

Throwback: Kelis-Popular Thug Feat. Nas

Kelis recorded “Popular Thug” for her 2001 album *Wanderland*. The quirky song about a woman falling for the proverbial bad boy was humorous and sounded like no other R&B singer at the time. Pusha T of The Clipse was the featured rapper who provided the comeback to Kelis’s complaint. The Neptunes’ midtempo arrangement of lazy rhythm guitar, church organ and a spacey synthesizer made Kelis sound like a sensual android. Unfortunately Virgin Records did not understand *Wanderland* and the album would only be released in Europe until 2019 when it became officially available in the United States. Music critics praised her sophomore album and European fans embraced the succession of her unique style introduced on her 1999 *Kaleidoscope* debut. American fans would later express disappointment at having to wait so long to be able to buy the album. Kelis recorded “Popular Thug” a second time with ex-husband Nas for *The Neptunes Present...Clones* album released in 2003. Fans have argued over which version is better but they all agree on it being an underappreciated album cut.

Kelis’s last studio album was *Food* released in 2014. In May of 2021 she revealed on Instagram that she she may title her seventh album Sound Mind. The singer became a chef in 2006 and has released a cookbook, line of sauces and in 2020 appeared on the Netflix series Cooked With Cannabis.



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