Your Name

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Course Number

Date

Title: Discussion 3

# Why were independent labels like Sub Pop so important to the development of the grunge bands?

In 1988 Jonathan Poneman and Bruce Pavitt founded an independent record label Sub Pop at Seattle. They are popular today because of signing Soundgarden, Nirvana, and Green River. In 1986, Sub Pop released their compilations which features punk bands throughout the United States. In the Eighties, Seattle was isolated socially and geographically. They had little influence on the external world. Jonathan Poneman and Bruce Pavitt put a lot of efforts in making Seattle recognized throughout the states. These effort includes early investment, self-promotion, and most importantly insisting a British Magazine to write an article on grunge music.

Their self-promotion and sense of business helped grunge to rise from the underground to the mainstream. Jonathan Poneman and Bruce Pavitt were interested in creating a unique sound that would become an identity of Seattle. In the eighties, there were cultural spaces created by various groups of people to practice different music genre. These cultural space were called music scene. Jonathan Poneman and Bruce Pavitt were inspired by music scenes and wanted to create a local music scene with a unique genre (Korać). With the purpose of creating new music in mind, they established a singles club named Sub Pop. Sub Pop launched two albums and 100 compilations domestically. Few copies, only in thousands were made due to lack of funds. In an effort of self-promotion, a journalist from British magazine Melody Maker was invited by Poneman and Pvitt to write an article about their music and local scene. This step became turning stone in the history of grunge music. The article in British magazine helped grunge to known outside its region. Eventually, Seattle becomes known for its unique music genre “Grunge”. A new regime in the music follows afterward with a release of Nirvana's new single “Smells like a teen spirit”, grunge became a new sound of Seattle (Korać).

Poneman and Pvitt’s Vision of creating a new music scene become so popular that the old bands and their scene were considered clichés and fake. Eventually Seattle’s economic and cultural prosperity changes. It became recognized as a place with talented people who create something new and transform their community.

# In what way was geography a factor in the development of the Pacific Northwest grunge scene?

Grunge is a music genre originated from Seattle in 1992. Seattle is the capital of Washington State located in Northwest of United States. In the Sixties, protest against the government results in the development of the Hippie movement in San Francisco. With the passage of time, the image of the Hippie movement reflects a lifestyle, instead of the consequence of the economic failure of the government. In contrary, followers of the grunge movement were the product of a failing economy. Seattle faces a huge economic shock in the era (Lechuga). Economic shock results in low rent in the region for rehearsal space for small bands. In addition, a serious crime like serial killing was in abundant in that era.

Geography and environment both play a key role in the development of music. In the eighties, Seattle was not a cosmopolitan area as it is today. When the grunge scene was in its early stage, there was a local of networking between the local band and no external influence present in the region. When touring the country, leading bands skip Seattle due to its geography. Seattle was not considered a big market for Rock & Roll industry. In the early eighties, punk music was very popular and it was difficult for the artists in Northwest to get to it. With the effort of a few individuals, punk music was introduced into the region. Grunge music which originated from Seattle has a fusion of punk music (Korać). In addition to geographical isolation, Seattle was also socially isolated in the Eighties. Weather is Seattle is cold and wet. The isolation of the Pacific Northwest is the reason that the local band created their own sound. The sound is known as grunge which soon became recognized by the whole nation.

Duff McKagan quoted

“Seattle, its grunge. People are into rock and roll and into noise, and they’re building airplanes all the time and there’s lots of noise, and there’s rain and musty garages” (Lechuga)

Harsh climate of Seattle and its atmosphere results in to creation of unique regional sound (Lechuga). With the effort of Sub Pop mentioned in question 1 of this assignment, the sound of the region became available to the whole world.

# Works Cited

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