

QUEEN

Knowledge Organiser Love of My Life (1975)

MELODY

- Descending crotchet bassline in the left hand of the piano intro
- Use of trills (ornamentation) which is a nod to the Baroque Era
- Rising sequence from the melody of 'love of my life' and 'broken my heart'
- Disjunct octave leap on the words 'now you leave me' communicates his sorrow
- Phrases are irregular: Intro is 7 bars, Verse is 4 + 7 bars
 - 'Blue' notes in the bridge 'remind'
- Augmentation from a 6th to 7th on the words 'I still love you', shows increasing affections and love

TEXTURE

- Melody and accompaniment during the verses and bridge
 - The intro is homophonic
- Backing vocals in 4-part harmony are signature sound of Queen

ARTICULATION

- Articulation is legato throughout

HARMONY

- The key is F major
- Modulation to Dm (the relative minor) in the bridge
- The harp plays rising G7 inversions (b7)
- Heavy use of dominant 7th chords, such as G7 and C7
- Dissonant appoggiatura on the word 'hurt' = word painting
- Repeating C in the right hand of the intro acts as a harmonic pedal
- Perfect cadence at the end of the verses as well as on the words 'I still love you'
- The song concludes on an expressive minor plagal cadence (Bbm to F)

STRUCTURE

Introduction – 7 bars
Verse 1 – 12 bars
Link – 2 bars
Verse 2 – 12 bars
Link – 5 bars
Bridge – 10 bars
Baroque Link – 13 bars
Shortened Verse – 9 bars

RHYTHM

- Quaver ostinato in the opening 4 bars with crotchets in the left hand, nod to Baroque
- Rhythms are largely simple, showing the song's exposed and delicate nature
- Rhythmic diminution on the words 'hurry back' = word painting
- Demisemiquavers in the Baroque link

METRE

- 4/4 time signature
- Brief changes to 3/4 and 2/4, which gives us a sense of urgency

TEMPO

- Adagietto (moderately slow)
- There is a 'poco a poco rit' (slow down little)

INSTRUMENTATION/SONORITY/TIMBRE

- Harmonics on the acoustic guitar in Bar 3
- Sweeping, Romantic glissandos on the harp
- High tessitura in the voice on the words 'broken my heart' shows fragility
- In the guitar solo, there is heavy use of distortion and overdrive in the electric guitar

QUEEN

Knowledge Organiser Seven Seas of Rhye (1973)

MELODY

- Word painting on the word 'smile': there is disjunct leap of a 7th
- Intro is based off a triadic ostinato
- Melodies are simple and conjunct. The melody of Verse 1 is based off a descending D major scale
- Disjunct leaps on words such as 'what is mine' and 'forever' for drama
- Guitar 'licks' are used in between verses
- Phrasing is equal with 4, 2-bar phrases in the verses

HARMONY

- The key is D major
- The opening ostinato highlights the chords D major and G major (I and IV)
- Supporting instruments such as the bass guitar almost always play the root/tonic
- Use of dominant 7th chords, such as the A7 at the end of the intro
- Chord progressions generally simple. The verse has alternating I – IVs
 - Perfect cadences from A7 to D

RHYTHM

- The opening ostinato is based off relentless semiquavers or a 'motor rhythm'
- Strong backbeat on the drums in the verses
- The drums also play a shuffle beat (swung, dotted feel in the verse)
 - Use of sextuplets in the drum fills
- Shift to triplets on the words 'possess you belong to' is a cross-rhythm

METRE

- 4/4

TEMPO

- Allegro – 120BPM
- Use of fermata (pauses)

TEXTURE

- Monophony for first 2 bars in piano
- Monophony at the very end on 'I'll take you to the seven seas of Rhye'
 - Verses are melody and accompaniment
- 4-part harmonies in the bridge, starting on 'sister'
 - Double tracking in the vocals
- Some polyphony where the backing vocals sing 'I'll survive I'll survive I'll survive'

STRUCTURE

Intro – 10 bars
Verse 1 – 8 bars
Link – 2 bars
Verse 2 – 8 bars
Link – 2 bars
Bridge – 7 bars
Guitar solo – 10 bars
Verse 3 – 8 bars
Outro – 12 bars with fadeout

INSTRUMENTATION/SONORITY/TIMBRE

- Cymbal crashes and rolls
- Guitar slides to add drama
- Use of overdrive and distortion
- Impressive drum fills using sextuplets
 - Double tracking in the vocals
- Sampling of 'Oh I do like to be beside the seaside' at the very end

QUEEN

Knowledge Organiser Bohemian Rhapsody

MELODY

- BALLAD: Largely syllabic but some melisma on words such as 'ooh' and 'time'
- BALLAD: Rising 6th on the words 'look up to the sky and see' = word painting
- ROCK: Pinnacle of the song is 'for me' which is a B6!
- ROCK: Octave leaps in the build-up
- ROCK: Rising sequence in build-up on 'for me', 'for me'
- OPERA: Rising and falling chromatic scale on 'easy come easy go'
- OPERA: Rising sequence on the build-up to the 'drop' in the hard rock section
- OUTRO: Descending scale 'nothing really matters' shows the sense of disappointment

GENERAL:

- Pitch bends, both in the vocals and guitar
- Largely conjunct with diatonic scales such as 'gun against his head and 'trigger now he's dead'
- Use of purposeful disjunct leaps such as 'for me' (B6)

HARMONY

- Ballad = Bb major
- Opera = A major and Eb major
- Remains in Eb major until the end
- OUTRO: Perfect cadence on 'to me'
- OUTRO: Modulates into F major (via Bb and C) and ends on a final plagal cadence in F major
- BALLAD: Based on broken Bb triads
- OPERA: Chromatic chords on 'easy come easy go'
- OPERA: Falling chromatic 3rds with inverted pedal on E after 'monstrosity'. This idea is also used in Love of My Life!
- OPERA: Prolonged dominant 7th held for 4 bars to build anticipation for the 'Hard rock' head banging moment!

RHYTHM

- BALLAD: Heavily based off quavers
- OPERA: Starts with steady crotchet chords and a patter song (a rhythmically dense and relentless song) on 'I see a little silhouette'
- Strong backbeat on Verse 2 in drums
- OPERA: Constant cymbal crashes on 'no no no no no no no!'
- Heavy use of syncopation and triplets
- Rock section is based off dotted rhythms

METRE

Mostly 4/4

Brief shifts to 2/4 to disrupt the pulse

TEMPO

The Ballad is Adagio

The Opera and Rock sections are Allegro

The song returns to an Adagio tempo

Use of rits to add drama

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Knowledge Organiser Bohemian Rhapsody

TEXTURE

- INTRO: Begins with an a cappella, homophonic texture in 4-part harmony
- INTRO: Imitation on words such as 'poor boy' from the backing vocals
 - BALLAD: Melody and accompaniment = simple
- OPERA: Call and response on 'Galileo, Galileo'
- OPERA: Bismillah' is based off an oscillating perfect 4th
- OPERA: Massive textural contrast in the opera section where Freddie alternates with full SATB chorus
- ROCK: Double tracking in the hard rock section 'so you think you can...'

STRUCTURE

Through-composed

- 6 song suite
 - Intro
 - Ballad
 - Guitar solo
 - Opera
 - Hard rock
 - Outro

DYNAMICS

- Full use of dynamics spectrum
 - BALLAD: mp/mf
- OPERA: extreme shifts between mp/ff on 'will not let you go, let him go!'
 - ROCK: ff
 - OUTRO: ppp

ARTICULATION

- Legato in the ballad
- Staccato chords in the opening bars of the opera section
- Heavy use of accents, often on syncopated or weak beats

INSTRUMENTATION/SONORITY/TIMBRE

- General: SATB vocals
- SATB and typical Rock instrumentation
 - BALLAD: Piano-based and requires 'crossover' of the hands
 - BALLAD: Sampled sounds on the words 'wind blows' and 'shivers down my spine'
 - OPERA: Use of panning on 'Galileo, Galileo'
 - OPERA: Use of 'choking' on the cymbals on 'no no no no no no no!'
 - OPERA: Use of the toms on the drums on the words 'thunderbolt of lightning'
 - ROCK: Heavy use of distortion on the guitar and crash cymbals
 - GUITAR SOLO: Virtuoso with rising scales, slides, tapping and overdrive