



# QUELLE

*Disrupting the Status Quo*

# DISCOGRAPHY DEEP DIVE

I chose Radiohead for Discography Deep Dive for two main reasons: 1) I love their music and have found that they're one of those bands that truly has a unique sound 2) I wanted to force Reagan to listen to all the Radiohead albums so I could talk to her about them. *In Rainbows* was my introduction to Radiohead and I'm so thankful it was because it made me want to listen to everything else they'd written. This is the hardest ranking I've had to do so far because so many of these albums are killer and it's difficult to put one over another. Each album has its own sound that is distinct and it's hard to compare them side by side. The rankings ultimately came down to miniscule differences but needless to say I love each and every one of these albums.

- Natalie Stagers

NATALIE



**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
'ALL I NEED,'  
'NUDE'

"This is genuinely one of my favorite albums of all time. It's nearly impossible to choose favorite songs because they're all kickass. If you haven't watched the live studio concert of this album, DO IT."

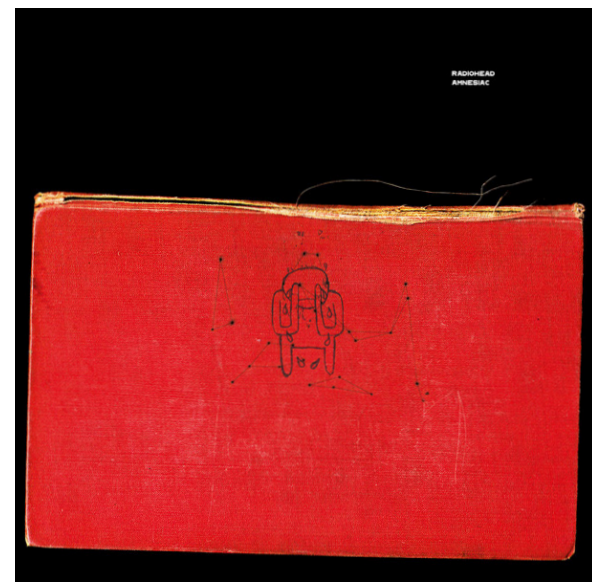


**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
'HIGH AND DRY,'  
'JUST'

"This album is SUCH a close second to *In Rainbows*. It's devastatingly beautiful."

1

REAGAN



**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
'YOU AND WHOSE ARMY?,' 'LIFE IN A GLASSHOUSE'

"Something about this album gripped me from the start even though it's not necessarily the fan favorite. I'm a huge fan of the production style and the diverseness of Industrial-sounding tracks contrasting with the soft and vulnerable tunes."



**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
'SUBTERRANEAN HOMESICK ALIEN,'  
'NO SURPRISES'

"Before I listened to Radiohead this is what I expected them to sound like. I think this one should be considered their creative peak."



★★★★★

**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
**'PARANOID ANDROID,' 'EXIT MUSIC (FOR A FILM)'**

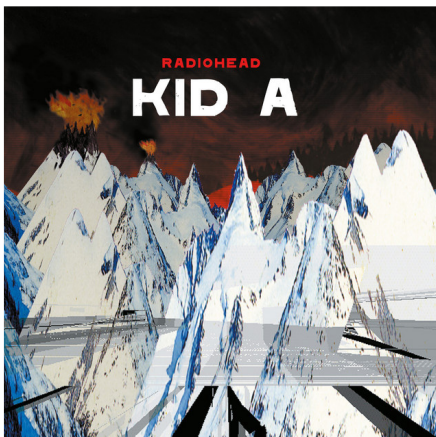
“I’m in love with their use of dynamics on this album.”



★★★★★

**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
**'DECKS DARK,' TINKER TAILOR SOLDIER  
SAILOR RICH MAN POOR MAN BEGGAR MAN THIEF'**

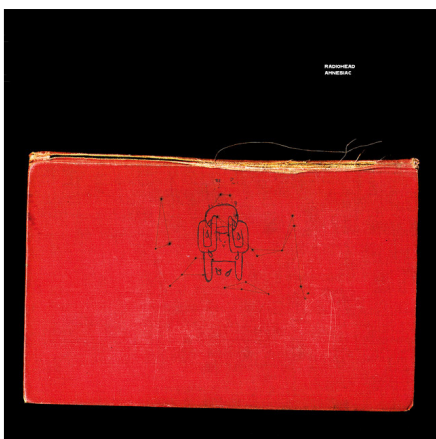
“This album is meditative and peaceful. Some songs feel as though they’re lulling you into a trance-like state.”



★★★★★

**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
**'EVERYTHING IN ITS RIGHT PLACE,' 'MORNING BELL'**

“This album is comforting in that it validates feelings of uncomfortability.”



★★★★★

**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
**'PYRAMID SONG,' 'YOU AND WHOSE ARMY?'**

“Part of what inspired this album is the Gnostic belief that the trauma of birth erases memories from past lives which I find fascinating.”

3

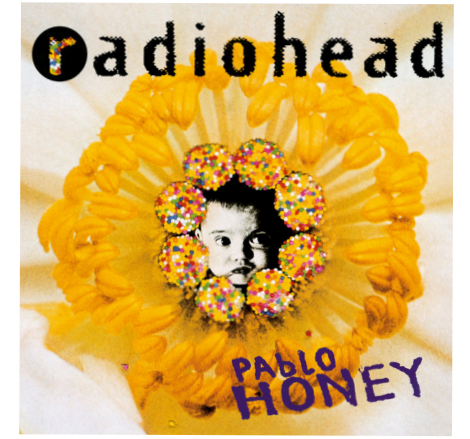


★★★★★

**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
**'NUDE,' 'FAUST ARP'**

“Yeah, Natalie’s going to be mad at this ranking because she never shuts up about this album. It had some good songs, but it didn’t resonate with me the same way the above two did.”

4



★★★★★

**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
**'BLOW OUT,'  
'ANYONE CAN PLAY GUITAR'**

“This is an extremely strong debut which set the foundation for them to build on. The rest of the album is heavily overshadowed by ‘Creep.’ You can find incredible gems on this album if you dig a little.”

5



★★★★★

**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
**'DECKS DARK,' 'GLASS EYES'**

“I think they found themselves again as a band because the previous album was not it. The orchestration and instrumentation is beautiful on this album.”

6



★★★★★

**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
**'SAIL TO THE MOON,' 'I WILL'**

“The sudden EDM jumpscare right in the middle of the first song left a bad taste in my mouth for the rest of the song. I’ve noticed I usually like the minimalist Radiohead songs because I absolutely LOVED ‘Sail to the Moon’ but can’t really say much about the rest of the songs.”



7

★★★★

**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
**'YOU,' 'HOW DO YOU?'**

"I think Radiohead definitely developed and grew from this, but this was a precursor to what was to come and was killer for a debut album."



★★★★

**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
**'HOW TO DISAPPEAR COMPLETELY,' 'MORNING BELL'**

"I was incredibly bored by this album. Nothing particularly stood out. Maybe I wasn't in the right headspace to appreciate this album for what it is to some of you out there."



8

★★★★

**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
**'2+2=5,' 'MYKOMATOSIS'**

"I really like the idea of tying fairytales and folklore into political commentary, but I don't connect to this album in the same way I do other Radiohead albums."



★★★★

**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
**'NICE DREAM,' 'STREET SPIRIT'**

"Please don't send me death threats over my placement of this album. I think Radiohead was still finding the sound that would define them in the next album but this just did NOT do it for me."



9

★★★★

**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
**'CODEX,' 'LOTUS FLOWER'**

"This album left me feeling like something integral was missing. I definitely prefer the B-side but even that feels incomplete."



★★

**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
**'LOTUS FLOWER,' 'GIVE UP THE GHOST'**

"I enjoyed the B side significantly more. It sounded more like the typical Radiohead album. I respect them for the experimentation on the front side but it was not executed well and made for a non-cohesive album."

# Reviews

## *Head Hunters*

Herbie Hancock

by Natalie Stagers



Though *Head Hunters* was the 12th release from Herbie Hancock, it was the first album to signify a commercial breakthrough for his music. The album allowed Hancock to branch into other audiences like funk and rock and landed at #13 on the Billboard 200, showing a rise in attention toward jazz-funk fusion. Much of Hancock's work that came before *Head Hunters* is more atmospheric and out there whereas this album feels more tethered to Earth.

Rather than using a guitar, he used a Clavinet to create all the guitar sounds heard on the album which is part of why the album's sound is so unique. In an era ruled by rock gods like Jimi Hendrix and Eric Clapton, abstaining from the use of the electric guitar was virtually unheard of. This album was the first project Paul Jackson (bass) and Harvey Mason (drums) worked on with Hancock and their ability to be tightly in-tune with each other while still maintaining a loose, funky feel defines the overall tone of the album. Until the release of *Breezin'* by George Benson in 1976, *Head Hunters* was the biggest-selling jazz album of all time.

One of the most interesting things about this album is the way in which they created the whistle noise at the beginning of "Watermelon Man." I have always loved the *cuíca*, a Brazilian drum that is sometimes colloquially referred to as the "monkey drum" due to the high-pitched cries it makes. I was introduced to the *cuíca* after becoming obsessed with "La Belle Dame Sans Regret" from Sting's album *Mercury Falling*, particularly struggling to take my attention away from the monkey-like sounds in the background. They were so unique and like nothing I'd heard before. One day I asked my dad if he knew how Sting created that sound and he replied simply, "the monkey drum."

Months later, I was in a private djembe lesson with Dr. Robert Damm when I casually asked if he knew what the real name was for the monkey drum. I played him the beginning of "La Belle Dame Sans Regret" and he excitedly said, "Oh! The *cuíca*!" as he turned and walked into the adjacent room. He returned, holding a cylindrical, hollow drum and a wet rag. Sitting down, he showed me how to play it and let me mess around for a while, experimenting with different pitches and tones. As I played, we started discussing "Watermelon Man," as I was convinced that the noises at the beginning of the track were also voicings of the *cuíca*. I very quickly discovered that I was wrong.

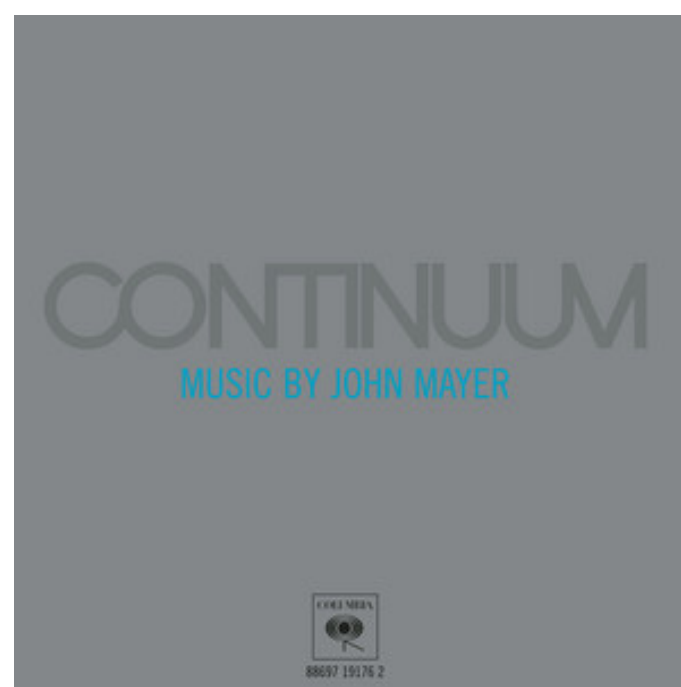
The whistle tones heard at the beginning of "Watermelon Man" are actually an imitation of the *hindewho* flute used by the Mbuti people of Zaire. Rather than using a *hindewho*, however, Bill Summers used a beer bottle to mimic the flute. This was so fascinating that it inspired a second hyperfixation on the album, resulting in me almost exclusively listening to *Head Hunters* during finals week.

It's difficult to put into words why this album is so special but it undoubtedly paved the way for future jazz-funk fusion groups, redefining the limits of what jazz could be. Its incorporation of African rhythms, funk grooves, synthesizer solos and abnormal instruments (such as the Clavinet and the beer bottle) came together to create a sound that was wholly unique and is enrapturing no matter how many times you engage with it.

# Continuum

John Mayer

by Natalie Stagers



*Continuum* is one of those albums that feels like coming home every time I listen to it. It was one of the first albums I truly fell in love with and it sparked my ongoing obsession with John Mayer. I can remember the first time I listened to the album in full. I was eight years old and overstimulated, sitting on the couch in our living room at a party I didn't want to be at. My uncle and dad were the only other people in the room and they were standing in front of the TV while "I Don't Trust Myself (With Loving You)" played. They started talking about how good the album was and I silently tuned in to the conversation, moving to sit on the floor so I could hear them better.

I asked them to play the album from the beginning and sat there completely immersed in the music. I had heard "Waiting On the World to Change," "Slow Dancing in a Burning Room" and "Gravity" before, but when "The Heart of Life" and "Stop This Train" started playing, I felt my nervous system relax. Both songs verbalized feelings I could never put words to. Whenever it feels like life is getting to be too much, this is the album I go to. It has the unnatural ability to make me pause and ground myself, no matter what's going on.

In a lot of ways, this album is what made me realize that I love music. I've always struggled with anxiety and *Continuum* was one of the first albums that helped me cope with it. The amount of memories I have tied to each of the songs on this album is unreal. "Waiting On the World to Change" is one of the first songs I learned to play on piano using the chord method. "I Don't Trust Myself (With Loving You)" will always take me back to the drive home from a trip I took to Memphis in the summer of 2023. "Slow Dancing in a Burning Room" never fails to remind me of my childhood best friend who I don't speak to anymore.

Though I love every song on this album for various reasons, "Gravity" has so many happy memories tied to it that it would be hard not to call it my favorite. On my 18th birthday, my dad's band played it specifically for me because they knew I loved it. One night my best friend and I were at Waffle House and she put it on the jukebox and slow danced with me. I've listened to it while stargazing at the refuge and while traveling to see people I love. It may be one of the most popular songs on the album, but it never gets old. While many songs on this album deal with love or heartbreak, some also dig into deeper issues like the inevitability of change and the passing of time. The lyrics have a way of growing with you so that every time you come back to them, you see them in a different light. There's a perfect balance between the vocals and the instrumentation, leaving space for contemplation and nuance. This album is a bit more bluesy than his previous work, still holding onto his pop rock feel but leaning into a softer, more refined sound. Finally, the sound quality of the recordings is perfect and the production is timeless.

I know that lots of people don't like John Mayer, either because they think he's overhyped or because they're in love with Taylor Swift, but this album is worth the hype. If you don't trust me, trust its #2 ranking on the Billboard 200, 5 million sales worldwide, Grammy Awards for Best Pop Vocal Album and Best Male Pop Vocal Performance and spot on the *Rolling Stone* 500 Greatest Albums of All Time list.

# Toto IV

Toto

by Natalie Stagers



This album wastes no time, kicking off with “Rosanna,” a musical and lyrical masterpiece. The Rosanna shuffle is a groove that even the best drummers I know can’t hold for more than 30 seconds. Derived from the Purdie Shuffle (which can be heard on Steely Dan’s “Home at Last”), John Bonham’s half-time shuffle from “Fool in the Rain” and the Bo Diddley beat, Jeff Porcaro created the Rosanna shuffle which is so distinct that it’s immediately recognizable to anyone who knows the song. Between the layered vocals, horns and auxiliary percussion, insane synth solo and the playful interactions between the keys and Steve Lukather’s guitar, there’s nothing to critique about this song.

Starting with a captivating keys intro (as many Toto songs do) “Make Believe” keeps the energy going. Every time I hear Bobby Kimball sing, “Why don’t we make believe we’re in love again? Who said the crimson moon doesn’t shine?” I imagine a coming of age movie set in the ‘80s where the main character is driving down a backroad with their windows down in the middle of summer, helplessly in love. “I Won’t Hold You Back” slows down the pace but doesn’t fail to deliver the same level of quality with its lovesick lyrics and Lukather’s emotive solo.

While “Africa” is a great song, it makes me so sad that it’s the first song people think of when Toto is mentioned because there are so many other killer songs in their discography, particularly on this album. Also, don’t even get me started on Weezer covering Africa because the level of disrespect and the contrast in talent between the two bands is insane.

“Afraid of Love” is one of the most underrated songs on the album. It has that same coming of age ‘80s movie feel as “Make Believe” and the hook is contagious: “I gotta get away from you, girl / ‘cause I’ve never been afraid of love ‘til I met you / never thought a girl could make me feel the way you do / never been afraid of love ‘til I met you.” One of my favorite things about music is that it finds a way to poetically rephrase emotions we all experience and this is one of my favorite expressions of the fear that comes with falling helplessly in love.

Aside from individual songs, Toto is composed of some of the most talented musicians of the ‘80s. David Paich (keys), Jeff Porcaro (drums) and Steve Porcaro (keys) were all children of session musicians and all followed in their dads’ footsteps. David and Jeff met in high school and after years of playing together as session musicians they decided to start their own band. They recruited session musician David Hungate to play bass, another high school friend Steve Lukather to play guitar and Jeff’s brother Steve to play keys. Once Bobby Kimball joined the band, they started recording their first album but didn’t have a name for the album or the band yet. To distinguish their demo tapes from the others lying around Columbia Records, Jeff wrote “Toto” on their tapes (or so the legend says). Initially, the band told the press that they took “Toto” from *The Wizard of Oz*, but Hungate noted that “in toto” translated from Latin to “all-encompassing” which fit their musical backgrounds, and thus Toto was born.

To say that I love this album (and Toto) is an understatement. I spent 7 hours getting my forearm blasted so that I could have the album art on my body for forever and if that doesn’t represent dedication, I don’t know what does.

# Music

311

by Natalie Staggers



Until last summer, I hadn't listened to anything by 311 other than "Amber." I started getting into Rage Against the Machine and asked my dad for recommendations of albums and bands that were similar to them. When he suggested early 311, I thought to myself, "the guys who wrote 'Amber'? Yeah right." I decided to listen to their debut album and was genuinely shocked by how much I liked it. They combine the playful, hip-hop feel of The Beastie Boys with Rage Against the Machine's abrupt rhythm and meter changes while still distinguishing themselves with their smooth, rhythmic feel.

The album flows together so fluidly that I think of it as less of a collection of songs and more as one unit so much so that any time I listen to one song from the album, I end up listening to the album in its entirety. What makes this even more interesting is that *Music* wasn't curated as an album. Aside from a handful of songs, *Music* is just a collection of songs they wrote in the 5 years prior to the album's release. They did, however, rearrange most of the songs and even rewrite lyrics for some of them to make them work together.

This album refuses to be put in a box, combining elements of ska, reggae, hip-hop, rap, funk and metal to create something that's totally its own. It reminds me vividly of summer which is likely in part because that's when I was introduced to it but also because of its funky grooves that you can't help but dance to. Listening to this album makes me feel like all of my problems are melting away.

It's not just the music that attracts fans though, it's also quirky things like "Herb," the character depicted on the cover art. It's common within the 311 community to take pictures posing as Herb as he's become an icon of the fanbase. Their ability to make good music while still being lighthearted and silly at times is what draws me in the most. I mean, who doesn't love the irony of naming your debut album *Music*? Also their bassist's name is literally P-Nut. Come on.

In short, I love these guys not only for their musical talent and versatility but also for their willingness to not take everything so seriously. That's also a big part of what I love about The Beastie Boys and Joey Valence & Brae. Who doesn't like some silly dudes who want to get together and have a good time?

*Music is subjective and we can all agree to disagree.  
My opinion doesn't determine if an album is bad or not.*

*Jar of Flies (1994)*  
Alice In Chains



I know I've reviewed an AIC album before but I just can't ever get enough of them. This is an EP but I enjoyed this one more than *Facelift*. In just 30 minutes, the band shows what makes them a unique force within the grunge scene of the '90s. The way that Layne utilizes harmonized lead vocals gives me chills and creates a haunting atmosphere throughout the album.

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*Perfect From  
Now On (1997)*  
Built To Spill



I felt like I was listening to a Pavement record but with a better singer and better lyrics. I actually really enjoyed this album even though indie is not necessarily a genre I listen to often.

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*Balloonism (2025)*  
Mac Miller



Posthumous releases always make me feel a bit odd. Is it a money grab or is it truly what this artist wanted released? It's always hard to gauge something like that. This one is quite different from the last Mac album I reviewed. It's still a rap album but the influence of R&B is obvious throughout. I liked this one much more than *GO:OD AM*. I see now why people hold Mac in such high regard. I guess I'll have to review *Swimming Pools* next issue.

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*British Steel (1980)*  
Judas Priest



Would you believe that Judas Priest started out as a glam rock band? This album certainly wouldn't give you that notion. Donning all leather and riding the '80s wave of British heavy metal, this album gave Judas Priest worldwide attention with their hits like "Breaking the Law" and my personal favorite "Living After Midnight." It's not a fantastic album but the highs are high.

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*Night And Day (1982)*  
Joe Jackson



After years of hearing "Steppin' Out" on the radio, I sat down to listen to the whole album and I am such a sucker for the early '80s sophisti-pop sound. The album is an aural play to my ears. I don't know if it's necessarily a concept album but this absolutely is the soundtrack for a peek into the lives of New Yorkers in the early 1980s. It's a soundtrack for a specific time and place.

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*Head Hunters (1973)*  
Herbie Hancock



I think it's hilarious that Natalie and I reviewed the same album. She had already decided to review it when it was requested by one of our readers. I, along with thousands of high school band nerds, knew who Herbie Hancock was because of "Chameleon." Opening an album with that track is insane but it sets the tone for the rest of this jazz/groove funk album. There's a reason that Herbie Hancock is considered such a legend and this album epitomizes that. The catchy hooks on every song makes this album a memorable one.

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*Forever Howlong (2025)*  
Black Country,  
New Road



Alright, y'all got me again. This is another great album from the current time period. This is my favorite part of each issue because it introduces me to good music that's being released now that doesn't get mainstream radio play. I don't know what I was expecting, but this wasn't it. From the odd instrumentation consisting of woodwind instruments and smooth melodies, I find myself listening to this album again and again. It sounds like how a sunny day feels.

*Perfect Angel (1973)*  
Minnie Riperton



Minnie Riperton does not get the credit she deserves. Her vocal talent alone is astonishing. This album shifts from song to song and gets overshadowed by the huge hit of “Lovin’ You.” Opening with a rocking ballad and good ol’ groovy songs makes this a great listen. It’s a shame that we lost her so young.

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- (2023)  
Ed Sheeran



This wasn’t as unbearable as most Ed Sheeran songs I’ve heard in the past. This is still a cheesy, contrite modern pop album, but like I said, it’s bearable.

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*The Whole Love (2011)*  
Wilco



This was sort of lackluster to me. The only reason I gave it a 3 and not a 2.5 is because of “Capitol City” which sounds like a Grateful Dead song.

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*Rites of Passage (1992)*  
Indigo Girls



I’m not too crazy about the singer-songwriter movement of the ‘90s. The songs were well-written and I do love the storytelling aspects and spitting anger behind the lyrics. It’s not typical for most folk music to have such strong emotion like that. Also, shout out to the members of Siouxsie and the Banshees backing them (love you, Budgie).

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*In the Court of the  
Crimson King (1969)*  
King Crimson



Personally, I’m not the biggest prog fan but I understand the importance of this album. It’s widely regarded as the first true prog rock album and King Crimson took inspiration from genres like classical and jazz to create something truly unique. Let me know if you’ve ever been personally traumatized by the album cover because I have.

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*Motorcycle.jpg (2017)*  
Slaughter Beach,  
Dog



I think I’ve finally realized the thing that bugs me about indie music. It’s the way the vocals are recorded. Do indie singers set their microphone in a tin can when they record? The rest of this EP is recorded very well but it’s just the damn vocals that really turn me off of this.

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*Who Will Cut Our  
Hair When We’re  
Gone? (2003)*  
The Unicorns



I thought this album was an overall good listen. My main gripe with it is that the songs start to really get good about halfway through. It’s irritating as hell when a song doesn’t grip you right from the start.

# NEW ARTISTS

## Black Country, New Road



by Natalie Stagers

I learned about Black Country, New Road through a couple of my friends who've been listening to them since they started releasing music in 2019. The first album of theirs that I listened to was their 2022 release *Ants From Up There*. I thought it was beautiful and heartbreaking in many ways but I wasn't a huge fan of the lead singer's voice. The instrumentation, however, was captivating enough to keep me engaged with the music. I still appreciate many songs from this album and return to them, particularly in times of confusion and distress. When I heard that they released a new album with a new lead singer I was eager to check it out. *Forever Howlong* is different from previous releases—in a good way. I immediately fell in love with the way in which Tyler Hyde, May Kershaw and Georgia Ellery's voices blended not only with each other but also with the music. Something about this album makes me think about how every person, place and experience I've encountered have culminated in the person that I am today. I am simply a mosaic of everyone and everything I've ever loved. While many longtime BCNR fans dislike the departure from their original sound, I prefer it and can't wait to see how they expand on it.

## Kate Bollinger



by Natalie Stagers

Listening to Kate Bollinger feels like talking to an old friend. The first time I heard her voice was at a party when "Pictures of You" by Drugdealer started playing. I was mid-conversation and stopped talking because I was so distracted by how soft and intimate her voice sounded. Shortly after, "Yards/Gardens" became my hyper-fixation song due to the simple but bouncy bassline and catchy chorus. One of my favorite lines from the song is, "I lost some of me when I met you but I would lose even more if I lost you." Her vulnerable lyricism and soft voice welcome you into a state of peace and giddiness. Every time I listen to her music I feel like a little fairy in a garden. Her music has a dreamy feel to it (as most bedroom pop does) but it still maintains enough diversity to keep you coming back for more. Though she's been featured on many songs and has released multiple EPs, her first full album wasn't released until September of 2024. It didn't disappoint. Her music is introspective with an undertone of childlike whimsy which I think is the perfect combination for summer. I saw someone comment that the recent album, *Songs From a Thousand Frames Of Mind*, "sounds like how I imagined the baby bear's porridge tasted when Goldilocks ate it" and that's simultaneously on the nose and one of the funniest comments I've seen about an album.

# Blue Talk



by Reagan Bussey

Hailing from Starkville, Mississippi, this funk band has found its footing in Atlanta, Georgia, where they are doing their best to revitalize soul. The group was founded on the MSU campus in 2016 under the moniker Hood Baby and the Barnacles. They would perform at regular Starkville haunts like Dave's Dark Horse Tavern and Moe's Original BBQ before venturing off to play in Oxford and Jackson. After COVID they made the move to Atlanta and have gained a following resulting in them regularly releasing music.

# The Bean Tones



by Reagan Bussey

The Bean Tones are a vocal jazz quartet that was originally founded at Berklee College of Music in 2018. They began their journey as a barbershop quartet before moving into the jazz area and adding instrumentation with their tunes. They are influenced by the swing music of the '40s and '50s which they often cover during their live performances. They've arranged various tunes but have recently released their first original, "Day Into Night." It takes you back to poodle skirts and malt shops and gives you the sensation of the fleeting concept of the American Dream.

**ACROSS**

- 1 Vicinity
- 5 "Hop \_\_\_!"
- 9 Fast-food chain with a cowboy hat logo
- 14 Miss
- 15 Spore sacs
- 16 More trifling
- 17 Sicilian volcano
- 18 Their anthem is "Lofsöngur"
- 20 1969 gay rights protests
- 22 Tarnish
- 23 Laverne, the first openly trans woman to win an Emmy award.
- 24 Give a hand
- 28 The \_\_\_, nickname for Chicago's Cloud Gate sculpture
- 30 Schneider who won 40 consecutive games on "Jeopardy!"
- 33 Sans-serif font
- 34 Repair
- 35 Org. that oversees college athletics
- 36 Celebrating the LGBTQ+ community during June.
- 39 Burden
- 40 French cherub
- 41 "You're \_\_\_ talk!"
- 42 Platoon V.I.P.
- 43 Joey Valance & \_\_\_

- 44 Michigan town where Thomas Dewey was born
- 45 Arthur of "The Golden Girls"
- 46 Amazement
- 47 Late Queen singer
- 55 College student's burden
- 56 Lively, in mus.
- 57 "\_\_\_ a stinker?": Bugs Bunny line
- 58 Work with needles
- 59 Money-related: Abbr.
- 60 Sanctified
- 61 "This comes \_\_\_ surprise"
- 62 "\_\_\_ mouse!"

**DOWN**

- 1 A long time
- 2 "Norma Rae" director Martin
- 3 Inventor Rubik
- 4 Cumming of "Cabaret" who portrayed the Master of Ceremonies.
- 5 Where bubble tea originated
- 6 Author Wilde
- 7 Place to find fjord explorers: Abbr.
- 8 Cash drawer
- 9 Embryonic sac
- 10 Chemical reaction
- 11 Poison lead singer Michaels
- 12 Gen \_\_\_ (millennials)
- 13 Fourth-yr. students

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- 19 Skee-Ball site
- 21 Poet Dickenson
- 24 Writer Roald and others
- 25 \_\_\_ Good Feelings (1815-25, in U.S. history)
- 26 Mideast-minded lobbying grp.
- 27 "Training Day" law org.
- 28 Neutral shade
- 29 "The Neverending Story" author
- 30 Teen travails
- 31 Damon and Dillon
- 32 Google rival
- 34 Molecule in many COVID vaccines
- 35 Taboo
- 37 Pride event with floats
- 38 Groundskeeper's machine
- 43 One-room apartment, to Brits
- 44
- 45 Some Muppet dolls
- 46 At full speed
- 47 Wrap for leftovers
- 48 Ancient letter
- 49 Actress Chase
- 50 Ages and ages
- 51 Bistro
- 52 Together, in France
- 53 "The Game of Strategic Conquest"
- 54 Village People hit
- 55 Taxi

# Chappell & Ryan

by Natalie Staggers



Chappell Roan was born in a small, conservative town in Missouri and spent much of her upbringing in church. Her family was very religious and she noted that she always felt different from the kids around her growing up. Music was something that made her feel seen and like she belonged and it was a big outlet for her. She started piano lessons at 12 years old and was writing songs of her own by the time she was 13. She wrote “Die Young,” which would become the first song on her EP *School Nights*, when she was 16 and pitched it to record executives in New York City and Los Angeles. When she was 17, Atlantic Records signed her to the label and she adopted the stage name Chappell Roan in honor of her grandfather Dennis Chappell who loved the song “The Strawberry Roan” by Marty Robbins.

From 2015-2017, she continued living with her parents in Missouri, traveling back and forth to New York to record her first EP. She moved to Los Angeles in 2018 and said this changed her life because she finally felt comfortable living openly as a queer woman. When *School Nights* and the single “Pink Pony Club” didn’t receive much commercial attention, Atlantic Records decided to drop her and she started pursuing being an independent artist. She continued releasing songs, most of which focused on what it means to be queer and the highs and lows of that experience, and as she leaned into this persona she started to brand herself as the campy Chappell that we know now. In May of 2022, her hard work paid off and she opened for Olivia Rodrigo, doing her own tour less than a year later. This attention led to another record deal with Island Records with whom she released her debut album, *The Rise and Fall of a Midwest Princess*. This album skyrocketed her presence as a mainstream pop artist, earning accolades from publications like *Time*, *Rolling Stone*, *Billboard*, and *Vogue* and contributing to her 2025 Grammy Award for Best New Artist.

The first time I listened to Chappell Roan was on my way to get my *Toto IV* tattoo in Meridian. I asked one of my friends to come with me so I wouldn’t be bored on the drive and halfway there she asked if she could queue an album. “I just can’t get it out of my head. I’ve been listening to it on repeat,” she said. I handed her my phone as she added *The Rise and Fall of a Midwest Princess* to the queue. When I asked what the album was she said it definitely fell in the category of pop and I thought to myself, “Oh great. Here we go.”

I’m not typically a fan of pop music, but the moment I heard Chappell Roan’s voice I was intrigued. Dance-pop isn’t something I find myself listening to regularly but something about Chappell was different. I couldn’t get over the amount of vocal control she had and the intensity of emotion in her voice. I started listening to the album more, particularly when I was tired and wanted something upbeat to give myself motivation to go to school or work. Over time, I realized that the songs were getting stuck in my head and I started appreciating Chappell not just for her voice but also for her lyricism and the energy she captures in her music.

One of the things that makes Chappell so attractive as an artist is her willingness to be unapologetically herself. She has created a space for queer people to feel not only comfortable but proud of who they are which is something that she didn’t have growing up. In an article with ABC News she noted that awards and money aren’t what drive her to continue writing and performing: “I don’t care about anything else, except giving space to people to be free,” she said. “Because that’s what I needed so bad: freedom.”

She’s open about how overwhelming her somewhat rapid rise to fame has been and how managing fame while battling mental illness feels like an insurmountable feat at times. Rather than accepting harassment from fans, she has actively stood up for herself, saying that fame isn’t an excuse to accept abuse. She also openly criticized the music industry, saying, “I told myself if I ever won a Grammy and I got to stand up here in front of the most powerful people in music, I would demand that labels and the industry profiting millions of dollars off of artists would offer a liveable wage and healthcare, especially to developing artists.” Her experience of getting dropped from Atlantic Records and struggling to make a living is something that has stuck with her, even with her current standing as one of the biggest icons in pop music. “I got signed as a minor and when I got dropped I had zero job experience under my belt,” she said. “Like most people I had a difficult time finding a job in the pandemic and could not afford health insurance. It was so devastating to feel so committed to my art and feel so betrayed by the system.”

While Chappell’s outspokenness is seen by many as a lack of media training or etiquette, I see it as something that is invaluable. The people who make a difference and spearhead change are those who are willing to say things that are uncomfortable or unpopular when other people are afraid to. While I understand that there’s a healthy balance that has to be struck, I appreciate people who are willing to be blunt and honest even if it causes controversy. I respect Chappell as an artist and a person and I’m excited to see where her career takes her.



# JOBRIATH

*by Reagan Bussey*

Jobriath deserves his flowers even 42 years after his untimely death at the age of 36. He was born Bruce Campbell in Pennsylvania in 1946. Campbell showed a great talent for the piano at a young age, even being introduced to Eugene Ormandy (conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra) as a child prodigy. After graduating from high school, he enrolled in Temple University to study music. Around this time he was interested in folk music because he'd recently seen Peter, Paul and Mary perform. After just one semester at Temple, he dropped out. Vietnam was in full swing and he was drafted into the U.S. Army before going AWOL and relocating to Los Angeles under the pseudonym Jobriath Salisbury. To avoid confusion, I will be referring to him as Jobriath for the rest of the article as there are several name changes throughout his life. While in Los Angeles, he accompanied a friend to an audition for the musical *Hair*. The producers were impressed by his vocal talents and abilities on the piano. He was subsequently casted as Woof. Those in the cast with him described him as a larger than life character that was always playing the piano during breaks in rehearsal, showing his cast members songs that he had written.

He received positive reviews for his performance but was ultimately fired from the production for upstaging the other cast members. Around this time, the Military Police had caught up with him and Jobriath spent six months in a military psychiatric evaluation center.

In December of 1972, Jobriath was living in an unfurnished apartment and supporting himself through prostitution and sending demo tapes to labels left and right. His tape was rejected by Clive Davis at Columbia Records but it was overheard by an individual who would change Jobriath's life (arguably for the worse).

Jerry Brandt was a manager and promoter who had already made a name for himself discovering artists like Carly Simon and Chubby Checker, booking acts like the Beach Boys and bringing the Rolling Stones to the United States. Brandt happened to overhear Jobriath's demo he sent to Columbia Records. He then located Jobriath who was now calling himself Jobriath Boone and signed him to Elektra Records for a reported \$500,000 deal (about \$3.7 million adjusted for 2025).

This began an explosive professional and personal partnership between Jobriath and Jerry Brandt. Without a single or album released yet, Brandt began a marketing campaign that ultimately screwed Jobriath. You couldn't look around without seeing Jobriath's face on buses, sides of buildings, billboards, magazines and record store windows. Brandt reportedly spent over \$100,000 on the summer marketing campaign for Jobriath's debut album. The statement of the promotion was "Jobriath is the American Bowie," drawing comparisons of Jobriath's glam flamboyant stage persona to Bowie's Ziggy Stardust character. His debut album was finally released on June 15, 1973. Names you might recognize lent their talents for this release such as Peter Frampton and Eddie Kramer, producer and engineer known for his work with Hendrix, Zeppelin and Kiss. The album had very poor sales but received generally positive reviews. Ultimately it failed because *Esquire* magazine referred to it as, "the hype of the year." His debut album is a fine piece of music. His classical and musical theater origins show through and give you a blend of glam, pop and Jobriath genius.

America also wasn't ready for an openly gay pop artist. This was 1973 so Elton John wasn't out, Freddie Mercury was just around the corner and we wouldn't know George Michael or Boy George for another ten years. During an interview Jobriath called himself "rock's truest fairy" which garnered negative public attention. His billboards and the buses that had his album cover on them would soon be defaced with slurs regarding his sexuality. Friends close to him said this destroyed his self confidence and his excitement for music. Other issues were arising surrounding his career as well. A planned three-night live debut for the Paris Opera was postponed because it was costing Elektra \$200,000 and the label soon cancelled it in February of 1974. He persevered and released his second studio album in January of 1974, *Creatures of the Night*.

Now we get into the Midnight Special performance. Somehow Brandt pulled a few strings to secure Jobriath's performance on the show on March 8, 1974, with Gladys Knight. He told the audience that they were about to witness the "act of tomorrow." For his debut performance on national television he started with his song "I'm A Man" which defies the stereotypes for what a man is. His second tune, "Rock of Ages," began later on in the broadcast and includes my favorite line of his, "a Little Richard goes a long, long way."

Jobriath still hadn't performed live to a public audience at this point but that came in July of 1974 when he sold out two shows at an NYC club. There was no promotional campaign for his second album and the sales of the album were still poor and failed to chart. A US tour followed the two shows in NYC. Despite high attendance, Jerry Brandt and Elektra decided to cut funding for the tour halfway, but the band continued and completed the tour. Their last date, funnily enough, was at the University of Alabama. It ended in five encores and the fire department being called after the audience set off the alarm.

After the conclusion of the tour, Jobriath announced his retirement from the music industry and moved into the pyramid rooftop apartment at the Chelsea Hotel in New York.

By 1981, the Jobriath persona had "committed suicide in a drug, alcohol and publicity overdose" and was now a cabaret singer going by the name Cole Berlin (a play on Cole Porter and Irving Berlin). He found success in this career move, securing regular work at restaurants, clubs and cabarets, as well as supplementing his income with occasional prostitution under the name "Joby."

He began to feel ill around this time and by the time that his 10-year contract with Brandt was up, Jobriath had been diagnosed with AIDS. Jobriath died at his residence sometime around August 3, 1983, but sadly was not found for two more weeks. A friend claims that after his death, Jobriath's father hired two people off the street in New York to go up to Jobriath's apartment and destroy everything in there. Cassettes, sheet music and scores were unfortunately lost because of this act. According to his brother, after his retirement from the music industry, Jobriath came back home to live with his parents for a few months. There were many arguments because of his sexuality and future career plans.

I discovered Jobriath by happenstance. I think Pandora recommended "Ooh La La" to me around 2012 and I became obsessed with this obscure artist. A documentary was released in 2012 titled *Jobriath A.D.* He's had influence on popular artists, namely Morrissey who oversaw the first CD reissue. Joe Elliott of Def Leppard, Marc Almond of Soft Cell and Gloria Jones are featured in the documentary giving their experiences or memories of Jobriath.

It's unfortunate that this artist who passed away alone with so much more music to give to the world has almost fallen into obscurity, but I hope some of you will give his music a listen and tell your friends the story of the first openly gay artist signed to a major label.

FOUNTAIN  
OF WAYNE

*by Natalie Stagers*

There are some one-hit wonders that truly made one good song and fell off the face of the Earth. There are also some one-hit wonders who wrote a lot of great music that was overshadowed by a song that took off. Fountains Of Wayne falls into the latter category. Every time I mention Fountains Of Wayne, the immediate response I get is, “Oh, the band who wrote ‘Stacy’s Mom.’” Insert eye roll here. Sure, “Stacy’s Mom” is great and all, but so are so many other songs of theirs that get little to no recognition.

First and foremost, if you’ve never seen *That Thing You Do*, it’s one of my all-time favorite movies and it’s worth the watch. The title track was written by Fountains Of Wayne’s bassist Adam Schlesinger and when you know what most of their music sounds like it makes total sense that he wrote it. The beautifully thick harmonies and lighthearted, poppy vocals make this song feel as though it could fit right in with the other tracks on *Welcome Interstate Managers*. The song received Oscar and Golden Globes nominations in 1996, the year it was released.

Though their self-titled debut album (released in 1996) and *Utopia Parkway* (released in 1999) had some killer songs, they weren’t radio-friendly enough for the band to gain traction. Atlantic Records dropped Fountains Of Wayne in 1999 and the band members decided to stay together but pursue other projects. In 2003, *Welcome Interstate Managers* was released by S-Curve Records and Fountains Of Wayne got their first taste of fame. “Stacy’s Mom” peaked at number 21 on the Billboard Hot 100 in the US due to its radio-friendly pop-rock sound, reminiscent of The Cars and Rick Springfield’s “Jessie’s Girl.” The song’s fame was also supported by the music video in which New Zealand model and actress Rachel Hunter played Stacy’s mom herself. The video has many pop culture references, my favorite of which being a license plate that says, “I <3 Ric,” a nod to The Cars’ Ric Ocasek.

After releasing *Traffic and Weather* (2007) and *Sky Full of Holes* (2011), the band decided to go their separate ways indefinitely. In 2020, Schlesinger passed away from Covid-related complications, signaling a definite end to the original Fountains Of Wayne lineup. Since then, the other band members have expressed disappointment that the band is only really known for “Stacy’s Mom.” In 2020, lead vocalist and founding member Chris Collingwood told Rolling Stone, “[Schlesinger] was too good a writer to have that be his calling card.” So, I’m here to change that. If you trust my opinion on music at all, believe me when I say there are better songs in Fountains Of Wayne’s discography than “Stacy’s Mom.”

First and foremost, “Sink to the Bottom” from their debut album is one of the first songs of theirs I truly fell in love with. Though its lyrics are somewhat simplistic, something about the energy and melody makes it hard not to get stuck in your head. I can remember flying overseas for the first time when I was 13 and listening to that song on repeat for hours. It feels like injecting summer into your veins.

*Utopia Parkway* loses me at points, but the first three songs are immediately gripping. With this album came the addition of guitarist Jody Porter and drummer Brian Young, both of which added to their sound, making it fuller and richer. The album starts off mellow with a single vocal line and simplistic piano melody before allowing harmonies and electric guitars to flood in. Something about the lead guitar line (which starts around 42 seconds into the first song) is captivating and I never get tired of hearing it. The second song on the album, “Red Dragon Tattoo,” is quite literally my summer anthem and hasn’t left my Spotify rotation since March. I don’t know what they put in that song but it’s as addictive as cocaine. I know I won’t stop talking about the vocal harmonies but if you listen to this song you’ll understand what I mean. In the near future I plan to get a red dragon tattooed on my left shoulder in honor of this song because it’s just that good. The third track, “Denise,” is one of the most popular songs on the record, gaining a lot of airplay at college radio stations. It’s more in your face than the first two songs with heavily distorted vocals and guitars but it’s just as much of an earworm as the others.

*Welcome Interstate Managers* has some gems outside of “Stacy’s Mom,” namely “Mexican Wine” and “Hackensack.” “Mexican Wine” (in typical Fountains Of Wayne fashion) has simplistic but engaging lyrics, beginning with, “He was killed by a cellular phone explosion / They scattered his ashes across the ocean / The water was used to make baby lotion / The wheels of promotion were set into motion.” Lots of Fountains Of Wayne songs make you sit and wonder, “What on Earth inspired this?” but that’s part of their charm. “Hackensack” shows a different, more mellow and contemplative side of the band. Its bittersweet lyrics tell the story of a boy who fell in love with a classmate who went on to be an actress and left him behind. There’s a strong sense of nostalgia and longing, showing their ability to have intimate moments.

“Someone to Love” from *Traffic and Weather* is another one that itches my brain in the right way. Though many of the lyrics are pop culture references that I’m too young to have any real emotional attachment to, the chorus is catchy and I love the synth and guitar parts.

In all honesty, I do gatekeep Fountains Of Wayne a little bit because it feels like I have some special insider knowledge that they’re actually a pretty killer band. However, I think it’s time to share them with the rest of the world. They’re one of my favorite bands to listen to during the summer because of their upbeat, power pop sound and I hope you enjoy the songs that have stuck with me for the past decade.

# FREDDIE MERCURY

by Reagan Bussey

When I no longer  
Feel it breathing down  
My neck it's just around  
The corner (hi neighbor)

- Tim Dlugos

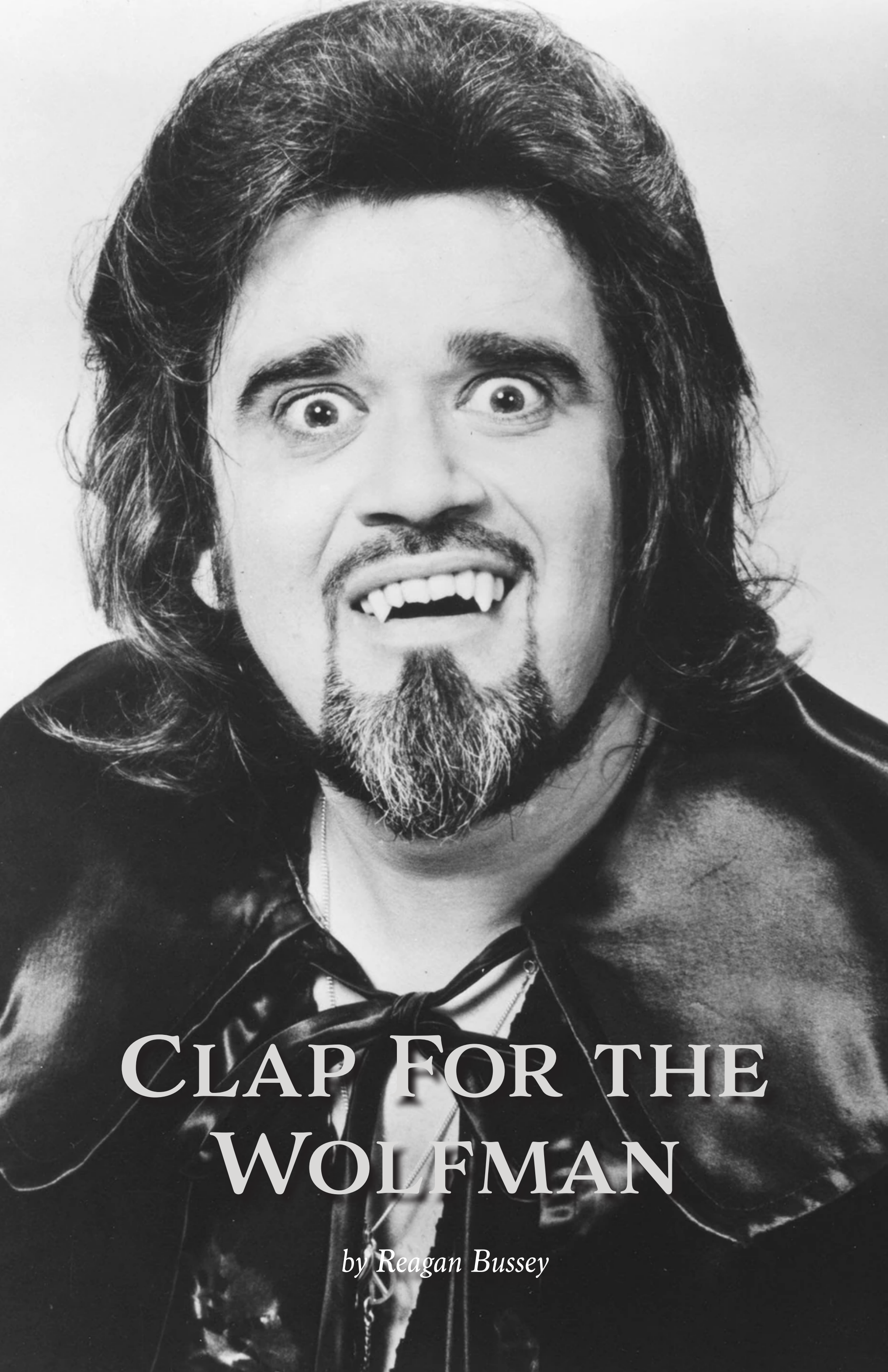
Considering that June is Pride Month, I thought it would finally be appropriate to discuss Freddie Mercury. I've always idolized him and I'll tell you a little story about the impact that he had on my life. As a child, I listened to a lot of '70s and '80s music, but I was often teased because I was so out of touch with the music that my peers listened to. Around 2010, I decided to start listening to whatever was popular within my age group. A few years later, I actually looked through my iTunes purchase history to find this date. On July 26, 2012, I was watching a YouTube compilation of horrible American Idol auditions and one person performed "Bohemian Rhapsody." Somehow I had gone eleven years without hearing that song and was intrigued and wanted to hear the original. I watched the music video for "Bohemian Rhapsody" and was floored because I had never heard a song like that before. After it was over, I looked for the next recommended video which was "Killer Queen" and that changed everything for me. I knew that was what music was supposed to sound like. I then searched Queen to see what other songs they had written and was shocked to see that all of these songs I had heard on the radio over the years were all by the same four individuals. I consumed every possible aspect of Queen that I could through my teenage years, listening to all of their albums, watching every music video and interview that I could and even picking up the guitar and piano because of Freddie Mercury and Brian May. Queen has been the biggest influence on my life in terms of music.

Let's talk about Freddie Mercury though. Aside from being one of the most iconic vocalists and performers of all time, he's one of the most significant gay men in the history of music. Even though he was dating and living with Mary Austin early in his career, he continued affairs with men in his personal life. His sexuality was left up for debate in the press over Queen's 21-year history. He was even quoted once, saying that he was "gay as a daffodil." By 1987, Queen was on top of the world. After the success of Live Aid two years prior and the recent completion of their "Magic Tour" (which included multiple sold out shows at Wembley Stadium in London), bad news was on the horizon.

Around Easter of 1987, Mercury was given a death sentence. He was diagnosed with AIDS. At the time, there was no cure for the disease that had taken the lives of several of his friends and former lovers already. Brian May said that when Freddie told them his diagnosis he said he didn't have much time but he didn't want to talk about it. He didn't want pity. He just wanted to continue making music for as long as he could. I couldn't imagine being in his shoes and having such a strong attitude in the face of the news. He kept the news of his illness quiet even though the press hounded him non-stop for the last few years of his life. Mercury denied that anything was wrong with him though he continued to appear more and more ill. The last album that Queen released during Mercury's lifetime was *Innuendo*. It includes what I think is Mercury's greatest vocal performance during his time in Queen, "The Show Must Go On."

The song was written by May but he said he wrote it with Mercury in mind. The lyrics tug on the heart-strings when you know what was really going on. The vocal melody reaches insane heights that even May thought Mercury would struggle with, but Mercury downed a shot of vodka and said, "I'll fucking do it, darling" then recorded the vocals in just one take. The fact that it's the last song on the album bookends Queen's undeniably outstanding career. Freddie Mercury died on November 24, 1991, less than 24 hours after he gave a statement that he had been diagnosed with AIDS. I cried my eyes out when I found out he had passed away, even though he had been dead for 20 years at that point. In April of 1992, the Freddie Mercury Tribute Concert was held, featuring artists such as Metallica, David Bowie, George Michael and many others. The concert sold out almost immediately.

The last song that he wrote, "A Winter's Tale," weighs heavy on my mind as I write this. He wrote it as he was sitting in his house on the edge of Lake Geneva in Switzerland, and I think it's somehow an ode to how he imagined Heaven would be. The world will never see another Freddie Mercury. Nobody will compare to his songwriting talents, vocal abilities and dominance as a performer.



# CLAP FOR THE WOLFMAN

*by Reagan Bussey*

A good radio DJ can have quite the effect on you. I remember the DJs that I listened to when I was a kid. It's easy to develop a parasocial relationship with them. You hear them speaking to you in between your favorite songs, when you've just had your heart broken and you're waiting for your request of "Love Hurts" or when you're driving around at night with the windows rolled down. If you were alive through the '60s, '70s and '80s, you knew who Wolfman Jack was. I think every person who becomes a famous radio on-air personality should strive to achieve the level of fame that Wolfman Jack had. Forget Howard Stern. He wishes that he had the legend status that Wolfman Jack had.

The Wolfman was everywhere during the '70s, from cameo appearances as a fictionalized version of himself in George Lucas' *American Graffiti* to hosting the live music based television show *The Midnight Special*. There are multiple songs written about him, the most popular being "Clap For the Wolfman" by The Guess Who. This song includes a few lines spoken by Wolfman himself and an album track by Todd Rundgren on his album *Something/Anything?*. July 1st marks 30 years since his passing and I wanted to dedicate a part of this issue to him.

He wasn't always known as the Wolfman. Robert Smith was born in New York City. He was given a Trans-Oceanic radio as a child and became an avid fan of R&B music along with the DJs whose voices filled his ears like Dr. Jive, Moon Dog and Alan Freed. After deciding he wanted to dedicate his life to radio, he attended the National Academy of Broadcasting (back when you had to actually be licensed to be a jock). After his graduation in 1960, he landed a job at WYOU in Newport News, Virginia (which is now known as WPMH and is a Christian talk radio station). After working there for a few years, he moved down to Shreveport to become the station manager and morning disc jockey at KCIJ, a country station.

While being the morning DJ at KCIJ, he took inspiration from one of his favorite DJs, Alan Freed, who originally called himself "Moon Dog." This character became the basis for the Wolfman Jack character. The character was taken from Smith's love of horror movies which would be evident in promotional pictures throughout the '70s where he would don fake fangs.

To really understand the impact that this next career move had on his life, let's talk about the FCC and wattage of radio towers. Most radio stations operate at 45,000-50,000 watts. The more power a tower has, the further its reach. FM towers are only powered at the very top which is why they're so tall. On the other hand, the entirety of AM towers are powered so even at 50,000 watts there's a lot of electricity running through it. A radio station that has that kind of power can be picked up for about 60 miles considering environmental factors like water or hilly areas that could affect transmission.

Mexico did not have quite the same limit standards that the United States had. When XERF-AM in Mexico called the Wolfman to come work for them, it was just across the border from Del Rio, Texas. XERF had a broadcasting power of 150,000 watts. Smith said once that you could drive from New York to L.A. and would never lose the station. It could even be heard as far away as Europe and the Soviet Union at night. This shot the Wolfman up to national fame and he developed his signature style while working at this station.

After eight months, he moved to Minneapolis to run KUXL. He was managing this station but taping his shows and mailing them to Mexico so it could still be broadcasting all over the U.S. There were some financial issues with XERB's revenue based on some of the religious advertisements they were running so the station lost a good portion of its revenue. He missed the excitement of what he was doing at XERB so he took a job at KDAY in Los Angeles. They could only pay him a small part of his former income so to capitalize on his fame, he edited old broadcasts and sold them to other stations, becoming one of the first syndicated programs.

During the mid-70s, Wolfman Jack was heard on more than 2,000 radio stations in 53 countries.

During this time, WNBC (known as WFAN now) was struggling. They weren't even cracking the top five in the NYC radio ratings. Radio legends like Don Imus and Murray Kaufman were a few of the on-air personalities at the time and they added the Wolfman to the roster. *American Graffiti* was premiering in theaters the same month he was hired so WNBC capitalized on it, hoping it would help with their ratings.

Unfortunately, it didn't work. WNBC hired Cousin Brucie less than a year after Wolfman's hire and this decision prompted Wolfman Jack to move back to Los Angeles to focus on syndication duties. In the late '80s, he relocated once again to North Carolina to be closer to family.

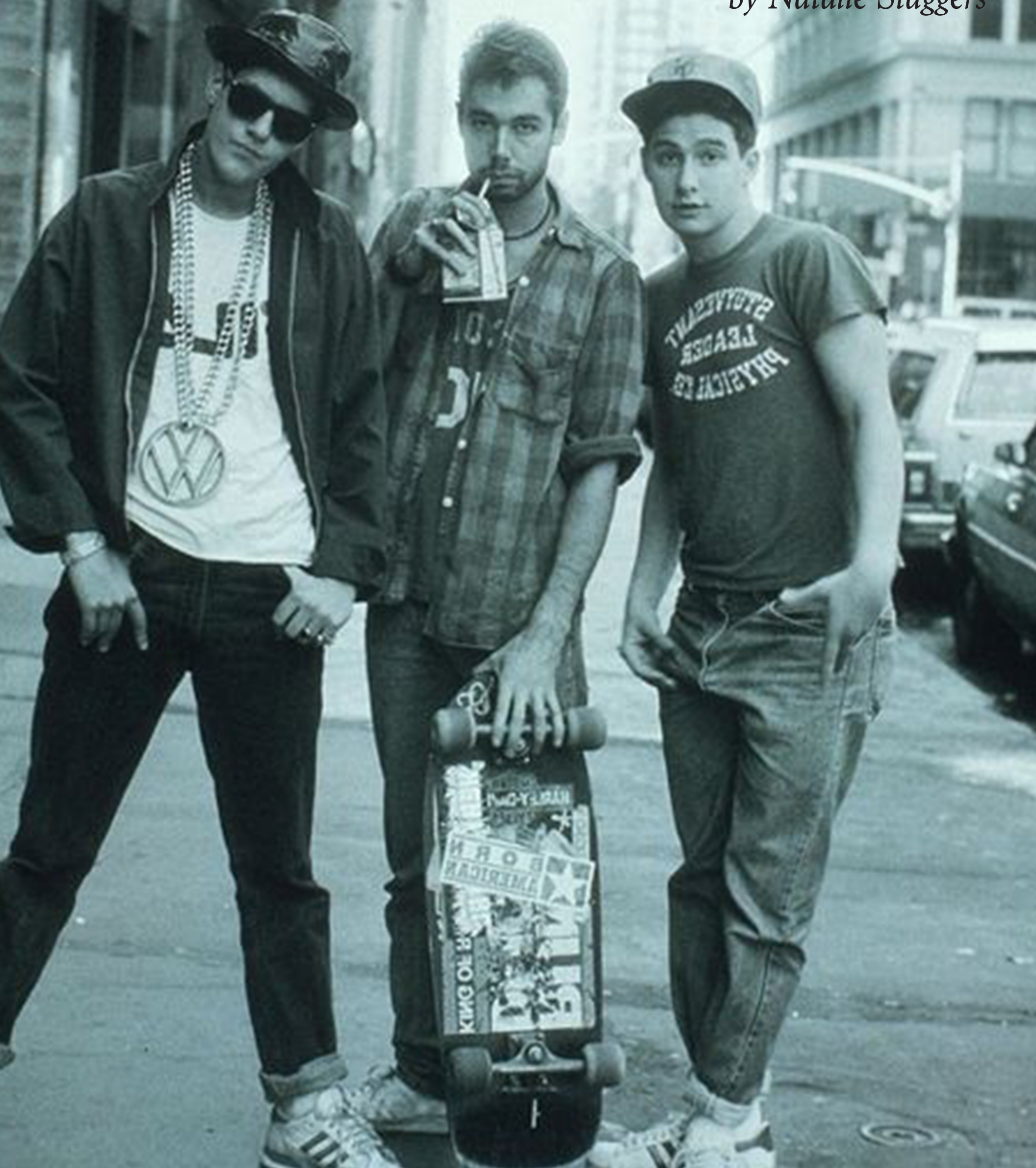
On July 5, 1995, Wolfman Jack passed away at his home from a heart attack. He was only 57 years old.

The Wolfman's legacy still lives on in those who look up to him as the laid back, out there DJ. I'm still waiting for someone to rise up and become a DJ that we all know and love. I'm tired of the washed up rock stars and AI hosting radio shows. Hopefully radio will return to the people soon.

To quote Elvis Costello, "The radio is in the hands of such a lot of fools. Tryin' to anesthetize the way that you feel."

# BEASTIE BOYS

*by Natalie Staggers*



My dad loves to make obscure references to movies, shows and music and ever since I was little I can remember asking what time it was and without fail receiving the response, “It’s time to get ill.” For the longest time I had no idea what he was talking about and brushed it off as another one of “dad’s weird references.” One time he asked if I knew what he was referencing and throwing an oddball guess out, I said, “I don’t know, Froggy Fresh?” If you know who Froggy Fresh is, that’s probably one of the funniest answers I could have given him.

I don’t remember when I really started listening to Beastie Boys but I know that once I did, I couldn’t stop. Their goofy demeanor and chemistry with each other was infectious and I couldn’t get enough of MCA, Mike D and Ad-Rock. My dad also loves to come up with silly nicknames for me and before I even knew who he was, I was deemed Mike D due to the fact that he “sounds like a mouse.”

I’ll never forget the first time that I listened to *Licensed to Ill* all the way through because the moment that “She’s Crafty” started playing I lost my shit. “The Ocean” is one of my favorite Led Zeppelin songs and I recognized the guitar riff in milliseconds. One thing that’s notable about the Beastie Boys is that they’ve stood the test of time. I know people who grew up listening to them while they were releasing music and I also know six-year-olds whose favorite song is “Brass Monkey.” They’ve got quotable lyrics, killer samples and energy for days. When I’m in a funk, Mike D knows how to fix it.

People are often shocked to learn that when they first got together in 1981 in New York City, they were a hardcore punk band. Their first release “Cooky Puss” was literally just a prank call with music put behind it and it was the first stepping stone to incorporating hip-hop into their music. While some people disregard them as too unserious or say their lyrics aren’t clever enough, that’s part of what I love about them. Their producer Rick Rubin wrote a book called “The Creative Act: A Way of Being” which outlines the importance of approaching creativity with a childlike mindset. As we age and learn how things are “supposed” to be done, we start to compartmentalize everything. We put blinders on so that we can be more efficient and focus on what needs to get done. To have a true creative breakthrough, though, we have to find a way to revert to a childlike version of ourselves that sees the world with fresh eyes. We have to pay attention to more than just what’s in front of us and think outside the box. Don’t get me wrong, I’m not saying that Mike D, Ad-Rock and MCA were some creative geniuses that broke the code to creativity but whatever their songwriting process involved was clearly effective considering that they’re still relevant over 15 years since their last release. It’s even more notable considering that after Adam Yauch (MCA) died in 2012, their music could not be used in any advertisements or promotional material due to a section in his will that forbade it.

While I go through seasons where I don’t listen to the Beasties as much, they are one of those groups that I always inevitably come back to. When I start to feel burnt out on new music or I just need to remember my roots, Mike D, MCA and Ad-Rock have always got my back. I grew up listening to “Brass Monkey” and “Fight For Your Right” but have since developed a love for so much more of their discography. While I sing harmonies on every other song in *The Bouncing Betty*, they’ve deemed me worthy of singing lead on the one Beastie Boys song we play because of how deep my love for them is. In a way, the Beasties have marked many significant landmarks in my life, a recent example being graduation. I listened to nothing but the Beastie Boys the entire day. Whether I’m feeling stressed, sad, tired, silly or crazy, the Beastie Boys always take whatever mood I’m in and make it 100 times better.

# Denny Garlos



*by Reagan Bussey*

Modern music wouldn't have taken the path that it did if it wasn't for Wendy Carlos. You may not know her name, but you know her music. If you've ever seen *The Shining*, *A Clockwork Orange* or the original *Tron* from 1982, then you've heard her work. Although she scored several legendary status movie soundtracks, it isn't her biggest contribution to music.

Carlos was born in 1939 in Rhode Island as Walter Carlos. At an early age, she showed much promise as a musician, beginning with piano lessons at the age of six and writing her first composition, "A Trio for Clarinet, Accordion, and Piano" at age ten. Carlos also showed interests in computers and electronics. She won a scholarship after building a computer and presenting it at the Westinghouse Science Fair which was a science competition for high school students.

Carlos obtained degrees in music and physics at the undergraduate level and a master's degree in music composition. She was particularly interested in electronic music, possibly brought on from her interest in the sciences, and it became a lifelong passion. She met Robert Moog during her master's program and the two formed a partnership. Carlos gave Moog advice on what would eventually become the Moog synthesizer.

When I think of synthesizers nowadays, they're much easier to manipulate to get the exact sound that you want. Back in 1965 it was a very different beast. You had patch cords that connected each of 50+ modules together that consisted of an oscillator, envelope generators, filters, noise generators and too many other parts to name. Nothing had ever been created like this before and the issue was that the first synthesizers that Moog produced did not come with manuals. This meant musicians had to learn on their own, from word of mouth or from seminars that Moog himself presented. The other issue with the early Moog synthesizer is that it was a monophonic instrument which means you could only play one note at a time—not one chord at a time, one singular note.

In 1967, Carlos concocted an idea to release her own original music played on the synthesizer. A friend whom she had met through her day job as a recording studio producer at Gotham Studios suggested that music by a more well-known composer would be digested easier and would lessen the blow of this new synthetic sound. That idea became *Switched-On Bach*. With a small advance from Columbia Records, Carlos recorded the album at her home studio.

It was a painful experience because each individual line had to be recorded separately rather than playing the piece as written. The Moog would drift out of tune every few measures and had to be, according to Carlos, beaten with a hammer on the case to get it back in tune.

After putting in supposedly 1,100 hours to fully record, the album was released in October of 1968. It became a hit commercially and critically, peaking at No. 10 on the Billboard Top 200 Album charts and receiving much publicity from the press worldwide. There was another slight issue though. In the liner notes she was credited as Walter Carlos but had begun hormone replacement treatment months before *Switched-On Bach* was released. Her appearance began to change but now she was being asked to do interviews and perform live while going through the early stages of her transition. For her personal appearances, she would put on fake sideburns and a wig and would draw on facial hair with an eyebrow pencil to physically look more masculine.

There's an interview that she did with the BBC in 1970 that still fascinates me, no matter how many times I've watched it. She gives you a demonstration on how exactly the synthesizer works and how she orchestrates the Bach pieces with said instrument. Listening to her explain each small nuance of the instrument makes me feel like an idiot even 55 years into the future. This huge instrument that used to take up large sections of living rooms can now be easily accessed with a laptop and a MIDI keyboard. I couldn't imagine the time it took to master and experiment with each module to try and replicate the instrument she had in mind for each line. In an interview from the late '80s, Carlos starts with the sine wave and accurately replicates the sound of a xylophone in less than a minute, even adding the sound of the hammer hitting the instrument.

*Switched-On Bach* would go on to win three Grammys (Best Classical Album, Best Classical Performance - Instrumental Soloist and Best Engineering Classical Recording). Moog began getting orders from producers and artists wanting a synthesizer because of the popularity of this album. Carlos opened the world's eyes to a new sound and a completely new way to create real music. After the financial success of the album, Carlos had the funds to undergo sex reassignment surgery in 1972. Carlos did not announce that she was transgender until the May 1979 issue of *Playboy* was published. Something I've noticed through my familiarity of Wendy Carlos over the years is I never see nasty comments about her and her transition. In all of the interviews I've viewed on Youtube, I only see admiration for her intelligence and skill. In discussions of her in my music classes, Carlos was always referred to as a woman and treated as the pioneer that she is.

Synthesizers would go on to be an integral part of pop music, specifically during the 1980s, and they're still widely used today. I think the world owes more appreciation and gratitude for the musician who changed the musical landscape by introducing the synthesizer to the world.



# THE PINKSHEETS

*by Natalie Stagers*

It's March 1 and Reagan and I are standing outside of Dave's Dark Horse Tavern talking to the members of Sonic Voyager. They've just finished their opening set and we're catching up on everything that's happened since the last gig. "You going back inside?" Reagan asks me. I look at the time and gauge my exhaustion levels, looking longingly at my car. "Sure, I'll stay for a couple songs," I say.

We walk back inside, grabbing a stool and setting up right in front of the stage. "You think they're gonna be any good?" I ask her. She shrugs. The Pinksheets open with "Sunday Morning" by Maroon 5, but I choose to withhold my judgment until I hear a few more songs. To my surprise, they start playing "Whipping Post" as Reagan excitedly slaps my arm, yelling, "Holy shit! They're playing it in 7/8!" We both lock in, suddenly captivated by this Oxford-born band. As the night goes on, Reagan and I only become more and more sucked into the atmosphere they've created, playing songs like "Panama" by Van Halen, "Time" by Pink Floyd and "Peg" by Steely Dan.

Halfway through the show, the bassist walks off the stage, moving around the room and interacting with enamored crowd members. He begins playing an eerily familiar bassline and I look at Reagan with eyes that say, "This can't be happening." We both proceed to lose our minds as they start playing "Chameleon" by Herbie Hancock.

"We've always understood the importance of crowd work and actually building that connection with the people in the audience," bassist and vocalist Bryson Heatherly said. "Obviously that's just as important as the music in my opinion."

While most of their cover songs are high-energy classics, their original music is much more calming and contemplative. Just over a week ago they released their first EP, *My Old Den*. While the first original song they wrote took heavy influence from bands like the Beatles and Van Halen, this EP is (in guitarist and vocalist Dylan Gray's words) the lovechild of Peach Pit, flipturn and The Backseat Lovers. Rather than continuing the "chewed up bubblegum pop" sound as they coined it, this EP is more mellow and introspective.

"We keep the energy there but just not so much like in your face and shaking you to the core," Heatherly said. "It's kind of like, here, have a seat. Be comfy."

The chemistry between the band members speaks for itself as most of them grew up together. Gray and Heatherly met in sixth grade and Heatherly became best friends with drummer Carter Maharrey in third grade. These three played together in a band in high school that later became The Pinksheets when they got to college. About seven months ago, they added guitarist and vocalist Aubrey Meredith to the mix. While they do spend time learning the song as it's played on the record during practice, they noted that no two Pinksheets shows are alike.

"We don't necessarily play things by the record as some people would say, but to us we think that adds a lot more character, a lot more energy and it definitely feels like we connect a little more with the audience because we're feeding off of each other," Heatherly said.

The Pinksheets got their name from the movie "The Wolf of Wall Street" in which a stockbroker goes to work at a small firm where they sell penny stocks off the pink sheets. At the time, the band was entirely composed of accounting majors so they thought it would be a nice nod to the movie.

When asked what their favorite part of being in The Pinksheets was, they giggled and responded, "wearing these overalls" as they tilted the camera down to reveal four sets of matching pink overalls.

"One of my favorite parts is that it's not just that we're in a band together," Gray said. "We were all friends before we made a band so it's like we're all brothers at this point."

"Music is the universal language and some things just can't be said with words," Heatherly said, commenting on the band's dynamic and closeness.

In the last year, The Pinksheets have tried to branch out, playing in cities like Starkville, Mobile and Memphis. Through this, they've gained a bigger following and hope to continue playing music together even after college.

"Whether it's us being a worldwide touring band or us being a band for the neighborhood, we're still going to be a band for sure," Gray said.

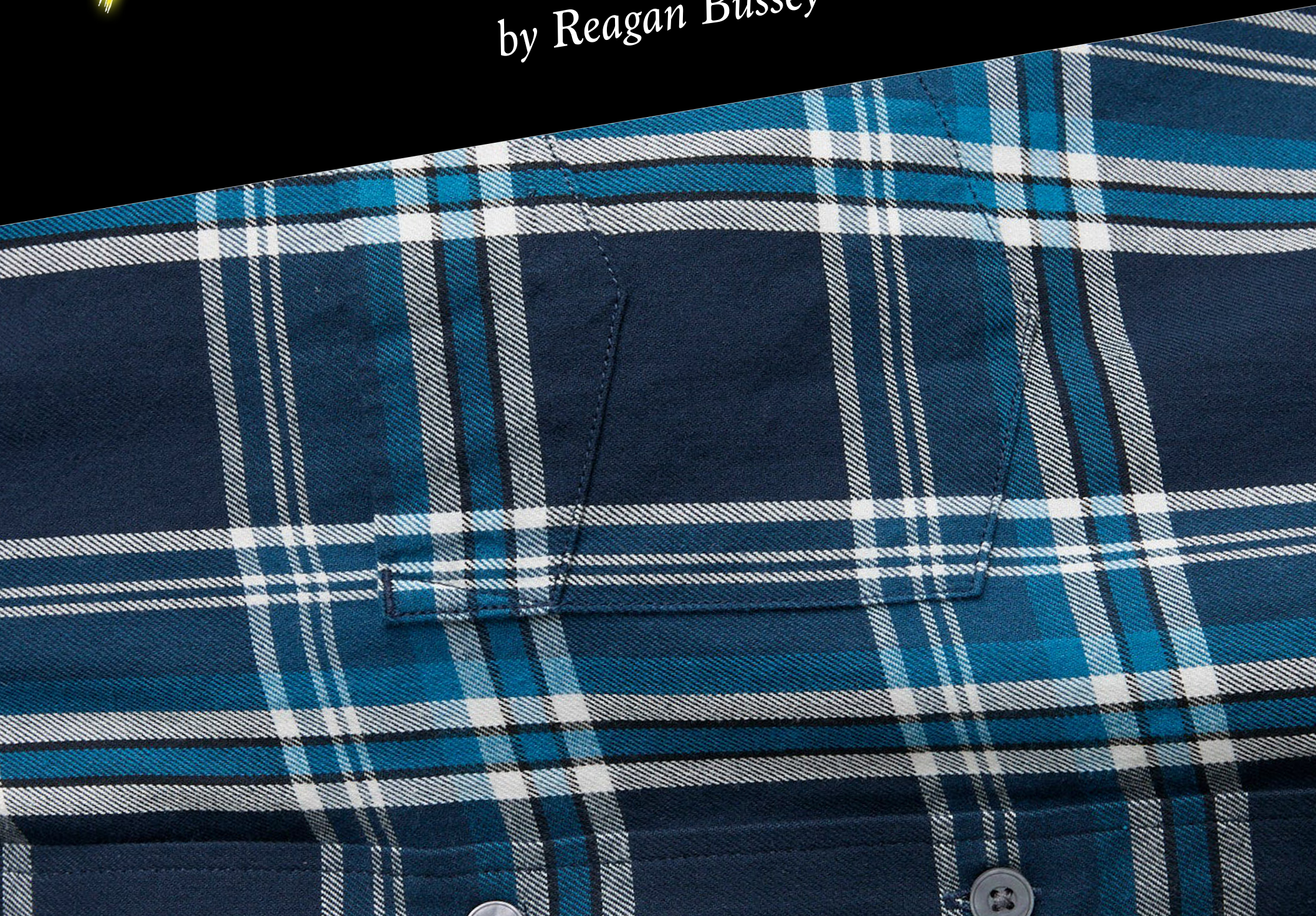


**GLAM**

**TO**

**GRUNGE**

by Reagan Bussey



At the beginning of the '80s, rock music was shifting. Gone were the days of bell bottoms, satin shirts and disco. A new sound for the youth was emerging—an angry and lust-filled one that was personified by Aquanet and the tightest leather pants you could find. On Sunset Boulevard in downtown Los Angeles, there were clubs like the Whiskey a Go Go, the Rainbow and the Roxy. Those clubs were dominated by groups such as Mötley Crüe, RATT, then later on in the decade, Poison and Guns 'N Roses. These groups epitomized the mantra of live fast and die young with their combination of sex, drugs and rock and roll. Groups like Mötley Crüe took what groups of the previous decade were doing and amplified the debauchery and destruction, becoming the standard for how a rock star should act. A new sound was emerging from Seattle—one that would be the sound of the next generation.

I personally mark the end of the “glam metal” era by the release of New Jersey band Skid Row’s debut album. I think that was the last true hard rock/glam album. Everything after that was a cheap grab at the end of a genre that was becoming more and more uncool by the minute. It contrasted the hedonistic L.A. lyrics with dark stories such as “18 and Life.” *Skid Row* was the bridge between glam metal and what we now know as grunge. Sub Pop was an emerging record label based in Seattle and was responsible for signing artists such as Nirvana, Soundgarden and Mudhoney. Sub Pop released Nirvana’s debut album, *Bleach*, in June of 1989 to moderate success. Alice In Chains released their debut album, *Facelift*, in August of 1990 but received poor sales until MTV added “Man in the Box” to regular rotation. We bid adieu to “Dr. Feelgood” and “Cherry Pie.” The people wanted to hear the new sound coming out of the Pacific Northwest.

1991 marked a turning point for the genre that we now refer to as “grunge.” Between August 27th and October 8th, *Ten* by Pearl Jam, *Nevermind* by Nirvana and *Badmotorfinger* by Soundgarden were all released. All those albums included songs that would rule the MTV airways and the charts and usher in the moody nature of Seattle to teenagers and young adults around the country. Nirvana’s *Nevermind* reached No. 1 on the Billboard 200 Top Albums chart the week of January 11, 1992. They were the 7th rock band to reach No. 1 after R.E.M., Skid Row, Van Halen, Metallica, Guns N’ Roses and U2. No bands reached No. 1 the entire year of 1990. The exposure of grunge resulted in more alternative rock bands emerging from around the country—Smashing Pumpkins, Stone Temple Pilots and then from overseas, Radiohead.

I don’t know if this has ever been officially discussed but I would like to make the decision that all grunge bands are alternative but not all alternative bands are grunge. To be considered a grunge band, you have to be from Seattle, much like how bourbon can only be produced in the United States.

You could argue that grunge was ushered in by what was happening politically in the United States in the late '80s and early '90s. The Gulf War was ongoing and much like Vietnam, the youth were unhappy about Americans occupying other countries. Bands like Pearl Jam, and most importantly Rage Against the Machine, were writing about the injustices that were happening before our eyes. Although RATM is not categorized as a grunge band, they were a huge part of what made the '90s rock scene sound the way it did.

I’m glad to see that grunge is still inherently popular with mine and younger generations. I’ll tell you a quick story about this. For those of you who don’t know, I love Guitar Hero. During the summer of 2022, I would go to work and come home and play it for hours. I got decently good at it and I always tried to make other people play it with me. Christmas of that year, I went to my grandparents house and forced my younger cousins to play it with me because we played GHIII nonstop when we were kids. The game they had was Guitar Hero: World Tour and my youngest cousin who was just shy of his sixteenth birthday asked me what would be a good song to play. Selfishly, I didn’t want him to play the song that I was planning on doing so I suggested “Everlong” by the Foo Fighters. He became obsessed at that moment and picked up the guitar several months after. He listens to Alice In Chains, Pearl Jam and Pantera exclusively and now dreams of starting his own band, writing music and becoming a rockstar.

It makes me happy to see that our generation is trying to keep rock and roll alive and I hope that this sudden fascination with grunge continues that trend.

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# Queue & A

## Who is your favorite drummer?

Natalie's Pick: Jeff Porcaro

I've always had a deep appreciation for drummers because I grew up watching my dad play in countless bands. My dad has mentioned many of his favorite drummers to me over the years (Bernard Purdie, Vinnie Colaiuta, Steve Gadd, etc.) but the main one that left a lasting impression on me was Jeff Porcaro. Outside of his work with Toto, Porcaro is an esteemed session drummer, having played in thousands of sessions with various artists. He started learning drums from his father (who was also a session musician) when he was seven and got his first professional gig playing with Sonny & Cher at the ripe age of 17. Porcaro has played with countless big-name artists, including but not limited to Steely Dan, Miles Davis, Boz Scaggs, Michael McDonald, Michael Jackson, Paul McCartney and Rickie Lee Jones. Though he's considered one of the most esteemed session drummers of the late '70s and '80s, he is extremely humble and never plays in a way that is overly flashy or doesn't serve the song. His drum sound is unique and stands out against other drummers of the time period. While he's most known for his work with Toto, especially the creation of the Rosanna shuffle, Porcaro's fingerprints are all over beloved music from the '70s and '80s.

Reagan's Pick: Jeff Porcaro

You may not know the name but you know his groove. He's played with Steely Dan, Hall & Oates, Pink Floyd, Crosby Stills & Nash and Michael Jackson. Jeff came from a musical family and he and his two brothers would go on to found and perform with Grammy Award winning group, Toto. Before Toto, he was a session musician and became high in demand very quickly. During his 22-year career, Porcaro has been credited on 466 songs according to [rateyourmusic.com](http://rateyourmusic.com). I saw in an interview one time where he said he actually disliked the half-time shuffle but because of his success on tracks like "Lido Shuffle" and "Rosanna" he couldn't get away from it. He continues to inspire people (including myself) to play for the song rather than yourself, to pay attention to details and to stay in the pocket.

**Who is your favorite drummer?  
Let us know at @queuemedia LLC!**

