

Welcome to Week 8

- The song list for Paper 2 is now available on Canvas .

Britpop

- In the 90s, music sales data started to be gathered by computers
 - This data revealed that hip hop, grunge, punk rock, and heavy metal were selling best.
 - Grunge becomes the focus of investment and promotion in America in 1991–92 .
 - Grunge was lo-fi and low-key; there was nothing glitzy or neat about it .

- MTV starts to lose its "taste-maker" status in the early 90's (although it still remains very influential)
- More fashion-conscious British bands start to get promoted in America.
 - Bright colors start to replace plaid shirts and cut-off jeans on MTV.
 - This genre is known as **Britpop**.
 - First Britpop band to reach wide popularity is **Suede** in 1992 - 93.
 - Most famous Britpop band is **Oasis**.

- Britpop was heavily influenced by 70's Bowie (fashionable, androgynous)
- This all happens right around the time when Bowie ends Tin Machine and marries Iman.

Black Tie, White Noise

- Bowie made B.T. W.N. to celebrate his wedding to Iman.
- He recruited Nile Rogers and Mick Ronson to help w/ the album.
- Album was produced by Savage Records (released in 1993)
 - They gave Bowie \$3.4 million advance for licensing deal

- Album was considered boring and unambitious by critics.
- In contrast to some of his previous albums, Bowie really enjoyed the music even though it wasn't received well by the critics. (the opposite was sometimes true before).
- Fell within Britpop movement.
- Established Bowie as elder statesmen.
- Title song was inspired by witnessing L.A. Riots up close in 1992.
- Bowie sings parts of Marvin Gaye songs (in a way, he kind of samples Gaye). He uses this to signify meaning.

- o Using samples to "signify" meaning is a common technique used in hip hop. "Signifying" in this context refers to taking the original meaning of a sample and fitting it into a new composition. New meaning could be attributed to the sample, but it was important that the listener understand the original meaning of the sample regardless.

The Buddha of Suburbia

- Critics and Bowie fans consider Buddha of Suburbia to be one of Bowie's best albums.
- Released in 1993 (same year as B.T.W.N.).
- Didn't sell well.

- Bowie wrote the music for a BBC T.V. movie based on a memoir by someone who interviewed Bowie in 1991.
- Bowie wrote and produced the record in 6 days!
 - o Some argue that Bowie did his best work when he (1) improvised the music and (2) didn't have big budgets causing him to overthink or overproduce the music.

1. Outside

- Bowie puts band together, collaborates w/ Brian Eno again.
- Bowie and Eno wanted to capture magic of their 70's collaborations.
- Tried to tap into the idea of the "weirdo" or the "outsider".
- They were also influenced by experimental composer Charles Ives.
- Bowie implemented cut-up technique but this time with a computational randomization algorithm.
- Bowie tricks Virgin Records into releasing artsy record.

- Bowie gets into industrial music.
- Toured album w/ Nine Inch Nails starting in late 1995.

Earthling

- Album was produced in 3 weeks
- Consisted of old tracks and samples that were laying around in Phillip Glass' studio as well as samples of Reeves Gabrels' demos from the "Outside" tour.
- Lyrics were effectively improvised.
- Bowie toured Earthling in 1997.
 - o Bowie and Gabrels opened for "headliner Bowie" as the Tao Jones Index.
 - o As Tao Jones Index, they played drum and bass songs.

Bowie Business

- In '97, Bowie sold bonds called "Bowie bonds" to earn enough money to reclaim his old 70's master tapes and publishing royalties.
 - Prudential bought \$55 million worth of Bowie bonds.
 - To make this transaction work, Bowie had to forfeit about 10 years of royalties (that was the projected time frame to pay the return on investment).
 - Bowie began to fear that the income from royalties would be greatly diminished by emerging trends in internet-based piracy.

- Because of this fear, Bowie sells all his rights and obligations to EMI for \$30 million.
 - Intellectual property became worth less and less over time, as Bowie predicted.
 - Bowie came out on top ; he pocketed lots of money in the end.
- In 1998, Bowie started an internet service provider (ISP) called **Bowie Net**.
- Bowie offered the same service as big name ISPs, and he also offered cool music perks for Bowie fans. There were 60,000 subscribers.

- Bowie's album "Hours" was the first to be released on the internet before the physical release (e.g. CD, vinyl)
- Bowie justified his business actions as art by appealing to Andy Warhol's philosophy that **business is art** and that this was unexpected behavior.

hours . . .

- With his accurate prediction of the devaluing of music royalties, Bowie began to be viewed as a **tech guru**.

- Bowie was hired to write video game music.
- Bowie then decides to write another album (hours)
 - o Bowie does one of the first full-length concert webcasts in Dec 1999 to promote the album.

Heathen

- Bowie has a daughter. He devotes more time to her and bails on movie gigs and media appearances.
- Eventually he decides to record music in upstate New York in Sept 2001

- Iman witnessed second plane hit wTC . Bowie was horrified by event and by fact he wasn't there w/ family .
- The album is viewed through lens of 9/11 and sense of weariness .
- Bowie plays five shows to promote album, one in each of the 5 NYC burroughs .
- After this period, Bowie became fully vested as a New Yorker .
- After tour , Bowie began working right away on a new record .

Reality

- "Reality" was **unnotable** record
- Bowie toured album, band learned 70 songs, Bowie randomly chose songs to play.
- Tour didn't go well because Bowie was often physically unwell.
 - o On June 25 2004 show, Bowie collapsed backstage after show. He had **heart attack**. This was his last show as band leader.
- Bowie's last public performance was on November 9, 2006.

- His last interview was in 2003.
- He gave no final farewell to fans.
- Fans eventually stopped expecting a public statement.

Retirement

- Bowie wants to stay home w/ wife and daughter.
- He records one comedic song for Ricky Gervais' Extras.
 - o People say that personally Bowie was really funny
- Aside: for Paper 2, try to come up w/ creative ideas then support them w/ research.