

Black Eyed Peas Biography

Social, personal, and philosophical evolution happen to the beat of culture. Rhythm underlines each ebb and flow, scoring the soundtrack to humanity's evolution.

With every move, Black Eyed Peas dictate the rhythm of culture. Blurring genre lines long before it became commonplace and pioneering an unprecedented global hybrid of hip-hop, pop, electro, and world as early as 1995, the Los Angeles trio—will.i.am, apl.de.ap, and Taboo—maximize the momentum of a legendary career earmarked by making history, breaking records, and raising the bar yet again in 2020 and beyond.

“The last time we were this clear was in 1995 when we started the group,” grins will.i.am. “There was a lane for us. There was room for us. We capitalized on moments to make an impact in 2003 and 2009. We’re looking to the future now. What’s the next ten years? For us, they’re about being purposeful in society.”

The group certainly constructed the perfect launchpad to be “*purposeful*.” Over the past 25 years, they earned six GRAMMY® Awards and achieved sales of 35 million albums and 120 million singles across seminal releases such as *Elephunk*, *The E.N.D.*, and more. Cemented as one of the era’s biggest acts, they emerged as “*the second best-selling artist/group of all-time for downloaded tracks*,” according to Nielsen, and landed on *Billboard*’s “Hot 100 Artists of the Decade.” Moving over 3 million tickets, performing 300-plus shows throughout 30 different countries, and headlining stadiums, they graced the biggest stage in the world with a landmark performance at the Super Bowl XLV Halftime Show in 2011.

After reaching these heights, a period of relative quiet followed—lasting nearly eight years. As always, Black Eyed Peas’ music coursed through the zeitgeist between one-off singles, but the group simultaneously endured life’s trials and tribulations. Taboo battled cancer in 2014, recovering victoriously with his brothers by his side at home.

“Metaphorically, Black Eyed Peas gave me life, but also in a real sense,” admits Taboo. “I had that horrible disease. At least, I was back in Los Angeles to deal with it. I became stronger and got back into work mode with my brothers. I appreciate us having another chance to feed this amazing journey and vehicle of Black Eyed Peas. This is my engine. It kept me fighting to know I’d be on stage again. It taught me how to appreciate and love every moment.”

“When you have a run like we did, you should not expect for it to repeat,” adds will.i.am. “We never thought we could do what we did in the first place. Then, we basically took an eight-year break. It’s taken a long time for us to get back. We had to learn, and to refocus on our roots. We’re a trio again, swinging for the fences. It’s a new era here.”

They found the best way to ignite this era on the single “RITMO (Bad Boys For Life)” alongside one of the hottest acts in the world and possibly the biggest Latin star of the millennium J Balvin. Featured as the lead single of the *Bad Boys For Life* Soundtrack, it exploded as a phenomenon right out of the gate, generating over 180 million streams and 294 million video views in under a month’s time. Creatively, it illustrated yet another breakthrough. Once again, Black Eyed Peas pulled from the streets, magnifying underground club energy, reggaeton grooves, and a Spanglish singalong on a global sonic canvas.

“‘RITMO’ is about having a good time,” Taboo states. “As much as we live in an internet age, people like to go out. So, this song is all going out, expressing yourself, and living life to the fullest. It’s a party song. I want my whole week to be like my Friday and Saturday.”

“We always joke, ‘*Damn, we made a career out of going out*,’” laughs apl.de.ap. “We still go out all the time. We just call it ‘*research*’.”

“We deliberately aimed to make a record that reflected our origins and celebrated the last two decades,” will.i.am elaborates. “We love boom-bap. We love hip-hop. We love Latin. When we made *The E.N.D.*, I was going to a lot of clubs and hearing what was happening with dance music. The same thing is going on now with Latin. There’s a Latin Afro-fusion influence to this next chapter. It’s always been there, and it’s part of our DNA as an L.A. group. We’ve been working on songs that are muscle with a global punch and saved them because we knew they would be special. This is one of them.”

With their eighth album and full-length debut for Epic Records on the way, Black Eyed Peas fulfill a perennial purpose on new music and so much more.

“We’re a family,” concludes apl.de.ap. “We have bigger dreams than ever, and we’re going to make them happen together.”

“We’ve learned a lot from our journey,” will.i.am leaves off. “I think we’ve learned more than we thought possible. I believe our younger selves would be proud of the courageous and fearless people we’ve become, because there’s a deeper meaning in our music. We try to bring answers and joy. We hope to solve problems. It starts with the music and purpose.”