

WILL B. MORRISON, ARR. HUGH LEVEY





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Scarecrow Rag

WILL B. MORRISON

William Burdette Morrison (1874 to 1937) was a little known American composer of songs and piano music, who later became a publisher and arranger of others' work. His first known compositions date from 1898 but it was two years later that he started using syncopation in a series of cakewalks for piano. Scarecrow Rag was written in 1911 and makes good use of syncopation; a key feature of the ragtime style. It starts with a descending diminished 7th arbeggio before settling into the key of C major for the main syncopated theme. The central Trio section, in F major, starts off hesitantly, but soon bursts into life with a delightful bubbly theme.

This arrangement for Wind Quintet remains faithful to the original piano version. It is in the original key, with the original structure melody, bass line and harmonies throughout. However, it does fill out some of the passage-work in a manner that the composer may have chosen to do, if he had not been restrained by the capabilities of a piano and two hands. This is mainly in the Trip section and adds to the enjoyments of the players and I hope the audience too.

Duration: 3 minutes

PERFORMANCE NOTES

The original piano version only has two dynamics marked: forte at the opening and mezzo-forte at the Trio. The arranger has added further dynamics and crescendos to increase the contrast and to enhance the performance. However, these are optional. The flute and horn parts each have some notes in parentheses which are an octave lower. These can be played if the player is less comfortable with the higher notes.

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