



HERBIE HANCOCK  
INSTITUTE OF JAZZ

## Jazz in America

### *Elements of Jazz*

#### Musical Elements of Jazz

1. **Syncopation** the accenting of beats that are **not** “naturally” accented; the accenting of “upbeats”
2. **Jazz Sounds**
  1. “jazz” instruments
  2. the **way** each instrument is played
3. **Improvisation** spontaneous composition; composing the music **as** you are playing; extemporaneous soloing; “musical conversing”
4. **Rhythm** steady tempo; swing
5. **Form** the repeated and contrasting sections in the design of a composition; the tune’s harmonic (chordal) “blueprint”

#### *“Song for My Father”*

Form: **A A B** (24-Bar Tune)

**A:** | F- | | | Eb7 | | | Db7 | | C7sus | F- | | | |

**A:** | F- | | | Eb7 | | | Db7 | | C7sus | F- | | | |

**B:** | Eb7 | | | F- | | | Eb7 Db7 | C7sus | F- | | | |

#### Glossary

1. **Chord** two or more notes played at the same time; the music that accompanies the melody, setting the mood (AKA “change,” i.e., the “changes” of a song are the chords that accompany the song)
2. **Head** the (written) melody
3. **Chorus** one time through the chords of a song (AKA “tune”); one time through the tune’s form
4. **Intro** optional introductory music that comes before the first chorus
5. **Coda** optional ending music that comes after the last chorus (AKA “outro”)
6. **Vamp** one chord (or a brief chord progression) which is played over and over

#### The Values of Jazz

1. **Teamwork and Respect**
2. **Unity with Ethnic Diversity**
3. **The Correlation of Hard Work and Goal Accomplishment**

4. **Democracy: Individual Freedom but with Responsibility to the Group**
5. **Persistence and Perseverance**
6. **Tolerance**
7. **The Vital Importance of Really Listening to One Another**