

## Black Music Month 2014: June 25 musical salute to Busta Rhymes



Shamontiel Vaughn  
African American Entertainment Examiner  
| Follow:

June 24, 2014

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

### Related Photo:

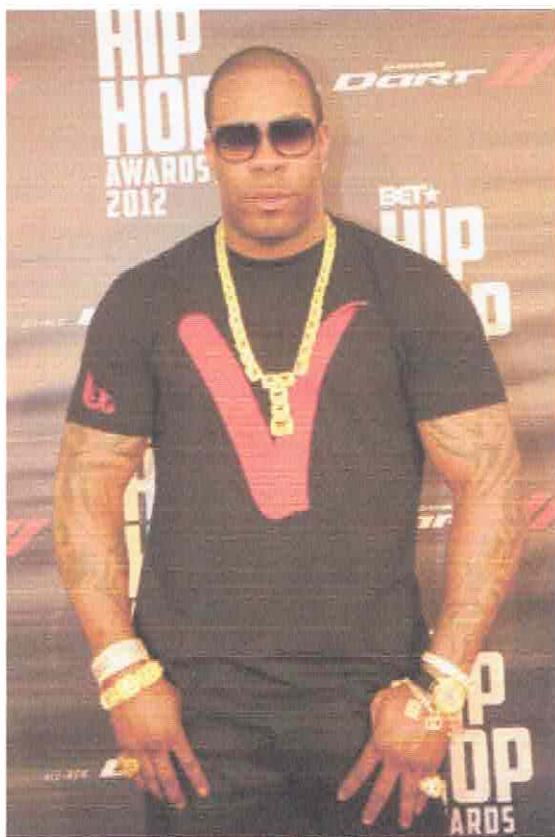


Photo by Chris McKay/Getty Images for BET

**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?":** If you ever want to see how appealing an artist is, watch the expression on everyone else's face when his (or her) music comes on. The snapping fingers, two steps, "Heeey" shouts and hand clapping are all great, but when an artist makes partygoers and other listeners get so into a song that they have to make "the ugly face" just to emit every single emotion from the lyrics, that's it. The jury's in. This is a star. Sometimes it happens in the form of car dancers who sing off-key and act like they can hit all the high notes. But with rappers, it's usually a lot of finger pointing, grimacing, hard head bobbing -- and in the case of Busta Rhymes -- gasping for breath to be able to get out as many words as he does in one verse and still stay on beat. Busta Rhymes is one of the few artists who never seems to have a problem creating party music but not selling out to dumbed-down lyrics. His fans want to hear what he's saying as much as they want to dance to the beat because both are equally impressive.

And although Busta Rhymes is known as a lyricist, people forget that he has poked his head occasionally in acting and voiceover roles. He was on an episode of the four-season show "Cosby" as the character Phillip and Zack on "The Steve Harvey Show." His gruff, deep voice came in handy for Reptar Wagon in "The Rugrats Movie" and Rasaan in "Shaft," and his more comedic side came out as Flonominal in Adult Swim's "The Boondocks."

**My Connection/First Memory to Artist:** No matter what mood I'm in, if I hear "Put Your Hands Where My Eyes Can See," "Dangerous," "The Body Rock," "We Goin' To Do It To Ya," "Hop," "Get Down" or "New York S\*\*t," I'm standing up to dance. My body reacts before my brain will, and I know all the lyrics to these songs so it's my opportunity to live out my momentary I-am-a-rapper-look-at-me performances. I watched the same response from my peers in elementary school, high school and especially college. Speaking of universities, "Higher Learning" has been my favorite movie since 1995, and it doesn't take much for me to randomly burst out the "They just hate me 'cause they ain't me!" line that Busta Rhymes' character Dreads snarled in the film. I rewind the fight scene in "Higher Learning" every single time just so I can watch Busta Rhymes scream out and Ice Cube scratch his eyebrow as soon as they see the Aryan Nation characters.

No matter how many bands performed "What's It Gonna Be?" during the Battle of the Bands at the Jackie Robinson Parades during my high school years, watching their choreography mixed with live instrumentals never got old. And watching Busta Rhymes get all in Janet Jackson's face for the video version of the song was a sight to see, too.



On an even more personal note, I'm mildly amused every time I hear "When Disaster Strikes" because this was the first birthday gift I ever gave a guy, my first boyfriend (in my high school days). His reaction to getting the CD? All 6'3 of him stood in front of me and did the one-leg up dance. Watching tall people do that dance cracks me up, but that was his appreciative reaction. I cracked up laughing then, and I still laugh about it now.

**Numbers Don't Lie:** Versatility is key with Busta Rhymes. He could make aggressive hardcore rap, party music, something for the ladies and plenty for the radio. Billboard Top 100 singles that made it to the top 10 include "Woo-Hah!! Got You All In Check/Everything Remains Raw" (20 weeks, peaked at number eight), "Dangerous" (19 weeks, peaked at number nine), "Turn It Up (Remix)/Fire It Up" (20 weeks, peaked at number 10) and "What's It Gonna Be?!" (20 weeks, peaked at number three). On the Hot Rap Songs chart, top 10 hits include "As I Come Back" (two weeks, peaked at number seven), "Break Ya Neck" (17 weeks, peaked at number nine), "I Love My Chick/B\*\*\*h" (18 weeks, peaked at number eight), "Touch It" (25 weeks, peaked at number two) and "Arab Money" (13 weeks, peaked at number nine).

*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.*

*Follow **Shamontiel on Pinterest** for all of her latest TV, book, music and movie reviews; photo galleries; entertainment saving tips and other entries, or subscribe to her National African American Entertainment channel at the top of this page. Also, follow her **@BlackHealthNews**, and follow **this Pinterest board** to read her **celebrity interviews**.*