

## = La Bella Mafia =

La Bella Mafia is the third studio album by rapper Lil ' Kim , released March 4 , 2003 on Atlantic Records . It debuted at number five on the U.S. Billboard 200 chart , selling 166 @, @ 000 in its first week and reached number four on the Top R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Albums chart . A commercial success , La Bella Mafia was certified platinum by the RIAA , selling over one million copies in the US and over 3 @. @ 5 million worldwide , becoming the highest selling female rap album of 2003 .

The album marked Kim 's return after a musical hiatus . La Bella Mafia received positive reviews from music critics upon its release , marking Kim 's lyrical ability as impressive and her presence as formidable . It produced two singles that attained Billboard chart success . The lead single " The Jump Off , " peaked at number 17 on the U.S. Billboard Hot 100 and at 16 on the UK Singles Chart chart . The second single " Magic Stick " , featured 50 Cent , peaked at number two on the Billboard Hot 100 . The singles " Magic Stick " and " Came Back for You " earned Kim a Grammy nomination for Best Rap Performance by a Duo or Group and Best Female Rap Solo Performance , respectively .

## = = Background = =

In late 2001 , Lil ' Kim left Junior M.A.F.I.A. and severed ties with all members . She also ended her friendship and business relationship with longtime collaborator Sean " Diddy " Combs .

Recording sessions for La Bella Mafia began in the spring of 2002 . In April 2002 , Lil ' Kim stated in an interview that she had begun working with Dr. Dre in the recording studio . She told MTV , " I 've been talking to Dre a lot . And Dre and I are talking about possibly doing some collaborations . He 's a cool cat . I love Dre . Our chemistry in the studio was just like , cool . We 've been working , you know , trying to cook up some things " . Kim also stated that she wanted to work with Eminem , Timbaland , and The Neptunes .

The original title for the album was Hollyhood ( which was also set to be the name of her clothing line and to her skit ) , but it was changed to La Bella Mafia ( which in Italian means ' Beautiful Mafia ' ) after Lil ' Kim watched a film of the same name about a family of mob widows who seek revenge for the murders of their mobster husbands . She stated , " Any girl who 's strong and very dedicated to what they do and don 't take no mess , they can be a part of La Bella Mafia " .

Limited edition collectable cards were included in the first 500 @, @ 000 US CDs that allowed fans to unlock exclusive content , such as photos and video , from the Internet .

## = = Reception = =

## = = = Critical response = = =

La Bella Mafia received generally positive reviews , as Metacritic reviews scored it at 65 out of 100 . AllMusic critic Jason Birchmeier stated her previous album The Notorious K.I.M. was considered a " disappointment " as a follow @-@ up to her debut album Hard Core and La Bella Mafia reestablished her as an " industry icon " . Nick Catucci , a critic for Spin Magazine , who gave the album 3 stars claimed , " The King is dead - long live the Queen " .

Stylus magazine critic Brett Berliner gave the album a B + calling the album " one of the top hip @-@ hop albums of 2003 " and said , " Kim is now in a class of female MCs that includes only Rah Digga and MC Lyte - and she 's more confident , funny , and sexy than any of them " . Sal Cinquemani of Slant Magazine gave the album 3 stars stating the album was her " most consistent effort to date , " and added the album " plays like one giant bravado about everything : fame , money , power , sex , clothes , rhymes " .

Critics were also impressed with her lyrical ability . Jon Caramanica of Rolling Stone gave the album 3 stars stating , " When she really gets her hands dirty , Kim sounds more forceful and engaged than she 's been in years " . However , some critics felt the album was too long and

contained too many fillers . Birchmeier of Allmusic stated the album could use a little " trimming " . Brett Berliner of Stylus Magazine said , " I enjoy about eight songs on this album , but they 're tracks I only feel like listening to from time to time " .

= = = Commercial performance = = =

La Bella Mafia debuted at number four on the U.S. ' s Top R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Albums chart , and at number @-@ five on the Billboard 200 , with a successful first week sales of 160 @,@ 000 copies , and ultimately spent a little over 29 weeks on that chart . The album sold over 3 @.@ 5 million copies worldwide , and received a platinum certification by the RIAA , for sales of over 1 @.@ 1 million copies . Outside the States , it debuted at number 81 on the Swiss Albums Chart , at number 105 on the French Albums Chart and at number 82 on the German Albums Chart .

= = Singles = =

Altogether La Bella Mafia spawned two international singles and a third US only single . The lead album 's first single , " The Jump Off " peaked in the top @-@ twenty on the U.S. Billboard Hot 100 chart with a peak position of number 17 , becoming Kim 's biggest single since her 1997 's " Not Tonight ( Ladies Night Remix ) " . It also reached number 8 on the Hot R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Songs chart , number 7 on the Hot Rap Tracks chart , and number 16 on the UK Singles Chart . The second single , " Magic Stick " , featured 50 Cent , peaked in the top @-@ ten on the Hot 100 chart reaching number 2 , without a music video , and it wasn 't even released as a single . It ended up spending 14 weeks on the chart , becoming Kim 's biggest and highest single on that chart . It also reached number 2 on the Hot R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Songs chart , number 7 on the Pop chart and number 1 on the Hot Rap Songs chart . The song " Thug Luv " , featuring Twista , was serviced to U.S. radios only . It reached number 60 on the Hot R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Songs chart and number 14 on the Hot Rap Songs . A CD single was also released in the US .

= = Track listing = =

= = = Sample credits = = =

" Juicytro " contains a sample of The Notorious B.I.G. ' s " Juicy " .

" Hold It Now " contains samples of Beastie Boys ' " Paul Revere " and Kurtis Blow 's " Christmas Rappin ' " .

" Can 't Fuck with Queen Bee " contains an sample and interpolation from the hit Deniece Williams song " Free " .

" Shake Ya Bum Bum " contains a sample of Saregama India Ltd 's " Hum " .

" The Jump Off " contains an interpolation from The Lost Boyz 's " Jeeps , Lex , Coups , Bimaz , and Benz " .

" This Is a Warning " contains a sample and interpolation of R. Kelly 's " A Woman 's Threat " .

" Magic Stick " contains a sample of B.B. King 's " The Thrill Is Gone " .

" Get In Touch with Us " contains a sample of Saregama India Ltd 's " Zindagi Ban Gaye To Tum " .

" Heavenly Father " contains a sample of The O 'Jays 's " A Prayer " .

" Came Back for You " contains a sample of Irene Reid 's " Didn 't We " .

= = = Leftover tracks = = =

" Knock ' Em Out the Box " ( featuring Method Man )

" Back Together Again " ( featuring The Notorious B.I.G. )

" Flow So Sick " ( featuring Ice Drake )

" What 's The Word ? " ( featured bonus track on the Japanese album release )

= = Personnel = =

Executive Producers : Kimberly " Lil ' Kim " Jones & The Notorious B.I.G.  
Associate Producers : Hillary Weston & Jean Nelson  
Queen Bee A & R : Jean Nelson & Dre Weston  
Atlantic A & R : Huston " Hutty " Miller  
Atlantic A & R Administrator : Lanre Gaba  
Atlantic A & R Coordinator : Chris Wade  
Queen Bee Project Manager : Jamel " Mann " Jackson  
Atlantic Project Manager : Joi Brown  
Album Assistant Engineer : Greg " Gee " Stewart  
Management : Hillary Weston  
Legal Affairs : L. Londell McMillan , P.C.  
Business Affairs : David Berdon LLP & Co .  
Album Sequencing : DJ 45 & Dan " The " Man  
Cover Photo & Photos 1 , 2 : Vincent Soyez  
Hair : Tre Major  
Makeup : JJ  
Styling : Derek Lee and Kimberly " Lil ' Kim " Jones  
Prop Stylist : Linda Keil  
Jewelry : MiMi So  
Additional Jewelry : Prestige Diamonds  
Photos 3 , 4 : David LaChapelle  
Hair : Cessy Lima  
Makeup : Scott Barnes  
Styling : Andrea Leiberman  
Jewelry : Diamond Quasar  
Art Direction : Lynn Kowalewski  
Design : Kevin Wolahan

= = Charts and certifications = =