



entertainment group

181 carlaw avenue, suite 229 toronto, ontario m4m 2s1 canada

UNIVERSAL MUSIC CANADA & OPENING DAY ANNOUNCE EXCLUSIVE DISTRIBUTION AGREEMENT

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Universal Music Canada is to become the sole distributor of independent record company Opening Day Entertainment Group's diverse catalogue. Boasting over thirty CDs and DVDs, ODEG features renowned artists such as Canadian Brass, R. Murray Schafer, Janina Fialkowska, Mary Lou Fallis, the Elmer Iseler Singers, and highly anticipated releases from Zoë Bentley, X-Quisite, Gary Quinn (GQ), Randy Hutchings and Giles Tomkins.

"The Opening Day Entertainment Group umbrella stretches over a broad definition of music," shared ODEG President Charles Daellenbach. "Our successes range from major AC/CHR radio play, Top 10 videos and crossover artist development to international awards and international concert stage presentations. Partnering with Universal Canada enables us to much more effectively and creatively bring our music to the Canadian audience."

"Universal Music looks forward to a long and rewarding relationship with ODEG," commented Thom McKercher, Catalogue Marketing Manager, Universal Classics & Jazz. "Their roster of Canadian artists is a beautiful complement to the Canadian performers that currently are associated with us."

Opening Day Recordings was founded by and for artists in 1993 to showcase the finest of Canadian classical performers and composers. The label became a favourite among critics and broadcasters and rapidly earned an enviable reputation for exclusivity and excellence, accumulating numerous Juno nominations plus a Juno win. In an aggressive restructuring move, founder Stuart Laughton enlisted the enthusiasm and expertise of acclaimed producer Trey Mills and Canadian Brass founder Chuck Daellenbach in ODEG's 2003 incorporation, extending this initiative across a singularly broad spectrum. Its three labels and supporting publishing company with Hal Leonard and BMG Publishing affiliations continue to lead the way in rock/urban (OP3), roots/blues (Opening Night) and classical (Opening Day). "We're developing an incredible situation where we can introduce great new Canadian music here at home and abroad," added OP3 Label Manager Trey Mills, with reference to ODEG's growing international presence.

The enterprising spirit and genre-defying versatility particular to ODEG as a company is also taken to heart by its individual artists. Canadian Brass' premiere recording of Bramwell Tovey's "State Street Stomp" on 2006 Juno-nominated *Magic Horn* turned heads when the group appeared on Bravo!Videos in the Top 3 alongside John Legend and Michael Bublé. It's not every day that you'll hear a classical ensemble on AC radio – much less in a Top 20 hit – but the quintet broke that mold when "singer/songwriter/sometimes-rocker" Zoë Bentley proposed a collaboration on "Very Merry Christmas" to cue in the holidays and set the stage for forthcoming releases from the young phenomenon.

Since its inception, ODEG has been on the fast track to cumulative success: Grammy-nominated and Juno & Echo winning Canadian Brass is actively touring worldwide and recording more than ever; Top 10 urban vocalist Gary Quinn (GQ) and chart-topping R&B/Soul Recording of the Year Juno nominee X-Quisite were #1 and #2 Independent Artists on Canadian radio; featured ODEG spring releases include Zoë Bentley's *Stride, And So It Goes*, a sophisticated classical/crossover collection of old and new from baritone virtuoso Giles Tomkins, and from the man known to pack the dancefloor with only his voice and an acoustic guitar, Randy Hutchings' roots/Americana release *Atlantic Avenue*.

A unit of the largest music company in the world, Universal Music is Canada's leading music organization, maintaining an overall 30% market share. Visit www.umusic.ca for more information.

Media contact: randy@openingday.com



Opening Day Entertainment Group (ODEG) signs distribution agreement with Universal Music Canada. Clockwise from top L: Janina Laughton, Thom McKercher, Trey Mills, Gene Watts, Steve Cranwell, Chuck Daellenbach