Channelling the Creative: Keith Jarrett's Spiritual Beliefs Through a Gurdjieffian Lens

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Introduction

The elusive nature of the creative process in art has remained a puzzling phenomenon for artists and their audiences. What happens to an inspired artist in the moment of creation and where that inspiration comes from are questions that prompt many artists to explain the process as spiritual or mystical, describing their experiences as 'channelling the divine', 'tapping into a greater reality', or being visited or played by their 'muse'. Pianist and improviser Keith Jarrett (b.1945) frequently explains the creative process in this way and this is nowhere more evident than in discussions on his wholly improvised solo concerts. Jarrett explains these massive feats of creativity in terms of an ability to 'channel' or 'surrender to' a source of inspiration, which he ambiguously designates the 'ongoing harmony', the 'Creative', and the 'Divine Will'. These accounts are freely expressed in interviews and album liner notes, and are thus highly accessible to his audiences. Jarrett's mystical accounts of the creative process, his incredible improvisatory abilities, and other key elements come together to create the strange aura of mystery that surrounds his notorious solo concerts.

This paper will demystify Jarrett's spiritual beliefs on the creative process by considering them within a Gurdjieffian context. This will allow for a much deeper understanding of Jarrett's cryptic statements on creativity, and his idiosyncratic behaviour during the solo concerts. In the late 1960s Jarrett became fascinated with the writings of Armenian-Greek spiritual teacher George Ivanovitch Gurdjieff (c.1866-1949). Although Jarrett was never affiliated with a Gurdjieff Foundation group, it is clear from his statements that from this time on, Gurdjieff's teachings greatly facilitated Jarrett in conceptualising and articulating his experiences of improvisation. It is not difficult to appreciate the jazz musician's attraction to Gurdjieff's teachings. In Gurdjieff's perpetually vibrating cosmos music is granted the power to effect individuals and phenomena dramatically, and is an important tool for self-development. Gurdjieff placed a great deal of weight on those structures that jazz musicians hold most dear: scales, modes, and harmonics. In fact, Gurdjieff

elevated these structures to cosmic significance, viewing them as analogous to the very structures and workings of the universe. Gurdjieff's views on the importance of co-ordinating intellect, feelings and body would also have undoubtedly resonated with jazz musicians who are immersed in a genre that is simultaneously intellectual, emotional and physical. (Jazz is well known for its power to move the performer and listener to dance, snap fingers, tap toes, nod the head and so on.)

It is astonishing that so little scholarly work has been done on the music and personal beliefs of Jarrett considering the popularity of his recordings and the hype that his solo concerts generate. Only one book has been published on Jarrett, the biographical *Keith Jarrett: The Man and the Music* (1992) by musician and journalist Ian Carr. The work is written with Jarrett's consent and contains numerous statements by Jarrett that are relevant to this study. Three theses have also been written on Jarrett: Gernot Blume's *Musical Practices and Identity Construction in the Work of Keith Jarrett* (1998), Peter Stanley Elsdon's *Keith Jarrett's Solo Concerts and the Aesthetics of Free Improvisation 1960-1973* (2001) and Tim Bruer's *A Study of Pianist Keith Jarrett's Approach to the Structuring of an Improvised Performance Based Upon the Standard Song, From the Years 1985 and 1989* (2003). Surprisingly, none of these studies have explored Jarrett's interest in the esoteric writings of G. I. Gurdjieff. This is puzzling as so many of Jarrett's statements on improvisation are clearly rooted in his deeper philosophical and spiritual beliefs. Scholars attempt to analyse and critique these statements with little to no appreciation of the nature of his fundamental belief system. This paper will present original work on the significant influence that Gurdjieffian philosophy had, and possibly still has, on Jarrett.

Keith Jarrett's Life and Work

Jarrett was born in Allentown, Pennsylvania, in 1945, and by the age of three he was already displaying remarkable musical talent, improvising music on an old converted player piano and playing along with melodies on the radio. At eighteen he had developed a strong interest in jazz and commenced jazz piano studies at the Berklee College of Music in Boston. However, Jarrett became bored with the approach he found there and was expelled after one year when he was found strumming the strings of a piano while rehearsing.[1] He then went to New York and was hired by drummer Art Blakey as pianist for his long-running Jazz Messengers band. After four months of touring he left to join the Charles Lloyd quartet, one of the most popular jazz groups of the 1960s. It was

[1] Ian Carr, *Keith Jarrett: The Man and His Music* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1992 [1991]), p. 19.

with this group that Jarrett first began to attract an audience for his idiosyncratic flights of improvisation.[2] The quartet avoided conventional classification, infusing their music with a range of musical influences, such as soul jazz, free jazz, blues, and world music. This eclectic attitude later became important to Jarrett's identity and music. In 1969 Jarrett joined Miles Davis's pioneering and controversial electric jazz-rock Fillmore group, playing keyboard alongside Chick Corea.[3] After recording seven albums with the group, Jarrett left in 1971 to pursue a career as a soloist.

At this time Jarrett began his highly productive and long-standing recording collaboration with the then obscure German record label ECM (Editions of Contemporary Music) and ECM's founder and producer Manfred Eicher. Since his first release with ECM, the 1972 solo album *Facing You*, Jarrett has produced over sixty diverse recordings with the label. In 1973 Eicher organised for Jarrett to undertake an eighteen-concert solo tour in Europe playing entirely spontaneous improvisations. This hugely innovative project proved to be unexpectedly successful and yielded Jarrett's acclaimed three-record album *Solo Concerts* (1973), recorded in Bremen and Lausanne. After the tour's success, Jarrett has continued to pursue the improvised solo concert format. His landmark solo album is *The Köln Concert* (1975), which has sold more than five million copies and has become the top-selling solo piano album of any genre.[4] Jarrett's other notable live improvised recordings include *Sun Bear Concerts* (1976), *Concerts* (1981), *Dark Intervals* (1987), *Paris Concert* (1988), *Vienna Concert* (1991), *La Scala* (1995), *Radiance* (2005) and *The Carnegie Hall Concert* (2006). The simplicity of his album titles and understated album presentation emphasise a particular place and moment, reinforcing the idea that these performances are entirely unique and unrepeatable. This also suggests that Jarrett is pressing his listeners to approach the music without preconceptions (as he does), and attempting to market his art as pure, unadulterated, and egoless.

In the early 1980s Jarrett formed his 'Standards Trio' with bassist Gary Peacock and drummer Jack DeJohnette. At this time, Jarrett was also developing his classical career, recording, and performing standard classical repertoire with a leaning towards the music of Bach, Mozart, Bartok, Stravinsky and Shostakovich. Jarrett's pursuit of both jazz and classical genres at the same time demonstrates an impressive versatility, particularly as he

[2] Mikal Gilmore, 'Keith Jarrett's Keys to the Cosmos', in *Night Beat: A Shadow History of Rock & Roll: Collected Writin.gs of Mikal Gilmore* (New York: Doubleday, 1998), p. 144.
[3] Todd S. Jenkins, *Free Jazz and Free Improvisation Vol. 1* (London: Greenwood Press, 2004), p. 191.
[4] Dan Ouellette, 'Out of Thin Air', *Down Beat* (August 2005), p. 38.

states, "I don't think you can do both things [jazz and classical playing] unless you have a certain kind of insanity that you are conscious of and you create… Your system demands different circuitry for either of those two things".[5] It is interesting to note that Jarrett, who is known for his free and experimental musical approach, is commonly criticised for his restrained classical performances. He argues that instead of imposing personal interpretations onto classical music one should identify with "the ecstatic state" of the compositional process that is inherent in the work.[6] In the liner notes to his classical recording debut, Bach's *Well Tempered Klavier Book I* (1987), he aptly asserts, "This music does not need my assistance".[7]

Jarrett became increasingly disillusioned with the classical music scene. Feeling isolated and creatively constrained he fell into a paralysing depression that lasted for several months.[8] His recovery was facilitated by the cathartic creation of his album *Spirits* (1986), consisting of improvised folk-like melodies played by Jarrett on various elemental, organic-sounding instruments such as tablas, recorders, the Pakistani flute, and the soprano saxophone. It seems that Jarrett's depression signalled a need for him to rediscover what is most important to him; his connection with the primal source of music making: "[I went] back to the source of music – the flute, a drum – the primal sounds".[9] After recovering Jarrett has continued to record classical music.

From the time of the album *Spirits* to the present day, Jarrett divides his time between the Standards Trio, classical music, and his solo concerts. He currently resides in rural western New Jersey with his second wife, artist Rose Anne Colavito.[10]

The Solo Concerts and the Mystique that Surrounds Them

Jarrett's solo concerts, performed throughout Europe, America, and Asia for a period of over thirty-five years, have received rapturous acclaim from his admirers, and accusations of self-indulgence and pretension from his critics. Representing the most renowned and controversial part of Jarrett's impressive oeuvre, his solo concerts consist entirely of spontaneous improvisations, some of which manifest as colossal musical excursions lasting up to an hour at a

[5] Ted Rosenthal, 'The Insanity of Doing More than One Musical Thing', *Piano and Keyboard Magazine* (January 1997).
[6] Carr, *Keith Jarrett*, p. 151.
[7] Keith Jarrett, liner notes to *Well Tempered Klavier*, ECM 1362/63 (1987).
[8] Michael Tucker. *Dreaming with Open Eyes: The Shamanic Spirit in Twentieth Century Art and Culture* (London: Aquarian/Thorsons, 1992), p. 238.
[9] Carr, *Keith Jarrett*, p. 160.
[10] Ouellette, 'Out of Thin Air', p. 42.

time. This style of performance was highly innovative when Jarrett began performing solo concerts in the early 1970s, as it marked the first time that any jazz or classical solo instrumentalist in the West had been known to improvise throughout entire concerts.[11] The music of the solo concerts reveals a high level of compositional craft, and this is all the more impressive because it is, according to Jarrett, wholly spontaneous. This solo concert music is commonly categorised as 'free improvisation'.[12]

Jarrett's solo concerts are renowned for their unique theatricality. Prior to performance Jarrett will often lecture his audience on the risky nature of the creative process, emphasising the notion that his improvisations are prone to failure, as he has no idea where the music will go. These preconcert lectures add an element of drama and immediacy to Jarrett's performances. Jarrett's audience is expected to maintain absolute silence as he prepares for performance by sitting still at the piano for a number of minutes before playing. This can be observed on the DVD *Last Solo* (1987b), from his 1984 Tokyo solo concert. In a 1979 *New York Times Magazine* article, Jarrett describes a preparatory process where he empties himself of self-consciousness and preconceptions, "I try to turn off the thought process, I'd like to forget that I even have hands. I'd like to sit down as if I'd never played the piano before".[13] Jarrett strictly condemns any coughing, phone noises, tape recording or rustling of papers before and during his concerts, and if these requirements are not adhered to he is known to blame the audience openly for disrupting the flow of his performance. The stringent demands Jarrett places on his audiences and the resulting ambience of the concerts have led to the idea that the concerts resemble a sacred ritual. In a 1983 article in *Down Beat*, journalist Jon Balleras describes "the séance-like atmosphere which Jarrett demands at his appearances".[14] There is clearly a sense in which the atmosphere at Jarrett's concerts reflects that of a sacred ritual or even a religious ceremony; the silent,

[11] Peter S. Elsdon, *Keith Jarrett's Solo Concerts and the Aesthetics of Free Improvisation 1960-1973* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Univ. of Southampton, 2001), p. 95.

[12] Free improvisation developed in America and Europe in the 1960s largely as an outgrowth of free jazz. Where traditional improvisation means extemporising a melodic line over the harmonic sequence and tempo of a composition, free improvisation is an attempt to break down and reinvent rhythmic and harmonic structures altogether as musicians seek to play the unknown and avoid the formulaic. See Elsdon, *Keith Jarrett's Solo Concerts*, p. 2. For a thorough examination of the genre of free improvisation see pp. 117-139 of Elsdon's thesis.

[13] James L. Collier, 'Jazz in the Jarrett Mode', *New York Times Magazine* (7 January 1979), p. 17.

[14] J. Balleras, 'Keith Jarrett: Concerts', *Down Beat* (January 1983), p. 40.

well-behaved and receptive audience sits in expectation, facing the stage or altar as they anticipate revelation.

The element of theatricality continues in the course of performance with Jarrett's eccentric physical movements and vocal noises. During performance Jarrett might stand up, crouch over the piano, sway back and forth, jerk his head and stamp his feet, as if striving to coax more expression out of the instrument or, perhaps, more energy from his muse. Of his mannerisms Jarrett asserts that they are, "out of necessity… it's the only way I can get the piano to do what I want it to do".[15] His vocal noises consist primarily of "whoops", groans and high-pitched singing sounds, and are far more confronting and noticeable than the famous vocal sounds of pianists Glenn Gould, Thelonious Monk, Oscar Peterson and Herbie Hancock, and drummers Art Blakey and Elvin Jones. These theatrical aspects strongly contribute to the curious sense of the miraculous that has surrounded Jarrett's solo concerts.

Of a concert in New York in 1972, music critic Bob Palmer wrote in *Rolling Stone*, "When he plays alone, Jarrett pushes his creativity to its limits. It's almost scary to hear someone who apparently relies so totally on the spirited, flowing, almost effusive directions of his muse, yet the muse seems to never let him down".[16] Similarly, in his article, "The Magician and the Jugglers" (1981), Swiss critic Peter Ruedi states:

> Jarrett's art is an art of the moment… It is a magical incantation, a magic power… Jarrett does not quote from music history, he conjures with it. He is not a manneristic interpreter, he brings into being. He practises magic.[17]

These statements imply that Jarrett's perpetual creativity and seemingly endless source of inspiration disallow a rational, purely physical account of his performances. In the 1997 *New York Times* article, "The Jazz Martyr", music critic Andrew Solomon sees the mystique of Jarrett's concerts as a "great marketing triumph" and his "best selling point". In the jazz world, according to Solomon, Jarrett is known as "the inaccessible pianist", "the recluse", and even, as one critic designates him, "the Sphinx".[18]

In interviews and album liner notes Jarrett encourages this sense of mystique as he reinforces the idea that his improvisations are beyond the realm of rationality and physicality. In an interview for *Rolling Stone* in 1979 carried out backstage after a solo concert, Jarrett refused to discuss his performance

[15] Len Lyons, *The Great Jazz Pianists Speaking of Their Lives and Music* (New York: Quill, 1983), p. 298.
[16] Bob Palmer, 'Keith Jarrett 'Facing You'' *Rolling Stone* (December 1972), p. 48.
[17] Carr, *Keith Jarrett,* p. 133.
[18] Andrew Solomon, 'The Jazz Martyr', *New York Times* (9 February 1997), p. 3.

experience, implying that the creative process is beyond the grasp of conventional language:

> I never realized until now how vain and purposeless it would be to attempt to describe what I just did on stage… Words are a poor substitute for experience, and in order for me to talk about any of this at all, I'm going to have to play games with you... I think it's totally appropriate that we say nothing now.[19]

Later in the interview Jarrett speaks of his extreme vulnerability when performing:

> you know, its funny, but death hovers around quite a bit at a solo concert… the possibility that I might not live through a concert because of how vulnerable I am to anything that happens. It's like my ego isn't strong enough to protect me at those moments.[20]

Jarrett Discovers Gurdjieff

In the late 1960s Jarrett was playing with the Charles Lloyd quartet and on a particular tour Charles Lloyd, the band's leader and saxophonist, was, to quote Jarrett, "on a Gurdjieff kick".[21] During one of the quartet's flights Jarrett remembers finding a 1200-page book, presumably Lloyd's, on the seat next to him and browsing through it. According to Jarrett this book was Gurdjieff's *All and Everything*, which contained a chapter on music.[22] He is undoubtedly referring to the mammoth *Beelzebub's Tales To His Grandson* (henceforth *Tales*), the first series of the trilogy *All and Everything*. Jarrett recalls, "What it said about octaves was so simply, exactly what was true about an octave and so basic, yet I had been alive for twenty years and no one had mentioned this thing".[23] Carr suggests that the book that Jarrett encountered, which "came almost in the form of a revelation", was in fact Ouspensky's *In Search of the Miraculous* (henceforth *Search*) because "*All and Everything* [has] a chapter on art (which includes some remarks on music) but no chapter on music *per se*. In Ouspensky's *Search* there is a chapter on music with an exposition of Gurdjieff's idea of octaves and inner octaves to infinity".[24] It is true that the chapter "Art" in *Tales* devotes little space to music,[25] but Jarrett could well be referring to the fortieth chapter of *Tales*, "Beelzebub Tells How People

[19] Gilmore, 'Keith Jarrett's Keys to the Cosmos', p. 140.
[20] Gilmore, 'Keith Jarrett's Keys to the Cosmos', p. 148.
[21] Carr, *Keith Jarrett*, p. 41.
[22] Carr, *Keith Jarrett*, p. 41.
[23] Carr, *Keith Jarrett*, p. 41.
[24] Carr, *Keith Jarrett*, p. 41.
[25] George Ivanovich Gurdjieff, *All and Everything First Series: Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1964 [1950]), pp. 488-491.

Learned and Again Forgot About the Fundamental Cosmic Law of Heptaparaparshinokh", where Gurdjieff expounds his ideas on scales, octaves, harmonics and the stringed, seven-octave *Lav-Merz-Nokh*.[26] Jarrett also makes the point that he read a 1200-page book, which is the approximate size of *Tales*. *Search* is one third of that size. Nevertheless, according to Carr Jarrett eventually read "virtually all [of Gurdjieff's] works".[27]

It is difficult to speculate on Jarrett's understanding of Gurdjieff, as Gurdjieff's writings are difficult and, in the case of *Tales*, so demanding that it seems almost impenetrable. Jarrett's various statements on art and creativity, at the least, however, demonstrate a familiarity with central ideas in *Tales* and *Views From the Real World*. It should be noted that according to Carr, Jarrett stopped reading Gurdjieff's writings in the 1980s. This suggests that Jarrett was reading Gurdjieffian material over a period of more than ten years. It is not clear what Jarrett's later and current position on Gurdjieff is, though he did comment that even though he stopped reading Gurdjieff in the 1980s, "the impression shouldn't be that I have at some point or other refuted it…"[28] In fact it will become clear that Jarrett has internalised various Gurdjieffian ideas and that it is unlikely that he would even be able to differentiate his Gurdjieffian from his non-Gurdjieffian ideas. Therefore the later interviews referenced here are still relevant to a discussion on Gurdjieff's impact on Jarrett's beliefs.

The most obvious sign of Jarrett's admiration for Gurdjieff is his album *Sacred Hymns*, a collection of fifteen of Gurdjieff's short compositions for piano, recorded for ECM in 1980. Jarrett was familiar with Thomas de Hartmann's 1951 *The Music of Gurdjieff/ De Hartmann*, an obscure recording of Gurdjieff's piano music, and was able to make the music available to the general public for the first time.[29] *Sacred Hymns* was the first unauthorised recording of Gurdjieff's music as no official Gurdjieff group had been involved in any way. One independent member of the London group simply suggested the idea to Jarrett. Jarrett says of *Sacred Hymns*:

> [I]t was the most appropriate thing for me to record at the time, given that I knew more about it than just the music, and also given that I was asked by [a member of] the London group whether I would do it or not. That was enough for me. But it was also an exercise in disappearing personality. In the so-called Gurdjieff

[26] Gurdjieff, *All and Everything First Series*, pp. 847-870.
[27] Carr, *Keith Jarrett*, p. 128.
[28] Carr, *Keith Jarrett*, p.130.
[29] Carr, *Keith Jarrett*, p. 128.

> world, personality is not a positive thing… So I used that recording as an exercise in not inflicting that music with my personality.[30]

Jarrett is referring to Gurdjieff's notion of the false personality, the socially and culturally created shell that individuals develop as a protection against the world. Gurdjieff attempted to break down the habit of individuals to cling to this illusory personality.[31] *Sacred Hymns* certainly attests to this, as there is minimal gesture and none of Jarrett's usual eccentric vocalisations. Jarrett has clearly expressed as little of himself as possible in the recording.

Gurdjieff's Life and Teachings

George Ivanovitch Gurdjieff (c.1866-1949) was born of Greek-Armenian parentage in Alexandropol (Gyumri), near the border of Russian Armenia and Turkey in the Caucasus.[32] Of his early life one can rely only on Gurdjieff's own *Meetings With Remarkable Men* (henceforth *Meetings*) and the autobiographical portions of *Life Is Real Only Then When 'I Am'* (henceforth *Life*). As a young boy Gurdjieff became convinced that answers to his questions existed within certain ancient traditions. Over a period of eighteen years, from 1894 to 1912, Gurdjieff claims to have travelled to Egypt, Tibet, Afghanistan, and countries throughout Central Asia, gathering esoteric knowledge and studying ancient dance and folk music traditions, which he believed preserved hidden truths and laws.[33]

Gurdjieff appeared in Moscow in 1912 with a fully developed teaching, which he attributed to the discoveries made during his extensive travels. Over the next few years he gathered together groups of pupils, including Russian journalist P. D. Ouspensky and Russian composer Thomas de Hartmann.[34] The turmoil of World War I and the Russian revolution of 1917 caused Gurdjieff and his pupils to move to Tblisi in the Caucasus. Later they continued to Constantinople, Berlin and finally France where they settled in 1922 at the

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[30] Carr, *Keith Jarrett*, p. 129.
[31] Gurdjieff, *All and Everything First Series*, pp. 376-377.
[32] His year of birth is unclear and dates put forth generally range from 1866 to 1877. This obscurity appears to have been intentional on Gurdjieff's part, as he possessed a number of passports with inconsistent birth dates. In fact Webb claims that on a trip to America there was confusion over the details of Gurdjieff's passport as his date of birth was printed as some time in the future. Gurdjieff characteristically stated, "No mistake… you go arrange". James Webb, *The Harmonious Circle: The Lives and Work of G. I. Gurdjieff, P. D. Ouspensky and Their Followers* (UK: Thames and Hudson, 1980), p. 25.
[33] Thomas de Hartmann and Olga de Hartmann, *Our Life with Mr. Gurdjieff*, eds Thomas C. Daly and Thomas A. G. Daly, (London: Arkana Penguin Books, 1992 [1964]), p. xvii.
[34] Michel de Salzmann, 'Gurdjieff' in *The Encyclopaedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1987), p. 139.

Chateau du Prieuré in Avon near Fontainebleau where Gurdjieff opened his Institute For the Harmonious Development of Man. In 1924, driving alone from Paris to Fontainebleau, Gurdjieff had a near fatal car accident that led him to reassess his priorities. He disbanded the Institute and concentrated on transmitting his ideas in written form.[35] In the following decade he immersed himself in the writing of four books: *Tales*, first published in 1950, *Meetings*, first published in 1963, *Life*, first published in 1975 (these form the trilogy *All and Everything*), and the pamphlet *Herald of the Coming Good*, first published in 1933. The latter represents the only work published during Gurdjieff's lifetime, though he repudiated it the following year.[36] In 1949 in Paris, Gurdjieff choreographed his last Movements and days later died.

Gurdjieff left behind his trilogy *All and Everything*, over 200 pieces of music composed mainly for piano in collaboration with Thomas de Hartmann, and at least 250 Movements or sacred dances. His books, music and Movements each express his fundamental vision of self-development and collectively they represent the intellect, emotions and body, the three faculties or 'centres' of the individual that Gurdjieff taught must be brought into alignment. Gurdjieff's teachings are popularly known as 'The Work', meaning work to be done on oneself, or the 'Fourth Way'. From the 1950s onward, Gurdjieff's ideas began to spread both through the publication of his own writings and through the testimonies of his pupils. Gurdjieff's philosophy has influenced many modern musicians, artists, directors, choreographers, writers and thinkers such as Sergei Diaghilev, J. B. Priestly, Aldous Huxley, Moshe Feldenkrais, Frank Lloyd Wright, Aleister Crowley, Alan Watts, Robert Fripp, Peter Brook, Sun Ra, George Russell, and Keith Jarrett.[37] With the guidance of his pupils, Gurdjieff's teachings have been carried on through foundations and societies throughout the world.

Gurdjieff on the Cosmos, Music and the Goal of Three-Brained Beings

For Gurdjieff, musical laws and principles perfectly paralleled the structures of the entire '*Megalocosmos*' and all entities and processes within it. The

[35] C. Stanley Nott, *Teachings of Gurdjieff: A Pupil's Journal. An Account of Some Years With G. I. Gurdjieff and A. R. Orage in New York and at Fontainebleau-Avon* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978 [1961]), p. 83 and p. 92.

[36] David J. Pecotic, *Body and Correspondence in G. I. Gurdjieff's "Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson": A Case Study in the Construction of Categories in the Study of Esotericism* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Sydney, 2004), p. 14.

[37] Mel Gordon, 'Gurdjieff's Movement Demonstrations: The Theatre of the Miraculous', *The Drama Review*, vol. 22, no. 2 (1978), p. 34.

fundamental Law of Seven or *Heptaparaparshinokh*[38] is the tendency for developing processes to pass through seven deflections or centres of gravity. At each deflection matter has a different order of "Vivifyingness of Vibrations", which increase the nearer matter is to its origins in the *Sun Absolute*.[39] Due to *Heptaparaparshinokh*, all processes are reflections of the irregular intervallic organisation of the major scale. Where progress through the whole tones is smooth (*do re mi* and *fa sol la si*), two discontinuities occur between the semitones (between *mi* and *fa*, and *si* and *do*) and additional energy is needed to push through these stages of the progression. The ascending scale is a model for all 'involving' processes where the seven stages proceed from the finest, most dynamic matter to the coarsest matter. The descending scale reflects all 'evolving' processes proceeding from the coarsest to the finest matter again.[40] Gurdjieff's universe is composed entirely of matter that is continuously moving or vibrating in processes of involution and evolution. This music-cosmos analogy is expressed most broadly in Gurdjieff's theory of the Cosmic Octave that stretches down from the *Sun Absolute*: "The Cosmos is an octave of seven notes, each note of which can be subdivided into a further octave, and again and again to the uttermost divisible atom. Everything is arranged in octaves, each octave being one note of a greater octave until you come to the Cosmic Octave. From the Absolute, emanations go in every direction…"[41] As the octaves become smaller through these subdivisions, they eventually become "inner octaves" or harmonics, the spectrum of pure frequencies that governs all sound. Thus Gurdjieff considered music to be a powerful path to understanding cosmic realities.

The complementary nature of Gurdjieff's cosmology and soteriology becomes evident in chapter 39 of *Tales*, "The Holy Planet 'Purgatory'", where he describes the '*Foolasnitamnian* principle of existence', the fundamental cosmological aim of all 'three-brained beings' or '*Tetartocosmoses'* (human beings). (*Tales* is full of neologisms and provocative linguistic devices that

[38] It is fitting that *Heptaparaparshinokh* is the most significant cosmic law in Gurdjieff's universe as the number seven holds pride of place in so many esoteric systems, be it the seven metals of alchemy, the seven *chakras*, the seven Heavens of Islam, the seven Chaldaean planets or the seven Rays of Theosophy. Interestingly, Godwin suggests that this number symbolism may have originated in the discovery of the progression of seven fifths that completes the diatonic scale. Joscelyn Godwin, *Harmonies of Heaven and Earth: The Spiritual Dimension of Music From Antiquity to the Avant-Garde* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987), p. 137.

[39] Gurdjieff, *All and Everything First Series*, p. 139.

[40] Gurdjieff, *All and Everything First Series*, p. 137 and p. 758.

[41] G. I. Gurdjieff, *Views From the Real World* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976 [1973]), p. 189.

force the reader to slow down.) The *Foolasnitamnian* principle is the possibility for three-brained beings to produce 'higher being-bodies' composed of vibrations of 'greater Vivifyingness'. A 'higher being-body' initially coats the 'planetary body' and later separates from it, becoming an immortal soul and reuniting with the deity to help administer the universe.[42] The few 'learned beings' who follow the path of self-development prescribed by Gurdjieff are those that develop immortal souls. This path involves the co-ordination of one's three centres, the intellectual, emotional, and moving centres, which control the three brains. Only when these centres are aligned can one fully 'awaken' and become able to 'do': "To do means to act consciously and according to one's will".[43] The fate of the majority of three-brained beings is to provide *askokin* or vibrations for the moon after they die, as the moon requires energy to assist its evolution.[44]

For Gurdjieff, music functioned as a significant aid to self-development as it represents a 'being-food' or 'impression'. Three-brained beings metabolise three 'being-foods' of food and drink, air, and impressions due to the masticatory process of *Trogoautoegocrat* or reciprocal-feeding-of-everything-existing, which ensures that all cosmoses maintain one another.[45] Music is a type of auditory impression that, unlike other impressions such as visual impressions that are linked only to the first centre, has the power to create sensations in the three centres of the individual simultaneously.[46] Thus music was considered to be an especially significant tool for facilitating self-awareness and self-development as it involves and effects one's entire being.

Some brief statements by Jarrett will be referred to here as they directly relate to Gurdjieff's cosmological views as outlined above. In the 1992 *New York Times* article "Categories Aplenty, But Where's the Music?" Jarrett states, "Music has nutritional value, and without artists who need the music (and therefore have a voice), there will be no value in it". In the same article he praises the music of free jazz pioneer Ornette Coleman, pleading to listeners, "Please listen guys! This is natural intelligence and nutrition".[47] These statements may indicate that Jarrett has adopted Gurdjieff's notion of music as a being-food that nourishes the individual. Further, in the liner notes to *Spirits* (1986) Jarrett comments on electronic music, which he wholeheartedly rejected

[42] Gurdjieff, *All and Everything First Series*, pp. 763-764.
[43] Gurdjieff, *Views From the Real World*, p. 69.
[44] Gurdjieff, *All and Everything First Series*, p. 1105 and p. 1107.
[45] Gurdjieff, *All and Everything First Series*, pp. 136-137.
[46] Gurdjieff, *All and Everything First Series*, p. 491.
[47] K. Jarrett, 'Categories Aplenty, But Where's the Music?', *New York Times* (16 August, 1992).

after performing in Miles Davis' electric band, stating, "Electronic music for the moon is just more 'progress-filibustering'".[48] "Music for the moon", an exceptionally odd expression that is used in relation to a type of music that Jarrett despised, may well have stemmed from Gurdjieff's bizarre concept of the moon as consuming the vibrations of those who live in a state of sleep. For Jarrett, the moon might just as well consume the mind-numbing vibrations of electronic music too.

Objective and Subjective Music

As Gurdjieff saw the structures and principles of music as corresponding to those of all entities in the universe he believed in the scientific ability of musical tones and rhythms to affect listeners in very specific ways. The kind of music that could awaken and powerfully affect listeners was designated, on the one hand, 'objective music', and was considered to be composed with an exact knowledge of cosmic laws. 'Subjective music', on the other hand, was merely a mode of expression for the artist and produced only subjective responses in the listener. For Gurdjieff, objective music was the only valuable type of music. Some examples of the effects of objective music follow. In *Views From the Real World* it is recorded that Gurdjieff experimented with the tuning of a musical instrument and was able to produce the results he wanted in passers-by on the street.[49] In a more bizarre story in *Tales* he describes an old dervish that, when played on a specially tuned piano, could produce a boil on the leg of every listener at the exact spot of the leg that the composer had predicted. A different series of notes would then quickly make the boil disappear.[50] Gurdjieff also believed that objective music had the power to affect other living things. In *Meetings* he claims to have witnessed plants growing due to the sound of ancient Hebraic music.[51] Interestingly, Jarrett also speaks of the

[48] K. Jarrett, liner notes to *Spirits*, ECM 1333/34 (1986).
[49] Gurdjieff, *Views From the Real World*, p. 184.
[50] Gurdjieff, *All and Everything First Series*, pp. 894-895.
[51] G. I. Gurdjieff, *Meetings With Remarkable Men* (London: Pan Books, 1963), p. 133. The physical and emotional effects of music on living things have received the attention of many thinkers throughout history. Pythagoras, who argued that the mathematical ratios governing the intervals of the harmonic series corresponded to those governing the periodicity of the planets, believed that music could improve and cure illnesses or, on the contrary, make one sick. F. B. Brown, 'Music', in *Religion and Emotion*, ed. John Corrigan, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 204. In the *Old Testament* David cures Saul's madness by playing a harp (I Samuel 16.14-23) and blaring trumpets and shouts toppled the walls of Jericho (Joshua 6.12-20). Similar ideas were taken up in the Middle Ages, most notably in the work of Johannes Kepler (1571-1630), Robert Fludd's (1574-1637) *Utriusque Cosmii* (c.1621), and Athanasius Kircher's (1602-1980) *Musurgia Universalis* (1650) and

powerful physical effect of music on individuals. In an interview for *Rolling Stone* in 1979 he states that his beliefs about the detrimental effect of electronic music on the individual are "physiological facts. Just being in the same room with it is harmful, like smoking cigarettes…"[52] This is an unusual statement that might well bear the mark of Gurdjieffian theory.

In the chapter "Art" in *Tales*, Gurdjieff expands on his theory of objective and subjective music to encompass art, and speaks of the relationship between objective art and ancient art. Gurdjieff considered ancient art to be encoded with a hidden knowledge of cosmic truths, and if a modern artist deciphers this knowledge and translates it into art, it becomes 'objective' and can be used "for the benefit of [three-brained beings'] ordinary existence".[53] Objective art has the inherent power to challenge and 'awaken' individuals. In 'Gurdjieff's Movement Demonstrations: The Theatre of the Miraculous' (1978) Mel Gordon states:

> The function of… [objective art] was not the invocation of aesthetic beauty or the imitation of surface reality, but rather the initiation of the recipient into a completely different place of understanding, to awaken him into experiencing the sense of cosmic place and time, to permanently shatter and enlarge his socially-delimited notion of personality.[54]

In what seems to be a response to Gurdjieff's view of art as a means of preserving hidden knowledge, Jarrett states in the liner notes to *Spirits* (1986):

> Art exists as a reminder. All true art is a reminder of forgotten, or soon-to-be forgotten, relationships, whether it be God and man, man and woman, earth and humanity, colour and form etc… What if art is the only way left to penetrate the armour we've built up to eliminate seeing our true nature.[55]

Jarrett, like Gurdjieff, sees art as having the potential to relate age-old truths to the beholder.

Phonurgia Nova (1673). In the latter Kircher claims that music can cure werewolves and madmen, and diagnoses a musical cure for tarantula bites. In recent times, Peter Tompkins and Christopher Bird explore the effects of music on plants in *The Secret Life of Plants* (1975). After collecting an impressive body of evidence, the authors claim that plants flourish when certain music or tones are played in their vicinity. They found that Indian *ragas* and Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* made them sprout faster, while playing the note F for eight hours a day retarded and even killed some plants. P. Tompkins and C. Bird, *The Secret Life of Plants* (London: Allen Lane, 1974), pp. 135-145.

[52] Gilmore, 'Keith Jarrett's Keys to the Cosmos', p. 146.

[53] Gurdjieff, *All and Everything First Series*, p. 488.

[54] Gordon, 'Gurdjieff's Movement Demonstrations', p. 7.

[55] K. Jarrett, liner notes to *Spirits*, ECM 1333/34 (1986).

Jarrett on Improvisation as a Means of Awakening

Gurdjieff's vision of the universe and central views on matters of music, art, and soteriology are great in scope and complexity, and have been presented as concisely as possible. It is time now to turn to Jarrett's own statements on improvisation and decipher these in light of Gurdjieffian philosophy. It will become clear that the teachings of Gurdjieff have shaped the way Jarrett understands and articulates his experiences improvising. The following examination can be divided into two sections. The first section is concerned with Jarrett's statements on the power of improvisation, and his aim as an improviser. This will be discussed with reference to Gurdjieff's ideas on the potential for art to 'awaken' the individual, and the problem of 'identification' and unconscious, mechanical behaviour. The second section is an attempt to unveil Jarrett's striking statements on the creative process as presented in the liner notes to *Bridge of Light*, where he professes to "surrender to an ongoing harmony"[56] and *Solo Concerts*, where he claims that he is "a channel for the Creative".[57] These will be examined with reference to Gurdjieff's teachings.

In what must be a direct response to Gurdjieff's ideas on objective music, Jarrett claims that his goal as an artist is not self-expression but is, instead, to make his listeners more "alert". Jarrett asserts:

> Just the other day, someone who had heard the *Vienna Concert* said to me, 'I get to these points in listening where I thought I knew what you were going to do, and you didn't do it'. And I said, 'Well, how did you feel when that happened?' He said, 'I became more alert'… that is already justification for me to do what I'm doing. That's what I want to happen. To make someone more alert is the biggest thing music can do…[58]

Jarrett's artistic aim is to challenge listeners by actively avoiding the predictable, and thus encouraging them to remain alert to the fact that anything can happen at any time. This is, however, only a superficial reading of Jarrett's statement and with an understanding of Gurdjieff's philosophy it is possible to go further in interpreting it, as it seems that Jarrett's aims are considerably deeper. By breaking listeners out of their mechanical listening habits Jarrett challenges their inherent mechanical, sleep-like approaches to life. That is, Jarrett may believe that his improvisations have the 'objective' power to wake individuals from their lethargic states and shatter their limiting, habitual ways.

[56] K. Jarrett, liner notes to *Bridge of Light*, ECM 1450 (1993).
[57] K. Jarrett, liner notes to *Solo Concerts*, ECM 1035/37 (1973).
[58] Robert L. Doerschuk, *88: The Giants of Jazz Piano* (San Francisco: Backbeat Books, 2001), p. 267.

For Jarrett, the moment-to-moment process of improvising means that he himself must remain thoroughly alert and in the present moment if he is to realise the potential of every instant:

> The alertness that is produced by committing yourself to a process rather than to the subject matter having to be transformed in any particular way demands that you sacrifice what you could do in a certain instant for what the potential of that instant is… in the solo concerts I use the music to wake up more.[59]

Similarly he states, "My job over the years has been not to make great music but to become ever more conscious of what it is I'm doing and what I'm perceiving".[60] Thus Jarrett understands the process of improvisation not only as a means of awakening his audience, but also as a way in which he, too, can become "ever more conscious". It seems possible that improvisation may function for Jarrett as a kind of Gurdjieffian exercise in 'awakening'. Gurdjieff did not discuss musical improvisation specifically, though he did treat the process of spontaneously transcribing music as a beneficial exercise. De Hartmann describes the process of transcribing Gurdjieff's musical ideas, which were rapidly dictated to him:

> Mr Gurdjieff sometimes whistled or played on the piano with one finger a very complicated sort of melody… To grasp this melody, to transcribe it in European notation, required a *tour de force*… I had to scribble down at feverish speed the tortuous shifts and turns of the melody… [he made it into] a personal exercise for me to 'catch' and 'grasp' the essential character… of the music… it was a constant difficulty, a never-ending test.[61]

It is interesting to consider whether improvisation really can 'awaken' an artist, as improvisation is commonly understood as an automatic or unconscious process, like an audible stream-of-consciousness. If one accepts this conception of improvisation then Jarrett's claim would make no sense in relation to Gurdjieff's philosophy. In Gurdjieff's world, unconscious, mechanical actions indicate that one has lost or forgotten oneself in 'identification', an opposite state to that of 'awakening'. Azize says, "Etymologically, 'identification' is 'it-being-making', or 'becoming it'. This is why it is an aspect of sleep: in identification, we practically become 'it'".[62] Indeed, Gurdjieff asserts:

> There can be no unconscious creative art, and our feeling is very stupid. It sees only one side, whereas understanding of everything must be of all sides… art is a means for harmonious development. In

[59] Doerschuk, *88: The Giants of Jazz Piano*, pp. 268-270.
[60] Solomon, 'The Jazz Martyr', p. 3.
[61] Hartmann and Hartmann, *Our Life with Mr. Gurdjieff*, pp. 245-246.
[62] G. M. Adie and J. Azize, *George Adie: A Gurdjieff Pupil in Australia* (UK: Lighthouse Editions, 2007), p. 38.

> everything we do the underlying idea is to do what cannot be done automatically and without thought.[63]

Jarrett's understanding of improvisation, however, perfectly accords with Gurdjieff's principles as he rejects the common conception of improvisation as automatic and views it instead as a much "deeper" process that has more to do with waking than sleeping:

> One of the bad raps improvisation is always going to have, and it'll have that based on very valid, provable things, is that it is an off-the-top-of-your-head, pattern-related, non-intellectual thing. Whereas in reality, with consciousness, improvisation is a much deeper tapping of something than any other process.[64]

Furthermore, Jarrett speaks of the problem of 'identification' in both art and life, "The one thing that has governed what I've done, throughout my musical career, has been not to identify with something I did. That may be the most important thing, not just in art but in your whole life".[65]

Jarrett on The Cosmic Significance of Improvisation

Jarrett's most striking accounts of the creative process appear in the liner notes to *Bridge of Light* (1993) and *Solo Concerts* (1973). In the liner notes to *Bridge of Light* Jarrett declares, "[My music reflects] a state of surrender to an ongoing harmony in the universe that exists with or without us".[66] Jarrett's "ongoing harmony" suggests a mystical view of a universe governed by sacred vibrations, or, in Gurdjieffian terms, a "common-cosmic harmony".[67] By stating that he 'surrenders' to an eternal harmony, he implies that his improvisations are not personal expressions but are, instead, objective forms of art that convey cosmic truth. Jarrett never uses the term 'objective music', but alludes to the notion that his improvisations are aligned with greater cosmic laws. This accords with Gurdjieff's vision of the universe as reflecting musical structures and vice versa. In a radio interview with Michael Toms on *New Dimensions Radio*, Toms asks Jarrett when and how he realised music was his calling. Jarrett states that it was around the age of twenty when he became aware that what he had been feeling when playing was not emotional but was

[63] Gurdjieff, *Views From the Real World*, p. 179 and p. 183.
[64] Carr, *Keith Jarrett*, p. 66.
[65] Bob Palmer, 'The Inner Octaves of Keith Jarrett', *Down Beat* (October 1974), p. 46.
[66] Keith Jarrett, liner notes to *Bridge of Light*, ECM 1450 (1993).
[67] Gurdjieff, *All and Everything First Series*, p. 180.

instead "more or less based on laws… there was some sonic reality that if tapped would produce music automatically".[68]

This may explain why Jarrett explores and emphasises the harmonic series in his improvisations. That is, open octaves, fifths and fourths are constantly reinforced. (These are the most prominent intervals of the harmonic series.) He also often repeats single notes at different volumes and durations, sometimes for minutes at a time, as if exploring the harmonic frequencies that can be conjured from the keyboard.[69] Indeed, in an article in *Piano and Keyboard Magazine* in 1997 Jarrett asserts, "I think what I see is the never-ending motion inside the chords whether they're still or not".[70] Similarly in *Views* Gurdjieff speaks of the "melody contained in one note".[71]

In an interview with Robert Doerschuk, Jarrett speaks of the scientific quality of improvisation, as he likens the creative process to the most basic of elements:

> There are only chemicals at your disposal – the chemical of sound – and the audience. If audiences truly understand that they would never think its weird if I stop because they're coughing or making noise. I'm a chemist up there, trying to hold the beaker without letting it shake, and then pouring the next ingredient into it.[72]

Similarly, Gurdjieff describes musical principles as "objective chemistry".[73] Jarrett's almost scientific philosophy of improvisation might explain why he believes that his music has the power to affect individuals, and even produce in them predictable results:

> I have experiences often at concerts where the listeners that really were able to listen were not professional listeners… [They] had no idea what I would do or not do… They received exactly what happened. They can come backstage sometimes and say this happened here, and I realized… I'm hearing from a total stranger… that what I'm doing isn't personal emotion at all; it's an objective thing.[74]

In the earlier liner notes to *Solo Concerts* (1973), Jarrett's "ongoing harmony" is deified, "I don't believe that I can create, but that I can be a channel for the Creative. I do believe in the Creator, and so in reality the album is His album

[68] Michael Toms, *The Well of Creativity: Julia Cameron, Natalie Goldberg, Deena Metzger, Keith Jarrett, Isabel Allende and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi with Michael Toms* (Carlsbad: Hay House, 1997), p. 75.
[69] Doerschuk, *88: The Giants of Jazz Piano*, p. 272.
[70] Rosenthal, 'The Insanity of Doing More than One Musical Thing'.
[71] Gurdjieff, *Views From the Real World*, p. 186.
[72] Doerschuk, *88: The Giants of Jazz Piano*, p. 270.
[73] Gurdjieff, *Views From the Real World*, p. 21.
[74] Toms, *The Well of Creativity*, p. 77.

through me to you, with as little in between as possible on this media-conscious earth".[75] In *The Channeling Zone* (1997) Michael Brown defines channelling as the use of altered states of consciousness to contact spirits or to experience "spiritual energy". It involves a mild form of dissociation that begins after a few minutes of meditation.[76] Brown distinguishes between conscious channelling, where the channel remains aware of what is around them, and trance channelling, where the channel pushes aside the ego to "make room for pure knowledge from a higher source".[77] Jarrett's experiences as he conveys them would fit the latter form.

In the *Solo Concerts* liner notes Jarrett reveals his belief in a 'Creator', which may be inspired by Gurdjieff's deity in *Tales* who is also commonly named CREATOR and is, like Jarrett's Creator, referred to in the masculine. Gurdjieff, in his characteristically complex cosmic vision, distinguishes between the deity and the Absolute, which is "the real God, by which word we sometimes still call our common Megalocosmos".[78] Jarrett's Creator is most likely a deification of the ultimate principle or truth that he so often refers to, and for this reason might, in fact, resemble Gurdjieff's Absolute. It is interesting that in the later liner notes to *Concerts* (1981) Jarrett also appears to refer to a particular term used in *Tales*, "Improvisation is more than the word expresses. It is a great responsibility… It is a blazing forth of a Divine Will…"[79] Gurdjieff employs this exact term in *Tales* when he speaks of "the Divine Will Power of our ENDLESSNESS".[80] This may be a coincidence but considering that Jarrett was actively reading Gurdjieff's writings at the time he wrote both liner notes, it seems possible that Jarrett adopted Gurdjieffian terminology ('Creator' and 'Divine Will') to facilitate his articulation of his belief in a fundamental creative source.

As he reveals in the liner notes to *Bridge of Light* and *Solo Concerts*, Jarrett understands improvisation as a mystical process where he aims to connect with an ultimate cosmic principle, and convey this principle to his listeners in a pure and unadulterated way: "…in reality the album is His album [the 'Creator'] through me to you, with as little in between as possible on this media-conscious earth".[81] It is interesting that Jarrett does not speak about his jazz and classical performances, or the process of composition, in this same

[75] K. Jarrett, liner notes to *Solo Concerts*, ECM 1035/37 (1973).
[76] Michael F. Brown, *The Channelling Zone: American Spirituality in an Anxious Age* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1997), p. viii and p. 21.
[77] Brown, *The Channeling Zone*, p. 25 and p. 35.
[78] Gurdjieff, *All and Everything First Series*, p. 775.
[79] Keith Jarrett, liner notes to *Concerts*, ECM 1227 (1981).
[80] Gurdjieff, *All and Everything First Series*, p. 756.
[81] Keith Jarrett, liner notes to *Solo Concerts*, ECM 1035/37 (1973).

mystical fashion. For Jarrett, improvisation is a unique and profound musical process in that an improviser does not make theoretical decisions but instead is virtually propelled into the present moment and must therefore utilise only what is essential. He states, "Improvisation is really the deepest way to deal with moment-to-moment reality in music. There is no deeper way, personally deeper".[82] Through improvisation Jarrett attempts to strip away all that is extraneous and seek the elemental and the objective. Gurdjieff also idealised a stripping down to what is essential, as is articulated by Azize:

> Forms can be dazzling. With discrimination – the ability to sense the substance within the form – one comes more swiftly to the essential… Ultimately one can come to a direct apprehension of the unity behind the plurality of forms…[83]

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to disentangle Jarrett's intriguing and little understood statements regarding the creative process. Jarrett most often presents these in the forms of convoluted ramblings in liner notes or gnomic remarks in interviews, making the scholarly assessment of them somewhat problematic. However, through an analysis of his strong interest in the esoteric philosophy of Gurdjieff, Jarrett's beliefs were examined and interpreted. For instance, Jarrett claims that his goal when improvising is to 'wake up' and to keep listeners 'alert'. On their own, these statements are of little value, but when read in light of Gurdjieffian philosophy, one gains a much deeper insight into Jarrett's intentions. That is, these claims suggest that Jarrett's artistic aim is considerably greater: to challenge his audience's inherent mechanistic conditions through the powerful medium of music. This indicates that Jarrett believes that his improvisations have the ability to dramatically alter people's perceptions and approaches to life.

Also explored were Jarrett's alluring statements on the very source of his creativity which he expresses in the liner notes to *Bridge of Light* and *Solo Concerts*. References to an "ongoing harmony", a "Creator" and an ability to "channel the Creative" were interpreted as possible references to Gurdjieff's 'common-cosmic harmony', or the fundamental vibrations that govern the *Megalocosmos*. Jarrett may understand his improvisations as literally reflecting cosmic laws and structures, and this explains why he believes that he can so powerfully affect listeners; his improvisations are a vehicle for communicating truth. This perfectly resembles Gurdjieff's theory that musical structures

[82] Art Lange, 'The Keith Jarrett Interview', in *Down Beat: 60 Years of Jazz*, ed. Frank Alkyer (Wisconsin: Hal Leonard, 1995), p. 206.
[83] Adie and Azize, *George Adie*, p. 34.

parallel cosmic structures, and that music has the power to affect dramatically and benefit individuals. To summarise, Jarrett's understanding of music as 'nutritional', as a means to 'awakening' (for both artist and beholder), and as having the capacity to affect the listener predictably, not to mention his striking references to an "ongoing harmony", "Creator", and "Divine Will", strongly indicate that Gurdjieffian teachings greatly facilitated Jarrett in conceptualising his mysterious improvisatory experiences.