

Russell Scarbrough

IMPRESSIONABLE FRED

Instrumentation:

Alto Saxophone 1
Alto Saxophone 2
Tenor Saxophone 1
Tenor Saxophone 2
Baritone Saxophone

Trumpet 1
Trumpet 2
Trumpet 3
Trumpet 4
Trumpet 5

Trombone 1
Trombone 2
Trombone 3
Bass Trombone

Vibraphone
Guitar (optional)
Piano
Bass
Drum Set

About **IMPRESSIONABLE FRED**:

This chart is intended to give inexperienced improvisers a chance to solo over blues changes, in Bb in a medium swing tempo. Specifically, the changes from Miles Davis's *Freddie Freeloader* from "Kind of Blue". Among jazz musicians, the consensus is that all who are interested in jazz or improvisation should be intimately familiar with this whole album, and this tune in particular, as it is one of the greatest recordings ever made.

One reason this record should be of such great interest to student improvisers is that it is relatively easy to hear Miles's unified approach to structuring solos over the course of the whole LP. He more or less applies the same plan to each solo he takes. When one compares his solos, for example, on *So What*, *All Blues*, and *Freddie Freeloader*, it becomes immediately apparent how he centers the start of each solo on the tonic (or root of the home scale, in the case of the strictly modal tunes), i.e. *So What* begins emphasizing D and ascends the scale. *All Blues* begins emphasizing G and likewise ascends, and *Freddie Freeloader* begins emphasizing Bb and progresses out in both directions. In all three, this root emphasis comes out as a rhythmic repetition on that note, sometimes being approached from the 6th. In *Freddie Freeloader*, this happens at the beginning of Miles's first and fifth choruses. His fifth chorus is practically a recapitulation of his first, and his sixth and final chorus reaches a melodic peak before ending with a mirror-image of the first bar of his solo, emphasizing Bb.

This is just one reason I consider this a "perfect" solo improvisation, and every melodic idea that is contained in it is ripe for compositional appropriation — which is part of why I decided to make a new composition based on elements of Miles's recorded solo. Those new to jazz improvisation would do well to transcribe Miles's solo and learn all of the ins and outs of it on their instrument, assimilating as many of his ideas as possible. Performing this chart will also hopefully encourage students to dig into this recording and absorb the original context.

Meanwhile, I wanted *Impressionable Fred* to be an original creation, made from re-assembled parts of Miles's solo (as well as a few of Cannonball's and Wynton Kelly's inspired ideas), and not just a straightforward contrafact on *Freddie*. To that end, I used a bouncing bassline and halved the harmonic rhythm for the melody of this tune. The harmon-muted trumpet echoes Miles's preferred voice during that period (though he didn't use the mute on *Freddie*).

Finally, though this chart may be well used as a pedagogical tool, it is ultimately intended to make a satisfying musical experience on its own. If — incredibly — someone encounters this chart who has never heard *Freddie Freeloader* or any of "Kind of Blue", I hope they would still hear the tune and the arrangement as a whole as a work with its own musical logic and integrity.

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Note: this was originally composed with 12-piece instrumentation for the Roberts Wesleyan College Jazz Ensemble in 2013. This 18-piece version was made for the Canisius College Jazz Ensemble in 2016.

Score

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Swing $\text{♩} = 120$

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The score is arranged in a standard orchestral layout. The top section includes five saxophone staves (Alto 1 & 2, Tenor 1 & 2, Baritone) and five trumpet staves. The bottom section includes four trombone staves (1-4), a piano part with grand and bass clefs, a bass staff, and a drum set staff. The saxophone parts feature a melodic line with triplets and slurs, while the trombone parts provide harmonic support with similar melodic lines. The piano and bass parts are mostly rests, and the drum set part is also mostly rests.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

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Musical score for Impressionable Fred, page 2. The score includes parts for Alto 1 & 2, Tenor 1 & 2, Baritone Sax, Trumpet 1-5, Trombone 1-3, Bass Trombone, Vibes, Piano, Bass, and Drum Set. The music is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat. It features vocal lines with lyrics and instrumental accompaniment. Dynamics include *mf* and *pp*. A rehearsal mark '22' is present in measures 22-23.

