

VH1 Goes Behind the Music with Six New Episodes

Written by Staff

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VH1's five-time Emmy-nominated documentary series "**Behind The Music**" returns to focus on six of today's most influential hip hop/urban artists. This season's roster includes:

Pitbull

,

Game

,

T-Pain

,

Akon

,

Brandy

and

Nas

. In addition to the dramatic storytelling that made

"Behind The Music"

a worldwide hit, the series will feature originally shot footage of each artist at work today, anchoring each story in the current day and connecting the past with the present.

The new season will premiere Thursday, March 15, 2012 at 9pm ET/PT

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"BEHIND THE MUSIC: PITBULL" – PREMIERES THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 2012 AT 9PM ET/PT

It's only through struggle that resilience arises and for Armando Christian Perez, better known to the world as **Pitbull**, the past ten years have seen the charismatic Cuban-American rapper evolve from an embattled upstart to become one of the most entertaining acts in all of pop music. Growing up in the gang-infested neighborhoods of Miami, Florida, Pitbull saw hip hop as a way out of the streets and into a better life. With his lighter complexion and "Spanglish" rhymes, he made an unlikely battle rapper, but his quick tongue and talent for wordplay earned him his first record contract at 20 years old. He spent the next several years honing his craft and transforming himself into an international superstar whose rapid-fire rhymes, billion-dollar beats and infectious hooks continue to take the world by storm.

By the time his sixth studio album Planet Pit was released this past year, Pitbull had transformed into a platinum-selling global sensation, whose knockout smash of the summer "Give Me Everything" climbed to the top of the Billboard Hot 100 and Pop charts and was also a top ten hit in 15 countries. In this installment of "**Behind the Music**," Pitbull opens up about his

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family struggles and how reconnecting with his dad as an adult filled a void in his life. With interviews with Lil' Jon, rap legend

Luther Campbell

of

2 Live Crew

, and hip hop mogul Irv Gotti, along with Pitbull's family and inner circle, "Behind the Music" follows Pitbull's extraordinary journey from the negative to the positive, topping charts and touching lives all around the world.

"BEHIND THE MUSIC: GAME" – PREMIERES THURSDAY, MARCH 22, 2012 AT 9PM ET/PT

"**Behind The Music: Game**" tracks the unlikely rise of a young gangbanger from Compton into the most successful west coast rapper since N.W.A. and Snoop Dogg

Born into a life of drugs and hustling, by the age of seven he was in a foster home. By high school, he was a full-time gang member and drug dealer. After being shot five times and left for dead, Game dedicated himself to becoming a rapper and against all odds, rose to the top of the genre, putting west coast gangsta rap back on the map. Despite numerous beefs, battles with depression and multiple arrests, Game has managed to stay on top with four consecutive #1 hit albums. Featuring candid, no holds barred interviews with Game, his family and close friends, Behind the Music: Game is a riveting portrait of one of hip-hop's most misunderstood artists.

"BEHIND THE MUSIC: T-PAIN" – PREMIERES THURSDAY, MARCH 29, 2012 AT 9PM ET/PT

"**Behind the Music: T-Pain**" explores the rise of a shy kid from Tallahassee, Florida to the heights of the music industry. T-Pain was born Faheem Najm into a stable, middle class family that supported his natural curiosity and talent in music at a very young age. An outsider in school, T-Pain spent his childhood locked in his makeshift bedroom "studio," producing his own music, eventually dropping out of the 8th grade to pursue his dreams full-time. As a teenager, he found local success with a group called the Nappy Headz. Frustrated by the lack of opportunities in Tallahassee, the falling apart of his family and a tense relationship with his father, T-Pain ran away from home and signed with Akon's fledgling label, Konvict Records. Finally on the national scene, his use of auto-tune created a signature sound and he quickly became one of the most sought-after producers, working with everyone from

Lil Wayne

, Kanye West

and

Britney Spears

. A multi-platinum selling artist in his own right with 2005's

Rappa Ternt Sanga, 2007's *Epiphany*, 2008's *Thr33 Ringz* and his most recent release

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rEVOLVER

, T-Pain has produced and been featured on over 45 top ten songs and 16 No. 1's.

Those participating in the special include: T-Pain, his family including wife Amber Najm, his parents and brother, Eric "DoeBoy" Youman, Akon and BU, Akon's brother and the person who gave T-Pain his first big break with a label and Michael Blumstein, Dave Abrams and Rocco Valdez from Chase Entertainment.

"BEHIND THE MUSIC: AKON" – PREMIERES THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 2012 AT 9PM ET/PT

In "**Behind The Music: Akon**," VH1 traces the artist's early beginnings in Senegal, Africa, through his struggles forging an identity in America and his criminal past as a car thief, landing him in prison. While there he ultimately found redemption by turning to music. Under heavy media scrutiny after his commercial success, Akon was forced to defend his heritage in the wake of several controversial onstage incidents. BTM catches up with Akon for a day-in-the-life as he promotes his forthcoming album, "Stadium." In the special, Akon opens up about his home life and addresses the notorious onstage incidents that included dirty dancing with an underage daughter of a preacher in Trinidad and tossing a fan off the stage at a concert in New York. He also talks about discovering Lady Gaga and being the last artist to record with the legendary

Michael Jackson

. In an effort to promote cultural tolerance and understanding, Akon is charting a career path to become hip hop's first truly global artist.

"BEHIND THE MUSIC: BRANDY" – PREMIERES THURSDAY, APRIL 19, 2012 AT 9PM ET/PT

"**Behind The Music: Brandy**" will chronicle the Grammy Award-winning artist from her days as young girl singing in her church choir to flourishing into a successful musician and actress. It will also follow Brandy's trials and tribulations, both personally and professionally, and illustrating how she re-emerged as a dynamic, hit-making musical recording artist with a successful acting career. At the tender age of 18, Brandy found herself dealing with the high costs of fame, maintaining her "perfect" image, all the while balancing her career as a musician and coping with the pressures of starring in her hit TV series "Moesha."

During this period, Brandy suffered life-altering tragic events, which are chronicled in this "**Behind the Music**

" special. Raising her daughter as a single mom and serving as a role model in her community via her Norwood Kids Foundation, which supports music and the performing arts in public schools, Brandy is on top of her game and currently in the studio working on her debut album

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for RCA/Chameleon Records set for release later this spring, as well as being a go-to actress for several TV and film roles including her upcoming role in Tyler Perry's film "The Marriage Counselor," as well as her roles on "90210," BET's scripted series "The Game" and serving as a mentor on the reality TV talent show for kids entitled "Majors and Minors."

"BEHIND THE MUSIC: NAS" – PREMIERES THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2012 AT 9PM ET/PT

"Behind The Music: Nas" tells the story of one of hip hop's most daring and prolific icons. Raised in the gritty Queensbridge projects of New York City, Nas narrowly escaped his violent surroundings. He later channeled his experiences into a lyrical style that would revolutionize hip hop. A musical legend by the age of 20, Nas' passion for music has carried him through a tumultuous career. Despite very public distractions including multiple feuds with hip hop's biggest names, political controversy, a highly publicized divorce with R&B star Kelis

, as well as the devastating loss of his mother, Nas' seven consecutive platinum albums have cemented him as one of the greatest hip hop artists of all time. The special features candid interviews with Nas, members of his family, friends and hip hop luminaries including Russell Simmons

,
Q-Tip
and
Common

. "Behind the Music: Nas" is the truly unfiltered story of Nasir Jones as it's never been told before.