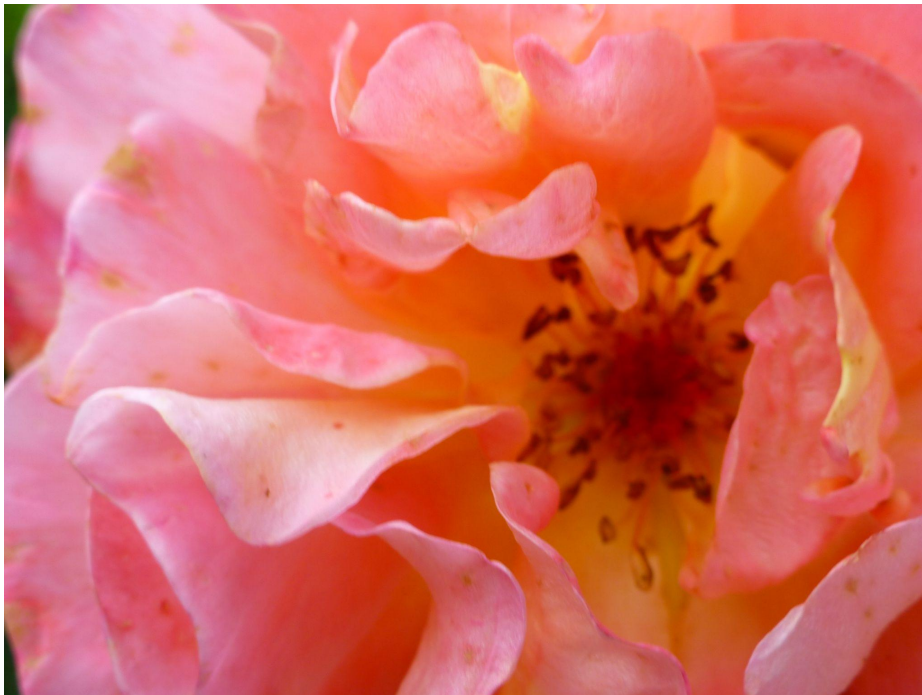




Chalice Circle Packet

May 2021



Transcendence

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Unity Church-Unitarian, St. Paul, Minnesota

Unityunitarian.org

Transcendence

When I consider how best and briefly to describe our times, the word that keeps returning to my page is “heavy.” There’s the weighty matter of mortality in the pandemic and its attendant losses. There’s the hefty and horrifying legacy of racial oppression hoisted into the public square by repeated state-sanctioned racialized violence. And there’s the freight of grief we carry from both of these, and also from personal losses and so much more.

Where, given the drag of reality’s millstone, is transcendence today?

By definition, transcendence is not contained within the bounds of reality. The dictionary tells us it resides beyond the normal or the physical. Theologically, it often refers to the holy as being beyond our human experience, senses, comprehension and language (thus the challenge of this reflection). But does this mean the transcendent is not embedded here, within, among and all around us, possibly even in some way tucked into a few inadequate words intended to point toward it?

Thanks to our Transcendentalist forebears, the theological root system of Unitarian Universalism insists that transcendence is not an otherworldly phenomenon but one that prevails within this world and our encounters with it. In listing the wisdom sources from which our faith draws, the first one named is the “Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder... which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life.” It’s what Ralph Waldo Emerson called “an original relation to the universe.”

Perhaps you’ve known something like that – experiencing the knee-buckling sound of the choir’s last note followed by silence; or the jaw-dropping sight of the northern lights on a clear autumn night; or the breathtaking turn of a poem from the particular to the universal; or the heartwarming gratitude an act of kindness can bring. Each of these is an embodied reaction to being lifted toward something beyond our selves. Each is an invitation to let go of self-consciousness and ego, to encounter the “something more” that mystery and faith both point toward and to open our awareness to possibilities not yet conceived much less apprehended.

This is not as abstract as it seems. Like the poets, whose work is said to begin with describing the material world with attentive care and then, at a certain point in the poem, to lift the eyes to a wider horizon, we are all invited to notice the world around us. To witness its beauty and its brokenness, its generosity and its losses, its pain and tenderness and resilience. Then, like the poets, we lift our eyes to a wider horizon, a greater wholeness, a more dimensional truth

with possibilities for healing. This is transcendence I have noticed even now, in such a time as this, with all its heaviness and suffering.

Recently, I heard theologian and activist Ruby Sales, speaking in the Healing Our City Interfaith Prayer Tent, say “The ritualization of truth is the only pathway to healing.” Referring to the repeated instances of institutionalized racial violence across the nation, she said, “We must use this time we are in together as an opportunity to speak the truth . . . to look at life for what it is, always believe the possibility of redemption, the possibility to make a new story for ourselves and others.” This is, she noted, what sustained her own African American ancestors through the terrors of slavery and the systemic racism that has followed it. It is, she said, the power of the inner spirit, which has survived and been passed down through generations of oppression. It is, she said, what will keep us all going today as we stand up and work for change.

As I heard Ruby Sales’ words, they moved through the heaviness of this time, lifting the eyes of my heart to a wider horizon and a longer arc; opening the ears of my heart to the spirit’s call to keep journeying toward justice; pointing beyond reach of my experience, comprehension, and language, toward the Beloved Community, both shimmering and real.

This is the gift of transcendence. Whether it takes us up to the sky, down to the earth, or open to all people and all beings around us – or to all of these at once – it releases us from the weight of ego and the alienation of pride and cynicism. Awakening us to the realities of our day – as harsh and beautiful as reality is – it unlocks our hearts to the wholeness and holiness of life itself. Surely, now is a time to welcome the power of transcendence and the promise and possibilities that spring from it.

By Karen Hering
Associate Minister

Reprinted from the April 2021 issue of *CommUNITY*

Spiritual Practices

Option A

Pausing

At the beginning of the day or week, reflect on a time or times in which you experienced a sense of moving beyond yourself, and into something more. This experience may have occurred while listening to music. It might have come about while you were walking in the woods, or making love, or in deep conversation, an experience that renewed your spirit and created an openness, a connection with a life giving flow.

As you hold this experience of moving beyond yourself and into something greater, reflect on how it felt. What happened to you? How did you experience this time? How would you describe it in a phrase?

Take the time to write about these experiences in your journal, or simply hold them lightly in your heart.

With this touchpoint of what we might call an experience of transcendence, go about your week. Each day during the week, a couple of times a day or more, whether at work, playing with your children, arguing with loved ones, doing the dishes, walking in your neighborhood, joining in protest...at any point or place in your day...

- Stop
- Pause - taking in the fullness of the moment
- Tune In - tune into your body, your heart, and sense the feeling(s) you have. How would you describe it?

You may want to continue to write in your journal throughout the week about your practice and your experience of it.

As you continue with this practice, does it relate to peak moments you described at the beginning of the week?¹

¹ Inspired by Thandeka's "Love Beyond Belief" workshop. You can find out more by checking out her book listed later in the packet.

Option B

The Transcendence of Trees

Each week of this month, commit yourself to being among trees. It might be along a particular block with a boulevard lined with old Elms or newly planted River Birch. It might be at a regional park or down by the river.

As you venture beside and/or among the trees understand that...

- When you step onto a forest floor there are 300 miles of fungal and root networks below your feet, 300 miles of communicating software...
- What we call a forest is actually a fraction of what a forest really is. Most of it is below the surface of the ground, far from the human eye.
- Forests have elders, or grandmother trees as indigenous people have named them. These trees nurture their community of neighbors and young, and provide defense, nutrition, support and structure.
- The forests store massive amounts of carbon and in fact are doing their gut level best to counterbalance the lopsided ratios of greenhouse gases. That is what scientists are coming to understand: that plants and trees are actually stepping up their game in carbon collection, trying to deal with the imbalance they sense in the world.
- Forests spiritually integrate with the human spirit. There is a reason you feel better when you go into a forest.

These truths are what scientists are discovering about forests, and indigenous peoples have lived and breathed in their cultural and religious patterns since time in existence.

Now, place your hand on an old maple, or elm, an oak or an aspen. Feel the life force of the tree and/or trees around you. Sense the forest beneath your feet, the transcendent forest below you. Open your heart to the gifts of the trees and say, "thank you." Stay for a while, more than you think you should.

As you pause here among the trees, see if you can sense the gift of transcendence. Whether it takes you up through the leaves and into the sky, or down to the earth, or opening to all people and all beings around you – or to all of these at once. See if pausing in a forest, or next to a tree releases you from the weight of ego and the alienation of pride and cynicism. Is this a place or time where your heart is unlocked and you sense the wholeness and holiness of life?²

Now stay a bit longer, holding gratitude.

² Italicized paragraph is adapted from the reflection on *Transcendence* written by Karen Hering above.

Option C

Transcendence in Pain

In her article, [So Much of the Privileged Life Is About Transcendence](#), Christena Cleveland states, “privileged people support a theology of transcendence, a belief that God lies beyond, not within, the limits of ordinary experience.” She then wonders what it would be like to develop a spiritual practice of mindfully coming into relationship with something that is ugly, painful, and hard, understanding God, the holy in and among all things.

If you experience systemic oppression as part of your everyday life, consider whether or not you want to explore this practice.

If you have experienced many privileges as part of your everyday life, consider committing to practice this exercise at least once in this month.

Cleveland asks, “What would it look like for privileged Westerners to intentionally turn toward the very pain that we so often avoid, intentionally seeking out evidence that God is present, active, and bringing hope?”

Begin this spiritual exploration by reading the article [So Much of the Privileged Life Is About Transcendence](#).

Then take this spiritual journey by intentionally turning toward pain. You may identify pain or suffering in an abandoned lot near your home that is overgrown and full of trash. It might be at a vigil or protest where people are gathering to name the pain in your/our community. It might be a hard conversation you’ve had with a relative that has not resolved. It might be a micro-aggression you’ve experienced. Whatever you choose, check in with yourself, be thoughtful about your strength and wellbeing in this time and place. If you are feeling quite vulnerable or unsure, stop. You can choose to do this practice another time or not at all.

If you choose to move forward with the exercise, invite your heart to open to the place, the people, the situation you have chosen. Come alongside the pain, just enough so that you can feel it but you are not overwhelmed by it.

- Breathe in what you are hearing. Breathe out and offer compassion to yourself and what you’ve chosen to work with. Listen for a while.

- Breathe in what you are seeing. Breathe out and offer compassion to yourself and what you've chosen to work with. Observe for a while.
- Breathe in what you are feeling. Breathe out and offer compassion to yourself and what you've chosen to work with. Feel your feelings for a while.
- Rest in this exchange of breathing in the suffering and breathing out compassion for yourself and what you've chosen to work with.
- In this open hearted place, where do you experience God? Where do you experience hope?

Close this spiritual practice by offering a blessing. You might say something like:
"May this place of suffering know grace and healing."

Share your experience with your Chalice group or a friend.

Questions to Ponder

Read through the questions below and notice which one(s) resonate with you. One or more of the questions might seem particularly compelling – or some might stir resistance in you. Either of these reactions might make the question fruitful to consider. Choose just one and take time to consider it, over several days if possible. Write it down on a piece of paper you carry in your pocket. Or take a picture of that paper with your phone. Or record it in your journal – and spend some time, each day if you can, reflecting on it in writing or otherwise, noticing where it leads you and what you learn from it and your response to it.

1. What does transcendence mean to you?
2. Can you name a time when you've experienced yourself as connected to something larger than yourself? What did that connection mean to you?
3. How would you describe an experience of transcendence you've had? What happened to your body, your mind, your heart during that experience? What lingered afterwards or as you recall it now?
4. What do you let go of when you experience transcendence? Is it hard to let go? What makes it possible?
5. Does your experience of transcendence relate to any of our seven principles of Unitarian Universalism? If so, how?
6. Are there practices or states of mind and being that make you more receptive to experiences of transcendence or less so? What are they?
7. In the article by Christena Cleveland, [So Much of the Privileged Life Is About Transcendence](#), she posits that transcendence is part of a Western European framework and a privileged life. Read the article carefully. How does this argument of transcendence and privilege sit in your experience and context and worldview? How does it relate to your own understanding of transcendence?
8. How does transcendence relate to your everyday life -- or does it?
9. Transcendence is often defined as beyond us. Can transcendence be among and within us?

Resources

Recommended Resources for Personal Exploration & Reflection

The following resources are not required reading. They will not be analyzed in our circles. Instead they are here to companion you on your journey this month, get your thinking started and open you to new ways of thinking about what it means to develop a spiritual practice of curiosity.

Word Definitions & Roots

Transcendence

A quality or state of being transcendent, extending or lying beyond the limits of ordinary experience

Word Origin

From Old French *transcendre* "transcend, surpass," and directly from Latin *transcendere* "climb over or beyond, surmount, overstep," from *trans* "across, beyond" + *scandere* "to climb"

Wise Words

"Never forget: we walk on hell, gazing at flowers."

~Kobayashi Issa

"To have humility is to experience reality, not in relation to ourselves, but in its sacred independence. It is to see, judge, and act from the point of rest in ourselves. Then, how much disappears, and all that remains falls into place.

In the point of rest at the center of our being, we encounter a world where all things are at rest in the same way. Then a tree becomes a mystery, a cloud a revelation, each man a cosmos of whose riches we can only catch glimpses. The life of simplicity is simple, but it opens to us a book in which we never get beyond the first syllable."

~Dag Hammarskjöld, *Markings*

"Who would then deny that when I am sipping tea in my tearoom I am swallowing the whole universe with it and that this very moment of my lifting the bowl to my lips is eternity itself transcending time and space?"

~Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki

...and half of learning to play is learning what not to play
and she's learning the spaces she leaves
have their own things to say
and she's trying to sing just enough so that
the air around her moves
and make music like mercy that gives what
it is and has nothing to prove

she crawls out on a limb and begins to build
her home
and it's enough just to look around and to
know that she's not alone

up up up up up up up points the spire of the
steeple
but god's work isn't done by god
it's done by people.

~Ani DiFranco

“To recognize one's own insanity is, of
course, the arising of sanity, the beginning
of healing and transcendence.”

~Eckhart Tolle

Poetry

Keeping Quiet

Now we will count to twelve
and we will all keep still
for once on the face of the earth,
let's not speak in any language;
let's stop for a second,
and not move our arms so much.

It would be an exotic moment
without rush, without engines;
we would all be together
in a sudden strangeness.

Fishermen in the cold sea
would not harm whales
and the man gathering salt
would look at his hurt hands.

Those who prepare green wars,

wars with gas, wars with fire,
victories with no survivors,
would put on clean clothes
and walk about with their brothers
in the shade, doing nothing.

What I want should not be confused
with total inactivity.

Life is what it is about;
I want no truck with death.

If we were not so single-minded
about keeping our lives moving,
and for once could do nothing,
perhaps a huge silence
might interrupt this sadness
of never understanding ourselves
and of threatening ourselves with death.
Perhaps the earth can teach us
as when everything seems dead
and later proves to be alive.

Now I'll count up to twelve
and you keep quiet and I will go.

~Pablo Neruda

The Negro Speaks of Rivers

I've known rivers:
I've known rivers ancient as the world and
older than the flow of human blood in
human veins.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were
young.
I built my hut near the Congo and it lulled
me to sleep.
I looked upon the Nile and raised the
pyramids above it.

I heard the singing of the Mississippi when
 Abe Lincoln went down to New Orleans,
 and I've seen its muddy bosom turn all
 golden in the sunset.

I've known rivers:
 Ancient, dusky rivers.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.
 ~Langston Hughes

God's Grandeur

The world is charged with the grandeur of
 God.
 It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
 It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
 Crushed. Why do men then now not reckon
 his rod?
 Generations have trod, have trod, have
 trod;
 And all is seared with trade; bleared,
 smeared with toil;
 And wears man's smudge and shares man's
 smell: the soil
 Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.
 And for all this, nature is never spent;
 There lives the dearest freshness deep
 down things;
 And though the last lights off the black West
 went
 Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward,
 springs—
 Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
 World broods with warm breast and with
 ah! bright wings.

~Gerard Manley Hopkins

Transcendence

Somewhere out there someone is tapping,
 Knocking at the doors of trees, that won't
 open,
 Trying to peer into their windows. This
 morning
 I heard him fumbling at the keyholes

Of the rocks, trying to force them
 To give up their secrets. This is no Eden,
 This little clearing in the shrubby woods;
 The bed of the dry water hole
 Is cracked like permafrost. In the Book of
 Knowledge
 I read of a people who fasten their prayers
 on trees
 For the wind to read and carry up to
 heaven.
 Already the leaves are starting to publish
 Their flamboyant farewells, poems
 That need no interpreting.
 ~Constance Urdang

Transcendental Etude

No one ever told us we had to study our
 lives,
 make of our lives a study, as if learning
 natural history
 or music, that we should begin
 with the simple exercises first
 and slowly go on trying
 the hard ones, practicing till strength
 and accuracy became one with the daring
 to leap into transcendence, take the chance
 of breaking down the wild arpeggio
 or faulting the full sentence of the fugue.
 —And in fact we can't live like that: we take
 on
 everything at once before we've even
 begun
 to read or mark time, we're forced to begin
 in the midst of the hard movement,
 the one already sounding as we are born.
 [...]

But there come times—perhaps this is one
 of them—
 when we have to take ourselves more
 seriously or die;

when we have to pull back from the
 incantations,
 rhythms we've moved to thoughtlessly,
 and disentrall ourselves, bestow
 ourselves to silence, or a severer listening,
 cleansed
 of oratory, formulas, choruses, laments,
 static
 crowding the wires. We cut the wires,
 find ourselves in free-fall, as if
 our true home were the undimensional
 solitudes, the rift
 in the Great Nebula.
 No one who survives to speak
 new language, has avoided this:
 the cutting-away of an old force that held
 her
 rooted to an old ground
 the pitch of utter loneliness
 where she herself and all creation
 seem equally dispersed, weightless, her
 being a cry
 to which no echo comes or can ever come.
 [...]

Vision begins to happen in such a life
 as if a woman quietly walked away
 from the argument and jargon in a room
 and sitting down in the kitchen, began
 turning in her lap
 bits of yarn, calico and velvet scraps,
 laying them out absently on the scrubbed
 boards
 in the lamplight, with small rainbow-colored
 shells
 sent in cotton-wool from somewhere far
 away,

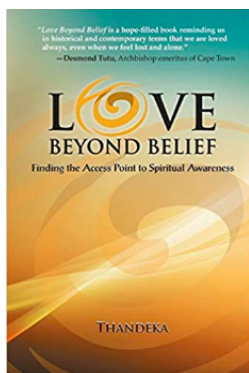
and skeins of milkweed from the nearest
 meadow—
 original domestic silk, the finest findings—
 and the darkblue petal of the petunia,
 and the dry darkbrown face of seaweed;
 not forgotten either, the shed silver
 whisker of the cat,
 the spiral of paper-wasp-nest curling
 beside the finch's yellow feather.
 Such a composition has nothing to do with
 eternity,
 the striving for greatness, brilliance—
 only with the musing of a mind
 one with her body, experienced fingers
 quietly pushing
 dark against bright; silk against roughness,
 putting the tenets of a life together
 with no mere will to mastery,
 only care for the many-lived, unending
 forms in which she finds herself,
 becoming now the sherd of broken glass
 slicing light in a corner, dangerous
 to flesh, now the plentiful, soft leaf
 that wrapped round the throbbing finger,
 soothes the wound;
 and now the stone foundation, rockshelf
 further
 forming underneath everything that grows.

~Adrienne Rich

Music

For a playlist inspired by the opening reflection
 on this month's theme and prepared by a Unity
 member, visit this Spotify link. (Note: you may
 have to register for a free Spotify account to
 listen to more than 30 seconds of each
 song.) [https://open.spotify.com/playlist/1jfCOZN
 BcwuKM7EO3lgDqA?si=6kkiEsZIQLSKt4lxqpHgG
 g&nd=1](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/1jfCOZNBcwuKM7EO3lgDqA?si=6kkiEsZIQLSKt4lxqpHgGg&nd=1)

Books



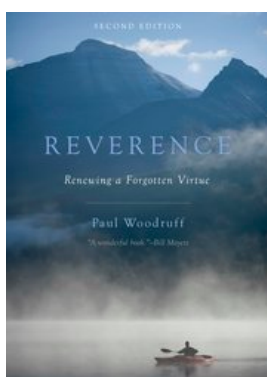
Love Beyond Belief

By Thandeka

Using insights from the brain science of emotions, Love Beyond Belief: Finding the Access Point to Spiritual Awareness narrates two millennia

of lost-and-found stories about love beyond belief as the access point to the heart and soul of spiritual life.

<https://www.amazon.com/Love-Beyond-Belief-Spiritual-Awareness/dp/1598152017/?pldnSite=1>



Reverence: Renewing Forgotten Virtue

By Paul Woodruff

“Reverence is an ancient virtue dating back thousands of years. It survives among us in

half-forgotten patterns of behavior and in the vestiges of old ceremonies. Yet, Paul Woodruff says, we have lost sight of reverence. This short, elegiac volume makes an impassioned case for the fundamental importance of the forgotten virtue of

reverence, and how awe for things greater than oneself can—indeed must—be a touchstone for other virtues like respect, humility, and charity.”³

<https://global.oup.com/academic/product/reverence-9780199350803?cc=us&lang=en&>

Videos and Podcasts

Infinite Flow Dance Company

A dance company committed to all varieties of people and life experience, creating transcendent beauty in movement.

[Gravity Collab](#)

Stjepan Hauser

Cellist Stjepan Hauser plays the evocative works of maestro Ennio Morricone in a series of sublime locations.

[HAUSER plays Morricone](#)

Articles and Online Sources

So Much of the Privileged Life Is About Transcendence

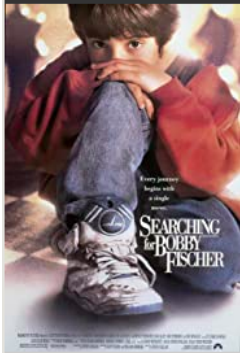
By Christena Cleveland

Black social psychologist, and public theologian observes that much of white western theology of transcendence is based in a privileged position in our society. Cleveland then uses the theology of Mary found in the Magnificat as an example of a robust theology rooted in God’s intimate relationship with suffering and the pain of life. <https://onbeing.org/blog/christena-clev>

³ Description from GoogleBooks, https://books.google.com/books/about/Reverence.html?id=KJBKM78yAesC&source=kp_book_description

[eland-so-much-of-the-privileged-life-is-about-transcendence/](#)

Movies



[Searching for Bobby Fischer](#)

A chess prodigy refuses to harden himself in order to become a champion like the famous but unlikable Bobby Fischer.

https://www.imdb.com/video/vi1542439193?playlistId=tt0108065&ref_=tt_ov_vi



[Interstellar](#)

a British-American epic science fiction film set in a dystopian future where humanity is struggling to survive, The film follows a group of astronauts who travel

through a wormhole near Saturn in search of a new home for mankind, and asks questions of meaning, how we know things, relationship and transcendence.

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0816692/>

This packet was created for use at Unity Church-Unitarian, St. Paul, Minnesota
curated by Rev. Ruth MacKenzie.

unityunitarian.org

Playlist

Sara Watkins - Too Much

Sara Ullrika Watkins (born June 8, 1981) is an American singer-songwriter and fiddler. Watkins debuted in 1989 as fiddler and founding member of the progressive bluegrass group Nickel Creek along with her brother Sean and mandolinist Chris Thile. In addition to singing and fiddling, Watkins also plays the ukulele and the guitar, and also played percussion while touring with the Decemberists.

Mavis Staples - You Are Not Alone

Mavis Staples (born July 10, 1939) is an American rhythm and blues and gospel singer, actress, and civil rights activist. She has recorded and performed with her family's band The Staple Singers and also as a solo artist.

Staples was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1999 and the Blues Hall of Fame in 2017.

The Chambers Brothers - Time Has Come Today

The Chambers Brothers are an American psychedelic soul band, best known for their eleven-minute 1967 hit "Time Has Come Today". The group was part of the wave of new music that integrated American blues and gospel traditions with modern psychedelic and rock elements. Their music has been kept alive through heavy use in film soundtracks.

Marvin Gaye - Wholy Holy

Marvin Gaye (born **Marvin Pentz Gay Jr.**; April 2, 1939 – April 1, 1984) was an American singer, songwriter, and record producer. He helped to shape the sound of Motown in the 1960s, first as an in-house session player and later as a solo artist with a string of hits, earning him the nicknames "Prince of Motown" and "Prince of Soul".

David Bowie - Heroes

David Robert Jones OAL (8 January 1947 – 10 January 2016), known professionally as **David Bowie** (/ˈboʊi/ *BOH-ee*), was an English singer-songwriter and actor. A leading figure in the music industry, Bowie is regarded as one of the most influential musicians of the 20th century. He was acclaimed by critics and musicians, particularly for his innovative work during the 1970s. His career was marked by reinvention and visual presentation, with his music and stagecraft having a significant impact on popular music. During his lifetime, his record sales, estimated at over 100 million records worldwide, made him one of the best-selling music artists of all time.

Natalie Merchant - Wonder

Natalie Anne Merchant (born October 26, 1963) is an American alternative rock singer-songwriter. She joined the band 10,000 Maniacs in 1981, and was lead vocalist and

primary lyricist for the group. She remained with the group for their first seven albums and left it to begin her solo career in 1993. She has since released seven studio albums.

Leon Bridges - Beyond

Todd Michael "Leon" Bridges (born July 13, 1989) is an American soul singer, songwriter and record producer from Fort Worth, Texas. He is best known for his 2015 song "Coming Home", which received regular airplay and was also a Top 10 Most Viral Track on Spotify. Bridges' debut album, also titled *Coming Home*, was released on June 23, 2015, on Columbia Records and subsequently nominated for Best R&B Album at the 58th Annual Grammy Awards.

Eva Cassidy - Way Beyond the Blue

Eva Marie Cassidy (February 2, 1963 – November 2, 1996) was an American singer and guitarist known for her interpretations of jazz, folk, and blues music, born with a powerful, emotive soprano voice. In 1992, she released her first album, *The Other Side*, a set of duets with go-go musician Chuck Brown, followed by the 1996 live solo album titled *Live at Blues Alley*. Although she had been honored by the Washington Area Music Association, she was virtually unknown outside her native Washington, D.C. She died of melanoma in 1996 at the age of 33.

John Lennon - Gimme Some Truth

John Winston Ono Lennon^[nb 1] (born **John Winston Lennon**; 9 October 1940 – 8 December 1980) was an English singer, songwriter, musician and peace activist who achieved worldwide fame as the founder, co-lead vocalist, and rhythm guitarist of the Beatles. His songwriting partnership with Paul McCartney remains the most successful in history. In 1969, he started the Plastic Ono Band with his second wife, Yoko Ono. After the Beatles disbanded in 1970, Lennon continued his career as a solo artist and as Ono's collaborator.

Talking Heads - New Feeling

The **Talking Heads** were an American rock band formed in 1975 in New York City and active until 1991. The band was composed of David Byrne (lead vocals, guitar), Chris Frantz (drums), Tina Weymouth (bass), and Jerry Harrison (keyboards, guitar). Described as "one of the most critically acclaimed bands of the '80s", the group helped to pioneer new wave music by integrating elements of punk, art rock, funk, and world music with avant-garde sensibilities and an anxious, clean-cut image.

Ty Dolla \$ign (Feat. Kanye West, FKA twigs, and Skrillex) - Ego Death

Tyrone William Griffin Jr. (born April 13, 1982), known professionally as **Ty Dolla Sign** (stylized as **Ty Dolla \$ign** or **Ty\$**), is an American singer, songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, and record producer. He first gained major recognition in 2010 for his feature on American rapper YG's single "Toot It and Boot It", which he had co-written and produced for Def Jam Recordings. In the summer of 2013, he signed a record deal with American rapper Wiz Khalifa's Taylor Gang Records. In November 2015, he released his debut studio album, *Free TC*, which peaked at number 14 on the *Billboard* 200.

Kanye Omari West (/ˈkɑːnjeɪ/; born June 8, 1977) is an American rapper, record producer,

fashion designer, and politician. He has been influential in the 21st-century development of mainstream hip hop and popular music in general.

Tahliah Debrett Barnett (born 17 January 1988), known professionally as **FKA Twigs** (stylized as **FKA twigs**), is an English singer-songwriter, record producer, dancer, and actress. Born and raised in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, she became a backup dancer after moving to South London at age 17. She made her musical debut with the extended plays *EP1* (2012) and *EP2* (2013).

Sonny John Moore (born January 15, 1988), known professionally as **Skrillex**, is an American DJ, record producer, musician, singer and songwriter. Growing up in Northeast Los Angeles and in Northern California, he joined the American post-hardcore band From First to Last as the lead singer in 2004, and recorded two studio albums with the band (*Dear Diary, My Teen Angst Has a Body Count*, 2004, and *Heroine*, 2006) before leaving to pursue a solo career in 2007. He began his first tour as a solo artist in late 2007. After recruiting a new band lineup, Moore joined the Alternative Press Tour to support bands such as All Time Low and The Rocket Summer, and appeared on the cover of *Alternative Press'* annual "100 Bands You Need to Know" issue.

Sia - Original

Sia Kate Isobelle Furler (/ˈsiːə/ *SEE-ə*; born 18 December 1975) is an Australian singer, songwriter, voice actress and director. She started her career as a singer in the acid jazz band Crisp in the mid-1990s in Adelaide. In 1997, when Crisp disbanded, she released her debut studio album, titled *OnlySee*, in Australia. She moved to London and provided vocals for the British duo Zero 7. Sia released her second studio album, *Healing Is Difficult*, in 2000, and her third studio album, *Colour the Small One*, in 2004.

Dua Lipa - Levitating

Dua Lipa (/ˈduːə ˈliːpə/; Albanian pronunciation: [ˈdua ˈlipa]; born 22 August 1995) is an English singer and songwriter. After working as a model, she signed with Warner Bros. Records in 2014 and released her eponymous debut album in 2017. The album peaked at number three on the UK Albums Chart, and yielded eight singles, including "Be the One", "IDGAF", and the UK number-one single "New Rules", which also peaked at number six in the US. The album has achieved platinum status worldwide. In 2018, Lipa won the Brit Awards for best British Female Solo Artist and British Breakthrough Act.

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