

pause

Teairra Mari

Give Me Five Reasons to Hit Pause...

1. At 17-years-old, this pretty young thing is poised to be the youngest and hottest new artist in the world of urban music. Ciara better come up with a new dance, 'cause Teairra is about to make the 1, 2 Step a thing of the past.

2. Jigga is taking his new position as President of Def Jam quite seriously. As one of the first artists signed to his label, Shawn Carter and Antonio "LA" Reid wanted to make sure that young Teairra was going to be hot out of the box and recruited hit-maker Sean Garrett (Bettie Midler, Ciara, Usher) to help create her debut single "Make A Girl Feel."

3. The "Young Princess of The Roc" began recording demos in her cousin's basement at age 12. By age 16, one of her demos wound up on Reid's desk, who signed her on the spot after a brief, but impressive meeting. "I couldn't believe it," she says. "I was crying because I was so happy. I felt like everyone's behind me, which is a great feeling to have coming from a time when it seemed that nobody believed in me or wanted to hear me."

4. Now that she's getting the chance to share her voice with the world, she's more than willing to relate to her girls. "Not only is ['Make A Girl Feel'] me, it's other girls too. Other girls can relate because I know that's how they feel. Every girl that has heard the song is like, 'Omgod! Thank you, Teairra.'"

5. This girl's proud to be reppin' her hometown of Detroit. "Right now, everything's all about the whole Southern movement, so me coming in from the Midwest is like a breath of fresh air," says this teenage Motor City Rebel. "There's no other city in America like Detroit. It's just fly, and I love it. Our swagga, the way we dress—everything is so different and laid back, which is how I am. You walk up the street and everybody has a different colored mink, Carter glasses—everything. We like to floss and be seen, so we don't have to say much. Every time someone sees me, they're like, 'Girl, you sharp!' and I'm like, 'Yes, I'm from Detroit.'"

What Else Should I Know Before I Hit Fly?

Though she wasn't even born when it was released, Teairra's debut single owes a whole lot to Eric B. & Rakim's 1987 cut, "My Melody." Her R&B vocals lace the classic sample from the legendary hip-hop duo's debut album, *Paid In Full*. "When I heard that track," she explains. "I was like, 'This is the one, because it's simple but also huge.'"

K. Young

Give Me Five Reasons to Hit Pause...

1. At age 19, K. Young has already made a name for himself in the music industry, as well as the film industry. He's been on the grind since age nine and he believes he's honed his skills enough to guarantee superstardom.

2. His first film role was in *Eye For an Eye*, in which a pint-sized Young worked alongside Sally Field and Keifer Sutherland. He also went on to appear in *The Fan* with Wesley Snipes and Robert DeNiro, and the Danny DeVito-directed *Matilda*.

3. In addition to his successful film career, he's written songs for the platinum-selling likes of Brandy, Yolanda Adams and Ginuwine — how many kids his age can make that grand of a claim? He also toured with Britney Spears, N'Sync and the Backstreet Boys as lead singer for the R&B group 3rd Storee.

4. This hardworking teen's current workload includes writing credits with fellow teen idols 82K, Formula 1 and Omarion.

5. This youth isn't about to sell himself short with the same old songs about Bentleys and poppin' bottles. "I didn't want to have an album that's just talking about the same stuff," he says about his debut album. "I know how I can take it to the next level."

What Else Should I Know Before I Hit Play?

As it turns out, this Young'n (get it...

Young'n? Ugh.) is actually family friends with another child star-turned-teen diva. It was Raven Symone's connection that helped K. Young land his record deal. Raven introduced Young to the right people and the rest, as they say, is history.

pause

Keyshia Cole

Give Me Five Reasons to Hit Pause...

1. After a wait that has felt like forever for fans who've been teased by her work on soundtracks such as *Barbershop 2* and *Me & Mrs. Jones*, Keyshia is finally dropping her debut *The Way It Is*.

2. The highly anticipated debut is pulling no punches and features heavyweights such as Kanye West; producer and songwriter DaRon of 112; rapper Chink Santana, and super producer E-Poppi. A line-up like that should guarantee the young singer a solid fan base and great sales.

3. This project is mostly personal due to the fact that the Mary J. Blige and Brandy-inspired singer penned most of her own songs. "Being young, you have to be really dedicated to doing it for yourself," says Keyshia. "There's a lot of trials and tribulations you have to go through to get what you want, especially if you feel like it belongs to you."

4. Hailing from the rough-and-tumble town of Oakland, California, this girl has plenty to sing about. Her first single with the always-egotistical Kanye West, "I Changed My Mind" shows a girl who's made too many sacrifices in the name of love and has decided that enough is finally enough.

5. Hard-working, goofy and fun (all keywords she uses to describe herself.) Keyshia is a go-getter who's made her career happen all by herself. After catching her boyfriend cheating, she decided to pursue her dream, drove out to Los Angeles and within months landed herself the connections needed to drop her debut.

What Else Should I Know Before I Hit Play?

Before she was even a teen, tiny Keyshia was schmoozing with the music industry's hottest stars. Younger than 12 years of age, she convinced then-superstar MC Hammer to put her onto the game. Being a little too legit too quit at her young age, little Keyshia made it happen and did some recordings with Hammer. Twenty pairs of parachute pants later and she's sure to blow.

A portrait of Micah Stampley, a young Black man with short hair, smiling warmly. He is wearing a light-colored, vertically striped dress shirt and a brown blazer. The background is a textured, warm-toned wall. A horizontal dotted line is visible above the text.

Micah Stampley

Give Me Five Reasons to Hit Pause...

1. Micah is doing what every other God-fearing Christian does on a regular basis — awaiting the return of his true Lord and Holy Father, Jesus “Big Ups to Brooklyn” Christ. What separates him from the pack is that he has the ability to prepare people for said return through the power of music.

2. His current album, *The Songbook of Micah*, doesn't just attempt to stick to a strict Gospel agenda. Though his father allowed nothing but Gospel music in his home, Micah was a huge fan of the likes of Michael Jackson and Cyndi Lauper. “I always loved the Gospel music I was raised on,” he recalls, “and anything with a choir sound immediately grabbed me, but the secular stuff really opened my ears, musically, to a whole world that was out there that I hardly knew existed.”

3. For a while he took up a ministerial role. However, due to tragedy, he put down his robe to express his emotions through music. When his brother was killed in a gun accident in 1994, everything began to change.

4. He currently wishes to spread the Gospel through more than just music. “Drama as well as music has been a significant part of my life,” he says, “and I want to use those gifts to spread the Gospel through TV, stage and film, as well as my music. I've also been able to travel and perform abroad in the last few years, and it's kindled a passion to carry the Word to all the cracks and crevices of the world where it has yet to penetrate.”

5. Aside from his more entertaining endeavors, Micah is looking to the future and already deciding on ways he can help his fellow man. Some goals he's currently striving for are building homeless shelters and rehabilitation clinics, and funding feeding programs and educational scholarship foundations. Now that's not just being a good Christian, that's being an exceptional human being.

What Else Should I Know Before I Hit Play?

You already know that Micah tapped into his God-given talent at an early age, but that's not all he tapped into. By age seven he took up the art of directing and teaching harmonies to the choir. In a move that seems nearly impossible, he took up the reigns as the church's choir director. The catch? Little Micah had to stand on top of an offering table in order for the entire choir to see him.

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