

<https://open.spotify.com/user/1298683815/playlist/3ZMkcAB6Ux0MxlrF85KgRQ>

Welcome to the Museum of Apology Audio Archive. I'm Raina Wellman, and I'll be your tour guide. Today we will be looking at the apology song collection. I'm going to start by apologizing for any flaws that may exist in this recording. In 2016, I created the Museum of Apology, a pop-up installation and archive with plans to expand into a real museum in the future.

As the founder and curator of the Museum of Apology, I approach apology making in a variety of ways. My research has led me to find apology related content that is personal and political, tiny and wide-reaching. This audio tour will reveal that apologies are really never one thing. The emotions associated with being sorry are actually a wide group of feelings, bittersweet, careless, angry, and hopeful. These feelings can be expressed abstractly or directly. They are delivered in a wide range of musical genres, country, hip hop, alternative, operatic, rock, electronica, and more...

Follow me as I dissect and share some of my favorite lyrics, melodies, and artists who utilize apology making to create music. Sorry to all of the songs I left out.

I'm Sorry- Brenda Lee

Our first song, Brenda Lee's, "I'm Sorry" came out in 1960. It crossed all genres and appealed to a wide range of people, effectively making Brenda Lee a star. The emotions she expresses in her apology song are universal, and the way she sings is filled with harmonious, heartfelt emotion. Lee was only 15 when she sang this song about unrequited love, and the ballad inspired further apology songs, including this one by Marshall Crenshaw, "[I'm Sorry \(But So Is Brenda Lee.\)](#)"

I'm Sorry (But So is Brenda Lee)- Marshall Crenshaw

It's so unexpected, and so incredible that one person can write an apology that becomes an anthem for millions of people. These musician's ability to share their personal turmoil—about a difficult relationship, or getting tired of putting up with bad behaviors—is brave and sometimes heart wrenching.

Our next song is "Drew Barrymore" by SZA (sizuh). It's a song about not being able to live up to expectations, all the while gently acknowledging that those expectations are warped... In the song, SZA sings about femininity and relationships, playing with her desires and confusion. She's struggling to come to terms with the perceived demands of womanhood.

Drew Barrymore—SZA

And here's my current favorite: Connie Francis' rendition of the song, "[Who's Sorry Now.](#)" Connie's version is powerful, heartfelt, and a bit vindictive. It's a song that sweetly hints at

retribution and celebrates the demise of the guilty party. She sings, “I tried to warn you somehow/You had your way/Now you must pay/I’m glad that you’re sorry now.”

Who’s Sorry Now—Connie Francis

On the other hand, Frank Sinatra’s version of the song sounds truly vicious. It’s as if he’s trying to hide his pain, or wrongdoing, behind this happy song of blame swapping. Apology songs like this one, and the many versions of them, are able to display the significance of attitude and intonation when delivering an apology.

Who’s Sorry Now — Frank Sinatra

But do apologies work? Why do they work? And what exactly is the best way to make one? Last, but not least, when is it too late to apologize?

It’s Too Late to Apologize-Timbaland ft. OneRepublic

There are so many facets to an apology. Are you apologizing to gain forgiveness from others or from yourself? In my curatorial opinion, I think it’s never too late to apologize, it’s important for it to have sincerity.

(under) Ms. Jackson- OutKast

But what does it mean to receive or create an apology in musical form? In some cases, an apology delivered via song may feel too cheesy, but a well crafted song can have more power than a written note or a mumbled confession.

But sometimes apology songs aren’t that apologetic at all. Take for example LMFAO’s popular song, “[Sorry for Party Rocking](#),” a proud, guilt-free ballad for bad neighbors. While they say the words, it’s not necessarily an apology.

Sorry for Party Rocking-LMFAO

The Audio collection at the Museum of Apology can be found in it’s growing entirety on Spotify. It currently consists of 76 songs, about 4 hours and 30 minutes of apologies with melody.

On it, you’ll find songs perfect for break ups and bad days, power ballads, and songs that let you feel bad for yourself. The sorry song is a part of every genre and the apology plays an important role in many narratives.

Some of the playlist that is currently unfeatured in this audio tour includes Nirvana’s “All Apologies,” “I’m Sorry We Lied” by Blood Orange, Keaton Henson’s “Party Song,” and Madonna’s “Sorry.”

These songs from the archive are worth a listen. They approach new topics, like the Monkees song, “A Little Bit Me, A Little Bit You,” which discusses the importance of communication especially following an argument.

To close out our tour, here is an apology song by Adult Mom, “Sorry I Was Sorry.” The song explores a romance gone sour and demonstrates a connection between songwriting and apology making. Stephanie Knipe sings, “Sorry for writing all those love songs to you/Is that suffocating for you too?” You can be sorry for so many things, even the act of writing songs.

Sorry I Was Sorry—Adult Mom