

Black Music Month 2014: June 11 musical salute to Chris Brown

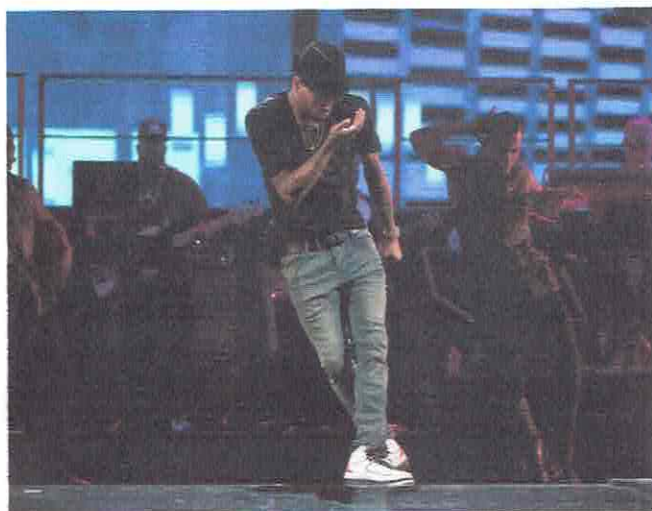


Photo by Christopher Polk



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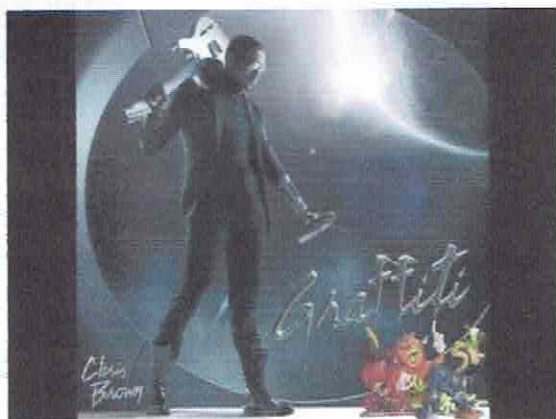
June 10, 2014

It's Black Music Month. Enjoy the 2014 series. Support the artists. Buy their licensed music. And turn up as you dance along.

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Brief history: In 2010, I wrote a music series honoring Black Music Month on Associated Content's site (republished on **Examiner**). The focus was to honor new R&B singers, veteran R&B singers, solo rappers, and evenly split the musical salute between female and male rappers. The only artists I was not willing to split up were Salt n' Pepa because they worked as a unit. In 2014, it's about time to salute more artists, but in the spirit of Salt n' Pepa's legacy, R&B groups and rap groups will be included. The pattern in 2014 will be newer R&B singers (from 2000 to present), R&B and/or hip-hop

YouTube/The Mechanical Dummy

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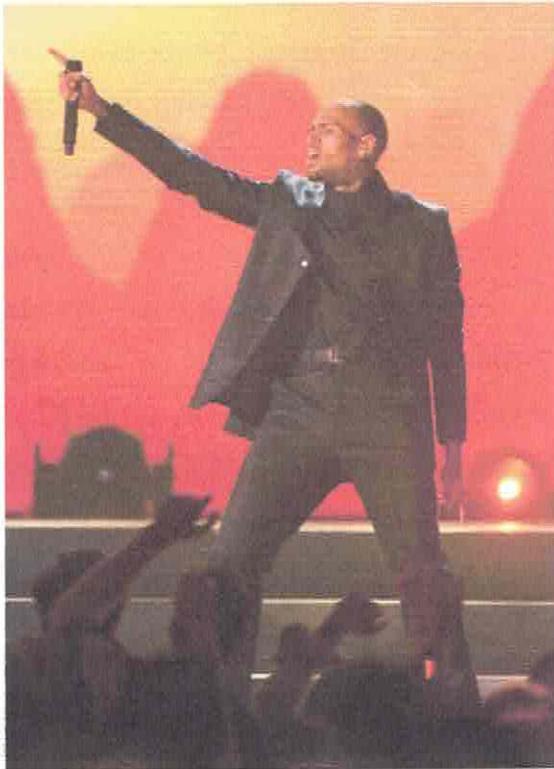


Photo by Ethan Miller/Getty Images

groups, veteran R&B singers, and then solo rappers, still evenly split between women and men.

Black Music Month Turn Up Factor

"Turn down for what?": There are very few artists to date who can sing, dance and rap the way Chris Brown can. Until "Look at Me Now," I'm not sure fans even knew he was nice on the mic (as a lyricist). But even after releasing a mixtape full of rap and R&B, he still pointed out on Sway's Universe that he's a singer, not a rapper. He just toyed with the idea. Now is he the *best* singer? No. But he's pretty damn good. Is he the *best* actor? Too early to tell what his full potential is in acting, but he was great in "Stomp the Yard," "This Christmas," "Takers" and his brief part on "Think Like a Man."

Is he the *best* dancer? My vote is a strong yes. Some R&B singers can dance, but they usually have a memorized routine to do and only a couple of instant moves in their trick bag. Chris Brown could walk on a stage with nothing rehearsed and still make other artists hope they don't perform after he's finished onstage. The only dancer who seemed to possibly give him a run for his money wore heels and crawled across a car -- Ciara -- so watching the two of them dance at the 2008 BET Awards was a pleasant surprise. It was like watching an updated version of **Michael Jackson and James Brown** from the 2003 BET Awards. There's never a dull moment when watching equally yoked dancers go at it. And whether you like him or not, Chris Brown has the ability to be equally charming in interviews and woo grown women (ex. 2007 episode of "The Tyra Banks Show).

My Connection/First Memory to Artist: I've never not been a fan of his voice, his dancing or even his rapping. Although I'm not thrilled with "Loyal," I listen to his CDs straight through. I remember doing the "Run It" dance in 2005 while headed to a Family Dollar

parking lot. I'm not sure why I decided to dance in a parking lot. The hit song was just stuck in my head and I acted on it. And either I did the dance really well or really badly because a car screeched to a stop to watch me. I'm a pretty decent dancer so I hope the driver was amused. I own all of his CDs and can sing the words to most songs, but my favorite song from him will always be "Fallin' Down" because it describes my personality more often than not.

Numbers Don't Lie: Whether I like it or not, "Loyal" has spent 20 weeks on the charts and is (at time of publishing) on the Billboard Top 100 charts for nine weeks. He's no newbie to top 10 hits. His first single, "Run It," stayed on the charts for 38 weeks and shot to number one. Other top 10 hits include "Yo (Excuse Me Miss)" (21 weeks on the charts, peaked at number seven), "Say Goodbye" (23 weeks on the charts, peaked at number 10), "Kiss Kiss" (26 weeks on the charts, peaked at number one), "With You" (29 weeks on the charts, peaked at number two), "Forever" (33 weeks on the charts, peaked at number two), "Look at Me Now" (featuring Busta Rhymes and Lil Wayne) (27 weeks on the charts, peaked at number seven), "Turn Up the Music" (20 weeks on the charts, peaked at number 10) and "Don't Wake Me Up" (28 weeks on the charts, peaked at number 10).

My Personal Rant: I absolutely do not respect domestic violence, not in movies or in real life. I despised the baby oil scene in "This Christmas," which Chris Brown was in, the same way I hated all of the abuse scenes in "What's Love Got to Do With It?" Man or woman, keep your hands to your self unless you're prepared to be hit back. Once a couple reaches the point that they are putting hands on each other or destroying property, it's time to break up permanently.

My issue is not with those who take issue with domestic disputes. I do, however, find it awfully convenient that those who see no problem with holding a grudge longer than Rihanna (how **pathetic is your life** to stalk someone on social media for two years, then screenshot his account after he blocked the attention-seeking, unfunny comedian's account?) have amnesia when it comes to other celebrities in domestic disputes. If you're opposed to domestic disputes, be opposed across the board, not just when the guy with the baby blue bowtie did it. If you're opposed to domestic disputes, volunteer with an organization, stand up for a cause, be active. Don't take all of your anger out on one person's timeline (or newspaper) and decide that's fighting for a cause.

I was a huge fan of Chris Brown when he first came out with "Run It" and incredibly

disappointed when I heard the news from the 2009 fight with Rihanna. I stopped supporting his music for a little under a year. But Rihanna forgave him. They broke up, got back together and broke up again. And I carefully observed how vicious people were to him – and him only – when it comes to incidents like this. Was he wrong? 100 percent. But I have heard of no repeat instances with other women. He apologized to her and the public. He volunteered with Jenesse Domestic Violence Center. And I let it go. It's not logical to be more mad at someone when the victim is chilling and moved on to dating other people. Never once has Chris Brown said he was right for the incident he had at the age of 19. But never once did I believe he owed *anybody* but Rihanna an apology.

For the first series of Black Music Month artists republished on Examiner (originally on Associated Content), [click here](#) to see all 30.

*Shamontiel is also **The Wire Examiner**, and for the gladiators, she's the **Scandal Examiner**, too.*

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