

Starr-Waterman

American Popular Music

Chapter 14: “Smells Like Teen Spirit”: Hip-Hop, Alternative Music, and the Entertainment Business

Filmography

*Colors* (1987): Dennis Hopper’s violent film about gang-police warfare in South Central Los Angeles. The film and Ice-T’s theme song, recorded for the film, reflect ongoing changes in Southern California’s urban communities, including a decline in industrial production, rising rates of joblessness, the continuing effects of crack cocaine, and a concomitant growth of drug-related gang violence.

*Chicago* (2002): Queen Latifah’s portrayal of Matron “Mama” Morton in this film adaptation of the musical earned her an Oscar nomination and cemented her position as a mainstream entertainer.

*Dead Man Walking* (1996): Film about a nun’s attempt to redeem the soul of a convicted murderer on the verge of execution. *Qawwali* singer Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan’s voice contributed to the haunting, mystical, and spiritual atmosphere of the film.

*Hype!* (1996): Documentary revealing the role of Sub Pop Records in the Seattle music scene of the early 1990s.

*Kurt Cobain: About a Son* (2006): Drawn from over twenty-five hours of videotape collected by journalist Michael Azzerad for his book about Nirvana, this critically well-received documentary offers an intimate portrait of Kurt Cobain.

*Nirvana: Live! Tonight! Sold Out!!* (1994): Video album featuring live performances by Nirvana.

*N.W.A.: The World’s Most Dangerous Group* (2008): Made-for-TV documentary about the pioneering gangsta rap group featuring interviews and concert footage.

*O Brother Where Art Thou?* (2000): Coen brothers’ film which illustrates the power of movies to carry musical styles and artists previously viewed as marginal into the mainstream. The soundtrack encompasses several generations of country artists and recordings, and pushes bluegrass into the limelight.

*Pearl Jam Twenty* (2011): Rockumentary directed by Cameron Crowe celebrating the Seattle-based band.

*Snoop Dogg: Drop It Like Its Hot* (2005): Live concert featuring West Coast rapper Snoop Dogg.

*Tupac: Resurrection* (2003): Documentary produced by the rapper's mother receiving critically positive reviews detailing the slain hip-hop artist's life through music, home videos, and voice-overs.

*Walk the Line* (2005): Biopic about the life and career of Johnny Cash.

*Welcome to Death Row* (2001): Suge Knight's record label Death Row Records and the stable of artists he recorded (including Tupac Shakur, Snoop Doggy Dogg, and Dr. Dre) are the subject of this 2001 documentary.