

'A Sleepin' Bee' (Harold Arlen)

Improvised solo piano by

Doug McKenzie

Musical notation for the first system of 'A Sleepin' Bee'. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 4/4. The system consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. Above the treble staff, the following chords are indicated: Ab/Bb, B/C#, Db/Eb, E/F#, Ab/Bb, B/C#, Ab/Bb, and G/A. The melody in the treble staff starts with a quarter rest followed by a quarter note G4, then a half note G4, and continues with a series of chords. The bass staff features a bass line starting with a quarter note G2, followed by a half note G2, and then a series of chords. A measure number '16' is written above the bass staff.

Using a CONSTANT STRUCTURE to harmonise the melody
2nd inversion major triads in RH (melody on top)
LH plays note 1 tone below root of Major triad in RH

Musical notation for the second system of 'A Sleepin' Bee'. The system consists of two staves. Above the treble staff, the following chords are indicated: AbMaj7, D9#11, DbMaj7, and Gb13#11. The melody in the treble staff starts with a quarter rest followed by a quarter note G4, then a half note G4, and continues with a series of chords. The bass staff features a bass line starting with a quarter note G2, followed by a half note G2, and then a series of chords. A measure number '3' is written above the treble staff and a measure number '4' is written above the bass staff.

Musical notation for the third system of 'A Sleepin' Bee'. The system consists of two staves. Above the treble staff, the following chords are indicated: AbMaj7, Db7, C7, and F7b9. The melody in the treble staff starts with a quarter rest followed by a quarter note G4, then a half note G4, and continues with a series of chords. The bass staff features a bass line starting with a quarter note G2, followed by a half note G2, and then a series of chords. A measure number '5' is written above the treble staff and a measure number '6' is written above the bass staff.

Musical notation for the fourth system of 'A Sleepin' Bee'. The system consists of two staves. Above the treble staff, the following chords are indicated: Bbm7, E9#11, Eb9, and Db9. The melody in the treble staff starts with a quarter rest followed by a quarter note G4, then a half note G4, and continues with a series of chords. The bass staff features a bass line starting with a quarter note G2, followed by a half note G2, and then a series of chords. A measure number '7' is written above the treble staff and a measure number '8' is written above the bass staff.

C13 C7b9b13 F7b9 F7b9b13

Bb13 Bb7alt Eb13 Edim A9

Ab13 Ab9b13 Db7

Bbm7 Cm7 Db6 Ddim Eb7sus Eb7

AbMaj7 Eb9sus AbMaj7 Eb9sus

Same 'Constant structure' as before - it is stack of perfect 4ths topped by a major 3rd - more 4ths could be added below

AbMaj7 D9#11 DbMaj7 Gb13sus

AbMaj7 Db7 C7 F7b9

playing up a triad (Ab) then
down the one above (A) ...
and up the next (BbMaj)

Half/whole diminished scale
Notice the chord root (C)
on both downbeats (beats 1 and 3)

Bbm7 E9#11 Eb9 Db9#11

C13 C7#9 F7b9 F7b9b13

Bb13 Bb7alt Eb9sus Eb7b9

Using a leading tone beneath the 3rd and
creating a drum-like rhythm

AbMaj7

DbMaj7

C7

F7

Bb9

Eb13

C7

F7b9

Bb9

Bb9b13

Eb7sus

Eb13

AbMaj7

BMaj7

EMaj7

A9#11

The 'Ladybird' turnaround - all Major 7ths move around cycle of 5ths

AbMaj7

Eb9sus

AbMaj7

Eb9sus

AbMaj7 D9#11 DbMaj7 Gb13sus

AbMaj7 Db7 C7 F7b9

Bbm7 E9#11 Eb9 Db9

C13 C7b9b13 F7b9 F7b9b13

Useful easy run on any C dominant chord.
 Bb(3),D(5),Bb(3),G(2),E(1),Eb(3),D(1),
 Db(3),C(2),B(1),Bb(3) ..etc.

This is just an F7 arpeggio
 with chromatically connected
 chord tones.

Bb13 Bb7alt Eb13 Eb13b9

A 'turn' around
 the note Bb

Ab13 Ab9b13 Db7

49 50

Bbm7 Cm7 Db6 Ddim Eb7sus Eb7

51 52

AbMaj7 Eb9sus AbMaj7 Eb9sus

53 54

AbMaj7 D9#11 DbMaj7 Gb13sus

55 56

To create the D9#11
The RH plays with an E Maj triad

AbMaj7 Db7 C7 Eb9

57 58

This line a combination of chord tones
(placed on the beat) connected
chromatically

Bbm7 E9#11 Eb9 Db9

59 60

C13 C7b9b13 F7b9 F7b9b13

61 62

Bb13 Bb7alt Eb9sus Eb7b9

63 64

AbMaj7 DbMaj7 C7 F7

65 66

Bb9 Eb13 C7#11b13 F7#11b13

67 68

RH 'whole tone' chords - they contain almost all the notes of the wholetone scales!

Bb13 Bb9b13 Eb7sus Eb13

69

AbMaj7 BMaj7 EMaj7 A9#11

71

AbMaj7

74