

COUNT BASIE'S "HEAD ARRANGEMENTS"

Basie would start out and vamp a little, set a tempo, and call out, "That's it!" He'd set a rhythm for the saxes first and Earle Warren would pick that up and lead the saxes. Then he'd set one for the bones, and we'd pick that up. Now it's our rhythm against theirs. The third rhythm would be for the trumpets, and they'd start fanning with their derbies. ... The solos would fall in between the ensembles, but that's how the piece would begin, and that's how Basie put his tunes together. He had a big band, but he handled it as though it were six pieces.

– Dickie Wells, *The Night People*