



'Put a Redneck in the White House' gains traction at country radio

Singer-Turned-Jock Brock Marks Return To Music

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Country-artist-turned-air-personality Chad Brock—who topped the airplay tally with “Ordinary Life” and “Yes!” in 1999 and 2000, respectively—is singing on the radio again. Mind you, he’s been on the air in between: doing mornings for Asterisk Communications’ WTRS/Ocala, Fla., and then CBS Radio’s WQYK/Tampa. And get this: He’s running for president.

With “Put a Redneck in the White House” as his platform, Brock says he hopes to make a difference in the upcoming elections. “I don’t like politicians, period,” he says. “They don’t have our best interest at heart. Whoever’s putting money in their back pocket, that’s who they care about.”

Apparently others agree. On his associated Web site, redneckinthewhitehouse.com, hundreds have signed a virtual petition. “It’s kind of a grass-roots deal,” he says. “People want to hear the song and then they understand what I’m talking about.”

While the track is tongue in cheek, Brock, who shares mornings with Rita Ciccarello, Steve Austin and Kevin Ebel, says the message is serious. “People are tired of what’s going on in this country. We need to think about the people that live in this country first and foremost.”

As of Aug. 22, the song has been played more than 3,000 times on Brock’s MySpace page.

“Redneck,” which was written by Michael Huffman, Dean Scallan and Frank Jeffus, has gotten airplay not only on WQYK, but also on sister WIRK/West Palm Beach; Pamal’s WXBM/

Pensacola, Fla.; and WBAM/Montgomery, Ala., among roughly a dozen other stations, according to Nielsen BDS.

Brock is quick to point out that in his mind, “redneck” is not a derogatory term. “When I say ‘redneck,’ I mean hard-working middle-class people who get up every day and work hard for their families.

“I can do this kind of stuff now,” Brock says, noting that he’s not worried about repercussions like he would be if he were still an active recording artist. (During a concert in July 2000 in Greeley, Colo., Brock suggested immigrants learn to speak English, which angered members of the area’s large Hispanic community.)

Meanwhile, don’t look for Brock to give up radio anytime soon. “I miss performing,” he says, before adding, “But they’re going to have to kick me out of here. I love it.”

Proceeds from the song, which is for sale on the Web site, go to charity, including St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital in Memphis.



Joe

‘I focus a lot on lyrics and subject matters. I took my time with the recording and came up with something I call “today’s R&B.”’ —Joe

‘Man’ Of The Hour

After parting ways with longtime label Jive earlier this year, R&B singer/songwriter/producer Joe returns with a new album. The fittingly titled “New

Man” arrives Sept. 23 via Kedar Entertainment/563 Records—a joint venture between manager Kedar Massenburg and Joe’s own imprint, with Universal/Fontana distributing.

“It’s a modern, classic R&B album,” 35-year-old Joe says. “I focus a lot on lyrics and subject matters. I took my time with the recording and came up with something I call ‘today’s R&B.’”

Bryan-Michael Cox, the Stereotypes, Phatz and D. Mile are among the set’s producers. D. Mile helms first single “E.R. (Emergency Room),” which moves 11-10 and is Most Increased this issue at Urban AC.

Other tracks on “New Man” include the acoustic “Heart Behind My Eyes,” “Man in Your Life,” club ballad “We Need to Roll,” the midtempo “Sex Girl,” the live-band-assisted “Friends Don’t Let Friends Sleep Alone” and “Why Just Be Friends?”

Asked about his label switch, Joe says, “I put in a long time at Jive. I was very loyal and they made me a great deal of income. But I felt it was time to own my own catalog.”

Kedar Entertainment is making Joe its top priority, according to the company’s Kierstan Tucker. The artist is scheduled to appear on BET’s “106 & Park”; do sessions for AOL, iTunes and BET J; and tour Europe and Japan. A branding partnership with Patron Tequila is in the works.

In addition, an as-yet-untitled EP will be released next month, featuring guest appearances by Mario, Trey Songz, Nas, Diddy, Busta Rhymes, the Game and Snoop Dogg on remixes for tracks from the new album. And because Joe cut enough tracks for two full-lengths while recording “New Man,” he is releasing a follow-up album, “Joe’s Signature,” Feb. 10.

“This is a really exciting, groundbreaking and unprecedented time for me,” Joe says. “It’s basically a new situation, and I approached the recording on this album like a new man . . . something different and new.”

—Mariel Concepcion, *Billboard*



Brock

A New Destiny

Often overlooked and commonly perceived as the quiet, shy member of one-time group Destiny’s Child, Michelle Williams has shed her soft-spoken image and proved to be

lively and full of energy with an infectious personality.

Her first solo success came as a gospel artist, where her debut effort, 2002’s “Heart to Yours,” hit No. 1 on Billboard’s gospel chart and became the biggest-selling gospel album of the year,

shifting 220,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Nonetheless, Williams declines to be pigeonholed, branching out into the mainstream with her latest endeavor, “Unexpected” (Music World/Columbia, Oct. 7). It’s her first solo effort since 2004’s “Do You Know.”

“I didn’t want to just follow the trends with these songs,” Williams says. “I wanted to create new ones.”

Breakout single “We Break the Dawn” clinched her new-fashioned sound with an electric, high-energy pop beat that explicitly establishes a new fan base. Produced by Wayne Wilkins (Keri Hilson’s “Energy”) and Andrew Frampton (Natasha Bedingfield’s “Pocketful of Sunshine”), and co-written by Solange, the song topped Billboard’s Hot Dance

Airplay chart. It generated seven remixes, even capturing urban with a popular version featuring Flo Rida. “What I love about the experience of making this album is that there were no limitations,” Williams says.

Latest single “The Greatest,” which showcases Williams’ collaboration with Jim Jonsin (Damity Kane, Lil Wayne), has received a positive reception at Clear Channel urban WZHT (Hot 105.7)/Montgomery, Ala., and Malkan rhythmic KZFM (Hot Z95)/Corpus Christi, Texas.

The surprising direction of Williams’ album has unearthed her hidden self-confidence and willingness to stray from normal expectations. Never again to be overshadowed, she’s not going anywhere until she’s good and ready. —Foladé Bell



Williams