

Outside the Hit Factory: The Playlist

A list of chart-toppers entitled “Outside the Hit Factory”, this contribution is a response to the question: why (more) Katy Perry? It reflects on the use of consumer-behaviour data and neurobiology research in the production of pop songs that are guaranteed to be pleasing to as many listeners as possible – and to avoid confronting listeners with songs that they haven't already been conditioned to like. The producers of hits like “Roar” and “Can’t Feel My Face” might design insipid products that manipulate our basic impulses, but they also devise an emotional Esperanto that merges all our voices into a single chorus. You might ask: do I want to hear a song that perfectly conforms to a numeric representation of my personality? Or a song that transports me to a club where nearly all of humanity mouth the words and grin as if just graduated?

1. Katy Perry, ‘Roar’, *Prism*, 2013. Written by Perry, Lukasz Gottwald, Max Martin, Bonnie McKee and Henry Walter. Produced by Dr. Luke, Martin and Cirkut. Spotify plays: 405,193,069.
2. Ariana Grande featuring Zedd, ‘Break Free’, *My Everything*, 2014. Written by Grande, Zedd, Max Martin and Savan Kotecha. Produced by Zedd and Max Martin. Spotify plays: 447,848,205.
3. Judy Garland, ‘Over the Rainbow’, *The Wizard of Oz*, 1940. Composed by Harold Arlen with lyrics by Yip Harburg. Spotify plays: 8,299,404.
4. Britney Spears, ‘...Baby One More Time’, *...Baby One More Time*, 1999. Written by Max Martin. Produced by Martin and Rami. Spotify plays: 175,471,000.
5. The Weeknd, ‘Can’t Feel My Face’, *Beauty Behind the Madness*, 2015. Written by Ali Payami, Savan Kotecha, Max Martin, Abel Tesfaye and Peter Svensson. Produced by Martin and Payami. Spotify plays: 860,427,035.
6. Rihanna, ‘Bitch Better Have My Money’, 2015. Written by Jammie Pierre, Bibi Bourelly, Rihanna, Travis Scott, Kanye West and WondaGurl. Produced by Deputy with West, Scott and WondaGurl. Spotify plays: 394,080,268.
7. Novo Talos, ‘Carry On’, 2018. Instrumental track created by and for Spotify. Spotify plays: 6,831,990.
8. Benoît Carré with Flow Machines (Sony CSL), ‘Daddy’s Car’, 2017. Produced by Flow Machines. Spotify plays: not listed on Spotify.
9. Lil Miquela, ‘Not Mine’, 2017. Spotify plays: 1,656,698.
10. Katy Perry and Migos, ‘Bon Appetit’, *Witness*, 2017. Written by Katy Perry, Quavious Marshall, Kirsnick Ball, Kiari Cephus, Max Martin, Shellback, Oscar Holter and Ferras Alqaisi. Produced by Martin, Shellback and Holter. Spotify plays: 156,028,180.

1. Katy Perry, ‘Roar’, *Prism*, 2013. Written by Perry, Lukasz Gottwald, Max Martin, Bonnie McKee and Henry Walter. Produced by Dr. Luke, Martin and Cirkut.

I used to bite my tongue and hold my breath
Scared to rock the boat and make a mess
So I sit quietly, agree politely
I guess that I forgot I had a choice
I let you push me past the breaking point
I stood for nothing, so I fell for everything

You held me down, but I got up (HEY!)
Already brushing off the dust
You hear my voice, you hear that sound
Like thunder gonna shake the ground

You held me down, but I got up (HEY!)
Get ready 'cause I've had enough
I see it all, I see it now

I got the eye of the tiger, a fighter, dancing through the fire
'Cause I am a champion and you're gonna hear me roar
Louder, louder than a lion
'Cause I am a champion and you're gonna hear me roar
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
You're gonna hear me roar

Now I'm floating like a butterfly
Stinging like a bee I earned my stripes
I went from zero, to my own hero

You held me down, but I got up (HEY!)
Already brushing off the dust
You hear my voice, you hear that sound
Like thunder gonna shake the ground
You held me down, but I got up (HEY!)
Get ready 'cause I've had enough
I see it all, I see it now

I got the eye of the tiger, a fighter, dancing through the fire
'Cause I am a champion and you're gonna hear me roar
Louder, louder than a lion
'Cause I am a champion and you're gonna hear me roar
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
(You're gonna hear me roar)
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
(You'll hear me roar)
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
You're gonna hear me roar...

Ro-oar, ro-oar, ro-oar, ro-oar, ro-oar

I got the eye of the tiger, a fighter, dancing through the fire
'Cause I am a champion and you're gonna hear me roar
Louder, louder than a lion
'Cause I am a champion and you're gonna hear me roar
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh

Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
(You're gonna hear me roar)
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
(You'll hear me roar)
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
You're gonna hear me roar...

2. Ariana Grande featuring Zedd, 'Break Free', *My Everything*, 2014. Written by Grande, Zedd, Max Martin, and Savan Kotecha. Produced by Zedd and Max Martin.

If you want it, take it
I should've said it before
Tried to hide it, fake it
I can't pretend anymore

I only wanna die alive
Never by the hands of a broken heart
Don't wanna hear you lie tonight
Now that I've become who I really am

[x2:]
This is the part when I say I don't want ya
I'm stronger than I've been before
This is the part when I break free
'Cause I can't resist it no more

You were better, deeper
I was under your spell
Like a deadly fever, yeah, babe
On the highway to hell, yeah

I only wanna die alive
Never by the hands of a broken heart
Don't wanna hear you lie tonight
Now that I've become who I really am

[x2:]
This is the part when I say I don't want ya
I'm stronger than I've been before
This is the part when I break free
'Cause I can't resist it no more

No more, baby, ooh

Thought on your body

I came alive
It was lethal
It was fatal
In my dreams it felt so right
But I woke up every time

Oh, baby

[x2:]

This is the part when I say I don't want ya
I'm stronger than I've been before
This is the part when I break free
'Cause I can't resist it no more

3. Judy Garland, 'Over the Rainbow', *The Wizard of Oz*, 1940. Composed by Harold Arlen with lyrics by Yip Harburg.

Somewhere over the rainbow way up high
There's a land that I heard of once in a lullaby
Somewhere over the rainbow skies are blue
And the dreams that you dare to dream really do come true

Someday I'll wish upon a star
And wake up where the clouds are far
Behind me
Where troubles melt like lemon drops
Away above the chimney tops
That's where you'll find me

Somewhere over the rainbow bluebirds fly
Birds fly over the rainbow.
Why then, oh, why can't I?

If happy little bluebirds fly
Beyond the rainbow.
Why, oh, why can't I?

4. Britney Spears, '...Baby One More Time', *...Baby One More Time*, 1999. Written by Max Martin. Produced by Martin and Rami.

Oh, baby, baby
Oh, baby, baby

Oh, baby, baby,
How was I supposed to know
That something wasn't right here?
Oh, baby, baby,
I shouldn't have let you go

And now you're out of sight, yeah

Show me how you want it to be
Tell me, baby,
'Cause I need to know now, oh, because...

My loneliness
Is killing me and I
I must confess
I still believe, still believe
When I'm not with you I lose my mind
Give me a sign
Hit me, baby, one more time

Oh, baby, baby
The reason I breathe is you
Boy, you got me blinded
Oh, pretty baby,
There's nothing that I wouldn't do
It's not the way I planned it

Show me how you want it to be
Tell me, baby,
'Cause I need to know now, oh, because...

My loneliness
Is killing me and I
I must confess
I still believe, still believe
When I'm not with you I lose my mind
Give me a sign
Hit me, baby, one more time

Oh, baby, baby
Oh, baby, baby
Ah, yeah, yeah

Oh, baby, baby,
How was I supposed to know?
Oh, pretty baby,
I shouldn't have let you go

I must confess
That my loneliness
Is killing me now
Don't you know I still believe
That you will be here

And give me a sign?
Hit me, baby, one more time

My loneliness
Is killing me and I
I must confess
I still believe, still believe
When I'm not with you I lose my mind
Give me a sign
Hit me, baby, one more time

I must confess
That my loneliness
Is killing me now
Don't you know I still believe
That you will be here
And give me a sign?
Hit me, baby, one more time

5. The Weeknd, 'Can't Feel My Face', *Beauty Behind the Madness*, 2015. Written by Ali Payami, Savan Kotecha, Max Martin, Abel Tesfaye and Peter Svensson. Produced by Martin and Payami.

And I know she'll be the death of me, at least we'll both be numb
And she'll always get the best of me, the worst is yet to come
But at least we'll both be beautiful and stay forever young
This I know, (yeah) this I know

She told me, 'Don't worry about it.'
She told me, 'Don't worry no more.'
We both knew we can't go without it
She told me, 'You'll never be alone.'

I can't feel my face when I'm with you
But I love it, but I love it, oh
I can't feel my face when I'm with you
But I love it, but I love it, oh

And I know she'll be the death of me, at least we'll both be numb
And she'll always get the best of me, the worst is yet to come
All the misery was necessary when we're deep in love
Yes, I know (yes, I know), girl, I know

She told me, 'Don't worry about it.'
She told me, 'Don't worry no more.'
We both knew we can't go without it
She told me, 'You'll never be alone.'

I can't feel my face when I'm with you
But I love it, but I love it, oh
I can't feel my face when I'm with you
But I love it, but I love it, oh

I can't feel my face when I'm with you
But I love it, but I love it, oh
I can't feel my face when I'm with you
But I love it, but I love it, oh

She told me, 'Don't worry about it.'
She told me, 'Don't worry no more.'
We both know we can't go without it
She told me, 'You'll never be alone.'
Whoa

I can't feel my face when I'm with you
But I love it, but I love it, oh
I can't feel my face when I'm with you
But I love it, but I love it, oh

I can't feel my face when I'm with you
But I love it, but I love it, oh
I can't feel my face when I'm with you
But I love it, but I love it, oh

6. Rihanna, 'Bitch Better Have My Money', 2015. Written by Jamille Pierre, Bibi Bourelly, Rihanna, Travis Scott, Kanye West and WondaGurl. Produced by Deputy with West, Scott and WondaGurl.

Yayo, yayo
Moo-la-lah
Yayo

Bitch better have my money!
Y'all should know me well enough
Bitch better have my money!
Please don't call me on my bluff
Pay me what you owe me
Ballin' bigger than LeBron
Bitch, give me your money
Who y'all think y'all frontin' on?
Like brrap, brrap, brrap

Louis 13 and it's all on me, nigga you just bought a shot
Kamikaze if you think that you gon' knock me off the top
Shit, your wife in the backseat of my brand new foreign car

Don't act like you forgot, I call the shots, shots, shots
Like blah, brrap, brrap
Pay me what you owe me, don't act like you forgot

Bitch better have my money!
Bitch better have my money!
Pay me what you owe me
Bitch better have my (bitch better have my)
Bitch better have my (bitch better have my)
Bitch better have my money!

Turn up to Rihanna while the whole club fuckin' wasted
Every time I drop I am the only thing you're playin'
In a drop top, doin' hundred, y'all in my rearview mirror racin'
Where y'all at? Where y'all at? Where y'all at?
Like brrap, brrap, brrap

Louis XIII and it's all on me, nigga you just bought a shot
Kamikaze if you think that you gon' knock me off the top
Shit, your wife in the backseat of my brand new foreign car
Don't act like you forgot, I call the shots, shots, shots
Like blah, brrap, brrap
Pay me what you owe me, don't act like you forgot

Bitch better have my money!
Bitch better have my money!
Pay me what you owe me
Bitch better have my (bitch better have my)
Bitch better have my (bitch better have my)
Bitch better have my money!

Bitch better have my money!
Bitch better have my money!
Pay me what you owe me
Bitch better have my (bitch better have my)
Bitch better have my (bitch better have my)
Bitch better have my money!

Bitch better have my money!
Bitch better have my money!
Bitch, bitch, bitch better have my money!
Yo, that bitch better have my money!
Hold up
My money!
Yo, my money!
That bitch better have my money!
Bitch better have my money!

7. Novo Talos, 'Carry On', 2018. Instrumental track created by and for Spotify.

No lyrics.

8. Benoît Carré with Flow Machines (Sony CSL), 'Daddy's Car', 2017. Produced by Flow Machines.

Ahhhhhh ahhhhhh ahhhhhh

Ahhhhhh ahhhhhh ahhhhhh

Take me to the diamond sky (take me to the diamond sky)

Now I'm gonna figure out (Now I'm gonna figure out)

In daddy's car, it sounds so good

Like something new, it turns me on

Good day sunshine in the backseat car

I wish that road could never stop

Down on the ground

The rainbow led me to the sun

Please mother drive, and then play it again

The taxman unveiled tomorrow, never know

Now I see the other side

Take me to the diamond sky

Now I'm gonna figure out

Take me on a distant sky

Yks dnomaia a no em ekat (x2)

Every day I gotta work downtown

I'm drowning in, the traffic jam

Down on the ground

The taxi leads me to nowhere, man

Please mother drive me, play it again, in your car

There's nothing here, nothing there, and everywhere

Ahhhhhhh

Ahhhhhhh

Ahhhhhhh

Now I see the other side

Take me to the diamond sky (take me to the diamond sky)

Now I'm gonna figure out (Now I'm gonna figure out)

Take me on the distant sky (Take me to the diaaaaamond)

Sky-yyy-yyyyykS
(eht ot em ekaT) tnatsid a no em ekaT
Tuo erugif annog m'l woN
Tuo erugif annog m'l woN
Yks dnomaid eht ot em ekat
Yks dnomaid eht ot em ekat
Eht ot em ekat
Yks tnatsid a no em ekat
Tuo erugif annog m'l woH
Tuo erugif annog m'l woh...

9. Lil Miquela, 'Not Mine', 2017.

Not mine, you just wanna waste my time
Can't let you get away on my dime
I'm falling, I'm falling, I'm fine
I'm fine, you know I'll be just alright
I'm cool, I'm just out here living my life
 I'm too gone to fall for you
Came too far to follow you
You see that I can't be used
Won't work now, so what's the use?
Can't keep getting caught up in your issues
Can't keep calling me with all your bad news
Got my own problems trying to work through
And I know what I'm worth so I don't need you
 Not mine, you just wanna waste my time
Can't let you get away on my dime
I'm falling, I'm falling, I'm fine
I'm fine, you know I'll be just alright
I'm cool, I'm just out here living my life
 Why you wanna waste my time
I been on the grind, yeah
Should've saw the signs
Guess they tell me love is blind
You should choose
'Cause I'm really not the one you wanna lose
So gassed up I'm in the club with my pack
Always had my back when I don't know where you at
Where you at?
I can't be your side like that
We ain't going out like that
 Not mine, you just wanna waste my time
Can't let you get away on my dime
I'm falling, I'm falling, I'm fine
I'm fine, you know I'll be just alright
I'm cool, I'm just out here living my life

10. Katy Perry and Migos, 'Bon Appetit', *Witness*, 2017. Written by Katy Perry, Quavious Marshall, Kirsnick Ball, Kiari Cephus, Max Martin, Shellback, Oscar Holter and Ferras Alqaisi. Produced by Martin, Shellback and Holter.

Ay, yeah

Katy Perry, Migos, ay

'Cause I'm all that you want, boy

All that you can have, boy

Got me spread like a buffet

Bon a, bon appétit, baby

Appetite for seduction

Fresh out the oven

Melt in your mouth kind of lovin'

Bon a, bon appétit, baby

Looks like you've been starving

You've got those hungry eyes

You could use some sugar

'Cause your levels ain't right

I'm a five-star Michelin

A Kobe flown in

You want what I'm cooking, boy

Let me take you

Under candle light

We can wine and dine

A table for two

And it's okay

If you take your time

Eat with your hands, fine

I'm on the menu

'Cause I'm all that you want, boy

All that you can have, boy

Got me spread like a buffet

Bon appétit, baby

Appetite for seduction

Fresh out the oven

Melt in your mouth kind of lovin'

Bon appétit, baby

So you want some more

Well I'm open 24

Wanna keep you satisfied

Customer's always right

Hope you've got some room

For the world's best cherry pie

Gonna hit that sweet tooth, boy

Let me take you

Under candle light

We can wine and dine
 A table for two (for two)
 And it's okay
 If you take your time
 Eat with your hands, fine
 I'm on the menu
 'Cause I'm all that you want, boy
 All that you can have, boy
 Got me spread like a buffet
 Bon a, bon appétit, baby (bon appétit)
 Appetite for seduction
 Fresh out the oven (fresh out the oven)
 Melt in your mouth kind of lovin' (yeah)
 Bon a, bon appétit, baby
 'Cause I'm all that you want, boy
 All that you can have, boy
 Got me spread like a buffet
 Bon a, bon appétit, baby (bon appétit)
 Appetite for seduction
 Fresh out the oven
 Melt in your mouth kind of lovin'
 Bon a, bon appétit, baby (Quavo)
 Sweet potato pie (sweet)
 It'll change your mind (change)
 Got you running back for seconds (running)
 Every single night (hey)
 I'm the one they say can change your life (Takeoff)
 No waterfall, she drippin' wet, you like my ice? (Blast)
 Said she want a Migo night, I ask her, 'What's the price?' (Hold on)
 If she do right, told her get whatever you like (Offset)
 I grab her legs and now divide, aight
 Make her do a donut when she ride, aight
 Looking at the eyes of a dime, make you blind
 In her spine and I'm on some diamonds change the climate
 Sweet tooth (sweet), no tooth fairy (no)
 Whipped cream (whip), no dairy (yeah)
 She got her hot light on, screaming, 'I'm ready' (hot)
 But no horses, no carriage
 'Cause I'm all that you want, boy (all that you want)
 All that you can have, boy
 Got me spread like a buffet
 Bon a, bon appétit, baby (eat it up, eat it up, eat it up)
 Appetite for seduction
 Fresh out the oven
 Melt in your mouth kind of lovin'
 Bon a, bon appétit, baby (bon appétit)
 Under candle light

Bon appétit, baby

Alexander Provan

Alexander Provan is the Editor and Co-founder of *Triple Canopy* and a contributing editor of *Bidoun*. He is the recipient of a 2015 Creative Capital | Andy Warhol Foundation Arts Writers Grant and was a 2013–15 fellow at the Vera List Center for Art and Politics. Provan's writing has appeared in the *Nation*, *n+1*, *Art in America*, *Artforum*, *Frieze* and in several exhibition catalogues. His work as an individual and with *Triple Canopy* has recently been exhibited and presented at the 14th Istanbul Biennial; Whitney Biennial; Museum Tinguely (Basel); the 12th Bienal de Cuenca; the New Museum (New York); and Kunsthalle Wien (Vienna). His sound work *Measuring Device with Organs* was recently published by Triple Canopy as an LP.