

**MTO 19.1 Examples: Hesselink, Radiohead's "Pyramid Song"**

(Note: audio, video, and other interactive examples are only available online)

<http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.13.19.1/mto.13.19.1.hesselink.php>

**Example 1.** Radiohead Full-Length Studio Album Releases (\*\*\*\*\* indicates end of contract with Parlophone/EMI)

1. *Pablo Honey* (Parlophone/EMI) 1993. Produced and engineered by Sean Slade, Paul Q. Kolderie, and Chris Hufford; art by Lisa Bunny Jones, Icon, and Tom Sheehan.
2. *The Bends* (Parlophone/EMI) 1995. Produced by John Leckie, engineered by John Leckie, Nigel Godrich, Chris Brown, and Jim Warren; art by Stanley Donwood and The White Chocolate Farm.
3. *OK Computer* (Parlophone/EMI) 1997. Produced and engineered by Nigel Godrich with Radiohead; art by Stanley Donwood and The White Chocolate Farm.
4. *Kid A* (Parlophone/EMI) 2000. Produced and engineered by Nigel Godrich with Radiohead; art by Stanley [Donwood] and Tchock.
5. *Amnesiac* (Parlophone/EMI) 2001. Produced and engineered by Nigel Godrich with Radiohead; art by Stanley Donwood and Tchocky.
6. *Hail to the Thief* (Parlophone/EMI) 2003. Produced by Nigel Godrich, engineered by Darrell Thorp; art by Stanley Donwood.
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7. *In Rainbows* (tbd records) 2008 [North American release]. Produced by Nigel Godrich, engineered by Nigel Godrich, Richard Woodcraft, Hugo Nicolson, and Dan Grech-Marguerat; art by Stanley Donwood and Dr Tchock.
8. *The King of Limbs* (tbd records) 2011. Produced and engineered by Nigel Godrich; art by Zachariah Wildwood [Yorke] and Donald Twain [Donwood].

**Example 2.** Track Listings for *Amnesiac* (2001)

1. "Packt Like Sardines in a Crushd Tin Box"
2. **"Pyramid Song"**
3. "Pulk/Pull Revolving Doors"
4. "You and Whose Army?"
5. "I Might Be Wrong"
6. "Knives Out"
7. "Morning Bell/Amnesiac"
8. "Dollars and Cents"
9. "Hunting Bears"
10. "Like Spinning Plates"
11. "Life in a Glasshouse"

Example 3. First Four Iterations of Piano Cycle (pause indicated by \*)

first iteration of cycle



second iteration of cycle



third iteration of cycle



fourth iteration of cycle



The musical notation for Example 3 consists of four systems, each representing an iteration of the piano cycle. Each system is written for piano in G major (one sharp) and consists of two measures. The first measure of each iteration contains a sequence of chords: G major, A major, B major, and C# major. The second measure contains a sequence: D major, E major, F# major, and G major. An asterisk (\*) is placed below the first chord of the second measure in each system, indicating a pause. The iterations are numbered 1, 3, 5, and 7, indicating they occur at measures 1, 3, 5, and 7 of the overall piece.

Example 4. Metrical Realizations of First Iteration of Piano Cycle: a) 11/8; b) 7/8, 3/4, 5/8, 2/4

a)



b)



The musical notation for Example 4 shows two different metrical realizations of the first iteration of the piano cycle. Both are in G major. Realization a) is in 11/8 time and consists of two measures of music. Realization b) is in a sequence of four time signatures: 7/8, 3/4, 5/8, and 2/4. The first measure is in 7/8 time, the second in 3/4, the third in 5/8, and the fourth in 2/4. The chords in both realizations correspond to the first iteration of the piano cycle: G major, A major, B major, C# major in the first measure, and D major, E major, F# major, G major in the second measure.

Example 5. "Compound Meter Neutral" Realization of Entrance of Drums (beginning of second verse)

The musical score for Example 5 consists of three staves. The top staff is a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) in G major (one sharp) and 6/8 time. It features a piano accompaniment with chords and eighth notes. The middle staff is a single line for the ride cymbal, marked with 'x' symbols indicating hits. The bottom staff is a single line for the snare drum, marked with vertical lines indicating hits. The drum pattern is a simple 6/8 groove.

Example 6. 9/8, 9/8, 6/8 Realization, First Phrase of Cycle

|  |   |
|--|---|
| smallest rhythmic unit                 |   |
| grouping of piano chords               |   |
| chords                                 | F# M                      F# M                      G M 7                      A add 6                      A add 6   |
| beat grouping implied by chord changes | 3    2    3    4  |
| eighth note groupings for piano chords | 5    4    6    5    4 |

Example 7. 4/4 with Swung Eighth Notes (12/8 realization), First Phrase of Cycle

|  |   |
|--|---|
| smallest rhythmic unit                 |   |
| grouping of piano chords               |   |
| chords                                 | F# M                      F# M                      G M 7                      A add 6                      A add 6   |
| beat grouping implied by chord changes | 3    2    3    4  |
| eighth note groupings for piano chords | 5    4    6    5    4 |

Example 8. 4/4 Realization, First Phrase of Cycle (8 Beats over 2 bars)

|  |       |  |  |   |       |  |   |  |       |  |   |  |                               |   |  |  |
|--|-------|--|--|---|-------|--|---|--|-------|--|---|--|-------------------------------|---|--|--|
| smallest rhythmic unit                 |       |  |  |   |       |  |   |  |       |  |   |  |                               |   |  |  |
| grouping of piano chords               |       |  |  |   |       |  |   |  |       |  |   |  |                               |   |  |  |
| chords                                 | F # M |  |  |   | F # M |  |   |  | G M 7 |  |   |  | A <sup>a</sup> <sub>d</sub> 6 |   |  |  |
| beat grouping implied by chord changes | 3     |  |  |   | 2     |  |   |  | 3     |  |   |  |                               |   |  |  |
| eighth note groupings for piano chords | 3     |  |  | 3 |       |  | 4 |  |       |  | 3 |  |                               | 3 |  |  |

Example 9. Excerpt from YouTube Video “Pyramid song 4/4 explained”

[Video Link](#)

Example 10. 4/4 Realization, 1 Complete Cycle (8 Beats over 2 Bars)

|   |       |  |       |  |       |  |                               |  |                               |  |                               |  |       |  |       |  |
|---|-------|--|-------|--|-------|--|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|--|-------|--|-------|--|
| smallest rhythmic unit                    |       |  |       |  |       |  |                               |  |                               |  |                               |  |       |  |       |  |
| grouping of piano chords                  |       |  |       |  |       |  |                               |  |                               |  |                               |  |       |  |       |  |
| chords                                    | F # M |  | F # M |  | G M 7 |  | A <sup>a</sup> <sub>d</sub> 6 |  | A <sup>a</sup> <sub>d</sub> 6 |  | A <sup>a</sup> <sub>d</sub> 6 |  | G M 7 |  | G M 7 |  |
| beat grouping implied by chord changes    | 1 . 5 |  | 1     |  | 1 . 5 |  | 1 . 5                         |  | 1 . 5                         |  | 1                             |  | 1 . 5 |  |       |  |
| eighth note groupings for piano chords    | 1 . 5 |  | 1 . 5 |  | 2     |  | 1 . 5                         |  | 1 . 5                         |  | 1 . 5                         |  | 1 . 5 |  | 2     |  |
| sixteenth note groupings for piano chords | 3     |  | 3     |  | 4     |  | 3                             |  | 3                             |  | 3                             |  | 3     |  | 4     |  |