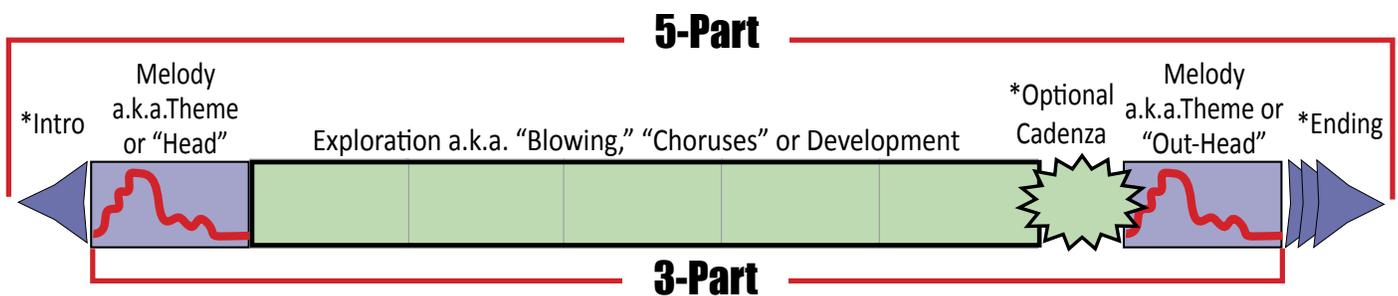


Musical FORMS - Distilled

These simple drawings are distillations of the powerful transformative forms that have been used by composers from Beethoven to Bernstein to Count Basie as a foundation for composition and improvisation. By distilling them, we can use them *at any technical level* and, as we use them, they transform our abilities and expression. You can call them 'forms', or structures, skeletons, blueprints or even games. They're the three basic forms we use in Hip Harp Academy as a foundation for developing skills, self-expression and musical fluency.

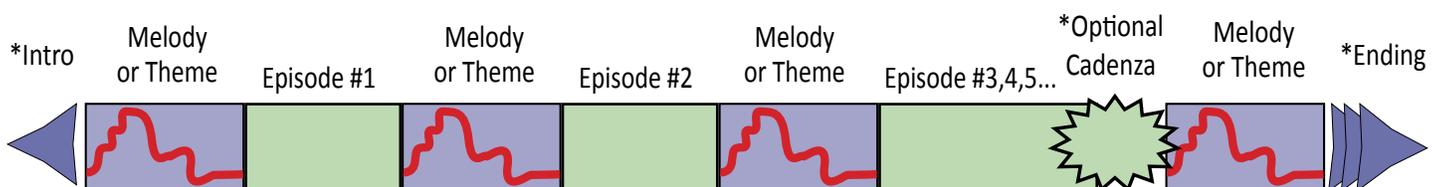
1. Basic Classical & Jazz Arrangement Form NOTE: The "kind" of thing that happens in the exploration is different depending on the style of the music. It can be a series of same-length sections that each follow the same harmonic progression, or one big 'open' exploration or an improv section based on a 'vamp' (short, repeating harmonic sequence)



2. Blues NOTE: The "Blowing" in Blues is "always" a series of same-length sections using the "same" bassline (though, like any harmonies, chords can be extended, altered or substituted). In the 12-Bar Blues, every section is 12 bars long. In a 16-Bar Blues, every section is 16-Measures long. Blues are almost always in 4/4 and almost always use a Swing Rhythm.



3. Rondo Form NOTE: The theme repeats in between 'episodes'. Episodes can be any length, and even in a related key.



* Intro, Ending & Cadenza are all optional - though Intros & Endings are less rare than cadenzas

These are not the only forms in music, and you can even create your own forms, but these three alone - or any one of them - can provide the foundation for a lifetime of creative expression.

Musical ROLES - Distilled Bass, Accompaniment, Melody

Just like in any game, you need to know your 'role' or 'position' in order to be able to play it.

When you're improvising, knowing the roles you're playing helps you create clarity, diversity - and to spontaneously play with others any time you're playing music, you're 'playing' one or more of the musical ROLES.

On the harp these roles often 'live' in specific locations of the harp (the top strings, middle strings or bottom strings) - which roughly corresponds to the top 3rd, middle 3rd and bottom 3rd of your instrument.

In standard music improv, if someone else is playing one or more of the roles, you generally play the ones they're not playing, and vice-versa. If you're playing solo - since you only have 2 hands - you have to either leave one of the roles out (usually the accompaniment) OR figure out how to combine two roles in one hand (usually by combining Accompaniment with one of the other two).

Playing a 'role' is a basic principle of improv - but *it's not always easy to see the separate roles in written music*, especially music for instruments (like the harp) that can play all 3 roles simultaneously.

Melody or
Melodic Improv

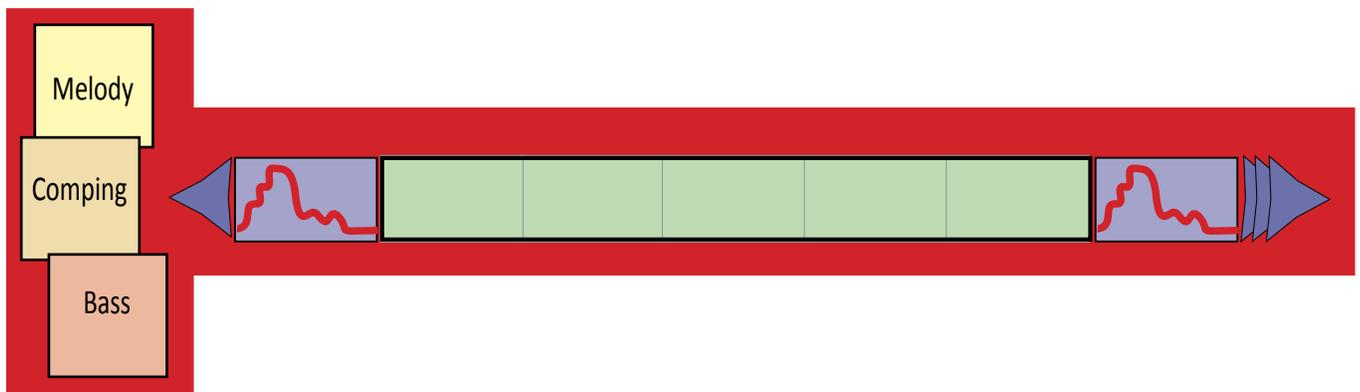
Accompaniment

Bassline

Musical DIMENSIONS

I often think of the Form and Roles as two dimensions of music. I 'see' the roles as 'vertical' in that they're always existing 'on top or below' each other. I see the form as horizontal because the roles traverse it. But those two roles are static until you add time, and once you have time you have movement, which unlocks the other two dimensions of music: emotion and connection. Here are the dimensions, as I see them:

1. **"FORM"** or Structure of a piece is like the horizontal dimension of music
2. **"ROLES"** you're playing are like the vertical dimension of music
3. **TIME** is what activates them - it's what allows music to CHANGE. The interplay of what changes and what stays the same is what gives music movement, so time, in the form of pulse, duration, tempo and rhythms is the 3rd dimension of music.
4. **EMOTION** is the 4th dimension - where our human spirit is affected



HOW you DO all this is what you learn in Hip Harp Academy.