

"Where's The Hook?"

TuneMoose Matt bates

Nov 21, 2023

SHOW NOTES

... I'm TuneMoose Matt Bates and these are the show notes from "Where's The Hook?" on 91.3FM, Bluewater Radio

... If you'd like to hear a particular song or topic covered in a future show you can email me at mattb@tunemoose.ca

Welcome and Station ID

... Good evening. Welcome!, to "Where's The Hook? This is 91.3FM Bluewater Radio, and I'm TuneMoose Matt Bates. Listen for the high pitched piano chords during the verses in our opening song.

Brave / Sara Bareilles

Opener song comments

Show overview

- Brave / Sara Bareilles. The high, and fast, piano chording was driving the groove with subdivisions of the main beat into 4. During the chorus the same fast rhythm was still there, but played at a lower pitch, for contrast, but also, and, maybe more important even, so it didn't get in the way of the vocals, that go high, in pitch, in the chorus. Speak up she says. Be who you gotta be. Say what you gotta say. Go where you gotta go. Play what you gotta play.

... You're listening to "Where's The Hook? I'm TuneMoose Matt Bates

... Let's play some great songs, and take a look inside to see what makes 'em tick.

- Tonight I have a couple of requests, as usual, and I'll be taking a brief tour of international pop songs looking for similarities and differences. I'll compare the emotional contours of a few acoustic based songs. We'll look at some different melody structures. and, of course, much much more.

KEYBOARD CHORD RHYTHM DRIVERS

- First, let's look at another example, of a high pitched, fast paced, keyboard, groove driver. Again, it splits into a 4-feel subdivision, off the main beat, driving things forward. And for some extra umph, or hookiness, and perhaps the hookiest part of this song, if you listen closely you'll notice that this beat breaks from 4 + 4 subdivision to 3 + 3 + 2 subdivision on that keyboard part. Supertramp made good use of, keyboard chord grooves, like this one. Here's Dreamer by Supertramp.

Dreamer / Supertramp

INTERNATIONAL TOUR

- Pack your bags, let's take a trip. Bring your active listening headphones. First stop, Jamaica, and Sitting In Limbo with Jimmy Cliff. As a young man trying to find himself in Mexico, I heard this song coming out of a cafe on my way down to the beach. It resonated. The groove, the message, the not being alone in my confusion. That was a perfect moment. Something that really stands out for me in this song, musically, that is unusual, is the high pitched bell sound. It's not fast paced, but if you count it out you'll see that it's coming in on beat 3 of a 4/4 song. Recall, that that's the position of the backbeat. We're used to the backbeat being played out on a snare drum or guitar, but here the bell is playing that role.

Sitting In Limbo / Jimmy Cliff

- And now to Scotland with the music of Paolo Nutini. Maria requested this one, a while ago, and I thought this would be a good spot for it, on our tour. Here you go Maria. With some Italian blood in him as well as Scottish, he charts high in Italy too. The song is Last Request from 2007. So what are we hearing here. This song sounds pretty mainstream to me. I'm not hearing anything that pins it to Scotland, or Italy. It's a good example of downward stepwise harmonic motion though. Listen for that. It's easiest to pick that out if you focus in on the bass. And something else, very very interesting, in the song form, something that Michael Jackson and Stevie Wonder used. The verse and the chorus are the same harmonic sequence. But! there's a pre-chorus, with a different harmonic structure, inserted between verse and chorus to break it up, so the chorus sounds fresh again, when it comes around. **Last Request / Paolo Nutini**

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Station ID

... You're listening to "Where's The Hook? with me, TuneMoose Matt Bates, here on 91.3FM, Bluewater Radio. If your friend would like to listen from out of radio range, they can tune in online, at bluewaterradio.ca. Blue Water Radio, all one word

INTERNATIONAL TOUR continued

- Our next song here from South-Eastern Europe. Thanks for your request on this song, Jon, and your feedback on the show. I'm hearing a driving kick drum. That reminds me of club music, and hip hop. But the strings, they take me back to early

60's soft pop. The hookiest thing this song for me, is the use of the non alignment of the natural spoken English accent pattern, and the sung accent pattern. Particularly noticeable on the line 'I beg you'. ' **Pick Up The Phone / Yorina**

- And now to Paris before we head home. A gypsy Jazz version of La Vie En Rose. This was the signature song of Edith Piaf in the mid 40's, and performed here by Zaz. I love how this song has a bouncy, happy, gypsy jazz section, with that catchy off-the-beat guitar strum, and preceded by an almost spoken slow a-rhythmic section. It happens twice, for great contrast in the song. The scat singing bridge, is pretty cool too. **La vie en rose / Zaz**

ACOUSTIC SONGS, EMOTIONAL CONTOUR

-Back home let's have a listen to some Hip. The song is Wheat Kings, an acoustic guitar based song. What about emotional contour? How does the song evolve in complexity to keep us engaged. It's very subtle in this one. If you compare the end of the song to the beginning you can hear it but as the song progresses it's hard to pick out, an almost flat emotional contour. So, if it's not the emotional contour engaging us much here, then where are the hooks that do. I leave that to you.

Wheat Kings / The Tragically Hip

- What of a low key, acoustic based song, that does use emotional contour to keep us engaged? Notice how different instruments get added as we move along, and the harmonies get thicker.

The Woods / Hollow Coves

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Station ID

Topic Continued BASS AND BEAT

... You're listening to "Where's The Hook? with TuneMoose Matt Bates on 91.3FM, Bluewater Radio

- The Black Crowes take it even further with a build from acoustic guitar sound to a rock band complexity in the chorus, then oscillating between high energy chorus, and lower energy verses.

(She Talks To Angels / The Black Crowes

BACKBEAT

- Backbeat. So common in our pop music. Here the horn stabs are playing the off beats, like we would hear in Reggae with guitar. And once Amy gets well into the heart of the song we can hear the bass coming in on the back beat, very unusual, along with a quiet rim shot on the snare, more common. Both of these, are important elements of groove, to spice up her version of the 1962 song.

Our Day Will Come / Amy Winehouse

More backbeat here now with Big Sugar and Turn The Lights On. I'd call this, classic backbeat, played on the snare except briefly in the bridge when the synth takes over the role. Love the bassy guitar riff in this song as well. **Turn The Lights On / Big Sugar**

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2nd hour Welcome, Station ID and Announcements

... Thanks for joining me tonight for "Where's The Hook?", where we look inside the hits to see what makes 'em tick. And remember that, on average, there's a hook every 10 seconds. The one or two I mention about each song, are the tip of the iceberg, for a well produced, radio-release, song.

... I'm TuneMoose Matt Bates and this is 91.3FM, Bluewater Radio

... Send me feedback, send me suggestions, send me a song request. Email me to mattb@tunemoose.ca, that's m-a-t-t-b @tunemoose.ca . I don't save email addresses so you won't get any junk mail from me.

IN SYNC VOCAL HARMONIES

- In sync vocal harmonies. Several people singing together. This human experience goes back to the beginning of time I expect. There's a feeling of confidence and security that comes from singing together. It's not the uncertainty of conversation, that, by it's nature, changes and evolves as we go along. Rather, it's the certainty of having agreed on something that we want to do together. There's a calmness about in-sync vocal harmonies. From 1954

Mr. Sandman / The Chordettes

- And ABBA in the 70's made use of in-sync vocal harmonies in many of their songs. 1975, Mama Mia, ABBA

Mamma Mia / ABBA

MELODIC STRUCTURE

- I'm gonna shift gears and talk about structure of melody for a while. I'll start by playing songs with short repeated melodic packets. And I'll move through, to structures that are very long in comparison. First song in this lineup is I'm with You / Avril Lavigne . I'll draw your attention to the very short melodic phrases that are repeated to make up the verse.

I'm with You / Avril Lavigne

- And slightly longer melodic phrases to build the verse in Speed of Sound / Coldplay

Speed of Sound / Coldplay

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Station ID

... You're listening to "Where's The Hook? with TuneMoose Matt Bates on 91.3FM, Bluewater Radio, where variety is key and great songs have a home.

MELODIC STRUCTURE Continued

- You may have noticed that the previous examples had choruses to change things up after somewhat repetitive verse melodies. Hold on to that thought. Old Habits Die Hard / Mick Jagger, Dave Stewart. The verse melody elements are significantly longer here. And we hear significantly less contrast between verse and chorus.

Old Habits Die Hard / Mick Jagger, Dave Stewart

- Next I'll play a song with quite long melodic lines in the verse. And because of that, Iron And Wine can go on longer with the verse, before needing some contrast from a chorus. And worthy of note is that the energy level in the 'chorus' is really the same as for the verse. What makes it a chorus then. The repeated lyrics. I've been told that the word 'chorus', comes from ancient Greek theatre, where the chorus would be the group of performers on stage, that the audience could hear, but the main actors seemed to be unaware of them. The Greek chorusters could give information that maybe wasn't obvious in the main action. And in modern songs, the chorus is usually where the main point of the song is expressed. Let's listen, to longer verse melody phrases in

Such Great Heights / Iron & Wine

- Bad Reputation / David Wilcox. Similar, mid range, length of melody, and the verse is made of two DIFFERENT melodic lines. Longer melodies, less contrast

needed in the chorus. In fact, well, there isn't a chorus, just musical interludes between sections.

Bad Reputation / David Wilcox

QUOTES

- Music, they say, and I would agree, is a language. And just as in spoken language we have idiomatic phrases that we use almost as if they were single words. And we like to use them a lot. Ditto in our shared cultural universe of music we have phrases that appear often, and in different contexts. There have been many innovators of musical idiom, and the Beatles are most certainly an important one. Check out Birthday by the Beatles. In the middle when they sing 'We would like you to dance, Take a cha cha cha chance', see if you can remember the musical bit that's going on there. Nice pun on cha cha cha, by the way. Cha cha cha chance

Birthday / The Beatles

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Station ID

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QUOTES Continued

- Ok, hold on to that one from the Beatles, and here's another one. Save to memory the 'Ah-oo', wolf howl, vocalization that appears several times in this song. Personal anecdote... my dog howls like a wolf when I play my saxophone at home. Can't tell if he's howling with pleasure or pain.

Werewolves of London / Warren Zevon

- You've got two musical idioms fresh in your memory. The up and down wave of Birthday, and the wolf howl from Werewolves of London. Here they are again in a Country song, about 2/3 the way through, functioning as a diversion in the bridge. Just after Shania sings 'Let's go!'.

Rock This Country! / Shania Twain

- I'll take us out tonight against the backdrop of a couple of 'missing-you' songs. Yes, we've got lots of musical hooks going on. Not least among them, is the gist of the storyline. I say gist, because, as we've seen many times, we rarely listen to all the lyrics. The gist of these songs are 'I Miss You'. I am terrible at good-byes. I have a hard time letting go of favourite running shoes when they're worn out

beyond recognition. I was walking my dog through the park on a sunny day once, on our way home. He decided to lie down. At 100 lbs plus I wasn't about to carry him. So I sat down and for 15 minutes we just enjoyed the day. That was a perfect moment.

Weak In The Knees / Serena Ryder

- I like to think, that at the end of the road, we're the sum of all the perfect moments we've acknowledged along the way.

Sign off

... Thanks for joining me here tonight for "Where's The Hook".

... This is TuneMoose Matt Bates, I'll be signing off now, until next week.

Final Song and Goodbye

- Taking us out I have, another missing-you song, If the World Was Ending / JP Saxe with Julia Michaels. May you find some perfect moments this week. I look forward to feeling your presence again, next Tuesday night. See you then.

If the World Was Ending / JP Saxe, Julia Michaels

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