

CLASSIC SONGS

That Changed the World

12 x 24 minutes

Season One

HEARTBREAK HOTEL
MAYBELLENE
I WANT TO HOLD YOUR HAND
RESPECT
LIKE A VIRGIN
WALK THIS WAY
SMELLS LIKE TEEN SPIRIT
ANY MAN OF MINE
STAYING ALIVE
I WANNA BE SEDATED
I SHOT THE SHERIFF
DO THEY KNOW IT'S CHRISTMAS?

Season Two

In Pre-Production Now

Worldwide Sales:

Pop Twist Entertainment

Tel: +1 818 990 8461

dzwick@poptwist.com

www.poptwist.com

CLASSIC SONGS

That Changed the World

A half-hour series that
puts the spotlight on the songs
that have made a lasting impact on
music styles, fashion, mores, culture and
our society as a whole

It all starts with a song... a nova burst of human emotion that, for all of its simplicity and relatively humble place in society, often has the power to change the world. Over the years, certain songs have come to define the times in which they appeared as they proved to be the catalyst for the transformation of the cultural and political landscape. Most set trends in music, fashion and dance while flouting convention and testing the boundaries of society's accepted moral values. If that sounds like the job description for "rock 'n' roll," you're right.

In this series of half hour shows, we put the spotlight on the songs that have left an indelible mark on the world. Besides setting the social scene and context for the release of the song, we'll talk to the songs creator(s) before exploring its cultural impact and the ways that it changed the course of history. Guests include recording artists, music industry executives, cultural and political pundits, religious leaders, fashion leaders/consultants, authors, broadcast commentators, musicologists, professors & teachers, museum curators, sociologists, pop psychologists. And, of course, we hear from plenty of music fans themselves for whom these songs became their life's soundtrack.

The Songs

MAYBELLENE

Chuck Berry

“If you were going to give rock ‘n’ roll another name, you might call it ‘Chuck Berry.’” -- John Lennon

On May 21, 1955, rock ‘n’ roll history was born. On this day, Chuck Berry recorded *Maybellene*, a song whose influence was massive and groundbreaking. Berry took an old Western sing-style song, gave it an extra kick with his signature electric guitar licks, renamed it *Maybellene* and unintentionally changed the direction of American popular music and culture. Berry’s guitar style influenced an entire genre of musicians and the song had so much social and cultural bearing in the transitional environment of the 1950’s, that a cultural historian refers to Chuck Berry as “central to the new rock ‘n’ roll generation”. Anticipating and pre-dating the fusion of black and white musical styles that Elvis popularized, Berry ignited interracial rock explosions in the ‘50s. With *Maybellene*, Berry influenced a plethora of guitar players, laid the foundation for rock music, began breaking down racial barriers and defined youth culture of the 50’s.

SMELLS LIKE TEEN SPIRIT

Nirvana

Kurt Cobain of the Seattle-based group Nirvana, who committed suicide in April of 1994, was a complex character who took his music very seriously. Combining a punk sensibility with hard rock to create a unique sound that would come to be known as "grunge," the three-man group would soon find themselves the voice and obsession of the disenfranchised youth of the early '90s that the media would soon dub "Generation X." Like the Sex Pistols, the emergence of Nirvana from a suddenly vibrant Seattle music scene, was facilitated by the dreadful state of music at the time as it pertained to the younger generation. *Smells Like Teen Spirit*, inspired by the name of a commercially available teenage girls' deodorant, became the unofficial anthem for "Gen Xers," and was more than partly responsible for the subsequent rise of a number of groups created in their image.

I WANT TO HOLD YOUR HAND

The Beatles

If there was ever a moment in history during which events conspired to change the course of society for years to come, it was during those dark days in America following the assassination of President John Kennedy in the late fall of 1963. The transformation came from the unlikeliest of sources -- four mop-topped lads from Liverpool, England whose music was rooted in good old American rock ‘n’ roll but whose early repertoire consisted of simple songs of teen love that immediately struck a chord with an American public longing for a return to innocence. *I Want To Hold Your Hand*, the biggest-selling British single of all time, introduced The Beatles to America in early 1964 and quickly became their first number one single on this side of the Atlantic. It was to be the start of a remarkable journey for the "Fab Four" from the Beatlemania of those early years to the pervasive, culture-altering presence of the group, collectively and individually, through the '70s and beyond.

STAYIN' ALIVE

The Bee Gees

Dance crazes abound throughout the history of popular music. By the mid-70s, dancing was back with a vengeance. They called it disco and with the release of the movie Saturday Night Fever starring John Travolta, a blue-collar worker by day and a terpsichorean high-stepper by night, it became a major part of the culture around the world. The accompanying soundtrack was dominated by the songs of The Bee Gees, including the number one hit Stayin' Alive which ostensibly served to stimulate a taste for polyester among the general populace and to launch a boogie-down fever which has endured in various guises through the last quarter of the 20th century and across the millennium.

HEARTBREAK HOTEL

Elvis Presley

Heartbreak Hotel was not Elvis Presley's first single -- songs like That's Alright Mama, Mystery Train and I Forgot To Remember To Forget, his first national chart-topping hit, predated it by a year -- but it was destined in many ways to define the Elvis persona and arguably become the first rock 'n' roll record. It was a song of teenage angst. Not the puppy love hand-wringing of later songs of the era but the real end-of-the-line, so-lonely-I-could-die variety that in those early days only Elvis and his rebel stance could make ring with authenticity. It established rock 'n' roll as an attitude -- brash, rebellious and sexually-charged -- as much as a musical style and gave it life as the soundtrack for alienated youth even during America boom times in the '50s. John Lennon said it best: if there had been no Elvis, there would have been no Beatles.

LIKE A VIRGIN

Madonna

It's ironic that "Girl Power," a term that became a media catch phrase in the late '90s with the emergence of the Spice Girls from England, had its beginnings in a song that even remotely suggests that abstinence makes the heart grow fonder. But there you have it. Given the titillation of the word "virgin" in the song title and the obvious contradiction of her sexy image on video, this was the song that thrust Madonna into the media spotlight, a place, as it would turn out, she feels extremely comfortable. Madonna would throw many a curve -- literally and figuratively -- over the years as she continued to court controversy and to reinvent herself and her music from project to project. She remains the most successful woman in the history of pop music who can take the credit for knocking down the barriers that had once stood in the way of women in the music business. Over the years, she has also set the fashion world on its ear and given rise to legions of "wannabes" beginning with her much photographed Gaultier metal bra and corset as well as her rather unique notion that lingerie belongs outside your clothes rather than under them.

DO THEY KNOW IT'S CHRISTMAS?

Band Aid

It was, in many ways, the music world's finest hour as many of the biggest names in British popular music gathered in the summer of 1985 for the sake of charity to record a song to raise money for those people starving in Ethiopia. Organized by Bob Geldof, the singer for the British group The Boomtown Rats, the single *Do They Know It's Christmas*, gave birth to Live Aid, the world's biggest rock concert and TV event which spanned two continents and was the catalyst for similar recording projects in the U.S. and Canada. The project would become the template and the inspiration for a number of other charitable recordings and live events

to benefit various causes around the world and marked a new era of raised social consciousness for many entertainers as well as their fans. Bob Geldof received a knighthood for his efforts.

I WANNA BE SEDATED

The Ramones

During the mid '70s, disco was king. New York's Studio 54 was the hip place to see and be seen. Bell bottoms, platform shoes, and disco balls were in vogue. Everybody wanted to boogie and the music of the time reflected that urge. Just downtown in the Village, there was another culture forming, a culture that couldn't be more opposite from Studio 54, in terms of attitude, fashion, and most of all, music. It was the Ramones. As the innovators of a new form of popular culture, these four alienated youths from Forest Hills, Queens were unlikely candidates. With this new, simplified music, came a rebellious and energetic form of self-expression. It brought grace and dignity to people who might have been, either, constitutionally incapable of dealing in the nine to five world. It just opened huge doors for people. The punk movement instigated by the Ramones helped to launch a new musical and aesthetic style known as new wave, which couldn't have been more opposite from the stripped-down, back-to-basics approach of the fathers of punk. By the early '90s, the original punk style of the Ramones would break in the mainstream. All over the world, they opened the doors. The entire indie movement would be rooted in what the Ramones made possible for young people. College radio, independent music labels, garage bands, the resurrection of garage bands, they were the seminal band.

WALK THIS WAY

Run DMC & Aerosmith

By any definition, *Walk This Way*, written by Aerosmith's Steve Tyler and Joe Perry, was your classic rock track. With its hooky guitar riffs and brazen, in-your-face vocal delivery, in the mid '70s, it was the song that set Aerosmith on the road to the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, but little could the group have known that it would have a second life a decade later. On its release in 1986, *Walk This Way* became the original rap/heavy metal video crossover song. Run DMC was the bridge between old-school artists like Grandmaster Flash and the modern rap era. To quote Rolling Stone magazine, they sparked a movement in popular music with an impact similar to the British invasion in the early '60s. With their gold chains and Adidas, they were the first rappers to earn gold, platinum, and multi-platinum albums; the first to have their videos played on MTV; the first to appear on American Bandstand; and the first to grace the cover of Rolling Stone and the first non-athletes to endorse Adidas products. Run DMC brought rap to mainstream America. It wasn't long before hip-hop style and fashion from the street had started to be seen in the stores of suburban shopping malls. Run DMC had a very recognizable look and it started catching on. To this day, the popularity of products associated with the hip-hop culture is not only exclusive to African-American youth. The style and the music have crossed both race and color lines, not only in America, but also around the world.

I SHOT THE SHERIFF

Bob Marley

Despite whatever Bob Marley's original intent was for this song, it assumed a bigger meaning; fighting against social oppression and social injustice. *I Shot the Sheriff* became a direct response to political oppression. It was crucial in defining Bob's role as a political and musical revolutionary. It endeared him to an international audience that was looking for someone to

carry the flame of rebellion. By the mid '70s, Bob Marley and reggae music had broken through internationally but nowhere did its political message and accompanying Rasta image have more impact than in Britain. In the late '70s, reggae and punk would in fact unite under the banner of Rock Against Racism to play concerts to demonstrate solidarity against white supremacist groups. It prompted a sense of respecting cultures; respecting ideas; looking into things politically; looking into where the real issues are throughout the world. The movement reflected the human desire for racial harmony and for a spiritual dimension. Bob Marley's impact in both areas cannot be underestimated. He turned the Rastafari movement into a universal force reaching out to all races. The movement was crystallized in *I Shot the Sheriff*.

RESPECT

Aretha Franklin

Rare indeed is the artist whose music can bridge race, color, creed, and gender and have an equal impact on each. This was a song that was used by the women who were beginning to imagine the feminist movement. It was a song that simply said, "the time for change has come". *Respect* reflected a shift in the tone of the Civil Rights Movement. It introduced a new and bolder phase in the struggle. The struggle was now going to the streets with an "in your face" approach. At that time, there wasn't a black woman who was prominent. So, when Aretha came along and sang, "give me some respect and here is why I deserve it" it caused women to start swinging banners. It was the soundtrack of the times. The emotion, the sound and the memories makes *RESPECT* as significant a record now as it was in 1967. In fact, every time a rock music magazine makes a list of the most influential recordings of all times, *Respect* is always in the top 20. It provided the spirit, the rhythm and changed the tone of black self-understanding, it changed the tone of life in America.

ANY MAN OF MINE

Shania Twain

Shania transcended all the genres and set the music industry on its ear. She combined country songs with pop style production and marketing, using video to create a dynamic image, injecting country with a more uptown style, and taking control of her career like no female had ever done in Nashville before. The magnitude of her impact set a new standard for country music, but also had far reaching influence in fashion, business, and social circles. Shania set new benchmarks for everybody in country music. Beginning with *Any Man of Mine*, Shania Twain gave every female artist in country music permission and freedom to be themselves. The sassy and assertive tone of the lyrics to *Any Man of Mine* appealed to women everywhere. It was a new form of feminism. She turned the tables with her "I love my man, but I love me too" lyrics. But, the most obvious influence of Shania on country music has been an outstanding series of music videos that redefined the image of country music. Her videos now are events.

Any Man of Mine drew large numbers of new fans to the genre and had a great effect on international acceptance of country music. Her impact with teenagers was welcome news to an industry concerned with a gradual aging of the country audience. Young wanna-bes mimicked her fashion style. She communicated to the average listener and was everybody's fantasy of the girl next door.