

# billboard

SEPTEMBER 18, 2021 • BILLBOARD.COM

LATIN  
2021



WHY KAROL G  
IS READY  
TO RULE

WHAT'S UMG  
REALLY  
WORTH?

## *El Godfather*

DADDY YANKEE'S

GUIDE TO BEING

A BOSS



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SEPTEMBER 18, 2021 • BILLBOARD.COM

LATIN  
2021

+

DADDY YANKEE'S  
GUIDE TO  
BEING A BOSS

—

WHAT'S UMG  
REALLY WORTH?

## *The Next Latina Queen*

WHY KAROL G IS

READY TO RULE



joontimusic.com



**AP GLOBAL  
MUSIC**  
POWERED BY **EMM**

**WELCOMES 2 TALENTED  
FUTURE STARS TO OUR  
ROSTER OF ARTISTS**

# FABIO

AVAILABLE NOW





# MARC ANTHONY

## *Palla Voy* TOUR

**AUG 27** - SAN ANTONIO, TX  
**AUG 28** - HOUSTON, TX  
**SEP 03** - DALLAS, TX  
**SEP 05** - ATLANTA, GA  
**SEP 10** - WASHINGTON, DC  
**SEP 11** - CHARLOTTE, NC  
**SEP 18** - UNCASVILLE, CT  
**SEP 19** - NEW YORK, NY

**OCT 08** - CHICAGO, IL  
**OCT 09** - KANSAS CITY, MO  
**OCT 15** - TULSA, OK  
**OCT 17** - DENVER, CO  
**OCT 23** - LAS VEGAS, NV  
**OCT 24** - SAN DIEGO, CA  
**OCT 29** - ONTARIO, CA  
**OCT 31** - PHOENIX, AZ

**NOV 05** - FORT MYERS, FL  
**NOV 06** - ORLANDO, FL  
**NOV 19** - MIAMI, FL  
**NOV 20** - MIAMI, FL  
**DEC 03** - MONTREAL, CANADA  
**DEC 04** - TORONTO, CANADA  
**DEC 17** - SAN JOSE, CA  
**DEC 18** - LOS ANGELES, CA

# PAPI JUANCHO

## MALUMA WORLD TOUR

SEP 02 / SACRAMENTO, CA

SEP 03 / LOS ANGELES, CA

SEP 04 / LAS VEGAS, NV

SEP 09 / SAN JOSE, CA

SEP 11 / ONTARIO, CA

SEP 12 / SAN DIEGO, CA

SEP 18 / SEATTLE, WA

SEP 19 / PORTLAND, OR

SEP 23 / PHOENIX, AZ

SEP 24 / EL PASO, TX

SEP 25 / ODESSA, TX

SEP 26 / SAN ANTONIO, TX

SEP 30 / BRIDGEPORT, CT

OCT 01 / NEW YORK, NY

OCT 02 / WASHINGTON DC

OCT 03 / GREENSBORO, NC

OCT 07 / ATLANTA, GA

OCT 08 / ORLANDO, FL

OCT 09 / MIAMI, FL

OCT 10 / FORT MYERS, FL

OCT 14 / DALLAS, TX

OCT 15 / LAREDO, TX

OCT 16 / HIDALGO, TX

OCT 17 / HOUSTON, TX

OCT 21 / TORONTO, CANADA

OCT 22 / MONTREAL, CANADA

OCT 24 / CHICAGO, IL

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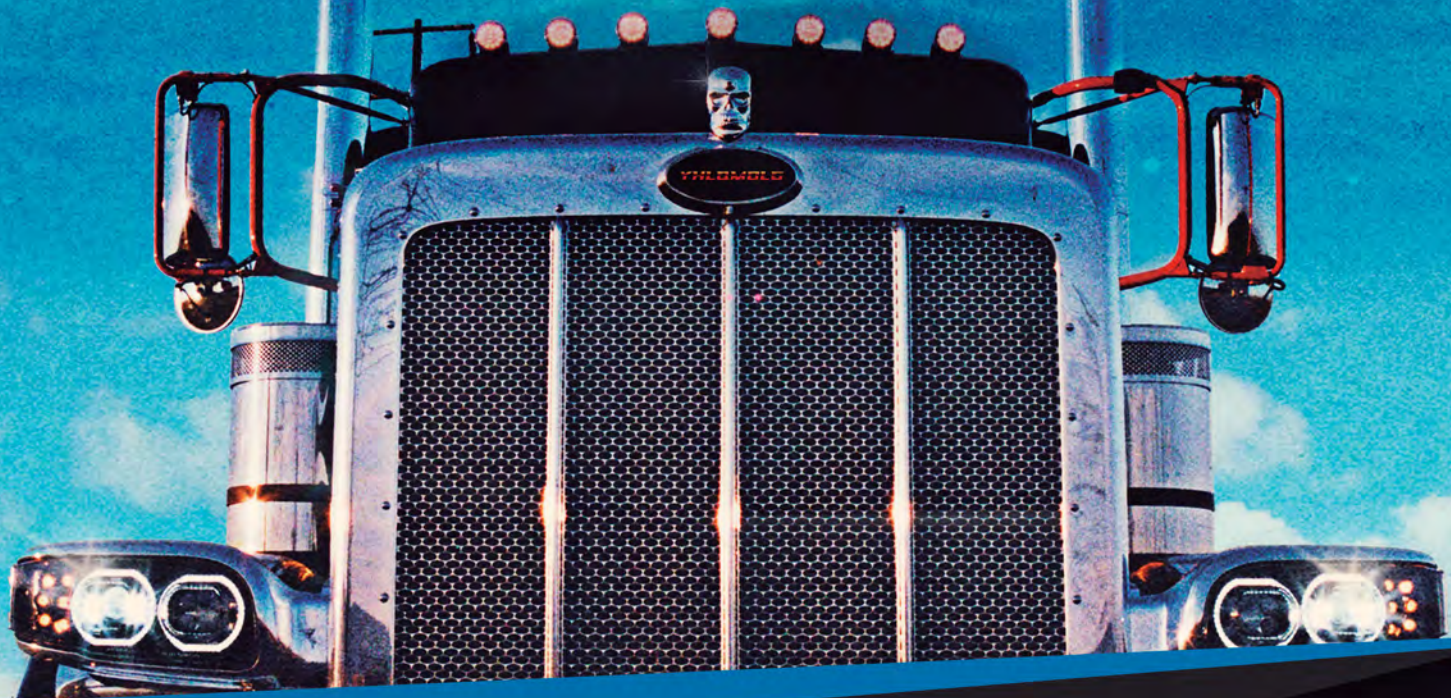
# BAD BUNNY

## El Último Tour Del Mundo 2022

FEB 09 DENVER, CO  
FEB 11 EL PASO, TX  
FEB 13 HIDALGO, TX  
FEB 16 HOUSTON, TX  
FEB 17 HOUSTON, TX  
FEB 18 DALLAS, TX  
FEB 19 DALLAS, TX  
FEB 23 SAN DIEGO, CA  
FEB 24 LOS ANGELES, CA  
FEB 25 INGLEWOOD, CA  
FEB 26 INGLEWOOD, CA  
FEB 28 PORTLAND, OR

MAR 01 SEATTLE, WA  
MAR 03 SAN JOSE, CA  
MAR 04 SAN JOSE, CA  
MAR 05 LAS VEGAS, NV  
MAR 06 PHOENIX, AZ  
MAR 10 CHICAGO, IL  
MAR 11 CHICAGO, IL  
MAR 12 CHUCAGO, IL  
MAR 14 TORONTO, ON  
MAR 16 PHILADELPHIA, PA  
MAR 18 NEWARK, NJ

MAR 19 BROOKLYN, NY  
MAR 20 BROOKLYN, NY  
MAR 22 BOSTON, MA  
MAR 23 MONTREAL, QC  
MAR 25 WASHINGTON, DC  
MAR 26 CHARLOTTE, NC  
MAR 27 ATLANTA, GA  
MAR 29 ORLANDO, FL  
MAR 30 ORLANDO, FL  
APR 01 MIAMI, FL  
ABR 02 MIAMI, FL  
ABR 03 MIAMI, FL



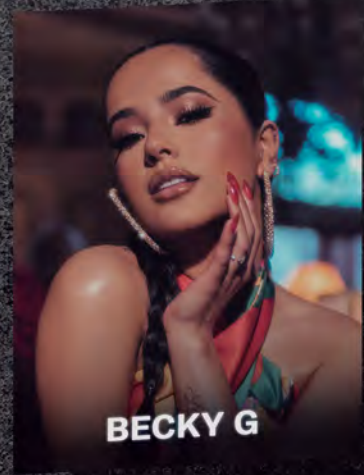
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AND THE #1 PRODUCER OF LATIN MUSIC TOURS IN THE U.S.



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VSUAREZ@CMNEVENTS.COM

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# *Ama Gabriel*

*La luna de américa*

## POR AMOR A USTEDES

— WORLD TOUR —

FEB 10 / OAKLAND  
FEB 12 / LAS VEGAS  
FEB 18 / TEMECULA  
FEB 20 / LOS ANGELES  
FEB 25 / FRESNO  
FEB 27 / DENVER  
MAR 04 / PHOENIX  
MAR 05 / EL PASO  
MAR 10 / SALT LAKE CITY  
MAR 12 / SEATTLE  
MAR 18 / LAREDO  
MAR 20 / HOUSTON  
MAR 26 / SAN ANTONIO  
MAR 27 / DALLAS  
MAY 07 / MIAMI  
MAY 08 / FORT MYERS  
JUN 10 / NEWARK  
JUN 16 / CHARLOTTE  
JUN 18 / NEW YORK

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J BALVIN PRESENTS

# J Balvin TOUR

2022



APR 19  
**SAN ANTONIO, TX**  
AT&T Center

APR 20  
**AUSTIN, TX**  
H-E-B Center at Cedar Park

APR 22  
**TUCSON, AZ**  
Tucson Arena

APR 23  
**LAS VEGAS, NV**  
Michelob Ultra Arena

APR 24  
**SAN DIEGO, CA**  
Pechanga Arena

APR 26  
**SEATTLE, WA**  
Climate Pledge Arena

APR 28  
**PORTLAND, OR**  
Moda Center

APR 30  
**SAN JOSE, CA**  
Sap Center

MAY 01  
**OAKLAND, CA**  
Oakland Arena

MAY 04  
**EL PASO, TX**  
Don Haskins Center

MAY 05  
**LAREDO, TX**  
Sames Auto Arena

MAY 06  
**HOUSTON, TX**  
Toyota Center

MAY 07  
**HIDALGO, TX**  
Payne Arena

MAY 08  
**DALLAS, TX**  
American Airlines Center

MAY 11  
**FORT MYERS, FL**  
Hertz Arena

MAY 13  
**MIAMI, FL**  
FTX Arena

MAY 14  
**ORLANDO, FL**  
Amway Center

MAY 15  
**ATLANTA, GA**  
State Farm Arena

MAY 18  
**CHARLOTE, NC**  
Spectrum Center

MAY 20  
**WASHINGTON, DC**  
Capital One Arena

MAY 21  
**NEWARK, NJ**  
Prudential Center

MAY 22  
**NEW YORK, NY**  
Barclays Center

MAY 25  
**BRIDGEPORT, CT**  
Webster Bank Arena

MAY 26  
**BOSTON, MA**  
TD Garden

MAY 27  
**MONTREAL, CA**  
Centre Bell

MAY 28  
**TORONTO, CA**  
Scotiabank Arena

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# SECH



**JUL 30** - ATLANTA, GA  
**JUL 31** - ORLANDO, FL  
**AGO 01** - MIAMI, FL  
**AGO 15** - ROSARITO, MEXICO  
**AGO 22** - ROSARITO, MEXICO  
**AGO 27** - NEW YORK, NY  
**AGO 28** - LAS VEGAS, NV

**AGO 29** - LOS ANGELES, CA  
**SEP 24** - SALT LAKE CITY, UT  
**SEP 25** - OAKLAND, CA  
**OCT 29** - HIDALGO, TX  
**NOV 19** - MONTERREY, MEXICO  
**DIC 09** - PUNTA CANA, DR  
**DIC 19** - MIAMI, FL

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**DOPAMINA TOUR**



# MANUEL TURIZO

SEP  
**10**

NEW YORK, NY  
UNITED PALACE

SEP  
**11**

MIAMI, FL  
THE FILLMORE

SEP  
**16**

HIDALGO, TX  
PAYNE ARENA

SEP  
**17**

HOUSTON, TX  
ESCAPADE

SEP  
**18**

BOSTON, MA  
BOCH CENTER  
SHUBERT THEATRE

SEP  
**25**

ATLANTA, GA  
ATLANTA  
COLISEUM

OCT  
**08**

SAN JUAN, PR  
COCA-COLA  
MUSIC HALL



## PRÓXIMAMENTE

**EL ESCENARIO MULTIPROPÓSITO MÁS GRANDE DE LATINOAMÉRICA**

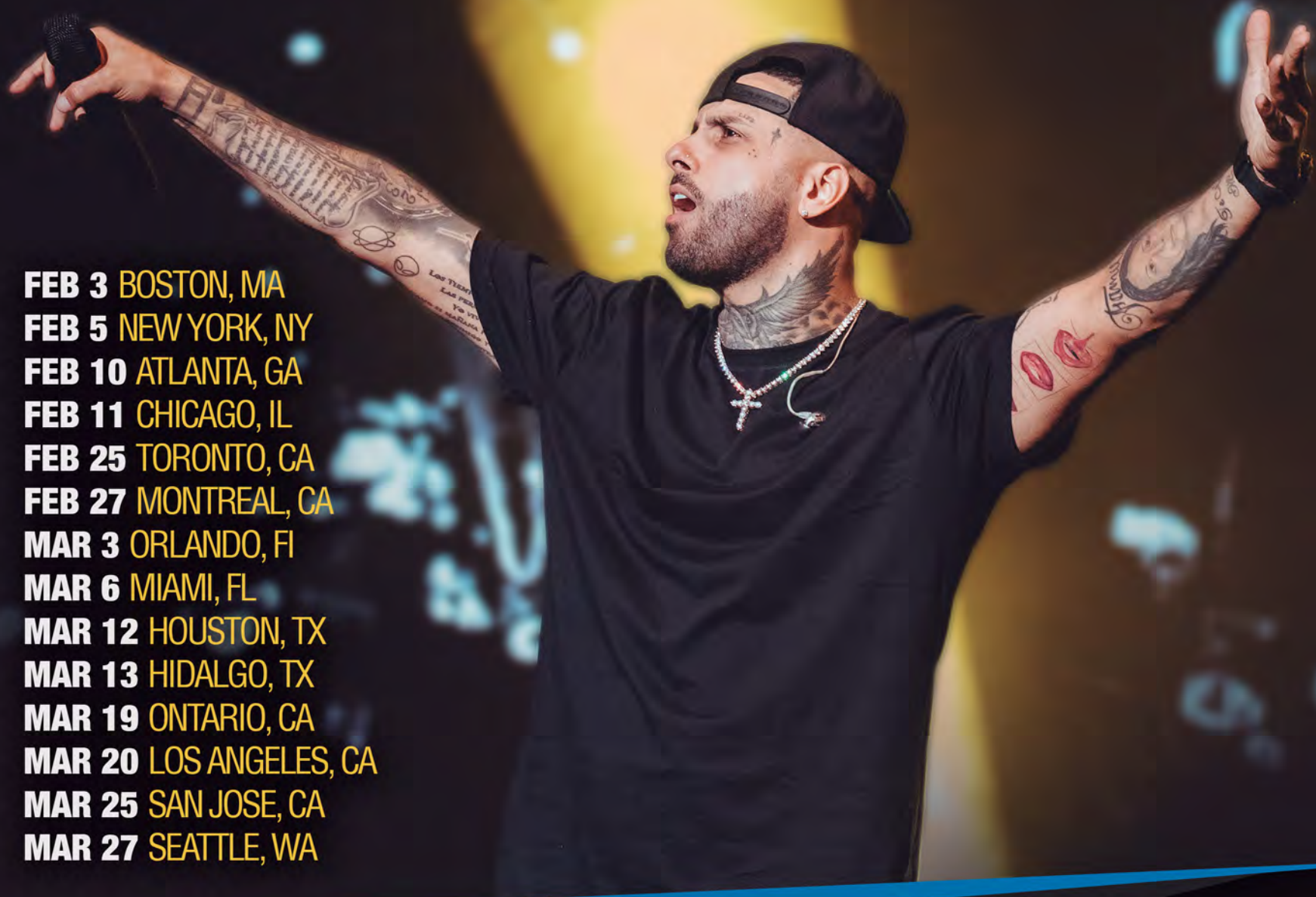
📍 BOGOTÁ, COL    📷 @COLISEOLIVE    📱 COLISEO LIVE

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# INFINITY

## NICKY JAM TO UR 2022



**FEB 3** BOSTON, MA  
**FEB 5** NEW YORK, NY  
**FEB 10** ATLANTA, GA  
**FEB 11** CHICAGO, IL  
**FEB 25** TORONTO, CA  
**FEB 27** MONTREAL, CA  
**MAR 3** ORLANDO, FL  
**MAR 6** MIAMI, FL  
**MAR 12** HOUSTON, TX  
**MAR 13** HIDALGO, TX  
**MAR 19** ONTARIO, CA  
**MAR 20** LOS ANGELES, CA  
**MAR 25** SAN JOSE, CA  
**MAR 27** SEATTLE, WA

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# MS Tour Positivo



**SEP 03** / NEW YORK, NY  
**SEP 04** / PHILADELPHIA, PA  
**SEP 05** / WASHINGTON, DC  
**SEP 24** / FORT MYERS, FL  
**SEP 25** / HOLLYWOOD, FL  
**SEP 26** / ORLANDO, FL  
**OCT 28** / BOGOTÁ, CO  
**OCT 29** / CALI, COL  
**OCT 30** / MEDELLÍN, COL  
**NOV 5** / MEMPHIS, TN  
**NOV 6** / INDIANAPOLIS, IN



# GRUPO FIRME

**NOVIEMBRE 11**  
CHICAGO, IL

**NOVIEMBRE 12**  
CHICAGO, IL

**NOVIEMBRE 19**  
NEW YORK, NY

**NOVIEMBRE 20**  
BOSTON, MA

**NOVIEMBRE 21**  
WASHINGTON, DC

LMS  
**billboard**  
 SEVILLA 2021  
 ESPAÑA

**01-02 OCT**  
**PARQUE DE LA VEGA DE TRIANA**



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# TOUR ESPAÑA 2021 RAUW ALEJANDRO

09/30 Madrid	10/01 Sevilla Billboard LMS
10/02 Málaga	10/03 Granada
10/08 Murcia	10/09 Barcelona
10/10 Valencia	10/11 Bilbao
10/13 Saragoza	10/12 Palma de Mallorca
10/15 Acoruña	10/16 Islas Canarias

# TOUR ESPAÑA 2022 RAUW ALEJANDRO

- Barcelona
- Granada
- Asturias
- Málaga
- Madrid
- Palma de Mallorca
- Sevilla
- Valencia
- Murcia
- Acoruña



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Yemani Coop V

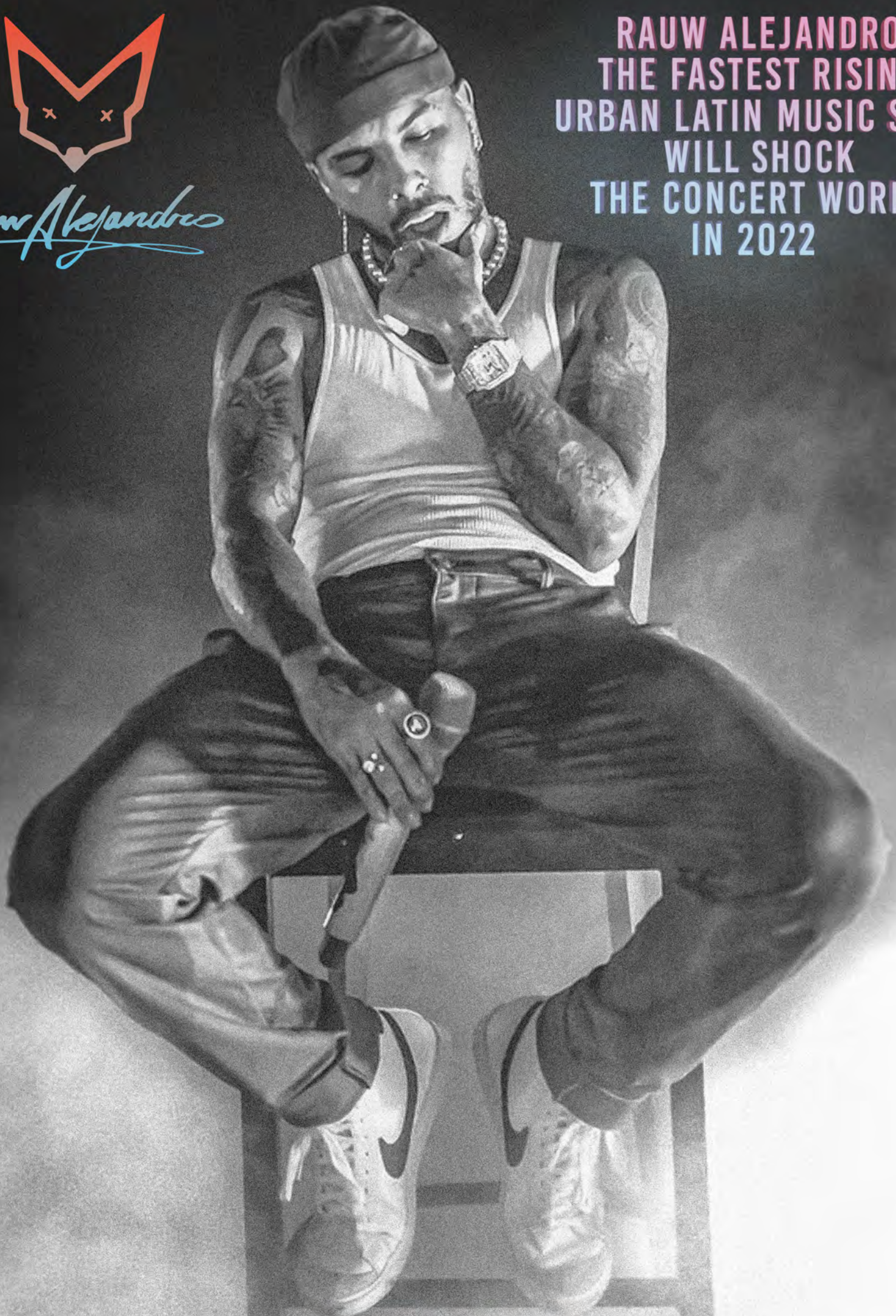


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*Rauw Alejandro*

**RAUW ALEJANDRO**  
**THE FASTEST RISING**  
**URBAN LATIN MUSIC STAR**  
**WILL SHOCK**  
**THE CONCERT WORLD**  
**IN 2022**





# OZUNA

## 2022

USA  TOUR

**EMM**  
ELITE MEDIA & MARKETING

AURA  
MUSIC



# EMMM

ELITE MEDIA & MARKETING

Solution DEVELOPMENT  
POWER ideas MEDIA SUCCESS Harmony  
LOYALTY PROCESS STRATEGY IDEAS LEARN MEDIA  
communication Create POWER ideas GOALS LEARN Creation  
PROCESSES Leadership POWER IDEAS  
SUCCESSION Business  
SUCCESSION Target BUSINESS  
analysis IDEAS Team Achieve BUSINESS PLANNING  
STRATEGY relation Team Solution POWER  
VISION IDEAS  
Create  
LEARN  
DEVELOPMENT SUCCESS Create analysis  
COACHING LEARN Target IDEAS Objectives  
Leadership LEARN Create BUSINESS teamwork together  
INITIATIVE CONCEPT SOLUTION POWER SUCCESS DETERMINATION PLANNING  
LOYALTY RISE WIN  
GROWTH MUSIC #1 PLANNING  
COLLABORATION synergy IDEAS  
GOALS Leadership Vision PROCESS GOALS LOYALTY Harmony  
Target www.EMM360.com  
DETERMINATION



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POWERED BY EMM

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MUSIC  
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**SDS**  
RECORDS



# A gentleman

2 June 1941 — 24 August 2021



# billboard Hot 100®



## Drake Dominates With Record Nine Of Top 10

**D**RAKE BOASTS ONE OF THE MOST TRIUMPHANT WEEKS in the 63-year history of the Billboard Hot 100, as he becomes the first artist to claim nine of the top 10 positions in a single frame. Among his Hot 100 haul, the superstar holds the entire top five, a feat previously achieved only by The Beatles on the chart dated April 4, 1964.

“Way 2 Sexy,” featuring Future and Young Thug, launches at No. 1 with 67.3 million streams, 7.7 million in airplay audience and 7,000 sold in its first week (ending Sept. 9), according to MRC Data. It’s Drake’s ninth leader, Future’s first and Young Thug’s third.

In total, Drake debuts 21 songs on the Hot 100, all from his new album, *Certified Lover Boy*, which enters at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 with 613,000 equivalent album units, the highest weekly sum in over a year (see page 20).

In its first chart appearance, *Certified Lover Boy* also becomes the album with the most Hot 100 top 10s from a single set, thanks to Drake’s nine highest entries. It surpasses four albums that each spun off seven top 10s: Michael Jackson’s *Thriller* (1982-84), Bruce Springsteen’s *Born in the U.S.A.* (1984-86), Janet Jackson’s *Rhythm Nation 1814* (1989-91) and Drake’s own *Scorpion* (2018).

—GARY TRUST

2 WKS. AGO	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	TITLE	CERTIFICATION	Artist	PEAK POS.	WKS. ON CHART
			PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)	IMPRINT/PROMOTION LABEL			
		1	<b>#1</b> WAY 2 SEXY	DR	Drake Feat. Future & Young Thug	1	1
		2	GIRLS WANT GIRLS	DR	Drake Feat. Lil Baby	2	1
		3	FAIR TRADE	DR	Drake Feat. Travis Scott	3	1
		4	CHAMPAGNE POETRY	DR	Drake	4	1
		5	KNIFE TALK	DR	Drake Feat. 21 Savage & Project Pat	5	1
1	2	6	<b>AIR</b> STAY	DR	The Kid LAROI & Justin Bieber	1	9
		7	IN THE BIBLE	DR	Drake Feat. Lil Durk & Giveon	7	1
		8	PAPI'S HOME	DR	Drake	8	1
		9	TSU	DR	Drake	9	1
		10	LOVE ALL	DR	Drake Feat. JAY-Z	10	1

COURTESY OF REPUBLIC RECORDS  
THE WEEK'S MOST POPULAR CURRENT SONGS ACROSS ALL GENRES, RANKED BY RADIO AIRPLAY AUDIENCE IMPRESSIONS AS MEASURED BY MRC DATA, SALES DATA AS COMPILED BY MRC DATA AND STREAMING ACTIVITY DATA BY ONLINE MUSIC SOURCES TRACKED BY MRC DATA. SONGS ARE DEFINED AS CURRENT IF THEY ARE NEWLY RELEASED TITLES. ARTISTS RECEIVING INDUSTRY CREDIT FOR THE FIRST TIME ARE LISTED IN THE CHARTS LEGEND ON BILLBOARD.COM FOR COMPLETE DETAILS AND EXPLANATIONS. © 2021 BILLBOARD MEDIA LLC AND MRC DATA INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.  
SALES, AIRPLAY & STREAMING DATA COMPILED BY MRC

The 30-year-old Puerto Rico native's sixth Hot 100 entry also collects its fourth week at No. 1 on the Hot Latin Songs chart.

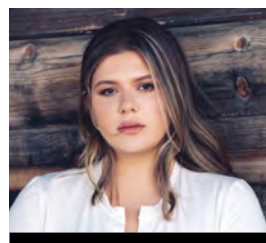


**15**  
FARRUKO  
"Pepas"

**How did you create "Pepas"?**  
I reached out to DJ-producer IAmChino [and] asked him to show me a few *guaracha* beats. He told me there was this producer from Colombia, Víctor Cárdenas, who is an expert. When I heard the rhythm for "Pepas," I thought, "I'll build the structure from here." I knew the chorus had to be easy so people could memorize and consume it. I followed the melody and added voices. It became euphoric.

**Why do you think Latin rhythm music works when fused with EDM?**  
The genre is a hybrid, so you can mix it with anything, but it had yet to reach that chemistry with EDM. I was able to strike that perfect balance between the two with "Pepas." We were able to develop a new formula. They are two genres that have so much energy — they're uptempo and make people sing, dance and jump.

**"Pepas" is your first No. 1 on Hot Latin Songs. Did you know right away it was a hit?**  
I went crazy when I heard it and so did my label, but we had some doubts because it's so different. We're not used to listening to these types of sounds in the Latin world, and I understood that. We released the song with no marketing campaign or video. We thought of the song as an experiment. And having no plan worked. —GRISelda FLORES



**24**  
DRAKE & YEBBA  
"Yebba's Heartbreak"

Following collaborations with Sam Smith, Ed Sheeran and Mark Ronson that reached other charts, Arkansas native Yebba (above, born Abigail Smith) notches her first Hot 100 hit. Her debut album, *Dawn*, arrived Sept. 10.

2 WKS. AGO	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	TITLE	CERTIFICATION	Artist	PEAK POS.	WKS. ON CHART
			PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)		IMPRINT/PROMOTION LABEL		
NEW	11		<b>NO FRIENDS IN THE INDUSTRY</b>		Drake	11	1
			VINYLAZ, OZ, NIK O (A. GRAHAM, A. HERMANDEZ, O. YILDRIM, N. FRASCONA, G. WILLIAMS, R. DEBARGE)		OVO SOUND/REPUBLIC		
NEW	12		<b>N 2 DEEP</b>		Drake Feat. Future	12	1
			KID MASTERPIECE, ARSENAULT, I40, AUSTIG (A. GRAHAM, N. D. WILBURN, N. J. SHEBIB, K. BARUA, H. ARSENAULT, A. LUSTIG, NOEL, C. BUTLER, S. C. CARTER, B. J. FREEMAN, J. MCVEY, WILLIAMS, JR.)		OVO SOUND/REPUBLIC		
2	3	13	<b>BAD HABITS</b>		Ed Sheeran	2	11
			FRED AGAIN!, J. MCDAID, E. SHEERAN (E. C. SHEERAN, F. GIBSON, J. MCDAID)		ATLANTIC		
NEW	14		<b>PIPE DOWN</b>		Drake	14	1
			L. THOMAS, FAX ONLY, J. BLEU, S. GEBRELU, A. GRAHAM, L. G. THOMAS III, R. E. FAIRFAX III, A. M. HAFEZ, S. GEBRELU, D. KASTAL, A. WALTERS, L. A. CAMEJO		OVO SOUND/REPUBLIC		
3	4	15	<b>GOOD 4 U</b> ▲		Olivia Rodrigo	1	17
			D. NIGRO, A. LEXANDER 23 (D. NIGRO, D. L. NIGRO, J. FARRO, H. WILLIAMS)		GEFFEN/INTERSCOPE		
NEW	16		<b>7AM ON BRIDLE PATH</b>		Drake	16	1
			CARDO ON THE BEAT, DEZ WASHINGTON, KNO (A. GRAHAM, R. LATOUR, D. CLEARY-KRELL, D. A. DUODU, M. BIDAYE)		OVO SOUND/REPUBLIC		
7	1	17	<b>BUTTER</b>		BTS	1	16
			R. GRIMALDI, S. KIRK, R. PERRY (J. ANDREWS, R. GRIMALDI, S. KIRK, R. M. A. BILOWITZ, S. GARCIA, R. PERRY)		HYBE/BIGHIT MUSIC/COLUMBIA		
NEW	18		<b>RACE MY MIND</b>		Drake	18	1
			GOVI, MONSUNE, 40 (A. GRAHAM, N. J. SHEBIB, N. GOVEIA, S. ZHANG, C. WALLACE, O. S. HARVEY, JR., D. AXELROD, M. AXELROD, J. A. JOHNSON, S. RA)		OVO SOUND/REPUBLIC		
4	5	19	<b>KISS ME MORE</b>		Doja Cat Feat. SZA	3	22
			YETI BEATS, R. CHAHAYED (A. Z. DLAMINI, D. SPRECHER, R. CHAHAYED, G. A. POWELL, II, C. LANG, L. S. GOTTWALD, S. I. ROWE, T. SHADDICK, S. A. KIPNER)		KEMOSABE/REPUBLIC		
5	7	20	<b>INDUSTRY BABY</b>		Lil Nas X & Jack Harlow	2	7
			K. WEST, TAKE A DAY TRIP, N. LEE (M. L. HILL, D. M. A. BAPTISTE, D. BIRAL, N. LEE, J. HARLOW)		COLUMBIA		

2 WKS. AGO	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	TITLE	CERTIFICATION	Artist	PEAK POS.	WKS. ON CHART
			PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)		IMPRINT/PROMOTION LABEL		
11	9	21	<b>FANCY LIKE</b>		Walker Hayes	9	12
			W. HAYES, J. THIBODEAU, S. MCANALLY (W. HAYES, J. JENKINS, S. STEVENS, C. BARTOLINI)		MONUMENT/RCA		
NEW		22	<b>IMY2</b>		Drake Feat. Kid Cudi	22	1
			H. ARSENAULT, CIBBO, HOUSSAM (A. GRAHAM, S. R. S. MESCUDI, H. ARSENAULT, C. OWUOR, A. BENFARRES, I. BIZIMANA, A. DZNOU, K. CASTANEDA)		OVO SOUND/REPUBLIC		
6	8	23	<b>LEVITATING</b> ▲		Dua Lipa	2	49
			KOZ, S. D. PRICE (C. COFFEE, JR., S. KOZMENIUK, S. T. HUDSON, D. LIPA, J. L. KIRK)		WARNER		
NEW		24	<b>YEBBA'S HEARTBREAK</b>		Drake & Yebba	24	1
			YEBBA, J. FRANCIES, 40 (A. SMITH)		OVO SOUND/REPUBLIC		
NEW		25	<b>YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE</b>		Drake Feat. Lil Wayne & Rick Ross	25	1
			R. HARRELL III (A. GRAHAM, W. L. ROBERTS II, D. M. CARTER, JR., R. HARRELL III, B. REID)		OVO SOUND/REPUBLIC		
NEW		26	<b>FOUNTAINS</b>		Drake Feat. Tems	26	1
			TRESOR (A. GRAHAM, T. OPENIYI, T. RIZIKI)		OVO SOUND/REPUBLIC		
NEW		27	<b>GET ALONG BETTER</b>		Drake Feat. Ty Dolla Sign	27	1
			NINETEEN85, NOEL, 40 (A. GRAHAM, P. JEFFERIES, T. W. GRIFFIN, JR., NOEL, N. J. SHEBIB)		OVO SOUND/REPUBLIC		
10	14	28	<b>SAVE YOUR TEARS</b> ▲		The Weeknd & Ariana Grande	1	39
			MAX MARTIN, O. T. HOLTER, THE WEEKND (A. TESFAYE, A. BALSHE, J. QUENNEVILLE, MAX MARTIN, O. T. HOLTER, A. GRANDE)		XO/REPUBLIC		
-	6	29	<b>HURRICANE</b>		Kanye West	6	2
			K. WEST, BOOGZ DABEAST, G. DEAN, DJ. KHALIL, RONNY JOU, VOLTAIK, D. WEST, A. FAYE, A. JONES, J. GWIN, K. ABDUL RAHMAN, R. SPENCE, JR., M. G. DEAN, R. CUBINA, M. WILLIAMS, M. BOGOD, S. SEEF, S. BASH, J. MEASE		G.O.O.D./DEF JAM		
9	15	30	<b>MONTERO (CALL ME BY YOUR NAME)</b> ▲		Lil Nas X	1	24
			TAKE A DAY TRIP, O. FEDIR, LENZO (M. L. HILL, D. M. A. BAPTISTE, D. BIRAL, O. FEDIR, LENZO)		COLUMBIA		
8	13	31	<b>DEJA VU</b> ▲		Olivia Rodrigo	3	23
			D. NIGRO (D. L. NIGRO, O. RODRIGO, T. SWIFT, J. M. ANTONOFF, A. E. CLARK)		GEFFEN/INTERSCOPE		
NEW		32	<b>FUCKING FANS</b>		Drake	32	1
			PARTY NEXT DOOR, NOEL (A. GRAHAM, J. A. BRATHWAITE, NOEL, N. J. SHEBIB, P. I. RING)		OVO SOUND/REPUBLIC		
33	23	33	<b>HEAT WAVES</b> ▲	STM	Glass Animals	19	34
			D. BAYLEY (D. BAYLEY)		WOLF TONE/POLYDOR/REPUBLIC		
13	19	34	<b>ESSENCE</b>		Wizkid Feat. Justin Bieber & Tems	13	10
			P2.J. LEGEND, DURY BEATZ (A. I. BALOGUN, R. ISONG, O. E. ENIKO, U. E. ONIKO, T. OPENIYI, J. D. BIEBER)		STARBOY/RCA		
NEW		35	<b>THE REMORSE</b>		Drake	35	1
			40 (A. GRAHAM, N. J. SHEBIB, A. HAMILTON)		OVO SOUND/REPUBLIC		
12	21	36	<b>YOU RIGHT</b>		Doja Cat & The Weeknd	11	11
			DR. LUKE (A. Z. DLAMINI, L. S. GOTTWALD, A. TESFAYE)		KEMOSABE/RCA		
16	25	37	<b>TAKE MY BREATH</b>		The Weeknd	6	5
			MAX MARTIN, O. T. HOLTER, THE WEEKND (A. TESFAYE, A. BALSHE, MAX MARTIN, O. T. HOLTER)		XO/REPUBLIC		
14	24	38	<b>NEED TO KNOW</b>		Doja Cat	14	13
			DR. LUKE (A. Z. DLAMINI, L. S. GOTTWALD)		KEMOSABE/RCA		
29	35	39	<b>BEGGIN'</b>		Maneskin	29	11
			L. FABBRI (P. FARINA, B. GAUDIO)		SONY MUSIC LATIN/ARISTA		
21	33	40	<b>LEAVE BEFORE YOU LOVE ME</b>		Marshmello X Jonas Brothers	19	16
			MARSHMELLO, LESSO HEAVY MELLOW, N. GALE, MARSHMELLO, J. P. MARSHMELLO, N. J. GALE, R. BOARDMAN, P. BOARDMAN, VAUGHAN, A. R. LINDBLAD, E. ROMANO, C. ARNOLD, G. MARROW, D. MARTIN		JOTIVE COLLECTIVE/REPUBLIC		
-	11	41	<b>OFF THE GRID</b>		Kanye West	11	2
			K. WEST, 3OROC, AYDA, O. JIVOLTA, DAVID & ELI, K. WEST, J. CARTER, FIVIO FOREIGN, S. GLOADE, D. RUOFF, E. KLUGHAMMER, E. SLOAN, JR., R. CUBINA, M. WILLIAMS, A. ASIF		G.O.O.D./DEF JAM		
22	38	42	<b>HAPPIER THAN EVER</b>		Billie Eilish	11	6
			FINNEAS (B. E. O'CONNELL, F. B. O'CONNELL)		DARKROOM/INTERSCOPE		
44	50	43	<b>SAL</b> <b>IF I DIDN'T LOVE YOU</b>		Jason Aldean & Carrie Underwood	15	7
			M. KNOX (J. MORGAN, T. KENNEDY, K. M. ALLISON, L. VAUGHAN)		MACON/CAPITOL NASHVILLE/BROKEN BOW		
-	18	44	<b>FAMILY TIES</b>		Baby Keem & Kendrick Lamar	18	2
			BABY KEEM, CARDO ON THE BEAT, OUT TOWN, ROSELI, AH, DEAT, J. HARRIS, FRANKIE BASH (H. CARTER, JR., K. L. DUCKWORTH, R. LATOUR, T. DEKKER, R. L. BACHA, D. PATRZEK, J. HARRIS, C. FRANKEN) PGLANG/COLUMBIA		BABY KEEM/REPUBLIC		
26	36	45	<b>PEPAS</b>		Farruko	26	7
			H. CHINO, V. CARDENAS, SHARO TOWERS, KAG, GHETTO, ICE, REYES, ROSADO, F. J. MARTINEZ, M. G. PEREZ, CHRON FERRER, SONY MUSIC (K. QUIROZ, A. BAUZA, A. R. QUIZENA, F. ULGENO, V. CARDENAS, OSPINA, J. M. GOMEZ, J. C. GARCIA)		LATIN/REPUBLIC		
15	29	46	<b>LEAVE THE DOOR OPEN</b>		Silk Sonic (Bruno Mars & Anderson .Paak)	1	27
			BRUNO MARS, D. EMILE (BRUNO MARS, B. ANDERSON, D. EMILE II, C. B. BROWN)		AFTERMATH/ATLANTIC		
18	31	47	<b>PEACHES</b> ▲		Justin Bieber Feat. Daniel Caesar & Giveon	1	25
			HARV SHNDD, J. D. BIEBER, A. WOTMAN, G. D. EVANS, B. HARVEY, L. M. MARTINEZ, JR., L. B. BELL, L. KING, M. S. LEON, K. YAZDANI, A. SIMMONS)		RAYMOND BRAUN/DEF JAM		
24	37	48	<b>WAVES</b>		Luke Bryan	24	12
			J. STEVENS, J. STEVENS (Z. CROWELL, R. J. HURD, R. C. MCGILL)		CAPITOL NASHVILLE		
28	39	49	<b>TRAITOR</b>		Olivia Rodrigo	9	16
			D. NIGRO (O. RODRIGO, D. L. NIGRO)		GEFFEN/INTERSCOPE		
-	17	50	<b>MOON</b>		Kanye West	17	2
			K. WEST, E. VAX, BOOGZ DABEAST, DJ. KHALIL (K. WEST, C. TOLIVER, S. R. S. MESCUDI, J. GWIN, K. ABDUL RAHMAN, E. MAST)		G.O.O.D./DEF JAM		



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# 52

THOMAS RHETT  
"Country Again"

The song becomes the Valdosta, Ga., native's 17th No. 1 on *Billboard's* Country Airplay chart, up 12% to 28.2 million audience impressions, according to MRC Data. Says Rhett, who wrote it with Zach Crowell and Ashley Gorley: "No. 1 singles are always something I cherish, but this one especially was such a central part of how I processed the last couple of years. To have it resonate with people and to have it sung back to me on the road, now that we're able to tour again ... it has been kind of the perfect punctuation point." —JIM ASKER

WKS. AGO	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	TITLE	CERTIFICATION	Artist	PEAK POS.	WKS. ON CHART
			PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)		IMPRINT/PROMOTION LABEL		
32	45	51	<b>THINGS A MAN OUGHTA KNOW</b>		Lainey Wilson	32	17
			J. JOYCE (L. WILSON, J. D. SINGLETON, J. NIX)		BROKEN BOW		
42	51	52	<b>COUNTRY AGAIN</b>		Thomas Rhett	42	19
			D. HUFF, J. FRASURE (THOMAS RHETT, Z. CROWELL, A. GORLEY)		VALORY		
34	47	53	<b>CHASING AFTER YOU</b>		Ryan Hurd With Maren Morris	34	19
			A. ESHUIS, T. REIMER (B. ADDINGTON, J. FLOWERS)		ARISTA NASHVILLE		
30	44	54	<b>ARCADE</b>		Duncan Laurence	30	22
			W. HARDY, O. HOLLEMAN (D. LAURENCE, W. HARDY, J. S. JOO, W. KNOX)		SPARK RECORDS/CAPITOL		
17	32	55	<b>RUMORS</b>		Lizzo Feat. Cardi B	4	4
			RICKY REED, TELE, N. MERCEREAU (M. JEFFERSON, E. B. FREDERIC, T. THOMAS, S. CHEUNG, CARDI B, T. CARR)		NICE LIFE/ATLANTIC		
45	55	56	<b>COLD BEER CALLING MY NAME</b>		Jameson Rodgers Feat. Luke Combs	45	10
			C. FARREN, J. D. MITCHELL (J. RODGERS, H. PHELPS, BRETT TYLER, A. VANDERHEYM)		RIVER HOUSE/COLUMBIA NASHVILLE		
27	46	57	<b>THOT SHIT</b>		Megan Thee Stallion	16	13
			OG PARKER, LIL JU (M. J. PETE, J. I. PARKER, J. M. MASON)		1501 CERTIFIED/300		
-	10	58	<b>JAIL</b>		Kanye West	10	2
			K. WEST, 88 KEYS, O. JIVOLTA, M. G. DEAN, DEM. JOINTZ (K. O. WEST, C. CARTER, C. M. N. JAPAN, CUBANA, M. WILLIAMS, D. A. ABERNATHY, JR., M. G. DEAN, S. SOLYMAR)		G.O.O.D./DEF JAM		
31	48	59	<b>LATE AT NIGHT</b>		Roddy Ricch	20	14
			MUSTARD, GYLTYRYP (R. W. MOORE, JR., D. I. MCFARLANE, S. R. KHAN ZAMAN KHAN)		ATLANTIC		
52	56	60	<b>A-O-K</b>		Tai Verdes	52	10
			A. FRIEDMAN (T. J. COLON, A. FRIEDMAN, M. T. KONJUNENBURG, B. W. BRUNDAGE)		ARISTA		
63	67	61	<b>I WAS ON A BOAT THAT DAY</b>		Old Dominion	61	10
			S. MCANALLY, OLD DOMINION (M. RAMSEY, T. ROSEN, W. SELLERS, G. SPRUNG, B. F. TURS, S. MCANALLY, J. OSBORNE)		ARISTA NASHVILLE		
35	54	62	<b>WOCKESHA</b>		Moneybagg Yo	33	20
			Y.C. REAL RED, J. ROCKAMORE (D. D. WHITE, JR., E. B. JORDAN, M. DEBARGE, C. PEARSON, J. D. NELSON, J. ROCKAMORE)		CMG/N-LESS/INTERSCOPE		
-	22	63	<b>SHARING LOCATIONS</b>		Meek Mill Feat. Lil Baby & Lil Durk	22	2
			NICK PAPZ, XANDER (R. R. WILLIAMS, D. A. JONES, D. B. BANKS, N. J. PAMAMITROU, A. PAMAMITROU, N. TETTEH, D. SVOROBORIC)		MAYBACH/ATLANTIC		
25	49	64	<b>EVERY CHANCE I GET</b>		DJ Khaled Feat. Lil Baby & Lil Durk	20	19
			TAY KEITH, DJ KHALED (K. M. KHALED, D. A. JONES, D. B. BANKS, B. L. CHAMBERS)		WE THE BEST/EPIC		
-	12	65	<b>OK OK</b>		Kanye West	12	2
			K. WEST, BOI-1DA, L. BELL (K. O. WEST, M. J. SAMUELS, L. L. YACHTY, D. CHARLES, FIVIO FOREIGN, L. B. BELL, C. LEE)		G.O.O.D./DEF JAM		
-	20	66	<b>PRaise GOD</b>		Kanye West	20	2
			K. WEST, 3ROD, O. JIVOLTA, Z. TACHIM, G. DEAN (K. O. WEST, TRAVIS SCOTT, H. CARTER, JR., S. GLOADE, A. Q. TATE, E. SLOAN, JR., R. CUBINA, M. WILLIAMS)		G.O.O.D./DEF JAM		
38	57	67	<b>SKATE</b>		Silk Sonic (Bruno Mars & Anderson .Paak)	14	6
			BRUNO MARS, D. WILE (BRUNO MARS, B. ANDERSON, D. EMILE II, J. E. FAUNTILERY II, D. DEGALE, J. D. BECK)		AFTERMATH/ATLANTIC		
50	60	68	<b>WHOLE LOTTA MONEY</b>		BIA Feat. Nicki Minaj	16	9
			BEAT GODZ, T. ROMANO, PLIZNAYA (BIA, R. DOSS JR., T. ROMANO, L. JAE, O. T. MARAJ-PETTY)		EPIC		
54	66	69	<b>LOVE AGAIN</b>		Dua Lipa	54	8
			KOZ (C. M. GRIMES, M. WARTHELL, I. WALLMAN, S. KOZMENIUK, D. LIPA, BING CROSBY, C. COFFEE JR.)		WARNER		
77	78	70	<b>MEMORY I DON'T MESS WITH</b>		Lee Brice	70	7
			B. GLOVER, K. JACOBS, L. BRICE (L. BRICE, B. MONTANA, B. DAVIS)		CURB		
53	61	71	<b>DRINKIN' BEER, TALKIN' GOD, AMEN.</b>		Chase Rice Feat. Florida Georgia Line	24	15
			C. CROWDER, C. RICE, T. HUBBARD, B. KELLEY (C. RICE, C. CROWDER, H. PHELPS, C. DODDS)		BMG/BROKEN BOW		
85	82	72	<b>YOU TIME</b>		Scotty McCreery	72	6
			F. ROGERS, D. WELLS, A. ESHUIS (S. C. MCCREERY, F. ROGERS, A. ESHUIS)		TRIPLE TIGERS		
57	69	73	<b>TODO DE TI</b>		Rauw Alejandro	32	15
			MR. NAISGAJ, EL ZORRO (R. A. OCASIO RUIZ, J. GONZALEZ, R. E. PABON NAVEADO, J. M. COLLAZO, E. L. PEREZ ROVIRA)		DJARS/SONY MUSIC LATIN		
84	84	74	<b>BUY DIRT</b>		Jordan Davis Feat. Luke Bryan	74	5
			P. DIGIOVANNI (J. DAVIS, J. DAVIS, M. JENKINS, J. JENKINS)		MCA NASHVILLE		
51	62	75	<b>2055</b>		Sleepy Hollow	51	8
			GREAT JOHN, UV KILLEN EM (T. CHAMBERS, J. SCOTT, Y. CHAIN)		WINNERS CIRCLE/RCA		
80	80	76	<b>COLD AS YOU</b>		Luke Combs	76	6
			CHIP MATT THEWS, J. D. SINGLETON, L. COMBS (L. COMBS, S. MINOR, R. MONTANA, J. D. SINGLETON)		RIVER HOUSE/COLUMBIA NASHVILLE		
55	72	77	<b>VOLVI</b>		Aventura x Bad Bunny	22	6
			DJ MAD, C. MERCADER, J. E. PARKER, J. L. CHEVERE (B. A. MARTINEZ OCASIO, A. SANTOS, J. A. NEGRON VELEZ, C. BRITO, C. BRAULIO MERCADER, J. E. PARKER, J. L. CHEVERE)		RIMAS		
-	16	78	<b>JUNYA</b>		Kanye West	16	2
			K. WEST, DIGITAL NAS, O. JIVOLTA (K. O. WEST, J. T. CARTER, N. PEMBERTON, R. CUBINA, M. WILLIAMS, K. R. BAILEY, T. W. GRIFFIN JR)		G.O.O.D./DEF JAM		
62	79	79	<b>DRUNK (AND I DON'T WANNA GO HOME)</b>		Elle King & Miranda Lambert	53	20
			M. JOHNSON, B. PADDOCK (ELLE KING, M. JOHNSON)		RCA/COLUMBIANASHVILLE		
70	76	80	<b>WOMAN</b>		Doja Cat	68	6
			YETI BEATS, L. JAY CRATE CLASSICS, A. JONES (A. Z. DLAMINI, D. SPRECHER, A. HORN, A. JONES, L. JAY, J. T. MOBISSON)		KEMOSABE/RCA		

WKS. AGO	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	TITLE	CERTIFICATION	Artist	PEAK POS.	WKS. ON CHART
			PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)		IMPRINT/PROMOTION LABEL		
41	65	81	<b>WE DIDN'T HAVE MUCH</b>		Justin Moore	41	12
			J. S. STOVER, S. BORCHETTA (P. DIGIOVANNI, R. MONTANA, J. S. STOVER)		VALORY		
74	74	82	<b>GYALIS</b>		Capella Grey	71	6
			CAPELLA GREY (C. J. JACKSON, JR., JUVENILE, D. M. CARTER, JR., B. O. THOMAS)		CAPELLA/CAPITOL		
59	71	83	<b>WILD SIDE</b>		Normani Feat. Cardi B	14	8
			STARRAH, T. ROHN, D. CAPPAL, J. L. CHRISTIAN, T. ROSS, J. NAWAKI, NORMANI (N. K. HAMILTON, B. T. HAZZARD, T. ROHN, D. CAPPAL, J. L. CHRISTIAN, T. ROSS, J. NAWAKI, K. MOORE, J. THORPE, CARDI B)		KEEP COOL/RCA		
58	73	84	<b>YONAGUNI</b>		Bad Bunny	10	14
			SMASH DAVID, FINESSE, BYRD, TAINY (B. A. MARTINEZ OCASIO, S. D. JIMENEZ, A. SINGH, BYRD, O. J. CEPEDA MATOS, M. E. MASHIS FERNANDEZ, J. M. REYES DIAZ)		RIMAS		
-	28	85	<b>BELIEVE WHAT I SAY</b>		Kanye West	28	2
			K. WEST, DEM. JOINTZ, BOOGZ DABEAST, FNZ, O. JIVOLTA (K. O. WEST, D. A. ABERNATHY, JR., J. GWIN, M. J. MULE, J. DEBONI, R. CUBINA, M. WILLIAMS, M. MYRIE)		G.O.O.D./DEF JAM		
66	75	86	<b>MEMORY</b>		Kane Brown X blackbear	50	9
			A. M. GOLDSTEIN, B. LACKBEAR (M. T. MUSTO, A. M. GOLDSTEIN, J. KIRKLAND, K. BROWN, E. K. SMITH)		RCA NASHVILLE/RCA		
NEW	87	87	<b>BLUE NOTES II</b>		Meek Mill Feat. Lil Uzi Vert	87	1
			NICK PAPZ, XANDER (R. R. WILLIAMS, S. WOODS, N. J. PAMAMITROU, A. PAMAMITROU)		MAYBACH/ATLANTIC		
68	81	88	<b>GET INTO IT (YUH)</b>		Doja Cat	68	5
			Y2K, SULLY (A. Z. DLAMINI, A. STARACE, S. Y. T. CHEUNG)		KEMOSABE/RCA		
81	87	89	<b>MY BOY</b>		Elvie Shane	70	11
			O. CHARLES (E. SHANE, R. SUTTON, N. COLUMBIA, L. STARR)		WHEELHOUSE		
61	83	90	<b>SINGLE SATURDAY NIGHT</b>		Cole Swindell	26	19
			M. R. CARTER (A. GORLEY, M. W. HARDY, M. L. HOLMAN)		WARNER MUSIC NASHVILLE/WMN		
-	27	91	<b>JONAH</b>		Kanye West	27	2
			K. WEST, AUDI, DRTWRK (K. O. WEST, T. J. HOLLINS, JR., D. D. BANKS, T. BROWN, M. SUSKI, M. G. DEAN)		G.O.O.D./DEF JAM		
76	91	92	<b>YOU SHOULD PROBABLY LEAVE</b>		Chris Stapleton	63	10
			D. COBB, C. STAPLETON (C. STAPLETON, A. GORLEY, C. DUBOIS)		MERCURY NASHVILLE		
71	89	93	<b>DON'T GO YET</b>		Camila Cabello	42	7
			M. SABATH, RICKY REED (K. C. CABELLO, M. H. SABATH, E. B. FREDERIC, SCOTT HARRIS)		SYCO/EPIC		
100	93	94	<b>THINKING 'BOUT YOU</b>		Dustin Lynch Feat. Lauren Alaina Or MacKenzie Porter	91	4
			Z. CROWELL (D. LYNCH, A. ALBERT, H. PHELPS, W. WEATHERLY)		BROKEN BOW		
-	26	95	<b>JESUS LORD</b>		Kanye West	26	2
			K. WEST, SWIZZ BEATZ, GESAFELSTEIN, M. G. DEAN (K. O. WEST, K. DEAN, L. HOOVER, JR., M. G. DEAN, M. LEVY, E. F. ALLAH, J. PHILLIPS, D. STYLES, S. D. JACOBS)		G.O.O.D./DEF JAM		
48	85	96	<b>SUMMER OF LOVE</b>		Shawn Mendes & Tainy	48	3
			TAINY, J. DIVOLTA, C. BATTLE, S. MENDES, SCOTT HARRIS, Z. MSHALANY, G. HEIN (S. A. SOLWAY, A. JACKSON, R. CLASSEM, E. MASHIS FERNANDEZ, A. BORRERO, J. RODRIGUEZ)		ISLAND/REPUBLIC		
65	88	97	<b>AIN'T SHIT</b>		Doja Cat	24	11
			TIZ HIMSELF, R. CHAHAYED, K. MCKENZIE, YETI BEATS (A. Z. DLAMINI, G. A. POWELL, L. R. CHAHAYED, D. SPRECHER, K. MCKENZIE)		KEMOSABE/RCA		
64	86	98	<b>MOTLEY CREW</b>		Post Malone	13	9
			D. A. GOT THAT DOPE, L. BELL (A. R. POST, D. A. GOT THAT DOPE, L. B. BELL, E. C. CHIKWENDU, D. KOSTOV, D. LEVIN)		REPUBLIC		
-	40	99	<b>REMOTE CONTROL</b>		Kanye West	40	2
			K. WEST, O. JIVOLTA, CUBETAZ, DIGITAL NAS, 88 KEYS, M. G. DEAN (K. O. WEST, J. L. WILLIAMS, N. PEMBERTON, T. GOMRINGER, K. GOMRINGER, R. CUBINA, M. WILLIAMS, C. M. N. JAPAN, M. G. DEAN)		G.O.O.D./DEF JAM		
88	94	100	<b>BADDEST</b>		Yung Bleu, Chris Brown & 2 Chainz	80	6
			HITMAK, ROMANO, OG PARKER, M. WOODS, J. BIDDLE, C. C. DOTSON, J. SCOTT, N. C. BROWN, T. PEPPS, B. A. MORGAN, O. SCOTT, R. J. WILSON, C. WARD, T. WILLIAMS, J. I. PARKER, M. WOODS)		VANDROSS/EMPIRE		



# 39

MÅNESKIN  
"Beggin' "

The Italian group's cover of The Four Seasons' No. 16-peaking 1967 Hot 100 hit becomes its first Alternative Airplay top 10, surging 14-9 with a 19% increase in plays.



# 87

MEEK MILL & LIL UZI VERT  
"Blue Notes II"

The chart's lone debut by lead artists other than Drake this issue? Meek Mill (above, right) and Lil Uzi Vert's new team-up, which enters with 7.8 million streams in its first full tracking week.

PHOTOGRAPHY: THOMAS RHETT (CHRISTOPHER W. HARRIS); THOMAS RHETT (CHRISTOPHER W. HARRIS); MÅNESKIN (DAVID S. HARRIS); MEK MILL & LIL UZI VERT (DAVID S. HARRIS); MRC (MUSIC RESEARCH CORPORATION) DATA PROVIDED BY MRC DATA. ARTISTS AND LABELS LISTED IN RED INDICATE NEW OR RE-ENTERING ARTISTS. \*ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

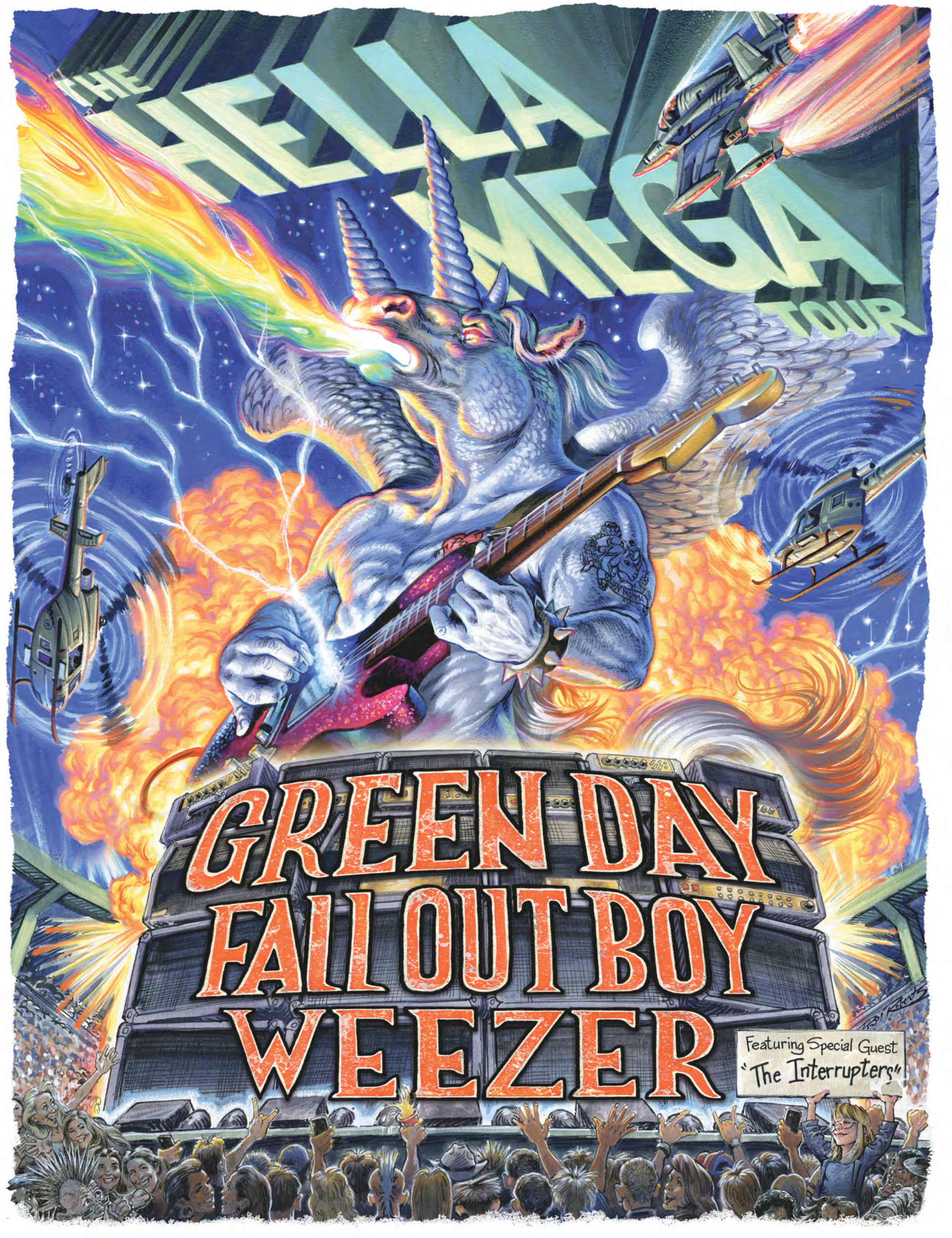
*Celebrate*

# VOCES

**This Latinx & Hispanic Heritage Month we honor the individuality in the voices of our extraordinary fans, artists, songwriters, producers, and employees. We are proud to celebrate the heritage of our communities & the power of our collective voice.**



**UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP**



**GREEN DAY**  
**FALL OUT BOY**  
**WEEZER**

Featuring Special Guest  
"The Interrupters"



**THE BIGGEST GLOBAL TOUR  
OF THE PAST TWO YEARS**

**TWENTY NIGHTS  
TWENTY SOLD OUT  
STADIUM GIGS**

**TOTAL ATTENDANCE  
639,458**

**FINAL GROSS  
\$65,435,503**

**"WILDLY ENTERTAINING...  
WELL WORTH THE NEARLY TWO-YEAR WAIT"  
-ROLLING STONE**

**"...THE MOST STACKED LINEUP OF ANY ROCK TOUR IN 2021."  
-USA TODAY**

**"SERVING UP A BUFFET OF HITS IN FRONT OF ONE OF THE LARGEST  
CONCERT CROWDS IN THE U.S. IN MORE THAN 17 MONTHS."  
-BILLBOARD**

**"HELLA MEGA OPENER KICKS OFF SUMMERTIME STADIUM  
RUN... DREW A SELLOUT CROWD FOR THE FIRST STADIUM  
PERFORMANCE IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE SINCE THE  
2020 CONCERT INDUSTRY SHUTDOWN."  
-POLLSTAR**

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**LIVE NATION**

**CRUSH  
music**

**CAA**

LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	ARTIST IMPRINT/DISTRIBUTING LABEL	CERTIFICATION	Title	PEAK POS.	WKS. ON CHART
HOT SHOT DEBUT	1	<b>#1 1WK</b> <b>DRAKE</b> OVO SOUND/REPUBLIC		Certified Lover Boy	1	1
1	2	<b>KANYE WEST</b> G.O.O.D./DEF JAM		Donda	1	2
NEW	3	<b>IRON MAIDEN</b> IRON MAIDEN/SANCTUARY/BMG		Senjutsu	3	1
3	4	<b>OLIVIA RODRIGO</b> ▲ Geffen/IGA		Sour	1	16
4	5	<b>DOJA CAT</b> Kemosabe/RCA		Planet Her	2	11
6	6	<b>MORGAN WALLEN</b> ▲ Big Loud/Republic		Dangerous: The Double Album	1	35
7	7	<b>BILLIE EILISH</b> Darkroom/Interscope/IGA		Happier Than Ever	1	6
5	8	<b>THE KID LAROI</b> ● Columbia		F*ck Love	1	59
NEW	9	<b>IMAGINE DRAGONS</b> KIDINKORNER/Interscope/IGA		Mercury - Act 1	9	1
8	10	<b>ROD WAVE</b> Alamo		SoulFly	1	24
2	11	<b>HALSEY</b> Capitol		If I Can't Have Love, I Want Power	2	2
14	12	<b>LUKE COMBS</b> ▲ River House/Columbia Nashville/SMN		What You See Is What You Get	1	96
NEW	13	<b>BIG30</b> Bread Gang/N-Less/IGA		King Of Killbranch	13	1
9	14	<b>TRIPPIE REDD</b> 1400/Tenthousand Projects		Trip At Knight	2	3
13	15	<b>DUA LIPA</b> ▲ Warner		Future Nostalgia	3	75
15	16	<b>POP SMOKE</b> ▲ Victor Victor Worldwide/Republic		Shoot For The Stars Aim For The Moon	1	62
12	17	<b>LIL BABY &amp; LIL DURK</b> Alamo/Quality Control/Motown/IGA/Capitol		The Voice Of The Heroes	1	14
18	18	<b>THE WEEKND</b> ▲ XO/Republic		After Hours	1	73
17	19	<b>LIL BABY</b> ▲ Quality Control/Motown/Capitol		My Turn	1	80
16	20	<b>J. COLE</b> Dreamville/Roc-A-Fella/Interscope/IGA		The Off-Season	1	17
20	21	<b>POST MALONE</b> ▲ Republic		Hollywood's Bleeding	1	105
24	22	<b>QUEEN</b> ▲ Hollywood		Greatest Hits	8	455
22	23	<b>JUICE WRLD</b> Grade A/Interscope/IGA		Legends Never Die	1	61
19	24	<b>POLO G</b> ● Columbia		Hall Of Fame	1	13
21	25	<b>MONEYBAGG YO</b> ● CMG/N-Less/Interscope/IGA		A Gangsta's Pain	1	20
25	26	<b>JUSTIN BIEBER</b> ▲ Raymond Braun/Def Jam		Justice	1	25
27	27	<b>JUICE WRLD</b> ● Grade A/Interscope/IGA		Goodbye & Good Riddance	4	173
32	28	<b>LUKE COMBS</b> ▲ River House/Columbia Nashville/SMN		This One's For You	4	223
39	29	<b>PACE SETTER</b> <b>HARRY STYLES</b> ▲ Erskine/Columbia		Fine Line	1	91
34	30	<b>GLASS ANIMALS</b> Wolf Tone/Polydor/Republic		Dreamland	7	44
29	31	<b>TAYLOR SWIFT</b> ▲ Republic		Folklore	1	59
10	32	<b>LIL TECCA</b> Galactic/Republic		We Love You Tecca 2	10	2
33	33	<b>FLEETWOOD MAC</b> ▲ Warner/Rhino		Rumours	1	441
114	34	<b>GREATEST GAINER</b> <b>ABBA</b> ▲ Polar/Polydor/UME		Gold: Greatest Hits	25	186
35	35	<b>WALKER HAYES</b> Monument		Country Stuff (EP)	35	12
37	36	<b>ORIGINAL BROADWAY CAST</b> ▲ Hamilton Uptown/Atlantic/AG		Hamilton: An American Musical	2	311
43	37	<b>MORGAN WALLEN</b> ▲ Big Loud		If I Know Me	10	154
47	38	<b>CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVIVAL</b> ▲ Fantasy/Concord		Chronicle The 20 Greatest Hits	18	540
49	39	<b>ELTON JOHN</b> ▲ Rocket/Island/UME		Diamonds	7	200
41	40	<b>ARIANA GRANDE</b> ▲ Republic		Positions	1	45
46	41	<b>EMINEM</b> ▲ Shady/Aftermath/Interscope/IGA		Curtain Call: The Hits	1	545
44	42	<b>MACHINE GUN KELLY</b> Est 19xx/Bad Boy/Interscope/IGA		Tickets To My Downfall	1	50
53	43	<b>BILLIE EILISH</b> ▲ Darkroom/Interscope/IGA		When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?	1	128
23	44	<b>42 DUGG</b> 4PF/CMG		Free Dem Boyz	8	16
48	45	<b>TRAVIS SCOTT</b> ▲ Cactus Jack/Grand Hustle/Epic		ASTROWORLD	1	162
50	46	<b>DRAKE</b> ▲ Young Money/Cash Money/Republic		Scorpion	1	167
28	47	<b>WIZKID</b> Starboy/RCA		Made In Lagos	28	11
64	48	<b>CHRIS STAPLETON</b> ▲ Mercury Nashville/UMGN		Traveller	1	313
51	49	<b>POLO G</b> ▲ Columbia		The GOAT	2	69
54	50	<b>KENDRICK LAMAR</b> ▲ Top Dawg/Aftermath/Interscope/IGA		good kid, m.A.A.d city	2	463

LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	ARTIST IMPRINT/DISTRIBUTING LABEL	CERTIFICATION	Title	PEAK POS.	WKS. ON CHART
52	51	<b>BAD BUNNY</b> Rimas		YHLQMDLG	2	80
59	52	<b>THE WEEKND</b> XO/Republic		The Highlights	2	31
77	53	<b>AC/DC</b> ▲ Columbia/Legacy		Back In Black	4	480
61	54	<b>POST MALONE</b> ▲ Republic		beerbongs & bentleys	1	176
36	55	<b>DAN + SHAY</b> Warner Music Nashville/WMN		Good Things	6	4
56	56	<b>GIVEON</b> ● Not So Fast/Epic		When It's All Said And Done... Take Time	5	26
71	57	<b>CHRIS STAPLETON</b> Mercury Nashville/UMGN		Starting Over	3	43
75	58	<b>JOURNEY</b> ▲ Columbia/Legacy		Journey's Greatest Hits	10	685
78	59	<b>DRAKE</b> ▲ Young Money/Cash Money/Republic		Take Care	1	445
62	60	<b>J. COLE</b> ▲ Dreamville/Roc-A-Fella/Columbia/Legacy		2014 Forest Hills Drive	1	353
69	61	<b>TAYLOR SWIFT</b> ▲ Republic		Lover	1	107
58	62	<b>POOH SHIESTY</b> ● 1017 Global/Atlantic/AG		Shiesty Season	3	31
68	63	<b>JUICE WRLD</b> ● Grade A/Interscope/IGA		Death Race For Love	1	131
65	64	<b>TAYLOR SWIFT</b> Republic		Evermore	1	39
57	65	<b>SLEEPY HALLOW</b> Winners Circle/RCA		Still Sleep?	38	15
NEW	66	<b>LADY GAGA</b> Streamline/Interscope/IGA		Dawn Of Chromatica	66	1
55	67	<b>BO BURNHAM</b> Bo Burnham/Imperial/Republic		Inside (The Songs)	7	14
92	68	<b>BOB MARLEY AND THE WAILERS</b> ▲ Tuff Gong/Island/UME		Legend: The Best Of...	5	695
99	69	<b>LUKE BRYAN</b> ● Capitol Nashville/UMGN		Born Here Live Here Die Here	5	46
NEW	70	<b>JHAY CORTEZ</b> Universal Music Latino/UMLE		Timelezz	70	1
60	71	<b>MIGOS</b> Quality Control/Motown/Capitol		Culture III	2	13
38	72	<b>MO3</b> HSM/Empire		Shottaz-14Eva	36	16
76	73	<b>TYLER, THE CREATOR</b> Columbia		Call Me If You Get Lost	1	11
70	74	<b>DJ KHALED</b> ● We The Best/Epic		Khaled Khaled	1	19
87	75	<b>ED SHEERAN</b> ▲ Atlantic/AG		÷ (Divide)	1	236
67	76	<b>RAUW ALEJANDRO</b> Duars/Sony Music Latin		Vice Versa	17	11
88	77	<b>GUNS N' ROSES</b> ▲ Geffen/UME		Greatest Hits	3	543
26	78	<b>TOMORROW X TOGETHER</b> HYBE/Bright Music/Imperial		The Chaos Chapter: FREEZE	5	12
100	79	<b>TOM PETTY AND THE HEARTBREAKERS</b> ▲ MCA/Geffen/UME		Greatest Hits	2	426
90	80	<b>THE WEEKND</b> ▲ XO/Republic		Starboy	1	234
74	81	<b>BAD BUNNY</b> Rimas		El Ultimo Tour del Mundo	1	41
91	82	<b>2PAC</b> ▲ Amaru/Death Row/Interscope/UME		Greatest Hits	3	387
73	83	<b>SUMMER WALKER</b> ▲ LVRN/Interscope/IGA		Over It	2	101
81	84	<b>DOJA CAT</b> ● Kemosabe/RCA		Hot Pink	9	97
101	85	<b>DRAKE</b> ▲ Young Money/Cash Money/Republic		Views	1	278
42	86	<b>POP SMOKE</b> Victor Victor Worldwide/Republic		Faith	1	8
79	87	<b>TAYLOR SWIFT</b> ▲ Big Machine/BMLG		1989	1	352
72	88	<b>SZA</b> ▲ Top Dawg/RCA		Ctrl	3	222
86	89	<b>YOUNGBOY NEVER BROKE AGAIN</b> ● Never Broke Again/Artist Partner Group/Atlantic/AG		Top	1	52
94	90	<b>FALL OUT BOY</b> Decaydance/Fueled By Ramen/Island/UME		Believers Never Die: Greatest Hits	77	8
85	91	<b>POST MALONE</b> ▲ Republic		Stoney	4	248
98	92	<b>KENDRICK LAMAR</b> ▲ Top Dawg/Aftermath/Interscope/IGA		DAMN.	1	230
84	93	<b>LIL DURK</b> Alamo/Geffen/IGA		The Voice	2	38
89	94	<b>MEGAN THEE STALLION</b> ▲ 1501 Certified/300/AG		Good News	2	42
45	95	<b>NELLY</b> Records/Columbia		Heartland	45	2
105	96	<b>LEWIS CAPALDI</b> Vertigo/Capitol		Divinely Uninspired To A Hellish Extent	20	121
96	97	<b>MARON 5</b> ● 222/Interscope/IGA		Jordi	8	13
93	98	<b>JACK HARLOW</b> ● Generation Now/Atlantic/AG		That's What They All Say	5	39
111	99	<b>THE BEATLES</b> ▲ Apple/Capitol/UME			1	489
106	100	<b>MICHAEL JACKSON</b> ▲ Epic/Legacy		The Essential Michael Jackson	31	365



## 'Certified' Smash

Drake's *Certified Lover Boy* makes a spectacular debut atop the Billboard 200 with the biggest week for any album in over a year. The long-awaited set, which arrived Sept. 3, is Drake's 10th No. 1 and starts with 613,000 equivalent album units earned in the United States during the week ending Sept. 9, according to MRC Data. That's the biggest week for an album since the Aug. 8, 2020-dated chart, when Taylor Swift's *folklore* launched at No. 1 with 846,000 units.

Drake first topped the Billboard 200 on July 3, 2010, with *Thank Me Later*.

*Certified Lover Boy's* 21 tracks generated 743.67 million on-demand streams, and of that sum, audio on-demand streams make up 714.83 million. Only one album has ever scored a larger week in on-demand audio streams: Drake's 2018 album, *Scorpion*, with 745.92 million for its 25 tracks during the set's debut week.

—KEITH CAULFIELD



# Charlie Watts

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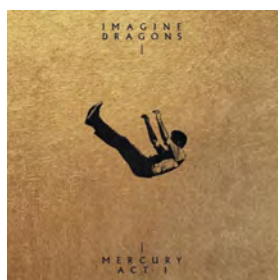
LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	ARTIST IMPRINT/DISTRIBUTING LABEL	CERTIFICATION	Title	PEAK POS.	WKS. ON CHART
97	101	LIL UZI VERT GENERATION NOW/ATLANTIC/AG		Eternal Atake	1	79
117	102	ZAC BROWN BAND HOME GROWN/BMG		Greatest Hits So Far...	20	321
104	103	LIL UZI VERT GENERATION NOW/ATLANTIC/AG		Luv Is Rage 2	1	211
107	104	XXXTENTACION BAD VIBES FOREVER		?	1	182
95	105	KANYE WEST ROC-A-FELLA/DEF JAM		Graduation	1	188
115	106	MICHAEL JACKSON EPIC/LEGACY		Thriller	1	487
80	107	EST GEE WARLIKE/CMG/INTERSCOPE/IGA		Bigger Than Life Or Death	7	8
66	108	SUICIDEBOYS G*59		Long Term Effects Of Suffering	7	4
109	109	SAM SMITH CAPITOL		In The Lonely Hour	2	332
110	110	BRUNO MARS ELEKTRA/EMG		Doo-Wops & Hooligans	3	536
63	111	NIRVANA SUB POP/DGC/GEFFEN/UME		Nevermind	1	540
103	112	H.E.R. MBK/RCA		Back Of My Mind	6	12
40	113	LORDE REPUBLIC		Solar Power	5	3
NEW	114	LANY SIDE STREET/POLYDOR/INTERSCOPE/IGA		gg bb xx	114	1
113	115	THE NOTORIOUS B.I.G. BAD BOY/RHINO		Greatest Hits	1	291
118	116	NICKELBACK ROADRUNNER/EMG		The Best Of Nickelback: Volume 1	21	58
127	117	BOB SEGER & THE SILVER BULLET BAND HIDEOUT/CAPITOL/UME		Greatest Hits	8	392
125	118	THE BEATLES APPLE/CAPITOL/UME		Abbey Road	1	427
119	119	LYNYRD SKYNYRD MCA/GEFFEN/UME		All Time Greatest Hits	56	143
129	120	KID CUDI DREAM ON/G.O.O.D./REPUBLIC		Man On The Moon: The End Of Day	4	191
116	121	ROD WAVE ALAMO/IGA		Pray 4 Love	2	75
124	122	MAC MILLER WARNER		Swimming	3	157
108	123	LIL TJAY COLUMBIA		Destined 2 Win	5	23
123	124	SOUNDTRACK WALT DISNEY		Moana	2	248
130	125	PITBULL MR. 305/POLO GROUNDS/RCA		Greatest Hits	120	32
126	126	EMINEM SHADY/AFTERMATH/INTERSCOPE/IGA		Music To Be Murdered By	1	85
NEW	127	SOUNDTRACK AMAZON/SONY PICTURES/EPIC		Cinderella: Amazon Original Movie	127	1
120	128	RODDY RICCH BIRD VISION/ATLANTIC/AG		Please Excuse Me For Being Antisocial	1	92
140	129	GRETA VAN FLEET LAVA/REPUBLIC		The Battle At Garden's Gate	7	5
131	130	DRAKE YOUNG MONEY/CASH MONEY/REPUBLIC		More Life	1	226
11	131	ONEREPUBLIC MOSLEY/INTERSCOPE/IGA		Human	11	2
145	132	THE BEACH BOYS CAPITOL/UME		Sounds Of Summer: The Very Best Of The Beach Boys	16	269
122	133	KANYE WEST ROC-A-FELLA/DEF JAM		My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy	1	150
150	134	DRAKE YOUNG MONEY/CASH MONEY/REPUBLIC		Nothing Was The Same	1	391
154	135	EAGLES ASYLUM/ELEKTRA/RHINO		Hotel California	1	145
138	136	IMAGINE DRAGONS KIDINAKORNER/INTERSCOPE/IGA		Evolve	2	220
143	137	AEROSMITH GEFFEN/COLUMBIA/LEGACY		Devil's Got A New Disguise: The Very Best Of Aerosmith	33	16
128	138	BTS BIG HIT MUSIC		MAP OF THE SOUL : 7	1	81
112	139	YUNG BLEU VANDROSS/EMPIRE		Moon Boy	12	7
135	140	KHALID RIGHT HAND/RCA		American Teen	4	236
146	141	BON JOVI ISLAND/UME		Greatest Hits: The Ultimate Collection	5	224
144	142	BILLIE EILISH DARKROOM/INTERSCOPE/IGA		Dont Smile At Me	14	194
155	143	TAYLOR SWIFT BIG MACHINE/BMLG		Red	1	175
149	144	ARCTIC MONKEYS DOMINO		AM	6	164
169	145	LEE BRICE CURB		Hey World	45	42
RE	146	WHITNEY HOUSTON ARISTA/RCA/LEGACY		I Will Always Love You: The Best Of Whitney Houston	14	67
156	147	GABBY BARRETT WARNER MUSIC NASHVILLE/WNN		Goldmine	27	64
134	148	DABABY SOUTHCOAST/INTERSCOPE/IGA		BLAME IT ON BABY	1	73
175	149	THOMAS RHETT VALDRY/BMLG		Country Again (Side A)	10	17
137	150	LIL DURK ALAMO/GEFFEN/IGA		Just Cause Y'all Waited 2	2	70



3

IRON MAIDEN  
*Senjutsu*

The veteran metal band lands its highest-charting set ever (64,000 equivalent album units earned in the United States during the week ending Sept. 9, according to MRC Data) and also its first No. 1 on the 30-year-old Top Album Sales chart.



9

IMAGINE DRAGONS  
*Mercury — Act 1*

All five of the group's full-length major-label studio albums have reached the top 10 as the act's latest starts at No. 9 with 31,000 units. The quartet claimed its first top 10 nine years ago this September with *Night Visions* (No. 2).



29

HARRY STYLES  
*Fine Line*

Both of Styles' albums experience double-digit unit gains in the wake of his Sept. 4 tour kickoff in Las Vegas. *Fine Line* is up 13%, and his self-titled set (No. 171) re-enters with a 12% uptick.

LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	ARTIST IMPRINT/DISTRIBUTING LABEL	CERTIFICATION	Title	PEAK POS.	WKS. ON CHART	
148	151	RIHANNA WESTBURY ROAD/ROC NATION		ANTI	1	285	
192	152	JORDAN DAVIS MCA NASHVILLE/UMGN		Buy Dirt (EP)	86	5	
194	153	TIM MCGRAW CURB		Number One Hits	27	196	
133	154	KANYE WEST ROC-A-FELLA/DEF JAM		The College Dropout	2	86	
168	155	BILLY JOEL COLUMBIA/LEGACY		The Essential Billy Joel	15	252	
161	156	RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS WARNER		Greatest Hits	18	290	
176	157	GEORGE STRAIT MCA NASHVILLE/UMGN		Strait Out Of The Box	43	58	
196	158	METALLICA BLACKENED		Metallica	1	624	
181	159	TOBY KEITH SHOW DOG-UNIVERSAL/UME		35 Biggest Hits	2	106	
NEW	160	SOUNDTRACK 88RISING/MARVEL/HOLLYWOOD/INTERSCOPE/IGA		Shang-Chi And The Legend Of The Ten Rings: The Album	160	1	
132	161	YOUNG THUG & VARIOUS ARTISTS YOUNG STONER LIFE/300/AG		Young Stoner Life: Slime Language 2	1	21	
RE	162	LADY GAGA STREAMLINE/KONLIVE/INTERSCOPE/IGA		Born This Way	1	56	
141	163	JHENE AIKO 2 FISH/ARTCLUB/ARTIUM/DEF JAM		Chilombo	2	79	
166	164	ARIANA GRANDE REPUBLIC		Thank U, Next	1	135	
121	165	KANYE WEST G.O.O.D./DEF JAM		The Life Of Pablo	1	165	
158	166	MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE REPRISE/WARNER		Three Cheers For Sweet Revenge	28	97	
142	167	HALSEY CAPITOL		Manic	2	86	
174	168	DARYL HALL JOHN OATES RCA/LEGACY		The Very Best Of Daryl Hall John Oates	34	145	
147	169	KHALID RIGHT HAND/RCA		Free Spirit	1	127	
157	170	TRAVIS SCOTT GRAND HUSTLE/EPIC		Birds In The Trap Sing McKnight	1	258	
RE	171	HARRY STYLES ERSKINE/COLUMBIA		Harry Styles	1	96	
171	172	MELANIE MARTINEZ ATLANTIC/AG		Cry Baby	6	134	
NEW	173	LAUREN ALAINA 19/MERCURY NASHVILLE/UMGN		Sitting Pretty On Top Of The World	173	1	
152	174	LIZZO NICE LIFE/ATLANTIC/AG		Cuz I Love You	4	125	
163	175	CARDI B THE KSR GROUP/ATLANTIC/AG		Invasion Of Privacy	1	179	
151	176	POP SMOKE VICTOR VICTOR WORLDWIDE/REPUBLIC		Meet The Woo, V.2	7	83	
159	177	YOUNGBOY NEVER BROKE AGAIN NEVER BROKE AGAIN/ATLANTIC/AG		AI YoungBoy 2	1	97	
164	178	FRANK OCEAN BOYS DON'T CRY		Blonde	1	244	
RE	179	BROOKS & DUNN ARISTA NASHVILLE/LEGACY		The Greatest Hits Collection	4	107	
180	180	J. COLE ROC NATION		Born Sinner	1	110	
173	181	HOZIER RUBYWORKS/COLUMBIA/LEGACY		Hozier	2	216	
170	182	TAI VERDES ARISTA		TV	168	6	
185	183	PLAYBOI CARTI AWGE/INTERSCOPE/IGA		Whole Lotta Red	1	31	
177	184	TYLER, THE CREATOR COLUMBIA		IGOR	1	103	
193	185	TAYLOR SWIFT BIG MACHINE/BMLG		reputation	1	156	
162	186	KAROL G UNIVERSAL MUSIC LATIN/UMLE		KG0516	20	24	
136	187	THE ROLLING STONES LONDON/ABKCO		Hot Rocks 1964-1971	4	363	
197	188	TYLER CHILDERS HICKMAN HOLLER/THIRTY TIGERS		Purgatory	106	66	
165	189	FUTURE FREEBANDZ/EPIC		High Off Life	1	69	
172	190	FUTURE A-1/FREEBANDZ/EPIC		DS2	1	164	
200	191	LANA DEL REY POLYDOR/INTERSCOPE/IGA		Born To Die	2	406	
167	192	DRAKE OVO SOUND/REPUBLIC		Dark Lane Demo Tapes	2	71	
RE	193	KATY PERRY CAPITOL		Teenage Dream	1	250	
188	194	NF NF REAL MUSIC/CAROLINE		The Search	1	106	
RE	195	21 SAVAGE & METRO BOOMIN BOOMINATI/SLAUGHTER BOOMIN/REPUBLIC/EPIC		Savage Mode II	1	45	
178	196	TAYLOR SWIFT REPUBLIC		Fearless (Taylor's Version)	1	22	
189	197	XXXTENTACION BAD VIBES FOREVER/EMPIRE			17	2	198
199	198	CHRIS YOUNG RCA NASHVILLE/SMN		Famous Friends	13	5	
RE	199	TWENTY ONE PILOTS FUELED BY RAMEN/EMG		Blurryface	1	313	
190	200	FLEETWOOD MAC WARNER/RHINO		Greatest Hits	14	205	





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RAUW ALEJANDRO, REIK,

ROMEO SANTOS, ROSALÍA,

SHAKIRA, & WISIN Y YANDEL.

Clockwise from left: Måneskin, Wizkid, Blackpink, Olivia Rodrigo, Bad Bunny, Lil Nas X and Dua Lipa.

## World News: Global Charts Highlights, Year One

**T**HE BILLBOARD GLOBAL 200 AND Billboard Global Excl. U.S. charts launched with the lists dated Sept. 19, 2020. The two surveys are based on worldwide audio and video streams and download sales. Now, a year later, *Billboard* recaps the biggest and newest artists from around the world with the Global Music and Chart Report: A Year in Review.

The weekly Global 200 is a ranking of songs measured by worldwide data, while the Global Excl. U.S. chart excludes U.S. data. Both collate sales and streaming data (as aggregated by MRC Data) from over 200 countries, with rankings based on a weighted formula that incorporates only official streams on the subscription and ad-supported tiers of leading digital service platforms and downloads from online music retailers.

For the past 18 months, the world has been in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. And as global revenue dropped across the music industry due to a lack of concerts, there has been a dramatic shift online, with music streaming increasing worldwide and the continued rise of emerging international markets.

More than 1,300 songs by over 800 artists from 50-plus countries have appeared on both charts combined. In addition to spotlighting the top songs and artists from the last year, the Global Music and Chart Report will analyze prominent highlights and trends. The full report will be available for free download on [billboard.com](http://billboard.com) later this September.

—ERIC FRANKENBERG

### NO. 1s ON BOTH BILLBOARD GLOBAL 200 AND BILLBOARD GLOBAL EXCL. U.S. CHARTS

SEPT. 19, 2020–SEPT. 11, 2021

SONG	ARTIST	WEEKS AT NO. 1 ON GLOBAL 200	WEEKS AT NO. 1 ON GLOBAL EXCL. U.S.
“Dynamite”	BTS	4	8
“Positions”	Ariana Grande	2	1
“Dákiti”	Bad Bunny & Jhay Cortez	3	5
“Life Goes On”	BTS	1	1
“All I Want for Christmas Is You”	Mariah Carey	4	1
“drivers license”	Olivia Rodrigo	8	9
“On the Ground”	Rosé	1	1
“Peaches”	Justin Bieber feat. Daniel Caesar & Giveon	2	5
“Montero (Call Me by Your Name)”	Lil Nas X	5	4
“Butter”	BTS	2	5
“Permission To Dance”	BTS	1	1
“Bad Habits”	Ed Sheeran	1	5
“Stay”	The Kid LAROI & Justin Bieber	6	4




THE BILLBOARD GLOBAL 200 CHART RANKS THE TOP SONGS BASED ON STREAMING AND/OR SALES ACTIVITY FROM OVER 100 TERRITORIES AROUND THE WORLD—INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES—AS TRACKED BY MRC DATA. THE RANKING IS BASED ON A WEIGHTED FORMULA INCORPORATING OFFICIAL ONLY STREAMS ON BOTH SUBSCRIPTION AND AD-SUPPORTED TIERS OF LEADING AUDIO AND VIDEO MUSIC SERVICES, PLUS DOWNLOAD SALES FROM TOP MUSIC RETAILERS ACROSS THE GLOBE. SEE CHARTS.LEGEND ON BILLBOARD.COM FOR COMPLETE RULES AND EXPLANATIONS. © 2021 BILLBOARD MEDIA LLC AND MRC DATA INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



# BILLBOARD GLOBAL 200

billboard

SEP. 18 2021

2 WKS. AGO	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	TITLE	Artist	PEAK POS.	WKS. ON CHART
1	1	1	<b>#1</b> <b>STAY</b>	The Kid LAROI & Justin Bieber	1	9
 <p>The song is the first in the year-old chart's history to log five consecutive weeks of over 100 million global streams. It extends its streak with 119.8 million in the week ending Sept. 9.</p>						
HOT SHOT DEBUT		2	<b>WAY 2 SEXY</b>	Drake Feat. Future & Young Thug	2	1
NEW		3	<b>GIRLS WANT GIRLS</b>	Drake Feat. Lil Baby	3	1
NEW		4	<b>FAIR TRADE</b>	Drake Feat. Travis Scott	4	1
NEW		5	<b>CHAMPAGNE POETRY</b>	Drake	5	1
NEW		6	<b>KNIFE TALK</b>	Drake Feat. 21 Savage & Project Pat	6	1
2	2	7	<b>BAD HABITS</b>	Ed Sheeran	1	11
NEW		8	<b>PAPI'S HOME</b>	Drake	8	1
NEW		9	<b>IN THE BIBLE</b>	Drake Feat. Lil Durk & Giveon	9	1
NEW		10	<b>LOVE ALL</b>	Drake Feat. JAY-Z	10	1
NEW		11	<b>TSU</b>	Drake	11	1
NEW		12	<b>NO FRIENDS IN THE INDUSTRY</b>	Drake	12	1
3	4	13	<b>INDUSTRY BABY</b>	Lil Nas X & Jack Harlow	3	7
NEW		14	<b>N 2 DEEP</b>	Drake Feat. Future	14	1
NEW		15	<b>PIPE DOWN</b>	Drake	15	1
NEW		16	<b>7AM ON BRIDLE PATH</b>	Drake	16	1
NEW		17	<b>RACE MY MIND</b>	Drake	17	1
7	9	18	<b>PEPAS</b>	Farruko	7	8
-	5	19	<b>HURRICANE</b>	Kanye West	5	2
26	21	20	<b>GG HEAT WAVES</b>	Glass Animals	20	36
14	3	21	<b>BUTTER</b>	BTS	1	16
4	8	22	<b>BEGGIN'</b>	Maneskin	3	14
5	10	23	<b>GOOD 4 U</b>	Olivia Rodrigo	1	17
NEW		24	<b>YEBBA'S HEARTBREAK</b>	Drake & Yebba	24	1
NEW		25	<b>IMY2</b>	Drake Feat. Kid Cudi	25	1
NEW		26	<b>FOUNTAINS</b>	Drake Feat. Tems	26	1
NEW		27	<b>YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE</b>	Drake Feat. Lil Wayne & Rick Ross	27	1
9	16	28	<b>HAPPIER THAN EVER</b>	Billie Eilish	6	6
6	12	29	<b>NEED TO KNOW</b>	Doja Cat	6	13
13	18	30	<b>WOMAN</b>	Doja Cat	13	8
10	14	31	<b>SAVE YOUR TEARS</b>	The Weeknd & Ariana Grande	1	36
8	15	32	<b>LEVITATING</b>	Dua Lipa	2	49
NEW		33	<b>GET ALONG BETTER</b>	Drake Feat. Ty Dolla Sign	33	1
11	19	34	<b>KISS ME MORE</b>	Doja Cat Feat. SZA	3	22
12	22	35	<b>MONTERO (CALL ME BY YOUR NAME)</b>	Lil Nas X	1	24
NEW		36	<b>FUCKING FANS</b>	Drake	36	1
-	7	37	<b>OFF THE GRID</b>	Kanye West	7	2
NEW		38	<b>THE REMORSE</b>	Drake	38	1
20	31	39	<b>LOVE TONIGHT</b>	Shouse	20	11
17	29	40	<b>TODO DE TI</b>	Rauw Alejandro	3	16
15	30	41	<b>TAKE MY BREATH</b>	The Weeknd	5	5
24	33	42	<b>BLINDING LIGHTS</b>	The Weeknd	2	53
29	35	43	<b>FANCY LIKE</b>	Walker Hayes	29	12
18	32	44	<b>PEACHES</b>	Justin Bieber Feat. Daniel Caesar & Giveon	1	25

19	34	45	<b>VOLVI</b>	Aventura x Bad Bunny	11	6
16	27	46	<b>PERMISSION TO DANCE</b>	BTS	1	9
-	20	47	<b>MOON</b>	Kanye West	20	2
-	6	48	<b>JAIL</b>	Kanye West	6	2
23	37	49	<b>YONAGUNI</b>	Bad Bunny	3	14
53	54	50	<b>COLD HEART (PNAU REMIX)</b>	Elton John & Dua Lipa	44	4
22	39	51	<b>I WANNA BE YOUR SLAVE</b>	Maneskin	13	16
-	25	52	<b>FAMILY TIES</b>	Baby Keem & Kendrick Lamar	25	2
25	41	53	<b>TRAITOR</b>	Olivia Rodrigo	7	16
NEW		54	<b>DON'T SHUT ME DOWN</b>	ABBA	54	1
34	47	55	<b>DYNAMITE</b>	BTS	1	53
27	46	56	<b>ASTRONAUT IN THE OCEAN</b>	Masked Wolf	3	33
30	49	57	<b>AM</b>	Nio Garcia X J Balvin X Bad Bunny	10	22
33	50	58	<b>QUE MAS PUES?</b>	J Balvin & Maria Becerra	17	15
-	17	59	<b>PRAISE GOD</b>	Kanye West	17	2
-	11	60	<b>OK OK</b>	Kanye West	11	2
32	44	61	<b>ESSENCE</b>	Wizkid Feat. Justin Bieber & Tems	28	9
NEW		62	<b>I STILL HAVE FAITH IN YOU</b>	ABBA	62	1
41	55	63	<b>GET INTO IT (YUH)</b>	Doja Cat	41	6
42	62	64	<b>PERFECT</b>	Ed Sheeran	30	53
31	52	65	<b>LEAVE THE DOOR OPEN</b>	Silk Sonic (Bruno Mars & Anderson .Paak)	2	27
74	64	66	<b>IN DA GETTO</b>	J Balvin & Skrillex	64	10
36	53	67	<b>DEJA VU</b>	Olivia Rodrigo	3	23
57	81	68	<b>RAATAAN LAMBIYAN</b>	Tanishk Bagchi, Jubin Nautiyal & Asees Kaur	57	4
39	59	69	<b>DRIVERS LICENSE</b>	Olivia Rodrigo	1	35
-	13	70	<b>JUNYA</b>	Kanye West	13	2
47	66	71	<b>DANCE MONKEY</b>	Tones And I	16	53
49	67	72	<b>MOOD</b>	24kGoldn Feat. iann dior	2	53
37	61	73	<b>2055</b>	Sleepy Hollow	37	8
44	68	74	<b>WATERMELON SUGAR</b>	Harry Styles	9	53
-	26	75	<b>BELIEVE WHAT I SAY</b>	Kanye West	26	2
59	72	76	<b>SOBRIO</b>	Maluma	52	9
107	99	77	<b>DON'T BE SHY</b>	Tiesto & Karol G	76	4
46	69	78	<b>LEAVE BEFORE YOU LOVE ME</b>	Marshmello X Jonas Brothers	40	16
43	70	79	<b>YOU RIGHT</b>	Doja Cat & The Weeknd	12	11
58	82	80	<b>SHAPE OF YOU</b>	Ed Sheeran	58	53
52	76	81	<b>BELIEVER</b>	Imagine Dragons	52	53
50	75	82	<b>DON'T GO YET</b>	Camila Cabello	28	7
48	74	83	<b>VOLANDO</b>	Mora, Bad Bunny & Sech	27	9
28	57	84	<b>RUMORS</b>	Lizzo Feat. Cardi B	12	4
-	24	85	<b>JONAH</b>	Kanye West	24	2
54	80	86	<b>WITHOUT YOU</b>	The Kid LAROI	10	42
56	79	87	<b>DAKITI</b>	Bad Bunny & Jhay Cortez	1	45
64	84	88	<b>SOMEONE YOU LOVED</b>	Lewis Capaldi	24	53
45	77	89	<b>FRIDAY</b>	Riton X Nightcrawlers Feat. Mufasa & Hypeman	18	29
40	71	90	<b>AIN'T SHIT</b>	Doja Cat	24	11
-	23	91	<b>JESUS LORD</b>	Kanye West	23	2
51	78	92	<b>FIEL</b>	Los Legendarios, Wisin & Jhay Cortez	13	26
62	87	93	<b>THE BUSINESS</b>	Tiesto	12	44
65	89	94	<b>DON'T START NOW</b>	Dua Lipa	30	53
78	91	95	<b>SUNFLOWER</b>	Post Malone & Swae Lee	47	53
63	88	96	<b>PARIS</b>	Ingratix	63	7

COURTESY PHOTO

THE BILLBOARD GLOBAL 200 CHART RANKS THE TOP SONGS BASED ON STREAMING AND/OR SALES ACTIVITY FROM OVER 200 TERRITORIES AROUND THE WORLD - INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES - AS TRACKED BY MRC DATA. THE RANKING IS BASED ON A WEIGHTED FORMULA INCORPORATING OFFICIAL-ONLY STREAMING AND AD-SUPPORTED TIERS OF LEADING AUDIO AND VIDEO MUSIC SERVICES, PLUS DOWNLOAD SALES FROM TOP MUSIC RETAILERS ACROSS THE GLOBE. SEE CHARTS.LEGENDON.BILLBOARD.COM FOR COMPLETE RULES AND EXPLANATIONS. © 2021 BILLBOARD MEDIA, LLC AND MRC DATA INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

MRC DATA


STREAMING & SALES DATA COMPILED BY

# LA FAMILIA<sup>LF</sup>



From left to right: Chanell, Gaby Music, Juliito, Dimelo Ninow, Lunay, Chris Jedi and Dulce Como Candy.

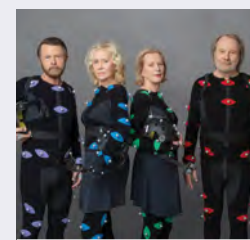
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Record Label

2 WKS. AGO	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	TITLE	Artist	PEAK POS.	WKS. ON CHART
97	90	97	<b>LIKE I CAN</b>	Sam Smith	90	3
55	85	98	<b>911</b>	Sech & Jhay Cortez	43	26
77	101	99	<b>BABY SHARK</b>	Pinkfong	38	52
35	83	100	<b>SUMMER OF LOVE</b>	Shawn Mendes & Tainy	35	3
-	43	101	<b>SHARING LOCATIONS</b>	Meek Mill Feat. Lil Baby & Lil Durk	43	2
66	98	102	<b>LOVE AGAIN</b>	Dua Lipa	63	14
-	36	103	<b>HEAVEN AND HELL</b>	Kanye West	36	2
69	96	104	<b>BEAUTIFUL MISTAKES</b>	Maroon 5 Feat. Megan Thee Stallion	24	27
187	141	105	<b>OUT OUT</b>	Joel Corry, Jax Jones, Charli XCX & Saweetie	105	3
75	95	106	<b>MIENTEME</b>	TINI X Maria Becerra	65	19
70	94	107	<b>ENTRE NOSOTROS</b>	Tiago pzk & Lit Killah	55	8
21	63	108	<b>VISITING HOURS</b>	Ed Sheeran	21	3
89	106	109	<b>A-O-K</b>	Tai Verdes	89	7
71	97	110	<b>CURAME</b>	Rauw Alejandro	71	5
76	100	111	<b>TIROTEO</b>	Marc Segui & Pol Granch & Rauw Alejandro	63	10
61	93	112	<b>I GUESS I'M IN LOVE</b>	Clinton Kane	61	3
-	42	113	<b>NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND</b>	Kanye West	42	2
NEW		114	<b>MEET ME AT OUR SPOT</b>	THE ANXIETY: WILLOW & Tyler Cole	114	1
98	114	115	<b>SWEATER WEATHER</b>	The Neighbourhood	62	50
92	110	116	<b>CIRCLES</b>	Post Malone	49	53
-	38	117	<b>REMOTE CONTROL</b>	Kanye West	38	2
82	115	118	<b>WANTS AND NEEDS</b>	Drake Feat. Lil Baby	2	27
RE-ENTRY		119	<b>WRECKED</b>	Imagine Dragons	90	4
104	102	120	<b>RUN</b>	OneRepublic	67	18
88	113	121	<b>PAREJA DEL AÑO</b>	Sebastian Yatra X Myke Towers	16	21
81	108	122	<b>HEARTBREAK ANNIVERSARY</b>	Giveon	10	30
68	103	123	<b>HAPPIER</b>	Olivia Rodrigo	14	16
-	45	124	<b>PURE SOULS</b>	Kanye West	45	2
85	112	125	<b>GOOSEBUMPS</b>	Travis Scott & HVME	15	37
99	124	126	<b>DREAMS</b>	Fleetwood Mac	10	50
112	129	127	<b>BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY</b>	Queen	101	49
NEW		128	<b>LEY SECA</b>	Jhay Cortez & Anuel AA	128	1
72	107	129	<b>RAPSTAR</b>	Polo G	3	22
197	137	130	<b>GANGSTA'S PARADISE</b>	Coolio Feat. L.V.	130	12
101	118	131	<b>CHOSEN</b>	Blxst & Tyga Feat. Ty Dolla Sign	101	4
110	125	132	<b>SHALLOW</b>	Lady Gaga & Bradley Cooper	59	53
105	120	133	<b>REMEMBER</b>	Becky Hill & David Guetta	89	7
100	104	134	<b>LIL BIT</b>	Nelly & Florida Georgia Line	76	19
96	119	135	<b>ROSES</b>	SAINT JHN	14	53
114	127	136	<b>CRY BABY</b>	Official HIGE DANDISM	114	11
-	40	137	<b>24</b>	Kanye West	40	2
118	131	138	<b>LOVELY</b>	Billie Eilish & Khalid	70	53
103	123	139	<b>ARCADE</b>	Duncan Laurence	36	32
176	147	140	<b>CHEGA E SENTA</b>	John Amplificado	140	3
108	130	141	<b>BAD GUY</b>	Billie Eilish	54	53
79	109	142	<b>JEALOUSY, JEALOUSY</b>	Olivia Rodrigo	19	16
87	122	143	<b>HEARTBREAK ANTHEM</b>	Galantis, David Guetta & Little Mix	52	16
135	132	144	<b>DARK RED</b>	Steve Lacy	132	4
121	134	145	<b>OLD TOWN ROAD</b>	Lil Nas X Feat. Billy Ray Cyrus	70	53
111	128	146	<b>SMELLS LIKE TEEN SPIRIT</b>	Nirvana	110	36
NEW		147	<b>BLUE NOTES II</b>	Meek Mill Feat. Lil Uzi Vert	147	1
-	28	148	<b>GOD BREATHED</b>	Kanye West	28	2

2 WKS. AGO	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	TITLE	Artist	PEAK POS.	WKS. ON CHART
138	144	149	<b>RANJHA (FROM SHERSHAAH)</b>	Jasleen Royal & B. Praak	138	3
113	161	150	<b>MEU PEDACO DE PECADO</b>	Joao Gomes	74	10
126	135	151	<b>CLOSER</b>	The Chainsmokers Feat. Halsey	100	49
84	117	152	<b>FAVORITE CRIME</b>	Olivia Rodrigo	14	16
91	126	153	<b>IKO IKO (MY BESTIE)</b>	Justin Wellington Feat. Small Jam	68	14
123	145	154	<b>SEÑORITA</b>	Shawn Mendes & Camila Cabello	67	53
127	140	155	<b>BEFORE YOU GO</b>	Lewis Capaldi	32	53
116	138	156	<b>POSITIONS</b>	Ariana Grande	1	46
83	116	157	<b>BRUTAL</b>	Olivia Rodrigo	11	16
NEW		158	<b>DANCING QUEEN</b>	ABBA	158	1
73	111	159	<b>MOTLEY CREW</b>	Post Malone	13	9
147	157	160	<b>CHASING AFTER YOU</b>	Ryan Hurd With Maren Morris	147	7
129	136	161	<b>SUIHEISEN</b>	back number	123	4
131	142	162	<b>HAWAI</b>	Maluma	3	53
106	133	163	<b>POBLADO (REMIX)</b>	J Balvin x Karol G x Nicky Jam	47	12
NEW		164	<b>GOOD ONES</b>	Charli XCX	164	1
RE-ENTRY		165	<b>IF I DIDN'T LOVE YOU</b>	Jason Aldean & Carrie Underwood	44	4
86	121	166	<b>THOT SHIT</b>	Megan Thee Stallion	27	13
119	143	167	<b>HEAD &amp; HEART</b>	Joel Corry X MNEK	17	53
134	150	168	<b>DESPACITO</b>	Luis Fonsi & Daddy Yankee Feat. Justin Bieber	114	49
115	146	169	<b>LOCO</b>	Justin Quiles, Chimbala X Zion & Lennox	93	9
166	156	170	<b>LA CURIOSIDAD</b>	DJ Nelson Presenta Jay Wheeler & Myke Towers	40	47
149	165	171	<b>DON'T STOP BELIEVIN'</b>	Journey	125	47
130	149	172	<b>COUNTING STARS</b>	OneRepublic	122	31
NEW		173	<b>LIFE GOES ON</b>	Oliver Tree	173	1
120	139	174	<b>2/CATORCE</b>	Rauw Alejandro X Mr. Naisgai	43	18
38	92	175	<b>DON'T GO</b>	Skrillex, Justin Bieber & Don Toliver	38	3
136	166	176	<b>WELLERMAN</b>	Nathan Evans	16	33
124	148	177	<b>STREETS</b>	Doja Cat	8	35
164	186	178	<b>HOTEL CALIFORNIA</b>	Eagles	148	47
159	164	179	<b>MEMORIES</b>	Maroon 5	71	53
-	73	180	<b>I AM NOT A WOMAN, I'M A GOD</b>	Halsey	73	2
157	170	181	<b>THINKING OUT LOUD</b>	Ed Sheeran	103	44
RE-ENTRY		182	<b>FOLLOW YOU</b>	Imagine Dragons	66	21
137	153	183	<b>34+35</b>	Ariana Grande	2	45
142	163	184	<b>TAKE ME TO CHURCH</b>	Hozier	129	35
145	158	185	<b>GOOSEBUMPS</b>	Travis Scott	102	50
167	178	186	<b>SWEET CHILD O' MINE</b>	Guns N' Roses	154	36
139	159	187	<b>SAVAGE LOVE (LAXED - SIREN BEAT)</b>	Jawsh 685 x Jason Derulo	1	53
NEW		188	<b>ARRANHAO</b>	Henrique & Juliano	188	1
140	151	189	<b>WHATS POPPIN</b>	Jack Harlow Feat. DaBaby, Tory Lanez & Lil Wayne	17	53
128	152	190	<b>FOR THE NIGHT</b>	Pop Smoke Feat. Lil Baby & DaBaby	7	53
156	175	191	<b>FOREVER AFTER ALL</b>	Luke Combs	4	38
188	199	192	<b>WAKE ME UP!</b>	Avicii	179	16
168	182	193	<b>NO ROLE MODELZ</b>	J. Cole	128	17
RE-ENTRY		194	<b>CHEAP THRILLS</b>	Sia Feat. Sean Paul	193	4
NEW		195	<b>HOT DEMON BITCHES NEAR U!!!</b>	CORPSE & Night Lovell	195	1
169	179	196	<b>ALL OF ME</b>	John Legend	97	51
191	183	197	<b>THE NIGHTS</b>	Avicii	177	7
150	180	198	<b>YORU NI KAKERU</b>	YOASOBI	16	53
143	171	199	<b>ROCKSTAR</b>	DaBaby Feat. Roddy Ricch	8	53
160	177	200	<b>RIPTIDE</b>	Vance Joy	160	15



# 54

ABBA  
"Don't Shut Me Down"

"We took a break in the spring of 1982, and now we've decided it's time to end it," said ABBA in a statement released Sept. 2. The Swedish pop pioneers announced that their return residency, *ABBA Voyage*, will begin May 27, 2022, in London — depicting the quartet as avatars (aka ABBAatars) circa 1979 — and a new album, *Voyage*, is due Nov. 5. Two tracks from the set enter the Global 200: "Don't Shut Me Down" at No. 54 (15.4 million streams; 26,900 sold worldwide, according to MRC Data), and "I Still Have Faith in You" at No. 62 (15.7 million streams; 22,600 sold).



# 164

CHARLI XCX  
"Good Ones"

The English singer-songwriter's new single debuts with 9.2 million streams and 2,600 sold worldwide. She led the Billboard Hot 100 for seven weeks in 2014 as featured on Iggy Azalea's "Fancy," which she co-wrote, and co-penned Shawn Mendes and Camila Cabello's "Señorita," which reigned for a week in 2019.

—GARY TRUST

DATA FOR WEEK OF  
09.18.2021

ABBA: BALLIE WALSH; CHARLI: RICH FURY/GETTY IMAGES. THE BILLBOARD GLOBAL 200 CHART RANKS THE TOP SONGS BASED ON STREAMING AND/OR SALES ACTIVITY FROM OVER 200 TERRITORIES AROUND THE WORLD — INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES — AS TRACKED BY MRC DATA. THE RANKING IS BASED ON A WEIGHTED FORMULA INCORPORATING OFFICIAL-ONLY STREAMS, BOTH SUBSCRIPTION AND AD-SUPPORTED TIERS OF LEADING AUDIO AND VIDEO MUSIC SERVICES, PLUS DOWNLOAD SALES FROM TOP MUSIC RETAILERS ACROSS THE GLOBE. SEE CHARTS.LEGENDON.BILLBOARD.COM FOR COMPLETE RULES AND EXPLANATIONS. © 2021 BILLBOARD MEDIA LLC AND MRC DATA INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



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#### EL GODFATHER

**Daddy Yankee** took reggaetón from the streets of San Juan to a global stage — and taught its stars a new way to do business. As he prepares his 10th album, he's showing why he's still The Big Boss.

### 88

#### REGIONAL MEXICAN GOES GLOBAL

A new generation of artists — with new sounds like trap *corridos* — is selling out arenas, drawing the attention of collaborators like **Bad Bunny** and **Snoop Dogg**, and connecting with listeners around the world.

#### ON THE COVER

Daddy Yankee photographed by Jai Lennard on Aug. 5 at Palacio Provincial in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Alexander McQueen coat, Rag + Bone sweater, Givenchy pants, Pierre Hardy shoes, Richard Mille watch.

#### TO OUR READERS

*Billboard* will publish its next issue on Oct. 9. For 24/7 music coverage, go to [billboard.com](http://billboard.com).



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#### TO OUR READERS

*Billboard* will publish its next issue on Oct. 9. For 24/7 music coverage, go to [billboard.com](http://billboard.com).



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## STAR-STUDED LATIN MUSIC WEEK AND AWARDS RETURN LIVE

*Billboard's* 31st annual Latin Music Week returns live to Miami in what will be the event's first weeklong edition. Encompassing live nightly concerts featuring acts like Rauw Alejandro, Natti Natasha, Jay Wheeler, Justin Quiles and Anitta; three days of exclusive panels, conversations and experiences featuring Karol G, Daddy Yankee, Farruko, will.i.am, Maná and over 30 other A-list artists and executives; plus the *Billboard* Latin Music Awards on Sept. 23 (televised on Telemundo), the week reflects the Latin music industry's optimistic outlook. Panels and conversations will take place at the

Faena Forum in Miami Beach, including a live filming of reggaetón star Nicky Jam's *The Rockstar Show* and an episode of *Billboard's* new video series, *Cultura Clash*, featuring a discussion on social justice. Presented by Samsung Galaxy, all of the week's panels — including conversations on touring, digital rights, the new generation of reggaetón and female acts, regional Mexican music's next wave and female artists in regional Mexican — will also livestream on LIVENow.

**For passes, go to [billboardlatinmusicweek.com](https://billboardlatinmusicweek.com).**



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**MM** Congratulates **Jay Wheeler** on his achievements thus far

**2018** **Aug 10: "Por Tu Culpa"**  
The song that introduced Wheeler to the Latin music scene and landed him on the DJ Nelson (Flow Music) and Dynamic Records radars

**2019** **Nov 27: "Otra Noche Más" Remix**  
First major collab with Farruko and DJ Nelson

**Nov 29: PLATÓNICO**  
First studio album released

**Feb 14: PLATÓNICO UNPLUGGED**  
First unplugged album released by a new artist

**May 16: "Me Enamoré"**  
First Billboard Latin Airplay chart entry, peaks at #23

**Aug 13: First TV Performance**  
"La Curiosidad" at Premios Juventud on Univision Network

**Oct 8: Certified Status**  
"La Curiosidad" feat. Myke Towers is certified Gold, Platinum & 3X Platinum  
"Me Enamore" is certified Gold & Platinum

**Oct 21: First Latin Billboard Performance**  
"La Toxica" Remix with Farruko, Myke Towers, Sech & Tempo on Telemundo Network

**Dec 17: "La Curiosidad" Remixes RED & BLUE**  
Becomes top trending videos globally\* #1 and #2 on YouTube

**July 22: PREMIOS JUVENTUD**  
Wins La Nueva Generación Masculina (New Generation - Male) award after performing live his latest hit "Viendo El Techo" on Univision Network

**August 7: Scores #1 on Billboard**  
"Viendo El Techo" reaches #1 on Billboard Charts on USA Latin Airplay & Latin Rythm Airplay

**August 7: Uforia Latino Mix Live**  
Performs in front of 22K people at BBVA Stadium in Houston, Texas for Uforia Latino Mix Live

**August 13: Jay Wheeler in English**  
Releases first English single  
"Take My Life" feat. Tyla Yaweh

**August 15: 6 Million views in 48 Hours**  
"Take My Life" surpasses 6 Million views in less than 48 hours on YouTube

\*according to kworb.net



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# The Market

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## What's A Song Worth?

Songwriters are benefiting from a boom in publishing assets, but they're still regulated into a paltry share of streaming revenue. Now some are organizing for better deals

BY CATHY APPLEFELD OLSON

**I**N SOME WAYS, THERE has never been a better time to be a songwriter. The creators of pop hits enjoy a visibility they haven't had since before the singer-songwriter era, and companies like Hipgnosis Songs Fund, fueled by capital from outside the music industry, have helped create a thriving market for writer shares. The U.S. publishing business took in \$4.08 billion last year, a nearly 10% rise over 2019, according to the National Music Publishers' Association, with the majority of that going to songwriters — whose deals, on average, let them take home 75% of the revenue their songs generate, according to NMPA president/CEO David Israelite.

Many songwriters aren't cheering this windfall, though — in part because it pales in comparison with the money going to the recording

business. The Copyright Royalty Board, which is empowered by law to set certain statutory royalties, uses a complex formula that produces a combined (mechanical and performance royalty) publisher payout of about 13% of revenue, which translates to less than one-quarter of 1 cent per stream from most digital services — and that's often divided among several publishers and writers. (And all the major streaming services except Apple Music have appealed the most recent CRB decision in order to lower the publishing royalties they pay.)

The only leverage writers have is with their publishers. Many are now speaking out about contract terms, delayed royalty payments and lack of promised pairings with artists, and organizing to push better terms and changes to the way streaming revenue is divided.

In recent months, writers-led groups like Songwriters of North America and the newly launched 100 Percenters and The Pact have begun educating and empowering fellow creators, calling out the age-old issue of artists taking publishing rights on songs they didn't write and pushing for songwriters to receive a cut of recorded-music revenue.

Hipgnosis CEO Merck Mercuriadis, whose fund invests in publishing rights and would benefit from higher payouts, also plans to join the fight. He says he already has hundreds of songwriters on board for a guild he's planning similar to Hollywood's Writers Guild of America, including Nile Rodgers, Ryan Tedder, Andrew Watt, Ali Tamposi and Tayla Parx.

"There's no secret the songwriter is the worst-paid person in the equation," says Mercuriadis. "No negotia-

tion should ever take place that affects how a songwriter is paid that doesn't have the songwriter represented in the negotiation." He says the guild will operate independently of Hipgnosis, and while it will have its own governance, it cannot structure itself as a union because a 1980s ruling by the National Relations Labor Board categorizes composers and lyricists as "independent contractors."

Songwriters hope a collective voice will give them more leverage. Until now, most have been reluctant to make a public issue of asking for better deals, fearing they may be dropped or blacklisted for speaking up. "Without a union, one of the hardest things we've seen is that songwriters are scared," says multiplatinum-selling songwriter Ross Golan. "We are walking a thin line, and most of those that are doing

● LIVE NATION PROCEEDED WITH ITS \$444 MILLION ACQUISITION OF OCEA ENTERTAINMENT. ● REPUBLIC RECORDS ANNOUNCED ITS NEW INDEPENDENT MUSIC COMPANY, IMPERIAL MUSIC.

really well don't want to rock the boat."

Since July 2020, when Tiffany Red launched The 100 Percenters (the name refers to how much credit songwriters should get for their work), she has been focused on helping release peers from outdated publishing contracts and petitioning labels to provide writers nonrecoupable per diems and points on recordings. "There's a lot of anxiety; it's a bit of a hostile work environment," she says, describing the writers' perceptions of their publishing partners. "There's a lot of trust that has been broken. But the publishing companies I've been working with are listening."

This summer, each of the major publishers — Sony Music Publishing, Universal Music Publishing Group and Warner Chappell — pledged to drop minimum delivery release commitments, which oblige writers to deliver a quota of songs deemed "commercially released" before they can fully recoup on an advance and begin receiving a higher royalty rate. That's a major coup because MDRCs can stretch on for years for a seemingly small minimum, depending on the number of writers per song. (Each receives only a percentage of a song credit against their minimum on a co-write.) Additionally, some publishers like Warner Chappell and BMG are adding executives to help register songs and administer royalties.

These moves signal a shift in the balance of power toward the songwriter that has been building since Kanye West sued Sony Music Publishing-owned EMI Music Publishing in 2019, claiming he was being held to contract terms he had long ago satisfied. (West and EMI settled in February 2020.) The songwriter groups are banding together, and they have more leverage at a time when publishers face com-

petition from venture capitalists and other nontraditional sources lured to publishing's long revenue game.

"We're in a time where publishing companies are open to [negotiating] because so many writers are unhappy and are not making money, even the ones who are working," says attorney Brandie N. Johnson, who recently got Akil "Fresh" King, a 2021 Grammy Award-winning co-writer on Beyoncé's *Black Parade*, out of a publishing deal he had recouped on months earlier but was tangled in red tape.

"If you are a publisher and you aren't a forward-thinker," says King, "your company will lose out on a lot of writers once people start talking about who's offering the better deals."

Several major publishing company executives contacted by *Billboard* say they were already evolving contracts and business practices before the recent public chorus of discontent. "We agree that MDRCs have become an archaic practice and only include them upon the request of the songwriter or artist," says Carianne Marshall, co-chair/COO of Warner Chappell.

Of course, no matter how much writers organize, much is still out of their hands. They can't affect what a stream pays or the way fans listen on streaming has amplified hits and squeezed music's middle class. But they can try to make working as a songwriter less of a struggle.

"If a writer isn't happy, it's on us to figure it out," says an executive at a major publisher. "There's not a week that goes by where I don't talk about deals with existing songwriters and say, 'OK, we are going to push you forward to the next contract period and forgo the minimum commitment from now on.' That's something we were doing well before this became a public issue." ■



Musgraves onstage at the Coachella festival in 2019.

## Crossing Country's Borders

STREAMING HAS CHANGED THE GAME IN NASHVILLE, LEADING LABELS TO FIND POP PARTNERS AS GENRE BOUNDARIES DISAPPEAR

**A** **S MORE COUNTRY** artists lean toward pop and listeners care less about genres, Nashville record companies are increasingly partnering with coastal counterparts to push their acts to a wider audience.

The latest example is Kacey Musgraves, whose breakout 2018 album, *Golden Hour*, helped Universal Music Group Nashville chairman/CEO Mike Dungan realize the artist would need a pop partner moving forward. "That way, she could go anywhere on her creative whims," he says. As Musgraves negotiated a new contract, she and her team picked Universal Music Group's Interscope to partner with UMG in a 50/50 deal to promote her new album, *star-crossed*, which arrived Sept. 10.

This kind of arrangement is growing more common to the point that every big Nashville label now works with a pop counterpart. Sony Music Nashville has teamed with RCA Records to promote several acts, including Kane Brown. After doing one-off song deals, SMN and RCA now have a "broader partnership" for the "Be Like That" singer, says SMN executive vp/COO Ken Robold. (Sometimes it goes the other way too, like with RCA's Elle King, who's now working with SMN for her country music.) Warner Music Nashville maintains an open pipeline to work crossover hits with Warner Records, which has brought Dan + Shay and Gabby Barrett pop and adult contemporary success. Big Loud partners with Republic Records on Morgan Wallen, while BMG's Broken Bow Records (which is distributed by Warner Music Group's Alterna-

tive Distribution Alliance) and Warner Records have worked Blanco Brown together; the pop division is now pushing Brown and Parmalee's Country Airplay No. 1, "Just the Way," to pop with a Bryce Vine remix.

The idea is that sharing expertise will help find more fans and money to go around. The particulars of how to split the revenue differ with each deal, from moving around a few percentage points for services provided to joint ventures with an even split. Then there's the issue of market-share designation, which sources say can vary wildly but is usually connected to label ownership of the primary deal. However, everything is negotiable: Radio share is usually easily split by genre, but there are no set rules for dividing market share, especially if the participating labels are not owned by the same company.

Such deals aren't new. Big Machine partnered with Republic Records to help turn Taylor Swift into a pop phenomenon, and in the '90s, country labels worked with pop counterparts to bring acts like Shania Twain and LeAnn Rimes to a mainstream audience. But streaming has changed the game, as has an expansive approach to country music that incorporates pop sounds.

"It used to be the principal way to [reach an audience] was through radio, which was very segmented" by genre, says RCA Records COO John Fleckenstein. "Now I just need to get in the ears of the people who might like it ... I don't care whether that fan is in Nashville or New York — I've got to find the people who can reach those fans."

—MELINDA NEWMAN

### MARKET WATCH

22.11B

↑ 0.2%

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

Number of audio and video on-demand streams for the week ending Sept. 9.

16.44M

↑ 0.3%

**ALBUM CONSUMPTION UNITS WEEK OVER WEEK**

Album sales plus track-equivalent albums plus streaming-equivalent albums for the week ending Sept. 9.

771.6B

↑ 9.6%

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

Number of audio and video streams for 2021 so far over the same period in 2020.



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# GOING UP!

Since Tencent agreed in late 2019 to buy 20% of Universal Music Group at a \$33 billion valuation, estimates of the company's worth keep rising. The latest? JP Morgan's \$62 billion

BY GLENN PEOPLES

**I**N 2013, WHEN THE JAPANESE technology company Softbank offered to buy Universal Music Group for \$8.5 billion, some analysts were surprised that UMG parent company Vivendi declined what was characterized as a generous offer. That was before the streaming boom. In late 2019, Chinese company Tencent Holdings agreed to buy up to 20% of UMG at a price that valued the music company at \$33 billion, which seemed optimistic.

But based on current analyst sentiment about UMG, which is preparing for a Sept. 21 spinoff from Vivendi, Tencent may have scored a bargain. In August, Bill Ackman's Pershing Square Holdings hedge fund bought a 10% stake in UMG for \$3.95 billion, which implies a valuation for the music company of almost \$40 billion. And a dozen equities analysts have valued the company at between \$35.2 billion and \$62 billion. By any measure, that's quite a rally — especially for an industry that was “fated to disappear,” as Vivendi CEO Arnaud de Puyfontaine said during the company's July 27 earnings call.

The question of what UMG is really worth will only be answered starting Sept. 21, when its shares begin to trade on the Euronext Amsterdam exchange. (Vivendi will distribute 60% of UMG's equity to current shareholders and keep the 10% that remains after the Tencent and Pershing Square sales.) Analysts' average valuation was \$47.5 billion, and most exceeded \$45 billion. JP Morgan, which valued UMG at \$62 billion, called the company “one of the best assets in the European market” and predicted that its estimate — higher by far than all but BofA Securities' \$59.1 billion — “will ultimately prove conservative.”

Analysts arrive at corporate valuations by applying a multiple to a company's forecasted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) that reflects its potential for future profit. (In this case, analysts calculated valuations using their forecasts of UMG's 2022 EBITDA.) The more growth that analysts expect, the higher that multiple. So while a utility company like Edison International trades at 13.4 times EBITDA, fast-growing technology startup Roku has a multiple of 138.

Analysts give UMG multiples of between 19.1 (Citi) and 28.7 (JP Morgan), with most coming at about 24 or so. That reflects common forecasts of about 10% annual growth for the company. That's why the multiple that the market ultimately gives UMG will not only reflect how investors see that organization — it will also affect the value of other businesses in the sector. If shares rise and remain high, that could convince investors that recorded-music catalogs and publishing rights are actually *underpriced*. If UMG stock disappoints — which seems unlikely, given analyst sentiment — investors might reconsider whether music rights and public companies that own them are worth the historically high prices they've been trading for recently. The stock that will be most affected is that of Warner Music Group, and it could fall — or, more likely, rise — based on UMG's performance.

The multiple at which UMG trades will ultimately

depend on two factors. One is the growth potential of music rights — mostly for recordings, which bring in about five times as much revenue as publishing rights for the company. The other is how much of a premium, if any, investors will be willing to pay for UMG over WMG, the other publicly traded major label. (Sony Music is owned by Sony Corp., which is public but includes a variety of other businesses.) In many sectors, investors are willing to pay a higher multiple for a company with more market share, with the idea that it has more negotiating leverage or other competitive advantages.

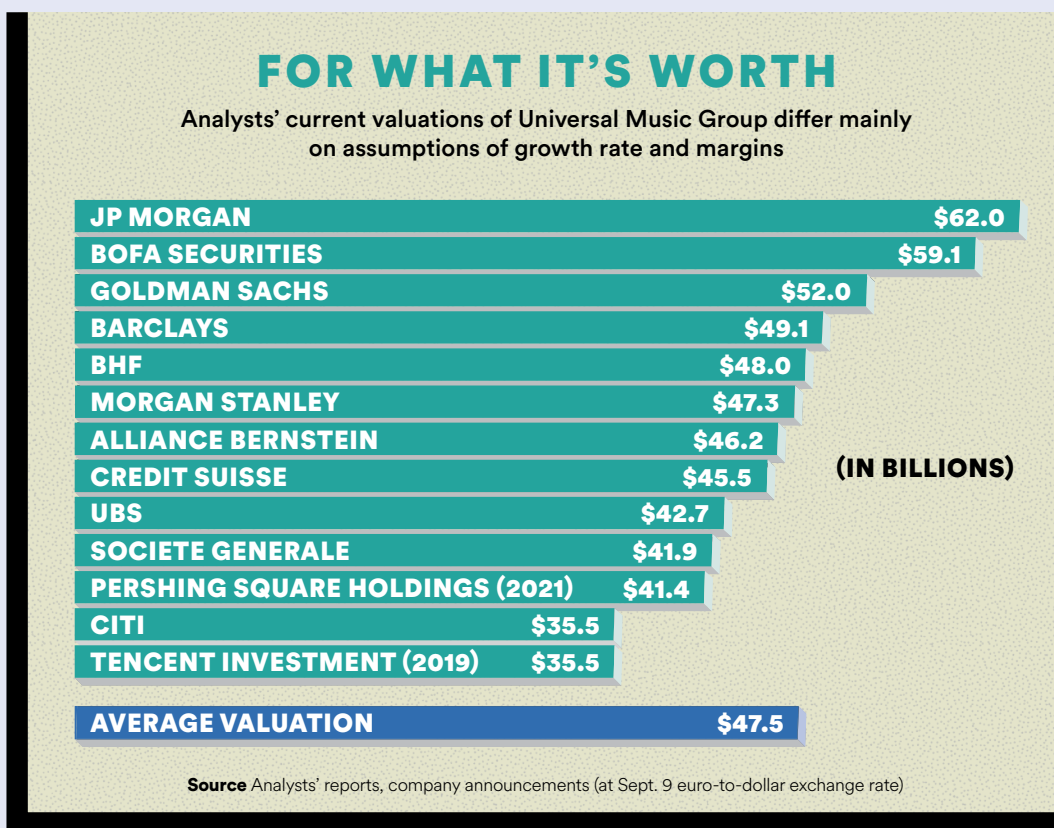
WMG, which went public in 2020, is currently valued at roughly \$23.8 billion, a 21.6 multiple of analysts' forecast for 2022 EBITDA and 621% above the \$3.3 billion that Access Industries paid for it in 2011. The company benefits from steady growth, improving margins and strategic investments in, among others, gaming giant Roblox and NFT pioneer Dapper Labs. Some analysts assign UMG a premium, however, although the amount varies: Alliance Bernstein gives WMG a multiple of 18.8, lower than where it currently trades, and UMG 20.7, while JP Morgan gives WMG 22 and UMG 28.7.

The explanations as to why UMG might command a premium vary, but it has better margins and is growing faster. It also has more of the most successful artists: 17 of the top 20 in the United States for the year ending Sept. 13, according to MRC Data. “That allows you to extract a higher royalty rate and ‘nonallocable’ income”

from online platforms, says Jason Peterson, chairman of music technology and distribution company GoDigital Media Group. Morgan Stanley, which gives UMG a 15% to 20% premium over WMG, says the company is “the most important negotiation” for digital services, while Pershing Square and Alliance Bernstein think its market share gives it a negotiating advantage with companies like TikTok and Peloton. That advantage could be worldwide: The fact that Tencent owns 20% of UMG could boost the company in China, “a very unique place to operate a business,” according to another executive.

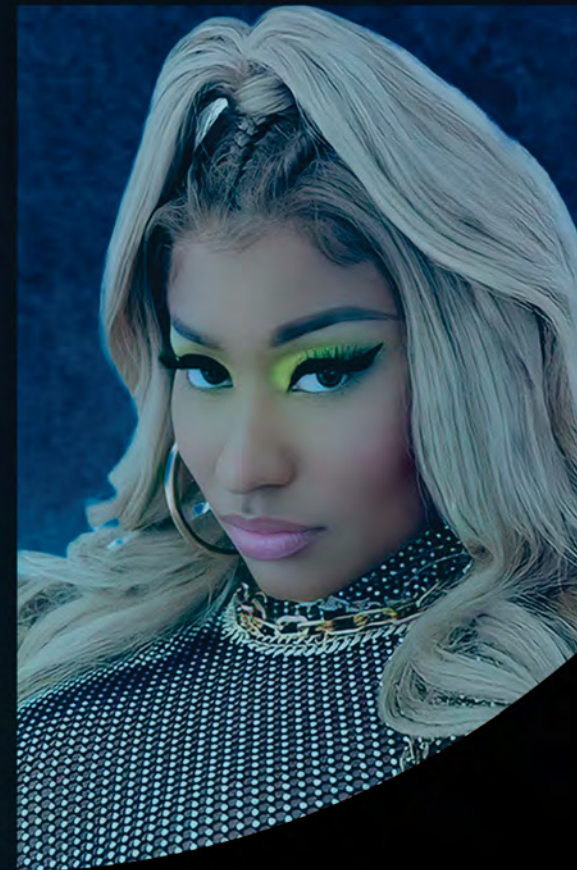
Amid all the speculation about UMG's value, the company's results have been strong: In late July, it announced second-quarter results, with revenue of \$2.37 billion, up 23% from the prior year. (First-half revenue — a better basis for comparison, given that the pandemic began in the second quarter of 2020 — grew 11% to \$4.52 billion.) Several analysts increased their valuations as a result. And despite concerns about a bubble, music-asset prices keep climbing.

However UMG ultimately fares, its spinoff marks the beginning of a new chapter for the music business. The last time two major labels were publicly traded — WMG and EMI Music, in the mid-2000s — cratering revenue had investors speculating about how low they could go or what entities could take them private in order to restructure them. Now, 15 years later, it seems the sky's the limit. **b**





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Tropical Album of the Year  
Tropical Song of the Year  
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### NICKI MINAJ

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Hot Latin Song of the Year  
Hot Latin Song of the Year,  
Vocal Event  
Airplay Song of The Year  
Sales Song of the Year  
Rhythm Song of the Year

### BAD BUNNY

Artist of the Year  
Songwriter of the Year  
Top Latin Albums Artist of the  
Year, Male  
Latin Rhythm Artist of the Year,  
Solo  
Hot Latin Songs Artist of the Year,  
Male

### MALUMA

Artist of the Year  
Hot Latin Song of the Year  
Hot Latin Song of the Year, Vocal Event  
Hot Latin Songs Artist of the Year, Male  
Airplay Song of the Year  
Sales Song of the Year  
Streaming Song of the Year  
Top Latin Album of the Year  
Latin Rhythm Artist of the Year, Solo  
Latin Rhythm Album of the Year  
Rhythm Song of the Year



# Will India Finally Pay To Play?

Ad-based listening is booming, outpacing the country's lagging subscriptions. Now leading streaming service Gaana wants to convert listeners into customers

BY AMIT GURBAXANI

**MUMBAI, INDIA** — In August, five months after CEO Prashan Agarwal's sudden resignation, Gaana, India's leading streaming platform, named Sandeep Lodha as his replacement. Lodha arrives at a challenging moment for both the 11-year-old company, considered the Spotify of India, and the country's music market, which is still driven mostly by ad-supported streaming, as its subscription revenue is slowing to a crawl.

When the pandemic mostly shut down Bollywood production in 2020, India's film music-dominated market stalled — falling two spots to No. 17 in IFPI global rankings, with overall revenue up just 4.9% to \$180 million. (For comparison, global revenue grew 7.4%.) Streaming generated 85% of that, primarily through ad-supported audio and video streams; combined, they shot up about one-third to account for over 60% of the country's total recorded-music revenue, according to IFPI's Global Music Report. Subscription revenue, meanwhile, grew only 2%.

India is among the world's most unique music streaming markets; YouTube is the country's most popular streaming service, with over 325 mil-

lion monthly active users (MAUs) as of October. Last year, video streams in India, worth \$42.2 million, nearly equaled audio subscriptions, according to IFPI. (Average revenue for a video stream in India is \$0.00027, less than one-third of a blended on-demand audio stream, Indian music executives say.) Only two countries — China (45% ad-supported), the seventh-biggest market, and Venezuela (58%), IFPI's lowest-ranked sector — rely more on ad-supported audio streams than India (38%). And China, for the first time, generated more revenue last year from subscription-supported streams than ad-supported streams, IFPI figures show.

Lodha, who previously was an executive at hospitality chain OYO Rooms, says it's time to change India's revenue paradigm. To help Gaana regain its edge in India's crowded streaming market against its well-financed competitors, he's focusing on boosting subscription income, which he says is more important than hitting Gaana's target of 500 million MAUs — a figure at which he says the streaming platform would finally turn profitable. Subscription income fell from 33% to 23% of Gaana's revenue in the fiscal year ending March 2020, and 68%

came from advertising, according to documents filed with India's Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

It's a shift India's music industry will welcome — especially if Gaana's rivals follow suit. Labels have long griped that the country's streaming platforms are more focused on acquiring customers to help raise their valuations than on boosting revenue. India's recorded revenue per capita was just 13 cents in 2020 — only Vietnam (10 cents) and the Middle East and Africa (12 cents) generated less, IFPI figures show. (The Indian Music Industry, which represents over 200 labels, estimates India's overall streaming market exceeds 300 million MAUs.)

Indian consumers have proved stubbornly resistant to paying anything at all. In 2019, a month after Spotify's arrival, Gaana and Indian rival JioSaavn slashed the prices of its annual subscription packages by over 60% to 399 rupees (\$5.40), leading Apple to reduce its monthly fee from 120 rupees (\$1.60) to 99 rupees (\$1.30). The discounting did little to affect the level of paying subscribers for the Indian streaming platforms, which has remained around 3% to 4%, says the founder of an Indian digital music distribution service.

Gaana won't be reducing its prices any further, says Lodha. "If anything," he says, "prices will go up."

JioSaavn, for its part, is still trying to lure more paying users by offering lower prices. The platform plans to introduce, likely early next year, a "more affordable" package to "lift up our 'freemium' users to the subscription model," says JioSaavn vp content partnerships Keshav Bhola.

Lodha and his team have their work cut out for them. For the year ending March 2021, Gaana's operating revenue grew 2.6% to 1.23 billion rupees (\$17 million), while losses fell 7% to 3.27 billion rupees (\$44 million). That followed a year in which revenue rose 53% to 1.2 billion rupees (\$16 million) but losses ballooned 82% to 3.52 billion rupees (\$48 million). These financial results have contrasted with Gaana's claims of rapid user growth. The platform reported that its MAUs more than tripled from 60 million in February 2018 to 185 million in August 2020. (A year later, that sum has remained unchanged. Gaana has set a target of 250 million MAUs for 2021.)

Complicating matters, the platform's parent company, Times Internet, doesn't have the deep, in-house cash reserves of the profitable telecoms that own JioSaavn and Wynk Music, another popular streaming service. Lodha says he is nonetheless confident of reaching the quarter-billion MAUs goal in two to three years, by making "the product the best in class." (Currently, in terms of content and features, there's little to distinguish Gaana from its competition.) He attributes Gaana's flat growth last year to the pandemic, which reduced travel and, in turn, hurt music streams.

Raising prices in a country still recovering from a second pandemic wave would be a risky move, and Gaana is likely to seek another round of funding next year to help see its plan through, says Lodha. One option: Chinese tech giant Tencent Holdings, which already owns an almost 35% stake in Gaana, 60% of which is now controlled by Times Internet. In June, the platform raised \$40 million in convertible debt from Tencent Cloud Europe, a deal that values Gaana at around \$570 million.

Gaana could also seek an initial public offering — but likely not just yet. "First, we have to become profitable," says Lodha. "Once that happens, all avenues [available to] a successful startup open up." ■

Additional reporting by Alexei Barrionuevo.



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FROM THE DESK OF

# ALEX GALLARDO

President of U.S. Latin,  
Sony Music Latin

BY DAN RYS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY  
ALFONSO DURAN

**B**EFORE ALEX GALLARDO got his start in the music business, he fronted a rock band in his native Spain — and though stardom never came, empathy did. “We were never very well-known, but I was the one calling venues to book shows, talking to publishers and sending our demo to labels,” says Sony Latin’s president of U.S. operations. “I started developing some business skills, and that helped me to relate with artists later on.”

Gallardo entered the business ranks in 2000 as the industry began its file-sharing free fall, and he spent years navigating staff cutbacks, label mergers and slashed budgets. Within the last decade, though, streaming has brought growth back to the business, with Latin music revenue rising for the fifth straight year in the United States to an estimated \$655 million in 2020 — a 19% increase — according to the RIAA.

Now, having ascended to his current role in January 2019 after 16 years at Sony, Gallardo is navigating a different challenge: how to build a modern-day record company in an era of globalized distribution, social and political change, rapid-fire music releases and ever-growing avenues for artists to succeed outside the traditional major-label system.

Gallardo has been doing that by trying new things, both musically and commercially. Encouraging artists like Rauw Alejandro (“Todo de Ti”), Farruko (“Pepas”) and Camilo (“Kesi”) to venture outside of reggaetón has paid off with the biggest hits of their respective careers. And building out Sony Latin’s business intelligence department — which parses data to help inform A&R, marketing and sales strategies — helped identify Rochy RD’s “Ella No Es Tuya” as it was gaining momentum on Dominican independent label Vulcano Music. The Sony Latin remix hit No. 30 on *Billboard*’s Hot Latin Songs chart, and was an even bigger sensation in Spain and South America. With each step, Gallardo is keeping an eye on the future. “As a label, we need to reinvent,” he says. “Nowadays, artists can put their music out from their computer. So why do they need us? We need to ask that question of ourselves.”



Gallardo photographed Sept. 8 at Sony Music Latin in Miami.

**In 2017, “Despacito” kicked down the door for Latin music in the United States. Did the pandemic slow that growth?**

“Despacito” was, and is, an iconic moment. But we were seeing something happening prior to “Despacito.” I remember that [in 2016] we had Ricky Martin’s “Vente Pa’ Ca” becoming a huge global hit, CNCO’s “Reggaetón Lento,” Shakira’s “Chantaje” with Maluma — those songs were exploding outside of the Latin markets. And we had seen other Latin explosions, like in the ‘90s with Ricky Martin, Jennifer Lopez, Marc Anthony and Shakira. But to me, the difference was that back then it was about a small group of artists. Now, it’s about the entire Latin culture taking over. You find hit songs coming from newcomers and established artists, and that kind of curve that started in those years definitely continued over the pandemic. That hasn’t diminished.

**Do you feel that your industry is more singles-driven than ever?**

Yeah, 100%. In the physical days, you released the album and then you worked the first single, second single, third and fourth singles — the album was the kickoff of something. Now, the album is like the conclusion — you wrap it up and you start on something fresh. Sometimes it’s just a collection of songs. Obviously, different artists have different approaches. We have a big roster, and we still have artists that approach an album as a coherent piece of work. But the more mainstream artists, I’d say, are definitely more singles-driven.

**Has that changed how you approach artist deals?**

Yes and no. We still consider an album as a collection of songs, and when we negotiate deals we still talk about albums. But when we get into the details, we



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talk about how many songs that album should contain, how many singles should be released prior to the album. Because when you release one single that brings in numbers, and then another and another before the album, you have created momentum. If you release an album all of a sudden, you lose that buildup. The way the [digital service providers] work now it's very hard to work a new single from an album that is one or two months old, because the music is already available. So sometimes in deals we specify, "Prior to the album, we need this specific number of singles."

**How have deals evolved?**

In the last few years, there has been a huge transformation. As a company we need to be very flexible, because every artist has a different need. Some lean more into distribution, because they already work independently; there are others where ownership is important, so a license would be better. For others, a direct, traditional signing is where they get the best support and full service from all the different areas of the label. So, yes, we're seeing a change and it's toward more diversity. No two deals are identical.

**How involved are you with your artists' branding and merchandise deals?**

We have a department that is extremely active. We did a deal with Paloma Mami and Bershka in Spain for a clothing line designed by her. We recently closed a deal with LaLiga, the Spanish soccer league, to make Camilo's single "Kesi" its official song. So, prior to a Real Madrid or Barcelona game, you'll see the advertisement with the song. We did a deal with Bacardi and Leslie Grace on a song that has been promoted all over the world. We're nonexclusive, so the fact that we bring in deals doesn't mean that artists can't do deals independently. And we try to cross-pollinate their latest release with the activation — the Camilo song with LaLiga is his current single, so that activation is helping to promote it.

**How do you use mainstream pop collaborations — like Camilo's "Kesi" remix with Shawn Mendes — to further an artist's career?**

Collaborations have been one of the cornerstones of the Latin explosion. Streaming came along with the explosion of social media, so when an artist invites others to collaborate, it's not only about the artistic angle, it's also about bringing in their monthly listeners and social media followers. It's very strategic, but it shouldn't be done just for numbers. If it doesn't make sense artistically — if the artists invited to collaborate don't make the song better — those numbers are probably not going to work. Having said that, I'm excited to see that it's not mandatory to have collaborations. Rauw Alejandro and Farruko are alone on two of the biggest songs in the Latin ecosystem this year. Last year, it was Maluma's "Hawa'i." I don't believe a good song needs three or four artists on it to make it a big hit. But when that mix of artists makes it more exciting, it's totally legit.

**How important is your business intelligence division, and what kind of things has it allowed you to do?**

We have different approaches. For example, in A&R, we have business intelligence identifying what is



1



2



3

happening in the Latin region, what song by a new artist is having a surprising result, what new group is making noise here or there. Paying attention to an entire continent is impossible for any A&R, so bringing business intelligence to that helps a lot. But it helps in almost every area: In new business, it helps to find which artists are aligned with a particular brand's vision or customer and what they want. In marketing and sales, in analyzing consumption: Are we doing as we expected or are we underperforming in a market? What are the reasons? What audiences are we attacking? Is a song resonating with a specific target demographic or is an older target the one that is connecting? This information helps our decision-making. But that doesn't mean it drives our decision-making. At the end of the day, you still need to believe in your gut and trust your artist.

**What songs or artists has this helped?**

Business intelligence identified that something was going on with [Rochy RD's] "Ella No Es Tuya." That was step one. Step two: An A&R stepped in and added value by doing the remix with Nicki Nicole and Myke Towers. And then we had an amazing hit.

**What trends are you watching in Latin music?**

Latin music is going to continue growing. The urban, reggaeton genre — which has been the leading one for the last few years and has been opening so many doors — is going to transform into many other styles. We are seeing that already with "Todo de Ti" and "Pepas." There is a new pop coming that is not the traditional pop of guitar, drum and bass, but that takes something from the urban world, takes something from the electronic world. In the next few years we are going to see genres mixing with each other and different flavors. Obviously, we see more and more presence from Latin artists in the general market. One great example is early next year, Maluma has a major role in a major Hollywood movie, *Marry Me*, with Jennifer Lopez. And Leslie Grace — who has been with the label for many years and who was recently in *In the Heights* — is starring in the *Batgirl* movie. More and more, Latin culture is part of general U.S. culture and the global culture. **B**



4

1. "Alebrijes are magical creatures from Mexican culture," says Gallardo. "I bought this alebrije rabbit in Oaxaca and it has been with me since 2010." 2. "I found this table on the internet and couldn't resist. It is a great icebreaker." 3. Cards used in the stop-motion music video for "Uh Uh Uh!" by Gallardo's former band Landa, and a Carlos Santana guitar signed by the artist. "I was A&R on two of his projects in 2014, and it was a dream come true. He has been one of my idols since I was a teenage guitarist." 4. Rauw Alejandro presented this illustration to Gallardo, which depicts the Sony team that worked on his successful first album, *Afrodisiaco*.



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10/13 PHILADELPHIA, PA  
10/14 WASHINGTON, DC  
10/16 NEWARK, NJ  
10/17 NEW YORK, NY  
10/22 MIAMI, FL  
10/23 MIAMI, FL  
10/29 ATLANTA, GA

10/30 ORLANDO, FL  
11/03 DALLAS, TX  
11/05 HOUSTON, TX  
11/06 SAN ANTONIO, TX  
11/07 EDINBURG, TX  
11/10 EL PASO, TX

11/11 PHOENIX, AZ  
11/13 SACRAMENTO, CA  
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**ASHLEY  
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- #1 LATIN RHYTHM AIRPLAY
- #1 AIRPLAY IN PUERTO RICO
- #1 LATIN ALBUM ON SPOTIFY TOP DEBUT ALBUMS CHART



# The Sound

PG. 20 INSIDE THE LATIN EDM CRAZE \* PG. 22 NATTI NATASHA

Alejandro photographed Aug. 25  
at El Tucán in Miami.

Styling by Darius Baptist  
Grayscale pants, Saint Laurent boots,  
JIAJIA necklaces, Cartier watch,  
Jewels by Dunn rings.

## TODO DE RAUW

As Latin's latest rising star, Rauw Alejandro  
approaches music with a winner's  
mentality — and it's paying off

BY JESSICA ROIZ

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MARY BETH KOETH



Prada shirt,  
Grayscale coat.



Clockwise from left: Farruko, Karol G, Aoki and Tiësto.

**D**ESPITE BEING A major name in Latin music today, the artist born Raúl Alejandro Ocasio Ruiz never envisioned a career in music. Instead, he dedicated much of his early life to soccer, even landing a sports scholarship to the University of Puerto Rico and later playing for the national team in his native Puerto Rico. While his soccer career didn't launch him to global stardom, his athlete's mentality has become a key part of his strategy for success.

"I see [music] as a sport," says Alejandro, 28. "If you are doing the job well — you are disciplined and you are focused — the coach will give you an opportunity to play an important game. Music is the same. When you are [putting up] the numbers, working hard and making good music, [when] you are disciplined, have a clear vision and defend your art to the death, people will realize that and want to work with you."

Alejandro earned his first *Billboard* chart entry in 2018 thanks to his feature on Alex Rose's "Toda." The rising Latin star also scored collaborations with Nicky Jam and Farruko and last year earned his first top 10 on the Hot Latin Songs chart thanks to his team-up with Camilo on "Tattoo (Remix)." In January, he nabbed his first major crossover collaboration on Selena Gomez's "Baila Conmigo," which peaked at No. 4 on Hot Latin Songs. And now, Alejandro is enjoying his biggest chart success to date —

without any assist. In May, the singer, who now lives in Miami, released his grooviest track thus far — the summer anthem "Todo de Ti." It peaked at No. 3 on Hot Latin Songs and topped the Latin Airplay chart for two weeks, while also becoming his first entry on the *Billboard* Hot 100.

Alejandro first began uploading music on SoundCloud and YouTube in 2013, posting every Friday, while also making connections in the local hip-hop and trap scene with artists and producers like Caleb Calloway, Myke Towers and Lyanno. Eric Perez, the artist's manager and CEO of Duars Entertainment, discovered Alejandro online in 2016, drawn by his voice and attitude. Perez offered him a 360 deal that same year to "measure opportunities," as he puts it. "During that time, I was looking for allies who were interested in the project, but no label showed interest — and I tried to do business with everyone," says Perez.

Two years later, former Sony Music U.S. Latin president Nir Seroussi helped Duars form a distribution deal with Sony's The Orchard. In 2020, Duars signed a joint venture with Sony Music U.S. Latin, which became a label partner for Alejandro. He says that Perez in particular "always understood my vision and what I wanted to do. He taught me that I had to first gain my public's attention — and then I can start experimenting." That's exactly what has helped set Alejandro — who hops from Latin R&B to a hard-hitting reggaetón beat to rhythmic pop to ballads — apart from a growing class

of pop-leaning reggaetoneros like Bad Bunny and Karol G.

"Rauw Alejandro has always been an atypical artist in the urban genre," says Sony Music U.S. Latin president Alex Gallardo. "He has never been afraid to experiment and try out other styles. That's why the musical leap is something that did not surprise us. I think the fans are eager to listen to new concepts, with different sounds and production styles."

Alejandro is already working on his third studio album in addition to the release of *Trap Cake, Vol. 2*, an "intimate project" for his hardcore fan base that loves his fusions of R&B and trap. But as much as he's grateful for those fans, he's equally thankful for the team that helped him get here. "They shed blood and tears to take me to the next level."

Now, after performing a series of virtual concerts while breaking out amid the pandemic, Alejandro is finally seeing those hardcore fans face-to-face on his current world tour that includes four dates at the emblematic Coliseo de Puerto Rico in October. And while the experience of performing in front of packed stadiums is a familiar one from his soccer days, nothing could have prepared him for what he has experienced so far.

"Panties and bras thrown onstage — I never expected that," says Alejandro. "It's an energy that I needed and a feeling that's hard to describe. That sensation I feel when I'm onstage... To be able to share that with my fans is beautiful." **b**

## (NEW) RHYTHM OF THE NIGHT

When Farruko was working on what would be his next single, "Pepas," in April, he started off with a song in *guaracha* — a genre known for its rapid tempo that originated in Cuba — powered by a reggaetón beat. Once he sped up the BPM, a rave-ready anthem was created.

"It was strange because it's not really an EDM song, but it has that same structure," says the Puerto Rican artist. "I wanted to evolve, reach a fan base that was more Anglo and replicate that energy that only EDM music can have at shows." Released in June, the track scored Farruko his first No. 1 on *Billboard's* Hot Latin Songs chart (dated Aug. 28) and has reached an average of 4 million daily streams on Spotify, according to the platform.

It's not the first time that EDM and reggaetón have fused: Steve Aoki was among the first dance acts to tap into Latin rhythmic with "Azukita," a 2018 collaboration with Daddy Yankee, Elvis Crespo and Play-N-Skillz. "Reggaetón is mostly electronic productions and heavily driven by the youth culture — there's definitely an organic synergy there," says Aoki. The veteran producer adds that there's a long history of Latin rhythmic music influencing the mainstream: "[Now, it's] playing a big role in revitalizing some of the subgenres in EDM."

In recent months, more and more A-list Latin artists have started dabbling in the genre and have found immediate success. Bad Bunny and Jhay Cortez released the futuristic synth-pop banger "Dákiti," which made *Billboard* history in November by becoming the first Latin hit to simultaneously crown the *Billboard* Global 200 and *Billboard* Global Excl. U.S. charts. Earlier this year, J Balvin and Skrillex teamed up for the 1990s dance hit-interpolated "In Da Getto," which arrived at No. 7 on Hot Latin Songs (dated July 17), and in August, Tiësto tapped Karol G for "Don't Be Shy," Karol's first-ever English-language song and the Dutch DJ-producer's first time working with a Latin act.

"Given the star power of the artists that are collaborating and the global nature of dance music and Latin music, it automatically has that big reach," says Monica Herrera Damashek, head of U.S. Latin artist and label partnerships at Spotify. "It works well because reggaetón at its core is about movement, dance, celebration and a release of energy, and dance music is obviously the same. This level of experimentation indicates that there's some longevity beyond a trend that superstars are embracing right now."

—GRISELDA FLORES

### BILLBOARD LATIN MUSIC WEEK

This year's edition of the annual event, happening Sept. 20-25 in Miami, will include special performances and discussions from **Rauw Alejandro** and **Natti Natasha**, as well as the Chartbreaker for September, **Jay Wheeler**.



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Q&A

# BALANCING ACT

Natti Natasha has been making history for over a decade, and is still paving a path in reggaetón

BY LEILA COBO

**N**ATTI NATASHA IS NO stranger to making history, from becoming the first female reggaetoneira since Ivy Queen in 2005 to top *Billboard*'s Hot Latin Songs

chart with Don Omar's "Dutty Love," to placing a record 12 top 10 hits on the Latin Rhythm Airplay chart, tied only with Karol G. Earlier this year, the artist born Natalia Alexandra Gutiérrez Batista experienced another first: motherhood.

The star publicly documented every step of her pregnancy on social media, culminating in a performance of "Ram Pam Pam" alongside Becky G on *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon* with her very pregnant, sequin-adorned bare belly glittering with every dance move. "I was thrilled to be pregnant and changing who I was because it wasn't part of the plan," says Natasha, who's managed by reggaetón veteran and her fiancée, Raphy Pina. "Personally, I felt more powerful. I felt even more daring. I felt free. I felt very comfortable in my own skin. I wasn't ashamed."

Natasha took that mentality and put it into her new album, *NattiVida*, out Sept. 24 on Pina Records/Sony Music Latin. Though the artwork features a baby carriage, Natasha insists "it's a real *perreo* [a style of dance music associated with reggaetón] album," and with features ranging from Maluma to rising females

like Farina and Cazzu to hardcore reggaetoneros like Nio García and Brray, the proof is in the music.

**You joined artists like Beyoncé and Cardi B who have famously performed pregnant, but for your Fallon performance your belly was bare. What was that like?**

Literally, I was days before my due date. Everybody was asking, "Do you feel comfortable?" And I was, "Girl, I'm sure." I danced with all the energy in the world. I mean, I was boxing until my 33rd week. I've never enjoyed my life as much as when I was pregnant. I had absolutely no shame about my body or what people would say. I do very explicit reggaetón, and now I was having a baby; whether I was going to be accepted was a big question mark for us. And to see those results? I would have never thought in a million years that I would be on *Jimmy Fallon* pregnant.

**How have things changed for women in reggaetón in the past couple of years?**

I definitely see more women now, and I feel that all I've fought for for so many years has helped. Obviously, some things still require change. For example, I still get comments from people — many of them women — saying I now need to



devote myself to my family. The fact that you "support" women and yet you don't support that a woman can be happy and raise a family, that was shocking. There are myths that have to be torn down, and it takes a full battalion to help a woman rise on the charts.

**Did you consider recording a song for your baby girl, Vida, on this album?**

I have a song Romeo Santos wrote called "Princesa" [Princess]. I recorded it when I was pregnant, and I sang it in a Facebook Live. Although I'm a reggaetón act, I do like to sing other material, and I wanted to record this song specifically for Vida, so she can see that her mom is a fighter and that women can do this. I'm going to include it in a future album that's in

the works. Because this is such a *perreo* album, I felt it would feel out of place.

**You're engaged to your manager, Raphy Pina, who also works with Daddy Yankee. How do you set boundaries?**

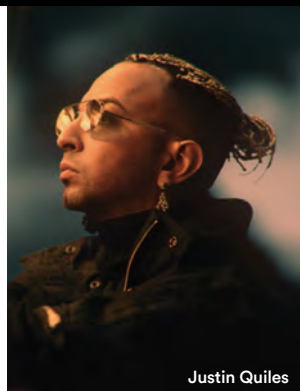
I've always heard you shouldn't work with your other half, but in my case, Raphy has been a blessing and has helped me continue in music. He fought for me at a time when women were not [part of the reggaetón scene]. He believed when no one believed. I already had my persona and my concept; Natti Natasha was me. He doesn't step on my toes. When we're working, I'm Natti Natasha and he's Raphy Pina. When we're home, I'm Natalia Gutiérrez and he's Rafael Pina. It's a winning formula. **b**

BEHIND THE HIT

"LOCO"

IN APRIL, JUSTIN QUILES traveled to the Dominican Republic to film the music video for what would become his next single, "Colorín Colorado." But while on his trip, he met up with Chimbala, a rising star in dembow (a genre built on dancehall), who showed him something that made Quiles change his rollout plans.

"He played me the beat and the hook of 'Loco,' and I immediately thought it was a



Justin Quiles

summer smash," says Quiles. The two artists hustled to the studio, working with producer Bryan Peguero Reyes (B-One) to finish structuring, writing and producing the song. Five

hours later, the track was finished, and they sent it to reggaetón duo Zion & Lennox (the former recorded his part in the Dominican Republic and the latter in Puerto Rico). That same week, all four artists were filming the music video in the bustling streets of the Caribbean island.

Following his instincts, Quiles paused all plans for "Colorín Colorado" and prioritized the release of "Loco" with the full support of his label, Warner Music Latina. "I told Chimbala to give me the record, because I was in a good

moment of my career and I felt that great things were going to happen," says Quiles.

As a result, "Loco," a feel-good track that fuses soca, Afrobeats and other tropical rhythms, hit No. 1 on *Billboard*'s Latin Airplay chart on Aug. 28 and also entered the Global 200 and Global Excl. U.S. charts. On TikTok, a simple arm- and hip-swaying dance challenge has amassed nearly 800,000 videos. "We knew this song could enter all markets," says Gaby Martínez, managing director at Warner Music Latina. "Once we saw it

was a hit, we aligned our plans further with our global office in London to create strategies and push the track in territories like Europe."

The song's strategy began on the mood board stuck to Quiles' refrigerator, where he writes the goals for each of his tracks. For "Loco," he says the aim was always for it to become a global hit, which is why he says they avoided any curse words. "We wanted people of all ages to be able to listen to it and identify with it. This is a good-vibe record."

—JESSICA ROIZ

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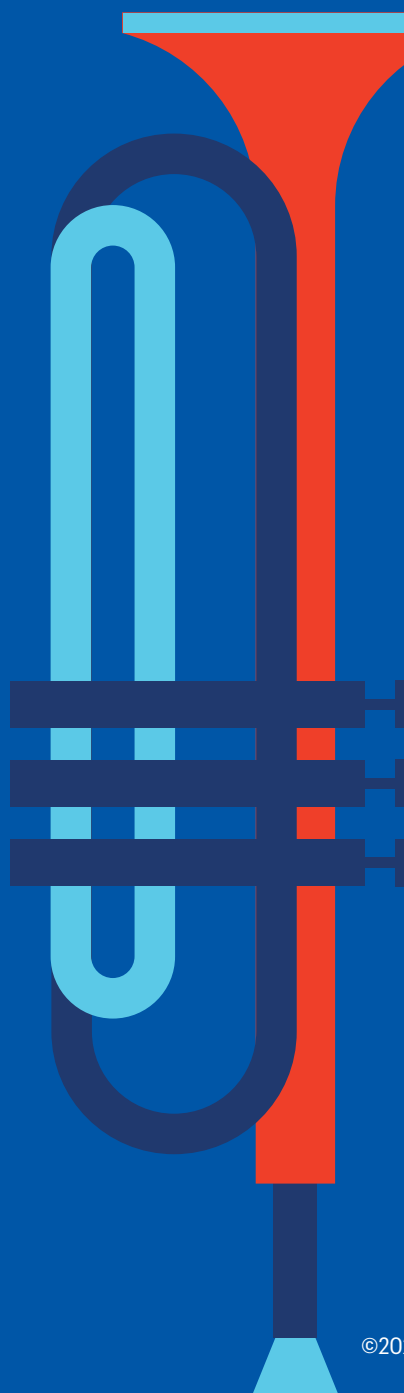
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# EL GODEFATHER

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**DADDY YANKEE** took reggaetón from the streets of San Juan to a global stage — and taught its stars a new way to do business. As he prepares his 10th album, he's showing why he's still The Big Boss

BY LEILA COBO

PHOTOGRAPHED BY JAI LENNARD



Yankee photographed Aug. 5  
at Palacio Provincial in  
San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Styling by Rachel Johnson  
Ambush T-shirt, Hudson Jeans  
pants, Y3 shoes, Richard Mille  
watch, David Yurman jewelry and  
Cutler + Gross sunglasses.



**D**ADDY YANKEE sat in the tiny apartment he shared with his wife and three children in Villa Kennedy, a housing project in San Juan, Puerto Rico, listening to the sounds of the streets.

“*Cómo le gusta la gasolina!*,” shouted the voices beneath his window, taunting the pretty girls who got rides from guys with flashy cars.

“*A mí me gusta la gasolina, dame más gasolina.*,” Yankee chanted to himself — a refrain he couldn’t get out of his head.

It was 2004, and Yankee (born Raymond Ayala), then 28, was the leader of a burgeoning underground musical movement known as reggaetón. He knew the music was too big to be confined to the streets where he lived — and that it would need a megahit to bust out beyond his island home.

He took the chorus and flow to his friend Luny, of production duo Lunytunes, then the leading producers on the scene. Together with rapper and lyricist Eddie Dee, they fleshed out a track, adding the sound of gunning motors in the introduction along with Yankee’s rapid-fire verses and, atop Luny’s thumping, aggressive beat, that earworm of a refrain that sounded like a schoolyard taunt.

“The verse was so simple and easy to remember,” recalls Yankee today. He’s sitting in the library of the Palacio Provincial, a newly opened hotel in a 19th-century building in the heart of trendy Old San Juan — a 10-minute drive but a lifetime away from that old Villa Kennedy apartment. “People looked for a hidden meaning: Was I talking about alcohol, about drugs? But that track is completely literal.”

However his audience interpreted it, “Gasolina” turned out to be the fuel that reggaetón, and Yankee, needed to explode. The track became the second single from 2004’s *Barrio Fino*, Yankee’s third album on El Cartel Records, the label he’d created three years before. Distributed by Universal Music Group (UMG) imprint Machete, it debuted at No. 1 on *Billboard*’s Top Latin Albums chart — the first-ever reggaetón album to hit that spot — and stayed there for 24 weeks, ultimately becoming the top Latin album of the 2000s.

With it, Yankee irrevocably altered the sound and business of Latin music, not only propelling the rise of a genre that today is a global phenomenon, but quite literally building it from the ground up. He set the standards for everything from how reggaetoneros dressed to how their music was

created to the way the genre’s biggest artists negotiated collaborations and song splits. Along the way, he introduced a DIY, independent business model — in which he financed his own recording, marketing and promotion; licensed out only distribution; and, most significantly, kept ownership of his masters — that has become a blueprint adopted by many of today’s top-selling Latin acts.

“[Daddy Yankee] was, and is, an inspiration for me, not just musically, but also as a visionary of the entertainment industry and a great advocate of our genre,” says Ozuna. Anuel AA matter-of-factly calls him “a legend” who “paved the way for many of us. We all started from the bottom, but he started from zero, when the genre didn’t even exist. That’s something only the greats can do.”

And Yankee hasn’t just stayed relevant; he has stayed on top, with six No. 1s on Top Latin Albums; a record 73 entries on Latin Airplay and 84 Hot Latin Songs hits since “Gasolina,” including the record-shattering, paradigm-shifting “Despacito” alongside Luis Fonsi. “He was at the forefront of the two most important shifts in Latin music,” says Jorge Mejía, president/CEO of Sony Music Publishing Latin America and U.S. Latin, of those two tracks. (Sony just renewed Yankee’s global publishing deal.) “Before ‘Despacito,’ the notion that Latin songwriters could collaborate on a world stage was not commonplace.”

Karol G says that partnering with rising acts is something she learned directly from Yankee. “You never perceive the guy as old because he collaborates with the hottest acts but also with the hottest *new* acts,” she says. “It’s something new artists are grateful for.”

Yet even as his reach has expanded to a global stage, much has stayed the same for Daddy Yankee. Over the years, he has continued to release his music on El Cartel through distribution deals with different labels. His 2007 bilingual album, *El Cartel: The Big Boss*, was distributed by Interscope because “they gave me the best deal,” he told *Billboard* at the time. It debuted at No. 1 on Top Latin Albums and a respectable No. 9 on the all-genre *Billboard* 200 chart, yet for his next studio album, 2010’s *Mundial*, he chose Sony Music Latin as distributor, and then Capitol Latin for 2012’s *Prestige* — again citing “the best deal” as his main reason for the switches.

At 46, he is still boyishly handsome, his buzz cut accentuating smooth skin and chiseled features. He’s lean from working out during the pandemic,



Rag + Bone sweater, Givenchy pants, Richard Mille watch and Cutler + Gross sunglasses.

wearing a white T-shirt, track pants and just the right amount of bling — chain, bracelet, ring and watch in matching platinum and diamonds — to exude self-confidence, not pretense.

He still lives in Puerto Rico, not just because it’s his home, but because it allows him to “stay in touch with the streets.” He still works with much of his day one crew, including publicist Mayna Nevarez and producer Luny. And he’s still married to high school sweetheart Mireddys González — who’s also his manager, CEO of El Cartel and an entrepreneur in her own right with over a million Instagram followers.

González (who declined to be interviewed) is widely known to wield broad influence over her husband’s career — which Yankee freely admits. “She’s the boss. She has always been the boss,” he says with a smile. (Later, I’ll catch the two of them chatting on the hotel balcony, Yankee whispering in her ear as her hands encircle his waist, as if they’re still teenagers.)

But final say on everything comes

down to Yankee himself. “His attention to detail is unmatched,” says Simran Singh, his attorney for the past five years. “He looks at everything. He studies music today as he did 20 years ago — the numbers and the metrics, and he’s thinking about everything from the marketing side way before he releases a song.”

Video director and graphic designer Carlos Pérez witnessed that first-hand back in 2004, when Yankee tapped him to design the marketing and visual strategy for *Barrio Fino*. “It took us like three days, him going line by line and asking, ‘What is this?’” recalls Pérez, who also still works with Yankee. “Finally, he said, ‘I want it all.’ Everything cost about \$30,000 — not including the video. It wasn’t cheap for the time or for an independent artist. But he just said, ‘Can you break it down into three payments?’ He wanted marketing and the identity at the level of any of the top hip-hop artists.”

That strategic savvy is still evolving as Yankee prepares to release his 10th studio album, and his first since





2012, this fall on El Cartel but under a revamped global distribution deal with UMG — one that falls directly under the purview of CEO Lucian Grainge and UMG executive vp Michele Anthony, with Republic Records providing marketing and promotion. The deal — which Singh describes as “astronomical,” though neither he nor Yankee will disclose its value — also includes a partnership on a documentary about the history of reggaetón, executive-produced by Yankee and funded and produced by UMG, which will soon begin shopping it to streaming platforms and studios.

“Daddy Yankee is that rare artist who actually shapes culture and changes the world through his music and ideas,” says Anthony. “By elevating reggaetón into a global phenomenon, he helped fuel the explosive crossover popularity of Latin music. Through his music and entrepreneurship, he has created new business models and a platform that has launched the careers of many of today’s new artists.”

The agreement was crafted last

year amid the height of the pandemic. Yankee, distributed by UMG since the 2012 Capitol Latin deal, still owed the company several singles. But rather than simply delivering those, he proposed a full album under a new deal — with UMG rather than Universal Music Latino.

“Fans are finally ready to listen to a full album on streaming platforms,” says Yankee. “We need to create a moment, and what better people than Sir Lucian and Michele Anthony to do so? Republic has a sense of [Latin] culture, and they have a lot of Latinos in their teams. [Universal Music Latino] was my distributor, but everything else, I did on my own. Now, UMG, they’re my partners.”

Though the album’s tracklist is still a work in progress, it includes the single “Métele Perreo” (released Sept. 2), a fast-paced vintage reggaetón track with a video paying homage to the Puerto Rican town of Bayamón, where Yankee trains daily at a boxing gym. And it will also include, as usual, collaborations with big names

and up-and-comers alike. Yankee’s always on the lookout for the next ready-to-break star, as he once was — like hardcore rapper Eladio Carrion, with whom he recently paired up on a track.

“I’m supporting him and I’m embracing what he’s doing because I recognize the importance and cred of the artist that comes from the streets,” says Yankee. “My goal always was to create an urban culture, in Spanish, that would get recognition. And thank God, I’m approaching my fourth musical decade, and I’m seeing the results.”

#### **When did you decide to make music your career?**

I had no other options. I had a daughter, so I thought, “I have to sing, otherwise how am I going to support this child?” The issue was, I was kicking off a career in a genre that didn’t exist yet. It was reggae, and it was rap, but it wasn’t reggaetón. Reggaetón culture started with us, in 1990, 1991. We started to release music and play in all the housing projects. And they

started to pay us, little by little. We had a DJ and a turntable, and we used the same mic as the DJ, and they’d pay us \$20, \$50, \$100.

#### **What convinced you it could work?**

We got our start singing in *fiestas patronales* [patron-saint celebrations common in Puerto Rico] at the housing projects. We had zero support or marketing and we were always the hit of the party. That’s when I realized we had something powerful in our hands. Plus, people were coming by to buy my cassettes. We were hot in the streets. Other people didn’t get it, but I did, because I’d been a big fan of ’80s rap — Run-D.M.C., LL Cool J — since I was a kid, and the same thing that had happened with rap was happening here, with us.

#### **The new crop of reggaetón artists all say you are their inspiration, both musically and businesswise. The fact that you own your masters is always mentioned. Why did you take that route?**

No one wanted to sign me. I tried. Honestly, no one believed in the music, period. They thought [reggaetón] was a fad. They’ve been telling me I’m a fad since 1990. They’ve been telling me to retire since 1990. I took *Barrio Fino* to EMI and Universal but they weren’t interested in that kind of music. Their offer was they’d pay me \$10,000 or \$15,000 to release it but they’d keep the masters. By then, I’d already released *Elcangri.com* [in 2002] and I had personally paid to manufacture 50,000 copies that I distributed on my own. If I’m getting \$5 per album, and I sell 50,000 albums — \$10,000 doesn’t add up. I knew, from the moment I started to manufacture the albums, that I wanted to grow, but I didn’t have the distribution system to reach everyone.

#### **Were you doing this entirely on your own?**

Yes. So when I went in to negotiate, I said, “I’m willing to be your partner. I need you to distribute my product and put me everywhere.” And they said no: “We don’t only distribute. We sign artists, and your music doesn’t sell.” That’s the mistake people make when they sit behind their desks and they’re not in the streets. That taught me to always stay in touch with the streets. Circumstances change when you grow as an artist and lose that anonymity and you’re not able to go out and connect with your environment. But here in Puerto Rico, I mingle with people, I go to the beach, I see how they consume music, I pay attention, and it allows me to create.



**Early in your career, before you made your own albums, you recorded mix-tapes and compilations. Did you cede those masters?**

Yes. At that point I did, because we had no sense of the music industry. I didn't know what a master was. When I put out *Elcangri.com*, I didn't have to concern myself with anything because I was my own boss and it was my songs and my lyrics. I would pay for the beats, and that's it. I made the investment, and everything else was for me. I didn't even have ASCAP. We didn't know we got royalties from airplay. Prior to [*Barrio Fino*], everything was verbal agreements, handshakes, song exchanges. Now, everything requires a contract [and monetary compensation]. *Barrio Fino* changed not only the culture, but the business model.

**When you talk about the "business model," you mean that on the one hand, the business was professionalized with contracts and agreements. But on the other, it was a new model in which you kept your master recordings — correct?**

It was adopted not only by reggaetón acts — I have rockers, *salseros* come to me and ask: "How did you become your own boss?" Dude, because I had no choice. If no one wants to sign a talented kid today, he records himself, produces himself, writes the songs and engineers the album. He creates his own opportunities. I had to create my own opportunities and it became part of my DNA.

**You built your career performing. Today, some new acts have hundreds of millions of streams before they ever perform live...**

That's what I mean: Right now we have elevators, not stairs. And in music, you have to take the stairs to navigate the highs and the lows. Most of these kids talk to me, and what I see is they can't deal with failures. They worked, they learned how to use Pro Tools and they exploded. They haven't gone through a process. So when they hit that hard patch, which happens to all of us, how will they work through that? This generation doesn't have the tools that are vital for longevity.

**What advice do you give them?**

Man, what I've always learned through the years: Go to the studio and do your best work. Music is what will speak for you and what will really connect with your audience. Social media is incredible but it doesn't bring you revenue. Instagram doesn't

bring me revenue. If I owned Instagram, I'd post all my content there. But Instagram doesn't pay me for my content. Neither does Facebook, Twitter or TikTok. YouTube pays me. And Spotify and Apple. Those are my allies. I release music, I give you content and your platform grows — but so does mine.

**I've heard that when you work on a collaboration you have a fixed percentage you ask for, regardless of who it's with or the number of artists involved. Is that true?**

Yes. This is a hard topic to broach with artists, because they often know so little about the music business. The way I explain it is, "Papi, I'm not asking for more than I'm worth. Now, you want me on your album, I like to collaborate, but I don't like to give away what's mine. So, is the master yours? No? Then, from the onset I'm working for someone other than yourself. I'm not working for you, my colleague, but for whoever owns you, your boss. I'm a boss, I'm not an employee. You can't ask a boss to work for another boss. You want to collaborate with me? I'm happy to do it, but remember I don't need to do it." I do it because I like the artist, or I really like the song.

**Have you ever paid someone upfront to record with you?**

Yes. When I've had to pay someone for the respect, I've done so. "I'm worth so much" — OK. I've always understood an artist's value. If we collaborate and you charge me X, that's fine. Most of my collabs are exchanges, but remember, there's a very fine line there. What if my song works, but yours doesn't? Hopefully both tracks work, but that's not always the case, and I get that. I get that you have a value that you need me to cover so that in the end, we're all in a good place.

But the business is flexible, and I'm flexible in many areas. I understand that sometimes, we're talking about cultural moments rather than simply chart position. "China" [Anuel's hit featuring Karol G, J Balvin, Ozuna and Yankee] is a good example. I saw it as a song that was important for the genre. When we do these collabs with many artists, there are times when [I've agreed to divide splits] in equal parts, because it's important for the genre. Cultural vision is what has allowed me to take a big-picture approach versus simply focusing on the hit.

**You've never had a traditional manager. Why?**

In the past few years, Raphy Pina

has stepped in as a partner. He helps Mireddys with the management, but I never had a manager per se. I had management offers and agency offers but back then, they didn't understand Latin urban culture [Yankee is now represented by WME]. Agencies didn't even have Latin divisions. Now they do. I got invited to Coachella [years ago], for example, and the pay was ridiculous. They kept saying, "It's Coachella." My reply was: "Get educated on what my value is, and who my fan is." I was already playing [arenas like] Madison Square Garden and Staples Center, you get me?

**Well, it took many years for reggaetón to be accepted not only in the mainstream U.S. market but also in countries like Mexico and Argentina. What role did you play in that?**

I like to say I took the bullets. I wanted people to understand my essence, where I come from, what I represent. But at the same time, I wanted to take my culture to the very top. I can't tell you there was a formula. Reggaetón was initially only known on the East Coast. When I released *Barrio Fino*, the West Coast didn't get it. I'd go to Los Angeles or Mexico and people knew Daddy Yankee, but they didn't know what reggaetón was. I had to take the culture with me everywhere so it became permanent instead of fizzling out like other genres where artists simply promote themselves. When I did promotion, I talked about all the artists in my album: "This is me. But this album also features Zion & Lennox, Plan B, Ivy Queen." I had to play their music and say, "This is them. This is reggaetón."

**Your current album falls under your longtime Universal distribution deal. What would you have done if you weren't under that contract?**

Right now, being an indie is great, but if you don't have a long-term major partner, you'll be eaten up alive, because each platform is out for their own interest. But personally, if I didn't have the former distribution contract, I would release my music independently on all platforms.

Don't get me wrong: Major labels aren't going anywhere. They have the power of their catalog, of hundreds of artists, and platforms need that content. A person like myself, who has leverage, can close deals directly with all the platforms and make more money. But, definitely someone indie will explode, or they'll negotiate a release directly with Spotify and Apple, for example.

**What new acts do you like?**

All of them. I'm 100% pro Bad Bunny. I think what he's doing is really important, and I support him to the millionth degree. Ozuna is a hard worker. [Anuel] brings the street and street swag with him. I really admire Balvin's dedication, and he has been a pillar in bringing a new wave of music from South America. I like what Rauw [Alejandro] and Sech are doing. Maluma has extraordinary branding, and he's underestimated. I love what Karol is doing.

**It's an exciting — and profitable — time for Latin music right now. What challenges still need to be overcome?**

Paradoxically, the advantage and disadvantage is the same: We have the opportunity to be on one-on-one terms with fans, but fans consume you. They demand so much that the challenge artists have today is: How long can I last? I believe there's a fan base that truly listens to and enjoys the music, and there's a disposable fan base that's simply looking for the next new thing and doesn't allow the music to create experiences in their lives.

We [older acts] had the opportunity to create lifelong fans — not only me, but rock bands, balladeers and *salseros* who fill stadiums. They don't have the same streams the younger generation has, but they sell more tickets. These younger artists have amazing numbers because they have amazing tools at their disposal, but I'd have done the same. I can't be a resentful OG.

**Now that it has become so big, is there any danger of the genre becoming disposable?**

No, no. That's why I never left Puerto Rico. I understand global music, but our roots are really important. That's our identity, and we can never lose that identity. And I don't think we've lost it. There are a lot of kids doing it, but they're flying under the radar. That's why you see so many of us recording with them, because we recognize the importance of the culture, even if the streaming numbers are not there yet. Right now, there are so many colors to choose from in our music. From reggaetón to trap, tropical, urban tropical, everything is working. It's just about doing it right. **📍**

Daddy Yankee will appear at **Billboard's 2021 Latin Music Week**, presented by Samsung Galaxy and taking place live in Miami Sept. 20-25. For more event info, go to [billboardlatinmusicweek.com](http://billboardlatinmusicweek.com).

# G FORCE

After years of grinding in Colombia, **KAROL G** hustled her way to the top of the male-dominated world of reggaetón. Now, with dreams of music moguldom, she's ready to prove she's more than just the genre's leading lady

BY GRISELDA FLORES

PHOTOGRAPHED BY HEATHER HAZZAN

## 2020 WAS SUPPOSED TO BE KAROL G'S YEAR.

As she rang in the New Year, she was still riding the high of "Tusa," a triumphant team-up with Nicki Minaj that marked a number of milestones. It was the first Latin song with all women artists to reach a billion streams on Spotify, and it was also the first song with a female lead artist to debut atop *Billboard's* Hot Latin Songs chart since 2016. Yes, 2020 was off to a great start for Karol G — she was regularly collaborating with stars both within Latin music (J Balvin, Ozuna, Anuel AA) and well beyond it (Jonas Brothers, Damian Marley), seemingly destined for crossover success and mainstream fame. And then — well, you can guess what happened next.

As the COVID-19 pandemic shut down parts of the music business, along with the rest of the world, the artist born Carolina Giraldo Navarro started to worry she had lost momentum. "I was feeling all this pressure because I thought, 'I will never be able to top 'Tusa.' I feel blocked,'" she says while sipping a cappuccino at Fi'Lia, a hip brunch spot in Miami's bustling Brickell neighborhood. Though she's trying to fly under the radar on this July day, her wavy hair, dyed a mermaid teal, makes her hard to miss. "I stopped making music and told my team to take advantage of this song as much as we could because I would probably be a one-hit wonder," she continues. "All my concerts were canceled. I thought everything was over. I became depressed, and it's a feeling I don't ever wish on anybody."

But after spending the first two months of the pandemic doing "absolutely nothing," the 30-year-old did something unusual: She started watching old interviews she gave and

listening to old songs she had written. She was impressed by how fearless her younger self was, and that turned out to be exactly what she needed to pull herself out of her funk. She grows teary as she recalls

her early days scraping together a career back in Medellín, Colombia. "It's hard to explain," she says, "but I fell in love with myself all over again."

Karol G already had plenty to be proud of. Although she is not the first female artist to find success in reggaetón — Ivy Queen helped pioneer the genre in the 1990s and early 2000s — Karol has achieved an astounding level of success in a particularly male-dominated field. She has amassed 1.2 billion on-demand U.S. streams, according to MRC Data; scored a dozen top 10 hits on the Hot Latin Songs chart; and won best new artist at the 2018 Latin Grammy Awards. Still, she has yet to achieve the type of global mainstream stardom that her male counterparts — like Balvin and Bad Bunny — have enjoyed in the last few years. As language and genre barriers have dissolved in the streaming era, other assumptions about what female Latin artists can achieve, and how they can get there, have been harder to shake.

"For a long time, we used to think men owned this genre, but we were completely wrong," says Puerto Rican radio personality Jorge Pabón, better known as Molusco. "The thing was that our ear wasn't fully developed, and we didn't want to hear a woman singing reggaetón. There were times when I was in a car with other people and a reggaetón song by a female artist would come on the radio, and someone would quickly change the station. Now, there are women like Karol G who are defying this machismo culture that still exists today. They all have talent — and the right to be part of this genre."

Today, having vanquished her self-doubt, a fired-up



Karol G photographed July 19  
at 107 Compound in Miami.

Styling by Patricia Alfonso  
Simonett jacket, Didu dress,  
R13 shoes, Ariel Taub earrings  
and Stephen Dweck rings.

Gonza top and gloves,  
Mahrukh Akuly earrings  
and Martha Calvo  
bracelet and rings.



Karol G is ready to take her career even higher — and prove she's so much more than just reggaetón's current leading lady. In March, she released her ambitious, genre-hopping third album, *KG0516*, which debuted at No. 1 on the Top Latin Albums chart — dethroning Bad Bunny's *El Último Tour del Mundo* and earning the biggest debut week by a female Latin act since Shakira's *El Dorado* in 2017. (The album also reached a career-best No. 20 on the all-genre Billboard 200 chart.) In October, she'll embark on her first headlining North American tour, which includes two sold-out shows at the Coliseo in San Juan, Puerto Rico — one of the most important venues for reggaetón acts to play — then perform back-to-back stadium shows in December at Medellín's Estadio Atanasio Girardot. It's all a dream come true for an artist who has been plotting a path to stardom since she was a teenager.

"The artists of today don't want the process, they want immediate results, and the problem is that a building without a solid foundation will fall," says Karol. "The opportunities haven't always been there. But from the very beginning, I imagined myself as this huge artist. I thank God that I got to go through visiting little towns to personally hand out my CDs, knocking on doors. Because I can now sit with authority and proudly say, 'I'm here because I worked hard.' It wasn't easy, but I'm here."

Conquering the music industry is only the start of her ambitions in entertainment, though. She envisions herself as a multihyphenate, just like her idols, Rihanna and Selena; she even has tattoos of the pop star and the late Tejano icon on her right arm. "I'm super focused on becoming an entrepreneur, launching a makeup brand, clothing lines and making my debut on the big screen," says Karol. "I want to see how far I can get as an artist and as a businesswoman. I want to be at a point in my life when I can say, 'I've done it all, there's nothing else I can do.'"

It's a mission she takes very seriously: Right next to the Rihanna and Selena tattoos is one of her own face.

**K**AROL G WAS 18 YEARS old when she considered quitting the music business.

In 2007, following an unsuccessful audition for Colombia's *X Factor* equivalent, she signed a multiyear recording contract with Puerto Rican label Diamond Music. She recorded some songs, but after two years, she says she hadn't seen much success for her efforts. (Diamond Music could not be reached for comment.) That's when her manager-father, Guillermo Giraldo — known to her fans as Papá G — decided to buy out the contract. "It was a bad contract," Karol says now, "but we also didn't know much about what was a good or bad contract back then."

Feeling lost and defeated, Karol sought a fresh start in New York, where she planned to study marketing. But one day, while riding the subway,

reggaetón, so she became a savvy networker. She worked as a backup singer for Reykon and approached Balvin and Nicky Jam at different events in hopes of getting into the studio with them. They would eventually become some of her biggest champions. "I was at a show in Medellín, and she asked me if she could hop on the stage with me — and she did," remembers Nicky Jam, who later collaborated with her on the R&B-tinged 2013 track "Amor de Dos." "Even back then, she was a dreamer. She had a clear vision of what she wanted and has worked relentlessly to achieve it."

It was also during this time that she made perhaps her most important connection yet — with producer Ovy

**"Artists aren't really idols anymore. If your song is a hit, they'll talk about you, but they'll forget about you when a new artist comes along."**

—KAROL G

she noticed an ad for a music-business conference in Boston and couldn't resist giving it one more try. "I attended the conference and that's when I knew: I really do love music, and I can actually make a living off this and look at it as my own business," she says. "I went back home with this new knowledge, and that's when I made a commitment to myself to give music another chance. My dad and I created a home studio where I started writing and recording songs."

That ignited a spark: She started to think of herself as more than just an artist and stopped waiting around for her big break. While studying music at the University of Antioquia, she released songs independently and played every stage she could book — nightclubs, colleges, festivals. She also realized that collaborations and male co-signs could make careers in

on the Drums, who would become her closest collaborator and produce most of her solo music to date. He was impressed by her hustle early on. "We hit it off right away," says the producer (real name: Daniel Echavarría Oviedo). "I loved her energy, her mentality, and that motivated me to propose an idea. I told her, 'I'd love it if you gave me the opportunity to be your producer and become a team like Maluma with the Rude Boyz and J Balvin with Sky [Rompiendo]. I knew Karol would be a major artist, and I wanted to be part of her team.'"

Karol credits Ovy with helping her sharpen her songwriting skills to match her mainstream ambitions. "When I started writing music, I had no idea how to make something 'commercial,'" she says. "I would write whatever came to mind, and then Ovy would add the instruments, and that

was that. But I knew that if I wanted to be part of the industry, I had to learn how to write a song that would be more commercial."

That work soon began to pay off. In 2015, after realizing that she and Papá G "were going in circles and needed someone else to help us get to the next level," she signed a management deal with Alex Rodriguez, a former label manager for Universal Music Latino who had stumbled upon one of her videos on YouTube. She also signed a recording deal with Universal Music Latino after a group of executives — including Angel Kaminsky, Aldo Gonzalez and Jesús López — recognized her potential and the way she stood out as a female reggaetón act.

"She was on my radar as a rising star in Colombia," says Kaminsky, now president of Universal Music Latino. "J Balvin, whom I was already working with, told me she was going to be the 'next big one.' The first time I saw her was at a Universal new artist showcase in Miami, where I was fully impressed by her energy, her vibe and performance, and her [dedication to being] the leading female voice in Latin urban music."

Though she had the Universal Music Group machinery behind her, Karol didn't have to change much to break through. She and Ovy wrote and produced her 2017 debut, *Unstoppable*, almost entirely by themselves. The project debuted at No. 2 on the Top Latin Albums chart, spawned high-profile collaborations with Bad Bunny and Ozuna, and showcased her range with forays into R&B, pop and reggae — though her versatility wasn't always what jumped out to listeners first. "You had all these Medellín artists who brought in a male perspective and had started making waves in the industry," says Ismar SantaCruz, vp/managing director of radio strategy at Univision. "Then came Karol G, who had a refreshing vibe and, on top of that, a female perspective and angle that made her even more interesting. She stands out not only as a general artist, but as a woman even more."

As much as Karol's "female perspective" opened doors for her, it also subjected her to additional scrutiny. In 2019, she released her second album, *Ocean*, which featured the hit single "Mi Cama." The track, powered by a squeaky horn that mimics the sound of a creaking bed frame, entered the

top 10 on the Hot Latin Songs chart and was remixed by Balvin and Nicky Jam. Yet the song also drew criticism from Spanish-language media outlets over its sexual lyrics — the kind male artists record all the time without getting so much as a raised eyebrow. In conversation, Karol acknowledges the double standards she faces but she's not much interested in unpacking them. Understandably, she doesn't want her gender to define her career any more than it has already. The fact that she's one of the few successful women in reggaetón is something her male collaborators and business partners frequently cite as both a reason for wanting to work with her and a challenge for her to overcome.

"I've been through some really horrible things as a woman in the industry, but I don't even want to talk about that anymore because I don't want to victimize myself," she says categorically. "Whatever happened, it's all in the past. Those experiences helped shape the woman and the artist I am today."

And her career path is already doing the same for the other women looking to establish a foothold in Latin's *urbano* scene. "You have artists such as Cazzu, Nicki Nicole, Mariah Angeliq and Snow Tha Product who are changing the game with their contributions," says radio personality Molusco. "It's incredible that they all share the same story: [overcoming] machismo and the men holding them back. But all these women have come together to create a battalion. In Karol G's case, I still don't think we've seen her best years. This is just the beginning of a beautiful career, and that only means we'll see more women coming in through doors she has opened for them."

**I**N THE MIDDLE OF LAST year, Karol G had an idea. She called up singer-songwriters Lenny Tavárez and Justin Quiles and told them, "I need to write a song that says I am *la más dura*" — the baddest of them all — "and that there's no one else." After struggling with her confidence during the pandemic, she was ready to take control of the next chapter. Together, the three of them — along with Ovy on the Drums and co-writer Cristian Salazar — came up with "Bichota," an attitude-heavy track whose title refers to a strong woman

leader. It would become a mission statement for both *KG0516* and her career at large.

"Ever since 'Bichota,' I am even more connected to my music," says Karol. "Gone are the days when someone would just send me a song and I'd say, 'OK, I'll sing it if it's any good.' Now, even if there are other songwriters involved, the direction of the lyrics and style are in my hands because I am at that point in my ca-

**"I've been through some really horrible things as a woman in the industry, but I don't want to victimize myself."**

— KAROL G

reer where I know what I want to and don't want to release."

She's hands-on behind the scenes, too. In 2020, she assembled a new management team, headed up by Noah Assad, the founder/CEO of independent label Rimas Entertainment and longtime manager to Bad Bunny. (Raymond Acosta, head label manager for Rimas, and one of Karol's sisters, Jessica, are also part of the team.) "There are two managers in the industry that I truly respect and admire: Noah and Rebeca León [co-founder/CEO of Lionfish Entertainment]," she says. "I've loved watching Noah evolve, and I love his work ethic. Same with Rebeca, and as a woman in the industry, she's huge and very committed. But Rebeca already has her main projects [clients Rosalía and Lunay], and Noah didn't have a female artist project. So I called him and said I was interested in working with him."

The two had crossed paths nine years ago at a recording studio in Puerto Rico and loosely stayed in touch. "I don't remember us speaking much at the time [when we met]," recalls Assad, "but I can tell you that as I continued to see her work, I grew respect for Karol and the drive she has

to continue growing and breaking the stigma of being a female in a male-dominated genre."

On the first day they started working together, Karol gave Assad a list of career goals that included headlining her first North American tour, which she announced nearly a year later. While talking about the tour, Karol gets so animated that she briefly starts referring to herself in the third person. "I knew *this* would be Karol G's

thrown off by male superstars — she's got her own lane."

That lane, she promises, will go far beyond reggaetón. "If I'm going to go onstage and sing reggaetón every single time, then how am I innovating? When will I give my fans something so different that truly challenged me?" she asks, sounding a little frustrated — she tends to bristle when people suggest she has already shown all she has to offer. In the past few months, she has tried to stretch her comfort zone, performing with a mariachi at an awards show in July and teaming up with EDM star Tiësto to release "Don't Be Shy," her first English-language song, in August. "He told me I could sing it in Spanish," she says of the DJ-producer, "but I saw it as an opportunity to look beyond [Spanish-speaking listeners]. With this song, we can bring in a new audience."

With an eye toward expanding into film, Karol says she has hired an acting coach, and she's also enrolled in business courses so she can be directly involved in the expansion of her business. She believes that Karol G can be so much bigger than Carolina — that career longevity will require thinking of herself as not just an artist, but a brand. "Artists aren't really idols anymore," she says. "Now it's all about moments. If your song is a hit, they'll talk about you, but because the industry is so saturated, they'll forget about you when a new artist comes along. Selena died more than 20 years ago, but her albums are still charting, she's still getting awards. That's a legacy. My goal now is to create a product that will connect with many people and for people to remember me."

For now, she still has people talking. Two years after "Tusa," and one year after worrying her career was over, Karol G is happy to report she's not the one-hit wonder she thought she might become. "I always wanted to be the biggest in Latin America, and I thought that was the biggest I could get," she says. "But 'Tusa' shook me up. It came to tell me, 'You're ready for the world, not just Latin America.'" **B**

Karol G will appear at *Billboard's 2021 Latin Music Week*, presented by Samsung Galaxy and taking place live in Miami Sept. 20-25. For more event info, see page 32 or go to [billboardlatinmusicweek.com](http://billboardlatinmusicweek.com).





Wein Santo shirt, Nina Ricci pants, Ariel Taub necklace and Stephen Dweck rings.

From left: Natanael Cano, Christian Nodal, Pedro Tovar of Eslabon Armado, Eduin Caz of Grupo Firme and Brian Tovar of Eslabon Armado.



# REGIONAL MEXIC

A new generation of artists — with new sounds like trap *corridos* — is selling out arenas, drawing the atten

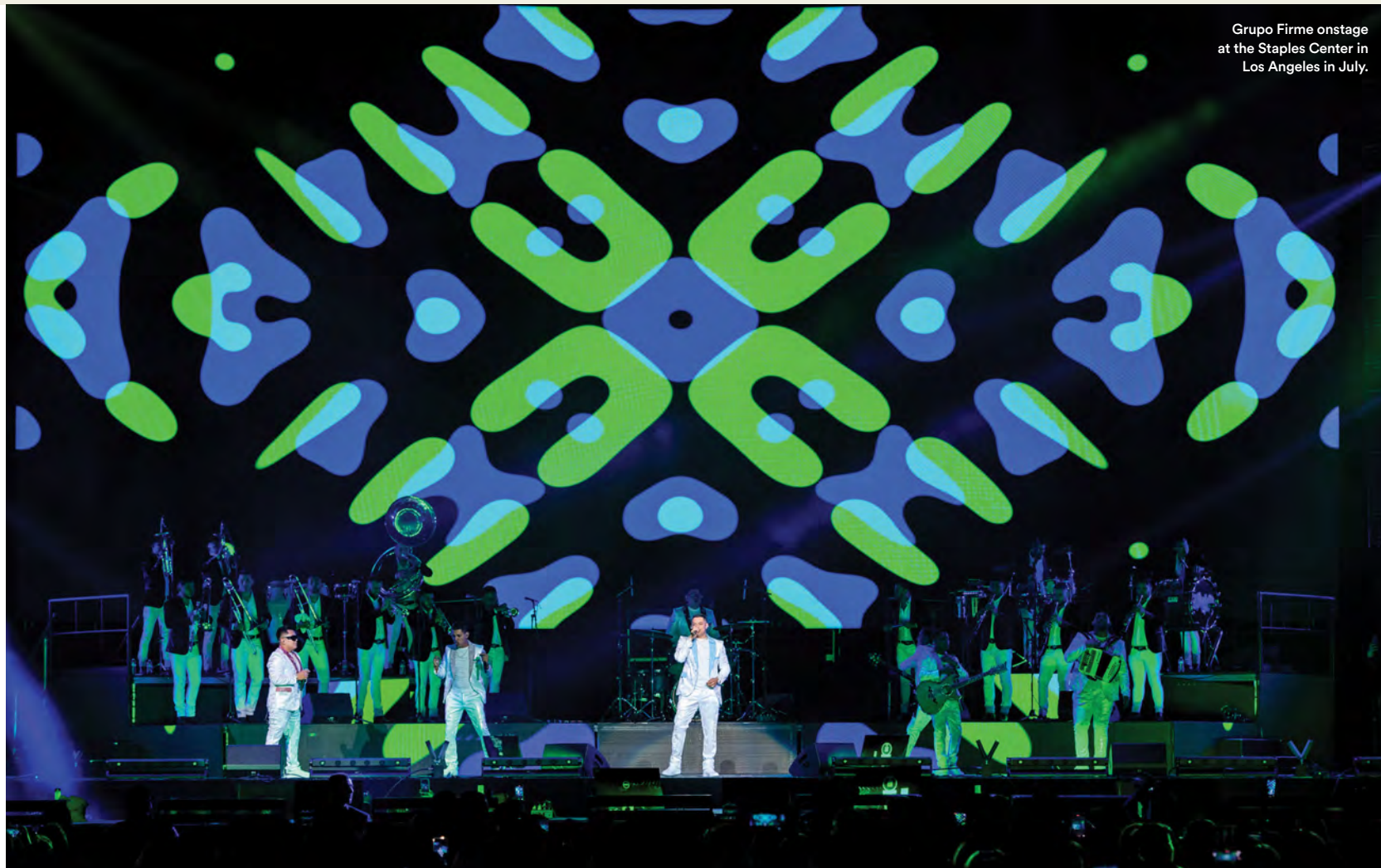
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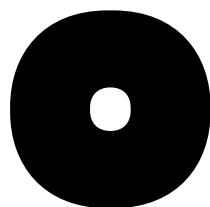
# AN GOES GLOBAL

tion of collaborators like Bad Bunny and Snoop Dogg, and connecting with listeners around the world

ILLUSTRATION BY SELMAN HOŞGÖR



Grupo Firme onstage at the Staples Center in Los Angeles in July.



**ON JULY 30, A BAND TOOK THE STAGE AT THE** Staples Center in Los Angeles for the first time in over 16 months. The crowd of 12,500 roared with joy as the charismatic frontman of the group they had come to see grabbed beers from fans at the front of the stage, then chased them with tequila shots from his own bottle onstage.

This might sound like the usual scene at a Guns N' Roses or Post Malone show. But instead of an electric guitar, there were trumpet solos and a tuba was pumping the bass. The stomping music driving the crowd into a frenzy was the accordion- and horn-inflected *banda* and *norteño* of Grupo Firme, a regional Mexican septet from Tijuana that has rocketed to stardom in the past year.

Grupo Firme's first U.S. show was in February 2019, at a nightclub in San Diego where 40 people showed up. "We thought only our family had come to see us," says Isael Gutiérrez, the band's manager and CEO of its independent label, Music VIP. But the group's July 30 Staples Center show was its first of seven consecutive nights at the arena. The only act that has played more nights there in one calendar year is Adele, with eight.

That opening night saw Grupo Firme frontman Eduin Caz celebrating his 27th birthday in a beer-soaked scene that could have come straight out of one of the band's music videos. Young fans have embraced Grupo Firme's party-hard attitude, as well as the group's TikToks, which often feature Caz and his older brother Jhonny, who also sings in Grupo Firme, lip-syncing or doing TikTok dances. In one recent viral video, the band is onstage with the crowd behind it while Jawsh 685's "Laxed (Siren Beat)" plays and the whole group does the hip-swaying dance that helped make that song a hit in June 2020. Recorded at a concert in Texas, it has over 2.2 million views.

Grupo Firme's success leads a new wave of regional Mexican music that is dominating Latin music in North America. The genre remains the dominant Latin radio format in the United States, with 150 stations reporting to Nielsen BDS, but is extending its reach both geographically and artistically, reaching audiences outside Mexico and the southeastern United States, long its strong-

holds, and attracting the attention of *urbano* artists who did not grow up with it. In the past two years, reggaetón stars like Bad Bunny and Karol G have both embraced acoustic *corrido* ballads and Snoop Dogg has recorded with Banda MS, known for its horn-drenched songs of heartbreak.

Last year, regional Mexican on-demand audio streams rose 29.9% — the biggest jump since 2016 — while in 2019, overall on-demand streams (video and audio) saw a 35% rise, according to MRC Data. To date this year on YouTube, Grupo Firme's songs have garnered 1.2 billion views, and the group recently held three spots on YouTube's U.S. Top Songs chart. "They're sitting next to artists like Cardi B, Travis Scott and Dua Lipa," says YouTube music trends manager Kevin Meenan. "Regional Mexican is ready to be as big as any other global genre."

Part of what's driving that growth is a new generation of performers who have brought new textures to a genre that for decades has been the tradition-based sound of home for nearly 40 million Mexican Americans living in the United States. Regional Mexican is an umbrella term that encompasses folk genres such as mariachi, corridos, norteño and banda, among many others, with each of the subgenres representative of different regions of Mexico that reflect the country's diverse culture.

With legacy acts such as Vicente Fernández, Los Tigres del Norte, Jenni Rivera and Joan Sebastian, the genre was once defined by — and maybe confined by — its roots. But in 2019, when Bad Bunny jumped on a remix of Natanael Cano's "Soy El Diablo," it put a spotlight on trap corridos, a fusion of traditional Mexican guitar sounds with trap beats. This year, Christian Nodal — known for his *mariacheño* mix of mariachi and norteño — teamed up with Mexican rapper Gera MX for the "drinking-your-way-through-a-breakup" anthem "Botella Tras Botella" (Bottle After Bottle), a country-tinged, acoustic *ranchera* with hip-hop beats. In May, "Botella Tras Botella" debuted at No. 3 on *Billboard's* Hot Latin Songs chart and made history as the first regional Mexican title to appear on the all-genre *Billboard* Hot 100, reaching No. 60.

"For many years, Mexican music was just banda, norteño and mariachi," says Jimmy Humilde, CEO of independent label Rancho Humilde, home to

# ALEJANDRO FERNÁNDEZ

TOUR 2021

HECHO EN MÉXICO



10 DE SEPTIEMBRE  
RENO, NV

11 DE SEPTIEMBRE  
SACRAMENTO, CA

12 DE SEPTIEMBRE  
FRESNO, CA

15 DE SEPTIEMBRE  
LAS VEGAS, NV

16 DE SEPTIEMBRE  
LAS VEGAS, NV

18 DE SEPTIEMBRE  
EL PASO, TX

24 DE SEPTIEMBRE  
HOUSTON, TX

26 DE SEPTIEMBRE  
CHICAGO, IL

30 DE SEPTIEMBRE  
BOSTON, MA

1 DE OCTUBRE  
NEW YORK, NY

3 DE OCTUBRE  
MIAMI, FL

5 DE OCTUBRE  
ATLANTA, GA

8 DE OCTUBRE  
IRVING, TX

9 DE OCTUBRE  
HIDALGO, TX

10 DE OCTUBRE  
SAN ANTONIO, TX

15 DE OCTUBRE  
SAN JOSE, CA

16 DE OCTUBRE  
SAN DIEGO, CA

17 DE OCTUBRE  
TEMECULA, CA

22 DE OCTUBRE  
LOS ANGELES, CA

23 DE OCTUBRE  
LOS ANGELES, CA

24 DE OCTUBRE  
PHOENIX, AZ

LIVE NATION

urban corrido artists like Cano and Junior H. “Artists weren’t experimenting with different sounds — it felt like we were stuck. But now the new generation is willing to explore, and it appeals to a wider and more international audience.”

Sometimes those explorations are subtle. Teenage brothers Pedro and Brian Tovar of Mexican American duo Eslabon Armado have placed all bets on the nascent, sad *sierreño* subgenre, melodic tunes powered by traditional instruments like a *requinto* or *bajo sexto* in addition to an electric bass for a contemporary twist. The pair has placed four albums in the top 10 of Top Latin Albums in less than 13 months. The latest, *Tu Veneno Mortal, Vol. 2*, entered the chart at No. 5 and has earned 44.8 million on-demand streams in the United States, according to MRC Data.

But when Pedro Tovar spoke with *Billboard* last year, it wasn’t Eslabon Armado’s chart success that he was most excited about — it was the way the group’s music was being embraced by audiences outside the United States and Mexico. “The other day I was doing a live chat on social media and people from Colombia, Venezuela and Central America were connecting saying that they listen to our music,” he said.

Social media and streaming are also key factors driving the growth of regional Mexican. “Technology has made it easier for this new generation [of fans] to consume new music constantly,” says Angel del Villar, founder/CEO of DEL Records, Eslabon Armado’s Los Angeles-based label. “Millennials are always on their phones, on social media and on digital platforms.”

At Spotify, “regional Mexican’s share of listening has grown in the past year 10.4% at a global level,” says Antonio Vázquez, the digital service provider’s U.S. Latin editorial lead. “In the last year, an average of over 34 million people streamed at least one regional Mexican track per month on Spotify. Vázquez credits “the new sounds of regional Mexican, such as *corridos tumbados*, mariacheño, mariachi pop and sad *sierreño*” with growing the genre’s listeners and expanding its global reach.

On YouTube, Nodal and Gera MX’s “Botella Tras Botella” was No. 1 in nine Latin American markets, including Colombia, El Salvador, Ecuador and Honduras, and it topped YouTube’s Global Top Songs chart — the first-ever regional

“Regional Mexican is ready to be as big as any other global genre.”

—KEVIN MEENAN, YOUTUBE

Mexican track to do so. “There are no limits to the genre anymore,” says YouTube’s Andrea Barbosa, content partnerships manager for Latin America.

That has meant more collaborations with artists outside the genre who recognize the growing power of regional Mexican. Colombian singer Karol G teamed up with rising singer-songwriter Danny Felix for her corrido anthem “200 Copas,” and Chilean singer Mon Laferte pays homage to the corrido tumbado sound on “No Lo Vi Venir.” Meanwhile, Camilo joined forces with norteño duo Los Dos Carnales for a more traditional track, “Tuyo y Mío,” featured on the Colombian singer’s *Mis Manos*. And Spanish artist C. Tangana wrote a corrido for his *El Madrileño* album, “Cambia,” tapping regional Mexican acts Adriel Favela and Carin León to help bring it to life.

In Tangana’s hometown of Madrid, radio station Kandela Te Prende recently changed formats, switching from all vallenatos (a Colombian folk style) to becoming more inclusive of other Latin genres, in particular regional Mexican. “I started working at Kandela when I moved to Spain from Colombia over a year ago and I proposed a change in our station’s DNA,” says Kandela artistic director Harold Acosta. “I thought, ‘Why are we not playing regional Mexican given the phenomenon that it has become?’ I worked at radio stations in Colombia where I witnessed the regional Mexican explosion there around 2015. Here we have many people migrating from Central America and Mexico where regional Mexican music is a reality.” In fact, Spain now has a Mexican community of 57,000, the third-largest in the world after Mexico and the United States. “So, let’s give them what they want to hear.”

While the music itself is catching on elsewhere, global touring remains a dream for most regional Mexican acts. The live circuit is mostly local and rural and limited to the United States and Mexico. Eddie Orjuela, the Nederlander Concerts promoter behind Grupo Firme’s run at the Staples Center, says that group’s jump to arena dates is the exception to the rule. The path to bigger venues, he says, is step by step. “The more organic way of developing an artist in regional Mexican is to go through the ranks: You start playing radio festivals to get exposure, then a nightclub,” he says. “From there you do a [three- to four-act] lineup in a bigger venue. It’s what could maintain the artist in the long run.”

But there’s hope that Grupo Firme’s seven nights at the Staples Center will open doors for regional Mexican artists, or simply raise the stakes. “The industry needed a major boost like this to inspire the new generation of regional Mexican acts,” says Gutiérrez. “In Grupo Firme, I see a Latin, Spanish-speaking group that plays traditional regional Mexican music and that is liked by many people in different Latin American countries. It’s incredible. Our genre is no longer limiting.”

Old and new school: Fernandez (left) and Nodal.



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**10.31 SAN DIEGO**  
SAN DIEGO CIVIC THEATRE

**11.01 SAN JOSE**  
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**11.03 SACRAMENTO**  
SACRAMENTO MEMORIAL  
AUDITORIUM

**11.04 LOS ANGELES**  
MICROSOFT THEATER

**11.05 ONTARIO**  
TOYOTA ARENA

**11.06 LAS VEGAS**  
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HOTELS LAS VEGAS

**11.09 HIDALGO**  
PAYNE ARENA

**11.10 HOUSTON**  
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**11.15 BOSTON**  
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**11.17 PHILADELPHIA**  
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**11.18 NEW YORK**  
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**11.19 NEW YORK**  
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MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

**11.20 WASHINGTON**  
DAR CONSTITUTION HALL

**11.22 CHARLOTTE**  
OVENS AUDITORIUM

**11.23 ATLANTA**  
THE EASTERN

**11.24 ORLANDO**  
HARD ROCK LIVE ORLANDO

**11.26 MIAMI**  
FTX ARENA

**11.27 SAN JUAN,  
PUERTO RICO**  
COLISEO DE PUERTO RICO

**11.28 SAN JUAN,  
PUERTO RICO**  
COLISEO DE PUERTO RICO

**12.04 MEDELLIN,  
COLOMBIA**  
ESTADIO ATANASIO GIRARDOT

**12.05 MEDELLIN,  
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# BACK AND EN VIVO

After a year gone virtual, Billboard Latin Music Week returns live, celebrating a revenue explosion fueled by the rise in streaming and return to touring. Five days of star-packed panels, concerts and showcases include these highlights — plus the Billboard Latin Music Awards, airing live on Telemundo on Sept. 23

## “Coming Out Latin” SEPT. 21

Over the past few years, a landmark number of Latin artists have come out — including electro-cumbia singer Raymix, who opened up about being gay in a five-minute YouTube video last year. He'll join **Esteman**, Erika Vidrio and Grupo Firme's **Jhonny Caz** (top) for a revealing conversation on their experiences as LGBTQ+ Latin acts, with moderator Eder Díaz of podcast *De Pueblo, Católico y Gay*.



## BMI's “How I Wrote That Song” With The Women Of Regional Mexican SEPT. 21

**Ana Bárbara** and newcomers **Lupita Infante** (top), Adriana Rios and Ivonne Galaz are all making inroads in various subgenres of the historically male-dominated regional Mexican music scene. BMI creative director of Latin Teresa Romo moderates a chat in which they'll reflect on the state of their thriving part of the industry, share the barriers they've faced and how they wrote some of their most memorable songs.



## “How HBO Max Is Taking Sounds To Screen” SEPT. 21

In the past year alone, HBO Max has showcased its deep commitment to producing and airing Latin music-based content, developing original franchises like *A Tiny Audience* and *Piano y Mujer*, plus specials by Juan Luis Guerra, Beatriz Luengo and **Farruko** — the latter of whom will join producers and executives in a conversation on the strategy behind the music onscreen, underscoring why culturally relevant, high-quality Latin-based content makes for good business.



## “The Sony Publishing Iconic Songwriter Q&A” With Tainy SEPT. 21

The top producer in the Latin market (with an astounding 96 weeks at No. 1 on *Billboard's* Top Latin Producers chart as of Sept. 1), **Tainy** is fast becoming a top songwriter, too. “Reggaetón used to have a very specific sound,” says the finalist for both producer and songwriter of the year at the Billboard Latin Music Awards, whose résumé includes Bad Bunny's “Yonaguni” and Kali Uchis' “Telepatía.” “Now,



everything has shifted, and urban music has a little bit of everything.” He'll discuss his approach to creative and business ventures alike, including the label and studio he runs under the Neon16 brand.

## “Cultura Clash Live: A Conversation On Social Justice” SEPT. 22

*Billboard's* new topical video series films live with host and YouTube artist relations manager AJ Ramos leading a conversation on social justice in the Latin music world. The artists joining include **Yotuel Romero** (top), whose “Patria y Vida” has become the soundtrack to current protests in Cuba; **Goyo** and husband Tostao of ChocQuibTown, among the first artists to lead conversations on race relations in Latin music and culture; and Kany García, a vocal advocate for LGBTQ+ and women's rights.



## “Mano A Mano” With Myke Towers And Rauw Alejandro SEPT. 22

Puerto Rican hitmakers **Rauw Alejandro** and **Myke Towers** (top) are two of the freshest faces in *urbano* — Towers has scored nine top 10 hits on the Hot Latin Songs chart and placed 13 tracks on the *Billboard* Global 200 in the past 12 months, while Alejandro secured his first No. 1 on any *Billboard* albums chart with *Vice Versa* in June. The two will sit down to discuss new projects, upcoming tours and the challenges they face as new reggaetón artists.



## “Master Class: Making The Hit Live” With Chris Jedi, Gaby Music And Lunay SEPT. 22

Earlier this year, producers Chris Jedi and Gaby Music launched La Familia Records and their own studio; signings include star act **Lunay**, who joins the duo for a live session in which the three Puerto Rico natives will produce a song from scratch, using their own equipment. “Most songs start with Chris' ideas, and I'm a little bit more technical, more into the recording and the mix,” says Gaby. Expect input from Lunay, too, whose writing and vocals are integral to their music.



Go to [billboardlatinmusicweek.com](http://billboardlatinmusicweek.com) for the full schedule.



## THE HOST WITH THE MOST

Nicky Jam kicks off season two of his new talk show at Latin Music Week with an onstage one-on-one with Jhay Cortez. Gleaning exclusive insights is his specialty

**H**e's one of the biggest reggaetón stars today, but that's just one of many roles Nicky Jam has taken on in his career, including actor, restaurant owner and, now, talk show host.

Last fall, he launched on his YouTube channel *The Rockstar Show*, in which he sits down for in-depth chats with his superstar friends to the tune of 1 million to 3 million views per episode, and over 19 million total views so far. Guests for the first nine installments included Maluma, Karol G, Luis Fonsi and Arcangel, but the real star is often the filter-free host himself.

“I interview people, and I give my opinion on a lot of things,” Nicky Jam recently told *Billboard*. “So if you want to know a little bit more about these artists, and get more intimate, this is a good place to see it.”

As he gears up for his second season — and soon, he says, for a deal with a streaming or TV platform — Nicky Jam will interview Jhay Cortez for a special live episode at the Faena Forum on Sept. 21. In the meantime, these nuggets from season one offer a taste of what the host has revealed about his interviewees — and himself.

**On Maluma overcoming early skeptics** “You had to work harder than anyone else. You went through thick and thin. There's a lot of haters, but you even shut me up.”

**On Karol G's business savvy** “You always spoke to me with authority. We were talking about labels, and I really didn't believe in them [at the time]. But you gave me all those reasons, and I thought, ‘Look at this little girl telling me these things.’ And she was right.”

**On why he wasn't part of ‘Despacito’** “It's no secret [Luis Fonsi and I] were going to do the song together. The song didn't come out with me simply because I was releasing ‘El Amante’ and timing didn't coincide. I had to get out of that huge hit ... In a way, I thank God I didn't because [Daddy] Yankee was the right man for the job.”

—LEILA COBO

JAM: OMAR VEGA/GETTY IMAGES; CAZ: MUSIC VIP; ESTEMAN: DIEGO NISHIZAWA; INFANTE: GREG WATERMANN; BÁRBARA: ESTRELLA MEDIA; TAINY: TOMAS STOCKTON; ROMERO: MONTELO MEDIA; GOYO: JORHAN GUARPO; TOWERS: JONATHAN HANNON; ALEJANDRO: BOY SHOD TER; LUNA: ORLI ARIAS; FARRUKO: IYEMEDIA/LIBELLE & COMPANY.

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#### **REGIONAL MEXICAN ARTIST OF THE YEAR, DUO OR GROUP**

#### **REGIONAL MEXICAN ALBUMS OF THE YEAR**

Eslabon Armado, Corta Venas  
Eslabon Armado, Tu Veneno Mortal  
Eslabon Armado, Vibras de Noche

### **DEL** 3 X NOMINEE

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Regional Mexican Albums Imprint of the Year  
Regional Mexican Albums Label of the Year



### **LENIN RAMÍREZ** 2 X NOMINEE

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Lenin Ramírez, featuring Grupo Firme, "Yo Ya No Vuelvo Contigo"

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# The Players

A rendering of Climate Pledge Arena in Seattle.



## Eco-Conscious, Safety-Centric, Tech-Savvy: 35 New Venue Builds

AS LIVE-MUSIC GROSSES VANISHED AMID THE PANDEMIC, VENUES INVESTED IN WAYS TO ENTICE FANS BACK TO THE LIVE MARKET — FROM HOSPITAL-QUALITY AIR FILTRATION SYSTEMS TO USING RECYCLED MATERIALS FROM LANDFILLS

BY DAVE BROOKS AND TAYLOR MIMS

**F**ROM THE LARGEST LED SCREEN ON earth to the first net zero carbon-certified arena, this year's class of future-forward music venues is reenvisioning what it means to connect artists with their fans in a post-vaccination touring economy.

After a decade of growth, with a 55% increase in ticket prices and sales throughout the 2010s, according to Billboard Boxscore (which tracks a portion of overall global activity), the start of a new decade saw revenue collapse amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Aside from livestreams and drive-in concerts, the near-total blackout of the live market carried over into 2021, as fears of new variants delta and lambda caused a fresh wave of cancellations and rescheduled

dates for acts including Garth Brooks, BTS and Billie Eilish.

Following are 35 new in-progress builds and revitalized and reopened facilities that reflect the latest trends in concert production, with attention to health, safety and the environment at the forefront — from hands-free lavatories and custodial electrostatic sprayers to the use of recycled rainwater to freeze hockey ice.

### AMERICAN FAMILY INSURANCE AMPHITHEATER

Milwaukee

Concert capacity: 23,000

The American Family Insurance Amphitheater reopened in July, one year later than expected, with dates for Foo Fighters,

Zac Brown Band and Miley Cyrus. Built as part of a two-year, \$51.3 million renovation of Maier Festival Park and managed by Milwaukee World Festival, the venue's features include new bleachers and grass areas, the addition of seven on-site bars (which now total 15) and concession areas, as well as a new elevator. The amphitheater has also found room for 800 more seats, including 270 for fans with disabilities.

### THE ANDREW J. BRADY ICON MUSIC CENTER

Cincinnati

Concert capacity: 8,000

The Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra's promotion company, Music & Event Management, developed the \$40 million

venue to help revitalize the city's historic Riverfront district. Dubbed the "ICON," the facility is made up of two venues — a 4,500-capacity indoor room with two balcony levels and an adjacent 8,000-capacity outdoor amphitheater for summer concerts and festivals. Recent bookings include Earth, Wind & Fire, Machine Gun Kelly and Nelly. New features include a JBL Line Array sound system and state-of-the-art air filtration that uses bipolar ionization technology that is said to be 99% effective at killing viruses, including COVID-19, within 30 minutes of operation.

### BANKPLUS AMPHITHEATER AT SNOWDEN GROVE

Southaven, Miss.

Concert capacity: 11,000

Live Nation is out and the DeSoto County Convention & Visitors Bureau is in at this Mississippi venue, which was built to boost tourism in the region just 20 miles south of Memphis. The outdoor facility added new permanent seats, concessions, bathrooms and a lawn area. Todd Mastry, executive director of the Landers Center in New Haven, Conn., will oversee the amphitheater, which was forced to cancel its first bookings for Sam Hunt, Dave Matthews Band, Foreigner and Rascal Flatts this fall.

### BROOKLYN BOWL NASHVILLE

Nashville

Concert capacity: 1,200

After hosting livestreamed concerts for Maren Morris, Margo Price and others during the pandemic, Brooklyn Bowl Nashville opened its doors to ticket holders in June — 16 months later than expected — with shows by Old Crow Medicine Show and The String Cheese Incident and scheduled dates for X Ambassadors, Madison Beer and others this fall. The Southern outpost of owner Peter Shapiro's franchise, which also has operations in New York and Las Vegas, is located next to First Horizon Park, home of the Milwaukee Brewers' triple-A baseball team, The Nashville Sounds. The facility also offers 19 bowling lanes and a menu by Blue Ribbon.

### THE BUDDY HOLLY HALL OF PERFORMING ARTS & SCIENCES

Lubbock, Texas

Concert capacity: 2,200

Named after the city's late local rock star, Buddy Holly, who graduated from Lubbock High School in 1955, the 220,000-square-foot performing arts center includes the 2,200-seat Helen DeVitt Jones Main Theater and the intimate, 425-seat Crickets Studio Theater, which will host acoustic shows. Managed by ASM Global and designed by global firm Diamond Schmitt



A rendering of Drake's History venue in Toronto.

Architects on a \$154 million budget, the venue's first artist bookings — including Styx, Boz Scaggs and Kristin Chenoweth — enjoyed access to new dressing rooms and lounges, back-of-house loading docks and a 6,000-square-foot multipurpose event room.

### CAPITAL ONE HALL

**Tysons, Va.**

*Concert capacity: 1,600*

Capitol One Hall is slated to open in October with plans to hold 200 events per year featuring touring Broadway productions, comedy and concerts. The venue's first music bookings include Josh Groban, Little Big Town and Kansas. Managed by ASM Global, the performing arts complex spans a main 1,600-seat theater, a 225-seat black box theater called The Vault, an amphitheater and additional event spaces. Other on-site accommodations include bocce courts, a sculpture garden, a Wegmans grocery store, a nail salon/spa and a 5,000-square-foot beer garden operated by local brewery Starr Hill.

### CHASE CENTER

**San Francisco**

*Concert capacity: 18,064*

In preparation for a fall opening with dates for Tame Impala, Phish and the Eagles, the Golden State Warriors' Chase Center announced a multitiered partnership with Clorox to serve as its official disinfectant and create a "clean team" to audit the building's cleanliness daily, including on nonevent days. The venue also installed a state-of-the-art HVAC system that circulates 100% outside air, custodial electrostatic sprayers at the arena's disinfection stations and mechanical air filters that are recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

### CLIMATE PLEDGE ARENA

**Seattle**

*Concert capacity: 17,200*

After four years of extensive renovations, the City of Seattle and Oak View Group plan to reopen the KeyArena as the Climate Pledge Arena in October with bookings for Eric Church, Andrea Bocelli, The Weeknd and Billie Eilish. It will be the

first net zero carbon-certified arena in the world, in keeping with naming partner Amazon's 2019 "climate pledge" commitment to be net zero carbon by 2040, 10 years earlier than the deadline set by the 2015 Paris Agreement. Standout elements include cutting all single-use plastic from the facility by 2024 and recycling rainwater to create the venue's ice for its NHL team, the Seattle Kraken.

### COACHELLA VALLEY ARENA

**Palm Desert, Calif.**

*Concert capacity: 11,679*

After two years of anticipation, Oak View Group broke ground in June on a \$250 million, 300,000-square-foot arena near Palm Desert, Calif. The building will host concerts for the greater High Desert region and also serve as the home of the American Hockey League's 32nd franchise team — the affiliate team for the NHL's Seattle Kraken — that will take the ice in 2022. Set to open with the Eagles, the venue will feature an 8,000-seat lower bowl, 20 suites, a private club that can hold 145 people, a pair of VIP clubs and a premium concourse club that seats 590. Live Nation will serve as a strategic partner for events.

### COCA-COLA MUSIC HALL

**San Juan, Puerto Rico**

*Concert capacity: 5,000*

The hall celebrated its grand opening in August after a yearlong delay, with a sold-out performance by local Latin pop star Ednita Nazario. Fall bookings include Pedro Capó, DJ Snake and Nio Garcia. Located in the newly developed entertainment district, Distrito T-Mobile, the ASM Global-managed facility will fill a need for midsize venues on the island and also host family shows, boxing matches and other corporate events. Amenities include a back-of-house artist compound, production offices and a club level with seven luxury suites.

### DAVID GEFKEN HALL AT LINCOLN CENTER

**New York**

*Concert capacity: 2,200*

Scheduled to reopen in the fall of 2022 (almost two years earlier than scheduled),

Lincoln Center's \$500 million renovation of its concert hall was funded in part by a \$100 million gift from entertainment mogul David Geffen. The renovation will double the size of its lobby and grand promenade and feature a new welcome center and a media streaming wall. Other elements include a state-of-the-art HVAC air purifying system and antimicrobial technology integrated into surfaces.

### THE EASTERN

**Atlanta**

*Concert capacity: 2,200*

Operated by Zero Mile Presents and AEG, The Eastern opened in September with a performance from hometown legend Big Boi. With dates for Big Thief, Thundercat and Ashley McBryde, the venue will anchor the Atlanta Dairies project in Reynoldstown, which is adjacent to the Atlanta Beltline — a sustainable redevelopment project connecting 45 in-town neighborhoods through a 22-mile loop of multiuse trails, modern streetcars and parks. The facility boasts a multitiered floor plan that spans a rooftop bar and covered performance space, with the option of hosting more intimate 100- to 200-capacity shows.

### ENMARKET ARENA

**Savannah, Ga.**

*Concert capacity: 9,600*

The arena, co-managed by Live Nation, Oak View Group and the City of Savannah, is scheduled to open in February 2022, with the goal of making Savannah a top touring destination in the southeastern U.S. market. Located just a mile from the neighboring Civic Center, the \$165 million project will transform 600 acres of undeveloped land in the city's Canal District. The venue also recently inked a deal to host an expansion team in the minor league East Coast Hockey League. The team has yet to be named and will join the league for the 2022-23 season.

### FIRSTBANK AMPHITHEATER

**Franklin, Tenn.**

*Concert capacity: 7,500*

The Live Nation-backed venue opened in August with performances by Florida

Georgia Line, Thomas Rhett and Chase Rice and has booked upcoming dates for TLC, Santana and H.E.R. The amphitheater sits on a former limestone quarry that was once a landfill. During construction, team members cleaned nearby ponds and trails to create a park-like setting for the venue's campus, while other green initiatives include repurposing cement from a local highway to build roads leading to the venue and serving water in BPA-free aluminum bottles.

### FOOTPRINT CENTER

**Phoenix**

*Concert capacity: 18,422*

After completing its \$230 million renovation, the Phoenix Suns' home arena (formerly known as Talking Stick Resort Arena) signed a new naming rights deal in July with engineering/material science company Footprint. The Arizona-based environmental-tech firm works to eliminate the use of single-use plastics and will test new technologies at the sports and entertainment complex, like an on-site "living innovation lab" to educate suppliers on plant-based products. The eco-conscious arena also repurposed 8,200 tons of material from a landfill during construction. The venue's first slate of music bookings includes Guns N' Roses, Maluma and Tyler, The Creator.

### FOREST HILLS STADIUM

**Forest Hills, N.Y.**

*Concert capacity: 13,000*

Originally designed in the 1920s for the U.S. Open tennis tournament, the historic Queens venue went on to host iconic 1960s concerts like Barbra Streisand, Jimi Hendrix and Bob Dylan. The AEG-managed stadium completed an extensive renovation during the pandemic and reopened in July with a concert lineup featuring Brandi Carlile, Bright Eyes, Wilco, My Morning Jacket/Brittany Howard, Nas and The Neighbourhood, among others. The revitalization began in 2018 and included the addition of private ground-level suites with speakeasy-style secret entrances, among other cosmetic upgrades.

### HARTFORD HEALTHCARE AMPHITHEATER

**Bridgeport, Conn.**

*Concert capacity: 5,700*

After an extensive renovation that began in 2018, the Live Nation-backed amphitheater reopened in July with dates for Greta Van Fleet, The Beach Boys and Erykah Badu. Located on the Long Island Sound, the facility's new elements include a tensile roof, custom steel gates, stone walls and marble bathrooms. Previously home to the Bridgeport Bluefish baseball team, the revamped venue also features a

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**HISTORY**

**Toronto, Ontario**

**Concert capacity: 2,500**

After three years of development and construction, Drake and Live Nation announced their new, intimate concert venue in the artist's hometown of Toronto in June. Located in the city's East Side enclave The Beaches, History was inspired by the rapper's pre-superstar years playing smaller stages. Set to open in October, the venue plans to host 200 concerts and events annually, including galas and community programs. Initial music bookings include All Time Low/Rival Sons, Bleachers, Thundercat and The Flaming Lips.

**IRVING PLAZA**

**New York**

**Concert capacity: 1,200**

In August, Irving Plaza completed a multi-million-dollar renovation that began in 2019. The overhaul doubled the size of the landmark's lobby and bar area to create a new space for artist meet-and-greets and other events. Owner Live Nation also upgraded the venue's sound and lighting equipment and added other new features, including a VIP lounge with a private bar and balcony-level boxes that offer unobstructed views of the stage for first scheduled bookings with Ben Folds, Noah Cyrus, Cheap Trick and Kevin Gates.

**LANDMARK LOEW'S JERSEY THEATER**

**Jersey City, N.J.**

**Concert capacity: 3,300**

Nearly a century after the historic movie palace opened in 1929, the Loew's Jersey Theater announced a \$72 million restoration in March that will include updates to the venue's HVAC and plumbing, plus sound and visual upgrades. With construction scheduled to begin in 2022, the venue

has a projected 2025 opening. Devils Arena Entertainment, which also operates the Prudential Center in Newark, N.J., will manage the venue, while former owner Friends of the Loew's will continue to run its nonprofit division providing arts programming for the greater Hudson County, N.J., region.

**LEGACY ARENA AT THE BIRMINGHAM-JEFFERSON CONVENTION COMPLEX**

**Birmingham, Ala.**

**Concert capacity: 18,000**

Downtown Birmingham's BJCC is expected to complete its \$123 million renovation of the Legacy Arena later this year. Improvements included the addition of 66,000 square feet of new space and enhancements to the fan experience from improved air circulation and doubling the number of women's restrooms to a renovated loading dock that can accommodate major tours like scheduled 2022 bookings with Billie Eilish and Eric Church.

**MISSION BALLROOM**

**Denver**

**Concert capacity: 3,950**

Operated by AEG Presents Rocky Mountain, Mission Ballroom has become a must-play venue in the competitive Denver market. The facility opened in 2019 to rival Live Nation's nearby Fillmore Auditorium and features a first-of-its-kind indoor terrace with a moveable stage that can nearly double the venue's capacity from 2,200 to 3,950. The 60,000-square-foot building anchors a new 14-acre mixed-use development, North Wynkoop, and has upcoming shows for Erykah Badu, Karol G and Ween.

**MOODY CENTER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN**

**Austin**

**Concert capacity: 15,000**

Built entirely with private money, the new \$338 million Moody Center will open in

A rendering of Anghami Lab in Dubai.



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FIVE INTERNATIONAL VENUES TO WATCH, INCLUDING FACILITIES IN DUBAI, THE U.K. AND ITALY

**Anghami Lab**

**DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

**Concert capacity: 300**

Launched by Middle East and North Africa-focused music streaming company Anghami in partnership with hospitality outfit Addmind, the Lab is the first in a series of planned international venues that aim to offer both traditional and digital entertainment for patrons. Set to open in 2022, the venue will feature a lounge, stage and studio where creators can experiment by co-creating and performing music inspired by both Arabic and international cultures. The resulting music will then be made available exclusively on Anghami.

**Co-Op Live**

**MANCHESTER, ENGLAND**

**Concert capacity: 23,500**

Built and managed by Oak View Group, Co-Op Live will be the largest indoor arena in the United Kingdom when it opens in 2023. Situated in East Manchester, adjacent to the Manchester Football Club's home turf, Etihad Stadium, the new facility will be sustainably powered and climate-conditioned through its "smart bowl" design, rainwater usage system and other eco-friendly measures. Harry Styles is both an investor and spokesman for the facility and appeared in a recent promotional video.

**Forum Birmingham**

**BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND**

**Concert capacity: 3,500**

Previously hosting acts including Nirvana, The Clash and Amy Winehouse, this historic space has been reimagined as an electronic music haunt after extensive renovations by the building's new owner, Global Venues. The facility reopened in September with a restored wooden sprung dancefloor and new sound

system. Glastonbury Festival-affiliated DMX Productions oversees the staging of shows, which so far have included Mike Skinner (of The Streets fame) and Netsky, Honey Dijon and slowthai.

**RCF Arena**

**REGGIO EMILIA, ITALY**

**Concert capacity: 100,000**

Located in the Emilia-Romagna region that connects Northern Europe and the Mediterranean, RCF Arena is one of the largest-capacity music venues in Italy. The venue boasts connectivity and VIP areas, and seating was built on a five-degree slope that provides optimal visuals from all sections of the arena. Seating capacity ranges from 5,000 to 100,000 for special events, such as its sold-out grand opening with local superstar Luciano Ligabue, which was rescheduled to June 2022 due to the pandemic.

**Stockton Globe**

**STOCKTON-ON-TEES, ENGLAND**

**Concert capacity: 3,000**

Known as a premier music destination for The Rolling Stones and The Beatles in the 1950s and '60s, the art deco theater then spent two decades as a bingo hall before shuttering in 1997. The facility has since been revitalized, with a decade-long renovation that began in 2011, piloted by the venue's new manager, Ambassador Theatre Group, which restored original design touches, including its Terrazzo floors in the atrium and the Hessian stage curtain, as well as wheelchair-accessible and VIP areas. After structural issues caused the price of the renovation to skyrocket from \$5.5 million to \$37 million, the space reopened in May with performances by McFly and Nick Cave.



At the groundbreaking for the Coachella Valley Arena on June 2 were (from left) the Seattle Kraken's Kyle Boyd; Oak View Group's Francesca L. Bodie, Tim Leiweke and Irving Azoff; Joe Walsh of the Eagles; Greater Palm Springs Convention & Visitors Bureau's Scott White; Riverside County Board of Supervisors' V. Manuel Perez; H.N. and Frances C. Berger Foundation's Douglass A. Vance; and Oak View Group's John Bolton.

ANGHAMI: COURTESY OF ANGHAMI LAB; COACHELLA: ETHAN KAMINSKY/COURTESY OF OAK VIEW GROUP



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the spring of 2022 to replace the university's 44-year-old Erwin Center. Scheduled concerts include The Weeknd, John Mayer, Justin Bieber and The Killers. Oak View Group developed and will operate the facility, which plans to host over 150 events a year, from concerts to the college's basketball games, family shows and other sporting and local events. Live Nation and Charles Attal, co-founder of C3 Presents, will handle booking, while Austin-born actor Matthew McConaughey will serve as building ambassador.

### MSG SPHERE

Las Vegas

*Concert capacity: 17,500*

Madison Square Garden's ambitious Las Vegas Sphere continues to be one of the most anticipated music venues in the world, with a price tag of \$1.8 billion. Set to open in 2023 following pandemic-related construction delays, the structure will be anchored by what is touted as the largest and highest-resolution LED screen on earth, which will cover an area larger than three football fields. The screen is intended to create an immersive, virtual reality-style experience for ticket holders. In June, MSG completed the construction of the Sphere's steel frame, while the exosphere is still under construction.

### NASHVILLE YARDS

Nashville

*Concert capacity: 4,000*

Developed by Southwest Value Partners, the 18-acre Nashville Yards complex will include a 1.3-acre park, two office towers for Amazon Nashville and hotels including a luxury Grand Hyatt and the converted landmark train terminal, Union Station. In June, SVP announced a long-term joint venture with AEG to co-develop the entertainment district's planned 4,000-capacity concert venue, as well as a movie theater, restaurants, shopping, office spaces and residences, with construction to begin in early 2022.

### PPG PAINTS ARENA

Pittsburgh

*Concert capacity: 19,578*

The NHL's Pittsburgh Penguins partnered with concessionaire Aramark for the renovation of its PPG Arena, which will be completed for the start of the 2021 hockey season in October and first concerts with Alabama, MercyMe and Genesis. Designed to create a safe and efficient environment for fans, the overhaul included adding new features with social distancing in mind, from touch-screen kiosks and mobile ordering through the Penguins app to self-checkout scanners powered by Mashgin artificial intelligence.

### PROMOWEST PAVILION AT OVATION

Newport, Ky.

*Concert capacity: 7,000*

The first phase of a \$1 billion, 25-acre revitalization of downtown Newport, the pavilion opened in August with concerts by Taking Back Sunday, Bleachers, Polo G and Angels & Airwaves. Managed by AEG, the facility's new elements include an interior mezzanine and two raised stages that can accommodate 2,700 fans for indoor shows and 7,000 outdoor. The venue also boasts a 550-car parking garage and a new bus dock for touring performers.

### ROADRUNNER

Boston

*Concert capacity: 3,500*

After three years of construction, The Bowery Presents will open its new 3,500-capacity venue, Roadrunner, next spring. Named after a song by local legends The Modern Lovers, the 50,000-square-foot building will serve as the region's largest general-admission venue for indoor live-music performances, according to the promoter. The facility will anchor the 15-acre Track at New Balance development at Boston Landing in the Allston-Brighton neighborhood — a former industrial area that once served as a stockyard.

### RUPP ARENA

Lexington, Ky.

*Concert capacity: 23,500*

Led by architectural firms NBBJ and EOP, the \$275 million renovation project at Central Bank Center (formerly Lexington Center) will wrap up in the spring of 2022, with its first concerts by Jason Aldean, Lauren Daigle, Jojo Siwa and Backstreet Boys. The Oak View Group-managed arena added new chair-back seats to replace bleachers, an expanded seating section and concourses, and a 50,000-square-foot hospitality club for the University of Kentucky. The project is seeking Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification.

### S.O.B.'S

New York

*Concert capacity: 450*

In its fourth decade, S.O.B.'s (aka Sounds of Brazil) is the premier destination for Latin, hip-hop, Caribbean and other world-music artists performing in the greater New York region. Located in Manhattan's Soho neighborhood, the facility has played host to landmark sets from Tito Puente, Marc Anthony, Celia Cruz, Drake, Kanye West and Jill Scott. In the venue's first revitalization since it opened in 1982, owner-director Larry Gold made upgrades to the sound system to improve the overall visitor

experience and expanded the room to 4,000 square feet.

### SOFI STADIUM

Los Angeles

*Concert capacity: 100,000*

The Inglewood, Calif., venue opened in September 2020 as the home of the Los Angeles Rams and Los Angeles Chargers, and the first indoor-outdoor stadium ever constructed. In May, it hosted the Global Citizen-organized concert special Vax Live: The Concert to Reunite the World, which promoted COVID-19 vaccinations and featured acts including Selena Gomez, Jennifer Lopez, Eddie Vedder, Foo Fighters and H.E.R. The stadium's upcoming slate of concerts includes dates for Los Bukis, The Rolling Stones and Kenny Chesney.

### THE THEATRE AT RESORTS WORLD

Las Vegas

*Concert capacity: 7,000*

One of the most anticipated entertainment properties on the Strip, Resorts World's new theater is slated to open in November with new residencies for Céline Dion, Carrie Underwood, Katy Perry and Luke Bryan. Programmed and operated by AEG Presents, the tech-forward facility will feature 5,000 square feet of LED screens and a cutting edge, fully immersive 265-speaker surround-sound audio system created by design firm Sceno and audio engineering company L'Acoustics.

### THE THEATER AT VIRGIN HOTELS LAS VEGAS

Las Vegas

*Concert capacity: 4,500*

Occupying the space once held by The Joint at the Hard Rock Hotel, the new

AEG-managed theater opened in September with remodeled luxury suites, bars and VIP areas and updated sound and video technology. Its first music shows included performances by Gary Clark Jr., Lady A, Russ, Dropkick Murphys/Rancid and Karol G. A six-show residency with Journey is scheduled for December.

### UBS ARENA

Elmont, N.Y.

*Concert capacity: 18,500*

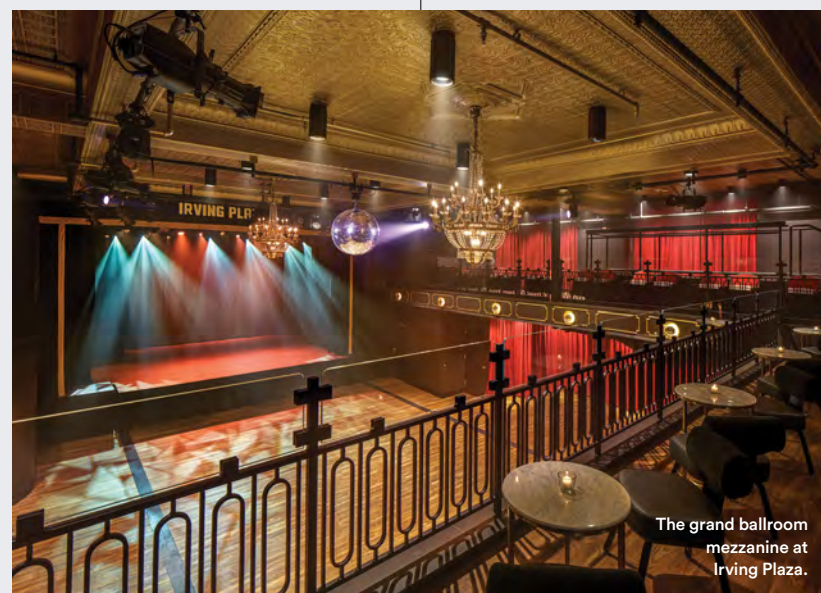
Following pandemic-related halts to production, Oak View Group's new \$1.5 billion Long Island arena is scheduled to open in October as the new home of the NHL's New York Islanders. The multipurpose arena is also designed for music and will offer a back-of-house load-in/load-out "campus," built with input from Live Nation, that will cut costs for large touring productions. Other features include a new hydraulics system that will ensure that no extra space is needed for nonsporting events like concerts and Munter dehumidifying machines that will generate 80% more airflow for scheduled concerts by Eric Church and Genesis.

### YOUTUBE THEATER

Inglewood, Calif.

*Concert capacity: 7,000*

Part of Hollywood Park, the new mixed-use development from Los Angeles Rams owner/chairman E. Stanley Kroenke, the 227,000-square-foot, three-story indoor venue shares the same sloped-roof and canopy with the adjacent SoFi Stadium and American Airlines Plaza. The theater's other standout features include six luxury boxes, a private club with 140 premium seats and a flexible capacity range of 3,400, 4,400 and 6,000 for larger events. The venue's fall schedule includes Trippie Redd, Marina and the Diamonds, and Louis Tomlinson.



The grand ballroom mezzanine at Irving Plaza.

# LATIN MUSIC LIVES HERE



 **FTX arena**

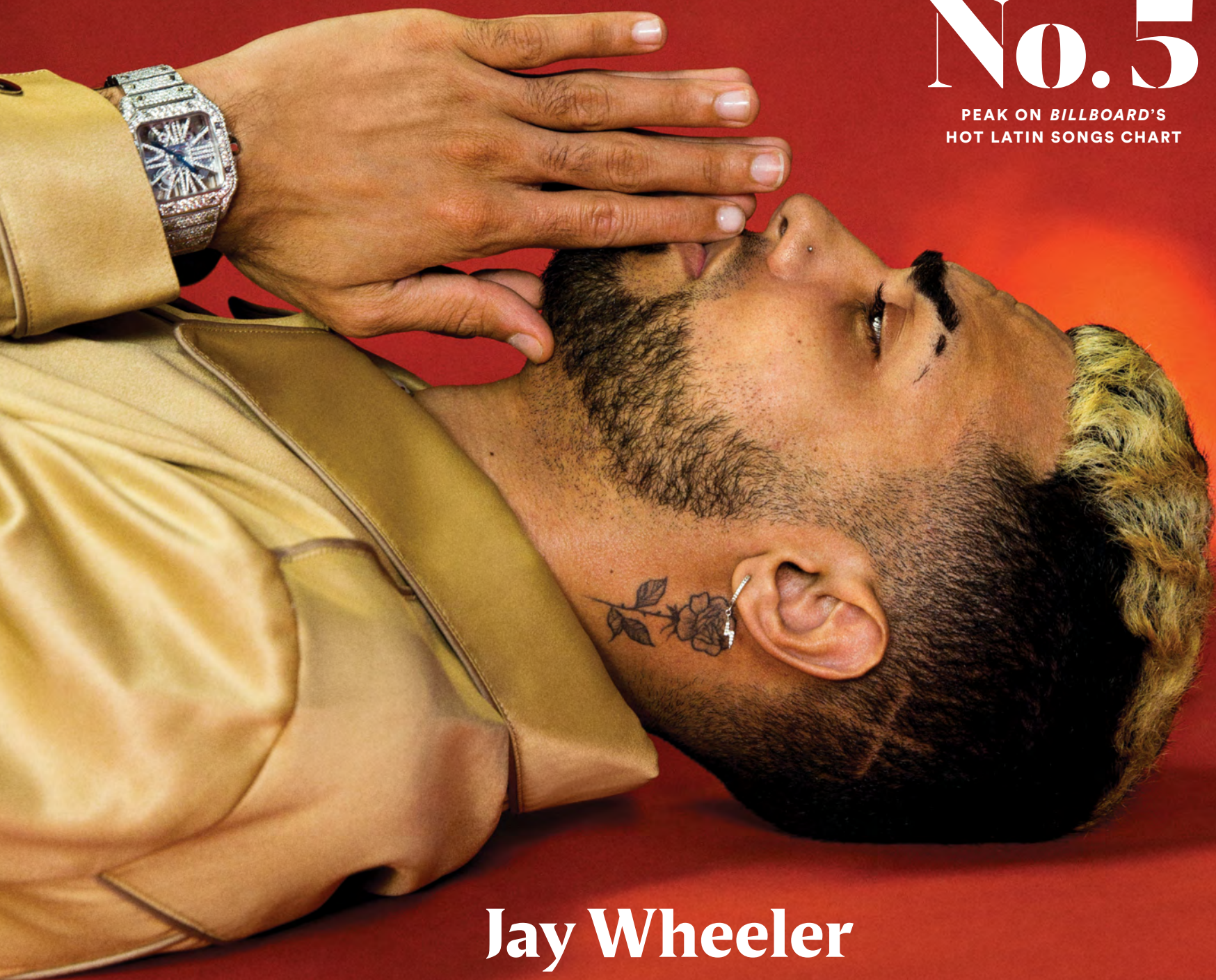
**SOUTH FLORIDA'S PREMIER MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT VENUE**

# Chartbreaker

Wheeler photographed by Devin Christopher on Aug. 24 in Miami.

# No. 5

PEAK ON *BILLBOARD'S*  
HOT LATIN SONGS CHART



## Jay Wheeler

Thanks to an early co-sign from Myke Towers, “La Curiosidad” helped the rising reggaetonero slowly fill the Hot Latin Songs chart

🕒 In 2020, while attending Myke Towers’ album release party at LIV nightclub in Miami, rising Puerto Rican artist Jay Wheeler hit it off with the more established hitmaker, and the pair made a verbal agreement, sealed with a handshake, to collaborate in the future. After the party, Wheeler (born José Ángel López Martínez) sent over a demo he had just written with a “wide open space” left for Towers’ vocals. “Thirty minutes hadn’t gone by and he sent the finished track back,” recalls Wheeler.

That demo became “La Curiosidad” (Curiosity), a midtempo reggaetón track that helped Wheeler, 27, explode internationally as it climbed to No. 40 on the Billboard Global 200 — and he has been on a winning streak ever since. The breakthrough hit became the first of Wheeler’s six total entries on the Hot Latin Songs chart, all of them this year. It also peaked at No. 16 on the Latin Airplay chart — and by early August, Wheeler scored his first No. 1 on the chart with “Viendo el Techo,” another romantically inclined track, this time without any features.

Wheeler hustled on his own for years, previously working as a farmhand and a

Marshall’s cashier before uploading songs to SoundCloud without much strategy. Eventually, Luis “Siru” Suárez, a producer and entrepreneur, stumbled upon his page. He wrote to Wheeler on Facebook, but Wheeler was leery. “I’d been through bad experiences, unkept promises, stolen money,” he says. But Suárez persisted and proposed to bring Wheeler into his company, Dynamic Records, as a partner instead of a signed artist. It was an offer Wheeler couldn’t refuse.

By 2018, Wheeler and Suárez contacted DJ Nelson, a veteran reggaetón producer who owns the independent label Flow Music. Nelson partnered with Dynamic under a new imprint called Linked Music and brought in Pablo Casals of Elite Media & Marketing to help with management and bookings. Casals later negotiated a distribution deal with indie EMPIRE, though Wheeler’s upcoming English-language project, *Good Music for Bad Days* (due out this year), will mark the end of that distribution pact. Now, conversations are underway with other companies, including majors. “What brought me to this point, aside from my team, is my discipline,” he says. “I work every single day as if I had just started yesterday.” —LEILA COBO

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**CONTACT:**

**Joe Maimone** | 201.301.5933 | joe.maimone@mrcentertainment.com  
**Lee Ann Photoglo** | 615.376.7931 | laphotoglo@gmail.com  
**Marcia Olival** | 786.586.4901 | marciaolival29@gmail.com  
**Cynthia Mellow** | 615.352.0265 | cmellow.billboard@gmail.com  
**Ryan O'Donnell** | +447843437176 | rodonnell@pmc.com

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**TO ADVERTISE, CONTACT:**

Marcia Olival | 786.586.4901 | marciaolival29@gmail.com

Joe Maimone | 212.493.4427 | joe.maimone@billboard.com

Lee Ann Photoglo | 615.376.7931 | laphotoglo@gmail.com

Cynthia Mellow | 615.352.0265 | cmellow.billboard@gmail.com

Ryan O'Donnell | +447843437176 | cmellow.billboard.com

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