Shelton shoots straight on his heartbreak: 'I was at rock bottom'

Mike Dungan leads Music Row's 50+ most powerful players

Kacey, Maren and country's rising female stars talk Tomato-gate and Hillary

Garth Brooks on besting U2's box-office record: 'I'd like it for country music's sake'

Saving SFX? Bankrupt dance promoter targets Randy Phillips as CEO

Song of the Summer? Not So Fast... Sia ends Drake's 10-week reign atop Hot 100

Make America Blake Again

Nashville Issue 2016

SHELTON shoots straight on his heartbreak: 'I was at rock bottom'

MIKE DUNGAN leads Music Row's 50+ most powerful players

KACEY, MAREN and country's rising female stars talk Tomato-gate and Hillary

GARTH BROOKS on besting U2's box-office record: 'I'd like it for country music's sake'
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KENT EARLS
BILL HEARN
CINDY MABE
Sia ‘Thrills’ Her Way To A First No. 1

Who needs dollar bills? With her ode to fun sans funds, Sia cashes in at No. 1 (up from No. 3) on the Billboard Hot 100 for the first time as an artist, with “Cheap Thrills,” featuring Sean Paul. Sia previously led as a co-writer of Rihanna’s three-week No. 1 “Diamonds” in 2012. (Notably, Rihanna passed on recording “Thrills” for her latest album, Anti.)

“Thrills” tallies its best sales week (aided in part by 69-cent pricing in the iTunes Store), increasing 34 percent to 122,000 downloads sold in the week ending July 21, according to Nielsen Music. It also drew 142 million in radio airplay audience (up 7 percent) and 13.1 million U.S. streams (up 4 percent).

While Sia scores her first Hot 100 No. 1, Paul tallies his fourth, and first since “Temperature” in 2006. He ends the longest break between leaders (10 years and four months) since Dr. Dre went 12 years, two months and three weeks between 1996’s “No Diggity” by Blackstreet featuring the rapper and 2009’s “Crack a Bottle” with Eminem and 50 Cent.

“Thrills,” which first was a global hit earlier in 2016, took 23 weeks on the Hot 100 to reach the top. That matches the record for a female artist’s longest climb to No. 1: Patti Austin’s “Baby, Come to Me,” with James Ingram, led in its 23rd week on Feb. 19, 1983. ~GARY TRUST
Selena Gomez is a fan. What’s that like? I’m just a small-town guy from Kernersville, North Carolina, and I’m such a big fan of hers, so the fact that she said “Fix” was her favorite song blew me away. It was a really cool shout-out. I got to meet her when she played a show in Nashville — now we’re friends.

“Fix” is definitely a different, more pop sound for country radio. How do you feel about where the genre is today? It’s in a great spot, to be honest with you. It’s in a great spot, about where the genre is today?

What inspired the title of your new album, Girl Problems [due Aug. 5]? It just seemed like every song was about some type of girl problem, whether it was a good one or a bad one — the ups and downs in relationships. I’m not reinventing the wheel. Naming it Girl Problems, I knew I was inviting some funny questions, but that was exactly what I wanted! — NATHALIE WEINER
The week's most popular current songs across all genres, ranked by radio airplay audience impressions as measured by Nielsen Music sales data as compiled by Nielsen Music and streaming activity data by online music sources tracked by Nielsen Music.

Songs are defined as current if they are newly-released titles, or songs receiving widespread airplay and/or sales leading to their placement on charts.

**邮政编码**

- **Certification**
- **Producer (Songwriter)**
- **Imprint/Promotion Label**

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**New**

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**备注**

- **Chart**
- **Week**
- **Artist**

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The Los Angeles D1, 23, hits the top 40 as “Hate U” bounds by 10 percent to 8.4 million streams and 84 percent to 37,000 sold after its price was reduced to 98 cents in the iTunes Store.

---

Katy Perry’s “Rise” debuts on the Billboard Hot 100 at No. 11, powered by its No. 1 start on the Digital Songs sales chart with 137,000 downloads sold in the week ending July 21, according to Nielsen Music. Perry scores her 11th Digital Songs No. 1, passing Taylor Swift (10) for the second-most leaders in the chart’s history; Rihanna is first with 14. The song celebrates the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, running Aug. 5-21. NBC plans to use the single as its anthem throughout its broadcast of the Games.

—G.T.
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CONGRATS TO OUR NASHVILLE POWER PLAYERS

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This year's Nashville power players struck a chord!

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ASCAP Vice President, Nashville Membership
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Pictured (l-r): Alison Toczylowski Webber, Director of Marketing + Communications; Holly Chester, Creative Assistant; Kele Currier, Director of Strategic Services; Evin Mustoe, Associate Creative Director; Michael Martin, VP of Nashville Membership; Beth Brinker, Creative Manager; Mike Sistad, Senior Creative Director; Mary Self, Membership Representative; Robert Filhart, Creative Director; Suzanne Lee, Administrative Manager. Photo by Ed Rode with special thanks to The Bluebird Cafe.
SAVING SFX
THE EDM POWERHOUSE’S HIGH-PROFILE FLAMEOUT FROM A $1 BILLION IPO CULMINATED IN BANKRUPTCY. NOW THE COMPANY LOOKS AHEAD, HOPING TO LAND AEG VET RANDY PHILLIPS AS CEO

By Robert Levine and Ray Waddell

Bankrupt dance music promoter SFX Entertainment has a plan to move forward — with veteran concert-business executive Randy Phillips at the helm.

Phillips, the former CEO of entertainment giant AEG Live and the man behind Michael Jackson’s ill-fated plan to play 50 shows at the O2 in London in 2009 (later chronicled in the This Is It documentary), has been offered the CEO job and plans to accept it, according to a source close to the situation. The salary is in the $2 million range.

On July 26, SFX, which went public in October 2013 with a value of more than $1 billion and entered Chapter 11 in February, filed a restructuring plan to emerge from bankruptcy. For the past two months Phillips has worked for SFX as a consultant on the reorganization, Billboard has learned. A Delaware bankruptcy court will consider the company’s proposal in a hearing on Aug. 30. Phillips, who at AEG Live oversaw the expansion of the company’s festival division, would replace SFX’s interim CEO, Michael Katzenstein, currently serving as chief restructuring officer. SFX declined to comment on specific plans.

Under CEO Robert F.X. Sillerman, the financier who in the 1990s put together the company that became Live Nation, SFX acquired more than a dozen dance music companies — including online store Beatport and promoters ID&T (producer of Tomorrowland) and Made Event (Electric Zoo) — for prices many observers believe were inflated. The company never found much synergy among its acquisitions, although the festivals have remained successful. The just-held 2016 edition of Tomorrowland Belgium sold out before the lineup was announced.

At AEG, Phillips was known for his considerable appetite for risk, as evidenced by a $26 million world tour guarantee for then-15-year-old YouTube star Justin Bieber. Phillips also promoted world tours by Britney Spears and Bon Jovi and oversaw a festival business that included Coachella and the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival. Perhaps most notably, he helped re-imagine the concept of artist residencies, with AEG Live’s Concentrics West division instrumental in putting together the deals for Celine Dion’s groundbreaking run at the Colosseum at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas. Phillips left AEG in November 2013 following the

---

Columbia’s Beyoncé and Adele earn the most MTV Video Music Awards noms, a double win for chairman/CEO Rob Stringer.

Attorney General Loretta Lynch’s continued waffling on the Department of Justice’s consent decree opinion frustrates the industry.

A year of negotiations pays off as Vevo CEO Erik Huggers finalizes a deal with Warner Music Group to license its catalog.
resignation of former AEG CEO Tim Leiweke and massive restructuring at the firm. He landed at Global Entertainment, which produced a July 4, 2015, Rolling Stones show at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway but never found its footing in the United States.

“I can’t think of anyone more qualified,” says Leiweke, now partnered with Irving Azoff in the venue network Oak View Group. “He is uniquely positioned to step into a situation like this and bring vision and action to the company.”

Lee Phillips, a losing situation better than Randy Phillips,” says one industry veteran, who asked to remain anonymous. “He has been fired from two jobs in the last 18 months? I guess Leiweke and massive restructuring

Other concert-business executives were more skeptical about the company’s chances, even with Phillips at the helm. “No one can spin a losing situation better than Randy Phillips,” says one industry veteran, who asked to remain anonymous. Adds another: “Why would a distressed company want to hire a guy who has been fired from two jobs in the last 18 months? I guess Leiweke and massive restructuring

“Randy is uniquely positioned to bring vision and action to SFX.”

—Leiweke

people, like companies, package and repackage themselves.”

In May, Sillerman, who lost his equity in SFX when the company went into Chapter 11 (eliminating $490 million of its debt), told Billboard that SFX had a brighter future than its financial results indicated. “The company will be a robust and successful enterprise when it emerges from bankruptcy,” he said. “But it will be different.”

“Once it’s out of debt, SFX should be viable,” a source close to the company concurs. (The company abandoned its previous restructuring plan on June 20.) Its failure to become a high-profile consumer brand could even help it recover. “I’d say that 90 percent of the public doesn’t know the name SFX,” says the source, “which was part of the problem in the first place.”

Okay, here’s an ad.

“Why are you thinking about your DiscoverWeekly playlist? Is Spotify? You should diet too. It’s more fun!”

Streaming’s Ad Boom

From TV commercials to subway wraps, marketing spends have surged as YouTube, Apple Music, Spotify and Pandora battle for subscribers

BY ANDREW HAMPP

STREAMING SERVICES LIKE SPOTIFY AND Pandora steadily have increased their visibility — and marketing spends — in recent years, but as Apple Music and now YouTube have joined the competition for subscribers, the battleground has moved to Madison Avenue.

What began with Apple’s Super Bowl-sized spot with Taylor Swift falling off a treadmill to Drake and Future’s “Jumpman” in April has become a bona fide blitz: In the past month, YouTube Music aired its first TV commercials, Spotify decorated several New York subway lines, and Apple Music — the heavyweight in the advertising stakes — rolled out its latest viral clip with DJ Khaled and Goodfellas star Ray Liotta getting pedicures while talking up the service. Add a series of TV and digital spots from Pandora earlier this year, and those four services have poured a combined $10 million in estimated ad dollars into the U.S. marketplace.

Each campaign took a markedly different approach, with YouTube Music opting for ordinary people to star in its series of five ads, which debuted July 17 and were created by New York-based ad agency Anomaly. The campaign and its music were a strategic shift away from recognizable top 40 tunes and faces, according to YouTube chief marketing officer Danielle Tiedt. “The places where YouTube really shines are where you can find just the right track for just the right time,” says Tiedt of the campaign that runs through Aug. 11 in cinemas, out-of-home and online music publications. “The music streaming space is highly competitive, which forces each of us to think through our differentiation.”

The size of the spends reflects just how high the stakes have become. YouTube Music’s marketing initiative arrives eight months after the service’s introduction of a $9.99 monthly subscription and at a time of advanced maturity for paid streaming. In 2015, a record 68 million people worldwide paid for a music subscription, according to IFPI’s 2016 Global Music Report, a figure that has multiplied more than eight times since 2010.

With Spotify reportedly mulling an initial public offering and Pandora and Deezer elbowing for an edge, the streaming space is becoming increasingly crowded. That has resulted in more marketing dollars than ever before from modest budgeters like Pandora and Spotify, which spent $3.6 million and $2.3 million, respectively, on paid advertising during the first four months of 2016, according to advertising analytics firm Kantar Media. By comparison, Apple laid out an estimated $7.6 million on its creative featuring Swift and Khaled alone, according to TV-ad researcher iSpot.TV.

“I always have felt no one really has conveyed that you could pay $9.99 to get one album, or pay $9.99 and get all the albums ever, to anyone outside the music industry,” says Jonathan Daniel, co-founder of Crush Management, whose client Sia rises to No. 6 on the Aug. 6 Streaming Songs chart (and No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100) with her latest single, “Cheap Thrills.” And Daniel isn’t the only one thinking that way.

“Now that the industry is growing and people understand that streaming is the future,” says Spotify chief marketing officer Seth Farbman, “we need to use all of our channels to reach them.”
NO. 1 BY A COUNTRY MILE

MARTIN BANDIER AND EVERYONE AT SONY/ATV MUSIC PUBLISHING CONGRATULATE TROY TOMLINSON ON BEING NAMED ONE OF NASHVILLE’S POWER PLAYERS
THOUGH WARNER/CHAPPELL MUSIC continues to assert itself, Sony/ATV claimed the title of top U.S. publisher for the 16th straight quarter, widening its lead as it grew its market share to 26.58 percent in 2016’s second quarter, which ended June 30.

In maintaining its hold on top, Sony/ATV had a share in 49 of the top 100 radio songs, including the No. 2 title, Mike Posner’s “I Took a Pill in Ibiza.” But, like Sony/ATV, Warner/Chappell also grew its market share — to 22.97 percent from 22.62 percent — and even scored a higher number of songs with 50, up from 47 last quarter. Its song count also fell, as it claimed a share in 31 of the top radio tracks, down from 35, while its top song remained the same during both quarters: Justin Bieber’s “Love Yourself.”

Meanwhile, Kobalt posted the most growth from the prior quarter, surging nearly three percentage points to 11.71 percent to remain at No. 4, while BMG’s share dropped to 6.7 percent from 7.62 percent, good for fifth place. But BMG claimed 23 songs in the second quarter, and its top hit was the No. 3 overall title, Fifth Harmony’s “Work From Home” (featuring Ty Dolla Sign). The track, which also was the top song for Kobalt, is split among four of the top five publishers, with Sony/ATV and Warner/Chappell also claiming a share.

Fifth Harmony

Managers For Alicia Keys, John Legend Form New Partnership

Erika Rose Santoro joins Ty Stiklorius’ Friends at Work with Ciara as the revamped company’s first signing

Friends at Work, the management firm founded by Ty Stiklorius, whose roster includes John Legend and Lindsey Stirling, is expanding, adding Erika Rose Santoro, Alicia Keys’ manager, as partner and Ciara as a new client.

“We are stepping to the forefront in many ways,” says Santoro, “including the first woman nominee for president. We felt it was super powerful to join together at a time like this and make a significant impact together.” Adds CEO Stiklorius: “This is a one plus one equals three partnership.”

Based in Venice, Calif., and New York, respectively, Stiklorius, a former co-president of Atoe Factory, and Santoro, Keys’ road manager since 2001 and co-manager since 2010 when the 15-time Grammy Award winner signed with Red Light Management and later with Maverick Management principals Guy Oseary and Ron Laffit in 2014, oversee a 20-member staff that includes five female managers. The duo is preparing for the release of Keys’ sixth studio album, the follow-up to 2012’s Girl on Fire, expected in the fall. Also in the company’s pipeline are forthcoming releases by Stirling and Legend as well as various TV and film projects. Among them: Legend’s critically acclaimed OWN America scripted drama series Underground, about the Underground Railroad, which has been renewed for a second season.
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Raúl Alarcón Jr.
The Latin entertainment titan on his push into streaming and why he won’t go back to Cuba

BY LEILA COBO
PHOTOGRAPHED BY RYAN STONE

WHEN RAÚL ALARCÓN JR. was a 9-year-old growing up in Queens, his dad would arrive home late to the two-family duplex and, carrying a stack of vinyl records, retreat to the basement and crank up the volume. Once Alarcón Sr. found a single he liked, he would play it again and again and shout: “It’s a killer!”

“My father was a music man,” recalls Alarcón of his namesake, who, after fleeing Cuba for New York in 1960 — leaving behind six radio stations — purchased his first U.S. frequency in 1983. “Music was his life.” Today, the publicly traded Spanish Broadcasting System (SBS), run by Alarcón Jr., 60, since 1994 when he took over as CEO (and chairman in 1999), is a 500-employee media empire that encompasses TV (Mega TV), live entertainment (SBS Entertainment), the 100-station syndicated Aire Radio Network and 17 radio stations in major U.S. markets and Puerto Rico, including New York’s WSKQ (Mega 97.9 FM), the top-rated station in the city, in any language, according to Nielsen.

Alarcón’s latest move is to aggressively enter the digital realm with LaMusica, a music streaming app that relaunches this summer with a video-centric format featuring proprietary, “snackable,” short-form original content.

An iconoclast who likes to hold business meetings at his palatial estate in Coral Gables in Miami — sometimes in shorts and sandals — Alarcón hosted Billboard poolside at his gazebo office where the conversation dove deep into the ever-changing U.S. Hispanic marketplace, but steered clear of politics. “The Hispanic niche is huge, and in most instances tends to vote as a single bloc,” he says. “Disregard us at your own peril!”

You have a very profitable terrestrial radio and TV operation, so a simple streaming app makes sense. Why go beyond that?
Radio continues to be a very vibrant, up-to-date and current medium. However, it’s not impervious to the competition, and there has been an enormous amount. We’ve tried to adapt ... with the creation of our concert and events division, aligned naturally with radio, and now we’re using technology to not only create a new service, LaMusica, but also further our main business of terrestrial radio by adding video that becomes the central focus of the app. LaMusica will publish 60 to 80 pieces of video content every week, ranging from 30 seconds to 90 seconds.

How will you make money?
The business model now and for the foreseeable future is advertiser-based. We will now be able to include mobile video advertising on the app, which we haven’t done to date. That’s an exploding category.

How important is the use of English versus Spanish?
We try to be reflective of the market because that’s the audience. [In radio], some stations have a younger focus, and having some English is a natural

“We have 35 years of market knowledge and are able to surgically program to the multiple Latino communities,” says Alarcón, photographed July 13 at his home in Coral Gables. “We stay ahead of the trends. Sometimes we’re caught by surprise, but not often.”
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extension to the public we’re addressing. Digitally, we’ve put young, bilingual, bicultural millennials [including Alarcón’s daughter Bianca] to work and [the mandate is], “Do things in a way that you feel addresses your needs.” [LaMusica is helmed by former MTV Tr3s head Jesus Lara.] We’re not putting restrictions. The overarching strategy is authenticity. We want to create video content that speaks authentically to the Hispanic audience.

It seems some ostensibly Latino-focused media companies downplay the “Latin” part, preferring to say they’re targeting “millennials” or the general market, which happens to have a large Latin population. What are your thoughts?

That’s absolutely a fair statement as far as the focus. But it can also sound a bit diminishing. In radio, for example, we’re trying to reach a Latin audience, but in New York, Mega 97.9 FM is the No. 1 station in the market, in any language. But I don’t have any problem in saying this is a Latino-focused initiative. That is our market. That is our target. But the expression of that target is up to them.

As someone who has been in business for more than three decades, would you say the U.S. Hispanic market is more relevant now?

Absolutely. It’s an important segment of America. It’s far more visible than in its past history and more vocal. It has bigger buying power. [According to Nielsen, Hispanics spent $1.5 trillion in 2015.] It’s a market we’ve had tremendous belief, faith and confidence in for three decades, and we continue to believe that it needs to be served properly in terms of entertainment.

You have a reputation for being very hands-on. What happens if you hear a “killer” song?

I used to spend summers in Palma de Mallorca [in Spain] and would visit the clubs and record stores. After a while, the programming guys knew that in late August I’d return with a batch of songs for them to play. I think I can lay claim to bringing back “Mambo No. 5,” “Mayonesa,” “Macarena.” I’d say, “I went to the club, they put on this song and everybody started dancing.” It harks back to my father. “It’s a killer!” And yes, if I hear something today that catches my attention, I absolutely will call my programming guy.

What is the secret to La Mega’s continued success?

Mega is a contemporary tropical radio station for metropolitan New York. That’s what it always has been. It could be reggaetón, bachata, Cubatón ... we see what the public is dancing to in the clubs and offer that to our listeners. We program to a marketplace that we know intimately, and we are constantly checking, adapting, measuring.

What do you think of the normalization of relationships with Cuba? Do you plan on going back?

I’m a bit schizophrenic about that. On one hand, I’m intensely fascinated by what I’ve heard about Cuba and Cuban youth and what they’re up to. But I cannot bring myself to [go back], because I’m fundamentally in disagreement with the political situation in Cuba. The normalization of relationships has many positive ramifications, but my upbringing, my family’s history, impedes me from [returning]. And I don’t think I will.

It has been said SBS doesn’t play Cuban music from the island. Any truth to that?

My personal position regarding the political situation of Cuba has no impact whatsoever on music worthy of airplay and exposure. Right now there’s huge interest in Cubatón — what Cubans have interpreted as their own reggaetón. [Cuba-based] Jacob Forever is a huge exponent. And we have a Cubatón-specific playlist. For 35 years, we’ve been giving audiences what they want. And if they want Cubatón, we’re going to give it to them.
CONGRATULATIONS JODY on being named as one of Billboard’s Nashville Power Players

WRITE ON.
VH1 announced a revival of America’s Next Top Model set for the fall, with singer Rita Ora to host.

Universal Music Group and Passion Pictures announced production of a forthcoming feature-length documentary on late INXS singer Michael Hutchence, with Australian filmmaker Richard Lowenstein to direct.

Verizon acquired Yahoo for $4.8 billion in cash.

James M. Nederlander, chairman of Broadway theater owner Nederlander Organization, died in Southampton, N.Y. He was 94.

Jampol Artist Management (Janis Joplin) signed a deal to manage the late Muddy Waters’ estate.

Sony Music International signed DJ-producer Martin Garrix to a worldwide agreement.

Sandy Pearlman, rock producer and former artist manager for Black Sabbath, died in Marin County, Calif., of unknown causes. He was 72.

07-18
Actor and Hollywood Vampires member Johnny Depp relisted his compound in the South of France for $55.5 million. The 37-acre estate centers on a village square, which includes a converted church, restaurant, laundry building and garage all made to look like local businesses. The 4,300-square-foot main house features five bedrooms, an art studio and a wine cave with a Pirates of the Caribbean motif.

Eddie Dean, former owner of Pacha NYC, acquired the recently shuttered two-room, 10,000-square-foot Brooklyn club formerly known as Verboten, for $1.2 million.

APA elevated music agent Christianne Weiss to head of adult contemporary, concerts.

Def Jam Recordings promoted Mildred Delamota to vp content creation.

FCancer appointed Kenny Burns, senior vp brand development for Combs Enterprises, to its board of directors.

Downtown Records signed an exclusive distribution and label services deal with Interscope Records and Universal Music Group. The agreement moves its catalog from Sony-owned RED Distribution to UMG’s Universal Music Enterprises.

Theresa Ashford exited Legacy Recordings to join ‘Stache Media as a staff publicist.

Former One Direction star Liam Payne signed a solo deal with Capitol Records U.K.

Universal Music Publishing Group elevated David Gray to executive vp/head of West Coast A&R.

Scott Igoe, longtime music booker for Jimmy Kimmel Live!, exited the late-night program to join ABC as vp alternative programming and specials.

Luxury menswear brand John Varvatos and Bravado, Universal Music Group’s merchandising division, launched the fashion company’s first pop-up shop at its Bowery store in New York. The three-day installation featured an exclusive new collection of Guns N’ Roses merch.

07-19

07-20

Fans queued up outside John Varvatos’ Guns N’ Roses pop-up store, which featured six one-of-a-kind painted leather jackets, limited-edition numbered bombers and two exclusive Varvatos-designed concert tees.

Hutchence (right) with Lowenstein in 1988.

Eddie Dean

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07-21

07-22

07-25

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BIRTHDAYS

July 29
Martina McBride (50)
Geddy Lee (63)
Patti Scialfa (63)
July 30
Kate Bush (58)
Paul Anka (75)
July 31
Will Champion (38)
Joshua Cain (40)

Aug. 1
Zac Brown (38)
Adam Duritz (52)
Coolio (53)
Chuck D (56)
Aug. 3
James Hetfield (53)
Tony Bennett (90)
Aug. 6
Geni Halliwell (44)
WE PROUDLY SALUTE OUR COLLEAGUES

ROB BECKHAM
GREG OSWALD

AND CONGRATULATE ALL OF THE

billboard
NASHVILLE POWER PLAYERS
"We are one world, we are one love, coming to you from across the planet," tweeted David Guetta shortly before hitting the main stage at Tomorrowland on July 22. Afterward he caught up with pal Armin van Buuren.

The main stage was one of 30 performance spaces spread across the grounds of the Tomorrowland Electronic Music Festival in Boom, Belgium (July 22-24), where more than 350,000 attendees turned out.
1 Before their Trolls presentation at Comic-Con in San Diego on July 21, moderator Chris Hardwick (top left), co-directors Walt Dohrn and Mike Mitchell, actress Anna Kendrick, producer Gina Shay and actor Justin Timberlake (from left) took a selfie.

2 Celine Dion brought glamour to Manhattan on July 21 while in town for a Today show performance.

3 Nas at the KCRW/Annenberg Foundation concert series in Century City, Calif., on July 23. Nick Jonas (left) at the Roc Nation Summer Classic Charity Basketball Tournament at Brooklyn’s Barclays Center on July 21. Vanessa Hudgens smooched the Klondike polar bear while promoting Powerless at Comic-Con on July 22. Billy Joel (left) celebrated Tony Bennett’s 90th birthday at Madison Square Garden in New York on July 20.
7 Days on the Scene

1. Newlywed Jill Scott beamed during her performance at the Neighborhood Awards Beach Party in Las Vegas on July 24.
2. The mood was blue for "Blue Neighborhood" singer Troye Sivan during his Comic-Con set in San Diego on July 20.
3. French Montana made the rounds in Las Vegas, hanging out with Iggy Azalea at the Aria Resort & Casino on July 23 before celebrating Jennifer Lopez's 47th birthday.
4. Alison Mosshart let her hair fly while The Kills performed at Splendour in the Grass in Byron Bay, Australia, on July 22.
5. Patti Smith onstage at Rhode Island's Newport Folk Festival on July 23.

Jake Owen’s mode of transportation to Country Jam USA? The country singer rode to the Eau Claire, Wis., festival on July 22 in a 1966 Volkswagen bus he purchased and dubbed “the Love Bus.”
BUILDING THE NEW STORYLINE

CARRIE UNDERWOOD  KENNY CHESNEY  MIRANDA LAMBERT  BRAD PAISLEY
JAKE OWEN  CHRIS YOUNG  MAREN MORRIS  OLD DOMINION  CAM
TYLER FARR  CHASE RICE  KANE BROWN  LANco  LEVON  SETH ENNIS
RYAN HURD  BEN GALLAHER  DOLLY PARTON  DEE JAY SILVER  ROBERT COUNTS
Panorama Festival

New York, July 22-24

Sandwiched between the end of the Republican National Convention and the beginning of the Democratic National Convention, political undercurrents ran steady at the inaugural Panorama Festival (presented by Coachella producer Goldenvoice as well as The Verge) in New York. SZA, Run the Jewels and Kendrick Lamar all touched on the current state of affairs, with Lamar using massive LED screens to play footage of presidents George Bush and Barack Obama as he ran through his politically charged catalog. And then there was Friday-night headliner Arcade Fire. Frontman Win Butler, who was vocal in his vitriol for the Republican presidential nominee, yelled: “Donald Trump will f—ing never, ever be the president of the f—ing United States of America!” before declaring, “Black lives matter!” Beyond its weighty themes, the weekend belonged to Sunday’s headliner LCD Soundsystem, which closed with “All My Friends,” putting an enthusiastic stamp on an event that proved New York could be more than a one-festival town.

—Dan Ryan

Arcade Fire’s Butler, who lives in Canada and was born in California, had one of the weekend’s most politically charged sets, declaring: “There’s a lot of f—ing empty patriotic talk right now, but we have to f—ing stick together, man.”

1 A picturesque sunset during Alabama Shakes’ July 22 set capped off a blistering hot 90-degree day at the Randall’s Island festival. 2 Grace Potter on July 24. 3 Anderson Paak on July 23. 4 Metallic tinsel and balloons were just two of the elements Sufjan Stevens incorporated into his July 23 performance. 5 Lamar.
UTA Music joins billboard in congratulating our own

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and all our Nashville power players

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tyler cole · cindy collins · jenn delamar
SCOTT GALLOWAY · JOSH GARRETT · JUSTIN HILL
TRAVIS JAMES · BRITTNEY KEELOR-HOLZER
ALAINA LATONA · JORDAN LIPSEY · JD MCCORKLE
BRIAN MULLIGAN · BRENDA RICH
NICOLE ROSALES · BRYAN VASTANO
KATE VASTANO · ALEC VIDMAR · ELISE ZIMMERMAN

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MARY ANN MCCREARY
MIKE (COACH) DUNGAN
CINDY MABE
DARIN MURPHY
MIKE MILOM
JODY WILLIAMS
KENT EARLS
BRIAN O’CONNELL
ALI HARNELL

AND CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE BILLBOARD NASHVILLE POWER PLAYER HONOREES!
MAGIC MIKE

From Gucci Mane to Queen Bey, producer Mike Will Made It proves the line between hip-hop and pop is just an illusion

BY RICHARD L. ELDREDGE
PHOTOGRAPHED BY ZACH WOLFE

“Is it raw and real? If it is, I did my job. And you can call it whatever you want,” says Will, photographed July 18 in Atlanta.

DO IT ALL, MAN. I PRODUCE, I DO MY OWN WARDROBE AND MY OWN IRONING, TOO!”

Mike Will Made It, the hottest producer in hip-hop, is on set at Studio Space in Atlanta, carefully pressing a $1,000 red-and-black-striped Vetements jersey as he prepares to film a cameo for Gucci Mane’s “At Least a M” video. With the Mike Will-produced track blasting over the speakers and the pungent odor of high-grade marijuana choking the air, the soundstage resembles some sort of Felliniesque hip-hop fever dream: Against a graffitied backdrop, Will mugs for the camera, juggling a half-dozen cellphones; a chalkboard off to one side reads “I Will Not Use Spotify in Class,” Bart Simpson-style; fellow Atlanta music icons Usher

THE PULSE OF MUSIC RIGHT NOW
and Young Thug mill about, filming a video of their own on a neighboring soundstage. No one seems to bat an eye as a live zebra wends its way through the set. With his 6-foot-2 frame, gold-rimmed Cartier glasses, black beanie cap and that striped, now-wrinkle-free shirt, Will is hard to miss.

“You look like Where’s Waldo in that thing,” cracks someone in his entourage, which includes Atlanta rapper Jace and various managers.

“That’s exactly the look I was going for,” replies Will, grinning.

Like Waldo, Will seems to be everywhere if you look hard enough. In five years, the 27-year-old producer has gone from creating future’s hit single “Turn On The Lights” in his mother’s Marietta, Ga., basement, to hand-delivering “Formation” to beyoncé, a song that ended up eclipsing even the Denver Broncos’ performance at Super Bowl 50 in February. He helped turn Miley Cyrus from Disney Princess to transgressive diva. And most recently, he was the main creative force behind everybody looking, producing nine of 12 tracks on the long-awaited Mane album that dropped July 22.

The duel ing attractions of pop and hip-hop have preoccupied Will since he was known as Michael len Williams ii, growing up in a middle-class home filled with both 2pac and Whitney Houston. By 14, he was making beats, which he sold for $100 a pop while he worked bagging groceries at a local Kroger. By the time he had sold one to Mane, the reigning king of Atlanta trap, the then-17-year-old’s fee had risen to four figures. Soon he was working with KanyE west, Rihanna and Jay Z, and by 2013 he had been given his own record label courtesy of former Interscope Records CEO Jimmy Iovine. “When I find someone who’s really good,” says Iovine of Will, “I try to sign them right away. They’re few and far between.”

But this year, with Mane getting out of prison after three years behind bars, Will went back to the guy who gave him his break, using a prison texting system to send the rapper in-depth descriptions of the beats he created for the comeback. Mane supplied the words.

“Gucci’s a different guy now: focused, sobered up. You’re getting his point of view all the way,” says Will. “We wanted this album to be like a mixtape. It’s hard as f—, it’s intense, it’s top-tier trap.”

When they first started working together in 2006, Will and Mane knocked out 20 tracks in three days, one of which inspired Mane to exclaim, “Mike Will made it, Gucci Mane slayed it!” Just like that, the producer had a new name. “I’ve known him since I was 17 years old,” says Will. “If a verse is just OK or his flow could be better, I’m going to be real. If it’s a banger, I’m going to let him know that, too.”

Speaking of bangers, most pop fans first heard the producer’s name at the top of Cyrus’ 2013 hit “We Can’t Stop,” off her critical breakthrough, Bangerz. As her life became grist for the Hollywood gossip mills, it wasn’t long before the ingenue and producer were romantically linked. Today, it’s clear Will’s appreciation is solely platonic. After the video shoot, as he settles behind the wheel of his $150,000 cream-colored Mercedes-Benz S63, Will and his buddy Skeet start discussing the difference between pop and hip-hop.

“All I hear is ‘Yo, that shit you’re making ain’t hip-hop,’” says Will, irked. “People told me that Miley’s ‘23 wasn’t hip-hop. Let me tell you, she went in and owned that track. She smoked more weed in one week than most rappers I know. That song was not some far-fetched thing she had to reach for. She was ill as hell. When people question me about whether something is hip-hop, I ask them, ‘Does it sound hard? Does it hit home? Is it raw and real?’ If it is, I did my job. And you can call it whatever you want.”

Jace, who released his face tape mixtape earlier this year, offers insights into Will’s process: “Mike has a very laissez-faire vibe in the studio. He never comes at you like, ‘I’m a big hitmaker and it’s got to sound like this.’ Unlike a lot of people in hip-hop, Mike doesn’t have that wall around himself—he can connect with you. That’s why everybody in the world wants to work with him right now.”

Will’s role in beyoncé’s “Formation” also has contributed to his demand. The producer recalls a 2014 career-altering car trip he took with Swae Lee, one half of the duo Rae Sremmurd, which is signed to Will’s Ear Drummer label. On the drive from Los Angeles to Coachella, Will played Lee a beat that his staff producer and former classmate A Pluss had created, and Lee started freestyling. The word “formation” came out of his mouth. Two years later, Beyoncé stopped the Super Bowl with her performance of the anthem.

“She went out there and empowered her people,” says Will. “She’s telling our people to be proud of our wide nostrils — something Michael Jackson was so ashamed of, he changed his face. She used ‘Formation’ to make people feel confident. That’s the best history to be a part of.”

As Atlanta’s 55-story Bank of America skyscraper looms on the horizon, and the smoke of a freshly rolled blunt fills the air, Will reflects on life as a black man in America. Sure, he says, he “definitely” has been racially profiled. But rather than resent those who assume the worst when they see him in a luxury car, “I just feel sorry for them,” he says. “It’s like not being able to operate an iPhone in 2016. ‘You’re still looking at color? Are you a caveman?’”

For now, Will wants to expand his brand to include film production and content creation. There also is Random 2, his long-awaited mixtape that he hopes to drop by the end of the year. Contemplating his future, Will relates a conversation he had with Iovine in 2013 at the Floyd Mayweather-Robert Guerrero fight in Las Vegas. As 13 of his tracks played over the MGM Grand Garden Arena’s PA system, Will realized he unofficially had created the fight’s playlist. Iovine turned to him and said, “You’re the only young producer out there making hip-hop pop.” Will recalls arguing with the music mogul, advocating that hip-hop could never be pop. “Jimmy told me, ‘Oh, yeah? 2pac, Diddy and Kanye all did it. ‘Pop’ is just short for ‘popular.’ They just played 13 of your songs during a boxing match! Quit f—ing around and do your own thing,’” recalls Will, adding, “That’s how you change the game.”
CELEBRATE YOUR SUMMER WITH NEW MUSIC FROM THE CADILLAC THREE, BURY ME IN MY BOOTS AVAILABLE 8/5

JUSTIN MOORE, KINDA DON'T CARE AVAILABLE 8/12

NICK FRADIANI, HURRICANE AVAILABLE 8/5

DRAKE WHITE, SPARK AVAILABLE 8/19

AARON LEWIS, SINNER AVAILABLE 9/16

FLORIDA GEORGIA LINE, DIG YOUR ROOTS AVAILABLE 8/26
Going For Gold (Records)

Seven of the 555 Team USA athletes competing at the Rio Olympics starting Aug. 5 share the songs that will take them to the podium — and the artists they would want on their team.

**Kassidy Cook**

**SPORT:** Diving  
**AGE:** 21  
**HOMETOWN:** Woodlands, Texas  
**ARTIST WHO WOULD MAKE A GREAT TEAMMATE:** Taylor Swift. Who wouldn’t want to be in her squad?  
**ARTIST I’D MOST WANT TO COMPETE AGAINST:** Kanye West. He has a very arrogant demeanor — it would be cool to show him who’s boss (insert sunglasses emoji).  
**SONG THAT DEFINES MY CAREER:** “Lose Yourself” by Eminem. He talks about being cool and win the Olympics. Over the last four years I’ve endured many injuries that threatened to end my career, but I never gave up because I had a goal in my mind — to compete in and win the Olympics.

**Charlie Buckingham**

**SPORT:** Sailing  
**AGE:** 27  
**HOMETOWN:** Newport Beach, Calif.  
**ARTIST I’D MOST WANT TO COMPETE AGAINST:** Bono, for putting his music on my phone without my permission!  
**ARTISTS THAT MOTIVATE:** Metallica, Black Sabbath. Postera. The lyrics get me amped.  
**SONG THAT DEFINES MY CAREER:** “Never Say Die” by Black Sabbath. There are ups and downs to every athletic career and the key is to never give up, no matter what.

**Danny Barrett**

**SPORT:** Rugby  
**AGE:** 26  
**HOMETOWN:** Pacifica, Calif.  
**TUNES WHILE TRAINING:** A mix of Kygo and Kygo-esque songs, and ’90s hip-hop. If it’s a heavy day, we get some Metallica or classic metal.  
**ARTIST WHO WOULD MAKE A GREAT TEAMMATE:** Nelly — I saw him in The Longest Yard, and he’s got moves on the football field. Give him a bit of time training with us, and no doubt he would be a star!

**Kerry Simmonds**

**SPORT:** Rowing  
**AGE:** 27  
**HOMETOWN:** San Diego  
**ARTIST I’D MOST LIKE TO COMPETE AGAINST:** Taylor Swift. She seems like she’s scrappy and would get really into it, which is more fun. Plus, she would write a song about it.  
**SONG THAT DEFINES MY CAREER:** “Started From The Bottom” by Drake. Going from college, where you’re the fastest, to the next level, where everyone’s bigger and faster, you don’t know if you’ll ever get here — but I did.

**Katie Zaferes**

**SPORT:** Triathlon  
**AGE:** 27  
**HOMETOWN:** Hampstead, Md.  
**PRE- AND POST-TRAINING SOUNDTRACK:** A mix of Tech N9ne, Taylor Swift, Lauren Daigle and Hillsong United. Something for every mood; I’m well-rounded.  
**SONG THAT DEFINES MY CAREER:** The edited version of “Let’s Go” by Trick Daddy. It has been my go-to pump-up song from college at Syracuse to now, prepping for the Olympics.

**Paige McPherSon**

**SPORT:** Taekwondo  
**AGE:** 25  
**HOMETOWN:** Sturgis, Calif.  
**ARTIST I’D MOST LIKE TO COMPETE AGAINST:** Beyoncé. She’s a force to be reckoned with, and to be the best you have to compete with the best. I like to say I have an alter ego too: my McFierce side versus Sasha Fierce.  
**SONG THAT DEFINES MY CAREER:** “Moment 4 Life” by Nicki Minaj, because I go to the ring with a balance of confidence and humility, knowing that I am blessed and with God anything is possible.

**Hans Struzyna**

**SPORT:** Rowing  
**AGE:** 26  
**HOMETOWN:** Kirkland, Wash.  
**TUNES WHILE TRAINING:** For any long workout, it’s Metallica with Rage Against the Machine. Tool, Black Sabbath and Guns N’ Roses mixed in.  
**ARTIST I’D MOST LIKE TO COMPETE AGAINST:** Snoop Dogg, because he would beat you and start rapping about it. He seems like he knows how to find a way to win, but has fun doing it.

**Danny Barrett: Kygo**

**Kerry Simmonds: Kygo**

**Katie Zaferes: Swift**

**Paige McPherSon: Beyoncé**

**Hans Struzyna: Nicki Minaj**

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**GABBY DOUGLAS FLIPS FOR CHRISTIAN ROCK**

The two-time gold medalist shares her training playlist before heading to Rio.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>First</th>
<th>Amazing Life</th>
<th>Not Backing Down</th>
<th>Nothin’ on You</th>
<th>Northern Sky (feat. KB)</th>
<th>Incorruptible</th>
<th>I Love You So Much</th>
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<td>Lauren Daigle</td>
<td>Britt Nicole</td>
<td>Blanca</td>
<td>Hollyn</td>
<td>Capital Kings</td>
<td>Backah Shae</td>
<td>V. Rose</td>
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<td>Me Are The Brave</td>
<td>V. Rose</td>
<td>This Is Living</td>
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—MELINDA NEWMAN

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cheers to our
NASHVILLE
POWER PLAYERS

YOU CONTINUE TO WOW US EVERY YEAR
from your family at

Ali Harnell & Louis Messina

AEG Live
Messina Touring Group
**OVERHEARD**

**BY SELMA FONSECA**

**No Weddings For Tedder**

Ryan Tedder doesn’t do weddings. The prolific songwriter played an exclusive show with his band OneRepublic at the Red Bull Sound Space at AMP Radio in Los Angeles on July 21 and afterward told Overheard he’ll no longer sing at weddings because nothing makes me more nervous.” As Tedder sees it, “if you forget a lyric or fall onstage, you can always do another show. But with a wedding, that’s it.” Tedder also talked about OneRepublic’s yet-to-be-titled new album, which is slated for a fall release.

It took 18 months to record, “the longest amount of time we have ever spent on one project,” he said. “We did a lot of living in the last four years — there was a lot to write about.” The tracks came together in some far-flung locations: “Kids,” which Tedder said will be the lead single, was created in Japan and Mexico City. He also is working on a movie soundtrack with Stevie Wonder.

**Spotlight**

**An Island King Goes Global**

**BY PATRICIA MESCHINO**

Whether joining Rihanna to perform “Bitch Better Have My Money” in her native Barbados or appearing in Nicki Minaj’s Trinidad-set “Pound the Alarm” video, Machel Montano is the go-to for providing island-ready assists to pop stars. Though his name may not be familiar in the United States, Montano’s music — soca, the upbeat, feverishly fast descendant of calypso that fuels Carnival celebrations around the world — has influenced everyone from Major Lazer (which paired him with Ariana Grande for 2014 track “All My Love”) to Drake, who booked the 41-year-old Trinidad native to headline his annual OVO Fest in Toronto on July 30. “Drake was just No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 with ‘One Dance’ — a hip-hop song influenced by soca music,” says Montano. “We’re contributing to the mainstream in a major way: There’s soca in Justin Bieber’s ‘Sorry,’ too. That makes me even more focused on my role right now.”

Having taken the genre from New York’s Madison Square Garden (five sold-out shows, most recently in 2011) to the White House (twice during the Obama administration), Montano’s role as the global ambassador for soca is expanding. On Aug. 5 the artist makes his acting debut as the star of Bazodee, a soca musical that also draws inspiration from Bollywood (Trinidad and India were both British colonies). “It’s important to put a film out to tell the story of Caribbean culture, alongside the story of soca music,” says Montano of the movie, which Indiepapel Films will release to 100 screens nationwide. “Reggae music did what it did, and I think now soca can do the same.”

Raised in South Trinidad, Montano first hit the island’s Carnival circuit in 1986 as a precocious 11-year-old singing the fitting anthem “Too Young to Soca.” By his late teens, he had started incorporating elements of hip-hop and dancehall into his music to create a modern soca sound, with mid-’90s Carnival classics like the frenetic “Big Truck” and “Toro Toro” catapulting him to the top of the genre. Having conquered the local festival scene, Montano turned his focus global: 2014’s Happiest Man Alive (Mad Bull Music), for example, featured both Nigeria’s Timaya and Boyz II Men. His energetic live performances, though, remain the backbone of his celebrity, reliably transforming audiences of tens of thousands into ecstatic, flag-waving and gyrating (or as islanders call it, wining) masses.

“Machel is the greatest at fusing soca with everything else going on in music, which is why he’s so successful,” says fellow Trinidadian and Grammy Award-winning songwriter Angela Hunte (Jay Z, Britney Spears), whose Montano collaboration “Party Done” will appear on the Bazodee soundtrack. “He’s as close as he ever has been to a mainstream breakthrough.”

To Montano, there never has been a better time for soca to go international — and fans like Meghan Trainor and Sean Paul (who joined Montano for “One Wine”) agree. “It has been a really deliberate focus by my management to look toward the influence Caribbean music can have on the world,” says Montano.

“Soca is based on seeing past barriers, and that is more relevant today than ever.”
Congratulations to all of our Nashville Power Players

Charlie Cook
Kerri Edwards
Seth England
Rod Essig
Pete Fisher
Leslie Fram
Mary Hilliard Harrington
T.K. Kimbrell
Jon Loba
Cindy Mabe
David Macias
Tiffany Moon
Curt Motley
Darin Murphy
Brian O’Connell
Ben Vaughn

We thank you for all the hard work and devotion you’ve given to The Academy of Country Music
HEAR SAY
A LOOK AT WHO’S SAYING WHAT IN MUSIC
COMPILED BY NATALIE WEINER

“I don’t want to see you catching any Pokemons up in this bitch.”
—RIHANNA
The chart-topper to fans at her concert in Lille, France, telling them to put away their phones during her Anti World Tour.

“And they both lived happily ever after. I’d like to find the person who wrote that and poke him in the eye with a burning stick.”
—OZZY OSBOURNE
The rocker explaining that his marriage to Sharon Osbourne is “back on track” in an interview with Good Morning America.

“Knowing them, it’s probably a big master plan. They’ll probably all come together at the MTV Awards or something.”
—FERGIE
The star sharing her theory about Kanye West and Taylor Swift’s current dispute during an interview with Australia’s KIIS radio station.

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Q&A
‘I DON’T HAVE ANYTHING TO PROVE’

Jake Owen didn’t get to be a country-radio stalwart by capitizing the format’s boat: Platinum-certified hits like “Barefoot Blue Jean Night” and “Beachin’” show his Nashville anthen bona fides. But after a public divorce from model Lacey Buchanan in 2015, the perpetually grinning Florida native, 34, eschewed both turn-up-friendly singles and cliché break-up laments for American Love (July 29, RCA Nashville).

This album shows broader range than your previous work. What inspired the shift?
Before, I was singing songs that didn’t represent me as a person – just trying to prove myself as a viable artist. But thankfully, after having a record deal for 10 years, I don’t have anything to prove to anybody. I’ve always been a little jealous that my music wouldn’t fit in a place like Bonnaroo – but I’d love to play there. In country, there’s room for everything right now.

You scrapped the album you had been working on and started over, right? I’ve done albums before where I’ve conformed to deadlines, and I think it shows to the fans. So I went to the new label head, Randy Goodman, and said, “Hey, man, you don’t know me, but I can make an awesome album if I just have the time to do it.” I’m so glad I reapproached this, because I don’t think I could do any better.

The cover of the album is you in a green Volkswagen bus – is there any symbolism there? They lend themselves to hopping in and taking a road trip to wherever... It’s like the freedom of young love. After going through a divorce last year and being a little sad, I needed to make a record that made me feel good. American Love is one long playlist that takes me on a journey of where I was, where I want to go and where I am right now. It’s the same as hopping in a van and just rolling.
—JEWLY HIGH

“I’m proud to support a candidate who will fight to ensure all people living with mental health conditions get the care they need.”
—DEMI LOVATO
The singer speaking at the Democratic National Convention about why she’s voting for Hillary Clinton.

“We notice something’s wrong and it’s gone on way too long/So we’re asking you right now, stop using our songs.”
—usher
The R&B star singing in a sketch about campaign songs on Last Week Tonight With John Oliver.

“‘And they both lived happily ever after.’ I’d like to find the person who wrote that and poke him in the eye with a burning stick.”
—OZZY OSBOURNE
The rocker explaining that his marriage to Sharon Osbourne is “back on track” in an interview with Good Morning America.

“I need to rethink some areas of my life creatively and personally.”
—SELENA GOMEZ
The singer in a cryptic Instagram post that she shared the day after her 24th birthday.

“I have the nerve to grab my sax player’s horn in the dressing room and start playing it... I wouldn’t put my mouth on it, personally.”
—Lenny Kravitz
The artist recounting a memorable backstage visit by Bill Clinton during an interview on Late Night With Seth Meyers.

“He had the nerve to grab my sax player’s horn in the dressing room and start playing it... I wouldn’t put my mouth on it, personally.”
—Lenny Kravitz
The artist recounting a memorable backstage visit by Bill Clinton during an interview on Late Night With Seth Meyers.

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“I would love to play there. In country, there’s room for everything right now.”
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SESAC Congratulates KELLI TURNER & DENNIS LORD and all of Billboard's 2016 Nashville Power Players Honorees
CONGRATULATIONS
Brad Belanger, Kerri Edwards,
Mary Hilliard Harrington, Tom Lord
and all of BILLBOARD’S
NASHVILLE POWER PLAYER
honorees!

From your friends and family at

RED LIGHT
MANAGEMENT

NASHVILLE • NEW YORK • LOS ANGELES
ATLANTA • SEATTLE • CHARLOTTESVILLE
BRISTOL • LONDON
A Chicken-Fried Friendship

Kings of Leon’s Nathan Followill and chef Jonathan Waxman spend a high-calorie morning at Adele’s, the hottest table in Nashville’s Gulch neighborhood

BY BROOKE MAZUREK
PHOTOGRAPHED BY DANIEL HENNESSY

GO AHEAD!” EXCLAIMS CHEF Jonathan Waxman, looking down at a gorgeously thick hunk of pork tenderloin. “Smash the hell out of it!”

It’s just after 10 a.m. inside Adele’s, the farm-to-fork Nashville restaurant that Waxman opened in 2014; there aren’t yet customers or clattering plates, or even music playing overhead. But whooshing through the serenity is a comically oversized aluminum mallet wielded by Kings of Leon drummer Nathan Followill. “It’s a good form of therapy,” he says of pancakes the meat, which is then breaded and sauteed in olive...
“In Italy, they would probably call this pork Milanese,” says Waxman, 65. But with buttermilk and cornmeal in the batter, the dish becomes chicken-fried pork, one of Followill’s favorites.

The long-haired drummer, whose prowess in the kitchen typically begins and ends at scrambled eggs (“I make the best ones you’ll ever have”), says his palate for fine dining developed in tandem with the success of his band, which formed nearly two decades ago in Nashville. “We’d get on the bus and hit the first fast-food joint we could find,” recalls Followill, 37, who was born the eldest son of a preacher and an insurance manager in Oklahoma. “As we started headlining festivals, we were asked what chefs we wanted for after-show meals. We fell in love with food in the process.”

Off-night dinners took him to places like El Bulli in Spain and Noma in Denmark. But Barbuto, Waxman’s rustic Italian eatery in New York, became one of the band’s go-tos. As the group’s friendship with the chef blossomed, so did the Music City Food & Wine Festival, which the band and Waxman launched in 2013. Though once defined culinarily by its hot chicken, Nashville’s changing landscape now has “a whole bunch of kids doing freeform food, using the ingredients growing here,” says Waxman, who was raised in Berkeley, Calif., and helped pioneer California cuisine in the 1970s. “There also are older chefs like me bringing in their influences.”

Today, he piles the greens on thick, topping off the chicken-fried pork with collards. “We’ve been bad,” says Waxman of adding butter to them. Followill, though, doesn’t seem to mind. “I doubled up on my Lipitor this morning. I think we’ll be OK.”

How did you guys meet?
FOLLOWILL My brother [lead singer Caleb Followill], stalked Jonathan at Barbuto for a year. Caleb lived a block away at the time. He was like, “You’ve got to try this place!” My wife [musician Jessie Baylin] and I went and had the chicken, roast potatoes.
WAXMAN And the kale salad.

Chef, what made you decide to open a restaurant in Nashville?
WAXMAN Originally, I wanted to open a fast-food chicken place and Ken Levitan [who manages Kings of Leon] suggested Nashville. But the space we found is five times bigger than what I’d wanted. It was an old tire store, so there were tires where we’re sitting. I walked in and fell in love. They saved a ton on the grease as well, which is wonderful. (Laughter.)

What, in your opinion, makes the perfect Southern biscuit?
FOLLOWILL My Oklahoma grandma would make a plain biscuit but use chocolate gravy.
WAXMAN Chocolate gravy?
FOLLOWILL It’s amazing. It’s basically just melted chocolate —
WAXMAN Wow, like Hershey’s?
FOLLOWILL Kind of! You cut your biscuit in half, dump your chocolate gravy on top,
Congratulations to CMT’s Brian Philips and Leslie Fram on being named Nashville’s Power Players for the second consecutive year.
FOLLOWILL Okra. My grandparents on the Tennessee side always had a garden and some of my earliest memories are of picking okra and squash with my grandma. She would cook them up.

WAXMAN My parents were from New York and had a passion for food. They took us to restaurants as kids. I remember going to a Chinese one and having a dish that was boneless, marinated chicken. It was wrapped and then fried in parchment paper. I remember eating the chicken and it was like, “Oh, my God, this is my first orgasm.” I was probably 6 years old. Those food memories are so — I can still see that chicken.

FOLLOWILL Next question: When was your first orgasm?

How about first concert?
FOLLOWILL An odd pairing: Kenny Rogers opening for Gloria Estefan in Memphis, 1985. Beat that one, Waxman. WAXMAN I saw The 13th Floor Elevators with Janis Joplin and Big Brother & The Holding Company at The Avalon. FOLLOWILL You crushed me.

Before you became a chef, Jonathan, you were a musician.
WAXMAN I played the trombone. I got a music scholarship to the University of Nevada in Reno and started playing in the casinos. I played with Sammy Davis Jr. when I was 18 years old — I was so nervous I couldn’t read the charts and got fired.

FOLLOWILL I’m at a disadvantage. You were in a band and know how to do what I do. But I don’t know how to cook!

Tennessee has its whiskey. But would you rather drink beer and wine?
WAXMAN It’s tequila at the beginning of the meal, rosé when I’m prepping and then sitting down at a meal I love a progression of wines. I think Nathan and I agree on this — but wines from the Piedmont [region in Italy] — those reds are like the earth.

FOLLOWILL My wife, who is a phenomenal cook, does the cooking and I pair the wine with whatever we’re having. That’s my thing. Sea Smoke pinot noir is pretty much my go-to.

After all that food and drink, does either of you do juice cleanses, which are so popular with musicians?
WAXMAN They scare the crap out of me.
FOLLOWILL Literally. A juice cleanse to me is no alcohol for three days. That happens once every leap year, I’d say.
FROM INTERN TO PARTNER.
23 YEARS AND COUNTING.
THANK YOU, CLINT.
- YOUR MHM FAMILY

SAND BOX
ENTERTAINMENT
A Nashville-area party barn designed by architect McAlpine features a lower-level loft that looks out onto the Tennessee hills and an outdoor pool.

Dunn’s Nashville barn has a patriotic theme. The 4,000-square-foot space has accommodated parties of 1,000 guests.

Kid Rock was photographed in 2010 outside his party barn for People Country magazine.

That ain’t no shed! In Nashville and across the South, Jason Aldean to Kid Rock are getting down in their intimate, decked-out spaces

BY ADRIENNE GAFFNEY

LAST SUMMER, WHILE HE WAS planning the bash to fete his fifth album, Kill the Lights, country crooner Luke Bryan, 40, didn’t scout just any private, A-list locale. Rather, he brought the party to him, drawing 100 music industry insiders to an expansive, tricked-out barn that he had constructed on his Tennessee property in Williamson County. The soiree was novel, but not rare. For country elite, entertaining increasingly is moving out of traditional venues and into lavish appointed barns that have become the ultimate at-home party space.

Like many, Bryan’s barn, which took its inspiration from Tennessee’s famed restaurant and hotel Blackberry Farm, embraces Southern history and heritage. In creating the space, interior designer Chad James sourced antique lumber from a shuttered factory in Georgia for the structure and reclaimed cobblestone from a street in Charleston, S.C., for flooring. “They want it to look like it has been there a while and not made in China yesterday,” says James of the barn owners with whom he has worked. (He has designed five party barns in the last few years.) The Bryan space was further customized with indoor sleeping quarters and a stage for impromptu musical performances, and accented with an 18th-century Italian chandelier and a number of Bryan’s hunting trophies.

Despite the low-key vibe, a first-class barn represents a real investment. James estimates that a basic 3,000-square-foot structure — including plumbing, electricity, heating and air-conditioning — will cost upwards of $50,000, with high-end finishes and materials pushing the price even higher, into the six figures. And despite the added expense, the investment doesn’t always have a significant impact on property value, according to Nashville broker Steve Fridrich. “Since it is someone else’s creation, people don’t want to pay a whole lot for it.”

But for celebrity hosts, the ability to throw a party outside of their actual living space has the added bonus of allowing revelers to get a bit rowdier without fear of destroying the carpets or vases. “People want to be able to have friends over and have a big party. Nashville has so much entertainment available at its fingertips that it’s not unusual for a party to have live entertainment of incredible quality. Barns satisfy that need,” says architect Bobby McAlpine, who has worked on a slate of high-end party barns for a variety of clients across the South and recently outfitted one with a pool. “It’s catching on,” he says of clients’ increased interest in these at-home venues.

The trend already has been embraced by the genre’s A-listers, including Jason Aldean, 39, who decked out his “man cave”-themed barn in rural Tennessee with a full bar, shuffleboard table and baseball memorabilia. The Alabama estate of Kid Rock, 45, is home to an expansive barn with a pool table, bar and leather couches.

For public figures, a barn also offers entertainment away from peering eyes. “With our entertainment clients, because of who they are, they can’t really go to [Nashville’s] Second Avenue and go out to a bar,” says James. “The way they can do that is to create that atmosphere in the privacy of their own compound.”

After moving into his Nashville home with wife Janine, Brooks & Dunn’s Ronnie Dunn, 63, set his sights on restoring a 16-stall horse stable out back. The structure now boasts a catering kitchen, bar and recording studio and has hosted business meetings as well as parties for up to 1,000 of the family’s friends. (New Yorkers and Los Angelenos have been particularly impressed by the space, notes Dunn.) “It’s real casual, cool, fun; you kind of let your hair down,” he says. As with many, Dunn took a rustic approach to decor, looking to highlight Southern tradition with touches like an elk-horn chandelier and parchment buckskin lighting. Over time, he picked up a tip for home design: “It’s a challenge not to get too kitschy. I learned the old phrase ‘a little cowboy goes a long way.’”

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-实景房，它是一个聚会！
-在纳什维尔和整个南方，贾森·艾德恩和Kid Rock等名人正在他们的私密，装修过的谷仓中举办聚会。

-不需要棚屋！在纳什维尔和整个南方，贾森·艾德恩和Kid Rock等名人正在他们的私密，装修过的谷仓中举办聚会。

-当然，这不仅仅是任何私人，A-级的聚会地点。相反，他把聚会带给他，吸引了100名音乐行业的内部人士到一个广阔的，装备齐全的谷仓，他在这个田纳西州的房产上建造了它。聚会很新颖，但并不罕见。对于国家精英来说，聚会越来越多地搬出传统场所，搬进装潢华丽的谷仓，成为家中的聚会空间。

-像许多人一样，Bryan的谷仓，借鉴了田纳西州著名的餐厅和酒店Blackberry Farm，融合了南方的历史和遗产。在创建空间时，室内设计师Chad James从乔治亚州一个关闭的工厂获得了古董木材，从查尔斯顿街收集了大理石。Bryan的谷仓进一步定制，安装了室内睡眠区和即兴音乐表演区，装点着18世纪的意大利吊灯和Bryan的猎获奖杯。

-尽管气氛平和，但一个一流的谷仓是一个真正的投资。James估计一个基本的3,000平方英尺的结构——包括管道，电力，暖气和空调——将花费5万美元起，高配条件下甚至更高，加入六位数。

-但在名人手中，聚会的举办地可以离家很远。人们不担心破坏地毯或花瓶。人们希望朋友可以来聚会，可以举办大型派对。田纳西州有如此多的娱乐资源，因此视野开阔的谷仓吸引了人们的兴趣。

-已经受到了一些名人的青睐，包括Jason Aldean，39岁，他把自己的“男人洞穴”主题谷仓放在田纳西州的乡村，设有酒吧，乒乓球桌和棒球纪念品。阿肯色州的地产由Kid Rock，45岁，拥有一个宏伟的谷仓，设有台球桌，酒吧和皮革沙发。

-对于公众人物来说，谷仓也可以提供远离窥视的视线。

-“对于我们的娱乐客户，因为他们是谁，他们不能真的去纳什维尔的Second Avenue出去聚会。”James说。“他们可以这样做的方法是创造那种氛围在他们自己的领域中。”

-在搬进他的纳什维尔家后，布克和邓恩的Ronnie Dunn，63岁，把视线放在了16匹马的马棚上。这座建筑现在拥有一个餐饮厨房，酒吧和录音室，并举办了商务会议，以及为1,000多名朋友举办的聚会。(新York人和Los Angelenos对这个空间的反响很好，这意味着Dunn.)“那真的很轻松，可爱，有趣;你会让你的头发松散。”他说。正如许多人一样，Dunn采取了乡村风格的装饰方法，探求南方传统，使用麋鹿角吊灯，羊皮纸长毛皮肤照明。随着时间的推移，他从他家中学到一个设计提示:“挑战是，不要太花哨。我学到了古老的短语‘一点点的牛仔可以走很长的路。’”
Dear Billboard Readers,

I want to congratulate all of the Nashville Power Player honorees on their well-deserved recognition as leaders in the music business here in Nashville.

It should be evident by the moniker Music City that our $10 billion a year music industry is one of the pillars of our economy, our culture, and our reputation as a city.

Here in Nashville, we like to celebrate the great diversity of music from Country Music and Gospel, which are the foundation of our music industry, to the emerging Rock and Hip-Hop scenes, which are taking off in part because of unique and welcoming neighborhoods as well as our terrific live music venues. We also have an array of local festivals from Tin Pan South to Americana Music Association Festival to cater to every musical palate.

Our Music City Music Council, co-chaired by myself and Joe Galante, is made up of industry leaders who have helped to shape our city’s policies and goals towards encouraging this vital industry to grow and thrive in ways never thought before.

One initiative that grew out of the Council was the Music Makes Us program, which serves to enhance our musical education programs in Nashville's public schools. This program wouldn’t be possible without the hard work and generous support of the Country Music Association, which has contributed $10 million to Metro Nashville Public Schools.

Music Makes Us is just one example of the tremendous partnership between our city and the music industry, which generates tremendous tax revenue and donates time, money and star power to great causes.

Music also has helped to make our city one of the top tourist destinations in the world. The show ‘Nashville,’ now on CMT, has helped to shine a spotlight on some of our amazing venues, like the Ryman Auditorium, Bluebird Café, and Grand Ole Opry.

We also have some wonderful free outdoor concerts, which are attracting visitors from around the country. The Jack Daniel’s New Year’s Eve Bash on Broadway saw a record 150,000 people fill the streets of Nashville, our outdoor concert and fireworks show Let Freedom Sing! attracted nearly the same amount of people on the Fourth of July, Live on the Green offers a month of free concerts showcasing local and national artists, and the CMA Fest brought 88,500 fans to Nashville – generating nearly $60 million in visitor spending for local area businesses.

In every facet of life, we benefit from the contributions and success of the music industry in Nashville, which gives Music City that unique culture and great quality of life that make this such a wonderful place to live, work and play.

Kind regards,

Megan Barry
Mayor of Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County
Beloved for his prank-playing, booze-celebrating, good-ol’-boy charm, Blake Shelton has earned 22 country radio No. 1s and an unparalleled pop-culture perch on *The Voice*. Now, sorting through the fallout from his divorce from Miranda Lambert and new romance with Gwen Stefani, Nashville’s clown prince feels like he’s starting from square one: “I was at rock bottom, in the middle of hell”
Shelton photographed June 10 at Starstruck Studios in Nashville. Styling by Trish Townsend. Shelton wears a Calvin Klein shirt, Levi's jacket, Ariat jeans and Tony Lama boots. For an exclusive interview about the worst song he ever wrote, go to Billboard.com or Billboard.com/ipad.
“IT’S A STUPID SONG,” BLAKE SHELTON says with a shrug. “I know that.”

He’s finished singing “Boys Round Here,” his magnificently stupid 2013 hit, in the middle of a surprise set at a Nashville club one lunch hour in early June. During the annual Country Music Association Music Festival, about 150 people had crammed into The Stage, a bar on lower Broadway in Nashville, enjoying the AC and a cover band, when Shelton walked in the back door. He’s 6 feet 5 inches tall, so it was hard to miss him. Amid whoops and selfies, he commandeered the stage.

For about an hour, Shelton — country singer, star of The Voice and brand ambassador for HAVIN’ A DAMN GOOD TIME — played unplugged, relying on the qualities that distinguish him from other Nashville singers: honesty, charm and self-deprecating wit. It takes a smart man to sing a stupid song.

He instructed the Stage staff to hand out free beers while he himself drained a couple of Coronas and pulled out a vodka-and-diet-soda mix in a coffee mug. He put a $500 bill in the tip jar for the band he had displaced. He mock-grudgingly honored a request (“I’m going to do it so you quit whining”) for “Austin,” the 2001 tear-jerk smash that launched his career.

“I love you, Blake,” a fan shouted, ineptly. “I love you, too,” he answered. “We’re going to be in the tabloids, you and me. We’re having twins.” And Shelton, who has gained a few pounds recently, pointed at a belly bump filled with beer.

Shelton, who recently turned 40, became famous for doing unserious things, like giving out Maroon 5 singer Adam Levine’s cellphone number, or recording “Boys Round Here,” which one reviewer called “sexist, crude and jam-packed with country stereotypes ... an embarrassment to everyone involved.”

For years, he has been the clown prince of country, a sentimental, amiable lug who loves booze, women and sarcasm. He’s the emotional center of The Voice, which, in its second season, helped catapult NBC from last in network ratings to first, eventually put American Idol out of business and enters its 11th season this fall. His last 17 official singles have all gone to No. 1 on Billboard’s Country Airplay chart, and he earns more than $28 million a year, Forbes recently estimated.

“He has brought star power to country music that I don’t think it has seen in a while, and he has brought a bunch of new fans, too,” says singer Trace Adkins, a good friend. “He says whatever he wants to say, and it has turned into a gold mine. When I do that, I go to jail. Or rehab.”

“I tell him he’s the Dean Martin of our generation — a handsome devil who comes across as lackadaisical even though he’s extremely driven,” says John Esposito, chairman/CEO of Warner Music Nashville. “His wit and charm translate to the music — you can see the twinkle in his eye, and you get sucked in.”

“I don’t think I’m ever going to get serious,” Shelton told CNN in 2013. “My heart and soul is being a redneck, and drinking, and being stupid.”

But that was in happier times, when he was six months into his marriage to Miranda Lambert, the coring good country singer. He has twisted his jester reputation on his latest album, If I’m Honest, which debuted at No. 3 on the Billboard 200 in May and has sold more than 300,000 copies since, according to Nielsen Music. In July 2015, Shelton and Lambert — who were routinely described as the “king and queen of country” — announced they were filing for divorce, igniting a series of tabloid covers. Four months later, after rumors and coy hints on Instagram, one of Shelton’s representatives acknowledged that he and voice co-star Gwen Stefani were dating.

If you listen closely enough to If I’m Honest, says Shelton, “you can learn some facts of my divorce. Maybe not specifics, but you can get a general idea about it. It is my divorce record, but maybe even more than that, it’s my happy, falling-in-love record too.” Emotionally, it’s Shelton’s richest album. The divorce (his second) has given him more feeling and depth. It’s almost enough to disrupt his self-described reputation as a stupid redneck.

“CAN WE DO THIS INTERVIEW LYING down, like therapy?” Shelton asks, slumping on a sofa at Starstruck Entertainment, a white-gloss, shockingly modern three-story palace in the heart of Music Row in Nashville. He’s sipping from a big plastic cup of at least 12 ounces of vodka and diet soda — a boozy Slurpee.

Shelton sequenced If I’m Honest in a way that simulates a “very specific time frame” in his life. It opens with “Straight Out of Cold Beer,” a backwoods party song that represents his carefree mind-set at the start of 2015. Then, he says, “the bottom drops out” of the album as it proceeds into the spring. “That’s when it became painfully obvious that it wasn’t going to work out in my marriage,” he says.

The second song, “She’s Got a Way With Words,” humorously but bitterly recalls a lover who cheated and lied. Shelton didn’t write it, but if you want to assume it describes some of the facts of his divorce, he won’t stop you. Then the album “stays in that hell for a while — that sad, dark place.” A few funny songs balance out the album, including the winking double-entendre “Doing It to Country Songs.” Shelton always has done those songs well, but more impressively, he sings his ass off on the heartache ballads.

“When we recorded the vocals for some of these songs, I was only six months removed from when all the crap went down,” says Shelton. “When you have a broken heart — at least, when I do — you got to get it out of your system. You want people to sympathize with you. I was at rock bottom, in the middle of hell.” For a while, Shelton stayed with Adam Levine. “As close as we have been, we got even closer.”

When The Voice began to shoot season nine in the spring, he decided to tell everyone at the show. “Though he and Lambert hadn’t announced their divorce, he knew it would be final by the time the blind auditions were broadcast in September, and he didn’t want his producers and fellow judges to refer to Lambert as “Blake’s wife.”

Shelton and Stefani had met two years prior, when she joined The Voice as a coach in season seven. But she recently had given birth to her son Apollo, and Shelton “never really got to know her, other than small talk.” When Stefani didn’t return for season eight, Shelton assumed she would never see her again. So the way she reacted to his news was surprising and memorable. “I won’t forget that day,” he says. “I looked over at Gwen — who I
“Next thing I know, I wake up and Gwen’s all I care about, and I’m wondering if she feels the same about me. She saved my life.”

—Shelton
didn’t really know — and she had these huge tears in her eyes. I thought, ‘Wow, she feels super bad for me!’ ”

It wasn’t only empathy. Though she, too, hadn’t announced it, Stefani was in the process of separating from her husband, Bush singer Gavin Rossdale, after 20 years together and three kids. Later that day, she asked to talk with Shelton, alone.

“I thought it was going to be another one of those things-are-going-to-be-OK talks,” he recalls. “She didn’t tell me much, because we didn’t know each other at the time, but she said, ‘I’m going through something very similar to what you’re going through. I understand. And I hate it.’ That’s kind of how our friendship and bond started, that day. It went from that, to checking in on each other once a week through email — “This shit happened to me, what happened to you?” — to maybe three times a week, then every day, to ‘Hey, here’s my phone number if you ever want to text.’ Next thing I know, I wake up and she’s all I care about, and I’m wondering if she feels the same about me.

“Gwen saved my life. Who else on earth could understand going through a high-profile divorce from another musician? You can’t even imagine the similarities in our divorces.”

After lingering in misery for a while, If I’m Honest starts to lift and turn, most notably with “Go Ahead and Break My Heart,” an unlikely duet between Shelton and Stefani. Shelton, who isn’t prolific, began to write about his new relationship and Stefani. She lives.) “I thought, ‘Man, that sounds like Gwen.’ And sure enough, the DJ said it was No Doubt. I was like, ‘What the f—?’ I didn’t know that was her song. I’m still learning, I guess.” While she visited him, the couple ate at a Dairy Queen and Shopped at a Dollar album release, live on The Voice while “making bedroom eyes at each other,” as one newspaper described it.

As Shelton has acknowledged, the couple “could not be, on paper, any more different” — a country singer who plants corn on his Oklahoma farm and bow-hunts white-tailed deer, and a glam-packed California vegan who started her career in a ska band and has her own fashion empire. She’s Vogue, he’s Field & Stream; he’s a tractor, she’s a Porsche.

A few months ago, Shelton was in his truck, driving to pick up Stefani at an airport in Oklahoma, when “It’s My Life” came on the radio. (He also rents a home in Los Angeles, where she lives.) “I thought, ‘Hey, here’s my phone number if you ever want to text.’” — to maybe three times a week, then every day, to “Hey, here’s my phone number if you ever want to text.” Next thing I know, I wake up and she’s all I care about, and I’m wondering if she feels the same about me.

“When you’re sad, that’s the best time to sing sad songs,” says Shelton. “When it still hurts.” With Lambert in 2012.

1) He cut his mullet. He had kept it until 2005, partly to defy and piss off everyone who told him to cut it. Then he traded cowboy hats for dark colors, suit jackets and vests.
2) He found a new producer, Scott Hendricks, who cut away the corn and devised a more modern sound, with less overemoting and more rhythmic singing — not quite rapping, but a casual, half-spoken style, known in the 19th century as Sprechgesang, that acknowledges the pervasiveness of rap without emulating it. In 2009 Hendricks and Shelton cut the country-as-cow-dung hit “Hillbilly Bone,” Shelton’s first of 22 singles to reach No. 1 on the Country Airplay chart, making him, after many years, a model of consistency.

3) He found a visible way to express his big personality. When The Voice debuted in April 2011, Shelton’s presence as a coach indicated to viewers who didn’t know country that he was a star on the same level as Levine and Christina Aguilera. Three months later, Shelton had his first No. 1 album on the Billboard 200.

Shelton believes NBC picked him because “they probably saw how unfiltered I am on Twitter and thought, ‘We need somebody that’ll shake things up.’ In country music, everybody falls in line,” he says with a sigh. “I am who I am. Sometimes that gets mistaken for ‘Blake Shelton is an asshole.’ I’m not. I just don’t want to be dishonest with anybody.”

“He’s always going for the joke,” says Adkins. “Blake has been sending me pictures every time he shits in the woods. Luke Bryan’s probably getting them too.”

One of Shelton’s favorite gags is about booze, like his ongoing series of “I’m so drunk” tweets (“I’m so drunk right now I just pissed my shirt pocket”). Last September, when a tabloid reported that he was in rehab, Shelton sued for defamation, and, in a sworn statement, said he hasn’t been to rehab — and “I also do not have a drinking problem.” The jokes, he added, are “part of my shtick.”

Most country singers represent a specific image of the South: humble, not profane, odorless. Shelton acts more like a rapper would, spouting off at will. People expect attitude from him. The night before we met, around midnight, he addressed “haters” on Twitter: “Have yourself a nice warm cup of camel balls...” (“Go to bed, dad,” one follower helpfully advised.)

“In country music, we’re so politically correct and so afraid to possibly upset someone,” he says. Recently a tea party website announced, “Blake Shelton Sides With Trump on Issues of Political Correctness,” dubiously trying to claim him for the right wing. Does the singer support Donald Trump? “I’m not going to have the political conversation with you about Trump, or about Hillary Clinton, but I will tell you this: Whether you love him or hate him, he says what he thinks, and he has proven that you don’t always have to be so afraid. A lot of people are pulling for him, no matter how much Hollywood fights it. I see people who don’t like him go and beat up people that do like him. You tell me, who’s crazy here?” Shelton, who says he will vote for the candidate who wants him as his running mate, adds, “I probably wish there was another option, but there’s not.”

As the conversation comes to a close, Shelton asks merrily, “Did you get some good career-ruining shit on me?” For the most part, he’s exactly as expected: funny, footloose, as honest as a divorce settlement will allow. There has been only one surprise: Around noon, he passed up a shot of whiskey when it was offered to him. “Shit,” he moans, “I hate shots. That’s for college drinkers. I’ve never thought about it anymore.”

“Six years before winning the best new artist Grammy at age 14, LeAnn Rimes appeared on Star Search, where she reigned as champion for one week, then began performing in Texas.

2005  Carrie Underwood won American Idol’s fourth season and quickly released her debut, Some Hearts, which went on to become Billboard’s No. 1 Country Album of the Decade.

2016  Chris Stapleton’s debut album, Traveller, re-entered the Billboard 200 at No. 1 after his performance with Justin Timberlake on the CMAs Country Music Awards in April.
The Game-Changers

‘You Say “Tomato,” I Say “F— You”’

A year after a radio consultant’s notorious remarks that likened female artists to a salad ingredient, Billboard gathered six of Nashville’s new stars to talk industry sexism, the “freak show” presidential election and who would rather “work at Walgreens [than] compromise.”

BY JEWLY HIGHT • PHOTOGRAPHED BY MILLER MOBLEY
The Grammy nominee’s first LP, *Untamed*, cruised to No. 12 on the Billboard 200.


A two-time Grammy winner, her sophomore LP, *Pageant Material*, peaked at No. 3 on the Billboard 200.

You”””
ON A HOT SUMMER MORNING IN DOWNTOWN NASHVILLE, SIX YOUNG COUNTRY standouts take seats around a table, making small talk while awaiting instructions from a surrounding film crew. “Pretend like we’re not here,” urges a producer.

“Yeah, it sure feels intimate,” deadpans singer-songwriter Margo Price, 33, drawing knowing laughter from the five other women who also have tiny microphones inside their dresses. Once the tape rolls, they’re anything but timid, though, as they freely discuss the highly competitive, male-dominated industry in which they live and work.

A lot has changed in the two decades since divas like Shania Twain, Faith Hill and Martina McBride filled the ranks of country’s leading hitmakers. In May 2015, a radio consultant publicly advised country programmers not to play too many female artists if they wanted to maintain ratings, likening songs by women to tomatoes scattered in an otherwise all-male salad. Dubbed “Tomato-gate,” the controversy spelled out an insidious industry bias, but also threw a spotlight on the genre’s serious female contenders — women working to establish their individuality, broaden the genre’s subject matter and raise the bar artistically. Women like these six.

All millennials, they’re a savvy, forward-thinking, casually irreverent bunch. There’s Price, who is the first solo female act to reach the Top Country Albums top 10 without a charting single, and Maren Morris, 26, whose country-pop blockbuster Hero debuted atop the country albums chart in June (and features her blasé use of the word “shit” on single “Rich”). Also here is Cam Ochs, 31, who performs as Cam and broke through with the anguished, stripped-down number “Burning House,” a Hot Country Songs No. 2. Mickey Guyton, 33, turned heads in the summer of 2015 with the neotraditional power ballad “Better Than You Left Me.” Aubrie Sellers, newly signed to Warner Music Nashville, is the 25-year-old daughter of Lee Ann Womack, but the second-generation singer has carved out her own tempestuous, garage rock-informed sound. Kacey Musgraves, 27, is the group’s relative veteran, a devotee of clever word-craft with the platinum single “Merry Go ‘Round,” the 2013 gold album Same Trailer Different Park and the chart-topping 2015 follow-up Pageant Material under her belt.

Over the next hour, these six leaders of Nashville’s new power generation discuss everything from Dolly Parton and Hillary Clinton to the state of industry sexism — including an ugly social media feud with the guy behind Tomato-gate.

How has country changed for women in the last 10 years? Or 20?

SELLERS We went through a little lull, but women are coming back in a big way. There’s a lot more freedom for women to be themselves.

MUSGRAVES For a while, you had to have a pretty face and a big voice. Now, I don’t feel like that’s as important — what you’re saying and the substance behind it is more important. That makes me excited.

MORRIS Ever since the Dixie Chicks, the female perspective on country radio has been love songs. I love love songs, but we do have more to talk about, so it’s nice that other perspectives are coming back.

GUYTON Maren, your song “Rich” — I freaking love that you curse. It makes me so happy, because it’s so taboo. Women — we’re real, you know? We’re not just trophies that you put on the shelf.

You all sound optimistic.

CAM I know! It’s heading in a good
direction, but we still have a way to go. If this was a "male power roundtable," it would be a bigger table. (Laughter.)

**GUYTON** I grew up listening to women singers. Where did they all go?

**MUSGRAVES** Shania. The Dixie Chicks.

**GUYTON** They weren’t mediocre. They were really, really good. I mean, Dolly Parton owned what she did. She had big boobs and she didn’t care what anybody said about her: Yeah, I get plastic surgery — and? And look at her. She has her own theme park.

**MUSGRAVES** She and Loretta Lynn did a really good job of balancing all these things: sexuality, humor and brains. They weren’t just pretty faces; they had it all. Dolly wasn’t afraid to be the smart woman in the room, but also wasn’t afraid to pop out her cleavage.

It has been a year since Tomato-gate. How have you directly experienced sexism in the industry?

**PRICE** A lot of times when I play a show, I’m the only girl on the bill. We’re a minority, for sure. I was so fired up when that tomato thing happened, I made a shirt that said, “You say ‘Tomato,’ I say ‘F— you.’ ” (Laughter.) I tweeted it at [Keith Hill, the radio consultant responsible for the uproar]. I had an argument with him. There was just no changing his mind. He actually made my photo his Facebook profile picture and got all these people to say bad things about me — how I’m ugly and need a nose job.

**GUYTON** Are you serious?

**PRICE** Yeah. I ended up getting rid of my personal Facebook and blocking him on Twitter. I can feel my blood pressure rising talking about it.

**CAM** It was nice [that Tomato-gate] acknowledged there was something going on — everybody knew there was something — but there are these excuses sometimes.

**MUSGRAVES** If they can’t get your song off the ground, it’s immediately blamed on your personality, or the fact that you’re female, or that you didn’t make a radio station program direct or feel important.

**SELLERS** There’s extra pressure to not piss anyone off. Men don’t have that.

**PRICE** I had the most frustrating thing happen when I was trying to find a label. I sent my album to this indie label and they were like, “We already have two girls on the label. I’m so sorry, we just can’t take your project.”

As if there’s a limited number of spots for women.

**PRICE** Right. You can have 15 guys, but if you have two girls, the quota is filled.

**MUSGRAVES** In my head, it’s never about female versus male; it’s always about good songs versus bad songs. If you’re singing and writing good songs, I don’t care what
it ever been hard to get ideas taken seriously?
MUSGRAVES If it was, I’d walk out the door.
PRICE You’ve got to find people who respect you.
MUSGRAVES Don’t go into a situation where your integrity or your thoughts would be questioned. Find your tribe. SELLERS That’s why I made my record before I had a label. I put it out independently — in a way, out of fear — because I didn’t want anyone to change it.

How involved are you all in the business side?
GUYTON For a long time, I let people kind of dictate — well, not dictate who I was, but I just assumed people in powerful positions know what’s hot. Then finally I realized, “You don’t know who I am. I have to stand up and dictate who I am.” Nobody cares more about your business than you.
MUSGRAVES Sometimes I’m probably way too hands-on, but I love knowing what’s going on with my money, with my crew. I want to be hands-on without letting it drive me crazy and take away from my creativity. I’m not a number-cruncher, but I want to have a say.
PRICE It’s your name. It’s your face.

When was the last time you had to choose between being liked and being respected?
PRICE Every day. It’s easy to be a people-pleaser, but that’s not what makes me happy. Women get labeled “bossy” when it’s like, “Maybe I’m a leader. Maybe I just know what I want.”
MUSGRAVES Maybe I just know what’s best for me.

Mickey, you’re one of the few women of color who have achieved measurable success in country. Are people hyperconscious of that?
GUYTON Everybody has been very kind to me and very open. The reality is music doesn’t see color.
Still, you often get asked about country and race in interviews.

**GUYTON** I do. But people outside the entertainment world don’t talk about that. I’ve only had one awkward comment. Someone said, “Oh, my God! You’re so tan!” (Laughter.)

**What do you make of the presidential race?**

**MUSGRAVES** I’ve got to go. (Laughter.)

But what do you make of a woman being a major party candidate for the first time?

**MORRIS** I’m going to be honest. I was really into the last election, but this one, I just feel so dejected. It’s a sound-bite culture of people saying the worst things, and I just want to put my head in the sand.

**SELLERS** It’s so representative of our time that it’s a reality-show freak show. It’s not a real presidential race.

**CAM** It is kind of tough with Hillary because you do want to be really excited.

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“We still have a way to go: If this was a ‘male power roundtable,’ it would be a bigger table.”

— Cam
The Masters Of Music Row

Billboard's second annual rundown of country's 50-plus top movers and shakers who generated $1.2 billion in U.S. music sales and touring grosses, despite challenges: "Radio's not breaking new artists."

Little Big Town

A new album is expected this year from the quartet, whose massive 2015 hit "Girl Crush" led Billboard's Hot Country Songs chart for 13 weeks, a record for a song by a group of three or more members. To date, the track has sold 2.2 million downloads.
“It is nice to be No. 1,” says the outspoken chairman/CEO of Universal Music Group Nashville, but he’s not sleeping any easier now that his competition is resurging: “I’m miserable unless I’m batting a thousand”

Urban has notched a record 36 consecutive top 10 singles on Billboard’s Country Airplay chart.

“HE’S THE DON!” SAYS LUKE BRYAN, sidling up to Universal Music Group Nashville chairman/CEO Mike Dungan at Billboard’s photoshoot. It’s the week of the Country Music Association’s CMA Music Festival, and if it’s the first time that one of Dungan’s artists has made a flattering reference to the influence that he wields, it won’t be the last. Before the festival is over, a procession of acts and their handlers will venture to Dungan’s Commerce Street tower office to kiss the ring of the most powerful person in country music and Billboard’s 2016 Nashville Executive of the Year.

Dungan, 62, oversees five labels — Capitol Records Nashville, EMI Records Nashville, Mercury Nashville and Show Dog-Universal, a joint venture with Toby Keith — that collectively make UMGN the largest distributor of country music in the United States. Its 29.5 percent market share for the first half of 2016 is almost 10 points higher than its nearest competitor, Sony Music Nashville, and, in that same time period, UMGN has charted 22 records on Billboard’s Top Country Albums chart and 11 singles in the top 10 of the Hot Country Songs list — by far, the most of any label group.

That’s not surprising given UMGN’s roster includes country’s reigning superstar, Bryan; radio darling Sam Hunt; CMA best new artist Chris Stapleton, whose full-length debut, Traveller, is the biggest-selling country album of the year (1.5 million units moved, according to Nielsen Music); and Dierks Bentley, who recently topped Hot Country Songs for the 11th time with “Somewhere on a Beach.”

“It is nice to be No. 1,” says Dungan, as he leans back in his office chair, surrounded by Beatles, Miles Davis and Rat Pack memorabilia, “but I was very comfortable being No. 2 at Capitol, because I didn’t have a big target on my back.” Dungan ran Capitol Nashville for 12 years, before it merged with Universal’s far bigger Nashville operations in 2012. He eventually took the reins of the entire music group, home to more than 25 acts — a number that, says Dungan,
has been used to discourage new talent from signing with Universal. "It’s easy for the guys down the street to go, 'How much attention do you think you’re going to get when they have Luke, Keith Urban, Little Big Town and Lady Antebellum?'"

Bryan describes the label boss as "seriously not serious," and between Dungan’s cheerfully acerbic personality and UMGN’s lead over the competition, it’s difficult to imagine him having many dark nights of the soul at the Brentwood, Tenn., home he shares with his wife of 38 years, Jane. (They’re the parents of two sons in their 30s.) Yet, Dungan admits to mixed feelings over recent resurgences at Sony and Warner Bros. Nashville divisions. "It’s never good to have weak competition," he says.

“That said, I am a ridiculously competitive person. If you know me well, I’m miserable unless I’m batting a thousand. Sometimes, late at night, I’ll get really dark," he says, "because something isn’t happening for us, and it’s happening somewhere else.”

That competitive zeal manifests itself in Dungan’s office layout. “It looks like a tech startup,” says Bruce Flohr, a senior executive at Red Light Management who was involved in the negotiations that led to The Band Perry signing a joint deal with UMGN and Interscope. “He has displays of all his artists’ data in real time. And he’s got a team in place that knows how to use that data.”

Key players on Dungan’s staff include UMGN president Cindy Mabe — “who the day I’m finished here will rise up and be the best anyone in this town has ever been, and better than I’ve ever been,” says Dungan — promo king Royce Risser, A&R vp Bryan Wright and COO Mike Harris.

As for their boss, “There’s nothing refined about Dungan — every part of him is on 11,” says Flohr. After Dungan’s beloved hometown team the Cincinnati Reds invited him to throw out the first pitch at a July game, he began practicing at the office using a pitchback that his staff bought him.

“For a 62-year-old guy, my form looks pretty good on film, but I’m f—ing spraying all over the place,” he says. “There are massive dents in everybody’s doors.” Flohr finds that same go-for-broke attitude in an annual camping getaway Dungan embarks on with other male exes, mixing winter weather with serious fireworks. “They go out and blow shit up,” he says. “Everybody’s shocked when they come back with all of their fingers.”

Dungan can be similarly unvarnished when it comes to his artists. He says, for instance, that he counseled Bryan against becoming too closely identified with the bro-country sound that he virtually pioneered. "When we signed Luke, he was unlike anything out there," he says. "But over time, everyone started to emulate him. I told him, ‘You need to utilize all the tools in your toolbox. Otherwise, you’re going to be branded as that guy forever.’ " On Kill the Lights, the 2015 album that Bryan released after their heart-to-heart, Dungan hears signs that Bryan was listening.

“He’s still got the shake-your-butt songs in there,” says Dungan, but such tracks as "Fast" and “Home Alone Tonight” are proof that “Luke is growing and morphing.”

As country’s style shifts go, Dungan is pro-evolution. He admits he “frustrated” Stapleton early on by urging him to go in a more contemporary direction — advice, he says, he’s glad Stapleton ignored, given the results. He has championed Urban, Little Big Town and The Band Perry working with pop or EDM producers, and Hunt, country’s genre-blending game-changer, didn’t faze him. At radio initially, “old guys like me stood back from 20 feet away and said, ‘Boy, I don’t know if there’s anything in this that’s remotely country,’” Dungan says of Hunt, whose debut LP, Montevallo, has sold 1.2 million copies. But, he adds, “there was one thing that was incredibly country: the lyrics.”

Dungan is intent on making a star of a 31-year-old artist named Jon Pardi, whom he likens to “Buck Owens from a frat house.” The bulk of the music on Pardi’s sophomore album, California Sunrise, is “a lot more traditional than what’s being played at country radio,” says Dungan. One track, though, is a hip-hop-influenced outlier called “Dirt On My Boots.” Dungan wants it to be the next single because he’s convinced it’ll be a “bona fide smash.”

Pardi is resisting him, however, and, as if on cue, steps out of the elevator. Dungan good-naturedly puts him on the spot. “Don’t fight me on the second steps out of the elevator. Dungan good-naturedly puts him on the spot. “Don’t fight me on the second single, boy!” he says, laughing. “Don’t have a great f—ing song and then stand there and say, ‘I don’t know if it’s me!’ ” Pardi can’t fight the pressure.

“All right, all right,” he says with a sigh. You can resist the don for only so long.

—CHRIS WILLIAMSON
Randy Goodman, 60
Chairman/CEO, Sony Music Nashville

When Goodman took the top Sony Music Nashville gig in July 2015, he says he came in “knowing that if we weren’t making a substantive difference within the first year, people would write us off.” A year later, SMN’s progress is evident: For the first half of 2016, its country album market share is 20.8 percent, up from 19.8 percent for all of 2015.

FRESHMAN YEAR HIGHLIGHTS
In addition to acing releases by inherited acts Carrie Underwood and Cam, the Nashville-raised father of two signed key artists from under the noses of rivals. “Maren Morris was far down the road with another label,” he says. The gambit paid off: Morris’ Hero reached No. 1 on Top Country Albums and the single “My Church” went top 10. He also snagged LANco, another act in talks with a competitor, at Nashville’s The High Watt club. The band’s single, “Long Live Tonight,” drew 459,000 radio audience impressions in its debut week. Just out: Kenny Chesney heralds his new LP, Cosmic Hallelujah, with a duet with Pink, “Setting the World on Fire.” And Goodman says he’s “blown away” by what he has heard of Miranda Lambert’s upcoming LP.

WHY THEY SIGNED
LANco’s Brandon Lancaster cites Goodman’s intrepidness: “You don’t expect a president to sign you on the spot, especially one who just came into that label.” Singer Kane Brown, whose Chapter 1 EP has sold 50,000 copies, says Goodman got the nod because “he treats me like I was his son. With him being new to Sony, too, I felt like we could start this thing together.”
Bill Hearn, 56
President/CEO, Capitol Christian Music Group

With more than 45 percent of the market, according to Nielsen Christian SoundScan, Hearn’s group dominates the genre and distributes its No. 1-selling release of 2016, Joey & Rory’s Hymns, which has scanned 419,000 units so far — enough to make it the 13th-best-selling album of the year across all genres. Hearn did not respond to interview requests, but his colleague, Universal Music Group Nashville chief Mike Dungan, calls him “one of the best music executives in Nashville,” who was “raised in the business.” Hearn’s father, the late Billy Ray Hearn, founded venerable Christian label Sparrow Records, which is owned by Capitol CMG.

Cindy Mabe, 43
President, Universal Music Group Nashville

It’s hard to argue with Mabe’s assertion that “[Chris] Stapleton was the story of the year,” and her boss, Mike Dungan, gives her credit for orchestrating the artist’s breakthrough. To make an end run around reluctant radio, Mabe campaigned to get Stapleton enough CMA Award nominations to merit a performance slot on the telecast, then brokered her idea of a dream duet with Justin Timberlake. The transfixing performance, coupled with Stapleton’s three unexpected CMA wins, made country music history, says Mabe. “The birth of a star happened in front of us.” She also had a key role in Little Big Town’s crossover smash “Girl Crush,” which, she adds, “redefined the band.”

David Macias, 51
President, Thirty Tigers

Thanks to the success of upstarts Chase Rice and Sturgill Simpson, Aaron Watson and Jason Isbell, Macias moved the 14-year-old indie-label services and management firm to flashy new digs in Nashville’s Wedgewood/Houston neighborhood this year. Isbell and Watson in particular have boosted the company. The former’s 2015 album, Something More Than Free, and Watson’s The Underdog both topped the Top Country Albums chart. Up next: new releases from Watson and Isbell.

Jack White, 41
Founder, Third Man Records

Third Man just pressed its 3 millionth vinyl disc, cementing its status as the most prolific label in Nashville, even if most of its 400 releases aren’t available digitally. A staff of about 50 runs the label, a mail-order business and a storefront that’s a must-stop for indie-rock tourists. White’s role as Music City’s foremost rock ambassador isn’t strictly symbolic; his civic duties include serving on the mayor’s new gender-inequity advisory board.

Loretta Lynn on The Grand Ole Opry

“When I was a little girl in Kentucky, I always listened to the Grand Ole Opry on the radio. I never dreamed I’d ever see the Opry, and doggone it if I didn’t sing there. The first time, I had this little short, tight dress that I made myself, and I sang ‘Honky Tonk Girl,’ my little record that was out at the time. I don’t remember actually singing though. I don’t remember anything but tapping my foot.”

Brandon Blackstock, 39
Manager, Starstruck Entertainment

Warner Bros. Nashville chief John Esposito says the biggest breakthrough in Blake Shelton’s career came 10 years ago when “he got Narvel and Brandon Blackstock to be his father-and-son management team.” In June, Shelton scored his fifth No. 1 on the Top Country Albums chart with If I’m Honest and his 22nd Country Airplay chart-topping single, “Came Here to Forget.” Although Narvel’s ex-wife, Reba McEntire, departed the firm, Brandon is now managing his spouse (and the mother of two of his four children), pop star Kelly Clarkson, who previously was repped by his dad. Pere and fils helped engineer Clarkson’s move from RCA Records, where she clashed with the label, to Atlantic, where she is cutting a classic R&B-inspired label debut.

Gary Borman, 63
Founder/CEO, Borman Entertainment

The Pittsburgh native maintains offices in Nashville and Los Angeles, but still keeps his business small and focused. The firm’s primary clients are Keith Urban, who notched a record 36 consecutive top 10 singles on the Country Airplay chart, including his latest No. 1, “Wasted Time,” in June and his fifth Top Country Albums chart-topper, Ripcord, in May; Alison Krauss, who has a solo album due out this fall; rising country star Mickey Guyton; and newcomer Clayton Anderson. Borman’s 12-person team has worked with Urban to raise $800,000 this year for the Country Music Hall of Fame through its all-star We’re All For the Hall benefit concerts, and to market the artist’s Urban Guitar brand, which, says Borman, has sold more than 400,000 instruments.

Coran Capshaw, 58
Founder, Red Light Management

With a staff of 45 and a roster of 60 acts, Red Light’s Nashville operation alone would qualify as the largest independent talent-management firm in the world (all told, RLM employs 60 managers and reps 250 acts), and despite living with his wife on a farm near Charlottesville, Va., Capshaw is a frequent presence. “You wouldn’t know he’s not based here,” says RLM Nashville executive Tom Lord of his boss’ weekly visits and active involvement in the careers of six of the 30 country acts that are handled out of the firm’s offices in the Gulch: Luke Bryan, who sold 1.6 million albums in 2015; Chris Stapleton; Dierks Bentley; Lady Antebellum; The Band Perry; and Sam Hunt, who will embark on his first headlining tour in 2017. Capshaw also has invested in the city through a partnership with Live Nation in the Ascend Amphitheater.

Bob Doyle, 68
President/owner, Major Bob Music; Bob Doyle & Associates

As the manager and music publisher for country superstar Garth Brooks, Doyle commands a lot of clout in Nashville as well as a great deal of admiration. “He’s managing the most unmanageable client in the world; he gets my respect,” says one label executive who lauds the former...
A Proud Voice for Singers and Recording Artists in the Music Row Community

We Congratulate Nashville’s Power Players
Operation Desert Storm fighter pilot’s ability to execute Brooks’ outsized vision, such as his current world tour — “our biggest accomplishment,” says Doyle. With 4.5 million tickets sold so far, it ranks as one of the top 10 tours of all time.

FAVORITE NEW ARTIST “Chris Stapleton. He’s an old friend who is finally being recognized for his talent.”

Ann Edelblute*
Owner, The H.Q.

When Carrie Underwood’s Storyteller bowed at No. 1 on Top Country Albums last fall, Edelblute’s star client became the only act in the history of the chart to have each of her six albums debut in the top spot. Her ongoing world tour in support of the album has grossed nearly $30 million, and her fitness/lifestyle apparel line, launched in 2015, was the third-highest-selling women’s athletic line at Dick’s Sporting Goods’ 600-plus stores. “Carrie constantly raises the bar for herself,” says Edelblute.

Brad Belanger, 41
Founder/president, Homestead Management

Kerri Edwards*
President, KP Entertainment

Mary Hilliard Harrington, 39
Senior manager, Red Light Management

Tom Lord, 40
Head of marketing, Red Light Management

Last September, Harrington sold a majority stake in the successful Nashville PR firm she founded, The GreenRoom, to work full-time with Red Light Management and a roster that includes Dierks Bentley and Aubrie Sellers. She’s in good company. Edwards manages superstar Luke Bryan in tandem with RLM, Belanger has a similar arrangement with Sam Hunt, and all three tap into Lord’s 18 years of industry experience to optimize radio promotion, branding and label relations.

COUNTRY’S POWER TRIO
Harrington devoted much of 2016 to following up Bentley’s Riser, which yielded his biggest digital single, “Drunk on a Plane” (1.5 million downloads), with the May release of Black. The rollout, which included a series of short films inspired by the album, gave Bentley his best-yet debut week — 88,000 in pure album sales — as well as a lead single, “Somewhere on a Beach,” that spent three weeks at No. 1 on the Hot Country Songs chart.

“If we’re working on New Year’s Day, we’re working on the album launch, Mary’s handprint — her grip — is on all of Black.”

— Bentley

“Through the recording process to the album launch, Mary’s handprint — her grip — is on all of Black.”

— Bentley

DIERKS’ PROPS
“From being a trusted friend to bounce songs off of, through the recording process and prerelease creative ideas, to losing sleep with me over single choices, to the album launch, Mary’s handprint — her grip — is on all of Black,” says Bentley.

*Declined to reveal age
Mike Curb's work to preserve music history and promote music education has made Nashville a better, richer place. Whether it's saving a historic studio or creating a music education building at a university campus that bears his name, Mike's contributions to Nashville's music, philanthropic and civic life are immeasurable.

- Mayor Karl Dean
Clint Higham, 44  
President/partner, Morris Higham Management

Higham’s 2015 partnership with Justin Bieber’s manager, Scooter Braun, reaped dividends in June, when Braun helped broker a deal with Apple Music to feature Higham’s longtime client Kenny Chesney — the No. 2 earner behind Taylor Swift in 2015, according to Billboard, with $31.8 million in total revenue — and his latest single, “Noise,” in an upcoming commercial for the streaming service. “Apple wants to appeal more to Middle America, and we’re looking to expand awareness of Kenny’s music, so it was a great deal,” says Higham. After three years of stadium touring, Chesney will have just a handful of shows in 2017, but with a new LP, Cosmic Hallelujah, out Oct. 28, he’s as busy as ever, which means so is his corner man. “I haven’t turned off my phone in 22 years,” says Higham.

TK Kimbrell, 60  
Founder/president, TKO Artist Management

Christmas came early for Kimbrell when the RIAA bestowed platinum status on breakout client Chris Janson’s single, “Buy Me a Boat,” in mid-December. The new year held good news as well. Kimbrell is about to delve into five decades of vault material from new client Glen Campbell, who, he says, “brought the world to country music.” But Kimbrell’s highest achiever is still longtime client Toby Keith. Even without a recent hit single, he was the fourth-biggest-earning country star on Forbes’ 2016 Celebrity 100. His Wild Shot mezcal, restaurants and endorsements contributed to a $4.75 million gross. “Toby is a great businessman, but nothing is on his radar every day except songs,” says Kimbrell, who married his office’s own Laura Covington last fall.

FAVORITE NASHVILLE CHARACTER  “I liked J.D. Souther’s character [Watty White], but I’m partial because of his songwriting.”

Marion Kraft, 51  
Principal owner, ShopKeeper Management

Although Kraft’s roster includes Ashley Monroe, Pistol Annies and Courtney Cole, the last year largely has been about flagship client Miranda Lambert, who has sold a career total 8.7 million albums. She took home CMA female vocalist of the year in November 2015, then won the same award, for the seventh consecutive time, from the ACM in April. But despite not owning a TV, Kraft is well aware media attention has focused on Lambert’s hotly anticipated new LP — first single “Vice” debuted at No. 2 on Hot Country Songs, a career best — and whether it will deal with her 2015 divorce from Blake Shelton. Kraft, who was raised in Germany (and remains a citizen), is characteristically tight-lipped about the record, but Sony Music Nashville chief Randy Goodman says the music he has heard so far is “amazing.”

HOW SHE KNOWS A SONG IS COUNTRY “Great country songs tell stories. It’s that simple.”

Jason Owen, 40  
President/CEO, Sandbox Entertainment

Owen swears that client Dan & Shay’s “From the Ground Up” will be one of the top three singles of the coming year when awards season rolls around, and it would be foolish to bet against him. He made the same claim for Little Big Town’s No. 1 “Girl Crush,” which won a Grammy, a CMT Award and two CMA prizes, fulfilling his five-year campaign to make LBT a household name. Not as much has come yet from his two years of quietly strategizing with Faith Hill, but, without divulging specifics, he asserts that “2016 to 2017 will be a year full of Faith.”

BIGGEST PERSONAL SPLURGE “My son! [My partner] Sam [Easley] and I aren’t able to go about it in the same way as most people, so it cost a lot to have him [through a surrogate]. But he was well worth it.”

Ricky Skaggs on Ryman Auditorium

“Classic Nashville, for me, was walking into the Ryman Auditorium — when I was 5 or 6 and the Grand Ole Opry was there — and seeing all the colors, the Nudie suits and western wear. Faith Young had a purple suit; Ernest Tubb’s was green; Hank Snow’s was red; and all of the ladies were dazzling in sequins.”

Clarence Spalding, 59  
President, Maverick Nashville

Under Spalding’s guidance, Maverick Nashville acts really delivered on the road. The big winner was 2016 ACM entertainer of the year Jason Aldean, who grossed close to $30 million on tour in 2015 and $15.7 million so far this year. There’s more to come: Spalding says Maverick acts will sell close to 1.9 million concert tickets in 2016. The firm also signed Darius Rucker after he exited McGhee Entertainment.

WHICH PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE IS MORE COUNTRY? “Neither. To be country, you need to be authentic. That’s a stretch for these two.”
The Road Warriors
Live Nation’s Brian O’Connell and Jason Aldean

Ali Harnell, 48
Senior vp, AEG Live Nashville
Louis Messina, 68
Founder/CEO, Messina Touring Group

Messina handled Boxscore’s top tour of 2015, Taylor Swift’s $217.4 million outing, as well as Kenny Chesney’s (No. 5 at $131 million). By the time Chesney’s run wraps in September, he’ll have played 167 U.S. stadium shows during the last 10 years, a number Messina says is surpassed only by The Rolling Stones. Atlanta-born Harnell, who worked with Messina on those tours, promoted 180-plus shows that grossed in excess of $66 million (up from 155 gigs and $27 million-plus in 2014). Her top 2015 accomplishment: promoting Little Big Town’s Pain Killer Tour, which, after years of LBT playing fairs and festivals, grossed $3.5 million. She also signed The Shadowboxers, whom she manages, to Justin Timberlake’s artist development/production company, Villa 40.

Brian O’Connell, 51
President of country music, Live Nation
Brian Traeger, 35
President of Tennessee, Live Nation

O’Connell annually rolls out more than a dozen country tours and four festivals that attract some 5 million fans, gross an estimated $250 million and pay out more than $100 million to talent. This year’s headliners represent country’s A-list — among them 2016 ACM entertainer of the year Jason Aldean, Luke Bryan, Miranda Lambert and Dierks Bentley — but the tours also offer valuable exposure to approximately 40 supporting acts. “One of the biggest issues facing country music right now is the industry’s lack of patience for developing an act properly,” says O’Connell.

Aldean on O’Connell
“Brian has been a supporter of mine from the very beginning,” says Aldean, whose latest single, “Lights Come On,” became his 15th No. 1 Country Airplay song on the July 23 chart. “I thought I’d made it when I sold out my first club, but he always believed I would play stadiums. He knows when to take a big risk and has become an important part of my career because of it.”

AND YET...
The publicly traded live-events giant did not have a full-time promoter in Nashville until Traeger was appointed in 2015. In addition to being the face of Live Nation on Music Row, the Lancaster, Pa., native books local venues like the new Ascend Amphitheater, a joint venture of Live Nation and Red Light Management.

“Brian knows when to take a big risk and has become an important part of my career because of it.”
—Aldean

COUNTRY COMEBACK
Although Live Nation’s Farmborough and Delaware Junction festivals were canceled for 2016 due to soft ticket sales, O’Connell, who’s on the road 46 weeks of the year, says the market is stabilizing and the company’s remaining country festivals are “way up” in ticket sales and revenue over 2015. The Watershed festival in George, Wash., expanded to two weekends, a first for the genre.

WHICH CANDIDATE IS MORE COUNTRY?
Harnell “Hilz. She lived in Arkansas. Trump is a city fool — I mean, boy.”
**Southern Comfort**

When she’s not on tour, singer Martina McBride finds peace in her nearly 100-year-old Nashville home (now free of ghosts)

**BY RICHARD L. ELDREDGE • PHOTOGRAPHED BY DANIEL HENNESSY**

It felt like someone giving you a warm hug” is how Martina McBride describes first stepping into the six-bedroom, neoclassical-style home just five miles from downtown Nashville, which she purchased 16 years ago. “I knew our family had to live here,” she says, even though it meant the four-time Country Music Association award winner and her husband, production manager John McBride, had to borrow money to afford — and make livable — the home that was built in 1917. “We gutted it. But each time I walked into this house after being on the road, I knew I was working toward something.”

Today, the 13,000-square-foot property welcomes guests with the scent of sandalwood-infused candles and the echoes of an outdoor waterfall. Perched on an oversized linen couch in the family room, McBride, 49, sees the home as a respite between stops on the tour promoting her 13th album, *Reckless* (Nashville Icon), which debuted at No. 2 on *Billboard*’s Top Country Albums chart earlier this year. The album’s peace-seeking themes are a departure for the woman who rose to fame with a breakthrough hit about burning down a house, “Independence Day,” in 1994. Fans have even turned the title of the album’s inspirational song “Just Around the Corner” into a hashtag for hopeful messages. “It’s a great feeling to offer people music that can heal,” McBride says of the record. “We’re having a rough time as a nation right now.”

“*I grew up on a farm, down a dirt road in the middle of nowhere,*” says McBride of her Kansas roots. “It was really quiet. I’m used to the quiet; I like it.” Her desire for tranquility inspired the waterfall pool, which frequently is enjoyed by her daughters, Delaney, 21; Emma, 18; and Ava, 11.

WATER WORKS *“The living room and kitchen are where we spend 99 percent of the time and are homey spaces,”* says McBride, photographed July 11 at her Nashville home. “I have a very warm, clean and simple aesthetic.” For an exclusive interview and behind-the-scenes tour of her home, go to Billboard.com or Billboard.com/ipad.
“This area is great for entertaining. At the end of the night, everyone will be here listening to records and drinking wine or whiskey. I love just filling up the house with people, music and food.” For McBride, her turntable and vinyl collection also is an opportunity to introduce her girls to the recording artists she grew up with: Loretta Lynn, Bonnie Raitt and Linda Ronstadt.

The cutting board is featured prominently in one of McBride’s favorite spaces. (“We live in the kitchen,” she says.) “It’s a keepsake from my grandma, and the prayer on it is what we used to say before meals.” A coffee station and collection of mugs reflect her “down to earth” approach to decor.

“House of Spirits”

“Iron Gate, helped me with the looks throughout the house,” says McBride. The painting of what McBride believes is a saint has special meaning. “He watches over the house. We used to have spirits in our house, and we renovated and now they seem to be gone. Maybe this painting is one of the reasons?”

“Party Central”

Interior designer Rozanne Jackson, who owns The Iron Gate, antiques and luxury furniture store, helped me with the looks throughout the house,” says McBride. The painting of what McBride believes is a saint has special meaning. “He watches over the house. We used to have spirits in our house, and we renovated and now they seem to be gone. Maybe this painting is one of the reasons?”

“Country Kitchen”

The cutting board is featured prominently in one of McBride’s favorite spaces. (“We live in the kitchen,” she says.) “It’s a keepsake from my grandma, and the prayer on it is what we used to say before meals.” A coffee station and collection of mugs reflect her “down to earth” approach to decor.
Boasting the most diverse roster of any major Nashville agency — including Carrie Underwood, Darius Rucker, Dixie Chicks, Keith Urban, Tori Kelly, Zac Brown Band, Kacey Musgraves, Sam Hunt, Dead & Company, Twenty One Pilots, The Chainsmokers and electronic act Pretty Lights — CAA’s Music City division booked $500 million in touring from left: Beckham, Oswald and Paisley photographed by Cameron Powell on June 29 at Starstruck Studios in Nashville.

Rob Beckham, 50
Co-head, Nashville division; William Morris Endeavor
Greg Oswald*
Co-head, Nashville division; WME

According to the Nashville duo, WME artists are headlining 14 of the 20 major country tours hitting the road in 2016 — among them, Blake Shelton, Luke Bryan, Jason Aldean, Miranda Lambert and Chris Stapleton — which, “We’re taking A&R to a whole different level,” he says.

GARTH IS IN THE HOUSE
In June, WME Nashville rocked Music City when it announced that it had signed Garth Brooks, who had been booked in-house since 1996. Brooks was seeking “a bigger scope to his career,” says Beckham. The exclusive global representation deal extends beyond touring and will harness WME’s film, TV, book and endorsement divisions. Oswald and Beckham say that WME’s ownership of the global sports management firm IMG was essential to the deal.

BRAD HAD A ‘BLAST’
“What a blast that was,” says Paisley, adding that WME’s affiliation with IMG “enabled them to partner with colleges and football and bring together a sponsorship all at the same time. I think combining these three different worlds would have been very difficult for most other agencies,” he says.

Paisley Goes to College
Last fall, WME Nashville worked a similarly synergistic deal with its IMG College division to launch Brad Paisley’s Country Nation College Tour Presented By Zaxby’s, which drew 120,000 college-age music fans to nine free university shows tied to NCAA football games.

POWER PLAYERS
Agencies

Scott Clayton, 51
Co-head, Creative Artists Agency Nashville
Marc Dennis, 46
Co-head, CAA Nashville
Rod Essig, 67
Co-head, CAA Nashville
John Huie, 60
Co-head, CAA Nashville
Darin Murphy, 50
Co-head, CAA Nashville

Rob Beckham, 50
Co-head, Nashville division; William Morris Endeavor
Greg Oswald*
Co-head, Nashville division; WME

The Synergists
WME agents Rob Beckham and Greg Oswald and country star Brad Paisley

*Oswald

“‘We’re taking A&R to a whole different level.”

—Oswald

From left: Beckham, Oswald and Paisley photographed by Cameron Powell on June 29 at Starstruck Studios in Nashville.
Greenberg Traurig congratulates our colleagues, **Joel Katz** and **Jess Rosen**, for once again being named to the *Billboard* Nashville Power Players list.

We are proud of your commitment to the entertainment industry and your clients.

**JOEL A. KATZ** | Atlanta Founding Shareholder | Atlanta Co-Managing Shareholder Emeritus | Chair, Global Entertainment and Media Practice

**JESS L. ROSEN** | Shareholder | Co-Chair, Atlanta Entertainment and Media Practice
of 25 percent ratings-wise — and not just the country stations." Despite the stylistic changes in the genre, he says, country lyrics are still "straightforward. They’re about what we experience in everyday life, no matter how the song leans musically."

**BIGGEST SPLURGE OF THE LAST YEAR**

"Let me check with my 14-year-old daughter, because I’m sure that whatever it is is in her room."

**Robert Deaton, 55**

Executive producer, CMA Awards

Despite a ratings dip of 16 percent over 2014’s broadcast, the 2015 CMA Awards gave ABC its highest ratings of the season and a career-changing moment for Chris Stapleton: his duet with Justin Timberlake (plus three surprise CMA wins). "People say it’s one of the best moments in CMA history," says Deaton, whose credits also include the 2016 Billboard Music Awards and his upcoming feature-film directorial debut, *Rounding Third*. Deaton says he’s bringing back "creative ideas from the other projects" for the CMAs’ 50th anniversary telecast in the fall, promising, "That will be a historic show."

**THE MOST COUNTRY THING HE OWNS**

"A WSM Grand Ole Opry guitar, made for Opry members about 30 years ago. Only 650 were made, because WSM is 650 AM."

**Leslie Fram**

Senior vp music strategy, CMT

**Brian Philips, 55**

President, CMT

Philips credits Fram with "always stretching the borders of country music," a nod to CMT’s successful expansion into scripted TV with the June premiere of *Still the King*, starring Billy Ray Cyrus, and the unscripted *I Love Kellie Pickler*, which premiered to more than 2.5 million viewers last November — the cable network’s most-watched premiere among women viewers since 2008. The *CMT Music Awards* drew a record 3.6 million viewers in June, and CMT has high hopes for the fifth season of *Nashville*, which it rescued from cancellation by ABC.

**Jeff Kapugi, 51**

Vp country programming, CBS Radio; program director, WUSN Chicago

Kapugi has a big pulpit — CBS’ 11 country stations have a cumulative audience of close to 8 million listeners — and in the past year he has exposed rising stars to those masses with Launch, which pairs airplay with online content. Launch pick Granger Smith went on to have a No. 1 Country Airplay hit, "Backroad Song."

### Jonathan Levine, 54

**Co-head, Nashville division; Paradigm Talent Agency**

How did Paradigm transform alt-country critical darling Sturgill Simpson into a commercial artist who can sell out five nights at the Ryman Auditorium in Nashville? Levine says he divined the answer while touring such jam bands as Phish and Gov’t Mule out of Nashville? Levine says he divined the answer while touring such jam bands as Phish and Gov’t Mule out of Nashville. "As an industry, we’re building headliners too fast. There is not enough patience."

### Nick Meinema, 36

**Co-head, United Talent Agency Nashville**

"I would like to see [Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton] go out on the country circuit. Let’s judge by the merch numbers."

### Charlie Cook, 65

**Vp country format, Cumulus Media; operations manager, Cumulus Nashville**

Moyle and his flagship client Toby Keith, it has emerged as an aggressive, growing contender in the country music market. A staff of 27, including 13 agents, books a roster that includes established headliners such as Keith, who’s outpacing his total 2015 Boxscore gross of $20 million; breakout artists like platinum-selling “Buy Me a Boat”-singer-songwriter Chris Janson; and such legacy veterans as Marty Stuart, Bobby Bare and The Kentucky Headhunters. UTA was dealt a blow with the April death of Merle Haggard, but the agency is now booking the legend’s son, Ben. "Everybody in country music is excited about what Ben is going to do," says Meinema.

**THE MOST COUNTRY THING HE OWNS**

**Moyle**

A groundhog [pelt] that Chris LeDoux skinned at a rest stop on the way to a gig in Louisville, Kentucky.

### Tanya Tucker on Music Row

"In the 1970s, my dad and I walked down Music Row and went to every record label here. We’d walk in and put down a tape that we’d made real quick right there on the Row. It was such a quaint, quiet place then — now, everywhere you look, there’s a crane."
Bobby Bones, 36
Radio personality, iHeartMedia

Rod Phillips, 47
Senior vp programming/country format captain, iHeartMedia

Bones has been a media multitasker during the past year. As host of the nationally syndicated Bobby Bones Show and Country Top 30, the Hot Springs, Ark., native reaches nearly 5 million listeners weekly. Earlier this year, his guest-star-packed second album with his band The Raging Idiots, The Critics Give It 5 Stars, hit No. 1 on the Comedy Albums chart and No. 4 on Top Country Albums. And his memoir, Bare Bones: I’m Not Lonely If You’re Reading This Book, spent two weeks as a New York Times best-seller. “The book has given me credit with smart people,” says Bones, “which I’ve never had before.”

Rucker on Bones
Hootie & The Blowfish frontman Darius Rucker had yet to cross over to country when an extremely nervous Bones, then 17, interviewed him for an Arkansas radio station. The two men have since become friends and Rucker has charted six No. 1 Hot Country Songs and four No. 1 Top Country Albums. “There are so few tastemakers these days that will go out on a limb and really champion music early on,” says Rucker. “When Bobby believes in something, he can make a believer of you, too.”

iHeart’s Country Captain
Phillips, who was instrumental in the 2013 syndication of Bones’ show, added country duties in 2015. He oversees more than 145 U.S. stations that reach 97 million-plus listeners. According to iHeartMedia, ratings for its country outlets in the top 50 markets grew nearly 8 percent, winter to spring.

The Crossover Kings
Darius Rucker and radio DJ/recording artist Bobby Bones

Rucker (left) and Bones photographed by Lucy Hewett on June 25 at Klipsch Music Center in Noblesville, Ind. For a behind-the-scenes video and an exclusive interview in which Rucker names his top five country party songs, go to Billboard.com or Billboard.com/ipad.
Steve Schnur, 50  
Worldwide executive/president, EA Music Group

During his college internship at MTV, Schnur says he was “the very loud guy in the room who went against the grain.” He brings a similar willfulness to the gaming world. Instead of seeking out hits for game soundtracks, Schnur decided, “Why not introduce [an up-and-coming act] that would become a kid’s favorite artist in the year ahead?” he says. Hence, Brantley Gilbert’s “It’s About to Get Dirty” will be among the songs to debut in the upcoming edition of Madden NFL. “You can get up to a billion impressions on a blockbuster game. We’re going to break some artists,” says Schnur, who has placed songs by Lady Antebellum and Luke Bryan in the Sims video game series. Schnur also moved EA’s scoring operations to Nashville, making it “one of the top four scoring destinations in the world,” he says.

J.R. Schumann, 34  
Senior director of country programming, SiriusXM

After a decade in heavily formatted terrestrial radio, Schumann says he’s thrilled to be breaking new acts. Just seven months into the gig at SiriusXM, where he oversees 13 channels, mostly country and Christian, his finds include Kevin Fowler, Aubrie Sellers, Kalie Shorr, Steve Moakler, Margo Price and Smithfield, but he also goes off-menu with major-label artists, playing such deep cuts as “The Devil Named Music,” a six-minute Chris Stapleton song that broadcast radio can’t touch. “Country radio is not breaking new artists. They’re not championing new music,” says Schumann. “That’s a shame.”

The Bellamy Brothers on Belle Meade  
(Howard, left, and David)

Howard Bellamy  
“I once went to the Belle Meade Country Club at the invitation of our guitar player. Belle Meade is the old-money area of Nashville. I always wear a hat, and as I walked in to have lunch there, an older maitre d’ asked me to take it off. I was about to do that anyway, but his attitude was out of line.”

David Bellamy  
“You almost got thrown out, but Minnie Pearl saved you.”

Howard  
“She was at the table next to me. She was a member. She had her hat on, of course, with the price tag, and she got on his butt: ‘Do you know who you’re talking to?’” she said. She straightened him out, and I had no problem going there from then on.”

The Bellamy Brothers, one of country music’s leading bands, grew up in Nashville and remained close to its roots. Their music, from the 1970s onward, has been a staple of the format, and their influence can be heard in the work of many of the city’s top songwriters and producers today. The band’s success has put the company ahead of its peers in the streaming era.

Seth England, 30  
Partner, Big Loud Shirt

Craig Wiseman, 52  
Owner, Big Loud Shirt; partner, Big Loud Records and Management; songwriter

Seth England took home 26 of the 50 most-performed songs for the 2016 winner of the best country song Grammy, Little Big Town’s “Girl Crush.”

The most country thing he owns is “One of our writers gave me a pound of venison jerky. It’s really good.”

Dennis Lord  
Executive vp creative and business affairs, SESAC

Kelli Turner, 45  
Executive vp operations and corporate development/CFO, SESAC

Turner and Lord, who both had

their responsibilities expanded last September, played key roles in the performing rights organization’s $20 million acquisition of The Harry Fox Agency, the leading U.S. mechanical rights company, which, says Turner, will enable SESAC to take a more holistic approach to licensing. The move will allow the Nashville-based society to issue licenses to and obtain royalties from radio and streaming outlets, record labels and digital download services—a potential boon for its songwriters in the streaming era.

Michael Martin, 54  
Vice president, ASCAP Nashville

“...a potential boon for its songwriters in the streaming era.

Troy Tomlinson, 52  
President/CEO, Sony/ATV Music Publishing Nashville

The Portland, Tenn., native, who has run Sony’s Nashville music publishing arm since 2005, led his division to a record 14th consecutive publisher of the year honor at the BMI Country Awards in May. Sony/ATV Nashville also was the sole publisher of BMI’s song of the year, “Beat of the Music,” by Ross Copperman, Brett Eldredge and Heather Morgan, and took home 26 of the 50 most-performed song prizes. Among the winners: Miranda Lambert and Natalie Hemby’s “Automatic” and Cole Swindell’s “Hope You Get Lonely Tonight.”

Jody Williams, 60  
Vp writer/publisher relations, BMI Nashville

BMI collected more than $1 billion for publishers and songwriters in fiscal year 2015—the most in its history—and Williams, who began there as an intern after dropping out of college in 1976, credits younger writer-artists turned producers such as Ross Copperman (Keith Urban, Dierks Bentley), Rodney Clawson (Jake Owen) and Busbee (Maren Morris).
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"Country-rock's most ferocious live band"
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BLACKBERRY SMOKE
LIKE AN ARROW
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With driving the surge “at a time when songwriters and publishers are struggling to make money with streaming.” He also is an adviser at tech incubator Project Music, where a recent grad developed the Notetracks app, which helps producers keep track of their ideas in the studio.

Russell A. Jones Jr., 66
Principal, Law Offices of Russell A. Jones Jr. and Anjlee Khurana

Before Jones — “Rusty” to his clients and friends — represented Garth Brooks, Trisha Yearwood, Tim McGraw and Toby Keith, the New Orleans native was a guide on the Snake River and a deputy sheriff in Nashville. “You learn to stretch your horizons, trust your instincts and react with confidence,” he says of working in different fields. Jones’ skill set came in handy when he joined ASCAP in Nashville in 1978 and in 1988 began representing Brooks, who is keeping Jones busy now that he’s back on the road and launching his own SiriusXM radio channel and Inside Studio G, a social media video series.

BIGGEST SPLURGE OF THE LAST YEAR
“Diving Australia’s Great Barrier Reef.”

Joel Katz, 72
Chairman, global entertainment and media group, Greenberg Traurig

Jess Rosen, 61
Co-chairman, Atlanta entertainment and media practice, Greenberg Traurig

Which Nashville artists don’t Katz and Rosen represent? Despite his Atlanta base, Rosen has negotiated deals for Kenny Chesney, Miranda Lambert, Kacey Musgraves, Thomas Rhett and Loretta Lynn; they both represent Brad Paisley, and Katz reps Little Big Town. Katz brokered the contracts for the current regime at Sony Music Nashville and re-signed Big Machine’s distribution deal with Universal Music Group. Katz says country’s next frontier is growing it “into a worldwide medium.” To that end, Rosen, a jazz guitarist in his spare time, helped cut a sponsorship and marketing agreement between Chesney and Apple Music.

Mike Milom, 73
Partner, Milom Horsnell Crow

Rose Kelley

Milom negotiated Kelsea Ballerini’s contract to co-host ABC’s Greatest Hits, handled Luke Bryan’s deal as Chevrolet’s
new brand ambassador and helped singer-songwriter John Prine acquire full ownership of his Oh Boy recording catalog. The Vanderbilt Law School grad prides himself on enduring client relationships: He has reped Bryan since he was an aspiring songwriter, and Alabama and Hank Williams Jr. for more than 30 years.

Julie Boos, 46
Co-owner/vice president/business manager, Flood Bumstead McCready & McCarthy
Mary Ann McCready*  
President/co-founder/business manager, Flood Bumstead McCready & McCarthy

McCready built one of the top financial management firms during the past 26 years with clients that include Blake Shelton and Keith Urban. There still are just four partners in the company, but McCready says she’s particularly proud of a restructuring in 2015 that gave all eight owners an equal ownership share. “If you told me I was going to die tomorrow, I would say I got that little dream—to have that second generation firmly entrenched and working on the third generation.” Boos is a big part of training future managers, “and probably training the first generation, too,” says McCready with a laugh.

THE MOST COUNTRY THING SHE OWNS
McCready “A fly fishing rod and waders.”

Steve Buchanan, 59
President, Opry Entertainment
Pete Fisher, 53
Vp/GM, Grand Ole Opry

Buchanan and Fisher are the caretakers and gatekeepers of Nashville’s most enduring symbol, the Grand Ole Opry, and in 2015 the institution celebrated its 90th birthday in robust health. “Over the last four or five years we’ve experienced double-digit growth, [through] a combination of Grand Ole Opry ticket sales and Ryman Auditorium and Opry tours,” says Buchanan, who also serves as an executive producer of the TV series Nashville. “And that is having a positive impact on businesses throughout the city.” Buchanan has seen a lot in his 31 years with the Opry, from Opry legend Roy Acuff shedding a tear as Vince Gill performed “When I Call Your Name” to Anna Nicole Smith jumping onstage, unbidden, to dance. “We were scared to death,” he says.

Mike Curb, 71
Founder/chairman, Curb Records; owner/chairman, Word Entertainment

Curb, who heads up the oldest indie label still run by its original owner, made news in Nashville when he bought out his partner in Word Music, Warner Music Group, to become sole owner of the 65-year-old gospel label. “We’re in the mood to grow our business,” says Curb, who is just as well known for his civic involvement and leadership in Music City. Despite finishing only two years of college, he has founded music-business programs at 14 colleges and universities, including Vanderbilt and Belmont, both in Nashville.

THE MOST COUNTRY THING HE OWNS
“I bought all of the major Johnny Cash items when he closed the House of Cash [in Hendersonville, N.C.]. We also own Elvis Presley’s first home in Memphis, before Graceland.”

Ken Levitan, 59
Founder/co-president, Vector Management

Because Vector made its reputation in the ’80s representing Americana forerunners Lyle Lovett, Emmylou Harris and John Hiatt, folks sometimes forget that Levitan brought rock to Music Row with Kings of Leon 16 years ago, then added The Strokes, The B-52s, Cheap Trick and movie/TV soundtrack king T Bone Burnett to his roster. Vector’s biggest launch in the past year was Prophets of Rage, the rock-rap supergroup pairing Chuck D of Public Enemy and Tom Morello of Rage Against the Machine. “What I love about Nashville is that it’s not just country,” says Levitan, a former lawyer who also chairs the Nashville Convention and Visitors Corp. and is a partner in chef Jonathan Waxman’s hot restaurant there, Adele’s.

Tiffany Moon, 41
Executive vp/manager/director/interim CEO, Academy of Country Music

Since the surprise departure of ACM CEO Bob Romeo in May, Moon has taken over his responsibilities and, according to ACM board chairman Paul Barnabee, is in the running as Romeo’s permanent replacement. The Texas native joined the ACM in 2003 and was appointed secretary of its board of directors in August 2015. She also was a founding member of ACM’s Lifting Lives charity, which is a beneficiary of the ACM Awards.

Sarah Trahern, 52
CEO, Country Music Association

The CMA Music Festival in June is the only major multi-day music event besides Coachella that reliably sells out before acts are booked. The four-day fest, which stars a who’s who of country music, has a huge impact on Nashville’s economy and on 30 music-education programs around the country that received a share of $2.6 million. (Artists perform for free, and the CMA donates half of the net proceeds from the festival.) Last November’s CMA Awards had their biggest viral moment in years with Chris Stapleton’s star-making duet with Justin Timberlake. This year’s show, the CMA’s 50th anniversary, will bring back old favorites. Says Trahern: “Hopefully we set a bar that the folks who do the 100th will look back on.”

SAFETY COUNTRY SONG EVER
“George Jones” “He Stopped Loving Her Today.”
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Garth! On (And For) The Record

Garth Brooks arguably was the biggest solo artist on the planet when, in October 2000, he announced that he would retire to Oklahoma until the youngest of his three daughters graduated high school. Though he periodically emerged for brief, sold-out runs at arenas and, from 2009 to 2013, played a 186-show acoustic Las Vegas residency with his wife, the country star Trisha Yearwood, Brooks remained out of the public eye.

When the couple’s daughter Allie opted to attend Belmont University in Nashville, Brooks, 54, moved back and reassembled his touring team as promised. Since launching in September 2014, Brooks’ world tour has moved an estimated 4.5 million tickets (Brooks doesn’t report his touring data), playing as many as 11 shows, often two in one day, in 48 North American cities through July. U2 holds the all-time attendance record of 7.3 million, according to Billboard Boxscore.

In November 2014, Brooks — RIAA-certified as the top-selling artist in U.S. history, with 137 million albums sold — released Man Against Machine, his first new studio album in 13 years, which has gone platinum. In June, he signed a deal for global representation with William Morris Endeavor, and SiriusXM’s Garth Channel will launch in September. Also coming this fall: two new albums, including a collection of Christmas duets with Yearwood, and a Man Against Machine follow-up.

In his first in-depth interview since his return, Brooks spoke from his allentown studio in Nashville on a rare break from the tour. Even he seems baffled by the enthusiasm for his comeback, which he says exceeds even his ’90s-era commercial peak: “This current thing is just stupid. I can’t explain it.”

The fans have welcomed you back. Do you feel like Nashville has too? The industry has become a very small place, so you either belong to one of three labels, basically, or you’re going to be doing it yourself out there. Everybody at Sony was great. But when you think about what makes their money — streaming, downloads and touring — I can’t help them in any of that stuff, because I don’t stream, I own my own masters and when we tour, we tour independently. The business has changed, so my thing is just focus on the things you can control and the people will decide what they want to see happen.

How long did it take to get your mojo back? When we came back, I was being humble, saying, “Give me four to six months.” I was sure it would take me two weeks, but I wanted to protect myself. Four to six months in, I was nowhere close. It probably took me 14 to 15 months to start feeling like, “OK, my legs are underneath me again now.”

When you throw in these two-shows-in-one-day dates, how hard is that? I am surrounded by people who spoil me on the road. There is a person for every job there — I don’t have to grab a tissue to sneeze; they’ve got it taken care of. To me, two shows a night is like eating two helpings of ice cream.

You priced your tickets relatively low, one price for all, and have played so many shows that fans didn’t have to turn to resellers. You priced your tickets relatively low, one price for all, and have played so many shows that fans didn’t have to turn to resellers. The ticket prices [are] really low, well, maybe compared to The Rolling Stones. Think about it: You never go to a concert by yourself, so whatever your ticket price is, immediately double it. Parking is as much as the ticket in some places. Double it again if you’re having a babysitter, plus dinner. That’s a honking expensive night. So you take that into your thinking when you’re pricing your tickets.

As for one price, I have never enjoyed playing a hall where the people on the floor were the rich people, and it never has made for a great crowd. If my kid said, “Hey, Dad, why are we not sitting down there?” and I had to say, “We can’t afford it,” that would break my heart. So I just wanted it to be luck of the draw.

Are you pleased with how the whole ticketing thing has worked? As long as you make more available than people want, and if you don’t mind playing to five-and-a-half shows instead of five sold-out shows — then you can give people what they want. They’ll choose
how much they want to pay to get tickets where they know where the seats are, like secondary markets [allow].

The all-time attendance record held by U2 would seem to be within reach. Do you want that? I would like it for country music’s sake. If the people keep showing up, so be it.

**Do you plan to go international?**
The guys from Australia came and talked to us. Australia’s a great place to tour. And festivals are becoming the way to tour outside the U.S. for a band that doesn’t want to take 800 million people and 1,400 trucks and all that stuff. If you can get on one of those festival runs where it books out right, you could see a lot of people and not have a lot of costs to drive tickets up.

You’re out on the road with your wife. How challenging are the “honey-dos”? (Laughs.) Anything she asks is an honor to do — all I want to do is see her smile. So she doesn’t have a long “honey-do” list. I think she makes up things just so I can feel proud to do something for her, because she knows how much I love her.

**What’s the direction of the new music?**
The one question I keep getting asked on this tour is “Where’s your pen? Where’s the Garth stuff you had a hand in writing?” I didn’t trust my own pen on the last record, because it had been 15 years since I had used that muscle. So I kind of holed myself up about six months ago and started forcing myself to write every day, then started to get enough courage to call writers and sit down with them and start learning the process all over again. So this new record will probably be the most Garth thing I’ve ever done — whether that’s good or bad, the people will decide that. But I’m all over this next record.

You’ve always been socially conscious. **What’s an artist’s responsibility in these challenging times?**

Making music. If you would have been there Friday night in New York [at the Yankee Stadium show], that was right after [the police shooting in] Dallas. When you talk to people, you can tell they’re all frustrated, you can tell they all are hurting, from Dallas and Orlando, and every day in the news. The simple thought of [Man Against Machine single] “People Loving People,” you would have not believed it — it’s a new song, not one of the old ones, [and the audience] made it theirs and sang their asses off. It’s going to be the highlight of the whole [HBO special]. You’ll see the joy in their faces getting to communicate that frustration, that love, that passion, through music.

**What keeps you motivated to do two shows a day five days in a row?**
Truthfully, and this is not a statement of humbleness, my bucket list has one thing on it: just one more day like today. It’s going to be over before I want it to be, and all the money in the world ain’t going to buy you another day.
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JULIE BOOS

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Nashville Executive of the Year
-Lady Antebellum
FOR THE FIRST TIME, BILLBOARD HAS compiled extensive chart recaps of country music, ranking the genre’s top artists, songs and albums during the past six decades (see chart methodology, opposite page).

Given his longtime “King George” sobriquet, it should come as no surprise that the No. 1 country artist of all time is George Strait. The legend has earned a record 44 No. 1 titles on the Hot Country Songs chart (which launched as an all-encompassing genre songs ranking on Oct. 20, 1958), from 1982’s “Fool Hearted Memory” to 2009’s “River of Love.” Strait likewise has logged an unprecedented 26 No. 1 entries on Top Country Albums (which began on Jan. 11, 1964), from Right or Wrong in 1984 to 2015’s Cold Beer Conversation.

The Hot Country Songs chart’s all-time No. 1 is “Cruise” by Florida Georgia Line (Tyler Hubbard and Brian Kelley). The duo’s debut single spent a record 24 weeks at No. 1 in 2012, first powered by country airplay, and 2013, when it became a pop crossover smash. Reflecting country’s rich history, the No. 2 song was released a half-century earlier, as Leroy Van Dyke’s “Walk On By” led Hot Country Songs for 19 weeks in 1961 and 1962.

As for the No. 1 country album of all time, that honor goes to Shania Twain’s Come On Over, which opened atop the Top Country Albums chart dated Nov. 22, 1997, and reigned for a record 30 weeks. The set has sold 15.7 million copies, according to Nielsen Music, ruling as the best-selling country album since Nielsen began tracking sales in 1991. 

**TOP COUNTRY ARTISTS 1958 to June 4, 2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSITION</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>GEORGE STRAIT</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>MERLE HAGGARD</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>WILLIE NELSON</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>ALABAMA</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>CONWAY TWITTY</td>
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<td>CHARLEY PRIDE</td>
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<td>REBA McENTIRE</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>GARTH BROOKS</td>
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<td>ALAN JACKSON</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>TIM McGRAW</td>
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<td>WAYLON JENNINGS</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>BUCK OWENS</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>HANK WILLIAMS JR.</td>
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<td>JOHNNY CASH</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>KENNY ROGERS</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>GEORGE JONES</td>
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<td>LORETTA LYNN</td>
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<td>DOLLY PARTON</td>
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<td>KENNY CHESNEY</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>RONNIE MILSAP</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>TOBY KEITH</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>BROOKS &amp; DUNN</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>GLEN CAMPBELL</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>RANDY TRAVIS</td>
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<td>TAMMY WYNETTE</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>DON WILLIAMS</td>
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<td>RAY PRICE</td>
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<td>RASCAL FLATTS</td>
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<td>SONNY JAMES</td>
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<td>THE OAK RIDGE BOYS</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>EDDY ARNOLD</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>CRYSTAL GAYLE</td>
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<td>JIM REEVES</td>
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<td>ELVIS PRESLEY</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>THE STATLER BROTHERS</td>
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<td>KEITH URBAN</td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>TAYLOR SWIFT</td>
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<td>CARRIE UNDERWOOD</td>
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<td>CLINT BLACK</td>
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<td>EDDIE RABBITT</td>
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<td>TANYA TUCKER</td>
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<td>42</td>
<td>ANNE MURRAY</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>BRAD PAISLEY</td>
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<td>44</td>
<td>SHANIA TWAIN</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>THE JUDDS</td>
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<td>VINCE GILL</td>
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<td>47</td>
<td>MARTY ROBBINS</td>
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<td>48</td>
<td>JASON ALDEAN</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>LUKE BRYAN</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>BLAKE SHELTON</td>
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## Top Country Songs 1958 to June 4, 2016

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<th>Position</th>
<th>Song</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Peak Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CRUISE</td>
<td>Florida Georgia Line</td>
<td>2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>WALK ONBE</td>
<td>Leroy Van Dyke</td>
<td>1961</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>WANTED</td>
<td>Hunter Hayes</td>
<td>2012</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>TAKE YOUR TIME</td>
<td>Sam Hunt</td>
<td>2015</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>THERE GOES MY EVERYTHING</td>
<td>Jack Greene</td>
<td>1966</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>LOVE'S GONNA LIVE HERE</td>
<td>Buck Owens</td>
<td>1963</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>CONVOY</td>
<td>C.W. McCall</td>
<td>1975</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>SOMEONE LIKE YOU</td>
<td>Keith Urban</td>
<td>2002</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>AMAZED</td>
<td>Lonestar</td>
<td>1999</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>DADDY SANG BASS</td>
<td>Johnny Cash</td>
<td>1969</td>
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<td>KISS AN ANGEL GOOD MORNING</td>
<td>Charley Pride</td>
<td>1971</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>JUST TO SEE YOU SMILE</td>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
<td>1998</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>ONCE A DAY</td>
<td>Connie Smith</td>
<td>1964</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>NEED YOU NOW</td>
<td>Lady Antebellum</td>
<td>2009</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>LIVE LIKE YOU WERE DYING</td>
<td>Tim McGraw</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>LUCKENBACH, TEXAS (BACK TO THE BASICS OF LOVE)</td>
<td>Waylon Jennings</td>
<td>1977</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>19 SOMETHIN’</td>
<td>Mark Wills</td>
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<td>MY HANG-UP IS YOU</td>
<td>Freddie Hart</td>
<td>1972</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>IT’S YOUR LOVE</td>
<td>Tim McGraw with Faith Hill</td>
<td>1997</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>CHECK YOUR ORNO</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>1995</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>RHINESTONE COWBOY</td>
<td>Glen Campbell</td>
<td>1975</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>HOW DO YOU LIKE ME NOW?</td>
<td>Toby Keith</td>
<td>2000</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>HERE YOU COME AGAIN</td>
<td>Dolly Parton</td>
<td>1977</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>IF YOU’RE GOING THROUGH HELL (BEFORE THE DEVIL EVEN KNOWS)</td>
<td>Rodney Atkins</td>
<td>2006</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>CHATTANOOGA CHOO CHOO</td>
<td>Alan Jackson</td>
<td>1993</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>HAVE MERCY</td>
<td>The Judds</td>
<td>1995</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>DON’T LET OUR LOVE START SLIPPIN’ AWAY</td>
<td>Vince Gill</td>
<td>1992</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>HEARTBEATS BY THE NUMBER</td>
<td>Ray Price featuring Vince Gill</td>
<td>1959</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>I’VE COME TO EXPECT IT FROM YOU</td>
<td>George Strait</td>
<td>1990</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>GIVE ME WINGS</td>
<td>Michael Johnson</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>ISLANDS IN THE STREAM</td>
<td>Kenny Rogers &amp; Dolly Parton</td>
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<td>Alan Jackson &amp; Jimmy Buffett</td>
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<td>THIS IS HOW WE ROLL</td>
<td>Florida Georgia Line featuring Luke Bryan</td>
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<td>DON’T BLINK</td>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
<td>2007</td>
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<td>MAMMAS DON’T LET YOUR BABIES GROW UP TO BE COWBOYS</td>
<td>Waylon &amp; Willie</td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>WATCHING YOU</td>
<td>Rodney Atkins</td>
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<td>ROSE GARDEN</td>
<td>Lynn Anderson</td>
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<td>YOU’RE THE ONLY WORLD I KNOW</td>
<td>Sonny James</td>
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<td>AIN’T NOTHING ‘BOUT YOU</td>
<td>Brooks &amp; Dunn</td>
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<td>41</td>
<td>I SWEAR</td>
<td>John Michael Montgomery</td>
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<td>42 ALMOST PERSUADED</td>
<td>David Houston</td>
<td>1966</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>BURNIN’ IT DOWN</td>
<td>Jason Aldean</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
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<td>44</td>
<td>THAT’S WHAT I LOVE ABOUT SUNDAY</td>
<td>Craig Morgan</td>
<td>2005</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>THE GOOD STUFF</td>
<td>Kenny Chesney</td>
<td>2002</td>
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<td>46</td>
<td>SKIP A ROPE</td>
<td>Henson Cargill</td>
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<td>47</td>
<td>COWARD OF THE COUNTY</td>
<td>Kenny Rogers</td>
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<td>48</td>
<td>HAVE MERCY</td>
<td>The Judds</td>
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<td>WHEN YOU SAY NOTHING AT ALL</td>
<td>Keith Whitley</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>EASY LOVING</td>
<td>Freddie Hart</td>
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## Top Country Albums 1964 to June 4, 2016

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<th>Album</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Peak Year</th>
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<td>COME ON OVER</td>
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<td>NO FENCES</td>
<td>Garth Brooks</td>
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<td>Taylor Swift</td>
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<td>GARTH BROOKS</td>
<td>Garth Brooks</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>ALWAYS &amp; FOREVER</td>
<td>Randy Travis</td>
<td>1987</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>BEHIND CLOSED DOORS</td>
<td>Charlie Rich</td>
<td>1973</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>SOME HEARTS</td>
<td>Carrie Underwood</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>GREATEST HITSB</td>
<td>Waylon Jennings</td>
<td>1979</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>THE WOMAN IN ME</td>
<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td>1995</td>
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<td>OBROTHER, WHERE ART THOU?</td>
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<td>FLY Dixie Chicks</td>
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<td>STAR DUST</td>
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<td>CRASH MY PARTY</td>
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<td>Zac Brown Band</td>
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<td>THE GAMBLER</td>
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<td>UNLEASHED</td>
<td>Toby Keith</td>
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<td>FOR THE GOOD TIMES</td>
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<td>ALWAYS ON MY MIND</td>
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<td>Gretchen Wilson</td>
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<td>COYOTE UGLY Soundtrack</td>
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<td>Charley Pride</td>
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<td>44</td>
<td>CHIEF</td>
<td>Eric Church</td>
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<td>45</td>
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<td>Kenny Rogers</td>
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<td>JOHNNY CASH AT SAN QUENTIN</td>
<td>Johnny Cash</td>
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<td>EVERYWHERE Tim McGraw</td>
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<td>A LOT ABOUT LIVING (AND A LITTLE ‘BOUT LOVE)</td>
<td>Alan Jackson</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>THE OUTSIDERS</td>
<td>Eric Church</td>
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</table>
The group debuts at No. 10 on the Artist 100 as its new release, *Hard Love*, launches at No. 1 on Top Album Sales, Top Rock Albums and Top Christian Albums (see pages 96, 102 and 105).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Last Week</th>
<th>Artist Name</th>
<th>Imprint/Distributing Label</th>
<th>Peak Pos.</th>
<th>Weeks On Chart</th>
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<td>TWENTY ONE PILOTS</td>
<td>FUELED BY RAMEN</td>
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<td>RIHANNA</td>
<td>WESTBURY ROAD/VOC MOTION</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>JUSTIN BIEBER</td>
<td>SCHOOLS/RECORDINGS/DEF JAM</td>
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<td>BEYONCE</td>
<td>PARKWOOD/Epic</td>
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<td>EMI RECORDS/PEACHES &amp; CO</td>
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<td>SHAWN MENDES</td>
<td>ISLAND</td>
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<td>REPUBLIC NASHVILLE/EMG</td>
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<td>KIDZ BOP KIDS</td>
<td>RAZOR &amp; TIE/GINCORP</td>
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<td>TAYLOR SWIFT</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>SELENA GOMEZ</td>
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**Billboard Artist 100**

The week’s most popular artists across all genres, ranked by album and track sales as measured by Nielsen Music, radio airplay, streaming activity data from online music sources tracked by Nielsen Music and fan interaction on social networking sites as compiled by Next Big Sound. See Charts Legend on billboard.com/biz for complete rules and explanations. © 2016, Prometheus Global Media, LLC and Nielsen Music, Inc. All rights reserved.

**NOTE:** New artists RE-ENTRY to chart.
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### Good News For Good Charlotte

**Good Charlotte** (above) debuts on the Billboard Artist 100 at No. 62 and earns its highest debut on the Billboard 200 in nearly a decade, as Youth Authority enters the latter list at No. 23 with 16,000 equivalent album units in the week ending July 21, according to Nielsen Music. Album sales account for nearly all of the act’s Artist 100 points. The Billboard 200 rank is the alt-pop-punk band’s best since Good Morning Revival opened at its No. 7 peak on April 14, 2007. On Top Album Sales, Youth Authority starts at No. 11 (14,000 in pure sales).

**Drake** last charted on the Billboard 200 with Caribou, which debuted and peaked at No. 31 in 2010. Between that set and its new release, offshoot act The Madden Brothers (twins Joel and Benji Madden) reached No. 57 in 2014 with Greetings From California.

Meanwhile, **Drake** logs a 17th week at No. 1 on the Artist 100. On the Billboard Hot 100 (see page 3), his smash “One Dance” (featuring Wizkid and Kyla) drops to No. 2 after 10 weeks at No. 1, but breaks a record, posting a 14th week atop the audio subscription services-based On-Demand Songs streaming chart (15.8 million on-demand U.S. streams). “Dance” passes Macklemore & Ryan Lewis’ “Thrift Shop” (13 weeks, 2013) for the most time atop On-Demand Songs since the list launched in 2012. —Gary Trust

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>IMPRINT/DISTRIBUTING LABEL</th>
<th>PEAK POL.</th>
<th>WKS. ON CHARTS</th>
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<td><strong>SAM HUNT</strong></td>
<td>MCA/NASHVILLE/ELEKTRA</td>
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<td>G O D / DEF JAM</td>
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The Chord Club is a 5,700 sq. ft. recording studio and event space located in Manhattan’s Upper East Side. We provide a wide spectrum of audio services, and our comfortable and relaxed atmosphere makes it the perfect space for all of your musical projects.

Music Production, Engineering, Mixing, Mastering • Commercial and Voice-Over Recording • Band Rehearsal • Vocal/Instrument and Production Instruction • Corporate Events

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**BBM市点週測定**

**Billboard 200**

**August 6, 2016**

**GTT Go to BILLBOARD.COM/BIZ for complete chart data**

**WorldRadioHistory**

**Data for week of 08.06.2016**

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**Drake continues to chill at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 with Views, as the set earned another 89,000 equivalent album units in the week ending July 21, according to Nielsen Music. The album has spent 11 nonconsecutive weeks atop the list — the most weeks at No. 1 since the Frozen soundtrack wrapped a 13-week nonconsecutive run on May 17, 2014. Views’ No. 1 perch marks yet another No. 2-debuting album from the top slot.**

Needtobreathe’s Hard Love, which began its first 12-week run at No. 1 on the chart dated Aug. 13, the list’s highest debut yet likely will be Gucci Mane’s Everybody. Looking a week after the competition against Views starts to heat up, with the release of DJ Khaled’s Major Key on July 28, followed by the Suicide Squad soundtrack on Aug. 5.

**Drake**

*Views Near Frozen’s No. 1 Run*

The album has spent 11 nonconsecutive weeks atop the list — the most weeks at No. 1 since the Frozen soundtrack wrapped a 13-week nonconsecutive run on May 17, 2014. Views’ No. 1 perch marks yet another No. 2-debuting album from the top slot.**
On September 3rd, Billboard will honor one of the most iconic Latin artists in the world, Juan Gabriel. Since signing with RCA Records in 1971, the singer, songwriter, recording artist, and performer has become a world-renowned musician. Gabriel has written and recorded over 1,000 songs and has sold more than 20 million records.

In 1996, he was inducted into the Billboard Latin Music Hall of Fame, honored as Person of the Year at the Latin Grammy Awards and received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Starting in August he is embarking on a tour and Telemundo will air a 12 part series on his life.

Join Billboard in congratulating Juan Gabriel on his remarkable career over the past 45 years.

CONTACT
Marcia Olival
786.586.4901/ marciaolival@yahoo.com
Gene Smith
973.452-3528/
billboard@genesmithenterprises.com

PUB DATE 9/3 | ON SALE 8/26 | ISSUE CLOSE 8/18 | MATERIALS DUE 8/19
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Michael Jackson’s greatest-hits collection Number Ones flies back onto the Billboard 200 at No. 59 with 9,000 equivalent album units (up 523 percent) in the week ending July 21, according to Nielsen Music. Of that sum, 5,000 were traditional album sales (up 263 percent). The gain is owed to a $5.99 sale price in the iTunes Store, which led to a 1.104 percent rise in download sales. With 5.3 million sold, Number Ones is Jackson’s best-selling hits package in the Nielsen era (1991-present). – K.C.
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Lee Ann Photoglo • 615-376-7931 • laphotoglo@gmail.com
Cynthia Mellow • 615-352-0265 • cmellow@comcast.net
The album returns to the 10,000 traditional copies, 200 with 19,000 equivalent according to Nielsen Music. album units earned in the week ending July 21, according to Nielsen Music. Of the album’s total units for the week, 10,000 were traditional album sales, while a sturdy 8,000 units were track-equivalent albums — thanks to the solid sales of its cuts like Smokey Robinson’s “Girls Talk Boys” (46,000 downloads sold).

The new album is the third Ghostbusters soundtrack to reach the top 20, following the first film’s companion set (which peaked at No. 6 in 1984) and Ghostbusters II (No. 14 in 1989). Notably, the new Ghostbusters album is just the fourth soundtrack to reach the top 20 in 2016, following Star Wars: The Force Awakens, Prince & The Revolution’s Purple Rain and TV soundtrack The Passion: New Orleans.

With the new Ghostbusters selling 10,000 traditional copies, the collection also enters at No. 16 on Top Album Sales (as well as at No. 1 on the Soundtracks chart). A few notches below, Ghostbusters on Top Album Sales (No. 28) is Crush, by Dave Matthews Band.

The album returns to the list with 6,000 sold (up 1,432 percent) thanks to its July 15 debut on vinyl. Of the album’s sales for the week, 90 percent were vinyl LPs (nearly 6,000), which enables its No. 1 debut on the Vinyl Albums chart.

Crash originally debuted at No. 2 on the Billboard 200 in 1996. It re-enters the list for the first time since 1996, popping back on at No. 89 (10,000 units earned in the week; up 491 percent).

—Keith Caulfield
TAKE A STAND LIVE FRIDAY SEPT 9 8|7c

standup2cancer.org
#reasons2standup
#su2c
**World Radio History**

**#1**

**27**

**7**

**26**

**24**

**3**

**15**

**44**

**EMERGING ARTISTS**

**13**

**30**

**8**

**37**

**5**

**48**

**15**

**14**

**Splashy Debut For ‘Water’**

Major Lazer’s “Cold Water,” featuring Justin Bieber (below) and MØ, snags the highest debut on the Billboard Top Tracks chart, at No. 3. Lazer (a trio of Diplo, Billionaire and Walshy Fire) released the song on July 22 after days of promotion on Twitter from both its and Bieber’s accounts. “Water” is Bieber’s 14th top five hit on Top Tracks, breaking a tie with Drake to give him the most among male artists. *One Direction* leads all acts, with 16.

Preliminary buzz sent the track to No. 1 on the real-time Billboard + Twitter Trending 140 chart on July 19, three days before its official release. Following its premiere, the song lodged 12 consecutive hours atop the Trending 140 through midnight ET on July 27. Also in the top 10 on Top Tracks, Charlie Puth zooms 26-5 with his Selena Gomez duet, “We Don’t Talk Anymore,” after he joined her on the July 9 stop of her Revival Tour for the disc’s first live performance of the song. The clip was posted on his YouTube channel on July 19 and zoomed to 91 million global views through July 26. The vault gives Gomez her seventh top 10 and Puth his third overall, his second as a lead act and his first on an original composition. His cover of Drake’s “Hotline Bling,” with Khalid, peaked at No. 6 in June. *Designer* debuts at No. 7 on Top Tracks with “Timmy Turner” after releasing the studio version of the single on July 22, following a freestyle version for Z100 in June. The tune follows the rapper’s debut song, “Panda,” which reached No. 5 on Top Tracks and topped the Billboard Hot 100, and is expected on his first studio album, *The Life of Designer.* —Traver Anderson

**Trending 140 chart on Top Tracks and topped the 98 through midnight ET on Top Tracks with “Timmy Turner” after releasing the**

---

**Billboard**

**TOP TRACKS™**

**WILD**

Troy Sivan Feat. Alessia Cara

**MAKE ME**

Britney Spears Feat. G-Eazy

**COLD WATER**

Major Lazer Feat. Justin Bieber & MØ

**RISE**

Katy Perry

**DON’T TALK ANYMORE**

Charlie Puth Feat. Selena Gomez

**INTO YOU**

Ariana Grande

**TIMMY TURNER**

Designer

**NOT NICE**

PARTYNEXTDOOR

**PANDA**

Designer

**SORRY**

Justin Bieber

**WORK FROM HOME**

Fifth Harmony Feat. Ty Dolla $ign

**SECRET LOVE SONG**

Little Mix Feat. Jason Derulo

**HAIR**

Little Mix Feat. Sean Paul

**INFINITY**

One Direction

**DANGEROUS WOMAN**

Ariana Grande

**TREAT YOU BETTER**

Shawn Mendes

**HELLO**

Adele

**DON’T LET ME DOWN**

The Chainsmokers Feat. Daya

**ONE DANCE**

Drake Feat. WizKid & Kyla

**CHEAP THRILLS**

Sia Feat. Sean Paul

**CRUEL**

Snakehips Feat. Zayn

**LOVE YOURSELF**

Justin Bieber

**WORK**

Rihanna Feat. Drake

**CLOSE**

Nick Jonas Feat. Tove Lo

**ALL IN MY HEAD [FREED]**

Pentatonix Feat. Halsey

**FAMOUS**

Kanye West

**CONTROLA**

Drake

**KILL EM WITH KINDNESS**

Selena Gomez

**RUIN**

Shawn Mendes

**VICE**

Miranda Lambert

**CAN’T STOP THE FEELING!**

Justin Timberlake

**ACTIVATED**

Cher Lloyd

**BLACK MAGIC**

Little Mix

**HALLELUJAH**

Panic! At The Disco

**NEEDED ME**

Rihanna

**SILENCE**

Eminem Feat. Swift

**FIRE**

BTS

**SEND MY LOVE TO YOUR NEW LOVER**

Ado

**RIDE**

twenty one pilots

**HEATHEMS**

twenty one pilots

**EMPEROR’S NEW CLOTHES**

Paco! At The Disco

**COMPANY**

Justin Bieber

**HYMN FOR THE WEEKEND**

Coldplay

**NO SHOPPING**

French Montana Feat. Drake

**CIRCLES**

Pierce The Veil

**STRESSED OUT**

twenty one pilots

**SOMEBODY ELSE**

The 1975

**PILOWSWALK**

Zayn

**WAYBACH**

Gucci Mane

**SAVE ME**

BTS

**ROTATING IN VAIN**

Korn

---

**EMERGING ARTISTS™**

**CRUEL**

Snakehips Feat. Zayn

**SING ME TO SLEEP**

Justin Bieber

**PERFECT STRANGERS**

JinJoo Lee Feat. Jordan Roddy

**YOU**

Bella Feat. Khalid

**THIS GIRL**

Kungs Feat. Cookin’ On J Berg

**BONBON**

Era Istrefi

**HOW TO LOVE**

Cash Cash Feat. Sofia Reyes

**DANCING ON MY OWN**

Calum Scott

**CAROLINE**

Amine

**DRUGS**

EDEN

**QUIESA**

CNCO

**WAT U MEAN**

Dox Dae

**HOTTER THAN HELL**

Dua Lipa

**CLOSE TO YOU**

Dreezy Feat. T-Pain

**TIFFEN**

Ookay

**RUNAWAY**

Bright Lights Feat. 3LAU

**FRIENDS**

Frenz & The Lights Feat. Don Intro & Easy West

**BE THE ONE**

Dua Lipa

**LOSIN CONTROL**

Ro James

**HURTS SO GOOD**

Astrid S

**HE ON**

Fan Feat. Afrojack

**YOU AND ME**

Marc E. Bassy Feat. G-Eazy

**BODY**

Dreezy Feat. Jeremiah

**PERMISSION**

Ro James

**GIVE ME LOVE**

Sigala Feat. Jen Newman & Nile Rodgers

**ALASKA**

Maggie Rogers

**SPIRITS**

The Strumbellas

**WILD WEST**

Lissie

**CAPSIZE**

Freddie & Emily Warren

**BONFIRE**

Faith Feat. Alma

**MILLIE**

Cash Cash & Digital Farm Animals Feat. Halsey

**THERE’S A GIRL**

Trent Harmon

**ALLY FRIENDS**

Snakehips Feat. Travie M & Charli The Raver

**PERFECT**

Bibi Bouellery & Earl St. Clair

**MIGHT NOT**

Bella Feat. The Weekend

**CROSSFIRE**

Stephen

**PARTY DANCE**

Cali Ute Feat. Lamir & Dynamic Boys

**EASY LOVE**

Sigala

**BEAUTIFUL LIFE**

Last Frequencies Feat. Soda Canza

**SNOO**

Jarred James Feat. Brooks

**REALITY**

Lost Frequencies Feat. Janier Devy

**WEIGHT IN GOLD**

Gallant

**THE GIRL IS MINE**

PP Feat. Destiny’s Child & Brandy

**DINOROBOT/MANNEKIN/SHROOMERACK**

Stephan

**O MI**

Jaguar

**MOOD**

Young Greatness

**RIVER**

Bishop Briggs

**I WENT TOO FAR**

AURORA

**THINKING OF YOU**

Mabel
NOTICE OF (I) ENTRY OF CONFIRMATION ORDER, (II) EFFECTIVE DATE, AND (III) PLAN DEADLINES

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Honorable Ann Nevins, United States Bankruptcy Judge for the District of Connecticut, entered an order (the “Confirmation Order”) confirming and approving the Debtor’s Third Amended Plan of Reorganization [Docket No. 485] (including all exhibits thereto and as the same may be amended, modified or supplemented from time to time, the “Plan”) on July 7, 2016 [Docket No. 552].

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that, as of July 7, 2016, all conditions precedent to the Effective Date contained in Article VIII of the Plan have been satisfied or waived. Therefore, July 22, 2016, is the Effective Date of the Plan.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that any Holder of a Claim arising from the rejection of an Executory Contract or unexpired lease pursuant to the Plan must file with the Bankruptcy Court and serve upon the Debtor a proof of Claim on account of such Claim by no later than August 22, 2016. A proof of Claim form can be obtained at the United States Courts website: http://www.uscourts.gov/FormsandFees/Forms/BankruptcyForms.aspx or at any bankruptcy clerk’s office. Completed Proofs of Claim should be submitted to the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Connecticut, Abraham Ribicoff Building, 450 Main Street, 7th Floor, Hartford, CT 06103. Any proofs of Claim not submitted and actually received by the Bankruptcy Court by such date will be forever barred from assertion against the Debtor and his Estate.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that any person who holds or asserts an Administrative Claim other than a Fee Claim must file with the Bankruptcy Court and serve on all parties required to receive such Notice a request for the allowance of such Administrative Claim on or before August 22, 2016. Holders of Administrative Claims (other than Fee Claims) that do not file requests for the allowance and payment thereof on or before such date shall forever be barred from asserting such Administrative Claims against the Debtor and his Estate.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that any Person who holds or asserts an Administrative Claim that is a Fee Claim for services rendered before the Effective Date must file with the Bankruptcy Court and serve on all parties required to receive such Notice a request for the allowance of such Administrative Claim not later September 20, 2016. Objections to Fee Applications must be filed and served pursuant to the Bankruptcy Rules on the Debtor to whose application the objections are directed or made within thirty (30) days after the filing of the Fee Application in object to objection. Holders of Fee Claims that do not file Fee Applications or before such date shall forever be barred from asserting such Fee Claims against the Debtor and his Estate.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that copies of the Plan and Confirmation Order may be obtained and/or are available for review via the Bankruptcy Court’s PACER website, https://www.pacer.gov/, or by contacting the Debtor’s counsel, c/o Ruth A. Clark, via e-mail at rclark@neliganlaw.com.

1 Capitalized terms used but not otherwise defined herein shall have the meaning ascribed to them in the Plan.
### Mainstream Top 40™

**Rank** | **Title** | **Artist** | **Weeks On Chart**
--- | --- | --- | ---
1 | CAN'T STOP THE FEELING! | Justin Timberlake | 7
2 | LOVE YOURSELF | Justin Bieber | 6
3 | ONE CALL AWAY | Charlie Puth | 5
4 | STITCHES | Shawn Mendes | 4
5 | GG JUST LIKE FIRE | Shontelle | 3
6 | 7 YEARS | Lukas Graham | 2
7 | WILDHEARTS DREAM | Taylor Swift | 2
8 | SEND ME YOUR (TO YOUR NEW LOVER) | Adele | 2
9 | EX'S & OHS | Ellie Goulding | 2
10 | LOSE YOURSELF | Kelly Clarkson | 2
11 | LOST BOY | COLUMBIA | 2
12 | CHEAP THRILLS | Sia Feat. Sean Paul | 2
13 | HUMBLE AND KIND | Tim McGraw | 2
14 | SHE IN HAND-MAIN | Nathan Sykes Feat. Ariana Grande | 2
15 | GOOD HEART | Elton John | 2
16 | SLEDGEHAMMER | Rihanna | 2
17 | WHEREVER I GO | OneRepublic | 2
18 | UNSTEADY | X Ambassadors | 2
19 | CAKE BY THE OCEAN | DNCE | 2
20 | BRAND NEW | Ben Rector | 2
21 | I Don't Mind | Meghan Trainor | 2
22 | LIE TO ME | OneRepublic | 2
23 | THE MAN WITH THE HANGOVER | Ellie Goulding | 2
24 | SO ALIVE | Goo Goo Dolls | 2
25 | I'M NOT ALONE | Ellie Goulding | 2
26 | ME TOO | Kyary Pamyu Pamyu | 2
27 | CRACKING | Jax Jones | 2
28 | JUST LIKE FIRE | Pink | 2
29 | YOU & ME | Ariana Grande | 2
30 | DONT'T MIND | Kendyl Jones | 2
32 | ONE DANCE | Drake Feat. Wizkid & Kyla | 2
33 | JUST LIKE FIRE | Pink | 2
34 | DONT'T MIND | Kendyl Jones | 2
36 | ONE DANCE | Drake Feat. Wizkid & Kyla | 2
37 | JUST LIKE FIRE | Pink | 2
38 | DONT'T MIND | Kendyl Jones | 2
40 | ONE DANCE | Drake Feat. Wizkid & Kyla | 2

### Adult Contemporary™

**Rank** | **Title** | **Artist** | **Weeks On Chart**
--- | --- | --- | ---
1 | LOVE YOURSELF | Justin Bieber | 5
2 | CAN'T STOP THE FEELING! | Justin Timberlake | 5
3 | ONE CALL AWAY | Charlie Puth | 4
4 | STITCHES | Shawn Mendes | 4
5 | GG JUST LIKE FIRE | Shontelle | 3
6 | 7 YEARS | Lukas Graham | 3
7 | WILDHEARTS DREAM | Taylor Swift | 3
8 | SEND ME YOUR (TO YOUR NEW LOVER) | Adele | 3
9 | EX'S & OHS | Ellie Goulding | 3
10 | LOSE YOURSELF | Kelly Clarkson | 3
11 | LOST BOY | COLUMBIA | 3
12 | CHEAP THRILLS | Sia Feat. Sean Paul | 3
13 | HUMBLE AND KIND | Tim McGraw | 3
14 | SHE IN HAND-MAIN | Nathan Sykes Feat. Ariana Grande | 3
15 | GOOD HEART | Elton John | 3
16 | SLEDGEHAMMER | Rihanna | 3
17 | WHEREVER I GO | OneRepublic | 3
18 | UNSTEADY | X Ambassadors | 3
19 | CAKE BY THE OCEAN | DNCE | 3
20 | BRAND NEW | Ben Rector | 3
21 | I Don't Mind | Meghan Trainor | 3
22 | LIE TO ME | OneRepublic | 3
23 | THE MAN WITH THE HANGOVER | Ellie Goulding | 3
24 | SO ALIVE | Goo Goo Dolls | 3
25 | I'M NOT ALONE | Ellie Goulding | 3
26 | ME TOO | Kyary Pamyu Pamyu | 3
27 | CRACKING | Jax Jones | 3
28 | JUST LIKE FIRE | Pink | 3
29 | YOU & ME | Ariana Grande | 3
30 | DONT'T MIND | Kendyl Jones | 3
32 | ONE DANCE | Drake Feat. Wizkid & Kyla | 3
33 | JUST LIKE FIRE | Pink | 3
34 | DONT'T MIND | Kendyl Jones | 3
36 | ONE DANCE | Drake Feat. Wizkid & Kyla | 3
37 | JUST LIKE FIRE | Pink | 3
38 | DONT'T MIND | Kendyl Jones | 3
40 | ONE DANCE | Drake Feat. Wizkid & Kyla | 3

### Rhythm™

**Rank** | **Title** | **Artist** | **Weeks On Chart**
--- | --- | --- | ---
1 | CONTROLLA | Drake | 15
2 | THIS IS WHAT WE CAME FOR | Calvin Harris Feat. Rihanna | 12
3 | DON'T MIND | Kendyl Jones | 13
4 | FOR FREE | DJ Khalid Feat. Drake | 16
5 | ONE DANCE | Drake Feat. Wizkid & Kyla | 13
6 | SOULMATE | Majid Jordan Feat. Travis Scott | 12
7 | BIG STRONG | Tory Lanez | 12
8 | FREE YOURSELF | OneRepublic | 12
9 | SHE IN HAND-MAIN | Nathan Sykes Feat. Ariana Grande | 12
10 | WEIGHING HEAVY | One Republic | 12
11 | YOUR LIPS ARE JUST LIKE COMFORT | Ben Rector | 12
12 | I Don't Mind | Kendyl Jones | 12
15 | ONE DANCE | Drake Feat. Wizkid & Kyla | 12
16 | SOULMATE | Majid Jordan Feat. Travis Scott | 12
17 | BIG STRONG | Tory Lanez | 12
18 | FREE YOURSELF | OneRepublic | 12
19 | WEIGHING HEAVY | One Republic | 12
20 | YOUR LIPS ARE JUST LIKE COMFORT | Ben Rector | 12

### Pop/Rhythm/Adult

**Rank** | **Title** | **Artist** | **Weeks On Chart**
--- | --- | --- | ---
1 | CAN'T STOP THE FEELING! | Justin Timberlake | 12
2 | LOVE YOURSELF | Justin Bieber | 12
3 | ONE CALL AWAY | Charlie Puth | 12
4 | STITCHES | Shawn Mendes | 12
5 | GG JUST LIKE FIRE | Shontelle | 12
6 | 7 YEARS | Lukas Graham | 12
7 | WILDHEARTS DREAM | Taylor Swift | 12
8 | SEND ME YOUR (TO YOUR NEW LOVER) | Adele | 12
9 | EX'S & OHS | Ellie Goulding | 12
10 | LOSE YOURSELF | Kelly Clarkson | 12
11 | LOST BOY | COLUMBIA | 12
12 | CHEAP THRILLS | Sia Feat. Sean Paul | 12
13 | HUMBLE AND KIND | Tim McGraw | 12
14 | SHE IN HAND-MAIN | Nathan Sykes Feat. Ariana Grande | 12
15 | GOOD HEART | Elton John | 12
16 | SLEDGEHAMMER | Rihanna | 12
17 | WHEREVER I GO | OneRepublic | 12
18 | UNSTEADY | X Ambassadors | 12
19 | CAKE BY THE OCEAN | DNCE | 12
20 | BRAND NEW | Ben Rector | 12
21 | I Don't Mind | Meghan Trainor | 12
22 | LIE TO ME | OneRepublic | 12
23 | THE MAN WITH THE HANGOVER | Ellie Goulding | 12
24 | SO ALIVE | Goo Goo Dolls | 12
25 | I'M NOT ALONE | Ellie Goulding | 12
26 | ME TOO | Kyary Pamyu Pamyu | 12
27 | CRACKING | Jax Jones | 12
28 | JUST LIKE FIRE | Pink | 12
29 | YOU & ME | Ariana Grande | 12
30 | DONT'T MIND | Kendyl Jones | 12
32 | ONE DANCE | Drake Feat. Wizkid & Kyla | 12
33 | JUST LIKE FIRE | Pink | 12
34 | DONT'T MIND | Kendyl Jones | 12
36 | ONE DANCE | Drake Feat. Wizkid & Kyla | 12

Data for week of 08.06.2016
**TOP COUNTRY ALBUMS**

1. **Dierks Bentley**  
   *Black *= 8
   *Ripcord *= 12

2. **Thomas Rhett**  
   *Tangled Up *= 43

3. **Luke Bryan**  
   *Kill The Lights *= 60

4. **Keith Urban**  
   *If I'm Honest *= 9

5. **Blake Shelton**  
   *I'll Name The Dogs *= 51

6. **Nashville**  
   *If I Got You *= 13

7. **Dierks Bentley**  
   *Black *= 8

8. **Charley Pride**  
   *What If Country Was Все *= 5

9. **Luke Bryan**  
   *Kill The Lights *= 60

10. **Cole Swindell**  
    *You Should Be Here *= 31

**HOT COUNTRY SONGS**

1. **"We Were Us"** by Florida Georgia Line  
   *Widespread airplay and/or sales activity for the first time.

2. **"H.O.L.Y."** by Eric Church

3. **"One Hell of an Afternoon"** by Dan + Shay

4. **"Chattahoochee"** by Florida Georgia Line

5. **"Me and My Girl"** by Luke Bryan

6. **"Cherry Pie"** by Zac Brown Band

7. **"That's What I Like"** by Dierks Bentley

8. **"Rethink Love"** by Kelsea Ballerini

9. **"If I Never See You Again"** by Thomas Rhett

10. **"She's Got A Way With Words"** by Kacey Musgraves

**COUNTRY AIRPLAY**

1. **"We Were Us"** by Florida Georgia Line

2. **"H.O.L.Y."** by Eric Church

3. **"One Hell of an Afternoon"** by Dan + Shay

4. **"Chattahoochee"** by Florida Georgia Line

5. **"Me and My Girl"** by Luke Bryan

6. **"Cherry Pie"** by Zac Brown Band

7. **"That's What I Like"** by Dierks Bentley

8. **"Rethink Love"** by Kelsea Ballerini

9. **"She's Got A Way With Words"** by Kacey Musgraves

10. **"If I Never See You Again"** by Thomas Rhett

**Country Airplay No. 1**

"We Were Us" by Florida Georgia Line

**Florida Georgia Line**

Collects its ninth Country Airplay No. 1 as "H.O.L.Y." rises 2-1 in its 13th week (47 million in audience, up 4 percent). The duo completes its fastest flight to the top, besting "Dirt" (14 weeks, 2014). "H.O.L.Y." spices Hot Country Songs and Country Streaming Songs for a 12th week, each leading the latter with 6.9 million U.S. streams (up 4 percent).

Meanwhile, Miranda Lambert’s “Vice” arrives at No. 1 on Country Digital Songs with 64,000 sold, marking her second No. 1, “Somethin’ Bad,” her duet with Carrie Underwood, also launched at the summit June 1, 2014). On Hot Country Songs, “Vice” opens at No. 2, her highest debut. Concurrently, “Vice” marks Lambert’s highest bow on Country Airplay, at No. 18 fueled in part by hourly plays following its release on participating (HeartMedia-owned) stations. The song presages Lambert’s forthcoming album, expected later in 2016. It is her first release since her divorce from Blake Shelton.

—Jim Asker
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOT ROCK SONGS™</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>CERTIFICATION</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>IMPRINT/PRODUCTION LABEL</th>
<th>WEEKS ON CHART</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>SILENCE</td>
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<td>A ZONE (THOMAS BIZZ, SEAN TETLOW)</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>DIRTY</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>CHILL</td>
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<td>DRUMS</td>
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<td>COOLDAY</td>
<td>A Head Full Of Dreams</td>
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<td>BRIDGE</td>
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<td>VOLBEAT</td>
<td>Seal The Deal &amp; Let’s Boogie</td>
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<td>HELLS BELLS</td>
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Hot R&B/Pop Songs

1. Drake featuring WizKid & Kyla - One Dance
2. Rihanna - Needed Me
3. Kent Jones - Don't Mind
4. Drake - Panda
5. Drake - Controlla
6. DJ Khaled featuring Drake - For Free
7. Drake - Fashionably Late
8. Rihanna featuring Drake - Work
9. DJ Khaled featuring Jay Z & Future - I Got The Keys
10. Beyoncé - Sorry
11. Future - Life Is Good
12. Future - Future Featuring The Weekend
13. D.R.A.M. featuring Lil Yachty - Broccoli
14. S collide featuring Kanye West - That Part
15. Future featuring Young Thug - Wicked
16. Fat Joe, Remy Ma & Jay-Z featuring French Montana & 2 Chainz - All The Way Up
17. Wale - My Pity
18. Tory Lanez - Privilege
19. Drake featuring Young Thug - Money Longer
20. Lil Uzi Vert featuring JAY-Z - Everything's Gonna Be Alright
21. Drake - Wake Up
22. Tyga featuring French Montana & Migos - FAMOUS
23. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
24. Drake featuring Lowkey - In My Feelings
25. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
26. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
27. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
28. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
29. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
30. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
31. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
32. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
33. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
34. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
35. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
36. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
37. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
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39. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
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41. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
42. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
43. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
44. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
45. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
46. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
47. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
48. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
49. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
50. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings

Top R&B/Pop Albums

1. Beyoncé - Lemonade
2. Logic - Bobby Tarantino
3. Drake - Views
4. Schoolboy Q - Blank Face LP
5. The Weeknd - Beauty Behind The Madness
6. Future featuring Young Thug - Future
7. Future featuring Young Thug - Future
8. Future featuring Young Thug - Future
9. Future featuring Young Thug - Future
10. Future featuring Young Thug - Future

R&B/Pop-Hip-Hop

1. Drake featuring WizKid & Kyla - One Dance
2. Rihanna - Needed Me
3. Kent Jones - Don't Mind
4. Drake - Panda
5. Drake - Controlla
6. DJ Khaled featuring Drake - For Free
7. Drake - Fashionably Late
8. Rihanna featuring Drake - Work
9. DJ Khaled featuring Jay Z & Future - I Got The Keys
10. Beyoncé - Sorry
11. Future - Life Is Good
12. Future - Future Featuring The Weekend
13. D.R.A.M. featuring Lil Yachty - Broccoli
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18. Tory Lanez - Privilege
19. Drake featuring Young Thug - Money Longer
20. Lil Uzi Vert featuring JAY-Z - Everything's Gonna Be Alright
21. Drake - Wake Up
22. Tyga featuring French Montana & Migos - FAMOUS
23. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
24. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
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42. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
43. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
44. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings
45. Drake featuring K Camp & Offset - In My Feelings

Data for week of 08.06.2016

Go to BILLBOARD.COM/BIZ for complete chart data 103
### TOP LATIN ALBUMS

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The week's top-selling current Christian albums, ranked by sales data as

**HOT CHRISTIAN SONGS**

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<td>Adrian</td>
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**HOT GOSPEL SONGS**

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<tr>
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**TOP CHRISTIAN ALBUMS**

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WorldRadioHistory

**Top Dance/Electronic Albums**

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Let Me In (ft. Krewella)</td>
<td>Calvin Harris/OneRepublic</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>This Is What You Came For</td>
<td>Calvin Harris/Drake</td>
</tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Work (ft. Rihanna)</td>
<td>Calvin Harris/PartyNext</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood</td>
<td>Mark Ronson feat. Diplo</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Repeat (ft. Zara Larsson)</td>
<td>Zara Larsson/EDC Las Vegas</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Higher Ground</td>
<td>Daft Punk</td>
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<td>Remember When</td>
<td>Jason Derulo</td>
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<td>I Can Only See You</td>
<td>The Weeknd</td>
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<td>Careless Whisper</td>
<td>Ed Sheeran</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Stay (ft. Rihanna)</td>
<td>Rihanna/Calvin Harris</td>
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**Dance/Mix Show Airplay**

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<td>Careless Whisper</td>
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Data for week of 08.06.2016

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Rihanna’s “I Need Your Love” featuring Calvin Harris and Mike Will Made It is the top current dance/electronic song, replacing Calvin Harris/Mark Ronson/Pharrell’s “Locked Away,” which holds the No. 2 position for the second consecutive week. Harris’ other collaboration, “Summer Love,” has dropped to No. 3. Dua Lipa’s “Be the One” is new this week at No. 4, while Clean Bandit’s “Symphony” featuring Zara Larsson holds steady at No. 5. Rihanna’s “Work” is a huge hit, moving up to No. 6, and she also debuts at No. 7 with “Kiss It Better.” Calvin Harris’ “Higher Ground” is new at No. 8, and “How to Love” by Zedd & Alia Bhatt is new at No. 9. "One Dance" by Drake featuring Wizkid and Kyla earns its fifth week at No. 10. "Danceaholic" by Italian DJ-producer Danceaholic is new this week at No. 11. "Lose You To Love Me" by Selena Gomez is new this week at No. 12. "Rape, Nymph, Sodom, Gomorrah" by the Pussy_Resource earns its third week at No. 13. "Rockabye" by Clean Bandit featuring Sean Combs is new this week at No. 14. "I Can’t Stop The Feeling!" by Justin Timberlake drops to No. 15. "I Won’t Go" by 3LAU drops to No. 16. "Can’t Stop The Feeling!" by Justin Timberlake drops to No. 17. "Blackout" by Tritonal feat. Stephen Jones drops to No. 18. "This Girl" by Kygo feat. Ed Sheeran drops to No. 19. "Need You" by Dillon Francis & NightmTRE drops to No. 20. "Broken Record" by Krewella drops to No. 21. "Sex" by Cash Cash feat. Krewella drops to No. 22. "Thinking About You" by Axwell & Ingrosso drops to No. 23. "Paradise" by Benny Benassi & Chris Brown drops to No. 24. "I Don’t Mind" by Kendj Long drops to No. 25. "Give Me Your Love" by Calvin Harris & Kodaline feat. Mike & The Moonshine Band drops to No. 26. "Back 2 U" by 3LAU feat. Bipolar Sunshine drops to No. 27. "Work From Home" by Fifth Harmony feat. Ty Dolla $ign drops to No. 28. "All In My Head (Flex)" by skrillex feat. Oli Hayen drops to No. 29.
### Dance Club Songs

**Week of August 6, 2016**

| Title                                      | Artist                   | LF  | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|
| Tell Me We're OK                          | Nick Jonas Featuring Tove Lo | 9   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 11 |
| Sweet Dreams                              | InRiders Featuring Skylar Verker | 8   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 12 |
| This Is For My Girls                      | Various Artists           | 7   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 13 |
| Wild Things                                | Alessia Cara              | 6   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 14 |
| Don't See Em                               | Sia Feat. Paul Paul       | 5   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 15 |
| Out There                                 | Kristine W               | 4   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 16 |
| Me Too                                    | Meghan Trainor            | 3   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 17 |
| One Night In Heaven                       | The Amoeba & Carl Feat. DJ Boy | 2   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 18 |
| Holiday                                    | DJ Antoine Featuring Akon | 1   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 19 |
| Money                                      | Galantis                | 0   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 20 |
| Good Things                                | Romeo                    | 0   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 21 |
| Love It                                    | Dario                   | 0   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 22 |
| Without You                                | The Ria                   | 0   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 23 |
| Pieces                                    | Rob Thomas               | 0   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 24 |
| Do It Right                                | Martin Solveig           | 0   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 25 |
| All In The Name                            | Bright Light Bright Light Feat. gravy John | 0   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 26 |
| I'll Tell You                               | Nervo                   | 0   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 27 |
| Free                                       | Ali Fox                  | 0   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 28 |
| Weekend                                    | Mr. W & Glo Capone Feat. Angelina | 0   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 29 |
| Huona Sera                                 | Diana Glister            | 0   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 30 |
| One Dance                                  | Drake Featuring Wizkid & Kyla | 0   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 31 |
| All Four Walls                             | Gorgon City Feat. Vaulth | 0   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 32 |
| Fade                                       | Kanye West              | 0   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 33 |
| Fader                                      | Alan Walker              | 0   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 34 |
| Always About Tonight                      | Fourvertii               | 0   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 35 |
| Love Right Next To You                     | Karina                   | 0   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 36 |
| How Long                                  | Jason Sobin             | 0   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 37 |
| Slip Away                                  | Sanjory                 | 0   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 38 |

**Boxscore**

The top grossing concerts as reported by promoters, venues, managers and booking agents. Boxcovers should be submitted to Bob Allen at bob.allen@billboard.com.

**Dance Club Songs**

in dance clubs, currently.

Data for week of 08.06.2016

Go to BILLBOARD.COM/BIZ for complete chart data

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**Double Bills Hit Boxscore**

Landing on the Boxscore chart for the first time this summer are Drake and Future (above), who earn the No. 14 slot based on $1.4 million in ticket sales from the first performance of the pair’s co-headlining Summer Sixteen Tour that began July 20.

The trek supports 2016 albums by both artists (Drake’s Views bowed in April and Future’s EVOL in February). The tour will visit 30 North American markets and continue into the fall with shows booked through mid-October.

Also joining forces this summer are rock veterans Sting and Peter Gabriel, who chart with four headlining sets on a two-show stand at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles at No. 6. From concerts on July 17 and 18 at the 94-year-old venue, the co-headliners grossed $3.8 million from 34,755 sold tickets. Since beginning on June 21, the duo’s Rock Paper Scissors Tour has logged more than $22 million at the box office.

Among the upcoming co-headlining tours to watch is a monthlong arena run by Five Finger Death Punch and Shinedown that kicks off on June 25. Also, country veteran Hank Williams Jr. will join with Chris Stapleton for dates in August, while Breaking Benjamin and Korn kick off a joint effort on Sept. 24. Other acts sharing a stage this fall are Gavin DeGraw and Andy Grammer, as well as ZZ Top and Gregg Allman. Both tours hit the road in August.—Bob Allen.
38 Years Ago
‘GREASE’ WAS THE WORD AND THE NO. 1 ALBUM

The soundtrack to the smash musical film starring John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John topped the Billboard 200 for 12 weeks.

NOSTALGIA FOR THE 1950S RULED THE summer of 1978 when the soundtrack album to Grease, a movie musical set 20 years earlier, topped the Billboard 200 chart dated July 29 and spent a total of 12 weeks at No. 1.

“There’s something magical [about Grease]. It’s contagious,” says Olivia Newton-John, who was 29 when she played Sandy, the sweet and pure cheerleader whose teen romance with bad boy Danny Zuko (John Travolta, then 24) during their senior year at Rydell High in the late ‘50s is at the center of the story.

The musical, which originated as a Chicago theater (and later, Broadway) production, also followed the exploits of the couple’s colorful friends, such as bad girl Rizzo (Stockard Channing), and Newton-John says that the movie “hit a chord” with the public because “everyone knows somebody who’s like one of those characters, or they knew someone like that in school.”

The Grease soundtrack spawned five hit singles on the Billboard Hot 100, including two No. 1s: the title track, which was performed by Frankie Valli, and “You’re the One That I Want,” a duet by Newton-John and Travolta. Another hit, Newton-John’s “Hopelessly Devoted to You,” peaked at No. 3 and received an Academy Award nomination for best original song.

Grease would finish 1978 as the year’s highest-grossing film in the United States ($159 million) and, to date, has earned $189 million. Its sequel, 1982’s Grease 2, which starred a pre-fame Michelle Pfeiffer, bombed, grossing just $15 million. Fox TV’s 2016 live staging of the original musical on Jan. 31 proved much more popular. The production, which starred Julianne Hough, Vanessa Hudgens and Aaron Tveit, was watched by 12.2 million U.S. viewers, according to Nielsen, and garnered 10 Emmy Award nominations.

—KEITH CAULFIELD
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