

JAZZ LINES PUBLICATIONS

Presents

THE JEFFREY SULTANOF MASTER EDITION

WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED LOVE

AS RECORDED BY CHARLIE PARKER

ARRANGED BY JIMMY CARROLL

EDITED BY JEFFREY SULTANOF

FULL SCORE

FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT

JLP-8045

WORDS AND MUSIC BY COLE PORTER

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PO BOX 1236

SARATOGA SPRINGS NY 12866 USA

WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED LOVE (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.

What is This Thing Called Love remains one of Cole Porter's most frequently performed and recorded songs. Porter was a graduate of Yale University and first wrote a score for Broadway in 1914; the show was called *See America First*. This was a huge flop, and since Porter had inherited a lot of money from his grandfather, he went to live in France to deal with the hurt of failure. He remained there after World War I, studied composition and even wrote a ballet. It was Irving Berlin who encouraged him to try Broadway again, and he finally returned in 1928. *What is This Thing Called Love* was first heard in England, and soon became a standard when heard in the United States. Another example of a song that flirts between major and minor, the chord sequence has been the basis of a number of jazz standards, including Tadd Dameron's *Hot House*.

The Music:

Arranged by Jimmy Carroll, *What is This Thing Called Love* is known by most Parker fans via the live recording from a midnight concert at Carnegie Hall on September 16, 1950. By that time, the book included music by Carroll, Jimmy Mundy, Neal Hefti, George Russell and Gerry Mulligan. Other live recordings of this setting exist and are available.

In general, Parker did not care for Carroll's arrangements, preferring Joe Lippman for future recordings with this ensemble. Examination of the original manuscripts revealed that Lippman was not the only arranger for these dates; some arrangements were ghosted.

Despite the modulation to the key of D Major halfway through the arrangement, Carroll wrote the entire score in the key of C, adding accidentals where necessary. This has been corrected for the present edition.

Bowings have been added from indications on the parts themselves and harp pedal markings have been included.

The only ensemble cut was at measures 69-70 (string part, beginning of piano solo). These two bars were omitted for each of the live recordings.

In addition, Charlie Parker's part had him double the harp at measures 113-114 and play with the ensemble at measures 115-116. All four of these measures were cut from all recordings.

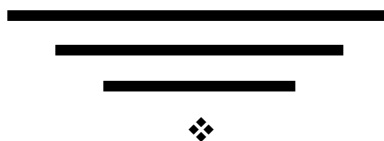


Notes to the Conductor:

Up-tempo arrangements with strings are a real challenge, as string players may not be used to playing with a rhythm section, and tend to play behind the beat. You may wish to rehearse this piece with your soloist and rhythm alone so that everyone can hear and absorb the tempo and feel. Many sections will need to be rehearsed slowly so that the musical figures can be heard clearly; when played fast without study, many of them can sound muddy.

Jeffrey Sultanof

- November 2010



WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED LOVE

SCORE

AS RECORDED BY CHARLIE PARKER

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EDITED BY JEFFREY SULTANOF

FAST SWING ♩ = 240

①

ALTO SAX. (STINGS) 6 1. 2. (SOLO) *f*

OBOE/
ENGLISH HORN (OBOE) (TO ENGLISH HORN) *mf*

VIOLIN A *mf* V 6 V

VIOLIN B *mf* V 6 V

VIOLIN C *mf* V 6 V

VIOLA *mf* V 7 V

CELLO *mf* V V

HARP [D^b, A^b, B^b] *mf* GLISS GLISS

GUITAR *mf*

PIANO *mf*

BASS *mf*

DRUM SET

1 2 3 4 5 *mf*

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(A) A7(♭9) A7 A7(♭9) A7 Dm(♯m7) Dm6 Dm(♯m7) Dm6

A. SX. E. HN. VLN. A. VLN. B. VLN. C. VLA. VC. HP. GTR. PNO. BRSS. D. S.

6 7 8 9

(PLAY TIME) (4)