Inside the meteoric rise of the 21-year-old whose 24/7 social media presence, Bernie Sanders support and genre-bending talent has made her the mouthpiece of a millennial audience: ‘I talk to them like real f—ing human beings’
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**Kelly Clarkson’s ‘Piece’ Proves *American Idol’s* Still Got It**

**Even in its 15th and final season, Fox TV’s *American Idol* can still make an impact on the charts.** The show’s first-season queen, **Kelly Clarkson**, soars onto the Billboard Hot 100 at No. 8 with “Piece by Piece” after her emotional performance of the song on the Feb. 25 episode. The title track from her 2015 album skyrockets 35-1 on Digital Songs (marking her third No. 1 on the list) with 210,000 downloads sold in the week ending March 3, up 852 percent, according to Nielsen Music.

Clarkson sang the moving song about her father and husband (originally recorded as a midtempo track) as a ballad on *Idol*, bringing her and judge **Keith Urban** to tears. On Feb. 29, she released the slowed-down “Idol Version”; on March 4, it was added to the deluxe digital version of the album and released as part of her new *Piece by Piece Remixed*. *Piece by Piece* vaults 120-6 on the Billboard 200, up 682 percent to 44,000 equivalent units.

Though sales account for 88 percent of the song’s Hot 100 chart points, “Piece” also drew 3.1 million U.S. streams (up 969 percent) and increased airplay of both the original and “Idol Version.” The track debuts at No. 23 on Adult Contemporary and re-enters Adult Top 40 at No. 33.

---

### Billboard Hot 100

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Peak Position</th>
<th>On Chart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>Rihanna Feat. Drake</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love Yourself</td>
<td>Justin Bieber</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stressed Out</td>
<td>twenty one pilots</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My House</td>
<td>Flo Rida</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorry</td>
<td>Justin Bieber</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pillowtalk</td>
<td>Zayn</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me, Myself &amp; I</td>
<td>G-Eazy x Bebe Rexha</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piece By Piece</td>
<td>Kelly Clarkson</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Years</td>
<td>Lukas Graham</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cake By The Ocean</td>
<td>DNCE</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
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</tbody>
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Clarkson’s “Piece by Piece” leaps onto the Hot 100 following the Idol album’s tearful return to the show.
ZARA LARSSON & MNEK
Never Forget You

LARSSON The song was done in two hours — it felt like it wrote itself. We had a great flow. It was supposed to be my song — it was my session — but when we sent it to all the labels and they loved it, he was like, “Well, I kind of want this song.” And I was like, “No, I want the song.” We ended up making it a duet, which is a win-win.

What was it like working with MNEK?

The song first hit overseas; it took a while to pick up steam here. Did you ever lose hope that you would break stateside? For some time, I did. But then I remembered the U.S. is actually very slow when it comes to everything. You just have to be patient and trust the marketing team, because America is so huge. It takes some time to break a record. [In Europe], you can release a song on Monday and it can be No. 1 on Friday.

Your career has had some starts and stops — you won the Swedish version of Got Talent at age 10 and released an EP five years later. Do you ever get impatient? I’m not patient, but I keep myself busy doing other things: social media, blogging, podcasting... I feel like it took forever for me to get where I’m at, and I’m not even where I want to be.

—STEVEN J. HOROWITZ

The Danish pop band goes top 10 on the Hot 100 with its global hit, which also climbs 6-4 on Digital Songs, 19-9 on Streaming Songs and 42-27 on Radio Songs.

LUKAS GRAHAM 7 Years

The Danish pop band goes top 10 on the Hot 100 with its global hit, which also climbs 6-4 on Digital Songs, 19-9 on Streaming Songs and 42-27 on Radio Songs.
Fifth Harmony’s “Work From Home” (featuring Ty Dolla Sign) debuts at No. 12 on the Billboard Hot 100, marking the quintet’s highest debut and matching its best rank on the chart, “Worth It” (featuring Kid Ink), which rose to No. 12 in August 2015. The group’s new single opens at No. 5 on the Digital Songs tally (88,000 sold) and No. 13 on Streaming Songs (10 million U.S. streams), while also adding 20 million airplay impressions, according to Nielsen Music. “Work” previews 5H’s second full-length album, 7/27, expected May 20.

—G.T.
FEATURES
40 Generation Halsey The 21-year-old has a hit album and a sold-out show at Madison Square Garden, but that hasn’t kept her from revealing every detail of her life to her passionate fans.

48 The Millennial Survey Twenty-one young artists, influencers and industry pros explain why their generation is so widely misunderstood. Plus: Super-manager Scooter Braun on the ups and downs of “oversharing.”

50 A Trip To Hell Kesha’s mother Pebe Sebert speaks exclusively to Billboard about the explosive allegations leveled against her daughter’s famed producer, Dr. Luke, and the 10 years the singer spent as a “prisoner.”

THE BILLBOARD HOT 100
3 Kelly Clarkson soars in at No. 8 with “Piece by Piece.”

TOPLINE
13 George Martin, 1926-2016: The legendary Beatles producer is remembered by those who knew him best.

16 South by Southwest founder Roland Swenson on how he scored keynotes with President and Mrs. Obama.

7 DAYS ON THE SCENE
24 Parties Paris Fashion Week, BMI Latin Awards, Okeechobee

THE BEAT
29 Behind the scenes of Fox’s live musical The Passion, which is bringing the Bible to 2016 by swapping robes and sandals with “Jordans and jeans.”

32 “My emotions are explosive,” says Norse alt-pop import (and Katy Perry fave) Aurora.

STYLE
35 Hip mini-me kicks are the hottest accessory for music stars’ tots.

36 How do you get Flo Rida to play your bat mitzvah?

38 Archivist David Casavant is Rihanna’s go-to for vintage Raf Simons.

39 Travel: A Week(e)nd in Toronto.

BACKSTAGE PASS
57 Branding’s power players.

CHARTS
68 The 1975 scores its first No. 1 album.

CODA
84 In 1988, Rick Astley hit the top with his first single, “Never Gonna Give You Up.”

CORRECTION
In the March 12 issue, Billboard misstated that Erica Rose had been an employee of Maverick. She is, however, Alicia Keys’ sole manager.
Congratulations to Mike Tunnicliffe, Kate Denton, Tom Eaton and all of UMG's Branding Power Players.

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Rich Lehrfeld

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"WHEN I FIRST STARTED IN THE music business, the ultimate aim was to try and re-create, on record, a live performance as accurately as possible," George Martin recalled in Kenneth Womack’s 2007 book Long and Winding Roads. "But then we realized that we could do something other than that."

During the course of his 60-year career, the legendary Beatles producer — who died of undisclosed causes at home in England on March 8 at the age of 90 — and his willingness to experiment helped pave the way for some of the most memorable music of the 20th century. He holds the record as the producer with the most No. 1 songs (23) on the Billboard Hot 100. Surviving Beatles Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr tweeted condolences to Martin’s family. "If anyone earned the title of the Fifth Beatle, it was George," wrote McCartney.

Martin’s indelible association with The Beatles began in 1962, when Brian Epstein introduced him to four fresh-faced Liverpudlians who had been rejected by every major record label in the United Kingdom. "They weren’t very good," Martin later recalled to the BBC, but still he saw something special in them and offered the group (minus original drummer Pete Best) a deal with Parlophone — the little-known EMI imprint he headed.

Until then, much of Martin’s studio work had been producing jazz bands, choral recordings and comedy LPs by Peter Sellers, Peter Ustinov and Spike Milligan. The Beatles’ love of Milligan and his Goons troupe helped build the foundation for what would become one of the most fruitful and influential partnerships in music history.

That background with comedy, which gave him experience and patience with harnessing unorthodox ideas, combined with his classical training, which helped him translate those ideas and bring them to fruition, made him a perfect shepherd for the group’s raw, youthful talent. During the next seven years, Martin produced every Beatles album except one (the Phil Spector-helmed Let It Be) and in the process helped redefine the role of music producer.

“He was the guy who invented the job. He’s the spiritual godfather of recorded music,” says Grammy Award-winning English producer...
Nigel Godrich, best-known for his work with Radiohead and Beck.

And while his fingerprints are all over The Beatles’ recordings — that’s him playing the piano solo on John Lennon’s “In My Life”, he prevailed upon McCartney to record “Eleanor Rigby” with a string quartet — his self-effacing, quintessentially British nature led him to shy away from not only the limelight that he could have commanded but also the financial windfall that would have come with taking a percentage of The Beatles’ record sales, electing to take just his producer’s fee.

“He set the standard for humility by refusing to leave a musical thumbprint on the forehead of the artist,” says Blue Note Records president Don Was, who has produced albums by Bonnie Raitt and The Rolling Stones. “He didn’t try to take credit for creating The Beatles.”


He produced many successful records in his post-Beatles years — with Jeff Beck, America, The Mahavishnu Orchestra, Sting and others — and expanded the Associated Independent Recording production company he had founded after leaving EMI in 1966 into studios in England and Montserrat. He also worked with McCartney on several occasions, including the 1973 James Bond theme song “Live and Let Die” and his acclaimed 1982 album, Tag of War.

Yet he never escaped the shadow of his work with The Beatles, and he embraced it. Asked about Martin’s contribution to the group’s timelessness, Was says, “If you really break down Beatles records and analyze the way the parts are arranged, they adhere to the way you’d voice a string quartet. They’re built on a foundation that goes back hundreds of years.” He regrouped with the surviving members to work on their mid-1990s Anthology series and was knighted by Queen Elizabeth in 1996.

Martin’s 30th U.K. No. 1 came in 1997 with “Candle in the Wind,” Elton John’s tribute to Princess Diana. Citing poor hearing, he announced his retirement in 1999. He subsequently advised his son Giles on Beatles projects, including Broadway musical Love and the recent +1 video collection.

“From the day that he gave The Beatles our first recording contract to the last time I saw him,” McCartney said on March 9 — perhaps unintentionally echoing himself on “Penny Lane” — “he was the most generous, intelligent and musical person I’ve ever had the pleasure to know.”

**Rolling The Stones Into Cuba**

Staging the group’s March 25 free concert in Havana is no easy task

**BY RAY WADDELL**

Cuba is a long way from becoming the next red-hot touring market, but when The Rolling Stones bring their massive production into Havana on March 25, it will mark a major milestone in the cultural emergence of this Caribbean — and Communist — frontier, ushered in by a group that for decades was considered the epitome of Western decadence.

The 14th and final date on the band’s Latin American tour will be free and is expected to pack 500,000 people into the city’s Ciudad Deportiva de la Habana (with possibly hundreds of thousands more in the surrounding streets). “We are witnessing a historic embrace between the Cuban people and the international music community,” says Adam Wilkes, senior vp at AEG Live, which is overseeing the show with AEG’s Concerts West division.

The idea to play Havana came from the band, but the legwork was done by Rolling Stones manager Joyce Smyth, who teamed with AEG Asia and Concerts West to secure the date with the Cuban government. The parties declined to comment on negotiations, but the political and physical logistics of staging a stadium-sized show in such relatively virgin territory cannot be underestimated: On March 6, Diplo’s group Major Lazer played a free, light-production outdoor concert in Havana that drew a reported 450,000 people. “Relations have warmed, but there are still a tremendous number of restrictions,” says Major Lazer’s agent Sam Hunt of The Windish Agency.

While the Stones show’s free status simplified some matters — neither the band, which has grossed around $400 million in touring since 2012, nor AEG is taking a profit — the issue remained of how to pay for it. The group will be bringing 61 sea containers and a 747 freighter full of gear, as well as a 350-strong crew. “We have to bring in literally everything,” says Concerts West co-president John Meglen.

Ultimately, Smyth secured the majority of the funding — estimated at more than $7 million — from Fundashon Bon Intenshon on behalf of the Island of Curacao, which initiates and supports international charitable projects. (The concert will be filmed, which could bring in additional revenue later on.)

And in this case, Meglen emphasizes, free really means free. “We’re not doing VIP packages or any of that type of stuff,” he says. “The band wanted this for the people of Cuba, and if you’re in Cuba, you can go.”

While two free concerts do not constitute a new live-music industry, the Stones show is in many ways a jumping-off point for a new era in Cuba. “It will be a slow road,” says AEG’s Wilkes, “but The Rolling Stones are the catalyst for exciting times to come.”
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Global VP, Consumer Connections, Anheuser-Busch InBev

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BY DAN RYS

Roland Swenson, co-founder of music’s marquee event, recalls 30 years as he welcomes the president and first lady

SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST’S ANNUAL music, film and interactive festival will celebrate its 30th anniversary in Austin when it begins March 11, but three decades of assembling one of the music industry’s premiere events hasn’t made the process any easier. “It gets harder every year,” says festival co-founder/managing director Roland Swenson, 59, whose event brought an estimated $317 million to the city in 2015. This year, the hard work will pay off with the first appearance by a sitting president and first lady — Barack and Michelle Obama will deliver keynote speeches — and the festival will host 72,000 registrants, more than 2,000 artists and hundreds of showcases, panels and workshops on the film, music and tech industries over 10 days. Before its 30th edition, Swenson spoke about the Obamas, brands and the evolution of SXSW.

What made the Obamas want to come?
I’m not sure. We’ve been talking to them for years about making an appearance here and got close a couple of times. I expect it was on their to-do list and they looked up and thought, “Hey, we’re out of here next year; maybe we should do this now.” I know they want to get in front of all the young, creative, energetic people who will be at SXSW.

What else is new this year?
We’ve developed this recommendation software that is part of our phone app, so you go in and check off the acts that you want to go see, and based on those acts it will automatically recommend other acts [performing] nearby. We started working with what they call beacons — little disc-like devices — and we’re going to install 5,000 of them all around. So if you have your app open and you have Bluetooth on, as you walk by certain areas you’ll get messages about what’s going on nearby. We work with this company from Vancouver, EventBase, and they’ve helped us develop this new technology.

SXSW has been criticized for too much brand involvement. Is that fair?
Every February we have these meetings for the staff, and I hold up a headline that reads “SXSW: How Big Is Too Big?” Then I say, “This is from 1991.” We’ve never shied away from sponsorships or working with brands: We think that’s just part of the deal for creative people. It has become an important income stream for musical artists, film, TV. It’s the business we’ve chosen to be in.

He Was A Force Of Nature

Paradigm music chief Chip Hooper, who died March 5, played a huge role in building the company, and his artists generated hundreds of millions of box-office dollars

BY RAY WADDELL

The March 5 death of Chip Hooper at 53 after a long battle with cancer dealt a huge blow to not only Paradigm Talent, where Hooper was worldwide head of music, but also the live music industry at large. He was considered one of the most creative executives in the business, influencing many artists and agents during a 30-year career.

A perennial on Billboard’s Power 100 list, Hooper was the personal agent for Dave Matthews Band and Phish — which have generated hundreds of millions of dollars at the box office — among others, and oversaw Paradigm’s 115-agent team. Hooper played a key role in building Paradigm’s music division into one of the world’s largest, with a roster of more than 2,000 artists.

Hooper began his career at the Good Music Agency, and in 1988 convinced Monterey Peninsula founders Dan Weiner and Fred Bohlander to take a shot on him. He would spend the next 28 years in their office.

“Chip hired us,” says Weiner. “He made it very clear he wanted to work here. It changed our lives.”

A fierce negotiator, Hooper was “a force of nature and always on a mission for his clients,” says Live Nation’s Rick Franks. “He would pound you for the toughest of deals, but you knew he had great soul and would have your back.”

Hooper was integral not only to Paradigm’s 2004 move into live entertainment, but also in its acquisition of New York-based Little Big Man and other key agencies, including Ellis Industries, Third Coast, EDM powerhouse AM Only and indie firm The Windish Agency. The move to Paradigm, and growth that followed, “would not have happened without him,” says Weiner. “He put that puzzle together.”

The devoted father of Max, 24, and Valerie, 21, made a special trip just days before his death to see Max play basketball for Oakland University.

Says Paradigm chairman/CEO Sam Gores: “His standards were very high, and we will honor his legacy by continuing to maintain those standards.”
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THIS YEAR’S LEAD ARTIST & PACKAGING UNVEILED APRIL 2016
Perhaps the biggest challenge when creating a From the Desk Of feature on Sonos CEO John MacFarlane is the fact that he doesn’t really have one. His “office” is anywhere in the company’s 12 global offices he sets up his laptop.

“I would go to our Amsterdam office for two weeks, work out of the kitchen and run into everybody,” explains the 50-year-old married father of two. “I would do the same in Boston and realized I got to know everybody in those locations so much better than in Santa Barbara, where I'd sit in my office. So last year I just got rid of it.”

MacFarlane’s unorthodox approach to work space—which in Santa Barbara includes free pilsner on tap, mustard greens from the office’s tower garden and an officewide, staff-curated...
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soundtrack — reflects a freewheeling approach to business that he has honed through the decades.

In 1989, the Denver native matriculated at the University of California, Santa Barbara for graduate studies in engineering and by 1992 had launched an Internet email system called Software.com, long before most people had heard of the Internet and before he knew “the difference between a P&L and a balance sheet.” He figured it out soon enough: Within a decade, Software.com merged with Phone.com in a deal valued at $6.4 billion.

Since its 2002 launch, Sonos — which specializes in “smart speakers,” controlled from an iPad or iPhone, that can stream music in multiple locations in a house or office — has grown from MacFarlane and his three fellow co-founders to 1,400 staffers today, with a dozen offices spread across the United States, Europe and China. The company had its best year to date in 2015, hitting nearly $1 billion in sales, according to MacFarlane, and unveiling its Trueplay technology (which allows users to “tune” speakers to a room’s dimensions) and Play:3, a compact yet sonically sophisticated speaker jammed with midwoofers and tweeters. In February, the company announced a partnership with Apple Music (which was criticized for digital music collections, it would be around 300 million for our market. If you add up Spotify’s 28 million people and Apple Music’s 11 million, you now have a target of 39 million — that’s roughly a tenfold drop. It’s a big change to lead everybody through, and it’s all just starting.

 Apart from the day-to-day running of the company, what is your biggest task right now?

I have 20 people on our management team going on a two-day off-site [meeting] in Los Angeles to refocus our company strategy onto paid music subscribers. During the first 10 years of Sonos, [most users were] people who had ripped or purchased digital music collections and then added a subscription service if they wanted one. With the launch of Apple Music last year, and on Sonos [on Feb. 10], the whole industry is leaning into streaming music, so we’re reattributing the company at streaming-music users.

What is most challenging about this change?

If you looked at the Sonos market a year ago and added up all the people who had [downloaded] digital music collections, it would be around 300 million for our market. If you add up Spotify’s 28 million people and Apple Music’s 11 million, you now have a target of 39 million — that’s roughly a tenfold drop. It’s a big change to lead everybody through, and it’s all just starting.

Is getting more people to convert to streaming one of your goals?

A lot of that is being done by streaming services. Our mission is to fill your home with music. That [“Music Makes It Home”] campaign with Apple was fun because it’s true: People quantitatively listen to a lot more music when they can play virtually anything ever made, rather than their own collections.

You rarely see Rick Rubin cosign an audio product, yet he’s featured prominently in Sonos’ latest ad campaign. How did you connect?

We saw him talking about Sonos in a magazine. He said it had changed his relationship with music and that he finally [understood] streaming services because of Sonos. He gave us our North Star, which is to — as closely as possible — deliver the artist’s intent in whatever room you are in, which is what led us to Trueplay.

What role does Giles Martin [son of late Beatles producer George] play at Sonos?

He leads our sound experience team. He’s an accomplished producer and recording engineer and worked on Play:5 a lot, so when we released it [in November], it was in the homes of [advisory board members] Rick Rubin, Hans Zimmer and Q-Tip, and we made sure it sounded like they wanted it to. It’s triple-oriented, so you can put it vertical or horizontal, or you can use two and pair them. I would say a pair of Play:5s can’t be beat for less than $40,000, and they’re $700 each.

What’s the criteria for selecting the artists Sonos uses in its campaigns?

We won’t work with an artist if it’s just a commercial transaction and he or she is not passionate about Sonos.

Who are your music-business mentors?

[Universal Music Group chairman/CEO] Lucian Grainge. I met him when he was at Universal in the U.K. We have lunch every couple of months. There’s almost no tech company that understands the creative process, and Lucian is an A&R guy who values the artist’s side. He taught me that, and hopefully I’ve taught him a bit about the tech side. They are very different cultures and don’t overlap very well, which is why the music business and the tech business have been so estranged.

Isn’t that changing?

It’s at a turning point — the light is appearing at the end of the tunnel. Streaming revenue is growing faster than physical. It has been fun watching Lucian pilot this because the whole industry underwent a lot of compression before it turned the corner, and digital streaming has grown. Digital downloads never had an effect like this, I’ll bet the best days are ahead of us and the business will be larger than even in the peak days of the CD.

1 Sonos’ Anechoic chamber is one of the largest of its kind (a similar model resides in Sonos’ Boston office), says MacFarlane: “It’s where we test the sound output from a single speaker [in] a completely dead space.” 2 A still of a Sonos/Apple Music commercial featuring St. Vincent. 3 An ad starring Matt Berninger of The National with his daughter.
THANK YOU CAMILLE, LORI, AND JONATHAN FOR MAKING THE MAGIC HAPPEN.

From your Warner Music Group family
Singer-songwriter Joey Martin Feek, one half of country duo Joey & Rory alongside her husband, Rory Feek, died following a battle with cancer. She was 40.

Rapper Bubba Sparxxx announced his engagement to Katie Connors, formerly Miss Iowa 2010.

21st Century Fox and News Corp executive chairman Rupert Murdoch wed model-actress Jerry Hall at St. Bride’s in London.

Lana Rae Meisner, the wife of Eagles co-founder and former bassist Randy Meisner, was shot dead in the couple’s Los Angeles home, in what police determined was an accidental shooting. She was 63.

SoundCloud named Alison Moore chief revenue officer.

Big Deal Music signed jazz artist Kamasi Washington to a publishing deal.

Producer Ricky Reed launched Nice Life Recording, a new label under Atlantic Records.

Rogers & Cowan elevated Jeff Raymond to senior vp, entertainment and appointed Raymond and Lindsay Galin to the newly created positions of co-managers of the company’s talent division.

John Morthland, author of the influential Best of Country Music and an early staffer at Rolling Stone and Creem, died of undisclosed causes.

Singer-songwriter Ben Harper signed with William Morris Endeavor to represent him in all areas.

Rapper Joey Badass joined the cast of the USA drama Mr. Robot for its second season.

Warner Music Group appointed Heath Kudler to the newly created position of executive vp, global repertoire acquisition.

Rapper Bankroll Fresh (real name Trentavious White), best known for his single “Hot Boy,” was shot and killed at Street Execs Studios in Atlanta. The investigation was still ongoing at press time. He was 28.

Rapper Bankroll Fresh, best known for his single “Hot Boy,” was shot and killed at Street Execs Studios in Atlanta. The investigation was still ongoing at press time. He was 28.

Simon Vazick-Levinson joined MTV News as deputy editor, music.

Mary J. Blige signed with ICM Partners’ concerts department. She remains with Creative Artists Agency for film and TV.

Jennifer Lopez inked a new long-term contract with Epic Records that will reunite her with chairman/CEO Antonio “L.A.” Reid, with whom she worked at Island Def Jam.

Prince Royce joined the cast of Hulu series East Los High for its fourth season.

Mike Cimicato joined The Orchard as associate producer, focused on soundtrack and compilation albums and playlists.

Australian singer and The Voice Australia judge Delta Goodrem listed her five-bedroom Hollywood Hills home for $5.8 million.

Cuban duo Gente de Zona signed an exclusive deal with Cardenas Marketing Network for worldwide booking.

Concord Music Group named Jim Shelby GM.

March 12
Petey Doherty (37)
Graham Coxon (47)
Liza Minnelli (70)

March 13
Adam Clayton (56)
Neil Sedaka (77)

March 14
Taylor Hanson (33)
Quincy Jones Jr. (83)

March 15
Will.i.am (41)
Mark Hoppus (44)
Bret Michaels (53)
Phil Lesh (76)

March 16
Patty Griffin (57)

March 17
Billy Corgan (49)
As CEO of Brooklyn Sports & Entertainment, Brett Yormark has built a dynamic programming and marketing platform, enhancing the recognition of our partners and artists.

Thank you Brett, for your vision and leadership.
Diplo performed with his electronic group Major Lazer at the Jose Marti Anti-Imperialist monument in Havana on March 6. The event, with an estimated 450,000 in attendance, was the first concert by a major American pop act since the reinstatement of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States in 2014.
After postponing tour dates in September 2015 due to meningitis, The Who’s Roger Daltrey (left) and Pete Townshend resumed their The Who Hits 50! Tour at New York’s Madison Square Garden on March 3. Atlantic Records Group chairman/COO Julie Greenwald (left) with K. Michelle at the artist’s listening party held March 3 in New York. From left: Martin Doherty, Lauren Mayberry and Iain Cook of Chvrches on the Parahoy! cruise on March 6. “I want to see a f—ing shark so badly,” joked Doherty to Billboard. “They are just swimming around. I figured that was a possibility.” Tinashe performed at St. Andrews Hall in Detroit on March 3 as part of her Joyride World Tour. Lady Gaga jumped into a freezing-cold Lake Michigan for The Polar Plunge on March 6 to help raise money for the Special Olympics in Chicago.

“To the people and the country of Cuba, thank you. We have been humbled by your love,” tweeted Diplo, who posed with fans at Arma Square while in Havana.
Paris Fashion Week
PARIS, MARCH 1-9

THERE WAS ONE NAME ON THE TIP OF EVERYONE’S TONGUE DURING PARIS Fashion Week: Demna Gvasalia. As the future of legendary fashion houses like Lanvin and Dior remained uncertain (creative directors Alber Elbaz and Raf Simons departed last season and have yet to be replaced), Gvasalia breathed new life into Balenciaga with his debut collection for the label. A year ago, the virtually unknown designer from Georgia (the country formerly occupied by the Soviet Union) erupted onto the scene with Vetements, an underground streetwear brand whose show Kanye West attended on March 5. West also turned out for friend Olivier Rousteing’s Balmain show, which was doused in beading and sequins but featured wigs (Gigi Hadid became a brunette, Kendall Jenner a blonde) that sent Instagram into a frenzy. Other music attendees included Paul McCartney, who showed support for daughter Stella at her show; Flo Morrissey and Christine & The Queens’ Héloïse Letissier at Chloe; and Janet Jackson at Haider Ackermann. Though Ciara was at Givenchy, Lanvin and H&M, it was ultimately Kelly Rowland who won the marathon: During the span of a few days she hit Akris, Chloe, John Galliano, Haider Ackermann, Emanuel Ungaro, Lanvin and Balmain, with a new look for each occasion.

BMI Latin Awards
BEVERLY HILLS, MARCH 2

1 Gloria Trevi — who received the President’s Award — sung, cried, danced atop tables and poured a bottle of water on herself during her time onstage. 2 Honoree Luis Fonsi and his wife, Agueda Lopez. 3 From left: BMI vp writer-publisher relations for Latin music Delia Orjuela with honorees Horacio Palencia and Jesus Omar Tarazon.
Okeechobee Music & Arts Festival
OKEECHOBEE, FLA., MARCH 4-6

1 Kendrick Lamar at the sold-out inaugural event, held at Sunshine Grove, on March 5. 2 “You know there’s nothing but legends on this stage — minus me,” said a grinning Miguel (left), who performed with Skrillex during the all-star PoWow, the festival’s answer to Bonnaroo’s Superjam, on March 5. The group — which also featured Arcade Fire’s Win Butler, John Oates, Marcus Mumford, the Preservation Hall Jazz Band, Kamasi Washington, Soulive’s Eric Krasno and more — performed covers including David Bowie’s “Fame,” Drake’s “Hotline Bling” and an encore of Earth, Wind & Fire’s “Let’s Groove.” 3 Members of the Preservation Hall Jazz Band with Miguel, Krasno and Washington on March 6. 4 Big Grams’ Sarah Barthel on March 6. 5 Mumford on March 6. 6 Grace Potter on March 4. 7 Future on March 6.
A True Legend

We’ll miss you, Sir George
JESUS CHRIST (TV) SUPERSTAR

Chris Daughtry, Prince Royce, Tyler Perry and more join forces in Fox’s ambitious live musical The Passion, which brings the Bible to 2016 by replacing prayers with pop hits and “robes and sandals with Jordans and jeans.”

BY CHRIS MARTINS
PHOTOGRAPHED BY AUSTIN HARGRAVE

WHEN TYLER PERRY heard that Fox was throwing its very own Easter pageant — The Passion, a live musical depicting Jesus Christ’s last mortal days airing 8 p.m. ET on March 20, Palm Sunday — he knew, without question, what he had to do. “There’s so much negativity on TV and film,” says the entertainment mogul, 46, who will host and narrate the show. “So much weighing us down when we watch the news. I thought, ‘If somebody’s going to use this broadcast system to encourage and uplift, I have to be a part of it.’ And I don’t think there’s a better story for that.”

Fox is banking on viewers to have that same enthusiasm for The Passion, its newest entry in the growing field of real-time TV musicals. January’s Grease: Live pulled in 12.2 million viewers (according to Nielsen), scoring Fox’s highest ratings since Empire’s second-season premiere (16.2 million), and handily besting NBC’s The Wiz.
Live! (11.5 million). So far, so good for The Passion: New Orleans is opening its streets to the two-hour event, which includes a huge public procession, and the cast comprises a roster of music luminaries. Country star Trisha Yearwood plays Mary, Seal is Pontius Pilate, American Idol alum Chris Daughtry takes on Judas, bachata/pop heartthrob Prince Royce does Peter, and Latin music/telenovela star Jencarlos Canela portrays Christ. Gospel great Yolanda Adams will perform the opening song.

Plus, The Passion already has been proved on a smaller platform: It’s an import from the Netherlands, where its popularity has grown for five years straight. The show had a 46 percent market share there in 2015, according to Dutch analytics firm SKO — despite the fact that a 2014 study from research company Ipsos found only 17 percent of the Dutch believe in a deity. Part of the appeal is that the musical is set in the present day and features contemporary pop hits. “The Netherlands is not a very religious country, but the show is just so powerful to watch,” says Passion executive producer and music arranger Adam Anders, 40, who also headed up the music for Fox smash Glee and has produced songs for Demi Lovato and Miley Cyrus. (Disclosure: Billboard is an affiliate company of one of The Passion’s co-producers, Dick Clark Productions.) “I didn’t understand a single word, and I was still moved. I was like, ‘If we can do this in the States, which is obviously a lot more religious, I can’t imagine how big it could be.’

In short: massive. History’s The Bible miniseries averaged 12.7 million pairs of eyes per episode, and that was on cable, where ratings usually top out in the single digits. Still, most of the songs chosen and reworked by Anders and co-producer Peer Astrom eschew explicit spirituality for universal themes — chart hits ranging from Imagine Dragons’ “Demons” and Tina Turner’s “We Don’t Need Another Hero” to Hoobastank’s “The Reason” and Celine Dion’s “Love Can Move Mountains.”

As Daughtry — whose chart-topping rock albums have often featured subtle religious themes — points out: “Most Christians don’t even listen to straight-up Christian music. These songs you’ve heard so many times are, at their core, moving songs.” (A soundtrack arrives March 18 on Anders’ Deep Well imprint, which signed a deal with Virgin in 2015)

Still, Anders admits that some musicians passed on having their work included in The Passion: “Until they’ve seen it, it’s hard to explain to people: ‘Hey, I want Jesus to sing your song.’ It’s like, ‘What?’”

Another initial nonbeliever: the guy playing Judas. “When I first was approached, I wasn’t interested,” says Daughtry, 36. Was it the role? “No. I don’t know if Anders thought I look like an asshole who would betray his best friend, but it’s exciting to play a bad guy — that was a selling point. I just wasn’t into doing a religious project. I didn’t want to be in a robe or in an overly preachy situation. Let’s just say there are a lot of examples out there of people: ‘Hey, I want Jesus to sing your song.’”

— ADAM ANDERS
Executive producer, The Passion

doctor to a serious role. My mom is lying out. I grew up going and gets the girls screaming. This is a much more chilling together, after everything.’”

Key for Canela in taking on such a monumental role is bringing it back down to earth. “My generation pictures this Jesus that’s so judgmental and human than we’ve ever seen.”

Still, a little miracle-working couldn’t hurt from where Anders is sitting. “The dream is to come back next year and do it again,” he says. “Jesus needs to get good ratings.”

WHAT’S YOUR HANGOVER CURE?

St. Patrick’s Day is coming up, which means lots of beer, lots of whiskey — and lots of headaches the next morning. Luckily, no one knows how to recover from the night before better than a musician.

Dustin Lynch
“I have to bite the snake. If the night before lingers past lunch, call the Captain. A few shots with a Coca-Cola Classic and you’ll be good to go.”

French Montana
“I take B12 shots in the morning and then honestly just keep going. After my birthday, I used an IV!”

The Lumineers’ Neyla Pekarek
“A gallon of kombucha and a Catfish marathon usually does the trick for me.”

Ty Dolla Sign
“The best hangover cure is some good natural green herbs — and sleep.”

Meghan Trainor
“When you’re done drinking, drink two Pedialytes. I get the flavored kind — strawberry. I wake up feeling great!”

Of course, updating a literally sacred story is risky business. There’s potential to offend non-Christians, sure, but also believers. But Anders insists their interpretation will be reverent: “I’m a pastor’s kid, and I have a cheese alarm that goes off easily. I knew I couldn’t have the disciples breakdancing.”

His cast also is aware of the high stakes. “It’s a responsibility,” says Royce, 26, a Bronx-born bachatero with Broadway ambitions who’s a perennial force on Billboard’s Latin charts. “I’m not playing the playing the Prince Royce who takes his shirt off and gets the girls screaming. This is a much more serious role. My mom is flying out. I grew up going to church every Sunday, and she’s always worried about the entertainment industry and, oh my God, drugs! I think this makes her feel better.”

Of course, when part of the show involves potentially hundreds of people helping carry a glowing 20-foot cross a mile-and-a-half through New Orleans streets, from the Superdome to Woldenberg Park, during a live telecast, all kinds of additional concerns arise: weather, emergencies, technical malfunctions, protestors. Is there anything about The Passion that Anders finds particularly intimidating? “Yeah — all of it,” he says with a laugh.

But Canela, who co-stars with Eva Longoria on NBC’s Telenovela and recently wrapped an Americas-spanning tour for his 2014 album Jen, says the positive energy on this set is like nothing he has experienced before. “Chris became like a brother to me,” recalls the 27-year-old Miami native. “One day we were like, ‘Let’s go to Bourbon Street and get to know this city.’ We’re at a restaurant when a crew guy walks in with one of the producers, and they’re like, ‘Who would’ve thought? Jesus and Judas just chilling together, after everything.’”

"I was like, ‘If we can do this in the States, which is obviously a lot more religious, I can’t imagine how big it could be.’"
OLIVIA WILDE: THE NEXT HYPE WILLIAMS?

Armed with an iPhone 6, the Vinyl actress makes directorial debut with a video for Edward Sharpe & The Magnetic Zeros

BY ALEX MORRIS

On the HBO series Vinyl, Olivia Wilde’s character Devon mourns her glory days as a member of Andy Warhol’s Factory and watches as her husband runs his record label into the ground. But in real life, the actress isn’t sitting on the sidelines of the music business. She recently pitched Alex Ebert, frontman for Edward Sharpe & The Magnetic Zeros, with a concept for a music video, shot entirely on iPhone 6 — “this idea that he would stumble upon his own funeral,” she says. In February, the first-time director decamped to New Orleans with a film crew. The resulting, just-released video for “No Love Like Yours,” from the alt-rock band’s fourth LP, Persona (April 15, Community Music), is a Southern gothic eulogy featuring choreography by Kristin Sudeikis, Wilde’s “sister-in-law” (she’s engaged to actor Jason Sudeikis; they had a son in 2014). “Olivia is awesome,” says Ebert. “I expect to see her directing things from here on out.”

What made you want to direct a music video?

I grew up in the MTV generation. I spent hours watching videos as a kid. Hours! [Video directors] like Mark Romanek and Spike Jonze really affected my taste, in film as well as music. And I’m a fan of the band. We’ve been friends for a while, and over the years, I’ve said to them, “I really want to make something for you guys.” I heard a rough version of the album and was blown away — there’s something very brave about it. I thought, “This is the one.”

How collaborative was making the video?

The crazy thing was how I could come up with these nutty ideas and people would understand how to make them come true. I said to our production designer, “I would like his head to be smoking.” And she said, “No problem!” She figured out a way to make dry ice go through a vaporizer and make Alex’s head look like it was on fire. And I was lucky enough to have a brilliant choreographer as my sister-in-law, Kristin. She’s not only family — she’s an inspiration. We listened to the song about 60 times alone together in a room.

Why did you shoot it in New Orleans?

We jammed with the band a few hours from Spain to play a free set at Rough Trade in Brooklyn on the eve of its sold-out March 9 show at Bowery Ballroom. The quartet dropped its bags at the hotel and headed to the venue for soundcheck before taking the stage at 10 p.m. to play songs from its LP, Leave Me Alone.

Thicke’s Run For The Roses

“Blurred Lines” singer Robin Thicke is slated to perform in the land of blurred horses on May 6 at the fifth annual Unbridled Eve Gala. The event takes place the night before the Kentucky Derby at the Galt House Hotel in Louisville.

You got to see their faces! Yeah, I’ve seen them! I know what they look like.

On Vinyl, your character’s arc, from a member of Warhol’s Factory to bitter housewife threatening divorce, has gotten really dark. It gets darker. It’s interesting because I think there was an executive decision to slow down Devon’s arc a little so that it would be more subtle of an evolution. And that forces me to feel, as the character, deep frustration. Which is kind of fascinating to play. As an actor, you empathize with your character in a different way because you’re living with her. It becomes your other life.
**RUPAUL: HOW TO SLAY EVERY DAY**

The world’s most famous drag queen, RuPaul, has been espousing the motto “If you can’t love yourself, how in the hell are you going to love somebody else?” for decades. It’s even the mantra at the end of each episode of his long-running Logo reality competition, RuPaul’s Drag Race. The show has contestants performing, designing outfits and walking the runway, but RuPaul says that to truly slay — to be as fierce as he is, day in and day out — is a metaphysical quest: “You have to think about it as a triad: mind, body and spirit.” The 55-year-old — whose self-released 13th studio album, Butch Queen, dropped March 7 — tells Billboard how to up its day-to-day slay.

**Find your frequency.**

“You have an energy force field, and you have to find out what it is. With clothes, it’s finding what works with you — what colors, proportions. It’s knowing what your body is telling you.”

**Meditate — and stretch.**

“After your morning stretch — which everyone should do — meditate. You don’t need to be able to levitate. You can just do it for 30 seconds. I leave my body and look at myself, like, ‘Hu, what do you want to do today?’ And I say, ‘Let’s do something.’”

**Let haters hate.**

“Other people are going to talk shit about you. But what other people have to say about you ain’t none of your goddamn business.”

**Forget labels.**

“[Drag queens] take the piss out of the idea of identity. Just because it says something on my driver’s license, does that mean I have to stick to it? That’s why drag is so punk rock. Society says, ‘Boys over here, girls over here; white, there; black, there.’ What if you could squeeze other identities in? A pirate or a yogi or a glamourpuss? It’s fabulous! When you’re a shape-shifter, you understand that your true self is actually God in drag.” —CLAIRE LOBENFELD

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**SPOTLIGHT**

**KATY PERRY’S EMO ‘ANGEL’**

Glassnote’s Norwegian alt-pop import Aurora has an A-list fan and already rules the U.K.

**BY NICK DUERDEN**

T here are few descriptions in music as reductive as “sensitive female singer-songwriter,” a phrase endlessly deployed to describe any woman who sings in a less combustible manner than, say, Katy Perry. That said, Aurora, a 19-year-old from Norway about to release her debut album, All My Demons Greeting Me As A Friend, due March 11 on Glassnote, really is sensitive — and more so than most.

“Oh, I’ve always been very... emotional,” she says in perfect English one wet March morning in a London hotel. “Hypersensitive’ is what they call it, I think.”

Last December, her impossibly delicate version of Oasis’ “Half the World Away” soundtracked a high-profile British TV ad (for John Lewis department stores) and became a big U.K. hit. Now, with new single “Conqueror,” which rose to No. 2 on Billboard’s Emerging Artists chart, she’s blowing up internationally — thanks in part to the aforementioned Perry, who called Aurora an “angel” on Twitter after she saw her play. “Finally. New music is quite tiny, but a lot of the emotions I feel are pretty explosive,” she says. “My emotions are explosive — they have to come out.”

During live performances, her fingers contort and eyes pop; frequently, she falls into a trance. “My body is quite tiny, but a lot of the emotions I feel are pretty explosive,” she says. “They have to come out.” Aurora still uses writing as therapy — to help her face fears. “Murder Song (5, 4, 3, 2, 1)” is written from the victim’s perspective: “He holds the gun against my head/I close my eyes, then bang!/I’m dead.”

“I’m just training myself to survive in this world,” she says. “If you try to protect yourself from pain, it becomes a stone in your heart.” She frowns, a V forming between her eyebrows. “But the more you learn to face things, the more likely that stone can become a pearl.”

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**ILLUSTRATIONS BY TARA JACOBY**
“It’s true — there’s no love stronger than a mother for her son.”
— BOB DYLAN
The legend in a 1978 note to Barbra Streisand, which she shared recently with The New York Times.

“No, you can’t say any of the n-words — even when you’re alone.”
— FUTURE
The rapper to Jonah Hill, just before the actor helped him perform “Jumpman” during the opening monologue of Saturday Night Live.

“It’s true — there’s no love stronger than a mother for her son.”
— MADONNA
The pop icon alluding to losing her custody battle over son Rocco before crying onstage in New Zealand.

“I ended up getting the tattoo because it was what they said to me that made me feel like the pain was lessening.”
— LADY GAGA
The star telling SiriusXM’s Morning Mashup why she and many of the sexual-assault survivors who appeared with her at the Oscars got matching tattoos.

“Unfortunately, she’s being attacked when she’s not responsible for any of the writing or the lies.”
— NINA SIMONE KELLY
Nina Simone’s daughter defending Zoe Saldana, star of the controversial upcoming biopic Nina, which Kelly claims is filled with inaccuracies.

“For the millionth time, we’re not breaking up.”
— FOO FIGHTERS
The band providing a punchline at the end of its “Official Band Announcement” video, which teased fans with a mock dissolution.

“I want to be empowering my fans.”
— ARIANA GRANDE
The diminutive diva explaining why she changed the title of her upcoming album from Moonlight to Dangerous Woman during an online live video chat.

J BALVIN MAKES HISTORY
The Colombian singer talks record-breaking hit “Ginza”

Bolvin has yet to embark on a major arena tour or drop a top-charting album, but that’s not stopping 2016’s hottest reggaetonero. His single “Ginza” is the longest-running No. 1 on Hot Latin Songs by one artist (sans featured guests), at 22 weeks. Now the Colombia native, 30, is eyeing pop, hitting the studio with Pharrell Williams and Justin Bieber for his next LP, due in May on Capitol Latin.

Why do you think “Ginza” has been so successful?
It’s a party track — a party for reggaetoneros to come out of the closet. We made reggaeton cool again. On Shazam, we’re No. 1 in India, Turkey, Nigeria — all countries where there were no big Latin hits.

How did you come up with the song’s name?
To tell you the truth, I used an Instagram filter called Ginza to share a snippet of the song — I simply left the name in the caption in case anyone wanted to use the same filter. But everyone started calling the song “Ginza.” And when I realized it was also the name of a district in Tokyo that’s all about entertainment, I thought it meant to be.

How’s recording with Pharrell and Bieber?
Everything has been very organic, everyone very respectful toward our music. These collaborations didn’t come from some grand record label plan. With Pharrell, we’re working on several songs; we’ve done two already. I’ll see Justin soon, God willing, and we’re going to make history. There’s new blood in Latin music!

— LEILA COBO
MATT RINGEL

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Pumped Up Kids

The hottest accessory on music stars' tots? Hip kicks, natch. From high tops to checkerboards, there's a mini-me version for all tastes

BY SHANNON ADDUCCI • PHOTOGRAPHED BY JONATHON KAMBOURIS
How To Get Flo Rida To Play Your Bat Mitzvah

When kids don’t want to settle for a luncheon at the synagogue, they have their parents call Ryan Schinman

BY CARSON GRIFFITH

DRAKE TAKING THE STAGE to perform “Hotline Bling” at a New York bat mitzvah on Feb. 20 had the Internet ablaze, but kids competing for the most talked-about affair isn’t anything new: In October 1972, then-CBS Records president Clive Davis threw a reported $20,000 bar mitzvah for his son Fred (the scenario supposedly inspired HBO’s second episode of Vinyl and would have roughly amounted to $111,000 today). Having the best-post-haftorah party often includes booking a flashy headliner better fit for a concert hall than a country club — but how do those with a hefty budget even make it happen?

They call Ryan Schinman, founder/chief executive of Platinum Rye Entertainment and founder of RBS Celebrity Bookings. Schinman, 44, founded his company in the early 1990s to broker talent with such corporations as Microsoft and DirecTV; in 1999, he founded RBS Celebrity Bookings to bring his same unique services to the high-end private sector, including weddings, birthday parties and bar and bat mitzvahs. “We’ve booked everyone from LMFAO to Chicago to Drake,” says Schinman, who is based in New York. Among his favorite events: “We did Rod Stewart in Italy for 30 individuals, and we had seven staffers present; we were 20 percent of the party.”

According to Schinman, The Weeknd and Ariana Grande are the hottest requests for bar and bat mitzvahs. Flo Rida, he adds, “is one of the best because he has had hit after hit after hit. There are a lot of requests for DJ Khaled, too.”

As for cost? “Sometimes it’s a $2 million bar mitzvah and the parents spend $50,000 on the talent. When done right it makes the party, but you don’t want to take away from the child and have the sole focus be on the talent.”

Rachel Dalton, president of Premier Parties — who has booked Austin Mahone, Sean Kingston and Jason Derulo for bar and bat mitzvahs — is a New York-based attorney who handles the contractual side of booking entertainment for her clients. In her 15 years of experience, she has learned that celebrities aren’t the only ones kids go wild for. “One of the most surprising hits was when YouTube comedian GloZell made her entrance at a bat mitzvah: The kids went absolutely wild! It was as if Taylor Swift had shown up — that kind of craziness.”

Baby Shower Bingo? Not In Hollywood

Music stars enlist Sharon Sacks for ultra-chic mom-to-be soirees

When Kim Kardashian sent out engraved music boxes that played Kanye West’s “Hey Mama” for daughter North West’s baby-shower invitations, go-to celebrity event planner Sharon Sacks was behind the scenes, attending to every detail. Gwen Stefani also had Sacks onboard for her third son’s shower, hosted by Shelli Azoff at the Hotel Bel-Air. For Los Angeles music-world A-listers, baby showers are a serious undertaking that can cost up to $100,000, and experts like Sacks are an essential part of making sure every detail is meticulously orchestrated.

Despite the money involved, the key is often to attain a laid-back feel. With flower crowns and flowing garments in abundance, Kardashian’s backyard shindig was in keeping with what Sacks has noticed trending. “Sensitive elements are brought into it, spiritual, vegan,” she explains. “You’re wearing casual clothing, and the afternoon is about blankets on the ground and gorgeous foods. It’s not about how much you spend but how you can be different.”

One of Sacks’ signatures is a garden labyrinth. “You walk through it and when you get to the center, in place of a guest book may be a stuffed animal who has a beautiful halo. You’ll write a note and then slip it into the halo on the stuffed animal, and then the child will have that in their room,” she says. “The important thing is to hear what my clients want to accomplish and then take it to the next level.”

—ADRIENNE GAFFNEY
THANK YOU

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SPOTLIGHT

Ri-Ri Raids This Guy’s Closet

When stars feel like slipping into vintage Raf Simons, they turn to archivist David Casavant, who has amassed a collection that spans thousands of pieces

BY JOHN ORTVED • PHOTOGRAPHED BY MEREDITH JENKS

DAVID CASAVANT, 25, is a stylist with an eye, an education (Central St. Martins, though he dropped out to work for Carine Roitfeld) and a secret weapon: an archive of vintage Helmut Lang and Raf Simons, sought by Kanye West, Travis Scott and Rihanna: “She borrowed a 2001 Raf camo bomber just to wear for fun, like, down the street,” he says, adding that he charges up to $1,000 per week per item.

Raised in a Tennessee mountain town, Casavant began collecting clothing at 14. After assisting Roitfeld, he worked for Mel Ottenberg, Rihanna’s stylist, as well as Love magazine editor Katie Grand. While these connections helped, they didn’t build his collection for him.

“It became a business through hard work,” he says. “I woke up every day and looked on eBay, built a contact list of sellers who would come to me first. I didn’t just throw money at it. I learned all the tricks.”

You’re a stylist but an anthologist. Your process speaks to more than trend. My viewpoint of what styling is has expanded a lot. Fashion is changing. Models aren’t models anymore; they’re supposed to be personalities. Magazines have to be an art form, because people go online for their information. People come to me [for] these vintage items [because they] add personality.

Would you ever divulge the stores you visit? Yeah, I love Tokyo 7 [in New York]. I go to others, but that’s my favorite.

What do you think the draw of Raf and Helmut is for these high-profile artists? The idea of youth empowerment, rebellion. That’s what Raf’s collections really emphasize. It’s the idea of it being cool to be young, having new ideas.

The most famous people in the world wear hugely expensive clothes on the red carpet. Hard to think of anything less rebellious. I disagree. That’s what’s amazing about it. The prices of the Raf clothes have gone through the roof. The clothes are being valued in the way that art is; they can be in a museum and cost $20,000.

Who are you looking at that might be the next Raf? You can’t compare, but I love Craig Green. I love Grace Wales Bonner. For commercial brands I still love Calvin Klein men’s collection. They mix new materials but keep it masculine.

Is image more important than ever before, less or the same? It’s more. People love a persona. Rihanna will show us her personality through Snapchat and it’s like we can hang out with her. Ten years ago, you wouldn’t imagine celebrities showing us their living rooms and kids.

Stars, they’re just like us. Sort of.
By John Ortved

As natives of the Canadian city dominate the charts, check out all their favorite haunts

As the Toronto International Film Festival closed out for 2015, an unexpected performance took place: Drake played waiter. Last September, the rapper/actor/Toronto ambassador threw an opening party for his new club and restaurant, Fring’s, where he passed food to guests who included Will and Jada Pinkett Smith. “Fring’s is an expression of youth,” says Iron Chef Master Susur Lee, who oversees the restaurant with sons Kai and Levi Bent Lee. Drake and Drake’s business partner, Angelo Ferraro. “Drake has been a client for some time. We hosted his birthday party last October, and he and Angelo are friends with my kids.”

What to expect? “I’m very open-minded as a chef, but my foundation is the old schools of French and Chinese cuisine,” says Lee. The result is comfort food with elevated touches: a Caesar salad made from kale and lardons; fried chicken with a touch of maple Sriracha. Prices range from $10 to $40; 455 King St. W., 416-979-9696

As the Toronto International Film Festival closed out for 2015, Drake and Drake’s preserved infantry jackets, bombers and combat boots. 694B Queen St. W., 647-436-6628

Consider it Cheers to the Cheers of Toronto’s growing electronic-music scene. This subterranean dive bar on the quiet but trendy strip of Dundas West has been a go-to for The Weeknd. Peaches (inset). Mac DeMarco and members of Austra and Metric. Dev Hynes may not be a local, but he’s a fan as well. 126/Dundas St. W., 647-346-93/five.tab6

Located in a coach house, Klaxon Howl provides customers — like Drake — with its own line of darkly colored vests, club shirts and separates, but many come for the unique collection of amazingly preserved infantry jackets, bombers and combat boots. 694B Queen St. W., 647-436-6628

Located in an offbeat mall in Kensington Market, this spot is a favorite for rockers (Feist has been spotted there) who have a hankering for dim sum and tall boys of PBR. 60 Kensington Ave., 416-546-4536

WHERE DRAKE WINES, DINES AND SOMETIMES SERVES MEALS IN THE 416

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Drake (left) with Chef Lee. Below: organic salmon crudo with jalapeno ($19).

The Real Jerk

Who would ever say “no” to Rihanna? Edward Pottinger, for one. The owner of The Real Jerk, a Caribbean mainstay that opened more than 30 years ago, twice refused Director X’s request to shoot the pop star’s “Work” video there with Drake before relenting. “They wanted it for a Friday, which is one of your busy days,” he says. Though the kitchen was closed during the shoot, which saw the restaurant’s atmosphere transform into an island bacchanal, Pottinger gave in and prepared Drake (who opts for takeout regularly) his favorite roti. 842 Gerard St. E., 416-463-6055

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Drake (left) with Chef Lee. Below: organic salmon crudo with jalapeno ($19).
The 21-year-old singer/songwriter/social media sensation has an out-of-nowhere hit album and a surprising sold-out show at Madison Square Garden, but that hasn’t kept her from oversharing every detail of her life with her hyperpassionate followers, from her history of mental illness to her love of boy bands and Bernie Sanders: “I talk to them like real f—ing human beings.”

BY JONATHAN RINGEN           PHOTOGRAPHED BY MILLER MOBLEY
ILLUSTRATIONS BY RYAN SNOOK
“CONSPIRACY THEORISTS THINK I WAS CRAFTED IN A BOARDROOM, BECAUSE I’M SO VERY TOPICAL.”

accused. Unlike most stars, she consistently and directly engages with fans—the majority of the 1,000 people she follows on Twitter love her music, although they sometimes drive her crazy, “I talk to them like real f—ing human beings, because they are,” she says. “But there’s also a sense of entitlement, where they feel like they have the right to chastise me like they would a friend.”

Mostly Halsey is psyched to have a direct line to her young, predominantly female fan base. It wasn’t too long ago that she was one of them, obsessed with emo crews like Brand New and Panic at the Disco and boy bands like One Direction. Now, with her debut album Badlands (which bowed at No. 2 on the Billboard 200 in August 2015) and its breakout single “New Americana” (which celebrates legal weed, gay marriage and a girl who’s a “viral mess,” and has sold nearly 300,000 downloads, according to Nielsen Music), she has become gossip-worthy herself. More than that, she has become a leading encapsulation of millennial femininity — self-possessed (if neurotic), a champion of progressive causes, a chronic social-media oversharer — to the point that she’s worried some fans don’t believe she’s real. “There are conspiracy theorists who think I was crafted in a boardroom,” she says, her large brown eyes widening incredulously. “Because I’m so very relatable and so very topical and so very Tumblr.”

Which is partly why Halsey is relieved to be moving on from the voice-of-a-generation statement of “New Americana” to her new single, the love song “Colors.” (The video, which costs $1 million, racked up 4 million YouTube spins in its first week.) She’s in New York to perform the track on The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon, which will be her biggest TV performance since November 2015, when she appeared with Justin Bieber on Today for an awkward, sexually charged duet of his song “The Feeling.” (“It was a f—ing train wreck,” she says with a laugh. “You don’t know fear until it’s 7 a.m. and freezing cold on live television and you’re not sure if Justin Bieber is going to kiss you or not.”) Just a few days after The Tonight Show, she would kick off a European tour leading into a run of her biggest U.S. shows yet, including stops at the Coachella and Bonnaroo festivals. It all wraps with a sold-out date in August, headlining the storied arena she just departed. “A lot of people were saying, ‘Why the f— would you put up Madison Square Garden?’ says the singer, who’s a serious student of the music business and takes pride in running “a tight ship.” “But I said, ‘Let’s test this — let’s see what we’re really worth in tickets.’ ”

“She’s a true artist — you can tell the moment you meet her,” says Imagine Dragons singer Dan Reynolds, who got to know Halsey when she was opening for his band in 2015. “And she’s passionate about putting on a great show. There were nights when she would get offstage and be upset because she felt like she just didn’t give enough — and those were nights when the crowd loved her.”

Halsey is a staunch feminist, an advocate for people with mental illness and a Bernie sis. (Her Twitter handle currently reads “Bernie Sanders Fan.”) She also is an out bisexual woman who rails against “heteronormativity.” She’s self-aware enough to know that young women with strong opinions often get slapped with labels like “attention-seeking.” Or, as Halsey puts it, “Everyone’s mortal enemy is the girl on the Internet who’s misunderstood.”

Speaking about those things, words tumble out of her mouth in fully formed paragraphs. Ask why she’s voting for Sanders, say, and this is the flood of information you’ll get:

I’m 21 years old and it’s kind of uncomfortable for me to talk about, but I’m in the 1 percent as far as my income and tax bracket. But now that I’m here, there’s no amount of money you can wave in front of my face that will make me understand depriving people of human rights. While I know people in the industry who want to vote for someone who will protect them financially, I’m looking for a person who will make sure my 17-year-old brother doesn’t get killed someday because he’s half-black. If that means I lose 50 percent of my income every year, so be it.
It’s not just her brother who’s biracial, of course. (She actually has two brothers: the 17-year-old Sevian and Dante, 10.) Halsey is too, although as she notes, she passes as white. Part of the chorus of “New Americana” — “Raised on Biggie and Nirvana / We are the new Americana” — alludes to that. Her parents were just teenagers when they had her; her African-American dad, Chris, who manages a car dealership, was a major hip-hop head, while her Italian-American mom, Nicole, who does security for a hospital, dug alt-rock acts. Her family scraped to get by for most of her childhood, moving around New Jersey before settling in Union County, about 45 minutes outside New York. “My parents were really good at keeping up appearances,” she says. “They didn’t own their first home until last year.”

The night before her Tonight Show gig, Halsey settles into a seat at a hushed cocktail spot hidden behind an unmarked door in a downtown Japanese restaurant. Lately she has been drinking a lot of pinot noir, but she happily accepts a dark and stormy. “I’m 21,” she says, “so I’m still in that stage when if you hand me something alcoholic, I’ll drink it.” With a baseball cap pulled low over her eyes, she has a slight tomboy vibe that calls to mind Ellen Page. She is also small — just 5-foot-4 — making her seem like a pocket-sized version of the imposing, larger-than-life presence she embodies onstage and in photos. She places an order for some sashimi and a few raw-bar oysters. The latter trigger Proustian sense-memories of a formational year she spent in New York after high school. “I was following a boy,” she says with a self-deprecating laugh. “I was 17. He was 23, and he had a really serious heroin addiction.”

It had been a rough couple of years. She loathed her football-obsessed public high school, where her tattoos and half-shaved head left her feeling bullied and misunderstood. She was diagnosed with bipolar disorder and, during her senior year, spent a few weeks in a psychiatric hospital. “I had tried to kill myself,” she says. “I was an adolescent; I didn’t know what I was doing. Because I was 17, I was still in a children’s ward. Which was terrifying. I was in there with 9-year-olds who had tried to kill themselves.”

Despite her real-life troubles, she had a natural aptitude for making her online persona irresistible to other kids. She packed her Tumblr, se7enteenblack, with selies, poems, diary entries, memes and countless photos of Harry Styles — earning her 10,000 followers and an international network of Internet cool kids (including the Australian dudes who would go on to form 5 Seconds of Summer). Being cut off from that network was the hardest part of being hospitalized. “There was no TV, no music, no nothing,” she says. “The day I got out of the hospital I was in the car and I was listening to Imagine Dragons. It was a f—ing moment for me. I don’t think I realized how important music was to me before that.” She shakes her head, and adds, “Three years later, I was opening their U.S. arena tour.”

Halsey sometimes stayed with her boyfriend in New York, but she also bounced around a lot. One night she swung by a party...
Halsey wears a Norma Kamali swimsuit, Michael Ngo robe, Eddie Borgo rings and Chanel earrings and shoes. For exclusive videos, including one of Halsey discussing her views on sexuality, go to Billboard.com or Billboard.com/ipad.

“YOU DON’T KNOW FEAR UNTIL IT’S 7 A.M. ON LIVE TELEVISION AND YOU’RE NOT SURE IF JUSTIN BIEBER IS GOING TO KISS YOU OR NOT.”
“IN MY CAMP WE HAVE A DIFFERENT F-WORD AND C-WORD: ‘FAME’ AND ‘CELEBRITY’. I HATE THEM.”

ALWAYS ON: HER SOCIAL DIARY

ON INSTAGRAM. Halsey serves up everything from snaps of her handwritten diary entries to half-jokey, half-sexy selfies. “I followed her on social media before I knew her,” says Imagine Dragons’ Dan Reynolds. “She’s an open book.”

“BEFORE THE SHOW”

“I’ve been in the hospital because I have bipolar disorder. I’ve tried to kill myself. Don’t try to turn it into a hashtag. It’s not a joke to me.”

BEFORE THE SHOW. Halsey answers questions from her fans online before hitting the road.

unbeknwonst to the other, broke off the relationships they were in that night. They began seeing each other soon after. Still, their relationship seems tailor-made for the “it’s complicated” era — even though it has been on and off (it’s currently off), they’ve lived together virtually nonstop since they met, including in the new house in the Los Angeles neighborhood of Sherman Oaks that Halsey recently purchased. “They’re two incredibly talented people who found something that works in terms of how they can create together,” says Jeremy Vuernick, Halsey’s A&R rep and one of her best friends. “That’s one of the most difficult kinds of relationships to find.”

Outside of Halsey’s core crew, her increasing fame has started to leave her feeling a little isolated. “I hate feeling like a prisoner,” she says. “I show up somewhere and I can’t explore the city because there’s like 6,000 to 10,000 people on the lookout for me.” She worries she’s not a good enough friend or family member to people she knew before her new life, about which she has enough ambivalence that it has infected her lingo. “In my camp we have a different F-word and C-word,” she says. “‘Fame’ and ‘celebrity.’ I hate them.” (Still, she’s comfortable enough in her new world to have a “camp,” which isn’t a thing that non-F- or C-people have.)

It all leaves her with a deeper understanding of one artist in particular, who perhaps feels even more deeply misunderstood than she does. “I love Kanye West,” she says. “I think he’s a visionary. He’s one of those people for whom I separate his personality from his artistry. But I also sympathize with him in a weird way, because being a musician is tough. If you were asked to talk about yourself for six hours a day you would probably go crazy, too! Which is why I give Kanye the benefit of the doubt. Being him must be exhausting.”

No matter how stressed Halsey gets, there is one huge consolation: the sheer joy she gets from performing. This is fully on display during her Tonight Show performance, where she’s backed by her touring band and augmented with a five-piece string section. “I could be having the worst day of my life, hate my body, think I’m fat, think I suck, and as soon as I hear the first few notes of my intro, that all goes away,” she says. “Everything that I hate about myself goes away when I walk onstage. That’s why I give Kanye the benefit of the doubt. Being him must be exhausting.”

Nevertheless, Halsey has to leave the unmarked bar and get back to rehearsal. Lido and her crew are waiting. Outside, she quickly chain-smokes a couple of Marlboro Lights, pulls out her phone, climbs into another black SUV and drives off into the night.
“You wouldn’t believe the shit [grief] people from high school give me. I had a few friends, but mostly frenemies.” Halsey wears a KTZ dress, Fleet Ilya visor and Eddie Borgo earrings.
In a *Billboard* survey, 21 artists, influencers and industry professionals born between 1980 and 1995 — members of the largest, most diverse generation in the U.S. — share their musical discovery habits, which artists best represent them (Drake! Miley!) and their thoughts on how they’re widely misunderstood. Spoiler alert: “We don’t need the industry as much as it needs us.”

**WHAT THE MUSIC INDUSTRY DOESN’T UNDERSTAND ABOUT MY DEMOGRAPHIC**

Sophie Ash If we aren’t given what we want, we will take it.

Francesca Stabile We’re willing to pay for stuff, but you need to make it easier for us to do it.

Jake Udell The next generation is starting to see through the bullshit.

Caitlin Maloney How to service video content to us effectively. Music videos had this amazing run in our youth, and now YouTube has enraptured Gen Z, but there was a gap somewhere.

Stelios Phili Our tastes evolve very fast.

Fabiola Reyna We’re more present and involved than you think.

Caiti Green We’re sick of gimmicks and hungry for substance.

Gabi Chepurny There’s need for substance. With all the fluff in music, people in my demographic are looking for direction — and they need music that actually says something to find that.

Kalog Heffernan We don’t need the industry as much as it needs us.

**“MILLENNIALS ARE MORE CONCERNED ABOUT OWNING THE BUILDING THAN GETTING OUR FOOT IN ITS DOOR. DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE US.” — Sophie Ash, 27**

**WHERE I FIND NEW MUSIC**

- **85%** think their generation feels more entitled than the previous one
- **71.4%** online publications
- **26.6%** Good Old Terrestrial Radio
- **71.4%** blogs
- **23.8%** Beats 1

**WHAT SONG BEST REPRESENTS MILLENNIALS?**

- “WHERE I’M UNOW” Skrilllex & Diplo with Justin Bieber
- “ROYALS” Lorde
- “DOWN IN THE DM” Yo Gotti
- “LEAN ON” Major Lazer & DJ Snake featuring MØ

**DRAKE OR KENDRICK?**

- 60% Drake
- 40% Kendrick

**WHICH TECH COMPANY WILL DOMINATE STREAMING IN 2020?**

- **63.0%** Spotify
- **31.1%** Apple
- **15.8%** YouTube

**IN THE FUTURE, MY BIGGEST CONCERN ABOUT MUSIC — AND THE MUSIC INDUSTRY — IS**

- **40%** Concert ticket prices, scalping and bands not getting money for playing shows.
- **21%** The concept of the album will go away.
- **10%** The lack of artists who are willing to stand up for what they believe at all costs.
- **9%** The precedent set by the ruling of Robin Thicke’s “Blurred Lines,” which basically states that a song’s “vibe” can be copyrighted.
- **9%** The lack of cultural reflection.
- **7%** The trend of not playing physical instruments.
- **6%** The sustainability of revenue for musicians who don’t tour. Even touring revenue is a struggle for the entry/mid-level artist.

**WHAT THE MUSIC INDUSTRY DOESN’T UNDERSTAND ABOUT MY DEMOGRAPHIC**

- **Stelios Phili** Our tastes evolve very fast.
- **Francesca Stabile** We’re more present and involved than you think.
- **Jake Udell** The next generation is starting to see through the bullshit.
- **Caitlin Maloney** How to service video content to us effectively. Music videos had this amazing run in our youth, and now YouTube has enraptured Gen Z, but there was a gap somewhere.
- **Sophie Ash** If we aren’t given what we want, we will take it.
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“THE GENERAL ONLINE ATTITUDE OF A LOT OF YOUNG PEOPLE — NIHILISTIC, NONPLUSSED, COMPLACENT — IS ANNOYING. I GIVE A F—, AND I’M PROUD TO SAY SO.”
— Clayton Blaha, 31

SURVEY PARTICIPANTS
AMRIT 28, DJ SINGER; SOPHIE ASH 27, PROJECT MANAGER AT PARKWOOD ENTERTAINMENT; SARAH AVERIN 21, PUBLICIST AT GIRLIE ACTION MEDIA; CLAYTON BLAHA 31, DIRECTOR OF A&R AT ONK LA PUBLISHING AND ARTIST MANAGER AT BLOOD COMPANY; D'CARISMA 25, ON-AIR TALENT AT KIRK LOS ANGELES; GABI CHEPURNY 24, PROSTHETIC RECORDS; CAITLIN MALONEY 28, PRODUCT MANAGER AT ATLANTIC RECORDS; CAITLIN LAMAR, 19, RAPPER; KALYN HEFFERNAN 29, DJ-SINGER; CLAYTON BLAHA 31, DJ-SINGER; JUAN DIEGO MEDINA 27, FOUNDER OF LA INDUSTRIA; MIKE NAVARRA 27, ATTORNEY AT LAPOLT LAW; JAMES SHANI 24, SONGWRITER-PRODUCER; SARI JAMES 27, ARTIST MANAGER AT RED LIGHT MANAGEMENT; JAMES SHANI 27, FOUNDER/CEO OF SAV STUDIOS; FRANCESCA STABILE 28, OPERATIONS MANAGER AT SONGKICK; JAKE UDELL 27, FOUNDER OF THIRD BRAIN.

WHO’S THE MOST INNOVATIVE 20- TO 35-YEAR-OLD IN MUSIC?

Instagram: 35%  Facebook: 15% Twitter: 20% Snapchat: 10%

Grimes  Daniel Ek, Spotify CEO  Young Thug  Kehlani  Kevin Parker of Tame Impala

FACEBOOK
NONPLUSSED, COMPLACENT — ATTITUDE OF A LOT OF YOUNG AND I’M PROUD TO SAY SO.”

BEST INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT
“FATHER JOHN MISTY, MASTERS OF MILLENNIAL SOCIAL COMMENTARY.”
— John Meller, 27

WHAT DOES YOUR FAVOURITE MILLENNIAL ARTIST REPRESENT?

BEST CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT?

5.9% Ted Cruz  11.8% Vermin Supreme  58.8% Bernie Sanders  0% Donald Trump

SURVEY PARTICIPANTS
AMRIT 28, DJ SINGER; SOPHIE ASH 27, PROJECT MANAGER AT PARKWOOD ENTERTAINMENT; SARAH AVERIN 21, PUBLICIST AT GIRLIE ACTION MEDIA; CLAYTON BLAHA 31, DIRECTOR OF A&R AT ONK LA PUBLISHING AND ARTIST MANAGER AT BLOOD COMPANY; D’CARISMA 25, ON-AIR TALENT AT KIRK LOS ANGELES; GABI CHEPURNY 24, PROSTHETIC RECORDS; CAITLIN MALONEY 28, PRODUCT MANAGER AT ATLANTIC RECORDS; CAITLIN LAMAR, 19, RAPPER; KALYN HEFFERNAN 29, DJ-SINGER; JUAN DIEGO MEDINA 27, FOUNDER OF LA INDUSTRIA; MIKE NAVARRA 27, ATTORNEY AT LAPOLT LAW; JAMES SHANI 24, SONGWRITER-PRODUCER; SARI JAMES 27, ARTIST MANAGER AT RED LIGHT MANAGEMENT; JAMES SHANI 27, FOUNDER/CEO OF SAV STUDIOS; FRANCESCA STABILE 28, OPERATIONS MANAGER AT SONGKICK; JAKE UDELL 27, FOUNDER OF THIRD BRAIN.

SUPER-MANAGER Scooter Braun (Justin Bieber, Tori Kelly) on the ups and downs of overshar ing

‘Everyone Is A Self-Promoter’

Super-manager Scooter Braun (Justin Bieber, Tori Kelly) on the ups and downs of overshar ing

M usically speaking, what are the defining characteristics of millennials?

That can be viewed as either empowering or terrifying. The negative side is that they often feel the need to live up to this idealized life they’re projecting through social media. As a manager, [I think] the good part is that the idea of promotion is not a scary thing to them. Also, in previous generations, there were gatekeepers who could limit an artist’s access to their audience. Now artists are their own distributors.

Clearly, some artists, like, say, Halsey, flourish having that 24/7 access to their audience, and some can’t seem to handle it at all. There’s an art to giving pieces of yourself to your fans and then holding pieces back for yourself. Justin, for instance, has grown up with it, so he generally understands what’s for him and what’s for the world. Then again, sometimes he doesn’t. (Laughs.)

You turn 35 in June. Are there go-to young people at your company, SB Projects, who help you decipher the latest social-media trends?

Yes! My head of social media, who I met when she was a teenager running a fan site, is always finding new stuff. We have something called Tech Tuesdays, where she and one of the other millennials in my office send around an email making us aware of all the things we should be looking at. It’s our weekly Tech Tuesday blast.

Have the decidedly nonmillennial executives who run the major labels come to understand this demographic?

 Depends on which executive and which label. There are some really great executives who do understand. And there are others who inadvertently give people like me the opportunity to build a pretty good business. —CRAIG MARKS

MARCH 19, 2016 | WWW.BILLBOARD.COM 49
On Feb. 19, Kesha Rose Sebert sat in Manhattan’s New York State Supreme Court building, tears streaming down her cheeks. Judge Shirley Werner Kornreich had just denied a preliminary injunction that would have allowed Kesha to record music outside her six-album contract with producer Lukasz “Dr. Luke” Gottwald, better-known as Dr. Luke — and, according to a lawsuit she brought against him in October 2014, her alleged rapist.

That lawsuit not only described how Dr. Luke, now 42, drugged and raped Kesha, 29. It also claimed that Luke controlled and psychologically abused the singer from the time she moved to Los Angeles to pursue her career in 2005 through her breakthrough in 2010 and beyond. “Dr. Luke has been tyrannical and abusive since our relationship began,” Kesha, who’s represented by the high-profile attorney Mark Geragos, stated in an affidavit from September 2015. “I was too young and naive to even understand what he was doing to me.”

“She was a prisoner,” Kesha’s mother, Rosemary Patricia “Pebe” Sebert, says today. During several hours-long phone calls from Nashville, where she lives, Pebe, 60, a successful songwriter — she can be seen sitting next to a sobbing Kesha in the courtroom photo that ricocheted across news sites and social media in February — spoke exclusively to Billboard about Kesha’s 10-plus-year relationship with the Grammy-nominated producer. (Kesha declined to speak with Billboard.) “It was like someone who beats you every day and hangs you from a chain and then comes in and gives you a piece of bread. Luke would say, ‘You look nice today,’ ” says Pebe, “and send her into hysterics of happiness because she was programmed to expect nothing but abuse.”

Kesha, a platinum-selling artist with 10 top 10 singles on the Billboard Hot 100, hasn’t released any music of her own since her second album, Warrior, in 2012, because she refuses to work with Dr. Luke and his partner, Sony Music. “Kesha’s allowed to work with another producer,” Pebe (pronounced pee-bee) explains (and Sony confirms). “But Luke gets to approve them. He gets to approve of anyone she works with. He has final say over everything.” Though no court has ruled on the
Kesha outside the New York State Supreme Court in Manhattan on Feb. 19.
‘DON’T BE AFRAID TO SPEAK UP’

A timeline of Kesha’s history and legal dispute with Dr. Luke and Sony Music

SEPTEMBER 2005

After dropping out of high school in Tennessee and moving to Los Angeles, Kesha, 18, signs a six-album deal with hot young producer Dr. Luke and his Kasz Money company.

OCT. 5, 2005

Kesha and Luke attend a party at Paris Hilton’s house. Her mother, Pebe (above), now says that the rape and drugging alleged in Kesha’s 2014 civil suit against Luke took place after the party.

JAN. 2, 2010

Kesha’s debut single, “Tik Tok,” produced by Luke, begins a nine-week reign at No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100, setting a then-record for a female solo artist’s largest digital sales week.

AUGUST 2012

Kesha works on her second LP, Warrior, at Luke’s Malibu studio. She alleges in her 2014 lawsuit that his violent threats during this period once caused her to flee his house barefoot and hide.

JAN. 3, 2014

Kesha says in a statement that she’s entering rehab for an eating disorder “to learn to love myself again.” Her mother soon joins her at Timelines Knolls rehab center near Chicago.

The veracity of these claims against Dr. Luke, Kesha’s case has hit a raw nerve in music and raised the longstanding problem of sexism and mistreatment of women in the business, an issue for which — compared with Hollywood and other industries — it has remained largely unscrutinized.

After the injunction was denied, many of entertainment’s most powerful women — including Adele, Lady Gaga, Demi Lovato, Lorde, Lena Dunham and Ariana Grande — voiced their support for the singer and decried the unfairness of forcing anyone to work with an accused abuser. Kelly Clarkson, whose 2004 hit “Since U Been Gone” was produced by Dr. Luke, called him “demeaning” and “not a good guy.”

On Feb. 22, Taylor Swift donated $250,000 to help Kesha with her legal and financial troubles. “It was really random,” says Pebe, who received an email from Swift’s publicist about the offer. “Kesha was like, ‘Are you sure it’s not some scammer?’ And then she said, ‘I would be honored if she wants to do that.’” (Swift and Kesha later spoke directly.)

Former Runaways bassist Jackie Fuchs, who alleged in July 2015 that she was drugged and raped by then-manager Levy, credits Kesha with inspiring her to speak out about her own assault. “She’s making a difference,” Fuchs tells Billboard. “If this hadn’t come out, I wouldn’t have come forward.”

Meanwhile, the support for Kesha has created a PR nightmare for Sony, which maintains that it cannot interfere with Kesha and Luke’s contract. Four pro-Kesha online petitions — including two organized by national women’s advocacy group UltraViolet, one of which demands Sony cut all ties with Luke — have garnered more than 411,000 signatures. A Sony representative tells Billboard, “We have done everything we could to resolve this.” Additionally, Luke’s attorney denied — and Sony would not comment on — a March 9 The Wrap report stating that the company plans to end their relationship with Luke ahead of the expiration of their contract next year.

In a sworn statement in December 2015, Luke responded to the charges from Kesha’s 2014 lawsuit: “All of their horrific allegations of abuse, threats and purported misconduct by me against Kesha are completely untrue and deeply hurtful,” he said. (Dr. Luke declined to comment for this story.) In fact, Kesha and her mother did testify, in an unrelated 2010 lawsuit also involving Luke, that he never made any sexual advances toward her.

According to a statement given to Billboard by Luke’s attorney Christine Lepera, “Kesha’s court filings are and have always been a transparent business ploy to pressure Luke into a more favorable and lucrative contract. Neither Kesha nor her mother have ever sworn under oath that any of the assault allegations have occurred, despite having numerous opportunities to do so. In fact, they swore the opposite in 2011.”

After social media lit up with stars and others declaring their support for Kesha, Dr. Luke responded on Twitter: “Imagine if you or somebody you loved was publicly accused of a rape you knew they didn’t do. It’s sad that [Kesha] would turn a contract negotiation into something so horrendous and untrue. But I feel confident when this is over the lies will be exposed and the truth will prevail.” (A Sony representative tells Billboard that, following an internal investigation, they found no evidence to support Kesha’s allegations of sexual abuse.)

“I wanted Kesha to come forward a long time ago and end this relationship with Dr. Luke immediately after the [alleged] rape,” says Pebe. “But if she wanted to have a shot at the music business, she had no choice but [to work with him].”

A TAGE 5, KESHA MOVED FROM California to Nashville with Pebe and an older half-brother, Lagan. Pebe, who says she’s not sure who Kesha’s biological father is, has written hits for artists like Dolly Parton and Johnny Cash. Kesha and Pebe — who calls herself a “sober alcoholic” — even collaborated together, writing several songs Kesha would later record.

Kesha proved to be a talent in her own right. “She’s one of the best co-writers I’ve ever worked with,” says Justin Tranter, a songwriter who also has worked with Selena Gomez and Justin Bieber. “Her instinct for melodies and lyrics is at the highest level.”

When Kesha was 17, her mother sent a demo that the Seberts had made together to Samantha Cox, a writer and publisher at BMI, who passed it along to BMI director of writer/publisher relations Beka Callaway. Callaway, in turn, hooked them up with one of the hottest young producers in the game, a former guitarist in the Saturday Night Live house band with the moniker “Dr. Luke.”

Luke had scored his first hit in April 2005 with Clarkson’s No. 2 Hot 100 single “Since U Been Gone,” written with his super-producer mentor, Max Martin, who would co-produce both of Kesha’s albums with Luke. In August 2005, Kesha dropped out of Brentwood High School in Nashville and moved to Los Angeles. In September, at age 18, she signed her deal with Luke and his company Kasz Money. (The financial terms of the deal, which gave Luke control over many facets of her career, including recording and management, have been redacted in court documents.)

her what he called “sober pills”: GHB, a
drug commonly used in sexual assaults.
This, the suit alleges, is what allowed him
to “bring [her] back to his hotel room alone
and rape her while she was unconscious.”
The documents don’t specify a date, but
according to Pebe, Luke drugged her at
the Hiltons’ party and took her back to his
hotel that night. An eyewitness at the party
confirms to Billboard that both Luke and
Kesha were there (although the source says,
“I didn’t see anything weird” between the
two of them).

By midafternoon the day after the party,
Pebe had grown concerned after calling
Kesha multiple times and getting no
response. (On an average day, Pebe says,
the two spoke by phone every six to eight
hours.) Finally, her mother maintains,
Kesha returned her call, saying she had
woken up naked in what she believed
was Dr. Luke’s hotel room. “Mom, I don’t
know where I am. I think we had sex.
I’m sore and sick. I don’t know where
my clothes are. I think I need to go to
the hospital,” she said. Then Kesha’s
phone battery died. Pebe kept calling her
daughter until Kesha called back from the
hotel’s landline.

Pebe says that a friend of Kesha’s
picked Kesha up and drove her back to
her apartment. (Kesha never went to the
hospital.) “At some point over the following
few days I called my best friend and pored
over the details,” Kesha recalls in the 2015
affidavit. “I had only had a few drinks but
after I had taken this ‘sober pill’ I blacked
out.” Says Pebe: “Looking back, I don’t
know why we didn’t go to the police. Kesha
told me not to do anything. She said,
‘Mom, I just want to sing. I don’t want to
be a rape-case victim. I just want to get my
music out.’ I didn’t follow my instincts.”

Less than two months later, according to
Pebe, Luke and Max Martin met Kesha and
Pebe for lunch at a restaurant in Beverly
Hills to discuss who should become
Kesha’s manager. (Max Martin declined to
comment.) She wanted to sign with David
Sonenberg at DAS Communications, who
had worked with The Black Eyed Peas and
The Fugees, and whom she knew through
an industry friend. However, according to
Pebe, Luke wanted Kesha to go with
his friend, the prominent talent manager
Larry Rudolph, who has managed Britney
Spears for most of her career. Kesha wound
up in tears, Pebe says, after Luke grew
frustrated, slammed his fork down and
lectured him on his authority over her
management. The two walked out of the
restaurant and didn’t communicate with
Luke again for two years. Kesha signed
with Sonenberg and began searching for a
record deal.

Kesha nearly found one at Warner
Bros. Records through A&R executive
and former American Idol judge Kara
DioGuardi. DioGuardi tells Billboard that
Warner Bros. and Arthouse Publishing
had a signed agreement with Kesha for
recording and publishing rights,” but that
Dr. Luke called her to say that he had a
pre-existing contract with Kesha. Soon
after, DioGuardi says, “we decided to
release her from our agreement.”

After the failed deal with Warner Bros.,
Pebesays, “Kesha would tell me she was
going to take her car to Mulholland and
drive off the cliff. She was a little dramatic,
but I never knew for sure.” One day Pebe
says that Kesha reached her on the phone
and said, “Dr. Luke just called me and I
have 24 hours to fire my lawyer and my
managers and go back with him. Anytime
I get a contract, he’s going to come
forward and basically say he owns me.
What do I do?”

Kesha, according to a lawsuit Sonenberg
would file in 2010, fired Sonenberg in
September 2008. (Sonenberg declined to
comment.) She also signed to Dr. Luke’s
publishing company Prescription Songs,
which houses dozens of songwriters and
producers.

In 2008, Luke had an important hit: “I
Kissed a Girl,” the first of numerous major
Katyr Perry singles that he co-wrote and/
or co-produced. That year, Kesha came
into one of Luke’s studio sessions with
Flo Rida. The rapper realized he needed a
female voice for his new track, which
in early 2009 became the No. 1 Hot 100
smash “Right Round,” and Kesha’s first
appearance on a hit single.

In late 2008 or early 2009, Dr. Luke
flew with Kesha to New York to shop for a
record deal. While there, she would sign
to RCA, a division of Sony Music. (In 2011,
when Luke formed Kemosabe Records
with RCA and Sony, she was moved over
to that label.) In the 2014 lawsuit, Kesha
claims that before a flight to Los Angeles,
Luke forced her to snort “an illicit drug”
and made sexual advances on her while
she was intoxicated on the plane, where
she had started drinking. “I do remember
her calling me from the plane telling me
that she was so drunk, and [how] Dr. Luke
came over and started making out with
her and was all over her,” says Pebe. “She
told me she felt terrible and was trying to
get away from him and then vomited.”

Pebe also claims that Dr. Luke interfered
with her personal and professional
relationship with her daughter while Kesha
was recording her debut album, Animal.
He refused to let her work on the music,
even though he had promised he would.
In 2013, she sent emails, which she has
shown to Billboard, to Dr. Luke and his
team about the mistreatment Kesha was
enduring from Luke inside the studio and
out, including the alleged rape. Pebe says
he never wrote back.

R. LUKE, WHO WAS BORN IN
Providence, R.I., got his start in the
Saturday Night Live band in 1996. He spent his off-nights
DJ’ing and working on remixes of

Above: Sebert at the 59th annual BMI Pop Awards
in May 2011 in Beverly Hills. Right: Gottwald and
Kesha onstage at the 28th annual ASCAP Pop Music
Awards in April 2011 in Hollywood.
his and other artists’ music. After SNL, he moved to Los Angeles. He has co-written and co-produced more than 30 top 10 Hot 100 hits and 16 No. 1 singles, including other Katy Perry hits such as “Teenage Dream” and “Roar,” and has been nominated for four Grammy Awards.


Music producers are known for using unorthodox and often provocative methods to coax great performances out of their charges — Phil Spector famously pulled a gun on John Lennon during one session — and Dr. Luke, according to some of the artists and executives with whom he has worked, was no exception.

A former Jive executive says Luke “has a massive ego” and is known to be “difficult” to work with. One top music manager who has known Luke for more than 20 years, and whose roster includes best-selling pop and rock acts who have worked with him, says, “Luke is a terrible person. He’s very talented, obviously — he’s a guitar player interested in pop beats — but he’s diabolical. No one likes dealing with the guy. He’ll do anything to f— over everyone. This thing with Kesha is a perfect example. He could have let her out of the deal a year ago — her career was already on its downside — but he’s such an asshole he just wouldn’t do it.”

Veteran publicist Elizabeth Freund has known Luke (who is not her client) since he was 11 years old, when she was his sister’s camp counselor. “There’s not one speck of doubt in my mind that he didn’t commit these allegations,” she says of Luke, who has a girlfriend and two young children. “He’s a loving father and an incredibly generous family member. I’ve seen really good relationships with the people he has worked with for years. He’s strong, kind and a loving and utterly good man.”

KESHA’S CAREER EXPLODED IN early 2010, when her debut single, “Tik Tok,” hit the radio and spent nine consecutive weeks at No. 1 on the Hot 100, breaking a record for single-week sales for a female solo artist. Her debut album, Animal — a giddy collision of pop, rock, hip-hop and dance music powered by Kesha’s outsized party-girl persona — hit No. 1 on the Billboard 200 and eventually sold 1.5 million copies, according to Nielsen Music.

Luke’s focus on Kesha, says Pebe, only intensified with her success: “This is when Luke started getting really hateful,” she says. “He saw her as a cash cow and started manipulating her all the time. She thought all her dreams were finally coming true, but this was just a f—ing trip to hell.”

In late August 2012, Luke and Kesha set to work on her second album, Warrior, in Luke’s Malibu studio. Pebe recalls that Luke would comment about how Kesha, who has spoken openly about her battles with bulimia, wasn’t fit enough. “He ridiculed my body and my weight to the point where I almost killed myself,” Kesha says in the 2015 affidavit. “He encouraged me to not eat — even when I was eight days with no solid food and skipping meals to work out two times a day.”

On one song, according to Pebe, Luke wanted her to sing a lyric that included the phrase “some fat bitches in the bar.” “She would never say something like that — not in a million years,” says a collaborator of Kesha, who has spoken openly about her battles with bulimia, wasn’t fit enough. “He ridiculed my body and my weight to the point where I almost killed myself,” Kesha says in the 2015 affidavit. “He encouraged me to not eat — even when I was eight days with no solid food and skipping meals to work out two times a day.”

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One night in 2012, Pebe remembers that Dr. Luke had Kesha and Pebe come to his studio and proceeded to scream at them for three hours. Kesha asked him if she could leave to go to the bathroom. She fled to her car and texted her mother: “Mom, I’m not kidding. We are going to Mexico. F— the music business.”

In 2013, Kesha co-headlined a tour with Pitbull after “Timber” — Pitbull’s song, co-written by Luke, Pebe and others, and featuring Kesha — spent three weeks at No. 1 on the Hot 100. But Kesha’s personal struggles mounted, and in January 2014, she entered the Chicago-area rehab facility Timberline Knolls for her eating disorder. She was joined a week later by Pebe, who previously had sought treatment for alcoholism and an eating disorder of her own. “Bulimia is a control issue,” says Pebe. “I really believe that the further this thing got with Dr. Luke, the less control she had and the worse her bulimia got, because it
was the only thing [that gave her] control.” Kesha filed her lawsuit against Dr. Luke on Oct. 14, 2014. Kesha, says Pebe, had undergone a lot of therapy since going into rehab and knew “she couldn’t go on as a healthy person” without breaking free from Luke — that she was no longer “willing to be a victim.” Just one week later, Dr. Luke succeeded in having her testimony in a 2010 civil case — in which her former manager, Sonenberg, and his company, DAS, sued Kesha for $14 million in commissions — unsealed.

In that deposition, taken in June 2011, Kesha contradicted what she would later claim in her lawsuit against Luke: She swore under oath that Luke never gave her a “rookie” or coerced her into sex. (Pebe says that Sonenberg was the only other person she was sure knew about the rape at that time.) “Dr. Luke never made sexual advances at me,” Kesha testified. And on Oct. 18, 2011, Pebe gave a deposition claiming Luke never gave Kesha drugs and that she was not aware of any sexual relationship between the two.

Kesha’s 2014 lawsuit states that Dr. Luke “repeatedly threatened that if she ever told anyone about these abusive incidents, he would destroy both [Kesha] and her entire family.” Once, the documents say, he took Kesha “down to the beach to ‘have a talk’ with her,” and “threatened to shut her career down, take away all her publishing and recording rights... He threatened to harm Ms. Sebert and the entire family’s careers, as well as their physical safety.” Kesha “was genuinely scared,” says Pebe, and would sometimes hire security to sit in the driveway of her Nashville house. “Luke almost destroyed us,” says Pebe. “And he has done it intentionally.”

ONY MAINTAINS THAT IT HAS made it possible for Kesha to record without any involvement with Luke. Nonetheless, “it’s his company, he’s CEO, and he’s not obligated to do what Sony thinks is best,” says Pebe. Sources confirm that if Kesha did record for Sony without Luke’s involvement, he would still be entitled to revenue from record sales and publishing.

“Sony is doing everything it can to support the artist in these circumstances,” a lawyer for the company stated in February, adding that Sony “is legally unable to terminate the contract to which it is not a party.”

In September, Kesha submitted an affidavit from Jim Urie, former president/CEO of Universal Music Group Distribution. He agreed that, without an injunction, her career would never recover. “No mainstream distribution company will invest the money necessary to distribute songs for an artist who has fallen from the public eye, as is happening to Kesha at this very moment.”

Later this year, Kemosabe’s five-year contract with Sony Music — worth an estimated $60 million — expires, which leaves Sony to decide whether to renegotiate the terms or cut ties with the label. Regardless of what happens between the two parties, though, Kesha’s contract with Luke, and obligation to RCA, will still stand. According to a prominent entertainment lawyer, the contract is ironclad.

There are few if any precedents for a music-industry contract dispute that centers on alleged sexual abuse. More conventional cases will often end in a settlement and renegotiated terms. “Dr. Luke basically owns Kesha until her death. He doesn’t have to give her any money and is under no time constraints. She can’t legally put any new music out, or he can and will sue her,” says Pebe.

After receiving Kesha’s lawsuit, Dr. Luke filed a defamation case in New York against her; her current manager, Jack Rovner; and Pebe. In it he calls Kesha’s claims “defamatory statements containing lurid allegations of physical and mental abuse — allegations that Kesha and [her mother] have themselves admitted are false.”

Two weeks later, he filed a similar defamation suit against Pebe in Tennessee. On Feb. 3, the New York case was dismissed due to jurisdictional issues. The other case is still pending.

IF KESHA DECIDES TO FILE AN amended complaint, the judge will need to decide whether to dismiss it, and the denial of her injunction could come up on appeal. If Kesha beats a dismissal motion, a trial likely wouldn’t happen until next year at the earliest.

“Artists get stuck in horrible record deals all the time and often don’t have the power to say or do anything about it, but Kesha’s situation is on a whole other level,” says songwriter Tranter. “For her to be so brave, to have herself affirmed through her divorce and her, almost destroyed us,” says Pebe. “And he has done it intentionally.”

“KESHA WAS PROGRAMMED TO EXPECT NOTHING BUT ABUSE.” — PEBE SEBERT

Additional reporting by Shirley Halperin.
MAC PRESENTS

Congratulations Marcie Allen on being named a Billboard Branding Power Player

MAC PRESENTS
GREATEST HITS

We’ve had a few hits over the last 12 years

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CONCERT MARKETING & PROMOTION AWARD
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2X Winner

CLIO MUSIC
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2X Winner
DURING CONCERT TOURS, IN TV COMMERCIALS and for clothing labels and cans of soda, musicians are increasingly linked to consumer brands. Marketers recognize the power of music to motivate consumers — and pay for relationships with stars (and rising talent) in every genre.

Some $2 billion in revenue reaches the music industry from the branding business. That includes $1.4 billion in sponsorship spending in the United States on music tours, venues and festivals during 2015, according to IEG. Another $347 million in fees was paid in 2014 (the most recent figures available) worldwide for the use of music in advertising, films, games and TV programs, according to IFPI. Fees and royalties paid to artists for endorsement and branding deals account for the balance.

The executives from the companies featured here are at the forefront of the business of marketing with music. They are in the business of linking brands and artists — for the benefit of both.

**CONSUMER BRANDS**

**RICH LEHRFELD, 47**
Senior vp global brand marketing and communications, American Express

More than 1.7 million fans have viewed the Dead & Company show filmed at New York’s Madison Square Garden on Oct. 31, 2015, for American Express’ online series *Unstaged* — it was the first time the Dead’s members had “partnered with a major brand in this way,” says Lehrfeld, a New Jersey native and father of two. The deal with the band continued Amex’s music spend (estimated at $25 million to $50 million in 2015), which included *Unstaged* performances by Ellie Goulding and Disclosure and the company’s partnership with Taylor Swift. That relationship yielded big numbers: more than a half-million presales to Amex cardholders for Swift’s 1989 World Tour, 1 million downloads of its Emmy Award-winning Amex *Unstaged* Taylor Swift Experience app and 1.6 billion views of the artist’s “Blank Space” video, featured on the app in an interactive format.

**TOM PEYTON, 59**
Assistant vp marketing, American Honda

To engage younger car buyers, Peyton’s plan was straightforward — and effective. “Take some of our TV [advertising] dollars, sponsor artists’ live videos, capture that content, run ads in front of that and have the same impact that we had on TV.” Honda Stage, launched in 2014, has featured more than 60 acts — One Direction, Ariana Grande, Sam Smith, Big Sean and Pitbull, among others — and has drawn more than 100 million YouTube and Vevo views. The video-focused campaign extended the company’s music marketing efforts, which began in 2001 with the Honda Civic Tour and continued in 2015 with lead sponsorship of One Direction’s On the Road Tour. Peyton, a native of Los Angeles who earned his MBA at the University of Southern California, says video clips have “higher emotional value” to fans than TV spots. This year, Honda is backing *Uncharted: Power of Dreams*, which will spotlight emerging musicians and stream on such sites as Facebook, Vevo, YouTube and Uproxx.

**RICARDO DIAS, 37**
Global vp consumer connections, Anheuser-Busch InBev

**BRIAN PERKINS, 33**
Global vp, Budweiser, Anheuser-Busch InBev

Dias and Perkins have tapped music to propel the marketing goals for, respectively, the Corona and Budweiser brands. For Dias, a native of Brazil, Corona’s 3-year-old Sound of SunSets series evokes “the best of beach culture,” with up to 3,000 small-scale events worldwide annually, featuring such EDM-minded artists as Robin Schulz, Bakermat and Claptone, in locations from Shanghai to the Andes Mountains. Perkins, a father of two, reports that Bud’s “Brewed the Hard Way” campaign — which included a partnership with the National Parks Foundation and showcased such artists as Mary J. Blige who performed before iconic American backdrops like the Statue of Liberty — has yielded the brand’s “strongest performance of the past 14 years.”

**Masters Of Music Marketing**

These dealmakers don’t just pair artists with trademarks — they shape the culture.

Mary J. Blige performed on Liberty Island in New York harbor as part of Budweiser’s Monument Series in 2015.
The Citi Concert Series on NBC’s Today delivers one-of-a-kind experiences to Citi cardholders and connects “with millions of people each morning,” says Breithaupt of the sponsorship deal that began in 2015. Similarly, a Citi/American Airlines partnership with Live Nation gave Citi/AAdvantage cardholders VIP access to an exclusive Imagine Dragons show in September at the Hollywood Palladium — one of 1,400 acts that Citi worked with worldwide in 2015. The payoff? Citi has experienced year-on-year double-digit growth in 2015 in customer entertainment spending, says Breithaupt, a native of New York state’s Finger Lakes region. “The power of music to connect, motivate, excite and energize fans is like no other.”

Jennifer Lopez, Eminem and Pharrell Williams

More than 1 million fans follow Coca-Cola’s custom playlists on Spotify, just one affirmation of the wisdom of Coke’s $10 million minority investment in the streaming service in 2012. For Belliotti and Seuge, who drive music marketing for the global beverage giant, new platforms offer new opportunities. The Coke-produced podcast First Taste Fridays has drawn 1.4 million listeners, ranking it among the top 10 podcasts at iHeartMedia, Coke’s partner in the venture, says Seuge, a French native and father of three. For Belliotti, whose 3-year-old son is a Twenty One Pilots fan, “music really is the vehicle for us to innovate” in marketing. “It’s about trying to test new formats and pilot new ideas, and music is the perfect medium to do that.”

Rajamannar leveraged MasterCard’s marketing might in 2015 to promote Gwen Stefani’s return to the stage following a six-year hiatus. “Her objective was to get back to the concert space, and we gave her a platform for that to happen,” the father of two says of MasterCard’s Priceless Surprises website and app, which gave cardholders a shot at concert tickets and even VIP encounters with Stefani when they used MasterCard with Apple Pay. Beginning with a late-2014 TV spot featuring Stefani’s song “Spark the Fire,” the campaign emphasized both Stefani’s music and style — “she’s a fashionista” — and resulted in a double-digit increase in Apple Pay usage, reports Rajamannar.

With an estimated $50 million to $75 million sponsorship spend, in 2015 Harter placed more than 125,000 ads across the brand’s nationwide advertising and global marketing partnerships (see Media), and the two maintain executive positions there. Their Converse Rubber Tracks collaboration reached a peak in 2015 with a campaign pairing 84 rising acts with the brand’s best sales-driving commercial in 2015 — and “Out of the Blue,” a marketing campaign that generated more than 1 billion media impressions for Fall Out Boy, helping to propel the band’s album American Beauty/American Psycho to No. 1 on the Billboard 200.

Rajamannar

JON COHEN, 47
Co-founder/co-CEO
Cornerstone Agency

ROB STONE, 47
Co-founder/co-CEO
Cornerstone Agency

Since 1996, Stone and Cohen, who were both raised in the suburbs of Long Island, N.Y., have built Cornerstone Agency into a music-marketing and branding agency with offices on three continents and partnerships with the likes of Budweiser, Coca-Cola and Converse. In 1999, the two co-founded music magazine The Fader, also known for its branding partnerships (see Media), and the two maintain executive positions there. Their Converse Rubber Tracks collaboration reached a peak in 2015 with a campaign pairing 84 rising acts with producers like Mark Ronson at London’s Abbey Road studios, Sly & Robbie at Kingston’s Tuff Gong and Big Boi at Atlanta’s Stankonia. Says Stone: “I’m most proud of the credibility and integrity we’ve sustained with both The Fader as a leading voice in music culture and Cornerstone as a creative agency.”
THE NEW FACES OF MUSIC DIGITAL MARKETING

"We build the brand so artists can focus on what's really important: the music."
Raffi Avi Keuhnelian

HOW MUSICPROMOTODAY IS CHANGING THE TUNE OF THE MUSIC INDUSTRY, ONE DISRUPTION AT A TIME.

Call it the trend of the moment, but it seems an A-list like Beyonce or Kendrick Lamar is secretly dropping an album that sets the internet on fire weekly. How could anybody do this with no push other than maybe a tweet? First, you've got to be famous — really famous. Second, these artists and their managers make bank by understanding the value of a loyal digital following and how to be strategically disruptive.

Where musical communities used to centre around record stores and concert halls, now they're scattered across an infinite network of Instagrams, blogs and video channels. Your fanbase is your followers. Anybody can have social media accounts, but how does a young artist leverage them to become a global superstar? They turn to visionaries like Raffi Keuhnelian and Anthony Katz.

Having been running viral campaigns since 2005, the serial entrepreneurs co-founded MusicPromoToday, and have seen the digital marketing firm swell to a bustling team of 20. Their growing empire is built on a unique perspective: anybody can go digital, not everybody can be disruptive. By scrapping traditional methods, they have had big wins with campaigns that ensure artists reach their full potential among their audience. Basically, they don't just get you seen and heard — they make you stand out.

Their success has been their client's success: MusicPromoToday's campaigns have racked up millions of YouTube views, social media engagements and words across press coverage. They've worked with some of the biggest artists and helped them top the industry, whether it's on the charts or at the GRAMMYs.

When asked what he thinks the key to their success has been, CEO Raffi Keuhnelian says:

“Our campaigns aren’t just about being digital — they’re about being disruptive. We build the brand so artists can focus on what’s really important: the music.”

To contact MusicPromoToday, email info@musicpromotoday.com or call 1-800-986-9185
The biggest matchmaking success for Allen’s company in 2015 was Southwest Airlines looking to reach more millennials,” she says, and MAC Presents got Imagine Dragons to carry on their instruments for in-flight concerts, capping a partnership in which contest entries reached seven times the airline’s usual sweepstakes numbers. Coverage helped drive more than 1 billion media impressions, with a comparable value of $5.2 million — and helped the band earn its second No. 1 album on the Billboard 200. Allen, a Nashville stepmother of two who commutes to her New York office, saw MAC Presents’ net revenue rise 20 percent in the past year.

Although there were no Intel logos onstage at the Staples Center, the tech giant and Greenlight’s months-in-the-making collaboration with Lady Gaga for the Grammy Awards’ David Bowie tribute — which incorporated robotics and an Intel Curie ring data sensor that the artist wore to produce real-time holographic effects — generated 500 million earned media impressions within 24 hours of the telecast. “We’re not creating band-plus-brand campaigns,” says Sandifer. “Our programs and clients are collaborating with artists to create culture.” Though Greenlight’s founders include Red Light Media & Marketing's Coran Capshaw, the branded content agency/production studio hybrid — clients include Under Armour and Hyundai — functions independently and is not beholden to RLM’s roster. “It allows the brand to realize that, potentially, it has the entire music business at its disposal,” says Flohr, “with our expertise helping to navigate that space.”

As a music attorney (he’s a senior partner with Hertz Lichtenstein & Young), Hertz represents Will Smith, Keith Richards, Gwen Stefani, Britney Spears and Ariana Grande. Meanwhile, his MemBrain entertainment marketing and strategy consulting firm has struck partnerships with McDonald’s, Hasbro, Intel, Keds and MillerCoors. “We’ve done almost $3 billion worth of retail deals in celebrity fragrance partnerships alone,” says the Venice, Calif., resident. His roles do overlap. “We’ve done a really good job of leveraging the consulting work we do to help our legal clientele, when appropriate,” says Hertz, adding: “Oftentimes when our clients are looking at sponsors or endorsement opportunities, people in the law firm will walk down the hall and pick brains at MemBrain.”

Collaborating with Mariah Carey’s manager Stella Bulochnikov, Hart, Lear and Lewis brainstormed branding partners for the singer when she joined the agency’s roster in mid-2015. With UTA’s help, Carey struck a deal with Hallmark that “was synergistic in every sense,” says Hart, a Los Angeles-based father of three. The brand “proved to be the consummate partner,” adds Lewis, a Dallas native. Hallmark backed six sold-out nights of Carey’s show All I Want for Christmas Is You at New York’s Beacon Theater and invited her to direct and star in the TV special A Christmas Melody on its Hallmark Channel. The program drew 3.9 million viewers, according to Nielsen — “the highest-rated holiday special in the network’s history,” says Lear. To top it off, Carey rode the Hallmark float at the 2015 Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade.

Jacobs, from his base in Los Angeles, and Lewin, who shuttles between New York and Nashville, drive some of WME’s most noteworthy branding deals: Selena Gomez’s Pantene ads, Janelle Monáe’s CoverGirl presence and Miranda Lambert’s partnership with Ram. “When everybody said that women can’t sell trucks,” notes Jacobs, Lewin linked up Bayer Crop Science as the sponsor for Luke Bryan’s Farm Tour. “Growing up on a farm,” says Lewin, “Luke’s dad used Bayer products, so it was a brand that he really believed in.”

For the 200-plus artists at Red Light, the world’s largest independent management firm — clients include Dave Matthews Band, Lionel Richie, Luke Bryan and Tiesto — Ringel is their liaison to the branding world. His in-house role allows
Congrats to Mike Belcher on being named to Billboard’s Branding Power Player list.

#Uncarrier T-Mobile

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the Yale-educated executive to offer “same-day responsiveness” and valuable information to brand clients. In return, he’s looking for smart partnerships. A brand exposure opportunity presented “six to 10 months” before the promotion campaign for an artist’s new album, for example, is measurably more valuable in Red Light’s view. “We’re asking for strategic partnerships as opposed to just taking dollars.”

Ferree had been vp brand partnerships at Island Def Jam Recordings, working with Justin Bieber, Iggy Azalea, Jhene Aiko and others, before she joined Bieber manager Scooter Braun at SB Projects in early 2015. An Ohio native who now lives in Brooklyn, Ferree moved ahead with the partnership that Braun had struck for Bieber with Calvin Klein (“I’m My Calvins”) and has overseen Tori Kelly’s “Joy of Pepsi” commercial and her role in Red Light’s view. “We’re asking for strategic partnerships with Def Jam Recordings, working with Justin Bieber, Future and Miley Cyrus, in a partnership with AEG Live/Goldenvoice. Ferree had been vp brand partnerships at Island Def Jam Recordings, working with Justin Bieber, Iggy Azalea, Jhene Aiko and others, before she joined Bieber manager Scooter Braun at SB Projects in early 2015. An Ohio native who now lives in Brooklyn, Ferree moved ahead with the partnership that Braun had struck for Bieber with Calvin Klein (“I’m My Calvins”) and has overseen Tori Kelly’s “Joy of Pepsi” commercial and her role in Red Light’s view. “We’re asking for strategic partnerships with Def Jam Recordings, working with Justin Bieber, Future and Miley Cyrus, in a partnership with AEG Live/Goldenvoice.

JULIETTE DEROE, 33
Head of brand partnerships
SB Projects

“Brands are really waking up to the power of connecting with people through their ears,” says Castelli, a father of three, who came to iHeartMedia from AOL and got hooked on music after seeing a Van Halen show at 14. At iHeartMedia’s signature Jingle Ball Tour in 2015, the company partnered with Capital One for a sweepstakes that delivered a half-billion media impressions. With Macy’s, the iHeartRadio Rising Star program invited listeners to choose new artists for a shot at performing at the 2015 iHeartRadio Music Festival — and generated 10 million votes. Says Castelli: “We integrate brands through everything we’re doing.”

TIM CASTELLI, 48
President of national sales, marketing and partnerships
iHeartMedia

The desire for brands to engage with consumers has led Pandora to create

As president of media and sponsorship for Live Nation — the world’s largest concert promoter, which presented 11 of the top 25 tours of 2015 — he’s the Queen native and his team of 150 manage a global portfolio of sales opportunities that includes venue name rights, tour sponsorships, festival deals, in-venue advertising, custom marketing programs and web properties (including Ticketmaster.com and LiveNation.com) that boast 65 million monthly unique visitors in the United States alone. With 100-plus venues, more than 65 festivals and a database exceeding 100 million people, “there’s really no other platform like this anywhere in the world for brands to get close to the music fan.”

BRETT YORMARK, 49
CEO
Brooklyn Sports & Entertainment

Since 2012, Yormark and his team have

venues in its class. Yormark cites Brooklyn Sports & Entertainment’s advisory board, which he co-chairs with Republic Group president Charlie Walk, as one of the key factors in the arena’s growth. Coming to Barclays Center this spring: the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremony on April 8, Bruce Springsteen, Rihanna and Justin Bieber. Meanwhile, the Morristown, N.J., native says he’s focusing on expanding BSE’s “venue pipeline” this year. It will reopen the renamed Nassau Coliseum on Long Island, and, in partnership with Live Nation and iStar, the Amphitheater at Coney Island Boardwalk, and renovate Brooklyn’s historic Paramount Theater. “We’ll set our sights on areas outside New York, too, if it’s on strategy and appropriate.”

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BOZOMA SAINT JOHN, 39
Head of global consumer marketing
Apple Music/iTunes

“We’re in the center of the culture,” says Saint John — “Box” to those who know her — about Apple’s marketing of its music services. For example: the Apple Music ad with Mary J. Blige, Kerry Washington and Taraji P. Henson that premiered during the Emmy Awards, to considerable media coverage. Saint John worked in music marketing at Pepsi, then went to Beats Music, months before Apple bought it in 2014, and now runs marketing for iTunes and Apple’s streaming service. In talking to brands about Apple Music playlists, “we’re trying to explain something that’s not tangible,” says the Wesleyan University grad, “so you compare it to something [familiar] like mixtapes.”

JOHN TRIMBLE, 52
Chief revenue officer
Pandora

The desire for brands to engage with consumers with more than ads has led Pandora to create

STREAMING AND RETAIL

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PLAYING FOR THE FINISH LINE

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Major League Baseball

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Since 2012, Yormark and his team have built Brooklyn’s Barclays Center into a live-entertainment brand that rivals its 137-year-old Manhattan neighbor, Madison Square Garden. The Brooklyn arena carved out enough market share — $56.7 million in cumulative box-office revenue in 2015, compared with MSG’s $130.4 million, according to Billboard Boxscore — to make it No. 3 in North America and No. 5 in the world for
THANKS TO YOUR TRACKS
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CONGRATULATIONS TO OLIVIER FRANÇOIS FOR CREATING A REMARKABLE PLAYLIST.
AND TO OUR PARTNERS; THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF OUR SOUNDTRACK.

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new types of branded content, says Trimble, a native Rhode Islander and father of three. Sponsored Listening gives users an hour of uninterrupted programming in exchange for 15 seconds of engagement with a brand (through a video or slide gallery, for example). Customized channels fit a brand’s message; a country stream for Ford’s F-Series trucks is “a great proof point for what Pandora can do for music makers and brands,” says Trimble, whose ad and sponsorship team drove $1 billion in revenue during its fiscal year of 2014 to 2015, with a 31 percent increase in ad growth in its third quarter.

Jeff Levick, 45
Chief revenue officer
Spotify

An Atlanta native now living in Manhattan, Levick offers brands an ability to connect Spotify fans — 75 million each month — with music in unique ways. Through a partnership launched in 2015 with Starbucks, Spotify is integrated into the “My Starbucks Rewards” app to provide customers with new music and playlists. Spotify also has worked with Dunkin’ Donuts to provide pop-up concerts (The Mowgli’s, Marian Hill, Hippo Campus, Cayucas, Saint Motel) in five major U.S. markets. Says Levick: “Brands want to be associated with the up-and-comers and form relationships with them.”

Ryan Beach, 40
Vice president/general merchandise manager of electronics and entertainment, Target

Beach was named Target’s chief music buyer in March 2015 and this past January led the retail chain to the greatest marketing triumph in its music-retail history — selling 1 million copies of Adele’s 25 album in the first 10 days of its release. The singer’s total Target sales now top 2 million. Target’s exclusive version of 25, with three bonus tracks, was one of nearly 100 exclusive album versions marketed by the chain in 2015. Amid the rise of music streaming, Beach, a Hong Kong native, says that “physical CD sales continue to be successful for our entertainment business. Music has been, and will continue to be, an important part of Target’s DNA.”

Tom Eaton, 46
Vp for advertising
Universal Music Publishing Group

With song placements in nine commercials that aired during Super Bowl 50 (tying Sony/ATV), Eaton and his team have been on a roll. Yet the Glen Ridge, N.J., resident cites his work with the speaker and headphone company Bose as a recent highlight of his branding efforts. Universal placed three songs from its catalog in Bose/NFL commercials, including Seinabo Sey’s “Hard Times,” as well as in Bose’s online “Game Changer” spot. Brands, overall, are driving harder bargains for synchronization rights to songs in ad spots, Eaton says. “The biggest issue is the downward pressure of fees,” he says, “and our battle to maintain the value of the songs.”

Jonathan Feldman, 38
Vp brand partnerships and sports marketing
Atlantic Records

Janelle Monae’s new Pepsi TV spot — in which the singer seques from The Contours’ 1962 hit “Do You Love Me” to Madonna’s 1989 smash “Express Yourself” — is the latest partnership between the beverage and the Atlantic Records star. “The biggest compliment is when a brand does repeat business with an artist,” says Hackney, a Harvard Business School graduate who guides Atlantic’s branding partnerships and coordinates deals for

Kate Denton, 36
Senior vp, seventeeneighty
Capitol Music Group

As head of Capitol’s in-house advertising initiative seventeeneighty (the address of the label’s iconic Los Angeles tower), Denton looks “to amplify the artist’s brand” and “to get them more exposure in ways that are authentic,” she says. The Saginaw, Mich., native had the chance to do both with Halsey by featuring the singer’s version of Tears for Fears’ “Mad World” in a much-Shazamed Taco Bell commercial, while also partnering the artist with MAC Cosmetics and the Nasty Girl clothing line. The multiple-brand
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GREG KURSTIN
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JAMES FAUNTLEROY
ARIEL RECHTSHAID

INTERVIEW

SALT-N-PEP A
NATE RUSS (fun.)

CONVERSATION

P AUL WILLIAMS

LIVE SONG FEEDBACK

DESMOND CHILD
ANTONINA ARMATO
DARRELL BROWN

HIT PANELISTS & PERFORMERS

CHARLES KELLEY (LADY ANTEBELLUM)
DAN WILSON
SUZANNE VEGA
MIKE POSNER
ROB THOMAS
MELISSA ETHERIDGE
POO BEAR
DAVID VANACORE
BRETT JAMES
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exposure helped Halsey’s *Badlands* enter the Billboard 200 at No. 2.

CLAUDIA BUTZKY*
Senior vp global brand partnerships
RCA Records

Working with a diverse roster that ranges from the rock of Foo Fighters to the a cappella pop of Pentatonix, the Florida-raised Butzky says that the biggest challenge of her role is “making sure the [artist-brand] partnership is the right fit for all sides both financially and organically.” In 2015, for example, Citi hosted VIP cardmember lounges at a handful of U.S. dates on the Foos’ Sonic Highways World Tour — worth an estimated $1 million in total media spending. As Pentatonix’s sound redefined what can become a pop hit, says Butzky, “we are in conversations with multiple brands for opportunities” for the group.

METHODOLOGY Executives were chosen based on branding-deal spending and music industry impact as measured by the chart and/or tour performance of partnering artists in the past year, as tracked by Nielsen Music and Billboard Boxscore.


MIKE TUNNICLIFFE, 54
Executive vp business development and partnerships, Universal Music Group

Since launching his UMG-wide department in January 2015, Tunnicliffe and his team have had “138 brand conversations,” resulting in partnerships with acts from across Universal’s label group. For Marriott, the Manchester, England, native created a concert series for the hotel chain’s rewards-club members, including Ellie Goulding in London and Gwen Stefani in Dubai. The intimate live performances, and additional branded content, are also featured on Marriott’s in-room TV channel. “The benefit for us is we’ve got this regular dialogue going on with Marriott’s 50 million rewards-club members about our artists,” says Tunnicliffe. Plus, Marriott invests in such Universal events as the label group’s Grammy and South by Southwest parties. While UMG’s individual labels continue to do their own deals, the former Saatchi & Saatchi executive says he works like “an [ad] agency. What we’re looking to do is build out broader, more strategic brand programs that we can plug multiple acts into. We go to the brands and figure out what they want and go back to the acts.”

LORI FELDMAN, 48
Executive vp brand partnerships and creative synch licensing, Warner Bros. Records

While Andra Day was still recording her Warner Bros. debut LP, *Cheers to the Fall*, Feldman began pitching her to potential partners. Day (who earned Grammy nominations for best R&B album and best R&B performance) has since gained exposure through more than a dozen brands including Bud Light, Gap and Delta. Most recently, the “Rise Up” singer paired with Diet Coke for its newly launched “It’s Mine” ads, which feature her cover of Queen’s “I Want It All.” The result is more than just the “money that comes in the door,” says Feldman, a mother of three. Millions of media impressions for Day helped *Cheers to the Fall* bow at No. 3 on Billboard’s R&B Albums chart.
THUMBS UP!!!

JOHN TRIMBLE

Congratulations

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YOUR DEDICATION, INNOVATION AND LEADERSHIP IN HELPING BRANDS FIND THEIR AUDIENCES THROUGH THE PASSION POINT OF MUSIC INSPIRES US ALL. WE ONLY WISH WE HAD MORE THUMBS TO SHOW YOU HOW MUCH.

FROM YOUR BIGGEST FANS AT PANDORA
Dreezy Debuts

Dreezy makes her entrance on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs as “Body” (featuring Jeremih) begins at No. 44. The 21-year-old Chicago native’s R&B track is rising, thanks partly to 10,000 downloads sold in the tracking week, according to Nielsen Music. It also lifts 26-21 on Mainstream R&B/Hip-Hop. Her 2015 EP, From Now On, previews her first full-length, expected later this year on Interscope.

Numbers: Gaga’s ‘Til’ Hits Hot 100

Following Lady Gaga’s performance of the Academy Award-nominated “Til It Happens to You” on the Feb. 28 Oscars broadcast, the awareness-raising song about sexual assault debuts on the Billboard Hot 100.

22

“Til” arrives at No. 95 on the Hot 100 and marks Gaga’s 22nd chart entry. It earned 1 million streams in the week ending March 3, according to Nielsen Music, up 546 percent.

2,121%

The song’s sales jumped 2,121 percent for the week, rising to 28,000 downloads — its best weekly total yet and 39 percent of its sales to date. Released in September 2015, the single has sold 71,000 thus far.

32

“Til” was co-written by Diane Warren, who returns to the list for the first time since 2011. The songwriter has earned 32 top 10 hits on the Hot 100, including nine No. 1s.

—KEITH CAULFIELD

On the ‘Money’

Singer-songwriter Brooke Eden rises 60-58 on Country Airplay with her Red Bow debut, “Daddy’s Money,” a banjo-heavy track praising her blue-collar work ethic and family background. The daughter of a carpenter, Eden sharpened her skills with a recurring gig at Nashville’s renowned Tootsie’s Orchid Lounge after moving from Florida. She’s currently recording her first album.

Fronted by Matt Healy, The 1975 lands its first No. 1 on the Billboard 200.
The 1975 Makes ‘Beautiful’ Debut With First No. 1

The British alt-pop band follows its slow-burning breakthrough album (featuring a historically long-winded title) with an instant hit

BY KEITH CAULFIELD

THE 1975 SCORES ITS FIRST CHART-TOPPER on the Billboard 200 with the arrival of I Like It When You Sleep, For You Are So Beautiful Yet So Unaware of It. The Dirty Hit/Interscope album, released Feb. 26, earned 108,000 equivalent-album units during its release week.

Not only is I Like It When You Sleep, For You Are So Beautiful Yet So Unaware of It the first chart-topper for The 1975, but it’s also the first time the group has even reached the top 10. The 1975 bowed and peaked at No. 28 on Sept. 21, 2013, selling just 15,000 copies in its debut week. But the album has been a steady seller since its release. During its first two years, the record sold an average of 3,000 copies per week. On the latest Billboard 200, the album returns to the list at No. 140 (5,000 units, up 25 percent; 2,000 in sales, up 57 percent), for its 71st nonconsecutive week on the chart.

I Like It When You Sleep, For You Are So Beautiful Yet So Unaware of It already has notched four top 20 hits on Hot Rock Songs: “Love Me” (No. 7), “Ugh!” (No. 10), “The Sound” (No. 14) and “Somebody Else” (No. 13). A more offbeat stat: The 1975 claims the longest title ever for a No. 1 album, with 71 characters (including spaces). It trumps the 59 characters in LL Cool J’s G.O.A.T. Featuring James T. Smith: The Greatest of All Time and the various-artists compilation P. Diddy & Bad Boy Records Present... We Invented the Remix.

On the March 26 Billboard 200, watch for Kendrick Lamar to score his second No. 1 with the surprise album Untitled Unmastered. Industry forecasters suggest that the set, released March 4, could earn more than 170,000 equivalent-album units in the week ending March 10.

MARKET WATCH

A WEEKLY NATIONAL MUSIC SALES REPORT

CHART BEAT

House Music With Fuller House, the Netflix reboot of Full House, comes a fitting rebirth of the show’s theme song, “Everywhere You Look,” the classic sitcom’s original theme, was written by Jesse Frederick (who also performed it), show co-creator Jeff Franklin and Bennett Safley. Now, 28 years after the show’s 1987 premiere, the song is a Billboard chart hit. A cover by Carly Rae Jepsen, subtitled “The Fuller House Theme,” debuts on Pop Digital Songs at No. 44 (10,000 downloads sold, according to Nielsen Music). The updated “Look” was produced by Butch Walker (Fall Out Boy, Taylor Swift, Train).

—CARY TRUST

GOOD COMPANY

Los Angeles trio The Record Company dabbles in bluesy, classic rock on its debut Concord album. Give It Back to You, which entered Top Rock Albums (dated March 5) at No. 23. True to its title, lead single “Off the Ground” is rising at radio, reaching the top 10 (13-9) on Triple A. The song has been building since 2015, when it was featured in a Miller Lite ad. —AMAYA MENDIZABAL, JIM ASKER and KEVIN RUTHERFORD

MARCH 19, 2016 | WWW.BILLBOARD.COM 69
The pop singer-songwriter reaches the Artist 100's top 40 powered by his single "I Took a Pill in Ibiza," which pushes 15-14 on the Billboard Hot 100.
Rihanna holds at No. 3 on the Billboard Artist 100, spending a fifth consecutive week in the chart’s top five. Powering her standing is “Work” (featuring Drake, who is at No. 4), which leads the Billboard Hot 100 for a third week. Rihanna gains by 12 percent in airplay as “Work” rises 5-4 on the Radio Songs chart, up by 16 percent to 104 million all-format audience impressions, according to Nielsen Music.

With “Work” released from Rihanna’s studio album Anti, she has made history: Each of her last seven studio records has yielded a Hot 100 No. 1, beginning with 2006’s A Girl Like You (“SOS”), a streak that no other artist has achieved. Her run would be eight straight studio LPs, encompassing her entire output, if her introductory single, “Pon De Replay,” from debut album Music of the Sun had risen one notch higher on the Hot 100. It peaked at No. 2 in 2005.

The 1975 blasts 100-5 on the Artist 100 (up 866 percent in overall activity) as its I Like It When You Sleep, For You Are So Beautiful Yet So Unaware of It debuts at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 and Top Album Sales (98,000 in pure sales). As the alt-rock band rewrites the record for the longest No. 1 title on the Billboard 200 (see story, page 69), it also makes history for the largest leap on the Artist 100. It passes Shawn Mendes’ 93-spot vault (95-2) on May 2, 2015.

—Gary Trust
JABARI JACOBS

Billboard 200

March 19

The week’s most popular albums across all genres, ranked by album sales, audio on-demand streaming activity and digital sales from albums, according to Nielsen Music. See Charts Legend on billboard.com/biz for complete rules and explanations.

As Twenty One Pilots’ former No. 1 Blurryface continues its handsome run on the Billboard 200, its smash single “Stressed Out” hits No. 1 on the Mainstream Top 40 airplay chart. It’s the first leader for the act on the tally and climbs 2-1 in its 16th week on the list (down 1 percent in plays at the format in the week ending March 6, according to Nielsen Music). The single also leads the Adult Top 40 airplay chart for a second week.

“Stressed” is the first former Alternative No. 1 to crown the Mainstream Top 40 tally in more than two-and-a-half-years, when Lorde’s “Royals” did so in 2013. It’s the first by a duo or group to notch the mark in nearly four years, following Fun’s “We Are Young” (featuring Janelle Monáe) in 2012.

Powered by “Stressed Out,” Blurryface has spent all 42 of its chart weeks within the top 40 of the Billboard 200. It has been in the top 10 for the past 10 straight frames and dips 7-8 on the new chart (36,000 equivalent album units earned in the week ending March 3, down 7 percent).

So far, Blurryface has sold 753,000 copies, earned 14 million equivalent album units and generated 606 million on-demand audio and video streams for its tracks.

—Keith Caulfield and Gary Trust

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The album was discounted to $3.99 during the week at select digital retailers, including iTunes, which prompts its 340 percent gain in pure album sales (to 10,000) for the week and a 136 percent unit lift (to 14,000).

OLD DOMINION
Meat and Candy

The humorous band that spoofs hair metal acts of yesteryear also rises 14-1 on Comedy Albums with this new live set. It’s the group’s fourth straight leader on the Comedy Albums chart out of four total visits to the list. —K.C.
Bonnie Raitt earns her 20th charting album on the Billboard 200 as her latest release, *Dig in Deep*, debuts at No. 11. The set earned 33,000 equivalent-album units in the week ending March 3, according to Nielsen Music, and sold slightly more than 32,000 in pure album sales. It also debuts at No. 7 on Top Album Sales.

The new album also enters at No. 1 on both Top Folk Albums and Blues Albums. It marks Raitt's second leader on the Blues Albums list, following a 25-week run at No. 1 with 2012's *Slipstream*.

Elsewhere on Folk Albums, pop-folk duo Lily & Madeleine arrive at No. 13 with their third album, *Keep It Together* (1,000 sold). It's the pair's third charting effort on Folk Albums, and it also starts at No. 14 on Heatseekers Albums.

Also on Heatseekers Albums, alternative rock act School of Seven Bells collects its first No. 1 on a national Billboard chart as its fourth studio record, *SVIIB*, bows atop the list (4,000 sold). The album is the final studio set from the act. The group began as a trio in 2007 (Benjamin Curtis and sisters Alejandra and Claudia Deheza), then became a duo (Claudia left in 2010). Curtis died in 2013 of T-cell lymphoblastic lymphoma. The new album was written and recorded with Curtis before his death and completed by Alejandra and producer Justin Meldal-Johnsen. —Keith Caulfield
Zayn Hits No. 1 Again

Zayn (below) collects a second straight No. 1 on Billboard + Twitter Top Tracks as “It’s You” strides 5-1 in its third charting week. “Pillowtalk,” the former One Direction member’s previous single, led for two frames in February.

“It’s You” ascends following its first full charting week since the song and its music video arrived Feb. 26. (The tracking window for Billboard + Twitter Top Tracks runs Monday to Sunday, so the latest chart’s activity was for the week ending March 6.) The new song also starts with 3.4 million U.S. streams for the week ending March 3, according to Nielsen Music.

Farther down the list, Meghan Trainor’s “No” enters at No. 12 after its March 4 premiere. Upon its arrival, iHeartMedia radio stations played the song hourly, helping it earn a No. 28 debut on the Mainstream Top 40 airplay chart. “No” is the lead single from Trainor’s second full-length studio album, Thank You, due May 13, and the cheeky cut’s debut prompts 34,000 Twitter mentions for the week ending March 6, according to Next Big Sound, a leap of 274 percent.

Elsewhere on the chart, Ariana Grande bows at No. 17 with “Dangerous Woman,” in advance of its official release on March 11. The pop star recently announced the song in conjunction with its album’s website launch and revealed she will perform the tune on the March 12 episode of Saturday Night Live. —Trevor Anderson
### SOCIAL 50™

The week's most active artists on social networking sites based on weekly additions of fans across Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and Facebook; and views to an artist's Wikipedia page, as measured by Next Big Sound.

### POP/RYTHMIC/ADULT

The week's most popular current songs at mainstream top 40, rhythmic, adult contemporary and adult top 40 formats, as measured by Nielsen Music. Songs are defined as current if they are relatively recently-released titles, or songs receiving widespread airplay and/or sales activity for the first time. Stations are electronically monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For complete rules and explanations: [Billboard](https://www.billboard.com/charts/social-50). All charts © 2016, Prometheus Global Media, LLC and Nielsen Music, Inc. All rights reserved.

### ADULT CONTEMPORARY™

As measured by Nielsen Music. Songs are defined as current if they are relatively recently-released titles, or songs receiving widespread airplay and/or sales activity for the first time. Stations are electronically monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For complete rules and explanations: [Billboard](https://www.billboard.com/charts/adult-contemporary). All charts © 2016, Prometheus Global Media, LLC and Nielsen Music, Inc. All rights reserved.

### ADULT TOP 40™

As measured by Nielsen Music. Songs are defined as current if they are relatively recently-released titles, or songs receiving widespread airplay and/or sales activity for the first time. Stations are electronically monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For complete rules and explanations: [Billboard](https://www.billboard.com/charts/adult-top-40). All charts © 2016, Prometheus Global Media, LLC and Nielsen Music, Inc. All rights reserved.

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**March 2016**

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<th>Social 50™</th>
<th>Mainstream Top 40™</th>
<th>Rhythm™</th>
<th>Pop/Rhythmic/Adult</th>
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Go to BILLBOARD.COM/BIZ for complete chart data. Data for week of 03.19.2016.
"We Went" by Randy Houser (above), the lead single from his fourth studio album Fired Up (March 11), jumps 3-1 on Country Airplay, becoming his sixth top 10 on Hot Country Songs (12-7). "We Went" is a song we cut immediately after hearing it," Houser tells Billboard. "The melody moves, and the story is just really adventurous, a Bonnie & Clyde vibe."

Three other songs reach the Country Airplay top 10. Florida Georgia Line's "Confession" climbs 12-7, marking the duo's 10th top 10. The track is the fifth single from FGL's second album, Anything Goes. With its first two full-lengths (Here's to the Good Times arrived in 2012) having generated five Country Airplay top 10s each, the pair is just the fifth act to accomplish the feat with its first two major-label albums, following Brooks & Dunn, Dixie Chicks (which scored six from its second record), Taylor Swift and Zac Brown Band.

Chase Bryant's "Little Bit of You" makes Country Airplay history, entering the top 10 in its 47th week (11-8). Lee Brice's "Love Like Crazy" (2010) and Chase Rice's "Gonna Wanna Tonight" (2015) each took 46 weeks to reach the region.

Rascal Flatts' "I Like the Sound of That" likewise hits the top bracket on Country Airplay (13-9), becoming the trio's 30th top 10, extending its mark for the most among acts of more than two members. —Jim Asker
Anthrax's *Kings Wears Crown* earns its first No. 1 on Hard Rock Albums and highest rank (No. 2) on Top Rock Albums as *For All Kings* debuts with 34,000 sold, according to Nielsen Music. The sum marks the metal act's best sales week since 1993, when *Sound of White Noise* launched with 62,000.

*Kings* arrives at No. 9 on the Billboard 200, becoming the group's second top 10; *Noise* reached No. 7.

Meanwhile, a trio of tracks take over the top of the rock airplay charts. Disturbed's cover of Simon & Garfunkel's *The Sound of Silence* surges 3-1 on Mainstream Rock to become the rockers' sixth chart-topper and third straight from 2015's *Immortalized*. The song is the first remake to top the tally since 2006 — when, ironically, Disturbed's version of Genesis' *Land of Confusion* led the list. It also marks another Mainstream Rock chart rarity: The song is missing both electric guitar and drums, instead driven by keyboards, strings and David Draiman's intense vocal.

On Alternative, Foals rise 3-1 with "Mountain at My Gates," the English band's first airplay chart leader. The track reaches the apex in its 32nd week, tying for the second-longest climb to No. 1. Fitz & The Tantrums traversed a 33-week path with "Out of My League" in 2013.

Finally, The Lumineers top Triple A with "Ophelia," reaching No. 1 in just its fourth week. The folk-rockers previously reigned with "Ho Hey" (2012) and "Stubborn Love" (2013), for eight weeks each.

—Kevin Rutherford
Macklemore & Ryan Lewis return to No. 1 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums with the new This Unruly Mess I’ve Made, which bows with 51,000 copies sold in the week ending March 3, according to Nielsen Music. The release comes nearly three-and-a-half years after The Heist debuted atop the chart with a stronger start: 78,000 (Oct. 27, 2012). While The Heist’s lead single, “Thrift Shop” (featuring Wanz), was on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs when the album debuted (and later reached No. 1), the new record’s lead track, “Downtown” (featuring Eric Nally, Melle Mel, Look Moe Dee and Grandmaster Caz), reached its peak (No. 6) months ago (Oct. 24, 2015). That significant gap between the single’s peak and its parent album’s release may have contributed to a softer sales start for This Unruly Mess I’ve Made, as compared with The Heist.

Meanwhile, Chris Brown soars 14-5 on Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs with “Back to Sleep,” scoring his 36th top 10 on the chart. A remix featuring Usher and Zayn (released Feb. 26) spurs a 175 percent spike in the song’s overall downloads to 42,000 (all versions of the song are merged for tracking purposes), propelling the track up the chart. Of its sales, 69 percent stems from the new version.

Meanwhile, Brown’s Royalty remains in the top 10 of Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums (at No. 10) for an 11th straight week. It debuted on the Jan. 9 chart at No. 1, where it reigned for three weeks.

Finally, Rihanna collects three new airplay No. 1s as “Work” crowns Mainstream R&B/Hip-Hop (jumping 4-1 and earning her eighth chart-topper), Rhythmic (3-1, her 12th No. 1 and R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay (2-1, her fifth leader).
Nicky Jam Returns To No. 1

The Hot Latin Songs chart welcomes a new No. 1 as Nicky Jam (above) steps 2-1 with “Hasta El Amanecer,” earning the urban artist his second chart-topper, following his 30-week run alongside Enrique Iglesias with “El Perdón” in 2015. The climb ends the 22-week reign of J Balvin’s “Ginza,” which became the longest-running No. 1 for a solo artist unaccompanied by another. (All of the other longer-leading No. 1s were duets or by soloists featuring a guest.) “Amanecer” takes Digital Gainer honors, selling 3,000 downloads in the week ending March 3 (up 4 percent, according to Nielsen Music), while a 7 percent hike in weekly streams (to 1.7 million domestic plays) also aids in the crowning rise.

Further down on Hot Latin Songs, the Streaming Gainer award goes to regional Mexican act Los Plebes del Rancho de Ariel Camacho — formerly known as Ariel Camacho y Los Plebes del Rancho — who fly 27-18 with “Que Caro Estoy Pagando,” logging 1 million weekly streams (up 27 percent). Most clicks (75 percent) stem from YouTube, where the song’s music video has amassed more than 11.8 million global views. The group is now led by singer Jose Manuel Lopez Castro, who joined the band in 2015 following the death of former frontman Ariel Camacho in 2015. The band was renamed in tribute to Camacho, and it currently has four songs on the chart including “El Mentado,” which debuts at No. 49.

Meanwhile, an older track by Ariel Camacho y Los Plebes del Rancho enters the chart as “Yo Quisiera Entrar” (from Hablemos, released nine months after Camacho’s death) arrives at No. 41. In all, 10 songs recorded by Camacho have entered the list since he died, with three of those tracks currently on the chart. —Amaya Mendizabal
Hillsong Young & Free’s ‘Youth Revival’ Launches at No. 2 on Top Christian Albums with 10,000 Sold, According to Nielsen Music. The act previously tallied two No. 1s: ‘We Are Young & Free’ (2013) and its ‘This Is Living’ EP (2015). The collective is a millennial-targeted spinoff of Hillsong United. “We’re a diverse group of people from various backgrounds,” Hillsong Young & Free’s Laura Toggs tells Billboard. “There’s a fusion of styles and sounds here and it’s difficult to categorize, yet there’s definitely a mission at work to make music that attracts a young audience.”

On Top Gospel Albums, Virtue’s ‘Fearless’ enters at No. 3 (2,000), marking the all-female trio’s best start and rank among seven appearances. The set surpasses the No. 4 peaks of 1999’s ‘Get Ready’ and 2001’s ‘Virtuosity’. Byron Cage notches his fourth Hot Gospel Songs top 10 as “Like No Other” lifts 11-10. The track is his first to reach the region since “Great and Mighty” (No. 8, 2012). Cage topped the chart for seven weeks in 2006 with “I Will Bless the Lord.” Meanwhile, Trisha Yearwood, who has placed 45 entries on Hot Country Songs (1991-2014), makes her first showing on a Billboard Christian chart as “Broken” debuts at No. 48 on Hot Christian Songs. The ballad is a remake of Lifehouse’s No. 7 Adult Top 40 hit in 2008 and is from the soundtrack to The Passion (March 18). Yearwood plays Mary, mother of Jesus, in Fox’s March 20 live musical based on Christ’s last days.

—Jim Asker
Zedd and Aloe Blacc bow on Hot Dance/Electronic Songs at No. 14 with “Candyman,” which starts with 15,000 sold and 964,000 U.S. streams, according to Nielsen Music. The song is a reinterpretation of Sammy Davis Jr.’s three-week 1972 Billboard Hot 100 No. 1 “The Candy Man” (with The Mike Curb Congregation), originally sung by Aubrey Woods & the Chocolate Factory. The new version is a tie-in to the 75th anniversary of M&Ms. While Zedd is a regular on Hot Dance/Electronic Songs, with 14 hits, seven top 10s and two No. 1s, “Candyman” marks Blacc’s first credited visit. Notably, he is the unbilled vocalist on the longest-running leader in the chart’s three-year history, Avicii’s “Wake Me Up!,” which spent 26 weeks at No. 1 in 2013 and 2014.

On Dance/Mix Show Airplay, three songs reach the top 10. DJ Snake slithers 12-8 and snags his fourth top 10 with “Middle” (featuring Bipolar Sunshine); Kygo makes his first trip to the tier as “Stay” (featuring Maty Noyes) jumps 14-9; and Deorro soars 19-10 with “I Can Be Somebody” (featuring Erin McCarley), his second top 10.


Remixes from Audien, Matoma and E-Squire, among others, helped Coldplay’s “Adventure” lead to No. 1. —Gordon Murray

For complete chart data, go to BILLBOARD.COM/BIZ.
**DANCE CLUB SONGS™**

**ARTIST**
1. Coldplay
2. Adele
3. Coldplay
4. Coldplay
5. Adele
6. Coldplay
7. Adele
8. Coldplay
9. Coldplay
10. Coldplay
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45. Coldplay
46. Coldplay
47. Coldplay
48. Coldplay
49. Coldplay
50. Coldplay

**CONCERT GROSSES**

1. BRITNEY SPEARS
2. JENNIFER LOPEZ
3. BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN & THE E STREET BAND
4. BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN & THE E STREET BAND
5. BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN & THE E STREET BAND
6. LUKE BRYAN
7. LUKE BRYAN
8. PRINCE
9. CARRIE UNDERWOOD, EASTON CORBIN, THE SWON BROTHERS
10. CARRIE UNDERWOOD, EASTON CORBIN, THE SWON BROTHERS
11. IRIS
12. IRIS
13. IRIS
14. IRIS
15. IRIS
16. IRIS
17. IRIS
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43. IRIS
44. IRIS
45. IRIS

**Aldean Surges With New Tour**

Jason Aldean makes his mark on the Boxscore chart, landing 16 concert engagements on the ranking of the 35 top grossers. The shows are from the first North American leg of his We Were Here Tour that launched Jan. 14 in Moline, Ill.

The trek is the second tour in support of the country headliner’s most recent album, Old Boots, New Dirt. When it arrived in October 2014, he was on the road with his Burn It Down Tour that wrapped in October 2015, grossing $70 million during its year-and-a-half run.

Aldean’s highest ranking on the chart is No. 17, a sold-out performance at the Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City, N.J., on Feb. 27. With sales totaling $778,363, the show’s sold-ticket count was logged at 12,543.

So far on the We Were Here Tour, he has played 19 shows at 18 U.S. arenas, racking up $9.3 million in revenue from more than 172,000 sold seats. Also charting with the first box-office counts from a new tour is English heavy metal band Iron Maiden.

The veteran group began its Book of Souls World Tour on Feb. 24 at the BB&T Center in the Fort Lauderdale, Fla., market.

The first three dates from the trek all hit the chart, led by the opening performance at No. 10.

—Bob Allen
28 Years Ago
RICK ASTLEY ROLLED TO NO. 1 ON THE HOT 100

The Brit topped the singles chart on his first try in 1988 with “Never Gonna Give You Up” and later became an Internet meme.

“Yeah, that’s pretty catchy,” Rick Astley remembers thinking when co-writer Mike Stock first sang “Never Gonna Give You Up” to him. The world would soon agree. Enriched by his velvety voice, Astley’s first single from his debut album, *Whenever You Need Somebody*, topped the Official U.K. Singles chart in 1987 and then rose to No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 for two weeks beginning March 12, 1988.

“It was amazing to turn up in a country that I knew nothing about,” the Lancashire, England-born blue-eyed soul singer says of his American welcome. “I was No.1, and everybody knew me.” Then 22, the baby-faced Astley scored a second No.1 with his follow-up single, “Together Forever,” which, like his first hit, was written and produced by Stock, Matt Aitken and Pete Waterman. During the next four years, Astley went on to land three more Hot 100 top 10s, including two that he wrote, and three more LPs on the Billboard 200 before taking a break from the music industry in the mid-90s.

In the late 2000s, Astley made a comeback of sorts when “Rickrolling,” Internet clickbait that led unsuspecting surfers to the “Never Gonna Give You Up” video, became a popular meme. “It was used ironically, so it’s all good,” says the married father of one daughter, who turned 50 on Feb. 6. He still tours and recently finished his first album in more than a decade.

Since his last chart run, two other blue-eyed-soul singers from the United Kingdom, Adele and Sam Smith, have dominated the charts, and Astley says they are additional proof that “a white kid from the middle of England can have as much soul as anyone.”

—GARY TRUST

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