

Throwback: Oaktown's 3.5.7. - Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!



Thirty-five years ago Oaktown's 3.5.7.'s debut album, *Wild & Loose* was released on MC Hammer's Bust It Records and Capital Records. Suhayla Sabir (Sweet L.D), Tabatha Zee King-Brooks (Terrible T) and Phyllis Charles (Lil P) were dancers for MC Hammer before he put them together as Oaktown's 3.5.7. He named them after their collective hometown of Oakland, California, and the 357 Magnum firearm because he likened their energy to the impact of a powerful gun. "Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!" was fun, funky and dominated by the sounds of screaming crowds and horn thrusts from a James Brown sample. They were not rap wizards so much as they were contemporary B-girls representing the culture minus the breakdancing. Oaktown's 3.5.7. had to be seen to be fully appreciated because they

were hip-hop dance pioneers like their mentor MC Hammer. Lil P left and two new members Sweet P and VC had joined the group by the time of the “Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!” video shoot. The video for “Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!” was played around the clock on the Video Jukebox Network where viewers could call a 1-900 number and pay up to \$3.99 to request a maximum of three videos. Yo! MTV Raps also played the video.

Nationally, Salt-N-Pepa were the biggest woman hip-hop group at the time. J.J. Fad and The Conscious Daughters were also women rap groups from California but none of them had Oaktown’s 3.5.7’s choreographer. Their performances were energetic, lengthy, and athletic. Janet Jackson wanted them to dance with her but Hammer’s production company denied the request. Most fans remember them for the pre-“W.A.P.” “Juicy Gotcha Krazy” that featured labelmate B Angie B. But “Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!” was also a hip-hop triumph for the Bay Area and it lit up clubs and college campuses around the country.

Oaktown’s 3.5.7. helped define sexiness for women rappers at the time with their suggestive lyrics, an absence of curse words and fluid movements. Women artists were still able to wear hip-hop gear and not cater to a corporate male gaze. Salt-N-Pepa’s glam era had not yet started and the arrival of Lauryn Hill and Lil Kim was a few years away. The group recorded two albums before they disbanded in 1992 but reconnected via Facebook in 2015. “Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!” is still making Oaktown’s 3.5.7. new fans in 2024. The ladies are active on [social media](#) and the pulse of their music demands a remastered and reissued version of *Wild & Loose*.