

Re-Vision Radio Goes to the Movies: *The Orphic Essay-with-Soundtrack*

The experimental format of RE-VISION RADIO is a seamless mixing of Argument & Song; of dialectics & music, or logos & mythos. In other words, philosophical essays are put to music, producing the Orphic Essay-with-Soundtrack. Thus Everybody Knows, since there's a song hermetically hidden in an essay and, conversely, an essay waiting to be revealed in a song, that RE-VISION RADIO puts its philosophy best in song — "Musical Philosophy." As the lyric goes: "That's why I'm telling you in song." ("Re-Vision Radio Manifesto & Visionary Recital")

The "Orphic Essay-with-Soundtrack" is designed on the analogy with film soundtrack "in order to enhance the dramatic narrative and the emotional impact of the scene in question." With the GS's musical essay, like the film soundtrack, the dialogue (or monologue) is strategically interrupted at key moments to heighten the emotional ambiance, to playfully amplify and drive home the idea(s) the writer desires to get across, and works best when the synergy of words, images, and music (through seamless seques) all come together As it was once said of a great filmmaker, "When he uses music, it's not a substitute for action [an interlude] but an enhancement of it."

In order to appreciate what the GS is trying to do with the “Orphic Essay-with-Soundtrack,” he must underscore the importance of the score or soundtrack in movies, which cannot be overestimated. ¹ In fact, it has been observed by many film critics, especially since American “New Wave Cinema,” that music is integral to film. This synergy of image and music in film has become more and more self-conscious for filmmakers since the mid-sixties. There are even directors who compose their own soundtracks and even release studio albums. ² Today, cutting-edge filmmakers are creating an art form that seamlessly combines the moving image and music soundtrack to tell a story.

Therefore, the Gypsy Scholar’s novel *radio-text*, the “Orphic Essay-with-Soundtrack,” seems all the more relevant as film and music (i.e., soundtrack) become more and more seamlessly integrated. In other words, the Gypsy Scholar’s passion to hear a *song-as-essay* and an *essay-as-song* seems to be shared, through its equivalent in film, with some avant-garde filmmakers.

For example, here’s a film critic, Michael Phillips (Chicago Tribune), reviewing (on the *Ebert and Roeper* website) a film that was inspired by the life and music of Bob Dylan, *I’m Not There* (12/09/07): “But if films are songs, this is one Troubadour that travels its own stretch of Highway 61 in its own way.” Here, all the Gypsy Scholar’s passions (and main themes) come together: troubadours, sixties popular song, philosophy, and film. Yes, just like “*films are songs*,” for the GS (in the medium of radio) “*essays*

are songs” (i.e., the musical essay or “Orphic Essay-with-Soundtrack”).³

Here are some prime examples of the integral relationship between film and soundtrack from directors and film critics:

My life was saved by Rock ‘n’ Roll. Because it was this kind of music that, for the very first time in my life, gave me a feeling of identity, the feeling that I had a right to enjoy, to imagine, and to do something. Had it not been for Rock ‘n’ Roll, I might be a lawyer now. —Wim Wenders (Filmmaker)

It’s [a film] a lot like music and it’s a little bit like painting, but it’s based on this mood the idea gives you. —David Lynch (Filmmaker)

I get a lot of inspiration from music, probably more than any other form. For me, music is the most pure form. It’s like another language. Whenever I start writing a script, I focus on music that sort of kickstarts my ideas or my imagination. —Jim Jarmusch (“Interview: Jim Jarmusch and The Music in His Films”)

Some of the images that are very important in *Eraserhead* aren’t simply the ones that you’re seeing on the screen but the ones that you’re producing yourself, because of the very suggestive soundtrack. —Jonathan Rosenbaum (Film Critic, *Midnight Movies*)

Through the years of the *Tower of Song* program, the GS has observed that some directors have a heightened consciousness about the function of music, especially popular song (such as Sixties and post-Sixties), in their films. The GS has occasionally taken note of this. In the following pages the GS will focus on some filmmakers who exemplify his ideal of the perfect film soundtrack in order to support his working analogy of film soundtrack to an essay soundtrack.

The most recent example of what the GS is driving at with his “Orphic Essay-with-Soundtrack” comes from an unlikely film, *Baby Driver* (2017), an action film from English director, screenwriter, producer, actor, and writer Edgar Wright. (It’s interesting that Wright cites Jon Spencer Blues Explosion as his favorite band. Several Blues Explosion songs feature in Wright’s 2007 film *Hot Fuzz*, including one written specifically for the film. He’s also a noted fan of the Australian psychedelic rock group King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard.) Because filmmaker Edgar Wright stands out for the GS as a kindred soul – one of the most musical of film directors – the following is offered to elucidate, by analogy, the GS’s idea behind his “Orphic Essay-with-Soundtrack” and what he’s trying to do with it. The information here comes from the behind-the-scenes “Special Features” for the *Baby Driver* film.

Wright states that the genesis of the film all began when he was listening to a song, Simon & Garfunkel’s “Baby Driver,” and

“got the idea for a movie.” He thought: “This would make a great song for a movie.” (And how many movies themselves have song titles, as if they were inspired by and built around a single, lowly pop song? The GS automatically thinks of *Someone Like You*, and *Domino*, titles taken from Van Morrison songs. *Bird On the Wire*, *The Future*, and *Take This Waltz* from the Leonard Cohen songs also comes to mind, not to mention an entire Leonard Cohen soundtrack in the Robert Altman’s 1971 film *McCabe & Mrs. Miller*.) Wright says he wanted to “do an action film set to music.” Thus, the germ of the idea: “How can I make an action movie completely driven by music?” Wright sees music as “*the motivating factor in the movie.*”

One of the actors interviewed observes that “music plays such an important role in the film,” so much so that “*the music is almost a character in itself.*” Wright explains that he likes the idea of “*a film driven by music.*” (In the same way, the GS wants to write essays “set to music” and likes the idea — is obsessed by the idea — of an essay “*driven by music!*”) He envisioned “a character who is motivated, and sometimes possessed, by music.” (It should be noted here that all Wright’s music is *rock music*, especially by the British hard-rock group Queen. The Queen song Wright listened to most while working on the film was “Brighton Rock.”) Wright set up his storyboards to see if what he had written fit the songs. One of the actors also observes that Wright has “taken the notion of a music video and is using it as a storytelling tool,” because the director does entire sequences that are choreographed to music.

Wright even edited the movie right on set in order to see if it was *"fitting the music."*

It is further disclosed that Wright's musical style even effects the movie locations that he picks and that he makes the actors rehearse while listening to the soundtrack songs so they get the rhythm of the scene. It's also interesting that Wright choose many of the main cast members because they also play music. Wright explains that he wanted to go beyond the musical score of a movie in that the lead character actually chooses the music. (It should be noted that the lead character has the habit of putting together mixedtapes for himself and friends. A budding DJ!) Another actor explains that the entire movie is *"set to the soundtrack of the lead character's life"* and that *"you're seeing the world through his beat."* The actor also points out that (a) *"the choice of the music in this movie shows the director's creative mind"* and (b) *"You really get an insight into Edgar's brain and the way he thinks and what kind of music he listens to get inspired."* (Just like the choice of the GS's music in his essays shows his *"creative mind."*) Director/screenwriter Wright himself tells us: *"When I'm writing I have to have the right music playing. I have to have exactly the right kind of tempo to keep me working."* Of the lead character, Wright says *"music is like oxygen to him, that he can't live without it; he's obsessed by it."* Another actor throws light upon Wright's directorial method by observing that the movie *"has this hyper-real sensibility in the way the music syncs up with the action,"* so much so that *"the whole thing kinda becomes a musical."*

He doesn't believe this has ever been done in a narrative feature before. (As far as the GS can tell, neither has his method of *using song to drive an academic type of essay* – the “Orphic Essay-with-Soundtrack” – been done before!)

Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2 (2017) is another popular action movie (in this case a superhero action one), where the soundtrack is integral to the story. It's another movie (in a long line of previous movies) that you can't imagine without the Sixties-era rock songs – a stellar soundtrack! Like the movie *Baby Driver*, the pop-song soundtrack comes from within the story because the main character actually plays the songs in the movie; in this case it's Star-Lord Peter Quill, who carries at all times an old Walkman tape player with his favorite tunes (keep in mind the future time in the movie is 2014). The movie opens in the past (1980) with a car driving down the road and the passengers, Peter's mother (Meredith) and her boyfriend (Ego, Peter's future father), listening to “Brandy (You're A Fine Girl)” by Looking Glass, the American pop music group of the early 1970s. This is the beginning of a plethora of rock tunes popular in the Sixties era; e.g., Fleetwood Mac, “The Chain” (1977), Jay and the Americans, “Come A Little Bit Closer” (1964), George Harrison, “My Sweet Lord” (1970), Sam Cooke, “Bring It On Home To Me” (1962).

It's obvious that this movie, from the very first scene, is indebted to *radio in the Sixties era*. One scene stands out here that shows the filmmaker's nostalgia for the golden days of FM radio.

Ego tells his son Peter the following about his dead mother: *"My river lily who knew all the words to every song that came over the radio."* Furthermore, so much is the soundtrack – and a featured song – involved with the story that we have the same character quote the lines from the opening song, "Brandy," to his son (who is listening to it on his Walkman) in order to demonstrate to him how the lyrics match the story in the movie:

It's fortuitous that you're listening to this song, "Brandy" by Looking Glass. A favorite of your mom's. One of Earth's greatest musical compositions; perhaps its very greatest. "Brandy, you're a fine girl / What a good wife you would be / But my life, my love, my lady is the sea. The sea calls the sailor back. He loves the girl, but that's not his place."

It's evident that the director just had to tell his audience his estimation of the greatness of this song by having the lyrics quoted in the movie! (The GS can relate – thinking of all the times on radio when the greatness of a certain song he used in a musical essay made him want to quote the lyrics before playing it!)

True to form, the movie closes with a grand finale of a song. We see Peter, who has just been technologically updated with a first-generation iPod (which he's told is the very latest tool,

holding up to 300 songs), select the Cat Stevens album *Tea for the Tillerman*. With a click, we hear the appropriate song for the primary family relationship in the movie, “Father And Son” (1970) – awesome! But it’s not just that this is one of those great defining songs of a generation that makes one who came of age in this countercultural era nostalgic for those heady times; *it’s the way director James Gunn lets the song play out to close the movie*. The songs takes over and the dialogue stops for many scenes, then it picks up gain, with the song fading to the background, and then the song comes to the foreground again – awesome way to end a movie! (Here, it must be said that the GS holds a particularly acute regard for films that don’t just momentarily bring in a song at a certain point in the action but rather stop the dialogue all together and let the song take over and play out.⁴ The GS got the feeling that perhaps Gunn made the movie just so he could showcase this Cat Stevens classic in the context of these closing scenes! The same way that the GS perhaps writes an entire essay just so he could showcase a great song – maybe “one of Earth’s greatest musical compositions” – for the grand finale!)

The GS didn’t know much at all about filmmaker James Gunn when he saw the movie. But, after viewing it, he felt that he should have known *this director started out as a musician!* James Gunn dropped out of college to pursue a rock and roll career. His band, the Icons, released one album, “Mom, We Like It Here on Earth.” Yet, the director apparently hasn’t given up songwriting; he co-wrote the song that played during the closing credits,

“Guardians Inferno,” performed by The Snipers ft. David Hasselhoff (who is mentioned as a hero of Peter’s in the movie and makes a cameo appearance in it). So the question is (and I think it’s a fair one, given the deep interconnection of movies and music by some of today’s most innovative filmmakers): Is the filmmaker a *musician-as-director*, or *director-as-musician*?

The third film I want to bring to attention is indie director Jim Jarmusch’s *Only Lovers Left Alive* (2013). The film stars Tom Hiddleston as a vampire who whiles away his nights (till morning comes) laying down densely layered acid-rock demos in his room. This psychedelic riffing forms the foundation of the picture and provides its direction. It’s another one of his films in which “*music is the lifeblood.*” (Indeed, it wouldn’t be too much to say that Jarmusch’s *vampire-as-psychedelic-rock-musician* seems to need the “lifeblood” of music just as much as he needs the “lifeblood” of humans to survive.) The film’s soundtrack, which has been described as “a moody, psychedelic goth-pop,” is actually done by Jarmusch’s own band Sqürl, along with his longtime musical collaborator Jozef van Wissem and guest musicians Zola Jesus and Madeline Follin.⁵

Thus, the inquiring new fan of Jim Jarmusch will discover that he’s not only a screenwriter, producer, editor, actor, but also (like filmmaker Gunn) *a musician*, who has formed a rock band calling themselves Sqürl (founded in 2009 with film associate Carter Logan and sound engineer Shane Stoneback).⁶ As a

musician-composer, Jarmusch has composed music for his films and released two collaborative albums in 2012 with Jozef van Wissem: *Concerning the Entrance into Eternity* and *The Mystery of Heaven*. He is also the author of a series of essays on influential bands. Sqürl's version of Wanda Jackson's 1961 song "Funnel of Love," featuring Madeline Follin of Cults on vocals, opens Jarmusch's *Only Lovers Left Alive*. Curlicues of electric guitar riffs by Sqürl dominate the film. (The film won the "Best Soundtrack Award" at the 2013 Cannes Film Festival.) Jarmusch used musicians as actors and looked to music to provide *the animating vitality to the films scenes*.

Music journalist John Petkovic (The Plain Dealer, 5/2/14) quotes Jarmusch on what was different with the *Only Lovers Left Alive* soundtrack, "Whereas someone like Wes Anderson creates a soundtrack out of existing music, we created music for the film. It's a different approach to music, but also film," and then concludes: "*The soundtrack not only compliments 'Only Lovers,' it also inspired the direction of the film.*" [My emphasis.] The "Aquarian Drunkard" (an independent audio blog) also observes how Jarmusch's soundtracks go way beyond conventional film soundtracks: "As such, Jarmusch's films have always incorporated *soundtracks that act like parts of the supporting cast. His characters argue about music, they define themselves by it.*" [My emphasis.]

Again, the best soundtrack doesn't merely provide an interlude or just add emotional weight to the dialogue of a film; no, it does much more than that. In a Jarmusch's film, *the songs say what his characters cannot, act as a supporting cast, and even inspire the direction of the film.* (Just as the GS's soundtrack to an essay sums up, in condensed form, and punctuates the overall meaning of its paragraphs, inspiring the further direction of the essay.) In an article in the Guardian (9/21/17), "How Jim Jarmusch used music to put a spell on Hollywood," Ryan Gilbey, writing of a concert series, "Jim Jarmusch Revisited," which is an evening of music from his work at the Barbican in London, recognizes what the GS has been at pains to point out about what makes the difference between just a mediocre soundtrack and a great soundtrack:

Jim Jarmusch doesn't just stick music on top of his films—*he weaves it into their fibre.* A new concert series shows how his soundtracks give a voice to drifters and dreamers. Jarmusch came to prominence in the early 80s, when movies were first being used as tools to sell soundtrack albums, but his were different. *Music wasn't there to shift units; it lived in the fibres of the celluloid.* [My emphasis.]

Three other film critics basically concur with this assessment:

Music is the blood running through the veins of every Jim Jarmusch film.... It's [*Only Lovers Left Alive*] merely another one of his films in which music is the lifeblood. —Calum Marsh

Music seems to matter to his work on almost as fundamental a level as images, not just in the final products but in every stage of their creation as well. —Colin Marshall

Jim Jarmusch's films not only feature cool music, they are also inspired by it.... Jarmusch's very personal use of music has always played such a role in his films, especially this time around in *Only Lovers Left Alive*. — John Petkovic

Thus, the primary and vital place of the soundtrack in Jarmusch's films seems to be generally recognized. In an interview, "Jim Jarmusch and The Music in His Films," Jarmusch himself stress the importance of a good soundtrack:

I've seen good movies — or maybe they would be good — just destroyed by the same crap, you know? If you look at films from even in the seventies, it wasn't that bad. People had some sense of music

for films. But maybe that's just the commercial realm: guys in suits come and tell 'em what kind of music to put on.

Calum Marsh, in an article, "A Jim Jarmusch Mixtape" (Pitchfork, 4/11/14), confirms how much the soundtrack means to a Jarmusch film:

Jim Jarmusch is one of the most important figures in American independent cinema, but in a sense his legacy belongs as much to the world of music as it does to film. From the brawny vigor of *Down By Law* to the sun-bleached drones of *The Limits of Control*, it's difficult to conceive of a Jarmusch film sounding any other way—you get the sense that he'd sooner recast his leads than switch out the soundtrack.

An article entitled "Music From The Films Of Jim Jarmusch" (Aquarian Drunkard, an audio blog) focuses on *Only Lovers Left Alive* and singles out what's totally unique about a Jarmusch soundtrack — it's like a "mixtape" (and in doing so seems to draw a parallel of what Jarmusch the director does in a film with what an innovative DJ does on radio in set after set: "the director ties songs together with an unmatched patience and style"):

Music is never incidental in a Jim Jarmusch movie. *It's part of his film's DNA*, a through line running through his characters' black comedy gags and existential wanderings. There's no stylistic template—everything from crazed blues to ambient drones have soundtracked Jarmusch's films—but the director ties songs together with an unmatched patience and style. *Jarmusch's films often feel like personalized mixtapes*, but for his latest, the vampire romance *Only Lovers Left Alive*, Jarmusch himself gets in on the action, joining with his band Sqürl and frequent musical collaborator Jozef van Wissem to craft a set of moody, psychedelic goth-pop, with guests like Zola Jesus and Madeline Follin, who joins Jarmusch for a take on “Funnel of Love,” as made famous by Wanda Jackson.... *Each film acts as a sort of mixtape from the enigmatic director* [My emphasis.]

Yet, a Jarmusch soundtrack does more. Over and above the purely artistic and aesthetic effects, his soundtracks seem to serve a social function in their ability to register and record the existence of a “US musical underclass.” Gilbey points out what Jarmusch's film soundtracks have cumulatively accomplished for the marginal figures in American society:

With unassuming casualness, Jarmusch's soundtracks and cast lists have created a cumulative portrait of the US musical underclass, much of it African American, that *reflects his films' interest in the marginal*

or overlooked—the drifters, dreamers and beatniks who give that troubled nation its artistic character. His enthusiasms range from blues and jazz to swamp rock, hip-hop and siren songs [My emphasis.]

Therefore, given the supreme importance of music to his films, it should not come as that much of a surprise that *Jarmusch originally set out to become a musician himself*. So now, in parallel with his career as one of America's most respected living independent filmmakers, he spends the rest of time with his band Sqürl. Jarmusch described their music to the New York Times Magazine as follows: "It varies between avant noise-rock, drone stuff and some song-structured things with vocals. And some covers of country songs that we slow down and give a kind of molten treatment to" — all of which fits right in with the rest of the music that has shaped his movies.⁷

Last but not least, the final outstanding film the GS would call attention to for its innovative integral use of a soundtrack is the 2018 film written and directed by Drew Goddard, *Bad Times at the El Royale*, an American neo-noir thriller that takes place in 1969. The GS now also sees Goddard as one of the most musical of film directors and, therefore, also a kindred soul. Indeed, in one important way Goddard stands out as the GS's *ideal filmmaker*. The following quote from Goddard (in the film's "Special

Features”) hits the jackpot the GS has always been looking for. As the camera pans the central prop in the movie, an old Wurlitzer jukebox, selecting and spinning a record, there’s a cut to Drew Goddard seated in his director’s chair. He informs viewers about the primary role of the soundtrack in his film:

I like to say the music of the movie is the eighth character of the movie. It’s very much a part of my process. I usually start with the songs before I even have the script. It’s more about taking the emotion in the vibe. We have a jukebox set right in the center of the movie — right on the line — that sort of serves as the voice the chorus would serve in a Greek play. And so I built the movie around that. I picked the songs of the ‘60s that resonated with me, that told a story, and designed scenes around them.... The movie is very much a love letter to music, and how much music has changed my life, and how I believe that music has the capacity to change others.

Let the GS emphasize that Goddard (a) *starts with the songs before he even has a script* and then *builds the movie around them* (not the other way around, which is the usual way a movie is started), (b) *the music is actually a character in the movie*, and (c) *the movie is very much a love letter to music*. That the movie soundtrack consists entirely of ‘60s songs is significant. It can’t be a mere coincidence that Goddard believes the music of this era changed him and

others, since this notion — “*music can change the world*” — was a deeply held belief, an article of faith, in the ‘60s and in subsequent decades.

That this movie is an excellent example of the GS’s perception of the progressive structural integration of music into filmmaking — and therefore measuring up to his concept of the “Orphic Essay-with-Soundtrack” — is also evident from the producer’s comment on the *integral* part of the songs in the film; that *they are part of the fabric of the film*:

When the movie was set up here at Fox, it was set up with the notion that these songs are in the film.... This is part of the fabric of the film. Every shot was designed with the song in mind. Every camera move, every character motivation, every acting choice — everything was designed with these songs existing as part of the fabric of the movie, which is why, when you watch the film, they feel so integrated. [My emphasis.]

Therefore, with this film/music art form by Drew Goddard, the GS can perfectly justify his teasing question to listeners about his performance art of the “Orphic Essay-with-Soundtrack” — about what is more primary: “Do the songs exist for the sake of the essay (which comes first, as most people would logically

assume), or, more radically, *does the essay exist for the sake of the songs?*” If the answer is the latter, then the GS, based on his own creative process (to showcase loved songs through an essay), has to wonder: does filmmaker Goddard, in starting his creative process with the song, actually love a song (or songs) so much that he’s inspired to do a movie around them because he wants to showcase them in a big way? Can’t help but imagine this is so, when he tells me that *“the movie is very much a love letter to music”* – in the same way *an essay is very much a love letter to music!*⁸

¹ In understanding what a soundtrack is, it should be pointed out here that when “pop song” is used, it’s usually not technically part of the film’s score or soundtrack. A film score—also sometimes called background score, background music, film soundtrack, film music, or incidental music—is original music written specifically to accompany a film. The score, written by one or more composers, forms part of the film’s soundtrack. It has what are called cues, which are timed to begin and end at specific points during the film in order to enhance the dramatic narrative and the emotional impact of the scene in question. Film scores encompass an enormous variety of styles of music, depending on the nature of the films they accompany. The majority of scores are orchestral works rooted in Western classical music, but many scores are also influenced by jazz, rock, pop, blues, new-age and ambient music, and a wide range of ethnic and world music styles. However, songs are usually not considered part of the film’s instrumental score, although songs can also form part of the film’s soundtrack. While some songs, especially in musicals, are based on thematic ideas from the score, or vice versa, scores usually do not have lyrics, except for when sung by choirs or soloists as part of a cue. Similarly, pop songs which are “needle dropped” into a specific scene in film for added emphasis are not considered part of the score, although occasionally the score’s composer will write an original pop song based on their themes.

² Here, three avant-garde directors come to mind, David Lynch, Wim Wenders, and Jim Jarmusch. Lynch, also a musician, has composed music for movies and TV, consisting of six soundtrack albums, two studio albums, *Crazy Clown Time*, which he called in the style of “modern blues,” and *The Big Dream*, three collaborative studio albums, six soundtrack albums, two spoken-word albums, twenty singles, and six music videos. Wim Wenders has produced a music documentary, *Buena Vista Social Club*, with musician Ry Cooder, directed many music videos for groups such as U2 and Talking Heads, including “Stay (Faraway, So Close!)” and “Sax and Violins,” a documentary about Blues musicians, and an album compilation, *Songlines*. As a musician, Jarmusch has composed music for his films and released two collaborative albums, *Concerning the Entrance into Eternity* and *The Mystery of Heaven*, featured on another album, *Apokatastasis*, a soundtrack album, *The Only Lovers Left Alive*, and six music videos.

³ The GS put his *scholarship-as-performance-art* ideal into practice with the “Orphic Essay-with-Soundtrack,” because he had realized that a good *essay*, when presented in the oratory of heightened speech, not only can be summed up and highlighted in a song, can be punctuated by a song, and can be translated into a song, but actually wants to be a *song*! This is why the GS has experienced in writing an essay that it seems to beg to be set to music.

⁴ For a particularly spectacular example of this, see the 1999 movie *Limbo* by independent filmmaker John Sayles (another director who knows how to best use a soundtrack), where the scene has the lead characters sailing the sea to the haunting Celtic love-ballad, “Dimming of the Day” (a Richard Thompson song, which is beautifully sung in an earlier scene by actress Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio in the role of a lounge singer).

⁵ The GS can’t help injecting here his observation about the genre of vampire movies; to wit, it’s about time that (a) the love story is central (following in the mold of *Bram Stoker’s Dracula*) and (b) we get a vampire saga that finally makes the modern vampire what he naturally would be today — a *rock-musician* (preferably an acid-rock one, a heavy metal one, or a goth metal one) and his life-style.

⁶ Sqürl was founded in 2009 with film associate Carter Logan and sound engineer Shane Stoneback. Previous to this, he was part of the CBGB (Country, BlueGrass, and Blues, the name of a New York City music club) new-wave (punk) scene in the late 70s. From the early 80s onward CBGB became a famed venue of punk rock and new wave bands like the Ramones, Television, Patti Smith Group, Blondie, and Talking Heads.) Also in the early 1980s, Jarmusch was part of a revolving lineup of musicians in Robin Crutchfield’s Dark Day project, and later became the keyboardist

and one of two vocalists for The Del-Byzanteens, a No Wave band. Sqürl was formed to record some instrumental pieces to score his 2009 film, *The Limits of Control*. (The band has now grown into its own separate entity, and several of their tracks appear on this playlist.)

⁷ The indie film, *Stranger Than Paradise*, where Screamin' Jay Hawkins's "I Put a Spell on You" blasts from a cassette player, made Jarmusch's reputation in 1984, back when "indie" really did mean "independent" rather than "the boutique arm of a major studio". (He has been a major proponent of independent cinema since the 1980s.) Jarmusch's soundtracks backing up his languid tales of cross-cultural exchanges and existential wanderings of social outsiders have attracted high-profile collaborations with a host of prominent musicians, such as Neil Young in the "acid western" *Dead Man* and the Wu-Tang Clan's RZA in the urban samurai tale *Ghost Dog*. Also Iggy Pop, The White Stripes, Screamin' Jay Hawkins, Wu-Tang Clan, Joe Strummer and more.

⁸ Lead actor, Jeff Bridges, also comments in the "Special Features" about the '60s songs of the soundtrack: "Well this is my era. Everybody loves their era's music the best, but you gotta . . . come on, the '60s Motown!" It should be pointed out here that the '60's era songs he's talking about are actually more than just Motown and range from early '60s rock-in-roll (e.g., "He's a Rebel," "Can't Take My Eyes Off You," "The Letter," "Unchained Melody") to soul and Motown (e.g., "You Can't Hurry Love," "Hold On, I'm Coming," "Try a Little Tenderness," "What Becomes of the Brokenhearted," "I Got a Feeling," "Bernadette") to later '60s rock ("Bend Me Shape Me," "Twelve Thirty," "Hush"). There's also a song that Goddard himself wrote for the movie. It should also be pointed out that one of the main characters in the movie is played by phenomenal singer-songwriter Cynthia Erivo, who performs seven of the songs in the film. Of Ms. Erivo's song performance, Jeff Bridges raved: "Her singing was ... Oh man! It just put you in another zone all together. So, so beautiful!" (Of course, for the GS, "another the zone all together" is equivalent to the "Tower of Song," the ultimate musical Zone wherein he seeks to transport listeners.)