

MUSIC CONNECTION

SPECIAL YEAR END ISSUE!

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40 Anderson .Paak

MC speaks in-depth with this dazzling multi-talent who, after years of dues-paying, is now on the cusp of full-fledged stardom. The artist talks about the development of his singing style, songwriting techniques, how he hooked up with Dr. Dre and others, and why he draws inspiration from surf culture.

By Dan Kimpel

Photos by Sarah Kjelleren

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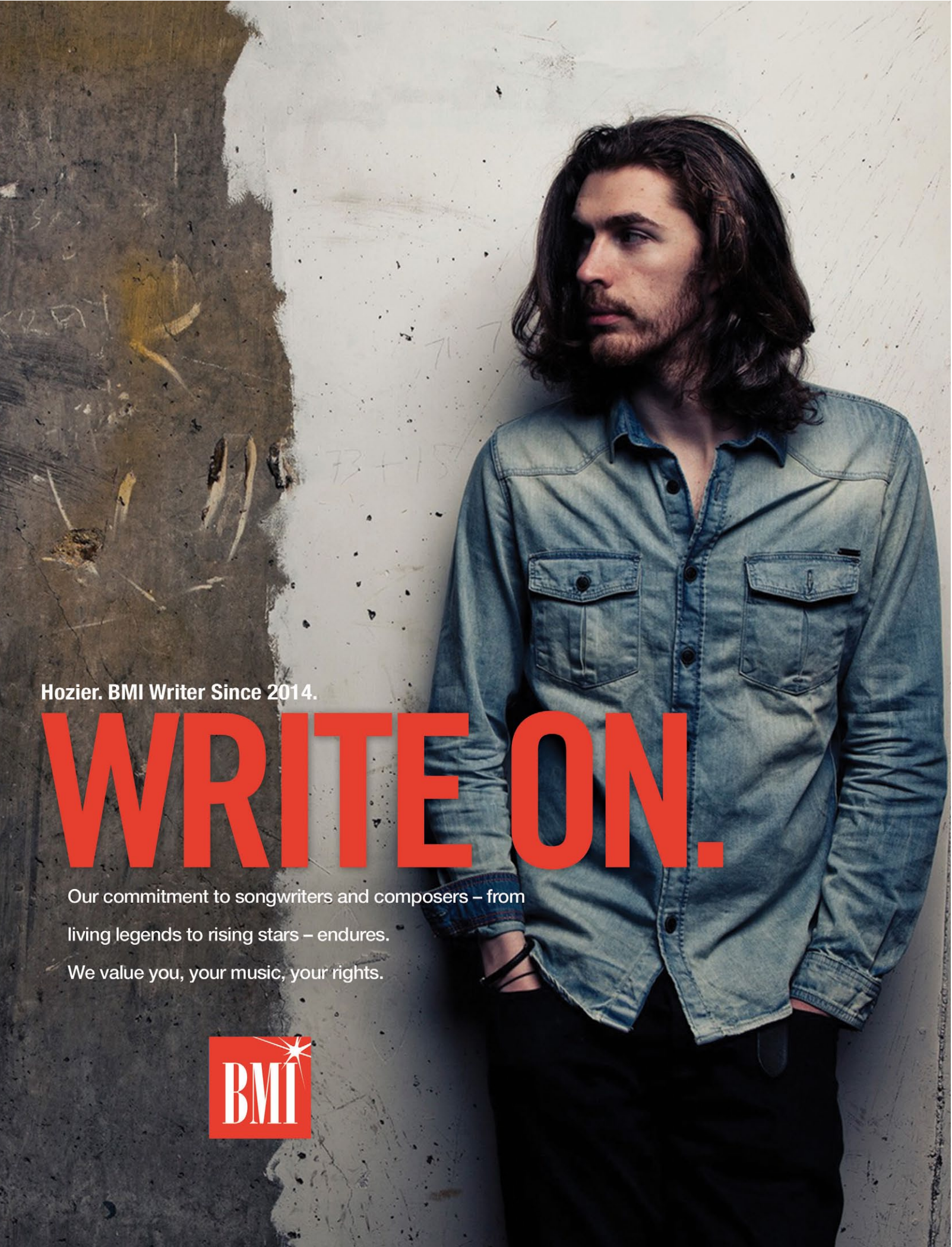
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LOS ANGELES

DR STRINGS

drstrings.com

Four Generations: New Jersey-based manufacturer DR Strings began with an idea that Al Dronge, the founder of Guild Guitars, passed along to his son Mark Dronge. In 1989, when DR started production, computer-assisted machinery and semi-automatic machinery for winding strings were becoming more and more common in string winding. The crew at DR was convinced that they could feel and hear a difference between a machine-made string and a handmade string. Prior to founding DR HandMade Strings, Mark worked at Guild, while on the other side of the family, Herman Carlsson Levin founded Levin Guitars in Sweden—which were popular in Europe (and were even played by Django Reinhardt). Mark's daughters, Annika and Camilla, recently joined the DR team. Among the musical greats who use and were known to use DR products are Stanley Clarke, Johnny Winter, Derek Trucks, Sting, Verdine White, Victor Wooten, Melissa Etheridge and the bands of Beyoncé, Lady Gaga and Bruno Mars.



Core Philosophies and Products: Mark Dronge believes that the work of DR Strings is both a science and an art form. They tout a return to American-made, old-fashioned hand craftsmanship, combined with the finest of American-made high-quality metals. They have also re-established the importance of winding on round core wire. They also make ZEBRA strings, alternating phosphor bronze and nickel-plated steel windings. DR introduced color coated strings in 2001 and brought out NEON strings in 2010, using the world's first hard guitar string coating, K3. DR believes that trained string winders develop a feel or sweet spot and constantly adjust for minute differences as wrap wire is wound around core wire.

VERITAS™: This past year, DR Strings rolled out its latest product line, VERITAS™, an innovative category of electric and acoustic guitar strings, with players noting VERITAS™ electrics with Accurate Core Technology™ (ACT™) and QUANTUM-Nickel™ wrap wire last longer and have more power than ordinary nickel plated strings. ACT™ was designed to reinforce the core wire and fill in imperfections along its length. QUANTUM-Nickel™, the dynamic wrap wire alloy, is more magnetic and therefore more responsive and powerful than ordinary NPS 8% nickel plated wire.

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Michael Kauffman

Partnership, Sales and Marketing
Music Business Association

The **Music Business Association** has appointed **Michael Kauffman** to spearhead Partnership sales and marketing for the organization and its Music Biz 2017 conference. Kauffman has worked previously at YouTube, Google, RightsFlow, Verve/Universal Music Group and with the Bertelsmann Music Group. He also serves as Co-chair of the Temple University Alumni Association's New York chapter and on Temple's School of Media and Communication's Board. For additional information on this appointment, contact Michael Kauffman directly at michael.kauffman@musicbiz.org or Laurie Jakobsen at laurie@jaybirdcom.com.



Kiel Berry

Co-Head, SVP
Viacom Labs

Kiel Berry has joined **Viacom Labs** as Co-Head and Senior Vice President. Berry will co-lead Viacom Labs with Viacom veteran Susan Claxton. Berry helped launch and maintains an advisory role at Linkin Park's Machine Shop Ventures, which has stakes in Lyft, Hyperloop One and Blue Bottle Coffee, among many others. Before that he worked at Creative Artists Agency in their Entertainment Marketing and International Business Development groups. Primarily, he began his career working overseas and stateside as an investment banker at J.P. Morgan after graduating from the University of Pennsylvania. Contact Bridget.Darcey@viacom.com.



Wendy Goldstein

Executive Vice President
Republic Records

Republic Records has promoted **Wendy Goldstein** to Executive Vice President. Goldstein most recently played an instrumental role in the success of Multiplatinum No. 1 albums from Ariana Grande and the Weeknd, as well as platinum singles from Hailee Steinfeld and DNCE, among others. Goldstein began her career as an assistant in the A&R department of Epic Records. Later, she worked in A&R at Geffen Records and was responsible for signing the Roots, Common, GZA, Mos Def and the Bloodhound Gang. She then became Head of Urban A&R at Priority Records/Capitol. For more information, contact joseph.carozza@umusic.com.



Ari Baron

General Manager
Bittree

Bittree has appointed industry veteran **Ari Baron** as General Manager. With over two decades of experience in the pro audio, broadcast and MI community, Baron will be responsible for day-to-day operations at Bittree including future planning and growth, overseeing manufacturing practices, introducing new products and developing marketing and sales strategies. Prior to his hire, Baron served as Eastman Music Company's Vice President of Marketing where he managed all Marketing, Content, Artist Relations and Creative Operations for Eastman's global network of brands. For additional information, contact paki@co5media.com.



Neil McDougall

Distribution Sales Manager
Celestion

Celestion has appointed **Neil McDougall** as Distribution Sales Manager for the U.K., Europe, Africa, Middle East, India and Asia Pacific Regions. McDougall will develop relationships and business with distributors in these regions. He brings experience from various aspects of the music, MI and pro audio industries, having worked both as a professional musician and as the owner of a music retail company. His previous experience includes sales for Yamaha in the U.K., sales and business development for Roland U.K., sales and marketing at AVSL and international sales for InMusic. For more, contact McDougall at neil.mcdougall@celestion.com.



Kerri Fox-Metoyer

VP, Music Strategy & Partnerships
APA

APA has named **Kerri Fox-Metoyer** as Vice President of Music Strategy & Partnerships. Fox-Metoyer will spearhead the agency's brand partnership initiatives and strategic campaigns for the agency's music roster. Prior to APA, she served as Vice President of Strategic Partnerships for Sony Electronics, where she helped expand the cross-corporate synergy with talent such as Joseph Gordon Levitt, will.i.am and world champion tri-athlete Lesley Paterson. Before joining Sony, she was Vice President of Sales at Sony Music Nashville, where she oversaw the company's traditional and digital business development. For more information, contact kirt@websterpr.com.



Jamie Garabedian

Director, Publicity and Communications
Red Bull Records

Red Bull Records has named **Jamie Garabedian** as the new Director of Publicity and Communications. Garabedian will be responsible for the development and implementation of communication and public relations strategies for the Red Bull Records roster worldwide. Prior to joining Red Bull Records, Garabedian served as the Director of Publicity at Vagrant Records/BMG U.S., overseeing the creation and execution of global public relations campaigns for artists such as the 1975, Mayer Hawthorne, Thrice and Janet Jackson. For additional information, contact Garabedian directly at Jamie.garabedian@redbullrecords.com.



Todd Humora

Director of Engineering
Automated Processes, Inc. (API)

Automated Processes, Inc. (API), a leader in analog recording gear with the Vision, Legacy Plus, 1608 and the BOX recording consoles, has announced **Todd Humora** as the company's new Director of Engineering. Humora has showcased his skill and work ethic over his 16-year tenure as an Audio Design Engineer at API and he will continue API's tradition of creating innovative audio products. For additional information on this appointment, contact Mary Quinn at mquinn@apiaudio.com.



▶ **AUDIO-TECHNICA ARTIST ELITE ATM230PK**

A-T's Artist Elite® ATM230PK is a specially priced bundle of three ATM230 compact instrument dynamic microphones. The ATM230 has a hypercardioid polar pattern and a proprietary capsule designed to excel in high SPL applications such as inches away from drum kit tom-toms or loud percussion instruments. Even right next to loud drums, I found them to produce a full sound with transients better represented when I compared them to my usual tom mics.

The low profile design of this all-metal microphone, along with the (included) clip-on AT8665 drum rim shock mounting system, made it easy to experiment with different positions on the toms where sometimes mic stand/boom setups just don't work or are in the way of the drummer.

With its hypercardioid polar pattern, the ATM230 zeroes in and picks up exactly where I pointed them. I also noticed, when soloing individual tom tracks, the (minimal) leakage from adjacent drums in the kit to sound more natural.

The ATM230 sells individually for \$139 MSRP and has a two-year warranty. The ATM230PK bundles three ATM230 microphones and sells for \$349 MSRP.

audio-technica.com/cms/wired_mics/0696da772808b28f/index.html



◀ **SSL SIGMA DELTA 2.0 UPDATE**

The **SSL Sigma** is Solid-State-Logic's SuperAnalogue™ mix engine system capable of summing up to 16 stereo stems from your DAW's analog I/O to either of its two, internal stereo buses. Sigma has complete analog monitoring, headphone, talkback and processing insert capabilities.

Recently SSL updated the Sigma Remote Control with Sigma delta-Control 2.0, an all-new Remote Control App with Mackie Control Universal protocol used for direct control of Sigma from other SSL MCU Controllers including their AWS and

Nucleus products. The free update to the delta-Control comes with all the tools and firmware files to update both the Sigma and Nucleus products to use MCU over TCP/IP network-based UDP control protocol instead of embedded MIDI messaging.

I've also been enjoying SSL's new delta-Ctrl DAW plug-in (\$85.75 download). It runs Native AAX/RTAS/VST/VST3 and uses the host's DAW's plug-in automation to control Channel level in full 10-bit resolution, Cut, EQ in/Out, Insert In/Out, Cue St, and FX 1, 2, 3, 4 of a Duality console, a lot of the AWS board's functionality and Sigma's 16 Channel Levels and Cuts only.

The new Sigma delta software and firmware version of the Remote Control App and MCU control will be free to existing Sigma owners. solidstatellogic.com/studio/duality/delta-control#&panel1-1, solidstatellogic.com.



▲ **PROMARK BY D'ADDARIO RICH REDMOND ACTIVEGRIP 595**

The **Rich Redmond** is one of the first signature drumsticks featuring Promark's patent-pending ActiveGrip™. The ActiveGrip 595 sticks are coated with a heat-activated grip technology that causes the sticks to get tackier and stickier as player's hands sweat and their body temperature rises.

The thin lacquer layer does not add extra weight to the stick and ActiveGrip doesn't stick to your hands, clothing or transfer to cymbals or drum rims.

Rich Redmond's ActiveGrip 595 is a 5B oval-shaped hickory stick with a standard 16-inch length and a .595-inch diameter with a 2-inch taper. The short taper and classic oval 5B wood tip gives this stick a well balance, front weighted feel for optimized power and speed.

A pair of Promark by D'Addario Rich Redmond ActiveGrip 595 sticks sells for \$19. daddario.com/pmMobileHomePage_Page?ActiveID=3928

▼ **EIOSIS E2DEESSER**

Whether hardware or software, I hate using de-essers—that is until the Eiosis e2deesser plug-in for Win/Mac computers came along. It works in 32/64-bit on AAX, VST2, VST3 and AU hosts and is super-easy to use. A good de-esser “zeroes in” on problematic “S” and other fricative sounds and instantly compresses them down—one-by-one and without collateral damage to the rest of the vocal's audio quality.

I tried e2 on a problem male lead vocal track in a Pro Tools 12 mix. I liked the simple, two main parameters: Sensitivity and Amount. With the Auto control fully CCW, Sensitivity acts like the attack time to set how fast e2 grabs the S and then Amount dials in how much de-essing you'd like. That is about it unless you'd like to shape the S sound with the Auto and Smooth sibilant controls.

Auto adjusts the frequency response of the sibilants; some singers have several different sounding S that would require more than one single-frequency de-esser. The Smooth control saturates the detected S and mellows out its harshness.

For eliminating even the most severe sibilant problems, get the Eiosis e2 deesser; it sells for \$99 downloadable and requires an iLok 2 dongle to run.

eiosis.com/e2deesser





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▼ **ETYMOTIC RESEARCH UPDATED ER4XR AND ER4SR IN-EAR EARPHONES**

Etymotic Research added new features to their classic ER-4® insert earphone and also now offers the ER4SR™ Studio Reference and ER4XR™ Extended Response models.

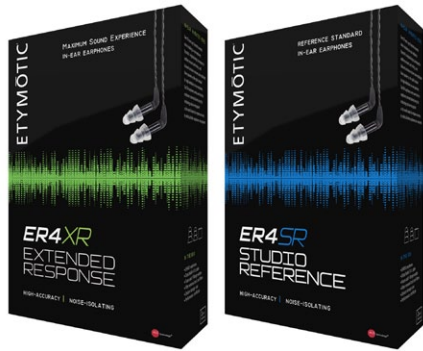
The new ER4SR Studio Reference and ER4XR models build on the Etymotic ER-4's 30 to 40dB of noise isolation and feature increased sonic accuracy with the ER4XR delivering more bass. I liked the new, easily replaceable cables that detach, don't tangle and are durable.

There is a posh zipper carrying case with individual pockets inside to hold different size ear tips, cable adapter, extra replaceable filters, insertion tool, instructions and performance specs.

I gave both new models a test run here at my studio and I used the large foam ear tips. Once I had them in my ears, I was very surprised how much outside sound isolation was possible and yet how full range they sounded.

The ER4XRs had good bass and were capable of loud playbacks. The two (L and R) anodized metal bodies are not marked left or right so there was a little guessing each time I put them in—but switching them to the correct sides revealed how closely matched they are.

The ER4SR™ Studio Reference and ER4XR™ Extended Response sell for \$349 MSRP for each pair and make an excellent way to hear music from your phone or in the studio without outside disturbance.
etymotic.com



► **WAVES TUNE REAL-TIME**

The Waves Tune Real-Time plug-in automatically tunes vocals in real time with minimal latency (0-ms to 4-ms max) and that makes it useful for both the studio and live sound mixing.

Waves Tune Real-Time has user-defined parameters that customize the tuning action exactly to your preferences. Vocal tuning, from very subtle and tasteful touchups to hard-core pitch quantizing effects are possible. I especially liked the intuitive GUI in this plug-in—you'll get how to use it immediately even if you've never used a tuner before.

Tuning, especially vocal tracks post-performance, is an aesthetical musical process that can sound only as good as the tool(s) you use. Waves Tune Real-time has a good set of advanced, intuitive tools and also works with non-Western musical scales.

You can constrain pitch correction to a musical scale and key with "illegal" notes—not in the scale or key—indicated so you can edit to include more or less of them.

What I have come to find after using Waves Tune Real-Time daily is that it offers a high fidelity and easy method for tuning vocals and instruments. It runs Native in AAX, AU and VST hosts and runs in any live mixing console. Wave Tune Real-Time sells for \$199.

waves.com/plugins/waves-tune-real-time#presenting-waves-tune-real-time



◀ **DRAWMER MC3.1 MONITOR CONTROLLER**

Drawmer's MC3.1 Monitor Controller updates their MC2.1 with an AES/SPDIF (24-bit/192kHz) digital input, a subwoofer output, assignable cue system, plus an upgraded talkback system with an external mic XLR input and footswitch jack.

I like the new Mix Check or Band Solo feature where you can monitor solo (non-destructively) the low, mid-range and high frequencies' contribution to your mix. I especially thought the ability to set a calibrated monitoring level—say 85dB SPL—was great. Calibrated and realistic monitoring levels are super important.

Besides the digital input, other source inputs include: two stereo XLR analog line inputs, and both L/R RCA jacks plus a 1/8-inch stereo jack with a separate volume control. Both the Main mix and Cue mixes can be derived from any choice of these five inputs at the same time. This means the artist could have a completely different mix than the engineer and producer.

There are three separate balanced loudspeaker outputs selectable in any combination all with separate trim controls for precise level matching.

I think Drawmer MC3.1 is a winner here with the right combination of controls, features and Mix Check for \$999 MSRP. More info on TransAudio Group at transaudiogroup.com.

drawmer.com/products/monitor_controller/mc31_monitor_controller.php

▼ **ONBOARD RESEARCH GOTUNE MODEL GT3 WIRELESS TUNER**

The latest innovation from OnBoard Research Corporation is the GoTune GT3 Wireless tuner—it's the first of its kind for tuning guitars using a smart phone or tablet. Using Bluetooth technology, the GT3 sends its tuning data wirelessly to your smart device running any Bluetooth-enable tuner app. Currently there are three iOS tuner apps: Tonal Energy and free versions of Elegantune and insTuner.

Like the previously reviewed OnBoard Research PT10C Mini, PT10s and PT40C tuners, the GT3 features a clip-on sensor that detects pitch from the instrument's vibrating body—there is no microphone to pick up other sounds, noises and cause erroneous tuner operation.

The all-black, low profile GT3 has a single on/off switch with a multi-colored LED status indicator for pairing and checking the state of its battery. Like PT40C model, the GT3 is recharged using an included mini-USB cable.

I found the GT3 to worked like a directly "wired" tuner app on my iPhone 6. Once initially paired with my phone, I could leave the GT3 clipped to my guitar and turned on for the entire day and night on a single charge. I would only open the app on my phone when I needed to tune as the GT3 was always putting out the tuning signal ready to be read on the phone.

The GT3 sells for \$59.95 and comes with instructions.
onboardresearch.com



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 and loves teaching audio engineering at Musician's Institute, Hollywood, CA. He is a lifetime Grammy-voting member of NARAS and a contributing editor for *Mix Magazine*. barryrudolph.com



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STOCKING STUFFERS | 2016

BY BARRY RUDOLPH

Merry Christmas, everyone!
Here are a few thoughtful stocking stuffers I know I would like to get come Christmas morning.

TUDIA COUS

TUDIA Cous will control all your lights, household appliances and power strips without using expensive remote control devices or a smartphone app and hardware. TUDIA Cous turns on/off lights and appliances, wirelessly by communicating to its outlet plugs from as far as 100 feet through closed doors, floors and walls. This is great for controlling hard to reach lights and appliances and essential for seniors and/or the mobility impaired. Cous comes with five outlet plugs and two remote pocket



remote controls with additional outlet plugs and remotes available. Each outlet plug module will control appliances and/or lights that use up to 1,200-watts (10-amps). It sells for \$34.75. tudiaproducts.com/Cous

EVANS '56 CALFTONE DRUM HEADS

Evans has a new assortment of drumheads that look like a calfskin, sound like a calfskin head and feel like calfskin but are not. Manufactured in New York from advanced synthetic materials



and fitted with D'Addario's Level 360 Technology™, they will serve up a warm, familiar sound and you'll love their quality and consistency. They are available in bass drum sizes: 16, 18, 20, 22, 24 and 26-inches and also various tom-tom sizes. Bass drums start at \$38.50 MSRP. evansdrumheads.com

BASS FITNESS APP

Based on the best-selling book *Bass Fitness* by Josquin Des Pres and published by Hal Leonard, Bass Fitness Ultimate Woodshedding The App for 4-string, 5-string and 6-string bass is now downloadable at iTunes for \$9.99. Bass



Fitness remains the gold standard of bass warm-up exercises that are designed to help increase your speed, improve your dexterity and develop accuracy and promote finger independence. Exercises can be display in bass guitar tablature notation and bass clef standard music notation. The table of contents allows ease of movement in the book and has the ability to keep track of the particular exercises you have completed.

itunes.apple.com/us/app/bass-fitness-ultimate-woodshedding/id1164608104?mt=8

NEWERTECH POWER2U DUAL USB WALL OUTLET

Another good little gift for that handy person around the house to install is the NewerTech



Power2U Dual USB wall outlet. I installed it as a direct replacement for any standard 15-amp wall socket at my house and it features two USB charge sockets built right in. If you leave USB wall chargers plugged in all the time, it is costing you money over the long term—not to mention taking up one or both of the AC sockets. The Power2U eliminates standby power drain by only using energy when your device(s) are plugged in. It supplies up to 2.5-amps of current for fast charging and I love that I can just plug in and charge both my phone and tablet at the same time. Plus there is no more hunting around for power supply(s) either. It sells for \$22.95 and I love it! newertech.com/products/power2u.php

WAVES AUDIO NX VIRTUAL MIX ROOM

Waves Nx Virtual Mix Room is a plug-in that puts you in the sweet spot everywhere you might move around. Waves Nx lets you hear, on any pair of headphones, the same natural depth, natural reflections and panoramic stereo image you would be hearing from speakers in an actual room. It turns headphones into a more reliable mixing and monitoring tool by letting you hear everything with real-world dimen-



sion. Music producers and singers are starting to use this technology in the studio with great results. It sells for \$49.95. waves.com/plugins/nx

RADIAL ENGINEERING REGENCY

The Regency has two sections and both can be used together or individually. The first is a high output low distortion overdrive useful to add extra saturation to the amp without “muddying” the tone. When in play, the pre-drive adds natural sustain and harmonics. The second section is a 100% discrete Class-A boost that delivers up to +18dB of gain. A built-in effects loop automatically activates when the boost is engaged. This is for solos or standouts



where a preset sound is instantly accessible. Regency is super compact and is powered by a standard 9-volt power supply and easily fits within any pedal board. It sells for \$169.99. tonebone.com/regency.php

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2017!

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mesaboogie.com

BY SIRI SVAY

GIFTS



CASIO CGP-700 COMPACT GRAND PIANO

Casio's CGP-700 Compact Grand Piano delivers an authentic sound and feel, a 6-speaker sound system and boasts a high-resolution Color Touch Interface™, a premium icon-based 5.3" touch display. This easy-to-use interface makes exploring the CGP-700 both simple and fun. Featuring hundreds of rich, vibrant Tones and Rhythms, plus powerful recording tools, the CGP-700 is at home onstage, in the studio or as a beautiful addition to any living space.

MSRP: \$799.99

casiomusicgear.com

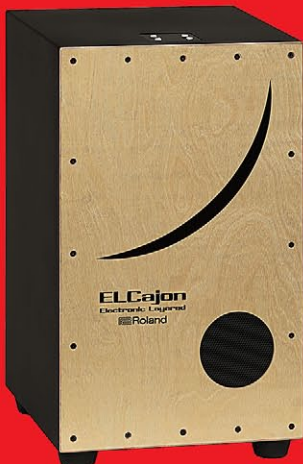
ROLAND ELCAJON EC-10 ELECTRONIC LAYERED CAJON

Professional musicians or street performers who want to add more flair to their percussion performance should take a gander at the Roland ELCajon EC-10. The EC-10 combines an authentic acoustic cajon with Roland's electronic percussion technology to allow players to enhance their music with layered electronic sounds. The integrated Roland sound module features 30 kits loaded with sounds developed to complement the EC-10's natural cajon voice. Included is everything from percussion like tambourine, djembe and shaker to acoustic snare, electronic drums and sound effects. Thanks to the EC-10's dual sensors, each kit allows users to trigger independent sounds from the head and edge of the playing surface. The integrated amp and coaxial speaker provide high-quality sound for keeping up with acoustic guitar amps and other instruments, and six AA batteries deliver up to 12 hours of power for long jams in any location.

MSRP: \$469

U.S. Street Price: \$399

RolandUS.com



TASCAM VL-S3 AND VL-S3BT

TASCAM's VL-S3 and VL-S3BT bring great-sounding compact studio monitoring to the price of a set of headphones. The 2-way powered monitors include a 3" woofer, and rear ported design packs a punch. A pair of RCA inputs accepts any line-level input, and a stereo 1/4" to RCA cable is included. Also available is a 1/8" stereo mini jack for playing from smartphones or MP3 players. The 14W per side stereo power amplifier drives the two monitors. The compact, ported cabinets fit almost anywhere. Ideal for home studios, dorm rooms or video editing suites, the VL-S3 is an affordable solution for mixes. The VL-S3BT includes a Bluetooth receiver for wireless playback for anyone to quickly audition mixes from their laptop or enjoy music from smartphones, tablets and other devices.

MSRP: \$199.99

tascam.com/product/vl-s3/overview



PLUGINZ JACK RACK

With such busy schedules, rushing from one place to another, we tend to forget things—including our keys! We always seem to place them in the places they shouldn't be. Well, fear no longer! The Pluginz "Jack Rack" is a wall mountable guitar amp key rack. They come with four guitar plug keychains and all the mounting hardware you need. Currently available are four Pluginz models, as well as four Marshall Jack Rack models, two Friedman models and one Engl model. The Jack Rack is great for musicians, music fans or anybody looking to hang their keys in an awesome way and never lose them again.

MSRP: \$39.99

thejackrack.com



IZOTOPE NEUTRON

Geared toward simplifying and enhancing the mixing process, Neutron is a new product that arms mixing professionals and enthusiasts with a better way to analyze each track, make smarter decisions and deliver customized mixes with confidence. The plug-in includes a first of its kind virtual assistant engineer in Mix Assistant. New features like Masking Meter and Control allow users to quickly reach an optimal starting point, clearly identify perceptual frequency collisions and fully wield creative control over all mix decisions. In addition to supporting detail and focus on each track, Neutron can detect and adjust the sound based on the instrument being mixed. Neutron easily identifies and fixes frequency collisions on multiple tracks for the ultimate mix.

MSRP: \$249

izotope.com

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CORT GUITARS NEWLY MODELED L900P-PD GUITAR

Cort Guitars expands their line of Luce Series acoustic guitars with the new L900P-PD. The Luce Series guitars offer a smaller body shape that is easier to hold and play, while maintaining a balanced sound with a strong low-end and surprisingly loud volume. The L900P-PD guitar features a parlor body with a 12th fret neck joint, a solid red cedar top, paldao back and sides, mahogany neck, rosewood fingerboard and a Vintage Sunburst finish to complete the overall vintage look and vibe of this model. Each guitar is equipped with the Grover tuners, a 45mm bone nut and D'Addario strings.

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cortguitars.com



CADLIVE 3000 SERIES

The CADLive 3000 series feature True Diversity operation to minimize multipath interference along with CADLock™ Automatic Tone Encoded Squelch to eliminate unauthorized transmissions in the signal path. Frequency agile design when partnered with ScanLink™ technology will precisely scan, select and link to the optimum channel allowing for an easy, flexible frequency plan. The handheld transmitter features metal construction and the D90 Super-cardioid dynamic capsule that provides a powerful, smooth and highly articulate profile. The handheld and body pack transmitters also include SoftTouch™ multi-function On-Off/Mute switches. Bodypack transmitters are equipped with CADTone™ circuitry ensuring accurate reproduction of Hi-z guitar and Lo-z mic inputs. CADLive wireless features 10, 30, 50mW transmitter power adjustment and dynamic range up to 110dB. Receivers and transmitters are equipped with a high definition LCD display and full RF, AF, Battery Life, Mic Sensitivity and RF power metering.

MSRP: \$699

cadaudio.com/CADlive.php

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The MA-301fet has a frequency response that is particularly well suited for capturing heavy, ballsy electric guitar - unique, yet wonderfully stable and predictable, making my job that much more fun."

Richard Chycki

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mojaveaudio.com



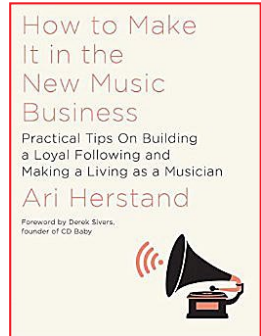
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BOOK STORE

How to Make It in the New Music Business

By Ari Herstand
(hardcover) \$29.95

This might well be the best "how to" book of its kind. As a working artist himself, Herstand knows of what he speaks. He's not on the outside looking in. He's done his homework, put it into action, and writes all about it in a way that



any music-maker can comprehend. Subtitled "Practical Tips on Building a Loyal Following and Making a Living as a Musician," the book crackles with the actual experience of being a working artist. Highly recommended.

The C. F. Martin Archives

By Jim Washburn with Dick Boak
(hardcover) \$45.00

Attractive and engrossing, the book's subtitle "A Scrapbook of Treasures from the World's Foremost Acoustic Guitar Maker" only begins to sum up the entertainment value of this item, stuffed to the gills with reproductions of vintage product booklets, posters and the like. The attention to detail and minutiae is impressive as

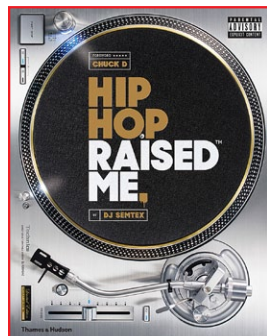


is the gamut of musicians that are referenced—from Jimmie Rodgers to Eric Clapton to Ed Sheeran. Includes online media.

Hip Hop Raised Me

By DJ Semtex
(hardcover) \$65.00

Fans will be gobsmacked by the labor of love that's been invested into this big, ultra-heavy book by U.K. hip-hop maven DJ Semtex. *Hip Hop Raised Me* traces the characteristics and influence of hip-hop from its origins in the early '70s with DJ Kool Herc's block parties in the South Bronx, to its breakthrough to the mainstream, and to the global industry that is

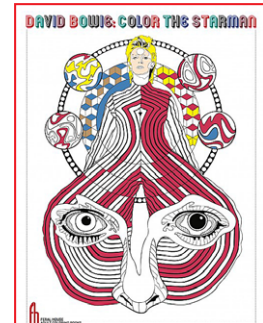


hip-hop today. Semtex's interviews include Jay Z, Kanye West, Eminem, Macklemore & Ryan Lewis, Drake, Nicki Minaj, Kendrick Lamar, Nas, the Wu-Tang Clan. It's a fun, photo-filled read.

BOWIE: Color the Starman

By Feral House
(softcover) \$15.95

This particular Feral House adult coloring book is the most anticipated of the series (which also includes a Lemmy Kilmister coloring book). Hundreds of Bowie fans have begged for inclusion in the volume due to Bowie's

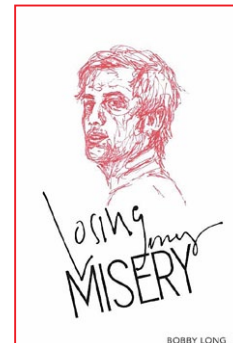


life-changing influence for them, his transformational aesthetic in gender roles, pop music and movies. Among the imaginative contributors here are Mica O'Herlihy, Mike Diana, Steve Krakow and Tony Millionaire.

Losing My Misery

By Bobby Long
(softcover) \$16.50

The New York-based London transplant known for his collections of intimate, affecting, sometimes wryly humorous songs, Long offers a book of poetry, returning to the medium that originally spurred him to become a songwriter.

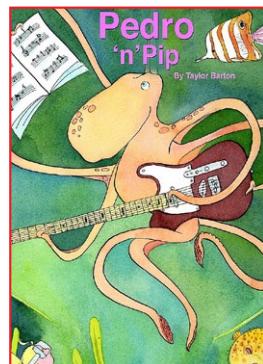


"I've had a constant thorn in my side most of my life," says Long, "and I had a moment of clarity in dealing with some obstacles—mainly anxiety and depression—and this book reflects the journey in it and through it. I addressed the problems, and I feel like I've lost my unnecessary misery."

Pedro 'n' Pip—A Rock 'n' Roll Odyssey

By Taylor Barton
(hardcover) \$24.99

Pedro 'n' Pip blends a children's picture book with a unique embedded music score (via a download card) that offers children a fun and eco-conscious story about a 10-year-old girl, Pip, and Pedro, an octopus she meets while



scuba diving in the Gulf of Mexico after the Exxon oil spill. With the help of seasoned pro's, including her husband, guitarist G.E Smith, singer/songwriter Barton shows kids how even a tiny effort can go a long way toward saving the planet.

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Commemorating the 25th Anniversary and
Re-release of Michael Jackson's 1991 "Dangerous"
on November 26, 2016.

*Here's to everyone that worked on the record and were credited,
as well as the unsung / uncredited heroes whose ideas helped lead
to the final outcome of the record.*

Visit: <https://www.reverbnation.com/markpontdangerous> to hear
Mark Pont's original demo of "Dangerous" ©1987.
Mark My Words Music (ASCAP). Mixed by Coke Johnson (Prince) and
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THE BAKERY

thebakery.la

A Rich History of "Baking the Hits": An accomplished studio violinist and veteran mastering engineer, Eric Boulanger brings a wealth of diverse experience to his facility, The Bakery, which he launched on the historic Sony Pictures lot in July 2015. The first-ever intern at Capitol Studios, he worked there with the legendary Al Schmitt, who mentored and guided Boulanger toward joining The Mastering Lab, the world's first independent mastering studio, founded by the late Grammy winning engineer Doug Sax. In 2009, when vinyl mastering returned, Boulanger designed and built The Mastering Lab's Ojai vinyl mastering room, complete with a custom high-res passive console. The experience and knowledge from his time at The Mastering Lab and with Sax lives on in The Bakery's unique, custom designed digital vinyl cutting system and overall musical approach. When Sax died in 2015, Boulanger launched his facility, whose branding line is "Baking the hits in the entertainment capital of the world." Recent projects include Green Day's *Revolution Radio*, Colbie Caillat's *The Malibu Sessions*, Rufus Wainwright's *Take All My Loves*, Hozier's "Better Love" and Selena Gomez's "Kill 'Em With Kindness."



Sonic Excellence and Inspiration: Boulanger is a believer in having artists attend mastering sessions, and says that being at the Sony Studios lends itself to creating an environment rich with inspiration. On the technical side, The Bakery's mastering signal flow features a wide array of custom electronics—from tape machines to equalizers, compressors, limiters, A/D & D/A converters, monitoring amps and console. Despite the evolution of the high resolution download, audio mastering for CD remains an integral part of production. They offer a DDP format for electronic delivery of listening reference, supplying their DDP player software for clients' convenience. They also offer secure deliver of WAV masters.

Vinyl Cutting: Affectionately named "RoboLathe," The Bakery's vinyl cutting lathe meets the sonic demands of modern music production with the vinyl format. Their Neumann VMS 70 lathe with the SX-74 cutterhead is powered by a DSP-based platform designed by Boulanger. In addition to sonics never before achieved with vinyl, this system is fully automated, ensuring nuances perfected in mastering are saved, and fully repeatable.

Contact The Bakery, 310-736-6661



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and reviews."*

— Mindi Abair



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COURTESY OF NEIL YOUNG ARCHIVES

▲ Young Walks the *Peace Trail*

Neil Young will release a brand new studio album, entitled *Peace Trail*, on Dec. 9 via Reprise Records. *Peace Trail* was recorded at Rick Rubin's Shangri-La Studios in Malibu, CA and features Young on vocals and guitar, Jim Keltner on drums and Paul Bushnell on bass. At the helm of production were Young and John Hanlon, who also mixed the album. Pictured (l-r): Bushnell, Neil and Keltner. For more information, visit neilyoung.com.



▲ Unity in the Black Keys

Patrick Carney, drummer for rock band the Black Keys, was looking to enhance his sound, and upon hearing Unity Audio's Lisson Grove AR-1 Tube Compressors in his friend Gus Seyffert's studio he purchased two compressors of his own to use across his mix-bus. Says Carney, "The compressors really shine on the bass, electric and acoustic guitar. The impedance control is particularly handy and if need be, I am able to distort my sound in a pleasing way. With these units, a little goes a long way and my mix continuously sounds amazing." For more, visit unityaudioproducts.co.uk.



▲ Beinhorn Gets Manley

Although he earned his first major credits as a keyboard player, Michael Beinhorn transitioned into producing, working with artists such as Marilyn Manson, Hole, Soundgarden, Korn and the Red Hot Chili Peppers. Recently Beinhorn utilized two Manley Reference Cardioid Tube Microphones during tracking for Dutch band Kensington's new album. He praises the microphone's dark, dense sound and its ability to capture bass guitar and the sounds from the low end of a drum kit. In addition, "everyone got goosebumps" when Beinhorn unexpectedly used the mics to record Kensington vocals. For more, visit manley.com.



BLUE & LONESOME

▲ The Stones are Blue

The Rolling Stones will release *Blue & Lonesome* on Dec. 2 through Interscope Records, their first studio album in over a decade. Recorded in three days at British Grove Studios in West London, England, *Blue & Lonesome* was produced by Don Was and the Glimmer Twins. The album takes the Stones back to their roots and passion for blues music and features long-time touring sidemen Darryl Jones (bass), Chuck Leavell (keyboards) and Matt Clifford (keyboards) and, for two of the 12 tracks, old friend Eric Clapton. Pictured (l-r): Mick Jagger and Keith Richards. For more information, visit rollingstones.com.

Producer Playback

"Believe in what you do. Stand behind your work. If your room is the way you like it and you hear the magic, have faith in your work."

— Chris Gehringer (Madonna, the Neighbourhood, twenty one pilots) Dec. 2015





BECKY SAPP/WIREIMAGE

◀ An Inspirational Partnership

The Recording Academy® Producers & Engineers Wing® has partnered with iZotope to support music makers through community outreach and programming that is educational and inspirational. Such events have taken place in 2016, spanning from Los Angeles to New Orleans, Philadelphia and Seattle. On Nov. 10, The Recording Academy Florida Chapter and the P&E Wing presented "In the Studio with iZotope: Mastering Music Production and Recording Workflow," at Miami's Hit Factory/Criteria Studios, which demonstrated the use of iZotope software like Ozone, Neutron and RX for production, mixing and mastering. Pictured (l-r): Maureen Droney, P&E Wing and Recording Technology Managing Director; and Mark Ethier, co-founder/CEO of iZotope.



LUZZY BEE

▶ Happy Birthday, Beans!

London-based independent label Xtra Mile Recordings (Frank Turner, Against Me!) and singer/songwriter Beans On Toast have announced *A Spanner In The Works*, Beans On Toast's eighth studio album. As he does each year, Beans On Toast's new album will be released on his birthday, Dec. 1. Recorded over a single weekend in East London with old friend and long-time collaborator, Scampi Dan, Beans embraced technology to create a record made on a laptop at a friend's house. For more information, visit beansontostmusic.com.



CLINT BYRNE



TRAVIS SHINN

▲ ONI Track in the Cayman Islands

Technical progressive metal band ONI will release their debut *Ironshore*, set to hit stores on Black Friday, Nov. 25, via Blacklight Media/Metal Blade Records. The upcoming release, recorded at The Mill in the Cayman Islands with producer Josh Wilbur, aims to take listeners on an absorbing ride that provides opportunity for head-banging, singing along and deep introspection. For more info, visit facebook.com/theoniband.

▲ Zwig and Bianco Get Conscious

Grammy-award winning producer David Bianco (Bob Dylan, U2, Johnny Cash) and singer/songwriter Adam Zwig are currently working on a 10-track orchestral album, featuring Zwig and the Section Quartet, which is slated for release through Conscious Records in Spring of 2017. The duo worked at Dave's Room in North Hollywood, CA. Pictured (l-r): Zwig and Bianco. For more, visit AdamZwig.com.



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The Rocky Horror Picture Show: Let's Do the Time Warp Again



Producer, songwriter and musician Cisco Adler descends from a lineage steeped in music. Multi-Grammy-winning producer Lou Adler is his father. When Adler discovered hip-hop as a child, he transitioned from consumer to contributor. He started with beats but craved more. He expanded his repertoire, became a Grammy nominee and has worked with rapper Shwayze. In 2010 he founded Bananabeat Records.

Adler begins new projects by understanding each musician's history and aims. "I write with nearly all of my artists," he says. "For an album, I try to get into the psychology of where they are, where they've been and where they need to go. It's crucial to understand their musical insecurities and musical strengths. I have to play to both. If it's an emotional artist, I want to hit that chord that makes them cry when they sing."

A producer's vocal chain can be as distinct as their fingerprint. The choices made help shape their own distinct sound. "Mine is a Tube-Tech CL1B, Neve 1073 and a Sony C-800," the producer explains. "I don't think you can beat it. I've got an API 1608 that I do drums on and with plug-ins I'm a fiend. I use SubBoomBass that I found when working at [Georgia's] Tree Sound Studios. I'm addicted to that, especially for hip-hop or [Roland TR-] 808 stuff. Every time I go into a new studio I type the word 'kick' and see all the kicks they've ever used and decide if I want them."

Perhaps his most ambitious project has been the soundtrack for *The Rocky Horror Picture Show: Let's Do the Time Warp Again*, which premiered Oct. 20 on Fox. He landed the gig in part because his father executive produced the original 1975 cult classic. "It's in the family," Adler observes. "I like to say I always knew I'd have to do this. The timing was right for the film to be made [and] for Laverne [Cox of *Orange Is the New Black*] to join the cast. When my dad asked me to produce, it wasn't a question. It was my duty."

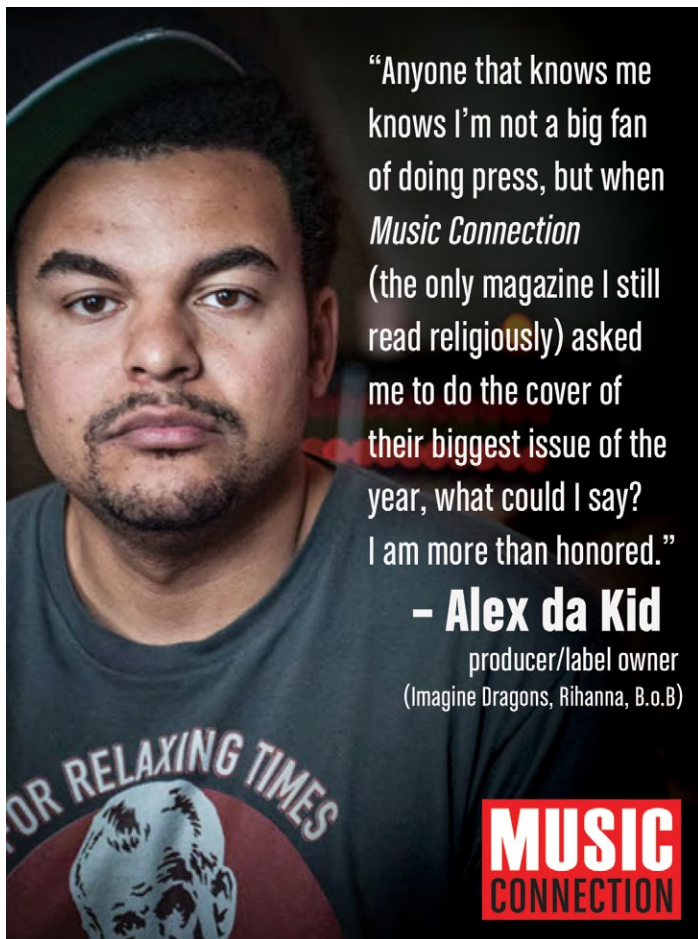
"We started cutting last November, well before casting or shooting was even finished," he continues. "I recruited several guys I use on almost all my records. People like Cody Dickinson, the drummer from North Mississippi Allstars, and Khari Mateen, who's played with the Roots. We rehearsed and cut the initial tracks live. From there, I began to carve out the sonic bed that I felt would modernize these classic songs. I didn't listen to any of the previous records. I simply relied on my intuition."

Rocky Horror represented a unique challenge and learning experience in that Adler had never produced a musical before. "There are 21 songs, which is almost two albums worth," he explains. "There are multiple singers, multiple keys. And at the same time, casting was going on. I'd find out who was singing and we'd either have to make adjustments with key or go back and completely change the arrangement. We'd hear that it would be one person, change course and then it would turn out not to be that person. I've done that kind of thing before, just not on that level."

Recently Adler released his own singles on Bananabeat Records. He also signed Canadian hip-hop artist Goody Grace, whose song "Memorie\$" dropped in early September. G-Love and Donavon Frankenreiter are recording an LP Adler is producing and he's working with Rob Stone, whose song "Chill Bill" has captured nearly 20 million YouTube views.

The three most important lessons he's learned as a producer and songwriter are:

- Be open to the ever-changing world of music. Be sure that you're ahead of the curve. We're making records that may not drop for six months.
- I want to find the truth. You can hear when an artist or a song is the truth. It goes beyond expectations.
- Does a song make girls dance? Does it make you feel something?



Contact Gina Schulman, gina@pressherepublicity.com

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Greg Parkin

Director of Digital Solutions
Iron Mountain Entertainment Services

Years with Company: Less than one
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Hollywood, CA 90038
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Email: greg.parkin@ironmountain.com
Clients: Universal Music Group, MTV,
Los Angeles Lakers

BACKGROUND

Having already experienced varying levels of achievement as a musician, producer and engineer, asset preservationist company Iron Mountain hired Greg Parkin last year. A former client, Parkin has been tasked with expansion and management of studio capabilities, as well as the broader goal of educating the public about the company's larger mission.

Ska, Engineering and Mastering

I formed a band in the '90s during the O.C. ska scene. When half my band signed to Reel Big Fish, I got into engineering.

I was going to school for that and had a friend at Capitol Records. They asked if I wanted to be a runner. So I started on the path to be an engineer, but realized my skills were not as good as the guys at Capitol.

I was good at putting together itineraries and planning. So I became Manager of the Mastering Division and became responsible for both studios' operations in Mastering. By 2007, I was Vice President of Studios, Mastering and Archives for Capitol Studios and EMI. I was there until 2012 when Universal bought EMI.

Iron Man

EMI housed their assets with Iron Mountain. When I met the team, went to the facility and saw the caliber with which they watch after these treasured assets, I became a fan. I became comfortable with them and their process.

After I left Capitol, I got into video and, oddly enough, politics. But I couldn't get away from the music. Jeff Anthony, [Iron Mountain's] Vice President, started talking about expansion plans. Currently, there are three studios—Hollywood, New York and Boyers, Pennsylvania. Iron Mountain recently acquired other entertainment storage properties, specifically Preferred Media, and that's getting brought into the fold.

Part of what I do is make sure we're meeting with each of the individual markets. For instance, the sports market is different from film, which is different from music.

Studio Advantage

Iron Mountain Entertainment Services started as a vaulting service. It was just storage, assets maintained in a temperature- and humidity-controlled, secure environment. About 10 years ago, they started adding studios. The thought was not only to retain assets but also have expertise in the building to never have that asset leave the facility. That started in Hollywood, grew out in New Jersey and then Boyers. We'll be expanding into places like Chicago and Nashville.

Video Stars

We keep adding services; right now, we're in video. One of the bigger stories is the digitization of the last 35 years of MTV. They [created] an MTV Classic channel and we're digitizing everything from *Beavis and Butthead* to *Daria* to



"Learn the old gear. Plug-ins are amazing, but there's something about the interactions that happen within a studio."

Total Request Live. These long-scope projects can take up to two years. There are new markets we're serving, like sports. We're working with The Lakers and digitizing their history of games.

Staying Up-To-Date With the Past

Some people think digital media is easier to maintain, but you need old operating systems—Pro Tools, computers, plug-ins... We constantly scour the web to update equipment and maintain an army of machines that can handle anything. You wouldn't be able to retrieve something from a floppy disc or Jaz drive, but we have to do that.

DCR

Our Digital Content Repository is a large-scale storage format that has triple-level redundancy of assets. [Assets are] stored digitally in three places and physically in one. It's more than a cloud—it's secure base, searchable digital files that will maintain zero-bit loss over 50 years.

Special Visitors

Artists do come in. One memorable example was featured on the History Channel. Jack and Ozzy Osbourne came to our underground facility, the big Iron Mountain people talk about. Within that secure, locked-down facility, we have a studio. Ozzy pulled his old master off the shelf and listened to it for the first time since he'd mixed it.

Think Ahead

Even if you're starting in your bedroom, think about [archiving]. Think about breakthrough bands that come out of obscurity. Everyone wants the original demo and the B-sides, things that didn't make the album. That stuff's valuable.

Expertise and Trust

We had panels hosted by Iron Mountain employees. Senior Vice President, Eileen Sweeney, talked about diversity in music and breaking ceilings. We had a panel on how to handle difficult media. Our Boyers studio manager, Bob Koszela, hosted a panel with

engineer Nate Kunkel; Joe Travers, who looked after the Zappa archives; Dave McEowen from Capitol, now Universal, who does restoration work; and one of our engineers, Brett Zinn, to talk about the challenges of recovering media that's gone bad.

Iron Mountain has deep expertise in these fields and handling those assets. You're not handing [your assets] over to somebody you don't know if you can trust.

A Solemn Oath

There is nothing we won't do for assets. They're treated like children. We are on guard all the time. This is not something where you hang your hat up and go home. It's guarding a castle. We take a pledge to do that and everybody chips in to make sure assets are protected.

Virtual Reality

VR will generate expansively more data than we have today. When we talk about digital assets, the multipliers are insane. We've got, within the DCR, petabytes worth of capacity, but it becomes more complex. How do you handle that media, attach metadata, capture it properly and make sure we can handle its next iteration?

Real Gear = Real Experience

You can make a record in your bedroom and that's excellent, but it also produces a lack of understanding. We struggle finding people who can align a tape machine or fix gear. Get a mentor to teach you the history of audio recording, as opposed to hitting the retro plug-in. Learn the old gear. Plug-ins are amazing, but there's something about the interactions that happen within a studio. It's better than being in your bedroom. Get out and touch a mic.

Personal / Personnel Matters

Even if you can't afford recording school, get in there and do it. Offer to be a fly on the wall in a session and make good coffee. I did that for a long time. You learn not only studio techniques but studio etiquette. You could know every technical aspect under the sun, but if you don't have a good bedside manner you aren't going to make the gig. If you're throwing the wrong vibe, an I-know-it-all vibe, you're not going to last.

Know Your Strengths and Weaknesses

Growing up on *Music Connection* and wanting to be in a band, I accomplished a lot of what I set out to do. I toured Europe and the East coast, put together major tours, was a drummer, band manager, producer, cat wrangler, whatever you want to call it. And I loved it.

When I got to Capitol, I realized there are other paths. I've been doing music my whole life and been relatively successful. That came from loving music but eventually realizing what my strong suits were and weren't. I was a decent drummer; I wasn't excellent. Same with engineering. But I found what I was good at—championing these craftsmen and putting together environments, sessions and teams that make it excellent. By no means give up on your dream, but keep your eyes open. There are options.

Save Everything

If you're creating music, save it in all forms—physically and in various iterations. You don't know what the route to success is, especially monetarily. The next generation needs to understand there is permanence to [what you record] and if you treat it right, it'll treat you right.

OPPS

Mervilton Records is currently considering artists for label representation. The record label has signed close to 70 artists since it began operations in 2012. Its current roster has over 25 artists from several different genres of music, including rock, pop, hip-hop, rap, R&B, soul, alt country and instrumental rock and pop.

Currently, Mervilton is recognized as one of the more successful indie labels around today. Located in Raleigh, NC, it also offers label services in the form of press kits, record mastering and publishing. If you would like to be considered, go to merviltonrecords.com for contact information.

James Sanger of VibeyStudios is seeking artists for development and management. He's looking for male and female artists in a variety of genres, including adult pop, indie, singer/songwriter, country and folk—no dance, rap or hip-hop.

The client list for Sanger and VibeyStudios is extensive and includes acts such as **U2, Madonna, Dido, Bryan Ferry, Annie Lennox** and more. If interested, submit links to your best tracks, along with some biographical information to vibeystudios.com.

JaxxShack, a popular music blog, wants to highlight new musicians, new sounds and the unrecognized talent of independent artists. The blog is geared toward uncovering and promoting new music. The website provides features, updates, industry news and behind-the-scenes info. It is currently accepting all genres of independent music. Simply go to jaxxshack.com for submission information. If you

submit via **MusicClout**, you might even get showcased.

KGUP FM Emerge Radio is currently seeking music in various genres: pop, rock and alternative to add to their diverse library.

KGUP was launched as a full-time independent to mainstream radio station featuring emerging music artists. Over the past two years, KGUP has grown into something more than a standard independent FM radio station. It is heard by over 800,000 listeners, who tune in for an average of 3 to 8 hours a day. If you want to be considered for airplay, visit kgup1065.com.

Needle In A Playstack is accepting submissions in all genres. It is a site that promotes music the world needs to hear, whether it's from a solo artist or a band.

They will not, however, accept anything vulgar, obscene, lewd, profane, discriminatory or violent. If interested, visit needleinaplaystack.com for submission guidelines.

Sunset in the Rearview is willing to listen to new indie-rock, electronic, pop, folk and hip-hop songs for potential reviews, features and interviews. The site was launched back in 2008 to share music, but has evolved into a collection of new music, reviews, interviews, news and more. It has new specials every week, debuting undiscovered artists.

If you would like your music spotlighted, you can contact the folks at Sunset via **SoundCloud** message by linking to their SoundCloud page at soundcloud.com/sunset-rearview. In the message, you can let them know if you would like them to consider premiering your



▲ PETER TOSH HONORED WITH MUSEUM

The Jamaican community honored the late reggae legend Peter Tosh with the opening of a new museum dedicated to his life and his impact on music. A benefit concert brought out a wide array of reggae acts including Tosh's original backing band **Word, Sound and Power**, his son **Andrew Tosh**, granddaughter **Jahzarah Tosh** and grandson **Dre Tosh**. The project came on what would have been Tosh's 72nd birthday. The museum, located in Kingston, showcases personal artifacts including tour jackets, Tosh's passports, telephone and radio, audio and video recordings, as well as his famed **M16 guitar** and beloved **unicycle**. For more, visit petertosh.com.

track. Please note, however, that if you email them a song, it will not be considered.

Wind-up Records is on the hunt for exciting new talent to add to its roster. Based in New York City, it is one of the largest independently owned music companies in the world. They're eager to hear what you have, but will only consider submissions through **MusicXray**. Notably, they promise to listen and reply to every submission.

Below Records. Joining Mayall (vocals, keyboards, harmonica and guitar) and **Greg Rzab** (bass), **Jay Davenport** (drums) and **Rocky Athas** (guitar) as special guest is legendary guitarist **Joe Walsh**, who plays on two tracks, "**The Devil Must Be Laughing**" and "**Cards on the Table**," both John Mayall compositions. The songs showcase Walsh's guitar work and are destined to be two of the many highlights on this new disc. *Talk about That* will be available for pre-orders at both **Amazon.com** and **iTunes** starting Dec. 9. For more information, visit johnmayall.com and fortybelowrecords.com.

LABELS • RELEASES SIGNINGS

deadmau5 has announced the release of a new album W:/2016ALBUM/, set to drop on Dec. 2 via mau5trap. A leading figure in electronic music, deadmau5 has seen international chart success with such memorable tracks as the recently platinum-certified "**Ghosts 'n' Stuff**," "**Faxing Berlin**," "**Sofi Needs a Ladder**," "**I Remember**" and "**The Veldt**." He has also received six **Grammy** nominations and has won multiple **Juno Awards**. For more information, visit deadmau5.com.

Atlanta-based heavy rock icons Mastodon are nearing completion of their next studio album, which follows their universally-praised 2014 album, Once More 'Round The Sun. The band has chosen to record with famed producer **Brendan O'Brien**, who first worked with them on their 2009 ground-breaking concept album, **Crack The Skye**. They warn that fans should expect great tricks and treats from Mastodon in 2017. Until then, you can keep an eye on mastodonrocks.com for details.

Iconic musician and Blues Hall of Fame member John Mayall will release his latest CD, Talk about That, on Jan. 27 from Forty

Neil Young will release a brand-new studio album, entitled Peace Trail, on Dec. 9, via Reprise



▲ METALLICA FEED THE CHILDREN

25,000 ecstatic fans at the Metallica concert in Bogota, Colombia not only got to listen to the legendary metal band while the group visited the country and promoted their new album *Hardwired...To Self-Destruct*, but also got the band members to support a drive to collect non-perishable foods for the Wayuu, an indigenous community in the northern region of Colombia. Nine tons (almost 9,000 kilos) of food were collected for the Wayuu children, who suffer from malnutrition, as well as food for abandoned animals. The food was donated to the Challenger Foundation, a group that for years has been focused on childhood nutrition. For the latest news, go to metallica.com.

Records. The record features all new songs that Young wrote since the release of his album *Earth*, this past June. This new album is primarily acoustic and reflects an intimate, sparse approach to each of the ten songs. The album was recorded at **Rick Rubin's Shangri-la Studios** and features Young on vocals and guitar, **Jim Keltner** on drums, and **Paul Bushnell** on bass. It was produced by Young and **John Hanlon**. For more news on this legendary rocker, go to neilyoung.com.

A Tribe Called Quest (Q-Tip, Phife Dawg—who passed away in March—Ali Shaheed Muhammad and Jarobi White), the groundbreaking '90s group that transformed the urban music landscape, recently detonated new shock waves on their first new studio album in 18 years. The album, *We Got It From Here... Thank You 4 Your Service* was released last month on **Epic Records**.

It's the first new music from the group since they disbanded in 1998. Consistently ranked at the top tier of rap's all-time most important groups, they have regrouped at various times over the past decade for live performances, including summer festivals and concert dates, and **Kanye West's Yeezus Tour** of 2013. For the latest news on this pioneering act, go to atribecalledquest.com.

PROPS

Canadian rock band the Strumbellas have been certified Gold for the song "Spirits" from their latest album Hope. With music that has been described as alternative country, indie rock and folk popgrass, the band is enjoying the

largest audience of the year for a **"New Alternative Artist"** per Alternative and AAA radio stations.

They were presented with a **Gold Single Plaque by Glassnote Records at The Friars Club** in New York. For additional news, go to thestrumbellas.ca. Read more about the band in **"Our Favorite Signing Stories of 2016"** article on p. 54 of this issue.

Tom Petty will be honored as the 2017 "MusiCares Person of the Year" in celebration of his creative accomplishments and charitable work. Proceeds from the annual Person of the Year tribute—now in its 27th year—provide essential support for MusiCares, which ensures music people have a place to turn in times of financial, medical, and personal need.

The organization also announced that **T Bone Burnett** will be the Musical Director of a **"Star-Studded Tribute Concert"** to benefit MusiCares' **Emergency Financial Assistance and Addiction Recovery Programs**. For more information, visit grammy.org/musicares.

Carrie Underwood has become the highest certified country album artist to debut this century. Underwood's *Some Hearts* has gone eight times Platinum. Of all the country albums now **RIAA** certified at 8 million or more, Underwood's 2005 debut stands as the youngest in the tally, also earning her the distinction of the highest album certification of any country artist to emerge since 2000.

Underwood also continues to reign as the **"All-Time Top Country Artist"** on the **RIAA's Digital Single Rankings**. For more on this country star go to carrieunderwoodofficial.com.

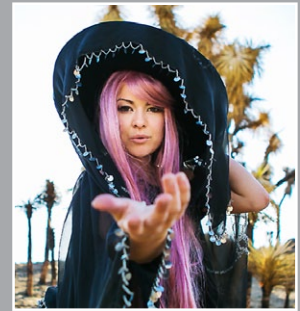


▲ YOUNG RAPPER IS RECORDING HER DEBUT

Having dazzled the judges on *America's Got Talent* and inciting the normally blunt curmudgeon Simon Cowell to proclaim she was the "coolest 11-year-old in the world," **Sky Katz** is making huge waves in the entertainment industry at a very young age. She's currently recording her debut album—slated for a 2017 release—and will be performing at **"Light Up Larchmont"** at Constitution Park in Larchmont, NY. Hailing from Long Island, Katz has hit the ground running since discovering her talent and passion for rapping at the age of five, and she has kept the momentum up since. For more, visit facebook.com/skykatztraps.

DIY Spotlight RUBY CHASE

Ruby Chase is a DIY dynamo who seemingly possesses inexhaustible energy. She is not only a performing and recording artist, she is also a creative visionary, entrepreneur and social light.



Chase writes and produces her own music in collaboration with members from her artist collective and production company **Convergence**. Bridging indie pop with tribal bass, she pioneered a genre she calls **"Organic Dance Music" (ODM)**. That sound, paired with her interactive show, sets her apart from the other musicians.

Her mission is to make things better for our planet through art, inspiration and empowerment. To that end, her company **Convergence** hosts **"Parties with a Purpose,"** which brings an interactive experience into entertainment. **"We bring the party to the party."**

Chase also produces **"Pop-up Events"** in public places (like the **Venice Beach Boardwalk** in Los Angeles) that appeal to all our senses, physically, spiritually and emotionally.

She even launched her own reality show, *Convergence*, which live streams on Facebook. She's also involved with a project called **"Rave Train"**—a reboot of *Soul Train* for the EDM crowd. Consequently, her profile has grown organically with over 100,000 viewers and followers.

But she's not always on the go. She occasionally mellows it out with her version of **"Acoustic Romantic Pop."**

While working on her upcoming album, Chase collaborated with **Bad Royal** on a cover of **"Blue Sky Action"** (originally by **Above & Beyond**). Notably, it's the first song to receive a double release on both **Anjunabeats** and **Mad Decent**.

How she does all this is a wonder...She simply says, **"It's all inspirational."**

For more, visit missrubychase.com

Have a successful DIY strategy to share? Email bbatmc@aol.com

Pop superstars ABBA are teaming with Simon Fuller and Universal Music Group to launch a new digital experience. It's a groundbreaking venture that will utilize the latest in digital and virtual reality technology. The aim is to create an original entertainment experience with the Swedish pop superstars that will enable a new generation of fans to see, hear and feel ABBA in a way previously unimagined. The members of ABBA will be involved throughout the creative process, maintaining the authenticity and integrity of the band's original vision within this new realm of entertainment possibilities. To learn more, go to abbasite.com.

THE BIZ

Capitol Records, the first record label established on the West Coast, has launched its 75th Anniversary Celebration with an extensive slate of music, film and literary projects that will pay tribute to Capitol artists. The year-long celebration commenced on Nov. 15 when Capitol became the first record company to receive a star of recognition from the **Hollywood Chamber of Commerce,**

which was installed in front of the landmark **Capitol Tower**, adjacent to the internationally-renowned **Hollywood Walk of Fame.**

After two decades of development, the official Hip-Hop Hall of Fame is poised to become "the Hip-Hop institution of record for the 21st century." The **Hall of Fame, Museum and Entertainment Complex** was designed to include the Hall of Fame, the Museum, a five-star hotel, retail stores, gift shop, arcade, TV studios and sports bar, as well as a restaurant and concert lounge with a goal of serving 1,000,000 local, national and international visitors annually including music fans, tourists, students, culture enthusiasts and families on educational and entertainment excursion tours. The Museum will enshrine hip-hop pioneers and legends in wax and through displays. Memorabilia and collectibles are presently being gathered and catalogued.

BERNARD BAUR was voted one of the "Top Music Business Journalists" in the country. Bernard is the connection between the streets and the suites. Credited with over 1,200 features in a variety of publications, he's a Contributing Editor at *Music Connection*.



The Truth About TAXI...

An Unedited Forum Post from TAXI Member James Kocian
<http://forums.taxi.com/post353820.html#p353820>

Hi Friends,
It's been awhile, but I'm still here!!

TAXI has been the singular catalyst for me in the past 2 years. I am closing in on 2 years of membership and my experience has been overwhelming. I will be at the Road Rally this year, as I've recently been invited to speak at the 'Successful Members' panel.

This is all beyond humbling to me, and I feel indebted to Michael and his incredibly talented staff.

Taking Risks...

In a nutshell, TAXI has motivated me and allowed me to take creative risks; to dabble in genres I didn't even know existed, and to develop relationships with high-level music professionals I otherwise would NEVER have had access to.

Major Publishers

So far this year I've signed 13 songs with major publishers. I'm writing with people all over the USA, and have made regular trips to Nashville a part of my routine. I've been co-writing with a guy who has had multiple (recent) #1's. It boggles my mind actually.

Once in a Lifetime Opportunity!

I'm writing Hip Hop tracks for a well known rapper's next project, and I'm connected to a Multi-Platinum, Grammy-Winning Producer who allows/asks me to regularly send him material to pitch to the biggest artists in music. That in and of itself is enough is a once in a lifetime opportunity, and it's been ongoing for nearly a year.

There's more, but this isn't about me. It's about: T-A-X-I Have I mentioned that I live in GREEN BAY, WI? I mean, sure, we have the Packers — but it isn't exactly a music hub for anything more than Journey tribute bar bands.



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I really can't stress how invaluable TAXI is to people who are willing to put the CRAFT into the ART of songwriting and music production. The "Forwards" section of the [TAXI] forum itself is worth the membership fee. Why?

Figured Out What Elements I Missed...

It's not to brag about Forwards. What I did was hit the [TAXI] Forums after I got "Returns" and found members who received "Forwards" for the same listings. Then I went and LISTENED. I analyzed the differences in our songs. Lyrics. Vocals. Arrangements. Instrumentations. Productions. I re-read the listings, and figured out what elements I missed. And I adjusted accordingly.

Where else can you get that?

The success of members (at least this member) is a TEAM effort. And I am honored to consider TAXI part of my team. It is possible to succeed. To "make it." To realize our dreams.

Don't quit. Don't settle. Don't lose hope. And stick with TAXI.



▲ April Bender: Insieme Signing

Insieme Music Publishing, the publishing affiliate of Glassnote Entertainment Group, has finalized a worldwide publishing deal with April Bender. Bender, an L.A.-based Berklee-trained vocalist, is a songwriter and producer whose original songs have been cut by acts such as Betty Who (RCA), the Score (Republic), Chord Overstreet and Elhaida Dani - Baciami E Basta (Universal Italy/the winner of *The Voice Italy*).

► This is ASCAP Country

Ashley Gorley was honored as the ASCAP country songwriter of the year during the 54th annual ASCAP Country Music Awards. This is the third successive year Gorley has won the award, and his fourth time total since 2009. Luke Bryan's "Kick The Dust Up," Dan + Shay's "Nothin' Like You," Jason Aldean's "Tonight Looks Good On You" and Frankie Ballard's "Young & Crazy" are among his hits during the eligibility period.



▲ SESAC Celebrates CMA Week

SESAC kicked off CMA Week by honoring the songwriters and music publishers behind the year's most-performed Country and Americana songs at the organization's Nashville Music Awards held at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum. Josh Hoge, who topped the charts with smash hits such as "I'm Comin' Over" by Chris Young and "Think of You" by Chris Young and Cassadee Pope, was named SESAC's Songwriter of the Year. Pictured (l-r): Shannan Hatch, SESAC; Josh Van Valkenburg, Sony/ATV; Hoge; Sam Kling, SESAC; Hannah Williams, Sony/ATV; and Troy Tomlinson, Sony/ATV.

Marty Panzer: Learn from a Legendary Lyricist

Now in its 23rd year, "Writing Songs That Succeed and Endure" is an annual UCLA Extension class with platinum lyricist Marty Panzer that invariably raises the bar for serious students of the songwriting craft.

Beginning on Jan. 12 and running through Mar. 30, Panzer will expound on such key areas as practices of the profession, including writing on assignment and deadline, rewriting and collaboration.

Having co-written a multitude of hits for artists including Barry Manilow (like "Even Now," "It's a Miracle" and "This One's for You") Panzer and Steve Dorff collaborated on the epic "Through The Years" for Kenny Rogers. Additional artists who have given voice to Panzer's words include Dionne Warwick, Gladys Knight, Julio Iglesias, Dolly Parton and many others, for record sales in excess of 70 million units. In recent years the lyricist has contributed to multiple Disney projects.

Past guests at the classes have included executives from Disney, Grammy and Tony award winners and artists, songwriters and producers. Read more about Panzer at martypanzer.com and find more info or register at entertainmentstudies@uclaextension.edu. Outside Southern California call 800-825-9064. Previous lyric writing experience is a prerequisite.

Listening Room Retreat

Listening Room Retreats has announced their 15th annual Northern California Retreat, Jan. 8 - 14, in Ben Lomond, CA. The event offers interest-free monthly payments, referral discounts, local housing reductions and single/multiple day participation options. The \$1,075 price is inclusive of housing, daily catered dinner service, workshops and concerts.

Over 1,000 songwriters from more than 20 countries have

participated in Listening Room International Songwriter Retreats and workshops—from those just starting out to seasoned pro's seeking rejuvenation. Participants have gone on to record, co-write and tour extensively beyond their home countries as a direct result of relationships established during the week, and many of the songs have been released commercially.

Visit listeningroomretreats.com for complete information.

NMPA Resolving Issues

The National Music Publishers' Association (NMPA), the Nashville Songwriters Association International (NSAI) and Sony Music Entertainment (SME) filed a joint agreement with the Copyright Royalty Board (CRB) that resolves open issues among them concerning the ongoing rate proceedings for mechanical royalties payable under Section 115 of the Copyright Act for the period between 2018 and 2022.

Similar to NMPA's previously announced settlement with record labels Warner Music Group and Universal Music Group, the agreement includes a roll-forward of rates in Subpart A of the 115 regulations, covering physical products, digital downloads and ringtones. Under the terms of the settlement, SME will withdraw from Subparts B & C, which applies to on-demand streams. Additional terms were not disclosed.

Prior to Sony and the associations reaching an agreement, public infighting marked the communication between the stakeholders, with David Israelite, CEO of the NMPA accusing Sony of trying to reduce songwriter income from on-demand streaming. Go to nmpa.org for details.

UMPG to Administer Prince

Universal Music Publishing Group (UMPG) has announced an agreement with the Estate of

► Julia Michaels: Major Label Debut

Hit songwriter Julia Michaels, profiled last year in Song Biz, has finalized a deal with Republic Records for the release of her debut solo EP scheduled for early next year. Among Michaels' credits are included co-writes, alongside Justin Tranter, on Selena Gomez's "Good For You" and "Hands To Myself," Hailee Steinfeld's "Love Music," "Close" by Nick Jonas and "Sorry," a No. 1 by Justin Bieber.



Prince Rogers Nelson to become, effective immediately, the exclusive worldwide publishing administrator for Prince's entire song catalog.

Bremer Trust, the court-appointed temporary special administrator of the Prince Rogers Nelson Estate, hired entertainment industry experts Charles Koppelman, Chairman and CEO of CAK Entertainment Inc., and L. Londell McMillan, Chairman and CEO of The NorthStar Enterprises Worldwide, to secure business agreements in the best interest of the estate.

UMPG served as the artist's publisher from 2001 to 2014.

Intuitive Songwriting eCourse Offered

On Sunday, Jan. 15, singer/songwriter Gregory Douglass will launch the next round of his signature Intuitive Songwriting eCourse to songwriters worldwide. Enrollment opens on Thursday, Dec. 1, and closes on Sunday, Jan. 8, 2017 at 12 midnight PST. The e-course will run for eight weeks from Sunday, Jan. 15, until Sunday, March 5, 2017.

Throughout an eight-week period, Douglass will demonstrate to songwriters at all levels how to write songs like legends write songs, and will become well equipped and inspired to create their most masterful work yet.

Douglass is the founder of TheCreativeAdvisor.com, which aspires to create community and teach other independent artists a proactive approach to sustaining their careers.

The Creative Advisor offers career coaching, training tutorials and indie artist/music industry interviews via dynamic videos,

podcasts and articles.

Visit creative-songwriter-academy.teachable.com.

Chris Austin Songwriting Contest 2017

The Chris Austin Songwriting Contest will accept entries through January of 2017, but there is a discounted fee of \$25/song until Nov. 30. After that date the fee goes up to \$30. Proceeds support the Wilkes Community College Chris Austin Memorial Scholarship. To date, they have awarded more than \$41,000 to students in need.

The contest also awards \$600 to the first place winner in each of four categories: Bluegrass, Country, General, Gospel/Inspirational. A \$300 prize goes to the runner-up in each category with \$100 for 3rd place. The competition is open to any songwriter who receives less than 50% of their income from songwriting or publishing. Instrumental music is not accepted.

Chris Austin was killed in a tragic plane accident near San Diego along with other members of Reba McEntire's band. The contest is affiliated with MerleFest in Wilkesboro, NC, and the three finalists in each category will be invited to perform their song live for the judges on April 28 at the 2017 festival, with accommodations and tickets provided. This performance is required to be considered for the prize.

See merlefest.org/chris-austin-songwriting-contest for registration info and contest rules.

DAN KIMPEL, author of six music industry books, is an instructor at Musicians Institute in Hollywood, CA. He lectures at colleges and conferences worldwide.



▲ Kenny Chesney Honored by BMI

Kenny Chesney received the BMI President's Award during the performing rights organization's 64th annual Country Awards. Ross Copperman took songwriter of the year after composing seven of BMI's 50 most-played titles of 2015, including Luke Bryan's "Strip It Down," Billy Currington's "Don't It" and Keith Urban's "John Cougar, John Deere, John 3:16." Pictured (l-r) Jody Williams, Vice President of Writer-Publisher Relations; Chesney and Mike O'Neill, BMI President and CEO.



▲ Kings of Leon Crowned by SESAC

The members of internationally acclaimed and Grammy-winning rock band Kings of Leon, best known for the singles "Use Somebody," "Sex on Fire" and "Radioactive," have signed with SESAC. Kings of Leon's affiliation is the latest in a string of prominent signings with Randy Newman, Robin Thicke, Green Day, Mariah Carey, Kesha, George Clinton and Cheap Trick's Rick Nielson recently joining the SESAC roster.



▲ Morgan Taylor Reid Ascends Round Hill

L.A.-based writer/producer Morgan Taylor Reid has signed a worldwide co-publishing deal with Round Hill Music. Recent artist collaborations include Joseph ("White Flag"), Max ("Gibberish"), Shane Harper ("P.O.W.E.R.") and Backstreet Boys ("Show 'Em What You're Made Of"). A new single with DJ Marshmello "Ritual," dropped Nov. 1 on his birthday. Pictured (l-r): Isaac Heymann, manager; Patrick Conseil, Round Hill; Reid; and Michael Goldberg, manager.

► Romeo Santos Signs with Universal

Universal Music Publishing Group (UMPG) has concluded a major new worldwide deal with "The King of Bachata" Romeo Santos, who has collaborated with top artists including Usher, Lil Wayne, Pitbull, Drake, Nicki Minaj, Marc Anthony and Carlos Santana. This year Santos was named ASCAP's 2016 Songwriter/Artist of the Year, an honor he previously earned five years in a row. He also won Billboard's Latin Music Artist of the Year for two successive years.



Harriet Brown

Illuminating the Soul Funktastic

An introduction for the uninitiated: Harriet Brown (née Aaron Valenzuela) is a Bay Area-born artist, songwriter, vocalist, instrumentalist and producer. A disciple of late '80s/early '90s soul, Brown's idiosyncratic songs are revealed in supple vocals and lacerating lead guitar over spectral electronic orchestration and fabulously funky grooves.

Growing up in a devoutly Christian Filipino-American family in Fairfield, CA, Brown sang in church, studied piano, switched to guitar, played in bands and developed an affinity for jazz. As a teen, he would board the BART train to hang out in nearby Berkeley where he eventually enrolled to study architecture at the University of California.

Appropriating his artist name from the title of a song by the '80s band Opal, the concept of Harriet Brown came into focus and he became part of a vibrant scene in nearby Oakland. "My friend convinced me to do a show when I didn't think I had anything to play," Brown relates. "I kept performing at house shows and warehouses, often with punk bands, all part of the local lo-fi community. My friend Willie connected me with these guys who had started Feel so Real, a small label in Los Angeles, where I released my first EP, *New Era*. I came down and recorded with Alex Talan who was part of the band Rare Times. I liked the vibe. I was in school at Berkeley, but I decided to move down to Los Angeles with the lady, and met all of these musical artists and DJ's who are part of a niche music community."

On stage with an electric guitar slung around his neck, the sleekly stylish Brown is surrounded by synths, drum machines and assorted hardware with no laptop in sight. "There are tons of artists who I love and respect who use laptops, but I think it helps that I don't use a computer on stage," he says. "I'm using all of these synths and drums machines, but I am programming them on the fly. It might seem impractical, but I need a tight rope for myself to walk when I'm playing, which keeps it more fun and exciting for me. I could have it really easy and not have to worry, but I think it helps that I'm doing this little dance—this tightrope walk—on stage."

Paying homage to the Prince-era Minneapolis vibe, Brown reveals the influence of producers and songwriters Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis whom he deems, "...my heroes. Obviously it's their history, the fact that they could separate themselves from the pack and do their own thing over the years. I love all the work they've done with Janet, and the way they are able to evolve with the times. It always sounds like Jam and Lewis."

Brown says that he continually contemplates song concepts. "It's a list that is with me all of the time and is ongoing with ideas for themes, hooks, or subjects. I will set up my sequencer and make some loops. I have a cache of musical ideas as well, but I never let myself get in too deep; I just lay down the idea until it's time to really write. But I have to completely finish a song, or realize it's not going to work, before I move on to the next one. I don't want to have hundreds of 50 or 60 percent finished ideas."

From a tour bus rolling across North America, Harriet Brown notes that he has been on the road for almost two months, supporting the Classixx (also with Neon Indian on select dates) for the electronic duo's Faraway Reach Tour. Now playing for national audiences and performing in successively larger venues, Brown creates remixes and adds his multi-octave voice to tracks for others, including "Eyes on Me" with his current tour mates.

He is looking forward to unpacking his road cases upon his return to L.A. "Home is where the lady and the studio are," he confirms. And Brown gives props to a supportive collective of musicians, producers, artists and DJ's in the City of the Angels. "Doing music and hanging out with my buds," he concludes, "I like to think we are all influencing each other."



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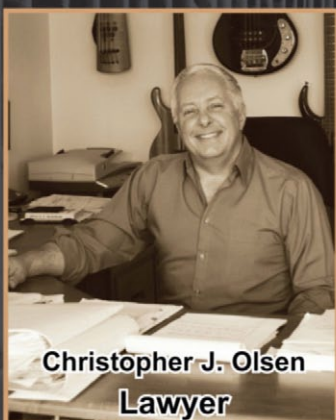
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DROPS

Legendary concert film *T.A.M.I. Show* made its DVD debut in 2009, and now it is making its Blu-ray debut, along with its follow-up, *The Big T.N.T. Show*, on Dec. 2. The set will contain all the bonus features from the *T.A.M.I. Show* DVD, plus new interviews with *The Big T.N.T. Show* performers **Petula Clark**, **Henry Diltz** and **John Sebastian**, and a 36-page booklet featuring detailed essays by **Don Waller**, rare photos and memorabilia. Filmed in Los Angeles in 1965, *The Big T.N.T. Show* featured some of the biggest stars of that time, including the **Byrds'** original lineup of **Gene Clark**, **David Crosby**, **Chris Hillman**, **Michael Clarke** and **Roger McGuinn** performing their No. 1 hits "Mr. Tambourine Man" and "Turn! Turn! Turn! (To Everything There Is A Season)." Fans will also find performances by **Ray Charles**, **the Ronettes**, **the Lovin' Spoonful**, **Donovan** and more. Contact Lauren Blum at LBlum@ShoutFactory.com for details.



Following **NBC's** broadcast of *Hairspray Live!*, which will air Dec. 7 at 8 p.m. ET/PT, the production's original soundtrack drops this month, featuring songs from the classic musical. *Hairspray LIVE! Original Soundtrack of the NBC Television Event* will include studio recordings for all of the musical numbers that are performed by the cast members in the live broadcast. For more information, contact Beth Krakower at Beth@KrakowerGroup.com.

Republic Records and **Twentieth Century Fox Television** will present music from *STAR*, a new series featuring original music and stunning music performances, set to premiere on Wednesday, Dec. 14, 9-10 p.m., on **FOX**. Created by **Lee Daniels**, co-creator and executive producer of broadcast's No. 1 drama, *EMPIRE*, and **Tom Donaghy** (*The Whole Truth*), *STAR* follows three talented singers—running from their pasts and desperate for a new start—with ambitions of stardom, as they navigate the cut-throat music business on their road to success. But reality soon dawns on the girls' fantasies, and they start to learn that ambition often comes at a cost. Contact Marisa.Bianco@umusic.com for further details.

Released in November on VOD and Blu-ray/DVD, *A Fat Wreck: The Punk-u-mentary* is a music documentary film about the influential California punk-rock label **Fat Wreck Chords** founded in 1991 by "Fat Mike" **Burkett** of **NOFX** and his ex-wife **Erin Kelly-Burkett**.



LONDON, 1979

Created by first-time director **Shaun M. Colón**, the crowd-funded *A Fat Wreck* premiered at the **Dallas International Film Festival**. For more information, email Pam Nashel Leto at Pam@Girlie.com.

From the Oscar-winning producers of *Amy*, created about the late singer/songwriter **Amy Winehouse**, comes *Supersonic*, which chronicles the rise of '90s English band **Oasis**. Starring **Liam** and **Noel Gallagher**, directed by **Mat Whitecross** and produced by **Fiona Neilson**, **James Gay-Rees** and **Simon Halfon**, the film captures the band's rise to fame, debauchery and renowned sibling rivalry as well as never-before-seen concert footage and interviews. Contact Kathy@bennytarantini.com for more information.

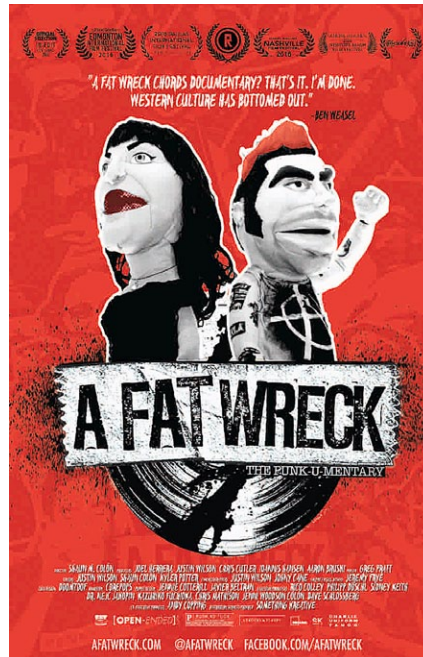
Premiering this fall, **Derrick Borte's** *London, 1979* recreated the city as it was at the dawn of Thatcher's Britain, telling the story of a 15-year-old Londoner hearing the music of **the Clash** for the first time, which opened up a world of teenage rebellion, first love and social and political unrest.

Starring **Jonathan Rhys Meyers** as **Joe Strummer**, the film features greats by the

Clash, **the Stranglers**, **Stiff Little Fingers** and **the Buzzcocks**. Email [Henry Eshelman](mailto:Henry.Eshelman@PlatformGRP.com) at Heshelman@PlatformGRP.com for more details.

The soundtrack to the 1976 **David Bowie**-starring cult classic *The Man Who Fell To Earth* has up until now never been available as a body of work. In celebration of the film's 40th Anniversary and **STUDIOCANAL's** 4K theatrical release, **UME** is releasing for the first time the original movie soundtrack, featuring original pieces by **Stomu Yamash'ta** and **John Phillips**, who composed specifically for the film. The full 25-track soundtrack is available now digitally and on CD. On Dec. 16, a 19-track vinyl edition featuring just Yamash'ta and Phillips' score will be released as a double LP. For the collectors, a limited edition dual format deluxe box, which pairs the vinyl and CD releases with a 48-page hardback book with rare photos, notes from the movie's editor **Graeme Clifford** and an illuminating new essay by British music critic

Paolo Hewitt, will be released that same day. More info is at UME.Ink.to/TMWTFE.



OPPS

Mr. Kate Studios, which produces content on home, fashion and beauty, needs a new

assistant video editor to work eight-hour days three to four days a week in Los Angeles. The part-time position has the potential to become fulltime. See MrKate.com for details. Include in the application a short bio, why the position is right for you, a résumé, link to samples and your most competitive hourly rate with "Assistant Video Editor for Mr. Kate via Craigslist" in the subject line. Send to p578c-5855106943@job.craigslist.org.

Promise Photos is hiring a studio and personal assistant for digital photography. The ideal candidate has video editing, web design, customer service and sales experience. Applicants should email a résumé and photo with "accomplish" in the subject line. Visit PromisePhotos.com for more information.

An experienced photographer and cinematographer stands to earn \$400 a day working for **Wineram Productions**, which is hiring a director of photography/cinematographer. The Lake Tahoe-based film and television production company covers wine, food, spirits and travel. Applicants should send the following to t27nm-5863018894@job.craigslist.org: a résumé and cover letter, links to samples, Facebook and Instagram handles, the town you reside in and whether you have access to your own transportation.

PROPS

Following the critical and commercial success of its first five original documentaries, **CMT** is beginning work on *If I Leave Here Tomorrow: a film about Lynyrd Skynyrd* (working title), slated for next year. Director **Stephen Kijak** (*We Are X*, *Stones in Exile*) and producer **Passion Pictures** (*Searching for Sugar Man*, *One Day in September*) will delve into the backstory of the legendary Florida band and its iconic frontman, **Ronnie Van Zant**. Email CMTPress@CMTPress.com for more information.

Versatile composer, pianist and conductor **Lalo Schifrin** has been honored with **France's Ordre des Arts et des Lettres** for a lifetime of work that included conducting symphony orchestras, scoring films and television shows and creating work for the Los Angeles **Chamber Orchestra**

and **London Philharmonic**. Schifrin attended two festivals in November for his achievements. The mid-November **Cinematheque Festival** featured a retrospective of the composer's films, including screenings of *Cool Hand Luke*, *Coogan's Bluff* and *Bullitt*. The composer also participated in a signing and Q&A with the audience. **The Festival du Cinéma & Musique de Film de la Baule** featured a tribute to the artist with a special concert. Contact Beth Krakower at Beth@KrakowerGroup.com.

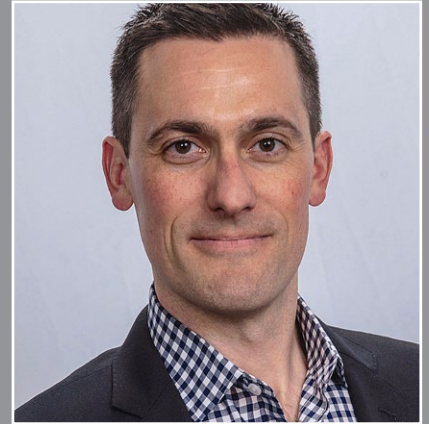
This year's grand marshal for the 85th annual **Hollywood Christmas Parade** will be actress and musician **Olivia Newton-John**, best known for playing Sandy in the 1978 musical film *Grease*. Taped on Nov. 27 in Hollywood, the parade will premiere as a two-hour special Dec. 16 at 8 p.m. ET/PT on the **CW Network**. Each year, it kicks off with a concert before the 3.5-mile trek down Hollywood Blvd. Newton-John was chosen not only for her artistic career but her philanthropy and work to raise awareness about breast cancer. Contact Steve Moyer at MoyerPR@Earthlink.net.

Kore Asian Media announced today that the **15th Annual Unforgettable Gala**, a celebration of Asian American trailblazers in the entertainment industry, will honor American electro-house musician/record producer, **Steve Aoki**, with the prestigious **Music Vanguard Award**. Musical performances will include **Chris "Stahyl" Gatlula** (the *Jabbawockeez*), **East West Players**, **Eric Nam**, **Kina Grannis**, and **Boys in Groove (B.I.G)**. The gala, hosted by **Jeannie Mai** (*The Real*), will be held at The Beverly Hilton in Los Angeles on Dec. 10 and live streamed on **Facebook Live** (**Kore Asian Media Facebook**).

As a producer, musician, businessman and entrepreneur, Aoki will receive the Music Vanguard Award for his continued innovation, creativity and devotion to the music world. Contact Mary Hong for further details. mhong@lippingroup.com.

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



Erik Langner
President, VuHaus

Email: [Odette Scott, Odette@RockPaperScissors.Biz](mailto:Odette.Scott@RockPaperScissors.Biz)
Web: Vuhaus.com

In his 12th year working with Public Media Company, managing director Erik Langner has a passion for public media, radio and music, leading dozens of projects over the past decade to get music programming to a broader audience. That includes KXT in Dallas, The Bridge in Kansas City, KUTX in Austin an Open Air in Denver.

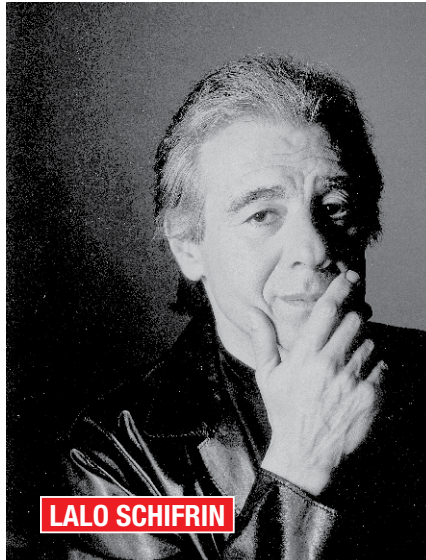
Among the company's most recent projects is VuHaus, which now gives the public the ability to discover new and emerging artists through video and live-streaming in-studio performances and concerts. Langner, president of VuHaus, helped secure startup funds and craft partnerships with stations to build a platform for new musicians to gain exposure and the public to find them.

"Radio is still important," Langner says. "Some of the biggest acts, from Beck to Mumford & Sons, got their first spin on public radio." Through VuHaus, artists are hand-picked to be featured as an artist of the week, based on talent rather than following.

"What's guiding our philosophy is quality. The best talent, the best songs—that's the only filter we apply," Langner says. "What sets us apart is that everything is hand-selected and curated. There are no algorithms. We have an artist of the week, usually one no one has heard of. And we also exclusively work with public radio stations."

Public Media Company's network of stations reaches four million per week, and as Langner says, airplay is a critical component of the prelude to success for emerging artists.

"Our advice to emerging artists is to reach out to our local public radio partners," says Langner. "They are on the front lines, and doing the hard work of seeking out and finding new and promising bands. They really are the initial tastemakers in this process."



LALO SCHIFRIN



OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN

HOT 100 2016

205

Rock/Funk Rock
Los Angeles, CA
205band.com

AFRAID OF MY NEIGHBOR

Rock/Punk/Metal
Los Angeles, CA
afraidofmyneighbor.com

ALEXANDER JEAN

Singer/Songwriter
Los Angeles, CA
alexanderjean.net

ALMA LAKE

Sassy Blues
Los Angeles, CA
fb.com/almalakemusic

ANDREW MARKS

Indie Pop
Los Angeles, CA
andrewmarksmusic.com

BEEFHEART JR. (FEAT. ROBERT WILLIAMS)

Multi-Genre
North Hollywood, CA
beefheartjr.com

BIG MON

Jamaican Dance Hall Hip-Hop
Los Angeles, CA/Jamaica
fb.com/BigMonMusic

BLACK DIAMONDS

Pop-Punk
Haverhill, MA
blackdiamondsband.com

BLUE HEALER

Indie Rock
Austin, TX
bluehealerusa.com

BUTTERSCOTCH

Beatbox/Pop/Jazz/Soul
Los Angeles, CA
butterscotchmusic.com

CAMRYN

Pop-Rock
Los Angeles, CA
camrynmusic.com

CHAMBERLAIN TRIPP BAND

Americana
Los Angeles, CA
fb.com/ChamberlainTrippBand

CORY SIPPER

Singer/Songwriter
Santa Barbara, CA
corysippermusic.com

DENNIS DREITH BAND FEAT: ELLIS HALL & TATA VEGA

Big Band R&B/Soul/Jazz
Studio City, CA
dennisdreith.com

DERDE VERDE

Indie Rock
Los Angeles, CA
DerdeVerde.net

DESERT TUNDRA

Alt Rock
Los Angeles, CA
fb.com/deserttundra

DIG THE KID

Alt Pop-Rock
Los Angeles, CA
digthekidband.com

DROOL BROTHERS

Psychedelic Fuzz Soul
Whittier, CA
droolbrothers.com

FLIGHT 584

Jazz Band, Big Band Jazz
Burbank, CA
bassbymike@gmail.com

FLIGHT OF FIRE

Hard Rock
Boston, MA
flightoffire.com

GERONIMO GETTY

Country
Los Angeles, CA
GeronimoGetty.com

HONEY AND JUDE

Indie Pop
Los Angeles, CA
honeyandjudemusic.com

IRATION

Reggae Alt Rock
Santa Barbara, CA
irationmusic.com

INSECT SURFERS

Instrumental Rock
Los Angeles, CA
insectsurfers.com

IN THE WHALE

Rock
Denver, CO
InTheWhaleSucks.com

JACKIE BRISTOW

Pop-Folk Americana
Los Angeles, CA
jackiebristow.com

JENNIFER WESTWOOD & THE HANDSOME DEVILS

Country
Detroit, MI
jwhandsomedevils.com

JESSE BLAZE SNIDER

Blues/Rock/Pop/Country
New York, NY/Los Angeles, CA
jesseblaze.com

JODIE AND THE NORMALS

R&B/Pop
New York, NY
normalsmusic.com

J GRGRY

Dark Pop/Indie Rock
Seattle, WA
fb.com/JgrgryMusic

KATE BROWN

Country/Americana
Pasadena, CA
KateBrownMusic.com

KELLEY JAMES

California Acoustic
Manhattan Beach, CA
kelleyjames.com

KING COTTON'S AGGRAVATION

Swamp Funk
Hollywood, CA
fb.com/King-Cottons-Aggravation

LARISSA VIENNA & THE STRANGE

Alt Rock
Denver, CO
fb.com/larissaviennamusic

LAUREN ADAMS

Americana Roots-Rock
Los Angeles, CA
LaurenAdams.com

LEX

Pop Rock
Las Vegas, NV
LexRox.com

LIO NICOL

Pop Singer/Songwriter
Los Angeles, CA
LioNicol.com

LISA FINNIE

Torch Americana
Altadena, CA
LisaFinnie.com

LITTLE MONARCH

Pop-Rock Soul
Los Angeles, CA
littlemonarch.com

LOS GOUTOS

Americana
Boston, MA
Losgoutos.com

MAGNASTIC

Hip-Hop/Funk/Ukulele Pop
San Fernando, CA
magnastic.bandcamp.com

MAGNETICO

Rock/Progressive Rock
Los Angeles, CA
rafaelmoreira.com

MARK MACKAY

Country-Rock
Hollywood, CA
markmackayofficial.com

MELODY FEDERER

Singer/Songwriter Folk-Pop
Los Angeles, CA
fb.com/MelodyFedererMusic

MIKE MOODY

Soul Rock
Los Angeles, CA
mikemoodymusic.com

MOONDREAMZZZ

Shoegaze Psychedelic Punk
Los Angeles, CA
moondreamzzz.com

MOZZY

Hip-Hop, Rap
Sacramento, CA
mozzystation.com

OL' SILVER TONGUE

Garage Rock
Oakland, CA
olsilvertongue.com

ONLY ON TUESDAYS

Indie Pop
Los Angeles, CA
fb.com/onlyontuesdaysmusic

OOPS

Alt Punk/Hard Rock
Chicago, IL
fb.com/OopsTheMusic

PETER PRINCE

Rock/Funk/Soul
New York, NY
peterprincemusic.com

POLARIS ROSE

Alt Indie Rock
Los Angeles, CA
polarisrose.com

THE ANNUAL MUSIC CONNECTION HOT 100, listed below in alphabetical order, puts the spotlight on superior unsigned live performers across the U.S. who caught our eyes and ears over the past 12 months. Contributors to this list are not only *MC* staffers and freelance writers, but club bookers and other industry pro's nationwide. *Music Connection* currently has reviewers in Los Angeles, New York, Minneapolis, Boston and Detroit. If you'd like to get in the running for an *MC* live review, go to musicconnection.com/reviews/get-reviewed. It's always free and easy.

PORNO WOLVES

Rock
Minneapolis, MN
fb.com/pwolvesmusic

PRIMITIVE FINKS

Surf Rock
Southern New Jersey
theprimitivefinks.bandcamp.com

RAYSSA

Indie Alt/Folk Rock
Los Angeles, CA
rayssamusic.com

REEVE CARNEY

Alternative Rock
Los Angeles, CA
reevecarney.com

REV. NORB & THE ONIONS

Garage Punk Rock
Green Bay, WI
fb.com/revnorbonions

RICHIE STEPHENS & THE SKA NATION BAND

Reggae Ska
Kingston, Jamaica
skanationband.com

RIDERS AGAINST THE STORM

Hip-Hop/World
Austin, TX
rashiphop.com

ROLAN BOLAN

Rock/Soul
Los Angeles, CA
fb.com/Rolan-Bolan

RUBY CHASE

ODM - Organic Dance Music
Los Angeles, CA
missrubychase.com

RUBY FRIEDMAN ORCHESTRA

Alt. Americana, Rock, Roots, Soulful
Los Angeles, CA
fb.com/Ruby-Friedman-Orchestra

SAD ROBOT

Indie Electronica/Cine-Pop
Los Angeles, CA
mysadrobot.com

SAM WILLIAMS

'60s Pop
Los Angeles, CA
samwilliamsmusic.net

SHAHED MOHSENI ZONOOZI

World Fusion
Los Angeles, CA
shahedmohseni.com

SHATTERED SYSTEMS

Progressive Metal
Los Angeles, CA
fb.com/Shattered.Systems

SIKORA

Electronic Pop-Rock
Los Angeles, CA
sikoraband.com

SLANT

Hard Rock/Progressive Metal
Los Angeles, CA
slantmusic.net

SLOPE114

House Electronica
San Francisco, CA
slope114.bandcamp.com

SMALL TOWN SCOUNDRELS

Alt Rock/Indie Hip-Hop/Funk
Hillsborough, NJ
smalltownscoundrels.com

SON & THIEF

Indie Rock
Athens, GA
SonandThief.com

SPACE LEMON

Alt Rock
Hollywood, CA
spacelemonmusic.com

SPATIAL RELATION

Electronica
Brooklyn, NY
fb.com/spatialrelation

STAGE II

Alt Rock
Los Angeles, CA
stage11music.com

STATE LINE SYNDICATE

Pop-Punk
Los Angeles CA
statelinesyndicate.com

STITCHES

Rap
Miami, FL
fb.com/StitchesTMI

SUMMER WARS

Pop-Punk
Raleigh, NC
fb.com/summerwarsnc

TALL AS TREES

Indie Rock
Los Angeles, CA
wearetallastrees.com

THE ABSOLUTE

Alt Rock
Los Angeles, CA
theabsolutemusic.com

THE ALTERNATIVES

Alt '60s Rock
Farmington Hills, MI
fb.com/thealternativesband.detroit

THE AMATORY MURDER

Alternative Rock
Brooklyn, NY
amatorymurder.com

THE CEREMONIES

Art Pop-Rock
Los Angeles, CA
theceremonies.com

THE D/A METHOD

Progressive Rock
Karachi, Pakistan
fb.com/TheDAMethod

THE DEVIL'S TWINS

Noir Punk
Boston, MA
thedevilstwins.com

THE MILLENIUM

Titanic Alt Pop
Eau Claire, WI
themillennium.net

THE OTHERSIDE

Punkadelic Rock & Roll
Los Angeles, CA
fb.com/theothersidemusik

THE PODUNK POETS

Honkytonk Country
Los Angeles, CA
thepodunkpoets.com

THE TERPSICHORDS

Funk
Los Angeles, CA
theterpsichords.com

THE VANSADERS

Rock/Punk/Country
Asbury Park, NJ
thevansaders.bandcamp.com

THE VAUGHNS

Indie Pop/Garage Rock
Springfield, NJ
thevaughns.info

THE WALCOTTS

Roots/Soul/Country
Los Angeles, CA
thewalcottsmusic.com

THE WORLD RECORD

Power Pop Rock
Los Angeles, CA
TheWorldRecord.net

TRIOKAIT

Jazz
Los Angeles, CA
KaitDunton.com

TWO FRIENDS

Dance Music
Los Angeles, CA
twofriendsmusic.com

TY WATERS

Pop/Soul/R&B
Vancouver, Canada
tywaters.com

VALLEY SHINE

Folk Rock, Americana
Los Angeles, CA
valleyshineband.com

VAPORS OF MORPHINE

Psycho-Delta Low Rock
Cambridge, MA
vaporsofmorphine.com

WESTERNER

Psychedelic Electronic Funk
Los Angeles, CA
westernerband.com

WHITE SHAG

Stoner Glam Garage Rock
Detroit, MI
whiteshag.com

WILD DOMESTIC

Indie/Alt Rock
Charlotte, NC
WildDomesticMusic.com

COMPILED & ORGANIZED BY BERNARD BAUR

► Kaleo Rock Out on the Vegas Strip

Icelandic rock band Kaleo made a quick stop in Nevada for a performance at the Brooklyn Bowl at the Linq on the Las Vegas Strip. Their rough, blues style and stage production made for a memorable show. For more photos of the band, visit bit.ly/PhotosKaleo.



JIM DONNELLY



JEANNETTE LUNDGREN

▲ The Best in the FAR-West

Danny O'Keefe (left) received the Best of the West Performer Award at the 2016 FAR-West Best of the West Awards Luncheon at the 2016 FAR-West Music Conference in Bellevue, WA. O'Keefe later performed, accompanied by FAR-West Board member Joel Tepp. For more information, visit far-west.org.



ERIC DUNN

◀ Debut Awards Show in London

A packed Troxy Theatre played host to the very first Unsigned Music Awards in London, England. Leading figures from across the U.K.'s music and entertainment industry, along with the nominees, guests and attendees, were treated to live performances from Dani Sylvia, Elle Exxe (pictured), AKS, Skies, Chasing Cadence, Hunter & the Bear, Broken Witt Rebels, Alex Francis and Darby Ward. With the first show under their belt, the UMA team aim to build on the strong response so far by making this a go-to date on the music calendar. For more, visit theunsignedmusicawards.com/home.



REVU ESTRODA

▲ An Ace Performance By Korn

Korn celebrated the release of their 12th studio album, *The Serenity of Suffering*, with a private, invite-only show at Theatre at Ace Hotel in Los Angeles, CA hosted by SiriusXM. The band proved that, even after 20+ years of existence, they can still rock any venue, large or intimate. For full review and gallery, visit bit.ly/PhotosKornAce.

▲ What Does Music Mean to You?

Toyota Giving was on-site at New Orleans' City Park for Voodoo Music + Arts Experience to introduce festival attendees to their activation and social campaign, part of a larger partnership with VH1 Save The Music. The activation consists of a large-scale pointillism art piece, built using plexiglass and multicolored globes. Music fans and Voodoo artists were invited to write or draw their answer to a question—"What does music mean to you?"—on the globes, which were added to the art piece throughout the weekend. Pictured writing "Music is Freedom" is AJ Haynes from the Seratones.

Tidbits From Our Tattered Past



▲ Rallying with TAXI

Once again, MC was at the Westin Hotel in Los Angeles for TAXI's free convention, The Road Rally, where the indie A&R company offered informative, insightful panels such as: DIY Power Tools (booking gigs, building your website, etc.), Think Like a TV Music Supervisor, a Music Supervisor Listening and Feedback session and more. TAXI team members (l-r): Briagha McTavish, Ashley Havelka, Kimberly Basir, Matt Hutchison, Tom Stillwagon, Angel Maradiaga, Taylor Hange, Michael Laskow, Debra Laskow and Isaac Williams.



1989—Mac Attack—#1

No only does this issue have a great interview with legendary producer Shel Talmy (Kinks, Who) but our cover story features the first ladies of Fleetwood Mac—Stevie Nicks and Christine McVie. "I go through phases," said McVie, "where I like writing with people; then I can't stand to be around someone when I'm trying to work out a song."



◀ FMSMF @ AFM

Foot traffic at the Film Musicians Secondary Markets Fund (FMSMF) exhibitor booth far exceeded expectations. Jonathan Wolf, Executive Vice President and Managing Director of AFM (American Film Market), stopped by the FMSMF exhibitor space to compare notes on the evolving trends at this year's film market with FMSMF's Executive Director Kim Roberts Hedgpeth. For more info, visit fmsmf.org.



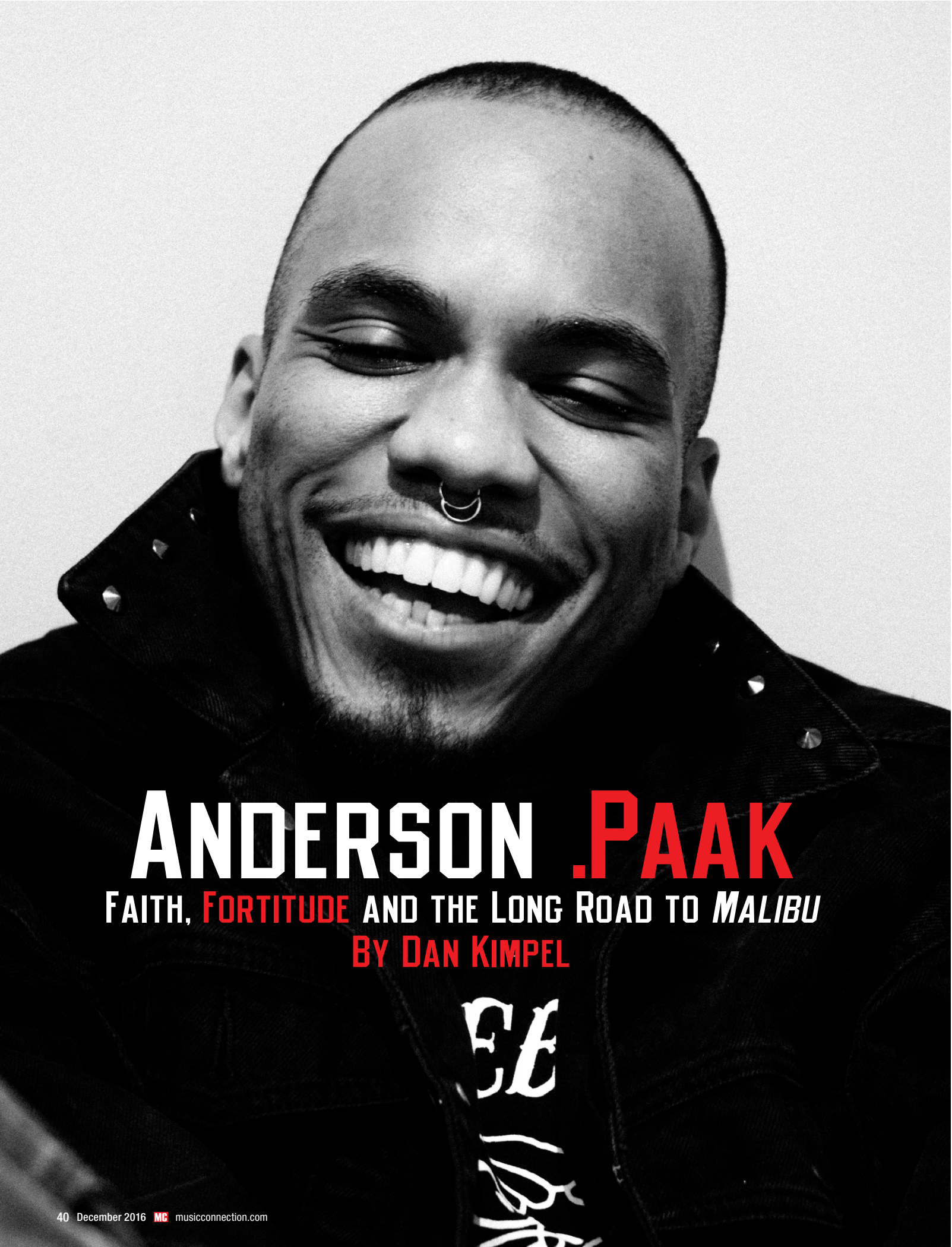
2005—Jason Mraz—#16

Mercurial singer/songwriter Jason Mraz sat for an in-depth interview with MC, and he had this to say about originality: "I'm sure every story has been told again and again. But as long as it's told from one person's perspective it will always be unique." Also in the issue are interviews with Miranda Lambert, Tom Jones and Patti Labelle who tell how to train, maintain and sustain your voice.

► Gearing Up in Nashville

Nashville, TN was the site of the fourth annual Gear Expo. Nearly 800 attendees including engineers, students, sponsors, manufacturers, artists and others took part in a full day of audio education, gear demos, career networking, gourmet food trucks, prizes and interviews conducted by Herb Trawick and Dave Pensado, co-hosts of *Pensado's Place*. Panels and special presentations included a Songwriters Panel, a live jam, a Producers Panel and a Gigs in Audio Panel. For more, visit gearxp.nashville.com.





ANDERSON .**PAAK**

FAITH, **FORTITUDE** AND THE LONG ROAD TO *MALIBU*

BY **DAN KIMPEL**

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With a much-lauded solo release, *Malibu*, multiple tracks vocalizing on Dr. Dre's Grammy-nominated No. 1 R&B/hip-hop collection, *Compton*, and a collaboration with producer Kxnowledge called NxWorries on a joint project, *Yes Lawd*, this year the stars have aligned magnificently for Anderson .Paak.

As in most breakthrough tales, there is a tumultuous backstory; almost a decade of scuffling for the 30-year-old Oxnard, CA-born vocalist, rapper, drummer, songwriter, producer and artist as he acquired a blazing arsenal of musical skills. For this exclusive interview, MC caught up with .Paak who is just off the road after long months of touring with his band, the Free Nationals. He is, as he explains, "Back home, my man. In L.A. Koreatown, USA."

Music Connection: You have been on this journey for close to a decade, but these past 12 months have certainly drawn a lot of attention to you and your music. Does it seem like it is all finally coming together?

Anderson .Paak: This has definitely been the best year of my career. But I still feel like I've got a ways to go. I am still pretty much an underdog, but it's been getting better every year. Sometimes you've to keep doing what you're doing and the world will catch up, things will come full circle and hard work will pay off. Yeah, I'm happy.

MC: There is a line in your song "The Bird" from *Malibu* that says, "I learned my lessons from the ancient rules/I choose to follow what the greatest do." Who do you consider the greatest that you follow?

.Paak: People like Jimi Hendrix and Miles Davis; Tupac and Biggy; JT, Kanye and Taylor Swift.

MC: Your vocal tone reveals echoes of classic soul singers. Who did you hear when you were growing up?

.Paak: Bobby Womack, Otis Redding, Sam Cooke, those are all big, but coming up in the house there was a lot of Al Greene and Curtis Mayfield. My mom would be playing Teddy Pendergrass singing with Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes. When I was young I was scared of their vocal sound. I'd be like, "Why are they yelling like that?" I'd want her to turn it down. But it stuck with me and resonated. When I was doing my album *Malibu* I went back and studied a lot of artists from the '60s. It's probably my favorite era of music.

MC: Your vocals reveal a deep connection to what many of the singers you reference also have: a background in the church.

.Paak: It was my first schooling. Some people have formal training, but I started playing in a Baptist church when I was 11 or 12. I learned how to follow. It's something you can't really teach. You have to go in and experience it. And to play within the choir there's a lot of following the leader and a lot of listening. Your musical reflexes get on point.

Gospel music is very advanced, dealing with a lot of time changes in one song. It's good energy—funk, soul and jazz and all that stuff. Some

of the best musicians and singers in the world come out of the church. It's a big part of my music, even without knowing it. It's the foundation.

MC: In between the songs on *Malibu*, there are spoken-word segments that act as connecting interludes. Where do these voices come from and who is speaking?

.Paak: My buddy Kelsey Gonzalez, who plays bass in the Free Nationals, he and Matt "Callum Connor" Merisola are the ones in the band who surf. When I was done with this album, and also *Venice* (the previous collection), when we're in the mastering process is when we're figuring out how to put the sequence together, and blend certain songs and make it feel like a cohesive album. Kelsey was a big part of



THE ONLY WAY TO DEVELOP YOUR SINGING VOICE IS TO GET IN THERE AND JUST RECORD, RECORD, RECORD, RECORD. GET COMFORTABLE. SEE WHAT WORKS FOR YOU AND WHAT DOESN'T.



coming up with the idea and he provided a lot of different quotes from big surfers like Mike Doyle and different surf movies from the '50s and '60s. He had a bunch of them, so I played them and picked out the lines that felt good. It helped bridge the album together and give it a theme.

MC: How does surfing relate to music?

.Paak: I like in surfing culture how it's hard to catch a wave. So if you catch one, you've got to enjoy it and ride it out. And remember how it is so you can catch the next one. I feel like that's a good thing with life and just with my whole career. I've been out here paddling, and it seems the past couple of years I've been able to catch a wave. I want to enjoy it and take it in. It's a metaphor for life.

MC: How essential was it to develop your audience in Southern California as your career evolved?

.Paak: A lot of people think that there are shortcuts or that they can go around building a grassroots following. I don't know if those careers really last all of the time. I didn't have anything better to do other than to devote time to my craft. I put years into it and every year I got more and more believers. I always thought

it was important to get the people in this city on my back before anything else. I couldn't have done anything without having those believers supporting me.

MC: We note that among the credits in your career is a stint drumming for *American Idol* contender Haley Reinhart, but you were always highly visible, albeit in underground scenes in Los Angeles. Your *O.B.E. Vol. 1* in 2012 and *Cover Art*, the EP of folk and rock classics molded into modern R&B set the stage, but you appeared on tracks for the Korean-American rapper Dumbfoundead, the producer Tokimonsta and produced tracks and guested on Watsky's *All You Can Do*. Was creating alliances with other artists within a creative community an equally significant step?

.Paak: It's a big part of my story. With Sa-Ra Creative Partners, the Low End Theory people, Hellfyre Club and Nocando, the whole Project Globe family, Dumbfoundead and Wax, all of these people were the first ones to say, "Yo, we feel what you're doing. You can go on tour with us. You can use our studio. You can use our network of people. We are going to pump you up." Nobody else was doing it. These people were doing it. It's very important, and I think it should be important with a lot of artists. It's a traditional thing with a lot of artists coming up in Southern California, building a team around you.

At the end of the day it's like these are gatekeepers. That's the reason I do it. When I wanted to make music it was about getting the respect of the people I looked up to. Everything else follows. When I was able to work with some of these people it was bigger than anything else that meant everything, more than a check.

MC: We did a quick historical search of artists who sing lead who are also drummers. It's a short list, Don Henley and Karen Carpenter notwithstanding. In your shows you play drums on some songs, but on others you have loops and stand up and sing.

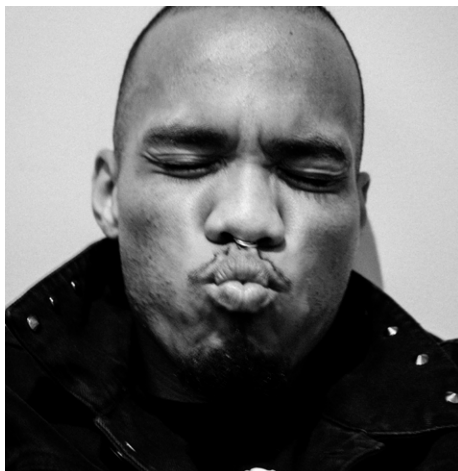
.Paak: Exactly. It's trial and error. I can't drum on every song, and I definitely don't want to. Eventually I'd love to have a drummer. I'm a drummer myself, and I'm not too bad. So it is hard to find one that I like. Back when I would play drums no one would make a big deal out of it. A lot of people still don't know I play and when I do the live show I love to see their reactions.

MC: Like a surprise for the uninitiated?

.Paak: I like building it. Not starting on the kit, but then going to the kit like a reveal and bouncing back and forth. It's something different. When I'm on the kit, it's one of the things I'm most comfortable with being behind those drums. So I'm able to channel it a little differently on the kit, to get outside of myself and be free. It's important.

MC: Your "Tiny Desk Concert" that came out on National Public Radio has you playing drums the entire time. What do you recall about that gig?

.Paak: Man, I was very nervous. I think we had, like, two shows before that. I had played the night before and I was up all night; I was hung over and knew it was going to be a strict thing and I thought I was going to sound like trash. I had never done anything stripped down like that. When we got there I had no clue that it was going to sound decent. I could barely hear myself and there was only one mic. I was kind of dreading it, but when it came out it didn't sound too bad. Props to whoever mixed that thing. "Suede," which we had never done stripped down before



QUICK FACTS

- Born Brandon Paak Anderson, the artist recorded under the name "Breezy Lovejoy" prior to reconfiguring his current name.
- The artist says that "Paak" sounds like "a lot of people."
- He says the "." between his first and last names signifies his attention to details.
- .Paak is of mixed African-American and Korean ancestry.
- Cover Art, an all covers EP released in 2013, contains a soulful recasting of the Beatles song "Blackbird."
- Stars as diverse as Schoolboy Q, the Game, Talib Kweli and jazz keyboardist Robert Glasper guest on .Paak's Malibu.
- .Paak recently appeared as a guest with Martha Stewart and Snoop Dogg on the VH-1 premiere of Martha & Snoop's Dinner Party.

came out cool. I think it's one of our biggest videos out. It's got like a million views. It was cool to do something that was all drums.

MC: You studied in the drum program at Musicians Institute in Hollywood, correct?

.Paak: Yeah. They didn't give me a scholarship when I couldn't afford to go there, but I still give them a little shout out. They did let me be a TA (teaching assistant) and I ended up meeting a lot of people and learning music I wouldn't have known about. I learned to read basic music charts, and that was a great experience.

MC: How essential is it for modern musicians to study music?

.Paak: I had developed in the church by ear. But later, with formal training, I got to learn

proper techniques and rudiments that really helped me out. So it's good to have both. Honestly, at the end of the day, to get the most out of this it's important to be able to read music because you don't want to have any blockage. When you can read music it's a language you can speak with anybody. If you want to have that greasy shit and you also know how to read music, there's nowhere you can't go to get your point across with whomever. If you want to write scores and do different things you have to write music and translate it.

That's where I am now. I want to be able to do movie scores and work with orchestras, but I'm going to have to have a middleman to translate that for me because I don't know how to write. And I will have to have a damn good one, because I want to get the grease across

too. Eventually I want to go back and really learn how to read charts to develop my musical theory. I think this is really important.

MC: Dr. Dre has noted that your vocal identity is instantly identifiable. The singers who you credit as your influences certainly also share this characteristic.

.Paak: All the singers I like, yeah. They have a unique thing and an undeniable tone. Today people use Autotune and comps and everyone sounds the same. But the people I grew up listening to and that I really respect had unique tones—even the ones that weren't the best singers—you just knew it was them. I spent a lot of time trying to develop that. I wanted something that couldn't be duplicated, or couldn't be bitten, and if someone did try to bite me they'd

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sound ridiculous—that was my main thing. Once I started in I had to put production, or drumming for different people, or just rapping on the backburner. I wanted to be a really good vocalist. I spent a lot of time developing that.

MC: How did you develop your singing voice?

.Paak: So many recordings. I'm a studio rat. I think that's the only way to develop your singing voice is to get in there and just record, record, record. Get comfortable. See what works for you and what doesn't. Trial and error. It took me some time.

When I was working on the *Yes Lawd* project with Knxwledge and when I got into working on *Compton*, I was okay that this was the pocket I liked and it was resonating with the producers. I knew it was worth developing.

MC: Is it a challenge to maintain vocal health with the constant touring?

.Paak: Absolutely. I tell my management, "Don't book me for three and four gigs in a row and expect me to have a voice." Sometimes they think I'm like a rapper who can do a bunch of shows in a row and keep my voice. That's not the case. I'm up here singing notes. It's exhausting. If you see our live show I'm not phoning it in. I definitely had to learn the hard way on my first couple of tours, how to take care of my voice. I got the hang of it—next year I'm not doing as many shows as I did this year. I don't think I will ever do that many shows. (Laughs) I'm planning to do less shows for triple the money!

MC: Your current release, *Malibu*, is released through Steel Wool/OBE/Art Club/EMPIRE but you are now signed to Aftermath, Dr. Dre's company. How does that work? Is there a new project coming for them?

.Paak: We start next month. But I've already been working with Dre on what he's working on. Ty (Tyhiem Cannon), the A&R over there, is really good helping out with whatever I need. It's dope. Everyone over there is really wonderful. It's interesting with me and Dre. We had a lot going on before I signed with them, and he was great about just letting us rock with *Malibu*, because we dropped it at the top of the year and we've pretty much been on the road ever since. We're doing a lot with *Malibu* and now we've got the other project out, *Yes Lawd* and rocking with that. Dre has been very supportive, like "Just do your thing, you're a rock star." And he's very hands-on working on the next project.

MC: NxWorries, your collaboration with Knxwledge that resulted in *Yes Lawd*, is super-deep, short songs, lots of changes, like an aural collage.

.Paak: Knxwledge put that together and made it an album. We had a bunch of songs and a bunch of files everywhere and J. Cole mixed it. I know at one point Knxwledge was hating me because he was trying to get this album together and I was gone. I think it came out amazing. It was a couple of years in the making. I'm proud of it. It's some of my best stuff, and the way he did it was really cool. I like that it's short, sweet and to the point; a great start. I'm working more with him in the future.

MC: With your output of songs, you must write constantly. What is the technique?

.Paak: I hardly ever write with my hand. I'm a horrible speller, so it's easier to put it on the iPhone with auto-correct. I can work with beats. I get a lot of information from conversations, or movies, or other songs and talking to people. I write everything down. When I find some pro-

duction I like, whether I'm producing it or I get a beat, I can usually go and retrace my steps, find a little blurb that I wrote, and I can build off of there. Or I can just write on the spot. I can go in the booth and do this kind of "speaking in tongues," if you will, get melodies off the top of my head, and pick and choose from there. It depends on what I feel like or the producer I'm working with, what he's comfortable with.

Some of the producers like me to just go off of the top. That's how Dre works, and Cookie Monster and some others. I just rock with what feels right. But I definitely always have lyrics to go, and I am always writing. It's important to me to keep it sharp. I'm trying to stick to a cadence and find the melody. I'm big on cadence and tone. I'm a drummer so I'm writing from a drummer's perspective.

MC: What do you tell someone who is out there hustling, who wants to make an impact?

.Paak: I just say it's got to be like breathing. A lot of people want to do this thing, and they think there's a shortcut, but they don't take any risks and they don't put both feet in the water. They devote all of this time to some job that they don't really want to do and only a little bit of time for their so-called passion.

With anything—relationships or music—you have to be willing to be all-out 100 percent, be willing to be humiliated, broke down, put everything you have into this.

At the end of the day you have to be focused. You have to trust that it might get really shitty before it gets really good. At the end of the day, the person who didn't give 100 percent is going to have regrets. Because they know they could have gone harder.

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96 BEST CAREER TIPS OF 2016

COMPILED BY

SIRI SVAY

DAYA

YOU WANT GREAT ADVICE and hard-won insights from individuals who actually work in the music industry—that's why a career-minded music-maker like yourself comes to *musicconnection.com* and our award-winning print magazine. With that in mind, we've again cherry-picked some of the best career tips that we gathered during 2016. Each quoted tip cites the month it first appeared on *musicconnection.com*, so you can read our original interviews.

BOTTOM LINE, SQUARE ONE

Make the decision that you want to go for it and then treat it as if that's the only option you have. Don't leave room for any kind of back-up plan.

— **Daya, artist, Nov.**

You have to make yourself happy first. You're never going to make everyone happy, and if you try, you're going to make a big pile of shit.

— **Patty Lynn, the Wind and The Wave, Aug.**



J.B. BRUBAKER

[Artists] should stop thinking about getting signed. They shouldn't worry about sending out demos and press kits. They should just focus on their music and their show.

— **Ben Blackwell, Director of Operations, Third Man Records, Jan.**

Don't narrow your path. Be open-minded and challenge yourself with different kinds of projects to expand your horizon.

— **Norihiko Hibino, composer, arranger, saxophonist, May**

You can't be afraid to ask people what they think, if they want to help you, what you can do to make yourself better. Be humble and take criticism. As long as you have your package together, start talking to people.

— **Lawrence Vavra, co-founder, Deckstar Management, June**

Money needs to not be the priority. It has to be that you love music so much you want to be around it at all times.

— **Lawrence Vavra, co-founder, Deckstar Management, June**

Not knowing about the business, and thinking that someone is going to discover you and make you a star is the most common mistake. Additionally, not asking for help when you need it can hurt your progress.

— **Dave Kusek, New Artist Model, June**

Don't get overwhelmed by the big picture and think ahead too far or too fast. You can take baby steps and still succeed.

— **Gilli Moon, artist, CEO, Warrior Girl Music, June**

Let go of the phony romantic idea that true artists don't get paid and that if you do ask for what your time and talent are worth, you're not really in it for the right reasons.

— **Matt Starr, touring/recording drummer, June**

I wanted to write the perfect song every time. And once I let go of all those ideas of what I had to do and what it all meant and what people thought, that's when I started writing good songs.

— **Courtney Barnett, artist, March**

Songwriting is something that needs to be practiced, much like your instruments.

— **J.B. Brubaker, August Burns Red, April**

Take your time; [don't] get frustrated when you hit the roadblocks. ... My writing has a season. When it's time to write songs, it happens and I know then it's time to do an album.

— **Ziggy Marley, artist, June**

I think the problem a lot of songwriters have when they're following up anything is that they're trying to think of the first thing that they thought of before, and they try to repeat that.

— **Wesley Schultz, the Lumineers, Aug.**

The best stuff is usually simple, if you think about it—but it's the hardest thing to do.

— **Gwen Stefani, artist, Sept.**

Don't rush an incredible song. Wait for the right moment and the right artist so you maximize your chances of a hit. I've sat on a song for two or three years before.

— **RedOne, producer, songwriter, Oct.**

Sync-able music lyrics should be universal and applicable to tons of situations. Never write a song about your dog and name it "Mitsy." There's never going to be a scene with a dog named Mitsy.

— **Tanvi Patel, CEO, partner, Crucial Music Corporation, Nov.**



CONFIGURE YOUR DREAM STUDIO

The input chain of a project studio is of the utmost importance. Your music (read: product) doesn't stand a chance if signal isn't recorded at or above the professional threshold.

— **Doug Fenske, Director of Education, Crê8 Music Academy, July**

One of the first areas recommended to treat are the early (first) reflection points, the first points on your sidewalls, floor and ceiling where reflections bounce off and come back to the listening position. Luckily, reflection points are easy to treat with a few acoustic panels in the right spots.

— **Glenn Kuras, owner, President GIK Acoustics, Feb.**

If you're working with a distributor or label, don't take what they say at face value, because the market is changing fast and there's opportunity to do better and do more.

— **Emmanuel Zunz, founder, CEO, ONErpm, Oct.**

Be careful which companies you work with. Look at their pedigree, their clients, how well they're doing, how transparent they are.

— **Tanvi Patel, CEO, partner, Crucial Music Corporation, Nov.**

Stand your ground, especially if any funny conversations happen that make you feel uneasy. There's no harm in saying what you want—it's all about a compromise.

— **Nina Diaz, artist, Nov.**

SONGWRITING

I was very private, but I learned that [a songwriter] can't be like that; you have to be an open book, especially if you are collaborating.

— **BC Jean, Alexander Jean, songwriter, Jan.**

Songwriters are often too clever—they come up with a cool word or hip phrase they think will get some attention. People don't latch onto trends. They latch onto truth.

— **Claude Kelly, co-founder, Weirde Workshop, March**

In most rooms, you'll want to orient yourself so that you're facing the shorter wall, with the longer walls on your sides. This gives you greater flexibility for positioning your speakers and listening position in the room. Facing the short wall will give you less drastic peaks and nulls than facing the long wall.

– **Glenn Kuras, owner, President, GIK Acoustics, Feb.**

All low-frequency modes end in corners, which makes corners the ideal place for absorption. Treat at least two corners (and more corners if possible) with bass traps positioned floor-to-ceiling.

– **Glenn Kuras, owner, President, GIK Acoustics, Feb.**

IN THE STUDIO

If you are in a studio setting, you should try anything and everything that your creativity is intrigued by. I just follow the muse. It's okay if the muse wanders off of a cliff and disintegrates into oblivion.

– **Keith Urban, Oct.**

Pre-production is huge. Getting to the artist's core and starting with knowing what that is, that's why we're creating music.

– **Eric Lilavois, producer, engineer, mixer, Nov.**

Listen to each other; respect each other. When you trust the person, they take you to a place you've never been before.

– **Stephan Moccio, producer, Jan.**

"Showing up" is the rule I have: As long as I show up in the studio, usually something happens, and I'll find myself in a place where I'm excited, creatively.

– **Brendon Urie, Panic! at the Disco, Jan.**

If you record a guitar in your bedroom and it sounds amazing, it can go on a record! It doesn't have to be recorded in a crazy expensive studio.

– **Vic Fuentes, Pierce The Veil, July**

The most important songs are the ones that you leave off. You make a better record by editing.

– **Cheryl Pawelski, producer, label founder (Omnivore Recordings), Feb**

MASTERING - THE FINAL POLISH

Gain is best applied in stages, much the way paint is best applied in coats. If you apply a light coat of paint, let it dry and repeat three times; you will achieve a smoother and more even finish than if you apply one very heavy coat.

– **Eric Corne, producer, engineer, author, Sept.**

Be organized, have your mixes properly labeled and listen to them on several systems. Know which mix is best. It's always expensive to master a record and then [go back and] have half of it remixed. Hiring an experienced mix engineer can save you money by having it done right the first time.

– **Bob Ludwig, mastering engineer, Gateway Mastering Studios, Oct.**

Before you submit audio you should listen to it with headphones. Listen for pops and ticks from edits. Ensure that vocals aren't too sibilant or over de-essed.

– **Kevin Bartley, Capitol Mastering, Oct.**

Treat each song individually. Don't try to match something another song has done. You lose the unique qualities when you do.

– **Kevin Bartley, Capitol Mastering, Oct.**

With the monitor volume up, be sure that you love what you're sending without fearing the level issue. Listen to it in the car, listen to it in the studio. Everyone involved should hear it. If you feel good about it, that's the one to send.

– **Gavin Lurssen, engineer, Oct.**



CREATE A BUZZZZZZZZZZ.....

Word-of-mouth is a huge deal, especially if you're just starting out. It's important to put your best work out there, because that one kid who showed up to a show might be your biggest fan.

– **Caroline Moore, artist/author, Oct.**

Put out content regularly, but not too regularly. Don't flood the market, but don't wait a year to put something out. Every three months or a couple times a year to make sure you have fresh content.

– **Emmanuel Zunz, founder, CEO, ONErpm, Oct.**

Music should be sent as links to your SoundCloud, YouTube or your website that has your music embedded on it. Many music industry professionals don't even own a CD player anymore.

– **Andy Reynolds, concert tour manager, March**

Do not include links to any more than three tracks. Your listener will be hooked after listening to three tracks, or they are going to pass on your material. Organize your links or SoundCloud page to feature your best song first. Do not save the best until last.

– **Andy Reynolds, concert tour manager, March**

Instead of assuming fans will come back on their own, commit to sending out eye-catching, engaging email updates regularly. This approach will make them feel like part of an insider community and provide a teaser to click through and learn more.

– **Chuck Fishman, media, entertainment and publishing director, Acquia, May**

Make sure your imaging is on point, because that's the first place any manager is going to look. Clean up your social and digital footprint before soliciting manager meetings.

– **Lawrence Vavra, co-founder, Deckstar Management, June**

When artists don't understand how the business works, they can get frustrated and dismissive. That kind of pushback can hurt a campaign and make [publicists'] job harder.

– **Mitch Schneider, publicist, MSO, June**

Reach out to any company that you endorse or would like to endorse—email them, tag them in social media posts along with pics of your gear. Making introductions that lead to bigger

opportunities is a good thing for all.

– **Matt Starr, touring/recording drummer, June**

If you get booked at a college, ask the student music chair if they are connected with someone on their student newspaper or the radio station. Don't forget to ask if there is an active on-campus TV station doing interviews and band performances.

– **Chris Fletcher, Coast to Coast Music, Oct.**

GET DOWN TO BUSINESS

It's important to have some sort of business sensibility, even as an artist. Know what you're getting involved in. If you're signing a contract that lasts [however many] years, you should understand what the consequences are of doing that.

– **Jimmy Brown, Bassh, July**

If I were an artist, I wouldn't go after the major executives; I'd want them to come to me. Use all your resources, let your music touch people and get a response out of them. Then build on that.

– **Eesean Bolden, VP of A&R, Epic Records, Jan.**

Call before emailing to make sure [a production house] is accepting new material, and ask what format of music they prefer. And,

whoever answers the phone, get their name, establish a connection.

— **Anika Paris, songwriter, author, Sept.**

Don't half-ass it. Don't ever. Not even if you're on a deadline to get something out, or you're working with a difficult client and it is easier to just do whatever is asked of you, even if you know it's a bad idea.

— **Caroline Moore, artist, author, Oct.**

Understand that some decisions are made—or not made—due to timing. If [artists] get passed on, they need to know that it's not always about them or their music.

— **Eesean Bolden, VP of A&R, Epic Records, Jan.**

MEETING & GREETING

Business is all about relationships and people. Especially in the music business. You'd better be a people person or you'll fail quickly.

— **Joey Sturgis, producer, engineer, plug-in maker, June**

Relationships, first and foremost, are the most important part of this job...Saying hello to someone in person is probably the most effective way to bring in business.

— **Jody Stephens, drummer, Ardent Studio Director, July**

Relationships mean everything. I'm trying to make friends with everybody, it doesn't matter who... You don't want to make a bad impression on anybody.

— **Simon Ward, the Strumbellas, March**

Attend conventions, trade shows and industry events to see what's current and to meet your peers. Seize any opportunity to make a connection face to face. Bring business cards or other ways of exchanging contact info.

— **Maor Appelbaum, mastering engineer, & Hush Paz, freelance producer, engineer and business owner, Jan.**

[At NAMM] go on the last day—Sunday when most people have cleared out. You'll be one of the last people [companies] see, and they'll remember you more as opposed to when they're mobbed by a million people on Friday and Saturday. — **Nikki Stringfield, musician, May**

Close an appointment. Schedule a meeting where you can provide more information about

what you have to offer. Prepare two convenient times and locations—a technique called the “two positive choices close.”

— **Bobby Borg, author, musician, July**

Write your pitch and practice reading it while changing the speed and tone of your voice. The point is to not sound like a robot. Once you get the hang of it, try reciting your pitch by memory and ask a friend to role play with you.

— **Bobby Borg, author, musician, July**

GOOD DEAL!

Don't sign any deal just because you are excited to have been offered one. Careful consideration of whether this is the right deal for you may save you a lot of future grief.

— **Erin M. Jacobson, attorney, April**



BOBBY BORG

Document as much as possible. For instance, if you are performing a small club and there will be no written contract, at least try via email to confirm your agreement regarding what you will be doing and what you will be paid (and when).

— **Glenn T. Litwak, attorney, Jan.**

Keep copies. Don't lose helpful evidence because you lose your cell phone or your computer crashes.

— **Glenn T. Litwak, attorney, Jan.**

Be clear that the producer is hired by you via a contract that explicitly states that he or she is to perform a job for a fee, and that he or she does

not retain any rights in the sound recording nor own any shares in your composition.

— **Bobby Borg, author, musician, Feb.**

A band agreement is advisable, not necessarily because you don't trust your band mates, but because it forces the members of your band to address difficult issues and hopefully reduce misunderstandings.

— **Glenn T. Litwak, attorney, May**

YOUR DREAM TEAM

The most important thing is to have a core team who really believe in the project. As long as you have that, you can still do exactly what you want with your music.

— **Angelica Garcia, artist, Oct.**

If you can't afford your “dream team” at first, supplement it with family and friends. Leverage your connections. Maybe you have a family friend who is a lawyer, a significant other who's well versed in social media or a sibling willing to sell merchandise at your shows.

— **Judy Stakee, songwriting coach, April**

Realize that you don't need to know everything. You can learn as you go. You should also seek out the right people, because no one can do it by themselves—you need a team to help you.

— **Gilli Moon, artist, CEO, Warrior Girl Music, June**



GILLI MOON

MANAGEMENT & SELF-MANAGEMENT

Your manager is everything, from marketing to putting out your records. So the most critical decision an artist will make is which manager they work with.

— **Lawrence Vavra, co-founder, Deckstar Management, June**

More artists [are] managing themselves than before. But, it can be a full-time job. So I encourage them to seek out a manager when things start to get busy.

— **Eesean Bolden, VP A&R, Epic Records, June**

The hardest part about self-management [is] there's a learning curve (about the business) that can take time, but you also learn more when you manage yourself.

— **Frank Drennen, Dead Rock West, June**



NIKKI STRINGFIELD

Artists need to understand that managers work off of a commission, which only works if the artist is generating a significant amount of income. If an act is not making serious money most experienced managers will pass.

— **Ben McLane, attorney, June**

TAILORING TUNES FOR TV/FILM & MORE

You need to do research. You must understand who and what you're writing for—it's not just straight songwriting. Become familiar with the style of music used on a show, as well as the lyrical content.

— **Cathy Heller, artist, Sept.**



You have to hustle every day. It comes down to hard work and grinding it out 24/7. Also, you have to do your homework, watch the shows and analyze the music.

— **Wentz Morris, music licensing, Morris & Young, Sept.**

Music supervisors tend to have “trust” issues, so you have to get to know them to establish yourself as trustworthy. Once you do that you can deal with them directly.

— **Cathy Heller, artist, Sept.**

Listen to the artist you are pitching to, and make sure your song matches their style, their vocal range and timbre. To be clever, read articles, Google them and try to find out what the artist may be going through in their personal life and write about it.

— **Anika Paris, songwriter, author, Sept.**

REHEARSAL

Rehearse without vocals—just the instruments to make sure everyone “knows” the music and their parts. That also helps us to get to know each other and anticipate what each one will do at any given moment.

— **Rafael Moreira, guitarist, Aug.**

Rehearsal should not be used to learn your part. A player who isn't prepared is the worst. Having a bad attitude can also cause problems. Everyone should be working together, and the project should be more important than your ego.

— **Michael “Nomad” Ripoll, music director, Aug.**

Recording and videotaping a rehearsal can be great reality checks—even if you just use your phone. That way you can see and hear exactly what you're doing.

— **Michael Lloyd, artist, songwriter, producer, Aug.**

Avoid over-rehearsing because you can lose the “feel” that way. If you focus too much on the technical aspects, the emotional connection can suffer.

— **Rafael Moreira, guitarist, Aug.**

YOU & YOUR AX

It's important to not become too complacent as a player. You might be playing something right or in time, but you can always play with a better feel, you know?

— **Adam Hann, the 1975, April**

As a bass player, the craft of listening is paramount. The bass player's role is to support. To support is to listen, assess and play accordingly.

— **Jennifer Young, Travis Larson Band, April**

I have a Digitech Drop pedal, which allows me to drop my tuning without switching guitars... It's great, especially when you're traveling internationally and you don't wanna fly with as many guitars.

— **J.B. Brubaker, August Burns Red, April**



The most important things with any musician are the little nuance things. If you've got really good tone in your hand, you've got really good phrasing and a good vibrato. That's your foundation that you can pile a lot of complex and clever stuff on top of.

— **J.D. Simo, guitarist, April**

SING YOUR HEART OUT!

To warm up your vocal cords before a performance [drink] a little cold tea or raw ginger. Also, Dr. Schulze's nasal spray is a singer's saving grace.

— **CeeLo Green, artist, May**

Your consonants should be crisp and clear, but the key to singing with ease and sounding pro is in how you deal with vowels.

— **Jeannie Deva, singer, voice coach, Feb.**

Choose a microphone that matches your vocal personality and performance needs. This may require testing a number of mics at the local music store to find the tonal support needed to enable you to relax as much as possible while singing.

— **Jeannie Deva, singer, voice coach, Feb.**

Make sure to sing every day leading up to performances to keep [your] vocal cords strong. Throat Coat is a great tea to drink before performing as well. Make sure to stay hydrated in general.

— **Meg Myers, singer/songwriter, May**

Steam your voice. You can accomplish this by taking a hot steam shower. Inhale through your mouth and give your voice a steam treatment.

— **Jeannie Deva, singer, voice coach, Feb.**

GET SOCIAL!

If you decide to boycott social media, you're only really going to hurt yourself. It's an enormously awesome, unparalleled tool and a great way to cultivate a universal connection. It's a huge resource you can't compete with anymore.

— **Chrissy Costanza, Against The Current, July**

Think of Apple and Spotify as social media. If you're building your audience on Facebook, but ignoring platforms that pay you, you're making a mistake. Think about a multi-platform strategy and generate content for each.

— **Emmanuel Zunz, founder, CEO, ONErpm, Oct.**

Use BandsInTown and Songkick to make sure your dates are pushed out to all your social media and website assets.

— **Andy Reynolds, concert tour manager, March**

BE ABSOLUTELY LIVE

You never know who's in the room, so never get too proud or too precious about wailing out on stage with just a few people in the theater. One person could change the game.

— **Miles Copeland, owner/founder, Copeland International Arts, July**

The best antidote to jitters is simple experience. The jitters will always be there to some degree, but being confident and comfortable with your performance makes all the difference between harnessing that adrenaline and letting it control you.

— **Robert Edens, Native Construct, May**

Always perform songs that you have honed to perfection. Do not choose songs that you can't perform flawlessly. If you can play or sing the song at 98 percent, that's still not good enough!

— **Coreen Sheehan, author, Aug.**

TOUR TOUR TOUR!

Touring is an important promotional tool. And it's the best way to connect with fans and sell records. Indie acts that want a career need to play live and tour.

— **Ben Blackwell, Director of Operations, Third Man Records, Jan.**

You should never do a college performance for ZERO money unless it is connected to a charity event.

— **Chris Fletcher, Coast to Coast Music, Oct.**

Keep [your gigs] small. You are better off with people standing in line to get in and people inside being packed like sardines, than having your audience saying, “It was great, but there was nobody there.”

— **Andy Reynolds, concert tour manager, March**

AND FINALLY...

Remember your audience ... There's no reason for you to be in this business if you don't know how to do that or don't care about it.

— **Herb Trawick, Pensado's Place, Jan.**

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TOP 25 NEW MUSIC

MUSIC CONNECTION routinely listens to and evaluates the work of unsigned and DIY recording artists. Below you'll find what we feel are the cream of the crop—our 25 highest scorers, as well as an extra Top 20 Prospects whose talent and skill are just too special to overlook. Each score you see is based on the merits of production, lyrics, music, vocals and musicianship. *Music Connection* welcomes all unsigned recording artists who want to be reviewed in a national magazine to check out musicconnection.com/reviews/get-reviewed.



STEFANIE ENGL - 9.0

Contact: stefanie.engl@aoidemusics.com
Web: aoidemusics.com



RIVAL TIDES - 8.6

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Web: rivaltides.com



THE CAROLYN SILLS COMBO - 8.4

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Web: carolynsills.com



AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER - 8.8

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Web: airtrafficcontrollermusic.com



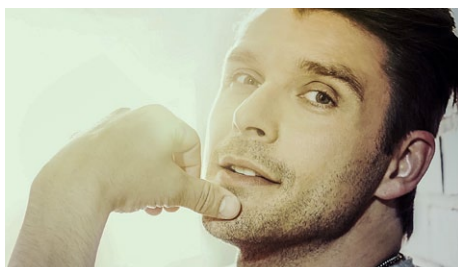
ELI CRAIG BAND - 8.4

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TIFFANY AUSTIN - 8.3

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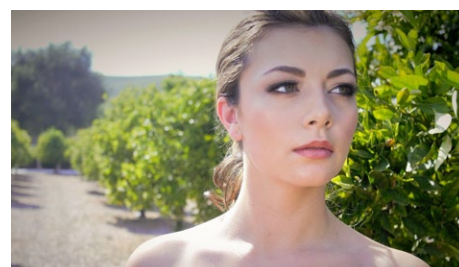
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CRITIQUES OF 2016



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Web: tfempire.com/albums



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TOP PROSPECTS

2016



▲ MATT ROUCH

Contact: mrouch@gmail.com
Web: mattrouch.com



▲ GONZALES

Contact: gonzalesevents@gmail.com
Web: gonzalesmusic.com



▲ SCRILLA DA REVEREND

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Web: soundcloud.com/scrillajmaygfm



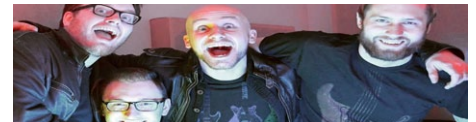
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▲ GOAT

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Web: soundcloud.com/goatjams



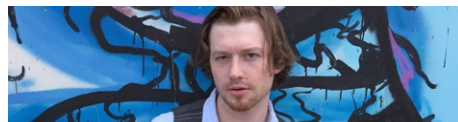
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TO GET YOUR MUSIC CRITIQUED IN 2017, CHECK OUT **GET REVIEWED AT MUSICCONNECTION.COM**

the Straight Truth About Pickups by Jason Lollar

The “magic” found in some (but not all) classic vintage pickups was created by accident—don’t let anyone tell you different. And over time, some pretty stellar accidents happened. The only way to recreate that magic is to study more than a few exceptional examples of all the classic pickup types, while acquiring a thorough understanding of exactly what materials were used and precisely how each pickup was constructed and wound. Only then is the “magic” repeatable, if you are willing to spend the time and money required to chase the dragon. I am.

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– Mikey H, Gift of Destiny



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– Jessica Byrd



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OUR FAVORITE SIGNING



Ruth B

Date Signed: July 2015
Label: Columbia Records
Band Members: Ruth B, vocals, piano.
Management: Marc Offenbach, Mark Cunningham - Red Light Management
Booking: N/A
Legal: Elliott Groffman, Rob Cohen - Carroll Guido & Groffman
Publicity: christina.hankin@sonymusic.com
Web: ruthofficial.com
A&R: Justin Eshak - Columbia Records

Sure, you can post some of your performances on YouTube, but are you prepared if record labels come knocking on your door with serious interest? We're impressed by young artist Ruth B who remained extremely levelheaded, despite having to evaluate such glamorous offers without benefit of industry experience: "I went with the label that I thought understood my music best," she says. "[Columbia Records] really got my vision of what kind of music I want to make and how I want to get it out there." As a signed artist, Ruth B's career trajectory—thanks to singles such as "Lost Boy" and "Superficial Love," and by taking advantage of top-notch studios and producers—has shown a steady rise and continues to gather steam.

The Strumbellas

Date Signed: Jan. 6, 2016
Label: Glassnote Records
Band Members: Simon Ward, vocals, acoustic guitar; David Ritter, piano, percussion, vocals; Jeremy Drury, drums, percussion; Isabel



Ritchie, violin, vocals; Jon Hembrey, electric guitar; Darryl James, bass.

Management: Joanne Setterington - Indoor Recess, Inc.
Booking: Windish Agency; Paradigm Talent Agency
Legal: Taylor Klein Oballa
Publicity: resnick@glassnotemusic.com
Web: thestrumbellas.ca
A&R: Daniel Glass

Show business is not for faint-hearted introverts. The Strumbellas' Simon Ward, for example, sent over-the-top emails to entice prospective (now current) manager Joanne Setterington to attend a Strumbellas show. He emailed a wacky pledge to eat a whole



bottle of horseradish. She attended, and was wowed. It was this kind of forward energy that propelled the band to a meeting with Glassnote Records founder Daniel Glass, which eventually sealed the deal. Through it all, however, Ward's positive and outgoing disposition—mirrored by the Strumbellas' infectious sing-along hit "Spirits"—has encouraged the sextet to move ahead while making all the right moves: "Relationships mean everything," he states. "I'm trying to make friends with everybody, it doesn't matter who. ... Put it all out there [and] don't be shy—get people's attention."

Lukas Graham

Date Signed: Oct. 31, 2013
Label: Warner Bros. Records
Band Members: Lukas Graham Forchhammer, vocals; Kasper Daugaard, keyboard; Magnus Larsson, bass; Mark Falgren, drums.
Management: Kasper Faerk, Lasse Siegmund - Then We Take The World
Booking: Kasey McKee - CAA
Publicity: Jaime.rosenberg@wbr.com
Web: LukasGraham.com
A&R: N/A

Lukas Graham, whose single "7 Years" became a viral sensation, voiced a few simple (yet unwavering) requests during his first encounter with Warner Bros. Records Chairman/CEO Cameron Strang: "I want time to settle my record, to meet new writers and producers

and experiment with my sound. Most of all, I want to build a team I know I can trust." Warner agreed to help nurture the young artist, but would only go so far.

"When Warner didn't want to pay for something, I went and paid for it. So Warner could see that I put my own trust and heart into it, I bankrupted myself twice. They eventually put in more effort and money and rewarded me for investing."

While Graham understands "the corporate beast wants money," he also values the power of working to achieve a common goal:

"I try to bond and connect with everyone from top to bottom. If you're not a likable guy, they don't give a shit about working with you."



Sammy Arriaga

Date Signed: January 2016
Label: Latium Records
Management: Charles Chavez
Booking: Jake Kennedy - CAA
Legal: Leslie Zigel
Publicity: Jensen Sussman, jensen@sweettalkpr.com
Web: sammyarriaga.com
A&R: Jim Catino & Taylor Lindsay - Sony Music Nashville.

For some careers to blossom, it's all about being where the action is. Miami-born Cuban Sammy Arriaga was raised on salsa and meringue music. The sounds of classic and modern country, however, are what spoke to his soul. "But," he says, "I didn't know anybody in Nashville." So the young artist began using Facebook to network and he connected with

STORIES of 2016

Compiled by MC Senior Editor
MARK NARDONE

hit songwriter Monty Powell. Says Arriaga, "He listened to my demos and invited me to look him up if I ever came to Nashville." On a wing and a prayer Arriaga moved to the country music capital. "I was in Nashville a short time and BMI signed me up for this songwriting camp. They needed songs for a Mexican reality TV show." Then, through a camp friend, Arriaga was invited to Los Angeles, which led to an audition for Latium Records' Charles Chavez (who manages Pitbull) who immediately wanted to work with Arriaga. The artist's debut is *Banjos N' Bongos*.



Toronz Cannon

Date Signed: June 1, 2015
Label: Alligator Records
Booking: Intrepid Artists
Publicity: marc@allig.com
Web: toronzocannon.com
A&R: Bruce Iglauer

Put in the time and be ready for your opportunity to shine. That's how it went for Chicago bluesman Toronz Cannon, who has spent the last 25 years or so honing his craft. He released three albums for the Delmark label from 2007-2013. Prior to that, he was a sideman with esteemed blues artists like Joanna Connor, Tommy McCracken, Wayne Baker Brooks and L.V. Banks. But Cannon really wanted a contract with premiere blues marque Alligator Records. In June 2015, he got his chance to show the company what he could do on a big stage at the Chicago Blues Festival. It was there that the artist made his unofficial launch from local hero to national star. "That big stage...man! The crowd was electric, the band was tight. It truly was a turning point in my career." Cannon's Alligator debut, *The Chicago Way*, is available now.

Against The Current

Date Signed: Feb. 23, 2015
Label: Fueled By Ramen



Band Members: Chrissy Costanza, Dan Gow, Will Ferri.
Management: Chris Woltman, Mike Ferri
Booking: Ryan Soroka - The Soroka Agency
Legal: Scott Bradford
Publicity: Christina.Kotsamanidis@atlanticrecords.com
Web: atcofficial.com
A&R: Pete Ganbarg

Against The Current hoped to avoid major change when signing with Fueled By Ramen. Instead, lead vocalist Chrissy Costanza's ultimate goal was to enhance the alternative band's strengths and pop-rock mentality, not transform into something phony and unoriginal: "Ramen said, 'We love what you're doing now, we just want to blow it up and make it huge.'" Also, Costanza's experience recording the band's debut album *In Our Bones* was extremely eye-opening. "Finally with a label," says Costanza, "we had time and [money] to make trips to L.A. and have access to amazing writers, and that taught us so much about songwriting, since we hadn't really done any co-writing sessions. Ramen supplied these connections we'd have no access to." Costanza advises artists to "Take a step back and breathe. Look at what you're doing and what you want. Too many people go right for it, but you need to have a vision. It's important to know what serves the band and your image."

The Baltic

Date Signed: March 6, 2016
Label: Misra Records, misrarecords.com
Band Members: Adam Dankowski, guitar, vocals; Graham Epstein, drums, vocals; Jose Chalit, guitar; Josh Kaplan, bass.
Management: N/A
Booking: N/A
Legal: Arnold R. Kaplan - Spencer Fane
Publicity: Justin Kreitzer
Web: facebook.com/thebaltic
A&R: John Kuker, Jeff Betten

Is it a problem if your bandmates are not all living in the same city, and are not always



available to tour? Usually, that is seen by most labels as a dealbreaker. Says the Baltic's Graham Epstein, "A lot of labels didn't like that we were attending different colleges, but Misra Records believed in us." Besides loving their shoegaze "dream rock" sound, Misra appreciated the band's dedication to craft. Being fans of Misra acts like Great Lake Swimmers and Shearwater made the offer attractive to the Baltic. "It was hard for us to book shows," admits Epstein. "A lot of clubs didn't take us seriously because of our age. We needed [a label] who believed in us." Even better, Misra is distributed worldwide by Redeye and licensed by legendary Sub Pop Records, a connection that might later pay off.

Tate Kobang

Date Signed: July 2015
Label: 300 Entertainment/D1 Entertainment
Management: O. Lloyd, directoneent@gmail.com
Booking: tatekobangbooking@gmail.com
Legal: Mintor & Assoc.
Publicity: Aishah White - AKW PR, aishah@akwpr.com
Web: 300ent.com/roster/tate-kobang
A&R: Selim Boubab, selim@threehundred.biz

Somewhere between a month and six weeks after the rapper's self-released breakthrough joint



"Bank Rolls" began climbing the charts in 2015, 300 Entertainment (Fetty Wap, Young Thug, Coheed and Cambria) knocked on rapper Tate Kobang's door. And from his first meeting with the label's Selim Boubab and Todd Moscowitz, the Baltimore rapper kept his cool. Kobang ("King Of Baltimore And N*ggas' Girls") made certain the deal, centering around a single with a two-album option, was scrutinized before making his decision. Never forget, he advises, to hold strong with potential labels and insist upon your worth. "Let it be known you're not going to get pushed over," he insists. "You're not just going to let them do anything with you. At the end of the day, you need them but they need you more."



Angelica Garcia

Date Signed: August 2014
Label: Warner Bros. Records
Management: Wendy Laister & Tim Vigon - Magus Entertainment
Booking: Frank Riley - High Road Touring
Legal: Peter Paterno & Marjorie Garcia - King, Holmes, Paterno & Soriano
Publicity: jaime.rosenberg@wbr.com
Web: angelicagarcia.net
A&R: Lenny Waronker

"I never thought one little show could change my life," marvels spunky newcomer Angelica Garcia. "Now, I know I have to be on my toes at all times." A rockin' singer/songwriter, Garcia and her band played a House of Blues Battle of the Bands competition that got her noticed by a manager, who then recommended her to Warner Bros. Records. The draw of aligning with such a deeply songwriter-oriented label proved irresistible to Garcia, and when label president Lenny Waronker openly declared her a career artist, her decision was cemented.

"The most important thing is to have a core team who really believe in the project," asserts the humble spitfire, whose deal grants her final say regarding all creative materials. "As long as you have that, you can still do exactly what you want with your music."



Al Scorch

Date Signed: Sept. 28, 2015
Label: Bloodshot Records
Management: Self-managed
Booking: Benjamin Montalbano - Shotwell Booking
Legal: Loren Wells - Pierson-Wells
Publicity: Josh Zanger, josh@bloodshotrecords.com
Web: alsorch.com
A&R: N/A

Al Scorch is an entertainer, road warrior and storyteller in the vein of classic artists like Woody Guthrie, John Prine and Billy Bragg. After releasing an indie album, *Tired Ghostly Town*, Scorch felt his limitations. "I was very much a D.I.Y. artist and realized I wanted some help with this stuff," he explains. "I thought Bloodshot would be a good fit because they don't treat artists as a product, they include them in a lot of decisions." And, just like his transparent and poignantly direct vocal delivery, Scorch did nothing fancy when approaching the company. "I emailed owner Rob (Miller) and the label people to come to a show. Two sentences; 'I like your label, maybe you'll like my music. Come to the show,'" says Scorch. "The label is interested in the music, not you and all your accomplishments. If they're interested in your music they'll care about you later." Scorch's Bloodshot debut *Circle Round the Signs* is available now.

Dreezy

Date Signed: August 2014
Label: Interscope Records
Management: N/A
Booking: N/A
Legal: N/A
Publicity: Yvette Gayle
Web: dreezyworld.com
A&R: Aaron "Dash" Sherrad, Roderick "Pushrod" Bullock & Joie Manda

With no prior experience with labels—in fact, she'd never imagined actually having a career in music—22-year-old rapper Dreezy (a.k.a. Seandrea Sledge) showed innate common sense when major players responded to her track "Ain't For None." First, it was WorldStarHipHop and Universal, then Atlantic, Sony and RCA. Later there was Interscope, and her decision to sign with that label boiled down to "They see me as the bigger artist that I am. That's something the other labels weren't really talking to me about." It didn't hurt that they've hosted mega acts like Kendrick Lamar, Eminem and Mary J. Blige. An advance facilitated the artist's move from Chicago's south side to Los Angeles and the label's muscle aided in scoring a raft of guest appearances, both from others on her debut album, *No Hard Feelings*, and as a featured performer herself.

"Don't come into a situation being desperate," Dreezy warns. "Have a lawyer read over your contract and don't sign anything for some little money," she advises, "because that's nothing compared to the money you could screw yourself out of."

Jevon Doe

Date Signed: March 2015
Label: Atlantic Records
Management: Bradley Beckwith & Brandon Kitchen
Booking: N/A
Legal: N/A
Publicity: chelsey.northern@atlanticrecords.com
Web: jevondoemusic.com
A&R: Shawn Barron

We like the persistence and work ethic the young, multi-talented hip-hop artist Jevon Doe demonstrated between his initial meeting with Shawn Barron, Atlantic's VP of A&R, at a music conference in Los Angeles four years ago, and finally signing and recording his label debut album. Initially, Barron was impressed with a few tracks the young Texan presented, but felt that he





Publicity: nikki.law@metalblade.com
Web: tombscult.com
A&R: Mike Faley - Metal Blade Records

Sometimes, being signed to a reputable label is not the be-all end-all. Such is the case for Mike Hill's Brooklyn metal outfit TOMBS who recently completed their contract with Relapse Records—after three LP's and an EP—and are now with Metal Blade. "We were not dissatisfied with Relapse," Hill says. "We just wanted to test the waters and see if there's any other opportunities out there." Having the right team in place was instrumental. "[Our manager] had a relationship with Metal Blade. ... Lo and behold [the label was] interested and it just kind of fell together. ... If you talked to me maybe five or 10 years ago I probably would just want to keep everything DIY, but today I just feel like team-building is very important." TOMBS returns to the studio in January to prep for a Spring 2017 release.

needed to up his presence online and grow a solid fan base before pursuing a deal. The two kept in touch and Doe regularly sent Barron tunes to appraise. Eventually, new songs by the artist, recorded on his friend's phone voice-memo app (including one that ultimately became the title track to his Atlantic debut *The Story of My Life*), inspired Barron. "He really liked the new material and appreciated the way I was growing as an artist and dedicating myself to attracting fans online," says Doe. "He told me to find my way back to L.A. to make something happen."

Tombs

Date Signed: Aug. 16, 2016
Label: Metal Blade Records
Band Members: Mike Hill, guitar, vocals; Charlie Schmid, drums; Ben Brand, bass; Evan Void, guitar; Fade Kainer, synth, vocals.
Management: Mark Vieira - Good Fight
Booking: Ron Martinez - Crawl Space Booking (for N. America)
Legal: N/A

Ashleigh Smith

Date Signed: Nov. 16, 2014
Label: Concord Records
Management: Monica A. Young - Blue Key Management; Chris Dunn
Booking: N/A
Legal: Law Offices of R. Vaughn Gill
Publicity: Mike.Wilpizeski@concordmusicgroup.com
Web: TheAshleighSmith.com
A&R: Chris Dunn - Concord Records

In 2012, while finishing her undergraduate jazz studies at the University of North Texas, Ashleigh Smith competed in the Sarah Vaughan Interna-

tional Jazz Vocals competition, and finished first runner-up to French-born singer Cyrille Aimee. Not winning turned out to be a blessing for the Georgia-bred, Dallas-based artist. She finished her degree, continued touring as a backup singer for R&B star Chrisette Michele and took the time to figure out her essence as an artist and authentic vibe as a vocalist. "I was raised around a lot of different kinds of music, from rock and R&B to gospel and jazz," Smith says. "All of those things are a part of me, and I wanted to figure out a way to showcase [my diverse sound]. When I returned to the competition in 2014, I felt a lot more grounded in who I was." Smith not only won this time, but benefited from a newly added prize bonus: the opportunity to sign a deal with top jazz label Concord Records, home to two of Smith's idols, Dianne Reeves and Esperanza Spalding. Smith showed up for her sessions prepared, with a budget, a batch of demo'd originals and a detailed game plan. The album features six originals and four covers, including Michele's "Love Is You." 🎵





Billy Rowe: Rock N Roll Relics



As a guitarist on the '80s Hollywood rock scene, Billy Rowe played rhythm guitar in the influential glam-inspired band Jetboy, hanging around with the other scenemakers of that era including members of Guns N' Roses and Faster Pussycat while honing his craft as both a musician and a skilled guitar restoration expert. When Jetboy didn't achieve the level of fame of the bands they helped promote, Rowe channeled his experiences during those years into a successful, unique business crafting high-quality guitars with distinctive road-worthy looks.

Rowe launched Rock N Roll Relics in 2005 to tap into a niche market of musicians, many of them his friends and bandmates looking for exceptional equipment with an edge. Gilby Clarke (Guns N' Roses) Sami Yaffa (New York Dolls), Rick Nielsen and Billie Joe Armstrong are a few of the pro's who are customers.

He didn't simply tap into his group of personal contacts. Rowe also networked through trade shows, like January's NAMM event, and the specialty market of guitar and equipment shops that he knew from his own shopping experiences. "I started out on Ebay selling guitars I had restored," he says. "And

then I tapped into a network of people selling and buying guitars, parts and equipment. This was in the 1990s, when they were still considered 'used guitars,' not vintage guitars."

Rowe quickly realized that this could be more than a hobby. "I have always been into the more aged look of guitars," he admits.

***"I built this business
the way you do a band.
Networking, online,
in person."***

"Some of my favorite guitar players have played their one favorite guitar throughout their career. You can just see the love on that instrument. It tells a story."

Based in San Francisco, Rock N Roll Relics guitars are hand-crafted by Rowe and are now available at boutique guitar shops and online. Hiring a sales representative to promote the

business and to place the guitars and the orders throughout the U.S. and Europe was a crucial move in the company's evolution, Rowe says.

While several Rock N Roll Relics guitars are based on classic guitar models, Rowe makes minor modifications to the body styles from the originals and also notes that the major guitar manufacturers did not patent their guitars body shapes, which gives them public domain status and thus allows Rowe's company and others to replicate them.


"I do not have any business background," Rowe says. "I built this business the way you do a band. Networking, online, in person. Hiring a sales rep allows me to focus on building the guitars." Rowe says he has avoided doing business with large retailers. "There's a curse to going to the big companies. There is a growth in mom and pop businesses that I embrace, and that is where most of my business is."

The appeal of having a new guitar that looks like it's old? Rowe explains: "Imagine if the Ramones wore new sneakers. It just wouldn't be the same band without those club-stained Converse."

Contact info@rocknrollrelics.net

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CRX

New Skin

Columbia Records

Producer: Joshua Homme

When approaching this side-project spearheaded by Strokes guitar player Nick Valensi and produced by Queens of the Stone Age's Josh Homme, one would expect a pretty loud outcome from their collaboration. But while the release includes some of that, it is largely a pop record, including a smattering of handclaps and tambourines. Highlights of the record include the tracks "Anything" and "On Edge." Valensi's guitar chops are evident, but not overused. The production value lives up to Homme's previous work (Eagles of Death Metal, Arctic Monkeys), but the songs could somehow have used a little more freshness. — **Brett Bush**



7.5

Jessy J

California Christmas

Changi Records

Producer: Jessy J, Jeff Lorber

Capping a decade of infusing the smooth jazz charts with her exotic Latin and Brazilian vibes and playful sensuality, saxophonist Jessy J takes a luxurious holiday on *California Christmas*—a spirited collection that melts away the snowy images of the holiday and replaces them with a lot of jazzy, bluesy fun. While the tunes are all staples of the season, Jessy creates new holiday traditions, slinking and twisting her seductive and energetic horn through colorful arrangements and productions that make them feel fresh. On hand playing elves to her Santa are fellow genre hitmakers Steve Oliver, Paul Brown and Jeff Lorber. — **Jonathan Widran**



8

Stick Men

Prog Noir

Unsung Productions/Moonjune Records

Producer: Tony Levin, Markus Reuter, Pat Mastelotto

This is probably the prog rock trio's most accessible album to date. It's a fairly balanced mix of vocal-oriented tunes with thoughtfully dark instrumentals and rich sonic landscapes. Both Tony Levin and Pat Mastelotto have been key architects of the band King Crimson's post-'70s renaissance and bring that sound design and groove to tracks like "The Tempest" and "Mantra." Guitarist Markus Reuter follows another musical path entirely, offering a Roxy Music/Tin Machine élan to numbers like "Schattenhaft" and "Plutonium." Ultimately, you have a triumvirate of likeminded players who realize the sum is greater than its individual parts. — **Eric A. Harabadian**



9

Deana Martin

Swing Street

Big Fish Records

Producer: John Griffith

A popular touring performer, Deana Martin (daughter of the legendary Dean Martin) has spent the last decade celebrating her dad's legacy while creating a formidable one of her own. After her previous reimaginings of beloved classics, she shows a fresh side of her artistry on *Swing Street*, centering the 15-track set on five dynamic originals co-written by Emmy and Grammy winner Patrick Williams, with spirited arrangements by Chris Walden. While she also hits on Songbook classics like "Georgia On My Mind," the set's top highlight is her sly and sensual take on the Classics IV hit "Spooky." Dino would be proud! — **Jonathan Widran**



9

D.R.A.M.

Big Baby D.R.A.M.

Atlantic Records

Producer: Various

Consistent with today's hip-hop delivered by millennial artists, D.R.A.M. offers a debut album that touches on hustle and having fun, while being unique. "Get It Myself" reflects on not waiting for anyone else, but relying on oneself to garner exposure, which he's done well thus far, obtaining co-signs by music's elites. D.R.A.M. is as carefree as Rick James and as soulful as Tyrese. He doesn't mind experimenting with certain concepts; he sets a liberal tone for his legacy in music, making the listener anticipate what else he has up his sleeves. — **Adam Seyum**



7

Guttermouth

New Car Smell

Rude Records

Producer: Guttermouth

As today's namby-pamby, grievance-fueled political climate breeds whining masses and teary, self-indulgent "safe spaces," the timing proves perfect for the reanimation of pure, unapologetically anarchic punk. Re-enter Guttermouth, one of the genre's genuine articles, whose devotion to dishing offense got them banned from performing in Canada for 18 months. On this no-frills EP, their edge proves cathartic. The flippant, six-song ride ends too soon, but punk's impact was never meant to last. The message remains—check your expectations, don't take things too seriously, in life or in music, and you're bound to improve your level of satisfaction. — **Andy Kaufmann**



8

Agnes Obel

Citizen Of Glass

Play it Again Sam (PIAS)

Producer: Agnes Obel

On her latest release, *Citizen of Glass*, Agnes Obel takes the listener into a dream-scape of keyboards, cello and strings, occasional percussion, and the artist's own beautiful vocals. Her lyrics conjure aspects of love filtered through ghosts and dreams. Introspective and lulling, this is music to listen to while watching snow fall. The purity of Obel's vision touches upon goth, classical and new age, but she makes it all her own. Besides the use of piano, celeste, mellotron, spinet and celesta, a "trautonium" is used, which is a predecessor to the electric piano and synthesizer. Nicely done! — **David Arnson**



7.5

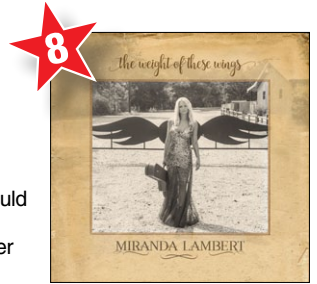
Miranda Lambert

The Weight of These Wings

RCA Nashville

Producer: Frank Liddell, Glenn Worf, Eric Masse

Fans of the Grammy-winning country star, hungry for her musical take on her much publicized divorce from Blake Shelton, should prepare for a lot of deep expressions and heavy confessions. At 24 tracks spread over two discs (subtitled "The Nerve" and "The Heart"), *The Weight of These Wings* is a dynamo of grand ambition, loaded with distorted guitars, rollicking jams and mega doses of pain, twang and a refreshingly honest rollercoaster of emotions. Her suffering, sorrow and digging out from the darkness is everyone's gain, offering hopeful catharsis that cements her status as more than a country superstar, but a premier storyteller. — **Jonathan Widran**



8

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.

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-Chris Lord-Alge

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The Mint Los Angeles, CA

Contact: jkuhn3133@gmail.com

Web: facebook.com/ComeOnDeath

The Players: Dustin Liggitt, vocals, bass; Curtis Bushey, guitar; Mike McGrogan, drums.

Material: If you love alternative rock similar to Bush, Tool or even Godhead you may enjoy what the Slit has to offer. Songs like "Run" and "Powder" are straight-up rock while "Elephant" is more of a ballad. "Nowhere" is the catchiest tune of the set with a nice balance of harmonics and discordant feedback.

The lyrics for their song "Isolate" are the most visual of the set: "I can barely breathe from all of the fumes/turning locks with keys to doors painted blue..." Again adding to the mood of the music, "...underwater now I can't seem to see...I can hold my breath until we both sleep."

Musicianship: The music does indeed make you feel like you are inside an underwater vessel out of a Jules Verne novel, thanks to Bushey's funk-wah guitar and seagull-call feedback. McGrogan delivers, especially on "Isolate" and "Run," with bass drum builds, solid rhythm pickups and finales.

Bushey is spotlighted on "Nowhere" with very clean but dark toned instrumentals. "Elephant" features a solid melodic bass line from Liggitt. Overall the group frequently transition between numbers but they also take the time to tune up as needed.

Performance: The band definitely draws a crowd and attention thanks in part to their lighted costumes, which are something out of an H.R. Giger painting if not a *Terminator* film.



THE SLIT

Liggitt channels no less than Jim Morrison and Robert Plant during his performance of "Nowhere," writhing on stage in a blaze of hologram colored strobe lights while still managing to turn out a decent bass solo. Unfortunately his vocals are low in the mix despite his apparent screaming. The band is fully capable of adjusting their dynamics (particularly on "Powder") so that really didn't seem to be the problem, rather a bad mic or cable short was perhaps the cause.

Summary: The band knows how to put on a theatrical show. Some audience members complained that the fog machine was a little overdone, but it did add to the ambience. While there is not a tremendous amount of variety in the set, there are moments that mix up what is a generally consistent atmospheric style. Liggitt is a great leading man and is so focused he almost appears to be in a trance, which adds to the overall vibe of the group.

– Brooke Trout

Pianos New York, NY

Contact: monica@thinkpress.net

Web: saramelson.com

The Players: Sara Melson, vocals, keyboards, guitar; Erica Quitsow, violin.

Material: The designation singer/songwriter must have been reserved for artists like Los Angeles-based Sara Melson, whose songs read like a diary set to music. In N.Y. to promote her brand-new release *Safe & Sound*, Melson delivered a set of cuts from the new album along with some of her earlier work. As an actress-turned-performing musician, her songs are mini-dramas and thematically deal with relationship woes and romantic betterment.

In her song "Go Where It's Warm," Melson's double entendre twist on leaving a relationship for a more conducive environment, works on two levels: "I've gotta go where it's warm, cause the winds of change are blowing through/I'm gonna go where it's warm where I don't have to perform, where I'll be far, far away from you." In "Never Been Hurt," Melson demonstrates the willingness to jump into the fire once again, reaching out to grab that silver lining: "I'm gonna love you like I've never been hurt before/Gonna open up the lock and let you in the door."

Musicianship: Equally proficient on keyboards and guitar, Melson employed the instrument that best fit the song. Her alto voice is unadorned and direct, with no vibrato and, to her credit, devoid of pyrotechnics, which can



SARA MELSON

often detract from the song and the underlying story. Accompanied by violinist Erica Quitsow, Melson used that instrument sparingly and at the appropriate times. The two met on Facebook, which is a thumbs up for the positive uses of social media.

Performance: The artist's laid-back persona dovetailed naturally with her material. Opening up about the backstory behind "Go Where It's Warm" gave the audience some insight into her songwriting influences. Though the crowd was attentive, and though Pianos is a respectable venue with enthusiastic listeners, it has more of a bar atmosphere.

Melson's sensitive, introspective music might be better suited to a coffeehouse setting or intimate club where her particular brand of emoting can be more effectively spotlighted. Even her sultry version of the Rolling Stones' "No Expectations" got a bit lost in the club's background noises and/or too much reverb in the PA.

Summary: Sara Melson has a good handle on her repertoire and is comfortable in her genre. Going forward, she would be wise to choose venues more carefully.

– Ellen Woloshin



BRETT CALLWOOD

HM157 Los Angeles, CA

Contact: hmonetfiftyseven@gmail.com
Web: rocojet.com

The Players: Nora Keyes, vocals; Jimi Cabeza de Vaca, guitar; John Perreira, guitar; Rebecca Lynn, violin; Carisa Bianca Mellado, harmony vocals; Sarah Allene, harmony vocals; Mitchell Brown, synth; Richard Costigan, percussion.

Material: This was an unusual show. Rather than a traditional band performance, this evening at HM157 (a wonderful art space inside a house that is a protected historical monument) saw Rococo Jet perform a live score to a 1927 silent movie called *Sunrise*.

The movie was screened in the backyard, on a neighboring wall painted white, and adjacent to a tee-pee. It couldn't be more perfect a setting for something this artistically unique.

The movie itself tells the story of a farmer, played by George O'Brien, who falls for a city woman (Janet Gaynor). Gaynor's character tries to convince the farmer to drown his wife so that they can be together. It's a love story, but certainly one with a sinister edge. So with the movie playing, all eyes were on the screen/wall, while the band played and sang over it all.

Musicianship: There's so much to admire here, not least Jimi Cabeza de Vaca and John Perreira's beautiful guitar work. They don't

play widdly solos (at least not here); rather, they understand that they're creating a musical blanket for the layered female voices to lay on. There are moments with other instruments in there too, but nothing stands out because it's not supposed to. The final modern score is certainly the sum of its parts. The vocal work is clearly the focus, and there are elements of haunting Irish vocal group Clannad in there, the women combining elegantly and beautifully to create something majestic.

Performance: There was absolutely nothing in the way of performance from the actual group. They were sat on a sofa at the very front, playing while everyone watched the film.

While the instrumentation is minimalistic and gloriously sparse, the women's voices are so lush and harmoniously on point that you could be forgiven for overestimating the amount of personnel actually involved. This is less about "songs" in the traditional sense and, as it should be, more about creating music to complement the movie, though some of the music is pulled from the new album *Mysterium Tremens*, the release of which was being celebrated at this show.

Summary: This was as much a movie screening as a concert, but the combination of those things made for a fascinating and very enjoyable night.

If there's a hole to pick, it's that the music doesn't always seem to naturally fit the film. There were moments when something quite dramatic was happening on-screen, and the music didn't alter to reflect that. But overall, the experiment was a resounding success.

— Brett Callwood

Echoplex Los Angeles, CA

Contact: flypr@flypr.net
Web: peoplesblues.com

The Players: Nekoro Williams, vocals, drums, Tim Beavers II, vocals, guitar; Matthew Volkes, vocals, bass.

Material: To describe this Richmond, VA-based trio as guitar rock would be accurate, no doubt, but it wouldn't come close to telling the full story. At times a throwback to psychedelic rock acts of the '60s along with contemporary stalwarts Dr. Dog, and at others reminiscent of roots rock outfits like San Francisco's the Stone Foxes, People's Blues of Richmond defy genre labels...unless "face melting rock" is a genre.

Musicianship: Whether listening live or in your living room with a pair of headphones, music is at its best when telling a story. Beavers' sing/talk style, tonally similar to Dan Auerbach, lends itself perfectly to the storytelling elements of the life-experience-based lyrics, covering, amongst other things, the powerful throes of addiction.

The frenetic, heavy, bluesy guitar riffs amplify true emotion behind the music. Williams' drum work is stellar, managing the many tempo changes throughout the set, and often within the same songs. Volkes on bass brings a stabilizing force to the group, with funky lines underneath the more showy guitar and drums that give the songs real staying power.



GRANT STONER

Performance: The unconventional lighting setup, which included some imaginative use of video projection, made it clear People's Blues of Richmond aren't about individual spotlight moments, rather a sum of all parts. Kicking off with the original, Black Keys-influenced "Go Home," the roller coaster ride was just getting started. What followed was two-plus hours of a passionate, adrenaline fueled performance that would've felt just as right on a festival headliner stage as it did in the dark confines of the Echoplex. Boasting a setlist full of originals, showcasing the songwriting chops

of this trio, People's Blues showed an innate ability to energize the crowd, smartly adding a few covers from the likes of Bowie and Jack White to further accentuate their talents.

Summary: Drawing some apt comparisons to Led Zeppelin (further punctuated with a late-in-the-set, "When the Levee Breaks" tag), People's Blues of Richmond aren't afraid to mix up styles, ultimately creating something unique and entertaining. This band obviously has the right talent and the right mindset to go far in this industry. — Grant Stoner

Molly Malone's Los Angeles, CA

Contact: jgeffen@jagpr.com

Web: kaseylansdale.com

The Players: Kasey Lansdale, vocals; Vince White, guitar.

Material: There's a glorious dichotomy to Kasey Lansdale. On one hand, she's every inch the squeaky clean, blonde bombshell country star that one could easily see signed to a major label, partnered with an industry-trusted songwriter from Nashville, and then having mega-hits for years to come. She's got some big tunes, not least the recent "Sorry Ain't Enough" single that you imagine could get a ton of radio-play, but didn't. Still, it's not difficult to envisage a pop-country career for Lansdale.

Then, however, you dig a little deeper. Behind the polished and professional sheen, there's real soul going on. It's betrayed, not only by her wonderful rendition of Patsy Cline's "Walkin' After Midnight," but also by the song "Blame You For Trying" from the debut *Restless* album, where she admits she's trying to emulate heroes like Patsy and Reba McEntire. Behind the huge smile, Lansdale knows how to wrench pain and humility from her heart, and that's what makes her such a special talent.

Musicianship: Lansdale was joined onstage for this show by acoustic guitarist Vince White, who stood in jeans and a Kasey Lansdale tee on stage-right, trying not to be noticed but failing due to his natural and very authentic



dusty country style. He didn't over-play, and White's style fits Lansdale's voice perfectly. Her voice is superb, displaying a raw, throaty husk when necessary to convey emotion, but also hitting the top notes smoothly.

Performance: There were maybe 12 people in Molly Malone's for this set, which can be partly explained by the fact that she was the opener on a four-band bill, and hit the stage at 7 p.m. Still, Lansdale performed as if she were at the Grand Ole Opry. She paced the stage like a panther, and made eye contact with everyone in attendance (not difficult, admittedly). A

natural performer, she deserves to play in front of more people, though she likely knows that only hard work will help her achieve this.

Summary: With a new *Leave Her Wild* EP out there, Lansdale is working hard to get her music heard. She admits to being a little bitter after her "Sorry Ain't Enough" single and the accompanying video were largely ignored by the media, but that's par for the course early on. If she keeps plugging away, Kasey Lansdale has a better chance at success than many other country musicians.

— Brett Callwood

Catalina Jazz Club Hollywood, CA

Contact: agoldmark@mac.com

Web: keysnovello.com

The Players: John Novello, piano; Eric Marienthal, alto saxophone; Darryl Williams, bass; Eric McKain, percussion; Rayford Griffin, drums.

Material: Though this show was billed as a celebration of his popular new contemporary jazz release *Ivory Soul*, veteran keyboardist John Novello launched the set with exciting perspective, setting the tone by going back a few decades for "One Less Worry," an intense percussive jam recorded by his fusion band Niacin. The tunes from *Ivory Soul*, including the easy swinging "Shuffle The Deck" and the Top 10 Billboard Smooth Jazz hit "Crush," were more mainstream, purely melodic "in the pocket" contemporary urban jazz, but each offered open doors to a spirited duality between Novello and Marienthal and powerful, high octane soloing by each member. Novello's arrangements allowed for exciting dynamics, where even a subtle piano opening for "Blackbird" evolved into a crazy jam.

Musicianship: Novello is a master of the Hammond B-3, but as per the focus of the new album, engaged in pure, engaging "Ivory Soul," balancing elegance, rich melodicism and emotional nuance with exciting percussive chording and exploratory improvisations. Marienthal ran the emotional gamut on his alto, driving songs powerfully and contributing gentle harmonies. This is the first gig Williams



and Novello played together, and they were an instant match, grooving perfectly and opening spots for the bassist to dive into funk soloing. Griffin's flourishes and soloing added thrust, while McKain took other tunes into exotic sonic dimensions. For "Funk Shui," guest saxman Donald Hayes engaged in a fiery repartee with Marienthal that stole the show.

Performance: These are consummate musicians who could be engaging via technique alone. Because of their experience in the smooth jazz world, they know how to put on a show, drawing people in with inviting movements and playful intensity. Williams was especially compelling during his solos.

Novello's amusing anecdotes showed he's still as excited as ever to be hitting the charts and adding true jazz creativity to even the poppiest of tunes.

Summary: In a word, masterful. Novello's show is the rare set that appeals to fans of fusion, trad jazz and smooth jazz alike. These are versatile musicians at the top of their game—even after thousands of gigs, they still bring a freewheeling sense of joy and transcendence to material both new and familiar. The melodies sparkled, the groove was infectious, and Novello's invention and openness to individual solos kept the audience wondering what might happen next. — Jonathan Widran

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The Viper Room West Hollywood, CA

Contact: cardiacband@gmail.com

Web: CardiacTheBand.com

The Players: David DiSarro, vocals; Don "Dish" Bish, drums; Jerod Woznik, guitar.

Material: Cardiac is a neo-progressive band reminiscent of the Cure and Pendragon. They start off telling you a tale, then take you through a long winding musical highway (telling the story with their instruments) and then the vocals finish off the song at the other end; all with no bass player, only pre-recorded loops. Tracks like "Lick the Blade" and "Summer Saved Me" tell stories of sadness and destruction and how it can all be alright in the end. It was a bit difficult to grasp the meaning of the songs because they were presented with aggression and attitude, but at the same time the music takes over and makes it worthwhile.

Musicianship: DiSarro was very aggressive and abrasive on the vocals at times, then smooth and silky at others. It seemed that his screaming was inserted wherever and whenever he felt like it, and it made for a dynamic, dramatic set. His range comes through pretty well, most notably on "I Feel Alive" and "Rot in Rhode Island." Woznik was a bit shy on the guitar at first. He seemed a little nervous, but by the time "Silver Lining" was being played he was as comfortable as could be. Bish banged on the drums like a pro. Saying he was superb is an understatement; excellent drumming on



every song with just the right amount of fills and rolls that suited each song perfectly. Bish made "Summer Saved Me" come alive with a fervor and enthusiasm that made the walls shake.

Performance: Cardiac is an energetic group, most notably DiSarro. He worked the stage, jumping, running and taunting the crowd (and his drummer). He made the performance worth watching (although at times at the price of the vocals). He was off key a few times, but only because he was midair as he delivered notes. Bish was solid behind the drum kit all night long as he and DiSarro played to each other's antics. Woznik was relaxed strumming his

guitar and, as someone in the crowd noted, "He's so sexy just standing there."

Summary: A good overall performance for the guys of Cardiac. They started out the set with an eerie ballad called "Another Hero Dies" that set the stage for a fiery, dynamic set. The music is heartfelt and relatable to life's harsh realities—drugs and broken relationships. The tunes are performed with vigor and aggression and the band make you feel what their songs are about. Cardiac tend to overdo the visual part of their performance, and the musicianship suffers because of it, but at the same time they are fun and amusing to watch. — **Pierce Brochetti**

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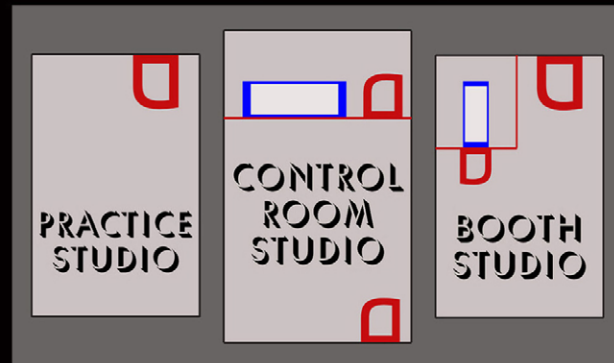
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10 Things You Should NEVER Say On Stage

Stage banter—the stuff you say to your audience between your songs—is an important part of delivering an engaging live performance. But be careful what you say. The wrong statement—just a few ill-advised words—can send your show into a nosedive. To help you avoid any gaffes, check out these timely tips from the new book *How To Make It in the New Music Business: Practical Tips on Building a Loyal Following and Making a Living as a Musician* by Ari Herstand.

1. “We’re Having Technical Difficulties”

Even if your guitar just caught fire. Well actually, that would be hilarious if you said it then. But when bands sheepishly admit it into the mic, it’s uncomfortable and kills the vibe. Technical difficulties are your fault. Even when they’re not. Your amp will crap out, your guitar cable will short, your batteries will die, your tuner will get dust in it and short out, the DI will die, the mic stand will fall apart and all of this you’re going to need to know how to deal with on the spot, in front of your audience.

It’s your stage. It’s your show.

I once had a venue’s DI die on me during my first song in front of a sold-out show in San Francisco. I had just built up a 12-track loop with beat boxing, trumpets, bass, keys, guitar, the works. So when it crapped out, it felt like Satan had just burst through the floor, grabbed my sound and bust out the back door leaving only awkward silence.

However, because I knew my setup so well, I quickly went through the checklist of everything it could be and realized within four seconds it was the DI. Without missing a beat, I got the crowd 1 2, 1 clapping while I told the sound guy I needed a new DI. He ran up, switched out the DI, the sound came back and joined the crowd’s 1 2, 1 claps almost right on beat where I left off.

I could have smiled awkwardly at the crowd, pissed myself, then curled up in a ball on the center of the stage crying, “There’s no place like home” while clicking my heels, but that wouldn’t have accomplished anything. That’s basically the same as saying, “Uh, we’re having technical difficulties” while looking awkwardly at your band members hoping someone will fix it for you.

2. “I Forgot the Lyrics”

If you can’t memorize your lyrics, then bring a lyrics sheet on stage as reference. Or get good at making them up on the spot.

The only thing worse than bad lyrics is forgotten lyrics.

Don’t ever step on stage unprepared. Not at an open mic, not at a talent show, not at a songwriters showcase and especially not at a show where your name is on the bill. The stage is not a time for you to “see how it goes” or to practice. Rehearse on your own time.

3. “I Want to Thank My Significant Other”

It’s like having a one-on-one conversation with someone in the audience off the mic. Uncomfortable for everyone else in the house.

Leave your lover out of it. If he or she did something truly awesome, then you can say something like “We’d like to thank our friend Sarah for getting this song into the hands of the music supervisor at *The Fosters*.”

If your significant other needs to be publicly thanked as your significant other, then you have bigger issues you have to work out.

4. “I’m Sorry”

Don’t ever apologize on stage. It makes you look weak. I don’t care if you just dropped a baby. Don’t apologize.

Making excuses for your lack of preparation makes everyone in the house uncomfortable and feel bad for you. I hear it all the time: “I forgot the rest of the song. Sorry.” “I’m sorry if this song sucks, we just wrote it.” “I’m sorry there aren’t more people here.” “We haven’t rehearsed this much, it might suck.”

Own the stage. Own the room. Own your set. Or don’t show up.

5. “Your City Sucks”

Should be a no-brainer, but I can’t tell you how many touring bands I’ve seen make fun of the city they are in—on stage. It may be fun to joke about in the van, but your audience takes pride in their city. No matter

if you think their city is cool or not. Never say anything negative about the town you are in while on stage unless you want a beer bottle thrown at you.

6. “This Song Is About My Grandma Who Died of Cancer. Love You, Nana.”

Don’t depress your audience. You can play a song about your dead grandma, but you don’t need to tell the audience that’s what it’s about.

People don’t pay money to come to shows to be sad. They come to be happy. To have fun. To be enlightened. To be inspired.

If you can’t communicate the power of your song by just playing it, then maybe the song isn’t really that good. That being said, telling stories about songs—especially at folk shows—is extremely important and impactful. Work out your stories so you don’t ramble.

7. “I’m Broke”

Don’t make your audience feel bad for you. It removes the mystique and coolness factor. You can say, “Pick

up a T-shirt and help us get to the next city.” That offers an emotional appeal in a positive light.

Guilting your fans into buying your merch never works.

8. “You Guys Suck”

Even if 95 out of the 100 people are screaming above your acoustic set while smashing glasses and vomiting in the corner, five people are engulfed in your set. Never insult your audience. They always have one ear to you—even if you are just background music.

9. “Any Requests?”

You’re never going to get the songs that you actually have prepared, and there will always be that one a**hole who yells “Free Bird” as if he just came up with the joke.

10. “How Does It Sound?”

This is a slap in the face to the sound guy. Never ask the crowd that. It should sound amazing. If it doesn’t, then it’s either your fault or the sound guy’s fault. Either way, you just pissed off the one person not in your band who can actually make you sound worse.



ARI HERSTAND is the author of *How To Make It in the New Music Business*, a Los Angeles-based singer/songwriter and the creator of the music business advice blog *Ari’s Take*. Find him at arierstand.com.

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