the variants become little judgment calls on what I think best serves the project at hand.

Also common in hand-engraved published music from the era, dynamics and accents are quite a mixed bag. Some parts will have some, other parts will have some others. The real trick is to correct the extant errors without introducing any fresh ones! As I haven't often played with

concert bands of this style since school days, I don't really have too much experience with how much an ensemble must depend on the conductor's leadership to manage this on the fly...or rehearse it at length!

## Melodic Treatment:

I've been taking cues from the Fillmore pieces as far as melody distribution is concerned across different ensemble types (since I had both band and solo versions for Lassus Trombone and Teddy Trombone available for reference). The band parts and the solo parts are not always identical. At times, the solo part gets more of the melody than the band's trombone section does for the same musical phrase. Therefore, I've been pretty loose in granting the solo part some extra melody just for interest's sake (where it makes sense, of course). Usually I've not strayed too far away from the band parts but I never really revered them as gospel, either. Often I'll opt to incorporate the melody into the solo part in place of held half notes...but not always. Since there would be variations between different editions of the same pieces even at that time, I'm not at all worried that I'm doing anything of sacrilege here.

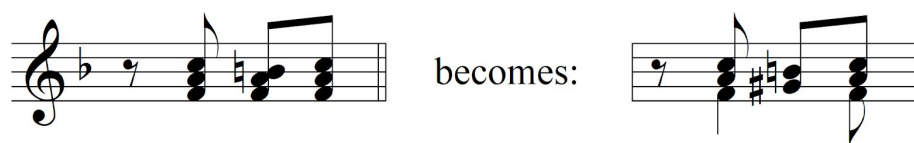
I can't imagine that anyone ever down the road will have started on my solo version of any of the Davis editions we're cooking up and think that they ought to do it as a solo feature with Full Concert Band accompaniment to be later surprised that the concert band editions are different. Even though these aren't major trombone works, I think and hope that the Trombone Smear sub-genre is well enough known within the trombone community as being *section* features while the Solo w/ Piano versions are alternate, reduced editions of them.

"Oh Slip It Man" seems to have the least melody-conscious trombone parts when sourced directly from the original band publication. For the Solo Trombone edition it seems I had to steal the melody for the soloist pretty much everywhere except for the glisses to avoid effectively writing a piece for "piano solo with trombone gliss accompaniment." Luckily enough, most of the glisses here seem to be able to mesh right into the melody (especially in the TRIO) making for a much more interesting (and challenging) solo part! The other titles in the set seem to already show up with a better balance of interesting things for the Trombonists to play other than just the glisses. Not that any of these are "High Art," of course, but I'd say the best part of this one is its title. Unfortunately, that curiosity could possibly be what draws people to "Oh Slip It Man" before the other four. Oh, well. In the end, if I've managed to get something out there that has some people take interest, I'll just hope I've provided something somewhat worthwhile.

## Harmonic Treatment:

While I've tried to remain true to the spirit of these original compositions, I've occasionally taken minor liberties to turn otherwise bland harmonic choices into something slightly more interesting yet still period appropriate. One example in "Mr. Trombonology:" I modified certain passing chords (containing only one altered pitch) to diminished chords at the beginnings of the both the second & final strains.





A similar alteration was made to measure 8 (and similar locations) of “Master Trombone” to break up the repetitious F chords in eighth notes when the melody note briefly moves up to the “D” as shown in the first beat of the second measures below:

Like most arranging choices, these sorts of tweaks will probably go unnoticed to most listeners, but they just felt right so that’s where I went with them.

Another set of tweaks to “Mr. Trombonology” was made to try to better accommodate voice leading between the melody and bass lines. There were passages where a number of parallelisms were going on that didn’t feel the most natural. I can’t claim to have perfectly resolved all of them to the degree of a tightly-knit Bach chorale, but hopefully a smoother set of voice leading has emerged for these editions that subtly smooths out some awkwardness without calling attention to itself as being “different” somehow.

“Trombone Francais” provided a different challenge where the harmonic motion gets quite awkward around the multiple endings in the first strain of the TRIO. There’s a nice authentic cadence from the last eighth note into the second ending but it seems to jump the gun a half beat early of the first ending, giving a jarring chord change that feels unnatural. I got around it by making a minor architectural tweak to start the ending brackets one bar sooner to allow for smoother and more logical chord progressions landing more comfortably on the downbeats.

"Oh Slip It Man" and The "Impossible" Gliss: There’s one instance of a gliss from Middle C down to the G below it that is the only one in the whole set that’s not reachable on a straight tenor Trombone. Since he was primarily a cornetist and this was his first of the self-published smears, I think I’ll forgive him for

only making one error of this nature. Glissing down to an “A” here has probably been the common solution through the years, and this was the option chosen by the Peachtree Ragtime orchestra in their recording. I opted to leave the original notes in place, but have listed 2 sets of positions to acknowledge that it is indeed possible but only with an F attachment.

## Other Original Publications’ Notes:

“Oh Slip It Man” is the only one of the five in this series that credits an arranger: Geo.D. Barnard, an accomplished composer/arranger of piano and band music of the day. It doesn’t seem likely that he was involved in any of the others as there were no other distinguishing characteristics that I could make out elsewhere. In fact, “Slip” seems to be less complex than the other four work in that there’s not much of a countermelody going on, mostly just the tune, the glisses, Ooms and Pahs. Then again, the tuba/low winds responses in the third measure of the A section were one of the few parts that didn’t mesh well with the gliss so I just left that to the accompanist. Other unique features to “Slip” include a 1st Cornet part that much more closely follows the Solo Cornet part as well as freestanding individual parts for all Cornets, Trombones, and (some) percussion when they are usually combined.

“Master Trombone” is the only one that seems to have originally been published with some hand-copied parts rather than engraved parts, though a number of hand-copied parts appear to have crept into the collections through the years in the way they’re available on BandMusicPDF.

I take great interest at the bottom of the Solo Cornet/Conductor part of “Miss Trombonism” where it’s notated:

**Pub for Piano Solo, Band, Orch. & Trom. Solo with Piano Acc.**

This further confirms that we’re not doing anything new in preparing different arrangements here, but who knows if we’ll ever unearth any of the other original sheet music for these! I’m very interested to see how the arrangers of the period worked out some of their solutions for this same material I’ve been working on in these contexts.

## General Comments on Modern Editions:

I chose not to use 1-bar repeat symbols or the slashed notation on stems of quarter or half notes to indicate repeated 8th notes, opting to just spell these out in full. While these aren’t unheard of in contemporary music, the repeating 8th slash especially tends to remain a rather uncommon notation in wind parts. I thought it best to avoid confusion for players.

Also, in both editions, I decided to copy out repeated strains verbatim rather than using the D.S. and Fine endings before hopping ahead to the TRIO. If we really had to remain mindful of

available real estate on paper like the original marching band-sized folios it would make sense to go with the original notations, but this just removes a level of unnecessary complexity in my mind, besides making the road map a bit clearer at first reading. Additionally, this makes it easier to introduce a little variety at times (like the harmonized glisses mentioned earlier).

## Notes On Writing the Trombone/Piano Arrangements:

Doing any of this kind of work involves compromises. One Trombonist plus 10 fingers at a piano just can't do everything a trombone section playing with a full concert band can do. It's a matter of frequent judgment calls to decide where melody, countermelody, downbeats and afterbeats are best served to make for the most complete musical statement possible.

One of the first rules I set for myself with this project was that **all** the glissandi from the band parts would survive in the solo part (since a piano gliss is a very different beast from one on a Trombone!). Other than a few octave shifts that were implemented to better accommodate the melodic lines for the soloist, I believe all of them safely made the transition.

Aside from the glisses, there was still no guarantee that the rest of the melody would automatically go to the Solo Trombone part. Occasionally I was able to incorporate the glisses right into the melody line but they were sometimes so independent of the other melodic material going on that I'd just have to let the pianist take over the tune. Additionally, the need for the accompaniment to keep an active eighth note pulse is imperative to the forward momentum of these kinds of arrangements. To get that eighth note pulse moving things forward would sometimes find me granting a more active primary melody line (and associated harmonies) to the accompaniment and letting the soloist take on some other secondary line (that may have even been originally delegated to band parts other than the trombones) that could otherwise be lost among everything else.

For reference I'd occasionally take a look at the piano accompaniments for "Lassus Trombone" or "Teddy Trombone" as well as some Scott Joplin piano rags to make sure I wasn't straying too far from the common practices of the period. Unlike the Joplin works, I refrained from delving too deeply into the territory of "stride" piano in the left hand, mostly for ease of playing's sake. Often I have the left hand just punching out downbeat bass notes (single pitches or in octaves) with occasions of adding broken eighth note patterns to accommodate some afterbeats enough to keep the pulse going, especially if there's something else important going on in the right hand that doesn't allow it to address any afterbeats. When using the left hand for eighth notes in broken octaves, I usually find it best not to let it happen too low unless I'm specifically looking for a heavy low end effect. Keeping it to baritone/tenor range helps the upper notes to retain their afterbeat quality without becoming too heavy handed. Luckily enough, occasionally the original Bassoon parts featured some of these very broken/octave eighth note patterns making it a simple task to copy/paste them straight into the left hand of the piano accompaniment.

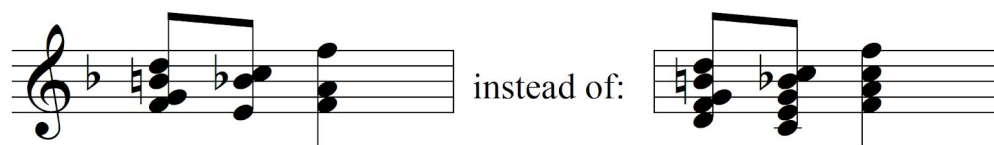
While it would be possible to compile a serviceable piano part with an adequate eighth note momentum by simply condensing the horn parts into the right hand and tuba to the left, this would end up pretty bland, neglecting many of the melodic characteristics that help make these pieces more interesting.

It seemed rare to have very much close homophony between the two hands to allow for more chorale-like voicings for the left hand but I took advantage of the opportunity whenever possible (such as the earlier example from the first strain of “Master Trombone”).

Other common judgment call situations: occasionally the trombone section melody (16th note lines) would be doubled by the low winds (Bassoon, Tenor/Bari Sax, Euphonium & Tubas). Sometimes this led me to go ahead and double it up in the piano left hand as well, yet at other times I’d work in a different broken 8th note pattern to not muddy up the works. Conversely, when the melody in the Solo Trombone parts was borrowed from the high woodwinds, sometimes it made sense to double the soloist up an octave (or two) in the accompaniment while other times I’d find different things for the right hand to do if the moment didn’t seem to need any extra treble reinforcement.

I endeavored not to write anything in the accompaniment requiring a reach of more than an octave for either hand. Having received chastisement following some of my past arrangements from pianists with apparently smaller hands than my own, I’ve learned my lesson to take it easy unless I’m knowingly writing for a particular player who I already know to have a larger reach. In writing for an unknown future accompanist, an octave’s reach is usually safe enough. The only cases of octave-plus stretched-hand writing that may occasionally show up here would be when there’s something sustained up high with a 2nd layer of 8th notes below it with downward stems that will still allow enough time to reposition hands. As long as I’ve given a clear enough outline of the chord progression, a talented ragtime accompanist could surely add much more on the fly than what I’ve put to paper.

When using octaves in the right hand to reinforce something, I usually won’t leave more than one harmony note in between unless it’s really needed. If fuller harmony is necessary, usually the octave is the first to go in favor of legibility. I don’t think I ever required 5 fingers at once in the right hand (both awkward to play and harder to read) and don’t frequently stack up 4 thirds on top of each other unless there’s a good reason.



All of these are more like general guidelines that I followed rather than immutable laws to be obeyed at any cost. Depending on the situation there were things that seemed more necessary at times than others, but these provided the basis for my approach.

## Notes On Preparing the Modern Band Editions:

Here are some observations more specific to this task, broken down by instruments:

- Piccolo: Db parts were common of the period, but not worth the effort now. The parts remain mostly unchanged, just prepared in C.
- Flutes: These are either not present in the originals (common enough of the era) or are only present as a shared part with the C piccolo that effectively doubles an octave below. As these days it's common to have 2 flute parts in addition to a piccolo, these resulting flute parts are primarily descended from the original piccolo part (sounding 8vb) along with occasional harmonization in 3rds or 6ths. This usually reflects the Eb and Bb Clarinet parts (of which the Eb part is often already a double of the piccolo). I have the original piccolo part doubled in at least one of the flutes at the higher octave at pretty much all times.
- Oboe, Bassoon, and Euphonium parts are occasionally given unique lines independent of anyone else in the ensemble. I've often drawn from those for interesting counter-things in the piano accompaniments. Usually, Oboe parts turn out to be like a somewhat simplified Soprano Sax part, so that became the starting point for creating a whole new part to fill in for the missing one from "Oh Slip It Man." Bassoon is usually fairly similar to Bari Sax, so again, that's the starting point for missing parts. I opted to keep 1 part each for Oboe/Bassoon in these band editions, but will go to 2 each if Orchestra editions are requested.
- Clarinets: as mentioned before, the Eb Clarinet is often doubling the piccolo part, either at porch or sounding an octave below it. I've opted to keep the original Eb parts mostly intact since they were already there and some ensembles still use them, but I probably wouldn't write an independent part for Eb Clarinet in a new composition anymore (not that they ever really had independent lines in the first place, at least in this collection). Bb clarinets may not always need to stay in the stratosphere as originally published, especially now that flute parts are being added, but that's not always motivation enough to make changes to what's there.
- I also added Bass Clarinet parts where there weren't already but didn't bother with the less common Alto Clarinet or any of the Contra Clarinets. The Bass Clarinet lines often came from a mixture of existing Bari Sax, Bassoon and Tuba parts. (Side note while discussing Clarinets: the most unique "hidden" thing I ever found was in a piece called Evening Shadows - Serenade, by D.L. Stubblebine. The piece is an Eb Alto horn solo that had a counter line in an Alto Clarinet part that wasn't doubled **anywhere** else. I wonder how often that line just went unheard there?!)
- Saxes: sometimes they're all doubling other things, other times they're a standalone section of "less interesting" stuff than other sections. It never quite feels right to give them afterbeats, though...they just won't sound right when asked to play too many of them. For these modern editions, I've added a 2nd Alto Sax part. The other parts are

mostly left as they were, but I tweaked the distribution between altos and tenors from time to time.

- Trumpets vs. Cornets: I went with 3 tpt parts. Occasionally it meant judgement calls for what to change, but there didn't seem to be any really hard calls in these pieces. Eb Cornet parts were left in place where they already existed (or were quickly derived from the Solo Cornet part), but mostly were left unchanged. Again, not a part I'd specially write for a modern work, but leaving them as a historical archive seemed okay.
- Horns: other than providing F Horn parts in place of Eb, there were mostly only occasional typo and harmonic fixes.
- Trombones: Often the original band parts were retained as is, but I made adjustments from time to time to allow for better section features rather than "only" having glisses.
- Euphoniums: Still provided T.C. option just because.
- Tuba: These new editions use just a single tuba note. Occasionally the Bassoon, Bass Clarinet or Bari Sax (or sometimes even Tenor Sax or Euphonium) will already be doubling the tuba note in tenor range, so there's not really a call to keep using the outdated "octave-d" tuba parts.
- Percussion: - Split into freestanding Bells, Cymbals, Snare and Bass drums with other minor tweaks at times.

## Part III: Historical Perspective

Along with the barrage of arranging I've done with these Davis pieces, I've also pondered a bit about his life and times, trying to picture what all might have been happening between the fragments of his life that we've so far been able to unearth.

Imagine being singled out for your skin color at every turn with no recourse. Serving in a segregated military unit. Teaching at a black university. Leading music schools for black children. Black circus sideshow musicians. Hell, even his marriage license has a "/C/" notation next to each of their names to identify them as colored!

Even though he endured that history of segregation, he also managed to live long enough to see some of the movements come about that made some improvements on this front. Lord knows we're not there yet, but it's encouraging to know that more people are coming to realize how much farther we still have to go.

While it's fantastic that some of his musical works have survived, how many more might have come about if he hadn't been relegated to the side column next to the Fillmore caricatures? There's no way we can know his aspirations, of course, but even with the little that is available to us it's not hard to see that we're fighting an uphill battle against history just to make sure he's not ignored for what he *was* able to accomplish.

It has been rewarding to have a hand in starting to bring these pieces into a more public awareness. Having worked directly on these works to distill them to their most basic elements, I won't try to claim that this job has been about reviving the work of some previously unrecognized genius. As I've mentioned before, this is not "high art," but I don't think these pieces have less charm than any of the other trombone gliss features of the period. Since this set comes without the racist baggage of the Fillmore works, I'm quite happy to be involved in getting this set out there to have around as a worthy alternative.