



MELODY

There is a **female and male singer**.
 The vocal melody is **repetitive**
 There are some **spoken** parts, including vocal **samples**
 The singers sometimes sing **vocables** (nonsense lyrics) like ooh and aaah

The melody lines are all **short phrases**
 At the start (before the first verse) the female vocal part sounds like it is **improvising**.
Solos are taken by the Uilleann pipe, whistle and hurdy gurdy

The female vocal part has a limited range (a 6th)
 The male vocal part has a bigger range (a 13th)
 The vocals use glissando (slides) and ornamentation (acciaccatura)
 The fiddle melody uses double stopping

HARMONY

The piece is in a **minor key** (C minor)
 It uses **repeating chord sequences** over and over again
 There is a **drone** in this piece on the note C

The harmony is mostly diatonic
 There are some chromatic notes, such as the low synth strings that play an ascending chromatic line
 There are some extended chords (such as 7ths and 9ths)

The harmonic rhythm is slow—it feels like it stays on the same chord for a lot of the piece. This is common to dance music.

TONALITY

The piece is in C minor

The piece has a **modal** feel at times.

TEMPO

The start of the piece is in **free time** (no set tempo/metre)
 Then when the bodhran comes in a **steady tempo** is set.

The piece is at 100bpm



RHYTHM and METRE

The time signature is simple **4/4** (common to dance music)
 There are lots of repeating rhythmic **riffs/ostinato patterns** in the song. These are short phrases that are **looped** (repeated over and over again)

There is **syncopation** used throughout
 The repeating rhythms are mostly **2 and 4 bar loops**

Triplets and **sextuplets** are used in the piece.
 The semiquavers are slightly **swung** (giving the piece a relaxed quality)
 Some notes are **accented** to make them louder than others



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This is a piece of fusion music, combining elements of African music, Celtic folk music and electronic dance music

It was released in 1999

The band has featured a number of guest musicians over the year, including Sinéad O'Connor who sings on "Release".



KEY

3 Grade 5 Grade 8 Grade



AFRO CELT SOUND SYSTEM—RELEASE



INSTRUMENTS/SONORITY

African instruments: kora, talking drum

Celtic instruments: hurdy-gurdy, uilleann pipes, bodhrán, fiddle, whistle, accordion

Electronic Dance Music instruments: male/female vocals, synthesisers (including string pad, soft pad, bells, bass), breath samples, drum machine, electric piano, shaker and tambourine.

The piece is made from **looping** ideas (a common dance music technique)

Some of the playing techniques include **glissando** (a continuous slide of notes), **ornamentation**, **double stopping** (playing 2 strings together on the fiddle), **open and closed hi-hat**.

There is a **reverb** effect on the vocals through the whole track.

The synthesizer drone uses a filter (which automatically adjusts the EQ giving a "sweeping" sound)

STRUCTURE

The piece has a **verse** form (with no choruses)
 It contains an **intro, verses, breaks, solos and an outro**.

The **full structure** is:
 Intro, verse 1, verse 2, solos, verse 3, build, outro

TEXTURE

The main texture of the piece is **homophonic**.
 There are lots of **layers** of loops. And the loops drop in and out regularly making the **texture constantly change**.
 At the start of the song, the texture builds up by adding loops one at a time

The many overlapping loops give often the piece a **polyphonic** feel.

There is a **heterophonic** texture during the outro, with solo instruments playing the same thing, with slight variations.

The very start of the piece is **monophonic**

