

Nanopublication — Compositional Encoding of Modal Shift and Pianistic Touch

by Arnaud Quercy · D minor - Research on Harmony - Variation 1 · 2024

Claim 2: Compositional Encoding of Modal Shift and Pianistic Touch

I use two contrasting formal vocabularies in this painting to encode two distinct aspects of Evans [4]'s playing. The rectangular geometric forms — the stacked blocks visible in the central-left vertical cluster — represent the modal shifts that structure the introduction: discrete harmonic events, each a distinct voicing stepping to the next. The gentle curves — particularly the prominent dome/arch form — represent Evans's smooth, lyrical touch: the way his hands move between voicings with a continuity that softens the harmonic boundaries. The painting holds both simultaneously: the architecture of the harmony (angular, segmented, stacked) and the quality of the pianist's execution (rounded, fluid, connected).

CONTEXT

Bill Evans's introduction to "So What [5]" is notable for the tension between its harmonic content and its delivery. The voicings shift through distinct modal centers — each chord a discrete harmonic object — yet Evans plays them with such smoothness that the transitions feel inevitable rather than abrupt. The score marks the passage "Explorative" and sets tempo at 60 bpm, reinforcing the unhurried, searching quality.

This duality — discrete shifts delivered with continuous smoothness — becomes the painting's compositional principle. The rectangular forms encode the harmonic discreteness: each block is a separate color event, a distinct voicing occupying its own bounded space. The stacking of these rectangles in a vertical arrangement echoes the way Evans builds voicings vertically on the keyboard. The curved forms — especially the large dome shape that occupies significant compositional space — encode the pianist's touch: rounded, unhurried, connecting what the harmony separates.

Neither formal vocabulary dominates. The rectangles and curves coexist within the same composition, just as harmonic architecture and pianistic fluidity coexist in Evans's playing. The painting does not choose between structure and smoothness; it holds both as simultaneous truths about the same musical passage.

REFERENCES

- [1] Arnaud Quercy (2024). D minor - Research on Harmony - Variation 1 — Catalog raisonné. <https://arnaudquercy.art/en/catalogue-raisonne/AQC0700.html>
- [2] Quercy, A. (2024). D minor - Research on Harmony - Variation 1 - Artwork Catalog. https://artquamanima.com/en/artworks/2025/09/d-minor-research-on-harmony-variation-1_7sg.html
- [3] Quercy, A. (2025). Physical Specifications - AQC0700. https://multimodal.institute/en/nanopubs/specifications/2025/11/aqc0700_physical-specifications_djv.html
- [4] Evans, B. (1959). Piano introduction to "So What," transcribed score.
- [5] Davis, M. (1959). "So What." *Kind of Blue*. Columbia Records CL 1355.

EPISTEMIC PROFILE

Claim type artistic statement

Voice first person

Epistemic status artistic declaration

Methodology reflective practice

Certainty high

CHECKSUM (SHA-256)

dc1f976f45f2fafc7e848a486b704b1cffedcac9d-c41391ee8291249aa9333aa

Artist Arnaud Quercy

Date 2024

Collection Synesthetic Explorations

Certificate 20240718-0196

Asset code AQC0700

Version 1

Published 2026-03-27

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Published by: Art Quam Anima Publishing New York LLC — publishing.artquamanima.com

Date of publication: 2026-03-27

Persistent URI: <https://multimodal.institute/en/nanopubs/2026/03/AQC0700-compositional-encoding-of-modal-shift-and-pianistic-touch.pdf>

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