



October 15, 2016  
*The State of Creative*

# NEWSLETTER

An Entertainment Industry Organization

## The President's Corner

Thank you for joining us as the CCC examines 'The State Of Creative'. We have assembled an esteemed panel of executives whose expertise is responsible for some of the artists and music occupying the airwaves and content streams today. Learn how the A&R community has learned to adapt as well as 'adopt' new techniques, strategies and philosophies to stay abreast of new developing talent as well as emerging trends that dictate the stars of tomorrow. A special thanks to co-moderators Sat Bisla and my CCC VP Charley Londoño for their assistance putting together a most compelling team of panelists!

**James R. Leach**  
President, California Copyright Conference

## 4 Label Reps: What They're Signing In 2016 by Bernard Baur | Music Connection

The music industry has evolved beyond the simple concept of selling a song or an album. Today, A&R reps and label execs face a multitude of challenges that, if mishandled, could cost them their jobs. Consequently, savvy industry pros adopt methods that suit their label's culture, and that affects the way they evaluate talent and make decisions. To give you some insight into the process each person uses to evaluate and sign an act to a label contract, we contacted A&R reps and executives at four record labels. You'll learn about what makes their companies unique and what factors they consider before inking a deal. We think you'll find the information they disclose both eye-opening and useful to your career.

**EPIC RECORDS - Eesean Bolden, VPA&R**  
Contact: [@SeanDidThat](#) / [epicrecords.com](#)

Eesean Bolden got into the music business 10 years ago and has been involved with A&R for almost five years. Bolden began his career at Capitol Records where he signed and worked with Mary Lambert ("Same Love," "Watch Me"), Silento ("Nae Nae") and hip-hop crunk girl group PTAF ("Bone Ass Bitch"). He recently moved to Epic (a division of Sony Music Entertainment) where the roster is even more diverse: Meghan Trainor, Andre 3000, Sara Bareilles, Ozzy Osbourne, Big Boi, Modest Mouse, Outkast, Airborne Toxic Event, Avril Lavigne and Mariah Carey.

### You've worked at two different major labels—is your job any different?

Well, every company has a different system, but it's pretty much the same gig. I try to find talented artists and help them fulfill their dreams by putting out a great product.

**What gets the attention of record labels and A&R execs?**

Really, it's all about the music and the buzz on the street. That's what gets our attention and directs us. It's important to build a buzz. You should do what you have to do to get your music heard. If you believe in what you're doing and have any talent, eventually you'll get results. We also do research to find out who is doing what and get in touch with acts to see what's up.

**Should artists contact major label executives directly?**

If I were an artist, I wouldn't go after the major executives; I'd want them to come to me. You should use all your resources, let your music touch people and get a response out of them. Then build on that. Do those things and labels will come to you. When the buzz gets loud enough, we'll check you out.

**What important lessons should artists learn?**

Artists should learn how to take constructive criticism and use it in the right way. They should enjoy the journey and understand that some decisions are made—or not made—due to timing. If they get passed on, they need to know that it's not always about them or their music. Sometimes the time just isn't right for the label or A&R rep to make a decision. And, artists should realize that luck is often part of the process.

**What qualities do you look for in artists?**

I like acts that are unique and have their own perspective. I like artists that are passionate and work hard on their careers. A good work ethic is important to me, because when you get signed to a major label you're going to work one thousand times harder.

**Would you develop an act?**

It depends. Major labels generally prefer artists that have their act together and are pretty much developed. However, if I absolutely love what the artist is doing, I might take a chance and work with them.

**How important is an act's live performance?**

It can make or break a deal. It's important for artists to put in the work and become great performers. But, it's not easy—with some artists it could take a while.

**Is there a courting period before you offer an artist a deal?**

It depends on the artist and their team. Sometimes it's love at first sight. Mary Lambert was like that. Other times you want to make sure everyone can work together, and that could take some time.

**One of your specialties is "A&R Research"—what is that?**

A&R research involves finding and identifying opportunities that are happening in different areas of music. It's important to know how people find new music and consume it. It also involves data analysis regarding new artists.

**Do you search the Internet for new artists?**

I like YouTube. I can gather a lot of information there. I also check out social media, but I'm not swayed by numbers. I look for engagement between an act and their fans. If that's not there, the numbers mean nothing.

**Are you looking for anything in particular?**

I want to find great artists that create great music, of any genre. If they have the skills, I can help them reach their goals. But, they have to work at it too. Signing a record deal is like entering a partnership. Everybody must do their job and be involved to make it happen.

**What would stop you from signing an act?**

If an artist is lazy, it's a total turn off. Additionally, if an artist doesn't have a clear vision about who they are and what their music is about, I'll look somewhere else.

## **THIRD MAN RECORDS - Ben Blackwell, Director of Operations, Psychedelic Stooge**

**Contact:** Label website / [thirdmanrecords.com](http://thirdmanrecords.com)

Ben Blackwell has been involved with music for over 15 years: as an artist (Dirtbombs' drummer), label founder (Cass Records) and Third Man Records' (TMR) pinball wizard. He has worked at the label since its inception in 2009. Founded by Jack White, TMR specializes in vinyl releases by a wide array of artists: The White Stripes, The Raconteurs, Dead Weather, The Greenhornes, Karen Elson, Wolf Eyes, Haden Triplets, The Black Belles, Wanda Jackson, Conan O'Brien and, of course, Jack White.

### **You've had some unusual titles at Third Man Records—why?**

It's the nature of the label. I wear a lot of hats and have done almost everything. In fact, everyone pitches in whenever it's needed. A while back I was Third Man's "Pinball Wizard." Now, I'm the "Psychedelic Stooge." They're all terms of endearment... I think.

### **How is your label different from other labels?**

We inhabit a place somewhere between an independent label and a major label. We specialize in all kinds of vinyl releases—including colored and scented vinyl. Because of that, we do a lot of re-releases and re-issues here. We also sign indie (DIY) acts if we love their music and they get us excited. We have a very simple approach; if we like the music we'll put it out.

### **Do you focus on any particular type of artist or music?**

We release a wide variety of records, everything from singer/songwriters, rock bands and country acts, to spoken word, comedy and even poetry. Anything that we think is cool and can cover its costs will get a go ahead. As long as it's inspired, we'll take a chance.

### **Are you looking for anything specific?**

We'd like to find something that doesn't already exist. Something that is totally new and original. We're not interested in clones or rehashed music. We want an artist or form of music that will surprise everyone.

### **Have you signed any new acts recently?**

Yes, there's one we're pretty excited about, Margo Price. She was a fixture in the Nashville music scene and one of Rolling Stone magazine's "Artists You Need to Know." We're in Nashville, so we've been scouting country acts for some time and Margo got us hooked.

### **Unlike other indie labels, TMR deals in a variety of genres. How come?**

We believe that a record label should be like a record collection. And most people don't collect just one style of music. Tastes vary and so do we. We will release everything and anything as long as we believe in it.

### **How important are live performances?**

We love acts that have great live shows. Touring is an important promotional tool. And, it's the best way to connect with fans and sell records. Indie acts that want a career need to play live and tour.

### **Do you develop artists?**

Artist development is a tricky term. I'm not sure what it means. We feel that the acts we sign are already developed and are exactly where they should be. Our job is to introduce them to the public and get them as much exposure as possible.

### **Do you consider social media numbers?**

Social media activity can be important, but the numbers are hard to quantify. They don't always translate offline. I mean, do they buy records? We haven't discovered an accurate measure that can predict whether or not online numbers (likes, views, plays) make a real difference.

### **How do you find new acts?**

There's no set method. Mainly, it's through referrals. We have a large network of friends, artists and scouts who let us know what's happening.

**What kind of deals do you offer artists?**

We do not do 360 deals. Our deals are more traditional. Some are even just one album deals. But, whatever kind of deal we do we never screw over the artist. That would go against everything our label stands for.

**Why should artists sign with TMR rather than another label?**

This label isn't right for every artist. Artists need to find the right fit, and if it's some other label they should go there. The one thing we've heard from acts that were courted by other labels is that they didn't feel the excitement elsewhere. They told us at Third Man they could tell we were excited to work with them. That's a big part of it for us. We want to be excited about our acts.

**Do you have any advice for artists who want to get signed?**

They should stop thinking about getting signed. Anyone who wants to record for Third Man or any other label should: (1) release their own music and, (2) play as often as they can in as many places as possible. They shouldn't worry about sending out demos and press kits. They should just focus on their music and their show.

**RAZOR & TIE RECORDS - Nick Haussling, Senior Director, A&R**

Contact: Label website / [razorandtie.com](http://razorandtie.com)

Nick Haussling's story is a classic. He literally started in the mailroom at Geffen Records in 1997, moved into A&R at Giant Records in 1998 and ended up at Warner Bros. Records for 14 years. At WBR, he signed and worked with Disturbed, Avenged Sevenfold, Art of Dying, Mastodon, Cavo, The Veronicas, Seal, Kenny Wayne Shepherd and Steely Dan. Last year, Haussling moved to Razor & Tie, one of the largest privately owned independent music labels in North America.

**Is your job any different at an indie like Razor & Tie?**

There is a significant difference from Warner Bros. At major labels you don't always have access to the decision makers and there's a lot more bureaucracy to deal with. Here, I have direct access to the president and owner, which makes everything more fluid and signings easier.

**You have a distinct rock background, but it's no longer a dominant genre. How have you adapted?**

Rock has loyal and devoted fans. There's still an audience for it and rock acts do well on tour. In fact, this label is currently having success with a new rock band called Red Sun Rising. But, I'm also open to other genres. What I'd really like to find is something left of center, no matter what the genre.

**How do you evaluate artists?**

It's a combination of things, but it all starts with the music. I then balance that with the data aspect (online research) to determine if there's a chance for success. If it looks good, I like to see the act play live and get to know the artist.

**Does an act need to be accomplished?**

Accomplishments are very important in this day and age. Artists have a lot of tools at their disposal and they should be using them. They need to work at it and get results if they want to take it to the next level.

**Would you consider developing an act?**

At this label I would be open to it. At major labels you usually don't have the time to do it. But Razor & Tie is about artist development, which I love.

**How important is the artist's team?**

They're super important. Everyone has to get along and work together. So, a strong team is imperative. Most artists need to be team players too. They can't live in a creative bubble unless they have very strong management (like The Beatles had with Brian Epstein).

**What about live shows and performance skills?**

For me, they're very important. I like great performers, not just good players. I want to see a high-energy performance—something that excites a crowd.

**Is social media activity important?**

It depends on the act. Some acts appeal to social media better than others. But, I'm not impressed by numbers alone—a lot of likes or views. I need to see real engagement, some interaction between the artist and fans. If that's missing, it indicates a disconnect and that worries me.

**What type of deals do you offer?**

We're pretty creative. It depends on the situation and what works for the act and the label. We don't just do 360 deals with every act.

**What's your opinion regarding streaming sites like Spotify and Apple Music?**

I think they have their place. They can be effective promotions for artists. And rock and heavy metal are doing well on those sites.

**What would keep you from signing an act?**

Bad songs or a bad attitude. Also if there's nothing different about them, nothing that makes them stand out, that would stop me from signing them.

**DINE ALONE RECORDS - Joel Carriere, Founder-Owner, A&R**

**Contact:** [info@dinealonerecords.com](mailto:info@dinealonerecords.com) / [dinealonerecords.com](http://dinealonerecords.com)

Dine Alone Records celebrated its 10th anniversary last year. Founded by Joel Carriere, the label has a wide range of acts with over 50 national and international artists, including: And You Will Know Us By The Trail of Dead, At the Drive-In, Billy Bragg, Attack in Black and Aero Flynn. It currently has offices in Los Angeles, Nashville and Toronto. Dine Alone Records was named the number one independent label in Nielsen Soundscan's 2014 Year-End Report.

**What makes your label different?**

What makes us unique is that we're not a top down label. The label is actually an extension of me and has a family atmosphere. We release many different genres and try to keep a positive vibe going at all times.

**You also operate Bedlam Music Management—isn't that a conflict?**

We were a management company first, and have not encountered any conflicts. If an artist has a problem with it, they can choose whatever they want. But, I think it's ideal. What's better than having your manager run your label? We're not the first to do it, and we won't be the last.

**How do you evaluate artists?**

It's kind of weird because it's always different. You can't always predict how successful an act will be. First, I have to like the music. Then, I have to make sure we get along, especially if the artist has a team behind them. If there is a team, everyone has to be able to work together or it will fall apart.

**How important are live performances?**

Extremely important. A great song may be timeless, but if you want longevity and a career you must play live. And not just play—you have to be a great performer and put on a show.

**Do acts have to be accomplished to get your attention?**

Not necessarily. In fact, our strong suit is artist development. We take artists from nothing and develop them. It takes time and a lot of patience, but I like jumping in early. It's an exciting time whenever you enter a new relationship.

**How important is social media activity?**

I look at it, but it's not a deciding factor. If it's a young act that I love, we can help them with it and develop their social network. With older acts it's not as critical.

### **Are you looking for anything in particular?**

Not anything specific. We're starting to get into hip-hop, R&B, EDM and soul driven material. We're not just stuck on one genre. We started with a lot of singer/songwriters, but we've moved beyond that. I like working with different musical styles. It's boring to work with just one style, so I like dealing with a variety. That's why we have offices in Nashville, Los Angeles and Toronto.

### **What type of deals do you offer?**

Every deal is different. But, we tend to do traditional deals, not 360's. I get why labels like 360 deals, but I don't believe many labels can service all those areas (sales, publishing, live concerts, merchandise, sponsorships and endorsements). I don't think they're able to do the job in a way that it entitles them to the extra money. If we can service those other areas, then we'll talk about it. But, right now, we're being honest and keeping it simple.

### **What do you think of streaming sites like Spotify and Apple Music?**

We're big supporters of streaming sites. In fact, we work closely with Apple and Spotify. We learned how to develop acts differently by utilizing streaming services. We found that if you use Spotify right, you can blow up an artist.

### **What would stop you from signing an act?**

If I don't like them as people, I will not sign them. If our plate is full or we have too many of the same type of acts, I won't sign them. Most important, if they don't have realistic expectations and a strong work ethic, I won't work with them.

### **Has your approach to business changed over the years?**

It has, because entertainment in general has changed. Now, we're more of an entrepreneurial hub. Festivals have become very popular and provide a new avenue for indie acts to get exposure. Streaming sites are like a new form of radio, and we partner with brands and sponsors more than we did years ago. It's an exciting time to be in the music business.

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## **Is A&R Still Relevant?**

**by Dave Kusek | Sonicbids**

A&R, or artists and repertoire, was a seemingly magical term in the past decades of the music industry. Catching the attention of an A&R rep was the difference between getting signed and being doomed to play in your garage for the rest of your life. Traditionally, A&R has acted as the middleman between the artist and the record label or publishing company. They discovered new acts with potential, pitched the bands to the label execs, oversaw the contracts, and guided and developed the band in everything from choosing a producer, to getting the right sound, to picking the single.

A&R reps used to play the part of primary tastemakers in the music industry. Notable A&R reps such as Gary Gersh (who helped sign Nirvana) brought about huge shifts in popular music. They were integral in deciding which artists got signed, and therefore, what consumers heard. It was very difficult for consumers to discover new music on their own.

Today, though, the role of the A&R rep is a little different, and, as a result, a lot of labels have downsized their A&R departments. But that's not to say that A&R is completely irrelevant today – like every aspect of the music industry, they've just had to adapt and update their model. The internet has opened up tons of possibilities for tech-savvy consumers to easily discover new bands. In a way, bloggers and the consumers themselves have almost taken over the tastemaker role.

### **What does major label A&R look for?**

The biggest change is that A&R is no longer looking for small, unheard of bands. With all the online tools out there, a label's involvement in the early stages of artist development is for the most part unnecessary. Musicians can record their own music with Pro Tools or Logic; market their music on social media, YouTube, and their website; set out on regional or national tours; and even

distribute their own music without the help of a record label. As a result, A&R involvement in an artist's career usually happens further down the timeline than it did in the past.

Major label A&R is typically looking for bands and musicians that will sell. They're looking at what most music fans are listening to, and trying to find new bands that fit in that category instead of taking risks on new genres. In other words, they're looking to the market to tell them who to sign.

### **What does indie label A&R look for?**

With indie labels, it's not so much about finding what will sell huge numbers. The internet allows even obscure genres way down the long tail to thrive with great development and the right marketing plan.

The role of artist development is particularly important in the indie record label scene. With the thousands of bands and musicians are trying to be successful in any given genre, development is a great way to really differentiate an artist's music from all the other noise. Quality is king if you want to stand out from the crowd, so indie labels tend put a lot of effort into finding the right sound, working on an artist's songwriting, picking the perfect songs for the album, and nailing the single. XL Recording is a great example of an indie label that prioritizes artist development. Most famously, they discovered and developed Adele into the huge star she is today.

### **How do you get your music in front of A&R reps?**

There is no single strategy to getting your music noticed by A&R reps. Keep in mind the role of A&R today: They're not looking for completely unknown bands playing in garages. They're looking for some traction in the marketplace. Social media, YouTube, and blogs are all resources A&R reps use to discover promising bands, so make sure you're on top of your marketing game. Grow your follower base on Twitter, Facebook, and SoundCloud, master your mailing list strategy, work on increasing your subscribers and view count on YouTube, and try to get your music talked about on as many blogs as possible.

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## **Introducing... The A&R Awards 2016 announcement by Music Business Worldwide**

People don't get into A&R for an easy life. The likelihood of success when investing in artists is infamously slim. The risk? Often huge. Yet the A&R process continues to fuel music culture, while defining record labels, publishers and management companies alike. Without it, artists would never reach their potential; fans would miss out on the records that change their lives.

The A&R Awards 2016 is a new event taking place at London's Park Lane Hotel on Wednesday, November 2. Judged by a panel of respected industry experts, the UK-focused ceremony will recognise A&R achievements across individual, team and project categories. These awards will celebrate the best in UK artist development at record labels, music publishers and management companies – and properly represent both the independent and major sectors of the market. Music Business Worldwide is proud to be the official media partner of The A&R Awards, with an ambition to launch a US-based sister ceremony in 2017. Individual A&Rs and executive pairings will be recognised for their accomplishments across a variety of genres including Pop/R&B, Hip-hop/Grime, Electronic/Dance and Rock/Alternative. Team awards will include Label of the Year and Independent Label of the Year.

### *THE A&R AWARDS 2016: FULL LIST OF CATEGORIES*

**THE BREAKING ARTIST AWARD:** Recognising a mixture of creative, critical and commercial achievement, this award will be dedicated to those new A&R projects which may not have hit Gold or Platinum sales status, but which show real promise for a sustainable future career. This award will be won by the entire team around an A&R project – including, where appropriate, the artist, record label, publisher/s and management company.

**THE BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST AWARD:** Recognising a mixture of creative, critical and commercial achievement, this award will be dedicated to first or second album campaigns which have surpassed Gold or Platinum UK sales status, and show real promise for the future. This award will be won by the entire team around an A&R project – including, where appropriate, the artist, record label, publisher/s and management company.

**PRODUCER OF THE YEAR:** Voted on by a wide range of A&R professionals in various disciplines, this award will mark out the true ‘A&Rs’ producer’ of the past 12 months.

**SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR:** Voted on by a wide range of A&R professionals in various disciplines, this award will mark out the true ‘A&Rs’ songwriter’ of the past year.

**A&R ADMINISTRATOR:** A&R magic doesn’t just happen, you know. Many record labels and music publishers often have someone specifically tasked with making sure that recording studios are booked, talent is where they’re supposed to be and budgets don’t go haywire. This award is for them.

**A&R OF THE YEAR: ELECTRONIC/DANCE:** Recognising an A&R individual or double-act at a label, publisher or management company, this award will be judged on the development and/or signing of two songwriters / artists over the past 12 months that have gone on to enjoy noteworthy success in the genre.

**A&R OF THE YEAR: HIP-HOP/GRIME:** Recognising an A&R individual or double-act at a label, publisher or management company, this award will be judged on the development and/or signing of at least one songwriter / artist over the past 12 months that has gone on to enjoy noteworthy success in the genre.

**A&R OF THE YEAR: POP/R&B:** Recognising an A&R individual or double-act at a label, publisher or management company, this award will be judged on the development and/or signing of two songwriters / artists over the past 12 months that have gone on to enjoy noteworthy success in the genre.

**A&R OF THE YEAR: ROCK/ALTERNATIVE:** Recognising an A&R individual or double-act at a label, publisher or management company, this award will be judged on the development and/or signing of two songwriters / artists over the past 12 months that have gone on to enjoy noteworthy success in the genre.

**PUBLISHER OF THE YEAR:** Recognising the best music publisher involved in active A&R across two specific projects over the past 12 months – judged on critical, commercial and creative success. This award is exclusively for companies who are in direct control of less than 250k copyrights worldwide.

**PUBLISHER OF THE YEAR:** Recognising the best music publishing team involved in active A&R across three specific projects over the past 12 months – judged on critical, commercial and creative success. This award is exclusively for companies who are in direct control of more than 250k copyrights worldwide.

**MANAGEMENT COMPANY:** Recognising the best management company involved in active artist A&R across two specific projects over the past 12 months – judged on critical, commercial and creative success. Those shortlisted will be expected to have played a role in the development of recordings.

**INDEPENDENT LABEL OF THE YEAR:** Recognising the best independent record label involved in active artist A&R across two specific album and/or EP projects over the past year. Judged on critical, commercial and creative success, the award will be voted for by an experienced and specialist panel.

**MAJOR LABEL OF THE YEAR:** Recognising the best major record company involved in active artist A&R across three specific album and/or EP projects over the past year. Judged on critical, commercial and creative success, the award will be voted for by an experienced and specialist panel.

**THE ARTIST LOYALTY AWARD:** A special moment: a celebration of an individual whose A&R input and loyalty has never waned throughout a successful artist’s career.

**A&R ICON:** A bit of hush for this one, please. Recognising a legend of music business A&R, whose professional feats have influenced generations to come.

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*More information about The A&R Awards 2016 can be found on the official website: [TheAandRawards.com](http://TheAandRawards.com)*

## PANELIST BIOS

### SAT BISLA

Sat Bisla has worked in almost every aspect of the global music business over the past 35 years – making him one of the most knowledgeable and respected executives within the international music arena. He has been an advisor and consultant to many companies and executives around the world helping them strategize and better understand the global music industry touch-points for both creative and commercial opportunities. In addition, he has played a key part in the early discovery, development and/or signings for artists such as LMFAO, Dido, Keane, Muse, Adele, Coldplay, Sheppard, the Temper Trap, the Ting Tings, Gavin James, Lily Allen and hundreds of others.

Sat is the brainchild of multiple music business and consumer platforms including A&R Worldwide, MUSEXPO (MUSEXPO Europe & MUSEXPO Asia Pacific), Global Synch & Brands Summit, A&R EXPO, Global Rock Summit and the Worldwide Radio Summit brands.

Sat also hosts the globally-syndicated, pre-discovery tastemaker radio show Passport Approved which airs on over 50 radio stations around the world including Asia's fastest growing streaming service Saavn, the iconic "World Famous KROQ" 106.7FM Los Angeles, Flux FM Berlin Germany, KNDD-FM Seattle, East-FM Shanghai China and many others.

### ANDREW GOULD

Andrew Gould is Senior Vice President of Creative at BMG. A classically trained pianist, Andrew graduated Bowdoin College magna cum laude in 2000 and moved to Manhattan. His first job in music was in 2003 as A&R Intern at Epic Records. Over the next 4 years he rose to Manager and reported to the EVP of A&R, assisting in making records for Sony priority pop acts.

In 2007, EMI Music Publishing hired Andrew as Director of Creative, based in New York. There he worked very closely with hit-makers such as Sia, Savan Kotecha, Jim Jonsin, and Toby Gad. Andrew relocated to LA in 2009.

He is now BMG employed since 2012. Here, Andrew signed Andra Day. Their work together led to Rise Up, which she performed at this year's Grammy awards, as well as the DNC. She was also nominated for R&B Album of the Year and R&B Vocal Performance of the Year. Additionally at BMG, Andrew works closely with writer and producer talent such as Jake Sinclair, Jason Evigan, The Monsters and Strangerz, and Carl Falk and Rami Yacoub. Andrew has an MBA from The Wharton School and currently resides in North Hollywood.

### IAN HUNTER

Ian Hunter is Vice President of A&R Research for Atlantic Records. Ian's interest in the music business began at Union College where he ran a Hype Machine blog and contributed to others. Having studied economics, this interest took him from the finance world (internships at State Street and Goldman Sachs) to Warner Music Group's Research + Analysis team upon graduating in 2011. While working for WMG, Ian also began consulting for Big Beat, Atlantic's electronic music imprint as a scout and remix commissioner. Eventually this led to meeting Mike Caren who hired Ian as WMG's Senior Director of A&R Research in 2013, which was the company's first dedicated A&R research role. A year later, Ian was promoted to Vice President of A&R Research for Atlantic Records under Craig Kallman.

His versatile signings through research have led to multiple RIAA certifications – most notably: Atlantic's breakout star Melanie Martinez, globally renowned DJ Matoma to Big Beat, gold-certified rapper Wes Walker (Atlantic), viral sensation Molly Kate Kestner to Artist Partners, and the viral urban dance hit DLOW's "Bet You Can't Do It Like Me" (Atlantic) Most recently Ian has been a part of the relaunch of the Asylum Records imprint, a collaborative effort between ADA and Atlantic. Ian is based in Los Angeles.

### JAMES R. LEACH

James began his music career as an intern at Famous Music Publishing before transitioning to ATV Music Group as an intern and where he eventually became Director of Creative Affairs, having the opportunity to work with artists such as Brownstone, and SWV among many others. Upon leaving ATV, James formed Leach Entertainment Enterprises where he consulted for several indie labels, music publishers and placed music in various film/television projects. Later rejoining Famous Music Publishing as Creative Director, James was responsible for signing million-selling artist/producer AKON. He later served as Music Consultant and Music Coordinator for the groundbreaking TV show, "New York Undercover" as well as working for Fox Television as a Music Supervisor before joining SESAC in 2001.

Since joining SESAC, James has had the fortune of signing and working with many talented Songwriters/Producers and Music Publishers such as Jacob Luttrell, Danja, Mike Free, Scoop Deville & Jaylien to name a few. As Vice President of Writer/Publisher Relation/West Coast Operations, James is charged with leading the company's exploration and development of branding opportunities on the West Coast as well as

developing business synergies for SESAC in the Digital Music/Media landscape. He is currently the President of the California Copyright Conference.

### **J. CHARLEY LONDOÑO, ESQ.**

Charley is a transactional entertainment attorney in private practice. Prior to practicing law, Charley was a music industry executive, having worked in the radio promotion departments of major label record companies (Arista, A&M, IRS, and MCA). He primarily practices in the area of music, film, television, and new media.

Charley counsels both companies and individuals regarding entertainment transactional issues. His practice concentrates in the protection, clearance, licensing and distribution of intellectual property rights for music, film, television, and varied digital platforms. Charley is a member of The State Bar of California and The Florida Bar and is currently Vice President of the California Copyright Conference.

### **VINCENT “TUFF” MORGAN**

Vincent “Tuff” Morgan is powerhouse Urban/Pop music industry insider and professional with over 15 years major record label and music publishing experience, including: artist/producer management, writing/production, publishing, and A&R.

During his college years at Montclair State University in New Jersey, Morgan landed a record deal with KRS1-One and Capitol Records in 1995. After receiving a Gold album, and 3 major label deals later, he moved to the West coast where he started writing and producing with Mike City on various artists including; Dr. Dre, Method Man, The Game, Busta Rhymes and Rhianna.

After some time, he started developing and managing artists and doing A&R for major music executives, Jheryl Busby(Umbrella records) and Brian Turner (Melee/formerly Priority Records). Morgan secured an imprint deal with Def Jam and Kanye West’s G.O.O.D. Music label shortly thereafter and also a Joint Venture with Peermusic Publishing the same year. In his new role as Director of Pop and Urban at Peermusic, Morgan has joint ventures and writers across Peermusic such as Salaam Remi, James Poyser (Anthony Hamilton, Rhianna) 1500orNothin (Justin Timberlake, Beyonce), The Audibles (Justin Bieber, Mary J Blige), and indie band Family of the Year.

### **STEVE ZAP**

Steve Zap began his music industry career in 1986 as one of the first employees at Virgin Records America. He later joined Warner Brothers Records as VP of Promotion and worked there for 12 years. He then spent three years as VP of Promotion for MCA Records prior to heading up Z-Entertainment in 2004. Z-entertainment began as a promotion and marketing company partnered with Irving Azoff’s Azoffmusic Mangement / Front Line Mangement. In 2015, Z-entertainment expanded its management division to include singer/songwriter/producer Gino “Farrago” Barletta, Daya, Symon, Maddi Jane and DJ R!OT.

Zap then created Artbeatz in February 2015 with Gino Barletta as a partnership with and a division of Z-entertainment. After managing Barletta's songwriting career for a few years, Zap felt that Barletta was not getting the opportunities he deserved, so they decided to create their own company where they could pair emerging musical artists with Barletta's songs and use Zap's marketing expertise to get them major mainstream exposure. Barletta brought Zap the hit “Hide Away” which was recorded by Daya, now 17-year-old platinum recording artist, and Zap knew they had something special on their hands.

Steve’s mission is to find the most talented artists and introduce them to the world with superb music. Whether or not they have hit songs at the beginning does not necessarily matter to him because Zap’s in-house creative team guarantees the development of a true artist.

It was just announced that Steve signed a 3-year joint venture with Sony Music through Doug Morris. His first signing is Aaron Carter, which Steve believes will have the comeback Pop Album of 2017. Also, the buzz band of the Warped Tour, The Heirs have signed with the label.

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**for more information and upcoming events, visit [theccc.org](http://theccc.org) or follow us!**



**SAVE THE DATE:** *The Next CCC Dinner Panel will be **Tuesday, November 15th** - details and Panelists TBA Soon!*

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