



The Malcolm Garrett Collection Playlist #1

Songs my first girlfriend made me listen to

Compiled in 2008

The year is 1972. I am not long turned 16, and I've just been introduced to Barbie, who will have an immediate and lasting effect on my life.

I'd like to share with you the music that she shared with me. These are what I consider to be her songs.

Yes, this is a collection of *songs*, the significance being that back then I was much more interested in the sounds than the lyrics. I tended to like the instrumental passages, and by and large lyrical detail always rather passed me by. I'd been enjoying the blues-based riffs of Cream, Led Zeppelin, Deep Purple and other similar 'hard rock' bands of the era. (Check out the playlist *Pop Rock 70*). I was also at the start of what became a life-long passio for the Avant Garde electronics of the nascent Deutsche Kosmische Musik of bands from Berlin, Düsseldorf and Cologne. (To get sense of how that originated listen to the playlist *Von Himmel Hoch*).

On reflection, Barbie surreptitiously introduced me to so much other music, some of which is collected here, and it prepared me for an appreciation of a whole other tonal range, and another way of listening.

I'd always tended to hear the human voice as another instrument, and it seems I seldom paid attention to the actual words. I enjoyed the cadence of a female voice, say, or a lyric sung in a language I did not understand. I can't really have noticed that at the time and I am now genuinely surprised at how shallow my attention levels were back then. I feel I am only now hearing the songs properly as songs. I must never have previously taken in much specific meaning from what I was listening to at all.

This collection, then, displays more depth and maturity than perhaps I myself did at the time. And over time I've come to appreciate these songs more and more. Barbie adored these songs. She would play them often, and consequently they have stuck with me. That said, there is a somewhat melancholy tone to many of them. This was not entirely lost on me at the time, as I thought some of them far too 'girly' and not at all what a sophisticated music aficionado should listen to. How wrong was I?

Perhaps the most surprising thing is that so many sad songs were so loved by a girl who had such a bright disposition and always had a happy-go-lucky approach to life. Nothing seemed to get in her way, with things seemingly always going well for her quite naturally. These songs reveal a sentimentality that she did not display in her day to day life. Life with her was always fun, and in many ways she quite suited the name Barbie, although she was not blonde, was nobody's toy, and had a mind that was already adult, intelligent and focused on a bright future. I wonder what she thinks of this collection now.

A mutual friend from that time, Bob Bowerman, recently remarked that Barbie's advanced musical taste was no doubt influenced by both of their elder brothers (who were also friends, and co-incidentally both called Anthony) and their record collections, but I like to think it was all Barbie.

Here is the original list..

Everything I Own – Bread
Nights in White Satin – The Moody Blues
Riders on the Storm – The Doors
Life on Mars? – David Bowie
Desperado – The Eagles
So Long, Marianne – Leonard Cohen
Our House – Crosby Stills Nash & Young
Mockingbird – Barclay James Harvest
Heart of Gold – Neil Young
Man of the World – Fleetwood Mac
Days – The Kinks
In a Broken Dream – Python Lee Jackson
House of The Rising Sun – Frijid Pink
Melancholy Man – The Moody Blues
Reason To Believe – Rod Stewart
Port of Amsterdam – David Bowie
Alone Again Or – Love
Imagine – John Lennon
Goodbye To Love – The Carpenters
The Show Must Go On – Leo Sayer

There were some other songs that somehow escaped me when making the original selection, but definitely should have been included, so I've slotted them in now.

Extra songs:

Without You – Nilsson
Perfect Day – Lou Reed
The Boxer – Simon & Garfunkel
Sloop John B – The Beach Boys
A Man Needs a Maid – Neil Young

Finally, **Suzanne** by Leonard Cohen should really have been chosen instead of **So Long, Marianne** in the original list, but I found it so depressing back then I couldn't bring myself to include it. I'm now reconciled to it, so I've added at the very end of the playlist.

This playlist was first posted on my friend Matt Cooper-Wright's 'Internet Music Programme' in July 2008.