

# Emo and pop punk: separated scenes

Pop punk and emo might sound the same, but their differences run deep.

By MORGAN MITCHELL  
morgan.l.mitchell@biola.edu

The two genres within the punk movement that get the most confused with one another have become pop punk and emo. For genres that many see as interchangeable, pop punk and emo could not be more different.

Emo, short for emocore, a term

also short for emotional hardcore, has reached its third wave. In the '80s it emerged into the post-hardcore scene with bands like Spring, Embrace and Beefeater. This first wave sounded a lot more energetic and harsh than the waves that followed.

The second wave started in the early '90s with bands like Sunny Day Real Estate — whose first album was deemed the No. 1 emo album of all time by Rolling Stone — Cap'n Jazz and Jawbreaker. This new wave gained traction in the midwest and many bands appeared on the scene such as American Football, Mineral and Brand New. This wave's sound was mellow with deeper, emotional lyrics. In the late '90s and early 2000s, Orchid led the way for screamo, a more aggressive subgenre of emo, to become popular.

Experimentation within the genre and its break into mainstream culture came the third wave, spearheaded by Jimmy Eat World, Fall Out Boy and My Chemical Romance. This wave took a less unique

approach by punk standards, foreshadowing pop punk.

In 2010, a revival of second wave emo began through bands such as Into It. Over It. and The World is a Beautiful Place & I Am No Longer Afraid to Die, who revived the deep lyricism and instrumental complexity that the '90s knew and loved.

These elements represent exactly what pop punk bands noticeably lack. Pop punk started in the '70s and '80s with bands like Dag Nasty and Social Distortion, but did not become popular until the early 2000s with bands like Green Day and Blink-182.

The sound of pop punk before it went mainstream had a harsh, upbeat sound and relatable lyrics. Modern pop punk uses at most four chords and a simplistic, distinctive drum beat that mostly plays throughout the entire song. Paul Crites, a fan of punk who has listened to emo and pop punk for 15 years, said pop punk is punk that caters to the mainstream, like any "pop" genre. With catchy choruses, clean vocals and basic, vague topics,

pop punk took on a massive following.

Lyrical topics in this style include teen angst, break-ups and being friend-zoned. While some of these topics seem harmless, sexism started to permeate the scene with the massively popular pop punk band The Story So Far singing lyrics like "think about who you let between your thighs." Blink-182 has sung about wanting to train women and what a drag they are, and there is a trend in calling women derogatory terms over and over again. Recently, the lead singer of the Story So Far, Parker Cannon, violently kicked a girl off a stage and fans rushed to his defense all over social media.

Crates said genre distinctions can become blurry for some because of similar origins and fans, but emo is miles ahead of pop punk lyrically and instrumentally and pop punk is a genre many find themselves growing out of, even the bands themselves.

Many pop punk bands switch to emo, such as Tigers Jaw, Citi-



MAX HEILMAN | The Chimes

**DISTINCT INTERIOR:** The World is... and Modern Baseball's respective styles differ greatly, even with similar visuals.

zen, Modern Baseball and Sorority Noise. Considering emo has more advanced music and lyrics, this could reflect the band growing in skill and out of what fueled

their previous songwriting. Crates said pop punk fans reflect a similar change, as he no longer listens to pop punk because he no longer relates to the musicality or lyrics.

# Noëta drops the supreme "Beyond Life and Death"



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**MINIMAL MAJESTY:** Noëta's visuals reflect a reliance on tried-and-true analogue approach for their aesthetic.

The Swedish duo may have released the ambient folk album of the decade.

Fans of dark ambient and neo folk music alike will hold "Beyond Life and Death" — released through Prophecy Productions — in highest regard as Noëta's bewitching

amalgamation of the two styles creates the perfect soundtrack for self-examination and philosophical dialogue.

"One of our great assets is that we come from very different musical backgrounds," Éléa and ndris claimed in an interview with Cultartes Magazine. As self-proclaimed practitioners of "anti-normative black ambient," eclectic combinations become the name of the game for the duo. Ritualistic drum loops and minimalist soundscapes subtly crescendo into dreary luminosity. Labels remain elusive as "Beyond Life and Death" travels through a surprisingly diverse array of textures, arrangements and melodies.

"Beyond Life" starts the album with ghostly vocal drones and a thudding synth bass drum, emphasizing ambient over folk. The vocal emphasis showcases Éléa's rapturous delivery right off the bat. Her voluminous notes remain powerful in their shroud of spectral reverb, supported by ndris' low-end monotone as the glue for an otherwise amorphous journey.

Using analogue recording

to their advantage, Noëta keep their songs grounded in nuanced songwriting as they utilize diverse instrumentation. Electronic samples and soundscapes still fill out the sound of many songs on the album, but each component breaths naturally and vibrantly — providing glimmers of dim light in a voyage through uncharted waters of emotional quandary.

Both members know exactly what each song needs, as exemplified by the djembe-esque percussion in "Darkest Desires" or the stupifyingly beautiful walls of synth pads in "Beyond Death," never losing sight of the haunting melodies and arpeggiations laying the foundation.

"Beyond Life and Death" might seem worlds away from anything related to the extreme metal leanings of Noëta's labelmates, but the album's impenetrable darkness leaves most black metallers in the dust. "In Void" and "Dead Soil" exemplify this depressive drowsiness through finger picked guitars, capturing the essence of Scandinavian darkness much like Norway's Ulver did with "Kveldssanger" in 1996.

Tracks like "In Drowning" and "In Thunder" take a more direct approach with distorted guitars and trudging basslines, but never come close to sounding like metal. Noëta's sound embellishes the dreary atmosphere from black metal with a style entirely of their own design, constructing beautifully melancholy musical platitudes that the lyrics use to a haunting effect.

This album's concept breaks into three sections, with instrumental tracks "Pneuma" and the concluding "Urkaos" separating them — the former cut bringing back the central vocal line in "Beyond Life." Noëta examines the journey of a naive soul to properly appreciate and embrace the chaotic power of nature after diving headfirst into a trial by fire. However, these complex existential topics come wrapped in surprisingly palatable doses of ominous vocal phrasing and intimate humanity. The disenchanted negativity of the midpoint contrasts with the beginning's sense of wonder and the end's assimilated enlightenment, smoothing out the album's flow while creating three

distinct auras.

Noëta's full-length LP ultimately succeeds by submerging the listener in nine unique sonic environments using analogue as both an aesthetic and musical tool. Each layer of the soundscapes they create sounds just as pure as Éléa's singing. Guitar, bass, synth and noise effects transcend their computerized counterparts with organic sounds.

As "In Void" achieves full-bodied dynamism through folky acoustic guitar modulations using perfectly placed synth swells and bottom-heavy rumble, so do dreamy electric strains maintain footing in raw execution in "Dead Soil." No matter how ambient Noëta gets, folk still prevails.

"Beyond Life and Death" reaches truly sublime desolation by spurring neofolk into the stratosphere of epiphany and the depths of inner turmoil, while its beauty strengthens and affirms a humble approach to the universe and one's place in it. Noëta's first LP stands as a eerily spiritual, benchmark-setting journey, an album they and their contemporaries will have trouble topping.

# Oscar season builds tension

"La La Land" faces stiff competition in our Oscar predictions.

By KYLE KOHNER  
kyle.j.kohner@biola.edu

A year after the #OscarsSoWhite debacle, the 89th Annual Academy Awards features seven nominated actors and actresses of color. Compared to last year, this could signify a monumental change within the voters' mindsets. Unfortunately, potential of not a single one of them winning lingers. However, the storyline clouding over this year's Oscars focuses around the meteoric directing talent of Damien Chazelle and his ode to Hollywood. "La La Land" and its record-breaking 14 award nominations prevails as Hollywood's biggest allure as Oscar night draws near.

**Best Picture:** The Academy loves films glorifying Hollywood, evidenced through Best Picture winners "Birdman" in 2015 and 2012's "The Artist." "La La Land" appears poised to further that trend. Although "Moonlight" recently captured the Golden Globe for Best Picture, "La La Land" has gained steam and increased favorability amongst critics. In addition, "La La Land's" December release

date increases its likelihood. Unfortunately for "Moonlight," the mid-October release date coaxed it into the backseat.

Barry Jenkins' "Moonlight" still has a fighting chance. With an ornate score, lush color palettes and hypnotic cinematography, the film's technical aspects seemed to persist as its own living, breathing entity. In addition, Jenkins casted masterful talents, resulting in exemplary performances across the board, especially from Mahershala Ali and Naomie Harris.

If the Academy does not want to jeopardize their relevancy any further and desires a chance at redeeming themselves from their previous 88 years of systematic racism prevalent in Hollywood, they will pick "Moonlight" as the first all-African American Best Picture winner, over the decidedly overrated "La La Land."

**Best Director:** This category hinges upon who takes home best picture. Within the past four years, only once did a film win for Best Picture and Best Director, "Birdman" and Alejandro Inarritu in 2014. This time around, Chazelle and Jenkins represent the top two contenders for the Best Director category and both are equally deserving. Chazelle's worthiness stems from his meticulous command over a grandiose set and innumerable cast, proving his 2014 "Whiplash" was no fluke. However, the magnitude of sheer, raw emotion brimming out of "Moonlight" gives Jenkins a slight edge for the award.

**Best Supporting Actor:** Based on screen time alone, Dev Patel should have received consideration for best actor. Even odder is the absence of Aaron Taylor-Johnson for his sadistic and perverse role in "Nocturnal Animals," which Johnson won the Golden Globe for in the same category. The real story inhabiting this stacked category is "Moonlight's" Mahershala Ali. As soon as I saw Ali on screen back in October for the "Moonlight" premiere, I knew that his talent would not go unnoticed. A failure for the Academy to give him this award will remain a huge

disappointment in awards season history.

**Best Supporting Actress:** I am torn between Michelle Williams and Harris in this category. Williams embodied brokenness — one

KYLE		BROOKS		TIM	
Picture	WANT - MOONLIGHT				
	WILL - LA LA LAND				
Directing	WANT - DAMIEN CHAZELLE (LA LA LAND)	WANT - KENNETH LONERGAN (MANCHESTER)			
	WILL - BARRY JENKINS (MOONLIGHT)	WILL - DAMIEN CHAZELLE (LA LA LAND)			
Supporting Actress	WANT - MICHELLE WILLIAMS (MANCHESTER BY THE SEA)	WANT - MICHELLE WILLIAMS (MANCHESTER BY THE SEA)	WANT - MICHELLE WILLIAMS (MANCHESTER BY THE SEA)	WANT - MICHELLE WILLIAMS (MANCHESTER BY THE SEA)	WANT - MICHELLE WILLIAMS (MANCHESTER BY THE SEA)
	WILL - VIOLA DAVIS (FENCES)	WILL - NAOMIE HARRIS (MOONLIGHT)			
Supporting Actor	WANT - MAHERSHALA ALI (MOONLIGHT)				
	WILL - MAHERSHALA ALI (MOONLIGHT)				
Actress	WANT - NATALIE PORTMAN (JACKIE)	WILL - EMMA STONE (LA LA LAND)	WILL - EMMA STONE (LA LA LAND)	WANT - NATALIE PORTMAN (JACKIE)	WILL - EMMA STONE (LA LA LAND)
	WILL - ISABELLE HUBERT (ELLE)	WILL - ISABELLE HUBERT (ELLE)	WILL - ISABELLE HUBERT (ELLE)	WILL - NATALIE PORTMAN (JACKIE)	WILL - NATALIE PORTMAN (JACKIE)
Actor	WANT - NATALIE PORTMAN (JACKIE)	WANT - NATALIE PORTMAN (JACKIE)	WANT - NATALIE PORTMAN (JACKIE)	WANT - ANDREW GAFIELD (HACKSAW)	WILL - DENZEL WASHINGTON (FENCES)
	WILL - ISABELLE HUBERT (ELLE)	WILL - ISABELLE HUBERT (ELLE)	WILL - ISABELLE HUBERT (ELLE)	WILL - ANDREW GAFIELD (HACKSAW)	WILL - DENZEL WASHINGTON (FENCES)

INFOGRAPHIC BY CASSIDY ELDREDGE | The Chimes

**STRATEGIC CYNICISM:** In addition to providing his predictions for this year's Oscar season winners, Kyle Kohner balanced out his voice with that of Tim Seeberger and Brooks Ginnan as they try to make sense of the Academy's thought process when choosing a nominee.

scene in particular really pierced me emotionally and if you have seen "Manchester by the Sea," you will know what scene I am speaking of. But Viola Davis empowered viewers like none other with her

role in "Fences," in which she won the Golden Globe for the same category. Williams ultimately wins me over with her admirable moments of heartache, but Davis will deservedly win the top honor.