



By Cheryl Zhang

# SUGA & SPICE AND ALL THINGS NICE

After spinning us Round Round and giving us a Hole in the Head, the Sugababes have proven that they aren't going anywhere just yet.

Having attained triple platinum album sales from three of their albums in the UK, the group have scored successes around Europe and Asia, with Number One singles in the United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, Poland, Denmark, Austria and New Zealand.

Obviously energised by the success of their Overloaded singles collection which had 14 hit singles including four Number One songs, the award-winning trio from London, Britain now find themselves in a position where their greatest rival is themselves.

### YOUNG UPSTARTS

Childhood friends Keisha Buchanon and Mutya Buena met Siobhan Donaghy when they were 13, and the trio were offered a record contract by London Records when they were 14. They called themselves Sugababes, a spin-off from Buchanan's school nickname of "Sugar Baby".

Their debut single 'Overload' made it into the UK Top 10 and was nominated for a BRIT Award for Best Single, whilst their debut album produced three more Top 20 hits in the UK. However, during a Japanese promotional tour, Siobhan Donaghy left the group in pursuit of a fashion career. It was later revealed that she was suffering from clinical depression amidst reports of rumoured fighting between the Sugababes members. Founding member of Atomic Kitten, Heidi Range, was to be her replacement. However, One Touch did not meet London Records' expectations, and the trio were dropped in 2001.

### SECOND & THIRD BASE

Having already started work on a second album *Angels with Dirty Faces*, the Sugababes looked for a new record label, eventually signing to Island Records. Their first single debuted at Number One in the UK and had an accompanying video, which saw Range being initiated into the group.

Off to a good start, the album then debuted at number two on the UK album chart and was a success across Europe, eventually being certified triple platinum in the UK, and selling one million copies in Europe. Continuing on their golden path, the group's third album *Three* was released in late 2003 and reached number three on the UK Album Chart.

Since then, the band have become synonymous with imaginative, cutting edge, daring and effervescent pop music, turning in several defining moments in the modern pop era along the way and picking up plaudits including: a Brit award (along with various nominations), a Q award, a Smash Hits award, two TMF awards, 2 Capital Radio awards, two Elle Style awards and a Glamour gong.



### ABOUT YOU NOW

After their successful Greatest Hits Tour, the Sugababes returned to the recording studio in summer 2007 to work on their fifth album *Change*. Choosing to once again work with William Orbit, Dallas Austin and Xenomania, their success formula seems unstoppable. Recorded with Dr Luke (Kelis, Pink, Missy Elliott) and written with Cathy Dennis, the recently-released single 'About You Now' has entered the UK charts at number one, and has stayed there for three weeks running (at time of print). In fact, the Sugababes are the first group and the first female act to top the UK singles chart through the sales of downloads alone.

Obviously striking a right chord with listeners, the single is fizzing with synths, guitars and perky beats, and is melodically captivating with, at its centre, an utterly hypnotic chorus of "Can we bring yesterday back around, 'cos I know how I feel about you now". 'About You Now' is an anthem for anyone who's ever chucked everything away then immediately regretted it – or anyone who's ever wanted to hear those words from someone else's lips.

If the first single from *Change* is anything to go by, the rest of the singles from the album should follow in the footsteps of its predeceasing songs – all the way to number one. Looks like the pop music scene is definitely About the Sugababes these days.

**GETTING AN OVERLOAD OF SUGA****Was it tempting to take some time off before starting the new album?**

Amelle: Well, definitely not for me, 'cos I've just joined! I wanted to get right in and start from scratch.

Keisha: We've always had the same dream and I think it was just natural for us to move forward.

Heidi: I think a week or two would be nice and then we'd get straight back into it. When we get time off, after about a few days, you just start wondering, "Hey, what's going on?"

Keisha: Yeah, we get bored if we're away for too long.

**Where was the album recorded?**

Sugababes: Cairns, Atlanta, numerous places around London. A good place that we worked at was where we met Justin Timberlake, Timbaland, Madonna and her daughter.

**Tell us about the song "Change"**

Sugababes: We did another track called Change and we wrote it with these guys from Denmark. We really liked this song instantly and it's nice to do another power ballad (if you want to call it that) because the last one that we did was "Too Lost in You". And it's nice to do one again.

**Amelle, how are you enjoying being a fully-fledged Sugababe?**

I'm really enjoying this, I've always wanted to do this, You know, I love to write, and we get along so well and as of now, I'm really happy that I'm in a good place. Well, we all are, so it's [really] cool.

**SUGA-RY DELIGHTS****The Sugababes have:**

- Sold over nine million albums worldwide.
- Released 19 singles.
- Been the first pop group ever to play the main stage at the popular Glastonbury Festival.
- Teamed up with Mattel to create a new themed Barbie doll collection.
- Won "Best World Group" at the ESKA Music Awards 2006 in Poland.

**ONE + ONE = THREE**

- **1998:** Sugababes was formed with members of Keisha Buchanan, Mutya Buena and Siobhan Donaghy
- **2001:** Siobhan Donaghy left the group for a fashion career, but eventually got diagnosed with clinical depression. Heidi Range (founding member of Atomic Kitten) was announced as her replacement.
- **2005:** After an apparent illness, Mutya Buena left the group, but the departure was also based on personal reasons.
- **2005:** Amelle Berrabah joined the group in late December.