WOMEN In MUSIC 2019

Woman of the Year
Billie Eilish
Brandi Carlile
Rosalía
Megan Thee Stallion
Alicia Keys
Alanis Morissette
Nicki Minaj

Roc Nation's Desiree Perez

Woman of the Decade
TAYLOR SWIFT
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CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE WOMEN IN MUSIC HONOREES FROM YOUR UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP FAMILY

DAHLIA AMBACH-CAPLIN
MICHELLE AN
MICHÈLE ANTHONY
KATINA BYNUM
MARGI CHESKE
MARNI CONDRO
SHARON DASTUR
NICKI FARAG
JODY GERSON
WENDY GOLDSTEIN
DONNA GRYN
ETHIOPIA HABTEMARIAM
CELINE JOSHUA
MICHÈLE JUBELIRER
ANNIE LEE
ALEXANDRA LIOUTIKOFF
CINDY MABE
KERRI MACKAR
SUSAN MAZO
JOY MURPHY
NATINA NIME\NE
MARISA PIZARRO
ANAID QUIJADA
BRENDA ROMANO
JACQUELINE SATURN
AYELET SCHIFFMAN
JAIME WESTON
NICOLE WYSKOARKO
The Weeknd’s Big Week: ‘Heartless’ Hits No. 1

The Weeknd vaults from No. 32 to No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 with the R&B-leaning “Heartless” and bounds in at No. 11 with the synth-infused “Blinding Lights.” Both songs are expected to appear on his forthcoming LP.

Following its first full week of tracking, “Heartless” reigns with 30 million U.S. streams, 26.2 million in all-format airplay audience and 58,000 sold, according to Nielsen Music. The song is The Weeknd’s fourth Hot 100 leader, after “Can’t Feel My Face” and “The Hills” in 2015 and “Starboy” (featuring Daft Punk) in 2017.

“Blinding Lights” bows with 24.8 million streams, 885,000 airplay audience impressions and 24,000 sold.

Of the two new tracks, Republic Records is officially promoting only “Heartless” to radio, but both ranked among the top 20 most-played songs on Mainstream Top 40 chart reporters WPOI Tampa, Fla., and WPYO Orlando, Fla., in the week ending Dec. 8. “They’re incredible in different ways,” says Will Calder, director of branding and programming for both stations.

“ ‘Heartless’ takes us back to what made us fall in love with The Weeknd in the first place, and ‘Blinding Lights’ makes us want to go back to 1985. This man never disappoints.”

—GARY TRUST
The 25-year-old Houston native's first Hot 100 entry also reaches No. 11 high on Hot Rap Songs.

You started making music at age 15 and signed to Alamo/Interscope in July 2018. How did “Falling” come together?

I was at one of my first real studio sessions in August 2018 with [hip-hop collective] Internet Money. We were all vibing off each other. I had started talking to this [new] girl after a rough relationship, and that's where the inspiration came from. It's raw, and I think people feel that.

The recent boost was fueled by TikTok. What do you think about the app's ability to launch songs on the charts?

TikTok made it easy for people to share songs and make your [own] interpretations of them. I've spent hours looking at TikToks with “Falling.” There's one with a dog skateboarding in a pool. I try to stay engaged with my fan base. I haven't made a TikTok video yet, but I need to.

How will you keep up the momentum?

We're shooting a video and going to radio — everything we can. We want to take full advantage of this hit to propel my other songs. I'm innovating and working on a new album. I had a session the other day with [Blink-182 drummer] Travis Barker. Growing up, I had posters of him in my room.

—LILLY PACE

---

**New Entries**

**TRUTH HURTS**

Lizzo

**JINGLE BELL ROCK**

Bobby Helms

**EVERYTHING I WANTED**

Billie Eilish

**HOT**

Young Thug feat. Gucci Mane

**LAST CHRISTMAS**

Wham!

**WOAH**

Lil Baby

**ONE MAN BAND**

Old Dominion

**OLD TOWN ROAD**

Lil Nas X feat. Billy Ray Cyrus

**LOVER**

Taylor Swift

**THE CHRISTMAS SONG** (MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU)

The Carpenters

**ONLY HUMAN**

Jonas Brothers

**ON CHILL**

Wale feat. Jeremih

**BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE**

Ed Sheeran feat. Khalid

**RANSOM**

Lil Tecca feat. Pop Smoke

**EVEN THOUGH I'M LEAVING**

Lake Como

**FELIZ NAVIDAD**

Jose Feliciano

**BANDIT**

Juice WRLD & YoungBoy Never Broke Again

**DON'T START NOW**

Dua Lipa

**SLEIGH RIDE**

The Ronettes

**ROUDLPH THE RED-NOSED RENDELLER**

Gene Autry

**GRAVEYARD**

Halsey

**INTO THE UNKNOWN**

Idina Menzel & AURORA

**HAPPY HOLIDAY / THE HOLIDAY SEASON**

Andy Williams

**TALK**

Khalid

**I DON'T CARE**

Ed Sheeran & Justin Bieber

---

**Title**: Panini

**Artist**: Lil Nas X

**Week**: 17

**Previous Week**: 39

**Debut**: 11

**Peak**: 26

**Hot Shot Debut**: 13

**Hot Shot Peak**: 16

The track is Lil Nas X's second top 10 on the Mainstream Top 40 airplay chart, rising 11-8, after "Old Town Road" (featuring Billy Ray Cyrus) hit No. 3. Both songs ruled Rhythmic.
Congratulations.
You all reign supreme.

Brandi Carlile
Lanre Gaba
Julie Greenwald
Dionnee Harper
Cris Lacy
Carianne Marshall
Gabriela Martinez

Alanis Morissette
Michele Nadelman
Masha Osherova
Elyse Rogers
Oana Ruxandra
Marsha St. Hubert
Nina Webb

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT
WARNER MUSIC GROUP
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Week Sales</th>
<th>Peak Hot 100</th>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>BABY</td>
<td>Lil Baby &amp; DaBaby</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>PLAYING GAMES</td>
<td>Summer Walker</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>94</td>
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<td>HOW DO YOU SLEEP?</td>
<td>Sam Smith</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>57</td>
<td>HEAT</td>
<td>Chris Brown feat. Burna</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>JUICY</td>
<td>Doja Cat &amp; Tyga</td>
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<td>THE BONES</td>
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<td>HEART ON ICE</td>
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<td>REMEMBER YOU YOUNG</td>
<td>Thomas Rhett</td>
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<td>VETE</td>
<td>Bad Bunny</td>
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<td>Trippie Red feat. DaBaby</td>
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<td>L. Green</td>
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<td>WHAT IF I NEVER GET YOU</td>
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<td>NO IDEA</td>
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<td>RIDIN’ ROADS</td>
<td>Dustin Lynch</td>
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<td>HEARTACHE MEDICATION</td>
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<td>Matt Stell</td>
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<td>ENEMIES</td>
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<td>KINFOLKS</td>
<td>Sam Hunt</td>
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<td>72</td>
<td>BABY SITTER</td>
<td>DaBaby feat. Offset</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>79</td>
<td>ALL THE GOOD GIRLS GO TO HELL</td>
<td>Billie Eilish</td>
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<td>80</td>
<td>6 KISS</td>
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<td>WHO NEEDS LOVE</td>
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<td>Roddy Ricch feat. &amp; Boozy Wit da Hoolie</td>
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<td>YELLOW HEARTS</td>
<td>Ant Saunders</td>
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<td>NICE TO MEET YA</td>
<td>Niall Horan</td>
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<td>SUICIDAL</td>
<td>Joji</td>
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<td>SLOW DANCING IN THE DARK</td>
<td>J.W. Melly</td>
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<td>HOMESICK</td>
<td>Kane Brown</td>
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<td>HATE ME</td>
<td>Ellie Goulding &amp; Juice WRLD</td>
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<td>90</td>
<td>EASY</td>
<td>DaniLeigh feat. &amp; DaBaby</td>
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<td>91</td>
<td>FOLLOW GOD</td>
<td>Kanye West</td>
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<td>CUBAN LINKS</td>
<td>Rod Wave &amp; Kevin Gates</td>
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<td>CANDY</td>
<td>Doja Cat</td>
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<td>TUSA</td>
<td>Karol G &amp; Nicki Minaj</td>
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<td>95</td>
<td>MAKE NO SENSE</td>
<td>YoungBoy Never Brake Again</td>
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<td>JERRY SPRINGER</td>
<td>Tone LANE &amp; T-Pain</td>
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<td>RITMO (BAD BOYS FOR LIFE)</td>
<td>The Black Eyed Peas</td>
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<td>98</td>
<td>INTO THE UNKNOWN</td>
<td>Panic! At The Disco</td>
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<td>99</td>
<td>LA CANCELL</td>
<td>J Balvin &amp; Bad Bunny</td>
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</table>

The collaboration from the Frozen II soundtrack — which reaches No. 1 on the Billboard 200 (see page 146) — gains by 63% to 10.4 million U.S. streams.

Saunders’ first Billboard chart entry rates by 3% to 10.3 million U.S. streams while drawing radio support at KMVQ San Francisco, which leads with 33 plays in the tracking week.
TAYLOR,

CONGRATS ON EVERYTHING YOU DO! I AM SO PROUD OF YOU AND PROUD TO HAVE WORKED FOR YOU FOR NEARLY 13 YEARS. YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS NEVER CEASE TO AMAZE ME. YOUR MUSIC, YOUR SHOWS, YOUR WORLD, AND EVERYTHING YOU’VE CREATED ARE ONE-OF-A-KIND.

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT 13 YEARS.

ALWAYS WITH LOVE,

Louis Messina
and the entire MTG Team
FEATURES

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BILLBOARD’S WOMAN OF THE DECADE
In the 2010s, Taylor Swift went from country superstar to pop titan and broke records with her chart-topping albums and blockbuster tours. Now she’s using her industry clout to fight for artists’ rights and foster the musical community she wished she had when she was coming up.

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WOMEN IN MUSIC 2019: THE ARTISTS
Woman of the Year Billie Eilish leads Billboard’s annual celebration of top female talent, which also includes an Icon (Alanis Morissette), a Game-Changer (Nicki Minaj), Impact Award honoree Alicia Keys and others.

Eilish photographed by Heather Hazan on April 18 at SunLight Studios in Los Angeles.
WOMAN
OF THE
decade
SONY/ATV SONGWRITER
TAYLOR SWIFT

CONGRATULATIONS FROM YOUR FAMILY AT SONY/ATV
ON THE COVER
Taylor Swift photographed by Sam Drasin on Oct. 20 in Los Angeles.

FEATURES

WOMEN IN MUSIC 2019: THE EXECUTIVES
88
Over 150 of the industry’s leading female executives, including Executive of the Year Desiree Perez, the Roc Nation COO, who has quietly become one of the most formidable figures in the music business. Plus: How rising executives found their mentors, ways to make the recording studio safer for women and more.
CONGRATULATIONS TAYLOR
WOMAN OF THE DECADE
(and top cat...)
LOVE FROM YOUR FRIENDS
ERIC, TIM, DEBRA AND EVERYONE AT WORKING TITLE FILMS
The Weeknd, scores his fourth No. 1 with “Heartless.”

SiriusXM’s acquisition of Pandora makes sense at the most basic level. But what value does Pandora bring to the combined company?

Remembering Juice WRLD, the boundary-pushing rapper who died Dec. 8 at age 21.

iHeartRadio Jingle Ball Los Angeles, Avicii Tribute Concert

With his second album, Stormzy is U.K. rap’s best bet for a global star — whom fellow Brits say is poised to take grime “where we couldn’t.”


Island Records COO Eric Wong reflects on his career at and outside of the label, which began when he landed his first internship through an ad in Billboard.
Thank YOU for making 2019 sweeter

Ariana Grande
5/31 • 6/1 • 11/27 SOLD OUT

With special thanks to everyone at Live Nation and SB Projects
HERE'S THE THING ABOUT THIS issue: There are many more remarkable women working in music today than we could do justice to in the pages that follow. So how does Billboard choose which artists and executives to recognize for their impact each year?

It’s a tough editorial decision that we don’t take lightly. Our team of journalists spends months gathering data, feedback and insight from every part of the music industry, and we take it all into consideration as we strive to spotlight new faces and represent women with a wide range of backgrounds who are shaping this business — as well as the entire culture. We celebrate some women paving the way for others through active mentorship of their female colleagues. We spotlight others who are leading by example. We also salute the women who decline to be honored in this issue because they believe having a special list for women is counterproductive, a concern our team wrestles with as well.

But as we head into the next decade, with women still significantly underrepresented in the music industry’s top ranks, as well as on our own charts, we believe this undertaking still has value. So to that end, we are honoring Billie Eilish this year for changing the sound of pop music in 2019 and taking global youth culture by storm with her singular vision; Taylor Swift for dominating our charts throughout the 2010s; Rosalia for taking flamenco to unthinkable heights; Nicki Minaj for redefining success for female rappers; and Megan Thee Stallion, whose breakthrough rang in the world’s first official “Hot Girl Summer.” We recognize Alanis Morissette for inspiring a new generation of songwriters with her groundbreaking album, Jagged Little Pill, now debuting as a Broadway show; Alicia Keys for starting a nonprofit to grow the careers of female songwriters and producers; Brandi Carlile for launching a female-fronted music festival and using her platform to affect political change; and Roc Nation COO Desiree Perez for her fierce support of artists, dedication to social justice and leadership in creating opportunities for people of all backgrounds at one of the most prominent companies in the business.

Rock on, ladies.

Hannah Karp
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR
CONGRATULATIONS

KATHY WILLARD

ALI HARNELL

PATTI-ANNE TARLTON

KELLY STRICKLAND

HEATHER LOWERY

VIRGINIA BUNETTA

2019 WOMEN IN MUSIC
SONY MUSIC

PROUDLY CONGRATULATES

OUR 2019 WOMEN IN MUSIC
CONGRATULATIONS
TO ALL OUR
WOMEN IN MUSIC
YOU INSPIRE US
EACH AND EVERY
DAY
FROM YOUR FAMILY
AT
AEG PRESENTS

BRIDGET BAYER
AEG PRESENTS

MELODY ORMOND
AEG PRESENTS

DONNA DIBenedetto
AEG PRESENTS

BROOKE MICHAEL KAIN
AEG PRESENTS

STACY VEE
AEG PRESENTS / MESSINA TOURING GROUP
Congratulations

Joyce Smyth

Billboard’s Top Manager of the Year
and Women in Music Honoree

The Greatest Rock and Roll Band in the World
deserves nothing but the best.
They’ve got it.

Well done!
— John, Paul and The Concerts West Team
CONGRATULATIONS
LUKE

on your record-setting album.
We’re proud of you and
honored to work with you!

Everyone at

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Every detail of Solo Pro has been carefully considered, right down to the intuitive way the headphones turn on and off via folding. The ergonomic design delivers exceptional comfort for extended wear and sleek style. And with up to 22 hours of battery life, you can keep the music going no matter where your day takes you.
Raising the Bar

ASCAP Celebrates Our Billboard Women in Music

ASCAP CEO
BETH MATTHEWS
BILLBOARD'S MOST POWERFUL EXECUTIVES LIST

BILLIE EILISH
WOMAN OF THE YEAR

ALANIS MORISSETTE
ICON

ALICIA KEYS
IMPACT

ASCAP WE CREATE MUSIC
Onboarding Pandora
Online-satellite merger offers larger audience, big-name content deals

BY GLENN PEOPLES

VER THE LAST DECADE, SiriusXM has been home to a number of artist-specific channels, such as the Grateful Dead, Bob Dylan, Willie Nelson and Bruce Springsteen. But in November, SiriusXM CEO Jim Meyer revealed that details of the company’s forthcoming partnership with Drake, by some measures the world’s biggest streaming artist, would be announced in the first quarter.

The reason Drake signed on: SiriusXM’s February acquisition of Pandora, which would let the company reach a combined 100 million listeners, for $3.5 billion. During a July earnings call, Meyer said a deal with Drake was only possible for SiriusXM after the merger. President/chief content officer Scott Greenstein added that the partnership will have more content and marketing components than others: “It is unequivocally the deepest we’ve ever gone on any artist deal.”

The Drake partnership is just one of the ways the SiriusXM-Pandora merger could pay off — in addition to a Pandora-branded channel on SiriusXM and news and non-music content from the satellite radio giant now available to Pandora users. The combined company’s new reach makes it an ideal partner, too: In December it announced a deal with U2 for U2X RADIO on SiriusXM; an agreement with basketball star LeBron James’ media company to create exclusive content; and a multiyear venture with Marvel Comics to create original series. Programming from all three will be available on both platforms.

Pandora also poses a challenge for its new parent: It lost 5.1 million free listeners over the last four quarters, and as Spotify, YouTube and Amazon pour resources into new products and features, its funnel of free users that can be converted into paid subscribers is shrinking. There’s no guarantee that Drake and U2 can stop the listener exodus.

Given what’s known about streaming economics, satellite radio is probably more profitable than the entire music streaming business. SiriusXM has told investors it expects 2019 earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) of around $2.4 billion, and free cash flow of approximately $1.625 billion. Even with the cost of maintaining four satellites in geo-synchronous orbit, SiriusXM comes out ahead. Pandora caught a financial life-line and now its competitive advantage is its owner.

There are stark differences between SiriusXM and Spotify, a streaming-only company that has far surpassed Pandora’s listenerhip. The two companies had about the same third-quarter revenue ($2 billion for SiriusXM, $1.9 billion for Spotify), but SiriusXM has enviable margins: Spotify keeps about 30% of its revenue and pays the rest to rights holders; after paying royalties and programming costs, SiriusXM keeps 70%. Even with the addition of Pandora’s weaker financial standing, the satellite radio-based model has better margins and turns a net profit.

86% of 13- to 17-year-olds in the U.S. streamed music in the past week.

ILLUSTRATION BY RYAN SNOOK
The two platforms don’t overlap, but SiriusXM has said cost synergies will reach $75 million annually by the end of 2019, 50% more than the $50 million estimated when the merger was announced. But the tantalizing benefit is the addition of a free service to a paid one and vice versa.

Meyer described the hybrid company as “a funnel” in which Pandora’s free listeners at SiriusXM are drawn to become satellite radio subscribers — i.e., the freemium model. “As we get people into that free funnel, you can expect we will promote the value of our subscription,” he said during the earnings call. The funnel is a financially attractive tool. Marketing to existing listeners is practically free for a company that spent $118.4 million to acquire satellite radio customers in 2018.

One of SiriusXM’s challenges will be that its funnel is getting narrower. Since the acquisition was announced in September 2018, Pandora’s free listeners decreased 8.3% to 56.8 million. Upon the acquisition’s close in February, SiriusXM’s monthly footprint jumped from about 30 million to nearly 100 million, including Pandora’s free/subscription listeners. But with few users fleeing, SiriusXM has fewer opportunities to upsell satellite radio.

The SiriusXM-Pandora deal makes sense if its low-margin streaming business isn’t a drag on the income statement. “Pandora will be EBITDA-positive in the second half of the year,” said Meyer on the call. SiriusXM’s financial statements don’t break out components of Pandora’s contributions to EBITDA. But the pro forma statements — calculated as if the acquisition took place Jan. 1, 2018, to allow for year-to-year comparisons — show improvements in the first nine months of 2019. The combined company’s revenue was up 11.2% to $1.25 billion, while gross margin, the percent of revenue kept after paying revenue-related expenses such as royalties, grew 38.1% to $435 million.

Aside from the financial benefits, there are the optics: Sirius definitely matters in the music business. “Music superspins continue to acknowledge the power of our platform, and in a competitive audio world that matters,” said Meyer on the call, adding that he spent 10 years telling the equipment manufacturers “how crappy the Pandora algorithm is.” But what impressed him was the technology. With Pandora, SiriusXM has a safety net for catching lapsed satellite subscribers. “Our goal should be to never lose a listener,” said Meyer. So, rather than lose a satellite subscriber or free trial user, SiriusXM can guide people to ad-supported Pandora.

Research by MusicWatch found 88% of Americans listened to music on broadcast radio in the previous week. But just 44% of 18- to 24-year-olds and 49% of 13- to 17-year-olds did so. And 86% of 13- to 17-year-olds streamed music the previous week.

With the acquisition behind him, Meyer said, perhaps for effect, that he “spent 12 years lying awake at night worrying about Pandora’s place in new vehicle production.” But SiriusXM executives and investors can sleep well... for a quarter or two. Market changes will soon require their alertness.

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**MARKET WATCH**

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**You Oughta Bundle**

**A NEW MUSICAL INSPIRED BY ALANIS MORISSETTE’S JAGGED LITTLE PILL BECAME THE FIRST TO PACKAGE ITS CAST ALBUM WITH A TICKET TO THE SHOW**

**BY TAYLOR MIMS**

_Jagged Little Pill, the musical inspired by the 1995 Alanis Morissette album of the same name, opened on Broadway on Dec. 5. The album has sold 15.2 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen Music. And now, the Broadway show is the first to bundle its cast recording album with tickets to its performances. Fans eager to see the classic LP come to life can pay an additional $2 per ticket for a digital copy of the cast album, released the same day as the show’s Broadway premiere._

With just over 425 seats at the Broadhurst Theatre eligible for the offer per show, the album bundles could bring in over $10,000 in sales through the end of the year and serve as a promotional tool for Pill’s Broadway debut. (Albums sold through ticket bundles on Broadway do not qualify for Billboard’s charts.) The promotion, available for select tickets to Pill’s weekend performances in December, was the result of a partnership between the show’s producers and the cast recording’s label, Atlantic Records.

“Instead of us just selling an album and them just selling a show, us selling an album should help them sell the show and [vice versa],” says Atlantic Records A&R manager Michael Parker, who spearheaded the bundling idea and calls it a pipe dream come true.

“There are people who might not have bought the album right away who will, and people who wanted the record will have the added incentive to buy a ticket to the show,” says Vivek Tiwary, one of the show’s producers. “We’ll see increased revenue on both sides.”

Despite the fact that touring artists have been bundling albums with tickets for years, Tiwary says it took months to get the system implemented for Broadway. Unlike with Ticketmaster, which created functionality for concert ticket and album bundles over a decade ago, the technology had to be built and tested within one of Broadway’s main ticketers, Telecharge.

“We didn’t simply snap our fingers and it happened,” says Tiwary, adding that attorneys also had to negotiate terms between the ticketer, the label and producers to make the bundling a reality. “I suspect other producers would have given up, would have said, ‘This is taking a lot of time and effort and it’s just not worth it.’ But we put the time and effort into doing it.”

As the label for Hamilton, which has sold over 6 million copies, Atlantic saw firsthand how a cast album can create worldwide demand for a show that has expanded internationally to England, Australia and Germany. According to Alecia Parker, executive producer of National Artists Management Company (Chicago, Waive), labels are no longer waiting months after the show hits the stage to release cast albums and are instead leveraging them for marketing purposes.

“A cast album is such an important component of a show’s brand these days, really as a promotional tool,” says Parker. “It builds awareness for audiences for when you start touring.”

Tiwary believes album bundles will become standard for Broadway shows going forward. “I would like to see a day where this is not a promotion, where this is just clockwork,” he says. “Much like a Playbill, everyone who leaves the theater walks out with a cast album.”

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**JEFF VAUGHN WAS NAMED PRESIDENT OF CAPITOL RECORDS. ◼️ FORMER WARNER MUSIC GROUP DIGITAL CHIEF OLE OBERMANN JOINED TIKTOK AS VP/GLLOBAL HEAD OF MUSIC.**
CONGRATULATIONS

DESIREE PEREZ

2019 EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR
WOMEN IN MUSIC

LIVE NATION
Exit Interview: Charles Caldas

OVER 12 YEARS, THE FIRST LEADER OF THE RIGHTS ORGANIZATION MERLIN BROUGHT INDIES INTO THE STREAMING ERA

BY RICHARD SMIRKE

After more than 12 years as the first CEO of indie rights nonprofit Merlin, Charles Caldas will step down on Dec. 31. During his tenure, Merlin distributed over $2 billion to its 900-plus members, including more than 20,000 labels and distributors in 66 countries that make up 12% of the global digital recorded-music market. Caldas made early licensing deals with Spotify, YouTube, Deezer, SoundCloud, Pandora, Facebook and Tencent. He also pursued copyright infringement actions against a number of digital services and played an important role in the Warner Music/Parlophone divestment. The 2018 sale of its equity shares in Spotify netted Merlin’s members a further $130 million. “When you are running this hard for so long, you don’t want to pause and look back at what you achieved,” says the executive. “You’re always looking ahead at what’s around the corner.”

One of the first deals you made as CEO was a licensing agreement with Spotify that gave Merlin an equity stake in what was then a startup. Was that a difficult decision at the time?

Doing an early deal with Spotify wasn’t necessarily the most popular move in some parts of the independent sector. There were a number of independents around the world that felt that the emergence of streaming services was going to take more value out of the market rather than add it. Some of my toughest discussions in the early days were justifying why we felt these platforms were worth licensing and why we weren’t trying to shut them down. But the value proved tangible, and the huge amount of money we injected into our community via the successful sale of our Spotify shares makes me proud that we built this engine.

Merlin is one of a number of major rights holder organizations that are negotiating new licensing deals with TikTok. Do you think you will reach an agreement?

I’m confident that we’ll get there. We are trying to harness what has been built there into a licensing model. It’s a good sign that there are people who are thinking of compelling ways to get people in the wider market engaged with music again. Five years ago, no one would have predicted kids doing 15-second bedroom videos of their favorite songs would become this global phenomenon.

Under your leadership, Merlin successfully fought copyright infringement actions against LimeWire and Grooveshark, and battled YouTube over the value of independent music. What has been the most trying battle during the past 12 years?

All fights are unpleasant, and they are all — from our perspective — avoidable. From a consumer’s perspective, they don’t care if an artist is signed to [Universal-owned] Republic or Ninja Tune. If it’s a great song, it’s a great song, and [independent music] shouldn’t be worth any less to the end user than something funded and recorded by a multinational corporation. We always knew that ultimately the story we were telling would prevail.

Merlin’s members represent around 12% of the global digital music market. Can you envisage independents’ market share continuing to grow?

I’m certainly confident that we’re not going to lose a lot of value. The main risk for losing value in the independent sector is through acquisitions and consolidation. And in a market this valuable, I have no doubt that we’ll see some of that. The thing that gives me confidence is that as streaming spreads across Latin America, Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, Africa — all of these markets that are still nascent in the streaming revolution — there are a lot of rights sitting within major labels. Those companies will start to take more control of their own digital business and take a much more independent path to market. So while there will be consolidation on one hand, there will be expansion on the other.

What’s the main challenge for indies in 2020?

The ongoing challenge is establishing parity in emerging markets. The value conversation in China, for example, is a difficult conversation to have. As we get into other markets like India that aren’t quite as evolved down the digital chain, we’re having to fight some of those battles again. So I would be very wary of saying the battle is won. The fact that the music industry’s biggest clients now are also massive technology companies with their own view of [the value of music] rights means there is always going to be that tension.

In addition to broadening its concert series with cross-genre lineups, the platform’s 2020 programming slate includes three new initiatives: “Serenade,” a series of live pop-up shows with male artists celebrating women; “Testimony,” an intimate gathering during which women in entertainment will share adversities and triumphs that changed their lives; and “Genna,” a live series and documentary showcasing groundbreaking female artists in Latin music.

“I’m calling on every female creative in the entertainment industry,” says Lowery. “I want to put talk into action. It’s our time to shine.”

— GAIL MITCHELL

Women To The Front

HEATHER LOWERY LEADS LIVE NATION’S NEW JOINT VENTURE WITH FEMME IT FORWARD

Since April, the female-led music and entertainment platform Femme It Forward has produced 20 all-female concerts and panel sessions. Launched under the Live Nation Urban banner, it is now entering a joint venture with parent Live Nation Entertainment to take its mission global. Femme It Forward founder and LNU vp talent and touring Heather Lowery will run the new division with a five-member female team.

“At Live Nation, we empower entrepreneurs and their creative visions,” says Live Nation CEO Michael Rapino. “Heather launched Femme It Forward with the purpose of creating a new platform for female artists and events. We’re thrilled to be investors in that mission.”

Starting with its “Black Women in the C-Suite” panel at Broccoli Con in Washington, D.C. (featuring Endeavor’s Bozoma Saint John), Femme has presented shows starring Cardi B, Jill Scott, Jorja Smith, City Girls and Brandy, and now also features such newcomers as Kiana Ledé and Nicole Bus. A portion of ticket sales for Femme events goes to charities that support women’s music education and career development, as well as organizations that assist people dealing with domestic abuse and homelessness.

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“I’m calling on every female creative in the entertainment industry,” says Lowery. “I want to put talk into action. It’s our time to shine.”

— GAIL MITCHELL
Desiree,

Congratulations on being named Billboard's 2019 Executive of the Year!

This recognition is beyond deserved.

We are very grateful to have you on our team!

Congrats!

Phil McIntyre, Kevin Jonas, Joe Jonas and Nick Jonas
JUICE WRLD
1998–2019

BY JOHN NORRIS

THIS WEEK, GEN Z MOURNS ONE of its most promising new voices of the streaming era. Jarad Higgins, the rapper known as Juice WRLD, died shortly after having a seizure at Chicago’s Midway Airport. He died Dec. 8, just a week after his 21st birthday.

Raised in the suburbs of Chicago, Juice started his career by uploading tracks to streaming platform SoundCloud. In a few short years, his diaristic earworms helped usher in a burgeoning wing of hip-hop that combined dark lyrics, catchy hooks and emo-rock influences, and he broke into the mainstream with his hit “Lucid Dreams.”

In spring 2018 came a headline-making $3 million deal with Interscope Records. He quickly became not only the latest and most prominent face of “SoundCloud rap,” but with the 2017 death of Lil Peep, the leading progenitor of so-called “emo rap,” a term that Juice told Billboard in his 2019 cover story he wasn’t particularly fond of: “Any rap that’s talking about what you’re going through is ‘emo rap,’ ” he said.

Juice’s lyrics often dealt with depression (“Empty,” “Flaws and Sins”), drugs (“Lean Wit Me,” “Wasted” with Lil Uzi Vert), enemies (“Armed and Dangerous”) and the oppressiveness of the male gaze (“Hemotions”).

Bleak as his songs could be on their face, hope was always the lesson Juice aimed to impart. Onstage, he often shouted words like, “Follow your dreams, and you will end up where you want to be in this life.” Being misunderstood is the currency of many a young male artist, but in Juice’s case, you do sense that there was more to him than the grim public image that was presented. Surely we had only just begun to know him.

WENT OUT TO CALIFORNIA in 1970 because Capitol Records was showcasing me at the Troubadour. While I was out there, I called Joe Smith, who was at Warner Bros. Records at the time, and asked if he could take a meeting.

I felt a bit sheepish going over to Warner Bros. after Capitol flew me out, but Warner was really where I wanted to be. It was the label that was hip enough to give James Taylor, Ry Cooder and Randy Newman enough rope to do whatever they wanted. They were at the top of my list.

At the time, Joe assured me he was not interested in changing the way I looked or controlling how I sounded. He really nurtured me as an artist.

“We make our money from Deep Purple and Black Sabbath and Frank Sinatra,” I remember he said to me then. “We do that so that we can develop artists like yourself.”

In a business that became more preoccupied with short-term profits, Joe believed in supporting artists for the long haul, allowing us to stretch and grow. Joe was such a warm and engaging guy. And he was the same Joe Smith the whole time. That’s why he was so beloved by artists especially. He would have been completely supportive if I had gone and made an album on the back of a flatbed truck with Mississippi Fred McDowell. He would have thought it was great.

In the mid- to late ’80s, [my former managers] Danny Goldberg and Ron Stone were shopping for a new label deal after I left Warner Bros. They were telling labels: “She doesn’t want money to sing, but she wants artistic control.” I said, “I’ll do the work. I sell around 150,000 records. I tour all the time. I do lots of press — but I’m not looking for somebody to reinvent the wheel. I’m not going to look for my look and my sound to be commercial.”

By that time, Joe had moved over to Capitol-EMI [from Elektra/Asylum]. He was a natural fit there. Fifteen years after he first signed me to Warner Bros., he gave me a second shot. He said to [my managers]: “Listen, we’re not going to spend a lot of money. She can do what she wants. We expect modest sales, but I would be happy to have Bonnie.”

I signed the deal with Capitol for one album, and Joe knew that I wanted to do a stripped-down-sounding record with Don [Was] producing. Giving me that second chance for [1989’s] Nick of Time has made all the difference in my life and career.

Joe loved Nick of Time. He had tremendous personal affection for each other. He was so happy that I got my life together and that he was the person who was able to give me that second shot. I feel like he was in my family. The Grammys for that album [including album of the year] were an astonishing victory for both of us that no one expected. Joe was so proud and grateful, as I was. We were really glad that we had taken a chance on each other.

The last time I saw him was in 2015, when he got his star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Jackson Browne and I gave impassioned talks about him and then there was a wonderful lunch at the Wilshire Country Club with his family and decades’ worth of people who knew him in the record business. People paid tribute to him for hours.

He was a dear friend as well as one of the most sincere, warmhearted and loyal people any of us in the business will be blessed to know.

—AS TOLD TO MELINDA NEWMAN
TO THE MOTHER OF DRAGONS!

THE WORLD NOW GETS TO KNOW WHAT WE, AND ALL THE PEOPLE YOU HAVE HELPED IN A CRISIS HAVE LONG KNOWN.

YOU ARE A FIERCE PROTECTOR WITH A HEART OF GOLD.

CONGRATULATIONS!

LA FAMILA
SHAWN CARTER, JUAN, JAY BROWN AND TYTY

ROC NATION
How Alok Became South America’s Biggest EDM Pop Star

Brazilian DJs have had a tough time breaking into the top tier of the music business. One artist broke the mold — and others are following

BY ALEXEI BARRIONUEVO

NEW YORK — Brazilian Day, an annual Labor Day weekend smorgasbord of barbecue smoke, local beer and hundreds of thousands of people jamming a dozen streets in midtown Manhattan, also features a star-studded musical lineup. This year, some of the biggest acts in sertanejo — Brazil’s version of pop-country music — hit the stage. But it was Alok Petrillo, the DJ known as Alok — Brazil’s biggest-ever electronic music act, who, with a performance peppered with confetti cannons and lots of hands in the air — closed out the festival.

After the global success of “Hear Me Now,” his 2016 song with Bruno Martini and Zebra — the first track from Brazil to break 100 million streams on Spotify — Alok hit international pay dirt. Tiésto called wanting to collaborate in a subgenre Alok smartly named Brazilian Bass. Offers rolled in to play Ibiza, China and the World Stage at Rock in Rio, previously reserved for global stars. Even Mick Jagger tapped him — at a party where a monkey pulled a llama by a leash — to remix one of his tracks.

But it was an unlikely partnership with Marcos Araújo — the owner of Villa Mix, the promoter that organized Brazilian Day’s lineup — that catalyzed Alok to a $100,000-per-show level rivaled among his countrymen only by Latin sensation Anitta and sertanejo duo Jorge & Mateus. On a continent where local DJs have mostly remained in the underground, Alok, 28, became the first EDM artist from South America to break into the global pop mainstream, proving to skeptical Brazilian promoters that an EDM pop star could be as big as any act in any other genre.

“You really have to be an electronic artist breaking through to pop to make it in Brazil,” says Alok. “What Calvin Harris and David Guetta did, that’s what I am trying to do.”

Born in Goiânia, in Brazil’s agricultural heartland, Alok is the son of psytrance DJs who co-founded the country’s weeklong rave Universo Paralello (which runs this year from Dec. 27 to Jan. 3 on a remote beach in Bahia). Alok dropped out of college in 2012, when the global EDM craze was in full swing, to focus on DJ-ing; and aided by his parents’ contacts in the industry, by 2015 he was debuting at Rock in Rio and EDC Brasil.

Since crossing over three years ago, Alok has released a slew of pop songs with co-producers, though he has yet to issue a studio album. His most recent track, “On & On,” with Portuguese producer Dynoro, hit 1 million streams on Spotify in its first weekend in November, and he has a project in the works with singer Luis Fonsi (“Despacito”), his team tells Billboard.

A strong social media push also helped. With 14.9 million Instagram followers, Alok trails only Marshmello (28.3 million) and Martin Garrix (17.2 million) in the dance-music realm, and he is gaining over 500,000 a month, says his marketing director, Willame Morais.

Araújo began to note of Alok around 2015, when he was hunting for a DJ to diversify the lineup of Villa Mix’s country music-facing festivals. Before he became the king of sertanejo, launching the career of Jorge & Mateus and pushing his festivals into 27 Brazilian cities, Araújo, 45, was a DJ and dance promoter. When he realized that Alok’s parents had once spun at one of his parties, he approached the young DJ, who, says Araújo, was then charging only about 3,000 Brazilian reals (less than $1,000) per gig.

At first Alok thought the idea was ludicrous: a DJ at a country music show? And their initial collaboration (in Goiânia in 2016), didn’t go well. “It was horrible,” says Alok.

“He was trembling, scared to death to be facing 50,000 fans that were there just for sertanejo,” says Araújo. But Alok gutted it out, did another show the next month, and soon became a regular on the Villa Mix lineup. Within a year, he became a headliner.

“He was the first DJ [from Brazil] to spin for 50,000-60,000 people almost every month,” says Araújo, “and that started to draw attention from abroad.” As the two became closer, Araújo’s role expanded. Today Araújo acts as Alok’s GM, and is responsible for his bookings in Brazil and Asia.

WME — which, Araújo says, once expressed interest in buying Villa Mix — handles bookings stateside and the rest of the world.

The Villa Mix exposure helped push Alok’s asking fee per gig in Brazil to between $100,000 and $150,000, says Araújo. Only Jorge & Mateus make more ($150,000-$200,000).

But to drive those fees, Alok needed hits. In 2016 he found one with “Hear Me Now,” which went viral overseas, becoming the first Brazilian track to land on Spotify’s global charts. It’s the third-most-streamed track in Brazil on Spotify, after Ed Sheeran’s “Shape of You” and Jorge & Mateus’ “Propaganda (Ao Vivo).”

Roberta Pate, Spotify’s head of artist and label marketing for Latin America, attributes Alok’s success to timing. She says he made the crossover to pop “exactly
We congratulate Desiree Perez on Billboard’s recognition of her as Executive of the Year!

Here’s to your amazing accomplishments and your continued success!
when Spotify and the streaming services were growing in the world.”

Suddenly, a number of big artists, including Tiësto and Steve Aoki, wanted to work with Alok due to the size of Brazil’s recorded-music market: According to IFPI, in 2018 it was the largest in Latin America and the 10th largest in the world, at $298.8 million. In 2016 at Tomorrowland Brasil, Alok dubbed his stage “Brazilian Bass,” defining a new, super-heavy bass sound that had been bubbling up in Brazil for more than a year.

“At the time, there was not really a clear trend in dance music,” says Jorni Heringa, head of A&R for Spinnin’ Records, which released “Hear Me Now” and then signed two more Brazilian artists. “This was new and fresh.”

Heading into 2020, Araújo is encouraging

“YOU REALLY HAVE TO BE AN ELECTRONIC ARTIST BREAKING THROUGH TO POP TO MAKE IT IN BRAZIL. WHAT CALVIN HARRIS AND DAVID GUETTA DID, THAT’S WHAT I AM TRYING TO DO.” — ALOK

Alok to play more shows abroad, especially in Asia and Las Vegas. Brazil’s touring map is so large — and Alok so popular there now — that he could easily play 200-250 shows a year in the country. In 2018 he did just that: 244 of his 263 concerts were in Brazil.

Alok’s biggest payday outside the country have been in China, where he has pushed his asking price for festivals up to $150,000. In 2017 the DJ toured China for 45 days.

It was the Chinese market that became a topic of discussion between Alok and Mick Jagger at a house party in São Paulo in late 2017. When Alok arrived, he saw a monkey leading a llama by a leash, with an exotic bird walking beside them. Soon Alok was showing Jagger videos on his phone from his tour in China. Jagger suggested they work on a track together, which led to a remix of Jagger’s “Gotta Get a Grip.”

For Alok, who doesn’t do drugs, it still felt like a trip. “I thought I had just taken acid,” he says. “I came here and saw a goat, a llama and a monkey, and now Mick Jagger is asking to do a song. What is going on?”

SA RECORDING ARTIST, AUDIO engineer, producer and multi-instrumentalist, Terri Winston was signed as a performer by BMG and PolyGram, and toured with acts like the Pixies and The Flaming Lips. But the farther Winston’s career took her, the more obvious it became that her field had a major gender problem. “I could count on one hand the women engineers that I knew,” she says.

While growing up in Milwaukee, Winston says she had the “luxury” of entering engineering because her father, a mechanical engineer, exposed her to the line of work at an early age. As an adult, she wanted to give women the same chance, and in 2003, founded Women’s Audio Mission, a nonprofit based in San Francisco that provides music education and creative technology classes taught by women in those fields, to women of all ages, at little to no cost.

In the 16 years since WAM launched, more than 16,000 women and nonbinary individuals have taken its classes. Of that group, 800 students were placed at such companies as Sony and Dolby Laboratories.

“It has changed things so much that male artists in San Francisco sometimes ask us, ‘Is there really a [gender diversity] problem?’” says Winston, who now serves full time as WAM’s executive director. Due in large part to WAM, the majority of Bay Area music venues and recording studios have at least one female engineer. That is a huge accomplishment, given that a February study from the University of Southern California’s Annenberg Inclusion Initiative estimated that just 2% of producers and 3% of mixing and mastering engineers in the United States are women.

At a workshop in September, members of Beyoncé’s original all-female touring band taught students about sound recording in one of WAM’s two entirely female-run recording studios. (In addition to the classes, WAM’s studios have produced more than 400 projects by artists including Neko Case, Angelique Kidjo, Tune-Yards and Toro y Moi.)

“When it comes to gear and equipment, it’s a really male-dominated space, and it can be difficult to have access and be comfortable,” says Divinity Roxx, the bassist from Beyoncé’s original band. “To be in a space with all women, using gear to record, would have been invaluable to me.”

Just before the Annenberg study brought mainstream attention to gender disparity in the music business, Winston decided it was time to expand WAM. In 2017, she launched a conference series to bring hands-on workshops to cities including Boston, Nashville and New York. Last month, she started an online fundraiser (a “WAMpaign”) to raise $25,000 by the end of the year that would allow the organization to accommodate an additional 1,000 students in 2020 (from 2,000 to 3,000 per year). Due to high demand, she has expanded WAM’s programming to Oakland and San Jose, Calif., and plans to launch in Los Angeles in the next five years.

“There are really no women driving the media, music and messages that you hear every day,” says Winston. “We’re not geniuses — we’re just taking the time and effort to actually do it.”

GOOD WORKS

Tech Support

Women’s Audio Mission has helped over 16,000 people pursue careers in creative technology by approaching activism as common sense

BY TATIANA CIRISANO

Sony Music’s The Thread Shop signed a deal to produce The Beatles merchandise. Interscope Records joint venture label AM Sounds signed singer-songwriter MK Gee.
CONGRATULATIONS

FROM LIVE NATION

ON YOUR AMAs FOR

FAVORITE DUO OR GROUP

TOUR OF THE YEAR

FAVORITE SOCIAL ARTIST
FOR THE SECOND CONSECUTIVE YEAR!
Very Day I Wake Up and Feel Like I Am Climbing Mount Everest on Roller Blades,” Says Ali Harnell, Live Nation’s First President and Chief Strategy Officer of Women Nation. The newly formed division, which Harnell took over in March, has a mandate to tackle issues of gender inequality and sexism in the live-music business even beyond the walls of Live Nation, allowing the longtime AEG veteran to shift her focus from developing female artists as headliners to identifying and recruiting the next generation of female leaders.

Last year, two major chapters in Harnell’s life were coming to an end: Her third five-year contract at AEG was expiring, and her son was preparing to leave for college. “It was an emotional time for me,” says Harnell. “I got some advice from people I trust, who said, ‘Just get really quiet and figure out what you really want to do.’”

After some reflection, Harnell wrote out a mission statement for a project to help women advance in the music industry — and potentially beyond. The proposal made its way to Live Nation CEO Michael Rapino, who had greenlit the Women Nation Fund, an early-stage vehicle launched in May 2018 to focus on female-led live-music businesses. In March, Harnell was hired to manage the fund’s initial investments and expand the company’s effort to cultivate and support female artists and entrepreneurs.

Unlike other business units at the concert giant, Women Nation operates fluidly. Commuting between Nashville and Los Angeles, Harnell focuses on female-centric commercial endeavors, as well as initiatives to raise awareness about misogyny in the music industry and improve gender parity on the stage and in the boardroom.

Harnell’s latest project is promoting Oprah Winfrey’s 2020 Vision, a nine-city arena tour in partnership with WW (formerly known as Weight Watchers). “I literally have spent the last six months working on this project in a constant state of bliss,” says Harnell. “Can somebody pinch me? Is this my life now?”
We Proudly Congratulate Our Colleagues

YVES C. PIERRE

And

JACQUELINE REYNOLDS-DRUMM

Women in Music
What are Women Nation’s main goals?
I’m working with a flywheel model with Women Nation at the center. One quadrant is the female-led and female-driven projects, which include Oprah Winfrey, a 100-year celebration of women’s right to vote and tours with women like Maren Morris and Jennifer Nettles of Sugarland. It’s also supporting and developing female-led festivals. There’s external-facing stuff like Spotify’s efforts to introduce gender parity in their playlists, as well as our work as delegates to Anita Hill’s Hollywood Commission, which is fighting sexual harassment and discrimination in entertainment. There are initiatives like She Is the Music with Stacy Smith at the University of Southern California’s Annenberg School, as well as Voices of Change leaders and Safe Tours. And there’s working with Live Nation’s human resources department and the Women Nation fund that was created before I got to Live Nation to figure out how we move the needle on all of those things.

How did you develop the concept of the Vision 2020 tour with Winfrey and her team?
The idea originated with WW, which wanted to put a wellness tour together, and because Oprah is involved in WW, it was a natural fit. It’s the power of Oprah and her guests that make this format work — a different guest in each city for these one-on-one, kind of Super Soul conversations. We need it — the world sucks right now.

“I BELIEVE THAT MAREN MORRIS CAN BE A STADIUM ACT ... THE SAME WITH BRANDI CARLILE ... AND JENNIFER NETTLES.”

Did that feeling — about the state of the world — compel you to work on this project?
[After] 2016, it felt really palpable and clear that misogyny exists. We’re living in an age, post-Harvey Weinstein, where men are like, “Oh, wait. I can’t do that anymore. I’m on better behavior now.” And that’s starting to help shift things that are hard for women. But watching what happened with Dr. Christine Blasey-Ford, and knowing for myself and my sisters in the world that things are still so unbalanced, I asked myself, “What do we have to do to get heard and to have equity to advantage?”

The WW tour made advancing gender equity full time for you.
Yes, and I eventually wrote this statement about how I envision a new breed of entertainment division that focuses on advancing women. [Live Nation CEO] Michael Rapino got his hands on it and within five seconds he said, “I love this. Let’s do it.” I’ll never forget what he told me next: “Until we’re focused on this 24/7, we’re never going to change it. So come help me and let’s focus on it together.”

How will your mandate reach beyond Live Nation?
[Gender] inequality exists, and solving the problem means more women in leadership positions. I work for Live Nation, so my mandate is to our employees, consumers and shareholders. I’m helping to create opportunity and access for women in our microcosm.

As someone who spent a lot of time in country music, what do you think of the gender inequality debate about country radio?
The success of the bro country sound created this other narrative for the radio stations that led to them just playing one sound that they’re now afraid to move away from. And the listener’s ear moves slowly. Radio will tell you women-led country acts “don’t sell advertising.” Instead of trying to dig in and figure out how to get women’s voices back on the radio, they just go to their corner and keep doing what they think is working.

You shaped artists like Little Big Town, Hunter Hayes. Would you ever do artist development full time?
Yes, if it is in the service of supporting and advancing women. I believe that Maren Morris can be a stadium act, and I believe in her manager Janet Weir, and I want to do everything I can to help them get there. The same with Brandi Carlile. Anything I can do to support the message that Brandi sends to young women is the kind of message I want to be behind. Jennifer Nettles — same thing. She came out at the Country Music Association Awards wearing a skirt that said “equal pay.” I have learned so much from these women.

What will you be most focused on in 2020?
Building awareness of these incredible female artists. If you help them get played on radio and listed on the digital streaming platforms, that helps strengthen their touring business and land festival spots. It’s all part of the machine. Once you understand how the machine works, you can start to make real change.
CAA HONORS OUR WOMEN IN MUSIC FEATURING KATIE ANDERSON • MARIEKE BIANCHI • AMINA BRYANT • SABRINA BUTERA SHANNON CASEY • MICHELLE MCGOWNE CRAIG • LESLEY DIPETRO • JILLIAN DOYLE CHELSEA DUNLAP • OLIVIA FARRELL • SHANNON FITZGERALD • KATIE GERMANO JULIE GREENBERG • JEN HAMMEL • LIZZIE HOLDFORTH • INA JACOBS MEREDITH JONES • JANET KIM • CAROLE KINZEL • LUCY KOZAK STEPHANIE LANGS • KRISTINE MARSHALL • SUMMER MARSHALL • MARIA MAY KASEY MCKEE • OLIVIA MIRABELLA • LINDSEY MYERS • REBECCA NICHOLS KATHARINE NOKES • SHIRIN NURY • ANGIE RHO • LANELL RUMION • KYLEN SHARPE EMILY VAN ALLSBURG • ELISA VAZZANA • EMILY WRIGHT • CAROLINE YIM AND SALUTES MEGAN THEE STALLION POWERHOUSE AWARD AND OUR OWN JENNA ADLER EMMA BANKS ALLI MCGREGOR MARLENE TSUCHII 2019 BILLBOARD WOMEN IN MUSIC HONOREES
At the Los Angeles stop of iHeartRadio’s traveling Jingle Ball tour, superstar performers brought festive flair to The Forum: Lizzo donned a Mrs. Claus get-up, including a red, floor-length robe; Katy Perry (above) opened her set by performing her 2018 single “Cozy Little Christmas,” flanked by backup singers dressed as gifts; and Billie Eilish declared to the crowd, “Christmas is coming, let’s be happy.” Camila Cabello celebrated her new album, Romance, released that day, with a solo acoustic rendition of its smash single “Señorita” sans collaborator Shawn Mendes — but elsewhere, there were plenty of onstage guests. BTS brought out Halsey to perform their team-up “Boy With Luv,” and Sam Smith invited Normani onstage to perform their hit “Dancing With a Stranger” together for the second time ever — the first was at Jingle Ball’s Tampa, Fla., installment five days earlier.

—TATIANA CIRISANO
Cabello performed singles from Romance, including “Liar” and “Shameless.” “I left stage tonight being INSANELY EXCITED FOR THE ROMANCE TOUR,” she later wrote on Instagram.

Lizzo performed “Good As Hell,” “Truth Hurts” and more, asking the audience to scream like “I’m Jimin from BTS.”

BTS kicked off the evening with a high-energy set.

After first performing at the preshow, Louis Tomlinson filled in for French Montana, who was recently hospitalized.

From left: Brady Tutton, Drew Ramos, Chance Perez, Conor Michael Smith and Sergio Calderon of boy band In Real Life, which performed its new holiday single, “California Christmas.”

Halsey (left) backstage with iHeartRadio host Ryan Seacrest.
ONE BILLION PLAYS  
Farruko (center) celebrated topping 1 billion Pandora streams and performed at the Pandora Live: El Pulso event in Hollywood, Calif., on Dec. 4. It “was a hit thanks to the fans,” he said in a clip on Instagram. From left: Pandora’s Jeff Zuchowski and Azu Olvera, Farruko and Pandora’s Leticia Ramirez, Marcos Juárez and Jonathan Cabrera.

A Tyler, the Creator presented Rihanna with the Urban Luxe prize for her Fenty company at the London Fashion Awards on Dec. 2.

At a concert honoring the late DJ, who died by suicide in April 2018, his father, Klas Bergling, spoke about mental health awareness.

David Guetta told Billboard before the concert that Avicii’s death served as a wake-up call: “It made everyone stop and think.”

Adam Lambert performed “Lay Me Down,” which he co-wrote and sang on Avicii’s 2013 album True.

Rita Ora performed her 2017 collaboration with Avicii, “Lonely Together,” for the concert’s 60,000 attendees.

AVICII TRIBUTE CONCERT  
STOCKHOLM, DEC. 5

Sony/ATV’s Jon Platt (right) with Motown Records’ Berry Gordy at the publisher’s holiday party in Los Angeles on Dec. 4.

A Timbaland (left) and Tainy on Dec. 4 at “The Kids That Grew Up on Reggaeton,” an Art Basel Miami exhibit presented in part by Tainy’s NEON16 music company.

A A Tyler, the Creator presented Rihanna with the Urban Luxe prize for her Fenty company at the London Fashion Awards on Dec. 2.

ONE BILLION PLAYS  
Farruko (center) celebrated topping 1 billion Pandora streams and performed at the Pandora Live: El Pulso event in Hollywood, Calif., on Dec. 4. It “was a hit thanks to the fans,” he said in a clip on Instagram. From left: Pandora’s Jeff Zuchowski and Azu Olvera, Farruko and Pandora’s Leticia Ramirez, Marcos Juárez and Jonathan Cabrera.
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PG. 52  THE GO-TO CHOREOGRAPHER  ×  PG. 57  INGRID ANDRESS  ×  PG. 58  NINJA TUNE TURNS 30

CALM BEFORE THE STORM

With his second album, Stormzy is U.K. rap’s best bet for a global star — that fellow Brits say is poised to take grime “where we couldn’t”

BY DORIAN LYNSEY
PHOTOGRAPHED BY AUSTIN HARGRAVE
WHEN BRITISH artist Stormzy met JAY-Z earlier in 2019 during a recording session for Ed Sheeran’s No.6 Collaborations Project, the veteran rapper advised him to create a culture, not just a career. “Because culture moves the whole world,” Stormzy recalls him saying. The encounter was so inspiring that the 26-year-old Londoner used a videoclip recorded when they had met to introduce his headlining performance at the Glastonbury Festival in June — the first ever by a black British solo artist.

Though Stormzy has been featured on only one minor U.S. hit so far (Linkin Park’s “Good Goodbye” in 2017), he is hailed at home as royalty, winning over two dozen awards, including British male solo artist at the BRIT Awards and best worldwide act at the MTV Europe Music Awards (both in 2017). This year, he guested on Sheeran’s “Take Me Back to London” — his second U.K. No. 1, following his own “Vossi Bop.” And now, with his second album, Heavy Is the Head, released on Atlantic, Stormzy is hoping to finally become a global star himself. “It sounds a bit funny coming from a rapper, but I’ve never been afraid of pulling from all genres, he says. “I can be inspired by the magnitude of Ed Sheeran and Adele.”

Born Michael Omari Jr. in Croydon, South London, in 1993, Stormzy emerged as an artist just as grime was coming out of a commercial and creative slump. During the 2000s, pioneers such as Dizzee Rascal and Wiley only crossed over by trading grime’s abrasive intensity for friendly dance-pop, as a moral panic about gang-related violence hampered the live scene. In 2014, however, veteran rapper Skepta relit the sound’s fire with his hit “Shutdown.” When Stormzy arrived, he was embraced as the full package of talent and charisma that British rap had been waiting for — it didn’t hurt that he was 10 years younger than Skepta. Wiley tweeted his blessing that October: “Please take it where we couldn’t, my brother.”

Stormzy spent the next three years building a tight creative team, many of whom also have Ghanaian roots like he does. By 2017, he had released his debut, Gang Signs & Prayer, through his own #Merky Records (distributed by Warner Music Group’s Alternative Distribution Alliance). It was the first independent grime album to reach No. 1 in the United Kingdom. In January, #Merky signed a joint-venture deal with Atlantic Records U.K.; Heavy Is the Head will be Stormzy’s major-label debut.

From the start, Stormzy’s strategy has been shaped by observing the “weird stigma” that usually comes with success in U.K. rap culture. “Artists get championed through the underground, and as soon as they get to the mainstream, that community spirit is lost,” he says. “I said, ‘When I finally get my chance, it’s important that I stay grounded.’ ” He has done so by paying tribute to dozens of such rappers during his set at Glastonbury and by launching a publishing imprint for black British writers and a Cambridge University scholarship for black British students in 2018.

Stormzy is politically outspoken, too, often turning high-profile appearances like Glastonbury and the 2018 BRIT Awards into opportunities to condemn Prime Minister Boris Johnson and his predecessor, Theresa May. Recently, on Instagram, he endorsed the opposition Labour Party; the day after his post, 366,000 people registered to vote, according to GOV.UK, compared with 109,000 the day before. “It just goes to show that we’re entering a time when black voices are way more prominent and influential,” says Stormzy. “I feel like everyone’s got braver. We’re being loud about our culture.”

Right now, Stormzy is among the loudest — and plans to keep it that way. The album title refers to his status as one of the most celebrated and most scrutinized artists in Britain (At Glastonbury, he led a “Fuck the government” chant) and how that weighs on him. “It’s very overwhelming and quite scary in terms of meaning this and that to different people,” he says. “But recently, making this album and telling my truths, I came to a slow realization: You can be superman a lot of the days, but you’re human. And sometimes, it’s going to be too much. You’re going to trip and stumble. It’s just coming to terms with the fact that I can still be flawed in my brilliance.”

He chronicles all of this on Heavy Is the Head, the product of two years’ work. The album has minimal guest spots (unlike his debut), though the dancehall-flavored “Own It” features Nigeria’s Burna Boy and Sheeran, a close friend since he first reached out to Stormzy in 2016. “He’s always been an open fan of black culture,” says Stormzy. “From as soon as he came in the game, he has worked with rappers.”

Stormzy has similar global ambitions, but unlike grime artists before him, may actually break through. His 55-date 2020 world tour schedule includes a dozen U.S. shows as well as first-time stops in Africa and headlining gigs in Dubai and China.

“I’m mad blessed,” says Stormzy, who is already thinking ahead to a third album. “The third one’s your homecoming. As an artist, albums are my everything. When I’m not here, that’s what lives on. You know when you see Kanye [West] and look back at his discography and you have all these brilliant pieces of art? That’s exactly how I want it.”

STORMZY’S STRATEGIZERS

Onwuka, 29, quit his job at a car dealership in 2014 to manage his longtime friend, using his savings as seed money. When Onwuka and Stormzy decided that major labels weren’t offering anything that they couldn’t do themselves, they established #Merky Records and signed a distribution deal with Warner Music Group’s Alternative Distribution Alliance.

Agyemfra, 36, met Stormzy in 2014 through her job in the entertainment department at adidas before founding her own brand consultancy, bea.london, whose clients include Spotify and rapper Wretch 32. Tasked with realizing Stormzy’s audacious ideas, she turned a book offer from Penguin Random House into a long-term partnership, #Merky Books, and established his Cambridge University scholarship.

Boating and his current role, overseeing a roster that includes Ed Sheeran and Coldplay as well as Stormzy. “Not only is Heavy Is the Head an incredible album,” says Saslow, “but Stormzy is motivating the youth of London to take action politically, encouraging hundreds of thousands to register to vote.”
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**SEAN BANKHEAD**
CHOREOGRAPHER/CREATIVE DESIGNER

Sean Bankhead’s dancing career started in the back seat of his mother’s car when he was 2 years old. “I was bopping on beat, and she’s like, ‘Where did this boy get this rhythm from?’” recalls the Philadelphia-born Bankhead, now 20. When he turned 17, his family moved to Atlanta in hopes of fast-tracking his dance career; his first week there, he auditioned for Ciara’s “Goodies” video. Though he didn’t get the part, his best friend, choreographer JaQuel Knight, led him to an even bigger opportunity: dancing with Beyoncé to “Single Ladies (Put a Ring on It)” on The Tyra Banks Show. Since, Bankhead has danced with Miley Cyrus and choreographed for Britney Spears and Drake. This year alone, he has landed gigs with Normani, Missy Elliott (for her MTV Video Vanguard performance) and Summer Walker, and by the end of 2020, plans to open his own rehearsal facility in Atlanta. No matter how many gigs he’s juggling at once, though, it has never feels like work to him. “I’ve never had a job,” he says. “I’ve only danced.”

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**TAYLOR WEATHERBY**

In 2014, Bankhead choreographed Fifth Harmony’s “BO$$” video. Following the act’s hiatus in 2018, he stuck with member Normani, choreographing her clips for “Waves,” “Dancing With a Stranger” (her Sari Smith duel) and most recently, her top 40 hit “Motivation.” He says of the choreo-heavy throwback: “We wanted her to look strong, but still give her room to grow as an artist so that we don’t give all of our tricks out of the bag so soon.” Bankhead believes Normani’s MTV Video Music Awards performance of the track was her standout moment this year, despite a wardrobe malfunction. “When that skirt didn’t come off, I was shitting bricks with her. But she always surprises me.”

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**NORMANI**

A year after working with Fifth Harmony for the first time, Bankhead submitted choreography intended for Rihanna to HHat Productions, a consultancy service for creative direction, artist development and, of course, choreography. Elliott ended up recruiting him instead for her “WTF” video. “I was so shook,” says Bankhead. “She was my Michael Jackson (growing up).” He has worked with Elliott since and commends her out-of-the-box approach to visuals, specifically on “I’m Better,” which features a move inspired by Bankhead bouncing on a medicine ball during rehearsals — which, to prevent muscle leaks — typically take place between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m.

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**MISSY ELLIOTT**

Last fall, Bankhead approached Walker’s manager at one of her shows; a year later, he became creative director for the R&B singer’s current First and Last Tour. Walker openly battles stage and social anxiety (she recently trimmed her tour schedule), so he opted for more “moments” rather than intense choreography, like using a wine glass as a stage prop for her song “Wasted.” Before her tour began in October, Walker wrote the entire production on her phone in the bathroom. “She gets to the bottom of her wrist, recalls Bankhead with a laugh, “and I’m like, ‘Summer, there’s eight more songs’ — so she rolls her sleeves up and starts writing down her [other] arm.”

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**SUMMER WALKER**

**INSIDE LOOK**

**MOTOWN’S MOVIE BET**

When Motown president Ethiopia Habtemariam first heard about Queen & Slim, she envisioned a soundtrack that would match the movie’s social and political messaging — and engage fans, thanks to her experience at Motown and Universal Music Publishing Group. So she met with film director Melina Matsoukas (Beyoncé’s “Formation” video) and discovered they wanted the same thing: to recall the 1990s/early-2000s soundtrack heyday propelled by black films such as Love Jones, Boomerang, The Nutty Professor, Love & Basketball and Above the Rim.

“Those were tight, seamless albums with tracks that really resonated, and still resonate, with people,” says Habtemariam. “There was a bigger goal involved here than having one big single. It was about serving the art.” In May, Motown secured the deal.

With Queen & Slim — in which Academy Award nominee Daniel Kaluuya and newcomer Jodie Turner-Smith play a couple on the run after killing a police officer in self-defense — Motown joins the growing list of labels taking a creative stake in soundtracks, like this year’s Beyoncé-curated The Lion King: The Gift (Parkwood Enter-
tainment/Columbia) and Teen Spirit (Interscope) in 2018. It is not Motown’s first soundtrack — the label’s history dates back to the ’80s with The Woman In Red and The Big Chill — but it is the first led by an all-female team, including label vp A&R Lindsay Lanier, vp artist relations/marketing Britney Davis and Capitol senior vp global creative Amber Grimes. “It’s another door opening,” says Habtemariam, “especially for black women.”

Featuring new songs by Megan Thee Stallion, Lauryn Hill and Burna Boy, and including four Motown acts, the soundtrack punctuates Queen and Slim’s emotional road trip with a mix of blues, soul, bounce, hip-hop and contemporary R&B.

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**GAIL MITCHELL**

Now, Habtemariam — who executive-produced the soundtrack with Matsoukas and screenwriter Lena Walhe — is exploring future film and TV projects. “Motown wants to bring people back to the importance of a full soundtrack experience,” she says, “telling stories through music that speaks for and to our black culture.”
Congratulations to Women in Music honoree Joyce Smith

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They say 7 is a lucky number, but we know this wasn’t luck. Do it once, good on you. Do it seven times, you’re a legend. 7 Straight Years on the Billboard Women in Music List.

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Q&A

GROWING PAYNE

Former One Direction member Liam Payne scored a solo top 10 hit in 2017 — so why did he wait 2½ years to release his debut album?

BY TAYLOR WEATHERBY

IN 2016, LIAM PAYNE MET WITH Capitol U.K. to play his first solo songs. The track everyone most gravitated toward was “Both Ways,” a midtempo song about a threesome. “It was testing the waters of what we could write about and could say,” says Payne — and it informed how he approached his debut album, LP1. The 17-track project, which includes all six of the singles Payne has released since 2017’s “Strip That Down,” establishes his sound as a modern update to the rhythmic pop of Usher and Justin Timberlake. “This album has grown with me over the last two years — honestly, some of the hardest I’ve spent on this planet,” says Payne, 26, who endured a breakup, welcomed his first child and fell in love again in recent years. “[LP1] is about my audience getting to know me.”

What contributed to the delay in releasing your debut full-length?

It was about finding the right records; I’m a bit of a perfectionist, so that caused a lot of delays. Also, there was one day where I wasn’t very famous, and then there was a day where I suddenly became ultra-famous — and the transition of that is a bit of a headfuck, really. There’s always that internal fear that you don’t really know what you’re getting yourself into.

Why did you feel the need to put out an album at all, after having success with your singles?

Obviously it’s a different game these days with streaming, but the problem is, [in order] to tour, you need a songbook, and the quickest way to get that songbook out there is an album. The singles I put out so far are very happy-go-lucky, but didn’t really give you an in-depth look at what I’m about. It was a chance for me to get a few things out that I’ve not really said before.

Are there any artists that have inspired you as you developed your own artistry?

I love Billie Eilish’s attitude around the whole idea of what her brand is. Post Malone does a similar thing — he is who he is and that’s what you get. He seems like he’s having fun doing what he’s doing, but there’s also a real dark side to his music. I used to speak to him before he was super massive, and obviously we’ve changed our phone numbers, like, 50 million times, but he randomly Instagram DM’d me at 3 in the morning saying, “Love you, Busta.”

With LP1 done, how does it compare to what you thought you’d be releasing as a solo artist?

It’s exactly what I wanted to release. There was a time in [One Direction] when I was labeled “Mr. Sonig,” and now I find myself naked on the side of a bus in London [for a Hugo Boss ad campaign]. In a band, you become one of something and it’s very easy to lose yourself within that, and I think we all had to get that back once we left. You can see that now — look at the way Harry [Styles] dresses, the music he puts out and the message that he sends. It’s a completely different thing. Same for all of us; everybody branched out and went “I want to be me” straight away.

Andres photographed Nov. 14 at The Fox Bar & Cocktail Club in Nashville. Find out more details of her backstory at billboard.com/videos.
INGRID ANDRESS
How the singer-songwriter’s “More Hearts Than Mine” became an unexpected country radio hit

BY ANNIE REUTER
PHOTOGRAPHED BY DIANA KING

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HOME RUN
In 2007, Andress and her family briefly relocated to Boston — her father, a Major League Baseball trainer, was working for the Colorado Rockies, who were playing the Boston Red Sox in the World Series. While on her way to Fenway Park one day, Andress passed the Berklee College of Music and upon realizing music could be a career, knew that’s where she wanted to study. After graduating in 2012, her songwriting professor, Kaci DioGuardi (Kelly Clarkson’s “Walk Away,” Carrie Underwood’s “Undo It”), urged her to move to Nashville. “At the time, I wasn’t ready to be an artist,” says Andress, 28. “When you’re in your early 20s, you’re still figuring things out.”

LEVEL-HEADED
A year after the move, Andress signed her first publishing deal, with DioGuardi’s Arthouse Entertainment/Sea Gayle Music/Universal Music Publishing Group, through which she formed her circle of songwriting friends, including Michael Pollack (Maroon 5’s “Memories”). “I was sticking with people [on my level] instead of feeling like I had to write with Max Martin to get a hit,” says Andress. In 2016 Arthouse/UMPG became her sole publisher, and by 2017 she had co-written songs later recorded by Charli XCX (“Boys”) and Fletcher (“About You”) — both of which put her on Warner Music Nashville’s radar, which signed her to a recording contract in 2018.

THE HEART WANTS WHAT IT WANTS
Andress’ debut single, “More Hearts Than Mine” — a cautionary tale about bringing a boyfriend home for the first time — arrived less than a year after signing with Warner. “It was around this time last year that I wrote it,” she recalls. “The holidays have a tendency of making you question your relationship with your significant other because you’re like, ‘OK, is this a place where I’d want to introduce them to my family?’” Turns out: “No, I didn’t,” she says with a laugh.

IT’S THE CLimb
“More Hearts Than Mine” becoming a radio hit was never a goal for Andress — “clearly,” she says, “because it’s not uptempo and doesn’t have any beer or trucks in [the lyrics].” At a time when women continually struggle to get airplay on country radio — something that Miranda Lambert and The Highwomen have been outspoken about — Andress is an anomaly. The track has been on Billboard’s Country Airplay chart for 24 weeks, and is the only debut song by a solo female artist to crack the chart’s top 20. Now she’s looking ahead to her upcoming debut, due in March. “Country music is the only thing that really fulfills me,” she says, “because I can tell a story — that’s what I love.”
In 1990, electronic musicians Matt Black and Jonathan More, who performed as the duo Coldcut, were nearly five years into their career and already felt confined by the major-label system. So, they founded their own U.K. imprint, Ninja Tune, and its publishing company, just Isn’t Music. Come 2020 — and with offices in London, Berlin, Paris and Los Angeles — the label will celebrate its 30th anniversary in a digital age where indie acts have more options than ever. “There’s much more awareness for the independents in the market,” says Marie Clausen, who was promoted to head of North America and global streaming for the label group this May. “That awareness is very important so that we can actually compete, to some extent, in the major market.” — NICK WILLIAMS

As pioneers in the electronic genre, Black and More’s side project DJ Food — characterized by the use of break beats, samples and synthesizers — first landed Ninja Tune on the map with its now-classic five-part series, Jazz Broke (released between 1990 and 1994), which features loops and samples that can be used for mixing, remixing and producing. Clausen, 36, joined the label in 2016 following stints at Universal Music and 9K7, and is now one of 10 women on a staff of 15.

Initially known as a tastemaker for jazz and hip-hop heads, Ninja Tune’s early releases include acclaimed albums from Amon Tobin, Kid Koala and The Herbaliser; the label’s first compilation album, Funkjazztical Tricknology, arrived in 1995. Following its early wins, the label continued to succeed by forming imprints like Big Dada (Wiley, Roots Manuva) and Counter Records (ODESZA, Kasbo), while also partnering with Flying Lotus’ Brainfeeder since 2008.

This year, the label is celebrating four Grammy nods: Bonobo’s “Linked” (best dance recording); Soulwax’s remix of Marie Davidson’s “Work It” (best remixed recording); Georgia Anne Muldrow’s Overload (best urban contemporary album), which was released on Brainfeeder; and Tycho’s Weather (best dance/electronic album), co-released with Mom + Pop Records. The label also earned a No. 1 on Billboard’s Dance/Electronic Album Sales chart with electronic musician-neuroscientist Floating Points’ Crush. “We have the muscle to power big campaigns,” says Clausen.

In 2020, the label will toast its anniversary with a series of to-be-announced global events and tours from Little Dragon, Sampa the Great and Floating Points. The latter will return to the United States in April and has already sold out three shows at the 350-capacity National Sawdust in Brooklyn. Outside of overseeing the label, Clausen also ran to become the U.S. director of global digital rights agency Merlin Network, a position never before held by a woman. “I work on the bleeding edge of music and technology every day — and that’s where the future lies.”

When singer-songwriter Kole (born Nicole Cohen) was 17 years old, she took a class called Songwriters on Songwriting at the University of California, Los Angeles. One week, songwriter-producer Rick Nowels (Sia, Madonna) visited as a guest speaker and Kole, then a second-year ethnomusicology student, volunteered to sing Lana Del Rey’s “Young and Beautiful” for him. After class, her professor offered to connect her with an industry veteran who later became Kole’s first manager.

In 2014 that manager introduced her to Sue Drew, GM of creative and acquisitions at Kobalt Music Publishing, who immediately offered to mentor her. “It was obvious that she had a natural talent,” recalls Drew. “It was just a matter of encouraging her and offering up select co-writes when I thought they were appropriate for her. We like to pride ourselves on discovering talent early and then helping get it to a point where they’re ready to join the roster.”

With Drew’s guidance, Kole ended up competing on an episode of NBC’s Songland this year — and won. Although she grew up singing in choirs and playing guitar and piano, she had never played her original music for anyone. Her prize? Meghan Trainor recorded “Hurt Me,” Kole’s original song about moving on after a breakup. Following Songland, Kole attended an SM Entertainment writing camp in Korea where she wrote for K-pop group Red Velvet. Later, Big Hit Entertainment reached out over email requesting she write with BTS.

After that, Drew knew she was ready for a deal, and on Dec. 2, Kole signed an administration agreement with Kobalt. The 22-year-old is now planning to release her debut EP in 2020.

“When I was in [Kobalt’s] office for the first time, I knew that was where I wanted to sign,” says Kole. “I’ve done a ton of work on my own — and I’m excited to continue growing on my own. This will be a partnership more than anything.” — LILLY PACE
Congratulations Jennifer on being named to Billboard’s 2019 Women In Music. We couldn’t prouder!
From your Citi family.
Swift photographed Oct. 20 in Los Angeles.

Styling by Joseph Cassell
Carolina Herrera dress, Alexander McQueen belt, Gucci blazer, Chloe Gosselin shoes, Sutra jewels and Stefere jewelry.
In the 2010s, she went from country superstar to pop titan and broke records with her chart-topping albums and blockbuster tours. Now Swift is using her industry clout to fight for artists’ rights and foster the musical community she wished she had coming up: “Even the really tough things I’ve gone through taught me things that I never would have learned any other way.”

BY JASON LIPSHUTZ
PHOTOGRAPHED BY SAMI DRASIN
Maison Margiela shirt, Prada boots, Karl Kani and Benny Newberg rings.
ONE EVENING in late October, before she performed at a benefit concert at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles, Taylor Swift’s dressing room became — as it often does — an impromptu summit of music’s biggest names. Swift was there to take part in the American Cancer Society’s annual We Can Survive concert alongside Billie Eilish, Lizzo, Camila Cabello and others, and a few of the artists on the lineup came by to visit.

Eilish, along with her mother and her brother/collaborator, Finneas O’Connell, popped in to say hello — the first time she and Swift had met. Later, Swift joined the exclusive club of people who have seen Marshmello without his signature helmet when the EDM star and his manager stopped by.

“Two dudes walked in — I didn’t know which one was him,” recalls Swift a few weeks later, sitting on a lounge chair in the backyard of a private Beverly Hills residence following a photo shoot. Her momentary confusion turned into a pang of envy.

“It’s really smart! Because he’s got a life, and he can get a house that doesn’t have to have a paparazzi-proof entrance.” She stops to adjust her gray sweatshirt dress and lets out a clipped laugh.

Swift, who will celebrate her 30th birthday on Dec. 13, has been impossibly famous for nearly half of her lifetime. She was 16 when she released her self-titled debut album in 2006, and 20 when her second album, Fearless, won the Grammy Award for album of the year in 2010, making her the youngest artist to ever receive the honor. As the decade comes to a close, Swift is one of the most accomplished musical acts of all time: 37.3 million albums sold, according to Nielsen Music; 95 entries on the Billboard Hot 100 (including five No. 1s); 23 Billboard Music Awards; 12 Country Music Association Awards; 10 Grammys; and five world tours.

She also finishes the decade in a totally different realm of the music world from where she started. Swift’s crossover from country to pop — hinted at on 2012’s Red and fully embraced on 2014’s 1989 — reflected a mainstream era in which genres were blended with little abandon, where artists with roots in country, folk and trap music could join forces without anyone raising eyebrows. (See: Swift’s top 20 hit “End Game,” from 2017’s reputation, which featured Ed Sheeran and Future.)

Swift’s new album, Lover, released in August, is both a warm break from the darkness of reputation — which was created during a wave of negative press generated by Swift’s public clash with Kanye West and Kim Kardashian-West — as well as an amalgam of all her stylistic explorations through the years, from dreamy synth-pop to hushed country. “The skies were opening up in my life,” says Swift of the album, which garnered three Grammy nominations, including song of the year for the title track.

She recorded Lover after the Reputation Stadium Tour broke the record for the highest-grossing U.S. tour last year. In 2020, Swift will embark on Lover Fest (see story, page 65), a run of stadium dates that will feature albums for each new album she turned in if she re-signed with Big Machine; Borchetta disputed this characterization, saying she had the opportunity to acquire her masters in exchange for re-signing with the label for a “length of time” — 10 more years, according to screenshots of legal documents posted on the Big Machine website.

Swift has said that she intends to rerecord her first six albums next year — starting next November, when she says she’s contractually able to — in order to regain control of her recordings. But the back-and-forth appears to be nowhere near over: Last month, Swift alleged that Borchetta and Braun were blocking her from performing her past hits at the American Music Awards or using them in an upcoming Netflix documentary — claims Big Machine characterized as “false information.”

“I’ve had several upheavals of somehow not being what I should be.

And this happens to women in music way more than men.”

While watching some of your performances this year — like Saturday Night Live and NPR’s Tiny Desk Concert — I was struck by how focused you seemed, like there were no distractions getting in the way of what you were trying to say.

That’s a really wonderful way of looking at this phase of my life and my music. I’ve spent a lot of time recalibrating my life to make it feel manageable. Because there were some years there where I felt like I didn’t quite know what exactly to give people and what to hold back, what to share and what to protect. I think a lot of people go through that, especially in the last decade. I broke through pre-social media, and then there was this phase where social media felt fun and casual and quiet and safe. And then it got to the point where everyone has to evaluate their relationship with social media. So I decided that the best thing I have to offer people is my music. I’m not really here to influence their fashion or their social lives. That has bled through into the live part of what I do.

Meanwhile, you’ve found a way to interact with your fans in this very pure way — on your Tumblr page. Tumblr is the last place on the internet where I feel like I can still make a joke because it feels small, like a
between your...when

64...to

Hey, you?

Did...reach

Did you have someone like that to reach out to?

Not really, because my career has existed in lots of different neighborhood of music. I had so many mentors in country music. Faith Hill was wonderful. She would reach out to me and invite me over and take me on tour, and I knew that I could talk to her. Cross over to pop is a completely different world. Country music is a real community, and in pop I didn’t see that community as much. Now there is a bit of one between the girls in pop — we all have each other’s numbers and text each other — but when I first started out in pop it was very much you versus you versus us. We didn’t have a network, which is weird because we can help each other through those moments when you just feel completely isolated.

Do you feel like those barriers are actively being broken down now?

God, I hope so. I also hope people can call it out, [like] if you see a Grammy prediction article, and it’s just two women’s faces next to each other and feels a bit gratuitous. No one’s going to start out being perfectly educated on the intricacies of gender politics. The key is that people are trying to learn, and that’s great. No one’s going to get it perfect, but, God, please try.

At this point, who is your sounding board, creatively and professionally? From a creative standpoint, I’ve been writing alone a lot more. I’m good with being alone, with thinking alone. When I come up with a marketing idea for the Lover tour, the album launch, the merch, I’ll go right to my management company that I’ve put together. I think a team is the best way to be managed. Just from my experience, I don’t think that this overarching, one-person-handles-my-career thing was ever going to work for me. Because that person ends up kind of being me who comes up with most of the ideas, and then I have an amazing team that facilitates those ideas.

The behind-the-scenes work is different for every phase of my career that I’m in. Putting together the festival shows that we’re doing for Lover is completely different than putting together the Reputation Stadium Tour. Putting together the reputation album launch was so different than putting together the 1989 launch. So we really do attack things case by case, where the creative first informs everything else.

You’ve spoken before about how meaningful the reputation tour’s success was. What did it represent?

That tour was something that I wanted to immortalize in the Netflix special that we did because the album was a story, but it almost was like a story that wasn’t fully realized until you saw it live. It was so cool to hear people leaving the show being like, “I understand it now. I fully get it now.” There are a lot of red herrings and bait-and-switches in the choices that I’ll make with albums, because I want people to go and explore the body of work. You can never express how you feel over the course of an album in a single, so why try?

That seems especially true of your last three albums or so.

“Shake It Off” is nothing like the rest of 1989. It’s almost like I feel so much pressure with a first single that I don’t want the first single to be something that makes you feel like you’ve figured out what I’ve made on the rest of the project. I still truly believe in albums, whatever form you consume them in — if you want to stream them or buy them or listen to them on vinyl. And I don’t think that makes me a staunch purist. I think that is a strong feeling throughout the music industry. We’re running really fast toward a singles industry, but you got to believe in something. I still believe that albums are important.

The music industry has become increasingly global during the past decade. Is reaching new markets something you think about?

Yeah, and I’m always trying to learn. I’m learning from everyone. I’m learning when I go see Bruce Springsteen or Madonna do a theater show. And I’m learning from new artists who are coming out right now, just seeing what they’re doing and thinking. “That’s really cool.” You need to keep your influences broad and wide-ranging, and my favorite people who make music have always done that. I got to work with Andrew Lloyd Webber on the Cats movie, and Andrew will walk through the door and be like, “I’ve just seen this amazing thing on TikTok!” And I’m like, “You are it! You are it!” Because you cannot look at what quote-unquote “the kids are doing” and roll your eyes. You have to learn.

Have you explored TikTok at all?

I only see them when they’re posted to Tumblr, but I love them! I think that they’re hilarious and amazing. Andrew says that they’ve made musicals cool again, because there’s a huge musical facet to TikTok. [He’s] like, “Any way we can do that is good.”

How do you see your involvement in the business side of your career progressing in the next decade? You seem like someone who could eventually start a label or be more hands-on with signing artists.

I do think about it every once in a while, but if I was going to do it, I would need to do it with all of my energy. I know how important that is, when you’ve got someone else’s career in your hands, and I know how it feels when someone isn’t generous.

You’ve served as an ambassador of sorts for artists, especially recently — standing down streaming services over payouts, increasing public awareness about the terms of record deals. We have a long way to go. I think that we’re working off of an antiquated contractual system. We’re galloping toward a new industry but not...
Taylor Swift's first big project of 2020? Lover Fest, her self-produced, festival-style tour slated to kick off in June (Messenia Touring Group will promote). Fourteen dates have been announced, and the artist lineup is still in the works. “I haven't really done festivals in years — not since I was a teenager,” says Swift. “That's something that [the fans] don't expect from me, so that's why I wanted to do it.”

Lover Fest is a new twist in Swift's touring strategy. While the 2018 reputation stadium outing was the highest-grossing U.S. tour of all time — $266 million in revenue across 38 stateside shows, according to Billboard Boxscore — Swift has announced only four Lover Fest dates in the United States. But if she's leaving potential millions on the table, she's also keeping fan interest high by deviating from a formula.

“People want new experiences — to connect to their favorite artists in new ways,” says CID Entertainment founder/CEO Dan Berkowitz, whose company will co-produce Luke Bryan's Crash My Playa destination event in Mexico in January. “Any artist playing the same 40 venues every single tour is just going to get boring to their fans, even if their show is changing.”

Lover Fest is the latest in a growing number of artist-curated festivals, ranging from Post Malone's Posty Fest to Travis Scott's Astroworld to Tyler, the Creator's Camp Flog Gnaw. “Fans are willing to travel to attend events that are an extension of an artist's personality and music,” says Berkowitz. Lover Fest will build on that model, playing larger venues (like the 70,000-capacity SoFi Stadium in Los Angeles and the 65,000-capacity Gillette Stadium outside Boston) in multiple locations, rather than existing as a one-time event.

But Swift has always prioritized personal touches, no matter the size of her show, from nightly surprise guests to one-time-only performances of early tracks. The on-brand opening acts, Instagram-ready visuals and overall attention to detail common to other artist-curated festivals should be present at Lover Fest, too. “[I want to] challenge myself with new things and at the same time keep giving my fans something to connect to,” says Swift. With Lover Fest, it seems she'll be able to do both.

— J.L.
Billie Eilish

Photographed by Heather Hazzan on April 18 at SunLight Studios in Los Angeles.

Styling by Samantha Burkhart
Off-White jacket, Heart of Bone and Dolmato necklaces.
WISH THERE WAS AN OFF SWITCH,” MUSES BILLIE EILISH.

“There’s really no way to prepare for this kind of thing. I want to just go to ‘Trader Joe’s for once!’ The 17-year-old is quick to clarify that she’s not complaining: Still a newly minted megastar, she’s hyper-aware that her milestone-a-minute past year has been extraordinary by any standard. Her debut album, March’s When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?, established Eilish as one of the most distinctive new voices in pop and topped the Billboard 200. Since then, all of its tracks (except the prelude) have made it onto the Billboard Hot 100, with “Bad Guy” becoming Eilish’s first No. 1 on the chart. She has performed at Coachella; appeared on Saturday Night Live; scored a Justin Bieber appearance on the “Bad Guy” remix; and most recently received six Grammy nominations, setting a record as the youngest artist to get nods in all of the Big Four categories at once.

Come March, Eilish will kick off an arena world tour, which will include sold-out stops at Madison Square Garden in New York and London’s O2 Arena. But for now, she’s planning to stay in Los Angeles through the end of the year — “the longest I’ve been home in a minute.” She’s not quite chilling yet: Earlier in the day of this interview, she marched in the Youth Climate Strike. She’s looking forward to her 18th birthday and the perks that come with it (voting, driving after 11 p.m.), and still adjusting to the accolades she’s receiving, like Billboard’s Woman of the Year honor. “I’ve never been called a woman before,” she says with a laugh. “You feel like you’ve been doing it forever. And then I remember — it’s literally just the beginning.”

You and your brother and collaborator, Finneas O’Connell, have been on the road pretty much nonstop this year. How has that informed your creative process?

Last year and the year before, we almost had to make music in our house. I don’t want to speak for Finneas, but for me, I didn’t really know how to make music anywhere else. We would try and work in studios, and it would never work out the way I wanted it to. It would be exhausting and not very fun. We’re at a point now, from touring and working so much, that I’m pretty sure the next album will be made on tour — around the world.

What are the biggest challenges you’ve faced this past year? I can’t complain about my career. The only thing is — and I know men are going to disagree, because they literally just can’t know — as a young female artist, you are looked at differently. I remember the first time I had a conversation with Claire; it was about how we were both hated because we were girls, and we weren’t looked at the same [as young male artists]. We just talked about how hard it is to be a young female and be taken seriously.

Right now, there are so many young women who are actually looked at as cool. I remember a year when I was so anxious about my future. I was worried that because I was a girl, people wouldn’t think I was cool or interesting — they would think I was just super basic and lame. And a lot of people do think that, which is whatever. But the majority are giving me a really good reaction and validation for what I do.

Speaking of differing expectations for young women: Recently you said you wear baggy clothes so that people won’t talk about your body. That totally blew up online.

I think my message — and I don’t really know if I have one — is miscommunicated sometimes. Sometimes I get this response from parents like, “Thank you for dressing the way you do so my daughter doesn’t dress like a slut;” and I’m like, “Whoo! That is the opposite of what I’m trying to do.” If anything, I’m trying to make it easier for your daughter to wear what she wants.

You’ve met so many artists, but I know you still want to meet Rihanna. What is it you admire most about her?

People [who are] like her and like Childish Gambino, Tyler [the Creator] and Kanye — [there’s] not just one thing that they’re known for. They take what they have and actually turn it into more. That’s what I’ve always wanted to do. I really want to design shoes, and I really want to fucking design a car. I direct my own videos and edit them myself most of the time, so hopefully more of that. I think Rihanna is fucking murdering it. Everyone who is like, “Stop with the [Fenty] brand and put out more music,” I think, “Shut the fuck up.” She is doing exactly what she needs to do, and that’s fire. Yeah, we want new Rihanna music, but we also want Rihanna. Only props to her.

“I’m lucky enough to be in a generation that’s able to break every rule — and that’s crazy.”

Do you feel like there’s anything you can’t do at this point? I’m lucky enough to be in a generation that’s able to break every rule — and that’s crazy. When I think about artists who grew up in a time where you could only have one genre and one look, and couldn’t change that ever … that must have been torturous. Especially to people who wanted to change. It’s really cool that I get to do this in a time when it’s more freeing. To be honest, there isn’t really anything that’s off-limits.

—LYNDSEY HAVENS
Gucci shirt, Heart of Bone and Dalmata rings.
Brandi Carlile

Brandi Carlile calls 2019 “the greatest year of my entire life,” and it’s easy to see why: This year’s Trailblazer sold out Madison Square Garden in New York, won three Grammys, and launched her Girls Just Wanna Weekend music festival in Mexico. And she did it all while lifting up other women along the way by co-producing Tanya Tucker’s Grammy-nominated “While I’m Livin” and hitting No. 1 on Billboard’s Top Country Albums chart with The Highwomen, her supergroup with Amanda Shires, Maren Morris and Natalie Hemby. “We are four women that have chosen to work together instead of competing with each other, even knowing that there are less than half a dozen spots in country music for us to be heard or seen,” says Carlile, 38. “We decided to try to occupy one of those spots as a group — and leave the door open for many other women to come into The Highwomen as a movement.”

You use your platform to talk about everything from gender inequality in the music industry to parent-child separation at the U.S.-Mexico border. Does that come naturally to you? As I get older, I wake up more naturally political every day, just by the fact that I’m married to a woman and raising two daughters. I was married before it was legal; I was denied a basic civil right in my own country for most of my adult life. There’s really no way for me to get onstage and not be political. It goes against the grain in a lot of ways for me to not use my voice to illuminate suffering and injustice.

2019 was a busy year for you, from launching Girls Just Wanna Weekend to headlining Madison Square Garden. That’s interesting that you mention Madison Square Garden and Girls Just Wanna Weekend in the same breath. I once was invited on tour with a band I worship. One of the dates was to open for them at the Garden. There was a promoter that wanted to take me off the tour, saying they wanted a male, guitar-fronted band to open. I lost the tour. I was so appalled, and of course, not until it hit my battleship did I realize what a problem it was — that women weren’t given a voice, particularly where this promoter thought men were more important, would buy more beer, would spend more money. That’s when I started Girls Just Wanna Weekend. I thought, if I can cause thousands of women to spend thousands of dollars to leave the country and see women headline a festival, it’s going to send a message to bookers at home.

What was the first year like? It sold out — but I will tell you there was a struggle in booking the festival that gave me a new empathy for promoters. Getting to go to Madison Square Garden after this emotional journey was a fucking cosmic lightning bolt to me. I just couldn’t believe where I’d come from, which was crying in my bedroom for being kicked off a tour to headlining that show and having it sell out.

Your Grammy-winning song “The Joke” has become an anthem for marginalized people in today’s political climate. What does it mean to you in 2019? It heals me every single night. I wrote it as a salve for myself from a place of despair. [When I look into the audience] I see like-minded thinking. And if it’s not like-minded thinking, I see consideration, which is the most beautiful thing about music — it sounds cliche, but [music] really is the universal language.

—HILARY HUGHES
Brandi Carlile photographed by Austin Hargrave on Jan. 9 at Smashbox Studios in Los Angeles.

Styling by Maryam Malakpour
Atelier Michalsky suit,
By Far boots, Armadura ring.
RISING STAR

Rosalía
Rosalia photographed by Ruven Afanador on Sept. 3 at The 1896 in Brooklyn.
Styling by Samantha Burkhart
Michael Kors Collection dress, Pleaser boots with Amy Shhab Jewelry, Bvlgari jewelry.
When she released her breakout single, “Malamente,” in spring 2018, Rosalía didn’t have a record label. Today, her unique fusion of flamenco and urban music has led to deals with Columbia Records and Sony Music Latin, five Latin Grammy Awards, sets at Coachella and Lollapalooza, and hit collaborations with J Balvin and Ozuna — plus, now a best new artist Grammy nomination. It’s the kind of trajectory that makes her this year’s Rising Star, but it’s also the culmination of years of work: The 27-year-old studied flamenco for a decade in her native Spain, and she remains hands-on with every aspect of her art, from the ornate production of her songs to the fierce looks and choreography of her videos. “After all the effort and sacrifice I have put into my performances and albums,” she says, “having people recognize and value my project is very, very meaningful.”

You have had such an explosive year. Do you still feel like a developing artist? Even though the public may perceive me differently, I always feel like I’m learning something new, and I like seeing myself this way. It keeps me focused on doing things with the love and care that comes from knowing you can always improve. I always have that in my head. Even though you have to feel big when you’re onstage so the message reaches everyone out there and gets them excited, you also have to feel the humility that comes from being a student who never stops learning.

What’s the most important lesson you learned in 2019? People who are perfectionists always want to control everything, but when you sing, you have to let go. And that’s hard. I’m increasingly conscious of the fact that, even when we know a lot, there’s an element of blind faith. For things to work well, you have to surrender to the moment. This is especially true of writing, producing and truly giving it all in a performance.

Your visuals often feature elaborate nail art. What draws you to that? I grew up surrounded by women with long nails. I can’t imagine it any other way. Hands have a major presence in flamenco, and when your hands are decorated, it adds power. It’s not so much about aesthetics — it’s about how I react when my nails are longer and full of colors and texture. It takes me to an expressive place.

Who are your heroines in flamenco? La Niña de los Peines was a singer who created cantes [flamenco songs] in a very masculine field. And Carmen Amaya was a breath of fresh air: a woman who took many risks, who sometimes dressed like a man. Her style of dance has influenced all bailadoras. I owe how I make music to them.

Before you had a manager and a label, you worked closely with your mother and sister. How did they influence you? My mother is a very strong, independent leader. My sister is also very inspiring, so my natural surroundings have been very feminine. That has extended to other women who inspire me, like [manager] Rebeca [León]: a determined woman who defends her point of view. I make music with many men, but my team is mostly women. It’s a little bit about vindication for women, too. As we see more women in positions of power in the industry, it will have an influence. Having more women in power means we’re all rowing in the same direction.

— Leila Cobo

“People who are perfectionists always want to control everything, but when you sing, you have to let go.”
Paloma Spain shirt, Area earrings and necklace.
Megan Thee Stallion
They put that check in my hand, now I’m killin’ em,” raps Megan Thee Stallion on “Realer,” the opening track on May’s Fever mixtape. Those words became somewhat prophetic: This year she toured with Meek Mill and Future; collaborated with Gucci Mane, Chance the Rapper, Quavo and City Girls; and made fans of Solange and Lizzo thanks to her blunt-force rhymes and savvy branding. The Houston native, 24, declared 2019 the year of the “Hot Girl Summer”—a nod to her devoted followers, whom she calls “hotties”—and turned the catchphrase into a top 20 hit of the same name that featured Nicki Minaj and Ty Dolla Sign. In a banner year for women in hip-hop, Billboard’s 2019 Powerhouse preaches sisterhood above all else: “There’s just so many rules that people try to place on women rappers, so we just have to keep breaking these barriers down.”

Your trademark for “Hot Girl Summer” was approved a few months back. What did that teach you about becoming a businesswoman? I have so many different ideas, and I’m kind of an off-the-wall, spontaneous person, so I didn’t realize that if you have an original idea, you can actually own it. When I saw all these people using “Hot Girl Summer” as a part of their marketing plan, I was like, “Damn, let me do that!” I didn’t even think [the phrase] would be that big of a deal—it was crazy. So it definitely taught me to protect myself and my ideas ahead of time.

When do you feel the most powerful? Definitely when I’m in the booth. When I hear a song come together and get chills, I know it must be going hard. So I feel really powerful when I’m rapping. It makes me feel good, and I’ll continue to work hard and stay humble. I just want to keep getting better and giving my hotties what they want.

You also signed a management deal with Roc Nation this year. Before [the deal], they came in and tried to help me get my business together. When I was getting enrolled in school [at Texas Southern University], they made sure things went smoothly. They were supportive before I even got signed, so it feels like a family. I could really see myself being part of the team.

Now that we’re getting into Hot Girl Winter, what are the essentials for this season? You definitely need ChapStick. You don’t want to be out here kissing all dry. You need that DayQuil on deck so you don’t get sick. Not booty shorts, unfortunately. You need your tights on and a little jacket. And you still have to drive the boat [take shots] because even though it’s cold outside, you can be a hot girl in the house.

You’re finishing up your health administration degree. You have talked about opening an assisted-living home in Houston after you graduate. Is that still the plan? I have seven more classes left—and the way this career is going, I can’t fit a lot on my plate. So we’re going to finish when we finish. But I grew up watching my grandmother take care of my great-grandmother, and I know there’s other families going through that same thing, where you got two elderly people taking care of each other. I know it’s hard, so I still want to make that easier for people in my community. —Bianca Gracie
As a teenager growing up in the New York City neighborhood of Hell’s Kitchen, Alicia Keys saw a L’Oréal TV commercial with the tagline “Because I’m worth it” and had an epiphany. “I thought, ‘What a killer line,’ ” says Keys of the slogan, which inspired her soulful 2001 single “A Woman’s Worth.” It was the first of many anthems celebrating female strength that Keys has written through the years — from 2007’s “Superwoman” to 2012’s “Girl on Fire,” which she performed at the 2016 Democratic National Convention to introduce Hillary Clinton.
Keys photographed by Miller Mobley on Nov. 6 at Moonfire Ranch in Topanga, Calif.

Styling by Jason Bolden
Stella McCartney coat, K Kane earrings.
Looking back on her career so far, however, Keys says she created “A Woman’s Worth” because she didn’t feel empowered at all. “I needed to write the song so that I could feel better,” she says. Almost two decades later, the 2019 Impact honoree is focused on helping others find that same confidence — in both big and small ways. In 2016, she embraced a minimal-makeup look to challenge conventional beauty standards. At Billboard’s 2018 Women in Music event, Keys detailed her Is The Music, a nonprofit she co-founded to increase opportunities for women in the music industry through writing camps, a database of female creators and other initiatives. Lately, Keys — who will return as host of the Grammy Awards in January — has also started using Instagram TV to lead deep discussions with her fans, like a recent broadcast in which she talked about her 4-year-old son's fears about getting bullied over his painted nails. She'll keep the conversations going on her seventh studio album, A.L.I.C.I.A., due next year. “I’m realizing how much I’ve diminished my own power,” says Keys. “I’m not doing that no more.”

You’ve said that a 2018 study from the University of Southern California’s Annenberg Inclusion Initiative — which found that women account for only 22% of performers of popular songs — inspired you to co-found Is The Music. What did that illuminate for you?
I was shocked. I didn’t think there would be such a huge discrepancy. I grew up in New York City, I’ve always seen a really diverse mix of people, and I was raised by a woman. So from my experience, it’s always been pretty women-centric. But it’s not. Sometimes I’m like, “What year is this?”

How would Is The Music have helped you as a young artist?
I love the community aspect. That would’ve been a big help for me because I was usually the only one — the girl with all the guys. With the global database, you can actually find, “Who are the best female lighting designers?” We’re allowing you to create your tribe.

Do you have any favorite memories from the writing camps?
One of the recent songwriting camps I did was hosted in my studio. There were a bunch of women that came up from the [Washington] D.C.-Baltimore area. I sat with them for a while, just chatting and chilling. One woman had come from the Middle East, and she had such a powerful story. Just getting to know different people’s experiences, even though it was a super-casual moment, was so beautiful.

In 2004, you teamed up with Missy Elliott and Beyoncé for the Verizon Ladies First Tour. What do you remember about it?
It was one of the first of its kind, especially three black women together like that. All three of us were so different from each other. It was so dope. There has always been the Lilith Fair and different festivals focused on women, and I’m glad there’s more things like that coming. We’re in that time when we are powerfully, clearly in our feminine, divine dope shit. Let’s just keep going with it.

How did you reach that level of self-acceptance?
Most of the time, we’re pretending, and we don’t even know it. We think, “People expect me to be like this.” I’m over all those things. Sometimes it feels so good, sometimes it don’t feel good, and I’m cool with that, too. Sometimes I don’t have an answer. Sometimes I’m really down and I’ve got to give myself a break. But I feel like I’m finally myself.

—TATIANA CIRISANO

WE’RE IN THAT TIME WHEN WE ARE POWERFULLY, CLEARLY IN OUR FEMININE, DIVINE DOPE SHIT. LET’S JUST KEEP GOING WITH IT.

STANDING TOGETHER

AT THE 2018 BILLBOARD WOMEN IN MUSIC EVENT, ALICIA KEYS PRESENTED SHE IS THE MUSIC, THE ORGANIZATION SHE CO-FOUNDED WITH HER LONGTIME SOUND ENGINEER, JUNGLE CITY STUDIO'S ANN MINCIELI; WME PARTNER AND HEAD OF EAST COAST MUSIC SAMANTHA KIRBY YOH; AND UNIVERSAL MUSIC PUBLISHING GROUP (UMPG) CHAIRMAN/CEO JODY GERSON. ITS GOAL IS TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF WOMEN IN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY. "IT WAS NEVER JUST A MEDIA PUSH," SAYS MINCIELI. "THIS IS SOMETHING THAT ALL OF US REALLY WANTED TO STAND BEHIND."

SHE IS THE MUSIC'S WORK Focuses On Three Key Initiatives: Expanding An Online Database (Powered By Billboard) That Now Includes Over 700 Female Creators, Establishing A Mentorship Program For Women In The Industry Of All Ages And Hosting All-Women Songwriting Camps Around The World With Artists Like Mary J. Blige And Natti Natasha. In June, Electro-Pop Artist Rozes Released "Call Me," The First Song To Come Out Of One Of The Camps. She Is The Music Is Also Growing Its Various Committees, Which Advise The Organization On Behalf Of Particular Interest Groups. In April It Unveiled Its First Latin Committee, With Members Like Anitta And UMPG's Alexandra Lioutikoff. She Is The Music Is Already Hearing Success Stories. "We're Getting Phone Calls," Says Minciel. Cyndi Lauper's manager, Lisa Barbaris, used the database to hire female stagehands for Lauper's upcoming Home for the Holidays benefit concert. The organization has also found like-minded partners in the All Things Go Fall Classic Festival in Washington, D.C., which this year had a women-focused lineup, and the nonprofit Step Up, which helps introduce high school girls to careers in music. "We're out there going, 'Tell us what you've been working on and however we can help, we'll get behind it,'" says Kirby Yoh. Adds Minciel: "It's about creating that opportunity and helping the next generation step into the future."
IN THE SUMMER OF 1995, A STARTLING VOICE JOLTED THROUGH THE haze of R&B jams dominating the airwaves. Part power belt, part witchy yelp, it sang of jealousy, perversion, of the messes men leave in the wake of broken relationships. It belonged to Alanis Morissette, then 21, whose song “You Oughta Know” hit No. 1 on Billboard’s Alternative Songs chart — the only one by a woman (other than her own “Hand in My Pocket” a few months later) to do so that year. That was just the beginning: Morissette’s U.S. debut, Jagged Little Pill, topped the Billboard 200 for 12 weeks and became the chart’s top-performing album of the 1990s, along the way inspiring a generation of singer-songwriters to share their rawest truths. Since then, Morissette has released another seven albums, and at 45, Billboard’s 2019 Icon is as busy ever: She’s putting the final touches on the Jagged Little Pill Broadway musical; readying her forthcoming LP, Such Pretty Forks in the Road, due May 1; and prepping for the Jagged Little Pill 25th-anniversary tour with Liz Phair and Garbage (starting in June). “I’ll be writing songs until I’m dead and probably after,” says Morissette with a laugh. “Channeling through some poor 17-year-old!”
Morissette photographed by Tawni Bannister on Nov. 18 in San Francisco.

Styling by Sara Paulsen
Eileen Fisher top, RtA jacket
from Elyse Walker.
“There’s this kind of violent tendency to one-dimensionalize artists, maybe so we can wrap our heads around them and move on.”

When you were starting out, who were the icons you looked up to? Whitney Houston, Carole King, Aretha Franklin. Women who could belt it out with a huge amount of soul. Whitney — I [loved] her vulnerability, her humanity, just her sweetness. A lot of her lyrics were so kind and adorable. I always felt if I could sing along with women whose voices I bowed down to, that would legitimize me as a vocalist.

Your career has had a somewhat unusual trajectory — you started out as a teen dance-pop singer in Canada, then seemingly got the support to write what you really wanted. Some artists are writers, and some are pure performers. I feel like I’m a combination of both. When I was a teenager, I wasn’t necessarily in an environment with people who were supportive of my songwriting. I was actually dropped from my record company right before I wrote Jagged Little Pill. So I had this clean slate in front of me when I was 19. I just wanted to write a record I loved.

Before you came to the United States to make Jagged Little Pill, did you already have the courage of your convictions? I had conviction on a certain level, and then working with Glen [Ballard, who produced Jagged Little Pill], it was solidified. If I wrote something, he would just say, “Is this a true story?” And it became a no-brainer: “Of course.” From 19 onward, I only know autobiographical [stories]. Even if I’m writing for a character — whether it’s for the Jagged Little Pill musical or a movie like City of Angels, I’m thinking of how I relate personally.

At that time, did you feel like you had a support system among other artists? I had a bit of Canadian naivete, [thinking] that as soon as I was in the public eye, I would be embraced by other artists and we would all be sitting around the fire singing “Kumbaya.” That wound up not being the case. There was a lot more isolation and misperception and competition and jealousy. I was still the woman doing the show at festivals around the planet with 16 male artists. It was awkward to figure out how I fit in the middle of that. My bandmates were lifesavers, especially in the 2000s. They really got behind me, and it wasn’t about anyone wanting the seat I was in, it was just, “Wow, we love this woman, and we honor what her mission is.” And I had a team of amazing therapists. (Laughs.)

When Jagged Little Pill came out, you were portrayed as this queen of angsty female rage — but you didn’t necessarily seem like an angry person. So many of the songs on the album are actually quite empathetic. Thank you for saying that. I feel like I’m everything — sometimes I’m ashamed, sometimes I’m jubilant, sometimes I’m ragey and irritable, sometimes I’m devastated. Hello, I’m a human being! There’s this kind of violent tendency to one-dimensionalize artists, maybe so we can wrap our heads around them and move on. That’s why I’m so enjoying this musical — it allows these people in this story to be complex.

Speaking of the musical — what convinced you it was a good idea? I definitely didn’t want a jukebox musical — I knew it would have to be something born from the stories in the songs. It wasn’t until [book writer] Diablo Cody signed on and went, “Alanis, all the characters are in your lyrics,” that it hit me: “Oh yeah, there are a lot of characters in these songs,” enough for her to expand them and create a whole narrative. It just feels so integrated.

In the past, you have spoken out about everything from the environment to postpartum depression to promoting healthy relationships. Do you think social activism is an obligation for all artists right now? People can feel responsible for what they choose. For me, if I’m going to experience this thing called fame, it has to be coupled with some form of service or else it feels hollow to me. As a kid, my mom took me to food banks, we did charity work almost every Sunday — it was just part of our upbringing. Don’t get me wrong, I’m a huge fan of self-expression and even self-indulgence. It’s mandatory as an artist. But it feels incomplete if I’m just doing it for myself.

—REBECCA MILZOFF
Nicki Minaj

Nicki Minaj debuted in 2007 with a mixtape called Playtime Is Over. She wasn’t kidding: From her kooky alter-egos to her wildly outspoken Queen Radio show on Apple Music, Minaj — the first and only woman to score 100 appearances on the Billboard Hot 100 — has redefined success for women in hip-hop this decade. Yet Billboard’s inaugural Game-Changer isn’t done yet. “I’m a perfectionist and love topping myself,” says Minaj, 37, “so as long as I love music, I’ll always be doing that.”

How do you think you have changed the game? I had an approach that had a lot of different layers. I first got the underground market and my hometown [on lock]. Then I gradually worked my way up. And even before I was doing music, I loved looking at magazines to see who was setting trends.

You tweeted this fall that you were going to retire and start a family. I love music and interacting with fans, so I can’t really see taking myself completely away. But I want to be open to other possibilities in my life. I do believe it is important to become a woman outside of the magnifying glass. I have to make sure that I’m well-rounded as a human being.

Will you keep expanding your business empire — which also includes your MYX Fusions liquor company and a Fendi partnership? Oh my goodness, yes. I plan on venturing out a million times more than I am now. That was always my goal: to become a big businesswoman. I don’t want to be in such a lucrative industry and not capitalize on it — everyone else does it.

In the past year, Queen Radio has become a can’t-miss event. It’s another thing I didn’t expect to be so big. I went in blindly: “I’m just going to get on the mic and talk to my fans. It can’t be that hard.” But it takes a lot of energy. You have to be willing to be very honest and have a backbone. If I can get it to a place where everyone looks forward to it every time, then I feel like I’m doing the right thing.

— B.G.

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<td><strong>106</strong> Total Hot 100 entries, more than any other woman</td>
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<td><strong>32</strong> Top 10 hits on R&amp;B/Hip-Hop Airplay, the most among women</td>
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LAURIE JACOBY

2019 BILLBOARD WOMEN IN MUSIC HONOREE

FROM YOUR MSG FAMILY

THE MADISON SQUARE GARDEN COMPANY
EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR

RUNNING THE NATION

The COO of Roc Nation, DESIREE PEREZ, has quietly become one of the most formidable figures in the music business. Now she’s talking about her career — for the first time

BY DAN RYS

ON A TYPICAL DAY, Desiree Perez would prefer not to be here. Well, not here, exactly — in a conference room on the top floor of Roc Nation’s sleek new offices on Manhattan’s West Side — but “here” as in doing her first interview about her career in the music business. Her path has taken her from part-time hip-hop club promoter to the C-suite of one of the most prominent, artist-friendly independent companies in the world.

As COO of JAY-Z’s multihyphenate, one-stop music shop, Roc Nation, she’s certainly got plenty of other things to do. The Roc, which initially formed in 2008 as a $150 million joint-venture between Jay and Live Nation (and included a 360 deal for Jay’s recordings, publishing and tours for 10 years), has during the past 11 years expanded into almost every facet of entertainment and grown from five employees to 450 — of which 52% are minorities, according to the company. (A new $200 million touring-only deal between Jay and Live Nation was signed in 2017.)

There’s Roc Nation Records, which counts Rihanna, J. Cole, and Jaden and Willow Smith on its roster and has a global partnership with Universal Music Group (UMG), from which Roc’s label has generated over $200 million. There’s Roc Nation Management, which boasts Meek Mill, Mariah Carey and Shakira as clients. There’s a publishing wing with divisions specifically for country and Latin music; a touring arm, which handles live ventures for JAY-Z, as well as the annual Made in America Festival; and Tidal, the music streaming service and content hub Roc Nation purchased, rebranded and launched with 16 artist stakeholders in March 2015.

Roc Nation Sports represents some of the most famous athletes on the planet, including CC Sabathia, Kyrie Irving and Victor Cruz; Roc’s film/TV division has produced acclaimed docuseries on Kalief Browder and Trayvon Martin. Spirits, branding, apparel, consulting, indie distribution, a venture capital fund and philanthropic efforts — the S. Carter Foundation, which raised $6 million in scholarship money during its gala on Nov. 15 and 16, and REFORM, a criminal justice reform initiative with Meek Mill, among others — all fall under Perez’s purview too, giving her one of the broadest job descriptions an entertainment conglomerate could conceive. And that, somehow, doesn’t cover all of it.

Yet the Bronx-born Perez — who runs the company alongside JAY-Z, CEO Jay Brown, co-founder/president of A&R Ty Ty Smith and her husband, head of Roc Nation Sports Juan Perez — still manages to be the confident eye at the center of the Roc Nation storm. “I’m fair, I’m strong, and I’m transparent,” she says about her management style, which also includes picking up calls at all hours — especially when her phone flashes “No Caller ID.” “You never have to worry about what I’m thinking — I’ll always tell you.”

Desiree is one of the most driven women I’ve ever met,” says Atlantic Records COO/co-chairman Julie Greenwald. “I always kid her and say, ‘When are you taking a vacation?’ She never does, because she’s always working. She’s there morning, noon and night, really driving that business. Everyone looks at Roc Nation as synonymous with JAY-Z, but she’s really the engine that drives it.”

In Perez’s telling, that drive comes from being the daughter of Cuban immigrants, as a girl helping her Spanish-speaking father run his moving company in the Bronx and learning how to sell his company’s services to English-speaking clients. “My dad was a big influence on me because he worked so hard and he came from nothing — it was really gritty,” she says. “I learned how to drive a truck at 16, how to drive a tractor-trailer at the age of 17. I learned how to change transmission oil and motor oil and all those things that normally ‘girls’ quote-unquote, wouldn’t learn. So I think he empowered me in that way.”

Perez herself never intended to get into the music business — she was running a company that sold cellphones and beepers when she was first asked to help run promotions at a nightclub in Manhattan’s Washington Heights neighborhood — but she had the drive to run with the opportunity. By 1996 she was managing a series of clubs. That year, for $5,000, she booked a young rapper named JAY-Z and his DJ, Clark Kent, to play one of her venues. A few years later, Jay, Juan and Desiree opened the 40/40 Club in Manhattan and Desiree became its director of operations, eventually launching additional outposts, including in Atlantic City, N.J., and Las Vegas. (The latter two have since closed, though the original club in Manhattan and one inside Brooklyn’s Barclays Center are open.) In 2008, after Jay struck his deal with Live Nation to create Roc Nation, he brought Desiree over to be his COO. “I don’t know that I would be anywhere in this business if it weren’t for Jay’s trust in me and his belief in me,” she says. Roc quickly expanded beyond its initial purview.

“Whether it’s music, film, television, fashion or sports, Desiree is either leading it or at the center of it,” says UMG executive vp Michelle Anthony. “She is tough because she is smart and a fierce champion for her artists,” says Jeffrey Harleston, UMG’s general counsel/executive vp business and legal affairs, who negotiated Universal’s deal with Roc Nation. He points to her “intellect, tenacity and strength, combined with a refined sense of what is the fair and right thing to do.” And Universal Music Publishing Group (UMPG) chairman/CEO Jody Gerson calls her “loyal” and “a tough negotiator, but always fair.”

“I respect Desiree enormously,” says UMG chairman/CFO Lucian Grainge. “She’s tough yet extremely pragmatic and is someone you can do business with. Operationally, she’s very experienced and has the ability to resolve complex and difficult issues while maintaining a great sense of humor throughout the process.”

Perez, along with the rest of the Roc inner circle, is famously wary of the spotlight. But during the past few
years she has begun to step more into the public eye. Earlier in 2019 she publicly criticized Billboard over the way album bundles count on charts, during a dispute that resulted in Roc client DJ Khaled coming in at No. 2 on the Billboard 200 with his album *Father of Asahd.*

Eleven months earlier, a public spat with the mayor of Philadelphia over the location of Made in America prompted her to go on the record with Roc Nation’s concerns, leading to a detente between the two sides that kept the festival at its longtime home on Benjamin Franklin Parkway.

And in February 2018, she joined with other high-ranking female executives—including Greenwald, Anthony, Gerson, Epic Records chairman/CEO Sylvia Rhone and Sony Music general counsel Julie Swidler—to pen an open letter to the Recording Academy, arguing for increased diversity and inclusion in both the academy and its Grammy Awards in the wake of then-academy chairman Neil Portnow’s controversial comments that women in the industry need to “step up.”

“There’s so much more that has to be done, that has to happen,” says Perez about the call for diversity in the music business. “Women shouldn’t have to make excuses for who they are or how they speak or how they carry themselves, because I’ve never heard a man have to make that kind of excuse for how they carry themselves.”

This year, Roc Nation’s biggest announcement came in August, when the company signed a deal with the NFL to oversee its live entertainment initiatives and social justice activism, a move that generated some controversy due to Jay’s relationship with former NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick (who in February settled a collusion lawsuit against the league over claims he had been blacklisted for protesting during the national anthem at games). For Perez, the NFL deal is part of a broader effort to raise awareness of social justice issues and create actual change in the criminal justice system in the United States. “They have 125 million viewers during the Super Bowl—I want to talk to those 125 million people,” she says. NFL commissioner Roger Goodell calls Perez “a very savvy executive, the driving force behind the NFL–Roc Nation partnership and [someone who] has approached our work together with unwavering enthusiasm.”

But none of that explains why she has finally granted an interview. “The reason I’m actually talking to you and doing this is because I think it’s a special time at Roc Nation,” she says. “To me, the success of this company is so emblematic for so many other people—a lot of people are inspired by what we do, to see people work hard and not necessarily be part of a big machine, and be entrepreneurial. I feel like the next two to three years [are] critical to this company’s growth. Because we’re almost to the next level. And we’re going to have to make it there.”

What led you into the music business? I started promoting in a nightclub in Manhattan, on 158th Street and Broadway. It was a hip-hop club. I had a lot of live acts performing. I learned a lot about accounting and people trying to take advantage because at the time it was a 100% cash business. So I learned a lot about managing expenses. I used to wear a bulletproof vest to work. It was a tough neighborhood, it was a tough time.

How did you start working with JAY-Z? Jay recorded most of his music at Baseline Studios in the early 2000s, and I was there helping Juan with accounting. (Laughs.) I’m not an accountant, but just more managing and figuring out how to run things. At the time I really wanted out of the nightclub business. And Juan suggested, “What if we opened our own sports bar?” A sports bar—in my mind, I’m thinking 3,000 square feet, something you’d typically see. I was naïve—I mean, a sports bar with JAY-Z? You know what that turned into—the 40/40 Club, thousands of people outside, 15,000 square feet on 25th and Broadway. We ended up opening five different 40/40 Clubs within five years. But it was better, and obviously it was a shift into where I am now.

Why did Jay bring you to Roc Nation when he did the Live Nation deal in 2008? Running around in a club—even the 40/40—was just a lot, and I was getting older and didn’t necessarily want to be in that. So I viewed going there as a positive thing, but not something that I knew anything about. And I just came over. It took time and trust, I think, and Jay feeling—we just work together well, I guess.

Roc Nation is a big company now, but still independent. What does that allow you to do? It allows us to do what’s right, always. It allows us to make decisions on our own, to do things outside the box, that are different and not necessarily “industry norm.” And that’s OK. Because I think that opens up all the doors of what business is supposed to be. It’s supposed to be evolving.

The reality is, we have to change everything that’s working and not working because we have to continue to progress. And in order to progress, you have to think outside of what you’re normally doing and think of how to do it better. All of us do. We’re all witnesses of this new era where streaming has happened. So how do you make money? How do you still maintain commerce but integrity? It’s that fine line—that’s the rub of what we do. It’s our responsibility as an industry to continue to seek out new systems in the name of evolution, and there is always pushback from those who profit. But we push forward anyway.

**Do you feel you’ve had to fight harder at times because you’re an independent company?** Always. Just because we’re independent, just because we’re minorities—it’s just a fact. I’m in a room, we’re doing a $200 million deal and it’s 30 white people in the room, or all men. Little by little, as you evolve, you have to straighten some people out, because they say the most inappropriate things to you, or they don’t believe in you so they treat you a certain way, and so you kind of push your way forward.

We have a company that’s not just music. We’re in publishing, we have a great deal with a rate where we can actually go out there and compete with those companies like Sony/ATV, UMPG and Warner Chappell. We have a music label, so we compete with Atlantic and Warner and Interscope. But because of our [Universal] deal, we’re able to actually compete with them commercially. We have Tidal, so we’re competing with the biggest streaming services in the world, and we all have the same catalog so we’re all trying to find ways to differentiate ourselves. We’re competing on management—same thing. And it goes on and on. The difference with us is that we’re one company with so many different verticals. We’re really just creating culture. That’s really what we’re doing every day.

**Have you seen attitudes toward diversity and inclusion change during your career?** I think the conversation has changed. I don’t know how much has actually changed. I think that more needs to happen in general. I mean, how many Women in Music executives are racial
CONGRATULATIONS

JENNIFER BREITHAUPT
GLOBAL CONSUMER CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER, Citi
ON BEING A 2019 BILLBOARD WOMEN IN MUSIC HONOREE

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT
LIVE NATION
None of us are tech experts. We’re music people in the tech business. Completely different. So I think that’s a little bit of what we didn’t foresee. And also, people don’t understand you’re putting distribution in the hands of the artist. I could see why the labels didn’t like that. (Laughter.) It goes back to how we work and the purity of our naïveté. The intent is always pure and we go for it regardless. I think the right opportunity will come [for Tidal]. But the only way we would do a deal for Tidal would be if the vision is about the art and the artist. If not, we couldn’t do it, and that has been the reason, actually, why we’ve turned down a lot of deals, because the different companies we’ve talked to just were not thinking the way we’re thinking.

Since Roc Nation formed in 2008, the business has completely changed. How do you stay on top of it? We were streaming five years ago and actually bought [Aspiro] a year before that. In 2014 we started talking about streaming, and everybody thought we were crazy. We stay on the cutting edge because we are part of it. Jay’s an artist. He and Juan live for sports. Jay Brown is living it day and night — artistry is who he is. We are the industry. It’s not like we’re some guy who came into the business and just knows business. It’s different for us. We’re the species ourselves.

Roc Nation was born from Jay and Jay Brown and Juan and Ty Ty being at Def Jam and saying, “We need to create our own place.” Jay’s the model, and we’ve taken his model and said, “OK, this needs to go across everyone.” That’s how we’ve been able to start all the different divisions because we’ve needed them. We needed a publishing division, just in case we can’t go out there and get [artists] a competitive publishing deal. We can give them one. Do we get them a good label deal? If you don’t want to do it, we can. Oh, you want to put out some music? They can’t get it out? We can get it up. It’s like we’ve created our own toolkit to do what we do.

What do you hope to accomplish with this partnership with the NFL? We’re hoping to be able to affect what’s going to happen. I don’t think, in our lifetime, racism will end. We were born into it, it’s here, and we’re going to die, unfortunately, and it’s going to be here. And it stems from so many different things. So I think we want to affect, we want to create awareness.

We were at the sentencing for Meek Mill, when he was sentenced to two to four years [for a parole violation in 2017]. And Michael Rubin [co-owner of the Philadelphia 76ers] was in the courtroom — and he was shocked. I wasn’t shocked because this is how it is. We all know someone who’s got locked up, I know people who are doing life in prison, who have been killed, who have been harassed by police — it’s just a normal thing for us. It’s just how we deal with that. And for [Rubin], he had never experienced that. And seeing how he experienced that, and then what he did about it — he ended up wanting to start REFORM. Rubin had his epiphany and said, “I have to do something about this. I’ve always given to charity, but I’ve never been passionate about anything.” Him going out and knocking on his friends’ doors, bringing $50 million to the table. And now we’re doing all these incredible things with REFORM — it’s only 11 months old, and we’re waiting on Pennsylvania to hopefully pass this bill, and we’ll change how probation and parole get handled in that state. That’s just the beginning.

So I realized that — some people are unaware. Some people just don’t know. If we’re able to create more awareness, I think there’s a lot more Michael Rubins out there. They may not be as wealthy and have such influential friends. (Laughter.) But it’s enough that they know. I believe that, fundamentally, the majority of Americans believe in life, that there’s part of us that is good, that we’re good people. It’s America — best country in the world! I believe that the 32 [NFL] owners, they’re billionaires and intelligent people — I get all that. And I get that some people don’t like some of the owners, or the NFL — put that to the side. They have 125 million viewers during the Super Bowl. I want to talk to those 125 million people. And I want to tell them, “Do you know that this is happening to Meek Mill?” And some of them will say, “I don’t care.” Some of them will say, “I didn’t know, and I care, and I don’t want that to happen to another kid at the age of 19.” Because that affects us, somehow, because we’re all in this together as a country. So part of what we’re trying to do is figure out how we can create awareness, how we can bring our message across, and I think the NFL wants that also — they just don’t know how to do it.

Which of Roc Nation’s accomplishments are you most proud of? I think the NFL deal is a success. Here you have the biggest sports organization in the United States. Super powerful. Billions of dollars a year, ratings going up as we speak. And they came to a minority-owned, little independent company in comparison to them, and said, “We’d like you to help us.” I think that’s a win for culture, it’s a win in the music movement.

Our label deal that we did with Universal, that’s groundbreaking. Now I know that some people are actually using it in other labels, because I negotiate label deals for other people and they’re actually using the deal that I did with Jeff Harleston as a template. We were in the right. And kudos to Universal for wanting to do that and saying, “Let’s try it. Let’s see how it works.”

You want me to tell you the truth? The music industry, touring and management — most of it has to do with accounting. It’s all accounting. Right back to the beginning [of my career]. I never realized that. There’s so many things; we’ve done so much.

The fact that we employ so many people — that’s a big responsibility. People have families, they work here. And making sure that every day we’re pushing the envelope, and they come here because they believe. It’s super entrepreneurial in here. If you come here in the morning, it’s full. Or you come in here at 9 o’clock at night, it’s full of people, everyone working for the same cause. I think we’re a movement — we’re a cause. We’re more than a business. And then the money comes after it. Because we do what we’re passionate about.

minities? It’s not 50%. It’s hard to be a woman who’s secure and to deal with people’s insecurities, and if you’re a woman and you’re straight-forward, it’s different than being a man and being straightforward — we’ve all heard this a million times, especially in the last two years. It’s much harder for a woman to just be, you know, yourself.

In March, it’ll be five years since Roc Nation launched Tidal, which doesn’t share subscriber numbers. What have you learned from running that business? I’ve learned that the power of content is even stronger than I’ve ever thought. I think that unfortunately, in general, the music industry has made a lot of mistakes in how it has handled its music and its content. And what I’ve learned is that we have to figure out a better way of how we can capitalize from the industry of music, rather than others in other industries.

I’ve learned that it’s really hard to compete against big companies. (Laughter.) It’s not easy. But we’ve relied on content to make us as we have. Some companies have $100 million to spend in one quarter, and we only have a song that we can put out that hopefully everyone wants to listen to and it’s on [Tidal], or people want to hear the podcasts that we have. So the power of content. And the power of culture. We’re representing all artists and we’re representing music. Not the commercial side of it — even though we have to fight for the commercial side of it so that we as an industry can stay alive. So I think all of that. It has been a tough fight. If I had to pick all the fights in my life, it has definitely been top three.

In January 2017, Sprint purchased a 33% stake in Tidal for $200 million – a coup for the company. But do you regret any of the moves you’ve made to grow the streaming business? In all the businesses, you’re always going to make missteps. On Tidal, we could have sold five different times. We could have merged five other different times. We could have taken a check very early. I think it was a big undertaking, more than we even thought. We delisted a public company [on the Swedish stock exchange, Oslo-based Aspiro, which Roc Nation acquired to launch Tidal]. (Laughter.) Just think about this: Its operations were sitting in a European country with a completely different work ethic, to say it nicely, and obviously a completely different culture, and they were very dependent on technology.
Congratulations

Deborah Curtis
Head of Global Experiential Marketing & Partnerships, American Express
On Being A 2019 Billboard Women in Music Honoree

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Women In Music: The Hall Of Fame

Honored in previous years as executives of the year, these industry leaders talk about their ongoing work and challenges, changing attitudes toward women, advice for the next generation and the artists who inspire them  By Joe Levy

Danielle Aguirre
EXECUTIVE VP/GENERAL COUNSEL, NATIONAL MUSIC PUBLISHERS’ ASSOCIATION

Jacqueline Charlesworth
PARTNER, ALTER KENDRICK & BARON

Susan Genco
CO-PRESIDENT, THE AZOFF COMPANY

Dina LaPolt
OWNER/CEO, LaPOLT LAW

O SAY THAT THESE EXECUTIVES, who played a crucial role in the passage of the Music Modernization Act, have remained busy in the year since the legislation was signed into law would be an understatement. All four were involved in the creation of the Mechanical Licensing Collective, the mechanical rights administration organization called for by the MMA. “It’s a technology and data company at its heart,” says Aguirre, a nonvoting board member of the MLC. Beta testing on a centralized public database accessible to both rights holders and anyone licensing mechanical rights is slated for the end of the second quarter of 2020. “We will have a portal, one place, where you’ll get paid, and there will be audit rights,” says Aguirre. “It’s something that’s intuitive, whether you’re a self-published songwriter with a few songs or you’re a major publisher with a few million songs.”

The MLC wasn’t the only new organization launched in 2018 to protect the rights of creators. Genco — along with her fellow co-president of The Azoff Company, Elizabeth Collins (see page 112) — was one of the founding forces behind the Music Artists Coalition, an artist advocacy group.

“Being an artist is an individual undertaking,” she says. “Folks on the other side who have interests that are not necessarily pro copyright/pro artist are very good at dividing and conquering. We haven’t always come together as a group.” So the Music Artists Coalition — whose board includes Irving Azoff, Coran Capshaw, John Silva and Live Nation Entertainment’s Ali Harrell — will draw on the coalition-building that led to the passage of the MMA to protect artists’ rights.

For both Charlesworth and LaPolt, the past year has been a time of expansion. Charlesworth joined music copyright firm Alter Kendrick & Baron in May and moved to Los Angeles, where she’s building out the firm’s West Coast presence. “I had to take the California bar exam last summer, which was not a lot of fun, but I passed,” she says. For her part, LaPolt — who made news when she got client 21 Savage out of a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention center in February — has grown her business enough that she’ll be expanding her namesake firm next spring.

All four recognize that there have been positive changes for women in the industry, and all four see the need for greater change. “The more that you can have not just women, but women of color in positions of power that show the diversity of the music that we’re actually representing, the stronger our industry is going to be,” says Aguirre.

Adds LaPolt: “It is sad that there are only five women CEOs, and two of those share the title with their male counterparts.”

Genco would like to see better protection for female creatives. “If you’re a female executive at a label, publisher or management company, one hopes that you have a system in place that can address any concerns that arise,” she says. “Who do you call when you’re a young, female session musician? Who do you call when you’re a young songwriter who’s at the studio late at night with a powerful producer, powerful artist, powerful songwriter? There’s no boss there.”

Charlesworth sees a need to address issues on a broader scale. “Fundamentally, at a cultural level we have to embrace the idea that women really can be great leaders,” she says. “The sad truth is that in large law firms, the number of women equity partners, frankly, hasn’t changed much since I graduated from law school, which was a long time ago. You have to get to a tipping point where there are enough women in leadership roles that it’s not an exception, but it’s just the way things are.”
We’re proud to honor Alicia Keys with the American Express Impact Award for her inspiring influence on and off the stage.
Bozoma Saint John
CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER, ENDEAVOR

“I have a high bar for what I want to see happen for women in the music business and in the corporate world overall. There hasn’t been enough change. We’re still looking at very low percentages for women in the C-suite. And since the retirement of [Xerox CEO] Ursula Burns three years ago, there are no black women CEOs at a Fortune 500 company. As we’ve seen in the report commissioned by the Lean In organization, the glass ceiling isn’t the problem, it’s the broken rung. Women aren’t getting into management positions — and if they can’t get to that level, how do they expect us to get to the ceiling? We need to evolve the narrative so that making changes isn’t just on the shoulders of women but squarely on the shoulders of men. Men need to be made more aware of the fact that there aren’t women in these positions. That they need to be held more accountable for the numbers and for the advancement of women. But I’m still very optimistic. I work to showcase the fact that you can be a black woman in the corporate space — in any space. I’ve been a woman in tech, in music, Hollywood — a lot of different industries — and I see that there’s an opportunity to bring more women in, especially in senior positions. Because the pipeline is definitely not the problem.”

Julie Greenwald
CHAIRMAN/COO, ATLANTIC RECORDS

“When Lizzo came in last September to play her album, I said to her, ‘We need this right now.’ Because I was feeling like, ‘What the fuck is going on in the United States?’ We need good, positive people like her who stand for something. There’s that Marian Wright Edelman quote, ‘You can’t be what you can’t see.’ Lizzo definitely put herself on front street and made sure people — young girls, young boys, the LGBT community — could see something else. We haven’t really seen a woman like her be a mainstream artist since Aretha Franklin. She talked about self-love and body positivity, but she was like, ‘I’m also going to have bad days, and I’m going to be honest with everybody’ — just 100% authentic. And I definitely set the tone here, which was: ‘We’re fucking breaking Lizzo.’ It was not ‘Hey, I hope we can get it.’ It was ‘You’re going to make sure everyone hears this album and understands who Lizzo is.’ And everyone delivered. The covers came when we needed them, the synchs. Radio — you can count on one hand how many artists you can take to five formats. I worked her on all sides of the building. She’s not a pop artist, she’s not an urban artist. She’s everyone’s artist.”

Michele Anthony
EXECUTIVE VP/EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT BOARD MEMBER, UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP

“There is a lot that has improved [for women], and I’m proud of our company. You only need to look at the leadership of UMG to see the number of very strong senior women peppered throughout the company. I’m proud to sit on Jody Gerson’s executive board for She Is the Music, and I’m proud of the work we did alongside the Recording Academy task force, focused on creating diversity in Recording Academy voting membership, the committees and the show itself. We’ve made great gains. But there’s so much more that needs to be accomplished, not just in our industry but in many others. Part of the positive change that we’ve seen is generational. There is more of a majority consciousness — a favorite Gloria Steinem term — regarding equal opportunities and pay. However, there’s still cliched stereotyping — ambitious, strong female personalities being referred to as too tough or emotional. Women being told to calm down, being interrupted, subjected to ovetalking, not sharing credit. I continue to hear these things from young women. Gloria Steinem has a great point in her new book: Women should be linked, not ranked. It’s very important for young women to own their voices and their power, and to support and promote each other.”

Jody Gerson
CHAIRMAN/CEO, UNIVERSAL MUSIC PUBLISHING GROUP

“If we are going to increase the numbers of women working in music, it’s going to be women who have to push other women into position. People talk about ours being a male-dominated business. There are a lot of men in the business, and you push your friends into position.

When I was coming up, I didn’t play golf, I didn’t go to basketball games with the guys. I wasn’t part of that crowd. There was no way for me to have social interaction with the people leading our business. It certainly didn’t hurt me. But in order to truly change the numbers, we as women have to create community — I call it sisterhood. And you have to change the narrative. It’s not enough that there’s one of us running a company. It’s not going to be better until there are many of us running companies, and it’s not going to be better until people aren’t thinking about women running companies. I want to be compared to the best executives in the business. Not the best female executives. I — with an incredible group of executives and employees — have built Universal into a billion-dollar business. Our revenue growth is extraordinary. It’s not because I’m a woman running a business. It’s because I’m a really good executive running a business.”

Judy McGrath
BOARD OF DIRECTORS, AMAZON

“Baby boomers — whether it’s in politics, music or media — need to step aside and make room for the new generation, who are digital natives, who grew up in a very different world and who have different expectations from work and life. In many ways, I think it’s harder for young people today. Looking for a job is anonymous. You do everything electronically. But I think the best advice I can give young women is, do lots of different things along the way. I recently heard Michelle Obama speak, and she said that she was always very focused on a straight line forward — which has certainly worked for her — but that her husband taught her the value of the s carve. You’re not going to know what you’re great at, or what you like, until you try it. Have an open mind. Learn something about management. Learn something about business. Gerry Laybourne, who ran Nickelodeon at Viacom, once said to me, ‘I don’t think you’re going to be truly successful until you learn to look at business as creatively as you look at the creative process.’ At the time, I thought, ‘I’m not so sure about that.’ But the truth is, I really fought my way into understanding and representing business — P&Ls, operating income — so I could be fully taken seriously at the table. So that was good advice.”
Congratulations

WOMEN IN MUSIC HONOREES

Including our own Martha Henderson, EVP Entertainment Banking

City National® is proud to support the Power of Women.

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Among the women working at Spotify are (from left) head of R&B Mjeema Pickett, vp/global head of artist and label services/interim co-head of music Marian Dicus, head of artist and label marketing U.S. Latin Monica Damashke, head of international music Madeleine Bennett, head of music marketing Amanda Butler, Ostroff, head of curation strategy Meg Tarquinio, head of consumer PR, U.S. and Canada Tamika Young, head of artist and label marketing Nashville Brittany Schaffer, head of artist relations Whitney-Gayle Benta and head of North America artist and label marketing Rosa Asciolla, who were photographed by Mackenzie Stroh on Nov. 11 at Spotify in New York.
DEEP IN STREAMS: THE WOMEN OF SPOTIFY

“Perhaps the achievement we’re most proud of in 2019 is that Spotify’s music team surpassed 50/50 parity in terms of women in the ranks. That means more than 50% of the music team is comprised of employees who identify as female, which is an enormous step forward not only for the company, but for our industry.”

—DAWN OSTROFF, CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER, SPOTIFY
MUSIC GROUPS

Katina Bynum
EXECUTIVE VP EAST COAST LABELS, UNIVERSAL MUSIC ENTERPRISES

Celine Joshua
GM OF COMMERCIAL, CONTENT AND ARTIST STRATEGY, UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP

Susan Mazo
SENIOR VP GLOBAL CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, EVENTS AND SPECIAL PROJECTS, UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP

Jaime Weston
EXECUTIVE VP CONSUMER MARKETING, UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP

While Mazo oversaw the coordination of over 150 corporate social-responsibility projects across 60 countries in the past year, she’s particularly proud of developing and launching All Together Now, UMG’s company-wide philanthropic platform, creating campaigns in the past 18 months “around recognized events like Pride, Black History Month, International Women’s Day, Election Day, Mental Health Awareness Month and Earth Day,” says Mazo. Bynum is helping UMG’s labels (Republic, Def Jam, Capitol and Island) position themselves, so that “artists still believe that signing with a record label is the best path for a successful worldwide career.” Highlights of her year included releases from superstars like Lil Wayne and Nicki Minaj, as well as breakthroughs from newcomers such as Blueface and Kiana Ledé. Joshua pioneered a new strategy for early viewership with major music videos by customizing the YouTube premiere of Taylor Swift’s “ME!” Tailoring a record-breaking 65.2 million views in 24 hours, it became the platform’s biggest 24-hour debut by a solo female artist, according to YouTube. Weston joined UMG from the NFL in October 2019 in a newly created role that oversees brand strategy, digital innovation and artist insight. “In this new world,” says Weston, “the consumer really has all the power.”

Advice for next-gen women

Mazo: “Three things: Be confident and kind; read the press every single day and have an opinion; listen to the stories of the women who have come before you and let their lessons help you find your own path.”

Monica Cornia
SENIOR VP INTERNATIONAL MARKETING, RCA RECORDS, ARISTA RECORDS

Deirdre McDonald
EXECUTIVE VP GLOBAL PUBLIC POLICY AND INDUSTRY RELATIONS, SONY MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT

Julie Swidler
EXECUTIVE VP/GLOBAL HEAD OF BUSINESS AFFAIRS/GENERAL COUNSEL, SONY MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT

Melissa Thomas
SENIOR VP INTERNATIONAL MARKETING, COLUMBIA RECORDS, EPIC RECORDS

Swidler, 61, undertook the task of modernizing Sony Music’s recording agreements at the direction of CEO Rob Stringer. “We are an 80% digital global organization,” says Swidler. “What does that mean for our contractual relationships with our artists?” She also helped Sony upgrade the online portal through which artists can view streaming earnings and withdraw royalties monthly. “In my geeky music-business way, it’s very revolutionary,” she says. McDonald, 56, helped steer labels, publishers and what she calls a “coalition of the willing” into a 21-point “Code of Best Practice” designed to stamp out false plays and other forms of stream manipulation. “That was hard-fought,” she says of the June agreement. “The aim was to send a very public message: Money needs to flow fairly in this world of streaming.” Cornia and Thomas, both 38, drove international marketing efforts for their respective Sony Music labels. In September, Cornia notes that Khalid sold out two nights at the O2 Arena in London. She cites his blockbuster 2017 Marshmello collaboration “Silence” as an especially potent global hit: “We’ve done our best to move him to as many markets as possible.” Thomas helped break two of Sony’s biggest 2019 singles, Lil Nas X’s “Old Town Road” and Travis Scott’s “Highest in the Room.” Internationally, the former hit 2.3 billion streams; the latter, 199.6 million.

Advice for next-gen women

Swidler: “Women are told to be more X, be more Y, and the best way for you to be successful is to figure out who you are, to work with your own style.”

Masha Osherova
EXECUTIVE VP/CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER, WARNER MUSIC GROUP

Oana Ruxandra
EXECUTIVE VP NEW BUSINESS CHANNELS/CHIEF ACQUISITION OFFICER, WARNER MUSIC GROUP

“Entrepreneurship, experimentation and innovation” are the watchwords cited by Ruxandra as her team leads digital strategy and business development for Warner Music Group. She’s working to close deals and secure partnerships at WMG “that protect the long-term value of music — so our artists and songwriters can keep creating amazing music for their fans.” Osherova is working with WMG’s leadership to redefine “what a 21st century music company should look like.” Her focus is on inclusion and diversity, but also mobilizing employees around social concerns — “things they care about” — and issues like international opportunities and policies so “our people can find the right life-work blend.”

Have attitudes changed?

Ruxandra: “There’s certainly more dialogue now — there’s more discussion and more awareness — and that’s a start.”

LABELS

Traci Adams
EXECUTIVE VP PROMOTION, EPIC RECORDS

Sylvia Rhone
CHAIRMAN/CEO, EPIC RECORDS

“I’m proud of our staff’s ability to consistently deliver breakthrough artists on a global scale,”

66

The most urgent issue facing the music business is...

“With the rise of hip-hop, there’s a huge void across the board of black executives — not just women. The sound of black music is really running the game, but when you look at the offices where the decisions are being made, you don’t see people who look like us.”

—Marsh St. Hubert, Atlantic Records
congratulations
WOMEN IN MUSIC
HONOREES

bridget bauer

stacy vee

I'm so proud of Bridget and Stacy, and all the women at Messina Touring Group.

Louis Messina
and your family at Messina Touring Group
Bass was promoted in January to lead the all-women marketing department at 300, with a focus on breaking down traditional genres that pigeonhole artists. She has also helped deliver a run of No. 1s this year across a variety of charts for artists like Young Thug (Billboard 200), Highly Suspect (Mainstream Rock), Cheat Codes (Dance/Mix Show Airplay) and Megan Thee Stallion (Rhythmic).

**MOST URGENT ISSUE** “Adaptability. The industry is changing every single day. We need to be able to quickly adapt to new technologies and keep up with the new ways that music is consumed.”

**Margi Cheske**
**President, Fantasy Records, Concord**
Cheske has overseen the successful relaunch of the storied Fantasy label (launched in the late ’40s as a jazz imprint and the label of Creedence Clearwater Revival in the ’60s), now home to a diverse and acclaimed roster. She has overseen the success of Nathaniel Rateliff & The Night Sweats (“Hey Mama”) as their third No. 1 (on Triple A), Steve Perry (his first solo album in 24 years, Traces, hit No. 6 on the Billboard 200) and Tanya Tucker (‘While I’m Livin’) has received a Grammy nomination for top country album.

**HAVE ATTITUDES CHANGED?** “There’s still a long way to go, but at least it’s a topic of discussion now, and that’s how real change begins.”

**Sharon Dastur**
**Senior VP Promotion, Republic Records**
**Wendy Goldstein**
**President of West Coast Creative, Republic Records**
**Donna Gryn**
**Senior VP Marketing, Republic Records**
**Kerr Mackar**
**Senior VP Brand Partnerships, Republic Records**

After Ariana Grande’s back-to-back Billboard 200 chart-topping success of Sweetener in September 2018 and Thank U, Next in February, the reunion of the Jonas Brothers on the No. 1 album Happiness Begins in June kept Republic on a roll. “When I was the [program director] of [WHTZ New York] Z100, we played ‘Burnin’ Up,’ ‘S.O.S.’ and other Jonas Brothers tracks,” says Dastur. “Now, being on the label side, it’s a full-circle moment.” Adds Goldstein: “The stars aligned really well. My first choice [for producer on Happiness Begins] was Ryan Tedder, and he was like, ‘I’m in,’ so I had to do was make the right record with them. The rest is history.” While Gryn works with Republic’s superstars, she is also focused on the growth of rising artists Julia Michaels, who just headlined her first tour, and Jeremy Zucker, who has logged 430 million streams. Mackar, 34, moved Republic from one-off deals with brands to increased repeat business, doubling revenue year over year. Post Malone’s 2019 “Dive Bar” campaign with Bud Light evolved this year with a custom can and co-branded merchandise.

**SONGS THAT INSPIRE** **Mackar** “’One Moment in Time’ by Whitney Houston and ‘Shake It Out’ from Florence + The Machine.”

**Phyllicia Fant**
**Co-Head of Urban Music, Columbia Records**
**Jennifer Mallory**
**GM, Columbia Records**

“Another generation of Columbia rising stars is incredible,” says Mallory, 45, citing Rosalía, Tyler, the Creator, Dominic Fike, Lil Tjay, Polo G, and Lil Nas X, whose record-setting “Old Town Road” has earned 2.3 billion streams. “If you ever saw a team come together, it was during the Lil Nas X project,” says Fant, 41, who came to Columbia from Warner Records only a year ago to help nurture the roster. “We’re not only signing these artists but developing them to be long-term staples.”

**WHERE SHE UNWINDS** **Mallory** “Somewhere in nature. I like to hug trees and climb mountains to unwind and refill my tank.”

**Nicki Farag**
**Executive VP Promotions, Def Jam**
**Natina Nimene**
**Senior VP Urban Promotion, Def Jam**
**Marisa Pizarro**
**Senior VP A&R, Def Jam**

Farag, 40, has helped Florida upstart YK Osiris emerge as a promising talent with the success of “Worth It,” which broke through on the Hot 100 in March and has since logged 403 million streams. Farag declares that radio can still play a factor in developing an artist, saying, “Radio is the original playlist.” Pizarro arrived at Def Jam earlier this year from Republic in time to be part of the launch for Kanye West’s Jesus Is King. “It’s always a fire drill with Kanye, who is notorious for tweaking up until the last moment, and the A&R and production staff really pulled together to make it happen,” says Nimene. 39, promoted to her current role in July, worked on the promotion side for Jesus Is King and saw it top the Billboard 200, as well as the Top R&B/ Hip-Hop, Rap, Christian and Gospel Albums charts. Says Nimene, “This is something that I take great pride in being a part of.”

**HAVE ATTITUDES CHANGED?** **Farag** “Drastically. We have meetings where we’re speaking about our artists that have provocative videos and men seem to be a little more cautious in how they articulate whether they like something or not. Men are a little bit more reserved.”

WOMEN IN MUSIC EXECUTIVES

**Dahlia Ambach Caplin**
Senior VP A&R, VERVE/IMPULSE!

Ambach Caplin, promoted to her senior A&R role in May, signed Tank & The Bangas and helped them craft Green Balloon, the album that earned the New Orleans act a Grammy nomination for best new artist. She also signed J.C. Ondara, who debuted at No. 37 on the Emerging Artists chart on the strength of his album Tales of America, and Jon Batiste, who has recorded back-to-back Live at the Village Vanguard albums. She says she’s focused on “bolstering and revitalizing the storied label imprints that we oversee, which are Impulse!, Verve Records and Verve Forecast.”

**Advice for Next-Gen Women** “Find your mentors and don’t be afraid to assert yourself.”

**Michelle An**
Senior VP/Head of Creative Content, Interscope Geffen A&M

**Annie Lee**
CFO, Interscope Geffen A&M

**Brenda Romano**
President of Promotion, Interscope Geffen A&M

**Nicole Wysoarko**
Executive VP Urban Operations, Interscope Geffen A&M

While Billie Eilish launched her career on SoundCloud in 2016, she “hadn’t broken into the mainstream before our radio campaign,” says Romano, whose team helped send Eilish’s “Bad Guy” to No. 1 on the Hot 100. The same promotion savvy helped Selena Gomez achieve her first Hot 100 No. 1 with “Lose You to Love Me.” An engineered Eilish’s ceiling-dancing performance on Sunday Night Live and helped Gomez shoot her videos with only an iPhone 1 Pro, drawing, says An, “a combined 170 million views in the first few days alone.” Wysoarko, 41, says her priority is “highlighting female voices and breaking female artists, particularly young black women,” from Ari Lennox to Summer Walker. Lee, 39; was upped to CFO in March and takes pride in finding the balance “between being fiscally responsible and not stifling creativity.”

**SONG THAT INSPIRES** **Wysoarko** “’Nina Simone’s Feeling Good’ is a classic. Her voice, the lyrics and production evoke a sense of renewal and power.”

**Rayna Bass**
Senior VP Marketing, 300 Entertainment

says Rhone, whose promotion to chairman/CEO in April came amid a prolific 18 months for Epic artists. Adams notes that the label notched five debuts in the top three on the Billboard 200, including Future’s The Wizrd, 21 Savage’s I Am > I Was and Travis Scott’s Astroworld, all three chart-toppers, along with the No. 2 bows of DJ Khalid and Rick Ross. Scott logged his first Hot 100 No. 1 with ‘Sicko Mode’ and his second chart-topper with “Highest in the Room.” Rhone reached another milestone in October as the first female African American recipient of City of Hope’s Spirit of Life Award.

WHERE SHE UNWINDS **Rhone** “A beach with warm, turquoise water.”
CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE INCREDIBLE WONDER WOMEN ON THIS YEAR’S LIST! I’M HONORED TO SHARE THIS TITLE WITH YOU.

Love,
Lou and the Tri Star Team
Paying It Forward

As the industry gradually moves toward giving women more — and better — opportunities, those in senior leadership roles are extending a hand to the next generation, building valuable mentor relationships. By Gail Mitchell

HEN ATTORNEY DINA
LaPolt began her practice in 2001, the only female mentor she could look to for advice was a client: Afeni Shakur, mother of the late rapper Tupac. “She used to tell me all the time, ‘Wisdom comes from good judgment, good judgment comes from experience, and experience comes from really bad judgment,’” recalls LaPolt. Since then, LaPolt has become a mentor in her own right, joining a growing group of women in senior positions supporting the next generation of female industry leadership. “We’ve been more successful at removing bias in the workplace,” says Epic Records chairman/CEO Sylvia Rhone, who alongside Atlantic Records chairman/COO Julie Greenwald and Universal Music Publishing Group chairman/CEO Jody Gerson is one of the few women executives leading a top music company. “Sony Music is now 50% women globally. But the disparity in senior-level management positions for women still needs to be addressed. Our task is to increase the pipeline for those roles and hold companies accountable.”

In an effort to do that, Atlantic executive vp Juliettes Jones is launching a monthly Q&A session with her team early next year featuring female speakers. “There are a lot of women who need and want to ask real questions,” explains Jones. “We forget the access we can have with our peers and co-workers.” Elsewhere, MAC Presents is funding a spring break 2020 program for female college students, who will spend time in Los Angeles and Nashville meeting with female executives from the major talent agencies, record labels, performing rights organizations and brand firms. “You can’t put a price on that,” says MAC Presents president Marcie Allen, who is working in tandem with co-worker and mentee Kacie Lehman. “The most valuable thing you can give someone that wants to break into the music industry is time.” Allen and Lehman — along with LaPolt, Jones and their respective mentees — recently chatted about what they’ve learned on both sides of these partnerships.

WINKLER I was at Universal Music Publishing handling royalties when I met Dina in 2010. I talked to Michael Rexford, a lawyer at Universal at the time. He said I had to meet Dina, who was teaching her UCLA class. And though I had graduated from Berklee College with a music business degree, I knew it was worth taking the class just to meet Dina. LaPOLT By the end of the class, she decided she would be a lawyer. So I told her to do as many internships as she could while going to law school and to keep in contact with me. She has been a lawyer here now for four years.

WINKLER Seeing and following her lead as a woman working in the industry has just been invaluable for me. I was like, ‘All right, I can do this. I don’t have to go to Harvard to succeed in this industry. I can be a woman, and I can speak my mind as a woman.’ The industry isn’t always supportive of women. There’s not a lot of tolerance for things like family flexibility and maternity leave. I’m on maternity leave now, and not once have I been made to feel shut out of anything or like I’m inconveniencing anyone.

LaPOLT There are two types of women: those that help pull each other up and those that actively push each other down. That’s definitely a thing in the music industry. It’s so hard to listen to women who preach inclusivity when the majority of their teams are men. I’ve called executives and artists out for that. As an industry, we have to set goals for the changes we want to see.

NIMENE We met in 2005 while I was working at WKYS in Washington, D.C., as a promotion and programming assistant. But I was very clear that I wanted to work on the label side. I remember being so impressed the day when Juliette came in because I had never seen a woman doing national promotion before, only local regional. I felt we had an instant connection, so I asked her flat out to be my mentor.

JONES I remember too that we bonded because you had had a lot of false starts with male executives who said they were going to hire you. But they never followed up. That touched me because I knew that frustration.

NIMENE We’ve only worked together three out of the 15 years we’ve known each other, but she has been a constant throughout my entire career. I brag about our relationship because I’m just so grateful that she took the time to invest in me. It’s very comforting to know I have someone that has my back. I also feel a sisterhood with my peers now. We have our own cheerleading squad and group chats to hold each other down.

JONES To be able to give someone an opportunity and watch them grow is very fulfilling. But there’s still an underlying belief that there’s only one seat at the table for us. There’s a long way yet to go in terms of more women being able to put more women in key positions. I ultimately just want to be a resource.

LEHMAN I was working in field marketing with Red Bull. I knew someone who knew Marcie, and I got connected that way. I started full time in 2012. We used to carpool to work together in New York, and that’s when I learned a lot: listening to her take phone calls on the car speaker as we drove across the bridge. And as a brand-new employee, she was willing to put me in the room so I could just soak up everything. I’m super grateful for that access with no separation.

ALLEN I was very careful from the beginning to not be overbearing, to just let her soar on her own. I guess on the flip side you could say I threw her in the deep end to see if she could swim. And she swam beautifully. She being millennial and me not, we absolutely have different viewpoints and have had heated discussions.

LEHMAN Marcie’s mentorship has really been inspirational for me as I adopt the practices that I’ve learned from her over these eight years. It’s a thread for our company that we don’t take for granted and continue to perpetuate.

ALLEN There are some unbelievable women in power in the C-suites now. But the next steps I want to see are more record labels, booking agencies, management companies, publishing and other industry firms being started by women. I want to see more female business owners forging the path.
CONGRATULATIONS
ALESSANDRA ALARCÓN
AND TO ALL WOMEN IN MUSIC
Maria Fernandez
EXECUTIVE VP/COO, SONY MUSIC LATIN IBERIA

Fernandez, 46, oversees finance, human resource matters and new business for Sony’s U.S. Latin, Latin America and Iberian operations — and also has a hand in all of Sony’s Latin recording deals and strategic acquisitions. But she takes most pride in recently implementing (along with her counterparts at other Sony labels and divisions) new functions in Sony Music’s artist portal. “These tools allow our artists and royalty participants to view and download earnings faster than ever before,” she says, “and went live on Oct. 28.”

MOST URGENT ISSUE: “Equality and diversity continue to be the top ones, especially in areas like A&R and senior management.”

Laure Gaba
GM/Senior VP Urban A&R, ATLANTIC RECORDS

Gaba, a 20-year industry veteran, was honored by the RIAA with the label executive of the year award in September for playing a crucial role in the superstardom of artists like Lizzo and Cardi B. “What we did with Cardi in two years takes some people 10 years [or] almost a fucking lifetime,” says St. Hubert, 41, who is ready to break new artists like Roddy Rich and Jack Harlow in 2020. “The way she has been able to slash everything from the last two years has really created a space for women,” Weeb says. Gaba focused on supporting the creative visions of Atlantic artists, such as Janelle Monae’s Grammy-nominated Dirty Computer, which was accompanied by a 46-minute narrative film, and Melanie Martinez’s simultaneous release of K-12 as an album and 92-minute feature film. Harper, 41, set her sights on bringing more under-the-radar rappers to the top of the charts. YoungBoy Never Broke Again’s A l YoungBoy 2 marked his first chart-topping album on the Billboard 200, while Kevin Gates’ I’m Him peaked at No. 4 on the Billboard 200, both in October.

MOST URGENT ISSUE: GABA “If we’re not careful to make sure songwriters stay at the top in this business, we’re going to lose the ability to have these life-changing songs that have shifted the culture and changed the world.”

Ethiopia Habtemariam
PRESIDENT, MOTOWN RECORDS; EXECUTIVE VP, CAPITOL MUSIC GROUP

“Yesterday. Today. Forever.” The phrase used years ago to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Motown still rings true for Habtemariam, 40, as she presided over the 60th anniversary of the legendary label in 2019 — while building its current roster with the likes of Migos, Vince Staples, BJ the Chicago Kid, Tiwa Savage and others — as well as the soundtrack to the film Queen & Slim. Motown’s streams increased by over 604 million between September 2018 and September 2019. “I’ve grown up in the industry, starting young [at age 14], and learned a lot over time,” says Habtemariam. “I love the change. I love the innovation. That’s what kind of keeps me engaged and excited about music and our business overall!”

ADVICE FOR NEXT-GEN WOMEN: “Roll up the sleeves. Do the work. Do your research. Study the business. It’s not just about standing up next to an artist or showing up at an event. Show your value by having an opinion and doing what’s necessary to make an impact.”

Allison Jones
SENIOR VP A&R, BIG MACHINE LABEL GROUP

Jones, 50, and her Big Machine team celebrated several opening-week chart-toppers in 2019: Thomas Rhett’s Center Point Road reigned on the Billboard 200, Florida Georgia Line notched a No. 1 on Top Country Albums with Can’t Stay I Ain’t Country, and Midland earned its inaugural peak on the same chart with Let It Roll. Jones recipe for success? “Always keep your ears, mind and eyes open for new talent and hit songs.”

SONG THAT INSPRES: “Gloria Gaynor’s ‘I Will Survive.’ The lyric says it all.”

Michelle Jubelirer
COO, CAPITOL MUSIC GROUP

Jubelirer, 46, helped Paul McCartney get back to where he once belonged, delivering a No. 1 album on the Billboard 200 with Egypt Station, his first album since 2005 for Capitol Records, the label that launched The Beatles in America. She also saw Korean supergroup SuperM open atop the Billboard 200 with its self-titled debut after a 10-week setup with the group’s management company SM Entertainment. Lewis Capaldi went to No. 1 on the Hot 100 with “Someone You Loved,” and Halsey’s “Without Me” turned into “the biggest [sold] hit of her career,” says Jubelirer.

Cris Lacy
EXECUTIVE VP A&R, WARNER MUSIC NASHVILLE

As her label continues to experience worldwide success with Dan + Shay — thanks to the duo’s recent collaboration with Justin Bieber on “10,000 Hours” — Lacy, 46, is most proud of her team’s recent successes with female artists. Ashley McBryde won new artist of the year at the Country Music Association Awards; fellow newcomer Ingrid Andress’ debut single, “More Hearts Than Mine,” reached No. 19 on Country Airplay; and American Idol alum Gabby Barrett earned her first Country Airplay hit with “I Hope.” “In three years,” says Lacy, “they will all be global household names.”

HAUTATIUES CHANGED: “Years ago, when I first started interviewing for A&R jobs — with the exception of one record label — it was a given that there was only one [A&R department] spot allotted for a woman. Now, at least in Nashville, the number of women is equal to, or greater than, the men in these creative positions.”

Taylor Lindsey
SENIOR VP A&R, SONY MUSIC NASHVILLE

With Lindsey, 33, playing a key role in the label’s A&R efforts and working with its joint-venture partners, Sony Music Nashville artists reigned at No. 1 on the Top Country Albums chart for 35 out of 47 weeks in 2019. Among those chart-toppers were Miranda Lambert’s Wildcard; Luke Combs’ What You See Is What You Get; This One’s for You; and The Prequel EP; Brooks & Dunn’s Reboot; Old Dominion’s self-titled third album; and Maren Morris’ GIRL, which broke the record for the largest streaming week ever for a country album by a woman, then won album of the year at the Country Music Association Awards. Says Lindsey: “I had a baby girl earlier this year, so Maren Morris’ GIRL is more meaningful than ever.”


Cindy Mabe
PRESIDENT, UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP NASHVILLE

For Mabe, 46, it has been a golden year. Although it was released in March 2018, Kacey Musgraves’ Golden Hour gained huge acclaim this year, including album of the year at the Grammy Awards. “Golden Hour changed perception, sound and influence in music and really established Kacey Musgraves as an arena touring act who cannot be contained or defined musically, creatively or culturally,” says Mabe. “She’s one of the most important artists in all of music.”

MOST URGENT ISSUE: “The lack of development in uniqueness, purpose and authenticity in our artists and music. It’s a very stale sound-alike world out there right now.”

Jesse Maldonado
VP PROMOTION OPERATIONS, RCA RECORDS

Val PensA
SENIOR VP POP AND ROCK MARKETING, RCA RECORDS

Maldonado and PensA both enjoyed full-circle achievements this year. When the reunited Backstreet Boys hit No. 1 on the Billboard 200 with DNA, Maldonado recalled working with the group two decades ago at Jive Records. PensA, 37, marketed Whitney Houston’s previously unreleased version of Steve Winwood’s “Higher Love,” as remixed by Kygo. “Whitney was one of the reasons that I wanted to work for Clive Davis,” recalls PensA, who had previously worked with him at J Records. “[This] felt like a record that the world really needed.”

MOST URGENT ISSUE: Pensa “Mental health. We have to really take care of each other and make sure [we’re] doing what we love, but in a healthy way.”

Gabriela Martinez
GM/Senior VP, WARNER MUSIC LATIN AMERICAS

Her dual roles (and beyond) the United States allow Martinez an unusual bird’s-eye view of the total Latin market. No wonder her biggest successes are literally all over the map. She cites Puerto Rico’s Zion & Lennox, who...
CONGRATS TO OUR FEARLESS LEADER MARCIE ALLEN FOR 10 YEARS ON THE BILLBOARD WOMEN IN MUSIC LIST!

THANK YOU FOR INSPIRING US AND THE NEXT GENERATION OF INDUSTRY LEADERS.
THE BEST ADVICE FOR NEXT-GEN WOMEN IS...
“Get into this business for the right reasons. Love the music, be prepared to work hard, and overcome any and all obstacles that could appear in your path. Lots of people want to be in the music business, now more than ever. Talent and hard work and passion will always win.”

—MICHELLE JUBELIRER, CAPITAL MUSIC GROUP

earned three No. 1 hits last year on Latin Airplay and Latin Rhythm Airplay, and Argentina’s Paulo Londra, whose debut album, Homener, has logged 108 million streams. Colombian band Piso 21 collaborated with The Black Eyed Peas’ Taboo, while Mexican alt singer-songwriter Ximena Sarinana was nominated for album and record of the year at the Latin Grammy Awards.

SONG THAT INSPIRES: “I Am Woman” by Helen Reddy. This song was a big hit when I was just a young girl. I remember singing it at the top of my lungs.”

Michele Nadelman
CFO, WARNER RECORDS
With over half the artists at the rebranded Warner Records signed in the past two years, Nadelman, who joined the label in January from Concord, has been kept busy finalizing agreements with acts brought to the label by co-chairmen Aaron Bay-Schuck and Tom Corson. “Deals happen very quickly, and it requires making fast, strategic decisions,” she says. “This has allowed us to transform our roster.”

WHERE SHE UNWINDS: “My backyard. Right now, there is no getaway... and no time for one.”

Anaid Quijada
MARKETING DIRECTOR, UNIVERSAL MUSIC LATIN ENTERTAINMENT
Quijada, 38, leads all marketing strategies for UMEL’s acts in the United States and Puerto Rico. Her recent standout projects include Sebastian Yatra’s Fantasia, which “brought balls back into the mainstream,” she says, and reached No. 1 on the Latin Pop Albums chart, and Luis Fonsi’s Vida, whose journey started with the release of “Despacito.” “Music is more volatile,” says Quijada, “and we need a different, more dynamic strategy.”

Have attitudes changed?
“I got a promotion [two years ago from label manager] while on maternity leave. There's still plenty of progress to be made, but leaders are taking into account the importance of women's roles within the industry.”

Elyse Rogers
EXECUTIVE VP, ARTIST PARTNER GROUP
At Artist Partner Group, the joint venture with Warner Music Group founded by Mike Caren, Rogers sums up this year in three words: “global artist development.” “Working with our label partners, Artist Partner Group broke several new artists around the world: Bazzi, Alec Benjamin, Lil Skies and Ava Max — all in parallel with the U.S.,” says Rogers, adding: “We’ll have more coming in 2020.”

ADVICE FOR NEXT-GEN WOMEN: “You will find some great partners on your path — some senior, some junior, some at your own company and some across the world. Value and protect them. There’s tremendous strength in building real trust. Make time to do it.”

Jacqueline Saturn
PRESIDENT, CAROLINE/HARVEST RECORDS
At Caroline, the indie distribution and label-services arm of Capitol Music Group, Saturn boasts of “a team that really knows how to put its foot on the gas at the right time.” She cites success stories like capitalizing on the appearance of “Trampoline” by 5SOS (Photo Finish Records) in an Apple ad and “turning that into a bona fide radio smash.” The song rose to No. 13 on the Hot 100 and has drawn 217 million streams. Saturn also cites a new partnership with Korea’s SM Entertainment, which has brought NCT 127 and SuperM into CMG’s fold, while a deal with Marvin Records in Nigeria includes releasing the singer Rama, who, says Saturn, “we know is going to be a global superstar.”

Ayelet Schiffman
SENIOR VP/HEAD OF PROMOTION, ISLAND RECORDS
After 24 years with Sony Music and hungry for new challenges, Schiffman took charge of Island Records’ promotion team in January, saying, “I wanted to take a chance on myself.” Her radio savvy behind Shawn Mendes garnered his first Hot 100 No. 1 with “Señorita” (with Camila Cabello), notching his sixth No. 1 on the Adult Top 40 chart and breaking Ed Sheeran’s record for a solo male artist.

MOST URGENT ISSUE: “How [does] radio keep up in the streaming world. There are artists who break in the streaming world, but when you really dig into it, they’re not really broken globally until radio puts their stamp on it.”

Colleen Theis
COO, THE ORCHARD
The Orchard has galloped to a 5.23% current market share so far in 2019, confirming its status as the largest independent distributor in the United States. Yet the company has also flexed its outside international presence by “successfully executing a global, timed physical and digital release for BTS’ Map of the Soul: Persona album earlier this year,” says Theis, 60. So far, that title has shifted 608,000 equivalent album units in the United States and has topped charts in four countries, including the Billboard 200. Says Theis: “Our smart, empowered team keeps pushing the boundaries of what it means to be a distributor while breaking records.”

CHARITY SHE SUPPORTS: “Covenant House, which provides shelter to homeless teens. Everyone deserves a warm meal and a safe place to sleep, especially those too young to fend for themselves.”

Katie Vinten
CO-FOUNDER, FACET PUBLISHING; FOUNDER, BLACK DIAMOND ARTIST MANAGEMENT
After over six years in publishing at Warner Chappell Music, Vinten, 36, struck out on her own in January by co-founding Facet Records and Facet Publishing alongside prolific songwriter Justin Tranter (whom she also manages), in partnership with Warner Records. In June, Vinten also founded Black Diamond Artist Management, which includes songwriters Tranter, Boy Matthews, Caroline Pennell and Zach Skelton on its roster. “It’s like a full-circle moment, because my first No. 1 [“Good for You” topped the Mainstream Top 40 chart in 2015] was with Justin, Julia [Michaels] and Selena [Gomez], and now the first No. 1 of the next phase of my career [“Lose You to Love Me” topped the Hot 100 in November] will also be Justin, Julia and Selena.”

ADVICE FOR NEXT-GEN WOMEN: “Trust your instinct and know that your voice and your opinion matter, no matter what the tone in whatever room you’re in tries to tell you.”
CONGRATULATIONS

2019 BILLBOARD WOMEN IN MUSIC

MARSHA VLASIC
WOMEN IN MUSIC HONOREE

CONGRATULATIONS ON THIS WELL-DESERVED HONOR

AGI
Artist Group International
“We do have this 90-year history and are very lucky to represent a lot of older copyrights that are strong, and then at the same time, we’ve created this global footprint that pretty much gives us the same reach as a major publisher.” — PEER

Mary Megan Peer  
DEPUTY CEO, PEERMUSIC
Mary Megan, 42, is a third-generation executive at one of the industry’s most successful global independent music publishers, representing over a half-million titles with 35 offices in 30 countries. It is also a firm with a legendary history, whose founder, Ralph S. Peer — Mary Megan’s grandfather — is credited with giving birth to the business of country music when he recorded the Carter Family, Jimmie Rodgers and others in Bristol, Tenn., in 1927. Ken Burns brought that history to some 34 million PBS viewers this fall in his documentary Country Music. Mary Megan is proud that Burns captured both Ralph’s ability to discover and nurture talent and his business acumen — “making sure people got paid,” she says — that still marks peermusic today. The family firm also offers a lesson in female empowerment; after Ralph’s death, Mary Megan’s grandmother Monique ran peermusic for 20 years before her father, Ralph Peer II (now chairman/CEO), took charge. Female executives, including company president/COO Kathy Spanberger, run peermusic offices in 10 countries. Burns’ history lesson notwithstanding, Mary Megan is very much focused on the present and future. Among the company’s recent achievements is its acquisition of MusicCube, a large independent publisher in Korea. “That added 40,000 Korean copyrights to our catalog [in a] territory we hadn’t been active in before,” says Mary Megan. And a long way from Bristol.
Congratulations to the 2019 Billboard Women in Music

BMI celebrates all the amazing honorees for their incredible contributions

Taylor Swift
Woman of the Decade Award

Special congratulations to BMI songwriters

Brandi Carlile
Trailblazer Award

Meghan Thee Stallion
Powerhouse Award

Rosalía
Rising Star Award

And BMI’s EVP Distribution, Publisher Relations & Admin Services

Alison Smith
Billboard Top Women in Music 2019

BMI
Music Moves Our World
Carr and writer Dave Marsh, who died in 1993 of sarcoma (a type of cancer), the fund supports research, education for young physicians and efforts to improve the quality of life for cancer patients. “Kristen was a remarkable young woman who would be so proud of the fund.”

Management

Lisa Barbaris
OWNER, SO WHAT MANAGEMENT
Through 20 years of managing client Cyndi Lauper, Barbaris and the singer have remained committed to True Colors United, the foundation they co-founded in 2008 that works to end homelessness among LGBTQ youth (40% of homeless youth in the United States are gay, according to one study). Barbaris was part of the team that struck the deal for Lauper to join actress Jane Lynch in a new Netflix comedy series shooting next spring.

SONG THAT INSPIRES: “That’s an easy one — ‘Girls Just Want to Have Fun’ by Cyndi Lauper.”

Virginia Bunetta
MANAGING PARTNER, G-MAJOR MANAGEMENT
For management client Thomas Rhett, Bunetta, 39, in the past year supervised his tours including dates in the United States and Australia (he has sold 670,000 tickets in 2019), saw him sell out Madison Square Garden and play Saturday Night Live; helped launch his album Center Point Road, which topped the Billboard 200; and cheered as he won male vocalist of the year at the Academy of Country Music Awards — all while caring for her infant daughter, who was born in the past year. “It all goes together in one massively coordinated effort,” she says.

ADVICE FOR NEXT-GEN WOMEN: “Invest in yourself. You are your own most important asset. Treat yourself as such.”

Martha Earls
OWNER, EFG MANAGEMENT
Earls, 42, has guided Kane Brown’s career through “genre and cultural barriers,” she says, noting the singer’s success not only with four No. 1s on the Country Airplay chart but his collaborations with EDM star Marshmello (“One Thing Right” topped Hot Country Songs in October), Khalid (“Saturday Nights”), Camila Cabello (“Never Be the Same”) and Latin act Fernando & Sorocaba (“Paraiso [Heaven]”). “We are continuing to show the world that great music knows no boundaries,” she says.

MOST URGENT ISSUE: “The continued siloing of genres. Completely unnecessary.”

Ann Edelblute
OWNER, THE HQ
After Carrie Underwood debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 with Cry Pretty in September 2018, Edelblute — who has managed the singer since 2005 — oversaw the Cry Pretty Tour 360, which hit 64 cities from May to October. Along with the tour’s high-end production, Edelblute is proud of its all-female lineup (Maddie & Tae and Runaway June served as support). “We saw so many parents bring their daughters to the shows,” she says. “It meant the world to Carrie to show all these young girls what is possible.”

Taylor Swift
Pres. of A&R, Big Machine Label Group
Swift, now the global ambassador for Big Machine Records, this year experienced a hit song (“Lover”) and sold-out arena tours. Along with releasing the surprise album Lover — which sold 1.5 million copies in its first week — Swift released distinct singles from her own new album, Miss Americana & The Heartbreak Pusher. Swift, 30, also appeared in the Netflix docuseries Miss Americana, which documented her struggles with a “perfect” image. Meanwhile, Swift’s manager, Scooter Braun, affirmed plans for new album Folklore, which Swift released in December 2020.

Charity & Community

Kerri Edwards
PRESIDENT, KP ENTERTAINMENT
Edwards represents all four artists — Luke Bryan, Cole Swindell, Jon Langston and DJ Rock — who were featured on Bryan’s 2019 Sunset Repeat Tour, which has grossed $50.2 million and sold 650,000 tickets to 34 shows since May. “I’m not sure that will ever happen again,” she says. “It was so amazing to watch them all perform each night.”

CHARITY SHE SUPPORTS: “A special one is the Brett Boyer Foundation, in honor of Luke and Caroline Bryan’s niece. Having been prenatally diagnosed with Down syndrome and a congenital heart defect, she died at 7 months.” “She was a special baby girl, and I love how their family is helping others through her.”

Allison Kaye
PRESIDENT, SB PROJECTS; PARTNER, ITHACA HOLDINGS
As president of SB Projects, Kaye, 38, shared in the success of client Ariana Grande as the singer topped the Billboard 200 twice in six months with Sweetener and Thank U, Next, mounted a world tour and set a new record among female artists with 11 simultaneous top 40 hits on the Hot 100. But within the past year, Kaye was also named partner in Scooter Braun’s Thaca Holdings. The firm has since “acquired Atlas Music Publishing, Big Machine Label Group and taken a position in [label/marketing firm] 740 Project;” she says, summarizing an eventful year.

MOST URGENT ISSUE: “It becomes very easy for people to fall in love with a song without investing any time or real money into the artist — making it harder for new artists to build sustaining businesses.”

Marlon Kraft
CEO, SHOPKEEPER MANAGEMENT
On Nov. 1, Kraft’s management client Miranda Lambert served up Wildcard; the singer became the second artist (after Carrie Underwood) to send her first seven albums to No. 1 on the Top Country Albums chart. For Kraft, 55, that achievement was paired with the success of Lambert’s Roadside Bars & Pink Guitars Tour (with an all-female support bill) and the earlier launch of “the Miranda Lambert lifestyle brands to engage our existing fan base as well as build a wider audience,” she says.

CHARITY SHE SUPPORTS: Kraft notes that sales of Lambert’s MuttNation-branded dog beds, dog toys, collars and leashes benefit the singer’s MuttNation Foundation, which works to promote adoption of pets from animal shelters.
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Dana Dufine &

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Billboard Women in Music 2019
**THE MOST URGENT ISSUE FACING THE MUSIC BUSINESS IS...**

“Climate change is the most urgent issue facing every industry. Freak storms and unusual weather patterns make traveling unpredictable and can put the safety of artists and fans at risk.”

—CORRIE CHRISTOPHER MARTIN, PARADIGM TALENT AGENCY

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**Rebeca León**
FOUNDER/CEO, LIONFISH ENTERTAINMENT

León, 44, has managed the “meteoric” rise of Spanish star Rosalía. “It has been 18 months since we dropped ‘Malamente,'” says León, and the song has registered nearly 114 million views on YouTube. León signed Rosalía as a fledgling flamenco act and oversaw her signing to Sony Spain and Columbia, followed by her album El Mal Querer hitting No. 1 on Latin Pop Albums. León also previously managed Juanes and, until midyear, J Balvin, whom she helped book as a main act at Coachella and Lollapalooza, a first for a Latin artist.

**MOST URGENT ISSUE**
“We need more Latin managers, more sophisticated Latin managers. Since artists are mainstream, Latin managers need to be thinking mainstream, too.”

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**Jeanine McLean Williams**
PRESIDENT, MBK ENTERTAINMENT

As head of the MBK Entertainment team that’s working with H.E.R., Williams helped the R&B singer-songwriter launch her inaugural Lights On Festival in September. The event at the 14,000-capacity Concord Pavilion outside San Francisco sold out in an hour and netted a seven-figure profit, says Williams, who’s already looking toward “superserving the R&B fan base” at next year’s event.

**CHARITY SHE SUPPORTS**
“Bring the Noise, created by H.E.R., to bring much needed music [education] programs and instruments back into schools and after-school programs.”

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**Lynn Oliver-Cline**
FOUNDER/CEO, RIVER HOUSE ARTISTS

“To think we are helping put out great songs that become the soundtrack to people’s lives might sound cliché, but it feels incredible.” So declares Oliver-Cline, 46, who co-manages Luke Combs with Chris Kappy of Make Wake Artists. Watch- ing Combs’ debut album, This One’s for You, tie Shania Twain’s Come On Over as the longest- reigning title on the Top Country Albums chart is “truly unreal,” she says. As a music publisher, adds Oliver-Cline, River House is enjoying hits with Ashley McBryde’s “One Night Standards” (co-written by Nicolle Hayford), Jake Owen’s “Homemade” (co-written by Drew Parker) and Combs’ “Even Though I’m Leaving” (co-written by Ray Fulcher).

**MADE ATTITUDES CHANGED:** “I have been fortunate to work with great people — but I still know when something will mean more coming from one of my male colleagues rather than me.”

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**Joyce Smyth**
MANAGER, THE ROLLING STONES

Smyth, 62 (“But young at heart,” she adds), is nearing her 10th year managing The Rolling Stones, and she has a particular philosophy about her job. “They are the ones doing the work, not me, and they are still passionate about what they do,” she says. “I’m trying to steward everyone else around them, like being the conductor of a brilliant orchestra.” Smyth pivoted this year when the North American leg of the Stones’ No Filter Tour was delayed two months due to frontman Mick Jagger’s heart procedure. The show went on, however, with the 16 dates grossing $177.8 million for a tour total of $415.6 million over three separate legs. The Stones are working on their first new studio album of original songs since 2005’s A Bigger Bang, which Smyth calls “a work in progress,” with no release details established yet.

**SONG THAT INSPIRES:** “Karen Carpenter’s ‘I Won’t Last a Day Without You.’ She is vocal perfection. Listen to the lyrics. When times are great, people are keen to share in the good times, and that’s wonderful. But when they’re not great, it’s so important to be grounded with our husband, partner, family.”

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**Ty Stiklorius**
FOUNDER/CEO, FRIENDS AT WORK

Stiklorius, 44, combines management services and social activism at her 6-year-old firm Friends at Work. “We’re interested in positive change beyond a top song on the radio,” she says. One example: She helped marquee client John Legend land a gender stereotype-upending Super Bowl commercial for Pampers, which installed 5,000 diaper changing tables in U.S. men’s bathrooms. She also guided the Netflix rap competition series Rhythm & Flow with Cardi B, Chance the Rapper and T.I.; Raphael Saadiq’s acclaimed album Jimmy Lee, which touches on addiction; and Tour Support, an initiative that offers therapy packages for touring professionals.

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**Janet Weir**
OWNER, HOUSE OF 42; MANAGER, RED LIGHT MANAGEMENT

Weir, 45, saw management client Maren Morris lead the field of nominees with six nods for the Country Music Association Awards in November, taking home album of the year for her sophomore record, GIRL. When it was released in March, GIRL set the record for the largest debut-week streaming sum for a country album by a woman, logging 23.96 million on-demand audio streams.

**ADVICE FOR NEXT-GEN WOMEN**
“The only thing I can offer is the way I started, which was interning, observing, learning, working hard, trusting your instincts, meeting the right mentors and sticking with it through the ups and downs with fortitude.”

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**Bridget Bauer**
SENIOR VP, MESSINA TOURING GROUP

**Stacy Vee**
VP FESTIVAL TALENT, GOLDENVoice; VP ARTIST RELATIONS, MESSINA TOURING GROUP

California’s preeminent country festival, Stagecoach hit a record attendance of 80,000 in April thanks to Vee and her team at Goldenvoice. “We had that number in the back of our heads and pushed every single day to get there,” says Vee, who added her role at Messina Touring Group in May. Bauer, 44, worked with Eric Church for his first headlining stadium show that brought 56,521 fans to Nissan Stadium in Nashville, breaking the venue’s attendance record, according to the company. She also works with George Strait, who made $31.3 million in combined stadium grosses in New Orleans and Atlanta, and at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. “Having the continued experiences working with George Strait will never get old,” she says.

**MOST URGENT ISSUE**
Bauer: “Secondary resale continues to be problematic. Eric Church and his management team have gone to great lengths to fight back against scalpers over the last five years.”

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**Becky Colwell**
REGIONAL BOOKING DIRECTOR, WEST REGION: GM, GREEK THEATRE, ASM GLOBAL

**Dana DuFine**
VP GLOBAL CONTENT AND DEVELOPMENT, ASM GLOBAL

Colwell and DuFine, formerly executives of SMG and AEG Facilities, respectively, now work with ASM Global, which formed through an October merger of those two companies. Colwell played a critical role in the team effort to renew a man-
CONGRATULATIONS
CARLA WALLACE
BILLBOARD WOMEN IN MUSIC HONOREE
LEADER OF THE PACK FOR OVER 20 YEARS
The beloved ticketing queen Shelley Lazar passed away on March 31 at the age of 69. She was a beloved figure in the live event industry, known for her tireless dedication and innovative thinking.

**IN TRIBUTE: SHELLEY LAZAR (1949-2019)**

**All Hail The Ticket Queen**

Re-creating a new business from scratch is never easy, especially for a woman in a male-dominated field like live music. But Shelley Lazar, who founded Ticketmaster in 1976 and later sold it for $4.2 billion in 2011, did just that. She was a trailblazer in the ticketing industry, and her legacy lives on.

** stagnant contract for Los Angeles’ prestigious Greek Theatre and oversees 13 venues in her West Coast region. Dufine worked on the merger, uniting the GMs, bookers and marketers for the first time in November. The new standalone venue management mega-company’s portfolio of 310 venues includes the United Kingdom’s Manchester Arena and Chicago’s Soldier Field.**

We have so many venues/facilities globally that we are going to be able to really help artists, managers, agents and promoters be able to create routing for tours in not just major markets, but secondary and tertiary markets,” says Dufine.

**SONG THAT INSPIRES: COLWELL. “I need to be there for the girl” by Bonnie Raitt. It reminds me of the women in my life, all navigating the ups and downs of life, and the strength and resilience they bring to their careers, families and friendships.”**

**Donna DiBenedetto**

VP, GLOBAL TOURING, AEG PRESENTS

Brooke Michael Kain

CHIEF DIGITAL OFFICER, AEG PRESENTS

Melissa Ormond

COO OF Festivals, AEG PRESENTS

Ormond helps AEG Presenters stand out in the saturated festival market with a mix of unique events, as well as genre-specific properties like Day N Vegas, which debuted in November. The hip-hop festival that featured J. Cole and Kendrick Lamar sold out within hours of going on sale. Kain oversees nine departments that maximize the data and marketing information that AEG collects to benefit both the company and consumers. I’m incredibly proud of the people I’ve hired and the young stars I’ve grown and built upon, she says. “The entire focus in my group is teamwork, teamwork, teamwork,“ DiBenedetto has done bookings for Hugh Jackman, Carrie Underwood (a “female powerhouse performer”) and Elton John’s farewell tour, which has brought in over $265.6 million.

**ADVICE FOR NEXT-GEN WOMEN: ORMOND. “You belong here. As women, we bring meaningful qualities and capabilities to the table.”**

**Ali Harnell**

PRESIDENT/CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER, GLOBAL WOMEN NATION/LIVE NATION ENTERTAINMENT

Heather Lowery

PRESIDENT/CEO, FEMME IT FORWARD, LIVE NATION

Kelly Strickland

SENIOR VP U.S. TOUR MARKETING, LIVE NATION

Kathy Willard

CFO, LIVE NATION ENTERTAINMENT

“We’re approaching 100 million fans this year at our events, which is a monumental number,” says Willard of Live Nation. The company has reported another year of growth across its three core businesses — concerts, sponsorships and ticketing — with total revenue up 6% to $8.7 billion and 92 million tickets sold year to date. Strickland oversees tour marketing and cites artist outings — “Everything from Billie Eilish to Jennifer Lopez and Hootie & The Blowfish and BTS” — that have contributed to Live Nation’s record results. Lowery has developed events and strategic partnerships in R&B, hip-hop and gospel with artist-curated festivals including Lil Wayne’s Lil WeezyAna Fest, the Roots Picnic and H.E.R.’s Lights On Festival. Under a joint venture with Live Nation, her Femme It Forward platform will spotlight “female visionaries” in the urban sector. After 16 years at AEG, Harnell, 61, joined Live Nation in March to lead its newly created Women Nation division. Building on the Women Nation Fund investment venture that CEO Michael Rapino launched last year, the startup aims to “level the playing field” for women in the live sector, says Harnell. “I’ve been on the planet and a woman in music and both have a systemic oppression of women.”

**HAVE ATTITUDES CHANGED? HARNELL. “It’s very clear in the last year or two, there’s an awareness so the way that [men] behave has shifted, and that is a great start.”**

**Laurie Jacoby**

SENIOR VP NEW YORK CONCERTS AND ENTERTAINMENT, MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

Madison Square Garden ranked as the No. 1 venue worldwide in its capacity class in Billboard’s midyear recap — and debut concerts by rising stars contributed to that success. “It has been incredibly rewarding to be a part of so many artists’ first headlining shows at Madison Square Garden,” says Jacoby, citing dates by Robyn, Brandi Carlile, Khalid, Vampire Weekend, Vulfpeck, Slayer and Tyler, the Creator.

**WHERE SHE UNHINDS. “Hawaii, the Big Island. There’s something very spiritual in the air that erases a year’s worth of the New York City hustle and grind.”**

**Patti-Anne Tarlton**

CHAIRMAN, TICKETMASTER CANADA; EXECUTIVE VP VENUES AND PROMOTERS FOR NORTH AMERICA, TICKETMASTER

Under Tarlton, Ticketmaster’s partnership with Montreal-based sports entertainment giant Groupe CH, the parent company of promoter evenko, “has added multiple millions of tickets” to its inventory for fans. Evenko manages over 1,500 events annually across 20 venues, including the critically acclaimed Osheaga Music and Arts Festival. “As I was born in Montreal and kicked off my career as [promoter] Donald K Donald Concerts, it goes without saying that this partnership is both a personal and professional highlight of my career.”

**MOST URGENT ISSUE. “We have made an impact — with a combination of technology, legislation and industry best practices — to fulfill our mission of getting tickets in the hands of fans [instead of scalpers].”**
WE PROUDLY CONGRATULATE OUR EXTRAORDINARY COLLEAGUES

ON BEING NAMED

WOMEN IN MUSIC HONOREES

AND SALUTE ALL OF OUR PHENOMENAL WOMEN IN MUSIC*

Lori Adler • Alexander Albanese • Jillian Andersen • Charis Armstrong • Mary Beth Armstrong • Susan Arnold • Audrey Ashby • Kaitlin Askvig
Emelia Aukee • Laurie Barrett • Dana Baxter • Erica Bolotsky • Marsha Bowe • Crystal Brackeen • Virginia Maria Brennan • Lindsey Buckmeier
Mitzi Byrd • Sherah Carney • Cecelia Casey • Laura Castillo • Christina Cho • Amy Coles • Elaina Conner • Racheal Conte • Leslie Cribbs
Sara Cromans • Amy Cymore • Nicole Dacquisto • Angell Davis • Laura De Bruin • Jennifer Drake • Scout Easley • Laurentia Editha
Tyra Elder • Shaungnessy Elsroth • Edina Fallah • Elicia Felix-Hughey • Shanell Finney • Samantha Fisher • Jessica Frey • Esther Friedman
Nicole Giacco • Monica Gil • Jennifer Gobeille • Kelley Goss • Angela Green • Julia Grimoldi • Victoria Guzman • Dolores Hale-Flaharty
Caroline Hall • Colleen Hall • Stephanie Hall • Tresa Hardin • Allision Harr • Kristina Hedrick • Rebecca Heeney • Ashley Henderson
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Sara MacNish • Margaret Martin • Victoria Martinez • Holly Mate-Luber • Brittany Matthews • Mara McGarity • Johanna McMorran
Cathy Merenda • Nicole Meseke • Danielle Middleton • Tina Mihacsi • Pamela Mountjoy • Sophia Munera • Breanna Murray • April Nagel
Ryne Naruth • Sylvia Navarro • Patricia Neely • Alison O’Donnell • Hayley Orten • Marissa Pascali • Makala Payton • Lynda Pearson
Brittany Perry • Marissa Peruski • Anna Petree • Kathy Pohlable • Michelle Praniewicz • Maria Proffitt • Sarah Raisian • Angela Ramos
Samantha Reas • Kelsey Reddick • Rec Reid • Rebecca Rodriguez • Yendi Rodriguez • Amy Roland • Hillary Rose • Regina Russo Bosso
Kathryn Salamin • Halie Sandoval • Pamela Sanford • Yaritza Santana Planell • Jasmine Santos • Haley Schambough • Nellie Schindler
Hailey Schmick • Jenna Scotti-Fathi • Megan Sedghi • Maria Silvestri • Vanessa Small • Amanda Smith • Gabriella Solomon • Angel Stewart
Gina Stockton • Samantha Surian • Kara Talve • Marsha Tannenbaum • Kacey Taylor • Kristen Taylor-Ladd • Debbie Tenpenny
Jodie Treutel • Ashley Trout • Ellen Turci • Elizabeth Ulmer • Veronica Vaccarezza • Marsha Van Wyk • Victoria Veal • Kathleen Villapando
Megan Vinberg • Kimberly Vuono • Gillian Wainwright • April Ward • Brooke Wasserman • Samantha Weintraub • Susan Welchly
Makenzie Williams • Maria Williams • Yohanna Williams • Crystal Mary Willingham • Angela Wilson • Bailey Wilson • Alison Wood
Jessica Wood • Meghann Wright • Debra Wylde • Melissa Yermes • Brooke Zamanillo • Caitlin Zlokovich • Denise Zuba • Susan Zucco

*US women only
space in the market and build businesses to fill it.” She’s now building brand partnerships and more for Paradigm artists.

**MOST URGENT ISSUE: BOLLWINNEL** “Our industry-wide mental health issue is definitely something every company needs to address immediately.”

**Lucy Dickins**

**HEAD OF U.K. MUSIC, WME**

**Becky Gardenhire**

**PARTNER/CO-HEAD OF NASHVILLE OFFICE, WME**

**Samantha Kirby Yoh**

**PARTNER/CO-HEAD OF EAST COAST MUSIC, WME**

**Sara Newkirk Simon**

**PARTNER/CO-HEAD OF MUSIC, WME**

While Kirby Yoh has guided WME clients like Rosalia, Florence + The Machine, St. Vincent and dance-act Zhu, the accomplishment of the year that she singles out is co-founding (with Alicia Keys, Universal Music Publishing Group chairman/CEO Jody Gerson and producer Ann Minciel) the nonprofit She Is the Music, with the goal of increasing the number of women working in the global music industry. Gardenhire, 38, was promoted in September to co-head WME’s Nashville office. (She’s now the highest-ranking female executive at any Nashville-based agency, according to WME.) While working with a team to oversee some 14,000 global bookings last year, she also runs “Talk the Talk,” a lecture series she started that connects women in the industry. Dickins, 44, after 20 years with International Talent Booking, became head of WME’s U.K. Music division in June, bringing her A-list roster of clients (Adele, Mumford & Sons, James Blake) with her. Newkirk Simon helped launch Pharrell Williams’ Something in the Water festival, brokered deals for Selena Gomez’s Netflix series Living Undocumented and Camila Cabello’s film career with Cinderella. What else? “The rise of Lizzo,” she says.

**SONG THAT INSPIRES: GARDENHIRE “Stronger” by Kelly Clarkson.**

**Cara Lewis**

**FOUNDER/AGENT, CARA LEWIS GROUP**

Lewis, an entrepreneur who left Creative Artists Agency in 2016 to open her own agency, reports that her eclectic roster enjoyed a banner year. Eminem swept through Australia (five concerts with 304,000 tickets sold), Khalid sold out 45 arena shows globally and played Coachella and other festivals, Travis Scott drew 808,000 to his Astroworld — Wish You Were Here Tour, and Chance the Rapper debuted at No. 2 on the Billboard 200 in July with The Big Day, setting up a 2020 tour. “I take a lot of pride in being able to say that I have spearheaded many artists in this genre to build long-lasting careers,” she says.

**HAVE ATTITUDES CHANGED?** “The ability to grow [my firm] with support from other professionals across the industry has signified a major change. This would have been called impossible a decade ago.”

**Natalia Nastaskin**

**GM, GLOBAL MUSIC GROUP, TMD**

**Cheryl Paglierani**

**MUSIC AGENT, TMD**

Strategic bookings for clients like Post Malone, 21 Savage, Tierra Whack, Saint Jhn and the reunited Jonas Brothers, as well as elite brand partnerships (Ford, Fenty and Yamaha are just a few) continue to fuel global growth for UTA.

“We are regularly signing and developing exciting festival artists and headliners,” says Nastaskin.

“And we’re bullish on international markets thanks to the democratization of music discovery through streaming and social media,” Paglierani, 35, is the agent for Post Malone who’s having a “tremendously successful year,” she says. He has sold 850,000 tickets and earned $89.6 million in grosses from arena dates in Europe, Australia and the United States. His second Posty Fest in Arlington, Texas, on Nov. 2 (with Pharrell Williams, Jaden Smith, Meek Mill and others) more than doubled its fan count to 45,000, says Paglierani.

**FAVORITE GETAWAY: NASTASKIN “My weekend home where I hike, meditate, do yoga and get my mind right for the week ahead.”**

**Yves C. Pierre**

**AGENT, ICMP**

**Jacqueline Reynolds-Drumm**

**AGENT, ICMP**

Pierre and Reynolds-Drumm, 33, take pride in representing a diverse group of upcoming female artists, such as City Girls, Yung Baby Tate and Leikeli47. “It’s really important that the female voice is heard, especially for young women these days,” says Reynolds-Drumm. Along with booking established stars like Migos and Lil Yachty, Pierre also has been involved with ICMP’s rising roster.

“The streaming numbers indicate these artists are starting to hit benchmarks and grow.”

**MOST URGENT ISSUE: PIERRE “Diversity and inclusion, both gender and racial.”**

**Marsha Vlasic**

**PRESIDENT, ARTIST GROUP INTERNATIONAL**

“I get around,” says Vlasic in a classic understatement. The veteran agent, who never misses client Neil Young’s annual September set at Farm Aid, guides her acts crisscrossing the globe. This year, that has included The Strokes’ comeback tour, the summer double bills of Cage the Elephant with Beck and Elvis Costello with Blondie, and Norah Jones’ first dates in tertiary markets. “And we’re always trying to develop new bands and get new things going,” says Vlasic. “We need to be able to look back and say, ‘There are the new headliners — massive new headliners.’”

**ADVICE FOR NEXT-GEN WOMEN: “Don’t worry that you’re a woman or a man; it’s what you’re qualified to do. Women have to think of themselves as equal and just go out there and do the job and earn that respect.”**

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**Jenna Adler**

**AGENT, CREATIVE ARTISTS AGENCY**

**Emma Banks**

**AGENT/CO-HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL TOURING/CO-HEAD OF CAA MUSIC**

**London, Creative Artists Agency**

**Alli McGregor**

**AGENT, CREATIVE ARTISTS AGENCY**

**Marlene Tsuchi**

**AGENT/CO-HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL TOURING, CREATIVE ARTISTS AGENCY**

Tsuchi, as CAA’s Los Angeles-based co-head of international touring, helped plot U.S. and European dates on Ariana Grande’s Sweetener world tour, which will wrap Dec. 22, having so far earned $181.3 million from over 1 million tickets sold to 77 shows through Oct. 16. Tsuchi also helped spearhead CAA’s deal to represent Korean music powerhouse SM Entertainment and its groups NCT ’127 and SuperM, for whom she booked a breakout U.S. arena tour. For her London counterpart, Banks, the year’s highlights included March’s Red Hot Chili Peppers concert in front of the pyramids in Giza, Egypt; two shows by Florence + The Machine in Athens, Greece; and Katy Perry’s in Mumbai, India. McGregor orchestrated Grande’s American Express deal for her Sweetener world tour and initiatives surrounding her Coachella and Lollapalooza headlining sets earlier this year. Adler helped client Jennifer Lopez bring in $101.9 million from her record-breaking Las Vegas residency in 2016-18 while setting the stage for her It’s My Party summer tour that grossed $64.7 million from 31 shows. Next up is Green Day’s 2020 Hella Mega Tour with Fall Out Boy and Weezer, which has so far earned nearly $50 million, she says.

**ADVICE FOR NEXT-GEN WOMEN: BANKS “Forget about being a woman — be a person, work hard, listen to people, get over yourself and just do it.”**

**Sara Bollwinkel**

**AGENT, PARADIGM TALENT AGENCY**

**Lori Feldman**

**CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER, PARADIGM TALENT AGENCY**

**Corrie Christopher Martin**

**CO-HEAD OF MUSIC, WEST COAST, PARADIGM TALENT AGENCY**

Bollwinkel, 35, has worked for the past three years with Billie Eilish (who is now 17), helping the breakout superstar sell out her first arena tour in October, she says. Over a half-million tickets worldwide sold in under an hour, says Bollwinkel. Martin, 42, who has worked with Imagine Dragons for a decade, reports that the band surpassed 1 million tickets sold in 2018, while client Janet Jackson launched her first Las Vegas residency. She’s a board member of the Loveloud Foundation, created by Imagine Dragons’ Dan Reynolds to support LGBTQ youth. In September, Feldman joined Paradigm as the agency’s first chief marketing officer after a long, successful tenure at Warner Records, where she was able to “find white
Dear Rayna,

I used to hear about this young woman at Def Jam, who in our terms was One Of Us... Hardworking, dedicated to the culture and always ready to be of service to the creative community. Over the past 5 years I’ve seen you grow into a remarkable creative, leader, and true pillar of the company we are building. Congratulations and thank you for continuing to be an inspiration at 300.

Love, Kevin

Rayna,
You set the bar for how it’s done: grace and humility with dope ass effectiveness.
Congratulations.

With respect and love, Lyor

CONGRATULATIONS
Discomfort Zone

For an overwhelming number of women, the studio feels like an anything-but-safe space — so artists and executives alike are driving new initiatives to enact real change  By Tariana Cirisano

FEW YEARS AGO, SINGER-songwriter Jessie Reyez arrived at an evening recording session, and the men in the studio didn’t give her the welcome she expected. They laughed at and patronized her, she recalls, “thinking I was just a girl wanting to party.” It was far from her only experience feeling uncomfortable in the studio. In May 2018, she revealed that her chilling single “Gatekeeper” — in which an unnamed aggressor says to “spread your legs” and “drink up, bitch” — was inspired by an experience with star producer Noel “Detail” Fisher. (He has not commented on her claims nor did his lawyer respond to Billboard’s request for comment.) In the studio, “it’s not uncommon to have to fight for your identity as an equal,” she says, “and not as a product shipped there for someone’s enjoyment.”

For female artists and creatives, the studio — an intimate environment where work often happens late at night and with little supervision — can be a deeply uncomfortable place where behavior ranging from obnoxious remarks to sexual harassment goes unchecked. “If you’re put in the wrong person’s hands, it can really be a bad experience,” says singer-songwriter Victoria Monét, who has asked female friends to accompany her to late-night sessions as a “safety net.”

According to a February study from the University of Southern California’s Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, only 21.7% of artists, 12.3% of songwriters and 2% of producers who appeared on the Billboard Hot 100’s year-end charts between 2012 and 2018 were women. Eighty-three percent of the 75 female songwriters and producers surveyed said that they or other women they know had experienced discomfort in the studio. Among the surveyed group, 39% said they had been objectified, 26% felt their expertise had been dis-missed because of their gender, and 20% agreed that drugs, alcohol and sexualizing women were a part of the culture.

Producer Shakari “Trakgirl” Boles says it took her years to build up the “mental armor” to fight sexism in the studio. “You’re walking into a room where you’re not acknowledged,” she says. “That can be really hard on mental health.” In January 2018, she launched “The 7% Series,” a set of panels spotlighting female producers and engineers. “I don’t want the message to be, ‘The studio is a scary place, stay away,’” she adds.

Boles is just one of many in the industry who, in the wake of the #MeToo movement, are pushing forward the conversa-tion around studio culture. “We should have contracts for anybody who goes into those settings where they have to sign a piece of paper that says, ‘I will not breach your space without consent,’” says Ty Stiklorius, founder/CEO of artist-management company Friends at Work. She has raised the idea of placing posters in the studio (akin to those in public transit systems) with information about harassment. “It’s the casting couch of the music business,” says Stiklorius. “Publishers, labels and stud-ios need to come up with a better plan.”

The Recording Academy’s Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion has considered starting a hotline, says member Terri Winston, founder/executive director of the Women’s Audio Mission, which offers free audio engineering and recording courses. “We have bad apples that take up a lot of space,” she says, “and we forget how many people want this to change.”

Enforcement is more complicated. Last spring, a group of female and nonbinary musicians formed the We Have Voice collective and released a formal Code of Conduct to Promote SAFE(R) Workplaces in the Performing Arts for all genders, spelling out the legal definition of sexual harassment and guidelines for improving studio safety. “We were tired of absorbing #MeToo news and stories without a positive action,” says member Sara Serpa, a vocalist-composer.

Fifty-nine institutions across the globe have adopted the code — though, so far, just one recording studio: Crew Studios in Vancouver. Studio manager Andy Warren says that he sought out We Have Voice after glimpsing a producer physically pushing a young female artist at Crew and feeling powerless to help. “Having us all talk about those things and having a docu-ment — if that situation comes up again, I know exactly what I would do,” he says. He has since added a clause to it reserving the right to terminate a session if improper behavior is observed or reported.

Other studio owners have simply taken matters into their own hands. “Every studio I’ve worked in has felt like a man cave,” says songwriter-producer-engineer Alaina Moore of the band Tennis. So she designed and built her own. “I wanted a studio that reflected me,” she says. “The entire space says that women are welcome and that a woman’s point of view is valued.”

Some industry veterans say they’re see-ing progress. “Ten years ago, if you were a female in the studio, you were either a girlfriend or a groupie — that’s what people assumed,” says Atlantic Records GM/senior vp urban A&R Laura Gaba. “The respect level for women in creative spaces has changed.”

For now, younger artists like Reyez are looking to both male and female colleagues to be allies. “If you’re in the studio and one of your boys humiliates a girl, speak up,” she says. “It helps me feel more confident knowing that Kehlani, H.E.R. and [Univer-sal Music Group executive vp] Michele Anthony move in a way that’s respectable and strong. That encourages other women to be like, ‘I want to feel that too.’”

Additional reporting by Lyndsey Havens.
CONGRATS TO OUR FEARLESS LEADER

YOU MAKE THE ORCHARD A PLACE FOR FUTURE LEADERS TO GROW

COLLEEN
THE MOST URGENT ISSUE FACING THE MUSIC BUSINESS IS...

“An understanding of globalization in music. It’s not Los Angeles and London and New York the way it used to be. It’s Mexico City, it’s India, it’s Korea. It can come from anywhere.”

—MARIA EGAN, PULSE MUSIC GROUP

PUBLISHING

Dominique Casimir
EXECUTIVE VP REPERTOIRE AND MARKETING FOR CONTINENTAL EUROPE, BMG
Casimir, 38, reports that she has overseen growth of 30% in BMG’s recorded-music business revenue in Germany, Europe’s second-largest music market. The achievement reflects BMG’s success “in a market increasingly polarized between streaming and high-end physical product,” says Casimir. Her team has struck deals with some of the country’s most relevant and successful recording artists, including Seeed, Adel Tawil and Trettmann,” says Casimir, who was promoted to her Pan-European role in April.

H ave attitudes changed? “Dramatically. I was recently at a conference in Bilbao, Spain, and was amazed by how many young female managers there were.”

Marni Condro
SENIOR VP FILM AND TELEVISION, UNIVERSAL MUSIC PUBLISHING GROUP

Alexandra Lioutikoff
PRESIDENT OF LATIN AMERICA/U S. LATIN, UNIVERSAL MUSIC PUBLISHING GROUP

Joy Murphy
SENIOR VP/HEAD OF FILM AND TELEVISION MUSIC LICENSING, UNIVERSAL MUSIC PUBLISHING GROUP

Lioutikoff was promoted to her current role this year and helped sign one of Latin music’s hottest new stars, Spain’s Rosalía, as well as the Brazilian YouTube channel KonZilla and Miami-based Rich Music, whose artists include Sech and Oroel Plow. Murphy, 45, secured lyric-reproduction deals for the Prince memoir The Beautiful Ones, cut marketing agreements for the Bruce Springsteen-inspired film Blinded by the Light and numerous other placements “that are being recognized for Grammy Award and/or Academy Award consideration,” says Murphy. Condro executed the creation of a new Latin sync division “and strengthened communication with our A&R and international sync teams” to the benefit of the L.A. sync team.

ADVICE TO NEXT-GEN WOMEN: MURPHY “Be open, honest and true to who you are. If you have a question, ask it. If you have an idea, share it. If given a challenge or task, take it on and don’t be afraid to fail.”

Amy Cranford
VP PUBLISHING ADMINISTRATION, SONY/ATV MUSIC PUBLISHING

Wende Crowley
SENIOR VP CREATIVE MARKETING FIRM AND TV, SONY/ATV MUSIC PUBLISHING

Amanda Hill
SENIOR VP A&R, SONY/ATV MUSIC PUBLISHING

Jennifer Knoepfe
SENIOR VP A&R, SONY/ATV MUSIC PUBLISHING

Knoepfe, 43, “proudly signed” rising pop artist King Princess and helped Jack Antonoff and Joel Little make history in collaboration with Taylor Swift on 12 of the songs from Lover, which debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 with the biggest week for any album since her 2017 release reputation. Thanks in part to Hill, 36, songwriters Sarah Aarons and Greg Kurstin earned a Country Airplay No. 1 with Maren Morris’ “Girl” while Sean Douglas did the same with Thomas Rhett’s “Sixteen.” Cranford, 50, is leading the business teams responsible for the upgrades to the royalty-payment system for songwriters, helping launch Sony/ATV’s

“Cash Out” service, which, she says, “will allow our songwriters to request some or all of their current royalty balance to be paid immediately, instead of having to wait until their next distribution.” Crowley, 46, and her team of 16 grew the company’s film synch business by double digits with the release of Bohemian Rhapsody and A Star Is Born. Crowley, who also pulls double duty as an independent music supervisor, was nominated this year for a Guild of Music Supervisors award for her work on the Sony Pictures film Peter Rabbit, which grossed over $350 million at the box office, according to Box Office Mojo.

SONG THAT INSPIRES HER: KNOEPFE “Natural Woman” by Aretha Franklin. When I hear that song, it instantly makes me feel more confident and content.”

Maria Eg an
PRESIDENT/HEAD OF CREATIVE, PULSE MUSIC GROUP

Pulse took home indie publisher of the year honors last December from the Association of Independent Music Publishers. Under Egan, 41, the company has enjoyed a string of successes including Maroon 5’s “Girls Like You” (featuring Cardi B), which set the record for the longest No. 1 on the Adult Contemporary radio airplay chart, and Travis Scott’s “Sicko Mode,” which became the first hip-hop song to spend 30 weeks in the top 10 of the Hot 100. “We’ve had these massive cultural breakthrough songs with what’s really on the front line of music,” says Egan.

WHERE SHE UNWINDS: “We work by the Silver Lake reservoir [in Los Angeles], so my daily ritual is I walk by the reservoir and listen to music and playlists — and try and get clarity.”

Golnar K hosrowshahi
FOUNDER/CEO, RESERVOIR

In Billboard’s latest publisher market-share rankings for the Hot 100, Reservoir came in fifth with a 3.96% share for the third quarter of 2019 — and has made that list in all three quarterly rankings since the tally launched. K hosrowshahi, 48, says company revenue also grew by 39% in fiscal year 2018 and 34% in the first six months of this year. She’s now reshaping this leading indie publisher as a full-service music company with the acquisition of Chrysalis Records, which boosted Reservoir’s recorded-music catalog to 20,000 masters.

CHARITY SHE SUPPORTS: “Silkroad, an organization rooted in cross-cultural collaboration via music and dialogue, founded by Yo-Yo Ma and on which I serve as board chair. The work Silkroad does to build a more hopeful and inclusive world is more important than ever.”

Carianne Marshall
CO-CHAIR/COO, WARNER CHAPPELL MUSIC

“The past 12 months have been quite the whirlwind,” says Marshall, who along with Guy Moot was named co-chair of Warner Chappell Music in January. Warner Chappell continues to dominate the Billboard rankings in country-radio market share, coming in at No. 1 on the Top 10 Country Publishers airplay chart for the
BRANDI CARLILE

2019 TRAILBLAZER AWARD WINNER

CONGRATULATIONS

FROM YOUR
LOW COUNTRY SOUND / ELEKTRA FAMILY
last 11 consecutive quarters. Says Marshall, “I’m so excited to build this next chapter at Warner Chappell with a partner who shares the same drive and passion for our songwriters.”

ADVICE TO NEXT-GEN WOMEN “I’d tell both men and women beginning in the music business to really take pride in their work — no matter how big or small the request or project. It’s also important to follow through and honor your word. People really value working with others who are dependable and trustworthy.”

Sas Metcalfe
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER, KOBALT MUSIC
Jeanette Perez
CHIEF EXPERIENCE OFFICER, KOBALT MUSIC

Metcalfe’s global creative team of nearly 40 members (65% of whom are female) had over 100 Kobalt-affiliated individuals and groups nominated for Grammy Awards in 2019, an all-time high for the company, says Kobalt. For the third quarter of 2019, Kobalt represented 16.59% of the songwriters on hits from Billie Eilish, Camila Cabello and Shawn Mendes, Panic! at the Disco and Ed Sheeran. Perez, 40, who was named chief experience officer in November, has seen a year-over-year increase in global synch revenue of 22% and directed the negotiation of over 14,000 synch deals for songs by writers including Stevie Nicks, Trent Reznor, Max Martin, Dean Lewis and Sam Fender, according to Kobalt. Perez adds that the company’s increase in global synch revenue for the 2019-20 fiscal year is trending toward double digits.

SONG THAT INSPIRES Perez “Beyoncé’s ‘Run the World’ because it’s the ultimate female empowerment song: ‘We run this mothafucka.’”

Helen Murphy
CEO, ANTHEM ENTERTAINMENT

Murphy, who assumed leadership of the music publisher formerly known as ole a year ago, has transformed the company from one apparently on the verge of being sold, to renaming and reasserting it as one of the top indie music publishers in the world, while also boosting its recorded-music presence and expanding its array of music production and film/TV collection services. Most recently, Anthem has acquired the Ricky Reed catalog of co-writes from Boardwalk Music Group (Lizzo’s “Truth Hurts” and “Good As Hell;” Halsey’s “Bad at Love;” Leon Bridges’ “Bet Ain’t Worth the Hand”), along with a catalog from songwriter-producer Doc McKinney (The Weekend’s “Wicked Games” and songs recorded by Drake and Khalid, among others). On the recorded-music side, Anthem plans a release early next year from legendary singer-guitarist José Feliciano.

WHERE SHE UNWINDS “I love Goldeneye in Jamaica. It’s a stunningly beautiful resort [with] the world’s best host, Chris Blackwell.”

Molly Neuman
PRESIDENT, SONGTRUST

Since Neuman joined Songtrust two years ago, she has reshaped the company, hiring a quarter of the roughly 80 people on staff and reports helping the rights management firm reach 140% growth in revenue and 160% growth in clients (both year-over-year measurements). “To be able to have accomplished that in 18 months is something of immense pride,” says Neuman, who was promoted to her role as president of Songtrust in October.

CHARITY SHE SUPPORTS “The Sound Thinking program to give women and girls in New York City public schools access to music companies for both production work and industry jobs.”

Carla Wallace
CO-OWNER/CEO, BIG YELLOW DOG MUSIC

“It’s never about numbers, just quality,” says Wallace of the roster signed to her boutique publishing/artist development firm of creators who connect deeply with listeners. Daniel Tashian won two Grammy Awards for his work on Kacey Musgraves’ Golden Hour; Maren Morris achieved her third No. 1 on Country Airplay with “Girl,” breaking a 17-month hiatus for women in the top position; and newcomer Tenille Townes won four Canadian Country Music Awards. Townes, says Wallace, is “determined to make everyone feel connected through the heartache we all see or pain we endure.”

WHERE SHE UNWINDS “Dollywood.”

Elizabeth Matthews
CEO, ASCAP

Responding to the torrent of data in the streaming age, Matthews reports that ASCAP has tapped “bleeding edge technology” to scale up its global IT systems and infrastructure, and digital access for its songwriters, composers and music publishers. The performing rights organization has finalized over 40 deals with TV cable broadcasters, radio networks and digital service providers. Says Matthews, “Making smart, strategic agreements with our licensees enabled ASCAP to return more than $1 billion in distributions to our members for the second year in a row in 2018.”

WHERE SHE UNWINDS “My couch. It’s close and cheap. Plus, I tend to find my kids there.”

Anjula Singh
EXECUTIVE VP/COO, SOUNDEXCHANGE

For Singh, who added executive vp to her CFO title at SoundExchange in September, the highlight of the past year came when “we were able to distribute $1 billion” to performers and record labels — 190,000 accounts in all — for U.S. digital performances. Adds Singh: “It’s important for us to do right by creators.”

MOST URGENT ISSUE “Data accuracy. It’s so important to get people paid. It’s core to where we are. There’s so much meta associated with a track. Does it matter that you’re getting [a royalty payment] out? Or does it matter that you’re getting it out as accurately as you can?”
congratulates our colleague

Christine Lepera on being named to

Billboard's 2019 “Women in Music” list
Alison Smith
EXECUTIVE VP DISTRIBUTION, PUBLISHER RELATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION SERVICES, BMI
Smith, 58, directed the BMI team that distributed royalties of nearly $1.2 billion to the performing rights organization’s songwriter, composers and music publishers. With her counterparts at ASCAP, she laid the foundation for Songview, the joint database that “will bring together and reconcile songs currently housed in both PROs’ proprietary databases,” says Smith. With final testing of the system underway, “we are extremely encouraged by the results we’re seeing.”

ADVICE FOR NEXT-GEN WOMEN: “Love music, respect the creative process, listen and learn all the time, find a mentor or mentors, and trust your instincts. Always be kind, respectful and ethical in your dealings with others.”

Kelli Turner
PRESIDENT/COO, SESAC
In August 2013 and a half-years after SESAC was acquired by the private equity firm Blackstone, Turner oversaw SESAC’s refinancing of its capital structure. The PRO sold $530 million in debt and gained commitments for a $30 million revolving credit facility. As SESAC went on a “road show” to potential investors, says Turner, there was “significant over-demand for the offering and the pricing came in better than SESAC expected.”

HAVE ATTITUDES CHANGED? “The #MeToo movement has provided women a more equal playing field. Issues have really come to light that helped get women recognition and opportunities that they deserve.”

STREAMING

Tami Hurwitz
VP GLOBAL MARKETING, AMAZON MUSIC
“Since the advent of the MP3, digital music has prioritized convenience over [sound] quality,” says Hurwitz, 47, who led the marketing team behind the launch of Amazon HD Music, adding over 50 million tracks to the high-definition audio service, plus several million in Ultra HD. Amazon partnered with artists including Neil Young, Halsey, Garth Brooks and Brittany Howard — with more to come — to celebrate the launch,” says Hurwitz.

SONG THAT INSPIRES: “I listen to Brandi Carlile’s ‘The Joke’ at least once a day. She is such a powerful singer-songwriter with an amazing voice. I love the meaning and message of that song.”

Vivien Lewit
GLOBAL HEAD OF ARTIST SERVICES, YOUTUBE
To oversee and strengthen YouTube’s relationships with artists, Lewit has built a team to help artists worldwide take full advantage of the platform — from educating artists in Japan on how to target a global audience to working with Nigerian act Mr. Eazi on emFawa, an incubator that provides career guidance and funds music videos for up-and-coming artists in Africa. “We’re seeking ways to catalyze artists’ access and connection to fans near and far,” says Lewit.

WHERE SHE UNWINDS: “Antiparos, Greece. A magical place, small enough to feel like a special secret but shock-full of beautiful nature on the island and in the waters around it.”

Rachel Newman
GLOBAL SENIOR DIRECTOR OF EDITORIAL, APPLE MUSIC
Apple Music’s content team, led by Newman, has been on a roll in 2019, announcing a flurry of new Beats 1 shows, revamped playlists and working with artists like Camila Cabello to create one-off experiences around their albums. After Apple acquired Shazam in 2018, Walsh was tasked with integrating the audio recognition service into Apple’s corporate culture and structure, as well as taking over business leadership for Beats 1, focusing “on people and innovation when measuring our success,” she says.

MOST URGENT ISSUE: “Preserving the value of artistry and artists’ stories is one of the most crucial issues in the streaming era. We need to be really careful that we don’t turn music into a commodity.”

Dawn Ostroff
CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER, SPOTIFY
Ostroff has led Spotify’s podcast movement in 2019, saying, “We acquired best-in-class podcasting companies — Gimlet, Anchor and Parcast — and we now have more than 500,000 podcast titles available on the platform, including exclusive titles and partnerships with President Barack and Michelle Obama, Jordan Peele and others.” But her proudest achievement? Over 50% of her music team identify as female. “It’s an enormous step forward not only for the company,” says Ostroff, “but for our industry.”

ADVICE FOR NEXT-GEN WOMEN: “Be willing to work harder than anybody else and think outside the box to help differentiate yourself. Be an innovator — don’t just follow the tracks that have been laid out in front of you.”

Lizzie Widhelm
SENIOR VP AD INNOVATION, PANDORA
When Widhelm, a 13-year veteran of Pandora and the broader Pandora team, tapped the company’s Music Genome Project data to place Lewis Capaldi’s “Someone You Loved” in front of new fans, the company reported that total Pandora streams of the song increased by 811%, helping drive the track to No. 1 on the Hot 100 in November. Says Widhelm: “Helping talent find their audience has always been our mission.” Her next challenge: “Cracking the code” for the best podcast ad format.

SONG THAT INSPIRES: “It has to be Dolly Parton’s ‘9 to 5.’ Even on a tough day, that song is everything.”

Alessandra Alarcon
PRESIDENT, SBS ENTERTAINMENT, SPANISH BROADCASTING SYSTEM
Promoted to her new role in March, Alarcon, 32, has been expanding the concert division of SBS Entertainment, adding a second night to the annual Calibash event in Los Angeles in January and launching the two-date summer concert series Megaton. “There is a lot of creativity and talent that needs and deserves exposure,” says Alarcon. “I want [us] to be a place where artists are supported across markets.”

MOST URGENT ISSUE: “Recognition of the explosion of the Latin genre in [the] general market. It’s a very exciting time for Latinos in the music and entertainment industry.”

Mary G. Berner
PRESIDENT/CEO, CUMULUS MEDIA
Berner, 60, led Cumulus out of bankruptcy by June 2018 and has since launched its aggressive expansion. Now a multimedia “audio first” company, she says that the radio giant reaches 260 million terrestrial listeners monthly in addition to marquee podcasts, streaming, smart speakers and digital channels. Says Berner: “First you fix it, so you can earn the right to innovate.”

WHERE SHE UNWINDS: “I am at my happiest when traveling with my family; second best is being transported by a great book, with my kids and pets right there with me.”

Amani Duncan
SENIOR VP MUSIC, MTV
Since taking on her current role in 2017, Duncan has seen year-over-year spikes for songs performed during the MTV Video Music Awards. (Overall ratings for the show itself in 2019 were flat despite a 6% rise in ratings for the 25-54 demographic.) The 2019 show resulted in a 74% increase in song sales and a 12% increase in streams the week of Aug. 23.

HAVE ATTITUDES CHANGED? “There have been countless studies that point to one conclusion: having women in the C-suite significantly impacts net margins. The music industry has been late to this discovery, but not all is lost — we are the change we seek.”

Leslie Fram
SENIOR VP MUSIC AND TALENT, CMT
Fram has been at the forefront of the gender disparity conversation within country music. She has led CMT’s Next Women of Country franchise and the 2018 CMT Artists of the Year celebration of women, which was the No. 1 social cable special of October 2018, according to CMT. She’s also a co-founder of Change the Conversation, which aims to empower women and provide knowledge and mentorship.

ADVICE FOR NEXT-GEN WOMEN: “Carry your passion, work ethic and desire to help others throughout your career. Remain true to yourself.”
No Sidekicks. Only Superheroes.

congratulations to Julie Boos
recognized as one of Billboard’s Women in Music
CAPITAL CONNECTION:
THE WOMEN OF CITY NATIONAL BANK

Martha Henderson manages a 250-member entertainment banking team with women in leadership roles and is striking partnerships for new services. “For me, it’s trying to look ahead,” she says. “What else can we do to help the music community?”
Congratulations to our Billboard Women in Music

HALL OF FAMER

EVP + GC Danielle Aguirre

from David Israelite & your NMPA family

NMPA is the leading voice for promoting and advancing the interests of music publishers and their songwriting partners.
Congratulations to Lisa Alter & Jacqueline Charlesworth on being named to Billboard’s “Women in Music” List

The time is near...Emerging Artist...

MATT LEGRAND EP

coming early 2020
Counting down to impact on all streaming platforms!

New single “I’ve Been Watching You” now streaming on all platforms!
Watch the music video on YouTube
We join in honoring Billboard’s Women in Music Honorees especially our friend and partner, 

DEBBIE WHITE.

You continue to inspire us.

WE COULDN’T BE PROUDER

Congratulations to our very own Cindy Hill on being named one of Billboard’s Women in Music 2019.

Felicidades, from your entire Univision family.
THE MOST URGENT ISSUE FACING THE MUSIC BUSINESS IS...
“We must drive change and tackle some of music’s greatest challenges — challenges like fair pay for creators, removing music-career barriers for women, and strengthening and protecting all students’ access to music education. We must collectively use our voices, our power and our influence to make some real change.”
—DEBORAH DUGAN, PRESIDENT, CEO, THE RECORDING ACADEMY

Cindy Hill
VP CONTENT, INDUSTRY AND AFFILIATE RELATIONS, UNIVISION
For Spanish-language media giant Univision, Hill helped drive such events as August’s sold-out Latino Mix Live in Dallas headlined by J Balvin and Bad Bunny, which drew 19,200 fans, according to the company. In 2018, the Bueno Malo & El Feo Fest, which brings the best of regional Mexican music to many U.S. cities, drew 15,000 concertgoers to San Jose, Calif., according to Univision. “Radio is such a powerful connection tool for Hispanics,” says Hill.
CHARITY SHE SUPPORTS: “I discovered the St. Jude [Children’s Research Hospital] Heroes program a few years ago and have run a half-marathon annually for St. Jude ever since. It’s a wonderful feeling of community and connection.”

Tamara Hrivnak
VP MUSIC BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS, FACEBOOK
As Facebook’s chief music strategist, Hrivnak leads a team (including numerous other female executives) that’s driving a string of deals with labels and publishers. Wherever possible, Facebook is leveraging its licenses to let 2.8 billion users across its family of apps personalize their posts with music content, according to the company. Quemerais, 34, leads music partnerships and teams focused on social impact for public figures. This year, that meant working with Kelsea Ballerini and Little Big Town’s Karen Fairchild and Kimberly Schlapman to put together the first-ever Women of Nashville event during this summer’s CMA Fest, as well as supporting She Is the Music, the nonprofit endeavoring to increase the number of women working in the music business.
SONG THAT INSPIRES: Hrivnak “Brandi Carlile’s The Joke. It’s about rising up and going against the grain. It’s about resilience and speaks to me deeply as a woman in business.”

Thea Mitchem
EXECUTIVE VP PROGRAMMING, IHEARTMEDIA; PROGRAM DIRECTOR, WWPR (POWER 105.1) NEW YORK
Mitchem guided WWPR (Power 105.1) New York to the best ratings in its 17-year history, reaching over 2 million listeners monthly, while the hip-hop station’s syndicated morning show, The Breakfast Club featuring Charlamagne Tha God, beams out to listeners of 80 stations and millions more on digital platforms, according to IHeartMedia. Mitchem, 33, guided launch campaigns for Taylor Swift’s Lover, among other projects, that leveraged an audience reach that iHeartRadio puts at a quarter-billion listeners. Her team also promoted and curated the lineup for such annual events as Jingle Ball, Fiesta Latina and the iHeartRadio Music Festival.
HAVE ATTITUDES CHANGED? Mitchem “We’re in a time when our voices and contributions to the music industry are starting to be recognized.”

Connie Orlando
EXECUTIVE VP SPECIALS, MUSIC PROGRAMMING AND MUSIC STRATEGY, BET NETWORKS
Three years after Orlando was named BET’s executive vp/head of programming, she was promoted to her current title in October. In that time, she has led BET to a near double-digit upswing in growth, with this year’s BET Hip Hop Awards raking in 1.3 million viewers, up over 9% year over year, according to the company. “When I began, there was a dearth of women, and few of those held key positions,” she says. “My ascension, along with my peers, has helped reshape the landscape.”
ADVICE FOR NEXT-GEN WOMEN “Identify the sector you desire to impact, craft a plan and work hard toward your goal each day. Never feel as though you have to compromise or cower to your male counterparts. Be authentically you.”

Lisa Alter
FOUNDEING PARTNER, ALTER KENDRICK & BARON
Alter, who negotiates transactions involving the acquisition and sale of music assets, says this is a “golden age for music publishing” — and for the business in general. The total value of her firm’s deals during the past year and a half has just hit “the billion-dollar mark,” she says.
SONG THAT INSPIRES: “Janis Joplin and ‘Piece of My Heart.’ She took the work of a male songwriter and made it her own. That’s so cool.”

Christine Lepera
CO-CHAIR OF THE ENTERTAINMENT & IP LITIGATION DEPARTMENT, MITCHELL SILBERBERG & KNUP
A powerhouse litigator, Lepera is known for her fierce arguments and her determination to turn a loss or setback into an eventual win. Although a jury in July ruled against her clients in a copyright infringement suit over Katy Perry’s hit “Dark Horse,” Lepera is not giving up. “We are fighting this one — big time,” she says.
MOST URGENT ISSUE “How [copyright] cases are handled and the problems we have with music being [like] a foreign language and courts and juries not being able to evaluate these things in that setting.”

Monika Tashman
ENTERTAINMENT PARTNER, MANATT PHELPS & PHILLIPS
Tashman in March joined Manatt Phelps & Phillips, “a firm that is not just supportive but enthusiastic about my passion to bring more efficiency and innovation to the practice of law,” she says. Among her projects is the Women in Music Workplace Initiative, which plans to name the best music companies for women and “raise gender diversity and equality standards.”
MOST URGENT ISSUE “Every minute of every day, the metadata and verification problem is getting worse. This is causing money to disappear into the ether or be claimed by third parties.”

Debbie White
VICE CHAIR, MUSIC INDUSTRY ENTERTAINMENT, LOEB & LOEB
White had a nonstop year providing legal and business counsel to a roster of A-list clients: Big Hit Entertainment, BTS, Tencent, The Who, Regina Spektor, Melanie Martinez, James TW, Diane Warren, Young the Giant, Friends at Work, Christie Brinkley, Citi, Uber and Ultimate Fighting Championship. “Watching BTS win group of the year at the Billboard Music Awards was something I will never forget,” she says. “When the boys stood on that stage as the winner, I felt like a proud mom.”
WHERE SHE UNWINDS “Harbour Island in the Bahamas. Since it’s hard to get to, you don’t run into the entire music industry.”
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BEST COUNTRY DUO/GROUP PERFORMANCE

LITTLE BIG TOWN: “THE DAUGHTERS”

NIGHTFALL ALBUM AVAILABLE JANUARY 17
BRANDING & FINANCE

Marcie Allen
FOUNDER/PRESIDENT, MAC PRESENTS

Allen this year celebrated the 16th anniversary of her music partnership and experiential agency MAC Presents with programs for Citi, Uber and Swisher Sweets. Her latest coup was ATLive, a three-day veterans benefit concert at Atlanta’s Mercedes-Benz Stadium in November, headlined by Keith Urban, Blake Shelton, Eric Church, Sam Hunt, Luke Combs and others. “For a first-year event to sell over 90,000 tickets with the hottest country artists out there, I’m very proud,” she says.

HAVE ATTITUDES CHANGED? “We’re starting to get women in the C-suite who are absolutely in charge, but I would like to see more women own their own businesses. That’s somewhere we have room to improve.”

Julie Boos
CHAIRMAN/BUSINESS MANAGER, FBMM

Like many financial advisers, Boos, 50, keeps FBMM’s client list confidential. But her stature within the Nashville community was affirmed last year when she was named business manager of the year at the Country Music Association’s 2018 touring awards. The accolade is nice, but Boos takes greater satisfaction from a client recently reaching a lifetime financial goal after 12 years of her guidance. “For a business manager,” she says, “that’s the holy grail.”

CHARITY SHE SUPPORTS: “I’m passionate about children in foster care and the challenges these kids face. I had 16 kids through my home in two years. Each story was different, but they each face the same struggles to survive and overcome the hand they’ve been dealt.”

Jennifer Breitnau
GLOBAL CONSUMER CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER, CITI

With the launch of its social impact and mentorship program #SeeHerHearHer on NBC’s Today in March, Citigroup joined the fight against gender bias and disparity in the music industry, committing to “50/50 gender parity” in its advertising and to bring 50 more brands into the fold. Artist partners have included Maren Morris, Sheryl Crow and Brittany Howard, with more scheduled for 2020. “It’s really a commitment to accurately portray women and girls in our advertising, storytelling and the media that we purchase,” says Breitnau, whose international team overseas 12,000 plus events and experiences globally through the Citigroup Entertainment program.

ARTIST THAT INSPIRES: “I always point people back to Ella Fitzgerald as one of the ground-breakers for women in music.”

Deborah Dugan
PRESIDENT/CEO, THE RECORDING ACADEMY

Starting in August as the new president/CEO of The Recording Academy, Dugan has a vision to invigorate the 21,000-member organization with service and activism, from fighting for embattled music education programs to advocating for the CASE Act to support copyright infringement claims. “Our North Star is the artist,” says Dugan. “Their work improves our lives, and our work at The Recording Academy is to improve theirs.”

CHARITIES SHE SUPPORTS: “The Grammy Music Education Coalition, because every child should have equal access to music education. And MusicCares [to] support music makers in time of hardship and great need.”

Sarah Trahern
CEO, COUNTRY MUSIC ASSOCIATION

Trahern, 54, and her CMA team watched a yearlong marketing collaboration with Ken Burns come to fruition with the acclaimed PBS documentary Country Music, an eight-part series that debuted in September. “Our industry saw significant growth in consumption,” says Trahern, referring to the sales and streaming boosts for some of the nearly 500 songs featured in the doc. Among those, Patsy Cline’s “Crazy” garnered 4,000 downloads between Sept. 13 and 26, and Johnny Cash’s Nine Inch Nails cover “Hurt” earned 3.1 million streams alone in that period.

MOST URGENT ISSUE: “Continuing to educate the country consumer on streaming and how consumers can utilize the platforms for music discovery in addition to finding their favorite artists.”

CONTRIBUTORS


ASSOCIATIONS

Michele Ballantyne
COO, RIAA

“Bringing people together and building trust” are Ballantyne’s priorities, which allowed the RIAA to push for the passage last year of the Music Modernization Act and, in February, led to the expansion of the RIAA’s board of directors “and the election of the most diverse slate of board members in the organization’s history,” she says.

HAVE ATTITUDES CHANGED? “Every young woman who comes into the business today has a much wider set of options and a whole rich roster of role models and category breakers who have paved a lot of the way.”

MYTHOLOGY

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WOMEN IN MUSIC EXECUTIVES

TOPLINES

134 BILDBOARD | DECEMBER 14, 2019
Congratulations to RIAA COO MICHELE BALLANTYNE on being named one of BILLBOARD’S 2019 WOMEN IN MUSIC
Most ‘Want’-ed: Mariah Carey Keeps At No. 1

MARIAH CAREY’S 1994 CAROL “ALL I WANT FOR Christmas Is You” continues at No. 1 on Billboard’s Holiday 100 chart, which ranks the top seasonal songs of all eras according to the same formula used for the Billboard Hot 100, blending streaming, airplay and sales data.

The song reigns for a 37th of the Holiday 100’s 42 total weeks since the list launched in 2011 and crowns all three of the chart’s component tallies: Holiday Streaming Songs (35.1 million U.S. streams, up 48%, in the tracking week, according to Nielsen Music); Holiday Airplay (31 million audience impressions, up 18%); and Holiday Digital Song Sales (9,000 downloads sold, up 60%).

On the Hot 100, the song, from Carey’s 1994 album Merry Christmas, dashes 18-3, returning to its high, first reached last holiday season, when it became the first top five holiday hit on the survey in 60 years. It’s the highest-charting holiday song by a soloist in the Hot 100’s history, bested overall in the category only by The Chipmunks’ “The Chipmunk Song” (with David Seville), which ruled for four weeks in 1958 and 1959. “Christmas” also surges 11-1 on the all-genre Streaming Songs chart, where it scores its second total week at the summit.

—GARY TRUST

GO TO BILLBOARD.COM FOR COMPLETE CHART DATA
Your last Christmas single was a 2008 cover of “Joyful Kings.” What inspired you to release another this year?

KEVIN JONAS We wanted to celebrate the joy that we’ve been feeling all year long (since reuniting as a band in February), and there’s no better time than the holidays, being together with family. If you travel as much as we have, there’s nothing better than coming home.

What are the essential elements of a Christmas song?

NICK JONAS We wanted this song to feel timeless, but also to give it a fresh spin. It’s comprised of some classic holiday song moments: wistful guitar, sweeping piano, hand claps and, of course, sleigh bells. We also had to make sure we brought in horns over the hook.

What’s the most ridiculous present you’ve exchanged?

JOE JONAS One year I gave Nick and Kevin their favorite gift: Shane Grey dolls, [the character] I played from Disney Channel’s 2008 movie Camp Rock.

What do you most look forward to during the holidays?

JOE Eating my weight in Christmas dinner! —TAYLOR WEATHERBY

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<td>18</td>
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<td>IT’S A SONG ABOUT THE JOY OF THE HOLIDAYS, COMPLETE WITH THE LINE “MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL, HAVE A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We honor all Women in Music especially our own Margi Cheske

Your leadership inspires us to reach great heights
Bing Crosby boasts the most songs — eight — of any act on the Holiday ‘100 (ahead of runner-up Michael Bublé, with seven). "It’s Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas," "Santa Claus Is Comin’ to Town" and "Sleigh Ride" sport the most versions of any title on the tally — four each — and Crosby charts versions of the former two at Nos. 31 and 70, respectively. Among the late singer’s entries, his recording of "Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!" makes its first Holiday 100 appearance this season, up 104% to 4.7 million U.S. streams, according to Nielsen Music. — G.T.

The track, which topped Adult Contemporary in December 2011 and was No. 1 in December 2017 in its first year of release, surges by 103% to 7.8 million U.S. streams following the Dec. 2 premiere of its official video.

Recorded 70 years ago, the instrumental debuts on the Holiday 100 with 4.1 million streams and 3.9 million in radio reach. The late Fiedler conducted the Boston Pops from 1930 to 1979.
WELL BEHAVED WOMEN RARELY MAKE HISTORY

Friends At Work congratulates our Badass Founder and CEO Ty Stiklorius for being named one of Billboard’s Top Women in Music for 2019.
### ARTIST

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**No. 9 PENTATONIX**

Pentatonix surges 28-9 on the Artist 100 as the vocal group lands four albums on the Billboard 200, led by The Best of Pentatonix Christmas at No. 8 (see page 146).
You’ve been advocating for women your entire career. From all of us at Downtown, thanks for pushing the boundaries to make the music industry more inclusive.

DOWNTOWN
DIVA LAS VEGAS

SHANIA TWAIN
Let’s Go!
NOW - DECEMBER 18
MARCH 3 - 28
MAY 20 - JUNE 6

CHRISTINA AGUILERA
THE XPERIENCE
NEW YEAR’S WEEK
DECEMBER 27 - 31
FEBRUARY 26 - MARCH 6

Rupaul’s Drag Race
LIVE
JANUARY 31 - AUGUST 1

GWEN STEFANI
Just a Girl
FINAL DATES
FEBRUARY 7 - 22
& MAY 1 - 16

MARIAH CAREY
THE BUTTERFLY RETURNS
FEBRUARY 14 - 29
CAESARS PALACE
LAS VEGAS

KELLY CLARKSON
invincible
APRIL 1 - 11
JULY 29 - AUGUST 8
SEPTEMBER 18 - 26

GET TICKETS TO SIN CITY’S BEST RESIDENCIES AT ticketmaster®

LIVE NATION®
## Billboard 200 Chart Data

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**Frozen II: Chills At No. 1**

The **Frozen II** soundtrack jumps to No. 1 on the **Billboard 200** as the set rises 31-80,000 equivalent album units earned in the United States during the week ending Dec. 5 (up 2%), according to Nielsen Music.

**Frozen II** and Frozen join an elite group of theatrical film or TV movie soundtracks whose original and sequel film albums hit No. 1. (The album for the first Frozen movie spent 13 weeks atop the tally in 2014.) They join the soundtracks to the TV movies **High School Musical** and **High School Musical 2** (in 2006 and 2007, respectively) and theatrical releases **Twilight** and **The Twilight Saga: New Moon** (2008, 2009).

**Frozen II** also marks the rare No. 1 that did not debut at the top. Of the 38 releases that ruled the chart in 2019, it’s just the second set to do so, following **A Boogie Wit Da Hoodie’s Hoodie SZN**.

—KEITH CAULFIELD
abkco congratulates Alisa Coleman on her Billboard Women In Music 2019 Honor as well as all this year's honorees.

And celebrate 34 years of working together jhk

Billboards Indie Power Players/Digital Power Players 2019
8

PENTATONIX
The Best Of Pentatonix Christmas

The group scores its 10th top 10 as this hits set zips 18-8 with 43,000 equivalent album units earned in the week ending Dec. 6 (up 64%), according to Nielsen Music. Always a seasonal favorite, half of Pentatonix’s top 10s are holiday sets.

15

VINCE GUARALDI TRIO
A Charlie Brown Christmas

The classic soundtrack to the 1965 TV special earns a new peak as it climbs 32-16 (29,000 units; up 58%) in the wakening of ASC’s Dec. 5 airing of the cartoon. The set previously topped out at No. 16 in 2018.

21

KACEY MUSGRAVES
A Very Kacey Christmas

The album returns (24,000 units; up 71%) thanks to buzz generated by the Dec. 1 premiere of The Kacey Musgraves Christmas Show on Amazon Prime Video. A soundtrack to the program also bows at No. 120 (9,000 units).
FOLLOW THE MONEY TO SAN JOSE.

Coming to the Bay Area and passing up SAP Center at San Jose? Major system error! We’re the home arena for the titans of tech, who are passionate about live music and have ridiculous amounts of disposable income to spend. If you’re passionate about profits, ping us, we’ve been 10xing ticket sales since 1993.

Visit sapcenter.com/steveandjames to receive a special gift. For avails, call Sheila at 408-999-5809.
A Jolly Top 10

Michael Bublé's Christmas makes its annual return to the top 10 on the Billboard 200 as the set climbs 17-6 with 48,000 equivalent album units earned in the week ending Dec. 6 (up 63%), according to Nielsen Music. The album was first released in 2011, topping the chart for five weeks that holiday season and has returned to the top 10 every year since.

Another familiar favorite stages an encore performance in the top 10 as Mariah Carey's Merry Christmas vaults 21-9 (37,000 units, up 63%). Merry Christmas — which features the enduring hit “All I Want for Christmas Is You” — initially spent six weeks in the top 10 in late 1994 and early 1995, peaking at No. 3. It made its first return to the top 10 during the 2019-20 holiday season, when it reached No. 8 on the list dated Jan. 5, 2019.

—KEITH CAULFIELD
We salute you.

Manatt is pleased to congratulate our partner **Monika Tashman** on being named to *Billboard’s* 2019 Women in Music list.

Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP  manatt.com

---

The power of diverse perspectives makes a world of difference.

Congratulations to Helen Murphy of Anthem Entertainment on your recognition as one of *Billboard’s* Top Women in Music.

Let’s do this.

kpmg.ca/enterprise
The Dolls Are Back

For the first time since 2012, The Pussycat Dolls (above) return to the Social 50. The girl group, led by Nicole Scherzinger, reunited at No. 43 on the (high) heels of its reunion and performance during the Nov. 30 finale of U.K. series The X Factor: Celebrity. Scherzinger was also featured as a judge on the ITV competition series.

During the show, the group, which is now a five-piece, performed a medley of its previous hits, plus a new song called “React.” It was the act’s first performance since 2010, when Scherzinger departed for a solo career. Before disbanding, the Dolls earned a pair of top 10 albums on the Billboard 200 and 11 hits on the Billboard Hot 100.

The Dolls’ chart metrics were led by 87,000 Wikipedia views (up 353%), and they were mentioned on Twitter 26,000 times. The group will embark on a reunion tour beginning in April in the United Kingdom.

—KEVIN RUTHERFORD
“The most effective way to do it, is to do it.”

Amelia Earhart

“Here’s to a decade of doing it!”

KRISTEN KARMA

STREAM THE NEW SINGLE

DEAR JOHN

FT. MARIAN HANNA + MR. ATP

“... (KRISTEN) TAKES THE STANDARD SINGER-SONGWRITER ELEMENTS AND ELEVATES THEM TO NEW HEIGHTS... VISUALLY STUNNING!” - EXCLAIM.CA

TOP 20 ITUNES ARTIST KRISTENKARMA.COM

www.AshleyPuckett.com

Containing the singles: "Medicine" "Bulletproof"

Debut Album 2/14/20

Ashley Puckett

NEVER SAY NEVER

... sounds like an angel resting

... in the dark...

... a statue... Americana classic...

... Kelly’s Colors...
### HOT 100 SONGWRITERS™

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### HOT 100 PRODUCERS™

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### COUNTRY SONGWRITERS™

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### R&B PRODUCERS™

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<td>TYSON TRAX</td>
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Johnny Marks’ Yuletide Rule

Late legend Johnny Marks (above) leads the Hot 100 Songwriters chart for a second week thanks to a trio of seasonal standards — all of which he wrote — on the Billboard Hot 100. Brenda Lee’s “Rockin’ Around the Christmas Tree” surges 29-8, hitting a new peak; Burl Ives’ “A Holly Jolly Christmas” vaults 48-18; and Gene Autry’s “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer” reenters at No. 44.

Marks died in 1985 at age 75 and is the first artist to posthumously top Hot 100 Songwriters (dating to the chart’s inception in June). Plus, Finneas paces Hot 100 Producers for a sixth week thanks to three songs by Billie Eilish that he produced: “Bad Guy” (No. 21), “Everything I Wanted” (No. 25) and “All the Good Girls Go to Hell” (No. 79). —XANDER ZELLNER

---

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The top songwriters and producers on the Billboard Hot 100 and selective genre songs charts that utilize the Hot 100 formula (blending streaming, airplay and download sales data) for the charts dated December 14, 2019. Rankings are based on accumulated weekly points for all charted songs — on the specified chart for the week — on which a songwriter or producer is credited. If a song is written or produced by more than one person, points are divided equally among all credited parties.
SHE IS THE MUSIC

IS THRILLED TO CELEBRATE THE
2019 BILLBOARD WOMEN IN MUSIC HONOREES.

Brandi Carlile
Billie Eilish
Alicia Keys
Megan Thee Stallion
Nicki Minaj
Alanis Morissette
Desiree Perez
Rosalía
Taylor Swift

SHE IS THE MUSIC

EQUALITY, INCLUSIVITY AND OPPORTUNITY
FOR WOMEN IN MUSIC.
### Mainstream Top 40

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<td>Post Malone</td>
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<td>SOMEONE YOU LOVED</td>
<td>Lewis Capaldi</td>
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<td>LOSE YOU TO LOVE ME</td>
<td>Selena Gomez</td>
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<td>TRAPMOLINE</td>
<td>SHAED</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>Dan + Shay &amp; Justin Bieber</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>LOSE YOU TO LOVE ME</td>
<td>Selena Gomez</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>ONLY HUMAN</td>
<td>Jonas Brothers</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>TRUTH HURTS</td>
<td>Lil Nas X</td>
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<td>HOW DO YOU SLEEP?</td>
<td>Sam Smith</td>
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<td>TIME</td>
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<td>Ed Sheeran feat. Khalid</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>DON'T START NOW</td>
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<td>Billie Eilish</td>
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<td>WHAT I AM</td>
<td>Why Don't We</td>
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<td>Idina Menzel &amp; AURORA</td>
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<td>DANCE MONKEY</td>
<td>Tones And I</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>Selena Gomez</td>
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### Adult Contemporary

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### Adult Top 40

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<td>Shawn Mendes &amp; Camila Cabello</td>
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<td>Billie Eilish</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>EVEN THOUGH I'M LEAVING</td>
<td>Luke Combs</td>
<td>15</td>
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</table>
THE NFL CONGRATULATES

DESIREE PÉREZ
Coo, Roc Nation

FOR BEING NAMED TO BILLBOARD’S
TOP WOMEN IN MUSIC
SO MANY STORIES.
ONE LEGENDARY NIGHT.
THANKS, BILLY.

BILLY JOEL

AN EVENING OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS... AND A LITTLE MUSIC TOO
FAENA THEATER. MIAMI BEACH

Our sincere gratitude for an incredible night
our subscribers will never forget.
2019 WAS THEIR YEAR.

We're proud they kicked it off with us.

"Highway Finds" on SiriusXM's The Highway, channel 56, is dedicated to discovering and breaking new artists.

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### HOT COUNTRY SONGS™

| #1 | 10,000 HOURS | Dan + Shay & Justin Bieber | Old Dominion | 1 | 10 |
| #2 | ONE MAN BAND | Old Dominion | 2 | 36 |
| #3 | EVEN THOUGH I'M LEAVING | Luke Combs | 3 | 26 |
| #4 | THE BONES | Maroon 5 | 4 | 40 |
| #5 | ONE THING RIGHT | Marshall & Kane Brown | 1 | 22 |
| #6 | REMEMBER YOU YOUNG | Thomas Rhett | 6 | 21 |

**Strike Up The ‘Band’**

“One Man Band” by Old Dominion (above) ascends 2-1 on Country Airplay with 38.8 million audience impressions in the week ending Dec. 8, according to Nielsen Music. The group adds its seventh single and its sixth in a row, an active streak second only to Luke Combs’ seven.

The song is the second single, and second Country Airplay, from Old Dominion’s self-titled third studio LP, which debuted atop the Top Country Albums chart on Nov. 9. Lead single “Make It Sweet” topped the Country Airplay tally dated May 4. Dustin Lynch lands his eighth top 10 on Hot Country Songs as “Ridin’ Rools” rolls in at No. 9, thanks to 27.1 million in airplay audience. 4.8 million U.S. streams, and 2,000 downloads sold.

Plus, Jon Pardi earns his sixth Hot Country Songs top 10 with “Heartache Medication” (12-10), which sports 26.1 million in radio reach, 4.6 million streams, and 2,000 downloads sold.

—Jim Asker
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PANELI BEBE CLAUDIA
JARED JOSLYN KAYLA ALICIA
### HOT ROCK SONGS™

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Week</th>
<th>New</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Engineer(s)</th>
<th>Producer(s)</th>
<th>Songwriter(s)</th>
<th>Label(s)</th>
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</table>
| 1         |     | #1    | High Hopes | Pan At The Disco | 1 81 | ©
| 2         |     | 2     | Hey Look Ma, I Made It | Pan At The Disco | 1 62 | ©
| 3         |     | 3     | Impala | Coldplay | 7 | ©
| 4         |     | 4     | The Hypo | twenty one pilots | 2 23 | ©
| 5         |     | 5     | Tongue Tied | Marshmello, YUNGBLUD & blackbear | 4 | ©
| 6         |     | 6     | I Think I'm Okay | Machine Gun Kelly X YUNGBLUD & Travis Barker | 26 | ©
| 7         |     | 7     | Air | Highly Suspect | 16 | ©
| 8         |     | 8     | Popular Monster | Meg Myers | 13 | ©
| 9         |     | 9     | Inside Out | Five Finger Death Punch | 10 1 | ©
| 10        |     | 10    | STM Lost In The Woods | Weezer | 2 | ©
| 11        |     | 11    | The End Of The Game | Ozzy Osborne | 13 | ©
| 12        |     | 12    | Social Cues | Cage The Elephant | 23 | ©
| 13        |     | 13    | Might Be Right | White Reaper | 10 | ©
| 14        |     | 14    | Outnumbered | Dermot Kennedy | 9 | ©
| 15        |     | 15    | Killing Me Slowly | Bad Wolves | 8 | ©
| 16        |     | 16    | 10/10 | Rex Orange County | 12 | ©
| 17        |     | 17    | Father Of All... | Rapper's Delight | 13 | ©
| 18        |     | 18    | Birthday Suit | Cosmo Sheldrake | 1 | ©
| 19        |     | 19    | When I Goanna Lose You | N.E.R.D. | 20 | ©
| 20        |     | 20    | Posthumous Forgiveness | The Lumineers | 13 | ©
| 21        |     | 21    | Life In The City | Girl In Red | 14 | ©
| 22        |     | 22    | Unhappy Days | Local Natives | 20 | ©
| 23        |     | 23    | Blind Leading The Blind | Mumford & Sons | 12 | ©
| 24        |     | 24    | Fear Inoculum | Tool | 3 | ©
| 25        |     | 25    | I Really Wish I Hated You | Blink-182 | 12 | ©
| 26        |     | 26    | Requiem | Phosphorescent | 10 | ©
| 27        |     | 27    | Can I Call You Tonight? | Dayglow | 5 | ©
| 28        |     | 28    | The Jester | Badflower | 8 | ©
| 29        |     | 29    | Sal Come Around | Papa Roach | 9 | ©
| 30        |     | 30    | Legendary | Skillet | 18 | ©
| 31        |     | 31    | Hurricane | The Black Keys | 5 | ©
| 32        |     | 32    | Hyperspace | blink-182 | 5 | ©
| 33        |     | 33    | Might Be Time | The Lumineers | 6 | ©
| 34        |     | 34    | Novocain | Paul McCartney | 1 | ©
| 35        |     | 35    | The Best | The Undertones | 38 | ©
| 36        |     | 36    | Original Me | YUNGBLUD Featuring Dan Reynolds | 8 | ©
| 37        |     | 37    | Outlaws & Outsiders | Ozzy Osbourne | 14 | ©
| 38        |     | 38    | Back Foot | Dinosaur Pile-Up | 10 | ©
| 39        |     | 39    | NERF Forte | Feed The Snack | 11 | ©
| 40        |     | 40    | Dear Future Self (Hands Up) | Fall Out Boy Featuring Wyclef Jean | 13 | ©
| 41        |     | 41    | Louden | Bring Me The Horizon | 13 | ©
| 42        |     | 42    | California Halo Blues | AWOLNATION | 48 | ©
| 43        |     | 43    | Used To Like | Neon Trees | 24 | ©
| 44        |     | 44    | Straight To Hell | Pan At The Disco | 16 | ©
| 45        |     | 45    | Wars | Various Artists | 48 | ©
| 46        |     | 46    | Hold You Down | X Ambassadors | 24 | ©

### TOP ROCK ALBUMS™

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<td>Elton John</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Warner/Reprise</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Guns N' Roses</td>
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### MAINSTREAM ROCK™

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist(s)</th>
<th>Label(s)</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 1    | Under The Graveyard | Ozzy Osbourne | 5 |;
| 2    | Come Around | Papa Roach | 19 |;
| 3    | Killing Me Slowly | Bad Wolves | 15 |;
| 4    | The Jester | Badflower | 21 |;
| 5    | Attention Attention | Shinedown | 11 |;
| 6    | Legendary | Skillet | 30 |;
| 7    | The Hunted | Saint Asonia | 14 |;
| 8    | Death To Live | Volbeat | 5 |;
| 9    | Hurricane | Stone Temple Pilots | 5 |;
| 10   | Under The Graveyard | Ozzy Osbourne | 1 |;

---

### ‘Graveyard’ Smash

Ozzy Osbourne (above) closes out the decade where he began: atop the Mainstream Rock airplay chart, as "Under The Graveyard," from the legendary rocker’s forthcoming album, Ordinary Man, jumps 4-1. The song is his first leader on the list since "Let Me Hear You Scream," which reigned for four weeks in 2010.

On a chart long dominated by bands, Osbourne scores the first Mainstream Rock No. 1 by a single soloist and no accompanying acts since "Scream." He and Slash are the only two solo artists in lead roles to top the tally all decade. Slash led with two songs in that span, in 2012 and 2014 (both featuring Myles Kennedy & The Conspirators).

"...Osbourne is among the senior-most artists to rule Mainstream Rock. This year alone..." —KEVIN RUTHERFORD
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Keys Leads With ‘Love’

Alicia Keys (above) collects a record-extending 11th No. 1 on Adult R&B as “Show Me Love” featuring Miguel rises from No. 2. “Love” leads with a 3% boost in plays in the week ending Dec. 8, according to Nielsen Music.

Keys first topped the list with her smash “Fallin’” in 2001 and last reigned with the seven-week chart-topping “Fire We Make,” a duet with Maxwell. The singer-songwriter’s No. 1 hits are the most of any artist since the chart launched in 1993. Toni Braxton ranks second, with eight.

Miguel, meanwhile, nets a second No. 1, following “Adorn.” That single dominated for 17 weeks in 2012 and 2013, which is still among the five longest stays at the summit.

The song also moves 10-9 on R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay with a 4% audience gain to 161,000. It’s Keys’ 16th top 10 and Miguel’s ninth visit to the region.

—TREVOR ANDERSON
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| SONGS OF THE WEEK | ARTIST | LABEL | WEEKS AT #1 | VETO | TUSA | RITMO (BAD BOYS FOR LIFE) | LA CANCION | OTRO TRABAJO | CHINA | CALALAA | LOCO CONTIDO | NO ME CONOCE | QUE TIENE PA LANTE | SAL | BLANCO | ME LA AVENTE | GAN-GA | MI META CONTIGO | QUE PRETENDE | VICTOR MANUELLE | SONGS OF THE WEEK | ARTIST | LABEL | WEEKS AT #1 | VETO | TUSA | RITMO (BAD BOYS FOR LIFE) | LA CANCION | OTRO TRABAJO | CHINA | CALALAA | LOCO CONTIDO | NO ME CONOCE | QUE TIENE PA LANTE | SAL | BLANCO | ME LA AVENTE | GAN-GA | MI META CONTIGO | QUE PRETENDE | VICTOR MANUELLE | VICTOR MANUELLE |
|-------------------|--------|-------|--------------|------|------|--------------------------|------------|-------------|-------|----------|-------------|------------|----------------|-----|---------|-----------|-------|----------------|-----------|----------------|-------|----------|-------------|------------|----------------|-----|---------|-----------|-------|----------------|-----------|----------------|-------|----------|-------------|------------|----------------|-----|---------|-----------|-------|----------------|-----------|----------------|-------|----------|-------------|------------|----------------|-----|---------|-----------|
| Ozuna (above) scores his third straight No. 1 on Top Latin Albums, and third debut in a row atop the list, as Nuribú arrives with 17,000 equivalent album units earned in the week ending Dec. 5, according to Nielsen Music. The bulk of that sum, 15,000 units, consists of streaming equivalent album units. That total translates to 20.4 million on-demand audio streams for the set's tracks. Nuribú’s unit sum marks the fifth-largest debut for a Latin album released in 2019. Nuribú — which features such guests as Sech, Ddy, Dj Snake, Anuel AA and Snoopy Dogg — follows Ozuna’s last album, Auro, which opened at No. 1 with 49,000 units in 2018. Ozuna’s first leader was 2017’s Odisea, which started with 18,000 units. **— PAMELA BUSTOS**
When women speak... everyone listens.
‘Drummer’ Snares New Support

Sparked by its performance of “Little Drummer Boy” on ABC’s CM4 Country Christmas, which aired on Dec. 3, a 2017 live take of the holiday classic by King & Country (above) tops the Christian Digital Song Sales chart for the first time. “Little Drummer Boy (Live From Phoenix)” re-enters at No. 1 (up 130%), reaching 5,000 downloads sold in the week ending Dec. 5, according to Nielsen Music. The recording previously reached No. 3 in December 2017. The duet — brothers Joel and Luke Smallbone — earns its third No. 1 on the chart, following “God Only Knows,” which ruled for five weeks beginning in June (aired by a remix with Dolly Parton), and “Joy,” which led the list in its debut frame in June 2018. — JIM ASKER
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<td>Marshmello &amp; Bastille</td>
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<td>Air (Bad Boys For Life)</td>
<td>The Black Eyed Peas ft. J.Balvin</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Ride It</td>
<td>DJ Regard</td>
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<td>Higher Love</td>
<td>Kygo x Whitney Houston</td>
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<td>Good Things Fall Apart</td>
<td>Illenium &amp; J Balvin</td>
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<td>Que Calor</td>
<td>Major Lazer &amp; J Balvin</td>
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<td>Lose Control</td>
<td>Medusa x Becky Hill &amp; Goodboys</td>
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<td>Takeaway</td>
<td>The Chainsmokers ft. Illenium</td>
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<td>Post Malone</td>
<td>Sam Feldt ft. Rani</td>
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<td>GRIZTRONICS</td>
<td>GRIZ &amp; Subtronics</td>
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<td>I'm Not Alright</td>
<td>Loud Luxury &amp; Bryce Vine</td>
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<td>God Is A Dancer</td>
<td>Tiesta &amp; Mabel</td>
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<td>Feel Love</td>
<td>Sam Smith</td>
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<td>Galantis &amp; Daily Parton</td>
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<td>Turn Me On</td>
<td>Riton x Oliver Heldens</td>
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<td>Body Back</td>
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<td>Violence</td>
<td>Grimes &amp; o.</td>
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**‘Bad Boys’ Are Best**

The Black Eyed Peas and J Balvin bounce to their first No. 1 spot on Dance/Electronic Digital Song Sales with “ITIMO (Bad Boys For Life).” It pops 2-1 with 2,000 downloads sold in the week ending Dec. 5, according to Nielsen Music.

Previously, each act had reached No. 2 peaks: the Peas with “I Gotta Feeling” in 2010 and Balvin with “Que Calor” (with Major Lazer) featuring El Alfa on Sept. 28. “ITIMO,” which samples Corona’s mid-’90s smash “The Rhythm of the Night,” sends a third frame at its No. 2 high on the multimetric Hot Dance/Electronic Songs chart, also drawing 5.9 million U.S. streams.

On Dance Club Songs, Medusa and Goodboys each earn their second No. 1, and Becky Hill achieves her first, as “Loose Control” rises 2-1, even without the aid of official remixes.

—GORDON MURRAY
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*per recent research by USC Annenberg
Bad Bunny Returns

With reports for 14 shows from Nov. 22 to Dec. 1, Bad Bunny (above) returns to the Boxscore chart with two engagements in the top 10 of the Dec. 14-dated ranking. According to figures reported to Boxscore, the new receipts total $7.6 million and over $80,000 in tickets sold.

These figures lift the Puerto Rican superstar's fall tour to $19.3 million. And when combined with his spring trek earlier this year, his 2019 total rises to $42.8 million, up by over 100% from a reported $21.2 million in 2018.

His top-performing show from the most recent data is his Nov. 29 date at Allstate Arena in Rosemont, IL. (20 miles outside of Chicago), earning $1.7 million from 17,299 tickets sold.

—ERIC FRANKENBERG
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CAPACITY 30
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I grew up in Brooklyn and always just loved music. Every week as a teenager, I would run to grab Billboard magazine to check the chart positions and my favorite artists. It gave real access and insight into the industry. When I was 16, I was flipping through it and saw an ad for the minority jobs program YES, which stood for Youth Entertainment Summer. I got my first internship at WEA Distribution through the program (that summer), as well as my second internship at Atlantic Records the following summer. Shortly after, I started at New York University, where I became a college marketing rep for EMI Records.

As an Asian American, I wasn’t sure how I would even get into the music business, but finding the YES program in Billboard gave me my first real opportunity. It’s a big part of how I got here today. Not knowing if I had a place in the music business, I honed my abilities as a marketer, and as someone who would work well with artists. I focused on the fact that I could do this job. I could be placed in any situation and excel. I never let anyone make me feel that I didn’t belong.

Seeing myself in Billboard, a publication that I grew up with, was really special and humbling. If you had asked me when I was 16 if I would ever be in the publication that basically started my career in the music business, I would never have believed it.

— AS TOLD TO NICK WILLIAMS

Eric Wong
COO, ISLAND RECORDS

A nearly two-decade veteran of Island, Wong has led operations and marketing strategy for the label since he became COO in 2018. Billboard covered his promotion in these pages—a full-circle moment for Wong, who landed his first internship after seeing an ad in the magazine.

“Eric is energetic, passionate and always there to support and guide us. He’s such an amazing presence, and I can’t thank him enough for being there for me.”
—SHAWN MENDES

THE LEGACY

Shawn Mendes’ “Señorita” (with Camila Cabello) became his sixth No. 1 on Billboard’s Adult Top 40 chart, the most ever among solo male artists.

Demi Lovato scored her second No. 1 on the Mainstream Top 40 chart with “Sorry Not Sorry” in 2017.

Bon Jovi earned its sixth No. 1 album on the Billboard 200 with This House Is Not For Sale in 2016.
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