

That Moaning Trombone

Comic March One-Step
Harlem Hellfighters Style!

Composed by Carl D Bethel
Arranged by Sandy Coffin

James Reese Europe and The Harlem Hellfighters Band



The US Army 369th Regiment, made up largely of African-Americans from New York, became known as *the Harlem Hellfighters* because of the heroic reputation which accrued to them during the actions they engaged in during the First World War in Europe.

James Reese Europe was one of the most active African-American composer/musical directors in the pre-war American music scene.

The legendary *Harlem Hellfighters Band*, which he assembled in 1917 from African-American and Puerto Rican musicians, came at an important transitional point in musical history. A new form of music called jazz was emerging from Ragtime and the performing style of Europe's band was immersed in the flow of this new direction.



Europe's *Harlem Hellfighters* influenced and inspired everyone who heard them, including the welcoming crowd when they disembarked in France, bowled over by their swinging rendition of *La Marseillaise*. Reese Europe became a war hero, commanding a machine-gun unit as well as the band.

On return from War in 1919 the band led a ticker-tape parade along Fifth Avenue in New York and soon made about 30 shellac recordings. These recordings display some of the fingerprints of their performing style: ragging, improvising, muting,



wailing, smearing (their word for glissando) - and from the evidence of their recordings they took the printed page as a blueprint for individuality.

In May 1919 during the *Hellfighters'* triumphant coast-to-coast tour after their return, James Reese Europe was tragically murdered, bringing to premature close, at the age of 39, the work of a great musical innovator.

That Moaning Trombone Harlem Hellfighters Style!

This arrangement of *That Moaning Trombone* has been crafted by Sandy Coffin



through close listening of the available recordings of the *Harlem Hellfighters Band*.

Note the the reckless abandon with which glissando, at that time a novel effect, is used!

Eye-witness accounts refer to the 369th band 'dancing' rather than 'marching'. Above all, in modern performance, finding a 'dancing beat' is crucial to a successful performance of this Ragtime march in order to do justice to the great pioneering work of James Reese Europe.

Performance Notes

The ideal tempo range is 120-128. The tempo on the original recording is exuberantly quick.

Glissandi were known as 'smears' in the US of this period and should be played accordingly. Glissandi are indicated by a straight line for clarity; alternate positions have been noted where it might be helpful.

The Bass Trombone part is in reality a third trombone part intentionally notated in the upper octave. It can be played on tenor trombone, rather than dropping down the octave. The solo passages in the Trio (60 and 62, and similar at F and H) may be played by Trombone 1 and 2 as well if desired.

TRIO: Aim for full dynamic range. Exaggerate the dynamic changes and differences. At rehearsal letter **F** and **H**, bring out the flutter tonguing in the cornets.

MUTE: At letter **H**, the muting effect needs to be exaggerated. This is most easily done with standard mutes, but some other effect could be used if desired. Horns 1 and 2 might use stopped, or a mute, or some other effect at letter **E** and **G**

Percussion: It is intended to be either Drumset or split percussion parts depending on the number of players available.

This works best with snares off throughout, or using toms instead of the snare.

Woodblock or claves should be used to get a sound similar to 'bones' or 'hooves' - they could even be used in place of the snare or toms in the opening section, and again from letter **F** to the end.

If desired, the bells can double/cover the xylophone triplet figures at letter **H**.

Other arrangements by Sandy Coffin from the Harlem Hellfighters' distinctive style of repertoire include *The St Louis Blues* and *Russian Rag*, also available from www.TheMusicCompanyShop.com.

That Moaning Trombone

Comic March One-Step

Composed by Carl D. Bethel
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Allegro ♩ = 112-128

The score is arranged for the following instruments:

- Soprano Cornet
- Solo Cornet
- Repiano Cornet
- 2nd Cornet
- 3rd Cornet
- Flugel
- Solo Horn
- 1st Horn
- 2nd Horn
- 1st Baritone
- 2nd Baritone
- 1st Trombone
- 2nd Trombone
- Bass Trombone
- Euphonium
- E♭ Bass
- B♭ Bass
- Drum Set (Snare, Wood block or claves, Cymbal, Triangle, Bass Drum)
- Percussion 1 (Snare/Bones/Claves, Cymbal, Triangle)
- Percussion 2 (Bass drum, Wood Block, Bells)
- Xylophone (optional)

Key features of the score include:

- Tempo: **Allegro**, ♩ = 112-128
- Time Signature: 2/4
- Key Signature: One sharp (F#)
- Dynamics: *ff* (fortissimo) and *f-piu f* (forzando)
- Articulation: Accents (^) and slurs
- Rehearsal Mark: A
- Figured Bass: 5 5 6 5 1

10

Sop. Cor.

Solo Cor.

Rep. Cor.

2nd Cor.

3rd Cor.

Flug.

Solo Hn.

1st Hn.

2nd Hn.

1st Bar.

2nd Bar.

1st Tbn.

2nd Tbn.

B. Tbn.

Euph.

E♭ Bass

B♭ Bass

Dr.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Xyl.

Detailed description of the musical score: This page contains the musical notation for measures 10 through 17 of a concert band piece. The score is arranged in a standard concert band layout with 21 staves. The instruments included are Sopranos, Solos, Repetition, 2nd and 3rd Cornets, Flute, Solo Horn, 1st and 2nd Horns, 1st and 2nd Baritone, 1st and 2nd Trombone, Euphonium, Eb Bass, Bb Bass, Drums, Percussion 1 and 2, and Xylophone. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are several trills and triplets indicated by '3' and '3' with a slash. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is written in a clear, professional font with standard musical notation symbols.

55

TRIO

Sop. Cor. *mf - p*

Solo Cor. *mf - p*

Rep. Cor. *mf - p*

2nd Cor. *mf - p*

3rd Cor. *mf - p*

Flug. *mf - p*

Solo Hn. *mf - p*

1st Hn. *mf - p*

2nd Hn. *mf - p*

1st Bar. *mf - p*

2nd Bar. *mf - p*

1st Tbn. *mf - p*

2nd Tbn. *mf - p*

B. Tbn. *mf - p*

Euph. *mf - p*

E♭ Bass *mf - p*

B♭ Bass *mf - p*

Dr. *mf - p*

Perc. 1 *mf - p*

Perc. 2 *mf - p*
Bells 2x only

Xyl. *mf - p*

Wood block

Wood block

Solo

61

Sop. Cor. *mf - p*

Solo Cor. *mf - p*

Rep. Cor. *mf - p*

2nd Cor. *mf - p*

3rd Cor. *mf - p*

Flug. *mf - p*

Solo Hn. *mf - p*

1st Hn. *mf - p*

2nd Hn. *mf - p*

1st Bar. *mf - p*

2nd Bar. *mf - p*

1st Tbn. *mf - p*

2nd Tbn. *mf - p*

B. Tbn. *mf - p*

Euph. *mf - p*

E♭ Bass

B♭ Bass

Dr. *mf - p*

Perc. 1

Perc. 2 *Bells*

Xyl. *mf - p*

66

Sop. Cor.

Solo Cor.

Rep. Cor.

2nd Cor.

3rd Cor.

Flug.

Solo Hn.

1st Hn.

2nd Hn.

1st Bar.

2nd Bar.

1st Tbn.

2nd Tbn.

B. Tbn.

Euph.

E♭ Bass

B♭ Bass

Dr.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Xyl.

1.

2.

Wood block

100 **G**

Sop. Cor. *f*

Solo Cor. *f*

Rep. Cor. *f*

2nd Cor. *f*

3rd Cor. *f*

Flug. *f*

Solo Hn. *f* *opt. 8va*

1st Hn. *ff* *fff*

2nd Hn. *ff* *fff*

1st Bar. *f*

2nd Bar. *f*

1st Tbn. *f* *St. mute*

2nd Tbn. *f* *St. mute*

B. Tbn. *f* *St. mute*

Euph. *f*

E♭ Bass *f*

B♭ Bass *f*

Dr. *ff* *Cymbal* *Triangle*

Perc. 1 *ff* *Cymbal* *Triangle*

Perc. 2

Xyl. *ff*

111

H flutter muted

Sop. Cor. *ff*

Solo Cor. *ff*

Rep. Cor. *ff* flutter muted

2nd Cor. *ff* muted

3rd Cor. *ff* muted

Flug. *ff*

Solo Hn. *ff*

1st Hn.

2nd Hn.

1st Bar. *ff*

2nd Bar. *ff*

1st Tbn. *ff*

2nd Tbn. *ff*

B. Tbn. *ff*

Euph. *ff*

E♭ Bass *ff*

B♭ Bass *ff*

Dr. *ff*

Perc. 1 *ff*

Perc. 2 *ff* Bells

Xyl. *ff*

122

Sop. Cor.

Solo Cor.

Rep. Cor.

2nd Cor.

3rd Cor.

Flug.

Solo Hn.

1st Hn.

2nd Hn.

1st Bar.

2nd Bar.

1st Tbn.

2nd Tbn.

B. Tbn.

Euph.

E♭ Bass

B♭ Bass

Dr.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Xyl.

Wood block