

JAZZ LINES PUBLICATIONS

Presents

THE JEFFREY SULTANOF MASTER EDITION

ROCKER

AS PERFORMED LIVE BY CHARLIE PARKER
AT CARNEGIE HALL, SEPTEMBER 17, 1950

ARRANGED BY GERRY MULLIGAN

EDITED BY JEFFREY SULTANOF

FULL SCORE

FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT

MUSIC BY GERRY MULLIGAN

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JAZZ LINES PUBLICATIONS
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ROCKER (1950)

Background:

Charlie Parker with Strings, an album arranged by Jimmy Carroll (Caruana) that Parker recorded in November, 1949 with a small string orchestra, oboe and rhythm section was a major success. A second album with arrangements by Joe Lipman was recorded in the summer of 1950, and soon after, Parker was performing these arrangements in public. Along with the arrangements recorded, additional pieces were written by Carroll, Lipman, legendary arranger Jimmy Mundy (veteran of the Goodman, Shaw, James, Basie and several other top big bands) and Gerry Mulligan.

Parker first met Mulligan in Gerry's home town of Philadelphia when Mulligan was still a teen. Both participated in the same concert at the Academy of Music where Parker's group included Dizzy Gillespie and Sarah Vaughan; Mulligan was playing tenor sax at the time. Parker invited Gerry to join him at a post-concert jam session, the young musician believing that he was a guest. Parker handed Mulligan the tenor and told him to play. Scared to death, Mulligan did his best. Even though Mulligan's saxophone playing was not as developed as his arranging ability at the time, Parker was kind and encouraging. They next met at Gil Evans' 55th Street apartment, where musicians of all types were invited to crash anytime they wanted. Parker came to sleep and to listen to the concert music Evans was borrowing from the library. By that time, Mulligan was well established as a major compositional voice in the new jazz, and would be one of the main architects of the Miles Davis Nonet. By 1950, many musicians were scuffling, so the commission from Parker was most welcome.



This was probably Mulligan's first experience writing for strings, oboe, harp and rhythm section. It is an adequate job given the nature of the tune, consisting of a rhythmic figure that is repeated throughout and then 'footballs' (half notes and whole notes). Mulligan was to write a second arrangement for the same ensemble, but it was never finished.

The Music:

Mulligan originally wrote *Rock Salt* in March of 1950 for the Miles Davis Nonet, scored it for Parker and strings, and for the Elliot Lawrence Orchestra. The nonet recording is well-known, coming from the last recording session of that ensemble. Lawrence recorded an album of Mulligan arrangements in 1954 that included *Rock Salt* when the saxophonist was on the west coast, but Mulligan was displeased with the tempo of that recording. The *Charlie Parker with Strings* version comes from a live performance of the ensemble at Carnegie Hall. The sources for this publication are the actual parts in Mulligan's hand, except for the bass part, which is in an unidentified hand. It is clear that these parts were copied quickly in that there were many shortcuts taken.

The publisher has tried to make this publication as user-friendly as possible, so the following alternate parts have been included so that this arrangement can be played without strings.

- 2 Alto Saxes for Violins A and B
- 2 Tenor Saxes or Trumpets for Violin C and Viola
- Baritone Sax for Cello
- The Cello part can also be played by Trombone.
- The Oboe solo is cued in the Guitar part.

Notes to the Conductor:

During the summer of 1995, Gerry Mulligan and I met on a weekly basis to prepare lead-sheets for two play-along volumes that would be published by Hal Leonard. At the time, I was an editor on-staff, and one of my responsibilities was to supervise jazz product. Mulligan was a particular hero of mine, not just because I had great admiration for him as a composer/arranger, but because I had been a baritone saxophonist myself. Sitting with him for several hours at a time was an amazing experience; between many stories that he shared about his life, the people who he worked with, and our give and take about composers, improvisers and any number of other non-musical issues, we discussed his large catalog of music. I told him of the many scores I had edited and corrected, and we discussed doing the same thing with his many big band and combo arrangements so they could finally be properly published. Without the words being spoken, I saw that he wanted me to understand how he thought musically and what his values were. He was very specific about tempo and notation, and we spent many hours on certain pieces to get them just right (he HATED fakebooks of standard tunes, rightly convinced that many of them had simplified or incorrect melodies and chord changes). Corrections in his music have still never been incorporated in published versions of some of his most famous pieces, and they will be made in the years to come.



When it came time to discuss *Rock Salt*, Gerry first played it for me on the piano. He was being mentored by Gil Evans at the time of its composition, and Evans was working with him to develop the linear aspects of his music. Consequently, the melody often creates dissonances with the chords. The chord names on Mulligan's original lead sheet did not reflect these pitches. As an example, I told Gerry that in the first bar of letter A, the G had to be represented in the Ebmi7 chord to let the player know that the Gb was present, or else some players would think that Ebmi7 was an error and the chord should be Eb7. Mulligan laughed and reflected on the fact that all he was trying to do was to write a piece where the melody stayed the same as the chords moved in parallel motion up and down. He didn't dream that this would create an entire discussion on notation, which he found fascinating since he was being asked to look at the piece in an entirely different way after almost fifty years. He agreed that the melody needed to be reflected in the chord names, and that is why some of them are unusual. As edited in this publication, there is no question as to what Mulligan wanted. Unfortunately, I was not as careful when preparing the version of *Rock Salt* in the *Birth of the Cool* folio as published by Hal Leonard due to time constraints, but one day the chord names will be fixed there as well.

Bowings were written in the parts by the string players and are included here. Even though the parts are fairly straightforward, some rehearsals without the soloist will be fruitful. The common problem of strings with a rhythm section is that most string players tend to play behind the beat. The more practice they have listening to the bass and drums, the better the synchronization will be.

Jeffrey Sultanof

- November 2009

ROCKER IAKA ROCK SALTI

(AS PERFORMED LIVE BY CHARLIE PARKER
CARNEGIE HALL, SEPTEMBER 17, 1950)

MUSIC BY GERRY MULLIGAN
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EDITED BY JEFFREY SULTANOF

SCORE

FAST SWING ♩ = 300

SOLO ALTO SAX.

OBOE

VIOLIN A

VIOLIN B

VIOLIN C

VIOLA

CELLO

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

GUITAR

PIANO
(SOLO) (END SOLO)
f
C⁶ E \flat m⁷ Dm⁷ G⁷

BASS

DRUMS
(PLAY TIME - SWING)
(BRUSHES)
mf

2 3 4

(A)

SOLO A. SX.

Ob. (SOLO) *mf*

VLN. A *mf*

VLN. B *mf*

VLN. C *mf*

VLA. *mf*

VC. *mf*

HARP *mf* 8va $G^9(\flat 5)$ GLISS

GTR. *mf* $E m^7$ $E^{\flat} m^7(\flat 9)$ $D m^7$ $G^9(\flat 5)$ C^6 $C^{\sharp} m^7(\flat 5)$ $D m^7$ $A^{\flat} 7(\flat 9)$ $D^{\flat} 7(\flat 5)$

PNO *mf* $E m^7$ $E^{\flat} m^7(\flat 9)$ $D m^7$ $G^9(\flat 5)$ C^6 $C^{\sharp} m^7(\flat 5)$ $D m^7$ $A^{\flat} 7(\flat 9)$ $D^{\flat} 7(\flat 5)$

BASS *mf*

DRMS *mf*

5 6 7 8