

<u>HAPPY HOOLIGAN</u>

Background:

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As a high school student in Philadelphia, Gerry Mulligan approached WCAU house band director John Warrington to write arrangements for the band. Warrington was impressed with Mulligan's music and not only bought some arrangements, but coached him as well. After a stint with the Tommy Tucker band in 1945, Mulligan went back to WCAU, where pianist/ arranger Elliot Lawrence had become the new house bandleader. After a year with the Gene Krupa orchestra, Mulligan moved to New York to arrange for the Claude Thornhill orchestra. He also wrote for Lawrence, whose orchestra was now a national attraction with a Columbia Records contract and a full-touring schedule.

The Music:

Most Mulligan scores are dated, but the score to this piece is unavailable at this time, so the date of this piece is a questionmark. This publication has been engraved from the original parts.

The name of the piece is of interest. *Happy Hooligan* was a comic strip character created by Frederick Burr Opper that ran from 1900 through 1932, when Burr had to retire due to poor eyesight. No doubt Mulligan must have seen it as a child and remembered the character, a penniless hobo who usually had a smile on his face regardless of whatever misfortune and bad luck befell him.

The recording made for Fantasy Records may be faster than Mulligan intended this piece to be played; Mulligan was upset with the tempos on this album in general. Certainly your ensemble can play the piece at the speed in which it was recorded, but the slower tempo indicated on the first page of the score is my recommendation based on discussions I had with him during the summer of 1995.

The introduction was cut on both the parts and recording (Lawrence plays an eight-bar intro with the rhythm section). Of additional interest are two backgrounds for solos that Mulligan wrote. According to the parts, he cut the background from bars 57-60, but they are present on the recording. The trombone/baritone sax background beginning at bar 65 was not cut on the parts, but was cut for the recording.

Notes to the Conductor:

There is very little to say here, as this is a straightforward swinging piece with solos for tenor sax, trumpet and trombone, which can be further opened up for more solos.

Jeffrey Sultanof - August 2010 •

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JLP-8203 MUSIC BY GERRY MULLIGAN



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