

BET Awards Next Week

The BET Awards are fast approaching and the list of top entertainers appearing at the event is growing. It's the second year for the event and this year it will take place in Hollywood at the Kodak Theater on Tuesday, June 25, live Eastern time and tape-delayed on the West Coast. Cedric "The Entertainer" and Steve Harvey will host the show.

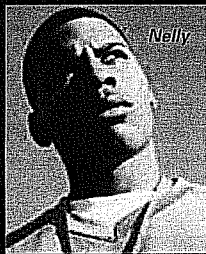
Scheduled attendees include Alicia Keys, Nelly, Janet Jackson, P. Diddy, Will Smith, Morris Chestnut, Johnnie Cochran, Jamie Foxx, LL Cool J, Jill Scott, Angie Stone and Bow Wow among others.

In addition to a host of entertainment categories, specialty awards will also be presented. Earth, Wind & Fire will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award; Muhammad Ali, the Humanitarian Award; and BET show host Dr. Bobby Jones will receive the inaugural Chairman's Award.

—Contributed by Laura Giles

Nelly's Hook-Up

Universal Records marketing strategy for multi-platinum rapper Nelly's new release *Nellyville*, due June 25, entitles buyers of his new CD to hit the backstage VIP area at nelly.net for a carnival of games, music and videos.



Upon registering their playa name and gender with their *Nellyville* CD, participants are welcomed by Nelly who leads one into the Nellyville Carnival where members of the St. Lunatics host each carnival game. Points are accumulated in the games created by Pileated Pictures, with a high score revealing an animation of Nelly heading off into the sunset of his hometown. Additional treats include two remixes of "Hot In Herre" and a never-seen-before video by the St. Lunatics called "Let Me In."

In a special arrangement with Clear Channel, Universal is also offering fans a chance to pre-order tickets to Nelly's summer tour before the tickets go on sale to the public. These can be ordered for a limited time through the password-protected backstage VIP area.

A Patent For Pullman

The creator of the Pullman Bond, David Pullman, has filed a patent with the U.S. Trademark and Patent Office on several key aspects of the Pullman Bond securitization process of future royalties for pools of music, entertainment and other intellectual property assets.

"We are proud to have been the first to have created this new innovative financing, so it is only fitting that we'd be the first to patent it to protect our intellectual property rights just like we have for our creators and artists," commented Pullman, who is celebrating five years of this new innovative financing. Citing over \$1 billion in transactions through 2002, Pullman explains the securitization allows the original creator or owner to maintain 100% ownership of the assets financed.

FRONT page NEWS

Bad Boy On Its Own

Arista Records and Bad Boy Entertainment will end their joint venture effective immediately, according to an announcement from Antonio "L.A." Reid, President/CEO, Arista Records, and Sean "P.

Diddy" Combs, founder/CEO, Bad Boy Entertainment. Combs leaves the deal with his company including the entire artist roster and catalogue.

"The history of Bad Boy and Arista over the past ten years resulted in a revolutionary shift in the music business. P. Diddy and his Bad Boy Records remain at the forefront of the rap and hip-hop movement, whose culture and climate continue to influence today's musical scene," commented Reid.

Combs added, "I have enjoyed my successful partnership with Arista and most recently working with L. A. Reid. I decided it was time to move my company to a new home and I wish L.A. the best and look forward to working with him in the future."

In this thoroughly amicable parting, Arista will continue to provide sales, promotion and marketing support services on an interim basis for current active projects on the charts by Bad Boy artists P. Diddy, Faith Evans, and others. Arista will also continue to provide distribution on an interim basis (via BMG) for the Bad Boy catalog, which includes P. Diddy, Faith Evans, 112, Carl Thomas, Notorious B.I.G., Dream, and others. In addition, Combs will continue to be available to Arista artists in his multi-faceted role as record producer, songwriter, remixer extraordinaire, etc.

This anticipated move ends a relationship started in 1993 when Combs, culminating in a 50/50 joint venture in 1996. To date, virtually all of the releases under the Arista/Bad Boy imprint have reached gold status or higher.

Crescent City Preps For Essence

The city of New Orleans is gearing up for the Essence Music Festival, July 4-6. The event, now in its eighth year, is the biggest national Black musical event of the year.

In addition to the main stage, there are four-stage Superlounges that will host acts in a smaller setting. There will also be a marketplace and empowerment seminars.

Acts already confirmed include Babyface, Brian McKnight, Luther Vandross, Alicia Keys, Mary J. Blige, Maze featuring Frankie Beverly, Gerald Levert, India.Arie, Faith Evans, the Isley Brothers, A.J. Jamal, Cedric The Entertainer, DeLa Soul, Oleta Adams, Etta James, the Brothers Johnson, King Floyd, Tyrone Davis, MeShell Ndegeocello, The Roots and the Ohio Players.

Festival organizers also announced that Bishop T.D. Jakes will appear July 5 at the popular free Empowerment Seminar, where African-American intellectuals, political activists and religious leaders are set to discuss issues of spirituality, love and popular culture. The Coca-Cola Company is the festival's major sponsor. The event is also being sponsored in part by Anheuser-Busch, Nokia/Cingular Wireless, Chevrolet, Luster Products and Southwest Airlines, the official airline for the festival. In addition, the U.S. Army Reserve Officers Training Corps will be on hand to provide information on college scholarships.—Contributed by Taryn Brown

Maxwell Announces 11 Summer Concert Dates

Columbia Records artist Maxwell will hit the road for the summer with 11 concert dates, beginning July 24 at the Tower Theater in Philadelphia. Other dates include:

- July 25 - Wantagh, N.Y. - Jones Beach
- July 27 - Newark, N.J. - New Jersey Performing Arts Center
- July 28 - Newark, N.J. - New Jersey Performing Arts Center
- July 31 - Washington, D.C. - Constitution Hall
- Aug. 1 - Washington, D.C. - Constitution Hall
- Aug. 3 - Toronto - Hummingbird Theater
- Aug. 4 - Cleveland - Music Hall
- Aug. 7 - Chicago - Arie Crown Theater
- Aug. 8 - Detroit - Cheney Park
- Aug. 10 - Richmond - Landmark Theater



Maxwell