

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	<p>Hello, everyone. It’s Oliver Wang from <i>Heat Rocks</i>. Just wanted to let you know that for the next month we are rolling out a new mini-series about movies and music, just in time for award season. We’re calling it <i>Music and Popcorn</i>, and starting next week we’ll have four episodes where guests are invited to talk about one of their favorite soundtracks and the movies that use them.</p> <p>To kick things off, though, we wanted to revisit some of the previous episodes where we’ve explored this exact territory, and we’re gonna start with our conversation with comedian Eliza Skinner about John Hughes’ classic 1980s teen drama, <i>Pretty In Pink</i>.</p>
00:00:44	Music	Music	<p>“Pretty in Pink” off the album <i>Pretty in Pink</i> by The Psychedelic Furs. Upbeat 80s pop.</p> <p><i>Caroline laughs, and it’s raining all day...</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]</i></p>
00:00:59	Oliver	Host	<p>Now, given your penchant for freestyle—</p> <p><i>[Eliza laughs.]</i></p> <p>—we thought you would pick a hip hop album, but here you are with <i>Pretty in Pink</i>, an iconic soundtrack from an iconic film to be sure, but about as far from hip hop and the 1980s cultural scale as one could imagine. Why did you want to talk about this album?</p>
00:01:16	Eliza Skinner	Guest	<p>This album was the seminal album for me. This helped create so much of my um, interesting in music as an adult. Um, even as a kid, but kind of breaking away from my parents and what I was hearing on the radio and everything came out of this. I had a turntable that I got from the thrift store, and <u>no</u> money, so I would just buy dollar records from dollar bins, and I got this in a dollar record bin. And all of these tracks are just gateways into amazing different bands and genres and like, whole sounds that I didn’t have any kind of access to otherwise.</p>
00:01:49	Music	Music	<p>“If You Leave” off the album <i>Architecture And Morality And More</i> by Orchestral Manoeuvres In The Dark. Passionate pop.</p> <p><i>Seven years went under the bridge Like time was standing still Heaven knows what happens now You've got to, you've gotta say you will</i></p> <p><i>I touch you once, I touch you twice I won't let go at any price</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]</i></p>
00:02:13	Oliver	Host	<p>So Morgan, I’m wondering for you, what makes for an iconic soundtrack?</p>

00:02:18 Morgan Rhodes Host One is its ability to carry the narrative without being intrusive. I think the other thing is to um, create a sonic palette for the characters. And I think in this case, we have that. I think we have the 80s excess with some of the songs here. I think we have the bleeding heart of Duckie with the Otis Redding thing. I think we have, you know, the Jesse Johnson, which doesn't make sense on this soundtrack, but that's what I like about it, because there's nobody Black in this film. Right? And then you get Jesse Johnson, which is completely Prince-esque.

00:02:55 Eliza Guest But yeah, but I feel like some of his other stuff leans way more towards that like, The Time funk.

*[Morgan responds affirmatively.]*

And this is almost like stepping into Prince new wave sound, which is really—kind of creates a cool sound to me.

00:03:10 Morgan Host But every music supervisor has to have a freebie. You know you can't afford it, it may not make sense, but you're throwing in because it's a jam. And for me, that's Jesse Johnson.

*[Oliver responds affirmatively.]*

00:03:17 Music Music "Get To Know Ya" off the album *Pretty in Pink* by Jesse Johnson. Upbeat, fun 80s pop.

*I've had my eyes on you for such a long time  
So long, girl, it feels like you're mine  
You're not aware, but you're part of my charade  
Ooh yes you are*

*[Music fades as Morgan speaks]*

00:03:33 Morgan Host And I think the other thing is to create a moment that you'll never forget, and there are a lot of these moments. Iconic stuff is the scene with Duckie in the record store. You'll never forget. There were moments where I got taken out of that moment, where I thought of Jay-Z and Kanye and Otis, you know? So I had that moment.

But uh, that song will always remind me of *Pretty in Pink*, and so to that end I think the music supervisor did what we all want to do, and that's to create a moment that you'll take away.

00:04:01 Oliver Host Lukewarm take, which is that I think if you're talking about the best 80s soundtrack, *Pretty in Pink* to me probably comes in at number two behind, not *Parade*, but obviously *Purple Rain*.

*[Morgan responds affirmatively.]*

And, again, you can go back and forth on it arguing, maybe. I think it's just hard to deny Prince's singular genius with that soundtrack. But this, in terms of when we think back to what the 80s meant, what they represented, what comes to mind, this album captures that in a way that—I mean you could make an argument to some extent for maybe *Top Gun*, 'cause it had some big hits. *Footloose*

had some big hits on it. Very 80s hits.

But when I think of the 80s—and maybe this is just a reflection of the fact that I’m someone who grew up in LA listening to KROQ. So I was a nu wave guy before I discovered hip hop, so a lot of this just takes me back. The Echo & The Bunnymen, the New Order, all of that was stuff that I was growing up listening to in high school.

And what other soundtrack in the 80s—again, besides Prince’s *Purple Rain*—has such specifically—again, I keep using the phrase iconic because I don’t know what’s a better phrase to use here—than this album?

00:05:06 Morgan Host Maybe not as iconic, but to me, *Flashdance*.

*[Eliza responds emphatically.]*

Because you connect a lot of the music with the dance scenes. “Maniac.”

00:05:14 Eliza Guest Also maybe *Footloose*.

00:05:15 Morgan Host *Footloose*.

00:05:17 Eliza Guest I feel like “Footloose” is the most overplayed song on the *Footloose* soundtrack, but you got “Dancing in the Sheets”. You got um, the—the um, “I’m Free (Heaven Help The Man)”. Um, “Let’s Hear It For The Boy.”

00:05:30 Oliver Host Yeah, oh! “Let’s Hear It For The Boy”. Woo!

00:05:32 Eliza Guest Yup, “Almost Paradise.” Like—

00:05:33 Morgan Host Sure. There’s some good ones.

00:05:35 Eliza Guest *Flashdance* also.

00:05:36 Morgan Host *Flashdance*, *The Blues Brothers*.

00:05:38 Oliver Host But see, *The Blues Brothers* was all older stuff, and so I don’t think you can count an album whose primary music came from a generation ago—I mean, it might be a great soundtrack, but you can’t define the era, because the era was 20 years past.

*[Morgan responds affirmatively multiple times.]*

The *Sleeper* soundtrack, *Valley Girl*—

*[Eliza and Morgan respond emphatically.]*

—and I think one main reason why it didn’t rise higher is it took them 11 years to put it out, which to me says rights clearance problems up the wazoo. But check it out, that album had Men At Work’s “Who Can It Be Now.” Right? The Psychedelic Furs “Love My Way”, one of their other greatest jams.

And to me, the real heavy, heavy, heavyweight banger on there, “I Melt With You” by Modern English, which is just one of the greatest

songs of the 80s. So if they had managed to get their ish together, I think *Valley Girl* could have challenged the *Pretty in Pink* throne for best new wave 80s soundtrack.

00:06:30	Music	Music	<p>"I Melt With You" off the album <i>After The Snow</i> by Modern English. Alternative indie rock.</p> <p><i>You've seen the difference and it's getting better all the time There's nothing you and I won't do I'll stop the world and melt with you</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as Morgan speaks]</i></p>
00:06:48	Morgan	Host	<p>Favorite song, the fire track from this soundtrack for you.</p>
00:06:54	Eliza	Guest	<p>Well, I mean—</p> <p><i>[She pauses, sighing thoughtfully.]</i></p> <p>I feel like it would be "If You Leave" but, you know how you kind of use up a song, so it doesn't really spark as much anymore? So that doesn't really spark for me that much anymore. Um, and uh, "Pretty in Pink", those saxophones, they still do it for me. So I kinda have two choices.</p>
00:07:15	Oliver	Host	<p>Of course.</p> <p><i>[Eliza laughs.]</i></p>
00:07:16	Morgan	Host	<p>Listen, it's your world, Eliza.</p>
00:07:18	Music	Music	<p>"Pretty in Pink" plays again</p> <p><i>... isn't she? Pretty in pink, isn't she?</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out again]</i></p>
00:07:41	Oliver	Host	<p>What is the best scene in the movie featuring music?</p>
00:07:45	Morgan	Host	<p>Oh you know I'm gonna say the Otis Redding parts.</p>
00:07:47	Oliver	Host	<p>Right, with Duckie.</p> <p><i>[Morgan responds affirmatively, repeating "with Duckie".]</i></p>
00:07:48	Eliza	Guest	<p>That's one of the best movie scenes of <u>any</u> movie. Like, it goes down in the annals.</p>
00:07:53	Morgan	Host	<p>I mean, of all time. Number one, you don't see it coming. Sometimes when you have films and you're a music supervisor, and you're in the film or you're in that moment of the show, they're like, you can just sense, you're like, "Okay, here's the big moment."</p> <p>That one, we didn't see coming. All of a sudden Duckie slides through the record store, and we're just as surprised as Andie and her homegirl, who are like, "Where did he come from?"</p>

*[Song begins to fade in as Morgan is speaking.]*

And I was surprised of that song. He's got an old soul, but I was surprised by that.

00:08:16 Music Music "Try A Little Tenderness" off the album *Pretty in Pink* by Otis Redding. Upbeat, loving, fun music.

*Yeah  
All you got to do is, man, hold her when you wanna  
Squeeze her, don't tease her, never leave her  
Get to her, got, got, got to try a little tenderness, yeah, yeah  
You got to know how to love her, man*

*[Music fades out as Morgan speaks]*

00:08:46 Morgan Host It's just—it's a perfect—to me, it's a perfect use.

00:08:50 Oliver Host Now here's my question. Would they have done that same scene by today's standards? Because, again, remember I had not seen the film until I had gotten ready for this. And what struck me about it, besides how fun it was, was, "Wow, they're really letting this go for a long time." And they would have just cut this in half at least, because the scene felt too long by today's like, ADHD standards.

00:09:11 Morgan Host And they wouldn't have been able to afford the full use. So that would have been reduced.

00:09:17 Eliza Guest They would have brought in other people halfway through, extra dancers, and uh, acapella harmonizers—

*[Oliver and Morgan respond affirmatively.]*

—and done their own version of it, and sleeked it up.

00:09:28 Oliver Host It would have been a very magic realism moment. Can I give the runner up position, I thought the second—my second favorite use of music in the film—it is hard to deny the importance of "If You Leave" during the prom scene. Because they play the whole damn song, it's what closes the film, you know, all the emotional weight is put on it.

But I think, to your point earlier, Eliza, one—it's—you kind of get too much of it at a certain point, because it gets used so much. It is—uh, Andie's dressmaking, getting ready for prom scene, which uses an instrumental version of New Order's "Thieves Like Us".

Which, again, not on the actual soundtrack, which—that was more surprising. The Otis Redding I could understand, because it didn't feel like it would fit into the overall vibe of it, but I'm surprised they didn't clear "Thieves Like Us" for the soundtrack, given that they play a good, I don't know, solid two minutes of it in the film. And it happens during this montage, which is really important to sort of the plot and the character development, all this stuff.

00:10:25 Music Music "Thieves Like Us (Instrumental)" off the album *Pretty in Pink* by New Order. Grooving, somewhat funky, somewhat poppy instrumentals.

Music plays for a few moments, then fades out.

- 00:10:41 Oliver Host Next up, we have my episode with the host of *Heartbreak Radio*, talking about the music of Wong Kar Wai's breakout 1996 film, *Chungking Express*.
- 00:10:51 Music Music "Dream-Person" off the album *Random Thoughts* by Faye Wong. Tender, romantic pop.
- Moong joong yun yut fun joong po gun*  
*Jeep sup fun (joong) dik mun*
- [*Music fades out as Oliver speaks*]
- 00:11:09 Oliver Host So, I have to confess to our listener audience, when you all first came out and said that you wanted to talk about a Wong Kar Wai soundtrack, I just automatically assumed it was gonna be for *In The Mood For Love*, because number one, it does—that movie in particular does have this indelibly memorable soundtrack. Uh, and number two, I just thought that the sheer kind of melancholic romanticism feels so in sync with the heartbreak radio steeze.
- But Phatrick quickly corrected me and said, "No no no, we want to talk about *Chungking Express*." Which is also sublime, but yeah, why this particular soundtrack? What was it about this one that sparked your interest here?
- 00:11:50 Lady Imix Guest Yeah, I think our initial idea was *In The Mood For Love*, but then when we thought a little bit more about it and what we had played on the show, we've played more of the songs, but there's also this—the situation where, what is the actual soundtrack to this film? Which we touched on.
- 00:12:08 Oliver Host Oh, you mean in terms of what we talked about earlier, is that there's a soundtrack in terms of the score. But really, I think, when you and I—when all of us were talking about the music from the film—and again, this is no disrespect to the score—but we're really talking about the use of pop songs that appear in this. And that's very much a Wong Kar Wai thing, right?
- [*Lady Imix and DJ Phatrick both respond affirmatively.*]
- So what is it about those particular songs? And we'll get into the specific songs later, but what is it just about this film and the songs there that have really resonated with each of you?
- 00:12:36 DJ Phatrick Guest I think *Chungking Express* is—if you're familiar with Wong Kar Wai's work, this film is really where he goes deep with the pop music as an emotional, thematic thing, right? Those songs, even though there are only like, four or five pop songs. The way they're repeated is really powerful to the storyline, and the storyline is very much in line with, I think, the vibe of *Heartbreak Radio*.
- 00:13:00 Oliver Host So let's just talk a little bit about the movie for a moment. What did you know about Wong Kar Wai in general, and what did you think of the film? What did you come away with, in terms of your response to it?

00:13:10 DJ Phatrick Guest I think I watched it in college. Maybe even the same time I took your class, the Asian American Film—

00:13:15 Oliver Host This is early 2000s.

00:13:16 DJ Phatrick Guest Early 2000s. I had no context of Wong Kar Wai. I—it’s just like, a bunch of the cool kids, the cool artsy kids said this was the movie to watch, and I actually didn’t like it when I first watched it.

00:13:28 Oliver Host Yeah, I don’t think it’s a film that necessarily instantly is like, “Oh yeah, this is awesome.”

*[DJ Phatrick responds affirmatively.]*

It definitely takes a while to settle into it, yeah.

00:13:35 DJ Phatrick Guest Yeah, but the thing that always stuck with me, even after first watch, is the use of pop music. Even if it wasn’t a conscious thing, like whenever a song would come on.

So, it was a college thing. It also kinda like, crazily kind of inserts into my like, personal love life. The Dennis Brown song was put on a mixtape by Steph, now my—

*[Lady Imix responds emphatically with “what?”]*

—my partner. Like, she just put that in one of our early like, “get to know each other, love me” mixtapes.

00:13:59 Lady Imix Guest I never knew that!

00:14:01 Oliver Host Good taste!

00:14:02 Lady Imix Guest That’s so sweet!

00:14:03 Music Music “Things in Life” off the album *Milk and Honey* by Dennis Brown. Mid-tempo romantic instrumentals with vocalizations. Music plays for several moments, then fades out.

00:14:20 Oliver Host How about for you, Sol?

00:14:21 Lady Imix Guest Um, well my introduction to Wong Kar Wai’s work came via a coworker at the time, my coworker David. We were talking, I think, about this very thing, about soundtracks. And he’s like, “Well, don’t you like *In The Mood For Love*?” And I’m like, “I had no idea.” I’d never heard of Wong Kar Wai. And, um, so this was a while ago, when you—actually, do you remember when you—your subscription to Netflix was they mailed DVDs to your house?

*[Everyone responds affirmatively and laughs.]*

They didn’t have it. And so, I live in South Pas, and there’s a store called Video Tech, and of course they have everything. If you ever want to see a film—

00:14:57 DJ Phatrick Guest They’re still around?

00:14:58 Oliver Host Yeah. Shout-out to Video Tech, and shout-out to Pasadena.

00:15:01	Lady Imix	Guest	Shout-out to Video Tech, and to Syndey, who works there. Um, 'cause then I went bonkers, right? So then I was just like, I'm obsessed with—
00:15:07	DJ Phatrick	Guest	Wong Kar Wai <u>everything!</u>
00:15:08	Lady Imix	Guest	Exactly. And so the third film in the chamber was, uh, <i>Chungking Express</i> .
00:15:13	Oliver	Host	Okay. And first impressions?
00:15:14	Lady Imix	Guest	I immediately loved everything about this film. Like, every single thing about this film. Um, I am a bookseller by trade, and so literature and dialogue and—it's just, everything about it, I just loved, obsessed with.
00:15:31	Oliver	Host	Let's bring it back to the music. And I want to pull out the scope a little bit, because you don't have to watch Wong Kar Wai's entire filmography to realize how important music is to him within his movies. And I don't mean just scores, but that he—especially I think in the first, roughly, ten or so years of his filmmaking—he really makes a point to use different kinds of pop songs from different eras to accent key scenes in all of the movies from that era. And I just compiled a short Greatest Hits list for this occasion.  So, for example, at the end of <i>Fallen Angels</i> , which was in 1995, you hear the 1983 British acapella chart-topper, "Only You" by the Flying Pickets.
00:16:12	Music	Music	"Only You" off the album <i>Lost Boys</i> by Flying Pickets. Tender acapella singing with vocals over a vocal music backing.  <i>... near me</i>  <i>All I needed was the love you gave</i> <i>All I needed for another day</i> <i>And all I ever knew, only you</i>  <i>[Music fades out as DJ Phatrick speaks]</i>
00:16:32	DJ Phatrick	Guest	<u>Oh</u> . We gotta play this.
00:16:36	Lady Imix	Guest	We've played it.
00:16:37	DJ Phatrick	Guest	Oops.  <i>[Everyone laughs.]</i>
00:16:39	Lady Imix	Guest	We've played it.
00:16:40	Oliver	Host	During the open credits of 1990's <i>Days of Being Wild</i> , which I only saw recently, you hear the haunting guitar of Brazil's Los Indios Tabajaras, and their 1964 hit, "Always in My Heart."
00:16:53	Music	Music	"Always in My Heart" by Los Indios Tabajaras. Slow, achingly tender and romantic instrumentals. Music plays for a few moments, then fades out.

00:17:10 Oliver Host And last but certainly not least, you cannot leave *In The Mood For Love* out of this, which uses several songs by Nat King Cole en Español—

00:17:17 Lady Imix Guest Which I had never heard before! I speak Spanish and I had never heard these versions before.

00:17:22 Oliver Host Let's be real though, Nat King Cole's Spanish was terrible.  
*[Everyone laughs.]*  
Like, straight garbage. But yet, because it's Nat King Cole—

00:17:29 Lady Imix Guest Very endearing.

00:17:30 Oliver Host —and that Cole voice, it sounds amazing.

00:17:32 DJ Phatrick Guest Straight garbage.  
*[Lady Imix laughs.]*

00:17:33 Oliver Host And I think, uh, one of the things that I think appears at least twice—

00:17:36 DJ Phatrick Guest Basura.  
*[Lady Imix and Oliver laugh.]*

00:17:39 Lady Imix Guest Phatty's Spanish has vastly improved.

00:17:40 DJ Phatrick Guest I'm trying!

00:17:41 Lady Imix Guest —since we've started *Heartbreak Radio*.

00:17:42 Oliver Host Right. *[Laughs]* One of the songs that they use, I think at least twice, maybe even three times in the movie, Wong Kar Wai's a lot—he lays into repetition. He uses Nat King Cole's 1958 cover of the Cuban classic, "Quizás, Quizás, Quizás."

00:17:57 Music Music "Quizás, Quizás, Quizás" off the album *Cole Español* by Nat King Cole. Slow, melodic music.  
*Siempre que te pregunto  
Que cuándo, cómo y dónde  
Tú siempre me respondes  
Quizás, quizás, quizás*  
*[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]*

00:18:15 Oliver Host Let's transition to talk about just the use of repetition in the film? It's not just there to quickly set the scene, it's there to be listened to. And the fact that you're bringing certain songs back over and over and over again helps to accentuate that point.

00:18:29 DJ Phatrick Guest From the beginning. I noticed that this time. He, uh, every time a song comes on, it's replayed from the very beginning, which I think is very interesting.

00:18:36 Oliver Host Well, for each of you, what did you think about the use of repetition?

00:18:39	Lady Imix	Guest	I mean, I think it's very accurate in showing like, how we kind of cycle through the same emotions over and over again.
00:18:46	DJ Phatrick	Guest	Oh, I like that.
00:18:47	Lady Imix	Guest	And you know, like, um, I'm using <i>Heartbreak</i> just because it's the general reference for today, but when you're sad, you always go back to these very specific songs. And I feel like <u>that</u> is so essential to this film is that, you know, she wants to get to California and she just keeps playing that song over and over and over again. It's like her own little emotional loop—  <i>[Everyone responds affirmatively.]</i>  —that keeps repeating at different points in her life.
00:19:12	Oliver	Host	I've gotten into deep arguments with friends about this, but the use specifically of the Mamas and Papas' "California Dreamin'", which figures <u>heavily</u> in the second half, the Tony Leung and Faye Wong part of the movie. I don't know how many times they use it. It feels like three dozen. And it somehow managed to make me really actually dislike the song, because of its repetition.  And I have other—you know, most of my friends are like, "You're crazy, it needs to be there," maybe for the reasons that you're explaining, Sol, in terms of it helps to explain Faye Wong's character and her motivations.  And like, that all might be true, but I don't really love the song to begin with? And when you play it back to me, you know, at least half a dozen times, you are not doing that song any favors to my ears.
00:19:55	Music	Music	"California Dreamin'" off the album <i>If You Can Believe Your Eyes and Ears</i> by the Mamas and the Papas. Upbeat, cheerful folk rock.  <i>All the leaves are brown (all the leaves are brown) And the sky is grey (and the sky is grey) I've been for a walk (I've been for a walk) On a winter's day (on a winter's day)</i>  <i>[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]</i>
00:20:11	Oliver	Host	I'm not saying it's a bad song. I'm just saying I never, ever in my lifetime need to hear "California Dreamin'" again, and I blame <i>Chungking Express</i> for that.
00:20:18	Lady Imix	Guest	I mean, it's kind of a creepy song. That song always just kind of creeped me out, I don't know why. It's kind of a dark song, right?
00:20:26	DJ Phatrick	Guest	It's not a—where are—the way they set the scene, the lyrics, they're doing something a little bit on the darker side, and you're thinking, "I need to get out of here."
00:20:33	Lady Imix	Guest	It's like post-apocalyptic California song. I don't know.
00:20:35	DJ Phatrick	Guest	Well, they're in a—they're in a dreary place, and they like, can't wait to get to California. I like the song, because I had a—the movie

made me crush on Faye Wong, so—and her character, kind of adventurous, not like, kinda—not all the way there, like dreamy. As a college kid, I was like, “Damn, like I am crushing on this character right now.”

- 00:20:59 Oliver Host That’s why you came out to California.
- 00:20:01 DJ Phatrick Guest And before that—before that, that song was just like, the oldies song that my mom and dad always played on the oldie station. That was like, you picture Woodstock or some kind of like—
- I’m not saying the song got better, but my attachment to the song, my association to the song was on that tip now with the Wong Kar Wai. I mean, he transformed that for me. So I’ll always have that feeling when that song plays now.
- 00:21:22 Music Music “California Dreamin’” plays again.
- (I pretend to pray)*  
*You know the preacher likes the cold*  
*(preacher likes the cold)*  
*He knows I’m gonna stay*  
*(knows I’m gonna stay)*  
*California dreamin’*  
*(California dreamin’) on such a winter’s day*
- [Music fades again]*
- 00:21:40 Oliver Host This may not be the right fit to how to ask this, but we usually ask our guests like, what is the fire track off this album? Even though I don’t think this is a—
- [He breaks off, laughing.]*
- 00:21:47 Lady Imix Guest I know, that was the one thing that I was thinking when I was driving over here. I was intimidated by this whole process
- 00:21:53 Oliver Host Really? What it is—what’s a song that just leaps out to you every time you hear it in the movie?
- 00:21:58 Lady Imix Guest I wanna go with, uh, “Things in Life.” I don’t know.
- 00:22:02 Music Music “Things in Life” plays again
- 00:22:21 Lady Imix Guest I think it summarizes our show like, very very well, because I feel like I’m not trying to make light or make fun of melancholy. I mean, this country, people are really suffering from depression, it’s like a serious thing.
- So I feel like the song is just um, very comforting and reassuring. It’s just like, you know, things in life, they’re up and they’re down, but we got this beat and we’re gonna keep pushing through it. And like, I don’t know. It’s just a very sweet kind of—these really complex ideas presented in this very sweet, melodic way.
- 00:22:53 Oliver Host Is there a slow burner off this soundtrack for either of you?
- 00:22:57 DJ Phatrick Guest Going back to the pop songs, the slow burn to me, going back and

			watching it, is the Dinah Washington song.
00:23:01	Oliver	Host	Right, which we haven't talked about.
00:23:02	Lady Imix	Guest	Yes, that's what I was gonna say. Yeah, that would be mine for sure.
00:23:04	Music	Music	"What A Difference A Day Makes" by Dinah Washington. Slow, tender crooning.
			<i>What a difference a day made</i> <i>Twenty-four little hours</i>
			<i>[Music fades out as DJ Phatrick speaks]</i>
00:23:21	DJ Phatrick	Guest	That's a song that—that describes just the opposite of heartbreak in this movie. The scenes where they're totally in love. So, the first time it comes on is the flashback to Tony Leung and the flight attendant. Him in his whitey tighties, and—we don't have to go too—yeah, it was a good scene.
00:23:41	Lady Imix	Guest	Is that the one—is that the one with the airplane?
00:23:44	DJ Phatrick	Guest	Shout-out to his confidence in that. He's in tighty whiteys a lot in that film. Love it.
00:23:48	Oliver	Host	He's Tony Leung, man.
00:23:49	DJ Phatrick	Guest	Yeah, well, it's amazing for this Asian-Am kid that grew up in the 80s, it was very uh, inspiring. And then the second time the song comes on is when Tony Leung catches Faye Wong in his apartment. They chase each other around and it cuts to this scene where she's back at the cafe at—the diner—yeah, whatever it is—
00:24:06	Oliver	Host	"Cafe." The food stand.
00:24:08	DJ Phatrick	Guest	The Midnight Express, and then Tony Leung comes and like, is like, "I want to take you out on a date." And that's when that song is playing.
00:24:14	Oliver	Host	Ohh. I had forgotten the second time. See, the repetition thing is kind of important.
00:24:18	Lady Imix	Guest	It's significant, yeah.
00:24:19	Music	Music	"What A Difference A Day Makes" plays again
			<i>What a difference a day made</i> <i>And the difference is you</i>
			<i>[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]</i>
00:24:42	Oliver	Host	We'll be right back with our Music and Popcorn medley show after this brief word from our sibling MaxFun podcasts. Keep it locked.
00:24:49	Music	Transition	"Crown Ones" off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under The Stairs
00:24:52	Promo	Promo	<b>Music:</b> Fun, cheerful, soft music.

**Benjamin Partridge:** If you're looking for a new comedy podcast, why not try *The Beef And Dairy Network*? It won Best Comedy at the British Podcast Awards in 2017 and 2018. Also, I—

*[Audio suddenly slows and cuts off.]*

**Speaker 1:** There were no horses in this country until the mid to late sixties.

**Speaker 2:** Specialist Bovine Arsefat—

**Speaker 3:** Both of his eyes are squids' eyes.

**Speaker 4:** Yogurt buffet.

**Speaker 5:** She was married to a bacon farmer who saved her life.

**Speaker 6:** Farm-raised snow leopard.

*[Strange electronic audio.]*

*[Beginning audio returns]*

**Benjamin:** Download it today. That's the *Beef And Dairy Network* podcast, from MaximumFun.org. Also, maybe start at episode one. Or weirdly, episode thirty-six, which for some reason requires no knowledge of the rest of the show.

00:25:32 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](http://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...

00:26:17 Music Transition "Crown Ones" off the album *Stepfather* by People Under The Stairs

00:26:19 Oliver Host Welcome back to *Heat Rocks* where you are listening to some of the highlights of music in movies that we've covered preciously on the show, in anticipation of our new Music and Popcorn miniseries, which kicks off next week.

Now back in October, dancer and choreographer Luis Xtravaganza joined myself and guest host Ernest Hardy to revisit the classic 1978 movie version of the musical *Grease*.

00:26:44 Music Music "You're The One That I Want" off the album *Grease* by John Travolta & Olivia Newton-John. Chill 1950s rock with a steady beat, guitar, and occasional piano.

*DANNY ZUKO:  
I got chills, they're multiplying  
And I'm losing control  
'Cause the power you're supplying  
It's electrifying!*

*[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]*

00:27:02 Oliver Host So, we are so hype that you chose this particular album.

*[Luis laughs.]*

And what was your introduction to *Grease*?

00:27:08 Luis Xtravaganza Guest *Grease* 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? So it was

*[Oliver and Ernest respond affirmatively.]*

So it was just like, singles. The first like, album album that my dad just bought for me, like as a gift, was *Grease*.

00:27:32 Oliver Host And this was the film soundtrack, not the original Broadway cast album from earlier in the '70s?

00:27:36 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.

- 00:27:55 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?
- 00:28:00 Luis Guest Same time. 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.]*
- 00:28:14 Ernest Hardy 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.
- 00:28:32 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.]*
- 00:28:48 Oliver Host But I was gonna say, I mean, the whole thing with "Greased Lightnin'" is they're 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.
- 00:29:07 Luis Guest It was, and we were just singing along like, "Woohoo!"
- 00:29:10 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:

*We'll get some purple French tail lights and thirty inch fin, oh yeah*

*A Palomino dashboard and duel muffler twins, oh yeah*

*With new pistons, plugs...*

*[Music fades out as Ernest speaks]*

00:29:34	Ernest	Host	So Luis, why is <i>Grease</i> your heat rock?
00:29:37	Luis	Guest	<p>There were a lot of albums for me growing up that really impacted my life in different ways. <i>Grease</i> 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—</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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 <i>Grease</i>, at Rydell High.</p>
00:30:55	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 stand out tracks.
00:30:49	Music	Music	<p>"There Are Worse Things I Could Do" off of the album <i>Grease</i> by Stockard Channing. Slow singing, sad yet strong.</p> <p><i>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</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as Ernest speaks]</i></p>
00:31:14	Ernest	Host	<p>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.</p> <p>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</p>

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—

00:31:59 Music Music

"There Are Worse Things I Could Do" plays again

*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 as Ernest speaks]*

00:32:31 Ernest Host

There's such a savviness, and I think, not to be a centralist or not to romanticise 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—

*[Luis responds affirmatively.]*

—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.

00:32:55 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—

00:33:16 Oliver Host

To some extent, yeah. Not necessarily across the board, certainly. Yeah.

00:33:20 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.

00:33:35 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.

00:34:08 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 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.

00:35:17	Ernest	Host	Oh, absolutely. Absolutely.
00:35:18	Luis	Guest	Totally agree.
00:35:19	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?
00:35:37	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...
00:35:48	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.
00:36:17	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>
00:36:45	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.

00:37:14	Music	Music	<p>“Hopelessly Devoted To You” off the album <i>Grease</i> by Olivia Newton-John. Slow, tender, sad, romantic pop with a bit of a country twang.</p> <p><i>You know I'm just a fool who's willing To sit around and wait for you But baby can't you see there's nothing else for me to do</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as Luis speaks]</i></p>
00:37:36	Luis	Guest	<p>“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?”</p> <p>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—”</p>
00:38:08	Oliver	Host	<p>“I’m conflicted now.” Yes.</p>
00:38:09	Luis	Guest	<p>“I’m not the asshole, but I am conflicted, because I gotta stay cool. But I really like you, though.”</p> <p><i>[Everyone laughs.]</i></p> <p>“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.</p> <p>And that’s also, you know, when we get the other favorite character.</p>
00:38:36	Oliver	Host	<p>Let’s go in.</p>
00:38:37	Ernest	Host	<p>Can I guess?</p>
00:38:38	Luis	Guest	<p>Okay, you can guess.</p>
00:38:39	Ernest	Host	<p>Cha Cha. <i>[Luis gasps.]</i> Yes! Yes.</p>
00:38:41	Luis	Guest	<p>The best dancer, right? 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.</p> <p>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.”</p>
00:39:15	Music	Music	<p>“Born to Hand Jive” off the album <i>Grease</i> by Sha Na Na. A fast, upbeat 1950s dance song with piano, drums, and saxophone intended to get crowds dancing together.</p>

*... hand-jive!*

*I could barely walk when I moved to town  
When I was three, I pushed a plow  
While chopping wood I moved my legs  
And I started to dance while I gathered eggs*

*[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]*

00:39:34 Oliver Host What is your favorite musical moment in the movie? And I'll start, which is, it's "Summer Nights". 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.

00:39:57 Luis Guest Yes. Like, "Tell me more, tell me more, like does he have a car?" Hello?

00:40:02 Oliver Host And the boys are asking, "Tell me more, tell me more, did you get very far?"

*[Everyone laughs.]*

00:40:06 Music Music "Summer Nights" off the album *Grease* by John Travolta & Olivia Newton-John. Gentle, upbeat pop with electric guitar and a steady beat.

*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?*

*[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]*

00:40:27 Oliver Host Honestly getting chills. I just love that song so much.

00:40:30 Luis Guest I love it.

00:40:31 Ernest Host So, what's your favorite?

00:40:32 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—
00:40:49	Oliver	Host	The choreography is amazing.
00:40:50	Luis	Guest	<i>[Emphatically]</i> Oh, my god.
00:40:51	Oliver	Host	The choreography is off the chain.
00:40:52	Luis	Guest	When that track goes into that drum breakdown— <i>[Beatboxing]</i> —and they're just showing the different couples and the heat—
00:41:00	Music	Music	"Born To Hand Jive" plays again
00:41:01	Luis	Guest	—and the vibrations that are coming off those couples, that it's almost like they lose it.
			<i>[Song plays for several more seconds and then fades out.]</i>
00:41:23	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 <i>Grease</i> , 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 Beegees, 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.
			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 <i>Grease</i> , 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 Beegees had actually sung it, especially in that falsetto, I think I would've loved this far more.
00:42:14	Music	Music	"Grease" off the album <i>Grease</i> by Frankie Valli. 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.
			<i>Grease is the word, it's the word That you heard It's got groove it's got meaning Grease is the time, is the place, is the motion Now, grease is the way we are feeling</i>
			<i>[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]</i>
00:42:39	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.
00:42:47	Ernest	Host	Well, you know, it's interesting because, although the lyrics <u>can</u> apply to these high school students, they're also very much in the vein of the ethos of disco, which was about self-affirmatio. 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 Beegees singing this—I mean, you can hear it in your head as you're listening to it.

00:43:11 Oliver Host Absolutely. I actually forget what the Valli version sounds like until I listen to it, because in my head, I hear the Beegees falsetto when I think about the song.

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”.

00:43:24 Music Music “We Go Together” off the album *Grease* by John Travolta & Olivia Newton-John. Fun, upbeat pop with drums, piano, and saxophone.

*We're one of a kind  
Like dip da-dip da-dip doo-wop da doo-bee doo  
Our names are signed  
Boogedy boogedy boogedy boogedy  
Shooby doo-wop she-bop  
Chang chang changitty chang sha-bop  
We'll always be like one, wa-wa-wa-one*

*[Music fades and plays quietly behind the speakers.]*

00:43:43 Oliver Host And another really good choreograph scene in the film, too.

00:43:45 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.

00:44:02 Music Music “We Go Together” continues to play for several more seconds.

*Chang chang chanitty chang sha-bop  
We'll always be together  
We'll always be together  
We'll always be together  
We'll always be together  
We'll always be together*

*[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]*

00:44:23 Oliver Host Last but not least, enjoy this revisit of our episode with journalist, and now MaxFun podcaster, Tre'vell Anderson, talking with us about the 2006 film adaptation of the smash Broadway musical, *Dreamgirls*.

00:44:37 Music Music “Dreamgirls” off the album *Dreamgirls* by Jennifer Hudson, Beyoncé, and Anika Noni Rose. Upbeat, excited R&B.

*We're your Dreamgirls...  
Dreamgirls will never leave you!  
No, no...  
And all you've got to do is dream, baby,  
We'll be there!  
Dream...  
Dreamgirls will help you through the night!*

*[Music fades as Oliver speaks]*

- 00:44:58 Oliver Host I realize that we are now about 70 episodes in, and we have yet to have discussed a musical. So before we dig into this specific one, I'm wondering from each of you, did you grow up listening to musicals, and if so, what were your jams back then?
- 00:45:13 Tre'vell Anderson Guest I love a good musical, like, today. I'm trying to think of the first musical I can—oh! *The Wiz* would be my first musical. Um, loved, loved *The Wiz*. So much better than *The Wizard of Oz*.
- [Morgan laughs uproariously.]*
- 00:45:26 Oliver Host Ooh, shots!
- 00:45:27 Morgan Rhodes Host That's real, though. Real.
- 00:45:28 Tre'vell Guest I know. People are gonna hate me for it. It's fine. Um, but yeah, I just grew up in a household that loved singing and loved music. And so when you can combine that with entertainment and with films, it just—it's the perfect kind of family gathering and bonding experience.
- 00:45:44 Morgan Host Why this, um, 'cause we asked you for a couple of picks. Why did this one make it to the last one for you? Why was it this one?
- 00:45:51 Tre'vell Guest You know, I feel like this movie, the story that is told on this soundtrack, um, is one that's just like very much representative and emblematic of like, the enduring kind of resilient spirit of Black people in this country. And I'm always interested in those types of stories, where we see ourselves kind of survive and thrive in spite of all the foolishness, right, that we have to deal with.
- Um, and so like, this movie for me, and the story of Jennifer Hudson, the story of Effie White, the character that she plays, I don't know, it just resonates with me so much. Just like, having to like—you go into this space, you're the most talented, obviously, but they're playing you because you're too big or you're too loud or you're too dark or whatever the case may be. And like, you go through some foolishness, but you end up coming out on the end.
- 00:46:43 Morgan Host Sure, and it's sort of an art imitates life thing, because I thought that was the issue with Jennifer Hudson on *American Idol*. That she was just too much for them. South side of Chicago, big booming vocals. And they were looking for something else.
- [Tre'vell responds affirmatively.]*
- But to your point, she showed them.
- 00:46:59 Tre'vell Guest She showed them!
- 00:47:00 Morgan Host On this, she showed a lot of people on this one.
- 00:47:02 Oliver Host There was a lot of expectation that was put on this. I mean, the casting was strictly A-list, the film itself obviously had the history

with the hit musical behind it. So, I mean, this was not like a small thing they were rolling out. I mean, this was hundreds of millions of dollars in production. Well, maybe not quite that much, but it was a lot of money. Big expectations.

For each of you, what did you go in hoping for from the film, and what did you get out of it? Did it live up to what you were expecting, or where did it link up or where did it diverge from your expectations?

00:47:31 Tre'vell Guest I think for me, I—I'm just—I grew up in the church as well, and so we love big singers. We like strong s—as I call them, we like "sangers."

*[Oliver laughs as Morgan agrees emphatically.]*

We don't like just singers, we like "sangers", right? And like, I wanted to make sure that the feeling was there. When you hear Jennifer Holiday's version of "And I Am Telling You I'm Not Going", you feel it. You feel that energy. And that's what I was looking for.

Um, and I think Jennifer Hudson, just the little bit of time that she had had in the industry, I feel like she was just able to bring all of that to the role. And so for me, I was looking for that. I was looking for, you know, with Eddie Murphy and Jamie Foxx, I was looking for those vocals.

Um, and I think ultimately it was just the energy. You wanted the right energy to be a part of the project, and everyone just seemed very committed to making sure this was the best thing possible.

00:48:24 Morgan Host Sure. Um, the same. I think there was a part of me inside, you know, I was praying. I was praying for Jennifer Hudson, because I felt the pressure on her. I was like, "You couldn't—I mean, you got the same initials as Jennifer Holiday. Your name is also Jennifer." And I just thought, "Lord, please don't mess up this song, because the scrutiny is gonna be so high on you, because it's a big song. It's the biggest song of the whole thing."

Um, I thought this was gonna be a star-making turn for Beyoncé. It's 2006.

00:48:54 Tre'vell Guest Everybody thought that.

00:48:55 Morgan Host Yeah. Destiny's Child is broken up, you've released *B'Day*, or you're on your way to releasing *B'Day*. It's huge. And I thought, "This is cute for them to—"

*[Tre'vell laughs uproariously.]*

"—to bring Jennifer Hudson in." But I didn't have—I thought this is it. This is where Beyoncé becomes Diana Ross. This is what I thought. So I think I was as surprised as anyone—

00:49:15 Tre'vell Guest She probably thought that, too.

*[Everyone laughs.]*

00:49:18 Morgan Host This is what—you know what I’m saying? And then all the uh, all the cast changes. This was supposed to be directed by Joel Schumacher, and he wanted Lauryn Hill to star in this.

00:49:28 Oliver Host Oh. I didn’t know that.

00:49:29 Morgan Host And then Whitney Hou—yeah. They wanted Whitney Houston, but Whitney Houston was like, “Well, I want to sing Deena’s songs and Effie’s songs.”

*[Oliver laughs.]*

And they were like, “Girl I guess.”

00:49:36 Tre’veil Guest That’s not how this works.

*[Everyone laughs.]*

00:49:39 Morgan Host So there was all this—yeah, Usher was supposed to be in it.

00:49:42 Oliver Host Wouldn’t Whitney have been a little old for the roles, given that each is supposed to be girls starting out in the industry?

*[Morgan responds affirmatively.]*

No shade against Whitney, ‘cause obviously she probably would have killed it vocally, but the casting thing doesn’t make sense.

00:49:54 Morgan Host Sure, but that’s maybe where they were going. They were like, “Whatever. Make up, we’ll just—she can sing.” And so. But it ended up being what it ended up, so I think it surpassed my expectations, and it surprised me that it became so big for Jennifer Hudson.

00:50:09 Music Music “Fake Your Way to the Top” off the album *Dreamgirls* by Jennifer Hudson, Beyoncé, Eddie Murphy, Anika Noni Rose. Mid-tempo, catchy R&B.

*'Round and around  
Try that part right there, baby  
(‘Round and around)  
Fake your way to the top  
(‘Round and around)  
Now you fell right in there  
Didn't you, sweetheart?  
You can fake your way to the top  
(‘Round and around)  
Shit, I knew you'd have it, baby  
But it's always real, so real  
(Always so real)*

*[Music fades as Morgan speaks]*

00:50:29 Morgan Host Let’s get into some of the songs on here. Um, I love—it’s not my favorite—but one of the things that engaged me from the beginning is the beginning song, which is “Move.”

00:50:41 Music Music “Move” off the album *Dreamgirls* by Jennifer Hudson, Beyoncé, Anika Noni Rose. Impassioned, ardent R&B with a multi-layered

vocals.

*... right out of my life!  
Move, move!  
Move right out of my life!  
You better move [Move!]  
You're steppin on my heart  
I said move [Move]  
You're tearing it apart, please move! (Please move)  
Ohhh, what am I gonna do, my heart (My heart)  
Is breaking breaking up over you (Breaking, breaking up over you!)*

*[Music fades out as Morgan speaks]*

00:51:02	Morgan	Host	Power.
00:51:03	Tre'vell	Guest	Listen.
00:51:04	Morgan	Host	Power. Sheer power. Jennifer Hudson bodies that thing. I like it because the thing you talked about, about gospel singers singing. It's like, we call it flat-footed singing, right?
00:51:16	Tre'vell	Guest	Yes! Flat-footed singing!
00:51:18	Morgan	Host	Flat-footed singing. And then it's such a, um—just watching it last night, there's such an awareness. What I like about her in this role is that she embodies her body. "I'm a big black girl and I'm singing." And mostly gospel singers, when I grew up, they'd always say, "If she's heavysset, she's about to kill it." You know, she's stepping up.

*[Oliver and Tre'vell laugh.]*

You don't want no skinny girl singing "Precious Lord." She better be about 200, up there singing "Precious Lord." So when she steps into this, um, I just like her presence amongst the girls. And something that I noticed, listening to it on Spotify, is how low Beyoncé's vocals are on here. Um, almost like they're trying to drive the point home that it was Jennifer first. And then when they make the decision to push Beyoncé, then they—then she goes to the back. But it's just one of those power songs where she comes out. I like how she's going from side to side. It's just confident.

00:52:15	Music	Music	"Move" plays again
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*Yeah outta my life!  
[Move it, move it, outta my life]  
Theres too much pain and strife  
So why don't you pack it up and move it, [Move]  
Take the cat, kit, and caboodle [Move]  
Take your broken down car [Move]  
Your smelly cigar [Move]  
And just move right outta my [Move, move, move]  
Move right outta my life! [Move right outta my life!]*

*Please move, move, move, move*

*[Music fades as Tre'vell speaks]*

00:52:34 Tre'vell Guest Um, I listen to the soundtrack more than I watch the movie. Um, and I think part of that is because I can, when I listen to the soundtrack, I can imagine the scenes that are happening, you know? I can imagine he said this and then she said this, and then the song starts, right? Um, and so I don't need the movie to kind of capture what I need from this album

00:52:55 Morgan Host Sure, sure. To that end, what's one of your favorite tracks on here? The one that like, if you listened to this before you got here, which was the one that you were dying to hear?

00:53:03 Tre'vell Guest So, one of—it's not necessarily my favorite. My favorites change depending on my mood, you know? But today the one I kept playing over and over as I was driving over here was "Patience."

*[Morgan responds emphatically.]*

00:53:16 Music Music "Patience" off the album *Dreamgirls* by Eddie Murphy, Keith Robinson, Anika Noni Rose. Slower, ardent R&B with heavy harmonizing over a choir.

*If we want to see that morning  
Yeah (want to see that morning)  
Of a brighter day  
Of a brighter day, yeah*

*Patience, come on, little sister (little sister)  
Patience, patience, little brother (little brother)*

*[Music fades out as Tre'vell speaks]*

00:53:35 Tre'vell Guest I just—I just love—I also love a good Black choir in the background, you know?

*[Morgan responds affirmatively.]*

It just—it does the right things.

00:53:44 Morgan Host It is a beautiful moment, and then Jamie Foxx just comes in and just steals their dreams

*[Tre'vell starts laughing.]*

He's like, nah.

00:53:50 Tre'vell Guest Right, he's like, "We don't want that. We don't care." But it's—it's one of the best songs, I think, of the entire soundtrack.

00:53:58 Oliver Host We actually have not, I think, talked enough about the biggest song on this album, in terms of—I mean, we've obviously been referencing it, and I'm telling you. But what is it about Hudson's performance here that is so memorable? I mean, it's obviously just—the power of it is, I think, clear. But what is it about this performance that is so extraordinary, and about the song itself, too?

00:54:18 Tre'vell Guest I think it's hard to divorce this song and this performance from the song that immediately precedes it, which is another one of my

favorites. “It’s All Over.” I think there you see the unfolding of like, everyone turning on her, and her realizing that everyone’s turning on her, so that once we come to the moment of “And I’m Telling You”, she’s just like, “I’m by myself. I had this family, I had all these people that were with me, and lifting me up. Now I’m by myself.”

And I just imagine—for me, I—again, I think back to *American Idol*. When you get sent home from *American Idol*, no one’s talking to you. You don’t have a record contract. What—you’re by yourself again.

*[Oliver and Morgan respond affirmatively.]*

And she’s saying with this movie, with her—this being kind of her resurrection, if you will, into the industry, “I’m not going. Despite the headlines with y’all talking about my body, talking about what I’m wearing, talking about how I look. I’m not going.”

And I think that energy, that spirit, is something that like, we all can identify with. That’s why you get the chills. That’s why, you know, I cry almost every time I hear that song. It’s just so much energy, so much power behind it.

00:55:23 Music

Music

“And I Am Telling You I’m Not Going” off the album *Dreamgirls* by Jennifer Hudson. Fervid, intense R&B over intense, rising instrumentals.

*You're gonna love me!  
Yes, you are  
Yes, you are  
Oh, love me! Love me! Love me!*

*[Instrumentals drop out partway through the next line, leaving her vocalizing acapella]*

*Love...!  
You're gonna love...  
Me!*

*[Instrumentals crash back in, then all music fades out as Oliver speaks]*

00:56:17 Oliver

Host

That was just a small sampler, but don’t forget other *Heat Rocks* episodes about movie soundtracks. We’re excited to have all of you listen to the next four episodes in the Music and Popcorn series, beginning next week, when podcaster Renée Bever of *Attack of the Queerwolf* joins us to talk about the music of Jordan Peele’s 2019 thriller, *Us*.

00:56:38 Renée

Guest

It was so refreshing to hear something with a good beat in a horror movie. *[She laughs.]*

It’s something familiar, something fun, but something that, you know, really got flipped on its head when we’re talking about the Luniz. Like, when that song comes on, what you imagine is probably not a scary situation, or a time in history that you didn’t

enjoy.

*[Oliver and Morgan respond affirmatively.]*

But just—I mean, in the way that Abels like, re-composed that and added in all of these really just kind of like breathtaking, scary elements, it's just so genius. I'm like, "Don't throw a violin on top of the hip hop beat, like I will lose my mind.

*[Everyone laughs.]*

I will lose it.

00:57:21	Speaker 1	Promo	<a href="http://MaximumFun.org">MaximumFun.org</a> .
00:57:23	Speaker 2	Promo	Comedy and culture.
00:57:25	Speaker 3	Promo	Artist owned—
00:57:26	Speaker 4	Promo	—Audience supported.