

3 Breakthrough Singers from the Past Decade that Influenced Me

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To begin with, people, especially at a young age, are strongly influenced by the outside ideas and content they consume. The particular spheres that appear to be the most impacting are music, cinematography, and literature, as they directly appeal to an individual's emotions and personal experience. I am not an exception to this phenomenon, being engaged in various cultural fields and, as a result, I am strongly affected by them. Notably, music is most appealing to me, and I can get emotionally attached to musicians who introduce pieces that relate to my feelings, opinions, and worldview. Naturally, throughout my entire life, I have been influenced by numerous singers, but their impact was the strongest several years ago when I was a teenager. As follows, some of the musicians that affected me the most are from the past decade, and the three who have played the most significant role in my development are Brian Molko from the band Placebo, Jared Leto from 30 Seconds To Mars, and Beyoncé. All of these artists are different, and each of them have brought dissimilar but meaningful ideas and feelings to me, and have influenced my personal development in a certain way.

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First of all, I should note that, as a teenager, I preferred listening to alternative music because it appealed to my feelings and outlook much stronger than pop music or any other genre. As follows, my great interest in Brian Molko was hardly avoidable, as his band Placebo was one of the main alternative music bands of the past decade. Their great albums *Sleeping with Ghosts*, *Meds*, and *Battle for the Sun* that were released in 2003, 2006, and 2009 correspondingly made a prominent impact on me in terms of music, emotions, and ideas ("Placebo", 2018). In particular, in the first aspect, the tunes and texts of Brian Molko fit into my musical taste; in fact, even now, I listen to his old tracks sometimes. Nonetheless, the emotions conveyed by Molko in the lyrics

were even more impacting. His main appeal was related to personal human struggles, a lack of self-confidence, and a certain alienation from society. Despite the fact that one may consider such a mood as destructive, in the past, it strongly appealed to the teenage me and, as demonstrated by the worldwide popularity of Placebo, to thousands of other teenagers. What is more, it was helpful due to the fact that in his music, Brian Molko showed emotions that I had as well, and in this way, he made me see that I was not alone and feel connected with other people. In addition, the public image of Brian Molko influenced me too, because it was tightly connected with his music and general appeal. In particular, the singer appeared as a hero of the angsty 2000s teenagers who discussed their issues and emotions, and showed that even though sometimes one can feel a bit depressed or anxious, it is possible to go through these periods and succeed in the end. Molko's music and success also inspired me, as it demonstrated that one can transition unwanted feelings into creativity, be understood by other people, and even assist them.

Jared Leto is another breakthrough singer from the past decade who has had a significant impact on me. He is the leader of the band Thirty Seconds to Mars that used to play alternative rock, similar to the previously discussed Placebo. Nonetheless, Leto affected me in a notably different way from Molko, even though with the same strength. First of all, the main appeal of Leto that appeared in the songs was his outstandingly empowering and inspiring lyrics. This can be observed in the piece *Attack* that was released on the album *A Beautiful Lie* in 2005 and in particular, in the words:

“I won't suffer, be broken, get tired, or wasted,

Surrender to nothing, or give up what I

Started and stopped it, from end to beginning.

A new day is coming, and I am finally free” (“Thirty Seconds To Mars - Attack”, 2018).

One can clearly observe a powerful motivation and belief in oneself in these lyrics, and that appealed to me at that time. What is more, Jared is an outstandingly motivational and empowering public figure who has always been paying significant attention to his audience. He, together with the band, has prominently supported their community of fans that even has the name “Echelon.” This community has been assisted in establishing a sense of connectedness and contact between its members. I cannot say I used to be an active fan and participated in fan events, but the feeling of being a part of such a great community and support from the artist whom I admired had a significant and undoubtedly positive influence on me.

Finally, the third breakthrough singer from the past decade who has impacted me is Beyoncé, and this figure critically differs from the two ones discussed previously. I have mentioned that I was not a big fan of pop music, but Beyoncé strongly appealed to me. At the beginning of the past decade, Beyoncé, who was already hugely successful due to her part in the famous girl-band *Destiny's Child*, went solo and gained even greater recognition. Yet, the main reason for her influence on me is undoubtedly the outstanding female-empowering messages delivered by the singer. While today, this topic is often displayed by numerous artists, in the past decade, there were not that many singers focusing on this meaningful subject and Beyoncé's presence was important. One of the most significant songs of hers is *If I Were A Boy* that was released in 2008 on the album *I Am... Sasha Fierce* ("*I Am... Sasha Fierce* by Beyoncé", 2018). This composition discusses the struggles in the singer's personal life caused by the lack of understanding between her and her boyfriend. Despite the fact that the topic may seem to be common, Beyoncé has introduced it from another more inclusive perspective by pointing out certain issues that are typically faced by women in relationships. What is more, in this song, she

contradicted the stereotypes concerning the fact that females are often causing pointless conflicts in relationships and highlighted the issues caused by men.

In addition, Beyoncé introduced numerous other empowering songs such as *Single Ladies (Put a Ring on It)* from the same album *I Am... Sasha Fierce* (2018) that appealed to me in a totally different way ("*I Am... Sasha Fierce* by Beyoncé", 2018). In the song and, to add more, in the music video that has been viewed almost 655 million times by now, Beyoncé shows a significantly unusual image of a woman who is not afraid or ashamed of being angry if there is a good reason for such a reaction and clearly demonstrates sexual appeal. The female power displayed by Beyoncé in this song and video were extremely inspiring and empowering for me.

Notably, as one can see, the singers from the past decade that influenced me are all different. I have learned meaningful things from each of them, as Brian Molko has shown me that it is possible to transfer feelings that are usually considered unwanted to the creation of the music that helps people; Jared Leto introduced inspiring and motivational ideas; Beyoncé delivered a great female-empowering message.

Altogether, I consider music to be one of the spheres that has influenced me the most by shaping my personality, teaching me, and helping me understand other people. I have been strongly affected by numerous different artists, and three breakthrough singers from the past decade that have impacted me the most are Brian Molko, Jared Leto, and Beyoncé. As it was noted, each of them influenced me in a different way, because the listed singers perform varying music and have dissimilar public images. Yet, it is the combination of the influence of all of them that has made me the person I am now—learning how to relate to other people from Brian Molko, knowing how to believe in myself from Jared Leto, and finding pride in being female from Beyoncé.

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