

**A Musical Analysis Of
The Music Of The
Pixies, In Terms Of
Their Influences & Their
Subsequent Influence**

**SIMON BRIERCLIFFE
42203
RAD1101Y1**

**BA (Hons) Recording
Arts
SAE Institute
September 2003**

“I'd love to see someone do their doctorate on The Pixies”
Black Francis, 1990

ABSTRACT

This thesis is an analytical study of the music of the Pixies, in terms of their influences, their subsequent influence and their place in popular music history. The project is divided into five main sections: the evolution of the band's sound; the Pixies' primary influences; their secondary influences; their minor, incidental musical references; and the conclusions that can be drawn from this study. Within these sections, there are chapters referring to a specific influence upon the band's music, for example alternative rock, or Spanish music. Within these chapters, the work is subdivided into studies of specific areas of influence, for instance rhythm or tone.

This project is intended not only as a study of the Pixies, but in a wider context as a formula for musical analysis based on the study of influences. Using the different levels of influence in a band's music it is possible to build up a picture of that band and where they fit into popular music. From this base it is possible to go on and explore their subsequent influence on others.

The project was researched from archive interviews and articles discussing the band's music, and from specialist reference books about each genre. Using this material it was possible to decide what qualified as a primary, secondary or incidental influence, or not at all. Once it was decided what counted as an influence, the musical analysis is almost entirely original, drawing slightly on collated sources and what little has been done in this narrow field already.

The conclusion reached is that the most important influence is alternative rock, and the Pixies class as an alternative rock band. They create their sound out of a diverse amalgam of various styles, most importantly punk rock and surf music.

PREFACE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project was undertaken in order to provide an insight into the music of the Pixies and their place in the history of popular music. My original intention was to analyse the music in reference to itself, but it was decided that this approach lacked focus. To give the research project a centre around which to build, I designed a study specific to the different styles of music used by the Pixies, that is, their influences. Over the course of compiling the project it was discovered that this was a wide-ranging and interesting study that encompassed all sorts of musical analysis. The techniques that I wanted to employ when conceiving the idea have mostly been implemented here. Originally, the intention was to study melodic content most of all, especially scales and modes, along with their significance, as well as looking at harmonic, rhythmic and tonal qualities. However, when undertaking the project, it became apparent that a wider-ranging study was in order, taking in all these aspects in almost equal proportions. It became clear that melody was of secondary significance in this music anyway, with rhythm and tone being more important. All these aspects have been covered in this project, mostly all within each chapter, so each specific influence has been analysed from various viewpoints. The only difficulty on this front was editing the finished piece so that it remained within the word limit – much more detail could have been added.

This approach to analysing influences has not, I believe, been used before for the Pixies: only large and hugely influential bands such as the Beatles and the Rolling Stones have had analysis of their influences. However, I believe that the project is worthwhile. Alternative rock in the 1990's and beyond is a major musical genre, and the Pixies were one of the most important bands in its genesis. Therefore, an analysis of this band adds to the knowledge of this genre, and its relation to others. It is an approach that can be used to study other artists, analysing all the various musical aspects of each of their influences to build up a picture of the band as a musical force.

There are a number of people I wish to thank for help in the compiling of this project. Firstly, the Pixies: Frank Black, Kim Deal, Joey Santiago and David Lovering, as well as Gil Norton, Gary Smith, Steve Albini, Ken Goes and Ivo Watts-Russell. Without these people, the music scene would be very different to how it is today, and not in a good way. Secondly, I wish to thank Nathan Christmas for introducing me to the Pixies, Jean-Michel Biel and Christophe Gourraud at the Alec Eiffel website for their invaluable collection of resources, Dag Wieërs at the Debaser website, Chris Hayne for the help he gave me in focussing and improving the project, Fiona Sawers for help with proof-reading and editing, and Jason Sidwell of Total Guitar for his practical help.

For their help with guitar tablature and suggestions, I would like to thank: Adheesh, Laurent Faureytier, Andrew Wall, David Fernández, Derek, Luisfer, Jure Lasnibat, Andrew Perrett, Mark Schnitzius, Graeme Baty, Darren Hardy, Mary Beth Pancreas, A Townsen, Ryan Cygnus, Roger Ellero, Adrian Foster, Jim, Jere Klami, Jonathan Eyre, Adam Farmer, Bryson Meunier, Jason Clinton Hamlett, and Sagi Assaf.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	I
PREFACE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	II
TABLE OF CONTENTS	III
1. INTRODUCTION	I
2. THE EVOLUTION OF THE PIXIES' SOUND	III
Formation, Come On Pilgrim & Surfer Rosa	III
Doolittle	III
Bossanova	IV
Trompe Le Monde	IV
Levels Of Influence	V
3. ALTERNATIVE ROCK	VI
Hüsker Dü	VI
Sonic Youth	VII
Violent Femmes	VIII
Dinosaur Jr.	VIII
Jesus & Mary Chain	IX
The Pixies' Place In Alternative Rock	IX
Nirvana and Alternative Rock In The 1990's	X
Dynamics In The Pixies' Music	XI
4. PUNK ROCK	XIV
Punk Rock Techniques	XIV
Punk Rock Chord Progressions	XVI
The Use Of Punk Rock Characteristics In The Pixies' Music	XVI
5. SURF MUSIC	XVIII

<u>Rhythm And Technique In 'Levitate Me'</u>	XVIII
<u>The Pixies' Adaptation Of The Classic Surf Style & Tone: 'Cecilia Ann'</u>	XIX
<u>Surf Melodies In The Pixies' Music</u>	XXI
<u>Harmonies & Structure In Vocal Surf Music & The Beach Boys</u>	XXII
<u>Summary Of The Use Of Surf Music By The Pixies</u>	XXV
<u>6. SPANISH MUSIC</u>	XXVI
<u>The Use Of Spanish Rhythms in 'Vamos'</u>	XXVI
<u>Spanish Harmony And Rhythm In 'Isla De Encanta'</u>	XXVII
<u>Other Songs With A Spanish Influence</u>	XXVIII
<u>7. THE BEATLES & POPULAR MUSIC</u>	XXX
<u>Harmonic and Thematic References in 'Here Comes Your Man'</u>	XXX
<u>Song Structure In 'Here Comes Your Man'</u>	XXXII
<u>Orchestration In 'Monkey Gone To Heaven'</u>	XXXII
<u>Summary Of The Beatles Influence Upon The Pixies</u>	XXXIII
<u>8. REGGAE & SKA</u>	XXXIV
<u>Creating A Reggae Feel</u>	XXXIV
<u>9. MOVIE THEMES: SPAGHETTI WESTERNS</u>	XXXV
<u>The 'Galloping' Rhythm</u>	XXXV
<u>Ennio Morricone</u>	XXXV
<u>10. MOVIE THEMES: SCIENCE FICTION</u>	XXXVII
<u>11. ROCK'N'ROLL & ROCKABILLY</u>	XXXVIII
<u>12. HEAVY METAL</u>	XL
<u>13. CONCLUSIONS</u>	XLI
<u>Evolution Of The Sound</u>	XLI
<u>Individual Influences</u>	XLI

Final Conclusions	XLIII
INDEX OF APPENDICES	XLIV
APPENDIX A: PIXIES BIOGRAPHY	XLV
APPENDIX B: PIXIES DISCOGRAPHY	XLVII
Copyright Information	XLIX
APPENDIX C: CORRESPONDENCE	L
APPENDIX D: BIBLIOGRAPHY	LI
Reference Books	LI
Magazines & Publications	LII
APPENDIX E: OTHER RESOURCES	LIV
Websites	LIV
Artist & Label Websites	LIV
Publication Websites	LIV
Musical Reference Websites	LV
Fan Sites & Opinion	LV
Academic References	LVI
Miscellaneous References	LVII
Libraries	LVII
Other Resources	LVII
APPENDIX F: CD TRACK LISTING	LVIII

A Musical Analysis Of The Pixies, In Terms Of Their Influences & Subsequent Influence

Simon Briercliffe

September 2003

1. INTRODUCTION

The Pixies have been consistently acknowledged as one of the most influential bands of the alternative rock era. Artists such as Nirvana, Radiohead and David Bowie have mentioned them as an influence on their music: Kurt Cobain said he “was basically trying to rip off the Pixies,”¹ and Thom Yorke of Radiohead has said: “[The Pixies were] the greatest band ever.”²

However, much has been made of the band’s own influences, which will be shown to range from surf instrumentals, to Spanish music, to punk rock, as well as a number of other areas. This project presents musical proof that the Pixies were influenced by a wide range of various artists and genres, supported by evidence from interviews and articles. It will describe how the band’s sound evolved over their existence, and how different influences affected different recordings. Analysis has been taken from those influences specifically stated on record, rather than to try to pick out unspecific musical features to prove a point. The retrogressive and derivative nature of pop music indicates that many influences may have been accidental or subconscious: for example, most bands today could claim a Beatles influence, but few could specifically pinpoint the characteristics in their own music to confirm this. Peter Winkler states: “No successful popular song exists in isolation; it is situated in a complex web of associations and connections of various sorts with musical (as well as verbal and cultural) elements of widely diverse origins.”³

A wide variety of musical aspects have been looked at when analysing the music, and most sections of this project feature a multi-faceted examination of the influence on different parts of the Pixies’ music. For example, in the discussion of the Beatles music harmonic, thematic and melodic areas are covered, as well as orchestration and structure. As a result, certain areas are affected by different music than others, for example use of rhythm in the Pixies music is affected more by Spanish music than the Beatles. The analysis of music in this way, studying all possible musical aspects in relation to each specific influence, is a systematic and methodical approach to the subject, and one that can be employed for other artists.

¹ Kurt Cobain, interviewed by David Fricke in Rolling Stone, 27/1/94

² Thom Yorke, Guitar World, April 1998

³ Peter Winkler, ‘Randy Newman’s Americana’, p.31, from ‘Reading Pop’ edited by Richard Middleton

2. THE EVOLUTION OF THE PIXIES' SOUND

Formation, Come On Pilgrim & Surfer Rosa

The Pixies were formed in 1985, when Thompson returned from his stay in Puerto Rico, a Spanish-speaking Caribbean island that he described as “the Caribbean Bronx.”⁴ The island is very musical, and Thompson undoubtedly heard plenty of music in his time on the island. This filtered through into his own music: a number of the songs on the first mini-album, *Come On Pilgrim*, feature semi-Spanish lyrics, and much was made in the music press at the time about the use of Spanish rhythms in the music, the frantic playing and insistent rhythms being widespread throughout the album. ‘Vamos’ uses a heavily rhythmic kick drum and acoustic guitar riff, emphasising the third beat in flamenco style. ‘Isla De Encanta’ features a chromatic rather than diatonic chord progression, as in many Spanish tunes.

After the first album, the Spanish influence faded, giving the impression that its use was almost a ‘passing phase’ for Thompson. The style did appear again, for example on ‘Havalina’ and ‘Evil Hearted You’ (a Yardbirds cover performed in Spanish), but its use was never as consistent as in this early material.

The Spanish influence was not the only source to affect the musical style of the Pixies. When Thompson was at university, his roommate was Joey Santiago, who introduced him to punk and alternative rock. “Charles had gone to Amherst full of Beatles and Doors and Ten Years After, met Joey and discovered Iggy [Pop] and The Violent Femmes and punk rock, and liked the idea of doing it themselves.”⁵ This gives an idea of the influences present at the genesis of the band – the most consistently mentioned in early interviews were Hüsker Dü and Iggy Pop. It is also clear from this information that Thompson was still discovering many alternative rock bands, which explains the appearance in later music of Sonic Youth-style discord and Jesus & Mary Chain-style distortion.

The use of alternative rock styles and harsh punk rock sounds characterised the first two Pixies releases – the second album, *Surfer Rosa*, was produced by Steve Albini, famous for his abrasive alternative rock/punk productions. It had a definite ‘uncommercial’ punk rock edge, typified by tracks like ‘Something Against You’ and ‘Broken Face’.

Doolittle

By the time of *Doolittle* (1989), the band had discovered a wider range of music, and began to introduce these styles into the songs. This album is often seen as the Pixies’ creative peak, and it takes in a large number of different influences. While the alternative rock and punk rock remained, a wider dynamic and stylistic range was brought in to emphasise the use of such genres as reggae, rockabilly and rock’n’roll, Morricone-style ‘Spaghetti Western’ movie themes and surf instrumentals. Also apparent on this album

⁴ Melody Maker, Vol.65 #13, April 1 1989

⁵ Q, #48, Sept 1990

was the band's desire to introduce a more accessible 'pop' sound, based on the melodic and catchy hooks of 1960's bands like the Beatles and the Beach Boys. This album, therefore, saw the raging punk of *Surfer Rosa* toned down to incorporate melodic, listenable hooks in 'Tame' and 'Gouge Away'. For the first time also, here was an out-and-out pop song in the vein of, and stylistically indebted to, the Beatles: 'Here Comes Your Man'. With its melodic guitar hooks and catchy, riff-led chorus, this track was the most commercial Pixies song to date, so much so that the band often refused to play it on tour.

Bossanova

The pop element in the band's sound came to the fore in their 1990 follow-up *Bossanova*. The record was variously described as the bands 'pop', 'surf' or 'sci-fi' album. The major difference between this album and the others is the production. Although working with the same producer as *Doolittle* (Gil Norton), the sound is far more 'produced': the dynamic range is less wide, aspects such as vocal harmonies and melodic guitar solos are emphasised, and everything has a much smoother, less raw feel. This could be seen as an effort on the band's part to appeal to a wider audience, as even the more idiosyncratic tracks have a commercial edge (with the possible exception of 'Rock Music'). Released at the end of the 1980's, *Bossanova* is quite in keeping with much of the music scene of the time: contemporaries such as Sonic Youth and Jesus & Mary Chain were becoming more commercial by toning down their sound.

The band's surf influence also came out most strongly in this album. Although they had used this style of music before (see 'There Goes My Gun' and 'Levitate Me'), they had tended to recognise the edgier side of the genre, particularly Dick Dale's tremolo-picked guitar. *Bossanova* introduced a summery, lightweight sound featuring vocal harmonies, melodic lead guitar and other surf traits. The opening track was a cover of a 1960's surf guitar instrumental ('Cecilia Ann' by the Surftones). The breezy tone of many of the tracks on the album was however tempered by the harder edge of such tracks as 'Rock Music' and 'Down To The Well' (revived from the Pixies' original 18-track demo tape).

In addition, 'Bossanova' also attracted a lot of attention for its use of science-fiction imagery, both musically and lyrically. 'Velouria' featured a theremin, famous for its use on the Star Trek theme (and also on the Beach Boys' 'Good Vibrations', which encompasses both the surf and pop influences), but apart from this there are few musical references. There are, however, many lyrical references, which extend beyond the remit of this project.

Trompe Le Monde

The band's final album was perceived by many as a reaction to the smooth pop of *Bossanova*, and also as a return to the band's violent and eclectic roots. *Trompe Le Monde* was hailed by many (including Santiago) as the Pixies' 'heavy metal' album: interviewed later, Santiago said "I came in with

every heavy metal trick in the book, I 'drilled', I did bend-ups, hammer-ons...⁶
Much of the album was indeed imbued with a harder sound, although there were moments when the Pixies' pop sensibility broke through. 'The Sad Punk' featured a Black Sabbath-style riff, and 'Planet Of Sound' included a fast, metal-style detuned guitar riff. However, many other influences were in effect here, especially punk rock (in 'U-Mass' and 'Alec Eiffel'), rock'n'roll ('Subbacultcha'), and alternative rock in 'Head On'. The album ended up far more diverse than was expected from initial reaction.

Levels Of Influence

Although a wide range of musical genres are touched upon in the Pixies' music, not all could be classifiable as a major influence on the band's whole sound – it has been necessary to differentiate between influences and decide whether they are clear enough to count as a definite influence. Artists like Jimi Hendrix, Neil Young and Talking Heads are examples of music where the link, although recognisable, is too tenuous to sustain deep analysis. The primary inspirations for the Pixies would be alternative rock and punk rock. The Pixies are most often characterised as an alternative rock group in keeping with the general principles of the genre. Almost all alternative rock was affected by punk rock, in its attitudes, ethos and musical style. It is therefore safe to say that the Pixies major sources of inspiration and motivation came from punk and alternative rock bands. Surf music is also prominent enough to classify as a primary influence, and is a defining characteristic of the Pixies.

The secondary level of influence constitutes the other styles that the Pixies appropriated into their music, but which did not compose their whole style. These include Spanish music and The Beatles. These styles were a major feature in the Pixies music, but did not dictate the overall sound. For example 'Vamos' and 'Isla De Encanta' have strong Spanish influences but are not Spanish music – rather, they are alternative rock with a Spanish edge.

The final level of influence is incidental, which covers the remaining featured genres. These are styles which have featured in passing in the Pixies music, usually just as a brief moment or passage in one or two songs, for example much has been said in interviews about Thompson's passion for science fiction, however there are relatively few references in the actual music. While these influences were not always key to the Pixies' sound, they do demonstrate the diversity of the band.

⁶ Joey Santiago, The Guitar Magazine, December 1997 (interviewed by John Callaghan)

3. ALTERNATIVE ROCK

The most accurate description of the genre that the Pixies inhabit is alternative rock. This term can be applied to a wide range of artists and styles; however, most have a number of defining characteristics that mark them out as producing 'alternative' music. These characteristics include the use of traditional rock instrumentation in new and different ways, and a general willingness to experiment and innovate. Something key to most alternative rock is the juxtaposition of dissonance and discordance with harmony and concord.

Alternative rock could be said to be the primary influence on the Pixies music, in that all of their songs in some way are classed as alternative rock. It must be mentioned that the Pixies themselves are a major part of the alternative rock genre, and as such created new strands of it and expanded upon other parts. As well as demonstrating the band's alternative rock influences, this chapter discusses how the Pixies affected alternative rock.

It is worth noting the artists who would fall into this category for whom in-depth analysis was not sustainable. In reviews and articles, those mentioned include Pere Ubu, Neil Young & Crazy Horse, Talking Heads, The Fall and Big Black. However, when studied critically, the specific influence of these artists is usually negligible. The following bands are those for whom explicit references can be identified.

Hüsker Dü

The Pixies have claimed the influence of a number of different artists, and still more can be seen in their music. The most obvious of these is Hüsker Dü, a hardcore punk band from Minneapolis. Hüsker Dü began as a speed-metal/hardcore band, before introducing different elements such as folk and pop influences. The Pixies' claim to the influence of this band can be found in the wording of the advert seeking new members: "a bassist into Hüsker Dü and Peter, Paul and Mary."⁷ Thompson has also said "I did get to see a Hüsker Dü show when Joey and I dropped out of school and said, "Let's start one of these groups."⁸

The first impression the listener receives when listening to a Hüsker Dü album is the volume and levels of distortion in the music. However, closer listening will reveal subtle use of melody and pop songwriting, albeit in a punk rock context. This is revealed in the Pixies through their similar use of melody and pop sensibility in the alternative rock context. An obvious example is 'Debaser' (track 1): there are a number of punk rock characteristics (the fast-paced three-chord structure with high distortion; the screamed vocals; the use of full barre chords on guitar as opposed to 'power' chords). However, there is also a very melodic riff.

⁷ A History Of The Pixies, www.4ad.com, taken from Record Collector #146

⁸ Black Francis interview, Musician (Jim McNie), February 1992

The image shows a musical score for the main guitar riff of 'Debaser' by Black Francis. It is written in 4/4 time and consists of two systems. The first system shows a melodic line in the treble clef and a guitar tablature below it. The tablature has three measures: the first measure has frets 3, 2, 3; the second measure has frets 3, 2, 0; the third measure has frets 3, 2, 3. The second system starts at measure 4 and is divided into two first endings. The first ending has frets 3, 2, 3, 0. The second ending has frets 3, 2, 3. A final measure at the end of the second system has a fret 3.

Fig 3.1 Main guitar riff of 'Debaser' (Black Francis, 1989) – track 1

The Hüsker Dü equivalent of this melodicism would be in a track such as their cover of the Byrds' 'Eight Miles High', which features a number of melodic and blues-based solo sections, albeit with high levels of distortion. As mentioned previously, the juxtaposition of the two conflicting styles is apparent in many alternative rock bands, and the Pixies were no exception: a clue was given in the very early days of the band in the above advertisement.

Sonic Youth

Sonic Youth's music tends to consist of long avant-garde pieces, played in a punk or alternative rock style. Their songs tend to display a large amount of discordance, as well as utilising altered tunings, dynamic shifts and time changes.

Although the Pixies have name-checked Sonic Youth in interviews they have not mentioned them specifically as an influence on their music. The two bands were part of the same music scene in the late 1980's, and as such were inspired by similar artists. Although there may be similarities musically, there are also major differences. The Pixies were unlikely to improvise to a significant extent, even at their live shows ("We never vamped much"⁹). A Sonic Youth gig may end up being entirely improvised, or at least incorporating much live experimentation.

There are some musical features that make it across to the Pixies, however. Sonic Youth are famous for using unusual implements as playing tools, for example power drills, and also for creating highly dissonant, atonal soundscapes with what they call their 'verse-chaos-verse'¹⁰ structure. The Pixies did occasionally introduce some of these techniques into their music. On the track 'Vamos' (track 2), they would often introduce unusual effects when playing live. The studio versions of the song contain a number

⁹ Frank Black, liner notes for 'Complete "B" Sides'

¹⁰ Helen Dalley, Total Guitar #53, p.46

of Sonic Youth-style elaborations on the lead guitar, including heavy use of pick scrapes, slides, feedback and “all sorts of explosions.”¹¹ Live footage of the band playing ‘Vamos’ adds to this: Santiago would use feedback created by hitting the guitar against the amplifier, running a beer-can along the strings, kicking and pushing the amplifier and toggling the guitar’s pick-up selector switch.

Other occurrences of Sonic Youth-style features appear on, among others: ‘River Euphrates’, where time signatures are varied and shifted between; ‘Tony’s Theme’, which features an atonal, noise-based guitar solo similar to ‘Vamos’; and ‘Dead’, in which the key is barely established because of the atonality of the instrumental parts.

Violent Femmes

The Violent Femmes were the first band to use purely acoustic instrumentation in a punk rock context. They rehearsed by busking and as such their records have an organic, live feel. Much of the Pixies’ earlier material is acoustic-based in a similar way, stemming from the Spanish style of some of the songs. Thompson is said to have discovered the Violent Femmes’ music alongside Hüsker Dü and punk rock while at university.¹² Reviews have also noted the similarities between Thompson’s and Gordon Gano’s singing voices. Neither vocalist concentrates on accuracy of pitch or rhythm, preferring instead to express the content of the music dynamically, using almost conversational singing techniques. Jay Blotcher described Thompson’s vocal technique as “lays a white-trash twang into his voice that owes much to...Gano.”¹³ In essence, both vocalists add highly expressive inflections into their singing that probably wouldn’t be added by a trained singer. Often Gano will slur words, sing non-lyrical ‘baah-baah’ type vocals, substitute speaking for singing, use a wide dynamic range and emphasise sibilants. On the Pixies’ ‘Vamos’, Thompson utilises screams, lyrics that shift constantly between Spanish and English and a wide dynamic range. Both utilise a conversational style, also found in Pixies songs such as ‘I’ve Been Tired’ and ‘Dig For Fire’. Although other singers use techniques such as these, the similarities between the music of the two bands, and the ‘live’ feel of the recorded material emphasise the influence upon the Pixies.

Dinosaur Jr.

The Pixies were often pigeonholed into the grunge scene of the early 1990’s in the USA, something also faced by their contemporaries Dinosaur Jr. Although both the Pixies and Dinosaur Jr featured a punk rock edge, their music was rarely down-tuned nor especially adolescent in subject like grunge. However, musically speaking these two bands were probably the most influential on the grunge scene, although coming from two different angles.

¹¹ Frank Black, liner notes for ‘Complete “B” Sides’

¹² “Charles had gone to Amherst full of Beatles and Doors and Ten Years After, met Joey and discovered Iggy and The Violent Femmes and punk rock, and liked the idea of doing it themselves.” Q#48, September 1990

¹³ Jay Blotcher, Reflex Magazine Vol.1 #4, May 1988

While the Pixies were imitated for their dynamics and pop sensibility, Dinosaur Jr's imitators focused on their thrashy, distortion-heavy guitar sound and laid-back attitude. One characteristic that both possessed, however, was their fondness for highly discordant passages, especially guitar solos. Dinosaur Jr's 'Freak Scene' (track 3) is basically a punk rock song built around a simple I-IV-V progression, with clashing open strings in the rhythm part: in short, a typical post-punk, pre-grunge alternative rock song. However, the guitar solo is quite different: although played over the verse progression, guitarist J Mascis pays scant attention to traditional harmonic or melodic rules. The beginning of the solo features some melodic sections, but from bar 8 onward, the solo becomes ever more discordant, with open strings, atonal bends and octaves all major features. This kind of solo harks back to Jimi Hendrix's live improvisations and has become quite commonplace in 1990's alternative rock: Blur and Smashing Pumpkins have made use of the device a number of times.

The Pixies often featured these atonal solos, in tracks such as 'Tony's Theme' and 'Vamos'. Many Pixies tracks actually feature some very melodic lead playing, clearly constructed for the benefit of the song, while others feature the discordant 'freak-outs' as seen in Dinosaur Jr. As has been noted previously, the Pixies often combined melodic songwriting with some sort of abrasive feature, serving to lend a rough edge to something sweet: the unexpected vocal harmonies and surf inflections found in the music of both the Pixies and Dinosaur Jr are examples of this.

Jesus & Mary Chain

The core of the Jesus & Mary Chain's sound was the tremendous volume and distortion found in their songs, tempered with almost Beach Boys-style melodies. Very often the band would play a song almost entirely in one chord, letting the volume and feedback provide the focus of the music. As their career progressed, the band introduced a subtler, more atmospheric sound to their recordings, and toned down their more abrasive elements. The Pixies most clearly acknowledged the influence of the band in their cover of 'Head On' (track 4). This contains many of the Jesus & Mary Chain's typical characteristics (volume, distortion, single chord passages, punk rock techniques), while actually being a cover of the band's latter period music (which featured less of these characteristics), which highlights the Pixies' desire to return to punk-based music on this album. Their cover also includes quiet bass-and-drums only sections that are more reminiscent of the original: the dynamics in Pixies songs are always a major feature, so this demonstrates their adaptive skills in making this cover their own. Apart from this cover, the spirit of the Jesus & Mary Chain is often found in the Pixies music, although not so specifically. The use of volume, distortion and feedback can often be seen, for example 'Vamos' and 'Broken Face'.

The Pixies' Place In Alternative Rock

The Pixies were peers of most of these bands, and the late 1980's were a peak in alternative rock. The bands that were at the forefront of the scene then were major inspirations on the bands that would make alternative rock

commercially successful: Nirvana and the grunge movement, and British bands such as My Bloody Valentine. Many bands that came after were influenced by these late 1980's artists: the most obvious was Nirvana's use of the Pixies musical template.

Nirvana and Alternative Rock In The 1990's

When Nirvana released 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' in 1991, many were outraged by its appropriation of the Pixies' dynamic style, the quiet verse/loud chorus structure found in many of their classic songs. David Bowie commented: "When I heard 'Nevermind' from Nirvana for the first time, I was really, really angry. This dynamics in the songs, this was a total Pixies rip-off."¹⁴ Kurt Cobain never denied this, however: "I was basically trying to rip off the Pixies. I have to admit it... We used their sense of dynamics, being soft and quiet and then loud and hard."¹⁵

The structure of 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' (track 6) is very much in the loud/soft vein, with a similar structure to tracks such as 'Gigantic', 'Tame and 'Gouge Away'. These all use just bass and drums in the verse before a loud, abrasive electric guitar part contrasts that in the chorus.

It is also worth noting the similarities between the chord sequences in 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' and 'U-Mass'. Although these songs were released at roughly the same time, thus ruling out any suspicion of plagiarism, the two have remarkably similar chord sequences, especially in the chorus. This is demonstrated below: note the similarities between the rhythm and chords, which demonstrate a heavy Pixies influence on Nirvana's part.

The image shows the main riff of 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' by Nirvana. It is written in 4/4 time with a treble clef and a key signature of three flats (B-flat major). The notation includes a guitar staff with chords and a bass staff with fret numbers and 'X' marks for muted notes. The riff consists of a quiet verse and a loud chorus.

Fig 3.2 Main riff to 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' by Nirvana (Cobain/Novoselic/Grohl, 1991)

The image shows the chorus riff of 'U-Mass' by Black Francis. It is written in 4/4 time with a treble clef and a key signature of three flats (B-flat major). The notation includes a guitar staff with chords and a bass staff with fret numbers. The riff consists of a quiet verse and a loud chorus.

Fig 3.3 Chorus riff of 'U-Mass' (Black Francis, 1991)

¹⁴ David Bowie in *Les Inrockuptibles*, June 1993

¹⁵ Kurt Cobain in *Rolling Stone*, 27/1/94, interviewed by David Fricke

Dynamic structure has been probably the most enduring facet of the Pixies sound, as much of the grunge scene and 1990's alternative rock based its sound around this. Weezer, Everclear and Blur have all name-checked the Pixies as key to their sound: Everclear singer Art Alexakis believed that: "the Pixies were probably the most influential band in the last 20 years."¹⁶

Dynamics In The Pixies' Music

The use of dynamics was probably the greatest single legacy that the Pixies left to rock music. Few alternative bands prior to the Pixies had used loud and soft contrasts to the extent that the Pixies did, yet since it has become an alternative rock staple. Many of the Pixies' most influential contemporaries often neglected this side of their music (for example Hüsker Dü, Dinosaur Jr and Jesus & Mary Chain), although Sonic Youth made some use of volume contrasts.

The Pixies' dynamic sensibilities were apparent from the very start of their career, and continued throughout. The whole of *Come On Pilgrim* approaches volume contrasts as a major point, and this is emphasised by the production, which highlights each instrument individually and doesn't seek to turn the band into one inseparable whole.

'Caribou' begins with some solo electric guitar and builds up in layers. Dynamics vary between sections and techniques such as tremolo picking increase the intensity, a device also found in 'Vamos' and 'Where Is My Mind?'

The other approach to dynamics in the context of an alternative rock song is to vary the levels strophically (between verse and chorus). A good early example is 'Gigantic' in which the verses are bass, drums and vocals only. If the guitar is used, it is a special effect, usually feedback. For the chorus, loud electric guitars are brought in to boost the sound. The next verse then reverts to quiet, then a loud chorus and so on.

On *Doolittle*, the equivalent is 'Tame' (track 5) which makes an even more extreme distinction between verse and chorus. 'I Bleed', 'Monkey Gone To Heaven' and 'Gouge Away' also have verses with bass and drums only contrasting with full-on choruses. Where guitars are used in the verses of these tracks, they are most often intermittent special effects.

The use of dynamics is less apparent on *Bossanova* and *Trompe Le Monde*, in keeping with the production and style of the albums.

The influence on Nirvana has been mentioned previously, and is marked, especially on 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' (track 6), which at times sounds like a more commercial Pixies song, stripped to its bare essentials.

The song begins with the famous riff, which then breaks down into a quiet verse with a subtle two-note guitar accompaniment. The chorus contrasts this with loud guitars then, after the guitar solo, falls back into the verse before ending on another loud chorus.

¹⁶ Art Alexakis (Everclear) in Addicted To Noise

The musical score for the main riff and chorus of 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' is presented in a system with four staves. The top staff is the vocal line in treble clef, showing a melody of eighth and quarter notes. The second staff is the guitar part in treble clef, featuring a complex arpeggiated pattern. The third staff is the bass line in bass clef, consisting of a steady eighth-note rhythm. The fourth staff contains TAB notation for both guitar and bass, with numbers 1-6 indicating fret positions. The key signature has two flats (B-flat major) and the time signature is 4/4.

Fig 3.4 Main riff and chorus of 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' by Nirvana (Cobain/Novoselic/Grohl, 1991) – track 6

The musical score for the verse of 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' is presented in a system with four staves. The top staff is the vocal line in treble clef, showing a melody of quarter and eighth notes. The second staff is the guitar part in treble clef, featuring a simple arpeggiated pattern. The third staff is the bass line in bass clef, consisting of a steady eighth-note rhythm. The fourth staff contains TAB notation for both guitar and bass, with numbers 1-4 indicating fret positions. The key signature has two flats (B-flat major) and the time signature is 4/4.

Fig 3.5 Verse to 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' by Nirvana (Cobain/Novoselic/Grohl, 1991) – track 6

While the bass is still active, the guitar plays a minor part, returning in the chorus. This echoes the Pixies songs 'Gouge Away' and 'Tame' in particular, as the bass part in each is very active.

Nirvana were the most prominent, but not the only band to use Pixies-style dynamics. Many others have used this: 'Creep' by Radiohead is another example of the soft verse/loud chorus structure. The verse consists of understated guitar arpeggios, while the chorus employs heavy distortion and tremolo-picked guitar octaves.

The pioneering use of dynamics in an alternative rock context has been the Pixies most important innovation, and one that has now become rock convention.

4. PUNK ROCK

Punk Rock in the Pixies' era was subject to the influence of a number of preceding artists and sub-genres. Alternative rock in the 1980's was heavily influenced by punk: New York punk inspired Sonic Youth, US hardcore affected Hüsker Dü, and so on. The Pixies music was certainly informed by the punk rock ethic: generally (and in particular their earlier work) their music was stripped down and raw sounding, they rarely used instrumentation other than the basic rock band line-up, and many of their songs were identifiable as punk rock tracks. Punk rock can certainly be described as a major influence on the Pixies, and most of their songs had a punk style of some sort.

Punk rock can be a difficult subject to define, but most punk has in common: an 'angry' theme or attitude; loud, untechnical, guitar-based music; a 'do-it-yourself' ethic; and an unmelodic feel. This is exemplified by bands such as the Sex Pistols, the Damned and Black Flag.

It is generally accepted that Thompson was introduced to punk rock at college by Santiago: "Joey... introduced [Charles] to the... sounds of punk."¹⁷ The first major punk rock artist that caught his attention was Iggy Pop. He has said: "I like Iggy Pop a lot,"¹⁸ and "I guess I just want to rock like Iggy and all those other people. Iggy is the only guy I can really trace directly. I can listen to a Pixies record and say, Oh yeah, there is some Iggy Pop impersonating right there."¹⁹

Iggy Pop's style is based around a raw form of rock'n'roll, with loud guitars and sneered, disinterested vocals. Thompson's vocal technique was compared to that of Iggy Pop on a number of occasions: "[Thompson has an] Iggy-esque bawl,"²⁰ "Charles' voice is vaguely reminiscent of Iggy."²¹

Punk Rock Techniques

The clearest way to analyse the presence of punk styles is to study the punk rock features that appear in the band's music. 'Debaser' (track 7) is based around three repeated chords, the vocals are screamed, and the chords are barre chords rather than power (5th) chords, all common characteristics of 1970's punk rock. If barre chords are used rather than power chords, it gives a less defined edge to the guitar sound when used with distortion. Using the third in a chord also adds tonality, which gives opportunities for dissonance within the guitar part. Examples of the use of full barre chords in this setting include: 'Ever Fallen In Love?' by the Buzzcocks; 'White Riot' by The Clash; and 'Alternative Ulster' by Stiff Little Fingers. In 'Debaser', these barre chords are used in a simple three-chord pattern over the verse and do take away from the clarity of the guitar sound, which was probably the desired effect.

¹⁷ Official Pixies biography from www.4ADcom, taken from Record Collector #146

¹⁸ Melody Maker interview, March 1988

¹⁹ Black Francis, Alternative Press (interviewed by Marlene Goldman), Vol.4 #22, September 1989

²⁰ Rolling Stone (David Fricke) interview Black Francis and Kim Deal, June 15, 1989

²¹ Melody Maker preview of 'Trompe Le Monde', August 1991

Fig 4.1 Verse rhythm guitar in 'Debaser' (Black Francis, 1989) – track 7

The chord of G major in the key of F major creates dissonance by adding the bV of the scale (B natural). The sliding barre chords are another typically punk characteristic: the introduction to the Sex Pistols' 'Anarchy In The UK' or the Undertones' 'Teenage Kicks' both feature sliding chords. A more common practice in punk rock is the slide into a chord from a semitone below, something that can be found in 'New Rose' by the Damned and the introduction to 'God Save The Queen' by the Sex Pistols (track 8). This stylistic trait is found most clearly in the Pixies' 'Head On' (track 4), a characteristic carried over from the original by the Jesus & Mary Chain. The verse section is based around a repeated C major chord played rapidly with down-strokes. At the end of each verse, the guitar plays rapid sliding chords of one semitone back into the C chord.

Fig 4.2 First verse, 'Head On' (Reid/Reid, 1990) – track 4

This is reminiscent of the introduction to 'God Save The Queen', which uses a similar technique at a higher register.

The musical notation shows a sequence of chords in a 4/4 time signature. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The tablature below the staff indicates the fret positions for the strings T, A, and B. The first system has two measures, each with a repeat sign. The second system has one measure with a repeat sign. The third system has one measure with a repeat sign. The tablature uses numbers 11, 12, 13, and 14 to indicate fret positions.

Fig 4.3 'God Save The Queen' by the Sex Pistols (Cook/Matlock/Jones/Lydon, 1977) – track 8

Punk Rock Chord Progressions

The use of the repetitious and simple chord sequence in 'Head On' is echoed in songs like 'Broken Face', 'U-Mass', and 'Gigantic' and is significant in terms of punk influence. Many punk songs were based on the three-chord trick (using I, IV and V), or added II_m or VI_m to this. For example, 'Blitzkrieg Bop' by the Ramones is A, D and E (I-IV-V), and 'Alternative Ulster' is D-A-B_m-G (I-V-VI_m-IV). These are typical of punk chord progressions: very basic and with minimum technical difficulty. The Pixies' more punk rock-styled songs use progressions such as these at some point in the song, if not throughout. The best example of this is 'U-Mass' which uses two punk progressions: one for the verse, one for the chorus. The verse uses G5-F5-C5-D5, which is II-I-V-VI. The chorus is in the same key but adds the IV chord: G5-C5-F5-Bb5, which is II-V-I-IV. The chorus, in particular, shows a great similarity to Nirvana's 'Smells Like Teen Spirit', probably the biggest punk rock song of the 1990's (see Chapter 3).

The Use Of Punk Rock Characteristics In The Pixies' Music

Come On Pilgrim had a number of punk-inspired moments, most notably 'I've Been Tired', but there were no tracks that could be described as punk rock songs. Punk engineer Steve Albini, famous for his raw production techniques and indie ethics, produced the Pixies' first full-length album, *Surfer Rosa*. The result was an album much harsher than the first: some of the songs, such as 'Something Against You' and 'Broken Face' were very much punk rock songs, although with a 'quirky' edge.

Doolittle featured a number of punk rock songs ('Debaser', 'Tame') but the production emphasised less the harshness of the band's sound. This pattern was continued on 'Bossanova', and though some of the band's edgier sound was restored in *Trompe Le Monde*, the overall production was considerably smoother than *Surfer Rosa*. So the band employed punk rock at all stages of their career, with a peak on *Surfer Rosa*. However, punk rock is an attitude that runs through most alternative music and incorporates sound, ethics and style. All these were present in the Pixies music and much of it demonstrates an admiration and acknowledged influence of punk rock.

5. SURF MUSIC

Surf music originated in early 1960's California. The sound was based on instrumental rock'n'roll; with some a number of defining features.

The Pixies had always featured an element of this genre in their music.

Thompson said: "We do like a lot of surf music too. I think some of our stuff sounds kinda surfy sometimes. The sound is really basic and totally involves chord progressions and a cute little riff, and that's one of our rules too, the chord progression and the song itself, and then whatever cute little riffs we can put on top of it."²²

This is a reasonably accurate summary of surf music: the style itself tends to be very basic. Most often, the band will consist of drums, bass and electric guitar, with a saxophone or second guitar for the melody line. The lead guitar sound was developed from the rockabilly style prevalent in the 1950's (see chapter 11).

Surf guitarists such as Dick Dale and the Surfaris' Jim Fuller adapted and refined this approach by adding artificial reverb and playing almost exclusively with Fender equipment.

A surf track will often feature a repeated, prominent drum riff and an un-syncopated single-note (not chord-based) lead guitar riff. Other common features include: tremolo-picked guitar lines; drum-derivative guitar rhythms; and use of the guitar's tremolo arm.

Most Pixies biographies state that Thompson discovered these old surf tunes while writing the band's third album, *Bossanova*, and it is certainly true that this is the album that most displays the surf influence. However, it is possible to trace the surf roots further back than this.

Rhythm And Technique In 'Levitate Me'

'Levitate Me' (track 9) is the final track on the Pixies debut mini-album, *Come On Pilgrim*. Its primary musical characteristic is the tremolo-picked guitar line, which introduces the song and continues throughout (see fig.1). This technique bears a strong resemblance to the picking style of Dick Dale, one of the founders of the surf genre. He was renowned for his fast, heavy tremolo picking. The style resulted in a sound that has been very influential on genres such as metal and punk - as Thompson has stated: "Dick Dale is an influence on everybody."²³

Figure 2 shows the opening bars of 'Night Rider' (track 10). The similarities between the two are clear, from the fast semiquaver rhythm to the tremolo picking technique.

There are very few other guitarists that play in this way, so it is possible to establish, with Thompson's own admission, that the Pixies were certainly influenced by Dale's music.

²² Black Francis, *The Catalogue* (interviewed by Martin Aston), April 1989

²³ Frank Black, on FrankBlack.net web forum

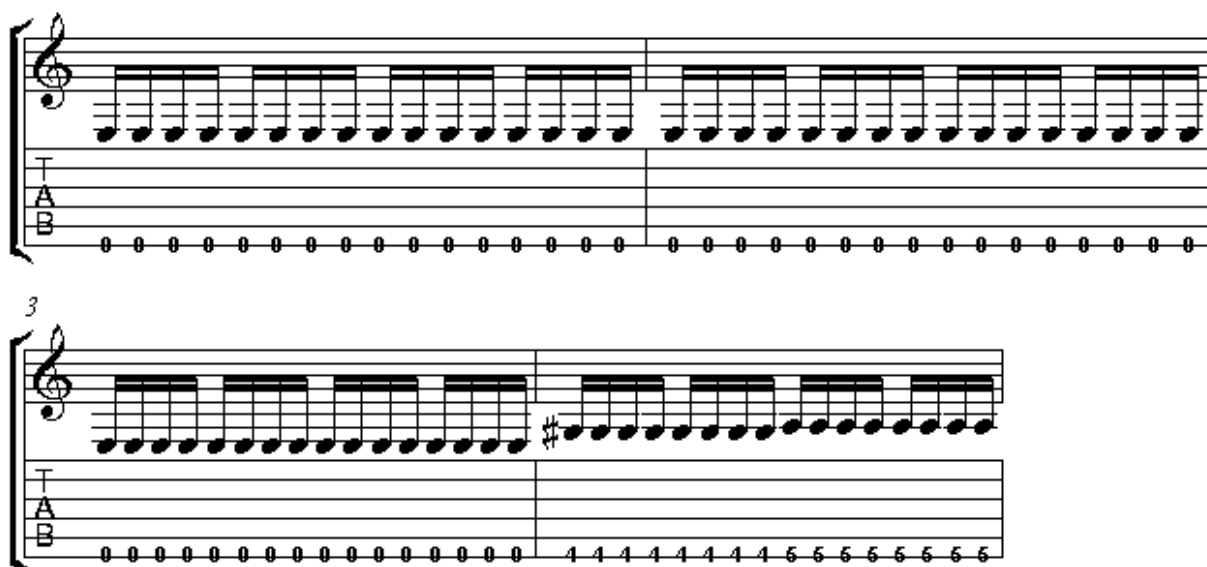


Fig 5.1 Main guitar riff of 'Levitate Me' (Black Francis, 1987) – track 9

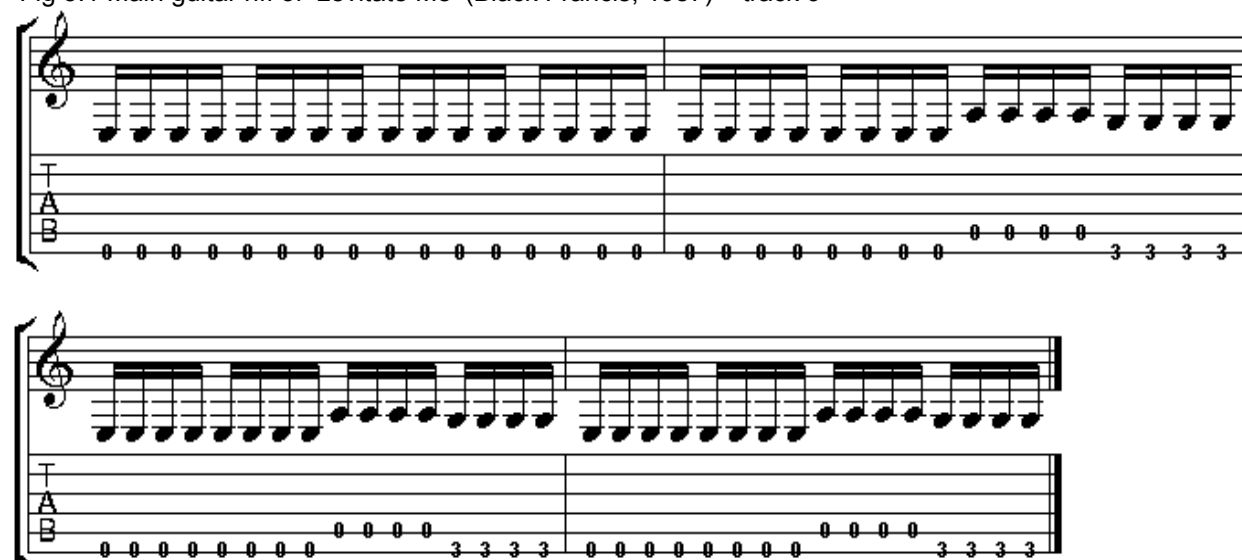


Fig 5.2 Main theme from 'Night Rider' by Dick Dale (Dale, 1963) – track 10

Despite variations between the pieces – such as major/minor tonality – it is plain to see that the playing style is a deliberate reference to Dick Dale. Although the notation shows a semi-quaver pattern throughout, the tempo of both pieces is fast enough to create a feel that the guitarist is actually just picking the strings as fast as possible. 'Night Rider' has a tempo of around 200 bpm, and to sustain an exact semiquaver tremolo-picking technique for a whole song would be virtually impossible. Dick Dale's influence elsewhere in the Pixies' catalogue is most often defined by his picking techniques: 'I'm Amazed', 'Crackity Jones', and 'Stormy Weather' all feature Dale-style moments.

The Pixies' Adaptation Of The Classic Surf Style & Tone: 'Cecilia Ann'

'Cecilia Ann' (track 11) is the opening track on the Pixies *Bossanova*, often seen as the band's surf album. It is a cover of a song from the 1960's by the

Surftones, and displays many of the classic characteristics of an instrumental surf song. The track is a short (2:06) instrumental led by a reverb-laden lead guitar, and backed by a standard rock'n'roll line up of rhythm guitar, drums and bass guitar. The melody at the start is based on an Em chord, moving to the dominant B (no third is played in this chord) via the III chord G. This riff is played later at a higher register, but remains in the key of Em.

The structure is quite typical – if a little more harmonically advanced – of many surf songs. Although a number of atypical rock'n'roll chords are used, they always serve to highlight the harmonic centre of Em. The use of a recurring melody is also a very common and important feature in this genre: famous surf tracks such as 'Pipeline' by the Lively Ones, and 'Walk Don't Run' by the Ventures feature such guitar lines, 'Pipeline' being an important reference point, featuring the low-register guitar melody and the well-established harmonic centre.

The tones of the instruments used in this piece are also important – classical musical analysis pays virtually no attention to this aspect, but popular music, relying on the recorded format, needs analysis in this area also. For example, there is a classic surf guitar tone: the lead guitar will be a Fender Stratocaster played through an amplifier such as a Fender Twin. Each instrument and amplifier has an individual sound or 'tone': these Fender instruments have a robust sound quality, which does not become too thick because of the single-coil pickups on the guitar, and the particular valves and components used in the amplifier.

The other major factor in the surf sound is the use of artificial reverb. The first unit produced by Fender was procured by Dick Dale, who used it in his most famous song, 'Misirlou'. After that, the sound was appropriated by most artists in the small genre, featuring heavily in tracks such as 'Pipeline' and 'Bustin' Surfboards' by the Tornadoes. Commentators have stated that the reverb gives the sound a 'splashy' quality, redolent of the ocean and breaking waves. However, this is disputed by many of the artists, who say it merely gave a distinctive effect to the guitar's sound.

The Pixies generally used Fender Telecaster guitars (which give a similar effect to the Stratocaster due to the single-coil pickups) and Fender amps. Although their guitar tone usually does not feature much reverb, this track introduces a sizeable amount,²⁴ which emphasises the surf guitar sound. Apart from an increase in volume and distortion, in line with general trends in popular music, this track is a fairly straight cover, very much in the style of old surf songs. From this we can draw the conclusion that surf instrumentals were very much a part of the band's collective consciousness as regards influences and sound.

The surf guitar tone is found in a number of Pixies songs, and it is fairly easy to spot given its distinctive timbre. It appears in the main riff to 'Here Comes Your Man', 'There Goes My Gun' and 'Havalina'. 'Here Comes Your Man' has

²⁴ In fact, the whole album features more reverb, and a much smoother sound all round, leading to criticisms that the material sounded too 'produced'. However, it is still fair to say that this track features a large amount of 'splashy' reverb on the guitar, in a surf style.

a classic surf style riff, which is very simple and leads into the verse arpeggios. 'There Goes My Gun' has a low-register, riff style guitar solo very much in the surf style, similar to the riff in 'Pipeline' – this is also found in 'Havalina', in which the surf-style guitar solo brings to mind George Harrison's guitar style²⁵, proving that many genres overlap and cross-reference.

Surf Melodies In The Pixies' Music

Melody was key to most surf tracks. Songs such as 'Pipeline' by the Chantays and 'Misirlou' by Dick Dale feature some of the most famous melodies in popular music. Pixies songs usually had a strong sense of melody, or at least incorporated it to some extent.

There is a defining style of surf guitar melody. Usually, the melodies are played at a medium to low register, rather than at a high pitch, and at a medium-paced tempo (around 150-170bpm). The tune is often constructed mostly from straight quaver patterns, not swung. Classic examples include 'Pipeline' and 'Misirlou'. On 'Pipeline' the melody is played on electric piano, which is an interesting derivation from the surf norm. 'Misirlou' is an old Greek pop song and utilises a tremolo-picked Spanish Phrygian scale. Examples of surf melodies in the Pixies' music occur regularly. 'Cecilia Ann' is an obvious example, but surf riffs and melodies are found in 'Debaser', 'Here Comes Your Man', 'There Goes My Gun', 'Havalina' and 'Ana' among others. The guitar solo in 'There Goes My Gun' (track 13) is played at a similar pitch and tempo as 'Pipeline', as performed by the Lively Ones (track 12).

The image displays two systems of musical notation for the main riff to 'Pipeline'. The first system is in 4/4 time, featuring a melody of eighth notes on a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The corresponding guitar tablature shows fret numbers 2, 0, 2, 0, 2, 4, 2, 0, 2, 4, 2 across the strings T, A, B. The second system is in 3/4 time, with a melody of eighth notes and a quarter note on a treble clef staff. The guitar tablature shows fret numbers 4, 2, 0, 2, 0, 2, and a final fretted note (2) on the B string.

Fig 5.3 Main riff to 'Pipeline' by the Chantays (Spickard/Carman, 1963) – track 12

²⁵ "Havalina'... boasts lead guitar of which 'Rubber Soul'-era George Harrison would have been proud." Q review of Bossanova, Matt Snow, Q#48, September 1990

The image shows a musical score for a guitar solo. It is in 4/4 time and the key signature has two sharps (D major). The score is divided into two systems, labeled '1.' and '2.'. Each system consists of a treble clef staff with a key signature of two sharps and a 4/4 time signature. Below each staff is a guitar tablature with fret numbers. The first system has a melody of eighth and quarter notes with slurs, and a fret sequence of 2, 0, 2, 4, 2, 0. The second system has a similar melody and a fret sequence of 4, 2, 0, 2, 4, 2, 2, 0.

Fig 5.4 Guitar solo in 'There Goes My Gun' (Black Francis, 1989) – track 13

Although the guitar solo is less rhythmically straightforward than the riff, the similarities are clear: the pitch, tempo, tone and style are all comparable. Another surf melody, this time as an introduction, occurs in 'Ana' (track 14). The unusual structure of the song is covered in the next section, but the melody is transcribed below (Fig 5.5).

It is possible to see how almost all notes are concordant with the backing, and even though the chord structure is reasonably complex, the tune remains simple and in the same fret board position. This melody is key to 'Ana', as it forms the basis of the vocal line also. This kind of melodic composition is most reminiscent of the Beach Boys, especially on 'Pet Sounds', where the song composition and arrangement is regarded as some of the best ever recorded. The style is still typically surf, however, including the straight quaver passages, the lack of bent notes as found in other genres and the guitar tone.

Harmonies & Structure In Vocal Surf Music & The Beach Boys

The term 'surf music' does not only cover instrumentals, but encapsulates the vocal harmony groups of early 1960's California, such as Jan & Dean and The Beach Boys, the latter being particularly significant for the Pixies. While most of these groups didn't progress any further than surf-themed harmony pop songs, the Beach Boys evolved their sound to include lushly orchestrated mainstream pop songs. Their album 'Pet Sounds' has been recognised as one of the best albums ever recorded, in terms of songwriting and arrangements.

On *Bossanova* particularly, the Pixies attempted to recreate some of the more complex pop songs and vocal harmonies found on Beach Boys albums. For example, 'Ana' uses a very complex chord structure, uncharacteristic of the punky approach that the band had employed on previous albums. This song in particular has a very mellow sound and surf-inspired lyrical theme.

The song begins with a diminished fifth jump from E to Bbm, and goes on to play an unusual Bbm chord progression (see fig.5.5). For a pop song this is highly complex, especially as the song modulates again later, and indicative of the move away from the bands more straightforward roots and towards a higher level of composition and arrangement.

'The Happening', from the same album, emphasises more the harmonies of the Beach Boys. The Pixies have become famous for their male/female harmonies, and this track is an excellent example of this. The second section of the song is an extended outro, and features female backing vocals supporting a melodic lead vocal line. This also features in 'Havalina', and lead vocal harmonies appear in 'All Over The World'. The use of vocal harmonies is far more apparent on this album than on any other, which underlines the theory that this album was a reaction to the Pixies' punk roots. It also gives credence to the official biography's claim that Thompson had recently discovered these old surf records. This biography also mentions this in connection with the use of a theremin in 'Velouria' – this instrument was best known for its use in the Beach Boys' 'Good Vibrations'.²⁶

²⁶ "Charles' recent discovery of surf records - Dick Dale, Link Wray and the Ventures - led to the use of a theremin (of the Beach Boys' 'Good Vibrations' fame) and an unearthing of the Surftones old hit, 'Cecilia Ann'". Official 4AD biography, www.4AD.com, taken in part from Record Collector #146.

System 1 (Measures 1-5): Chords: B^bm, A, D^b, G^b, A. Tablature: 11 11 11, (11) 10 11 10 8 10, 11, 11 11 8 11.

System 2 (Measures 6-10): Chords: B^bm, A, D^b, G^b, A. Tablature: 11 8, 7, 10 11 10 8 10, 11, (11) 11 8 11.

System 3 (Measures 11-12): Chords: D^b, A^b, D^b, A^b. Tablature: 11, 11 8 9 11, 8 8 11, 12.

System 4 (Measures 13-14): Chords: A, B^bm, E, B^bm. Tablature: 9, 11 8 9 11, 10 10 9 9, 10, (10).

Fig 5.5 Lead guitar introduction to 'Ana' (Black Francis, 1990)

Summary Of The Use Of Surf Music By The Pixies

Although the surf characteristics appear on various Pixies albums, it is clear that Thompson must have discovered these band's at around the time of *Bossanova*, or at least chosen to include their legacy in his music at this point. This coincides with the band's apparent desire to make more commercial music: it was at this time that the Pixies had their biggest hit – 'Velouria' reached number 28 in the UK chart. It is difficult to say what prompted this, as only two years early they had released *Surfer Rosa*, which was far removed from the smooth sound of *Bossanova*. The most likely explanation is that the record was a reaction to the previous albums, and an attempt to prevent the stagnation of their sound. This reasoning would also explain why *Trompe Le Monde*, their next album, would feature very little of the surf and pop references.

Some of the surf influence might be explained by the genre's appropriation by other acts. In the early 1980's, the Dead Kennedy's used surf riffs with all the defining characteristics and tone in their groundbreaking punk rock. Closer to the time of the Pixies, Dinosaur Jr utilised surf-style vocal harmonies, 'twangy' riffs and even a theremin in 'Take A Run At The Sun'. It is very likely that the Pixies were aware of these artists, and the use of surf styles by these acts may have inspired them to incorporate it in their own music.

After the Pixies, surf music continues to find a place in many band's sounds. Electric Six's recent hit 'Gay Bar' uses a very clear surf riff as the main hook of the song, and punk bands such as Weezer and Blink 182 have incorporated vocal harmonies into their music.

The music of the Pixies, in some form or another, encapsulated almost all of the features of classic surf music. Dick Dale was acknowledged on 'Levitate Me' and elsewhere, surf riffs and song structures punctuated the whole of the *Bossanova* album, as did the surf guitar tone. The vocal harmonies of the Beach Boys were referenced a number of times, although adapted to the Pixies' line-up and alternative rock agenda: their use set the band slightly apart from their peers. The surf style was one of the defining points of the Pixies' music and there are a number of songs, most notably 'Ana' and 'Cecilia Ann' that can be classified as surf songs. It is therefore possible to class surf music as a primary influence upon the band's sound.

6. SPANISH MUSIC

The Spanish influence is one of the most celebrated aspects of the Pixies music, yet most of the commentary focuses on the use of Spanish in Thompson's lyrics. There are, however, many Spanish features in the Pixies music, especially in the band's earlier output. It is generally acknowledged that the Spanish influence was inspired by Thompson's six-month visit to Puerto Rico. After he returned from this trip, he dropped out of college with Santiago (himself of Filipino and Spanish descent) to form the Pixies. Therefore, it is no surprise that the music he heard in Puerto Rico had such a big effect on his earlier songs. It was notably absent in later recordings: when questioned, Thompson replied "I wish I could write more songs in Spanish but it's not natural for me,"²⁷ signifying that the Spanish style was probably just a 'phase'.

Spanish music in general and dance forms like flamenco in particular, are most notable for their use of rhythm. Whereas most western folk music is based on melody, Iberian folk music is for dancing: lyrics will be minimal and the focus will be on the rhythm, performed with clapping, percussion and guitar.

Music in Puerto Rico is very much influenced by traditional Spanish music, but has developed into something completely separate through the assimilation of different musical styles. It is still specifically for dancing, and is thus very rhythmic in the same way as much Spanish music. The most famous musical export from Puerto Rico has been salsa, based around variations on a common syncopated 'clave', or rhythm. Other styles include plena, with rhythms in 2/4 time, and bomba, based on a call-and-response dance sequence.

The Use Of Spanish Rhythms in 'Vamos'

'Vamos' (track 15) features lyrics in a Spanish/English hybrid ("Esta pensando sobre viviendo con mi sister en New Jersey"), and the song alternates between the two languages. This track is probably the Pixies' defining moment in terms of Spanish music, and it features a very rhythmic use of all the instruments.

The song is in 3/4 time, and has a distinctive rhythm that continues throughout most of the track.



Fig 6.1 Rhythm guitar part from 'Vamos' (Black Francis, 1987) – track 15

²⁷ Black Francis, *The Catalogue*, (interviewed by Martin Aston), April 1989

The accented third beat gives a distinctive propulsion to the rhythm of the song, and is a tool often found in traditional Spanish dance music such as flamenco. The pre-chorus section provides a brief pause in the tempo consisting of two held chords of Bm and G before the chorus begins. The chorus is in 2/4 time (as found in plena), and a new chord progression is now introduced (again repeated throughout the section), Em-G-A-B (notice the use of the B major chord as the dominant in a minor key).

The rhythm is primarily created by the coincidence of the kick drum and bass guitar. The bass plays the root notes of each chord, and the drummer plays the kick drum on the first of each beat. The rhythm guitar adds another percussive element, as the timbre of the sound is very much at the treble end of the spectrum. This detracts from the melody but adds to the rhythmic feel of the song. This is reminiscent of flamenco guitar playing, which is used more for its rhythmic qualities than its melodic capabilities. The guitar is also used to add variation to the rhythm, for example at some points the normally straight-quaver guitar part is played as semiquavers. This is a feature often found in flamenco as the tempo and intensity of the song increases.

There is also a lead guitar part in 'Vamos': although this is rarely found in Spanish dance, its use in this context can be seen as influenced by this style. It is intermittent in the song but has a set part in the verse, a call-and-response device reminiscent from bomba. When Thompson finishes each line of lyrics, the vocals are complemented by a fast sliding lead pattern, of which the individual notes are barely distinguishable.

The guitar solo (track 2) is composed of almost entirely rhythmic patterns. It is basically an attempt to create a series of unmelodic, discordant sounds. In a live setting, the guitar solo was used as a platform for improvisation (something which is not common in Spanish music or the Pixies): "We never vamped much, but we did on this song."²⁸

To summarise 'Vamos', it is clearly a song in the traditions of Spanish and Puerto Rican music. Its emphasis is almost entirely on rhythm to the exclusion of melody, and features time signatures and rhythms familiar from flamenco, plena, bomba and other traditional Spanish/Caribbean music forms. This track deals with lyrical themes picked up from Thompson's various experiences at college and in Puerto Rico, and enforces the impression that the Pixies were strongly influenced by events and music in their own lives.

Spanish Harmony And Rhythm In 'Isla De Encanta'

'Isla De Encanta' (track 16) is another example of the Pixies' use of Spanish styles. This time the lyrics are completely in Spanish, and they appear to be partly chosen for their particular sound and timbre. The music is percussive in a similar vein to 'Vamos', although there is certainly more melody in this track. The main chord progression that constitutes the riff and verse is B-Bb-A-C. The chromaticism in this progression is also evident in the lead guitar parts, which are based on ascending chromatic phrases. These characteristics

²⁸ Frank Black, liner notes to 'Complete "B"-Sides' compilation, 1997

have more in common with flamenco guitar playing, which also shares the frenetic strumming patterns with this song.

The most common flamenco progression consists of an E-shape chord that is moved chromatically around the fret board to create unusual harmonies in its clash with non-diatonic open strings.

Fig 6.2 Flamenco-style chromatic chord sequence

'Isla De Encanta's chromatic chord sequence does not utilise the ringing open strings, but retains the chromatic characteristics of a flamenco piece. Its rhythm is also of interest: the triplet rhythm in the second half of the bar gives the impression that the tempo is increasing, and lends the sequence a driving feel which propels the listener to the next bar as if he is 'falling' into it. This use of propulsive rhythms to arrest the listener's attention and draw him into the rhythm almost certainly stems from flamenco.

Fig 6.3 Introduction and verse guitar part from 'Isla De Encanta' (Black Francis, 1987) – track 16

Other Songs With A Spanish Influence

Many of the songs on *Come On Pilgrim* use the same percussive approach to the acoustic guitar part, which is emphasised in the mix: the acoustic guitar is often treated so that only the treble comes through, with the momentum being provided by the drums and bass. This comes through particularly in 'Nimrod's Son', and 'Oh My Golly!' (from *Surfer Rosa*). It appears that after this, Thompson (as principal songwriter) drops these Spanish stylisms, and any later occurrence tends to be as passing reference: the Spanish language in 'Crackity Jones'; the chromatic C-pedal chord sequence in 'Havalina'; and the

use of Spanish language for 'Evil Hearted You'. None of these show the level of musical influence apparent in the first album and this goes some way to proving that the Spanish influence was derived from Thompson's stay in Puerto Rico, and lost its appeal quickly. This categorises the Spanish influence in the Pixies music as secondary: that is, tracks such as 'Vamos' and 'Isla De Encanta' are heavily Spanish influenced, but are not themselves Spanish music.

In terms of post-Pixies influence, the Spanish element is one of the major features of the Pixies music that has not been adopted by other indie or alternative bands – the style is rarely found today.

7. THE BEATLES & POPULAR MUSIC

The Beatles have influenced most of the pop music that has come after them and they were also a diverse band, incorporating many sorts of music. This makes it difficult then to pin down any one band as being overly influenced by the Beatles. However, there are occasions in the Pixies music where it is possible to detect a specific Beatles influence. It is very likely that Thompson was aware of the music of the Beatles as he was growing up, and some songs have almost explicit Beatles references. The Beatles influence is therefore of secondary importance in the Pixies music: the songs are not exact replicas of the Beatles, but their influence is more than just incidental.

Harmonic and Thematic References in 'Here Comes Your Man'

The clearest Beatles references come in this track from *Doolittle*. The track begins with a G7sus4 chord (track 18), with a very similar sound to the opening G chord²⁹ of the Beatles 'A Hard Day's Night' (track 17). Here too the chord is played hard once then left to ring out before the rest of the band enters. This is a gestural reference to this famous chord, but is the only clear incidence of this in the Pixies music. 'I Feel Fine' by the Beatles is another example of a gestural device being used as an introduction: the burst of feedback at the beginning is easily identifiable. This is comparable to the Pixies' 'Cecilia Ann', where the track is opened with an amp 'explosion', most likely caused by inserting the guitar lead while the amp is on. This creates a burst of noise that, like 'I Feel Fine', has no melodic content, but signifies the opening of the track in the same way.

The figure shows five guitar chords labeled (a) through (e). Each chord is represented by a treble clef staff with notes and a corresponding six-line tablature below it. The chords are: (a) G7sus4, (b) G11sus4, (c) Fadd9/G, (d) G7sus4, and (e) G9sus4/A. The tablature for (a) shows frets 1, 1, 3, 3, 3, 3. For (b) it shows 1, 1, 2, 3, 3, 3. For (c) it shows 3, 1, 2, 3, 3, 3. For (d) it shows 3, 3, 3, 3, 3, 3. For (e) it shows 3, 3, 3, 3, 3, 3.

Fig 7.1 (a) G7sus4: opening chord from 'Here Comes Your Man' (Black Francis, 1987)³⁰ – track 18
 (b) – (e) Suggested opening chords from 'A Hard Day's Night' by the Beatles (Lennon/McCartney, 1964)³¹ – track 17

²⁹ The opening chord of 'A Hard Day's Night' is a very contentious issue, and a number of possible fingerings have been suggested (see note 31)

³⁰ Total Guitar #96, May 2002, Pete Whittard

³¹ (b) From 'Revolution In The Head' by Ian MacDonald, p.90; (c) "As shown to Gary Moore by George Harrison", Jason Sidwell, see Appendix C; (d) Jason Sidwell, see Appendix C; (e) As used by Neville Martin, see Appendix C.

This chord seems to be a clear Beatles reference (especially given the contention surrounding George Harrison’s fingering), and the song carries on in a similar way: it is a straightforward three-chord pop song with a surf style riff that is also reminiscent of the Beatles’ ‘Day Tripper’ (track 20). The riff is key to the tune, and reappears in the chorus reinforcing the melody. Ian McDonald says that ‘Day Tripper’ is “entirely dependent on its riff,”³² and Tim Riley says, “the naked electric guitar riff on the left channel implies the entire track’s attitude and form in its initial statement.”³³ While the riff to ‘Here Comes Your Man’ (track 19) is not specifically on the left channel, both these statements apply completely to the song. Its riff is both the most memorable part of the song and its main hook, and actually sounds similar to that of ‘Day Tripper’: both are single note, low-to-middle register looped melodies played at a similar tempo. The riff is also reminiscent of the Byrd’s ‘Mr Tambourine Man’, which again features a similar ‘naked’ electric guitar riff followed by the full band entry. The Byrd’s were influenced by the Beatles and in return influenced them, utilising the guitar style and arrangements, and vocal harmonies familiar from the Beatles.

Fig 7.2 Main riff to ‘Here Comes Your Man’ (Black Francis, 1987) – track 19

Fig 7.3 Main riff to ‘Day Tripper’ by the Beatles (Lennon/McCartney, 1964) – track 20

³² ‘Revolution in the Head’ by Ian MacDonal, p.134

³³ ‘Tell Me Why’ by Tim Riley, p.172

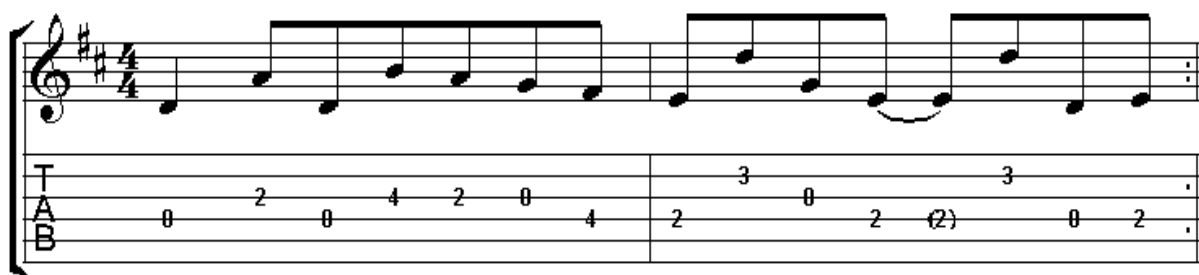


Fig 7.4 Main riff from 'Mr. Tambourine Man' by The Byrds (Dylan, 1964)

As you can see, 'Day Tripper' is based more on a pentatonic, blues style lick than 'Here Comes Your Man', but all three riffs end on the V chord, which leads the listener to expect a resolution, giving a 'looping' feel. This thematic use of a melodic pop riff is not common in the Pixies' music: there is more tendency to utilise a longer, less structured introduction, although the riff to 'Debaser' suggests bands like the Beatles and the Shadows.

Song Structure In 'Here Comes Your Man'

The final significant Beatles reference in 'Here Comes Your Man', apart from the general mid-tempo, 1960's pop feel is the bridge section (track 21). The Beatles were famous for their use of middle eights and bridge sections: Dominic Pedler, author of 'The Songwriting Secrets Of The Beatles', says, "[The Beatles] were masters of the precision-crafted bridge."³⁴ In 'Here Comes Your Man', the Pixies use a minor bridge section, with the chords Bm-G-A-D, or VI-IV-V-I, so that it resolves back to the tonic chord for the start of the chorus. The use of a minor bridge, especially using the VI chord was common in the Beatles music, for example 'We Can Work It Out' also has a Bm bridge in a D major song.

Although this may not be a specific Beatles reference like the opening chord and the riff, the Beatles pioneered the use of all types of middle eights and bridges in songs, so the Pixies must have been at least indirectly influenced by that.

Orchestration In 'Monkey Gone To Heaven'

'Monkey Gone To Heaven' (track 22) is the only Pixies song to feature a string section, and it is used to supplement the sound on the bass-and-drums-only verse, and to bolster the chorus. The bulk of the sound comes from the 'cellos, and when introduced, they follow the root notes of the chords. The note values alternate between staccato quavers on the shorter chords to long semibreves in the D-Bm verse section.

³⁴ From the article 'The Beatles Songwriting Tricks' by Dominic Pedler, in Total Guitar #60, September 1999

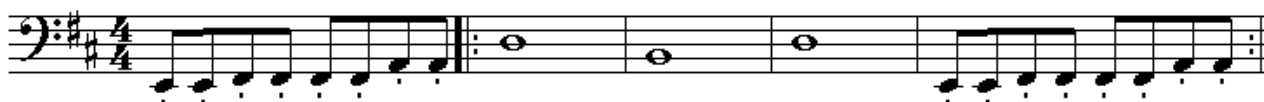


Fig 7.5 'Cello part for verse of 'Monkey Gone To Heaven' (Black Francis, 1989) – track 22

This staccato to legato style, in this context, is similar to the use in the Beatles' 'Eleanor Rigby' (track 23). In both, the staccato quavers precede the main vocal part, and the legato semibreves accompany it. In both also the foundation of the verse melody is the I-VI chord change, D-Bm in 'Monkey Gone To Heaven' and Em-C in 'Eleanor Rigby'.



Fig 7.6 Main cello parts from the introduction to 'Eleanor Rigby' by the Beatles (Lennon/McCartney, 1966)³⁵ – track 23

It would be fair to say on this evidence that 'Here Comes Your Man's' string section is arranged in a similar style to that of 'Eleanor Rigby'.

Summary Of The Beatles Influence Upon The Pixies

There is a clear Beatles influence on both these songs, and on a number of others. For example, the bridge in 'Velouria' is in a Beatles style, and the whole song is written in a very accessible pop format. The final significant Beatles reference would be their cover of 'Wild Honey Pie', which is performed in a very idiosyncratic Pixies style. The vocals are screamed and the whole piece is performed very differently from the original. However, the fact that the band chose to perform a Beatles cover shows their respect and acknowledgement of their influence.

It has been shown that the Pixies employed the whole range of musical features in their Beatles-inspired songs: the gestural device in the opening chord of 'Here Comes Your Man'; the melodic/thematic in the riff; the song structure in their use of the bridge; and arrangement in 'Monkey Gone To Heaven'. The fact that the Beatles song they did choose to perform was one of the less musically obvious, and altered to fit the Pixies' own style shows the admiration they had for the Beatles musical attitudes.

³⁵ Transcribed by David Bowman, 'Anthology Of Music' p.408, University Of London Examinations & Assessment Council, 1986

8. REGGAE & SKA

It has already been noted that Thompson spent time in the Caribbean; however, that was on the Spanish-speaking island of Puerto Rico. Reggae and ska are music forms that are considered to have originated in Jamaica. The two are quite similar: ska came first, and reggae was an evolution of that sound, slower and more laid-back. What caused the Pixies to include these sounds in their music is unclear, however, it must be noted that their inclusion is usually incidental – usually just one passage in the occasional song has a reggae style.

Reggae and ska, while relatively similar to each other, are easily distinguishable from other popular genres. The most obvious and defining feature is the characteristic ‘up-beat’ rhythm style, where the guitarist plays short, staccato chord hits on the off-beat in a bar, for example beats 2 and 4 where the rhythm section (which is very prominent) are playing on beats 1 and 3. Usually the guitar part is played with up-strokes, catching just the highest three or four strings. This is found most clearly in the Pixies’ music in ‘I’ve Been Tired’, ‘Mr. Grieves’ and ‘The Navajo Know’.

Creating A Reggae Feel

In ‘I’ve Been Tired’ (track 24), the pitch is quite indistinct but the reggae rhythm is still definable, and in ‘The Navajo Know’ (track 25), the part is buried under a busy mix.

In ‘Mr Grieves’ (track 26), it is more distinct. The verse in which the reggae guitar features is quiet and atmospheric: the bass plays a more melodic role, and the whole arrangement is very sparse. When the chorus enters it shifts the beat to 2 and 4 so that the guitar is playing on the beat and the reggae feel is removed.

There are other suggestions of a reggae style, for example on ‘Lovely Day’, and ‘Dancing The Manta Ray’. On the latter, a Clash-style rhythm is used. The Clash were famous for incorporating reggae and ska into punk rock, and this could be an indirect reference to that.

It is probable, then, that the Pixies included the reggae style for variation, not because it was a major influence. The up-beat guitar that defines the reggae style is apparent on most of their albums at some point, but never as a major feature.

9. MOVIE THEMES: SPAGHETTI WESTERNS

The use of stylistic traits of Western movies appeared occasionally in the Pixies' music, mostly as passing reference.

The 'Galloping' Rhythm

When a Western director wanted to create a fast-paced movement (specifically horse-riding) feel in his score, he would use a 'galloping' rhythm: quaver-semiquaver-semiquaver. This was used on a number of occasions by the Pixies, most notably in 'The Holiday Song', 'I've Been Tired', and 'Cecilia Ann'. The example below demonstrates the use of this rhythm under a surf-style melody in 'Cecilia Ann' (track 27).

The image displays two systems of musical notation for the song 'Cecilia Ann'. The first system shows a melody in the treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of a half note C5, followed by a dotted quarter note B5, and then a quarter note G5. Below the melody, the bass clef part features a continuous galloping rhythm of quaver-semiquaver-semiquaver chords. The second system continues the melody with a triplet of eighth notes (E5, F#5, G5) followed by a quarter note G5. The bass clef part continues with the same galloping rhythm. Chord symbols C5 and B5 are placed above the first system, and Em is placed above the second system.

Fig 9.1 Guitar theme 3 with rhythm from 'Cecilia Ann' (Hoffman/Horton, 1963) – track 27

Ennio Morricone

The most famous composer of Spaghetti Western scores is Ennio Morricone. His most famous composition is probably the theme from 'The Good, The Bad & The Ugly' (track 28). This contains many of his trademark styles: instead of the traditional bombastic score, Morricone employed a number of unusual effects to create an evocative soundscape. This theme features the famous ocarina and electric guitar themes, as well as whistles, chanting, organ and bass drum. The guitar is especially important in this piece: it is more prominent than the other instruments, and plays the main solo.

'Silver' by the Pixies (track 29) is the most obvious reference to Morricone's style, although similar whistling effects also appear in 'La La Love You'. 'Silver' is driven by a slow, steady bass drum and the guitar part is acoustic played with a slide (unusually for the Pixies). The vocals are high-pitched with unusual inflections. The electric guitar is used much as in Morricone, with basic themes, long arpeggios and noisy tremolo picking. The whole

atmosphere of the song evokes empty spaces and atmosphere because of the sparseness of the arrangement.

The image shows a musical score for an electric guitar. The top staff is a treble clef in 3/4 time, containing a melody of six notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4. The bottom staff is a guitar tablature with three lines labeled T, A, and B. The fret numbers are: 0, 0, 2, 2, 7, 7, 10, 9, 7.

Fig.9.2 Electric guitar theme from 'Silver' (Black Francis/Kim Deal, 1989) – track 29

The image shows a musical score for an electric guitar. The top staff is a treble clef in 4/4 time, containing a melody of six notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4. The bottom staff is a guitar tablature with three lines labeled T, A, and B. The fret numbers are: 0, 0, 2, 3, 1, (1). There are wavy lines above the second and third measures of the tablature, indicating a tremolo effect.

Fig.9.3 Electric guitar theme from 'The Good, The Bad & The Ugly' (Morricone, 1966) – track 28

Although the two parts are very different in some ways, it is still possible to see the similarities in the slow, ponderous arpeggios. Accompanied by the sparse arrangements, the similarities between the two pieces become more pronounced so that it is possible to claim that the Pixies incorporated some of Morricone's stylisms into their music. However, because these musical references are so few and far between, it is still very much an incidental influence, chosen to add variation and character to a song, similar to the 'galloping' rhythm.

10. MOVIE THEMES: SCIENCE FICTION

Much has been written about the Pixies' lyrical science-fiction references, though these are outside of the scope of this project. The subject appears a number of times, for example in 'The Happening', 'Motorway To Roswell' and 'Planet Of Sound'; however, musically the subject is rarely addressed. The only major science-fiction reference in the band's music comes in 'Velouria' (track 30), which is based around a sci-fi lyrical theme. Here the theremin is used to make large intervallic leaps, in a similar way to its use in the Star Trek theme, the most famous use of this instrument besides the Beach Boys' 'Good Vibrations', and which has led to the instruments sci-fi association.



Fig 10.1 Theremin part from the 'Star Trek' theme (Courage, 1966)



Fig 10.2 Theremin part from 'Velouria' (Black Francis, 1990) – track 30

Again the use of science-fiction style effects appears to be incidental and used for variation: there are certainly not as many references musically as lyrically.

11. ROCK'N'ROLL & ROCKABILLY

Rockabilly was a sub-genre of the wider rock'n'roll of the late 1950's. The style was a hybrid of hillbilly country music and electric R&B. The foremost players in the scene were guitarists such as Scotty Moore, Carl Perkins and Duane Eddy, and the genre tended to be mainly instrumental before it was assimilated into rock'n'roll through the music of Elvis Presley, Eddie Cochran and others.

The electric guitar tended to be the lead instrument, and generally the riffs were constructed from R&B-style licks. The guitar tone was a forerunner of surf guitar, using reverb and delay to create its distinctive sound. Duane Eddy was famous for his 'twangy' guitar, the expression coming from the delay and the repetitive riffs played on the bass strings of the guitar. His most famous track is the 'Peter Gunn Theme' (track 31), which is played all on the sixth string of the guitar, with accented hammer-ons and a repetitive riff.

Fig 11.1 'Peter Gunn Theme' by Duane Eddy (Mancini, 1958) – track 31

The Pixies incorporated this kind of riff into a number of their songs: the bass guitar riff in 'Dead' is very similar to the first two bars of 'Peter Gunn', using hammer-ons and slight vibrato. The clearest reference is in 'Subbacultcha' (track 32), first recorded as part of the *Purple Tapes* then rerecorded for *Trompe Le Monde*. It has a riff reminiscent of Duane Eddy, which continues throughout the song in a rockabilly style.

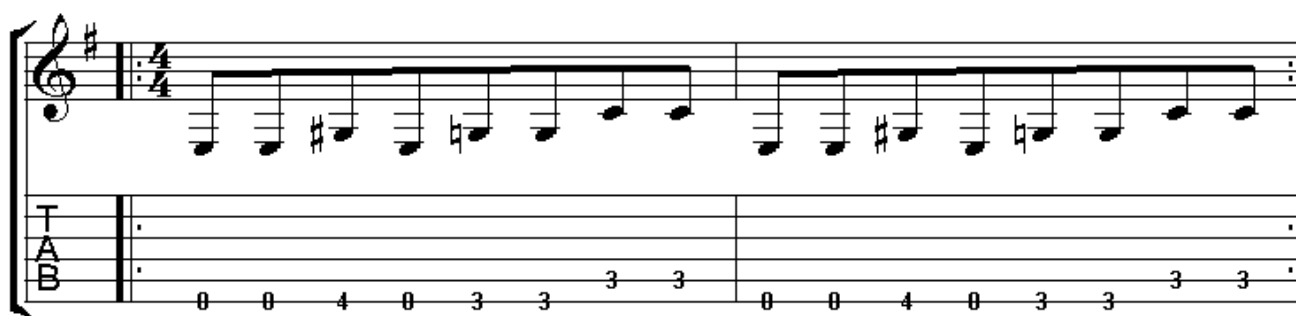


Fig 11.2 Verse riff to 'Subbacultcha' (Black Francis, 1987) – track 32

Note the addition of the major third (G#) in the key of Em, in the same way as 'Peter Gunn' (A natural in F). Listening to the tune, the playing style and use of the riff as muted single notes give little doubt that the song was intended to be a rockabilly pastiche.

The other Pixies track that makes use of rock'n'roll characteristics is 'Cactus' (track 33). The key factor here is the use of the E5-E6 chord progression, famous for its use by artists such as Chuck Berry and the Rolling Stones.



Fig 11.3 Verse 1 rhythm guitar figure, 'Cactus' (Black Francis, 1988) – track 33

This is a classic rock'n'roll guitar device. The similarity between this track and T Rex's 'The Groover' has been pointed out: "'Cactus' was spiked with T. Rex's 'The Groover'"³⁶, and in reality, so many songs have featured this formula that it has almost become a cliché. It is likely then that this was chosen specifically by Thompson in reference to artists such as this.

Other Pixies tracks, like 'Evil Hearted You', 'Motorway To Roswell' and 'Palace Of The Brine' all feature various rock'n'roll characteristics, so it is fair to assume that the Pixies were definitely aware of this music, enough to incorporate it into their own. However, the rockabilly side of rock'n'roll never featured as much as the surf-style rock'n'roll in the Pixies music.

³⁶ Official 4AD biography, www.4AD.com, taken in part from Record Collector #146.

12. HEAVY METAL

While not being a primary influence, heavy metal introduced itself into the Pixies music in a major way on *Trompe Le Monde*, although traces of the style had been evident before that.

The first true heavy metal band was Black Sabbath, who used slow, gloomy riffs and musical characteristics like tritonic chord progressions to achieve their sound. Later, metal became more influenced by Van Halen, who introduced a more melodic side, and started the fashion for complex guitar work.

Heavy metal musical features include: very thick guitar tones; heavy use of the diminished fifth interval (b5) in chord progressions and riffs; and the use of palm-muted, eight-in-a-bar quaver rhythms.

When *Trompe Le Monde* was released, it was described as the band's 'heavy metal' album (see ch.2). The album (and accompanying B-sides) featured a number of musical references to heavy metal. 'Planet Of Sound' is one of the few Pixies songs to feature detuned instruments, a favourite technique of Black Sabbath. The chorus features a pull-off guitar riff similar to Metallica's 'Sad But True'.

The clearest metal reference can be found in the opening bars of 'The Sad Punk' (track 34). The first instrument to enter is the drums, which play a slow tom fill as found on Black Sabbath tracks such as 'War Pigs'. The guitar then enters playing the chord progression F#5-C5-C#5-G#5, similar to that of 'Symptoms Of The Universe' by Black Sabbath (track 35). The guitar riff in that track features a chord progression of E5-Bb5-E5-B5, which is essentially the same as 'The Sad Punk' a tone lower. Note how in both cases the flattened V resolves to perfect V: C5-C#5 in 'The Sad Punk', and Bb5-B5 in 'Symptom Of The Universe'. This track also features the palm-muted 'power-chord'³⁷ quavers found in 'Planet Of Sound' and 'Theme From Narc'.

Other heavy metal features in the Pixies music include military-style drumming in 'Rock Music', and the screaming vocal style taken from thrash metal and found in Pixies tracks like 'Tame' and 'Planet Of Sound'.

All this shows that while heavy metal was not a major influence on the Pixies, its influence was certainly present, possibly as a reaction to *Bossanova*.

³⁷ A 'power-chord' is any chord played featuring just the root and the fifth of the scale, for example, E and B. In guitar terms, these chords tend to be played on the lower strings to give a heavy, powerful sound.

13. CONCLUSIONS

Evolution Of The Sound

This project has proved that the Pixies' sound evolved considerably in their short career. A number of musical characteristics have remained in place throughout, the most notable of which were the dynamic sensibilities of the music. From their first release, the band have shown themselves adept at utilising dynamics to add interest and invention to a song. In doing this, they went some way towards creating the template by which most alternative rock of the 1990's was produced. The use of the quiet verse/loud chorus structure is probably the single most influential feature of the Pixies' music because of its appropriation by Nirvana and the grunge scene.

This project has shown that the Pixies are one of the most diverse bands in alternative music. Their use of different styles ensured that they stood out at the time and that they continue to exert an influence today. The project also demonstrates on a wider scale the different levels of influence the Pixies had in their music: major, secondary and incidental reference points. This analysis can be applied to other artists; for example, the Beatles were based in pop and rock'n'roll, but had other influences as well, such as country, soul and R&B. Later in their career, they introduced elements as diverse as Indian music, folk and musique concrète. Each of these appeared at different stages in the band's career, and to different extents, just like with the Pixies. This analysis then can be useful in tracing the roots of important artists.

The Pixies have been shown to have developed their sound rapidly over time. Between 1987 and 1991 the band released a new album every year, each with a different style. Each is individually distinguishable, from the production, the style of the songs and the influences present. Few bands evolve this quickly, even in today's disposable market. A comparable study would be the evolution of Radiohead, though even this has been over ten years rather than the Pixies' six-year lifespan. At the other extreme lies a band such as Oasis, whose music is generally the same today as it was in 1994. This proves that the Pixies were unusually rapid in their evolution, compared to the typical popular music model.

Individual Influences

The main intention of this project has to been to organise and classify the Pixies' influences and to qualify them. In the process of writing this dissertation, the different levels of influence, and the justifications for these influences, have become apparent through studying the music and prior opinion. With the band's alternative rock influences, it has been possible to demonstrate which artists have been the most important in the Pixies' sound. Hüsker Dü, the Jesus & Mary Chain and Dinosaur Jr all have similarities to the Pixies' style and methods, and these are evident in the bands' music. Each use a balance of melody and discordance in their music, a feature found in artists from Neil Young and Sonic Youth, as well as modern alternative rock.

Punk rock has been a less definable characteristic, yet it is notably present throughout. Although sound and technique have been discussed, it is still difficult to state exactly what makes a punk rock song. The genre has evolved so much from its early days that it now encompasses a wide array of styles, and its influence is found in many places.

Surf music has been surprisingly pervasive in the Pixies' music also. While many biographies state that the surf influence began on *Bossanova*, it is actually apparent from the first album in a subtler way. It has become one of the key musical features of the Pixies sound in all its facets: melody, harmony, rhythm and tone are all present as surf influences in various songs.

Spanish music has been established to be a secondary influence. It is one of the most celebrated aspects of the Pixies' music, yet it is only predominant on one album. The context of its use tends to be lyrical and rhythmic: the Spanish/English language hybrid is used for its percussive and rhythmic qualities, and is supported by the music. The Pixies' music, especially on *Come On Pilgrim*, makes much use of Spanish-style rhythms and harmonic progressions, but the use of aspects such as Spanish melody is limited. This qualifies the style as only a secondary influence: only some aspects of the genre are employed, whereas in the primary influences, songs can be described as being part of that genre. There are no Pixies' tracks that can be described as being a piece of Spanish music: 'Vamos' comes closest, but even that is more of a Spanish-flavoured alternative rock song.

The Beatles influence is harder to pin down. Many aspects of the Beatles sound feature in various forms in the Pixies' music: thematic, melodic, harmonic and arrangement. However, these are not regular enough to classify the band as a major influence.

The incidental references in the Pixies' music are comparatively unimportant in terms of the Pixies' legacy, but demonstrate the diversity and scope that characterised the band. Each applies to just one or two songs, and then only as an addition to the song, not the basis. The exception to this is 'Subbacultcha', which is essentially a rock'n'roll song; however, the context of this genre reference is still very much as alternative rock, and the use of the genre elsewhere is sparse.

In researching the project, a number of other possible influences have been suggested, researched and discounted. Most notable among these have been Jimi Hendrix (for his discordant guitar style), Neil Young (who blends early alternative rock styles with acoustic ballads), Pere Ubu, (for their alternative/punk rock combination), Talking Heads ('Dig For Fire' has been described as a "bad Talking Heads imitation,"³⁸ because of its combination of conversational vocals and funky, melodic backing) and 1980's electro-pop (especially the dry, compressed sound which is prevalent on *Bossanova* and *Trompe Le Monde*). These were disregarded on the grounds that there was not sufficient evidence in the music to claim them as a reference point: where a musical reference did appear, it was too tenuous or not sufficiently

³⁸ Black Francis, Music Express (interviewed by Perry Stern), #152, Oct 1990

unambiguous given the widely influential and much-copied nature of the above artists and genres.

Final Conclusions

The overall conclusion of this project has been to establish and prove that the Pixies were a diverse band that made use of various genres and styles in order to enhance their own music. Each genre has been analysed to prove its qualification and determine the extent of its influence upon the Pixies. As such, it can be stated that the Pixies were first and foremost an alternative rock band, based upon the preceding and subsequent music in that genre. They created their original sound from a hybrid of many genres, most importantly punk and surf. The inclusion of other genres and influences extended the band's range and scope, and led to their acceptance as an influence upon many others, again most notably the alternative rock scene.

In a wider context, this research project is indicative of an approach that can be taken to analysing other popular music in terms of its influences: levels of influence are differentiated and analysed (through musical study and expert opinion) to create a picture of the exact genre of the band. For example, the Pixies are described, as an outcome of this project, as a surf-punk band in the wider alternative rock sphere.

INDEX OF APPENDICES

A: Pixies Biography.....	II
B: Pixies Discography.....	IV
C: Correspondence.....	VII
D: Bibliography.....	VIII
E: Other Resources.....	XI
F: CD Track Listing.....	XV

APPENDIX A: PIXIES BIOGRAPHY

The Pixies were formed when Charles Thompson (a.k.a. Black Francis - guitar and vocals) returned early from his six-month exchange visit to Puerto Rico and, with his roommate Joey Santiago (guitar), dropped out of college (University of Massachusetts, Amherst). They placed an advert in a Boston music paper for musicians “into Husker Du and Peter, Paul & Mary.”³⁹ The only respondent was Kim Deal (bass), who also introduced the band to drummer David Lovering. They began gigging in 1986, and were discovered by producer Gary Smith. He recorded an 18-track demo with the band and passed it on to a number of industry contacts and record labels. The band eventually signed to British label 4AD, who released 8 tracks straight from the demo, as the band’s debut mini-album *Come On Pilgrim* in 1987

The band’s second album again drew strongly from the original demo, although this time the tracks were recorded by alternative icon Steve Albini (Big Black, Shellac). The resulting album, *Surfer Rosa* (1988), went straight to number one in the British indie charts, and the accompanying EP ‘Gigantic’ did the same. The album received numerous accolades including Album Of The Year in *Melody Maker*.

In November 1988, the Pixies started recording their third album, produced by Gil Norton (with whom the band were to build a successful working relationship). ‘Doolittle’, released in 1989, again went to number one in the British indie charts, and reached number eight in the mainstream charts. During this time, the band also began to build a following in the USA, supporting The Cure on a stadium tour.

In 1990, the band began work on their third full album, *Bossanova*, which showed a greater affinity for 1960’s surf music and science fiction themes. This was released to similar success the same year: the single ‘Velouria’ reached number twenty-eight in the mainstream charts, their highest placing. The band also undertook extensive touring commitments including headlining the third day at the Reading Festival. During 1990, Kim Deal formed the Breeders as a side project, with her sister Kelley, Tanya Donelly from Throwing Muses, and Josephine Wiggs from Perfect Disaster. Their debut album *Pod* (recorded by Steve Albini) was released in 1990, and outsold the Pixies’ release that year, *Bossanova*.

In 1991, the Pixies recorded and released their fourth, and what proved to be their final, album *Trompe Le Monde*. This was referred to by many as the band’s ‘heavy metal’ album, demonstrating a generally harder sound. The album reached number seven in the UK charts. Following the release of ‘Trompe Le Monde’, the band toured extensively, as well as opening for U2 on the US leg of their Zoo TV stadium tour.

³⁹ The Rough Guide To Rock, article by Anna D Robinson, p.664

In 1992, the Breeders released a new EP, *Safari*, and Thompson began work on solo material, to be released under the pseudonym Frank Black. In early 1993, he announced the band's split live on radio, without telling the other band members.

Since then, he went on to release three solo albums (*Frank Black*, *Teenager Of The Year* and *The Cult Of Ray*), before forming a new band, Frank Black & The Catholics.

The Breeders released the album *Last Splash* in 1995, with the hit single *Cannonball*, and their latest album, *Title TK* was released in 2002.

Joey Santiago has formed the Martinis, and has recently released the band's first album.

David Lovering has played in a number of bands since the Pixies, most notably Nitzer Ebb and Cracker.

Biography information from: 'The Rough Guide To Rock' (Rough Guides, 1996); The Virgin Encyclopedia of 80's Music (Colin Larkin, Virgin, 1997); 4AD (www.4ad.com); Alec Eiffel (www.membres.lycos.fr/alec)

APPENDIX B: PIXIES DISCOGRAPHY

- *Come On Pilgrim* mini-album (4AD, 1987) – produced by Gary Smith at Fort Apache Studios, Roxbury, MA. Engineered by Paul Kolderie.
 - ‘Caribou’/‘Vamos’/‘Isla De Encanta’/‘Ed Is Dead’/‘The Holiday Song’/‘Nimrod’s Son’/‘I’ve Been Tired’/‘Levitate Me’
- *Surfer Rosa* album (4AD, 1988) – produced and engineered by Steve Albini at 2-Division, Boston, MA.
 - ‘Bone Machine’/‘Break My Body’/‘Something Against You’/‘Broken Face’/‘Gigantic’/‘River Euphrates’/‘Where Is My Mind?’/‘Cactus’/‘Tony’s Theme’/‘Oh My Golly!’/‘Vamos’/‘I’m Amazed’/‘Brick Is Red’
- *Surfer Rosa/Come On Pilgrim* CD release containing both previous albums (4AD, 1988)
- *Gigantic EP* 4-track single (4AD, 1988)
 - ‘Gigantic’/‘River Euphrates’/‘Vamos (live)’/‘In Heaven (Lady In The Radiator Song (live))’
- *Doolittle* album (4AD, 1989) – produced and engineered by Gil Norton at Downtown Recorders, Boston, MA.
 - ‘Debaser’/‘Tame’/‘Wave Of Mutilation’/‘I Bleed’/‘Here Comes Your Man’/‘Dead’/‘Monkey Gone To Heaven’/‘Mr Grieves’/‘Crackity Jones’/‘La La Love You’/‘No.13 Baby’/‘There Goes My Gun’/‘Hey’/‘Silver’/‘Gouge Away’
- *Monkey Gone To Heaven* single (4AD, 1989)
 - ‘Monkey Gone To Heaven’/‘Manta Ray’
- *Here Comes Your Man 7”* single (4AD, 1989)
 - ‘Here Comes Your Man’/‘Into The White’
- *Here Comes Your Man 12”* single (4AD, 1989)
 - ‘Here Comes Your Man’/‘Wave Of Mutilation (UK Surf)’/‘Into The White’/‘Bailey’s Walk’
- *Here Comes Your Man Canadian 12”* single (4AD, 1989)
 - ‘Here Comes Your Man’/‘Tame’/‘Manta Ray’/‘Weird At My School’/‘Dancing The Manta Ray’
- *Velouria 7”* single (4AD, 1990)
 - ‘Velouria’/‘I’ve Been Waiting For You’
- *Velouria 12”* single (4AD, 1990)
 - ‘Velouria’/‘Make Believe’/‘I’ve Been Waiting For You’/‘The Thing’
- *Bossanova* album (4AD, 1990) – produced by Gil Norton at Cherokee (Los Angeles), Aire (Los Angeles), Silverlake (Los Angeles), Hansa Ton (Berlin). Engineered by Alistair Clay.
 - ‘Cecilia Ann’/‘Rock Music’/‘Velouria’/‘Allison’/‘Is She Weird’/‘Ana’/‘All Over The World’/‘Dig For Fire’/‘Down To The Well’/‘The Happening’/‘Blown Away’/‘Hang Wire’/‘Stormy Weather’/‘Havalina’
- *Dig For Fire 7”* single (4AD, 1990)
 - ‘Dig For Fire’/‘Winterlong’
- *Dig For Fire* single (4AD, 1990)
 - ‘Dig For Fire’/‘Velvety Instrumental Version’/‘Winterlong’/‘Santo’
- *Planet Of Sound 12”* single (4AD, 1991)

- 'Planet Of Sound'/'Theme From Narc'/'Build High'/'Evil Hearted You'
- *Trompe Le Monde* album (4AD, 1991) – produced by Gil Norton at Master Control (Burbank CA), Pacificque (Burbank CA), Studio Des Dames (Paris), Blackwing (London). Engineered by Steve Haigler.
 - 'Trompe Le Monde'/'Planet Of Sound'/'Alec Eiffel'/'The Sad Punk'/'Head On'/'U-Mass'/'Palace Of The Brine'/'Letter To Memphis'/'Bird Dream Of The Olympus Mons'/'Space (I Believe In)'/ 'Subbacultcha'/'Distance Equals Rate Times Time'/'Lovely Day'/'Motorway To Roswell'/'The Navajo Know'
- *Alec Eiffel 7"* single (4AD, 1991)
 - 'Alec Eiffel'/'Motorway To Roswell'
- *Alec Eiffel 12"* single (4AD, 1991)
 - 'Alec Eiffel'/'Motorway To Roswell'/'Planet Of Sound (live)'/ 'Tame (live)'
- *Alec Eiffel US CD single* (4AD, 1991)
 - 'Alec Eiffel'/'Letter To Memphis (Instrumental)'/ 'Build High'/'Evil Hearted You'
- *Head On* single (4AD, 1991, Canada and Japan only)
 - 'Head On'/'Planet Of Sound (live)'/ 'Tame (live)'/ 'Debaser (live)'
- *Death To The Pixies 'Best Of...'* album, featuring bonus live CD (4AD, 1997)
 - 'Cecilia Ann'/'Planet Of Sound'/'Tame'/'Here Comes Your Man'/'Debaser'/'Wave Of Mutilation'/'Dig For Fire'/'Caribou'/'Holiday Song'/'Nimrod's Son'/'U-Mass'/'Bone Machine'/'Gigantic'/'Where Is My Mind?'/ 'Velouria'/'Gouge Away'/'Monkey Gone To Heaven'
 - 'Debaser (live)'/ 'Rock Music (live)'/ 'Broken Face (live)'/ 'Isla De Encanta (live)'/ 'Hang Wire (live)'/ 'Dead (live)'/ 'Into The White (live)'/ 'Monkey Gone To Heaven (live)'/ 'Gouge Away (live)'/ 'Here Comes Your Man (live)'/ 'Allison (live)'/ 'Hey (live)'/ 'Gigantic (live)'/ 'Something Against You (live)'/ 'Tame (live)'/ 'Wave Of Mutilation (live)'/ 'Where Is My Mind? (live)'/ 'Ed Is Dead (live)'/ 'Vamos (live)'/ 'Tony's Theme (live)'
- *Debaser* single (4AD, 1997)
- *Monkey Gone To Heaven* single (4AD, 1997, France only)
- *Pixies At The BBC* live BBC sessions album (4AD, 1998) – engineered at the BBC by Mike Robinson, Dale Griffin and Miti. Mastered by Chris Staley.
 - 'Wild Honey Pie'/'There Goes My Gun'/'Dead'/'Subbacultcha'/'Manta Ray'/'Is She Weird'/'Ana'/'Down To The Well'/'Wave Of Mutilation'/'Letter To Memphis'/'Levitate Me'/'Caribou'/'Monkey Gone To Heaven'/'Hey'/'In Heaven (Lady In The Radiator Song)'
- *Complete 'B' Sides* album (4AD, 2001)
 - 'River Euphrates'/'Vamos (live)'/ 'In Heaven (Lady In The Radiator Song) (live)'/ 'Manta Ray'/'Weird At My School'/'Dancing The Manta Ray'/'Wave Of Mutilation (UK Surf)'/ 'Into The White'/'Bailey's Walk'/'Make Believe'/'I've Been Waiting For You'/'The Thing'/'Velvety Instrumental

- Version'/'Winterlong'/'Santo'/'Theme From Narc'/'Build High'/'Evil Hearted You'/'Letter To Memphis (Instrumental)'
 - 'Here Comes Your Man (video)'/Allison (video)'
- *The Pixies* 9-track album featuring the original Gary Smith demo tape (*Purple Tapes*) material that did not feature on *Come On Pilgrim* (4AD, 2002) – produced by Gary Smith at Fort Apache, Roxbury MA. Engineered with Paul Kolderie.
 - 'Broken Face'/'Build High'/'Rock A My Soul'/'Down To The Well'/'Break My Body'/'I'm Amazed'/'Here Comes Your Man'/'Subbacultcha'/'In Heaven (Lady In The Radiator Song)'
- Also, appearances on compilations:
 - *The Bridge* (Caroline, 1990) – includes 'Winterlong'
 - *Rubaiyat* (Elektra, 1990) – includes 'Born In Chicago'
 - *I'm Your Fan – The Songs Of Leonard Cohen by...* (Columbia/Warner/Atlantic, 1991) – includes 'I Can't Forget'

Copyright Information

All songs written by Black Francis and published by Rice & Beans Music except:

- 'In Heaven (Lady In The Radiator Song)' by Peter Ivers/David Lynch (Paul Music)
- 'Levitate Me' by Black Francis/Lovering/Walsh (Rice & Beans Music)
- 'Gigantic' by Black Francis/Mrs John Murphy (Rice & Beans Music)
- 'Silver' by Black Francis/Kim Deal (Rice & Beans Music)
- 'I've Been Waiting For You' by Neil Young (Warner Chappell Music Ltd.)
- 'Cecilia Ann' by the Surftones (Rice & Beans Music)
- 'Winterlong' by Neil Young (Warner Chappell Music Ltd.)
- 'Evil Hearted You' by Graham Gouldman (Campbell & Connelly Co. Ltd.)
- 'Head On' by William Reid/Jim Reid (Warner Chappell Music Ltd.)
- 'Wild Honey Pie' by John Lennon/Paul McCartney (Northern Songs)
- 'Born In Chicago' by Nick Gravenites (Nina Music)
- 'I Can't Forget' by Leonard Cohen (Stranger Music)

Discography information from Alec Eiffel website (www.membres.lycos.fr/alec), compiled by Christophe Gourraud, Kimmo Saaskilahti and Rob Vaughn.
Copyright and publishing information from RadioMoi.com

APPENDIX C: CORRESPONDENCE

From:

Jason Sidwell <jason.sidwell@...>

To:

simonbriercliffe@...

Subject:

Beatles chord

Date:

Thu, 28 Aug 2003 18:19:53

Simon,

Welcome to one of the most contested aspects of modern music - the Hard Day's Night chord!

There are so many stories of what that chord is - even George Martin, the Beatles producer is unsure what the chord is.

Suffice to say, the chord you're fretting isn't too far from other attempts we've heard. We've heard the chord was 3 0 3 2 1 3 (thumb on low G) as shown to Gary Moore by George Harrison.

However, try also this shape 3 5 3 5 3 3 or even the one Neville Martin prefers which works great with a trebly guitar tone: 5 5 3 5 3 3 – the low A note may seem at odds but let the chord sustain a while and a sympathetic harmonic pops out, making it pretty convincing.

All the best,

Jason

[Senior Music Editor, Total Guitar magazine]

APPENDIX D: BIBLIOGRAPHY

Reference Books

- BOWMAN, D. (ed.), 1986. *Anthology Of Music*
London, University Of London Examinations & Assessment Council
- BUCKLEY, J. & ELLINGHAM, M. (ed.), 1996. *The Rough Guide To Rock*
London, Rough Guides Ltd.
- BRACKETT, D., 1995. *Interpreting Popular Music*
Cambridge, Cambridge University Press
- BURT, R., 1986. *Surf City, Drag City*
London, Blandford Press
- DAY, R. & MOORES, J. (transcribers), 1995. *Selections From Pulp Fiction*
London, Wise Publications
- FOSTER, C., 1999. *Roots Rock Reggae*
New York, Billboard Books
- FRITH, S., 1978. *The Sociology Of Rock*
London, Constable & Co.
- HEYLIN, C., 1993. *From The Velvets To The Voidoids: A Pre-Punk History
For A Post-Punk World*
London, Penguin Books
- LARKIN, C. (ed.), 1997. *Virgin Encyclopaedia of 80's Music*
London, Virgin Books
- LARKIN, C. (ed.), 1998. *Virgin Encyclopaedia of Indie & New Wave*
London, Virgin Books
- LARKIN, C. (ed.), 2000. *Virgin Encyclopaedia of 90's Music*
London, Virgin Books
- MACDONALD, I., 1994. *Revolution In The Head: The Beatles Records & The
Sixties*
London, Fourth Estate Ltd.
- MIDDLETON, R. (ed.), 2000. *Reading Pop: Approaches To Textual Analysis
In Popular Music*
Oxford, Oxford University Press
- NETTL B. and BÉHAGUE G., 1990. *Folk and Traditional Music of the
Western Continents*
New Jersey, Prentice-Hall

RILEY, T., 1988. *Tell Me Why: A Beatles Commentary*
London, Bodley Head

ROY, M., 2002. *Cuban Music*
English Ed. Princeton NJ, Markus Wiener Publishers

SHUKER, R., 1994. *Understanding Popular Music*
London, Routledge

SWEENEY, P. (ed.), 1991. *Virgin Directory of World Music*
London, Virgin Books

TRUE, E., 2001. *Live Through This: American Rock Music In The Nineties*
London, Virgin Publishing

UNTERBERGER, R. (ed.), 1999. *Music USA: The Rough Guide*
London, Rough Guides Ltd. & Penguin

WHITEHILL, D. & DeVINCK, R. (transcribers), 1993. *Nirvana: Nevermind*
Milwaukee, Hal Leonard Publishing Corporation

Magazines & Publications

ALTERNATIVE PRESS: Issue Vol.4 #22

GUITAR WORLD: Issue April 1998

LES INROCKUPTIBLES: Issue June 1993

MELODY MAKER: Issues March 1988, Aug 1988, April 1989, June 1989, Aug 1991, July 1992, Oct 1997,

MONDO 2000: Issue 10

MUSICIAN: Issue Feb 1992

MUSIC EXPRESS: Issue 152

NEW YORK TIMES: Issue Oct 21 1997

NME: Issues Oct 1987, March 1988, April 1989, Aug 1990

Q: Issues 15, 32, 48,

REFLEX: Issue Vol.1 #4

ROCK A MY SOUL (Pixies Fanzine): Issues 1, 2, 3, 4

ROLLING STONE: Issues Jun 15 1989, Nov 1 1990, 27 Jan 1994

SOUNDS: Issues Dec 1987, Nov 1990, Dec 1990

SHUTDOWN: Issue May 2001

THE CATALOGUE: Issue April 1989

THE GUITAR MAGAZINE: Issue Dec 1997

TOTAL GUITAR: Issues 41, 47, 48, 51, 53, 57, 58, 59, 60, 63, 75, 78, 79, 83,
85, 86, 89, 90, 94, 96, 98, 100, 103, 106, 107, 109.

VOX: Issue Jul 1991

APPENDIX E: OTHER RESOURCES

Websites

Website name: date first accessed in relation to research project
[URL](#)

Artist & Label Websites

What Are Records?: 03/03/03
<http://www.whatarerecords.com>

Spin Art Records: 03/03/03
<http://www.spinart.com>

Frank Black.net: 03/03/03
<http://www.frankblack.net>

4AD records: 15/03/03
<http://www.4ad.com>

Husker Du Database: 15/03/03
<http://world.std.com/~thirdave/hd.html>

Pixies: Debaser: 20/05/03
<http://dag.wieers.com/debaser/>

Pixiesweb (various sites): 20/05/03
<http://sydonia.hypermart.net/pixiesweb/>
<http://www.fortunecity.com/tinpan/drumandbass/>

Alec Eiffel (fan site): 21/05/03
<http://membres.lycos.fr/alec/>

Publication Websites

Mojo Magazine: 03/03/03
<http://www.mojo4music.com>

NME: 03/03/03
<http://www.nme.com>

Q Magazine: 03/03/03
<http://www.q4music.com>

Rolling Stone: 06/03/03
<http://www.rollingstone.com>

Record Collector Magazine: 15/03/03
<http://www.recordcollectormag.com>

Alternative Rock Review (includes a collation of reviews from various sources): 20/03/03
<http://www.entertainment.inuk.com>

Musical Reference Websites

Kabish.com Tablature Site: 03/03/03
<http://kabish.com/guitar/tablature>

Chord Coach: 16/06/03
<http://www.chordcoach.com>

World Music Central: 16/06/03
<http://www.worldmusiccentral.com>

Music Of Puerto Rico: 16/06/03
<http://www.musicofpuertorico.com>

Pixies Tabs: 19/06/03
<http://digilander.libero.it/jenkins78/pixiestabs.html>

Aztabs: 19/06/03
<http://www.aztabs.com>

Guitar E-tab: 25/06/03
<http://www.guitaretab.com>

Theremin World: 21/08/03
<http://www.thereminworld.com>

Classic Themes.com: 21/08/03
<http://www.classicthemes.com>

Fan Sites & Opinion

Rocklist: 06/03/03
<http://www.rocklist.net>

Newslink: 07/03/03
<http://www.newslink.org>

Green Plastic: 18/03/03
<http://www.greenplastic.com>

Bomp: 18/03/03

<http://www.bomp.com>

Everyday I Write the Book: 18/03/03

<http://www.cas.usf.edu/communication/rodman/biblio/biblio-front.html>

Earlash: 19/03/03

<http://www.earlash.com>

Luna Kafe: 20/05/03

<http://www.fuzzlogic.com/lunakafe/>

Magic, Mania, Murder and Manta Rays: 9/06/03

<http://www.melvillem.freeseve.co.uk/mmmm/>

Free Williamsburg: 9/06/03

<http://www.freewilliamsburg.com>

In Sound: 9/06/03

<http://www.insound.com>

Academic References

British Library: 06/03/03

<http://www.bl.uk>

British Phonographic Industry: 06/03/03

<http://www.bpi.co.uk>

Westminster Library: 06/03/03

<http://develop.westminster.gov.uk>

The LISWA Online Catalogue: 06/03/03

<http://henrietta.liswa.wa.gov.au>

facweb.stvincent.edu: 18/03/03

[http://facweb.stvincent.edu/academics/english/faculty/McDaniel/EL304/rockbi
b.htm](http://facweb.stvincent.edu/academics/english/faculty/McDaniel/EL304/rockbi
b.htm)

Oberlin University: 15/05/05

<http://www.oberlin.edu/>

Stony Brook, State University Of New York: 19/05/05

<http://www.sinc.sunysb.edu/Class/mus304/notes/ap15.htm>

University Of Wisconsin: 16/06/03

<http://www.cs.wisc.edu>

Miscellaneous References

Amazon: 03/03/03

<http://www.amazon.co.uk>

Google: 03/03/03

<http://www.google.com>

JPR Management: 14/03/03

<http://www.jprmanagement.co.uk>

Ultimate Band List: 9/06/03

<http://www.ubl.com>

Radio Moi: 22/08/03

<http://www.radiomoi.com>

Libraries

British Library,
Euston Rd,
Kings Cross,
London

Westminster Music Library
Buckingham Palace Rd,
Victoria
London

Barbican Centre Music Library
Barbican Centre
Barbican
London

Other Resources

Sibelius 2 notation software, Sibelius Software Ltd., © 2001

Sonic Foundry Sound Forge 2-track editing software, v.4.5.281, © 1999

APPENDIX F: CD TRACK LISTING

See main text for relevant information regarding playing this CD.

- 1) The Pixies – ‘Debaser’: introduction and verse one
- 2) The Pixies – ‘Vamos’: guitar solo
- 3) Dinosaur Jr. – ‘Freak Scene’: guitar solo
- 4) The Pixies – ‘Head On’: verse one
- 5) The Pixies – ‘Tame’: verse one and chorus one
- 6) Nirvana – ‘Smells Like Teen Spirit’: verse one and chorus one
- 7) The Pixies – ‘Debaser’: verse guitar chords
- 8) Sex Pistols – ‘God Save The Queen’: introductory guitar riff
- 9) The Pixies – ‘Levitate Me’: verse one
- 10) Dick Dale – ‘Night Rider’: introduction
- 11) The Pixies – ‘Cecilia Ann’: introduction and verse theme
- 12) The Lively Ones – ‘Pipeline’: main riff
- 13) The Pixies – ‘There Goes My Gun’: guitar solo
- 14) The Pixies – ‘Ana’: introduction
- 15) The Pixies – ‘Vamos’: introduction and verse one
- 16) The Pixies – ‘Isla De Encanta’: introduction riff
- 17) The Beatles – ‘A Hard Day’s Night’: opening chord
- 18) The Pixies – ‘Here Comes Your Man’: opening chord
- 19) The Pixies – ‘Here Comes Your Man’: opening chord and main riff
- 20) The Beatles – ‘Day Tripper’: introduction
- 21) The Pixies – ‘Here Comes Your Man’: bridge section
- 22) The Pixies – ‘Monkey Gone To Heaven’: introduction, verse one and chorus one
- 23) The Beatles – ‘Eleanor Rigby’: introduction
- 24) The Pixies – ‘I’ve Been Tired’: verse one
- 25) The Pixies – ‘The Navajo Know’: introduction and verse one
- 26) The Pixies – ‘Mr Grieves’: verse one
- 27) The Pixies – ‘Cecilia Ann’: bridge section
- 28) Ennio Morricone – ‘Theme From The Good, The Bad & The Ugly’: electric guitar theme
- 29) The Pixies – ‘Silver’: electric guitar theme
- 30) The Pixies – ‘Velouria’: verse excerpt
- 31) Duane Eddy – ‘Peter Gunn Theme’: main riff
- 32) The Pixies – ‘Subbacultcha’: verse riff
- 33) The Pixies – ‘Cactus’: introduction
- 34) The Pixies – ‘The Sad Punk’: introduction
- 35) Black Sabbath – ‘Symptoms Of The Universe’: main riff