

CHAPTER 10: FRACTURED LIGHT

Style: Ant Law Odd-Meter | **Key:** F# Minor | **Tempo:** 140 BPM | **Time:** 7/4

OVERVIEW

"Light broken through a prism—seven distinct colors, one unified beam."

Fractured Light pushes into 7/4 territory, channeling Ant Law's fearless approach to odd meters. The title evokes light passing through a prism, separating into components yet remaining coherent. This tune teaches odd-meter fluency, phrasing across bar lines, and the art of making asymmetry feel natural.

Playing Tip: Feel 7/4 as 4+3 or 3+4. Find your natural grouping, then break it apart.

THE FORM

28-bar form (4×7 -bar sections) in 7/4:

Section 1 - Intro (Bars 1-7):

F#m9	Emaj7	D#m7b5	C#7alt	
Bm9	Amaj7	G#m7b5		

Section 2 - Triad Solo (Bars 8-14):

F#m	E	D#dim	C#m	
Bm	A	G#dim		

Section 3 - Quartal Chord Melody (Bars 15-21):

F#m11	Emaj9	D#m11	C#7#9	
Bm11	Amaj7#11	G#m7b5		

Section 4 - Outro (Bars 22-28):

F#m9	Emaj7	D#m7b5	C#7alt	
Bm9	Amaj7	F#m9		

7/4 Feel Options:**4+3:** | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 | (rock-influenced)**3+4:** | 1 2 3 | 1 2 3 4 | (waltz-influenced)**2+2+3:** | 1 2 | 1 2 | 1 2 3 | (subdivided)**Key Harmonic Features**

1. **F# minor center:** Dark, modern minor key
2. **Descending bass motion:** F# → E → D# → C#
3. **Altered dominants:** C#7alt adds tension
4. **Half-diminished chords:** D#m7b5, G#m7b5 for color

SCALE PALETTE

Chord	Primary Scale	Odd-Meter Application
F#m9	F# Dorian	7-note phrases (one per beat)
Emaj7	E Lydian	A# as lift over 7 beats
D#m7b5	D# Locrian #2	Tension release
C#7alt	C# Altered (Super Locrian)	Maximum tension before resolution
Bm9	B Dorian	Relative major brightness
Amaj7	A Lydian	D# color tone
G#m7b5	G# Locrian	Leading back to F#m

7/4 Phrasing Strategy

Build phrases that emphasize the meter:

7-note cell: F# - G# - A - B - C# - D - E (one note per beat)
 4+3 phrase: F#-G#-A-B | C#-D-E (pause)
 3+4 phrase: F#-G#-A | B-C#-D-E (pause)

TRIAD VOCABULARY

Chord	Triad Pair 1	Triad Pair 2	7/4 Pattern
F#m9	F#m	A	4 beats F#m + 3 beats A
Emaj7	E	G#m	3 beats E + 4 beats G#m
D#m7b5	D#dim	F#m	Tension/release over 7
Bm9	Bm	D	2+2+3 subdivision

7-Beat Triad Patterns

Pattern 1: | F#m arp (4 beats) | A arp (3 beats) |
 Pattern 2: | E arp (3 beats) | G#m arp (4 beats) |
 Pattern 3: | Bm-D-F#m-A | 7 beats, one triad every 1.75 beats |

THE THREE CHORUSES

Chorus 1: Lyrical 7 (Version A)

Concept: Melodic phrases that flow across the 7/4

- **Bars 1-4:** 4+3 phrasing, melody arcs over bar lines
- **Bars 5-7:** 3+4 phrasing for contrast
- **Breath points:** Beat 7 or beat 1 as natural rests
- **Dynamic shaping:** Crescendo to beat 5, diminuendo to 7

Phrasing Map:

Bar 1: Melodic arc starting beat 1, peak at beat 5
 Bar 2: Continuation, resolving at beat 7
 Bar 3: New phrase starting beat 4 (cross-bar phrasing)
 Bar 4: Resolution on beat 3 (unexpected rest)

Chorus 2: Triad Weaving in 7 (Version B)

Concept: Triads that emphasize the 7/4 subdivisions

- **Bars 8-10:** F#m → E → D#dim with 4+3 feel
- **Bars 11-14:** C#m → Bm → A → G#dim with 3+4 feel
- **Triad changes:** On beat 1 and beat 5 (in 4+3)

Triad Rhythm:

Bar	Beat 1	Beat 5	Feel
8	F#m arp	A arp	4+3
9	E arp	G#m arp	4+3
10	D#dim arp	F#m arp	4+3

Chorus 3: Quartal in 7 (Version C)

Concept: Quartal voicings that ride the 7/4 groove

- **Bars 15-17:** F#m11 → Emaj9 → D#m11 with sustained voicings
- **Bars 18-21:** C#7#9 → Bm11 → Amaj7#11 → G#m7b5
- **Rhythmic placement:** Chords on beats 1, 4, 6 for asymmetry

Voicing Placement:

7/4:		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Chords:		X	-	-	X	-	X	-	

VOICING REFERENCE

F# Minor Family

```
F#m9:      2-4-2-2-2-2 (barre shape)
Emaj7:     0-2-1-1-0-0 (open position)
D#m7b5:    x-6-7-6-7-x (half-diminished)
C#7alt:   x-4-3-4-2-x (altered dominant)
Bm9:      x-2-0-2-2-2 (open with extensions)
Amaj7:     x-0-2-1-2-0 (open position)
G#m7b5:    4-x-4-4-3-x (leading to F#m)
```

Quartal Voicings

```
F#m11 quartal: 2-2-4-4-2-x (stacked 4ths)
Emaj9 quartal: 0-2-2-1-2-x (open string included)
Bm11 quartal: x-2-4-2-3-x (hybrid voicing)
```

TECHNIQUE: ODD-METER FLUENCY

Internalizing 7/4

1. **Count out loud:** 1-2-3-4-5-6-7, emphasizing your subdivision
2. **Tap and play:** Foot on 1 and 4 (or 1 and 5), hands play phrases
3. **Walk in 7:** Physical movement helps internalize
4. **Loop practice:** Play single chord for minutes in 7/4

Subdivision Exercises

- Exercise 1 (4+3): Count "1-2-3-4, 1-2-3" repeatedly
 - Exercise 2 (3+4): Count "1-2-3, 1-2-3-4" repeatedly
 - Exercise 3 (2+2+3): Count "1-2, 1-2, 1-2-3" repeatedly
 - Exercise 4: Switch between feels every 4 bars
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PRACTICE ROUTINE

Week 1: Feel the 7

- [] Practice counting 7/4 with metronome (click on 1 only)
- [] Work on 4+3 and 3+4 feels separately
- [] Learn Version A focusing on phrasing

Week 2: Triads in 7

- [] Master triad changes on beats 1 and 5
- [] Practice smooth voice leading in 7/4
- [] Work on Version B with rhythmic precision

Week 3: Quartal in 7

- [] Learn asymmetric chord placement
- [] Practice hybrid picking for quartal voicings
- [] Learn Version C with proper feel

Week 4: Fluency

- [] Play through all three choruses
- [] Focus on making 7/4 feel natural

- [] Record and evaluate for groove and accuracy
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LISTENING RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Ant Law** – *Zero Sum World* (odd-meter mastery)
 2. **Tigran Hamasyan** – *Mockroot* (odd meters + modern jazz)
 3. **Sting** – "Seven Days" (accessible 7/4)
 4. **Dave Brubeck** – "Unsquare Dance" (classic 7/4)
 5. **Meshuggah** – any track (extreme polyrhythm, for study)
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TONE TIPS

For Fractured Light: - **Articulate clean:** Every note must be clear - **Tight low end:** Especially important in odd meters - **Moderate reverb:** Don't wash out the rhythm - **Compression:** For consistent attack - **Consider drop tuning:** Drop D for deeper bass notes

COMMON PITFALLS

1. **Losing beat 1:** Always know where you are in the 7
 2. **Forcing 4/4 phrasing:** Embrace the 7, don't fight it
 3. **Inconsistent subdivision:** Pick 4+3 or 3+4 and commit
 4. **Rushing through discomfort:** Slow down until 7/4 is natural
 5. **Ignoring the groove:** Odd meters can still feel good
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THE FRACTURED LIGHT CONCEPT

The title suggests: 1. **Light through a prism:** 7 colors, 7 beats 2. **Coherent yet broken:** Unity in asymmetry 3. **Unexpected beauty:** Odd meters have their own elegance 4. **Refraction:** Melodies bent by the meter

When playing this piece, imagine white light entering a crystal—what emerges is separated yet remains light.

SELF-EVALUATION

- [] Can I feel 7/4 without counting?
 - [] Do my phrases flow naturally across the bar?
 - [] Is my subdivision consistent?
 - [] Are my triad changes on time?
 - [] Does the tune groove despite being in 7?
 - [] Would Ant Law recognize this as fluent odd-meter playing?
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