

The Golden Age of Rock 'n' Roll

Week 10, April 30, 2018

1960-62: The Brill Building; Producers

Assignment:

Two short takes on the Brill Building Sound:

<https://www.thoughtco.com/overview-of-brill-building-music-2522601>

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Brill-Building-Assembly-Line-Pop-1688332>

From the much longer Wikipedia piece (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brill_Building):

“The Brill Building approach—which can be extended to other publishers not based in the actual Brill Building—was one way that professionals in the music business took control of things in the time after rock and roll's first wave. In the Brill Building practice, there were no more unpredictable or rebellious singers; in fact, a specific singer in most cases could be easily replaced with another. These songs were written to order by pros who could custom fit the music and lyrics to the targeted teen audience. In a number of important ways, the Brill Building approach was a return to the way business had been done in the years before rock and roll, since it returned power to the publishers and record labels and made the performing artists themselves much less central to the music's production.”

An article on Don Kirshner and Aldon Music:

<http://www.history-of-rock.com/kirshner.htm>

Carole King profile:

<https://www.thoughtco.com/carole-king-bio-and-discography-2522026>

Listen to:

This Magic Moment, Drifters

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kCGelOhx5lo>

Cathy's Clown, Everly Brothers, 1960 (#1 Pop)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5_CEHyNxUI

Only the Lonely, Roy Orbison, 1960

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjq4wYuwgxs>

The Twist, Chubby Checker (cover of Hank Ballard, 1955), 1960 (#1 Pop)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pHGXwQeUk7M>

Save The Last Dance For Me, Drifters (Ben E. King), 1960

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QFoBreVWa7M>

Stay, Maurice Williams and the Zodiacs, 1960 (#1 Pop)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1Z_hskvz1M

Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow, Shirelles

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LVNUd6J5CQA>

Calendar Girl, Neil Sedaka, 1961

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ZMyvzbc0U4>

There's a Moon Out Tonight, Capris (self-penned), 1961

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nVAZ5O0WXYA>

Blue Moon, Marcells, 1961

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qoi3TH59ZEs>

Fine local documentary about Pittsburgh RnR groups;

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MP9WKLLZfyY>

Travelin' Man, Ricky Nelson, 1961 (#1 Pop)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0janfcZ8LUw>

Stand By Me, Ben E. King, 1961

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hwZNL7QVJjE>

Crazy, Patsy Cline (written by Willie Nelson), 1961
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLNGgv0qdMA>

Runaround Sue, Dion (#1 Pop), 1961
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ID-jsd0HGZs>

Extra Songs:

I'm Sorry, Brenda Lee (#1 Pop)

Walk-Don't Run, Ventures

A Thousand Stars, Kathy Young and the Innocents

Runaway, Del Shannon (#1 Pop)

I Fall To Pieces, Patsy Cline

The Wanderer, Dion

The Lion Sleeps Tonight, Tokens (#1 Pop)

Georgia on My Mind, Ray Charles (#1 Pop)

Tonight's the Night, Shirelles

Notes for class discussion:

Phil Spector

-First of the superstar producers.

-Egomaniac who insisted on full control of all aspects of the recording; producer, but also the creative director, writing or choosing the material, supervising the arrangements, conducting the vocalists and [session musicians](#), and masterminding all phases of the recording process.

-De-emphasized the importance of the performers, treating them as one element among others in records.

-His signature became the "wall of sound". Doubling and tripling of instruments, multi-tracking, lush orchestration and background vocals.

-Went so far as to record Darlene Love, and then credit the recording to any of a number of groups, sending them on the road with a different lead singer. (He's a Rebel by The Crystals).

A fine example of Spector productions is You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling by the Righteous Brothers (<https://youtu.be/xEkB-VQviLI>).