ALL BLUES
Miles Davis

Structure and Tone

• **Head Arrangement** (based on a main theme or 'head', with an improvised solo section in the middle: HEAD...SOLOS...HEAD)
  • Includes intro and outro

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intro</td>
<td>Intro – 8 bars Two four bar sections (called Intro 1 and Intro 2).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 bars</td>
<td>Intro 1 – piano tremolo Intro 2 – saxes join in with the main riff (interval is a third)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head</td>
<td>Muted trumpet plays 12-bar theme or ‘head’ whilst saxes play main riff in the background Link (based on Intro 2) 12-bar head again on muted trumpet Link (based on Intro 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 bars</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvised</td>
<td>1. Trumpet (48 bars) Link (based on Intro 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Alto sax (48 bars) Link (based on Intro 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Tenor sax (48 bars) Link (based on Intro 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Piano (24 bars) Saxes play main riff after</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-bar pattern repeated</td>
<td>14 times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head</td>
<td>Same as first Head section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 bars</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outro</td>
<td>Fades out Saxes play main riff again Trumpet plays a new riff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 bars</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Chord Pattern:

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D7#9</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Tonality: In the key of G throughout, but uses modal tonality.

How are the elements used?

**Structure**

• Head arrangement with intro & outro
  • Intro-Head-Solos-Head - Outro

**Tonality and Harmony**

• Modal
  • The standard 12 bar blues chord progression is altered by extended chords (addings 7ths and 9ths), link is inserted between repeats, ‘turnaround’ chords vary in the head and solos.
  • Chords like D7#9 are known as altered, extended or substitution chords.
  • The term ‘changes’ is the chord sequence in a jazz piece

**Timbre and Texture**

• Melody and Accompaniment
  • Drums/Piano/Bass = Rhythm Section (accompaniment)
  • Trumpet plays the main theme ‘Head’
  • Saxophones play the riff in the Head sections
  • Alto sax, Tenor sax, Trumpet and Piano all take solos
  • At the end of each solo, there is a link (like the intro) where the frontline instruments drop out

**Dynamics**

• The intro is quite soft
  • The trumpet uses a mute in the Head section, which makes it sound quieter and ‘far away’
  • First trumpet solo has lots dynamic variety as he plays with expression.
  • Generally the trumpet solo is quite loud

**Melody**

• The Head is the main melody of the piece
  • Trumpet plays the head
  • Two saxophones play the riff in the Head in an interval of a third apart.
  • Chromatic notes are used in the melody (notes that are not in the key of the piece)
  • The melody is modal

**Rhythmic devices**

• Swung rhythms
  • Syncopation
  • Time signature is 6/4
  • Tempo of 156 BPM
  • Feel laid back as the bar is split into two slow beats

The piece features two types of saxophone – **alto sax** is smaller and higher than a **tenor sax**

The bass player is using a **double bass** (sometimes called string bass or upright bass) and, as is common in jazz, he **plucks the strings (plays ‘pizzicato’) throughout**

Miles Davis uses a **mute** whilst playing the Head section – it makes his trumpet sound quieter and ‘further away’ – he takes it off and plays normally in his solo

In jazz, the drums, piano, bass (and guitar, if there is one) are referred to as the **rhythm section**. The other instruments (usually brass, woodwind, saxes) are called the **frontline**. The piano plays a **tremelo** in the intro and then **comps** (plays the chords in different ways) in the solo sections

**Style – Blues**

Uses a 12-bar blues chord sequence (although not the usual, basic one) Typical Jazz/Blues line up – rhythm section plus frontline saxes/trumpet

Uses ‘jazz harmony’ – all the chords have added notes e.g. 7ths and 9ths.

It was recorded in one take which meant the performers would need to know

- Basic structure
- Chord sequence
- Number of solos
- How long to improvise for
- Which modes to play

Three musical points about this piece that I like:

*Justify your points and use musical vocabulary.*

The instruments and performers

- Miles Davis - Trumpet
- Cannonball Adderley – Alto Sax
- John Coltrane – Tenor Sax
- Bill Evans – Piano
- Paul Chambers – Double Bass
- Jimmy Cobb – Drums

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