

# The new King of Pop Leaves Pearlman Behind

Contributed by Lou Pearlman Writer  
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Sandra Sperounes, The Edmonton Journal  
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In five short years, Justin Timberlake has segued from 'N Sync puppet -- Bye Bye Bye, Lou Pearlman! -- to pop visionary, with a little help from producer Timbaland.

His second album of 21st-century pop, funk, dance and hip-hop, FutureSex/LoveSounds, was one of the top-selling discs of 2006. Released last September, it racked up U.S. sales of 2.4 million copies in less than four months.

Timberlake went on to win two Grammys -- including best rap/sung collaboration for his squelchy sci-fi ballad, My Love, with rapper T.I. -- and the honours keep pouring in.

He's nominated for seven MTV Video Music Awards and he could also add an Emmy to his collection in the coming weeks.

Remember his touching little Christmas tune, Dick in a Box? The Saturday Night Live music video -- a raunchy R&B satire complete with gold chains, Color Me Badd suits and slimy facial hair -- is up for the Emmy for outstanding original music and lyrics.

Awards are fine and all, but the true sign of JT's power is the number of artists lining up to work with him -- from '80s popsters to country stars such as Reba McEntire.

Some of his "customers" include Nelly Furtado, Black Eyed Peas, rapper Lil Wayne and Canadian comedian Mike Myers, who will star with JT in a new comedy, The Love Guru.

Even the most egotistical man in hip-hop, Kanye West, is in awe of the former Mouseketeer.

"He's the only other person that gets an across-the-board response and respect level -- black radio, white radio," West tells XXL magazine.

"If Justin hadn't come out and killed the game, I can't say that my album, singles and videos would be on the same level that they're on. We push each other. I look at me and Justin like Prince and Michael Jackson in their day."

About the only artists who don't want the Timberlake touch are Janet Jackson -- think Super Bowl 2004 -- and his former girlfriend, Britney Spears.

He wrote a song for the out-of-control singer, but Spears reportedly ditched plans to record the tune, according to the New York Post's Page Six gossip column.

Wow, Spears really does need help.

Here's a list of some of the artists who weren't afraid of enlisting JT's talents over the last few months:

## MADONNA

- Timberlake and Timbaland recently co-wrote and co-produced 10 tunes with the '80s pop icon. She remains mum on the subject, but Timbaland spilled the beans to MTV.com.

"She's great ..." he said. "She's got a hot album. Her album is up there with Justin's album."

## 50 CENT

- Timberlake guests on the gangsta rapper's swirly funk-hop single, Ayo Technology.

Not only did 50 Cent speed up his rapping style to suit Timberlake's chorus, he also flew across the U.S. -- three times! -- to work with Mr. SexyBack.

"We started this record in Miami," Fiddy told MTV.com

"I flew to Miami from Los Angeles, (where) I was working with Dr. Dre and Eminem in the studio. We failed to complete it the first night 'cause Justin and Timbaland were both on tour. We recorded the first version, the intro to the song, and then I flew back to L.A., caught up with them in Houston. So when I got to Houston we got back to the studio and it was like 1-2-3. Justin had it clear in his head. There was no paper: He just went and delivered his vocals and changed octaves all over the place. It came out great - you can't ask for better."

Ayo Technology, and the rest of 50 Cent's new album, Curtis, drops Sept. 11.

Talib Kweli

- The New York rapper enlisted Timberlake to co-write and guest on The Nature. It's the last track on his new album, Ear Drum, now in stores.

"I had been recording at Record Plant in Los Angeles, and kept running into Justin Timberlake," Kweli told SOHH.com.

"I learned a lot watching him preparing his record. ... Justin works hard at beefing up his sound so it hits your ear right, and that's what I was focused on for my record."

Macy Gray

- JT co-wrote and produced Okay, from the loopy singer's latest album, Big.

"He's very focused, very determined, very much a master of his craft," she told the Orlando Sentinel.

"Justin knows how to put a song together. I liked him, and we definitely clicked."

Duran Duran

- JT and Timbaland co-wrote Nite Runner (or Night Runner, depending on the website) for the aging wild boys.

The track, which will appear on DD's Red Carpet Massacre, is now streaming on Entertainment Weekly's website.

There's still no confirmed release date for the disc.

Reba McEntire

- Timberlake and the country legend sing The Only Promise That Remains on her forthcoming album, Reba Duets. He also co-wrote and co-produced the Celtic-flavoured song.

"I told Justin I was very nervous about hearing the song," McEntire revealed on her website.

"I didn't know if it was going to be Sexy Back II or what! ... It was really a lot of fun getting to know him. We went to supper after recording, and just hung out. He's very down-to-earth."

Reba Duets will be released Sept. 18.

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