Release

Afro Celt Sound System

Tonality/Harmony

- Modal tonality – C Aeolian
- Suggestion of move C Dorian mode
- Sustained chords – synth
- Fairly static harmony
- Some use of 7th and 9th chords (extended)
- Drones

Instrumentation

- Male and female vocal vocals (vox) – some sliding (glissando/portamento)
- African – Talking drum, kora
- Celtic – Bodhran, Uillean pipes, tin whistle, fiddle (double stopping), hurdy-gurdy, accordion
- Western instruments – drum machine, shaker, tambourine, electric piano, synths, bass guitar

Music Technology

- Breath samples. Vocal examples
- Looping
- Multi-track recorded
- 'Mix' is used to blend tracks
- Studio effects – reverb, panning, filter-sweeping in intro
- Synthesiser – 'string pads'
- Drum machine

Context/African/ Celtic features

- Fusion
- Celtic/African/Western
- African – ostinato, polyrhythmic, cross rhythms, syncopation, layered texture, Maninka language (intro)
- Celtic- Drones, Fast moving melodies, modal, triplet-based rhythms, Gaelic language

Melody

- Instrumental solos based on modes – mostly conjunct – decorated (grace notes)
- Female vox low tessitura
- Male voice (V2) larger range, sung in Gaelic
- Verse 1 is largely pentatonic and based on a riff
- Vocal syllabic setting
- Solos based on semiquavers
- Some vocal sliding (glissando/portamento)

Structure

- Verse structure (vocals)
- Introduction before verse
- Breakdown sections
- Instrumental solos are frequent
- Textural changes dictate the structure
- 8 bar phrasing
- Fade out ending

Texture

- Constantly evolves (forever changing)
- Layered texture – '28 loops'
- From the beginning texture builds (8 bars)
- Some abrupt changes – maximum effect
- Breakdown sections – texture decreases
- Multi-tracked recorded – allows texture changes with ease

Tempo/Metre/Rhythm

- Ostinato patterns – create polyrhythms
- Syncopated – uses accents
- Loop 1 provides rhythmic backbone. Establishes the pulse (bodhran)
- Solos based on semiquavers
- Triplets rhythms and sextuplets - Celtic
- Bass guitar syncopated and provides drive
- Metre 4/4
- Slightly swung feel – relaxed