

# **BIGG STEELE**

## *Biography*

Straight out of Long Beach roars the newest Southern California rapper to spit ferocious, street-wise rhymes over funk-drenched, synthesized, sun-soaked beats. Enter Bigg Steele, 6 foot 4, 315 pounds of LBC emcee with an innate ability to fuse articulate and clever narratives over a bevy of soulful soundscapes and catchy, up-tempo hooks.

Indeed, Steele's debut release *Size Duz Matter* seems certain to propel the 28-year-old rapper into the throes of hip-hop notoriety. Complete with bass-heavy bangers, club shots and unabashed, reflective odes to the joys of hood living, the album rings true from start to finish. And as the West Coast begins to regain its rightful place within hip-hop, Big Steele will invariably play an important role.

Things though weren't always so clear for the rapper. Born in Cleveland, Steele's family moved him to Long Beach when he was a teenager. Steele got in a little trouble as a child, but football was always his saving grace. A high school standout, Steele went on to play at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, New Mexico. It was at that point, however, that Steele realised he had other aspirations.

"I was always the guy on the team who was rapping and people would always be telling me that I was nice...like nicer than guys who were already putting out records," recalls Steele, who notes he'd been recording his own tracks just for fun since he was 14 years-old. Still, even with his rap interest suddenly seeming like a viable option, Steele wanted to pursue his football talents. After college, he began playing with a team from the Canadian Football League, but as Steele says, "My heart wasn't in it."

No doubt, Steele's heart and ears were always focused on his favourite emcees—Ghetto Boyz, Big Daddy Kane, Kool G Rap and other old school cats. So, Steele returned to LA and began trying to follow his true passion. After a 2 Live Crew concert at LA's legendary Lemert Park, Big Steele hooked up with members of the group, who listened to a demo tape he had on him. Soon, in a whirlwind turn of events, Steele found himself touring with 2 Live Crew as a roadie, which he did on and off for three years.

Back home, Steele often found himself hanging out in a local barber shop frequented by Compton legends DJ Quik and Hi-C. "One day, I had my demo CD there, and Hi-C was listening to it. He didn't believe it was me," Steele chuckles. "From then on I was on the road with Hi-C travelling up and down the West Coast, playing the biggest festivals, the biggest shows, and he was letting me do my own thing!"

During that time, Steele linked with burgeoning Swedish producer Polar Bear, who'd earned the equivalent of a Swedish Grammy for production work he'd done in Europe. "It was just like an instant chemistry when I met him," Steele explains of their first meeting after a concert in Rosarito, Mexico.

Coincidentally, around the same time, a track Steele recorded "Movin' On" began burning serious rotation on local Los Angeles radio, most notably Power 106. The song eventually led to a deal with indie label BlockReady Records, who came to Steele after hearing his work on the radio and on the streets. "They came to me with the right money, and I was at the point where I wanted my music out there," Steele says.

And so Steele set to work with Polar Bear creating *Size Duz Matter*, a fun-loving but also provocative release which showcases Steele's obvious talents: "Tha Hood" featuring vocals from Polar Bear's is a beautifully-crafted anthem, complete with thick, symphonic strings and colourful lyrics portraying a ride through ghetto America complete with liquor stores, funeral parlours and storefront preachers.

"Freeze," is a surefire hit for the nightclubs and conveys Big Steele 's versatility as he spits verbal tongue-twisters about sexing females on the dance floor, over a Latin-inflected guitar and quick ragga-muffin inspired beat.

"You know, I wanted to me a reggaeton record, except do it my own way. Make a real riddim record, nah mean? I told Polar Bear I was gonna rap way different. I like to hang my voice on every style he gives me."

"Money," on the other hand displays Big Steele 's penchant for the blues—syrupy, southern-fried guitar licks—and features a surprisingly soulful hook sung by legendary gangsta' rapper RBX. "I love the bluesy-ness of the song. I just knew I had to do something like this for the album."

Nonetheless, Big Steele 's most notable musical characteristic is his penchant for having fun: Songs like the West Coast synth-influenced "Bubble Bounce," featuring Hi-C, are a testament to his free-wheeling, quick-witted sensibility and his appreciation for women. "Thicky Thick," —a lightening quick, electronic-driven track, featuring Uncle Luke, is another shameless, unabashedly bold club banger that virtually forces the ladies to leave their drinks and flock to the dance floor.

Without a doubt, Size Duz Matter, is a cohesive and consistent debut, sure to move crowds at shows or in the dance clubs. And most notably, it's the world's first real glimpse into the life of a rapper, whose musical stature meets his size. Bigg Steele's massive video for "Bubble Bounce" is already playing on Channel U.

And if he is not busy enough Big Steele has called in some of the Hip Hop heavyweights to collaborate on Bigg Steele Chronicles Vol 1 Featuring Notorious B.I.G and Tupac and tracks with Bone Thugs, Kurupt and Snoop Dogg which was released on July 11th. (Debut # 33,UK R&B Charts)

Size Duz Matter drops in the UK on October 10th, 2005 on BlockReady Records/Altered Ego Music.

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