

# What is Jazz Improvisation? Keith Jarrett – A musical analysis of “Stella by Starlight” (1/2)

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# What is Jazz Improvisation? Keith Jarrett – A musical analysis of “Stella by Starlight” (1/2)

Keith Jarrett (born May 8, 1945) is an American jazz and

classical music pianist and composer.

Jarrett started his career with Art Blakey, moving on to play with Charles Lloyd and Miles Davis. Since the early 1970s he has enjoyed a great deal of success as a group leader and a solo performer in jazz, jazz fusion, and classical music. His improvisations draw from the traditions of jazz and other genres, especially Western classical music, gospel, blues, and ethnic folk music.

In 2003 Jarrett received the Polar Music Prize, the first recipient of both the contemporary and classical musician prizes,[2] and in 2004 he received the Léonie Sonning Music Prize. His album *The Köln Concert* (1975) became the best-selling piano recording in history.

Jarrett has also played harpsichord, clavichord, organ, soprano saxophone, and drums. He often played saxophone and various forms of percussion in the American quartet, though his recordings since the breakup of that group have rarely featured these instruments. On the majority of his recordings in the last 20 years, he has played acoustic piano only. He has spoken with some regret of his decision to give up playing the saxophone, in particular.

On April 15, 1978, Jarrett was the musical guest on *Saturday Night Live*. His music has also been used on many television shows, including *The Sopranos* on HBO. The 2001 German film *Bella Martha* (English title: *Mostly Martha*), whose music consultant was ECM founder and head Manfred Eicher, features Jarrett's "Country", from the European quartet album *My Song* and "U Dance" from the album *Tribute*.

## [Keith Jarrett - The Art of Improvisation](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7IXlpenHIrY>

## Idiosyncrasies

One of Jarrett's trademarks is his frequent, loud vocalizations, similar to those of Glenn Gould, Thelonious Monk, Charles Mingus, Erroll Garner, Oscar Peterson, Ralph Sutton, Willie "The Lion" Smith, Paul Asaro, and Cecil Taylor. Jarrett is also physically active while playing. These behaviors occur in his jazz and improvised solo performances, but are for the most part absent whenever he plays classical repertory. Jarrett has noted his vocalizations are based on involvement, not content, and are more of an interaction than a reaction.

## Biography

Keith Jarrett was born in Allentown, Pennsylvania. on the 8th of May 1945. He started piano lessons around the age of 3 after it had been discovered that he had perfect pitch, and an ability to improvise. He began performing publicly by age 5, by 7 was writing melodies and improvising on them, and shortly before his a'" birthday gave a concert which featured the usual classical pieces by composers such as Mozart, Bach, Beethoven, Mendelssohn and Grieg, along with compositions of his own.

From about the age of 11 he began playing dance music and jazz, and at 15 was playing around town in his own group. At 16, he left school, and before long was working and touring professionally, and in 1962 made his first recording with a big band. In 1963, through a scholarship from DownBeat magazine, Jarrett moved to Boston and studied at the Berklee School of Music. A year later he moved to New York, and there he joined Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, recording his first fully fledged jazz album with them in 1966. This album, called either Buttercorn Lady or Get the Message, shows Jarrett at the age of 20 to be a remarkably mature jazz performer, highly creative, with brilliant technique, and displaying advanced

rhythmic concepts.

Shortly after this, he joined saxophonist Charles Lloyd's quartet for a stay of 3 years which would prove to be a pivotal career move. This group, though essentially a jazz band, embraced a wide range of styles and along with jazz standards and free improvisation, would play rock-oriented songs, and versions of Beatles tunes. Their eclecticism and Lloyd's

connections with eastern spirituality, meant that they appealed to a wider audience than is normally the case with a jazz group, and during the "Flower Power" era of the late 60s they gained wide exposure, often playing in the rock venues of the day. Apart from the exposure

that Jarrett also gained, he was often given a solo spot where he would improvise freely, and this sowed the seeds for the solo piano improvisations he became renowned for later on.

Following his departure from this band, he began working and recording with his own trio before being asked to join Miles Davis's group around 1970, where he stayed for 18 months. Here he played electric keyboards in what was essentially a funk-rock band which, as was usually the case with Davis's bands, allowed for great personal freedom and much experimentation.

In 1972, his first solo piano album *Facing You* was released, and the following year he began playing solo concerts where he would simply improvise freely with no pre-determined songs or structures, sometimes for an hour at a time. The music would embrace the huge range of

styles that Jarrett had absorbed, from long ruminations on a single chord using eastern scales, to driving gospel inspired sections, to complex and dissonant harmonic excursions influenced by 20th century classical composers, to plucking the strings on the piano or hitting the body of it as though it was a drum. This was quite revolutionary at the time, and through the eclectic nature of the music, he was able to draw a large audience which went way beyond the confines of hard-

core jazz listeners. The most well known recording of this side of his output is The Koln Concert, recorded in 1975, and to this day, representative of the style that many people associate with him.

During this period Jarrett also maintained 2 distinctly different quartets, one American and the other European, both of which featured mainly his compositions, the European group being particularly influential. Jarrett was also involved in many other projects during the mid to late 70's which are too numerous to mention but included writing orchestral music, solo piano music and recording improvisations on a church organ.

In the early 80s he began to perform classical music, playing concertos by more contemporary composers such as Bartok, Stravinsky and Barber, then in 1987 he recorded his first classical album, J.S. Bach's The Well Tempered Clavier book 1, and has since that time recorded many more classical works, including Bach's Goldberg Variations (on harpsichord}, Handel's Keyboard Suites, Shostakovitch's Preludes and Fugues, and a number of Mozart's piano concertos.

In 1983 he formed his "Standards Trio" with Gary Peacock on bass and Jack DeJohnette on drums, to concentrate largely on the standard jazz repertoire, and since that time they have continued to perform and have recorded 16 albums and 3 videos. In 1986, Jarrett also recorded an album of clavichord improvisations The Book of Ways, which demonstrates his incredible diversity and improvisational prowess, with many pieces sounding like compositions from the baroque and pre-baroque eras.

In 1996 he became ill with chronic fatigue syndrome and was forced to retire from performing for a few years, but by 1999 he had recovered enough to record a solo album and was again actively performing with his trio, something which he

continues to do to this day.

To summarize, Keith Jarrett has embraced many of the forms of music making from the 20th century, and some from before, in both improvised and composed contexts, has been highly influential in the jazz world and beyond, and at the age of 58 still remains a vital figure.

## Awards

He has received many awards during his career and these include:

– The French Grand Prix du Disque 1972 (for the album Expectations);

The Grand Prix du Festival Montreux 1973 (for the album Facing You);

Record of the Year 1974 from Downbeat magazine (Critics poll) and Time magazine, (for the album Solo Concerts);

The Deutscher Schallplattenpreis 1975 and Record of the Year 1975/76 from Jazz Forum (for the album Belonging);

Album of the Year 1977 from Melody Maker magazine and the Deutscher Schallplattenpreis 1978 (for the album The Survivors Suite);

The Grosser Deutscher Schallplattenpreis 1979 and the Silverdisk Award from Swing Journal 1979 (for the album Sun Bear Concerts);

Record of the Year 1979 from Jazz Forum (for the album My Song);

Album of the Decade from Stereo magazine Readers Poll (for the album The Koln Concert);

Best Jazz Pianist 1982 from Keyboard magazine;

Record of the Year 1983 from Audio (Germany) {for the album Standards Vo/.1);

Record of the year 1985 from Jazz Life critics poll (Japan) (for the album Standards Vo/.2);

Jazz musician of the year 1986 from HiFi Vision (Germany), and Album of the year 1986 from Swing Journal (for the album

Standards Live);

Prix du President de Ia Republique, Academia Charles Cros:  
Best recording of the year, all categories (1990) (for the  
album Tribute);

Best Classical Keyboardist 1991 from Keyboard magazine editors  
poll;

Classical CD of the year 1992 from CD Review (for the album  
Shostakovich Preludes & Fugues);

Pianist of the year and album of the year 1996 from Downbeat  
(Critics poll) (for the album At The Blue Note);

Best Acoustic Group (The Standards Trio) 1998 and 1999 from  
Downbeat (Readers poll);

Pianist of the year 2000-2002 from Downbeat (Critics poll);

The Polar Music Prize (Sweden) 2003.

## [Jazz Sheet Music download.](#)

### **Musical Analysis: Stella by Starlight**

The overall character is probably best described as romantic and slow moving, with sophisticated harmonies that very much reflect the song and Jarrett's classical sensibilities. It is played with a pronounced rubato, and though there are a number of pauses, it has a definite sense of flow. It begins reflectively, and after stating the melody, becomes more passionate in the development section which follows. Furthermore, it then returns to its former mood with the final melody statement.

#### **Form and Melody**

It is 104 bars long, runs for approximately three and a half minutes, and has a form which is comprised of:

1. A brief introductory statement (5 bars);
2. A melody statement (19 bars- some bars are condensed,

and the last 8 bars become

the first 8 of the first development section);

3. Three improvised development sections (16, 16, and 29 bars);
4. Another melody statement (10 bars – the first 12 bars of the song with some bars condensed);
5. A coda (9 bars).

In the melody sections the original melody is not strictly adhered to, but the harmony is retained, and except for one instance (at bars 50- 53 where the melody is in the alto part [see ex.1 ]), the melody throughout is in the soprano part.

Ex. 1 The melody moves briefly form the soprano to the alto part

(Bars 50-53- straight lines show the path of the melody).



Cohesion in the development sections is achieved by the use of harmonies derived from the song, and the utilization of rhythmic motifs, which form the basis of various melodic episodes that occur within each section. Each section concludes with a V – I cadence. The two episodes in the first section are both eight bars long, but from then on there is no discernible

pattern in their lengths or groupings, and they vary in length from four to eleven bars. The episodes are as follows:

### **1st development sections:**

Bars 25-32, 1" episode: – This is based on motif "A"(see ex.2). After it is first stated<sup>5</sup> (bars 25, 26 [includes crotchet pick up from previous bar]), it is then shortened by

a crotchet (bars 27,28), then by 3 crotchets (bar 29), then by a crotchet (bars 30,31), then displaced (the crotchet pick up is on beat 2 rather than beat 4) and shortened by a crotchet (31,32);

Bars 33-40, 2<sup>nd</sup> episode:- This is based on motif "B"(see ex.2), and also uses "A".

After it is first stated (bars 33,34), it's second half is played (bar 35 [the last crotchet is tied over to the next bar]), it is then shortened by 2 crotchets (bars 36,37), then "A" is played (bars 38-40 [it is lengthened by 2 crotchets]);

### **2nd development section:**

Bars 41-45, 1<sup>st</sup> episode:- This is based on motif "B". After it is first stated (bar 41 [it actually starts in 40]), it is repeated twice (bars 42-45 [note how the first two statements again have the last crotchet tied over]);

Bars 46-56, 2<sup>nd</sup> episode:- This is based on motif "C" (see ex.2). After it is stated (bar 46), it is repeated twice (bars 48,50 [bars in between contain pick up notes]), then played as part of change to 3/4 (bars 52,53 [which means that the pick up at 53 is lengthened by a crotchet]), then lengthened by 4 crotchets as part of the change to 5/4 (bars 54,55);

### **3rd development section:**

Bars 57-60, 1<sup>st</sup> episode:- This is based on motif "0" (see ex.2). After it is stated (bars 57,58 [incl. crotchet pick up from prev. bar]), it is repeated (bars 59,60);

Bars 61-64, 2<sup>nd</sup> episode: -This is based on motif "01" (see ex.2). After it is stated (bar 61 [incl. crotchet pick up from prev. bar]), its pick up is lengthened by a crotchet as part of the change to 4/4 (bar 62) and it is lengthened by a crotchet (bars 63,64);

Bars 65-69, 3<sup>rd</sup> episode: -This is based on motif "02" (see ex.2). After it is stated (bars 65-67 [incl. 2 crotchet pick up from prev. bar]), it is shortened by 2 crotchets (bars 68,69);

Bars 70-74, 4' episode:- This is based on motif "01". After it is stated\_ (bar 70 [incl. pick up from prev. bar]), its pick up is lengthened by a crotchet (bar 71) and it is repeated (bar 72).

Bar 73 uses 2 crotchet pick up but phrase is truncated;

Bars 75-82, 5' episode: -This is based on motif "E" (see ex.2). After it is stated (bars 75,76 [incl. crotchet pick up from prev. bar]), it is lengthened by a crotchet (bars 77-79 [a part of the changed time sig.]), then its pick up is lengthened by 2 crotchets (bar 80) and it's first half lengthened by 2 crotchets (bars 81 ,82). Bars 83-85, cadence.

Ex.2 Shows motifs.

Motif "A" (Bar 26)

Motif "B" (Bars 33 and 34)

Motif "C" (Bar 46)

Motif "D" (Bar 57)

Motif "D1" (Bar 61 etc.)

Motif "D2" (End of bar 64 etc.)

Motif "E" (Bar 76)

## Rhythm

The main aspects here are the use of varied time signatures, and (as can be seen from the above analysis), the manipulation of the motifs, mainly through the use of augmentation, diminution, and permutation via the changed meters. There is also substantial syncopation present, as a number of the figures feature anticipations of a full beat (bars 35, 41, 55, 61

etc.[ see ex.3]). Perhaps the most obvious aspect of the varied time signatures is the frequent shifting from 4/4 to

3/4 (although this does not occur in the first and second development sections), and this simply tends to change the character of the passage (e.g. bars 6-16 etc.).

The incorporation of other meters however (particularly 2/4 + 3/4, or 5/4), affects things more overtly, and of course gives the rhythm an asymmetrical quality (e.g. bars 52, 55 etc.[see ex.4 ). The manipulation of the motifs in general, creates rhythmic interest of course, but also lends a certain sophistication to the proceedings, and it is worth noting how the brief displacement in bars 31 and 32 (see ex.5), and the manipulation. In bars 61-64, are particularly noticeable for the way they make the time sound as though it was turned around.

Ex.3 Anticipation of a full beat.(Bar 35)



Ex.4 Incorporation of mixed meters gives the rhythm an asymmetric quality. (Bars 52-56)



Ex.5 Shows displacement. (Bars 30 and 31)



The rubato aspect (although strictly to do with tempo) needs to be mentioned, as it features throughout, and generally, it tends to heighten the expressive qualities of the introduction by adding brief ebbs or surges to the overall flow. A good example of the amount of variation here can be found in the first melody section, where, after a number of drawn out phrases, the tempo accelerates in bars 10-12, slows again at bar 13, and then returns to the faster speed at bar 24.

The overall effect that Jarrett achieves here is one of rhythmic freedom, flexibility, and a certain elasticity, qualities that have always been evident in his work. Describing Jarrett's playing when he was with Art Blakey, Jack

DeJohnette said, "It was totally free of the time ... he would play around, outside the pulse ... " 6 Peter Stanley Elsdon in his analysis of Jarrett's solo ballad style says "This kind of rhythmic flexibility is found fairly rarely in most jazz contexts".

## Harmony

The tonal center is that of the song itself, Bb major, but the chord changes from bars 11 and 12 of the tune (which are essentially in D minor) feature often throughout, and this, combined with the fact that the first two chords of the song are also the II V chords in D minor<sup>8</sup>, means that there is a recurring D minor flavour throughout. These changes (from bars 11 and 12) are used in the introductory statement, and of course in both melody sections, but are most prominent in the third development section from bars 59-68 where they are repeated (with slight variations) a number of times (see ex.6.) This reiteration of a harmonic fragment of the tune (or a fragment of some related harmonies) is a device that Jarrett has often employed in introductions of this kind (e.g. I Wish I Knew from 1985, or Days of Wine and Roses from 1994), and it creates the impression that the harmony has paused for a moment. There is one brief modulation to the relative minor (G) in bars 41-45.

Ex.6 Bars 59-68 - The chord changes from bars 11 and 12 are repeated a number of times.

As stated earlier, the harmony in general is derived from the song, but apart from the aforementioned D minor section, it draws largely upon the cycle of fifths progression that is found in the last eight bars. The first development section in fact is constructed from two of these, and in each case, the first chord is replaced with a substitute tonic, before the cycle begins on the second bar.

The second development section utilizes the cycle of fifths, but in a slightly different way. The first five bars contain the previously mentioned modulation to G minor, and mainly use a progression of fifths, however, the dominant chord D7 (bar 45) moves down a semitone to a C# minor chord (a tri-tone substitute for G) at bar 46, rather than resolving to a tonic G minor chord. The C# minor then becomes the first chord in a cycle of fifths progression which concludes at bar 56 when it resolves to the Bb major chord.

The third development section begins with a modulation to D minor, and then moves into the aforementioned repetition of the chord changes from bars 11 and 12 of the song, but like the passage at bars 45 and 46, the dominant chord (at bar 69) moves down a semitone rather than resolving to the tonic, D

minor. The Ab chord at bar 70 then becomes the first chord in a descending chromatic progression, which lasts until bar 79 where it shifts to another cycle of fifths pattern, and this, like the others, resolves to Bb major (see ex.7).

It should be obvious that the various similarities that are apparent here contribute to overall cohesion. The coda consists of a 4 bar C pedal section (most of which centers around the tonality of the dominant F (see ex.7]), a deceptive cadence which involves another brief move to a D minor chord (begins at bar 100, and utilizes a fragment of the melody on the dominant chord, and a descending chromatic progression to the secondary dominant. The phrase at bars 103 and 104 which leads to the melody, functions as a dominant statement, but of course moves to the first harmony of the song, E minor 7 b 5 (see exs.7) and 8).

There are a few remaining points of interest, and the first of these is the use of a number of fairly dissonant chords which add a contemporary flavour. They can be found at bars 30-32 (note how a D major triad is utilized here (see ex.9]), 49 and 50, 77, and 79. The second is the recurring use of a suspended Bb note above a number of 07 sus. chords (or minor 7 b 5, or minor 9), this creating a certain ambiguity until it resolves either up or down. These chords are found at bars 36, 76, and 101(see ex.5). The last is the very first chord of the introduction which though labeled Ab major, but could easily be interpreted as Bb7sus.or F minor 7.

Ex.7 **Diagram of the tonal structure** (Chords are simplified, and time signatures are not shown.)

**1<sup>st</sup> Development section**

Bbmaj									
Bar 25	IGm (tonic subst.)	IEm7b5	IA7	IDm7b5	IG7	ICdim	IF7	IBb	I
Bar 33	IAb (tonic subst.)	IEm7b5	IA7	IDm	IG7	ICdim	IF7	IBb	II

**2<sup>nd</sup> Development section**

Gmin.									
Bar 41	IAm7b5	D7	IGm	IC7	IBbm Am / / ID7	IC#m (tri tone subst.)	IF#m	B7	I
Bar 49	I(B7)	IEm A7	I	ID7	IG7	ICmaj7	IF7	IBb	II

**3<sup>rd</sup> Development section**

Dmin.									
Bar 57	IEm7b5	IA7	IDm	I	IBb7	IEb7	IA7	IDm	I
Bar 65	IBbm	IA7	IDm	IDm / Bbm	IAm	IAb (tri tone subst.)	IG7	IGb	I
Bar 73	IF7	IE Bbmaj.	IEb7	ID7	IDb	IDbm	IF#7	IB7 // Em7b5	I
Bar 81	IA7	IDm	IG7	IF7	IBb	II			

**Coda**

Fmaj.						Bbmaj.		
Bar 96	IF/C	IG/C	IC7	I	IF7 A7 IDm	Db IC7	I(F7)	I
Bar 104	I(F7)	II						

Ex.8 Last six bars of Coda - Shows deceptive cadence (bracket above line), melody fragment (bracket under top line), dominant statement (last two bars), and D min. 9 chord with added Bb.

99 C7sus F7sus A7alt Dm9(b9) Eb9sus

102 C7sus NC Med. swing tempo

Ex.9 Bars 30-32 – A D major triad is used to create a number of dissonant chords.

D/C Cdim(b9) F7sus F7(b9) Bba

## Opening melody section

The song is played as a medium swing, with Jarrett establishing this by playing a simple right hand line at the conclusion of the introduction, and once the first two notes of the melody have been stated, the band immediately joins in playing a two feel. The melody at first is played much as written, though of course with the expected syncopations, and there is a playful quality to the musical dialogue between the instruments. The highly syncopated piano left hand and the bass' roaming, melodic approach contribute in particular to this, and one is very much reminded of the classic Bill Evans trio with Scott La Faro. (e.g. tracks like Witchcraft 11 or Sweet and Lovely 12 )

At bars 13-15, Jarrett pulls around the rhythm of the melody in what could be called his typical style, 13 and once he

reaches bar 19, the original melody is pretty much discarded in favour of an improvised version. Bars 25-28 feature more of the aforementioned pulling around, and this, combined with the syncopations in both the piano left hand and the bass figures, as well as the conversational style of the drums, creates much rhythmic colour, a characteristic trait of this trio. From bar 29 onwards, the rhythmic tension is essentially released as the players come together in anticipation of the improvisation section.

The usual harmonic changes tend to be used throughout (see the chord chart which accompanies the transcriptions), except at bars 13 and 14 the progression is changed from F major, E minor 7b 5, A7 to A7, D minor, G minor, C7. The bridge section (bars 17-24), and the last eight bars (25-32) feature a few common variations- a G pedal for bars 17-20, a C dim.add 9 chord substituting for the first C minor at bar 19, an Eb min.maj. 7, Ab7 sus. progression at bars 21-22 rather than just Ab 7#11, and a Gb aug. chord in place of C minor 7 b 5 at bar 29. These changes (from the bridge onwards) tend to create harmonic tension, particularly the C dim.add 9, Eb min.maj. 7, and Gb aug. chords, all of which have a dark quality.

### **3.3 Piano solo**

#### **General description**

It is five choruses in length (160 bars), and runs for approximately four and a half minutes. The overall shape is probably best described this way :-

First chorus- two feel, melody notes occasionally referred to, mainly quaver based; Second chorus- four feel (continues for the rest of the solo), no obvious reference to melody, intensifies and becomes busier (many semi quavers) then becomes less busy near the end; Third chorus – less busy but intensity maintained, then quickly becomes busy again and builds toward more intensity around the middle which is

maintained until the end; Fourth chorus – less busy, but intensity maintained, further intensifies briefly before leveling out in the middle then re-intensifies, becomes busier and builds towards the final chorus; Fifth chorus – starts busily with a climax of intensity and maintains it, then starts to wind down

approaching the last eight bars before winding right down and referring to the melody in the last eight.

It is worth noting the use of many quaver triplets throughout.

## **Form**

Form is achieved mainly by the combination of broad shapes that have been described above. (Note that at the beginning of the climax [bars 128 and 129] the very high register is used.) There is not any sustained use of a particular theme or motif, rather a sense of the solo being through composed. There are, however, many thematic episodes throughout, and in general, they contribute to the development of the solo. The longest of these also tend to assist in the aforementioned changes in intensity. The most substantial of these is probably the one that starts at the end of bar 83, and runs until the end of 90 (see ex.10).

The theme here is obviously the quaver triplets, which for the most part follow a descending pattern that also incorporates ascending figures. There are two other relatively long thematic passages that are worth noting, and the first of these can be seen at bars 104-113. Here, a B flat blues figure is utilized from bars 104-108, and is then followed by a phrase which develops from it. The second is similar, and can be found at the very end of bar 114, and runs until the beginning of This passage uses one theme (bars 115-119) which at bar 120 develops into another (bars 120-125). Another long episode can be found at bars 134-140, and some briefer examples can be seen at bars 38-40, 43-45, bars 50-54 etc.

Ex.10 Bars 83-90 – Thematic episode (theme is quaver triplets, as bracket above the first group shows).

## Rhythm

The overall rhythmic character is a swinging one (the aforementioned quaver triplets contribute to this), but with a certain sense of freeness and (again) flexibility. This flexibility, apart from providing much variety in general, often manifests itself in the utilization of various approaches which create tension by playing around with the beat. Ian Carr whilst describing an early solo of Jarrett's says this about his rhythmic approach. "His sense of time is so finely poised that he can play within the pulse, enhancing the rhythmic drive, or in some other time he himself chooses... The alternation of these two approaches is one vital way of creating and releasing tension.

Probably the most prevalent of these approaches is Jarrett's aforementioned playing behind the beat, and it is perhaps most obvious in quaver passages such as the ones found at bars 46-49, 65-68, (and particularly) 108-113 etc. (see ex.11). The same approach to semi quaver passages can be seen in bars 7-8, 71-72, 131-132 etc., and a couple of examples of pushing ahead of the beat can be found in bars 21 and 106 (see ex.12).

Ex.11 Shows Jarrett's playing behind the beat.

Ex.12 Shows Jarrett's pushing ahead of the beat. (Bar 21)

The other approaches in evidence are the use of :  
 Displaced figures, the first being in the opening phrase at bars 1-2 (the motif on beat 3 of bar 1 [which happens to be the opening theme of the song) is played on beat 2 of bar 2, [both Jarrett and Peacock also happen to play the Emin.7 b5 chord on beat 2] see ex.13), the other being in the passage at bars 120-125 (here, the motif on beat 2 of 120 is played on beat 1 of 122, and beat 3 of 124); Irregular groupings of notes, as in bars 56, 70, 75, 77 etc.( see ex.14); Crotchet triplets, as in bars 27, 64,114 etc.(see ex.15); A highly syncopated phrase at bar 25 (see ex.16).

Ex.13 Shows displacement. (Bars 1 and 2)

Ex.14 Irregular note groupings. (Bar 56)

Ex.15 Crotchet triplets. (Bar 27)

Ex.16 Highly syncopated phrase. (Bar 25)

The most important aspects of the general variety mentioned above are:- the number of different rhythms present and the

way they are combined; the length of the phrases; where the phrases begin and end in relation to the bar lines; aspects of the phrases' relationship to the beat which have not already been discussed.

A good example of the variety of rhythms and their combinations can be seen in the first eight bars, these alone containing a minim, dotted crotchets, crotchets, quavers, quaver triplets, and semi quavers (see ex.17). Other examples can be found at bars 21-30, 40-45, 55-57, 62- 68 etc. The phrases vary in length from half a bar (bars 12, 18, 39 etc.) to seven bars (bars 84-90), but in general tend to be one or two bars long. Where they begin and end in relation to the bar lines further demonstrates Jarrett's flexibility, and his awareness of this is reflected in the following statement – "As a pianist, you really have to phrase impossibly. I think I do that ... " 15 An examination of the first seventeen bars will illustrate this aspect (also see ex.17).

First phrase:- starts on 4+, ends on 2+; Second phrase:- starts on 4, ends on 2; Third phrase:starts on 3, ends on 3; Fourth phrase:- starts on 2, ends on 4; Fifth phrase:- starts on 1, ends on 1; Sixth phrase:- starts on 2, ends on 16., note after 4; Seventh phrase:- starts on 4+, ends on 1; Eighth phrase:- starts on 2, ends on 3+; Ninth phrase:- starts on 1+, ends on 1+.

The above example also shows partially, of course, one of the main aspects of the phrases' relationship to the beat, and that is their level of syncopation. As can be seen, numerous of them begin and end on the beat, and though there are a number of syncopations within those same phrases (bars 4,9,10 [beat 4],11,12,16 [2+,4+]) there is \_still an "on the beat" quality here (see ex.17). This is offset to a degree, by the placement of the left-hand chords (which are almost all off the beat [see ex.18]), but is best seen as an example of Jarrett's directness, and his comfort with playing simply when he wants to. Talking about the trio, Jarrett once remarked,

“All three of us love melody and don’t like playing clever.”

This aspect becomes less noticeable as the solo moves into the second chorus (where the band plays a four feel and Jarrett’s left-hand chords are minimal), and it tends to become more regularly syncopated from the third chorus onwards. However, although the use of the aforementioned approaches which play around with the beat make things less regular, the accents in the lines often favor the main beats (see ex.19). The resulting approach is therefore one which combines sophistication with directness.

Ex.18 Some of the syncopated left hand chords in the first chorus. (Bars 3-5)

Ex.19 Shows how the accents in the lines often favour the main beats. (Bars 19 and 20)

## Harmony

The chord changes in the piano solo are essentially the same

as those used in the melody section, but as you would expect, there are a few variations. The role of the bass, is of course important here, and in general it combines functional root note playing with more melodically based lines.

Often these lines utilize the thirds or fifths of the chords (along with scalar melodies), and as a result, create a certain amount of harmonic tension, but they always resolve to a root note after a bar or two.

Occasionally, Peacock also plays his own brief substitutions (e.g. at bar 44 he plays Eb, B, Bb, B, rather than Bb, Eb, (see ex.20) and at bars 119 and 120 he plays a line over a Bb tonality which is F, B, A, G IF, A, Bb, F.

Ex.20 Bars 44 and 45 – Shows one of Peacock's substitutions.

Jarrett, as is often the case with this song, favors the use of the natural ninth (F#) on the Emin7 b5 chord (the sound of this chord is of course is one of the defining characteristics of the piece), and tends to exploit it's interchangeability with a tonic Bbmaj. 7 # 5 chord (bars 56 and 65, 89 and 95 etc.[see ex.21]), although he also often uses a flattened third (C#) in Bb

lines (bars 31, 55, 87 etc.[see ex.22]). (Note the substitution of an E min. 11th with a natural fifth for the E min. 7 b 5 in bars 25 and 89. This creates a brighter sound.) The most noteworthy variations are probably those found in the two bar section at bars 13 and 14, 45 and 46, 77 and 78 etc. As can be seen from the earlier reference to \lle chord changes here

(see Opening melody section), this is a Ill, VI, II, V progression in F major, and in general Peacock outlines those

changes.

Jarrett, however, treats them more freely and observes them some of the time (bars 13 and 14, 109 and 110 [see ex.23- note how the melody in 110 utilizes an Abdim. chord in place of C 7]), replaces them with allusions to D minor at other times (bars 45 and 46 [see ex.24 – note the faint A 7 chord in 46, and bars 77 and 78 [the chords here seem to be F maj./ E 7 b 9, A 7 I D min.) or elaborates on them (bars 141 and 142 [see ex.25 -the pattern here is based on a descending chromatic idea, and is probably best interpreted as Ab dim., G min., D I F#, F dim., C I E). These variations, and slight discrepancies between the bass and piano, tend to add both harmonic color, and a certain ambiguity.

Ex.21 Shows the exploitation of the interchangeability of the Bb maj. 7 # 5 and E min. 9 b 5 chords.  
(Bars 56 and 65)



Ex.22 Shows the use of the flattened third in Bb lines.



Ex.23 Jarrett sometimes observes the chord changes from the melody section. (Bars 109 and 110)



Ex.24 Shows allusions to D minor. (Bars 45 and 46)



Ex.25 Shows elaboration on chord changes from melody section.



Other variations worth noting are the use of :

Harmonic suspension (at bar 92 the chords are D 7, D min., G 7, rather than just G 7 (see ex.26]; at bar 103 the Bb 7 alt. chord is held over for two beats.); Harmonic anticipation (on beat 4 of bar 89 the A 7 chord of the next bar is outlined; on beat 4 of bar 143 the D 7 chord of the next bar is outlined [see ex.27].); Changes of chord quality within the bar (at bar 59 the chords are D min., 07 rather than just D min 7 b 5 [see ex.28]; at bar 75 a D 7 b 9 chord is played on beat one rather than D min.);

The superimposition of different chords over one harmony (at bar 144 beat 2 an Eb maj. 7 chord is played over a D 7 harmony [see ex.27]; at bar 131 Eb, Bb, and F triads are played over a C minor harmony; at bar 134 [beat 2] a D triad is played over a Bb 7 harmony. ).

These variations obviously contribute to general harmonic variety and tension, and combined with the ones above, create an overall impression of harmonic freedom.

Ex.26 Harmonic suspension. Chords are actually D 7, D min., G 7.



Ex.28 Changes of chord quality within the bar. (Bar 59)



Ex.27 Bars 143 and 144 - Shows harmonic anticipation (beat 4 of 143 is D 7) and chord superimposition (beat 2 of 144 is Eb maj. 7).



## Melody

Jarrett's lyrical, flowing, melodic style is very much in evidence here, and as you would expect, there is much variety. The lyrical aspect is particularly noticeable in passages like the ones at bars 13-16 (see ex.29), 19 and 20, 65-68, and this is enhanced by his characteristic use of melodic embellishments and grace notes (bars 81 [beat 3], 100, 101 etc. [see ex.30]).

On an organizational level, the overall approach is based on a combination of scalar shapes and arpeggiated figures, with extensive use of chromaticism. As stated earlier, there are occasional references to the original melody notes in the first chorus, and these can be found in bars 1, 2, (see ex.31) and 13. The general diatonic shapes range from scale passages (bars 13, and 14 [see ex.32], and 147), to scalar-type figures (bars 6 [see ex.33], 52, 83, 84), to more purely melodic shapes (20, 27, 33 [see ex.34], 45, 47 etc.), to melodic shapes which feature large intervals (bar 94 [beat 4], bar 95 [beat 1- see ex.35], bar 128 [beat 4] etc.).

There are many kinds of arpeggiated figures, and these range from triadic formations (bars 41 [see ex.36], 46, 57 etc.), to seventh chord outlines (bars 11 [see ex.37], 56, 64 etc.), to

superimposed triads or sevenths (bar 19 [see ex.38], bar 80 [beat 4- Bb I D 7 = D 7 alt.], bar 92 [beat 3- F I A 7 = A 7 alt.]), to broken or composite formations (bars 7, 53 and 54 [see ex.39], 75 [beats 2 and 3] etc.).

The variety found here is a good example of Jarrett's melodic depth, and this has been described by Laurence Hobgood in the following terms – "Combining an uncanny sense of simplicity and lyricism with a seemingly boundless instinct for connecting, extending and overlapping densely figured phrases, Jarrett embodies the current extent of supreme melodic thinking."

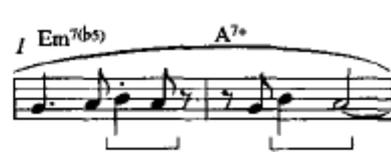
Ex.29 Lyrical passage. (Bars 13-16)



Ex.30 Characteristic use of grace notes.



Ex.31 Reference to melody.



Ex.32 Use of scale passages. (Bars 13 and 14)



Ex.33 Scalar-type figure. (Bar 6)



Ex.34 Shows a more purely melodic shape. (Bar 33)



Ex.35 Use of triadic formations. (Bar 41)



Ex.36 Melodic shapes with large intervals.



Ex.37 Use of seventh chord outline.



Ex.38 Superimposed seventh outline - Dmin./Cmin.=Cmin.13.(Bar 19)



Ex.39 Use of composite formation. (Bars 53 and 54)



The use of chromaticism falls into a number of categories, and they are probably best described this way:

The use of chromatic notes as,

- 1) Components of a chromatic scale passage (bar 31[see Ex.40]).
- 2) Passing tones between scale or chord tones (bars 5 [see ex.41], 21, 35, 36, 55 [second semi quaver] etc.).

- 3) "Approach" tones- i.e. tones which lead to a chord tone, and that do not fall on the main beats of the bar ([in semi quaver passages of the quaver subdivisions will also be considered the main beats] bars 14 [see ex.42], 35 [last semi quaver], 109 [2nd, 4th, and 6th quavers] etc.).
- 4) Dissonant tones which fall on the main beats and then resolve ([these are similar to an appoggiatura] bars 14 and 15 [see ex.42], 23 [beat 1], 73 [beat 4], 76 [beat 2, 3rd semi quaver], 138 [beat 3] etc.).
- 5) Upper and or lower "neighbour" tones – i.e. tones that embellish a chord tone from above and or below, and maybe on or off the main beats (bars 18, 48 [beat 3, 2nd quaver], 50 [see ex.43], 55 [beat 4] etc.).
- 6) Components of what could be called "general" or "universal" melodic shapes – i.e. melodic shapes which feature some chromatic movement, and that can be utilized in many different harmonic situations. (What will hereafter be called "1" – bars 59 [there are 2 uses here, one on beat 3 and another on beat 4], 74 [beat1], 130 [beat 3]; "1a"- bar 92; "2" – bar 60; "3" – bars 77, 145 [beat 3]; "3a" – bar 92; "4"bars 129, 130 [beat 1 – slightly modified]. – For examples of these see ex.44 ).

Ex.40 Use of chromatic scale passage. (Bar 31)



Ex.41 Passing tone. (Bar 7)



Ex.42 Shows approach tone (second bracket) and dissonant tones (first and last bracket).



Ex.43 Upper and lower neighbour tones.



Ex.44 General or universal shapes.

"1" (Bar 59, beat 3.)



"1a" ("1" inverted - Bar 92, beat 2.)



"2" (Bar 60, beat 2.)



"3" (Bar 77, beat 4.)



"3a" ("3" inverted - Bar 92, beat 1.)



"4" (Bar 129, beat 4.)



Apart from adding interest to the melodic lines, Jarrett's use of chromaticism here functions in a number of ways. It either serves or embellishes the basic harmony, (as in 2, 3, 5), or briefly obscures it, (4) or does both (1, 6). (This essentially holds true for the remaining pieces.)

The passage at bar 87, which contains many chromatic notes, is probably best seen as a utilization of the blues scale.

## The role of the left hand

In this case, large sections of the solo contain no left hand at all. The only real sustained use is found in the first chorus, an eight bar passage towards the end of the fourth chorus, and the wind down section at the end of the solo which is approximately twelve bars long. This, of course is not unusual, and is a reflection of a common desire amongst jazz pianists to create unencumbered, horn like melodic lines.

The first chorus, in general features short, stabbing chords that are almost all off the beat (this has been touched on in the Rhythm analysis), and which contribute to the playful two feel.

The last chord (bars 30-32) is a long one, and serves to delineate the first chorus from the second (see ex.45) which of course, changes to a four feel. From then on, it either fills or punctuates (bars 37-40 [see ex.46]), again delineates (bars 64-68,148, 149), or supports changes in intensity (83-90 [see ex.47], 116-118, 150-160).

Ex.45 A long sustained left hand chord helps to delineate the first chorus from the second.

Musical notation for Ex.45. The piece is in B-flat major. The bass clef features a long, sustained chord starting at bar 30, which changes from F7sus to Bb. The treble clef contains a melodic line with eighth notes and triplets. A slur spans across bars 30, 31, and 32, indicating the sustained nature of the left hand chord.

Ex.46 The left hand fills and punctuates.(Bars 37-40)

Musical notation for Ex.46. The piece is in B-flat major. The bass clef shows rhythmic fills and punctuations. The treble clef has a melodic line with eighth notes and triplets. Chords indicated above the staff are Fm, Bb7, Eb7, and Ab7. A slur spans across bars 37, 38, 39, and 40.

Ex.47 The left hand supports changes in intensity.

Musical notation for Ex.47. The piece is in C minor. The bass clef shows changes in intensity supported by the left hand. The treble clef has a melodic line with eighth notes and triplets. Chords indicated above the staff are Cm, Ebm7, and Ab7. A slur spans across bars 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, and 90.

## Closing melody section

This section emerges from the brief one chorus bass solo which becomes more of an ensemble statement as it progresses, and thus provides a smooth transition between the two.

The fact that (like the opening melody section) it is played with a two feel, much interaction between the instruments, a similar approach to the melody, and essentially the same harmonic changes, means that a certain thematic continuity is present. However, the different rhythmic, harmonic, and melodic colours that the players use, give it a different character, and

make it apparent that a musical journey has occurred. This, of course, contributes to a sense of development. From the beginning of the C section, things become more spacious, and there is a gradual winding down in anticipation of Jarrett's cadenza, which begins at the resolution point (bar 31 ).

## **The cadenza**

It contains 18 bars, runs for approximately 45 seconds, and is made up of three main sections which are grouped as follows :

1st section: 4 bars;

2nd section: 6 bars;

3rd section: 8 bars;

It's overall approach is similar to the introduction, as it is played rubato, uses rhythmic motifs, utilizes varied time signatures, and incorporates similar harmonies. The structure will be described as follows:

1st section: (see ex.48)

Bars 1-3 :- Bypasses tonic chord (it would normally occur on bar 31) and begins a cycle of fifths progression that is based on the last eight bars and utilizes motif "A" (see ex.48). After "A" is stated (bar 1 [includes quaver pick up from previous bar]), it is repeated (bar 2), then repeated in slightly altered form (bar 3).

Bar 4 :- Pauses on an Eb chord.

2nd section: (see ex.48)

Bars 5-10 :- Modulates briefly to A minor, becomes faster and changes from 4/4 to 3/4 (bars 5,6), then returns to tonic key area and 4/4 (bar 7) and begins another cycle of fifths progression (uses some of the dissonant chords noted in Harmony in the analysis of the introduction), then moves to a sequence of open fifths and pauses on a Db chord (bar 10).

This all utilizes motif "B" (see ex.49). After it is stated (bars 5,6), it is repeated twice but permuted through the change to 4/4, and slightly lengthened at bar 9.

3rd section: (see ex.48)

Bars 11-15 :- Starts on an Eb/Bb chord and then mainly uses

the aforementioned dissonant chords as well as incorporating varied time signatures within 4/4 (bars 13, 15). This all utilizes motif "C" (see ex.49 [note that it is similar to the "B" motif in the introduction]). After it is first stated (bars 11,12), it is repeated twice but permuted through the changed meters and shortened at bar 15. Bars 16-18 :- Cadential phrase which uses an ascending chromatic progression. Pauses on an Ab diminished chord, resolves to tonic.

(Rubato)

**1<sup>st</sup> section**

"A"

Bar 1 (bar 31 of song) (pause) II  
 (4/4) IF7b9 Em7b5 / / IA7+ Dm7b5 / / IG7+ Cm7b5 / / IEb6

**2<sup>nd</sup> section**

"B"

Bar 5 (pause) II  
 (3/4) IAm/E IFmaj7#11 I(4/4)Gm7sus. Cm7b5 IAb/D G7 IDb/C IEb C Bb DbII

**3<sup>rd</sup> section**

"C"

Bar 11  
 (4/4) IEb/Bb Db/C Em7sus.#11 / IA13b9 I(2/4)D+ I(4/4)Abm7b5 I(5/4)Cmaj.7#5 I

Bar 16 (pause ) II  
 (4/4) IFmaj.7#11 Db/F Gbsus.2 / IG6addF Db/G Abdim. / IBbsus. - 3<sup>rd</sup>. II

Ex.49 Shows motifs.

Motif "A" is shown as a 4-measure phrase in 4/4 time, starting on G4 and moving up stepwise to Bb4. Motif "B" is shown as a 4-measure phrase in 3/4 time, starting on G4 and moving up stepwise to Bb4. Motif "C" is shown as an 11-measure phrase in 4/4 time, starting on G4 and moving up stepwise to Bb4.

It is worth noting that even though there are many foreign harmonies here, the tonal center of Bb major is preserved by the use of the subdominant chord (Eb) at crucial points in the structure. Again, it should be obvious that the similarities between the cadenza and the introduction contribute to thematic unity.

## Overview and Summary

The overall shape of this performance is, of course, governed in broad terms by the structure that is particular to this approach, so it is the actual components within each section that contribute to the specific shape which is found here. The introduction functions as a prelude, which apart from presenting the melody has its own definite profile, this being most apparent when it moves from the melody statement into the development sections, and then back again.

The opening melody section not only serves to amplify the melody and develop it (through ensemble interaction and Jarrett's melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic variations), but also has its own identity and functions as the introductory part of the ensemble section in the musical discourse.

The piano solo functions as a development section, building on what has preceded it, and part of this is a definite change of character between the first chorus (which maintains the playful two feel from the melody section) and the second (which moves into "four"). The second and remaining choruses continue the development, and are responsible for the gradual rise in intensity and eventual climax, which is achieved by building intensity in stages with plateaus in between.

The final part of the solo involves another change in mood when, at the end of the bridge in the last chorus, it begins to wind down. The closing melody section functions as the last part of the development by the ensemble, and (as mentioned earlier) makes it obvious through another change of character that a musical journey has taken place. The mood then changes once more as the band winds down before the cadenza, which subsequently acts as a final statement that not only has structural connections with the introduction, but of course is once again solo piano.

The general impression that comes across in this performance is one of a very passionate, spontaneous and flowing musical

journey. This is made up of many definite musical episodes which are brought together by a strong underlying sense of form and structure. Jarrett's awareness of this aspect is confirmed in a statement that he made in 2001. "I have instincts about form over long periods of time."