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2 EXCLUSIVE LISTS

A&R Reps - Music Attorneys

-UPDATED FOR 2022-

The Black Notes:

Becoming
One with Your
Instrument

How to Get **Your
Music** to Label
A&R Reps

Be a **Better**
Collaborator

GUN NANA!

Producer Crosstalk:

Ebonie Smith

(Hamilton, Mean Girls)

+ Leslie Hunt - **Glasses Malone**
Eric Gales - Summer Walker
& Unsigned Artist Reviews!

New Toys P. 10
Ingram Engineering
EQ52 See Saw EQ/Filter



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CONTENTS

Informing Music People Since 1977
January 2022 • Vol. 46 • No. 1



40 *Gunna*

In our exclusive interview, the hip-hop star discusses his ongoing work with YSL label head and mentor Yung Thug and he delivers sensible advice and keen insights to all artists who are looking to develop a successful career in today's music industry.

By Joseph Maltese

Photos: Elizabeth Miranda



47 *TASCAM Mixcast 4* *By Steve Sattler*

A&R Reps

Music Connection has assembled a group of experienced A&R professionals who discuss their specific area of the A&R landscape.

By Andy Kaufmann



42

Departments

- 08. *Close Up*
- 09. *Assignments*
- 10. *New Toys*
- 14. *Book Store*
- 16. *Up Close*
- 18. *Studio Mix*
- 23. *Business Affairs*
- 24. *The Legal Beat*
- 26. *Signing Stories*
- 28. *Song Biz*
- 32. *Film-TV-Theater*
- 34. *Mixed Notes*



56 *Directory of A&R Reps*

60 *Directory of Music Attorneys*

Compiled By Denise Coso

Reviews

- 49. *Album Reviews*
- 50. *New Music Critiques*
- 52. *Live/stream Reviews*



Be sure to follow *Music Connection* on Facebook and Twitter.



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- 20. *Producer Crosstalk: Ebonie Smith* By Rob Putnam
- 22. *Exec Profile: Myka Miller, Guitar Center Foundation* By Andy Kaufmann
- 30. *Songwriter Profile: Duckwrth* By Andrea Beenham
- 46. *Artist to Artist: Collaboration—We Need Each Other* By Angela Predhomme
- 48. *Industry Profile: AudioScape Engineering* By Brian Tarquin
- 70. *Tip Jar: The Black Notes* By Frank Fitzpatrick

EQ52 500-Series Filter Module

See-Saw, Low and High Cut Filters

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and Ultra-Wide Filter Ranges



"I had great success using the EQ52s as a stereo mastering touch up tool"
- Barry Rudolph, Jan 2022

"It truly has a feature set and range of frequencies that I have not seen outside of see-saw EQ plugins,
and like most Ingram gear the sonic signature can easily be described as "mastering grade"
- Michael Frasinelli, Nov 2021



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Hype Studios LA

hypestudiosla.com

A Commitment to Artist Development: Tracing back to key formative experiences in his life, there's a reason why Augie Ray, the Grammy-winning producer who launched Hype Studios LA in 2020, declares on his website bio, "I believe in artist development and love to see the power that comes from that." For the multi-talented songwriter, musician and entrepreneur—who has worked with everyone from Rihanna and Elton John to Bibi Bourelly and Julia Michaels, as well as Disney, Acura, Pepsi and ESPN—it's a matter of paying it forward. At age 11, Ray took part in a mentorship program sponsored by EMI where young people could learn the recording process hands-on.

Influence of Warryn Campbell: After recording some of his own hip-hop CDs, Ray scored an internship with multi-Grammy-winning producer Warryn Campbell, who took him under his wing and gave him a wide array of responsibilities. While working by day as an assistant on sessions with Quincy Jones, Musiq Soulchild, Mary Mary, Heavy D, Dr. Dre and Macy Gray, at night he would use Campbell's studio to produce local L.A. artists—all while going to college full time. Ray continued to work with Campbell, earning a Grammy for his work on Erica Campbell's 2014 debut solo album *Help*, which won for Best Gospel Album. The family-oriented vibe at Campbell's studio, compared to the cold, sterile and transactional nature of business conducted at the major facilities Ray later worked in, sparked the idea of creating the community oriented Hype Studios LA.

Groundbreaking Studio and Creative Community: Hype Studios LA is a truly revolutionary venture, the first subscription-based professional recording studio in the San Fernando Valley, offering high-quality recording in a collaborative environment designed to empower the modern creative. There are three essential member benefits: 1) Collaborate. Hype LA provides the opportunity to collaborate and elevate a member's platform



by becoming part of an exclusive creative community, in addition to invitations to members-only events and ability to create them; 2) Elevate by becoming one's own CEO by customizing studio hours; fingerprint access allows for easy access to the studio; and 3) Recording with the same engineer each time to build a meaningful and trusting relationship, and having accountability for the hours committed to. Members pay monthly, customizing the amount of hours needed per month. Prices start at \$180 with a monthly minimum of six hours. Members can use the Hype Studios LA online calendar to book priority session times. Hype also offers the best mixing and mastering services in the San Fernando Valley, with prices that start at \$150 per song.

Hype Song Camps: Hype Studios LA recently held its first collaborative song camp for members. These are designed to help each creator build a musical community while collaborating with different writers and producers each day to help take his or her songwriting and production skills to the next level. It's an inspirational, creative and unique camp offering the chance to work intensively with like minded people. Hype LA's team of active hit songwriters and industry pros assist each group of collaborators to get the best out of their three-day sessions.

Contact Hype LA Studios, 747-224-7034

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ASSIGNMENTS

Wes Donehower

SVP of A&R
Republic Records

Republic Records has appointed **Wes Donehower** as **Senior Vice President of A&R**. Respected as a leading A&R executive, Donehower will spearhead the discovery and development of talent at Republic. Donehower spent six years in A&R at Columbia Records. As Director of A&R since 2018, he worked closely with diamond-certified superstar Lil Nas X, multiplatinum rapper and singer Russ, as well as rising talents Koe Wetzal, Quinn XCII, and 347Aidan, among others. He started his career as a coordinator at BMG Rights Management after graduating with a Master of Arts in Music Business from NYU in 2015. Contact sydney.feinberg@umusic.com.



Meg Harkins

SVP of Marketing
Republic Records

Republic Records has appointed **Meg Harkins** as **Senior Vice President of Marketing**. Harkins began consulting for the label in 2019, spearheading releases for everyone from K-pop powerhouses TWICE, (G)I-DLE, and TOMORROW X TOGETHER to Daddy Yankee, Swedish House Mafia, to eco-warrior/singer-songwriter Jack Johnson and the roster under UAM. She will continue to orchestrate marketing strategy and run campaigns for the aforementioned artists and more. Throughout her career, she has held executive posts in marketing at Blue Note Records and Capitol Records, working on projects for: Beastie Boys and Rapsody to Norah Jones, Morrissey, Ween and Grimes. Contact jsydney.feinberg@umusic.com.



Amy Tremmel

VP, Marketing & Events
The Syndicate

The **Syndicate** has announced several promotions within their ever-expanding marketing department, highlighted by department head **Amy Tremmel** becoming **VP, Marketing & Events**. In the past year, the company's marketing division has developed integrating marketing campaigns across music, TV, comedy, and several other verticals. They've also managed social media campaigns for comedy superstars and festivals like Lewis Black and the New York Comedy Festival, global musicians like Guns N' Roses, and street marketing activations for Coldplay, Kacey Musgraves, and The Pedestal Project by Color of Change. For more information, contact jeff@thesyn.com.



Jovan Polanco

Concert Promotions
Live Nation

Live Nation has announced that concert promoter **Jovan Polanco** has joined the Live Nation Concerts division. In his new role, Jovan will be focused on booking artists and talent throughout the southeast region in the U.S., as well as working on national tours across hip-hop/R&B, pop and Latin. In addition, Polanco will also continue to run his independent artist management and festival production company, Swerve Presents. Since 2015, the company has grown to produce over 100 shows across multiple markets throughout the state of Florida. Jovan has also been behind some of the first shows in the area for artists like H.E.R, Ari Lennox, 6LACK, Jessie Reyez, J.I.D and many more.



Sandeep Gupta

Chief Operating Officer
Universal Audio

Universal Audio (UA), a worldwide leader in audio and music production products, has announced the hiring of **Sandeep Gupta** as **Chief Operating Officer**. In this role, Gupta will oversee all aspects of UA's rapidly growing business, including its engineering, product, financial, sales, and marketing efforts. For the last decade, Gupta worked at Amazon (AMZN) and most recently served as Vice President and General Manager for Amazon Fire TV. His prior roles include leadership positions at Yahoo!, Digidesign, and Apple (APPL), where he helped reshape music distribution with the iPod. Contact press@uaudio.com for more information on the promotion.



Matthew Morgan

Co-Head, Nashville
UTA

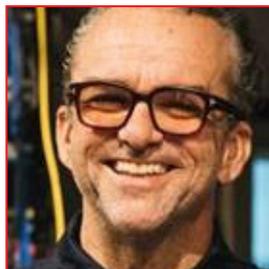
Global talent, entertainment and sports company **UTA** has announced that **Matthew Morgan** has joined the agency as **Co-Head of its Nashville office**, working alongside Co-Head Jeffrey Hasson. Morgan has worked with a wide variety of influential contemporary and country artists including: Lizzo, Zac Brown Band, Cam, Dean Lewis, Jessie James Decker, JP Saxe, Keane, Kidd G, Michael Franti, Phillip Phillips, Rival Sons, Robyn Ottolini, Rodrigo y Gabriela, and The Revivalists, among others. Morgan previously spent 13 years at CAA and two years at CMT. He is a member of the CMA, ACM, and Recording Academy Nashville Chapter. For more information, contact carleen@theoriel.co.



Brian Hay

Head of Catalog
Round Hill Records

Round Hill Records has announced the hiring of industry veteran **Brian Hay** as the company's new **Head Of Catalog**. In his new position, Hay will relocate from Los Angeles to Nashville to develop product and marketing plans around the company's vast and growing catalog (that includes artists such as The Offspring, Bush and Estelle). He will also seek out catalogs acquisitions and find new ways to help artists grow their audience and revenue. Prior to joining Round Hill, Hay was SVP Commerce, Consumption & New Business at Rhino Records and spent almost a decade as VP of Global Account Management for WEA at iTunes. For more information, contact deborah@dpr.us.



Steven Rosen

President of Creative Marketing
and Publishing
Regime Music Group

Longtime music industry executive **Steven Rosen** has been named **Regime Music Group's President of Creative Marketing and Publishing**. Rosen will be responsible for growing the label group's film and TV sync division and music publishing company, working with artists on their label and management teams and signing new talent to the publishing company. Regime is home to eclectic artists such as Tower of Power, Everlast, Amigo The Devil, Dropout Kings and more. Rosen brings Fuel, Mary Gauthier, Nostalgia, KidneyThieves, Veronica Fusaro, Brave The Royals and Jesika Von Rabbit to Regime's film and TV sync division. For more information, contact alexistedford@gmail.com.





◀ INGRAM ENGINEERING EQ52 SEE SAW EQ/FILTER

After the success of the EQ50 See Saw EQ/Filter in a single-slot 500-series module, Eric Ingram has followed up with the EQ52, an updated, greatly expanded version of this unique audio tool. Like the EQ50, the Ingram EQ52 combines low cut and high cut filters with a See Saw EQ that uses a single control to simultaneously boost in one band of frequencies and reduce in another band.

Below the hardware bypass button, the passive Low Cut section of the EQ52 module now has its own In/Out bypass button and a switch to toggle between the low range from 50Hz to 500Hz, and the high range from 700Hz to 5kHz. This is a very gentle -6dB/octave change and being split into two ranges allows for more precision with high pass filtering for mixes or individual tracks.

Below is the See Saw EQ section with two switchable “pivot” frequency ranges. The pivot frequency would be the exact point at which above and below frequencies are affected by this filter. The lower range is 120Hz to 1.7kHz and the higher range is from 1.9kHz to 26kHz labeled in red. A single control knob at the top of this section simultaneously boosts the highs and cuts lows when turned toward HF or boosts lows and cuts highs when turned toward LF. At the bottom of the module is the Hi Cut section that is a continuously variable -6dB/octave filter ranging from 3kHz to 200kHz.

Two EQ52s were sent for evaluation and they plugged right into my 500 rack. The EQ52s are useful for individual tracks as well as a mastering EQ; the sound is pristine and transparent. I had great success using the EQ52s as a stereo mastering touch up tool. When I just wanted to add a subtle touch without adding harmonic or phase distortion. It worked well to clear up lower mid-range build up and for other subtractive EQ changes.

The Ingram Engineering EQ52 See Saw EQ/Filter sells for \$410 MSRP and is available from dealers.

ingramengineering.net/eq52.html

▶ MASSENBURG DESIGNWORKS MDWEQ6 EQ PLUGIN

Developed by the creator of the parametric equalizer George Massenburg, version 6 of the MDWEQ6 high-resolution parametric EQ for Pro Tools (both AAX DSP and AAX Native) was introduced in 2020 and is now available for VST and AU host applications for MACs and PCs.

Built on the venerable and unique MDW filter-form, the MDWEQ6 includes a new active spectrum display, new high and low pass filters, high Q shelves with sharper transitions, and for ease of parameter adjustment, you may click/drag directly on nodes on the display, type in values or click/drag any of the control knobs. This plug-in emulates the constant shape filter curves of the industry-standard reference for parametric equalizer: Massenburg’s legendary GML 8200 equalizer.

I’m a long-time user of the GML equalizer both with this plug-in in Pro Tools as well as the hardware unit when recording in the studio. The AAX-DSP version is my standard channel equalizer I use on nearly every track in my music mixing. Just like the hardware, the plugin performs as I expect and not something “close” or coarsely emulated.

I just love the new built-in spectrum analyzer and the Hi-Q shelving filters are especially good when I’m looking for a “Pultec-style” effect where you would boost with one band and cut with another both set to the same frequency! The MDWEQ6 uses double-precision, 64-bit floating-point math for all sample rates. For 44.1 and 48kHz audio, it up-samples to either 88.2 or 96 kHz.

Version MDWEQ6-AAX+ is a full version with both AAX-DSP and Native versions and both VST and AU formats—it is \$329 as a download. MDWEQ6-Native+ sells for \$199 and includes just the AAX Native, VST and AU formats. Upgrades are available for MDWEQ5 and MDWEQ6-AAX users.

massenburgdesignworks.com/products/mdweq6



▶ FENDER ACOUSTASONIC PLAYER TELECASTER

The latest addition to Fender’s Acoustasonic Player line is the Telecaster model that embodies the spirit of ambitious innovation that Leo Fender had over 75 years ago. The Acoustasonic combines an acoustic guitar and electric guitar into a new hybrid instrument for on stage and in the studio.

Handmade in Ensenada, Mexico, the Acoustasonic Player Telecaster was five years of planning, building and refinement. You get the beautiful waterfall sound hole with forearm contour, a scalloped heel and recessed back plates designed for sound and comfort. Colors include: Butterscotch Blonde, Shadow Burst and Arctic White and a neutral Brushed Black.

It has a 3-way Voice Selector with a Blend Knob that mixes between its electric tone and acoustic voice using a N4 noise-less pickup system designed in collaboration with Fishman. The hollow body has a naturally resonant body with a warm, acoustic sound even when unplugged.

The Acoustasonic Player Telecaster is the most accessible Acoustasonic guitar yet specifically designed to inspire young people to be creativity in live performances from studio to songwriting sessions.

It sells for \$1,199 MSRP but go and sit down and play one of these! You’ll love it right away!

fender.com/acoustasonic/player/en



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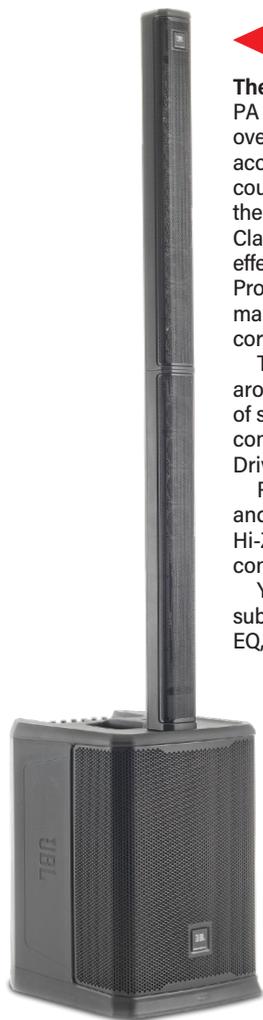
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◀ JBL PROFESSIONAL PRX ONE PORTABLE PA SYSTEM

The **JBL Professional PRX ONE** is a complete self-contained portable PA System with Pro Connect Control App to provide remote control over Bluetooth for up to 10 PRX ONE systems at the same time. It has an acoustically optimized vertical column array of twelve 2.5-inch tweeters coupled with a 12-inch woofer in a bass-reflex cabinet that doubles as the solid-base for the column. The base also houses a 2,000 watt (peak) Class-D power amp, a 7-channel digital mixer with professional DSP effects, and extensive audio connection facilities. Bluetooth 5.0 and JBL's Pro Connect universal app control for your phone, computer or tablet make the PRX ONE ideal for DJs, musicians, entertainment venues, corporate presenters, and houses of worship.

This all-in-one system comes up sounding great with little fooling around and setup; JBL's technology geometrically optimizes the spread of sound in defined 130-degree width by a 30-degree height shape for consistent coverage in your space. Also built-in is the wonderful dbx DriveRack technologies AFS Pro Automatic Feedback Suppression.

Pretty simple to connect microphones, instruments, mobile devices and wireless rigs to the mixer that has phantom microphone powering, Hi-Z inputs and pro-grade Neutrik connectors. The mixer has full control of input faders with bass, mid, treble and effects sends controls.

You get a Lexicon effects engine with delay, reverb chorus, echo and sub synth, with a good collection of presets. There is an 8-band master EQ, system limiter, plus gates and compressors on each channel. All of these functions are controllable using a full-color LCD screen right on the mixer and also on a Bluetooth app running on your phone out front with the audience.

Including a nylon-carrying bag for array column, the portable and complete JBL PRX ONE PA System weighs 56 pounds and sells for \$1,599 MSRP.

jbl.com/portable-pa-systems/JBL-PRX+ONE-NA-LS.html



▲ EVENTIDE TRICERACHORUS PEDAL

The sound of the **TriceraChorus** pedal is very reminiscent of the classic rack-mounted Tri-Stereo Chorus and stomp box choruses of the 1970s and early 1980s. It has both a stereo bucket brigade-style chorus along with Eventide's Micro Pitch detuning. There are three different chorus sounds available in stereo. But even working in mono, TriceraChorus produces a rich, deep, and lush modulation effect that works excellently on electric guitars, keyboards or just about any source. It also has a complex chorale effect with movement for rich textures and the vibrato gives a pulsing, warbled sound. My guitar player immediately started playing Jimi Hendrix songs as soon as he heard the sound of the TriceraChorus.

TriceraChorus is divided into two layers of parameters. Most of the time it is on the Primary layer with knob functions such as Mix or a blend between dry, chorus or vibrato voices. The Swirl LED button toggles between the Preset mode and Swirl, a psychedelic flanging, phasing and the sound of a Univox Uni-Vibe pedal so popular in the late 60s and 70s.

In Preset mode, the Active/Bypass/Load stomp switch loads one of five presets stored onboard. Up to 127 presets can be stored and be accessed via MIDI or the Eventide Device Manager application. Lastly, any combination of TriceraChorus parameters can be mapped to an expression pedal plugged into the pedal's ¼-inch Expression jack.

After prying the TriceraChorus pedal from my guitar player's hands, I tried it in the studio sending mono or stereo into it and returning in stereo just like a conventional outboard rack effect. There are switches to change the gain staging from guitar levels over to line level.

TriceraChorus is a super quiet, professional-level pedal in either configuration—just the effects without noise or hum. An included small, 9-VDC power supply powers Eventide's TriceraChorus pedal and it sells for \$299 MSRP.

eventideaudio.com/tricerachorus-pedal

▶ OVERLOUD DOPAMINE

Overloud's **Dopamine** is interesting to me because it models an "old-school" processor trick for enhancing either already recorded tracks or new recordings. Back when noise reduction was required for multi-track analog tape recording, there was the Dolby-A noise reduction system that used an encode/decode process. You would record through the A-361 encoder but you had to playback through the A-361 decoder to recover the audio's original fidelity and tone just without tape hiss and noise. As long as this entire system was correctly aligned, it all worked great. Dolby-B is a single-ended version used on consumer-level tape recorders; Teac's AN-180 Noise Reduction system was one of the popular choices for a standalone unit.

Overloud's Dopamine simulates both the Dolby A-361 1U single-channel units and the Dolby-B processor used by the Teac AN-180 units.

An un-decoded Dolby-A recording is called "stretched" and sounds bright with a variable compression/expansion dynamic.

Overloud Dopamine simulates that effect and notably, like the original noise reduction process, does not introduce the unpleasant artifacts and atonal harmonics common to other audio exciters and enhancers.

My first use for Dopamine was for an entire mix in Pro Tools. I found it like a mastering effect in this use but it also worked great on individual vocal and acoustic guitar tracks. Dopamine is a subtle and beautifying effect and that is why I love it. I mostly use the 361 mode but there are a many great presets to toggle through using either the 361 and 180 modes.

Presets with descriptive names like "Acoustic Air" for adding a kind of brilliance not really possible with EQ are available and reminiscent of using a Dolby-stretched acoustic guitar tape track except I could adjust it more exactly to my needs.

OverLoud's Dopamine sells for \$129 as download and I like the way it adds a special something to any audio. It's a keeper!

overloud.com/products/dopamine



BARRY RUDOLPH is a recording engineer/mixer who has worked on over 30 gold and platinum records. He has recorded and/or mixed Lynyrd Skynyrd, Hall & Oates, Pat Benatar, Rod Stewart, the Corrs and more. Barry has his own futuristic music mixing facility in North Hollywood called Tones 4 \$ Studios. He is a lifetime Grammy-voting member of NARAS and a contributing editor for *Mix Magazine*. barryrudolph.com

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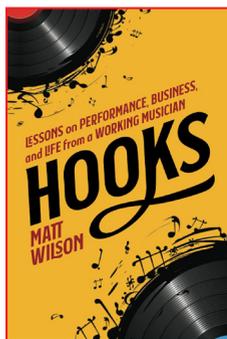
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BOOK STORE

Hooks

By Matt Wilson
(paperback) \$9.95

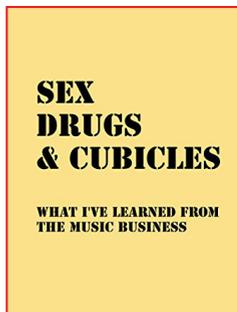
In his advice-filled guide, singer-songwriter Wilson shares 80 life lessons—or Hooks, named after the musical term—covering skills, performance, identity, confidence, expectations, courage, fear, creativity, and business. These simple Hooks are followed by thorough explanations, as well as real-life examples, all presented to help artists find perspective, improve performance, retain confidence, and find balance in life, “onstage,” and in business.



Sex, Drugs and Cubicles: What I've Learned from the Music Industry

By N. J. Gilligan
(Kindle) \$9.99

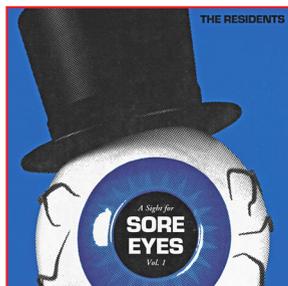
In *Sex, Drugs and Cubicles: What I've Learned from the Music Industry*, Gilligan (the founder of Fake Chapter Records, who started the label 25 years ago in his college dorm in NJ) celebrates his label's diverse catalog of indie rock, power pop, punk, acoustic and more. His book is a humorous collection of stories about running a record label and his corporate day job at Sony Music.



The Residents: A Sight for Sore Eyes, Vol. 1

By Aaron Tanner
(hardcover, boxed set) \$75.00

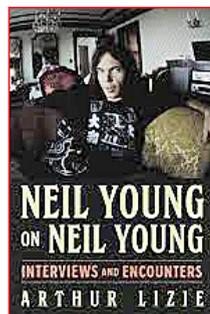
Author Aaron Tanner was given unprecedented access to The Cryptic Corporation's Residents archive, and *A Sight for Sore Eyes, Vol. 1* (limited edition boxed set) is a fully authorized visual history with rare and unseen photos, artwork, and other ephemera across 356 pages. It also comes with a 7" vinyl record featuring the unreleased track “Nobody's Nos” from the *Not Available* era of the band.



Neil Young on Neil Young

By Arthur Lizie
(hardcover) \$30.00

The author pulls together a revealing anthology of Young's most significant, fascinating, and entertaining discussions, declarations, and dreams, chronicling 50 years of conversations, feature stories, and press conferences. With many interviews widely available for the first time—including new transcripts and first-time translations into English—the book spans the artist's words and ideas from 1967 onward.



The Curly Girl Blues

By Tori Kelly
(hardcover) \$20.00

The two-time Grammy award winner says she created *The Curly Girl Blues* with the hope of mentoring tomorrow's generation by incorporating elements that reflect her own childhood and unique perspective gained during her career. “I wanted to encourage young kids to embrace their individuality and characteristics that make them unique. This book isn't just about loving yourself, it's also about celebrating the different cultures around us.”



There Was a Fire: Jews, Music and the American Dream (Revised and Updated)

By Ben Sidran
(paperback) \$22.88

Sidran takes readers on a wild ride through American popular music history, discovering the voices, sounds and sentiments of Jewish immigrants. The book reveals how popular music defined the American Dream—where popular song led to personal freedom, and



social justice was only a chorus away. This edition touches on the advent of Trump, Black Lives Matter, COVID-19, and streaming services such as Spotify and their impact on the Jewish experience; the first edition was a finalist for the National Jewish Book Award.

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- JONATHAN WIDRAN

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kevorkianmastering.com

A Passion for Mastering: Fred Kevorkian's background in electronics and passion for music originally led him into the world of audio consulting and studio design. After launching his career in Paris working for the sound company SonoFrance, he moved to New York to become chief recording engineer at Sear Sound, where he collaborated with owner Walter Sear in building and customizing unique vintage gear. He improved his skills by engineering countless jazz and rock sessions. His evolving interest in mastering led Sear to create Studio B, where Kevorkian spent five years mastering albums for indie and major label artists.

After a subsequent five-year stint at Absolute Audio, in 2004 he launched Kevorkian Mastering, which operated for years at Avatar/Power Station and recently relocated to the Greenpoint area of Brooklyn. While mastering indie artists and bands are his longtime "bread and butter," over the years he has worked on projects for numerous rock superstars and jazz icons, including The White Stripes, Maroon 5, Dave Matthews Band, Willie Nelson, Ryan Adams, Phish, Iggy Pop, Sonny Rollins and Billy Cobham. It's a two-man operation with veteran manager/engineer Larry Lachmann, who started working with Kevorkian years ago.



Analog Mastering: Kevorkian's introduction to and work with analog in the 90s still informs the unique sonic aesthetic he brings to his mastering projects today. One of his most popular vintage tools is the 1950s Ampex 351 tape machine (converted to 1/2" 15 ips) the electronics of which he completely custom rebuilt by hand to his own specs. "The modified machine sounds more accurate for modern mastering needs, and having a half inch rather than quarter inch keeps the noise floor down," he says. Another key playback source is the Ampex ATR 102 (1/4" and 1/2"). Analog equipment includes the Sontec MES-432C/6 Parametric Equalizer, the Pultec EQM-153 Mastering Equalizers and the Manley "Variable-MU" Lim/Comp (Mastering Version). Besides their classic analog gear, high end digital processing and a perfectly balanced acoustical environment, Kevorkian and Lachmann say they mostly rely on their well-trained sets of ears.

Remastering and Restoration: Kevorkian is also involved in restoring/remastering older projects for several artists. They include the Gentle Giant catalog, Jon Spencer Blues Explosion catalog, and an ongoing project of Jerry Garcia live recordings including the beautiful box set *Jerry Garcia—Before the Dead*. He has the experience, knowledge and proper tools to handle and safely play back a variety of formats, and the processing power to correct most recording issues and aging degradation.

Quote from Fred Kevorkian: "With every project, I see my job as simply making things sound better. Critical listening is essential, but at Kevorkian Mastering, we also make it a priority to listen to the client first. Knowledge and experience are obviously important in this business, but the key to being successful, in addition to knowing your tools, is understanding what our clients want. Once you get that, everything else falls into place. We're the last stop before a project is released, so everything has to be just right."

Contact Kevorkian Mastering, Inc., fkfk@aol.com

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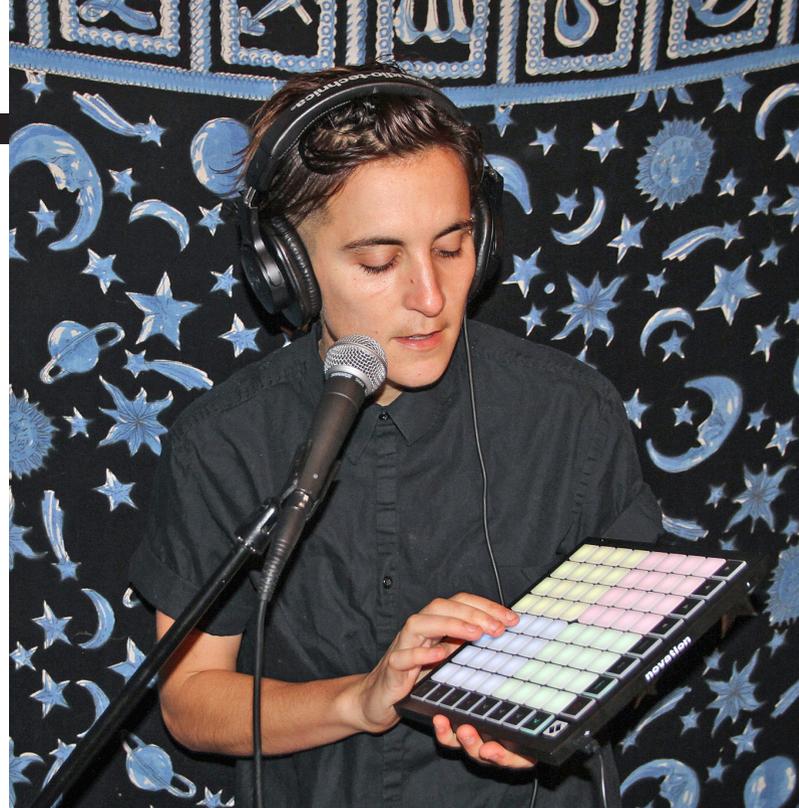


STUDIO MIX



▲ ASHFORD AND TELEFUNKEN

Mix engineer Ricky Ashford has been touring with his Telefunken microphones for more than five years. "They have never failed me," he says. Ashford is well-known for the sharp sound of his tours with artists such as Ashanti, Bow Wow, Kiana Lede, SchoolBoy Q, Jay Rock, Soulja Boy, Lloyd, SZA, and Pretty Ricky, among many others.



▲ CLOUD OUT LOUD

Cloud, aka Cloud Out Loud, is pictured during a Sunday jam in their Eugene, OR home studio. "My setup is honestly pretty simple," Cloud says. "Mostly just using a looping pedal with my guitar or Novation pad."



▲ LENA SCISSORHANDS OF INFECTED RAIN

Infected Rain have become one of the most exciting new acts in the heavy music world, with charismatic, multi-talented frontwoman Lena Scissorhands emerging as one of the fastest-rising leading ladies of the genre. The band has released their otherworldly fifth album, *Ecdysis*, via Napalm Records.



▲ LIL' RONNIE AT EINNOR

Producer and songwriter Ronnie Jackson (aka Lil' Ronnie) has installed a Neve Genesys Black G16 console in his new studio in Atlanta. "I wanted a Neve desk because I love the iconic analogue Neve sound," he says. "The console delivers the traditional analogue look and feel while also offering digital control and easy integration with DAWs." Lil' Ronnie has worked with many artists including T.I., Bow Wow, Britney Spears, Mary J. Blige and Scott McCreery.

Producer Playback

"A great film composer can write in the various styles yet within them you hear his or her voice shine through. What sets composers apart is their perspective."

— PJ HANKE (*Fight Club*, *The Thin Red Line*)





▲ KATELYN TARVER'S BIG TIME RUSH

Katelyn Tarver, who got her start playing Jo Taylor on Nickelodeon's *Big Time Rush*, has released *Subject To Change* via Secretly Distribution. The L.A.-via-Georgia singer-songwriter/actress continues to work with regular collaborators Davis Naish, Annika Bennett, Justin Gammella and David Arkwright on new music to come in 2022 when she heads out on the road across the U.S. in March-April with Johnnyswim. Her brother Drew Tarver is also on HBO Max's *The Other Two*.



▲ HARBOR STUDIOS MALIBU: A ROOM WITH A VIEW

Harbor Studios hosted and Barefoot Audio sponsored a high powered happy hour for a who's who of audio's most talented engineers, producers and musicians. The Malibu studio has a Steven Klein designed tracking room and Delta H designed mixing room with a paradise view from Palos Verdes to Point Dume. Shown (l-r): producer-engineer, Robert Caranza, producer-engineer Mark Needham, studio owner Zach Zimmerman and producer-composer CJ Vanston, For more info go to HarborMusic.com.



▲ KEVIN FLOURNOY AT UNITED RECORDING

Producer, songwriter, arranger and keyboardist Kevin Flournoy has been working on several projects at United Recording in Hollywood. In his star-studded career, Flournoy has recorded: Chaka Khan, Dionne Warwick, Gladys Knight, The Pointer Sisters, Jennifer Hudson and Harvey Mason, to name a few. Pictured (l-r): Flournoy; engineer David Rideau; steel drummer-percussionist Leon Alexander, Jr. and singer-songwriter Amanda Cole.

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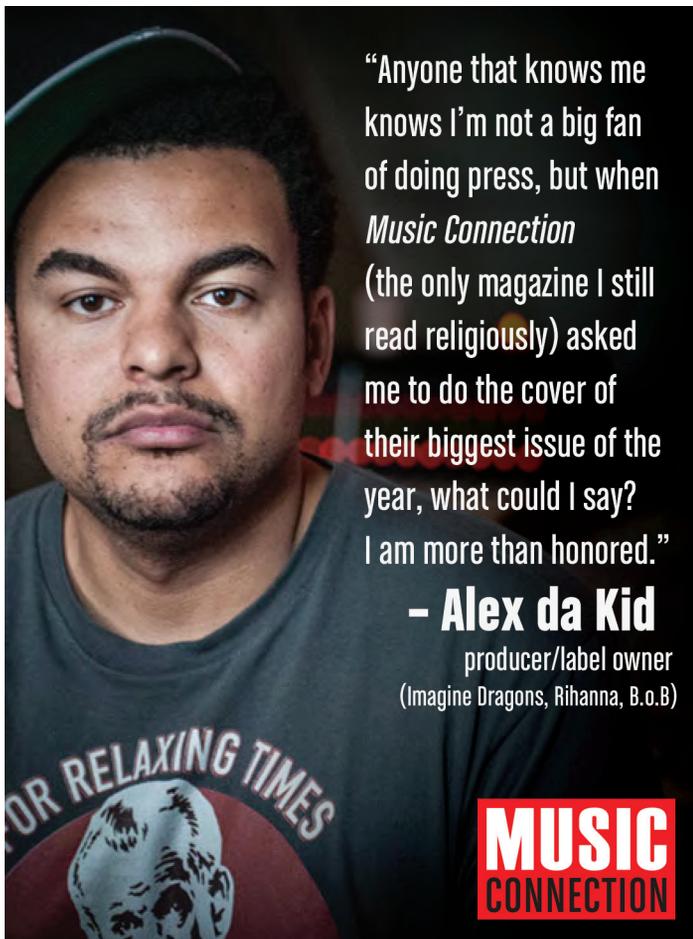
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“Anyone that knows me knows I’m not a big fan of doing press, but when *Music Connection* (the only magazine I still read religiously) asked me to do the cover of their biggest issue of the year, what could I say? I am more than honored.”

– Alex da Kid
 producer/label owner
 (Imagine Dragons, Rihanna, B.o.B)



PRODUCER CROSSTALK

– ROB PUTNAM



EBONIE SMITH

Ebonie Smith has always loved music, although as she was starting out she had her sights set on a career in the WNBA. But when she was about 15, she stepped into Memphis’ Strings & Things where she witnessed a Roland sequencer wielding its might. Her love for it was deep and immediate and it shaped the way she hears songs: piece-by-piece rather than as a whole.

Smith studied music in college, interned everywhere she could and earned her master’s degree at NYU. Smith is now the senior producer & engineer with Atlantic Records in N.Y.C. She’s worked on soundtracks such as *Hamilton*, *Mean Girls* and *Dear Evan Hansen* and alongside artists including The Roots and Alanis Morissette. In 2007 Smith founded Gender Amplified at Barnard College, a non-profit dedicated to helping women in music, production and engineering.

A key part of a producer’s job is to make artists feel comfortable and to establish a vibe that fosters creativity. The main strategies that Smith employs are largely sensory ones. “You need to make sure that there’s soft lighting, the studio smells great and that the temperature is right,” she asserts. “Artists’ olfactory experiences are often overlooked. If the studio smells bad or the temperature isn’t right, that can create a bit of anxiety. Sometimes I’ll favor lamps over ceiling lights, especially if the overheads are abrasive. Dimmers or warmer-colored bulbs help too. Beyond that, your disposition matters a lot. I make sure that I know something about the artist so that we can converse and I can learn what their expectations are.

“As soon as an artist goes into the live room and starts screwing around on instruments, I’m rolling, so I’ve caught whatever they’ve done,” she continues. “That’s one of my favorite parts of being an engineer: the ability to capture everything. I don’t want to ever relay the bad news that I didn’t get something or ask an artist if they’re ready to record. When you can tell them that you’ve caught something and they didn’t even know you were rolling, that ups the respect level and they know that they can trust you. Good engineers arrive early and leave late. They’re always ready.”

Being in New York, Smith is often tapped to work on Broadway recordings. Not surprisingly, the challenges associated with them differ significantly from records with individual artists. “There’s usually tons of sheet music brought in and you have to make sure everything is orderly,” she explains. “You’re dealing with musicians that are doing eight shows a week and they have to fit in a session between rehearsals and shows. An individual artist may spend days in the studio and not record anything or record things that they end up scrapping. In my experience with cast albums, they don’t even get green-lit until you pretty much know all of the material and basically you’re recording every song from the show. Decisions have already been made and there isn’t a lot of creative input at that point. There are also a lot of union rules that don’t allow performers to record past a certain time and there may be sessions with a hundred tracks dedicated solely to the orchestra.”

THE 3 MOST IMPORTANT

... lessons she’s learned as a producer and engineer are:

- Preparation. I do a recording plan for every session, sometimes weeks in advance.
- A great producer is a vibe master. That starts before the studio. You have to plan who’ll be in the room and also have a vision for a track.
- Have a sense of adventure. You need one to make good art. You also must be willing to make mistakes and to stand behind a sound that you’ve created.

See eboniesmith.com, [instagram.com/eboniesmithmusic](https://www.instagram.com/eboniesmithmusic)

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Clients: Jordan High School in Watts; Elevate Oakland; Girls Rock; Boys & Girls Clubs; Daniel Pearl High School; Preservation Hall Foundation; YMCA

BACKGROUND

Founded in 2005, The Guitar Center Music Foundation is a non-profit organization based in California. Its sole mission is to provide instruments and other music-creating tools to those in need. Last October, Myka Miller took over as Executive Director. Her 14 years as Chief Executive Officer at The Harmony Project helped prepare her for this next chapter.

A Perfect Marriage

After the pandemic, I was feeling like I wanted a change. And thinking about corporate social responsibility, I wasn't even thinking music. I was just thinking [about joining] some corporation and making an impact in that space. So, this made a lot of sense.

It's beyond exciting, because I am a professional musician. I'm still playing and want to continue playing. If I stopped playing, I might literally die. That's always been important to me. But I wanted to do more than play. I've always wanted to impact communities and give back. So, it's the perfect marriage of all my skill sets.

Forgoing the Musician's Route

I finished [my tenure at The] Harmony [Project] at the end of June and was looking [for a new position]. A recruiter reached out on LinkedIn and everything fell into place.

I was thinking I might try to make it as a musician, so I did that for a couple months this summer and realized that wasn't going to cut it. Not only financially, but just for me. I sit on a bunch of boards, and I'm always doing way too much, so I knew I needed to find something. I have so many friends who are struggling after the pandemic. They're looking at me like, "What else can I do besides music?"

The Mission

We source instruments and put them into organizations' hands and the hands of students who don't have access. We focus on schools, community organizations, but also music therapy. We do a lot of grants that have to do with hospitals and students with special needs.

It's funny, because my bio used to say I put musical instruments into the hands of students. Now, that's literally my job. I'm looking forward to enhancing what we do and pushing beyond that. I've spent the last couple months doing research and talking to people, cooking up the next strategy and initiative. But we will always be giving away instruments.



"My bio used to say I put musical instruments into the hands of students. Now, that's literally my job."

Understanding Obstacles

Having worked at Harmony for the last 14 years, [I know how] there are so many obstacles these programs are up against. We always had a big challenge with space, getting teachers, making sure kids had transportation... There are so many obstacles that organizations have to overcome. Taking the instrument piece out is a huge help. And it's not just about instruments; it's about quality instruments and making sure they're getting stuff they don't have to replace every year.

The Full Orchestra

We provide anything [our grantees] ask for. Traditionally, it has been guitars, basses, and drums. More and more, we're getting requests for band and orchestra. That's been my world for the last 30 years, but that hasn't been what we've traditionally been giving away. We've been getting a lot of requests for things to make recordings. Some ask for lighting, PA systems, microphones... It's the full gamut. And that's important, because there is a bit more access at schools for traditional instruments. To be able to provide all these types of gear is really important.

Donation Station

We want to donate the best-quality instruments to our grantees. If [someone wants to give us] a mixing board from 25 years ago, that's not terribly helpful, because technology changes so much. But we do receive a lot of band and orchestra instruments. We have them repaired and sent back out. We just did a huge push to repair some guitars and get them back into the hands of programs.

The Big Easy

[For] the first quarter of 2022, we're focusing on New Orleans. Because of the hurricane, some programs had their inventory wiped out. They have nothing, so one of the things we've been looking at is how we can make sure kids have

instruments to march with, because the parades are coming up. They didn't march last year because of the pandemic.

The other thing I'm noticing is a need for repairs. Guitar Center owns Music & Arts, and having them repair instruments is a huge thing. A lot of people have instruments that have been on shelves for a year. They need to be tweaked or cleaned up. That's a huge need.

Playing Quarters

We usually do one large grantee a quarter. The one from this quarter is in Oakland. It's a middle school that faced a lot of budget cuts and had a lot of equipment that was not usable. And then everybody's trying to embrace technology, so making that available to schools that don't have access to that kind of equipment.

The big one we're doing for Q4 is a partnership with Sheila E, who sits on our board. We created a whole new band room for that program. And they're also getting a ton of new gear. The need is overwhelming, especially after the pandemic and natural disasters that people have been experiencing.

Grant Applications

We're looking for programs that have the greatest needs, so they have to be free or low cost to participants. They apply online, and it's a rolling application. We do about 20 per quarter. People tell us what they need, so there's not a dollar amount; it's based on their needs.

We have a grant committee that goes over [the applications] and decides which are going to be funded. [We] usually [spend] between \$2,500 and \$5,000 per grantee. And then we have one larger one that's more in the \$10,000 to \$30,000 range. I'm hoping to expand that and do more.

The Board

Our board is comprised of members, both on the music industry side and the artist side, with well-known music attorney/artist manager David Helfant serving as Chairman. We have a lot of people from Guitar Center. They're really passionate. We have Ron Japinga, who's our CEO, as well as Anne Buchanan, who is our Chief HR Officer. Wayne Colwell is the EVP of Stores Operations. Someone who's fairly new is Paul Gimenez. He's our Director of Diversity & Inclusion. Those are the people from the Guitar Center side.

We also have Michael Sammis from Universal Music. Don Lombardi, who is the founder of Drum Workshop (or DW, as it's more commonly known), is an amazing advocate for music education. Other members include Janie Hendrix, Val Garay, Bruce Kuhlman and Sheila E. [There are] a lot of great people on the board, but we're looking to expand and diversify a bit.

Signed Memorabilia

I'm going to do an auction, some sort of memorabilia event, hopefully in the first part of [2022]. That's a great way to raise money, but people also get to bid on items that their favorite artist has signed. I'm still getting everything ready for launch.

OPPS

Netflix wants a Manager of Music Business Development, series. This unique and exciting role will focus on developing opportunities around their rapidly growing portfolio of original music in Netflix Series. The role requires the successful candidate to manage and grow a wide number of external relationships in order to develop key partnerships for Netflix, whether with music publishers, record labels, touring companies, DSPs, talent management agencies, lifestyle brands, etc. to drive equity of their original series titles. This role will deliver and execute a cohesive series music release strategy (streams, playlisting, social footprints, live experiences, etc.). Apply at LinkedIn.

United Talent Agency is looking for an Assistant, Music. Candidates must have the ability to proactively function under tight deadlines in a fast-paced working environment and experience managing daily schedules/calendars, as well as preparing for meetings. Qualified candidates must have precise, detail-oriented organizational skills, as well as excellent communication and writing abilities. The ideal candidate is knowledgeable about the music industry and the entertainment industry as a whole. Apply at EntertainmentCareers.net.

Warner Music Group needs a Music Publicity Assistant. The role: Assisting publicists with daily requests/projects in the field of publicity, including writing/

editing press releases and bios, coordinating production of press images, coordinating materials for national and local television performances. Apply at ShowbizJobs.

NBCUniversal wants a Manager, Film Music Production. The Manager, Film Music Creative is a key member of the Creative group of executives in the Film Music department. This self-starter is responsible for a variety of ongoing film/project-related routines. Specifically, this role will oversee and manage all music needs for Back Lot Music soundtracks, and third-party soundtracks. Apply at LinkedIn.

For More Career Opportunities, check out musicconnection.com daily. And sign up for MC's Weekly Bulletin newsletter.

LABELS - RELEASES SIGNINGS

Swedish band Pershagen has signed with Lövely Records. Their debut for the label will be their third album overall—*Hilma*. "The main riff of *Hilma* is inspired by the indie and grunge music of the 90s," says guitarist Jimmie Nilsson. "I felt that the album needed something that's vigorous, raw and straight to the point. Originally it was intended as a minute long riff that would open the album, but when the whole band got together to play it, we felt it was lacking something. So we started experimenting with different arrangements, adding atmospheric and dreamy sections."



▲ ABHORIA RELEASES 'FALSE IDOLS'

L.A. black metal band Abhorria have released new single "False Idols" on Prosthetic Records. It's the second single from their self-titled debut album. "This was the song that laid the groundwork for what I wanted Abhorria to be," says guitarist Vor. "I feel like it embodies the '90s black metal that first got me into the scene, but with a modern touch. Lyrically, it looks at people who present themselves as godlike entities in the hope that others will believe the hype, only to be identified as frauds." Contact wil@prostheticrecords.com for more info.

Contact mike@earshotmedia.com for more info.

British singer and songwriter Luke Sital-Singh has signed with Nettwerk Records. The L.A.-based artist has celebrated by releasing the "Blind Missiles" single from a forthcoming, current untitled album. "It is a song about polarization, feeling tired with the constant attacks from one group to another and the lack of empathy and understanding, feeling at odds with the world around me, as a Brit living in the U.S. feeling overwhelmed and disconnected from U.S. politics, confused as to

where I fit in the picture," he said. Contact ppalmer@netwerk.com for more info.

Los Angeles pop/R&B artist Riley has signed to Thriller Records. He's released a new track and video on the label called "Call it When You Want." "I wanted to make the visual for this release something that would surprise people and show a little glimpse into my personality," Riley says. "We had a lot of fun making this video and I feel like it stays true to my Southern California roots." Contact becky@cosanostrapr.com for more info.

DIY Spotlight

MOVE LIKE CREATURES

SoCal four-piece Move Like Creatures formed thanks to a Craigslist ad placed right at the start of the pandemic.

"I was already struggling with depression pre-pandemic and I knew I needed to get a new project together and find people to create with to combat that," says frontwoman Nancy Bombard. "Like most artists I've always had the dream to pursue music full time and to be on tour again. We all had been in previous bands and were looking for something new. Ryan [Reynolds, guitar] thought initially it was going to be a cover band situation until he realized how serious I was. I had a mission in my head to find good people who I could build something with. Everything really came together quickly, almost like magic."

The singer says that the band's sound molded itself organically.

"We are an eclectic group of musicians with backgrounds in reggae, rock, metal, pop and

punk," she says. "I'd describe it as combination of all of those backgrounds but close to indie/pop/electronic. I always say that it is happy/sad music, where the instrumentals and melody seem happy but when you dive into it lyrically its actually a bit sad. Being sad while making other people feel good and like they are not alone is part of my writing process so melodically that comes out."

Bombard says that she felt driven to form a band when she started to realize how long she'd be away from her family for.

"We realized we were not going to be able to see our families for a while during the lockdown and we were only able to send song ideas through text or email," she says. "Once lockdown ended we kept our circle close and focused on writing. I was thankful we had each other through those times and that we were able to



create. I think for many people there was A LOT of time to sit and think, which could be a bad thing if you don't have an outlet."

The band's latest single is "Mind Reader," "based off of personal experience dealing with mental health struggles and receiving advice from all directions, even when it is not always asked for," Bombard says.

Go to movelikecreatures.com for more info.

PROPS

Mariah Carey's "All I Want for Christmas is You" has become the first and only holiday single to be awarded the RIAA's Diamond Award (in recognition of 10 million sales and streaming units in the United States). "The continued love for my song never ceases to amaze me and fill my heart with a multitude of emotions," says Carey. Contact edwin.tetteh@thechambergroup.com for more info.

Congratulations to all of the artists that have been nominated for Grammys. The 2022 Grammy Awards Show takes place on January 31 and will be available to view on CBS and Paramount+. Go to grammy.com/grammys/news/2022-grammys-complete-winners-nominees-nominations-list to see the full list of nominees.

THE BIZ

The National Independent Venue Association (NIVA) has announced NIVA Care—health-care insurance for members.

"Since Day 1 at NIVA, our mantra has been 'First we survive, then we thrive,'" says Chris Bauman, a NIVA founding member, lead of its Insurance Committee, and president of Zenith Music Group in Chicago. "NIVA Care is a massive game changer that has the potential to improve employees' and their families' lives and enable our mom-and-pop small businesses to attract and keep staff during this competitive employment time -- and for years to come. NIVA Care is the opposite of a 'one size fits all' solution. Instead it's fully customized for our industry and diverse membership." Learn more at nivassoc.org.

BRETT CALLWOOD has written about music for two decades, originally for Kerrang!, Classic Rock, Metal Hammer and more in the U.K. He's the author of two books, about Detroit proto-punks the MC5 and the Stooges. He's now the music editor at LA Weekly, and has regular bylines in the SF Weekly, Tucson Weekly and iDobi Radio, as well as here in Music Connection. He can be reached at brettcallwood@gmail.com



▲ COOK DROPS 11TH ALBUM LIBRE

Multi-Platinum/Gold winning artist Jesse Cook has released his 11th studio album, *Libre*, via his own Coach House imprint. "I wrote and recorded *Libre* during the pandemic when, like most people, I was longing for freedom," Cook says of the new project. "My music was my escape from the four walls that surrounded me, and the storm that was swirling outside." The first single, and video, from the album is "Number Five," out now. Contact mgowen@milestonepublicity.com.

The LEGAL Beat

BY GLENN LITWAK



As reported extensively by the press, on Nov. 5, 2021 the Astroworld festival (in Houston, TX) got underway. The headliner was rapper Travis Scott who founded the festival in 2018. As soon as Scott began to perform, the crowd surged toward the stage. Ten people died by being trampled or asphyxiated. Many more were injured. It has also been reported that fans had earlier crashed the VIP entrance to the venue.

Numerous lawsuits have since been filed and the question of who is responsible for this disaster has arisen.

THE ASTROWORLD FESTIVAL DISASTER

It should be noted that Scott has run into trouble in the past for allegedly inciting violence and praising fans for participating in such conduct at his concerts. At the 2015 Lollapalooza festival, he was cited for disorderly conduct and there were problems in 2019 at Astroworld when fans rushed to enter the festival.

Some of those who may be held legally responsible include Scott, Live Nation, the City of Houston, and Harris County.

As Scott took the stage at about 9 p.m. the crowd began to push forward from the front and sides, leading to numerous attendees being crushed. People fell, were trampled and panicked. Apparently, there were too many people near the stage and insufficient escape routes. Scott paused the concert several times before stopping it for good at 9:42 pm.

There are many legal issues raised by this disaster, such as:

- Was the event organizer or others negligent in preparing for the event and not stopping it when problems arose?

- Was there adequate and properly trained security, ushers, and police?
- Was sufficient fencing, signage, lighting, medical facilities and crowd control measures taken?
- Were cost-cutting measures taken that increased the risk of this occurring?
- What about the layout of the stage and fan areas?
- Did Scott incite the attendees with his conduct? What did he know about the crowd surge and when?
- What was the chain of command?

Undoubtedly, the various defendants will countersue each other for the tragedy.

One of the important questions is whether the concert should have been stopped earlier and the lights turned on when things got out of hand.

What Travis Scott knew about the crowd surge and when will be investigated. Who had authority to stop the concert? Why weren't there more exits and contingency plans for such an occurrence?

From a legal standpoint, it seems the overall question will be what would a reasonable person or company have done to prepare for a safe concert and what should have been done once the situation deteriorated? My guess is that the vast majority of these cases will be settled by insurance carriers for the defendants. Hopefully, in the future, music festivals will have better safety precautions in place than they had at Astroworld.

GLENN LITWAK is a veteran entertainment attorney based in Santa Monica, CA. He has represented platinum selling recording artists, Grammy winning music producers, hit songwriters, management and production companies, music publishers and independent record labels. Glenn is also a frequent speaker at music industry conferences around the country, such as South by Southwest and the Billboard Music in Film and TV Conference. Email Litwak at gtllaw59@gmail.com or visit glennlitwak.com.

This article is a very brief overview of the subject matter and does not constitute legal advice.



I Quit My Day Job Because I Make More Money From My Music.

Matthew Vander Boegh, TAXI Member

That's every musician's dream, isn't it —quitting your day gig because you make more money with your music. Well, that's my life now, and here's how I did it...

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I live in Boise, Idaho, not Hollywood, yet my music is on TV nearly every day. My studio is in a glorified tool shed in my backyard, and my gear setup is so quaint other musicians ask, "Really? That's *it*!?" I've got a computer, monitors, a few mics, and a cheap little interface. No fancy outboard gear, no rack-mounted *anything*!

My Two Secret Weapons

Targets and deadlines are my secret weapons. Knowing who needs music and *when* they need it motivates me to get things done. It's changed my life! Actually, TAXI changed my life.



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I'm getting *paid* for my music now instead of sitting on my couch *dreaming* about it. I'm my own boss, and some day my music will probably pay for my retirement, a vacation home on an exotic beach, and some umbrella drinks!



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I'm all the proof you need that a regular guy can make enough money with his music to quit his day job! Do what *thousands* of other musicians have done to become successful—join TAXI. You might never have to work another day gig in your life!



Date Signed: January 2021
Label: Atlantic Records
Type of Music: Pop
Management: Eighteen Company / SB Projects
Booking: ICM
Legal: Feltcher & Freifeld LLP
Publicity: Liza Anderson - agpr@andersongrouppr.com
Web: jaxwritessongs.com
A&R: Adam Grossman & Aton Ben Horin

Jax's journey is a lesson in trying new things while staying invested in what you love. Encouraged to pursue her passion for music from a young age, Jax (born Jackie Miskanic) was homeschooled to allow time to focus on her voice lessons, performances, recording and mini-tour schedules. Awarded the John Lennon Scholarship in songwriting after submitting a piece through a BMI contest, Jax was certified as a producer and engineer in Pro Tools and Avid, and then built her own studio with her winnings. She has since opened for Justin Bieber, The Jonas Brothers, Ke\$ha, performed at Bamboozle and the Warped Tour, and has co-written with Natasha Bedingfield.

Thyroid cancer limited her singing in 2016, so Jax switched to songwriting, experiencing success with songs for Paris Hilton, Weezer and Big Freedia. Fast-forward to quarantine, she returned to her own music, posting funny ("dad pop") music videos on TikTok. An overwhelming response to her first song, "Ring Pop," catapulted her TikTok success—ultimately garnering over 500 million views and 6 million followers. As momentum on TikTok continued, Jax began getting industry attention, and when Atlantic Records reached out she was extremely excited. Speaking about Atlantic Chairwoman/COO, Julie Greenwald, Jax shared, "I've always been a fan of Greenwald, specifically because she's just such a badass! Atlantic has always nurtured artist careers for a long time."

"I now have an awesome team to support what I'm doing."

The artist says Atlantic is always looking at ways to grow with projects, and that they really seem to care about the artists, and Jax is very pleased that her agreement leaves her in creative control of projects and ongoing TikTok posts, adding, "Not much has changed, other than the fact that I now have an awesome team to support what I'm doing."

Jax shares that unproduced, authentic content can be very powerful. "I think there's power in just being yourself and being organic and putting yourself out there." Latest single, "Like My Father," has reached over 43 million views. "It's been a really, really cool couple of months for me to see one of my favorite pieces of work come to life." - **Andrea Beenham**



Date Signed: January 2021
Label: Mare/Woodsist
Band Members: Liam Kazar, David Curtin, Spencer Tweedy, Lane Beckstrom
Type of Music: Alternative Rock, Singer-Songwriter
Management: Sully Davis, localuniverse.net
Booking: N/A
Legal: N/A
Publicity: Jim DeLuca - jim.pitchperfectpr@gmail.com
Web: liamkazar.bandcamp.com
A&R: Kevin Morby

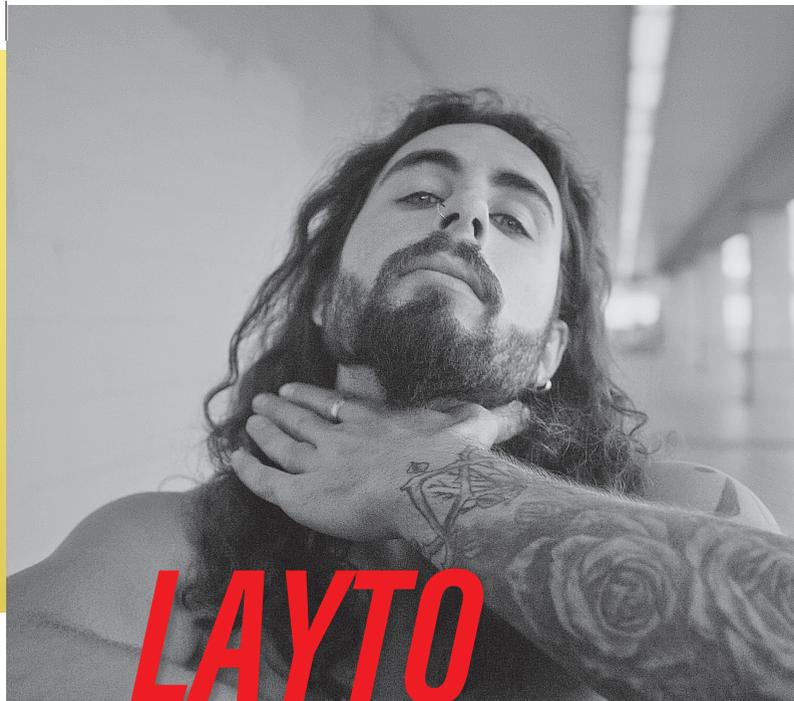
There are many roads that lead to that elusive record deal or management contract. But there are few substitutes for achieving anything of value than exerting the proper amount of elbow grease and putting in the work. In the case of Chicago/Kansas City-based singer-songwriter Liam Kazar, that journey has been in service of, and in collaboration with, various artists such as Jeff Tweedy, Steve Gunn, Chance the Rapper and Daniel Johnston. For over 10 years Kazar has toured as a sideman and multi-faceted vocalist, guitarist and songwriter.

Kazar has a new album out called *Due North* and he always knew the direction of a musician's life was the one he wanted to follow. "I was lucky enough that music seemed like a real job right away," says Kazar. "I always took touring seriously. With this new album I wanted to record some music that would be fun to play live. And that's something I've learned from all the people I've collaborated and toured with."

"His label only puts out people's debut work."

Due North is Kazar's debut on Kevin Morby's imprint, Mare/Woodsist. But the unassuming singer-songwriter entered into the label association almost by accident. "The truth is I have very little experience with labels for somebody who's been in music professionally for 10 years now," says Kazar. "But, with this situation, the label is run by my friend Kevin who also lives in K.C. I knew some of his music peripherally and he knew some of the people I've played with." Curiously, Morby had never heard Kazar's own compositions. That all changed during last year's pandemic lockdown when he attended one of the Sunday porch concerts at the singer-songwriter's home. "Kevin liked one of my songs and thought it was an old standard. When I told him it was mine he made up his mind to put out my record. That was November 2020. By the beginning of the year he said 'Let's do this,'" recalls Kazar.

Kazar—who during the touring downtime of the pandemic also became a pop-up Armenian chef—is happy to step into the spotlight and put his own musical vision on display. "Kevin's whole vibe is helping people get their foot in the door," explains Kazar. "I believe his label only puts out people's debut work. I think that's an interesting idea for a label, with nothing but debut albums. I am just excited that someone else is excited about it!" - **Eric Harabadian**



Date Signed: June 30, 2021
Label: Left on Read Music Group
Type of Music: Alternative
Management: Garrett Ream and Steve Richards
Booking: N/A
Legal: N/A
Publicity: Deborah Radel
Web: N/A
A&R: Mark Chipello

Mark Chipello, Head of A&R at Position Music, manages the rock band Welshly Arms. Garrett Ream was one of the individuals responsible for the group's radio promotion efforts when they played Lollapalooza three years ago. As such, he hung out backstage during that tour. He and Chipello met, became friends and subsequently stayed in touch.

Approximately a year and a half ago, Ream began managing singer-songwriter Layto with Steve Richards. Soon, the former custodial worker from Cape Cod had amassed over 150 million streams. Part of the reason his sound blew up is that a music supervisor unexpectedly stumbled upon and used his song "Little Poor Me."

Ream began messaging Chipello multiple versions of tracks that Layto had been crafting. The edgy vibe was exactly what Position was looking for. "Tyler [Bacon, Position's owner] had been talking to me for months, describing what he wanted," remembers Chipello. "And when Garrett started sending me these songs, I was like, 'This is what we want.'"

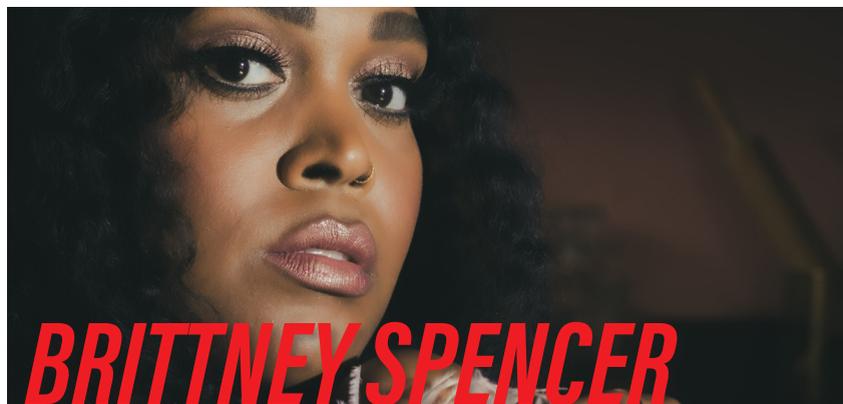
"Love the process, and hone your chops."

Contract negotiations were quick and easy. Chipello's solid relationship with Ream and Richards, on top of Layto's unrelenting work ethic, made the deal highly appealing. Although Position has a sizable indie label side, Layto is currently signed only as a songwriter. Chipello and Bacon, however, remain open to the possibility of his joining their roster.

Presumably, Position's experience with sync licensing appealed to Layto, given how it was a sync license that took him to the next level. The love that Chipello and Bacon expressed toward his music was likely another vital element. "We're a passion-based company," says the A&R man. "I think all three of them felt that."

Cowrites have already proven fruitful, with Layto's first collaborative session resulting in a stunning track that's yet to be released. Although more songwriting powwows are planned, the pandemic has delayed them until later this year.

Chipello observes that aspiring songwriters must have an undying need to create, just as Layto does. It's the best way to get noticed and signed. "Love the process," he says, "and hone your chops." - **Andy Kaufmann**



Date Signed: July 2021 (UTA)
Type of Music: Country
Management: Andrew Cohen - Cohencidence Projects
Booking: United Talent Agency - Jeffrey Hasson, Alec Vidmar, Joe Wohlfeld, Riley Folsom and Emily Wright
Legal: N/A
Publicity: Jaclyn D. Carter - jcarter@shorefire.com
Web: brittneyspencer.com
A&R: N/A

To call Brittney Spencer's ascendancy in country music a Cinderella story wouldn't do justice to how quickly the singer-songwriter has rocketed into the stratosphere. Spencer's only release thus far is an EP, *Compassion*, that dropped in July 2020. She doesn't have a record label or Wikipedia page yet. She recently signed with UTA to book her performances.

Despite not being on a label, Spencer is already considered a leading Black female country artist. People Magazine, Spotify and Pandora all named her an "artist to watch." She recently performed at two of the most treasured venues in the U.S.: the Ryman Auditorium and Grand Ole Opry House. And she even recently launched a headlining tour.

"My life has been one big-ass transition for the last year," Spencer says. "It almost feels like this world isn't happening."

"I do have intentions of signing to a label. But..."

To reiterate, Spencer hasn't even released a full-length album yet. So how the hell is she pulling this off?

For starters, Spencer paid her dues. A Baltimore native, Spencer relocated eight years ago to country music's most cutthroat city, Nashville. She slept on air mattresses and busked on street corners. All the while, Spencer strengthened her songcraft, eschewing country music cliches in favor of heartfelt storytelling. The irrepressibly optimistic musician also started adding some impressive contacts to her cell phone—like friend Maren Morris, who name-dropped Spencer at the Country Music Awards.

Spencer pinpointed two specific events that turbo-boosted her career: the release of her first song, "Sorrys Don't Work No More," in October 2020 on YouTube; and her signing to UTA the following July, after her songs blew up on social media.

"I started getting phone calls and emails [from agencies and record labels]," Spencer says. "UTA was one of the ones I reached out to myself. Then they reached out to my manager, and we've been working together ever since. I want people who are really good at what they're doing to be part of my team."

Obviously, the agency is helping Spencer secure better bookings than she did on her own. But Spencer's ineffable charm has helped land her on bills with Reba McEntire and Jason Isbell, and a seat on Melissa Etheridge's recent music-festival/cruise.

And yet... that debut album still isn't out.

"I'm taking my time," she says. "I do have intentions of signing to a label. But right now, I'm having too much fun." - **Kurt Orzek**



▲ MAXWELL SIGNS TO BMG

After more than two decades and five albums, award-winning singer-songwriter and producer Maxwell has signed an international multi-album label agreement/label partnership (the first in 25 years) with BMG.

COOPER ALAN ACCELERATION

From his early 2020 TikTok clips to over 6 million streaming followers, SESAC country artist Cooper Alan built momentum with songs "New Normal," "Tough Ones" and "Too Soon," launching Cooped Up Records alongside his songwriting mentor, Victoria Shaw.



▲ CHRISTOPHERSON'S BUBBLEGUM

Trans and Indigenous artist Quinn Christopherson has released his highly anticipated debut EP, *I Am Bubblegum*, on Play It Again Sam Records, after tours with Courtney Barnett, Lucy Dacus, Shura and Portugal. The Man, and following his 2019 NPR Tiny Desk competition win.

Godmode Joins Hipgnosis

Hipgnosis Songs Fund has joined artist development company godmode in a publishing joint venture. Founded in 2017, godmode's founders Talya Elitzer and Nick Sylvester focus is on dance, rap and electronic songwriters, and bring 20 years of combined artist development experience between them.

Godmode's breakout credits include JPEGMafia, Channel Tres and Yaeji and the joint venture's latest artist development focuses on TikTok artist Emmy Hartman ("Stupid Big Teeth" dropped last month).

Brennan Bill Fails

Proposed legislation in England that attempted to restrict U.K. record company revenues and return profits to artists and performers has failed to pass in a chamber of the British Parliament. Presented by Labour politician Kevin Brennan MP, the "Brennan Bill" was an attempt to introduce Equitable Remuneration into U.K. law and would have seen a proportion of artist/musician streaming revenues bypass label agreements for payment directly to the performer. The bill also proposed a "Right of Revocation" that would allow songwriters and artists to apply to reclaim their copyrights after 20 years, even if they had previously signed perpetuity agreements.

Supported by Paul McCartney, Chris Martin and Stevie Nicks, the Equitable Remuneration initiative was blasted by labels arguing that the legislation would diminish the

overall royalty pool available. If passed, the bill would have had to pass further review and a vote by elected officials, in addition to approval in the House of Lords.

Kennedy Honors Return

Last month, the Kennedy Center Honors returned to its in-person gala format, with President Joe Biden and First Lady Jill Biden in attendance. Last year marked the Center's 50th anniversary of cultural programming and lifetime achievement awards for artistic excellence were presented to Motown Records' founder Berry Gordy, singer Bette Midler, opera singer Justino Diaz and folk legend Joni Mitchell.

Tin Pan South Live for 2022

Mark your calendars for the 30th anniversary of the Nashville Songwriters Association International (NSAI) Tin Pan South Songwriters Festival taking place on March 29 through April 2, 2022 in Nashville, TN.

As the largest songwriter festival in the world, hosted in a city known for music, Tin Pan South includes 100 shows to showcase the best current songs in the business in all musical genres, performed by the songs' original creators in historic Nashville hotspots. Legendary performers have included Art Garfunkel, Carole King and Donna Summer, and artists play and talk with each other and the audience throughout the festival, creating the perfect opportunity for powerful networking.

Details and updates at tinpansouth.com



▲ THE BRANDY ALEXANDERS' DEBUT

Canadian psychedelic rock band The Brandy Alexanders release their self-titled 9-track introspective via Gypsy Soul Records. With nods to Pink Floyd and the Beatles, the band is named after a cocktail John Lennon was rumored to have over-indulged in at Hollywood's Troubadour.

BMG Buys Mötley Crüe

BMG has acquired the entire recording catalog for Mötley Crüe in their largest ever single band acquisition, with cost estimates in the vicinity of \$90 million. The purchase follows deals with Tina Turner and Mick Fleetwood, and includes all material from the band's 40-year, nine-album career as well as live and compilation sets.

Primary Wave Adds Porcaro and Pendergrass

Primary Wave Music has added the Estates of Jeff Porcaro and Teddy Pendergrass to their growing roster of legends. The estimated \$30 million dollar catalog purchase of late drummer Jeff Porcaro includes recorded and published catalogs, as well as the master royalties from all TOTO album releases.

With publishing, master recording income stream and name and likeness stakes, the Pendergrass acquisition includes top songs "Love T.K.O.," "You're My Latest, My Greatest Inspiration," "When Somebody Loves You Back" and "Close The Door." The latest acquisitions follow the Gerry Goffin and Bing Crosby deals, rumored at \$20 million and \$50 million dollars respectively.

ASCAP Gets Versed

Now in its fourth year, and hosted by ASCAP's VP and Creative Director, Erik Philbrook, Versed, is ASCAP's bi-weekly podcast featuring in-depth interviews with the greatest songwriters and composers from various genres, sharing stories around their work, along with tips and insights

they have gained along the way. Philbrook is joined by industry experts to discuss ongoing issues affecting the lives of creatives.

Having written and edited for ASCAP, provided ASCAP's video production, content management, and interviewing numerous songwriters and composers, Philbrook is at the forefront of songwriter rights' advocacy efforts and is pivotal to the success of major ASCAP events—including the Sundance ASCAP Music Café and ASCAP "I Create Music" EXPO.

More at ascap.com/news-events/podcast-versed

The CCC App Event

The California Copyright Conference is hosting the "Put On Your Thinking App!" panel next month at the Catalina Jazz Club to discuss how Spotify, TikTok, Soundcloud and Instagram platforms have changed the way A&R works for labels, as well as financial outcomes for publishers. Various monetization options for streaming will be discussed, as well tips on how best to navigate the new musical landscape. The evening will be moderated by Sweet On Top Founder, Kristina Benson and the evening will include dinner and cocktail hour included with tickets.

Full panelist and registration details at theccc.org/events.

ANDREA BEENHAM (aka Drea Jo) is a freelance writer and marketing consultant based in Southern California. The South-African born, Canadian-raised California transplant has a passion for music, people and fun. She can be reached at drea@dreaajo.com



▲ THE WAY BACK HOME WITH BADRU

Indie-folk artist Aisha Badru has released her third EP, *The Way Back Home*, on Nettwerk Records, with spellbinding atmospheric sound, spoken word, and lyrics around nature, spirituality and family. With over 100 million streams and a European fanbase, her latest release speaks to her personal evolution.



▲ SCOTT OATLEY WINS USA SONGWRITING

Los Angeles-based songwriter Scott Oatley (aka Vãn Scott) has won the 26th Annual USA Songwriting Competition Gospel/Inspirational first prize and Overall Grand Prize for "What's Coming Next?" See songwriting.net for all winners and nominees.



▲ WATCH OUT FOR CLARK

At only 18, BMI artist Callista Clark has created a buzz with debut single, "It's Cause I Am." Discovered by Big Machine Label Group's Scott Borchetta and SB Projects' Scooter Braun, Clark has already garnered over 130 million views of her videos on social and YouTube.



▲ PURPLEBEAT SIGNS STEVENS

Purplebeat Music has signed Shane Stevens to a worldwide publishing deal, following success with Lady A's "American Honey" and Walker Hays' "Fancy Like," as well as songs by Carrie Underwood, Ariana Grande, Sara Evans, Selena Gomez, Jessie James Decker, Meghan Trainor, Ronnie Milsap and others.

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SONGWRITER PROFILE

- ANDREA BEENHAM

Duckwrth: The Value of Purpose

At 33, Duckwrth—born Jared Lee—has been developing his art for nearly 20 years. His debut major-label album, *Supergood*, and follow-up EP, *SG8*, both via Republic Records, marked a turning point in his artistic evolution, offering an eclectic, introspective style that has brought him more than 350 million catalog streams and a dedicated international following. In addition to his headline tours, the L.A.-born rapper and songwriter has opened for Anderson .Paak, Rich Chigga, Louis the Child and N*E*R*D, and his self-titled “funk wave” sound has been showcased in festivals around the world, including the Montreaux Jazz Festival, Lollapalooza, Groovin the Moo (Australia), and Valkhof (Holland). He has kicked off a European tour this month, with stops in Ireland, Scotland, England, Belgium, France and Germany, ahead of a tour with Billie Eilish in March.

Growing up in South Central Los Angeles in a strict Christian home and raised predominantly by strong women, Duckwrth is a deep thinker who began writing poetry as a teenager. He discovered hip-hop at school, immersing himself in freestyle and taking part in rap battles. “Mom didn’t let us listen to hip hop, so it was a rebellion of sorts,” he says. “I just liked the way the music made me feel. Going into writing, I feel like I can just narrate my own life and story a bit.” When a high school love broke up with him on his birthday, he performed a reimagined version of Common’s “I Used To Love H.E.R.” for his classmates. Their rave reviews inspired him to continue performing.

After moving to San Francisco to study graphic design, Duckwrth found new inspiration in a rap group he formed with two friends. “It was tight—like super, super sick—and it just felt right,” he says, revealing that, “with a rap loop, you out kind of find ways to come together and blend, but I needed something that was my own sound, my own message. *Duck-tape* [a self-released digital download from 2012]—if you want to talk about the true spark that rocketed off into space—that was it.” Having released his songs online as Duckwrth, he wanted to develop his own solo sound, and joined the TeamBackpack cypher series on YouTube after a friend suggested he contact TeamBackpack cofounder Armani Cooper.

Republic Records artist manager Xtina Prince discovered Duckwrth on YouTube, and mentored him for two years before his move to New York in 2014. As his manager, Prince delivered marketing and tour budgets, along with licensing and sync options. The artist’s 2017 label deal brought *An XTRA UGLY Mixtape* and *The Falling Man*, Tayla Parx and Louis The Child collaborations; *Spider-man: Into The Spideverse* and *Space Jam: A New Legacy* placements; and work with Riot Games. South by Southwest in 2018 brought an introduction to Billie Eilish. The synergy between Duckwrth and Eilish was immediate, resulting in the forthcoming tour.

Duckwrth’s writing has a unique flavor, which he attributes to having listened to a wide range of music from a young age, including classical, gospel, jazz, punk, and metal. His first public performances were in his church choir. He started out, he says, “just feeling like I had something different that I could bring,” and feels that artists should, “be a whole lot of themselves. It’s the key ingredient to [being] a good artist.” In a process that now involves artists, producers, and many others in collaboration, Duckwrth feels that, to make something special, it has to be organic and present in the moment—created from scratch. His recommendation? Create a bridge of sounds and genres to something new that people aren’t yet doing, and to challenge yourself.

It would seem that South Central gave him his backbone, New York built his strength, and San Francisco added color, vibration and texture to his style and sound. He’s always looking to push himself to try new things and create on the next level. “I just want people to be blown away by the music,” he concludes, “by the performance, by the energy. That’s a big goal of mine.”

Contact Maggie Faircloth, faircloth@sunshinesachs.com,
Experience Duckwrth at duckwrth.com



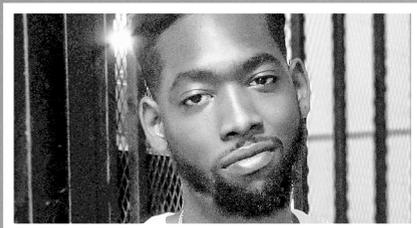
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Who reads Music Connection?



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“Music Connection has been a reliable home to get absolute honest and reliable feed back on my reviews! I felt like they really gave my songs a chance and gave helpful feedback to assist in elevating my game as a recording artist and entertainer.”

-- **Chevy Chase**



THE EDUCATOR

“Music Connection magazine is my barometer for staying on top of industry trends. My students receive invaluable feedback through the New Music Critiques and Reviews. Also, the national Directories are a great resource. The latest issue of Music Connection magazine has a permanent home in my teaching studio!”

- **Chris Sampson**, Vice Dean for Contemporary Music, USC Thornton School of Music



THE MUSIC CONSULTANT

“Music Connection is on another level! They quickly and accurately promoted my composition competition, which led to a number of submissions. As the owner of a music consulting business that helps musicians compose their careers, this type of service is essential when I want to send out content that benefits artists.”

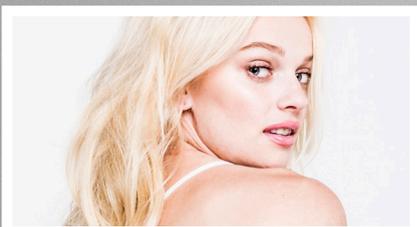
- **Jessica Muñoz-Collado**, Founder/CEO - Nizco Music



THE STUDIO OWNER

“I find valuable information in every issue. I constantly refer engineers seeking employment to the annual Recording Studio issue, which has the most complete and comprehensive list of U.S. studios that you will find anywhere. And when I am asked for advice by a kid just starting out, I always tell them 'Well the first thing you should do is check out Music Connection.'”

- **Kathleen Wirt**, Owner, 4th Street Recording



THE INDIE ARTIST

Music Connection consistently serves up some of the most helpful music articles online, and has helped me find several songwriting opportunities that I wouldn't have known about otherwise. Regardless the stage of your career, Music Connection is an amazing resource.”

- **Aprilann**



THE GRAMMY WINNER

“Music Connection is consistently the best source for how to make records and sustain a career in music.”

- **Greg Wells**, producer, songwriter-musician (Katy Perry, Panic!, Adele)

MUSIC
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DROPS

The *Licorice Pizza* Original Motion Picture Soundtrack, the musical accompaniment to writer and director Paul Thomas Anderson's ninth film, was released in December digitally and with a limited-edition vinyl pressing. In addition to a collection of tracks that encapsulate the 1970s during which the film is set, the album features an unreleased original track, "Licorice Pizza," by composer and Radiohead guitarist Jonny Greenwood, who has frequently collaborated on the director's films. It also includes "Life on Mars?" by David Bowie, "Stumblin' In" by Chris Norman and Suzi Quatro, "Peace Frog" by The Doors and "If You Could Read My Mind" by Gordon Lightfoot. The film stars Tom Waits, Alana Haim, Bradley Cooper, Sean Penn and Benny Safdie. For more information, contact taylor.vaughn@umusic.com.



As Courtney Barnett's autumn tour continues into the new year to promote her third and latest album *Things Take Time*, the musician has also announced a new documentary on her life and career, to be released in theaters in 2022. Titled *Anonymous Club* and shot on 16mm film over a three-year period, the film will chronicle the artist's ups and downs on the world tour for her second studio album, *Tell Me How You Really Feel*, with narration from Barnett's audio diary. The film was directed by Danny Cohen. For further details, contact Grace Jones at gracej@grandstandhq.com.

An expanded collection of concert films recorded over the years of Pink Floyd and David Gilmour has been released worldwide, featuring some of the most iconic performances by the artists. The release includes eight concert films: *Pink Floyd—The Endless River*, which pays tribute to late band member Richard Wright with music from the 1993 *Division Bell* sessions; *Pink Floyd—Pulse*, filmed during the *Division Bell* tour at Earls Court, London; *Remember That Night: David Gilmour Live At The Royal Albert Hall* with special guests including David Bowie, David Crosby and Graham Nash; *David Gilmour—Live in Gdańsk*; *David Gilmour—Live at Pompeii*; *David Gilmour in Concert* featuring Gilmour live at the Royal Festival Hall, London, as part of the Robert Wyatt-curated Meltdown festival; *Nick Mason's Saucerful of Secrets—*



Live at the Roundhouse featuring the drummer playing the band's early songs at one of the first venues where they performed; and *Pink Floyd—Delicate Sound of Thunder*. Contact Maria. Malta@sonymusic.com.

After it was kept under wraps for two years, Open Road Films has acquired worldwide rights to horror comedy *Studio 666*, which is slated for theatrical release on Feb. 25 with an international release date forthcoming. Directed by BJ McDonnell, the film stars Dave Grohl, Taylor Hawkins, Nate Mendel, Pat Smear, Chris Shiflett, Rami Joffe, Whitney Cummings, Leslie Grossman, Will Forte, Jenna Ortega and Jeff Garlin. In the film, rock band Foo Fighters move into an Encino mansion to record their 10th album, but they become threatened by the supernatural forces within. The film is based on a story by Grohl with a screenplay by Jeff Buhler and Rebecca Hughes. Visit studio666movie.com/synopsis.

Street Singer Productions has announced a new documentary film, *John Monteleone: The Chisels Are Calling*. Directed by Trevor

Laurence and produced by Laurence and Woody Mann, the documentary is a profile of one of the world's most renowned guitar builders and a living artist on permanent exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. It made its film festival debut in November at the Tiburon International Film Festival, and chronicles Monteleone's life and craft

from age 10 when he first took interest in the composition and construction of instruments, the development of his talent in innovating and designing his own unique models, and his familial and creative roots in Italy. Contact Mike Gowen at mgowen@MilestonePublicity.com for more details.

Charli XCX: *Alone Together* dropped Jan. 28 in theaters and on-demand. Birted out of the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown, directors Bradley & Pablo (Lil Nas X, Dua Lipa, Rosalia, Kanye West, Cardi B) teamed up with Charli XCX to document

39 days of shooting and 5000+ clips to create a doc that captures the making of her 2020 album *how i'm feeling now*. Charli collaborated with her online fan community on many key elements of the album, from music to visuals.



In the end, both Charli XCX and her fans gain a better understanding of their creative and emotional limits.

Detroit area filmmakers **Lisa Hagopian** and **Eric Harabadian** of **Vision 561 Productions** are raising funds through February 2022 for their third feature film, **We Thrive**. The documentary celebrates the music of Armenian American artists that transcends their often-tragic history. The story is told through interviews with prominent Armenian-American musicians, candid street encounters, historical footage and live performances.

A tax-deductible contribution will help the filmmakers cover music licensing fees, legal fees and archival photo and film costs. To make a donation, visit fracturedatlas.org/we-thrive-documentary-film/campaigns/4555 and visit facebook.com/WeThriveMovie for more info about the forthcoming film.

OPPS

There's still time to submit your work for the inaugural **World Trailer Awards**, which honors creators in entertainment marketing in film, television, gaming and more. Jan. 7 is the late deadline. Categories include Best Trailer, Best Audio Trailer, Best Poster, Best Motion Poster, Best Story and more. For eligibility guidelines and details for submitting, visit worldtrailerawards.net/deadlines-eligibility.

The **Julien Dubuque International Film Festival**, which will be held April 20-24 in Dubuque, IA, is accepting entries for the 2022 event through Jan. 24. Cash prizes are offered to winning works including for Best Narrative Feature, Best Short, Best Documentary and Best Use of Music. For details on submitting, visit julienfilmfest.com.

Dances With Films, formed in 1998 by filmmakers who wanted to create a film festival where "who you know" didn't matter, is accepting submissions through March 23 for features, shorts, documentaries, television and web series pilots and music videos. The standard deadline is Feb. 9, after which the entry fee will increase. For details and to submit your work, go to danceswithfilms.com/submissions.

PROPS

Black Dance Stories, a series hosted and produced by **Charmaine Warren** to discuss the stories and history of the Black dance community, now offers the

Young Professionals' Experience, a series of programming that spotlights young and up-and-coming Black dance artists. As the COVID-19 pandemic was taking a major toll on the performing arts sector, BDS was launched in June 2020 to hold space for Black dance artists and provide a forum to connect and share stories. Young Black artists and professionals ages 21-35 can contribute to the Young Professionals online journal and find other artists' stories through blackdancestories.org/young-professional-experience.

Mariah Carey's "All I Want for Christmas is You," one of pop music's most iconic holiday songs, made history again this past holiday

season becoming the first and only holiday single to be awarded the RIAA's Diamond Award after making 10 million sales and streaming units in the U.S. Billboard also named the hit as the No. 1 record on their Greatest of All Time Holiday 100 Songs list. In December, Sony Pictures Entertainment made two Mariah Carey films, **Live at the Tokyo Dome**, capturing the artist's historic first concert in Japan during her 1996 **Daydream World Tour**, and

First Vision, which offers a look into Carey's life on the verge of superstardom in 1991 with music videos, interviews and behind-the-scenes footage. Four additional films, including **Fantasy: Mariah Carey at Madison Square Garden**, **Here is Mariah Carey**, **Mariah Carey Around the World** and **Mariah Carey: MTV Unplugged +3** were also released in December. For more info, contact Gabby.Gibb@sonymusic.com.

The 12th annual **Hollywood Music in Media Awards**, held in November, gave the best song for a feature film to **"No Time to Die,"** co-written by **Billie Eilish** and **Finneas O'Connell**. Other winners included **"Good Mood"** by **Karl Johan Schuster**, **Savan Kotecha**, **Oscar Gorres** and **Adam Levine** for best song in an animated film; **Rufus Wainwright's "Secret Sister"** for best song in a documentary; **The Sparks Brothers**, directed by **Edgar Wright**, for best music documentary; and **Respect**, directed by **Liesl Tommy**, for best music themed film, biopic or musical. For a complete list of winners, visit hmmawards.com/hmma-winners.

JESSICA PACE is a music journalist-turned-news-reporter based in Durango, CO. She is from Nashville, where she started a writing career by freelancing for publications including *American Songwriter* and *Music Connection*. Contact her at j.marie.pace@gmail.com.

OUT TAKE



Paul Avgerinos

Composer/Producer/Engineer

Web: roundskymusic.com

Contact: paul@roundskymusic.com

Most Recent: *Peace*

If you're a composer living outside the entertainment hubs of New York or L.A., that doesn't necessarily bar you from success in the industry, as Paul Avgerinos can attest. From his studio in Redding, CT, he is averaging nearly 4 million streams a month with his ambient music and has thousands of tracks in TV shows globally.

"That's one of the wonderful developments of the modern era. Communication and file transfer are so electronic now, I do a lot of music for people I've never met in person," Avgerinos says. "That's actually wonderful, not being another composer flocking to L.A. trying to get a tiny piece of the pie. You can be really good and get nowhere because the luck's not with you, or you weren't at the right restaurant at the right time. My success is more in my own hands."

Avgerinos started working on catalog music as he realized the difficulty in securing original score-to-picture jobs. "The industry was moving more in that direction, because it's really fast and inexpensive for the director," he says. "I started cranking out massive amounts of tracks, and I would say to young composers, it's a slow burn, but it's a good way to use your downtime and constantly add to your catalog. Over time, it adds up."

When he started creating music for libraries, Avgerinos says that sort of work was looked down upon. "People talked about catalog work in a derogatory way. It was a mark of failure. It was the goal to do the score for stuff like *Star Wars*, but good luck with that. With catalog work, I have free reign. I can basically do what I feel like if it fits the genre of what the broker wants. You don't have a director and editor team pecking away at you, asking for 500 changes." To excel at that, he says, "You really have to know the genres and colors and how to achieve levels of tension. To do that, you have to listen to a lot of great examples. You should also know how to write for all kinds of orchestral instruments. If not, you can really mess things up."

Avgerinos is currently working on a follow-up album to the Grammy winner *Grace* to be released in 2022. •

MIXED NOTES

▶ ONEREPUBLIC PAID IN CRYPTO

OneRepublic played an intimate acoustic show at historical venue, Haydn Hall, outside of Vienna. The band was paid entirely in Bitcoin for the show, making them the first American major label artist or band to be paid for a show in cryptocurrency. OneRepublic used the STRIKE peer-to-peer bitcoin payment app for the transaction.



▲ DEAD & CO. GUITAR AUCTION

In the spring of 2021, renowned contemporary artist mister e customized five D'Angelico guitars for Dead & Company's 2021 tour to be auctioned in support of HeadCount, REVERB and the Dead Family charities. The auctions raised a total of \$409,150 to be split among HeadCount, Reverb and a group of over a dozen Dead Family Non-Profit groups.



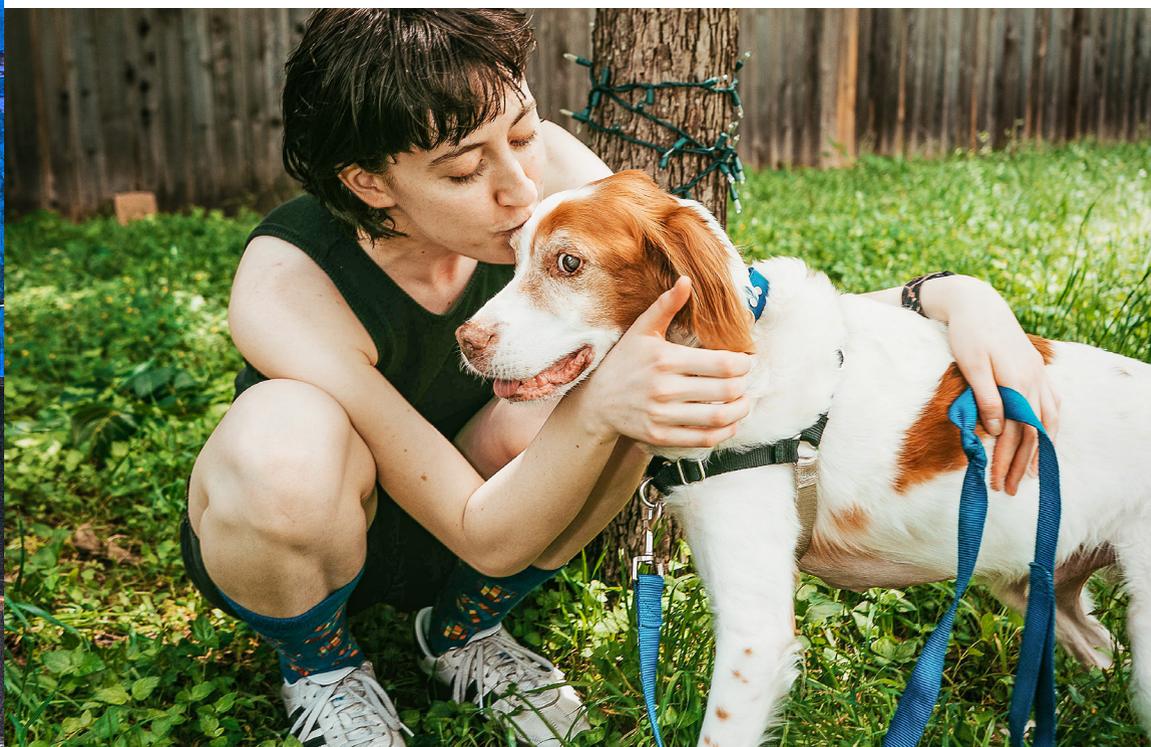
◀ FUTURE GOES DIAMOND

Just two years after its release, "Life Is Good," the seminal 2019 collaboration from Future and Drake, has been certified 10x platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America. Future has just gone Diamond. Only 66 songs have ever been certified Diamond in the U.S.



▲ LAUREN DAIGLE DONATES IN NOLA

Grammy Award winner and multi-platinum recording artist Lauren Daigle celebrated a long-awaited return to her hometown by giving \$375,000 to five New Orleans organizations close to her heart: KidSmart, NOCCA, Ellis Marsalis Center, Roots Music, and Young Audiences of Louisiana—all nonprofits that provide at-risk youth with resources to succeed through music/art education, food support, and literacy.



▲ 10 YEARS OF DOUBLE DOUBLE WHAMMY

Beloved New York indie label Double Double Whammy is now streaming *10 Years of Double Double Whammy*, a compilation featuring DDW artists covering their fellow label mates. The compilation features Frankie Cosmos (pictured), Lomelda, Hovvdy, Mirah, Great Grandpa, Told Slant, Florist, Long Beard, The Glow and more.



◀ ROSANNE CASH NAMED ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE AT NYU

Throughout the 2022 academic year, Cash will be working closely with NYU students through a series of lectures, workshops and classroom visits. This one-of-a-kind experience includes a three-day Lyric Workshop that will feature the school's songwriting students developing and workshopping their original material with Cash's guidance.

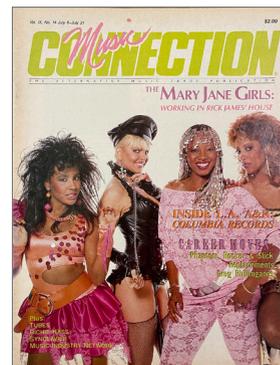
▶ STILL CRUISIN'—AN ORCHESTRAL TRIBUTE TO THE BEACH BOYS

Pioneering hybrid orchestra Nu Deco Ensemble released a beautiful new Beach Boys suite *Still Cruisin'—An Orchestral Tribute to The Beach Boys*. The suite includes reimagining of material from The Beach Boys' landmark album *Pet Sounds*, their unfinished *SMiLE* project, and older surf-era songs.



MUSIC CONNECTION

Tidbits From Our Tattered Past



1985—Mary Jane Girls—#14

Music Connection's feature on Mary Jane Girls featured comments by their svengali, Rick James, who said, "I think women have a lot to say, and I feel because of my many experiences with women, I can write better for them than I can for myself." The issue also features interviews with Phantom, Rocker & Slick and The Replacements.



1998—James Iha—#8

When Smashing Pumpkins guitarist James Iha came out from the shadows to released his first solo record, *MC* spoke with him about the process. "I didn't want to make a big, bloated solo record," he explained. "I just wanted it to be about the songs." The issue also has interviews with guitar stars Ritchie Blackmore, Chris Whitley, Charlie Hunter and Richie Sambora.



GUNNA

THE KING OF DRIP

BY JOSEPH MALTESE
PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH MIRANDA

Gunna is the King of Drip. For those who are *cheugy* (a new addition to the dictionary for 2022, referring to being old and out of touch), *drip* refers to an overall 'fit (outfit). At Gunna's level, the drip consists of signature designers, who this writer has never heard of, decorated in diamonds and gold from head to toe—as Gunna says, he just wants to look “fresh without trying.”

In the following interview, *Music Connection* boldly asks exactly what drip Gunna is wearing, and dives into working almost exclusively with fellow native Atlanta artists, the most impactful being Young Thug. Gunna is one of Thug's most prolific proteges from the Young Stoner Life Records label.

Another creative outlet for the rapper is fashion and design—Gunna has recently partnered with Foot Locker, on top of endorsements and fashion shows for Birkin, Pyer Moss, Off-White and Yohji Yamamoto.

Gunna began making music at 15, influenced by OutKast and other Atlanta hometown heroes. In 2013, he released debut mixtape *Hard Body* under the name Yung Gunna. By 2016, Gunna strengthened his roots, extended his network of motivated emcees, and began working with label boss Young Thug. Gunna shared the mic with Gucci Mane and Travis Scott on Thug's “Floyd Mayweather.” In 2018, Gunna worked again with Travis Scott, guesting on “Yosemite,” a standout from *Astroworld*. That same year, Gucci Mane took to Twitter to publicly offer Gunna \$1 million to sign to 1017 Eskimo (the same label that first signed Thug).

Gunna remains loyal to YSL, home to seven of his releases and compilations, including the Lil Baby collaboration *Drip Harder* (which produced Gunna's highest-charting, platinum-certified, Grammy-nominated single, “Drip Too Hard”), as well as 2020's acclaimed sophomore album on a major label, *WUNNA*.

Drip Season 4, the latest in Gunna's *Drip* musical anthology, is set to release early this year, already boasting singles with Future, Roddy Ricch and Thug.

Music Connection: I think what's been important and impressive about your experience is the community emphasis in your career, working with all these great collaborators, producers. How does it work with your collaborators? Just on *WUNNA* there's Taurus, Turbo, Wheezy, everyone in YSL—how do these partnerships come about and how do you keep building each other up?

Gunna: At our headquarters—our studio—is where we're all creative. We all go to each other's world. When we get in a room or we play each other's music, each of the artists on the label are all in one room and one artist is scrolling through their whole catalog. Whether fresh or old songs, they are preparing to put them out. We'll just go off the vibe.

MC: Some people can show old tracks and maybe now have something new to add. Does that happen regularly?

Gunna: Yes. For example, I just heard [Lil] Keed's latest songs that he just made, because he was at the studio. It's just natural for us to tap in on each other's songs that we're doing.

MC: You're starting to drop songs from *Drip Season 4*, are you bringing a lot of those tracks to the group?

Gunna: *Drip Season 4* is almost done. I'm finalizing and mixing things down. It's just about ready to go.

MC: That's exciting. Do you feel good coming off of *WUNNA*?

Gunna: I feel like I've been set back almost two years. Artists can't even sit back like that. I'm in a space where I feel like I'm gonna drop one of the biggest albums of my career, at a point where people are actually paying attention to how creative I am as an artist. So, I'm feeling good about the place I'm in right now.

MC: I think we hear it in the music too.

Gunna: Thank you. I agree.

“YOU CAN ALWAYS MAKE A BETTER SITUATION ONCE YOU BUILD YOURSELF UP, BUILD YOUR NAME UP AND PUT IN MORE WORK.”

MC: How has writing and recording in the Pandemic affected *Drip Season*?

Gunna: I'm just glad that I think my work ethic is good. I work in the studio. I'm in the studio a lot. I've got a lot of material. I think that comes with being prepared. Even with *WUNNA*, I had old and new songs. I was recording right before the pandemic, and before then I was in Jamaica. I spent about four weeks there—about three weeks locked in on [recording] the album. I was planning on dropping it at the top of the year, but that's when it started hitting, Corona and the pandemic came, so it stalled me up. But I still had to put out music for my fans. And I had the release [*WUNNA*]. I had a No. 1 album, still. Even after George Floyd died right before, I dropped the album on Thursday night and on that Sunday George Floyd died. That was a real culture change for us, as a whole. I couldn't really talk about the album.

MC: Have you been playing shows in the pandemic? How has that been?

Gunna: I've been doing more festivals than my own shows. I've also been doing colleges now that we're in, like Homecoming Season. Other than that, I did a few virtual shows.

MC: How'd you like performing at virtual shows? How did that work out for you?

Gunna: They were cool also. They were different. I love doing different shit sometimes.

MC: It's rolling with the punches. And as you said, that's being prepared, to get into the virtual scene.

MC spoke with the 28-year-old rapper days after the tragic Astroworld event. Travis Scott, the festival's creator, is a contemporary and early/frequent collaborator of Gunna.

MC: I almost hate to bring it up, but would love to hear your input. Of course it is a tragedy what happened at [Travis Scott's] Astroworld Festival over the weekend. Has this been affecting your thoughts on festivals going forward?

Gunna: No. But I do want to send prayers to the families of all the kids who died and all the people who had to really be there and experience that tragedy. I pray for those families. I feel like there was nothing that we could really control. It's all God's plan, but we should take heed and move differently from now on for festivals and putting everybody in crowds. We just gotta take heed of kids coming up and not being a certain age without a chaperone. We shouldn't have a 10-year-old out in the field without someone making sure they're protected. Or we shouldn't have them

in the field. We should have them in maybe a 10-year-old section. That's my opinion.

MC: Thank you for saying that. It of course is horrible and we are just going to concerts to hear music, to dance and to feel good...

Gunna: One hundred percent. I was a part of Astroworld. I also feel that's all we want to do. We care about our fans. Me, Travis, everybody on the lineup. We would never want to endanger our fans. As a whole, I feel responsible, but I know in our hearts, genuinely, we would never want anything like this to happen. Each kid supports us to play our music and make sure that we can feed our families.

MC: Let's talk about your influences. I think it's safe to say Young Thug has certainly been a mentor to you. Do you feel that there is still that mentorship? Are you working more toward being partners.

Gunna: I feel it will always be a mentor thing. It's like having a big brother. He's always going to experience more steps that I'm going to run into later. Just being of age, working. He continues to drop jewels on not just me, but everyone around. I feel like that alone won't change. We are becoming more partners just from me stepping up and being bigger and knowing more responsibilities. We have a label, but I play a real major part of this label. If I want to be on this label, I want this label to be the top label. I don't give a damn if I have to put my two, three cents in. Me, doing things like



QUICK FACTS

- Gunna was born Sergio Giavanni Kitchens June 14, 1993.
- Part of YSL (Young Stoner Life Records), founded by Young Thug. Members include: Lil Keed, Lil Duke, Yak Gotti, HiDoraah, Fn Da Dealer and more.
- *Drip Season 4* will be Gunna's latest major-label release, ninth overall release, due out early this year.
- Performed on *Saturday Night Live* with Young Thug as Musical Guest on the song "Love You More," which also features fun.'s Nate Ruess, Kravenworks producer Jeff Bhasker on grand piano and Travis Barker on drums.
- Gunna has endorsements and fashion collaborations with Foot Locker, Birkin, Pyer Moss, Off-White and Yohji Yamamoto.

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that with my actions, will make me more of a partner with that shit, as far as the label.

MC: You definitely have a crew that you're coming up in. Again, it's impressive and people are listening. It's also great that you are taking others under your wing and showing them what you've learned already in the business. It's all about paying it forward.

Gunna: Right.

MC: Last summer, *Music Connection* featured you and Young Thug in the magazine's "Mixed Notes" column. You paid bonds for inmates at Fulton County Jail who had minor offenses. That is what could have introduced our readers to you. It all goes back to giving to your community. How did that come about?

Gunna: I'm big on giving back. It's one of my hobbies—things I like doing—especially being in a position now to do it. With us freeing the inmates, that's more of Thug, being how he is, thinking outside of the box like always. He had put a budget together for one of the artists on the team, [YTB] Trench. We wanted to shoot a video for him, but we didn't know exactly

**"PEOPLE ARE ACTUALLY
PAYING ATTENTION TO
HOW CREATIVE I AM AS
AN ARTIST."**

what we wanted to do. Thug said, "Man, let's get people out. Let's take the whole budget and bond everybody out and that would be the whole video." We did that and it was a success. I feel like it got the look that it should, and that we didn't even think it would hit.

MC: You didn't do it for the cameras.

Gunna: Well, we did it on camera, but didn't expect to be on the news and be a PSA—everybody heard about that.

MC: Another Georgia charity you have is the Drip Closet, a no-cost grocery and clothing store for students and families. I couldn't let you go without talking "Drip" with you. So, one more question, what are you wearing right now? I dressed up a little today, too. I wore my nicest chain, which is good for my level.

Gunna: Right now, I got a pair of brown custom leather pants on. I got a Rick Owens blazer. It's like a peacoat with an off-white hoodie under. The hoodie is cream colored. And I got some mink slippers from Dolce & Gabbana, all black.

MC: That's about as good as I hoped to hear.

Gunna: I'm fresh today without trying. There's only 365 days in the year. I know for sure I got 365 outfits and want to make sure that I'm fresh, sharp, every time I step outside the house. I only went to get lunch today, like a business meeting, but I wanted to make sure I was sharp! Make sure I'm fresh every day.

MC: I don't know if you always meant to, but you are certainly a fashion icon. Is that yet another venture you're working on? I'm hearing about your Foot Locker partnership.

Gunna: Most definitely. I'm really passionate about clothes. So, coming up with clothing brands. I'm doing a lot of different collaborations right now to get my feet wet and let people know how I could come to your world and make it a thing. That's where I feel like everybody will really understand that, "He can really make sugar from shit."

MC: Not just *shit*, and not just fashion. I hear you're also moving into interior designing.

Gunna: You talking to somebody! Somebody's telling you facts! You got a good source. I am not working on nobody else's house, but my own properties. I've been doing home decor on my own and I've been showing them off. People think I'm lying—they don't believe me. Then I did an interview with Ludacris and he brought it up and told me he saw when I posted a video of my house. He asked if I really did that. He said you need to take it seriously. I asked if he would let me design one of his houses. He said, "Next spot, I'm gonna let you do something."

MC: That's a big project.

Gunna: Ain't no telling what he's probably going to spend on that house. One room would be... crazy. That's a big canvas.

MC: Any other advice for our readers before we go?

Gunna: I would give this advice to up-and-coming artists who are contracting deals: try to learn the business as much as you can. But at the same time, look at it like your first time is always an opportunity. You can always make a better situation once you build yourself up, build your name up and put in more work—you'll get what you want after. Don't be so scared about the first deal that you ever do.

MC: You want to build your fanbase before going to the bigger names and bigger labels...

Gunna: Sometimes you might need people to do that. Sometimes when you sign with a record label, it's not the end, it's the beginning. Not like the deal you wish to get you were always waiting for. Might just be that the first deal to get to you is the best deal.

MC: Is that from your experience?

Gunna: Most definitely. I've experienced situations where I knew I could have had more, but I settled and built [to get] more after.

MC: I am happy that we got to speak. Is there anything else?

Gunna: Just I appreciate the support, and be on the lookout for all new projects, all new material from Gunna.

MC: And YSL, and collaborators and all your other ventures.

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MUSICIANS FIRST

The Film Musicians Secondary Markets Fund

which collects and distributes residuals to union musicians who play on film and TV shows, will mark its 50th anniversary in 2022.

It's become a financial lifeline for many musicians, from helping them to achieve financial security to being a primary income source during their retirement years.

Every July 1, the FMSMF sends checks to nearly 17,000 working and retired musicians, and the beneficiaries of those who've passed away. According to executive director Kim Roberts Hedgpeth, this money constitutes about 1% of the so-called "producers' gross receipts" from the sale of a film or TV show into a "secondary market": free TV, cable TV, streaming services, home video or other venues. (Musicians are not entitled to share in profits from the original box office take.)

This all started around 1960 when producers

the fund has seen an evergrowing allotment of money owed to the musicians. Back in 1988, it distributed about \$10 million. By 2000, the figure had grown to \$43 million and in 2019, it broke the \$100 million mark. This year the amount was nearly \$109 million (based on total collections from the producers of \$124 million).

"There is no question that the growth in residuals is primarily driven by streaming," Hedgpeth points out.

About 40% of the money currently being collected represent streaming options, suggesting "more product is being moved into secondary markets to a greater extent than in prior years."

And that money is key for a professional player to survive in today's marketplace, says Recording Musicians Assn. international president Marc Sazer. "When you're first starting out, it's an important enticement to a

juggling recording dates, live performances and teaching. But she had played on the score for James Cameron's blockbuster "Avatar," and its sale to cable, DVD and other markets resulted in a \$3,000 check, which was "huge" at the time, she recalls.

This money "makes our community better, more comfortable and more able to focus on music-making rather than just survival," Wickes says. "It feels like I've made a much more meaningful contribution if I'm being compensated in a way that's parallel to the actors and writers and so forth."

Music plays a major role in the artistic triumph or failure of any visual-media project, so for the musicians to share in any financial success is well deserved, execs say. (Imagine, for example, "Titanic" minus James Horner's Oscar-winning score, or "Jaws" without John Williams' now-iconic shark theme, both



OUR FIRST 50 YEARS: 1972-2022



1972-80	1990	2000	2010	2020	2021
<p>1972- Fund was established in NYC, administered by AFM-Employers Pension Fund</p> <p>Fund establishes first satellite office in LA</p> <p>Fund hires Barbara DeLucia, first LA based Employee</p> <p>First film omission inquiry: UNFAITHFULLY YOURS</p> <p>1988 Distribution: \$10 Million</p>	<p>Fund Accounting Department moves to LA</p> <p>Fund establishes in-house Compliance Department to pursue collections and oversee audits</p> <p>Fund satellite office moves to Wilshire Blvd</p> <p>Oversight Committee formed</p> <p>1999 Contributions: \$48 Million</p>	<p>All Fund operations moved from NY to LA, established as an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit</p> <p>Fund name officially changed from "Theatrical and Television Motion Picture Special Payments Fund" to Film Musicians Secondary Markets Fund</p> <p>Fund establishes Community Relations Department and launches GO PAPERLESS</p> <p>FMSMF/ASCAP/Columbia University establish Film Scoring Workshop, pairing graduate film students w/Composers & professional musicians to score their MFA film projects</p> <p>2009 Contributions: \$86 Million</p>	<p>FMSMF separates from AFM/SAG-AFTRA IPRDF</p> <p>Fund office moves from Studio City to Encino</p> <p>New website launched in 2015</p> <p>Fund hosts first film & TV scoring panels at SXSW and the American Film Market</p> <p>Fund establishes "Conversation With" program in LA for Columbia University MFA Grads, first programs featured composers Laura Karpman, Germaine Franco and Kathryn Bostic</p> <p>Fund updates beneficiary policy to empower musicians</p> <p>2019 Contributions: \$115 Million</p>	<p>Fund maintains operations during COVID pandemic</p> <p>Distributed \$2.5 million in unclaimed residuals</p> <p>Fund issues \$99 Million 'July' distribution five weeks early in May 2020, in response to industry's pandemic shutdown</p> <p>Fund launches FMSMF 101 webinar series for musicians</p> <p>FMSMF partners with SCL ASCAP, AWPFC, and others to launch MUSICIANS MENTORING MUSICIANS program</p> <p>2021 Contributions: \$124 Million</p>	

wanted to sell their movies to TV but faced opposition from actors, writers, directors and craftspeople who asked to be repaid when their work appeared in another medium.

Producers came up with this concept — a small percentage of the profits from licensing the work — and it has become standard practice in the industry since that time. The FMSMF functions as a middleman between the American Federation of Musicians (the union representing professional players) and the various studios, networks and independent producers who are signatories to AFM agreements calling for these payments.

"We are a nonprofit payroll house that acts like a multi-employer pension plan," Hedgpeth explains. "We're a one-stop shop. If you are a musician who did a score at Sony one day, at Fox another day and at Warner Bros. another day, and your [initial] checks might be coming from all kinds of different places, when it comes to residuals, you only need to look for one check from us."

The amounts range from a few hundred dollars to — in some cases, in which older musicians have worked on many popular films — sums running into the hundreds of thousands.

solid career," he says. "Once you've developed a career, it's absolutely essential to be able to raise a family, have a home and lead a middle-class life. And for thousands of retired musicians, it's a fundamental part of their retirement."

Last year, in the midst of the pandemic when no one was working, Sazer adds, "the fund did something unprecedented and, frankly, heroic. They distributed that year's residuals checks months early, and it literally saved people's lives."

As Hedgpeth explains: "Musicians suddenly woke up one day and all their jobs were gone. We were the only place that could provide some income to musicians who were just stranded when the industry shut down in March [2020]."

The FMSMF staff scrambled and, because they could actually still work in their Encino, Calif., offices (having been declared "critical infrastructure" for the business, just as SAG-AFTRA was), managed to issue checks on May 22 ahead of the traditional July 1 date.

Oboist Lara Wickes remembers getting her first FMSMF check in 2010. She was struggling to make a living as a professional musician,

recorded with L.A. union players.)

"Some of the best musicians in the world are here," notes Dennis Dreith, who was administrator of the fund from 1999 to 2014. "The talent pool is incredible. What you get in three hours [recording time] here would take you three or four times as long" in cheaper, mostly overseas, recording locales, he points out.

Adds Wickes: "Everybody in the room, on any recording project, has spent tens of thousands of hours perfecting their craft in order to even be considered [for a recording session]."

"The best orchestras in the world are also the best-paid orchestras and that's not a coincidence," she notes. "A freelancer who does this work can make a salary that's on par with a topnotch orchestra. And we've got to keep the standards as high as we can."

Hedgpeth is constantly stressing to producers that "residuals payable to this fund won't break the bank. It's a small percentage. If the film doesn't do well, the percentage is probably negligible. And if you're paying \$1 million in residuals, that means you've already made \$100 million."

FOR FIVE DECADES

Playing Detective

Fund works to disburse 'millions' in unclaimed residuals for musicians

Every year, the Film Musicians Secondary Markets Fund pays thousands of musicians for their movie and TV work when it appears on cable, free TV, streaming services or home video.

But not every musician is aware of this benefit when they begin their recording career, and many who have left the business are still owed money — sometimes, a lot of money, FMSMF officials say.

The fund website (fmsmf.org) lists thousands of musicians (and in some cases their beneficiaries) who are owed, in all, several million dollars in residuals for movies and TV shows but have somehow dropped out of the system.

Even FMSMF executive director Kim Roberts Hedgpeth discovered, to her surprise, that she was on the list.

"My dad was a musician, in New York. It turned out my father had done one or two small things that generated teeny-tiny residuals, and I was his beneficiary. So there was enough money for me to buy a couple of lattes," she says with a laugh.

Some of her 40-plus employees spend part of their workday playing detective, tracking down musicians that are not in their system.

Participant services generalist Rachel Arno recalled looking for one particular musician several years ago. He had played on a handful of films (two of which received multiple Oscar nominations) but was no longer in the Los Angeles area.

Using internet search engines, she eventually managed to locate him: He was working at a piano bar in northern California and — after she managed to convince his skeptical boss that this was no scam, that she really wanted to give him money — she was able to send him a check for \$158,000.

In fact, an estimated 800 to 1,000 musicians are added to the FMSMF rolls each year, says Hedgpeth: "We call them 'new musicians' because they are being reported to us for the first time. But they might have been members of the union for 10 years or more; this was the first time they were on something that generated a residual."

Improvements in technology have helped FMSMF personnel find these "lost" musicians,

and social media has been a surprising plus in tracking them down, says Chris Kuhrt, director of participant services operations. Locating musicians who played on songs that wind up in movies or TV are some of their biggest challenges, he notes.

Hedgpeth would like to dispel an enduring myth that "only 50 guys are getting residuals," and that they're all staggering sums. "For the first couple of years, it's modest," Christopher Anderson-Bazzoli, president of the Recording Musicians Assn., concedes. "But year after year, you realize this is a special thing to have."

The fund was known as the Theatrical Motion Picture and Television Producers Special Payments Fund until 2001-02, and many musicians still refer to their annual check as "special payments." But there is actually a separate unit, the Sound Recording Special Payments Fund, that applies more specifically to musicians who play on records than in films.

What's more, a growing number of producers are not hiring union musicians in order to avoid any kind of future payments.

The Film Musicians Secondary Markets Fund is not part of the collective bargaining process. These contracts are negotiated between the American Federation of Musicians and the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers. The FMSMF collects and distributes residuals based on those terms, and you must be a union member to benefit.

"For musicians, the shift in the industry to these new made-for-streaming platforms is something that will have a profound effect on their futures and something that they will have to be thinking through and paying attention to in the years ahead," says Kim Roberts Hedgpeth, FMSMF executive director.

"We are committed to supporting the industry," she adds. "It's important to respect professional musicians. They are our core."

To that end, the fund has recently been supporting efforts to encourage filmmakers to hire professional musicians, and to encourage young composers (at Columbia University in New York, and with the ASCAP film-scoring workshop in Los Angeles) to work with professional musicians.

Recording Musicians Assn. international president Marc

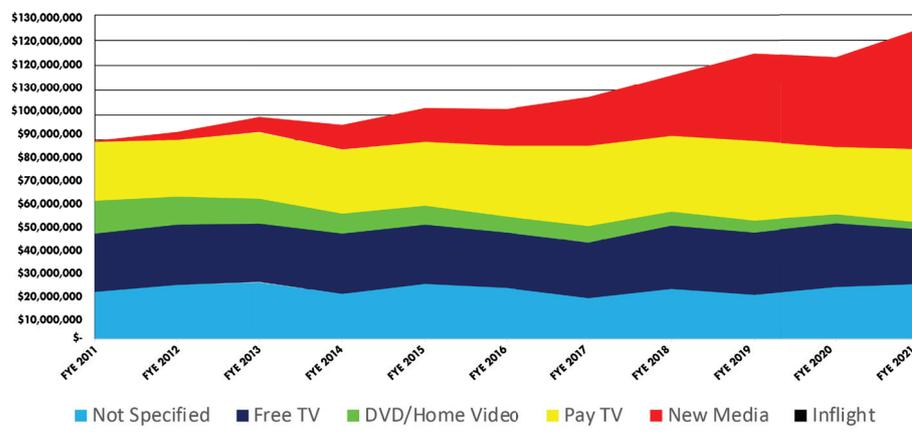
Sazer believes "the big issue facing us, going forward, is the new world of streaming, and the streaming economy. Once [a program] goes to a streaming service, it never comes back out to free television or pay TV or cable TV or, rarely, DVDs. The whole world of secondary markets is broken when this market swallows everything up."

That's an existential threat for us that we have to figure out."

Adds Christopher Anderson-Bazzoli, president of the Los Angeles RMA: "I've been able to make a career because of the Secondary Markets Fund. We're in such a huge transition now, to watch that be undermined in this transition to streaming, would be a tragedy."

"I want to make sure that the next generation [of musicians] has the ability to take their talents and make a solid career here in L.A., and not live hand-to-mouth. To me, that's the most important point."

CHANGING TRENDS AMONG PLATFORMS THAT GENERATE FMSMF RESIDUALS (FY2011-FY2021)



Existential Threats

Streaming's impact on residuals is a concern for fund and union execs

What does the future hold for the Film Musicians Secondary Markets Fund? As with so many aspects of a rapidly changing media business, it's hard to predict.

When union musicians struck the networks and studios in 1980, the hope was to gain residual payments for reruns of network TV series, something that had been overlooked in earlier negotiations with producers dating back to the 1960s. But they failed, and have never been able to achieve that goal in any contract talks since.

Streaming services that produce their own series are very often a "dead end" in terms of residuals, because shows that air exclusively on Netflix, Hulu, Disney Plus or other services — and don't pass on to a secondary market like DVD or Blu-ray — will not generate later payments for union musicians who played on those scores.

By Jon Burlingame

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A&R 2022

BY ANDY KAUFMANN



WITHOUT A&R, record labels wouldn't have any musical talent. These industry representatives are the key to discovering artists who create songs that change our lives. Likewise, they're the gatekeepers to power, individuals that musicians must impress to kick their careers into overdrive. Every year, we give our readers insight into a few select individuals who represent this side of the business, get a taste of what they think and how they operate. This year is no exception.

Allison Jones

Executive VP of A&R

Big Machine Label Group
bmlg.net

How did you get into A&R?

I grew up enamored with music, playing piano and singing. I didn't want to become a recording artist, but I was obsessed with every instrument, every genre, musical theater... I came to Nashville, went to Vanderbilt [University], and loosely wanted to pursue the music business. I kind of thought, do people really have jobs in the music business? At the time, Vanderbilt didn't have any music-related majors. So, I did voice at the Blair School of Music [a part of Vanderbilt], but was a human resources and marketing major.

I got lucky and interned at RCA. They hired me to be the A&R assistant and receptionist at the newly formed BNA Records. I was working for Richard Landis, who was head of A&R. I don't know if I understood how lucky I was. I graduated with honors and took at \$17,000-a-year job without benefits because I loved it.

From BNA, I went to Giant Records. At Giant, I worked for James Stroud under Irving Azoff. Then James was hired to run DreamWorks Nashville, so I was there from day one. Scott [Borchetta] was head of promotions at the time. A lot of how Scott runs our label comes from the creative synergy of DreamWorks. I got the opportunity to have a front row seat to DreamWorks Pictures and TV and getting our music in there and working on soundtracks. That's kind of morphed over into my job. In addition to A&R, my favorite side-hustle is exploiting third-party licenses for our artists in TV and film.

So then, DreamWorks merged with Universal. Scott was there about a year and said, "You know what? I want to do this on my own." I stayed at Universal a bit longer, because I had a contract. I'm incredibly grateful that he asked me to join his team almost two years in.

What compels you to stick with A&R?

I love music. One of my favorite things to do is hop on an artist's bus and spend a weekend seeing the fan reaction. I love the carnal life of a tour and seeing artists get feedback from fans. There were a couple times where I felt like I was getting sick and then the energy of a live show made me feel better.

The other part is when you're working with a new artist and hear their song on the radio or in Walgreens. I still get goose bumps every time I hear something I might have loosely touched.

How do you find artists? Is there one avenue you prefer over another?

There's not one avenue. First and foremost, [it's about] relationships and making sure I'm in communication with songwriters, artist managers, publishers, anyone who might be nurturing talent. It's a relationship business.

Second, I'm obsessed with finding someone on social media. While I have a love/hate relationship with social media, the love wins out because I have several stories of where, if I wasn't on social media, we wouldn't have these artists.

I have two badass women who work with me, Darielle Schroeder and Carly Strickland. They are so connected to the newer, younger generation. They are on every platform, scouring for artists. If I see someone new, 95% of the time they are already aware of this artist.

What makes you want to sign someone? What can artists do to make themselves more attractive to A&R reps?

First and foremost, there's that sizzle factor. You cannot teach or give someone the tools to have that intrinsic star quality. I've known Thomas Rhett his whole life, because I worked with Rhett Akins [Thomas's father]. When he met me at age 19, I was like, "You don't know me that well, but I've watched you grow up. You have so much star appeal and confidence." And he's like, "What do you mean?" I was like, "You are going to be that person that people want to be attached to." I don't think you can teach

me. His family wouldn't let him sign a record deal until he graduated high school. I think three days after he graduated we offered him a deal. That's just one story. Everyone's is different.

The other thing is I stay in touch with agents, especially those who book small clubs. A lot of new artists are emerging from the Tin Roof circuit. It's kind of like a college bar. The capacity is probably 500 people. They're always open to new artists, so I like to stay in touch with agents that book those kinds of bars to ask--who's coming up? Who's putting in the work? Who decided to get in their van, sell their own merch and make their own way?

Do you use data analytics to make decisions?

Yes, in the sense of numbers. Analyzing the TikTok explosion has been very interesting. You can't deny someone who recorded something in their bedroom that gets millions of views. So, in a sense, those analytics are important. But if a brand new artist walked in my office who was not on TikTok and I thought they were a star and had a hit song and they don't have analytics, I'm not going to hold that against them. But the analytics certainly get people's attention.

It's interesting that more pop artists have emerged from TikTok than country. But we've had a lot of success with our country artists taking advantage of TikTok.

How is A&R changing? Are A&R reps supplanting the role that record labels used to play?

You can sit on your phone until 4:00 a.m. and find a handful of artists who are compelling. That's exciting. Ultimately, the music has to lead. The artist has to want it. They have to have a good work ethic and star appeal. There has to be a hit song. Those things are always going to be key.

Ten years ago, if someone said, "I want to be a country artist. What do I do?" I'd say, "Move to Nashville, hustle, write with people, go to writers' nights." Now, I still give that same advice, but I also say, "Get on social media. Send direct messages to songwriters." It's a lot easier for an artist or songwriter to make their way because of social media and all the streaming platforms. It's incredible that you have so many avenues to make your own destiny. But once you do that, you still have to put out compelling content.

I used to have five to ten showcases or writers' nights a week that I was invited to attend. Now, people can put their live show on a streaming platform or their website. If it gets someone's attention, you have a meeting. "Come into the office and play two or three songs acoustically." That is the entryway, as opposed to years ago when someone had to get a band into a club and invite people to see them. That does still happen, but that's kind of been replaced with exploiting yourself on streaming platforms or social media and hoping to get a meeting.

I'm a fan of seeing an artist perform acoustically in a conference room. Most artists will tell you that's way more uncomfortable than performing in front of 20,000 people. If they can tackle that, I'm usually in.

What's the biggest misconception about what you do?

People don't realize all the business parts that



"I'm a fan of seeing an artist perform acoustically in a conference room."

somebody that. Work ethic is key. I want to know an artist is willing to work as hard as we do. The ability to write a hit song or listen to a hit song and recognize it is key.

Conner Smith, one of our artists who I'm convinced is going to be a superstar, started writing with big-time songwriters when he was 16 or 17. He wrote with an artist-writer, Emily Weisband, who's a good friend of mine. [Smith] posted something on Instagram and I texted [Weisband] immediately. "Oh, he's in high school. He goes to Brentwood Academy and I'm writing with him. He's so good." I kept trying to meet him and found out Sam Hunt's manager had also found him online. [Smith] had started recording covers [of Hunt] and putting them on YouTube. His first live gig was opening for Sam in front of 40,000 people. That story impressed

go into it. Even within the industry, everyone thinks A&R people just listen to music all day. At Big Machine, the recording budgets originate with us. We are responsible for deadlines and getting music turned in. How many songs are they allowed to record? Circulating all the approvals and making sure the correct versions end up on streaming platforms.

In April of 2020, when we realized artists weren't going to be touring, Scott said, "Let's figure this out. What can we start putting on streaming platforms we normally would not when artists are touring?" If someone did an at-home version of a song for a morning TV show or an award show, A&R had to make sure those were mixed, mastered and ready to be released. That is not quite as glamorous as people think.

Another thing is [we do] anything [our artists] might need. "Hey, I need a guitar player this weekend. Mine is sick. Can you help?" Some artists lean on you more than others. I'm proud to say we try to be accessible 24-hours a day to our artists for anything they might need.

Has the pandemic affected the way you work?

Absolutely. We released two-and-a-half times more music than we had the year before, because every artist was home. A lot of new artists, I went to them and said, "Okay, you can't tour. You can't do TV. You can't meet radio. You can't meet streaming partners. Here's what you can do. Own whatever you want on social media."

Avenue Beat took it and ran. They were doing their own videos, their own artwork. Savana [Santos] was writing, recording and playing everything. Some artists became more creative than they probably could imagine. Lady A only had one outside song on their project, because they wrote so much.

It was like Christmas for me, because every artist was creating. It was daunting keeping up, but it was amazing watching all the creativity.

What genres are you soliciting?

My ears are always open. I don't personally sign artists on the rock label, but I'll pass along whatever I hear. I'm a fan of straight-up pop music, so we've signed a couple pop artists. I have a lot of relationships with pop writers; it's been fun putting pop writers with our country artists and seeing what comes of it.

If someone has an artist they feel is a star, I want to hear it. We'll figure out what to do with it. My ears are always open. •

Loren Israel

Producer/A&R Consultant

lorenisrael.com

How did you get into A&R?

I was performing in bands, touring and getting record deals since I was 16. I had three jobs, one at the surf shop and another teaching surfing. And I was bartending at an after-hours roller disco. I tried to get through school, but I found myself constantly going to hear music.

A lot of people in the music business don't need the job. For those of us who need a career, it kind of finds us. I've always been involved in music. One of the A&R people I worked for used to see me at shows. And one of those days, he asked if I'd seen any cool bands. I told him and those bands became super big. Now, he was calling me all the time. I finally asked, "What does an A&R guy do?" And he told me. I'm like, that's what I want to do.

I spent about nine months campaigning to get an internship. Frankly, it wasn't easy. I finally got an internship at Capitol [Records]. I did that and had a few other jobs to make rent for like three years. During that time, I started producing and developing artists. And here I am.

What compels you to stick with A&R?

There's nothing else I'm good at. I'm an evan-



"I'm more committed to developing the artist and building a brand."

gist for songs. I'm really good at identifying greatness. I've identified and helped a lot of great producers, great bands.

How do you find artists? Is there one avenue you prefer over another?

I've always found artists by having relationships, reading a lot, listening a lot, having curiosity. I do kind of old-school A&R. In my opinion, old-school A&R is true Artist, which is the voice, and R, the Repertoire, which is the song. And then seeing that song to completion and market.

A lot of times these days, something blows up on TikTok and you follow it, give a kid a deal, throw it at the wall and [see if] it sticks. I'm more committed to developing the artist as a whole and building a brand.

What makes you want to sign someone? What can artists do to make themselves more attractive to A&R reps?

A great voice. An understanding of the song. The understanding of how a chorus hits you. Great lyrics, sincerity... Usually, it's a special voice. And then I dive deeper. Does this person have a good work ethic? Do they understand what a song is? How hard do they work?

Put out a lot of great music. You've got to be prolific. It's like anything: the more you do it, the better you get. You can't write six songs a year and think you're going to get anywhere. That doesn't sound correct in anyone's calculus, you know?

Do you use data analytics to make decisions?

No. That's what most labels are doing. But I would challenge people to do their homework and look at those artists that have blown up and have really good metrics on TikTok or Instagram and then get signed. They get signed to a label, maybe make a bit of money, but don't really know what they're doing. They don't know the science of hit songs, why their song did so well.

And then there are a few people who can communicate to these artists what to do and how to do it. It's a skill that's different from scouting. And A&R, now, is a lot of scouting.

When I came up, it was true A&R. It was fights and conflicts and being in the studio begging your artist to change a melody so it's simpler. Giving the melody a bit of space. Making sure every lyric is cool, using poetic devices and repetition.

How is A&R changing? Are A&R reps supplanting the role that record labels used to play?

The career of A&R has evolved. It's gone from people like Sam Phillips and Berry Gordy and all these great guys who kind of are producers, who actually are in the room.

If something's blowing up on TikTok and getting 30 million streams, people sign it, regardless if that artist knows what the heck they did. There's one artist who had a wonderful song about four years ago. It blew up on TikTok and he got a record deal. I haven't heard from them since. There are a lot of artists like that.

What I do is take someone with no tour history, no history of selling merchandise, no history of having any Spotify [streams], anything on the radio, nothing. And I help them go to a million records. I've done it several times, most recently with The Unlikely Candidates. That's what I do. That's a lonely, difficult place to be, because nobody wants to work with the artist when I work with them.

A&R people are part of a label. An A&R person is usually someone who has a job at a label and is responsible for bringing talent. So, I don't know if they're supplanting what a label does. They're part of the process.

What's the biggest misconception about what you do?

I don't think people have a misconception of what I do. I kind of get shit done. I'm not the easiest person to get along with. I'm not the most difficult person to get along with. I'm honest. I'm hard working. I'm an equal opportunity professional. I just want to be around great songs. •

Manda Mosher

Co-owner

blackbirdrecordlabel.com

How did you get into A&R?

I'm an independent artist, but I've always had a strong propensity for the business side. That started when I went to Berklee College of Music. I was a songwriting major, but I came out of that wanting to get into the music business. I had this realization that, even if you're incredible at your craft, if you're not savvy on the business side you're only going to go so far.

So, I started working for Andy Goldmark, who is a prolific hit songwriter and producer. He was also an A&R guy for Jive Records at the time. He recommended me for a record label position working for Zomba Music's West Coast division under Neil Portnow. I had a great working relationship with him. Neil moved to the Recording Academy, so I went over with Neil. I was there a couple years before I decided to launch my first solo record and took the artist's path.

I put out several releases with Red Parlor Records. After that, I was in a female group called CALICO the band. We had a manager who was shopping us. We did have label interest, but we kept hitting this wall. The kind of feedback we were getting was, "We already have a girl group, and we can't have more than one." At that time, there wasn't as much room for women on label rosters.

We came back to the drawing board. I was like, "This group is great. I know we can do a lot with this." My husband works for Lakeshore Records. He says, "I think it's time to start our own label." So, we started a label called California Country Records. It was created to release CALICO the band, but we ended up bringing other artists on. We had artists we wanted to work with who were not based in the California country sound, so we closed that label and kicked up Blackbird Record Label.

How do you find artists? Is there one avenue you prefer over another?

So much of it is word-of-mouth. It's people we trust turning us onto artists. Sometimes, artists connect with us directly. Jeremy Squires reached out on social media. He kept sending material. We listen to a lot of what is sent to us, even if it's a blind submission, out of curiosity. Certain things grab you.

LadyCouch came to us through another label we admire, Café Rooster Records in Nashville. They're friends of ours and we've always admired how they run their label. They were on pause during the pandemic, and in the middle of an album release for LadyCouch. So, they reached out to see if we could pick up where they left off. That was the first time we've collaborated with another label on a release.

I prefer when artists or managers reach out. Anyone who's submitting to us, I prefer one SoundCloud link that's set to private, so we know it's not released. That's the easiest way to go. People send Dropbox links. We don't want to get into or have time for that. A SoundCloud link is the easiest way for me to

listen. It'll take me a good two weeks or so to fully digest a record.

And then I'm thinking about sequencing, artwork, and if this is going to work for film and television. That's important, because it's one of the few remaining territories where artists and labels can still make money. So, if we're going to take an artist on, we have to be able to find a film and television representative for them. We have a roster of sync agents we work with, so when we have new records that we're excited about we'll pitch them. If we cannot find a good film and TV match, it doesn't mean we won't take that artist on. But usually we have to pass, because financially it's not going to make sense.

Has the pandemic affected the way you work?

Certainly gave us more time to work on the re-



"Anyone who's submitting to us, I prefer one SoundCloud link that's set to private, so we know it's not released."

lease schedule we had for last year. I dedicated more time to supporting those releases. I don't know that it changed how we look for artists. It pretty much just gave us more time to focus on the label.

What makes you want to sign someone? What can artists do to make themselves more attractive to A&R reps?

It has everything to do with a great record: unique production, great songs, something that makes that project special and compelling. It's really subjective.

I work on this label with my husband, Eric Craig. If something comes across his desk, he'll be like, "Check this out. It's beautiful." We'll take time with it. We send [artists] to each other and bounce off, like, "Am I the only one that's in love with this?" Make sure we're both really behind it.

Unique production is always interesting. We're not working in full-on mainstream. A lot of our artists are Americana, rock, alternative... We're pretty open. Straight-up singer-songwriters, we're into that as well.

Visuals are important these days, so it helps if someone has a good press image. We like to work with the artists on all their imaging. They can create it themselves and pass it by us. If it's not happening, we'll say, "We think you need different PR shots," or "We have an artist you probably should be working with. Check them out." Or "Let's reapproach your vinyl artwork." We guide artists through the entire process of preparing albums for release.

And video assets are very important. We recommend at least two, if not four, music videos for any album release. For a single, we almost always require a video to go along with that. It's hard for press to gain traction without a video component.

Do you use data analytics to make decisions?

Not really. Those numbers are not of great importance to us. It's lovely if somebody has a great following on Spotify. It's great if somebody's socials are built up. We really appreciate that. But, at the same time, we are art over numbers. If someone has a beautiful record that we believe in and their socials need work or they play only 30 shows a year, we'll still work with them.

How is A&R changing? Are A&R reps supplanting the role that record labels used to play?

There are things I miss from when I worked at Zomba. A&R was a more hands-on process. Your A&R person would find the right producer, the right song, build everything from the ground up with an artist. A lot of that art has been lost, primarily because the budgets don't exist the way they used to. And labels frequently have to deal in volume to make things work. And when volume matters, the art of A&R can be lost.

There is more pressure on artists to develop themselves [than before], and the labels cherry pick whichever artists have developed in a way that looks attractive. We're frequently working with records that are done. We'll go in and have notes on sequencing, if something needs to be remastered, if a song needs to be cut, or if we don't feel it's complete. But as far as being on the ground level developing an artist, that piece does not exist strongly now. A&R is one piece of what we do. I look at it as curating a roster and then guiding artists in the best way you can.

What's the biggest misconception about what you do?

I see artists rail against the thought of any other entity having control over the creative process. That's a fine line. We do not impose our ideas onto an artist in any way that would make them uncomfortable. If you're not liking our suggestions, that's okay. We want the artist's vision to be what pokes through. We're not here to battle our artists. We're here to help see their vision through. Ultimately, the artist has final say in their creative work. 

Collaboration: We Need Each Other

Our society likes to promote a certain denial. Independence is seen as a noble badge of honor. The jack-of-all-trades, unless they're a master of none, is admired. But, like many creatures of this earth, we are communal beings. We function best interdependently, as much as some would like to see themselves as lone wolves. Even the survivalist uses tools and information from others that came before, unlike the solitary mountain lion living off of nature.

To view this idea in terms of music, I'll use the established industry in Nashville as an example. In Nashville, most people specialize in one area. They are either a session/live player, a producer, an audio engineer, an artist, a songwriter, or one of many people on the business side. Sure, there are plenty who are doing multiple things, but the people who are making their living in music commonly have one role that is more dominant. People with different specializations all contribute their skills and experience to projects. Nearly all of the widely heard music that makes it to your ears is the result of organized cooperation rather than one person trying to do everything. Our success in music when we collaborate is undeniable.

Getting Over Ourselves

One marked difference between music amateurs and professionals is that professionals accept their own strengths and weaknesses. They've gotten over the fact that maybe someone else can play a part, write a melody or lyrics, or produce better than they can. It's a humbling experience to realize these things. But then, after people take an honest inventory of their skills and accept what is, that's when the music's potential really goes through the roof.

I, for one, have had consistent success from collaborating—working with others whose skills excel in areas where mine are functional, but not super solid. Piano is my first instrument, and I play the acoustic guitar, but I never really fell in love with it as an instrument. I play live, but I'm just not motivated to put in the heavy technical practice to play as cleanly and dead on as a session guitarist. So, on songs like my recent single, the upbeat rhythmic acoustic "So Good to Be Free," I worked with Cheyenne Medders, a Nashville-based guitarist.

I wrote the song on the guitar, but for a recording that needed to be up to professional standards, I thought it was best to pool strengths with others. Cheyenne played the bass on the song, too. I added some light percussion and tracked my vocals, and voila, it was sounding good. Then, even though I have some knowledge and experience with mixing and mastering, I know that a pro engineer can get the song sounding radio-ready better than

I can. So, I sent the tracks over to my longtime audio engineer, Jim Kissling. He sent back the finished master of "So Good to Be Free" that's been streamed millions of times now all over the world.

Could I have gotten a product of this quality if I did everything myself? No way. Even before the recording, I had tweaked the song itself according to feedback from other songwriters I respect. Then, theoretically, I could have played the guitar part, added a virtual bass, mixed it and sent it off to a robot for mastering. However, I know the recording would not have turned out as well. I get a lot of compliments on this song,



"It's been said that co-writing is like dating. You have to find the right chemistry."

and it's no doubt because the finished track was a collaboration of several people doing what they do best.

Co-writing Music

If you look at credits of popular songs in most genres, you'll see that there is usually more than one songwriter. Writing songs with other people requires a certain emotional maturity. You need to be able to give and take. It's been said that co-writing is like dating. You have to find the right chemistry.

When it's right, it's right, and when it's wrong, it's wrong, and you just know you don't vibe with somebody. Often, it's not a personality thing, but rather a question of whether people are on the same page musically.

A lot of people out there say that they like "all genres," but at the end of the day, everybody has a slant toward something. One musician I've worked with, John Patrick Peters, does a beautiful job playing my songs even though his heart is in traditional jazz. You can hear his guitar playing on "Hey Mr. Sunshine." Knowing yourself and the

genres you lean toward are important in musical compatibility. The styles of a jazz player and I mesh successfully because blues, jazz, and soul are what I connect with at my core. My pop-type songs have roots of those genres.

Alternatively, musical leanings are less important with lyricists, because lyrics tend to have universality about them. When people are co-writing lyrics and/or music, they have to keep their egos in check enough to be able to recognize the better idea, even if it's not theirs. The song is king, and great songs come from writers who'll do what it takes to get a truly great song.

People get attached to their own ideas, but sometimes other people's opinions or contributions are simply better, and giving in and changing it would improve the song. It can be difficult at first, but collaborating gets easier the more you do it, and you see it's not a contest of "who's better." You know that you're serving the song, bowing down to get the best product that can be created.

An example of give and take is something I've experienced with a longtime collaborator, Brett Lucas. Brett has contributed to and produced some of my songs, most recently, "Warmest Wish for You." When he has an idea that he thinks could improve a song, he makes it clear that there'll be no hard feelings if his ideas aren't incorporated. That makes working together easy, and the songs turn out great.

Yet another way of co-writing is the old-school Rodgers & Hammerstein, Elton John and Bernie Taupin way—where one person writes lyrics and the other music. This was the method used to write "Christmas Time with You," the song of mine that opens the

Hallmark film "Christmas on Honeysuckle Lane." For this song, I just did the music and production. The words came from lyricist Paul Robert Thomas, a collaborator across the pond in the U.K. Again, flexibility is everything. I appreciated that Paul was okay with me modifying a few lines to fit the rhythmic meter of the music.

In the end, collaboration is all about working with people you trust, and then trusting them. It's about letting your ego take a back seat and realizing that maybe your ideas or skills aren't always the absolute best, and other people's strengths can make the music better. We are stronger together than alone.

Singer-songwriter **ANGELA PREDHOMME's** music has been heard by millions through television, film, radio and streaming. Her soulful songs have been featured in the popular Hallmark movie *Christmas on Honeysuckle Lane* Lifetime's hit show *Dance Moms*, commercials for ING Bank and Fiat, and more. See angelapredhomme.com; [facebook.com/angelapredhomme](https://www.facebook.com/angelapredhomme)



TASCAM's Mixcast 4

TASCAM's Mixcast 4 is an all-in-one portable Podcaster solution featuring a high-quality Touchscreen and a simplified audio interface. The Mixcast 4 is designed to record up to four in-studio guests simultaneously as well as up to three call-in guests remotely via Bluetooth, USB or direct connection using web enabled apps such as Facebook, We Chat, etc.

The entire podcast production process on the Mixcast 4, from plugging in your microphones to post-production, has been streamlined and simplified as much as possible so that prior pro audio experience while helpful, is not a prerequisite for successfully using Mixcast 4. A tutorial explaining the basic functions of the Mixcast 4 boots up on the unit the first time it is turned on and helps you get oriented to the Mixcast 4's graphical user interface, which as mentioned above is designed to be as dead simple to operate as possible.

Mixcast 4 uses full-size SD cards for recording and playback (64GB or higher storage capacity is recommended). The SD card can record up to 14 channels simultaneously. The Mixcast 4 has built-in Bluetooth and USB 2.0 connectivity capability allowing you to interface with external input and output devices as well as to add background music and effects.

If you need more real-time control over playback and editing of your podcasts you can automatically launch the free TASCAM Podcast Editor software and connect to the app from the Mixcast 4's touchscreen. From there you can perform such tasks as editing waveforms, splitting takes combining waveforms fades, sends and more.

The back of the Mixcast 4 features four XLR

Combo jack inputs, which are designed to work with microphones with both balanced and TRS connectors. There are additionally on the back of the unit two line-level input jacks immediately next to the combo connectors inputs that can be used to facilitate talent with guitars, keyboards, and other external line level external devices. There is also an eighth-inch TRRS input jack so you can plug in your phone, mp3 player, iPod, or similar devices.

On the front of Mixcast 4 can be found dedicated talkback, mute and solo controls on top of each channel input. Channel one on the left side of the unit is reserved for the local podcast host or producer. On top of the producer/host channel is a non-latching talkback button that when depressed temporarily disconnects microphone one from the stereo mix while keeping you audible to the up to four in-person guests connected to the four stereo headphone outputs. Its important to note that muting a channel on the Mixcast 4 will not only mute your audio to other listeners, it will also prevent that selected channel audio from being recorded.

There is a dedicated TRRS input on the front of Mixcast 4 that allows you to monitor your entire mix via headphones as well as allows for two-way communication with your talent via the Mixcast 4 utilizing an external microphone/headset headphone. The faders themselves are color coded to match inputs one through four and have easy-to-see color coded icons for phone, USB, TRRS and Bluetooth inputs. The last fader on the right is there to dial in the bank of eight color pads and are designed to allow you to trigger up to 64 different sound effects or music on the fly. Sound effects can also be inserted

into your podcasts from the included TASCAM Podcast editor onboard effects library. All the sound effects are designed to be used real-time and automatically dropped into the dedicated sound pad track.

Once all your inputs and levels are set, you move to the recording page which is relegated to Recording and Stop. There are no dedicated real-time play or fast-forward or rewind controls as would be found on a conventional recording interface. If you do need to play back your podcast, that can be easily facilitated from the touchscreen's drop-down menus. If you want more control, the advanced playback mode allows you to manually fast-forward or rewind to anywhere on your recording timeline.

The Podcast editor also features a comprehensive selection of plugins you can use for your post-production editing. The Podcast Editor's included suite of plugins covers a typical suite of effect processors including compression, limiters, reverb, EQ and more. You can also assess any other VST plugins you may have on your computer. The Podcast Editor can also be used to export your podcasts into your DAW of choice as well as assign sound effects to Mixcast 4's trigger pads.

TASCAM has over 50 years in designing portable audio interfaces, so it is no surprise that they would produce a product as well designed as the Mixcast 4. Podcasting is here to stay and the Mixcast 4 will find a home in many different production environments, both in and out of the music industry.

The Mixcast 4 is available now for \$599. Find out more at tascam.com/us/product/mixcast_4

AudioScape Engineering—Celebrating Vintage Tone

Through my many years in the recording industry there have been a plethora of pro audio manufacturers that claim their products will make your mixes sound better. But there are few who really come through with the goods at the end of the day. That's why I was excited to meet Chris Yetter, brainchild of AudioScape engineering, five years ago. I have many of his products and I have to say they are the real deal for capturing vintage tone and characteristics!

Yetter devotes hundreds of hours of research and development for all his products, putting blood sweat and tears into each creation. AudioScape is an incredible story as he started developing pro audio gear himself as a one-man operation. He has had so much success with sales that now the company boasts a small army of employees to manufacture the gear. He works out of his Daytona, FL location where on one side of the property stands his beautiful house and on the other side a large main building where products are tested before they are shipped. There are also two smaller buildings where employees painstakingly hand assemble each unit. On top of that Chris Yetter is a super nice guy, so I had to pick his brain on his creative passion.

Music Connection: What is the history of the company?

Chris Yetter: We officially started in 2016, but the journey began in the early to mid 2000s. I cut my teeth building and breaking anything, I could in that period. The first thing I built was a fuzz pedal out of broken VCR parts. Then I graduated to raiding the local music store's back room for broken gear and parts. Everything was fair game! It got a little crazy during those times.

MC: How did you get started engineering these wonderful pieces of pro audio gear?

Yetter: It was a long progression of necessity, need and drive. One thing I noticed when visiting studios was that the ones using boutique and vintage gear always seemed to be cranking out far superior sounding records versus the studios that relied on more standard name-brand equipment. It's just something that always stuck with me, and these tools in general piqued my interest. So, I knew from those experiences this was what I wanted to do, build awesome studio gear. At the same time, I also knew high voltage was no joke. So, I started building lower voltage guitar pedals, eventually transitioning into higher voltage guitar amps and then finally vintage

inspired audio gear.

MC: What was your biggest influence for designing your products?

Yetter: The desire to make the music we all listen to sound better. That is what truly drives this company; every product is rooted in that core idea. That is why I personally make gear; it's certainly not for money. Our company margins reflect that sentiment as well.

We aim to recreate vintage pieces and capture what makes them sound special. So,

I've also found that to accurately recreate these pieces, the only way to do it with integrity is to build them in small batches with love and care and critically listen and test each one. That's why we do it the way we do.

MC: What was your inspiration for the D-Comp Limiter, which I love?

Yetter: Simply put, I took every British Diode Comp and threw them in a blender, grabbing certain elements from each one that I liked.

Then I pulled my hair out for three years obsessing over attack times and transformer ratios. Finally, I threw my hands in the air and declared it done.

MC: What new products do you have in the works that we can look forward to in the future?

Yetter: There are A LOT of great products in the works, ALWAYS! We recently debuted our whole 2021 new product lineup at Summer NAMM. Four new products in one year is no small feat for a boutique company building everything on site by hand. Yet to be released this year is amazing. An original designed 2 channel tube preamp that fills a huge void for all working studios. And of course, we are debuting an all-analog Spring reverb that sounds more "Plate-like," with an equally tempered, handmade spring assembly.

We make the spring assembly in these from scratch, which, to my knowledge, makes us the only manufacturer to do that in this century. •



"One thing I noticed when visiting studios was that the ones using boutique and vintage gear always seemed to be cranking out far superior sounding records." -Chris Yetter, AudioScape

we either have an original unit that we start with as the best representation, or I'll build one with original parts and use that prototype as the model to make our product. If it's an original product, I'll simply try to make it sound like something I would want to use. It must serve an all-important need.

MC: How much research and development goes into your compressors, like the V-Comp 6386 Edition MU Ccompressor, from beginning to end?

Yetter: R&D is quite the process. The V-Comp (6386 edition) was developed very similar to our Opto Comp.

I built a Point To Point Version with original parts and started with the mods in the original Gates manual, then just kept tweaking more. After we released the standard version in 2019, I kept modding even more and we released an expanded deluxe version this year.

Some people think if it's an old piece that this is an easy, mindless venture... In reality, it's a fun challenge and a constant balancing act. Designing an original piece can be easier at times, because you aren't trying to find or substitute an obsolete vintage part; or trying to look for Easter eggs in schematics in old manuals, etc.

Multi-Emy-winning guitarist-composer **BRIAN TARQUIN**, known for his Smooth Jazz instrumental radio hits, has 32 million streams on Pandora, Spotify & Apple Music. Tarquin is also known for having won three Emmys for "Outstanding Achievement in Music Direction and Composition for a Drama Series" and has been nominated for an Emmy six times. In 2019 he received a Global Music Gold Award for his release *Orlando in Heaven* for "Best Album." Three years in a row (2016-2019) Tarquin received "Best Album of the Year" nominations from the Independent Music Awards for his releases: *Guitars for Wounded Warriors*, *Orlando in Heaven*, and *Guitars for Veterans* showcasing his guitar prowess alongside such world-class shredders as: Steve Morse, Larry Coryell, Billy Sheehan, Bumblefoot (Guns N' Roses), Gary Hoey, Reb Beach (Whitesnake), Jeff Watson (Night Ranger), Chuck Loeb (FourPlay), Trey Gunn (King Crimson) to name a few. Tarquin has appeared on 40 releases, selling over 140,000 physical records in his career.

Eric Gales

Crown

Provogue Records/Mascot Records Group
Producers: Joe Bonamassa and Josh Smith

The gregarious blues rocker's latest album *Crown* plays like a concept album on which Gales bears his soul, as evidenced by the pivotal song "I Want My Crown." This is the guitarist's battle cry where he musically goes toe to toe with Bonamassa in an epic axe duel. But a number of other songs mine deeper personal issues and socially relevant territory. "Survivor," "Stand Up" and "The Storm" are superb examples of this. Rock, gospel, ballads and a whole lotta blues, baby! He mightily embraces it all. - **Eric Harabadian**



Various

Relief: A Benefit for the Jazz Foundation of America's Musicians' Emergency Fund Mack Avenue

Producers: Geoffrey Menin and Joe Petrucci

Designed to help those impacted by COVID, this project on behalf of the JFA's Musician's Emergency Fund is a dazzling, stylistically eclectic collective in which the genre's top labels contribute live and studio performances of freewheeling originals and re-imagined standards by the likes of Herbie Hancock, Christian McBride, Kenny Garrett, Joshua Redman, Jon Batiste and Esperanza Spalding—capped by a classic performance featuring Wallace Roney and Jimmy Heath, two greats we lost in 2020. - **Jonathan Widran**



Glasses Malone

Glass House

Division Media
Producers: Various

Leader of the New West movement for well over a decade, Malone is bringing back attitude and restoring gangsta rap's spirit with this release, a reconsidered version of his admired 2012 mixtape, under the same name. Besides five new tracks and three remixes, *Glass House* is relevant and hits with rebellious tracks like "Thug By Myself," "Gangsta Boogie," and "Super Sport." In addition, *Glass House* includes notable features from Snoop Dogg to Ice-T to Raphael Saadiq and Kurupt, among others. - **Adam Seyum**



Davis John Patton

Songs From Davis

Netwerk Music Group
Producers: Davis John Patton and Patrick Cunningham

With pure approachable vocals and gentle guitar strumming, Patton's poignant lyrics touch the deep emotionally charged points of the human psyche. On this five-track EP he reminisces over bittersweet childhood memories ("Eason" is the elementary school where he met co-producer Patrick Cunningham, and "Rosewood" is the street he grew up on) and reflects on an ever-changing world. *Songs, for Davis*, represents a collection of his most intimate work and provides the perfect backdrop to a relaxing night in. - **Andrea Beenham**



Zeal & Ardor

Zeal & Ardor

MVKA
Producers: Marc Obrist and Manuel Gagneux

This self-titled LP picks up where its predecessor, *Stranger Fruit*, left off, with a proggy twist. The black metal/blues project instills bouts of synthwave to round out this new release. "Emersion" pairs Tycho-esque programming with an unrelenting Deafheaven-adjacent hook. "Golden Liar" introduces a deeper vocal tonality, with Ennio Morricone musicianship. Whether screaming, belting, or whispering, Gagneux does exactly what's needed to keep listeners from skipping a single track on this nearly perfect follow-up. - **Andy Mesecher**



Leslie Hunt

Descent

Spirit of Unicorn Music/Cherry Red Records
Producer: Christian Matthew Cullen

A residual goal of embarking on a solo project is to make a statement that stands apart from one's primary band. The District 97 frontwoman accomplishes that on this tight EP, focusing more on economy than extensive improvisation. But that's not to say Hunt's message is any less compelling. Check out the funky social commentary of "Again & Again," the self-reflective "Big White Flag," the samba-like "These Days" or the spiritually nurturing "Quiet Mind" to hear a singer-songwriter with a powerful musical vision. - **Eric Harabadian**



Ulrich Krieger

236 Strings

L'ST Records
Producer: Ulrich Krieger

First you learn the rules and then you break them. It is a credo that woodwind master Krieger has taken to heart. Although classically trained, he's immersed himself in noise rock, electronic, jazz and, with this release, ambient and experimental music. The five originals here are all about breaking the rules. These instrumental pieces center on themes ranging from desert landscapes and the ocean floor to Nordic mythology. The most engaging tracks feature progressive pianists Vicki Ray and Danny Holt. The overall mix of drones and manipulated acoustic sounds is fascinating. - **Eric Harabadian**



Summer Walker

Still Over It

LVRN/Interscope
Producers: Various

Summer Walker is in the uppermost echelon of today's singers. She is so soulful, and, with postmodern production, has created a 2020s R&B timestamp. Cardi B, SZA, Omarion, Ciara, Pharrell, Ari Lennox, City Girls and Lil Durk all get to duet with Walker. Special shoutout to Cardi's at-first throwaway outro of "Bitter" that ends with profound empowerment, setting a great headspace for the project. *Still Over It* became the most streamed R&B album since Beyoncé's *Lemonade*. Not sure if they are totally neck and neck, but Walker can hold her own as a singer-storyteller. - **Joseph Maltese**



To be considered for review in the Album Reviews section, you must have a record deal with a major label or an independent label with an established distributor. If you do not, please see our New Music Critiques section.

NEW MUSIC CRITIQUES



Law

Contact: lawandmusicgmt@gmail.com
Web: linktr.ee/lawandmusic
Seeking: Label
Style: R&B/Pop

Independence and attitude, that is what solo artist Law demands—in her sleek, sensual, reserved way—in this batch of expertly rendered songs led by “Controller” in which she declares “You cannot control me.” The production finesse continues strong (but is never overpowering) on “Liar,” in which the singer gives thumbs down to a lover who would be anything but true. We can’t understate the soulful, supple quality of the production, which contrasts skittery percussion textures with soft, sinuous synths. Instead of synthesizers, “Over It” features a swirling electric jazz guitar for a catchy ear-pleasing ride. There’s no question this R&B artist has the goods to be considered by major-label A&R reps. Check her out!

Production	10
Lyrics	8
Music	8
Vocals	8
Musicianship	9

SCORE: 8.6



Hazelord

Contact: hazelordmusic@gmail.com
Web: hazelord.com
Seeking: Label, Booking
Style: Alt-Rock

The first thing that strikes us about this band is how tight and solid they are. And the downstroking buzzsaw they generate is well-captured by crisp, clean production. The second thing, though, is how, um...eccentric the singer is. On “Freckles” and “Glasshead” his voice is all over the place—except in key. And yet... Obviously fueled by a punk rock spirit, this frontman’s shrill moments begin to make some sense, and by the time we hear “Restless,” we’re not only intrigued by his French accent, but also impressed by his daring attempts to reach for high notes with a manic, go-for-broke attitude. There’s lots of work still to do here, though. We advise the band to inject dynamic shifts in their music and to make the songs shorter.

Production	8
Lyrics	7
Music	7
Vocals	7
Musicianship	8

SCORE: 7.4



Mike Telega

Contact: mike@miketelega.com
Web: miketelega.com
Seeking: Label, Booking, Film/TV
Style: Folk

Folk artist Mike Telega imbues his engaging, heartfelt songs with the high-touch qualities that make folk so honest and likeable. “Winter Birds,” with fiddle and a steel guitar whining so beautifully, helps paint a picture that we’ve all witnessed—the lonely sight of birds flying south for the winter. And while Telega’s voice is an average instrument, its unadorned realness fits the music perfectly. “Forever and a Day” is our favorite, just a catchy, briskly paced tune with a tasty harmonic solo. Finally, “Monsters” is a look back at regret and disappointment, a reality that is sweetened by the beautiful female backup voice that supports Telega’s own. This artist would really shine in an intimate, coffeehouse setting.

Production	8
Lyrics	8
Music	8
Vocals	7
Musicianship	8

SCORE: 7.8



Veekay

Contact: vskhumalo87@gmail.com
Web: amplink/ZD0mn
Seeking: Bookings, TV/Film Placement
Style: Afro Tech, Dance

South African jazz drummer Vusi Khumalo has a batch of songs that mix beats with electro elements, and this formula allows him to show off strengths and shortcomings. Propelled by a tribal beat, “Curtain Call” has a basic drum & bass setup along with a soulful yet nasally lead vocal that laments “This love has stopped breathing.” “Shapeshifting” has great percussion that adorns its upbeat message: “Beautiful people, fly like an eagle!” The love song “Always and Forever” features lots of percussion touches and an overall rich fabric of sound. As well recorded as these songs are, however, we urge Khumalo to find a producer to take him away from basic samples, string synth pads, and amateur production elements.

Production	8
Lyrics	7
Music	7
Vocals	8
Musicianship	8

SCORE: 7.6



Derek Lersch

Contact: shania@milestonepublicity.com
Web: dereklerschmusic.com
Seeking: Booking, Film/TV, Label
Style: Country

As soon as the wall of guitars that fuels “100 Proof” bursts from the speakers, it’s clear that country-rock artist Derek Lersch has put together a team of musicians and engineers who “know their bidness” and who support his tenor vocals with a dazzling authority. Lots of alcohol flows through these songs of love and heartache, such as “Miss Me Whiskey” where swigging some ‘shine unlocks a whole array of powerful emotions about the singer’s ex. A bit less interesting is the tribute to sun and fun, “My Baby’s Summertime,” a rocker that rides a great arrangement. From his relatable themes to his roughhewn, guitar-driven sound, Lersch fully understands the formula and executes it deftly.

Production	8
Lyrics	8
Music	7
Vocals	8
Musicianship	9

SCORE: 8.0



Wanderers

Contact: sian@littleacornmusic.com
Web: wanderersmusic.com.au
Seeking: Label, Booking, Festivals, Publisher
Style: West Coast Sound

Yacht Rock, anyone? You won’t find many bands today like this Aussie duo, who demonstrate consummate skill in channelling the ‘70s so-called “yacht rock” sound that features creamy synths, funky guitars and delicious falsettos. The production is just so good! “NITW” (Nothing In This World) is a tasty slice of what these guys can do, an ultra-catchy hook with great instrumentation and infectious falsettos. Though “Malibu” meanders, it has a strong hook and an excellent sax part. The dramatic, downtempo “Penny” has amazing synths. Considering the ongoing popularity of Hall & Oates, in the right situation, Wanderers’ music would completely wow an audience.

Production	10
Lyrics	8
Music	8
Vocals	9
Musicianship	8

SCORE: 8.6

Music Connection’s executive committee rates recorded music on a scale of 1 to 10. Number 1 represents the lowest possible score, 10 represents the highest possible score. A final score of 6 denotes a solid, competent artist. For more information, see Submission Guidelines on the next page.



The Incubators

Contact: chris@theincubators.net
Web: theincubators.net
Seeking: Booking, Film/TV Placement
Style: Americana

Northern Cal combo The Incubators have a well-seasoned, good-natured, pop-Americana sound that would be ideal on any winery's stage. "Who wants to be normal?," they ask on the fanciful "Apollo" which namechecks a scad of ancient gods and civilizations, complemented by some nice guitar noodling. Next, with its hand-drum percussion and idyllic Eagles-like vocal blends, "Petaluma Wind" is tailor-made for the winery experience as it conjures a refreshing breeze of sights and sounds. Finally, the band puts its stamp on the Grateful Dead's "Fire On The Mountain," infusing the tune with the funky flavors of wah wah guitar as well as previously unpublished lyrics.

Production	8
Lyrics	7
Music	7
Vocals	8
Musicianship	8

SCORE: 7.6



Clockwise on Fire

Contact: bari@pressherepublicity.com
Web: clockwiseonfire.com
Seeking: TV/Film Placement
Style: Psych-Rock, Progressive

Here's a band, a duo actually, that make you sit up and take notice. Featuring Anthony Green (Circa Survive), Clockwise have an attack energy and finesse that on "What Will You Forget" is like a combination of Arctic Monkeys, Capt. Beefheart and angelic-mode Radiohead, all vying for the ear. Yes, it is a bit chaotic, even abrasive, at times, but this psych-rock anarchy demands attention. Jazzy harmonies imbue the upbeat "Dig" whose racing, ultra-fluid guitar contributes to its overall danceability. A '90s alt-rock feel permeates "Now We're Retroceding" which even includes elements of rap/spoken-word. It's fun hearing these guys let out the throttle on these songs; now we advise maybe taking a step back and simplifying.

Production	9
Lyrics	8
Music	8
Vocals	8
Musicianship	9

SCORE: 8.4



Shaheed404

Contact: contactme@shaheed404.com
Web: atlantafunk.com
Seeking: Review
Style: Hip-Hop

GA-born Shaheed404 made a name for himself with debut Everlasting in Atlanta Funk. 404 would be considered a conscious rapper. Channeling A Tribe Called Quest with throwback arrangements, the single "Midnight" is sparse, relying on a murky bass and simple 808 beats. "Homecoming" demonstrates excellent risks in production, impressive panning and dropped EQ, but the basics--being able to determine vocals clearly amid other elements--can use work. The forthcoming follow-up, Season 2, boasts lead single "What U Want," which features ghostly panning vocals over melancholy swirling guitars. "W.U.W." has some of the catchiest melodies and biggest hooks, although the doubled vocals do not come in clean.

Production	7
Lyrics	7
Music	8
Vocals	7
Musicianship	7

SCORE: 7.2



ViciousTBN

Contact: viciousTBN@gmail.com
Web: youtube.com
Seeking: Booking, Film/TV
Style: Hip-Hop

ViciousTBN "eats these raps with chopsticks,"—his words, according to the single "Chopsticks." The Virginia-based artist has a lot of energy at the mic. His brash voice is made brasher when vocals are doubled on all productions. "Grind All Night" is very good, with a technically complicated backbeat. "I Got It" is a standout cypher with verses by TBN mates Don Tober, Day Da Don, Oeynote. The songs feature melancholy instrumentals, almost reminiscent of the violin score from Schindler's List. The sound itself seems a bit dated—not up to the same level and formulas of current trap music. We don't totally wish to make an example out of ViciousTBN, but Instagram and SoundCloud can only take you so far. Please get a real website.

Production	8
Lyrics	7
Music	7
Vocals	7
Musicianship	7

SCORE: 7.2



Scarecrowz

Contact: scarecrowzband@hotmail.com
Web: scarecrowzottowa.wixsite.com
Seeking: Bookings, Film/TV Placement
Style: Hard Rock

Rockin' hard n' heavy right out of the gate is Canadian band Scarecrowz, whose muscular, no-frills attack is all guitars, bass, drums and lead vocals that echo Metallica's James Hetfield. The group's gang vocals, however, are what really make an impact, as on "Bull By The Horns," a rousing, upbeat, call-to-action song. The softer, more thoughtful "Skywalk" emulates Alice in Chains and has very nice guitar tone, fat electric bass, and those great gang vocals whose chorus conveys a powerful spirit of camaraderie. We were let down by the chorus of "Let's Party Tonight," which turned out to be too obvious and, well, invites the listener to party tonight. Well produced, solidly performed, tried-and-true hard rock, plain and simple.

Production	8
Lyrics	7
Music	7
Vocals	7
Musicianship	8

SCORE: 7.4



Tim Reynolds & Michael Sokolowski

Contact: sokolowskimichael@mac.com
Web: timreynolds.com, breezewayrecords.com
Seeking: Distribution, Film/TV
Style: Electronic

This duo are working at a high level, coming up with instrumental pieces that are by turns simple and complex. One thing is clear, however, they're superior musicians who achieve stellar moments with sound. "Efflorescence" is altogether ambient and atmospheric music that seems to celebrate the flowering, the birth, of something—before the mood shifts to something that could be menacing. The 11-minute "Freighter Hop" has excellent Kraftwerkian sounds that are panned from left to right, along with awesome drum beats. Showing their flexibility, "Homunculus" shifts the vibe to jazzy, funky and absolutely phat. Film/TV folks should call.

Production	9
Lyrics	X
Music	8
Vocals	X
Musicianship	9

SCORE: 8.6

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES: There is absolutely no charge for a New Music Critique. We critique recordings that have yet to connect with a label or distributor. To be considered please go to musicconnection.com/get-reviewed. All submissions are randomly selected and reviewed by committee.

LIVE REVIEWS

Rockwood Music Hall New York, NY

Contact: monica@sideways-media.com

Web: eleanorbuckland.com

Players: Eleanor Buckland, vocals, guitar; Adam Iredale-Gray, electric guitar, vocals; Sean Trischka, drums, vocals; Zoe Guigueno, electric bass, vocals

Material: In this intimate Lower East Side venue, Eleanor Buckland, one third of the trio Lula Wiles, debuted her first solo effort, performing all 10 songs from her brand-new album, *You Don't Have To Know*. A mix of indie, folk, rock and pop, Buckland reflects on relationship ups and downs, struggles with moving through life's difficulties and what might await her on the other side.

The songs are thematically tied together, forming a cohesive tapestry of self-examination. In the title song, Buckland drives home the notion that sometimes you must live with uncertainty: "How are you ever going to keep your heart sober? And shake your ghosts?/ They rattle the sky/they catch in your throat/ You don't have to know."

"How Fast, How Far?" the catchiest of the collection, has radio potential, with its hypnotic electric guitar motif, a gripping rhythmic pattern and highly singable chorus: "Hold me baby, hold me tight/I think I love you/I think I might/If I fall, I'm a shooting star/but if I fall/how fast, how far?"

Musicianship: Buckland's voice is a blend of sweetness and energy, but it is the vulnerability that she imparts that is her greatest asset. Iredale-Gray's compelling guitar work supports



ELEANOR BUCKLAND

MARK SHWOLICH

Buckland's own playing along with Trischka on drums and Guigueno on bass, taking the music to its rightful place.

Performance: Buckland's folksy, girlish charm, immediately resonated with audience members, from her opening bit of banter, asking listeners how they "liked her new jacket," to just about any other topic. Iredale-Gray (the album's producer) interjected himself into the conversation, further cementing the performer-audience relationship. Buckland stepped away from the band to perform a guitar-only version of "Wishing Is Useless," proving that she can

also shine acoustically. Though Buckland wanted to showcase all the songs on the album, adding a distinguishable cover would further align her with other artists in her genre.

Summary: Eleanor Buckland has a promising package to move forward with. She is more than able to bring you into her world of self-exploration. Throwing in one heavy-hitting cover alongside her own songs would further draw more fans of her genre. On Feb. 8, Buckland will perform as part of the WFUV "On Your Radar" series at Rockwood Music Hall hosted by John Platt. - **Ellen Woloshin**



CARRY-ON BAND

The Canyon Club Agoura Hills, CA

Contact: mark@markprudeaux.com

Web: carry-onband.com

Players: Mark Prudeaux, vocals; Pete Sarenana, lead guitar; Ruben Reza, second guitar; Jesse Silgero, bass; Adam Ponce, drums

Material: With an energetic 30-minute set of originals, the Carry-On Band played a powerful and engaging rock show with vibes giving diverse nods to everything from KISS and Guns n' Roses, to Alannah Myles and Kings of Leon.

From straightahead rock to retro power ballads, the group demonstrated excellent musical sensitivity and delivered a balanced sound with fantastic vocal lines and intense growls from frontman Mark Prudeaux.

Musicianship: Show opener, "I'm Ready," highlighted Jesse Silgero's talented bass slapping, and the flow between Silgero and Prudeaux was outstanding. "City Lights" unveiled a great guitar drive from Pete Sarenana and Ruben Reza, with phenomenal drum fills from Adam Ponce, who landed a

fat drum sound and incredible fills and runs throughout the night (and especially on "City Lights"). Sarenana and Reza added a tight intro on "Queen of Hearts" and captivating dueling guitar solos on "Lovely, Long and Lean." Prudeaux stood out as a formidable leader with potent vocals.

Performance: With a good audience turnout, the band kept its energy high and listeners were captivated throughout the set. While the banter between songs could use improvement, the level of musicality and the balance of sound from the group was very good. The group worked well together, with "Queen of Hearts" delivering a cool kickdrum and guitar breakdown and fabulous syncopated drum lines. Between soaring vocal melodies, darker transitions and bass licks (in "Lovely, Long and Lean"), and incredible falsetto notes, the Carry-On Band has clearly done the work to get here.

Summary: The group produced a fun, compelling show, while displaying strong songwriting chops and great musicality. Prudeaux's animated charismatic stage presence, alongside the intensity and control of his vocals, were well supported by the solid band of talented musicians that possessed seemingly boundless energy. With their diverse stylistic ability and sturdy sound, the Carry-On Band is the real deal, delivering a dynamic evening of rock. - **Andrea Beenham**



The Hotel Café Hollywood, CA

Contact: theajuliette@gmail.com

Web: [instagram.com/fox_violets](https://www.instagram.com/fox_violets)

Material: Thea Juliette is the sole writer, producer, rhythm guitarist and vocalist for her band Fox Violet. The Europe-based outfit played the Hotel Café on a beautiful autumn evening, producing music with a '60s, grunge/pop vibe, complete with super-angry vocals and eerie

guitar tones. The music—hard-driving most of the time—had its tender moments. "Trenches" is a standout, starting slow and mellow as it chronicles a teenager getting irritated with life and having to face their darkest fears. The song reaches a crescendo with a most moving finale, providing a very touching moment.

Musicianship: The musicianship at this Hotel Café gig was good. The band really put out and had fun. The bass player was great to

watch, dancing and whipping her hair back and forth, so into the music. She and the drummer were in sync, partners in crime in the art of being a great rhythm section. So solid was the rhythm section that it gave the guitarist a lot of room to move around and play with the sounds from his ax.

"Who Are You" brought out the guitar player's abilities and creativity. He was so perfectly blended that, at times, you suspected it was a keyboard player making those noises, but it was actually the guitar, full of funky, psychedelic sounds. The vocals were a bit weak, at times, but Juliette got her point across with powerful, angry songs that made you think.

Performance: Standout players at this show were the bass player and the guitar player, who were extremely animated and gave the whole Fox Violet vibe a boost. Meanwhile, the delivery of the lyrics was a forceful act that gave the songs life and brought everything together.

Summary: Thea Juliette brings with her a grunge/pop album full of influences that include Radiohead, R.E.M. and Pink Floyd, music that is laden with synthesizer effects and lyrics filled with angst and distress. Songs like "Floating Out of My Skin" will take you to places you've never been to before. Very moody tunes sometimes lead you to places you would rather not be. The music is unconventional, at times, but the sulky, sullen lyrics are compelling and will pull you through. If you like heavy lyrics paired with dark, upbeat music, Fox Violet is your kind of band. - **Pierce Brochetti**

The Goldfish Los Angeles, CA

Contact: kate.rakvic@sacksco.com

Web: hankmaymusic.com

Players: Hank May, vocals, guitar; Sean Lean, guitar; Max Foreman, keys, steel pedal guitar; Patrick Taylor, bass; Dylan Gardner, drums

Material: Hank May might be one of the most quotable personalities in the indie rock scene. His humorous adlibs are liable to engage an audience member before, after and during the rendition of original compositions like "High on LCD." The raw sincerity of his interplay with random spectators often provides context for his love songs and a summary of his bachelorhood. May is an Angeleno who spent four years, during his twenties, living in New York City. A place that undoubtedly influenced the lyrics for "Modern Medicine." An alternative rock song filled with personal accounts about substance abuse, introspection and heartbreak.

Musicianship: One of the most distinct components in Hank May's music is his usage of the pedal steel guitar. It's a glaring ingredient that adds a bit of a country twang to tracks that range from indie-folk and alt-rock to college rock and Americana. "Where I'm Calling From" is a stand-out track from May's brand-new album, *One More Taste of The Good Stuff*.

Performance: Hank May displayed great command of his setlist and his vocal register.



His voice echoed throughout the live venue in a tone that was very similar to Wesley Schultz from The Lumineers. But when he sang "NBC," he produced a sound that seemed to be coming from his lowest vocal register. It was a nice display of how dynamic a vocalist he is. And it certainly contributed to one of the many reasons why the song is a crowd favorite.

Summary: On this night, Max Forman routinely transitioned from backup vocals and keys to the pedal steel guitar numerous times. Meanwhile,

the rhythm section's standout moment of the live set came during the band's rendition of "Offline." The groove and underlying rhythm displayed by Dylan Gardner and Patrick Taylor meshed well with the dueling guitars of May and his lead guitarist, Sean Lee. As the show reached its conclusion, the back-up band exited the performance area, leaving May under the stage lights by himself to perform a couple of heartfelt songs with his acoustic guitar. It was a very sensible way for this emotional performance to reach its conclusion. - **Miguel Costa**

LIVE REVIEWS

Los Globos Theatre Los Angeles, CA

Contact: Jillian Condran, jillian@theoriel.co

Web: boyrainbow.com

Players: Keinyan Lonsdale, vocals; Patch Mahoney, drums; Poliana Magalhães, bass; Summer Swee-Singh, keys; Brandon Dove, guitar

Material: In his first U.S. performance, Keinyan Lonsdale delivered an exhilarating hour of nonstop energetic artistry, complete with fantastic showmanship and full dance choreography. His music encompasses elements of pop, dance, R&B and beachy reggaeton, and Lonsdale's set included songs from his 2020 debut, *Rainbow Boy*, his latest single, "Gods of the Disco" as well as a cover of Craig David's "Rendezvous." From the dramatic cymbal flourish intro on to each seamlessly transitioned song, Lonsdale and his crew unveiled an intense production with strong vocals.

Musicianship: The cohesive backing band, synthesizers and unique sound effects added to the drama and magnitude of the evening, with each band member integrating seamlessly into the overall sound with solid musicality, supporting Lonsdale's delicious falsetto accents and vocal runs. "White Noise" unleashed big theatrics and "Chocolate" delivered a heavy synth opening that transitioned into a slow grind with fabulous falsetto. Lonsdale's low-end vocals were showcased in Craig David's



"Rendezvous," and "All My Life" was an ethereal dance jam along the lines of the Pet Shop Boys, with full-on dance choreography and a Kings of Leon-esque drum fill sequence.

Performance: Palpable anticipation brought out a full house of pulsing, swaying, eclectic fans who added a joyful, free-feeling ambience while a full-sized screen streamed videos and graphics, adding to the experience. Dancers Skvtch and Jordan Harris amped up the artistry and engaged the audience even more, with dancing on "Gay Street Fighter," "White Noise," and especially "All My Life"—with a full dance interlude between Lonsdale, Skvtch and Harris. Dancing continued in "Rhythm

& Music" and "On My Wave," while "Magic Mickey" was a soulful ballad highlighting Lonsdale's charisma and natural crowd interplay. The show's closer, "Gods of the Disco," had the house dancing along.

Summary: With a robust sound and eye-catching visuals behind him, Lonsdale proved himself as a bona fide popstar, complete with wardrobe changes between songs, great audience interaction, and confident stage movement. Connecting with his dancers, and maintaining eye contact with crowd members, he has a captivating presence on stage and is a great performer. — **Andrea Beenham**



Livestream Stagelt

Contact: [facebook.com/TonyMillerBand](https://www.facebook.com/TonyMillerBand)

Web: tonymiller.hearnow.com

Players: Tony Miller, vocals, guitar, harmonica

Material: Think about the sort of adult contemporary rock you'd want gently wafting from your radio while driving late at night on a summer evening, the windows down and wind blowing through your hair. That's the

type of music Tony Miller has been crafting for more than four decades. Though he has only one release, 2020's *Better Late Than Never*, he's been consistently appearing on streaming platform Stagelt twice a week for some time, with Saturdays devoted to a cozy acoustic presentation.

Musicianship: Miller is adept at creating full-bodied sounds with no more than a guitar, harmonica and heartfelt vocals. A voice

enhancement device allows him to incorporate two- and three-part harmonies, although he never uses pitch correction. This filter boosts his show from a humble, intimate performance to something bigger in the listener's mind. Over a half-hour and change, he traded original compositions off his recorded debut with covers of '80s classics, including REO Speedwagon's "Take It On the Run" and Bon Jovi's "I'll Be There For You." The set concluded with an intriguing, although abbreviated, version of Michael Jackson's "Beat It."

Performance: Like every good live performer, Miller takes time to speak directly to his audience, and he's skilled at doing so. He's warm and loose when mentioning song names, directing people to purchase his album and delivering brief snippets of information about his tunes. Regrettably, he burned too many seconds soliciting requests toward the end of his slot, leaving little room to experiment with the King of Pop's classic number. This is disappointing, as he insists he never performs any song in precisely the same way twice. One can't help but wonder what he'd have created without a pressing time constraint.

Summary: Tony Miller is a seasoned performer with sizable chops. He has a remarkable ability to communicate feeling, even without an in-person audience or supporting performers to fall back on. His material is solid and bound to please listeners without extravagant tastes. The only problem is that his music feels stuck in the past. Miller would grab more attention by exploring far-flung sonic horizons or approaching his performance methodology from an unexpected angle. — **Andy Kaufmann**



The Hotel Café Hollywood, CA

Web: sonsofthevelvetrat.com

Contact: sonsofthevelvetrat@gmail.com

Players: Heike Binder, keyboard; Eric McCann, bass; Greg Gordon, drums; Georg Altziebler, guitar, vocals

Material: Sons of the Velvet Rat is a mix of Americana, folk, heartland, psychedelic and rock & roll all wrapped up in one package. Songs like "Solitary Company" and "Franklin Avenue" convey an eeriness and brings a

creepy, "scary movie" feel to the show. Lots of psychedelic synthesizers envelope the room as hints of Pink Floyd and Feetwood Mac seep out of every note. "Eleven & Nine" and "Stardust" are good 'ol, hard-driving rock & roll that had the audience dancing in their seats. "Another Glass of Champagne" is reminiscent of Gypsy style music and is a "Tom Petty meets Bob Dylan while having dinner at Pink Floyd's house" kind of tune.

Musicianship: The musicianship was good. Nothing fancy going on here, just good, solid

play that made the Hotel Café rumble. McCann and Gordon had the rhythm section locked down on just about every song while Binder and Altziebler led the way with vocals, keyboards and rhythm guitar. "Sweet Angela" had everyone busy. While the music said Dylan, the vocals cried Petty and they tugged 'n pulled, but in the end, the harmonies brought everything together.

Performance: The performance was very good. The music kept everything alive and kicking especially toward the end. Songs like "The Only Child" made the rhythm section come alive and brought out the creativity that Gordon and McCann were holding back. "Eleven & Nine" kept everything fresh as Altziebler broke out a great harmonica solo, and Binder sneakily unleashed the accordion to add another layer of creativity to the show.

Summary: Sons of the Velvet Rat are multi-instrumentalists with a wide, diverse set of songs. They'll take you from dreary, creepy songs to full-throttle rock & roll in no time and won't even look back. "Alicia" stands out palpably, with the tag line "Do You Love Me, Do You Love Me?" You could almost feel Altziebler's pain as he sang out to his love interest. And as Binder aided ever so subtly in the calamity with superb harmonies and outstanding backing vocals, it was moments like that which made this night a good one for the Rat; The Velvet Rat, that is. - **Pierce Brochetti**

The Mint Los Angeles, CA

Web: theokandel.com

Contact: jbonner@milestonepublicity.com

Players: Theo Kandel, guitar, vocals; Ben Pleasant, guitar, vocals; Jimmy Berry, keyboard, vocals; Julian Shaw, bass, vocals; Rafael Vidal, drums

Material: Theo Kandel's music is very country/pop with extra sprinkles of pop scattered over the top. The songs are very well written and encompass a professional attitude. The first tune, "How Could Anybody," had a religious undertone that brought out the goodness in everyone. Repeated chants of "Oh my god, I've fallen for you" transported the audience to a church pew asking for forgiveness after a long night of partying. Juicy hooks and meaningful, sometimes funny lyrics, add to Kandel's stage persona and help draw the audience into his world.

Musicianship: All the players were superb musicians. "I Don't Want to Think About That" brought out Pleasant's guitar skills as he slid all over the fretboard playing soothing, soulful slide. Not sure why, but that song brought out a Monkees vibe (Hey, Hey, it's the Monkees!) as it was being played, probably because it was upbeat and happy. Ben Pleasant and Jimmy Berry combined to make the background vocals a big part of all the songs. They crooned together to smooth out the wrinkles and added a layer of personal goodness to each song.

Performance: A great show. All the players had great stage presence and Kandel acknowledged the audience as if they were



family. He told stories of how the songs developed and at one point asked the crowd for advice. "Fixer Upper" is a prime example of how Kandel takes a simple, personal situation and turns it into a cool song. A song about looking at homes in an area that's unaffordable, but was still a lot of fun. This song also brought out Vidal's superb drumming.

Summary: Kandel's tunes are extremely melodic and it doesn't take much to start

liking them and imagining them in your personal play list. These guys are fun to watch and it didn't hurt that the songs were altogether likable. Shaw and Berry were subtle in their play, but they proved to be the most important part of the evening. Shaw, Berry and Vidal laid the foundation onto which Kandel and Pleasant could express their impromptu gifts. Now, that's talent.

- **Pierce Brochetti**

CLICKPOP RECORDS

P.O. Box 5765
Bellingham, WA 98227
Email: dave@clickpoprecords.com
Web: clickpoprecords.com
Styles/Specialties: folk, metal, pop, punk, electronic, ambient noise and more
Dave Richards, A&R

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Email: demo@clubstream.se
Web: clubstream.se
Style/Specialties: techno, all types of electronic dance music
*Accepts unsolicited material.
Do not send rock music, reggae or psy-trance.
See website for instructions
Hakan Ludvigson, A&R Manager

CMH RECORDS

2898 Rowena Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90039
800-373-8073
Web: cmhrecords.com
Styles/Specialties: country, bluegrass, electric, children's, Christmas

COAST RECORDS

Nashville, TN
310-325-2800
Email: staff@logginpromotion.com
Web: logginpromotion.com
Styles/Specialties: all styles
*Accepts unsolicited material
Paul Loggins, A&R

COLUMBIA RECORDS

LOS ANGELES

(Sony Music)
10202 Washington Blvd.
Culver City, CA 92032
310-272-2555
Web: columbiarecords.com
*No unsolicited material

COLUMBIA RECORDS

NEW YORK

25 Madison Ave
New York, NY 10010
212-833-4000
Email: john.doelp@sonymusic.com
Web: columbiarecords.com
*No unsolicited material
John Doelp, SVP, A&R Operations
Justin Eshak, SVP, A&R
Imran Majid, SVP, A&R

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916 19th Ave. S.
Nashville, TN 37212
615-320-7672. 800-757-2277
Email: info@compassrecords.com
Web: compassrecords.com
Styles/Specialties: celtic, roots
*Accept unsolicited material see website for info
Alison Brown, A&R
Garry West, A&R

CONCORD MUSIC GROUP

5750 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 450
Los Angeles, CA 90036
310-385-4455
Web: concordmusicgroup.com
Styles/Specialties: jazz
Tom Coulson-Smith, A&R Director

CURB RECORDS

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Nashville, TN 37203
615-321-5080
Email: licensing@curb.com
Web: curb.com
Styles/Specialties: country, pop, gospel
*No unsolicited material
Bryan Stewart, VP, A&R

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Web: dangerbirdrecords.com
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*We do not accept unsolicited demos
Jenni Sperandeo, President

DCD2

New York, NY
Email: info@dcd2records.com
Web: dcd2records.com

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808-214-4407
Email: info@deepelm.com
Web: deepelm.com, deepelm.com/submit
Styles/Specialties: indie rock, emo, punk, pop, atmospheric, slowcore, alt-country, instrumental
John Szuch, A&R

DEEP SOUTH ENTERTAINMENT

P.O. Box 17737
Raleigh, NC 27619
919-844-1515
Email: hello@deepsouthernentertainment.com
Web: deepsouthernentertainment.com
Styles/Specialties: rock
*See website for demo submission policy
Steve Williams, A&R

Additional location:

P.O. Box 121975
Nashville, TN 37212
615-953-4800

DEF JAM (Universal)

2220 Colorado Ave., 5th Fl.
Santa Monica, CA 90404
310-865-4000
Web: defjam.com
*No unsolicited material
Chelsea Blythe, SVP, A&R
Noah Preston, VP, A&R

DEF JAM (NY)

1755 Broadway - 7th Floor
New York, NY 10019
212-333-8000
Email: steve.carless@umusic.com
Web: defjam.com
Styles/Specialties: hip-hop, rap, urban, R&B
*No unsolicited materia
Steve Carless, Sr. Dir VP

DEFEND MUSIC, INC.

1667 N. Main Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
323-305-7315
Email: russell@defendmusic.com
Web: defendmusic.com
*Accepts unsolicited material
Russell Nygaard, A&R

DELICIOUS VINYL RECORDS

6607 Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90028
323-464-7467
Email: contact@deliciousvinyl.com
Web: deliciousvinyl.com
*No unsolicited material
Michael Ross, A&R/Owner
Rick Ross, A&R

DELMARK RECORDS

4121 N. Rockwell
Chicago, IL 60618
773-539-5001
Email: delmark@delmark.com
Web: delmark.com
Styles/Specialties: blues and jazz
Elbio Barilari, VP & Artist Director
Steve Wagner, A&R

DIM MACK RECORDS

724 South Spring St.
Los Angeles, CA 90014
Email: mike@dimmak.com
Web: dimmak.com
Styles/Specialties: edm, pop
Contact: Mike Jones

DINE ALONE RECORDS

864 Eastern Ave.
Toronto, ON Canada
416-585-7885
Email: info@dinealonerecords.com
Web: dinealonerecords.com
Styles/Specialties: Various, including rock, indie, punk, R&B, hip-hop, post hardcore and emo
Roster: Moneen, Streets of Laredo, the Flatliners, Vanessa Carlton, New Swears, the Lumineers
Joel Carriere, Founder-Owner, A&R

DISCHORD RECORDS

3819 Beecher St., N.W.
Washington, DC 20007
703-351-7507
Email: dischord@dischord.com
Web: dischord.com
Styles/Specialties: punk rock

DOMO MUSIC GROUP

11022 Santa Monica Blvd, #300
Los Angeles, CA 90025
310-966-4414
Email: newtalent@domomusicgroup.com
Web: domomusicgroup.com
Styles/Specialties: new age, world music, rock, soundtrack, ambient, electronic
*We accept unsolicited material. See website for details

D'MAR ENTERTAINMENT, INC.

7723 Tylers Pl. Blvd., Ste. 275
West Chester, OH 45069
513-617-2392
Web: dmarmusic.com/home
Styles/Specialties: smooth jazz, R&B, gospel
*Accepts unsolicited material

DRAG CITY RECORDS

P.O. Box 476867
Chicago, IL 60647
312-455-1015 Fax 312-455-1057
Email: radio@dragcity.com
Web: dragcity.com
Styles/Specialties: rock, hard rock, experimental
*Does not accept Demos

DUALTONE RECORDS

3 McFerrin Ave.
Nashville, TN 37206
615-320-0620
Email: info@dualtone.com
Web: dualtone.com
Styles/Specialties: country, rock

ELEKTRA

1633 Broadway 10th & 11th Floor
New York, NY 10019
212-707-2130
Web: elektramusicgroup.com
Johnny Minardi, VP, A&R

Additional locations:

3400 W. Olive Ave.
Burbank, CA 91505

1030 18th Ave. S.
Nashville, TN

EMI CHRISTIAN MUSIC GROUP (CMG)

P.O. Box 5084
Brentwood, TN 37024
800-877-4443, 615-371-6980
Email: radio@capitolcmg.com
Web: capitolchristianmusicgroup.com
*No unsolicited material

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(See Universal Music Group)
Web: universalmusic.com
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EMPEROR JONES RECORDS

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Web: emperorjones.com
Styles/Specialties: folk, indie, alt.

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10 Harbor Park Drive
Port Washington, NY 11050
516-484-1000

Additional locations:

2700 Pennsylvania Ave.
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Santa Monica, CA 90404

4201 Wilshire Blvd.
Suite 400
Los Angeles, CA 90010

200 Varick Street
New York, NY 10014

134 Peter St.
Suite 700
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

10202 W. Washington Blvd.
Culver City, CA 90232
310-272-2220

Web: epicrecords.com
Contact: Ezekiel Lewis, EVP & Head of A&R, Jermaine Pegues, VP A&R, Patrick Afeku, Sr. Director A&R, Kailen Tharpe, Associate Director of A&R
*No unsolicited material
Styles/Specialties: Various, including pop, R&B, rock and hip-hop
Distribution: Sony Music Entertainment
Roster: DJ Khaled, Judas Priest, Meghan Trainor, Sade, Travis Thompson, Sara Bareilles, Jez Dior, Jidennam, Fifth Harmony

EPITAPH / ANTI (WMG)

2798 Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90026
213-355-5000
Email: radio@epitaph.com
Web: epitaph.com
Styles/Specialties: alternative rock, post-hardcore, punk rock, hip-hop, metalcore
*Accepts unsolicited material. See website for instructions
Chris Foitel, SR VP

EQUAL VISION

P.O. Box 38202
Albany, NY 12203-8202
518-458-8250
Email: music@equalvision.com
Web: equalvision.com
Dan Sandshaw, GM/A&R
*accept unsolicited submission

FAT POSSUM RECORDS

P.O. Box 1923
Oxford, MS 38655
662-234-2828 Fax 662-234-2899
Email: matthew@fatpossum.com
Web: fatpossum.com
Styles/Specialties: indie
*Accepts unsolicited material
Matthew Johnson, President
Bruce Watson, Director, A&R

FAT WRECK CHORDS

2196 Palou Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94124
415-284-1790
Web: fatwreck.com
Styles/Specialties: punk

FAVORED NATIONS RECORDS

17328 Ventura Blvd, #165
Encino, CA 91316
Email: info@favorednations.com
Web: favorednations.com
Styles/Specialties: all styles welcome

FEARLESS RECORDS

5870 W. Jefferson Blvd., Studio E
Los Angeles, CA 90016
310-730-6655
Email: cody@fearlessrecords.com
Web: fearlessrecords.com
Styles/Specialties: pop-punk, punk rock, emo, alternative rock, post-hardcore
*Accepts unsolicited material. See website for mailing instructions
Bob Becker, Owner/A&R

FERVOR RECORDS

1810 W. Northern Ave., Ste. A-9
Box 186
Phoenix, AZ 85021
602-870-1788
Email: info@fervor-records.com
Web: fervor-records.com

Styles/Specialties: vintage, new indie

*We do not accept unsolicited submissions
Jeff Freundlich, Exec. Producer

FIRE TOWER ENTERTAINMENT

Located in West Hollywood, CA
Website: firetowerent.com
Email: artists@firetowerent.com
Contact: Evan Griffith/Ruth Nichols
Styles: Pop, Indie
Clients: Wesley Stromberg, Michael Blum, Sophie Ann - full roster on website
Services: Artist Management, A&R consulting, horn contracting
*Accepts unsolicited material

FONOVISA

(Universal Music Group)
Woodland Hills, CA
Web: universalmusic.com
*Accepts unsolicited material

FUNZALO RECORDS

PO Box 571567
Tarzana, CA 91357
520-628-8655
Email: dan@mikesmanagement.com
Web: funzalorecords.com
Michael J. Lembo, President
Dan Agnew, General Manager

GEARHEAD RECORDS

P.O. Box 2375
Elk Grove, CA 95759
916-897-2451
Email: info@gearheadrecords.com
Web: gearheadhq.com
Styles/Specialties: rock n' roll, outlaw country, punk, garage, rockabilly and sleaze metal
*No unsolicited material
Michelle Haunold, President

GEFFEN

See Interscope

GLASSNOTE RECORDS

8201 Beverly Blvd, Suite 400
Los Angeles, CA 90048
323-822-4112 ext. 2279
Contact: marc@glassnotemusic.com
Web: glassnotemusic.com

Additional location:

770 Lexington Ave
New York, NY 10065
646-214-6000

GOGIRLSMUSIC.COM

Email: gogirlsmusic@gmail.com
Web: gogirlsmusic.com
Styles/Specialties: all genres
*The oldest and largest online community of indie women in music
Madalyn Sklar, A&R

HOLLYWOOD RECORDS - LOS ANGELES

500 S. Buena Vista St., Old Team Bldg.

Burbank, CA 91521
818-560-5670
Email: hollywoodrecords@gmail.com
Web: hollywoodrecords.com
*No unsolicited material, No MP3s
Mio Vukovic, SVP, A&R/Head of Creative, Disney Music Group, (DMG) A&R
Barbara Vander Linde, VP, Music Publishing A&R, DMG A&R
Mike Daly, Exec. Director, A&R, Music Publishing, DMG A&R

HOPELESS RECORDS
15918 Arminta St.
Van Nuys, CA 91406-1806
818-997-0444
Email: information@hopelessrecords.com
Web: hopelessrecords.com
Eric Tobin EVP, Business Dev. & A&R

ISLAND RECORDS
(UMG)
2220 Colorado Ave
Santa Monica, CA
888-583-7176
Contact: Darcus Beese, President
Web: universalmusic.com/label/island-records

INTERSCOPE
2220 Colorado Ave., 5th Fl.
Santa Monica, CA 90404
310-865-1000
Email: sam.riback@umusic.com
Web: interscoperecords.com
*No unsolicited material
Sam Riback, Head A&R
Nicole Wyckoarko, Co-Head of A&R

IPECAC RECORDINGS
Email: info@ipecac.com
Web: ipecac.com, facebook.com/ipecac
Distribution: Fontana
Roster: Fantomas, Melvins Big Band, Northern State, Dalek, Skeleton Key, Peeping Tom, Dub Trio
Greg Werckman, A&R

JAGGO RECORDS, LLC
515 Flower St.
18th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90071
323-850-1819
Email: jaggo@jaggo.com
Web: jaggo.com
Styles/Specialties: pop, rock, jazz, R&B, hip-hop, soul, World music
*Unsolicited material accepted

K RECORDS
P.O. Box 9154
Olympia, WA 98507
360-786-1594
Email: promo@krecords.com
Web: krecords.com
Roster: Kimya Dawson, the Curious Mystery, the Blackouts
Calvin Johnson, Owner

KOBALT MUSIC
8201 Beverly Blvd., #400
Los Angeles, CA 90048-4505
310-967-3087
Email: info@kobaltmusic.com
Web: kobaltmusic.com

Additional locations:
2 Gansevoort St. - 6th Fl
New York, NY 10014
212-247-6204
Bob Bortnick, SVP, Creative

907 Gleaves St., Ste. 101
Nashville, TN 37203
615-321-8585

956 Brady Ave NW, 2nd Fl
Atlanta, GA 30318
404-954-6600
Al McLean, SVP, Creative

2100 Ponce De Leon Blvd
Suite 1230
Coral Gables, FL 33134
305-456-1624

The River Building
1 Cousin Lane
London, England EC4R 3TE
+44 (0) 207 401 5500

LITTLE FISH RECORDS
P.O. Box 19164
Cleveland, OH 44119
216-481-1634
Email: littlefishrecords@gmail.com
Web: littlefishrecords.com
Styles/Specialties: roots reggae, jam band, smooth jazz, pop
*Accepts unsolicited material
Lawrence Koval, President, Artist Mgmt

LIZARD SUN ENTERTAINMENT
San Pedro, CA
310-505-3958
Email: Floyd@lizardsunentertainment.com
Web: cliffmorrison.com
Roster: Cliff Morrison
Floyd Bocox, CEO

LOVECAT MUSIC
P.O. Box 548, Ansonia Station
New York, NY 10023
Email: lovecatmusic@gmail.com
Web: lovecatmusic.com
Styles/Specialties: rock, country, folk
*No unsolicited material

MACK AVENUE
18530 Mack Ave., Unit #299
Grosse Pointe Farms, MI 48236
888-640-6225
Email: info@mackavenue.com
Web: mackavenue.com
Styles/Specialties: jazz

MALACO RECORDS
3023 W. Northside Dr.
Jackson, MS 39213
601-982-4522, 800-272-7936
Email: demo@malaco.com
Web: malaco.com
Styles/Specialties: gospel, R&B, spoken word, jazz, blues, soul
*No unsolicited material
Tommy Couch, Jr., President/R&B, A&R
Wolf Stephenson, VP, A&R
Matt Kivett, Director, Gospel

MATADOR RECORDS
134 Grand Street
New York, NY 10013
212-995-5882 Fax 212-995-5883
Email: jake@matadorrecords.com
Web: matadorrecords.com
Styles/Specialties: all styles
*No Unsolicited Material
Jake Whitener, Director of A&R

Additional location:

17-19 Alma Rd.
London, SW18 1AA U.K.
+020-8875-6200

MERGE RECORDS
409 E. Chapel Hill St
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
919-688-9969
Email: merge@mergerecords.com
Web: mergerecords.com
Styles/Specialties: alt-rock
Roster: See website for roster

MEROKE SKY RECORDS
Van Nuys, CA
818-427-2712
Styles/Specialties: folk/rock/Americana/Country
Roster: Barry Goldberg, Alex Del Zoppo, Tony Kaye, Todd Taylor, Alex Sherman, Andrew Wraith, Matt Michenzie
Mike Giangreco, A&R

METAL BLADE RECORDS
5632 Van Nuys Blvd., #1301
Sherman Oaks, CA 91401
818-597-1964
Email: metalblade@metalblade.com
Web: metalblade.com
Styles/Specialties: heavy metal, progressive, rock
*See website for Demo Submission
Brian Slagel, President

Additional location:

Metal Blade Records GMBH
Friedrichstr.38
73033 Goppingen, Germany

METROPOLIS RECORDS
PO Box 974
Media, PA 19063
Attn: Demos
610-595-9940
Email: demo@metropolis-records.com
Web: metropolis-records.com
Styles/Specialties: electronic, industrial, goth
*Accepts unsolicited material by CD or CD-R

MILAN ENTERTAINMENT
Sherman Oaks, CA
Email: jc.chamboredon@milanrecords.com
Web: milanrecords.com
Styles/Specialties: soundtracks, electronic, world

MINT RECORDS
P.O. Box 3613, M.P.O.
Vancouver, BC Canada V6B 3Y6
604-669-MINT
Email: info@mintrecs.com
Web: mintrecs.com
Roster: Duotang, Duplex, Fanshaw, Hot Panda, Immaculate Machine

Styles/Specialties: indie
*Send demos via mail

MOM + POP RECORDS
Web: momandpopmusic.com
Roster: Tom Morello, Sleater-Kinney, Sleigh Bells, Courtney Barnett
Hannah Gross, VP and Head of West Coast A&R

MORPHIUS RECORDS
100 E. 23rd St.
Baltimore, MD 21218
410-662-0112
Email: david@morphius.com
Web: morphius.com
Styles/Specialties: rock, punk, hip-hop, experimental

MOTOWN
1750 North Vine Street
Hollywood, CA 90028
Web: motownrecords.com
*No unsolicited material accepted

MRG RECORDINGS
Los Angeles, CA
310-629-9782
Email: info@mrgregordings.com, submission@mrgregordings.com
Web: mrgregordings.com
Styles/Specialties: rock, electronic, ambient, folk

NETTWERK RECORDS
1675 West 2nd Ave., 2nd Floor
Vancouver, B.C. V6J 1H3
604-654-2929
Email: info@nettwerk.com
Web: nettwerk.com
*No unsolicited material
Mark Jowett, VP, A&R - International

Additional locations:

3900 West Alameda Ave, Suite 850
Burbank, CA 91508
747-241-8619

263 S 4th St.
PO Box 110649
Brooklyn, NY 11211
212-760-1540

NEW PANTS PUBLISHING INC. & OLD PANTS PUBLISHING INC.
119 N. Wahsatch Ave
Colorado Springs, CO 80903
719-632-0227, Fax: 719-634-2274
Email: rac@crlr.net
Web: newpants.com, oldpants.com

Styles/Specialties: all genre styles considered
Roster: Stephanie Aramburo, Chad Steele, C. Lee Clarke, Tech T, James Becker, Kathy Watson, Lisa Bigwood, George Montalbano, Silence, Sherwin Greenwood, Joel Diehl, John Ellis and Rocky Shaw.
*Unsolicited material through management or lawyer only. Please call/email before submitting.
Robert A. Case, A&R

NEW VISION RECORDS MUSIC GROUP & NVM RECORDS
7306 Ann Cabell Lane
Mechanicsville, VA23111
919-747-8950
Email: newvisionmusicgroupnvmrecords@gmail.com
Web: newvisionmusicgroup.com
Styles/Specialties: Christian, Gospel, Inspirational, Country, Pop, R&B/Soul, Indie, Singer/Songwriter
Walter Boswell, Owner/Founder

NOFACE RECORDS
1763 N Gower St
Los Angeles, CA 90028
Email: demos@nofacerecords.com
Web: nofacerecords.com
Styles/Specialties: edm, all styles of electronic music including house, dubstep, bigroom, techno, trance, trap, etc.
*Email demos of your unsigned electronic music

NONESUCH RECORDS
1633 Broadway
New York, NY 10019
212-275-4910
Email: info@nonesuch.com
Web: nonesuch.com
Roster: Emmylou Harris, Joni Mitchell, Gipsy Kings, KD Lang, Randy Newman, Wilco, Brian Wilson, Stephen Sondheim, Kronos Quartet, Youssou N'Dour, Buena Vista Social Club, Laurie Anderson and more.
Styles/Specialties: jazz, classical, Americana, singer-songwriter, contemporary, world, pop
*No unsolicited material

OGLIO ENTERTAINMENT
3540 W. Sahara Ave., #308
Las Vegas, NV 89102
702-800-5500
Web: oglio.com
Contact: Carl Caprioglio, Mark Copeland

Roster: the Leftovers, Foreign Globester, Margo Guryan, BigBang, Beatallica, George Lopez, Jackie "Joke Man" Martling, comedy, reissues, novelty, soundtracks, Brian Wilson (Beach Boys), Robbie Krieger (the Doors), Ray Manzarek (the Doors), Wisely, Phunk Junkeez, Bouquet of Veal and Ogden Eds!
Carl Caprioglio, President

OH BOY RECORDS
P.O. Box 150222
Nashville, TN 37215
615-742-1250
Email: info@ohboy.com
Web: ohboy.com
Styles/Specialties: country
*No unsolicited materials

OMNIVORE RECORDINGS
4470 W. Sunset Blvd., Suite 209
Los Angeles, CA 90027
877-733-3931 Ext. 333
Email: cary@conqueroo.com
Web: omnivorerecordings.com
*Not accepting demos

ORCHARD
23 E. 4th St., 3rd Fl.
New York, NY 10003
212-201-9280
Email: communications@theorchard.com
Web: theorchard.com
Brad Navin, CEO

PAPER GARDEN RECORDS
170 Tillary St., Apt. 608
Brooklyn, NY 11201
Contact: Caleb Olson, Dir. of A&R
Email: caleb@papergardenrecords.com
Web: papergardenrecords.com
Roster: Laura & Greg, Dennis Love, The Due Diligence, Hnry Flwr, Big Brutus

PEAK
30765 Pacific Coast Hwy., Ste. 134
Malibu, CA 90265
805-370-0609
Email: peakrecordsusa@gmail.com
Web: peak-records.com
*No unsolicited material
Styles/Specialties: smooth jazz, urban AC, and Pop Artists
Andi Howard, President

POSI-TONE
P.O. Box 2848
Los Angeles, CA 90294
310-871-2652
Email: info@posi-tone.com
Web: posi-tone.com
Styles/Specialties: jazz
Roster: Michael Dease, Doug Webb, Behn Gillette, Brian Charette, Walt Weiskopf, Ed Cherry, David Gibson, Ken Fowser, Art Hirahara, Ralph Bowen
Marc Free, A&R

PPL - ZMI ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, INC
310-962-3873
Email: pplzmi@aol.com
*No unsolicited material accepted

PRA RECORDS
1255 Fifth Ave., Ste. 7K
New York, NY 10029
212-860-3233
Email: pra@prarecords.com
Web: prarecords.com
Styles/Specialties: jazz
Distribution: E-1
Patrick Rains, A&R

PRAVDA RECORDS
4245 N Knox, Suite 7
Chicago, IL 60641
773-763-7509
Email: kenn@pravdamusic.com
Web: pravdamusic.com
Styles/Specialties: rockabilly, pop, blues
Distribution: ADA

PRIMARILY A CAPPELLA
P.O. Box D
San Anselmo, CA 94979
415-419-5509
Email: harmony@singers.com
Web: singers.com
Styles/Specialties: a cappella
*Unsolicited material accepted

PUTUMAYO WORLD MUSIC
Attn: A&R
413 Carpenter Rd.
Charlotte, VT 05445
212-625-1400 800-995-9588
Email: info@putumayo.com
Web: putumayo.com
*Accepts unsolicited materials.

RAMP RECORDS
Santa Barbara, CA
Email: info@ramprecords.com

Web: ramprecords.com
Styles/Specialties: eclectic
Roster: Michael McDonald, Jeff Bridges
 *No unsolicited material

RCA RECORDS
 6363 Sunset Blvd
 Los Angeles, CA 90028
Web: rcarecords.com
 *No unsolicited material

Additional locations:

25 Madison Ave.
 New York, NY 10010
Web: rcarecords.com
 *No unsolicited material

9 Derry St. 4th Floor
 London, W8 5HY England
Web: sonymusic.co.uk

RED BULL RECORDS
 9044 Melrose Ave.
 Hollywood, CA 90069
 323-606-7680
Email: customercare@redbullrecords.com
Web: redbullrecords.com
 *Demo submission accepted

Additional location:

1750 Stewart Street
 Santa Monica, CA 90404
 310-393-4647

RED HOUSE RECORDS
 916 19th Avenue South
 Nashville, TN 37212
 800-757-2277, 615-320-7672
Web: redhouserecords.com

RELAPSE RECORDS
 8701 W Chester Pike
 Upper Darby, PA 19082
 610-734-1000
Email: brian@relapse.com
Web: relapse.com
Styles/Specialties: metal, rock
 Rennie Jaffe, VP, A&R

REPUBLIC RECORDS
 1755 Broadway, 8th Fl.
 New York, NY 10019-3743
 212-333-8000
Email: robert.stevenson@umusic.com
Web: republicrecords.com
 Rob Stevenson, Exec. VP / Head of A&R

Additional location:

2220 Colorado Ave. 3rd Fl
 Santa Monica, CA 90404-3506
 310-865-8470
Email: ben.adelson@umusic.com
Web: republicrecords.com
 Ben Adelson, SVP, A&R

REVELATION RECORDS
 P.O. Box 5232
 Huntington Beach, CA 92615
 714-842-7584
Email: webmaster@revhq.com
Web: revhq.com
Styles/Specialties: hardcore, punk, emo
 *Unsolicited material accepted

RHYMESAYERS ENTERTAINMENT
 2411 Hennepin Ave., S
 Minneapolis, MN 55405
 612-977-9870
Email: info@rhymesayers.com
Web: rhymesayers.com
 facebook.com/Rhymesayers
Styles/Specialties: hip-hop/rap
 Brent Sayers, CEO

RISE RECORDS
 15455 N.W. Greenbrier Pkwy, Ste. 115
 Beaverton, OR 97006
Web: riserecords.com
 *Accept unsolicited material

ROADRUNNER RECORDS
 Warner Bros. Group
 1633 Broadway
 New York, NY 10019
Email: publicity@roadrunnerrecords.com
Web: elektramusicgroup.com/roadrunnerrecords

ROCKZION RECORDS
 673 Valley Dr.
 Hermosa Beach, CA 90254
 310-379-6477 Fax 310-379-6477
Email: rockzionrecords@rockzion.com
Web: rockzion.com
Styles/Specialties: Christian and crossover rock

ROIR (say ROAR!)
 (Reachout International Records)
 540 President St.
 Brooklyn, NY 11215

718-477-ROIR (7647)
Email: accounts@roir-usa.com
Web: roir-usa.com
Styles/Specialties: punk, reggae, rock
 *Unsolicited material accepted

ROUNDER RECORDS
 Nashville, TN
 629-401-3901
Email: info@rounder.com
Web: rounder.com
 *No unsolicited material
Styles/Specialties: roots music

ROUND HILL MUSIC
 650 Fifth Ave., Suite 1420
 New York, NY 10019
 212-380-0080
Email: info@roundhillmusic.com
Web: roundhillmusic.com
 Jonnie Davis, SVP, A&R

Additional locations:

Los Angeles, CA
 1411 5th St., Suite 305
 Santa Monica, CA 90401
 310-451-4100

1802 Grand Ave.
 Nashville, TN 37212
 615-292-5100
 Josh Saxe, Associate Director, A&R

ROYNET, THE ROYALTY NETWORK, INC.
 224 W. 30th St., Ste. 1007
 New York, NY 10001-1077
 212-967-4300
Email: drew@roynet.com
Web: krianmusicgroup.com
 Drew Witte, A&R

Additional location:

12711 Ventura Blvd. #217
 Studio City, CA 91604
Email: ian@roynet.com
 818-762-0775
 Ian Fletcher, A&R

SADDLE CREEK RECORDS
 P.O. Box 8554
 Omaha, NE 68108
 402-558-8208
Email: info@saddle-creek.com
Web: saddle-creek.com
Styles/Specialties: rock, electronica, country rock
 *Accepts unsolicited material
 Amber Carew, A&R

SHANGRI-LA PROJECTS
 P.O. Box 40106
 Memphis, TN 38174
 901-359-3102
Email: sherman@shangrilaprojects.com
Web: shangrilaprojects.com
Styles/Specialties: alternative rock
 Sherman Willmott, A&R

SIX DEGREES RECORDS
 P.O. Box 411347
 San Francisco, CA 94141
 415-626-6334
Email: publicity@sixdegreesrecords.com
Web: sixdegreesrecords.com
Styles/Specialties: world music, ambient, folk, contemporary classical and intelligent pop music
 *No unsolicited material

SKAGGS FAMILY RECORDS
 P.O. Box 2478
 Hendersonville, TN 37077
 615-264-8877 Fax 615-264-8899
Email: bobby@skaggsfamilyrecords.com
Web: skaggsfamilyrecords.com
Contact: Ricky Skaggs, Charlotte Scott

SO MUCHH NOISE URBAN (SMN)
Atlantic Records
 212-707-2000
Email: Somuchhnoise@gmail.com
Genre Styles: Rap/Hip-Hop/ R&B/ R&B
Submissions: Accepts Demos and Unsolicited for Urban genres only
 Sarah Hall, President of A&R

SO MUCHH NOISE Recordings (SMN)
Atlantic Records
Email: Somuchhnoise@gmail.com
 323-577-7677
Genre Styles: Rap/Hip-Hop/Pop/Country/R&B/
 Dancehall/Kids Bop/Gospel and ALL
Submissions: Accepts all Demos and Unsolicited for ALL genres
 Chris Jones, Vice President of A&R

SONIC PAST MUSIC, LLC
 11271 Ventura Blvd. #205
 Studio City, CA 91604
 818-203-9999
Email: joeystec@gmail.com
Web: sonicpastmusic.com

Styles/Specialties: specializes in unreleased material by famous artists and cult-based musicians of the 60s to the '90s
 Joey Stec, President

SONIC SAFARI MUSIC / JONKEY ENTERPRISES
 663 W. California Ave.
 Glendale, CA 91203
 818-242-4034
Email: chuck@sonicsafarimusic.com
Web: sonicsafarimusic.com
Styles/Specialties: environmental, world, traditional, ethnic
Distribution: Indies
 Chuck Jonkey, A&R

SST
 P. O. Box 1
 Taylor, TX 76754
 206-309-5331
Web: sstsuperstore.com
Styles/Specialties: rock, jazz, punk progressive rock
 *Unsolicited material accepted

STEF ANGEL MUSIC GROUP
 310-388-5880
Email: info@stefangelmusic.com
Web: stefangelmusic.com
Contact: Stefaniah McGowan, Exec. Music Producer & A&R
 Accepts unsolicited material
Email to: musicsubmission@stefangelmusic.com

STONES THROW RECORDS, LLC
 2658 Griffith Park Blvd., #504
 Los Angeles, CA 90039
Email: losangeles@stonestrow.com, demos@stonestrow.com
Web: stonestrow.com
 *Accepts unsolicited material

SUB POP RECORDS
 2013 4th Ave., 3rd Fl.
 Seattle, WA, 98121
 206-441-8441
Email: info@subpop.com
Web: subpop.com
 *Accepts unsolicited materials
 Tony Kiewel, Head, A&R

SUMERIAN RECORDS
 3330 Cahuenga Blvd. W.
 #500
 Los Angeles, CA 90068
 424-832-7275
Email: info@sumerianrecords.com
Web: sumerianrecords.com
 Ash Avildsen, President

SURFDOG RECORDS
 1126 S. Coast Hwy. 101
 Encinitas, CA 92024
 760-944-8000 Fax 760-944-7808
Email: demo@surfdog.com
Web: surfdog.com
Styles/Specialties: rock
Roster: Brian Setzer, Stray Cats, Richard Cheese, Gary Hoey, Rusty Anderson, Slightly Stoopid, Dan Hicks, Butthole Surfers, Gibby Haynes, Dylan Donkin, Dave Stewart, the Wylde Bunch, Burning of Rome
 *Unsolicited material accepted
 Scott Seine, A&R

TANGENT RECORDS
 P.O. Box 383
 Reynoldsburg, OH 43068-0383
 614-751-1962 Fax 614-751-6414
Email: info@tangentrecords.com
Web: tangentrecords.com
Styles/Specialties: contemporary instrumental, rock instrumental, electronic, jazz-rock, world beat
Distribution: self-distributed
 *Unsolicited material accepted
 Andrew J. Batchelor, President

THIRD MAN RECORDS
 623 7th Ave. S.
 Nashville, TN 37203-4601
 615-891-4393
Email: Nashvillestore@thirdmanrecords.com
Web: thirdmanrecords.com
Styles/Specialties: Various genres, specialize in vinyl records pressing
Roster: Jack White, the Dead Weather, Olivia Jean, the Raconteurs, the White Stripes, Wanda Jackson, Wolf Eyes, Karen Elson
 Jack White, Founder
 Ben Swanck, Co-Founder

THUMP RECORDS
 P.O. Box 9605
 Brea, CA 92822
 909-595-2144
Email: customersupport@thumprecords.com
Web: thumprecords.com
Styles/Specialties: Latin rap, old skool, rap, R&B, Latin, oldies, disco
 *Unsolicited material accepted

TOOTH & NAIL
 P.O. Box 12698
 Seattle, WA 98111-4698
Web: toothandnail.com

TRIPLE CROWN RECORDS
 P. O. Box 222132
 Great Neck, NY 11022
Email: info@triplecrownrecords.com
Web: triplecrownrecords.com
 Fred Feldman, President

UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP
 2220 Colorado Ave., 3rd Fl.
 Santa Monica, CA 90404
 310-865-4500
Web: universalmusic.com

URBAN & LAZAR
Email: help@urbandlazar.com
Web: urbandlazar.com
Styles/Specialties: indie rock, alternative, singer-songwriter
 *We do not accept unsolicited material

VANGUARD RECORDS (Concord)
 5750 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 450
 Los Angeles, CA 90036
 310-385-4455
Email: info@vanguardrecords.com
Web: vanguardrecords.com
Styles/Specialties: jazz, folk music
 *No unsolicited material

VERVE MUSIC GROUP (UMG)
 Santa Monica, CA
Email: contact@vervemusicgroup.com
Web: vervemusicgroup.com, universalmusic.com
Styles/Specialties: jazz, adult contemporary, classical
 *No unsolicited material

VICTORY RECORDS
 346 N. Justine St., 5th Fl.
 Chicago, IL 60607
 312-666-8661
Email: contact@anotherictory.com
Web: victoryrecords.com
Styles/Specialties: rock, punk, metal
 Tony Brummel, Founder
 *Accepts unsolicited demos

VRIRGIN RECORDS
 (see Capitol Music Group)

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Web: wickedcoolrecords.com
Styles/Specialties: garage rock

WILD RECORDS
Web: wildrecordsusa.com
Styles: rockabilly, blues, surf, garage and soul.
 Reb Kennedy, President, Founder

For hundreds more contacts from current directories (producers, engineers, managers, agents, vocal coaches, major and independent record labels, publicity firms, publicists, college and indie radio, recording studios, rehearsal studios, mastering studios, publishers, film/TV and more), visit our website: musicconnection.com/industry-contacts.

Never sign anything until you have a qualified legal pro look over it first. Expert legal advice is essential to any successful career, and this exclusive MC list—updated for 2022—will help you connect with an attorney who can advocate for you.

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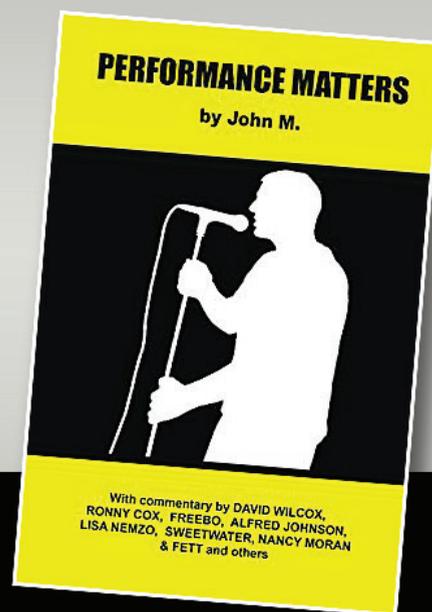
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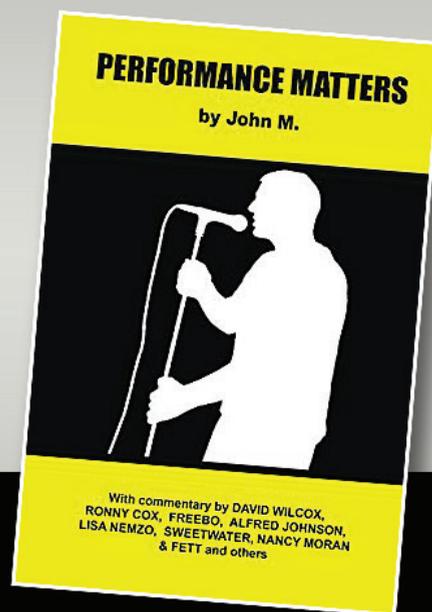
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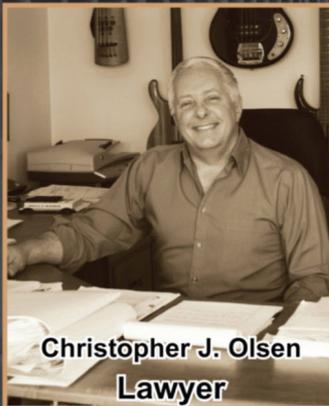


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The Black Notes

A Beginners Guide to Musical Flight

Based on the book *Amplified: Unleash Your Potential Through the Power of Music*

A dear friend of mine is the father to a brilliantly gifted boy named Daniel. Daniel was studying oboe and piano. During one visit to their home, when Daniel was 12 years old, his mother asked him to play piano for me. She thought I might be able to help Daniel develop more discipline with his musical studies by helping him better appreciate the importance of practicing. Daniel had a good ear, so he didn't have to practice much to learn new pieces. He also had an extremely active and intelligent mind and, like most 12-year-olds, was a bit impatient.

I took a seat at their beautiful Steinway grand piano and looked at the open piece of music he had been practicing. I asked him if he would play for me. Daniel sat down next to me on the piano bench, with his mother watching from the couch, and started playing the piece from his latest lesson. He rushed through the difficult passages, getting frustrated with himself and stopping when he made a mistake. He then quickly picked back up where he left off and rushed through to the end. It was almost as if Daniel was playing notes to score points in a video game. His brain was highly engaged and his fingers were following suit, but his body and breath were completely disconnected.

Daniel didn't need my help to become more disciplined or to learn better performance techniques. He already had a classically trained, qualified piano teacher for that. What Daniel needed was a way to experience his relationship with the piano differently—to step back from his drive to score points with me, his teacher, and his mother. My challenge was to help him let go of his self-judgment and experience playing his instrument like he experienced listening to his favorite piece of music: in a way that filled him with joy and resonated within every cell in his body.

A New Kind of Music Lesson

I asked Daniel if he would try something new for me. He agreed. Still seated next to him on the piano bench, I instructed Daniel to close his eyes, sit up tall, and start breathing deep and long into his diaphragm. Once he was relaxed and more in touch with his breath and body, I asked Daniel to place his hands on the piano, but without depressing any keys.

Next, I asked Daniel to play one note or interval at a time, restricting him to only playing the black notes. Meanwhile, I controlled the piano's sustain pedal with my foot. Because the black notes are arranged in a pentatonic scale with no dissonant intervals, this meant that Daniel couldn't play a wrong note. More importantly, it meant he didn't have to think and could continue to stay mindful of his body and breathing. Once out of his thinking mind,



Daniel could relax and let the sound from the piano wash over him, fill him up like his breath, and draw him more deeply into the resonant field of music moving through him.

Daniel's mom looked on while for the next several minutes Daniel's fingers glided across the black keys and he surrendered to the beautiful, almost unpredictable, melodies and harmonies emanating from the piano. It was as if the piano were playing Daniel. The look on his face was a mixture of awe and bliss.

When he finally took pause and opened his eyes, ten full minutes had passed. Daniel's mom, looking on from the couch with amazement, asked him, "What did that feel like?"

A glossy-eyed Daniel replied, "I was flying! It's like I was flying. I never felt like that before."

What Daniel experienced is something anyone can tap into while playing music—but only when they are not trapped by expectations set by themselves and others, by the dissonant vibrations that can come from mismatched notes, or by the technical challenges of becoming competent with a musical instrument. This is a feeling we can all discover once we get out of our own heads. This is a place beyond performance—an experience of the love

music has for us. And for you.

When you let the sound of an instrument become one with your breath and allow it to resonate through your body, you can awaken the genie within you. You can unleash one of your most powerful human attributes: your imagination. And yes, you can even learn to fly.

Letting Music Play You

I have used this exercise on many occasions:

to show nonmusicians how to play, and enjoy playing, the piano in just ten minutes; to help highly trained musicians shift out of their highly critical performance mode so they can more deeply connect to the essence of music within them; and to help clients take a reprise from their busy days, open up their creativity, or learn to meditate using the piano.

I want everyone to be able to experience the love music has for them, and that means you. This is a state that often takes a masterful musician years to learn: to move beyond performance and let the music play you. Think of it as a meditation or mindfulness exercise, but through music. Rather than being the performer, you become a receiver of healing sounds played by the piano.

A Beginner's Guide to Musical Flight

Whether you are a musical pro or have never placed your hands on the piano before, the *Black Notes* is a great way to introduce you to the piano for the first time or reintroduce yourself to it with a different experience.

You can get a copy of the exercise, learn why the black notes affect your brain so profoundly, and discover other time-tested and scientifically validated gems to unleash your potential through the power of music in my latest best-selling book at AmplifiedBook.com. Or you can download a copy of the *Black Notes* exercise for free at amplifiedmedia.co/bonus.

Go ahead, try it. Take a leap of faith and see if you, like Daniel, can feel what it's like to fly on the wings of music. •

FRANK FITZPATRICK is a Grammy-nominated multi-platinum writer-producer, music & health expert, founder of Amplified Ventures & Faculty of Exponential Medicine at Singularity University. He's also the best-selling author of the new book, *Amplified: Unleash Your Potential Through the Power of Music*. @FrankFitzpatrick.com

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