

Ragtime and Blues

Ragtime



Background

- Ragtime has its roots in Africa.
- Through the slave trade, it became popular in America between 1900-1920.
- In the early days Ragtime was usually played on the piano to accompany dancing and marching.
- Other instruments associated with the style are **banjo** and **violin**.
- Ragtime music is recognised by its bouncy beat or **rhythm**.
- The most famous Ragtime composer was **Scott Joplin**.
- He composed works such as 'The Entertainer' and 'The Maple Leaf Rag'.

The melody line...

- is **syncopated**
- has **repetition**
- has **sequences**
- may be in a **major** or **minor** key

➤ May be **chromatic** (moving in semitones) in places
The bass line...

- Has a steady rhythm
- Is usually a vamp (alternating between a low note and a higher chord)

Blues

- Blues originated from slaves who worked on the plantations of southern USA who sang about their feelings and problems.
- Blues is normally slow and jazzy
- It is often sung or played over a twelve bar chord progression. We called this a **12 bar blues**.
- C/// C/// C/// C///
F/// F/// C/// C///
G/// F/// C/// C///
- Musicians will often **improvise** over this chord progression.



