



The New York Public Library
Music Division

Guide to the
Errol Parker scores
1982-1990s
JPB 14-01

Compiled by Matthew Snyder, 2014

Summary

Creator: Parker, Errol

Title: Errol Parker scores

Date: 1982-1990s

Size: .75 linear feet (3 boxes)

Source: Donated by Elodie Lauten in 2013.

Abstract: Errol Parker (née Raphael Shecroun, 1925-1998) was a jazz pianist, drummer, composer, arranger, and bandleader. The Errol Parker scores, dating from 1982 to ca. 1998, mainly contain compositions and arrangements Parker created for the tentet he led from 1982. These include arrangements that appeared on the four tentet recordings Parker produced for his Sahara label, as well as arrangements intended for four unproduced recording projects.

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Preferred citation: Errol Parker scores, JPB 14-01. Music Division, The New York Public Library.

Processing note: Compiled by Matthew Snyder, 2014 Original order was maintained. The scores were rehoused.

Creator History

Errol Parker (née Raphael Shecroun, 1925-1998) was a jazz pianist, drummer, composer, arranger, and bandleader. Born in Oran, Algeria, his first instruments were North African drums. At the age of 14, after hearing jazz for the first time, he switched to piano. Eventually, Shecroun worked under a stage

name derived from two of his musical heroes: Errol Garner and Charlie Parker.

In his late teens, Parker moved to Paris to attend the French National School of Fine Arts, where he studied sculpture, but his main goal was to study and play jazz with the local community of French and American musicians. He eventually worked with Kenny Clarke, James Moody, Don Byas, and Django Reinhardt, and he recorded with Clarke and Reinhardt.

In the early 1960s, Parker suffered a shoulder injury in an automobile accident which limited him technically, but he continued to perform as a pianist until he moved to New York City in 1968. There, he renewed his interest in percussion, integrating the American drum kit with North African drums and techniques, and fronting groups featuring his new approach. Parker continued to perform and record on piano, and produced solo piano recordings as well as albums in which he performed on both drums and piano via overdubs. He released his recordings on his own label, Sahara, founded in 1971.

In the early-1980s, Parker formed a tentet for which he created his own compositions and arrangements. The group (a unique ensemble of two trumpets, four saxophones; trombone, guitar, bass, and drums) featured some of the best young jazz musicians of that era, including Kevin and Robin Eubanks, Graham Haynes, Steve Coleman, Patience Higgins, Wallace Roney, and Donald Harrison. The band recorded four albums: *Errol Parker Tentet* (1982), *Live at the Wollman Auditorium* (1985), *A Night in Tunisia* (1991), and *Remembering Billy Strayhorn* (1994). Parker wrote music for four more tentet projects that went unrecorded, though the arrangements were most likely performed.

In 1995, Parker published *A Flat Tire On My Ass* (Cadence Jazz Books), an autobiography. He died of cancer in 1998.

Custodial History

Parker's daughter, Elodie Lauten, kept the collection until she donated it to the Music Division.

Scope and Content Note

The Errol Parker scores, dating from 1982 to the 1990s, mainly contain compositions and arrangements Parker created for the tentet he led from 1982. These include arrangements that appeared on the four tentet recordings Parker produced for his Sahara label, as well as arrangements intended for four unproduced recording projects. Other arrangements in the collection may have been used only in live performance.

The scores consist of manuscripts of lead sheets, piano scores, full scores, and parts. With one exception, all arrangements are for Parker's standard instrumentation of two trumpets; soprano, alto, tenor, and baritone saxophones; trombone; and a rhythm section of guitar, bass, and drums.

The unproduced projects, dating from the mid- to late-1990s, are titled *The Intensity Legacy*, *Grandpa Monk's Dance*, *Hip-Hop Symphony*, and *Blue Afternoon*. Each has between seven and nine arrangements, usually with piano scores and all parts except for drums. Also among the unproduced projects is *Marathon Man on First Avenue*, a draft of a composition for string quartet, drums, guitar and bass.

With the exception of *Remembering Billy Strayhorn* (1993), the scores recorded on the tentet's four albums are not grouped by album. Many, but not all, of the parts are grouped together by instrument,

and the parts also hold lead sheets, chord changes, and set lists. Full scores and some lead sheets are arranged separately from the parts. Some scores and parts are for music never recorded by the tentet and are not among the unproduced projects. However, these are fragmentary (incomplete parts or lead sheets only), though they contain lead sheets of compositions by Parker that do not appear elsewhere in the collection.

Arrangement: Scores and parts already grouped by project name have been kept under those headings. The remainder of the collection was generally divided between scores and parts, and has remained so under the General heading.

Key Terms

Occupations

Arrangers
Composers
Drummers
Musicians
Pianists

Subjects

Jazz musicians

Geographic Names

New York (N.Y.)

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Scores

Names

Errol Parker Tentet

Container List

General

- b. 1 f. 1-2 Full Scores and Lead Sheets 1982-1990s
- b. 1 f. 3-4 Parts 1982-1994
- b. 2 f. 1 *Blue Afternoon* 1990s
- b. 2 f. 2 *Grandpa Monk's Dance* 1990s
- b. 2 f. 3 *Hip-Hop Symphony* 1990s
- b. 3 f. 1 *The Intensity Legacy* 1995
- b. 3 f. 2 *Marathon Man on First Avenue* ca. 1998
- b. 3 f. 3 *Remembering Billy Strayhorn* 1994
Recorded on Sahara 1016.