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BURNA BOY'S
Worldwide
Mission

**UKRAINE'S
MUSICIANS**
Photos From the
Front Lines

MusicCon 2022

ANITTA'S Global Vision

A TRILINGUAL TAKEOVER

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Trilingual Takeover

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TAKING AFRO-FUSION TO THE
WORLD'S BIGGEST STAGES



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MAY 14, 2022

VOLUME 134

NO. 6

ON THE COVERS

Anitta photographed by Ramona Rosales on April 18 at The Mountain Mermaid in Topanga, Calif.

Burna Boy photographed by Seye Isikalu on April 17 at One Friendly Place in London.

THIS PAGE

Saint Laurent bodysuit and DJULA earrings.

TO OUR READERS

Billboard will publish its next issue on June 4. For 24/7 music coverage, go to billboard.com.

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Olivia Rodrigo's and **Adele**'s managers, marketing and merch leaders, Web3 pioneers — they're all among the honorees in *Billboard*'s annual celebration of the next-gen executives defining the future of the music industry.

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A SONG FOR UKRAINE

On Feb. 23, Ukrainian musicians were doing what they've always done. The next day, Russia invaded their country, and everything changed. In images that Kharkiv-born photographer **Sasha Maslov** — who returned to Ukraine from New York — shot for *Billboard* in late March, he captures regional pop stars, folk groups, rappers and *bandura* players.



A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

I T'S A WHOLE NEW WORLD — and the artists seeking stardom across its borders today face a mind-bending new set of opportunities and challenges.

While streaming has made distributing music easier than ever, the business is struggling to break new global stars in the face of fierce and fragmenting competition for fans' attention. Local-language tunes rule in many of the 40-plus markets where we introduced our Hits of the World charts earlier this year. Touring has become a logistical nightmare in the wake of the pandemic: Soaring inflation and supply shortages of everything from trucks to tour bus drivers are ratcheting up the price of playing abroad to woo new foreign fans. And Russia's war on Ukraine, in addition to destroying thousands of lives and displacing millions, has left musicians in both countries fighting for their freedom and their livelihoods, while further complicating the touring landscape.

Amid all this, we decided to turn the spotlight on some of music's most promising contenders for world domination — both in this issue and on the stage at our new global music summit, MusicCon, which will kick off May 13 in Las Vegas, ahead of the Billboard Music Awards on May 15. Our two cover stars, Brazil's Anitta and

Nigeria's Burna Boy, will discuss their innovative plans to grow their fandoms far and wide. Jamaica's Shenseea will showcase her fusion of dancehall and hip-hop. Puerto Rico's Rauw Alejandro will examine the future of reggaetón. Ukraine's Max Barskih will illuminate the plight of his country and perform his new song, "Don't F@ck With Ukraine." Meanwhile, some of Ukraine's other notable musical acts — photographed for *Billboard* by Kharkiv-born photographer Sasha Maslov — tell us their remarkable stories from the front lines (see page 58).

At MusicCon, we'll also celebrate the industry's brightest young executives cracking the code to this new world order at our first-ever 40 Under 40 dinner on May 14. We look forward to toasting their inclusion on our 40 Under 40 list (see page 50) and to building MusicCon into a gathering where tomorrow's music leaders, stars and fans can learn from one another and forge relationships that will fuel their careers for years to come.

Please join us there and mark your calendars for next year, when we'll no doubt have a very different world to make sense of. Here's to hoping it's a peaceful one — and full of hits that get the whole world singing together again.



Hannah Karp

Hannah Karp
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

Top, from left: Alejandro, Anitta, Barskih, Shenseea and Burna Boy.

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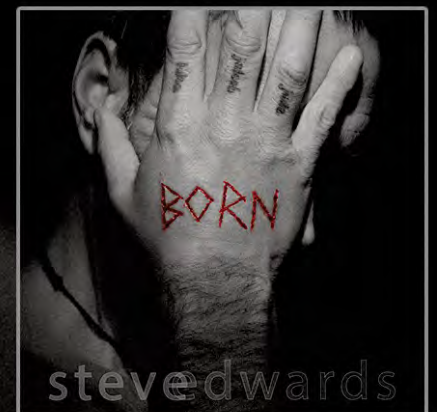
MODERN ROCK WIZARD STEVE EDWARDS SHARES PROFOUND EMOTIONS IN NEW ALBUM "BORN"

Prolific artist Steve Edwards inspires crowds across the globe with his latest album titled Born. The anticipated collection arrives just in time, sharing heartfelt thoughts and dynamic soundscapes with the audience. An entirety of ten tracks, Born represents the artist's desire to continue creating his very own, authentic music after a short pause; Steve Edwards' music is "born" again.

Released at the end of 2021, "Colour of Blood" drew much attention to the New Zealand native with hundreds of thousands of streams and views. "Fallen," the album's second release, amassed over 400K plays, and is a stirring and vibrant song that fully showcased Steve Edwards' talent and his impeccable taste in music production.

Born opens with "Happysad", a more melodic modern rock piece that juxtaposes the two opposite emotions, showing us the artist's unique perspective. The guitar chords are magnificent while the vocals are simply unparalleled as Steve Edwards speaks of growth and remaining feeling of bittersweetness when all is said and done.

"Born" is an exquisite song that continues the theme of growth and becoming wiser. "Maybe we were born to fight alone," comes the first verse followed by the second realisation: "Maybe we were born to dream alone, maybe it's better than a lie". The dreamy soundscapes, supported by the heavier beats and electric guitar, dance in a harmony of their own, allowing room for the artist's thoughts to wander, much like the listener's.



Transcendental and highly contemplative, Born is a one of a kind collection that does justice to its maker's talent. It takes more than a good voice to create such an extraordinary album imbued with personal experience and a rare level of emotionality that fills the audience's hearts and even provides food for thought. Before we know it, "Fall From Grace" arrives and the collection is complete. Steve Edwards inspires people across cultures, countries, and backgrounds to be bold and to pursue their real selves.

JACK HARLOW

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charts

DATA FOR WEEK OF 5.14.2022



Future Bounds In Atop Billboard 200 And Hot 100

BILLBOARD 200

1

I Never Liked You
Future

LAST WEEK	PEAK POSITION	WEEKS ON CHART
-	1	1

FUTURE'S *I NEVER LIKED YOU* enters at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 (dated May 14) with the year's largest week for an album. His eighth leader opens with 222,000 equivalent album units earned in the United States in the week ending May 5, according to Luminate — the best total since Adele's *30* logged 288,000 units (Dec. 11, 2021) and the biggest debut since *30* scored 839,000 units one week earlier that December.

Future also earns a personal best for a solo effort — his only bigger week came as part of his collaborative album with Drake, *What a Time To Be Alive*, which started with 375,000 units in October 2015.

Concurrently, *I Never Liked You*'s "Wait for U," featuring Drake and Tems, soars in at No. 1 on

the Billboard Hot 100 with 40.2 million streams, 7.9 million radio airplay audience impressions and 6,400 downloads sold.

Future scores his first Hot 100 No. 1 as a lead artist and his second overall after his and Young Thug's featured turns on Drake's "Way 2 Sexy," which debuted atop the Sept. 18, 2021, chart.

Tems leads the Hot 100 for the first time, while Drake collects his milestone 10th chart-topper and first since "Way 2 Sexy." His first No. 1 was as a featured artist on Rihanna's "What's My Name?" for one week in November 2010, and he becomes the 10th act in the chart's history with a double-digit No. 1 total — a club that most recently inducted Rihanna, after "S&M" (featuring Britney Spears) became her 10th leader (of 14 to date) in April 2011.

—KEITH CAULFIELD AND 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
		1	#1 for 1 WEEK Wait For U	Future Featuring Drake & Tems <small>ATL JACOB, FNZ (N.D. WILBURN, A. GRAHAM, T. OPENYI, T. AKPOGHENE, J. D. CANADY, M. MULE, J. DEBONI) FREEBANDZ/EPIC</small>	1	1
(1)	(1)	2	SAL As It Was	Harry Styles <small>KID HARPOON, T. JOHNSON (H. STYLES, T. E. PHULL, T. JOHNSON) ERSKINE/COLUMBIA</small>	1	5
(2)	(2)	3	AIR First Class	Jack Harlow <small>CHARLIE HANDSOME, J. T. HARLOW, J. L. HARRIS, R. CHAHAYED (C. B. BRIDGES, D. FORD, E. WILLIAMS, J. T. HARLOW, J. JONES, J. L. HARRIS, J. VELAZQUEZ, M. RAHEEM, N. J. PABON, R. CHAHAYED, CHARLIE HANDSOME, S. DUHAMEL, W. ADAMS) GENERATION NOW/ATLANTIC</small>	1	4
NEW		4	Puffin On Zootiez	Future <small>TM88, TOO DOPE, NILS (N.D. WILBURN, B. L. SIMMONS, L. RAGLAND, N. NOEHDEN) FREEBANDZ/EPIC</small>	4	1
3	3	5	Heat Waves	Glass Animals <small>D. BAYLEY (D. BAYLEY) WOLF TONE/POLYDOR/REPUBLIC</small>	1	68
(4)	(4)	6	Big Energy	Latto <small>DR. LUKE, V. OLIVER (A. STEPHENS, L. S. GOTTFELD, V. OLIVER, A. T. R. SMITH, T. M. THOMAS, KAINE, J. LOWE, A. BELEW, C. FRANTZ, S. STANLEY, T. WEYMOUTH) STREAMCUT/RCA</small>	3	28
(5)	(5)	7	Enemy	Imagine Dragons X JID <small>MATTMAN & ROBIN (D. REYNOLDS, W. SERMON, B. MCKEE, D. PLATZMAN, R. L. FREDRIKSSON, M. P. LARSSON, J. D. TRANTER, D. ROUTE) KIDINAKORNER/INTERSCOPE</small>	5	24
NEW		8	712PM	Future <small>TM88, DJ MOON, WHEEZY, MOXART BEATZ (N.D. WILBURN, B. L. SIMMONS, C. MOON, S. GILARDE, W. T. GLASS, N. BERLINGER) FREEBANDZ/EPIC</small>	8	1
6	6	9	Stay	The Kid LAROI & Justin Bieber <small>CASHMERE CAT, O. FEDI, B. SLATKIN, C. PUTH (C. K. J. HOWARD, J. D. BIEBER, M. A. HOIBERG, O. FEDI, B. SLATKIN, C. PUTH, M. J. MULE, J. DEBONI, S. RAHMAN) RAYMOND BRAUN/COLUMBIA/DEF JAM</small>	1	43
NEW		10	I'm Dat N***a	Future <small>DY KRAZY, NICKY SLOWBURN, J. L. LUELLEN (N.D. WILBURN, D. L. J. AVERY, N. SANTOS, J. H. LUELLEN) FREEBANDZ/EPIC</small>	10	1
NEW		11	I'm On One	Future Featuring Drake <small>TOREY MONTANA (N.D. WILBURN, A. GRAHAM, T. M. GILMER) FREEBANDZ/EPIC</small>	11	1
NEW		12	Love You Better	Future <small>ATL JACOB, FNZ, J. DARDEN (N.D. WILBURN, J. D. CANADY, M. MULE, J. DEBONI, J. DARDEN) FREEBANDZ/EPIC</small>	12	1
8	7	13	Woman	Doja Cat <small>YETI BEATS, L. JAY, CRATE CLASSICS, A. JONES (A. Z. DLAMINI, D. SPRECHER, A. HORN, A. JONES, L. JAY, J. T. MOBISSON) KEMOSABE/RCA</small>	7	40
10	8	14	Ghost	Justin Bieber <small>THE MONSTERS & STRANGERZ, J. BELLION (J. D. BIEBER, J. D. BELLION, J. K. JOHNSON, S. JOHNSON, M. R. POLLACK) RAYMOND BRAUN/DEF JAM</small>	5	32
NEW		15	Keep It Burnin	Future Featuring Kanye West <small>ATL JACOB (N.D. WILBURN, YE, J. D. CANADY) FREEBANDZ/EPIC</small>	15	1
9	9	16	Super Gremlin	Kodak Black <small>ATL JACOB (B. K. KAPRI, J. D. CANADY, M. A. TIMMERMANN) SNIPER GANG/ATLANTIC</small>	3	26
11	10	17	Thats What I Want	Lil Nas X <small>O. FEDI, B. SLATKIN, R. B. TEDDER, K. BEAZY (M. L. HILL, O. FEDI, B. SLATKIN, R. B. TEDDER, K. C. BACH) COLUMBIA</small>	8	33
12	11	18	Bad Habits	Ed Sheeran <small>FRED, J. MCDAID, E. SHEERAN, J. FISH, O. S. SYKES (E. C. SHEERAN, F. J. P. GIBSON, J. MCDAID) ATLANTIC</small>	2	45
(50)	60	19	About Damn Time	Lizzo <small>B. SLATKIN, RICKY REED (B. SLATKIN, E. B. FREDERIC, L. PRICE, M. MCLAREN, M. JEFFERSON, R. LARKINS, S. HAGUE, T. M. THOMAS) NICE LIFE/ATLANTIC</small>	19	3
NEW		20	Massaging Me	Future <small>ATL JACOB (N.D. WILBURN, J. D. CANADY) FREEBANDZ/EPIC</small>	20	1

Go to the Chart Beat section of [billboard.com](https://www.billboard.com) for complete charts coverage.



HOT 100

43

"Thousand Miles"
The Kid LAROI

The Kid LAROI (left) and Andrew Watt, 31, who co-wrote and co-produced the artist's most recent single. "Thousand Miles" jumps 22-17 on Mainstream Top 40 this issue.

How was "Thousand Miles" created?

ANDREW WATT LAROI came to my house a year ago and was like, "Could you give me something on the guitar?" I just wrote this riff the other day and I showed it to him, and he was like,

"That's the shit right there." This amazing thing just flew out of him. I started coming up with this other chord sequence, and we went through it to get the melodies to [make] sense. Then, me, LAROI, Billy Walsh and Louis Bell got together and crafted lyrics until we had something that we felt was great. It's so funny how parts of the process fly out and others have to be a longer thing. It's always different.

You and Louis Bell also co-produced fellow Hot 100 hit "2step" by Ed Sheeran and Lil Baby. What's your working relationship with Bell like?

He's my partner in crime and one of my closest friends. We make a certain type of music that I don't think anyone else could make because it's a true collaboration between two different sides of the brain. I play a bunch of instruments, and he'll take my stuff and make it sound like [something] you've never heard before. We have a lot of fun as we're doing it — if it's not fun, there's no point.

As someone with a hand in genre-spanning hits, what sounds do you think are currently driving mainstream music?

I cannot answer that question. All I can say is that I am dedicated to putting real instruments, chord changes [and] human-feeling recordings in mainstream music. Every artist is different, so it's what serves that artist. But at the core, it's good chord changes and good music that inspire a singer or a rapper to get emotional and deliver something that people want to sing along to.

—JOSH GLICKSMAN

Biggest Sales Gain	2	"As It Was" Harry Styles	
Biggest Airplay Gain	3	"First Class" Jack Harlow	
Biggest Streaming Gain	25	"Provenza" Karol G	

WATT: GUYA HANCOCK/GETTY IMAGES; STYLES: LILLIE EBER; HARLOW: URBAN WHIT; KAROL G: PABLO ESCOBERO

THE WEEKS' BEST PERFORMING SINGLES, ALBUMS, AND ARTISTS ARE RANKED BY WEEK-END SALES, AS REPORTED BY LUMINATE AND STREAMING ACTIVITY FOR THE FIRST TIME. SEE CHARTS. LEGENDON.BILLBOARD.COM FOR COMPLETE RULES AND EXPLANATIONS. © 2022 BILLBOARD MEDIA LLC AND LUMINATE INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

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• TYLER
JUNIO 11

• PROVIDENCE
JULIO 8

• PHILADELPHIA
JULIO 9

• NEWBURGH
JULIO 10

• LOS ANGELES
JULIO 22

• DETROIT
AGOSTO 12

• GRAND RAPIDS
AGOSTO 13

• RALEIGH
AGOSTO 19

• ATLANTA
AGOSTO 20

• CHARLOTTE
AGOSTO 21

• INDIANAPOLIS
SEPTIEMBRE 24

• COLUMBUS
SEPTIEMBRE 25

• WEST PALM BEACH
OCTUBRE 7

• FORT MYERS
OCTUBRE 8

• RALSTON
OCTUBRE 14

• MAPLEWOOD
OCTUBRE 15

• ORLANDO
OCTUBRE 21

• HOUSTON
NOVIEMBRE 4

• NEW ORLEANS
NOVIEMBRE 5

• HARTFORD
NOVIEMBRE 19

• WASHINGTON DC
NOVIEMBRE 20

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BILLBOARD 200

2



The Weeknd *Dawn FM*

The Weeknd's latest album, which debuted at No. 2 on the Jan. 22 chart, jumps 35-2 largely due to its vinyl release on April 29. It also earns the largest sales week for an R&B album on vinyl (34,000 in the week ending May 5) in the Luminate era, which began in 1991.

11



Pooh Shiesty *Shiesty Season*

The rapper's 2021 project was reissued April 29 with an additional 11 songs, bringing its total tracklist to 32. In turn, *Shiesty Season* rallies 123-11 with 28,000 equivalent album units earned (up 196%).

116



Norah Jones *Come Away With Me*

The former No. 1 was reissued in a variety of formats for its 20th anniversary and returns to the chart for the first time since 2015. On Top Jazz Albums, it scores its first week at No. 1 since 2004.

90

The Judds *All-Time Greatest Hits*



The late Naomi Judd, one-half of mother-daughter country duo The Judds, is remembered on the charts following her death on April 30. On the Billboard 200 and Top Country Albums, the act has its highest-charting release in 30 years as *All-Time Greatest Hits* debuts at Nos. 90 and 11, respectively. It's the highest ranking on each chart for The Judds since *Greatest Hits Vol. II* reached Nos. 54 and 7 in 1992.

The duo gave its final public performance on April 11, singing "Love Can Build a Bridge" at the CMT Awards. The 1991 hit debuts at No. 1 on Country Digital Song Sales with 6,200 sold (up 6,261%) in the United States in the week ending May 5, according to Luminate.

The Judds made their *Billboard* chart debut in 1983 and scored 14 No. 1s on Hot Country Songs, the most of any female duo/group.

-KEITH CAULFIELD

Billboard 200

2 WKS. AGO	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	Artist IMPRINT/DISTRIBUTING LABEL	Title	PEAK POS.	WKS. ON CHART
		1	#1 for 1 WEEK Future FREEBANDZ/EPIC	I Never Liked You	1	1
31	35	2	GG The Weeknd XO/REPUBLIC	Dawn FM	2	17
2	2	3	Morgan Wallen BIG LOUD/REPUBLIC	Dangerous: The Double Album	1	69
	NEW	4	Miranda Lambert VANNER/RCA NASHVILLE/SMN	Palomino	4	1
5	4	5	Olivia Rodrigo Geffen/IGA	Sour	1	50
3	3	6	Lil Durk ALAMO	7220	1	8
4	5	7	Soundtrack WALT DISNEY	Encanto	1	23
	NEW	8	NoCap NEVER BROKE AGAIN/ATLANTIC/AG	Mr. Crawford	8	1
6	7	9	Drake OVO SOUND/REPUBLIC	Certified Lover Boy	1	35
7	6	10	Doja Cat KEMOSABE/RCA	Planet Her	2	45
140	123	11	PS Pooh Shiesty 1017 GLOBAL/ATLANTIC/AG	Shiesty Season	3	65
	NEW	12	Grateful Dead GRATEFUL DEAD/RHINO	Dave's Picks, Volume 42: Winterland, San Francisco, CA - 2/23/74	12	1
	NEW	13	Kehlani TSUNAMI MOB/ATLANTIC/AG	Blue Water Road	13	1
10	10	14	Lil Baby QUALITY CONTROL/MOTOWN/CAPITOL	My Turn	1	114
	NEW	15	Rammstein RAMMSTEIN/VERTIGO/CAPITOL/VIRGIN	Zeit	15	1
9	9	16	Gunna GUNNA/YOUNG STONER LIFE/300/AG	DS4EVER	1	17
30	11	17	Ed Sheeran ATLANTIC/AG	=	1	27
16	14	18	Luke Combs RIVER HOUSE/COLUMBIA NASHVILLE/SMN	What You See Is What You Get	1	130
12	15	19	Bad Bunny RIMAS	YHLQMDLG	2	114
13	12	20	Harry Styles ERSKINE/COLUMBIA	Fine Line	1	125

THE BILLBOARD 200 RANKS THE MOST POPULAR ALBUMS OF THE WEEK, AS COMPILED BY LUMINATE. BASED ON MULTIMETRIC SALES DATA, INCLUDING ALBUM SALES, TRACK SALES, AND STREAMING EQUIVALENT ALBUMS. © 2022 BILLBOARD MEDIA LLC AND LUMINATE INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

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|--------------------------|----------|-------------------------|----------|
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| 11 MAR -READING, PA | SOLD OUT | 08 ABR -EL PASO, TX | SOLD OUT |
| 12 MAR -NEW YORK, NY | SOLD OUT | 09 ABR -PHOENIX, AZ | SOLD OUT |
| 25 MAR -INDIANAPOLIS, IN | SOLD OUT | 16 ABR -ALBUQUERQUE, NM | SOLD OUT |
| 26 MAR -MILWAUKEE, WI | SOLD OUT | 17 ABR -DENVER, CO | SOLD OUT |

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GLOBAL 200

5

"That That"
PSY featuring SUGA

WITH HIS NEW SINGLE, "THAT THAT," featuring SUGA of BTS, PSY (above) debuts at No. 5 on the Billboard Global 200. Released April 29, the track enters with 67.7 million official streams and 29,600 sold globally in the week ending May 5, according to Luminate. PSY scores his first entry since the chart

launched in September 2020, while SUGA achieves his second, after "Girl of My Dreams," with Juice WRLD, peaked at No. 37 in December 2021.

"That That" marks the highest-charting solo Global 200 hit for a BTS member — and first top 10 entry — surpassing Jung Kook's "Stay Alive," which entered and peaked at No. 13 on the Feb. 26 chart. As a group, BTS has a record six Global 200 No. 1s.

On the Billboard Global Excl. U.S. chart, "That That" debuts at No. 2 (61.5 million streams, 18,800 sold outside the United States). The track is likewise the highest-ranking solo hit on the list for a BTS member — and the second top 10 — after "Stay Alive" debuted and peaked at No. 8. BTS has scored a leading five Global Excl. U.S. No. 1s.

Among BTS' other members, Jimin has also reached the top 20 of both the Global 200 and Global Excl. U.S. charts; his and Ha Sung Woon's "With You" opened at its Nos. 19 and 14 highs on the respective May 7 rankings.

PSY earns his latest chart honors nearly a decade after his "Gangnam Style" galloped to No. 2 on the Billboard Hot 100 for seven weeks in October and November 2012. He added his second Hot 100 top 10 the following year with "Gentleman" (No. 5, May 2013).

—GARY TRUST

Global 200

2 WKS. AGO	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	Title	Artist	PEAK POS.	WKS. ON CHART
1	1	1	#1 for 5 Weeks As It Was	Harry Styles	1	5
	HOT SHOT DEBUT	2	Wait For U	Future Featuring Drake & Tems	2	1
2	2	3	First Class	Jack Harlow	2	4
3	3	4	Heat Waves	Glass Animals	1	70
	NEW	5	That That	PSY Featuring SUGA	5	1
-	15	6	Provenza	Karol G	6	2
	NEW	7	Puffin On Zootiez	Future	7	1
4	4	8	Stay	The Kid LAROI & Justin Bieber	1	43
7	5	9	Bam Bam	Camila Cabello Featuring Ed Sheeran	5	9
5	6	10	Cold Heart (PNAU Remix)	Elton John & Dua Lipa	3	38
	NEW	11	712PM	Future	11	1
6	7	12	Enemy	Imagine Dragons X JID	3	27
10	9	13	Shivers	Ed Sheeran	3	34
8	8	14	abcdefu	GAYLE	1	25
11	10	15	Save Your Tears	The Weeknd & Ariana Grande	1	70
13	12	16	MAMIII	Becky G X Karol G	4	12
	NEW	17	I'm On One	Future Featuring Drake	17	1
12	13	18	Bad Habits	Ed Sheeran	1	45
9	11	19	Envolver	Anitta	2	9
	NEW	20	I'm Dat N***a	Future	20	1

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THE BILLBOARD GLOBAL 200 CHART RANKS THE TOP SONGS BASED ON STREAMING AND SALES ACTIVITY FROM OVER 200 TERRITORIES AROUND THE WORLD — INCLUDING 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 TIER OF LEADING AUDIO AND VIDEO MUSIC SERVICES, PLUS DOWNLOAD SALES FROM TOP MUSIC RETAILERS ACROSS THE GLOBE. SEE CHARTS LEGEND ON BILLBOARD.COM FOR COMPLETE RULES AND EXPLANATIONS. © 2022 BILLBOARD MEDIA LLC AND LUMINATE INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

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ARTIST 100

7

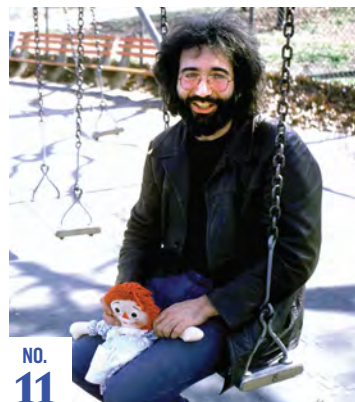
Miranda Lambert

WEEKS ON CHART

136

Miranda Lambert jumps 58-7 on the Billboard Artist 100 as her latest album, *Palomino*, debuts

at No. 2 on the Top Country Albums chart and No. 4 on the Billboard 200 with 36,000 equivalent album units, according to Luminate. It's her ninth and seventh top 10 entry on the charts, respectively.

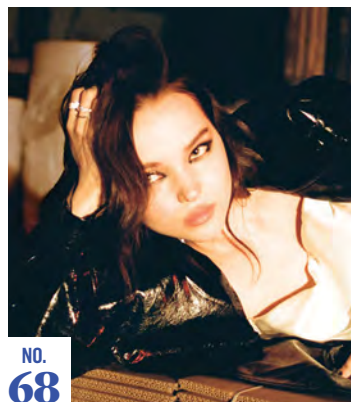


NO. 11

The Grateful Dead's Best Since 1987

The Rock & Roll Hall of Famers score their highest-charting Billboard 200 album in 35 years as their new three-CD set, *Dave's Picks, Volume 42: Winterland, San Francisco, CA - 2/23/74*, debuts at No. 12 (22,000 units). The band has matched or exceeded that ranking only twice before: in 1975 with *Blues for Allah* (No. 12 peak) and in 1987 with *In the Dark* (No. 6, powered by the group's lone Billboard Hot 100 top 10, the No. 9-peaking "Touch of Grey"). The new release also opens at No. 1 on Top Rock Albums.

-XANDER ZELLNER



NO. 68

Cameron Crowns Emerging Artists

Dove Cameron rises 75-68 on the Artist 100, and concurrently tops *Billboard's* Emerging Artists chart for the first time, thanks to the continued success of her single "Boyfriend." The track sits at No. 34 on the Billboard Hot 100 with 30.7 million airplay impressions (up 23%), 6.7 million streams and 1,500 downloads sold. The song also jumps 11-8 on the Mainstream Top 40 airplay chart, marking her first top 10, and holds at its No. 15 high on Adult Top 40. Cameron previously charted four Hot 100 hits thanks to Disney's *Descendants* franchise.

-X. Z.

Artist 100

2 WKS. AGO	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	Artist	IMPRINT/LABEL	PEAK POS.	WKS. ON CHART
57	(30)	1	#1 for 5 Weeks Future	FREEBANDZ/EPIC	1	233
6	6	2	The Weeknd	XO/REPUBLIC	1	356
3	(1)	3	Doja Cat	KEMOSABE/RCA	1	120
4	4	4	Harry Styles	ERSKINE/COLUMBIA	1	149
(2)	2	5	Morgan Wallen	BIG LOUD/REPUBLIC	1	165
5	3	6	Ed Sheeran	ATLANTIC/AG	1	403
53	58	7	Miranda Lambert	VANNER/RCA NASHVILLE/SMN	2	136
11	10	8	Drake	OVO SOUND/REPUBLIC	1	410
10	8	9	Lil Baby	QUALITY CONTROL/MOTOWN/CAPITOL	1	208
8	5	10	Luke Combs	RIVER HOUSE/COLUMBIA NASHVILLE/SMN	1	270
RE-ENTRY	(11)	11	Grateful Dead	GRATEFUL DEAD/RHINO	3	36
7	7	12	Jack Harlow	GENERATION NOW/ATLANTIC/AG	1	91
9	11	13	Olivia Rodrigo	GEFFEN/IGA	1	69
14	14	14	Justin Bieber	RAYMOND BRAUN/DEF JAM	1	376
13	13	15	Dua Lipa	WARNER	1	209
(12)	24	16	Taylor Swift	REPUBLIC	1	406
15	17	17	Chris Stapleton	MERCURY NASHVILLE/UMGN	1	341
16	16	18	Bruno Mars	ATLANTIC/AG	1	388
RE-ENTRY	(19)	19	Rammstein	RAMMSTEIN/VERTIGO/CAPITOL/VIRGIN	14	3
20	26	20	Kanye West	G.O.O.D./DEF JAM	1	164

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NO. 1

'Girl' Power: Pearce & McBryde Reign

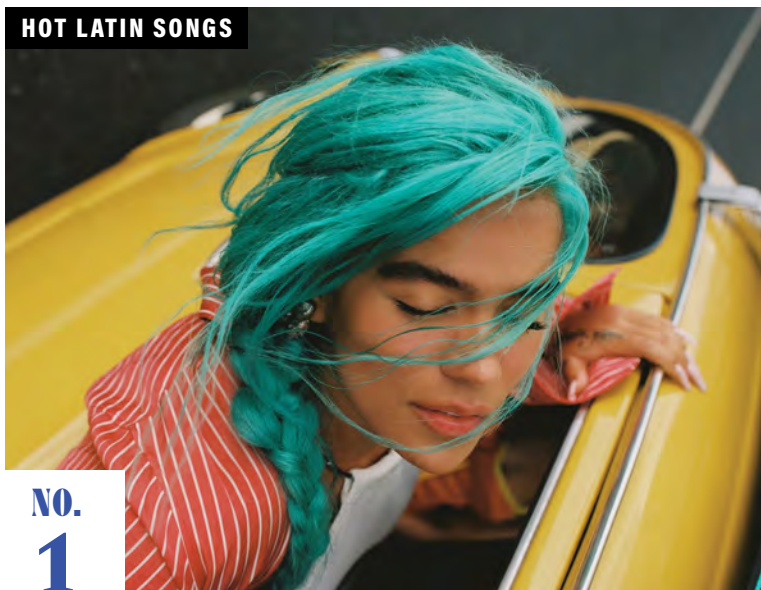
Carly Pearce and Ashley McBryde's "Never Wanted To Be That Girl" tops Country Airplay, becoming just the third duet between two solo women to lead the chart — and the second in under a month, after Elle King and Miranda Lambert's "Drunk (And I Don't Wanna Go Home)" (April 16). The team-ups follow Reba McEntire's "Does He Love You," with Linda Davis, in November 1993.

"Reba and Linda... Miranda and Elle... now Ashley and me," says Pearce. "And the fact that we're not just singing it, but also that we wrote it [with Shane McAnally]... that's the icing on the cake."

"Carly, Shane and I were focused on writing a song we loved that day," says McBryde. "We were three individuals unafraid of being honest. That was our compass. Now here we are with a No. 1 song at country radio to remind us of how rewarding honesty can be."

—JIM ASKER

Country Airplay				
LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	Title	Artist	WKS. ON CHART
		<small>IMPRINT/PROMOTION LABEL</small>		
4	1	#1 for 1 Week Never Wanted To Be That Girl	Carly Pearce & Ashley McBryde	34
		<small>ATLANTIC/WARNER MUSIC NASHVILLE/BIG MACHINE/WMN</small>		
1	2	Never Say Never	Cole Swindell / Lainey Wilson	25
		<small>BROKEN BOW/WARNER MUSIC NASHVILLE/WMN</small>		
2	3	'Til You Can't	Cody Johnson	32
		<small>COJO/WARNER MUSIC NASHVILLE/WMN</small>		
3	4	Doin' This	Luke Combs	25
		<small>RIVER HOUSE/COLUMBIA NASHVILLE</small>		
6	5	23	Sam Hunt	35
		<small>MCA NASHVILLE</small>		
10	6	Trouble With A Heartbreak	Jason Aldean	17
		<small>MACON/BROKEN BOW</small>		
7	7	Slow Down Summer	Thomas Rhett	27
		<small>VALORY</small>		
8	8	Wild Hearts	Keith Urban	38
		<small>HIT RED/CAPITOL NASHVILLE</small>		
9	9	AA	Walker Hayes	24
		<small>MONUMENT</small>		
13	10	Take My Name	Parmalee	30
		<small>STONEY CREEK</small>		



NO. 1

Karol G Replaces Herself At No. 1

Karol G hits a new milestone in her *Billboard* chart career as she becomes the first woman to replace herself at No. 1 on Hot Latin Songs since the chart launched in 1986. "Provenza," which debuted on the May 7 chart at No. 2, trades places this issue with "Mamiii" (with Becky G). The former takes top Streaming Gainer honors, with a 25% gain to 13.7 million U.S. streams generated in the week ending May 5.

The arrival of "Provenza" in the runner-up slot made the singer only the second woman to hold the top two positions simultaneously — following Selena in 1995, with "Tú Sólo Tú" and "I Could Fall in Love."

Radio play for "Provenza" also helps boost it to lead the all-metric ranking. With 7 million audience impressions earned in the week ending May 8, the track pushes 18-8 on Latin Airplay in its second week.

—PAMELA BUSTIOS

Hot Latin Songs				
LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	Title	Artist	WKS. ON CHART
		<small>IMPRINT/PROMOTION LABEL</small>		
2	1	#1 for 1 Week STM Provenza	Karol G	2
		<small>UNIVERSAL MUSIC LATINO/UMLE</small>		
1	2	MAMIII	Becky G X Karol G	12
		<small>KEMOSABE/RCA/SONY MUSIC LATIN</small>		
3	3	SAL Pepas	Farruko	44
		<small>CARBON FIBER/SONY MUSIC LATIN</small>		
5	4	Envolver	Anitta	9
		<small>WARNER/WARNER LATINA</small>		
6	5	Soy El Unico	Yahritza y Su Esencia	6
		<small>LUMBRE</small>		
7	6	Desesperados	Rauw Alejandro & Chenzo Corleone	21
		<small>DUARS/SONY MUSIC LATIN</small>		
RE-ENTRY	7	Ya Acabo	Marca MP x Becky G	21
		<small>MARCA MP/SONY MUSIC LATIN</small>		
8	8	Yonaguni	Bad Bunny	48
		<small>RIMAS</small>		
9	9	X Ultima Vez	Daddy Yankee & Bad Bunny	6
		<small>EL CARTEL/REPUBLIC</small>		
10	10	AIR Te Felicito	Shakira & Rauw Alejandro	2
		<small>SONY MUSIC LATIN</small>		

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Doja Cat Rules Rhythmic, Sets Record

Three weeks after Doja Cat ceded the Rhythmic Airplay throne with “Woman,” she recaptures the top slot with “Freaky Deaky,” with Tyga. The latter advances with a 16% improvement in spins in the week ending May 8, according to Luminate.

The song is Doja Cat’s seventh Rhythmic Airplay No. 1 and Tyga’s fourth. The new leader one-ups their prior charted collaboration, “Juicy,” which reached a No. 2 high in January 2020.

Doja Cat also makes history in the Rhythmic Airplay top 10 as “Get Into It (Yuh)” climbs 13-9. With that single, “Freaky” and “Woman” (No. 6), she becomes the first female to hold three simultaneous top 10s on the chart as a lead act; overall among women, she joins Ashanti, Cardi B and Rihanna with a top 10 triple. “Get Into It” is the fifth top 10 from Doja Cat’s *Planet Her* album; all four of its predecessors hit No. 1.

—TREVOR ANDERSON

Rhythmic Airplay				
LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	Title IMPRINT/PROMOTION LABEL	Artist	WKS. ON CHART
3	1	#1 for 1 Week Freaky Deaky KEMOSABE/LAST KINGS/RCA/EMPIRE	Tyga X Doja Cat	10
6	2	GG First Class GENERATION NOW/ATLANTIC	Jack Harlow	4
1	3	To The Moon! JNR CHOI/BLACK BUTTER/EPIC	JNR CHOI & Sam Tompkins	13
2	4	Big Energy STREAMCUT/RCA	Latto	31
5	5	Scared Money 4HUNNID/DEF JAM	YG Featuring J. Cole & Moneybagg Yo	13
4	6	Woman KEMOSABE/RCA	Doja Cat	20
8	7	Do We Have A Problem? REPUBLIC	Nicki Minaj X Lil Baby	12
11	8	Sweetest Pie 1501 CERTIFIED/300	Megan Thee Stallion & Dua Lipa	8
13	9	Get Into It (Yuh) KEMOSABE/RCA	Doja Cat	6
12	10	City Of Gods RICHFISH/COLUMBIA	Fivio Foreign, Kanye West & Alicia Keys	12



Jelly Roll Rocks First Airplay No. 1

Jelly Roll, the artist born Jason DeFord in Nashville, scores his first leader on a radio ranking — after he first hit the *Billboard* charts in 2011 — as “Dead Man Walking” reaches No. 1 on Mainstream Rock Airplay.

The track also jumps 9-6 on the Rock & Alternative Airplay chart with 3.2 million in audience, up 1%, according to Luminate. Beyond its mainstream rock acceptance, the song holds at No. 30 on Alternative Airplay.

Meanwhile, Jelly Roll’s first Country Airplay entry, “Son of a Sinner,” holds at its No. 28 high, up 3% to 4 million impressions.

Largely a rapper early in his career, Jelly Roll released his latest album, *Ballads of the Broken*, last September, fusing hip-hop, rock and country on the project. “Some music’s meant to be heard and some music is meant to be felt,” he recently told *Billboard*. “Personally, I try to make the kind of music that’s meant to be felt.”

—KEVIN RUTHERFORD

Mainstream Rock Airplay				
LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	Title IMPRINT/PROMOTION LABEL	Artist	WKS. ON CHART
3	1	#1 for 1 Week Dead Man Walking BAILEE & BUDDY/BMG/BROKEN BOW	Jelly Roll	22
4	2	Call Me Little Sunshine LOMA VISTA/CONCORD	Ghost	16
2	3	Zombified EPITAPH	Falling In Reverse	18
1	4	Won't Stand Down WARNER	Muse	17
8	5	The Steeple ATLANTIC	Halestorm	13
5	6	Planet Zero ATLANTIC	Shinedown	15
6	7	Never Gonna Learn BETTER NOISE	Asking Alexandria	17
9	8	Afterlife BETTER NOISE	Five Finger Death Punch	4
7	9	Black Summer WARNER	Red Hot Chili Peppers	14
10	10	If Tomorrow Never Comes BETTER NOISE	Bad Wolves	12

Ángela Aguilar


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Major labels and publishers reached a tentative settlement at the **Copyright Royalty Board** to increase the songwriter mechanical royalty rate from 9.1 cents to 12 cents.

Live Nation reported its "best first quarter ever" with \$1.8 billion in revenue.

SONY MUSIC PUBLISHING SCORES ANOTHER 'EASY' WIN

Disney makes its premiere on the Hot 100 publishing ranking thanks to Lin-Manuel Miranda

BY ED CHRISTMAN

SONY MUSIC PUBLISHING led the first-quarter 2022 publisher rankings on both the Top Radio Airplay and Hot 100 charts — its eighth consecutive No. 1 on the latter chart — while British rock band Glass Animals' "Heat Waves" and Lin-Manuel Miranda's "We Don't Talk About Bruno" single-handedly catapulted their respective publishers, Hipgnosis and Disney, onto one or both of the rankings.

Sony had stakes in 58 songs on the first-quarter Hot 100 chart, good for a 22.65% share of the market and up from 51 songs and a 22.51%



Glass Animals

market share in the fourth quarter of 2021, respectively. The music publisher's first-place finish on the Radio Airplay ranking — its 37th over the last 39 quarters — is thanks to shares in 57 of the top 100 songs; good for a 24.67% market share. Despite the win, Sony's market share and song count were down from the previ-

ous quarter, 27.7% and 59, respectively. Its top song on both charts was Adele's "Easy on Me."

Universal Music Publishing Group, which finished No. 2 on both rankings, also had mixed results. Its Radio Airplay market share grew to 21.74% from 21.49% in the fourth quarter, albeit with a quarter-to-quarter decline in song count from 55 to 53 of the top 100 songs. Its top track on both charts: "Heat Waves."

On the Hot 100 publishers chart, however, UMPG's market share fell more than a percentage point from 21.47% in the previous quarter to 20.4%, and its song count dropped from 51 to 46.

Warner Chappell Music maintained its No. 3 rank on the publishers chart with a 14.99% share, up from 14.8% in the prior quarter. Its song count also grew quarter-to-quarter from 44 to 49, and its top track was The Kid LAROI and Justin Bieber's "Stay." On the Radio Airplay chart, Warner Chappell fell to fourth place, surpassed by Kobalt, which benefited from a 1.5 percentage-point surge in market share to 16.77% with a share of 41 tunes, up from 38 in the fourth quarter. Kobalt placed fourth on the Hot 100 ranking.

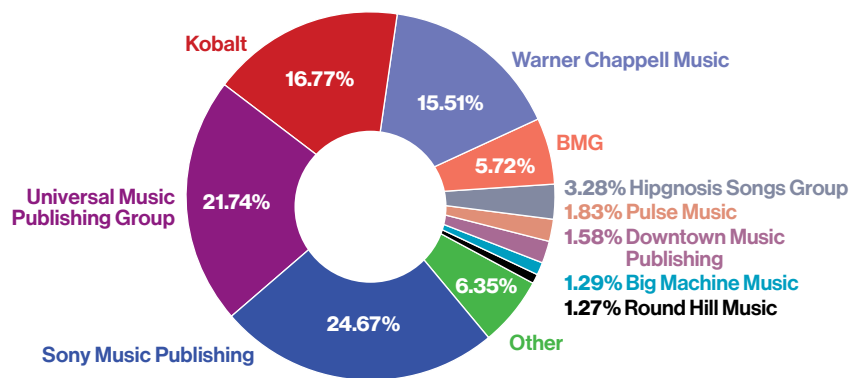
Warner Chappell's drop to No. 4 was precipitated by a market-share decline from 16.08% to 15.51%, although its song count on Radio Airplay rose from 51 to 54, including "Stay." In country music, Warner Chappell remained the No. 1 publisher for a 21st consecutive quarter.

"Heat Waves" was the No. 1 song on both charts, and its writer, frontman Dave Bayley, emerged as the top songwriter on the Radio Airplay chart for the quarter and No. 2 on the Hot 100 ranking behind "We Don't Talk About Bruno" writer Lin-Manuel Miranda. The successes of those songs were the sole reasons that Hipgnosis ("Heat Waves") landed in the top 10 of both rankings and Walt Disney ("Bruno") made the Hot 100 publishers ranking for the first time since it was established in 2019. **b**



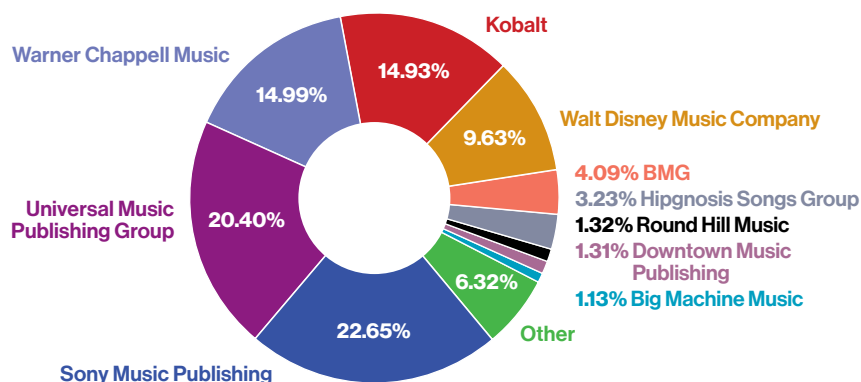
Doja Cat

Top Radio Airplay: Publishers*



Rank	Title	Artist	Label
1	Heat Waves	Glass Animals	Wolf Tone/Republic
2	Easy On Me	Adele	Columbia
3	Stay	The Kid LAROI & Justin Bieber	Raymond Braun/Def Jam/Columbia
4	Ghost	Justin Bieber	Raymond Braun/Def Jam
5	THATS WHAT I WANT	Lil Nas X	Columbia
6	abcdefu	GAYLE	Arthouse/Atlantic
7	Need To Know	Doja Cat	Kemosabe/RCA
8	Shivers	Ed Sheeran	Atlantic
9	One Right Now	Post Malone & The Weeknd	Republic
10	Bad Habits	Ed Sheeran	Atlantic

Hot 100 Songs: Publishers*



Rank	Title	Artist	Label
1	Heat Waves	Glass Animals	Wolf Tone/Polydor/Republic
2	We Don't Talk About Bruno	Carolina Gaitan, Mauro Castillo, Adassa, Rhenzy Feliz, Diane Guerrero, Stephanie Beatriz & Encanto Cast	Walt Disney
3	Easy On Me	Adele	Columbia
4	Stay	The Kid LAROI & Justin Bieber	Raymond Braun/Columbia/Def Jam
5	Super Gremlin	Kodak Black	Sniper Gang/Atlantic
6	abcdefu	GAYLE	Arthouse/Atlantic
7	Shivers	Ed Sheeran	Atlantic
8	Ghost	Justin Bieber	Raymond Braun/Def Jam
9	Bad Habits	Ed Sheeran	Atlantic
10	Cold Heart (Pnau Remix)	Elton John & Dua Lipa	Rocket/Mercury/EMI/Interscope

* For the Top 10 Publishers Top Radio Airplay chart, percentage calculations were based upon the overall top 100 detecting songs from 2,012 U.S. radio stations electronically monitored by Luminate 24 hours a day, seven days a week during the period of Dec. 31, 2021, to March 31, 2022. For Top 10 Publishers Hot 100 Songs, percentage calculations were based upon the top 100 songs as ranked by Billboard Hot 100 points calculated from digital sales, streaming and Luminate-tracked radio airplay detections during the period of Dec. 31, 2021, to March 31, 2022, reflecting the issue dates of Jan. 15 through April 9, 2022. Publisher information for musical works on both charts has been identified by the Harry Fox Agency. A "publisher" is defined as an administrator, copyright owner and/or controlling party.

CONGRATULATIONS

TOP Q1 PUBLISHERS



HOT 100

SONY MUSIC PUBLISHING

UMPG

WARNER CHAPPELL MUSIC

KOBALT

WALT DISNEY MUSIC COMPANY

BMG

HIPGNOSIS

ROUND HILL MUSIC

DOWNTOWN MUSIC

BIG MACHINE MUSIC

RADIO

SONY MUSIC PUBLISHING

UMPG

KOBALT

WARNER CHAPPELL MUSIC

BMG

HIPGNOSIS

PULSE MUSIC

DOWNTOWN MUSIC

BIG MACHINE MUSIC

ROUND HILL MUSIC



UNIVERSAL

MUSIC

GROUP



CONGRATULATES

OUR

40

UNDER

40

HONOREES



CHARLES

WADELINGTON



LA MAR

TAYLOR

LAURA

CARTER

MANDY

GABRIEL

SIMONE

MITCHELL

TOBY

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UNIVERSAL



UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP



sound

NOW PLAYING



21 UNDER 21

This year's list features a mix of familiar faces in the mainstream, viral artists eager to prove their staying power and a handful of stars-to-be across genres

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MARA OCEJO

Olivia Rodrigo

Age **19**

Label **GEFFEN**

Publisher **SONY MUSIC PUBLISHING**

Management **LIGHTHOUSE MANAGEMENT & MEDIA**

Total Streams **4.4 BILLION**

"Drivers license" was just the beginning for Olivia Rodrigo, who has turned the No. 1 launch of the anthemic ballad in January 2021 into one of pop's biggest breakthroughs of the

decade so far. Upon its release last May, the *High School Musical: The Musical: The Series* star's debut album, *Sour*, topped the Billboard 200, while pop-punk follow-up single "good 4 u" became Rodrigo's second No. 1 smash. After taking home the Grammy Award for best new artist and embarking on her first headlining tour, she's already looking ahead to her next musical era. "It's really exciting to think about the next world that's coming up for me," Rodrigo told *Billboard* earlier this year. "I just love writing songs. I'm trying not to put too much pressure on myself. [I want to] just explore and have fun right now."

BoyWithUke

Age **19**

Label **REPUBLIC RECORDS**

Publisher **WARNER CHAPPELL**

Management **SOKA TALENT GROUP**

Total Streams **337 MILLION**

Already this year, East Coast newcomer BoyWithUke has had four songs enter the Hot Rock & Alternative Songs chart, with the biting "IDGAF" also landing on the Billboard Hot 100 and his viral hit "Toxic" reaching No. 7 on Alternative Airplay. Most recently, the masked singer released his debut album, *Serotonin Dreams*, following a label deal with Republic Records in late 2021. Self-produced on his iPad using GarageBand — he told *Billboard* in February that being taught the basics of the software in high school was "the most important thing I learned" — he's still stunned by it all. "I used the thing to play [mobile game] Subway Surfers in middle school," he says, "and now I'm using it to be BoyWithUke."

Eslabon Armado

Ages **BRIAN TOVAR, 18;**
PEDRO TOVAR, 19; **ULISES GONZALEZ, 20;**
DAMIAN FIDEL PACHECO, 20

Label **DEL RECORDS**

Publisher **DEL PUBLISHING**

Management **NELIDA OCEGUERA**

Total Streams **1.7 BILLION**

After releasing four consecutive chart-topping albums over the past two years — all of which hit No. 1 on *Billboard's* Regional Mexican Albums chart — Eslabon Armado took a longer-than-usual break before releasing its latest album, *Nostalgia*, on May 5. (During that time, the group added new members Gonzalez and Pacheco.) "Releasing back-to-back albums was good for our career, but we decided to take a break writing new music so that we could come back stronger," the Mexican-American *sierreño* group says. "Our biggest challenge as young artists is staying relevant and creating music that connects with our fans."

Lil Tecca

Age **19**

Label **GALACTIC RECORDS/REPUBLIC RECORDS**

Publisher **UNIVERSAL MUSIC PUBLISHING GROUP**

Management **GIUSEPPE ZAPPALA**

Total Streams **3.7 BILLION**

Last year, Lil Tecca cruised past the sophomore jinx with the release of his second studio album, *We Love You Tecca 2*. The sequel to his 2019 debut, *We Love You Tecca*, spawned his highest-peaking Hot 100 hit, “Ransom” (No. 4) and included features from Gunna, Trippie Redd, Lil Yachty and Nav; it debuted at No. 10 on the Billboard 200. In February, the New York native announced his Tecca Loves You Tour, a two-month trek that included stops in Los Angeles, New York and Miami. Next up, he’ll play festivals like Chicago’s Summer Smash and Rolling Loud’s Toronto installment.

Ángela Aguilar

Age **18**

Label **MACHÍN RÉCORDS**

Publisher **SESAC LATIN**

Management **EL HUESO PRODUCCIONES**

Total Streams **240.1 MILLION**

Aguilar, the daughter of Pepe Aguilar, says she “had been working with my parents’ record label all my life,” having signed to Machín Réconds herself in 2012. Nearly a decade later, in 2020, she scored her first No. 1 on *Billboard*’s Regional Mexican Airplay chart with the Christian Nodal-assisted single “Dime Cómo Quieres”; she says the biggest benefit of being a young artist is “the ability to DM someone about a collaboration.” Earlier this year, she scored her second No. 1 on the chart with “Ahí Donde Me Ven.” The Latin Grammy nominee is eager to explore acting, like her father has, and says some of his best career advice includes being “respectful of your craft and the public — to keep your roots well-embedded in your heart.”

The Kid LAROI

Age **18**

Label **COLUMBIA RECORDS**

Publisher **SONY MUSIC PUBLISHING**

Total Streams **2.3 BILLION**

After breaking out in 2020, The Kid LAROI enjoyed an even bigger 2021: He scored a Grammy nomination for best new artist and landed his first No. 1 entries on the Hot 100 and the Billboard 200. Following a recent split from former manager Adam Leber’s Rebel (he signed a deal last September after parting ways with Scooter Braun’s SB Projects), LAROI is gearing up for the arrival of his official and highly anticipated debut album, which will include the recently released, rueful “Thousand Miles” that debuted at No. 15 on the Hot 100 in May. His Justin Bieber-assisted synth-pop hit “Stay” ruled the Hot 100 for seven nonconsecutive weeks, and a final reissue of his *F*CK LOVE* mixtape buoyed the project to the top in its 53rd week on the Billboard 200.

Clockwise from top left: Lil Tecca, Clark, Eilish and The Kid LAROI. Center: Aguilar.





Callista Clark

Age **18**
 Label **BIG MACHINE RECORDS**
 Publisher **BIG MACHINE MUSIC**
 Management **SB PROJECTS**
 Total Streams **33 MILLION**

Clark was just 13 when manager Scooter Braun and his business partner Allison Kaye reached out after she went viral on YouTube with her version of Creedence Clearwater Revival's "Have You Ever Seen the Rain." Her own hit, "It's 'Cause I Am," reached the top 30 on *Billboard's* Country Airplay chart in 2021, and this year, she became the youngest member of CMT's Next Women of Country class. Clark believes her age helps to "bring a fresh perspective to the songwriting process," which is in part why she admires Maren Morris. "She writes and sings whatever is honest to her ... which is something that I love to do with my songwriting as well."

Billie Eilish

Age **20**
 Label **THE DARKROOM/
 INTERSCOPE**
 Publisher **UNIVERSAL MUSIC
 PUBLISHING GROUP**
 Management **BEST FRIENDS**
 Total Streams **16.7 BILLION**

In the final months of her teens, Billie Eilish was given the tall order of following up 2019's *When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?* — one of the most successful debut albums of all time that helped the pop superstar become only the second artist ever to sweep the Big Four Grammy categories in 2020. Last year's *Happier Than Ever* became her second *Billboard* 200 chart-topper, spawned five top 40 Hot 100 hits, produced seven more Grammy nods and delivered the 20-year-old to arena audiences. And in between sold-out dates, Eilish won an Academy Award alongside her brother, FINNEAS, for their James Bond theme, "No Time To Die." "In the last year, I've done so many things that I dreamed about doing years and years ago," Eilish recently told *Billboard*. "I was like, 'Oh, I can actually do that now.' Nothing is stopping me."

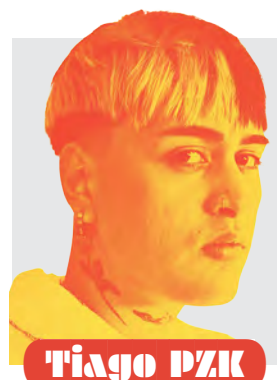
TECCA; DANIEL PRADO/PZK; CLARK: CHELSEA THOMPSON; ASULIAR; SERGIO VALENZUELA; LAROI; JASON NODTO; EILISH; ARIQUETTY; IMAGES; 347AIDAN; SIBEN VAUGHAN; TIAGO PZK; THOM RAMONDI



347aidan

Age **18**
 Label **COLUMBIA RECORDS**
 Publisher **UNRESTRICTED/
 KOBALT**
 Management **THE GOLDEN KIDS
 GROUP/FOREVER 150**
 Total Streams **246 MILLION**

Shortly after the 2020 release of 347aidan's bouncy, pop-leaning single "Dancing in My Room" — which peaked at No. 15 on the Hot Rock & Alternative Songs chart — the track became a sensation on TikTok, where it has since been used to soundtrack over 1.5 million clips. By 2021, the Cambridge, Ontario, native signed a record deal with Columbia. He closed last year with another hit on the same chart — "Memories!" peaked at No. 21 — and scored a Pop Airplay entry this year for his feature on the 88rising track "The Weekend (Remix)." Having just wrapped his first tour in support of Oliver Tree, he says he "mainly learned confidence" and that, as a young artist, "it's relieving to know I have a lot of time to do all I hope to do."



Tiago PZK

Age **20**
 Label **GRAND MOVE
 RECORDS/WARNER
 MUSIC LATIN**
 Publisher **SONY MUSIC
 PUBLISHING**
 Management **MOVE MANAGEMENT**
 Total Streams **7.1 MILLION**

Tiago PZK was only 6 years old when he discovered his passion for music, thanks to Daddy Yankee's 2007 song "Impacto (Remix)" (featuring Fergie). The Argentine newcomer (who also cites Justin Bieber as inspiration) has since created his own fusion of R&B, reggaeton and alternative rock, best heard on his five *Billboard* Global 200 hits: "Además de Mi," "No Me Conocen," "Entre Nosotros," "Salimo de Noche" and "Bzrp Music Sessions, Vol. 48." In 2021, the artist born Tiago Uriel Pacheco signed a worldwide publishing agreement with Sony Music Publishing U.S. Latin and, this year, a record deal with Warner Music Latina (through a partnership with indie Grand Move Records). Looking ahead, he says he's most excited to tour: "It will make me travel the world and strengthen me mentally."



21
UNDER
21



Lauren Spencer-Smith

Age **18**

Label **ISLAND RECORDS/REPUBLIC RECORDS**

Publisher **N/A**

Management **DAVID EHRLICH**

Total Streams **220.5 MILLION**

You recently sold out your first-ever tour.

What's another area of the industry you're excited to explore and learn more about?

I would love to write for other artists or learn more about getting your songs in movies. I would love my songs, like *Labrinth* [has done], to be in *Euphoria* or something like that.

What's the biggest challenge, and benefit, about being a young artist?

You have a lot of negativity coming from older people, stereotyping you because you're young. They just think you're part of Gen Z and not hardworking. But the same thing is the best thing because people underestimate you, so when you work your ass off to prove people wrong, you're the underdog in a good way. Anyone that I have ever met that is truly confident never tries to put someone else down. So when I'm in a negative situation with someone, I think that this person is dealing with their own issues because if they were truly happy, they would cheer me on and have a positive energy.

Whose career do you admire most and why?

I admire Billie Eilish because she blew up so fast and so young. She's so successful that she could honestly just do whatever she wants musically. I also admire people like Lizzo, who didn't break through until she was older and maybe had more time to hang out with family or have a normal life in her 20s.

How do you try to live as normal a life as possible as you enter your 20s?

I've always felt older than I am because of my life experiences with divorced parents and working from a young age. I've never been into partying or reckless things, and I love working out and having a routine. To feel like you still have a childhood, though, you just have to surround yourself with the people who have always been there and make you feel normal. People that bring the fun into your life.



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For more information visit www.fastfeetnyc.com

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From left: NLE Choppa, Kismet and McRae.

NLE Choppa

Age 19
Label NLE ENTERTAINMENT/WARNER RECORDS
Publisher SONY ATV/NLE CHOPPA ENTERTAINMENT/TRICKY BUSINEZZ
Management ANGELETA ELLIS, TRICKY MONTGOMERY
Total Streams 4.5 BILLION

NLE Choppa's penchant for trunk-rattling anthems and high-profile collaborations has helped him stay top of mind since his 2019 breakout hit, "Shotta Flow," which peaked at No. 36 on the Hot 100. His efforts resulted in record deal offers as high as \$3 million — all of which he turned down to partner instead with independent distribution company UnitedMasters. But by the end of 2019, he had launched his own label in partnership with Warner Records on which he has since released three projects. Earlier this year, the Memphis native's latest mixtape, *Me Vs. Me*, debuted at No. 14 on the Billboard 200 and featured three Hot 100 hits — "Final Warning," "Jumpin" (featuring Polo G) and "Shotta Flow 6" — bumping his career tally on the chart to nine.

Moore Kismet

Age 17
Label THRIVE MUSIC/VIRGIN MUSIC
Publisher N/A
Management PRODIGY ARTISTS
Total Streams 5.9 MILLION

Last year, Moore Kismet became the youngest artist to play Electric Daisy Carnival Las Vegas, an electronic and dance music megafest that they will return to later in May. "I can't wait to do it again, but bigger and better, showing people that artists like me are here to stay," says the producer. "Younger artists have always been viewed as industry plants before they were seen as prodigies or cool creatives." Having blown up largely during the pandemic, Kismet's plan post-high school graduation is "to learn what it's like to work with people in person and not just over the internet." Taking inspiration from Madeon and Porter Robinson, whose careers also launched when they were young, Kismet is excited to have time to explore other avenues in art and "use what I create to take care of my friends and family."

Tate McRae

Age 18
Label RCA RECORDS
Publisher SONY/ATV
Management HARD 8 WORKING GROUP
Total Streams 1.5 BILLION

After releasing her second EP, *Too Young To Be Sad*, last March, McRae's breakout hit, "You Broke Me First," reached a new peak of No. 17 on the Hot 100. She added four more entries on the chart ahead of the release of her debut album, *I Used To Think I Could Fly* (out May 27). McRae says she has learned "to always trust my gut ... my own instinct is what I always end up gravitating toward and is what I'm most proud of." Having recently toured for the first time, McRae says she can't wait to continue traveling and performing, "as it completely changes my perspective on the songs I write ... There are so many things I have yet to experience, so my music/writing is genuinely shifting and changing in real time."

CHOPPA: JOHNNIE CARPENTER; KISMET: L'LOREL DELUY; MCRAE: RCA RECORDS

tmwrk

**It is pretty awesome to be included in this year's 40 under 40.
I want to personally thank the squad at TMWRK
for being the best team in the game.**

**Jon Adler | Jack Babnew | Lola Bitton | Zoe Blilie
Renee Brodeur | Sydney Clarke | Ben Collins
Baltazar Dasalla | Katy Eggleton | Colin Finkelstein
Vidhi Gandhi | Brendan Hoffman | Ben Matusow
Brittany Nahum | Chris Pergolizzi
Sydney Jabbarpour | Nick Palmacci | Paddy Scace
Paul Sweedlund | Perry Symonds**

**Love,
McInnes**



CHAYLE

Age **17**
Label **ATLANTIC RECORDS/
ARTHOUSE RECORDS**
Publisher **ARTHOUSE
ENTERTAINMENT**
Management **KRISTINA RUSSO**
Total Streams **47.9 MILLION**

How do you feel when you hear your Hot 100 top 10 hit “abcdefu” today?
It's really crazy to hear something that you wrote on guitar with your friends on the radio or in the car, or you see somebody wearing a T-shirt that you designed with the song. [Me and my friends] made a pact that if we got 100 million streams, we'd get matching tattoos. We got the tattoos a couple of months ago. To get my mom to say OK to a tattoo of the alphabet ... it would have to take a lot.

Why do you think that song led to your breakthrough?
“Abc” was the first time I was openly angry in a song — and unapologetically angry, at that. And I didn't particularly know how that was going to be accepted by people, especially being a young woman. I even showed the song to my grandmother and was nervous. She was like, “You get to say all the things at 17 that I never could.”

What's the biggest challenge, or benefit, of being a young artist today?
I feel like some people think when you're younger you can work harder because you're just like, not as tired and still excited about life. I always get both ends of the spectrum where it's like, “OK, she's young. Let's let her go to bed.” But then it's like, “OK, she's young, that means she could do all this work.”

Whose career do you admire most and why?
I do really admire Billie [Eilish]. Her music videos and merch and shows are so outstanding. She really has a good way of showing her personality as well. Everything she makes feels like her. Even if people have the possibility of not liking it, it's still her, and she's not going to change that for anybody.

CONGRATULATIONS TO
Sophia Dilley
FOR BEING NAMED ONE OF BILLBOARD'S
40 UNDER 40



CONCORD
ORIGINALS



Kidd G

Age **19**

Label **REBEL MUSIC/THE VALORY MUSIC CO./Geffen Records**

Publisher **N/A**

Management **HARD 8 WORKING GROUP**

Total Streams **338.1 MILLION**



In 2020, Kidd G signed a record deal with Rebel/Geffen (later partnering with Big Machine Label Group's Valory Music). In 2021, he earned a top 40 Hot Country Songs entry with "Teenage Dream" and reached No. 30 on *Billboard*'s Emerging Artists chart. Still, he's a bit shocked by it all. "Even though this was always a dream of mine, it seemed far off, so it was really surprising how fast it all came together," he says. In March, he released the remix of his 2020 hit "Dirt Road" (which that year became his first *Billboard* chart entry) featuring BRELAND, whom he calls "another artist that had a fast come-up like me. The fact that we're both younger artists made the experience cool."

DannyLux

Age **18**

Label **VSP MUSIC/WARNER MUSIC LATINA**

Publisher **WARNER CHAPPELL**

Management **JOSE LUIS AGUILAR**

Total Streams **4.8 MILLION**



Self-taught musician DannyLux hit No. 1 on *Billboard*'s Latin Songwriters chart at just 17 years old thanks to his work on Eslabon Armado's "Jugaste y Sufri" (off the band's third album, *Corta Venas*). The *sierreño* artist has since signed a record deal with Warner Music Latina (in partnership with his indie label, VSP Music) and released his ultra-melancholic album, *Perdido Sin Ti*. He's already working on new music because, as he says, consistency is key. "Since I'm young, I have so much time to grow up to be the best artist I can be," he says, citing Bad Bunny's career as an inspiration because "he never gave up."

From left: Lucia and Mila de la Garza, Wong and Salazar.



The Linda Lindas

Ages **MILA DE LA GARZA, 11; ELOISE WONG, 14; LUCIA DE LA GARZA, 15; BELA SALAZAR, 17**

Label **EPITAPH**

Publisher **N/A**

Management **FLY SOUTH MUSIC**

Total Streams **6.9 MILLION**

Your performance of "Racist, Sexist Boy" at the Los Angeles Public Library went viral last year and helped score a record deal with Epitaph. What sur-

prised you about the process of getting signed?

LUCIA DE LA GARZA We were planning on getting signed to Epitaph even before the "Racist, Sexist Boy" video blew up. Like two months before that, we were already in the process of figuring something out with them. The video just gave us more momentum.

BELA SALAZAR A lot of people have it very hard [in the music industry], and we've been really lucky.

What has been the biggest challenge since releasing your debut album, *Growing Up*, in April?

LUCIA We don't have time to be full-time musicians and

we don't have time to be full-time students, but we're making it work. I love having something to put creative energy into.

Are you touring during school breaks?

LUCIA We're skipping school, but we still have to do the work. I'm falling so behind.

SALAZAR I just don't care [about school] anymore.

LUCIA Bela's a senior, so she's allowed to say that.

SALAZAR I have one more month left of school.

MILA DE LA GARZA I have one more month — and then six years.

You recently played five shows in New York and performed on *The Tonight Show With Jimmy Fallon*. As Los Angeles natives, what did you think of New York?

LUCIA New York has been really cool. It's a different vibe. One night after the show, we walked to get pizza and then took the subway back at 12:30 a.m. That was a good experience.

Where are you headed next on tour?

LUCIA We have a tour lined up for summer. We have five or six headlining shows, and we're playing some shows with Japanese Breakfast ... We want to travel, and playing shows while we travel is always a bonus.

Whose career do you admire the most?

ELOISE WONG We're surrounded by these lifers who have been doing music for so long like Hayley Williams, Alice Bag, Kathleen Hanna. If we can continue doing what we're doing, I think that would be cool.

What are the benefits of being a young artist?

SALAZAR We still live at home, so we don't have anything to worry about.

LUCIA We don't have to worry about paying rent.

SALAZAR We're having so much fun making music, and we don't have to worry about any of that. That's our parents' job.

A **BIG** **LOUD** CONGRATULATIONS TO

CLASS
OFF
20 **22**



PATCH

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CULBERTSON

GENERAL

MANAGER

BILLBOARD
40 **UNDER** **40**

BIG LOUD



From left: Jairo, Yahrizza and Armando Martinez.

Yahrizza y Su Esencia

Ages YAHRITZA MARTINEZ, 15; JAIRO MARTINEZ, 17; ARMANDO MARTINEZ, 24
Label LUMBRE MUSIC
Publisher N/A
Management LUMBRE MUSIC
Total Streams 52.9 MILLION

Your debut single, “Soy el Unico,” debuted at No. 1 on Hot Latin Songs and hit No. 20 on the Hot 100, making your group the youngest Latin act to enter the all-genre chart. What do you think is the song’s appeal?
YAHRITZA MARTINEZ I never knew

that I was going to be up there. I feel that a lot of people can relate to the song because they’re probably dealing with a similar situation: It’s about being hurt because you’re the only one giving it all in the relationship, and in the end, the other person will never find anyone like me.

Your ability to write these deep, mature songs at such a young age is notable. Where do you seek inspiration for these heartfelt lyrics?

I know that the words are very strong, but honestly, when it comes down to me writing my songs, it’s more like a research process. I see other people’s stories on TikTok — that’s how I [wrote] “Soy el Unico,” because I saw a clip that said, “It’s crazy how someone can leave you when you’re the only one who’s best for them.” No one’s going to believe me when I say that I get my inspiration from TikTok. This was actually the first song I wrote when I was 13.

What’s the biggest challenge and benefit of being a young artist?

The biggest challenge is that we won’t be able to live our normal childhood or have a regular life like other kids our age. We’re always on the go with meetings and interviews, and it reflects in our schoolwork because we need to keep up. One of the benefits, however, is that we can inspire young people our age as well.

What’s the best career advice that you’ve received?

To stay humble and just enjoy the ride, and also to do everything with your heart. I feel that fans will notice when you do something for money as opposed to for passion. And not to forget the purpose of our dream. We want to hopefully buy our parents a house [so they can] retire.



Lamorn

Age 19
Label MAUSTRAP
Publisher MAUSTRAP
Management SEVEN20
Total Streams 707,000

When Lamorn first submitted his tracks to mau5trap in 2020, label head deadmau5 was so struck by the tunes that he asked to see the file sessions, wanting to verify that the then-17-year-old was in fact making the music himself. Shortly after, deadmau5 signed Lamorn to his label (Lamorn waited until his 18th birthday “so that my parents didn’t have to sign for me”) and the rising artist released his debut project, *Encore*, last November. With music going from his hobby to his career almost overnight, Lamorn’s crash course in deals, gigs and producing “has forced me to build my confidence.” Traveling on his own, working with promoters and “generally fending for myself in those situations has been challenging,” he says, “but I’ve been learning quickly.”



Chloe Moriondo

Age 19
Label PUBLIC CONSUMPTION/
FUELED BY RAMEN
Publisher N/A
Management ZACK ZARRILLO,
ALTERNATE SIDE
Total Streams 140.3 MILLION

Since becoming a successful YouTuber in 2014, Detroit native chloe moriondo had a built-in fan base — over 3 million followers on YouTube alone — eager to consume her brand of bedroom pop. “Having somewhere to put yourself out there is really important as a young artist, and for me, YouTube was it — and it still is for some,” they say. “TikTok is a crazy wormhole of a place, but it is also mysteriously crazy at making huge stars out of small artists.” In 2020, moriondo signed to Fueled by Ramen, and last year, after releasing her full-length label debut, *Blood Bunny*, they scored their first late-night TV gig on *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* This April, she released her second EP, *puppy luv* — inspired entirely by their dog. **B**

CONTRIBUTORS Rania Aniftos, Katie Bain, Griselda Flores, Josh Glicksman, Lyndsey Havens, Carl Lamarre, Jason Lipshutz, Taylor Mims, Jessica Nicholson, Jessica Roiz

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GOING GLOBAL



LIMITLESS

Brazilian artists never had an easy time achieving — and maintaining — stardom outside their home country. But there has never been a star quite like **Anitta**

BY GRISELDA FLORES

PHOTOGRAPHED BY RAMONA ROSALES

Anitta photographed April 18
at The Mountain Mermaid in
Topanga, Calif.

Styling by Ronnie Hart
Gucci suit, Versace shoes, Panconesi
earrings, Patricia Von Musulin rings.



INDIO, CALIF., AND RIO DE JANEIRO are nearly 7,000 miles apart. Indio is a desert, and Rio a tropical beach paradise; Rio a bustling metropolis of nearly 7 million people, and Indio, for most of the year, a sleepy small town. But in mid-April, the disparate locales somehow became one when Anitta turned Coachella into a Brazilian Carnival.

Sérgio Mendes' classic samba "Mas Que Nada" played over the speakers; then, as it transitioned into her own "Onda Diferente," the 29-year-old rode a motorcycle onto the main stage, wearing a spangled and feathered Roberto Cavalli ensemble in yellow, green and blue, the colors of the Brazilian flag. Over the course of the next 45 minutes, her eye-popping show — a master class in twerking, with funk battle, samba and capoeira segments — transported the audience to the working-class Honório Gurgel neighborhood in which she grew up. Anitta's message was clear: You can take the girl out of Rio — and bring her all the way to Indio — but you can't take the Rio out of the girl.

Three days before that history-making performance — the first-ever by a Brazilian artist on the festival's main stage — Anitta is taking a break from rehearsal, looking far more low-key in loose pants, a crop top and an oversize jacket paired with sneakers. But the momentousness of the upcoming show (where her guest performers included Snoop Dogg, Saweetie and Diplo) is on her mind. "I will always need to carry my culture," she says. "I could never just go to another market and do whatever. What would be the purpose: Fame? Money? I already had that, and that's not the point for me."

Since launching her career in 2010 with local hits like "Meiga e Abusada," "Vai Malandra" and "Show Das Poderosas" — songs that fused Brazilian funk's hip-hop beats with pop melodies — Anitta has become the biggest star in recent memory to emerge from Brazil and have major crossover success. That feat required both sheer force of will and industry savvy that she mostly learned on her own. Over the past seven years, with the help of her older brother, Renan (with whom she co-manages her career in Brazil under the joint company Rodamoinho), Anitta strategically built a foundation for achieving stardom outside her home country, spending an increasing amount of time in the United States (mostly Los Angeles and Miami) and collaborating with more mainstream artists and producers, including Ryan Tedder, Becky G, Prince Royce and Snoop on her 2019 album *Kisses*.

"Many executives at labels told me that it was impossible to have an international career as a Brazilian. I was like, 'I don't know, there's no "impossible" for me.'"

— ANITTA

"Being an international artist is not only about being famous wherever you go, because the world is so big," Anitta says. "It's about being able to impact culturally different areas at the same time." But achieving that would present unique challenges — and come at a cost. As she spent more time outside Brazil, Anitta had to pass on the kinds of brand deals and touring opportunities that could affect her music's popularity at home. And history wasn't on her side: Only a handful of big stars from Brazil have ever found lasting fame outside its borders.

That's partly because Portuguese is the primary language spoken there, not the much more widespread Spanish. But in recent years, the country's most popular stars simply haven't needed to go elsewhere to find sustainable success. The Brazilian recorded-music market is the 11th largest in the world and, if not for the pandemic's effects, would likely be even bigger (In 2017, it reached a height of No. 9.) It has grown for six years in a row, by 32% in 2021 alone (according to Pro-Música Brasil, the country's recorded-music trade association and IPFI affiliate) to 2.111 billion reais (\$451 million). Streaming, which represents 85.6% of the Brazilian music market, grew by 34.6% in 2021 to 1.806 billion reais (\$386 million).

"We see many great Brazilian artists today who can't achieve Anitta's success because they are very attached to Brazil," says Cris Falcão, managing director of Ingrooves in Brazil, adding that consumption in the country is nearly 80% Brazilian music. "Looking at the last 20 years, I don't see anybody that has done what Anitta has done." (Likewise, it's still rare for non-Brazilian acts to take advantage of the market's potential: "For artists to go in there, it has to be a

relevant collaboration with a Brazilian artist," says Falcão. "There is opportunity, but the strategy has to be well thought out.")

Anitta vividly remembers how her brother responded when, back in 2015, she first told him she wanted to "go international": "Why? You will need to start from the bottom and do the shit you were doing six years ago. You don't even have the energy anymore.' And I told him that's what I wanted, although I was really scared," she confesses. "It meant I would abandon everything I had done. I knew that if I failed, everyone in my country would laugh at me. That's what happens to everyone who tries and fails. I didn't want to become a joke. I wanted it to happen for real."

She didn't have much of a blueprint to follow. In the 1970s, tropicalia pioneer Caetano Veloso and balladeer Roberto Carlos managed to find audiences in Latin America and Europe. But more contemporary artists from the country have found the global spotlight short-lived: Alexandre Pires scored six top 10 hits on *Billboard's* Hot Latin Songs chart in the early 2000s, and Michel Teló's anthem "Ai Se Eu Te Pego" (an exemplar of *sertanejo*, Brazil's country music) ruled Hot Latin Songs for 10 weeks in 2012, but neither artist has achieved that kind of success outside Brazil since.

"Many executives at labels told me that it was impossible to have an international career as a Brazilian, and they weren't being mean — they just had never seen anyone do it recently," Anitta says. "I was like, 'I don't know, there's no "impossible" for me.' I understood that you had to risk your whole career and you got to have balls to keep insisting. It isn't easy or quick, especially when you're already used to being treated as a star in a country and then you go to another market and you're treated as a nobody."

Now, Anitta is aiming to prove those early naysayers wrong once and for all. Her new album, *Versions of Me* — released in mid-April with the power of three different divisions of Warner Music Group behind it — is her strongest case yet for herself as a chameleonic artist with global reach: It's trilingual, recorded mostly in English with a few songs in Spanish and one in Portuguese. The album has earned 111.7 million on-demand song streams in the United States,

according to Luminate, formerly MRC Data. And though it has yet to enter the *Billboard* album charts, its third single, "Envolver," has exploded — four months after its release — thanks to its steamy music video and equally suggestive choreography. In March, it reached No. 1 on *Billboard's* Global Excl. U.S. chart and on Spotify's Global list, making Anitta the first Brazilian artist to achieve either feat; the video, which she directed, claimed the top spot on YouTube's Global Top Music Videos chart.

Her drive and I'll-show-you attitude got Anitta this far — and judging by the thousands of fans at Coachella waving Brazilian flags, listening raptly to her speaking in Portuguese and singing along to every word of her funk carioca anthems, she may have cracked the code that has eluded her countrymen for so long. "That's what I admire about Anitta, her perseverance and her focus," says Brazilian-American artist Bebel Gilberto (the daughter of bossa nova legend João Gilberto), who had a taste of international success with her album *Tanto Tempo* in 2000. "What I was trying to do was basically maintain myself — completely different than 'I want to be No. 1.' But I don't think it is fair to her to compare her to anyone else, because whatever she did, she was the only one who did it. Especially because she came from nowhere."

ANITTA WASN'T GOING TO WAIT AROUND for the world to come to her. Seven years ago, she boarded a plane to Mexico and, upon landing, asked a taxi driver to take her to "a rich people's club." To her surprise, she didn't hear reggaetón, the genre she had been told at the time was the hottest in the Latin market. "I got another taxi and told him, 'I want to go to the cheapest club here, where the poor people go,'" Anitta recalls. "He looked at me confused, but that's where



Alexandre Vauthier
Haute Couture dress,
Jennifer Fisher
earrings, DJULA
necklace, Patricia Von
Musulin bracelet.



Bronx and Banco dress,
DJULA earrings.





I saw people *perreando*, and I was like, ‘OK.’” She took notes, Shazaming each track that played, writing down the titles that got people “crazy and dancing.”

Next, she headed to Los Angeles, in search of people who could help her figure out how to make songs that would have a similar effect far and wide. WME agent Rob Markus, whom she had met at an event in Brazil, helped set up meetings for her with different managers. “Some people were nice, some weren’t,” she recalls with a shrug. “It was a mess, and I realized I would need to do things on my own.” By then, she was performing in Brazil on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, then flying to L.A. on Monday to network Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday — all while taking phonetic classes. She had learned English at age 10 but quickly realized that an international career would require perfecting it. “The more accent I had,” she recalls, “the less people respected me during the meetings.”

Her networking paid off. In 2017, she signed a management deal with Shot Studio heads John and Sam Shahidi and began collaborating with everyone from J Balvin to Rita Ora, Alesso and Ozuna. But growing her international presence meant she was less present — and less popular — back home. From 2013 to 2017, Anitta had averaged over 100 shows a year in Brazil; for her 2019 *Kisses* world tour, she did only about one-third as many. Last year, Anitta’s highest-charting songs in Brazil ranked at No. 169 (“Girl From Rio”) and No. 177 (“Me Gusta”) on Pro-Música’s Streaming Top 200, which was dominated by local genres, in particular *sertanejo*.

“When you’re out of the market, people start wondering where you are,” says Anitta. “I was used to being No. 1 [in Brazil] every single time, and I knew that as soon as I would leave the country for half of the year, I couldn’t make No. 1 again. I would lose exposure and money because I needed to cancel concerts back home. I knew it was a moment of going down a bit so I could eventually go up again.”

SEARCH FOR THE ‘ENVOLVER’ SOUND ON TIKTOK, and you’ll get over 2 million videos: people bending over, executing a slow-motion pushup, gyrating their hips while holding a plank position — or at least somewhat awkwardly trying to. If you don’t have Anitta’s flexibility, or her upper-body strength, or her talent for eye-popping muscle isolations, this isn’t the dance for you.

The song soundtracking the challenge, however, jibed with a far bigger audience. It certainly wasn’t the first reggaeton-leaning track Anitta had released, but after four years of the grind, it was the right one at the right time: In March, “Envolver” became the first song by a Brazilian act to enter the top 10 on Spotify’s Global chart and subsequently hit No. 1 in Brazil. “Finally, everything got well-oiled,” says Hector Rivera, Warner Music Latina senior vp and head of A&R for Latin music.

In 2019, Anitta had signed with a new manager, Brandon Silverstein, and his S10 Entertainment for a worldwide deal. Their initial conversations, Silverstein recalls, were about “trying to figure out how to bring together everything that is authentic to Anitta: Brazil, her personality and the music she loves,” he says. “She believed in ‘Envolver.’ There’s that side of her where she has a good gut instinct — she knows what she wants.”

Anitta knew immediately that she wanted to sign with Silverstein: The day they met, “I thought, ‘This guy is young, hungry and beginning his career, too.’ He had the same energy I had.” But before officially bringing him onboard, she required him to pass a somewhat unconventional, yet very Anitta kind of test. “He had only seen my business side,” she continues. “So, I started to talk about my crazy things, like sex, going to a strip club or getting drunk and throwing up, talking about poop to see how he’d react. There’s a side of me that’s very serious, but

there’s another side of me that’s just crazy and he needed to see it. He was just laughing, and I told my brother, ‘That’s the guy.’”

Their first priority as new partners was to renegotiate her label deal — she had previously only been signed to Warner Music Brazil — to also include a deal with Warner Records and Warner Latina. “My main purpose was to get the push and the team for her to make sure there’s a global focus,” Silverstein says. Earlier this year, Anitta signed with UTA for worldwide representation. And in the wake of the TikTok-driven success of “Envolver,” her team is doubling down on the platform’s potential to push the rest of the songs on *Versions of Me*. “We’ve single-handedly built her platform so that we can market the album’s songs there,” says Silverstein. “We flew in the biggest TikTok creators from around the world to create content with Anitta that you’ll see roll out on her page” — where, he adds, she has gained 8 million new followers over the past four months.

“She believed in ‘Envolver.’ There’s that side of her where she has a good gut instinct — she knows what she wants.”

— BRANDON SILVERSTEIN, MANAGER

And as her audience grows so too, her team plans, will the size of the stages she’s playing. “Anitta is already on her way to the next level, where the world will see much more of her on headline and festival stages across the United States, Europe, the rest of Latin America and beyond,” says Jbeau Lewis, her agent at UTA. Marcos “Marquinhos” Araújo, owner of Brazil festival company Villa Mix, predicts her profile will soon change at home, too: “In six months to a year, she will come here to Brazil and on her own draw 40,000 people. She will fill a stadium in two years if she continues this growth trajectory.”

On the cover of *Versions of Me*, six different photos of Anitta appear — including older ones taken, she says, before her now well-known plastic surgeries. “It sends a message about not being embarrassed of your past or mistakes,” Anitta continues. “If you didn’t like who you were before, it’s OK to change.” That kind of candor is, says Brazilian music journalist Kamille Viola, the reason why Anitta’s fan base in the country remains strong. “Here is this singer who has made decisions for herself in her career. She has autonomy,” says Viola. “I think it represents many desires and contradictions of women in Brazil today.”

That was, Anitta says, always the point — to “open doors for other people. For them to believe it’s possible, they need to see that someone did it first,” she says. “I want to be able to make a difference in other shit, not only in music. It’s about how women will be treated in their jobs, about how society will act, how they will vote.”

Throughout the pandemic, Anitta immersed herself in a research project quite different from the one that enabled her entry into the music industry years ago: She decided to learn more about Brazil’s politics, asking her friend Gabriela Prioli, a criminal lawyer and political commentator, to broadcast political education classes on Instagram to her 60 million-plus followers. Prioli recounted the history of Brazil’s 21-year military dictatorship (which ruled until 1985), the global history of fascism and the country’s laws relating to indigenous peoples, among other topics; both women have urged young Brazilians to vote their country’s far-right ruler, President Jair Bolsonaro, out of office in the coming October elections.

As much as her music, that has made Anitta feel more present in Brazil than ever. “She is so attentive to everything that goes on here that it looks like she lives here,” says Paulo Junqueiro, president of Sony Music Brazil. And through her own management company, she has invested in the next generation of Brazilian music stars, mentoring emerging local acts — like singer Juliette, one of her signees — who could, someday, maybe become the next Anittas. “The legacy that she’s leaving for Brazilians is big, especially for pop artists that want to have an international career,” says her brother and business partner, Renan. “To know that we’re helping others cross this line is really important for us.”

At first, Anitta planned to call her new album *Girl From Rio*, after one of its tracks. But “I like being a different person every day,” she says. “Today I’ll be romantic, tomorrow I’ll be nerdy, tomorrow I’ll be sad. That’s what I think it is to be Anitta: to be limitless.”

Additional reporting by Alexei Barrionuevo and Beatriz Miranda.

Anitta will speak and perform at Billboard MusicCon on May 13 at Area 15 in Las Vegas.

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GOING GLOBAL

MAN ON A MISSION

Burna Boy is on a quest to take his Afro-fusion music to the world's biggest stages. Selling out Madison Square Garden was just the beginning

BY HERAN MAMO

PHOTOGRAPHED BY SEYE ISIKALU





Burna Boy photographed
April 17 at One Friendly
Place in London.

Styling by Ronami Ogulu
Bianca Saunders top and
pants, Prada shoes.



“Ghese!”

Burna Boy is soaring over the crowd at Amsterdam’s Ziggo Dome, yelling the Yoruba term that loosely means “move your legs.” His six-foot-one frame explodes into the air, seemingly powered by enough energy to fuel the Space Drift Tour race car he zoomed onto the stage in earlier. Wearing a blue custom Botter jumpsuit, he looks like some kind of Afro-futurist astronaut, ready to fly even higher.

“He gives his all. And when he comes off [stage], you’ll see him in the dressing room, falling flat out on the floor and shaking,” says his younger sister Ronami Ogulu, who’s also his stylist and creative director. “Then he comes up and we patch him all together and we go again the next day.”

Three days later, Burna is in South London and decidedly more earthbound, slouched in an antique red leather chair. He takes long, drawn-out puffs from his Backwood, taking care that his denim Off-White ensemble doesn’t turn into a designer ashtray. He speaks in aphorisms, like “It is better to stick with the devils you know” (why he keeps family, including his sister and “momager” Bose Ogulu, on his team) and “I hope for the best and am prepared for the worst” (when he thinks about the future of the African continent). When he laughs, tiny diamond tooth gems glint at the edges of his kilowatt smile. When he’s finished answering a question, he gestures toward me with his hand and sternly commands, “Proceed.”

Especially for a fellow African who shares his passion for our motherland, an audience with Burna feels a bit like one with a dignity. And while he may have just flown here from Amsterdam a few nights before, his exhaustion does not take precedence over his calling — his mission — to spread his signature Afro-fusion music all over the world. “It has always been my vision to build a bridge

“There’s going to be a ‘Before Burna Came’ and ‘After Burna’s Death’ time period in the performing arts world. That’s my legacy.”

— BURNA BOY

between all Black people in all parts of the world through the music and performance,” he states. “Music is the No. 1 messenger.”

The 30-year-old artist, born Damini Ebunoluwa Ogulu in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, now splits his time between London and Lagos. And as his career gets more globe-spanning, the concept of his homeland seems to only become more and more important to him — and central to his identity as an artist. After pandemic delays, he has finally been touring the songs from his fifth album, *Twice as Tall*, released nearly two years ago on Atlantic Records/Bad Habit/Warner Music International and his own label, Spaceship Collective.

It won the 2021 Grammy Award for best global music album, along with the praise of Nigeria’s minister of information and culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed, who called the award “a global endorsement for the Afrobeat genre of music that has propelled Nigeria’s increasing dominance of the music world.” And Burna is adamant that his signature “Afro-fusion” sound — a blend of Afrobeats folklore, dancehall riddims, hip-hop swagger, reggae

and R&B, all sung in his distinct baritone mix of Yoruba, English and pidgin — is leading the way.

“It’s making people who don’t even speak the same language start dancing with each other,” Burna says. Even in his more vulnerable lyrical moments, “you’re dancing to it,” he explains with a hearty laugh. “At that point, it becomes bigger than me.”

Over the last couple of years, Afrobeats has steadily migrated West thanks to crossover hits like Wizkid and Tems’ Billboard Hot 100 top 10 “Essence” and CKay’s “Love Nwantiti (ah ah ah),” which became the first-ever No. 1 on *Billboard*’s new U.S. Afrobeats Songs chart in April. As the genre’s profile has risen abroad, more Afrobeats artists have, post-lockdown, embarked on their first U.S. tours, and among that group, Burna has played the biggest stages yet — the kind that can mint superstars. With historic sold-out shows at London’s Wembley Arena and Paris’ Accor Arena already accomplished, he became the first African artist to headline Los Angeles’ Hollywood Bowl in October 2021. Then in April, he became the first Nigerian act to headline and sell out New York’s Madison Square Garden.

“He’s a fantastic performer. Even though I’ve watched Burna more than 100 times onstage, I still get excited,” says Osita “Duke” Ugeh, who, as CEO of promoter Duke Concept, has been booking U.S. tours for African acts like Burna for the last decade. (He secured Burna’s first sold-out U.S. show in April 2019 at Harlem’s Apollo Theater — where he again made history as the first Afrobeats artist to sell out the venue.)

But as Ugeh knows well, Burna’s arrival at the Garden was far from preordained. Since founding Duke Concept in 2013, he has struggled to get artists like him into big rooms. “[Production managers and theaters] would be under the assumption that Afrobeats artists cannot sell this number of tickets. They didn’t believe in the genre,” Ugeh recalls. In 2019, even as he and Mr. Eazi made history as the first Afrobeats performers to play Coachella, Burna grumbled about the tiny printing of his name on the festival slate. “I am an AFRICAN GIANT,” he wrote on his Instagram story. “I represent a whole Generation of SOLID AFRICAN creatives going Global.”

“We took the stairs,” Bose says, quoting her son’s description of the slow path he was forced to take in the live sector. “We didn’t do any elevators. We spent a lot of time and money planning to go around the world. We ran through the

label’s tour support pretty quickly, so we were using money he’s making from shows in other places, particularly in Africa, to bankroll our initial touring. Yes, it has been hard, but there is no way we’re performing 16,000- to 20,000-capacity venues when we didn’t start with 3,000.”

Now, as Afrobeats continues to expand its reach, Ugeh says he and his 15-person team are starting to see that reflected in the kind of venues the genre’s artists can play: He has gone

from booking two to three U.S. tours for Afrobeats artists a year to booking two to three a month, with Davido, Tiwa Savage, Rema and more scheduled for later this year. A different concert promoter, Cokobar, is helping Burna book shows in the United Kingdom and France. And with both the Bowl and the Garden in the books — as well as recent gigs at the Outside Lands and Governors Ball festivals last year — Burna and his team have their sights set on bigger stages, and more of them. “When the artist gives you good music, and gives you a fantastic show, you’re able to sell the artist,” Ugeh says. “Burna puts in the work with his performance, his production.”

When his “One Night in Space” show at the Garden was announced in December, Duke Concept launched a joint venture with Live Nation, expanding upon a relationship that began in 2018, when Burna himself approached the company about a tour deal. He insisted on bringing Ugeh along; subsequently, UTA’s Christian Bernhardt, Burna’s touring agent, introduced Ugeh to Live Nation’s director of touring, Andy Messersmith.

“The deal is a good one because it also gives us access to a lot of their stages across the world, which is what we’re talking about — trying to get the artists in the right rooms,” Ugeh says. “Burna paving the way in the North America arenas

Bianca Saunders top and
pants, Amiri jacket.





GOING GLOBAL



Jean Paul Gaultier blazer and pants, Filling Pieces shoes.

shows that it can be done. It makes it easier for every other person coming right behind him to get to that place.”

Selling out the Garden was one kind of history; opening the door for other African artists to do so could be another huge staircase to climb. But Burna is used to it, and no one’s more confident in his abilities than he is. “It’s like I’m better at [performing] than making music. And that says a lot because I’m really good at making music,” he says with a loud laugh, the gems on his teeth sparkling. “You see how with Christ, there’s B.C. and A.D.? I feel like that’s how it is for me with performing. There’s going to be a ‘Before Burna Came’ and ‘After Burna’s Death’ time period in the performing arts world. That’s my legacy.”

The African Giant stands on the shoulders of giants.

Benson Idonije, Burna’s maternal grandfather and one of Nigeria’s most widely respected music critics, was the first band manager for Afrobeat pioneer Fela Kuti. Growing up, Bose witnessed her father’s relationship with Kuti, the first artist to combine American jazz and funk, Ghanaian highlife and Yoruba chanting and drumming with unabashedly political lyrics addressing the reality of life in his home country.

“The one thing that stuck out to me was, here was this man with so much talent, but he didn’t have a clue about how to manage his business,” Bose recalls. “When things weren’t working, the band members didn’t go to [Kuti], they came to my dad.” Long after he stopped managing Kuti, she recalls, the singer would still call Idonije to play him new music or for help if he was in trouble. “It was clear to me that a manager plays a big role in an artist’s life,” Bose continues. “And it was also clear to me that a manager has to be someone that the artist respects.”

Bose, known to her son’s fans as “Mama Burna,” has managed Burna since “before he gave himself a stage name” and in 2015 co-founded a label, Spaceship Entertainment, with him. (Her daughter Nissi — a musician and animation artist she also manages — is signed to it.) Launched as a one-stop shop for Burna, she expanded the label to its current incarnation as Spaceship Collective, a home for both artists and producers that recently added a publishing division.

For Bose, launching the company was not only about ownership of Burna’s business, but of his inherently African personal narrative, too. “I strongly believe that African music is born out of our everyday life — our woes, our tears, our joys, our celebrations, our problems — and no one is able to tell the story better than us,” she says. That attitude rules how Burna’s sister Ronami runs his creative endeavors, too. She helped him secure a 120-piece collection with U.K. fashion retailer boohooMan in 2020, featuring odes to the green-and-white Nigerian flag, and a spot in Calvin Klein’s spring 2022 campaign alongside Vince Staples, Solange and Dominic Fike — something Ronami says Burna would never have done two years ago, when he wasn’t comfortable being “some sort of spectacle” offstage. But after starting to attend fashion shows with her, she says her brother has taken an interest in everything from “talking about fabrics and buttons” to “modeling a product” — always, of course, on their own terms. “Even when they come to us, if we’re not able to do [that], then it’s not worth it,” she says.

“They operate as a family, but they’re focused on building a legacy. They’re preserving that legacy to push African music globally, and that’s what I love and support,” says Jason Johnson, vp of marketing and brand strategy at streaming platform Audiomack, which has the biggest footprint on the continent among Western digital service providers (DSPs) and is the No. 1 free music app on Apple’s App Store in Nigeria. Johnson and the team have worked closely with Burna’s to amplify his streaming presence through playlisting and editorial projects — like a Trap Symphony performance with a string, piano and percussion ensemble and a “Burna Comics” pop-up in Brooklyn to promote *Twice as Tall*. Backstage at the Hollywood Bowl last fall, Johnson presented Burna with a plaque celebrating his 300 million-plus streams on Audiomack, where Johnson says he is “one of the biggest global artists.” (He’s now up to over half a billion streams.)

It was 2017 when Matthew “Baus” Adesuyan — the Nigerian American co-founder of Atlantic Records imprint Bad Habit — heard Burna on a PartyNext-

Door playlist and became determined to sign him and bring his music to a wider audience. The same year, Burna had signed to Warner Music International for territories outside Africa. “What we could definitely do was run our own business in Africa, so we took that out of every deal we made,” Bose says, “so that we could control that side of the narrative.” Adesuyan, who acts as Burna’s main A&R representative, now describes Bad Habit as “the center” of a 50/50 joint venture: The imprint handles all aspects of the album creation process for Burna while Atlantic and Warner act as global marketing partners.

As his profile continues to expand far beyond the continent, Burna has recorded with artists outside the Afrobeats world — like Ed Sheeran on the Stormzy-assisted “Own It,” his first U.K. No. 1, and Justin Bieber, whose *Justice: Triple Chucks Deluxe* he’s featured on (and for which he therefore also received a 2022 Grammy album of the year nomination).

Still, he’ll only jump on a remix if he feels it’s in the larger service of his Pan-Africanist manifesto. When the 2019 gospel-tinged house anthem “Jerusalema,” by South African musicians Master KG and Nomcebo, was rereleased in 2020 — sparking a global TikTok dance challenge — Burna recorded his verse in one of South Africa’s official languages, isiZulu. “You have to know who you’re speaking to,” he says. “Some people don’t want to speak to the whole world. Some people want to speak to certain parts of the world.”

On *Twice as Tall*, Burna intended to speak to the whole world — and he did so in all of the languages he grew up speaking. Executive-produced by Sean “Diddy” Combs and Bose, its themes double down on Burna’s Pan-Africanist principles and lean further into Kuti’s “music has to be for revolution” mandate, with Timbaland and Burna’s childhood favorite, Naughty by Nature, making appearances. *Twice as Tall* reached No. 1 on the World Albums chart and debuted at No. 54 on the all-genre Billboard 200, approximately 50 spots higher than its predecessor, *African Giant*.

That leap is an impressive one, albeit indicative of the robust U.S. audience Burna is still working to build on the radio and streaming services — not that that worries him. Recording music is “more therapy than business — it’s business second,” he says, before admitting, “You can only say that if you have money. I’ve got the money. It’s not about that for me. It’s about that for my mom and my sister, though. That’s why we have arguments when it’s time to release stuff, because I just want to do what I want to do. And sometimes what I want to do is not the best thing for business.” (That side of things, Bose says, is left to “the marketing team, the whatever team, and above all, we leave it to God.”)

And the next stage Burna wants to conquer may, in fact, not be a stage at all. “My dream venues, other than all the stadiums in the world, are unorthodox, like a theme park or a fucking train station,” he says, imagining what that would look like: “A concert in a big-ass train station, and there’s no trains and the whole tracks are filled with people. I just want to do weird shit like that for my own pleasure.”

His publicist interjects to gauge whether Burna wants to speak about his upcoming sixth album; he looks at me and says I haven’t asked him about it, waiting for my direct query. As always, the world comes to Burna — so I ask. He waits a beat before revealing that it’s called *Love, Damini* and due on his birthday, July 2.

“That’s how I like to sign all my letters, because I didn’t know the proper [signoff],” he says of the title with a chuckle. “It’s a bit personal [because] it’s bringing you into my head on my birthday — when you turn 31 and ain’t got no kids, everything is going good and bad at the same time. You reflect and then you get as lit as possible. Then you sleep and wake up and reflect again. I’m reflecting on everything — what I’m doing and what’s happening where I’m from. Where I’m from is a part of where I’m going.”

Burna Boy will speak at Billboard MusicCon on May 13 at Area 15 in Las Vegas.

40 UNDER 40

Olivia Rodrigo's and Adele's managers; marketing and merch leaders; Web3 pioneers – they're all among the honorees in *Billboard's* annual celebration of the next-gen executives defining the future of the music industry



SHAUNA ALEXANDER

VP/global head of partnerships
/// SoundCloud

Alexander, 38, sees herself “as a bit of a Robin Hood,” who “instead of stealing from brands,” educates them “on why they need to invest in emerging artists.” SoundCloud, for example, dove into gaming partnerships over the past year, working with Adobe, Swiffer and Xbox on a Fortnite Battle Royale co-hosted by Rico Nasty that pitted eight SoundCloud rappers against each other. The tournament racked up over 700,000 views. “In a time where artists have been really struggling,” Alexander says, “I’m proud of my team and I for constantly finding nonconventional ways to get emerging artists paid.”



TOBY ANDREWS

President /// Astralwerks

While Andrews, who manages all day-to-day aspects of the Capitol Music Group imprint, has overseen the expansion of Astralwerks Asia and recently helped launch Fabled Records — a new China-based label created in partnership with Live Nation — the 32-year-old executive says, “none of this can overshadow what we do every day at the company.” In March, Astralwerks released *The Silence in Between*, the third studio album by Bob Moses, which Andrews describes as “a true honor,” given that he was the electronic duo’s first manager.



ANDREW ASARE

Senior director of streaming (urban)
/// Warner Records

Paraphrasing hip-hop fave Gunna, Asare says his daily version of “pushin’ P” is “prayer, pitch notes and pushing “send” on emails to platforms for placement on playlists and beyond.” The 34-year-old Ghanaian’s work proved instrumental in Saweetie’s rise from 2019 Billboard Hot 100 debutante with “My Type” to two-time 2022 Grammy Award nominee. And his promotion of rapper Isaiah Rashad’s *The House Is Burning* fueled its No. 7 debut on the Billboard 200, where it charted for six weeks. When he’s not busy expanding an artist’s reach, Asare supports his alma mater Howard University through Warner Music Group’s mentorship program.



RYAN BEUSCHEL

VP of A&R strategy
/// Warner Chappell Music

Beuschel, 38, says he spends “a lot of time with my songwriters discussing strategy as trends change in the overall music landscape as well as the country market,” in which he specializes. His fostering of singer-songwriter and friend Randy Montana’s career led to the “Beer Never Broke My Heart” co-writer landing his first Country Music Association Triple Play Award in May — a highlight of the past year, because “Randy and I started our careers together at Universal Music Group,” Beuschel says. Other top notes include adding Brett Eldredge, Riley Green, Hailey Whitters, Priscilla Block, Justin Lynch and Warren Zeiders to Warner Chappell’s roster.



ALEXIS BROWN

Artist manager (Adele)
/// September Management

As the point person for one of the biggest pop stars in the world, Brown, 28, played an instrumental role in the release of Adele’s *30*, the top-selling album of 2021, and in a promotional and marketing campaign that included NBC and CBS TV specials; the latter drew more than 12 million viewers, becoming the second most-watched televised entertainment special of that year, according to Nielsen. The Syracuse University graduate also guides the careers of Grammy-winning mix engineer Tom Elmhirst (“Rolling in the Deep”) and emerging talents Orion Sun and MorMor.

TYPE ILLUSTRATION BY MARTIN NAUMANN



Zack Morgenroth

Partner, Lighthouse Management & Media

ILLUSTRATION BY RYAN MELGAR

Though he is now the co-manager of superstar multihyphenates Olivia Rodrigo and Selena Gomez, Morgenroth, 35, says with a laugh that he “didn’t even know this was a job” growing up.

That changed his sophomore year at the University of Southern California when he landed an internship at a management company and realized “there’s a world out there that me in high school could have never thought about.”

His next internship, at Brillstein Entertainment Partners, proved even more fruitful. It was there he met Aleen Keshishian, founder of Lighthouse Management & Media, where Morgenroth joined as a partner at the company’s inception in 2016. Having known Keshishian for nearly 15 years, he says, “gives us such a shorthand when we’re working together on clients,” says Morgenroth. “It’s like yin and yang — and you get the brain power of two people.”

Keshishian says Morgenroth has evolved “into one of the most talented and visionary artist reps I’ve ever seen,” adding, “his mastery of all of the verticals necessary to create business for our clients is truly rare.”

Lighthouse’s A-list roster of talent is spread across music, TV, film, beauty and other sectors — and a major selling point for a young ascendant artist like Rodrigo, who signed with Lighthouse in February and is eager to do it all. Morgenroth describes the process of getting to know a new client as “incredibly delicate,” adding that the start of any successful management relationship comes down to asking plenty of questions: “It’s big-picture things to things as small as what they are allergic to.”

Rodrigo, of course, got her start on the Disney+ show *High School Musical: The Musical: The Series*; broke a slew of chart records with her 2021 debut single, “drivers license”; and became a superstar with first album *Sour*, scoring seven Grammy nominations. In March, she was named *Billboard*’s Woman of the Year, then in April scooped up three of those Grammys and announced a partnership with Glossier as the first celebrity ambassador of the direct-to-consumer makeup brand.

Morgenroth says it’s important to have “the ability to do all these different things and have expertise in different [areas] and have a track record in working with artists in different [lanes].” It’s exciting to him as well. He says management feels “much more entrepreneurial than ever,” adding that it is “incredibly rewarding to be able to connect the dots with clients and be able to do multiple things.” Recent cross-field victories include collaborating with John Janick and Justin Lubliner at Interscope and The Darkroom, respectively, to executive produce the 2021 Apple TV+ documentary *Billie Eilish: The World’s a Little Blurry* (along with Eilish’s co-managers, Danny Rukasin and Brandon Goodman); and, in April, watching Gomez win her first Grammy for her first Latin album, *Revelación*.

He says a key part of the Lighthouse pitch is to always think long term — as far ahead as “what are the goals for, hopefully, 20 to 30 years from now?”

“Especially when you have a young client, you want to be thinking about a career,” he continues. “You want to pace yourself and only do things that feel organic to the client and what they want to accomplish.”

—LYNDSEY HAVENS



DARCY BROWN

Head of music merchandise
/// Amazon Music

Last year, Brown, 35, worked closely with Kanye West and Balenciaga head designer

Demna on limited-edition merchandise for the Amazon Music-hosted #FreeLarry-Hoover benefit. “That collection was indicative of how Amazon Music is transforming artist merchandise experiences beyond the typical band T-shirt,” says Brown, who employed a similar strategy around livestreams for the 2022 Dreamville Festival and album release events for The Weeknd and Tyler, The Creator. “The way we listen to music has changed with new technology, but the merch booth hasn’t been reinvented for decades,” says Brown.



LAURA CARTER

Senior vp/head of urban marketing
/// Interscope Records

Leading a 10-member team that shares her “passion for artist

development,” Carter supervised marketing campaigns for releases from J. Cole, Summer Walker and Moneybagg Yo, as well as a second posthumous Juice WRLD album — all contributing to Interscope’s 10.08% overall market share in 2021. As the industry readjusts back to pre-pandemic marketing opportunities, Carter says, “It’s exciting to watch touring and events start to thrive again, and for fans to get a piece of the artist they’ve been missing.”



BRIANA CHENG

A&R, 4AD /// founder, b4

Cheng landed at 4AD in 2018 as an A&R executive, signing Velvet Negróni, Tkay Maidza, Erika de Casier

and HAWA to the British label during her four-year-plus tenure. Cheng is also founder of b4, a label and management company, and notes that all the acts she manages — including 27 Delli, Tami Gucci and Mia Carucci — “are people of color and/or queer and huge advocates for their community and culture outside of making forward-thinking, genreless music.”



THOMAS COESFELD

CFO /// BMG

Since joining BMG in April 2021, Coesfeld has helped lead its biggest acquisition program in nearly a decade —

boosted by a \$1 billion partnership with KKR. Over the past year, BMG has picked up catalogs from Tina Turner, ZZ Top and Mötley Crüe, among others, and is projecting more

than \$1 billion in annual revenue over the next three years. “The market has turned our way,” says the 32-year-old executive, who hails from Germany. “It has become clear that the service-orientated agenda we pioneered similarly resonates with the new financial investors entering the field of music.”



MICHELE CRANFORD

Senior vp of digital marketing
/// Atlantic Records

Cranford, 38, oversees a team of 30 “digital marketers, social platform

experts, and gaming and Web3 specialists” that, she says, creates “cutting-edge digital lifestyle and tastemaker marketing campaigns across all major social digital platforms.” Her team has both helped break new acts and contributed to long-term artist development, and she notes that her division is increasingly focused on short-form content, which thrives on TikTok and has increasing traction on YouTube. “I love that we are connecting with fan audiences earlier, ahead of releases, to build excitement,” she says.



PATCH CULBERTSON

Senior vp/GM
/// Big Loud Records

Promoted to senior vp/GM in 2021, Culbertson, 36, helped curate Morgan Wallen’s *Dangerous: The Double Album*, which was the most

popular album of last year. Wallen’s success — alongside that of labelmates Jake Owen and Chris Lane — earned Big Loud the top position on *Billboard*’s Hot Country Songs Label 2021 year-end chart. Culbertson, whose role spans A&R, data analytics and strategy, is known as “Stat Daddy” at Big Loud, and understandably so: The label was earning 5 million on-demand audio streams a week when he came aboard in 2017. That number is now 100 million per week.



SOPHIA DILLEY

Senior vp of film/TV development and production
/// Concord Originals

“I am in awe at the sophisticated level of storytelling that is being

produced right now,” says 33-year-old Dilley, who last year launched Concord’s new division for developing projects onstage and onscreen, utilizing its artists and music and theatrical catalogs. Her development slate includes three projects mining the works of Rodgers & Hammerstein; documentaries on Billy Preston and Shari Lewis and Lambchop; and a genre film using blues legend Robert Johnson’s catalog. Dilley says she’s also excited about working with Skydance TV and Jennifer Lopez’s Nuyorican Productions to adapt musicals for the screen based on Concord’s own legacy works.

The Next Big Thing My Colleagues Should Get Hip To Is...

“The concept of digital fashion and how that space is evolving. There is so much opportunity for creativity, individualism and innovation all while maintaining an eco-friendly impact through utilizing these new digital fashion apps. Plus, it’s a ripe medium for brand partnership opportunities.”

—Shauna Alexander

“Music-driven films like *CODA*.”

—Sophia Dilley

“Music nano-communities. We are rapidly shifting away from an entertainment monoculture, and music fans are finding one another through all kinds of unconventional online and [in-real-life] means, building networks around very niche common interests. It makes marketing more challenging but also more rewarding.”

—Jennifer Kirell

“Paying writers songwriting fees and giving them points on records.”

—Hannah Montgomery Bay-Schuck

“Today’s listeners are incredibly open to music of all kinds. It has made rules and limits a thing of the past, which is exciting for those of us behind the scenes because it gives us more leeway in how we can approach song production. I can’t wait to see how we can develop new sounds and styles through artistic experimentation.”

—Javier González

“The metaverse. I’m truly excited to see how this new form of technology can create a completely different lane for the music industry, such as concert experiences from home [and] fan interactions, as well as the overall aspect of NFTs. This will give people a completely different viewpoint on music.”

—Simone Mitchell



MATT GRAHAM

Co-founding managing partner
/// Range Media Partners

Graham, 38, considers himself a “multihyphenate,” with good reason. As one of the architects of Range’s 360 approach to management, the company secured a label partnership with Capitol Music Group and Virgin Music Label & Artist Services in 2021; helped found Web3 platform Classick Club in early 2020; and secured film, TV and branding opportunities for clients Jack Harlow, Wale, Justin Tranter and Midland. Range is also preparing to launch a publishing division, but Graham says he’s most thrilled with the return of touring, calling it “the lifeblood of our business.”



OSCAR GUITIÁN JR.

GM /// WK Records

Gutián — who learned the music biz working at his father’s independent label — helped make Walter Kolm’s 2-year-old WK Records one of *Billboard*’s top 10 Latin labels of 2021, thanks to global hits like “Fiel” by Los Legendarios, Wisin and Jhay Cortez. Gutián, 32, spends his days “looking for viral songs and artists to sign, negotiating deals with managers/attorneys and helping grow the business overall.” He is eyeing Spain as the next generator of Latin hits and adds that “the frequency of how quickly music is coming out and the levels of deals being made” keeps things exciting.



TIARA HARGRAVE

VP/GM /// Alamo

Working alongside Alamo founder/CEO Todd Moscovitz, Hargrave, 36, served as a key player in helping Lil Durk dominate “the charts and culture,” as she proudly puts it. Durk secured his first *Billboard* 200 No. 1 album (7220) last March after Alamo aided in pushing his 2021 release, *The Voice*, to platinum status. If she wasn’t busy building superstars, Hargrave says she might have been a sociologist. “I just might still do it,” she quips. “We deal with so many different types of people, it might be helpful.”



NICK JARJOUR

Global head of song management,
Hipgnosis Songs Management /// artist
manager (Starrah, Trinidad Cardona)

With Hipgnosis continuing to snap up classic song catalogs, Jarjour, 36, deals with billions of dollars in song assets on a global scale. On the management side, R&B singer Trinidad Cardona signed to Def Jam, while Jarjour and client Starrah co-founded publishing venture 3:02 Music Group, negotiating partnership terms with Pulse Music Group. He calls producer-songwriter Starrah “a trailblazer of creating more representation and equality within the music industry,” adding that the five businesses he has invested in this year “have been female-founded, and the data indicates female founders exit 25% faster and at higher valuations than their male counterparts.”



JACOB FOWLER

Chief technology officer
/// The Orchard

In the increasingly fast-paced digital-first world, Fowler has helped The Orchard build out its suite of products for its artists and labels. A partnership with payment service Wise allows for faster payouts across countries and currencies, and OrchardGo is a new analytics-focused mobile app. But Fowler says he is most proud of building “a more inclusive and diverse team. The results always take longer than you hope for, but we are now in a place we can be proud of, especially as we look toward the future.”



MANDY GABRIEL

VP of film, TV and
advertising /// Universal Music
Publishing Group

Gabriel, 37, helped place UMPG synchs with Apple, Peloton, Toyota, Campbell’s Soup and Taco Bell over the past year. She has also worked on internal synch-education sessions called Office Hours to help songwriters keep up to date on synch trends and the intersection of music and media. “A large part of my job is thinking outside the box to make interesting connections that lead to exciting and creative opportunities,” says the eight-year company veteran, who previously worked at Kobalt — “the best thing to happen to me,” she says.



JOE GALLO

Senior vp/head of sales
/// Columbia Records

In 2021, Columbia held the No. 1 spot on the Hot 100 for 33 weeks thanks to nine different songs, including Polo G’s “Rapstar” and The Kid LAROI’s Justin Bieber-assisted “Stay.” Gallo, 33, says “the determination within the label to achieve such a feat was contagious,” and his team worked alongside departments throughout the company “to craft each artist’s release timing and strategy.” He executed campaigns with individually tailored strategies to maximize consumption, with help from a unit on his team dedicated to data analysis across new releases at the label.



JAVIER GONZÁLEZ

Owner/CEO /// Tamarindo
Rekordsz

Ten years ago, González was doing oil changes at an Acura dealer while pursuing songwriting and working on launching his regional Mexican label, Tamarindo Rekordsz. Now 35, with signings like Carin León — who has 11 million monthly listeners on Spotify and has guested on a remix of Walker Hayes’ country hit “Fancy Like” — the indie label is going global. “In today’s landscape, it’s not just Mexico and the U.S. interested in Mexican artists,” he says. “Latin American and European countries are listening, too.”

RICHMUSIC
CONGRATULATES COO & CO-FOUNDER
JOSH MENDEZ
BILLBOARD'S 2022 40 UNDER 40

"ALWAYS
DREAM"



Before I Turn 40, I Want To...

“Grant scholarships to two students who wish to pursue careers on the business side of music. And run two New York City Marathons.”

—Andrew Asare

“Be proficient enough in woodworking to build a piece of furniture from scratch for my home.”

—Mandy Gabriel

“Learn how to swim.”

—Seon Jeong Shin

“See a songwriter of the year Grammy Award.”

—Nick Jarjour

“Own a sports team, either basketball or soccer.”

—Oscar Guitián

“See Michigan football win a national championship.”

—Ryan Beuschel

“Add 10 more stamps to my passport, buy my mom a house and develop another woman in music to become a top executive.”

—Simone Mitchell

“Finally see The Rolling Stones play live.”

—Thomas Coesfeld

“Go to a concert with the team I built virtually at the start of the pandemic — we are due for an outing.”

—Darcy Brown

“Be like Melissa McCarthy at the end of *Bridesmaids* and have so many golden retrievers people think I have a problem.”

—Thomas Krottinger

“Have a day off.”

—Zack Morgenroth



ALEX KAMINS

Senior vp of new business and ventures // Warner Music Group

Kamins leads the WMG team that oversees Web3 strategy and venture-capital investing. Last March brought a partnership with STYNGR, which helps gaming companies license tracks from the label’s catalog; in June came a partnership with Songclip, which makes searching for music clips easier on social media. Kamins also works with gaming giant Roblox, in which WMG invested eight figures last year; WMG’s twenty one pilots performed a virtual concert on the platform that drew 13 million views last September. “We are on the verge of a new golden age in the music industry,” says Kamins, 37, referring to the emerging metaverse and Web3 ventures that “allow artists to better incentivize their superfans.”



JENNIFER KIRELL

Senior vp of catalog and retail marketing // AWAL

For Kirell, 32, the many facets of her job boil down to a singular goal: “help create and deepen fan relationships with an artist and their existing body of work.” Sometimes, that means overseeing global marketing campaigns for acts like Chvrches, Rex Orange County and Dashboard Confessional. Other times, it means leading the catalog strategy that turned AURORA’s 2015 single “Runaway” into a TikTok sensation and No. 1 trend on Instagram Reels more than five years after its release.



THOMAS KROTTINGER

VP of creative // Sony Music Publishing

Krottinger’s massive success with Olivia Rodrigo’s debut album, *Sour*, was a few years in the making. He heard one of Rodrigo’s demos, “All I Want,” in 2019; met her a year later; and vividly remembers “calling my boss, gushing about how I had to work with her.” He and senior vp/head of West Coast A&R Jennifer Knoepfle also found success in 2021 with pop artist-songwriter Salem Ilese, who broke through with her own “Mad at Disney” and contributed to Bella Poarch’s “Build a Bitch.” Krottinger, 32, hopes the future of the business brings more respect to “young female music fans,” noting, “They are a driving force in our culture and should be taken seriously.”



CORY LITWIN

Executive vp // Hallwood Media

As Hallwood Media’s executive vp, Litwin, 36, is involved in all levels of A&R, marketing and operations at the producer/songwriter management company. He also manages his own roster, which includes Murda Beatz (who has produced for Cardi B, Doja Cat, Drake and Migos) and Quay Global (Lil Baby). Over the last year, Litwin had a hand in three No. 1 songs and eight No. 1 albums and launched the herbal mood-booster Psychedelic Water, while he and his wife welcomed their first child. He says Hallwood’s “unofficial mission statement” — and the thing that drives him — is providing clients the ability “to make money making music.”



KATIE MCCARTNEY

GM // Monument Records

Under the leadership of McCartney, 36, country singer-songwriter Walker Hayes became a crossover star with his No. 3 Billboard Hot 100 smash, “Fancy Like,” and its follow-up, “AA.” The success of the former song — sparked by Hayes’ DIY TikTok dance video with his daughter going viral — “catapulted Monument to a whole new level,” she says. The song gave the 5-year-old label its first No. 1 hit (on four *Billboard* country charts), spawned a national Applebee’s ad campaign and was a social media phenomenon. “It is something our team has been preparing for for years. And it’s unreal to see the magic work.”



ANDREW McINNES

Co-founder/CEO // TMWRK

This year, McInnes, 38, worked with star client Diplo to finalize the sale of the producer’s catalog — a project that has been in the planning stages for over a decade and which utilized the resources of TMWRK’s full team. (Details of the sale were not disclosed.) “At TMWRK, all 23 of us view our artists as entrepreneurs and business partners,” says McInnes. “The goal may be a tour deal, artist-owned label, publishing company, film project, comic book deal, investment strategy — we provide advice and creative ideas to build our clients’ businesses.”



JOSH MENDEZ

Co-founder/COO // RichMusic

Mendez has grown his Miami-based indie label to 35 employees, renewed the contracts of up-and-coming Panamanian urban star Sech and producer Dímelo Flow, and signed its first female act, paopao. RichMusic also launched a series of philanthropic initiatives including local youth empowerment through music education — with partner the Miami Music Project — and equity for women in entertainment. The 33-year-old executive, who calls himself a “professional dreamer,” says, “Every step at RichMusic has been intentional and prepped us to scale up,” adding that the label is focused on TikTok growth, artificial intelligence, non-fungible tokens and the metaverse.



SIMONE MITCHELL

President // Quality Control Music, Solid Foundation Management

As the head of City Girls’ label, Mitchell, 32, who was promoted to her current position in October, is heavily involved in the rap duo’s brand development and ran point on the pair’s first Coachella performance in April, “a major win for our team and a pivotal moment in their career,” she says. She also manages the careers of Quality Control artists Layton Greene and Lakeyah at Solid Foundation. As one of a growing number of women promoted to high-ranking positions in the industry, Mitchell says, “The flowers are nice, but the recognition highlights that women are a powerful force that must be reckoned with.”

2022

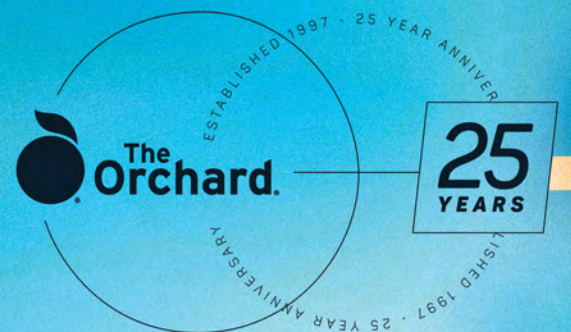
BILLBOARD
40 UNDER 40



Congratulations Jacob Fowler

Chief Technology Officer

The Orchard thanks you for your
innovation and leadership.





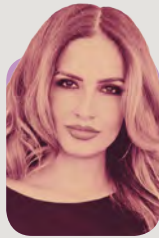
HANNAH MONTGOMERY BAY-SCHUCK

A&R // Prescription Songs
Montgomery Bay-Schuck, 30, describes herself as a “professional cheerleader, coach and champion” for her songwriters, and last year, she had a lot to cheer about. As A&R executive to five of the seven songwriters on Saweetie and Doja Cat’s smash “Best Friend” as well as to talents like Lauren LaRue — who has penned songs for Sam Hunt, Lil Yachty and Illenium — she has helped her roster reach the top of the charts in nearly every genre.



ROBBY MORRIS

Creative director/senior director of creative and strategy // Secretly Group
Morris, 36, notched several big wins overseeing marketing and strategy for Secretly’s labels last year, including a pair of Grammy nominations for Japanese Breakfast and a top five album for Mitski on the Billboard 200. As the pandemic appears to recede, he’s eager to apply lessons learned during lockdown to a less restrictive 2022. He says, “There’s no set template to setting an artist up for success, but we have a lot more tools to help maximize their creativity than we did three years ago.”



SAMANTHA ROBINSON

VP of neighboring rights // Songtradr
Robinson, 38, manages neighboring rights throughout the world for Songtradr, with a focus on challenging markets like Latin America, where she says the company has been one of the most successful U.S.-based collection agencies for masters owners in that region over the past year. Robinson, who works with artists and labels to carve out and untangle their rights, says she is excited by Latin America’s growth in the music sector and how it is “becoming one of the most impactful regions in neighboring rights and audiovisual as a whole.”



JEN TANNER

VP of brand partnerships // RCA Records
Tanner, 32, unlocks the affinities of RCA artists by digging into their hobbies and dreams, then connects those interests to the music strategies of agencies and brands. She helped spearhead Doja Cat’s deals with Postmates and Girls Who Code, as well as a labelwide partnership with Essentia Water, which included rising pop artist Tate McRae starring in a campaign alongside NFL superstar Patrick Mahomes. Tanner says she “would love to do more partnerships like this that tap into the breadth and diversity of the roster.”



LA MAR C. TAYLOR

Co-founder // XO, HXOUSE
Taylor, who describes his role as “a hybrid of janitor, firefighter and therapist,” helped shape the 2021 Super Bowl halftime performance of The Weeknd — his co-founder and friend since high school — along with the creative vision and marketing for the pop superstar’s 2022 album, *Dawn FM*. Having continued “breaking boundaries while in the middle of a pandemic” through the rollout of The Weeknd’s record-setting release *After Hours* and XO’s Toronto-based creative incubator, HXOUSE, Taylor is working on plans for The Weeknd’s global ambassadorship with the UN World Food Programme.



VIC TRUBOWITCH

Head of artist and label partnerships, North America // Spotify
A decade ago, Trubowitch, 35, was trying to get Hype Machine blogs to embed MP3s from artists signed to Vagrant Records. These days, he oversees the team that helps acts like Olivia Rodrigo and Silk Sonic “tell their stories” to Spotify’s 180 million subscribers. The mission is similar — connect artists with new listeners — but the medium keeps advancing. Trubowitch says he’s excited about Spotify Live, which streams concerts on the platform, and is testing an initiative “where artists can interact directly with their biggest fans” in “live audio rooms.”



STEPHANIE SHIM

Head of East Coast label relations // YouTube
Over the last year, Shim, 37, played a critical role in the global launches of two major artist campaigns through YouTube Shorts: BTS’ #PermissionToDance challenge, followed by Ed Sheeran’s #SheeranShorts promotion. The activations generated almost 9 million and more than 400 million views, respectively. In addition to facilitating massive engagement for both artists, Shim helped with the platform’s Asian Pacific American Heritage Month campaign, a project Shim says she’s “particularly proud of and something I am looking forward to expanding upon this year.”



SEON JEONG SHIN

Training and Development (T&D) business department leader // HYBE
Shin, 38, helped advance a system for training future artists on the South Korean K-pop giant’s labels, including BigHit Music, Source Music, PLEDIS Entertainment and ADOR. The T&D system, which HYBE has also initiated in Japan (where Shin is GM for that market’s T&D department), has been used to develop K-pop stars like BTS, Tomorrow x Together and ENHYPEN. Shin says, “I feel like understanding the evolving demands of the public and the fans is the most important trend for people in this business.”



MATT SIGNORE

COO // 300 Entertainment
Ten years ago, Signore, 32, was starting his first job in the music industry. Today, he speeds the plough when it comes to 300’s business operations and strategies, and was a key part of the team that orchestrated the company’s \$400 million sale to Warner Music Group in December and its subsequent integration into the major. The executive, who became a first-time father in June 2021, says he’s a proponent of “providing a clear value proposition to employees with empathetic resources and programs for them.”



CHARLES WADELINGTON

Manager of public policy and government relations // Universal Music Group
From his vantage point as an advocate for UMG’s business objectives with the government and a “voice for the music industry on Capitol Hill,” Wadelington, 31, had a front-row seat for last year’s negotiations over the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, including a “virtual lobby day” that UMG’s Task Force for Meaningful Change held in support of the proposed legislation. While there’s “more work to be done on that issue,” Wadelington says it was “a career highlight to unite so many notable figures from the music, sports and entertainment industries to help move the needle on police reform.”



NIC WARNER

Co-founding partner/GM // Milk & Honey
Warner, 33, describes himself as a “big-picture” executive who’s “still rolling up my sleeves and getting granular with clients and their careers.” While the pandemic continued to stifle the industry in 2021, he kept Milk & Honey growing and its staffers and roster of songwriters — including Jenna Andrews, J White Did It, Noah Goldstein, Y2K and Andrés Torres — busy. While clients scored writing credits for Ed Sheeran’s “Afterglow,” Dua Lipa’s “Levitating” and BTS’ “Butter,” among other hits, Warner oversaw the opening of offices in London, Amsterdam and Australia, along with sports and Web3 divisions.

contributors

Darlene Adjerou, Katie Bain, Alexei Barrionuevo, Starr Bowenbank, Leila Cobo, Stephen Daw, Chris Eggertsen, Griselda Flores, Josh Glicksman, Lyndsey Havens, Steve Knopper, Carl Lamarre, Elias Leight, Jason Lipshutz, Joe Lynch, Rebecca Milzoff, Gail Mitchell, Melinda Newman, Jessica Nicholson, Kristin Robinson, Neena Rouhani, Glenn Rowley, Dan Rys, Colin Stutz, Andrew Unterberger

methodology

Billboard’s 40 Under 40 list was chosen by editors based on factors including but not limited to nominations by peers and colleagues, timely career accomplishments and overall impact on the music industry. The nomination process for each Billboard power list opens at least 120 days in advance of publication. The nomination link is sent to press representatives and/or honorees previously featured on Billboard lists, as well as those who send a request to thom.duffy@billboard.com. (Editorial calendars are also available through him.) Nominations close not less than 90 days before publication. Unless otherwise noted, Luminate (formerly MRC Data) is the source for chart achievements, tour grosses and sales/streaming data.

MONTGOMERY: ALEX CHANG FOR GLOBE PHOTOS; MORRIS: ROBBY MORRIS; ROBINSON: NET WORTH MANAGEMENT; SHIM: COURTESY OF YOUTUBE; SHIN: JEFFREY M. HARRIS; SIGNORE: JENNA COUBO; TANNER: SAM HOUSTON/RCA RECORDS; TAYLOR: COURTESY OF XO RECORDS; TRUBOWITCH: COURTESY OF SPOTIFY; WADELINGTON: COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP; WARNER: BLAKE YOUNG



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A Song For Ukraine

BY STEVE KNOPPER

PHOTOGRAPHED BY SASHA MASLOV

Andriy Khlyvnyuk

Twelve days before collaborating with Pink Floyd on “Hey Hey Rise Up” — a traditional Ukrainian war song and the band’s first new release in nearly 28 years — Andriy Khlyvnyuk was wounded by mortar fire in the Kyiv suburbs. “Doctors took a piece of Russian iron out of my head,” says the frontman for pop-rock band Boombox. “Now I’m OK. Some [people] lost legs and arms. I’ll have a scar, but it’s nothing.” Speaking through Telegram from a Kyiv military barrack, Khlyvnyuk, 42, wears a New York Yankees cap, its shadow barely covering his black eye and a bruise on his cheek from three or four stitches. “We train every day, for different kinds of antiaircraft, anti-helicopter, anti-tank weapons,” adds Khlyvnyuk, who first served on territorial defense, then as a local sheriff deputy. “Everywhere I go, I do selfies. I find it fun. People feel more optimistic.” Khlyvnyuk’s recognition is increasing: The Pink Floyd video, for which he recorded his part by phone, has over 8.8 million YouTube views.



On Feb. 23, Ukrainian musicians were doing what they've always done: getting together with their bands, recording in studios, writing new songs, planning concerts and tours. The next day, Russia invaded their country, and everything changed. Some took solace in songwriting, performed secret concerts for soldiers or took in refugees at theater shelters. Others, plagued by bomb-induced migraines, were unable to contemplate a single note. Some music artists joined the military; some used their bands' vans to transport supplies. "Obviously, you're not thinking about touring," says Sasha Maslov, the Kharkiv-born photographer who returned to Ukraine from New York. In these images he shot for *Billboard* in late March, Maslov captures regional pop stars, folk groups, rappers and *bandura* players. "A lot of people can't concentrate. You're going about your business and the Russians are everywhere. War is always present."

alyona alyona

If she hadn't woken up to explosions in her newly rented Kyiv flat on Feb. 24, rapper alyona alyona, 30, might, at this moment, be preparing for summer festivals in the Czech Republic, Germany and Poland. Instead, Alyona Savranenko, who was earning \$200 a month as a nursery school teacher before moving into music, is now living near her parents in a village 25 miles from the capital city, volunteering to deliver medicine, recording inspirational videos and doing endless media interviews to draw attention to the Ukrainian cause. After her song "Rybky" ("Fishes") went viral in late 2018, she received invitations to tour the world, but the pandemic forced her to cancel her plans — and then the Russian invasion forced her to cancel rescheduled plans. "I guess, in the future, we go to all the cities where I [was supposed] to be in 2020," she says in a Skype video interview by candlelight. For now, "all my mind and attention are here."



Kurbasy

With her father, brother and other relatives still holed up in heavily bombed Kharkiv, Natalia Rybka-Parkhomenko (right) of folk group Kurbasy calmed herself by helping to open a shelter in Lviv's Les Kurbas Theatre. Volunteers contributed pillows, blankets and food and moved stage scenery to the basement to accommodate a bomb shelter; 300 people stayed there throughout the first month after the Russian invasion. In late March, Rybka-Parkhomenko and bandmate Mariia Oneshchak (left) put on a program of folk songs for the residents, touching on "losing people, losing relatives," says Oneshchak, 37, by Telegram through a translator. During the show, says Rybka-Parkhomenko, 42, "There was complete silence. After the songs, people shared their feelings about how they felt. One man from Kharkiv said he was about to cry every time the song started." As for Rybka-Parkhomenko's own Kharkiv family, they hid in bathrooms and bomb shelters for 10 days after the invasion, then traveled safely to Lviv.

A woman with short, straight pink hair and bangs stands in a recording studio. She is wearing a light purple long-sleeved sweatshirt with the word "Dovehlye" written in green cursive across the chest. The studio is dimly lit with warm tones, featuring large black acoustic panels on the wall behind her, two studio monitors, and various pieces of audio equipment like a mixing console and a rack of gear. A small black and white cat is visible in the lower right corner.

Yulia Yurina and Yana Polupanova

Masterskaya, a 6-year-old Kyiv label, recording studio and “house of culture” founded by singer Ivan Dorn, functions today as a shelter for about 15 musicians, actors and directors and their families. The windows are barricaded with tables, tape and garbage bags. Inside, Yulia Yurina (right), a 27-year-old singer whose band YUKO competed in Ukraine’s national final to select its song for Eurovision, divides her time between distributing food and medicine to needy Ukrainians and releasing new music under the name YUYU. Yurina is frustrated that her parents, who live in her native Russia, believe Russian government propaganda about, for example, supposed Nazis in Ukraine. “We all understand this is bullshit,” she says through a translator during a Telegram call where she’s seated along with Masterskaya marketing director Yana Polupanova (bottom). Yurina hopes to change her nationality to Ukrainian. Meanwhile, she teaches Ukrainian songs to fellow volunteers.



ONUKA

After six days of bombs falling in Kyiv, Eugene Filatov (left) and Nata Zhyzhchenko (right) of independent electro-folk band ONUKA relocated for three weeks to the Lviv area in the safer western part of Ukraine. "It was really very tough to just be in this hotel room and watch the news," says Filatov, 39, the group's producer. "It was exhausting." The married couple decided to return to Kyiv with their 1-year-old son; despite the terrifying views of rockets from their window and frequent sounds of explosions, they prefer to be home. For weeks, after they returned from a vacation to Egypt just before the war, Filatov didn't even open his backpack containing his laptop and microphone. "But now," says Zhyzhchenko, 37, "I think we are ready to create something."



Volodymyr Voyt

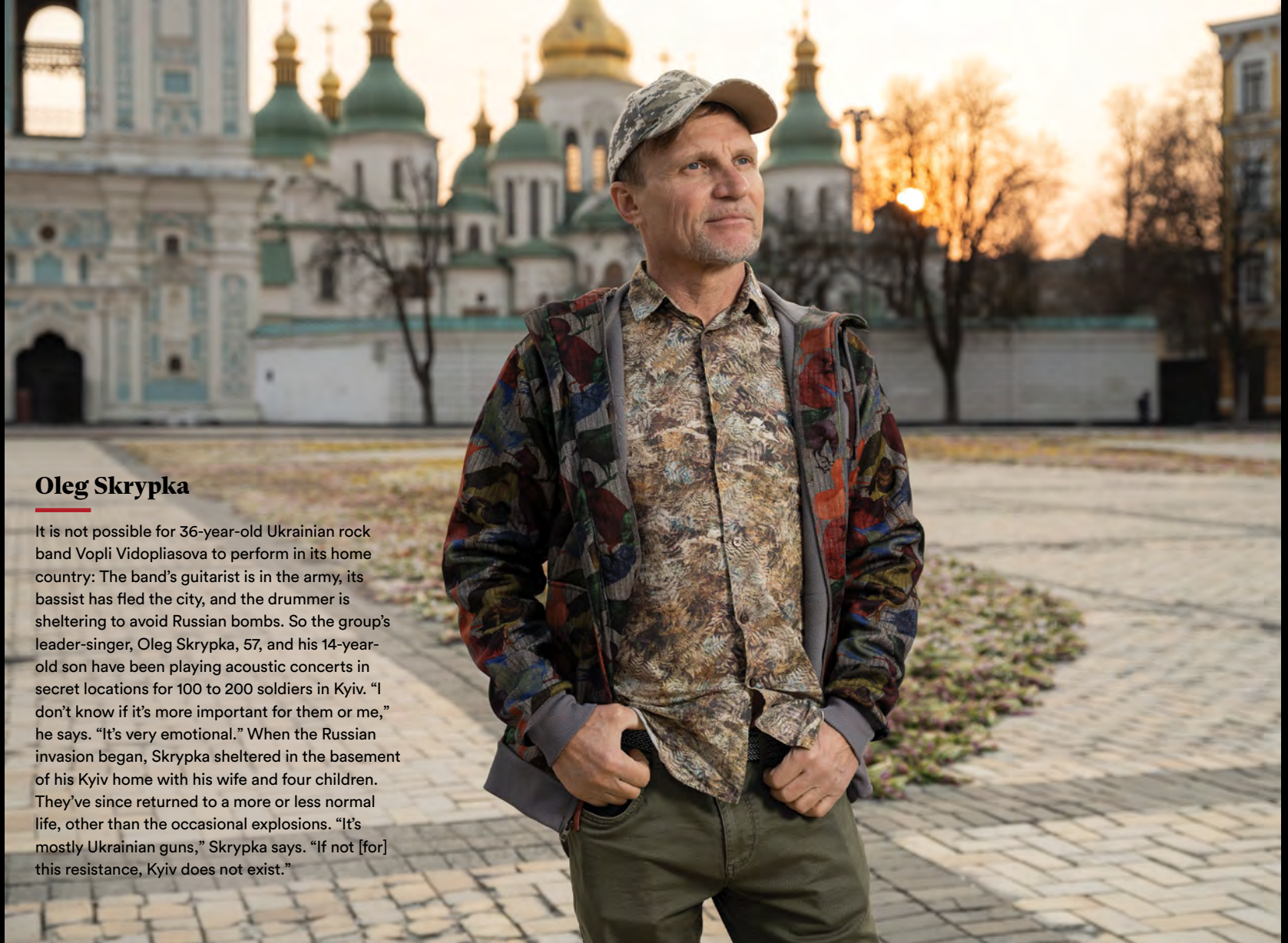
Upon leaving his Kyiv home for relative safety in Lviv, Voyt was unable to bring any of his 15 *banduras*, traditional Ukrainian stringed instruments that resemble lutes. “We had just two small bags and one small bag with food for the train,” he says of the 10-hour journey, during which alarms frequently sounded, causing the train to shut off its lights and travel in eerie darkness. Voyt, 42; his wife; and their 2-year-old daughter are safe at his mother-in-law’s house, but he was unable to play music until a friend loaned him the bandura in this photo. “First week, I couldn’t hear any music,” he says. “We ate, but no appetite. After we move here, I understood the music is my life. I must play.”



Vera Logdanidi

The night Russia invaded Ukraine, DJ Vera Logdanidi huddled in her apartment with her family and contemplated remaining in Kyiv. The family did not have a car, so their best option was a 10-hour night train to Lviv. “It was a slow road without lights. Our windows were covered. It was super creepy,” she says. Because women are not required to remain in the country for potential military service, Logdanidi, 33, was allowed to cross the border, so she spoke through Telegram from Budapest, Hungary. She recently posted on Instagram that she is “ready to travel” and work to help her family. She’s aiming for European gigs, but she struggles with the idea of dancing with fans in wealthy countries while her country is suffering. “It’s a psychological problem,” she says. “But I will do it because it’s necessary and I have to work.”





Oleg Skrypka

It is not possible for 36-year-old Ukrainian rock band Vopli Vidopliasoiva to perform in its home country: The band's guitarist is in the army, its bassist has fled the city, and the drummer is sheltering to avoid Russian bombs. So the group's leader-singer, Oleg Skrypka, 57, and his 14-year-old son have been playing acoustic concerts in secret locations for 100 to 200 soldiers in Kyiv. "I don't know if it's more important for them or me," he says. "It's very emotional." When the Russian invasion began, Skrypka sheltered in the basement of his Kyiv home with his wife and four children. They've since returned to a more or less normal life, other than the occasional explosions. "It's mostly Ukrainian guns," Skrypka says. "If not [for] this resistance, Kyiv does not exist."



1914

Dmytro Kumar (standing, center), frontman for death metal band 1914, spends his days transporting toothbrushes, food, armored jackets and other supplies to soldiers on the front line. "Our guitar player has a big car, so he can deliver [things] for us," says Kumar, 39, taking a break from military service for a Skype call. "We were touring with this van, a Volkswagen Transporter T4." Kumar's lyrics have always emphasized war, death and suffering, but after the Russian invasion, "it became part of my life." Most of the band volunteers or helps the war effort in other ways. "Our drummer is a tattoo artist," Kumar says. "He's got a lot of requests: 'Can you make tattoo with Russian 'You can go fuck yourself,' with some national signs?'"

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Astronata

It was the migraines that finally broke Nata Smirina (in front). The Russians relentlessly bombed Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, killing 500 people and destroying 600 buildings by mid-March. "I couldn't sleep. I couldn't eat. I couldn't think," says the 37-year-old singer-songwriter for electronic bands Pur:Pur and Astronata. "My head was aching all the time, and there were no pharmacies working for the first week." Smirina and her partner, Ilya Misyura (in back), finally moved to Lviv in the country's safer western region, where they now live rent-free in a generous Instagram follower's family apartment. Before Russia invaded, the couple had planned to marry on March 22; because Misyura is a Russian citizen, this is no longer possible. "God had another plan," he says. Adds Smirina: "We're waiting for our [Ukrainian] victory to marry." **b**

HAPPY 70TH ANNIVERSARY!



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THE RIAA'S PLATINUM ANNIVERSARY

The Recording Industry Association of America has helped labels navigate a changing business for 70 years

BY CATHY APPLEFELD OLSON

THE RIAA HAS GONE PLATINUM. The recorded-music business trade organization — which awards gold and platinum certifications, among other functions — celebrates its 70th anniversary this year, and the traditional gift to mark that milestone just happens to be platinum.

Like the industry itself, the RIAA has changed a lot over the years. Founded in 1952, it started as a New York-based organization that developed and promoted the “RIAA Equalization Curve,” an industry standard for the recording and playing of records that let them hold more music and improved sound quality. Although the RIAA has become associated with lobbying for legislation

to protect the interests of its member labels, the organization didn't even move to Washington, D.C., until 1986. By then, it had already played a role in the debate over the Copyright Act of 1976, which shaped the media business for decades to follow.

By the 1990s, the RIAA had become a force in national politics, litigating and lobbying to protect the interests of labels as the recording business grew. The organization played a major role in pushing the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, especially the provision that makes it illegal to circumvent, or distribute a method to circumvent, copyright protection. It was also better prepared for the digital revolution than it gets credit for: By the early '90s, the RIAA was already lobbying for the bill that became the Digital Performance Right

in Sound Recordings Act of 1995, which created a strong legal foundation for labels to license recordings to streaming services, even though terrestrial radio stations use them for free. More recently, it joined the rest of the industry to push the Music Modernization Act — which got labels expanded copyright protection for older recordings and favorably changed the way satellite radio royalty rates are set.

“We're constantly asking ourselves, ‘Do we have the rights in place?’ ” says RIAA chairman/CEO Mitch Glazier, who spoke about the organization's history, as well as what its future holds. “You have to get the rights in place, and then you have to get enforcement of those rights in place, and finally, you have to allow some time to pass for these businesses to mature.”

Congratulations on your platinum anniversary. What do you think is the RIAA's biggest accomplishment?

The biggest milestone — and it took years to get there — is the law that's boringly called the Digital Performance Right in Sound Recordings Act of 1995. The RIAA got together and said, “What if someday there's a — they called it a ‘celestial jukebox’ — and anyone, instead of buying a record, could just push a button and listen to any song. Do we have the rights necessary for that?” Imagine thinking in 1989, when [the efforts to pass the law] started, about what would come to pass in the year 2010. And there was no giant lobbying force on the other side to prevent it from happening.

There hardly was another side at that time.

We realized that we didn't have a performance right in the digital world — or even in the terrestrial world [which is why traditional radio stations don't pay for their use of recordings]. So we got the right of digital performance on which the entire streaming economy is based today. If we didn't have that, there would be no streaming industry — and that's 85% of our income [in the recording business]. So the RIAA is basically responsible for establishing the right on which the entire industry is now based.

Top left: Glazier on Capitol Hill in 2018. Top right: Former RIAA executive vp Jonathan Lamy, Jay-Z, Glazier and RIAA senior vp Liz Kennedy (from left) in 2013.

Fast-forward a few years, and the industry was spiraling down with the rise of peer-to-peer file sharing. The RIAA sued Napster and Grokster, but it also threatened to sue peer-to-peer service users, which sparked a backlash. How do you look back on that now?

Like we were doing emergency room medicine. Almost every day we were on Capitol Hill showing policymakers how easy it was for anyone to get music for free and how these companies were making hundreds of millions of dollars by, in our view, using consumers as stooges while they reaped the benefits. The RIAA's role was, "How do you get people to understand it's illegal?" On one hand, you had to hold these giant corporations liable, and on the other hand, you had to go after people who are engaging in piracy so there's an understanding that if they get caught, they will suffer consequences. We had to get into the public consciousness or we would lose the entire industry.

You think people didn't understand that?

The internet was still fairly new, and especially for folks in the 18- to 24-year-old range, sitting in your dorm room and taking music from someone else's computer didn't feel like walking into a store and shoplifting. That's why taking it to the Supreme Court and getting that 9-0 opinion [in 2005 in *MGM Studios v. Grokster*] was incredibly important. Our first choice was never to sue individuals, but there was a court case [against Verizon] where the [internet service providers] prevented us from getting the name of the infringer, so we had to sue [an ISP address] as a "John Doe" and we couldn't send a settlement letter. Before that point, we had been sending letters [to users]. We wanted there to be consequences — enough to sting, but not enough to bankrupt anybody. Then, by the time we found out who it was, they were already a defendant in a lawsuit. Those lawsuits were difficult, and we will never repeat them. But we had to get over that so we could stop the bleeding and start rebuilding.

And one could argue that these policies you pushed for helped establish an environment in which streaming could succeed.

What preceded the [1998] Digital Millennium Copyright Act that people never really focus on was something called the NET [No Electronic Theft] Act. At the time, there were bulletin boards on the internet and people were posting music on them. The NET Act established that as a criminal activity.

The ISPs came to Congress and said, "We need protection from being held liable for things that are passing over our network that we have no knowledge or control over." Congress agreed but said they have a responsibility to help. And the DMCA created the notice-and-takedown system. Unfortunately, in the 20 years that followed, the courts interpreted the DMCA in such a narrow way that creators really didn't get an effective way of taking their stuff off the internet.

The bipartisan SMART [Strengthening Measures To Advance Rights Technologies] Copyright Act was recently introduced in the Senate to address this.

The SMART Copyright Act basically recognizes that the cooperation Congress wanted — platforms and creators getting together to develop ways to protect copyright online — didn't happen. So now Congress is trying to create incentives to fix the interpretation failures of the DMCA. What is realistic is Congress figuring out how to enforce voluntary cooperation because there are incentives on both sides that didn't exist 20 years ago. Freezing a solution into law is going to be less flexible than private solutions that can evolve. But if we don't get our act together — and I think our companies are already there — Congress is going to do what they did with the felony streaming law [the Protecting Lawful Streaming Act, which makes it a felony to make available streams of copyrighted material without a license]. They're going to say, "Sorry, you didn't do it so we're going to have to."



From left: Glazier with former RIAA CEOs Hilary Rosen, Cary Sherman and Mitch Bainwol.

THE RIAA'S GREATEST HITS

▶ **THE RECORDING INDUSTRY** trade organization engages in any number of activities — from setting technical standards to awarding gold and platinum certifications. But its focus is lobbying and litigating to protect the interests of labels. Here are some of the biggest scores of its 70-year run.

Sound Recording Act Of 1971

For decades, recordings were only protected by state statutes. This law, which the RIAA pushed, offered federal protection to recordings made after the following year.

Copyright Act Of 1976

The most important copyright law in the latter half of the 20th century codified fair use, extended the term of protection and eliminated the need to register works with the U.S. Copyright Office (although rights holders still need to do so in order to be eligible for statutory damages). The RIAA played a significant role in the debate.

'Parental Advisory' Label, 1985

Faced with the threatening prospect of legal regulation, the RIAA worked with the National Parent Teacher Association and the Parents Music Resource Center to develop a label that identified music that could be inappropriate for children.

Digital Performance Right In Sound Recordings Act Of 1995

Traditional radio stations pay royalties to publishers and songwriters, but not labels or artists. Recording rights holders do get paid by satellite radio, cable TV music channels and online streaming services — including Spotify and Apple Music — because of this law, for which the RIAA lobbied. (Without it, labels would have to make the case that services were making copies of the music they offered — a complicated prospect.) The "sleeper hit" that changed the music business.

MGM Studios v. Grokster, 2005

A 2001 appeals court decision held that Napster could be found liable for secondary copyright infringement, but the second generation of file-sharing services had been designed differently. This unanimous Supreme Court decision, in a case brought by the music and film industries, held that Grokster and Streamcast, the company behind the Morpheus software, could also be held liable. At the time, the result wasn't obvious — Grokster had won in both a district and an appeals court — but this decision helped make the world safe for streaming.

Music Modernization Act, 2018

Think of this as the music industry's "posse cut" since several sectors of the business worked together to push it forward. It changed the way mechanical royalties are collected and distributed, adjusted some rate-setting standards and — most important for labels and artists — gave federal copyright protection to recordings made before 1972.



President Trump signed the Hatch-Goodlatte Music Modernization Act in 2018.



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Above: Glazier (right) with Vince Gill and Amy Grant. Right: Warner Music executive vp Margo Scott, Sony Music senior vp Sheldra Khahaifa, Atlantic Records co-president of Black music Lanre Gaba, Republic Records senior vp Marleny Dominguez-Reyes and RIAA chief policy officer Morna Willens (from left) during Women Execs Day on the Hill. Far right: Glazier and Miranda Lambert in 2019.



Not long ago, it felt like the RIAA was the bad guy and technology companies could do no wrong. That has changed. How does that feel?

It's gratifying to feel like we were ahead of the curve. One thing we got right from the very beginning is that music is part of American culture — it's not just a business. When we talk to policymakers, we ask them, "What song played at your wedding? How about your prom or when your child was born?" And we say *that* is why it's important to protect this industry. If you don't balance the interests of creators with those of platforms, not only are you going to lose American culture, but there's going to be nothing to drive the very platforms that are trying to squelch creators' rights.

Right now streaming seems to be driving a boom for labels, while some artists and songwriters say they're splitting pennies.

With the entire music ecosystem, if it doesn't work for everyone, it doesn't work for anyone. There are two pieces here. There's the market piece, which is now based on consumption rather than sales, and that's going to take time to level out — both for artists and songwriters and for record labels and publishers. On the market side, the record companies have done the right thing by licensing everybody. On the policy side, we are completely committed to making sure we advance policies that help the entire ecosystem. That doesn't mean we're all going to agree on everything, but we're 90% together.

One area where labels and artists are not aligned is the proposed change to the state of the California "seven-year statute," which currently allows labels to sue artists for damages if they leave after seven years but before delivering the number of albums for which they're under contract. The FAIR [Free

Artists From Industry Restrictions] Act, which would change that, passed the California State Assembly's Labor and Employment Committee but then got pulled from the arts and entertainment committee.

This is one of those issues that has a lot of nuance. The record companies take incredibly seriously their role in helping new artists develop careers in the streaming age, which is difficult to do because there are 60,000 tracks uploaded every day. It's about where that revenue goes — to artists who already have a lot of leverage versus being able to be used for the next generation.

Some big-name artists and executives — including Don Henley and Irving Azoff — see this differently.

They have achieved a level of success where their focus may not be the same as ours. We are focused on making sure we can reinvest a giant percentage of what we earn back into discovering artists rather than shifting it from the 99% to the 1%. So far, this bill has been mostly supported by that 1%. It's not that we don't appreciate and respect them, but in this case, we think what they are asking for will be a reverse Robin Hood for the revenue of the industry.

Trade organizations usually steer clear of divisive issues, but the RIAA advocated for police reform. Why did it take a stand on this?

There's a new generation of people in the industry who have the expectation that the RIAA will support what they see as crucial. And we have the connections, the infrastructure and the ability to reach policymakers, so we were able to be that connective tissue. It wasn't just us — it was a coalition. But one of the coolest moments was when the governor of California was signing the police reform bill and the lead [legislative]

sponsor thanked the RIAA at the ceremony. We will always be an organization that's committed to bipartisanship and making sure policymakers, no matter where they stand ideologically, will support music. But that doesn't mean we can't stand up for what our industry feels is right when it comes to a compelling issue.

The RIAA represents three major labels of very different sizes. Are their interests still aligned?

They are. I wondered when I first became CEO whether that would become more complicated, and I've been pleasantly surprised that consistently on policy, content protection, data collection, participating in revenue numbers for the whole industry, they really do come together pretty seamlessly. At the RIAA, the three majors are equal — it doesn't matter what your market share is. Nobody's voice gets drowned out.

What are your goals for the next year?

We're constantly asking ourselves, "Do we have the rights in place?" And then, "How quickly can we put together enforcement mechanisms for those rights?" Here's a recent example: Artist managers came to us when HitPiece started putting out [non-fungible tokens] for auction that included the name and likeness of their artists, and some of their music, and said, "You've got to get this down." And in 24 hours, we pulled together a legal analysis and were able to nip in the bud these new services that could have violated the rights of artists for new revenue streams. It sends a signal right away that when a new platform comes out, it's either going to get licensed or we're going to come after them. **B**

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From left: Kryz Reid, Alex LeCavalier, Jenkins, Colin Creevey and Brad Hargreaves of Third Eye Blind.

THIRD EYE BLIND HITS 25

Frontman Stephan Jenkins reflects on his early struggles, his new attitude and how hip-hop has inspired him now

BY GIL KAUFMAN

EVEN AFTER A QUARTER century and nearly 7 million equivalent album units earned from his band's first five albums, according to Luminate, formerly MRC Data, Third Eye Blind's Stephan Jenkins still feels like he's on the outside looking in. "This folk music's fucking me up/Makes me think I should quit/Maybe I'm just scared of it," he sings on "Silverlake Neophyte" from the group's 2021 album, *Our Bande Apart*, a collection Jenkins says is his favorite thing he has ever done.

Musicians are expected to plug the new one. But in Jenkins' case, after years of battling former bandmates, managers — and, in some cases, himself during dry spells — he has emerged from the most fruitful period of his career with a new attitude and a fresh perspective on what and who his band is.

Fans of 3EB (as the act is commonly known) know that Jenkins, after years of working on his songwriting, burst onto the scene with the band's 1997 self-titled debut, which has generated nearly a billion on-demand streams in the United States (according to Luminate), featuring big-swing alt-pop staples "Semi-Charmed Life," "Graduate,"

"How's It Gonna Be" and "Jumper." His signature mix of NC-17 subject matter and earworm choruses heralded a fresh songwriting voice that blended the underbelly frankness of Jane's Addiction with the guitar-forward hooks of peak Smashing Pumpkins.

The band followed up with the more musically adventurous *Blue* in 1999 and *Out of the Vein* in 2003, though its next two releases each came after six-year breaks that led to Jenkins' most prolific period. Since 2019, the new-look 3EB — whose only original members are Jenkins and drummer Brad Hargreaves — have been on a tear, releasing two albums, a live set and two EPs in less than four years. "To me, it's very close to the first album in letting the songs be what they are without any of that nervousness of trying to make them into the thing they should be," Jenkins says of *Our Bande Apart*.

With 3EB setting out in June on its 25th-anniversary Summer Gods Tour, sharing the bill with Taking Back Sunday and Hockey Dad, Jenkins talked with *Billboard* about how modern folk music messes with his head and the time Kanye West paid him a compliment.

What was the founding concept of 3EB? What did you want the band to be?

I wanted to be freed up from genre. I liked British riff rock and singer-songwriter stuff... New Order, Joy Division, Cat Stevens, and I really liked hip-hop. I liked the space that hip-hop gave you for expanding the lyric and being really wordy. I didn't like the ethos of grunge where it was nihilism, everybody not caring and turning inward. I had more of a rage to live, to reshape my world on my own terms. My mindset was more eros, erotic, the ferocity of demanding to live on your terms.

What happens when you go from being unknown to having that kind of chart success with your debut release?

I definitely felt validated in a way to know I was going to be able to make a second record, which was amazing to me. To be a musician is to take a vow of poverty, and I didn't have a driver's license or a bank account. I really bet everything on doing music, with no fallback, so to have a gig was amazing.

You have a moment when you get success where you can turn yourself into the person who is talking loudest in the room and what you have to say is so interesting and you're making jokes and not asking questions. I think we're all susceptible to that with success and early on I went through that. But I also decided I wanted to be living in a space where I had impact with people and engaged with them about the real, authentic friction of relationships.

You seemed to capture that same explosive first-album energy on *Blue*, especially on "Wounded." That ecstatic "woo woo!" and the gigantic guitar windup feel triumphant. When you write a song like that, do you know in the

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moment you've written something special?

Oh, for sure, yes. It's one of my favorite records, and during the making of *Blue* I felt free, truly free. Then what happens is it goes through mixing and mastering and gets shrunk down to this little fucking CD and it all shrinks. But there's a moment where it's ocean-sized in your head. That was a song about a friend who got raped and withdrew from our friend group and that made an emotional dent on me. That's [the place where] I wrote from, and I was able to render something of her rage and triumph of ownership of self.

You've never made it easy on yourself with your choice of topics: abortion, suicide, a pharmacopeia of drugs, oral sex. Do you ever try to wind it back for the sake of mainstream acceptance or radio?

No. I've always felt that as an indie-rock artist, there have been very few times where I've been radio-focused. It's about being in a kitchen under suspect light after midnight when the conversation gets real. For me, writing doesn't come from one particular place, it's just about trying to stay in a cultivating space where things can actually make a dent on you emotionally.

There was a six-year break before *Ursa Major* arrived in 2009. What happened?

I produced and co-wrote a couple other albums [Vanessa Carlton's *Harmonium*], produced for a few [Spencer Barnett], so there was that. I can't really account for myself. To make rock music, there's that, "Here's what I'm doing and I don't give a fuck, fuck your opinion." That's the rock'n'roll mindset and I didn't have it. I felt judged and misunderstood. I also had been going so hard for so long for years before I got a record deal that I think maybe I was a bit stunned by the idea of going out and being subjected to evaluation and criticism.

You talked about the influence of hip-hop, which pops up across so many of your songs, like "Semi-Charmed." Do you feel like a rapper at heart?

I just love the daisy age of hip-hop — De La Soul, A Tribe Called Quest — and I just felt like rap music was punk and there's a music aspect to it that just immediately compelled me as someone who tends to be overly wordy.

After another long break, you came back with the EP *We Are Drugs* in 2016, which felt the least restrained you had ever been. You're 57 — could you have written those same songs at 25?

I think the real question is could I have written it without Drake? Drake is an amazing lyricist. I just stayed in my late 20s, that's what I did. (*Laughs.*) I don't have any wisdom. I'm just interested in the music I hear now, and I pay attention to culture now. I don't have any old stories. I'm always looking to go surfing with friends. That's how I roll and that's the energy that comes back to me.



From left: Kevin Cadogan, Hargreaves, Jenkins and Arion Salazar of Third Eye Blind on *The Tonight Show With Jay Leno* in 1998.

Third Eye Blind still has a young audience. How do you explain that?

It's a phenomenon, and one I feel like I have no control over. Certainly, I don't have any way of fostering it. It's a result of the socializing of music sharing, and what happens is our band turns into playlists and they don't have date stamps on them. People find songs that illuminate where they're at and then they share them.

Do you see signs of your influence on bands out there now?

Yes. There's a frankness and rawness in rap lyrics that inspires and repels me because of a lot of the violence and misogyny that gets a pass. But there is a lot of incredible, exciting raw shit in there. I was at a baseball game and Kanye [West] was there and he was talking about how he saw that in my music and found it "inspiring." He's a rapper who can do some really raw, genuine stuff where he's looking for that completely unhinged state of freedom, and to hear a nod [from him] like, "I understand what you're on about and I dig it" was so cool.

"Silverlake Neophyte" from *Our Bande Apart* has you questioning your place in music. Are you still wondering if you should quit after hearing some of the new folk music that's messing with your head?

I took this deep dive into the Los Angeles neo-folk scene [Phoebe Bridgers, Adrianne Lenker] and there's this hyper-realness going on there. It made me go, "OK, are you being real?" I imagined that feeling of being at an open mic night in Silverlake with other songwriters and really laying it down. You don't discover yourself; you make yourself up. We are inventions. [*Our Bande Apart*] is kind of my favorite album because, to me, it's very close to the first album in just letting the songs be what they are without any of that nervousness of trying to make them into the thing they should be. It's not overthought, not overwrought. **b**

Third Eye Blind's Biggest Alternative Airplay Hits

RANK	TITLE	PEAK	PEAK DATE	LABEL
1	Semi-Charmed Life	1	5/24/97	Elektra/EEG
2	How's It Going To Be	5	1/31/98	Elektra/EEG
3	Never Let You Go	4	2/26/00	Elektra/EEG
4	Jumper	9	9/12/98	Elektra/EEG
5	Graduate	14	10/4/97	Elektra/EEG
6	Losing A Whole Year	13	5/2/98	Elektra/EEG
7	Anything	11	12/11/99	Elektra/EEG
8	10 Days Late	21	6/17/00	Elektra/EEG
9	Blinded (When I See You)	35	5/3/03	Elektra/EEG
10	Deep Inside Of You	39	9/2/00	Elektra/EEG

Third Eye Blind's Biggest Alternative Airplay Hits ranking is based on weekly performance on the radio airplay-based Alternative Airplay chart (from its Sept. 10, 1988, inception through April 23, 2022). Songs are ranked based on an inverse point system, with weeks at No. 1 earning the greatest value and weeks at lower spots earning the least. Due to changes in chart methodology over the years, eras are weighted differently to account for chart turnover rates during various periods.

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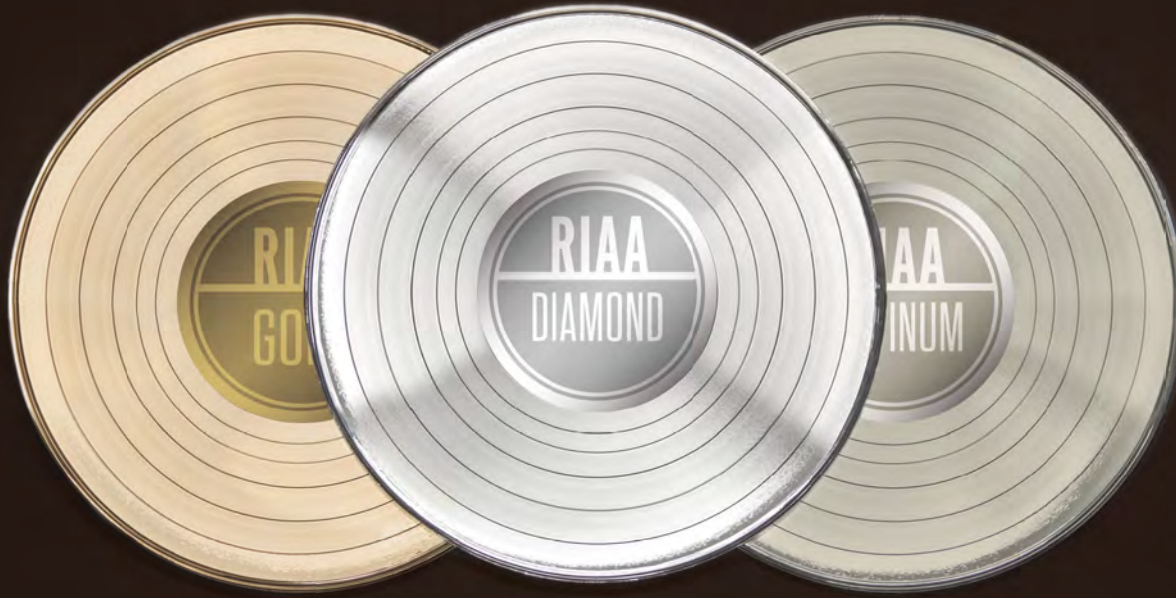
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Wade (left) and Sparr
photographed by
Eric Ryan Anderson
on April 25 in Nashville.

chartbreaker

No. 35

PEAK ON BILLBOARD'S
COUNTRY AIRPLAY CHART

MORGAN WADE

The rising singer-songwriter's slow-burning hit has her team eyeing a global breakthrough

▶ While performing at a music festival in her hometown of Floyd, Va., in 2018, singer-songwriter Morgan Wade managed to get one of her CDs into the hands of Sadler Vaden, guitarist for Jason Isbell and the 400 Unit. The two quickly connected and started working on what would become Wade's breakout hit, "Wilder Days." As Wade, 27, recalls: "I started playing the song at shows, and it was the one that you could tell everybody connected with. I knew we had a crowd favorite."

After independently releasing the song in January 2021, Wade and her team focused on increasing fan engagement through Facebook Live performances. The single soon landed across indie and Americana-leaning playlists to mainstream roundups on digital service providers. "The song could live in the country world, the rock world, the indie pop world," says Mary Sparr, Wade's manager since 2019. Wade leaned into its cross-genre success, explor-

ing arena rock, pop, country and Americana on her 2021 debut, *Reckless*, which she released in partnership with Thirty Tigers. Wade and Sparr leaned on the indie label for physical sales support, leading to a campaign at key independent record stores. The results allowed her to bulk up her team: Wade signed with booking powerhouse WME and later a publishing deal with Universal Music Publishing Group Nashville. But she and Sparr continued to avoid a major-label deal — until Sony Music Nashville chairman/CEO Randy Goodman reached out.

"I thought, 'Are they going to see me as Darth Vader from the big label wanting to change her?'" Goodman recalls jokingly. "I said, 'You could be a big fish in the Americana pond and a big fish in the country pond, but I see you as a global star.'" Following the announcement of Wade's deal with Sony Music Nashville's Arista Nashville last August, Goodman initially planned to

let "Wilder Days" continue to build organically before officially promoting it to country radio. But he pivoted when a Sony Nashville executive said a few key country stations were already playing it. "It is unusual for a new artist — particularly a young female artist — to have that kind of pull from key programmers in major markets," Goodman says. "Why would we pull back on that?"

"Wilder Days" debuted on *Billboard's* Country Airplay chart in November and has steadily climbed since Wade released a deluxe version of *Reckless* in January. On the May 14-dated chart, it reached a new No. 35 high. As the song continues to build, Wade is already looking ahead — and hard at work on her next album. "I don't want the second project to flop, and I always want to have a song like 'Wilder Days' that people connect with, but I also know you can't force it," she says. "If I just trust the process, it will come." —JESSICA NICHOLSON

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