

JAZZ LINES PUBLICATIONS

Presents

THE JEFFREY SULTANOF MASTER EDITION

GOLD RUSH

AS PERFORMED BY CHARLIE PARKER

ARRANGED BY GERRY MULLIGAN

EDITED BY JEFFREY SULTANOF

FULL SCORE

FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT

JLP-8021

MUSIC BY GERRY MULLIGAN

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GOLD RUSH (1950)

Background:

When Billie Holiday signed a new recording contract with Decca Records in 1944, she told producer Milt Gabler she wanted to record with strings. Anxious to establish Holiday as a pop singer, Gabler hired six string players for her first session, and the first song recorded was *Lover Man*, one of her biggest hits. Several years later, when Charlie Parker signed with impresario/manager Norman Granz' label Clef, Parker asked for strings as well.

Granz was obviously keeping costs down, as only five string players were hired for the first session (1949), but these were the very top New York session players; some were members of the NBC symphony conducted by Arturo Toscanini. As much as he'd dreamed of playing with strings, reportedly Parker walked out of a few sessions without playing a note (the number has never been authenticated). He later explained that the sound of the strings and the thought of working with such distinguished musicians scared him; he thought they were greater artists than he. What finally took place was sheer magic. The parts for the string players were relatively easy, so they listened and enjoyed Parker's improvisations. The arrangements for the first studio session were done by Jimmy Carroll and recorded on November 30, 1949. On July 5, 1950 there was another studio recording session, this time with arrangements by Joe Lippman. This second date featured a larger ensemble including oboe, French horn, 4 violins, 2 violas, cello, harp, guitar, piano, bass, and drums. Parker also appeared with his string group on at least 4 live occasions: *Birdland* (August, 1950 and March and April, 1951), *Apollo Theater* (August 1950), *Carnegie Hall* (September, 1950), *Rockland Palace Dance Hall* (September, 1952). In 1952 Parker recorded an additional 4 arrangements by Lippman featuring a full big band with a string section.



Parker would later say that the studio recordings with his string ensemble were his favorites of his own work, despite jazz critics' condescending reactions and their claims that he was 'selling out.' As it turns out, he was selling 'in.' The albums sold well, and brought Parker to a whole new audience. As far as his own playing, many of his solos on this first album were lovely and inspired. *Just Friends* is one of Parker's finest records and his solo is remarkable; I can't be the only one who can sing it by heart at a moment's notice. It is a pity that none of the alternate takes seem to have survived.

On May 29, 1949, tenor saxophonist Brew Moore led an all-star ensemble for Savoy Records. Four sides were recorded, the most notable being *Lestorian Mode* by John Carisi, and *Gold Rush* by Gerry Mulligan, who played baritone sax on the session.

Charlie Parker and Mulligan were old friends. They first met in Mulligan's home town of Philadelphia when Parker played a concert there and Mulligan opened with his own group (at the time, he was playing tenor sax). Parker later jammed with him after the concert and encouraged the young musician. By the time Bird assembled the touring *Bird with Strings* ensemble, Mulligan was an established composer/arranger who was still finding his own style on the baritone sax.

Thankfully, Parker asked Mulligan and George Russell to contribute to the book, Parker requesting arrangements of jazz pieces and songs he's heard and liked. Mulligan arranged *Rocker* (AKA *Rock Salt*) and *Gold Rush*, giving Bird some contemporary jazz to play in between versions of classic songs. Thanks to the recording of the 1950 Carnegie Hall concert, the performance of *Rocker* has been widely distributed and is well known. However, *Gold Rush* was performed in only one known instance: at the Rockland Palace Ballroom in 1952. Thankfully, this was recorded (by two different individuals) and is now available on a few unofficial CD releases.

The Music:

In the original *Bird with Strings* book of arrangements that was played on the road this version of *Gold Rush* was found. It is a pity that Mulligan's and Russell's¹ arrangements were not studio-recorded.

As has been pointed out in other Jazzlines Publications, Mulligan's music at the time was more horizontal than vertical, and chord changes needed to be reviewed. Gerry was not as careful about these things as he was in later arrangements (see the notes on *Rocker* for further information).



Notes to the Conductor:

There are very few ensembles that can play this music as fast as Parker's ensemble does in the one live recording that exists. I also wonder whether Mulligan wanted this piece played this fast. Regardless, *Gold Rush* should be rehearsed slowly so that the musical figures are understood and played together. As with most string ensembles with a rhythm section, it is imperative that all players hear the rhythm instruments clearly so that the strings don't drag.

Mulligan shows us that he really had a good sense of string writing, and it's a pity that he had few opportunities to do so.

Jeffrey Sultanof

- November 2010

¹Note: George Russell wrote an arrangement of *Ezz-Thetic* that Jazz Lines Publications has also published.

GOLD RUSH

(AS RECORDED BY CHARLIE PARKER)

SCORE

MUSIC BY GERRY MULLIGAN
 ARRANGED BY GERRY MULLIGAN
 EDITED BY JEFFREY SULTANOF

FAST SWING ♩ = 260

①

ALTO SAX. *mf*

OBOE *mf*

VIOLIN A *mf*

VIOLIN B *mf*

VIOLIN C *mf*

VIOLA *mf*

CELLO *mf*

HARP *mf*
 [C \sharp , D \sharp , E \flat , F \sharp , G \sharp , A \flat , B \flat]
 [G \sharp] [E \sharp]

GUITAR *mf*
 Gm 7 Gm 7 (ADD E \flat) A \flat m 7 A \flat 7 Gm 7 Gm 7 (ADD E \flat) A \flat m 7 A \flat m 6

PIANO *mf*
 Gm 7 Gm 7 (ADD E \flat) A \flat m 7 A \flat 7 Gm 7 Gm 7 (ADD E \flat) A \flat m 7 A \flat m 6

BASS *mf*
 Gm 7 Gm 7 (ADD E \flat) A \flat m 7 A \flat 7

DRUM SET *mf*
 (BRUSHES) (4)

1 2 3 4

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