

Master Songwriter

Module 11 of *Music: Under the Hood*

John Hooker

Carnegie Mellon University

Osher Course
October 2018

Outline

- Biography of Harold Arlen
- Analysis of *Stormy Weather*

Biography

- **Harold Arlen, 1905-1986**
 - **Born Hyman Arluck in Buffalo, NY**
 - Son of Jewish cantor
 - Loved to sing
 - Began studying piano at 9 but hated practicing
 - **Formed a combo (Snappy Trio) as a teenager**
 - Wrote arrangements for it.



Biography

- **Career**
 - **Wanted to be a professional singer**
 - But his arrangements were always more popular than his singing.
 - Moved to NYC, age 22
 - **Met lyricist Ted Koehler**
 - They wrote *Get Happy*, 1929, Arlen's first hit.
 - Wrote for Cotton Club, 1930-34.
 - *Stormy Weather* also a hit.

Harold Arlen and Ted Koehler



Biography

- Career
 - Wizard of Oz
 - Arlen teamed with lyricist Yip Harburg for the movie
 - He felt the movie needed a ballad with a broad, sweeping melody.
 - It came to him while driving on Sunset Blvd...



Yip Harburg (left) and Harold Arlen

Biography

- Career

- *Over the Rainbow*

- *Over the Rainbow* was cut from the film 3 times.
 - Associate Producer Arthur Freed, who hired Arlen, lobbied to have it restored
 - Ranked *Best Song of the Century* by Recording Industry Association of America.
 - Named *Best Movie Song of All Time* by American Film Institute.



Stormy Weather

- Music by Harold Arlen, lyrics by Ted Koehler
 - A lament
 - Illustrates Arlen's gift for expressive melody
 - First performed 1933
 - by Ethel Waters at Cotton Club
 - She made first recording same year.
 - Also sung by Frank Sinatra, Lena Horne, Billie Holiday

Harold Arlen and Ted Koehler



STORMY WEATHER (KEEPS RAININ' ALL THE TIME)

Slow lament

Lyrics by TED KOEHLER
Music by HAROLD ARLEN

[Audio file
\(first recording,
by Ethel Waters\)](#)

The musical score is presented in three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The tempo is marked 'Slow lament'. Dynamics include *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *p* (piano). Chord diagrams are provided for the piano accompaniment.

System 1: The piano accompaniment begins with a *mp* dynamic. The vocal line starts with a *mf* dynamic. The lyrics are: "Don't know why there's no sun up in the sky. Storm-y Weath-er."

System 2: The piano accompaniment continues with a *mp* dynamic. The lyrics are: "Since my {man gal} and I ain't to - geth - er. keeps rain - in' all the time."

System 3: The piano accompaniment continues. The lyrics are: "Life is bare, gloom and mis - ry ev - 'ry - where, Storm-y Weath-er."

Chord Diagrams:

- G: $\begin{array}{c} \text{X} \\ \text{0} \\ \text{2} \\ \text{3} \\ \text{2} \\ \text{0} \end{array}$
- G#dim: $\begin{array}{c} \text{X} \\ \text{0} \\ \text{2} \\ \text{3} \\ \text{2} \\ \text{0} \end{array}$
- Am7: $\begin{array}{c} \text{X} \\ \text{0} \\ \text{2} \\ \text{3} \\ \text{2} \\ \text{0} \end{array}$
- D9: $\begin{array}{c} \text{X} \\ \text{0} \\ \text{2} \\ \text{3} \\ \text{2} \\ \text{0} \end{array}$
- Am7: $\begin{array}{c} \text{X} \\ \text{0} \\ \text{2} \\ \text{3} \\ \text{2} \\ \text{0} \end{array}$
- D11: $\begin{array}{c} \text{X} \\ \text{0} \\ \text{2} \\ \text{3} \\ \text{2} \\ \text{0} \end{array}$
- D7-9: $\begin{array}{c} \text{X} \\ \text{0} \\ \text{2} \\ \text{3} \\ \text{2} \\ \text{0} \end{array}$

Am7 D11 G Am7 D7-9 G

Just can't get my poor self to - geth - er, I'm wear - y all the time, the

C G G#dim Am7 D7-9 G Am7 G C

time. So wear - y all the time. When {he /she} went a - way - the blues walk

G C G C G

in and met me. If {he /she} stays a - way - old rock - in' chair will get me.

C G C G E7-5

All I do is pray - the Lord a - bove will let me walk in the sun once

more. Can't go on, ev - ry - thing I had is gone, Storm - y

Weath - er, Since my { man gal } and I ain't to - geth - er.

keeps rain - in' all the time, keeps rain - in' all the

time. Don't know time.

rall. *p*

Ped.

STORMY WEATHER (KEEPS RAININ' ALL THE TIME)

Melody

Audio file

Slow lament

Lyrics by TED KOEHLER
Music by HAROLD ARLEN

Musical score for the first system of 'Stormy Weather'. It features a piano accompaniment and a vocal line. The tempo is marked 'Slow lament'. Dynamics include *mp* and *mf*. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C).

This repeated motif emphasizes yearning

Musical score for the second system of 'Stormy Weather'. The lyrics are: "Don't know why there's no sun up in the sky. Storm-y weath-er." Three red boxes highlight specific melodic motifs in the vocal line. Above the staff, guitar chord diagrams are provided for G, G#dim, Am7, D9, and G. The piano accompaniment is marked *mp*.

...as does this prolonged leading tone

Musical score for the third system of 'Stormy Weather'. The lyrics are: "Since my {man} and I ain't to - geth - er. keeps rain - in all the time." A red box highlights a prolonged leading tone in the vocal line. Above the staff, guitar chord diagrams are provided for Am7, D11, G, Am7, D7-9, and G. The piano accompaniment is marked *mp*.

Dramatic octave drop suggests exhaustion and release

Musical score for the fourth system of 'Stormy Weather'. The lyrics are: "Life is bare, gloom and mis - ry ev - 'ry - where, Storm-y weath-er." A blue box highlights a dramatic octave drop in the vocal line. Above the staff, guitar chord diagrams are provided for Am7, D9, G, G#dim, Am7, D9, and G. The piano accompaniment is marked *mp*.

Anticipates middle section

A snippet of a musical score in G major. The vocal line has three phrases highlighted with boxes: an orange box around the first phrase, a blue box around the second, and another blue box around the third. An orange arrow points from the text 'Anticipates middle section' to the first orange box. Two blue arrows point from the text 'Drop of a fourth or third echoes octave drop earlier (also used by Chopin)' to the two blue boxes. The piano accompaniment is visible below the vocal line.

Drop of a fourth or third echoes octave drop earlier (also used by Chopin)

Extra 2 bars. Standard is 32 bars, here it is 34.

A snippet of a musical score. A green box highlights a phrase in the vocal line, with a green arrow pointing from the text 'Extra 2 bars. Standard is 32 bars, here it is 34.' to it. An orange box highlights a later phrase in the vocal line. The piano accompaniment is visible below.

Echoes motif from first section

A snippet of a musical score. Two phrases in the vocal line are highlighted with orange boxes. An orange arrow points from the text 'Echoes motif from first section' to the first orange box. The piano accompaniment is visible below.

Inspired by chorus of African American spiritual

Solid rhythm and repetition contrast with opening lament

A snippet of a musical score. A phrase in the vocal line is highlighted with an orange box. The piano accompaniment is visible below.

Melody echoed in accompaniment

more. Can't go on, ev - ry - thing I had is gone, Storm - y

Weath - er, Since my { man } gal and I ain't to - geth - er.

keeps rain - in' all the time, keeps rain - in' all the

time. Don't know time.

STORMY WEATHER (KEEPS RAININ' ALL THE TIME)

Harmony

[Audio file](#)

Repeated ii-V-I

Melody is suspended over ii⁷, resolves after chord change

Diminished chord provides passing tones

ii⁷ is suspended over V, resolves after chord change

Slow lament

Lyrics by TED KOEHLER
Music by HAROLD ARLEN

The musical score for "Stormy Weather" is presented in three systems. The first system shows the piano introduction and the beginning of the vocal melody. The second system contains the lyrics: "Don't know why there's no sun up in the sky. Storm-y Weath-er." The third system contains the lyrics: "Since my {man} gal and I ain't to - geth - er. keeps rain - in' all the time." The final system contains the lyrics: "Life is bare, gloom and mis - ry ev - 'ry - where, Storm-y Weath-er." Chord diagrams are placed above the staff. Harmonic analysis labels are placed below the piano part: I, ii⁷, V⁷₉, I, ii⁷, V⁷₉, I, ii⁷, V⁷₉, I, ii⁷, V⁷₉, I. A blue box highlights a suspended melody over an Am⁷ chord, and an orange box highlights a diminished chord (G^{#dim}) providing passing tones. A green box highlights a suspended melody over a V⁷₉ chord.

Am7 D11 G Am7 D7-9 G

Just can't get my poor self to - geth - er, I'm wear - y all the time, the

ii⁷ V⁷₉ I ii⁷ V⁷_{o9+12} I

C G G#dim Am7 D7-9 G Am7 G C

time. So wear - y all the time. When {he/she} went a - way - the blues walk

mf IV

IV – I pattern is common in spirituals

G C G C G

in and met me. If {he/she} stays a - way - old rock - in' chair will get me.

I IV I

C G C G E7-5

All I do is pray - the Lord a - bove will let me walk in the sun once

IV I

Dissonant 7 chord
marks return to lament
(we heard it in
Satin Doll)

more. Can't go on, ev - ry - thing I had is gone, Storm - y

Chords: **II⁶⁷**, **V^{7o9}** (highlighted in green), **I**, **ii⁷**, **V⁷⁹**

Weath - er, Since my { man } and I ain't to - geth - er.

Chords: **G**, **Am7**, **D11**, **G**, **I**, **ii⁷**, **V⁷⁹**, **I**

keeps rain - in' all the time, keeps rain - in' all the

Chords: **Am7**, **D7-9**, **G**, **Am7**, **D7-9**, **ii⁷**, **V^{7o9+12}**, **I**, **ii⁷**, **V^{7o9+12}**

time. Don't know time.

Chords: **G**, **Am7**, **D9**, **G**, **Am7**, **Gmaj7**, **C**, **G**, **I**, *rall.*, *p*, *Ped.*