

Grunge is a subgenre of alternative rock that emerged in Seattle in the mid-1980s. It is characterized by its heavy, distorted guitars, raw and emotional vocals, and often bleak or introspective lyrics. The genre was influenced by punk rock, heavy metal, and underground rock scenes, and was initially associated with the Pacific Northwest region of the United States.

The term "grunge" was originally used to describe the unkempt fashion sense of the early grunge bands, but it soon became associated with the music itself. The first wave of grunge bands included acts like Soundgarden, Mudhoney, and Green River, but it was the breakthrough success of Nirvana's 1991 album "Nevermind" that brought grunge to mainstream audiences and made it a cultural phenomenon.

Grunge was often seen as a reaction against the excesses of the hair metal and glam rock scenes of the 1980s, with its focus on authenticity and raw emotion. Its lyrics often dealt with themes of alienation, depression, and social isolation, reflecting the experiences of many young people in the post-industrial landscape of the Pacific Northwest.

The influence of grunge can still be felt in the music world today, with many modern rock and alternative bands citing grunge as an influence. The genre also paved the way for a more stripped-down, DIY approach to rock music, and helped to popularize the idea of "alternative" music as a viable commercial genre.

Despite its commercial success, grunge was not without its controversies. The death of Nirvana frontman Kurt Cobain in 1994 marked the end of the genre's heyday, and some have argued that the commercialization of grunge led to its dilution and eventual decline.

Nevertheless, the impact of grunge on the music world cannot be denied. It brought alternative rock to the forefront of popular culture, inspired countless musicians, and gave voice to a generation of disaffected youth. Its legacy continues to be felt today, both in the music world and in popular culture as a whole.

1. What are some of the defining characteristics of the grunge genre of music?

2. What were some of the themes commonly explored in grunge lyrics?

3. How did the success of Nirvana's album "Nevermind" impact the popularity and cultural significance of grunge music?

Pearl Jam – Alive

Son, she said, have I got a little story for you
What you thought was your daddy was nothin' but a...
While you were sittin' home alone at age thirteen
Your real daddy was dyin', sorry you didn't see him,
but I'm glad we talked...

Oh I, oh, I'm still alive

Hey, I, I, oh, I'm still alive

Hey I, oh, I'm still alive

Hey...oh...

Oh, she walks slowly, across a young man's room
She said I'm ready...for you
I can't remember anything to this very day
'Cept the look, the look...
Oh, you know where, now I can't see, I just stare...

I, I'm still alive

...

Is something wrong, she said
Well of course there is
You're still alive, she said
Oh, and do I deserve to be
Is that the question
And if so...if so...who answers...who answers...

I, oh, I'm still alive

...

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