

## David Bowie

- What is the meaning of width of a circle? Is it to express resistance? Rock music? what do you like? Don't like? Charismatic? Engaging?
- It's not an act, it's authentic.
- China Girl - it seems copied and it seems dated. What's the background? why did he do that? This is Rich GQ guy phase.  
*awkward guy*
- Is rock dead? Is it self-referential?
- Blackstar - dichotomies, everything is stratified, very detailed
  - o Sum of Ziggy and China Girl
  - o Do you agree?

## Post-war England and Skiffle

- Post-war economy in England was bad
  - Bebop - technical
  - Black - dance
  - white - pop
- England didn't have segregation, wasn't divided in same way as America was
- No infrastructure, everything was bombed
- Dixieland music became popular, challenging to play music but didn't need lots of resources
  - Old blues/ folk songs from '20s/30s
  - This became known as skiffle
- Things bought in England had to be made in England  
Quality of instruments was low in early 1950s

- with skiffle, you didn't need good instruments, could play anywhere  
English guy →  
Lennie Donegan played skiffle
- Skiffle  
Became popular in England while rock became popular in America
- English weren't thinking about subtext, they just thought African American music sounded good.
- Is it necessary for Lennie to adopt Lead Belly's character to play his music?

## Rock and Roll in England

- Rock and roll emerged in 1954 in U.S.
- Cleveland radio D.J. <sup>Alan Freed</sup> played R & B music (<sup>i.e.</sup> Black music). It was aimed at suburban white kids.
- By 1955, it became popular among teens
  - \* piano/sax : Lil Richard
  - guitar : Chuck Berry
- By <sup>time of</sup> Elvis, guitar became white side of rock and roll (Buddy Holly, Chet Atkins)

- Sax/horns were Black side (Ray Charles, Amos Milburn), Motown sound.
- When Lil. Richard toured Eng in '57, rock became really popular. There wasn't same type of music segregation in England.
- By 1960, major figures became dead or quit music, or became sex offenders, in America.
- In America, rock lost charm. In England, they couldn't get rock imported anymore. So, they needed to make their own.

- shouting in Black music had meaning, showed resistance to racism.
- English didn't have same experience as Black ppl, so it wasn't as authentic.
- English started playing L. Rich.
  - They don't care that L. Rich. needs to be played on piano/horns. So, they played it on guitars.
- So, skiffle bands started playing Black side of rock music. This is where modern idea of rock music is formed.

## Cold War + Beat Music

- American troops stationed in Europe were less segregated
- army radio stations played blues music, skiffle bands were exposed to it
- By '61, skiffle bands could buy electric guitars,
- American troops in Hamburg Germany listened to <sup>American-ish</sup> R&B music played by English bands
- English played combos of <sup>strong/</sup> backbeat and <sup>weak</sup> polka/waltz, called "make-show" beat (4 on the floor) "beat" <sup>or</sup> music

(mix of blues, pop, R&B, duop  
and other music people  
wanted to hear)

- Beatles introduced backbeat  
into Beat music, great  
advance of Beatles.
- Beatles sound more alive  
than Dave Clark Five because  
they had backbeat.

## David Jones

- Born in 1947 in Brixton  
South London.
- Brixton was flattened in WWI.  
Germans thought they were  
bombing Westminster area.

- Took long time to rebuild;  
In '40s, low-income ppl lived  
in **council housing** in Brixton,  
including **artists**.
- Older **brother Terry** influenced  
David heavily. Terry was  
influenced by artsy Brixton  
neighborhood.
- Moved to dull, grey suburb, Bromley.  
Bowie found it dreadfully dull.  
Bowie was drawn to wildness  
of rock and jazz via  
brother's record collection.
- Bowie credits **Coltrane**  
and Eric **Dolphy**.
- Bowie really liked **avant-garde**  
**jazz** music; played sax  
in High School band; wasn't  
very good at it.

- Peter Framton's father got Bowie job in London.
- Coltrane was very authentic; he thought right on the spot, it was extreme honesty
- Bowie played with authenticity and act/character. He likes polarities. He was never in the middle.

## London Scene

- Bowie hates working in London because he can't make music. His boss introduced Bowie to blues, which in 1963 was big thing in London.
- ~ English start opening for, then playing with American blues musicians, including Stones
- ~ In 1964, British invasion.



- John Lee Hooker (blues) was very similar to Stones.

## Davie Jones and the King Bees

- Bowie becomes obsessed with blues
- Forms blues band with George Underwood. They wanted to combine beat and blues, make it rough.
- Bowie sang and played sax, but didn't have stage presence.
- People liked him on personal level.  
And he worked hard.
- Sends letter to John Bloom, a washing machine salesman,

telling him that if he could "sell [Bowie] as well as he could sell washing machines, they'd make a killing."

- Bloom tells <sup>Les (music management guy)</sup> Kahn ^ about Bowie.  
Bowie plays at party, booted off stage. However, Kahn saw something in Bowie that others didn't, and gave <sup>him</sup> opportunity to record two songs. But, songs didn't sound great, no where near as good as Stones for ex., but not even as good as 2nd - tier band like Wranglers.
- Bowie didn't start out with innate talent, he just really wanted to be a musician.

Bowie  
is  
17  
yrs old

## Davy Jones and the Manish Boys

- King Bees don't work out.
- Kahn hires Bowie to paint offices.  
Bowie painted with marc Feld,  
who founded glam rock. They  
became friends, talked fashion,  
talked above stunts to get  
attention.
- Jones started playing with manish Boys (sax, vocals)  
*got gig from Kahn*
- Jones told reporter he begun org. called society for the prevention of cruelty to long haired men; and he got on T.V.!  
*BBC*
- Hoped <sup>he could turn</sup> publicity into something musical

## Davy Jones and the Lower Third

- Jones didn't get music gigs from BBC stunt, but he did get **modeling gigs**.
- Jones left Manish Boys, found new manager named Ralph Horton, developed rapport.
- Jones formed his own band, P. J. and Lowerd 3<sup>rd</sup>. Style was like **The Who** and **The Kinks** -
- In '64, Kinks used distortion as intentional effect; Jones copied this in '65 with his band (see 2:22 stamp)  
**Jones has ear to ground.**

## - Influences:

- Coltrane - honesty
- Vince Taylor - weird greaser
- Lonnie Donegan - unbridled enthusiasm
- Eric Burden,  
Mick Jagger - natural charisma
- The Monkees - complete  
fabrication,  
actors

- Horton felt there was  
Something there in Jones,  
didn't know how to bring it out.

Star  
of  
the  
Show → Asked <sup>famous</sup> publicist, Kenneth Pitt, for advice. Pitt said he couldn't help, but advised Jones to change name because maraca player, Davy Jones, in The Monkees was about to become a real big name. Needed new name.