

2016

## **A brief exploration of variances in Larry Grenadier's approach to soloing in piano trio and duo contexts on selected recordings of All the Things You Are and Long Ago and Far Away**

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A brief exploration of variances in  
Larry Grenadier's approach to soloing  
in piano trio and duo contexts on  
selected recordings of *All the Things  
You Are* and *Long Ago and Far Away*

---

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Dissertation

Bachelor of Music Honours

Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts

Edith Cowan University

2016

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## Abstract

Larry Grenadier is a highly accomplished and acclaimed modern jazz bassist. Amongst his many collaborations with the luminaries of jazz, he is probably best known for his enduring partnership with the Brad Mehldau trio, which has been continuous since 1994.

This study focuses on Grenadier's improvisational style, specifically aiming to contrast his approach in piano trio and drumless piano-bass duo contexts, in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Four musical transcriptions have been completed (one performance in each ensemble setting of the standards *All the Things You Are* and *Long Ago and Far Away*) and analysed for aspects such as rhythmic complexity, motivic and melodic development, harmonic approach, and adherence to the form. In tandem to the analysis, Grenadier himself was interviewed to further unpack his views on improvising. An overall comparison section discusses the similarities and differences between the performances, cross-referencing the analytical findings with Grenadier's interview, resulting in several conclusions about how his approach appears to vary across the performances.

Through the analysis, it is found that – while the transcriptions share common techniques – it is observable that the trio improvisations are often relatively more complex, and the duo performances more foundational. Despite this empirical distinction, Grenadier asserts in the interview that he does not consciously change his approach: instead, he suggests that the presence of different musical personalities leads his improvising to alternate outcomes *in the moment*. Importantly, it is also noted that his overall improvisational approach is strongly informed by a blurred line between *bassline* and *bass solo*, inferring that the absence of drums might subconsciously direct him to play more foundationally.

The outcomes of this research not only provide a fascinating insight into a member of the jazz music elite, but are also highly informative for my own practice and direction for performance in these contexts, as well as any other bassists wishing to gain a deeper understanding of how to approach performing in similar ensembles.

## **Acknowledgements:**

Immeasurable thanks to my supervisor, Nick Abbey. I'm unable to express how phenomenally helpful he has been this year, and I thank him for all his time, editing assistance, and advice.

Thanks to my teachers this year; Sam Anning, Daniel Susnjar, Jamie Oehlers, Tom O'Halloran, and everyone else at WAAPA.

Thanks to all my mates who undertook honours alongside me, especially Dan, Ben, Brodie, and Vaughan.

Thanks to my dad, for assisting with editing even while overseas on holiday.

And thanks to Larry Grenadier, for participating in the study, and for his truly inspiring musicianship.

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## Introduction

Larry Grenadier (b. 1966) is a highly regarded contemporary jazz double bassist. His performance and recording credits include an extensive list of jazz luminaries such as Joe Henderson (who he toured with when he was only 18), Joe Lovano, John Scofield, Stan Getz, Paul Motian, Charles Lloyd, and Billy Higgins.

Of his work with these giants of jazz, Grenadier is perhaps known best for his ongoing collaboration with pianist Brad Mehldau, whom he has played alongside for 22 years. The focus of this study will be the late 1990s period of the “standards trio” consisting of Mehldau, Grenadier and drummer Jorge Rossy. This group played together from 1995 – 2004, at which point Jeff Ballard replaced Rossy in the line-up. While this original trio released ten albums together, it is the collection of five volumes of *The Art of the Trio* that best represent the trio’s sound (Kelman, 2011). Within this collection the group performs a wide spectrum of music, from jazz standards and original music to pop covers, but all featuring the interactive element that lies at the core of this trio. Mehldau, speaking on the qualities that allow this ensemble to play so cohesively says:

I've found that playing trio has been so rewarding because of my relationship with Larry and Jorge - their creativity and musicianship, their willingness to go out on a limb with me, their open-mindedness, has been vital to the whole project of playing trio (LeGendre, 2004).

This study examines the performances of bassist Larry Grenadier in this vital period to determine if and how his approach to improvising varies between the piano trio (piano/bass/drums) and duo (piano/bass) ensemble contexts. Two of the transcriptions undertaken will be drawn from *The Art of the Trio* albums, and the other two from an unreleased concert in Koln Germany, recorded sometime in April of 1999 with Mehldau. This concert was part of a European tour undertaken by the trio that became duo unexpectedly when Jorge Rossy had to return home at the last minute for his wife’s labour. According to Grenadier, this duo date was quite unusual for the group, and he and Mehldau had not performed together in that setting very much previously (Personal communication, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016).

## Aims and research question

The aim of this study is to investigate the potential impact of ensemble context on the improvisational style of Larry Grenadier in specific collaborations with Brad Mehldau.

The primary research question emerges directly from this aim:

- How does Larry Grenadier’s approach to soloing appear to vary between piano duo and trio contexts in the examined performances, and what specific observable devices suggest this?

This outcome will be determined in relation to several musical factors, including the complexity of rhythmic content within lines, melodic motivic content, any apparent extended harmonic content (extended referring to notes “outside” of the standard accepted chord changes), and the level to which Grenadier adheres to, and outlines, the form of the song.

## **Rationale and significance**

Despite his high critical praise and wealth of recordings, there is only limited literature discussing the practices of Larry Grenadier. This study will contribute to knowledge pertaining to this influential figure and to bass improvisation in general, through the research conclusions, the production of the four high quality musical transcriptions, and the interview transcription contained in the Appendices.

The duo recordings are highly important and interesting musical documents, as there are no other available resources on the two of these musicians playing in a duo setting. Grenadier himself elaborates, stating that the concert itself was not planned to be duo, but was the result of Jorge Rossy having to take an emergency flight home in the middle of a tour on account of his wife going into labour (Personal communication, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016). The uniqueness of these recordings alone is enough reason to research this performance.

The significance of this research extends further for me though, as Grenadier has been a landmark influence on my own development as a musician. His deeply foundational approach to accompaniment and his virtuosic and idiosyncratic improvisational style have informed areas of my own playing that I am most intent on developing. As such, my main rationale for undertaking this study is to improve my own ability in a duo setting. I also highly respect the Brad Mehldau trio’s movement away from more traditional instrumental roles towards a more interactive collective, which Grenadier discusses in a 2001 interview conducted by Mike Brannon: “We are collectively trying to play trio music without the standard roles delegated to each instrument... As a band we are aware of achieving a group sound made possible by the uniqueness of our individual sounds”(p. 2). This statement in particular resonates deeply with me, and the opportunity to study how Grenadier adjusts his individual sound in relation to the ensemble context he occupies is of great interest. It will also be pertinent to many jazz musicians who operate as freelancers in their profession, where one has to adjust to different people and ensemble situations day-to-day.

# Chapter 1: Literature Review and Research Methodology

## Literature review

Academic literature pertaining to Grenadier is sparse, though sources exist that contextualise and feed into this research. These sources have been organised into three categories within this review:

- Research on Larry Grenadier
- Similar jazz (and double bass) research
- General contextual sources for supporting the study

## Extant knowledge on Larry Grenadier

As is typical of many modern jazz musicians, there is not an extensive amount of literature available that discusses Larry Grenadier. The pool of relevant sources extends to a collection of interviews, a few journal articles on the Brad Mehldau Trio and only one academic thesis with Grenadier as a focus.

Sam Trapchak's master's thesis, entitled *Towards a model of jazz bass accompaniment on standards adapted to uneven meters: The foundational approaches of Larry Grenadier, Scott Colley and Johannes Weidenmueller* (2009) is the most directly relevant piece of literature to this research. This paper examines Grenadier specifically, and even includes a partial transcription of the same performance of *All the Things You Are* that is examined in this research. However, Trapchak focuses on the accompaniment style of Grenadier rather than his improvisational approach, and such presents an other-side-of-the-coin perspective to the study. Additionally, his paper is concerned with the comparison of Grenadier to other players and vice versa, as opposed to the comparison of Grenadier's approaches to different ensemble contexts.

Trapchak's thesis also contains an interview with Grenadier on his approach to playing in odd time signatures, which provides some initial context for the analysis of his improvisations on the 7/4 arrangement of *All the Things You Are*. The interview discusses Grenadier's approach to playing foundationally – that is, Grenadier's tendency to provide the music with a strong harmonic and rhythmic *grounding* – but also with openness, with specific referral to several techniques utilized by him in an accompaniment setting. “Well the simplest way (to open up the time in 4/4) is not to play beat one. And that same thing will work in odd time signatures as well” (Trapchak, 2009, p. 53). Another such important quote is related to the use of clave (a repeated rhythm used for comping) in 7/4:

My method for that is really to use the clave as... when the music needs some sort of foundation, just like I would lay down a strong 4/4 walking line if I felt the music needed that (Trapchak, p. 56)

While these quotes can both be used as an inference to Grenadier's improvisational approach, the interview does not discuss this topic in any great length, and also doesn't touch upon the consideration of different ensembles affecting how Grenadier thinks about the music that is central to this study.

The methodology of this dissertation will also be adapted, which is a qualitative study incorporating interviews and musical transcription. Trapchak's discussion of harmonic rhythm will be used in analysis of resolution points of the music, as well as Grenadier's adherence (or otherwise) to form. In his thesis he mentions three musical factors which aid in the outlining of form, which are "duration, tessitura, and pitch" (2009, p. 19). Though Trapchak discusses this in relation to the formation of a bassline, it is an equally relevant consideration in a solo format.

There are several interviews with Grenadier conducted across more than a decade. The earliest is from a 1999 article in Bass Player magazine entitled *Larry Grenadier: Listening, Waiting* (Johnston), and the most recent being conducted in 2012 by Marta Ramon for the website JazzTimes. These interviews are useful for this study as they provide information on Grenadier's personal music philosophies as well as influences. In a 2007 interview for Bassplayer magazine, Grenadier says:

I am very much influenced by the people I'm playing with, but by now my musical personality has become what it is... Whatever the group is, if I feel the harmony needs to be stated very clearly, then I'll do that (Booth).

A similar sentiment is echoed in an earlier interview, again for Bass Player:

I'm always tuned to where Brad or the drums might lead us, and sometimes I might take us somewhere different. If you know the tune – the chords, the melody – you can take it anywhere (Johnston, 1999)

Grenadier has performed on many jazz albums, but the most pertinent to this research are two albums in the *Art of the Trio* collection – *The Art of the Trio Volume 4: Back at the Vanguard* (Mehldau, Grenadier, & Rossy, 1999) and *Art of the Trio Volume 5: Progression* (2001). From these I will be drawing the musical transcriptions in the trio format. The duo recordings are from a live recording of a performance by Grenadier and Mehldau sometime in April 1999, in Koln, Germany.

## Related jazz and double bass research

This category includes many other theses, books and interviews on topics related to the Brad Mehldau trio and similar jazz groups, or to jazz improvisation, but do not directly address the topic of the study. Most relevant of these sources are the theses from which I am drawing my methodological structure.

Other theses I will be drawing on include the rhythmic analysis methods evidenced in Robert Sabin's Master's thesis "*Gary Peacock: Analysis of progressive double bass improvisation 1963-1965*" (2015) in which he discusses the concept of an "accentual shift", which is the delay or anticipation of an entire improvised line from where would usually be expected.

A distillation of the meter analysis used in Linda Oh's 2005 thesis "New Method of Rhythmic Improvisation for the Jazz Bassist: an interdisciplinary study of Dave Holland's rhythmic approach to bass improvisation and North Indian rhythmic patterns" will also be used. The method here provides a way to measure the strength of the individual beats of a bar and define the strongest and weakest resolution points.

Further direction for analysis will be drawn from Aaron Stroessner's 2016 Doctoral thesis entitled "Evaluating Jazz: A methodology developed for the stylistic analysis of modern jazz artists John McLaughlin and Pat Metheny". This document draws inspiration from a book written in 1970 titled *Guidelines for Style Analysis* (LaRue) which provides a list of five musical characteristics from which to draw observational data, which are "Sound, Harmony, Melody, Rhythm, and Form". These are the aspects that will be addressed within the analysis of the transcribed solos, also using the functional language utilised in Stroessner's thesis: "simple/complex, disordered/ordered, sparse/dense, consistent/contrasting mood, and eclecticism." While these concepts are all present in LaRue's original text, Stroessner presents revised methods which may be used to study improvised passages.

## General contextual sources

Many ancillary resources will be drawn upon to support the research. These include the instructional book *Intro to Polyrhythms* (Hoenig & Weidenmueller, 2009) which will be used in conjunction with rhythmic analysis of the transcriptions, paying specific attention to the book's instruction in the use of rhythmic hemiolas with a basis in both triplet and eighth note rhythms. This book also makes an appearance in Sabin's methodology.

*The Improvisers Bass Method* is a theoretical study and instructional book on improvisation by Chuck Sher (1979). It provides a comprehensive theoretical overview of many improvisational

concepts, from simple to complex, and will provide an excellent general reference for chordal and melodic analysis of the transcriptions.

## Research methodology

This study follows an established jazz research paradigm of using musical transcription and analysis to draw conclusions about the subject's musical tendencies. In this instance, the methodology incorporates aspects of Oh (2005), Sabin (2015), Stroessner (2016) and Trapchak (2009), and also uses an interview with Grenadier to further contextualise empirical findings.

- Initially, four **musical transcriptions** of Grenadier's improvisations were completed.
  - These are split between the two ensemble contexts on the jazz standards *All the Things You Are* and *Long Ago and Far Away*.
    - *All the Things You Are* (trio context) – *Art of the Trio Volume 4: Back at the Vanguard* (Mehldau et al., 1999)
    - *All the Things You Are* (duo context) – Live concert in Koln, Germany, April 1999
    - *Long Ago and Far Away* (trio context) – *Art of the Trio Volume 5: Progression* (Mehldau et al., 2001)
    - *Long Ago and Far Away* (duo context) – Live concert in Koln, Germany, April 1999
  - The method of transcription and analysis is commonplace in jazz music, as well as the academic realm, as evidenced in theses such as Sabin (2015), Trapchak (2015), Oh (2005), and Zimmer (2016).
- Each transcription was then **individually analysed**. The results of this process are presented in Chapter 2: Analysis.
  - Melodic and rhythmic content are at the forefront of the analysis. The areas that have been examined in detail are form, rhythm, motivic development, and any apparent adherence or departure from a fundamental rhythmic clave or subdivision.
  - The analysis of material uses standard accepted jazz terminology, and draws on methods from Sabin (2015), Oh's beat-strength notation (2005), and Trapchak's harmonic and melodic assessment of expressive techniques (2009).
- Larry Grenadier was **interviewed** via Skype, and his responses are integrated into both the Analysis and Comparison chapters.



- This interview discusses his approach to improvisation, and his mindset when performing in the discussed ensemble contexts. His own perspective on the matter will be compared to the outcomes demonstrated within the analysed transcriptions.
- All dealings with Grenadier were undertaken with the strict approval of Edith Cowan University's Ethics Policy through the completion of a successful System Tracking Research Ethics Applications Monitoring (STREAM) application.
- This interview transcript is presented in its entirety in Appendix E: Transcript of Interview with Larry Grenadier
- Finally, Chapter 3: Comparative Discussion and Summary of Results **gives a summary of the similarities and differences** of the performances, **comparing** them on a macro-level to draw conclusions on whether or not ensemble context affects Grenadier's improvisational approach. Comparative complexity and frequency of ideas and consistency of improvisational devices used across the transcriptions will be considered as factors indicating such a change.

### Research limitations

Due to the limited timeframe of an Honours-level research project, certain concessions have been made in determining an appropriate scope for this research. The quota of four transcriptions across two tunes is an appropriate amount of material (based on other similar research projects) to infer useful conclusions whilst remaining logistically feasible given the amount of time available. While it would have been ideal to examine the trio holistically to draw deeper conclusions, it would have been impractical and too dense to transcribe the contributions of the other members of the trio, and attempt to codify their influence over what Grenadier is playing. Likewise, the research has not broached Grenadier's approach to accompaniment, as this would form a topic of its own and has already been covered to some extent by Trapchak. While Grenadier's approach over time may have changed, but the sample size of transcriptions is all within the same few years, so this problem has been mitigated as much as possible.

## Chapter 2: Analysis

This chapter presents the findings uncovered through the analysis of the musical transcriptions of Grenadier’s four performances. The duo and trio transcriptions are initially discussed separately to identify characteristics and techniques found common to each context before comparisons are made in Chapter 3: Comparative Discussion and Summary of Results.

### Findings from duo transcriptions

#### Close adherence to clave or fundamental subdivision

Brad Mehldau’s arrangement of the standard *All the Things You Are* features a 7/4 meter. In such adaptations, the pulse is commonly felt as a combination of a bar of 4/4 and a bar of 3/4, as shown in Figure 1. This bar division is also found in several other 7/4 meter jazz works, such as *It Might as Well Be Spring* from the album *Introducing Brad Mehldau* (Rossy, 1995), Joshua Redman’s 1998 version of *Summertime* from *Timeless Tales for Changing Times*, and drummer Ari Hoenig’s adaptation of *Moment’s Notice*, from *Bert’s Playground* (2008).



Figure 1: 7/4 meter as compounding of 4/4 and 3/4 bars

The standard 7/4 clave is derived from this compound meter, and is shown along with some common variations in Figure 2. It is determined in Trapchak’s study that Grenadier uses this clave frequently in an accompanying context on tunes in 7/4. This is largely for reasons of clarity, and the conclusion is reached that “When rhythmic ideas between members of the band become less certain, the bassist usually goes back to the original clave pattern” (Trapchak, 2009).



Figure 2: Standard 7/4 rhythmic clave and derivatives

The division of 7/4 is often felt like this to facilitate an easier starting point for musicians to internalize the rhythm of the bar. As both 4/4 and 3/4 are more common time signatures to western music, this division allows the bar to be counted in two more familiar sections. Each of these sections is then divided in half rhythmically, giving the idiosyncratic 7/4 clave as shown above.

The clave also defines the rhythmically strongest beats of the bar. Figure 3 demonstrates this through an adaption of Lerdaahl and Jackendoff's dot-notation (Oh, 2005) which uses a system of dots to denote beat strength. As shown in the graphic, the beats of the bar with the most dots correspond with the clave rhythm, indicating their greater strength.



Figure 3: Beat strength in 7/4 clave

All but one bar of this solo conform to this beat-strength rule, as every phrase is constructed with groupings derived from the common clave, similar to those in Figure 2. Figure 4 demonstrates several examples where Grenadier employs rhythms phrased within the framework of the four-plus-three clave division.



Figure 4: Examples of clave division within transcription (*All the Things You Are*, duo context)

Although the examples above are somewhat dissimilar in terms of their specific rhythms, each phrase still falls within the established clave.

Figure 5 is the only instance in the solo where Grenadier does not play on the downbeat of the bar. Even despite the omission of the strongest pulse in this example, the phrase still seems to strongly adhere to the established clave.



Figure 5: Only instance of omission of beat one (*All the Things You Are*, duo context)

Each of his phrases are based around the four-plus-three bar division, strongly outlining harmony and rhythm and contributing to keeping the form of the song intact. In addition to this, all of the phrases of the solo barring one instance are all one-bar in length, assisting in maintaining the sanctity of the clave.

The duo version of *Long Ago and Far Away* is in 4/4, and while the swing feel underlying this common meter does not have an equivalent bar-length clave like that of the 7/4 discussed above, it does have the strong fundamental subdivision of four crotchets in a bar, as defined by the walking bassline comping pattern. The 4/4 pulse, combined with an up-tempo delivery of the song, results in a solo from Grenadier that is largely based around the core subdivision of crotchets, much like a rudimentary walking bassline, with the evolving melodic line being the focus.



Figure 6: Examples of crotchet based phrasing (*Long Ago and Far Away*, duo context)

A sample of this core subdivision of crotchets is expressed in Figure 6 above. As mentioned, the solo mirrors many aspects of a walking bassline, the bass player's primary accompanying role in a jazz

piece of this style, provides both rhythmic and harmonic support through relatively constant playing. Grenadier himself doesn't see there being a divide between a bassline and a solo, saying:

We're having this dialogue, where maybe we're stepping to the front of the dialogue a bit more than we would when we're playing a bass line, but it's really close. The wall between what's a good bass line and what's a good solo is kind of transparent, it doesn't really exist. It's the same thing to me. (Personal communication, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016)

This sentiment is quite pertinent: it is clear from the four transcriptions that Grenadier's approach largely follows this mantra, as evidenced by his emphasis on strong chord tones and extensive filling of space. The exception to this continuous crotchet-based phrasing in this performance occurs in chorus 3 of this solo, but even there he sticks closely to the newly established division of minim triplets as shown in Figure 7. Following this chorus, Grenadier returns to the fundamental division of crotchets and minims.



Figure 7: Example from chorus 3 of new fundamental subdivision (*Long Ago and Far Away*, duo context)

### Prevalence of form-centric phrase lengths

As discussed above, the improvised phrases in *All the Things You Are* closely adhere to the clave, and are also mostly one-bar in length. The exception to this is a descending phrase from bar 29-30, as shown below in Figure 8:

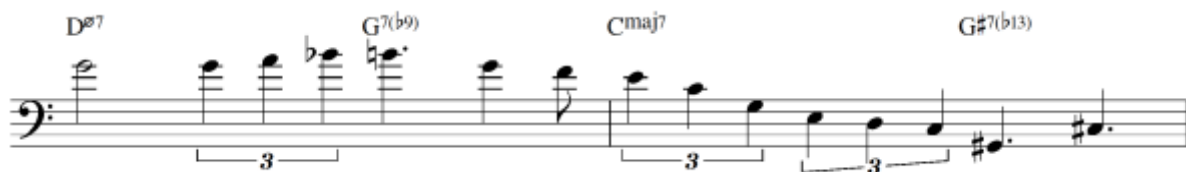


Figure 8: Instance of a two bar melody (*All the Things You Are*, duo context)

This graphic above is a clear indication of a two-bar phrase, which stands out from the rest of the phrases in the solo by both its clear continuation of a melodic contour across the phrase, as well as the rhythmic closeness of the notes either side of the intervening bar line. Every other bar either starts or ends with a longer beat, which is usually a clave subdivision.

This one-bar phrase length allows for very clear outline of harmony, and most importantly in a duo setting – the time and form. In the absence of a drummer explicitly stating the time, there is a greater responsibility on the soloist and accompanist to solidify the form and the pulse. Grenadier’s foundational approach in this setting seems to assist in the clarity of the performance. Aspects which are most important for the foundation of the form and song in this case, and most specifically in this ensemble context, are transparency in the treatment of the harmony, and presence of a rhythmic clarity. The harmonic clarity expressed by Grenadier throughout his solos mean that there is rarely any doubt about what chord he is on, or when the next section of the form is arriving. Grenadier spoke about this with me, saying:

As a bass player, when you solo you often have to be everything at one time; you’re the soloist, but you’re also the accompanist, you’re the piano player, the drummer and the horn player. You’re kind of having to fulfil a lot of roles. The bass is tricky as a solo instrument... A lot of times the harmonic accompaniment is sparse, or not there at all so we kind of have to be aware of little guide posts – not necessarily for us, but for everybody else. (Personal communication, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016)

These guide posts include not just the already mentioned aspects – clear chord outlining and a commitment to well-stated timekeeping – but also the length of Grenadier’s phrases and the way that these aid in outlining the form of the song. The harmonic form for *Long Ago and Far Away* is a 32-bar progression that is structurally similar many jazz standards. It features an A-B-A-C form, with each section being eight bars in length. The even nature of this progression allows it to be divided very easily into specific blocks of harmonic content: typically eight sections of four bars, and sometimes further into 16 two-bar blocks.

Grenadier’s phrasing in this performance is mostly made up of four-bar phrases that contribute to a series of chorus-long motives (or melodic ideas, which will be discussed in more detail later). He signposts the start of each phrase with a strong, extended bass note. This results in a form of self-accompaniment, echoing Grenadier’s sentiment that a bassist must be both the soloist and one’s own accompanist.

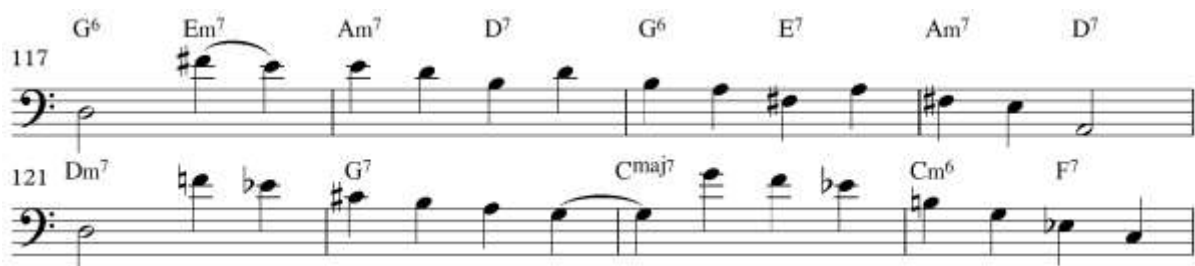


Figure 9: Four-bar phrasing, and example of self-accompaniment (*Long Ago and Far Away*, duo context)

Figure 9 is a typical example from this solo of two separate four-bar phrases. As mentioned, these are often framed by a longer note – minim or semibreve – on a strong chord tone at the beginning of the phrase, which is followed by the melodic content of the solo (often arpeggiated material). As this song is performed at a very fast tempo, Grenadier says that he does not think of individual beats, and rather feels a longer subdivision of several bars for a “longer motif” (Personal communication, October 18<sup>th</sup> 2016). This tendency is clearly observable in both versions of this tune.

### Motivic development of phrases

Melodic motivic development (strong musical relationship between consecutive phrases) is a common feature of Grenadier’s solos, as is the case with many great improvisers. Repetition with slight variation is an important aspect to the development of a motif, especially at a faster tempo where rhythmic choices are limited, and Grenadier discusses this concept in the interview – the idea of repeated melodic or rhythmic figures giving a solo continuity. “I do rhythmic permutations of it that are a slower tempo, but that become kind of, rhythmic patterns that continue through the solo, that give it some continuity or thematic material.” (Personal communication, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016)

*All the Things You Are* in the duo setting has motivic development in short sections, with collections of one-bar phrases following a similar melodic pattern or rhythmic idea. While it does not have chorus length motivic development, it does have several instances where patterns can be seen forming across three-to-four bars, such as below in Figure 10:



Figure 10: Melodic motivic development (*All the Things You Are*, duo context)

Bars 13-15 see almost the same pattern of notes repeated, with just the first note of each bar changing to outline the harmony. This consistency, combined with groupings within the clave gives the listener’s ear a familiar pattern to grasp onto, while the moving root note of the phrase serves to re-contextualise the static line against moving harmony. The rhythm changes slightly bar-to-bar as well, but not to any great degree, as this idea is more of a melodic evolution.

Figure 11: Rhythmic evolution of an idea (*All the Things You Are*, duo context)

Figure 11 demonstrates two motivic evolutions. The first phrase is a rhythmic idea featuring the inclusion of the crotchet triplet in the clave phrase. This initial phrase is presented at bar 35, and then each of the two following bars demonstrates a slight tweaking of the rhythm. In bar 37, it transitions naturally into the next motif, which is also used for the preceding three bars – a repeated rhythm that is harmonically adjusted to suit the moving chord changes.

The duo version of *Long Ago and Far Away* features extensive motivic development, with each chorus presenting a new motif, upon which Grenadier develops and distorts throughout. These ideas are often presented in a simple form in the first four bars of a chorus, and then built on for the proceeding 28 bars or more. Figure 12 demonstrates the first and last eight-bar sections of the first chorus of his solo.

Figure 12: Evolution of an idea across a chorus (*Long Ago and Far Away*, duo context)



As shown above, the melodic contour – a large interval followed by an arpeggiated melodic line – is kept consistent across the chorus. This idea evolves in the last eight bars of this chorus. While the initial ascending interval is retained, the rhythm is more contracted and busy, and this passage acts as a sort of ‘pivot point’ where the crotchet-based idea that is carried throughout the majority of the next chorus is introduced as an extension of the previous line.

As mentioned, Grenadier often uses longer bass notes at the beginning of lines or on important chord changes to anchor the form and harmony, assisting in the role that the drums are no longer fulfilling. This (or a motivic equivalent) occurs at the beginning of 45 out of the 65 four-bar phrases that comprise the solo. A similar effect can be provided by the omission of certain beats within a phrase, which arguably outlines the same point as a bass note when used in the right circumstance. It is seen that after so many occurrences of a similar shaped line – long note followed by crotchet based melodic idea – that a rest in the same place as an accentuation of that line. The long note is still felt with equal strength – whether it is there or not – once the ear expects it.

Figure 13: Motivic demonstration of self-accompaniment (*Long Ago and Far Away*, duo context)

Figure 13, an example from chorus six of the solo, demonstrates Despite Grenadier omitting the bass note at the beginning of bar 65, there’s no doubt about the beginning of the phrase. This omission of notes becomes more common in the later choruses, which makes it seem almost like a development of the overall idea of the solo.

Figure 14: Triplet groupings and manipulation of an idea (*Long Ago and Far Away*, duo context)

Figure 14 demonstrates an idea in the third chorus that Grenadier begins, and then develops. The entire phrase is constructed around the minim triplet phrase, and the core idea is the bracketed four-note phrases above. This ascending pattern is begun on beat one of the bar, and the mirroring phrase follows at the end of the four-bar section, this time anticipated by a minim triplet beat. Although this is functionally the same series of notes grouped in a similar rhythm, the melodic stresses of the line results in it targeting different downbeats, and leading the listener to different conclusion points. This technique has been defined as an accentual shift in a 2015 Masters thesis (Sabin).

## Findings from trio transcriptions

### Manipulation of triplet groupings

Grenadier's solo on the trio version of *All the Things You Are* is still largely tied to the fundamental 7/4 clave discussed in Figure 2. Of particular note however is that there are several more instances of departure than in the duo setting, with some phrases even reversing the clave or eschewing it completely. One of the main rhythmic features of this trio solo is the advanced melodic manipulation of triplet groupings, within the clave phrasing. On top of the melodic consistency lent to these lines by consistent rhythms, the subdivisions Grenadier has chosen also sound very similar in terms of their temporal length (at this tempo the difference is relatively imperceptible), giving the illusion of a series of equally spaced notes (Figure 15). This is an effective improvisational device because it allows Grenadier to develop a freer sounding approach to rhythm in this odd meter whilst maintaining connection to the clave through familiar rhythms.

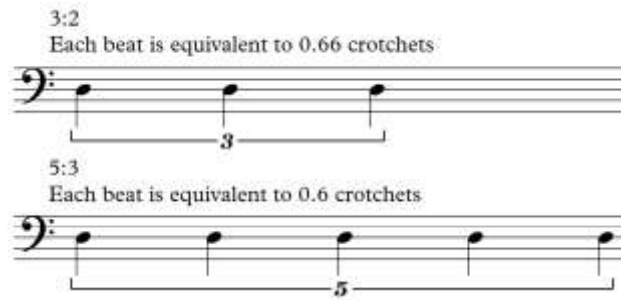


Figure 15: Mathematic demonstration of closeness of beat-lengths

Figure 16 below is an example of this melodic manipulation within and across different tuplet groupings. The groupings of four notes form a strong melodic statement through sequencing, and the unusual resulting stresses serve to “trick” the listener’s ear, having a rhythmically disorienting effect.



Figure 16: Groupings of 4 across tuplet rhythms (*All the Things You Are*, trio context)

While this same tuplet pattern occurs in the duo version, the treatment of it there is more prescriptive – the harmonic shape usually follows the tuplet groupings themselves. This same four-note pattern appears later in the solo as well, now extended as part of a two-bar phrase, shown below in Figure 17:



Figure 17: Groupings of four in tuplets across two bars (*All the Things You Are*, trio context)

While this phrase seems more complex than others on the surface, Grenadier has constructed it using familiar rhythms based on major divisions that still fall within the clave – the complexity comes instead from the manipulation of the melodic shape within the phrase.

This same jump in complexity of tuplet treatment is apparent for *Long Ago and Far Away* in this context: instead of the solo being built from the crotchet pulse, this time the majority of

Grenadier's content comes from manipulation of triplet subdivisions. Figure 18 provides two simple examples of this idea, occurring in the first (1-8) and last (25-32) eight bars of the solo's first chorus.

Figure 18: Prevalence of triplets in transcription (*Long Ago and Far Away*, trio context)

In fact, Grenadier favours the minim triplet subdivision as the primary pulse for the duration of his eight chorus solo. The manipulation of this subdivision serves to abstract his rhythmic ideas away from the over-riding 4/4 pulse, creating new layers of rhythmic interest and tension.

Later in the solo, Grenadier begins introducing tuplet motifs and then re-presenting them in a different rhythmic context using the idea of accentual shifts; in these instances favouring longer duration lines. Figure 19 gives this example within the bracketed four-note phrases. The initial phrase is presented in bar 97, and then the same melodic statement is anticipated very slightly in bar 102 of the figure.

Figure 19: Accentual shifts of triplet rhythms (*Long Ago and Far Away*, trio context)

This octave-based phrase is then reiterated several bars later (Figure 20).

Figure 20 shows two staves of music in bass clef. The first staff starts at bar 113 and contains the following chords: G<sup>6</sup>, Em<sup>7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>maj7</sup>, Em<sup>7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, and D<sup>7</sup>. The second staff starts at bar 117 and contains the following chords: G<sup>6</sup>, Em<sup>7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>6</sup>, E<sup>7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, and D<sup>7</sup>. Both staves feature eighth-note triplets and are connected by a brace across the first staff.

Figure 20: Extension of triplet phrasing (*Long Ago and Far Away*, trio context)

At bar 113, this phrase has now doubled in length from a four-note to an eight-note phrase, and the starting point has shifted again. This continual shifting of melodic material is another rhythmically disorienting technique due to the strength of the repeated patterns and their changing interactions with the strong beats of the bar. By changing the length of these phrases or the point that they fall in a bar or phrase, Grenadier is subverting the listener's aural expectations, creating a flow of tension and release. Included below in Figure 21 are a few shorter examples of other instances of triplet manipulation.

Figure 21 shows three staves of music in bass clef. The first staff starts at bar 201 and is labeled 'Groupings of 2:'. It contains the following chords: B<sup>b6</sup>, G<sup>m7</sup>, Cm<sup>7</sup>, F<sup>7</sup>, B<sup>b</sup>maj<sup>7</sup>, and A<sup>7</sup>. The second staff starts at bar 217 and is labeled 'Groupings of 4:'. It contains the following chords: D<sup>m7</sup>, G<sup>7</sup>, C<sup>maj7</sup>, C<sup>m6</sup>, and F<sup>7</sup>. The third staff starts at bar 221 and contains the following chords: G<sup>6</sup>/B, B<sup>b</sup>o<sup>7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>6</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, and D<sup>7</sup>. The notation includes various triplet groupings and slurs.

Figure 21: Supplementary examples of triplet manipulation (*Long Ago and Far Away*, trio context)

## Phrase length

The trio version *All the Things You Are* features several multi-bar phrases, which can be understood for the purposes of this analysis to be phrases that would feel rhythmically or harmonically incomplete if bisected by an intervening bar line.



Figure 22: Two-bar phrase connected with hemiola (*All the Things You Are*, trio context)

In Figure 22, Grenadier's phrase is reliant on the repetition of a rhythmic grouping across the bar line. The rhythmic motif (bracketed) beginning on the C#m7 is made up of a repeating figure three quavers in length, which carries into the following bar. This results in the rhythm of the second bar of this phrase feeling 'inverted' in comparison to the four-plus-three clave and results in the strong harmonic resolution landing on beat four, in anticipation of the chord change. The hemiola is similar to that demonstrated in the instructional book *Introduction to Polyrhythms*, where dotted crotchet rhythms are discussed in detail (Hoenig & Weidenmueller, 2009).



Figure 23: Two-bar phrase connected with melodic line (*All the Things You Are*, trio context)

Figure 23 presents another example of a two-bar phrase. Instead of being connected by a recurring rhythmic figure, this phrase is defined by the descending melodic contour of the line, which leads strongly towards the resolution on beat 5 of bar 12.

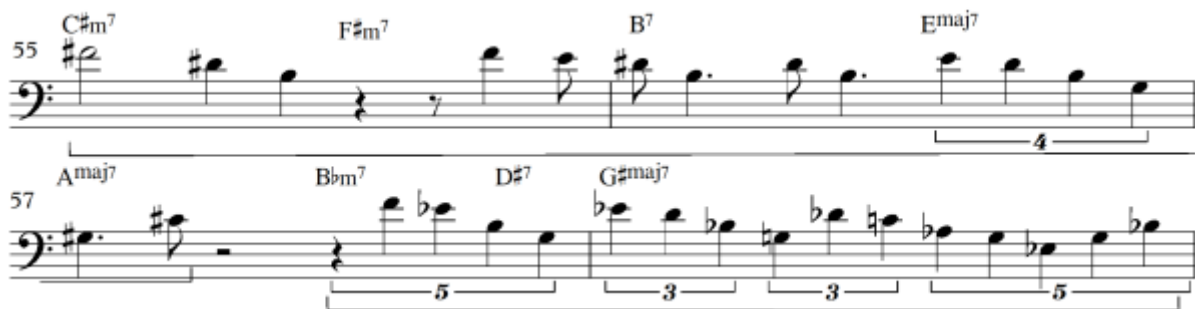


Figure 24: Consecutive multi-bar phrases (*All the Things You Are*, trio context)

Further, in Figure 24 Grenadier plays two consecutive multi-bar phrases: these phrases are interrelated, as the melodic grouping of notes in bar 55 and 56 directly correlates to the shape of the lengthy triplet phrase that commences at the end of bar 57.

*Long Ago and Far Away* also features many multi-bar phrases. In contrast with the duo performance, these phrases do not seem directly tied to the form as they begin in less common places and are sustained for unusual durations (though the top of the form is still always clearly defined).

The first few choruses largely remain grouped in four- or eight-bar sections, but by the end of the third chorus Grenadier begins to depart from this convention.

Figure 25 shows three musical phrases in bass clef. The first phrase (bars 81-84) starts with a G<sup>6</sup> chord and includes chords Em<sup>7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>maj7</sup>, Em<sup>7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, and D<sup>7</sup>. The second phrase (bars 85-88) starts with a G<sup>6</sup> chord and includes chords Em<sup>7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>6</sup>, E<sup>7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, and D<sup>7</sup>. The third phrase (bars 89-92) starts with a Dm<sup>7</sup> chord and includes chords G<sup>7</sup>, C<sup>maj7</sup>, Cm<sup>6</sup>, and F<sup>7</sup>. Each phrase is marked with a '3' and a bracket, indicating a triplet. Dashed lines delineate the phrases.

Figure 25: Example of odd phrase length (*Long Ago and Far Away*, trio context)

Figure 25 displays three musical phrases, which have been delineated by dashed lines. As shown in the figure, these phrases do not begin in expected places, as they are broken up into respectively a five-bar phrase, a three-and-a-half-bar phrase, and then a third phrase beginning on beat three of bar 89, which continues onto the next system of music. Figure 26 provides another example of this uncommon phrase length.

Figure 26 shows two musical phrases in bass clef. The first phrase (bars 121-124) starts with a Dm<sup>7</sup> chord and includes chords G<sup>7</sup>, C<sup>maj7</sup>, Cm<sup>6</sup>, and F<sup>7</sup>. The second phrase (bars 125-128) starts with a G<sup>6</sup>/B chord and includes chords Bb<sup>o7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>6</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, and D<sup>7</sup>. Each phrase is marked with a '3' and a bracket, indicating a triplet. Dashed lines delineate the phrases.

Figure 26: Supporting example of odd phrase length (*Long Ago and Far Away*, trio context)

Again, this example has been marked with dotted lines to denote the start and end point of the phrases, with the focus of this figure being the five-and-a-half bar phrase beginning on beat three of bar 121.

### Adherence to bar lines and form

Similar to the duo performances, Grenadier’s tendency in both of the trio transcriptions is to strongly outline the top of each form. However, in this context there are many more phrases that tie across bar lines and obscure the form to varying degrees within each chorus.

*All the Things You Are* has several instances of an obscured bar line within a phrase, with eleven occurrences total of either a rest or a tied note on beat one, compared to only one in the duo setting. Grenadier talks about omission of beat one in his interview for Sam Trapchak’s master’s thesis (2009, p. 53), where he says “the simplest way (to open up the time) is to not play beat one”. Grenadier more often opens this up with a rest on beat one, in preference to a note tied across bars, which gives a different definition to the line.



Figure 27: Initial occurrences of omission of beat one (*All the Things You Are*, trio context)

The example shown in Figure 27 demonstrates this concept: the omission of beat one at bar 13 and the tied note from bar 14 into bar 15 create this more open feeling Grenadier describes, whilst still allowing him to access familiar clave-based rhythms.



Figure 28: More complex instances of beat one omission, non-clave derivative (*All the Things You Are*, trio context)

Figure 28 demonstrates a more obscure phrase that isn’t directly tied into the four-plus-three clave. This sudden departure in the accentuation of the clave, combined with a rest on beat one results in an unexpected phrase when compared to the rest of the solo.

Likewise, *Long Ago and Far Away* clearly features more instances of departure from beat one than the duo version. Almost the entire solo is constructed around the minim triplet subdivision and the ways in which Grenadier can use that to distort the audience’s perception of the bar line and



the form. There are entire multi-bar phrases that don't play a downbeat, such as the six-bar phrase beginning in the middle of bar 218, demonstrated below in Figure 29:

The figure shows three systems of musical notation for bass guitar. Each system consists of a staff with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The notes are grouped into displaced minims triplets, starting on the third beat of each bar. Above the notes are chord symbols: Dm7, G7, Cmaj7, Cm6, F7 in the first system; G6/B, Bb9, Am7, D7, G6, Am7, D7 in the second system; and G6, Em7, Am7, D7, G6, E7, Am7, D7 in the third system, which is labeled 'Chorus 8'. Brackets with the number '3' are placed under each triplet.

Figure 29: Multi-bar phrase omitting beat one (*Long Ago and Far Away*, trio context)

This figure demonstrates extended phrases that float across multiple bar lines through the use of displaced tuplets. Unlike *All the Things You Are*, which has more rests than tied notes on beat one, *Long Ago and Far Away* has phrases which by their very nature cross over bar lines. Grenadier's use of displaced minims triplets in Figure 29 is a good example of this: as the phrase begins on beat three of the bar, the cyclic rhythm creates a six-bar period of sustained rhythmic tension. Grenadier eventually resolves the line by breaking the cycle to hit the downbeat of Chorus 8 (bar 225) with a tonic, again demonstrating his preference for outlining the top of the form strongly.

Crotchet triplets tied across barlines:

Minim triplets off beat 3:

Figure 30: Further example of phrasing across the bar line (*Long Ago and Far Away*, trio version)

Similar downbeat obfuscation can be seen in many other places in the transcription, demonstrated in Figure 30. The first example shown utilises more crotchet triplet phrasing: this doesn't obscure the one of each bar, instead using ties and anticipations to keep its position clear without explicitly stating it. The lines themselves resemble typical swing rhythmic phrasing performed in half-time. Grenadier states that feeling wider pulses in this way is indeed a conscious decision in tunes at a fast tempo: "I'm not going to play eighth notes – I mean I *can't* play eighth notes, I can't play triplets that fast – so what do I do? I do rhythmic permutations of it that are a slower tempo" (Personal communication, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016). This has been exemplified in Figure 31, which has an equivalent conversion of the first example of Figure 30 if performed at half-tempo.

Swung

Figure 31: Apparent phrasing of Figure 29 in half-time

However, the second example in Figure 30 uses the same displaced minim triplet ideas as in Figure 29. The sustained use of offbeat triplet figures is disorienting, and obscures the downbeat much more than the first example.

This is not to say that Grenadier obscures bar lines or form for the entire solo. This technique is only used in isolated choruses, featuring heavily in both Chorus 4 and 8, and sparingly in

the endings of Chorus 3 and 7, setting up the motif for the next chorus of solo. For the rest of the solo, downbeats are far more regular, and rhythms tend to be less obscure.

Chorus 3

65 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>maj7</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

69 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> E<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

Figure 32: Example of non-obscured phrasing (*Long Ago and Far Away*, trio context)

## Chapter 3: Comparative Discussion and Summary of Results

This section provides a tabled summary on the usage of the identified thematic devices in the solos, and then will contrast the apparent approaches in the two ensemble contexts through discussion of the empirical transcriptions findings and Larry Grenadier’s interview responses.

Table 1: Comparative table of devices

Device/Aspect of performance	Duo	Trio
<b>Presence of clave/fundamental subdivision</b>	Both duo solos strongly <b>adhere to their fundamental subdivision</b> : <i>All the Things You Are</i> is phrased almost exclusively around the four-plus-three clave, whilst <i>Long Ago and Far Away</i> is almost a walking bassline for the majority. Both of these solos are more <b>ordered</b> and slightly <b>sparser</b> than the trio equivalents.	A clave or common subdivision is still present, but is not referenced to the same prescriptive degree. Solos are <b>denser</b> and feature <b>more complex</b> presentation of rhythms.
<b>Phrase length</b>	Features a <b>more ordered</b> approach to phrase length, largely based on form-lengths and common bar divisions. <i>Long Ago and Far Away</i> is composed of many separate four-bar phrases, and <i>All the Things</i> – barring one instance – is entirely made up of one-bar phrases.	Both of the trio versions feature <b>longer phrases</b> . <i>All the Things</i> features many two-bar phrases, and <i>Long Ago and Far Away</i> has phrase length that is often independent of form length, featuring many extended and odd-length phrases, resulting in a more <b>complex</b> solo.
<b>Manipulation of tuplet groupings</b>	Tuplet groupings occur in both of these transcriptions in a largely <b>simple</b> fashion. Where they occur, they’re often presented in the groupings that are dictated by the tuplets themselves (for example: triplets grouped in three, quintuplets in five) . <i>Long Ago and Far Away</i> has one chorus that makes a	Both trio transcriptions feature far more <b>complex</b> treatment of tuplets. Instead of phrasing them with their natural divisions, Grenadier disguises them with melodic shapes that accent uncommon points of the tuplets, and thus the meter.

	feature of triplet phrasing, and <i>All the Things</i> uses triplets as a melodic technique to somewhat disguise the clave.	There are examples in both transcriptions of him playing groupings of four across different triplet subdivisions.
<b>Adherence to bar lines and form</b>	There are very few instances of phrases obscuring bar lines in either of these transcriptions. <b>Form is also always kept clear</b> , especially the top of each form, but section-to-section it is also harmonically and rhythmically obvious. The form is presented in a very <b>ordered</b> fashion.	Many more instances of phrases crossing through bar lines, and even through sections of the form (although the first bar of each form is always outlined clearly). Because of the nature of the triplet groupings Grenadier begins playing around with – especially in <i>Long Ago and Far Away</i> – there are no natural downbeat resolution points, and many bars can go by without a downbeat being played. It gives the overall solo a more <b>disordered</b> feeling than that of the duo version.

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### Overview of harmonic approach

Grenadier’s overall harmonic approach is relatively consistent over the four transcriptions and – similar to his approach to phrasing – largely matches with his concept of a bass solo being emergent from a bassline. The main aspects of this approach can be broken into a few categories. The harmonic content of the solo is all largely “inside”, mostly conforming to standard jazz conventions of chord-tones and chromatic passing notes. Much of his improvisational style is comprised of arpeggiated material based on the fundamental harmonic movement of the tune, or repeated motifs that move through the chord changes. Grenadier talking about this approach in relation to *Long Ago and Far Away*:

Even though the changes are moving, there is a kind of, tonic centre that is very clear in that tune, and then the bridge goes to a new key and a new tonic place, and it kind of sits in it for more than a bar or two at a time, so that helps, you know? I can kind of play through the changes a bit more, and have a melodic or rhythmic motif that is long, and thinking of the changes as **one sound** [emphasis

added] a bit. On *All the Things* it's a bit trickier, but still you could think a couple of bars at a time. (Personal communication, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016)

These references to a “tonic place” and “one sound” suggest that Grenadier thinks of harmony in larger increments, in much the same way that he thinks of phrase lengths and time-keeping. It's less about “vertical” playing of the harmony (picking out every chord tone from every chord) and instead playing horizontally through the tune, making reference to the chords, but not sacrificing melodic strength in order to achieve this.

He also discusses his approach to harmonic content, and the way in which he conceives of outlining harmony where necessary:

The bass is tricky as a solo instrument... A lot of times the harmonic accompaniment is sparse, or not there at all so we kind of have to be aware of little guide posts – not necessarily for us, but for everybody else. Like, “here we are”. That's why arpeggiated lines are really helpful on the bass, because it can really clearly outline “here's the chord that I'm on right now”, because if you just play a melodic idea it might not really give the flavour completely of the chord (Personal communication, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016)

As discussed earlier, there is a strong tendency towards self-accompaniment evident across all transcriptions, allowing Grenadier to fulfil some of the accompaniment role of the bass (often lacking in a bass solo, as Grenadier himself notes) whilst simultaneously developing his improvised ideas.

All three of these trends tie directly into Grenadier's concept of both bass-line and bass-solo being non-distinct entities. As has been emergent from the interview, he feels that a ‘bass solo’ is a time for the instrument to step to the front of the dialogue more than it was before, but that it's impractical to believe that a bass solo can follow the same approach as a lead-instrument solo due to range, technical limitations, and the inherent absence of a rhythm section “bed” to accompany the improvisation.

### Other general tendencies

There are several other identified tendencies in Grenadier's solos:

- Grenadier outlines the top of every form very strongly. No matter what the overall complexity of the solo may be, this is the one bar that Grenadier **never** distorts. This is an important distinction, as despite being the soloist, he is also always aware of the necessity of clarity and strength in form.

- Another device which is readily observed is that of Grenadier's tendency to introduce a thematic motif within the last several bars of a chorus, that then goes on to be a large part of the following chorus' motivic material.

## Discussion of findings

The aim of this research has been to explore how the change between piano trio and duo contexts might affect Grenadier's performance practices, As was presented earlier in Chapter 2: Analysis, there are many similar techniques employed by Grenadier in these two sets of recordings, but it is the difference in the way in which he uses them – specifically in terms of relative complexity – that sets them apart and demonstrates an observable difference in approach. The duo versions feature a simpler form of soloing, closely adhering to his philosophy of a blurred line between bass solo and bassline. Simple in this instance does not refer to easy, instead referring to a more foundational approach to soloing that attempts to allow expressive freedom whilst compensating for the missing voice of the drums in the ensemble. Contrastingly, the extra voice and rhythmic stimulus provided by the addition of Rossy to the lineup results in a noticeable increase in the complexity of Grenadier's improvisation, allowing him to take more chances with his approach to phrase length, adherence to subdivision, manipulation of tuplet groupings, and subverting conventional form-based phrasing.

Grenadier's contribution to the discussion of these findings adds invaluable context to this apparent shift, confirming that while the specific **ensemble context** doesn't necessarily affect his approach to playing, the **individuals** that he is playing with affect him greatly. He says:

I think that what my concern is less of what instruments are there; more so my focus is *who* is playing those instruments... It's all about the personalities of the people playing... like one drummer has one thing, and the next drummer comes in and it'll be a whole other set of issues. (Personal communication, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016)

He expresses similar feelings when discussing a drumless context such as piano duo:

[The piano duo] is one musical environment I think that the bass player has to somehow consider when they're playing, because there's not that person to react to, but there's also one less rhythmic instrument which is *super* important to what we do as jazz musicians... I mean, it's funny, these things that we're talking about are not things that I'm actually **consciously thinking about in the moment or even before the gig. It kind of goes back to that balance thing, of sonic balance. While I'm playing, I'm hearing it differently than if there was a drummer, so I'm responding and reacting in the moment to that** [emphasis added]. (Personal communication, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016)

These two pertinent responses from Grenadier provide a very succinct summary on both who he is as a musician, and also how he thinks about playing. They confirm that yes, ensemble context **does** change his approach: however, this is not because of a pre-conceived idea or trying to fit into some archetype, but rather because different ensembles present different personalities and situations to consider, and that this **subconsciously** affects the decisions he makes in the act of performance. Grenadier's musical identity is driven by the idea of organic in-the-moment decision making rather than pre-planning his approach, and so it is according to his sensibilities that these adjustments are automatically made in his improvising in the different contexts. Grenadier articulates this sentiment, and his deep respect for the somewhat mystical nature of improvisation, saying:

That's why it's hard for me to talk or even teach improvisation, because it's something else going on, and I'm a little hesitant to go too deep into it, because I don't want to mess up that part of it... You know, it's a bit of being scared of over-analysing anything, or being so prepared that I'm not in the moment, or not reacting to the people I'm playing with. (Personal communication, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016)

This is the nature of his playing that I have such a deep appreciation for: that he achieves such individuality of concept and sound while still retaining the fundamental components that are important to the role of a bassist – providing stability, clarity, and a balance to the music – in both an accompaniment and soloist capacity.

## Conclusion

This study has determined that aspects of Larry Grenadier's approach to improvising do change between the duo and trio ensemble contexts in the performances examined. This conclusion has been reached through a combination of analysis of the four musical transcriptions and a personal interview with Grenadier on his own thoughts and philosophies about being an improvising musician. Whilst his harmonic approach, treatment of form, and general rhythmic language remain consistent regardless of context, his tendency in the duo setting is to play more foundationally, simplifying his approach to tuplet rhythms, phrase lengths within the form of a song, and outlining bar lines with much greater clarity. Grenadier himself maintains that this is not a conscious decision, but that inevitably his musical sensibilities dictate a differing approach based on the change in ensemble context. It can be inferred that the absence of a drummer – or at least the absence of Jorge Rossy – results in Grenadier's perception of the additional sonic space available to the ensemble to lead his ear towards a more foundational approach.



Overall this study has given me a substantial amount to think about in regards to my own playing. Even more than the specific devices presented, Grenadier's commitment to facing each musical situation with an open ear and with no presumptions of what is required of him. For me, it has always been difficult to separate my musical decisions from my presumptions of what each situation **requires**, and to hear the way in which this elite musician approaches this dilemma has really informed the way in which I will consider it in the future. As this approach is so holistic, it can be applied to any musician in any setting, anywhere, with equal relevance.

Given the limited scope of this project, there is plenty of room for further study in this field. A more in-depth examination of Grenadier's interactions within the ensemble could attempt to determine the level of personal autonomy held by each member of the trio and duo, and whether or not there are any clear examples of reliance on one or more member of the band. A further harmonic analysis of Brad Mehldau's accompaniment underneath Grenadier's solo, and/or vice versa, could lead to discoveries about how these musicians lead each other harmonically in an improvised setting. Also for further consideration would be a more global study on Grenadier's improvisations, investigating him within different ensembles of varying sizes, or examining how his approach has changed over time.

Larry Grenadier is a widely acclaimed and yet puzzlingly under-researched contemporary jazz musician. The work that he and the Brad Mehldau trio have been doing for the last 22 years is greatly inspiring for me, and I am glad that I have been able to examine his musicianship on a much deeper level. I am sure that the information gleaned from this study will be just as interesting and inspiring to others as it has been to me.

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# Long Ago and Far Away Duo Transc.

Uptempo Swing

(Starts 9:25)

Jerome Kern/Larry Grenadier

Chorus 1

5

9

13

17

21

25

29

Chorus 2

33

37

2 B<sup>b</sup>6 Gm<sup>7</sup> Cm<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> B<sup>b</sup>maj<sup>7</sup> A<sup>7</sup>

41

45 D<sup>m</sup>maj<sup>7</sup> Bm<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

49 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>m</sup>maj<sup>7</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

53 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> E<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

57 Dm<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>m</sup>maj<sup>7</sup> Cm<sup>6</sup> F<sup>7</sup>

61 G<sup>6</sup>/B B<sup>b</sup>o<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

Chorus 3

65 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>m</sup>maj<sup>7</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

69 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> E<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

73 B<sup>b</sup>6 G<sup>m</sup>maj<sup>7</sup> Cm<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> B<sup>b</sup>maj<sup>7</sup> A<sup>7</sup>

77 D<sup>m</sup>maj<sup>7</sup> Bm<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

81 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>m</sup>maj<sup>7</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

85 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> E<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> 3

89 Dm<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> Cmaj<sup>7</sup> Cm<sup>6</sup> F<sup>7</sup>  
 G<sup>6</sup>/B B<sup>b</sup>o<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

93

Chorus 4

97 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> E<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

101 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> E<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

105 B<sup>b</sup>6 Gm<sup>7</sup> Cm<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> B<sup>b</sup>maj<sup>7</sup> A<sup>7</sup>

109 Dmaj<sup>7</sup> Bm<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

113 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> Cmaj<sup>7</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

117 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> E<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

121 Dm<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> Cmaj<sup>7</sup> Cm<sup>6</sup> F<sup>7</sup>

125 G<sup>6</sup>/B B<sup>b</sup>o<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

4

Chorus 5

129 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> E<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

133 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> E<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

137 B<sup>b</sup>6 Gm<sup>7</sup> Cm<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> B<sup>b</sup>maj<sup>7</sup> A<sup>7</sup>

141 D<sup>m</sup>maj<sup>7</sup> Bm<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

145 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>m</sup>maj<sup>7</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

149 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> E<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

153 D<sup>m</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>m</sup>maj<sup>7</sup> C<sup>m</sup>6 F<sup>7</sup>

157 G<sup>6</sup>/B B<sup>b</sup>9<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

Chorus 6

161 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> E<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

165 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> E<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

169 B<sup>b</sup>6 Gm<sup>7</sup> Cm<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> B<sup>b</sup>maj<sup>7</sup> A<sup>7</sup>

173 Dmaj7 Bm7 Am7 D7 5

177 G6 Em7 Am7 D7 Gmaj7 Em7 Am7 D7

181 G6 Em7 Am7 D7 G6 E7 Am7 D7

185 Dm7 G7 Cmaj7 Cm6 F7

189 G6/B Bb07 Am7 D7 G6 Am7 D7

Chorus 7  
193 G6 Em7 Am7 D7 G6 E7 Am7 D7

197 G6 Em7 Am7 D7 G6 E7 Am7 D7

201 Bb6 Gm7 Cm7 F7 Bbmaj7 A7

205 Dmaj7 Bm7 Am7 D7

209 G6 Em7 Am7 D7 Gmaj7 Em7 Am7 D7

213 G6 Em7 Am7 D7 G6 E7 Am7 D7

6

217  $Dm^7$   $G^7$   $C^{maj7}$   $Cm^6$   $F^7$

221  $G^6/B$   $B^{\flat 07}$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^6$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

**Chorus 8**

225  $G^6$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^6$   $E^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

229  $G^6$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^6$   $E^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

233  $Dm^7$   $G^7$   $C^{maj7}$   $Cm^6$   $F^7$

237  $G^6/B$   $B^{\flat 07}$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^6$   $Am^7$   $D^7$



## Appendix B: Long Ago and Far Away Trio Transcription

### Long Ago And Far Away Trio transc.

Uptempo Swing

(Starts 3:34)

Jerome Kern/Larry Grenadier

Chorus 1

Chorus 1 musical notation (measures 1-28). The key signature is one sharp (F#). The notation is in bass clef with a 3/4 time signature. It features a series of chords and triplets. The chords are: G<sup>6</sup>, Em<sup>7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>maj7</sup>, Em<sup>7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>6</sup>, Em<sup>7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, B<sup>b6</sup>, G<sup>m7</sup>, Cm<sup>7</sup>, F<sup>7</sup>, B<sup>bmaj7</sup>, A<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>maj7</sup>, B<sup>m7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>6</sup>, Em<sup>7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>maj7</sup>, Em<sup>7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>6</sup>, Em<sup>7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>6</sup>, E<sup>7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>m7</sup>, G<sup>7</sup>, C<sup>maj7</sup>, C<sup>m6</sup>, F<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>6</sup>/B, B<sup>b07</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>6</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>.

Chorus 2

Chorus 2 musical notation (measures 29-36). The key signature is one sharp (F#). The notation is in bass clef with a 3/4 time signature. It features a series of chords and triplets. The chords are: G<sup>6</sup>, Em<sup>7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>maj7</sup>, Em<sup>7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>6</sup>, Em<sup>7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>6</sup>, E<sup>7</sup>, Am<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>.

2

41  $B\flat^6$   $Gm^7$   $Cm^7$   $F^7$   $B\flat^{maj7}$   $A^7$

45  $D^{maj7}$   $Bm^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

49  $G^6$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^{maj7}$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

53  $G^6$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^6$   $E^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

57  $Dm^7$   $G^7$   $C^{maj7}$   $Cm^6$   $F^7$

61  $G^6/B$   $B\flat^{o7}$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^6$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

Chorus 3

65  $G^6$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^{maj7}$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

69  $G^6$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^6$   $E^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

73  $B\flat^6$   $Gm^7$   $Cm^7$   $F^7$   $B\flat^{maj7}$   $A^7$

77  $D^{maj7}$   $Bm^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

81  $G^6$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^{maj7}$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

85 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> E<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

89 Dm<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>maj7</sup> Cm<sup>6</sup> F<sup>7</sup>

93 G<sup>6</sup>/B B<sup>b</sup>o<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

Chorus 4

97 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>maj7</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

101 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> E<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

105 B<sup>b</sup>6 Gm<sup>7</sup> Cm<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> B<sup>b</sup>maj<sup>7</sup> A<sup>7</sup>

109 D<sup>maj7</sup> Bm<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

113 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>maj7</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

117 G<sup>6</sup> Em<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> E<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

121 Dm<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>maj7</sup> Cm<sup>6</sup> F<sup>7</sup>

125 G<sup>6</sup>/B B<sup>b</sup>o<sup>7</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>6</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

4 Chorus 5

129  $G^6$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^{maj7}$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

133  $G^6$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^6$   $E^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

137  $Bb^6$   $Gm^7$   $Cm^7$   $F^7$   $Bb^{maj7}$   $A^7$

141  $D^{maj7}$   $Bm^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $Gmb^7$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

145  $G^6$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^6$   $E^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

149  $G^6$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^6$   $E^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

153  $Dm^7$   $G^7$   $C^{maj7}$   $Cm^6$   $F^7$

157  $G^6/B$   $Bb^{o7}$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^6$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

Chorus 6

161  $G^6$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^6$   $E^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

165  $G^6$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^6$   $E^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

169  $Bb^6$   $Gm^7$   $Cm^7$   $F^7$   $Bb^{maj7}$   $A^7$

173 *Dmaj7* *Bm7* *Am7* *D7* 5

177 *G6* *Em7* *Am7* *D7* *Gmaj7* *Em7* *Am7* *D7*

181 *G6* *Em7* *Am7* *D7* *G6* *E7* *Am7* *D7*

185 *Dm7* *G7* *Cmaj7* *Cm6* *F7*

189 *G6/B* *Bb7* *Am7* *D7* *G6* *Am7* *D7*

**Chorus 7**

193 *G6* *Em7* *Am7* *D7* *G6* *E7* *Am7* *D7*

197 *G6* *Em7* *Am7* *D7* *G6* *E7* *Am7* *D7*

201 *Bb6* *Gm7* *Cm7* *F7* *Bbmaj7* *A7*

205 *Dmaj7* *Bm7* *Am7* *D7*

209 *G6* *Em7* *Am7* *D7* *Gmaj7* *Em7* *Am7* *D7*

213 *G6* *Em7* *Am7* *D7* *G6* *E7* *Am7* *D7*

6

217  $Dm^7$   $G^7$   $C^{maj7}$   $Cm^6$   $F^7$

221  $G^6/B$   $Bb^{o7}$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^6$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

**Chorus 8**

225  $G^6$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^6$   $E^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

229  $G^6$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^6$   $E^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

233  $Bb^6$   $Gm^7$   $Cm^7$   $F^7$   $Bb^{maj7}$   $A^7$

237  $D^{maj7}$   $Bm^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

241  $G^6$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^{maj7}$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

245  $G^6$   $Em^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^6$   $E^7$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

249  $Dm^7$   $G^7$   $C^{maj7}$   $Cm^6$   $F^7$

253  $G^6/B$   $Bb^{o7}$   $Am^7$   $D^7$   $G^6$   $Am^7$   $D^7$

## Appendix C: All the Things You Are Duo Transcription

### All The Things You Are Duo Transcription

Transc. Alistair Peel

Larry Grenadier

**Chorus 1**

Chorus 1

Chords: C#m7, F#m7, B7, Emaj7, Amaj7, Bbm7, Eb7, Abmaj7, G#m7, C#m7, F#7, Bmaj7, Emaj7, Fm7, Bb7, Ebmaj7, Fm7, Bb7, Ebmaj7, D#7, G7(b9), Cmaj7, G#7(b13), C#m7, F#m7, B7, Emaj7, Amaj7, Am(maj7), G#m7, G07, F#m7, B7, Emaj7, D#7, G#7(b9)

**Chorus 2** Pushing.....

Chorus 2 Pushing.....

Chords: C#m7, F#m7, B7, Emaj7, Amaj7, Bbm7, Eb7, Abmaj7, G#m7, C#m7, F#7, Bmaj7, Emaj7, Fm7, Bb7, Ebmaj7, Fm7, Bb7, Ebmaj7, D#7, G7(b9), Cmaj7, G#7(b13), C#m7, F#m7, B7, Emaj7, Amaj7, Am(maj7), G#m7, G07

2

35 F#m7 B7 Emaj7 D#o7 G#7(b9)

Chorus 3 C#m7 F#m7 B7 Emaj7 Amaj7 Bbm7 Eb7 Abmaj7

37 G#m7 C#m7 F#7 Bmaj7 Emaj7 Fm7 Bb7 Ebmaj7

41 Fm7 Bb7 Ebmaj7 D#o7 G7(b9) Cmaj7 G#7(b13)

45 C#m7 F#m7 B7 Emaj7 Amaj7 Am(maj7) G#m7 G#o7

53 F#m7 B7 Emaj7 D#o7 G#7(b9)



## Appendix D: All the Things You Are Trio Transcription

### All The Things You Are Trio Transcription

Transc. Alistair Peel

Jerome Kern/Larry Grenadier

**Chorus 1**

The musical score is written in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 7/4. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 260. The score is divided into two choruses. Chorus 1 consists of 18 measures, and Chorus 2 consists of 4 measures. The notes are written on a single staff, and the chords are indicated above the notes. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and triplets.

Chorus 1:

- 1 C#m7
- 2 F#m7
- 3 B7
- 4 Emaj7
- 5 G#m7
- 6 C#m7
- 7 F#7
- 8 Bmaj7
- 9 Emaj7
- 10 Fm7
- 11 Bb7
- 12 Ebmaj7
- 13 D#7
- 14 G7(b9)
- 15 Cmaj7
- 16 G#7(b13)
- 17 C#m7
- 18 F#m7
- 19 B7
- 20 Emaj7
- 21 Amaj7
- 22 Am(maj7)
- 23 G#m7
- 24 G07
- 25 Fmaj7
- 26 B7
- 27 Emaj7
- 28 D#7
- 29 G#7(b9)

Chorus 2:

- 30 C#m7
- 31 F#m7
- 32 B7
- 33 Emaj7

2

21 A<sup>♯</sup>maj7 B<sup>♭</sup>m7 E<sup>♭</sup>7 A<sup>♭</sup>maj7

Musical staff for measure 21 in bass clef. It contains a whole note chord A<sup>♯</sup>maj7, followed by a triplet of eighth notes (B<sup>♭</sup>, C, D) and a quintuplet of eighth notes (E, F, G, A, B). The staff ends with a whole note chord A<sup>♭</sup>maj7.

23 G<sup>♯</sup>m7 C<sup>♯</sup>m7 F<sup>♯</sup>7 B<sup>♯</sup>maj7

Musical staff for measure 23 in bass clef. It contains a whole note chord G<sup>♯</sup>m7, followed by a whole note chord C<sup>♯</sup>m7, a whole note chord F<sup>♯</sup>7, and a whole note chord B<sup>♯</sup>maj7.

25 E<sup>♯</sup>maj7 F<sup>♯</sup>m7 B<sup>♭</sup>7 E<sup>♭</sup>maj7

Musical staff for measure 25 in bass clef. It contains a whole note chord E<sup>♯</sup>maj7, followed by a whole note chord F<sup>♯</sup>m7, a whole note chord B<sup>♭</sup>7, and a whole note chord E<sup>♭</sup>maj7.

27 F<sup>♯</sup>m7 B<sup>♭</sup>7 E<sup>♭</sup>maj7

Musical staff for measure 27 in bass clef. It contains a whole note chord F<sup>♯</sup>m7, followed by a whole note chord B<sup>♭</sup>7, and a whole note chord E<sup>♭</sup>maj7.

29 D<sup>♯</sup>7 G<sup>7</sup>(<sup>♭</sup>9) C<sup>♯</sup>maj7 G<sup>♯</sup>7(<sup>♭</sup>13)

Musical staff for measure 29 in bass clef. It contains a whole note chord D<sup>♯</sup>7, followed by a triplet of eighth notes (E, F, G), a whole note chord G<sup>7</sup>(<sup>♭</sup>9), a whole note chord C<sup>♯</sup>maj7, and a triplet of eighth notes (D, E, F) leading to a whole note chord G<sup>♯</sup>7(<sup>♭</sup>13).

31 C<sup>♯</sup>m7 F<sup>♯</sup>m7 B<sup>7</sup> E<sup>♯</sup>maj7

Musical staff for measure 31 in bass clef. It contains a whole note chord C<sup>♯</sup>m7, followed by a whole note chord F<sup>♯</sup>m7, a whole note chord B<sup>7</sup>, and a whole note chord E<sup>♯</sup>maj7.

33 A<sup>♯</sup>maj7 A<sup>♯</sup>m(maj7) G<sup>♯</sup>m7 G<sup>♯</sup>7

Musical staff for measure 33 in bass clef. It contains a whole note chord A<sup>♯</sup>maj7, followed by a whole note chord A<sup>♯</sup>m(maj7), a whole note chord G<sup>♯</sup>m7, and a whole note chord G<sup>♯</sup>7.

35 F<sup>♯</sup>maj7 B<sup>7</sup> E<sup>♯</sup>maj7 D<sup>♯</sup>7 G<sup>♯</sup>7(<sup>♭</sup>9)

Musical staff for measure 35 in bass clef. It contains a whole note chord F<sup>♯</sup>maj7, followed by a whole note chord B<sup>7</sup>, a whole note chord E<sup>♯</sup>maj7, a whole note chord D<sup>♯</sup>7, and a whole note chord G<sup>♯</sup>7(<sup>♭</sup>9).

Chorus 3

37 C<sup>♯</sup>m7 F<sup>♯</sup>m7 B<sup>7</sup> (Muted) E<sup>♯</sup>maj7

Musical staff for measure 37 in bass clef. It contains a whole note chord C<sup>♯</sup>m7, followed by a whole note chord F<sup>♯</sup>m7, a whole note chord B<sup>7</sup> (Muted), and a whole note chord E<sup>♯</sup>maj7.

39 A<sup>♯</sup>maj7 B<sup>♭</sup>m7 E<sup>♭</sup>7 A<sup>♭</sup>maj7

Musical staff for measure 39 in bass clef. It contains a whole note chord A<sup>♯</sup>maj7, followed by a whole note chord B<sup>♭</sup>m7, a whole note chord E<sup>♭</sup>7, and a whole note chord A<sup>♭</sup>maj7.

41 G<sup>♯</sup>m7 C<sup>♯</sup>m7 F<sup>♯</sup>7 B<sup>♯</sup>maj7

Musical staff for measure 41 in bass clef. It contains a triplet of eighth notes (G, A, B), a whole note chord G<sup>♯</sup>m7, a quintuplet of eighth notes (A, B, C, D, E), a whole note chord C<sup>♯</sup>m7, a whole note chord F<sup>♯</sup>7, and a whole note chord B<sup>♯</sup>maj7.

43 E<sup>maj7</sup> F<sup>m7</sup> B<sup>b7</sup> E<sup>bmaj7</sup> 3

45 F<sup>m7</sup> B<sup>b7</sup> E<sup>bmaj7</sup>

47 D<sup>o7</sup> G<sup>7(b9)</sup> C<sup>maj7</sup> G<sup>#7(b13)</sup>

49 C<sup>#m7</sup> F<sup>#m7</sup> B<sup>7</sup> E<sup>maj7</sup>

51 A<sup>maj7</sup> Am<sup>(maj7)</sup> G<sup>#m7</sup> G<sup>o7</sup>

53 F<sup>maj7</sup> B<sup>7</sup> E<sup>maj7</sup> D<sup>#o7</sup> G<sup>#7(b9)</sup>

Chorus 4

55 C<sup>#m7</sup> F<sup>#m7</sup> B<sup>7</sup> E<sup>maj7</sup>

57 A<sup>maj7</sup> B<sup>bm7</sup> D<sup>#7</sup> G<sup>#maj7</sup>

59 G<sup>#m7</sup> C<sup>#m7</sup> F<sup>#7</sup> B<sup>maj7</sup>

61 E<sup>maj7</sup> F<sup>m7</sup> B<sup>b7</sup> E<sup>bmaj7</sup>

63 Fm<sup>7</sup> Bb<sup>7</sup> Ebmaj<sup>7</sup>

65 D<sup>ø7</sup> G<sup>7(b9)</sup> Cmaj<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7(b13)</sup>

67 C<sup>#m7</sup> F<sup>#m7</sup> B<sup>7</sup> Emaj<sup>7</sup>

69 Amaj<sup>7</sup> Am(maj<sup>7</sup>) G<sup>#m7</sup> G<sup>ø7</sup>

71 Fmaj<sup>7</sup> B<sup>7</sup> Emaj<sup>7</sup> D<sup>ø7</sup> G<sup>7(b9)</sup>

## Appendix E: Transcript of Interview with Larry Grenadier

Recorded Tuesday the 18<sup>th</sup> of October

**AP = Alistair Peel (interviewer), LG = Larry Grenadier (subject)**

**AP:** The first one I've got here, is that I'd like to hear a little bit about your general mental process with improvising. Do you find that everything you do is a conscious decision? Or is it more reactive, more instinctual usually?

**LG:** Yeah, in general it's more the latter; it's more reactive, and instinctual. It's pretty hard for me to talk too much about improvisation, because to me even still it's a pretty mysterious thing. I mean, once you learn the tune, in the sense of knowing the changes, the form, the melody, and having played it a lot – you know just getting really comfortable with it enough so that you're not thinking bar to bar, you're not thinking "E minor, A minor" – you know, beyond that next point where we get to, only by knowing the tune really well... then we're just kind of hearing melodies and hearing the shape or the movement of the harmony. It's really just following the flow of that for me, and reacting to what the other people who are playing with me are doing, you know whether its just the drums are playing, or whether Brad's playing. It's really completely that, it's kind of the opposite of working something out and saying "at this point in my solo I'm going to do this"... which is just a disaster, and not really in the spirit of why we play jazz to begin with. So it's really like that for me, and in general for jazz musicians, but even maybe more for me in a sense like, I really don't think about modes or, that I'm going to play *this* scale over *that* chord. I know what the scale is of course, I know what the chord is. It's really to find the melodies that work throughout the harmony.

**AP:** Yeah okay, that's more what I was getting at, so you're not going "alright I'm going to go up and land on this flat 9<sup>th</sup>", you just kind of hear the sound of the line and follow that, because you know that it fits the chord

**LG:** Exactly, exactly. And it's more like colours, you know it's like a certain colour or a shape, I almost think of it geometrically... Like there's a shape to the line, and that it's trying to balance out the whole sound that's happening. It's one thing if you're playing by yourself, but once you add anybody else like a drummer or a piano player... Also – I think bass solos are kind of unique in that way, because it's not like a saxophone player that has this big carpet to play on top of... Bass doesn't always have that carpet, and also just sonically it's much lower pitched so it's hard to ride on top of everything. So it's almost like we're just continuing what we're doing when we're playing a bassline, in a way. We're having this dialogue, where maybe we're stepping to the front of the dialogue a bit more than we would when we're playing a bass line, but its really close. The wall between what's a

good bass line and what's a good solo is kind of transparent, it doesn't really exist. It's the same thing to me.

**AP:** Yeah great. Okay this is really good, you're actually answering a few other questions I've got ahead of time... So from there I guess, the next question, which you've possibly already answered, is do you, when you're going into a trio or duo situation, do you consciously adjust yourself already for that situation, by maybe being more aware of certain aspects of duo playing? Or is it totally fresh, and once the first note's played, that's when you're there?

**LG:** Umm, I think that what my concern is less of what instruments are there; more so my focus is *who* is playing those instruments. Because, it's all about the personalities of the people playing and you know, like one drummer has one thing, and the next drummer comes in and it'll be a whole other set of issues, of sonic issues, and feel, and how comfortable we are, and I think for me it's all about *who* it is.

I mean, people ask me, "do you play differently in a piano trio, as opposed to a saxophone trio" and I mean, I could say "yes I do", but it's not really what's going on. It really depends on who is playing, and what the comfort level, is and how well we know each other. You know, you could say that with a saxophone trio the bass might have to be more clear with the harmony, and the shape of the form. And that's true sometimes, but then other times – if I'm playing with Mark (Turner) and Jeff (Ballard) for example – I don't really have to worry that Mark is going to get lost in the form, or that he's not going to know what I'm doing; there's enough trust. And the same thing with drums, you know like we can play off of each other, and there's a trust. We know that we're not messing up, that we're just playing with the time, or elaborating on the time. So it's really about who I'm playing with. If I'm playing with somebody for the first time, then there's some thought going into it of maybe like playing more simply at first, just to get a sense of where we're at, to find a common ground. So that's kind of my main concern, the personalities rather than the instruments.

**AP:** Okay yeah cool, that makes a lot of sense. So I guess, you're talking about the people, do you find then in this situation, where you play with Brad in all the recordings, but in one context there are no drums and the other there is. So do you think that the way you change is now reliant upon the fact that there is one less personality to react to? Or that you need to be more clear with where it's going?

**LG:** Heh, yeah that's an interesting question. I mean it's probably a little bit of both, I mean... without drums... That is one musical environment I think that the bass player has to somehow consider when they're playing, because there's not that person to react to, but there's also one less rhythmic

instrument which is *super* important to what we do as jazz musicians. So not only do I have that responsibility to make sure that it stays together rhythmically, but that there's a good rhythmic foundation for the other instrument – that being piano, being Brad – that he has enough rhythmic stimulus to make it interesting for him. So it does change. I mean, its funny, these things that we're talking about are not things that I'm actually consciously thinking about in the moment or even before the gig. It kind of goes back to that balance thing, of sonic balance. While I'm playing, I'm hearing it differently than if there was a drummer, so I'm responding and reacting in the moment to that. I'm not thinking about it too much beforehand at all, just reacting to that new sonic space that is available. Then it's all up to the choices that I make; do I fill up some of that space? Or do I choose *not* to fill it up? And how is Brad reacting to that new space? Is he playing rhythmically a little busier? There are all these questions that come up while we play and we're all reacting to them, and making decisions instantaneously, and then make a decision based off that decision, and you know its just a continual conversation about where we're at in the moment. Does that make sense?

**AP:** Yeah that does make a lot of sense. That's great... yeah, I was wondering how much was forethought or how much was instinctive, but its obviously more a moment-to-moment, instinctive kind of thing.

**LG:** You know, I think... We haven't really played duo very much. That one gig that I think you're talking about, it just happened because Jorge had to go home because his baby was being born. So, we weren't planning on doing a duo gig, it just happened out of an emergency situation, so there was very little thought about it until we started playing.

**AP:** Yeah I was wondering what the story was, but yeah that's fair enough. So you remember the gig, obviously, I think it was somewhere in Germany?

**LG:** I remember it vaguely...

**AP:** Yeah, obviously I'm not asking you to recount anything...

**LG:** Yeah, no I remember the circumstances of why it happened, and I do remember it being in Germany... and somebody did tell me that there was tape of it, but I actually haven't heard it.

**AP:** Yeah I think there's around seven tracks, that I've got anyway.

**LG:** Okay.

**AP:** Okay so, I guess the next question I have here is... are there any particular recordings or duos or trios that you've kind of taken on board as a good construct to build [your own approach] from? Specifically duo, but yeah, any albums that you've really checked out?

**LG:** Well sure. I mean, probably a lot of the ones that you have... But the interesting thing for me talking about duos or even trios is that there are a lot of records that AREN'T duos or trios, but which become duos and trios, in parts. And then, that's an inspiration in itself. The whole record doesn't have to be a duo for me to find information to take from. For example, if you take any trio, at some point it becomes a duo usually, you know for a bass solo. Take Sonny Rollins trio with Wilbur Ware and Elvin Jones, at some point when Wilbur is soloing it's a duo. And how that feel is, and how Wilbur is able to be very clear about the form and the tune, but really playful at the same time – stretching it or being risky about it. Not just playing the same thing, but going the next step and saying, "Okay, let's play with it"... and Elvin reacting to that. When one of them stretches it, maybe the other maybe holds it down a bit. Or with Ornette; hearing how when Ornette stops or Don Cherry stops, where Charlie Haden and Billy Higgins or Ed Blackwell, what happens in that dialogue – that duo moment. And the same thing with trio, I always found if you listen to Miles when Herbie lays out, you know... Then all of a sudden it's a trio between Miles, Ron and Tony. You have to say that, yeah there are some differences. It does change up, but it's not set... It doesn't necessarily mean that Ron plays more simply, or that he shows the root more. I mean sometimes, yeah. But then sometimes it's the chance for the music to really open up because the piano isn't playing. And then Ron can even be more mysterious, and then there's the trust with Miles knowing that he's cool, and he knows the tune, or what the changes are. So, it's like those moments to me, that happen all the time, even in a big band, it's constantly breaking down and there are these moments of duos or trios... That's why I'm really hesitant to say that there are certain strict rules about duo playing or trio playing, because it's whatever can be.... It allows for more freedom, sometimes it necessitates a more strict playing of the form and the harmony has to be more clear, but definitely not as a rule. It really depends on what is going on in the moment. And then, the duo thing... I guess there are some duo records of piano and bass... But also just the whole duo thing between drums and bass. I mean, I think of it more in my imagination of how those two – the bass and the drums – are always playing together, and there's always that duet going on, even when other people are playing. I mean it *has* to; it *starts* with the drums and bass. And then harmonically, it's often the bass and the piano, that duo that's happening underneath the larger band. I mean, in our imagination we can kind of wipe out the other people for a second and just focus on those two instruments, we get a lot of information that could be useful, in whatever situation.



**AP:** So you can kind of look at a quartet record, and then break it down to just how two of those people are interacting – is that what you’re talking about?

**LG:** Yeah, and it’s always moving, it’s never sitting still. Something else comes in, another voice comes in and then there’s that reaction. There’s also guitar trio, which is really different again. Guitar trio in general I would say is more like a saxophone trio... I mean, guitar can play chords of course, but they’re often playing single lines, and for me having played a lot of guitar trio too, it’s more similar to me of a saxophone trio than a piano trio. So, the way I react to that is a bit more in the saxophone realm than as if I was playing in a piano trio. But then, once again it depends on who’s playing guitar... It goes back to that; it’s really the personality, or the person.

**AP:** Totally. So I know it’s probably a bit of a moot point when you’re talking about people of your level or the guys you play with, but with the duo thing is there still more of a responsibility – like say when you’re playing with Brad – is there still more of a responsibility on the bass as a time keeper? Or are you guys so in-sync at that point?

**LG:** Yeah. I mean... I think if I was telling a class about playing duo, I’d say “yeah you have to make sure that the time stays cool, that the form stays cool, that you really know the changes”... And then, once you have that, and you’re playing with a great musician in duo then you don’t have to worry about any of that stuff. It’s the same old thing: you learn all that stuff in order to forget it basically. When you know a tune, you’re not thinking “okay Em7b5, A7b9, Cm” you know? You’re not thinking like that, because you know it so intrinsically. And it’s the same thing with the time. When you’re playing with another great musician who has great time, you don’t really have to worry about it. But you’ve *had* to worry about it, to get to the point where you *don’t* have to worry about it. So if I’m playing duo with someone with maybe not so clear time, or maybe somebody who doesn’t know the tune so well... and its duo, then yes I’d have to play much more clearly harmonically and rhythmically; more simply... but that kind of goes out the window if I’m playing with somebody who’s got it all together.

**AP:** Yeah that’s great. Okay, so this next point might get a little hazier, because I’m talking about some specific rhythmic things that you do in these solos... But I get the feeling that they might have been things that you worked on for a while, so maybe it might make a little more sense... In *All The Things You Are*, there seems to be a common rhythmic thing you do, where you divide the bar into the four-plus-three clave, and play triplets across the first four beats, and then a 5 over 3 sort of figure... Was that something you were consciously working on back then? This is kind of a minutia-type thing.

**LG:** Right... Um... this is in 7 right? Yeah you know... the rhythmic stuff...

**AP:** I guess I was wondering if this was something that you workshopped either with the band or by yourself, or maybe if it was just more organic: that you were so comfortable that you were able to just play.

**LG:** Yeah. My memory of that is kind of similar to most things in that, I didn't work out specific rhythmic devices to play over odd meters. The only thing I did, and it was specific actually to that tune, is I do remember practicing *All The Things* – because we're playing it in two keys right?

**AP:** Yeah it moves between solos.

**LG:** Right, so I do remember just in order to get more comfortable with the key as well as the time signature, of just playing it by myself at home in time. And just getting the feel of that key, and getting comfortable with 7. First by hearing the clave of the 7 (**Claps the four-plus-three clave**). And then, just having it go inside. So I don't have to articulate that clave all that time. I can feel it, but I don't have to play it, just for my own ability to not mess up, so it gets more free. And that's really it, I know that some bass players have really thought about odd meters much more than I have. Of like, really working out this permutation against this one and having many ways to play it... Mine was a bit more organic I guess, of just trying to feel that passage of time. Over 7 beats a certain amount of time passes... Whatever it is, if it's 1.5 seconds or whatever it is, and just filling up that space however I want to. And if I had to break it down, and say what I rhythmically did I wouldn't be able to tell you (laughs). It is different, I know other bass players who've thought about it much more scientifically, but for me it was more just trying not to mess it up... for my own self. Because when I started playing with Jorge and Brad, they had been playing in some odd meters already. I had played in some, but I hadn't done it that much. They were able to do it much better than I was. It was really helpful because I knew that *they* knew where they were, so if I messed it up I could listen and find it again. So by doing it at home by myself, in tempo, with the form just playing chorus after chorus, it helped me just get more strong by myself... so when I went in to play with them I just felt like I had it more together.

**AP:** So you could feel like you weren't reliant on anyone.

**LG:** Exactly. But at the same time, it was pretty free and reactive, in that rhythmically – I mean maybe some things do recur, because those were my go to things – but it wasn't so conscious. It was just the vocabulary I had available to me at that point in time.

**AP:** So it had been something that somehow worked its way into your ear.

**LG:** Right.

**AP:** It's kind of interesting, because for someone who hasn't thought about it, or wasn't thinking about it... these two devices come up a lot, so it must have been something that you were listening to at the time, because both of the transcriptions are from around the same year.

**LG:** Yeah I think that sounds right. I think that's exactly what it is, you know it's just what I was hearing at the time. But you know, it does bring up the other thing of like, rhythmic thematic material that I've used, or which can be used to create some form of continuity in a solo. It's not just a melodic theme, but it can be a rhythmic seed that continues through the solo a bit, so that gives the solo some continuity. I know that back then we were playing a lot of fast tempos, where it became an issue of like, okay now it's a bass solo, so what do I do? I'm not going to play eighth notes – I mean I *can't* play eighth notes, I can't play triplets that fast – so what do I do? I do rhythmic permutations of it that are a slower tempo, but that become kind of, rhythmic patterns that continue through the solo, that give it some continuity or thematic material.

**AP:** Yeah, and that's actually really obvious from what I've got... it's very clear. In those faster tempos, or I guess even in the 7/4 tune which is still fairly up... How do you feel that? I'm assuming you feel it in larger time-increments, you're not feeling crotchets, you're feeling some sort of larger bar length, or more than one bar-length time span.

**LG:** Yeah, typically yes. I mean *All the Things* is a little trickier like that, because the changes are moving by fast. But you know, on a tune that's... I don't know. What's the other tune that you're looking at?

**AP:** *Long Ago and Far Away*, a really fast one.

**LG:** Right, so that's a good example actually, so even though the changes are moving, there is a kind of, tonic centre that is very clear in that tune, and then the bridge goes to a new key and a new tonic place, and it kind of sits in it for more than a bar or two at a time, so that helps, you know? I can kind of play through the changes a bit more, and have a melodic or rhythmic motif that is long, and thinking of the changes as one sound a bit. On *All the Things* it's a bit trickier, but still you could think a couple of bars at a time. And also this idea that I'm often not thinking about 7 beats, I'm thinking about the time that's going by. It's just a certain amount of time that a clock would pass, rather than the metronome knocking off 7 beats. It's a bit more philosophical maybe, but it is what's happening you know; to not think so regimentally. I'm just trying to say something in that time period.

**AP:** It's a lot more organic than going "alright I'm going to hit the third quaver of this bar, and then do this next thing."

**LG:** Yeah, I wouldn't be able to do that (laughs). I mean, I think this all brings up the idea that we do what we do because that's what we are *able* to do. We all have certain talents and deficiencies maybe, where we focus our mind. And, for me it's more that way of playing, as opposed to "I'm going to play this Phrygian, over this permutation of 7" you know, I can't think like that, I didn't learn to play music that way.

**AP:** Yeah, that's great to hear for a variety of different reasons in my own playing, that I won't touch on just now. So you said that you spent a lot of time working on *All the Things*, but do you work on playing on soloing on tunes by yourself regularly?

**LG:** No (laughs). Yeah I mean, I really don't. I spend my time learning the instrument better, making sure I know the tune. But that's why it's hard for me to talk or even teach improvisation, because it's something else going on, and I'm a little hesitant to go too deep into it, because I don't want to mess up that part of it... You know, it's a bit of being scared of over-analysing anything, or being so prepared that I'm not in the moment, or not reacting to the people I'm playing with. I mean, I *have* practiced playing solos on tunes at home, but not much...

**AP:** Ah okay, because another thing that I was going to mention, which seems to be present at least in both the duo versions, there seems to be almost some sort of self-accompaniment thing going on during your solos. You'll play a long tone at the start of a phrase to kind of centre it almost? And was wondering if that was maybe a practiced thing, or some kind of classical study type thing?

**LG:** Mhmm, um I think it brings up the thing that I'm sure you're aware of... which is that as a bass player, when you solo you often have to be everything at one time; you're the soloist, but you're also the accompanist, you're the piano player, the drummer and the horn player. You're kind of having to fulfil a lot of roles. The bass is tricky as a solo instrument... A lot of times the harmonic accompaniment is sparse, or not there at all so we kind of have to be aware of little guide posts – not necessarily for us, but for everybody else. Like, "here we are". That's why arpeggiated lines are really helpful on the bass, because it can really clearly outline "here's the chord that I'm on right now", because if you just play a melodic idea it might not really give the flavour completely of the chord. So kind of dealing with the inherent issues of being a bass player and soloing – kinda having to cover a lot of bases, and helping out with the form or the chord...

**AP:** Yeah okay great, that makes a lot of sense! Well that's really all the main questions I've got. So I'll leave you to your day... Again thanks so much Larry for doing this.

**LG:** My pleasure!