

Jack Harlow embodies effortlessness. The 22-year-old, Louisville, Kentucky native has seen a meteoric rise since the release of his 2020 single, the Platinum “WHATS POPPIN.” Produced by Jetsonmade and Pooh Beatz, “WHATS POPPIN” is poised to be the first of many mainstream hits for the rapper who got his start writing poetry and wrote one of his first verses at age 12, as he divulges on 2017’s “Eastern Parkway,” the opener to his breakout 2017 mixtape, *Gazebo*. Yes, the Jack Harlow story is one of a decade of shedding ego, chasing fire, and getting as close to fluidity as possible.

Inspired by his mom’s love of hip-hop, André 3000, Missy Elliott, Drake, and more icons, the Generation Now/Atlantic artist’s journey through hip-hop feels as if it has several start points. We could look to 2015’s *Handsome Harlow* EP. We could look at either 2016’s *18* or 2017’s *Gazebo* mixtapes as the genesis of Harlow finding his voice and starting to define his honey-tongued sound. We could point specifically to his single, “Dark Knight,” which will go down as the first of many watershed moments for Jack Harlow. Too, we could look at 2018 as the true turning point in Jack’s career—the moment he went from stiff to imbued with swagger, releasing *Loose* to acclaim culminating in a Best Mixtape nomination during the 2019 BET Hip Hop Awards.

Growing his profile as prolific, Jack Harlow released *Confetti* in 2019. Fanfare swirled around Harlow for tracks like the hard-hitting “ROTTEN,” the Bryson Tiller-assisted “THRU THE NIGHT,” and the heartfelt “RIVER ROAD.” On each of these three songs, Harlow displayed his range as a rapper, going from making certified bangers to witty pop hits, to a song so bare it felt timeless upon the first play. *Confetti* featured Jack Harlow playing DJ, guiding the party with an attractive fervor. Standouts like “WARSAW” and “HEAVY HITTER” showcased Jack’s ability to drawl and sing and produce pristine club-ready smashes.

All the while, the *Confetti* mixtape revealed Harlow’s obsessions with mortality and legacy, reminding us that beneath the veneer of a good time, Jack Harlow remains a wise thinker. Too, Harlow finds himself in the throes of social change, returning to his native Louisville to lead protests in the wake of the murder of Breonna Taylor.

A star with a heart of gold, to celebrate his birthday, Harlow released the *Sweet Action* EP in March of 2020. Including the massive “WHATS POPPIN” single, *Sweet Action* featured Jack honing in on his singing and ease of delivery with songs like “2STYLISH” and “OUT FRONT.” The slick closer, “ONCE MAY COMES” made triumph into a glistening affair. All of *Sweet Action* played like one long summer jam made to bring the bliss of outside into our speakers.

In support of *Sweet Action* and “WHATS POPPIN,” which Harlow performed on *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*, Harlow enlisted Tory Lanez, DaBaby, and the legendary Lil Wayne to give fresh life to the already undeniable and inescapable hit single, solidifying the song’s spot in the upper half of the top 10 on Billboard’s Hot 100, for most of Summer 2020. With a fiery new verse of his own into the mix, the “WHATS POPPIN” remix is yet another milestone in Harlow’s career, one marked by timely co-signs and effortless singles, and an endless process of watering seeds and watching them grow.

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**A close up of a sign

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