

# MUSIC CONNECTION

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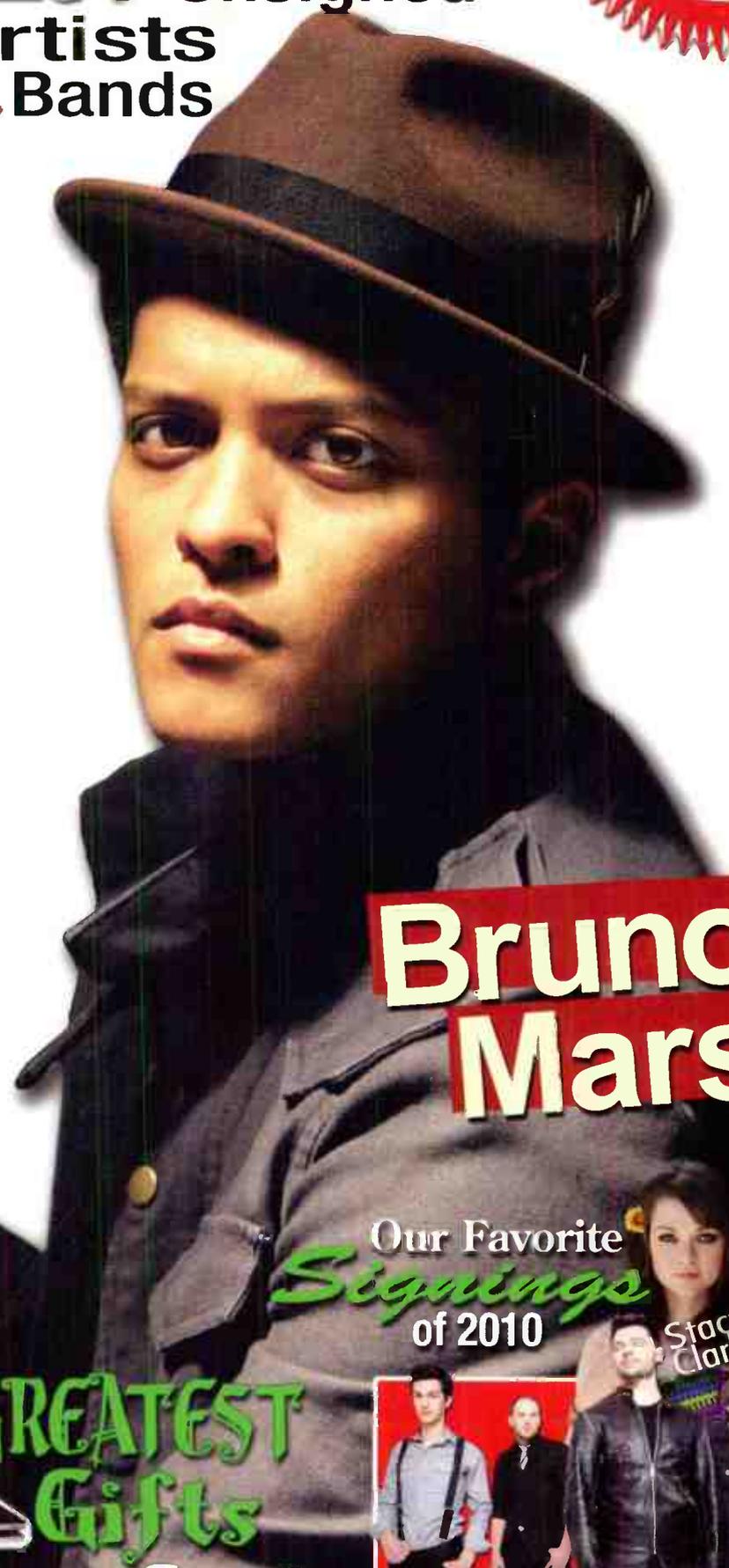
# Hot 100 LIVE Unsigned Artists & Bands



**85** Ways To **BEAT** This **RECESSION**  
Like It Owes You **MONEY!**

**Top 25** New **MUSIC Critiques** of The Year

The **20** **SMARTass PHONE** apps of **2010**



# Bruno Mars

Our Favorite *Signings* of 2010

Stacy Clark



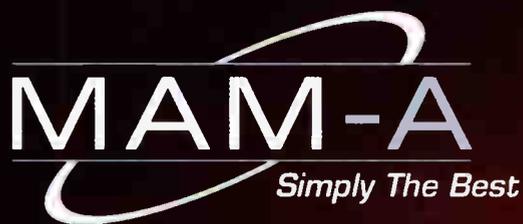
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## cover stories

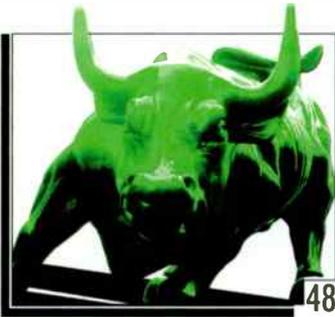
### Bruno Mars

After making his name as a songwriter and producer (Flo Rida's "Right Round," Cee Lo's "Fuck You") Mars broke big recently as a performer with a *Billboard* No. 1 album and hit tune, "Just the Way You Are." In this exclusive Q&A, *MC* finds out how the Hawai'i native overcame frustration and took charge of his career.

By Dan Kimpel 38



COVER PHOTO BY: HARPER SMITH



### 85 Ways To Beat This Recession Like It Owes You Money!

Artists and musicians are notoriously strapped for cash, and these days the financial pressures are worse than ever. But fear not—*Music Connection* feels your pain and we've come up with a boatload of tips that will help you survive the tough times ahead.

By Bernard Baur • Andy Mesecher • Dean Moore 48

### Our Favorite Signings of 2010

*MC* cherry-picks artists and bands from all genres whose personal signing saga, published in our pages over the past year, sheds a special light on how indie and major label contracts are being done today.

By *MC* Senior Editor Mark Nardone 60



### Top 25 New Music Critiques of the Year

At the end of each year, *Music Connection* compiles this eagerly awaited list, the absolute cream of the crop of unsigned recording artists who've submitted their work for review. Inclusion on this coveted list is guaranteed to draw industry attention to these talented artists, so congratulations to you all!

By Mark Nardone and Andy Mesecher 66

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Be Sure To follow *Music Connection* on Facebook and Twitter. Check out our AMP Music Network & online magazine for up to date music news.

Always be vigilant of people attempting to make a "fast buck" off musicians. If you encounter difficulty with an individual listed in this magazine, or if you are confronted by a dishonest or "shady" operation, drop us a note to inform us of the details. No phone calls please. The opinions expressed in *Music Connection*, as well as all Directory listings and contact information, are provided by various sources in the music industry. *Music Connection* is not responsible for any business transactions or misadventures that may result from your use of this information.

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Contestants may enter as many songs in as many categories as they wish. Each entry must have its own entry form and lyric sheet. One check or money order for multiple entries will be accepted. Entrance fees for the Billboard Starmaker Song Contest, herein referred to as BBSC are not refundable. BBSC is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected, damaged, misappropriated, postage due, or stolen entries.

All songs that have been placed 1st, 2nd or 3rd in any category of the BBSC in previous years are not eligible to be resubmitted. Previous winners, however, may submit new material.

The Billboard Starmaker Song Contest is open to both amateur and professional songwriters. Employees of BBSC and their families, subsidiaries and affiliates are not eligible.

Winners will be determined February 15, 2010 and will be posted on our website as well as notified by email, mail and/or phone.

For more info, go to:  
[www.billboardsongcontest.com](http://www.billboardsongcontest.com)



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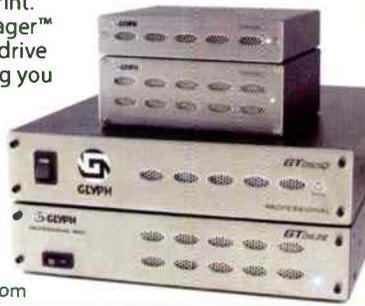
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## CLOSE-UP



By Jonathan Widran

Michael Kauffman

Launched in October 2007, NYC based RightsFlow (rightsflow.com) is a leading technology-enabled mechanical licensing and royalty service provider representing artists, record companies, distributors and online music services.

The company has been at the forefront of solving the complex issues of copyright compliance and royalty payment as new methods of consuming music have emerged. RightsFlow specializes in obtaining bulk physical, DPD and ringtone licenses including streaming, tethered and limited download rights. The company's proprietary "FLOW" system and 23.5 million song database allows them to license, account and pay royalties on behalf of clients quickly and accurately, while ensuring that rights-holders are paid for the use of their work.

Currently, RightsFlow serves over 12,000 clients obtaining licenses from publishers and songwriters all over the world—including major, independent and artist controlled works. Clients include Rhapsody, Muzak, The Orchard, Thumbplay, INgrooves, [PIAS], Alliance, Kontor New Media, Zynga, Beatport, Zebalution, CD Baby, Disc Makers and X5.

Earlier in 2010, RightsFlow launched Limelight, which the company touts as the "simplest way for artists or bands to clear any cover song." Limelight (songclearance.com) has provided thousands of artists and labels around the globe with a simple way to clear covers for U.S. release. By reducing the complexity of licensing with domestic and international publishers directly, Limelight is providing a service for established and independent artists worldwide with users in all 50 states and from over 46 countries: college bands, church choirs, indie labels—even an American Idol.

Last year's Idol Lee DeWyze and his team recently used Limelight to clear his version of Marilyn Manson's "Beautiful People" for use with recordings being released on the WuLi Records imprint.

Limelight's prominent rise in the industry is due to the use of familiar cover songs to help rising artists set themselves apart from their vast competition for an audience and build rapport with new fans. Wuli Records co-founder and producer Louis Svitek says, "Cover songs can add a strong personal connection for fans as they reflect personal likes and influences, and allow an artist to add creative expression to something familiar."

Added Ryan McGuire, co-producer of the two pre-Idol DeWyze albums *Slumberland* and *So I'm Told*, "Limelight provides a simple way for a musician to clear any cover song... making it simple to share and release classic or memorable song choices. It also ensures that songwriters and publishers receive royalties due."

Michael Kauffman, SVP of Sales and Marketing at RightsFlow, says, "Our system lets you secure a mechanical license for any cover song by providing a bit of information about the requested song and about your release including street date, manufacturing quantity and anticipated sales. For a minimal service fee plus publishing royalties, the system and our research team do the rest, calculating the royalty amount due, finding the appropriate rightsholder and securing the license ... It's exciting to provide a service that is helping thousands of artists, bands, musicians, school and church groups and also driving revenue to publishers and songwriters."

From the independent label perspective, Limelight provides a cost-effective solution that ensures legal compliance and proper accounting to the correct publishers and songwriters. Jeremy Peters, Director of Licensing for Ghostly International, states, "Having used multiple systems and processes of clearing songs, Limelight is by far the most easy, customer friendly and straight-forward process to license mechanical copyrights."

Singer-songwriter Samantha Murphy, who goes by "the Highway Girl," created a YouTube video of herself going through the simple process of using Limelight to secure licensing for Johnny Cash's "Ring of Fire."

Kauffman adds, "Our vision for the company is to provide products that simplify and serve our clients and community. Most of our staff are musicians, and it's in our DNA to help musicians and artists pursue their craft."

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**Cristin Livezey**  
Vice President, Finance  
Full Compass

Full Compass Systems has announced the promotion of **Cristin Livezey** to Vice President of Finance. Livezey graduated from Iowa State University and spent the first several years of her career as an electrical engineer. Later, she earned an MBA from Loyola University in Chicago, IL. Livezey then joined a national bro-

kerage and investment banking firm as a financial consultant. By the end of 2000, she accepted an accounting position with Intelix while also working as a professor at Lakeland College. After becoming a Senior Cost and Financial Analyst at a dairy equipment manufacturer, Livezey joined Full Compass as a Corporate Controller in 2008 and has helped to drive initiatives resulting in increased sales. Contact [laurie@fullcompass.com](mailto:laurie@fullcompass.com).



**Eric Sands**  
U.S. National Sales Manager  
Orange USA

Orange USA has announced the appointment of **Eric Sands** to their team to lead sales efforts in the U.S. Sands will work closely with major accounts as well as Orange Sales Reps to take the brand to the next level. Prior to 20 years in the computer industry as a manufacturers Rep for LG Electronics, Viewsonic and

Hitachi, Sands began his sales career in MI, working for Gary Kessel Music in Queens, NY. During College, he worked at EE Forbes & Sons Piano Company in Birmingham, AL. He returned to the MI industry five years ago as a District Sales Manager for Korg. Sands has earned a reputation as a top performer and trusted business partner by putting the needs of the dealer first. For more information, contact [info@orangeusa.com](mailto:info@orangeusa.com).



**Jim Presley**  
Director, Western Sales  
Casio America, Inc.

**Jim Presley** has been appointed to Director of Sales for the Western U.S. division of **Casio America, Inc.** Presley comes to Casio from Yamaha Corporation of America where he served as Marketing Manager for the piano division. Presley began his career in a small retail store teaching guitar and

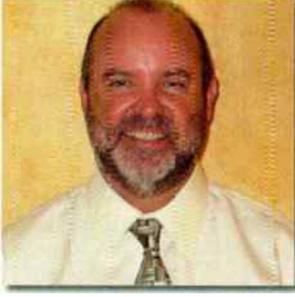
moved into sales followed by management. His portfolio includes a position as district sales manager at Yamaha, where he moved up the ranks and became marketing manager for portable keyboards, pro audio, synthesizers and disklavier. Presley became known for innovations in marketing approaches that produced significant results for Yamaha. For further information, contact Tania at 973-316-1665 ext. 513.



**Mark Amentt**  
Director, Eastern Sales  
Casio America, Inc.

**Casio America, Inc.** has appointed **Mark Amentt** as the director of sales for the Eastern U.S. division. Amentt comes to Casio from AIMM: The Alliance of Independent Music Merchants, where he served as Director of Operations. He has extensive background in the music industry including his tenure at

AIMM where he interacted on all levels with the organization's retail and vendor partners. He was instrumental in securing the growth and success through increased sales, product development and operations and finance initiatives. Amentt is an accomplished musician with several studio credits, in addition to notable live performances with well known artists. For more info on this new hire, contact Tania at 973-316-1665 ext. 513.



**John Goodrich**  
Sales Manager, Mass Comm.  
Harman Professional

**Harman Professional** has appointed **John Goodrich** to the newly created position of Global Sales Manager for Mass Communications. Goodrich has joined Harman from Altel Systems Group, where he was VP of Business Development, leading the creation of integrated audio/visual and com-

munication systems for the airport, mass transit and hospitality industries. He previously held senior sales and business development roles at Meyer Sound Labs and Innovative Electronic Designs (IED). In his new role, Goodrich will be responsible for developing Harman Professional's presence in the mass communications market. For further information on this appointment, contact [daniel.oconnell@definitionbam.com](mailto:daniel.oconnell@definitionbam.com).



**Richard Blackstone**  
Chief Creative Officer  
BMG

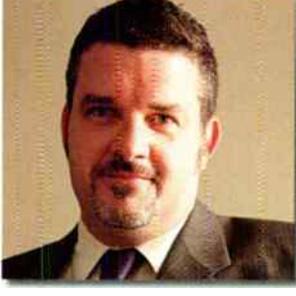
**BMG**, a music rights company, has announced the appointment of **Richard Blackstone** as its Chief Creative Officer. Blackstone will be based in the company's U.S. headquarters in New York City. In this newly created role, he will oversee the rosters of the recently acquired companies as well as direct the

efforts to attract and sign new talent to continue to build on the company's growth over the past year. In 2005 Blackstone was appointed to the position of Chairman and CEO of Warner/Chappell Music. His leadership at WCM led to the company's first Urban Music Publisher of the Year award. Prior to joining WMG, Blackstone was President of Zomba Music Publishing. Contact [dalia.das@bmg.com](mailto:dalia.das@bmg.com) for more.



**Roxanne Wenzel**  
VP, Sales and Marketing  
Full Compass

**Roxanne Wenzel** has been appointed to VP of Sales and Marketing at **Full Compass Systems**. Wenzel joined the company in 2008 and has helped push Full Compass to record sales growth. She began her career by launching her own real estate rentals business at age 23. Wenzel later started a second successful business in the housing industry. After selling her second business, she held a number of high-level positions, including Chief Operating Officer at an IT asset management company, President of a special events company and VP of Sales for a major international distributor of computer parts. Contact [laurie@fullcompass.com](mailto:laurie@fullcompass.com).



**Ben Sweeney**  
Director of Operations, Intl. Sales  
Hosa Technology

**Hosa Technology** has promoted **Ben Sweeney** to the position of Director of Operations and International Sales. Sweeney will oversee Hosa's internal systems and processes, which includes maintenance of the company's website, and he will serve as the liaison between internal departments and third-party

providers-including manufacturer's representatives and international distributors. Hosa Technology is a supplier of analog and digital connectivity solutions to the musical-instrument and professional-audio/video industries that has been around since 1984. For further information about this promotion, contact Jonathan at [jonathan@hosatech.com](mailto:jonathan@hosatech.com). 



## Blue Microphones en•CORE 300 Live Condenser Mic

Blue Microphones' en•CORE 300 cardioid is the top of their live microphone line—it uses a capsule similar to one of their studio mics. To minimize the typical resonances inherent in a mic's enclosure, the en•CORE 300's capsule uses an open-air design and is surrounded and suspended from the top and bottom using a rubber shock-mounting system. The en•CORE 300 uses a "specifically-tuned" phantom powering circuit that runs its pre-amp circuit and backlights a cool-looking blue, company logo.

Initially I compared the en•CORE 300 to my regular live vocal mic here in at my Tones 4 \$ Studios where I could scrutinize the sonic differences easily. The 300 required less microphone pre-amp gain—a loud singer will need only about 25 to 35 dB max. An intrinsically hotter mic is good news for quiet singers who, in the past, may have fought with the soundman for sufficient mic sensitivity. My "reference" dynamic required around 40dB of mic gain to produce the same volume.

The 300 has a "taller" sound—more top and bottom (40Hz to 20kHz rated response) with less of the nasality I usually hear on dynamic live mics. Like any good live mic, the 300 has a tight pickup pattern that minimizes feedback and exhibits little handling noise or change in sound, even if the mic is gripped near its head. "P" popping was noticeable and a foam cover may be in order for certain singers. The 300 feels well balanced in my hand with its ribbed grip and its "large and in charge" size (weighs 0.9lbs). Both the electro-plated styling and hardened painted body are gorgeous and seem durable.

The en•CORE 300 sells \$199 MSRP and is a fresh choice in the right direction for better live sound. See [bluemic.com](http://bluemic.com).

## Mod Kits DIY Verb Pedal

The Verb pedal is one of many pedal and amp kits offered by Mod™ Kits DIY. If you are handy with a few small tools and know how to solder, try building your next pedal as these kits sell for about one third of the best price you'd pay for any manufactured pedal. All kits come with easy-to-follow instructions and use 'old school' point-to-point wiring—no printed circuits. The pedal box enclosure comes pre-drilled and all the necessary parts are included, even the control knobs.

I received the Verb pedal for evaluation and it is based around the Belton Digi-Log module—a reverb module design to replace old, dead spring reverb units. It took me about three hours start to finish to assemble the kit. I liked the extremely clear instructions that have several pictures and helpful suggestions. I also like that the kits use old fashion terminal strips that are large and easy to wrap and solder component leads to. The pedal worked the first time I plugged it in. It produced a warm analog-like reverb that sounded good and subtle on guitar. At \$74.95, it's the best deal in town for a reverb pedal.

Other kits available are: MOD 101 Guitar Amp Kit, a 60-watt model with your choice of either 6L6 or EL34 tubes and 32 different circuit variations; Rattler is a '60s and '70s fuzz tone pedal; Piledriver is a clean boost kit with up to 38dB of gain; Persuader is a tube pre-amp pedal built around a 12AX7 tube; and the Enticer is a limited edition tube overdrive pedal kit based on a NOS original RCA 12AU7A tube. For more info, visit [modkitsdiy.com](http://modkitsdiy.com)



## SANYO Pedal Juice

SANYO North America has the KBC-9V3U Pedal Juice enloop that uses rechargeable lithium-ion battery technology to power effects pedal boards or any music gear that runs on nine-volt DC. One Pedal Juice enloop battery will provide up to 50 hours of continuous power for a single analog pedal or up to 20 hours for three digital pedals.

The enloop is a high-capacity 9V battery power supply that is rechargeable hundreds of times and capable of two amps of output current. It is the same size as a standard effects pedal (2.5" W x 4.7"D x 1.7"H) and the advantages of using it are many. Besides eliminating nine-volt battery e-waste, you can go totally mobile with your pedal board without seeking out an AC outlet for your wall-wart power supplies.

Since all your high gain pedals are now powered by a single beefy battery, you'll hear an immediate drop in the noise and hum floor plus you'll never struggle with AC power ground loops again. With two DC outputs, Pedal Juice can power multiple pedals at the same time with battery life dependent on how many pedals how often you use them.

I powered up my two battery-eaters with no hitches: a Marshall practice amp and a Planet Waves chromatic stomp pedal tuner, with the SANYO Pedal Juice battery. The little Marshall sounded much better powered by the Sanyo than an internal nine-volt.

If totally discharged, Sanyo's Pedal Juice enloop recharges in about three hours. I like the convenient on/off pushbutton that turns your entire pedal board on/off and the three-stage/color visible LED power indicator that displays the remaining power level. SANYO Pedal Juice is ready for the road, is water-resistant and sells for \$199, and comes with a world AC (100-240V) power AC charger. Visit us. [sanyo.com/pedal-juice](http://sanyo.com/pedal-juice).



## Mix Master DJ Headphones from Skullcandy

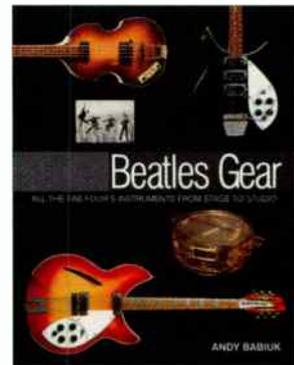
Developed along with the Beastie Boys' DJ, Mix Master Mike, the new Mix Master DJ headphones from Skullcandy are all business with many innovative and useful features plus a stylish look.

There is a clever, dual channel cue control built in that automatically switches the entire mix (left and right channels mix together) to one driver when you go to single ear cupping. I also liked the one-touch muting right on the phones for checking your speaker system and the crowd. Another very thoughtful feature are the two input jacks for connecting the cord on either side. This solves the issue I often see of DJs struggling with other headphones where the cord is always in the way—depending on how they set up their tables and/or if they are left or right-handed.

Now the sound: they are efficient and as loud as you could ever want coming from the large 50-mm drivers. I would characterize the sound quality as thick and super rich with loads of bass—the opposite of tinny and thin. I found myself able to take the mix louder without pain if I required hearing over the noise in the room. The soft, luxurious ear pads fit snugly and are comfortable for hours. Snug enough so that the headphones will not fly off no matter how much head banging you do.

My set came in fire engine red but the latest version (pictured) is all black, made using a cool three-piece folding body design that compresses down to about half size for traveling. The futuristic look utilizes stainless steel and aluminum components and the kit includes an extra cable with in-line mic and music control.

The Mix Master DJ Headphones sell for \$249 and further information is available at [skullcandy.com](http://skullcandy.com).



## Beatles Gear from BackBeat Books

I couldn't wait to get my hands on Andy Babik's bestseller *Beatles Gear* now available in a revised, hardcover version. This lavish, oversized coffee table-style book is the definitive resource on the Fab Four's gear with examples of the actual guitars, basses, drum kits, sticks and strings those guys used to make pop music history.

I found it interesting reading about the way the Beatles demanded so much out of their (at the time) primitive musical instruments and studio gear—they never settled for less than the very best sounding or newest gear they could get their hands on. They were always on the quest to sculpt unforgettable songs using a fascinating range of sounds from the available instruments around them.

Like the previous version, *Beatles Gear* is laid out in chapters by year starting with 1956/57 with John Lennon's first guitar, the Gallotone Champion. The chapter about 1965 covers of all their new instruments including the Rickenbacker 12-string electric, Vox Continental organ, American-made Fender guitars, and Lennon's Mellotron.

Chapters about the years 1966 to 1970 focus on their studio work and tell the stories behind all the instruments used in the production of their albums at Abbey Road studios. You'll see the Challen Tack piano and the Lowrey Heritage Deluxe organ used on "Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds."

*Beatles Gear* by Andy Babik is required reading for anyone interested in the guitars, amps and drum kits used by the Beatles. There is much to discover about the Beatles and the gear they, more than anybody else, made into classics. It's available for \$40 and is published by Backbeat Books, an imprint of Hal Leonard. It's available through Music Dispatch at [musicdispatch.com](http://musicdispatch.com).



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NEW FOR 2010

We're talkin' 'bout our generation of loudmouth yobbo tones. Rich bell-like clean tones that drove the classic UK rock and pop bands of the '70s. Lean into high gain gear for a bare-knuckle growl that retains definition. Push it harder and you are live at Leeds.



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NEW FOR 2010

Experience T-rextacy with the greasy grit of '70s London glam, or take it deeper and darker into Paranoid vintage metal grind. Dime the gain to experience the sludgelicious roar of contemporary stoner rock. From sweet cleans to crushing distortion, the Oxford is one juicy pedal.



## US Steel

NEW FOR 2010

Packing more metal than Pittsburgh, the U.S. Steel is high gain Valhalla. Every nu-metal chunk, every modern rock slab just keep coming. Back off for smoky blues or ignite the rage of an uber-gain rectifier. The U.S. Steel is here to raise hell and steal your girl.



## British

Legendary crunch from searing blues to UK anarchy.



## Liverpool

Distinctive diamond grille tone with a voice that shook generations.



## Blonde

This Blonde dishes out pure American tone to the stratosphere.



## California

Everything you need to create your own California dream tone.



## VT Bass

Clean focused punch to dirty earthquaking rump, you dial it in.



## VT Bass Deluxe

NEW FOR 2010

The Deluxe version of the SansAmp VT Bass features a combination of a warm, all-analog signal path and convenient digital recall. There are 6 program locations and dual inputs for two instruments to be on-line, ready to go. Create three custom tones for each input or use all six locations for a single instrument.

Character Series

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## PMC DB1S-All Powered Monitors

The smallest and most compact of the PMC active monitor speaker line, the DB1S-All measures 11.4H X 11.1D X 6.1W inches, weighs 5.1kg, and offers the dynamics and mid-range detail of much bigger units. Its Advanced Transmission Line (ATL) bass loading technology and PMC's 200W, DS-001 Class-D power module combine to make a dependable, high-resolution monitor in your smaller music mixing workspace. A set of five are ideal for a 5.1 system when partnered with PMC's TLE1S powered sub.



I set up my pair of evaluation units on wooden plinths on both sides of my ProTools screen here at my Tones 4 \$ Studios. They come in a flat black color and connect to my Cranesong Avocet Monitor controller using XLR cables. I normally mix on much bigger speakers with large woofers and check on smaller speakers. In the past, my pair of Yamaha NS-10Ms has served me well for this process but I put up with their sound and compensate too much! With the PMC's, the mid-range is clearer and I hear further into the mix. They give me an analytical "take" on my mix—I hear more things that need fine-tuning and reevaluation of EQ, reverb levels or compression. On my mains I can only hear these details when listening in solo.

The useable frequency response of the DB1S-All is 50Hz-25kHz and I can verify that they will provide a peak SPL of 108dB at 1 meter away—loud for such a small footprint. The low frequency driver has a 140-mm cast alloy frame while the high frequency unit is a 27-mm diameter fabric soft dome model. The crossover frequency is 2kHz.

A fine upgrade for any studio, I like the DB1S-All's small size, accurate and clean sound, and attractive look. A pair of the PMC DB1-SAll will set you back \$2,999 MSRP. For more information, see [pmc-speakers.com](http://pmc-speakers.com).

## Zildjian Gen-16 Digital Vault Z-Pack

Who better to offer high-resolution samples of their master reference cymbals than legendary cymbal-maker Zildjian? The Digital Vault series are limited editions of sample collections made from handpicked cymbals pulled from the company's vault. Percussion sampling guru John Emrich recorded all the cymbal samples.

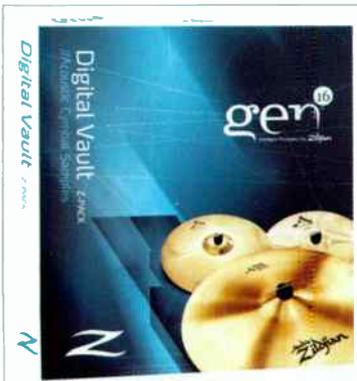
The Gen16 Digital Vault series comes with a custom version of FXpansion's BFD Eco drum playback/production environment. The BFD Eco engine allows users to change pitch, mix or add effects to these samples for the creation of even more unique sounds. For my evaluation, I used BFD2 running standalone or within ProTools HD.

The DV Z-Pack 2-DVD disc set has three sets of hi-hats, four crashes and splashes and seven ride/crash cymbal samples—14 total cymbals sampled in the appropriate stick, brushes and mallets or rods versions. I like all the first-rate sounding cymbals in this collection, there are no dogs in this collection taking up space plus this collection is not available anywhere else.

I especially liked the 14-inch Custom Mastersound hi-hat set for cutting through a mix of loud guitars while the tight little 10-inch A Custom Splash worked well for a spicy sonic accent. There is the broad sounding

21-inch A Custom Rezo Ride that has a good stick sound yet still sinks well into the drum mix. I used the 16-inch A Custom Crash for its nice and loud "stick" near the bell while the 20-inch A Custom Crash is thicker and provides more ring out of its distinctive sound.

Zildjian's Gen16 Digital Vault is a refreshing new collection of excellent cymbals for BFD2 or BFD Eco that are all recorded in a very present and pristine manner and ready to take any mix effects. They sell for \$249 MSRP. Get more info at [gen16firstlook.com](http://gen16firstlook.com).



## Martin 00-15M Acoustic

The 00-15M is reminiscent of Martin's 1930s small-body Blues guitar—an instrument sought after by hardcore players and collectors. The new 00-15M features a rich dark-stained mahogany body covered with satin lacquer for a warmer tone. Its smaller size means it also has a clear and strong sound that speaks well within ensemble settings.

To further enhance the tone by letting the top vibrate well, the 00-15M uses Martin's A-frame Sitka bracing. The '30s styling and tradition are maintained with the use of a single ring wood rosette around the soundhole.

The genuine mahogany 14-fret neck has the classic solid headstock with vintage-style Gotoh tuners while the fingerboard and "belly" bridge are East Indian rosewood. Both the nut and compensated saddle are made of bone. Learn more about this guitar at [martinguitar.com](http://martinguitar.com).



## Audio-Technica 2000 Series Wireless

A-T has added the ATW-R2100a receiver, the ATW-T210a UniPak body-pack transmitter and the ATW-T220a handheld transmitter to its 2000 Series wireless system. The 2000 Series is a frequency-agile UHF system that uses true diversity to always select the best signal from two receiver sections. The R2100a receiver makes setup a breeze with its automatic scanning for unused channels. A pre-coordinated integral channel plan allows for simultaneous operation of any of the 10 channels in a given location, in one of two UHF frequency ranges.

The ATW-T210a UniPak body-pack transmitter features a latching cover to protect the internal controls and the input is available for your own low impedance microphone and/or high impedance musical instrument or line inputs. The unit supplies DC bias voltage to power condenser microphones and a red LED power/battery indicator glows when the transmitter is turned on and running on sufficient batteries. To conserve battery life even more, an RF power switch toggles high or low transmitter power modes.

The redesigned ATW-T220a handheld transmitter uses a PRO 41-type dynamic unidirectional capsule to maintain sonic consistency with A-T's wired microphones. A rugged steel head case with an integral foam pop filter protects the capsule, and both transmitters function with standard AA alkaline batteries for over eight hours of operation.

The ATW-2110a Basic System includes the ATW-R2100a receiver and ATW-T210a UniPak transmitter for \$429 MSRP. Other system configurations are available at [audio-technica.com](http://audio-technica.com).



## T-Rex Octavius Dual Octave Pedal

Called a Tri-Tone Generator, Octavius is an octave divider and octave multiplier in one guitar pedal. Besides adding these two new tones to your guitar's signal, it also has a clean boost function you can use alone or in tandem with effects.

There are four controls on Octavius: Lo Oct level, Hi Oct level, Master Mix control and Boost. Master Mix sets the relationship between the two octaves and the dry signal, and Boost has a separate stomp button for kicking in extra level for solos and standouts.

Octavius sounds wonderfully warm—it tracks well and there is no feeling of latency in either the dry signal or the octaves. The Boost feature is very good in the way it introduces little additional tonality shift or distortion—great when you're putting out three octaves at a time!

Great for funk lead lines and riffs and also to replicate 12-string guitar solos on stage. Leave the fussy Rickenbacker 12 home! You might also like using it when playing double stop 4ths and 5ths—it sounds like an organ! Amazing!

Octavius requires an external 12-volt/800ma DC power supply as its circuitry needs more power than a nine-volt battery can make. It sells for \$369 MSRP and futher info is at [t-rex-effects.com](http://t-rex-effects.com). You can purchase T-Rex Pedals direct from the T-Rex American Ambassador at [selaneguitarstore.com](http://selaneguitarstore.com).



**MICRO-BIO:** Barry Rudolph is a recording engineer/producer/mixer with over 30 gold and platinum RIAA awards to his credit. He has recorded and/or mixed: Lynyrd Skynyrd, Hall & Oates, Pat Benatar, Rod Stewart, the Corrs and Robbie Nevil. Check out [www.barryrudolph.com](http://www.barryrudolph.com) for more.

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# STOCKING STUFFERS

Merry Christmas to all! In keeping with the feeling of the past year's slow economic times—and I do emphasize “the past”—I've tried to show a few gift ideas that are essential, utilitarian or just fun—all for under \$100 each.

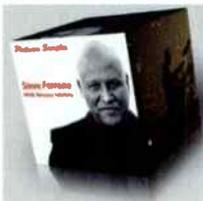
By Barry Rudolph

Around your studio, garage or home try **Alliance Rubber Company's** re-usable **Cable Wrapz** tools to bundle and organize cords, cables and ropes needed for instruments, mics, amps and lighting.

These simple-to-use rubber tie wraps have a T bar that keeps cables from coming undone until you need them for rigging, staging and backline equipment use. There are three separate product lines: Cable Wrapz, Gear Wrapz and Camo Wrapz. See [alliance-rubber.com](http://alliance-rubber.com).



**Platinum Samples** has the **Steve Ferrone Multi-Format MIDI Groove Library**. These are a collection of 660 MIDI files comprising over 3,200 bars of un-quantized grooves performed by drummer Steve Ferrone (Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers, Average White Band, Eric Clapton). They are formatted and ready to play in *BFD2*, *EZdrummer*, *Superior Drummer*, *Addictive Drums*, *Cakewalk Session Drummer* and they come in General MIDI Standard files too. There are 17 songs performed by Ferrone broken into song sections as well as nine additional Groove variations plus proper song endings. The collection is available for download and sells for \$40. Visit [platinumsamples.com](http://platinumsamples.com).



**Atomic9** has the **Bluetooth Wristband Speakerphone** for \$99. This bracelet is stylish as much as it is useful. It easily pairs to any Bluetooth enabled cell phone—I had no problem pairing with both my iPhone and a friend's Blackberry. It comes



with a charger and runs all day (four hour talk time) on your wrist on a single charge. I like the speaker's volume, the built-in text to speech conversion and audio caller ID mode. The Atomic 9 is a lot less intrusive to both wear and use. Those “jawbone” devices that hang on your ear make you look like a member of the Borg and talking into your sleeve is more covert and private than shouting out loud as I see people do while wearing a jawbone. Other features include voice commands to place and answer phone calls, optional vibration and sound alerting, 30-foot range from your cell phone (at home I leave mine on the coffee table), USB charging port and wireless music playback from your phone. Check out [atomic9.com](http://atomic9.com).

For recordists who love using Shure's SM57 dynamic mic but have trouble getting them in close to snare drums or exactly angled on guitar amp speakers, **Granelli Audio Labs** is now offering a DIY conversion kit to modify your own SM57s into the handy right-angled shape made popular by the company's popular

G5790 microphone. This mod gives engineers more microphone placement options for snare drums and toms. With the mic fitted with the elbow conversion kit, it takes up less space on stage or in the studio on speaker cabinets and percussion instruments. The kit comes complete with color-coded wire, heat shrink tubing and modification instructions. With a price of \$49.99, you can repurpose your collection of SM57s into identical-sounding G5790s at a fraction of the price. See [granelliaudio.com](http://granelliaudio.com).



**LaCie** has the **XtremKey** series, USB 2.0 Flash drives with capacities from 8GB to 64GB that come in a blast-proof, crush-proof and water-resistant pipe made of an aluminum alloy called zamac. The metal pipe casing is sealed with wear-resistant screw threads and rubber O-ring—good up to 100-meter depth. Able to stand 5-meter drops, fierce heat and bitter cold (+200°C/-50°C), the high tech-looking XtremeKey has writing speeds up to 30 Mb/s and reading up to 40 Mb/s. Prices start at \$49.99 and for more information, go to [lacie.com](http://lacie.com).



**Planet Waves Lubrikit** is a fast, easy and affordable solution for guitar friction issues that happen on the guitar's nut or the bridge and tremolo saddles. Not only does lubrication keep the guitar's tuning more stable, it prolongs string life by preventing wear and minimizing breakage at those stressful pivot points. Lubrikit has been field-tested with the industry's top techs and luthiers and is the easiest way to end tuning problems at the source. Lubrikit comes with one syringe of lubricant and two application swabs. Planet Waves' Lubrikit retails for \$17.99. For more information on Planet Waves' products, visit [planetwaves.com](http://planetwaves.com).



Speaking of strings, **Ellix Strings** has the **Pro Pack** for discerning players who change strings often or just want to get ready for a heavy playing schedule. These three-packs of string sets will be offered in limited editions of the company's most popular strings. You can get packs of the four leading NANOWEB coated varieties; Phosphor Bronze Acoustic Strings in Light and Medium; and Electric Strings in Light and Super Light Phosphor Bronze Acoustic Strings. The NANOWEB coating allows for the unique phosphor bronze tone to last up to three-to-five times longer. The electric strings deliver the presence, punch and detail of the finest conventional strings while extending tone life and a smooth feel. For more details, head over to [elixstrings.com](http://elixstrings.com).



Ok you've got your guitar lubricated and have cranked on new strings, but what about tuning? **Tascam's TC-1S** is the world's first solar powered chromatic tuner—you'll never go to tune up and discover a dead battery. A small bank of solar cells charges the internal battery plus a USB jack connects and quickly charges the tuner when you're not outside. The TC-1S is wrapped in a shockproof silicon cover available in six colors. It has a short leash and clip so, if you keep it attached to your gig bag, it will charge all day long. The TC-1S has a built-in microphone and a 1/4-inch input jack for tuning guitars and basses. I enjoy the super-fast pitch detection and the wide bargraph pitch deviation display with four display modes including fine pitch in 1-cent steps. The TC-1s sells for \$40 and can be found at [tascam.com/product/tc-1s](http://tascam.com/product/tc-1s).

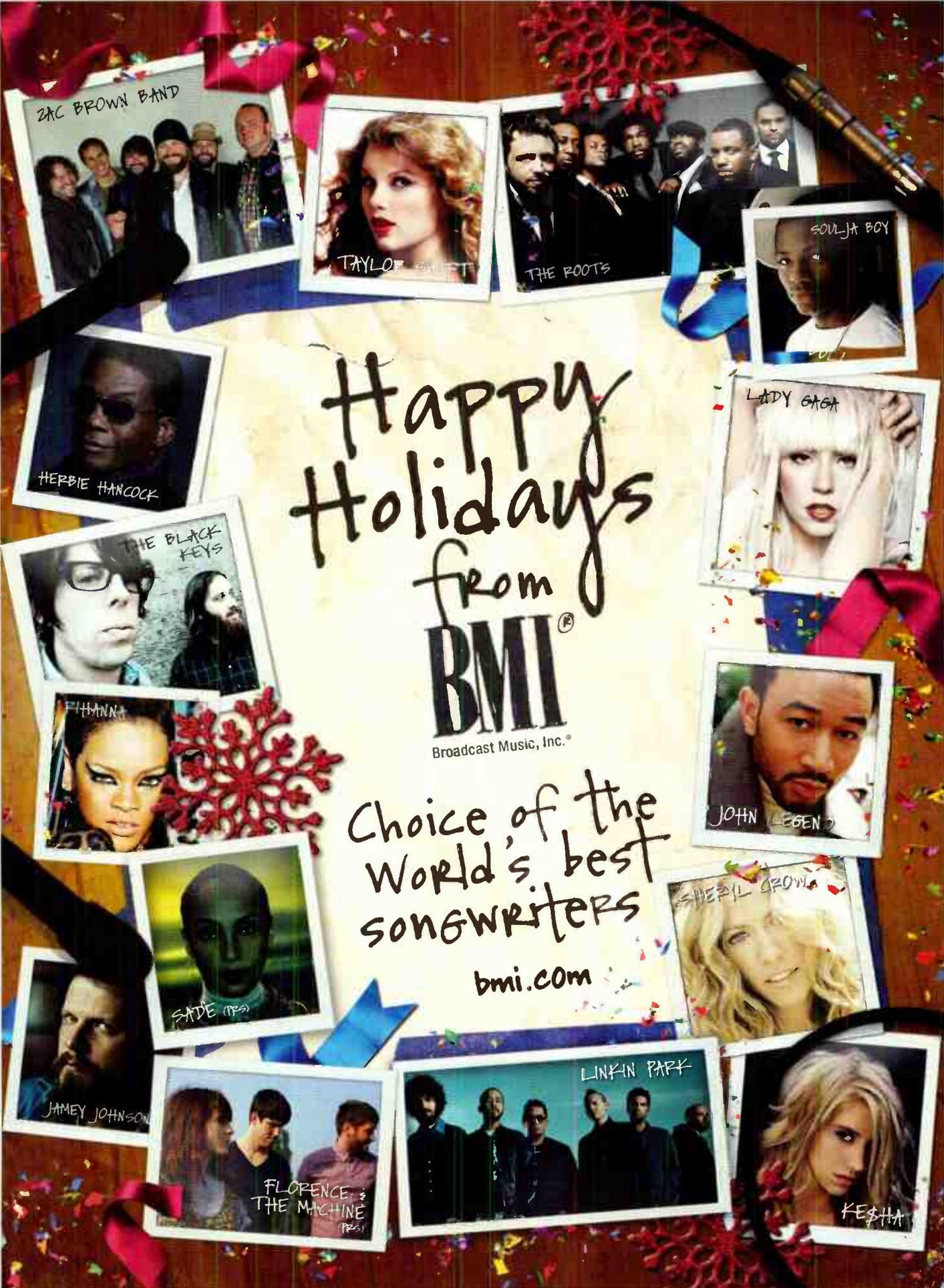


**IK Multimedia** solves a lot of new problems with its new product the **iKlip**. It is an iPad-mounting accessory so musicians, singers, stage presenters or karaoke artists can use their iPad without resorting to a table or their laps. Great for standing and lecturing, lesson playing or singing in the studio and reading music and/or lyrics—any conventional mic stand will work with iKlip's lightweight thermoplastic frame. You can adjust the tilt, height and viewing angle in either landscape or portrait orientation. Connection to the iPad's ports and touch screen remain unblocked and the six secure quick-snap clips hold the iPad without scratching or marring it. Once positioned, iKlip installs on a mic stand in seconds with the twist of a knob. iKlip sells for \$39.99. See [ikmultimedia.com/iklip](http://ikmultimedia.com/iklip).



**boog Boa Follo iPad Case** is a stylish and protective carrying case for your iPad made from genuine Nappa leather and boog Twylon—it even has a pocket for your iPhone since most iPad owners have already factored into that device. On the tabletop, Boa Follo features three positions designed for typing, presentations and deskwork. The iPad will lie flat across your lap, slightly elevated for typing on a desk or nearly vertical for presentations and video viewing. When the iPad is not in use, Boa Follo's closing strap guards against unwanted opens and screen damage during accidental drops. Also available in a 1680D ballistic Nylon version the Boa Follo comes in black/red, berry or boog's new slate color for \$49.95. Visit [boogbags.com](http://boogbags.com).

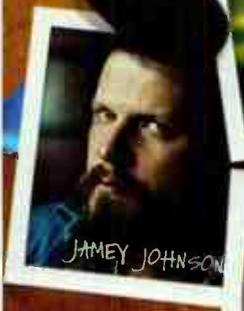
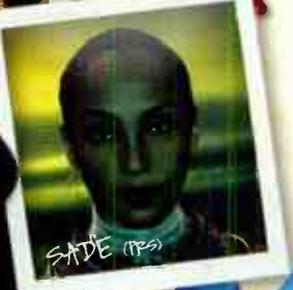
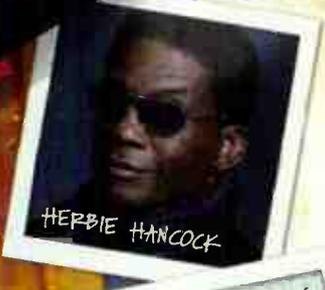




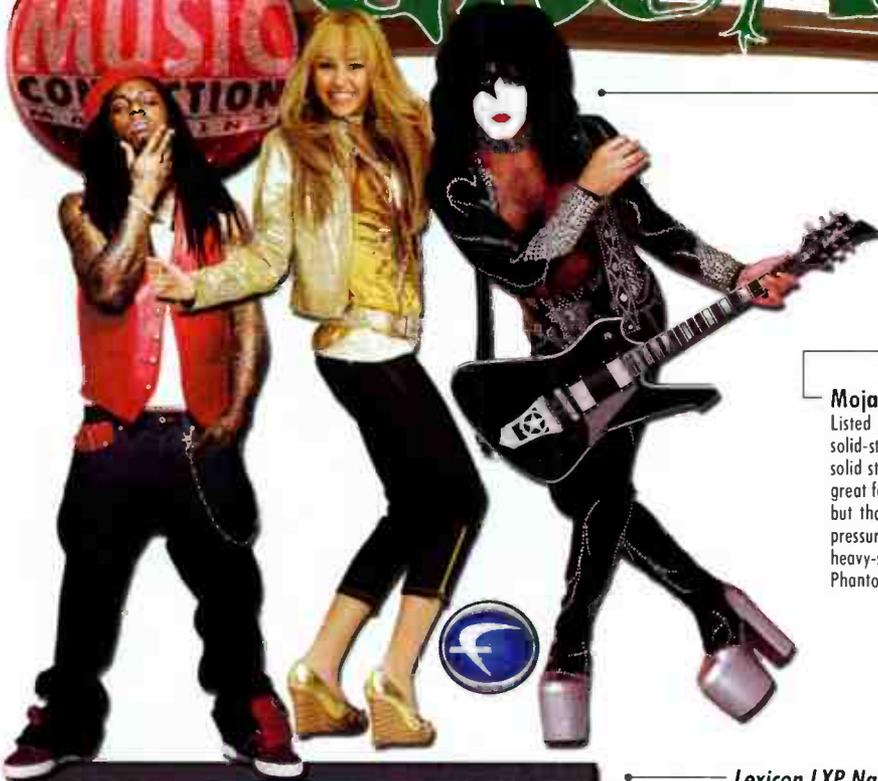
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# GREATEST



## Fathead

From Kid Rock to Kiss, these life-size wall decorations aren't just for sports fanatics anymore. You can order anything from CD covers to actual Godzilla like artists. Priced at \$89.99 - \$99.99, these sticker-free stars are a sweet gift for any musician or music fan and a great addition to any studio and/or office. Check out fathead.com for a full line of figures as well as album covers for under \$30.00.

## Mojave 201-fet

Listed at just under \$700, this cordoid mic is basically a solid-state mimic of the classic MA-200 tube mic. As the first solid state mic from Mojave Audio, this bad boy is not only great for drum over-heads, piano and acoustic instruments, but thanks to its ability to handle heavy doses of sound pressure, it can also track kick drums, bass or guitar cabs and heavy-set vocals (all you death metal engineers out there). Phantom power required. Visit mojavaudio.com for more.



## Lexicon LXP Native Reverb Bundle

Compatible with Windows XP, Vista and 7, as well as Mac OS 10.4 or above, this collection of plug-ins contains over 200 studio presets on four classic Lexicon reverbs (chamber, hall, plate and room). With real-time graphic display, this is a great product to beef up your digital reverb arsenal. *The LXP Bundle* can be found on sale for as low as \$600. Visit lexiconpro.com.



## Focusrite ISA One Mic Preamp

This desktop unit contains a single channel ISA 110 preamp built in. In addition to the mic-pre, it also has a direct input—meaning that singer-songwriters can get their jollies recording with an instrument and a microphone simultaneously. The unit can be found for \$500, but if you want the additional digital output (ISA One Digital), it will run you about \$800. See focusrite.com.



## Mesa Boogie - Transatlantic TA-15

Don't be fooled by this tube-amp's size (just around 12lbs)... it can really pack a punch. Combining 12AX7s in the preamp and EL84s in the power amp, this lunchbox style head hybrids British tones, American tweed tones and classic Boogie lead tones. With three power settings (5W, 15W, 25W) and five different pre-omp settings, your options ore for from limited. Gig bog included. Priced just right of about \$899. See mesoboogie.com.



# Gifts for Under A Grand



—ANDY MESECHER andym@musicconnection.com

## Shure SE315 Sound Isolating Earphones

The new SE315 Sound Isolating Earphone from Shure is a single driver earphone featuring frequencies as low as 37dB and a unique detachable cable, making cable replacement a breeze. Available in clear or black, this little bugger is based on the design platform of the SE425 and SE535 at a lower price. A carrying case is also included. A pair runs for about \$199.99. See [shure.com](http://shure.com) for more.



## TC-Helicon VoiceLive Touch

Available for roughly \$500, the Touch puts live vocal processing and looping in a flashy, simple-to-use box. For singer-songwriters and Imogen Heap type enthusiasts alike, this box can be controlled by fingers or feet, allowing an array of opportunities that include Modulation, Delay, Reverb, Harmony, Double, Transducer, HardTune, Adaptive Tone, Pitch Correction, Guitar FX, Guitar Tuner and the all new VLOOP stereo looper. Visit [tc-helicon.com](http://tc-helicon.com).



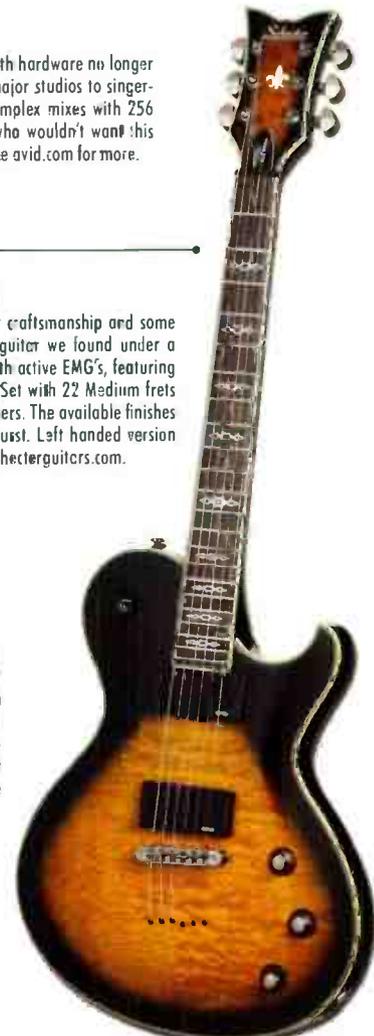
## Pro Tools 9

ProTools is back and has finally answered all of our requests. With hardware no longer a necessity, the flood gates of opportunity have opened from major studios to singer-songwriters still living with mom. With the ability to create complex mixes with 256 internal busses, 160 aux tracks, and 512 total audio tracks... who wouldn't want this software under the tree? Full price = \$599, upgrade = \$349. See [avid.com](http://avid.com) for more.



## Schecter Hellraiser Special Solo 6

The Hellraiser Special Solo 6 has the highest craftsmanship and some of the best hardware and pick-ups for any guitar we found under a grand. This one has a single-cut silhouette with active EMG's, featuring a Schecter Ultra Access 3-pc Mahogany Neck Set with 22 Medium frets over Rosewood and Schecter's own Locking tuners. The available finishes include Black Cherry and Dark Vintage Sunburst. Left handed version also available. The MSRP is \$999. Check out [schecterguitars.com](http://schecterguitars.com).



## Tannoy Reveal 501a

At under \$200 (each, totalling under \$400 a pair) these near-field reference monitors give KRK a run for their money. 501a's design includes a front baffle with curved edges to eliminate unwanted diffraction and front-firing reflex bass ports to help eliminate bass-coupling in small spaces. Great for anyone mixing at home or in a tight-fit mixing room. Also check out the 601A and 601P. For further details, see [tannoy.com](http://tannoy.com).



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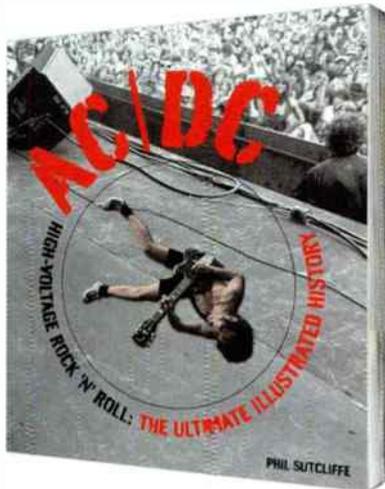
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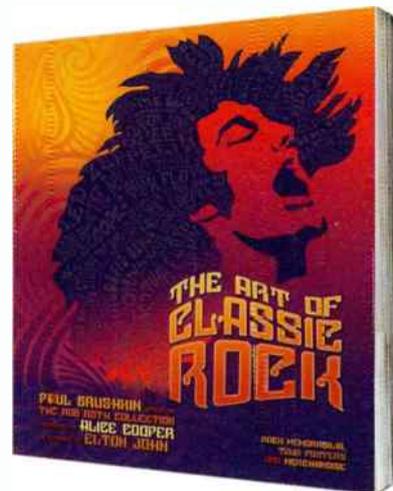
## Holiday Hard Covers...



### AC/DC: High-Voltage Rock 'n' Roll: The Ultimate Illustrated History

By Phil Sutcliffe MSRP \$35

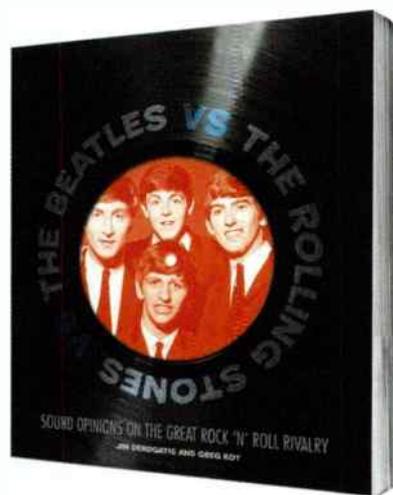
The book's cover will get your immediate attention—Angus on a spinning disc. Such imagination is the gateway to more than 400 illustrations including handbills, posters, backstage passes and vinyl from around the globe, as well as rare candid and performance photography. This massive new title follows the band from its roots in Sydney, Australia, to its most recent releases and sold-out world tours. No stone is left unturned, from AC/DC's formation and early club gigs to its astounding worldwide success.



### The Art of Classic Rock

By Paul Grushkin MSRP \$50

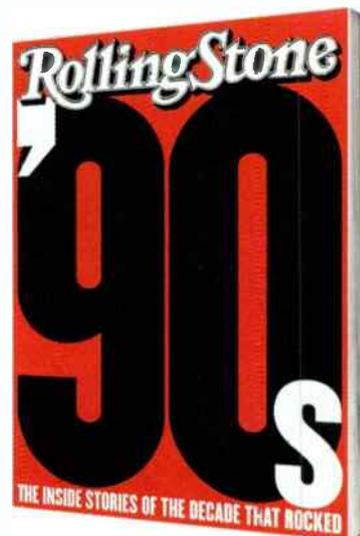
For 40 years, theater director Rob Roth has collected rare examples of rock tour posters, advertising posters, rock memorabilia, original artwork and items of merchandise. His spectacular collection is so vast that it has never been put on public display, but when visitors to his spacious New York loft apartment—stars like Elton John and Alice Cooper—caught a glimpse of some of the material he has collected over the years, they were amazed and urged him to let rock fans see the dazzling array of artifacts from the '70s and '80s. This impressive, oversized book does Roth's collection justice.



### The Beatles vs. The Rolling Stones: Sound Opinions on the Great Rock 'n' Roll Rivalry

by Jim DeRogatis and Greg Kot MSRP \$35

Three subjects are not conducive to polite dinner conversation: politics, religion and who is the better band: the Beatles or the Rolling Stones. Virtually no music fan holds a neutral opinion on this issue—in fact, it has been dubbed the ultimate rock smackdown. Chicago-based music critics Jim DeRogatis and Greg Kot, cohosts of NPR's Sound Opinions, enter the debate with this coffee table book filled with photos, lists and conversations discussing various aspects of the bands. Each chapter focuses on different topics, such as vocalists, drummers and guitarists. Other hot button issues include comparing the double albums, and debating which band best incorporated psychedelic elements in their music.



### The '90s: The Inside Stories from the Decade That Rocked

By Rolling Stone magazine MSRP \$29.99

At no time since the rock & roll explosion of the 1960s did music matter more than in the 1990s—the decade of grunge, gangster rap and Britney Spears. The '90s might have kicked off with Vanilla Ice, but music changed forever the following year when Nirvana's "Smells Like Teen Spirit" exploded onto the airwaves, giving birth to the alternative nation. The decade spawned dozens of new stars and top artists from U2 to Madonna made their most adventurous records, while hip-hop icons Tupac Shakur and Biggie Smalls met violent ends. This book is packed with over 50 stories, portraits by the biggest names in photography, and a guide to the decade's hundred greatest albums.

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FULL COMPASS

PRO AUDIO | VIDEO | A/V | LIGHTING



By Jonathan Widran

Jonathan and Susan Lipp

A national leader in pro audio, video, A/V and lighting sales, Madison, WI, based Full Compass ([fullcompass.com](http://fullcompass.com)) launched in 1977 with five basic electronics lines—including AKG, Technics and Sony. It now boasts over 700 top equipment brands in the fields of sound reinforcement, audio and video recording (including many lines of wireless mics), photography, broadcasting, lighting and audio visual equipment.

With a database of clients and potential customers hundreds of thousands strong and a warehouse of over 80,000 square feet, the company also provides unique contemporary services such as computer systems integration, lighting design and rentals. Full Compass' huge inventory allows the company to ship most items the same day, and they are an authorized service center and parts distributor. While they sell musical instruments and related equipment (guitars, guitar amps, etc.) to artists and musicians, their expansive product lines includes everything from educational equipment for schools to electronic media that is used by law enforcement agencies, the U.S. government and the military.

While very few companies carry as broad a selection of products, founders Jonathan and Susan Lipp say that the most prominent quality differentiating Full Compass from other similar companies is the quality of their customer service and, quite simply, the human touch. Starting the company in an era when personal relationships mattered helps them maintain an edge even in this e-commerce dominated marketplace.

"Only 15 percent of our business is e-commerce generated," says Jonathan Lipp, "and we have 50 full-time sales people who are charged with making our customers happy and loyal. Much of our growth is due to customer loyalty and creating lifetime advocates of Full Compass. We're one of the few companies of our type with a service department. Being in business this long and growing through all the technological changes in the various industries we cater to, we do what we know how to very well.

"The majority of our customers are pros that make a living with the equipment they use," he adds, "so they need a reliable relationship with a company like ours. Our sales people are also problem solvers who are conversant in a wide variety of product areas. What we don't know, clients can count on us to research. For someone like me who grew up as an electronics hobbyist and began his career as a recording engineer, it's exciting that our product lines touch so many different related areas. At any given wedding, for instance, it's possible that our equipment is being used by the guy doing videography, the band, the folks doing the lighting and the DJ!"

In line with having a fully human, totally committed sales staff, Lipp adds that those who do business with Full Compass over the phone will often get much better prices than if they keep their transactions strictly impersonal and online. "Most customers do their pre-shopping on our site, but then call us to make a better deal by talking to us," he says. "Most legit dealers and manufacturers operating on e-commerce are bound by MAP, or Minimum Advertised Price. By law, we can't advertise products on the site below a certain price. But those rules don't apply on the phone."

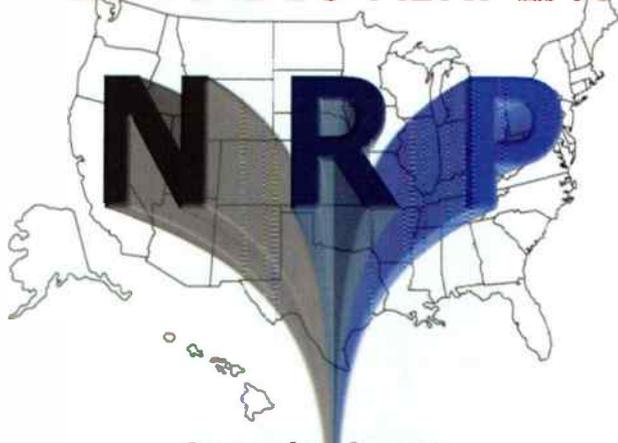
Full Compass has hands-on involvement in various non-profit organizations in the Wisconsin region. Susan Lipp has served on the NAMM board and has gone to Washington on behalf of the organization to help save school music programs across the country. Many arts programs were slashed under No Child Left Behind, which failed to identify music and other arts classes as part of the core curriculum.

Jonathan wouldn't trade Full Compass' incredible customer service ethic for anything, yet he notes that in the modern era, the company is competing with others who provide no service or help yet charge the same price for similar products. While that makes their profits slightly lower, it also allows the Lippes to hire and work with high quality, knowledgeable people that few companies can match. In fact, the very first time a client orders from Full Compass, the company assigns a sales pro to them. This person will help with all current and future projects.

Contact Full Compass, 800-356-5844

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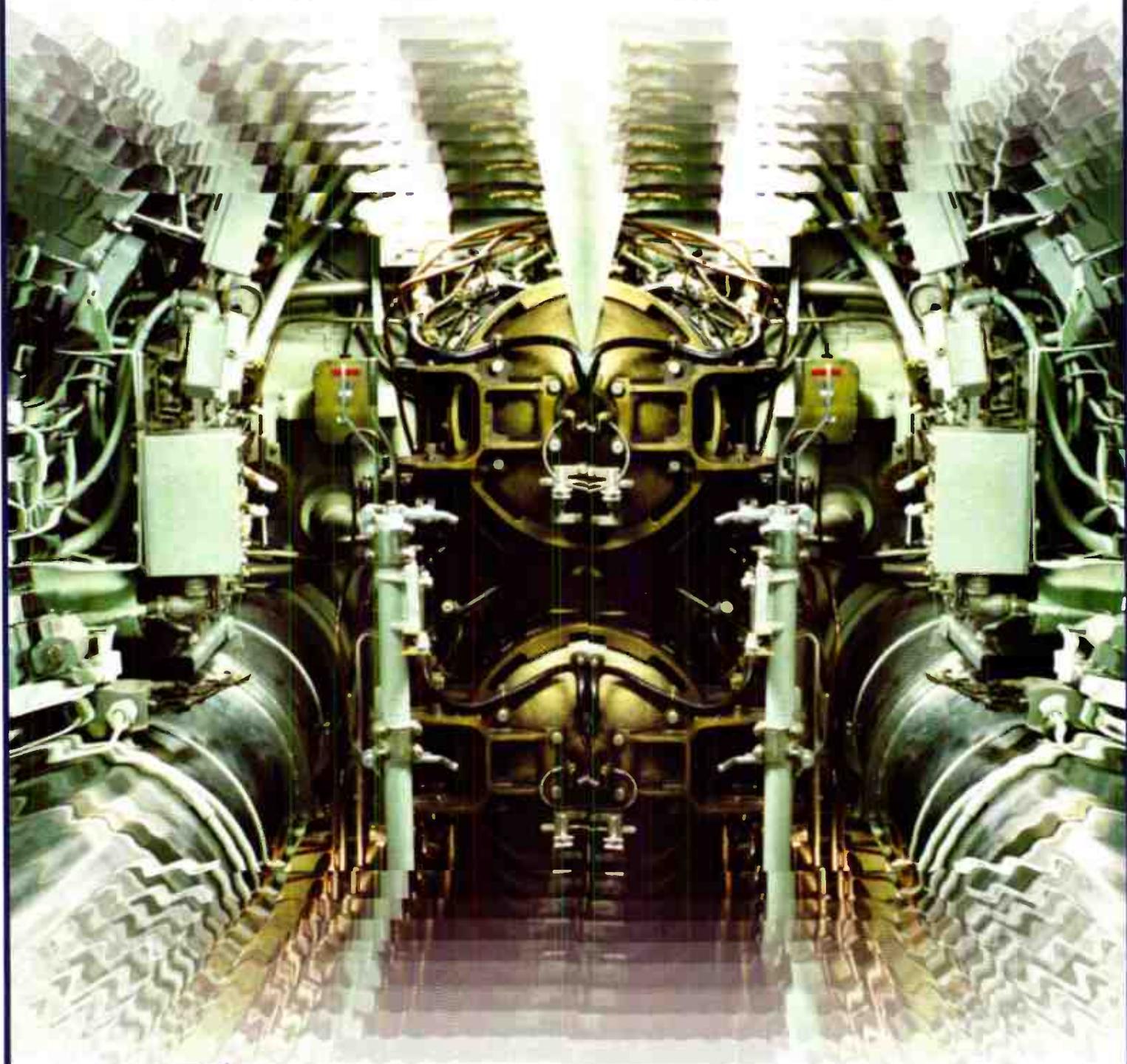


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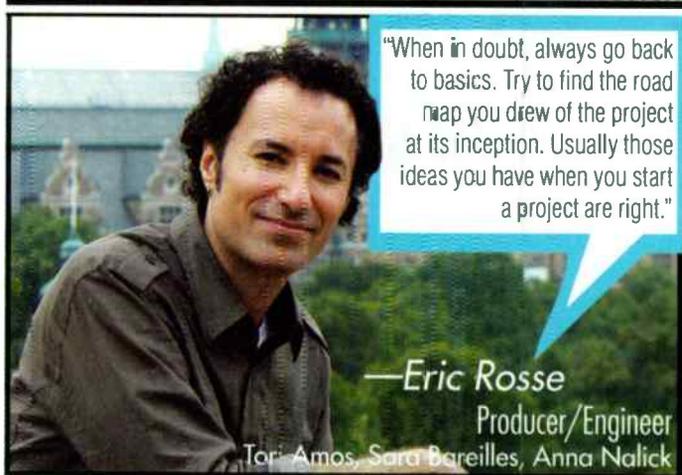
**GREGG ALLMAN TO RELEASE FIRST SOLO RECORD IN 14 YEARS:** Rounder Records has announced that **Gregg Allman** will release his first solo album in over a decade on Jan. 18, 2011. Titled *Low Country Blues*, the record was produced by **T-Bone Burnett**, recorded at The Village in Los Angeles and features **Dr. John** on piano, guitarist **Doyle Bramhall II** and Burnett's go-to rhythm section: bassist **Dennis Crouch** and drummer **Jay Bellerose**. The 12-track record includes renditions of **Muddy Waters**, **B.B. King**, **Buddy Guy** and **Magic Sam**. Contact [weinstein@bighassle.com](mailto:weinstein@bighassle.com) for further details.

**EGGE FINISHES HER NEW CD:** Independent singer-songwriter **Ana Egge** just finished recording her seventh solo album with producer **Steve Earle** at the famed **Levon Helm Studio** in Woodstock, NY. Because the songs she had written for the new album were more stripped down than before, Egge envisioned them with the Steve Earle edge she had heard

in the albums he did with **Lucinda Williams** and **Ron Sexsmith**. Twelve songs later and Egge is in Nashville mixing and mastering the tracks with **Ray Kennedy**. Her new album is scheduled for release in early 2011 and will follow up her 2009 release *Road To My Love* and her debut album *River Under the Road*, for which she garnered two Austin Music Awards. Visit [myspace.com/anaegge](http://myspace.com/anaegge) for further information.

**GRIMUS STUDIO FOOTAGE POSTED:** Garden State death metallers **Grimus** recently posted a teaser video documenting the recording process for their latest full-length record, *Gutter Earth*. The video can be viewed at the band's official Myspace ([myspace.com/jerseygrimus](http://myspace.com/jerseygrimus)). The album was recorded and mixed by guitarist **Marco Bobadilla** and mastered by **Bill Henderson** at **Azimuth Mastering** in New Jersey. It is available for free at the following link: [purevolume.com/jerseygrimus](http://purevolume.com/jerseygrimus).

MC



INTERVIEWED IN MC FEBRUARY 2008

**MICHIGAN STUDIO UPGRADES TO 5.1**



Nick Vasquez

**Rolling Thunder Studios** in Traverse City, MI, is the creative and production home for numerous local artists needing everything from demos to mastering. Now **Rolling Thunder's** clients will experience a new dimension to their music with the recently installed 5.1 monitoring system from **Genelec**. Pictured is studio owner **Nick Vasquez** in his control room, featuring **Genelec 8240A Bi-Amplified DSP Monitors** and a **7270A Active DSP Subwoofer**.

**KING LIVES DANGEROUSLY ON KINGS OF LEON RECORD**



The 2009 "Record of the Year" Grammy was awarded to **Kings of Leon** for "Use Somebody"—which was co-produced, engineered and mixed by **Jacquire King** (pictured in front of **Dangerous Music** gear). King has also worked with **Norah Jones**, **Modest Mouse** and **Tom Waits**, just to name a few. He used his **Dangerous Music 2-Bus analog summing amp** and **Dangerous Monitor ST** monitor controller to mix the latest **KOL** album *Come Around Sundown* released in October of this year. See [dangerousmusic.com](http://dangerousmusic.com) for more.

**SADIE SPOOKS THE GLOBE**



Audio post production facility **Studio 5/5** has been employing its **SADiE** digital audio location recorders and workstations to complete the sound design for a number of new theme park rides and attractions across the globe. One of the most recent projects completed is the sound for the world's first 5D theme park show. Now running in two theme parks on both sides of the Atlantic, the show is titled *The Castle of Horror* in the U.S. and *Nightmare* in Europe. For more information, please visit [sadie.com](http://sadie.com) or [prismsound.com](http://prismsound.com).

**HERNANDEZ, DON WAS CAUGHT INSIDE CAPITOL**



We got behind the scenes at **Capitol's Studio B** in Hollywood, CA, recently, finding musicians tracking **Saul Hernandez's** first solo album to be released March 2011. Pictured (l-r): **Paul Smith**, assistant engineer; **Howard Willing**, engineer; **Don Was**, producer; **Saúl Hernández**; **Marco Renteria**, bass; and **Gustavo Nandayapa**, drums.

**U.K. STUDIO UPGRADES TO SSL**



Backstage Recording Studios, a private studio complex with two studios and artist housing situated on a 15-acre site in Derbyshire, U.K., recently upgraded Studio A with a Solid State Logic AWS 900+ SE console. The console was most recently used to mix the live concert tracks of Megadeth the recent Big 4 European tour. The AWS 900+ SE replaces a DAW controller bringing SSL's sound back into the mix for Backstage, a studio that specializes in recording high level metal bands. Pictured at Backstage Recording is Andy Sneap.

**CELTIC ROCK TRACKED IN SOCAL**



Bakersfield, CA, Celtic rock band 1916 were back at Veneto West Studio in Los Angeles to record their second album with producer Ronan Chris Murphy. Pictured (l-r): Richard Cheney, guitar, vocals; Robbie Byrne, bagpipes; and Murphy. For more on what else Veneto West is up to, see [venetowest.com](http://venetowest.com).

**N.Y.C. PRE-PARTYING FOR CMJ**



Stratosphere Sound held an unofficial party for this year's CMJ Music Marathon & Film Festival in N.Y.C. Over 400 guests were treated to live sessions for [insound.com](http://insound.com) by Surfer Blood (pictured), Class Actress, DOM, Ma. Mentor, Woven Bones, Bear Hands, Jukebox the Ghost and Fake Problems. See [stratospheresound.com](http://stratospheresound.com) for further details.

**CARIBBEAN STUDIO TRACKS STEVE VAI**



Legendary guitar hero Steve Vai is seen working on new material in Ocean Way's resort studio on the island of St. Barts in the Caribbean. Engineer and owner of the Ocean Way studio facilities, Allen Sides, is recording tracks for Vai's forthcoming symphonic album project. Pictured at the vintage Neve console (l-r): Sides and Vai.

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# Jim Wirt

*Incubus, Fiona Apple, Hoobastank*

By Rob Putnam

Missouri native and self-taught engineer Jim Wirt has been in production since the '80s—after recording with his band Fools Face at Santa Monica's Sound Solution Studios (now 4th Street Recording where he now does much of his work). Since then, he's produced Incubus (recording their demos), Fiona Apple and Hoobastank.

Wirt works in Los Angeles but makes Missouri his home. The reason? "Bands don't move here anymore," he explains. "There's a lack of bands; there's no scene at all. Most of the bands I've worked with over the last few years have been from New Jersey."

Bands that he produces are found online either by himself, his wife Claire or Randy Chase, a collaborator in Cleveland, OH, where Wirt also maintains a studio. "We're starting to get a reputation," he says. "We think that we're making \$100,000 records for \$20,000. So it's a combination of people approaching us and us just going out and looking."

Wirt feels that he's focusing on some substantial bands, bands that he believes are the best to be found. "A lot of producers that are still doing major label bands are just living out their contracts," he observes. "It may take me a few years for something to hit, but I feel that we're on that path because we're doing the best material. How can we save music? It's not by doing some old band that's still got one record left in their contract that no one will care about. It's about finding the coolest bands."

Accordingly, Wirt likes to develop acts that he believes hold a strong work ethic and the right attitude. "People that come out to L.A. don't care about other bands," he explains. "They come here to be famous. They don't want to be fans. It's hard to break it in a big city. You can't really get a fanbase, especially in L.A. There are no small towns outside of it in which to develop a following. Cities like Chicago and Detroit are huge but they aren't entertainment hubs. So we started a label called Crushtane Music. We want to sign bands that can draw 400 - 500 people [to shows]. We've got one band from Chicago, two from Cleveland and one female solo artist. We're trying to get a scene going in the places where we sign bands."

One of the biggest challenges that he's faced as a producer was having to finish records under an extreme time constraint. "There have been a few times when I've stayed up all night," he says. "You're so happy that you've overcome the obstacle that you don't even feel tired. There was another time when a vocalist had no voice the entire time we were recording. We got sound out of him by using his hoarseness, which made it sound great. Musicians get nervous when they come to record. You can punch in every note separately if you want to. The time to get nervous is when you go on stage."

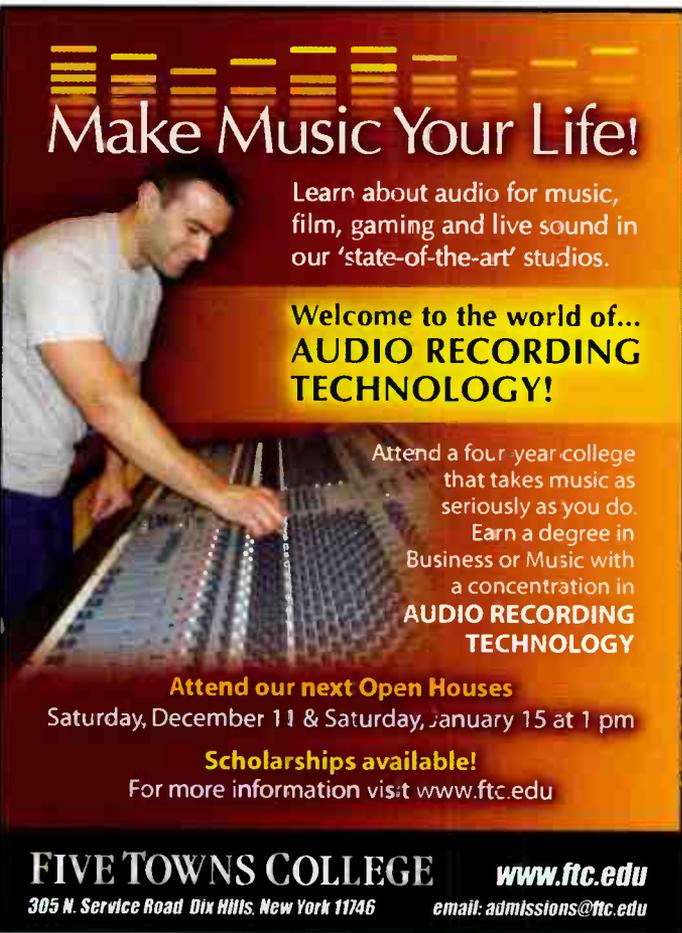
To rising producers Wirt suggests that being good simply isn't enough to make it these days. "You've got to work your ass off," he insists. "You have to be able to do everything yourself because you can't count on people to do it right. You've got to put the time in and can't make people wait on you."

**The three most important things he's learned as a producer are:**

- Mic placement. I look at it as collecting the sound. All of it.
- Don't EQ or compress to the medium that you're recording on. You can always do that later because you don't know what the rhythm guitars or drums will be like. If you do the miking right you won't need to EQ or compress.
- You can't ever be more important than the artist. The artist is everything. Be true to their vision. If they don't have one, help them find it.

Recently Wirt winged down to Argentina to produce an album for the Argentine punk outfit Attaque 77. He's also working with an East Coast band called the Morning Of, for which he has high hopes. Other promising acts on his roster include Gabriel the Marine (from Long Island) and Parachute Musical (Nashville).

Contact [jimwirtmusic.com](http://jimwirtmusic.com), [claire@jimwirtmusic.com](mailto:claire@jimwirtmusic.com)

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**BACKGROUND:** In the late '70s, Texan Steve McClintock moved to L.A. with dreams of becoming an artist. Within six months of his journey, Clive Davis signed him to Arista as half of duo Fertitta and McClintock. Fatefully, Davis and their producer began arguing and the project got shelved. Since his contract forbade him from recording, McClintock began songwriting for Island Music. Making use of his label advance, he built a 16-track studio in Orange County, CA, and started recording hits with acts like Tiffany and Berlin. This was the genesis of 37 Records, McClintock's eclectic boutique. McClintock's current expertise also extends into management, licensing and vocal production.

#### From Digital to Physical:

I started 37 [Records] back in the '80s, just to have an outlet for projects I was working on. It was only in the last five or six years when I moved back to Los Angeles from Vancouver that I decided to get into the digital world. I saw that new wave coming and thought, okay, I can be competitive. And then, as some of the bands I was working with started doing more shows and more touring, it became necessary to expand back to the old way of

“You know how to play music. Now learn a bit about your business, because that’s the only way you’re not going to get taken advantage of.”

doing business in CD form. So I got North American distribution through Burnside and started selling product, but my original focus was on being a digital label.

#### The Thrill of the Hunt:

I got into the business side almost as much as I got into the creative side, because I really enjoyed the conquest. I really liked having a song I thought was great and pitching it to somebody until they agreed. That's the approach I took and I was pretty lucky.

#### Management:

I managed a couple bands early on. The biggest one was Dexter. We got a nice deal and then the band broke up, so I stopped managing for a bit. Then I discovered this kid I thought would be good for country. I took him to Nashville and got him a deal with Almo Sounds. He did pretty well, but one of my biggest successes with him was getting one of his songs [recorded] by Aaron Tippin. It went to No. 1. It's not just about the record; it's about what I can do for my artists to help them make a living doing what they love.

#### Take My Wife, Please:

I constantly look for somebody to co-manage [bluegrass artist Cathy-Anne McClintock], because she's my wife. I'm going to tell an artist some things and I'm going to tell my wife other things. I didn't want to producer her, either. We tried two different producers. We did two or three songs each and never captured it. So we started over a third time on this project and I took on the production, even though I didn't want to do that either. But that's how we managed to finish it and we're really proud of it. It's a great record.

#### Pop Rocks:

I'm a pop guy. I like good melody and I like getting to the meat of a song quickly. I'm signing a new girl out of Vancouver named Emily Spiller. She's a singer-songwriter kind of thing. White Apple Tree is electronic pop. Brian Stoner is pretty much modern rock and Cathy-Anne is folk acoustic. I want to grow to where people who are looking for something interesting look at 37 Records. I love the pop side of reggae, so I'm probably going to get into that this year. Everything is within the pop format for me. I don't want to work on an 11-minute song.

#### Variety Hour:

I like bouncing around and being able to do different things. I have a pretty good handle on a lot of different kinds of music. I don't consider myself a rap producer, but I'm working with some guys right now with Cathy-Anne. It's acoustic folk meets rap. It's going to be really odd, but it's going to be fun.

#### Story of His Life:

I've been told all my life, "you could be the best songwriter in the world if you just wrote. You could be the best producer if you'd just produce." I don't know. I started writing a book on it and got 23 chapters and left it in the back of an airplane one day. I thought, "I'll never write that again."

#### Indie Investment, Indie Profit:

We try to sell 10,000 to 15,000 records [of each recording]. That's profit for us. We're not selling them for nine bucks a piece; we're selling usually for \$15. If we sell that many records, we can put money back into people.

#### Green Christmas:

Two years ago, I produced a Christmas album for Judy Aken. We sold about 6,000 copies of it and it cost me about \$20,000 to produce. I got to work with great players and it'll sell forever. It's been one of the bigger quarterly sales, even though it's almost three years old. It sells all the time. I would do more of those kinds of things if they presented themselves.

#### Licensing Magic:

I have to find bands I can get onto TV. We got Shiny Toy Guns a cut in the new *Wall Street* movie and we also got it used in the trailer. I've got an indie film for White Apple Tree in Germany. It could be their break into that whole territory. The type of electronic pop music they do is really popular there. I'm always looking for those kinds of things. I'm probably not going to sign something unless I think I can license it.

#### Flavor of the Minute:

When we got White Apple Tree in *Gossip Girls* last year, sales raged within the hour. In five days, that was pretty much off the radar. That doesn't mean it's still not selling, but it sold [approximately] 4,500 units in four or five days. And then it's kind of over. That's not necessarily longevity kind of stuff.

#### Taking Care of Business:

Some things we might just be interested in the publishing side and some things we might be interested in the artist side. It's tough on small labels to sign bands, because the cost of a band is expensive, when they break up it's expensive and you've got all the issues of who owns what. You can see why big labels don't sign as often—there's too much going on. I like to see people who have a concept of what the business is about. You've taken the time to learn your craft. You know how to play music. Now learn a bit about your business, because that's the only way you're not going to get taken advantage of. I prefer to work with bands that know what's going on, because my contract's going to be done quicker, I'll have less lawyer fees and everybody'll be happy because they all understand it and nobody's screwing anybody.

#### Roll With the Times:

We're doing an EP for White Apple Tree, just four songs, and we're going to give it away on Amazon. After three or four months, we'll start selling downloads again. This EP is not going out as a CD for at least six months. Before Shiny Toy Guns was signed to Universal, Myspace was the big deal. When they hit a million listens on Myspace, we got press all over the world. That was a big deal. I have three million listens with White Apple Tree and nobody gives a shit. Times have changed. So you've got to find other ways to interest people. Because we're an independent label, we can make these decisions without having to talk to 40 people. We just decide we're going to do the record and we're going to give it away. That doesn't sound like a smart business decision, but I hope it will help advance the career of my band.

#### Love It or Leave It:

If you're going to be in this business, you'd better love it because you're going to get told no most of the time. You're going to get told you're too old, you're too young, you're too fat, you're too short, you're too cute, because nobody wants to say yes. People who say yes lose their jobs. If you don't have the passion go do something else. You might get lucky and get a one-off here or there, but if you want a career you need to embrace it and love it. And that means you live it as well.

**M**usic Connection's *Business Affairs* delivers up-to-date information about the signings of new artists, significant developments at major and indie labels, as well as news of managers and attorneys who are active in the A&R aspect of the music business. So that MC can provide the most current information possible, please send any industry news, buzz or rumors that need to be verified to **BBatMC@aol.com**.

**OPPS**

• **MusicXray has two OPPortunities worth pursuing...** The first involves **Bad Boy Records**. Originally called **Bad Boy Entertainment**, the label was founded **Sean "Diddy" Combs**. Today it operates as a subsidiary of **Warner Music Group** and is distributed by **Atlantic Records**. **Bad Boy** is looking for **DOPE** writers.

The second involves **stealth OPPS**. **Stealth opportunities** are not listed online or via search engines. You have to be selected for them. The only way to find them is by having your songs matched to them through **MusicXray's S2O** service. If interested in either opportunity (as well as others listed on the website), you can go to **musicxray.net** and upload your music for free.

• **Myspace has developed a new website to better serve the hip-hop generation.** Rap/hip-hop has been propelled to the top music genre on the website. Myspace

wants to create a rich, personalized experience for people to discover content and connect with fans who share similar interests. **Mike Jones**, Myspace CEO explains, "Myspace is unique in that it is powered by the passions of our users, who program the site by expressing interests and sharing tastes around particular topics, as well as scouting up-and-coming subcultures. This is just the first step and there will be many more features, programs and improvements to come."

• **Wanna Party?** It's the holiday season again and parties are in full swing. With that in mind, **Sirsa Shekim** of the critically acclaimed duo **Beauty Supply** contacted **Music Connection** to offer her DJ services to our readers. Her style is loungey and hip "cosmo-chic," always groovy and melodic. Just mention **MC** and you'll get a nice discount. She may even bring her mannequins along. You can contact **Sirsa** at **sirsa@earthlink.net** or call **310-614-3842**.

• **Conrad Dimanche**, the former **Director of A&R for Sean Combs' Bad Boy Entertainment**, has launched an **Online Production Platform** titled **PMPworldwide**. **PMP** allows producers from all around the country to submit tracks directly to record labels, artists, and A&R for direct placement.

**Dimanche** has managed the production of platinum albums by the likes of **Danity Kane**, **New Joc City**, **Diddy**, **Notorious B.I.G.**, **Carl Thomas**, **Black Rob** and others. With his name and accomplishments engraved in the music industry, **Dimanche** launched this service for the upper echelon of independent talent. He wants to act as your personal liaison to top A&R executives from major labels such as **Def Jam**, **SRC**, **Universal**, **Capitol** and **Shady Records**. If you think you have what

**KEITH URBAN SCORES PLATINUM**



Ed Rock

**2010 CMA Entertainer and Male Vocalist of the Year** nominee **Keith Urban** held a listening event for the release of his seventh **Capitol Records Nashville** album, **Get Closer**, at the **Hard Rock Café**. Guests not only got to hear a sneak peek of the new album, they were also treated to a surprise live performance by **Urban**. In a funabout, **Capitol Records Nashville President & CEO Mike Dungan** surprised **Urban** with a **Platinum plaque** signifying sales of over **1 million copies** of his last album **Defying Gravity**. Pictured are **Urban** and **Dungan**. To get the latest, go to **keithurban.net**.

it takes, you can contact **Rodney Hubbard** at **rodhubb@gmail.com** or call **773-990-9333** for details. Go to **pmpworldwide.com** for more.

• **Jonesy's Jukebox is back on the air and is seeking material for airplay.** L.A.'s rock radio station **KROQ** brought **Steve Jones**, the former **Sex Pistol**, back to the airwaves with a two-hour show from **7:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.** on Sunday nights. **Jones**, excited about his new home, reports, "They are letting me play whatever I want—and that's good for me." It's good for you too. The program will feature an irreverent mix of new music from iconic artists, developing talent, and eclectic cuts from his personal music collection. You can hear the show on FM radio and online at **kroq.com**. To submit music to be considered for inclusion on **Jonesy's Jukebox**, send a CD and Bio to: **Steve Jones c/o Jonesy's Jukebox, PO Box 790, Hollywood, CA 90027**.

• **Filmmusic.net—created by Film Music Network—is constantly posting opportunities to help get your music placed into film/tv.** From all markets, the job board continually posts specific needs for everything from European TV commercials to major motion pictures. From metal guitar tracks to instrumental hip-hop, to electro-fusion, everything is needed. Check out **filmmusic.net**.

**LABELS ~ RELEASES ~ SIGNINGS**

• **Sir Elton John** says, "Never Again..." The man frequently hailed as the greatest songwriter of his generation, with hits such as

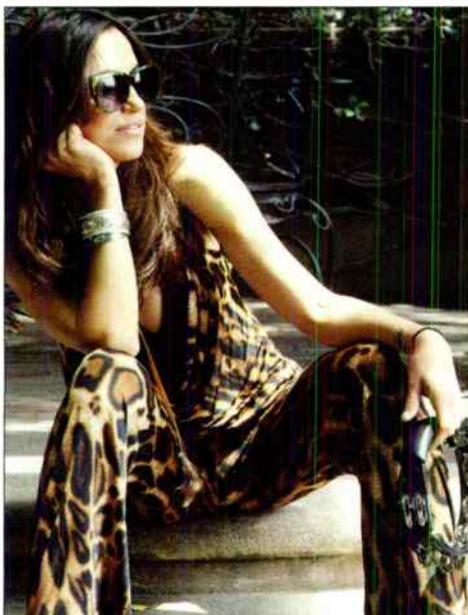
"**Rocket Man**," "**Your Song**" and "**Candle in the Wind**," says he can no longer compete with younger stars like **Lady Gaga**. The 63-year-old said he would continue with several "little side projects" such as his collaboration with the U.S. pop band **Scissor Sisters**, but declared that he would never put out another solo single.

In an interview with **GQ** magazine, **John** said: "I'm at that stage where I don't think I can write pop music anymore. I can't sit down and do a proper song. It was okay when I was 25 or 26, but not anymore."

**Sir Elton** was half of one of pop's most successful songwriting partnerships with lyricist **Bernie Taupin**. They went on to enjoy more than **50 Top 40** hits and **250 million** record sales. Earlier this year **Sir Elton** released **The Union**, an esoteric album of duets with **Leon Russell**. Launching the album at the **BBC Electric Proms**, he related: "I can't make pop records any more and I hate videos. I just watched **VH1** and it makes me want to vomit." To check out what you'll be missing, go to **eltonjohn.com**.

• **Welsh songbird Charlotte Church is gearing up for a return to the United States** with her first album of new material in a decade. Slated for release in early 2011, the album is entitled **Back to Scratch** and showcases **Church's** growth from a young teen sensation to a mature artist as she penned most of the songs on her latest release. The album was produced by Grammy winning **Martin Terefe** who was named one of **Billboard Magazine's** "Producer's of the Year" after working with the likes of **Train**, **Jason Mraz** and **KT Tunstall**. **Church** burst onto

**MISTY WILL PLAY ROCK & ROLL HALL OF FAME**



Brian Bar

**Misty Gonzales' Freedom Child Entertainment** has partnered with producer **Warren Huart (the Fray, Kris Allen, Mandi Perkins)**. They are planning to release a three-song teaser in **January 2011** and a complete **10-song album** titled **The Rock & Roll Hippie Show** in **April**. **Gonzales** currently has a residency at the infamous **Sunset Strip club, The Roxy**, and is scheduled to play at the **Rock & Roll Hall of Fame** in **March**. To find out more about her, go to **mistyfreechild.com**.

the scene in 1998 and became an international star with the release of her debut album, *Voice Of An Angel*. Showcasing her unique vocals across a collection of arias, hymns and traditional pieces, it sold over four million copies worldwide and made her the youngest artist ever with a No. 1 album. If you'd like to learn more, or hear her music and check her tour schedule, go to [charlottechurch.co](http://charlottechurch.co).

• **Music attorney, Ben McLane** has reported that Australian pop-rock band **Tonight Alive** recently signed with **Sony Music**. They are scheduled to record their debut album with producer **Mark Trombino** (*Blink-182*, *Jimmy Eat World*). To hear what they've got, visit [myspace.com/tonightalive](http://myspace.com/tonightalive). To contact McLane, e-mail [bcmclane@aol.com](mailto:bcmclane@aol.com).

• **Grand Hustle/Atlantic recording artist T.I.** has announced the release of his new album, *No Mercy*. The Grammy Award-winning rapper's first new collection since 2008's double-platinum *Paper Trail* arrives on Dec. 7th. It is T.I.'s seventh studio album, with guest appearances from **Kanye West**, **Eminem**, **Chris Brown**, **The-Dream**, and **Christina Aguilera**. Production was handled by top producers including **Dr. Luke** ("Magic," "Right Round"), **Danja** ("My Love," "Knock You Down") and **Jim Jonsin** ("Whatever You Like," "Lollipop"). For additional information, go to [trapmuzik.com](http://trapmuzik.com).

**PROPS**

• **Judy Collins** has had a great year. The June release of her "life-

affirming record" *Paradise* on **Wildflower Records** became her highest charting album in over a decade. Collins will also appear on NPR's news quiz show *Wait, Wait Don't Tell Me* on Dec. 4 and has already taped a "Tiny Desk Concert" at NPR's Washington, D.C. headquarters. Called "one of the greatest interpreters of modern times" by *Mojo*, Collins' career spans 50 years, more than 40 albums, and numerous Top 10 hits.

Collins' new album features her take on songs from the likes of **Jimmy Webb**, **Tom Paxton**, **Joan Baez**, **Tim Buckley**, and **Stan Jones**, as well as duets with **Joan Baez** and **Stephen Stills**. To find out the latest on this legend, you can visit [judycollins.com](http://judycollins.com).

**Rockin' Moms** conducted an international song contest seeking songs that reflected a "parenthood" theme. The 1st place winning song, "Making My Way" was written and performed by **Zarni**, a 21-year-old aspiring new singer-songwriter originally from South Africa. The song portrays the everlasting love of a parent, as her child makes the transition to adulthood.

Zarni is currently studying at the **Berklee College of Music** and is a few semesters away from finishing her double major in Music Education and Songwriting. She won \$1,000 cash, a Daisy Rock Guitar and a boatload of other great prizes. The contest was open to both professional and amateur songwriters with winners chosen by a panel of music industry professionals. For further information, head over to [rockinmoms.com](http://rockinmoms.com).

**GODZILLA WISHES YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS**



That eccentric band of splendid artists, the **Towels**, have a holiday treat for you... a song called "Godzilla Christmas." Yes, the lizard celebrates Christmas. But, you might say the resplendent reptile is somewhat of a Scrooge. You see, his childhood was troubled to say the least, resulting in deeply personal issues. Will he find redemption, or continue his nasty ways? Listen to the song and decide for yourself. You can check it out at [thetowelsband.com](http://thetowelsband.com).

• **Los Angeles based rockers, the Darlings**, have come a long way since their inception in 2005. They beat out hundreds of bands to win this year's **Ernie Ball Battle of the Bands** and had their song "What Lies Below" picked up by the **NHL Anaheim Ducks**, who used the track for their season promo spots on **Prime Ticket**. The band's song "Let's Roll" has also been in steady rotation on influential L.A. modern rock station **KROQ's Locals Only** show for months. In addition to taking part in the **Vans Warped Tour** for the third time last summer and securing endorsements from **Ernie Ball** and **Hart & Huntington**, they hit the road on tours with **Pennywise**, **Strung Out** and **Guttermouth**. You can find out more about this bust group at [myspace.com/thedarlings](http://myspace.com/thedarlings).

**THE BIZ**

• It's been reported that **EMI** has lost its court case and will soon be on the selling block. When the dust finally settles there may be only three big labels left, **WMG**, **UNI** and **Sony**. Some industry experts predict that **Google** will be in the hunt and may score the historic catalog held by **EMI**.

• **Myspace** may have changed its focus to music, but it's still limping along. It's so dicey that some believe **News Corp**, which owns the company, could pull the plug on the entire operation within the year. **COO Chase Carey** offered the following sombre comments about

the aging social network, "We've been clear that Myspace has been a problem." Carey went on to say, "Current losses are not acceptable or sustainable."

Traffic numbers for Myspace (which saw revenue plummet \$70 million compared to sales a year earlier) need to be better or else the website could be readied for the auction yard sooner than some have expected.

• The world's most egregious file sharer, **Jammie Thomas-Rasset** was found guilty by a jury of her peers... for the third time. She became the first defendant to take **RIAA** file-sharing accusations to court. Unlike thousands of others, she rejected an out-of-court settlement, preferring to argue her innocence in front of a Minnesota jury in 2007.

Due to irregularities, the case was appealed twice and tried three times. This time, however, **Thomas-Rasset** was fined \$1.5 million after rejecting a settlement offer of \$25,000 which would go to charity. She plans to appeal... again. Simply Google "Jammie Thomas-Rasset" for further details. **MC**

**MICRO-BIO:** Voted one of the "Top Music Business Journalists" in the country, **Bernard Baur** is the connection between the streets and the suites. Credited with over 1,200 features in a variety of publications, he's a Contributing Editor at **Music Connection**.

**JAN LINDER-KODA DIRECTS TAXI ARTISTS**



**Jan Linder-Koda**, a singer, songwriter, record producer and actor, is on a mission to help singers and producers connect with the emotional content of the songs they sing and record. With that as her focus, she presented a master's workshop at this year's **TAXI Road Rally**, where she unveiled her newly published *Guide to Directing Singers from an Actor's Perspective*. Demonstrating tips and exercises found in the work, she surprised and impressed all who attended. Those interested in checking out this one of a kind tip guide, can go to [angeldivamusic.com](http://angeldivamusic.com). Pictured (l-r): **Linder-Koda** and **Alessandra Silva**.



# “Make Money with Your Music No Matter Where You Live”

*Martin Haene – TAXI Member*

**M**y name is Martin Haene, and since I was a kid, I dreamed of earning my living with my music.

Sound familiar?

I live in Switzerland, so I thought it was nearly impossible. After all, who wants to hear music from a guy with a home studio who lives 5,920 miles away from Hollywood, in a country the size of West Virginia?

### **What Didn't Work...**

I tried sending out hundreds of unsolicited CDs, but it was expensive and unproductive. Just like you, I needed a “vehicle” for my music.

### **What Did Work!**

I discovered TAXI in 2006 and quickly understood the value of having a well-connected U.S. based company “filter” my music and get it to the right people. I thought the people on the receiving end would be much more likely to listen to well-targeted music from a trusted source, rather than the *hundreds* of unfiltered songs they get every day.

The number of my Film and TV placements has increased *dramatically* since joining TAXI: In just 2 ½ years, my music has been used in international TV Shows like *Lincoln Heights* (ABC Family), *Stylista* (CW Network), *Degrassi* (CTV) as well as feature films like *Graduation* (Independent) and *Bring it on – Fight to the Finish* (Universal). I've also licensed four of my tracks for a Sony/BMG, Latin Music CD that was released internationally.

### **Your Music as Your Retirement Fund**

Having also signed deals with several top publishers through TAXI, I have little doubt those will turn into an ever-increasing number

of Film & TV placements down the road. I'm beginning to see how my music could easily become my retirement fund. How many musicians can make that claim?

You can if your music is top notch and you use your TAXI membership well.

### **More Than Just Great Contacts**

TAXI is also the perfect way to learn what the market needs and how to produce it. Every member gets two free tickets to TAXI's annual convention, the Road Rally. It's such a great learning and networking experience that it's *more* than worth the price of the plane ticket – even from Switzerland!

I've also made friends, contacts, and met co-writers by becoming part of TAXI's online community. The possibilities are limitless if you take advantage of them. And the best part is, you can make money with your music no matter where you live.

Where do *you* live and what are you waiting for? Call TAXI!



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*The World's Leading Independent A&R Company*

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**ASCAP'S HIGHER POWER**



ASCAP (the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers) saluted the songwriters and publishers of Christian music's most performed songs at its 32nd annual Christian Music Awards in Nashville. Pictured (l-r): Songwriter of the Year Ben Glover and ASCAP's Tim DuBois.

**NSAI INDUCTIONS IN NASHVILLE**



The Nashville Songwriters Association International (NSAI) and the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame joined forces for the 40th Anniversary Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame Dinner & Induction Ceremony in Nashville. Former BMI President & CEO Frances Preston joined the night's honorees, receiving the prestigious NSAI Mentor Award. Pictured are (l-r): BMI VP, Writer/Publisher Relations Jody Williams; inductees Pat Alger and Steve Cropper; Frances Preston; AT&T Tennessee President Gregg Morton; Roger Murrah, Senior VP, Bug Music; and BMI President & CEO Del Bryant.

**Repping Writers on the Row**

The **Songwriter Agency**, a new company that books hit songwriters into a variety of mainstream venues, has opened its doors in Nashville, TN. The company was created by music industry veterans **Paul Compton, Randy Harrell and Rod Parkin** and has a roster of over 30 country, pop and rock songwriters, including **Regie Hamm, Wynn Varble, Buddy Cannon, Deanna Bryant and Phillip White**.

While some of the performers will be booked as solo artists, the majority of dates will include multiple songwriters billed as a package, acoustically or with a band. The audience at each show will get to hear the stories behind the songs and hear the writers performing their hits exactly as they were originally written.

For the agency roster, tour dates, writer biographies or more information about the company, visit [thesongwriteragency.com](http://thesongwriteragency.com). They can be reached at 615-289-0769.

**Furlong Channels the Bieber**

Within hours of the release of songwriter-producer **Nicholas "RAS" Furlong's** video spoof "If I Was Justin Bieber," it exploded with thousands of YouTube views. This sly video commentary on the unrelenting "Bieber Fever" introduced Furlong to a global audience of ap-

preciative viewers. In reality, Nicholas "RAS" Furlong is a songwriter more accustomed to crafting songs for others to record. Signed to hit songwriter **Ryan Tedder's Patriot Publishing** (a company in alliance with **Kobalt Music Publishing**), Furlong writes for artists including **Jordin Sparks, Big Time Rush, Josiah Bell and Her Majesty and The Wolves**.

With reports on overwhelming viewer support coming in from as far away as the U.K., India, South Africa, Netherlands and Hong Kong, Furlong appreciates the activity, and emphasizes that although he may not be Justin Bieber, his song is shared in the spirit of a complementary creativity.

"Music is at a crucial point," Furlong says, "with so much going on and so many talented people coming out and getting their chance to shine. It is so exciting to see music go back to a point of purity; when it was about the music, fun to make and listen to. It's a fun business to be in."

To see the video for yourself, check out [youtube.com/watch?v=UDH yCk5IF7o](http://youtube.com/watch?v=UDH yCk5IF7o).

**ASCAP Gives Back**

ASCAP (the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers) together with **America SCORES** will once again present its national songwriting mentorship program, **ASCAP**

**Songwriter Residency @ America SCORES**. The program gives ASCAP songwriters and composers a platform to give back to their local communities by engaging and inspiring inner city school kids through songwriting and recording.

As part of the program, ASCAP selects its talented members, ranging from rising stars to Grammy-winning artists, to collaborate with SCORES kids over three two-hour sessions: co-writing a song during the first two sessions and recording it in a professional studio during the third session.

Confirmed for this year's program are the **Great Unknown** in five cities; Latin Grammy-winning songwriter **Claudia Brant** (Luis Fonsi, Carlos Santana) in Los Angeles, CA; songwriter **Odie Blackmon** (George Strait, Lee Ann Womack) in St. Louis, MO; R&B singer-songwriter and So So Def/Island Music recording artist **Dondria** in Dallas, TX; songwriter-producer **Chris Henderson** (R. Kelly, Jamie Foxx) in Atlanta, GA; and songwriter-producer the **Legendary Traxster** (Ludacris, Twista) in Chicago, IL.

Additional details regarding Brant, Blackmon, Dondria, Henderson and the Legendary Traxster will be announced soon.

To listen to songs created during last year's program, visit [ascap.com/playback/2010/07/AC TION/AmericanScores.aspx](http://ascap.com/playback/2010/07/AC TION/AmericanScores.aspx).

**ANASTASIA BROWN: POWER PLAYER IN TOWN**



Anastasia Brown has joined L.A. and New York-based **Format Entertainment**, a music supervision company (the **Iron Man** and **Sex and the City** franchises, **The Blindside**, **Alvin and The Chipmunks**). TV viewers may recall her stint as a celebrity judge on **Nashville Star**. Contact her at [Anastasia.brown@formatent.com](mailto:Anastasia.brown@formatent.com), 615-330-5822 or 615-783-1850.

**BMI ROCKS OUT, GETS COMPOSED**



BMI presented the "From Rock Star to Composer: Creating a Career in Film/TV Music" panel during the 2010 **Billboard/Hollywood Reporter Film/TV Music Conference** in Los Angeles. Participants included (l-r): **Stewart Copeland**; **Doreen Ringer Ross**, BMI VP of Film/TV Relations; **Lyle Workman**; **The Angel**; **Charlie Clouser**; and **Ann Donahue**, Senior Editor, *Billboard*.

## SESAC SIGNS RICKMAN



SESAC has announced the signing of singer-songwriter Brandon Rickman for representation. Rickman, lead singer and guitarist of the celebrated Lonesome River Band, created a buzz last year with the release of his solo project, *Young Man, Old Soul*. Rickman recently took time out from his busy writing and touring schedule to visit with SESAC to commemorate the occasion. Pictured (l-r): SESAC's Amy Beth Hale, Rickman and SESAC's Tim Fink.

## Claude Kelly Expresses for Christina

Fresh off the release of his lead songs for David Archuleta ("Falling Stars"), Fantasia ("Bittersweet") as well as Britain's Oily Murs ("Please Don't Let Me Go"), recent Song Biz Profile luminary Claude Kelly has penned the first track, "Express," by Christina Aguilera, for the forthcoming Aguilera and Cher feature film, *Burlesque*. He also wrote "Who Dat Girl" featuring Akon for Flo Rida's new album, *Only One Flo (Part 1)*, and "Stuttering" for Fefe Dobson's latest effort, *Joy*.

Among the auspicious creator's co-written cuts are "Party in the USA" (Miley Cyrus), "Circus" (Britney Spears), "Take It Off" (Ke\$ha), "In My Head" (Jason Derulo), "Grenade" (Bruno Mars) and "My Life Would Suck Without You" for Kelly Clarkson. Contact is Kaz White, Simone Smalls PR, Inc., 917-388-3887. kaz@simonesmallspr.com.

## Edwards: Operator for SESAC

Maxine Edwards has been appointed VP, Broadcast Operations for the performing rights organization SESAC. Edwards formerly served as VP, Licensing Administration & Process Development. Edwards will be responsible for

the directing and evaluating strategic licensing initiatives within broadcast and digital media industries.

Edwards began her career with SESAC in 1995 as Manager, Account Resolutions before being promoted to Director, Administration & Support in 1997. In 2000 Edwards was named Senior Director, Licensing Administration and held that position until being upped to VP, Administration & Process Development in 2005. Prior to joining SESAC, Edwards served as Senior Case Manager for Chapter 13 Trustee, Western District of TN. She can be reached at 615-320-0055. Visit sesac.com for details.

## Chrysalis on the Block?

BMG Rights Management and the Warner Music Group are among the list of potential bidders for Chrysalis Music Group, which has said it is discussing "merger opportunities," according to *The New York Post*. Chrysalis, a British music publisher whose catalog includes work from recent *MC* cover subject Ray LaMontagne, Blondie, David Bowie and Michael Jackson, said that it was in "early stage discussions with a number of parties regarding merger opportunities, which may or may not lead to an offer being made for the entire issued and to-be-issued share capital of the company."

Among those taking a look are BMG Rights Management, the joint venture between Bertelsmann and Kohlberg Kravis Roberts, and Warner Music, which has considered a possible reverse merger between Chrysalis and its own music-publishing arm.

Should BMG leverage a deal with Chrysalis, it would be the company's fifth acquisition this year. In September, the company announced a deal to buy Evergreen Copyright Acquisitions. Earlier this year BMG bought Cherry Lane Music Publishing, followed by Adage IV's catalog and Stage Three Music. See chrysalismusicusa.com.

## HITLAB Partners with ASCAP

ASCAP and HITLAB.com, a new media company focused on reinventing the way music is discovered, produced, marketed and distributed, have an exclusive agreement to help ASCAP's songwriter, composer and publisher members receive evaluation, scoring and personal feedback of their song submissions. See [ascap.com](http://ascap.com) and [hitlab.com](http://hitlab.com). MC

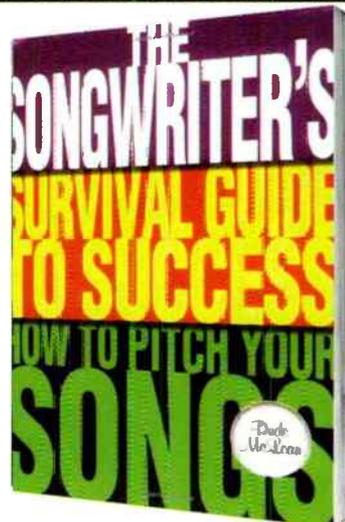
**MICRO-BIO:** Dan Kimpel's newest book, *It All Begins with the Music*, is penned with legendary A&R exec Don Grierson. Hear Dan's audio interviews worldwide on Delta Airlines.

## NEW REVENUES SYMPOSIUM



Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI), presented its inaugural "Content, Copyright & Commerce" symposium during the Digital Hollywood Fall conference in Santa Monica, CA. Pictured (l-r): The "Music Downloads vs. Streaming" panel with Mark Piibe, EVP, Global Business Development, EMI Music; Michael Drexler, Sr. Director, Business Development, New Media Licensing & Strategic Development, BMI, *MC*'s Dan Kimpel, moderator; David Rosenberg, Legal Counsel, Live 365; Vickie Nauman, VP, North America, 7digital; and Massimiliano Pellegrini, CEO Dada Entertainment, Dada Group.

## SONGWRITER'S SURVIVAL GUIDE TO SUCCESS



Veteran music publisher Dude McLean reveals practical tips and a wealth of hard won experience in his debut book, *The Songwriter's Survival Guide to Success (How to Pitch Your Songs)*, new from Hal Leonard. The psychology of marketing—how and who to pitch—is vividly described from a publisher's point of view. Find it at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) and the music biz shelf at your local bookstore. Learn more about McLean at [songconsultant.com](http://songconsultant.com).

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One INDIE BAND at a time

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# Kristian Hoffman

**"I'm unrepentantly guitar-oriented. I rock—too bad."**

by Dan Kimpel

Swelling string sections, searing guitars and cavernous drums: Kristian Hoffman's *FOP* utilizes an epic palette to frame a 17-song suite of meticulous craft and extravagant personality. When he began recording he had no financial backing, but a *ProTools* record would have been out of the question. "My ambitions are much larger," pronounces the energetic artist over an omelet in a Glendale, CA deli. "When I did secure backing, I thought, 'There's a Richard Harris opus in me waiting to happen.' I needed to out myself as someone who loves this kind of opulence."

Over the course of his convoluted career, Hoffman maintains that he has often been accused of being too pretty and too perfect. "What's the matter with that?" he retorts. "I love the Sex Pistols, but there's room for this over-reaching grandiosity, trying to best yourself and improve the craft." *FOP* presents songs that appear to have multiple personalities, with melody, lyrics and production each taking turns pirouetting in the spotlight. "I always aspired to make music that had layers. You want to seduce by beauty, or outrageousness, and some conceit no one has ever used, then you want to listen to it again and say, 'But there's more. Something else has been saved as a surprise.' That's what the music I love does."

A native Californian from a family of peace activist Quakers, Hoffman grew up listening to the Weavers and Pete Seeger plus an annual classical record provided by his mother. When Hoffman's grandmother passed away, he inherited her Knabe parlor grand piano that echoed with this valuable lesson. "She had played for the silent movies and said you only need to know how to accompany three things: a chase, a love scene and conflict."

Scribes have marveled at Kristian Hoffman's Zelig-like pop culture presence: He was Lance Loud's best friend in the '70s PBS reality show forbearer *American Family* and musical partner in the punk band Mumps; a New York provocateur who played with the Contortions and the Swinging Madisons; the writer of Klaus Nomi songs including "Total Eclipse"; a touring musician with the Kinks' Dave Davies and a musical director for Rufus Wainwright. Despite this illustrious history, *FOP* proves that Hoffman exists in both tenses, present and future.

Although there are baroque dimensions in his arrangements, his sensibility is more Left Banke than Bach. "I come from rock," Hoffman affirms. "That George Harrison thing of always making a guitar solo a hook, and the Mick Ronson thing of making the sound sinuous and sexual. I'm unrepentantly guitar-oriented. I rock—too bad."

Hoffman enjoys the input of a vivid cast of co-conspirators in his current project. Videos from *FOP* include "Hey Little Jesus Get Out of That Hole," with John Andrew Quale, aka Prince Poppycock as the Lord and Savior; "Out of the Habit," an eye-popping production with the hunky Kazakhstan tenor, Timur Bekbosunov, and "Ready or Not," featuring Hoffman as a jaded stage director conducting an audition with Rob Zabrecky of Possum Dixon. "As Oscar Wilde said, 'I still manage to meet people with a deplorable excess of personality,'" laughs Hoffman who says that the creation of the videos reflects the artistry of those around him. "I asked my friends, 'Would you help me?' and they said, 'yes.'"

In addition to music, Hoffman is a well-known visual artist whose images have accompanied everything from a New York Dolls album insert and a Green Day documentary poster to one-man retrospective shows. Fittingly, *FOP* includes a 28-page color booklet designed and illustrated by the artist. Hoffman also programs what he describes as "Light psychedelia from 1966 - 1971," for a weekly radio show on Luxuria music.com. "I put on a new radio show every week, so I'm always trolling for new records," he notes.

According to Hoffman, *Days of Future Passed* (Moody Blues) and *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and The Spiders from Mars* (David Bowie) are the referential bookends that inspired him to display his spellbinding artistry within the grandiose sonic amber that is *FOP*. "I like having control," the artist affirms, "and this is a current scrapbook of my contemporary vision."

Contact Wendy Brynford-Jones, Hello Wendy PR, 818-762-7063, [wendy@hellowendy.com](mailto:wendy@hellowendy.com)

MC

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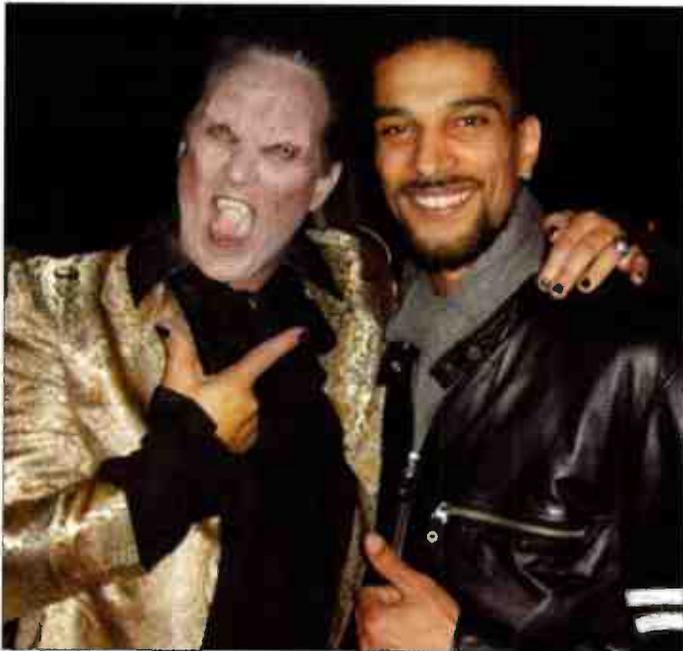
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JENNIFER R. GIBLIN

▲ **IS NOBODY GUARDING THE BORDER?:** Guitarist Kim Gosselin of Blackguard flipped heads (and hair!) during the band's concert at the Gramercy Theatre in New York City, recently. The Canadian death metal band, along with over 1,200 artists, took over N.Y. venues during the five-day CMJ Music Marathon. See [myspace.com/blackguard](http://myspace.com/blackguard) for future dates.

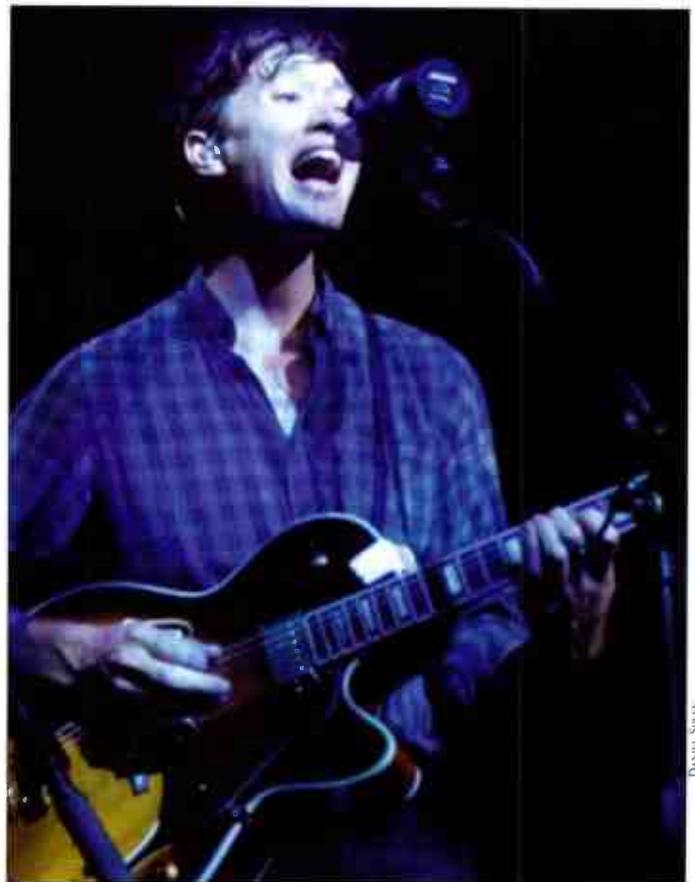


▲ **LOGGINS SUCKS LIFE OUT OF AMERICAN IDOL:** Veteran promoter and *New Music Weekly* magazine publisher Paul Loggins was caught in rare form this Halloween at his annual bash held in Nashville "Music City U.S.A.," TN. Pictured (l-r): Loggins (CEO, Loggins Promotion/Backstage Entertainment) and American Idol Corey Clark.



▲ **LIVE AT LEEDS REVISITED:**

Best live rock album ever? The Who's *Live At Leeds* is usually up there on most lists. But even if it isn't ranked No. 1, make no mistake—it's an album of raw power that has been in every hard rock fan's collection since its release. Now, just in time for the holidays, you can gift (yourself, of course) this nectar of the rock gods via a 4-CD box set that features a reissue of the original vinyl LP and its seven-inch vinyl single. Just as we hype the return of a classic, however, let's entertain for a moment an alternate reality, where Leeds was just another stop on the tour, and instead the city of Hull became the show etched in rock & roll history. What if, upon its release, Nik Cohn of the *New York Times* had hailed *Live At Hull* as the best live rock album ever made? Well, if all had gone according to the band's original plan, that's exactly what would've happened, because by many accounts the acoustics, the performance and all the other accoutrements that make for an unforgettable show were at Hull, not Leeds. But as you'll discover in the included booklet, Pete Townshend deemed the Hull recordings unfit for mass consumption. Today, however, with the help of scientists, specialists, fortune tellers and pinball wizards, you can hear the Hull gig and judge for yourself. *Live At Leeds* or *Live At Hull*? Luckily, with this impressive box set, there's no need to substitute.  
—Daniel Siwek



DANIEL SIWEK

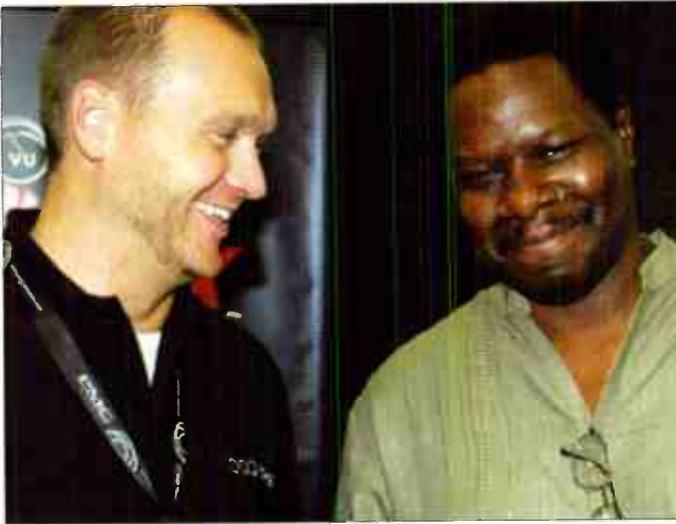
▲ **THE MUSIC BOX GETS BENT:** Berkeley, CA's the Morning Benders brought their blend of moody indie-rock and '60s pop to the Music Box in Hollywood, CA, where they headlined in support of their latest release, *Big Echo* (Rough Trade). Pictured is Christopher on guitar and vocals.



◀ **HOW TO GET TO CARNEGIE HALL:** D'Addario & Alhambra hosted a gala event and stunning classical guitar performance by 2010 Koblenz Classical Guitar Competition winner, virtuoso Rafael Aguirre Miñarro with delightful opening sets from Cem Ouruöz and Philippe Bertaud. Set at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall, the concert series sustains both D'Addario's and Alhambra's continual efforts to build artist recognition for up-and-coming classical artists. Check out [daddariofoundation.org/concertseries](http://daddariofoundation.org/concertseries).



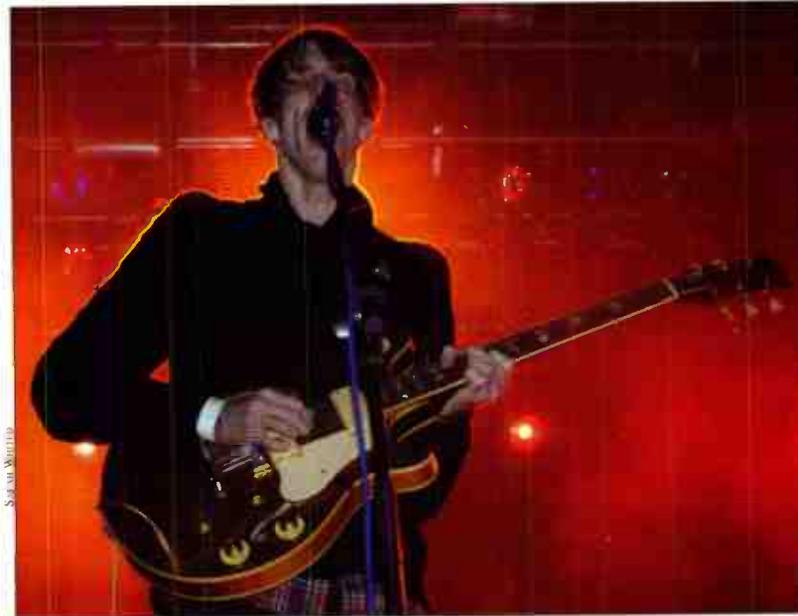
▲ **MC'S FRIDAY FREEBIE WINNER GETS AMPED:** *Music Connection* gave away a VHT Special 6 Combo amp, courtesy of The Music Link, to Friday Freebie winner Danny Stringer, Jr. of Los Angeles, CA. Each week *MC* gives away a piece of stellar gear for free, so see what's up for grabs now at [musicconnection.com](http://musicconnection.com)—look in the upper right hand corner for the words FRIDAY FREEBIE.



◀ **SOCIAL NETWORK UNVEILED AT AES:** *MixSensei.com* principals Maurice Patist (left) and Oave Isaac are seen at the recent AES convention in San Francisco, CA, where the new social networking website "MixSensei" was officially unveiled. The site offers a series of downloadable, 90-minute video tutorials that cover all aspects of sound engineering and music production to go with a social networking platform.



▲ **MICHAELSON PARACHUTES INTO HOLLYWOOD:** Ingrid Michaelson recently came through Hollywood, CA, performing a headlining show promoting her new record *Parachute*. She wrapped up the gig with an ode to Britney Spears, making Michaelson a truly brave performer. Visit [ingridmichaelson.com](http://ingridmichaelson.com) for more details.



▲ **FUN FUN FUN FEST:** This relatively new festival (founded in 2006), was held Nov. 5-7 at Waterloo Park in Austin, TX, and sold out for the entire weekend. The eclectic lineup featured Weird Al Yankovic, MGMT, Deerhunter, GWAR, the Descendants, the Vandals, Suicidal Tendencies and more, as well as alternative entertainment such as an open skate ramp, boxin, and an air sex competition. The four-stage festival is hosted by Transmission Entertainment, a rapidly expanding coalition of promoters, owners and employees of punk/rock venues along the city's Red River Street. Pictured is Bradford Cox of Deerhunter. For more, visit [funfunfunfest.com](http://funfunfunfest.com).

# BRUNO MARS

By Dan Kimpel

The lilting tenor voice of Bruno Mars is inescapable on modern pop radio. His No. 1 pop hit “Just the Way You Are,” the follow-up, “Grenade,” his guest turns on B.o.B.’s “Nothin’ on You” and Travie McCoy’s “Billionaire,” his co-writes on Flo Rida’s “Right Round” and Cee Lo Green’s “Fuck You” all serve to showcase this 25-year-old Honolulu native’s exuberance as a vocalist, songwriter and producer. Now his full length, *Doo Wops and Hooligans*, reveals the full dimensions of Mars the artist. Although this new release marks his album debut (it was preceded by an EP, *Better if You Don’t Understand*), Mars, born Peter Gene Hernandez, is a show business veteran. “The hardest thing to do is to talk about your own songs and your own craft,” Mars begins in this exclusive interview with *MC*.

**Music Connection:** We first became aware of you as a songwriter for Sean Kingston, Brandy and Flo Rida as a member of the Smeezingtons, a buzzed-about songwriting and production team. What do you feel is your greatest strength as a collaborator and as a songwriter?

**Bruno Mars:** I would hope my “strongest strength” is simplicity, which is very difficult in its own way. In “Nothing On You,” I’m saying something that has been said a million times in other songs. There are a couple of things that make it more current and fresh. My favorite songs are very simple. For “Nothing on You” I was listening to the Flamingos’ “I Only Have Eyes for You.” Just that line alone is the most charming, flyest line in the world. But the way they used the melody behind it is what makes you able to connect with it. I’m not super poetic. If I’m going to write a song I’m going to write it as if I was talking to some girl. When I say, “I think you’re amazing just the way you are” that’s what I would say. But if you put a bad-ass fucking melody behind it, then you get gold records.

**MC:** Where does songwriting end and production begin?

**Bruno Mars:** You need a hook in the production. Take the White Stripes for instance; “Seven Nation Army,” that bass line is a hook. “Nothing on You” or “Fuck You” same thing—you play the track and you will be able to hum back what the piano is doing. We try to make sure that, when we’re writing, the music alone is something memorable.

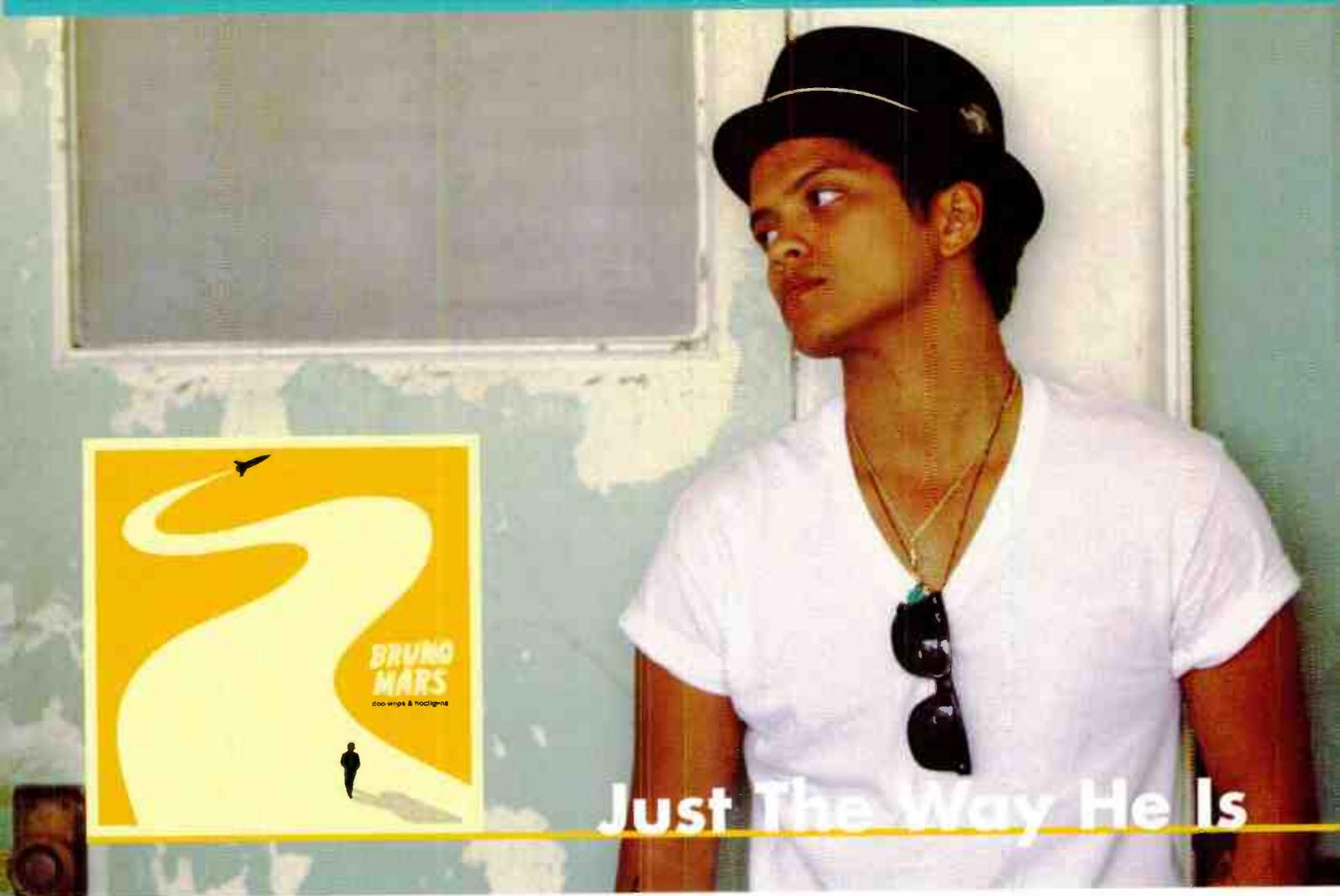
**MC:** When you say “we,” may we assume that you’re referencing your co-writers and producers, the Smeezingtons, with Philip Lawrence and Ari Levine? Are your musical backgrounds similar within this partnership?

**Bruno Mars:** We grew up on Motown, and old-school music; along with classic rock, that’s our upbringing. And for me, doo-wop music. That’s what we were listening to, and we cross our fingers that we can write songs that pass the test of time, like that music and those songs have.

**MC:** Speaking of Motown, you were signed with them early in your career, but that went nowhere. Would you care to elaborate on that experience?

**Bruno Mars:** The difficult part was *after* I got signed. That’s when the frustration kicked in. I didn’t know what was going on. It’s not like the movies where you get signed and all of a sudden hit records are falling in your lap and you’re touring the world. The reality was that I was always waiting for them to call and say, “Now you can go in with this producer and this songwriter.” I think it was because of that frustration that I took it upon myself to say, “I’m going to write and produce everything myself.”

**MC:** You’re clearly a skilled and charismatic live performer. You’ve been on the road this fall with Maroon 5, toured Europe, and have been on recent shows like *Late Night With David Letterman*, *Today*, *Saturday Night Live* and the upcoming *Grammy Nominations*



## Just The Way He Is

**Concert Live.** Even though your first successes were behind the scenes, was achieving recognition as an artist always at the forefront of your ambitions?

**Bruno Mars:** Who can sell the song better than the person who wrote it? Who can connect emotionally with the song? We're in a day and age that if people are going to spend a dollar on music they're going to support the cause. It helps when they know it's coming from this person, and knowing exactly who creates the music.

**MC:** In this current information age, with 24-hour news channels, the internet and the accessibility of Twitter and other social media, many artists seem obsessively connected to their fans. How do you feel about this trend?

**Bruno Mars:** I was never a technology buff. I prefer the mystery of an artist. I didn't have YouTube and Twitter when I was growing up, all of these things where you can get music so fast. If you wanted to see the *Thriller* video you had to wait until it played on MTV or buy the VHS.

That was so fun. I remember being a kid and just loving that. Now, people can pull out a cell phone and just record the concert and have it on YouTube for everyone to see. That's something I personally have to get used to. If that's where music is going, you have to know how to adapt.

**MC:** How do you feel being onstage and seeing the audience either recording you on cell phones or watching the video screens? Is it distracting?

**Bruno Mars:** It's not too distracting, but it's just not my style. Personally, if I bought a ticket to a concert I would want to feel like it was only for us, the fans, where everyone is in the moment sharing the intimacy. I guess that's not how other people think.

**MC:** "Fuck You" by Cee Lo is a huge hit. Where in the world did that come from?

**Bruno Mars:** You know what, man? Again, that was inspired by Motown, Sam Cooke, and Jackie Wilson. I've been a huge fan of Goodie Mob and Gnarls Barkley. When "Crazy" came out it made me feel so much better—it was on hip-hop stations, crossing over genres, because it was so good. No one could categorize what it was.

I remember getting signed to Elektra and I really wanted to work with Cee Lo. I'm a huge fan and his voice is incredible. So we started working together and did a song for Travie McCoy's record; he did a song on my EP, "The Other Side," which is also on my album. We got together for his project, *The Ladykillers*, and we walked into the studio and were just jamming.

I said, "Yo man I've got this idea." And I sang, "I see you driving downtown with the girl I love/ Fuck you." And he said, "Man, I love that, let's just go with that." And he started going on a rant, "I'm sorry, I can't afford a Ferrari," and he's really digging in. It was the most collaborative session that we'd ever had. I wish we had a video camera in the studio because that was like a band getting together and making a song. It got better and better. So we wrote it on a piece of paper and he went into the booth and began singing it, and

everyone was getting chills—he was performing it so well, and we're laughing because the lyrics were just incredible. We knocked it out in one day. He's such a good singer that it's hard for him to miss a take.

**MC:** Your own voice is very distinctive. Could you talk about your vocal technique and influences?

**Bruno Mars:** I make love to that microphone. I really want to make sure that the emotion comes across. In "Just the Way You Are," I'm hoping what makes people feel it is the emotion behind the lines, "I never asked you to change if perfect's what you're looking for then just stay the same." Those aren't mind-boggling lyrics, but I hope the emotion I put behind it in the vocals will make you feel it.

Vocal influences? I guess I studied guys with higher register voices because I sound like a chipmunk! I listened to Stevie Wonder, Sting, Michael Jackson and Alvin from the Chipmunks, voices that were more relatable to me because I can sing them as opposed to Barry White.

**MC:** The musical culture in Hawai'i is so diverse, with the traditional music, Jawaiian (Hawaiian reggae), Hapa-haole, slack-key. Did you ever sing the Hawaiian style falsetto?

**Bruno Mars:** There's a song called "Akaka Falls" ("Waiile O 'Akaka," written by Helen Parker in

...continues on page 44



# Hot 100 LIVE UNSIGNED

## Artists & Bands

**M**usic Connection's annual, eagerly awaited Hot 100 list spotlights those artists and bands whose live performances made a big impact on us over the past 12 months. Those involved in determining the results of our 2010 poll included not only Music Connection staff members, but freelance journalists, club bookers and other industry professionals from across the nation. To enquire about a live review of your band, be sure to check out Music Connection's acclaimed always-free **AMP Music Network**; it's for musicians only—no friends or fans.

Compiled by Mark Nardone, Bernard Baur & Julianna Young

ARTIST	WEBSITE	STYLE	LOCATION	ARTIST	WEBSITE	STYLE	LOCATION
Addison Strong	AddisonStong.com	Alternative Indie	Los Angeles, CA	Kinloy	kinloy.info	Rap/Rock	Tokyo, Japan
A Dying Ember	Myspace.com/ADyingEmbersg	Metal	South Gate, CA	lo3way	lo3way.com	Rock/Americana	Los Angeles, CA
Alex Nester	AlexNester.com	R&B Soul	Los Angeles, CA	Leftover Cuties	LeftoverCuties.com	Indie/Acoustic/Folk	Los Angeles, CA
The Apple Stung	theAppleStung.com	Rock	Osaka, Japan	Lizzy Williams	LizzyWilliams.com	Alternative/Pop Rock	Los Angeles, CA
Armado	Armado-bond.com/moin.html	Indie Pop Rock	Los Angeles, CA	The Lonely H	myspace.com/theLonelyH	Rock/Americana	Port Angeles, WA
Assemble The Skyline	MySpace.com/assembletheskyline	Alternative Pop Rock	Hollywood, CA	The Lost Boys	2lostboys.com	Rock	Lake County, CA
Audacity	Myspace.com/AudacityCA	Gorage/Rock/Punk	Los Angeles, CA	Love on do .38	Loveondo38.com	Hard Rock	Los Angeles, CA
The Bad Beat Jockpot	CorlRestivo.com	Rock	Los Angeles, CA	The Luxury	theLuxuryBand.com	Rock/Brit Rock	Boston, MA
Beauty Supply	BeautySupplyMusic.com	Synth Pop	Los Angeles, CA	The Mocpodz	theMocpodz.com	Jam/Prog Jazz Rock	Ann Arbor, MI
The Black and White Years	TheBlackandWhiteYears.com	Indie/Alternative	Austin, TX	Magic Hammer	MagicHammer.com	8-bit	Nashville, TN
The Bright Light Social Hour	BrightLightSocialHour.com	Rock	Austin, TX	Magnolia Memoir	MagnoliaMemoir.com	Jazz Swing	Los Angeles, CA
Comoron Ochs	ComoronOchs.com	Americana Folk Pop	Oakland, CA	Morgote	myspace.com/Morgate	Pop/Punk	Los Angeles, CA

[www.musicconnection.com/amp](http://www.musicconnection.com/amp)

Cathy-Anne McClintock	cothyanneclintock.com	Acoustic Folk Americana	Westminster, CA	Mark Guliana's Beat Music	MarkGuliano.com	Drum & Boss/Electronic	New York, NY
Cheer Up Charlie Daniels	Myspace.com/CheerUpCharlieDaniels	Pop/Rock	Nashville, TN	Megon Burt & The Cure for Love	MeganBurt.com	Pop/Acoustic	Denver, CO
Coldwater Canyon Band	Myspace.com/ColdwaterCanyonLA	Rock	Los Angeles, CA	Melea McGuiness	MeleaMusic.com	Country/Pop Rock	Santa Monica, CA
Dorius Lux	DoriusLux.com	Rock/Pop	Los Angeles, CA	Michael Jost	JostMusic.com	Acoustic/Flamenco	Venice, CA
The Dirty Guv'nahs	theDirtyGuvnahs.com	Rootsy Garage Rock	Knoxville, TN	Michele Vreeland	MicheleVreeland.com	Singer-Songwriter	Los Angeles, CA
Draysin	Myspace.com/draysin	Rap/Rock	Los Angeles, CA	The Millionaires	theMillionairesPloy.com	Jump Blues/Swing	Detroit, MI
Drew Yowell	DrewYowell.com	Singer-Songwriter	New York, NY	Miss Willie Brown	MissWillieBrown.com	Country/Americana/Pop	Los Angeles, CA
Echo Echo	weareEcholoEcho.com	Alternative	Santa Ana, CA	Misty Freechild	MistyFreechild.com	Americana/ Blues Rock	Los Angeles, CA
Ecotonic	Ecotonicmusic.com	Rock/Folk/Soul	Los Angeles, CA	Muertones	myspace.com/theMuertones	Surf/Rock	Los Angeles, CA
Erica Nicole	EricaNicoleMusic.com	Country/PopRock	Los Angeles, CA	The Mullhollands	MullhollandsMusic.com	Indie/Pop Rock	Los Angeles, CA
Evil Twins	Myspace.com/EvilTwins	Indie Pop	Venice, CA	The Murdochs	Myspace.com/themurdochs360	Indie/Punk	Port Orchard, WA
Evolove	Myspace.com/EvoloveTheBand	Alternative/Pop Rock	Los Angeles, CA	Nature Airliner	reverbnotion.com/NatureAirliner	Folk	Tokyo, Japan
EZ Tiger	Myspace.com/EZTigerMusic	Alternative/Pop	Los Angeles, CA	Neverwonder	neverwonder.com	Rock/Soul/Indie	Artesia, CA
Fay Wolf	FayWolf.com	Singer-Songwriter	Los Angeles, CA	Oh Darling	OhDarlingMusic.com	Indie/Rock/Pop	Los Angeles, CA
Fay Wroays	Myspace.com/FayWraysFresno	Post-Punk/Rock	Fresno, CA	Okie Doke	Myspace.com/OkieDoke	Punk	Los Angeles, CA
The Feaver	theFeover.com	Rock	Ventura, CA	Omar Torrez	OmarTorrez.com	Alternative/Latin/Blues	Venice, CA
The Fronks	DieFranksDie.com	Indie/Punk	Los Angeles, CA	Or, The Whole	Myspace.com/OrTheWhole	Americano	San Francisco, CA
Friend Slesh Lover	FriendSlashLover.com	Indie Rock	Los Angeles, CA	The Paper Raincoat	thePaperRaincoat.com	Pop/Rock	New York, NY
The Frontier Brothers	theFrontierBrothers.com	Rock	Austin, TX	Papersky	PaperskyMusic.com	Metol	Tokyo, Japan
Gaby Moreno	Gaby-Moreno.com	Indie Rock	Los Angeles, CA	Quiet Company	QuietCompanyMusic.com	Indie/Pop	Austin, TX
Gold Motel	Myspace.com/GoldMotel	Pop	Chicago, IL	Rolly for One	Myspace.com/rallyfor1	Alt. Pop Rock	Long Beach, CA
Gram Rabbit	GramRabbit.com	Alternative Rock	Los Angeles, CA	RapScallions	Myspace.com/rapscallionsmusic	Funk/Alt/Hip-Hop	Los Angeles, CA
Gypsy Saddle Tramps	GypsySaddleTramps.com	Rock	N. Hollywood, CA	Remedy	RemedyDetroit.com	Rock/Pop	Detroit, MI
Haroula Rose	Myspace.com/HaroulaRose	Indie/Folk Rock	Los Angeles, CA	Sean Wheeler and Zander Schloss	Myspace.com/SeanWheelerZanderSchloos	Roots/Folk	Palm Springs, CA
Images	Myspace.com/Images	Punky Power Pop	Los Angeles, CA	Seth Swirsky	watercolorday.com	Pop	Los Angeles, CA
Invago	Invago.com	Latin/Euro Rock	Takya, Japan	Shammy Dee	ShammyDee.com	Hip-Hop/Soul/R&B	Las Vegas, NV
Joylo	JaylaMusic.com	Acoustic/Pop Rock	Los Angeles, CA	SO & SO	whoissoandso.com	Soulful Pop Rock	Beverly Hills, CA
Jenny Wood	Myspace.com/JennyWoodNashville	Alternative	Nashville, TN	Stab City	Myspace.com/StabCityStabCity	Rock/Punk	Los Angeles, CA
Jezda	jezda.com	Hip-Hap	Hollywood, CA	Starving Far Gravity	Myspace.com/StarvingFarGravity	Melodic Rock	Orange County, CA
Jahn Pointer	JahnPointer.com	Virtuasic Acaustic	Austin, TX	The Stane Foxes	theStoneFoxes.com	Bluesy Swamp Rock	San Francisco, CA
Jary Glick	Myspace.com/JaryGlickMusic	Pop Rock	West Hills, CA	Sunset Drive	sunsetdrive.jp	Rock	Tokyo, Japan
Jupiter One	JupiterOne.com	Rock	New York, NY	The Swords of Fatima	theSwordsofFatima.com	Surf/Tropical/Psychedelic	Los Angeles, CA
Kalu James	KoluJomes.com	Singer-Songwriter	Austin, TX	Thomas King	ThomasKingmusic.com	Electro-Pop	Los Angeles, CA
Karina	karmina.com	AAA Pop	Venice, CA	Toni Monroe	Myspace.com/TaniMonroe	Rap/R&B	Los Angeles, CA
Karen Hort	KarenHartMusic.com	Singer-Songwriter	Los Angeles, CA	The Towels	theTowelsBand.com	Eccentric Pop Rock	Los Angeles, CA
Kevin Bents	bashville.com	Pop/Rock	New York, NY	Truth 2 Power	Truth2PowerMusic.com	Prog Rock	Nanuet, NY
Kingbaby	KingbabyMusic.com	Rock/Blues	Los Angeles, CA	Youth Sounds	YouthSoundsMusic.com	Indie Rack	New Orleans, LA
Kinetic Element	myspace.com/KineticElement	Prag Rack	Richmand, VA	The 88	the88.net	Pop/Rock	Los Angeles, CA



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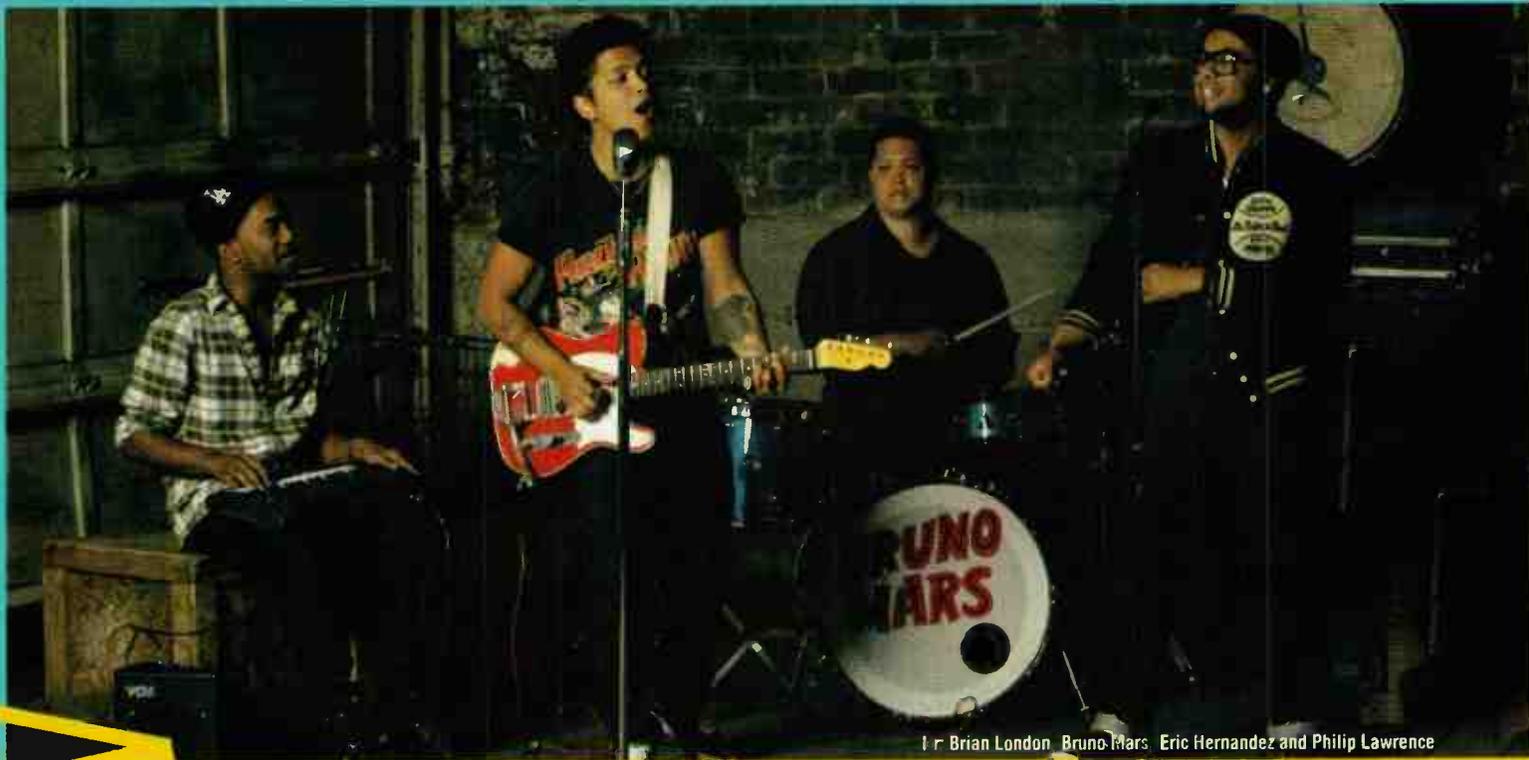
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Inspired by the Legend

Mix Master Mike

My Playlist

1. Plasma Rifle
2. Stylistics
3. Black Milk - 365
4. M.I.A. - MAYA
5. Bassnectar

Every Revolution  
Needs a sound track



From left: Brian London, Bruno Mars, Eric Hernandez and Philip Lawrence

## QUICK FACTS:



A chubby baby, Mars was nicknamed "Bruno" in homage to the rotund wrestler named Bruno Sammartino.

Mars' father, Pete Hernandez, is a percussionist; his mother, Bernacette or "Bernie" a vocalist and dancer.

The 1992 film *Honeymoon in Vegas*, features a very young Bruno Mars as a bouffant-haired tyke in a blue jumpsuit, with a fierce hip shake doing "I Can't Help Falling In Love," as "Baby Elvis." He had worked with his uncle John Valentine's band as the island's youngest Elvis impersonator.

Bruno Mars was one of the few Elvis impersonators ever invited to perform at Graceland. Priscilla Presley was in attendance at a banquet at the Memphis shrine.

Along with three schoolmates, Mars formed the School Boys, a group that recreated classic oldies by the Isley Brothers and the Temptations. They had an ongoing gig at Ilikai Hotel in Waikiki alongside Mars' family's band, Love Notes.

Two other well-known vocalists—Hopa-haole crooner Alfred Apaka and Yvonne Elliman ("If I Can't Have You")—graduated from President Theodore Roosevelt High School, Bruno Mars' alma mater.

At 14, Mars did an impersonation of another idol, Michael Jackson, in the *Legends in Concert* show in Waikiki described as "a multi-media extravaganza featuring a live cast of impersonators in a \$10 million showroom."

In Los Angeles, Mars was briefly in a band called Sex Panther with his brother Erik and Jeff Bhasker, now a Grammy-winning producer for his work with Jay-Z featuring Kanye West and Rihanna. The band's name comes from the film *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy*, reportedly a Mars favorite.

At the beginning of November 2010, when the two top spots on the *Billboard* singles charts were held by "Just the Way You Are" by Bruno Mars and "Fly Like a G6" by For East Movement, it represented the first-ever chart domination by two Asian American artists.

1934) that is all falsetto. I used to sing it when I was a kid in a show I used to do. I was in a bunch of shows. I was a damn circus freak when I was a kid. I did an Elvis impersonation. A lot of people are reading about that recently.

**MC: Were you around the big shows, like Al Harrington's?**

**Bruno Mars:** That's where my parents met each other. My dad was a percussionist and my mom was a hula dancer. That's crazy that you would even say "Al Harrington." That's the real Hawai'i stuff right there

**MC: Did you ever consider building your career in Hawai'i?**

**Bruno Mars:** I really wanted to take a stab at world domination. Why not? I felt like I could always go back to Hawai'i and record an album or keep doing what I was doing down there, singing and performing, which I was very happy doing. But my sister moved up to California. I stayed in touch with her and she said, "You've got to come up here. I've met a few people who might be interested, but they need to see you, you've got to be here." It's hard to do it from over in Hawai'i when you're hours and hours away.

**MC: Like most Hawaiians, you're ethnically mixed. What were the cultural dynamics of that when you were growing up?**

**Bruno Mars:** The thing about me is, culturally I don't know what the hell I am. My father is from Brooklyn and went to Hawai'i, my mom moved from the Philippines when she was a baby. I'm Puerto Rican and Filipino and I'm on his island, listening to this crazy music and putting on an Elvis suit. My real name is Peter but my mom and dad call me Bruno. I was all over the place. That was the problem: I never knew what to adapt to.

I'm not the only one. There are so many mixed breeds out there right now. It's not like the old days where you would hang out with the black kids or the white kids. Everyone is becoming so much more cultured, diverse and worldly. It's more of a natural thing. That's what is helping music become more acceptable.

**MC: *Doo Wops and Hooligans* certainly crosses a wide spectrum of styles.**

**Bruno Mars:** This is my first album. Some of the songs are older than others. It is an eclectic mix of music. I think people need to know my story a little bit more. And to know that I'm a producer and I produced this and that, and maybe that's why I jump from genre to genre. I'm a fan of music, and I think if people understand that, they'll understand this album.

**MC: Let's talk production. It seems that your knowledge of different genres, as you've indicated, would be a plus.**

**Bruno Mars:** You've got to be well educated. A guy like Cee Lo is a jukebox, and knows every record ever made from 1922 to 2010, you've got to be on top of it. When he has references, you've got to know. I'd love to get in the studio with Jack White or Jay-Z, but you have to know that world to be able to hang with those cats. You can't be a producer and not know what's going on.

**MC: What producers do you study or admire?**

**Bruno Mars:** Jay-Z, Jack White, Quincy Jones, Dip Lo & Switch, Phil Spector, Timbaland and the Neptunes. And Brian Wilson. To me, he's the king of melody.

**MC: Some of the producers you've mentioned have their own styles and some are more transparent in their craft. Where would you put yourself in that mix? Is your style as a producer identifiable, or do you prefer to let the artist's signature dominate the sound?**

**Bruno Mars:** I don't know where the fuck I am. I can play a couple of chords and put a song together. Those guys had their sound down. I'm a fan of all of those guys and I aspire to be just as good as Timbaland or Brian Wilson, but I might not have one particular sound like they do. Hopefully my song and melody are going to be bad ass.

Contact [cara.donato@atlanticrecords.com](mailto:cara.donato@atlanticrecords.com)

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# Rock-n-Roll Gourmet, Inc.

## Ex-Musicians Are Now In The Chips

**"P**ease, Love and Gluten Free." That is part product tag-line, part philosophical mantra of Dan and Jean Ehrlich, co-founders of snack food company Rock-n-Roll Gourmet. In 2007 the husband and wife team were industrious musicians trying to raise awareness about their various live and recording projects, while simultaneously trying to make sense of a music business that was seemingly crumbling all around them. Dan started a website in 2005 called Music Industry Television. The site's intent was to respond to and try to define the changes that were emerging within the global music scene. Let's take a step back to the origin of the Ehrlichs' entrepreneurial spirit and vision.

"I started in the food business in 1986," says Dan. "My brother and I were making salad dressing in the back of my parents' house in New York. It was his company, called Robert's American Gourmet. He found some success with the salad dressing, found a co-packer and there I was out of a job.

"I've been a musician/bass player for 35 years," Dan continues. "I made my living on the weekends doing casuals and different kinds of gigs. My brother went on to create another food product called 'Pirate's Booty.' In 2003 I went back to him and said I've got this idea to blend music and snack food. He said he loved the idea so I set up a meeting with Wyclef, who loved it and was gonna set up a meeting with Clive Davis. We were gonna have a whole new way of marketing music on the back of snack food bags. I brought it back to my brother who basically got cold feet and threw me out the door again."

Slightly stunned but undaunted, Dan kept the music-oriented snack food idea in the back of his mind while maintaining a steady living as a sideman and owner of the Manhattan recording studio, Powerhouse. He was keeping tabs on the business while working on his Music Industry Television concept. It was at this time that Dan and Jean both reached an epiphany that changed their lives and career direction.

The object of Dan's musical internet enterprise was to teach musicians how to make money vis a vis interviews with legendary producers like Quincy Jones, Phil Ramone and guitar greats like Buddy Guy. "We wanted to make a site where people could go and be a part of the music industry even though they were on the fringes of the industry," explains the bassist. "Everything was becoming more D.I.Y. and record deals were not so legitimate anymore."

Dan met Jean in 2007 and she became co-producer of MIT, which culminated with a film shoot for the site on location in Beverly Hills at one of the Gibson studios. There were musicians and music industry professionals milling about when the couple had an "aha!" moment. "There were a number of drink sponsorships present and everybody had a free drink in their hand," observes Jean. "But we also noticed many people had a bag of snacks in their hand too. And there was only one vending machine, which was empty. I said, 'Look at all those drink sponsors but no snack food sponsors.'"

That one poignant question reignited Dan's snack food bag music connection and the shift from Music Industry Television to Rock-n-Roll Gourmet began.

"We had over two years of footage for our channel but had no clear way to turn the site into money," admits vocalist Jean. "Our intention was to interview musicians and have them seen and heard because that is every artist's goal. And we also saw that there was a lot of space on the back of snack food bags that could be used for advertising."

The duo now found themselves moving full throttle into the snack food business, with a rock & roll attitude. They expanded on the altruistic notions that blossomed out of MIT, promoting bands and causes like "Playing for Change," that build music schools in impoverished countries like Ghana and sponsor musicians who tour around the world to promote peace.

"When we decided to get out of the internet business and start a snack food company we said, 'Let's make something that's healthy or, at least, healthier,'" states Dan. "A lot of musicians are out on the road and eating a lot of crap and convenience store fast food, with high fat and lots of chemicals. We wanted to offer something different."

*"A lot of musicians are out on the road and eating a lot of crap and convenience store fast food, with high fat and lots of chemicals. We wanted to offer something different."*

*—Dan Ehrlich*

Hippie Chips are an all natural, zero cholesterol, low fat and baked-not-fried potato and rice-based product that is light, flavorful and fun. The music aesthetic is pervasive, with clever classic rock themed names like "White Room Cheddar," "Woodstock Ranch," "Haight Ashbury Jalapeno" and "Memphis Blues Barbecue." They also feature organically based "Rock & Pop Kettle and Jalapeno Corn," "Sweet Emotions" heart shaped cookie-like snacks and their newest taste sensation "Little Wings," which is a buffalo wing chip with bleu cheese drizzle.



Dan and Jean knew they finally had a winner with a great product and concept, but needed to find a way to distinguish them from the over-saturated snack food pack. With their focus on healthier snacking, they marketed their products primarily to schools.

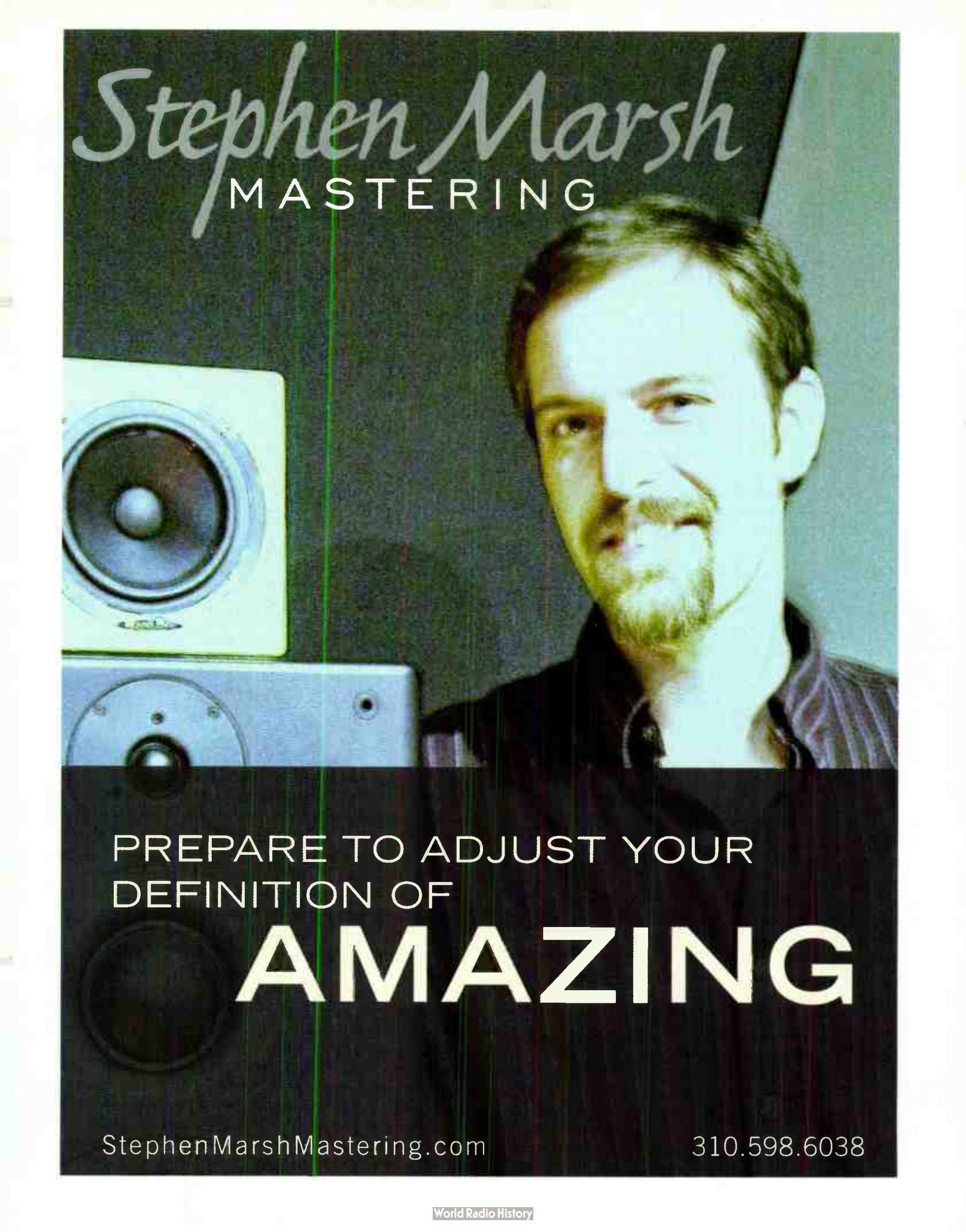
In true trail blazing fashion they bought a large 1949 Crown tour bus and christened it "The Motherchip." Dan and Jean's goal is to travel across the U.S. spreading the word on healthy eating, lifestyles and music to kids. They will be doing this by partnering with the Grammy in the Schools Foundation to save music programs.

"We also want to help up and coming bands raise money for their tours and recordings," explains Dan. "We have a very innovative concept where bands would sell boxes of our products to their fans and the proceeds would go back to them to fund their tours. The band who sells the most would get on the back of the next bag. Touring is the only real way that bands can make any money right now because that's something you can't download or steal."

Although it may be a clichéd or overused term, "thinking outside the box" or...ahem "bag," in this case, is exactly how bands should consider their career approach. "So many songwriters are marketing themselves the same way. They must become the 'Purple Cow,'" explains Dan in reference to the best-selling book by marketing expert Seth Godin. "How do you make yourself different? When you walk into a music store and you see a zillion CDs, how do you stand out? How do you stand out on the internet? You have to change yourself and become 'Purple' today."

Visit [rocknrollgourmet.com](http://rocknrollgourmet.com)



A portrait of Stephen Marsh, a man with a goatee, looking towards the camera. He is positioned in front of a dark wall. To his left, two large studio monitors are visible, one above the other. The top monitor is white with a black grille, and the bottom one is black with a silver grille. The lighting is soft, highlighting his face and the speakers.

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# 85 Ways to BEAT this RECESSION Like It Owes You MONEY

By Bernard Baur • Andy Mesecher • Dean Moore

**A**s we close out the year 2010, the so-called Great Recession shows no sign of letting up. And the next dozen months promise to be no less challenging. So whether your finances are floundering, circling the drain, or even if you're already flat-on-your-ass broke, *Music Connection* offers the following 85 survival tips.



## FREE & CHEAP STUFF

### Suag Yourself a Sponsorship

Sponsorships (also called endorsement deals) aren't just for Madonna and KISS. If your band brings a decent draw and has steady rotation throughout local radio stations, start contacting companies for sponsorship. The only thing better than those brand new drum heads/guitar strings is getting them for free! Make a deal with the merchandiser: Offer to cover your van, your merch booth and your gear with their stickers and banners.

### Strike When They're Hot to Trot

Your greatest chance of landing a sponsorship/endorsement will be when a company releases a new product. Also, sponsors are much more likely to give you goods, rather than money. Jägermeister is known for this. (See "The RIGHT Way To Get Sponsorships," in the April 2010 MC).

### Google Says "Every Day Is Your Birthday!"

Yes, clipping coupons isn't very rock & roll, but did you know that many companies have exclusive e-mail clubs that include discount codes for purchases (especially around your birthday)? Well, rather than signing up for every music company on the web, do a quick Google search for coupons before you "finalize your online shopping cart." Many times you find "free shipping" codes or a percentage off your order. Registering to musiciansfriend.com and sweetwater.com can't hurt either. Also be sure to sign up for discount

programs at grocery stores, drug stores, etc. Some popular online coupon sites: couponcabin.com, Retail Me Not, smartsources.com, coupons.com, Eating Well, couponmom.com, RedPlum and Valpak.

### Partner With An Upstart Clothing Line

Don't pitch the usual suspects. If you need new threads, but can't find any good vintage shops, can't afford designer boutiques, and you've exhausted H&M's inventory, check around for local or regional clothing lines that could benefit from a hot artist wearing their clothes at shows and out on the music scene. If they have a shop in a high-traffic location, offer to play an in-store on a weekend afternoon...while wearing their handiwork, of course.



### Get to Know Your Fans Better

Find out what they do for a living. See if you can utilize their abilities and interests to barter for what you need. Maybe a fan is a champion skateboarder who could get your band to play the next competition.

# ASCAP

## Take Advantage of Perks

If you're a member of a professional music/entertainment organization (ASCAP, BMI, SESAC, NARAS, etc.) take advantage of membership benefits and discounts on tickets, travel expenses, insurance, gear, health care and more.

# BMI

## Barter for Everything

If you're like a lot of musicians, you have a day job or expertise that you can barter. Need an engineer to record your music? Give bass lessons to his kid!

## DO THE MATH

### Itemize All Your Expenses

Sorry, but if you're really serious about curbing your expenses as an individual and as a band, you must closely examine your finances. Keeping a half-ass tab of your monthly expenditures is just not gonna cut it. Instead, sit down and make a list of your exact expenses. Add it all up and see where you overspend, and where you can cut back.

### Prepare a Budget

Writing out a budget will put your band's finances in perspective. If you're going on tour, create a spreadsheet with ALL the costs you'll incur and what your limit is. Having numbers in front of you will make it real and keep things from spiraling out of control.



### Use Quicken

Invest in a program called *Quicken*. It helps you easily account for daily expenses. And at the end of the year, you hit one button and all your expenses are added up for your tax return.

### Put It in Writing

Few bands take this advice because they feel awkward—but a written agreement between band members will spell out the band's business vision in advance, thereby saving you money and assisting with finances when using a joint bank account.

### Open a (DBA) Bank Account

Open an artist account (as a "Doing Business As") and pay attention to it. Put 15 percent of your earnings into it and in six months you should be able to pay for rehearsals or buy merch.

### Keep All Your Receipts

Keep all your receipts: cable bills, parking, gas/mileage, food on the road, guitar strings, drumsticks, studio time, rehearsal space. All may be deductions at tax time for a working musician. And be sure to keep all your receipts in a special folder, so you know where to find them.

## ON THE HOMEFRONT

### Shop Wholesale

Costco and Sam's Club are worth considering as your primary grocery outlet, mainly because you can buy the food you eat most in bulk. When comparing prices, look at the cost per unit rather than the overall cost. Look for meats that are close to the sell-by date and on sale and immediately use or freeze them. Buy only what you know you'll eat—if there's a sale on avocados but you only use one before they turn, you're still wasting money.

### Stay Satiated At Home

Stock your kitchen with food that's cheap and filling. Oatmeal (canister is cheaper than packets) will keep you going for hours; mix in peanut butter for protein, honey for taste. Other fiber-heavy cereals are handy to snack on with or without milk, and Progresso markets fiber-rich soups that are priced right; select varieties with barley or legumes (beans, lentils, etc.) to stay full the longest. And drink water: sometimes dehydration can be misdiagnosed as hunger.



### Trim The Fat

Some might cry sacrilege, but how badly do you really need cable TV? If you have internet access there's just so much to watch online, and Netflix is an affordable option when you're in the mood for a movie.

### Lose The Booze

Weaning yourself off heavy or even moderate alcohol consumption might not be the worst of ideas, for a few reasons. In addition to bloating you for your photo shoot and not exactly belonging to one of the four food groups, it's expensive! Or at least the stuff worth drinking in the first place is.



### Take Up a Hobby

Take ownership of a task, such as web design, video blogging, photography, or maybe managerial work like contacting companies for endorsement or sponsorship consideration. Then go nuts with it, treat it like an obsessive hobby. Create a schedule of goals and log your progress. Get your bandmates to take a task and compete against them. The goal: stay out of pricey malls and movie theaters.

## GEAR PURCHASES

### Organize a Buying Team

Retailers appreciate a "buying team," where you bring in other musicians as customers. Individual purchases might not be large, but the store will be grateful for the biz and reward you for your support.



### Become a Loyal Customer

The more you shop at a store, the better your bargaining position. And be sure to zero in on a specific sales person and get to know them. At some point you could use your past business and the amounts you've paid as leverage for a better deal.

### Renting vs. Buying

Cities like Los Angeles and New York charge an arm and a leg to rent equipment (up to 50 percent of cost just for a weekend!). However, smaller markets like Austin, Seattle, Miami, etc., have rental shops that may offer you as low as 10 percent of cost for a weeklong rental. So if you need a small studio set-up for a few days only, renting the equipment, as opposed to buying it all new, may save you in the long run.

### Buy a PA

It may cost a few bucks up front, but a PA will give you the freedom to play wherever you want. You can book gigs at alternative venues and avoid having to beg for a slot on the club circuit. At alternative venues you'll have less competition and the potential to make some money.

### Buy Quality Gear and Maintain It

Choosing strings with anti-rust coating and wiping them down after each use will improve their longevity. Buy a stylish pouch for your picks so you'll be motivated to keep them close and perhaps lose them less. And do some research on cables before you buy; you don't want to skimp on cheaper ones to save a few bucks and have to replace them every year when a bit more cash upfront would get you a cable with 10 times the life.

## STUDIO STUFF

### Don't Buy A DAW You Don't Need

If you're a singer-songwriter looking to track simple acoustic demos, programs like *Logic* and *ProTools* are a waste of your hard-earned cash. Instead, try using freeware programs like *Audacity* (freeware), and *GarageBand* (comes standard on a Mac) which will provide you with the same basic necessities to track, rough mix and bounce files without all the sexy glitter.



## Do One Song

Try just one song with a studio, producer or engineer before committing to a full production. After all, who said your recording has to be done at one studio? If you're not sure you can work well with them don't agree to a full CD.

## Be Flexible

Studios hate empty rooms. If you can record at odd hours, or at a moment's notice—whenever a studio is empty—you can get great deals. Also, if you pay in cash, you can often get a deal.

## Offer Your Time & Talent

Some studios/producers will cut costs in return for session work. Barter your time for theirs.

## Rehearse at Home

Every band member should record rehearsals so they can work on songs privately before the next session. If you rehearse at home, you won't need as many band hours in a pay-as-you-go rehearsal space.

## Work with Competent Engineers

Don't cut corners on your recordings; you'll probably end up having to pay for a "fix the mix" session. And, by the time you get to mastering, it's too late. So, make sure your tracks are clean and your mixes are ready. A good engineer will track your songs with mixing and mastering in mind. If done properly, post-production will be a snap.



## Mind Your Mastering

As much as you may not understand what exactly mastering is (see our October mastering issue), it is essential to finalizing your recorded product. Don't choose a friend with a laptop because he tells you he can "boost those levels." Choose someone that has experience but also understands you're in a financial bind.

## Refer Clients to Them

Everyone loves referrals. Sending post-pros a stream of paying clients will get you a good deal.

## COPYRIGHTING, REGISTERING



### Forget About a "Poorman's Copyright"

Mailing your songs to yourself so that they have a date stamp is a waste of time and postage. It proves nothing and is not considered evidence in a court of law.

### Get an "Automatic Copyright"

Yes, you must legally protect all of your creative work, but you shouldn't pay through the nose. Obtain an "automatic copyright" by simply recording your songs. You don't need to spend bucks on a big production; a rehearsal demo will

do. Under the law, a copyright exists from the moment you fix an original song in a tangible format.

## Classify Your Songs as a Collection

Registration fees required by the U.S. Copyright Office currently start at \$35 (for an electronic filing). That can add up if you have a lot of songs. But, as long as you are credited as a writer or co-writer on each song, you can save money by registering all of them—a whole album—as a collection. Register individual songs later.

## If You Have a Hot New Song...

If you have a new song that is about to generate income (via a placement, broadcast or cover), register the song so that it gets its own registration number. This applies to any songs already registered in a collection, or on a recording. Giving the song its own registration number is money well spent; it will help speed the clearance process when dealing with the company that's licensing your song.

## CD DUPLICATION

### Hire a Duplicator/Buy a Machine

Even though your mom's computer can burn 100 CDs a day, it will tax the drive quickly. By the 10th CD, the burner will start to make writing and finalizing errors, and possibly fail all together. Instead of paying to replace mom's disk drive every time you come out with a new demo, find someone with a duplicator machine who will give you a good deal.

### CDs or Not?

Yes, yes: CDs show the amazing dynamic artwork and list of credits for your record. But you're trying to lure fans, not win an art award. Instead of mailing out a boatload of CDs to outlets you've never spoken to, send postcards with downloadable links that include MP3, FLAC and WAV files. There are even apps out there that read a barcode and take the phone user directly to the band's webpage. Not only will this impress interested industry folk, but it will also save you a pretty penny in burning, printing and shipping your music.

### Do a Short-Run

If you decide to go the CD route, stop running hundreds of copies. There are duplicators who will do short runs, i.e. 30 to 300 copies for less than \$2 each, even with artwork. Reordering is better than letting your CDs collect dust.

...continues on page 52



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## Don't Go with the Cheapest

There's a lot of competition among duplicators. And though shopping around seems obvious, few artists do it. There's more than one duplicator in the world and some even offer FREE duplication and manufacturing. The trade out is brand advertising in your CD artwork. Always ask about specials and discounts, but don't use the cheapest replicator. Sure, it's tempting to "save a hundred bucks," but you might regret going with the two-man operation in Albuquerque that only communicates by automated e-mail. It's better to wait until you can at least afford a company whose reputation is as good as its price quotes.

## Remember the S&H Factor

Whether with CDs or other merchandise orders, often shipping & handling fees can nullify whatever savings you get out of the price you were able to negotiate. It might be worth it to search extra-hard for quality replicators and manufacturers in your town—if you get a pretty good deal and can go pick up the order yourself you could save more than if you get a slightly better deal out of town.

## Don't Waste Ink

If you decide to self-replicate your CDs, be careful. For example, when making an all black album with a black CD cover, don't waste ink. It isn't cheap. Instead of buying white paper stamps for your CDs and white sleeves, buy pre-printed black materials and use white ink for your lettering. It sounds obvious, but we see it all the time... and the ink weighs down the CD, making it hard to spin properly in a player.

## IMAGE

### Partner with an Upstart Photographer

If you don't have a friend or fan who's a photographer but still need quality promo shots for cheap, look around for someone just starting out who's willing to provide a discount. You can even send out the call (for free) on *Music Connection's* AMP Network. In return for his or her services, suggest the photographer set up



a booth at your next show where he can attract business by taking "out on the town" portrait shots of fans and their friends, which they can then retrieve at the photographer's website (try to get some live shots out of the deal, too!)

## Ask for Shopping Help

In this recession, the "I wants" have to be toned down. Cool items can be found in thrift stores, flea markets and vintage clothing shops. It depends on how creative a shopper you are. Often, guys are not good shoppers—so, ask one (or all) of the females in your life for help. You'll quickly find who's creative.

## Treat Your Stage Clothing Carefully

Don't wear your stage clothes to the gig or on the street. They'll also stay in better shape if you hang them up to dry.

## Test Out Your T's

Fans will buy merch if it looks cool. So when ordering up your merch, do a short run to see how fans respond to the new items—or you'll be washing your car with those T-shirts for years.



## ENLIST STUDENTS

### Be a Student's Recording Project

Nothing is more difficult for audio students than finding a decent band to record in the studio (hey, it's their grades on the line!). Try contacting local universities that might need a band to come in and lay down a few tunes (Ex'pression, Full Sail, Berklee College of Music). Worst-case scenario will include basic tracks for you to mix yourself in one of those free DAWs we discussed—but keep the booze and "music enhancers" at home. (See MC's recent Directory of Music Schools for an exclusive list at [musicconnection.com/amp](http://musicconnection.com/amp).)

### Get a Write-up

News editorial students are always itching for a clever, unique article (29 students all writing about the cafeteria food can become a little mundane). And as much as your legendary band may think "college journalism" is beneath you, it's actually a great way to get yourselves published for your next EPK, and raise awareness of your shows in the local area.

### Graphic Design/ Web Design

From developing your logo to creating an entire webpage from scratch, students need you as much as you need them. And because their classes involve quick deadlines, you are guaranteed a quick turn-around on a decent, hip website or logo—and free promotion too! Maybe you could make "designing a logo" part of a school/class project. You can ask the teacher to present it, and whoever wins will get \$50

or \$100. Then, reward the class/school with a concert to launch your new merch.

## Get Shot By a Student

Having low-res pictures of your band in your mom's basement will not develop any street cred, or get you noticed by industry pros. So meet up with some photography majors that need high quality shots for their portfolio and get your band some sweet new leather chaps for the shoot under your local bridge.

## Make a No Budget Video

We remember seeing the first music video from Odd Project (a now departed screamo/hardcore band circa 2003): a film student out of Los Angeles created it with a \$0 budget, but you would have never known it. With enough ambition, students of film can compile some unique work that will get your name out all around the internet. All it takes is one viral video (::cough:: OK GO).

## Get on College Radio

Most universities have a local FM and online radio station funded by the state. Make sure your single is in their rotation. Get your band in there for an interview, and maybe an "exclusive live performance." It only takes one fraternity to start playing your jam during a keg-stand to start a wildfire of fans. And if they allow you to record the set, you've just compiled a "live" demo, for free!

## ON THE ROAD

### Tour Realistically

Taking a deep breath and hitting the road is often what it takes to connect with a fanbase and catch on. But to tour nationally or regionally you have to be prepared to do some extensive planning months in advance, and then do it all over again to capitalize right away on the progress you made the tour before. Especially for bands just starting out, try touring within an hour or two of home so you can save on food and lodging and easily make repeat visits to the towns that like you the most.

### Book an "Anchor Gig"

Not all of your shows are going to be money-makers. If you play too many of those on a tour, you're going to have little to show for it. Instead, try booking key "anchor gigs" along your route. These are well-paying shows, often at non-club venues. Seek out private parties, seasonal fairs and festivals as possible anchor gigs.

### Know Your Van's Appetite

There's nothing like a gas guzzler to mess up your tour budget. To avoid any surprises, go



...continues on page 54

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to fuelcostcalculator.com. There you can enter your vehicle's make, model and year to get a reliable fuel-cost estimate for your trip.

### Pay Less At The Pump

Being thrifty when filling up at the pump pays off in the long run. GasBuddy.com will tell you where the cheapest gas at that moment is wherever you are, via their website or their mobile app. You may want to apply for a band credit card, especially for

gas—PumpAndSave.com and CardRatings.com both say the Discover More card is the best deal. And unless you're touring in a Maserati, higher-octane fuel is wasted cash...stick with regular.

### Use AAA Mainly for Auto

Keep in mind that AAA stands for American Automobile Association. Your AAA membership can certainly get you discounts on other stuff, but especially with hotel accommodations, shop around before assuming your AAA discount is the biggest discount available. It's often identical to online travel sites' discounts, or even less than what you can get by booking in person. Sometimes befriending the desk clerk is the best route to a cheap hotel stay.



### Skip Hotels Altogether

CouchSurfing.com, BetterThanTheVan.com and Hostelz.com can all help you find friendly homes or hostels to stay in for free. BTTV targets touring musicians only, which has its advantages, but CouchSurfing has more members and a trusted vouching system. Whichever service you choose, you'll be forging an intimate connection with potential fans instead of just crashing at a hotel with your bandmates.

### Invest In a Quality Sleeping Bag

By spending just a little extra money upfront on a soft, insulated, cushioned sleeping bag (maybe even with a built-in pillow!), you'll have that much

more incentive to "sleep creatively," whether that means napping on the van floor, cramming everybody into the same hotel room or crashing at a fan's studio apartment.

### Book House Gigs

If you're up for the couch surfing approach to save money on accommodations, why not try to book some house parties at the places you'll be staying to fill the gaps in your touring schedule? A lot of times those are the kinds of gigs that are most memorable anyway—for the artist and the audience—because they're intimate. Plus you won't have to draw straws to see who's the designated driver back to the hotel. See concertsintheshome.com and houseconcerts.com.

### Eat In, Or Eat Out Smart

Eating out can purge your wallet (and add to your waistline) in a hurry. Prioritize eating in, and when you really feel like eating out, make it count. Often one restaurant-sized meal is enough for two, or choose an appetizer and a salad, which is often cheaper than one entree. Go for water to drink, and ignore your sweet tooth; beverages and desserts are usually the least impressive and most-marked-up items on the menu.

### Get Nuts In The Van

Stock your van with items that are tasty and filling enough to save you that trip to Sizzler. Nuts are the best and most portable option for keeping your stomach full. Be sure to buy them and other van staples (like jerky) in bulk, because they're expensive at gas marts. In addition to carrying plenty of water, fill your van cooler with handy snacks like carrots and hummus. If you keep meats or other perishables in the cooler and are on an overnight trip, call ahead to make sure your hotel room has a fridge or ice machine.

### Get the Right Mobile Phone Plan

If you suspect at all that you might be paying too much for your cell phone, call your carrier and try to hash out what kind of plan you really need. For touring artists, it's imperative to make sure you'll avoid roaming charges for calls and texts. And if you're really rolling, getting a band phone might be worth it so that no individual is spending more money or personal minutes on band business.

### Per Diem, Per Diem

The rest of the band works just as hard as you do on tour, and making an impulsive decision to cut the "daily food budget" will not only create a mutiny, but will also reduce energy produced for your live sets. It may save you \$47 some odd bucks a day, but how much will it cost you to hire a new backline of artists?

### Yelp!

Not just for fast food anymore, this free app (iPhone/Android) and website offers reviews of

local venues. So when you're stuck deciding which venue to book in a foreign state, Yelp! can give you the scoop on what the fans think with a star rating of each venue and footnotes explaining. (It beats buying the *Indie Bible* for just one contact).

## MORE INTERNET OPTIONS

### Build Your Own Website

Instead of splurging on a tech-savvy web guy, build a basic site to get your name out there. Since most fans want everything instantly, a flashier webpage will just make them wait longer anyway. "Google Sites" is a great tool to build a basic, functioning website that will look professional, and they have tools to help just about anyone create their own .com. Then see "Go Daddy" for a cheap domain name. (Nobody wants to memorize mspace.com/the greatestband towalkonearth.)

### Get Free Tech Support

Tech support can be pricey. So check out fixya.com where volunteer tech-nerds donate their time and expertise to solving personal computer problems.

### Don't Rely Only on Myspace • Twitter • Facebook

With new apps being created everyday, you can continually develop fans, and easily let them know where you are. Although you should always keep the three main social networks updated, use free apps like *Four Square* and *Places* to inform fans in the area that you are playing a show or need a free place to stay.

### Use Free Phone Apps to Save

Scour the apps stores for free phone applications that will alert you to moneysaving deals as they occur. For example, if you're an iPhone user you might want to check out Musician's Friend Stupid Deal of The Day. This free application from Guitar Center will send info about a "deal of day" directly to your iPhone every day.

### GearSlutz For Everyone

An online forum for professional and amateur recording engineers to share techniques and advice, gearslutz.com is a great tool for engineers of all trades (and yes, hip-hop producers too). If you're looking to build a home studio, or need help troubleshooting gear, this free site is your best bet.

### Raise Stakes with Kickstarter

Got no money to record your next EP or CD? Kickstarter offers a unique way to help your band generate revenue. If you can prove to members of the website why, for example, you deserve \$5,000 to produce a record (perhaps save an endangered species?) then this page will prove to be a great tool.

### iTunes Isn't Your Only Option

BandCamp is a site that offers something iTunes and Amazon do not—CD QUALITY! Not only

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does it take just 15 percent of sales (10 percent once you exceed \$5,000) but it also offers buyers the ability to download, FLAC, AAC and MP3 (vs. iTunes' and Amazon's mp3 only). If you pitch that concept correctly, it can generate you a lot of street credit by audiophiles and fans alike, and can be used for media outlets by providing a "free download" code.

## GUERRILLA PROMO TACTICS

### Send a Single to Mingle

When sending your music into radio stations, demo sessions, etc., don't waste an entire album. Send the company your three strongest songs, (in order of importance). They're only going to give you 30 seconds—if you're lucky, anyway!

### Walk Festivals with Music In Hand

Bamboozle, Warped Tour, CMJ, SXSW, Austin City Limits, SSMF, Outside Lands. All of these festivals consist of great opportunities to promote your band—and most of them allow people to walk around for free. But selling merch out of your van is out-dated (and borderline creepy). Try putting your three best songs on an iPod or on your phone and carry around a pair of headphones. Pitch to fellow show-goers how

awesome your band is, and with 30 seconds of their time, they may agree. Then carry around some petty cash, a few CDs and a bazillion stickers. The only bad promotion is no promotion at all.

## MED CARE

### Use Google

There are hundreds of free medical and dental clinics all over the U.S. every major city has several. Just do a Google search for your area.

### Contact Schools & Universities

Medical Schools often have free or low cost clinics so students can hone their skills. By the way, real physicians monitor the students' work.

### Contact Music Aid Organizations

If you're a member of the Recording Academy, contact MusicCares. They provide a safety net of critical assistance for musicians in need. MusicCares' services ([grammy.com/musiccares](http://grammy.com/musiccares)) cover a wide range of financial, medical and personal emergencies. Another good-works organization The Society of Singers at [singers.org](http://singers.org).

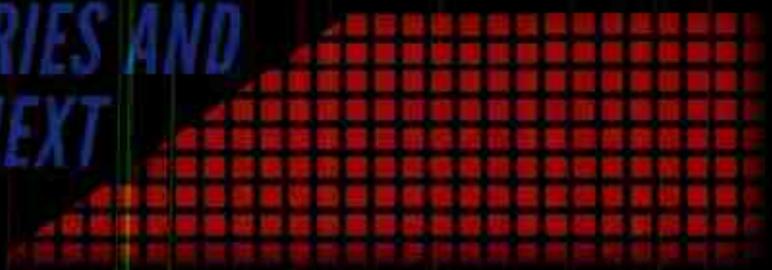


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## DESPERATE MEASURES

### Dumpster Dive for Treasures

Dumpster Diving (sometimes referred to as *freeganism*) is not for everyone. Most divers don't actually get in the bins. Instead, they use a long pole that allows them to lean over the dumpster and pull items up. You can make money with everything from aluminum cans to items that can be resold. Meantime, there's an art to finding discarded stuff that can actually be consumed. Best targets: donut or bagel shops, grocery stores, pizza places, and factories that churn out packaged goods. Call it a desperation move if you must, but is buying low-quality produce at a discount supermarket really that much better than eating hour-old untouched rolls found still in the box behind a gourmet pastry shop?

### Network with Other Divers

As you get into it, you'll meet other divers, and many (but not all) will be friendly. Share your

experiences and you'll get some good tips in return. Consider joining an online dumpster diving forum or a local club. Other divers can keep a look out for items you want.

### Apply for Food Stamps

To get food stamps your household cannot have more than \$2,000 in resources and everyone must have a Social Security number. You can receive expedited service if you have less than \$150 in monthly gross income and liquid resources of \$100 or less. Applications are available at any Social Security or County office.

### Get Rental Help

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) offers subsidized rentals and low rent apartments: The agency gives funds directly to apartment owners, who lower the rents they charge low-income tenants.

### Donate Plasma

Donating plasma is an easy way to help others while making money. The process takes about 45 minutes, and you can make between \$100 and \$260 a month. Additionally, many centers have cash prizes or gift certificates to keep things fun and interesting.

### Donate Sperm

Yep. Sperm donors are in demand at hundreds of sperm banks in the U.S., and are often clustered around universities. The screening process can take up to six months and only

five percent of applicants are accepted, but you get \$40 to \$100 for each semen sample. You can sire a maximum of 10 children and make up to \$6,000 per year.

### Donate Eggs

When it comes to donating precious bodily fluids, being female is a plus. In fact, it's one area where women out-earn men. Education, health and lifestyle determine what you'll be paid. If you're a top candidate you can earn \$5,000 per cycle.

### Become a Guinea Pig

People of either sex are needed in medical trials and research studies. Volunteering for regulated and approved studies can be an excellent way to supplement your income. The pay varies from an hourly rate to a flat fee.



## AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST...

### Make a Deposit In The Karma Bank

No matter how tough things get in the coming year, keep a clear head and realize there are others who are in worse shape than you. Volunteer your time somewhere—maybe you'll earn something better than money in return.

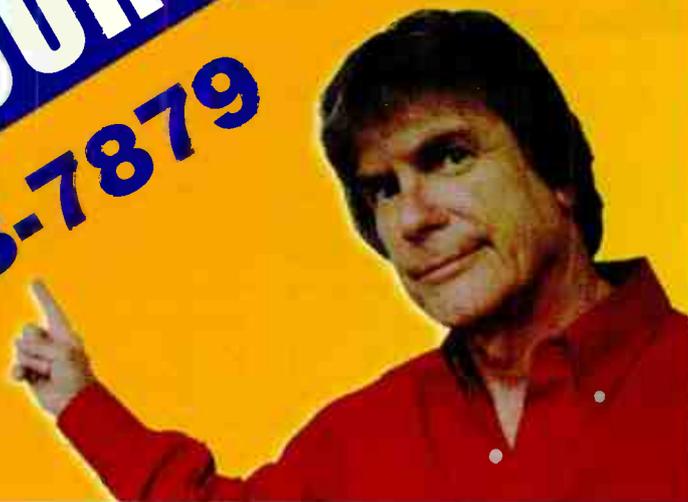


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# Our Favorite Signings of 2010

By MC Senior Editor, Mark Nardone

**N**owadays, not every artist is in pursuit of a record deal; steadfast DIYers prefer to use the internet's power to propel their career. But there is no shortage of artists looking to get signed by a real label or publishing company. That's why every issue of *Music Connection* features half a dozen Signing Stories. As you'll find, no two signing stories are alike. Some artists struggle for years to get signed; others have the good fortune to get a deal fairly quickly. What is certain is that there are many, many ways to get a contract these days, and we feel these 20 signings—cherry-picked from our 2010 issues—are a window into how deals are being made.



## Black Veil Brides

Universal Records  
A&R: Jason Flom for Lava/  
Universal Republic Records

Beginning in early 2009, this group got on the music business radar when Hot Topic stores picked up the band's eye-popping T-shirts. Within a few months, the Brides' T's were among the stores' highest selling shirts. Next, according to lead singer Andy Six, the sales performance of the Brides' first album with indie label Standby Records (in addition to some very rigorous touring) led to the group's recent signing with Universal. In the coming year, the band plans to work on putting together their first record on the major imprint. "We have a full *ProTools* setup on the bus," Six reveals, "so maybe there will be a few singles coming out in the next few months."

## Andy Grammer

S-Curve Records  
A&R: NA

Grammer was discovered by manager Ben Singer who saw the pop artist captivating an audience on a busy street corner along Santa Monica, CA's 3rd Street Promenade. Manager and artist soon had a choice—would they select a major or an independent? They chose S-Curve because the indie label guaranteed Grammer would get the attention the artist needed, plus Grammer was assured he could count on a serious radio push. S-Curve's support has extended beyond the average, yielding America's first interactive music video. The \$270,000 shoot was sponsored by Old Navy and features Rainn Wilson from *The Office*. According to the artist, it's a dramatic shift from the two years he spent paying his rent with loose change.



## Katt Rockell

Cherry Lane Music / BMG  
A&R: Paul Morgan / Cherry Lane

Getting a record deal is not the only way to succeed. When aspiring singer Katt Rockell failed to get signed by a label, her manager Keith Cooper suggested "Why not try writing for others?" As an experiment, he sent Rockell some tracks by one of his choice clients, hip-hop producer Alex Da Kid. Rockell seized the opportunity. "It's a different way to get in the door," she reasons. "I went headfirst into writing for other people." Soon, Cooper began meeting with publishers and played Rockell's tracks for Cherry Lane's Paul Morgan. Since signing with Cherry Lane, Rockell has been blessed with collaborators such as John Legend and Wyclef Jean. Although there are no guarantees she'll have a hit record, Rockell is looking to the future. "Definitely soon you'll be hearing my songs on the radio."

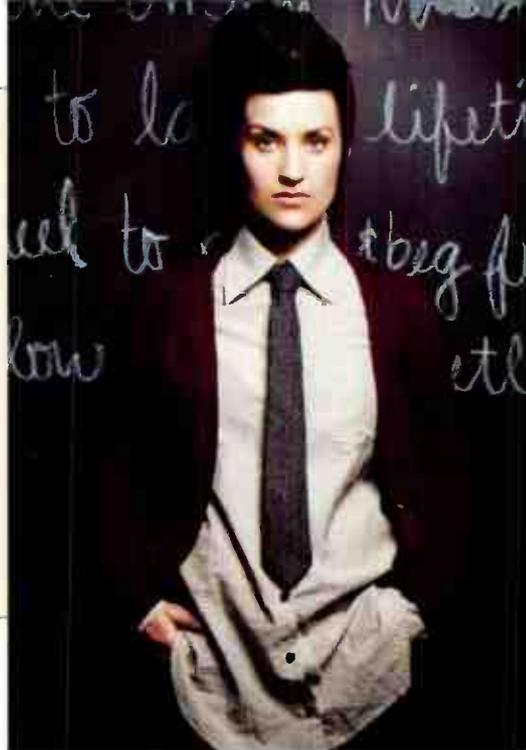


## Megan McCormick

Ryko Records

A&R: Ruby Marchand

This artist's label signing traced a less conventional path: her lawyer came first, then a publishing deal, followed by a manager. Her label deal with Ryko was merely a later slab in the foundation of her career, after Ryko A&R rep Ruby Marchand attended a Nashville showcase. Upon returning to New York, Marchand reached out to the artist. "She had her legal team draw up the basics of the deal," McCormick recalls. "I signed the short-form agreement on a Friday and the producer flew in on Monday. I was in the studio the next day. It was very fast, but I wasn't going to say no to a label that was so enthusiastic and ready to work."



## Bertell

Capitol Records

A&R: Gary Beech

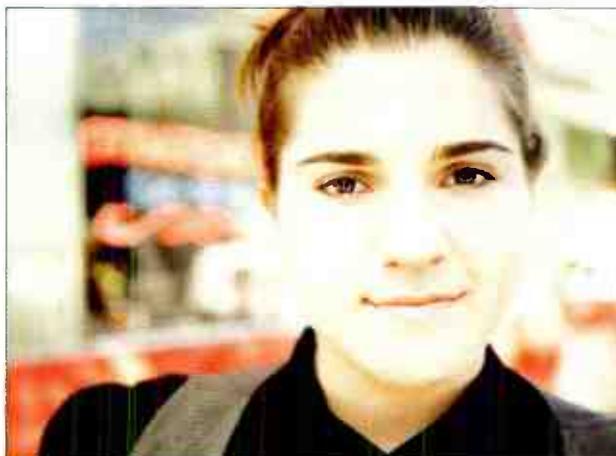
Houston R&B artist Bertell had a decision to make: go for a quick-hit single or build a career. The artist's dogged self-promotion had paid off in a meeting with Grammy-winning producer Bryan-Michael Cox (Mariah Carey, Usher, Monica) and ultimately a major label offer. "I met B. through a mutual friend and he wanted to work with me," Bertell says. "He told me, 'You can take a single deal, a one album deal or you and me can work together and get a major deal.' I took the option to work with him and we've been rockin' ever since." Bertell's *Gain Hard* was released in May.

## Daphne Willis

Vanguard Records

A&R: Kevin Welk

What are your chances of being discovered at 30,000 feet? Ask Daphne Willis. "My Dad used to work at Sony/BMG," says the Chicago-based artist. "And he knew people at DMX, a company that licenses music for stores, airlines and that kind of thing. He passed my EP along to his friend and they licensed it." While in transit, Vanguard Records head Kevin Welk happened to plug his headphones into the in-flight entertainment and heard Willis' tune "No Difference" and was hooked. "I was exactly in the right place at the right time," Willis muses. "Vanguard had A&R rep (and Grammy-winning engineer) Gary Paczosa fly up from Nashville to check me out. Soon, they brought me to their L.A. headquarters to play a few songs acoustically, then they put a deal on the table. It was a great fit."



LAURA CROST



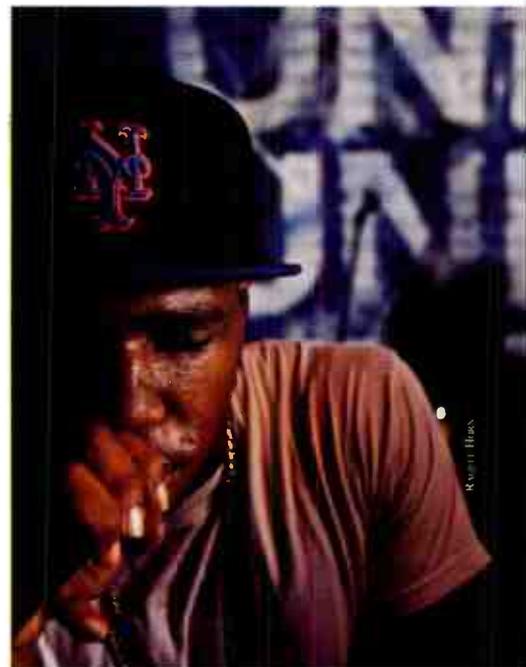
An American band on a Brit label? That's pretty unusual. But in early 2009, after an informal meeting and EP exchange between the band's manager Paul Adams and Domino Records founder Lawrence Bell, Chief's sound made a strong impression and started a prolonged courtship. The label attention helped Los Angeles based Chief secure representation with the New York-based Press Here Publicity, and garner a performing spot at the reputable Glastonbury Music Festival. Awarded a two-album contract, a third-album option, an advance, and a deal with Domino Publishing, Chief (with Grammy-winning producer Emery Dobyns) tracked and completed *Modern Rituals*, which was released on Aug. 17th.

## Curren\$y

DD172 Records

A&R: Mckenzie Eddy and Raquel Horn

Shante Franklin, better known as Curren\$y, was leery of signing with a traditional "numbers" label. So when his manager Mckenzie Eddy called him up with an opportunity to work with hip-hop powerhouse Damon Dash, he walked away from a pool game, hopped a plane the next day and moved into an apartment a block away from the studio. "I've been through enough, so I know shit from sugar." His DD172 deal is an extremely loose, friendly collaboration between label, artist and guests, including Snoop Dogg, Wiz Khalifa, Mos Def and others. The rapper feels that the lack of a truly binding contract is a good fit for artists in his situation. "[This deal] is not a corporate or business set-up. It's not even there in this deal." Curren\$y's *Pilot Talk* was released in June on DD172, through Island/Def Jam Records



KEVIN HARRIS

**Stacy Clark**  
Vanguard Records  
A&R: Kevin Weir



It is inspiring to hear about an artist who gets signed to a respected label after years of struggle. A true believer in hard work and paying dues, Stacy Clark at age 19, started to tour the U.S., releasing a few albums independently. Clark says for many years she wasn't in the right place at the right time, but she muses that learning to support herself as an artist was crucial to not losing momentum and giving in to a 9-5, just to pay the bills. "You just have to keep moving forward, create a good message and really reach out there," she says. "If you put the time in and hone your craft, you have a shot."



**Ry Cuming**  
Jive Records  
A&R: Teresa La Barbara Whites

Australian singer-songwriter Ry Cuming's label deal began with a Los Angeles film producer. After competing the World Longboard Championships in surfing, Cuming was overheard playing guitar by another surfer who passed along the word. After listening to Cuming personally, the producer asked what he was doing with his music, then invited him to Los Angeles where Cuming eventually signed with Jive. Cuming explains that hardships, the love of the music, and relentless performing are what prepared him for signing with such a successful label. "Developing your writing and voice, believing in yourself, creating your own style, then approaching a label already knowing in your gut who you are, with a sense of humility," states Cuming, "that is paramount."



**Batusis**  
Smog Veil Records  
A&R: Frank Mauceri

Batusis is the sound of two punk legends joining forces after years of knowing each other. Longtime friends, Cheetah Chrome (Dead Boys/Rocket From the Tombs) and Sylvain Sylvain (New York Dolls) had taken to writing and jamming together. "Frank Mauceri (Smog Veil Records' owner) and [Sylvain's] manager came up with the thought that me and [Sylvain] should do something while we're off Rocket From the Tombs and New York Dolls," says Chrome. "Smog Veil is not like these other jackass labels," Chrome insists. "They really treat artists well and you have complete freedom to do what you want."



**Kollosus**  
Capitol Records  
A&R: Russell "Big Block" Spencer / Block Entertainment

Two years ago, rapper Kollosus' mother called him—did he know there was a talent competition about to start? The event was BET's *Screamfeast*, and one of the panelists was Russell "Big Block" Spencer, of Block Entertainment (Boyz n Da Hood and Yung Joc). The day after the young rapper's performance the label approached him with a deal. That handshake agreement led to a number of collaborations, including appearances with the likes of Gucci Mane. Soon, Senior VP of Urban A&R at Capitol, Leonard Brooks, flew to Atlanta to check out the young gunner. He only needed to hear one or two tracks before the partnership was a go. For his part, Kollosus was willing to wait for this deal. "I could've been signed two years ago, but it's about getting the right situation," he says. "I'm not trying to have a hot single and then fade out in six months. You will see me six years from now."



**Petree**  
Dream Records / Universal Music Group  
A&R: WA

Stephen Petree, frontman and founder of the eponymous group Petree, is a shining example of good karma. Despite the success of his and his brother Chad's band Shiny Toy Guns, it was Stephen's volunteerism that led to a contract with Dream Records/Universal. "I volunteer for [The Dream Center] in Los Angeles where they help people get off the street. At their events, they would ask me to come and play, and that's when they saw what I did musically." Five years of donating his time and considerable talents made Petree the first artist to call when the Center decided to start its own label. Petree didn't need an advance, and instead asked the label to sink their capital into production and promotion. "Trying to get the record deal is a good goal, but that's only the beginning. To reach people is the main thing." *Weakness Makes You Beautiful* was released on May 18, and a portion of the proceeds benefits The Dream Center.

...continues on page 64

**Music Connection Hot 100 Artist of 2010**

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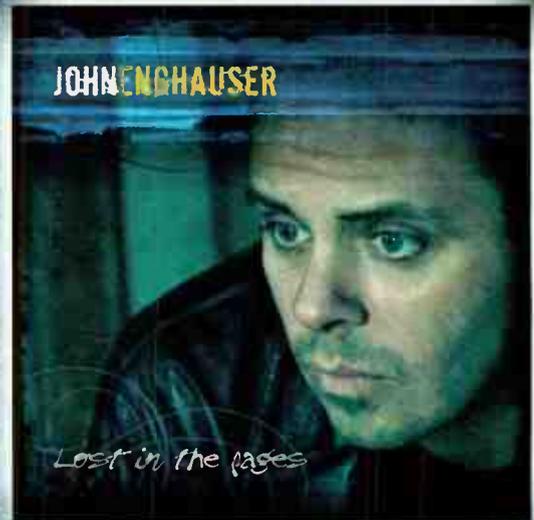
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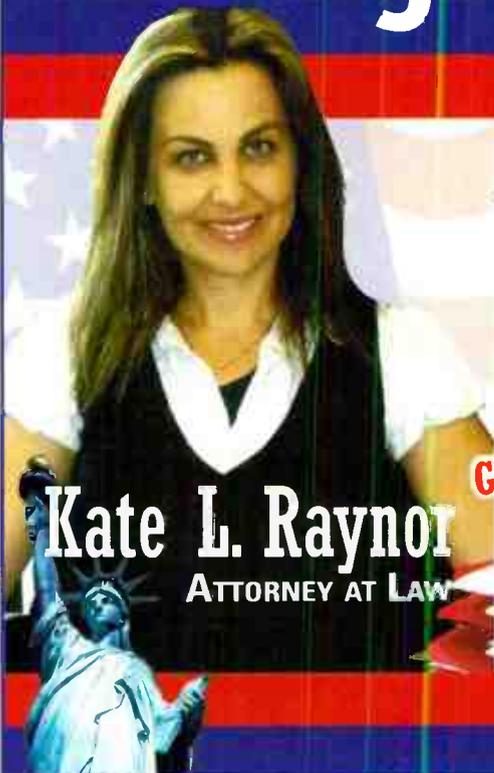
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## Off With Their Heads

Epitaph Records  
A&R: Brett Gurewitz

After securing an opening spot for Against Me! on their 2009 tour, the band captured the ears of Epitaph Records owner/president, Brett Gurewitz. "Brett called me out of the blue and said that he was a fan," recalls vocalist/guitarist Ryan Young. Gurewitz asked the band to stay in touch and pass any new demos along for a listen. In addition to their catchy tracks, the punk label honcho cited the band's constant 11-months-a-year touring as an extremely valuable asset. "Most bands won't ditch their whole lives to go out and do what we do," says Young. Off With Their Heads' debut label effort, *In Desolation*, was released June 8th.

## Eli "Paperboy" Reed

Capitol Records  
A&R: Rob Stevenson / EMI Music

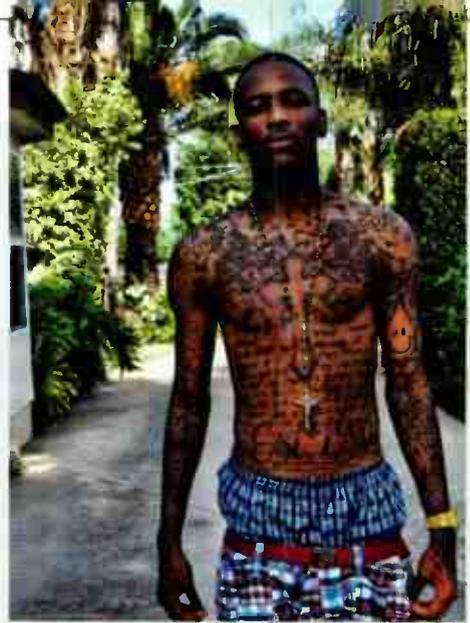
When self-proclaimed record nerd Eli "Paperboy" Reed performed before a Boston crowd that included both Howard Sadowsky and Matt Galle (his eventual attorney and booking agent, respectively), he fastened his seatbelt. Not long after New England-based Q Division Records released Reed's first album, *Roll With You*, major label interest erupted. Reed's talent and drive impressed EMI's Rob Stevenson, and the artist enthusiastically joined the Capitol roster. He notes, "EMI was excited I had done all this work on my own, written my own songs, and was such an active participant in the creation of my own music and sound." Soon, Reed found himself on his first major tour alongside the pop-punk notables, Say Anything. He is currently promoting his Capitol (U.S.) debut, *Come and Get It*.



## Y.G.

Island Def Jam  
A&R: Max Gousse

How do you get major-label attention fast? You amass over two million views of your Myspace page. That kind of draw helped Y.G. (Young Gangsta, aka Keenon Jackson) to become one of Los Angeles' most popular "jerkin" rappers after starting his career on a lark. "I recorded off this program that came with my computer," he says. "It was the first time I had ever rapped." In January of 2009, the young artist put together his first mixtape, which he says he began "hearing everywhere." Soon after, Y.G. was performing at parties, halls, warehouses and clubs. He also began working with a street manager, who had a friend who knew Max Gousse at Def Jam. After meeting with Y.G. and attending his show, Gousse flew the youngster to New York to perform for Island Def Jam Chairman, L.A. Reid. According to Y.G., he had Reid "throwing his hands in the air," and a week upon returning home, was offered a deal. "Just the name—Def Jam—was enough for me," the artist beams. "There's so much history there and for me to join that history was a big thing."



## Young & Divine

RCA Records  
A&R: Keith Naftaly

Albany, NY-based pop-rockers Young & Divine spent the majority of 2008-2009 on the road, eventually performing a series of label showcases. But would they sign with a major or an indie? "Before we signed with RCA all I heard for the last three or so years was to stay away from the majors, you'll hate it," says Clark. "But it has been the most positive thing to have happened to this band. And we understand that it's not about just sitting around all day waiting to do a show. We're constantly shooting footage for the web and doing all we can to promote ourselves. You have to remain extremely active or other bands will outwork you."



## Charice

Reprise/143 Records  
A&R: David Foster

Most signings are a private ceremony; this one was on national TV. The Philippines-born, 17-year-old singing phenom, Charice (last name: Pempengco), got her start at age 4, when she began training with her mother (a singer). By age 7, Charice was entering countless competitions. It was in 2007, when a fan's videos went viral that Charice became internationally known and began fielding calls from the likes of *The Ellen Degeneres Show*. "I didn't have a manager. It was just my mom and me when we entered the U.S." After *Ellen*, Charice's appearance on *Oprah* got the attention of pop mogul David Foster who agreed to work with the young star. Sparking a run of performances that included Foster's *Hitman: David Foster and Friends* and duets with Andrea Bocelli and Celine Dion, Charice's rise culminated in an on-air signing with Foster's Reprise Records imprint, 143 Records, on another *Oprah* Winfrey telecast. Charice's self-titled debut hit shelves in May.



## Sahara Smith

Playing In Traffic Records  
A&R: Kevin Wommack

Texas-born Sahara Smith, at 15, sent in a demo tape to the radio show *A Prairie Home Companion*. "My mom picked me up from school one day and she told me that I had gotten on and I just flipped out!" Smith's mother also asked an old friend, Rosalyn Rosen, to tune in during her performance. "Rosalyn, unbeknownst to us, is [partner] to the manager of Los Lonely Boys, Kevin Wommack, and she told him, 'You've gotta hear this.'" An impressed Wommack signed on as Smith's manager after she turned 16. "Then on a whim, he sent my Myspace page to T-Bone Burnett; he listened and said that he'd work with me." Smith and Wommack then flew to Los Angeles where the acclaimed producer actively shepherded the recordings, produced by his long-time engineer Emile Kelman. Wommack put up the capital for the album, to be recouped from subsequent profits, and signed Smith to a two-album deal with his Playing in Traffic Records.

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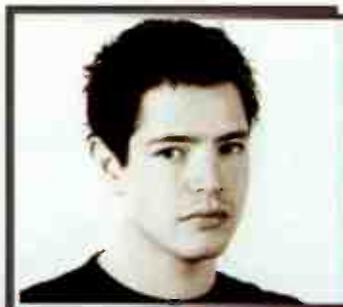
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# TOP 25 NEW MUSIC CRITIQUES OF 2011



**Jason Ayres**

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SCORE: 8.0



**Michelle Fontaine**

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SCORE: 8.0



**Superficial Saints**

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SCORE: 8.0



**Ian C. Bouras**

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SCORE: 8.0



**Chasing Saints**

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SCORE: 8.0



**Miss Willie Brown**

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 AMP Username: misswilliebrown

SCORE: 8.0



**Matt Ryals**

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 AMP Username: matryals

SCORE: 8.0



**The Playdates**

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SCORE: 8.0

## HONORABLE MENTION:

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**Correna Ann**  
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**Dale Turner**  
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**Eleven - Eleven**  
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**Faith in Phantoms**  
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**Hot Streets**  
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**Jessica Loren**  
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**Jose Alvarez**  
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**Junkstar**  
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**Lil' Dee**  
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**Weekend Lights**  
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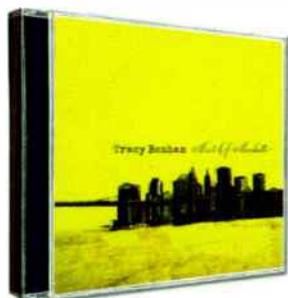
**Zach Spencer**  
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MC



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**Tracy Bonham**  
*Masts of Manhattan*  
Engine Room Records

① ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ★ ⑩

**Producer:** Tracy Bonham  
**Top Cuts:** "Big Red Heart," "We Moved Our City to the Country"  
**Summary:** Before the hit "Mother Mother" made her famous in 1996, Tracy Bonham was a violin major at the University of Southern California, and *Manhatta* is her first album that fully heralds that talent as well as other adventurous instrumentation, from tuba to cardboard box. Bonham's fourth full-length is rootsy, folksy, bluesy and even dips into cabaret-like country on "We Moved Our City to the Country," while still retaining the sly wit, singular vocal stylings and, most importantly, the great songwriting of her past work. A classy, cool mix of alternative and Americana.  
—Dean Moore



**Eric Johnson**  
*Up Close*  
EMI

① ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ★ ⑩

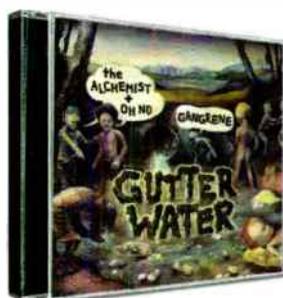
**Producer:** Eric Johnson  
**Top Cuts:** "Traverse," "Brilliant Room"  
**Summary:** Johnson's latest album is a lesson in effortless mastery as he continues to weave his unique blend of Texas blues-rock fusion and country stylings. It's a serene but powerful recording with rich guitar tones, spellbinding virtuosity and contemplative lyrics. *Up Close* features musical guests Steve Miller on vocals and Jimmy Vaughn on guitar covering "Texas" by the Electric Flag. Malford Milligan, Jonny Lang and Sonny Landreth also contribute. Lang's vocal work on "Austin" is particularly noteworthy, while Landreth's slide guitar on "Your Book" is absolutely sublime.  
—Oscar Jordan



**Eartha**  
*Ink Dry Blue*  
AFRT Music

① ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ★ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩

**Producer:** Helsa Ariass, Glaurys Ariass, Eartha  
**Top Cuts:** "Hearts of Stone," "One By One," "My Face Again"  
**Summary:** Eight years after her Grammy and nine after her track "Love Jones" hit dance charts, Eartha returns with a romantic, socially conscious work that touches on a potpourri of styles. With vocals that tap into the pop soul vibe of Annie Lennox, and with the gritty edges of Pink, she keeps the sensual R&B flow but moves away from the dance floor and into deeper shades of AC pop-rock. Lyrically she contemplates the course of her own life, questions the mysteries of the universe and advocates for global harmony and treating Earth as God's gift.  
—Jonathan Widran



**Gangrene**  
*Gutter Water*  
Stones Throw

① ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ★ ⑨ ⑩

**Producer:** The Alchemist, Oh No  
**Top Cuts:** "Not High Enough," "Chain Swinging"  
**Summary:** I'll call this album dope, not just because there's probably a calculated 420 reference to what Californian's call "medicine," but along with that, there's an unexpected consciousness that most backpacking sissies would mistake for arrogance. It's a bizarre combination of gangsta and green (as in ecological), thus it's DOPE. David Axelrod's *Earth Rot*, Marvin Gaye's *What's Going On* and Funkadelic's *America Eats Its Young*. There's no tree-hugging going on here; instead the producers-cum-rappers act as if they're just another part of their polluted tapestry.  
—Daniel Siwek



**The Trio of Oz**  
*The Trio of Oz*  
Ozmosis Records

① ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ★ ⑩

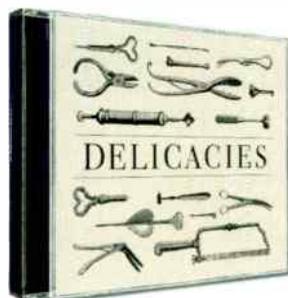
**Producer:** Omar Hakim  
**Top Cuts:** "Angry Chair," "In Your Room"  
**Summary:** Acoustic pianist Rachel Z returns with a follow-up to the modern jazz-contemporary / rock-pop amalgam she began a few years ago with her Department of Good and Evil project. She is teamed up here with husband/drummer extraordinaire Omar Hakim and acoustic bassist Maeve Royce. The trio dives head first into such non-traditional jazz fare as Stone Temple Pilots' "Sour Girl" and the Police's "King of Pain," giving both a fascinating facelift. There are other artists doing something similar today but, arguably, none do it more heartfelt than Ms. Z and crew.  
—Eric Harabadian



**Monotonix**  
*Not Yet*  
Drag City

① ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ★ ⑨ ⑩

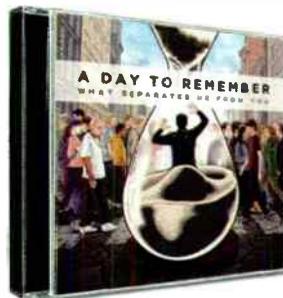
**Producer:** Monotonix  
**Top Cuts:** "Nancy Fancy," "Blind Again," "Late Night"  
**Summary:** As an MC reader, you likely are, or once were, in a band that practiced in your parents' garage. If that's the case, the title of Monotonix's sophomore album is how you answered when your family begged, "IS IT ALMOST OVER?" Frontman Ami Shalev is a wild child who could probably go scar for scar with Iggy Pop himself. It's easy to see why there's a cult developing around this band; they've got the rebelliousness we loved in Black Flag—and, as engineered by Steve Albini, dare I say that they evoke the "N" word with the right balance of chaos and chorus.  
—Daniel Siwek



**Simian Mobile Disco**  
*Delicacies*  
Delicacies

① ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ★ ⑨ ⑩

**Producer:** SMD  
**Top Cuts:** "Nerve Salad," "Hákarl"  
**Summary:** There are fringe benefits to touring the world as a mobile techno-party, especially if you love to eat! It may be intimidating to the pedestrian palate, but if you're adventurous, then you may love not just the foodie recommendations from the duo of James Ford and Jas Shaw, but the new sonic dish they're offering as well. Their third release is the culmination, or a buffet of 12-inches, each representing a dish that they ate somewhere on the road. Don't expect it all to be confectionary glow-stick music; there's dark meat and bones to devour here. If you're not careful you can gorge yourself on modulation.  
—Daniel Siwek



**A Day To Remember**  
*What Separates Me From You*  
Victory Records

① ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ★ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩

**Producer:** Chad Gilbert  
**Top Cuts:** "All Signs Point To Lauderdale," "Out Of Time"  
**Summary:** Less pop and a lot more anger best describes the latest release from these fearsome Florida natives. Following up 2009's *Homesick*—one of AP's Most Anticipated Albums of the Year—ADTR take the less "fun" road, and it may take some getting used to. While "Sticks & Bricks" comes through your speakers aggressively with no remorse, it's "Better Off This Way" and "All Signs Point To Lauderdale" that help remind one what makes this band so great. If your girl just left you with nothing but a box of tissues, here's an album of depressed anthems to get you through.  
—Andy Mesecher

## The Art of Shock

*The Whisky A-Go-Go*  
West Hollywood, CA

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**AMP Username:** artofshock  
**The Players:** Art Geezar, guitar, vocals; Arno Nurmusto, bass, Adrian Geezar, drums.

**Material:** This three-piece's sound is heavy-ended, topped with high-pitched vocals. Although metal, they're not your typical double-bass-laden Slayer-type band. The Art of Shock sometimes approach the style with a more melodic and international flair, as two of the three members are of Mexican descent and another is from Finland.

**Musicianship:** The players are all proficient and work well together, although they take it up a notch when a guest guitarist stands in for frontman Art. Although the stand-in guitarist looks out of place, he sounds good and it shows that Art is a much better performer when he is able to move around while singing, rather than being glued to the microphone with guitar in hand. The drummer Adrian has a strong rhythmic presence as does the imposing bassist, who has a Krist-Noveselic-if-he-was-from-Europe vibe.

**Performance:** The band's set was bottom-heavy with solid bass and drums and thick chord-driven guitars. There was no screaming lead-guitar a la Slash, but there certainly was



**The Art of Shock: A three-piece metal act that carries a melodic and international flair.**

screaming. With a Flying-V guitar and Gibson Explorer bass, the band looked imposing and "metal."

When Art focused more on singing and performing as opposed to playing an instrument, the band was better off. Keeping him behind the mic while playing guitar severely hindered the overall energy. In any case, the bass and drums were tight and Art's singing was appropriate, while his guitar playing was solid, if unremarkable.

**Summary:** The Art of Shock's performance, like its image, is a mish-mash that goes in every direction at

once. Although mostly heavy rock and metal, the band at times play melodically. Then again, sometimes there is no melodicism and the players don't seem to know what they want to achieve. It will take more experience and direction to make the band's vision gel properly.

Perhaps one issue that should be addressed is that Art of Shock only semi-commit to an Axl Rose/'80s Sunset Strip image—i.e. metal-band clothes (gloves without fingers, leather, sleeveless shirts) with athletic wear (sweatbands, athletic wristbands and sneakers). They'd be better off picking a coherent

image, maybe a metal image or a White Zombie-type approach, and following it through completely.

Musically, the band improves when adding a guitar player, giving Art the freedom to roam around the stage while singing. With the frontman let loose during the full performance, and the addition of a more Scandinavian metal influence (complete with makeup, masks or something similar), the band would set themselves apart. At the moment, however, Art of Shock are indeed solid and entertaining.

—John Wareham

## Brett Randell

*One 2 One*  
Austin, TX

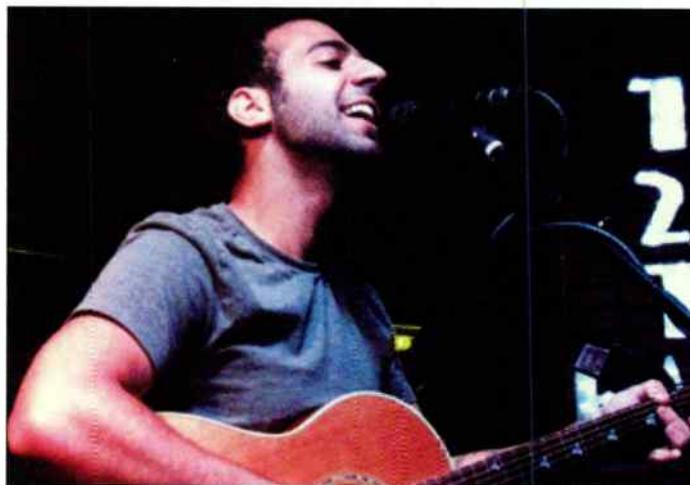
**Contact:** brett@brettrandell.com  
**Web:** brettrandell.com; myspace.com/brettrandell

**AMP Username:** brett.randell  
**The Players:** Brett Randell, guitar, vocals; Wilyum Jerome, piano, guitar; Mark Ford, cello; Christopher Rains, cello.

**Material:** Brett Randell performs romantic, modern acoustic pop in the vein of Brett Dennen. Each original composition explores the multi-colored connections between humans. Double-picked guitars and plucked harmonics create bitersweet washes of sound in the breakup song "It's Over." Mature lyrics paint brilliant portraits of our social landscape in "Jack & Coke," a leisurely rumination on the layers of separation between strangers and neighbors. "Enigma" swirls together cascading piano solos and cello lines that span several octaves, creating a highly dynamic piece.

**Musicianship:** Randell does not attempt feats of virtuosity with either vocals or guitar, nor are his rhythms overly complicated. However, his simple musicianship is perfectly suited to his sweet, moving and deeply connective songs. Instead of focusing on technical ability, he chooses to focus on dynamics and the emotional interplay of stringed melodic lines. And each backup performer confidently delivers a piece of the richly harmonized compositions, creating a new sound palate for each song, despite only having four instruments.

**Performance:** Randell occasionally leaned into the mic or turned briefly to his fellow musicians, and though his brow creased during emotional points, his overall body language was extremely subdued, a gentle performance for a gentleman. The depth of his music was literally illustrated when Randell brought a French painting on stage, the inspiration for "Enigma," to display next to him during the piece's performance. Despite the group's lack of exercise on stage, the audience was thoroughly involved



**Brett Randell: Mature lyrics that paint brilliant sonic portraits.**

in the performance, swaying and clapping hands while singing along. The long coffeehouse bar was elbow to elbow, a testament to Randell and company's ability to touch hearts.

has the ability to truly move the audience, but only if the listener has an open heart and the courage to swim out to the performer's depths.

—Sarah Whitel

**Summary:** Like a painting or a symphony, Brett Randell's music

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## The Whitehouse Band

SOB's  
New York, NY

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The Players: David E. Beats, lead guitar, vocals; Fernando "Sexy Solo" Martinez, guitar; Cory "Galactic Panel" Lonas, bass; Elder "Crazy Drummer" Merchant, drums.

**Material:** "How you like me now?" lead singer and guitarist David E. Beats asks defiantly as he navigates through Hendrix-like guitar riffs overlaid with edgy rapping in "Walk In," one of several originals the Whitehouse Band performs live. The lyrics allude to Beats' share of hard knocks; however, determination and persistence clearly win out in his favor. The band, newly formed in early 2010, has made the frontman's vision possible, combining hard rock, rap and blues into its own genre the band calls "New Vouge." Beats' hip-hop side has been compared to Kid Cudi, while his melodies have been likened to a present day Buddy Guy.

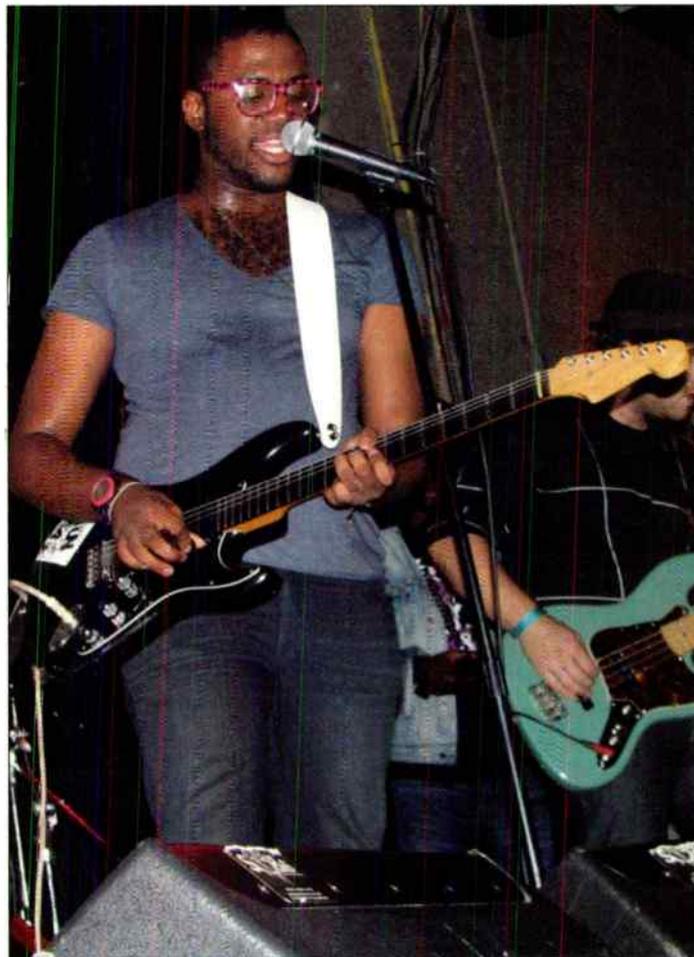
**Musicianship:** For a group that have been together a short amount of time, their playing is impressively tight. Each member brings a myriad of influences and experiences to the table, ranging from hard rock to jazz fusion and hip-hop, which they demonstrate during substantial solo moments. Drummer Merchant sets the energy level, cranking up the volume with crashing cymbals which

in turn the band matches well. Initially, an audience may think they're in the midst of a chaotic jam session, but upon further listening it is evident that this complex music is deserves more credit, due to the many elements working simultaneously requiring a proficient skill level.

**Performance:** Beats' professorial good looks and the band's general wholesome appearance made for an interesting dichotomy which went against the grain of the harder edged music they performed. The frontman was charismatic, focused and clearly working hard on stage, and though he had more than adequately defined his position as leader, he still left room for other band personnel to shine. Beats worked diligently at keeping the audience engaged—checking in with them throughout to see if they were with him and having a good time. Perhaps Beats could reach out with a few references that would tell more about who he is as an artist, which would in turn further his relationship with the crowd.

**Summary:** The Whitehouse Band bring interesting elements into play as they continue to carve out and refine their unique niche. The band's audience seem poised to embrace their music providing the players with a great opportunity to further that connection. They are gaining momentum on the New York music scene, having just headlined the Time Out New York Make Music Festival and the DIY Bushwick Music Festival.

—Ellen Woloshin



ELLEN WOLOSHIN

The Whitehouse Band: Many complex elements smoothly syncing together.

## World of Enemies

O'Brien's Pub  
Allston, MA

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AMP Username: worldofenemies  
The Players: Seth Roberts, vocals; Phil Ruiz, guitar; Johnny Moffett, guitar; Jay Weir, bass; Joey Bruno, drums.

**Material:** A jolt of barbed-wire sonic assault, World of Enemies run screaming down a highway of metal mania without reservation. A hurricane of notes assails the crowd while frontman Seth Roberts serves up the sort of guttural groans and squawks typically associated with this genre. Eschewing hooks and rhythmic eddies for a persistent in-your-face attack results in a dynamic show, but makes it tricky for the first-time listener to quickly relate.

**Musicianship:** Without question, these guys display ample talent. Guitarists Moffett and Ruiz absolutely blaze, fingers dancing along their frets with lightning speed. The same goes for bassist Weir, while Bruno's drumming blends perfectly with the haywire compositions. Roberts' vo-



ANDY KAUFMANN

World of Enemies: A sonic assault screaming down a highway of metal mania.

cals, however, fail to rise above the standard expectations of a singer piggybacking on the death metal/thrash zeitgeist.

**Performance:** Both guitarists and bassist had an amazing stage presence, particularly Moffett. Besides the inherent joy in witnessing their rapid-fire instrumentation, the three worked the stage like pros, posing, grimacing and bringing the pain. Frontman Roberts, unfortunately, weakened the presentation, rarely seeming comfortable as the band's focal point, often lurking in the dark at the edge of the stage and rarely, if ever, connecting directly with fans. Points must be awarded, though, for downing a shot of tequila mid-show.

**Summary:** Ultimately, World of Enemies fall short of expectations. Although the two-headed monster that is Ruiz and Moffett will fill your ears with metal goodness and Bruno and Weir serve up exceptional performances, this quintet from hell simply lack an original angle to make them stand out. Worse, their frontman hasn't found his groove, leaving the audience without a charismatic persona or a memorable chorus. Considering their abilities, it would be a shame if WoE failed to retool their formula into something magical.

—Andy Kaufmann

## Cristina Taddonio

Hard Rock Cafe  
Nashville, TN

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AMP Username: cri777

The Players: Cristina Taddonio, vocals, keys; Reed Pittman, keys; Caleb Mundy, bass; Ricky Perry, guitar; Jared Whitaker, drums.

**Material:** Here's an artist who likes to hit the stage with her band and sit down at the keys with a smile. She has a few songs that could be described as simple jazz influenced pop, such as "Lost for You," while showing her vocal power on "Cry," evoking Aretha Franklin like vocals with dead accuracy. Most of this performer's songs give an upbeat, optimistic impression, even through some of her more heartfelt songs.

**Musicianship:** Taddonio surrounds herself with pro players, but at times it seems the music could use a little more flair. Specifically, the Sara Bareilles style piano chords can become tiring to the ear. Adding contrast, guitarist Perry at times busts through with colorful solos that reenergize the songs, not letting them sink to the realm of "just another predictable radio tune." Taddonio mainly plays keys

but shows diversity by switching to guitar during "Floating Fire."

**Performance:** The performance was a good fit with the Friday night cocktail crowd, but the audience didn't treat her as mere background music; they responded to the artist's entertaining edge. The first tune Taddonio and company performed mirrored the opening of a lighthearted sit-com, with simple chords and descriptive lyrics. At a glance, it appeared the singer was playing to a venue full of buddies, but this was simply the result of the warm, welcoming vibe generated by the artist and her band.

Between songs, Taddonio chatted about the meaning behind her lyrics in a way that allowed listeners to feel a connection to each song. The band showed a charm and class that wouldn't quite fit in the bar scene and it was clear they chose the Hard Rock Café carefully.

**Summary:** Upon first listen, one might compare Cristina Taddonio to similar-sounding female vocalists on the radio. But it would be a mistake to be lulled by her sweet demeanor and innocent voice. Vocally, this artist has a powerful edge that pops through when you least expect it, and a keen commercial ear when it comes to songwriting.

—Jess Pierce



ERIC R. VOIGT/GETTY IMAGES

Cristina Taddonio: Keen songwriting skills with a powerful edge.

## The Elizabeth Kill

The Mint  
Los Angeles, CA

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myspace.com/theelizabethkill

AMP Username: sarahgoff

The Players: Sarah Goff, vocals; Jeremiah Roiko, guitar; Brent Hoffort, guitar; Son Vo, bass; Flip Vint, drums.

**Material:** As a solo artist, Sarah Goff generated quite a buzz. Now she's stalking the stage with a new project that transforms her image from a quirky singer-songwriter to a down and dirty rock queen. The Elizabeth Kill play a form of rock that is dense and heavy with a hint of danger. Their songs are grunge-fueled, gut-busting tsunamis that rain a virtual plague upon decorum. With big riffs, crunchy chords and a bottom end that could power a defibrillator, this group have cojones. Brazen and brash, the material is solid, strong and satisfying. It's rock with a big "R" for those who keep score.

**Musicianship:** These players are cut from the same cloth. Roiko and Hoffort alternate leads and play as if their lives depend on it. Vo and Vint are a killer rhythm section that provide a lot of ballast. And, Goff... well, she's a force of nature. Her pipes are so powerful she could easily shatter glass. But, even at



BERNARD BAUR

The Elizabeth Kill: Grunge-fueled, gut-busting tsunami that rains a virtual plague upon decorum.

the volume she sings (loud and very loud), she manages to sustain her tone and nail her pitch. It's an impressive display of vocal prowess that perfectly matches the music's muscle. In fact, as a whole, this band brings it all in an onslaught that takes no prisoners.

**Performance:** There was no doubt as to whose band this was. Goff owned the stage, the room and

probably a few people walking past the venue. She exuded charisma and charm, as well as a wild child demeanor. Crazy and impassioned one moment, little girl sweet the next, Goff performed with near abandon. Her antics infected her bandmates and caused them to kick it up as well. So much so, that by the end of the set every player was fully primed, as Goff left the stage to let them jam out.

**Summary:** The Elizabeth Kill are a worthy endeavor. They have all the elements of a great rock band. Most of all, they have Sarah Goff. She's the real deal. And so is her band. In fact, this is an act that would satiate any rock devotee, and maybe even pull in a few converts.

—Bernard Baur

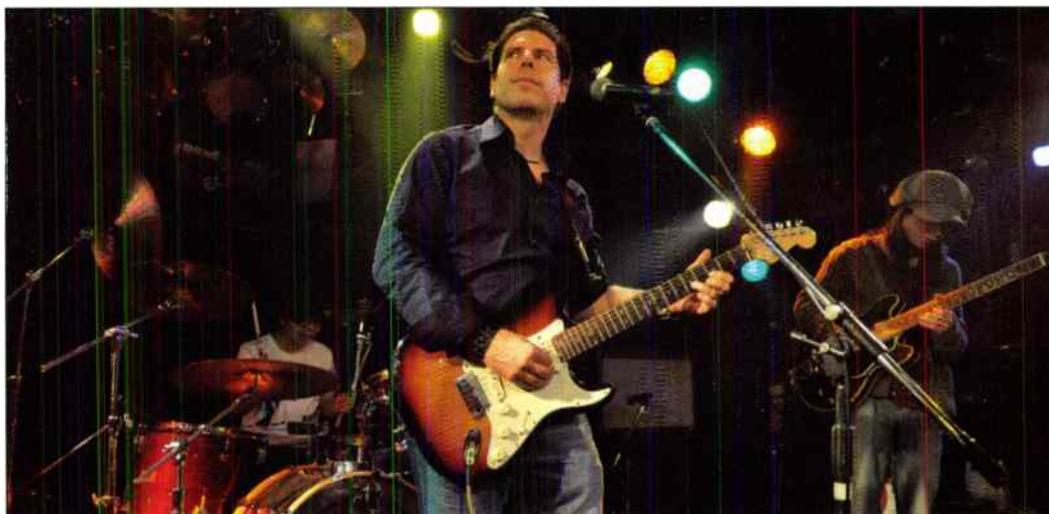
## Michael Boustany

*La Mama*  
Shibuya, Tokyo, Japan

**Contact:** Michael Boustany, mchlemil@gmail.com  
**Web:** michaelboustany.com  
**AMP Username:** michaelboustany  
**The Players:** Michael Boustany, vocals, guitar; Kei Takasugi, guitar; Kiyo Tahara, bass; Kazuki Shimano; drums.

**Material:** Michael Boustany's music is mostly comprised of jangly blues-flavored pop-rock, with catchy choruses. His lyrics tend to focus on the ups and downs of relationships, without resorting to too many clichés. Arrangements follow the traditions of Crowded House or the Beatles, while still remaining fresh enough to keep one's interest. The slightly reggae-flavored standout "My Side of the Bed" is a funky treat, with a pre-chorus teasing like a lover that makes you chase them around the four poster.

**Musicianship:** While Boustany doesn't possess a huge vocal range, like many of the classic rockers that inspired him, he has complete control over every note. His guitar playing seems effortless, much like the playing of Alex Lifeson of Rush, whom he claims is his greatest influence. As for the supporting cast, Tahara's bass lines support each song as if he has been studying



**Michael Boustany: Blues-flavored pop-rock that features catchy choruses.**

the genre for years, and drummer Shimano punctuates each beat as if to celebrate it and drive every idea home. Meanwhile, Takasugi's playing comes across like a guitarist accompanying a string section, a feat he achieves via a huge array of pedals. While this embellishes each song, it might seem to distract from the mainstream pop vibe inherent in some of the songs as well.

**Performance:** Striding the stage like a practiced pro, Boustany simultaneously pulled off blues riffs like Santana and belted his vocal

lines like Bon Jovi. The rhythm section were a pleasure to behold. Shimano consistently smiled at the audience as if he was their best friend, while dishing out rhythms worthy of a drummer on a stadium tour. Tahara swayed and bobbed in time to Shimano's beats while locking in and expanding on the rhythms. Takasugi was the black sheep, off in his own world beneath his golfer's hat, covering the whole band with his parts.

**Summary:** Michael Boustany, while not breaking any new ground, is

simultaneously mainstream enough to be comfortable to the ears, while being fresh enough to encourage repeated listening. This artist would probably be right at home on any AOR radio station, and on the roster of any similar record company. His band is more than ready to support him on any necessary tours as well. Maybe they just need to reel the guitarist in a bit, or perhaps they're fine just the way they are.

—Laurier Tiernan

## Afterglow

*Dan McGuinness*  
Memphis, TN

**Contact:** David Michael Lee, 901-490-2457; soulshaker@bellsouth.net  
**Website:** myspace.com/afterglowtunes  
**AMP Username:** davo  
**The Players:** Davo, vocals, bass, keyboards; Rod Schiller, vocals, drums; Adam Yancey, vocals, guitar.

**Material:** Afterglow are a close knit trio that have been performing their brand of classic rock around the Mid-South for the past several years. The band's original material can be considered new wave rock, but their live club set consists mostly of covers that keep the Memphis club owners content and the crowds on the dance floor. This trio's portfolio runs the gamut from the Cars, Billy Idol and Bad Company to Memphis Sun artists like Elvis and Johnny Cash. Set favorites include Golden Earring's "Twilight Zone" and Afterglow's own brand of Johnny Cash's "Ring of Fire."

**Musicianship:** Davo, Schiller and Yancey are all seasoned players who have the talent, chops and means to make this genre of music not only memorable, but imaginatively new at the same time. Bassist,



**Afterglow: Fine performances of infectious tunes that embody pure and pleasing harmonies.**

keyboardist and vocalist Davo and guitarist Adam Yancey take turns singing lead, while drummer Rod Schiller assists with backing vocals throughout. While each can carry a tune, Yancey is the troupe's strongest singer. His vocals range from falsetto to low bass tones, all with strength and clarity, while still playing perfect six-string solos. Davo is equally impressive with an ability to cover bass guitar and keyboards simultaneously. Schiller is a versatile

percussionist who keeps perfect time and maintains the steady rhythms needed for a band that presents such a variety of styles.

**Performance:** Afterglow's animated performance kept the crowd pumped up throughout this evening. Davo, Yancey and Schiller all complemented one another, as well as the edgy nature of their music, by contributing a commanding performance. The house was pack-

ed containing an attentive and appreciative crowd, with many of the audience members obviously being long-term die-hard Afterglow fans.

**Summary:** Known for their fine performances of infectious tunes, pure and pleasing harmonies and a charismatic live show, it's no wonder Afterglow have generated a buzz in their musical region.

—Anne O'Neary

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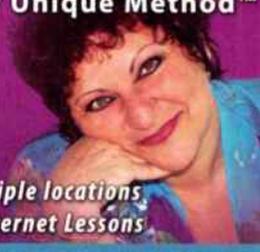
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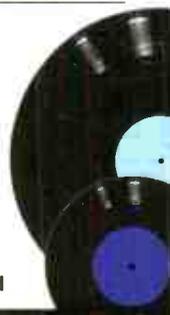
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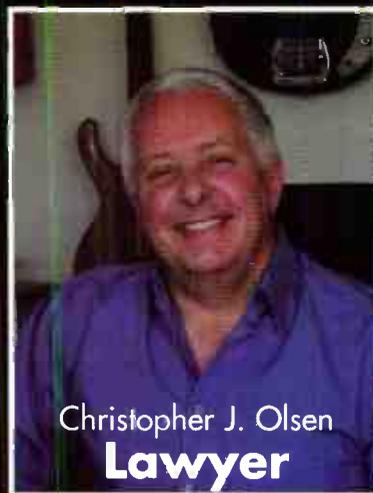
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By Michael Dolan

**I**n the beginning there were NO smart phone applications for musicians, other than multi-use utilities and toys. Now there are hundreds of apps devoted to the musician and music fan. From recording your session to confirming a gig, the smart phone has become an invaluable career tool for anyone in the music biz. Therefore, here are my top picks for the coolest iPhone & Android apps of 2010. Also, be sure to shoot me an e-mail to let me know what other great apps you've discovered!

The following apps are available at either the iPhone or Android app stores.

#### For iPhone:

 **Musician's Friend Stupid Deal Of The Day (Free):** Owned by Guitar Center, get MF's popular daily deal delivered to your phone every day. I check this one often.

 **QuickVoice Pro (\$2.99):** This is my all time favorite app that I use every day. Not only do I record business ideas, blog ideas, to-do lists and seminar notes, it also allows me to e-mail those recorded notes to myself in a text format. Very Cool!



**Carvin Impedance Calculator (Free):** Calculates total impedance of multiple speakers in both series and parallel connections. Great for those of you who play bass, guitar or set up sound systems or install speakers in the mobile audio industry.



**Drum Kit (\$1.99):** This application's graphics are extremely cool and it's a fun app for drummers and non-drummers alike.



**MusicBiz (Free):** Actually this app has nothing to do with the business. But it's great for musicians and gear geeks on tour, instantly finding music stores near your current location from over 4,000 music shops listed in the U.S. and around the world.



**Easy Beats Pro Drum Machine (\$4.99):** As a drummer I find this app to be an easy way to create great sounding beats. It's a powerful tool for creating new beat patterns. You can use either the built-in samples or sounds you import yourself.



**Tweak (Free):** iLive Tweak is designed to provide basic mobile control of Allen & Heath's iLive digital mixing range.



**Guitar Tool Kit (\$9.99)** My friend Daveed recommended this one. Pro, essential guitar utilities for 6 and 12 string players, including an amazingly accurate tuner, a fat library of chords and a metronome. Also includes alternative tunings.



**iBone (\$2.99):** Realistic trombone sounds that you can touch or blow to make a sound. Slide your finger to change pitch and raise and lower the bell to change volume. If you're a horn player it's great, if not it's just plain fun.



**SunVox (\$4.99):** SunVox is a small, fast and powerful music sequencer with modular synthesizers. It is a useful tool for those people who want to compose music anywhere.



**iSequence (\$4.99):** This is a complete mobile music production environment. By virtue of its intuitive, single screen sequencer and 110 built-in instruments you can easily create, edit and mix your music.



**Pocket Amp (\$2.99):** Best guitar amp effects for practicing with your iTunes music. It gives you access to your entire iPod library and the ability to fast forward, rewind and pause. Its presets easily dial in basic sounds.



**Pro Loop (\$5.99):** This is a powerful and flexible loop instrument for pro musicians. Use it as a live electronic instrument by itself or as an addition to your other gear.

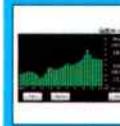


**Air Display (\$9.99):** Here's an app for the iPad. Ever wish you had an extra display for your computer? With Air Display, you can use your iPad as a wireless display for your Mac OS X or Windows computer.

#### For Android:



**G-strings: (Free)** A chromatic tuner application measuring sound pitch and intensity—and even has a Hz display. This bad boy will help you tune several musical instruments (violin, viola, violincello, bass, guitar, piano, wind instruments).



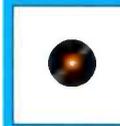
**RTA Analyzer: (Free)** Perfect tool for any audio engineer. Use this app to measure the frequency response of your audio equipment, identify tones and noises (ex: finding feedback frequencies). Handy tool for ringing out monitors.



**Gig Bag: (\$4.99):** A gig calendar, tracker and income/expense log. Built for any DIY touring musician. If only it synced with Gmail!



**FourTracks: (Free Lite Version/ \$6.95 for pro)** A very simple 4-track recording program, allowing you to mute, adjust volume and zoom a simple 4-track mix. Ideal for musicians that are on tour/bored in mom's basement.



**BPM Counter: (Free)** Simple and efficient, it displays the BPM as well as the tempo marking: Largo, Larghetto, Adagio, Andante, Moderato, Allegro, Presto, etc.

#### For iPhone and Android:



**VocalEase: (\$7.99 Android/\$9.99 iPhone)** With stellar reviews, this portable vocal warmup studio for singers/public speakers was designed by Arnold McCuller (Phil Collins, Beck and James Taylor).

**Best selling author J. Michael Dolan** is the founder and former CEO/Publisher/Editor of *Music Connection* magazine. Today he is a personal coach/consultant specializing in innovative solutions to impossible challenges. E-mail [jmichaeldolan@gmail.com](mailto:jmichaeldolan@gmail.com). Visit [jmichaeldolan.com](http://jmichaeldolan.com).



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## AUSTIN

Emo's  
January 26th, 2011  
7 PM CST

## BOSTON

The Paradise  
January 27th, 2011  
7 PM EST

## CHICAGO

Metro  
January 20th, 2011  
6 PM CST

## LOS ANGELES

The Roxy  
January 19th, 2011  
8 PM PST

## NASHVILLE

Wildhorse Saloon  
January 25th, 2011  
6 PM CST

## TORONTO

The Mod Club  
January 24th, 2011  
7:30 PM EST

POWERED BY:



**SHURE**

**FOR FANS:** NO PURCHASE NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN. Open to legal residents of the 50 United States, DC and Canada (the "Eligible Countries"). Sweepstakes ends on October 10, 2010 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. Sweepstakes begins on October 11, 2010 at 12:01 a.m. Eastern Standard Time. Sweepstakes ends on October 10, 2010 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. First Prize: \$119.95 will be given away to 20 winners in random drawing conducted from entries received in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands from 12:01 a.m. Eastern Standard Time on October 11, 2010 to 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on October 10, 2010. Second Prize: 20 winners in random drawing from entries received between 7/4/10 and 2/18/11. Odds of winning depend on number of entries. Odds of winning are based on entries received from 7/4/10 to 2/18/11. Sweepstakes ends on October 10, 2010 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. All rights reserved. © 2010 Shure Incorporated. All rights reserved.

**FOR BANDS:** NO PURCHASE NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN. Sweepstakes ends on October 10, 2010 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. Sweepstakes begins on October 11, 2010 at 12:01 a.m. Eastern Standard Time. First Prize: 20 winners in random drawing from entries received in the United States, DC and Canada (the "Eligible Countries") from 12:01 a.m. Eastern Standard Time on October 11, 2010 to 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on October 10, 2010. Second Prize: 20 winners in random drawing from entries received between 7/4/10 and 2/18/11. Odds of winning depend on number of entries. Odds of winning are based on entries received from 7/4/10 to 2/18/11. Sweepstakes ends on October 10, 2010 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. All rights reserved. © 2010 Shure Incorporated. All rights reserved.

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# Some of Studio One Pro's hitherto complacent competitors aren't quite as complacent anymore.



Apparently there *is* a market for a serious DAW that's way easier to use, sounds better, runs 64-bit native on both Mac<sup>®</sup>s and Windows<sup>®</sup>, has built-in mastering, etcetera\*.

We just won the 2010 Quality and Innovation Award from UK's **resolution** magazine. And we're currently in the running for a coveted TEC award (as we say in Louisiana politics, "Vote early. Vote often.")

Studio One Pro. Now in Version 1.6.

And, increasingly, in our competitors' faces.

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