

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR IN ZAPPA: PHILOSOPHY, ALLUSION, AND
STRUCTURE IN FRANK ZAPPA'S MUSIC

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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In this thesis I explore how music-text relations in Frank Zappa's music work together to express a central narrative, with a particular focus on his use of musical allusion. First, I frame Zappa's creative perspective from a Dadaist philosophy, illuminating an underlying critique of American culture through the use of musical and lyrical devices such as allusion. I explore how Zappa uses allusion as a narrative device and how these allusions affect a listener's interpretation of a track. Finally, I provide an in-depth analysis of "Billy the Mountain" from the 1972 album *Just Another Band From L.A.* I first present an overview and analysis of the narrative as it is presented in the lyrics and then explore how musical parameters contribute to the narrative of the track. By understanding the interaction of music and text, I create a platform from which Zappa's music can be better understood.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

When someone writes a piece of music, what he or she puts on the paper is **roughly the equivalent of a recipe**—in the sense that **the recipe is not the food, only instructions for the preparation of food**. Unless you are very weird, you don't eat the recipe.

-Frank Zappa¹

California in the mid-1960s saw the rise of the Freak subculture—a group of young individuals sporting “greasy curls” and crazy outfits—rebellious against the Beat generation through an outward creative expression of their relationship to society.² The musical side of the Freak movement is often associated with Frank Zappa, a Maryland-born, self-taught composer-performer. Leading his band, the Mothers of Invention, Zappa released the first double LP rock album *Freak Out!* in 1966, which was interpreted by Pete Johnson as “musical gibberish.”³ When describing the Mothers, Loraine Alterman said, “Their hair and beards are filthy. They smell bad.”⁴ In contrast to the musical aesthetic of the British Invasion—where bands looked good and wrote songs about love, holding hands, and necking—Zappa and the Mothers presented an alternate form of expression and were received by audiences as an oddity existing outside of the realm of popular music mainstream. However, *Freak Out!* became an underground success, appealing to young Americans who found songs like “Go Cry on Somebody Else's

¹ Frank Zappa with Peter Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book* (New York, NY: Poseidon Press, 1989), 160. (Emphasis Zappa's).

² David Walley, *No Commercial Potential, The Saga of Frank Zappa, Then and Now* (New York, NY: Da Capo Press, 1996), 49-56.

³ Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 222.

⁴ Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 222.

Shoulder” and “Who Are the Brain Police” refreshing alternatives to more straight-forward pop songs.

Zappa always worked on the fringes of the music industry: rather than fitting into either the world of popular music or “classical” music,⁵ he maintained a niche of his own. Zappa's main passion was for music, and he consistently gave the impression that his only concern was to make enough money so that he could continue writing and playing. Analysis of Zappa’s has only recently become a topic explored in musicological scholarship with work by Jonathan W. Bernard, Brett Clement, and Andre Mount.⁶ Possible reasons for this include the lack of transcriptions or access to Zappa manuscripts, the continued prejudice against Zappa as “outsider” in musical academia, and the presumed lack of structure in his music. My thesis focuses specifically on the last of these criticisms. I argue that Zappa's compositions, which seem disjunct or haphazardly thrown together, are in fact carefully organized according to a central narrative. Zappa presents his narrative ideas through the text itself (lyrics), the delivery of the text (persona), the structure of the music (form), or some combination of these. Furthermore, Zappa’s compositional ideas can be highlighted through conventional musical means: motivic gesture, musical quotation and allusion, key relations, word painting, etc.

⁵ Zappa made many forays in the concert hall with orchestral pieces that were performed with little enthusiasm by the London Symphony Orchestra and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. The release of *Yellow Shark* in 1993 (the same year as Zappa’s death) represents a successful orchestral collaboration between Zappa and Ensemble Modern.

⁶ See: Jonathan W. Bernard, “Listening to Zappa,” (*Contemporary Music Review* 18/4, 2000), 63-104, Brett Clement, “A Study of the Instrumental Music of Frank Zappa,” (PhD. diss., University of Cincinnati, 2009); and Andre Mount, “‘Bridging the Gap’: Frank Zappa and the Confluence of Art and Pop,” (PhD. diss., University of California Santa Barbara, 2010).

The music of Frank Zappa has been subjected to both generalizations and misunderstandings, reducing his compositional prowess to the level of frivolity. Music critic Richard Meltzer writes, “But Zappa, whose humor is so all-pervading that it is capable of becoming tedious to the point of extinction, is rarely merely humorous enough...to avoid being susceptible to the conventional big laugh.”⁷ Meltzer's comment is focused on Zappa's lyrics: divorcing them from their musical context and meaning. By looking at Zappa's own philosophy, I provide a platform from which his music and lyrics can be analyzed and appreciated in a meaningful and informed way. This thesis does not propose the definitive method for analyzing Zappa's music, but rather seeks to broaden understanding of his compositional goals and facilitate more nuanced readings of his work. In particular, I focus on musical form, allusion, recurring motivic material, the relation between the persona and the environment of the track, and how these elements contribute to a global narrative, in order to illuminate the structure in Zappa's music. Elements that may seem trivial or purely comical appear to have a more nuanced meaning upon closer scrutiny.

For Zappa, structure is at the heart of composition: “composition is a process of organization, very much like architecture...just give me some *stuff*, and I'll organize it for you. That's what I do.”⁸ His comment suggests that behind a seemingly disjunct presentation of material there is indeed a structure that is dictated by a cohesive organizational process. What directs the organizational process? What is appealing to the listener in such music? Does the search for structure become an equivalent challenge to

⁷ Richard Meltzer, *The Aesthetics of Rock* (New York: Something Else Press, Inc, 1970), 42, foot note 51.

⁸ Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 139. (emphasis Zappa's).

solving a riddle? In Zappa's case, fables—told through an interaction between lyrics and music—become the fundamental organizing principle for much of his music. The recurring social and political commentary and subjects in Zappa's stories reflect the influence of the Freak mentality. Michael J. Prince, in his study of science fiction as a subject in Zappa's music, claims, “The engaging element in Zappa's work is often the story line, for his music frequently depicts situations within a larger narrative context.”⁹ In order to gain a more nuanced insight into Zappa's compositional process, we must look for a global narrative within which the placement of sections in a piece—or tracks on an album—becomes more meaningful.

I develop an analytic approach to Zappa's music by first looking at his compositional philosophy from a Dadaist perspective. In Chapter II I explore the relationship between Dadaism and Zappa's use of allusion and theatricality as a means of cultural, social, and/or political critique. While presented in a humorous manner, many of Zappa's lyrics often deal quite explicitly with American ideals, people, or policies. While Zappa may criticize these themes lyrically, musical elements are also used to convey meaning in the track. In Chapter III, I look more closely at Zappa's use of allusion, focusing on how allusion is employed, the interpretation of allusion, and some examples within Zappa's output. Using Michael Long's notion of cultural register,¹⁰ I argue that Zappa uses quotation in order to evoke a variety of conventions and their associative meanings in the listener as a means of enhancing lyrical elements of a track. Finally, in

⁹ Michael J. Prince, “The Science Fiction Protocols of Frank Zappa: Problems of Genre and Satire in

¹⁰ Michael Long, *Beautiful Monsters: Imagining the Classic in Musical Media* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2008), 11-15.

Chapter IV I put these methodological techniques in an analytical context by tracing connections between narrative, form, and allusion in “Billy the Mountain” from the 1972 album, *Just Another Band from L.A.*¹¹ “Billy the Mountain” seems at first to be a random composite of musical ideas, loosely tied together to provide an accompaniment to the surrealistic narration. However, despite the lack of traditional functional progressions, steady rhythms, and phrase groupings, I argue that the piece exhibits formal cohesion through the use of musical allusion, leitmotifs, and music-text relations. The interaction of musical elements and text contributes to a larger narrative construct; when taken together, these elements reveal a clearly cohesive structure that is presented through a jagged mash-up of musical ideas.

¹¹ *Just Another Band from L.A.* was released in 1972, but live recordings are taken from performances in Los Angeles in 1971.

CHAPTER II

ZAPPA AS DADAIST

If anyone involved in mass culture seems to point to an untruth in the way things are run, it would be Frank Zappa. Obstinate, irreducible, oppositional, his music presents a continual disjunct, a permanent dada.

-Ben Watson¹²

Introduction

Following Frank Vincent Zappa's passing in 1993, a plethora of biographical discourse has been written that fails to incorporate any analysis of his music. This is due partly to Zappa's candid, erudite, and unapologetic openness to his own musical career and style, and partly to his cynicism towards rock critics as interpreters of his music. In his autobiography he writes, "There are several reasons why my music has never really been 'explained' in the press. For one thing, the people who write the articles don't really care **how it works** or **why it works**."¹³ Zappa also exhibited a certain disdain for his fans, and in one instance said, "I don't think the typical rock fan is smart enough to know he's been dumped on, so it doesn't make any difference...Those kids wouldn't know music if it came up and bit 'em on the ass."¹⁴ Such hostile comments from the composer have served to both establish a certain amount of disdain from the populace while at the same time to accumulate a devoted fan-base of self-proclaimed "Zappologists."

In spite of this dichotomous relationship with the audience—and despite the lack of close analytic discourse on his music—Zappa's music has retained a certain amount of

¹² Ben Watson, *Frank Zappa: The Negative Dialectics of Poodle Play* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), xiii.

¹³ Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 224. (Emphasis Zappa's).

¹⁴ Barry Miles, *Zappa, a Biography* (New York, NY: Atlantic Books, 2004), 41-42.

prestige in the pop-rock canon. This chapter draws from recent writings on, and by, Frank Zappa in an effort to generalize a philosophical understanding of Zappa's approach to composition, and to supplement an analysis of his music. While many authors seek to draw parallels between Adorno's view of the avant-garde and Zappa's musical career,¹⁵ few, if any, propose a practical definitive philosophy for Zappa's compositional process. I propose a Dadaist interpretation of Zappa's music, and argue that the use of allusion, which I discuss in more detail in Chapter III, exhibits a direct link between Dadaist ideology and Zappa's compositional process.

I begin this chapter by providing an historical context for Dada and how it relates to Zappa's incorporation of allusion, theatrics, and social and political critiques in his music. Next I look at a process that Zappa calls “xenochnony,” meaning roughly “different times,” where previously recorded tracks are reused or recorded over to create entirely different tracks. Although this process is similar to allusion, the self-referential borrowing is usually buried deep in the texture of the track or from such an obscure source that the recognition of the process does not impact an interpretation to the same extent that an explicit musical quotation or stylistic allusion would. Finally I look at Zappa's concept of “Project/Object,” a term which he uses to relate all of his creative output. He explains that, “Each project (in whatever realm), or interview connected to it, is part of a larger object, for which there is no 'technical name.’”¹⁶

¹⁵ For example, this approach is explored by Martin Knakkegaard, Max Paddison, and Ben Watson. See: Martin Knakkegaard, “Zappa and Modernism: An Extended Study of 'Brown Shoes Don't Make It,’” in *Frank Zappa And the And*, ed. Paul Carr, (Ashgate Publishing, 2013); Max Paddison, “The Critique Criticised: Adorno and Popular Music,” *Popular Music* Vol. 2 (1982); and Ben Watson, *Frank Zappa: The Negative Dialectics of Poodle Play* (St. Martin's Press. 1993).

¹⁶ Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 139.

“Oh Mein Dada”

The origin of Dada stems from European and North American artists as a reaction to the absurdity and mass orchestrated horrors of the First World War in 1914. Dadaists sought to undermine convention as way to criticize social and cultural standards by creating what they thought of as “anti-art.” John Adkins Richardson explains that “Dada opposed reform as strenuously as it rejected convention; the movement was as unprogressive as it was radical...Nonetheless, behind its japeries and riddled manifestos lay a pitiless nihilism that brought every notion of stability into question and threatened the very idea of intellectual respectability.”¹⁷ The Dadaist anti-Expressionism, anti-logical, anti-everything approach represents a distorted adaptation of realism as Daniel Albright claims, “Dada...(from the Dadaist’s point of view), is Realism, as the twentieth century understands reality.”¹⁸

A prime example of Dada art is Marcel Duchamp's “Fountain” (Figure 1), an appropriated urinal turned on its side and signed “R. Mutt, 1917.” The installation was submitted for an exhibition put on by the Society of Independent Artists in New York (of which Duchamp was a board member); however, the piece was removed from the exhibition because it was considered by other board members to be “not art.” Despite its rejection, “Fountain” made a splash in the art community by bringing to the fore questions about convention and interpretation: one of the goals of the Dada movement.

¹⁷ John Adkins Richardson, “Dada, Camp, and the Mode Called Pop,” *The Journal of Aesthetic Criticism* 24/4 (1966): 550.

¹⁸ Daniel Albright, *Modernism in Music: An Anthology of Sources*, (University of Chicago Press, 2004), 315.



Figure 1. Marcel Duchamp's "Fountain"

In the late 50's and early 60's, there was a brief revival and reformation of the original Dadaist aesthetic. The main difference in this Neo-Dadaist approach is that the value and integrity of the artistic product is maintained; that is to say, they did not view their products as "anti-art," but still believed that convention should be questioned—especially in cultural, social, and political spheres.¹⁹ The musical world was also influenced by this resurgence of Dadaist ideals, particularly in Fluxus, a collective network of artists. Members of Fluxus were influenced by John Cage and they incorporated elements of indeterminacy, experimentalism, and noise, into their performances. One of the goals outlined in George Maciunas's 1963 *Fluxus Manifesto*

¹⁹ For further discussion on neo-Dadaism see: Susan Hapgood, *Neo-Dada: Redefining Art, 1958–62* (New York, NY: Universe Pub., 1994). For further reading on the original Dada movement see: Tristan Tzara, "The Dada Manifesto," accessed June 9, 2014. www.391.org/manifestos/1918-dada-manifesto-tristan-tzara.html.

(Figure 2) reads: “Purge the world of bourgeois sickness, “intellectual,” professional & commercialized culture, PURGE the world of dead art, imitation, artificial art, abstract art, illusionistic art, mathematical art, — PURGE THE WORLD OF 'EUROPANISM!'”²⁰

This particular goal suggests an aggressive means of not only criticizing convention, but replace it with “Living art, anti-art, NON REALITY ART,” which is to be accessible to all peoples.

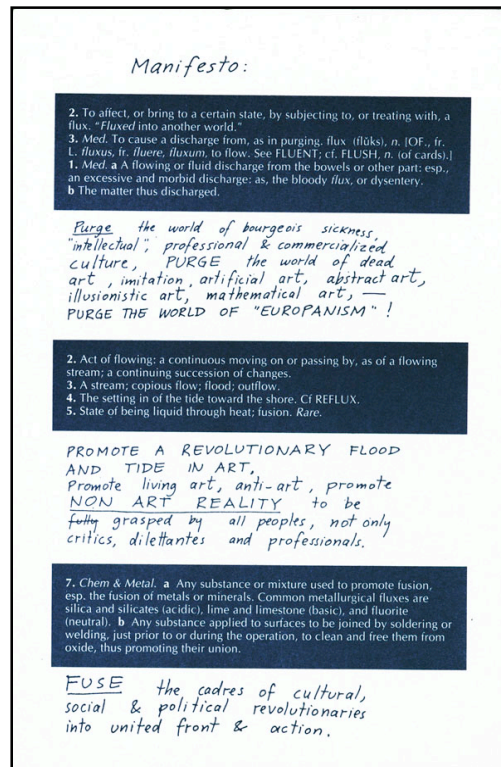


Figure 2. George Maciunas's *Fluxus Manifesto*

Unlike Fluxus, Zappa uses Dadaist ideals in a subtler and less aggressive way. Zappa's use of allusion and relentless critique on cultural norms places him in the Dadaist

²⁰ George Maciunas, *Fluxus Manifesto*, (1963).

mindset: musical quotations function as “found objects” that are used to signify meaning (i.e., the urinal in Duchamp’s “Fountain”). This mindset can be summarized by two main ideas: first, it is motivated by an underlying incentive to move away from and/or to criticize an established 'norm'—what Zappa calls “Nuking the Norm;”²¹ second, Dada is a technological melting pot, compiling and drawing from any number of disciplines. As Ben Watson puts it, "Dada rearranged artistic materials...with a freedom of invention that still giddies the mind. It is the emphasis on innovation, an advance that willfully flouts social codes and moral values, that finds an echo in Zappa."²² Zappa talks about Dadaism, stating, “In the early days, I didn't even know what to **call** the stuff my life was made of. You can imagine my delight when I discovered that someone in a distant land had the same idea—AND a nice, short name for it.”²³ Zappa’s approach to the Dadaist ideals has a much less aggressive agenda than the ideals exemplified by Fluxus. While he is opposed to many conventions in the American culture—particularly commercialism in the music industry (both pop and classical), televangelism, and the American bipartite political system—his goal is not to replace or reinvent the system through his music, but to stamp out the ignorance of the public by drawing attention to these problems in a more subtle, and often comedic, way. As Jonathan W. Bernard writes, “For [Zappa], the satirical urge extended into matters beyond those more strictly speaking ‘musical’; in fact, on many occasions it is clear that the music is serving primarily as an indicator of a

²¹ Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 185.

²² From: Ben Watson, “Frank Zappa as Dadaist: Recording Technology and the Power to Repeat,” in: *The Frank Zappa Companion. Four Decades of Commentary*, ed. Richard Kostelanetz (New York, NY: Schirmer. 1997), 152.

²³ Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 255. (emphasis Zappa's).

specific social, cultural, or political situation toward which satirical commentary is being directed.”²⁴ One way in which this critique is brought to the fore is in Zappa's use of musical allusion, which I will explore in more detail in Chapter III.

While the use of allusion represents Zappa's critique of convention, his forays into other media and modes of expression represent the idea of melting pot technologies associated with Dadaism. In addition to composing and performing music, Zappa was also an amateur filmmaker. His most notable films include the surrealistic depiction of life on tour with a band in *200 Motels* from 1972, and the pastiche of live performance, candid band shots, and stop-motion clay animation in *Baby Snakes* from 1979. However, for Zappa, theatricality is not limited to films, and he often incorporated a theatrical element into his live performances as well.

In 1966 Frank Zappa and the Mothers of Invention took up residency in New York City as the house band for the Garrick Theatre on Bleecker Street. In this post-Beat experimental environment Zappa occasionally organized events to happen on stage; sometimes improvising them from night to night. In many cases these events included audience participation. During the Garrick residency, Zappa recalls, “We performed a couple of marriages on stage. We pulled people out of the audiences and made them make speeches. One time we brought thirty people up on stage and some of them took our instruments and the rest of them sang “Louie Louie” as we left.”²⁵ For audiences, the erratic, unpredictable nature and content of the Mother's performance became a major attraction.

²⁴ Jonathan W. Bernard, “Listening to Zappa,” (*Contemporary Music Review* 18/4, 2000), 69.

²⁵ Walley, *No Commercial Potential*, 81.

In addition to audience participation Zappa incorporated props into his performance as well. Absurd costumes, dolls, various produce, and regular household items were constantly used on stage and occasionally transferred over the audience via wire system from the back of the hall. According to David Walley, one of the favorite props was a modified stuffed giraffe that would squirt a load of whipped cream onto the audience from its nether regions.²⁶ Zappa describes another event that was never fully realized:

I once proposed the construction of an apparatus which would have been a cross between a gallows and an old-fashioned shower stall. The curtain was to have been an American flag and behind it, hanging from the gallows, was to be a side of beef (at room temperature). I proposed to roll this out at the end of each show, play a fanfare and open the curtain, releasing flies into the audience.²⁷

The combination of props, audience participation, and unpredictability contrasts with the conventional concert going experience, and through theatric elements such expectations are brought into question. These performances create a challenging atmosphere for the audience as well: in one instance they could be willing participants in the Mothers performance; in another they could be subjugated victims in a staged assault.

Zappa's use of allusion and theatricality are often employed as critiques of convention and therefore can be better understood by a contextualization of his output with Dadaism. This Dadaist perspective helps to inform our interpretation of Zappa's music by looking beyond the comedic elements of his music and interpreting them as a cultural, social, or political critique. I will now look at Zappa's self-referential form of musical borrowing and appropriation in his process of xenochrony.

²⁶ Walley, *No Commercial Potential*, 82.

²⁷ Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 93.

Xenochrony: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

In addition to stylistic allusion and direct quotations, Zappa utilized other techniques of musical montage such as xenochrony. Kelly Fisher Lowe defines xenochrony as: “the idea that you can take different pieces of music recorded at different times and edit them together, often laying one on top of the other, to create a unique piece of music.”²⁸ In many instances of xenochrony, Zappa would take a live-recorded track and place it on top of a studio-recorded track. For instance: all of the guitar solos on *Joe's Garage* (1976) are taken from various live recordings and superimposed over the studio recording. Another instance of xenochrony is the piece “Rubber Shirt,” from the 1979 album *Sheik Yerbouti*, which takes a bass and drum track recorded for different tracks and puts them together. Zappa explains, “The musical result is the result of two musicians, who were never in the same room at the same time, playing at two different rates in two different moods for two different purposes, when blended together, yielding a third result which is musical and synchronizes in a strange way. That's xenochrony.”²⁹ The recorded medium becomes a “fixed object,” which can then be manipulated or reorganized into something new.³⁰ The use of live recordings characterizes the spontaneity of a live performance but translates them into a new context as a “fixed object.”

²⁸ Kelly Fisher Lowe, *Words and Music of Frank Zappa* (The Praeger Singer-Songwriter Collection: Westport, CT, 2006), 6.

²⁹ Frank Zappa, “1988 Interview with Bob Marshall,” accessed May 24, 2014, http://www.science.uva.nl/~robbert/zappa/interviews/Bob_Marshall.

³⁰ Neil Slaven, *Electric Don Quixote: The Definitive Story of Frank Zappa* (London: Omnibus Press, 1996), 232.

While the borrowing of Zappa's xenochrony seems to relate to his use of other forms of allusion, the goals of each technique are drastically different. The use of allusion can be viewed as a technique that aims to establish a clear connection with the listener. Quotations, both literal and stylistic, require an audience familiar with the cultural references being made and employed. On the other hand, xenochrony is a purely compositional technique—a tool that Zappa uses to create unique results—not easily reproduced in conventional notation or by live performers. As I will discuss in Chapter IV, the resultant piece does not require listener engagement in the same way “Billy the Mountain” does—it becomes an object.

Project/Object: Unity Amidst the Madness

Zappa conceived his entire artistic output as contributing to an overarching, and ongoing, composition—Project/Object. He considered his music, films, interviews, writings, and other artistic output of various mediums as contributors to this universal idea. Zappa explains that:

In the case of *Project/Object*, you may find a little *poodle* over here, a little *blow job* over there, etc., etc. I am not obsessed by *poodles* or *blow jobs*, however, these words (and others of equal insignificance), along with pictorial images and melodic themes, recur throughout albums, interviews, films, videos (and this book) for no other reason than to unify the 'collection.'³¹

This connection in Zappa's output is not a new artistic idea, but it is worthy of note for two reasons: first, Zappa's artistic output and experimentation exist across a wide variety of mediums; second, Zappa makes a conscious effort to establish an interconnected body of work—on both a grand scale and one of minutiae.

³¹ Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 140. (Emphasis Zappa's).

Zappa describes two metaphors of this technique in order to explain his perception of Project/Object. The first connects with literature, where a character in a story reappears in subsequent novels and plots. Zappa asks, “Why should he get to go to only one party?”³² While he doesn't offer any concrete examples, some contemporaneous examples include Robert Heinlein's character Lazarus Long—who appears in several novels dealing with Heinlein's “Multiverse”—and Kurt Vonnegut's autobiographical character Kilgore Trout, who appears in varying roles in several novels. “The Adventures of Greggory Peccary” from the 1978 album *Studio Tan* is an example of Zappa bringing in the character Billy the Mountain for a cameo appearance. The second metaphor that Zappa uses is Rembrandt's technique of mixing brown into every other color. Zappa says, “The brown itself wasn't especially fascinating, but the result of its obsessive inclusion was that 'look.’”³³ For Zappa such elements become creative trademarks that define an artist's uniqueness—defining his/her creative voice.

Conclusion

Frank Zappa's compositional process and output can be better understood through the lens of Dadaism. Rather than interpreting his music as purely frivolous, or comedic, the Dada approach facilitates a more nuanced interpretation. Both allusion and theatrics are used as a means of conveying a critique on conventions of culture, society, or politics, which will be further investigated in subsequent chapters. Zappa's use of xenochrony, though related to allusion, presents borrowing as a purely compositional technique rather

³² Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 139.

³³ Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 140.

than as a narrative or interpretative device. All of these components become recurring motifs that Zappa relates through his idea of Project/Object. With a general understanding of Zappa's compositional philosophy, I will now take a more detailed look at the use of allusion and its interpretative value as a narrative device in his music.

CHAPTER III

MUSICAL ALLUSION IN FRANK ZAPPA'S WORKS

Virtually everything we say or do borrows from what we have heard and seen, and the true mark of originality lies in how we suit it to our current situation and make it our own.

-Peter Burkholder³⁴

Introduction

Musical borrowing, appropriation, and allusion are all terms that (for the purposes of this thesis) refer to a similar compositional technique: placing elements of preexisting material—in part or in whole—in a new context for extra-musical purposes. What then is the purpose of musical allusion? A composer's intent may seem like a useful starting place to expose an interpretative meaning behind the borrowing; however, I argue that the impact of musical allusion on a listener's interpretation relies entirely on the listener's ability to recognize the allusion being made. Although a composer's intent may provide us with clues as to what allusions to listen for in a particular piece, both the recognition and interpretation of allusion are in the ears of the listener. It is therefore entirely possible that intended musical allusions fall on deaf ears, wherein the listener does not recognize them and the allusions have no effect on interpretation. Likewise, it is possible that a listener may hear something as an allusion that the composer has not intentionally (or consciously) included. In either case, the listener's ability to discern musical allusion in a work—and the effect that has on an interpretation—will be the focus of this chapter.

³⁴ Peter Burkholder's summarization of Ralph Waldo Emerson's "Quotation and Originality" from 1904. See: Peter Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes: Charles Ives and the Uses of Musical Borrowing* (Yale University Press, 2004), 418.

Musical allusion can be divided into two large categories: direct and indirect allusion.³⁵ A direct allusion (or quotation) takes material from a specific, discernible source, while indirect allusion refers to stylistic borrowing through timbral, textural, or harmonic idioms of a particular genre of music. The first part of this chapter explores this hierarchical model of identifying allusion by further distinguishing how these allusions are used. I draw from Peter Burkholder's study of musical borrowing in Charles Ives compositions, borrowing certain classifications that are equally applicable to Zappa's technique.

How do musical allusions effect a listener's interpretation? I utilize Michael Long's discussion of 'cultural register' in order to clarify how musical allusions can be interpreted. Essentially, the recognition of a familiar quotation, or style, evokes a collection of images, places, concepts, or ideas—the register. The register evoked depends entirely on an individual listener's cultural background, experience, and familiarity with the original subject matter of the allusion. Therefore, in the re-appropriated context, the register evoked may embellish an idea presented in the new musical creation, it may create a conflict between ideas, or it may serve no interpretative purpose and simply exists as an homage or esoteric connection for the composer or the listener. Long's idea resonates strongly with Zappa's idea of “Archetypal American Musical Icons”³⁶ or musical references that are so ingrained in the American public that

³⁵ Kelly Fisher Lowe uses the terms “direct” and “hidden” as categories for Zappa's allusion. However, “hidden” allusion refers to quotations that are “hid[den] bits and pieces of [Zappa's] classical composers in his rock songs.” Lowe argues that these allusions are meant to be recognized and appreciated by a different type of audience, or that recognizing them becomes a sign of being “in the know” about Zappa's music. See: Kelly Fisher Lowe, *Words and Music of Frank Zappa* (The Praeger Singer-Songwriter Collection: Westport, CT, 2006), 8.

³⁶ Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 166.

they will (mostly) be recognized. Then, following the work of Linda Hutcheon and Lars Elleström, I provide a brief discussion of parody, satire, and irony, which are applicable to many examples from Zappa's output, but require clarification of their meaning in the context of allusion.

Finally I look at several examples of musical allusion in Zappa's musical output. In “Go Cry On Somebody Else's Shoulder” Zappa uses a stylistic allusion to doo-wop, both in the music and in the lyrics, for the purposes of critiquing the previous generation. The style evokes a sense of nostalgia—even though it was released in 1966—while the lyrics take a different spin on the traditional love motif. The 1988 album *Broadway the Hard Way* uses a recurring quotation of “The Battle Hymn of the Republic.” Following Christopher Smith's study of this album, I show how the same quotation is used in different contexts to evoke a similar register that can be interpreted as a mockery of Reagan-era politics. Next I look at “Debra Kadabra,” a through-composed piece that uses a variety of direct and indirect musical allusions, featuring Captain Beefheart (Don Van Vliet) on vocals. “Flakes” from 1979 contains an extended monologue by Adrian Belew, impersonating the voice of Bob Dylan. I look at how this impersonation plays into the subject matter of the piece as a whole rather than being a purely comedic element of the track. Finally, I look at several instances of allusion on “Amnesia Vivace” (1967) which features quotations from Igor Stravinsky, Edgard Varese, and Gene Chandler (“Duke of Earl”) and are juxtaposed to comprise the entire one minute track.

By exploring the methodology of musical allusion as it pertains to Zappa's works, I show that their effect is not merely comedic but represent an intrinsic element to the narrative of his music. Identifying the cultural register is a useful tool for analyzing the

impact of musical allusions on a listener's interpretation. While this chapter's primary focus is to explore how and to what effect musical allusions are employed, in Chapter IV I will apply these concepts in an analysis of a larger work to show that, for Zappa, allusion is an important narrative device.

Taxonomy for Allusion

Peter Burkholder identifies fourteen types of quotation/allusion that are used in Charles Ives' works. While not all of the types he lists are applicable to describe Frank Zappa's approach, there is enough overlap that they are worth reproducing in whole. I will first recreate Burkholder's list,³⁷ pointing out instances in Zappa's music when appropriate, and then add some other types that are particularly useful in my study of Zappa. This accumulative list is by no means meant to be exhaustive, but will provide a useful starting point for future research.

1. **Modeling:** A work or section that is based on the form of another piece.
2. **Variations:** As in theme and variations. An initial tune is presented in a series of embellishments.
3. **Paraphrasing:** A new melody is created based on a preexisting one.
4. **Setting:** Placing a tune over a new accompaniment. This is most similar to Zappa's technique of xenochrony, where previously recorded material is reused in a new track or composition. For example, the guitar solos for *Joe's Garage* (1979) were taken from live tour recordings, and re-appropriated for the studio album.
5. **Cantus Firmus** Preexisting tune is played in long durations.

³⁷ Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 3.

6. **Medley:** A succession of two or more tunes.
7. **Quodlibet:** Combining two or more existing tunes in counterpoint or in fragments. As I will discuss, “Amnesia Vivace” (1967) presents quotations from *The Rite of Spring*, *The Firebird*, and “Duke of Earl” in a quodlibet style.
8. **Stylistic Allusion:** Timbral, textural, and harmonic idioms of a particular genre are used. Zappa's *Cruisin' With Ruben and the Jets* (1968) is an entire album that utilizes a stylistic allusion to doo-wop.
9. **Transcribing:** An arrangement of an original tune for a new medium. Related to this type is “cover,” which I will discuss as a separate type of allusion.
10. **Programmatic Quotation:** Use of a preexisting tune contributes to an extra-musical program. As Andre Mount points out, “Tinsel Town Rebellion” (1984) makes several text embellishing quotations including Creams' “Sunshine of Your Love” under the lyrics “skim the cream,” and The Door's “Light My Fire” under a reference to Jim Morrison in the lyrics.³⁸
11. **Cumulative Setting:** A tune is used in fragments throughout the work, only appearing in its original form at the end.
12. **Collage:** Multiple tunes sound simultaneously.
13. **Patchwork:** Fragments of two or more tunes are alternated making a synthetic tune.
14. **Extended Paraphrase:** An entire melody for a section or work is based on an

³⁸ From the 1978 album *Studio Tan*. See: Andre Mount, “Bridging the Gap: Frank Zappa and the Confluence of Art and Pop,” (PhD diss., University of California Santa Barbara. 2010), 173-174. See also: Andre Mount, “Does Serious Music Belong In Pop? Borrowings From Stravinsky in the Music of Frank Zappa,” (accessed September 10, 2014. <http://www.andremount.net/professional>).

existing tune.

Before presenting my own types of allusion, it is useful to mention Andre Mount's use of Burkholder's quotation types. Mount traces the various methods and instances of Zappa's appropriation of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, and provides examples that cover the following Burkholder types: Modeling, Paraphrasing, Arrangement, Setting, Medley, Quodlibet, Stylistic Allusion, Programmatic Quotations, and Extended Paraphrase.³⁹ However, Burkholder's list does not account for all of the techniques that Zappa employs. The following are several additional types of allusion that I have found in Zappa's work.

15. **Cut and Paste:** A more or less unaltered quotation is presented, with little or no transition, as an interruption of previous material. This type shows up most prevalently in "Billy the Mountain," which I will discuss more in Chapter IV.

16. **Cover:** The entirety of a track created by one artist is performed by another. Variations from the original range from subtle to extreme. On the album *Them of Us* (1984), Zappa has a cover of the Allman Brother's Band song "Whipping Post," and is performed close to the original, with some minor changes in instrumentation.

17. **Imitation:** The texture of the environment of the track in some way evokes the sonic qualities of another artist or group. "Variations on the Carlos Santana Santana Secret Chord Progression"⁴⁰ uses a heavily fuzzed guitar solo over a

³⁹ Mount, "Bridging the Gap: Frank Zappa and the Confluence of Art and Pop," 186-192.

⁴⁰ Originally from the 1981 album *Shut Up 'N Play Yer Guitar Some More*. Later released as a compilation with the prequel album *Shut Up 'N Play Yer Guitar*, in 1987.

repetitive organ and bass motive, reminiscent of Santana's "Oye Como Va" or his cover of Fleetwood Mac's "Black Magic Woman."

18. **Impersonation:** The persona of a track mimics a person or style of talking or singing. In "Flakes," a Bob Dylan impersonation is used and the persona is referred to by name in the song.

This taxonomy provides a useful starting point for the identification of types of musical quotation. However, before looking at specific examples, I will look first at ways in which these allusions, once recognized, can be meaningfully interpreted.

The use of musical allusion as a compositional technique is not a unique aspect of Zappa's music. Burkholder points out, "Many composers have paraphrased themes from sacred or folk melodies or have evoked a place, activity, or group by suggesting a certain style or quoting a familiar tune [i.e. cultural register]...The reworking of existing music is central to the [Western] tradition, taking many forms throughout history."⁴¹ Why is this worth considering in Zappa's music, since it is an inherent aspect of a historical tradition? Zappa employs allusion as a narrative device, relying on an audience's familiarity with certain tunes, or stylistic idioms, to color their interpretation of what has been said, sung, or spoken. I begin by exploring how allusions affect a listener's interpretation through the use of cultural register, or what Zappa calls "Archetypal American Musical Icons." Lastly I briefly discuss definitions of the terms parody, satire, and irony as they pertain to musical examples and analyses presented in this thesis.

⁴¹ Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 5.

Cultural Register

In general, stylistic allusion and stylistic assimilation is an important aspect of pop-rock music. Music critic Richard Meltzer describes that, “There is an entire school of rock which sporadically produces 'answer' records...this answer consists of the same tune and plot...which might be mistaken for the original.”⁴² While the “answer” process may describe only a portion of rock music, the implication is that artists constantly influence, and are influenced by others, creating a quasi network of coherence through similarities. In talking about the role of this intertextualization, Albin Zak states, "It serves as a contextualizing force that situates the individual recording within a galaxy of other recordings and provides the listener with all sorts of clues as to style, rhetorical sense, and aesthetic stance."⁴³ Zak's goal is to explain a historical lineage through the progression of pop-music as an evolving influence. Zappa works against this lineage, using stylistic ideas as a platform for critique rather than as a model for creativity. Specifically, Zak's “clues” become important reference points for Zappa's critique and act as something for the listener to pick up on and relate to similar cultural phenomenon. Once these relationships are made, the listener is able to predict a normative style, structure, or stance that they associate with the specific “clues” they hear. Zappa uses this technique to imply a familiar style, but then departs starkly from expected norms in an effort to both comment on a particular style and to play with an audience's expectations.

For Zappa, what characterizes the style of the piece, and what ultimately triggers an association in the listener is timbre:

⁴² Meltzer, *The Aesthetics of Rock*, 51.

⁴³ Albin Zak, *Poetics of Rock Composition: Multitrack Recording As Compositional Process*, (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001), 185.

On a record, the overall timbre of the piece (determined by equalization of individual parts and their proportions in the mix) tells you, in a subtle way, *WHAT* the song is about. The orchestration provides *important information* about what the composition *IS* and, in some instances, assumes a greater importance than *the composition itself*.⁴⁴

By carefully manipulating and emulating specific stylistic timbres, Zappa is able to invoke what Michael Long calls cultural register: a communal level of understanding and association that is particular to a specific culture or genre.

The importance of cultural register is that it is “related to broader fields of acculturated styles and genres for which it functions as a signal and marker.”⁴⁵ This allows Zappa's critique to exist beyond the realm of pop-rock music and to be applicable and understandable to a much broader context of culture. Long's notion of “Cultural Register” is a result of the repetition of an object or idea where “the *sensory* aspects of a cultural product [are linked] to the *expressive* value of the register in which they are understood to be located.”⁴⁶ With enough time, this linking of sensory aspects and expressive values becomes a shared collective idea, establishing an associated expectancy among a group of people, or culture.

More important than Zappa's use of allusion is the variety of material that he incorporates into his works. One of Zappa's favorites was “Louie Louie,” quoted to create an allusion to what Lowe calls “simple, dumb rock songs.”⁴⁷ “Billy the Mountain” makes use of several stylistically disparate quotations. Zappa utilizes more traditional tunes such

⁴⁴ Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 188. (emphasis Zappa's).

⁴⁵ Long, *Beautiful Monsters*, 12.

⁴⁶ Long, *Beautiful Monsters*, 12. (emphasis Long's).

⁴⁷ Lowe, *The Words and Music of Frank Zappa*, 8.

as “The Star Spangled Banner,” “Off We Go Into the Wild Blue Yonder,” and “Pomp and Circumstance,” in addition to more contemporary cultural quotations such as “Johnny's Theme,” the opening music from the Johnny Carson show, and the last section of Stephen Stills “Suite: Judy Blue Eyes,” from Crosby, Stills and Nash's eponymous 1969 album. Zappa calls these quotations “Archetypal American Musical Icons” and uses them to enhance the narrative of the piece and provide a clear context for the surreal dialogue of the piece. Zappa elucidates that, “Their presence in an arrangement puts a spin on any lyric in their vicinity. When present, these modules 'suggest' that you interpret those lyrics within parentheses.”⁴⁸ The majority of Zappa's references (that I've found at least) are from the twentieth-century, though some of the more traditional allusions date back to mid- to late-nineteenth-century (i.e., “The Star Spangled Banner”).

Parody, Satire, and Irony

In order to discuss parody, we must dismiss all previous connotations with the term. As Linda Hutcheon writes, “What I am calling parody...is not just the ridiculing imitation mentioned in the standard dictionary definition.”⁴⁹ What Hutcheon calls the “standard dictionary definition” presupposes that the use of parody implies a fixed interpretation, more often than not, involving some degree of humor or ridicule at the expense of the source material. However, before discussing how parody functions, or how it can be interpreted we must first determine what parody is. Hutcheon offers a fairly

⁴⁸ Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 166. (Emphasis Zappa's).

⁴⁹ Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Parody: The Teachings of Twentieth-Century Art Forms* (University of Illinois Press. 2000), 5.

succinct definition: “Parody is...repetition with difference.”⁵⁰ The key word in this definition is “repetition,” which suggests that certain parameters of an original source are recognizable in a parody. Therefore in order for something to be labeled as parody, one must first be able to recognize and identify the source object that is being parodied. It is also necessary for the parody to contain some sort of dissonance with the original source—something that initiates interpretation. However, there is no limitation on the level of difference between the parody and the source, which can range from a minor variation to a near complete bastardization of the source material. The limitation comes from the audience's ability to recognize the recontextualization of the original source, and (as with cultural register) is a completely subjective procedure. Let me now reiterate what parody is before discussing how it works. For the purposes of this thesis: parody is the use—in part or in whole—of recognizable preexisting material with some degree of discernable difference between the original source and the appropriated context.

In parody, meaning is signified through recognition of the critical difference between the context of the original source and the context of the parody. A foreground interpretation of this distance requires a comparison between salient features presented in both the parody and source—i.e., what is different. However, Hutcheon argues that parody operates on two levels, foreground and background: “the latter...derives its meaning from the context in which it is found.”⁵¹ Therefore, the background level takes into account the translation of meaning from a source’s original context to its context within parody—i.e., what does the foreground difference signify. At both levels

⁵⁰ Hutcheon, *A Theory of Parody*, 32.

⁵¹ Hutcheon, *A Theory of Parody*, 34.

(foreground and background) the interpretation is at the sole discretion of the audience and based on the intent of the artist. While the artist may encode their own meaning through the use of parody (or other allusions) the audience decodes (or interprets) their own meaning independent of artistic intent. This does not mean that the encoded meaning and decoded meaning *will* be different, but that they are not inherently the same: Parody is in the ears of the listener. An interpretation of parody may indeed fit the “standard dictionary definition” that I chose to dismiss at the beginning of this discussion; however, the ability of parody to ridicule represents only one interpretation of the role that it can have. Hutcheon points out, “This does not mean that ridicule is not possible. On the contrary, it is one of a range of ethos or intended responses.”⁵² With parody being a very specific form of musical borrowing, let us now look at a more general form: satire.

By reworking Hutcheon’s definition of parody we can define satire as: imitation with difference. For the purposes of these definitions, repetition refers to a specific source, while imitation refers to a more general association with a style or genre. Satire evokes conventional characteristics of a body of work while parody evokes the characteristics of a single identifiable work. Therefore, much in the same way that we can distinguish between direct and indirect allusion, the distinction can be made between parody and satire. As with parody, the interpretation of satire results from both foreground comparison and background contextualization, and relies entirely on the audience's ability to recognize the imitation.

What is the distinction between parody and satire and direct and indirect allusion? In the case of direct and indirect allusion, the audience recognizes that the allusion has

⁵² Hutcheon, *A Theory of Parody*, 67.

occurred, whereas both parody and satire require a noticeable difference between the allusion and their original context. This difference becomes the focus of interpretation. To put it another way: all parody is direct allusion and all satire is indirect allusion, but not all direct allusion is parody nor is all indirect allusion satire. The distinction is left entirely up to the scrutiny of the audience, though it is useful to consider the role that irony plays in making this distinction.

Lars Elleström explains that the most common definition of irony is “to say one thing and mean the opposite.”⁵³ This definition is limited in its application and implies that the “thing” being said has a clear meaning with a discernible “opposite.” Nevertheless, this common definition points in the right direction of how irony functions: an incongruity between the presentation of an idea and the meaning of that idea in context. A literary example of this is Damon Knight's short science fiction story “To Serve Man,” published in *Galaxy Science Fiction* in 1950 (later adopted by Rod Serling into an episode of the *Twilight Zone*). An alien race gives the book “To Serve Man” to people in authority, who construe its meaning to refer to the aliens commitment to the betterment of the human race. However, we learn that the book is actually a cookbook describing how to serve man in a culinary context. I choose to interpret this as irony because of the plots initial focus is on the aliens providing power and food and ending war and disease. We are therefore led to believe that the book left contains the method by which these ends are met. When we discover it is in fact a cookbook, this creates an incongruity with the initial interpretation of the book. As Elleström explains, “Ironic

⁵³ Lars Elleström, *Divine Madness: On Interpreting Literature, Music, and the Visual Arts Ironically* (Bucknell University Press, 2002), 15.

meaning is never really 'found' in a text or in the world, it is always 'created' in an act of interpretation.”⁵⁴

Since the focus of my thesis is on music, how can we explain musical meaning in a way that supports the notion of an ironic opposite meaning? Long's cultural register becomes a useful tool for understanding and explaining instances of musical irony. Instead of relying on defining and explaining musical meaning, register allows for a generic, though still subjective, substitute that is easier to define and explain. As David Ferrandino explains, “Musical irony can then be interpreted as a result of the simultaneous or sequential juxtaposition of incongruous registers. The most commonly cited example of such irony is a situation in which lyrics do not 'fit' the music—'sad' lyrics set to 'happy' music or vice versa.”⁵⁵ This technique allows for a more concrete explanation of musical irony through the interpretation of register rather than musical meaning.

Elleström, as well as Hutcheon, discusses the relationship of irony to interpretations of parody and satire. Elleström most clearly labels them with a similar nomenclature, “intratextual irony” representing irony within a work, “intertextual irony” as parody, and “extratextual” irony as satire. He explains that:

Intratextual irony would thus be understood as irony created out of incongruities that a reader understands to be part of one and the same text; intertextual irony would be irony that emerges from an apprehended relationship between two or more texts; and extratextual irony, finally, would be irony resulting from a perceived conflict between a text and some context in the 'extratextual' world.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Elleström, *Divine Madness*, 58.

⁵⁵ David Ferrandino, “Irony, Mimicry, and Mockery: American Popular Music of the Late Twentieth Century,” (PhD diss., SUNY Buffalo, Forthcoming), 25.

⁵⁶ Elleström, *Divine Madness*, 99.

Therefore, both parody and satire are ironic agents that achieve their effect through the use of direct and indirect allusion respectively. The interpretation of these allusions, as well as irony in general, is best explained through the cultural register, or registers, evoked.

Examples of Allusion in Zappa's Music

In this section I provide several brief case studies of allusion in Zappa's music and discuss how these allusions contribute to the interpretation of a track. The examples below cover a twenty-two year span of Zappa's output, illustrating that the use of allusion is a prevalent compositional technique throughout Zappa's career. I look at “Go Cry on Somebody Else's Shoulder” (1966), “Dickie's Such an Asshole” (1988), “Debra Kadabra” (1975), “Flakes” (1979), and “Amnesia Vivace” (1967). Each of these tracks makes use of direct allusion, indirect allusion, or both, and my focus is on how these allusions can affect interpretation and contribute to a larger analysis.

Example 1: “Go Cry on Somebody Else's Shoulder”

A clear example of stylistic indirect allusion is “Go Cry on Somebody Else's Shoulder” from the 1966 album *Freak Out!* The piece is an allusion to the “doo-wop” style with minimal instrumentation, embellishment of a [I-vi-IV-V] progression, and a focus on vocal harmonies. I consider this track a satire on the doo-wop style, as its deviations from the norm are apparent and poignant in the lyrics.

In the case of “Go Cry On Somebody Else's Shoulder,” Zappa invokes cultural register through his stylistic allusion of doo-wop, but in relation to the text, creates an unexpected quandary. Lyrically, the piece creates a disconnect from what would be

expected: “I sure don't need you know/ I don't love you anymore” is contrary to the subject matter associated with this style. Consider a similar piece with the same progression and stylistic characteristic: “Earth Angel,” released by The Penguins in 1954. In this example, lyrics like “Earth angel, Earth Angel, the one I adore/ Love you forever and ever more” evokes a sense of love and longing, rather than the rejection in Zappa's lyrics. However, this is not to say that rejection is a foreign subject matter to the doo-wop style. Such a sentiment is expressed in lyrics like “I don't have happiness, and I guess,/ I never will again/ When you walked out on me/ In walked old man misery/ And he's been here since then” from The Skylines 1958 release, “Since I Don't Have You.” Zappa's piece portrays rejection from the point of view of the 'rejector,' while The Skylines are 'rejectee.' The dichotomy of lyrics is heightened by the stylistic similarity of “Go Cry On Someone Else's Shoulder” when compared with other examples; those considered to be the stylistic 'norm.' Behind this satirical song is a critique of sappy lyrics and exaggerated romantic situations, and a rejection of these conventions in favor of a more realistic scenario exemplifies the influence of Dadaism on Zappa's music.

Example 2: “Dickie's Such an Asshole”

Explicit musical quotations contribute to the social and political critique in a less literal way. Zappa generally uses this technique to provide a subtle yet poignant contextualization of the lyrics. He explains that, “[I] can put sounds together that tell more than the story in the lyrics, especially to American listeners, raised on these subliminal cliches, shaping their audio reality from the cradle to the elevator.”⁵⁷ An

⁵⁷ Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 171.

example of such “subliminal cliches” is his use of “Battle Hymn of the Republic” throughout the album *Broadway the Hard Way* from 1988. Christopher Smith explains five instances of this particular allusion within the album: 1) in “Dickie's Such an Asshole,” to refer to former Republican U.S. president Richard Nixon; 2) in “When the Lie's So Big,” referring to Reagan-era Republican political leaders; 3) in “What Kind of Girl,” referring to television evangelist Pat Robertson's political affiliations; 4) in “Jesus Thinks You're a Jerk,” referring to young members of the Republican party 5) in the same piece, referring to lynch-mob mentality.⁵⁸ This type of allusion relies on the listener's ability to make the association between music and the “story.” As Kelly Fisher Lowe points out, “Every person who hears the different musical quotations, and cues, is going to have a different, unique, and individual set of experiences to relate to these allusions.”⁵⁹ In *Broadway the Hard Way*, Zappa repeats quotations to evoke similar associations. This technique allows for the possibility that a listener who has no association with a specific quotation may be able to, through repetition, deduce a similar association based on the context of the piece.

Throughout this album, “The Battle Hymn of the Republic” is used as a play on the word “Republican” through its association with political subject matter in the lyrics. The quotation evokes a register of victory and nationalistic pride, which creates a contradiction with Zappa's lyrics. In “Dickie's Such an Asshole,” the quotation comes in towards the end of the track, after the lyrics “The man in the White House/He's got a

⁵⁸ Christopher Smith, “Broadway the Hard Way: Techniques of Allusion in Music by Frank Zappa,” *College Music Symposium* Vol. 35. (1995): 40-44.

⁵⁹ Lowe, *The Words and Music of Frank Zappa*, 99.

conscience black as sin” (5'05”). This can be viewed as an example of Setting, where “Battle Hymn of the Republic” is placed over a new blues-style accompaniment. It can also be interpreted as a parody since Zappa's recontextualization of the quotation over a blues pattern evokes a contrasting register, one of complaint, dissatisfaction, or unrequited love, creating an example of musical irony. The initial register for “The Battle Hymn of the Republic” is equally thwarted by a sizable amount of negative connotations with Richard Nixon prior to the entrance of the quotation. We are already conditioned to view the Republican Party from a negative standpoint, making the quotation and its register an ironic instance in the context of both the lyrics and music of the track.

Example 3: “Debra Kadabra”

Zappa's twenty-first album, *Bongo Fury* from 1975, is comprised almost entirely of live recordings taken from performances in Austin Texas. The most notable personnel additions to this incarnation of the Mothers is Terry Bozzio on drums⁶⁰ and childhood friend Don Van Vliet—better known as Captain Beefheart—who is credited with harp, vocals, alto saxophone, and shopping bags. With the exception of two prose readings by Van Vliet, the album consists of songs written by Zappa for Van Vliet to sing. The opening track on the album, “Debra Kadabra” is full of esoteric lyrical and musical references to Van Vliet and Zappa's childhood: their interest in B horror movies, Van Vliet's mother selling Avon products, and an interesting occurrence where Van Vliet—

⁶⁰ Bozzio inspired Zappa to write “The Black Page” originally for solo drum set, referred to as “The Black Page #1,” and later with additional instrumentation, “The Black Page #2.” The track was first released in 1978 on *Zappa In New York*, which was a live album from 1976 of a performance at the Palladium in New York City.

having covered himself in various colognes, scents, and creams—suffers an intense allergic reaction and resembles a B movie monster himself.

“Debra Kadabra” begins with a Texas-blues-style riff (Figure 3) that repeats for the duration of the first section of the piece. The riff itself is similar both rhythmically and melodically to the repeated guitar riff in ZZ Top's “Le Grange,” released in 1973 (Figure 4). Both excerpts make use of syncopation and outline an A minor seventh sonority. This ZZ Top example draws attention to the stylistic allusion that Zappa employs; however, it could also be interpreted as parody in “Debra Kadabra.”



Figure 3. Opening Guitar Riff in “Debra Kadabra”



Figure 4. Guitar Riff in ZZ Top's “Le Grange”

The lyrics make several direct references that are realized musically in the piece. The first of these is to the Spanish B horror movie *Brainiac*: “make me grow Brainiac fingers, but with more hair” (2'17”). These lyrics are surrounded by horn interjections that are a direct reference to the movie's score (Figure 5). Zappa states, “When the monster appears there's this trumpet lick that isn't even scary...That's what the song is about and when you hear it in the background, DA-DA-DA-DA-DAH [Figure 5], that's

making fun of the stupid trumpet line that's in the movie.”⁶¹ The trumpet line from the movie that Zappa is referencing is shown in Figure 6, and during the monster’s second attack.

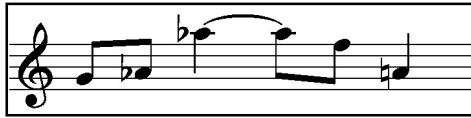


Figure 5. *Brainiac* Paraphrase in “Debra Kadabra” (2'09’’)



Figure 6. Trumpet Line from *Brainiac* (32'42’')

Another reference that is made in the lyrics, and realized musically, is Charlie Higgins's “Pachuko Hop.” The lyrics occur at the end of the piece, “Learn the Pachuko hop,” and is followed by a direct quotation of Higgins's original track. Figure 7 illustrates Zappa's appropriation of Higgins's tune, and Figure 8 shows Higgins's original tune.

The last quotation in this track that I will discuss involves Burkholder's term Setting. However, it is not a melodic example being placed over a new accompaniment, but a lyrical fragment being recontextualized. The repeated section beginning at 2'45” extracts a lyrical quotation from Bob Dylan's “Mr. Tambourine Man”—made famous by the Byrds in 1965, the same year Dylan released on his album *Bringing It All Back*

⁶¹ Miles, *Zappa, a Biography*, 247.

Home—with the lines “Cast your dancing spell my way, I promise to go under it.”

Behind these appropriated lyrics is new accompanimental material completely unrelated to the original (Figure 9).



Figure 7. “Pachuko Hop” Quotation in “Debra Kadabra” (3’32”)



Figure 8. Charlie Higgins's “Pachuko Hop”



Figure 9. Setting of Lyrics from “Mr. Tambourine Man” (2’45”)

The combination of cryptic and esoteric lyrics makes interpretation of the song’s meaning difficult. However, there seems to be a clear motif of transformation that occurs both musically and lyrically. The first transformation in the music occurs from the opening blues section to a more free jazz textural environment—beginning around 0’40” and continues through to 2’45”—and is related lyrically to Van Vliet's morphing into the

Brainiac character. The second transformation brings on a dancing frenzy that is characterized by the reference to both “Pachuko Hop” and the lyrics “Cast your dancing spell my way.” This interpretation breaks the track into three different sections that highlight different aspects of transformation in the lyrics and music.

Example 4: “Flakes”

The track “Flakes” from the album *Sheik Yerbouti* utilizes a different type of allusion than what I have discussed so far: impersonation. Though it may seem haphazard to consider this as musical borrowing, I consider it as a type of musical allusion since its recognition is based entirely on sonic elements: timbre, tone, and range. In “Flakes,” there is a long section comprised of Adrian Belew imitating Bob Dylan. The subject matter of the song deals with people who are inherently lazy and ignorant yet who nevertheless own or work in various business establishments or trades. Figure 10 summarizes the section of the piece that is “sung” by Belew/Dylan.

: D - Em7 - D - G - A - B :
I ask as nice as I could, if my job would, somehow be finished by Friday
Well the whole damn weekend is came and went Frankie, you know what? They didn't do nothing, but they charged me double for Sunday
Now you know no matter what you do, they gonna cheat and rob you, and then they'll give you a bill that'll get your senses reeling
And if you do not pay, they got computer collectors, that'll get you so crazy till your head'll go through the ceiling, yes it will.

Figure 10. Bob Dylan Impersonation Section in “Flakes” (1'21” - 2'38”)

Within the context of the track, this impersonation section adds a degree of justification to the complaints that Zappa is voicing about 'flakes.' This iteration by 'Dylan' evokes a register of social and political commentary and the voice of the people. The familiarity between Zappa and Belew/Dylan contributes to this register as well: Zappa leads into the section with “take it away Bob,” and Belew/Dylan's use of “Frankie” while talking to Zappa. In the context of the track, this section stands out as a sort of aside, as if Zappa is (musically) saying, “Don't take my word for it, here is a celebrity testimonial!”

Impersonation in this example is fairly explicitly used; however, there are other examples of impersonation worth mentioning for comparison. One example is Paul Simon's “A Simple Desultory Philippic (or How I Was Robert MacNamara'd Into Submission” from *Parsley, Sage, Rosemary, and Thyme*. In this track, Simon's delivery is a loose mockery of Dylan's speech-like singing style, and the lyrics—like various Dylan examples—lists a plethora of contemporaneous topical references to pop culture, politics, and philosophy. The use of the Hammond organ as a salient feature of the track is also reminiscent of Dylan's infamous “Like a Rolling Stone.” A similar but less mocking example of Dylan-esque delivery and composition is Donovan's “Catch the Wind” from the album *What's Bin Did and What's Bin Had* from 1965. Donovan's uncharacteristically gravelly and loose pitch centered delivery is a more subtle impersonation of Dylan, the song itself is in a folk style reminiscent of Dylan's “Blowin' In the Wind.”

Example 5: “Amnesia Vivace”

While the allusions discussed so far could be considered familiar to the average American listener, Zappa also utilized what Lowe calls “hidden” allusion. Lowe describes the occurrence of these allusions: “in the song 'Amnesia Vivace' on the album *Absolutely Free* [1967], Zappa includes quotes from [Stravinsky's] *The Rite of Spring* and *The Firebird* as well as the classic doo-wop song “Duke of Earl.”⁶² He goes on to argue that the purpose of these “hidden” allusions are to reach a different kind of audience—to see who might pick up on them rather than contributing to the interpretation of a track. However, Lowe's description relies on Zappa as mediator of meaning and interpretation, whereas I have argued that the listener is the important party involved in the interpretation of music. Therefore, I offer a revised definition of “hidden” allusion: any type of allusion that has no apparent narrative contribution to a track. According to this definition, “Amnesia Vivace” from *Absolutely Free* exemplifies “hidden” allusion as it is a brief quodlibet of various quotations with no apparent narrative behind its construction.

At the opening of “Amnesia Vivace” there is a paraphrase from Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* (Figure 11). The material is based on the central motivic idea from “The Ritual of the Ancestors” section of the second part of *The Rite of Spring*. Figure 12 illustrates Stravinsky's original motive, the source for Zappa's paraphrase, which is shown in Figure 11. Shortly after this we get another paraphrase of the opening bassoon motive of *The Rite of Spring*, first in saxophone then sung by Zappa. The motive is essentially the same as Stravinsky's original, but the neighbor embellishment on the initial C is left out (Figure 13).

⁶² Lowe, *The Words and Music of Frank Zappa*, 8.

Zappa uses another quotation from Stravinsky, this time from *The Firebird*. Beginning at 0'22" of the track, the melodic material that is played on sax and loosely doubled by voice is taken from the "Berceuse" at the end of the First Tableau. The melody is transcribed in Figure 14.



Figure 11. Opening Material in "Amnesia Vivace"



Figure 12. "The Ritual of the Ancestors" Motive from Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*



Figure 13. Paraphrase of Bassoon Introduction from *Rite of Spring* (0'17'')



Figure 14. Quotation of Melody from *Firebird*, "Berceuse" (0'22'')

The final reference in “Amnesia Vivace” is a parody of Gene Chandler's “Duke of Earl.” Zappa sings a bastardization of the bass part that is closer to speech than song (Figure 15). He also changes the lyrics to “Duke of Prunes” referencing the preceding track of the same name on *Absolutely Free*. Figure 16 shows Chandler's original bass part and lyrics for comparison.

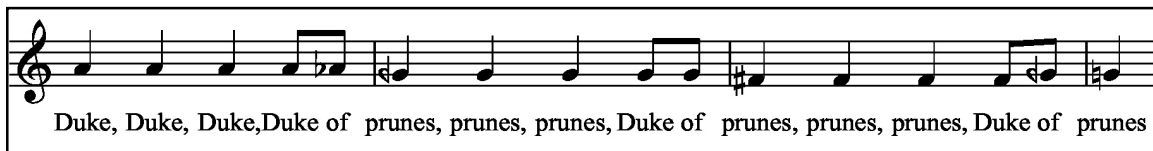


Figure 15. Zappa's Parody of “Duke of Earl” (0'47”)



Figure 16. Gene Chandler's “Duke of Earl”

While the juxtaposition of various musical styles built into Zappa's works creates what at first glance seems absurd and nonsensical, the use of 'familiar' musical objects from diverse areas of popular culture creates the perfect vehicle for cultural critique. The assimilation of past styles or ideas—which are representative of an established 'norm'—presents them as relics: obsolete in their expressive ability. Watson creates a dialogue from the turn to Neoclassicism in the 1920's to Zappa in the 1960's, and states that, "Stravinsky laid a nylon net-curtain of bogus primeval mythology across his mechanical constructions [Neoclassical elements]: Varèse tore it away. Zappa reintroduced it as a degraded plastic remnant, explicit references to the manufactured Disneyland which

Stravinsky [and Rimsky] Korsakov passed off as true enchantment."⁶³ However, Watson's bias against Stravinsky erases the extreme amount of respect that Zappa had for Stravinsky and Varèse, and ignores that Zappa's "reintroduction" of their materials can be understood as homage. Jonathan W. Bernard suggests that when Zappa uses "serious music" quotations in short segments—as in "Amnesia Vivace"—they "might arouse the suspicion that they are nothing more than in-jokes...or simply trashings of high culture à la Spike Jones."⁶⁴ However, for this example I choose to hear the quodlibet of these examples as insight into Zappa's own musical background: Varèse, Stravinsky, and R&B; putting him in context of the lineage that Watson traces without the "explicit references to the manufactured Disneyland."

The majority of Zappa's allusions are to twentieth-century material with no regard to stylistic boundaries. He freely pulls from the "classical" tradition, the "popular" tradition, and various media sources, for material to provoke some response in the listener. However, the actual nature of the listener's response is completely subjective and draws from the listener's own experiences and awareness of both the "Archetypal American Musical Icons" and the more subtle allusions in the music.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed several ways in which allusion can be employed in a work, as well as several factors that contribute to their interpretation. Peter Burkholder's list of types of musical quotation in the music of Charles Ives translates

⁶³ Watson, *Negative Dialectics of Poodle Play*, 59.

⁶⁴ Bernard, "Listing to Zappa," 71.

equally well to the music of Frank Zappa and creates a useful starting point for developing a taxonomy for allusion. By considering Michael Long's description of cultural register, we can interpret a contextual meaning or association with a particular allusion based on the register that it evokes. This register suggests a general association that is still open to subjective interpretation but provides a useful point of comparison. The register of an allusion is also useful in exploring musical irony and its more specific relations—parody and satire. I have provided a brief exploration of various types of allusion and their interpretative impact in several examples of Zappa's output, showing the importance of allusion as a compositional technique throughout Zappa's career. It seems fitting to conclude this chapter with a direct allusion—parody if you will—of Burkholder's conclusion on Ives:

The ultimate aim is to help us hear the music better. When we know the function of each allusion in a work and its relation to the whole, when we understand each work in the context of [Zappa's] career, and when we understand [Zappa's] music and his uses of existing music in the context of the traditions he inherited, we will be many steps closer to hearing the music as he meant it to be heard, sharing the experience he sought to share.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 7. (I have replaced “Ives” with [Zappa]).

CHAPTER IV

APPLIED ANALYSIS OF “BILLY THE MOUNTAIN”

I don't have any pretensions about being a poet. My lyrics are there for entertainment purposes only – *not to be taken internally*. Some of them are **truly stupid**, some are slightly less stupid and a few of them are sort of funny.

-Frank Zappa⁶⁶

Introduction

“Billy The Mountain” was written by Frank Zappa in 1970 and performed on tour from 1971 to 1972 with the second incarnation of The Mothers of Invention. This lineup featured: Howard Kaylan and Mark Volman (former members of The Turtles, then under the stage name Flo and Eddie) on vocals, Frank Zappa on guitar, Jim Pons (also from The Turtles) on bass, Aynsley Dunbar on drums, as well as previous Mothers of Invention members Ian Underwood on woodwinds and keyboard, and Don Preston on keyboard. The track was released on the live album *Just Another Band From L.A.* in 1972, but was subjected to heavy editing in order to fit it onto a single side of an LP. Mark Volman recalls, “On the album it was only twenty-two minutes [actually, it is twenty-four and a half], but in our show there was another fifteen minutes...Frank just made up a story about a mountain and a tree that lived on his shoulder whereupon they decided to take a vacation.”⁶⁷ Other live versions of the track were released on the 1992 album *Playground Psychotics* and on the 2011 release of *Carnegie Hall*. No studio versions were ever

⁶⁶ Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 185.

⁶⁷ Billy James, *Necessity Is...: The Early Years of Frank Zappa & The Mothers of Invention* (London: SAF Publishing Ltd. 2001), 104.

recorded by Zappa. For this thesis, I refer to the version performed in Los Angeles on August 7, 1971, and released on the 1972 album *Just Another Band From L.A.*

While the story presented in “Billy the Mountain” is a fantastical tale of a walking, talking, mountain that travels across the United States—simultaneously causing destruction—it realizes a more poignant social and political critique through the use of musical and cultural allusions. The disorder in the track comes from the seemingly random assemblage of scenes and images: moving from a talking mountain, to a telethon hosted by Jerry Lewis, to an historical account of the antagonist Studebaker Hoch, to a televised dancing lesson and prayer for cosmic guidance. While at first the story in the track seems to fall into the category of what Zappa describes as “truly stupid” lyrics, I show that through the use of musical form, allusions, motives, and relations between the persona and environment of the track, that the piece adheres to a meaningful and logical structure. Michael Prince writes that “because the main agenda of [Zappa's] work is parody and satire, what initially may have come as whimsy carries a much stronger charge once it is released into the popular culture sphere.”⁶⁸ Therefore, the specific allusions in the piece have a direct impact on the listener: augmenting the mythological story from a surface interpretation of silliness to a contemporary social and political critique. I provide both an overview of the narrative as it is told through the lyrics and an analysis of the story that focuses on the dichotomy between protagonist Billy the mountain and Studebaker Hoch, the function of absurdity in the narrative, and the use of cultural references to engage a specific audience. I show that “Billy the Mountain” represents a sophisticated composition with intricate music-text relations through both an

⁶⁸ Prince, “The Science Fiction Protocols of Frank Zappa.”

analysis of the verbal narrative and musical narrative rather than representing what Mike Fish claims is a “nadir” in Frank Zappa's music.⁶⁹ I begin my analysis by providing a summary of the bizarre verbal narrative of the track, and an analysis of the story itself.⁷⁰ I then provide a musical analysis focusing on structure, musical allusions, the relationship between the track's persona and environment, and motivic content. Finally, I explore how the dualisms presented in my musical analysis relate to the dichotomy between Billy and Studebaker. A comparison of the musical and textual elements of the piece illuminates how intimately involved Zappa's compositional choices are with the overall narrative of the track.

Narrative Overview

I begin first with a summarization of the story that is told through the lyrics. At the start of the track we are given a description of Billy (a mountain) and his wife Ethell (a tree growing out of his shoulder). Billy is described as a “regular picturesque” mountain located roughly twenty miles north west of Lancaster, CA (between Rosamond and Gorman where Zappa grew up). Two caves make up Billy's eyes, and a cliff constitutes his jaw, which, when it moves, causes boulders and dust to come out of his mouth.

⁶⁹ Quoted in: Richard Kostelanetz, *The Frank Zappa Companion. Four Decades of Commentary* (New York, NY: Schirmer. 1997), 136.

⁷⁰ A script for “Billy the Mountain” is presented in Zappa's *Them Or Us* from 1984, which covers everything that is said in the 1971 performance, with additional material that may have been edited from the *Just Another Band From L.A.* version. See: Frank Zappa, *Them or Us [The Book]* (Barking Pumpkin Press. 1984), 34-57.

One day, a man arrives in an “El Dorado” Cadillac, and delivers an envelope to Billy. Inside the envelope are royalty checks for postcards that he had posed for years ago. The amount of money startles Billy so much that his jaw drops open and a boulder comes out and crushes the man's car—which is now described as a Lincoln instead of a Cadillac.⁷¹ The man seeks solace in a nearby bar where he hopes to find transportation back to civilization. In the meantime, Billy decides to surprise his wife Ethell with a vacation to New York. The couple also decides to stop in Las Vegas on their trek across the country and on their way incidentally destroy Edwards Air Force Base a few miles east of Rosamond, CA.⁷²

At this point the narrative switches to a local news broadcast claiming that Billy and his wife abuse drugs and are involved in pay-offs as part of a sinister smut ring. We are informed that local authorities are in the process of receiving “secret evidence” that will lead to the indictment of Billy and his wife. Jerry Lewis is hosting a telethon to raise money for helping the “injured and homeless” hurt in the wake of Billy's journey. We also learn that Billy has accidentally released an underground storehouse of poisonous gas and germ bombs in Glendale near a Jack-in-the-Box fast food restaurant.⁷³ His passing also causes a freak tornado to come through the area, spreading the released gas.

⁷¹ The discrepancy between automobile models also occurs in the script for “Billy the Mountain.” See: Zappa, *Them or Us*, 36.

⁷² Edwards Air Force Base, like many of the Los Angeles area geographic references in this piece, has a personal resonance with Zappa. After growing up in Maryland his family moved to Lancaster, CA, roughly 20 miles south of the base, where his father worked for a time at the Air Force Base as a data reduction clerk.

⁷³ Glendale is in the northern Los Angeles area, south west of where we are introduced to Billy. Since it is the opposite direction of where Billy would be traveling, Glendale is used as a local reference for the audience rather than an important location of the story.

We catch up with Billy and Ethell outside of Columbus, OH, where Billy has received notice that he has been drafted and must report for an induction physical. Ethell is adamantly opposed to letting Billy go. Another broadcast cuts in; informing us that Ethell is an active communist and also practices witchcraft. An “informed Orange County minister”—a possible reference to the televangelist host of *Hour of Power* and founder of the Garden Grove Drive-in Church: Robert H. Schuller—confirms this information.

At this point in the story there is a drastic shift from talking about Billy and Ethell to describing Studebaker Hoch. Studebaker Hoch is the “only mortal” capable of saving America and dealing with Billy and Ethell. He is described as a mysterious super hero, who bears some resemblance to Zubin Mehta,⁷⁴ and was born next to the frozen beef pies at Boni's market in San Francisco. An unspecified amount of time passes until the phone rings in Studebaker Hoch's “secret briefcase.” He is brought up to date about Billy's wave of destruction and most recent crime of draft evasion. We cut briefly away from Studebaker Hoch to witness a televised program, “The Studebaker Hoch Dancing Lesson and Cosmic Prayer For Guidance”: another reference to televangelist culture.⁷⁵ *Rolling Stone* magazine also prints a rumor that Mr. Hoch can write the Lord's Prayer on the head of a pin. All of this is a direct influence of Studebaker being born next to the frozen beef

⁷⁴ Zubin Mehta was conductor of the L.A. Philharmonic from 1962-1978, and had conducted some of Zappa's works during the Contempo '70 Festival at the Pauley Pavilion, UCLA. As Zappa recalls, “Sometime in 1970, I had an offer for a major concert performance of the orchestral music accumulating in my closet...The performance was to be held at UCLA's Pauley Pavilion..., with Zubin Mehta conducting the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. A pretty big deal.” See: Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 109.

⁷⁵ For more of Zappa's commentary on televangelist culture see: Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 302-307.

pies at Boni's Market. This affiliation is further emphasized with references to Bay area musicians Joni Mitchell, David Crosby, Neil Young, and their manager Elliott Roberts.

Studebaker Hoch, who is presumably in San Francisco at the time, must catch up and confront Billy as he heads to New York City. He cuts out some cardboard wings and covers them in foil and heads to a telephone booth located behind a Ralph's supermarket. He then proceeds to cover the inside of his thighs with maple syrup in order to attract flies. Once the booth and his pants are full of flies, he puts the wings under his arms and yells "New York!" and the booth floats up into the sky heading west. The story reconvenes at Billy and Studebaker's confrontation.

Studebaker stands on the cliff that is Billy's jaw threatening to use Billy as landfill and to turn Ethell into brooms, matchsticks, and ironing boards, if Billy refuses to attend his induction physical. Billy laughs at the prospect of being drafted. His laughing incidentally knocks Studebaker Hoch off the cliff to the ground two hundred feet below. The moral of the story (as told by the narrator) is: "A mountain is something you don't want to fuck with. Don't fuck with Billy!"

Narrative Analysis

How are we as listener's to interpret the meaning of the narrative given the strange series of events that occur in the plot of the story? I begin my analysis of the narrative by first looking at the protagonist-antagonist dichotomy between Billy and Studebaker Hoch. Billy is characterized by his association with nature and is presented as a logical persona. On the other hand, Studebaker is characterized by his associations with commercialism and is presented as an absurd character. I then look at the function of the

absurd—and physically uncomfortable—elements of the narrative, specifically Studebaker's method of travel that involves maple syrup, flies, and a telephone booth. Finally, I discuss some of the specific cultural references in the narrative and how they contribute to the social and political agenda of the story.

Zappa presents Studebaker Hoch as the hero figure of the story who is called in to stop Billy's wave of destruction. He is introduced as the “Fantastic new superhero of the current economic slump” and is contacted through his “secret briefcase” to take care of the situation. Considering Long's notion of cultural register, the register of the implied superhero evokes an expectation of courage, justice, and a general sense of being the good guy in the story. Ironically, these expectations are subverted by the absurd characterization of Studebaker Hoch: his dancing and televangelism, his association with frozen beef pies, and his attracting flies with maple syrup as a means of transportation, all suggest a dissonance with the expected superhero register. His use of the telephone booth—a reference to other fictional superhero figures (i.e., Superman and Underdog)—further subverts the superhero imagery as it is used as a means of transportation rather than as a changing room. Studebaker’s persona thwarts the expected deep voiced assuredness of the superhero figure; Howard Kaylan's delivery is instead whiny, nasal, and high-pitched. Besides the hero register, Studebaker’s affiliation with San Francisco can be a negative trait as well. Zappa claims, “To the *Friscoid'* way of thinking, everything that came from THEIR own town was **really important Art**, and *anything* from *anyplace* else (especially L.A.) was dogshit.”⁷⁶ In other words: Studebaker Hoch's

⁷⁶ Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 68, (emphasis Zappa’s).

affiliation with San Francisco is a negative aspect from Zappa's point of view and—along with the ironic hero register—situates Studebaker as the antagonist.

On the other hand, Billy is a much more logical character who (more or less) minds his own business throughout the story. There are certain collateral damages: crushing the Lincoln, destroying Edwards Air Force Base, and inadvertently releasing poisonous gas; however, none of which represents the bad moral character that is propagated by the broadcasts in the story—associations with drug dealing and smut rings. Even through the end of the piece there is no intentional act of violence on Billy's part; his only concern is taking his wife on vacation to New York City. However, the damage is a direct result of Billy's journey and he neither projects remorse for the destruction caused, nor sympathy for the victims. Instead Billy maintains a detached attitude towards the accusations and slander—as well as to the destruction itself.

The irony employed by Zappa in the hero/anti-hero paradigm and Studebaker Hoch is made more apparent by the presentation of the plot. Since the first half of the piece is focused around Billy and Ethell, we immediately see Billy as the focal point of the narrative and are given no reason from his initial introduction or actions to presume that he is the villain of the plot. After coming into money, his first action is to take his wife on a holiday—a very relatable and generous action. By giving us first Billy's story followed by the public's response to his destructive trek, Zappa creates an immediate sympathy with Billy rather than encouraging us to side with the media's portrayal of him. When Studebaker Hoch is finally brought in as the hero we instead take Billy's side; we see Studebaker as the antagonist of the piece.

To further expand the dichotomous relationship between Billy and Studebaker Zappa utilizes specific imagery: nature for Billy, and American consumerism for Studebaker. Billy is a mountain; his wife is a tree with birds perched on her, and their travel on “foot” from northern Los Angeles to New York. The couple represents an anthropomorphic version of a typical suburban husband and wife going on vacation after coming into money. In contrast, Studebaker is “born next to the frozen beef pies,” is written about in *Rolling Stone*, has a Dudley Do Right wristwatch, and uses Kaiser Broiler Foil and Aunt Jemima's Syrup, all of which relate to specific consumer products. The name Studebaker Hoch is also a play on the name of an American automobile, Studebaker Hawk, which was produced from the mid 50's to mid 60's. His association with corporate America and name brand merchandise creates a contrast with Billy's character and suggests a more direct and recognizable social and political commentary.

Of all the scenes presented in the story, Studebaker's peculiar method of travel—which requires attracting flies into his pants as a means of flying—stands out as being the most striking and nonessential in its contribution to the narrative. However, this scene, and Studebaker's entire characterization, makes sense when considered in context of the Theatre of the Absurd⁷⁷ in which, as Stephen Halloran describes, “Things are...superfluous, gratuitous, wholly without explanation—and therefore man's need to make sense of things is a joke.”⁷⁸ The joke in this case is inherent in a literal interpretation of the Studebaker's preferred method of travel. This is not to say that the

⁷⁷ Theatre of the Absurd was coined by critic Martin Esslin in 1960 and used more often than not to describe the plays of Samuel Beckett, Eugene Ionesco, and Edward Albee.

⁷⁸ Stephen M. Halloran, “Language and the Absurd,” *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 6/2 (Spring 1973): 97.

scene is nonessential to the plot or the interpretation. It presents an association of absurdity with the character Studebaker Hoch in direct contrast with Billy the mountain as a rational character.

While there remains a certain comedic quality to the description of a man coating his legs with maple syrup to attract flies as a means of transportation, its importance to the narrative is stressed musically as well—it is the climax of the piece and is told over a long musical segment. It also changes the characterization of Studebaker from a savior to a depraved figure and solidifies Billy as protagonist in the plot. As Jovan Hristic writes, “‘the absurd’ is a negative concept implying only the absence of certain qualities and connections, rather than the presence of others.”⁷⁹ Therefore, rather than highlighting the characteristics that are presented by a character the absurd highlights those characteristics which are clearly not portrayed by that character. The use of absurdity contributes to the protagonist-antagonist dichotomy between Billy and Studebaker; Studebaker is painted as an outsider due to his mysterious and shady characterization. In particular, Studebaker's anti-social behavior is highlighted: exemplified by his unconventional method of travel. Earlier in Studebaker's introduction he is described: “When a person [Studebaker] gets to be such a hero folks, and marvelous beyond compute. You can never really tell about a guy like that. Whether he's really a nice person or if he just smiles a lot.” Studebaker's high profile status is damaged by both his anti-social behavior and his irrationality. Zappa is using the absurdity of this scene to highlight Studebaker's irregular and sexually

⁷⁹ Jovan Hristic, “The Theater of the Absurd: An Essay in Definition and the Yugoslav Variant,” *Books Abroad* 46/3 (Summer 1972): 359.

depraved behavior as well as to discredit the media and public who put so much faith in him—in stark contrast to Billy's rational decision to take his wife on vacation.

Zappa's narrative portrays an allegory for the social and political climate of the early 70's. The public's acceptance of the media's portrayal of Billy as the villain and Studebaker as the hero is a direct critique of the effect of mass media on an ignorant public; Zappa manipulates us into thinking the opposite: Billy as protagonist, Studebaker as antagonist. Ethell is accosted as both a communist and a witch while Billy is indicted for draft evasion—a direct correlation with the Vietnam War, the draft, and penalties of draft evasion.⁸⁰ Because Billy is presented as a logical and relatable character the listener is able to see beyond the facade of the broadcasts within the narrative and to see Studebaker Hoch—who is praised by those same broadcasts—as a perverted iconoclast rather than the hero of the story.

“Billy the Mountain” is full of location specific references (in this recording, Los Angeles) and their role in the piece—a handful of which I have described above.⁸¹ Since references would change depending on where the Mothers were touring, their contribution to the plot of the story is negligible. However, they serve a very clear theatrical purpose of engaging the audience, and, more importantly, make the story more relatable to a particular audience. Zappa's social and political critique becomes more directed and influential on the listener's interpretation of the story, which has become an

⁸⁰ As this recording is taken from a live performance at UCLA, it is worth mentioning that the audience would have particularly resonated with the draft issue that Zappa brings up. As students, they would have been exempt from the draft, but it was their demographic, males born from 1944-1950, who were targeted by the draft.

⁸¹ For certain changes in material based on location see: Charles Ulrich, “The Planet Of My Dreams,” (accessed January 11, 2015, <http://members.shaw.ca/fz-pomd/vaudeville/btm.htm>).

allegory criticizing the public ignorance and the irrationality of authority figures in the listener's immediate society through the use of these references.

As in any live recording, the spontaneity and impact of the performance are diminished, and specifically with “Billy the Mountain” many of the references to 1970's Los Angeles may seem anachronistic to the modern listener. However with the help of the information superhighway these references can be decoded and understood.⁸² This aspect of uncovering and understanding the satiric elements of the piece creates a new dimension to the interpretation of the narrative. Both the historical and cultural distance provides a modern listener with a challenge that potentially makes the impact more meaningful. As Linda Hutcheon writes, “There is no doubt that parody [and satire], like allusion and quotation, can act as a kind of 'badge of learning' for both encoders and decoders, that it can work toward maintaining cultural continuity...[or] makes possible change – even radical change.”⁸³ Both the cultural allusions and musical allusions act as a “badge of learning” in the track.

The lyrical narrative of “Billy the Mountain” utilizes absurdity as a device to create a significant contrast between protagonist and antagonist. Zappa then uses the ironic portrayal of Studebaker-hero as a means of eliciting a specific reaction from the listener and evoking the social and political critique outlined above. The structural order of the narrative augments this interpretation: Billy is presented as the logical and relatable character and Studebaker is presented as the absurd, perverted character.

⁸² Even though I was born seventeen years after this performance and 3,000 miles away from L.A.

⁸³ Hutcheon. *A Theory of Parody*, 94.

Musical Narrative

While the verbal narrative presents the main material for the piece, the interpretation is further colored by Zappa's music. Following Allan F. Moore's method of relating and interpreting the persona and environment of a track,⁸⁴ I show how the persona of the lead vocalist(s), the textural environment created by the instruments, and more traditional musical parameters (harmony, rhythm, key area, etc.) work in conjunction with the lyrics to embellish and reinforce the narrative of the song. I look at the song in two units: the first up to the point where Studebaker Hoch is introduced; the second from that point to the end—showing the interaction of music and narrative and the overall shape of each section. I then conclude with an overall interpretation of “Billy The Mountain,” informed by the parameters described above.

Formal Structure and Organization

Taken in its entirety, “Billy The Mountain” is made up of two large sections, which I will refer to as A and B. The lyrics in A develop the main character Billy while in B they establish the antagonist: Studebaker Hoch. There is an additional brief codetta section at the end of B that reuses some of the opening material of A to depict Billy and Studebaker Hoch's epic, but brief, confrontation. The internal organization of the work follows a recitative/aria alternating structure, with recitative sections working to propel the plot with spoken dialogue, and the aria sections highlighting, and elaborating, certain moments with song. However, the amount of variation in what I am labeling as “arias”

⁸⁴ See: Allan F. Moore, *Song Means: Analysing and Interpreting Recorded Popular Song* (Ashgate Popular and Folk Music Series. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company. 2012), 179-214.

and “recitatives” still create a sense of disorientation, and though I argue there is a clear form, hearing it is still a challenging task. Figure 17 illustrates the formal breakdown of the work into its alternating sections and also shows where structural musical quotations and larger improvisatory sections occur. A transcription of the track is provided in Appendix A.

I begin by looking at musical quotations and stylistic allusions that Zappa uses in this piece, considering how they function as narrative devices. Next I look at three main motives in the piece that serve as leitmotifs associated with Billy, the recitative sections,

A		B	
Intro	0'06"	MQV	10'47"
RI	0'44"	AIII	11'16"
AI	1'21"	RVI	12'48"
RII	1'45"	AIV	13'13"
MQI	2'38"	RVII	13'40"
AII	3'04"	Improv II	14'52"
RIII	3'43"	MQVI	15'57"
MQII	4'40"	RVIII	17'00"
AII'	5'12"	MQI	19'22"
RIV	5'44"	AV	19'41"
MQIII	6'18"	RIX	21'28"
Improv I	6'52"	AII''	23'09"
MQIV	9'35"	Intro'	24'13"
RV	10'03"	(End)	24'30"

R = Recitative	MQI = “Johnny's Theme”
A = Aria	MQII = “Pomp and Circumstance”
MQ = Musical Quotation	MQIII = “Off We Go Into the Wild Blue Yonder”
	MQIV = “Somewhere Over the Rainbow”
	MQV = “Star Spangled Banner”
	MQVI = “Suite: Judy Blue Eyes”

Figure 17. Form in “Billy the Mountain”

and Studebaker Hoch, and show that Studebaker's motive is an inversion of Billy's; a musical representation of the protagonist/antagonist relationship described above. I then discuss the relation between persona and environment in the track and how changes in either or both represent a change in scenery or character in the plot. Finally, I summarize and conclude my analysis by connecting the dualisms presented in the music with the dichotomy between Studebaker and Billy. These musical dualisms exist at both deep structural and foreground levels of the piece, and serve as another type of narrative device that Zappa employs in "Billy the Mountain."

Quotation and Allusion

The majority of the allusions that Zappa employs in "Billy the Mountain" fall under the category of cut-and-paste allusions discussed in Chapter III. These quotations function as narrative devices—evoking cultural register to provide a subtext for the verbal narrative of the story—and are placed at crucial moments. Among these examples include: Elgar's "Pomp and Circumstance," Paul Anka's "Johnny's Theme," "The Star Spangled Banner," "Off We Go Into the Wild Blue Yonder,"⁸⁵ and "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" from *The Wizard of Oz*. Zappa also uses a parody of Stephen Still's "Suite: Judy Blue Eyes" and a nostalgic indirect allusion to honky-tonk in the opening of Aria III. The functions of the cut-and-paste quotations fall into three categories: change in narration, representation of location, and pastiche with other verbal and sonic allusions. I

⁸⁵ Written by Robert MacArthur Crawford in 1938 and was originally titled "Army Air Corps." It has also been called "Army Air Force" and "Air Force Song," therefore, I will refer to it by the opening line of the lyrics, "Off we go into the wild blue yonder," to avoid confusion.

begin by looking at the cut-and-paste direct quotations and then explore the role of the parody of “Suite: Judy Blue Eyes” and the stylistic allusion to honky-tonk in Aria III.

The first quotation we hear helps to move from the general narrative of the recitative section to a more active description. Following the second Recitative we hear “Pomp and Circumstance” (MQI – 2'38”), (Figure 18), as an accompaniment under the account of destruction of the deliveryman's car by a boulder that falls from Billy's mouth. This quotation is a play on the word “royalty,” suggesting something more majestic and dignified than the actual payment that Billy receives. It also serves as a subtext for Billy's reaction to his newfound wealth: indicating a shift in status that will allow him to go on vacation. The cultural register evokes graduation, success, and pompousness. Over the quotation Kaylan recites, “Yes, and his eyeball caves widened in amazement and his jaw which was a cliff, well, it dropped thirty feet!” The quotation is then interrupted (after reaching the half cadence of the second phrase) by cacophonous descending attacks; representing both Billy's jaw dropping as well as the boulder that falls out of his mouth and crushes the Lincoln. The brevity of this quotation acts to both interrupt the groove of the prior recitative section and provide a subtext for Billy's amazement and state of mind beyond that of the verbal narrative.

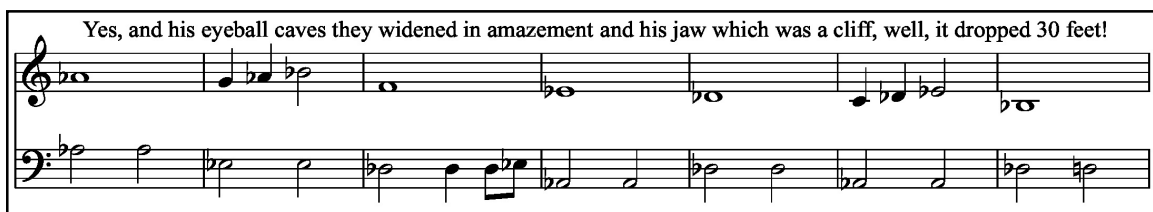


Figure 18. Quotation of “Pomp and Circumstance” (2'38”)

After visiting Las Vegas (Aria II) we leave the couple traveling across the Mojave desert and are told of the destruction that Billy and Ethel are leaving in their wake: “The first piece of real estate they destroyed was Edwards Air Force Base.” The destruction of the Air Force base is accompanied by the U.S. Air Force theme “Off We Go Into the Wild Blue Yonder” (MQIII – 6'18”) played on the keyboard (Figure 19). As this song became the official anthem for the United States Air Force, Zappa uses it to highlight the change in perspective from the narration about Billy to the destruction of the Air Force Base.

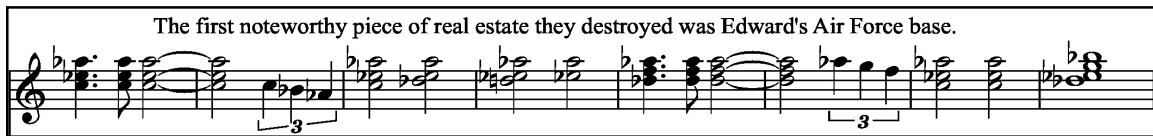


Figure 19. Quotation of “Off We Go into the Wild Blue Yonder” (6'18”)

We are introduced to Studebaker Hoch, “fantastic new superhero of the current economic slump,” over a quotation of “The Star Spangled Banner” (MQV – 10'47”), signifying America's attempt to neutralize the threat Billy holds for national security (Figure 20). As with “Off We Go Into the Wild Blue Yonder,” “The Star Spangled Banner” is used to change scene, and highlights the shift from Billy, in section A, to Studebaker Hoch, in section B. As Studebaker is introduced, the quotation evokes a register of America, nationalism, and pride as an early association with the character. The purpose of the quotation is to provide a direct context for the interpretation of the allegory presented in the story: the common man is essentially good and should not

subject himself to the political or societal pressures of America that are essentially twisted.

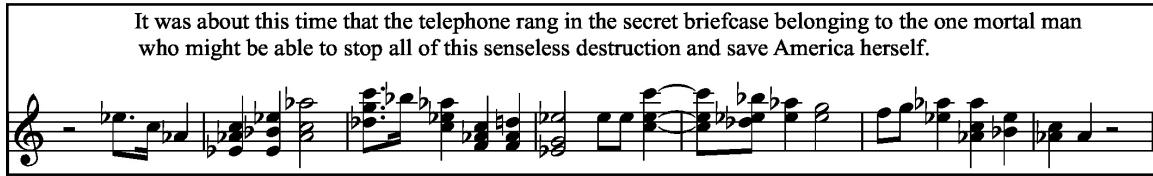


Figure 20. Quotation of “The Star Spangled Banner” (10'47”)

The next quotation to be discussed here similarly interrupts a recitative section (Recitative III) but serves as a leitmotif for New York: “Johnny's Theme” (MQII – 4'40”), (Figure 21). This adds to the suspense of Billy's telling Ethel where they are going on vacation, and interrupts the narrative at “Billy told Ethel they were going to...['Johnny's Theme']...Yes, they were going to New York!” The quotation is repeated at half speed and the melody now sung an octave lower signifying that Billy is telling Ethell where they are going. “Johnny's Theme” is used as a leitmotif throughout the piece for New York as the Johnny Carson Show in the early 70's was filmed in New York City. Though the quotation requires a historical context in order to place it within the narrative, the register evokes a sense of glamour, bright lights, and a happening nightlife, that works regardless of the specific association of “Johnny's Theme” with New York.

This quotation of “Johnny's Theme”—which uses only the opening bars of the theme song—is never spoken or sung over and is always interjected at a point in the narrative where a location is about to be mentioned. It occurs again at the end of the first

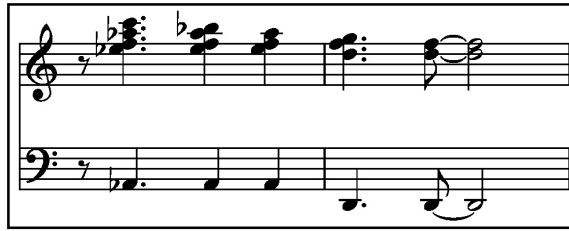


Figure 21. Quotation of “Johnny's Theme” (4'40”)

improvisation section (9'56”) as a misnomer for the destruction in Watts (Los Angeles) caused by the freak tornado: “For untimely dispersal over vast stretches of...['Johnny's Theme']...Watts!” The final iteration of this quotation occurs at the end of the description of Studebaker Hoch's absurd means of travel (19'22”): “he [Studebaker] said, in a clear, impressive, Ron Hubbard type voice...['Johnny's Theme']...New York!” The booth then proceeds to fly up into the sky and head towards New York.

The final type of cut-and-paste allusion that Zappa employs is part of a larger pastiche of images from *The Wizard of Oz*. During the first improvisation section the “freak wind,” caused by Billy's passing through, releases the germ warfare and poisonous gas onto the unsuspecting populace of northern Los Angeles. The accompaniment here consists of wind sounds, and an a cappella interjection of “Somewhere Over the Rainbow” (MQIV – 9'35”), with other direct references from *The Wizard of Oz* behind the narrative: exclamations of “Toto” and “Auntie Em.” In this example the musical quotation supplements the verbal parody of the opening scene of *The Wizard of Oz*. Instead of Dorothy in Kansas we have “little Howard Kaylan sitting on his porch” in Los Angeles, and instead of being transported to Oz he is subjected to “terrible germs” that Billy had incidentally released. Unlike the previous examples, which were presented by

the instrumentalists, this quotation is sung by Kaylan and emerges out of the windy texture played by the band. All of the examples discussed thus far appear more or less as exact replicas (cut-and-paste) with some changes in instrumentation. In the next example Zappa modifies the original material yet retains enough of the original to be recognizable.

Following the Studebaker introduction is a long parody of the final section of Stephen Stills's "Suite: Judy Blue Eyes" (MQVI – 15'57"). Figure 22 represents the original Crosby Stills and Nash harmonies and Zappa's alterations are shown in Figure 23. The band comes in abruptly with the "Suite: Judy Blue Eyes" quotation. The lyrics begin describing Studebaker being "born next to the frozen beef pies," but quickly dissolve into a commentary on specific San Francisco Bay area musicians including: Joni Mitchell, David Crosby, and Neil Young, as well as manager Elliott Roberts. Crosby's infamous narcotics arrest record, Robert's "big bank book" as a result of managing numerous successful artists, and Neil Young's canceling of a tour due to a slipped disc in 1971 are real events and are described as the main influence on Studebaker Hoch. Zappa himself was somewhat hostile towards what he saw as the conformist San Francisco "scene" in the mid-sixties,⁸⁶ an opinion that comes through in both the use of this quote and in its personification of Studebaker Hoch. The interjection of "I'm so hip!" at the beginning of this quote points towards a superficial persona, while the influence of the select figure heads of San Francisco culture points towards unoriginality—both in Studebaker Hoch and the San Francisco music scene.

Aria III (11'16") is presented as a stylistic allusion to early American popular music. At the beginning of this section the music most closely resembles the honky-tonk genre;

⁸⁶ Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 68.

combining elements of the blues, Tin Pan Alley songs, and gospel music, over a “sock rhythm” in the accompaniment (one that accents the off beats in a boom-chuck style).⁸⁷ Over this, Kaylan gives a description of Studebaker—continuing his recitative-style narration—which is echoed by Mark Volman. Volman's delivery is uncharacteristically nasal and reinforces the nostalgic allusion in the music that is evoked through a register of early American radio, movies, and Al Jolsen. The use of allusion over Studebaker's narrated description adds a subtextual description in the music; painting him as an anachronism, and explains to some degree why the narrators may find him “so mysterious” since they are unable to relate to him.



Figure 22. Stephen Stills's “Suite: Judy Blue Eyes”



Figure 23. Zappa's Adaptation of “Suite: Judy Blue Eyes” (15'57”)

Zappa's use of both direct and indirect allusion is intricately related to and woven into the plot. Allusions function as narrative devices by suggesting a change in scene or

⁸⁷ Stephanie Vander Wel, "Honky-tonk," in *Grove Music Online*, (Oxford University Press, accessed February 7, 2015, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/A2256791>).

location, embellishing specific words or ideas in the verbal narrative, or contributing to the characterization provided in the verbal narrative. By understanding the cultural registers associated with these allusions we are able to infer a more nuanced interpretation that goes beyond the verbal narration of the plot and contributes to the overall narrative of the track.

Recurring Motivic Material

Zappa uses recurring motivic material to reinforce the verbal narrative at a more local level. All of the motivic material I discuss is based on the initial iteration of what I call the Billy motive, which occurs at the opening of the piece in the keyboard. The first measure of Figure 24 represents the Billy motive, made up of elements 1-6. The following repetition and embellishment are associated with Ethell. This relationship is exemplified in the first recitative section where the line “Billy was a mountain” is set over the first measure of Figure 24, and “Ethell was a tree growing off of his shoulder” is set over the rest of the example.

The first related motivic device is the bass ostinato in the recitative sections. The recurring triplet bass figure is derived from elements 1, 2, and 4 of the Billy motive and characterizes the majority of the recitative sections in the piece. The elements themselves are repeated, transposed, and inverted to create this bass figure that is used to delineate the recitative sections from the arias. Although the bass part is presented in a more atonal context it is centered on Ab. The third motive I talk about, Studebaker's motive (Figure 25), occurs first during Recitative VIII, and is prominently featured at the beginning of Aria V. Studebaker's motive is a retrograde and slightly embellished version of Billy's

motive. In Figure 26 I have marked moments where these motives occur throughout the piece: X represents instances of Billy's motive, Y represents Studebaker, and Z the bass recitative figure.

Both the Billy motive and the Studebaker motive get embellished in similar ways at different points in the piece. Figure 27 shows the different transformations for each motive (X, Y, and Z, for Billy, Studebaker, and Bass recitative respectively), and their relationships to the initial opening Billy motive from Figure 24. On the chart a “ * ” signifies a change in interval size from the initial X motive elements, and the “ ’ ” is used to indicate an inversion of the initial elements of the motive. The first modification to the Billy motive expands the interval between elements 3 and 4, from a major third to a perfect fourth, and occurs during the first recitative section. A similar intervallic expansion happens between the first two Studebaker motives. In the first iteration of Y elements 4 and 3 create an interval of a major third; when it comes back in Aria V it becomes a perfect fourth. During Recitative VIII the interval between elements 4 and 3 of Y are a major third and in Aria V this interval is expanded to a perfect fourth in Y'. The second transformation of the Billy motive X" is rhythmically altered and occurs at the end of Recitative VII (14'43").

While the transformations of the motives are minimal they all stem from the initial Billy motive at the opening of the track. Both the paralleled intervallic expansion and the retrograde relationship between the Billy and Studebaker motives illustrate a dramatic musical representation of the characters antagonist-protagonist relationship. The recurring Bass ostinato, which is also based on the Billy motive, also w

orks to reinforce Billy as the center of the narrative’s focus through repetition throughout the majority of the recitative sections.



Figure 24. Billy's Motive from Introduction (0'10'')



Figure 25. Studebaker's Motive from RVIII (17'09'')

Persona and Environment of Track

Because the story of “Billy the Mountain” is told through a variety of characters and perspectives, it is useful to consider Allan F. Moore's analysis of the relationships between persona and environment. Persona is defined by the delivery of the lead vocals and can be characterized by the “proxemics” between the singer and the listener, or, the “perceived distance between persona and listener, modified by the intervention in this space of any other musical material sources.”⁸⁸ The environment of the track consists of all of the other sonic aspects of the track and may work to either support or oppose the lyrics presented by the persona, or to provide a backdrop for the presentation of text. The

⁸⁸ Moore, *Song Means*, 187.

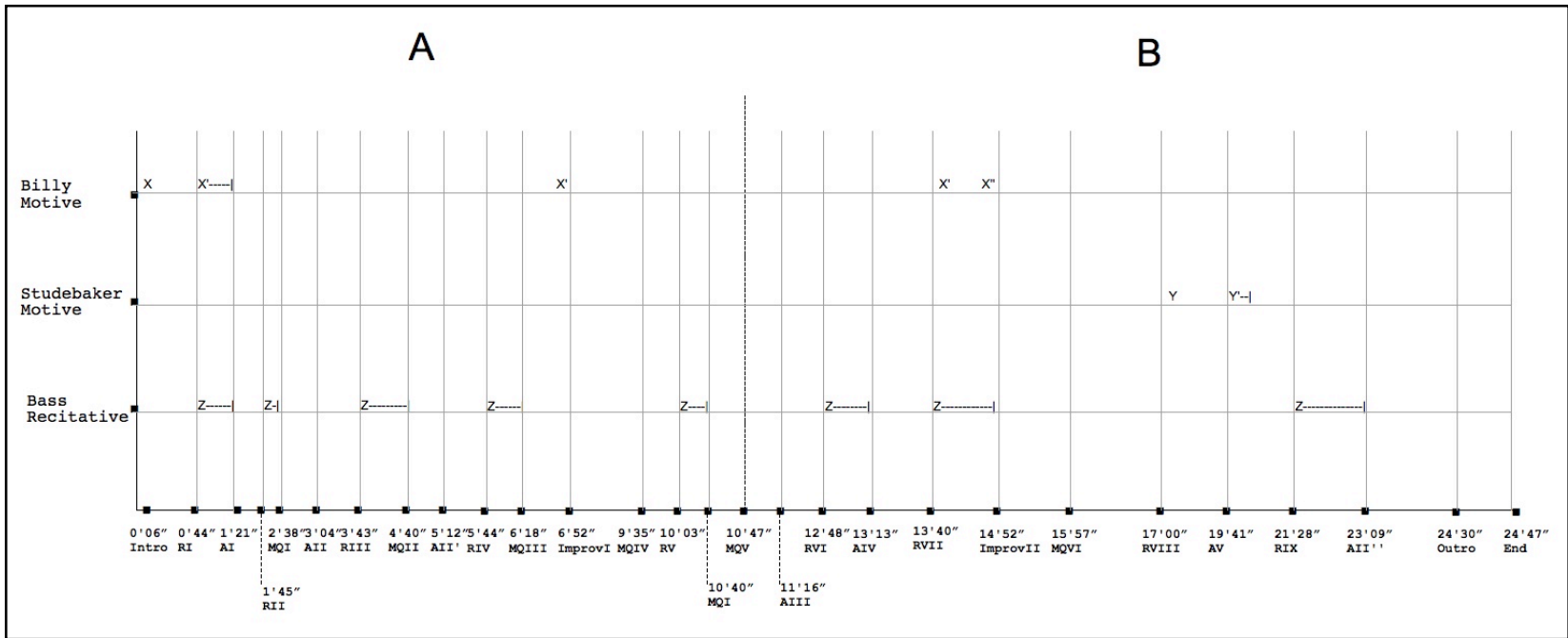


Figure 26. Motivic Frequency Chart







Billy's Motive	Studebaker Hoch's Motive	Bass Recitative Motive
		
		
		

Figure 27. Transformation and Relationship Between Motive

latter relationship occurs throughout most of the recitative sections, whereas the arias and improvisation sections more actively provide subtext for the lyrics. In order to trace the connection between the musical structure and the verbal narrative—which is told through a variety of personas—I begin by charting the change in persona throughout the piece. Then, following Kofi Agawu's distinction between “song mode” and “speech mode,”⁸⁹ I show how the shift between past tense and present/future tense in the lyrics helps, along with the environment, to delineate changes in persona. Lastly, I compare several sections over which the intimacy of the persona changes and is facilitated by a shift of environment.

Moore provides four “proxemic zones” for the persona, based on the listener's perceived distance: intimate, personal, social, and public. The verbal narrative of the piece is told through various shifts between these personas and is further embellished by the role of the accompanying instruments of the track: the environment. Moore defines five positions that the environment can occupy based on the instrumentation and texture of the track: inert, where the environment adds nothing substantial to the narrative; quiescent, where the environment acts as a neutral backdrop; active, where the environment responds to the narration with text painting; interventionist, where the environment adds subtext beyond the verbal narrative; and oppositional, where the environment works against the literal narrative.

For the purposes of this analysis, I use Moore's “proxemic zones” to describe the audience that is being addressed by the persona rather than to describe the distance

⁸⁹ Although Agawu's method is intended for the analysis of German Lied, the same interpretative procedures are applicable, and useful, for the analysis of popular music. See: Kofi Agawu, *Music As Discourse: Semiotic Adventures in Romantic Music* (Oxford University Press, 2008), 98-99.

between persona and listener. The audience includes the listener, a general fictional public within the story, and a character within the story. The spectrum of “proxemic zones” is still useful but rather than using them to indicate the level of intimacy between listener and persona I use them to describe the level of intimacy between the persona and the intended audience. Three main personas are used within “Billy the Mountain:” the narrator outside the story who addresses the listener which can be classified as a social persona (least intimate), the narrator within the story who addresses a more ambiguous or shifting audience as public (more intimate), and the characters in the plot who converse with another character and represent a more personal persona (the most intimate for this example). Figure 28 illustrates the change in personas throughout “Billy the Mountain.”

These descriptors for persona are useful in illuminating the relationship between structural, as well as sonic, elements of the piece with the verbal narrative. As can be seen in Figure 28, the A section, which deals primarily with Billy, delineates recitatives from arias through changes in persona. In this section, recitatives are delivered by the narrator persona in the past tense, while arias are delivered by a character in the present/future tense. In the B section, which changes perspective to Studebaker Hoch, the aria/recitative personas are inverted from A. That is to say that the recitatives, with the exception of Recitative VIII, are delivered by a character's persona (Studebaker), while the arias are delivered by the narrator. This inversional relationship between persona and formal elements is similar to the inversional relationship previously discussed between Billy and Studebaker's motives. This inversion highlights the protagonist/antagonist dichotomy by representing the characters (musically) as opposites of one another.

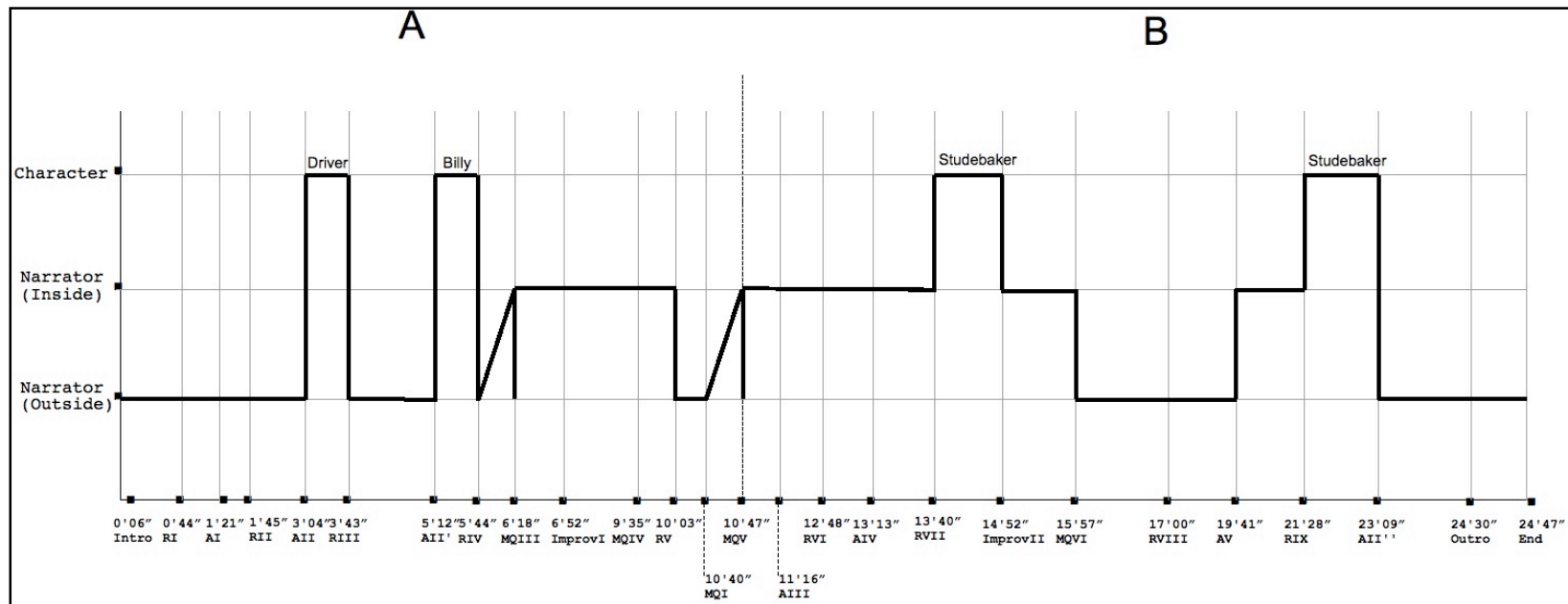


Figure 28. Change in Character/Persona

Kofi Agawu's "song mode" and "speech mode" are particularly useful in explaining how the change in persona are registered and interpreted by the listener. Agawu describes speech mode as being the "natural language" with the "instrument speaking as if in recitative;" while the song mode "puts melody on display and calls attention to the singing voice."⁹⁰ In his analysis, he points out that the shift of the listener's focus is guided by the change in mode or the blurring of modes. In general, speech mode draws focus to specific structural elements or specific words while song mode highlights less specific subtextual moments. In "Billy the Mountain," speech mode and song mode correlate to the spoken recitative sections and the sung aria sections. The function of the recitative sections in speech mode is to propel the plot through the narrator persona, while the aria sections in song mode focus on a particular person. Figure 29 illustrates the change in tense throughout the piece and when compared with Figure 28, it is clear that the instances of present tense correlate to a character's persona while the two narrative personas are both past tense. Therefore, the change in tense contributes to the listener's ability to determine shifts in persona, and who the intended audience is at a given moment within the piece. I now look at several sections that exemplify a shift in persona, and how "proxemics," environment, and song/speech mode make this shift evident to the listener.

Recitative II introduces the primary social narrator of the story (Howard Kaylan) over the same minimal environment of Recitative I. Kaylan's delivery is animated and exaggerated in order to highlight the ideas of the narrative. In addition to the narration, bass ostinato, and sparse drums, there are also vocal interjections that elaborate on the

⁹⁰ Kofi Agawu, *Music As Discourse: Semiotic Adventures in Romantic Music*, 98-99.

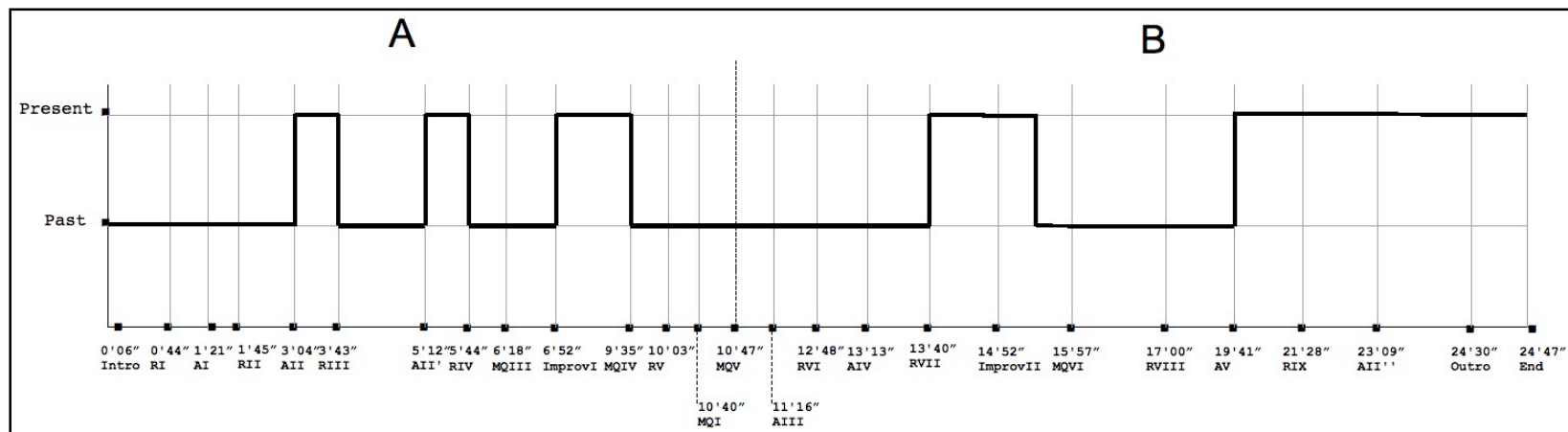


Figure 29. Past/Present Tense

narrative itself. For instance, the narrator describes the “El Dorado Cadillac leased from Bob Spreen” which is embellished with “*Where the freeways meet in Downey,*” referencing a commercial for Bob Spreen's Cadillac dealership. While these interjections represent an active part of the environments involvement in the narrative, the more static repeated material is more inert—although the bass ostinato is a variation on the Billy motive as discussed in the previous section.

In Aria II we are momentarily pulled into the personal persona of the driver whose car is inadvertently destroyed by Billy; the first person perspective of the lyrics and the shift of environment indicate this shift in persona. Over a repeated progression of [I-ii-IV] in Ab major, the driver talks to a bartender at a local establishment and looking for transportation since he doesn't “want to stand here all night in this bar.” The texture of the environment is very thick: it includes all of the instrumentalists as well as harmonized vocal lines in contrast with the minimal recitative section. Both the change in persona and the change in the environment's texture occur at a structural division in the piece: recitatives and arias. This change of scene technique occurs frequently throughout the piece at similar structural divisions. The environment in Aria II in Ab major has a very buoyant groove and is opposed to the worried nature of the persona because it will be used again for other purposes in the track. This serves to highlight the comedic nature of this ridiculous event rather than to dwell on the driver's misfortune of loosing his car. At the end of this section (3'43”) we get an unresolved dominant seventh chord in Ab (Eb7) that fades back into the third recitative section.

This relationship between Recitative II and Aria II is immediately repeated in Recitative III and Aria II'. In this second iteration we learn of Billy's plan to go on

vacation (in Recitative II) and their stop in Las Vegas (in Aria II). This structure returns again at the very end of the piece in Recitative IX and Aria II", but this time the personas are reversed. In Recitative IX (21'28") we get the interaction between Studebaker and Billy presented through the characters persona, while Aria II" returns to the persona of the narrator. Recitative IX is also the first and only time that the interaction between two characters is presented in the delivery of the story. In previous instances we only hear one side of a conversation: the driver from Aria II, Billy in Aria II', and Studebaker on the phone in Recitative VII are all in the persona of the individual character, and we can only infer who they are talking to. The final iteration of Aria II" (23'09") is also striking as the listener is addressed for the first time in the piece as the pickup: "Oh, listen. That only goes to show you, and it will show you once again that..." Spoken by Zappa, the "you" refers to the listener and is followed by the moral of the story: not to fuck around with mountains.

The first instance of the narrator within the story occurs during the first improvisation section (6'52") and takes the form of a news broadcast describing Billy's destructive journey; associating him with drug abuse and smut rings. What is most striking at the start of this section is the dropping away of the accompaniment that signifies a change in the narrative. Although Zappa takes up the narration over the quotation of "Off We Go Into the Wild Blue Yonder" prior to the first improvisation, I choose to hear this as a transition into the broadcast narration rather than a clear shift in persona. Therefore, it functions as a narrowing in from narrator outside the story, to narrator within. The broadcast is highlighted by scream-like interjections, which represent ringing phones for the telethon hosted by actor-comedian Jerry Lewis ("La La

La, Nice Lady!”) to raise money for the “Injured and homeless” who are affected by Billy's journey.

Although changes in the persona occur throughout this section, the narration remains in the more public persona until Recitative V (10'03”) where we learn that Billy and Ethell are now in Ohio. The function of the public persona throughout the track is to smooth out jumps in time over the course of the plot. Prior to the first improvisation section Billy and Ethell were making their way across the Mojave Desert and when the social narrative persona comes back in they are outside of Columbus. A similar time jump occurs from Aria III (11'16”) to Studebaker's persona in Recitative VII (13'40”). Here the public narrative persona is providing an historical contextualization for Studebaker—momentarily taking us out of the diachronic telling of the story. When we arrive at Recitative VII we are back in the timeline of the plot. The second improvisation section (14'52”) functions in a similar way to the first and is also delineated from the previous section by a dropping out of the environment. It is a much shorter section than the first improvisation—which also reflects the shorter amount of time being skipped over—and takes us from Studebaker's phone call to his preparation for travel. The final time shift occurs in Aria V that is again facilitated by the public narrative persona and transitions between Studebaker taking flight to the confrontation between Studebaker and Billy.

Zappa utilizes the change in persona and environment as clear narrative devices in telling the story. As listeners we are able to ascertain shifts in persona based on the shifting between speech and song mode, change in tense, and variations in the environmental texture. The shifting between the three main personas in this piece: social

narrator outside the story, public narrator within the story, and personal character within the story, correspond to a shifting of focus in how the story is told. The public narrator persona is presenting us (the listener) with the basic plot in a diachronic manner. The social narrator on the other hand, is providing a more biased explanation/description of events that are occurring, while the directed audience is more ambiguous. Finally, the personal persona of individual characters is the most intimate persona: always in conversation with other characters in the story. As Figure 28 shows, the relationship between structural sections and changes in persona are directly connected; changes in persona lining up with musical changes. This adds a great deal of dramatic interest to the piece, and shows how the verbal narrative is greatly enhanced by musical choices and methods of performance.

Dualisms

The musical narrative in “Billy the Mountain” enhances the verbal narrative through its use of musical allusions to provide a context for the lyrics and the role of the environment in establishing and supporting the persona in the lead vocals. However, the musical narrative also suggests its own dramatic idea through the use of dualisms at both the formal and surface levels of the track. These dualisms musically reflect the dialectic between Billy and Studebaker in the verbal narrative. I begin by looking at the most structural dualisms and focus in on more foreground and salient dualisms, some of which I have previously discussed in my musical analysis.

At the most structural level the form of the track represents its own dualism and divides into two large contrasting sections A and B. This division is informed by the

story: the shift of focus from Billy to Studebaker. These larger A and B sections can be divided into alterations of recitative and aria subsections, representing another more localized instance of formal dualism. The A section can be characterized by the repetition of Aria II, while the arias in the B section are distinct from one another—until the return of Aria II at the end of the piece.

The tonal centers of A and B are also different. All of A is centered around Ab major at the beginning and aria sections and atonally centered around Ab during the recitative sections. The first improvisation section is tonally ambiguous but the quotation of “Off We Go Into the Wild Blue Yonder” is in Ab major as well. On the other hand, the B section moves through several tonal centers. The recitative sections in B maintain their Ab centrality but the arias move between E and Eb. Aria III begins in E major, modulates to E minor at 11'58” (through a [I-bVII-bVI-V-i] progression), and becomes centered around Eb at 12'26.” Aria IV continues to be centered on Eb followed by the quotation of “Suite Judy Blue Eyes” and moves back to Ab major after Recitative VII. In Recitative VIII—which does not have the bass recitative motive—repeating quarter note iterations begin on Ab and slowly move up chromatically to D. After a quotation of “Johnny's Theme” in its original Ab major transposition, Aria V begins on E minor and ends in E major—the reverse of the key areas in Aria III. Aria II” moves back to Ab major to the end of the piece. The shifting of tonal centers from Ab, Eb, and E in the B section establishes another structural dualism in the track. Ab is associated with Billy and the Eb/E (dominant/triton) relationship represents Studebaker. Studebaker's Eb/E ambiguity also creates its own dualism that reflects his personality: Eb representing the public's view of him and E representing his suspicious, mysterious nature. For example, in Aria

IV under the E centric material the lyrics culminate in “You can never really tell about a guy like that” in reference to Studebaker's previous mysterious description. On the other hand, under the Eb centric material the lyrics are listing some of Studebaker's qualities: he can fly, swim, sing like Neil Sedaka, and “All the girls in Flushing would be amazed of him.” As the plot unfolds the E centered sections about Studebaker (particularly Aria V) become more prominent than Eb and contribute to the classification of Studebaker as antagonist.

The change in persona is directly related to formal divisions of the track. The A section is presented with the persona of the narrator outside the story speaking over recitative sections and a character persona speaking in the arias. In the B section this dualism gets inverted: Studebaker's persona being delivered in the majority of the recitative sections and the narration occurring in the arias. The delivery of both Billy and Studebaker's personas create their own sonic dualism as well: Billy's persona is delivered in a very slow and deep tone, representing his gargantuan size and prowess; while Studebaker's persona is delivered in a high, nasal, and whiny tone. Although these dualisms are directly related to the verbal narrative, they are invoked sonically and are therefore musical features of the track.

Another dualism occurs in the function of allusion throughout the piece that is different in the A section and B section. In A the quotations are used to embellish the story: “Pomp and Circumstance” as a play on the word “royalty,” and “Somewhere Over the Rainbow” which connects *The Wizard of Oz* imagery to the “freak tornado;” or to represent a location: “Johnny's Theme” for New York, and “Off We Go Into the Wild Blue Yonder” for Edward's Air Force Base. The remaining two quotations in the B

section and the stylistic allusion in Aria III all serve to characterize Studebaker Hoch: “The Star Spangled Banner” makes Studebaker's governmental affiliation clear, the allusion to early twentieth century radio and honky-tonk represents an anachronistic and nostalgic facet of Studebaker's character, and the parody of “Suite: Judy Blue Eyes” connects him with San Francisco and commercialism. Therefore, the allusion in the A section around Billy functions as an embellishment of ideas expressed in the lyrics while in the B section the allusions function as providing subtext for the characterization of Studebaker Hoch.

At the most foreground level of the track is the dualism between the Billy motive and the Studebaker motive; Studebaker's motive (Figure 25) is the retrograde of the opening Billy motive. Both motives undergo an intervallic expansion from a major third to a perfect fourth: in Billy's motive this occurs between elements 3 and 4 and in Studebaker's motive this occurs between elements 1 and 2. This particular dualism represents the oppositional relationship between Billy and Studebaker.

Conclusion

While on first hearing “Billy the Mountain” may seem like a nonsensical story set to a random assortment of quotations, improvisations, and tunes, a closer analysis reveals a social and political commentary in the verbal narrative and an elaborate relationship between the music and the text. The dichotomy between Billy as protagonist and Studebaker as antagonist is highlighted both in the text and in structural and surface levels of the music. Through the use of specific cultural allusions and more general references to the draft and televangelism, the verbal narrative is elevated above the

fantastical story to a more effective social and political critique; complemented by the musical narrative. Zappa uses both direct and indirect musical allusions as a narrative device that enhances the verbal narrative of the track by reinforcing a change in scene or location, highlighting specific words or thoughts, or by embellishing the verbal characterization of the personas. Other structural elements in the track—including form, persona and delivery, key areas, and motivic material—create a purely musical drama through dualisms that exist behind the lyrical content of the narrative. Although the track exemplifies Zappa's comedic and satirical nature and is presented in a very disorienting way, it also portrays compositional merit in its intricate weaving of musical and verbal narrative.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

One of the things I've said before in interviews is: “*Without deviation (from the norm), 'progress' is not possible.*” In order for one to *deviate successfully*, one has to have at least a passing acquaintance with whatever *norm* one expects to deviate from.

-Frank Zappa⁹¹

From a relatively small amount of material Zappa is able to construct a large musical work that on a salient level seems erratic and disjunct. But by using a global narrative to both direct and interact with the structure he is able to weave together seemingly disparate elements of allusion, improvisation, aria, and recitative. Musical allusions serve as embellishments on the narrative as well. “Johnny's Theme” is used repeatedly as a leitmotif to represent the location of New York City and Watts. Other quotations—like “The Star Spangled Banner,” “Pomp and Circumstance,” and “Off We Go Into the Wild Blue Yonder”—supply a deeper meaning to the text in the context of the narrative. Zappa invokes Long's idea of cultural register through his “Archetypal American Musical Icons,” allowing the listener to interpolate irony: as in Studebaker Hoch's introduction over the “Star Spangled Banner.” The quotation belongs to the register of patriotism and national pride, a marker for freedom, justice, and American ideals; however, we learn that Studebaker embodies none of these traits that we associate with his introductory music. He is presented as a mysterious figure: conforming to popular culture while at the same time acting as a pawn for the government. More generally this represents Zappa's critique of the government as a ridiculous entity: upholding none of the values it purports to protect.

⁹¹ Zappa with Occhiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, 185.

Narrative is the driving force behind the structure in many of Frank Zappa's works and is further enriched by the use of direct and indirect musical allusions. A greater understanding of how the allusions contribute to the narrative is enhanced by considering Zappa's Dadaist philosophy; understanding the allusions as signifiers for meaning based on their associative cultural register. While there are a variety of ways in which allusion can be employed by a composer, their interpretation and meaning are dependent on the listener's ability to recognize them in the context of a piece. I have explored the important effect that these extra-musical parameters have on the interpretation of Zappa's music, how they work with or against the general narrative of a track, and how these considerations can be incorporated into an analysis of "Billy the Mountain."

What deeper threads can we find in other examples of Zappa's music? What idiosyncratic techniques and tools does Zappa employ consistently and inconsistently in his music beyond allusion? In this thesis I have explored some ways that Zappa employs allusion in his music in order to gain a better understanding of how music and text work together to present a narrative. Brett Clement's work on Zappa has focused on modal harmonic function and, in particular, with Zappa's use of the Lydian mode.⁹² However, Clement's theoretical observations are not concerned with the track's narrative, text, or meaning. Instead, he uses Zappa's music as a justification for a system of Lydian tonality. On the other hand, Kelly Fisher Lowe's study of Zappa focuses on historical contextualization and the lyrics of various tracks, avoiding musical analysis.⁹³ In order to

⁹² Brett Clement, "A New Lydian Theory for Frank Zappa's Modal Music," *Music Theory Spectrum* 36/1 (Spring 2014). See also: Brett Clement, "A Study of the Instrumental Music of Frank Zappa," (PhD. diss., University of Cincinnati 2009).

⁹³ In Lowe's introduction, he makes clear that he is uncomfortable analyzing the musical aspect of Zappa's output. See: Lowe. *The Words and Music of Frank Zappa*, xvii.

better understand Zappa's music, I believe that a synthesis of Clement's and Lowe's approach is needed. Therefore, while theoretical analysis can help us understand the way the music works and a critical interpretation of lyrics in an historical context can provide insight into a song's meaning, both approaches must be applied in order to get a clearer picture of how a track is expressive and what it is expressing. While I have attempted a synthetic approach to analyzing Zappa's music with a focus on allusion, other theoretical areas such as form, timbre, and harmonic language, are yet to be explored in a way that incorporates both a musical and lyrical analysis. What will these studies reveal about Zappa as composer? How can these approaches influence our appreciation and understanding beyond Zappa's output? Such answers require a more detailed analysis of his output as a whole and await further discourse on Zappa as musician, composer, and architect.

APPENDIX A
TRANSCRIPTION OF “BILLY THE MOUNTAIN”

Billy The Mountain

Frank Zappa (1940-1993)

trans. M. Ferrandino

Intro - 0'06"

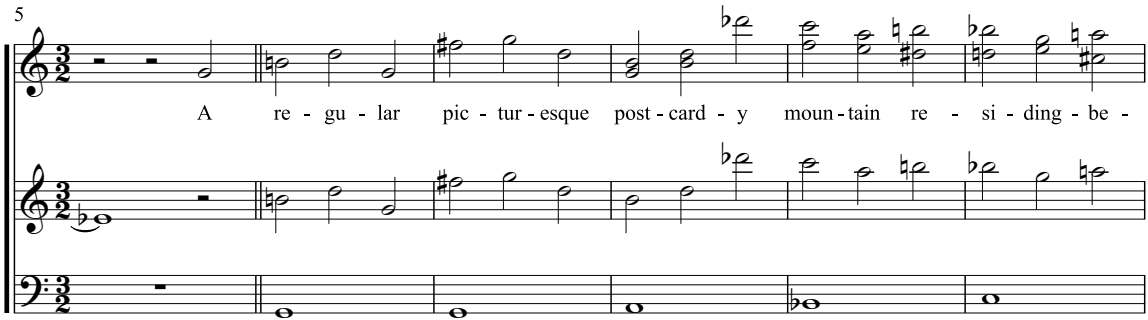
$\text{♩} = 72$



Bi - lly the moun - tain. Bi - lly the moun - tain.

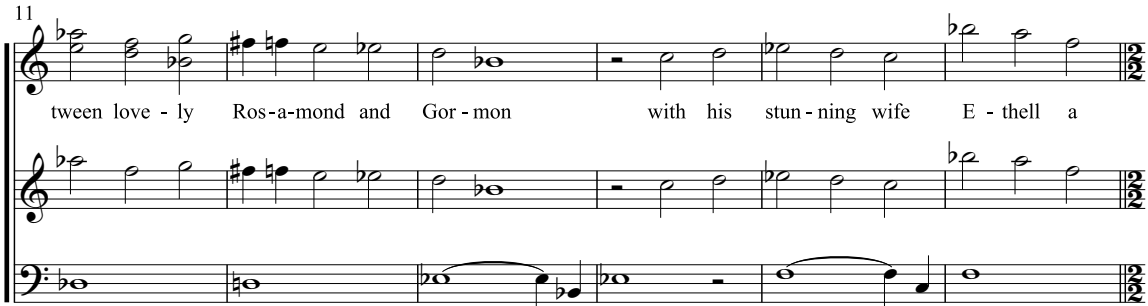
Abma7/Db Synth

5



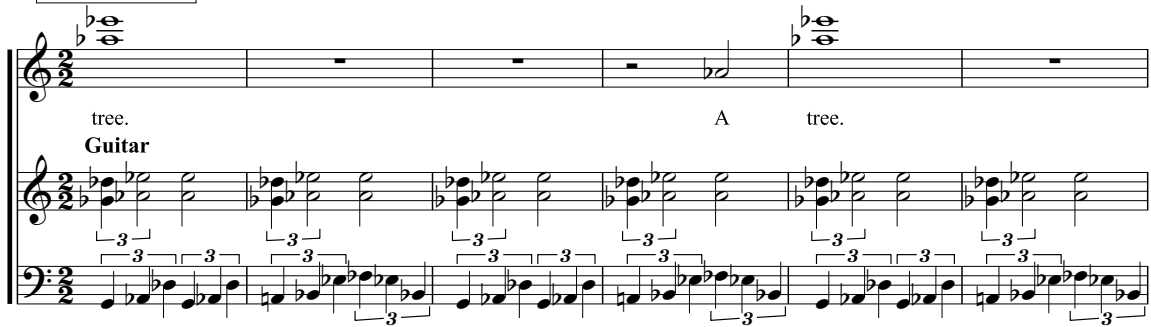
A re - gu - lar pic - tur - esque post - card - y moun - tain re - si - ding - be -

11



tween love - ly Ros - a - mond and Gor - mon with his stun - ning wife E - thell a

RI - 0'44"



tree. A tree.

Guitar

23

Bi-lly was a moun-tain,

28

E-thell was a tree grow ing off of his shoul-der.

33

Billy was a mountain,
Bi-lly was a moun-tain, E-thell was a tree grow-ing off of his shoul-der.

37

Ethell was a tree growing off of his shoulder. H-h-hey!

AI - 1'21"

41 $\text{♩} = 160$

Bi - lly had two big caves for eyes_ with a cliff for a jaw that would

Ab Gb/C

44 Hack!

move up and down and when - ev - er it did he'd puff out some dust_ and hack up a boul - der.

Db Synth

49 Hack, hack! Hack, hack!

hack up a boul - der. hack up a boul - der. hack up a boul - der.

RII - 1'45"

55 $\text{♩} = 72$

Now, one day. I believe it was on a Tuesday, a man in a checkered double knit suit.

61 drove up in a large El Dorado Cadillac leased from Bob Speen (Where the freeways meet in Downey).

67 And he laid a huge, bulging envelope right at the corner of Billy the Mountain. That was right where his foot was

73 supposed to be. Now, Billy the mountain, he couldn't believe it. All those postcards he'd posed for for all

79 of those years and finally, now, at last his royalties. (Royalties Royalties Royalties...)

85

Yes! Billy the mountain was rich!

MQI - 2'38"

88

Yes, and his eyeball caves they widened in amazement and his jaw which was a cliff, well, it, it dropped 30 feet!

"Pomp and Circumstance"

96

A bunch of dust
puffed out.

Rocks and boulders
hacked up.

Crushing the
Lincoln!

AII - 3'04"

102

gave him the mo - ney_ he act - ed real fun - ny_ he hocked up a rock

107

— and it to-talled my car. Oh do you know an - y trucks might be

(Db) (Ab) Ab

112

bound for the va - lley I don't want to stand here all night in this bar.

Bbm (Db)

117

— Dear lord I don't want to stand here all night in this bar. No shit I

Bbm (Db)

122

don't want to stand here all night in this ba - - - - r.

Bbm (Db) Eb7

RIII - 3'43"


128 By two o'clock, When the bars had already closed down, Billy had broken the big news to Ethell.

135 And with dust and boulders everywhere. Billy, choked with excitement

141 announced: "Ethel, we're going on a vacation." Yes! They were going on a vacation. Oh, and Ethell, Ethell, Ethell! like any little woman

147 She of course was very excited. She creaked a little bit.


153 and some old birds flew off of her. Billy told Ethell they were going to



MQII - 4'40"

159 Yes, they were going to New York! "Ethell, We're going to..."

"Johnny's Theme"



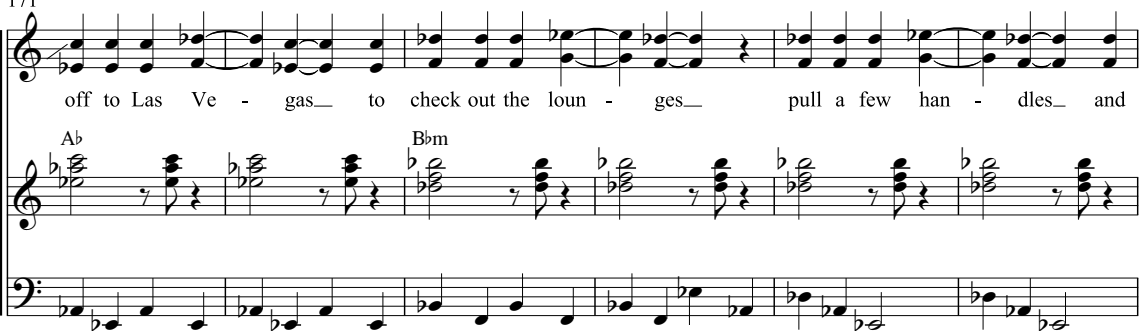
164 New York! But first, they were going to stop in Las Vegas!

da da da da da. It's *gliss.*



AII' - 5'12"

171 off to Las Ve - gas_ to check out the loun - ges_ pull a few han - dles_ and



177

drink a few beers. Oh E - thell, E - thell my dar - ling you know that I love

(Db) Ab Bbm

182

you I'm glad we could have a va - ca - tion this year. Oh nea-to

(Db)

187

glad we could have a va - ca - tion this year.

Bbm (Db) Eb7

RIV - 5'44"

193

They left that night, crunching across the Mojave Desert. Their voices echoing through the canyons of your mind.

200 "Ethel, Wanna get a cup of Coffee?" (Howard Johnson's)

Musical score for "Ethel, Wanna get a cup of Coffee?" (Howard Johnson's). The score consists of three staves: a vocal line with a whole rest, a piano accompaniment with chords, and a bass line with triplets.

206

Musical score for measure 206. The score consists of three staves: a vocal line with a whole rest, a piano accompaniment with chords, and a bass line with triplets.

211 "Oh, There's a Howard Johnson's, Wanna eat some Clams?"

Musical score for "Oh, There's a Howard Johnson's, Wanna eat some Clams?". The score consists of three staves: a vocal line with a whole rest, a piano accompaniment with chords, and a bass line with triplets.

MQIII - 6'18"

216 The first noteworthy piece of real estate they destroyed was Edward's Air Force base.

Musical score for "Off We Go Into The Wild Blue Yonder". The score consists of three staves: a vocal line with a whole rest, a piano accompaniment with chords and triplets, and a bass line with a whole rest.

224 And to this very day Wing nuts and data reduction clerks alike, speak in reverant whispers about that fateful night,

232 when test stand number one and the rocket's sled itself got lunched. I said LUNCHED, by a famous mountain-in

241 and his small wooden wife

Ha-dee - a - dee - a Ha-dee - a - dee - a ha-dee ha-dee - a - da - da.

Improv I - 6'52"

ca. 1' 20"

We're just into our KTTV news service undeniably links this mountain and his wife to drug abuse and payoffs as part of a San Joachim Valley smut ring. However, we can assure parents in the Southern California area that a recent narcotics crack-down in Torrance, Hawthorne, Lomita, Westchester, Playa Del Ray, Santa Monica, Tujunga, Sunland, San Fernando, Pcoima, Sylmar, Newhall, Canoga Park, Palmdale, Glendale, Irwindale, Rolling Hills, Granada Hills, Shadow Hills, Cheviot Hills, will provide the secret evidence the Palmdale Grand Jury has needed to seek a criminal indictment, and pave the way for stiffer legislation, increased federal aid, and avert a crippling strike of bartenders and veterinarians throughout the Inland Empire.

245

Section highlighted with monotone "scream" interjections.

Within the week, Jerry Lewis had hosted a telethon. "La La La Nice Lady!" To raise funds for the

246

Musical notation for measures 246-248, showing three staves (treble, middle, and bass clef) with rests.

249

and the

In - - jured Home - - less in

G⁷ C⁷

Musical notation for measures 249-252, including vocal line with lyrics, guitar accompaniment with chords G⁷ and C⁷, and a bass line.

253

As Billy had And a few miles right outside
just leveled it! of town, Billy caused an "Oh mein Papa."

Glen - dale dee - da - da - dow.

Musical notation for measures 253-256, including vocal line with lyrics, guitar accompaniment, and a bass line.

258

In the Earth's crust. Right over the
secret underground dumps right
near the Jack in the Box on
Glen Oaks where they keep the

Pools of old poi - son gas,

Musical notation for measures 258-261, including vocal line with lyrics, guitar accompaniment with 'x' marks, and a bass line.

262

Just as a freak tornado
cruised through.

and old ob - so - lete germ bombs.

Yes, it was about 3 o'clock in the afternoon when little Howard Kaplan was sitting on his porch, just playing and having a nice time with his little accordion, and this weird wind came up direct from Glendale blowing these terrible germs in his direction. And all of this caused by a huge mountain.

267

Wind and random sounds, and interjections of "Toto."

MQIV - 9'35"

268

"Somewhere Over the Rainbow"

Some - where o - ver the rain - bow blue - birds fly.

Wind and random sounds continue, more intense.

272

Sucking up two
thirds of it.

(Suck,Suck...)

For untimely dispersal
over vast stretches of

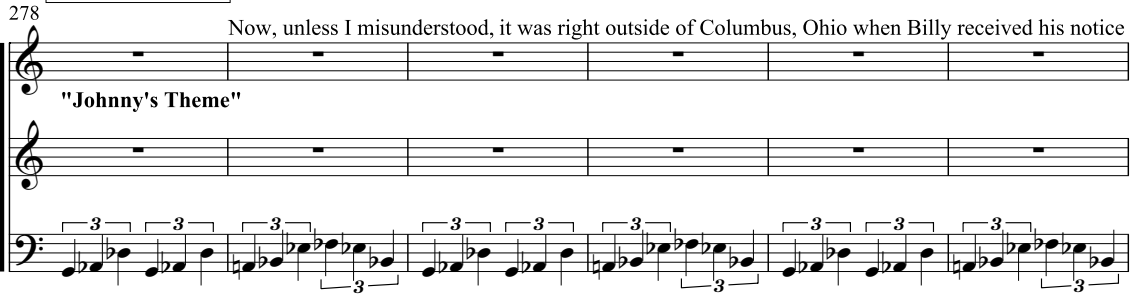
Watts!

"Johnny's Theme"

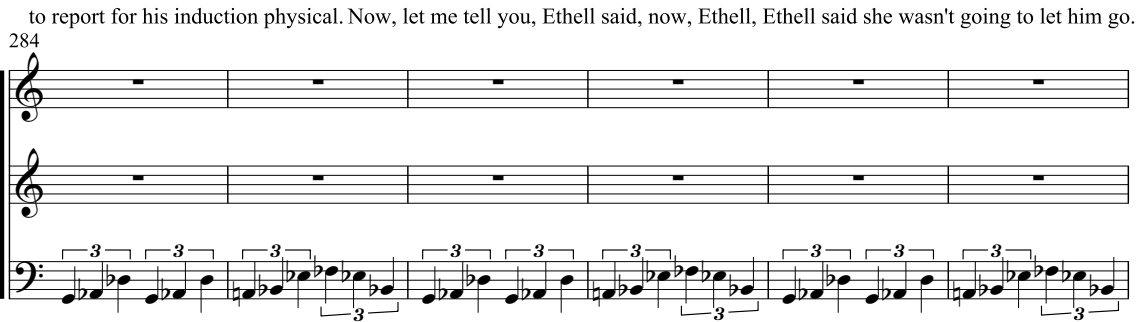
RV - 10'03"

278 Now, unless I misunderstood, it was right outside of Columbus, Ohio when Billy received his notice

"Johnny's Theme"



284 to report for his induction physical. Now, let me tell you, Ethell said, now, Ethell, Ethell said she wasn't going to let him go.

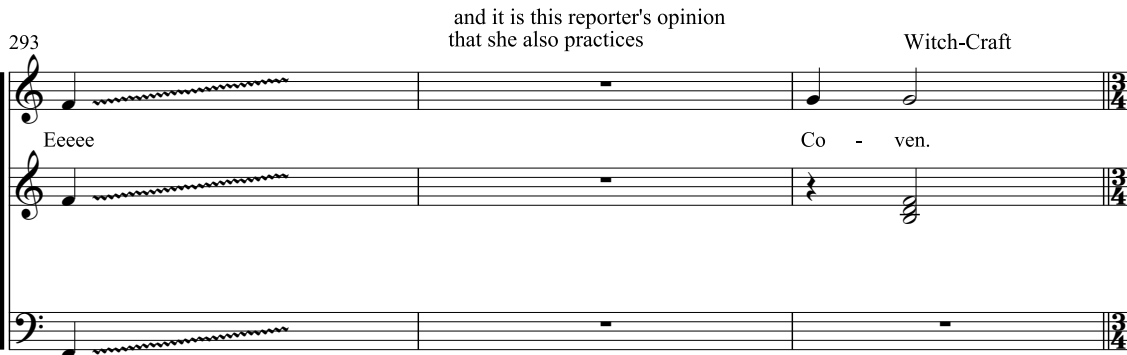


290 "I'm not gonna let you go Billy!" Thats right. We now have confirmed reports from an informed Orange County minister, that Ethell is still an active communist,



293 and it is this reporter's opinion Witch-Craft
that she also practices Co - ven.

Eeeee

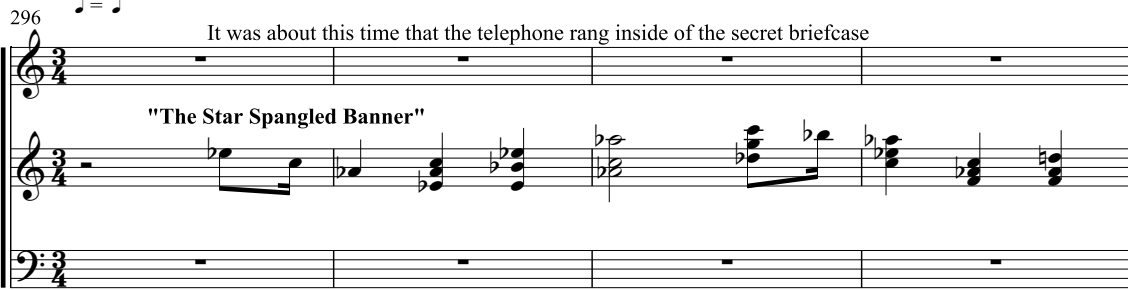


MQV - 10'47"

296 $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$

It was about this time that the telephone rang inside of the secret briefcase

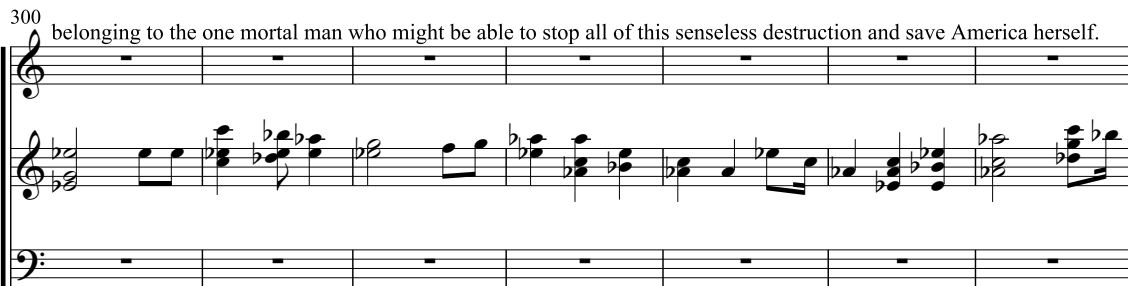
"The Star Spangled Banner"



Musical score for MQV - 10'47". It consists of three staves: a vocal line, a piano accompaniment line, and a bass line. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The vocal line has a rest for the first four measures.

300

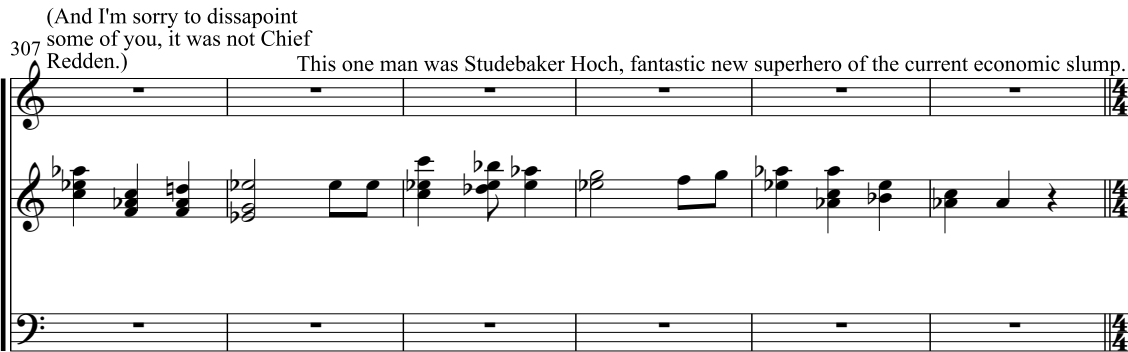
belonging to the one mortal man who might be able to stop all of this senseless destruction and save America herself.



Musical score for MQV - 10'47". It consists of three staves: a vocal line, a piano accompaniment line, and a bass line. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern. The vocal line has a rest for the first four measures.

(And I'm sorry to dissappoint
some of you, it was not Chief
Redden.)

307 This one man was Studebaker Hoch, fantastic new superhero of the current economic slump.



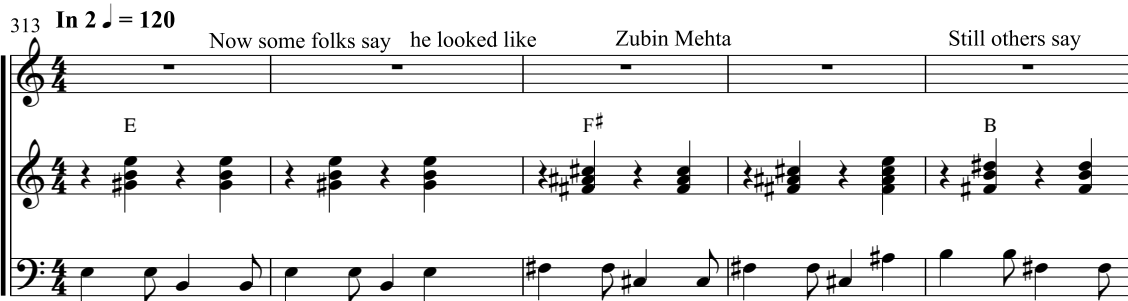
Musical score for MQV - 10'47". It consists of three staves: a vocal line, a piano accompaniment line, and a bass line. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern. The vocal line has a rest for the first four measures.

AIII - 11'16"

313 In 2 $\text{♩} = 120$

Now some folks say he looked like Zubin Mehta Still others say

E F# B



Musical score for AIII - 11'16". It consists of three staves: a vocal line, a piano accompaniment line, and a bass line. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#) and the time signature is 2/4. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The vocal line has a rest for the first four measures. The piano accompaniment includes chord markings E, F#, and B.

318 bullshit honey he's just another greasy guy who happened to be born next to the frozen beef pies

Chords: E, C

321 at Boney's Market Still others say, John, piss on you Jack he's just a crazy Italian

Chords: E, F#

325 who drove a red car. You see nobody ever really knew for sure, because Studebaker was so Mysterious
He was so—

Chords: B, E, C#m

329 — (he was so, he was so) my-ster - i - ou s, he was so (he was so, he was

Chords: F#, F#m, B7, E, F#

334

In 4 ♩ = 120

so) my-ster-i - ous. Cause when a

F#m B7 E D C B

339

per-son gets to be such a he-ro folks, — and mar-ve-lous be-yond com-pute,

343

Slightly Faster
♩ = 172

You can ne-ver rea-lly tell a - bout a guy like that whe-ther he's rea-lly a nice per - son

347

poco rit.

or if he just smiles a - lot. Or if he has a son named Pin - o - cchi - o or

353

♩ = 72

Whether he's really a nice person, or if he has a son named Pinocchio or what.

what.
Bbm

♩ = 172

Some men say he could fly, some men say he could swim. O - thers say he could sing like

360

Neil Se - da - ka. And all the girls in Flu - shing would be a - mazed of him.

363

♩ = 72

Amazed. Time Passes

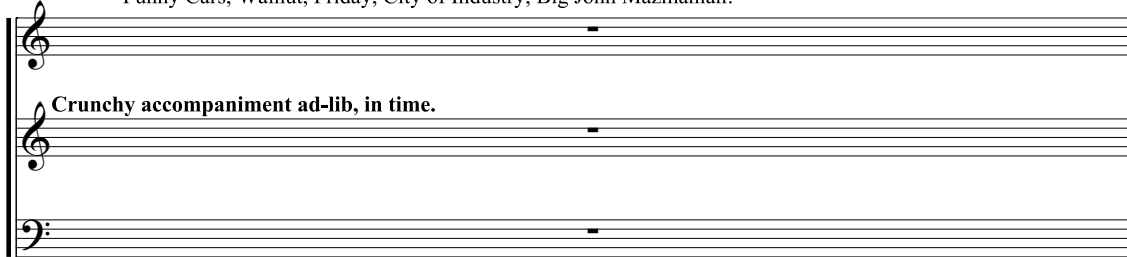
two three A - mazed of him.

Ebm7
ad-lib

RVI - 12'48"

ca. 25"

366 January, February, March, July, Wednesday, August, Irwindale, 2:30 in the afternoon, Sunday, Monday,
Funny Cars, Walnut, Friday, City of Industry, Big John Mazmanian!

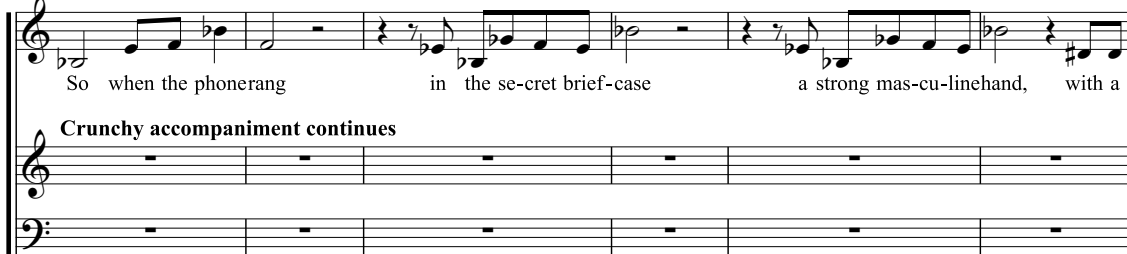


Musical score for RVI - 12'48". It consists of three staves: a vocal line and two accompaniment lines (treble and bass clef). The vocal line contains the lyrics: "January, February, March, July, Wednesday, August, Irwindale, 2:30 in the afternoon, Sunday, Monday, Funny Cars, Walnut, Friday, City of Industry, Big John Mazmanian!". The accompaniment lines are empty, with a note indicating "Crunchy accompaniment ad-lib, in time."

AIV - 13'13"

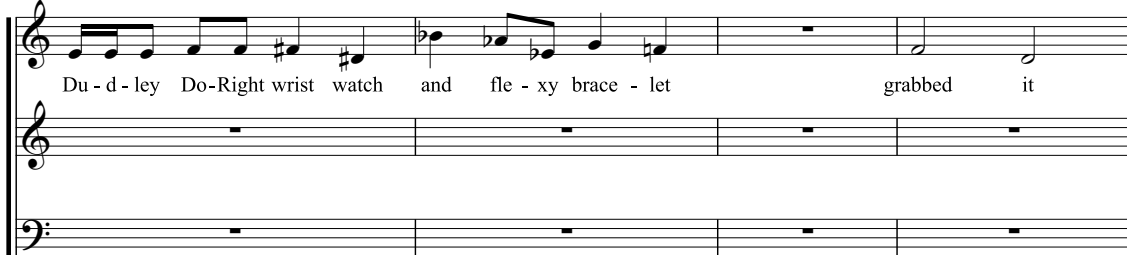
ca. 25"

367 Rhythm ad-lib



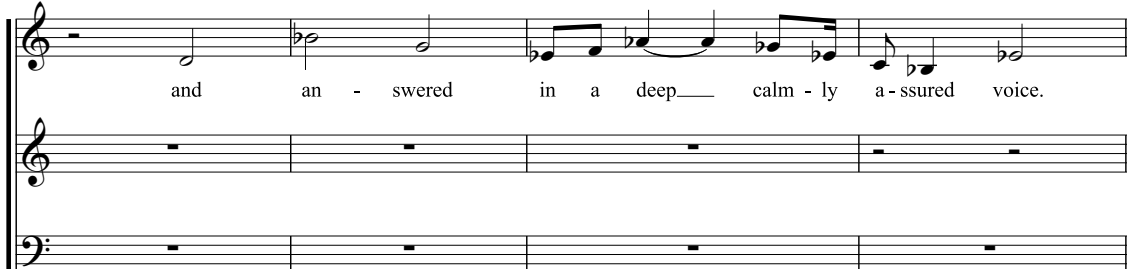
Musical score for AIV - 13'13". It consists of three staves: a vocal line and two accompaniment lines (treble and bass clef). The vocal line contains the lyrics: "So when the phonerang in the se-cret brief-case a strong mas-cu-linehand, with a". The accompaniment lines are empty, with a note indicating "Crunchy accompaniment continues".

373



Musical score for AIV - 13'13" (continued). It consists of three staves: a vocal line and two accompaniment lines (treble and bass clef). The vocal line contains the lyrics: "Du - d - ley Do-Right wrist watch and fle - xy brace - let grabbed it". The accompaniment lines are empty.

377



Musical score for AIV - 13'13" (continued). It consists of three staves: a vocal line and two accompaniment lines (treble and bass clef). The vocal line contains the lyrics: "and an - swered in a deep__ calm - ly a - ssured voice.". The accompaniment lines are empty.

RVII - 13'40"

So ah yeah yeah,
hello already? What?

381 Well yeah. Oh, are you kidding? You're not kidding, a mountain?

Musical score for measures 381-386. The score consists of three staves: a vocal line (treble clef) and two piano accompaniment staves (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The vocal line contains rests for all six measures. The piano accompaniment features a consistent rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with triplet markings (indicated by a '3' and a bracket) in both the treble and bass staves.

387 With a tree growing off of its shoulder? Aw, you're full of shit man!

Musical score for measures 387-390. The score consists of three staves: a vocal line (treble clef) and two piano accompaniment staves (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has two flats. The vocal line contains the lyrics: "Ha-dee - a - dee - a" (measures 387-388), a rest (measure 389), and "Ha-dee - a - dee - a ha-dee" (measure 390). The piano accompaniment continues with the same eighth-note triplet pattern as in the previous system.

391 Ah, listen, by the way, before I go on; did you get those white albums I sent you with the pencil on the front?

Musical score for measures 391-394. The score consists of three staves: a vocal line (treble clef) and two piano accompaniment staves (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has two flats. The vocal line contains the lyrics: "ha-dee - a - da - da." (measures 391-392), a rest (measure 393), and a rest (measure 394). The piano accompaniment continues with the same eighth-note triplet pattern.

395 Yeah? Yeah? You should move some of those for me, we're having alot of...

Musical score for measures 395-398. The score consists of three staves: a vocal line (treble clef) and two piano accompaniment staves (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has two flats. The vocal line contains rests for all four measures. The piano accompaniment continues with the same eighth-note triplet pattern.

399 listen, so kiss little Jakey on the head, and ah, how's your wife's hemorrhoids? Oh, thats too bad. Listen,

Musical score for measures 399-401. The score consists of three staves. The top staff is a vocal line with rests. The middle staff is a piano accompaniment with chords and triplets. The bottom staff is a bass line with eighth notes and triplets. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat).

402 so you've got a mountain, with a tree, listen, causing Oh my! Well let me write this down, sort of take afew notes here.

Musical score for measures 402-405. The score consists of three staves. The top staff is a vocal line with rests. The middle staff is a piano accompaniment with chords and triplets. The bottom staff is a bass line with eighth notes and triplets. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat).

406

Yeah to El
Segundo huh?

Musical score for measures 406-408. The score consists of three staves. The top staff is a vocal line with rests. The middle staff is a piano accompaniment with chords and triplets. The bottom staff is a bass line with eighth notes and triplets. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The title "**Johnny's Theme**" is written above the middle staff.

409

Causing untold destruction? Oh god, thats terrible! (my baby my baby)

Musical score for measures 409-411. The score consists of three staves. The top staff is a vocal line with rests. The middle staff is a piano accompaniment with chords and triplets. The bottom staff is a bass line with eighth notes and triplets. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat).

414

Wanted for draft evasion?

Musical score for 'Wanted for draft evasion?'. It consists of three staves: two treble clefs and one bass clef. The top two staves are mostly empty, with some notes in the second measure of the second staff. The bass staff contains a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets and slurs.

Improv II - 14'52"

419

Musical score for 'Improv II - 14'52"'. It consists of three staves. The top staff has lyrics: "And ex-pense a count? and per di - em too?". The music includes various notes, rests, and a final double bar line with a repeat sign.

They said he could dance and of course they were right!
Ladies and gentlemen, this is it, the Studebaker Hoch
dancing lesson and cosmic prayer for guidance featuring
Aynsley Dunbar. Hit it!

425

Musical score for 'Some men say he could dance.'. It consists of three staves. The top staff has lyrics: "Some men say he could dance.". The music is in 6/4 time and includes various notes and rests.

ca. 30"

Hey! Twirly, twirly, twirly, twirly, twirly! Fillmore, Fillmore, Fillmore, Fillmore. Hey!
Right hand from the heart-a, left hand from the heart-a, right hand from the heart-a
left hand from the left shoulder to the heart-a.
Fillmore, Fillmore, Fillmore, Fillmore.

427

Three empty musical staves (two treble clefs and one bass clef) corresponding to the 'ca. 30"' section.

ca. 25"

Nobody can dance like Studebaker Hoch.
So many rumors have spread about Studebaker Hoch. (Rumors, rumors, rumors)
Consider this rumor, which was published about three weeks ago in Rolling Stone (Oh, it's Gotta be true!)
Studebaker Hoch can write the Lord's Prayer on the head of a pin! No!

428

Musical notation for measures 428-432, showing three staves (treble, alto, and bass clefs) with rests.

MQVI - 15'57"

429

$\text{♩} = 160$

"Suite Judy Blue Eyes"

Do do.

Guitar interjections throughout. Keyboard doubles harmonies.

Musical notation for 'Suite Judy Blue Eyes' starting at measure 429, including vocal line with 'do' syllables and guitar/keyboard accompaniment.

433

I'm so hip!

Beef pies,

Do do.

Musical notation for measures 433-437, including vocal line with 'I'm so hip!' and 'Beef pies,' and accompaniment.

438

He was born next to the beef pies. Un-der - neath

do do do do do do do do do do do do do do do do.

Do do do do do do.

This musical system covers measures 438 to 441. It features a vocal line with lyrics, a piano accompaniment with chords and triplets, and a bass line. The lyrics are: "He was born next to the beef pies. Un-der - neath". The piano part includes a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure of the system.

442

Jo - ni Mi-tchell's au - to graphed pic- ture, Right be - side

do do do do do do do do do do do do do do do do.

Do do do do do do.

This musical system covers measures 442 to 445. It features a vocal line with lyrics, a piano accompaniment with chords and triplets, and a bass line. The lyrics are: "Jo - ni Mi-tchell's au - to graphed pic- ture, Right be - side". The piano part includes two triplet markings over eighth notes.

446

Ell - i - ott Ro-berts big bank book, next to the boat

do do do do do do do do do do do do do do do do.

Do do do do do do.

This musical system covers measures 446 to 449. It features a vocal line with lyrics, a piano accompaniment with chords and triplets, and a bass line. The lyrics are: "Ell - i - ott Ro-berts big bank book, next to the boat". The piano part includes three triplet markings over eighth notes.

450

where Cros-by flushed a - way all his stash, and the cops

do do

454

got him in the boat and drove a - way, to the

do do

457

can, where Neil Young slipped a - no ther disc.

Do do

461

Fro - zen by the pies, Fro - zen by the pies, Fro - zen by the pies,

464 The influence of
a frozen beef pie.

poco rit.

And that was the main in - flu - ence on hi - - - m.

RVIII - 17'00"

470 **Faster**
♩ = 104

Boldly springing into action, he phoned his wife, (who ran a modeling school). Whereupon he, yes, he ran around the back of the Broadway at Hollywood Boulevard and Vine to see if he could find himself some big, large, unused cardboard boxes. (No shit!)

4th time only (whereupon he:)

ca. 11x (22 bars)

473

After which, he hit up the Ralph's on Sunset for some Aunt Jemima's syrup, some Kaiser broiler foiler, and a pair of blunt scissors. (Hey hey!)

ca. 8x

475

Yes! Yes, and in the parking lot of Ralphs, where no prices are lower prices than Ralph's, in the parking lot of Ralph's in between a pair of customized trucks where nobody was looking, he cut out some really, really, really nice wings, and he covered them thoroughly with foil.*Thoroughly with e-e-e-e foil*

ca. 37x

477

Then he took those wings and wedged them under each one of his powerful arms and sneaked into a telephone booth. Yes! Yes!

Musical score for measures 477-480. It consists of three staves: two treble clefs and one bass clef. The top two staves contain whole rests. The bass staff contains a sequence of four quarter notes: G2, A2, B2, and C3. The text "ca. 12x" is positioned above the fourth note.

479

And then he shut the fucking door! And he pulled down his blue denim policeman-type trouser pants, and he spread even amounts of Aunt Jemima maple syrup all over the inside of his legs!

Musical score for measures 479-482. It consists of three staves: two treble clefs and one bass clef. The top two staves contain whole rests. The bass staff contains a sequence of four quarter notes: G2, A2, B2, and C3. The text "ca. 19x" is positioned above the fourth note.

481

Soon the booth was filling with flies. (Help me, help me!)
He held open the legs of his boxer shorts so they could all get in.

Musical score for measures 481-484. It consists of three staves: two treble clefs and one bass clef. The top two staves contain whole rests. The bass staff contains a sequence of four quarter notes: G#2, A2, B2, and C3. The text "ca. 16x" is positioned above the fourth note.

483

Yes! Yeah! And when each and everyone of those little cock-sucking flies had gone into his pants, and they were lapping up the maple syrup, he bent over and he put his head between his legs and he said in very a clear, impressive Ron Hubbard-type voice:

Musical score for measures 483-486. It consists of three staves: two treble clefs and one bass clef. The top two staves contain whole rests. The bass staff contains a sequence of four quarter notes: G2, A2, B2, and C3. The text "ca. 16x" is positioned above the fourth note.

MQI - 19'22"

"New York!"

485 ♩ = 72

And the booth and everything lifted up out of the parking lot and into the sky!

"Johnny's Theme"

Musical score for 'Johnny's Theme' in 7/8 time. It consists of three staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate treble clef staff. The first staff is mostly empty. The second staff contains a melodic line with a wavy line indicating a tremolo or vibrato effect. The third staff contains a bass line.

AV - 19'41"

489 ♩ = 100

Stu-de-ba-ker Hoch yea— yea, Stu-de-be-ker Hoch Stu de - ba-ker Hoch Stu-de-ba-ker Hoch yea— yea,

Musical score for AV - 19'41'' in 4/4 time. It consists of three staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate treble clef staff. The first staff contains the vocal melody with lyrics. The second and third staves contain piano accompaniment.

495

Stu-de-ba-ker Hoch Stu-de - ba - ker Hoch He's coa-ting his legs with Aunt Je - mi-ma's

Musical score for AV - 19'41'' (continued) in 4/4 time. It consists of three staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate treble clef staff. The first staff contains the vocal melody with lyrics. The second and third staves contain piano accompaniment.

500

sy-rup up and down. His shorts will be filled with flies

Musical score for AV - 19'41'' (continued) in 4/4 time. It consists of three staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate treble clef staff. The first staff contains the vocal melody with lyrics. The second and third staves contain piano accompaniment.

505

— that will be bu-zzing all a-round. (Guitar)

509

Stu-de-ba-ker Hoch he's real-ly out of sight. Stu-de-ba-ker Hoch he does it ev-ery night.

513

Stu-de-ba-ker Hoch he treats the flies all-right. Stu-de-ba-ker Hoch thats why they ne-ver bite.

517

Please to New York! Fly to New York!

C D C D

525

He could be a dog or a frog or a les-bi-an queen. Fly to New York!

C D

533

He could be a nark or a na-val ma - rine Or he

Fma7

540

might play dir - ty hes ov - ver thir - ty get-ting o - ld.

Gm Bb

547

I don't know. His pe - cu-liar a - tti - re and the flies he re - qui

555

- re__ keep lea-ding-him on__ Cause E-thel is gone

561

They keep lea-ding him on__

567

cause E - thel is gone__ and the

572

moun - tain she's on__

And speaking of mountains, we'll join Studebaker Hoch on the edge of Billy the Mountain's mouth. Take it away!

RIX - 21'28"

ca. 30"

"Ah, yeah, yeah, yeah, hey-ah Billy, ah listen. I've come to reason with you! Our great country needs you in the Armed Forces! You're number came up, you can't go on running like this forever." Oh, but Ethel just shook her twigs angrily, but Studebaker Hoch, calm, cool, collected, and unferturbed, continued, "Yeah, well listen, you. (cough cough).

576

Constant ad-lib

ca. 1'

Listen you communist son of a bitch! You better get your ass down there for your fucking physical, or I'll see to it that you get used for fill dirt in some impending New Jersey marsh land reclamation, and your girlfriend there will wind up disguised as a series of brooms, primitive ironing boards (or a doghouse), get the (cough cough), get the picture? Yea well Billy just laughed, "Ha, Ha, Ha. If they think they're gonna draft me, they're crazy!" Unfortunately because Studebaker Hoch was standing on the edge of Billy the Mountain's mouth when the giant mountain laughed, Studebaker Hoch lost his footing and fell, screaming, two hundred feet into the rubble below!

577

Sparse ad-lib

578

"Oh fuck I'm gonna need a truss!" Oh, listen, that only goes to show you and it will show you once again that

LONG!

AII' - 23'09"

581

gliss.

A moun-tain is some - thing_ you don't want to fuck___ with__

Ab Bbm

586

don't want to fuck___ with___ don't fuck a- roud__ don't fuck a-round don't fuck with Bi - lly__ and

(Db) Ab

572

don't fuck with E - thell__ you saw what just ha___ ppened to the guy with the flies.

Bbm (Db)

577

___ Don't fuck a - round,___

Bbm Fm

581

Don't fuck a - round. Don't

Cm Gm Db

587

— fuck a round. — Don't — fuck a round. — Don't fuck a-round,

Eb Db Eb Db Eb

595

Don't fuck a-round, Don't fuck a-round, with Bi-lly, Bi-lly Bi-lly Bi-lly

Db Eb Db Eb

Intro' - 24'13"

601

Bi-lly. Bi - i - lly the moun-tain - in.

Abma7/Db

APPENDIX B

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY AND FILMOGRAPHY

Discography

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ZZ Top. *Tres Hombres*. © 2006, 1973. Warner Bros. Records. R2 78966. Compact Disc.

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