

Black Music Month 2014: June 28 musical salute to Total

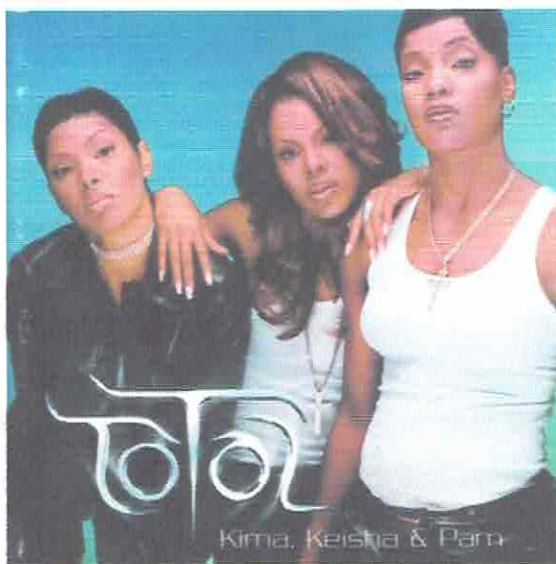


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June 27, 2014

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 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?": Bad Boy doesn't have the best luck when it comes to long-lasting group careers, but Diddy has succeeded in making

sure the groups aren't forgettable. Whether they lasted past a sophomore album or not, chances are slim that R&B and hip-hop fans can't at least remember the chorus of all of their popular songs. And Total came right in time for hip-hop and R&B intermingling. They had a harder edge, but they could bust a note as long and loud as traditional R&B groups. And in my elementary school graduation year (1995), their singles got major airplay right into their 1996 self-titled release. Of course Andre 3000's freestyle about Keisha in 2003's "The Love Below" brought Total back to fans' attention when Erykah Badu was initially the only person we may have connected to him.

My Connection/First Memory to Artist: A childhood friend of mine looked like an elementary school version of Pam, and my older brother made a point of reminding her of it regularly. Every time she came over or spent the night, he'd go into his own off-key rendition of "Kissing You" or "Can't You See." It was entertaining to say the least, and she had a sense of humor about him teasing her (in a brotherly way).

Numbers Don't Lie: Although "Kima, Keisha, and Pam" got less attention than their self-titled debut, "Trippin" did well on the Top 100 charts (20 weeks, peaked at number seven). Other top 10 hits on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs charts included "Sitting Home" (20 weeks, peaked at number 10), "Trippin" again (22 weeks, peaked at number three), "What About Us" (36 weeks, peaked at number four), "Kissin' You" (29 weeks, peaked at number six), "No One Else" (25 weeks, peaked at number four) and "Can't You See" (30 weeks, peaked at number three).

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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