

# Listen: Beyoncé: Renaissance Album Stream

Beyoncé's much-anticipated *Renaissance* album comes weeks after she released the house track "Break My Soul" on the Summer Solstice. She told Harper's Bazaar last year she was working on her next album and planned to make it a place of safe escape after so much isolation and injustice in 2020. The cover of *Renaissance* is an ode to John Collier's Lady Godiva painting and Bianca Jagger's horse ride into famed New York club Studio 54. Beyoncé credits her late gay uncle Johnny for introducing her to the world and culture of dance music which is the main source of inspiration for *Renaissance*. The album is blended liked a mixtape and feels like one long night at the club. Syd, The Dream, Hit-Boy and Honey Dijon are among the personnel who helped bring Beyoncé's vision to life. "Break My Soul" isn't the only 3 AM offering; "Cozy," the Donna Summer-sampled-"Summer Renaissance" and "Pure/Honey" are all meant for peak hours on the dancefloor. Fashion and music icon Grace Jones, who was a Studio 54 fixture, appears on "Move" with Nigerian singer Tems.

It's been six days since *Renaissance* leaked online before the official release date of July 29th and Beyoncé has already addressed two controversies around the album. The sample of Kelis's "Milkshake" has been removed from "Energy" after the singer took to social media to voice her gripe of "theft" after not being contacted about its use. Pharrell Williams and Chad Hugo aka The Neptunes took all credit for the song and this has been a sore spot with Kelis for years. The word "spaz" was lifted from "Heated" because online watchers pointed out that the word is an ableist slur used to denigrate those with Cerebral Palsy. Lizzo also removed the word for the same reason from "Grrrls" off of her recently-released *Special* album.

The changes to *Renaissance* make no difference in its potency as a much-needed club respite and necessary dance music history lesson. The only real question now is when will Beyoncé take Renaissance on tour and what will the videos look like.