

Often it's the music that makes the movie

TRACKING RECORDS

BY SARAH HART / ASSISTANT SCENE EDITOR

If it weren't for soundtracks, would any of us know as much music as we do? It's sort of like classical music and Bugs Bunny: I'm not sure I'd know any if not for "The Rabbit of Seville."

Soundtracks are random, diverse and can outshine their companion movie. Sometimes they make you discover a band you've never heard before. Sometimes you buy a soundtrack and the whole thing is amazing.

Sometimes, you just like that one song from that one scene: The part where the music stood apart from the plot, forever linking it with a scene.

Soundtracks are the metronomes of movies, the auditory placers of film. And they make up a sizable portion of my music collection.

So I've narrowed down some of my favorites from the past 30 years or so — didn't want to go too far back, because that's getting into musical theater territory and that's a whole other story. A caveat: I tried to stick with well-known movies and their soundtracks. As it turned out, most of these are compilation albums.

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THE 100-PERCENTERS

Good from the top down. Always worth a listen. Never a dull moment. Timeless.

5. Purple Rain, Prince and the New Power Generation

I've had this on vinyl, tape and CD. I remember my mother gave me an option on birthday presents: twister beads or "Purple Rain." I took the vinyl version of Prince's star-making masterpiece. It's flawless, if you're into the crazed musings of a tortured star. My favorites: "Take Me With U," "Baby I'm a Star," "Let's Go Crazy" and the always emotional title track "Purple Rain."

4. O, Brother, Where Art Thou?, various artists

Who else but the Coen Brothers could make songs like "I'll Fly Away" and "Man of Constant Sorrow" relevant to an entire generation? The movie was great, but the soundtrack really outlived it. Best: "Big Rock Candy Mountain," Harry McClintock; "Keep On the Sunny Side," The Whites (which my mother raised me on); "In the Jailhouse Now," The Soggy Bottom Boys. Let's face it. The whole thing is pretty great.

3. Dazed and Confused, various artists

The songs were radio gems from the late 1970s but worked so well with the plot that they are forever linked in my mind to Randall "Pink" Floyd, Wooderson, Slater and the boys. Highlights: "Stranglehold," Ted Nugent; "Jim Dandy," Black Oak Arkansas; "Low Rider," War.

2. Singles, various artists

Maybe it's because it was my second year in college. Maybe it's because I'm a 30-something who feels ownership of the Seattle sound. Whatever the case, this soundtrack was on such constant rotation from 1994 to 1997 that I've purchased at least three copies. Nearly every song is a masterpiece it seems. There are some weaknesses, but all in all, it's Cameron Crowe's greatest soundtrack. Favorites: "Breath," Pearl Jam (my all-time favorite Pearl Jam song); "Chloe Dancer/Crown of Thorns," Mother Love Bone (This song defines the Seattle sound. I'm so glad Crowe included Mother Love Bone, because without them, grunge as we know it wouldn't have existed.); "May This Be Love," Jimi Hendrix. What a nice touch.

1. Garden State, various artists

Everyone from Gen X to Y to whatever the teens are now owns this soundtrack. It's as close to perfect as you can get (despite the fact that it opens with Coldplay). It's got the way-too-cool Shins vibe, in addition to class reimaginings of Men At Work songs by former frontman Colin Hay. Highlights: "New Slang," The Shins; "Waiting Line," Zero 7; "Overkill," Colin Hay.

Honorable mentions: "Juno," "The Wedding Singer," "Slumdog Millionaire," "American Beauty."

THE 50-PERCENTERS

Halfway decent soundtrack, not something you'd listen to from start to finish, but has a few good 'ns.

5. Flashdance, various artists

It has some really craptastic songs, but the good ones are really good. I've re-bought this on CD (I had to find it on eBay; it's not on iTunes) and haven't been disappointed. Highlights: "Imagination," Laura Branigan; "He's a Dream," Shandi (the very same Shandi who inspired KISS' song "Shandi"); "What a Feeling," Irene Cara. Say what you want, this is a perfect workout song and makes you feel happy. Lowlights: "Lady, Lady, Lady" by Joe Esposito.

4. Almost Famous, various artists

You've got to give Cameron Crowe credit in formulating this one. He didn't want it to include the same songs as the "other" 1960s and '70s movies, such as "Dazed and Confused" and the like. He picked some unusual stuff, and that's not even including the stuff from made-up band Stillwater. Hits: "Every Picture Tells a Story," Rod Stewart (The scene in which the title character William Miller (Patrick Fugit) chases Penny Lane (Kate Hudson) down the street to the Stewart song is etched in my memory. Love it.); "I've Seen All Good People/Your Move," Yes; "That's the Way," Led Zeppelin; and "Something In the Air," Thunderclap Newman. Misses: "Sparks," The Who (sorry, I'm a huge Who fan and even I don't care for this song).

3. Trainspotting, various artists

Such a gut-wrenching movie, complete with scenes that made my skin (and that baby) crawl. But the soundtrack is sublime. It plays like a heroin binge (I'm assuming), fast and slow, jerky and calming, magic, mystery and malaise. Highlights: "Mile End," Pulp; "Lust for Life," Iggy Pop; "Temptation," New Order; and "Atomic," a Blondie cover by the band Sleeper. The ambient stuff is good, too, but gets a little droning. Sorry, Brian Eno, but you could try a three-minute song every now and again.

2. Boogie Nights, various artists

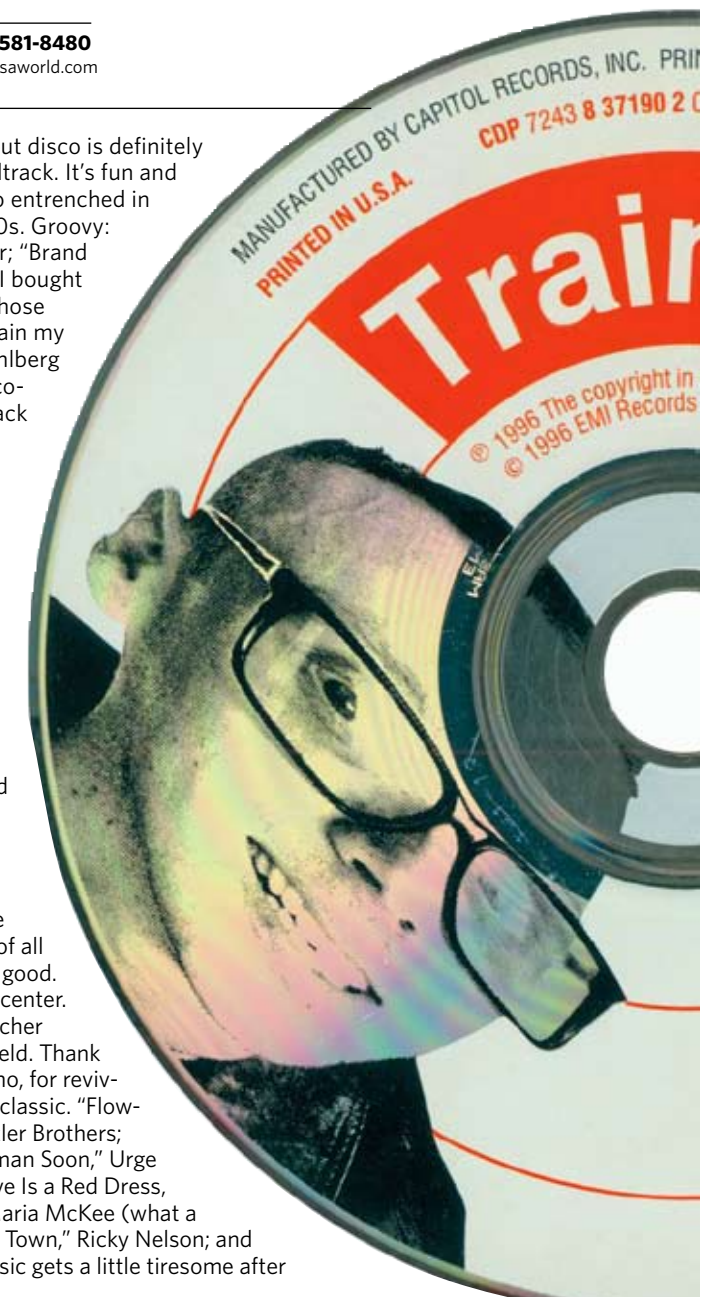
The premise of the movie may have been the

adult film industry, but disco is definitely the star of the soundtrack. It's fun and flashy, but a little too entrenched in the Sounds of the '70s. Groovy:

"Spill the Wine," War; "Brand New Key," Melanie (I bought this soundtrack for those two songs; they remain my favorites). Mark Wahlberg and John C. Reilly's cocaine-fueled comeback songs "The Touch" and "Feel the Heat," are pretty funny and awful, all at the same time. Bummers: "Magnet and Steel," Walter Egan; "Sister Christian," Night Ranger (man alive, didn't we get enough of this song in the '80s?); "Ain't No Stoppin' Us Now," McFadden and Whitehead.

1. Pulp Fiction, various artists

Scoff if you will. You may think it's the greatest soundtrack of all time. It's pretty dang good. But it's not a 100-percent. Highs: "Son of a Preacher Man," Dusty Springfield. Thank you, Quentin Tarantino, for reviving this song. Such a classic. "Flowers on the Wall," Statler Brothers; "Girl, You'll Be a Woman Soon," Urge Overkill. Lows: "If Love Is a Red Dress, Hang Me in Rags," Maria McKee (what a downer); "Lonesome Town," Ricky Nelson; and some of that surf music gets a little tiresome after a while.



THE 10-PERCENTERS

Maybe two good songs. You're kind of embarrassed to own this soundtrack. Thank God for iTunes, now you don't have to buy the whole thing.

5. The Craft, various artists

I admit I bought this before I saw the movie. The movie was awful. The soundtrack, only marginally tolerable. The reason I bought it: "Jump Into the Fire," Tripping Daisy. Still one of my favorite songs. It's a mostly remake CD, an unfortunate by-product of the New Voices of the

'90s. They shouldn't have: "How Soon Is Now?" Love Spit Love; "I Have the Touch," Heather Nova; "Dangerous Type," Letters to Cleo.

4. Cruel Intentions, various artists

I didn't hate this movie, and I didn't loathe

SEE MUSIC D2

AMC classics series wants viewers' feedback

Jason Davis, manager of the AMC Southroads 20, said in a recent e-mail that he is always looking for submissions on what films people want to see projected in the future for its classics.

"We love to take suggestions," Davis said in the message. "The success and continuation of the program is determined by attendance. If you like the program, please tell your family and friends!"

He offered his e-mail address — jdavis@amctheatres.com — for you to submit your suggestions or



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comments.

"I definitely read and try to respond to all feedback (positive or negative)," he wrote.

AMC Southroads 20's fall classics

series that brings film favorites back to the big-screen has already screened "Jurassic Park," "Jaws" and "The Birds," with "Grease" opening on Friday.

You can view the entire fall classics lineup at AMC at tulsaworld.com/fallclassics2009.

You don't say ...

You never know what's going to come out during one of those question-and-answer sessions at the Circle Cinema.

Last Friday night, an overflow crowd that spilled out of the screening room listened as Davis Guggenheim, the Oscar-winning documentary filmmaker of "An Inconvenient Truth," spoke about his newest project, "It Might Get Loud," a love letter to the electric guitar with Jimmy Page, the Edge and Jack White as its stars and that is now playing at the Circle.

Guggenheim was asked to take part in a Skype videoconferencing Q&A with the audience between opening screenings of the docu-

mentary. He obliged and spoke for nearly 40 minutes. At one point, he brought up his college days at Brown University, class of 1986, and his roommate and fellow graduate.

Unknown to the Circle staff, Guggenheim's roommate was none other than Tim Blake Nelson, Tulsa actor/writer/director and one of the Circle Cinema's board members. Very cool. Small world.

Excerpted from Michael Smith's "I See Movies for Free" blog. Read it at tulsaworld.com/iseemovies



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