

JAZZ LINES PUBLICATIONS

Presents

THE JEFFREY SULTANOF MASTER EDITION

SUMMERTIME

AS RECORDED BY CHARLIE PARKER

ARRANGED BY JIMMY CARROLL

EDITED BY JEFFREY SULTANOF

FULL SCORE

FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT

JLP-8041

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY GEORGE GERSHWIN,
DUBOSE AND DOROTHY HEYWARD AND IRA GERSHWIN

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SUMMERTIME (1949)

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.

Summertime opened George Gershwin's folk opera *Porgy and Bess*. A flop when first presented on Broadway, it became a huge hit when it was revived in 1942; this production essentially re-worked the property from an opera to a musical with dialogue. It would be many years before *Porgy and Bess* was finally recognized as perhaps the greatest opera written by an American, with large-scale productions throughout the world.

Parker's recording came from the first Charlie Parker with strings session. It is a fairly straight-forward setting that allows Parker to play a bluesy solo over the string ensemble.

The Music:

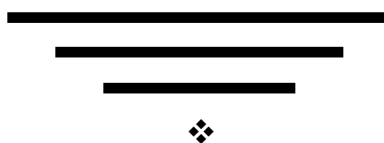
Jimmy Carroll hews closely to the original song in making this arrangement.

Only one or two things were changed at the session, the most notable being the string figures in bars 23 and 24, which were originally written an octave lower. Also note that the original ending is included as an option. As was pointed out in another publication in this series, Carroll clearly did not know ahead of time who would be playing in the rhythm section; Buddy Rich could not read music, let alone play the vibraharp.

Carroll wrote guitar parts for these arrangements, which were not used at the time. The original string parts are invaluable; the bowings on these parts have been reproduced in this edition with some adaptation. They were made by some of the finest string players in New York at the time.

Jeffrey Sultanof

- November 2010



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① MEDIUM ♩ = 100

(STRINGS)

ALTO SAX.

VIOLIN A

VIOLIN B

VIOLIN C

VIOLA

CELLO

HARP

GUITAR

PIANO/CELESTE

BASS

DRUM SET/ VIBES

EXPRESSIVO

mf

pp

f

[E \flat , F \sharp , B \flat]

Gm 6 Am 6

(CELESTE)

mf

PED.

* PED.

(BRUSHES) (cym)

(PLAY TIME)

(Solo)

f

1 2 3 4 5 6

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Chord progression for measures 7-10:

Measures 7-8: $E m^6$ $F^{\sharp} m^6$ $E m^6$ $F^{\sharp} m^6$ $E m^6$ $F^{\sharp} m^6$ $E m^6$ $F^{\sharp} m^6$

Measures 9-10: B^7 $E m^6$ $G m^6$ $A m^6$ $G m^6$ D^7 $G m^6$

Instrument parts and dynamics:

- A. SX. (Alto Saxophone): Melodic line with slurs and accents.
- VLN. A, B, C (Violins): Harmonic accompaniment with slurs and accents.
- VLA. (Viola): Harmonic accompaniment with slurs and accents.
- VC. (Violoncello): Harmonic accompaniment with slurs and accents.
- HP. (Harp): Harmonic accompaniment with slurs and accents.
- GTR. (Guitar): Harmonic accompaniment with slurs and accents.
- PNO./CEL. (Piano/Cello): Harmonic accompaniment with slurs and accents.
- BASS: Harmonic accompaniment with slurs and accents.
- D. S. (Drum Set): Rhythmic accompaniment with slurs and accents.

Measure 10 includes a dynamic marking of (2) and a bracketed note $[E^b]$.