

## CRAIG KALLMAN

### CHAIRMAN/CEO, THE ATLANTIC RECORDS GROUP

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Craig Kallman carries on the entrepreneurial tradition that has driven Atlantic Records since its founding by Ahmet Ertegun over 65 years ago, and is embodied in the careers of such fellow Atlantic producer/executives as Jerry Wexler, Nesuhi Ertegun, and Doug Morris. Craig joined Atlantic in 1991, when the company acquired his independent Big Beat Records label. Advancing through the executive ranks, the New York-born Kallman was named Chairman/CEO of the Atlantic Records Group in 2005.

A passionate music fan, obsessive record collector (with an archive now numbering 350,000 vinyl albums and counting), and avid audiophile, Kallman began his music industry career while still in high school. He started out by DJ-ing at the Cat Club in New York, while working in Columbia Records' dance department. At Brown University, he was the CBS Records college representative, programmed urban and rock specialty shows on WBRU-FM, and ran a legendary series of campus dance parties. After graduating in 1987 with a B.A. in English, Kallman worked for Factory Records and Billboard magazine, while DJ-ing at such legendary nightspots as Danceteria, Area, The Palladium, and The Tunnel – spinning boundary-crossing sets drawn from his vast collection.

Fresh out of college, he started the Big Beat label in his bedroom, selling dance records on the street from a shopping cart. He launched the label with the single "Join Hands" by Taravhonty. His second release, "The Party" by Kraze, was an international smash, selling over 300,000 copies, and prompting calls for Kallman remixes from such major artists as Soul II Soul. Through the 1990s, Big Beat remained a major presence in the dance and rap underground, as well as in the crossover pop and R&B fields, with a multi-genre string of hits by Robin S., Jomanda, Tara Kemp, Bucketheads, Artifacts, Double XX Posse, Dawn Penn, Inner Circle, Changing Faces, and Quad City DJ's.

Just four years after Craig started Big Beat, his success prompted Atlantic to acquire the label and bring Craig into the company. He came on board as Vice President/Assistant to then Co-Chairman Doug Morris. Advancing to Executive Vice President, Kallman began to oversee Atlantic's entire A&R operation. His roster of trailblazing artists grew to include Aaliyah (whose Atlantic debut introduced producers Timbaland and Missy Elliott to the pop top 10); Brandy; Notorious B.I.G.'s rap clan Junior M.A.F.I.A., featuring Lil' Kim; and hard rockers Stone Temple Pilots and P.O.D. He also spearheaded Atlantic's involvement with film soundtracks, notably the smash *Space Jam*.

Kallman was named Co-President of Atlantic Records in 2002. In the fall of that year, he forged an alliance with the pioneering dancehall reggae label, VP Records. The first VP/Atlantic

album, Sean Paul's groundbreaking, Grammy-winning *Dutty Rock*, sold six million copies worldwide. In 2002, Kallman inked Florida-based hard rockers Shinedown and the following year he brought hip-hop icon T.I. into the Atlantic family.

In 2004, with the new independence of Atlantic's parent company, Warner Music Group (in the wake of its sale by Time Warner), the label was faced with the challenge of recreating the company for a new era, building a new culture with a new vision and fresh energy. Kallman was named Co-Chairman/COO of the newly formed Atlantic Records Group, and a year later he was promoted to Chairman/CEO.

In recent years, Kallman has continued to bring a rich diversity of high-profile artists into the Atlantic fold, among them Death Cab For Cutie, Gnarls Barkley, Trey Songz, Lupe Fiasco, Flo Rida, Zac Brown Band, B.o.B, Skrillex (via his recently re-launched Big Beat label) and many others. Kallman also spearheaded one of the music industry's pioneering "360" deals, partnering with punk-pop quartet Paramore.

Craig's entrepreneurial sensibility has also made Atlantic a highly desirable destination for indie labels looking to take their artists to the next level – exemplified by the company's partnership with Fueled By Ramen (Panic at the Disco, Gym Class Heroes). Since 2007, the seminal hard rock/heavy metal label Roadrunner has been part of the Atlantic family. In 2010, Craig re-launched his Big Beat label which has had tremendous success with artists like the aforementioned Skrillex, Icona Pop, Martin Solveig, DJ Chuckie to name a few.

As the number of senior music executives with authentic record-making experience and expert "ears" continues to dwindle, Kallman remains Atlantic's musical director and constant hands-on creative collaborator with his artists – as A&R guru, producer, songwriter, and admitted studio junkie. A case in point is the 2008 Grammy Award-winning song, "Daydreamin'" by Lupe Fiasco featuring Jill Scott – which was produced and co-written by Kallman.

"We have shifted our mission from being a traditional record company to an A&R-driven, music content company where focused, deep, and long-term artist development is king," says Kallman. "Our compass is still set by Atlantic's deep heritage in American roots music of every kind," says Kallman. "It is a privilege and an honor for our artists, producers, songwriters, and staff to live up to that tradition, and to make our generation's contribution to it."