

Kenny Burrell

Fig. 5 — Solo

Kenny Burrell is a consummate master of the blues in jazz. Countless players have borrowed and adapted his earthy licks; indeed these licks have become indispensable components of the jazz-guitar lexicon. Burrell's playing has always conveyed a distinct blues quality regardless of the ensemble, harmonic context, or type of composition. However, when actually playing a true blues tune, he is in a league of his own. It figures that his decision to include "All Blues" in the *Handcrafted* trio set would result in a soulful and fulfilling excursion.

Burrell has played in many settings and is quite effective in the piano-less trio format; this gives the guitar tremendous freedom harmonically, rhythmically, and melodically. His performance of "All Blues" finds him exploiting the trio ensemble for all its worth, freely mixing single-note lines and chord phrases in an inspired series of improvisations.

Personnel: Trio. Kenny Burrell, guitar; Reggie Johnson, bass; Sherman Ferguson, drums.

Recorded: February 28 or March 1, 1978, at Dimension Sound, New York City.

Arrangement: Burrell plays "All Blues" in the standard key of G at a moderate tempo, slightly faster than Benson's. This excerpt occurs at 2:44 in the track, which marks the beginning of his improvisations. Here, Burrell departs from the structured extensions and variations of the melody and is truly creating new material. He incorporates the song's central riff between solo phrases in **A** and **B**. A transition from straight 6/8 feel to swing occurs in **B** and is maintained for the remaining three choruses. The third chorus **C** is essentially chordal, while the final chorus **D** is played in single notes with chord punches.

Signatures: Burrell uses a number of classic blues devices in his solo. In **A** and **B**, he bases his improvised phrases around iterations of the core riff for an attractive *call-and-response* effect. This procedure also produces a nice balance of single-note versus chordal textures. Trademark bluesy double stops are played in measures 9, 11, 12, and 20. Burrell toys with the song's 6/8 meter throughout. He employs two-against-three cross-rhythms for licks in measures 15 and 43 and a similar hemiola-type syn- copation for the D7#9–E♭7#9 chord phrase in measures 34–35.

Performance notes: Most of Burrell's single-note lines are blues-oriented and based on the G Minor Pentatonic Scale or the G Blues Scale. Several key phrases indicate Burrell's preference for triplet note values in blues melody. His chord playing primarily makes use of the traditional 7th, 9th, 11th, and 13th chords of the blues genre. Many of his chord phrases are marked by half-step approach figures from above, as in measures 26, 29, 30, 36, and 42.

Sound: Burrell's tone is usually produced by a Gibson Super 400 arch-top electric with two humbuckers, or a D'Angelico New Yorker with a floating DeArmond pickup. He covers his f-holes with clear plastic tape to minimize acoustical feedback. Burrell uses medium picks. His main amp is a Fender Twin Reverb, though he occasionally plays through a Polytone.

19 G7

5 3 6 / 7 6 3 5 X 3 5 3 5 3 5 3 5

21 D7#9 Eb7#9 D7#9

3 3 3 3 6 3 5 2 / 3 6 3 5 5 10 7 4 4 4 4 6 6 X X X 5 13 10 7 X 6 3

24 [C] Third Chorus G13 G9 G13 Ab13

G7 G13 G13 G13 G13 G9 G13 Ab13

* Quick lift-off produces frethand mute.

27 G13 C/D G13 C/D G13 G7#9 /5 C9 Db9 C9

G13 C/D G13 C/D G13 G7#9 /5 C9 Db9 C9

31 G°7 G9 C/D G13 G9 G13 D7#9

let ring

G°7 G9 C/D G13 G9 G13 D7#9

35 Eb7#9 D7#9 G13 Ab13 G13 D7sus4 E°7

Eb7#9 D7#9 G13 Ab13 G13 D7sus4 E°7

D Fourth Chorus

G9

38

10 10 10 9 10
12 13 11 12 12 12 10 12 13 11

40

10 10 10 9 10
12 13 11 12 12 10 12 12 15 15

42

C13 Db13 C9

10 10 10 9 8
12 11 13 11 12 12 11 10 12 10 12 10 12 10 12 10

44

G9

10 10 10 9 9
7 6 8 3/4 5 5 5 5 6 7 6 8 6 3 5 3 5 3 5

46

D7#9 Eb7#9 D7#9

5 4 4 5 5 4 4 5 6 7 6 7 6 5 4 5 3 5 3 5 3 5 5

48

G7 D7#9 C/G G7 G7 Ab13 G7

3/4 5 6/5 3/4 5 3/4 5 6/7 5 3/4 5 5 3 5 5 5 6/5 4 3