# New documentary reveals how Average White Band reshaped funk and Black musical culture



Average White Band, a Scottish ensemble renowned for their pioneering contributions to funk and R&B, continue to capture the music world’s attention. Their influence, evidenced by numerous samples in modern hip-hop from artists like NAS and N.W.A., reflects a remarkable journey that transcends cultural and racial boundaries. As Chuck D of Public Enemy once remarked, their performance on Soul Train in the 1970s was nothing short of a revelation. “Black folks realised these guys were white, and that they were that good,” he noted, highlighting their significant impact on audiences and peers alike.

A new documentary, *Average White Band: Soul Searching*, directed by Anthony Baxter, promises to illuminate this legacy further. The film is poised to premiere on 17 May 2025 at the prestigious Scottish Works-in-Progress Showcase during the Marché du Film in Cannes. It will feature exclusive insights, never-before-seen archival footage, and poignant testimonies from iconic figures in music and culture, including Chaka Khan, Questlove, and even former President Barack Obama, who famously praised the band by stating, “Those boys could jam. Outstanding.”

Average White Band was formed in 1972 in London by a collective of Scots, and they quickly carved a niche for themselves. Their distinctive blend of funk and soul reshaped popular music, making them one of the most successful white acts in the genre. Their musical versatility is often spotlighted; not only did they produce infectious grooves and soulful ballads, but they also contributed significantly to the evolution of hip-hop. As noted in various discussions, their sound has been sampled extensively by leading artists in the genre, bridging cultural and musical gaps that traditionally separated genres.

The film’s narrative will include perspectives from surviving members of AWB alongside influential commentators from the music industry. Stacy Robinson, producer and artistic director of Kartemquin Films, emphasised the documentary's depth, stating, “*Soul Searching* isn’t just a music feature doc—it’s a story about cultural connection, racial boundaries.”

As the film unfolds AWB’s extraordinary journey, viewers will witness how this Scottish band not only gained popularity in the UK, but also became cultural ambassadors, introducing funk elements to American audiences. According to various music historians, their uncanny ability to resonate with diverse demographics makes them a vital part of modern musical history.

Director Anthony Baxter reflected on the emotional impact of this story, saying, “What’s moved me most in making this film is just how deeply this incredibly talented group of Scottish musicians touched the lives and work of some of the world’s greatest artists— from soul legends to today’s most influential hip-hop producers.” Their influence is a testament to the power of music as a universal language, uniting people across different backgrounds and cultures.

As the release date approaches, anticipation builds not just for the film itself, but for the further exploration of Average White Band's legacy, shining a light on how a Scottish band became a cornerstone of Black musical history.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/25165033.new-film-influential-scottish-band-average-white-band/?ref=rss), [[3]](https://www.motortrend.com/news/1006-lrmp-the-average-white-band/)
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7. Paragraph 7: [[1]](https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/25165033.new-film-influential-scottish-band-average-white-band/?ref=rss), [[3]](https://www.motortrend.com/news/1006-lrmp-the-average-white-band/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/25165033.new-film-influential-scottish-band-average-white-band/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.encyclopedia.com/education/news-wires-white-papers-and-books/average-white-band> - This article provides an overview of the Average White Band (AWB), a Scottish funk and R&B group formed in 1972. It details their formation, musical style, and influence on the music industry. The piece highlights their ability to introduce funk and soul elements into popular rock, making them one of the most successful white acts in the genre. The article also discusses their collaborations and the impact of their music on both European and American audiences.
3. <https://www.motortrend.com/news/1006-lrmp-the-average-white-band/> - This article explores the Average White Band's influence on the music scene, particularly in the realms of soul and R&B. It emphasizes their versatility, showcasing their ability to produce soulful ballads and their significant impact on hip-hop through numerous samples by artists like Rakim, Public Enemy, Ice Cube, Too Short, N.W.A., and De La Soul. The piece also delves into the band's origins and their unique position in bridging cultural and musical gaps.
4. <https://www.funkatropolis.com/average-white-band-scotlands-funkiest-export/> - This blog post delves into the Average White Band's origins, formation, and musical influences. It highlights their ability to blend funk and R&B elements, creating a distinctive sound that resonated with diverse audiences. The post also discusses their impact on the hip-hop genre, noting that their grooves have been sampled by numerous artists, including Janet Jackson, TLC, and Eric B. & Rakim. The piece underscores the band's significance in both the funk and hip-hop landscapes.
5. <https://www.sebishiphop.com/are-we-really-going-to-let-white-artists-redefine-rap-and-rb/> - This article examines the role of white artists in the evolution of rap and R&B, focusing on acts like the Average White Band. It discusses how these artists, often referred to as 'blue-eyed soul' singers, have contributed to the genres by introducing funk and soul elements into their music. The piece also touches upon the broader impact of such artists on hip-hop, noting their influence on pioneering rap groups and the genre's development.
6. <https://www.encyclopedia.com/education/news-wires-white-papers-and-books/average-white-band> - This article provides an overview of the Average White Band (AWB), a Scottish funk and R&B group formed in 1972. It details their formation, musical style, and influence on the music industry. The piece highlights their ability to introduce funk and soul elements into popular rock, making them one of the most successful white acts in the genre. The article also discusses their collaborations and the impact of their music on both European and American audiences.
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