

# billboard Bulletin

YOUR DAILY ENTERTAINMENT NEWS UPDATE

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## How Brent Faiyaz's Team Spent Seven Years Building Up to the Success of 'Wasteland'

BY DAN RYS

Generally speaking, the upper echelons of major *Billboard* charts are populated by artists with the backing of a major label: currently, the top five of the Billboard 200 is populated by [Bad Bunny's](#) *Un Verano Sin Ti* (Rimas, distributed by Sony-owned The Orchard); [aespa's](#) *Girls: The 2nd Mini Album* (SM/Warner); [Harry Styles' Harry's House](#) (Erskine/Columbia); and [Morgan Wallen's](#) *Dangerous: The Double Album* (Big Loud/Republic).

But this week, the usual major-label parade was disrupted by a totally independent newcomer to the top tier: [Brent Faiyaz](#), whose *Wasteland* album — released on his own Lost Kids label, with distribution from indies Stem and Venice — [soared in at No. 2](#) on the Billboard 200 and [No. 1 on R&B/Hip-Hop Albums](#) with 88,000 equivalent album units in its first week, a staggering number for an artist doing things on his own.

It's also validation for Faiyaz and his team, who worked for seven years to build up the R&B singer's career and following to get to this point, with a long-term plan that eschewed the help of the majors in

exchange for creative control and ultimate flexibility. And now, the strategy has paid off: Faiyaz's *Wasteland* is one of the more compelling artist/business stories of the year so far, and the success of that plan helps earn his manager and Colture co-founder and Faiyaz's manager [Ty Baisden](#) the title of *Billboard's* Executive of the Week.

Here, Baisden explains that seven-year plan and how the team methodically cultivated a fan base for the singer, the album's big debut even without a breakout single or viral marketing and where everything could go from here. "We are zeroed in on breaking the perceived glass ceilings around being independent," Baisden says. "What is about to happen now is that all eyes will be on all platforms that support major label artists more than independent artists. The support needs to reflect the market. We hope to be the seed that has been planted to prove that you can compete outside of the system."

**This week, Brent Faiyaz's album *Wasteland* debuted at No. 1 on Top R&B/Hip-Hop albums**

(continued)

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**► IN BRIEF****and No. 2 on the Billboard 200. What key decisions did you make to help make that happen?**

We worked hard for seven years building a fan base and culture around Brent. We took the time to learn and ask the right questions. After not having a project from him in two and a half years, we knew his fans would explode. One big decision for this project was release date. We originally were set on June 24, but got word that we could get more support on July 8 and that there weren't any other big artists releasing that day. It also gave us more lead time for marketing.

I internally projected that we would do 75,000 units based off of forecasting from past streams and projections. I also researched how the top five album sales were performing for debuts on Billboard 200, then matched it to our projections. We made the final decision and started working towards that date. Then, we loaded our bets with all existing partners we have on the marketing end — not to mention the music is Fye!

The seven years prior leading up to this album is important to mention because having those years of resistance, learning and growth, we keyed in, allowing us to handcraft a long-term plan that we hope will continue to work release after release for us moving forward. Lastly, we aligned strong strategic marketing partnerships

with Venice, Stem and Graduation. This was the launch of the plan. We still have nine more months of activations and campaigning toward our Grammy year baby!

**You put this album out independently through your Lost Kids label, with distribution by Venice and Stem. Why did you decide to go that way? And what support did they provide?**

I wanted to use this moment to showcase that — when done properly with the right team — two indie distro companies can partner to help grow the indie sector of the music industry. I feel that more independent distribution companies should partner more on artists. We all are aiming to turn the ship to make the market share tip toward independent companies that aren't owned by majors. Stem is flawless when it comes to making sure that our collaborators get paid on time and that is very important to us. Venice has always been a long-term partner for us, but with this project they came in to help with strategy around high-level marketing opportunities.

**What does that independence allow you and Brent to do that you wouldn't be able to do otherwise?**

Be innovative with how we want to use our intellectual property in the market. It allows us to be open to partner with *any* company. We control the yes or no, so we can get as creative and be as flexible as we want.

**You also made this huge debut without****a major viral single, which even the biggest pop stars in the world aim for before releasing their albums. How did you set this album up to maximize its impact in its first week?**

Historically, it has been about a song with big artists. But truthfully, with Brent, it is about a deep relationship with his fan base and the culture built around him. His albums will always do better than his singles because we are storytellers. Everyone loves to hear a great story.

**It's been two years and a pandemic since his last project, *F–k The World*. How has the industry changed and how have you adapted to that?**

The industry didn't change. Really, what the fans wanted changed. We know what that is, but the rest of the industry has to figure it out for themselves.

**Where do you go from here with Brent to build on this success?**

We are zeroed in on breaking the perceived glass ceilings around being independent. What is about to happen now is that all eyes will be on all platforms that support major label artists more than independent artists. The support needs to reflect the market. We hope to be the seed that has been planted to prove that you can compete outside of the system. **b**

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## 2022 MUSIC INNOVATION

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For the first time ever, Billboard is publishing its inaugural Music Innovation Issue on August 6th. The issue will explore the seismic shifts in innovation and technology that keep the music industry unsettled yet cutting-edge.

The issue will also be distributed at the 4th Annual Music Tectonics Conference on October 25-27 in Santa Monica! Please contact your Billboard rep to learn more about this exciting opportunity.

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## ► IN BRIEF

## For the Record: Who's Afraid of User-Centric Royalties?

BY ROBERT LEVINE

**I**n the music business, it is the best of times and the worst of times. Overall, it is the season of light – in 2021, U.S. recorded music revenues increased 23% to \$15 billion, the sixth year in a row of growth driven by subscription streaming. For many creators and some entire genres, however, it is the winter of despair: Per-stream payouts are getting lower, publishers and songwriters are constrained by regulations and receive a small share of revenue, and many independent artists are struggling.

All of these things are true partly because streaming hasn't just changed the size of the recorded music revenue pie – it has radically changed how it's sliced. Streaming royalties are distributed on a pro-rata basis, meaning overall revenue is divided based on the total popularity of tracks. That means consumers who spend more hours listening matter more when it comes to revenue – and the artists they like benefit accordingly. That arguably disadvantages other creators

and fuels at least some of the problems with streaming: Modestly successful artists aren't seeing their per-stream royalties add up partly because the biggest hits account for more of the business than ever – and part of the reason they do is because of the way revenue gets divided.

Over the past few years there has been more talk about the so-called user-centric model, which involves dividing the revenue generated by individual subscribers according to what they listen to. Now SoundCloud, which began using this system last year for some independent artists, has announced a similar deal with Warner Music Group. (SoundCloud refers to this system as "fan-powered royalties," which sounds cool, but none of these systems are fueled by people who don't like music.) The immediate effect will be small, since SoundCloud doesn't have that much market share. But Deezer has already advocated for this model, and its use will fuel the debate about how fair streaming is.

So far, the big streaming services and the two biggest majors have either said or hinted that they're fine with either system, sometimes because their revenue and payouts won't change much, and they'd be happy to make a change if artists and other stakeholders agree. But the idea that label revenue and payouts wouldn't change much obscures how this could shift the fortunes of artists – and saying you're willing to make a

change once everyone in the music business comes to a consensus on an issue is basically saying it's going to happen on the 1st of Neverary.

It's hard to tell just how much of a change user-centric royalties would represent. A French study found that royalties for the top 10 artists dropped 17.2%, while increases for others didn't rise more than 5.2% – which didn't add up to much. A Midia report on SoundCloud's system found that 56% of the acts who used the system were better off, but those numbers could change if major label acts joined in. It would certainly favor the kinds of acts that labels used to call album artists – more serious, more established, and probably of more interest to an older audience.

So far, most of the arguments about user-centric royalties relate to fairness – how a different system would better reward middle-class artists, or how the current one would be fairer to superstars. But the music business was never set up to be fair, and a change like this in royalty distribution wouldn't alter that. So it might be more interesting to consider how the user-centric system would change labels' incentives to sign different kinds of acts.

Right now, the majors focus on acts that they think will be broadly popular among consumers who spend a lot of time listening to music, like Drake and The Weeknd. They're less interested in acts that might

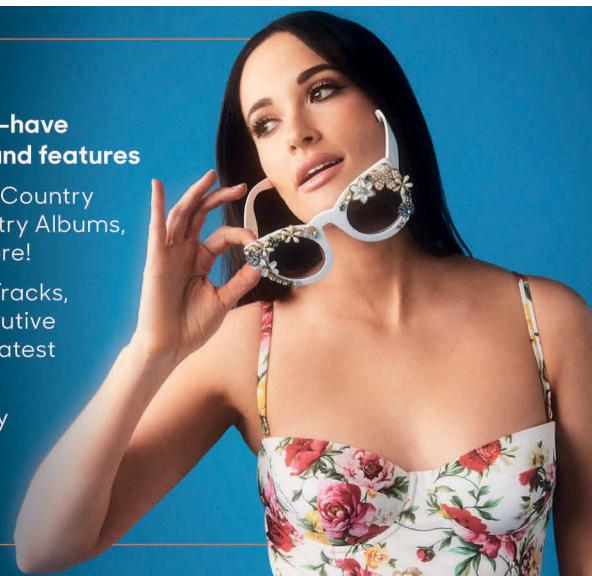
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Gloria Trevi celebrates her 35th Anniversary with her Isla Divina World Tour 2022 in the U.S. and Mexico. Join us in congratulating Gloria Trevi on her achievement.

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**► IN BRIEF**

appeal to smaller numbers of dedicated fans, including rock bands. This can make fans emotional, but it's not a moral issue so much as a possible sign of short-sightedness:

**Fleetwood Mac** wouldn't be doing so well if a whole lot of people didn't like that kind of music. And the most compelling argument for a user-centric system could be that it would incentivize the kind of investment in A&R and marketing that tends to pay off over the long term – for labels and acts of all sizes. It's worth remembering that Fleetwood Mac's big breakthrough album, the one before *Rumours*, was the band's 11th.

It's possible that user-centric streaming won't work – that it won't change royalty flows enough to be worth the cost of setting it up. OK. But the only way to know is to let some services try it, while others stick with the current system. Some superstars won't like the user-centric system, and it's completely possible that they'll try to stop services from using it. (It's also possible that some big labels will fight it, in order to keep their superstars happy.) But the best thing for the streaming business is competition – among labels and services, but also among business models. Right now, Spotify and Apple Music offer fairly similar products that pay rightsholders in fairly similar ways. That could be the best way to set up the future of the music business – but the business wouldn't have them in the first place if it wasn't willing to experiment.

*For the Record* is a weekly column from deputy editorial director Robert Levine analyzing news and trends in the music industry.

Find more [here](#). ▶

## Top Bruce Springsteen Ticket Prices Fueled Rage, But the Average Cost Wasn't So High

BY DAVE BROOKS, STEVE KNOPPER

**B**ruce Springsteen fans had a rough introduction to the world of dynamic ticket pricing Wednesday (July 20), as many logged into Ticketmaster's Verified Fan platform to buy tickets for his upcoming tour with the E Street Band and experienced sticker shock at the cost of the best seats.

Those prices – which climbed into the thousands of dollars, as widely reported – represented about 1 percent of the tickets listed on the Ticketmaster Verified Fan sale, but they became a sore point for fans who felt that they no longer had a shot at great seats after years of loyalty to the Boss.

By selling high-priced platinum tickets, Ticketmaster argues, the company can prevent the best seats from being bought and resold by scalpers. That money can instead go to Springsteen. However, this only works when the tickets cost enough to prevent scalpers from making a profit.

Sources tell *Billboard* that early numbers show that less than 10 percent of tickets sold for the five concerts that went on sale Wednesday ended up on the secondary market – lower than average – and that despite complaints about four-figure prices, only 1 percent of tickets were above \$1,000.

For Springsteen's 2023 U.S. tour, the mean average price for most tickets was \$213, sources close to the sale tell *Billboard*. That's a 33 percent increase from the 2016 tour, where tickets were an average of \$159 a piece when factoring in inflation. If the much higher-priced Platinum seats are factored in, however, the average price rises to \$265 per ticket. That's less than the price

for Springsteen's Broadway run, which averaged \$424 a ticket, according to Billboard Boxscore.

Despite some outrage over prices, fans bought up the 75,000 to 80,000 tickets on sale Wednesday for concerts in Florida, Oklahoma and Colorado. Based on the ticket price, Springsteen stands to earn about \$4 million per show – and as much as \$120 million for the U.S. leg of the tour.

Some of the anger comes from the fact that Springsteen was known for setting fan-friendly ticket prices. In a 2009 letter, after Ticketmaster redirected buyers without permission to its own resale site, TicketsNow, Springsteen took umbrage, telling fans: "We perceive this as a pure conflict of interest. Ticketmaster is there to ensure that we have a good, fair sale of our tickets at their face value plus normal ticketing charges." Then-Ticketmaster CEO Irving Azoff responded [with an open letter of apology](#) to Springsteen and his team, and the company later reached a settlement with the New Jersey Attorney General in which it agreed to stop linking customers to TicketsNow for at least one year.

For years Springsteen fans have said they felt that they always had a shot at buying front-row tickets for less than \$200, but over the years it became almost impossible to compete with the increasingly sophisticated operations of scalpers, which deploy bots and code to buy up the best tickets in seconds. As a result, Ticketmaster, which itself operates one of the world's largest resale marketplaces, has advised artists to raise the price of seats that would be most appealing to the secondary market.

A source close to the situation tells *Billboard* that Springsteen is likely to address the controversy in the coming days. "He's not defensive about it," they said. ▶

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# CLEOPATRA RECORDS

2022

## CLEOPATRA RECORDS 30TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

One of the largest and longest lasting independent record labels in existence, Cleopatra Records, are celebrating their 30th anniversary this year. What began in 1992 as a small operation out of the garage of founder Brian Perera has since grown into a family of labels representing one of the most diverse catalogs that encompasses a variety of genres with an emphasis on unique and experimental artists. In a time when most small record labels either die out or get bought by a major, Cleopatra Records has managed to survive and thrive as a privately owned entity deftly navigating the seismic shifts in the industry that have caused so many labels to founder. Please join us in celebrating this monumental milestone.

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# Resilient in Pandemic, Tomorrowland Roars Back to Life Action in Belgium

BY ALEXEI BARRIONUEVO

**B**OOM, Belgium — When **Michiel Beers** and his brother **Manu Beers** set out to create Belgium's first dedicated electronic music festival in 2005, it was supposed to be called Mysteryland.

But after the Beers printed thousands of flyers and posters advertising the name, **Duncan Stutterheim**, their partner and founder of Dutch festival brand ID&T, called up Michiel Beers to say he had changed his mind — he wanted to preserve “Mysteryland” for the Netherlands. Then another obstacle arose: Their featured headliner, **Tiesto**, the most popular DJ in the region, pulled out late in favor of a pop-rock festival about a half-hour away.

Stunned and reeling, the Beers carried on, reprinting their materials and mounting a one-day festival for 8,700 people that year featuring **Sven Väth**, **Ferry Corsten** and a young **Armin van Buuren**. They named it Tomorrowland, a nod to Mysteryland’s motto: “Yesterday is history; Today is a gift; Tomorrow is a mystery.”

Some 15 years later, that resilient spirit helped Europe’s most iconic dance music festival find ways to pivot during the global pandemic and chart a future as a more-diversified company. Unlike most dance music festival companies, Tomorrowland kept its staff of 160 fully employed during the pandemic, which helped it mount a groundbreaking **pay-per-view virtual stream**, develop a fiction book division and launch a Tomorrowland Music record label.

Today (July 22), the festival begins the second of its historic three-weekend run, aimed at recouping some of the 25 million euros (\$25.6 million) it lost from 2020-2021.

The longer festival means this year a record 600,000 people are attending Tomorrowland — including 10,000 Americans, a higher-than-normal number, the organizers say. More than 800 artists are performing on 16 stages, ranging from EDM stalwarts

**Martin Garrix**, **Marshmello** and **Alok**, to techno powerhouse **Paul Kalkbrenner**, to deep house producer **Lost Frequencies**.

In the spirit of solidarity, Beers successfully appealed to Tomorrowland’s headliners to discount their 2019-level fees by 10%. It wasn’t a tough sell, say a handful of headliners *Billboard* spoke to. “We’re all sticking together, because basically we’re kind of lost without each other in this game,” says Danish techno DJ **Kölsch**.

The extra weekend and lower artist fees won’t be enough, however, to make the company profitable again, Michiel Beers tells *Billboard*. “It’s an important part of a solution of being healthy again,” he says. “Does it cover a two-year loss? No.”

The festival’s last two weekends have been sold out for two years. This year, they sold all 200,000 tickets for a third weekend (July 14-17) — priced 5% higher at 114.50 euros per day or 310 euro for the weekend, to help compensate for high inflation in Europe — but it is a one-off, Beers says. The festival negotiated a 10-point plan with the towns of Boom and Rumst where Tomorrowland takes place atop the De Schorre park, which include it reverting to its normal two weekends starting next year.

As *Billboard* saw firsthand on weekend one, Tomorrowland is back in a big way. The sprawling festival footprint this year winds around a lake in the park and across footbridges, and meanders into enclaves in the forest and a grassy hill rising up from the mainstage. It features a Core stage, with an Indigenous-like head with his eyes closed looming overhead, and a new chillout Mesa Garden, serving upscale wine and food — which has plenty of space to dance.

The mammoth white mainstage resembled a set from *Star Wars* — or as Kölsch remarked, maybe the Ivory Tower in *The Neverending Story* — with helmeted robot-like figures trimmed in gold and donning colored sunglasses marching along a top lip during key moments at dusk and after the

night had ended. Kalkbrenner held court on Sunday inside the cavernous Freedom stage, which projected his convulsed face in black and white on giant screens in between images of his fingers working the dials of his massive mixer board.

The international crowd, representing more than 200 nationalities, reveled in the blazing heat, as record temperatures washed across Europe late last weekend.

Apart from that first, challenging event in 2005, the Beers faced other challenges — including two earlier Antwerp festivals that went bankrupt, and a struggle to disentangle from ID&T. (The latter festival brand was absorbed in 2013 by SFX Entertainment, the U.S. company that went public after gobbling up various EDM properties, only to implode and **declare bankruptcy** itself three years later.)

The festival continued to grow in size every year, buoyed by the EDM boom of the 2010s, when it briefly expanded to São Paulo, Brazil — and to Atlanta, where a steady rain in 2015 stranded thousands of festivalgoers in the muddy forest. But after being forced to shut down in 2020 due to COVID-19 outbreaks, the situation went from bad to dire last year, when the local mayors denied a use permit for the festival, citing an uptick in virus cases. “That was a kick in the stomach,” says **Debby Wilmsen**, the festival’s spokesperson.

Despite the company’s financial struggles, Beers says he never considered selling out to a competitor or any other company — and wasn’t approached with any serious offers. “We’re still a little bit of a Switzerland that gets along with everybody,” he says. (As *Billboard* reported in November, **Pasquale Rotella**, CEO of Live Nation-backed Insomniac, said he was on the hunt for festival properties to acquire opportunistically.)

While other festivals have their diehard admirers, artists long associated with Tomorrowland point to the founders’ dedication to independence and a family atmosphere. “This festival is special because the people that run it are unicorns,” says **Miriam Nervo**, who along with sister **Olivia Nervo** performs as **Nervo**, an act Tomorrowland supported early in their careers. “It’s a positive family community, and

SPECIAL ISSUE  
SEPTEMBER 17

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**► IN BRIEF**

we haven't felt that with other festivals."

Tomorrowland is also known for consistently promoting female producers and DJs, Nervo says, noting that techno DJ **Charlotte de Witte** is closing out the "The Reflection of Love" mainstage on Saturday, July 30 — the first female act in the festival's history to do that.

For attendees, the festival goes further than most in providing an immersive experience, especially for those staying in DreamVille. Atop fields normally used for planting corn, 38,000 fans camp across two sites in Rumst peppered with amenities like an outdoor Venice Beach, Calif.-style muscle beach gym, yoga classes, a supermarket, bakery, swimming pool and hot tub, two hair salons and a special stage for The Gathering, DreamVille's exclusive pre-party each Thursday night. Upscale cabins even have electricity. (Five-day DreamVille packages range from 390 euros to 2,078 euros.)

"This has been a bucket list item ever since I saw **the aftermovie from 2012**," James Mather, from San Pedro, Calif., said Saturday while sitting outside his tent with his girlfriend Zina D'orio. "We finally made it happen 10 years later, even after all the Covid craziness."

Attendees talk about Tomorrowland with a reverence that evokes comparisons to loyal Burning Man attendees. "At first, I was a little bit skeptical about the whole thing because it had sort of a cult kind of vibe to it," says Kölsch. But after one of the artistic directors gave him a tour of the stages, "I noticed all the details – the lamp posts, trashcans, everything is specifically designed for this experience... You start to appreciate that it's actually a festival made by festivalgoers for festivalgoers."

#### **Building Out the Tomorrowland Universe**

In "the atelier" near Antwerp where the company is based, dozens of designers and technicians are toiling away at building out a multi-platform future for the festival company that will leverage its IP into potential book, movie and VR franchises.

Over the past three years, Beers has overseen the creation of an over 500-page "fantasy novel" set in the universe designed for festivalgoers, which will include dragons

but not DJs, he says. He's hoping Hollywood will be interested in the book, which is authored by a writer who specializes in the fantasy genre and is part of a planned trilogy.

In June, Tomorrowland signed with literary agency Janklow & Nesbit, and with **Jason Richman**, the co-head of Media Rights at UTA, to try to sell the books as possible movie or TV properties. "Most projects have a book and then they have a theme park at the end," Beers says. "We started with the theme park somehow and went backwards. It's a project we're very passionate about and we had time for in pandemic. We planted those seeds and let's see what comes out."

The **Tomorrowland Around the World** editions that the company experimented with during pandemic — where DJs recorded sets in green screen rooms later painted with digital backgrounds — are also likely to continue in 2023, Beers says. "It's difficult to just throw it away, because we feel we're sitting on something beautiful," he says. "But if we do it again, it can't be a replacement for a real festival in a pandemic. Maybe it's more heading towards an enormous promotional tool where you can also bring people into your world and maybe the world gets bigger with the fiction [novels]... Maybe things start connecting."

Seeking to expand its ecosystem even further, the company launched a joint-venture label during pandemic with Universal Music Group's Virgin Records. With a staff of three full-timers, Tomorrowland Music already has released tracks with **Afrojack & Chico Rose, Quintino** and others. "It's really a long list of artists we're releasing with," Beers says, "and we use those tracks in the aftermovie," which previously didn't generate royalties for Tomorrowland.

#### **A Pandemic Reinvention**

While Beers and his team searched for new creative outlets during the shutdown, DJs strongly associated with the festival also worked to pivot.

**Dimitri Thivaios** and **Michael Thivaios**, the Belgian-Greek brothers known as **Dimitri Vegas & Like Mike** who grew up close by the festival, explored options outside of being performing DJs.

The duo's connection to the festival dates back some 14 years. In 2008, Dimitri, while a struggling DJ, worked backstage at Tomorrowland as a sound technician, setting up DJs' CD-J players (he was fired for putting demos in the bags of headliners like **David Guetta**). Beers approached them in 2009 wanting to manage them and to cast them as "the Belgian face of the festival," Dimitri says. He has managed them ever since. The duo wrote the anthem for the 2010 Tomorrowland, "Tomorrowland (Give in to the Night)," their first big hit in Europe.

During the pandemic, Dimitri finished writing a comic-book series and continued to pursue his acting career. He did a bit part as a Maltese smuggler in the blockbuster *Jurassic World Dominion*, and has a leading role as a sports car-driving gambler trying to save his daughter in the film *H4Z4RD*, which is being released in Belgium this week. Meanwhile, his brother Mike made a hip hop album, and says he designed and built two houses. Together they invested in real estate and in tech startups, including a blockchain company.

Nervo, who began performing at Tomorrowland a dozen years ago, found time to raise their first baby daughters, who were born just before the pandemic exploded. (The famously close twins got pregnant at the same time.) Now, in recent weeks their touring "has gone from zero to hero," Miriam says, with the duo scheduled to do 70 shows over the course of the summer.

Kölsch, who had been pondering hanging up the headphones, found the recharge he needed. "I've come to realize that I'm a pretty introverted person, so I find it very hard being surrounded by people 24 hours a day," says the Danish DJ, who has been playing Tomorrowland since 2016. "And doing that 150 times a year became too much for me. But then after a while [during pandemic], I came to realize that I love music. I live for the music."

And there was sorrow.

Last year the Thivaios' father died on their mother's birthday, and Mike's partner lost their unborn daughter. Beers organized their father's funeral. Like Mike told the mainstage audience on Saturday that they buried him in the valley just a few hundred



ON SALE

SEPT. 17, 2022

2022

# NEW & RENOVATED VENUES

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On September 17th *Billboard* will provide readers with an exclusive backstage pass into the newest and most recently renovated venues around the world. This special feature will assess the architecture, production capabilities, sound, capacity level, fan amenities, and more that entice talent to these highly anticipated venues.

**Take this opportunity to advertise your venue and reach key touring industry decision-makers as they plan tour schedules and map out must-play venues.**

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feet in front of where the stage is. (The audience lit up their phones in a vigil as the duo played their own cover of [Coldplay's "The Scientist."](#)) On Wednesday, Beers also held a screening for Dimitri Vegas' film at the Freedom stage, a first-ever movie premiere at Tomorrowland.

After Tiësto's seeming rejection the first year, Beers soon patched it up with the Dutch legend. He has since played numerous Tomorrowland editions and is headlining on Saturday and next Friday, July 29.

Recalling the disappointments of the first festival, Beers says he dodged a "Mystery-land Belgium" bullet.

"Afterwards, I thought it was probably one of the best [phone] calls we ever got," he says, "because we were able to do our own thing and put all our love and passion and energy, with little steps, into the festival, and really make it something of our own." □

## Epidemic Sound Sues Meta For \$142M, Says Instagram and Facebook Stole Hundreds Of Songs

BY BILL DONAHUE

**M**eta Platforms Inc. is facing a lawsuit that claims its Facebook and Instagram platforms "intentionally and brazenly" stole hundreds of songs from Swedish production music label Epidemic Sound, encouraging their users to upload more than 50,000 infringing videos every day.

Repped by attorneys at the top music law firm Pryor Cashman, Epidemic says the social media giant is offering nearly 1,000 of the label's songs through its "Music Library" for users to add to their video uploads, but that Meta has refused to secure copyright li-

censes for that music — and has ignored the company's repeated demands that it do so.

"Perhaps Meta is hoping to get away with it for as long as possible," Epidemic's lawyers wrote in a complaint filed Wednesday (July 20) in San Francisco federal court. "Perhaps Meta is hoping that it will intimidate a company like Epidemic into bowing to Meta rather than incurring the disruption and expense of a lawsuit. Meta is wrong."

Epidemic says it will seek at least \$142 million in damages, since it is entitled to \$150,000 in damages for every song infringed. A spokesperson for Meta did not immediately return a request for comment on Friday.

Platforms like TikTok, Instagram and Snapchat typically secure sweeping licenses with major music companies, enabling their users to pick from a robust list of fully-licensed music without the risk of copyright infringement.

But Epidemic, which offers a catalog of so-called production music for use in videos, podcasts and other content, says Meta simply never sought such a license for its tunes before incorporating them into the library. The result, it says, has been infringement on a massive scale.

"As a result of Meta's actions, Epidemic's music is available across millions of videos and have been viewed billions of times," the company wrote. "Approximately 50,000 infringing videos and 30,000 new uploads containing Epidemic's music are uploaded to Facebook and Instagram, respectively, on a daily basis."

Under the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, platforms like YouTube are shielded from direct legal liability when a user uploads content that contains infringing music, so long as the site takes swift action to remove the video when alerted. But Epidemic says those rules don't apply, since Meta is directly providing the music to its users.

"These infringing uses are not merely users posting infringing works that Meta has failed to take down," Epidemic's lawyers wrote. "This case is about Meta itself actively and directly infringing Epidemic's works by storing them in its online music library and then making a curated selection of Epidemic's works available across its platforms."

Epidemic says it reached out on more than a dozen occasions to alert Meta to the problem, but was rebuffed. It also says it was refused access to anti-piracy tools provided to other rights holders. □

## CNCO Is Breaking Up After Nearly 7 Years: 'We're Ready to Try New Things'

BY JESSICA ROIZ

**C**NCO announced at the 2022 Premios Juventud on Thursday (July 21) they are disbanding after nearly seven years as a group. The news came as a surprise to many, including their fans, since the announcement comes a bit over a year after Joel Pimentel shared his departure from the boy band on May 9, 2021.

*Billboard* was able to catch up with the remaining CNCO members, Christopher Velez, Erick Brian Colon, Richard Camacho, and Zabdiel de Jesus just a day before they would break the news at the awards show. "We are feeling nervous but at the same time, we feel excited, anxious," Colon exclusively tells *Billboard*. Adding that the decision to split was amicable.

"We always thought that if we split, it had to be natural, and that's how it happened," De Jesus elaborates. "We've lived many things together, and grew together in this industry, and we're ready to try new things to expand our careers. We're very excited."

The [Latin](#) boy band, which formed in December 2015 after winning the Univision competition show *La Banda*, is behind multiple *Billboard* hits including "Reggaeton Lento," "Hey DJ," and "Se Vuelve Loca." Three of their albums have hit No. 1 on the Latin Pop Albums chart, including *Primera Cita*, which spent eight weeks at the top in 2016. They have nabbed seven *Billboard* Latin Music Awards, including the new artist of the year in 2017.

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OCTOBER  
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# TOP LATIN POWER PLAYERS

On October 17th, *Billboard* will profile the most influential people in Latin music, from record label executives, music publishers and management companies to radio and television stations and live entertainment

Join *Billboard* in congratulating this year's Latin Power Players.

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\*Editorial content subject to change.

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But after a successful run that spanned short of a decade, the boys are parting ways.

"It hurts us because it's a big step in our lives that's going to lead us to our solo careers but exciting at the same time because we're willing to experiment and try to find our own sound and individuality," Velez notes. "Just because we're splitting doesn't mean we're going to stop seeing each other, we're simply trying out new, challenging things. I know we will see each other in the way, of composing or working together. We have faith that the outcome will be great."

Although the group announced its split, CNCO will continue for another year and a half, promising more new music, an album, a tour, and their upcoming series on Disney+.

"CNCO opened the doors for us in the industry and now we have more opportunities to keep writing and meet other people, get into the studio and create new vibes," Camacho explains. "In the end, we have a lot of love and want to make sure everyone feels part of this family because everyone contributed and without you, we're no one. This is not negative at all, it's very positive. At the end of the day, we want to grow and enjoy life. Maybe in the future, we'll come back. Who knows?"

As for their loyal fandom, the CNCO owners, Velez expresses: "They know that we love them from the beginning. Without them, this wouldn't be possible. I know they're going to follow our solo careers and support us. The love is always going to be mutual. We're going to become better artists to deliver the best music. They know we love them."

CNCO, who is signed to Sony Music Latin and managed by Walter Kolm, is currently making the rounds with their Kenia OS-assisted single "Plutón." ▀

## Twitter, Amid Elon Musk Legal Battle, Posts \$270 Million Quarterly Loss

BY ASSOCIATED PRESS

**L**ONDON (AP) — Twitter reported a quarterly loss Friday (July 22) as revenue slipped even as its number of users climbed.

The social media company's latest quarterly earnings figures offered a glimpse into how the social media business has performed during a months-long negotiation with billionaire and Tesla CEO **Elon Musk** over whether he will take over the company.

The company lost \$270 million in the April-June period after revenue slipped 1% to \$1.18 billion, reflecting advertising industry headwinds, as well as uncertainty over Musk's acquisition bid.

The number of daily active users rose 16.6% to 237.8 million compared with the same period a year before.

Twitter chalked up the gains to "ongoing product improvements and global conversation around current events."

Overshadowing Twitter's latest sales results is its legal fight with Musk to make good on his April promise to buy the company for \$44 billion. Twitter last week sued Musk to complete the deal and both sides are bracing for an October courtroom trial to resolve the dispute.

Given the pending acquisition, Twitter said it wouldn't hold its usual quarterly earnings conference call or issue a shareholder letter.

The April-June fiscal quarter encompassed a tumultuous three months for Twitter, starting with the April 4 disclosure that Musk had acquired a huge stake in the company, paving the way for his takeover bid later that month. It didn't take long for the relationship to fray as Musk publicly tweeted his concerns about Twitter and its employees and signaled he was having second thoughts.

Twitter argued in court that Musk's actions in and his "repeated disparagement of Twitter and its personnel" created uncertainty that harmed Twitter's business operations, employees and stock price.

It called for an expedited trial so the company could carry on with important business decisions, while Musk sought to wait until next year because of the complexity of the case and his demands for more of Twitter's internal data about how it counts fake and automated "spam bot" accounts — which he's cited as a chief reason for trying to terminate the deal.

A judge this week set the trial for October, siding with Twitter's concerns that too much delay could cause the company irreparable harm. It will be held in Delaware's Court of Chancery, which handles many high-profile business disputes, unless Musk and Twitter settle the case before then.

Shares slid 2% before the opening bell Friday. ▀

## Executive Turntable: Live Nation Expands Latin Team; Universal Music Canada Loses A&R SVP

BY CHRIS EGGERSEN

**L**ive Nation hired **Ricardo Taco** to lead Latin music strategy for the company's concerts division across Canada, giving him responsibility for growing Live Nation's Latin music presence in Toronto and new markets throughout the country. He will also act as the liaison between Live Nation senior vp of global touring **Hans Schafer** and the company's Latin booking team globally, help develop Latin touring shows for Canadian venues and more. Also hired to the Latin

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team was **Claudia Valencia**, who joined as a tour director out of Guadalajara, Mexico, as well as **Maritsa Restrepo**, who boarded as a ticketing coordinator in Los Angeles. Valencia will develop and implement business strategies for Live Nation Latin tours, while Restrepo will assist with tour set-ups, facilitate promotions and aid in communication between artist teams and venues while helping with various day-to-day projects.

**Kardinal Offishall** stepped down from his role as senior vp of A&R at **Universal Music Canada** to pursue other opportunities, according to a post on [his Facebook page](#). "There's something amazing I will be sharing with you soon!" Offishall wrote. "It's a dream come true for me, for my country, and for music on a whole. Next level tings."

Also at Universal Music Canada, **Trinh Tham** was appointed senior vp of revenue & digital strategy. Tham will oversee UMC's digital marketing, streaming & music strategy, data analytics and commercial affairs teams.

**AEG Global Partnerships**, a division of AEG, promoted **Kate Sheets** to senior vp of strategy and business affairs, a newly established role. Sheets, who will continue working out of AEG's Los Angeles office, was previously vp of legal counsel at the company. In her new position, Sheets will lead efforts to identify, cultivate and refine key partnerships and strategic initiatives while offering strategic counsel and insight into all major revenue growth initiatives for the division. She will also help set Global Partnerships' vision and strategy to optimize partner campaigns and content and be deeply involved in growing and advancing global deal-making strategies, new business opportunities and annual revenues.

**Create Music Group** named **Chris Herche** to the newly-created role of senior vp of music operations and marketing. Herche will oversee the music division's day-to-day operations out of Brooklyn.

Music and entertainment law firm **Rothenberg, Mohr & Binder** promoted **Kevin Eskowitz** to partner. Eskowitz's clients include [Conan Gray](#), [Gryffin](#), [JPEG-MAFIA](#), [Noname](#) and label and management company GODMODE. He has been with the firm since it launched in 2018.

The **CMA Foundation** hired music educator **Franklin Willis** as its community impact director. In the newly-created role, Willis will further the foundation's commitment to fostering music education programs across the U.S. and guide it toward "more tactical and impactful opportunities to leverage the power of music to raise up the next generation of leaders," according to a press release. Willis will work closely with teachers, students, policymakers, nonprofit partners and other stakeholders to broaden outreach, increase involvement and foster connection while developing and implementing all CMA Foundation events. He can be reached at [fwillis@cmaworld.com](mailto:fwillis@cmaworld.com) starting on Aug. 8.

**Matt Rowsell** was hired as artist manager at **YMU** out of London. His management clients past and present include We Are The Ocean, Eliza and the Bear and Lauren Hibberd.

Entertainment attorneys **Matt Cottingham** and **Austin Wells** joined **Lewis Brisbois**' Nashville office as partner and associate, respectively, in the firm's entertainment, media & sports practice. The two bring music clients including Britney Spencer, Lily Rose, Ashley Cooke, Chris LaCorte and Matt Roy to the firm. Cottingham can be reached at [Matt.Cottingham@lewisbrisbois.com](mailto:Matt.Cottingham@lewisbrisbois.com) and Wells can be reached at Austin. [Wells@lewisbrisbois.com](mailto:Wells@lewisbrisbois.com).

**The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences** promoted **Jenny Galante** to executive vp of revenue and business development. Previously senior vp of business development, Galante will be tasked with driving global revenue growth for the Academy across platforms, including special events, Academy member initiatives, international programs, digital platforms, the Academy Screening Room, talent development and inclusion programs, as well as the Academy Museum, Margaret Herrick Library, Science and Technology Council and Academy Film Archive. She will additionally continue to oversee the organization's strategic brand partnerships and lead the development of integrated marketing opportunities for Oscars sponsors and advertisers.

Equity-centric venture fund **Impellent Ventures**, led by **David Brown** and **Philip**

**Beauregard**, appointed **The Roots** co-founder **Tariq "Black Thought" Trotter** as general partner. The fund will allocate investments in multiple sectors including AI, healthcare technology, robotics, consumer goods and apps.

**The Polish Society of Authors and Composers (ZAiKS)** elected publishing representatives to the Board and Audit Committee for the first time. Those elected were Schubert Music Publishing's **Marta Zgrzywa** and Rebel Publishing's **Damian Słonina**. Meanwhile, ABKCO Music International's **Magdalena Cuprzyńska** will sit as the publisher member on the ZAiKS Audit Committee. The landmark moment arrived after a two-decade campaign led by the Polish PSWM (Music Publishing Association), including Schubert Music's **Andreas Schubert**, Golba Music's **Paulina Golba**, **Anna Laskowska** of Sony/ATV and with the support of several individual publishers internationally alongside the advocacy of CISAC and IMPF. Prior to this, music publishers had a representation agreement with ZAiKS but were not full members.

PR firm **Shore Fire Media** promoted both **Andrea Evenson** and **Max Lefkowitz** to director of publicity; both were previously senior account executives.

**Content Partners**, an independent owner of major studio-distributed films, television shows, and related participations including Revolution Studios and the **CSI** TV franchise, hired **Rob Amir** to join the team in Los Angeles. In his new role, Amir will be responsible for augmenting the company's sourcing of new film, television, music and other entertainment intellectual property assets. ▀

## ► IN BRIEF

# Australia's Splendour in the Grass Cancels Day 1 Due to 'Significant Weather System'

BY LARS BRANDLE

**B**RISBANE, Australia — After two editions were wiped out by the pandemic, the first day Splendour in the Grass 2022 was sunk by Mother Nature.

Inclement weather turned the site into a quagmire on the eve of this year's show, held July 22-24 in Byron Bay, the picturesque beach town at the most easterly point of Australia.

By midday on Friday (July 22), the grounds were deemed to be unmanageable.

"In the interest of patrol safety and in consultation with all relevant emergency services," reads a statement from Splendour organizers, "we have decided to err on the side of caution and cancel all performances on the main stages today only."

The reason: a "significant weather system" currently sitting off the country's east coast which "may reach land later today, bringing more rainfall."

The situation is a blow for the estimated 50,000 festival fans already on site or en route to the event, a sell-out weeks in advance and the first since 2019.

Those who hadn't arrived were asked not to enter the grounds Friday while staff work on repairs.

Splendour crew will be kept busy. Clips and images doing the rounds on social media show a site inundated with water and mud.

This year's show at [North Byron Park-lands](#) is headlined by internationals Gorillaz, the Strokes, Tyler, The Creator, Liam Gallagher, Glass Animals, and a lineup of local talent including The Avalanches, Violent

Soho, DMA'S, Amyl And The Sniffers and many more.

Since its first edition back in 2001, the mid-winter fest has hosted a who's who of rock, pop, hip-hop and electronic stars, from Coldplay to Arctic Monkeys, Kanye West, Tame Impala, Lorde and many more.

Its recent history, however, has been riddled with problems, none of which could be foreseen.

The pandemic crushed the best-laid plans for the 2020 show, and, with more than half Australia's population then under lockdown, a late July 2021 event was nixed. Instead, organizers hatched a bold plan for a [bespoke VR experience](#), featuring some 50 exclusive performances.

Splendour, one of the biggest music festivals Down Under, is produced by Secret Sounds Group, part of Live Nation since 2016. ■

## 2022 Premios Juventud Winners: Complete List

BY GRISELDA FLORES

**T**he 19th annual Premios Juventud ceremony was held Thursday (July 21) for the first time ever in San Juan, Puerto Rico, where Latin music artists were awarded in categories such as viral track of the year, album of the year and best OMG collaboration.

The night's biggest winner was [Karol G](#) who home nine awards, followed by [Grupo Firme](#) with four awards. [Becky G](#), [Evaluna Montaner](#), [Tiësto](#), [Ángela Aguilar](#), [J Balvin](#), and [Farruko](#) each received two awards.

The night was powered by performances by [Prince Royce](#), [Daddy Yankee](#), [CNCO](#) – who surprised fans announcing they were breaking up – [Danna Paola](#) and Balvin, who closed the 19th annual PJs with a medley of his biggest hits such as "6AM," "Reggaeton" and "Ay Vamos."

There were also a number of tributes throughout the ceremony with [Wisin & Yandel](#), [Kany García](#) and [Jenni Rivera](#)

being honored by fellow artists and later awarded with the Agent of Change Award. Balvin also received the special award and teamed up with Premios Juventud to launch a \$25,000 Agent of Change Grant that recognizes individuals or entities who are committed to driving positive change in the community, and the world.

This year, 10 new categories have been added: female artist – on the rise, male artist – on the rise, my favorite actor, my favorite actress, best onscreen couple, my favorite streaming artist, best couple song, tropical hit, the best beatmakers, and best fandom. For Premios Juventud, the winners are determined by fan votes.

Held at the Coliseo Jose Miguel Agrelot and televised live on Univision, the awards were co-hosted by bachata crooner [Prince Royce](#), [Grupo Firme](#)'s Edwin Caz, Mexican pop star [Danna Paola](#), and television personality Clarissa Molina.

See the complete list of winners below:

### Viral Track of the Year

"Envolver Remix" – Anitta & Justin Quiles  
"Índigo" – Camilo & Evaluna Montaner  
"Mamii" – Becky G & Karol G  
"Medallo" – Blessd, Justin Quiles & Lenny Távarez

### "Pepas" – Farruko – WINNER

"Poblado Remix" – J Balvin, Karol G & Nicky Jam Feat. Crissin, Totoy El Frio & Natan Y Shander  
"Qué Más Pues?" – J Balvin & Maria Becerra  
"Sobrío" – Maluma  
"Todo De Ti" – Rauw Alejandro  
"Yonaguni" – Bad Bunny

### The New Generation – Female

Bad Gyal  
Corina Smith

### Evaluna Montaner – WINNER

Ingratax  
Kim Loaiza  
La Gabi  
Las Villa  
Lola Indigo  
Ptazeta  
Tokischa

### The New Generation – Male

Alejo  
Blessd  
Boza  
Duki

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Lit Killah  
Luis Vazquez  
Ovi  
Robi

**Ryan Castro – WINNER**

Tiago Pzk

**The New Generation – Regional Mexican**

can

Dannylux  
Gera Mx  
Ivan Cornejo  
Los Del Limit  
Luis R Conriquez  
Lupita Infante  
Majo Aguilar  
Ramon Vega

**Santa Fe Klan – WINNER**

Yahritza Y Su Esencia

**Male Artist – On the Rise**

Eladio Carrión

**El Alfa – WINNER**

Feid  
Jay Wheeler  
Jhayco  
Justin Quiles  
Lenny Tavárez  
Mora  
Paulo Londra  
Sech

**Female Artist – On the Rise****Ángela Aguilar – WINNER**

Cazzu  
Emilia  
Farina  
Kali Uchis  
Maria Becerra  
Mariah Angelique  
Nathy Peluso  
Nicki Nicole  
Tini

**My Favorite Streaming Artist**

Anitta  
Bad Bunny  
Camilo  
Christian Nodal  
Daddy Yankee  
Farruko  
Grupo Firme  
J Balvin

**Karol G – WINNER**

Rauw Alejandro

**Best Song by a Couple**

“Att: Amor” – Greeicy & Mike Bahía

“Dangerous” – Nicki Nicole, Trueno & Bizarrap  
“Esto Recién Empieza” – Duki & Emilia  
**“Índigo” – Camilo & Evaluna Montaner – WINNER**  
“Si Tu Me Busca” – Anuel AA & Yailin La Mas Viral

**Best Regional Mexican Song**

“Ahí Donde Me Ven” – Ángela Aguilar  
“A La Antigüita” – Calibre 50  
“La Casita” – Banda Ms De Sergio Lizárraga  
“¿Qué Tienen Tus Palabras?” – Banda El Recodo De Cruz Lizárraga  
“Sin Miedo Al Éxito” – Banda Los Sebastianes  
“Soy Buen Amigo” – El Fantasma  
“Soy El Único” – Yahritza Y Su Esencia  
“Ya No Somos Ni Seremos” – Christian Nodal  
“Ya Solo Eres Mi Ex” – La Adictiva Banda San José De Mesillas

**“Ya Supérame (En Vivo)” – Grupo Firme – WINNER**

**Best Regional Mexican Collaboration**  
“2 Veces” – Los Plebes Del Rancho De Ariel Camacho & Christian Nodal  
“Amores Van Y Vienan” – La Nueva Estrategia & La Maquinaria Norteña  
“El Columpio” – Banda Los Sebastianes & Los Rieleros Del Norte  
“El Triste Alegre (En Vivo)” – Banda Carnaval & Calibre 50

**“En Tu Perra Vida” – Grupo Firme & Lenin Ramírez – WINNER**

“La Sinvergüenza” – Christian Nodal & Banda Ms De Sergio Lizárraga  
“Mariachi Tumbado” – Danny Felix Feat. Mariachi Vargas De Tecalitlán  
“Mariposa Traicionera” – Maná & Alejandro Fernández

“Señorita Cantinera” – Los Rieleros Del Norte Feat. Polo Urias Y Su Maquina Norteña  
“Te Encontré” – Ulises Chaidez & Eslabon Armado

**Best Regional Mexican Fusion****“Cada Quien” – Grupo Firme & Maluma – WINNER**

“Como Lo Hice Yo” – Matisse & Carin Leon  
“Ella Qué Te Dio” – Ángela Aguilar & Jesse Y Joy  
“Está Dañada Remix” – Ivan Cornejo & Jhayco

“Fino Licor” – Gerardo Ortiz Feat. Piso 21  
“Las Locuras Mías” – Omar Chaparro Feat. Joey Montana  
“Monterrey” – Guaynaa & Pain Digital  
“Otra Noche” – Los Angeles Azules & Nicki Nicole  
“Qué Bueno Es Tenerte” – Natalia Jiménez & Banda Ms De Sergio Lizárraga  
“Te Lloré Un Río” – Maná & Christian Nodal

**The Perfect Mix**

“Canción Bonita” – Carlos Vives & Ricky Martin  
**“El Incomprendido” – Farruko, Victor Cárdenas & Dj Adoni – WINNER**  
“Emojis De Corazones” – Wisin, Jhayco & Ozuna Feat. Los Legendarios  
“Fan De Tus Fotos” – Nicky Jam & Romeo Santos  
“Mojando Asientos” – Maluma Feat. Feid  
“Pareja Del Año” – Sebastián Yatra & Myke Towers  
“Se Menea” – Don Omar & Nio García  
“Una Nota” – J Balvin & Sech  
“Volví” – Aventura & Bad Bunny  
“Wow Bb” – Natti Natasha, El Alfa & Chimbalá

**Best Tropical Hit**

“Agüita E Coco” – Kany García  
“Cartas Sobre La Mesa” – Gilberto Santa Rosa  
“Cumbiana” – Carlos Vives  
“Hasta El Sol De Hoy (Versión Salsa)” – Luis Figueroa

“Lao’ A Lao” – Prince Royce  
“No Hay” – El Gran Combo De Puerto Rico  
“Pa’lla Voy” – Marc Anthony  
“Pa’ Que Me Perdones” – Héctor Acosta “El Torito”

**“Sus Huellas” – Romeo Santos – WINNER**

“Tu Fan” – Luis Vazquez

**Best Tropical Mix**

“Besos En Cualquier Horario” – Carlos Vives, Mau Y Ricky & Lucy Vives  
“Dame Una Noche” – Manny Cruz & Daniel Santacruz  
“Dios Así Lo Quiso” – Ricardo Montaner & Juan Luis Guerra 4.40  
“Háblame De Miami” – Gente De Zona & Maffio  
“La Bendición” – Farruko & Lenier  
“Lluvia Y Samba” – Elvis Crespo, Gilberto Santa Rosa & Alex Bueno

**► IN BRIEF**

“Pa’mi” – Peter Nieto & Ivy Queen  
“Señor Juez” – Ozuna & Anthony Santos  
**“Te Espero” – Prince Royce & Maria Becerra – WINNER**  
“Tú No Bailas Mas Que Yo” – Jerry Rivera  
Feat. Don Omar  
**Collaboration Omg**  
**“Don’t Be Shy” – Tiësto & Karol G – WINNER**  
**NER**  
“Kesi – Remix” – Camilo & Shawn Mendes  
“La Fama” – Rosalía Feat. The Weeknd  
“Mama Tetema” – Maluma Feat. Rayvanny  
“Nostálgico” – Rvssian, Rauw Alejandro & Chris Brown  
“Oh Na Na” – Camila Cabello, Myke Towers & Tainy  
“Santo” – Christina Aguilera & Ozuna  
“Sg” – Dj Snake, Ozuna, Megan Thee Stallion & Lisa Of Blackpink  
“Sigue” – J Balvin & Ed Sheeran  
“Tacones Rojos” – Sebastián Yatra & John Legend  
**Artist of the Youth – Male**  
**Bad Bunny – WINNER**  
Camilo  
Christian Nodal  
El Alfa  
Farruko  
J Balvin  
Maluma  
Rauw Alejandro  
Romeo Santos  
Sebastián Yatra  
**Artist of the Youth – Female**  
Ángela Aguilar  
Anitta  
Becky G  
Kali Uchis  
**Karol G – WINNER**  
Maria Becerra  
Natti Natasha  
Nicki Nicole  
Rosalía  
Sofía Reyes  
**Favorite Group or Duo of the Year**  
Calibre 50  
Cnco  
Gente De Zona  
**Grupo Firme – WINNER**  
Jesse & Joy  
Los Angeles Azules  
Maná  
Mau Y Ricky

Reik  
Wisin Y Yandel  
**Album of the Year**  
Dharma – Sebastián Yatra  
Jose – J Balvin  
**Kg0516 – Karol G – WINNER**  
La 167 – Farruko  
La Última Promesa – Justin Quiles  
Legendaddy – Daddy Yankee  
Mis Manos – Camilo  
Motomami – Rosalía  
Natividad – Natti Natasha  
Vice Versa – Rauw Alejandro  
**Regional Mexican Album of the Year**  
Alma Vacía – Ivan Cornejo  
Del Barrio Hasta Aquí, Vol. 2 – Fuerza Regida  
Esta Vida Es Muy Bonita – Banda El Recodo  
De Cruz Lizárraga  
Inédito – Carin Leon  
La Ley De La Vida – Luis Angel “El Flaco”  
**Mexicana Enamorada – Ángela Aguilar – WINNER**  
Mi Herencia, Mi Sangre – Majo Aguilar  
Mi Vida En Un Cigarro 2 – Junior H  
Vamos Bien – Calibre 50  
Ya Solo Eres Mi Ex – La Adictiva Banda San José De Mesillas  
**The Catchiest Song**  
“A La Antigüita” – Calibre 50  
“Envolver” – Anitta  
“In Da Getto” – J Balvin & Skrillex  
“Lao’ A Lao” – Prince Royce  
“Pa’lla Voy” – Marc Anthony  
“Pepas” – Farruko  
**Provenza – Karol G – WINNER**  
“Sus Huellas” – Romeo Santos  
“Todo De Ti” – Rauw Alejandro  
“Ya Supérame (En Vivo)” – Grupo Firme  
**Best Girl Power Collab**  
“24/7” – Sofía Reyes & The Change  
“Báilalo Mujer” – Flor De Rap & Denise Rosenthal  
“Hasta Los Dientes” – Camila Cabello & Maria Becerra  
“La Niña De La Escuela” – Lola Indigo, Tini & Belinda  
“Linda” – Tokischa & Rosalía  
**“Mamii” – Becky G & Karol G – WINNER**  
“Pa Mis Muchachas” – Christina Aguilera, Becky G, Nicki Nicole Feat. Nathy Peluso  
“Piketona” – Lele Pons & Kim Loaiza  
“Roce” – Paopao, La Gabi, Villano Antillano,

Aria Vega & Cami Da Baby  
“Yummy Yummy Love” – Momoland & Natti Natasha  
**The Best”Beatmakers”**  
Albert Hype  
Bizarrap  
Caleb Calloway  
Edgar Barrera  
Los Legendarios  
Mr. Naisgai  
Mvsis  
**Ovy On The Drums – WINNER**  
Sky Rompiendo  
Tainy  
**The Hottest Choreography**  
“Chicken Teriyaki” – Rosalía  
“Disciplina” – Lali  
**“Envolver” – Anitta – WINNER**  
“Todo De Ti” – Rauw Alejandro  
“Wow Bb” – Natti Natasha, El Alfa & Chimbalá  
**Video with Best Social Message**  
“Dpm (De P\*Ta Madre)” – Kany García  
“Gracias” – Pedro Capó  
“My Lova” – Farruko  
**“Niño Soñador” – J Balvin – WINNER**  
“This Is Not America” – Residente Feat. Ibeyi  
**Popular Artist or Influencer**  
Ángela Aguilar  
Danna Paola  
Domelipa  
Eduin Caz  
El Alfa  
**Karol G – WINNER**  
Karol Sevilla  
Kim Loaiza  
Lele Pons  
Luisito Comunica  
**Best Social Media Power Couple**  
Anuel AA & Yailin La Mas Viral  
**Becky G & Sebastian Lletget – WINNER**  
Emilia & Duki  
Gabriel Soto & Irina Baeva  
Juana Zurita & Macarena Achaga  
**Best Fandom**  
Ángela Aguilar – Angelitos  
Camilo – La Tribu  
Carlos Rivera – Riveristas  
**Cnco – Cncoowners – WINNER**  
Jay Wheeler – Rueditas  
Tini – Tinistas  
**Best Social Dance Challenge**

## ► IN BRIEF

“Bombón” – Daddy Yankee, El Alfa & Lil Jon  
**“Don’t Be Shy” – Tiësto & Karol G – WINNER**

“Envolver” – Anitta  
 “Fiel” – Los Legendarios, Wisin & Jhayco  
 “Fuera Del Mercado” – Danny Ocean  
 “In Da Getto” – J Balvin & Skrillex  
 “Jordan” – Ryan Castro  
 “Linda” – Tokischa & Rosalía  
 “Mon Amour Remix” – Zzoilo & Aitana  
 “Problemón” – Álvaro Díaz & Rauw Alejandro

**Trendiest Artist**

Bad Bunny  
 Danna Paola  
 Emilia  
 Goyo  
 Grupo Firme  
 J Balvin

**Karol G – WINNER**

Maluma  
 Rauw Alejandro  
 Reik

**My Favorite Actor**

Gabriel Soto – Soltero Con Hijas  
 Jesús Zavala – Búnker  
 José Ron – La Desalmada

Oscar Isaac – Moon Knight

**Sebastián Rulli – Vencer El Pasado – WINNER**

Angelique Boyer – Vencer El Pasado  
 Carolina Miranda – ¿Quién Mató A Sara?  
**Danna Paola – Elite – WINNER**  
 Macarena Achaga – Luis Miguel: The Series  
 Yalitza Aparicio – Hijas De Brujas

**Best On-Screen Couple**

**Angelique Boyer & Sebastián Rulli – Vencer El Pasado – WINNER**  
 Livia Brito & José Ron – La Desalmada  
 Maite Perroni & Alejandro Speitzer – Oscuro Deseo  
 Susana González & David Zepeda – Mi Fortuna Es Amarte  
 Úrsula Corberó & Miguel Herrán – La Casa De Papel

# These Were the 20 Most Played Tracks During Weekend One of Tomorrowland 2022

BY KATIE BAIN, GORDON MURRAY

**T**aking place in Boom, Belgium from July 15-17, globally renowned [electronic](#) festival [Tomorrowland](#) hosted roughly 200,000 fans while coming back to a live format for the first time since the pandemic. While more than 800 DJs played across 16 stages and dropped thousands of tracks spanning different electronic genres, only 20 songs had the distinction of getting more play than all the others during the first of three weekends of Tomorrowland.

Data was collected by DJ Monitor, a global leader in electronic music monitoring with exclusive access to performance data from [festivals](#), clubs, venues and online streams. [DJ Monitor](#) identifies music for Collective Management Organizations, rights users and technology companies worldwide.

Topping the list is [Eurythmics](#)’ 1983 classic “Sweet Dreams (Are Made Of This)” (while the ominous ’80s banger has gotten a few recent edits, the original was the one getting so heavily rinsed at Tomorrowland 2022.) On its tail at No. 2 is another piece of nostalgia via [Acraze](#)’s unstoppable remix of [Cherish](#)’s 2006 classic “Do It To It.” Following that is “Move Your Body,” the 2021 hit from Brazilian artists Ownboss and SEVEK.

The remainder of the list contains fresh tracks and other genre classics that audiences (and artists, apparently) never get tired of, including Shouse’s 2017 monster hit “Love Tonight,” [Sebastian Ingrosso](#), [Tommy Trash](#) and John Martin’s 2013 EDM anthem “Reload,” and, of course, [Avicii](#)’s 2011 genre defining smash “Levels.” See

the complete list below.

1. Eurythmics “Sweet Dreams (Are Made Of This)”
2. Acraze Featuring Cherish “Do It To It”
3. Ownboss & SEVEK “Move Your Body”
4. Gala “Freed From Desire”
5. Bob Sinclar Featuring Steve Edwards “World, Hold On [FISHER Rework]”
6. Shouse “Love Tonight”
7. Eli Brown “Believe”
8. The Age Of Love “The Age Of Love” (Charlotte de Witte & Enrico Sangiuliano Remix)
9. Farruko “Pepas”
10. Sebastian Ingrosso/Tommy Trash/John Martin “Reload”
11. Tiësto “Lethal Industry”
12. Anyma Featuring Meg Myers “Running”
13. Massano “The Feeling (2022 Remaster)”
14. Joel Corry & Da Hool “The Parade”
15. Zombie Nation “Kernkraft 400”
16. BURNS “Talamanca”
17. Benny Benassi Presents The Biz “Satisfaction”
18. Avicii “Levels”
19. James Hype & Miggy Dela Rosa “Ferrari”
20. Dj.Neyt “Storm And Fire Retro”

## ► IN BRIEF

# These Were The 10 Most Played Current Tracks During Weekend One of Tomorrowland 2022

BY KATIE BAIN, GORDON MURRAY

The first weekend of [Tomorrowland](#) — which took place between July 15 and July 17 in Boom, Belgium — was a barrage of sensory input that included, of course, loads of music from across eras and genres of [dance](#).

While the [top 20 songs played at the festival](#) provided a mix of fresh tracks and cross-genre classics, there were also ten more current songs — a mix of mostly techno, hard dance and electro pop — that were played more than all the others during the festival this year.

Data was collected by DJ Monitor, a global leader in electronic music monitoring with exclusive access to performance data from [festivals](#), clubs, venues and online streams. [DJ Monitor](#) identifies music for Collective Management Organizations, rights users and technology companies worldwide.

The top song on this list is the FISHER rework of Bob Sinclair and Steve Edwards' 2006 single "World, Hold On." (Aussie producer FISHER also occupies the No. 10 slot on the list with his Shermanology collab "It's a Killa.") Following "World, Hold On" at No. 2 is "Believe," the darkly hypnotic peaktime techno hit from UK producer Eli Brown. Charlotte de Witte and Enrico Sangiuliano's remix of the 1990 classic "The Age Of Love" rounds out the top three. See the complete list below.

Tomorrowland 2022 continues, with the second weekend of the festival kicking off on Friday (July 22) and a third weekend

happening July 29-31.

1. Bob Sinclair Featuring Steve Edwards ["World, Hold On \[FISHER Rework\]"](#)
2. Eli Brown ["Believe"](#)
3. The Age Of Love ["The Age Of Love" \(Charlotte de Witte & Enrico Sangiuliano Remix\)](#)
4. Anyma Featuring Meg Myers ["Running"](#)
5. Massano ["The Feeling \(2022 Remaster\)"](#)
6. Joel Corry & Da Hool ["The Parade"](#)
7. BURNS ["Talamanca"](#)
8. James Hype & Miggy Dela Rosa ["Ferrari"](#)
9. Dj.Neyt ["Storm And Fire Retro"](#)
10. FISHER & Shermanology ["It's A Killa"](#)

## Aespa Achieves First No. 1 on Top Album Sales With 'Girls'

BY KEITH CAULFIELD

**A**espa achieves its first No. 1 on [Billboard's Top Album Sales](#) chart (dated July 23), as *Girls: The 2nd Mini Album* debuts atop the tally. The effort launches with 53,000 copies sold in the U.S. in the week ending July 14, according to Luminate. It's the second top 10 for the act, after previously reaching No. 2 with *Savage* in 2021.

Also debuting in the top 10: the latest releases from [Journey](#) and [Neil Young](#) With Crazy Horse.

[Billboard's Top Album Sales](#) chart ranks the top-selling albums of the week based only on traditional album sales. The chart's history dates back to May 25, 1991, the first week *Billboard* began tabulating charts with electronically monitored piece count information from SoundScan, now Luminate. Pure album sales were the sole measurement utilized by the [Billboard 200](#) albums chart through the list dated Dec. 6, 2014, after which that chart switched to a

methodology that blends album sales with track equivalent album units and streaming equivalent album units.

For all chart news, follow @billboard and @billboardcharts on both Twitter and Instagram.

Of the 53,000 copies sold of *Girls*, physical format sales comprise 52,000 (all on CD; the album was not released on any other physical formats) and digital album sales comprise 1,000.

Like many K-pop releases, the CD configuration of *Girls* was issued in collectible deluxe packages (12 total, including an exclusive edition for Target) each with a standard set of items and randomized elements (such as photocards, stickers and a poster).

[Harry Styles'](#) former No. 1 *Harry's House* rises 4-2 with 12,000 sold (down 2%).

Journey's new album *Freedom* flies in at No. 3 on [Top Album Sales](#) with 10,000 sold. It's the band's highest-charting effort on Top Album Sales since 1996's *Trial By Fire* also debuted, and peaked, at No. 3.

Six previous chart-toppers are next up on Top Album Sales, as [Tyler, the Creator's](#) *Call Me If You Get Lost* dips 3-4 (nearly 10,000 sold; down 20%), [NAYEON's](#) *IM NAYEON: The 1st Mini Album* falls 2-5 (9,000; down 40%), The Beatles' *Abbey Road* jumps 17-6 (just over 8,000; up 94% thanks in part to sale pricing on its vinyl LP at Amazon), [TOMORROW X TOGETHER's](#) *Minisode 2: Thursday's Child* is a non-mover at No. 7 (8,000; up 5%), [Olivia Rodrigo's](#) *Sour* climbs 10-8 (7,000; up 12%) and [BTS' Proof](#) falls 5-9 (nearly 7,000; down 28%).

Rounding out the new top 10 is Neil Young With Crazy Horse's *Toast*, which starts at No. 10 with nearly 7,000 sold.

In the week ending July 14, there were 1.787 million albums sold in the U.S. (up 6.2% compared to the previous week). Of that sum, physical albums (CDs, vinyl LPs, cassettes, etc.) comprised 1.435 million (up 10.2%) and digital albums comprised 352,000 (down 7.6%).

There were 672,000 CD albums sold in the week ending July 14 (up 12.9% week-over-week) and 754,000 million vinyl albums sold (up 8.1%). Year-to-date CD album sales stand at 18.154 million (down 10.1% compared to the same time frame a year

ago) and year-to-date vinyl album sales total 20.953 million (up 1.5%).

Overall year-to-date album sales total 50.415 million (down 8% compared to the same year-to-date time frame a year ago). Year-to-date physical album sales stand at 39.281 million (down 4.2%) and digital album sales total 11.134 million (down 19.5%). □

## Snap Misses on Second Quarter Revenue, Does Not Issue Future Guidance

BY CAITLIN HUSTON,  
J. CLARA CHAN

**S**nap reported \$1.11 billion in revenue during the second quarter after the company previously warned it would miss its revenue expectations for the quarter.

The revenue number marks a 13 percent increase year-over-year, coming in below its previous guidance of 20 percent to 25 percent. Daily active users increased 18 percent year over year to reach 347 million.

The company did not provide third-quarter revenue or EBITDA guidance due to “uncertainties related to the operating environment.” Snap shares were falling 23 percent in after-hours trading Thursday.

“While the continued growth of our community increases the long-term opportunity for our business, our financial results for Q2 do not reflect our ambition,” said **Evan Spiegel**, chief executive of Snap. “We are evolving our business and strategy to reaccelerate revenue growth, including innovating on our products, investing heavily in our direct response advertising business, and cultivating new sources of revenue to help diversify our topline growth.”

Part of this evolution will include “a substantially reduced rate of hiring” and also examining other operating expenses, while the company continues to invest in

long-term sectors, with a particular focus on augmented reality.

“We are not satisfied with the results we are delivering, regardless of the current headwinds,” Spiegel said in a letter to investors.

Spiegel and his Snap co-founder **Bobby Murphy** signed agreements to serve as chief technology officer and chief executive officer through at least Jan. 1, 2027. The pair will each make \$1 per year and will not receive equity compensation. The board of directors has agreed to issue a stock split if the Class A share price reaches \$40 in the next 10 years, which would allow the co-founders to donate or sell additional Class A shares.

Snap also announced a \$500 million stock buyback program, which the company said is intended to “offset” dilution related to the company issuing stock to employees “as part of the overall compensation program designed to foster an ownership culture.”

In May, Snap said in an SEC filing that because “the macroeconomic environment has deteriorated further and faster than anticipated,” the company would not meet the low end of its revenue and adjusted EBITDA guidance. That same month, Spiegel informed staff the company would be slowing down its hiring for the remainder of the year, with a limit set at 500 new hires compared to the 2,000 new employees brought on in the last 12 months. The top executive attributed the negative impact to Snap’s business on rising inflation, supply chain shortages, platform policy changes and the war in Ukraine, according to a memo reported on by The Verge.

In the letter to investors, Snap also spoke to the impact of increased competition on advertising, as platforms compete for an overall lower ad pool across the industry. Snap saw a 25 percentage point deceleration in revenue growth quarter-over-quarter and said revenue decelerated as the quarter progressed.

“We’re seeing these various headwinds put pressure on the earnings of a wide variety of companies, and this is directly impacting the demand on advertising,” said **Derek Andersen**, the company’s chief financial officer.

Snap may be particularly impacted, ac-

cording to Andersen, due to the ease with which advertisers can scale or decrease their campaigns on the platform. To help boost ad revenue, Snap said it will improve its ad measurement tools and continue to invest in ranking and personalization.

As the tech giants face a looming recession and plummeting stock prices — shares of Snap have dropped more than 50 percent in the last six months — Snap is also beginning to experiment with subscriptions as an additive to its advertising-driven business. In late June, the company launched Snapchat+, a \$3.99 a month subscription offering that gives users access to new features. Earlier this week, ahead of earnings, the company also rolled out a web version of its Snapchat app for subscribers that allows users to send messages and make video calls on their computers.

*This article was originally published by [The Hollywood Reporter](#). □*

## Tanya Tucker, Los Lobos & Orville Peck to Lead Lucktoberfest at Willie Nelson's Luck Ranch

BY JESSICA NICHOLSON

**T**anya Tucker, [Orville Peck](#), [Los Lobos](#), the Black Opry featuring [Fantastic Negrito](#) and more are set to lead the upcoming 10-day Lucktoberfest music celebration, set for Oct. 28-Nov. 6 at [Willie Nelson](#)’s Luck Ranch.

Each evening of the festival’s diverse performance lineup will be anchored by a different theme, from Peck’s Outlaw Masquerade Ball, a Halloween family night, the Black Opry celebrating the music and creative excellence of Black artists, nights celebrating AAPI and LGBTQIA+ artists and an all-female performer evening featuring Tucker, Sierra Ferrell and Nikki Lane.

**► IN BRIEF**

Luck Presents founder Matt Bizer said via a statement, "Lucktoberfest is a 10 day celebration of everything we love about Texas; from the music to the food and everything in between. Luck at its core is all about community, where everyone can come as they are. By collaborating with an amazing and diverse group of local and national curators, we are celebrating Texas by holding space for people to be themselves and share their incredible talents. Bring a little of yourself to Luck this year, and take a little bit of Luck with you on your way out!"

Festival passes offer admittance to all events, and will go on sale July 22 at 10 a.m. CT [here](#). Daily passes will also be made available on July 25 at 10 a.m. CT. 10-day festival passes are \$100, while individual night passes are \$35. Lucktoberfest will benefit the Central Texas Food Bank via the Luck Family Foundation, with one dollar from each ticket sold to Lucktoberfest aiding a goal of providing at least 100,000 meals with this year's program.

See the full lineup for Lucktoberfest below:

**Friday, Oct. 28: A Texas-Sized Kickoff Celebration Featuring: Paul Cauthen's Big Velvet Revue**

The grand introduction to the first-ever Lucktoberfest will kick off our 10-day celebration of Texas culture in a big way with Paul Cauthen's Big Velvet Revue, featuring special guests as big as The Lonestar State. Did we mention that it's big?

**Saturday, Oct. 29: Outlaw Masquerade Ball Featuring: Orville Peck**

Headlined by Orville Peck, this night is a far-west cowboy-themed masquerade ball featuring an eclectic cast of characters from burlesque dancers, saloon acts, and more special experiences; an homage to our unapologetic ancestors who paved the way for modern-day outliers and outsiders continuing the outlaw tradition.

**Sunday, Oct. 30: Prost, Y'all! "Lucktoberfest" Featuring: Alex Meixner and Friends**

A night of German-influenced entertainment celebrating cherished Bavarian traditions from everything to polka and Maskugstemmen (beer-stein holding) featuring headliner and world-renowned musician

Alex Meixner and special guests.

**Monday, Oct. 31: LUCK-O-LANTERN****Halloween Family Night Featuring: A Special Matthew Logan Vasquez and Friends Spooktacular**

Just outside of neighborhood tradition, a unique and exciting one-stop shop for Halloween trick-or-treating, boos and brews, and something for every member of the family. Headlined by Matthew Logan Vasquez featuring a spooktacular all-star band. Kids under 18 get in free with a parent or guardian.

**Tuesday, Nov. 1: Día De Los Muertos****Experience Featuring: Los Lobos and More**

Headlined by four-time Grammy award winners, Los Lobos, this Day of the Dead celebration features curated food, music, a community ofrenda, a formal procession, and so much more.

**Wednesday, Nov. 2: The Black Opry Revue Featuring: Fantastic Negrito**

Three-time Grammy award winner Fantastic Negrito headlines this night celebrating the soul at the crux of every genre of music, highlighting the work of Black artists who have always been integral to [country](#); folk; blues; and Americana music. The evening will feature a viewing party for Fantastic Negrito's film, "White Jesus Black Problems," and more.

**Thursday, Nov. 3: Luck Night Market Featuring: Sasami**

Headlined by Sasami, this night celebrates Texas' Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) community with a festive Night Market including street food from some of the best AAPI chefs from around the state, plus a wide array of vendors and artisans.

**Friday, Nov. 4: Desert Roses Queer Southern Glamour: A Fashion and Variety Show**

An LGBTQIA+ fete taking the celebration from the runway to the stage, featuring central Texas designers FLAMER; DASHE; Alive By Benjamin; This is Sloane; NICÓ; and curators. In Luck, all ways are welcome.

**Saturday, Nov. 5: Sweethearts and a Rodeo With Tanya Tucker, Sierra Ferrell, and Nikki Lane**

Led by two-time Grammy award winner Tanya Tucker, this night will feature an

all-star female music lineup straight out of Honky Tonk, USA, celebrating the women of country music. Dust off your hat and shine up your boots for a yee-to-the-haw-filled night featuring a rowdy rodeo, two-steppin' dancehall experience, and more.

**Sunday, Nov. 6: Bloody Mary Morning: A Luck-style Send-off and Brunch Festival with Bob Schneider and Shiny Ribs**

The grand finale to the first-ever Lucktoberfest will bring Bob Schneider and Shiny Ribs to the stage for an all-day fanfare and feast featuring your favorite brunch plates from national and local chefs. □

## Shonka Dukureh, 'Elvis' Actress and Singer, Dies at 44

BY ASSOCIATED PRESS

**S**honka Dukureh, who played Big Mama Thornton in this year's movie about [Elvis](#) Presley, was found dead Thursday in a bedroom at her home in Nashville, police said. She was 44.

Nashville police said there were no signs of foul play. Autopsy results are pending from the medical examiner.

Dukureh, a Fisk University graduate and Nashville singer, shared the apartment with her two young children, police said. One of the children found her unresponsive and went to the apartment of a neighbor, who called 911 shortly before 9:30 a.m., police said.

The actor, who also shared the stage at Coachella this year with Doja Cat, had a theater degree from Fisk and graduated from Trevecca Nazarene with an education degree, WPLN-FM reported.

In an interview with the station last month, Dukureh said she taught second grade for a while and then worked with inner city youth through after-school and summer programs.

She said those students reached out after seeing her in *Elvis*. □

## Jack Johnson Moves ‘One Step Ahead’ to Top of Adult Alternative Airplay Chart

BY KEVIN RUTHERFORD

**J**ack Johnson's "One Step Ahead" makes a move mirroring its title, climbing from No. 2 to No. 1 on *Billboard's* [Adult Alternative Airplay](#) chart dated July 23.

"Step" is Johnson's 11th No. 1 on the survey, which began in 1996. He first ruled with "Flake" for three weeks in June 2002 and had last led with his [Milky Chance](#) collaboration "Don't Let Me Down" for a frame in July 2020.

Johnson ties for the third-most leaders in the chart's history, alongside [Dave Matthews](#), solo and fronting [Dave Matthews Band](#). [Coldplay](#) and [U2](#) lead all acts with 13 No. 1s apiece.

**Most No. 1s, Adult Alternative Airplay**

|  |
|--|
| 13, Coldplay   |
| 13, U2   |
| 11, Jack Johnson                                     |
| 11, Dave Matthews (solo and with Dave Matthews Band) |
| 8, John Mayer  |
| 7, The Black Keys                                    |
| 7, Sheryl Crow                                       |
| 7, Counting Crows                                    |
| 7, R.E.M.  |

Johnson boasts the most career weeks atop Adult Alternative Airplay among soloists, adding his 62nd. Overall, he ranks third, after U2 (70 weeks) and Coldplay (69).

Concurrently, "Step" ranks at No. 36 (after reaching No. 33) on the all-rock-format, audience-based [Rock & Alternative Airplay](#) chart with 1.1 million audience impressions, according to Luminato. In addition to its adult alternative radio airplay, the song is bubbling under Alternative Airplay.

"Step" is the lead single from *Meet the Moonlight*, Johnson's eighth studio album. It

debuted at Nos. 2, 10 and 10 and on the [Americana/Folk Albums](#), [Top Rock & Alternative Albums](#) and [Top Rock Albums](#) charts dated July 9, respectively, and has earned 27,000 equivalent album units to date. ■

## Kate Bush Extends Run on Australia's Singles Chart

BY LARS BRANDLE

**K**ate Bush has done it again, as "Running Up That Hill" (via Warner) reigns over [Australia's singles chart](#) for a sixth non-consecutive week at No. 1, while [Harry Styles](#) retains top spot on the [national albums survey](#) with *Harry's House* (Columbia/Sony).

Styles' third studio album does enough to stop [Lizzo](#) from claiming a first [ARIA](#) Chart crown, as the U.S. pop artist's *Special* (Atlantic/Warner) debuts at No. 2

Still, it's a special effort from Lizzo's fourth studio album, which easily improves upon the No. 19 best of her previous release, 2019's *Cuz I Love You*.

Meanwhile, new recordings from [Steve Lacy](#) (*Gemini Rights* at No. 13 via Sony) and [Beabadoobee](#) (*Beatopia* at No. 19 via ING/RKT) crack the Top 20 of the ARIA Albums Chart, while [J-Hope's](#) solo LP *Jack In The Box* (ING/UMA) lands in the Top 40, at No. 27.

*Jack In The Box* is the first full-length release from a [BTS](#) band member since the K-pop phenom went on indefinite hiatus [last month](#). BTS' career retrospective *Proof* debuted at No. 1 on the ARIA Chart [in June](#), for their third leader.

In a cycle which sees no new single impact the Top 50, Lacy can boast the biggest gain with "Bad Habit," the U.S. alternative pop artist's *Gemini Rights* track. "Bad Habit" flies 36-9 in its second week on the survey. ■

## Snow Man's 'Orange Kiss' Is No. 1 on Japan Hot 100 With Biggest First-Week Sales of 2022

BY BILLBOARD JAPAN

**S**now Man's "Orange Kiss" blasts to No. 1 on the [Billboard Japan](#) Hot 100, dated July 20, launching with 850,692 CDs sold — the biggest first-week sales of 2022 so far.

The seventh single by the Johnny boy band rules physical sales, look-ups and radio airplay this week, while also performing well in video views (No. 4) and Twitter mentions (No. 8). The nine-member group's new release upped its predecessor by more than 40,000 CDs — "Brother Beat" sold 809,082 copies in its first week and hit No. 1 in April — proving that the boys have been steadily expanding their fanbase in the interim.

OCHA NORMA's "Koi no kurauchingu sutaato" bows at No. 2 on the [Japan](#) Hot 100. The major label debut single by Hello! Project's ten-member idol group sold 92,695 copies and comes in at No. 2 for sales, while hitting No. 13 radio, No. 15 for downloads, No. 25 for look-ups and No. 48 for Twitter.

The close race between last week's No. 1 song, Official HIGE DANdism's "Mixed Nuts" and the runner-up, SEKAI NO OWARI's "Habit," continues this week, with the latter coming out on top on the latest tally at No. 3. "Habit" performed better in downloads and video, but the track slips to No. 2 for video after leading the metric for seven straight weeks. NiziU's "CLAP CLAP" takes over the No. 1 spot for the metric with 3,027,385 views, while "Habit" logged 2,989,729 views, a difference of about 10,000 views.

The Billboard Japan Hot 100 combines physical and digital sales, audio streams, radio airplay, Twitter mentions, YouTube

**► IN BRIEF**

and GYAO! video views, Gracenote look-ups and karaoke data. Take a look at the full Billboard Japan Hot 100 chart, tallying the week from July 11-17, [here](#). ▀

## Duke Deuce Is The Latest ‘Crunkstar’ Coming Out of Memphis

BY AHMAD DAVIS

**D**uke Deuce is the modern-day king of crunk music. The Memphis-bred MC is best known for his ability to make people dance with his booming voice and high-energy records. The Quality Control/Motown Records signee wasn't afraid to experiment with different sounds on his newest LP, *Crunkstar*.

His latest singles, “JUST SAY THAT” featuring “F.N.F.” rapper Glorilla and the Rico Nasty-assisted “Falling Off,” are both doing well on all streaming platforms. Duke looks to separate himself from the pack and continue to build upon the momentum he has created with his assertive yet fun-loving attitude ahead of his forthcoming “Crunkstar Tour” starting Aug. 10th.

“I didn’t want people to box me in continuously,” Deuce tells Billboard. “I got so much talent and wanted to express it. While expressing it, I am being true to myself because the sounds on this project come from the same musical influences I grew up on.”

Since his breakthrough hit “Crunk Ain’t Dead,” Duke Deuce has successfully reintroduced crunk music to the mainstream. After receiving co-signs from southern [hip-hop](#) legends like Lil Jon, Juicy J, and Project Pat, Duke hasn’t let his foot off the gas pedal. His newest album *Crunkstar* boasts features from Babyface Ray, Juicy J, Lil Yachty, and many more.

Below, we spoke with Duke Deuce to discuss what he has learned from his time

with Quality Control, his quest to expand the reach of crunk music on *Crunkstar*, and his headlining *Crunkstar Tour*.

You have proclaimed yourself to be the “King of Crunk.” Who would you consider some of the pioneers of the sound that inspired you coming up?

Tommy Wright III, Lil Jon — of course Project Pat & Three 6 Mafia. Man, my pops, and many different artists out of the city. Then as I got older, artists like Lil Jon and Bankroll Fresh had to get their flowers.

Your relationship with Quality Control & Motown is a strong match. Can you explain how the partnership started and how it has helped your career over the years?

It’s been a long time coming, man. One thing I can say about QC is that they do not hold hands. You have to be a hustler. P is big on that. Once they see you grinding, then they come to support you tenfold.

Motown works so hard for me. We are always on the phone working on a plan, and as you can see, there has been a lot of progress.

You are Memphis through and through. How important was it to incorporate artists from your hometown on your album?

It was very important. It is my way of giving back so we can keep the momentum as a city. As long as we show love to each other, we will always get bigger. Memphis deserves the spotlight, because we do not have the industry in our city, but we always had the talent. Now that we have the shine, we have to keep it going.

Your newest record, “JUST SAY THAT,” with Glorilla. How did that track come about?

Man! I reached out to her in February before “F.N.F.” blew up. I just want to show love to my city and help out however I can if I see someone going hard. The song got cleared at the very last minute! It wouldn’t have been on my album if it had gotten cleared any day after. You know some things we trip about, but the universe always has something else better for you.

You just recently announced your first headlining tour coming right before your set at Rolling Loud Miami 22’. What city are you most excited to hit on “The Crunkstar Tour” and why?

I would say all of them, but if I had to

choose, I would say California and New York. Fans from those cities always comment on my posts asking when I am coming, so now that I am coming, I am curious to see what happens!

You have some amazing co-signs, including Juicy J, Offset, and even Drake. What does it mean to receive support from some of the industry’s biggest stars?

It means the world to me, because that is something they do not have to do. It feels good knowing someone believes in you the way you believe in yourself.

*Crunkstar* has a lot of rock elements to it. How did you and your team come up with such a unique sound?

It was kind of a natural thing, but Hitkidd kicked it off for me. Once he sent me the beat for “Falling Out Of Love” and had Dante Smith throw some guitars on it, I knew that is how I wanted my project to sound.

You have a feature from Juicy J on “Flip Da Switch.” What did he and Three 6 Mafia mean to you growing up?

I cannot explain it with words, to be honest. I used to see Juicy J on TV, so to be able to get features from them and hang out with them is surreal.

Lastly, you are known for various viral moments on social media. Do you feel pressure to create more of those moments on top of making music?

It’s pretty much a natural thing. It’s never really any pressure to go viral. It seems like I don’t even try sometimes, and it happens. It is what it is to me!

Speaking of that, I want all my fans to get these “Crunkstar Tour” tickets and turn up with me. As I work on my next album, I plan to be consistent in the next couple of months. ▀