

Music: fictional band songs

'That Thing You Do' by The Wonders (from *That Thing You Do!* 1996)



In a film that's packed with fictional bands and songs, it takes something special to stand out. However, the title song by the band formerly known as The Oneders (that's One-ers, not Oh-Need-Ers) not only does so in Tom Hanks' *That Thing You Do!*, it sends an earworm more vicious than that little

blighter from *Star Trek II*, burrowing so far into your brain that you can't get it out for weeks. No wonder – we hear the song 11 times in the film!

To find the best song for the film, the producers opened up a public contest with only two stipulations: the title is 'That Thing You Do' and it should

sound like one of the many Beatles clones that began to appear in the mid 60s. The winning entry was penned by Fountains of Wayne bassist Adam Schlesinger with vocals by prolific singer-songwriter Mike Viola. To retain an air of authenticity, the sleeve notes of the soundtrack album listed The Wonders as the performers of the song, with Viola only receiving a credit as an additional vocalist – something he wasn't happy with at the time.

Schlesinger cited The Knickerbockers as a major influence, 'That Thing You Do' does indeed share some traits with their only top-20 hit 'Lies'. He also stated that the song's bridge section was inspired by a similar segment in 'I Want To Hold Your Hand'...

'Pop! Goes My Heart' by PoP! (from *Music & Lyrics*, 2007)

While the story of *Music & Lyrics* is fairly standard romcom fare, the soundtrack is packed with catchy tunes. The Diane Warren-esque power ballad 'Way Back Into Love' that Hugh Grant and Drew Barrymore are hired to write is rather dull compared to this fun slice of pretend 80s bubblegum pop! And who knew Hugh Grant could sing?

'Running Thru The Fire' by Eddie & The Cruisers (from *Eddie & The Cruisers II: Eddie Lives!* 1989)

The *Eddie & The Cruisers* films present an interesting dichotomy. Film and record producers Tony and Ben Scotti were accused of throwing the majority of their efforts into the music, so the result was a pair of terrible movies, each with a truly great soundtrack album! The superb Springsteen-like songs were provided by real-life rockers John Cafferty & The Brown Beaver Band.

'Brown Shoes' by Sing Street (from *Sing Street*, 2016)

I considered choosing 'Drive Like You Stole It', but it closely imitates 'Maneater' by Hall & Oates, just as *Sing Street's* earlier songs bear a striking similarity to other tunes they were listening to when they wrote them (Duran Duran, The Cure). In 'Brown Shoes', we can still hear the band's influences, but also that they've finally found their own sound.

'Blood On The Coal' by The Folkmen (from *A Mighty Wind*, 2003)

As good as Spinal Tap are, they were also an obvious choice and I wanted something a little more unusual. Guest, Shearer and McKean's other band, The Folkmen, have been around almost as long and, their comedic credentials aside, 'Blood On The Coal' stands up on its own merits as a remarkably good country-folk ballad in the Johnny Cash vein.