

Music

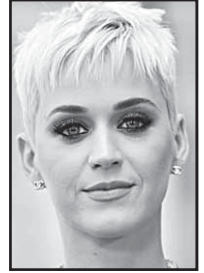
PrettyMuch poised to pop

Get ready to 'roar': Perry to host VMAs

LOS ANGELES, July 29, (Agencies): **Katy Perry** will host the 2017 MTV Video Music Awards, Variety has learned.

Perry will also perform at the show, and is the first performer announced for this year's show. She is also one of the most-nominated artists this year with five nominations, which were announced earlier this week.

"I've been training with MTV in zero gravity, eating astronaut ice cream, and I'm on a group text with Buzz Aldrin and Neil deGrasse Tyson. Come August 27th, I'll be ready to be your MOON-WOMAN! Brace for impact, kids," Perry said in a statement, referencing the signature VMA trophy, the moonman statue.



Perry

"We're thrilled to have global phenomenon Katy Perry as the host and a performer at the 2017 VMAs," said Bruce Gillmer, head of music and music talent of Viacom's global entertainment group. "She is at the forefront of music culture and the perfect person to anchor this year's show, which promises to be one of the most diverse and music-filled in VMA history."

With five VMA nominations, Perry is nominated for best pop, best direction and best visual effects awards for "Chained to the Rhythm," plus best art direction for "Bon Appetit" and Best Collaboration with Calvin Harris, Pharrell Williams and Big Sean for "Feels."

This will be Perry's first time hosting the VMAs. Last year's show did not have a traditional host, but featured Keegan-Michael Key and Jordan Peele as commentators. In 2015, Miley Cyrus hosted the show.

The VMAs isn't Perry's only upcoming high-profile TV gig. The Grammy winner is set to serve as a judge on ABC's revival of "American Idol," alongside host Ryan Seacrest.

The VMAs air Aug 27 at 8 pm, live from the Forum in Inglewood, Calif.

Simon Cowell's newest discovery, the group **PrettyMuch**, is set to make its world television debut on the Aug 13 Teen Choice Awards.

Syco Music and Columbia Records are betting big on the boy band, which features members **Austin Porter** (19, Charlotte, North Carolina), **Brandon Arreaga** (17, Corinth, Texas), **Edwin Honoret** (18, Bronx, New York), **Nick Mara** (19, Manalapan, New Jersey), and **Zion Kuwunu** (18, Ottawa, Canada), and the gamble seems to be paying off — the group's undeniable lead single, "Would You Mind," written by hitmaker **Savan Kotecha** (One Direction, **Ariana Grande**, **The Weeknd**) and released July 21, has already reached the top 10 on Spotify's Viral 50 both in the US and on the global chart, and Apple Music has selected the group as "Artist of the Week," with each photographic member getting his own feature on the website.

Melded

Like One Direction before them, the members of **PrettyMuch** were pursuing solo careers until Cowell, recognizing their individual strengths, melded them into a group. Since 2016, the boys have been living together in Los Angeles while recording their debut album and perfecting their dance moves.

At the Teen Choice Awards, the group — managed by former Syco Music President **Sony Takhar** — will join Syco labelmates **Louis Tomlinson** and "America's Got Talent" winner **Grace VanderWaal**. Tomlinson will perform his new single, "Back to You" featuring **Bebe Rexha**, and VanderWaal is nominated "Next Big Thing."

The Teen Choice 2017 Awards airs live from the University of Southern California's Galen Center on Fox.

Few bands have straddled the divide between indie and mainstream quite like **Arcade Fire** — eclectic in tastes and cerebral in views, yet enjoying rock-star recognition in the industry.

Releasing its first album in four years, the Montreal-based group — which has always cast its net wide on instrumentation — steps away from the rugged guitar that characterized its hits and heads to the dance floor, infusing its songs with disco.

"Everything Now," which came out on Friday, nonetheless keeps the favorite lyrical themes of **Arcade Fire** — introspective takes on modern consumer culture and self-image.

The result is an album that is both dark and full of catchy hooks — vital to a band that has become legendary for its live performances. Yet "Everything Now" is also less consistent than **Arcade Fire's** more conceptual works such as "The Suburbs" — which in 2011 won the Grammy for Album of the Year in a startling first for indie rock.

"Everything Now," the group's fifth studio album, starts off with a title track that reconfirms **Arcade Fire's** skill at weaving together diverse influences into a unique but accessible pop song.

Built around a flute sample by the late Cameroonian artist **Francis Bebey**, the title track is driven by a choral refrain by the New Orleans-based Harmonistic Praise Crusade, as a funky bass and melancholic piano melody work in counter-balance.

Mourning what has passed in the age of universal internet and 24-hour media consumption, frontman **Win Butler** sings: "Every inch of space in your head is filled with the things that you read / I guess you've got everything now."

"And every film that you've ever seen / Fills the spaces up in your dreams," he sings.

Daft Punk's Thomas Bangalter serves as a producer, bringing a retro electronic sound that evokes the robot-clad French electronic duo on "Signs of Life," a biting rap about empty hedonism, and the darkly abstract "Electric Blue."

Arcade Fire, masters since the band's inception at crafting a grandiosity around the sound, brings a disconcerting sense of uplift to "Creature Comfort," a dance track with an industrial beat about self-hatred and suicide.

Yet uncharacteristically for **Arcade Fire**, the album can also become predictable, with "Chemistry," "Good ... Damn" and "Put Your Money On Me" built over minimalist dance rhythms that stay confined.



Egyptian singer Shirine Abdelwahab performs during the 53 session of international festival at the Roman Theatre in Carthage on July 28. (AFP)



French actor Gerard Depardieu performs on stage during a 'Depardieu chante Barbara' concert at the Opera Garnier in Monaco. (AFP)



Adele

Kesha

Variety

LOS ANGELES: As performance rights organizations and former rivals ASCAP and BMI forge a partnership to create a comprehensive database of musical works from their combined repertoires, one artist whose songwriting share won't be included is **Adele**.

Variety has confirmed that, following a long relationship with BMI, the Grammy-winning singer has jumped ship to Society of European Stage Authors and Composers (SESAC).

Established in 1930, SESAC in 2016 bought the Harry Fox Agency and was itself acquired by Blackstone Core Equity Partners earlier this year in what was reported to be a deal worth \$1 billion. Annually, SESAC collects more than \$250 million on behalf of its roster of 400,000 songs and 30,000 affiliated songwriters, composers and music publishers.

Adele joins **Bob Dylan**, **Neil Diamond**, **RUSH**, **Zac Brown**, **Lady Antebellum** on the SESAC roster, which purports to be a smaller, more effective and nimble Performance Rights Organization (PRO), compared to ASCAP and BMI. Another difference is that SESAC pays royalties on a monthly rather than quarterly basis, and is also able to offer singular licenses that aggregate both performance and mechanical rights. (RTRS)

LOS ANGELES: Kesha released the third song and video from her long-delayed third album, "Rainbow," and like the other two songs released so far, "Praying" and the party anthem "Woman," it comes with a long essay and shares a theme of moving on from hardship.

"As much as our past creates who we are, we can't let it define us or hold us back," Kesha writes in this song's accompanying essay, published again in *The Huffington Post*. And especially if you've been through something hard, and we all have, you can't hold on to resentment because it's like a poison. You have to learn to let go of those bad feelings and move forward.

"Your past only has as much effect on your future as you want it to."

While those words could address any situation, anyone who's paid attention to her long legal battle with former collaborator **Dr Luke** — which saw her accusing him of sexual assault and unfair contract terms — will see

Music

Mick Jagger sings Brexit blues

Ocean finds live intimacy at NY fest

NEW YORK, July 29, (AFP): Frank Ocean has captivated audiences since his debut with his tenderness, a gentle but unwavering voice in the often hyper-macho world of R&B and hip-hop.

Nearly a year after he released his long-awaited second album, "Blonde," Ocean has presented his ever-patient fans with a live vision of his music, one that creates a kind of cinematic intimacy.

Headlining the first day Friday of **Panorama**, a year-old festival on New York City's Randall's Island, Ocean shunned the stage — which became a giant audiovisual project — as he performed in the round from an island in the crowd.

Ocean emerged to the boisterous beats of his track "Pretty Sweet" before immediately dialing down the exuberance with "Solo," his bare, organ-backed confessional on embracing solitude.

Clicking a button on a mountain of equipment, Ocean appeared on the stage-screen in grainy footage akin to an old home video. But soon it became a slick, real-time concert movie with shots of Ocean and cheering fans fading into each other and occasional bursts of color including Ocean's signature orange.

In a hint that the show may eventually wind up in a new form, director **Spike Jonze** filmed Ocean up-close through the entire set with a steadicam — a scene that could have figured as a subplot to his movies "Her" or "Being John Malkovich."

Ocean has returned from a three-year touring hiatus but is only playing a handful of shows. Only two are in the United States; the other one, a week ago in Los Angeles, again saw **Jonze** trailing Ocean as well as a cameo appearance by **Brad Pitt**.

Ocean — who made waves in the hip-hop world in 2012 by declaring that his life's first love was a man — delivered a statement for the current political moment by wearing a T-shirt that read: "Why be racist, sexist, homophobic, or transphobic when you can just be quiet?"

Ocean reconfirmed the emotional power of his falsetto on tracks such as "Thinkin' 'Bout You," one of his best-known hits, infused with a jangly guitar by stage guest **Alex G**.

Yet the band and Ocean veered out of step at points, with the perfectionist singer himself acknowledging to the crowd that the show remained a work in progress.

Rare

The show culminated in a surround sound, rare for festivals, as instrumentation from guitar riffs to organ boomed from alternating speakers.

Panorama was inaugurated in New York last year by the promoters behind **Coachella**, the premier festival that takes place each year in the California desert, as the market for live music thrives across the United States.

Panorama suffered a setback Friday as an indoor, air-conditioned concert stage was damaged. Fan footage posted online showed the wooden floor breaking open during a packed performance by rapper **Isaiah Rashad**.

No one was hurt but the stage was shut for the day, forcing cancellations of sets by prominent hip-hop producer **DJ Shadow** and French house DJ **Breakbot**.

Frank Ocean was preceded on stage by another leading figure of alternative R&B, **Solange**, who brought brass takes to last year's album "A Seat at the Table," an introspective tour through the state of black America.

a parallel there. While **Kesha** did not work with **Luke** on this album, she remains under contract to his record label, **Kemosabe**, which is releasing "Rainbow" via **RCA**.

The song's video collects footage from several home movies of **Kesha** as a child, and in the **Isaac Ravishankara**-directed video she wanders through a field she'd run through as a child, accom-

panied by dancers, discovering items from her childhood featured in the home movies. Unlike the ballad "Hymn" or the rocked-up "Woman," this song is a buoyant pop anthem that lets **Kesha** show off her range. (RTRS)

ULAANBAATAR: Ulaanbaatar's urban music scene is buzzing with a new vibe created by a hip-hop

duo mixing into their sound the traditional art of throat singing, or "Khoomei", as Mongolians refer to it.

Rap group **Fish Symboled Stamp**, named for a fish-shaped seal traditionally used to brand horses in the landlocked nation, incorporates the nearly 1,000-year-old vocal tradition of communities across **Siberia** and Central Asia.

Clooney to sue Voici over pics

LOS ANGELES, July 29, (AFP): Hollywood A-lister **George Clooney** is fuming mad at **Voici** for publishing images of his twins and will sue the French entertainment magazine.

"Over the last week, photographers from **Voici** magazine scaled our fence, climbed our tree and illegally took pictures of our infants inside our home," **Clooney** said in a statement.

"Make no mistake, the photographers, the agency and the magazine will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. The safety of our children demands it."

Khoomei means "pharynx", and performers imitate the sounds of nature, emitting a melody of harmonics alongside a continuous drone, **UNESCO**, which added the art form to its intangible heritage listing in 2009, says on a website describing it.

Lead bass vocalist **Sanjiv Baatar**, 32, founded the group with rapper **Battogtokh Odsalkhan**, 30, in 2010, when they started experimenting with music styles. (RTRS)

LOS ANGELES: **Justin Bieber** accidentally hit a photographer with his truck after leaving a Beverly Hills church service, and the singer got out to help the man while waiting for emergency services to arrive.

The photographer, who was not identified, suffered non-life threatening injuries in the accident on Wednesday night, Beverly Hills police said. The photographer later posted a video thanking the "Sorry" singer for his help.

"He (Bieber) got out, he was compassionate. He's a good kid. Accidents happen", the photographer said in a video posted on celebrity website **TMZ**.

Bieber was not charged and had fully cooperated with authorities, Beverly Hills police spokesman **Segeant Chris Coulter** said. (RTRS)



Adam Lambert (left), and Brian May of Queen perform at Queen + Adam Lambert at Barclays Center on July 28 in Brooklyn, NY. (AP)