

THE STYLE ISSUE: 25 TRENDSETTING ARTISTS

VIBE

HIP HOP MEETS ROCK

GWEN & PHARRELL

**REDEFINE
MUSIC AND
FASHION**

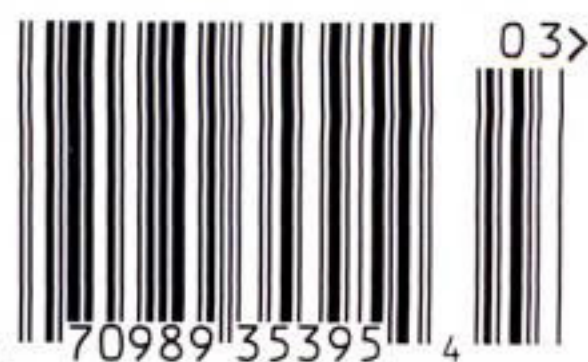
**FLAVOR FLAV
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**RAP'S
BLACK EYE
DOMESTIC
ABUSE EXPOSED**

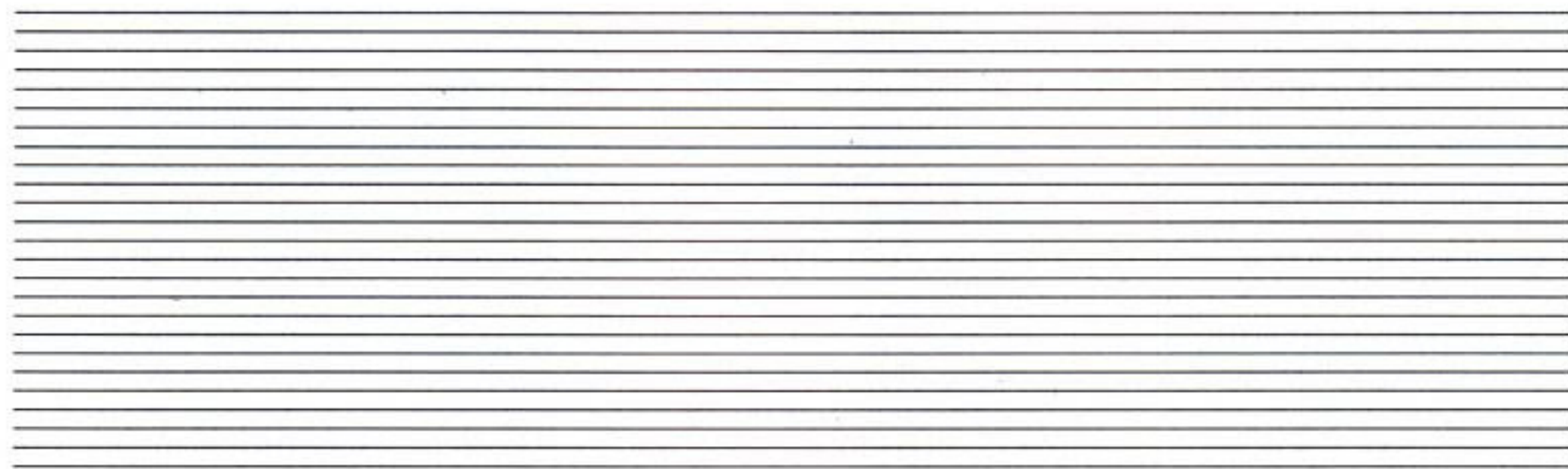
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Leave it to music to blur the lines of style and cool. Today, a Virginia-bred skater boy is making some of the hottest beats in hip hop. Meanwhile, a Southern California white girl, who fronts a rock band in a bindi and hoodie, collaborates brilliantly with Andre 3000, Eve, Dr. Dre, and the Neptunes. But Pharrell Williams and Gwen Stefani have always demonstrated the unifying principles of style. And that's why they've made **VIBE'S LIST OF 25 STYLE ICONS**. From the undeniable influence of Jay-Z and his new grown-up outlook to Jennifer Lopez, who has become the picture of female fabulousness, each artist here uses his or her imagination as their only guide through music and fashion. Also, stylists to the stars speak out, and the fashion police keep you in stitches as they reveal some of their most wanted. Nope, this is not your typical list of fashion sew-and-sews.



BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

New wave rocker **GWEN STEFANI** and hip hop skater-boy **PHARRELL WILLIAMS** chat it up about clothing lines, what happens when rock and rap trends collide, and why *The Dukes of Hazzard* was good for more than just the Daisy Dukes. **AYANA BYRD** listens as the uniting secrets of their styles are revealed.

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VIBE: There has always been a spotlight on your fashion senses, but how do you describe your style?

Gwen: For years I didn't want to talk about style at all. I was like, don't talk, just look at it. The music was always more important. With style, clearly I make an effort, and I enjoy it. But I felt like once the song was written, then it was time to get dressed up. Now I love talking about style.

What were your styles like before the fame?

Pharrell: I was a fuckin' nerd. And I'm still a fuckin' nerd....

G: You're definitely not a nerd.

P: Every two years, I dramatically changed the way I dressed. Before I started getting notoriety, I was considered kind of a weirdo. When Prada sneakers first came out, I wore them with jeans, and people said, "Where are your Jordans?" I would wear all these colors years ago, and dudes would be like, "What are you doin'?" Now it's cool to be vivid. In my first video, "Lapdance," in 2001, I wore a pink striped polo, which was totally unheard of then. Now, that's the shit, everyone wears pink. Not because of me, but...

You don't think you had anything to do with it?

P: Nah. I never take credit. Credit is something to be given, not to be taken. Look at the trucker hat. I can't say it's me. I got it from *The Dukes of Hazzard*. It seemed like Uncle Jesse wore one in every episode. I just always thought there was something cool about it.

G: I've been copying people forever, with my clothing, my music, my personality. I was gonna call my record *That Was Yours, Now It's Mine*, because the process is about being inspired by the things around me and making it mine.

P: People shouldn't be afraid to say they're influenced. I'm definitely influenced by Stevie Wonder, Jim Morrison's attitude, and I dug the way Robert Redford was a ladies' man, but he ain't fuck half the world. When I was young, hip hop was big, but so was rock 'n' roll. On MTV, we were watching Bryan Adams and Whitesnake. I would sit in class, and the guy next to me was into Depeche Mode and next to him was someone wearing an Iron Maiden T-shirt, and a skater was on the other side of the table. The thing that we had in common was that we were all creative.

Pharrell, you have Billionaire Boys Club (BBC), and Gwen, you've created your L.A.M.B. line. Is it mentally taxing to make your styles accessible to everyone?

G: It's a tug-of-war in my head. I was actually a little bit jealous when I started to see all my girls wearing my jeans. But, really, I love the whole process—from going out and finding the inspiration, picking a color palette, designing it, and then seeing people wear it. It's just like writing a song in that you're creating something from nothing. It's a part of who you are.

What was the inspiration behind the lines?

P: There's not too many entire lines where I like everything, but I love what [Japanese designer] Nigo does. What his clothing line embodies is his personality and his boundary-less attempt to be a big kid and make the world how he wants it. That's how I make my music—no boundaries. And I explore different colors and textures of a sound that nobody else uses. Not for the sake of being different, but for the sake of reaching into oblivion and finding that great new thing. To me, it's like making a song.

G: L.A.M.B. is inspired by Japanese culture, too. They take style very seriously there. You see kids there that can be into Japanese music and they dress so hip hop—with dreadlocks. It's pretty incredible to see the power of hip hop and how far its influence has reached.

P: I don't care how racist a person says they are, their children are singing Jay-Z and Eminem songs. Pop music is all hip hop influenced. And it's the same thing with style. Hip hop kids and rock kids are borrowing from each other. You have Sublime, who are influenced by hip hop, but they aren't making hip hop. Just like back when De La Soul and the Native Tongues were on some skater style. It's all about mixing it up, the bravery that comes from being open-minded.

GWEN STEFANI

Ska, new wave, rock, and rap. The outrageous white girl with punk roots—who, like Lil' Kim, rocked pink hair and made it hot—has quietly influenced fashion and music of all genres and styles. Whether she's teaming with fellow fashionista Eve or creatively sparring with Andre 3000, Gwen's ghetto fabulous pass extends beyond musical borders. And she's carried that fusion into her own L.A.M.B. (Love. Angel. Music. Baby.) clothing line, bringing into the fashion fold the Japanese Harajuku girls (named for Tokyo's famous shopping district). And the beat goes on.

Style: Marilyn Monroe meets Cyndi Lauper

Known for: Blond hair, Rasta-influenced wristbands, bindi

Fashion word: "Think what that money could bring / I'd buy everything / Clean out Vivienne Westwood in my Galliano gown."

PHARRELL WILLIAMS

As half of the futuristic production duo the Neptunes, Pharrell has traveled off the beaten path and become a fashion It boy in the process. By staying true to his humble skater-boy beginnings, he turned the fashion world into a personalized playground where cultures collide. From his Ice Cream footwear to his latest eyeglasses designs for Louis Vuitton, Pharrell has initiated the revenge of the nerds.

Style: Tony Hawk meets Miles Davis
Known for: A Bathing Ape (BAPE), foam trucker hats

Fashion word: "I'm a nice dude, with some nice dreams / See these ice cubes, see these Ice Creams?"