**IMPROVIZ**

Visual Explorations of Jazz Improvisations

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Is it possible to see how a jazz musician improvises? Is it possible to see how one improviser’s style is distinct from another? ImproViz attempts to answer these questions through two visualizations: (1) melodic landscapes show the general contours of musical phrasing; and (2) harmonic palettes represent the musician’s tendency to use a particular combination of notes in a given part of the song. In this example, a composition from the classic Miles Davis recording *Kind of Blue* was explored. Viewing All Blues through the lens of ImproViz illustrates the contrasting melodic and harmonic styles of three musicians.

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**MILES DAVIS**
Trumpet

Davis plays extended phrases and punctuates them with equally long silences, creating a sparse musical landscape. He fills his solo with musical motifs, like the opening two-note riff that he develops and then returns to at the end, later echoed by the other soloists (1). He repeats a haunting fanfare in the middle of the tune (2) and finishes off each chorus by drawing out a mysterious, almost mournful tone (3), but then releases the mood with a simple figure (4).

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**CANNONBALL ADDERLEY**
Alto Saxophone

Adderley creates a compressed rhythm by starting and stopping phrases and punctuating them with equally long silences, creating a sparse musical landscape. He fills his solo with musical motifs, like the opening two-note riff that he develops and then returns to at the end, later echoed by the other soloists (1). He repeats a haunting fanfare in the middle of the tune (2) and finishes off each chorus by drawing out a mysterious, almost mournful tone (3), but then releases the mood with a simple figure (4).

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**JOHN COLTRANE**
Tenor Saxophone

By 1959, Coltrane had started to experiment with playing continuous streams of notes. He often launches into these streams of sound with a rapid ascent that quickly trails off (5). In the middle of each chorus, Coltrane climbs to a high plateau, holds steady on a key note, then tumbles downhill to another sheet of sound (6). He peppers his solos with numerous rests, giving the listener’s ear a chance to recuperate before the next nonstop run of notes.