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Establishing a Linkage between Shakespeare and Steely Dan

Here's a possible chain of influence connecting Shakespeare to Steely Dan:

1. Shakespeare influenced John Keats, an English Romantic poet known for his sensual and emotional verse. Keats' poetry often explored themes of beauty, mortality, and the human condition, which would later influence various literary and artistic movements.
2. John Keats influenced Walter Pater, a British essayist and critic who was a key figure in the Aesthetic Movement. Pater's emphasis on the importance of art and beauty for their own sake would later shape the development of modernist literature and art.
3. Walter Pater influenced F. Scott Fitzgerald, an American author known for his novels and short stories that captured the essence of the Jazz Age. Fitzgerald's works, such as "The Great Gatsby," often explored themes of love, greed, and the American Dream.
4. F. Scott Fitzgerald influenced Jay McInerney, an American author known for his novels about excess and disillusionment in the 1980s. McInerney's writing style, which blended elements of jazz and pop culture, would later influence a generation of writers and musicians.
5. Jay McInerney influenced Walter Becker and Donald Fagen, the core members of Steely Dan. Becker and Fagen have cited McInerney's novel "Bright Lights, Big City" as an influence on their songwriting style, particularly in terms of its themes of alienation and excess.

This chain of influence highlights the connections between literary and artistic movements, from Shakespeare's exploration of the human condition to Steely Dan's sophisticated and nuanced music. While the linkages are indirect, they demonstrate how artistic influences can ripple through time and shape the work of subsequent generations.