

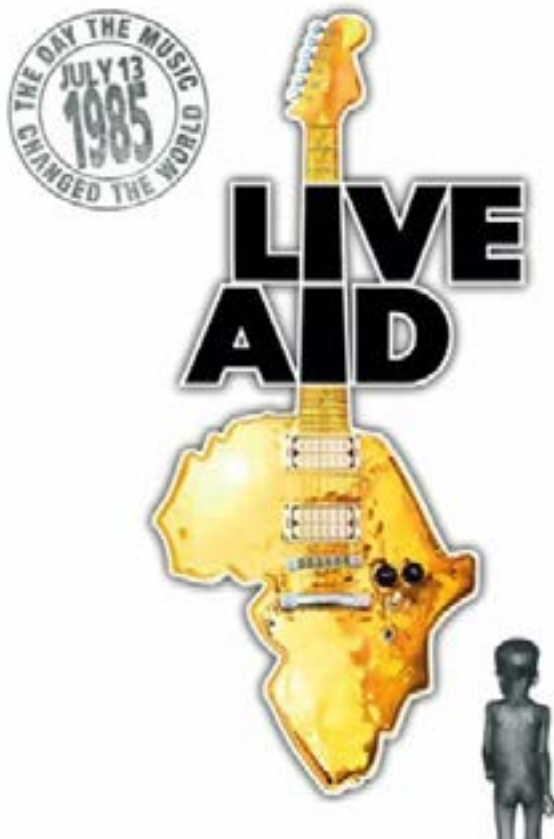
# THE MID 1980'S: A REBIRTH OF SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN ROCK MUSIC



*Do They Know It's Christmas?*, (1984)  
a single for famine relief in Ethiopia



*We Are The World* - single released in May 1985



An worldwide audience estimated at 1.5 billion watched the 16 hour concert.

The event raised almost 80 million dollars for famine relieve.

The performers played for free.

## Headliners included:

Eric Clapton	The Temptations
Paul McCartney	The Pretenders
Phil Collins	U2
The Who	The Cars
Queen	Neil Young
Madonna	Sting
Run-DMC	Elton John
Bob Dylan	David Bowie
Rod Stewart	Mick Jagger
Tom Petty	Tina Turner

## The Female Rock Explosion

Between 1995 and 1997 female artists come to the forefront. The success of Alanis Morissette's *Jagged Little Pill* (1995) fueled an interest in other female artists and songwriters. In 1997 Sarah McLachlan, Paula Cole, Liz Phair, Shawn Colvin, Meredith Brooks, and others performed at Lilith Fair, a festival showcasing female artists.



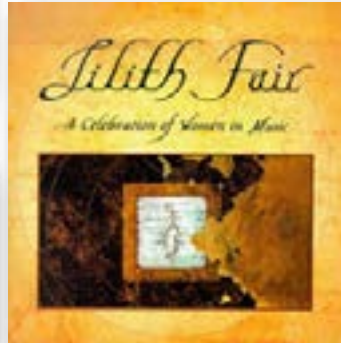
Alanis Morissette



Sarah McLachlan



Paula Cole



Meredith Brooks

## The Beginnings of Alternative Rock

The short-lived New York rock style called No-wave maximized its non-commercial, industrial noise elements to produce forward looking bands such as Sonic Youth (1981). Sonic Youth was particularly influential for creating an underpinning for 1990's alternative rock. In 1991 Sonic Youth toured with then relatively unknown Nirvana.

Throughout the mid 1980's a cult following occurred centering on post-Velvet Underground influenced bands such as Joy Division and Thin White Rope. There had also been interest in unifying elements of Metal, Funk, and Post-Punk with this new aesthetic. One of the first successful bands to achieve this goal was Jane's Addiction. Their debut album *Nothing's Shocking* was released in 1988. Their 1990 *Ritual de lo Habitual* album won critical acclaim as forward looking in style and content marking the beginnings of Modern rock. They ignored the refinement and commercialization that rock had taken in the late 1980s focusing on raw energy and, live performance and outlandish costuming. As part of their initial farewell tour, Perry Farrell, founder and lead singer organized a Lollapalooza the first Alternative Rock Festival. Featured performers were the Nine Inch Nails, Siouxsie & the Banshees, Henry Rollins Band, Living Colour, and Ice-T.



# **LOLLAPALOOZA®**

**1991 - intermittently to present  
The touring festival helped  
popularize alternative rock**

## **Seattle Grunge/Olympia Washington**

Mudhoney, the first Seattle underground band, was formed in 1988. Largely influenced by Mudhoney, Nirvana popularized this subset of alternative rock which became known as Seattle Grunge sound (1991). Trademarks of this late 1980's guitar band style were a lazy vocal delivery, sparse bass lines and light drumming intermingled with loud thrash guitar interjections.

In Olympia, Washington Molly Neuman formed the group Bratmobile, the first of the Riot-Grrrl bands, an indie-punk feminist movement. In Los Angeles Donita Sparks all girl group , L7 approximates the same attitude.



## Seattle Grunge



Mudhoney



<Temple of the Dog



## Mid 1990's Britpop

Oasis



Blur



Pulp

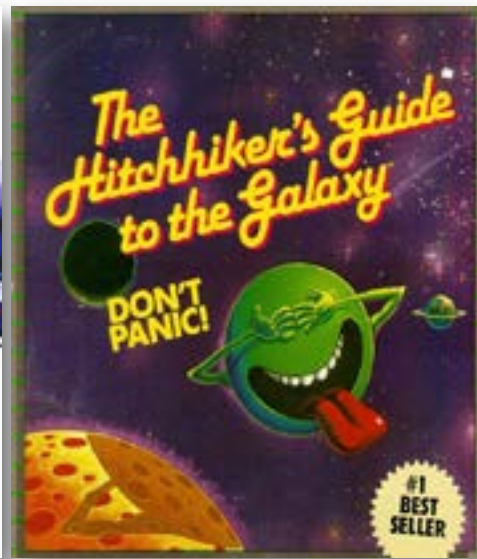


Radiohead



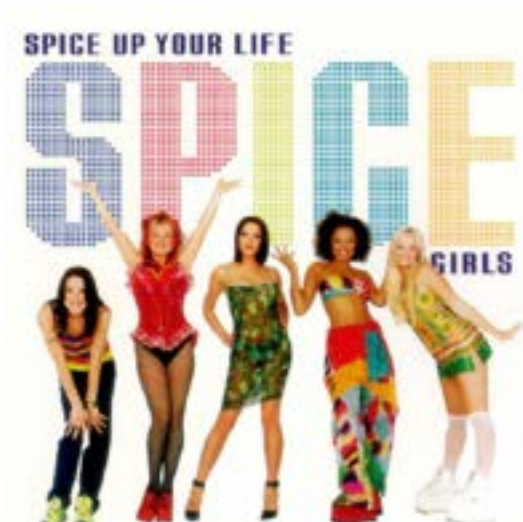
Radiohead

*Paranoid Android* from O.K. Computer (1997)



Late 1990's Bubblegum  
Revival:

The “baby boom” echo



## The Boy Group Craze Peaks in 1998:

The success of Boyz II Men led to a number of follow-ups efforts. Most notably Lou Pearlman produced Backstreet Boys and 'N Sync. Ex-mouskateers join the sub-teen market to produce the late 1990's Bubble-Gum revival including Ricky Martin, Marc Anthony, Britney Spears, Christina Aguilera

## The Music Business is in a free-fall:

- Has lost control of radio
- Retail outlets like Tower Records have shut down
- MTV rarely broadcasts music videos
- Lucrative album market has been overshadowed by downloaded singles





Public Enemy  
LL Cool J  
Run-D.M.C  
Beastie Boys  
Slayer  
Slipknot  
Red Hot Chili Peppers  
Mars Volta  
Danzig  
Dixie Chicks  
Metallica  
AC/DC  
Weezer  
System of a Down  
Green Day  
Linkin Park  
Johnny Cash  
Rage Against the Machine  
Jay-Z



Rick Rubin



"Columbia is stuck in the dark ages. I have great confidence that we will have the best record company in the industry, but the reality is, in today's world, we might have the best dinosaur.

- Rick Rubin,  
co-head of Columbia Records.

## **Rick Rubin Style Considerations**

- Does not play any musical instrument. His assessments and responses are instant and specific based on his sensibilities.
- He encourages artists and bands strip down their sound to the essence of what makes them sound good.
- He encouraged artists to experiment and record songs from outside of their typical musical genre.
- He avoids common production elements such as string sections, backup vocals, and reverb
- Emphasis is on the melody and a good “hook”
- Strives for “timeless” quality rather than specific album considerations.

## **Pop Punk Bands**

### **Primarily West Coast based**

**Green Day** (1987 to present, East Bay, CA.)

**Offspring** (1984 to present, Huntington Beach, CA.)

**Face to Face** (1991-2004 Victorville, CA. )

**Rancid** (1991 to present, East Bay, CA.)

**NOFX** (1983 to present, Los Angeles, CA.)

**Pennywise** (1988 to present, Hermosa Beach, CA.)

**MxPx** (1992 to present, Bremerton, WA.)

**Blink-182** (1992-2005 Poway, CA.)

### **Pop Punk Bands, Second Wave**

**Fall Out Boy** (2001 to present, Near Chicago, IL)

**Good Charlotte** (1996 to present, MD,)

**Jimmy Eat World** (1993 to present, Mesa, AZ)

**My Chemical Romance** (2001 to present, NJ)

**New Found Glory** (1997 to present, FL)

**Saves the Day** (1997 to present, Princeton, NJ)

**Taking Back Sunday** (1999 to present, Long Is., NY)

## Indie Rock:

- Do-it-yourself stance
- Lower-budget
- Small venues
- Anti-corporate
- Greater freedom to explore sounds, emotions, and lyrics
- Not reliant on mainstream appeal

## The Early 2000's Garage Band Revival



# The Coachella Festival

The Coachella Festival (1999 -to present) in California is one of several regional “fixed site” festivals.

Performers featured at Coachella include: Beck, The Chemical Brothers, Tool, Jurassic 5, Björk, Oasis, Radiohead, Inch Nails, Coldplay, Daft Punk, and Massive Attack.

## Events since 2001 that have shaped Pop Music

**2001:** The first Apple iPod was introduced. In 2008 the iPod had total domination of the personal audio market.

**2002:** CD sales decreased 9%

**2003:** The social media site, MySpace becomes a household term. In 2007 there are 192 million MySpace accounts and 34 million Facebook accounts.

Facebook (2010)=**500 million** active users  
MySpace (2010)=62 million active users

2003: Apple introduces the online music service “iTunes”. Today **iTunes outsells** all brick and mortar music merchants including **WalMart** and **Best Buy**.

2006: YouTube goes online. Because YouTube’s rankings are largely based on a user feedback loop it is possible for an amateur or entrepreneur can create a video that goes “**viral**”; spread by interest users to millions of views within a few days, hours, or even minutes.

2007: The **iPhone** is introduced: Media and application integration erode dominance of iPods.

### The Decline of the Record Industry

In 2006 U.S. consumers bought 588 million albums (includes downloads), a drop of about 25%

Over 2,700 U.S. record stores have closed across the country since 2003 including Tower Records’s 89 stores.

The decline of big recording studios: the advent of Avid’s ProTools=self-produced albums

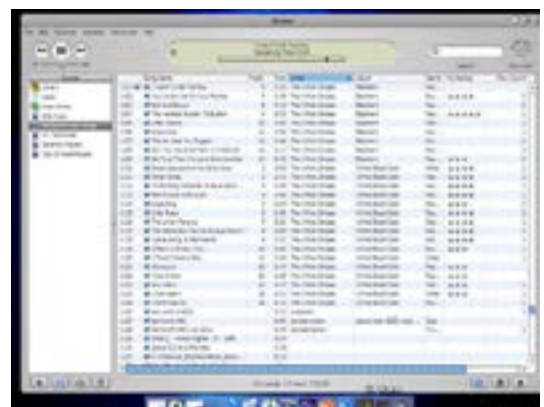
The computer music market went from \$140 million in sales in 1999 to \$500 million dollars in 2008

65% percent of all music sales take place in big-box stores such as Wal-Mart and Best Buy, fewer titles, less promotion of emerging artists.

## Technology Goes Exponential

In 1996 the DVD is introduced in Japan. Soon the conversion from VHS to DVD gave rise to music videos of new or archival footage being released by every major artist.

Every song seemed to need a visual counterpart. Computer instant messaging is introduced and quickly the major players America Online and Yahoo produce messaging clients. Instant messaging gave rise to social networking sites such as My Space and Facebook.



The move to digital media represents the biggest shift in the recording industry since the 1920's when records replaced sheet music.

# Bonsera's Fundamental Rock Truths

Rock music represents a “cultural moment” --an expression of the here and now, rather than a specific musical style.

Rock music takes on a different meaning or loses its meaning when disassociated with the historic period or subculture.

In rock music, good is good AND bad is good.

Rock music is often a coded generational message. It strives to be untranslatable, and is designed to provide an [impenetrable](#) line between generations.

The music industry and rock music is often at odds with one another. The music industry rarely understands rock music. However the music industry will always make an attempt to *sell it*. In the absence of a sellable product, the recording industry will invent and promote its own.

Inarticulate utterances and secondary meanings are often as important as articulate, and well thought out concepts.

Rock tends to oscillate between innovation and refinement.

Innovators tend to be rebels or iconoclasts and culminators tend to be craftsmen, technicians or showmen.

Mis-connections, mis-applications, and incomplete understandings are the basis for much of rock stylistic evolution.

The story of Rock music is often the story of the outsider looking in --the loner and misfit; disenfranchised and alienated.

Bands want to be accepted and become more popular; but as soon as the band achieves that success their fans will accuse them of selling out.

Fans seek to introduce their friends to newly discovered bands.

However, when everyone likes the band it's time to move on and the original fans will begin tearing the band down