

# Ichiban no Takaramono

Keep The Beats! (2010)

composer: Jun Maeda

arranger: Hikarisuyuo

\*annotations describe staves above

General comments: This is one of my favorite of the Angel Beats songs. Either this or Shine Days. This song is saved by Lisa's great vocals (at least I'm infatuated with them) - yet this song is really, really repetitive. Well, the repetitiveness is what saves the song, since the B theme is really powerful, and it just keeps hitting you over and over. It does have a powerful effect. Although I enjoy the song a lot, it's a lackluster composition.

$\text{♩} = 63$



I swear I've heard this same type of introduction before...it's so typical it probably does exist almost verbatim somewhere. Nothing special about it, it merely plays its function as an introduction. From these four albums Maeda never began a song with the B theme, as is common by other composers. I almost wish he did so that (1) his songs didn't follow the same boring pattern and (2) the songs were more coherent and tightly structured. Using the B theme - parts of it, altered or otherwise - is a great way to force your song to flow with itself, whereas sticking in a mediocre instrumental intro is pretty easy. It's much harder, however, to begin with a vocal and very melodic introduction that flows beautifully into the A theme (ryo's Sayonara Memories is a great example of this).

6

Am F B $\flat$  C

11

Dm Dm $\triangle$

The first phrase of the A theme is at heart a two bar figure repeated three times, each with a different ending. Measures 9, 11, and 13 are identical, yet the bars that follow each resolve the melody in opposing ways. First (m. 10) is down, then (m. 12) down, then (m. 14) down at first but then adds a coda in order to move on to the next phrase. I like the added chromatic in m. 15. While you could interpret it as a DmMaj7, it could also be heard as a D5addMaj7 (no third).

16

D Gm Am B $\flat$  Dm

I really really like the first half of the second phrase of the A section. It just has this really nice flow - it derives its force not from a repetition of a very short idea, but from a long, more intricate momentum built up from a longer phrase. This is the kind of phrase that's much harder to compose! Interestingly, its rhythm is almost identical to the B theme. I'm not sure if this is some kind of preparation (I doubt it is, because the second half of this phrase totally ruins it with the bIII-IV (chromatic E-flat) and the awkward fermata on the high C.

21

Gm Am A $\flat$  B $\flat$  B $\flat$  B $\flat$

28 B $\flat$  C A D E A E

Just as with the first phrase of the A theme, the B theme is a two-bar figure strung together many, many times. There's nothing really special about it - rather, it's lucky. It's so high up that it features Lisa's ability to hit the high notes (which is, again, why I think she saves this song).

33 F $\sharp$ m D E A A

38 D E A F $\sharp$ m D

43 E A

48 2

I really like these chords (in blue). The descending chromatics from d-sharp add some much-needed color to this song.

54 A D E A E F $\sharp$ m

Where there's usually an interlude, the guitar just picks up the B theme again. Interesting move - it adds a subtle touch to the B theme, making it more gentle and soft than powerful and emotional. Looking back now, playing the B theme on the instruments during the traditional interlude section is a really great device, especially for these kinds of themes where it's just one repeated figure over and over, ironically - since you'd think that repeating it some more would drive you crazy.

59 D E A A D

64 E A F $\sharp$ m D E

69 A A D E A E

74

F#m D E A A

79

D E A F#m D

84

E A A Bb

88

Eb F Bb F Gm Eb

You could see this one coming a mile away. Directly modulating up a half step is the epitome of pop techniques used to drive the song home. It may be a really cliché tool, but it works.

93

F Bb Bb Eb F

98

Bb Gm Eb F Bb

After the B theme in the vocals ends the guitar just picks it up again. How many times you play it is up to your own discretion. It's a pretty simple vamp, so you can get crazy with it if you want. Functionally speaking, ending on the B theme is more than just fading out; similar to the interlude, repeating the B theme on guitar adds a nice sense of gentleness. The important part is that it adds on to the theme after the fact. Most of the time, the interlude or outro will move to some different melodic and harmonic material that affects the B theme temporally. Using an arranged (instrumental) B theme as the interlude or outro is all about capturing the same musical idea in a much different light (obviously) - it's sort of like a call and response, with two people saying the same thing but the end product being greater than the sum of the parts. It's kind of hard to explain...