

# TIME

## ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

*BTS*





## Who is the 2020 TIME Person of the Year?

Raisa Bruner

It's late October, and Suga is sitting on a couch strumming a guitar. His feet are bare, his long hair falling over his eyes. He noodles around, testing out chords and muttering softly to himself, silver hoop earrings glinting in the light. "I just started learning a few months ago,"

he says. It's an intimate moment, the kind you'd spend with a new crush in a college dorm room while they confess rock-star ambitions. But Suga is one-seventh of the [Korean pop band BTS](#), which means I'm just one of millions of fans watching, savoring the

moment.

BTS isn't just the [biggest K-pop act](#) on the charts. They've become the [biggest band](#) in the world—full stop. Between releasing multiple albums, breaking every type of record and appearing in these extemporaneous



Comparisons to that epoch-defining group are inevitable. "What's different is that we're seven, and we also dance," says V. "It's kind of like a cliché when big boy bands are coming up: 'Oh, there's another Beatles!'" says RM. I've interviewed BTS five times, and in every interaction, they are polite to a fault. But by now they must be weary of revisiting these comparisons, just as they must be tired of explaining their success. RM says it's a mix of luck, timing and mood. "I'm not 100% sure,"

he says.

They've matured into smart celebrities: focused and cautious, they're both more ready for the questions and more hesitant to make big statements. When you ask BTS about their landmark year, for once they're not exactly chipper; J-Hope wryly calls it a "roller coaster." "Sh-t happens," says RM. "It was a year that we struggled a lot," says Jimin. Usually a showman, on this point he seems more introspective than usual. "We might look

like we're doing well on the outside with the numbers, but we do go through a hard time ourselves," he says. For a group whose purpose is truly defined by their fans, the lack of human interaction has been stifling. Still, they've made it a point to represent optimism. "I always wanted to become an artist that can provide comfort, relief and positive energy to people," says J-Hope. "That intent harmonized with the sincerity of our group and led us to who we are today."