**Purpose of Music Videos**

A music video, much like it sounds, is a visual film that accompanies a song. Often called a 'Promotional Video', these were not industry practice for some time. Although many songs featured some video clips to accompany their songs, it was not until the renowned success of *Queen's* 1975 hit *Bohemian Rhapsody* and it's partner video that it became an industry norm to produce a video along side their song.

By creating a promotional video, it meant that the video could be used instead of a live band for shows at the time like *Top of the Pop's*, which required the band play live. If the band couldn't make it or were busy, the video could be used in its place, meaning that people didn't miss out on a place on the show.

In 1981 *MTV* was launched; the channel played music videos all day every day. This channel was a new medium for music and branched out and appealed to a newer and wide audience. The 80's were a pivotal and influential year for music because of the videos and they grew to an even greater and sophisticated level when film directors began directing and creating videos, *David Mallet* directed *David Bowie* and *Queens Under Pressure* video.

Horror film director John Landis directed *THRILLER,* perhaps the most famous and influential music video of all time, in 1983*.* *Michael Jackson's THRILLER* shot to worldwide fame when it was released because of its scope, catchy lyrics, dancing, direction and length, an astonishing 14 minutes. The video incorporated many horror elements, such as zombie dancers, werewolves, a voice over from horror legend *Vincent Price* and the director, who directed *An American Werewolf In London*. It was after this music promo that they became more respected and expanded into a grander scale.

Almost every song that followed was accompanied by a music promo. Some of the videos that followed have become very iconic because of their innovative direction and style that was unconventional at the time. *Sledgehammer* is one of the iconic videos, taking inspiration from *Jan Svankmajer* and the stop motion he is most famous for. The entire video is shot in a stop-motion style all while the lead singer sings along to the song. Another famous video is *Take on Me*, which features a combination of live action and a sketch style animation. This video has been parodied in many forms, a notable appearance in *Family Guy*. These parodies and references of the song are perfect examples of how iconic the promo is and how much influence it has.

Recent years have showcased bigger production videos and equally minimalistic artful videos. *Lady Gaga* is a perfect modern example of big production music promotions as her videos - like her music itself - are fast paced and extravagant. For example, *Telephone* - the continuation of her previous song *Paparazzi -* follows *Gaga* after she confesses and is arrested for the murder of her boyfriend. *Telephone* begins with her in prison and then bailed out by Honey-B played by *Beyoncé.* The two then go on a murder spree in a diner, killing all the diners’ insider with poison. The video closes with the two being chased by police in a big yellow vehicle called *Pussy Wagon*, which is a direct reference to *Quentin Tarantino's Kill Bill.* This video is heavily influenced by *Tarantino’s* filmography and he personal landed *Gaga* the *Pussy Wagon* after she explained the videos concept to him over lunch.

The video received a great critical reception and is noted for being a pop culture event with its *Tarantino* references, *Thelma and Louise* style story arc between the two female leads and has since been named one of the best music videos of the decade so far. This music promo runs for full 9 minutes and is a great example of how production companies have taken great stakes in music by giving huge budgets to produce big videos. Other big production videos include

In a great contrast to the big production music videos, there are also minimalistic and artful videos. *Lorde's* music video for *Tennis Court* is a simple continuous talking head shot of the singer as she stares into the camera. She occasionally moves her hands into frame and sings along to small sections of the song. Another example is the video for *Not Made of Stone* by *Lykke Li* which, like *Tennis Court*, features a continuous shot traveling around a woman’s upper body in a low-lit unidentifiable location. The camera pans around her for the entire video as she changes facial expressions; she does not sing a long. These videos, along with several other examples, show how a music video does not have to be a big production but can be simple and more thematic.

From the examples explored above, it is clear that music videos have grown since they first aired nearly 50 years ago. Much like the growth of cinema, as new technologies came forward, music videos became more advanced and moved away from live concert footage into full original productions covering a vast number of styles and formats.