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Black Music Month 2014: June 3 musical salute to Method Man & Redman



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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?": Before the slang term "turn up" was created, these two were a visual image of how to do it. Both Clifford "Method Man" Smith and Reginald "Redman" Noble look like they'd just as quickly punch you in the face as kiss you on the cheek. Not too many rappers are as well respected by men as they are adored by women without having to compromise their style. These two did no such thing. Method Man even went so far as to show off a **glass eye** in "Bring the Pain." Not even a bloody eye from a beer can could stop his flow at **Gathering of the Juggalos**. And anyone who remembers that notorious episode of "Crips" with Redman, who showed off quite possibly the bummiest apartment for a celebrity, knows he has no interest in impressing people either. Both of them are nice on the eyes, but neither one of them ever banked on that outside of consistently having **masterfully clipped goatees**. Some rappers need a catchy hook or a muscle pose to get you to listen to their songs. Others force you to *want* to listen to their every word, catchy hook or not. As solo artists, these two were impressive, but as a team, there is no other male duo who meshes as well as these two do.

My Connection/First Memory to Artist: In college, a guy friend of mine asked me who was my type because he was trying to fix me up with one of his friends. I said something to the effect of, "I'm more likely to go for the Redman type than the Shemar Moore type." For the next two years at that first university, that became a running comment whenever he saw me. The man thought all I liked were weedheads. Not true. That wasn't *all I liked*, but it's not like Redman wasn't attractive so I let him play cupid. "**I'll Bee Dat**" was my favorite song from him -- not just because the entire video was hilarious -- but he always mastered the perfect balance of hip-hop and humor.

And like Ice Cube, I thoroughly respect and salute Method Man for being married for well over a decade. R&B singers are constantly under pressure to be single (from some unknown source), but rappers don't seem to have the same weight on them. I *respect* that he has been able to have a successful music career and protect his wife from tabloid fodder at the same time. While I'll probably always like Method Man best as the second half of "You're All I Need" (huge Marvin Gaye fan, by the way) with Mary J. Blige, my other favorite collaboration that I loved to rap and sing during college was Jonell's "Round and Round."

Numbers Don't Lie: Separately these two rappers have done well for themselves with hood anthems, as well as Billboard charts. On a solo basis, Method Man broke the top 100

charts with "Break Ups 2 Make Ups" for two weeks ranked at number 98 and "Release Yo' Delf" lasted a week, "The Riddler (From 'Batman Forever')" spent 11 weeks on the charts and peaked at number 56, and "Bring The Pain" stayed on the charts for 20 weeks and peaked at number 45.

Redman broke the top 100 with "Let's Get Dirty (I Can't Get In Da Club)" for two weeks ranked at number 97. Two other songs hung around for four weeks "Funkorama" (peaked at number 81) and "Can't Wait" (peaked at number 94). His biggest chart-topping hit was "Whateva Man," which stayed on the charts for 15 weeks and peaked at number 42.

And their film "**How High**" was profitable at the box office. According to IMDB, the film was made for a little over \$9.8 million and grossed over \$31 million. With any other artists, this film may have been a straight-to-DVD flick, but because it was these two comedic rappers, their fans supported the film and (some) purchased the "green" in the spirit of it all.

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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