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May 30, 2003

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**SUMMER
MUSIC
SPECIAL**

50 Cent and Jay-Z

**An Exclusive Q&A
With the Summer's
Hottest Touring Duo**

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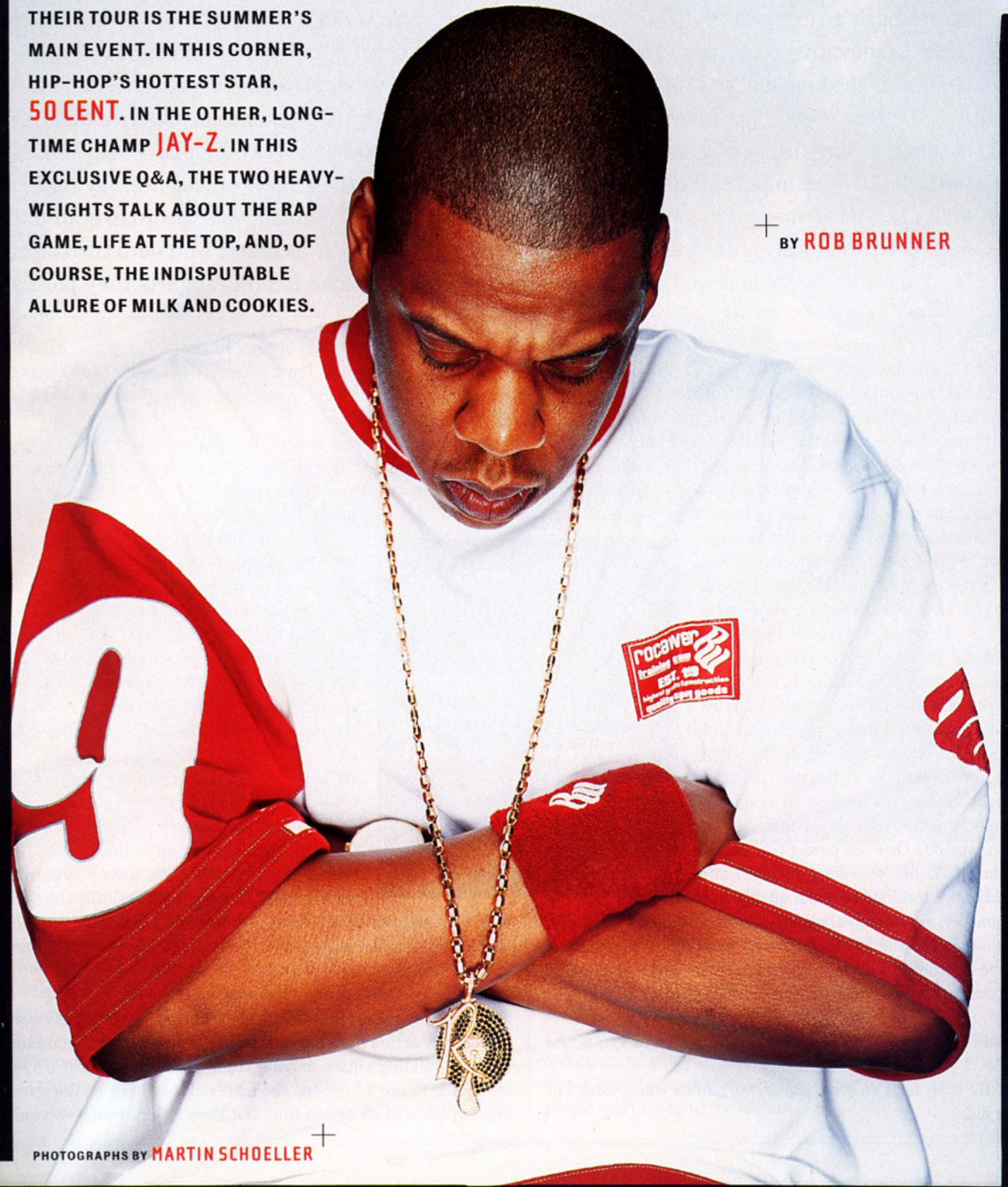
50 CENT
+
JAY-Z

CASH OF THE TITANS

+ THE HITMAKERS

THEIR TOUR IS THE SUMMER'S MAIN EVENT. IN THIS CORNER, HIP-HOP'S HOTTEST STAR, **50 CENT**. IN THE OTHER, LONG-TIME CHAMP **JAY-Z**. IN THIS EXCLUSIVE Q&A, THE TWO HEAVYWEIGHTS TALK ABOUT THE RAP GAME, LIFE AT THE TOP, AND, OF COURSE, THE INDISPUTABLE ALLURE OF MILK AND COOKIES.

+ BY **ROB BRUNNER**



PHOTOGRAPHS BY **MARTIN SCHOELLER** +

T'S LIKE FRANK SINATRA HITTING THE ROAD WITH ELVIS PRESLEY. OKAY, MAYBE NOT. More like Jack Nicklaus going head-to-head with Tiger Woods. No, that's not quite right either. Let's just put it this way: When Jay-Z and 50 Cent team up for a 34-city tour that kicks off June 25 in Hartford, it'll be one of the most scintillating superstar pairings since Julia Child broiled a Chateaubriand with Jacques Pépin. Damn, these analogies are difficult. • In any case, it'll be big. For much of the past decade, Jay-Z has been hip-hop's heaviest hitter, delivering one cross-over smash after another ("Hard Knock Life [Ghetto Anthem]," "Big Pimpin'," "Girls, Girls, Girls"), innovative party jams about money and cars and girls...and money and guns and money. 50 Cent is the new kid, an up-from-the-underground success story whose major-label debut, *Get Rich or Die Tryin'*, has ruled the charts since its February release. Both rappers came from nothing, selling drugs to get by in their New York neighborhoods (Jay-Z in Brooklyn's Marcy projects, 50 Cent in South Jamaica, Queens). Both have seen their share of violence: Jay pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor assault charge that stemmed from the stabbing of a record exec in 1999, and 50 was famously shot nine times in May 2000, in a street-war incident. And both turn out to be charismatic, good-natured, and funny—nothing like the stone-faced braggarts they portray

in their videos. In a summer tour season ruled by headbangers (see page 48), the Jay-Z/50 Cent tour—which will also include Missy Elliott, Snoop Dogg, and Sean Paul on various dates—promises to be a particularly riveting money machine.

Much like rap itself. Even as the music biz reels from plummeting sales and the chaos caused by online piracy, hip-hop reigns as pop's big income generator. "The record business is in trouble, not the music business," says Jay-Z, whose eight platinum and multiplatinum albums suggest he knows what he's talking about. "People are always gonna make music. But the record business, they've got some things to fix. First and foremost, though, we've gotta put integrity and soul back in the music."

He's right: In this increasingly desperate (and disparate) pop-music climate, it's harder than ever for artists to make great, heartfelt music and maintain a stable career. Just look at Beyoncé Knowles, who's cannily branching out into films to broaden her appeal (page 34). Or alt-rock darling Liz Phair, who's radically remaking her sound in a bid for mainstream success (page 39). Or even power-pop misfits Fountains of Wayne, who came up short at a major label but continue to make quality music in a smaller, more sympathetic corner of the industry (page 45).

For now, Jay-Z and 50 Cent have no such concerns. Instead, they have to contend with more pressing issues, like how to count all that cash and who really *is* the greatest rapper....

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY So, for the record, which of you is the better MC?

50 CENT He is, by far. I've been listening to him for a long time. I'm the new kid.

EW That's not what you say on your records.

50 CENT I know, because I'm confident. I've always been competitive. But when you've got eight [years] under your belt and a kid only has one summer...

JAY-Z Seniority rules. But all records are made to be broken. You've got Dr. J and then you have Michael Jordan and then you've got Kobe, you know what I'm saying? The game just keeps surviving. That's what it's about. If he continues on this path, *he* could be the greatest. Who knows? It's hard to judge.

EW Why team up for a tour?

JAY-Z A lot of the time in hip-hop, things that could be big never get to happen. You used to have the Fresh Fest [in 1984]. You had Run-DMC, Whodini, the whole lineup on one tour. You seldom get that now. I believe in putting out the hottest thing. We could have toured separately, but we figured if we bring it together it would be unstoppable.

EW Why does hip-hop continue to be so unstoppable in the marketplace?

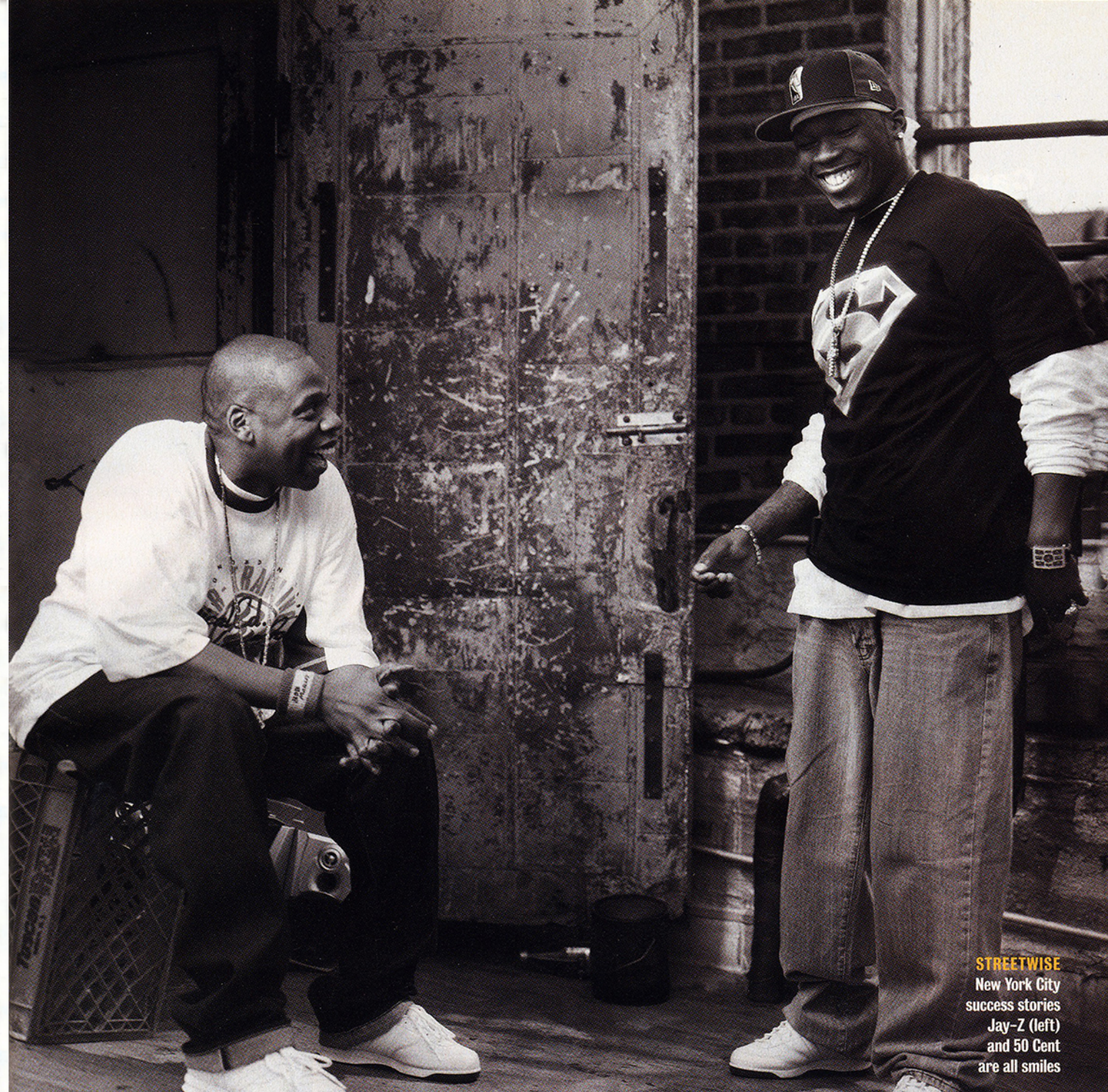
JAY-Z I think the music speaks more directly to youth culture than any other music. [*He gestures toward 50.*] We never even met [growing up], but we share basically the same

story. We all grew up the same way. And people that never lived there, they can just pick up a CD and experience the whole thing without having to get shot at. [*They laugh.*]

EW Why do people *want* to experience that?

50 CENT They want to do things and not reap the repercussions. That's why action films are entertaining. In real life, if you jump out of a building onto a moving train, you're f---ed. But it's entertaining to see it happen. The material that I put on the street is acceptable in an action film, but [less so] in music—because

THE GRIM STREET
IMAGERY THAT COURSES
THROUGH JAY-Z'S
AND 50 CENT'S MUSIC IS,
JAY SAYS, A REFLECTION
OF THEIR OWN EXPERIENCE:
"ALL WE DOING IS
TURNING A LIGHT ON IN
A DARK PLACE."



STREETWISE
New York City
success stories
Jay-Z (left)
and 50 Cent
are all smiles

it's based on a true experience.

EW Your music has been criticized for having too much sex, violence, and profanity. What would happen if you eased up on that stuff?

JAY-Z They wouldn't feel it. They wouldn't buy it. That's a fact. You absolutely *know* that's a fact.

50 CENT And it wouldn't be me as an artist, so it would have no substance. It would just be words over some music.

EW But why does sex, violence, and profanity have to be the substance so much of the time?

JAY-Z People can tell if something is contrived. We're doing what comes natural to us. We're having fun in the studio, talk-

ing about experiences that we went through. For us to take ourselves out of our element just to please someone else, it wouldn't be what we do.

50 CENT How many newspapers do you think get sold a day worldwide? Ain't s--- positive in none of them. Maybe Sunday in the entertainment section. Everything else is about who did some s--- they wasn't supposed to do. People want to see that.

EW Even some hip-hop fans say your music is too fixated on materialism and violence. Does that bother you?

JAY-Z Nah, because that sends a signal to me immediately that people don't listen to the albums.

EW That stuff is just on the hits?

JAY-Z There you go. That lets you know what the world wants. "Big Pimpin'" was a huge hit, but I put out a single before it and after it.

EW What were they?

JAY-Z Yeah, exactly. On my [fifth] album I had "Give It 2 Me" [sample lyric: "Got six model chicks, six bottles of Crist'/Four Belvederes, got weed everywhere"] and "Soon You'll Understand" [sample lyric: "You said the street claim lives, but I wanted things like bling bling, ice/I was wrong in hindsight"]. So "Give It 2 Me" plays on the radio for eight months, a year, but nobody picks up "Soon You'll Understand." That's the way the world is, man. So if someone says, "Jay-Z's just about champagne and all that," then I know [snaps his fingers] automatically that you don't listen to the album.

EW How true to life is that "Big Pimpin'" stuff? On Thursday night at the Jay-Z house, are you sipping Cristal with 10 women in G-strings or do you watch *Friends* like the rest of us?

JAY-Z [Jokingly incredulous] You watch *Friends*? [Laughs] Ah, that's funny. I watch a lot of sports.

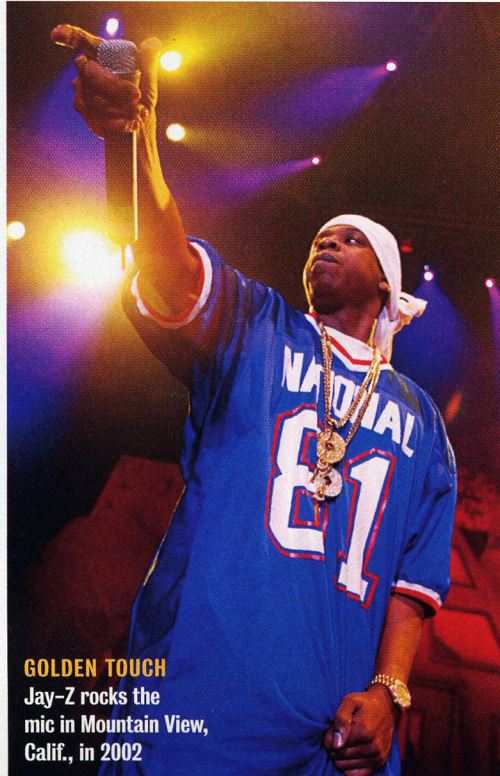
50 CENT People look at an artist and go, "This guy has a Bentley!" Every company sends me [free] clothes, so what do you spend money on? Things that excite the people who look at you. Outside of that, there's nothing else to do with your paper, so you get what you like. I want things that everybody else is not necessarily into; I just bought a '55 Impala. And I want things when I can't have them. When you on the curb, a Benz looks like a *spaceship*. [He and Jay laugh.] You think, That's gonna take me outta here. I'm not gonna feel like this anymore.

EW You guys are at different points in your career. Jay-Z, do you find yourself wanting to talk about different things as you get older?

JAY-Z Yeah, I believe so. If you listen to my first album and then my new album, you'll see there's a broadness there. The s--- I was upset about then ain't the same s--- I'm upset about now. I'm more upset about the press. I ain't have no press then. I'm upset about the DA. The DA has a publicist. Did you *know* that? That's unreal to me. That's not justice, that's *drama*. I'm upset about people that don't want me to move into their building because I'm a young black dude. They don't want me to live in that penthouse. [But I] take my home *seriously*. It ain't like there's gonna be 30 niggas having a party in my house every night.

EW You can see how they'd get that impression from your videos.

JAY-Z That's a *video*! I hope you don't think Arnold Schwarzenegger's shooting up his house every day! So I have different s--- to be angry about. But I'm not as angry as I was.



GOLDEN TOUCH

Jay-Z rocks the mic in Mountain View, Calif., in 2002

TO THOSE WHO ASSUME
HIS LIFESTYLE IS ALL GUNS, GIRLS,
AND RAUCOUS PARTIES,
JAY-Z SAYS, "THAT'S A VIDEO!
I HOPE YOU DON'T THINK ARNOLD
SCHWARZENEGGER'S SHOOTING
UP HIS HOUSE EVERY DAY!"

go, "I don't know if he understands what's going on yet. He could still be a little...stupid." But it doesn't bother me. I don't care if they're uncomfortable with me, because I'm just as uncomfortable in some environments.... I'll go to [business] meetings and we'll be in restaurants. I'm used to restaurants that sell french fries, you know what I mean? Some of this stuff on the menu, I'm like, "What's this?" I'm experiencing different things. It's all new to me.

JAY-Z But it's good when people think of you in a certain way. It has them at a disadvantage. You should put that out to all the readers: They should be careful about that. Nobody's dumb over *here*.

EW You both have a past in drug dealing. Does that shared experience create some kind of bond between you?

50 CENT We can relate to each other easier.

JAY-Z Absolutely. We share the same experience because we came up from the projects, urban neighborhoods. It's not a coincidence that we sit here and we've been through some of the same things. It's not a coincidence that 80 percent of rappers have had—if they didn't do it themselves, they've definitely seen somebody deal. They was around it. They was in the car when it happened, they was in the hall when it happened. And then people condemn us for the music we make. All we doing is turning a light on in a dark place.

EW What do you miss the least about those days?

JAY-Z You never gonna know this feeling, but you could just be driving, absolutely doing *nothing*, but if you see a cop in the rearview, because you live your life so... You do so much dirt every day that you don't even know what's on you. That feeling right there, I hate. I don't ever want to fear another man, ever ever. But with those cops in the rearview—the lights don't even have to be on. But it was ill: Yesterday I was at a restaurant at 145th and Broadway, and the cops came in. It was the best s--- in the world. [Laughs] This cop was fumbling with his hat because he was so nervous to meet me. I was like, "Goddamn," you know? Ten years ago he woulda been in my rearview mirror and my heart woulda been *beating*. But right now he walks in this restaurant.... He was a great guy, but the fact that he was so nervous to meet me that he dropped his hat on the floor—it was the most amazing s--- ever.

50 CENT I don't miss worrying about my bills. My finances is good right now. I can be focused on other things, like making more money. That feels good. I ain't gotta worry about the light bill.

EW Was being a drug dealer anything like being a hip-hop star?

50 CENT Yeah.

JAY-Z There was a celebrity to it, you know what I'm saying? All the light-skinned, wavy-haired girls are attracted to it.

50 CENT A rap star is kind of like what a drug dealer was in, like, '86. This business is the new drug game. This business is the high-tech s---, nigga. [He and Jay laugh.] And write that I said "The high-tech s---, nigga."

EW If you had grown up in a nice house in the suburbs, what would your music sound like? Or would you be a doctor or lawyer?

JAY-Z Yeah, who knows? I could be interviewing *you*. But I wouldn't want to grow up no other way. It shaped me, taught me integrity. There's a lot of people in the music business that didn't come from the streets. That's why it's tough for people like us to get along with music executives. We coming from a place where there's integrity, there's honor. There are unwritten rules that people all know.

EW There are no rules in business?

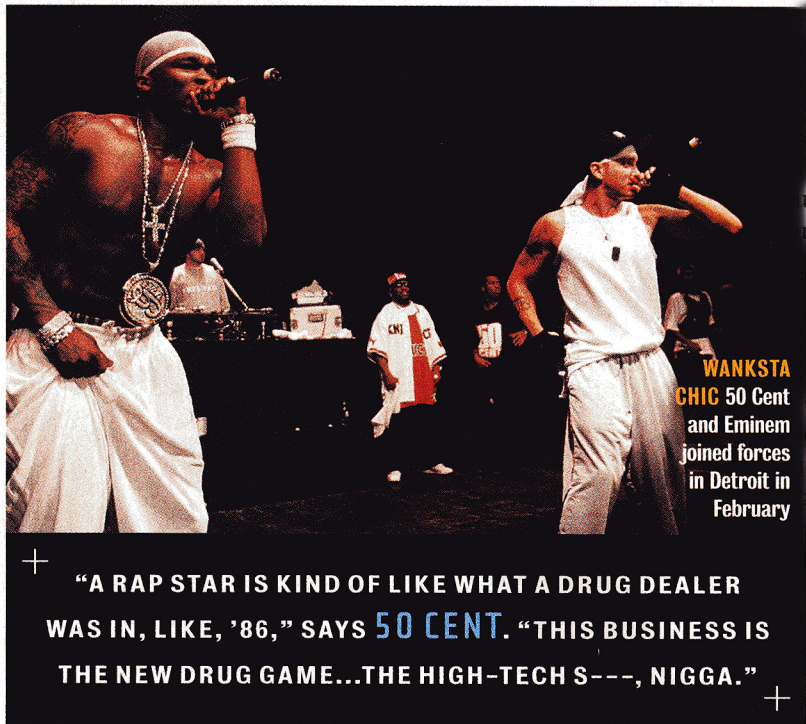
JAY-Z Absolutely not.

50 CENT [Growing up poor] gives you the hustle. Some people get opportunities in business and they are content with just a little, because they ain't really *had* it hard. That little bit of success they get is enough.

JAY-Z You've got kids that inherited stuff from their parents.... They don't appreciate it because it was no work; there's no A to Z, it's just Z. To me, you need somewhere to start, somewhere to be like, "Man, I ain't *never* going back to not being able to pay my light bill, my stomach growling, eating cereal at night, peanut butter and jelly off the spoon, mayonnaise sandwiches." This is *real*. I'm talking from a place where if groceries came and we got to put bananas on the cereal, it was a *treat*. That was the s--- that you can't fathom.

EW What was your worst day during that time?

JAY-Z When you're hustling, you've got ups and downs [with money]. I fell off one time. I was messed up [financially]. I used to



WANKSTA CHIC 50 Cent and Eminem joined forces in Detroit in February

+

“A RAP STAR IS KIND OF LIKE WHAT A DRUG DEALER WAS IN, LIKE, '86,” SAYS 50 CENT. “THIS BUSINESS IS THE NEW DRUG GAME...THE HIGH-TECH S---, NIGGA.” +

have... This is going to be a long story, but you asked for it: I had a girl out in Long Island, and you know in Long Island they've got houses and trees; she had a nice little situation. I used to go over there and eat cereal, cookies and milk, have little snacks, and go back home. I didn't have no money, so one time I took some food with me. She put it in a bag, which was a little embarrassing. When I got back, my friend was like, "Yo, you got any more of those cookies?" I was like, "Nah."

50 CENT [Laughs] Cookies.

JAY-Z Cookies! I'm talking about *cookies*, and this is *my man*. We did things *together*. But I was like, "Nah, I ain't got any more cookies." So he went next door, and I poured the milk all the way up to the top, got the cookies, sat down in front of the TV. As soon as I looked up, he was standing there, just shaking his head. He was like, "We gotta get right."

EW And 50, your worst day?

50 CENT Well...one time my homies went out and caught some nigga for a watch. They brought me [his] ring and chain and s---, and they kept the watch. But the nigga, he died for all this s---. I've still got the ring. I never got rid of it. I don't wear it, but I keep it. He died for the f---ing ring, man. That's all I got. I would rather that nigga have his ring and still be around.

EW How does something like that happen?

50 CENT It's easy, man. Your ribs is touching. If you ain't got nothing, that s--- was worth a lot. It was like the jackpot right there: "There it is, I hit the lottery!"

EW Now *you're* the guy with the watch. Doesn't that worry you?

50 CENT Nah. Not at all. We're all gonna die. When you live your life afraid to die, you're afraid to live. The bottom line is, the obstacles that you overcome are going to determine how great you are. What makes Jay-Z special is the fact that he's from Marcy f---ing projects. I'm from the *bottom*. So when [disadvantaged kids] look at us, they go, "Damn." It makes them feel like, "They did it. I can do it." That's enough for me. ■

DESTINY AWAITS

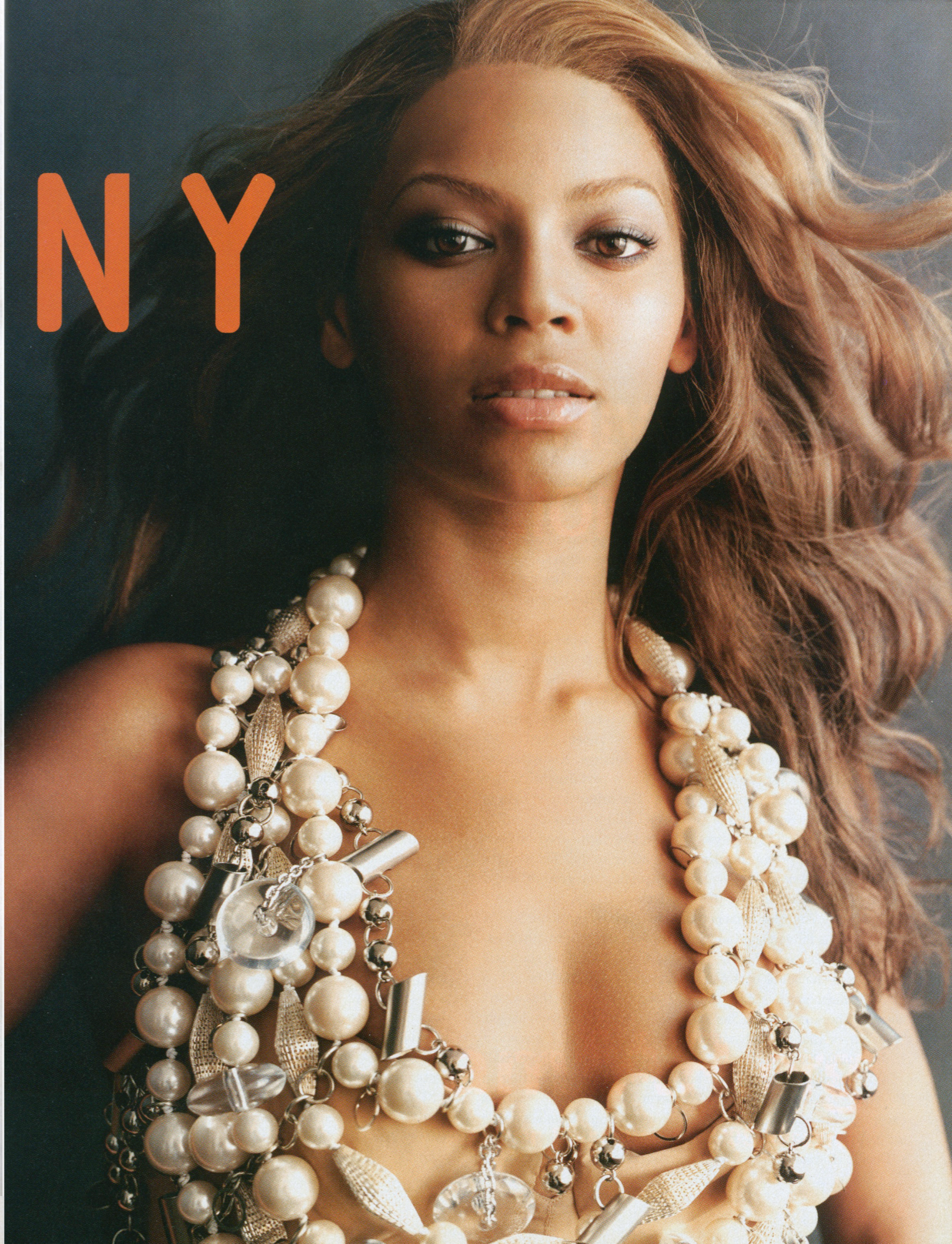
+ THE MULTI-THREAT

THE SOLO CAREER, THE MOVIE ROLES, AND THE ALL-AROUND FAME-MAKING MACHINATIONS THAT SURROUND THEM. **BEYONCÉ KNOWLES** HAS FINALLY REACHED THE PLACE SHE SET OUT FOR AT AGE 5. AND WHAT'S HER REWARD? A HAMBURGER

+ BY **CARINA CHOCANO**

> IT'S NOT EASY GETTING FACE TIME WITH BEYONCÉ Knowles. Even when you're looking right at her. Twice, while on the cell with her publicist trying to arrange a meeting, I find myself staring up at her as she quaffs a Pepsi on the billboard high above the intersection of Hollywood and Highland. • Finally, there's nothing left to do but hop on the Beyoncé express. I'm instructed to call Knowles' cousin/assistant, Angela, who tells me to drive to a nearby spot on Sunset Boulevard, park my car, and look for a bodyguard named Shorty. Shorty—well, you could ski down Shorty in a snowfall. The big man waves me over to the black Cadillac Escalade idling on the corner. By the time I climb into the dim cocoon of the SUV, I'm no longer sure if I'm meeting a pop diva, a Mob boss, or a presidential front-runner on the campaign trail. • Actually, she *is* on the campaign trail. "Crazy in Love," the first single from Knowles' debut solo album, was released to radio two weeks ago. And the CD, *Dangerously in Love*, hits stores July 8. Flanked

PHOTOGRAPH BY **RICHARD PHIBBS**



by a dark-suited driver, and her mother/stylist, Tina, the almond-eyed lead singer of Destiny's Child has been pressing the flesh of the press for a week. She shows no sign of flagging. Actually, she couldn't look more invincible if she'd just sprung from Zeus' head. Knowles is a focused and gracious campaigner—even though, if it were up to her, she wouldn't be doing this at all.

"I always want to make music, sing, and perform on stage," she says in her low, husky drawl. "And, I think, make movies. But everything else that comes with it? If I had a choice, I wouldn't do it... Putting out the solo album, there are things you have to do"—she pauses—"because you do!" The absurdity cracks her up.

By the end of this day, Knowles will have gotten through a meeting, two fittings, a dance rehearsal, and this interview. She'll have sent Angela to pick up T-shirts for a video, scanned audition tapes, selected dancers for her upcoming tour, searched for a pair of stilettos she can dance in, gazed longingly at Shorty's cheeseburger ("Don't look at that," Angela warns, "it'll kill you"), and ordered the spicy green beans for dinner.

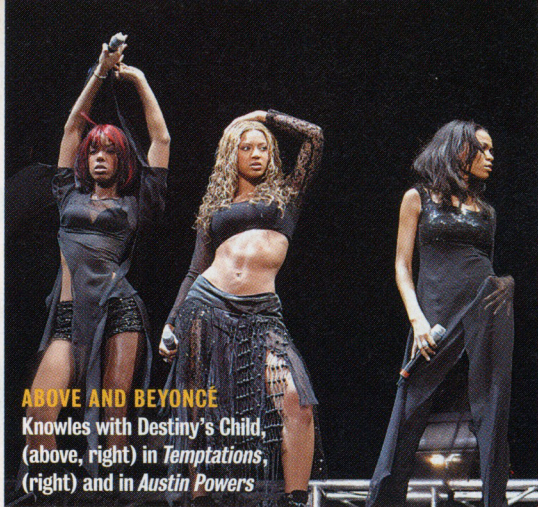
By the time you read this, she'll have appeared on *SNL*, crammed in two recording sessions, made a radio-station stop, flown to Vegas for *VH1 Divas Duets*, and shot back to New York for *TRL*. "That's my reward," Knowles says. She means the burger.

JUST 21, KNOWLES HAS BEEN A STAR—IN THE MOST RIGOROUS, exhausting sense of the word—for more than two thirds of her life. Since before she was washing her own hair, she has been both the principal product and the main marketing vehicle of the Knowles family business, a mini-entertainment empire managed by her father, Mathew, whose most recent yield is Beyoncé's 16-year-old singer/actress sister, Solange. Knowles pinpoints the start of her career as a talent-show performance at age 5 near her childhood home in Houston. The original members of the group that would become Destiny's Child formed in elementary school in 1989. Three years later, they appeared on *Star Search* and lost, prompting Knowles' father to quit his job as a medical-equipment salesman and start guiding the group's career full-time. Beyoncé was just 10 at the time.

To this day, Knowles finds nothing too troublesome about such a singular focus for someone so young. In fact, the preternatural experience may account for the palpable sense, now, that she's still hovering in the space between woman and child. She's been in a place of informed naiveté for years. "I didn't even know that wasn't normal," she says of her father's decision to walk away from his job. "I just knew that my dad started helping us. Not until I was about 18 did I think, like, God, that was a huge sacrifice—and a huge risk!"

Asked how big a gamble her husband was taking by betting on Beyoncé's stardom, Tina says, "We never had a doubt. We saw an exceptional talent and drive in her. It's no different from a kid who wants to be a doctor. You try to make everything available to him."

Doogie Howser's parents would almost certainly agree. But at an



ABOVE AND BEYONCÉ
Knowles with Destiny's Child,
(above, right) in *Temptations*,
(right) and in *Austin Powers*



+ "I ALWAYS WANT TO MAKE MUSIC, SING, AND PERFORM ON STAGE," SAYS KNOWLES. "BUT EVERYTHING ELSE THAT COMES WITH IT? IF I HAD A CHOICE, I WOULDN'T DO IT." +

age when most future medics are licking their pencils for the MCATs, Knowles has logged five CDs, four No. 1 hits, three Grammys, and more than 33 million in global sales as a member of Destiny's Child.

Since turning 21, Knowles has talked a lot about growing up. She says *Dangerously in Love*—which is made up of equal parts palpitating dance tracks, sensual midtempo tunes, and miasmic ballads; and features, among other guests, is-he-or-isn't-he-her-boyfriend Jay-Z—is meant to "celebrate the evolution of a woman." On the new album, Knowles—who wrote and produced much of it—dedicates a track, "Daddy," to her father, who gave her her first lessons in how to take care of herself in a tough business. "Because of my dad," she says, "I knew the importance of writing my own songs, of reading *Billboard*—all of those things that certain artists didn't do."

It's with this hard-earned savvy that Knowles has approached her acting career. As a follow-up to her exuberant turn as Foxy Cleopatra in 2002's *Austin Powers in Goldmember*, she has taken on her first dramatic role, opposite Cuba Gooding Jr., in this fall's *The Fighting Temptations*. In it, she plays a small-town single mom who, thanks to her gospel-singing talents, helps redeem a childhood friend-turned-yuppie creep, who has returned home to claim an inheritance he can't have unless he revives the church choir.

"I had scripts where I could have the starring role," she says. "But I didn't want to do that because I want to know exactly what I'm doing before [taking on] all that pressure."

Knowles wrapped the movie in January and the album in April. Though her mother stresses the eventual importance of slowing down and finding balance ("Buckle down and work hard for some years," she says. "Then you can semiretire and do only the things that you want to do"), Knowles' schedule shows no sign of letting up.

Did all the work of the past year—particularly on the set of *Temptations*—trigger a Mariah-like breakdown, as Knowles suggested might have happened in an interview last year?

"The press exaggerated that," she says, smiling. "I said I was tired. But it worked out great. I got to meet some great people. I had my 21st birthday party there.

"And," she adds, chuckling, "the weekends off!" ■

(PREVIOUS PAGE) STYLING: C. DIXON/ART DEPARTMENT; MAKEUP: MALLI HONGAL/CONTACT; HAIR: TINA KNOWLES/NECLAGE; PAGO RABINNE; (THIS PAGE) DESTINY'S CHILD: MEGHAL WATTS/WIREIMAGE.COM; THE FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS: DAVID LEE; AUSTIN POWERS: S.

+ SUMMER
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SELLS LIKE TEEN SPIRIT

+ THE MAKEOVER

AT 36, LEGENDARY
ALT-ROCKER LIZ PHAIR
IS BEHAVING LIKE AN
AVRIL WANNABE. HER
FANS ARE UP IN
ARMS. BUT DOESN'T
EVERYONE IN
AMERICA WANT TO
BE A POP STAR?

BY ROB BRUNNER +

> THE ASPIRING POP STAR-
let knows what she wants,
and like most aspiring pop
starlets, she's got a plan for
how to get it. First of all, she
wants to be famous. That's a
given. To do this, she's tapped
the Matrix—the production trio
behind Avril Lavigne—who've
come through with roll-down-
the-windows sing-alongs that
are begging to get blasted out of
the car stereo all summer long.

+ PHOTOGRAPH BY MATT JONES

Right now, however, what she most wants is lunch at the Santa Monica annex of the Ivy, L.A.'s famous celebrity dining establishment. She knows how to get that, too. "How's your expense limit?" she asks. Reassured that her aspiring-pop-starlet needs will be met, she hops into her BMW and heads toward a plate of poached salmon and—so the plan goes—multiplatinum superstardom.

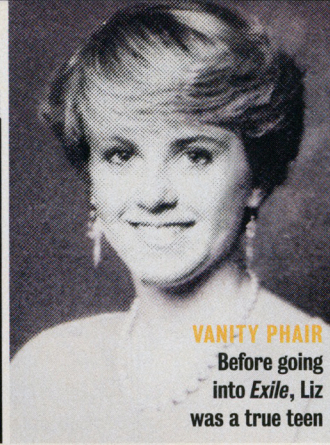
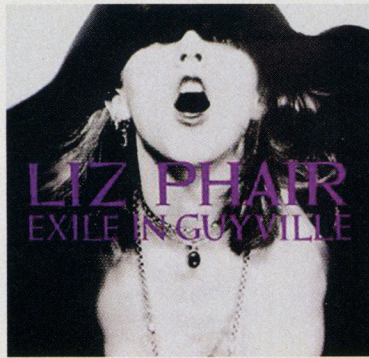
Nothing unusual about this picture, right? After all, those chirpy teen-poppers panting on your radio—What were their

names again?—occupied the same starting gate not long ago. But this aspiring pop starlet, well, she's different. For one, she's a 36-year-old mother. She's been making music for over a decade. And she's responsible for one of the most celebrated documents of female empowerment and indie-rock songcraft ever recorded: 1993's *Exile in Guyville*. So what the hell is Liz Phair thinking?

Quite a bit, it turns out. "I didn't want to be some '90s act that was great in my 20s and never did anything else," says Phair, tackling an appetizer of crab claws. "People are like, 'Don't be commercial, then. Just be...Wilco.' And that's one way to live. But even when I made *Guyville*, I was hating indie then. The whole album was about how much I hated indie. I was sick to f---ing death of that snobbery. You know, I liked radio hits my whole life, including when I was cool. When Shakira goes [sings] 'Underneath your clothes...,' that works on me. So here's your question in life: Do you acknowledge who you are even if people don't like you for it? Even if people say, 'That's so lame'? Should I pretend to be cool so that you will approve of me? After I had my kid, the revelation I had was, Life is incredibly short. I like who I am. And I'm just gonna like what I like and go for what I want to go for. It's simple."

The result of this epiphany is the brazenly glossy *Liz Phair* (due out June 24), a naked bid for mainstream airplay that's such a radical departure from her previous albums—*Guyville* and its slightly less raw follow-ups, *Whip-Smart* (1994) and *whitechocolatespaceegg* (1998)—that it's guaranteed to alienate a large chunk of her fan base. "I think it's better to be talked about and hated and embraced—because a lot of people do love [the new album]. I like to be noticed. I don't like to be boring. So it's better to have people up in arms about it. I don't like not being liked, but...I really like my record."

It's been five years since her last album, a delay caused by many factors: Phair's breakup with film editor Jim Staskausas, the father of her 6-year-old son, Nicholas, after five years of marriage; a subsequent move from Chicago to L.A.; and a significant regime change at Capitol, her current label. Mostly, though, the struggles were creative. Phair had recorded far more than an album's worth of tracks during three sessions over several years, including stints with producers R. Walt Vincent (Pete Yorn) and Michael Penn. Though Phair was, for the most part, pleased with those record-



+ "I LIKED RADIO HITS MY WHOLE LIFE," SAYS PHAIR. "WHEN SHAKIRA [SINGS] 'UNDERNEATH YOUR CLOTHES...,' THAT WORKS ON ME." +

for Phair, including the first single, "Why Can't I?" Their mandate was simple: Create hits. *Guyville* and *Whip-Smart* had both gone gold, but Phair was angling for a more explosive breakthrough. "Our manager met with her A&R people," recalls Lauren Christy, whose Matrix cohorts are Scott Spock and Graham Edwards. "She had this beautiful record that she'd done with Michael Penn. It was stunning. But I think Liz felt it was just a little mellow; it didn't have anything that would grab you by the throat."

"Oh, oh, evil! Go get a radio track, how awful!" Phair says in mock horror at the idea of turning to the Matrix. "May I say how great it was to work with them? They weren't this faceless group of people who were going to do something to me that I didn't want. I was looking for help. I was like... What's a good analogy? What's an environment that you need the appropriate ship to travel in?"

Um, scuba gear? "They're your scuba gear for going diving. And you can say, 'I'm not diving. I obviously don't breathe underwater, I will not be diving.' But I'm a real seeker of that nature, and it was a choice I made long before I met the Matrix. This is my thing: If I make mistakes sometimes, they'll be my mistakes. My whole career up until now, I let other people make the business decisions. One of the biggest changes for me—which I think is a political act but you may see as a cop-out—is I've taken more business control. I've educated myself. As a woman who's basically been cared for by her father and then her husband and then her boyfriend, never really being independent, I think it's important. I was talking to Pete [Yorn] at a party and he was like, 'Well, isn't it just about the music?' I looked at him and I'm like, 'Not for me anymore. It's not.'"

And what happens if she does become a pop star? "That's a good question," Phair says. "What if it works? What if I become a platinum artist and everyone knows who I am? I like the fact that I can be normal during the day and watch the world, and then when I want to turn it on I can be the one who's being looked at. But I want the other things that go with [stardom]. I want the financial security to stay in California. I'm responsible for my son. I want artistic leverage so if there's cool stuff I want to do, people will greenlight it. I want a ticket to ride so that I can be creative for a lot longer. Otherwise, honey, I'm back in Chicago living with my parents."

Spoken, oddly enough, like a real grown-up. ■

+ SUMMER
MUSIC
2003



+ THE SURVIVORS

MAKING + ALLSTOPS

BY BRIAN M. RAFTERY

PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL LEWIS

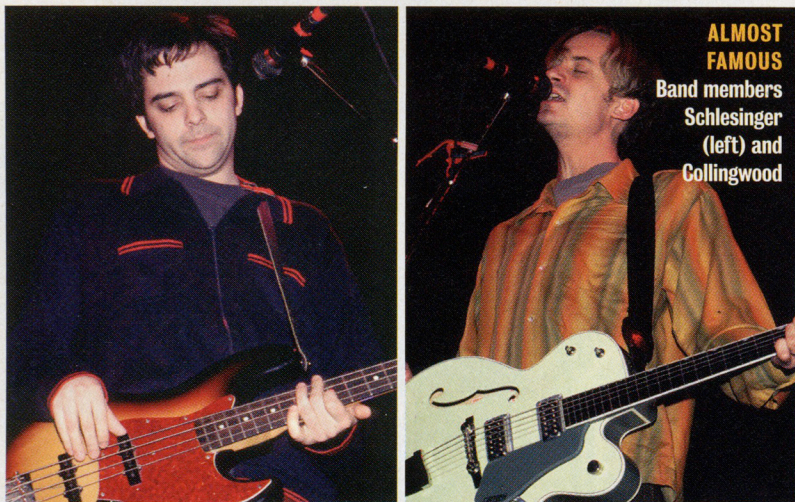
AFTER PEAKING IN THE LATE '90S, **FOUNTAINS OF WAYNE**—LIKE MANY POP AND ROCK ACTS IN THE DEPRESSED RECORD BIZ—LOST THEIR CONTRACT. THEY'RE BACK ON TRACK, BUT NOW IT'S A DIFFERENT KIND OF RIDE.

> THE FOUNTAINS OF WAYNE GUYS HAVE PLENTY OF STORIES about their major-label days, but none encapsulates eight years of curious luck better than the motorcycle-gang incident.

This was back in '96, when the group was riding the success of "Radiation Vibe," an alarmingly catchy, chorus-saturated sing-along that had taken off on MTV. Hoping to goose the band's

momentum, Atlantic Records asked them to go on the stump for their new single, the problematically titled "Leave the Biker."

"We had an idea to go to radio stations with a bunch of bikers," remembers bassist Adam Schlesinger. "We went to Hogs & Heifers and rounded them up. What we didn't realize is that we'd enlisted opposing camps who hated each other—20 bikers, two rival



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gangs. We had to get out of there.” The promotional tour was scrapped, and “Leave the Biker” fell off radio’s radar.

Schlesinger, 35, and his longtime songwriting partner, vocalist Chris Collingwood, 35, tell this mini-Altamont tale from Chelsea’s Stratosphere Sound, the studio Schlesinger co-owns with ex-Smashing Pumpkin James Iha. It’s summer 2002, and though the pair have assembled to record material for their third album, *Welcome Interstate Managers*, there’s no urgency. In part because their 120 Minutes of fame ran out in the late ’90s, Fountains of Wayne—which also includes drummer Brian Young and guitarist Jody Porter, both 33—are working without a deal. It’s the kind of mid-career flux now commonplace in a struggling industry, with its shrinking bottom lines and rosters, but the Fountains’ record-collecting, power-pop-adoring fans (guys who “live in Hoboken and run record shops,” as Collingwood describes them) don’t want to hear about corporate trends. Talk to FOW admirers and you’ll hear the same question again and again: *Why isn’t this band famous yet?*

“Who’s to say?” answers Iha. “Maybe they haven’t fit into the trends of the time. They’ll have their fans, regardless. They’re making their own cottage industry.”

TO UNDERSTAND WHY ANYONE WOULD OBSESS OVER ALT-rock castaways, you might take a trip to Queens or, specifically, the suburban wonderland illuminated on Fountains of Wayne’s neglected 1999 album, *Utopia Parkway*. On its 14 songs, the outskirts of New York—including Coney Island and the Jersey shore—are portrayed as a Shangri-la teeming with wistful prom attendees, tattoo-seeking .38 Special fans, and a knee-weakening Liberty Travel agent named Denise. The people are instantly recognizable, and thanks to a brew of pop influences (the Kinks, the Cars, the Beach Boys), the hooks instantly memorable.

“The songs are character studies,” says Steve Yegelow, the former Atlantic A&R rep who signed the band to its first deal. “They’re not necessarily the most flattering portraits, but...there’s sympathy there.”

Yegelow first heard the Fountains under ideal circumstances: driving around on a warm afternoon in ’96, windows down and the band’s four-song demo blaring. By then Schlesinger and Collingwood had been writing together for years, having teamed up at Massachusetts’ Williams College in the late ’80s. Collingwood, a native of Bucks County, Pa., was into British art-pop like the Smiths’; Schlesinger, from Montclair, N.J. (the band got their name from a fountain and lawn-ornament shop in Wayne, N.J., not far from there), favored the big-chorus bravado of U2. But they proved to be an effective partnership, spending hours hanging out, jotting song names on bar napkins and challenging each other to write a song around them.

“Sometimes you just have a title that you try to use,” says Schlesinger, “or else [you] free-associate a few lines, see what it suggests, and try to turn them into a story.”

Impressed by the results, Yegelow secured the guys a slot on Atlantic imprint Seed Records, which folded just before their 1996 self-titled debut was released. Still, “Radiation Vibe” took off, and an arena tour with the Smashing

Pumpkins helped the album sell a respectable 118,000 copies—enough to inspire high expectations for the follow-up. “Everyone hoped they’d expand on that fan base,” Yegelow says. They didn’t.

Despite critical laurels and a bounty of potential hit singles, the buoyant *Utopia Parkway* couldn’t have been more out of tune with modern-rock avatars of the time, like Korn and Limp Bizkit. It didn’t help that Yegelow left Atlantic even before *Parkway*’s release. Just as the band was ending a near-yearlong tour in December 1999, the label decided not to renew its contract.

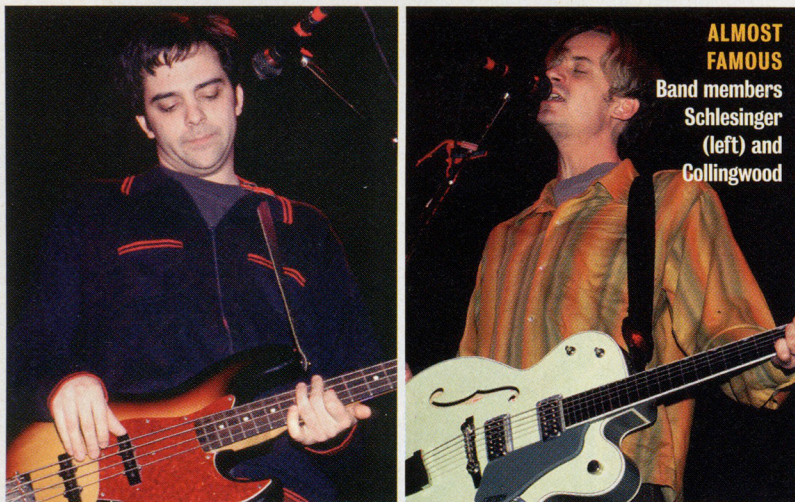
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Burnt out by touring, Collingwood returned to Boston and his pre-FOW gig as a computer technician; Schlesinger produced records by, among others, the Verve Pipe. It was their longest hiatus. “We’ve played together since we were 18,” Schlesinger says. “We knew we’d eventually gear up again.”

Inspiration arrived, strangely enough, courtesy of old Atlantic allies. In summer 2001, a former label executive asked them to write tunes for VH1’s upcoming animated sitcom *Hey Joel*. An offer to score Comedy Central’s *Crank Yankers* shortly followed. The TV work paid well enough to finance *Welcome Interstate Managers* sessions, and the band began shopping its new demo—cautiously.

As luck would have it, Yegelow had just started at a boutique label called S-Curve and signed FOW this past winter. And though he’s confident there’s still an audience for catchy rock & roll (the album is due June 3), it’ll take more than killer choruses and, by comparison with the big machinery at Atlantic, the modest marketing muscle of S-Curve to regain a footing in the era of wankstas and skankstas. No one knows this better than the Fountains themselves.

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+ ANDREW W.K.
The Vans Warped Tour



MUDVAYNE +
Summer Sanitarium Tour



+ THE ROAD RAGERS



LOLLAPALOOZA

After a five-year hiatus, Lollapalooza—the trendsetting nexus of alt-rock, burritos, and piercing booths—is back. Cofounder **Perry Farrell** resurrected the festival with an all-star lineup that includes a Jane's Addiction reunion and L.A.-based punks the Distillers, fronted by **Brody Armstrong**.

Who's the best-dressed rock star in history?

BRODY Elvis Presley.

PERRY I'd say David Bowie.

How do you prep for a tour?

PERRY I start rehearsing today.

BRODY I've just been coughing up blood.

Who do you want to hang with on tour?

BRODY Perry.

PERRY Brody.

Favorite concession stand?

BRODY [to Perry] Is there a cotton-candy concession?

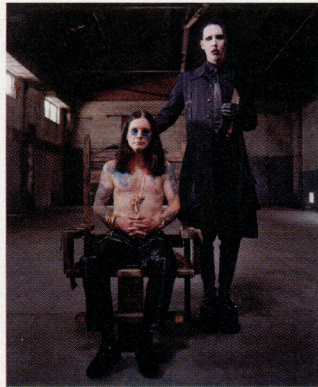
PERRY I'll work on it.

Craziest thing you've seen from the stage?

PERRY I once saw my bass player pee on the monitors.

BRODY I can't beat that.

Lollapalooza, which also includes Audioslave and Queens of the Stone Age, pierces Grand Rapids, Mich., July 3 and wraps like a burrito Aug. 23 in Seattle. (lollapalooza.com)



OZZFEST

For this year's Ozzfest, **Marilyn Manson** plans to dress like "Oscar Wilde at the Nuremberg rallies." **Ozzy Osbourne's** band includes ex-Metallica bassist Jason Newsted (of whom the Ozzman sayeth, "He reminds me of a young Geezer Butler") but little flash. How does he intend to compete? "I'm Ozzy." He's got you there, Manson.

Who's the best-dressed rock star in history?

MARILYN Bowie always had a great sense of style. Also Jim Morrison. James Brown. Elvis.

How do you prep for a tour?

OZZY I run up to six miles daily.

MARILYN I don't like to run unless I'm being chased.

Which Ozzfesters are you looking forward to seeing?

MARILYN I'll laugh watching them get mopped up by me. Other than Ozzy, of course.

OZZY I'll probably see Marilyn, a bit of Korn.

Most personal thing you bring on tour?

OZZY Me. And I always take a crucifix. I've got lots of them.

MARILYN My cat, Lilly.

Ozzfest also features Disturbed, Chevelle, and the Datsuns. It ignites in San Antonio June 28 and rages into West Palm Beach, Fla., Aug. 28. (ozzfest.com)



WARPED TOUR

At first, **Andrew W.K.** seems a little too metal and *way* too disco for the punky Warped Tour. But it's all about the attitude. He describes his upcoming CD as "pure unadulterated triumph, unmitigated glory, absolute complete euphoria, melodic ecstasy, and true human victory." Now *that's* punk rock.

Who's the best-dressed rock star in history?

ZZ Top and Michael Jackson.

Stevie Nicks had cool clothes—all those gowns and stuff.

CDs/movies/videogames you'll bring on tour?

Two Towers, *Sorcerer's Stone*, Leslie Nielsen movies, *Seinfeld*, *Simpsons* tapes. The new *TranzWorld* CD.

Favorite things about summer festivals?

It's a whole day completely and perfectly organized to facilitate fun. Everyone's there with one goal in mind, focused.

Favorite concession stand?

I like to watch people get their tongues pierced. Mine's not pierced, but it's crazy to watch. Their eyes get all watery.

The Warped Tour, also with AFI and Rancid, revs up June 19 in Boise and ends Aug. 10 in Asbury Park, N.J. (warpedtour.com)



SUMMER SANITARIUM

Maybe you caught your first glimpse of **Mudvayne**, with bullet wounds in their heads, at the 2001 MTV VMAs. Or on tour in bloody bunny suits. As bug-eyed aliens? In any case, expect to be surprised when the band plays Summer Sanitarium. "We tone it down a bit now," says frontman **Chüd**, "but for us, going on stage [out of costume] is as shocking as it was to go on with bullet holes."

Who's the best-dressed rock star in history?

Gene Simmons. Badass. Actually, Elvis over Gene Simmons.

Craziest thing you've seen from the stage?

A beer bottle coming at my face from the 15th row.

CDs/movies/videogames you'll bring on tour?

Gummo and CDs by King Crimson, Elvis, Foo Fighters.

Strangest thing you pack?

I don't change often when I'm on tour. I have a real problem with bathing.

Favorite on-the-road food?

Pedialyte and Nature Valley peanut-butter bars. I love 'em.

Summer Sanitarium, with Metallica, Limp Bizkit, and Linkin Park, checks in July 4 in Detroit, and out Aug. 10 in San Francisco. (metallica.com/tour)

CREDITS (FARRELL & ARMSTRONG) STYLING: ALEXANDRA KEELING/ARTISTSBYTIMOTHYPRIANO.COM; PROP STYLING: ED MURPHY/SMASHBOXAGENCY.COM; ARMSTRONG'S HAIR & MAKEUP: ALLISON BURNS; FARRELL'S GROOMING: LINDA SAMMUT; ARMSTRONG'S DRESS: VINTAGE PROM DRESS; FARRELL'S PANTS AND SHIRT: DOLCE & GABBANA; TIE: DEMI TIE; BELT: ALLISON BURNS; PRODUCED BY EMILY ROTH; (OSBOURNE & MANSON) STYLING: DEDA COBAN; PROP STYLING: ED MURPHY/SMASHBOXAGENCY.COM; GROOMING: EDEN ORFANDS; PRODUCED BY EMILY ROTH; (ANDREW W.K.) PROP STYLING: SABINE TUCKER; GROOMING: BY JENN STREICHER/ARTISTSBYTIMOTHYPRIANO.COM; (MUDVAYNE) STYLING: ALEXANDRA KEELING/ARTISTSBYTIMOTHYPRIANO.COM; PROP STYLING: ED MURPHY/SMASHBOXAGENCY.COM; MAKEUP & BODY PAINTING: LISA RUCKH/CELESTINEAGENCY.COM; HAIR: CECILIA ROMERO/CELESTINEAGENCY.COM; PRODUCED BY EMILY ROTH; R-D'S TRUNKS: VINTAGE; ROBE: MISSONI; CHÜD'S SHORTS: STÜSSY; SHIRT: P. GRAHAM; SUNGLASSES: VINTAGE; SPÜG'S PANTS: ORLANDO; GÜDÜG'S SHORTS: RUSTY; SHIRT: P. GRAHAM; ALL CLOTHES AT BLOOMINGDALE'S, L.A., AND ZJ BOARDING HOUSE, SANTA MONICA

CALENDAR [TOURS]

...AND WHEN YOU COME OUT OF **WARPED** DRIVE, CHECK OUT THESE UPCOMING **GIGS** AND **GATHERINGS**



BECK

+ FESTIVALS

FORECAST: PARTLY CROWDY WITH A HIGH HEAT INDEX

CMA'S FAN FAIR (Nashville)

LINEUP INCLUDES Blake Shelton, Darryl Worley, Vince Gill, Alan Jackson, Lonestar, Martina McBride, Patty Loveless, Billy Gilman
THE SKINNY Round up the cowboys and girls! This family-friendly event has everything from bluegrass and alt-country to Billy Ray Cyrus. (6/5-6/8)

FIELD DAY MUSIC FESTIVAL

(Calverton, N.Y.)
LINEUP INCLUDES Radiohead, Beastie Boys, Beck, Sigur Rós, Blur, the Roots, Beth Orton, Interpol, the Streets, N.E.R.D., the Music
THE SKINNY Long Island flexes its music muscle with two days of 40-plus performers.

WHAT YOU'LL SEE Radiohead glamming it up with new stage and lighting technology, plus the Beasties doing a straight hip-hop set, according to crew member Adam Yauch.

WHAT THEY SAY Unless you're "color-blind and hard-of-hearing," Radiohead bassist Colin Greenwood thinks you'll get your money's worth. (6/7-6/8)

BONNAROO MUSIC FESTIVAL

(Manchester, Tenn.)
LINEUP INCLUDES The Dead, Widespread Panic, Neil Young & Crazy Horse, James Brown, the Allman Brothers Band, the Flaming Lips, the Roots, Emmylou Harris, Sonic Youth
THE SKINNY Rock, jazz, funk, indie, and hip-hop artists invade the South.
WHAT TO EXPECT Although there'll be well over 60 acts, Dead bassist Phil Lesh insists fans should expect "a full-on

four-hour Dead show." Adds Dead guitarist Bob Weir, "I'd be surprised if we didn't cook up something, but if I told you, it wouldn't be a surprise." (6/13-6/15)

SNAPPLE SUNSET MUSIC FESTIVAL (Newport, R.I.)

LINEUP INCLUDES Ben Folds, Cheap Trick, Livingston Taylor, the Blind Boys of Alabama
THE SKINNY You'll be hard-pressed to find a screaming guitar during any one of these six days of laid-back pop, folk, and gospel. (7/1-7/6)

ESSENCE MUSIC FESTIVAL

(New Orleans)
LINEUP INCLUDES Erykah Badu, Musiq, P. Diddy and the Bad Boy Family, Jaheim, Stevie Wonder, Chaka Khan, Nappy Roots, Smokey Robinson, Anita Baker, Heather Headley, Nelly, Babyface
THE SKINNY Neo-soul crooners perform alongside their idols in the Big Easy.
WHO THEY'LL BE WATCHING Jaheim can't wait to bounce to Carl Thomas and the Bad Boy Family while Musiq expects heaven and earth to collide when Chaka Khan gets on

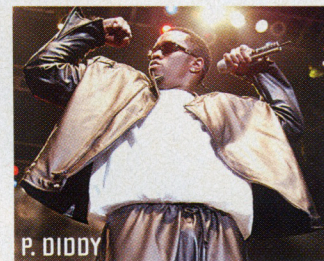


EMMYLOU HARRIS

stage: "She's a living legend. Her voice is God's proof that there are angels." (7/3-7/5)

MOONDANCE JAM (Walker, Minn.)

LINEUP INCLUDES Alice Cooper, Sammy Hagar, Joe Cocker, Rick Springfield, Joan Jett
THE SKINNY If sitting around a campfire and jamming to



P. DIDDY

Lou Gramm fluffs your mullet, this is your dream '80s-nostalgia fest. (7/9-7/12)

ROCK FEST (Cadott, Wis.)

LINEUP INCLUDES Whitesnake, Twisted Sister, Heart, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Def Leppard
THE SKINNY If you thought *Totally Pauly* was a way of life, head over—and if Wisconsin runs out of Aqua Net, we'll know why. (7/17-7/20)

HOBSTOCK 2003

(Carroll County, Miss.)
LINEUP INCLUDES Widespread Panic, Les Claypool's Frog Brigade, moe., Gov't Mule, North Mississippi Allstars, Medeski Martin and Wood
THE SKINNY Hobgood Farms plays host to thousands of camping Southern rock fans pretending they were all raised in a barn. (7/18-7/20)



NORAH JONES

MUSIKFEST (Bethlehem, Pa.)
LINEUP INCLUDES Melissa Etheridge, the B-52's, Earth, Wind & Fire, Martina McBride, the Beach Boys, Jars of Clay with Sixpence None the Richer, Jethro Tull
THE SKINNY More than 300 stars light up Bethlehem with an array of street performances and main-stage acts. (8/1–8/10)

BONNAROO NE (Riverhead, N.Y.)
LINEUP INCLUDES Dave Matthews and Tim Reynolds, Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, the Dead, Bob Dylan, the Flaming Lips, Talib Kweli, Yo La Tengo
THE SKINNY It's the Northeast version of the Tennessee-based show. (8/8–8/10)

BUMBERSHOOT, THE SEATTLE ARTS FESTIVAL (Seattle)
LINEUP INCLUDES R.E.M., Solomon Burke, Nickel Creek, Karsh Kale, Chuck Prophet
THE SKINNY Acrobats, poets, painters, and comedians mix with music heavyweights at the Pacific Northwest's biggest Labor Day party. (8/29–9/1)

AUSTIN CITY LIMITS MUSIC FESTIVAL (Austin)
LINEUP INCLUDES Liz Phair, Ben Harper, Jack Johnson, Lucinda Williams, Al Green, Rosanne

Cash, G. Love & Special Sauce
THE SKINNY Maybe everything is bigger in Texas: eight stages and a bill that's a Who's Who of cult faves. (9/19–9/21)

+ HEADLINERS

SEEING YOUR FAVORITE BAND IS THE REAL AMERICAN IDYLL



CHRISTINA AGUILERA

+ MAY

BECK The pop chameleon kicks off his summer *Sea Change* tour in Northampton, Mass., with a string of North American dates (5/25–6/27)... **CHER** Her "farewell tour" goes on and on (5/25–8/31)... **COLDPLAY** with **RON SEXSMITH** The busy Brits end the U.S. leg of their world tour in NYC (5/25–6/13)... **DIXIE CHICKS** with **JOAN OSBORNE** and **MICHELLE BRANCH** Clamorous cowgirls saddle up for their Top of the World Tour (5/25–8/4)... **THE DONNAS** (5/25–8/23)... **MATCHBOX TWENTY** with **SUGAR RAY**

and **MAROON 5** (5/25–7/6)...
RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS (on first leg) with **THE MARS VOLTA** and **QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE**; (on second leg) with **THE MARS VOLTA** and **SNOOP DOGG** Now on the menu: Chili con Eclectic Mix of Fan Favorites (5/25–6/21)... **THE EAGLES** (5/25–7/25)... **FLEETWOOD MAC** The Mac are back to support *Say You Will*, their first album of new material in 16 years (5/25–7/26)... **PEARL JAM** (5/28–7/14)... **JAMES TAYLOR** (5/25–10/18).

+ JUNE

CHRISTINA AGUILERA and **JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE** The dirty girl heads out with the new prince of pop on a tour that'll really tick Britney off (6/4–8/24)...
LUCINDA WILLIAMS Heartland heartbreaker warbles in support of her latest disc, *World Without Tears* (6/4–8/10)...
NORAH JONES Grammy hot-shot tours theaters across the country with material from last year's *Come Away With Me* (6/6–8/16)... **LL COOL J** and **DRU HILL** (6/5–6/22)... **PETER GABRIEL** (6/7–7/2)... **SANTANA** (6/11–7/14)... **BO DIDDLEY** with **THE DEBBY HASTINGS BAND** (6/12–9/6)... **DAVE MATTHEWS BAND** (6/17–9/20).

+ JULY

PHISH Vermont jam band sets out to make an all-new set of bittersweet motel experiences (7/7–8/3)... **COUNTING CROWS** and **JOHN MAYER** (7/7–9/2)...
BON JOVI with **SHERYL CROW**, then **THE GOO GOO DOLLS** (7/11–8/8)... **BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN** AND **THE E STREET BAND** The Boss lets everyone know who really runs things in Jersey with 10 shows at Giants Stadium alone (7/15–9/25)... **B.B. KING** and **JEFF BECK** (7/25–9/6)...
RINGO STARR AND HIS ALL STARR BAND (7/26–9/7).

+ AUGUST

AEROSMITH and **KISS** The combo platter of these '70s-rock rowdies just might be summer's hottest ticket. Aerosmith axman Joe Perry admits he's no stranger to Kiss' notorious stage antics: "We go back a long way. When they were first coming up, they opened for us once or twice," he recalls. Excited at the prospect of prolonging the re-

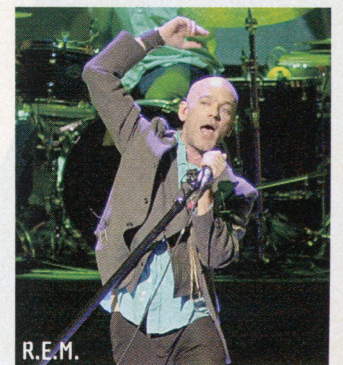


BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

gal reunion, Perry adds: "We're gonna tour with Kiss as long as we can do it. I think it's gonna be a riot." **SALIVA** will also be on board for what Perry imagines will become "a three-ring circus." (8/2–10/18)

+ also this SUMMER

R.E.M., on staggered dates with **WILCO**, **ED HARCOURT**, and **SPARKLEHORSE** Alterna-rock patriarchs kick off their first tour in four years at Seattle's Bumbershoot fest in support of their greatest-hits set. (9/1–10/11)



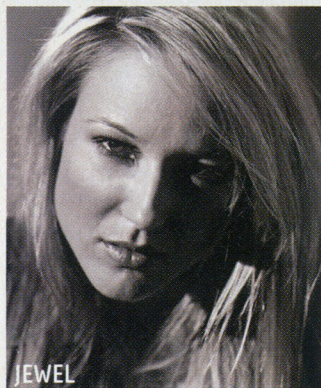
R.E.M.

CALENDAR (ALBUMS)

NEW OFFERINGS FROM **ASHANTI** TO **ZEVON** JUST MIGHT CURE THOSE SUMMERTIME BLUES

+ JUNE

JEWEL 0304 Meet Jewel Kilcher, dance diva. The erstwhile poetess has jettisoned her folkie roots to make a groovalicious pop album with producer Lester Mendez, who has previously worked with Shakira and Enrique Iglesias. As bizarre as the move seems, "Intuition," the new album's slinky, sardonic first single, is grabbing radio play—so maybe Jewel's new



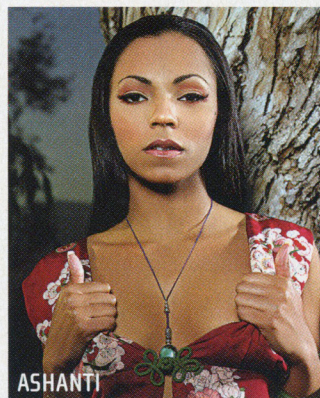
direction will save her career, if not her soul (*June 3*)....

TRAIN My Private Nation By teaming up with vet producer Brendan O'Brien (Pearl Jam), the middle-aged purveyors of 2001's Über-catchy megahit "Drops of Jupiter" aim to keep Train on its unlikely track (*June 3*).... **STEELY DAN Everything Must Go** Twenty years had passed between the last two Steely Dan records, but Walter Becker and Donald Fagen cranked out their latest offering in a quick three years. The album has



more of a live-band feel than 2000's *Two Against Nature*, but other than that, not much has changed. "We're fundamentally trying to do the same thing," says Becker. "Find cool, funny sad little songs and make cookin' little tracks of 'em" (*June 10*)....

JUSTIN GUARINI TBA The curl-flaunting *American Idol* runner-up hopes to shed his G-rated image on his tentatively self-titled debut, which includes production and songwriting by Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds. "I think, on this album, I've explored my sensual side," says Guarini. "People haven't seen that side of me." Um, that's because we were too busy looking at his hair



(*June 10*).... **ANNIE LENNOX Bare** Lennox sings the sorrow on 11 achingly beautiful tracks about ending a relationship. Being bereft never sounded so good (*June 10*).... **BLU CANTRELL Bittersweet** Love's got everything to do with Cantrell's sophomore disc, and from the sound of it, 2001's "Hit 'Em Up Style (Oops!)" was only the beginning of her exorcise regimen

(*June 24*).... And look for albums from: **EELS... FOUNTAINS OF WAYNE... JOHN MELLENCAMP... MOGWAI... WILLIE NELSON... DA BRAT... KENNY G.**

+ JULY

ASHANTI Chapter II The soundtrack for a season's worth of backyard barbecues. Ashanti brings the flavor of 1970s and '80s R&B, including a cover of Love and



+ MARY J. BLIGE Love & Life

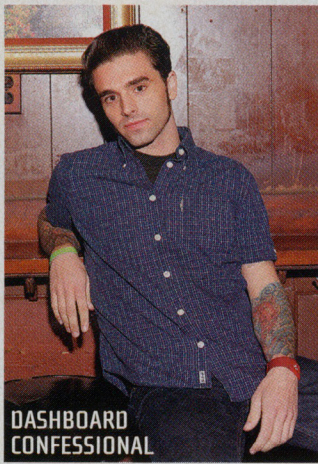
"When I said 'No More Drama,' I meant that," says Blige, reflecting on her emotional 2001 single and the struggles it evoked. Thankfully, it wasn't called "No More Music": The R&B goddess is back with a time-traveling album mostly produced by P. Diddy, who launched her career in the early '90s. *Life* also includes guest spots by 50 Cent and Jay-Z. "It feels like a 2003 version of *What's the 411?*," she says, recalling the classic 1992 disc she made with Diddy. "He's still the same Puff, I'm still the same Mary, but we've grown up in a lot of areas and that made it an even better experience." (*Aug. 26*)

Kisses' "I Found Love (Now That I Found You)" (July 1)... **MACY GRAY** *The Trouble With Being Myself* The daffy diva keeps the R&B and funk crunk with old-school assists from horns, strings, and on-a-mission bass lines (July 15)... **JANE'S ADDICTION** *Strays* Frontman Perry Farrell proves as resilient as ever, reviving the moribund Lollapalooza tour and recording the first new Jane's album since 1990, with guitarist Dave Navarro, drummer Stephen Perkins, and new bassist Chris Chaney (Andrew W.K., Rob Zombie) (July 22)... **BABYFACE** *Love Story* The veteran R&B hit-maker aims to exert whip



MACY GRAY

appeal yet again on this silky set, including the appropriately steamy first single, "We Can't Stop Now," and a



DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL

duet with Blu Cantrell (July 22)... **GAVIN DeGRAW** *Chariot* This 26-year-old singer-songwriter's debut glides from Jeff Buckley sweetness to Counting Crows melodic dishevelment to blues hues, with guitarist Michael Ward (the Wallflowers) and drummer Joey Waronker (Beck) along for the ride (July 22)... **DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL** *A Mark, a Mission, a Brand, a Scar* Judging from the title, Dashboard and tattoo-sleeved frontman Chris Carrabba have no intention of abandoning the raw emo whinery of 2001's *The Places You Have Come to Fear the Most*. Brit producer Gil Norton (the Pixies, Foo Fighters) joins the pity party (July 29)... **RODNEY CROWELL** *Fate's Right Hand* Roots music that wanders

+ MICHELLE BRANCH *Hotel Paper*

A year before Avril showed up, Michelle Branch's "Everywhere" made *TRL* safe for singer-songwriters. While her debut CD, *The Spirit Room*, hedged bets with dance beats and other fripperies, *Paper* is meant to be rootsier and more personal. "My biggest thing was less is more," says Branch. "I wanted minimal drum loops, minimal noises, and minimal noodling." With lyrics about "seeing the world on my own for the first time," and songs influenced by the likes of Bonnie Raitt and Aimee Mann, *Paper* is Branch's bid for grown-up cred: "I just want people to be able to say, 'You know what, she's an artist.'" (June 24)



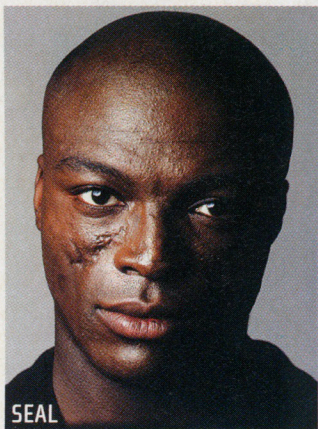
+ RADIOHEAD *Hail to the Thief*

"I'm backsliding," Thom Yorke moans on his band's first disc in two years—and he's not kidding. After the one-two punch of 2000's *Kid A* and 2001's *Amnesiac*—on which the group ditched guitars for glitchy drum machines and reverberant keyboards—*Thief* finds Radiohead at least occasionally sounding like rockers again. "When I listen to it, I'm reminded of all my favorite Radiohead things," says bassist Colin Greenwood. And if *Thief* sounds less gloomy and more danceable than usual, blame it on the bright lights of Los Angeles. Notes Greenwood: "This is the first record we recorded in sunshine." (June 10)

existential byways ("Come On Funny Feeling"), targets political conflicts ("It's a Different World"), and describes the emotional vulnerability that comes with parenting ("Adam's Song") (July 29)... And look for albums from: **BEYONCÉ... BOW WOW... SPYMOB... MYSTIC.**

+ AUGUST

RAVEONETTES *Chain Gang of Love* The Danish noise-pop duo's first full-length album flaunts at least one major difference from last year's EP, *Whip It On*: All of the songs are recorded in the key of B-flat major, instead of the less radio-friendly B-flat minor. "It's a lot more poppy, a lot more easy and accessible," says singer-guitarist Sune Rose Wagner, citing the not-exactly-accourant influences of the Everly Brothers and Buddy Holly. Hey, at least horn-rims are still in style (Aug. 12)... **SEAL** *Seal* For his first album since 1998's *Human Being*, Seal—one of the few artists to achieve stardom in



SEAL

spite of scardom—reunites with “Kiss From a Rose” producer Trevor Horn. (Aug. 12)... **JESSICA SIMPSON** In the 5kin Simpson penned all but two of the songs on the carnally knowledgeable *Skin*. If only in name, first single “Sweetest Sin” evokes the mark of Sade; it was actually written by Diane Warren (Aug. 19)....

THE BENS TBA Former Radish frontman Ben Kweller, Australian crooner Ben Lee, and pop singer-songwriter Ben Folds don't have a lot in common—except, ya know, the whole Ben thing. Still, that was enough for these musical adventurers to take time out from their solo careers to collaborate on an as-yet-untitled EP. Keep an eye on the artists' individual websites: That's where the album will be released

this summer (Aug. 19).... **JC CHASEZ** TBA The first album from the 'N Syncer encompasses an eclectic mix of dirty-pop genres, mostly driven by a live band. “I've kind of covered the whole scope. I've done dance-type stuff mixed with retro '80s stuff, mixed with R&B/hip-hop stuff,” says Chasez. As for matching bandmate Justin Timberlake's solo success: “That guy's a superstar. I'm just gonna do my thing” (Aug. 26).... Also look for albums from: **GUIDED BY VOICES... ROBERT RANDOLPH AND THE FAMILY BAND.**



LUDACRIS

+ also this SUMMER

AEROSMITH *Untitled Blues* Album Aerosmith guitarist Joe Perry reveals that he first heard the blues via the Rolling Stones and the Yardbirds. But his band's new



+ **OUTKAST** *Speakerboxx/The Love Below*

To follow up 2000's *Stankonia*, one of the most critically acclaimed hip-hop albums in recent memory, the Atlanta duo took their time creating this ambitious two-CD set, with one disc (*Speakerboxx*) concocted by Big Boi, the other (*The Love Below*) by Dre. “Mine is more hip-hop-based,” says Big Boi. “Dre's doing more funk-based stuff.” While Big Boi's disc features Jay-Z and Goodie Mob, Dre's includes a solitary, if unlikely, guest: Norah Jones. “It's still a unified front,” Big Boi adds; he and Dre produced tracks and rapped on each other's discs. “This is just our way of telling two perspectives of the story.” (Aug. 19)

release—which will mix such 12-bar classics as “Baby Please Don't Go” with like-minded originals—will attempt to demonstrate that the rockers have since absorbed the real thing. Still, says Perry, don't expect a PBS special: “We're not out there all of a sudden wearing our Blues Brothers suits, saying ‘Everybody get serious now.’ It's just

gonna be a party record”.... **LUDACRIS** *Chicken & Beer* What else would a follow-up to 2001's multiplatinum-selling *Word of Mouf*—with its rooster-referencing “Saturday (Oooh Oooh!)”—be called? (September)... **CEE-LO** *Cee-Lo Green Is the Soul Machine* “My integrity and my intuition tell me that it is a crime to go in the same direction twice,” says the Hotlanta hip-hopper. Thus, a distinctly rap follow-up to his more eclectic minded *Perfect Imperfections* (September).... **BUBBA SPARXXX** *Deliverance* Everybody's favorite obese Southern white rapper is back. Mentor and producer Timbaland (Missy Elliott, Aaliyah) is still on board, but we have a sneaking suspicion that he took this project just to prove he could make *anybody* a star.

+ **WARREN ZEVON** *The Wind*

Spending time with a CD that mirrors mortality is not easy. But do you listen to Zevon, who was diagnosed with inoperable lung cancer last year, because you like facile things? We didn't think so. You know where you're headed with the cover of “Knockin' on Heaven's Door,” but songs like “Keep Me in Your Heart” (lyrics: “Shadows are fallin', and I'm runnin' out of breath”) are too beautiful to guard yourself against. “I kept a soldier's face,” coproducer, cowriter, and Zevon pal Jorge Calderón says of making *The Wind*. “I wanted to keep him exhilarated and happy about the creative process. And he was.” (August)

