

Song Analysis and Practice Notes - Show 9

"Chain Of Fools", Aretha Franklin

Analysis and notes by 'TuneMoose' Matt Bates

Developed for the Music Circle - "Hits and Hooks" podcast

Produced by Every One's A Star Records

FUNDAMENTALS

4/4 time

116 bpm

Key of Bb

CHORDS

in Nashville notation:

(Intro)

|| 1m || (in free time)

(V)

|| 1m / / / ||

(CHorus)

|| 1m / / / ||

(BRidge)

|| 1m / / / || (sung a cappella)

(Break)

|| 1m || (in free time)

Letter Name Notation:

1m = Cm

SONG FORM

Intro CHx2 Vx4 CHx1 Vx2 BR Break CHx2 Vx2 CHx4(Fade)

HOOKS and NOTES

- This song is all about groove and vocal emotion. There's not much in the way of harmony, or chordal, changes. The song stays on 1m, and possibly works in 1m7 here and there.
- There's a prominent active bass line landing squarely on beat 1, and has an interesting beat for the rest of the measure. It stays on the root note but has a repeating run-up to the main beats.
- However the electric guitar that playing a second voice roll, answering the vocals and filling gaps, is also playing some very bassy notes and riffing up from there. The electric guitar also provides the riff for the intro and break
- The break is interesting. It's almost like a stop time. The main groove stops and the break is played in free time.
- Of course the vocals are emotionally delivered and give a great focus to the song
- There's a lot of call and response between the lead singer and the harmony vocals

- The Bridge is another really interesting bit giving us something different from the repeating groove. It's sung 'a cappella' (vocals only) except for the kick drum sound, which is coming in on the off-beats, 2 and 4. The 'whoop' backing vocals are coming in on the anticipation to beats 1 and 3, giving a little tension to the whole sequence. The backing vocals are taking a rhythmic role here rather than singing lyric as in the rest of the song
- The lyrics are structured that each phrase has two parts, similar to call response
- The chorus is everyone singing together with Aretha joining in on one half of the phrases but blending in.

PLAY-ALONG OPTIONS

- There's lots of space in the verses to take a second voice role in the vocal spaces
- The bridge is great of course, but there's opportunity to fill it with more percussion, bass, rhythm section and/or soloing instruments

CREATIVE TAKE-AWAYS

- This is basically a song on one chord but notice the many hooks that are used to give it variety... bass run-ups, guitar second voice, group singing chorus and solo singing verses, a cappella section, free time riff intro and break, two part lyric phrasing.