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Strings Arranged By LENNIE NIEHAUS

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PLAY-A-LONG CD INFORMATION:

STEREO SEPARATION: RIGHT CHANNEL = Piano, Strings, Drums; Left Channel = Bass, Strings, Drums
Tuning Notes: Concert Bb & A (A=440)

PERSONNEL ON PLAY-A-LONG RECORDING:

Steve Allee, Piano; Tyrone Wheeler, Bass; Steve Davis, Drums; Peter McHugh, Violins; Alan Oldfield, Synth Strings.

Back Cover photo of Charlie Parker and strings by DUNCAN SCHIEDT Engraving by DAVID SILBERMAN Cover Design by JASON A. LINDSEY

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Introduction

By Phil Bailey

An idea whose time has come — a play-a-long album with strings! Jamey Aebersold has chosen terstandards, commissioned arrangements from Lennie Niehaus and realized the accompaniments on this album with a mix of live musicians and a synthesizer. Known in the business as a "hybrid score, this method makes it possible to produce rich orchestral scoring on a modest budget. Niehaus said, "I wrote the scores in my Los Angeles studio and sent them to Alan Oldfield, a synthesizer programmer in Texas who is also fine jazz pianist, so I knew the string parts would have the right feel when he recorded them. He sent the parts, recorded with a click track, to Jamey in Indiana. The live musicians then recorded their parts while listening through headphones to the click track." Violinist Peter McHugh, a former concertmaster of the Louisville Orchestra, doubled the sythesized violin parts to give them an acoustic feel.

The idea of jazz musicians playing with strings goes back at least to the Paul Whiteman band of the '20s (with Bix Beiderbecke often featured), and some strange mythology has grown up with it. First, the idea (perpetuated in a number of Hollywood movies) of the primitive jazz musician who hopes to achieve legitimacy by playing with a (civilized) symphony orchestra. Second, the purist's suspicion that a jazz musician using strings has "sold out" to commercial considerations. Third, performances that include string sections inherently don't swing. Years ago of these myths had a kernel of truth to them, but advances in music education, changes in establishment attitudes toward jazz, and changes in public taste have relegated them all to the status of quaint fables.

Today's ideas on using strings in a jazz ensemble began during the early '40s when many of the leading white swing bands had string sections. Artie Shaw, Gene Krupa and Tommy Dorsey all toured with big bands augmented by string sections 9 to 15 strong, and Glenn Miller's Army Air Force band had a complement of 20 strings plus oboes and French horns! With the end of World War II in 1945, the big bands reverted to the standard brass-reeds-rhythm format for budgetary reasons, but many of the string players from these bands, now accustomed to playing in popular music situations, found employment in the recording and film studios.

Charlie Parker heard the Artie Shaw band with strings in the early '40s and was impressed. He later said, "Why, I asked for strings as far back as 1941 and then, years later [1949] when I went with Norman [producer Norman Granz], he okayed it." The first Parker sessions, which included Jimmy Carroll's arrangement of Just Friends and Joe Lipman's of Autumn In New York, were a commercial success. In the following decade Dizzy Gillespie, Clifford Brown, Chet Baker, Jack Teagarden and others made albums with strings. In this early period the string parts had a preponderance of whole notes, while the rhythm section musicians did the swinging. In recent years, though, a growing body of string players comfortable with jazz rhythms has emerged, making it possible for today's arrangers to use string sections in a more idomatic way. When Lennie Niehaus was asked about influences on his string writing, he said he couldn't think of any because from his first date with strings in 1955 he wrote for them much as he would for saxophones.



6. You And The Night And The Musi

