

Charlie Parker on Dial, Volume 4

When Charlie Parker returned to New York in the Spring of 1947 a major crisis in his life lay behind him and he was about to enter the most creative period of his career. The seven months involuntary rehabilitation process at Camarillo State Hospital had restored his health and the interim period had brought about a marked increase in the acceptance of his music amongst musicians and fans alike.

On his return back East, Charlie set about organising the ideal group in which his musical ideas could best be realised. For reasons of geography, availability or economic opportunity this had not been possible in the past. He now persuaded the men of his first choice on each instrument to join a small combination quintet.

Aside from Parker the key man of the group was Max Roach, the incomparable drummer whose playing had taken the Kenny Clarke style to a new high level of individual and group playing.

Miles Davis, the new trumpet star whose middle register work, cool intonation and compatibility with Parker's harmonic ideas made him more attractive, for Charlie at least, than more brilliant trumpet men like Navarro or Gillespie.

The rhythm section was completed by two less well known but nonetheless highly competent musicians. Tommy Potter a veteran of the Billy Eckstine Band and pianist Duke Jordan, a New Yorker with a variety of small group experience including Coleman Hawkins and the band at Clark Monroe's Uptown House.

Noticeably lacking were such presumably available and brilliant players as Fats Navarro, Dizzy Gillespie and Bud Powell. Essentially this was a group built around Parker's alto saxophone and best equipped to handle playing a supporting role to talents which had by now been acknowledged to be among the greatest in the history of Jazz.

The new Parker Quintet played clubs in and around 52nd. Street, notably the Three Deuces. Under the management of Billy Shaw the group was booked for important out of town engagements in Detroit, Chicago and other cities with large coloured populations. The black youth in urban centres were accepting Bebop as their own music whilst white America, except the hipsters, was still left out in the field as far as the new music was concerned.

In the early Summer of 1947 Ross Russell moved the Dial headquarters from Hollywood to New York mainly to continue recording Parker, who remained under contract to that label despite several under cover recording sessions with the Savoy company.

The session on the enclosed record, the first of the New York dates, took place the evening of Tuesday, October 28, 1947 at WOR Studios, Broadway at 38th. Street, New York City. WOR had been selected because of its technical reputation for the best facilities and also because one of its engineers, Doug Hawkins, a Juillard graduate and probably the only one in the sound recording field, was the ideal man to ride gain on a jazz date.

The session, so Ross Russell recalls went quickly, all six tunes being recorded in approximately four hours. The efficiency with which the quintet cut these sides is explained by the fact that the men had been working together almost every night for a period of six months and most of the material, including the originals were already in the repertory. The third take was the final acceptable one for three tunes whilst only two were necessary for the remainder.

When the masters to Dial LP904 were cut on October 5, 1951 the third take of DEXTERITY could not be located and was substituted with 1154-B BONGO BEEP which subsequently appeared in error as DEXTERITY on the record when it was finally issued. This master remains missing despite an extensive search by Ross Russell at his California home and a thorough search back in 1951 when the masters to LP904 were being prepared. Perhaps a further search could be carried out at WOR with rewarding results.

The session but for this missing take is complete and the remaining fourteen tracks cut that day were all issued in one form or another on the Dial label and have fortunately been secured from original sources by Spotlite for inclusion on this LP. Charlie Parker aficionados will be surprised to hear, possibly for the first time, the opening theme and bridge by Parker on the A master of DEWEY SQUARE. This has always been edited from previous issues and was only issued in its complete form on rare copies of Dial 1056, from whence this version originates. Another interesting aspect concerning this item is the fact that Bird stretches out and takes 2 choruses instead of his usual self-rationed 32 bars. On this take he took off and kept pulling everyone along and played a solo much longer than was customary for him in a studio. Ross Russell recalls how Bird had a strange theory for not letting everything out on wax and preferred to hold back on solo space.

The last Parker Dial quintet date held one week later and which produced what is certainly one of Bird's most sensitive ballad performances, the previously unissued C master of OUT OF NOWHERE will shortly be issued on Spotlite 105 together with two other unissued Dial masters from earlier sessions, these being a third take of MOOSE THE MOOCHE and the D master of DARK SHADOWS.

PERSONNEL

CHARLIE PARKER QUINTET

Miles Davis tpt; Charlie Parker alt; Duke Jordan p; Tommy Potter bs; Max Roach d; WOR Studios, Broadway at 38th. Street, New York City — Tuesday, October 28, 1947.

SIDE ONE

Dexterity	(2:56)	D1101—A
Dexterity	(2:56)	D1101—B
Bongo bop	(2:42)	D1102—A
Bongo bop	(2:42)	D1102—B
Dewey Square	(3:25)	D1103—A
Dewey Square	(3:00)	D1103—B
Dewey Square	(3:04)	D1103—C

SIDE TWO

The Hymn	(2:29)	D1104—A
The Hymn	(2:26)	D1104—B
Bird of Paradise	(3:05)	D1105—A
Bird of Paradise	(3:06)	D1105—B
Bird of Paradise	(3:09)	D1105—C
Embraceable you	(3:41)	D1106—A
Embraceable you	(3:17)	D1106—B
