

= Bizarre Ride II the Pharcyde =

Bizarre Ride II the Pharcyde is the debut album of American hip hop group The Pharcyde , released on November 24 , 1992 through Delicious Vinyl Records . The album was produced by former group member J @-@ Swift , and features only one guest appearance , provided by little known Los Angeles rapper Bucwheed (known then as " Buckwheat " from The Wascals) . In the years after its release , Bizarre Ride has been hailed by music critics and alternative hip hop fans , as a classic hip hop album along with Souls of Mischief 's " 93 ' til Infinity " , and has appeared in numerous publications ' " best albums " lists .

Released during the dominant Gangsta rap era of West Coast hip hop , Bizarre Ride was described as " refreshing " due to its playful , light @-@ hearted humor and lush , jazzy production . Along with albums such as To Whom It May Concern ... by Freestyle Fellowship , and I Wish My Brother George Was Here by Del tha Funkee Homosapien , Bizarre Ride helped establish a new alternative scene on the West Coast , followed by artists such as Hieroglyphics , The Coup and Jurassic 5 . Despite its wide critical acclaim , the album produced only moderate sales , peaking at No. 75 on the Billboard 200 album chart in 1993 . However , on the strength of the second single , " Passin ' Me By " , the album was certified gold in sales by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) on March 28 , 1996 .

= = Conception = =

= = = Background = = =

High school friends " Slimkid3 " (Tre Hardson) , " Imani " (Emandu Wilcox) and " Bootie Brown " (Romye Robinson) began their career in the entertainment industry as dancers and choreographers under the moniker " Two For Two " , making numerous appearances in music videos . Their most notable exposure came with a short stint on the television show In Living Color . While working on the show , the group met their future manager Suave , then a road manager for Candyman and Tone Loc . The trio met Derrick " Fatlip " Stewart and producer John " J @-@ Swift " Martinez at an after @-@ school music program called South Central Unit . The program 's teacher , Reggie Andrews , taught the group about essential elements of the music industry , and later oversaw the group 's writing and recording sessions . While attending SCU , the group recorded their first demo tape , which included the track " Ya Mama " . In 1991 , the group signed a deal with Delicious Vinyl Records , following a performance of the track " Ya Mama " at an artist showcase . Soon after , the group made their first notable appearance , with the track " Soul Flower " , released on the Heavy Rhyme Experience album by the Brand New Heavies .

= = = Recording = = =

The four emcees , along with producer J @-@ Swift , began recording their debut album in 1991 at the Hollywood Sounds studio in California , with Delicious Vinyl Records head Michael Ross overseeing the project as Executive Producer . J @-@ Swift produced 10 songs and five interludes ? 15 of the album 's 16 tracks . Before the completion of the album , Swift had a falling @-@ out with the group over internal problems . He claimed that he was not properly compensated for his work , and that the other group members had tried to take production credit , when he had crafted all the beats himself . After leaving Pharcyde , J @-@ Swift began a crack cocaine habit , which he has yet to completely recover from . In a 2006 interview with Mass Appeal Magazine , Swift stated :

I would be in the studio crying ? cause I couldn ? t believe that I was in the situation that I was in . I was like , What did I do to deserve this ? All I did was try to help everybody , so I was kinda feeling sorry for myself . I was feeling suicidal but I knew that I didn ? t have the balls to put a gun to my head , so I figured I ? d smoke dope and just kill myself off this dope .

Now without a producer or a finished product , the group recruited local producer L.A. Jay to craft

the album 's final recording , " Otha Fish " , which was also co @-@ produced by SlimKid 3 .

= = Music = =

= = = Lyrical content = = =

Much of the album 's acclaim was due to the eccentric , comedic content provided by the four emcees , who were described as a " pack of class clowns set loose in a studio " by Rolling Stone . The album 's wacky storytelling and light @-@ hearted playfulness provided an alternative to the pessimistic , hardcore hip hop that had ruled the scene at the time . Due to its light lyrical content , the album has been described as an extension of the " Daisy Age " , established by De La Soul and the Native Tongues Posse . AllMusic described the group 's rapping as " amazing " , and stated , " The L.A.-based quartet introduced listeners to an uproarious vision of earthy hip @-@ hop informed by P @-@ Funk silliness and an everybody @-@ on @-@ the @-@ mic street @-@ corner atmosphere that highlights the incredible rapping skills of each member . " Instead of focusing on the troubles of the inner city , the quartet use their verses to provide humorous first @-@ person narratives , with varying topics . On the album opener " Oh Shit " , SlimKid , Imani and Fatlip trade embarrassing tales about drunken antics , unusual sex partners and transsexuals . SlimKid , Imani and guest rapper Buckwheat use the song " On the DL " to vent personal stories that they 'd like to be kept " on the down @-@ low " , with topics including masturbation and murder . On the single " 4 Better or 4 Worse " , Fatlip dedicates an entire verse to prank calling , in which the rapper spouts insane and psychotic threats while a confused female victim continually threatens to call the police . The group 's debut single " Ya Mama " , described by the Rolling Stone Album Guide as the album 's most memorable track , calling it a " marathon game of the dozens " , sees the four rappers trading comical insults towards each other 's mothers . An online reviewer comments on the group 's humorous rapping style :

The first album by the lovably obnoxious California rappers , is a wonderfully adventurous exploration that covers almost every social topic known to man in the best way possible ? with a brilliant mixture of low and high comedy and introspective contemplation . The four rappers that form The Pharcyde are all very humorous , thoughtful , surprisingly lucid and self @-@ depreciating , and most importantly , they can actually rap .

While the majority of the album has a focus on comedic stories , the song " Officer " touches on the topic of racial profiling . " Otha Fish " finds the group rising up and moving on from their past hang @-@ ups as described in the previous track , " Passing Me By " , the album 's hit single . On the song , the four recount heartbreaking tales of school @-@ boy crushes that had eluded them . Their mix of humor and social insight was one factor in the album 's acclaim . An editorial reviewer comments on the group 's unique style :

When the Pharcyde burst onto the scene in the summer of ' 92 with its brilliantly disconnected grab bag Bizarre Ride II the Pharcyde , it seemed at first an innocuously enjoyable , goofy if somewhat lightweight disc . However , it would swiftly become clear that there were deeper waters stirring within the Pharcyde 's rhymes and rhythms , and that the group 's style was unlike that of those who came before . The main distinction came in the Pharcyde 's subject matters , which run the gamut from the usual sexual conquests all the way to rejection and masturbation . The group 's lyrics are often reflective and vulnerable , bordering on self @-@ deprecating at times . While many rappers who came before poked fun at themselves as a gimmick , the Pharcyde relates its rebuffs with confident candor . "

= = = Production = = =

Bizarre Ride also featured the acclaimed production work of J @-@ Swift , who provides the album with a lush , jazzy soundscape through use of live instrumentation and sampling . Swift relied on a large number of samples , by artists including James Brown , Donald Byrd , Sly & the Family Stone ,

The Meters , Quincy Jones , Jimi Hendrix , Roy Ayers and Marvin Gaye . Aside from the samples , Swift also provided piano , bass and rhodes on the album , and fellow producer JMD provided drum arrangements . These upbeat key arrangements and quick @-@ paced drum loops provide much of the backdrop for the rapper 's animated lyrical deliveries . Allmusic calls the album 's production " easily some of the tightest and most inventive of any hip @-@ hop record of the era . " NME magazine stated , " The Pharcyde use jazz samples and phat beats to the ultimate effect : to create their own sonic Utopia . " . An online review describes the album 's unique musical atmosphere and layered production :

The music on the album is very lush and multi @-@ layered , with a mixture of live instruments , turntable wankery , and samples from jazz , R & B , funk , classic rock and everything in between . Powerful beats pervade , with some of the most kinetic bass lines this side of funkadelic . The Pharcyde forgoes the minimalism that now dominates mainstream rap music , favoring intense rhythmic layering and a strong melodic element instead . Piano lines cascade down dropping bass lines while three or four vocal tracks attack from all sides . The music is jaunty , elaborate and even atmospheric in parts (consider the stoner rap anthem " Pack the Pipe ") , all of it drawn tightly together with the band 's satirical lyrical outlook .

= = = Singles = = =

Bizarre Ride II the Pharcyde featured four singles , all of which were accompanied by music videos . The group 's debut single , " Ya Mama " , was originally released in 1991 , then re @-@ packaged by Delicious Vinyl in 1992 , with two additional songs , " I 'm That Type of Nigga " and " Soul Flower " . Though the song landed the group their record deal , it failed to reach any Billboard singles chart . Their first major exposure came with the release of the album 's second single , " Passin ' Me By " . Utilizing a sample from Quincy Jones ' " Summer in the City " , the song became the group 's biggest crossover hit , peaking at No. 52 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart , and No. 1 on the Hot Rap Singles chart . The song was later featured on the soundtrack to , and in Adam Sandler 's 1999 film Big Daddy . The song is now considered a classic hip hop single , and was later included on comprehensive hip hop compilation albums like The Hip Hop Box and Hip Hop Gold . The album 's third single , " 4 Better or 4 Worse " , was released in mid @-@ 1993 , and featured the stoner song " Pack the Pipe " and the throwback track " Return of the B @-@ Boy " as its B @-@ Side . The single did not reach any Billboard chart . The final single , the SlimKid solo track " Otha Fish " , was released in late 1993 . The song became the second charting single from the album , though not as highly placed as " Passing Me By " , reaching only the Hot Dance Music / Maxi @-@ Singles Sales chart .

A number of tracks from the album were later remixed . " Ya Mama " , " Soul Flower " , " Otha Fish " , and " Passing Me By " all featured a number of remixes , which were later included on the 2005 Pharcyde compilation album Sold My Soul : The Remix & Rarity Collection .

= = Reception = =

At the time of its release , Bizarre Ride received mostly positive , though at times , mixed reviews . In the years following its release , critical reaction became increasingly more positive . A number of music publications have since recognized the album as a classic . Bizarre Ride was listed on Pitchfork Media 's " Top 100 Favorite Records of the 90s " , and was also featured in the 2005 publication 1001 Albums You Must Hear Before You Die , in which it is stated :

When many MCs and rappers were striving to ' keep it real ' , The Pharcyde instead went out of their way to ' keep it original ' . J @-@ Swift 's production , along with the core members , sacrificed the more immediately catchy hooks for greater depth and a lush , soulful sound . While this may have cost them audiences at the time , the album is now a true classic , both of its time and of hip hop . It remains an influence on the scene even today .

Hip hop magazine The Source originally gave the album a humble 3 ½ (out of 5) mic rating , but in 1998 , included Bizarre Ride on their 100 Best Rap Albums list . Allmusic gave the album a perfect 5

Star rating , while Rolling Stone and Q both gave Bizarre Ride positive 4 Star ratings .

An Ink Blot Magazine review called Bizarre Ride " the most fun album ever " , and stated :

Bizarre Ride II The Pharcyde reaffirms every positive stereotype you 've ever heard about hip hop while simultaneously exploding every negative myth with under a barrage of head @-@ twisting rhymes , jazz breaks and straight @-@ up funk . The samples nod (wink ?) at the past , the urgency of the rhymes keep things rooted in the present and the vibrancy of the overall vision keeps Bizarre Ride ... reaching for the future . Make no mistake , this is one of the most important records in the history of hip hop . It is the sound of black music 's past erupting in a riot of colour and excitement and possibility . It 'll make you dance , it 'll make you smile , and it 'll make you wanna do it all over again .

NME (December 25 , 1993 , p . 67) ? Ranked No. 39 in New Musical Express ' list of `The Top 50 LPs Of 1993 ' ? " ... a cartoon @-@ strip of blunt @-@ smoking antics , sexual innuendo and unashamed political incorrectness , crammed with infectious funky beats "

In November 2010 , Kanye West named the album as his ' favorite album of all time ' .

= = = Influence = = =

While alternative East Coast hip hop albums , such as De La Soul 's 3 Feet High and Rising ultimately sold over a million copies , there was no equivalent from the West Coast . With Bizarre Ride , The Pharcyde became one of the first alternative acts on the West Coast to sell large numbers of albums . Though Bizarre Ride did reach Gold status , the album 's sales paled in comparison to West Coast G @-@ funk releases of the era , such as The Chronic by Dr. Dre and Doggystyle by Snoop Dogg .

While Bizarre Ride sparked the career of The Pharcyde , the group did not attempt to capitalize on the album 's reception . Following the release , the group set out on the Lollapalooza tour , and waited almost three years to release their second album , Labcabincalifornia . While the album featured two highly regarded hit singles , " Runnin ' " and " Drop " , it received mixed reviews . Critics weighed the album against their debut , and some felt Labcabincalifornia fell victim to the sophomore jinx . Group member Bootie Brown later stated in a 2005 interview :

I don ' t think it ' s that they slept on it , they were just expecting a sound like Bizarre [Ride II] and we came out with something different . But after people actually listened , they felt it and vibed to it and now it ' s considered a classic .

Following the release of Labcabincalifornia , member Fatlip split from The Pharcyde , and the group did not return until 2000 , releasing the album Plain Rap to mediocre reviews . Though the album marked the first collaboration between the group and J @-@ Swift , Bootie Brown and Imani had a falling out with SlimKid (now known by his birth name Tre Hardson) , before the album was released , turning the group into a duo . In 2004 , Imani and Bootie released the group 's fourth album , Humboldt Beginnings , receiving little attention and harsh reviews . Tre and Fatlip have both since released solo albums , but no project released by the group or its members since their debut has been able to reach the acclaim of Bizarre Ride .

= = Track listing = =

Track listing and production information is taken from the album 's liner notes .

= = Personnel = =

All information is taken from the album 's liner notes .

= = Chart history = =

= = = Album chart positions = = =

All chart positions from Billboard magazine (North America) .

= = = Singles chart positions = = =

All chart positions from Billboard magazine (North America) .

= = Accolades = =

Information is taken from Acclaimed Music . (*) designates lists which are unordered .