

Music says it's a time to get up

By ELLIOT GOLD

As far back as ancient times, music has always had strange effects upon its listeners. For every new form of music that came plumaging through the 20th century, not only were the feelings of the era that bore it reflected in it, but also each specific style of music seemed to have a purpose behind it and contained within its music, and not necessarily its lyrics, a message for its listeners.

The 1920's saw an era where people were tired of war and wanted to live their lives that had been graciously spared by a war that was supposed to end all wars. Because they thought there was no chance of another war, they had something to be happy about. The soldiers returned home. American society became prosperous. People wanted to forget the past and look forward to a bright future for mankind. Out of this era grew rag-time and funky music.

The rag-time music created a zestful feeling in the people, because its music was based upon the jumpy, staccato beat of the piano. The high key that the music was played in made people feel up or high or just plain happy.

People generally had a carefree attitude during the 20's; much was bought on credit and there was no worry of how to meet the actual payment of things. People had faith that things would work themselves out in the end, and they weren't going to worry about the present.

The music told the people to get back to their old successful ways of making the society run smoothly, and to be happy because they could make it from the shadow of the war that would leave its ugly mark on history forever.

Then came the 30's, and a depression, and a new era of music.

People weren't happy anymore; they had lost all their money and there was great unemployment.

The Negro had always suffered pain and understood the feeling of society at the time. Blues and jazz was music that could only be expressed properly from the soul of the musician. The key of the music became lower than that of rag-time, and it reflected the depressed feelings of the society. The music seemed to create a mournful atmosphere; a mourning of the present and a hope of a regular life resuming. For the Negro, it was always the hope of a decent life beginning. The sad, sorrowful sound of the music aroused the people so they could concentrate and search for a way to end their present depressing state.

The music also had a relaxing effect on its listener. Constant depression and frustration can lead people to aggression or violent panic. The blues and jazz music kept the people subdued.

The 40's brought another war, and America sent many of its boys overseas to fight. The morale of the people had to be sustained. It was the era of the big bands of Jimmy Dorsey, Benny Goodman, and Glenn Miller.

The music these bands created was mellow and created sentimental, romantic feelings within its listener. The army boy thought of going back home.

It was the era of Sinatra's and Crosby's crooning voice. The girls thought of their guys overseas, and knew that only victory would bring them home, and so the morale on the home front endured.

To keep America's mind off the gloominess of the war, jitterbugging set the example as the dance of the day. Those dances were even crazier than our dances, and they served as



Remember opening night at the Pennsylvania when Glen Miller held dancers in a trance.

an excellent release of tension.

World War II ended, but there was still the disease of war in the air. Tensions were to remain forever in the Middle East when Israel became a state. Then there was the Korean War and after that the constant threat of an annihilating nuclear war. The 50's noted for the rock'n'roll of Little Richard, Jerry Lee Lewis, Fats Domino, Chubby Checker, and Elvis Presley, diverted attention from this thought.

Dancing was to such songs as "At the Hop" and "Jailhouse Rock" was very big in the 50's. To say the least, the stage shows of those rock'n'roll stars had sexual overtones. All aspects of the music combined rang out the old society and brought in a new society.

The Beatles came along with a different brand of music. It had rock'n'roll roots, but it was sit-down music. They spoke of their alienation from the society: Bob Dylan, the troubadour folk singer came and sang of alienation as well.

The key of the music had changed; it was lower like the blues of the 30's. The tempo of the music had changed to one that was not conducive to dancing. No one wanted to dance. The youth of the day had too many things on his mind, like survival in a suicidal-driven society that was making him fight an Asian war that he didn't know anything about, didn't want to fight.

Time of soul searching

By the mid 60's we had psychedelic music. Its brand lent itself even more to the blues of the 30's. Gracie Slick sang about revolution. David Crosby wanted to get away from it all on wooden ships. Stephen Stills sang about the violence on the streets of America. George Harrison sang about the taxman and his cheating ways.

Concerts became composed and the audience was genuinely interested in what the singer had to say. It was a time of soul searching and it was a confused time in the mind of the youth. Everything was happening so fast. This brand of music led the youth within himself so that he could sort out for himself the way that he wanted his society to be. The lyrics of the songs showed him what was wrong with the society; he had the facts before him and he had to think about them. The confused youth followed like sheep the radical rabble rousers who preached revolution. But because they were confused about what they wanted, and couldn't convince themselves of the moral justification of violent revolution, organized successful revolution was impossible.

Psychedelic music was based around the guitar and the great lead guitarists of the time patterned themselves after the blues' musicians of the 30's and 50's. Some of these contemporary great guitarists were Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck and Jimmy Page.

Steve Sills starts new trend

These guitarists are still influential, but there is now a new trend of music begun by Steve Sills that is gaining popularity with the youth.

Steve Sills' first album can be best classified as Gospel music. Most of his songs incorporate a chorus of Gospel singers throughout them, composed of such people as Rita Coolidge and Priscilla Jones. Gospel music is best sung by the Negro. The souls are bubbling, looking for a light to shine on them; and Gospel soul music is full of energy and it transmits that energy to its listener. It says get up and do something, whereas psychedelic music said think and lie still and experience yourself.

Another musician in this reawakening era is Rod Stewart. His music is classified as country funk and as it did in the 20's, it is telling us to be happy because it is the dawning of a new society, and it is putting the energy in us to build it. Leon Russel is another master of get-up music.

Our future is ahead of us

The trend of our music seems to be patterning itself after the music of the 20's and the 50's. It was a time

Lift up your hearts and sing me a song."

Paul McCartney said that a long time ago and he's saying it again. RAM was called stale and commercial, but its music created a happy get-up feeling and that's what is needed right now. Monksberry Moon Delight does the same thing to you that Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da did to you, if you want some fun.

On McCartney's new album Mumbo and Bip Bop are funky in the old rock'n'roll style. He hits a serious note in the beautiful, sad, blues song Wildlife: "The word wild applies to the words you and me

Taking a walk through an African park one day I saw a sign say, the animals have the right of way Wildlife — whatever happened to Wildlife — the animals in the zoo

You're breathing so hard a lot of political nonsense in the air You're making it hard for the people who live in there You're movin' so fast, but baby you know not where Wildlife — what's gonna happen to

Wildlife — the animals in the zoo

You better stop — cos' animal's everywhere And man is the top and animal too and man you just gotta care Wildlife — what's gonna happen to Wildlife — the animals in the zoo."

We were once wild like the animals in Africa; now they're in the zoo. There's so much preoccupation with making money now, that we are killing our environment, either by way of the pillage of war or by way of the soot of industry. And because political nonsense has okay'd the quick pace at which society is moving it hasn't had time to see the mess it has been creating. The zoo is like death to the wild animal. We are at the top of the animal tree, but soon our environment will be like a cage to us. It will be so dirty that we won't be able to clean it up, and we will claw for freedom at the cage that we built; it will move in on us and we will die forlorn with broken spirit.

As in the 20's and the 50's we have a hard road ahead of us. In those days the music put energy into the people and made them happy, and they set about to right the errors of their ways. Wouldn't it be nice if everyone put a smile on their face and said hello to everyone they saw, and got together with everybody to do something positive, and came out from the withdrawn mould of their inner selves? When you see life as a drag, you are a drag. When you see life as a game to be enjoyed, you join in with vigor. It's a time to get up.



Linda & Paul McCartney

when people had just come through a rough time and saw a bright future in the making. We experienced rough times in the Cold War. Our future is ahead of us and we have to start building it right now.

The piano has come back again. "Let's all get up and dance to a song

That was a hit before your mother was born

Though she was born a long time ago

Your mother should know. . .

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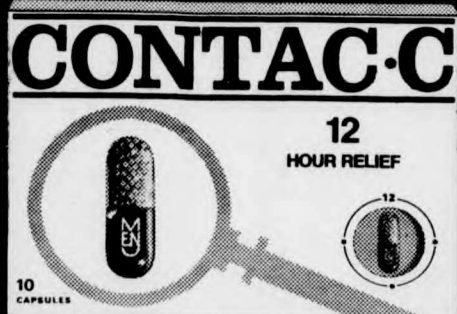
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