

Notes on works in the exhibition *Mad World* by Steven Evans

Mad World, 2021

Mad World is a 1982 song by British band Tears for Fears. Written by Roland Orzabal and sung by bassist Curt Smith, it was the band's third single release and first chart hit, reaching number three on the UK Singles Chart in November 1982. *Mad World* appeared on the band's debut LP *The Hurting* (1983). This single was also the band's first international success, reaching the Top 40 in several countries in 1982–83. *Mad World* has since been covered by many artists since the early 2000s.

Don't Leave Me This Way/Never Can Say Goodbye, 2022

Don't Leave Me This Way is a song written by Kenneth Gamble, Leon Huff, and Cary Gilbert. It was originally released in 1975 by Harold Melvin & the Blue Notes featuring Teddy Pendergrass, an act signed to Gamble & Huff's Philadelphia International label. *Don't Leave Me This Way* was subsequently covered by American singer Thelma Houston in 1976 and British duo the Communards in 1986, with both versions achieving commercial success.

Never Can Say Goodbye is a song written by Clifton Davis and originally recorded by The Jackson 5. The song was originally written and intended for the Supremes; however, Motown decided it would be better for the Jackson 5. It was the first single released from the group's 1971 album *Maybe Tomorrow*, and was one of the group's most successful records. It has been covered numerous times, most notably in 1971 by Isaac Hayes, in 1974 by Gloria Gaynor, and in 1987 by British pop group The Communards. The version by Gloria Gaynor, released as a disco record in 1974, was a number-nine hit on the U.S. Pop Singles chart and went to number 34 on the Soul Singles chart. The Gloria Gaynor version became one of the defining recordings of the disco era.

Still Ill, 2021

Still Ill is a song by the English rock band the Smiths. It was written by singer Morrissey and guitarist Johnny Marr. It was featured on the debut album, *The Smiths*, in February 1984. Another version of the song was included on the compilation album *Hatful of Hollow* in November 1984. One of Morrissey and Marr's earliest songs written together, *Still Ill* has been described both as Morrissey's "deeply personal realization that his old dreams and freedoms were dead" and also as a reflection on his sexual orientation, in the Thatcher era. In 2018 *The Independent* described it as "infused with a bitterness at the country's political failings". It is a moody and poignant song which worries that life will never again be simple and carefree. The lyrics of the song reference a nostalgia for the past ("We cannot cling to the old dreams anymore"), and ponders whether the body rules the mind, or vice versa. Writing in *Paste*, Tyler Kane notes that the song "can sound hopeful, morose and back again all within a few measures". Morrissey took the line "Under the iron bridge we kissed, and although I ended up with sore lips ..." from minor British tragic celebrity Viv Nicholson's autobiography.

Don't Make Me Over, 2022

Don't Make Me Over is a song written by Burt Bacharach and Hal David, originally recorded by Dionne Warwick in August 1962 and released in fall 1962 as her debut single. The song reached number 21 on the US Billboard Hot 100 and number five on the Billboard Hot R&B Singles chart. It was also a top-forty hit in Canada, reaching number 38. In 1989, Sybil released a successful dance cover of the song, that was a number-one hit in New Zealand for four weeks. In the US, it reached number 20 on the Billboard Hot 100 with her version, one position above Warwick's original, and number two on the Hot Black Singles chart, eventually receiving a gold certification from the Recording Industry Association of America. Evans first referenced *Don't Make me Over* in his seminal work *Selections from the Disco, 1979-1991* for Group Material's series of *AIDS Timeline* exhibitions.

I Will Survive, 2020

I Will Survive is a song by American singer Gloria Gaynor, released in October 1978 as the second single from her sixth album, *Love Tracks* (1978). It was written by Freddie Perren and Dino Fekaris. A top-selling song, it is a popular disco anthem, as well as being certified Platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA). The song's lyrics describe the narrator's discovery of personal strength following an initially devastating breakup. It received heavy airplay in 1979, reaching spending three non-consecutive weeks at number one on the Billboard Hot 100 as well as topping the UK Singles Chart and Irish Singles Chart. The song is also frequently recalled as a symbol of female empowerment. In 2016, the Library of Congress deemed Gaynor's original recording to be "culturally, historically, or artistically significant" and selected it for preservation in the National Recording Registry.

Dim All The Lights, 2020

Dim All the Lights is a song by American recording artist Donna Summer released as the third single from her 1979 album *Bad Girls*. It debuted at number 70 on August 25, 1979, and peaked that year at number two on November 10 and November 17 on the Billboard Hot 100. Produced by her longtime collaborator Giorgio Moroder with Pete Bellotte, the track combines Summer's trademark disco beats with a more soulful pop sound. It was the third Hot 100 top-two single from the album and her sixth consecutive Hot 100 top-five single. Billboard rated the song one the sexiest ever recorded, saying it, "sounds like a nice song to sway to at the prom. But the groove becomes decidedly horizontal once the song hits the bridge and she demands her lover to 'use me all up / take me bottom to top'".

Gimme Danger, 2019

Gimme Danger is the second song on *Raw Power*, the third studio album by American rock band the Stooges (credited as Iggy and the Stooges), released on February 7, 1973 by Columbia Records. The album departed from the "groove-ridden, feel-based songs" of the band's first two records in favor of a more anthemic hard rock approach inspired by new guitarist James Williamson, who co-wrote the album's eight songs with singer Iggy Pop. Though not initially commercially successful, *Raw Power* gained a cult following in the years following its release, and, like its predecessor *Fun House* (1970), is considered a forerunner of punk rock. The song *Gimme Danger* implies a reckless attitude towards sex, relationships, and possibly drugs, with a strong suggestion of the song's narrator seeking anonymous sex.

Scorpio Rising, 2021

Scorpio Rising is a 1963 American experimental short film directed by Kenneth Anger and starring Bruce Byron as Scorpio. Themes central to the film include the occult, biker subculture, homosexuality, Christianity, and Nazism. *Scorpio Rising* also explores the worship of rebel icons of the era, such as James Dean and Marlon Brando (referred to by Anger as Byron's "heroes"). Like many of Anger's films, *Scorpio Rising* does not contain any dialogue, but features a prominent soundtrack consisting of 1960s pop, including songs by Ricky Nelson, the Angels, the Crystals, Bobby Vinton, Elvis Presley, and Ray Charles. The iconic image of studded leather jacket first appears at 1:35 in the film, as an opening credit/title card.

Cruising, 2021-2022

Cruising is a 1980 crime thriller film written and directed by William Friedkin and starring Al Pacino, Paul Sorvino, and Karen Allen. It is loosely based on the novel of the same name by New York Times reporter Gerald Walker about a serial killer targeting gay men, particularly those men associated with the leather scene in the late 1970s. The title is a play on words with a dual meaning because "cruising" can describe both police officers on patrol as well as men who are cruising for sex.

Poorly received by critics upon release, *Cruising* performed moderately at the box office. The shooting and promotion were dogged by gay rights protesters, who believed that the film stigmatized them. The film is also notable for its open-ended finale, which was criticized by Robin Wood and Bill Krohn as further

complicating what they felt were the director's incoherent changes to the rough cut and synopsis, as well as other production issues.

Judy Garland, 2021

Judy Garland (born Frances Ethel Gumm; 1922 – 1969) was an American actress and singer. She is widely known for playing the role of Dorothy Gale in *The Wizard of Oz* (1939). With a career spanning 45 years, she attained international stardom as an actress in both musical and dramatic roles, as a recording artist, and on the concert stage. Renowned for her versatility, she received an Academy Juvenile Award, a Golden Globe Award, and a Special Tony Award. Garland was the first woman to win the Grammy Award for Album of the Year, which she won for her 1961 live recording titled *Judy at Carnegie Hall*.

Garland appeared in more than two dozen films for MGM. She was a frequent on-screen partner of both Mickey Rooney and Gene Kelly and regularly collaborated with director and second husband Vincente Minnelli. Other starring roles during this period included *Meet Me in St. Louis* (1944), *The Harvey Girls* (1946), *Easter Parade* (1948), and *Summer Stock* (1950). In 1950, after 15 years with MGM, the studio released her amid a series of personal struggles that prevented her from fulfilling the terms of her contract.

Although her film career became intermittent thereafter, two of Garland's most critically acclaimed roles came later in her career: she received a nomination for the Academy Award for Best Actress for her performance in *A Star Is Born* (1954) and a nomination for Best Supporting Actress for her performance in *Judgment at Nuremberg* (1961). She also made record-breaking concert appearances, released eight studio albums, and hosted her own Emmy-nominated television series, *The Judy Garland Show* (1963–1964). At age 39, Garland became the youngest and first female recipient of the Cecil B. DeMille Award for lifetime achievement in the film industry. In 1997, Garland was posthumously awarded the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award. Several of her recordings have been inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame, and in 1999, the American Film Institute ranked her as the eighth-greatest female screen legend of classic Hollywood cinema.

Garland struggled in her personal life from an early age. The pressures of early stardom affected her physical and mental health from the time she was a teenager; her self-image was influenced by constant criticism from film executives who believed that she was physically unattractive and who manipulated her onscreen physical appearance. Throughout her adulthood she was plagued by alcohol and substance use disorders, as well as financial instability, often owing hundreds of thousands of dollars in back taxes. Her lifelong substance use disorder ultimately led to her death in London from an accidental barbiturate overdose at age 47 in 1969.

State of the Union, 2021-2022

The image of the tattered United States flag is based upon an image found online, by an anonymous photographer, entitled *Torn US flag*, 2010, via *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, one of the largest daily newspapers in Germany. The tone of SZ is mainly described as center-left, liberal, social-liberal, progressive-liberal, and social-democrat. The image is reminiscent of a 1977 photograph by renowned American photographer Robert Mapplethorpe (1946-1989).