

# billboard

APRIL 23, 2022 • BILLBOARD.COM



## THE MANAGERS ISSUE

Meet the co-pilots propelling  
**BILLIE EILISH** and **FINNEAS**  
to the stratosphere

+

STEVEN VICTOR'S  
VISION PAYS OFF

—

INTERNATIONAL  
POWER PLAYERS 2022

From left: Danny Rukasin, Billie Eilish,  
FINNEAS and Brandon Goodman



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## THE MANAGERS ISSUE

How **STEVEN VICTOR's**  
vision pays off  
for stars like **PUSHA T**

+

THE CO-PILOTS  
PROPELLING  
BILLIE AND FINNEAS

INTERNATIONAL  
POWER PLAYERS 2022

ELTON JOHN

FAREWELL

YELLOW BRICK ROAD

THE FINAL TOUR

PRESENTED BY

Alliance for  
Lifetime  
Income



“AS A THANK YOU, HE’S GIVING THE FANS EXACTLY WHAT THEY COULD WANT IN A FINAL HURRAH: SOME OF HIS ALL-TIME BIGGEST HITS PLAYED WITH HIS CLASSIC GUSTO AND DRAPED IN GLITZ.”

– BILLBOARD

“LEAVE IT TO ELTON JOHN TO THROW THE MOST FABULOUS GOODBYE PARTY OF THEM ALL...”

– THE BOSTON GLOBE

“GOING OUT ON HIS OWN TERMS IS SO VERY ELTON AT HIS BEST.”

– TORONTO STAR

“...FANS OF THE MUSIC ICON WERE WITNESS TO A GREATEST HITS RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE, INDEED.”

– CHICAGO SUN TIMES

“IT’S REASSURING TO KNOW THAT AS SIR ELTON SAYS FAREWELL TO THE ROAD IN 2023, THAT HE STILL IS MAKING MUSIC, MEMORIES AND NEW FRIENDS.”

– MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE

“...A REMINDER THAT HIS SUCCESS HAS ALWAYS BEEN ROOTED IN ROCK-SOLID MUSICIANSHIP.”

– PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

## FAREWELL YELLOW BRICK ROAD FINAL STADIUM DATES

JULY 15  
CITIZENS BANK PARK  
PHILADELPHIA, PA

JULY 18  
COMERICA PARK  
DETROIT, MI

JULY 23  
METLIFE STADIUM  
EAST RUTHERFORD, NJ

**JUST  
ADDED** JULY 24  
METLIFE STADIUM  
EAST RUTHERFORD, NJ

**JUST  
ADDED** JULY 27  
GILLETTE STADIUM  
FOXBOROUGH, MA

JULY 28  
GILLETTE STADIUM  
FOXBOROUGH, MA

JULY 30  
PROGRESSIVE FIELD  
CLEVELAND, OH

AUG 5  
SOLDIER FIELD  
CHICAGO, IL

SEPT 7  
ROGERS CENTRE  
TORONTO, ON

**JUST  
ADDED** SEPT 8  
ROGERS CENTRE  
TORONTO, ON

SEPT 10  
CARRIER DOME  
SYRACUSE, NY

SEPT 16  
PNC PARK  
PITTSBURGH, PA

SEPT 18  
BANK OF AMERICA STADIUM  
CHARLOTTE, NC

SEPT 22  
MERCEDES-BENZ STADIUM  
ATLANTA, GA

SEPT 24  
NATIONALS PARK  
WASHINGTON, DC

SEPT 30  
GLOBE LIFE FIELD  
ARLINGTON, TX

OCT 2  
NISSAN STADIUM  
NASHVILLE, TN

**JUST  
ADDED** OCT 8  
LEVI’S® STADIUM  
SANTA CLARA, CA

**NEW SHOW  
ADDED** OCT 9  
LEVI’S® STADIUM  
SANTA CLARA, CA

**JUST  
ADDED** OCT 16 & 17  
TACOMA DOME  
TACOMA, WA

OCT 21  
BC PLACE  
VANCOUVER, BC

**JUST  
ADDED** OCT 22  
BC PLACE  
VANCOUVER, BC

OCT 29  
ALAMODOME  
SAN ANTONIO, TX

NOV 4  
MINUTE MAID PARK  
HOUSTON, TX

**JUST  
ADDED** NOV 9  
PETCO PARK  
SAN DIEGO, CA

**JUST  
ADDED** NOV 11  
CHASE FIELD  
PHOENIX, AZ

NOV 12  
CHASE FIELD  
PHOENIX, AZ

**JUST  
ADDED** NOV 17  
DODGER STADIUM  
LOS ANGELES, CA

NOV 19  
DODGER STADIUM  
LOS ANGELES, CA

NOV 20  
DODGER STADIUM  
LOS ANGELES, CA

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PRESENTS



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**27**  
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U.S. Bank Stadium, Minneapolis, MN



**CIRQUE DU SOLEIL**  
Brookshire Grocery Arena, Bossier City, LA



**HOUSTON RODEO**  
NRG Stadium, Houston, TX

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APRIL 23, 2022

VOLUME 134

NO. 5

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With global recorded-music revenue reaching \$25.9 billion, executives driving that growth share success stories from every continent — while joining in the calls for peace in Ukraine.

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Music Business Association president **Portia Sabin** discusses the return of the organization's flagship conference as an in-person event, along with the top issues facing her membership.

## ON THE COVERS

Pusha T (left) and Steven Victor photographed by Matt Salacuse on March 26 in New York.

Pusha T: Dries Van Noten top, JUUN.J jacket, Song for the Mute pants, Kiko Kostadinov shoes and Supreme gloves. Victor: Givenchy sweater and vest, Prada pants, Vans shoes.

From left: Danny Rukasin, Billie Eilish, FINNEAS and Brandon Goodman photographed by Matt Salacuse on April 4 at Gila River Arena in Glendale, Ariz.

## THIS PAGE

Pusha T (left) and Steven Victor

## TO OUR READERS

*Billboard* will publish its next issue on May 14. For 24/7 music coverage, go to [billboard.com](http://billboard.com).

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### VICTORIOUS

What do **Pusha T**, **Pharrell Williams** and **Nigo** have in common? They've all benefited from the no-quit hustle, prescient taste and connect-the-dots vision of manager-turned-CEO **Steven Victor**.

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### TO INFINITY AND BEYOND

Managers **Danny Rukasin** and **Brandon Goodman** have supported super siblings **Billie Eilish** and **FINNEAS** since their career blastoff — and they're in it for the long haul.

38

### THE GAME CHANGERS

The music business was built by musicians and labels, but also entrepreneurs who fought to give artists more leverage — and shaped the modern industry in the process.

## CORRECTIONS

Incorrect information was published in the March 26 issue. The names of Richard Baskind, John Seay and Uwonda Carter Scott were misspelled in the Top Music Lawyers list. Seay and Carter Scott are transactional attorneys. The rapper Blxst is represented by attorney Karl Fowlkes.



IN LOVING MEMORY

# Allison Canzanella

1989 – 2022



You belong among  
the wildflowers

You belong in a boat  
out at sea

Sail away, kill off  
the hours

You belong somewhere  
you feel free

*“Wildflowers”*  
Tom Petty

We are heartbroken by the loss of one of our own.

Large sunglasses on, coffee in hand, music blasting, Allison lived every day to the fullest.

She always had a smile and a kind word for everyone she came across.

Allison leaves behind a lasting legacy in the music industry. Starting as an usher at PNC Bank Arts Center at 17, she grew into a world-class marketer at Live Nation, AEG Presents and Madison House Presents.

Her crowning achievement was opening UBS Arena at Belmont Park, showcasing a deep devotion to the project and a desire to make a generational impact in New York. We will forever be inspired by her strength, dedication, compassion, and kindness. She will be greatly missed by her family, friends, colleagues, and her rescue puppy Stevie.





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**"Leave The Door Open"**

SONG OF THE YEAR

RECORD OF THE YEAR

BEST R&B SONG

BEST R&B PERFORMANCE

# charts

DATA FOR WEEK OF 04.23.2022



## Jack Harlow Flies 'First Class' To No. 1 On Hot 100

HOT 100

1

"First Class"  
Jack Harlow

LAST WEEK

—

PEAK POSITION

1

WEEKS ON CHART

1

**J**ACK HARLOW'S "First Class" takes off in style, debuting atop the Billboard Hot 100. The single arrives as his first solo leader on the chart — as well as his first to debut at No. 1 — and second overall after he reached the top with Lil Nas X for one week in October 2021 thanks to the success of "Industry Baby."

After first teasing the song on Instagram on March 31, Harlow released "First Class" on April 8. It subsequently launched with 54.6 million streams, 4.1 million radio airplay audience impressions and 10,600 sold in the week ending April 14, according to Luminate, formerly MRC Data. It scores the best streaming week for a song in 2022 and the top week since Drake's "Way 2 Sexy" (featuring Future and Young Thug) roared in with 67.3 million (Sept. 18, 2021).

Notably, "First Class" interpolates Fergie's "Glamorous" (featuring Ludacris), which held on to No. 1 for two weeks in March 2007 and became the second of three chart-toppers from her debut album, *The Dutchess*.

"First Class" previews the 24-year-old Louisville, Ky.-born rapper's second studio album, *Come Home the Kids Miss You*, due May 6. The set follows his debut, *Thats What They All Say*, which entered and peaked at No. 5 on the Billboard 200 in December 2020, as well as the seven-song EP *Sweet Action*, which reached No. 20 in July 2020.

Harlow is also set to star in a remake of the 1992 sports comedy *White Men Can't Jump*, in the role originally portrayed by Woody Harrelson. "We got a classic to do justice to," Harlow told *Billboard* of the film at the Grammy Awards on April 3.

—GARY TRUST

## HOT 100



NO. 2

### Styles, Latto, Lil Baby Land Honors

A week after "As It Was" debuted as his second Billboard Hot 100 No. 1, the latest single by Harry Styles (above) wins the chart's top Airplay Gainer award as it jumps 19-14 on Radio Songs (up 25% to 33.8 million in audience, according to Luminate, formerly MRC Data). Despite dropping a slot on the April 23-dated Hot 100, it enters the top 10 of two airplay charts: Mainstream Top 40 (14-9) and Adult Top 40 (17-10).

Latto earns her first Mainstream Top 40 No. 1 with "Big Energy," which concurrently sits at No. 4 on the Hot 100, just below its No. 3 high from one week earlier. The track topped Rhythmic Airplay for seven weeks beginning in January, and is the only song to rank in that chart's top 10 each week so far in 2022.

Just outside the Hot 100's top 10, Lil Baby debuts with "Right On" (No. 13) and "In a Minute" (No. 14) — upping his career total to 100 entries as he becomes the 12th artist to reach the milestone.

—GARY TRUST

## Hot 100

2 WKS. AGO	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	Title <small>PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)</small>	Artist <small>IMPRINT/PROMOTION LABEL</small>	PEAK POS.	WKS. ON CHART
		<b>#1 for 1 WEEK</b>	<b>First Class</b>	<b>Jack Harlow</b>	1	1
		<b>AIR</b>	<b>As It Was</b>	<b>Harry Styles</b>	1	2
1	2	3	<b>Heat Waves</b>	<b>Glass Animals</b>	1	65
3	3	4	<b>Big Energy</b>	<b>Latto</b>	3	25
5	5	5	<b>Enemy</b>	<b>Imagine Dragons X JID</b>	5	21
2	4	6	<b>Stay</b>	<b>The Kid LAROI &amp; Justin Bieber</b>	1	40
4	6	7	<b>Super Gremlin</b>	<b>Kodak Black</b>	3	23
10	8	8	<b>Woman</b>	<b>Doja Cat</b>	8	37
6	7	9	<b>Ghost</b>	<b>Justin Bieber</b>	5	29
9	10	10	<b>Thats What I Want</b>	<b>Lil Nas X</b>	8	30

## BILLBOARD 200



NO. 4

### 'Dawn' Debuts

*Fear of the Dawn* by Jack White (above) is the top debut on the latest Billboard 200, entering the chart at No. 4 with 42,000 equivalent album units earned in the United States in the week ending April 14, according to Luminate, formerly MRC Data. It is White's fifth solo top 10. He has also collected nine additional top 10s as a member of The White Stripes, The Raconteurs and The Dead Weather.

Of *Fear's* starting-unit total, 58% was driven by vinyl album sales (24,500), easily placing the title atop the Vinyl Albums chart. *Fear* also flies in at No. 1 on Top Album Sales, Top Rock Albums, Top Alternative Albums and Tastemaker Albums.

Hot vinyl sales are also set to send Tyler, The Creator's former No. 1 *Call Me If You Get Lost* surging back up the April 30-dated chart. The June 2021 album debuted April 12 on wax on the artist's webstore — nearly 10 months after its original release.

—KEITH CAULFIELD

## Billboard 200

2 WKS. AGO	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	Artist <small>IMPRINT/DISTRIBUTING LABEL</small>	Title	PEAK POS.	WKS. ON CHART
2	2	1	<b>Lil Durk</b>	<b>7220</b>	1	5
4	4	2	<b>Morgan Wallen</b>	<b>Dangerous: The Double Album</b>	1	66
3	3	3	<b>Soundtrack</b>	<b>Encanto</b>	1	20
HOT SHOT DEBUT		4	<b>Jack White</b>	<b>Fear Of The Dawn</b>	4	1
5	5	5	<b>Olivia Rodrigo</b>	<b>Sour</b>	1	47
7	8	6	<b>Drake</b>	<b>Certified Lover Boy</b>	1	32
NEW		7	<b>42 Dugg &amp; EST Gee</b>	<b>Last Ones Left</b>	7	1
9	10	8	<b>Doja Cat</b>	<b>Planet Her</b>	2	42
NEW		9	<b>Fivio Foreign</b>	<b>B.I.B.L.E.</b>	9	1
NEW		10	<b>Camila Cabello</b>	<b>Familia</b>	10	1

**CORRECTION** On the March 26 Billboard 200, the labels for Nos. 7 and 8 (for KING & COUNTRY's *What Are We Waiting For?* and Gunna's *DS4Ever*) were listed incorrectly. They should have been credited to Curb-Word/Curb and Gunna/Young Stoner Life/300/AG, respectively.

STYLES: HANNA MOON; WHITE: DAVID JAMES SWANSON. THE HOT 100 RANKS THE WEEK'S MOST POPULAR CURRENT SONGS ACROSS ALL GENRES, RANKED BY RADIO AIRPLAY AUDIENCE IMPRESSIONS AS MEASURED BY LUMINATE, SALES DATA AS COMPILED BY LUMINATE AND STREAMING ACTIVITY DATA BY ONLINE MUSIC SOURCES TRACKED BY LUMINATE. THE BILLBOARD 200 RANKS THE WEEK'S MOST POPULAR ALBUMS, TRACKED BY LUMINATE. TRACK EQUIVALENT ALBUM UNITS (TEA) INCLUDES SALES OF ALBUMS, SINGLES, AND STREAMING EQUIVALENT ALBUMS. © 2022 BILLBOARD MEDIA LLC AND LUMINATE. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

## Top Album Sales

LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	Artist	Title	WKS. ON CHART
		IMPRINT/DISTRIBUTING LABEL		
NEW	2	for KING & COUNTRY CURB-WORD/CURB	What Are We Waiting For?	1

## Billboard 200

2 WKS. AGO	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	Artist	Title	PEAK POS.	WKS. ON CHART
			IMPRINT/DISTRIBUTING LABEL			
	NEW	7	for KING & COUNTRY CURB-WORD/CURB	What Are We Waiting For?	7	1

C O N G R A T U L A T I O N S

# FOR KING + COUNTRY

O N A N I N C R E D I B L E C H A R T D E B U T

W H A T A R E W E W A I T I N G F O R ?

## Independent Albums

LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	Artist	Title	WKS. ON CHART
		IMPRINT/DISTRIBUTING LABEL		
	3	for KING & COUNTRY CURB-WORD/CURB	What Are We Waiting For?	1

## Top Christian Albums

LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	Artist	Title	WKS. ON CHART
		IMPRINT/DISTRIBUTING LABEL		
HOT SHOT DEBUT	1	#1 for 1 WEEK for KING & COUNTRY CURB-WORD	What Are We Waiting For?	1

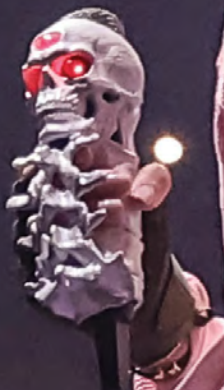
## Hot Christian Songs

LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	Title	Artist	WKS. ON CHART
		IMPRINT/PROMOTION LABEL		
1	1	#1 for 3 WEEKS Relate CURB-WORD	for KING & COUNTRY	28

Bad Bunny onstage at FTX Arena in Miami.

# HOPPING TO NEW HEIGHTS

BAD BUNNY SCORES THE TOP TOUR AGAIN, SHATTERING BILLBOARD BOXSCORE RECORDS ALONG THE WAY



**B**AD BUNNY LEADS THE WAY AGAIN on the Top Tours chart in March, with a \$64.5 million take across 20 shows during the month in support of his November 2020 album, *El Último Tour del Mundo*. With the repeat accomplishment, he becomes the first artist to top consecutive monthly rankings.

The Latin star's take is up 62% month over month from his \$39.8 million gross that *Billboard* reported from February, which at the time was the second-highest monthly total for an arena tour since the monthly charts launched in 2019. His March revenue sets a new record, surging past Trans-Siberian Orchestra's \$47 million finish from December 2019.

With \$116.8 million all told, Bad Bunny's trek wraps as the highest-grossing tour by a Latin artist in *Billboard* Boxscore history and sets earning records in 13 markets.

Overall, *El Último Tour del Mundo* is one of nine tours to gross over \$20 million in March. The only other time nine tours hit that mark was in June 2019, led by the Spice Girls' U.K. stadium tour.

—ERIC FRANKENBERG

Top Tours			
Artist	Gross	Total Attendees	No. Of Shows
1 <b>Bad Bunny</b>	\$64,534,537	336,989	20
2 <b>Elton John</b>	\$30,113,961	173,925	12
3 <b>Genesis</b>	\$30,089,105	197,660	14
4 <b>Justin Bieber</b>	\$25,457,124	163,763	12
5 <b>Coldplay</b>	\$25,446,113	319,138	7
6 <b>Billie Eilish</b>	\$25,227,283	191,173	14
7 <b>Dua Lipa</b>	\$25,027,606	239,855	17
8 <b>Eagles</b>	\$22,343,086	102,188	9
9 <b>New Edition</b>	\$20,188,302	176,691	15
10 <b>Tyler, The Creator</b>	\$17,538,780	193,209	16

Top Boxscores				
	Artist(s) VENUE DATE	Gross TICKET PRICES	Total Attendees NO. OF SHOWS	Promoter(s)
1	<b>Lollapalooza Brasil</b> AUTÓDROMO DE INTERLAGOS, SÃO PAULO MARCH 25-27	\$23,225,344 \$414.37/\$44.13	267,446 3	T4F-Time for Fun
2	<b>Bad Bunny</b> ALLSTATE ARENA, ROSEMONT, ILL. MARCH 10-12	\$11,245,170 \$500/\$59	51,430 3	Cárdenas Marketing Network
3	<b>Coldplay</b> ESTADIO BBVA BANCOMER, GUADALUPE, MEXICO MARCH 25-26	\$8,996,432 \$152.67/\$28.75	112,262 2	Live Nation, OCESA
4	<b>Grupo Firme</b> FORO SOL, MEXICO CITY MARCH 24-26	\$8,922,124 \$46.96	190,004 3	OCESA
5	<b>Coldplay</b> ESTADIO AKRON, GUADALAJARA, MEXICO MARCH 29-30	\$8,190,681 \$173.18/\$23.89	90,153 2	Live Nation, OCESA
6	<b>Morgan Wallen</b> BRIDGESTONE ARENA, NASHVILLE MARCH 16-18	\$8,172,568 \$366.50/\$72.75	44,095 3	Live Nation
7	<b>Vive Latino Festival</b> FORO SOL, MEXICO CITY MARCH 19-20	\$8,001,836 \$53.61	149,274 2	OCESA
8	<b>Bad Bunny</b> SAP CENTER, SAN JOSE, CALIF. MARCH 3-4	\$7,919,315 \$502/\$51	35,305 2	Cárdenas Marketing Network
9	<b>Genesis</b> O2 ARENA, LONDON MARCH 24-26	\$7,794,137 \$218.31/\$79.38	43,648 3	Live Nation
10	<b>Bad Bunny</b> BARCLAYS CENTER, BROOKLYN MARCH 19-20	\$7,217,349 \$500/\$61	32,999 2	Cárdenas Marketing Network

JOHN PARAVIEW/PAGE

UJA ENTERTAINMENT, TECH & LIFESTYLE

# 2022 MUSIC VISIONARY OF THE YEAR

## SCOTT GREENSTEIN

President & Chief Content Officer, SiriusXM

WEDNESDAY, MAY 18 | 11:30 AM  
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Mezzo Agency  
Sony/ATV Ballad

### GOD WANTS TO HEAL YOU

Kevin Davidson  
Robert Lance Lucas  
Map Catalogs  
Slickey Music

### HIS LOVE

Calvin "Snoop Dogg" Broadus  
Twinkie Clark  
Dorinda Clark-Cole  
Faith Evans  
Kierra Sheard  
J Drew Sheard II  
Drew's Girl Publishing  
EMI-Blackwood Music, Inc.  
Faith Evans Publishing  
Forever Grace Publishing  
J Drew Sheard Music  
My Own Chit Publishing  
Songs by Twinkie Music Publishing  
Songs of Kobalt Music Publishing

### HOLD ME CLOSE

Jeshua "TedyP" Williams  
Eyeam Family Publishing

### I CAN'T GIVE UP

Byron Cage  
Malaco World Music  
NoryB Publishing

### I GOT IT

Amanda Monique Gentry  
Curtiss Glenn  
Michael DeWayne McClure Jr.  
CGlenn Publishing  
Gentryfied Music  
Kerry Douglas Publishing  
Rock City Media Group Publishing  
The Ham 205 Music Publishing

### IN SPITE OF ME

Joe L Elisha Barnes  
Dante Bowe  
Aaron Moses  
Aaron Moses Chiriboga Music  
Be Essential Songs  
Bethel Worship Publishing  
Capitol CMG Publishing  
ForTheDreamers Publishing  
Heritage Worship Music Publishing  
Maverick City Publishing

### IT BELONGS TO ME

Aaron Lindsey  
Juan Winans  
Five Lions Publishing  
My Block Blue Songs  
Parkside and Curtis Music Publishing

### IT KEEPS HAPPENING

Kierra Sheard  
J Drew Sheard II  
Drew's Girl Publishing  
J Drew Sheard Music

## SONG OF THE YEAR

### SPEAK TO ME

Donnie McClurkin  
Troy Taylor

Don Mac Music / No Quincidence Music Publishing  
peermusic III, Ltd. / Savgos Music, Inc.

## SONGWRITERS OF THE YEAR

### AARON LINDSEY

It Belongs To Me  
Thank You For It All

### J DREW SHEARD II

His Love  
It Keeps Happening

### KIERRA SHEARD

His Love  
It Keeps Happening

### JESHUA "TEDYP" WILLIAMS

Hold Me Close  
Trouble Won't Last

## PUBLISHER OF THE YEAR

### BE ESSENTIAL SONGS

In Spite Of Me  
Movin' On  
Never Lost

## CELEBRATE WITH US

[bmi.com/trailblazers2022](http://bmi.com/trailblazers2022)

### MOVIN' ON

Jonathan McReynolds  
Terrell Demetrius Wilson  
Be Essential Songs  
Fair Trade Global Songs  
Life Room Songs  
The Wilson Songbook Publishing

### NEVER LOST

Chris Brown  
Steven Furtick  
Tiffany Hudson  
Be Essential Songs  
Music By Elevation Worship Publishing

### NOBODY LIKE JESUS

Ay Ron Ronell Lewis  
Copyright Solutions Music  
Straightchurch Publishing

### PATIENTLY PRAISING

Fred Jerkins  
Fred Jerkins Publishing  
Songs of Kobalt Music Publishing

### PSALMS 18 (I WILL CALL ON THE NAME)

Todd Dulaney  
Entertainment One Music  
U Know It 2

### SO GOOD

Sean Keys  
Alayna Maberry  
Adolphus "Scottie" Scott III  
Smooth Tunes Publishing

### SPEAK TO ME

Donnie McClurkin  
Troy Taylor  
Don Mac Music  
No Quincidence Music Publishing  
peermusic III, Ltd.  
Savgos Music, Inc.

### STRONG GOD

Kirk Franklin  
Aunt Gertrude Music Publishing  
Capitol CMG Publishing

### THANK YOU FOR IT ALL

Jarmone E. Davis  
Aaron Lindsey  
Marvin Sapp  
Capitol CMG Publishing  
Five Lions Publishing  
Jarmone Hoox Davis Publishing  
Marvin L. Sapp Music  
Universal Music-Brentwood Benson Songs

### TOUCH FROM YOU

Emerald Campbell  
Andrew "Drew" Collins II  
Quannel Gaskin  
Tamela Mann  
Rickey "Slikk Muzik" Offord  
DrewMusic4U  
Eppiefly Music  
Music From Slikkmuzik Productions  
Quannel Gaskin Productions  
Songs of Reach Music

### TROUBLE WON'T LAST

Keyondra Lockett  
Jeshua "TedyP" Williams  
Eyeam Family Publishing  
Ruthies Babes Music

MUSIC MOVES OUR WORLD



## MUSIC AND MONEY



## Managing Gets Unmanageable

Guiding the career of an act now involves so many facets of the music business that some managers say it's time their relationships with artists reflect those additional responsibilities

BY ELIAS LEIGHT // ILLUSTRATION BY KYLE ELLINGSON

**R**YAN CHISHOLM grew up watching his father, Kevin, manage Carlos Santana, who consistently toured six months out of the year. “My dad was constantly on the phone with their agent routing things and dealing with promoters,” Chisholm recalls. “His job was less about dealing with record labels, marketing and music videos.”

Chisholm followed in his father's footsteps, entering the music industry as a manager in 2006. He currently works with Mike Posner,

known for the club hit “I Took a Pill in Ibiza,” as well as Tai Verdes and Claire Rosinkranz, rising pop acts who leveraged success on TikTok into major-label deals. The difference between his father's job responsibilities and his own is stark. “Today, we're asking artists to do all this stuff outside of creating music — we're asking them to be influencers, content creators, models,” says Chisholm. “Never have we had to ask artists to do so much and be so engaged on a daily basis.” To help clients meet the demands of today's fast-paced, social

media-dominated landscape, where most artists are never off-cycle and there is constant pressure to generate growth on streaming services, “managers are basically being pushed to become content companies,” Chisholm says.

His experience is hardly unique. Over a dozen of his peers echoed the sentiment that managers are doing more than ever to support their acts. Even as the management role has expanded into new areas like TikTok marketing and the metaverse, however, most managers are still paid according to the traditional commission-based compensation model, which typically grants them a 15% or 20% cut of their artists' earnings but leaves them with little long-term security. Managers who spoke to *Billboard* said there is a pressing need to reevaluate this approach. “It's not sustainable,” says one manager who requested anonymity to avoid upsetting his clients. “We're at a real turning point with how present that is.”

Management has always involved a degree of professional peril. “They are the ones that take the most risk in the beginning; they're often the first team member,” says Elena Awbrey (Kilo Kish, Empress Of). But at the same time, since the profession is “so high touch,” she says

### The Copyright Royalty Board

agreed to reconsider the long-standing 9.1 cent mechanical royalty rate settlement among music publishers, record labels and digital services for song sales for 2023-2027.

### Spotify's

live audio app formerly known as Locker Room was relaunched in the main app as Spotify Live.

the ability of managers to expand their businesses is limited, often requiring them to put all their eggs in a few baskets.

This situation is made more precarious because managers are “the easiest person to fire,” according to Monee Perry, a veteran of Roc Nation and RCA who is hoping to rethink traditional management models with her company 4th Ave Collective. “Management contracts are notoriously easy to get out of,” another manager adds. Typically, managers are entitled to some type of payout if they part ways with their artists, but it takes place over a limited time period, and “even if you have the most aggressive sunset clause on the planet, collecting is not easy,” a second manager says. “We can be building houses with the artist and [they] can say, ‘Get the fuck out of my house.’”

Labels used to play more of a role in constructing that house, but now, “they’re not looking to do anything from the ground up,” says Kirk Harding, who left a major-label career to found Bad Habit, which manages Burna Boy and Dora Jar, among others. As a result, “you’re doing the bulk of artist development, something labels used to do but no longer do because they don’t have the stomach or the patience,” says Chris Anokute, who helps guide the career of singer-songwriter Muni Long.

Those interviewed agreed that these additional responsibilities warrant a reevaluation of the artist-manager relationship. They envision an alliance similar to a business partnership. “Management should get a piece of the pie,” says Ty Baisden (Brent Faiyaz).

“Everyone knows the manager is so disposable,” adds Brandon Farmer (Latto). Forming some sort of partnership “gives the manager some security, a steadier place in the business overall.” In an ideal situation, several managers envision having some sort of equity in projects they work on with their artists. “Commission is temporary,” says lawyer Karl Fowlkes, who is partners with rising rapper Blxst and manager Vic Burnett in the company EVGLE. “Equity is forever.”

That said, managers are often wary of voicing this sentiment to their acts and challenging an industry standard. “Everyone is so scared of getting canned that they won’t speak up,” says another manager who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Nonmusic ventures can offer opportunities to break out of the commission-based model. Chisholm, for example, is partnering with Posner to develop a TV pilot. “Some of the more progressive artists, if they really want to grow their business, they’re furthering their relationship beyond the traditional commission,” says Max Gousse (Saweetie). “Some artists have partnered with managers on certain revenue streams, investing in clothing lines and liquor companies.” There’s no sunset clause on this type of collaboration.

In addition, “you’re starting to see a lot of businesses on the management side become more vertically integrated” by also offering label and publishing services, adds Baisden, whose company Colture is set up in this way. Similarly, EVGLE spans management, publishing, label services and venture capital investment and owns Blxst’s recording and publishing rights. Even if Burnett’s management arrangement were to end, he would still maintain ownership in the company.

Some managers remain reluctant to scrap the traditional representation model, however. “What I can’t get past is that if we decide to become the label and the management company, you’re robbing the artist of another team,” Harding adds. “Not only can you be accused of making a label decision with your management hat on or vice versa, there is also a bank of ideas from [the label] team that you’re taking away [from an artist].”

But it’s likely that more nontraditional models will emerge. “The commission system is a good basis for a relationship, but with some artists, it’s interesting to try to build a new kind of business together,” says Jorge Ferradas (Camilo, Evaluna). “Just respect that, without the artist, this [effort] is impossible. We are like a train, and the first car in the train is always the artist.”

## MARKET WATCH

### 24.63B

↑0.8%

**TOTAL ON-DEMAND STREAMS WEEK OVER WEEK**

Number of audio and video on-demand streams for the week ending April 14.

### 17.95M

↑0.7%

**ALBUM CONSUMPTION UNITS WEEK OVER WEEK**

Album sales plus track-equivalent albums plus streaming-equivalent albums for the week ending April 14.

### 351.4B

↑11.7%

**TOTAL ON-DEMAND STREAMS YEAR OVER YEAR TO DATE**

Number of audio and video streams for 2022 so far over the same period in 2021.

**Deezer** is planning to go public with a European special purpose acquisition corporation, I2PO, backed by holding company Groupe Artémis and French investment banker Matthieu Pigasse.

**Sonos** acquired Dutch small-speaker startup Mayht for \$100 million.

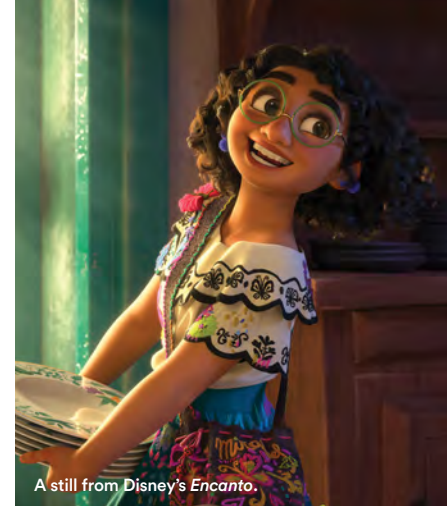
## The Mouse Takes More Cheese

Disney is the big gainer in Q1 market share

**WE DON’T TALK** about Bruno, but Disney is giving the music business something to talk about: its impressive gains in market share. As 2022 got underway, the soundtrack to the Disney film *Encanto* was the biggest album of the first quarter. The Lin-Manuel Miranda-penned collection of songs is the first album to pass 1 million equivalent album units year to date in 2022, according to Luminate, formerly MRC Data, and its success has boosted Disney Music Group into the top 10 of overall U.S. market share rankings for the first quarter, the most significant of several moves atop the rankings, year over year.

Interscope Geffen A&M maintained its spot atop the rankings for the first quarter, coming in at 9.76% and fending off a charge from No. 2 Atlantic, which closed the gap with a 9.49% share, up from 9.22% in the same period last year. They are the clear front-runners of 2022 to date, as 11 of the top 12 labels ceded some measure of overall market share points over the same period in 2021, while several other companies — most notably 300 Entertainment, Alamo Records and Disney — surged to big starts in 2022.

Those boosts weren’t enough to upend the established order, though. The same labels that ranked in the top nine in first-quarter 2021 remain, albeit in a slightly different



A still from Disney's Encanto.

order. Republic Records held on to its third-place position at 7.91%, down from the 8.51% it held in first-quarter 2021, when Morgan Wallen’s *Big Loud/ Republic album Dangerous: The Double Album* dominated. (*Dangerous* has staying power: It is the third-biggest album of 2022 so far, at slightly more than one-third of the 1.4 million equivalent album units in the same period last year; Republic has five of the top 10 albums this year to date.) Columbia Records (which includes indie distributor RED) and Warner Records (which includes catalog label Rhino, Warner Music Latina and the bulk of Warner Nashville) climbed to fourth and fifth, respectively, with market shares of 6.69% (from 6.79%) and 6.06% (from 6.32%). Meanwhile, Capitol Music Group slipped to sixth with 5.91%, down from the 6.98% that put it in the No. 4 spot in the first quarter of 2021.

RCA (4.92%), Epic (2.44%) and Def Jam Recordings (2.22%) retained their spots from last year (in seventh, eighth and ninth, respectively), each down very slightly percentage-wise. The success of the *Encanto* soundtrack, which ruled the Billboard 200 for eight weeks, boosted Disney Music Group’s market share from 0.49% in first-quarter 2021 to 1.96% this year, to round out the top 10.

—DAN RYS

Rank	Label	Percentage
1	Interscope Geffen A&M	9.76%
2	Atlantic Records	9.49%
3	Republic Records	7.91%
4	Columbia Records	6.69%
5	Warner Records	6.06%
6	Capitol Music Group	5.91%
7	RCA Records	4.92%
8	Epic Records	2.44%
9	Def Jam Recordings	2.22%
10	Disney Music Group	1.96%

Source Data from Dec. 31, 2021, through March 31, 2022, as calculated by Luminate, formerly MRC Data

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Republic Records relaunched the **Mercury Records** imprint, led by Tyler Arnold as president and Ben Adelson as GM.

**Bob Dylan** won a ruling against songwriter Jacques Levy's widow claiming a cut of his catalog sale to Universal Music Publishing Group.

# Grammys Go To Washington

Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis lead the honorees at the 20th annual Grammys on the Hill event, where priorities include raising streaming royalties

BY ROBERT LEVINE

**I**'VE HEARD IT described as the most interesting mix of music and politics," says Todd Dupler — the Recording Academy's acting chief of advocacy and public policy officer — of the academy's annual Grammys on the Hill event, which brings musicians together with legislators at a Washington, D.C., dinner, followed by a day of meetings on Capitol Hill. This year, on April 27, the dinner will honor Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis, along with Reps. Ted

Deutch, D-Fla., and Michael McCaul, R-Texas.

"We can connect artists with lawmakers who make decisions that affect their livelihood," Dupler says. The night includes performances — usually by the creators being honored and others — plus members of Congress getting onstage to join the musical guests. "The members feel relaxed," Dupler says, "and a lot of the walls come down." Where else can former Utah senator Orrin Hatch talk with Missy Elliott (as they did at the



Dupler



From left: U.S. Rep. Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., with Little Big Town at Grammys on the Hill in 2018.

first event, in 2001)?

This will be the 20th Grammys on the Hill — as well as the third attempt at doing one — after the 2020 and 2021 events were canceled due to the pandemic. And although the traditional 20th-anniversary gift is china, "I don't know if I need a set of dishes," Dupler says. Instead, the academy plans to focus on four policy priorities.

## RADIO ROYALTIES FOR RECORDED MUSIC

The American Music Fairness Act (H.R. 4130), introduced in June by Reps. Deutch and Darrell Issa, R-Calif., would require terrestrial radio stations to pay royalties to labels and performers for their use of recordings — as they do in almost every other country in the world. "Radio is still the only industry in America that can use

someone else's intellectual property without permission or compensation," Dupler says. Changing this has been a goal of labels and performers for decades — Frank Sinatra and Elvis Presley favored it — but broadcasters have always blocked the move. (The Local Radio Freedom Act, introduced last year, would stop this with legislation.) "I think in this Congress we have a great opportunity to

## JIMMY JAM AND TERRY LEWIS

**THE FIRST TIME** Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis discussed the songwriting business, they were in middle school 40 years ago, a decade or so away from producing a string of hits for Janet Jackson, Boyz II Men, Mariah Carey and many others, as well as winning five Grammy Awards. "The only business that Terry and I talked about back in that day was we were going to split everything 50-50," Jam recalls. "We shook hands, and our handshake was our agreement, and that's still in place."

As the duo's career progressed, the discussions of copyrights, royalties

and publishing became more complex, and Jam and Lewis evolved into songwriter advocates. Jam was the first Black person to chair the Recording Academy's board of trustees in the early 2000s, and he and Lewis attended numerous Grammys on the Hill gatherings before being named artist honorees this year. "I've always schmoozed at that event," Jam says on a Zoom call (which Lewis couldn't join due to his daughter's dance recital at Princeton University). "I love it."

Jam and Lewis aren't especially public about their politics, preferring to support specific issues on a personal

level. In August 2018, Jam requested a phone call with Tina Smith, the U.S. senator from his home state of Minnesota; he wanted her to support the Music Modernization Act. "I said, 'Listen, Prince would have loved this. You can't be from Minnesota and not be on board with this,'" he recalls telling Smith during their call. She threw her support behind the legislation the next day, and Congress passed the MMA two months later.

"When you meet people and have conversations, it goes a long way," Jam says, then cites a friend and

music-business mentor, Clarence Avant, known as "The Black Godfather." When Avant ran Tabu Records, Jam and Lewis were helping define the sound of 1980s R&B with productions for Tabu acts like The S.O.S. Band and Alexander O'Neal. "I always wanted to know what was going on behind

the scenes," says Jam. "Clarence always [said], 'Make sure you get in those rooms where those decisions are being made because those rooms are very much important to be in.'" Now they are being honored in one of those rooms.

—STEVE KNOPPER



Jam (left) and Lewis



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**“We can connect artists with lawmakers who make decisions that affect their livelihood. The members feel relaxed, and a lot of the walls come down.”**

—**TODD DUPLER**, The Recording Academy

advance the bill,” Dupler says. The House Judiciary Committee, chaired by Rep. Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., who is interested in music industry issues, held a hearing on the legislation in February, and Dupler says “we’ve seen more artists get engaged and more traction on the Hill than in previous years.” Importantly, the act would allow American companies and performers to collect foreign radio royalties that aren’t currently remitted to the United States because of its policy.

### A STUDIO TAX DEDUCTION

The Helping Independent Tracks Succeed (HITS) Act (H.R. 1945/S. 752), which would change a tax deduction for artists, “basically came out of COVID-19 recovery,” Dupler says. It would allow artists to deduct recording costs during the year they’re incurred, up to \$150,000, as opposed to amortizing them over time. “The aim is simple: We want to get independent artists back in the studio,” Dupler says. Although the bill would apply more broadly, it’s aimed at indie artists who finance their own recordings. It was included in the House and some Senate versions of the Build Back Better Act, which isn’t currently moving, “but we’re looking to move it,” Dupler says. “We view it as part of pandemic recovery.”

### CULTURAL EXCHANGE TO INCREASE THE PEACE

The Promoting Peace, Education and Cultural Exchange (PEACE) Through Music Diplomacy Act (H.R. 6498) “was recently introduced by Congressman McCaul and Congressman Deutch, who happen to be

our honorees, to make music a more important part of diplomatic efforts,” Dupler says. (“We’re a creative industry, so we try to come up with creative names,” he says about the name of the legislation. “It makes these bills memorable.”) It directs the U.S. Department of State to work with stakeholders to create the international music exchange programs run by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. It should be much easier to get through Congress than the kind of copyright policy legislation that often faces opposition from radio or technology companies.

### HIGHER ON-DEMAND STREAMING ROYALTY RATES

The Recording Academy also wants to make its songwriter members’ feelings known about the upcoming Copyright Royalty Board proceedings to determine mechanical royalty rates for on-demand streaming services. Unlike the other issues, this doesn’t involve legislation — at least for now — since the CRB is a three-judge panel. (The upcoming proceeding will set the National Music Publishers’ Association on one side against Spotify, Amazon, Apple, Pandora and Google on the other.) “I think members of Congress are more interested in this following the passage of the Music Modernization Act, which changed how these royalties get paid but not how they’re set,” Dupler says. “And songwriters feel a lot of frustration about what they’re getting paid.”

## FLORIDA REP. TED DEUTCH

**U.S. REP. TED DEUTCH** has played piano most of his life, and a Bruce Springsteen song, “Land of Hope and Dreams,” helped inspire his first run for office — a Florida state senate race in 2006. But as much as he loved music, he didn’t understand how complicated music-business legislation could be until he learned the laws were inspired by the advent of player pianos over 100 years ago — the term “mechanical royalties” comes from the mechanics of the instrument.

“That’s when I knew that there was a lot of work to be done. And I’ve spent a lot of time learning about copyright and boning up on the really challenging aspects of it,” says Deutch, a

Florida Democrat and one of this year’s Grammys on the Hill honorees.

But despite the details, Deutch says the many music-related bills he sponsors in Congress are fundamentally simple and easy to explain to his colleagues, and the public, on a visceral level.

Save Our Stages, which Deutch co-sponsored, helped concert venues with funding to survive the pandemic after



it passed in late 2020; the Protect Working Musicians Act, which Deutch introduced last October, would let musicians unite to negotiate better rates on streaming platforms such as Spotify and Apple Music. And the American Music Fairness Act, which Deutch co-introduced in the House last June, would require terrestrial radio stations to pay performers whenever they air songs, despite fierce opposition from the National Association of Broadcasters and other radio groups. They all have one thing in common.

“It’s really not that complicated,” Deutch says. “We ought to be asking the fundamental question, ‘At a time of radically changing technology, do we have a system that fairly compensates creators?’ That’s what we really need to focus on.” —S. K.

## TEXAS REP. MICHAEL MCCAUL

**MANY IN THE MUSIC BUSINESS** lean liberal, but when it comes to congressional music legislation, much of the progress comes from bipartisanship, with Republicans from former Sen. Orrin Hatch to Rep. Michael McCaul sponsoring crucial creators’ rights bills. “A lot of our strongest advocates are on the Republican side,” says Jimmy Jam. “It’s the one place we agree upon things.”

McCaul — a guitarist who plays every day, attends Austin City Limits in his hometown and saw U2 on its first U.S. tour in 1981 — tops this Republican list, and will join Jam, Terry Lewis and U.S. Rep. Ted Deutch, a Florida Democrat, as Grammys on the Hill honorees this year. McCaul co-sponsored 2018’s Music Modernization Act and the Save Our Stages bill, which brought \$15 billion in funding to pandemic-challenged concert venues, and he’s working with Democratic House colleagues to pass the HITS Act, which would allow musicians and producers to deduct recording expenses on their taxes. (“It’s a matter of gathering focus in the midst of many competing

priorities,” he says of the pending bill from July 2020.)

McCaul regularly attends Grammys on the Hill, which he calls “an opportunity to reconnect with old friends and highlight my music-related legislation.” Working with Deutch, McCaul in January introduced the PEACE Through Music Diplomacy Act to boost music-related exchange programs in an attempt to “advance peace abroad.” The bill, he says, “takes my belief in the power of music and appreciation for its creators to a global scale.”

Will music bills repair the ugly partisan wounds of the past decade by uniting Democrats and Republicans? Not a chance. But, as McCaul says by email: “I’ve always believed that music is a vital part of American society and a powerful tool to promote peace worldwide. And I think many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle recognize this as well.” His favorite Austin artists are singer-songwriters Kacey Musgraves and Patty Griffin, the former a staunch liberal, the latter an outspoken voting-rights advocate, so maybe there’s hope. —S. K.





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## GENERAL FIELD

*RECORD OF THE YEAR*

Leave The Door Open

**SILK SONIC**

*ALBUM OF THE YEAR*

We Are

**TROMBONE SHORTY**

(featured artist)

**HOT 8 BRASS BAND**

(featured artist)

*SONG OF THE YEAR*

Leave The Door Open

**ANDERSON .PAAK,  
BRUNO MARS (SILK SONIC)**

*BEST NEW ARTIST*

**OLIVIA RODRIGO**

## POP

*BEST POP SOLO PERFORMANCE*

drivers license

**OLIVIA RODRIGO**

*BEST POP VOCAL ALBUM*

Sour

**OLIVIA RODRIGO**

## DANCE/ELECTRONIC MUSIC

*BEST DANCE/ELECTRONIC  
MUSIC ALBUM*

**BLACK COFFEE**

## ROCK

*BEST ROCK PERFORMANCE*

Making A Fire

**FOO FIGHTERS**

*BEST ROCK SONG*

Waiting On A War

**DAVE GROHL, TAYLOR**

**HAWKINS, Songwriters**

**(FOO FIGHTERS)**

*BEST ROCK ALBUM*

Medicine At Midnight

**FOO FIGHTERS**

## R&B

*BEST R&B PERFORMANCE (TIE)*

Leave The Door Open

**SILK SONIC**

Pick Up Your Feelings

**JAZMINE SULLIVAN**

*BEST R&B SONG*

Leave The Door Open

**ANDERSON .PAAK,  
BRUNO MARS (SILK SONIC)**

*BEST PROGRESSIVE R&B ALBUM*

Table For Two

**LUCKY DAYE**

*BEST R&B ALBUM*

Heaux Tales

**JAZMINE SULLIVAN**

## RAP

*BEST RAP ALBUM*

Call Me If You Get Lost

**TYLER, THE CREATOR**

## COUNTRY

*BEST COUNTRY SOLO  
PERFORMANCE*

You Should Probably Leave

**CHRIS STAPLETON**

*BEST COUNTRY DUO/GROUP  
PERFORMANCE*

Younger Me

**BROTHERS OSBORNE**

*BEST COUNTRY SONG*

Cold

**CHRIS STAPLETON**

*BEST COUNTRY ALBUM*

Starting Over

**CHRIS STAPLETON**

## JAZZ

*BEST JAZZ VOCAL ALBUM*

Songwrights Apothecary Lab

**ESPERANZA SPALDING**

## GOSPEL/CONTEMPORARY/CHRISTIAN MUSIC

*BEST CONTEMPORARY  
CHRISTIAN MUSIC ALBUM*

Old Church Basement

**MAVERICK CITY MUSIC**

## LATIN

*BEST LATIN ROCK OR  
ALTERNATIVE ALBUM*

Origen

**JUANES**

## REGGAE

*BEST REGGAE ALBUM*

Beauty In The Silence

**SOJA\***

## MUSIC FOR VISUAL MEDIA

*BEST COMPILATION  
SOUNDTRACK FOR VISUAL  
MEDIA*

The United States Vs. Billie Holiday

**ANDRA DAY**

*BEST SCORE SOUNDTRACK  
FOR VISUAL MEDIA (TIE)*

The Queen's Gambit

**CARLOS RAFAEL RIVERA**

## Soul

**TRENT REZNOR &**

**ATTICUS ROSS**

## COMPOSING/ARRANGING

*BEST ARRANGEMENT,  
INSTRUMENTAL OR A  
CAPPELLA*

Meta Knight's Revenge

(From "Kirby Superstar")

**CHARLIE ROSEN**

## PRODUCTION

*PRODUCER OF THE YEAR,  
NON-CLASSICAL*

**JACK ANTONOFF**

Chemtrails Over The Country Club

**(LANA DEL REY)\* (A)**

## MUSIC VIDEO/FILM

*BEST MUSIC FILM*

Summer of Soul

**AHMIR "QUESTLOVE"**

**THOMPSON**



# sound

NOW PLAYING

## MANAGERS TO WATCH

For *Billboard*'s first-ever roundup, these managers on the rise have set the bar for what it takes to successfully break new talent. From strategically utilizing TikTok and exploring how to leverage Web3 to preparing clients (and their respective fan bases) for the return of touring, these are the ascendant managers and management teams you need to know

BY LYNDSEY HAVENS



### Muyiwa Awoniyi

AGE 29

COMPANIES BSB Management Agency, Leading Vibe

KEY CLIENTS Deeds Art, Tems, Lekaa Beats

Awoniyi cites his talk-based YouTube channel, *The Donawon Podcast*, as a crash course in expanding a fan base. "We grew a local following [but it] didn't take much to realize it wasn't sustainable," he says. To engage followers, he sold merch, threw parties and leaned into Twitter. "Before I knew it, I had a network of people in various circles." That know-how helped land Grammy-nominated artist Tems as a client. As she debuted on the *Billboard* Hot 100 in 2021 for her feature on Wizkid's "Essence," other clients have also scored major collaborations: Nigerian artist Deeds with Burna Boy and U.K. producer-engineer Lekaa Beats with Adekunle Gold.

### Will Runzel

AGE 35

COMPANY Prodigy Artists

KEY CLIENTS SLANDER, NGHTMRE, Deorro, Afrojack

Runzel says that feeling "bored with being a talent buyer" pushed him into management, along with a desire to work closer with creatives. He co-founded Prodigy Artists in 2014 and recently celebrated such wins as SLANDER and Dylan Matthew's "Love Is Gone" hitting No. 12 on *Billboard*'s Dance/Electronic Digital Song Sales chart and live feats like NGHTMRE headlining Colorado's Red Rocks Amphitheatre and Deorro selling out two shows at the Hollywood Palladium.

### John Geraghty,

### Blythe Scokin

AGES 27, 32

COMPANY rogue.

KEY CLIENTS Fletcher, Ingrid Andress Geraghty and Scokin co-founded the boutique management firm rogue. in 2020 — and by 2021, Ingrid Andress had scored three Grammy nominations, including best new artist. (Scokin has managed Andress since 2018.) This year, Fletcher wrapped her sold-out North American tour that sold nearly 50,000 tickets globally within minutes — without a debut album out. Says Geraghty: "It brings me joy to see Ingrid represent country music the way she does and Fletcher create safe spaces for young queer kids."

### Alex Valenti

AGE 26

COMPANY 3V Method

KEY CLIENTS Peach Tree Rascals, CLAY, Felly, Sean Leon

Launching her own management, recording and publishing company, 3V Method, in early 2020 — and then having the pandemic hit — did not deter Valenti. Instead, she says that she and her team learned to "look at TikTok as a channel for telling stories as opposed to a quick way to break a song and move on." The approach paid off when Peach Tree Rascals performed at Chicago's Lollapalooza for the first time in 2021 to over 25,000 fans. 3V also manages writers and producers including BOYCO (Dominic Fike, Carlie Hanson), Erick Serna (Olivia Rodrigo, Sia) and Simone Torres (Chloe Bailey, Normani, Anitta) and is exploring how to "activate fan communities in metaverses" and leverage cryptocurrency platforms and blockchains for intellectual property funding.

# sound

## Sophie Lev

AGE 27

COMPANY N/A

KEY CLIENT Remi Wolf

Since working as a product manager at a label, Lev grew eager to work directly on an artist's team. "In management," she says, "you are helping to execute on all things music, as well as all other ventures." For rising alternative-pop artist Remi Wolf, that included the live sector. She sold out her 2022 North American headline tour (in support of last year's debut album, *Juno*) that included two nights each in New York and Los Angeles.



## Mookie

## Singerman

AGE 37

COMPANY TaP Music

KEY CLIENTS Noah Cyrus, Caroline Polachek, Purity Ring  
Singerman says he had a "holistic overview of the industry at a young age" thanks to starting a "very niche but somewhat successful" indie label in college while also touring in a self-managed band. "I had been on both the business and creative side; I could empathize with the grueling day-to-day routine of being an artist while also confidently navigating the industry side for my clients." He has done just that with Noah Cyrus, whose debut album, *The Hardest Part*, arrives July 15, and Caroline Polachek, who opened on tour for Dua Lipa and sold out Los Angeles' Greek Theatre as an indie act over a decade into her career, which Singerman calls "the most gratifying, emotional night."

## Nick Jarjour

AGE 36

COMPANY JarjourCo Management

KEY CLIENTS Starrah, 3:02 Music Group, Hipgnosis Songs Management

In March, Jarjour helped Starrah launch the publishing venture 3:02 Music Group in partnership with Pulse Music (one of its hits includes Normani's "Wild Side," which Starrah co-wrote). "Dr. Dre and Jimmy Iovine set the framework for how creatives and executives can co-create businesses together," he says.

## Dylan Shanks

AGE 24

COMPANY Open Door Management

KEY CLIENTS Omar Apollo, Teo Halm, Callan Wong, American Dance Ghosts, Oscar Santander, Jackson Shanks

Fresh off the release of Omar Apollo's debut album, *IVORY*, Shanks calls the experience "my biggest success story, hands down." Having helped the artist sign a record deal with Warner in 2020, Shanks says that "a label will always be necessary if an artist wants to be a superstar ... but managers are able to build business with their clients."

## Juanita "Niya"

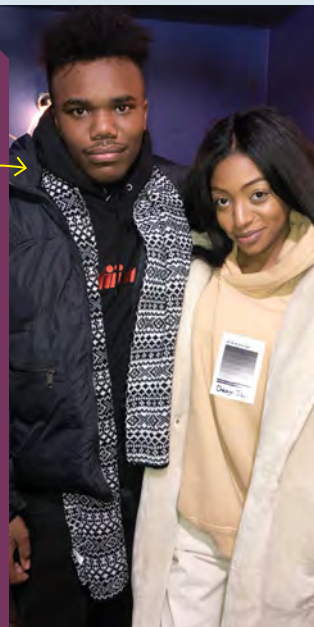
## Morton

AGE 31

COMPANY pgLang

KEY CLIENT Baby Keem

Since working with Dave Free as a product manager on Baby Keem's 2019 mixtape *Die for My Bitch*, Morton felt motivated to move into management. In April, Keem won his first Grammy Award, but Morton says she's more proud of pgLang's collaboration on his debut album, *The Melodic Blue*, which in September entered at No. 3 on *Billboard's* Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart.



## Omar "Omi"

## Rivera Maldonado

AGE 34

COMPANY Omi Management

KEY CLIENTS Sech, Arcangel, Chris Lebron, Myke Towers

Rivera landed his first client, friend and reggaeton star Arcangel, over a decade ago. More recent wins include signing Myke Towers (a co-management client with Whiteworld's Orlando "Jova" Cepeda and José "Tito" Reyes) to a brand deal with Puma Global Motor Sports and Sech selling out three dates at the Coliseo de Puerto Rico.

## Cory Litwin

AGE 35

COMPANY Hallwood Media

KEY CLIENTS Murda Beatz, Sounwave, Quay Global, Jason "Cheese" Goldberg, Pvlace, Yung DZA, Jenius

Litwin began 2022 by signing Murda Beatz, who he "organically" started managing in 2014, to a global deal with Alternative Distribution Alliance Worldwide; negotiating a "sizable" catalog sale with Kilometre Music Group; and scoring another Las Vegas residency.

## Adam Hirsch, Benito Lugo

AGES 36, 33

COMPANY ALT:Vision

KEY CLIENTS Blu DeTiger, Autograf, Young Franco, K?d, Drezo, Dot

Hirsch and Lugo launched ALT:Vision in 2017 "not knowing where the journey would lead us," says Lugo. It turns out that it led to launching pop-rock artist Blu DeTiger as an independent act through ALT:Vision's label venture at Sony/Orchard, on which she released her 2021 debut. The success of the single "Figure It Out" helped her land a record deal with Capitol in November.

## Mike Ahern, Jimmy Bui

AGES 26, 29

COMPANY Good Buddy

KEY CLIENTS Clairo, Paris Texas, Forrest Nolan

Ahern always "loved the entrepreneurial nature" of management, while Bui was drawn to the creative process. That is why, says Bui, "supporting Clairo on her [2021 sophomore] album *Sling* in the remote hills of Catskills, N.Y., was an extraordinary experience." Her current tour sold over 100,000 tickets, compared with 5,000 on her 2018 trek.

## Hilary Sullivan

AGE 27

COMPANY Bad Habit

KEY CLIENTS Dora Jar, Yeek, Ralph Castelli

Sullivan says that she "stumbled" into management when her friends in a band started to release music, prompting her to lend her expertise in brand collaborations and product curation for companies like Bape and Opening Ceremony. Since joining Bad Habit (a label, management and publishing company founded in 2015 by Matthew Adesuyan and Kirk Harding), Sullivan has helped build indie-pop artist Dora Jar, who this year opened on tour for Billie Eilish. "To have her ninth show ever, and subsequent six shows, be [to a crowd of] 15,000 people was pretty insane."

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UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP

The MANAGERS Issue

# VICTO



From left: Williams, Pusha T, Nigo and Victor photographed March 26 at Hotel on Rivington in New York.

Williams styling by Cactus  
Pusha T styling by Marcus Paul

Williams: Cactus Plant Flea Market jacket and shirt.  
Pusha T: Dries Van Noten top, JUUN.J jacket.  
Victor: Prada top, Chanel jacket, New Era hat,  
Jacob & Co. chain.

# ORIOUS



What do **Pusha T**, **Pharrell Williams** and **Nigo** have in common? They've all benefited from the no-quit hustle, prescient taste and connect-the-dots vision of manager-turned-CEO **Steven Victor**

BY DAN RYS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MATT SALACUSE

The **MANAGERS** Issue

Givenchy top and backpack,  
Jacob & Co. chain.



# T

## HE LINE STRETCHED

around the block, to Houston Street on Manhattan's West Side, south down Wooster, wrapping around Prince and then back up Greene Street, the tail end bumping up

against the entrance. The kids all looked the part: KENZO, BAPE, Human Made and Supreme logos as prominent and fresh as their Air Force 1s, dutifully waiting for the chance to pick from a selection of exclusive \$130 T-shirts, \$450 sweatshirts and \$2,000 varsity jackets inside.

For a streetwear fan on a Saturday in New York, there was no better place to be than here, outside a SoHo pop-up shop celebrating the latest collaboration from Nigo. The Japanese cultural legend — who founded BAPE in 1993 and ushered in an aesthetic that made him one of his generation's most iconic fashion designers and tastemakers — was putting out his first album in 17 years, *I Know Nigo!*, and, as with many of his projects, this one was multifaceted, with its own limited-edition merchandise and clothing lines, drops so rare that to be anywhere else was to simply not care about the culture.

That is, of course, if you know Nigo.

Pharrell Williams knows Nigo, and has for more than 20 years. The two met in Nigo's Tokyo studio — a place with multiple floors housing a showroom, a hair and makeup salon, and studios for photography and recording — when Williams was in town on tour. "I was like, 'Who is this dude?'" Williams recalls. "We've been friends ever since." The two launched the Billionaire Boys Club clothing line together in 2005; Williams is the executive producer of Nigo's new album.

Pusha T knows Nigo. It was 2003 when Nigo — a huge fan of Clipse, the Virginia coke-rap duo of Pusha and his brother Malice (now known as No Malice) whose work was largely produced by The Neptunes — flew them all out to Tokyo to celebrate BAPE's 10th anniversary. "First time I've ever seen branding like that," says Pusha of that trip into Nigo's world. "It was everything — his Rolls-Royces had his camo print; his cafés, the tables were all his prints. I didn't know where I was — I was in Wonka land." Pusha is featured on two tracks on *I Know Nigo!*, even getting back together with his brother for a mini-Clipse reunion on the album's standout track, "Punch Bowl," produced by Williams.

Steven Victor doesn't just know Nigo — he's a Nigo superfan, having first encountered the designer's work "as a New York City kid at the BAPE store." The two met here and there over the past decade, while Victor was working in his various capacities — as Pusha's manager; as first an A&R executive, then the COO of Kanye West's G.O.O.D. Music; after he left G.O.O.D., while working at Universal Music Group with artists like Pop Smoke. But they didn't really think about working together until 2017, when Victor asked if Nigo would design the logo for his new partnership with UMG, Victor Victor Worldwide.

It was Victor, 41, who sparked the creative fire that turned into *I Know Nigo!*, which debuted at No. 13 on the Billboard 200 after its March 25 release on Victor Victor/Republic and has racked up over 70 million on-demand streams since, according to Luminate. "I had a half-formed idea about doing a new record, and I asked him for advice," Nigo says. (He is a DJ with the Japanese hip-hop group the Teriyaki Boyz, but served as more of a curator on this project.) "[Victor and I are] able to share and exchange ideas, and that's what allowed us to work on this project."

What started as a two-song mini-release with Clipse

and Williams evolved, thanks to Victor, into a full-length album, with heavy hitters — and Nigo's friends — A\$AP Rocky, Tyler, The Creator, Gunna, Kid Cudi, A\$AP Ferg and Lil Uzi Vert lending verses. There is also the exclusive merch from Nigo's Human Made clothing line (he sold BAPE in 2011) and a collaboration with Victor Victor, with branded dog collar sets (\$50), baseball bats (\$200), skate decks (\$100) and an ashtray (\$75) available at the pop-up, making Victor's name just as ubiquitous as Nigo's for those who managed to make it inside. Victor and Nigo are planning a restaurant in New York, modeled after Nigo's famed Curry Up spot in Tokyo, while Victor has been in touch with the producers behind Netflix's Michael Jordan docuseries, *The Last Dance*, about developing a film on Nigo's career.

It's the type of multipronged, industry-spanning project on which Nigo built his career — and that Victor is hoping to emulate with Victor Victor Worldwide, a company encompassing a record label, publishing, merch, branding, management, a charitable foundation and more — putting him among other top-flight managers-turned-CEOs like Coran Capshaw, Scooter Braun and Wassim "Sal" Slaiby,

around outside — a result of both weekday blues and an early-spring cold front. (The pop-up will ultimately close a few days early — because its inventory sells out.) But in the greenroom downstairs, Victor, omnipresent blue L.A. Dodgers hat on his head, can barely contain his excitement as he tears open a package: a custom Victor Victor racing suit, decked out in Nigo's designs, with racing gloves to match.

The one-of-a-kind fit is for Victor's upcoming training for the Ferrari Challenge, a series of races for the brand in which he'll compete starting next year. "I've always been obsessed with cars — even when I couldn't afford them," he says. "But I've started taking it way more seriously recently."

A lot of things in Victor's life are more serious now that he has risen through the ranks of the music business, ascending over the past two decades from publicist to manager to label executive to CEO. ("I think he has always pretty much been the same person," says Williams of Victor's rise. "The only thing that has really changed is the keys — the keys to opportunities and the keys to his cars.") In 2004, Victor came aboard as a publicist during

## "COMMERCIAL SUCCESS WILL ALWAYS COME IF YOU MAKE A GREAT PRODUCT."

So my ultimate goal is to give back in the form of inspiration because that's what enabled me." — VICTOR

whose management enterprises have recently expanded into all aspects of entertainment.

"Nigo, Pusha, Pop — these are creatives who have different ideas, and I feel like my job is to help bring it to life or just think outside the box about how it can have the most impact without thinking about commercial success," Victor says. "Because commercial success will always come if you make a great product. So my ultimate goal is to give back in the form of inspiration because that's what enabled me. More than anything, me being inspired by different people is what drives me and gives me the ability to do anything."

## "MY MANAGER STARTED OFF AS MY PUBLICIST/HE BUY GT2S AND A BUNCH OF OTHER SHIT."

—NIGO & CLIPSE, "PUNCH BOWL"

"You know what a GT2 is? A GT2 RS Porsche — it's a race car," Victor says, animatedly but distractedly. "I have one, but people don't really drive them on the street. They drive them on the racetrack."

It's two days later, and the line for the pop-up is considerably smaller, with about a dozen people milling

Clipse's highly successful run of underground mixtapes as the Re-Up Gang, which Victor pushed to journalists and tastemakers, helping build Clipse up on the internet at a time when mixtapes were still more commonly found in stalls on Broadway than as downloads on the web. He would eventually become Clipse's co-manager alongside Suave House founder Tony Draper, who Victor says taught him everything there was to know about management.

"Draper wasn't a manager at heart; he was a label owner, so every dollar that he made was his money," Victor says. "Other managers that I knew, their approach was, 'How can I extract the most money out of the record label and get the best deal for my artist, no matter how it negatively impacts the label?' Draper's approach was, 'Work with the label and make sure they're getting as much out of this as you are.' That gave me a different approach to the music business."

In 2010, Clipse's former manager, Anthony Gonzalez, went to jail on drug charges; Malice found religion and quit rapping (he would return several years later as No Malice); the duo broke up; and Pusha ventured out as a solo act, following the mixtape formula to establish himself on his own. Soon after, West called and asked Pusha to come out to Hawaii to work on his next album, which would become *My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy*. That spawned a working relationship that would lead to Pusha signing with G.O.O.D. Music, West's joint venture with UMG; then Victor becoming an A&R executive at G.O.O.D.; then Pusha and Victor taking over the manage-

ment of G.O.O.D. Music as president and COO, respectively, in 2015.

Victor was also developing his management roster at the time, signing a series of producers and beginning to work with artists like The-Dream and Tyga. “He’s very pro-artist,” says Tyga, who worked with Victor in the mid-2010s. “He’s not like an industry guy or a guy who worked at a label who’s just going to give you the run-around and tell you bullshit. He’s very in it and very hands-on, and if he sets his mind to something, he’s going to get it.”

“I feel like even as a young man, what set me apart from other managers was that I was involved in the marketing, the publicity, the music,” Victor says. “Now, because the playing field is so level and there’s so much competition and so much music coming out so fast, a manager has to wear way more hats than they did back in the day.” And how did Victor develop such a broad skill set? “I just paid attention,” he says. “I’m a whore for information.”

That has often meant pushing — pushing his artists, pushing his partners, pushing those who work for him and those he works for, to create the best project possible. It’s how he got Nigo’s original idea of creating two songs to blossom into an entire album; it’s how he nudged Pusha toward working with West even when their initial sessions didn’t pan out; how he pushed to sign Desiigner to G.O.O.D. Music when the Brooklyn MC was on the brink of inking a deal with Columbia, then helped push “Panda” to No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100.

“When Steven believes in an artist, there’s no stopping him,” says Republic Records co-founder/COO Avery Lipman. “He’s the ultimate artist advocate and champion. He doesn’t relent, and it’s why he remains a leading force in the business and the culture.”

## THERE IS ALSO THE SMALL MATTER OF THE FISH SANDWICH.

Legend has it that, in 2003, Pusha co-wrote the iconic McDonald’s jingle “I’m Lovin’ It,” receiving somewhere between \$500,000 and \$1 million for his and his brother’s contribution — but no royalty or ownership stake in the song, which would go on to underpin the longest-running advertising campaign in the company’s history. (Pusha’s claims are disputed by others who were involved, but he publicly sticks by them.) So when, in March, Pusha released “Spicy Fish Diss,” aimed at the McDonald’s Filet-O-Fish sandwich, in an advertisement for Arby’s promoting its new spicy fish sandwich, most people understood why.

The dis track created over \$8 million in equivalent marketing exposure for Arby’s in just seven hours, according to Apex Marketing. But Pusha’s relationship with Arby’s actually stretches back a decade, to when he was featured on the 2014 track “Burial” by EDM producer Yogi. Victor pushed Pusha to record it because he thought it would be easy to synch — and bring in publishing money.

Through Victor’s relationship with music supervisor Scott Vener and others, the song was synched in trailers for the *Entourage* movie, the HBO series *Ballers* and a documentary on the UFC. Then Arby’s called and asked to use a snippet in its 2014 advertising campaign, “We Have the Meats” — and because Pusha and Victor controlled the composition, they’ve been getting paid every six months ever since.

“I’ve never seen anybody put pieces together like this,” Pusha says of Victor. “He’s going to drive you nuts with the



Dries Van Noten top, JUUN.J jacket, Song of the Mute pants, Kiko Kostadinov shoes.

process, but he knows exactly what he’s doing and who needs to be involved. It is another level of finding information to use to the benefit of all of us, really.”

When Victor and Pusha took over G.O.O.D. Music in 2015, his time in management helped ease any learning curve, and his last-minute intervention in the Desiigner deal, which cleared the way for the artist’s inclusion on West’s *The Life of Pablo*, led West to trust his instincts.

“Kanye gave us the keys to run the company. He was very open-minded to all the different ideas of what we wanted to do,” says Victor. “I knew it was an opportunity to showcase my ability, and he gave me the freedom to do it.”

By late 2016, however, Victor’s deal with G.O.O.D. was up, and he unexpectedly became a sought-after free agent in the label world. As he considered his options — including an offer from Jay-Z at Roc Nation — he got a call from UMG executive vp Michele Anthony, who implored him to stay within the UMG family. “I said to her,

‘I want to have an opportunity to do the things I’m really good at,’” he remembers. “As a manager, you’re able to do so many different things and wear so many different hats without restrictions. When you’re working at a record company, whatever your job is, that’s your job. She was like, ‘Well, let’s figure it out.’”

Victor says Anthony’s plan was to find him a role within the company’s East Coast label-services division, which she oversees: “I was impressed by Steven’s detailed vision for his artists and how intimately involved he was in crafting every aspect of their campaigns,” she says. But then UMG chairman/CEO Lucian Grainge asked to meet with Victor. “Lucian said, ‘I want you to come work for me, and I want you to lay it out for me how it would look.’ So I told him, ‘These are all the things that I want to do.’ And he was like, ‘Everything you just told me, we’re going to put it together on paper, and we’re going to create a role for you.’”

That led to the formation of Victor Victor Worldwide, his partnership with UMG that became one of the first deals



# Providing HOPE in Ukraine

The violence in Ukraine has taken such an extensive toll on hospitals and basic services that people now face worsening shortages of food, medicine and electricity. Within Ukraine and three bordering countries, Project HOPE emergency teams are **delivering medical supplies, care and other relief** for refugees and displaced children and families.

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in what is known as The Center, the collection of labels, executives and partnerships that works within the core of UMG, rather than solely with any of its affiliated labels, and reports directly to Grainge. When Victor signs an artist, he can bring that act to any label within Universal, effectively creating an internal bidding war for the right to release the artist's recordings. In the beginning, he would have to pitch label heads on artists prior to signing them; now, he has his own A&R funding, allowing him to bet on his instincts with his own money.

With The Center as Victor Victor Worldwide's base, Victor can "work with and benefit all UMG divisions to help drive success across the company," Anthony adds. "Steven has built a reputation as a formidable entrepreneur and cultural curator, with great ambition for his projects, and he continues to evolve as an important creative executive."

That may have seemed like the perfect endgame for someone like Victor: the freedom and flexibility to pursue any deal in any capacity he wanted, with the backing of the largest music company in the world and support from the top. And he used that to sign some promising young artists like Ski Mask the Slump God and producer Young-Kio, who co-created Lil Nas X's "Old Town Road."

But when Paul Rosenberg was named Def Jam's new CEO in 2017, the calculus changed. Victor has a long history with Def Jam: His older sister, Epic's current head of publicity Melissa Victor, used to work there; Pusha has been signed there as a solo artist for a decade; West and G.O.O.D. Music have always operated in partnership with Def Jam. The label tried to hire him when his G.O.O.D. deal expired, but he resisted at the time; now Rosenberg wanted Victor to run his A&R department.

"For me, it was a bad deal on paper because it was me going from working in The Center, where I have all this flexibility and report to the chairman of Universal, to reporting to a label head," Victor says. "So I started having second thoughts about it. But what kept coming back [to me] was, 'If you want to be a label head, this is a step in that right direction' — sort of like two steps back to take three steps forward."

Victor took the job, but after 15 years of running his own show, he clashed immediately with the corporate structure. "I thought about it like, 'If I go here and have success, only good can come from that,'" he says. "And then it was just like a fucking nightmare."

Def Jam went on a signing spree as the label refocused on its hip-hop roots, bringing in some two dozen young acts within a year and putting them in a rap camp, a sort of incubator program that aimed to develop and promote a new generation of MCs. But it was the ones who got away that ate Victor up. In January 2018, just after starting the Def Jam gig, Victor was approached by Lil Bibby, the former Chicago rapper turned entrepreneur who had just signed a young artist named Juice WRLD. Bibby wanted \$2 million to sign Juice to Def Jam, but Rosenberg balked at the price tag; Victor instead set Bibby up with his lawyer and told them to shop the deal, asking for the right to match whatever offers came in. When Bibby still couldn't secure a \$2 million deal, he released the Juice WRLD song "All Girls Are the Same," which blew up on YouTube — and led to a \$3 million deal with Interscope in March.

That same month, Victor says, another attorney approached him with the opportunity to sign another young artist for \$750,000 — on the high side, but doable. But when Rosenberg found out the artist was in jail, he killed the deal; ultimately, the artist, Dominic Fike, signed a multimillion-dollar deal with Columbia after a bidding war that then-Columbia co-president of A&R Imran Majid called "ugly and competitive." Other deals similarly didn't

pan out, leaving Victor feeling blasé about the whole enterprise. ("My recollection of events differs from Steven's — the industry is full of conflicting versions of the ones that got away — but we gave it a real shot together," says Rosenberg. "Steven is a gifted strategist and a great manager, and I wish him only the best." A Def Jam representative did not return a request for comment.)

"I'm not the best executive, but my gift is my ability to see things that are good, whether it's clothes or music — and if I can't trade on that gift, then I'm useless," Victor says. "So I was like, 'This doesn't work. I'm a quarterback, not a defensive end — I have to throw the ball.' So I was just done with it."

Victor spoke to Rosenberg, who agreed to let him leave, and Grainge ultimately allowed Victor to return to The Center and his Victor Victor organization. But as he was on his way out, another opportunity presented itself. One of his A&R executives, the producer Ricardo "Rico Beats" Lamarre, asked him for a favor: to take a meeting with a young artist named Pop Smoke.

Victor took the meeting, he remembers, "half in the hallway," but was ultimately drawn in by the music. "There was something about this kid — he was really intense," he says. "But the shit was really good." A few months later, Victor went to see Grainge to talk about his situation at Def Jam — but Grainge didn't want to talk business, instead asking Victor to play him artists whom he was excited about. Victor played him Pop's unreleased music, then explained that, because he was on his way out of Def Jam, he didn't know where to sign him; Grainge,

bum, it was different because it was like work. I was listening to it from a different perspective. It was the toughest thing I ever had to deal with in my personal life."

## DURING THE PANDEMIC, VICTOR TOOK A STEP BACK TO REFOCUS.

In his case, that meant hunkering down with Pusha, who has a new album, *It's Almost Dry*, coming April 22, produced by Williams and West; he also launched a philanthropic venture, the Victor Victor Foundation, to empower and provide education opportunities to the next generation of underrepresented kids. And it meant pouring all his energy into this new project with Nigo, which he calls "the epitome of what Victor Victor is: clothing, content, music, all the different things that I'm into."

Over the past 20 years, Victor has often excelled through his association with top-level creatives — Clipse, Williams, The-Dream, West, Pop, Nigo, even Grainge, whom he puts alongside those others as "in different area codes as the rest of us." But there's still a humility to his demeanor at times — a sense that, while he's sitting at that top table, he isn't truly one of *them*. But that's not how his peers see him.

"When you think about everything that Berry Gordy was, he really was more than just a label head," says

**"HE'S GOING TO DRIVE YOU NUTS WITH THE PROCESS, BUT HE KNOWS EXACTLY WHAT HE'S DOING and who needs to be involved. It is another level of finding information to use to the benefit of all of us, really."**

— PUSHA T ON VICTOR

according to Victor, told him, "Just sign [him] to Universal, and we'll figure out the rest later."

Victor signed Pop to Victor Victor Worldwide, and shortly after was free from Def Jam. He shopped Pop to UMG's family of labels, ultimately going with Republic, and through a series of well-received singles and mixtapes, Pop soon emerged as one of the most exciting and freshest voices coming out of Brooklyn in years, with Victor riding alongside, helping keep him out of trouble and in the studio. But in February 2020, months before the release of his debut album, Pop was shot and killed in a home invasion in Hollywood Hills, Calif.

When it was released that July, Pop's *Shoot for the Stars Aim for the Moon* debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard 200; it became such a phenomenon that it ended 2020 at No. 7 on the year-end Billboard 200 Albums chart, then ended 2021 at No. 3. A second posthumous album, *Faith*, debuted at No. 1 in 2021; Victor executive-produced it.

"For a very long period of time — even now — I can't really listen to his music," Victor says. "Even making the al-

Williams. "He really was PR, he knew how to tell those stories, and when you think about all of the artist and repertoire skills that he had, that came out in the artists. [Victor] is doing the same thing with Nigo, and it just makes all the sense in the world. Nigo thinks with the same level of elaborate vision, and [Victor is] a person who can take the baton and run with it and have it be just as articulate and just as comprehensive as the baton that was handed to him."

Sitting in the greenroom of the pop-up shop that bears his name, Victor examines the racing gloves in his hands more closely. They're a tangible reward for the work of the past 20 years — a reward that signals more work ahead. "I always look at things like, 'How do I do something that has an impact and that inspires people?'" he says. "Because I feel like the whole reason why I'm able to be successful is that people have inspired me, whether they know it or not. My approach is to make things of the highest quality, no matter what it costs, no matter how hard it is, and that's the focus. Nothing else matters. At all." **B**

# SM ENTERTAINMENT

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**BILLBOARD'S  
2022 INTERNATIONAL  
POWER PLAYERS LIST**



From left: Rukasin, Goodman, Eilish and FINNEAS photographed April 4 at Gila River Arena in Glendale, Ariz.

Eilish styling by Andrew Mukamal Chrome Hearts jeans and Converse X Rick Owens shoes.

FINNEAS styling by Anton Schneider Givenchy shirt, pants, shoes and jewelry.

# TO INFINITY AND BEYOND

Managers **Danny Rukasin** and **Brandon Goodman** have supported super sibs **Billie Eilish** and **FINNEAS** since their career blastoff — and they're in it for the long haul

BY LYNDSY HAVENS PHOTOGRAPHED BY MATT SALACUSE

# T

## HE DETAILS ARE A

little blurry on Billie Eilish's first time meeting Danny Rukasin. She remembers him wearing a leather jacket ("I was?" he asks with a skeptical laugh) and was

convinced he was in his 40s. ("30s!" he later objects.) "It's so cute to be thinking about all of this," Eilish, 20, reflects with a soft smile while sitting next to her brother, FINNEAS, 24, in a serene greenroom in Phoenix, mere hours before her next headlining show.

But the facts about what led to that moment in late 2015 are irrefutable. When Eilish first met Rukasin, now 43, FINNEAS already had a rapport with the manager — he had previously reached out to him about his own band, The Slightlys. "Danny gave me great advice way before jumping in and working on anything, which to me, that's always a sign of respect," he recalls. Soon after, the two ran into each other at a Meg Myers show in Los Angeles, and FINNEAS mentioned (or rather, screamed, as he recalls in an exaggerated reenactment) that he was also working on music with his kid sister.

A day later, FINNEAS uploaded what would become Eilish's breakout hit, "Ocean Eyes," to SoundCloud — and Rukasin was one of the first to call. "I was like, 'Wait, how old is she again?'" Rukasin remembers. He became Eilish and FINNEAS' de facto manager, later bringing

on Brandon Goodman, 37, as co-manager at the top of 2016. (The two met a decade earlier when their respective clients at the time toured together.) By 2019, they co-founded Best Friends, a management, publishing and recording company that has since also signed Bishop Briggs, Role Model and other artists, writers and producers to management deals.

"Brandon and I are both extremely focused on Billie and FINNEAS, and we never want to take our eyes off that ball," says Rukasin. That approach has, of course, yielded monumental results, from Eilish's 2019 chart-topping debut, *When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?*, to FINNEAS' own debut full-length, *Optimist*, being re-released last year, and much in between: Grammy sweeps, an Academy Award win, history-making bookings for Eilish as the youngest solo artist to headline Coachella and Glastonbury.

"At the same time," Rukasin continues, "we've grown a great team around them and can lend what we've learned in the past 10 years to other projects and clients that we really love. It's about hiring the right people who are capable, but also helping them develop into superstar managers themselves." That group includes Laura Ramsey, who handles Eilish's and FINNEAS' day-to-day matters; as Rukasin puts it, Ramsey "has an incredible ability to understand Billie and FINNEAS and their taste." Adds Goodman: "Billie wants to see every single thing and we want to oblige that, so we needed someone who

was with her [on the road]. That's how it started, and [Ramsey's role has] evolved into such a bigger part of the team, executing everything."

Both Goodman and Rukasin knew well what it's like for young artists diving headfirst into the industry. Goodman started managing his first band as a senior at Michigan State University; in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Rukasin played trombone in pop-punk band The Hippos — the first release on label Fueled by Ramen, which kicked off a 20-year working relationship with John Janick (FBR's founder and now chairman/CEO of Interscope Geffen A&M). "That Janick is the head of this company that signed Billie is a crazy, full-circle moment for me," says Rukasin. (She is signed to The Darkroom in partnership with Interscope.)

Like any good team, Goodman and Rukasin say their greatest strengths are complementary. Goodman excels at "seeing very quickly what's necessary and what's not," Rukasin says, adding that he inherently understands how to navigate the industry's behind-the-scenes business. Goodman calls Rukasin "the most attention-to-detail-oriented person I've met in my entire life," one who can "see far out and have the most efficient grid of time — which has really helped Billie have such a dynamic career as far as hitting every angle and being everywhere."

"That's a great partner to have," says Goodman, before adding with a laugh, "Go back to me again."

"Is this therapy or an interview?" quips Rukasin. "I love it."

**Billie and FINNEAS, you two performed at the Grammys in April and won an Oscar for "No Time To Die" in March. Which room is more intimidating?**

**BILLIE EILISH** Oscars. It feels like I am a goddamn nobody in a room full of actors, and that's fine.

**Does part of you enjoy that?**

**EILISH** A little bit? But at the same time, it is a little bit weird. I think it might be the same way if an actor came into a room full of musicians, they'd be like, "Interesting vibes."

**FINNEAS** Because of music festival culture, you really get to know your contemporaries. At the Grammys, during commercial breaks, everybody was walking up and saying hi.

**You two also wrote original music for Disney/Pixar's *Turning Red*. Danny and Brandon, how do you field all the requests for Billie and FINNEAS?**

**DANNY RUKASIN** What's a more relatable topic for Billie to write about than a teenage girl who's a huge fan of music?

**BRANDON GOODMAN** And being obsessed with a heartthrob artist. It ties back to the story of her and [Justin] Bieber. We want to make sure they see everything, especially when something is a significant offer.

**FINNEAS** They're always super transparent.

**GOODMAN** We have a weekly call with them — it's harder when they're on the road to maintain, but we go through things and we preface it like, "We think you should pass on this," or "We know you're going to pass on this." They're passing, as they should be, on 98% of things.

**FINNEAS** We're all very aligned these days on everything. I think you have an unbridled enthusiasm for all opportunities at the beginning of your career, which Billie and I were at recently. You're just like, "Wow! Somebody is asking us to do something?" I often talk about wanting to do things or Billie and I both being like, "This song is fire, let's drop it now!" and our managers being like, "Well, let's *not* drop it now..."

**EILISH** Yeah, in hindsight, I'm grateful for that.

**GOODMAN** And then what happens? "No, let's drop it now." (All laugh.)

**Is that true?**

**EILISH** There was a period where I was 16 or 17, and I was like, "I want to make a three-song EP, and I want to drop it right now." And I was so certain that that was the best idea possible, and they were like, "Well, here's why maybe this is a better idea." And I was like, "No! Absolutely not." And they were right for sure.

**RUKASIN** Part of it was your understanding of music was the SoundCloud era — putting something up and it goes. And then also, you were — and still are — so genuinely young, and you feel something and want to put it out.

There's a certain amount of, "I want to express this right in this moment," and then us being the dudes, the old guys, who are like, "No, no, no, wait; let's do it the right way."

**EILISH** The mixture of me being a SoundCloud fan and teaching them what my experience was while they were teaching me what my career was did benefit [all of us].

**RUKASIN** We also, in that stage of her career, wanted to do nothing but set her up to succeed. And I think now she can do whatever the fuck she wants, and that's the cool thing. We built it the right way.

We had to really suss out who the partner was that really believed in her and the music they were making and were going to help develop that. The decision that Billie ultimately made were the people we all agreed on, like John [Janick] and [Interscope vice chairman Steve] Berman and Justin [Lublner, co-founder/CEO of The Darkroom], who was really excited about what Billie was doing on a totally other level.

**FINNEAS** Very youthful, in a way that most people weren't.

**EILISH** I'm really proud of the way we waited that out and made sure it felt right.

**There have been major shake-ups in management lately, with rising and superstar artists parting ways**

**with the managers who helped launch them. How important is it to get the team right from the start?**

**RUKASIN** It's tough because a manager is really [part of] the DNA of what you're doing. Someone who is going to understand you and be able to guide you through every step of the process of being an artist from the start to wherever you land. I think sometimes it's based on access. FINNEAS didn't know anybody, and had I been a different person or a different manager, maybe he wouldn't have stayed with me because as time goes on, you learn whether somebody really gets you or is going to trust you. It's really hard to get it right the first time. There's also a lot of great young managers who are just friends with someone and they're kind of learning the business together with the artist.

**GOODMAN** I've heard other people talk about how passion can be just as valuable as experience [for a manager] because if you have a young, dedicated, smart person who wants to get it right and knows how to work with people and find the answers by asking questions, that can go a long way. At the end of the day, artists really want

**FINNEAS** Our parents never talked down to us because we were children; they might have had to repeat themselves and explain something more than if they were talking to an adult, but they never talked to us with a kind of...

**EILISH** Condescension.

**FINNEAS** Yeah, they were never condescending to us ever, and neither are our managers. I think our managers communicating openly with us and treating us like peers even though we were children at the time that we started working with them, we were used to that style of communication from our parents.

**EILISH** I'm just now thinking about this, doing a lot of meetings in that year of 2016 of just having put out "Ocean Eyes," there were a lot of people that we did meet that treated us like children.

**FINNEAS** They just didn't know what to say, and I don't blame them for it.

**EILISH** But it just proved even more how good [Goodman and Rukasin] were with us, especially at the beginning when we didn't know what the fuck was going on. They didn't make us worried or scared or feel out of place or like

**"At the end of the day, artists really want people working with them who want to succeed and are capable of learning quickly.**

**THERE ARE REALLY NO BARRIERS TO ENTRY TO BEING A MANAGER. THAT'S THE TRUTH."**

— GOODMAN

people working with them who want to succeed and are capable of learning quickly. There are really no barriers to entry to being a manager. That's the truth. All you have is yourself — and then, of course, you have to be fortunate enough to work with great talent.

**How do you two manage artists who are growing up in front of the whole world? And Billie, how do you handle that as a young woman managed by two dudes?**

(All laugh.)

**EILISH** No shit. Two dudes in their 40s at the time.

**RUKASIN** Well, 30s.

**GOODMAN** I was 31!

**EILISH** You guys were 50 to me.

**FINNEAS** However old your parents are is how old you think all adults are.

**GOODMAN** We are very lucky that Maggie and Patrick [their parents], but Maggie especially, are a very big part of the whole thing and are there every step of the way [for] Billie and Finn — and to help translate some things that might need to be put into their language. Even to this day, Maggie continues to be integral to every big decision and the day-to-day goings-on.

we were doing something wrong, which was really nice. And we would meet people who just didn't know how to talk to us.

**FINNEAS** And I empathize with that too, man. I'm only 24, and when I'm talking to a 13-year-old sometimes, I'll be like, "Well, what the fuck do I say?" Being 13 feels so long ago to me.

**EILISH** It's hard to talk to people from a different generation.

**When you think about a long and healthy career, what does that look like?**

**EILISH** It's really a real thing that I think about a lot...

**FINNEAS** Yeah, most people are cautionary tales.

**EILISH** It's really hard to maintain a timeless kind of career, and the longer I exist as Billie Eilish, I'm more and more aware of like, "Let's look at this through a different lens." Because when I was "hot" or whatever, when you have that first moment of "Boom, everybody's looking at you..."

**FINNEAS** When you have your breakthrough...

**EILISH** ...it feels like that will literally never go away, in all the bad ways and all the good ways. It was actually John Mayer who said something to FINNEAS that made me think about it. (To FINNEAS.) What was it?

Eilish (left) and FINNEAS



From left: Rukasin, Ramsay and Goodman.



**FINNEAS** We were at an airport in Wisconsin in the summer of 2019, and it was really crazy, like all of the TSA agents were filming Billie, it was like a zoo...

**EILISH** Everywhere we went, I mean, it was a nightmare.

**FINNEAS** I was like, "Everything is just crazy right now." And John was like, "Ah, Billie's white hot." He was like, "It's like seeing an animal on safari."

**EILISH** And it's scary. It feels like it's never going to end because when you're new, that is like nothing else. But it changes. It doesn't last for a really long time.

**FINNEAS** Which is good.

**EILISH** Which is very, very good. It has been interesting to see how the couple of years have been after that. I've been looking up to the people who came before me way more. When I was 15, 16, 17, I wasn't thinking about the things that all the artists before my time had gone through to get to where they are. Now I see how hard these people have worked, and I note it, I really note it. I don't want to jinx anything by saying, "I'm going to do this or that," but I think that it's an amazing thing when people have longevity.

**FINNEAS** It's really rare. You don't have to reinvent yourself every day, but you do have to evolve because everyone else is. That's what people forget so much about musicians: Whether or not your favorite musician is evolving, every other person on Earth is. If you want to be somebody's favorite musician for a decade, you have to evolve — because so are they.

**Billie, you grapple with your future on *Happier Than Ever*. When you think about the big picture, is this what you want to do and will do forever?**

**EILISH** I don't really think about a quitting moment. I

picture my future and things I want to achieve, and... I don't know, it's tough. I don't know if I should even say this, but music was never the thing I really wanted to do. I love music so much, but it wasn't ever the first thing I thought of doing. For FINNEAS, it was really different.

**FINNEAS** Billie's a multihyphenate.

**EILISH** I used to do a lot of different shit.

**GOODMAN** You're an overall creative.

**FINNEAS** Fashion, directing...

**EILISH** Yeah, and music was the underlying love that no matter what I did was always there, so I guess it was subconsciously the thing I loved the most, but I had so many other goals in my life. I don't feel like they're not going to happen, I feel hopeful for them. In the last year, I've done so many things that I dreamed about doing years and years ago just because I was like, "Oh, I can actually do that now," like nothing is stopping me. I don't think about my end of days when I'm going to be alone on a ranch...

**GOODMAN** Like when you're 25. *(Laughs.)* And Billie hasn't done this, but there's a power in going away and coming back. I mean, Adele is a great example. A lot of artists are. We feel Billie has reached the level where it's OK if she wants to focus on other things for a minute. We are on her timeline, and when and how she wants to release music, we're here to support that.

**EILISH** The thing that does scare me is the idea of, if I'm not in the mood, does that mean I can't do it?

**FINNEAS** I don't envision a world where Billie and I ever stop making music together.

**EILISH** That's what I mean. It's not like a 9-5 job where we have to stop one day or not.

**FINNEAS** To me, it's always going to be about moving

goal posts, and I don't necessarily mean to bigger, I just mean to different places. When I look at artists who are continuing to inspire me, it's the breadth of their career as opposed to like, "Wow, they have another No. 1." We're very fortunate and very blessed, but I don't feel that winning a bunch more Grammys is what's keeping me inspired these days.

**EILISH** On that note, I had this feeling yesterday at the Grammys because we obviously didn't win anything — I went into the day suspecting we weren't going to win anything, and of course, the internet, no matter what happens, is going to be like, "You were robbed," and I'm just like, "I wasn't, I have seven at home. It's OK, it's all good."

**RUKASIN** You were also nominated for many, which is great.

**EILISH** I was nominated and that's amazing, but getting up during a commercial break and people coming up to me being like, "You changed my life, your music gets me through the day," I'm like, "That's it."

**FINNEAS** That's the win.

**EILISH** I'm getting choked up because yesterday, I was like, "Who gives a fuck if you don't have fans?" That's what I care about. I just want to keep enjoying the music that we make. And so that's why I think I'm a little bit of a procrastinator when it comes to working, especially when we're busy. In theory, I want to make a song and put out an album next year, but that means we have to make it, and it's really hard to make music, for me. I don't want to make something I don't like, so I get freaked out, but I never want to stop creating the way that we create and making music that touches people. That's it, you know? That's the only longevity I give a shit about. **B**





**Congratulations to Donny Novakovic**  
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# THE GAME CHANGERS

The music business was built by musicians and labels, but also entrepreneurs who fought to give artists more leverage — and shaped the modern industry in the process

BY FRED GOODMAN ILLUSTRATIONS BY OLLANSKI

**I**N 1978 PAUL MCGUINNESS sat down in Dublin's Granary pub with the four members of The Hype, who were too young to drink — but not too young, in his view, to be served a cold truth about making music for a living. "It is pathetic to be good at what you do if you are bad at the business of it," said McGuinness, then an aspiring manager. Over the coming decades, the manager and the band — rechristened U2 — would prove anything but, staying a step ahead of the fast-changing music business as it shifted from albums to downloads and tours became megatours.

Half a world away in Los Angeles, Irving Azoff gives his acts a similarly blunt message. "The first thing I tell a young artist is that they call this the music *business*," Azoff once said. "If you don't pay attention to the business, you won't get to make any music."

Where there's a string of great records, there's a great artist, the saying goes — and when that artist has a great career, there's almost always a great manager. That requires both the ability to recognize talent and see where the music business is going, plus the skills of an old-school hustler and the ability to negotiate complicated deals with multinational companies. The pioneering managers listed here not only took on the music business but changed it. They are by no means a diverse group — their homogeneity reflects the business of rock, at a time when it dominated pop music. But they used the power they had to expand opportunities for their artists — and in the process fundamentally altered how the industry worked for artists who came later.

## THE SHOWMAN

### Colonel Tom Parker

Elvis Presley's manager was more canny than colonel — the title was a Kentucky honorific, casually bestowed and hungrily embraced — but he transformed the rock business from a sideshow to the main event. By today's standards, his deals look primitive, his splits with Presley unconscionable, and his affected pose as a southern-fried midway barker seems premodern. But there wasn't a playbook, yet: Rock'n'roll was barely a business in January 1955 when Parker negotiated an enormous-for-the-time \$35,000 deal to move Elvis from Sun to RCA. The following year Parker launched Presley's superstar career in earnest, with TV appearances that caused a media frenzy, and then *Love Me Tender*, the first of 31 feature films. The last record deal Parker made for his client was to sell Presley's future royalties from his recordings to RCA for the then-astronomical sum of \$5.4 million — the kind of late-career cash-out deal that's very much back in vogue.



## THE TRUE BELIEVER

### Brian Epstein

Missionary of the *Mersey Beat*, apostle of The Beatles, Brian Epstein had an unshakable belief in the Fab Four, and he forced the band — and the future it foretold — on an indifferent music business. He was an impresario, but not a sophisticated operator: EMI's Parlophone paid each of The Beatles just a farthing (one-fourth of a penny) per single, and music publisher Dick James earned the lion's share on their songs. Epstein practically gave away merchandise rights. Contemporaries like Rolling Stones manager Andrew Loog Oldham saw Epstein as a giant, though, and musician, manager and Beatles confidant Peter Asher credits him with the band's focus and success — and suggests the group lost its cohesion after his death in 1967. "Without him," Asher told music executive Joe Smith for Smith's oral history, "they argued a lot more."



## THE ROCK KINGMAKER

### Albert Grossman

The manager of Bob Dylan, Janis Joplin and The Band plus the creator of Peter, Paul & Mary, Grossman was the first big music executive to embrace the new counterculture: Woodstock, N.Y., became a rock mecca because that's where he lived, and Dylan followed him there. More hustler than hippie, Grossman believed in the vision of his artists and — starting in the early 1960s with Peter, Paul & Mary — made sure they, rather than their labels, controlled everything from song selection to cover art. Grossman's superstar roster also gave him the power to significantly raise the financial ante on recording and publishing deals. "He'd pick up the phone and it wasn't a question of whether there was a deal or not," recalled Electric Flag vocalist Nick Gravenites. "The question immediately was, 'What was the deal?'"



## THE GUNSLINGER

### Allen Klein

An accountant by training, Klein began his career digging through label and publishing reports — and ended up managing both The Rolling Stones and The Beatles. At the height of the British Invasion, Klein's razor-sharp mind and ability to take the bite out of U.K. tax laws made him the go-to adviser for British acts, and after negotiating a new contract for the Stones, Klein became their U.S. manager. But the relationship soured over the way the rapacious Klein dealt himself into their deals. The band spent two frustrating, and fruitless, decades suing him. Klein also dismantled The Beatles' financially disastrous Apple Records but made an enemy of Paul McCartney — the others wanted to work with him — who ultimately convinced a British court to dissolve the band's partnership and oust him.

## THE BLACK GODFATHER

### Clarence Avant

As recounted in Reginald Hudlin's documentary, *The Black Godfather*, Avant played a singular role as consigliere to several generations of Black artists and executives. Starting at Associated Booking in the 1950s, Avant served as an agent and manager for Little Willie John, Sarah Vaughan, Freddie Hubbard and others. He started the Sussex and Tabu labels and played a key role in the careers of Bill Withers and producers Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis. Avant — who has said that “everything is a number” — later emerged as one of Hollywood's top campaign bundlers, raising millions for progressive candidates including Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton and Barack Obama. “His tools,” Withers has said, “are his ability to manipulate people.”



## THE FIGHTER

### Irving Azoff

Azoff's unparalleled grasp of the concert business made him promoters' worst nightmare: a manager who knew their business as well as they did. Questioning every industry assumption, Azoff moved beyond negotiating for a cut of ticket sales into merchandise — and eventually had artists like the Eagles dictating financial terms for stadium shows. Azoff's Frontline Management supplanted Geffen-Roberts as the premier rock company, and he has managed dozens of arena headliners including Gwen Stefani, Jimmy Buffett, Stevie Nicks, Steely Dan, Van Halen, Journey, Jon Bon Jovi and Neil Diamond; his son, Jeffrey Azoff, manages Harry Styles. He also ran MCA Records, Giant Records, Ticketmaster and Live Nation and, in 2013, started the collecting society Global Music Rights. “I want my legacy,” Azoff says, “to be that no one did more for artists' rights.”



## THE HAMMER OF THE GODS

### Peter Grant

At six-foot-two and 300 pounds, former professional wrestler and Led Zeppelin manager Peter Grant made a powerful impression — and he was just as good at creating a mystique for his clients. Grant refused all TV offers so anyone wanting to see Led Zeppelin had to buy a ticket. Learning his trade as a tour manager, Grant worked and butted heads with Don Arden, the thuggish manager and agent (and father of Sharon Osborne). Having visited America as tour manager for The Animals and The Yardbirds, Grant came to appreciate the size of the U.S. rock market and launched Led Zeppelin's career by keeping the group on the road in the United States for most of its first year. Grant soon got the band a 90/10 split of concert proceeds — which was unheard of at the time.



## THE OPERATORS

### David Geffen & Elliot Roberts

Through their association with Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young, Joni Mitchell, the Eagles, Jackson Browne, America and others, Geffen-Roberts went from a management upstart to the preeminent firm of the early 1970s. Both were agents who switched to management — Geffen with Laura Nyro and Roberts with Mitchell and Neil Young. (Young remained a client until Roberts died in 2019.) They were a formidable pair: Roberts, the hip, hands-on talent schmoozer and Geffen, the high-octane wheeler-dealer. Indeed, Geffen's decision to launch Asylum Records ultimately led to the dissolution of the partnership after Warner Communications, Asylum's distributor, suggested that serving as both a manager and a label — and in some cases a publisher — could cause legal issues. (It ultimately did in the case of the Eagles.) Until then, no one sounded unhappy. “You just naturally do get to love the cat,” David Crosby said of Roberts in *Rolling Stone*.



## THE CHANGE NAVIGATOR

### Paul McGuinness

It's hard to tell what helped McGuinness more: his knowledge of a fast-moving marketplace or his deep understanding of top client U2. His 35-year association with the band started with accompanying the act on tours by van and bus and ended in 2013 when he sold his firm and was succeeded by Guy Oseary. *The Joshua Tree* sold 25 million copies, and U2 was so successful that the members reportedly received equity in their label, Island Records, which later earned them 30 million pounds. When music sales declined, McGuinness helped U2 adjust: The group's 2009 *No Line on the Horizon* sold a comparatively modest 5 million copies, but U2 grossed a reported \$750 million on the accompanying global tour — a figure McGuinness has suggested may never be broken.



## THE VAN-TO-JETSETTER

### Miles Copeland III

“The job is to get noticed,” Miles Copeland once said of launching artists. So managing The Police — a band that featured his brother Stewart on drums and was booked by a third brother, Ian — meant starting the Illegal label to release the group's first single. Recording the band's debut album on the cheap, Copeland enticed A&M Records to take a shot by declining an advance. Then, capitalizing on the 1977 debut of the no-frills transatlantic discount carrier Laker Airways, he sent the trio and one roadie to tour the United States by van. Six years later, The Police headlined Shea Stadium. Building on his start-small strategy and leveraging his relationship with A&M for funding and distribution, Copeland started I.R.S. Records, which in turn launched The Go-Go's and R.E.M. and other acts.



## THE GRASSROOTS MOGUL

### Coran Capshaw

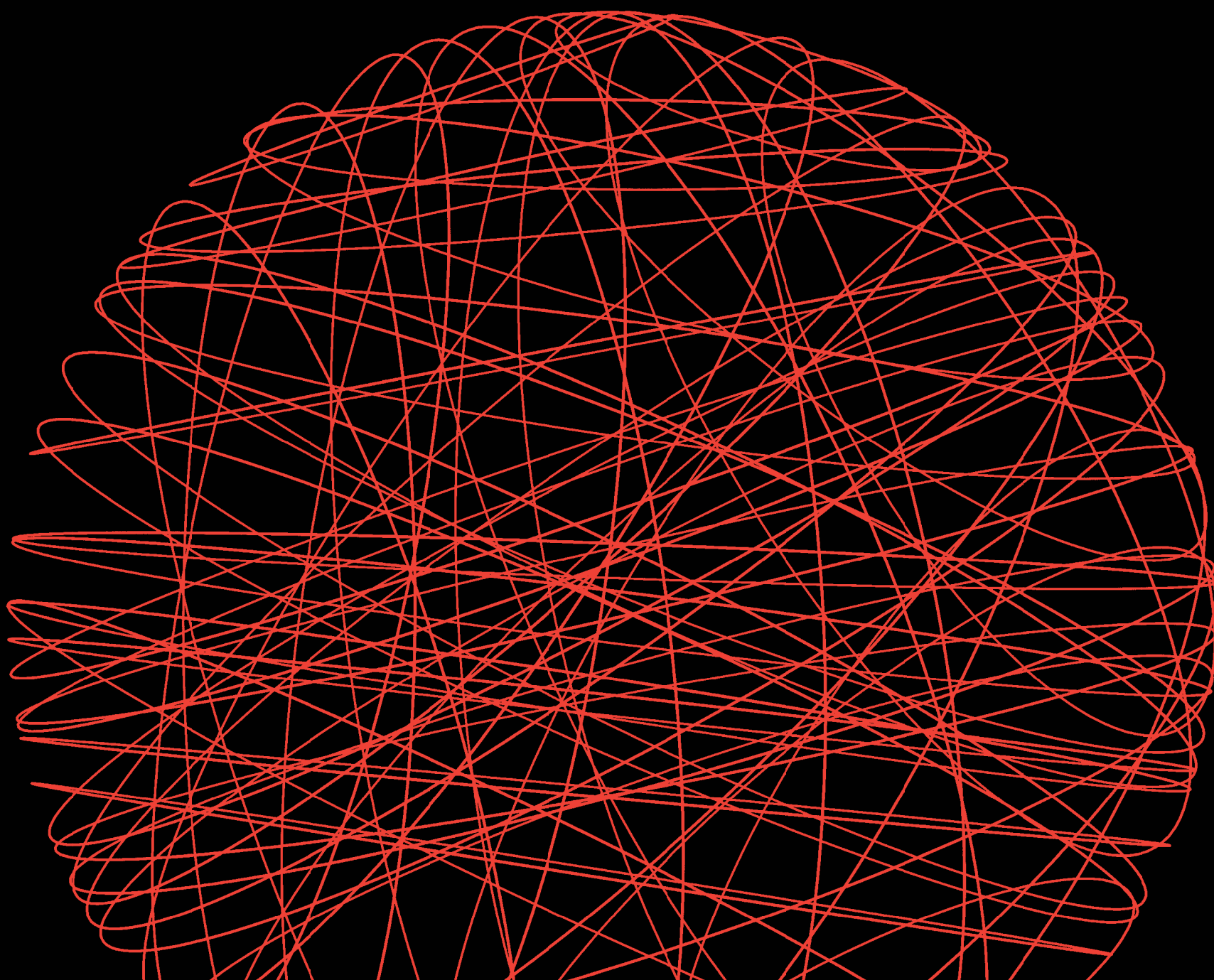
A longtime Deadhead, Capshaw took aspects of the way the Grateful Dead connected with its audience and applied it to the careers of Dave Matthews Band and Phish — then professionalized the Dead's idea of self-contained merchandise, fan outreach and ticketing. His Red Light Management has 400 clients and over 70 managers, as well as a label, online commerce and financial stakes in festivals and venues. “I think of myself as a manager who leads an entrepreneurial management business,” he says of his multifaceted operation. “But, yeah — I'm still a manager.”

AVANT: ILLUSTRATION REFERENCE PHOTO: CHARLEY GALLAGHER/GETTY IMAGES; AZOFF: ILLUSTRATION REFERENCE PHOTO: IRON GALLELLA/ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES; GRANT: ILLUSTRATION REFERENCE PHOTO: PHILIP HERRING/GETTY IMAGES; GEFFEN, ROBERTS: ILLUSTRATION REFERENCE PHOTO: GUSBERT HANE/ROOTSREFERS; CAPSHAW: ILLUSTRATION REFERENCE PHOTO: LESTER COHEN/GETTY IMAGES; MCGUINNESS: ILLUSTRATION REFERENCE PHOTO: PHILIP HERRING/GETTY IMAGES.

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# players

CELEBRATING MUSIC'S MOVERS

Artists whose hits rank among the top 10 songs of the past 12 months on *Billboard's* Global Excl. U.S. chart include (clockwise from top left) Justin Bieber, BTS, Lil Nas X, Olivia Rodrigo and Dua Lipa.



2022

## INTERNATIONAL POWER PLAYERS

With global recorded-music revenue reaching \$25.9 billion, the highest level in decades, executives driving that growth share success stories from every continent — while joining in the calls for peace in Ukraine

**WHEN IFPI PRESENTED** its Global Music Report on March 22, the exceptional growth of the worldwide music business was actually the second item on the agenda.

"Before we start, I just wanted to say one word on Ukraine," said IFPI CEO Frances Moore. "And that is to reiterate the position taken by the industry that we stand by Ukraine — and we call for peace and for an end to violence." Among other participants in the event, Simon Robson, president of international, recorded music, at Warner Music Group, echoed Moore's comments. "The news from Ukraine is just heartbreaking," he said.

No report on the global music business can begin

without an acknowledgement of the toll of the war, which has also affected the industry. Following the invasion of Ukraine in late February, numerous music companies — including the three multinational music groups, Live Nation, Spotify and YouTube — have announced the suspension of operations in Russia.

At the unveiling of its annual report, IFPI noted that global recorded-music revenue reached \$25.9 billion in 2021, an 18.5% increase over 2020 and the highest level ever reported by the trade organization. The results were driven largely by a 21.9% jump in paid streaming subscription revenue. Streaming now accounts for a startling 65% of global music sales, according to IFPI.

*Billboard's* 2022 International Power Players — nominated by their firms and peers and chosen by our

editors from selected industry sectors — have contributed to that growth. All have primary responsibility for markets outside the United States, the territories that account for the overwhelming majority of the world's recorded-music sales.

On IFPI's global top 10 albums chart, it's no surprise that Adele is No. 1. But local artists in each market — Yung Hurn from Germany, Anitta from Brazil, Burna Boy from Nigeria and many others — have broken the long dominance of Anglo-American repertoire on the world stage. The multinational music groups, seeking to maximize their access to local artists and propel local talent to global audiences, have steadily increased their presence in regions they previously did not prioritize.

"Around the world record companies are engaging at a very local level to support music cultures and bring on the development of [an] emerging music ecosystem," said Moore, in announcing the latest global numbers. "As more markets mature, they join with and contribute to the rich, globally interconnected music world."

The 2021 results exceeded the highest previous totals ever reported by IFPI — a tally of \$24.1 billion in 1991. And Moore took a moment to put the historical trend in perspective.

"Some of you may have lived through the days when we were reporting year after year about the decline of the industry," she said. "But now we're in our seventh year of global growth. There's a lot of optimism in the market."

—THOM DUFFY

## MUSIC GROUPS GLOBAL

### Adam Granite

EXECUTIVE VP OF MARKET DEVELOPMENT,  
UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP

### Dickon Stainer

PRESIDENT/CEO OF GLOBAL CLASSICS AND JAZZ,  
UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP

Granite oversaw UMG's significant expansion in China over the past year, which included the launching of Republic and Capitol outposts and the relaunching of PolyGram Records China and EMI China as front-line labels, making Universal "the first major music company to introduce a multilabel structure" there, he says. And in India, UMG was the first music company to create dedicated labels for all the major local dialects. "UMG doubled down on our unmatched commitment and belief in the diverse and unique music talent globally," Granite adds. Stainer, who runs all of Universal Music's classical music operations from London, oversaw the evolution of Italian pianist-composer Ludovico Einaudi as an "international streaming phenomenon," he says, who helped score the Academy Award-winning movies *Nomadland* and *The Father* and also scored on TikTok with his track "Experience," which has topped 11 million video creations and more than 23 billion views — "a truly astonishing feat."

### Stéphane Hubert

EXECUTIVE VP OF GROUP INVESTMENTS AND STRATEGY, BMG

### Dominique Casimir

EXECUTIVE VP OF GLOBAL REPERTOIRE AND MARKETING, EUROPEAN UNION, LATIN AMERICA, ASIA-PACIFIC AND SYNCH, BMG

As BMG's earnings grew 5.1% from 2020 to 2021 and the publishing business came "roaring back," as BMG CEO Hartwig Masuch told investors recently, the company scored unusual hits like its first-ever live musical — *Ku'damm 56*, based on a popular German TV series. "Despite all the obstacles of the pandemic, it has become 2021's most successful new German musical," Casimir says. Next up for the Bertelsmann-



Adele's album *30* debuted at No. 1 in over 30 countries, according to Sony Music Entertainment, whose executives contributed to her global success.

owned company, whose publishing division represents songwriters from Keith Richards to the late rapper Juice WRLD, is setting up its Mexico division as "the new hub" for its Latin American operations, says Casimir.

### Donny Novakovic

VP OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING,  
DISNEY MUSIC GROUP

Novakovic and his team had a fairytale few months with the blockbuster success of the *Encanto* soundtrack, as the U.S. chart performance of the hit "We Don't Talk About Bruno" surpassed every Disney song of the past 26 years. "We localized the soundtrack in 23 languages and celebrated the No. 1 album in Canada, Australia, Ireland and New Zealand for multiple weeks," he says. "We Don't Talk About Bruno" held the No. 1 U.K. singles chart position for 12 consecutive weeks and the album continues to top the compilation chart.

### Jiwon Park

CEO, HYBE

### YJ Shin

PRESIDENT, BIGHIT MUSIC

When a company represents some of the world's biggest pop stars, such

as BTS and Tomorrow X Together, it doesn't take much to "transcend regional borders to establish a strong foothold for artists to be loved worldwide," says Shin. In early 2021, Park and his team in South Korea rebranded from Big Hit Entertainment to HYBE and led "an industrial innovation of sorts" to increase the company's efficiency in production, distribution, tech and concerts. The goal? To establish a "fan-centered industrial ecosystem," says Shin, "so that fans and artists can constantly continue to interact."

### Melissa Thomas

EXECUTIVE VP OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING,  
U.S. REPERTOIRE, SONY MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT

### Wouter Jansen

SENIOR VP OF DIGITAL AND COMMERCIAL STRATEGY,  
U.S. INTERNATIONAL, SONY MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT

### Jenna Novak

SENIOR DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING,  
SONY MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT

The highlight of international marketing for Sony in the past year can be summed up in one word: Adele. Her album *30* debuted at No. 1 in over 30 countries, according to the company. Thomas was promoted this past year to oversee the international strategy for

Sony Music's front-line U.S. labels. She oversees a global department that includes marketing and promotion, digital, streaming and sales expertise, guiding Sony's biggest U.S. artist campaigns in over 50 markets in Europe, Latin America, Australasia and Africa. For those regions, Jansen guides streaming and digital marketing strategy, including campaigns involving Spotify, TikTok, Apple Music, Instagram and YouTube. Novak is responsible for RCA Records' international roster and led the global strategy for Doja Cat's *Planet Her*.

### Eric Wong

PRESIDENT/CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER, RECORDED MUSIC, WARNER MUSIC GROUP

### Simon Robson

PRESIDENT OF INTERNATIONAL, RECORDED MUSIC,  
WARNER MUSIC GROUP

### Jessica Keeley-Carter

SENIOR VP OF GLOBAL MARKETING,  
WARNER MUSIC GROUP

For Warner's international division, "superstar artists and hits are coming from all corners of the world and connecting with people globally," says Robson, who was named to the post in late 2020. CKay broke out of Nigeria and experienced global stardom with "Love Nwantiti (ah ah ah)," while Brazilian pop star Anitta and Argentine rapper Paulo Londra reached the top of Spotify's Global chart — securing the No. 1 and No. 2 spots for "Envolver" and "Plan A," respectively, the first time that both a Brazilian and Argentine artist have climbed that high. "It has been great to see so many international artists enjoy worldwide success," says Robson, "and this is a trend that will only continue to grow."

## MUSIC GROUPS EUROPE AND AFRICA

### Frank Briegmann

CHAIRMAN/CEO, UNIVERSAL MUSIC CENTRAL EUROPE/  
DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON

### Olivier Nusse

CEO, UNIVERSAL MUSIC FRANCE/UNIVERSAL MUSIC AFRICA

### Sipho Dlamini

CEO, UNIVERSAL MUSIC SOUTH AFRICA AND SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

### Franck Kacou

MANAGING DIRECTOR, UNIVERSAL MUSIC AFRICA

**"Superstar artists and hits are coming from all corners of the world and connecting with people globally."** —SIMON ROBSON



Under Briegmann, UMG expanded operations across the Balkans, Eastern Europe and Russia, including the launch earlier this year of Virgin Music in Russia, to support its independent label distribution and artists — until the war in Ukraine led UMG to join other countries in suspending operations in the country. In Germany, the largest music market in Briegmann's region, Universal had the top single of 2021 with Nathan Evans' "Wellerman," as well as the top two albums with ABBA's *Voyage* and Helene Fischer's *Rausch*. Nusse, with responsibility for France and Africa, saw Universal win in nine out of 14 categories at France's NRJ Awards. Dlamini oversees all of UMG's operations in English-speaking Africa, where he grew the local market and helped create new opportunities for African talent to reach global audiences. In 2021, according to the company, seven of the top 10 artists on Apple South Africa were from UMG labels. Kacou struck a partnership with leading French rapper-entrepreneur Booba and his Tal-lac Records label. The deal marked the launch of 92 i Africa in partnership with Universal Music Africa and Universal Music France to develop African rap and hip-hop acts like DopeBoy DMG (Senegal) and Didi B (Ivory Coast).

### Rob Cowling

GM, GALLO MUSIC GROUP

Gallo Music Group includes Africa's largest and oldest independent label, which marks its 95th anniversary this year, and Cowling oversees the company's label and publishing divisions. Last year, Gallo Music Investments announced the appointment of managing director Simukayi Mukuna and took a significant stake in one of Africa's biggest independent content aggregators, Content Connect Africa. Among the music group's recent initiatives, the Gallo Remixed project has allowed current artists to reinterpret songs from Gallo's deep publishing catalog of African classics. Producer-DJ Black Coffee, who worked on Gallo Remixed, won the best dance/electronic album Grammy Award for *Subconsciously*.

### Fabian Drebes Doreen Schimk

CO-PRESIDENTS, WARNER MUSIC CENTRAL EUROPE

### Mark Fry

PRESIDENT, WARNER MUSIC NORDICS

### Alfonso Perez-Soto

PRESIDENT OF EMERGING MARKETS,  
WARNER RECORDED MUSIC

Drebes and Schimk were promoted last year to co-lead Warner Music Central Europe and have overseen the launch of Atlantic Records Germany, which is focused on discovering and developing

German hip-hop. Austrian-born Yung Hurn, described by the company as one of the most influential German-speaking artists of recent years, is the label's first signing. Fry, who had been managing director of market-leading Warner Music Finland, now oversees operations in that country along with Sweden, Norway and Denmark. The song "Habibi" (Arabic for "darling" or "sweetheart"), credited to Swedish rapper Ricky Rich and AMRAM Mafia, has charted in Sweden, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Greece. Perez-Soto, also named to his role last year, has responsibility for Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa; India and South Asia; the eastern Mediterranean region; and Eastern Europe — home to 40% of the world's population, according to WMG. Among Perez-Soto's achievements is bringing Nigerian artist CKay into the WMG network. The singer-songwriter reached No. 1 on *Billboard*'s Emerging Artists chart in November thanks to his hit "Love Nwantiti (ah ah ah)."

### Fred Gillham

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF EUROPE AND THE U.K.,  
CONCORD RECORDED MUSIC

Having expanded his U.K. managing director role to encompass all of continental Europe, Gillham says he also celebrated "three great successes for our artists." Swedish rock band Ghost's fifth album, *Impera*, debuted at No. 1 in multiple European countries. *The Tip-tipping Point*, Tears for Fears' first album in 17 years, debuted at No. 8 on the *Billboard* 200, matching the peak of 1989's *The Seeds of Love*. And Korn scored its sixth No. 1 title on *Hard Rock Albums* with its latest release, *Requiem*.

### Tony Harlow

CEO, WARNER MUSIC U.K.

### Victor Aroldoss

SENIOR VP OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING,  
WARNER MUSIC U.K.

Harlow's role includes oversight of the Atlantic, Parlophone, Rhino and Warner Records labels in the market as well as ADA U.K. Among several key moves by Harlow is the creation of a new joint-venture label with Darcus Beese, previously president/CEO of Island Records in the United States. Aroldoss leads international marketing strategies for the front-line U.K. labels that are home to Anne-Marie, Charli XCX, Coldplay, Dua Lipa, Ed Sheeran, Foals, Jess Glynne, Lianne La Havas, Muse, Royal Blood and Rudimental. The company celebrated the rise of three singles by

four U.K. artists — Ed Sheeran's "Shivers," Lipa and Elton John's "Cold Heart (PNAU Remix)" and Coldplay and BTS' "My Universe" — into the top 10 of the *Billboard* Hot 100.

### Jason Iley

CHAIRMAN/CEO, SONY MUSIC U.K. AND IRELAND

### Nicola Tuer

COO, SONY MUSIC U.K. AND IRELAND

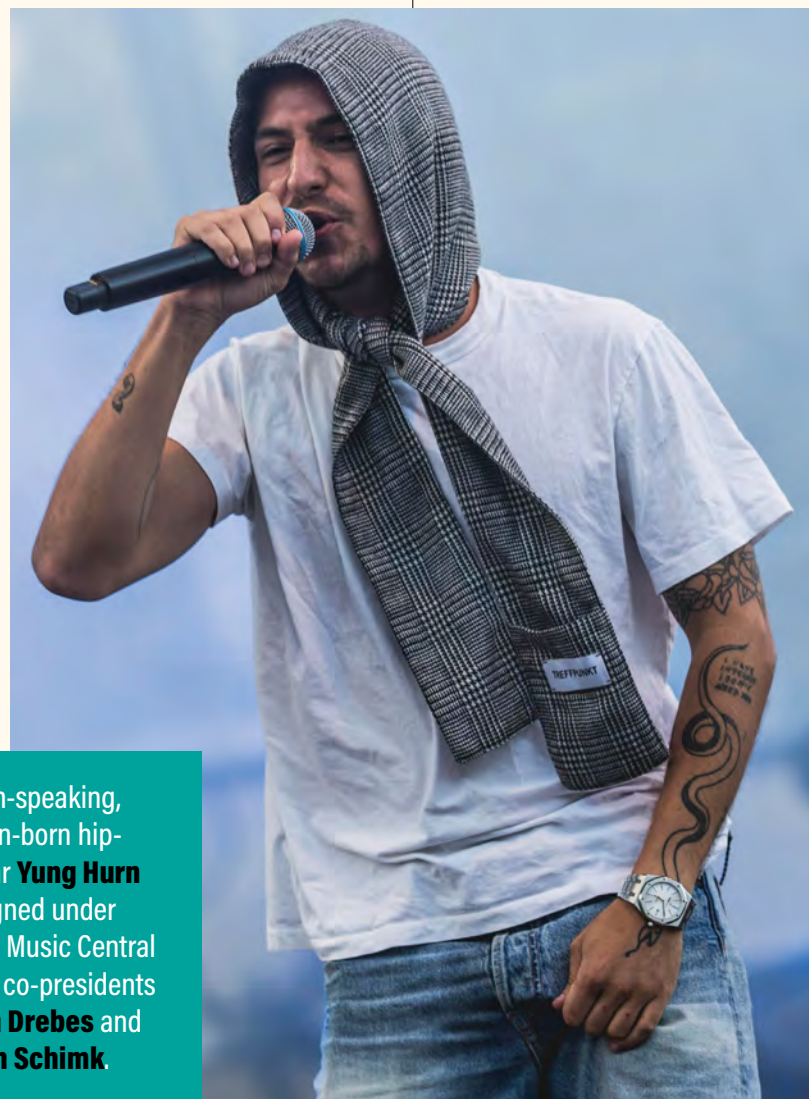
Under Iley and Tuer, Sony Music U.K. scored nine No. 1 albums, including the second album from Rag'n'Bone Man, the breakthrough release from Tom Grennan, the Manic Street Preachers first chart-topping album in 23 years and hits from London Grammar, Bring Me the Horizon, Foo Fighters, Kings of Leon and The Script. BRIT Award nominations went to Grennan, Joy Crookes, Mimi Webb, Riton and Little Mix — the first all-female act to win the award for British group. Tuer oversees the company's commercial group, which helped give Mariah Carey a No. 1 U.K. hit with "All I Want for Christmas Is You" (26 years after its release) and created a TikTok campaign for the 30th anniversary of George Michael's "Freedom! '90." Iley has been responsible for the U.K. divi-

sion of Sony's worldwide Social Justice Fund, which in the United Kingdom has distributed more than \$1 million in grants to 16 beneficiaries since its launch in June 2020.

### David Joseph

CHAIRMAN/CEO, UNIVERSAL MUSIC U.K. AND IRELAND

Among the top-selling artists in the United Kingdom in the past year, the Universal labels under Joseph could boast seven of them: Taylor Swift, Drake, ABBA, Olivia Rodrigo, Eminem, The Weeknd and The Beatles. In his territories, Joseph has responsibility for the Capitol, Decca, Island, Polydor, EMI and 0207 Def Jam labels, as well as the renowned Abbey Road Studios. In 2021, Joseph helped re-establish the iconic Virgin brand with the launch of Virgin Music Label and Artist Services and launched the new Mercury Studios, whose first announced film project is a new Abbey Road documentary directed by Mary McCartney. He also oversaw the creation of a U.K. Task Force for Meaningful Change, led by Afryea Henry-Fontaine and Fay Hoyte, with representation from across UMG's U.K. business, to contribute to UMG's Global Task Force for Meaningful Change.



German-speaking, Austrian-born hip-hop star Yung Hurn was signed under Warner Music Central Europe co-presidents Fabian Drebes and Doreen Schimk.



# tunecore.



**AJAR** (FRANCE)

10 million+ Spotify Streams,  
92k+ Spotify Monthly Listeners



**Ana Castela** (BRAZIL)

Top 50 Viral Spotify Brazil,  
830k+ TikTok Followers



**Anatomy Rabbit** (THAILAND)

JOOX Award "Best Indie Song"  
Nomination, Spotify Radar's  
Billboard



**Cleo Sol** (UK)

MOBO Award "Best R&B/Soul  
Act" Winner, 1 million+ Spotify  
Monthly Listeners, Ivor nominated



BILLBOARD INTERNATIONAL  
POWER PLAYER 2022

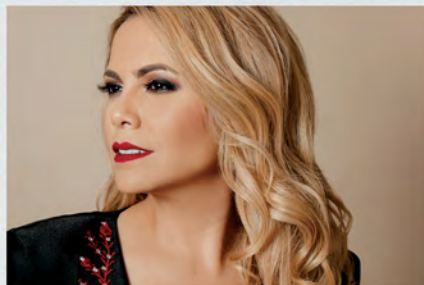
"I'd like to call attention to talented TuneCore artists from across the world. We couldn't do what we do without you, and your achievements are a testament to the power and rise of independent artists. As Billboard honors international music executives, TuneCore would like to applaud all of our international artists."

**Andrea Gleeson**  
CEO, TUNECORE



**Danilla Riyadi** (INDONESIA)

100 million+ Spotify Streams,  
400k Spotify Monthly Listeners



**Erika Vidrio** (MEXICO)

2021 Latin Grammy Nomination,  
Most Recorded female composer  
in the Regional Mexicano genre



**LA SAD** (ITALY)

Supergroup featuring Theø,  
Plant, and Fiks, 8 million+ Spotify  
Streams on their first album



**PJ Sin Suela** (PUERTO RICO)

Billboard "10 Latin Artists to  
Watch", Billboard Top "Hot  
Latin Song"



**Sinach** (NIGERIA)

GMA Dove Awards "Song of the  
Year" Winner, 100 million+  
YouTube Views



**Spoegwolf** (SOUTH AFRICA)

Spoegwolf the first Afrikaans  
band in history to reach #1 on  
the Apple Music Album Charts



**SVDP, Navz-47 (maajja)** (INDIA)

SVDP, Navz-47, and maajja for  
Neeye Oli. Nominated for "Music  
Video of the Year" at the Juno  
Awards. 4 million+ YouTube Views



**Theo Junior** (GERMANY)

Only 18 years old, 750k+ TikTok  
Followers, went viral on TikTok  
with unique name Theophilus  
Junior Bestelmeyer

## Maximilian Kolb

EXECUTIVE VP OF REPERTOIRE AND MARKETING,  
CONTINENTAL EUROPE, BMG

Kolb helped BMG's European division develop rising stars such as Italian singer-songwriter Ditonellapiaga ("Chimica") and Spanish Eurovision contestant Chanel ("SloMo") while boosting veteran artists like German production trio KitschKrieg as well as Netherlands label partner 8ball. The division "really showcases all the facets we work in, from recordings to publishing, live and more," says Kolb. Plus, BMG acquired an extensive portfolio of rights from Tina Turner in October. "Introducing an icon like her as the female force that she has always been to a new generation is extremely inspiring," Kolb adds.

## Daniel Lieberberg

PRESIDENT OF CONTINENTAL EUROPE AND AFRICA,  
SONY MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT

## Patrick Mushatsi-Kareba

CEO OF GERMANY, SWITZERLAND AND AUSTRIA, SONY  
MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT

## Marie-Anne Robert

MANAGING DIRECTOR, SONY MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT  
FRANCE

Within his region of responsibility, Lieberberg recently has expanded Sony's business in Israel and Africa; overseen breakthroughs for artists in France, Germany and Italy; and built a team to advance social justice in the music industry and beyond. Under Mushatsi-Kareba, Sony Music Germany has achieved border-crossing success with hits including "Beggin'" by Måneskin, "Roller" by Apache207, "Savage Love" by Jawsh 685 and Jason Derulo, and the "Roses" remix by SAINt JHN and Imanbek. Mushatsi-Kareba signed the German-Ghanaian rap star Pajel and has helped drive international collaborations such as German artist AriBeatz teaming up with Latin superstar Ozuna. Sony Music in September named Robert managing director of the label's French operation, making her the first woman to fill the role. She will oversee signings and acquisitions for Sony France and work to boost the digital transformation of the world's fifth-largest market.

## MUSIC GROUPS LATIN

### Alejandro Duque

PRESIDENT, WARNER MUSIC LATIN AMERICA

### Sergio Affonso

PRESIDENT, WARNER MUSIC BRAZIL

### Tomás Rodríguez

MANAGING DIRECTOR, WARNER MUSIC MEXICO

Warner's Latin focus is highlighted by the recent success of Anitta, who became the first Brazilian artist to top *Billboard's* Global Excl. U.S. chart with "Envolver" the same week Argentina's Paulo Londra hit No. 3 with "Plan A," as well as signings of Colombia's Blessd and Argentina's Tiago PZK. In Mexico, Warner signed top producers SOG (Blessd, Ryan Castro) and MAFF (J Balvin, Sech) and rising Costa Rican star Siho Villalobos. The latter deal exemplifies Warner Mexico's strategy of tapping Central American acts with regional and international potential. "Internationally," says Duque, "Latin music has never been in a better position."

## Jesús López

CHAIRMAN/CEO, UNIVERSAL MUSIC LATIN AMERICA  
AND IBERIAN PENINSULA

## Luis Estrada

PRESIDENT, UNIVERSAL MUSIC SOUTHERN CONE

## Victor Gonzalez

PRESIDENT, VIRGIN MUSIC LABEL AND ARTIST  
SERVICES LATIN AMERICA AND IBERIAN PENINSULA

## Paulo Lima

PRESIDENT, UNIVERSAL MUSIC BRAZIL

Universal's ability to internationalize local Latin artists has been highlighted by Sebastián Yatra's Academy Awards performance of "Dos Oruguitas" and collaboration with John Legend; Karol G's success as Latin music's leading female artist; and J Balvin's collaborations with Ed Sheeran. Estrada has focused on spotlighting local genre cumbia 420, helping sign a joint-venture deal with Kriterion Music and Universal Spain. And in his new position at Virgin, Gonzalez has expanded his operation, establishing regional support teams that have closed deals with HUB Records in Brazil and signed emerging talent like Samantha Sánchez in the United States and Maximiliano Calvo in Spain. In the last year, Lima has developed over 15 successful local acts in Brazil, including Jão.

## Afo Verde

CHAIRMAN/CEO, SONY MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT  
LATIN IBERIA

## Maria Fernandez

EXECUTIVE VP/COO, SONY MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT  
LATIN IBERIA

## José María Barbat

PRESIDENT, SONY MUSIC IBERIA

## Paulo Junquero

PRESIDENT, SONY MUSIC BRAZIL

## Melissa Exposito

MANAGING DIRECTOR, SONY MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT  
CENTRAL AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN

Sony continued to be the market leader in Latin America and Spain thanks to the international success of artists like Rauw Alejandro, Farruko, Maluma and Camilo. In Spain, the company led for an eighth consecutive year, posting a record market share in 2021 thanks to C. Tangana's *El Madrileño* and the launch of Nathy



The ability of **Universal** executives to bring local Latin artists to global audiences has been highlighted by the international success of **Karol G** from Colombia.

Peluso at an international level. In Brazil, Sony finalized the acquisition of Som Live, Brazil's largest independent, and led in popularizing the *pisadinha* genre. New signings in the region include acts like Colombia's Beéle. Sony's Central America and Caribbean region also broke its first global star, 24-year-old Boza from Panama, the first Latin American artist featured on Spotify's U.S. Radar program.

## MUSIC GROUPS AUSTRALASIA

### Andrew Chan

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF GREATER CHINA, SONY  
MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT

### Arina Dmitrieva

MANAGING DIRECTOR, SONY MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT  
RUSSIA

### Rajat Kakar

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF INDIA, SONY MUSIC  
ENTERTAINMENT

### Shridhar Subramaniam

PRESIDENT OF CORPORATE STRATEGY AND MARKET  
DEVELOPMENT FOR ASIA AND THE MIDDLE EAST,  
SONY MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT

Sony and other major U.S. companies suspended operations in Russia in March in response to the invasion of Ukraine. Previously in that market, Dmi-

trieva had taken a lead in anti-piracy actions both in outreach to government officials and through the rights association NFMI. She also advanced an educational program for young people from Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States who seek to work in the music business. In China, under Chan, Sony reports local repertoire breakthroughs including the track "Stars and Sea" from HL Entertainment, which surpassed 300 million streams worldwide in one month, according to the company; C-pop star Eric Chou's "You Don't Belong to Me," which topped charts in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia; and awards for veteran star Karen Mok from the digital platform NetEase. In India, Kakar oversaw an industry milestone as the tracks "Rataan Lambiyaan" and "Ranjha" from the soundtrack to the film *Shershaah* helped propel the album to over 1 billion streams. Subramaniam oversees all Sony companies throughout Asia and the Middle East, with responsibility for joint ventures, investments and partnerships for one of the world's fastest-growing regions.

### Sunny Chang

CHAIRMAN/CEO, UNIVERSAL MUSIC GREATER CHINA

### Calvin Wong

CEO OF SOUTHEAST ASIA/SENIOR VP OF ASIA,  
UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP

### Naoshi Fujikura

PRESIDENT/CEO, UNIVERSAL MUSIC JAPAN

### Devraj Sanyal

MANAGING DIRECTOR/CEO OF INDIA AND SOUTH ASIA,  
UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP

Last year under Chang, Universal Music

**Congratulations to our  
International Power Players**

**Kim Frankiewicz, EVP, A&R Worldwide**  
Concord Music Publishing

**Tina Funk, MD**  
Concord Music Publishing GSA

**Fred Gillham, MD, UK & Europe**  
Concord Recorded Music



Greater China announced a significant expansion of its recorded-music operations, including a multilabel structure and new flagship labels — Republic Records China, EMI China, PolyGram Records China, Universal Music China and, most recently, Capitol Records China — to focus more closely on domestic A&R and local-language artists within the region. Wong leads UMG's operations in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. Artists from Def Jam Southeast Asia were among those chosen to appear on Snoop Dogg's recent release *The Algorithm (Global Edition)*. In Japan, Fujikura last year saw BTS named Billboard Japan's top act on its year-end chart and the group's release *BTS, The Best* named top album. Local artists King & Prince, Backnumber and Mrs. Green Apple are among the recent breakthroughs, and Fujikura has expanded the services his company offers artists to include merchandising, live entertainment and fan clubs. In India under Sanyal, UMG reports it had the top four non-film songs of 2021: "Baarish ban Jaana" from Payal Dev, "Baarish Ki Jaaye" and "Filhaal 2" from BPrak and "Jugnu" from Badshah featuring Nikhita Gandhi.

### Chris Gobalakrishna Jonathan Serbin

CO-PRESIDENTS, WARNER MUSIC ASIA

### Dan Rosen

PRESIDENT, WARNER MUSIC AUSTRALASIA

Warner Music Asia has "significantly expanded" its footprint and roster of regional Pan-Asian labels, including Asiatic Records (hip-hop), Whet Records (dance) and WMA (pop), "enabling top artists in the genres from different Asian countries to more rapidly grow their fan base across the wider region," says Serbin. Gobalakrishna adds that strategies like the artist mentorship, marketing and distribution program WAVE in Southeast Asia are helping accelerate collaborations by artists such as British singer James Blunt and Chinese superstar Jason Zhang, "creating awareness for artists in new markets." Warner Music Australasia's Rosen has focused on setting up homegrown artists like Australia's Budjerah and New Zealand's Harper Finn for success through investments in the label's roster, appointing new executives in A&R, marketing and promotions.

### Matt Gudinski

CEO, MUSHROOM GROUP

Mushroom Group enters a new era with a flurry of deals under Matt Gudinski, following the 2021 death of his father, Australian music business pioneer Michael Gudinski. In quick succession, Mushroom has launched an artist management division, an alliance with Universal Music

Group's Virgin Music and a new structure at Frontier Touring that has announced tours by Ed Sheeran and others. "Mushroom's proudest achievement over the last 18 months was our ability to keep our full team together during the pandemic whilst continuing to grow the Mushroom family," says Gudinski, who was on hand for the March 24 unveiling of a statue honoring his father in Mushroom's home city of Melbourne. "We also created unique opportunities for not only Mushroom artists but the whole Australian music industry with new ventures such as [Australian Broadcasting Corporation music series] *The Sound*." With Frontier's full calendar, "we are leading the pack with the return to live concerts and events," Gudinski says, and "kick-starting international touring for the region."

### Cussion Pang

EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN, TENCENT MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

### Tsai Chun Pan

GROUP VP OF CONTENT COOPERATION DEPARTMENT, TENCENT MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

In 2021, the crackdown by Chinese regulators on numerous tech companies led Tencent Music Entertainment Group to wind down its exclusive licensing contracts with labels, among other actions. But TME kept its momentum, finishing the year with a 7% revenue gain to \$4.9 billion and 32% growth in music subscriptions, by focusing on superservicing the 300,000 independent artists on its streaming platform, hosting 56 livestream performances through TME Live and fostering industry opposition against piracy. "With all these efforts," says Pang, "TME has become the partner of choice for music labels."

## STREAMING

### Pawan Agarwal

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR INDIA AND SOUTH ASIA AND LABEL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT FOR ASIA PACIFIC, YOUTUBE

### Dan Chalmers

HEAD OF MUSIC FOR EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA, YOUTUBE

### Sandra Jimenez

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR LATIN AMERICA, YOUTUBE

### Sun Lee

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR KOREA AND GREATER CHINA AND PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR ASIA PACIFIC, YOUTUBE

### Ruuben van den Heuvel

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND AND LABEL RELATIONS FOR ASIA PACIFIC, YOUTUBE

In their respective regions, YouTube's international executives are drawing

views to the platform by working closely with local artists and industry executives. Pawan leads music partnerships in India, one of the world's fastest-growing markets, with one of YouTube's biggest audiences. He and his team have helped genres like Desi hip-hop gain national attention across India. Chalmers played a key role in securing the deal that led the BRIT Awards to stream on YouTube. He helped engineer Ed Sheeran's album preview session on YouTube Shorts and ABBA's global livestream with the band's avatars. Jimenez and her team have supported the breakthrough of such artists as Anitta (who has 16.2 million YouTube subscribers), Camilo and Karol G. Lee led the YouTube Shorts partnership with BTS. Van den Heuvel co-manages the YouTube APAC music partnerships team, which works directly with the region's music industry (and includes staff representing 11 nationalities). He has overseen the local licensing of YouTube Shorts, contributing to the successful launch of that feature in the region, and has supported regional YouTube and music industry events involving artists, managers, labels, publishers and others.

### Glenn Booth

COO, KISWE

With a reach far beyond its New Jersey headquarters, Kiswe delivered hundreds of interactive livestream concerts and events worldwide. The company connected millions of fans to each other — and to their favorite artists — with tools like "cheering" and "chat" functions that ultimately enabled 1 billion fan engagements, according to Booth. While Kiswe reached milestones with BTS — which used the platform to play to Guinness World Record-breaking crowds — the company and its partnership with HYBE also helped drive global visibility for other K-pop groups like Seventeen, Tomorrow X Together and Enhypen. "It has been an incredibly exciting ride," says Booth.

### Bruno Crotot

HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL FOR MUSIC, SPOTIFY

### Sulinna Ong

GLOBAL HEAD OF EDITORIAL, SPOTIFY

### Mia Nygren

MANAGING DIRECTOR FOR LATIN AMERICA, SPOTIFY

In 2021, Spotify expanded its reach into more than 80 new markets and now serves 406 million monthly active users in 184 markets. The streaming service brings "real scale to the music industries of emerging markets," says Crotot, with the help of its global emerging-artist platform RADAR and the international expansion of Spotify Singles. Of the 52,600 artists who generated over \$10,000 on Spotify in 2021, 34% live in countries outside IFPI's top 10 music markets.

## The Latin Surge

Recorded-music revenue in Latin America increased by 31.2% in 2021, its 12th consecutive year of growth and one of the highest rates globally, according to the annual Global Music Report released in March by IFPI.

Were it not for currency devaluation, the region would account for an even higher share of global revenue.

The IFPI also reports on the surge in digital consumption of music in Latin territories. Streaming accounted for 85.9% of the market, one of the highest proportions in any region.

The growth is driven by the strength of the region's artists, including several major superstars, and outsized streaming rates compared with other regions.

For a snapshot of that talent, *Billboard* highlights some of the most influential talents in Spain, which, bound by language with Latin America, is both a source and destination for music in Spanish; Portuguese-speaking Brazil, which is the largest Latin American territory (by recorded-music revenue); and the Latin markets of Mexico, Argentina and Colombia.



### SPAIN

C. Tangana SONY  
Aitana UNIVERSAL  
Alejandro Sanz SONY



### BRAZIL

The Barons of Pisadinha  
SONY MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT BRAZIL  
Gustavo Lima SONY MUSIC  
ENTERTAINMENT BRAZIL  
Marília Mendonça SOM LIVRE  
Jorge & Mateus SOM LIVRE  
Henrique & Juliano  
VIDA NOVA/VIRGIN MUSIC



### ARGENTINA

Tiago PZK WARNER  
BZRP DALE PLAY/SONY  
Tini SONY  
Maria Becerra 360  
Duki DALE PLAY/SONY  
L-Gante WARNER



### COLOMBIA

J Balvin UNIVERSAL  
Maluma SONY  
Karol G UNIVERSAL  
Camilo SONY  
Blessd WARNER



### MEXICO

Luis Miguel WARNER  
Christian Nodal  
UNIVERSAL/SONY  
Dana Paola UNIVERSAL  
Banda MS SONY  
Grupo Firme MUSIC VIP  
ENTERTAINMENT

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**ALEX HILL**

**JIM KING**

**SIMON JONES**

**STEVE HOMER**

**AEG**

**PRESENTS**

**Jo Charrington**, recently named co-president of EMI Records U.K., oversaw the global success of **Sam Smith** during her nine years at the helm of Capitol Records U.K.



## Konrad Dantas

FOUNDER, KONDZILLA

Celebrating 10 years in business, Dantas' ever-evolving entertainment company now encompasses KondZilla Records — boasting over 100 artists on the roster — KondZilla Films, KondZilla Licensing and news channel KondZilla Portal. “We still remain at the top of the music industry,” the Brazilian executive says, thanks to its fast-growing YouTube channel, which has 65.5 million subscribers — equivalent to 31% of the Brazilian population. Another milestone for the company was the release of season two of its in-house-produced Netflix series *Sintonia*, which became one of the most streamed shows of 2021 in Brazil.

## Paul Firth

DIRECTOR, AMAZON MUSIC INTERNATIONAL

## Kazuhiro Shimada

DIRECTOR/GM, AMAZON MUSIC JAPAN

## Claire Imoucha

HEAD OF MUSIC INDUSTRY, AMAZON MUSIC SPAIN

## Paul Forat

HEAD OF AMAZON MUSIC MEXICO

## Bruno Vieira

HEAD OF AMAZON MUSIC BRAZIL

Amazon Music launched in Chile and Colombia and spent the past year focusing on high-definition audio, rolling out the premium sound for free to all of its Unlimited customers in October and adding spatial audio capability to more devices in its smart speaker portfolio. “Spatial audio puts the listener inside the music with an immersive, multidimensional audio experience and allows fans to hear music as the artists who created it intended,” says Firth. “I’m very proud of our work in HD sound and how this helps to bring fans and artists closer together.”

## Jeronimo Folgueira

CEO, DEEZER

Under Folgueira, the French streaming service Deezer has introduced local talents to audiences through its Originals content, offering podcasts and playlists including *Souvenirs d'enfance* for French listeners and *Forró Viral* for those in Brazil. “In Reggaeton Acústico, for example, which featured acoustic versions of songs from the United States and Latin America, we showed fans a side of reggaeton they had never heard before,” says Folgueira. A partnership with German broadcaster RTL+ was announced in November that he calls “a first of its kind in the world” that will “very clearly differentiate RTL+ and Deezer in Germany.”

## Jason Johnson

VP OF MARKETING AND BRAND STRATEGY, AFRICA, AUDIOMACK

## Max Escobar Souffrain

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AND LATIN STRATEGY, LATIN AMERICA, AUDIOMACK

## Charlotte Bwana

MANAGER OF MEDIA AND BRAND PARTNERSHIPS, AFRICA, AUDIOMACK

## Tanya Lawson

DIRECTOR OF REGGAE AND GOSPEL, CARIBBEAN, AUDIOMACK

Audiomack reports that it became the top-ranked Apple iOS music streaming app in 2021 in Nigeria, Ghana, Tanzania, Senegal and Kenya — all territories under Johnson's region of responsibility. He has developed marketing initiatives to collaborate with Afrobeats stars like Davido, Wizkid and Burna Boy that help boost their international presence. Escobar Souffrain, who leads Audiomack's Latin music curation and marketing strategy, has boosted programming including the *En la Mira* series, highlighting rising acts like Noreh, Tokischa and Immasoul. Bwana created Audiomack's new podcast show, *Swahili Radio*, that features prominent African artists. Lawson helped Audiomack become a top-ranked music streaming app in Jamaica, Haiti, St. Vincent, Grenada and Barbados.

## Robb McDaniels

CEO, THE BEATPORT GROUP

Over the last year, The Beatport Group signed over 125,000 subscribers and produced what McDaniels describes as “some of the most daring activations across livestreams and the metaverse” in partnership with consumer brands such as Desperados beer. In the wake of the company's recent 20-hour electronic music livestream benefiting Ukraine through its ReConnect fundraiser platform, McDaniels says that “The Beatport

Group has continued its investment in the DJ community by providing access to tools and services that have accelerated growth even through the pandemic. It has been an active few years for this company that helps define DJ culture around the world.”

## Jen Walsh

SENIOR DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL CONTENT AND SERVICES, APPLE

This past year, Apple introduced “its most innovative lineup of products and services ever,” says Walsh, a key international executive for the company. “With the launch of spatial audio with Dolby Atmos, Apple Music brought the next generation of sound to subscribers, a notable advancement in sound quality that also offers artists the opportunity to bring an immersive, multidimensional audio experience to fans.”

## Ama Walton

SENIOR VP OF BUSINESS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS, MUSIC, SOUNDCLOUD

As SoundCloud transitions from indie-first streaming platform to full-service distributor and label-services operation, Walton points to the launch of fan-powered royalties — which pays artists royalties based on who is listening to their music rather than market share — as the cornerstone of the company's efforts. Says Walton: “There is an urgency now to innovate and help more artists, especially emerging and independent artists, get paid and have more equitable payouts, transparency and control over their own careers.”

## Jay Winship

CEO OF ASIA PACIFIC, GODIGITAL MEDIA GROUP

In the last year, Winship has been sharing a clear message: “Music presents a stable and lucrative long-term asset class for [the Asia Pacific] investment community.” Leading GoDigital, which focuses on intellectual property rights through its various subsidiaries (including Cinq Music, AdShare and SoundRoyalties), Winship says his company “positions music as a welcome addition to the traditional equity, fixed income and real estate portfolios of Asian private and institutional investor communities.”

# LABELS AND DISTRIBUTORS

## Jericho Adams

VP OF INTERNATIONAL, 300 ENTERTAINMENT

Earlier this year, Gunna's top 10 Hot 100 hit, “Pushin P,” with Future and featuring Young Thug, had a lasting effect not only stateside but also internationally. With over 270 million streams and more than 1 million “creates” on TikTok, “Pushin P” is an enduring hit beyond social media, says Adams. “With ‘Pushin P,’ the velocity at which the song went viral was a testament to Gunna's global influence at the most granular level,” he says. “Everyone from schoolteachers in Nigeria to pro Euro soccer players and British celebrities to K-pop choreographers posted content to ‘Pushin P.’”

## Kaz Aida

HEAD OF ADA JAPAN

## Alassane Konaté

DIRECTOR, ADA FRANCE

## Larissa Lueters

HEAD OF ADA CENTRAL EUROPE

## Adriana Sein

SENIOR VP, INTERNATIONAL, ADA WORLDWIDE

## Sander Stijnen

HEAD OF ADA MUSIC BELGIUM, NETHERLANDS AND LUXEMBOURG

## Chee Meng Tan

MANAGING DIRECTOR, ADA ASIA

ADA Worldwide has rapidly expanded over the past year, adding 60 employees outside the United States; opening offices in new territories throughout Asia, Latin America and Europe; and working with Warner Music Group's newly acquired African digital music company Africori and Middle East/North Africa music distributor Qanawat. “We've built up our presence around the world,” says Sein, a former Sony Music international marketing executive who joined ADA in September. “Our strategy has evolved to offer

Bronco



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even more from day one to our partner artists and labels to fast-track their growth internationally.”

### Rebecca Allen Jo Charrington

CO-PRESIDENTS, EMI RECORDS U.K.

In March, Universal Music U.K. announced that Charrington and Allen would jointly serve as co-presidents of EMI Records U.K. Allen had been named to lead EMI in 2020 and Charrington previously had been named president of Capitol Records U.K., so this move brought Capitol under the EMI umbrella. During her nine years at the helm of Capitol U.K., Charrington oversaw the global success of Sam Smith and the rise of emerging artists like Aitch, Mae Muller and Zoe Wees, all of whom have upcoming releases this year. During the past 12 months, EMI has achieved No. 1 albums in the United Kingdom with releases from Bastille, Elton John, Kanye West, Taylor Swift and The Killers.

### Tricia Arnold

SENIOR VP OF GLOBAL LABEL MANAGEMENT AND SALES, THE ORCHARD

### Erol Cichowski Jason Pascal

SENIOR VPs OF GLOBAL ARTIST AND LABEL PARTNERSHIPS, THE ORCHARD

### Priya Dewan

VP OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING, ASIA PACIFIC;  
MANAGING DIRECTOR OF SOUTHEAST ASIA AND KOREA, THE ORCHARD

For the 45 cities worldwide in which The Orchard operates, Arnold drives global release strategy and leads the team responsible for managing key international label relationships. For the BTS single “Butter,” Columbia Records and The Orchard worked closely with BIGHIT Music to propel the single to No. 1 on the Hot 100 for 10 weeks. Arnold oversaw The Orchard’s global sales strategy that led to top 10 chart positions for the song in over 30 territories and more than 500 million streams globally — earning the group a Guinness World Record in 2021 for the most streamed track on Spotify in 24 hours. Cichowski and Pascal jointly closed a distribution deal with Rimas Entertainment, home to Bad Bunny, under which the two companies also created a new independent label, SONAR, focused on artist development throughout Latin America. Dewan holds The Orchard’s first Pan-Asian management role and has guided the success of its Asian catalog, which includes acts like ITZY, GOT7, Kiana Valenciano, Inigo Pascal, DPR Live and BTS.

### Stacey Bedford

CEO, BANDZOOGLE

Bedford is thrilled that Bandzoogle’s

commission-free, direct-to-fan sales tools helped its members sell nearly \$10 million in merchandise and tickets in 2021, “during a global pandemic, no less.” The company offers turnkey solutions for website management, analytics, marketing and e-commerce, as well as a robust blog with best practices on search engine optimization, bio writing and web design. In tandem with continuing advancements in music tech, these Bandzoogle features enabled scores of indie artists to keep themselves solvent over the past two years. Bedford says she’s “proud to be at the helm of a company that has provided transparency, visibility and autonomy to musicians globally.”

### Alec Boateng Alex Boateng

CO-PRESIDENTS, 0207 DEF JAM

### Marisa Lauro-Norris

SENIOR VP OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING,  
DEF JAM RECORDINGS

As Universal Music Group expanded the Def Jam brand around the globe in recent years, twin brothers Alec and Alex Boateng have driven the success of the 0207 Def Jam label that they launched in the United Kingdom while Lauro-Norris has responsibility for international marketing of repertoire from the U.S. flagship label. The first signing to the British label, rapper Stormzy, reached No. 1 on the Official U.K. Albums chart in 2017 with his debut, *Gang Signs and Prayers*, and the Boatengs are now focused on launching artists such as Potter Payper, Debbie and Tendai. In the past year, Lauro-Norris has guided global campaigns for Justin Bieber’s *Justice* (which has achieved global sales of 7.7 million, according to UMG) and Kanye West’s *Donda*, which set an Apple Music record by charting at No. 1 in 152 countries while selling 2 million albums globally, according to UMG.

### Ezegozie Eze Jr.

VP OF MARKET DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICA AND DIASPORA, EMPIRE

### Titilope Adesanya

PROJECT MANAGER OF AFRICA, EMPIRE

### Mobolaji Kareem

REGIONAL HEAD OF WEST AFRICA, EMPIRE

### Jonathan Jules

SENIOR DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING,  
EMPIRE

While EMPIRE continues to boast wins on the hip-hop side with acts such as Tyga and Key Glock, the company’s most significant feat now lies in its expansion into Africa, especially after the success of Fireboy DML and his Hot 100 hit, “Peru.” “Over the past 12 to 18 months,” says Kareem, “the rapid development of our EMPIRE team on the ground in Lagos and globally has already reaped tangible

rewards with the success of our artists such as Fireboy DML, Kizz Daniel, BNXX fka Buju, Black Sherif and KiDi — not only in West Africa but around the world.”

### Cris Falcão

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF BRAZIL, INGROOVES MUSIC GROUP

### Nick Roden

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST AND INDIA, INGROOVES MUSIC GROUP

### Nina Rabe-Cairns

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND SOUTHEAST ASIA, INGROOVES MUSIC GROUP

Ingrooves reports that its global expansion over the past year was up by nearly one-third with new personnel hired in India, Mexico, the Philippines, Italy, the Netherlands, Denmark and Iceland, increasing its local presence to 23 countries. The distribution, marketing and technology company has “global streaming success powered by top indie labels GR6, Dirty Hit, Del Records and a massive year in K-pop,” says Roden. Ingrooves’ long reach is evident in Shouse’s global hit “Love Tonight” on label Onelove, which racked up over 1 billion streams and received top 20 airplay in 21 territories, according to Ingrooves. “I’m personally so thankful and proud,” says Roden, “to be part of a cohesive global team that kicks into gear whenever and wherever needed.”

### Denzyl Feigelson

CO-FOUNDER/CEO, PLATOON

In 2016, the U.K.-based South African native launched Platoon, a creative services agency that Feigelson sold to Apple in 2018. Calling his staff “team Platoon,” Feigelson touts the recent

global successes of Nigeria’s Adekunle Gold, America’s Victoria Monét and Ghana’s Amaarae, and breaking new artists like Britain’s Holly Humberstone and Nigeria’s Khaid, as well as “non-traditional” chill music and children’s music. The new Platoon7 facility in London has three recording studios, two Dolby Atmos rooms, a podcast booth, two writing rooms, a content capture studio and an educational lab “to help artists of all levels reach their next octave,” he says.

### Martin Price

HEAD OF GLOBAL EXPANSION, ONERPM

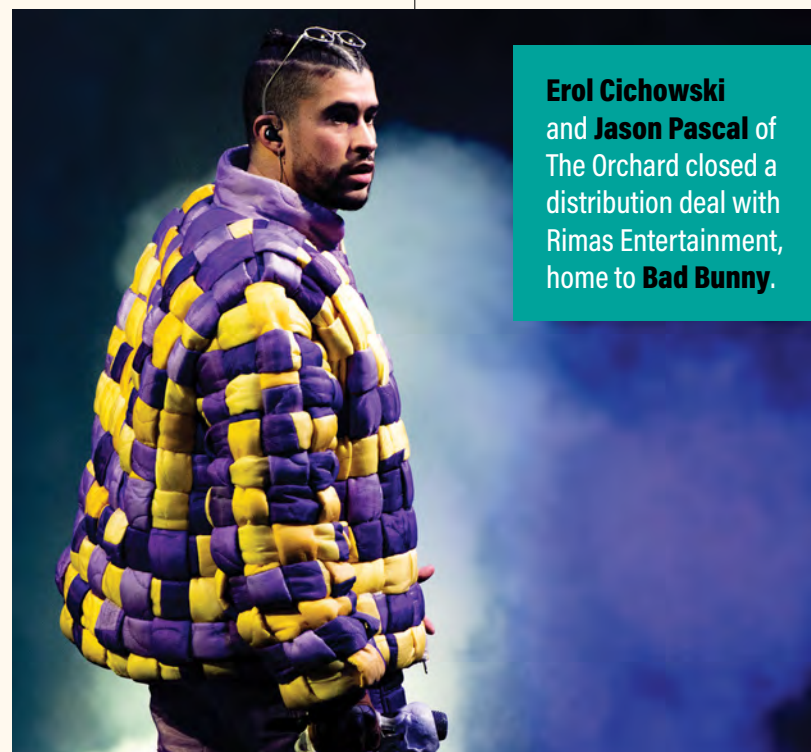
### Arthur Fitzgibbon

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF BRAZIL, ONERPM

### Andrés López

VP OF LATIN-IBERIA REGION, ONERPM

For the digital distribution and artist services company ONERpm, Price has helped guide growth at multiple new offices around the globe. The company reports that revenue doubled at its office in Jamaica (it did not report dollar volume) while the debut album 438 from Jamaican signing Masicka started at No. 14 on *Billboard*’s Heatseekers chart and reached No. 2 on Reggae Albums. Fitzgibbon oversaw the addition of more than 110,000 new Brazilian artists to ONERpm distribution in 2021, reaching over 60 billion YouTube views in the market, according to the company. López pursued growth in Argentina, Chile and Peru and expansion into other Latin markets. After opening an office in Turkey in 2021, Price this year is preparing for ONERpm to move into Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, South Africa, Senegal, Greece, Egypt and Azerbaijan.



Erol Cichowski and Jason Pascal of The Orchard closed a distribution deal with Rimas Entertainment, home to **Bad Bunny**.

TIMOTHY NORRIS/GETTY IMAGES



# CONGRATULATIONS

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PROGRAMMING DIRECTOR

ASM GLOBAL UK



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EVENT SALES DIRECTOR STOCKHOLM LIVE

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## Kenny Gates

CO-FOUNDER/CEO, [PIAS]

## Michel Lambot

CO-FOUNDER, [PIAS]

Since 1982, [PIAS] has been an industry leader in music distribution. The company is headquartered in London and Brussels, with offices worldwide. But it still pays careful attention to each release — including British singer-songwriter Arlo Parks' *Collapsed in Sunbeams* album. "From international partnerships with Apple and Spotify to TikTok making her one of the faces of their Black History Month programming," says Gates, "this is an ongoing campaign that continues to establish Arlo as a major new artist."

## Eshy Gazit

PRESIDENT/CEO, INTERTWINE MUSIC

Last June, Gazit founded record label Intertwine Music in partnership with BMG, with a specific focus "to support artists' worldwide success with a strong emphasis on the U.S. market," he says. Gazit quickly signed K-pop talents Monsta X and Wonho to global deals and helped serve as an A&R executive for new projects from each act. "Intertwine stands for creating a global music fabric intertwining cultures and music from all over the world as one," he adds. Outside of his efforts at Intertwine, he manages international songwriters and producers including Bekuh Boom, who has worked with Jennifer Lopez, Blackpink and others.

## Danielle Geiger

SENIOR VP OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS, WARNER RECORDED MUSIC

Geiger points to the company's success in growing its market share in the R&B/hip-hop sector, which she puts down to "developing artists like Jack Harlow, Cordae and Pooh Shiesty while continuing to increase the exposure of our superstar artists like Lizzo, Cardi B and Silk Sonic." She specifically notes that the lattermost, the Grammy Award-winning supergroup of Bruno Mars and Anderson .Paak, has generated over 3 billion streams worldwide.

## Andrea Gleason

CEO, TUNECORE

With the help of TuneCore Social Platforms, which let artists upload music directly onto social media networks such as TikTok and Instagram, 18-year-old Lauren Spencer-Smith's single "Fingers Crossed" went viral prior to its release, after which it hit No. 1 in four countries, reached No. 19 on the Hot 100 and sat just outside the top 10 of *Billboard's* Pop Airplay chart. "Spencer-Smith's ascension to stardom is the very reason TuneCore launched this innovative service — to

help our independent artists grow and reach new heights never before imaginable," Gleason says. "[We're] not only enabling indie artists to connect with fans and create viral moments, we're helping them to monetize those interactions."

## Jurgen Grebner

EXECUTIVE VP/HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING, INTERSCOPE GEFLEN A&M

Between Billie Eilish's first Academy Award for best original song ("No Time To Die") and second consecutive record of the year Grammy ("Everything I Wanted"), alongside Imagine Dragons' 2 billion-plus global streams for megahit "Enemy" (with JID) in collaboration with Riot Games' *Arcane* series, IGA has been on a roll. "We've had a number of global successes over the last year," says Grebner, also citing Machine Gun Kelly's latest album, *Mainstream Sellout*, and, of course, Olivia Rodrigo, who snagged best new artist at the 2022 Grammy Awards and "whose *Sour* debut has sold almost 10 million copies around the world," he says.

## Drew Hill

MANAGING DIRECTOR, PROPER MUSIC GROUP

In January, leading U.K. physical music distributor Proper Music Group was acquired by Swiss fintech firm Utopia Music — "a company that shares our values," says Hill. The Proper team "worked incredibly hard to maintain our service levels in the face of COVID-19 and navigate international trade in a post-Brexit environment," Hill says. "Following our acquisition by Utopia, I can't wait to see the business continuing to excel and grow on the global stage."

## Georgina Hilton

DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING, ARISTA RECORDS

Hilton made sure that Tai Verdes' international launch went "A-O-K," with his debut single of that title passing the 400 million-stream mark, according to the label, breaking into Spotify's top 20 and finishing in the top 10 of *Billboard's* 2021 year-end Hot Rock & Alternative Songs chart. Hilton also set Emmy Meli's career in motion with her female empowerment anthem "I Am Woman" charting in 13 countries, with marketing initiatives timed for Women's History Month and International Women's Day. "I'm also proud to continue to help develop the careers of marquee artists for the label," she says, having pushed Grammy nominee JP Saxe to over 1.7 billion global streams.

## Paul Hitchman

PRESIDENT, AWAL

AWAL — which had its acquisition by Sony approved by U.K. officials in



**Emily Kendrick of XL Records** says she awaits "the next project from envelope-pusher" **FKA Twigs**.

March — enjoyed its "best year yet, both commercially and creatively," says the London-based Hitchman, who has spent the past decade at the label-services company. In the United Kingdom, Hitchman points to seven top 10 albums in 2021 including releases from You Me at Six, Jungle, girl in red, The Vaccines and Nick Cave & Warren Ellis, while The Wombats have already landed a No. 1 album in 2022 for AWAL and Little Simz took home the BRIT Award for best new artist in February.

## Manu Kaushish

PRESIDENT, CREATE MUSIC GROUP INDIA

Since acquiring India's Nirvana Digital in November 2021, Create Music Group has enjoyed exponential growth in its YouTube monetization, distribution and rights management businesses. The views on the content that Create Music Group monetizes within India grew from 30 billion in 2019 to 137 billion in 2021 — an increase of more than 400%, according to Kaushish. Overall watch time rose to 6.9 billion hours from 2 billion in 2019, which Kaushish says "would take an individual 787,000 years watching videos 24 hours a day to watch what we served last year."

## Emily Kendrick

DIRECTOR OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT, XL RECORDINGS

After hiring three new global project managers, Kendrick was proud to see the "brilliant, innovative" campaigns they rolled out for U.K. electronic dubstep star Joy Orbison, as well as for Canadian instrumental jazz-hop trio BadBadNotGood and The xx bassist-singer Oliver Sim. "This year I am personally looking forward to overseeing the debut album from

The Smile — who I look after in addition to Radiohead — [and the start of a cycle of three releases] from The xx as they develop their solo entities," says Kendrick, who also awaits "the next project from envelope-pusher FKA Twigs." The past year also brought success for nonbinary, Latinx trans artist Arca with a five-album drop on XL, as well as the reimaging of Radiohead's *Kid A* and *Amnesiac* albums as *KID A Mnesia* and a Juno nomination for Mustafa's debut, *When Smoke Rises*.

## Christian Kroner

COO, FUGA

## Dorothee Imhoff

SENIOR VP OF EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA,

FUGA

For business-to-business music distributor FUGA, expanding into Japan and building a joint venture with Space Shower there have been among the highlights of the last 18 months. "Japan is a huge music market where the digital music business has been a bit slower in gaining momentum compared with other parts of the world," Kroner says. "The potential in the coming years in Japan is enormous due to the inevitable shift toward more digital music sales." He adds that by joining forces with the distribution and entertainment company, FUGA is "well positioned to take on the expected growth in the market."

## Ben Larsen

SENIOR VP OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING, WARNER RECORDS

Larsen points with pride to a concerted international effort to break American rapper Saweetie through remixes of her hit single "Best Friend." "We added German superstar Katja Krasavice to a

# Congratulations **Matt Gudinski** on joining Billboard's 2022 International Power Players List



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Khruangbin • KOTA The Friend • Leon Bridges • Lime Cordiale • Lorde • Marc Rebillet  
Mimi Webb • Nick Cave & Warren Ellis • Robbie Williams • Short Stack • Something for Kate  
Starcrawler • Surfaces • Tai Verdes • Tame Impala • The Killers • The Script • Thomas Headon  
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### Touring Australia + New Zealand 2022/23

**FRONTIER**



PHOTO: KANE HIBBERD

version that went to No. 1 in Germany,” he says. “Likewise, the impact we made in Australia by teaming up with JessB and OKENYO has put Saweetie in an amazing place in my home country. Add to that similar looks in the U.K., China, Korea and Japan, and we had something that made all the late nights and early mornings worth it.” The payoff for her U.S. version with Doja Cat: a No. 14 peak on the Hot 100 and a Grammy nomination for best rap song.

### Diego Laviada

CEO, DUBBING HITS

### Hernan Villarreal

CO-FOUNDER/COO, DUBBING HITS

After 28 years at Sony Mexico, most recently as vp of marketing and promotion, Laviada launched indie marketing and promotional company Dubbing Hits as a one-stop shop for press, radio and digital marketing. In three years, Dubbing has emerged as a small (10 employees) but mighty “can-do” company that delivers results-driven campaigns in Mexico and Latin America for a broad range of acts from rapper Residente and Rimas Music to up-and-comers Eladio Carrión and Mora, as well as superstars like Maluma, Ozuna and Wisin y Yandel. Standouts include the launch of a Latin Grammy campaign for Ricardo Montaner’s *Fe* throughout Latin America and the groundbreaking campaign for Ricardo Arjona’s *Blanco y Negro*.

### Sung Su Lee

CEO, SM ENTERTAINMENT

### Young Jun Tak

COO, SM ENTERTAINMENT

Tak says that Seoul-based SM Entertainment continues to soar in its 27th year as K-pop keeps reaching new global heights. Despite the ongoing pandemic, “last year we achieved our highest performance in the company’s history with nearly 18 million albums sold,” he says. Much of the credit goes to the success of metaverse girl group aespa, whose members each have avatars occupying a unique fictional world. The group signed with Creative Artists Agency in July for representation. “SM is taking the vast virtual world we have envisioned and turning it into reality,” says Tak, “and the opportunities are limitless.”

### Nando Luaces

FOUNDER/CEO, ALTA FONTE

In the past year, the digital distribution company hired over 40 staff members to join its global crew. Headquartered in Spain, Altafonte now has 15 offices in 11 countries, including key markets Mexico and Brazil. With a “very clear vision of internationalizing our artists,” Luaces says that his company signed over 1,800 acts in 2021 and developed a new

platform that “allows us to automate almost 90% of the company’s processes, providing our artists with access to multiple global analysis and advanced management tools.”

### Tom March Ben Mortimer

CO-PRESIDENTS, POLYDOR RECORDS U.K.

March and Mortimer have helped make Polydor one of the top imprints in the United Kingdom, working with acts like Billie Eilish, ABBA and Florence + the Machine. According to Mortimer, their crowning achievement in recent years came with the release of Glass Animals’ first album on the label, 2020’s *Dreamland*, which reached No. 7 on the Billboard 200 while their single “Heat Waves” crowned the Hot 100 after a 59-week climb. “It was their first record on Polydor, so we had a point to prove,” says Mortimer, adding, “We were able to go beyond our wildest dreams.” In July, March will become president of Geffen Records (U.S.) while Mortimer will move up to sole president of Polydor.

### Ted May

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF U.K. AND INTERNATIONAL, MNRK MUSIC GROUP

With the sale of eOne’s music division to Blackstone Group last year, the company was rechristened MNRK Music Group and became a stand-alone focused on recordings, publishing and artist management. It has become a major indie power that controls the catalogs of music labels Last Gang Records and Dualtone Music Group and the publishing catalog of Chuck Berry (through Dualtone), among other assets. “MNRK now builds on its incredible history as one of the biggest independent labels in the U.S. to look toward a truly global future,” says May, as “the first choice for the best music creators in the world with the resources and drive to meet that ambition.”

### Benjamin Parmar Daniel Parmar

CO-FOUNDERS/CO-PRESIDENTS, PMR RECORDS

The Parmar brothers founded PMR a decade ago, and their roster — beginning with the success of Jessie Ware and Disclosure — now generates 1 billion-plus streams annually, according to the company. While continuing their leadership of PMR, the two also previously served as A&R executives for EMI Records U.K., contributing to the success of TikTok-driven stars A1 x J1 and pop singer Bree Runway. This year, the brothers are focused on singer-songwriter Hope Tala; New York’s Amber Mark, who released her debut album, *Three Dimensions Deep*, on PMR/Interscope in January; and producer-writer-remixer SG Lewis,

who is scheduled to play Las Vegas’ Life Is Beautiful Festival in September.

### Michael Petkov

HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL, REDEYE WORLDWIDE

### Pelle Eriksson

MANAGING DIRECTOR, REDEYE WORLDWIDE

While maneuvering through a global pandemic and the impact of Brexit, distribution and music services company Redeye Worldwide has been making big moves in the past year. In what Petkov calls “an important step for the future of the company’s international business,” Redeye acquired Border Music Sweden, which allows the former to “offer a unique global distribution set.” In addition to making acquisitions, Redeye has grown physical and digital revenue year over year, introduced its own global business-to-business platform for international customers and signed label partnerships like the worldwide distribution deal with New West Records.

### Maykel Piron

CO-OWNER/CEO, ARMADA MUSIC

The long-standing Dutch electronic label opened offices in New York and made hires this year, while also finding and developing fresh talent and overseeing a sprawling roster that includes global star (and Armada co-founder) Armin van Buuren and over 60 other acts. The 2017 Armada release “Body” by Loud Luxury (featuring Brando) hit the 1 billion streams mark, and the label signed new artists and kept established acts on a steady trajectory despite the ongoing pandemic. “We had to adapt and evolve so fast my head’s still spinning,” says Piron, “but the team put their shoulders to the wheel and powered through very impressively.”

### Jeffrey Remedios

CHAIRMAN/CEO, UNIVERSAL MUSIC CANADA

The opening (amid COVID-19 restrictions) of Universal Music Canada’s new Toronto headquarters last May has set up the label “for a new era,” says Remedios. He touts global prospects for new signings Rêve, Savannah Ré, Banx & Ranx, La Zarra, Valley and Johnny Orlando and is deliberately making “major shifts in how we work and support artists,” including assuring representation for Black and Indigenous people and people of color; gender equity; and the Francophone market. To that end, the company has partnered with the Indigenous women-led Ishkôdê Records, continued investment in Québec through its French label imprint Maison Barclay Canada and established a domestic artist-focused Black music marketing team bolstered by “new leadership in senior roles across marketing, A&R, communications and more,” says Remedios.

### Steven Rowen

VP/HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL, ISLAND RECORDS

Rowen has overseen international campaigns marketing some of the biggest artists in the world including Shawn Mendes, and in 2022, Rowen says his “defining moment” has been the release of Keshi’s debut album, *Gabriel*. The project was released in March after Island signed the Texas artist who had built a SoundCloud following. Keshi’s first European headlining tour sold out in minutes. Rowen calls Keshi’s growth “while staying true to his artist vision and integrity” a major achievement of the past 12 months. *Gabriel* reached No. 16 on the Billboard 200 and No. 4 on Top Album Sales.

Maykel Piron oversees the Dutch electronic label Armada Music, whose roster includes global star (and label co-founder) Armin van Buuren.



# RESERVOIR & BLUE RAINCOAT CELEBRATE OUR INTERNATIONAL POWER PLAYERS



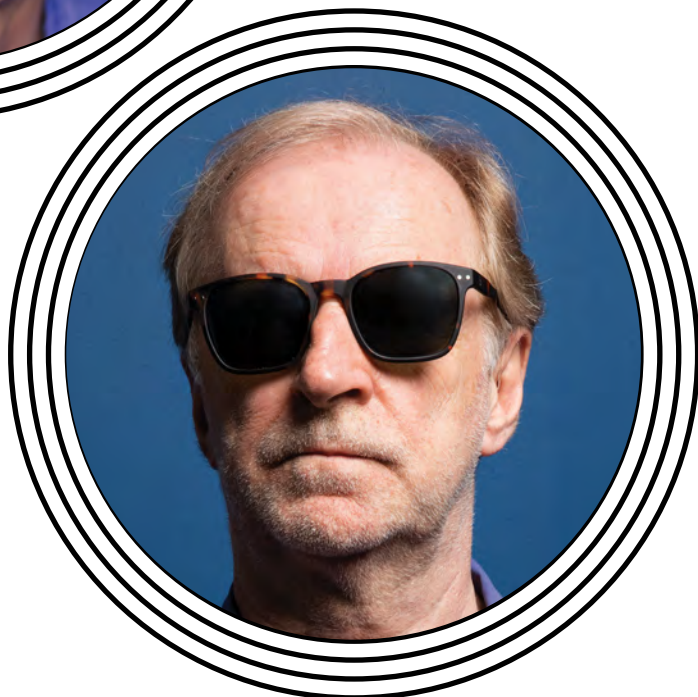
**Annette Barrett**  
Reservoir Managing Director  
and Global Strategic Liaison



**Spek**  
Reservoir EVP of International and  
Emerging Markets & PopArabia Founder  
and President



**Jeremy Lascelles**  
Blue Raincoat/Chrysalis Records CEO



**Robin Millar**  
Blue Raincoat/Chrysalis Records Chairman





For Capitol Music Group, **Kieran Thurgood** has guided global marketing for acts including Motown/Quality Control artist **Lil Baby**.

### Naoise Ryan

SENIOR DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING, COLUMBIA RECORDS

Ryan's team at Columbia Records has achieved a lot in the past year, but the highly anticipated return of Adele with the release of her fourth studio album, *30* — the singer's first under Sony Music worldwide — was a "major highlight," says Ryan. "It was a project that required us to operate at our most strategic and absolute best," she says of the album, which debuted at No. 1 in 35 countries. To promote the release, Ryan's team oversaw the launch of 30 visual projections at landmarks around the world, including the Colosseum in Rome, the London Eye, Brandenburg Gate in Berlin and the Louvre in Paris.

### Wassim "Sal" Slaiby

FOUNDER/CEO, UNIVERSAL ARABIC MUSIC

Launched by superstar manager Slaiby, Universal Arabic Music is a division of Universal Music Group focused on bridging Arabic music with global partners, platforms and brands. The label was the exclusive music partner of Egypt's El Gouna Film Festival and launched its theme song, "Gaw El Banat." The label's first signing, Jordan's Issam Alnajjar, had his single "Hadal Ahbek" become the first Arabic song to reach No. 1 on Shazam's Global chart, while the latest addition to its roster, Palestinian-Chilean artist Elyanna, has received support from stars like The Weeknd and Lana Del Rey, and has appeared on the covers of *GQ Middle East* and *Elle Arabia*. In 2021, the label's gala dinner for the Children's Cancer Center of Lebanon helped raise over \$1 million for the organization.

### Marcelo Soares

CEO, SOM LIVRE

Som Livre in March became part of

Sony Music Group after the multinational company acquired Brazil's largest independent label for about \$255 million following the deal's announcement in 2021. The purchase not only strengthens Sony's presence in the fast-growing Brazilian music market but also brings a vast array of resources to Som Livre artists. "I can't think of a better way to begin this new post-pandemic world," says Soares.

### Brian Sutnick

SENIOR VP OF GLOBAL MARKETING AND DIGITAL STRATEGY, REPUBLIC RECORDS

### Stephanie Perez

VP OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING, REPUBLIC RECORDS

The pandemic forced Republic's international team "to adapt and rethink how we approach marketing and promotion on a global scale," says Perez. Indeed, worldwide strategies for superstars like Taylor Swift, The Weeknd, Drake and Ariana Grande have had to endure shifts, postponements and major upheavals. Sutnick says that, even despite travel restrictions, Republic artists have grown closer to their global label teams in recent months: "Whether it's an artist presenting music to our label partners, our business partners or meeting directly with fans, we've continued to grow our artists' audiences around the globe," he says. "And now, as the world opens up, they are eager to get on the road and reconnect."

### Stacey Tang

EXECUTIVE VP, RCA RECORDS U.K.

RCA was named the No. 1 label in the United Kingdom for 2021 on four different market-share rankings of the Official Charts Company, including the principal All Music (Artist Albums) measurement and Track Streams, with an accumulated tally of 15.1 billion streams last year. Tang, who was named executive vp of the label in August, played a key role in that

success. She led campaigns for domestic acts including Mimi Webb, Paloma Faith, Bring Me the Horizon, Sam Fischer and Little Mix, which was the first all-female act to win the British group honor at the BRIT Awards. She also guided international campaigns for artists including Miley Cyrus, The Kid LAROI and Lil Nas X.

### Mez Tara

VP OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING, EPIC RECORDS

Tara has worked on countless international marketing campaigns for high-profile clients and, in 2021, she focused on R&B singer-songwriter Giveon, who "had many 'firsts' on foreign soil," she says, including Spotify No. 1s for his single "Heartbreak Anniversary" in South Africa, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines and Indonesia, as well as his first magazine cover with *tmrw* in the United Kingdom and his first headlining show at London's Village Underground. "I'm very proud that the artists and campaigns I've been a part of across the last year have been very global in their reach and success," says Tara, mentioning acts such as Camila Cabello, Mimi Webb, JNR Choi, Zara Larsson, Travis Scott, Future and the Black Eyed Peas.

### Kieran Thurgood

SENIOR VP OF GLOBAL MARKETING, CAPITOL MUSIC GROUP

CMG has continued to expand its global footprint over the last few years, launching Astralwerks Asia, Capitol Records Italy, Motown Records U.K. and, in March, Capitol Records China. There's more to come, says Thurgood, adding that the efforts are "all in order to truly embed our artists in the local cultural conversation and maximize global opportunity." That approach has led to recent worldwide successes for Halsey's Grammy Award-nominated collaboration with Nine Inch Nails, *If I Can't Have Love, I Want Power*, and Motown/Quality Control artist Lil Baby.

### Dan Waite

PRESIDENT, BETTER NOISE MUSIC

"This past year, we've put a lot of effort into making sure we have the right team in place across all of our international markets," says Waite. "Now that we do, we're excited to expand the global presence of all of our artists." He notes that Better Noise topped *Billboard's* year-end Hot Hard Rock Songs and Mainstream Rock Songs Imprint charts in 2021. "I continue guiding each team's focus on increasing consumption in the U.S. and internationally, with a growth in presence in Europe, including Scandinavia, over the past year, and the opening of distribution in Southeast Asia in 2021."

### Simon Wheeler

DIRECTOR OF COMMERCIAL STRATEGY, BEGGARS GROUP

The tech and operational teams at Beggars Group recently guided the company with making a "seamless" transition to using FUGA, a distributor that specializes in digital supply chain technology and works to "provide flexible music distribution and marketing services," says Wheeler. Throughout the transition, Wheeler says the company worked remotely to expand its global reach, especially in Southeast Asia, "without getting on a plane."

## ASSOCIATIONS

### Frances Moore

CEO, IFPI

### Simon Seow

REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF SOUTHEAST ASIA, IFPI

IFPI opened a Middle East/North Africa office in November, followed in March by a Southeast Asia office, led by Seow. "Having a local presence in these regions helps us to engage with policymakers and local stakeholders to help create the right environment to enable music markets to grow," says the London-based Moore. During her tenure as head of the international trade association of the recording industry, global trade revenue has climbed from \$15.1 billion in 2010 to \$25.9 billion in 2021, according to IFPI's latest Global Music Report.

### Paul Pacifico

CEO, ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT MUSIC

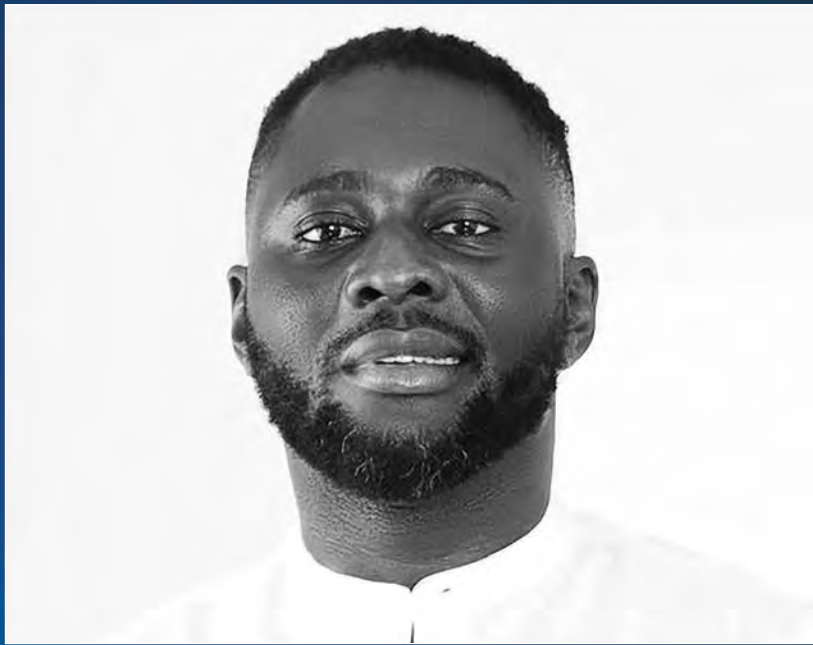
Since 2016, Pacifico has led U.K. trade group AIM, which represents more than 1,000 independent labels, artists and music companies, including Beggars Group, Domino and Ninja Tune. In December, the London-based organization launched the Music Climate Pact, an industrywide initiative to decarbonize the record business backed by all three major labels and dozens of indies. "It has been inspirational to see so much of the global music sector come together and take action," says Pacifico. An associate professor at Berklee College of Music in Valencia, Spain, he spoke on behalf of the indie sector during last year's U.K. Parliament probe into music streaming.

### Jeremy Sirota

CEO, MERLIN

In the past year, Merlin expanded "the territorial reach of both its partnerships and its membership around the world," says Sirota, welcoming 33 independent labels and distributors from 17 countries to the global digital rights orga-

# CONGRATULATIONS



MOBOLAJI KAREEM



EZEGOZIE EZE JR.



TITILOPE ADESANYA



JONATHAN JULES

# 2022 BILLBOARD INTERNATIONAL POWER PLAYERS



EMPIRE

nization, including first-time members from Kenya, Pakistan and Turkey. New partnership deals include agreements with livestreaming service Twitch, music licensing platform Lickd and Tencent-owned streaming service JOOX, which operates in Southeast Asia, Hong Kong and South Africa. In December, Merlin extended its licensing agreement with Boomplay to cover 47 additional countries in Africa.

## PUBLISHING

### Jackie Alway

EXECUTIVE VP OF INTERNATIONAL LEGAL AND INDUSTRY AFFAIRS, UNIVERSAL MUSIC PUBLISHING GROUP

### Bertil David

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF FRANCE, UNIVERSAL MUSIC PUBLISHING GROUP

### Joe Fang

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF CHINA, UNIVERSAL MUSIC PUBLISHING GROUP

### Tom Foster

SENIOR VP OF FILM AND TV, EUROPE, UNIVERSAL MUSIC PUBLISHING GROUP

### Alexandra Lioutikoff

PRESIDENT OF U.S. LATIN AND LATIN AMERICA, UNIVERSAL MUSIC PUBLISHING GROUP

### Thomas Vidovic

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF GERMANY/SENIOR VP OF AUSTRIA AND SWITZERLAND, UNIVERSAL MUSIC PUBLISHING GROUP

Alway is UMPG's expert on public policy, digital licensing and rights society relations in territories worldwide and, last year, became the first woman elected chair of the International Confederation of Music Publishers. She has been a leading voice for copyright and the reform of safe harbor regulations of online services and also an advocate for the rights of creators and rights holders in the European Union and worldwide. In France, David has built a roster of writers with border-crossing impact, recently signing Kel-p, a Nigerian producer for Burna Boy. In China, in collaboration with She Is the Music, Fang and his colleagues organized the first all-female songwriting camps in Asia. Under Foster's leadership, UMPG's European synch team has paired the works of Coldplay with BMW, Metallica with Ford, "Chim Chim Cher-ee" from the Disney catalog (which UMPG administers in Europe) with Coca-Cola and a new original song from BRIT

Award winner Griff with Sky TV for its new Sky Glass system. Lioutikoff, the first female president of Latin America and U.S. Latin for a major music publishing company, oversees a roster of hitmakers that include J Balvin, Rosalía, Bad Bunny, Romeo Santos and Espinoza Paz. Vidovic has guided his company's signings and developments of songwriter-artists, including badmómzjay, Lucio101, Mathea and Luna, as well as joint ventures with Electric Feel Europe and We Publish Music.

### Annette Barrett

MANAGING DIRECTOR/GLOBAL STRATEGIC LIAISON, RESERVOIR

### Hussain "Spek" Yoosuf

EXECUTIVE VP OF INTERNATIONAL AND EMERGING MARKETS, RESERVOIR

The past year was about growth and reach for Reservoir. The New York-based independent — the first female-founded and publicly traded music company in the United States — now represents more than 140,000 copyrights and 35,000 master recordings worldwide, and recent deals include Lebanese musician Seid Hamdan, Arab superstar Mohamad Ramadan and a joint venture with Egyptian label 100 Copies to invest in new content in North Africa. Longtime Reservoir songwriter Jamie Hartman was also named songwriter of the year at the Ivor Novello Awards. "I'm proud of the work we have done this year to further build a better environment for songwriters and independent publishers," says Barrett, "with significant advocacy across the European Union, including regarding Brexit and also via the outreach to our international partners."

### Virginie Berger

SENIOR VP OF GLOBAL PUBLISHING AND SOCIETY RELATIONS, SONGTRUST

### Mandy Aubry

SENIOR DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, SONGTRUST

### Lara Baker

DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, SONGTRUST Songtrust, which represents songwriters in 175 countries and territories around the globe for royalty collection administration, is working at expanding its international client base, including staging a virtual Songtrust Summit in October with participants from over 70 countries. The company is also making its educational content available in more languages to educate independent songwriters about their rights. Aubry

and Baker are focused on growing the company profile and business-to-business relationship network across Africa, Asia and Australasia, while Berger and her team work directly with its society collection partners around the globe. Songtrust has seen a 75% increase in international collections in 2021 over 2020, and ex-U.S. clients have experienced a 160% increase in royalty revenue, the company reports.

### Stéphane Berlow

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF FRANCE, KOBALT

### Swantje Weinert

VP OF CREATIVE OF GERMANY, SWITZERLAND AND AUSTRIA, KOBALT

### Frederica Wong

DIRECTOR OF ASIA, KOBALT

Kobalt celebrated its 20th anniversary by chalking up its first profitable year in 2021, turning in a net profit on continuing operations of \$5.8 million on \$519.4 million in revenue. The international team oversees territories — outside North America — that bring in 54.6% of revenue, or \$283.6 million, for the company. Recent global publishing signings include MOLI, who has co-written Topic & A7S' "Breaking Me," which has tallied 1.6 billion global streams, according to Kobalt; writer-producer Vito Kovach; and writer/producer/multi-instrumentalist Johannes Roemer, signed from the German office. In Asia, Kobalt has signed a deal with film company One Cool Group. Kobalt clients took home 15 Grammy Awards in the past year.

### Clive Black

CEO, BLACKLIST ENTERTAINMENT; PARTNER, PRIMARY WAVE U.K.

### Justin Dowling

PARTNER/EXECUTIVE VP, PRIMARY WAVE U.K. AND EUROPE; GM, BLUE MOUNTAIN MUSIC

Primary Wave's international operation placed Bob Marley songs in campaigns for the Dutch football club Ajax, Sandals Resort and the *Apex Legends* game, synched Free's "All Right Now" with Stations Casino and Bretzi Pharma, and landed John Grant's "Black Belt" in a Facebook campaign narrated by Grace Jones. "The increased internationalization of Primary Wave ... has enabled so many partnerships and acquisitions to complete this year by way of harmonious synergy across time zones," says Dowling. "Such [achievements] can only happen through will, determination and a united team pulling in the same direction guided by inspirational leadership."

## Tracking Music Royalties

At a time when revenue is booming, artists, songwriters and copyright owners should expect their income to rise as well, whether through performance royalties (for songwriters and music publishers), mechanical royalties (for owners of sound-recording copyrights), digital performance royalties (paid in the United States by noninteractive digital streaming services) or neighboring rights royalties (earned outside the United States from the public performance of a master recording). In the world's top 10 markets as ranked by IFPI, these are the leading rights-collection organizations. Most are commonly identified by the widely used acronyms for their full names.



### 1. UNITED STATES

ASCAP  
BMI  
SESAC  
Global Music Rights  
HFA  
SoundExchange  
The MLC



### 2. JAPAN

JASRAC  
CPRA/Geindankyo



### 3. UNITED KINGDOM

MCPS  
PPL  
PRS



### 4. GERMANY

GEMA  
GVL



### 5. FRANCE

SACEM  
SCPP



### 6. CHINA

MCSC



### 7. SOUTH KOREA

KOMCA  
RIAK



### 8. CANADA

SOCAN  
Sound



### 9. AUSTRALIA

APRA  
AMCOS  
PPCA



### 10. ITALY

SIAE

Sources ASCAP, BMI, CISAC, SoundExchange

**"Now, as the world opens up, artists are eager to get on the road and reconnect."** —BRIAN SUTNICK





**peermusic**  
the global independent



# INTERNATIONAL POWER PLAYERS

**CONGRATULATIONS MARY MEGAN PEER & NIGEL ELDERTON  
FROM YOUR GLOBAL PEERMUSIC FAMILY**

## Benjamin Budde

CEO, BUDE MUSIC

Now in its third generation of family ownership and leadership, Budde Music is not only expanding its traditional publishing business but also supporting the management and agency ventures that now operate alongside it. “We’ve doubled in size over the last decade by almost any measure — turnover, [net publisher’s share] and staff,” says Budde. Last year, the company integrated its London staff into the Shoreditch headquarters of Phrased Differently, which Budde bought a part of in 2020, and started brand partnership divisions at Budde Talent Agency, where a new agent now handles corporate and special events.

## Kim Frankiewicz

EXECUTIVE VP OF WORLDWIDE A&R, CONCORD MUSIC PUBLISHING

## Tina Funk

MANAGING DIRECTOR, CONCORD MUSIC PUBLISHING GERMANY, SWITZERLAND AND AUSTRIA

For Concord’s global publishing A&R team, the last year “has been about growth and working to both integrate and expand our roster by signing new talent and incorporating acquired catalogs,” says Frankiewicz. Concord recently signed Ghanaian “Sad Girlz Luv Money” singer Amaarae, Jamaican hit-maker Bounty Killer and Kazakh “Roses” remix producer Imanbek. And with its acquisition of Downtown Music Publishing’s owned and published copyrights, Concord gained Grammy-nominated artist Yola and Academy Award-winning “Shallow” co-songwriter Anthony Rosomando, as well as the catalogs of Ryan Tedder, Benny Blanco and Mötley Crüe’s

Nikki Sixx. The strategy, Frankiewicz says, “continues to be about challenging the publishing status quo.”

## Shani Gonzales

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF WARNER CHAPPELL U.K./ HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL A&R, WARNER CHAPPELL MUSIC

## Gustavo Menéndez

PRESIDENT OF U.S. LATIN AND LATIN AMERICA, WARNER CHAPPELL MUSIC

## Santiago Menéndez-Pidal

PRESIDENT OF SOUTHERN EUROPE, WARNER CHAPPELL MUSIC

## Matthieu Tessier

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF FRANCE, WARNER CHAPPELL MUSIC

In 2021, Gonzales reached an agreement to extend Warner Chappell’s representation of George Michael’s catalog, covering both Michael’s solo work and the songs he wrote as frontman of ’80s pop duo Wham! Among Menéndez’s recent achievements is the signing of superstar Mexican singer-songwriter Marco Antonio Solís, while his team in Brazil signed two other legendary Latin songwriters, Carlinhos Brown and Caetano Veloso. Menéndez-Pidal rose to his new role last year with responsibility for Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece — the latter a new area of focus for the company. In France, Tessier recently signed a global subpublishing deal covering the catalog of the late iconic singer-songwriter Jacques Brel and also played a key role in breaking the chart-topping French rapper Orelsan.

## Jeremy Lascelles

CO-FOUNDER/CEO, BLUE RAINCOAT MUSIC

## Robin Millar

CO-FOUNDER/CHAIRMAN, BLUE RAINCOAT MUSIC

In 2021, Blue Raincoat Music — which provides management services for artists like Phoebe Bridgers and Arlo Parks, as well as publishing deals with ABISHA, Let’s Eat Grandma and others — oversaw the signing of new publishing deals with John Parish and the estate of Nick Drake. Meanwhile, Chrysalis Records, Raincoat’s front-line label, signed pop singer Emeli Sandé to a global record deal. Throughout this expansion, Blue Raincoat promoted “equality and proportional diversity across age, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation and education” within the company, says Lascelles. “It’s a constant challenge to keep it on track — but worth it.”

## Tim Major

CO-MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED KINGDOM, SONY MUSIC PUBLISHING

## David Ventura

PRESIDENT/CO-MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED KINGDOM; SENIOR VP OF INTERNATIONAL, SONY MUSIC PUBLISHING

## Carol Ng

PRESIDENT OF ASIA, SONY MUSIC PUBLISHING

## Silence Hua

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF CHINA AND GREATER CHINA, SONY MUSIC PUBLISHING

## Hyun-Hoon (Kenny) Lee

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF KOREA, SONY MUSIC PUBLISHING

## Niels Walboomers

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF BENELUX, SONY MUSIC PUBLISHING

Major and Ventura led Sony Music Publishing to market-leading status in the United Kingdom in 2021, according to the company, representing over one-third of the top 100 songs and shares of four out of the most popular singles, including Ed Sheeran’s “Bad Habits,” written by Sheeran and Johnny McDaid, and “Shivers,” co-written by Sheeran, McDaid and Kal Lavelle. Awards in the past year have gone to the company’s writers including Arlo Parks, Pa Salieu and PinkPantheress. Ng has driven the company’s growth in Asia, opening an office in Indonesia, as the first independent international publishing company in the country. Hua has created key relationships with major digital platforms throughout China and Greater China while also helping to establish industry standard music licensing structures with TV stations for online and offline broadcasting. In Korea, Lee and his team recently signed a subpublishing agreement with HYBE, home to BTS, as well as partnerships with JYP and Iconic Sounds. In the Benelux region (Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg), Walboomers and his team celebrated the Grammy nominations of two songwriter-producers on their roster, Tierce “Kizzo” Person and Andrae Alexander, for their work with Jon Batiste.

## Merck Mercuriadis

FOUNDER/CEO, HIPGNOSIS SONG MANAGEMENT/ HIPGNOSIS SONGS FUND/HIPGNOSIS SONGS CAPITAL

Mercuriadis has spent the last 18 months assembling an intricate network of complementary companies, but he still had time to continue purchasing music assets. His funds have spent \$1 billion acquiring rights to song catalogs of the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Leonard Cohen, Neil Young, Kenny Chesney, Shakira, and Lindsey Buckingham and Christine McVie of Fleetwood Mac, among other songwriters of “great cultural importance,” he says. Now Mercuriadis is ready to deploy funding to buy more music assets, thanks to the double firepower he wields with the publicly traded Hipgnosis Songs Fund and the recently launched private equity-based Hipgnosis Songs Capital — backed by financial firm Blackstone.

## Mary Megan Peer

CEO, PEERMUSIC

## Nigel Elderton

MANAGING DIRECTOR/EUROPEAN PRESIDENT, PEERMUSIC

During the past year, peermusic — with 38 offices in 31 countries — established a new neighboring-rights division business. The neighboring-rights roster now encompasses over 250 artists and 300 record labels, according to Peer, who notes that “we find the ability to deliver these important royalties to our clients rewarding.” Meanwhile, peermusic U.K. acquired Accorder Music Publishing, established a joint venture with Whispering Bob Harris’ Under the Apple Tree platform and had a global hit with GAYLE’s “abcdefu” through a subpublishing deal with Big Machine for all territories outside the United States.

## Mike Smith

PRESIDENT, DOWNTOWN MUSIC SERVICES

## David Alexander

SENIOR VP OF NEW MARKETS, DOWNTOWN MUSIC HOLDINGS

Smith says, “Over the last 18 months, we have successfully launched [Downtown Music Services] and have been hard at work building the global infrastructure and team” in Argentina, Brazil and the United States, as well as Bogotá, Colombia; Johannesburg; London; Mexico City; Paris; and Tokyo. Downtown works with 1.7 million creators and 2,500 business clients, with DMS representing the song catalogs of John Lennon and Yoko Ono, as well as Mexico’s Los Tucanes de Tijuana and France’s Ibeyi. “Our goal each day is to support the creators and rights holders who depend on our services to achieve success and get paid fairly for their work,” Smith says. Alexander guides the global growth of Downtown Music Holdings, which includes FUGA, Songtrust and CD Baby.

## The Hottest Hits Outside The U.S.

“Stay”	The Kid LAROI & Justin Bieber
“Bad Habits”	Ed Sheeran
“Butter”	BTS
“Save Your Tears”	The Weeknd & Ariana Grande
“Montero (Call Me by Your Name)”	Lil Nas X
“Levitating”	Dua Lipa
“good 4 u”	Olivia Rodrigo
“Peaches”	Justin Bieber featuring Daniel Caesar & Giveon
“Heat Waves”	Glass Animals
“Industry Baby”	Lil Nas X & Jack Harlow

Based on the Billboard Global Excl. U.S. chart from April 10, 2021, through April 2, 2022, which ranks the top songs based on streaming and/or sales activity from over 200 territories around the world, excluding the United States, as tracked by Luminate. The ranking is based on a weighted formula incorporating official-only streams on both subscription and ad-supported tiers of leading audio and video music services, as well as download sales from top music retailers across the globe.

A photograph of Phil Rodriguez lying on his back on a set of railroad tracks. He is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt, blue jeans, and brown boots. The tracks run straight into the distance towards a mountain range under a cloudy sky. The surrounding area is grassy with some trees.

# PHIL RODRIGUEZ

## INTERNATIONAL POWER PLAYER 2022

**Congratulations**  
The MOVE family is proud to have you  
as our mentor and inspiration

**MOVE**  
CONCERTS

**GRANDMOVE**  
RECORDS

**MOVE**  
MANAGEMENT

## LIVE

### Alfredo Alonso Ramos

PARTNER/DIRECTOR OF ENTERTAINMENT, BIZARRO LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Having already established a footprint in Colombia, Bizarro — an arena owner and operator and Chile's biggest producer of live events — this year opened outposts in Peru, Bolivia and Uruguay. The company, which owns Movistar Arenas in Santiago, Chile and Bogotá, Colombia, will be opening an arena in Bolivia by summer and is poised to launch 2022 tours in the Southern Cone by Sebastián Yatra, André Rieu, Wisin & Yandel and J Balvin in addition to individual shows by Bad Bunny, Karol G and Daddy Yankee. When Chile entirely shut down live shows during the pandemic, Bizarro spearheaded the operation of the country's two biggest vaccination centers, while its immersive art show, "Beyond Van Gogh," sold over 150,000 tickets in Chile and Peru.

### Denis Desmond

CHAIRMAN, LIVE NATION U.K. AND IRELAND

### John Reid

PRESIDENT, LIVE NATION EUROPE, THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

### Yongbae Cho

JOINT MANAGING DIRECTOR, LIVE NATION KOREA

### Selina Emeny

INTERNATIONAL GROUP COUNSEL, LIVE NATION ENTERTAINMENT

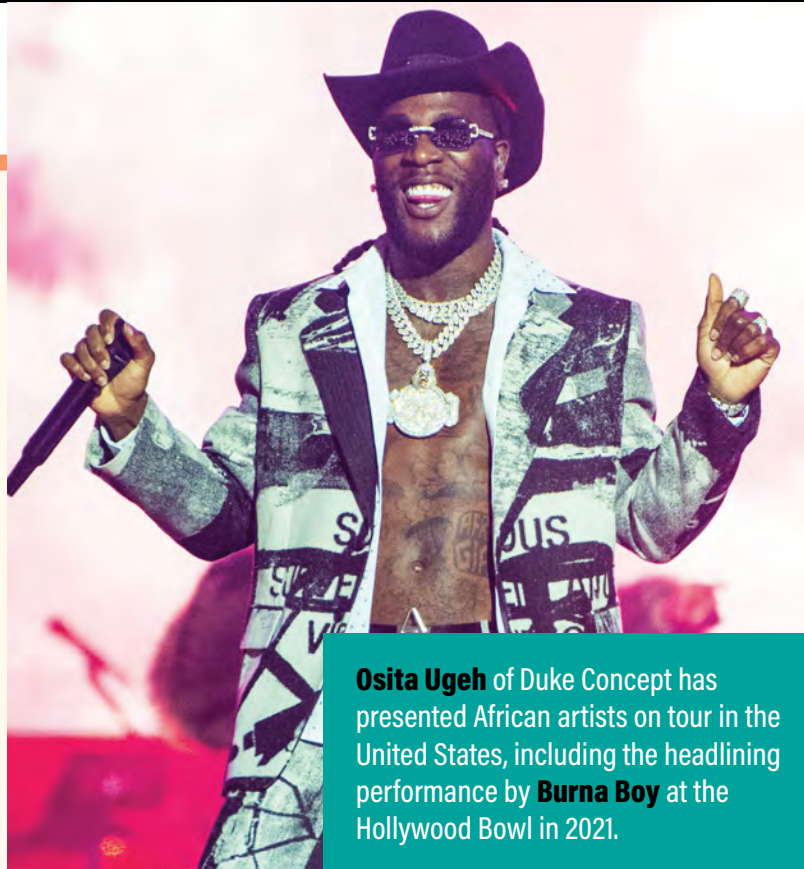
### Roger Field

PRESIDENT, ASIA PACIFIC, LIVE NATION

### Jim Wong

MANAGING DIRECTOR, LIVE NATION ELECTRONIC ASIA

Desmond praises his team for "a blockbuster year in 2021" despite the pandemic, with Live Nation staging shows as soon as attendance restrictions lifted, resulting in "an astounding fourth quarter" last year. Fan demand is fueling strong bookings for 2022, 2023 and beyond, according to Live Nation. Reid has expanded his areas of responsibility from Europe to the Middle East, Africa and India, dealing with a constantly shifting landscape of restrictions and COVID-19 mitigations. Cho and Kim have collaborated on the return of K-pop to the world's stages, including the BTS stadium shows that coincided with the Grammy Awards in Las Vegas. Field has worked with Australia's Live Entertainment Industry Forum to support the safe return of live events across that market. Wong has focused on artist development in China and Live Nation's electronic music business in Asia. He has helped establish the Live Nation artist management company Dancing Dragon, based in Hong Kong, as a leading artist agency



Osita Ugeh of Duke Concept has presented African artists on tour in the United States, including the headlining performance by Burna Boy at the Hollywood Bowl in 2021.

in the region. As international group counsel for Live Nation and general counsel for Ticketmaster, Emery oversees government and regulatory affairs across global markets, liaising between Live Nation's U.S. headquarters and its international operations.

### Jenny Blomqvist

EVENT SALES DIRECTOR, ASM GLOBAL SWEDEN

### James Harrison

PROGRAMMING DIRECTOR, ASM GLOBAL U.K.

After the pandemic hit, ASM Global shifted to creating new business, like repurposing arenas as padel tennis courts. In Stockholm, ASM acquired the Södra Teatern theater and took control of food and beverage services at some of its arenas in Stockholm. ASM also spearheaded the project to rename Stockholm's famed The Globe as Avicii Arena, a tribute to the late superstar DJ and "a hub for initiatives focused on young people's mental health," says Blomqvist. More recently, the company created a central programming resource for its U.K. venues, offering clients "a single point to reach our arenas spread across the country," she adds.

### Alex Hill

PRESIDENT/CEO, AEG EUROPE

### Adam Wilkes

PRESIDENT/CEO, AEG ASIA

### Steve Homer

CEO, AEG PRESENTS U.K.

### Jim King

CEO OF EUROPEAN FESTIVALS, AEG PRESENTS

### Simon Jones

SENIOR VP OF LIVE MUSIC INTERNATIONAL, AEG PRESENTS

Under Hill's leadership, AEG Europe managed pandemic restrictions while bringing the All Points East festival back to London last August. King, who played a key role in that event, is now prepar-

ing for British Summertime Hyde Park in June and July (featuring the Rolling Stones on their 60th-anniversary tour) and is also revitalizing Paris' Rock en Seine festival in August. Hill also oversaw the redevelopment of the Olympia London venue. Homer is booking that location as well as the renovated Wolverhampton Civic Halls, the Eventim Apollo and Indigo at the O2. In Asia, Wilkes continues to guide the development of AEG's new arena in Seoul and led the partnership between AEG Presents and AVEX Group that was announced in 2021. Jones is involved in summer tours in Europe by superstars including Elton John and Justin Bieber.

### Jorge Juarez David West

CO-CEOs/CO-FOUNDERS, WESTWOOD ENTERTAINMENT

The Mexican management, marketing and concert promotion stalwarts scored big by landing major tours in Mexico, including Karol G's upcoming arena tour, Camilo and Rauw Alejandro's sold-out 2021 tours and upcoming 2022 stints, as well as Bad Bunny's 2022 stadium tour that has already sold 300,000 tickets, according to the company. Beyond Mexico, Westwood booked 30 U.S. dates for Reik as well as Camila and Sin Bandera's 4 Latidos tour that has sold out venues north and south of the border and Carlos Rivera's Spanish tour in the midst of the pandemic. Although associated mostly with pop, Westwood has also partnered with hip-hop artist Santa Fe Klan as he begins his first U.S. arena tour.

### Huston Powell

PROMOTER, C3 PRESENTS

During the pandemic, C3 Presents faced a blank calendar for the first time. The Austin-based promoter behind Austin

City Limits, Bonnaroo and seven global Lollapalooza festivals was less than two weeks away from kicking off its South American shows in March 2020 before pivoting to two years of rebooking gigs. "We moved those shows to the fall of 2020, then to the fall of 2021 and, ultimately, to March of 2022," Powell says. With successful editions of Lolla in Brazil, Argentina and Chile under their belts, Powell says those shows "hopefully played a role in helping the international touring market take one step closer to being fully open."

### Phil Rodriguez

CEO, MOVE CONCERTS

Touring is "finally up and running" again for Move Concerts, which has marked the return to live events with sold-out shows from Kany Garcia and a-ha, as well as upcoming shows by Karol G, Michael Bubl , Justin Bieber, KISS, Myke Towers, Arctic Monkeys, Sebasti n Yatra and others. Move Management — the company's growing management division that launched in late 2020 — has landed acts like Argentine artists Tiago PZK and Alejandro Lerner. In February 2021, Move also created a new division with Grand Move Records, which is licensed to Warner Music Latina. Tiago PZK was the first signing for Grand Move Records, with Rodriguez promising "more signings to follow."

### Klaus-Peter Schulenberg

CEO, CTS EVENTIM

CTS Eventim, one of the world's largest concert promoters, spent a tough 2021 setting itself up for the future. The company launched its Eventim Live Asia business and brought its Eventim.com ticketing platform to North America, as well as announced a deal to build a 16,000-capacity arena in Milan and acquired the software company simply-X. Past moves also started to pay off in the form of a Genesis tour in the United States promoted by EMC Presents, its joint venture with promoter Michael Cohl. "We have seen just how eager people are to get back to live entertainment," Schulenberg wrote in his annual letter to shareholders, "based on demand for tickets to see top German and international artists."

### Alejandro Sober n Kuri

CEO, OCESA

The pandemic forced OCESA "to reinvent itself" and "reimagine how to provide audiences and artists ways to remain close," says Sober n Kuri, who founded Mexico City-based OCESA Entrenimiento in 1990 and built it into the world's third-largest concert promoter (as of 2019 year-end Billboard Boxscore data). So, until the return to



# billboard's 2022 International Power Players List

**We Proudly Salute Our  
Billboard International Power Players**

MATT BATES

ARI BERNSTEIN

SCOTT MANTELL

BECKIE SUGDEN

BEN WINCHESTER

normalcy, OCESA held digital performances, car concerts and events with safe distances between groups of fans. "Alex and the OCESA team are incredible at what they do," said Live Nation CEO Michael Rapino after his company bought a 51% stake in OCESA for \$431.9 million in December.

## Osita Ugeh

CEO, DUKE CONCEPT

From Wizkid's *Made in Lagos* U.S. tour to Burna Boy's historic headlining performance at the Hollywood Bowl, 2021 saw a surge in the number of Afrobeats shows in the United States. One common thread throughout this influx of African acts taking the stage is Ugeh's Duke Concept, which, over the last decade, has become an expert in bringing top African acts to U.S. venues, including 92 shows across North America in the last year alone, says Ugeh. Following Duke Concept's 2021 joint venture with Live Nation, Ugeh will be co-producing Afrofusion pioneer Burna Boy's April show at Madison Square Garden in New York, making him the first Nigerian to headline the iconic arena.

## Maarten van Beusekom

LEAD PROMOTER OF INTERNATIONAL EVENTS, INSOMNIAC

While Insomniac Events has long been a dance festival leader in the United States and beyond, van Beusekom and his team elevated the company's offerings on the international circuit when live events returned in 2021. Along with co-producer ALDA, they hosted Romania's SAGA Festival last September and launched the Amsterdam debut of their Secret Project brand during the Amsterdam Dance Event, with 10,000 tickets sold in less than a day. The house and techno-oriented Secret Project Portugal will happen in June, and Croatia's new Pula Music Week will take place in July at an ancient Roman amphitheater. During a challenging period, van Beusekom says the key has been to "remain positive and to keep booking, producing and executing our global events."

# AGENCIES

## Emma Banks Mike Greek

CO-HEADS OF THE LONDON OFFICE, CREATIVE ARTISTS AGENCY

## Chris Dalston Marlene Tsuchii

AGENTS, CREATIVE ARTISTS AGENCY

## Maria May

HEAD OF ELECTRONIC/INTERNATIONAL, CREATIVE ARTISTS AGENCY

Greek describes having an incredibly successful year coming off the pandemic. He has been working with clients like Sigur Rós, Sam Smith and Thirty Seconds to Mars on a number of successful tours and concert bookings that have regularly landed the agency atop the touring charts. Greek was part of the team that helped Harry Styles earn a coveted booking: headlining Coachella 2022 after Rage Against the Machine dropped off the lineup, as well as Styles' highly successful Love on Tour outing that grossed over \$150 million in ticket sales, according to CAA.

## Matt Bates

HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL, ICM PARTNERS; MANAGING DIRECTOR, PRIMARY TALENT INTERNATIONAL

## Ben Winchester

DIRECTOR/AGENT, PRIMARY TALENT

## Beckie Sugden

AGENT, PRIMARY TALENT

Since ICM Partners acquired Primary Talent International in 2020, the London-based music agency has been on a mission "to take the European strength in electronic music and build it worldwide," says Bates. Primary Talent has leveraged its integration with ICM to hire key electronic agents in North America to build "a global powerhouse in dance music." Notable signings include Imanbek in 2021, shortly after the 20-year-old Kazakh producer won a Grammy for best remixed recording.

## Amy Davidman Devin Landau

FOUNDING PARTNERS/AGENTS, TBA AGENCY

Despite challenges brought on by the pandemic, TBA booked over 200 artists in countries across the globe in the last two years. The new agency expanded its artists' reach through slots at noteworthy events across countries like Mexico, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Brazil and Peru, including Lollapalooza Brazil, Primavera Sound Spain and Portugal. With rumors of Canada's reopening swirling, Davidman became a guiding force in bringing a trio of Caribou shows to fruition, selling 3,500 tickets in hopes that restrictions would be lifted — and they were, marking Vancouver's first full-capacity shows in two years. "The guidelines for shows were lifted just 48 hours before their shows were to happen," Davidman says, "and they moved forward with the first full-capacity shows in Vancouver in almost two years."

## Lucy Dickins

CO-HEAD OF MUSIC, WME

## Craig D'Souza

PARTNER, WME

## Tony Goldring Richard Lom Rob Markus

AGENTS, WME

D'Souza joined WME as partner in the company's London office after an 11-year stretch at Primary Talent. The roster includes Aitch, ArrDee, Jacob Banks, Joy Crookes, Krept & Konan, Mist and Stormzy, whom he met while the artist was playing clubs and helped him grow into a Glastonbury Festival headliner. His success, he says, is due to the "trust and loyalty my artists and their managers put in me."

## Alex Hardee Tom Schroeder James Whitting

PARTNERS, PARADIGM AGENCY

"After the most turbulent two years imaginable," Paradigm has its "biggest ever year" lined up for 2022, says Whitting, noting European tours for A-list clients including Billie Eilish, Imagine Dragons and Lewis Capaldi. "The chaos has made us take stock and really reflect," he adds, including by "continuing to spearhead change to the industry's approach to sustainability" as well as by becoming a more diverse and inclusive company "that reflects that wonderful mix of people that is both our roster and their fan bases."

## Josh Javor

AGENT, X-RAY TOURING

In the last year, the United Kingdom's X-ray Touring formed a strategic partnership with Artist Group International in the United States, bringing the latter's roster of artists into the fold of X-ray's 300-plus clients. Javor also points to the organization's recent handling of Coldplay's world tour, for which it managed to sell "over 1 million tickets on the on-sale day in Europe alone" as a professional highlight of the last year.

## Scott Mantell

PARTNER/AGENT/CO-HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL, ICM PARTNERS

## Ari Bernstein

AGENT, ICM PARTNERS

Without shows to book, ICM concert agents focused their efforts on helping clients make a difference through the ICM politics department. Earthgang created community gardens on Earth Day through a partnership with the Atlanta Public school system and performed a virtual show for the United Nations on World Ocean Day. In addition, the agency helped Khalid's The Great Khalid Foundation get involved with Michelle Obama's When We All Vote initiative and worked to connect Ne-Yo with the Omaze campaign to benefit foster youth, which raised over \$150,000 for nonprofit Journey House. As ICM and its clients "were questioning our political system," says Bernstein, "we helped our clients use their power to effect change

and advocate on the issues most important to them."

## Neil Warnock Obi Asika

CO-HEADS, UTA U.K.

## Belinda Law

SENIOR AGENT, UTA

## Jules de Lattre

## Rebecca Prochnik

AGENTS, UTA

Longtime independent agent Asika became the co-head of UTA's fast-growing U.K. office in 2021 with Warnock after UTA Music acquired Asika's U.K.-based Echo Location Talent Agency. The acquisition added Marshmello, Alesso and Wizkid to UTA's growing client list. Describing the partnership as one built around "strength, ingenuity and true commitment," Asika has enjoyed a number of triumphs out of the gate, including a highly successful dual headlining tour between Alesso and Sentinel built on the success of their newest track, "Only You."

## CONTRIBUTORS

Trevor Anderson, Rania Aniftos, Rich Appel, Megan Armstrong, Chuck Arnold, Katie Bain, Alexei Barrionuevo, Karen Bliss, Lars Brandle, Dave Brooks, Anna Chan, Ed Christman, Leila Cobo, Jonathan Cohen, Stephen Daw, Thom Duffy, Chris Eggertsen, Griselda Flores, Eric Frankenberg, Adrienne Gaffney, Josh Glicksman, Gary Graff, Paul Grein, Gil Kaufman, Steve Knopper, Katy Kroll, Carl Lamarre, Robert Levine, Jason Lipshutz, Heran Mamo, Gail Mitchell, Taylor Mims, Melinda Newman, Glenn Peoples, Bryan Reesman, Neena Rouhani, Jessica Roiz, Dan Rys, Richard Smirke, Jewel Wicker

## METHODOLOGY

Nominations for Billboard's executive lists open no less than 120 days in advance of publication. (For a contact for our editorial calendar, please email [thom.duffy@billboard.com](mailto:thom.duffy@billboard.com).) The online nomination link is sent to press representatives who send a request for notification before the nomination period to [thom.duffy@billboard.com](mailto:thom.duffy@billboard.com). Billboard's International Power Players were chosen by editors from selected industry sectors, based on factors including, but not limited to, nominations by peers, colleagues and superiors. In addition to information requested with nominations, editors consider industry impact as measured by metrics including, but not limited to, chart, sales and streaming performance as measured by Luminate and social media impressions using data available as of March 22. **B**

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Music Biz offers conference attendees an opportunity to discover current technologies on the market. “The Future Is Now Music Experience,” presented by Universal Music Group, returns this year with a series of panels and workshops targeting women in tech and startups.

# MUSIC BIZ AS USUAL

Music Business Association president Portia Sabin discusses the return of the organization’s flagship conference as an in-person event, along with the top issues facing her membership

BY ERIC BROWN

**F**EW MUSIC EXECUTIVES have worked in every sector of the Music Business Association’s membership, but Portia Sabin comes close.

Sabin, who became president of the industry trade group in September 2019, broke into the music business as an artist before founding Shotclock Management in 2004 and taking over esteemed independent label Kill Rock Stars in 2006. She has served on the boards of the American Association of Independent Music (A2IM) and the RIAA, among other organizations, and also hosts a weekly podcast, *The Future of What*.

Sabin’s diverse experience helps her steer the Music Business Association, which was founded in 1958 and has roots in retailing, through the pandemic. Now, after a successful and substantial slate of virtual events, she is leading the return of its flagship Music Biz Conference as an in-person gathering, scheduled to take place May 9-12 in Nashville.

The conference’s programming ranges from “Let’s Talk Physical,” where the association will present a new study of vinyl consumer behavior

produced in conjunction with the RIAA, to The NFT & Metaverse Summit, which will analyze the implications of Web3 technologies for the music business. Sony Music Publishing chairman/CEO Jon Platt will deliver a keynote address, and Sony Music Entertainment executive vp/general counsel Julie Swidler will receive the Presidential Award at the organization’s inaugural Bizzy Awards — a revamped and expanded version of the conference’s awards ceremony. Rising country artist Jimmie Allen will host the event, which will recognize excellence in marketing and diversity, among other business-related categories.

Sabin spoke to *Billboard* about the conference’s return as an in-person gathering, the progress the organization has made during her two-and-a-half years of leadership and the song that got her through the pandemic.

**You’ve conducted numerous successful virtual sessions during the pandemic. Why is**

**it important for the conference to resume as an in-person event?**

Our industry is a weirdly small industry, and people tend to know each other and love to connect. I think some of the best work gets done through face-to-face networking at the conference. The virtual events utilized some platforms that allowed for some networking, but nothing beats in-person interaction.

**How has the association changed since its last in-person gathering in 2019?**

I was hired in September of 2019, so really, right before everything shut down. In a weird way, it was good, because I was able to sort of remake the entire organization [in terms] of what the industry needed at the time. The virtual events were obviously a big part of that. We created a place where people could continue to come together and have conversations about what was happening.

I feel like Music Biz really embraced the diversity, equity and inclusion issues in the music industry as soon as they came up in 2020. That is something we continue to talk about and make a priority. The music industry has no excuses not to have a great deal of diversity in our executive structure because there are so many artists of color, queer artists and trans artists. The industry itself should represent that and reflect that. One of the awards we’re giving [at the Bizzy Awards] is the Agent of Change Award for an executive or company that’s really leading the way in terms of DE&I. The whole award show was revamped with that in mind — rewarding people and



Sabin





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shining a spotlight on their efforts to do good in the industry.

## What changes have you implemented related to diversity, equity and inclusion?

When I was hired, we had a 15-person board that was 13 white men and two white women. Now our board has 25 voting members, and it's 70% women and 40% people of color. The diversity of companies is really all over the place. We now have companies on our board like Clubhouse, Pandora, a couple of different retailers, indie distributors, indie labels and major labels. We really are making an effort to be diverse in all senses of the word. In terms of our hiring practices internally, our last three hires have all been people of color. We want to walk the walk and not just talk the talk.

## How did you conceptualize and decide to launch the Bizzy Awards?

I was on the board of A2IM, which is the independent label trade association, for 12 years. I spearheaded the development of the Libera Awards over there, so I have some experience doing award shows. We wanted to spotlight some of the regular day-to-day work that people do and are doing well. For example, the [Bizzy Awards] Master of Metadata Award: I always say metadata is the least sexy but most important part of the whole music industry.

## What are some of the programming highlights you're most excited about?

We crowdsource our conference. The first thing we do when we go through the call for proposals is sort of separate them into categories. Unsurprisingly, the big areas of interest were [non-fungible tokens], Web3, the metaverse, gaming, catalog valuation. We separated those out, then created blocks of programming around those topics that were quite popular to go with our other blocks of programming that we normally do, like metadata and #NextGen\_Now, which is the program we started during the pandemic to celebrate executives under 40.

## The association has roots in retailing. How do you view your constituency today? Which stakeholders are you most trying to serve?

When I came into Music Biz, I came from an independent-label background. Brick-and-mortar retailers and customer-facing retail stores are our bread and butter. I love them, I care about them. We've really worked over the pandemic to nurture that relationship with our retailers and distributors. The pandemic allowed us to target different sectors of our membership and give them equal love. We had events that targeted independent publishers, artists and independent songwriters. Those people are not necessarily our members, but our members work with those people.

## How did your background as the head of an



Among the participants in Music Biz 2022 are (from left) Sony Music Publishing's Platt, singer-songwriter Beth Nielsen Chapman and Manatt Phelps & Phillips partner Monika Tashman.

must play catch-up. That intersection of tech and music is a tough one for us — it always has been. But Music Biz is super well-positioned to be helpful in that space because so many of our members are

## indie label inform your approach to leading this organization?

It was helpful because I understand how the business works. I knew a lot of the players already, and I had a good sense of what the important issues were. Also, it has always been helpful to have been an artist because I get the artist perspective, too. There are things I haven't done in the music industry. I've never worked in publishing, for example, but I understand and get the importance of publishing. I understand how it matters to the full ecosystem. My background gave me a bird's-eye view of the industry as a whole and [the ability to] make good decisions about how we can help our membership.

## What is the most pressing concern facing the music industry in 2022?

We get swamped by the tech industry. Technology advances, changes happen, and the music industry

upstart tech companies that are coming to the marketplace with actual solutions. Tech is taking the music industry more seriously these days, which is a good thing.

## Is there a song that got you through the pandemic?

The band's name is Avenue Beat, and the song is called "F2020." That's an amazing song. The song that has also been giving me life this year is "Chaise Longue" by Wet Leg.

## What makes you optimistic about the music industry?

The people are great. There are assholes in every industry, and I'm sure there are a bunch of assholes in the music industry. But the vast majority of people that I know are awesome people who love music and want to make this a better business for each other and for artists. **b**

## The Bizzy Award Nominees

### Leading Light Award

- Kevin Liles, 300 Entertainment
- Monstercat
- Warner Music Group

### Agent of Change Award

- Made in Memphis Entertainment
- The Recording Academy
- Spotify

### #NextGen\_Now One To Watch Award

- Shauna Alexander, SoundCloud
- Jenna Gaudio, Vydia
- Tiffany Kerns, Country Music Association
- Geoff Ogunlesi, 300 Entertainment
- Jennifer Turnbow, National Songwriters Association International

### Master of Metadata Award

- Lindsay Conlin, Exactuals
- Britnee Foreman, Exceleration Music Jaxsta
- Music Reports
- SoundExchange

### Frontline Innovator Award

- Darkside Records (Poughkeepsie, N.Y.)
- Music Millennium (Portland, Ore.)
- The Record Exchange (Boise, Idaho)
- Seasick Records (Birmingham, Ala.)
- The Sound Garden (Baltimore; Syracuse, N.Y.)

### Marketing Superstar Award

- All Time Low "It Was Never a Phase" Campaign, Hopeless Records
- Cleopatrik, Thirty Tigers/The Orchard
- Donny Osmond "Puppy Love" 50-Year Anniversary Campaign, Crowd Surf
- Tenille Arts Marketing Campaign, EMPIRE
- WMX Black History Month Campaign

/// Dorothee Imhoff



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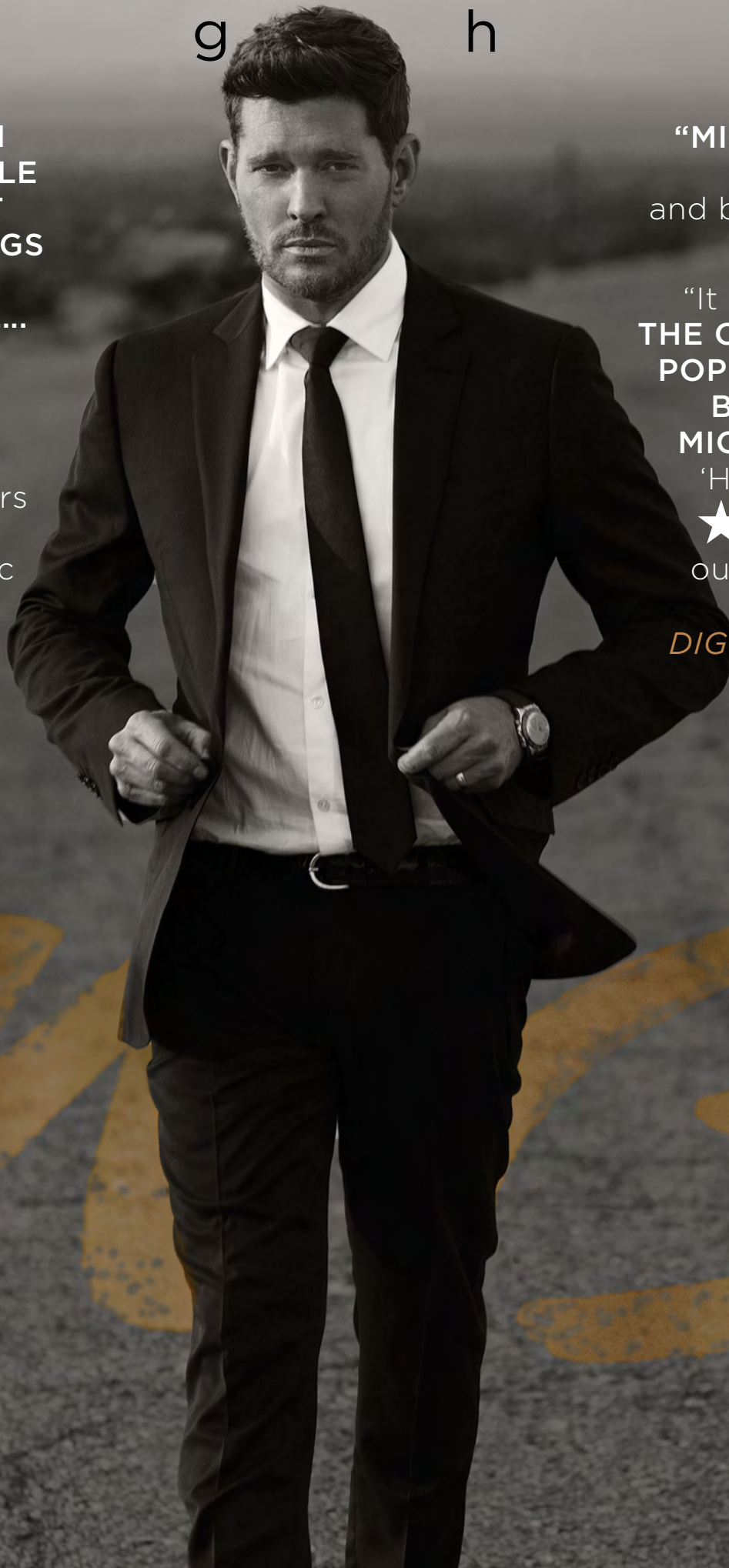
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