Music companies of all stripes ended 2021 healthier and more hopeful than the previous year, when touring stopped, advertisers shunned radio and the global economy teetered on the brink of ruin — although as a whole their stock prices did not provide evidence of a turnaround.

Among the stocks of 20 companies for which music is a significant portion of their business, 11 ended the year in negative territory, averaging a 3.7% decline in market value.

Five of the 20 stocks fed investors' appetite for music's streaming-led rebound by debuting on public markets in 2021 (meaning their gain or loss in 2021 came from less than a year of trading): Universal Music Group, Believe Digital, Reservoir Media, Vivid Seats and Cloud Village (the latter two went public through SPACS, or special purpose acquisition companies, rather than initial public offerings). But only one of the five, UMG, finished the year in positive territory following a high-profile public listing that attracted worldwide attention. In 2019, UMG was valued at roughly $33 billion after an investment by Chinese tech company Tencent. At the end of 2021, with its stock 13.7% above its Sept. 21 IPO price, UMG had a $51.1 billion market value, making it the world's largest music company.

Ironically, the companies most responsible for the major labels' good fortunes had the worst year on Wall Street. Spotify and Tencent Music began the year with a combined market value of $91.7 billion and $13.4 billion in annual revenues. Although their 2021 revenues will likely grow by double digits in 2021, their combined market value fell 38.2% to $56.7 billion by Dec. 31. Including the two companies, the combined market capitalization of the 20 music stocks grew by 6% in 2021. Removing the two music streamers, their combined value rose 22.6%.

As the common refrain goes, the stock market is not the economy. Neither is an individual stock the same thing as an industry within an economy. Instead, a stock price reflects investors' latest expectations about a company's growth and profitability. In the early days of the 2020 lockdown, for example, a spike in sales of Peloton's indoor cycle caused the stock to jump 440% in 2020. Such a large increase would be justified if COVID-19 made a lasting change in how—and where—people exercise. In the fourth quarter,
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RENEWAL

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"Strings’ high level of musicianship and lyrical sincerity are the kind that defies the boundaries of time and genre." SPIN

"In a word, Strings simply soars." songwriter

"...there’s a heaviness to the chord progressions and lyrics that speaks to his love of metal." Rolling Stone
however, analysts slashed their price targets, and slowing sales caused Peloton to cut the price of its original equipment (the company has other products and sells subscriptions for online workouts). The shine also wore off two other pandemic darlings, Spotify and Tencent Music, although for different reasons.

Spotify had a standout year on paper: in the nine-month period ended Sept. 30, the company's revenue climbed 26.6% year-over-year to 2.5 billion euros ($2.9 billion), while subscribers grew 19.4% year over year. Like Peloton, Spotify was a winner during the 2020 lockdown after investors flocked to most any company with a streaming business benefitting from consumers' need for entertainment. But investors were also attracted to Spotify's aggressive podcast strategy that could fuel subscriber growth, improve on music's weak margins and keep Apple Music and other competitors at bay. Wall Street's enthusiasm pushed Spotify to an all-time high of $387.44 on Feb. 22, valuing the company at $74.2 billion. The glow didn't last, however. Despite a diligent effort to expand its influence, Spotify shares fell 37.7% and ended 2021 at $241.25, down 23.3% on the year.

Tencent Music, China's leading music streaming company, lost $21.4 billion of market value in 2021 amidst regulators' sweeping moves to reign in powerful technology companies with outsized commercial and social influence. In July, China's State Administration for Regulation ordered Tencent Music to cancel its exclusive licensing agreements with record labels that might lend an advantage over competitors. (The broad crackdown also ensnared parent company Tencent and ride-sharing service Didi, among other Chinese companies, for failing to report past merger activity for antitrust review. Separately, e-commerce giant Alibaba was fined $2.8 billion in April for preventing merchants from selling goods on its platform.)

Sensing an opportunity, NetEase raised $421 million by spinning off Cloud Village, which runs China's second-largest music streaming company, NetEase Cloud Music, on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange on Dec. 2. The possibility of a level playing field didn't help Cloud Village, however, and its share price fell 23.4% through the end of the month.

The six public companies that own intellectual property averaged a 12.3% share price increase in 2021. Sony, which received about 18% of its operating profit from its music division, grew 25% in 2021, no doubt helped by the halo effect of Universal's Sept. 21 public listing on the Euronext Amsterdam exchange. Sony's investors must have watched Vivendi's spinoff of Universal with keen interest, knowing its own standalone music division could nearly match UMG's $51.4 billion market value. Not that Sony intends to sell stakes in its labels and music publisher, but Universal's IPO helped investors better understand music companies' value and was a factor behind the 13.7% gain in Warner Music Group's stock price in 2021. That same investor zeal for music assets allowed Believe and Reservoir Media to go public in 2021 and helped shares of Hipgnosis Songs Fund and Round Hill Royalty Fund Ltd. enjoy low single-digit growth.

The greatest gainer in 2021 was Live Nation, whose stock price was battered after concerts were canceled and postponed in 2020. The concert promoter's market capitalization rose 62.9%, from $16.5 billion to $26.9 billion, in 2021, a signal that investors expect enough fans will turn out in 2022 and 2023 to rationalize a busy pipeline of touring artists eager to return to the live stage. That was a simple narrative until Nov. 5, when Live Nation shares reached $127.75 the afternoon before the Astroworld festival tragedy in Houston that left 10 people dead and more than 1,500 injured, according to legal claims filed in December. But it's also a surprisingly durable narrative. With Live Nation facing unknown legal liability, its share price dipped below $100 on Nov. 28. Despite the possibility of additional concert cancellations because of the omicron variant, Live Nation shares finished the year at $119.69, just 6.3% below the pre-Astroworld high mark.
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Moving into 2022, investors will need new narratives to help make sense of music companies’ post-COVID prospects. Take Warner Music’s recent 9.7% two-day slide following its earnings release on Nov. 15. BofA Securities analyst Jessica Reif Ehrlich lowered her price target from $53 to $42 due to expectations that a rebound in physical product sales—hurt by store closures in 2020 and touring disruptions extending to present day—will harm WMG’s margins.

Never mind that the streaming boom benefits WMG, too, and that there’s no indication physical sales growth will crowd out higher-margin streaming revenues. Instead, WMG’s share price moved because “COVID is a boon for content owners” was no longer the narrative. Likewise, Live Nation may find that investors need a newer storyline than “COVID has created a pent-up demand for live music.”

Music companies across the board are likely to excel in 2022. Whether or not their stocks soar is far less certain.

Grammys Move Show Date Amid Omicron Surge

The Recording Academy is postponing the 64th annual Grammy Awards due to the spreading COVID-19 omicron variant, the organization announced Wednesday (Jan. 5). The event was originally set for Jan. 31 at Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles, but will now move to spring—possibly April—sources say. It may take place in a different venue or even out of Los Angeles.

“After careful consideration and analysis with city and state officials, health and safety experts, the artist community and our many partners, the Recording Academy and CBS have postponed the 64th Annual GRAMMY Awards Show,” reads a joint statement from the Recording Academy and CBS. “The health and safety of those in our music community, the live audience, and the hundreds of people who work tirelessly to produce our show remains our top priority. Given the uncertainty surrounding the Omicron variant, holding the show on January 31 simply contains too many risks. We look forward to celebrating Music’s Biggest Night on a future date, which will be announced soon.”

This is the second year in a row that the Grammys have been postponed due to COVID-19. Last year’s show was originally set for Jan. 31, 2021, but on Jan. 5, 2021 it was delayed to March 14 due to a spike in COVID-19 cases in Los Angeles. At that time, the show was also relocated from Staples Center (the former name of Crypto.com Arena) to the nearby Los Angeles Convention Center, which allowed for less crowding.

Wednesday’s decision comes after several intense days and nights for the Recording Academy, the show’s producers, CBS, Crypto.com Arena and artist managers who have been locked in conversation about if the show should move. Sources tell Billboard that the Recording Academy tried to hold to the Jan. 31 date, in part because most of the talent had already been locked in, but that some managers felt it was better to move the show. Initially there were thoughts of moving to May or June, but that will conflict with when many artists are hopefully able to get back on the road. The only consensus right now is that the show will take place in the spring, sources say.

The academy and CBS are now tasked with trying to find an open date that works both in terms of finding a venue that can give the Grammys the several days it needs for set-up and rehearsals and the show, as well as one that works for CBS and doesn’t
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conflict with already scheduled premier television events, including other awards shows. The situation is complicated by venues, including Crypto.com Arena, that host NBA and NHL teams dealing with their teams possibly being in the playoffs in the spring and having to leave those dates open. Sources say that organizers are looking at a number of scenarios, in and outside of Los Angeles and also where artists would be comfortable going.

The 2021 show on March 14 was the latest in the calendar year that the Grammys have been held since 1972. If the 2022 Grammys slide into April, it would be the first time the Grammys have been held in that month since 1965, when the seventh annual Grammy Awards were held on April 13.

Trevor Noah, host of Comedy Central’s The Daily Show With Trevor Noah, hosted last year’s show and is also set to host this year’s show.

Recording Academy CEO Harvey Mason Jr. told Billboard late last year that the organization wanted to move back to full capacity, in part for the revenue from ticket sales that helps fund educational and advocacy efforts, as well as MusiCares. The academy lost that money last year with the scaled-down show.

The MusiCares gala, set for Jan. 29 at the Los Angeles Convention Center, and Clive Davis and the Recording Academy’s Pre-Grammy Gala, set for Jan. 30 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills are also postponed. Joni Mitchell is the person of the year honoree for the MusiCares gala. Rob Stringer, Sony Music Group chairman, is the 2022 Grammy Salute to Industry Icons recipient at the Pre-Grammy Gala.

The telecast will be produced by Fulwell 73 Productions for the Recording Academy. Ben Winston, Jesse Collins and Raj Kapoor are executive producers; Kapoor also serves as showrunner. Jeannae Rouzan Clay joins the team as co-executive producer.

Hamish Hamilton, who succeeded Louis J. Horvitz as director last year, is set to return as director for the second year.

This year’s Grammy nominations were announced on Nov. 23, 2021. Jon Batiste is the top nominee with 11 nods, followed by Doja Cat, H.E.R., and Justin Bieber with eight nods each. This year marks the first time that the Grammys have had 10 nominees in each of their so-called Big Four categories – album, record and song of the year plus best new artist.

### Access Industries to Sell $351M of Warner Music Group Stock

**BY GLENN PEOPLES**

Warner Music Group plans to sell 8.6 million shares of common stock at $41 per share on behalf of its controlling shareholder, Access Industries, the company announced Tuesday (Jan. 4). The offering is planned to take place Thursday and will raise about $351 million before underwriter discounts, commissions fees and expenses. WMG shares closed at $41.27 on Tuesday, down 3.9%.

Access Industries sold stock worth $1.85 billion in two previous Class A share sales: 70 million shares at $25 per share in the June 2020 initial public offering on the Nasdaq; and 2.3 million shares at $44 per share in Sept. 2021, according to company SEC filings. After the latest offering, Access will have recouped about two-thirds of its $3.3 billion investment in 2011 and still own more than 73.6% of WMG’s economic interest.

Because Access owns 100% of WMG’s Class B shares, which confer 20 votes to one vote per Class A share, it will have 98.2% of WMG’s voting interest after selling 8.6 million shares, according to the offering’s SEC filing. Because WMG is a “controlled company,” meaning a single party holds more than 50% of its voting power, it is exempt from certain requirements from Nasdaq corporate governance standards (e.g., a requirement to have independent board members). As a result, WMG investors have a limited ability to influence corporate matters such as mergers, stock sales or equity incentive plans. Thus far, however, WMG investors have little to complain about, as Tuesday’s $41.27 closing price is 65% above the $25 IPO price.

With record labels and publishers in heated competition for recorded music and publishing catalogs, WMG has used inexpensive debt rather than stock sales to raise money to purchase companies as well as recording rights and publishing catalogs. In just the last month, WMG has made two major acquisitions: Universal Music Group purchased David Bowie’s publishing catalog for $400 million and Warner Music Group sold $250 million of notes in November 2021. Separately, WMG’s October 2020 sale of $250 million of notes helped fund two acquisitions worth $338 million.

### Mitski Moves to Good Harbor After Sexual Harassment Claim Against Former Manager

**BY KRISTIN ROBINSON**

Mitski has left her longtime manager Chris Crowley for boutique artist services company Good Harbor. The firm – which also boasts Father John Misty, Hovvdy, Rostam and Lucy Dacus on its roster – quietly added the singer-songwriter’s name to its website over the holiday break.

News of Mitski’s management switch-up arrives less than a month after Billboard published a story about a sexual harassment complaint against Crowley, co-founder of Salty Management, by one of his young female hires. The woman’s complaint, made during a company-wide Zoom call, led to an immediate exodus of Salty’s other managers and soon after Salty Management’s co-founders decided to disband the business altogether. Crowley did not
On February 26th, *Billboard* will publish its highly anticipated Women in Music special issue, featuring top women in the music industry who are creating excitement and making their mark across labels, publishing and touring.

Coinciding with the issue, *Billboard’s* Women in Music awards ceremony will be held March 2nd. This event will bring together music’s most prominent female artists and the industry’s top female business executives to recognize and celebrate their achievements.

Take this opportunity to congratulate the most powerful and talented women in music and wish them continued success.

**CONTACT**

East Coast: Joe Maimone | joe.maimone@billboard.com.
Southeast: Lee Ann Photoglo | laphotoglo@gmail.com
Latin: Marci Olival | marciolival29@gmail.com
Touring & West Coast: Cynthia Mellow | cmellow.billboard@gmail.com
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respond to several requests for comments.

Prior to the story’s publication, Beach Bunny — a band previously co-managed by Crowley — left him after hearing about the situation from another manager at Salty, and some sources told Billboard they were not confident that Crowley’s other acts were fully aware of the reason behind the firm’s closure. Said one former Salty manager: “If you asked me to give you my word that [his artists] know the truth? No, absolutely not.”

On Dec. 27, Mitski’s Rolling Stone cover story revealed that Crowley was “currently transitioning out of the role of being Mitski’s manager,” according to the singer’s representative, but the identity of her new management team was not disclosed.

Another client of Crowley’s, singer-songwriter Miloe, confirmed to Billboard he is no longer being co-managed by Crowley. Other artists represented by Crowley have not returned requests for comment.

Good Harbor was started by Massachusetts-based Dalton Sim, who originally managed artists through a joint venture called Dalton Sim Management/Nettwerk Management from 1995 until he founded Good Harbor alongside Ben Levin in 2020. All of Sim’s and Levin’s original clients, including Fun, and Guster, migrated to Good Harbor alongside them.

Mitski is preparing for the release of her new album, Laurel Hell, set to drop on Feb. 4 via Dead Oceans, a division of Secretly Group.

Ted Gardner, Artist Manager and Lollapalooza Co-Founder, Dies at 74

Ted Gardner, a longtime artist manager who co-founded the Lollapalooza festival with Jane’s Addiction frontman Perry Farrell, died Dec. 28. He was 74.

“I’m sad to report Ted Gardner, Our manager passed away today surrounded by his loving family,” tweeted Anton Newcombe, whose band, The Brian Jonestown Massacre, has been managed by Gardner since 2004. “We will miss a great manager, mentor & friend. Our condolences to all his family & friends.”

A more than 40-year veteran of the music business, Gardner launched his career in his native Australia before going on to manage some of the biggest rock acts of the 1990s, including Jane’s Addiction, Tool and The Verve.

With Farrell, he helped invent the modern festival landscape with Lollapalooza, which launched to huge commercial success in 1991 and went on to host a who’s-who of ‘90s superstars including Nine Inch Nails, Soundgarden, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Pearl Jam, Hole, Snoop Dogg, The Smashing Pumpkins and Beastie Boys.

His skills were many and varied. He worked as a tour or production manager for the likes of Frank Zappa, UFO, New Order and Echo & the Bunnymen and, much later, guiding the careers of prog-metal outfit Floating Me and The Brian Jonestown Massacre, which featured prominently in the 2005 documentary Dig!

Gardner left his homeland for the United States in 1982 with Men at Work on the rock band’s national tour. The following year, Men at Work became the first Australian act to land a simultaneous U.S. No. 1 album and No. 1 single, with Business as Usual and “Down Under,” respectively.

From that point on, Gardner aimed high. “My father used to say to me: ‘when are you going to get a real job?’” he told Australia’s Scenestr in an interview published in 2017. “Then one year I came home from Lollapalooza with a check for $1.5 million and he looked at me and went, ‘yeah, but it’s not a real job, is it?’”

Along the way, Gardner had a falling out with Tool, which he represented from 1992 until May 2000. Gardner sued the band and their publishing company for $5 million for breach of contract and fraud in Nov. 2000, alleging they failed to pay him $500,000 in commissions.

Disillusioned with the music industry and, in particular, the major labels, he took a step back for 12 months in the mid-2000s. In January 2007, he returned to Australia revitalized, and started Cross Section Management and Records with Scott Mesiti.

Reflecting on his career for a 2011 interview published in Australia’s The Music Network, Gardner said the music industry presented no challenges that were too great.

“Jane’s were crazy. We all were. Tool were difficult in many aspects. But they knew what they wanted and they wouldn’t bend and (they understood) what had to be done. And you’d deal with it. They’re the artist. The manager is there to facilitate their desires, no matter how crazy it is,” he explained. “There were some crazy things I’d be asked to do and I’d just laugh, No one was really hard. I worked with John Lydon. That was not difficult. Although he was impossible to work with.”

His approach to management was a holistic one. “You’re a manager therefore you’re a mother, you’re a father, you’re a marriage guidance counsellor, you’re a priest, you’re there as a shoulder to cry on when the girlfriend leaves. You’re a drug counsellor, you’re someone that can bring someone back to life when they’ve OD’d in another room,” he explained in the same interview. “All of these aspects you go through. If you’re going to be involved with an artist, you have to take every facet of their life. You can’t go, ‘I’m dealing with just the business and I take my X percent.’ End of story.”
Bad Bunny’s Two-Day Concert in Puerto Rico Leads to Spike in COVID-19 Cases

BY GRISELDA FLORES

A surge in COVID-19 infections has overwhelmed Puerto Rico, with cases ballooning by 4,600% last month. Likely contributing to the spike: Bad Bunny’s two-day “P FKN R” concert in mid-December, where an estimated 2,000 people — 2.5% of the roughly 80,000 that attended the event — contracted the virus, according to The New York Times.

The sobering numbers come even after the event — which took place Dec. 10 and Dec. 11 at the Estadio Hiram Bithorn — followed strict COVID-19 protocols and safety measurements. The Noah Assad Presents and Move Concerts-produced concert required all concert attendees to show proof of COVID-19 vaccination or an official Vacu-Id provided by CESCO Digital. The promoters also implemented mandatory masks, even when on the field and during the concert. “Those who don’t wear a mask will be removed from the event and fined $100,” according to measures laid out by the organizers.

While people followed mask rules at the entrance and at the Bad Bunny Museum (located inside the stadium), on the event’s first night when Billboard was in attendance, the majority of attendees ditched their masks once at their seats. During that show, while event staff was strict about checking COVID-19 vaccination cards at the entrance, there was little enforcement of mask mandates within the venue.

Multiple videos posted on social media social also show people without masks, and on Tiktok people said they tested positive after attending the concert.

Holiday parties and family gatherings during the festive season also likely contributed to the increase in cases. According to Harvard University statistician Rafael Irizarry, one-third of Puerto Rico’s COVID-19 cases throughout the entirety of the pandemic occurred in December. Also, during that month, hospitalizations increased. Overall, about 75% of Puerto Rico’s population is fully vaccinated, a higher rate than California (68%) and New York state (72%), according to Johns Hopkins University.

Puerto Rico’s increase in COVID-19 cases coincides with a surge in coronavirus infections across the U.S. States such as New York, Florida, Illinois and California have also reported a spike in cases in just the past few weeks with the emergence of the highly contagious omicron variant.

Failed Iowa Music Festival Leads to Criminal Charges for Organizers

BY BILL DONAHUE

Two former Iowa tourism officials are facing federal bank fraud charges related to a failed 2018 music festival headlined by Maren Morris and Kelly Clarkson — and both plan to plead guilty.

In charges unveiled Tuesday, federal prosecutors say Aaron McCreight and Doug Hargrave used fraudulent misrepresentations to secure $700,000 in additional loans from a Cedar Rapids bank in order to finance Newbo Evolve, a three-day music and cultural event held in the city in August 2018.

The pair — executives at a local promotional group called Go Cedar Rapids — submitted inflated data about the event’s underwhelming ticket sales and projected revenues, according to charging documents, and lied to the bank that Newbo Evolve was expected to turn a small profit.

In reality, McCreight and Hargrave expected to lose more than $600,000, prosecutors say. The festival eventually lost more than $2 million, and was unable to repay most of the loan to the bank.

Both McCreight and Hargrave plan to plead guilty to a single charge of bank fraud, according to documents filed alongside Tuesday’s charges. In a statement to Billboard, an attorney for McCreight said he was a “good man” who made a “bad decision” under “extreme pressures.”

“His motive was not based in personal greed, but in an attempt to salvage the Newbo Evolve event for the Cedar Rapids community,” said attorney William White. “Had the event sold more tickets and been profitable, it is unlikely any prosecution would have ensued. However, that was not the case, and Mr. McCreight accepts his involvement in the lending bank losing money and is extremely remorseful.”

An attorney for Hargrave declined to comment when reached by Billboard.

If convicted, each man faces a possible maximum sentence of 30 years’ imprisonment, though their immediate guilty pleas likely mean they face far less prison time than that.

Pooh Shiesty Pleads Guilty to Federal Firearms Charge Linked to 2020 Hotel Shooting

BY BILL DONAHUE

Memphis rapper Pooh Shiesty is pleading guilty to a single criminal charge related to a 2020 shooting at a Florida hotel, as part of a plea agreement that will see federal prosecutors recommend an eight-year prison sentence.

According to a copy of the deal filed Tuesday (Jan. 4) in Miami federal court, Shiesty copped to one charge of conspiracy to possess a firearm in furtherance of violent and
drug-trafficking crimes. In return, prosecutors will drop three other counts, including a more serious charge that Shiesty fired the weapon himself.

Under the terms of the deal, prosecutors will seek only 97 months in prison for Shiesty, whose real name is Lontrell Williams. If convicted of all four counts, the rapper would have faced a far longer sentence; by itself, a federal charge of firing a gun in furtherance of a crime of violence carries a minimum 10-year sentence.

The charges against Williams stem from an October 2020 shooting at the Landon Hotel in Bay Harbor Islands, Fla. According to prosecutors, Williams and two others drove to the hotel to buy marijuana and a pair of high-end sneakers but eventually ended up shooting the sellers they were meeting. Both victims survived.

Williams was indicted in June on four counts related to the shooting. In addition to the charges of conspiracy to possess a firearm and discharging a firearm, he was also hit with two additional counts of robbery in violation of the federal Hobbs Act. The case had been scheduled for trial in October, when Williams notified the court that he wanted to reach a plea agreement. 

Importantly, Tuesday’s deal is not binding on the federal judge who will eventually sentence Williams. Prosecutors are merely recommending the 97-month sentence, and the judge could still hand down a harsher sentence. But judges typically give great weight to such recommendations by prosecutors. 

A date for sentencing has not yet been set. An attorney for Williams did not immediately return a request for comment. A spokeswoman for the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of Florida also did not respond to a request for comment. 

The incident at the Landon Hotel isn’t the only recent shooting linked to Williams. According to the Miami Herald, he was arrested in June for allegedly shooting a security guard in the leg at a local strip club during Memorial Day weekend. 

Federal prosecutors have said those charges are being handled by state authorities, and the status of that separate case is unknown. But as part of Tuesday’s plea agreement, Williams filed a document in which he admitted that he had “assaulted a victim with firearm at the King of Diamonds Gentleman’s Club” on May 30. 

**Music Retailer Bull Moose Sells Business to Employees**

**BY ASSOCIATED PRESS**

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — The longtime Maine-based music retailer **Bull Moose** is being sold to its 140 employees. 

The store said in a news release Tuesday that its founder, **Brett Wickard**, will stay on as interim CEO and chair of the board during the transition, the **Portland Press Herald** reported.

The chain has 11 locations in Maine and New Hampshire. Wickard opened the first store in Brunswick in 1989 when he was a student at Bowdoin College, the newspaper reported.

All locations of the store were closed Monday at 6 p.m. for a company meeting, the newspaper reported. 

**Live Nation-Partnered Water Brand Liquid Death Hooks Up $75M in New Funding**

**BY TAYLOR MIMS**

everage brand Liquid Death plans to grow the reach of its canned water thanks to a new $75 million Series C funding round led by venture capital firm Science Ventures. To date, the company says it has raised $125 million and reached a valuation of $525 million.

Additional partners in the Series C funding include PowerPlant Partners, Access Capital, Nomad Ventures and Live Nation, which signed a deal in May to make Liquid Death the exclusive water option at more than 120 of the promoter’s owned-and-operated venues and festivals across the U.S.

The Live Nation and Liquid Death partnership was developed through the promoter’s sustainability arm, Green Nation. Live Nation has set a goal of phasing out the sale of single-use plastics at all owned and operated venues and events, and Liquid Death packages its water in 16.9-ounce aluminum cans instead of plastic bottles.

Liquid Death donates 10% of the profits from every can sold to nonprofits that are helping reduce plastic-related pollution and bring clean drinking water to those in need. As of January 2022, the company has donated more than $1 million to non-profit organizations.

Launched in 2019, Liquid Death is now carried in more than 29,000 locations throughout the U.S., including bars, tattoo parlors, cafes and liquor stores. The non-alcoholic beverages are also available nationwide at Target, Wal-Mart, Whole Foods, 7-Eleven, Albertsons, Safeway, Sprouts Farmers Market and Publix.

The new round of funding will go toward massive retail expansion and new product lines, including new Liquid Death flavors, which will hit shelves in the coming months. According to the water brand, revenue has grown 300% every year since its launch, going from nearly $3 million in 2019 to just under $45 million in 2021.
Los Temerarios & Carlos Vives Postpone Their 2022 U.S. Tours Amid COVID-19 Surge

**BY GRISELDA FLORES**

Los Temerarios and Carlos Vives announced Wednesday (Jan. 5) that they’ve postponed their respective U.S. tours amid a surge in COVID-19 cases across the nation.

In an official press release shared on their social media channels, the Mexican grupero band said that due to the “critical situation,” they decided to postpone their 2022 tour — which was set to kick off Feb. 4 — and move it to 2023.

“At this moment, everyone’s health is top priority, and although we want to return to the stage and reunite with our fans, we don’t want to put anyone at risk,” Los Temerarios, led by brothers Gustavo and Adolfo Angel, wrote. Tickets purchased for the 2022 tour will remain valid for the new dates, which they’ll be announcing in the upcoming months, according to the post.

Meanwhile, Colombian star Vives also announced that his Después de todo ... Vives tour, which kicked off in December and was set to pick up Jan. 13 in Seattle, was postponed until further notice.

The Loud and Live-produced trek is being canceled for the time being to protect the public, artists and their teams. “This difficult decision has been made in a prudent manner to ensure the well-being and health of the entire community,” stated Nelson Albareda, CEO and founder of Loud and Live. New dates will be announced in the next few days, according to a press release, and tickets purchased will remain valid.

The emergence of the highly contagious Omicron variant has led to a spike in coronavirus infections across the U.S. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 206.6 million people in the U.S. have been fully vaccinated against the coronavirus, but the country still hit a record high on Jan. 3 with more than one million people diagnosed with COVID-19, according to data from the John Hopkins University.

Aaliyah’s Posthumous Album Coming This Month, Singer’s Uncle Says

**BY GLENN ROWLEY**

Aaliyah’s new posthumous album, Unstoppable, is set to be released later this month, according to a new interview with her uncle and former label head Barry Hankerson.

“About five years ago we realized we had quite a bit of music that we had never put out that was recorded by Aaliyah,” the Blackground Records founder said. “The vocals were there, and we decided to try to remaster it and to ask other artists that were big fans of her if they would like to participate in being on various songs.”

Pointing to the release of lead single “Poison” with The Weeknd, the record exec boasted that other posthumous collaborations on the album include songs with Ne-Yo, Snoop Dogg, Future, Drake and Chris Brown.

Hankerson also opened up about the personal toll of his niece’s untimely death in August 2001 at the age of 21. “The worst part, obviously, was when she passed away,” he told host Geno Jones. “But working with Aaliyah was always a pleasure. She was such a delight to work with ‘cause she was very professional. She was very bright. She had an incredible memory, so she could read lyrics and remember them after only reading them once or twice.”

He continued: “It was very difficult sometimes when we were listening. Before we started listening to her sing, she would be maybe talking on the mic — just talking about personal things and...about how she wanted to hear the finished product of the song she was working on. So it was very emotional because we knew when she was saying that, she had no idea she would not be here to hear the finished product. So it was incredibly heart-wrenching at times. But we did suck it up and we got through it.”

Billboard reached out to a rep for Hankerson for more information on the release and had not heard back at press time.

Back in August, Billboard broke the news that Hankerson, along with EMPIRE Records, would finally be releasing Aaliyah’s back catalog to streaming services.

Watch Hankerson’s full interview about the new Aaliyah album below.

Consumer Tech Sales to Hit $505B in 2022, CES Owner Forecasts

**BY CAROLYN GIARDINA**

The U.S. consumer technology industry is projected to generate a record $505 billion in retail sales revenue this year, according to a forecast from the Consumer Technology Association, owner and producer of the CES Show. Despite reports of a string of companies from Microsoft to Lenovo canceling in-person plans in recent weeks due to the omicron surge, the 2022 CES in Las Vegas is forging ahead with both an in-person and virtual component, and as is typical, that begins with preshow announcements and press conferences before the exhibition, which opens on Wednesday.
CTA’s optimistic sales forecast suggests that potentially record sales this year could be driven by demand for smartphones, automotive tech, health devices and streaming services. Spending on streaming services and software amid this pandemic is expected to reach $313 billion in 2022, up 6 percent over 2021, according to CTA’s projections. Breaking that down, CTA reported that this includes an expected $47 billion on video streaming services; $12.9 billion for streaming services that offer music, audiobooks and podcasts; and $53.6 billion for gaming software, downloads and services.

These projections were outlined by CTA vp research Steve Koenig, who, during a preshow presentation, emphasized the importance of developments involving Artificial Intelligence and 5G, calling the latter the “connective tissue” for innovation. He reported that more wireless technical standards are scheduled to be published in the spring, making 5G “the first wireless generation that will be led by the enterprise and not consumer” with expected growth in all sorts of cloud-based services.

Looking ahead, he also addressed the concept of the Metaverse, which he defined as “the next generation of the internet that will convey increasingly immersive digital experiences [that] over time — and I’m talking like over the next 10, 20 years — will become inextricably linked to our physical reality.” Koenig asserted that the “Metaverse is closer than you think,” citing “building blocks” for such experiences that are present in the industry, including 5D, cloud, haptics and volumetric video.

During his presentation, Koenig also warned that the consumer tech business would continue to be impacted by broad supply chain challenges and in particular the microchip shortage. Of the chip shortage, Koenig noted that in the short term, efforts in place to “squeeze out more production volume from existing facilities” as well as add to existing facilities, “maybe a new production line.”

But he concluded that what’s needed is more chip-making facilities. “It’s gonna take time to build these facilities,” Koenig admitted, looking toward the middle of the decade. “We’ll have a greater geodiversity of semiconductor manufacturing facilities, which is desperately needed because today about three-quarters of chip-making is attributable to East Asia. So what am I saying? I’m saying we’re potentially one typhoon or earthquake away from a major disruption in chip-making for the world.”

On Dec. 31, CES announced that the in-person event with an expected 2,200 exhibitors would close on Friday, one day earlier than originally scheduled, along with additional COVID-19 safety protocols.

*This article was originally published by The Hollywood Reporter.*

### Where Podcast Producers May Turn for Deals in 2022

**By J. Clara Chan**

If 2020 and 2021 were the years Hollywood stars proved their mettle in podcasting, 2022 could be the year top influencers find their stride in audio.

A survey of U.S. listeners by Acast and Nielsen finds nearly 40 percent of respondents said they wanted podcasts from YouTubers and influencers, outranking interest in shows from music and TV personalities. “We anticipate that this consumer desire will drive content creators who are looking to please their fans to pick up microphones and test the waters in podcasting this year,” Tommy Walters, Acast’s North America Commercial Insights Manager, said in an email to *The Hollywood Reporter*, noting that “smart content creators” understand the potential of podcast advertising will be able to carry their followings over to the medium.

When it comes to podcast genres, news and comedy were ranked the most popular in the Acast and Nielsen survey, with 64 percent of respondents selecting news and 61 percent selecting comedy (listeners were able to select more than one option in their responses). The interview format, where the host has a conversation with a different guest each show, was most popular among 48 percent of survey respondents, while 43 percent of respondents said they liked listening to co-hosts discuss topics with each other.

Already, TikTok stars like Addison Rae and the D’Amelio sisters have released their own shows that follow these popular formats. Rae, who signed an exclusive deal with Spotify in 2020 for a show hosted with her mom, Sheri Nicole, has interviewed guests like Kourtney Kardashian and her He’s All That co-star Tanner Buchanan on the most recent season of *That Was Fun*? (formerly called Mama Knows Best), while Charli and Dixie D’Amelio typically banter with one another about their lives on 2 Chix.

YouTuber turned boxer Logan Paul also has a comedy podcast that has garnered 3.5 million subscribers for its YouTube companion page, while Emma Chamberlain, who has 11.2 million YouTube subscribers and hosts the show Anything Goes, has arguably found the most success with the medium — at least when it comes to the charts. As of publication, Chamberlain’s podcast is one of the top 30 and top 10 most popular podcasts on Apple Podcasts and Spotify in the U.S., respectively.

Aside from the ability to better connect with fans and broaden their reach, podcasts are a growing source of revenue for influencers. The podcast industry is expected to hit $2 billion in advertising revenue by 2023, according to the Interactive Advertising Bureau, and companies like Spotify recently reported quarterly ad revenue of $375 million, thanks in large part to its podcast business.

Having a well-known influencer read an ad can also benefit advertisers, as host-read ads on podcasts have a 71 percent recall rate compared to the 61 percent recall rate of sponsor-read ads, according to Nielsen.

Hollywood appears poised to help digital talent turn to podcasts. Networks like UTA and Cadence13’s Ramble, which are behind Chamberlain’s and the D’Amelios’ podcasts, and Studio71 have focused on launching podcasts from digital talent, even as the space becomes increasingly crowded.
Newport Jazz and Folk Festivals Ink Exclusive Deal With Ticketer Dice

BY TAYLOR MIMS

The legendary Newport Jazz and Newport Folk Festivals in Rhode Island have entered into an exclusive agreement with ticketing and discovery platform Dice. Both festivals, which take place at Fort Adams State Park, will be ticketed by Dice starting this year.

“The most important thing to us is that the fans have a fantastic experience and we know that experience starts long before doors open to our event,” said Newport Folk executive producer Jay Sweet in a release. “In a year where fans deserve to get out and go see the music they love, we know Dice is the right partner to make things as easy as possible, fair, transparent and intuitive for our Newport Family. We want these tickets in the hands of our fans and not on the secondary market.”

Dice works with over 3,600 venues, festivals and promoters globally and has sold tickets to fans in nearly 180 countries. Founded in 2014, its mission is to remedy the opaque world of ticketing with its technology includes upfront pricing and features such as refunds on sold-out shows and a “waitlist” that helps fans get into in-demand shows and ensures venues are at capacity to increase revenue. Dice also combats for-profit resellers by preventing secondary resale of tickets.

“Newport Folk and Jazz Festivals have an unmatched legacy as two of the most celebrated music events in US history and it’s an honor for Dice to be named their partner,” said Dice president Russ Tannen in a release. “At Dice we love working with the most ambitious operators in the world, whether that’s rising independent venues through to legendary festivals that continue to push the boundaries.”

The Newport Jazz and Folk Festivals are two of the longest running music festivals in the country – created by George Wein in 1954 and 1959, respectively. The festivals have been home to legendary performances by Miles Davis, Ella Fitzgerald, John Coltrane, Pete Seeger, Johnny Cash, Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell, Dolly Parton, Mavis Staples and more.

The long-running festivals were postponed in 2020 due to the pandemic, but returned in the summer of 2021. Just months after both festivals took place in late July, Wein passed away at the age of 95.

The Newport Folk and Jazz Festivals are set to return to Rhode Island this summer from July 22-24 and July 29-31, respectively.

Garth Brooks Is Set to Play His First San Diego Concert in Nearly Seven Years

BY JESSICA NICHOLSON

In March, Garth Brooks will play his first concert in San Diego in nearly seven years. The entertainer is set to perform at San Diego’s Petco Park on Saturday, March 5, marking his first time playing at the venue. Petco Park is currently home to the major league baseball team San Diego Padres.

This will also mark the country star’s only West Coast show as part of his stadium tour, with no other dates planned for Arizona, California and Nevada. Tickets for the Petco Park show will go on sale Friday, Jan. 14, at 10 a.m. PT. Tickets for the show are $94.95, all inclusive.

In February, Brooks is set to return to Las Vegas for “Garth Brooks: The One Man Show,” a pair of concerts set for Feb. 4-5 at Dolby Live at Park MGM. Similar to his recent Nashville shows at the Ryman Auditorium and Grand Ole Opry, the Vegas events will feature an acoustic performance setup.

Following the Sin City and San Diego shows, Brooks will also play stadium shows in Orlando, Fayetteville, Ark., and Baton Rouge, La. In September, he will perform a slate of sold-out shows at Dublin, Ireland’s Croke Park.

Brooks released his most recent album, Fun, in 2020. His most recent single, “That’s What Cowboys Do,” reached the top 30 on Billboard’s Country Airplay chart last year.

Adele Earns an 18th Week at No. 1 on Artist 100 Chart, Hits Billboard 200 Milestone

BY XANDER ZELLNER

Adele tallies an 18th week at No. 1 on the Billboard Artist 100 chart (dated Jan. 8), holding as the top musical act in the U.S. thanks to the continued success of her album 30 and its first two singles, “Easy on Me” and “Oh My God.”

The set spends a sixth week at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 with 99,000 equivalent album units earned in the week ending Dec. 30, according to MRC Data. Notably, Adele has now spent 40 weeks at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 in her career, combining the totals of 30 (six weeks) and previous leaders 25 (10 weeks, 2015-16) and 21 (24 weeks, a record among women, 2011-12).

Adele is the eighth act to total at least 40 weeks atop the Billboard 200, joining The Beatles (132), Elvis Presley (67), Taylor Swift (55), Garth Brooks (52), Michael Jackson (51), Whitney Houston and The Kingston Trio (46 each), dating to the chart’s March 1956 debut.

Meanwhile, 30 lead single “Easy on Me” pushes 5-2 on the Billboard Hot 100, after spending seven weeks at No. 1, and
follow-up “Oh My God” returns to the top 40, jumping 57-40 (after it debuted at No. 5 in early December).

Two acts debut on the Artist 100, led by BTS member V at No. 57. His solo single “Christmas Tree” debuts at No. 79 on the Hot 100, marking his first solo entry, and No. 1 on Digital Song Sales (23,600 sold). He also re-enters the Emerging Artists chart at No. 1, leading the list for the first time.

Plus, Jessica Darrow enters the Artist 100 at No. 96. The singer-actress’ “Surface Pressure” debuts at No. 54 on the Hot 100, and No. 9 on Digital Song Sales (5,800 sold) and No. 46 on Streaming Songs (10.9 million U.S. streams), as its parent album, the Encanto soundtrack, bounds 116-7 on the Billboard 200, following the film’s Dec. 24 release on Disney+.

The Artist 100 measures artist activity across key metrics of music consumption, blending album and track sales, radio airplay and streaming to provide a weekly multi-dimensional ranking of artist popularity.

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

Bill Kreutzmann Pulls Out of Dead & Company Mexico Dates

BY GLENN ROWLEY

Dead & Company’s Bill Kreutzmann took to social media on Monday to tell fans that he has to sit out the band’s upcoming vacation shows in Mexico due to health complications.

“Playing in the Sand has become my favorite tour stop in recent years and there’s so much about it that’s just so great. And thus, it is with a heavy and still recovering heart that I have to relay a note that I received from my doctor this morning ordering me to sit this one out,” the drummer tweeted. “As many of you know, I had some health issues this past fall. After a lifetime of playing special beats, it’s almost no wonder that my heart came up with its own idea of rhythm,” he quipped.

The drummer went on to say, “All jokes aside, my doctor has ordered me to take it easy (and stay safe) through the end of January so that I can continue to drum and play for you for many tours to come. I have a lot of music left in me and there’s no stopping me from playing it. I’ve never been one to obey orders or play by the rules but in the interest of longevity, I hope you’ll understand.”

Before signing off, Kreutzmann gave a special shout-out to his bandmates and fans, asking everyone to “stay safe out there so that we can do it all again.”

Sans their longtime drummer, the Grateful Dead offshoot will play their annual concerts at the Moon Palace Resort in Riviera Cancún, Mexico, over the next two weekends in January.

Check out Kreutzmann’s announcement below.

Golden Globes to Take Place Without Celebs, Press or Audience in Attendance

BY SCOTT FEINBERG

The 79th Golden Globe Awards, set for Sunday, will highlight the philanthropic efforts of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association — which The Hollywood Reporter has previously written about — with winners announced intermittently throughout a 90-minute gathering at the Beverly Hilton, the HFPA revealed on Tuesday.

There will be no red carpet and no celebrities, non-HFPA members of the press or audience members in attendance — a reflection of both the grave COVID situation and the fact that the HFPA is currently personae non gratae with many in Hollywood.

It remains unclear if or how people not in the room will be able to watch the ceremony if they desire to do so — a live stream is a possibility, but there are presumably legal hurdles to broadcasting something as “the Golden Globe Awards” without the participation of NBC, which owns the broadcasting rights to the Golden Globe Awards.

And NBC is decidedly not participating in this year’s Globes, part of the fallout of last February’s Los Angeles Times exposé about the HFPA’s conduct and demographic makeup. The resulting uproar led many Hollywood constituencies to boycott the HFPA and prompted NBC, their longtime broadcasting partner for the Globes, to decline to air a Globes ceremony in 2022.

In whatever form this year’s gathering occurs, HFPA grantees and Kyle Bowser, svp NAACP Hollywood Bureau, will discuss their work with the organization throughout the ceremony.

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on multi-metric consumption as measured in equivalent album units. Units comprise album sales, track equivalent albums (TEA) and streaming equivalent albums (SEA). Each unit equals one album sale, or 10 individual tracks sold from an album, or 3,750 ad-supported or 1,250 paid/subscription on-demand official audio and video streams generated by songs from an album.

Encanto earned 41,000 equivalent album units (up 220%) in the U.S. in the week ending Dec. 30, according to MRC Data. The soundtrack album, with songs written by Lin-Manuel Miranda, was released on Nov. 19, before the film arrived in U.S. theaters on Nov. 24. The movie was released via the Disney+ streaming service a month later (Dec. 24, the first day of the chart’s latest tracking week).

Encanto also jump 12-1 on Billboard’s Independent Albums chart and 7-1 on the Soundtracks chart.

‘Encanto’ Songs Surge: Encanto’s presence is also felt on the Billboard Hot 100 songs chart, where two tunes from the soundtrack debut: “We Don’t Talk About Bruno,” credited to Carolina Gaitan, Mauro Castillo, Adassa, Rhenzy Feliz, Diane Guerrero, Stephanie Beatriz and the Encanto Cast (No. 50), and “Surface Pressure,” by Jessica Darrow (No. 54).

The former also bows at No. 35 on Streaming Songs, with 12.4 million streams, up 308%, in the tracking week. The latter launches at No. 46 on the tally with 10.9 million streams, up 439%.

Notably, “Bruno” marks the highest charting hit on Streaming Songs from a Walt Disney Animation Studios release since three songs from Frozen placed higher, led by Idina Menzel’s “Let It Go,” which rose to No. 2 in April 2014. Following four total Frozen entries, one other Walt Disney Animation Studios song reached the Streaming Songs top 40 until Encanto’s impact: Menzel and Aurora’s “Into the Unknown,” from Frozen II, hit No. 37 in December 2019.

On Digital Song Sales, Encanto sparks two top 10 debuts: “Surface Pressure,” at No. 9 (5,800 downloads sold, up 892%), and “Bruno,” at No. 10 (5,200, up 812%). Plus, the set’s “The Family Madrigal,” by Beatriz, Olga Merediz and the Encanto Cast, opens at No. 35 (2,400, up 712%) and Guerrero and Beatriz’s “What Else Can I Do?” enters at No. 42 (2,200, up 831%).

SB19’s ‘Bazinga’ Adds Fourth Week Atop Hot Trending Songs Chart as BamBam & NCT U Debut

BY XANDER ZELLNER

SB19’s “Bazinga” commands Billboard’s weekly Hot Trending Songs chart (dated Jan. 8), powered by Twitter, for a fourth total week.

The Filipino quintet’s track has maintained momentum since its official video premiered Oct. 29, followed by the group’s Nov. 29 performance of the song at the 34th Awit Awards, the annual honors bestowed by the Philippine Association of the Recording Industry.

The song holds at No. 1 with 2.1 million Twitter mentions (up 1%) in the Dec. 23-30 tracking week. Billboard’s Hot Trending Songs charts, powered by Twitter and sponsored by Capital One, track global music-related trends and conversations in real-time across Twitter, viewable over either the last 24 hours or past seven days. A weekly, 20-position version of the chart, covering activity from Friday through Thursday of each week, posts alongside Billboard’s other weekly charts on Billboard.com each Tuesday. The charts highlight buzz around new releases, award shows, festival moments, music nostalgia and more. Hot Trending Songs is unique in that it tracks what songs people are talking about, not necessarily what they’re listening to.

Among other moves, Kazakh singer-songwriter Dimash Kudaibergen claims the tally’s Nos. 2 and 3 spots with “Fly Away” and “Be With Me,” respectively. Dating to the chart’s launch, he joins BTS and Lisa as the only acts to have placed multiple songs in the top five simultaneously.

Thai rapper and GOT7 member BamBam boasts the chart’s highest debut, as “Who Are You,” featuring SEULGI of Red Velvet, opens at No. 12. The song bows thanks to conversation on Twitter surrounding its Dec. 28 release.

NCT U score the chart’s two additional debuts, with “Sweet Dream” and “Beautiful” at Nos. 13 and 20, respectively. Both tracks are on NCT’s Universe: The 3rd Album, Neo Culture Technology (2021), which has spent its first two weeks on the World Albums chart at No. 1, as it leads the latest, Jan. 8-dated list with 20,000 equivalent album units, according to MRC Data.

Keep visiting Billboard.com for the constantly evolving Hot Trending Songs rankings, and check in each Tuesday (Wednesday this week, following the New Year’s Day holiday) for the latest weekly chart.

Foo Fighters Set New Record for Most Rock & Alternative Airplay Top 10s

BY KEVIN RUTHERFORD

After tying the record for the most career top 10s on Billboard’s Rock & Alternative Airplay chart last summer, Foo Fighters take sole possession of the mark with “Love Dies Young,” which jumps 12-9 on the survey dated Jan. 8.

“Young” marks Foo Fighters’ 14th top 10, breaking the band out of a tie with Cage the Elephant and Twenty One Pilots for the most in the list’s 12-year history.

The song earned 2.5 million audience impressions in the latest tracking week, up 7%, according to MRC Data.

Each of the Dave Grohl-led group’s last four Rock & Alternative Airplay entries has
hit the Rock & Alternative Airplay top 10, dating to “Shame Shame,” which reigned for 11 weeks beginning in November 2020. Subsequent singles “Waiting on a War” (six weeks) and “Making a Fire” (seven) also led, upping the band’s count to a record nine No. 1s.

Most Top 10s, Rock & Alternative Airplay
14, Foo Fighters
13, Cage the Elephant
13, Twenty One Pilots
12, Shinedown
11, Imagine Dragons
10, The Black Keys
10, Muse
9, Coldplay

Concurrently, “Young” lifts 15-14 on Mainstream Rock Airplay and 20-17 on Alternative Airplay. It bullets at No. 33 on Adult Alternative Airplay, after reaching No. 29.

“Young” also shoots 19-14 on the multi-metric Hot Hard Rock Songs list, after hitting No. 13 in December. In addition to its radio audience, it drew 44,000 U.S. streams in the tracking week.

Medicine at Midnight, Foo Fighters’ 10th studio LP, debuted at No. 1 on the Top Rock Albums, Top Alternative Albums and Top Hard Rock Albums charts in February 2021, and has earned 200,000 equivalent album units since release.

Ed Sheeran’s ‘Equals’ Chasing U.K. Chart Crown

BY LARS BRANDLE

Ed Sheeran is on track for a third non-consecutive week at No. 1 in the U.K. with = (equals).

Sheeran has an enviable chart record in his homeland, where all five of his studio albums have hit No. 1 on the Official U.K. Albums Chart.

Equals (via Asylum) would have logged more weeks at the summit were it not for Adele’s 30 (Columbia), which dropped last November and ruled the Official Charts Company’s year-end chart, with Sheeran’s latest album coming in at No. 2.

Based on midweek data, Sheeran’s 2017’s LP Divide is set to reenter the U.K. Top 10, at No. 7, the OCC reports, with equals at No. 1.

Another veteran act on the rise is ABBA, whose chart-leading comeback album Voyage (Polar) climbs one place to No. 3 on the Official Chart Update, while their career retrospective Gold — the only album in history to log more than 1,000 weeks on the U.K. chart — appears set for a return to the top tier, lifting 12-8.

Expect ABBA Fever to spread in the months ahead: the Swedish pop legends will appear as avatars for a hits-stacked virtual residency in London this spring, under the banner of ABBA Voyage.

A string of hit packages are bouncing on the post-Christmas midweek chart, including sets by Little Mix, Elton John, Fleetwood Mac, George Michael, Michael Jackson, Bob Marley, Whitney Houston, Elvis Presley, and The Weeknd, whose new album Dawn FM is due out Friday (Jan. 7).

The Official U.K. Albums Chart is published late Friday, local time.

Jason Derulo Involved in Las Vegas Resort Fight

BY ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pop and R&B entertainer Jason Derulo was involved in a scuffle with two people early Tuesday (Jan. 4) at a Las Vegas Strip resort, but the singer, dancer and TikTok star was not arrested or given a summons, police said.

Las Vegas police said in a statement that an altercation was reported after 2 a.m. at a night club at the Aria resort and that Derulo “committed a battery against two individuals.” No injuries were reported by police.

Emails to Derulo’s agent and manager seeking comment were not immediately returned Tuesday. Media reports including video posted on celebrity website TMZ said Derulo, 32, struck at least one person near an escalator after someone cursed him and called him by the name of another musician, Usher.

“The victims did not want to press charges against Derulo,” police said, and Derulo was told by hotel security to leave the property under a trespass order. Police said no police report was taken because the people involved did not want to prosecute.

Derulo has sold millions of songs since 2009 and has 11 Platinum singles including “Wiggle,” “Talk Dirty,” “Want to Want Me,” and “Whatcha Say.” At press time it did not appear as if Derulo had addressed the incident on his social media channels.

IN BRIEF