00:00:00	Music	Transition	"Crown Ones" off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under The Stairs. Chill, grooving instrumentals.
00:00:05	Oliver Wang	Host	Hello, I'm Oliver Wang.
00:00:07	Ernest Hardy	Host	And I'm Ernest Hardy, sitting in for Morgan Rhodes. You're listening to <i>Heat Rocks</i> .
00:00:11	Oliver	Host	Every episode we invite a guest to join us to talk about a heat rock. That is an album that lights a fire inside of us. And today we will be stepping back to 1998 to revisit the iconic solo debut album by Manu Chao, <i>Clandestino</i> .
00:00:26	Music	Music	"Clandestino" off the album <i>Clandestino</i> by Manu Chao. Mid-tempo Latin music with multilayered vocals.
			Solo voy con mi pena Sola va mi condena Correr es mi destino Por no llevar papel
			Perdido en el corazón
			[Music fades out as Oliver speaks\

00:00:39 Oliver

Host

In the early 90s there were few bands in Europe bigger than Mano Negra, a tri-lingual rock group fronted by one José-Manuel Chao, AKA Manu Chao, the group's singer, songwriter, and guitarist. Some surmised that in a different timeline, one where the in-group tensions hadn't taken their toll, Mano Negra could have become arena rock legends. But instead, for three years following his group's disillusion, Manu Chao went on a global lost weekend, visiting cities and towns throughout the Americas, Africa, and Europe.

As chronicled by biographer Peter Culshaw in the 2013 book *Clandestino: In Search of Manu Chao*, the enigmatic artist used the time to nurse his personal and professional wounds, and slowly began writing song after song based on his travels. As Chao told told Culshaw, "I didn't know I was making a record. It was pure therapy." But by 1998, it did become a record, a 16-song masterpiece entitled *Clandestino*.

There was no guarantee that the album would catch on when it first appeared. Mano Negra's break up had been ugly. Chao had stayed far away from the media radar for years, and few would have gambled that the album's embrace of everything from reggae rhythms to French pop to electronica would find a ready audience.

Clandestino was a classic slowburn, taking a full year to really catch on, but once it did, the LP became embraced as a not quite so instant classic. When the Spanish music magazine Rock Deluxe gave it album of the year honors, it proclaimed that Clandestino was, "The quintessential album of the nuevo mestizaje, popular music in its broadest and most powerful sense." Put another way, Chao's solo debut was populist music, an album written for the

people he met in rural villages and urban favelas alike in the years leading up to its completion. 00:02:29 Oliver Host In '98, Chao sampled Zapatista leader Subcomandante Marcos for Clandestino. A year later, it was Marcos who was giving Chao a shout-out in an address celebrating musicians of the world. This was an album both deeply of its time, yet ahead of its time, and how it takes its inspiration from, and speaks to the flow of ideas, cultures, and of course people between and across borders. Its music of our world, just don't call it world music. Music ["Clandestino" plays again] 00:02:55 Music Argelino, clandestino Nigeriano, clandestino Boliviano, clandestino Mano negra, ilegal [Music fades out as Ernest speaks] 00:03:10 Ernest Clandestino was the album pick of our guest today, Josh Kun. Host MacArthur Fellow, Sundance Fellow, award-winning author and cultural critic, professor of journalism at the Annenberg School at USC. These are just a baby's handful of Josh Kun's career accomplishments. But music fans first became aware of him over 20 years ago, when his byline was attached to some of the most insightful music criticism around, during a time when there were a lot of amazing music critics doing great work. With an emphasis on the politics of history and borders, and music and artists that make the former by transgressing the latter, Josh has carved out a distinctive voice and an intellectual and artistic path of his own making. His dedication to detail scholarship and connecting dots in ways wholly unexpected has taken him around the world and back in his exploration of culture. Who makes it, how, and why. He's one of the foremost critics in the country, and we're very honored and happy to have him with us today. Josh, welcome to Heat Rocks. 00:04:05 Josh Kun Guest Thank you. 00:04:06 Oliver Host So Josh, I've known you for, at this point, over 20 years. And so I know how deep your crates run, and your interests and passions in music run. So I was especially curious what you would choose, and much, you had a really hard time coming up with the list. And you did finally settle. This was one of the options that you had given us. I'm first wondering, why was it so hard to come up with a list of albums to talk about? Given—I mean, you've put out entire books about albums. 00:04:32 Josh Guest [Laughing] So, first of all, let me say it is really amazing to be here with both of you guys. And I've known you both, I think, that same

amount of time almost.

[Oliver responds affirmatively.]

I've never been a—you know, I'm sure you both get that question all the time of like, you know—

00:04:45 Oliver Host Desert island picks.

00:05:37 Josh

00:07:04 Music

00:04:46 Josh Guest —what's your favorite song, favorite artist.

[Oliver and Ernest respond affirmatively multiple times, overlapping.]

And I never—I'm always, uh, and it's like I've invented one that isn't even the one but I just have an answer, you know? Um, I've never been a list guy like that. I've never—as much as I aspire to. I have to work hard to put together end of year lists, for example. Not that anyone asks anymore, I just do it for myself.

[Everyone laughs.]

Just in the hopes that email arrives. Um, but I think I've always been a very, um, fickle listener, and omnivorous, and so having that one record or that one song works for a moment. I'm definitely a moment listener or a mood listener. And so it's always hard for me to come up with that one that I think defines myself or defines my story.

00:05:33 Oliver Host You did end up settling with *Clandestino*, so why Manu Chao and why this album?

Guest

Boy, this is a record and an artist who has been really important to me for a long time, and who I've written about before, and I've had the chance to interview before. But this record in particular in '98, it meant so much when it came out, but I think especially now in hindsight, I really think of it as like, the quintessential end of the 20th century record.

[Oliver hums thoughtfully.]

It was a record meant to be an end of the century record. He talks a lot on the album with a phrase he repeats, and keeps repeating now even in his current work, about being—um, I'm translating roughly from Spanish—being lost in the century. This idea of being lost in the century. And there's a moment early in that album where he says, over and over, "Lost in the century, lost in the century, but on the road to the next century." And that was not a road of optimism or of clarity. It was a road of great uncertainty around issues of freedom, of belonging, of rights. And so the things he was expressing, both about immigration and about displacement, but also about climate change. This is a record also about the death of the Earth. These are themes that he really was, at that moment, a philosopher of the end of the 20th—the end of the global 20th century. And I really was moved by it, and it stuck with me. It's a very simple record, and minimal in a lot of ways. And its simplicity, I think, is one of the important things about it, that it stuck with me.

Music "Desaparecido" off the album Clandestino by Manu Chao. Mid-

tempo Latin music with prominent strings.

Cuando me buscan, nunca estoy Cuando me encuentran, yo no soy El que está enfrente porque ya Me fui corriendo más allá

Me dicen el desaparecido Cuando llega, ya se ha ido

[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]

00:07:22 Oliver Host

I mentioned in the intro that for a lot of listeners this was a bit of a slow burn. Number one because they weren't expecting it, because after the group broke up, it wasn't really clear what he was going to do. And so I'm wondering, as someone who—again, as you had just mentioned that you had followed his career for a long time. How did this album land on your radar? Did you know it was coming, was it something you were anticipating, or were you like, for a lot of folks, "Oh my god, there's like, a solo album by him."

00:07:45 Josh Guest

Yeah, it's funny, 'cause I went back to prepare for today to kind of remind myself some things. I also read some of that commentary about the chart, you know, now that—back then we didn't have the Wikipedia—

## [Everyone laughs.]

—to remind us of its chart placements and album sales. So I actually never thought about that before with this album. I actually had no idea that it was popular or unpopular in terms of sales. It was a <a href="https://huge.nlm.nih.gov/huge.nlm

I had been writing a lot about what was then called the Rock en Español scene, and Mano Negra was that—their last record, right after they broke up, had become a masterpiece and the kind of statement of the genre. And so everyone was waiting for the Manu Chao record. So, to me, I looked back and I thought, "Oh, everyone—it was everywhere."

And it's interesting. I think some of that idea that it was a kind of a global slow burn and that it—now it's, I think, you know, France says it's one of the greatest, is that it was a slow burn to who? You know, and it was a slow burn maybe on the quote-unquote "music charts", or for Virgin or whatever, but on the ground, like, with the people who that music mattered to, it was everywhere.

00:09:07 Oliver Host

Right. And Ernest, you were telling us a moment ago, before we started taping, that you were working at the Virgin megastore in LA, and you had some thoughts to share about the world music section. And was this an album that had come into that section while you were there?

00:09:21 Ernest

Host

Well actually, doing research reminded me, I worked at the Virgin megastore a few years earlier, but just reminded me of my thoughts about the term "world music" and how odious I think it is. Because it's such a white, Western notion of categorizing the world, and it's—I mean, what <u>isn't</u> world music, first of all? And it's sort of a way of flattening out all this other music and all these other cultures and all these other artists and all this cultural projection into like, this sort of buffet that, you know, as I said, people could sort of walk into the Virgin megastore and they heard something on that's—you that's on—you know, their wine cave.

## [Everyone laughs.]

You know, and they wanted to show how progressive they were or how cultured they were, but it really, I think, fosters a hierarchy of musics and cultures, and I think really flattens out the complexity of cultural projection around the world. And, again, it does so in a way that positions the person who uses that term, world music, as a cultured, progressive, whatever person, but they're really sort of reinforcing, I think, a lot of hierarchies and a lot of bullshit notions of—

I mean, as Josh just said, slow burn for who?

00:10:33 Josh Guest

Yeah, I was shocked, um, and I'd stopped paying too much attention to Grammy's and award show stuff, but I noticed like, when the recent batch of nominations came out, that someone was talking about who got nominated in the world music category. And I was just like, "There's still a world music category?"

Like, I actually was legitimately shocked that—I mean, that term, beyond belonging to this outmoded and retrograde political structure. It's a colonialist term, it's an imperialist term. It's an industry term that belongs to a 20th century of the music industry, that doesn't exist anymore. And so I'm just kind of shocked that it still exists, but we don't want to go down there. The critique of Grammy category wormholes, but—

## [Oliver and Ernest laugh.]

But I think this record is an interesting one, perhaps for the world music part, but really more about Europe. And it's actually interesting to listen to it now in the context of what's happening in Europe, what's happening in the U.K. with Brexit. I always thought of this as a post-Europe record, or a kind of un-European record. And it was something that, at its heart, was—like with Mano Negra's work—going out of its way to reject a notion of monocultural European-ness, and embracing the colonies.

I mean, this was an early—I think you can say—a kind of decolonial move. And Manu Chao, at that point, and Mano Negra especially, were embracing cultures and identities in politics that were kind of expressly anti-European, or at least anti-European in the Eurocentric notion of it. And so I think it ages well, to a certain degree because of that.

00:12:19 Music

Music

"Día Luna... Día Pena" off the album *Clandestino* by Manu Chao. Slow, melodic music with harmonized vocals.

Hoy día luna día pena Hoy me levanto sin razón Hoy me levanto y no quiero Hoy día luna día muero... Arriba la luna Ohea...

[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]

00:12:43 Oliver Host

This might be a bit of a tangent, but it makes me think of the fact that—and I—let me just state on the front end—I knew very little about Manu Chao before I prepped for this. I knew his name only because it has circulated in such prominence for 20 plus years running, but not much about his background. And I think I assumed, going in, that he was either from Mexico or Central America or South America, because I knew that was part of his fanbase. And he, you know, he is Spanish-speaking, but his parentage or his heritage is basically Spanish-French.

And so the fact that he has this kind of stature in what we describe as Latin America—which, again, if we're gonna talk about problematic terms, we could get into that too. My point being here, his embrace—I guess because I'm always filtering things through a constant American context, which doesn't really apply when you get outside of our borders necessarily.

But in terms of identity politics, the fact that he is European and yet he speaks and his music is embraced to the extent that it is along the lines that you're talking about in terms of decolonial, post-colonial. I just think it's very interesting, if only because, again, from a very limited American perspective of race relations and identity politics, it just seems like he would be seen as more of an outsider. And I'm wondering if you could just speak to that a little bit.

00:13:57 Josh Guest

Sure. I mean, it's, you know, his biography is also important in that, as you said, he's born on the outskirts of Paris, but his father was a really important, very political leftist Spanish journalist. Mother's from the Basque Country. Um, his grandfather was also kind of a political radical, and they fled Spain. They fled Franco. I mean, they fled terror. And so he comes from a family, importantly, of anti-authoritarian politics with some connection to a tradition of anarchism and radicalism, and of the kind of socialist left. And that, I think, is as important for what he means as a European.

[Oliver responds affirmatively multiple times.]

But then, with Mano Negra—and again, we have to remember the time period here. We have to remember this is at this kind of premedia, pre-internet moment, pre-social media moment. Mano Negra decided, "Well, we're gonna put out records, and how are we gonna do it? We're gonna travel through Latin America and we're gonna pledge allegiance to revolutionary communities and revolutionary cultures wherever we go."

You know, some, in hindsight, have said some of that wasn't that real, or some of it—that might be true. But at the time, it worked, and it felt real. And within Latin America, there was some critique, for sure, but they were seen as part of the scene and part of the movement.

And then when Manu got more embedded with Zapatistas, I think that also kind of sealed it for him, that this was like, alright, you know, he's in the Lacandon, he's in Chiapas, he's sampling Marcos. Who else was really doing that? There weren't that many bands doing it, and for a European to do it, you know what I'm saying? Someone who seemed to reject Europe, at least on the surface, that felt profound.

00:15:42 Ernest Host

Right. Are there sort of like descendants of his, you know, artistically, that you could site, you know, not just with fans and not just with activists, but in terms of music itself?

00:15:55 Josh Guest

No children—I mean, I'm sure there are, but no children are immediately coming to mind. I think more about, um, a kind of horizontal effect that he had at the time, where he was really influencing other artists and other bands. The bands he was writing songs with and producing in Mexico in particular. But it's funny, the contemporary artist who I think about a lot in relationship to him with no, that I'm aware of, direct connection or influence is Rosalia.

Um, and a lot of the debates about Rosalia as an artist from Spain, from Barcelona, who is being called a Latin American artist at times and is winning best Latin Artist awards and that kind of thing, and who is singing flamenco when she is not Roma, not Gitana, and is, you know, kind of comes up as a non-Roma singer singing flamenco music and is now making reggaeton and is doing whatever she wants, and is an extraordinary artist, I believe.

And yet there's been a lot of debates about her identity right now, and if she's allowed to be doing what she's doing. Um, I think Manu, if he came out right now, would be a whole other situation. I think if he was a new artist, you know, people would be going to town on him in a lot of ways.

But I think Rosalia's an interesting—as a Spanish artist, and as a kind of European artist—is a really interesting example, 'cause I actually think you could, you could make similar decolonial arguments about her music. That she is trying to—that throughout her young career has always been embracing musical cultures that do not belong to the one that she was immediately raised in.

00:17:38 Music Music

"Catalina" off the album by Rosalia. Passionate vocals over guitar.

Ya la memoria me trae Cosas que estaba olviando Ya la memoria me trae Cosas que estaba olviando

Ponme la mano aquí, Catalina Ponme la mano aquí [Music fades out as Oliver speaks]

00:17:59 Oliver Host

I mean, Ernest though, to your question, the person I thought—and we can talk more about this at length during the second half—but it would be someone like M.I.A. Um, in terms of this idea of bracing and, in her particular case, and I think in both cases, that this engagement with the global South and the diversity of music across that, but also the ways in which the debates around her politics and whether or not they're ernest or authentic enough and these things, I can imagine being attached to a lot of different artists, including Manu and others.

I do want to actually bring this back to *Clandestino* musically, because part of when I was thinking about the comparison between something like *Clandestino* and M.I.A's early albums, like *Arular* or Kala is that those are inherently like, dance music albums, right? And mining the kind of diversity of dance music in the global South was a big, big part of how M.I.A created a sonic identity for herself.

And one of the things I had read about *Clandestino* is that early on when he first started putting it together, he was working with a producer in France, Renaud Letang, and the original version of Clandestino was supposed to be much more heavily electronic. And as the story goes, a computer glitch basically wiped off all of the electronic production on it, and left behind the acoustic elements.

And even though there are a few songs on here that bring back some of that, this is a very largely kind of acoustic, sonic texture. And I'm wondering what your thoughts are in terms of the music of this album and how it might have been very different had it had more of that EDM impact that they originally had intended?

00:19:38 Josh Guest Hm. I've always heard this record as kind of indicative of the way Manu makes his music and continued to make music after that, which was super mobile and super portable. He was kind of a protobedroom—he was like a bedroom producer that didn't have a bedroom. Um, and was, you know, had a little four track and had his laptop, and he would record and mix on the road. And so a lot of the process that—he started with this, then he kept building with previous r—with um, the records that followed, um, is he would go to a city and he would find out who was great and interesting and doing important work. And he'd go hang out with them, and he'd record them, and he'd put them on the record and he'd have them sing a hook or do a verse or something. Just record it, boom, and go. Or just street musicians, did that a lot. That also raised important questions about who was getting paid.

00:20:07 Oliver Host Compensation.

00:20:28 Ernest Host Who's being exploited.

[Everyone murmurs in agreement.]

00:20:29 Josh Really, really important, and that's been with him his whole career. I Guest think what I, in going back and I was listening again to the record this morning, Clandestino, and I just love that—there's something

very—it's so lo-fi. I love the sound effects and I love just the little like, news samples that he throws in. My favorite sample that is probably the most talked about on that record is the little like, bomb drop noise that he repeats, like—

[Imitates bomb dropping sound.]

—and that was from a keychain in Tijuana. Like, a toy keychain that you would hit a button on it. Like, you could just buy it for, you know, a nickel or something, and it'd just like—

[Makes sound again.]

—like a little kid sound, and he just recorded it and looped it over and over and over.

00:21:10 Music Music "Desaparecido" plays again.

Guest

00:21:20 Josh

Deprisa, deprisa a rumbo perdido

[Electronic chime plays in a descending tune, in the likeness of a cartoonish falling sound effect.]

I mean, what that record did, and what it set in motion. If you go listen to his other albums, solo albums, they sound very similar to this record. And a lot of people will say like, "It's the same. He makes the same songs over and over," and he says, "That's exactly

what I do."

[Oliver and Ernest chuckle.]

These are motifs. They're—it's kind of in that rhythm, um, idea of just repeating and repeating in order to create difference. And he repeats not just the music, but these melodies repeat over—still to this day, records, songs he's put out over the last year. And phrases. Lyrics that he just repeats little snippets that become these—

He, I think at one point, he called them little characters that he keeps with him, that he doesn't believe should go away after one record. But they're just part of his little musical kind of theater troupe that he calls upon whenever he needs them.

So I do think that there is, musically, there are a lot of similarities actually on the M.I.A front. And also there are all the political and economic contradictions.

00:22:24 Oliver Host Of course.

We will be back with more of our conversation with Josh Kun about Manu Chao's *Clandestino* after a brief word from our Max Fun podcast siblings. Keep it locked.

00:22:35 Music Transition "Crown Ones" off the album Stepfather by People Under The Stairs

00:22:37 Promo Promo Music: Gentle, upbeat piano music.

Helen Hong: Hey, J. Keith.

**J. Keith van Straaten:** Hey, Helen! I hear you have a true/false quiz you want me to finish!

**Helen:** I do! Here we begin: We host a trivia gameshow podcast on the MaxFun network called... *Go Fact Yourself*!

J. Keith: True!

**Helen:** Correct! The show is all about celebrity guests answering trivia questions about things J. Keith enjoys.

**J. Keith:** False. We sometimes don't talk about baseball or cats.

**Helen:** Thank god. It's questions about things <u>they</u> enjoy! Next, we bring on surprise experts <u>every</u> episode.

J. Keith: True!

**Helen:** Correct! Final question: It's just the two of us sitting alone with these guests.

J. Keith: False.

**Helen:** Correct! We have a live audience at the Angel City Brewery!

[Audience cheers and claps.]

Helen: See?

[A bell dings.]

**Helen:** You can hear *Go Fact Yourself* every first and third Friday of the month, and if you don't listen, you can go fact yourself!

J. Keith: True!

[Music finishes.]

**Danielle Radford:** [In announcer voice] Macho Man to the top rope! The flying elbow! The cover!

[Crowd counting to 3.]

Danielle: We've got a new champion!

[Sound of bell ringing.]

[Tights and Fights theme song. Upbeat song similar to what you'd hear during a wrestling match.]

**Lindsey Kelk:** We're here with Macho Man Randy Savage after his big win to become the new world champion. What are you gonna do now, Mach?

Hal Lublin: [Doing Randy Savage impression] I'm gonna go listen to the newest episode of the Tights and Fights podcast! Oh yeah!

**Lindsey:** Tell us more about this podcast!

**Hal:** [Doing Randy Savage impression] It's the podcast of power. too sweet to be sour, funky like a monkey, woke discussions, man, and jokes about wrestlers' fashion choices, myself excluded. Yeah.

**Lindsey:** I can't wait to listen!

Hal: [Doing Randy Savage impression] Neither can I! You can find it Thursdays on Maximum Fun! Oh yeah, dig it!

			[Music ends.]
00:24:10	Music	Transition	"Crown Ones" off the album Stepfather by People Under The Stairs
00:24:13	Ernest	Host	We're back on <i>Heat Rocks</i> talking about <i>Clandestino</i> , the 1998 solo debut album by Manu Chao with our guest, professor and writer, Josh Kun.
00:24:21	Oliver	Host	For a listener who is completely unfamiliar with the album and with the artist, if you had to pluck a song off the album that you think would be an introduction to what Manu Chao is about, what song would you pick?
00:24:34	Josh	Guest	[Stammers.] So, I'm not trying to be coy with this answer.
00:24:37	Oliver	Host	All of them!
00:24:38	Josh	Guest	Well, in a way, the record is a song.
			[Oliver responds delightedly.]
			In a way, it's one long song that has different um, to use one of his many images on the album—waiting for the last wave, which, you know, he uses over again—is that there's waves. It's like, this is a kind of ocean, and then each little moment is these little swells, you know?

Um, and in some sense, he hasn't written many songs, in my opinion, that stand out and can hold their own in the way that a classic pop song can, right? Three minutes of a perfect, scientific—

00:25:18	Ernest	Host	There's no single
00:25:18	Ernest	Host	There's no sing

Guest

00:25:20 Josh

There's no single. And he's tried. Or, the label has tried, I should say. But there are melodies and swells that I think are really kind of just beautiful. The title track is probably the most—the statement of the record, I would say. "Welcome to Tijuana" is also, I think, a really nice place to start, 'cause it, I think he plays with myth there that a lot of English language listeners will get. Um, but "Bongo Bong" is one that is not one that I love myself, taste-wise. I mean I like it, but it's not my favorite. But it's one that's really interesting, because it's in English, it's actually a version of a song that Mano Negra did, and Mano Negra's version was a version of—

00:26:02	Oliver	Host	Roy Eldridge, from the 1930s.
00:26:06	Josh	Guest	Exactly. And even that, I would say, is part of the signifying monkey tradition of folktales about the monkey who speaks their mind, and speaks it against the lion. And there's other Mano Negra and Manu Chao tracks where he uses that phrase, the monkey speaks his mind. Um, and this idea of the underdog who is using language to outsmart the conquerer, to fight and chant down a global Babylon, that—the song seems like a kind of goofy, jokey song, that if you don't know that history, this actually could sound like a really crappy and maybe even offensive song. But it comes out of this tradition that maybe he doesn't have the right to do, fair, but I think it's an interesting song.
00:26:53	Music	Music	"Bongo Bong" off the album <i>Clandestino</i> by Manu Chao. Fast, uptempo music with playful vocals and instrumentals.
			Hanging loose in a big town But I'm the king of bongo, baby I'm the king of bongo bong
			Hear me when I come, baby (King of the bongo, king of the bongo bong) Hear me when I come
			[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]
00:27:08	Oliver	Host	The minute I did any bit of research into like, so what's the deal with this song, I uncovered that background. And I love the different layers here, and just to walk the listener through, and repeating some of what Josh was saying here.
			So the roots of the song go back to 1939 and Roy Eldridge's "King of the Bongo Bong."
00:27:25	Music	Music	"King of the Bongo Bong" by Roy Eldridge. Upbeat, playful 1930s music.
			Here I am, it's plain to see That all the swing belongs to me 'Cause I'm the king of bongo bong
			Now I may not dress just like a king Or knock you cock-eyed when I sing But I'm the king of bongo bong
			[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]
00:27:43	Oliver	Host	I'm also just suddenly thinking of Disney's <i>Jungle Book</i> . That can't be a coincidence, I'm sure they riffed on that a little bit. In any case—
			[Josh responds affirmatively.]
			And then Mano Negra, Josh, as you mentioned, they recorded the first version of this song back in 1991 and they gave it the title of "The King of Bongo."

00:27:59	Music	Music	"King of the Bongo" off the album <i>King of Bongo</i> by Mano Negra. Fast, intense music with fast drums.
			Mama was queen of the mambo Papa was king of the congo Deep down in the jungle I started banging my first bongo Every monkey'd like to be In my place instead of me
			[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]
00:28:10	Oliver	Host	And already you can hear just musically completely different style and feel. And then on the version that Manu Chao puts out on <i>Clandestino</i> , he's partially sampling from Black Uhuru's "Bull in the Pen" from their 1984 album, <i>Anthem</i> .
00:28:24	Music	Music	"Bull in the Pen" off the album <i>Anthem</i> by Black Uhuru. Mid-tempo, fun, grooving music with distant vocals.
00:28:37	Oliver	Host	And then you have the afterlife of the song, because "Bongo Bong" itself, Chao's version itself gets sampled and remixed quite a few times. The most—to me, at least—seemingly random would be this 2000 remix of a Mario Winans song done by Puffy called "Never Really Was."
00:28:52	Music	Music	"Never Really Was (Twista Remix)" by Mario Winans. Mid-tempo music sampling "Bongo Bong".
			Baby baby, ba-by ba-by baby (this is the remix!)
00:29:04	Oliver	Host	I just love—
00:29:05	Josh	Guest	I did not know that. [Laughs.]
00:29:07	Oliver	Host	—I mean, so many layers are just stacked on with this one tune, and the fact that that same backing track goes from "Bongo Bong" into the very next song on the album, which is—so he goes from English to French with, "Je Ne T'aime Plus." And my French is abhorrent, so apologies to any Francophiles out there. But there's just so much that you can unpack with just—not even just the song, just unpack with the rhythm itself, because he's taking from all of these predecessors and then, as I mentioned before, the afterlife of this song continues years after it goes.
00:29:39	Music	Music	"Bongo Bong" plays again.
			Hear me when I come, baby Hear me when I come
			[Song fades directly into the next song.]
			"Je Ne T'aime Plus" off the album <i>Clandestino</i> by Manu Chao

Je ne t'aime plus Mon amour Je ne t'aime plus Tous les jours

[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]

00:30:07 Oliver Host And Ernest, I think this is a song that you also had some thoughts

about as well.

00:30:11 Ernest

00:32:08 Josh

Host

Yeah, for me, for pretty much the reason that you said. 'Cause I was thinking, you know, when you were saying, introduce the album to someone who hadn't heard before and maybe didn't know much about him, I was thinking, again, of an American context as

opposed to anywhere else in the world.

And I was thinking that track would be, because it is in English, but also because for me, you know, we've talked about how incredibly heavy a lot of the subject matter is. But one of the things that I like about that track is there's a playfulness in his vocal performance, and I think that's important because if we spend a lot fo time talking about how heavy the subject matter is, you know, global warming, all the issues around immigration, loss, etcetera, I think people won't necessarily grasp how much wit and humor there is as well.

And there's a playfulness in his vocal performance that I think is really crucial to sort of—you know, we've been talking about the layering effect of music and samples and all these things but, you know, him as a singer, as a performer, what he does with his voice and what he does in his singing, I think it's also really crucial to conveying multiple layers and that this is not just a song—not just an album of defeat. It's not just darkness. You know, I think it's really important and I think his vocal performance is one of those things that sort of, in this track, it's one of those things that really underscores that.

00:31:37 Oliver Host And if I could just add one quick thing before we get back to Josh

and his thoughts on this. It's the one song on here, that for an album recorded in 1998, feels very conversant with hip hop because his choices in terms of how he does that vocal

performance. It's like he does it like a rap song.

00:31:49 Music Music "Bongo Bong" plays again

Nobody like to be in my place instead of me 'Cause nobody go crazy when I'm bangin' on my boogie

I'm a king without a crown Hanging loose in a big town But I'm the king of bongo, baby I'm the king of bongo bong

(King of the bongo, king of the bongo bong) Hear me when I come, baby

Guest Um, the next—his next record was actually in English. *Next Stop: Hope.* Um, that if you keep staying on the road, you keep staying on that train, the next stop is gonna be hope. And in a lot of ways that record became more popular, I think commercially, which is

interesting.

But even in that moment, Ernest, of that being a song that has a kind of playfulness to it, which I totally agree with, I've always appreciated with this album in particular that for the most part, he stayed away from heavily kind of obvious lyrical interventions to culture and politics.

They happened, don't get me wrong, but it's not a preachy record. He uses metaphor really well. He uses these kind of illusions. And I just—one of my favorite songs is the end of the final song, um, where he talks about el viento se va. You know, the wind comes, viene, se va, por la frontera. It comes and it goes over the border.

He just sings it over and over, so you have to—and then you hear—the last thing you hear on the record is wind. And it leaves the listener, even if you haven't—if you're not a student of immigration and you haven't visited militarized borderlands around the world as he had, it does push you to think about the arbitrariness and cruelty of the physical border cut into the Earth where the wind can come and go.

00:33:40 Music Music

"El Viento" off the album *Clandestino* by Manu Chao. Slow, melodic music with guitar.

La suerte viene La suerte se va Por la frontera La suerte viene La suerte se va El hombre viene El hombre se va Sin mas razón

[Music fades out as Josh speaks]

00:34:00 Josh Guest

And it's just this incr—it's so much more powerful than saying, "Borders are arbitrary and create violence upon the Earth, but the wind can come and go." And he was a master on this record, and also a little bit into the second, of creating these images and feelings that allowed listeners to feel the things they need to become activated to protest against the things that seemed unjust to them.

00:34:23 Music Music

["El Viento" fades back in. Sound of wind blowing is audible beneath the music]

Por la carretera Por la carretera Por la carretera

[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]

00:34:41 Oliver Host

Do you have a favorite moment within it? So not necessarily a song, but a moment within it. And for me, for example, what really grabbed me when I listened to this album the first time through, the moment that grabbed me is the very beginning of the song

			"Malegria" and party—actually not even partly—largely it's because I immediately recognized, oh snap, this is Manu using the guitar riff from one of my favorite Columbian songs, which is Afrosound's "Tira al Blanco." And it's just one of the hardest guitar riffs, and this is exactly what Manu uses.
00:35:12	Music	Music	"Tira al Blanco" by Afrosound. A long, complicated guitar riff.
00:35:29	Music	Music	"Malegria" off the album <i>Clandestino</i> by Manu Chao. The same guitar riff, but slightly faster.
			Por la calle del desengaño Esta mañana yo pasé
00:35:43	Oliver	Host	It's such a flex, you know?
			[Josh and Ernest laugh.]
			In terms of both the sound of the original Afrosound track and then using that so deliberately to kick off and to make the soundbed for "Malegria." So that's just a moment that jumps out to me, and I'm wondering if there's something similar for you on this.
00:36:00	Josh	Guest	I think that's also, just to comment on that quickly, indicative of the way then he was really functioning in a way out of a hip hop mentality of sample-chasing and that, but also of self-education, right?
			As somebody who is going to Latin America for the first time, who is meeting with Afro-Columbian, Afro-Brazilian communities and has only heard the records, or only heard one record. And then hears more records, and then falls in love, and then stays there for six months and just doesn't go home, and gets deeply immersed in one scene, and takes little bits.
			So I've always—I think it's also important that this is is an album that is a great example of a musician who listens. Um, isn't just putting out, but is studying and thinking, and the record becomes the sum of these parts that he or she is consuming.
			Um, my favorite moment. It's funny, I—when I think of this album, it's hard for me to separate it from the live versions of it.
00:37:01	Oliver	Host	Oh, interesting. Okay.
00:37:02	Josh	Guest	Which I saw many times. And then he put out a live—he put out many live albums, but one in particular, the <i>Radio Bemba Sound System</i> album, which is the kind of greatest moments of the tour for this record and the one after. And it was by far one of the best live experiences I've ever had. I'm not much of a live concert person, and these were just like, transformative as experiences.
			And there's a moment in "Welcome to Tijuana", and he's done a

different version of that song, but also the city means a lot to me in all kinds of ways, and it's a minor moment, but he talks about—he mentions briefly Sopita de Camarón. This is this very Tijuana soup.

00:	37:47	Oliver	Host	A shrimp soup, I take it?
00:	37:48	Josh	Guest	Yeah. And it was the favorite soup of the former lead singer of Tijuana No!, who he stayed with in his kind of underground bunker, and he would go take him to the same place every day, as legend has it, to get this soup.
				And so I also love that he was writing from this very specific, you know, maybe even in a kind of classic traveler narrative, you know? Goes somewhere, gets immersed, and writes a diary of his trip, sure. But there's something just about that when he hits that lyric, um, I always feel—I feel something.
00:	38:21	Music	Music	"Welcome to Tijuana" off the album <i>Clandestino</i> by Manu Chao. Mid-tempo Latin with multilayered vocals.
				Bienvenida la cena Sopita de camarón
				Bienvenida a Tijuana Bienvenida mi suerte Bienvenida la muerte
				[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]
00:	38:36	Oliver	Host	The really important question here is do you know where that shrimp soup stand is in Tijuana?
00:	38:41	Josh	Guest	I don't.
				[Ernest and Oliver laugh.]
				But I know who does.
00:	38:46	Ernest	Host	Listening to you talk about the specificity of his writing made me think about, you know, this is someone who travels the world, but he's not a tourist, right? And I think that's so crucial, and I think that fans around the world, listeners around the world, can really pick up on that. Not just the people in Tijuana who were just like, "Oh shit, he was paying attention, he got these details right. He has real affection for us."
				But I think, you know, it's just interesting to think about someone who's sort of predicting a world in which the refugee is probably the international figure. And at the same time, someone who is sort of giving us a model of what it might be to land in different places, to arrive in different places, and to not simply be a tourist, but to actually pay attention to what's happening around you, and to engage the people and the lives around you and not just have them be backdrops for your photos. But just like, really live with the

people.

I think that's interesting to think about those two things, that sort of prediction of the refugee, and a model of how we might move through this world <u>when</u> borders and documents and all these things, as they become more and more important and more and more violent. You know, how do you engage where you might end

00:40:07 Josh Guest

Absolutely. I mean, I think about that all the time. Thought about it a lot when the record came out, and then the book I'm writing right now is actually all about this very topic. Um, about music and the contemporary global refugee crisis. And I think in listening back to this '98 record, there's—I've had to—I question myself, and I'm sure both of you have had this in your own work, particularly around music and social change, let's say broadly, is, okay, '98, this felt like this was so important for all the reasons that you said and that I was saying.

But, well, it's 2019 and nothing's changed, and then I have to question my own—you know, is this just romanticism? You know, that—is this music doing anything for anybody? Is it changing anything? And it's something I really—it's a question I really want to keep thinking through is, can—is a song about displacement going to heal the displaced? Maybe, on an individual level.

Um, yeah, I'm just—I keep grappling with the actual impact, if that even exists, of a song. And I know that we all write about this in different ways, and at different moments in our lives we would probably make—I can make really clear, almost empirical arguments, you know, for it. But in the kind of longer, big scope, I always—and especially with someone like Manu, who's so good at getting thousands of people in a stadium to sing together and imagine this other world... and then what?

00:41:50 Oliver Host

I mean, this might sound very hokey, but I think you start with getting them to imagine it and then that begins the process in which you move towards it. And it may not happen in our lifetime, or, you know, but that's—it's gotta start someplace, right? And I mean, this is an age-old question about the relationship between art and the rest of the material world, right?

00:42:09 Josh Guest

Well, it's what I've devoted my entire life to, is the belief that is actually what music does. But I guess what I'm saying is, as part of that conviction, I now feel more responsibility than ever to question it.

00:42:22 Ernest Host

And I also think, you know, we have to—you're sort of trying to weight the value of personal versus structural exchange. And I think it would be very easy to succumb to hopelessness and despair if we simply look at the fact that these structures seem to rebound and rebuild and, you know.

And I think it's also really important though to keep in mind that the people who might be struggling against that structure, if they can have some respite, if they can have something that feeds them in some way. You know, I don't know.

I think it's a back and forth, because I think we'd all just throw our hands up and say "fuck it" if you're trying to measure the structural change and the institutional change that is brought about by art, you know, versus looking at the ways in which somebody who has a really hard and fucked up life, but they put this music on and it feeds

them for a moment. It insp	pires them fo	r a moment.
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00:45:00 Music

Music

			them for a moment. It inspires them for a moment.
			And ideally, we want that moment to be transformed into something that does sort of weaken the structure, but um, until that happens, I think we have to be really careful to not undervalue what is being done for that individual or those individuals.
00:43:35	Music	Music	"Por el Suelo" off the album <i>Clandestino</i> by Manu Chao. Fast, uptempo music with bare vocals over rhythmic guitar.
			Por el suelo hay una compadrita Que ya nadie se para a mirar Por el suelo hay una mamacita Que se muere de no respetar Patchamama te veo tan triste Patchamama me pongo a llorar
			[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]
00:43:58	Oliver	Host	Damn, we got deep on here.
			[Everyone laughs.]
			Which makes sense, given the themes on this album. Josh, if you had to describe <i>Clandestino</i> in three words, what three words would you choose?
00:44:09	Josh	Guest	Oh, my goodness. I didn't know it was gonna be this kind of show.
00:44:12	Oliver	Host	It's how we end with. It's how we do.
00:44:14	Josh	Guest	Oh, you do? Okay. Um, I think global, with all the weight that has. Insurrectionist.
00:44:24	Oliver	Host	Mm. That's a first. We have not had insurrectionist mentioned on the show, so.
00:44:28	Josh	Guest	That's why I'm here, Oliver. There you go.
			Um, global, insurrectionist, party.
			[Oliver responds delightedly.]
			Which you don't get on the record, but live, I mean, he comes from punk. You know, he's really—the kind of punk spirit is what he does live. And there's a real rockist, aggressive energy to his shows that—there is a political party aspect to it.
00:44:52	Ernest	Host	That would be a great album title. Global Insurrectionist Party.
00:44:55	Josh	Guest	I think—I feel like the coup already did it.

"Welcome to Tijuana (Live)" by Manu Chao.

Welcome to Tijuana Con el coyote no hay aduana

[Everyone laughs.]

Bienvenida a Tijuana Bienvenida mi amor

Por la Panamericana Bienvenida mi suerte A mi me gusta el verte

Welcome to Tijuana Tequila, sexo y marihuana

[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]

00:45:21 Oliver Host

For our listeners who really got into this album, we always want to leave them with a recommendation of what they should put on next. Ernest, you want to start us?

00:45:29 Ernest Host

I'm going to cheat a little bit and give two answers. In both cases, I'm recommending artists versus a specific album or CD, and it's because they work without sounding just like Chao, to me, shares with him both political sensibilities and a very Catholic approach to both genre and sound.

And the first is Ana Tijoux, a Chilean rapper who I think is—work is incredibly smart and fiercely political and fearless and very human. And she's sort of been in the news again the last few weeks with the resistance taking place in Chile. Her music is sort of at the forefront, being a soundtrack for that. So I think she would be really great for people who are not familiar with her. A great artist to sample.

00:46:09 Music Music

"1977" off the album 1977 by Ana Tijoux. Rapid singing over fast instrumentals.

Sin anestesia en la camilla
Mi padre solo dijo es Ana Maria
Si seria el primer llanto
Que me probaría
Quemando las heridas
Y dándome la batería
Solía ser entonces como un libro abierto
Pero leí la letra pequeña del texto
Como un arquitecto
Construyendo cada efecto

Correcto, incorrecto, sé aprender todo al respecto

[Music fades out as Ernest speaks]

00:46:27 Ernest Host

The second would be Stromae, the Belgian singer-songwriter-rapper-producer. I think that if the electronic elements of *Clandestino* had not been wiped away, it might be sort of like a foreshadowing of what Stromae is doing right now.

[Josh responds affirmatively.]

Um, so I think yeah, Stromae would be my second. And for anyone who is not familiar with him, there's a really amazing—the Toronto

date of his world tour, he's only done one world tour so far, is up on
YouTube, and you should check it out. He is a phenomenal live
performer.

And he's another one where even if you don't exactly—if you don't speak French, if you don't exactly know what he's saying, you get the gist of it, and the spirit of his voice, and the conviction. Um, and there's both playfulness and very serious content at the same time. So I think Ana Tijoux and Stromae.

00:47:22 Music Music

"Tous le Memes" off the album *Racine Carrée* by Stromae. Uptempo singing and instrumentals.

Cette fois c'était la dernière

Tu peux croire que c'est qu'une crise

Mate une dernière fois mon derrière, il est à côté de mes valises

Tu diras au revoir à ta mère, elle qui t'idéalise Tu n'vois même pas tout c'que tu perds

Avec une autre ce serait pire

Quoi toi aussi tu veux finir maintenant?

[Music fades out as Josh speaks]

00:47:40 Josh Guest

For Ana, I would also specifically point people to "Somos Sur", a collaboration she did with a Palistinian rapper based in England, Shadia Mansour. Um, and "Somos Sur" is very kind of Mano Negra-Manu in its—not that it's copying at all but in its sensibility of kind of creating a manifesto for a global south.

Um, of the sense of, you know, where he would talk about, "we are the disappeared, we are the clandestine ones." They're saying, you know, we are south. We are the underdogs. We are los debajos. We're the ones on the bottom who are rising up. And the connection between Latin America and Palestine is really important. He's been—he's done a lot of work in Palestine.

00:48:26 Music Music

"Somos Sur" off the album *Vengo* by Ana Tijoux feat. Shadia Mansour. Fast, frenetic rap.

Levantarnos para decir: "ya basta" Ni África, ni América Latina se subasta Con barro, con casco, con lápiz, zapatear el fiasco Provocar un social terremoto en este charco C'mon! C'mon!

[Music fades out as Josh speaks]

00:48:43 Josh Guest

Stromae, who I love, but interesting is—shows up—I don't know if he's on the record, but is on the—Coldplay's—

[Ernest responds affirmatively.]

Is he on the record?

00:48:52 Ernest Host Yes, he is.

00:48:53 Josh Guest Yeah, and then on the live launch of that album, which I say this not

as someone who has ever said this about any Coldplay record, you ought—everyone needs to go watch. Which was their YouTube live concert from sunrise to sundown in Amman, Jordan. And that record is—their new record is <u>full</u> of Palestinian artists, and Stromae's presence on that helps to create—to further widen this circle of alliance and connection between Latin America, decolonial Europe, Palestine, and beyond.

00:49:23 Music Music

"Arabesque" off the album *Orphans* by Coldplay. Slow, melodic singing and instrumentals.

Comme provenant de la même mère Comme deux ruisseaux (You could be me) Qui se rassemblent (I could be you) Pour faire les grandes rivières And we share the same blood

[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]

00:49:47 Oliver Host

My recommendation is very low hanging fruit, just because number one I think it's kind of obvious, and we've already talked about this, which would be, you should listen to M.I.A's *Kala*. You can also go back to her first album, *Arular*, but *Kala* fits, I think, better in ways that we've already discussed, which is that, much like how *Clandestino* was recorded in different parts of Manu Chao's travels, M.I.A and Switch were basically going to different cities around the global south as well as Europe and the Americas to tape parts of that album.

And I think for an album that comes ten years afterwards, you can link the kind of prescience in what Manu Chao's saying on *Clandestino* carries through even more so ten years later, and then of course I think *Kala*'s speaking to a different but very similar, in ways, political moment in the late 2000s. Which, again, if we fast forward another ten years, both those things seem incredibly and perhaps very depressingly prescient.

But I think they make very good companion listens, as sonically different as they may be. And then I'm just gonna self plug, after you listen to that M.I.A album, go back and check our our episode here on *Heat Rocks* which was a conversation between myself and music and television critic Lorraine Ali about *Kala*, and I thought Ali got into some just brilliant, brilliant insights into sort of what M.I.A's music meant both then and now.

00:51:05 Music Music

"Hussel" off the album *Kala* by M.I.A. Fast instrumentals and vocals.

M.I.A.:

Why has everyone got hustle on their mind? Hustle, hustle, hustle Grind, grind, grind Why has everyone got hustle on their mind?

AFRIKAN BOY:

You think it's tough now, come to Africa! You think it's tough now, come to Africa!

00:51:25	Oliver	Host	Josh, what would you recommend people listen to?
00:51:27	Josh	Guest	I would probably just—since you both picked more contemporary things, which is great—I would say to go back, listen to Mano Negra's last record. That's called <i>Casa Babylon</i> . Babylon house. Um, extraordinary, very important album. And then Negu Gorriak, who Manu collaborated with them quite a bit, it adds to our English-French-Spanish-Portugese mix Euskera, indigenous Basque language. They were a very important Basque—kind of radical Basque punk band who were part of that global movement at the time. And I think that would also help contextualize those—all those records.
00:52:09	Music	Music	"Radio Rahim" off the album <i>Negu Gorriak</i> by Negu Gorriak. Midtempo, passionate rap.
			Gustatzen zaidan Mugimendua Rap-arekin Dantza orduko Rosie Perez Ikusi ezkero Mike tyson k.o. Utzi zuela Jakiteak Ez zaitu harrituko Bat-bi, bat-bi Rap-arekin Gustatzen zaidan
00:52:24	Ernest	Host	That will do it for this episode of <i>Heat Rocks</i> with our special guest, Josh Kun. Josh, what are you working on now? I mean, you mentioned you're working on a book about documents and—
00:52:34	Josh	Guest	Yeah, I'm about to get kind of knee-deep into it, and it's a book that really—it's called <i>Beats Across Borders: A Migrant Songbook</i> and it's kind of using music as a way to understand contemporary global displacement. And it's based on research and travel that I've been doing in Latin America, in Europe, and soon in North Africa and also in Palestine. I'm working with recorded music but also live music and in refugee camps and detention centers and things like that.
00:53:05	Ernest	Host	Are you on social media at all?
00:53:06	Josh	Host	I am on social media. I'm not very good at it, and it—
			[Everyone laughs.]

You know, like all of us, I just like, I feel like it's made me a worse human being. I'm on Twitter, @JDKun and then on Instagram you can find me.

00:53:20	Oliver	Host	I think you have your own website too, right? Your own URL?
00:53:22	Josh	Guest	I do. Just <u>JoshKun.com</u> . There you go. Dumping ground for projects.
00:53:28	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 <i>Thes One</i> of <i>People Under The Stairs</i> . Shoutout to Thes for the hookup.
			Heat Rocks is produced by myself and Morgan, and Christian Dueñas, who also engineers, edits, and books for the show. Our senior producer is Laura Swisher and executive producer is Jesse Thorn.
			We are part of the Max Fun family, taping every week live in their studios in the West Lake neighborhood of Los Angeles, where you can keep it as clandestino as you want.
00:54:00	Ernest	Host	Be sure to follow us on Twitter and Instagram @HeatRocksPod. You can find a link to our Facebook group on our webpage, <a href="HeatRocksPod.com">HeatRocksPod.com</a> . 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 <a href="HeatRocksPod.com">HeatRocksPod.com</a> .
00:54:16	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.
			One last thing. Next week we are launching our special miniseries, <i>Music and Popcorn</i> , where we talk about movies and music, starting with a medley show of some of our favorite episodes where we dive into iconic soundtracks from years past and the movies that gave birth to them.
00:54:51	Speaker 1	Promo	MaximumFun.org.
00:54:52	Speaker 2	Promo	Comedy and culture.
00:54:54	Speaker 3	Promo	Artist owned—
00:54:55	Speaker 4	Promo	—Audience supported.