

Getting Swept Up in the Magic that is BTS



Credit: BTS Official Facebook Page.

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LAST UPDATED JULY 22, 2020, 10:35 PM

BTS are the artists from South Korea on everyone's lips right now also known as Bangtan Boys, if you don't know who they are – what have you been doing for the last few years? The seven members that make up BTS are RM, Jin, Suga, J-Hope, Jimin, V and Jungkook. Now is the perfect time to fall in love with BTS.

They have sold out albums and arenas all over the world but who are BTS? Underneath the charismatic, multi-talented group, are seven guys with a powerful message in their music videos, their lyrics and how they present themselves. In a recent press junket for their latest album, leader, RM explained how, “Seven symbolises the number of members and years spent together. Seven means very good luck, right? Lucky number 7”

Their popularity is not confined to one region – or even continent – as the seven-member act are global in every sense. Their impact on Western charts comes after remaining true to themselves, and increasing their fanbase through

messages of love, hope, acceptance and growth, as well as being wonderful, humble individuals who make up one of the most talented groups in the world. With every song and music video to accompany the track, the music evolves as the years go by, again showing that there is no set genre when it comes to the greatest band in the world at this moment in time.

Since BTS debuted back in 2013, followed by conquering the world with their artistry, it is surprising that many people are still failing to see how talented these guys are, with them writing and producing their own albums whilst being vocal on many social issues. BTS continue to challenge the status quo, having been the first K-pop group featured on the cover of TIME magazine in their Next Generation Leaders issue.

What defines BTS and sets them apart from other K-Pop bands in the eyes of fans, is their emotional honesty, expressed through their lyrics, press interviews, and personal videos. From the beginning, the group have promoted advocacy and social change, encouraging their listeners, especially youth, to speak up and stand up not just for themselves and others. With the platform they have been given, they have managed to do great things. It was clear from the outset that they had something different that captures everyone's attention, perhaps what some Western artists are envious of.



BTS have sold out many stadiums across the globe including Wembley Credit: (BigHit Entertainment)

Having been snubbed of Grammy nominations and lack of radio play are two of the frustrating realities for many fans of non-Western music. Many in the US are happy to use popular global acts like BTS for clout such as inviting them to award shows, mentioning them on Twitter, but continue to fail to see them stand as equals among Western artists. A wrongful assumption pervades BTS' fan base is fuelled by teenage devotion, and xenophobia from an industry traditionally dominated by predominately white Western artists, but this couldn't be further from the truth.

They have dealt with adversity and being racially profiled, but one thing they can certainly count on is their fan base, ARMY. In the year of 2018, BTS became the first K-pop group to perform at the Billboard Music Awards when they performed '*Fake Love*', making their mark in the West.

Despite having their success compared to The Beatles, they have their own style. Their genre is BTS, slick, electrifying and mesmerising. Trophies will never define BTS' global impact, one that will likely become increasingly harder for anyone to ignore.

Their "*Love Yourself*" album series oversaw the journey to self-love amid the highs and lows of an ill-fated romance. They aim to remind the younger generation and ARMY that true love starts within you.



The popular Korean group performing on ITV's Britain's Got Talent.
Credit:Dymond/Thames/Syco/Shutterstock

BTS embraces their Korean culture by using minimal English lyrics in their songs and getting their messages across through meaningful words. The talented group's newest album *Map of the Soul: 7* is no different. The tangible themes visible in the latest release are the idea of perseverance and strength, narrating the band's journey and the lessons they've learned along the way in their seven years of performing.

For example, the song 'ON' details BTS's calling as artists and the perseverance and strength that carried them over the past seven years. The music video signifies BTS's determination and ambition to reach where they are today. What's not to love about this group? The members of BTS are actively writing themselves into music history; haters beware.

BTS are more than surface level entertainers, refuse to be confined by genre and the most influential group in the world right now. Over the years BTS have built a reputation as being one of the most socially conscious artists in South Korea, donating money to many organisations over the years, recently donated 1 million Korean won towards COVID-19 research, Live Nation's Covid-19 relief fund and Black Lives Matter.



Credit: Steve Granitz (Getty Images)

They cater to diverse audiences, having released three Japanese language albums with their fourth most recent release *Map of the Soul: The Journey*. BTS have never tried to be the next of anything, they're just trying to be the best versions of themselves. Rewarding their fans for their support by making each

comeback and each album release unique to them and gaining more anticipation.

They endeavour to stand out amongst their pop peers through a tendency to integrate so-called high culture with popular culture. There's no stopping them from surpassing even this feat, they embody eminence and embrace being the greatest K-Pop band of their generation making a difference wherever they go. Their ability to connect with fans is what makes BTS special.

World domination is a phrase that just makes sense for BTS as Map of the Soul: 7 continues to dominate the charts across the globe. There is no stopping BTS. Who knows what the next seven years will hold, their ARMY will be waiting for more!