

## Pharrell's Neptunes beginning to a hit solo career

Pharrell Williams (aka Skateboard P) is a songwriter, singer, and rapper, from Virginia Beach, Virginia. He is the songwriter for hip-hop production duo, The Neptunes, alongside with Chad Hugo. In addition, he is the lead singer and drummer for funk/rock group N\*E\*R\*D, with Hugo and Shae Haley. He also is a budding solo artist, both as a singer and rapper. Pharrell and Hugo first met each other in Junior School and after graduating from high school, together formed 'The Neptunes'.

In 1998, they scored their first major production hit was with N.O.R.E.'s Superthug, which would climb to #36 on the Billboard Hot 100. Thereafter, the pair would go on to produce Kelis' first album, Kaleidoscope, as well as Ol' Dirty Bastard's record, Got your money. The duo would later work with Mystikal on his Shake Ya Ass single and also with Diddy's single, Diddy. In both songs, Pharrell sang the hook.

In 2001, Pharrell, Hugo, and Haley released their first album, In Search Of... (electronic), as N\*E\*R\*D in Europe. Before its worldwide release in 2002, the group reworked the N\*E\*R\*D sound to make it more unique and re-recorded the album with the funk-rock band, Spymob. In August 2002, The Neptunes were honored as Producers of the Year at both The Source Awards and the Billboard Music Awards.

That same year, Pharrell wrote and produced rapper Nelly's single, Hot in Herre, which would go on to peak at the top of U.S. music charts. Thereafter, Pharrell would provide Britney Spears with a hit single as well, with I'm A Slave 4 U. In 2003, Pharrell released his first solo single, Frontin, which featured Jay-Z. The single was a big summer hit and would keep the ball rolling for Pharrell, as The Neptunes released the album, The Neptunes Present...Clones, which would debut at the top of the album charts in August 2003.

Pharrell had a big year in 2004. Not only did N\*E\*R\*D release their second album, Fly Or Die, Pharrell would also win two Grammy Awards, one for Producer of the year, Non-Classical and the other for Best Pop Vocal Album for his work on Justin Timberlake's album, Justified. Pharrell's next solo album is scheduled to be released on July 25, 2006 and will feature several popular musical guests, including: Gwen Stefani, Daddy Yankee, Jay-Z, and Kanye West. Besides music, Pharrell also has a hand in business, as the owner of two clothing brands, Billionaire Boys Club and Ice Cream.

## About the Author

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