

Posse---Movies, Rock and Roll, and 30 movies

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The most recent Rolling Stone has an interesting list of “The 30 greatest rock roll movie moments,” which includes some exquisite movies, movie scenes, and music. Take a moment to screen through it, and you will note just how linked great movies are to their scores, whether original scores (*Last Tango in Paris*, *The Godfather*, etc) or, as in this list, covers of classic songs. I am not sure that the *Monterey Pop* (Country Joe, of all the clips possible from that movie, most notably Jimi Hendrix) or Elvis movie (“C'mon Everybody” in *Viva Las Vegas*) actually qualify, or we would have to include *The Last Waltz* (Van in his unforgettable “Caravan”), *Woodstock* (the Who, Santana, Jimi again, waking everyone at the end with his “Star Spangled Banner”), *Nashville*, or *Stop Making Sense* (“Burning Down the House”)—all of them with glorious moments of music and moviemaking. And who can forget the scene at the beginning of the 1983 *The Big Chill*? Real fans also know that the cadaver being dressed was Kevin Costner, whose role as the suicidal friend was cut to only the opening film credit, played under the Stones’ “You Can’t Always Get What You Want.” And where is *High Fidelity*, the great movie about a record store, with John Cusack, Jack Black, Catherine Zeta-Jones, and others, which was filled with great songs?

So if you take out the concert films or musicals, these others make sense. I would only note that Van again does not get his due—he is one of the few rock artists whose work has appeared in enough movies to warrant a full length album of such songs: *Van Morrison at the Movies – Soundtrack Hits* (2007), which includes: “Gloria” (from *The Outsiders*), “Baby, Please Don't Go” (from *Wild at Heart*), “Jackie Wilson Said (I'm in Heaven When You Smile)” (from *The Pope of Greenwich Village* and *Queens Logic*), “Domino” (from *Clean and Sober*), “Moondance” (from *An American Werewolf in London*), “Queen of the Slipstream” (from *Extreme Close-Up*), “Wild Night” (from *Twenty Four Seven*), “Wonderful Remark” (from *The King of Comedy*), “Brown Eyed Girl” (from *Born on the 4 July*), “Days Like This” (from *As Good as It Gets*), “Into the Mystic” (from *Patch Adams*), “Hungry for Your Love” (from *An Officer and a Gentleman*), “Someone Like You” (from *French Kiss* and *Bridget Jones's Diary*), and more. Of course, TV also provides many such great moments, perhaps more evanescent. One of the great things, of the many, from *The Sopranos* was the regular use of rock and roll, especially that of Van, including his cover of Pink Floyd’s “Comfortably Numb,” which is playing when Christopher rolls the car after dissing the song, and Tony strangles him. (Moral of the story, never make fun of Van, even when he is covering someone else. And, never drive and drink and do drugs.) I also could do my own Top 30 list, as my Posse could, but I recall two songs that so blew me away that I went out afterwards and bought the cds: “You Made Me the Thief of Your Heart” by Sinéad O'Connor, the closing music from *In the Name of the Father* and “Blower’s Daughter” by Damien Rice, for *Closer*. Up until these movies, I had not heard anything by Damien Rice, and I have become a great fan. Of course, I knew Sinéad O'Connor’s earlier work, but this collaboration with Bono made me appreciate her all the more. I am also hopeful she works her way through her terrible personal struggles. Neither of them has been as prolific as their talent

promised, but I am hopeful that they will continue to produce extraordinary work. As it happens, they are both Irish, which makes them like U2 and Van.

The interesting thing to me was that I had seen all these 30 movies compiled by Rolling Stone, except two: *Mad Love* (featuring “The Scratch,” a great song by 7 Year Bitch) and *Adventureland*, with the Stones’ “Tops,” a favorite song from the album “Tattoo You.” When I looked up the movie, I saw that it included Jesse Eisenberg, so I will make an effort to see it. One last thing: Ione Skye is John Cusack’s love interest in *Say Anything*, and in real life, she is the daughter of Donovan, whose “Atlantis” is featured in *Goodfellas*. This sort of makes them the only father-daughter team in the list, once removed. But the real point here is why would Rolling Stone pick “Atlantis,” a concededly-good song, when it could have picked “Layla.” Any time “Layla” appears, it will be the best moment in a movie, or in life generally, especially if it includes the full version, with the heart-breaking piano riff at the end.

That does it—on the CD playlist: Clapton, Rice, and Van, all day long.

This is it for 61. Tomorrow, I turn 62, but am not ready to put away the things of a child.

Michael