

00:00:00	Oliver Wang	Host	<p>Hi everyone. Before we get started today, just wanted to let you know that for the next month's worth of episodes, we have a special guest co-host sitting in for Morgan Rhodes, who is busy with some incredible music supervision projects.</p> <p>Both Morgan and I couldn't be more pleased to have arts and culture writer and critic, Ernest Hardy, sitting in for Morgan. And if you recall, Ernest joined us back in 2017 for a wonderful conversation about Sade's <i>Love Deluxe</i>; which you can find in your feed, in case you want to refamiliarize yourself with Ernest's brilliance or you just want to listen to a great episode.</p>
00:00:35	Music	Music	"Crown Ones" off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under The Stairs
00:00:41	Oliver	Host	Hello, I'm Oliver Wang.
00:00:43	Ernest Hardy	Host	And I'm Ernest Hardy, sitting in for Morgan Rhodes. You're listening to <i>Heat Rocks</i> .
00:00:47	Oliver	Host	Every episode we invite a guest to join us to talk about a heat rock. You know, an album that's hot, hot, hot. And today, we will be taking a trip to Rydell High School to revisit the iconic soundtrack to the 1978 smash movie-musical, <i>Grease</i> .
00:01:02	Music	Music	<p>"You're The One That I Want" off the album <i>Grease: The Original Soundtrack</i>. Chill 1950s rock with a steady beat, guitar, and occasional piano.</p> <p><i>DANNY ZUKO:</i> <i>I got chills, they're multiplying</i> <i>And I'm losing control</i> <i>'Cause the power you're supplying</i> <i>It's electrifying!</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]</i></p>
00:01:20	Oliver	Host	<p>I was in first grade the year that <i>Grease</i> came out in theaters, and I think one of the only memories I have about the entirety of first grade was when our teacher decided to put on the <i>Grease</i> soundtrack onto the class phonograph and play us "Grease Lightnin'". We were just starting to cut a rug when the song arrived at the line, "you know that ain't no shit, we'll be getting lots of tit." The entire class froze. We looked at one another in a mild panic, and that vinyl left the platter faster than greased... well, you know.</p> <p>It's easy to forget that <i>Grease</i> began life as a raunchy, subversive musical, staged in the fictional Chicago high school of Rydell. An attempt in the 1970s to use the American nostalgia for the 1950s as a way to comment on moral panic surrounding teenage sex, drinking, and of course, rock n' roll. If somehow you've never seen <i>Grease</i>, it centers on Danny Zuko, a kind of manic greaser dreamboy, who eventually—and this is a spoiler alert here—convinces the prim and proper Sandra Dee to trade in her petticoats for some lipstick and leather.</p>

The 1978 film version, starring John Travolta and Olivia Newton-

John in the lead roles, gave its source material a slightly sanitized makeover. And though it included most of the original Broadway songs, it also added several songs from the post-Woodstock rock n' roll revivalist Sha Na Na; plus a new title track, written by the Bee Gees' Barry Gibb and performed by Four Seasons star Frankie Valli. Even four decades later, *Grease* has remained an enduring classic in American pop culture, especially as an inaugural low-key teenage sex comedy for my generation of '70s babies, and perhaps beyond.

00:03:03 Music

Music

["You're The One That I Want" fades back in. Sandy and Danny sing, accompanied by a chorus of their classmates]

DANNY:

Nothing left, nothing left for me to do

DANNY & SANDY:

You're the one that I want

CLASSMATES:

You are the one I want!

DANNY & SANDY:

Ooh-ooh-ooh, honey

The one that I want

CLASSMATES:

You are the one I want!

DANNY & SANDY:

Ooh-ooh-ooh, honey

The one that I want

CLASSMATES:

You are the one I want!

DANNY & SANDY:

Ooh-ooh-ooh, the one I need...

CLASSMATES:

One I need...

DANNY & SANDY:

Oh, yes, indeed!

CLASSMATES:

Yes, indeed!

00:03:25 Oliver

Host

The *Grease* soundtrack was the album pick of our guest today, Luis Xtravaganza.

00:03:30 Ernest

Host

Most of us were introduced to Luis Xtravaganza as one of the dancers of Madonna's iconic Blond Ambition Tour. Luis and his fellow troopers became stars in their own right, as they moved through choreography that was part voguing, part hip-hop, and part Broadway. *Truth or Dare*, the classic genre-redefining documentary

of the tour, cemented the superstar status of the dancers, who often did the unimaginable: they stole the spotlight from the diva.

Some measure of Luis' cultural impact was outlined a few months ago, when popular Twitter user @GranVarones created a photo, film clip, music video, and gif-rich thread that tracked the careers and cultural significance of friends and collaborators Luis and José Extravaganza, from their ball culture roots, to their dance recording careers, to the present, in which they've taken their place among the legends of ball culture.

@GranVarones wrote, "José and Luis broke the third wall during a time when queerness existed in code, beneath the surface. They provided a possibility for black and latinx gay boys like me, when both the crack and AIDs epidemic were snatching our lives, dreams, and future. José and Luis proved that one could get their 10's by being unapologetically Dominican, Puerto Rican, and femme, as middle America watched. I still remember the hope they represented for me. They looked and sounded like the locas my mother surrounded herself with. I'm happy to celebrate them while they are still blessing this Earth with their energy and magic. José and Luis Xtravaganza are still dancing and thriving, and still providing this old Kween with possibility and hope."

Luis, thank you for being here with us today.

00:05:05	Luis	Guest	Thank you. You're making me cry up in here. Oh my goodness.
00:05:10	Oliver	Host	So, we are so hype that you chose this particular album.
			<i>[Luis laughs.]</i>
			And I already shared my earliest memory of being introduced to <i>Grease</i> . What is your— what was your introduction to <i>Grease</i> ?
00:05:21	Luis	Guest	<i>Grease</i> was one of— I don't want to say the first albums my dad bought for me, but, you know, earlier on I used to go to the local record stores and just buy 45's, remember those?
00:05:35	Oliver	Host	Yes.
00:05:36	Luis	Guest	So it was just like, singles. The first like, <u>album</u> album that my dad just bought for me, like as a gift, was <i>Grease</i> .
00:05:45	Oliver	Host	And this was the film soundtrack, not the original Broadway cast album from earlier in the '70s?
00:05:49	Luis	Guest	No. Correct, it was the film soundtrack. And I even put my name over John Travolta's picture, and I think I put my sister's name over Olivia Newton-John, because we used to dance together all the time. So we would perform, like literally the whole album, we would just go through the movie and like, perform the movie.
00:06:08	Oliver	Host	Were you familiar with the songs first, before the movie? Or did you see them and listen to the album around the same time?
00:06:14	Luis	Guest	Same time.

00:06:15 Oliver Host Okay.

00:06:16 Luis Guest Yeah. I was surprised he let me watch the film at such a young age, because I was barely, you know, legal at that time.

[Everyone laughs.]

00:06:28 Ernest Host You know, I actually didn't see the film until years later on VHS. I was in junior high school when the film was released and it was huge, and so I knew all the music because radio stations played it, and talent shows, and just like, you couldn't escape it. But I actually didn't see the movie until years, years later.

00:06:46 Luis Guest Well, that's why I was surprised that my father let me even see the film, because I was so young, and then when I see it later, I was like, "Oh! This is kinda racey! Bun in the oven? Oh, I get what that is now!" *[Everyone laughs.]*

00:07:02 Oliver Host But I was gonna say, I mean, the whole thing with "Greased Lightnin'" is they're talking about, you know, they're swearing in it, they talk about the car being a pussy wagon, they're talking about it'll make chicks cream. So it's not as— even without the film, the content of the songs themselves were still a little bit out there, least of all for the '70s, right?

00:07:20 Luis Guest It was, and we were just singing along like, "Woohoo!"

00:07:24 Music Music "Greased Lightnin'" off the album *Grease: The Original Soundtrack*. Upbeat 1950s rock with Danny singing the main vocals with a chorus of young men singing behind him.

DANNY:
Go Greased Lightnin'
You're coasting through the heat lap trials

CHORUS:
Greased Lightnin', go Greased Lightnin'!

[On the chorus' "Oh, oh!"s below, there are two loud drumbeats]

DANNY:
You are supreme!

CHORUS:
Oh, oh!

DANNY:
The chicks'll cream!

CHORUS:
Oh, oh!

DANNY:
For Greased Lightnin'!

CHORUS:
Go, go, go, go, go, go, go, go, go, go, go!

[Danny continues singing the main line while the chorus sings "oooh" and "bop-bop" behind him]

DANNY:

*We'll get some purple fringe tail lights
And 30-inch fins, oh yeah
A Palomino dashboard
And duel muffler twins, oh yeah...*

[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]

- 00:07:47 Oliver Host Ernest, I'm kind of curious. For someone who knew the music first, but didn't see the film later—and these two things can of course exist in different spheres—but I'm wondering, when you actually finally saw the movie version of it, what had you built up in your mind about what it would look like based on being familiar with the songs, and did the image match the sound, if that makes sense?
- 00:08:06 Ernest Host I think because the music was everywhere, and, you know, and then television shows running film clips and different parts of the movie, so, I sort of pieced together what the movie was about. I have to be honest, I wasn't really that interested in seeing the movie when it was in the theater. I was kind of exhausted by whiteness.
- 00:08:24 Luis Guest I was just gonna say, "Why, because there was a lot of white people in it?"
- 00:08:26 Ernest Host Yeah, and I'm from the south and I was like, one of two black kids in my class, and I'm just like, "You know, the music is enough."
- [Everyone laughs.]*
- But uh, the movie pretty much lived up to what I had built up in my head. I think what really blew me away was—and we can talk about this a little bit later—I think I was just in awe of the character Rizzo, and that was who I really wanted—
- 00:08:49 Oliver Host Stockard Channing.
- 00:08:50 Ernest Host —yeah, that was who I really wanted to spend so much more time with.
- 00:08:54 Oliver Host Yeah, and we will absolutely come back to Rizzo, who is, I think, really, really undersung within— especially the movie version of this. Perhaps she was a little bit more prominent in the original Broadway staging of it. We'll definitely come back to Rizzo.
- 00:09:06 Ernest Host So Luis, why is *Grease* your heat rock?
- 00:09:09 Luis Guest There were a lot of albums, for me growing up, that really impacted my life in different ways. *Grease* really, it shined a light on a really happy time in my life, kind of like a more innocent time in my life, and I was— I don't know, every time I think about it, I just think about me and my sister, and we're dancing and singing along to these songs and watching the movie and how colorful and, you know, there was a lot of dancing in it.

And that was, you know, that was me, because I was an aspiring dancer, and I didn't know at the time what I wanted to be, but I knew I wanted it to look like what was happening on the screen, you know, in *Grease*, at Rydell High. I wanted to go to that high school, I wanted to have that leather jacket, and then later on I wanted to have the satin jacket, and then I was like, "Well, why not both?"

00:10:18 Ernest Host It's a good look.

00:10:19 Luis Host Yeah.

00:10:20 Oliver Host One of the things that strikes me about *Grease* is, and this is a film—I use different clips of it in my classes, so—just to remind listeners, I'm a sociology professor at Long Beach State. And usually when it comes to anything that's older than even ten years, I definitely do not presume my students are going to have a familiarity with it. But it always surprises me that whenever I ask students, before I show a clip, you know, "How many of you have heard or seen this before?" And it's always much more, I think, certainly—probably the last time I did, it was the majority of the class, which really took me back, because I'm like, "Wow, I had no idea." Even though it makes sense to me in terms of *Grease* being an incredibly popular film and soundtrack and all that.

But nonetheless, it surprises me how much of a younger generation have seen it, and it got me thinking about sort of the enduring appeal of it, and I guess the easy way to answer it would simply be, it has very good songs, it's a fun film. But there's a lot of good songs and fun films from the 1970s that don't get remembered by a generation or two generations later. And I'm wondering for either of you have a sense of why you think *Grease* has managed to endure.

00:11:27 Ernest Host I think one of the reasons the film and its soundtrack still resonate so much is that they sort of straddle eras and music genres. Robert Stigwood, who managed The Bee Gees, was one of the film's producers, and one place you can see his influence is the title track of the *Grease* soundtrack. It's very disco-flavored.

00:11:44 Music Music "Grease" performed by Frankie Valli off the album *Grease: The Original Soundtrack*. Much more of a 1970s disco-funk rock song than the previous 1950s rock n' roll songs, with a chill beat and smooth backing vocals.

FRANKIE VALLI:

*I saw my problems and I'll see the light
We got a lovin' thing...*

[Music fades out as Ernest speaks]

00:12:03 Ernest Host I think Stigwood wanted to sort of tap into the reigning, lucrative sound of the day as a sonic hook, but also to give the film, the whole project, a veneer of freshness and hipness. So when you listen closely to some of the music and lyrics on the soundtrack, a lot of them are kind of out of time, well beyond rigid categories of era or genre.

00:12:23 Music Music *["Grease" fades back in]*

FRANKIE:

*They think our love is just a growing pain
Why don't they understand? It's just a crying shame
Their lips are lying, only real is real
We stop the fight right now, we got to be what we feel
Grease is the word*

CHORUS:

*Grease is the word, is the word that you heard
It's got groove, it's got meaning*

[Music fades out again as Ernest speaks]

- 00:12:41 Ernest Host If I can just piggyback on something you were saying earlier, about your students, you being surprised that they were familiar with this. One of the things— I mean, I was born in the mid-60s, and so was a child in the '70s, and the '70s were just so incredibly close to us at that time. I think time-wise and eras were much more porous than they are now. And so the '70s were all around us. You had on TV, you had *Happy Days* and *Laverne and Shirley*. You had, Sha Na Na had a variety show, right? And so, and then on radio, which had a very different function in pop culture, you know, you heard songs from the '50s and '60s on regular playlists.
- 00:13:19 Oliver Host Right, the oldies.
- 00:13:20 Ernest Host Exactly. So, I think there was a kind of instant familiarity, because we sort of knew the aesthetics and we knew the sounds that were being referenced in the film. And so, like you, I'm a little surprised that, you know, people in their teens and twenties know *Grease* now. Because the way culture works, the way it's transmitted, is so incredibly different, and we're sort of encouraged to have a kind of cultural amnesia, so that our data bank doesn't go much further than a decade at most. You know?
- 00:13:52 Luis Guest Which is a shame, but—just the story of *Grease* is still relevant, right? I mean, high school kids today still go through the things that Rizzo was going through, or Marty would go through, or even Sandy with her being an exchange student and being bullied a little bit, and then having to “change her identity” to fit in, and then finally she fits in because she looks like they all do. So those kind of issues and topics still prevail in high school today.
- 00:14:31 Ernest Host Perhaps even a little more intense.
- 00:13:33 Luis Guest Yes, thank you. That's the word. Like, more intense today. I mean, it was a little bit more candy-coated back then, but today it's a little bit more intense. But it's those same issues and things that high school kids go through.
- 00:14:48 Oliver Host Right. I think, to your point, the high school film as a genre is a distinctive genre. It's continually remade. Every year there's going to be multiple attempts at tapping into that, and I hadn't really thought about this until now, even though I described *Grease* a moment ago as being kind of this low key teen sex comedy. Really, it's— I totally forgot the more obvious analogy, which is it was my introduction to

the high school film, which is something— especially now that I have a fourteen year old at home. She loves this stuff, because for her, she's treating it as kind of a quasi-anthropological look into like, "This is the terrain I have to navigate and to master."

But so, she watches a lot of these things, and now that I'm really thinking about it sitting into this room with y'all, like, I can take it back to *Grease* as being, okay, this was sort of an introduction to me to what a high school environment might look like. With the one, I think, really important exception here—and this is something I also wanted to ask you all about—the thing that's so distinctive about *Grease* in particular, about when it comes out, and this goes directly to your point, Ernest, is that the '70s were very much suffused with this nostalgia for the '50s. You mentioned *Happy Days*. That's an obvious point. *American Graffiti*, George Lucas' breakout film, set also in the 1950s. And the popularity of Sha Na Na, who I didn't realize until recently got their big break—as I mentioned in my intro—coming out of Woodstock, because they were offering baby boomers that nostalgia for the era that they grew up in as kids.

But I had no nostalgia for it because I hadn't been born yet, and to be quite honest, my parents, who were immigrants in the '60s, they couldn't have even come to the U.S. in the 1950s because of how immigration laws were. So for me, it was kind of an imagined nostalgia for something, because I never could have experienced, not just because of when I was born, but also because of my ethnic background. And I'm wondering, for each of you, was any of the appeal of *Grease*, either musically or as a film, how much of it had to do, if anything, with that nostalgia of the '50s and the ways in which we have idealized that era continually throughout American pop culture?

- 00:16:51 Luis Guest For me, it was the colorful, dancey way, and sing-songy way that high school was. And then came the t-shirts with the rolled up sleeves, which I had to do at one point, or like, you know, the jeans with the rolled up cuffs and the leather jacket. That kind of fashion just brings up these images of just Americana. You know, that, Americana.
- 00:17:18 Oliver Host Right. Yeah. Yeah.
- 00:17:19 Luis Guest And so, me being a little Latin boy growing up on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, I'm like, ooh, the grass is greener type of deal, right? Like, I'm growing up in the projects, but look at this, this is fabulous, this is not where I—you know, this is not what I'm dealing with on a daily basis. Wouldn't it be nice to drive a Thunderbird to high school one day? *[Laughs.]*
- 00:17:42 Ernest Host Well, you know, for me it—sort of building on what you were saying, Oliver—it speaks to the ways so much even nostalgia is racialized. Because, for me, I was very familiar with the music of the '50s, you know, growing up in the '70s. My parents had been, you know, teenagers in the '50s, and so, you know, in our house we were listening to The Platters, we were listening to The Drifters, we were listening to these groups from the '50s right alongside Chaka Khan and Earth Wind & Fire. So, my sister and I, we grew up with this sort

of very fluid notion of a timeline when it came to culture. It was all there. And the nostalgia that was put forth and sort of celebrated in *Grease* was just very different than the music that I grew up listening to, that's representing the '50s, as well as the conversations that my parents had about, you know, being Black people growing up in the South in the '50s. Um, it wasn't a musical. [Laughs.]

00:18:36 Oliver Host

Oliver: Right.

Luis: [Laughing] Right, well—

Oliver: Hard to beat that nostalgia. Right, right.

Luis: Surprise!

00:18:39 Ernest Host

So it's a very different kind of nostalgia, and even the music of, you know, like The Drifters or The Platters or whoever, even though it's like pop and escapist, whatever, because of the memories that my parents had attached to it, and the ways in which we came to that music, that music had a sort of weight to it. It wasn't necessarily bubblegum, even though it might have been pop music for its day.

00:19:05 Luis Guest

Right. I mean, for me, my parents were, you know, coming from Puerto Rico, so we had a lot of Latin, salsa, merengue music in our household. As we got older, then we started getting introduced to, you know, more R&B groups, and so I'm really fortunate that my dad really liked— was a fan of music. So not only was I listening to the salsa and the merengue, he was introducing me to, you know, the R&B and the groups that you were just talking about, and *Grease* was just another musical category that he was just introducing me to at such a young age, because I was—my mother called it vibrating—I was always dancing around in my home whether music was on or not. And so they were like, "Well, just put music on, if he's gonna dance around, put the music, you know, put music on." So he was always doing that for me.

00:20:09 Music Music

"Summer Nights" off the album *Grease: The Original Soundtrack*. Gentle, upbeat pop with electric guitar and a steady beat.

DANNY:

Summer loving, had me a blast

SANDY:

Summer loving, happened so fast

DANNY:

I met a girl, crazy for me

SANDY:

Met a boy, cute as can be

BOTH:

Summer days drifting away

To, uh oh, those summer nights

[Music fades out]

00:20:31 Ernest Host I wonder if we can talk a little bit about the sex and gender politics of the movie, but also specifically I'm thinking about the songs "Look At Me, I'm Sandra Dee" and "There Are Worse Things I Can Do", which to me are the sort of standout tracks.

00:20:45 Music Music "There Are Worse Things I Could Do" off of the album *Grease: The Original Soundtrack*. Slow,

*I could stay home every night
Wait around for Mr. Right
Take cold showers every day
And throw my life away
On a dream that won't come true*

[Music fades out as Ernest speaks]

00:21:10 Ernest Host One of the reasons that I love "There Are Worse Things I Could Do", which is— it's Rizzo's character really sort of defiantly claiming her sexuality and her desires, but she's also really smart, because she says she knows there's a high price to pay for being herself, and for following, you know, her own impulses.

But she also says that she would rather pay that price than be phony and conformist, you know, when she says the lines, "I could throw my life away on a dream that won't come true." Here's someone who's already sort of peeped the game, and knows that, "If I stick to the conventional path and what is expected of me, I will not be happy. If I do what I want to do and follow my own desires, I will be called out of my name, I will be possibly exiled." And so, at the end, when she says—

00:21:55 Music Music *["There Are Worse Things I Could Do" fades back in.]*

*I don't steal and I don't lie!
But I can feel and I can cry
A fact I'll bet you never knew
But to cry in front of you...
That's the worst thing I could do*

[Music fades out again]

00:21:28 Ernest Host There's such a savviness, and I think, not to be a centralist or not to romanticize womanhood or femalehood or anything, but I think it really speaks to the ways in which girls do mature faster, and have to mature faster—

00:22:41 Luis Guest Oh, absolutely.

00:22:42 Ernest Host —and are aware, at a very young age, of what it costs them, as girls turning into women, what it costs them to move through the world.

00:22:49 Oliver Host Right.

00:22:50 Luis Guest But I think that also speaks to a time where parents weren't really talking about, you know, this kind of stuff to their daughters. I think parents today, and you can— I mean, Oliver, you can tell me if I'm

right or wrong, with a fourteen year old girl, I mean, you know, parents are more woke these days, right, so they wanna—

00:23:11 Oliver Host To some extent, yeah. Not necessarily across the board, certainly. Yeah.

00:23:16 Luis Guest Well, and so, I mean, there are always gonna be some kind of issue that comes up, or some question that comes up, but, you know, back in the '50s those things weren't really spoken about to young girls.

00:23:30 Ernest Host Well, I think to some degree you're right, but I also think one of the things that the film does is, you know, it shows that the candy-coated version of the '50s that we have been sold for much of post-50s American pop culture, that candy-coated version is bullshit; because the kids were fucking, and contemplating abortion, if that was one of the outcomes of the fucking, and so it's given you this neon, fast-moving, fun movie, but it's also sort of letting you know that the complexity was already there.

00:24:04 Oliver Host Which was always, from my understanding—and I've never seen the original Broadway version of this staged—but from my understanding of it, that was what it was intended to do, was to kind of speak to these things, but being—as I said earlier—being very subversive about it, which is hiding all of these issues beneath some really fun songs and really good dancing. And I want to come back to your point when we were talking earlier about the importance of Rizzo, is, I mean, really the female characters in this film, or just in this story, I think are the most interesting.

As much visual time as we give to the Thunderbirds and to Zuko, you know, they get to wear the cool leather jackets, and of course, our idea of what cool is is part of the programming, right? But if you look at sort of the kind of internal tensions and the relationships, I think it's the women who are, by far, much more interesting. And Rizzo in particular, I think, is also by far the most interesting single character in the entire storyline—

00:25:00 Luis Guest Oh, absolutely.

00:25:01 Oliver Host —and just does not get enough of that focus, when really, you could do—if you had remade *Grease* and made her the centerpiece, I think it would have been actually far more fascinating.

00:25:12 Ernest Host Oh, absolutely. Absolutely.

00:25:14 Luis Guest I totally agree. She has so many layers to her. You know, she wants to be the cool chick, and, you know, she's kind of like quasi—you know, the bully, but come to find out that she really is just scared and she just wants to be loved. And yes, she makes these decisions because she wants to be a strong-minded and strong-willed woman, and she knows the outcomes of these decisions, so she goes, "Oh well, fuck it. This is me."

00:25:42 Ernest Host This is something that I was thinking about, just when researching, watching clips from the films. It's so interesting to watch that movie and realize that most of the cast is closer to being eligible to AARP than being eighteen years old.

[Both laugh.]

Those were some hard livings eighteen year olds. There's a scene when one of the high school boys, you know, it's like of the dance scenes, and he like walks in front of the camera, swigging from a bottle, and I'm like, "that's somebody's grandfather." So it's been interesting to me to watch the film and just see this huge suspension of disbelief in terms of the casting is asking a lot.

00:26:25 Luis Guest Yeah, but we can also say that now, right? 'Cause you're looking at the film and clips now, but back then, when I was looking at the film, I was like, [Gasps] "I'm gonna look like that when I'm in high school!" Because I wasn't in high school yet. So yeah, that belief was suspended, you know, for a little Luis. Now when big Luis is looking at it, I'm like, "Oooh, she look old!"

[Everyone laughs.]

"That's an old girl!"

00:26:53 Music Music "Alone At A Drive In Movie" off the album *Grease: The Original Soundtrack*. Slow, mournful pop instrumental with heavy saxophone.

00:27:13 Ernest Host Luis, did you have a chance to check out *Grease: Live?* That came out in, I think, 2016, when NBC broadcast the live theater performance.

00:27:23 Luis Guest Yes. I did not see that. I like my current picture of *Grease*, right, and current memory of *Grease*, and I just don't want it altered; and if I see something else and it's just not to my liking, I just don't want it ruined. So, I did not see it. I don't even know who was in it. I'm sure they were fantastic.

00:27:43 Oliver Host I think, for the same reason, I know a lot of people who loved *Grease* but never bothered with *Grease 2*, because—

00:27:48 Luis Guest [Gasps] Oh, yes.

00:27:49 Oliver Host Starring a young Michelle Pfeiffer, amongst other folks, but now you have seen *Grease 2*, it seems like.

00:27:54 Luis Guest Oh my god, yes.

00:27:56 Oliver Host Since we took it there, let's take it there.

00:27:57 Ernest Host Did you not walk out of the theater singing "Cool Rider"?

00:28:00 Luis Guest I'm telling you! Oh, God. What are they doing to me today? Yes.

00:28:06 Oliver Host So, if someone has not seen *Grease 2*, you're vouching for it.

00:28:10 Luis Guest I liked *Grease 2*. Then again, you know, I loved *Grease* so much that when *Grease 2* came out, ugh. When they do the song about the seasons, oh, I live! I can't. I live.

00:28:23 Ernest Host Well, for me, it's an incredibly bad movie that's a lot of fun.

00:28:26 Luis Guest Oh, yes. Well, yes, and—yes. I'll let you know that, yes, I felt that it was not a good movie. It definitely was not on the level of *Grease*. But it was so much fun, and I just—I just loved it. What was the, uh, the lead male character, the blonde, blue-haired guy?

00:28:48 Oliver Host Right, we all remember Michelle Pfeiffer but I don't know who—

00:28:50 Luis Guest Yeah, I don't remember—

00:28:51 Ernest Host I forget his name, but the actor was Maxwell Caulfield.

00:28:54 Luis Guest Yes! Yeah, sorry, I'm yelling into this mic. Yes. And he was so dreamy, and then like, he takes off his helmet and, you know, he's right there with all his blonde and blue-eyedness. I was like, "Yes!"

00:29:06 Music Music "Cool Rider" off the album *Grease 2: Original Soundtrack*. Fast-paced rock n' roll.

STEPHANIE ZINONE:
I'll do anything to let him know that I'm his
His for the taking!

I want a cool rider
A cool, cool, cool, cool rider
I want a cool rider
A cool, cool, cool, cool, rider

[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]

00:29:25 Oliver Host Well, we will come back to more of our discussion about *Grease*—*Grease 1*, that is—after a break, to listen from some of our sibling MaxFun podcasts. Keep it locked.

00:29:36 Music Music "Crown Ones" off the album *Stepfather* by People Under The Stairs

00:29:38 Promo Promo **Music:** "Money Won't Pay," by bo en, feat. Augustus. Upbeat, cheerful music.

Rachel McElroy: Hi, this is Rachel McElroy!

Griffin McElroy: Hello, this is Griffin McElroy!

Rachel: And this is *Wonderful!*

Griffin: It's a podcast that we do as—uh, we ma—we are married—

[Rachel laughs.]

And... How's the ad going so far? 'Cause I think it's going very good.

Rachel: *[Laughs.]* We talk about things we like every week on Wednesdays!

Griffin: One time Rachel talked about pumpernickel bread. It was so tight; you cannot afford to miss her talking about this sweet brown bread.

Rachel: We also talk about music, and poems, and... you know, weather!

Griffin: There was one—weather?

[Rachel laughs.]

One time Rachel talked about "Baby Beluga," the song, for like 14 minutes, and it b—ooh, just really blew my hair back.

[Rachel laughs.]

Rachel: So check us out on MaximumFun.org.

Griffin: It's a cool podcast with chill vibes. Amber is the color of our energy! Is what all the iTunes reviews say.

Rachel: *[Chuckles.]* They will now!

Music: *[Fading out]* You could end up on the street...

00:30:22 Promo

Promo

[Music.]

Lisa Hanawalt: Hey, if you like your podcasts to be focused and well-researched, and your podcast hosts to be uncharismatic, unhorny strangers who have no interest in horses, then this is not the podcast for you.

Emily Heller: Yeah, and what's your deal?

[Lisa laughs.]

I'm Emily.

Lisa: I'm Lisa.

Emily: Our show's called *Baby Geniuses!*

Lisa: And its hosts are horny adult idiots. We discover weird Wikipedia pages every episode.

Emily: We discuss institutional misogyny!

Lisa: We ask each other the dumbest questions, and our listeners won't stop sending us pictures of their butts.

Emily: We haven't asked them to stop! But they also aren't stopping.

Lisa: Join us on *Baby Geniuses*.

Emily: Every other week on MaximumFun.org.

[Music ends.]

00:30:58	Music	Music	"Crown Ones" off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under The Stairs
00:31:00	Ernest	Host	We're back on <i>Heat Rocks</i> , talking <i>Grease</i> with Luis Xtravaganza.
00:31:05	Oliver	Host	So, I wanted to ask each of you, what was your favorite song from the soundtrack, independent of how it was used in the movie? In other words, we're talking about just the musical part of it. As a song, what is the one that has been enduring for each of you? What is the fire track off this soundtrack for each of you?
00:31:22	Luis	Guest	You have to go first, because I am—they have the song list out for me, so I'm going through all of them and I'm like, "Oh, that one. Oh wait, no, no, no, that one! No." So...
00:31:34	Ernest	Host	I think I've already given mine away. For me, it definitely is "There Are Worse Things I Could Do", and Alison Moyet actually did a fantastic cover on her 1994 album <i>Essex</i> . And then two years later, she released an album called <i>Singles / Live</i> , which was her in concert performing her hit singles, and she did a live version of it as well, which just really knocks it out of the park, and is such a fantastic—for me, it just really underscores how solid that song is.
00:32:03	Music	Music	"There Are Worse Things I Could Do" off the album <i>Singles / Live</i> by Alison Moyet. The same tune as before, but slower and more keyed-down with occasional cheers, applause, and whistles from the audience. <i>I could flirt with all the guys Smile at them and bat my eyes Press against them when we dance Make them think they stand a chance...</i>
			<i>[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]</i>
00:32:30	Oliver	Host	For me, I would probably go with "Hopelessly Devoted To You", which, to me, is a great showcase for Olivia Newton-John's vocal talents, and certainly could have been, and was, a pop a hit that, if you had just released that song independent of the movie, it still, I think, would have done just as well. Obviously I think it got a boost from the success from the movie, you kind of remember, like, Olivia

Newton-John was a really—was great. Like, she was a great pop star back in that era, and I think she just, yeah, she does a lovely job with that.

00:33:00	Music	Music	<p>“Hopelessly Devoted To You” off the album <i>Grease: The Original Soundtrack</i>. Slow, tender, sad, romantic pop with a bit of a country twang.</p> <p><i>SANDY:</i> <i>You know, I'm just a fool who's willing</i> <i>To sit around and wait for you</i> <i>But baby, can't you see</i> <i>There's nothing else for me to do?</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as Ernest speaks]</i></p>
00:33:22	Ernest	Host	<p>What’s interesting to me about “Hopelessly Devoted To You” is that, in terms of lyric, production, and instrumentation, it is absolutely in line with the country/pop songs she was making—</p>
00:33:31	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<p>Luis: Yes!</p> <p>Oliver: Yes, totally.</p>
00:33:32	Ernest	Host	<p>—at the start of her career, and that made her such a huge global pop star. Songs like “If You Love Me Let Me Know” and, most obviously, “I Honestly Love You.”</p>
00:33:40	Music	Music	<p>“I Honestly Love You” off the album <i>Long Live Love</i> by Olivia Newton-John. Quite similar to “Hopelessly Devoted to You”—sad, tender, aching country/pop.</p> <p><i>If we both were born</i> <i>In another place and time</i> <i>This moment might be ending in a kiss</i> <i>But there you are with yours</i> <i>And here I am with mine</i> <i>So I guess...</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as Ernest speaks]</i></p>
00:34:06	Ernest	Host	<p>And in a way, she was a prototype of the way Taylor Swift has rebranded herself.</p>
00:34:10	Oliver	Host	<p>Wow. I never thought about that. Yeah.</p>
00:34:11	Ernest	Host	<p>Yeah. Olivia was very shrewd in using <i>Grease</i> as an image makeover. Her performance of Sandy—</p>
00:34:17	Luis	Guest	<p>Just like Sandy.</p>
00:34:18	Ernest	Host	<p>Yeah, exactly!</p>
00:34:19	Oliver	Host	<p>We’re getting deep in here right now.</p>
00:34:21	Ernest	Host	<p>Her performance of Sandy at the start of the film is very much her performing her public persona up to that point, and the transformed Sandy was a bridge to a much more sexy, overtly sexual version of</p>

Olivia Newton-John. On the cover of *Totally Hot*, which was six or seven months after the *Grease* soundtrack, she's even wearing black leather pants, similar to those worn by Sandy post-transformation.

And I don't think a lot of people can now grasp what a huge shakeup that was in terms of both her image and her subsequent music, because she had been a huge global pop star, with this sort of—I mean, it was good. It was very good music. But it was this like safe and chaste and virginal and, you know, her album covers are her in white, and wind blowing her hair, and—

00:35:05 Oliver Host I never thought about that, but that is— yeah that's brilliant, in that sense, because, and she also does it with *Xanadu* a couple years after that, which is also much more of that post-transformation look. She did "Physical", right?

00:35:16 Ernest Host Yeah. She did "Physical."

00:35:17 Oliver Host Right, by the '80s, which was very much more sexualized. I think Sandy's transformation, to me, always felt a little bit problematic, only because it's—she's basically—it feels like, to some extent, she's conforming to what it is that Danny wants her to be like, right? It's a little bit *Little Mermaid* in that sense, I suppose. The Disney version, not the original Hans Christian Andersen.

But, when I think about it in terms of this was actually a way for Olivia Newton-John to sort of transform her, and make it feel organic, so from the listener's point of view it doesn't seem strange for her to go from this to that, but using *Grease* as that transition is part of her own ambition. Suddenly, actually I'm much more cool with Sandy's narrative within the logic of the story itself.

00:36:02 Music Music [*"Hopelessly Devoted To You" fades back in.*]

*My heart is saying, "Don't let go
Hold on till the end"
And that's what I intend to do
I'm hopelessly devoted to you*

[*Music fades out as Luis speaks*]

00:36:24 Luis Guest "Hopelessly Devoted To You" was always the one that everybody sang together, because it has this crescendo. Everybody like joins in. But, uh, "Stranded at the drive in, branded a fool, what will they say Monday at school?" With John Travolta and Sandy. "Oh, Sandy, baby." Oh, I love that torch song that he is proclaiming that, "I'm really not like these other guys, I really do like you. I'm not—"

00:36:55 Oliver Host "I'm conflicted now." Yes.

00:36:56 Luis Guest "I'm not the asshole, but I am conflicted, because I gotta stay cool. But I really like you, though. Can't you see?" Then, you know, the dancey, Latin guy in me just loves "Hand Jive". When that beat comes in on "Hand Jive", all I want to do is shake it to the rhythm, honey.

00:37:17	Music	Music	<p>“Born To Hand Jive” off the album <i>Grease: The Original Soundtrack</i>. A fast, upbeat 1950s dance song with piano, drums, and saxophone intended to get crowds dancing together.</p> <p><i>VINCE FONATINE & CHORUS:</i> <i>Born to hand-jive, baby!</i> <i>Born to hand-jive, baby!</i></p> <p><i>VINCE:</i> <i>Yeah!</i></p> <p><i>[Instrumentals continue for a moment, then the music fades out as Luis speaks]</i></p>
00:37:41	Luis	Guest	And that’s also, you know, when we get the other favorite character.
00:37:47	Oliver	Host	Let’s go in.
00:37:48	Ernest	Host	Can I guess?
00:37:49	Luis	Guest	Okay, you can guess.
00:37:50	Ernest	Host	Cha Cha.
			<i>[Luis gasps.]</i>
			Yes! Yes.
00:37:53	Luis	Guest	The best dancer, right? Ugh. I live. I can’t.
00:37:56	Ernest	Host	Although I have to—the first time I saw the film, going back to what I was saying about how everyone is looking older, the first time I saw the film I was like, “Is that like, a teacher dancing?”
00:38:04	Luis	Guest	I live. Miss Cha Cha Di Gregorio, the best dancer from St. Bernadette’s.
			<i>[Everyone laughs.]</i>
			Yes. And her dress was fierce, too.
00:38:12	Oliver	Host	She was.
00:38:13	Luis	Guest	Oh, goodness gracious. And she brought that next level of like, grit, you know, that girl that was definitely more on Rizzo’s side of the street. I think she was, you know, she’s that character like, Rizzo was jealous, but it was because Rizzo wanted to be her in some way. Because she was fully realized in her persona, like she was like, “This is me. Boom, get it. And let’s get this on and dance in and <i>[beatboxing]</i> . Like, hello.” I was like, “There she is. There’s my queen. There it is.”
00:38:47	Music	Music	<p><i>["Born to Hand Jive" fades back in.]</i></p> <p><i>VINCE:</i> <i>.. gave birth to the hand-jive!</i></p> <p><i>I could barely walk when I milked a cow</i></p>

*When I was three I pushed a plow
While chopping wood I moved my legs
And they saw me dancing when I gathered eggs*

[Music fades out]

00:39:05 Oliver Host What is your favorite musical moment in the movie? And I'll start, which is, it's "Summer Nights". And I think as a kid, part of it was—and Luis, I'm really interested to hear your thoughts on this, because, in listening to this song again now, and "Summer Nights" was always my favorite song growing up, and I couldn't really figure out what it was that was so appealing until I tried to unpack it this past week.

But I realized, because it opens with that really classic one, four, five chord progression, which, as someone who listens, me personally, to a lot of Latin boogaloo music out of New York in the 1960s, that is all one, four, five chord stuff. "Louie Louie", one, four, five. A lot of Beatles stuff. Because it was all the influence of Afro-Cuban music, and I think something about it, on a musical level, is just appealing to me.

I think the adult sociology professor in me, what I like about "Summer Nights" too is, it's a really great example of how—and I apologize for getting overly academic here, perhaps—but the differences between what the girls want to know and what the boys want to know is all about normative femininity and masculinity that is being performed for you both literally and figuratively.

00:40:10 Luis Guest Yes. Like, "Tell me more, tell me more, like does he have a car?" Like, hello?

00:40:15 Oliver Host And the boys are asking, "Tell me more, tell me more, did you get very far?" *[Everyone laughs.]*

00:40:20 Music Music "Summer Nights" off the album *Grease: The Original Soundtrack*.

*DANNY & SANDY:
Summer sun, something's begun
But, uh oh, those summer nights*

*T-BIRDS AND PINK LADIES:
Well-a, well-a, well-a, uh!*

*PINK LADIES:
Tell me more, tell me more*

*FRENCHY:
Was it love at first sight?*

*T-BIRDS:
Tell me more, tell me more*

*KENICKIE:
Did she put up a fight?*

[T-Birds and Pink Ladies vocalize for a few moments before the music fades out]

00:40:40 Oliver Host Honestly getting chills. I just love that song so much.

00:40:43 Luis Guest I love it.

00:40:44 Ernest Host So, what's your favorite?

00:40:46 Luis Guest Um. Okay, so, again, the dancer in me and, you know, I love the gym scene, when everybody starts dancing, and it all goes into pandemonium, and you see all these couples doing all kinds of—

00:41:02 Oliver Host The choreography is amazing.

00:41:03 Luis Guest Oh, my god.

00:41:04 Oliver Host The choreography is off the chain.

00:41:06 Luis Guest I was, I mean, lost. Lost in that scene. I was like, "Oh, my god. That— I— uh— *[Continues stammering indiscernibly.]* How can I? I want all of that." All those couples, and they're doing this, and— it was just amazing, and flipping each other, I mean, the choreography, I just, I wanted that so bad in my life.

00:41:26 Ernest Host I agree with you. That's my favorite, like, music moment in the film as well, because the dancing finally— I mean they're dancing throughout the film, but that's really dancing. And in a way, it's also a throwback to classic Hollywood musicals, where, you know, the way in which the camera moves, and the choreography, the way it's staged and everything is composed is so intricate, and the camera has to move very carefully and very fluidly in order to capture all that is happening. And that scene is just like, really, the— you know, in terms of the music performances, that really is the best scene.

00:42:00 Luis Guest Yes, when that track goes into that drum breakdown— *[Beatboxing]*—and they're just showing the different couples and the heat and the vibrations that are coming off those couples, that it's almost like they lose it.

00:42:07 Music Music "Born To Hand Jive" off the album *Grease: The Original Soundtrack*. Fast-paced drumbeat accented by cymbals that plays for several moments before a piano flourish kicks off the rest of the instruments rejoining.

[Music continues, then fades out as Luis speaks.]

00:42:31 Luis Guest You know, they break out of their '50s sweet girl, sweet boy normality, and they become these like, dance animals. There's one point where the guy—the girl is slapping—making like he's slapping the guy, and one is going underneath her skirt, and it just becomes this... you know, like, sexually charged pandemonium. And I just, I don't know, I thought I was gonna lose my mind. I was like, "Yes!" *[Cheers]*

00:42:56 Ernest Host Which was, of course, the big fear around race music, period. That it would turn these sweet, young white kids into these primal—

00:43:05 Oliver Host Libidinous.

00:43:08 Ernest Host Right.

00:43:09 Oliver Host Which is why you have all of the older teachers and administrators going around enforcing how kids are touching each other.

00:43:16 Ernest Host You must be six inches apart when dancing.

00:43:17 Oliver Host Exactly.

00:43:19 Luis Guest After a while, they just give up, right, because it's just, I mean that breakdown comes in and it's just like, "Girl, don't try. Don't try to break us up, because we about to get this on and pop it. Yes."

00:43:29 Oliver Host We've somehow managed not to talk much at all about the actual title track, which is one of the new songs that was introduced. And so, just for people not familiar with this, the original Broadway staging of *Grease*, the Frankie Valli song that opens the movie, that was not part of the original songs with the stage version of this. But when they brought it to screen, Barry Gibb—as we talked about, from the Bee Gees—was asked to write a title track for it, and then they got Frankie Valli of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons to sing it.

And you were mentioning this earlier, Ernest, that "Grease" was, the title track was designed to very much ride on the height of the disco wave. Even though I don't really think of "Grease" as being a super disco-y song, but the elements are certainly there. I still am ambivalent as to, do I like the song? I think I like it because I associate it with that cartoon opening with *Grease*, which was always fun as a kid because it's colorful and all these things. You don't really know what you're getting yourself into with it.

And it's catchy, but I think for some reason—and this is no shade on Frankie Valli at all—if the Bee Gees had actually sung it, especially in that falsetto, I think I would've loved this far more than how it is. And again, it's not because I think it's bad, but for whatever reason, I really wanted to hear the Bee Gees actually do the song and not just sing backup.

00:44:44 Music Music "Grease" off the album *Grease: The Original Soundtrack*.

FRANKIE & CHORUS:
Grease is the word, is the word that you heard
It's got a groove, it's got a meaning
Grease is the time, is the place, is the motion
Grease is the way we are feeling

[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]

00:45:06 Oliver Host I mean, just listening to it again just now, it's so incongruous with the rest of the movie and the era it's supposed to be depicting.

00:45:14 Ernest Host Well, you know, it's interesting because—although the lyrics can apply to these high school students, they're also very much in the vein of the ethos of disco, which was about self-affirmation. You know, he says, "We can be who we are." I mean, that was the whole premise of disco, right, it would be this liberating force. And so, I

agree with you, if we'd heard the Bee Gees singing this— I mean, you can hear it in your head as you're listening to it.

- 00:45:37 Oliver Host Absolutely. I actually forget what the Valli version sounds like until I listen to it, because in my head, I hear the Bee Gees falsetto when I think about the song.
- 00:45:46 Luis Guest You know, for me, it kind of straddles this rock-disco thing, because in the beginning, you know, those electric guitars don't sound disco to me. And this song doesn't sound like the rest of the album—
- 00:46:02 Oliver Host Not at all.
- 00:46:04 Luis Guest —at all. So, I liked, again, I liked the song. I always liked the song, especially because it had that cartoon opening which I loved so much, but I was always like, "Hm, that doesn't sound like the rest of the songs."
- 00:46:20 Oliver Host I just mentioned the song that it opens with, but we should also talk about perhaps the song that it ends with, which is "We Go Together". And it took me awhile to figure this out, because every time I heard it, especially the chorus part, I'm like, "Why does this sound familiar?" And I finally figured out: the chord progression of the vocal chorus, whether its coincidence or not, and I don't know if it's a coincidence, but it sounds identical to "The Tide is High" originally by Jamaica's Paragons and then covered by Blondie of course, two years later in 1980.
- 00:46:51 Music Music "We Go Together" off the album *Grease: The Original Soundtrack*. Fun, upbeat pop with drums, piano, and saxophone.
- PINK LADIES, T-BIRDS, DANNY, AND SANDY:
Remembered forever like
Shoo-wop sha wada wada yippity boom da boom
Chang chang, changity chang shoo-bop
That's the way it should be
Wah-oooh, yeah!*
- [Music fades into...]*
- 00:47:04 Music Music "Tide Is High" off the album *Blondie 4(0)-Ever* by Blondie crossfades in from "We Go Together." A similar tune to "We Go Together", but slower and with a distinct reggae influence. Debbie Harry sings over grooving horns, drums, and vocalizing back-up singers.
- I'm not the kinda girl who gives up just like that, oh no
The tide is high but I'm holding on...
[Music fades out as Ernest speaks]*
- 00:47:17 Ernest Host I wish you guys who are listening to the podcast could see Luis getting his, like—dancing in the chair.
- 00:47:21 Luis Guest *[Laughing]* And Oliver, too! We're gonna make this—we'll take this on the road.
- 00:47:25 Oliver Host It's fun, yeah.
- 00:47:27 Luis Guest Yes! I'm telling you. I mean, this is such a feel good song. I love the

“ram-a-lama-lama, a dingyety-ding-a-dong, shoo-wop sha wada wada yippity boom da boom, chang chang—” I just love the rhythm of it. I just love that they’re not really words, and that a child like me was like, “I know that word! Ramalamalama!” You know? It’s so good. I love the feel good aspect of it. I love the message that, you know, we go together. You are my brother, right? And whatever happened during the school year, whether we were fighting or not friends, at the end of all of this, you know, we go together.

- 00:48:06 Oliver Host And another really good choreograph scene in the film, too.
- 00:48:08 Luis Guest Absolutely. And I just, again, for me as a kid, growing up and wanting to be, or dreaming to be a dancer or whatever, a performer, these kinds of scenes and music, this really— I just loved it.
- 00:48:25 Music Music *[“We Go Together” fades in again]*
- ALL:
... lo-o-o-ove!*
- Ram-a-lama-lama, a dingyety-ding-a-dong
Shoo-wop sha wada wada yippity boom da boom
Chang chang changity chang shoo bop
Yip da dip da dip doo wop a dooby-doo
Boogy boogy boogy boogy shooby doo wop she bop
Sha na na na na na na na yippity dip di boom*
- [Music fades out as Oliver speaks]*
- 00:48:38 Oliver Host Luis, if you had to describe the *Grease* soundtrack in three words, what would those three words be?
- 00:48:44 Luis Guest It would be cool, fun, and it would be musical.
- 00:48:53 Oliver Host On point.
- 00:48:54 Music Music *[“We Go Together” fades back in. The Pink Ladies & Sandy sing while the T-Birds and Danny vocalize, the higher voices singing “ooh” while the deepest voices plus a falsetto sing some of the nonsense words sung earlier]*
- PINK LADIES & SANDY:
We’ll always be together
We’ll always be together
We’ll always be together*
- [Music fades out as Oliver speaks]*
- 00:49:10 Oliver Host For folks who really enjoyed the *Grease* soundtrack, whether you’ve heard it a thousand times or maybe this is your introduction to it, if people have recommendations for other things that they should check out as the next listen, what would those be? Ernest, you want to start us off?
- 00:49:24 Ernest Host Yeah. I am going to go with any Shirelles greatest hits collection.
- 00:49:28 Oliver Host Ah. That’s great.

00:49:29 Ernest Host Because I think, as time goes by, they are an increasingly underrated, undervalued girl group, and I think with cuts like “Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow”, which is one of the all-time great, “If we fuck, are we still gonna— what happens then?”

[Luis laughs.]

You know, “Tonight’s the Night”, “Dedicated To The One I Love”, “Mama Said”, “Baby—” I mean, I could just go on and on. I grew up with these songs. And I know that, you know, the Shirelles falls a little bit outside the timeline of the movie, but since the movie is so loose with era accuracy—

00:50:01 Oliver Host Yeah. To say the least.

00:50:03 Ernest Host Right. So I’m gonna stick with that, but I think, sort of immersing in the music of the Shirelles would be great.

00:50:10 Music Music “Tonight’s The Night” off the album *Tonight’s The Night* by The Shirelles. Slow, tender rock n’ roll.

*Well, I don't know
I said, I don't know right now
I might love you so*

*I might love you so much
You may break my heart...*

[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]

00:50:30 Oliver Host If it’s not too self-serving for me to say, my recommendation would be to have listeners go listen to our *Dreamgirls* sound track episode, which came out in February with guest Tre’veil Anderson. And I think, in a lot of ways we try to unpack *Dreamgirls* both—in very similar ways that we have discussed here today with *Grease*. If people enjoyed today’s episode, I would really recommend, check out our *Dreamgirls* episode.

00:50:51 Music Music “And I Am Telling You I’m Not Going” off the album *Dreamgirls* by Jennifer Hudson. Deeply emotional R&B with strong, soaring vocals accentuated by complementary drumbeats.

*... I'm not going!
You're the best man I'll ever know
There's no way I could ever, ever go
No, no, no, no way!
No, no, no, no way I'm living without you!
I'm not living without you*

[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]

00:51:12 Oliver Host Luis, take us home. What do you think people should listen to after *Grease*?

00:51:14 Luis Guest Oh my god. Uh. God, a couple of things. I mean, have you guys done *Purple Rain* yet?

00:51:20	Oliver	Host	We have.
00:51:21	Luis	Guest	Ooh. Right? You've done Sade. Have you done Lauryn Hill?
00:51:25	Oliver	Host	We have.
00:51:26	Luis	Guest	Oh, really? Oh my goodness, I gotta start listening to your podcast.
00:51:31	Ernest	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> You know, I'm disappointed, Luis. I was sure you were going to say <i>Grease 2</i> .
00:51:35	Luis	Guest	<i>[Laughing]</i> <i>Grease 2</i> . Did you do <i>Saturday Night Fever</i> ? That's a good one, too. Oof.
00:51:39	Oliver	Host	No.
00:51:40	Luis	Guest	<i>Saturday Night Fever</i> .
00:51:41	Music	Music	"If I Can't Have You" off the album <i>Saturday Night Fever</i> by Yvonne Elliman. Up-tempo poppy disco-rock. <i>... I don't want nobody, baby If I can't have you, oh, oh, oh, oh If I can't have you, I don't want nobody, baby If I can't have you, oh, oh, oh, oh</i> <i>[Music fades out as Ernest speaks]</i>
00:51:58	Ernest	Host	Alright. That will do it for this episode of <i>Heat Rocks</i> with our special guest, Luis Xtravaganza. It's been so great having you here.
00:52:05	Luis	Guest	It's been an honor.
00:52:06	Ernest	Host	What are you working on now, and where can people find you?
00:52:09	Luis	Guest	Uh, well, I have my own podcast. It's called <i>Werque Podcast</i> , and also Ernest has been a guest on it as well, so check us out. We're on iTunes. It's called Werque, W-E-R-Q-U-E, Podcast dot com .
00:52:26	Oliver	Host	What's it about?
00:52:27	Luis	Guest	I mean, our tagline is "Voices for the voices that go unheard." So we're really speaking to anybody who has an interesting story, that has contributed in any way to the culture, to their life. We want to speak to people who have interesting stories to tell, and who can inspire others.
00:52:50	Ernest	Host	Yeah, they've done a lot of really great work around ball culture, and is like, sort of fleshing it out. Because ball culture is one of the major tributaries of pop culture right now, but it's so— as it has made its way into the mainstream, it's become so watered down and misunderstood, and lost a lot; and one of the things that the podcast does is really sort of get back to who was at the root of this culture and what was some of the goals and intentions and dreams that sort of spurred it on, so it's really worth checking out.
00:53:24	Luis	Guest	Yeah. And we speak to a lot of the people of that time, now. What are they doing now, you know, and their life story and their life path since that time.

00:53:36	Oliver	Host	And back to you, Luis, where can people find more info about you and your podcast online?
00:53:40	Luis	Guest	www.WerquePodcast.com . I also have a monthly dance class, which is a vogue workshop, and you can go to www.WerqueDanceClass.com and come dance with me. I do a two hour werque, vogue dance class, that uh, that's open to all levels. And we have a whole bunch of fun, and it's about getting in there and expressing yourself and sweating it out.
00:54:09	Oliver	Host	Thank you so much again for coming through. This was great.
00:54:10	Luis	Guest	Yeah, it's been an honor. Thank you so much you guys.
00:54:13	Ernest	Host	Thank you.
00:54:14	Oliver	Host	You've been listening to <i>Heat Rocks</i> with me, Oliver Wang, and our guest co-host Ernest Hardy, sitting in for Morgan Rhodes. Our theme music is "Crown Ones" by Thes One of People Under The Stairs. Shoutout to Thes for the hookup. <i>Heat Rocks</i> is produced by myself and Morgan, and Christian Duenas, who also engineers, edits, and books for the show. Our senior producer is Laura Swisher, and our executive producer is Jesse Thorn.
			We are part of the Maximum Fun family, taping every week live in their studios in the West Lake neighborhood of Los Angeles, just thirteen miles away from Venice High School, which served as Rydell High in the movie.
00:54:49	Ernest	Host	Be sure to follow us on Twitter and Instagram @HeatRocksPod. You can find a link to our Facebook group on our webpage, HeatRocksPod.com . That's where we'll post show notes for every episode, including a track listing of everything you've heard today, and more goodies. Again, that's at HeatRocksPod.com .
00:55:05	Oliver	Host	As we ask every week, if you haven't had a chance to leave a review for us on iTunes, it is a big, big way in which new listeners can find their way to our humble little show. So, if you can just take out a minute and leave us a review, please do so. Ernest, thanks so much for joining us.
00:55:21	Ernest	Host	It's been fun. I'm really happy to be here trying to fill those pricy stilettos of Miss Rhodes.
00:55:27	Oliver	Host	One last thing. Here's a teaser for next week's episode, featuring poet and artist Gabrielle Civil, talking to myself and Ernest Hardy about Prince's 1986 album and soundtrack, <i>Parade</i> .
00:55:39	Gabrielle Civil	Clip	Now, I immediately listened to this record, and it was so like melancholy and emotional and romantic, and really different than what I remember <i>Around The World In A Day</i> being. And me liking it, but being a little afraid of songs like, um, "Sometimes It Snows In April", because it was like, what does it mean to be so sad? What does it mean to say that you're sad and to be emotionally vulnerable in that way? As a prepubescent girl, you're attracted to that, you want to be able to do that, but that's also really terrifying.
00:56:17	Speaker 1	Promo	MaximumFun.org .

00:56:18	Speaker 2	Promo	Comedy and culture.
00:56:20	Speaker 3	Promo	Artist owned—
00:56:21	Speaker 4	Promo	—Audience supported.