

# 'Special Deluxe' memoir recalls Neil Young's rides to stardom



By **RANDY LEWIS**

NOVEMBER 4, 2014, 5:30 PM

**A** case could be made that motor vehicles run a close second to electric guitars in the hierarchy of technological devices that have shaped Neil Young's life.

The two-time Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductee underscored that point in his just-published book, "Special Deluxe: A Memoir of Life & Cars" (Blue Rider Press, \$32), a loving rumination on the litany of vehicles that have taken him from here to there throughout his 68 years.

"See that car on the screen there?" Young said Monday night, pointing across the gallery during the opening of the first extended exhibition of his paintings at Robert Berman Gallery in Santa Monica. On display through Nov. 30, some two dozen watercolors serve as the book's illustrations. "That's the car that got me down here," he said, referring to a black, 1953 Pontiac hearse he drove from Toronto to Los Angeles in 1966 and which figured into the formation of Buffalo Springfield with

Stephen Stills.

Young and Stills had met previously in Canada and had hoped to work together again some day after both left for greener pastures. They might have never reconnected had Stills and singer-guitarist Richie Furay not spotted Young's impossible-to-ignore hearse driving the opposite direction down Sunset Boulevard. Stills whipped a U-turn in traffic and quickly shouted them down, and shortly thereafter Buffalo Springfield was the talk of the Sunset Strip music scene.

"It broke down immediately as we were going to visit ... I think it was the Byrds manager," said Young, dressed in a weathered brown leather jacket over a black Oxford shirt on top of a black T-shirt. "We went to their office, then we were driving back to our motel room and the driveshaft fell out on Sunset Boulevard. So that was it for that car. I didn't have enough money to fix it."

Young's latest avenue of expression adds yet another line to his already lengthy resume.

"I started with photographs, then I started thinking that photographs didn't really go anywhere — they're just photographs," he said of his decision to delve into painting. "Then I thought maybe I'll trace them and see what tracings look like — maybe just pencil tracings. I didn't want to be specific.

"I painted one with some charcoal and some watercolors, and the publisher said, 'Wait a minute — what's that?' I said, 'I thought with some of the special ones maybe I'd color them a little bit.' He said, 'Our art department thinks you should do all of them like that.'"

That request added two years to the creation of "Special Deluxe," which comes at a time when two other big projects from Young are surfacing: his new album "Storytone" and his Pono music playback system.

"Storytone" is an unusual two-CD set that features the same songs performed two ways: in stripped-down, largely acoustic arrangements on one CD; then on the other with accompaniment by a 92-piece orchestra. Pono, which has been gestating for years, is Young's response to the diminished quality of recorded audio in the MP3 era.

"I've been working on a lot of things for a long time, and I don't know, it just all happened at once," Young said. "A lot of things just got finished. It's kind of interesting, isn't it, the way it appeared out of nowhere?"

*[randy.lewis@latimes.com](mailto:randy.lewis@latimes.com)*

*Twitter: @RandyLewis2*

-----

## 'Neil Young: Special Deluxe'

**Where:** Bergamot Station, Robert Berman Gallery, B7, 2525 Michigan Ave, Santa Monica

**When:** Through Nov. 30

**Info:** <http://www.bergamotstation.com>

Copyright © 2014, Los Angeles Times

---

## FROM AROUND THE WEB

Sponsored Links by Taboola

### **An Extremely Brilliant Way To Pay Off Mortgage**

RateMarketplace

### **12 Great Movies We Just Dont Ever Want to See Again**

Movieseum

### **Angelina Jolie Shows Why Brad Pitt Is The Luckiest Man Alive**

StyleBistro

### **28 Celebs Who Have Severe Illnesses**

PressroomVIP

### **World War I Pics You'll Be Scared To See Now**

Cool Gallery

### **Kate Middleton Cruelly Insulted By Camilla Parker-Bowles**

Stirring Daily

### **Inside Look On Matt Damon's Multi Million Dollar Home**

LonnyMag

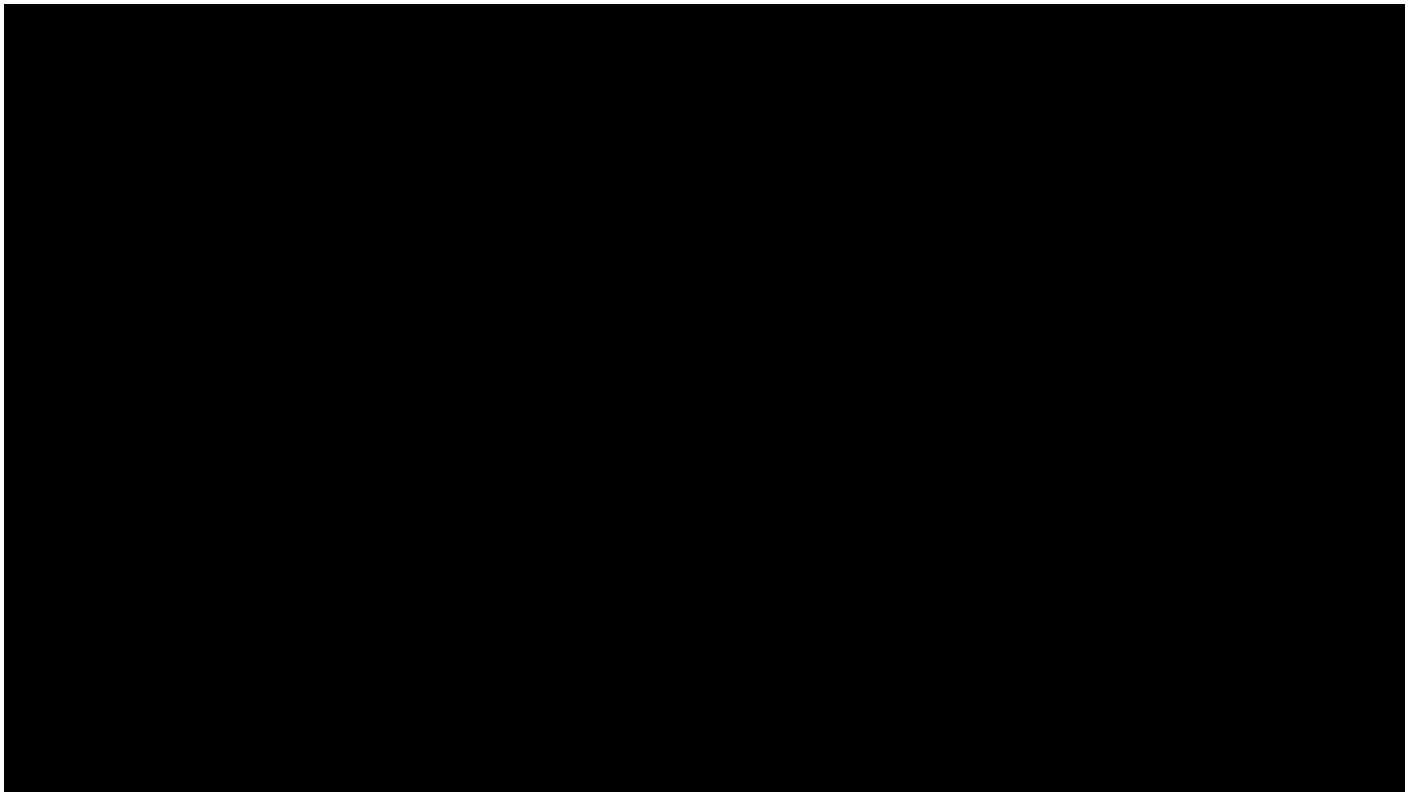
### **5 Richest Oscar Winners And Their Staggering Net Worths**

Bankrate



NOVEMBER 5, 2014, 1:32 PM

## United Nations holds a summit at Jewel's Catch One



The band United Nations. (United Nations)

On Tuesday night, L.A.'s must-see live set of the week was at Jewel's Catch One, the African American lesbian dance club in Mid-City. L.A.'s hipster elite was out in full force, including Este Haim, superproducer Jon Brion and all varietal of beard, selvedge denim and black-metal band tees. Graeme Flegenheimer, the night's booker and promoter behind the old Church on York venue in Highland Park, paced the alleyway letting in last-minute VIPs.

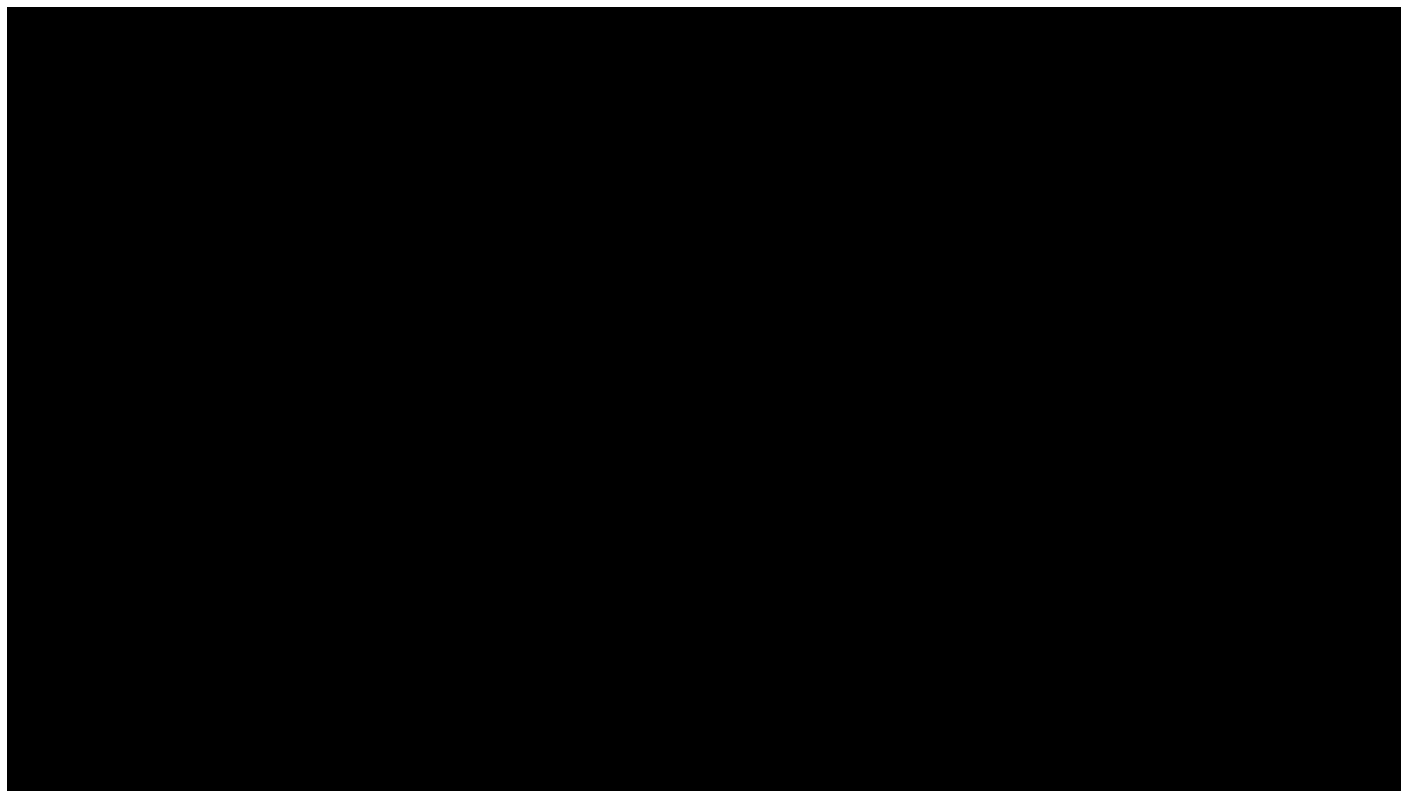
The band onstage? United Nations, a side project from a 35-year-old singer who led the early-aughts screamo punk wave.

It's been only a decade and some change since the band Thursday released its major-label breakthrough "War All the Time." But that was enough time for its singer, Geoff Rickly, to go from mike-swinging, bloodletting emo hero to a salty scene wiseacre.

His current band, United Nations, has been an on-and-off side project for years, and even more than its brutal lockstep drumming or metal-singed guitar leads, United Nations is... [READ MORE >](#)

NOVEMBER 5, 2014, 8:00 AM

## **Essential tracks: New from Ariana Grande, Ariel Pink and more**



A scene from the new video for Ariel Pink's song "Picture Me Gone." (4AD Records)

Amid the thousands of new pop, hip-hop, EDM, rock, country and R&B songs that have been uploaded and eclipsed since Taylor Swift released "1989" last week, below are a recent five for a weekday that offer a glimpse of the (non-Swiftian) here-and-now.

**Ariana Grande featuring the Weeknd, "Love Me Harder," (Republic).** As a smooth seduction that serves to further transition a former Disney star into the mainstream adult marketplace, "Love Me Harder" goes all the way. It does so by following a path that worked so well for Miley Cyrus: diving in head-first.

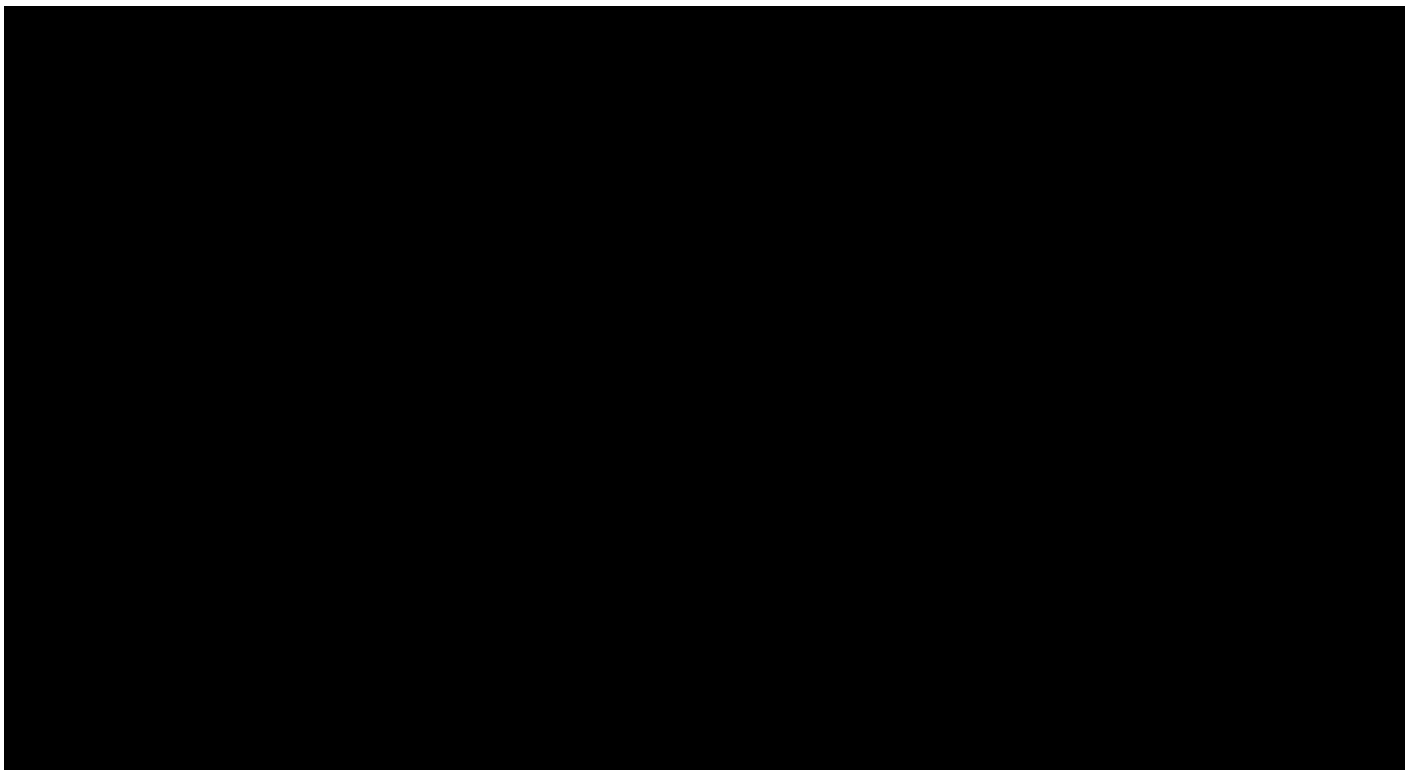
To do so, Grande teams with contemporary R&B's current master of the bedroom, the Weeknd's Abel Tesfaye, who's never met a plot of land he couldn't turn into a candlelit sex den. "Love Me Harder," the video of which debuted on Vevo this week, is both buoyant and thick, a rush of luxurious synthesizers and a humming heartbeat rhythm below. Saucy? Most certainly, but in a PG-13 kind of way.

**DJ Quik, "Puffin the Dragon," (Mad... [READ MORE >](#))**

---

NOVEMBER 4, 2014, 8:36 PM

**First week for Taylor Swift's '1989' album? 1.287 million in sales**



---

Taylor Swift, shown at the iHeartRadio Music Festival, sold 1.287 million copies of her new album "1989" in the first week, making it the biggest single week for an album since rapper Eminem's "The Eminem Show" sold 1.322 million in 2002. (Taylor Swift)

Taylor Swift's "1989" album racked up sales of 1.287 million copies during its first week of release, upending widespread music industry speculation that the million-plus retail sales week had become a relic of glory days long past.

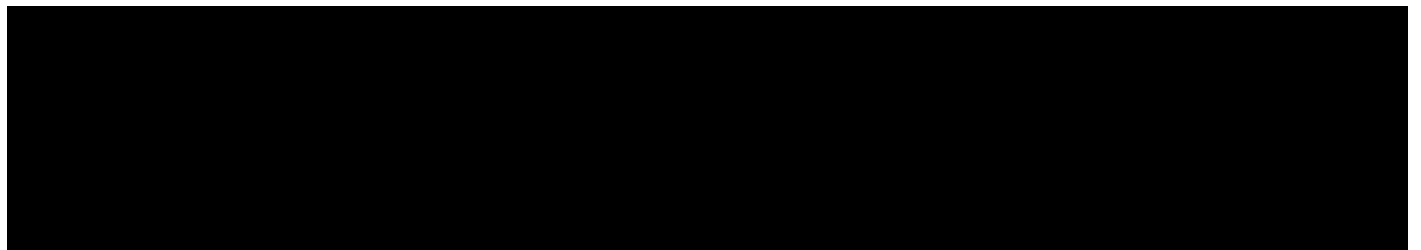
"Industry experts predicted 1989 would sell 650k first week," the 24-year-old pop star tweeted Tuesday while on a promotional visit to Tokyo, referencing some of the earliest projections for her album's first week out. "You went and bought 1.287 million albums."

Just how big is that? "1989" sold more copies than last week's 70 biggest-selling albums combined.

Actually, people bought more than 1.287 million copies, but **Billboard**, working with figures collected by the Nielsen SoundScan sales monitoring service, does not count the copies of the album sold through a Microsoft promotional tie-in that made the album available for 99 cents to people who bought a new app. Billboard's policy is that albums must be sold for \$3.99 or more to count toward their... [READ MORE >](#)

NOVEMBER 4, 2014, 11:51 AM

**Watch Kendrick Lamar's jubilant new video for 'i'**





A screen shot from Kendrick Lamar's "i" music video. (Alexandre Moors and the Little Homies)

In L.A. hip-hop, Kendrick Lamar is the one artist everyone can agree on. Now, in a new music video, he's taken that musical peacemaking ability into real life.

The MC released his new video for the single "i" this morning. Directed by Alexandre Moors and the Little Homies, the clip followed Kendrick as he quells a fight in a nightclub, rallies a group of campers and even stops an arrest and a suicide in favor of a big old dance party.

He plays a pied piper of good feelings, one that matches the warm, nostalgic Isley Brothers sample that drives "i" in its production.

Just when you think the video ends on an obvious scene of a rooftop party, however, there's a long locked shot of Kendrick leaning from a moving car window, splayed out in exhausted ecstasy, again alone but ultimately happy.

Are we looking at a more upbeat and free-spirited Kendrick to come on future singles? There's still no hard news on a formal follow-up to "good kid, m.A.A.d city" yet, but it certainly looks as if he's... [READ MORE >](#)

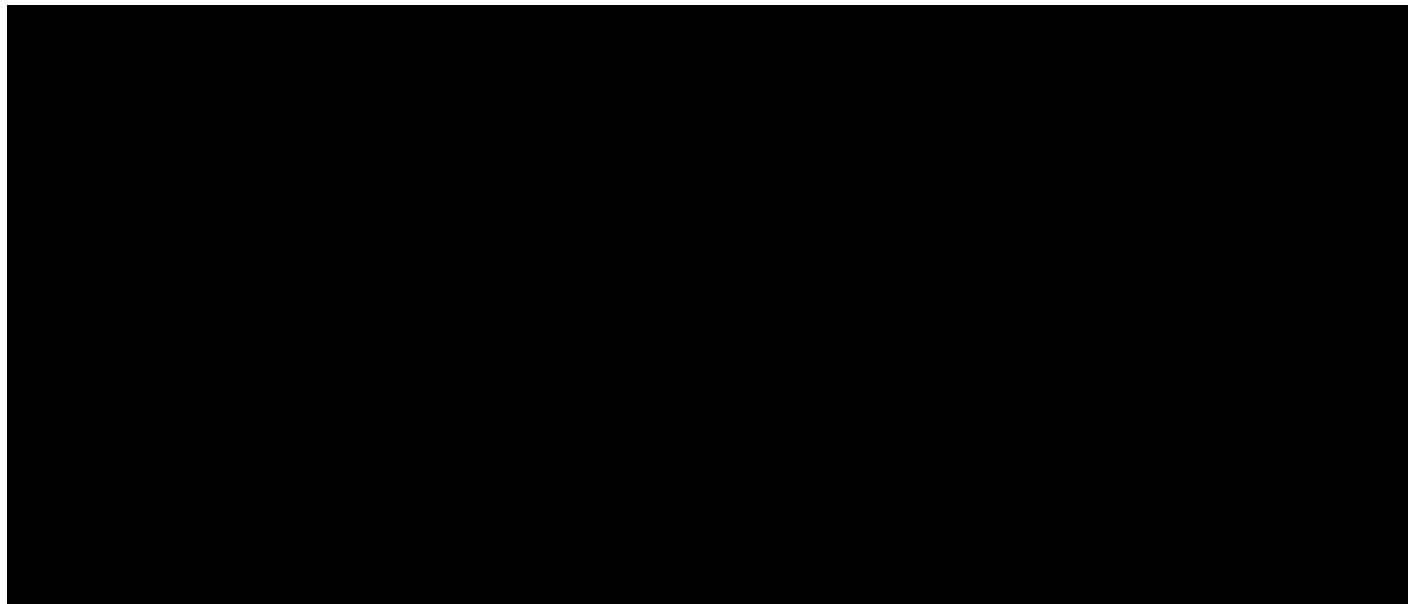
---

NOVEMBER 4, 2014, 11:26 AM

## **Beyonce announces box set edition of 2013 surprise album**







Beyonce performs at the Grammy Awards at the Staples Center in Los Angeles in January. (Robert Gauthier / Los Angeles Times)

Turns out the rumor mill was half correct. Beyoncé will indeed release an expanded version of her self-titled surprise album in just a few weeks.

The bad news: It's not as amazing as the Internet hoped it would be.

After days of online speculation, the singer announced she will issue a "Platinum Edition Box Set" of her groundbreaking visual album. Fans who previously purchased the original album digitally will be able to add the bonus material.

The four disc set – it will contain two cds and two DVDs – will include a disc of new music and a live performance DVD from her blockbuster Mrs. Carter Show World Tour and a mini version of her official calendar. The original 14 songs and 17 videos that made up the project will also be included.

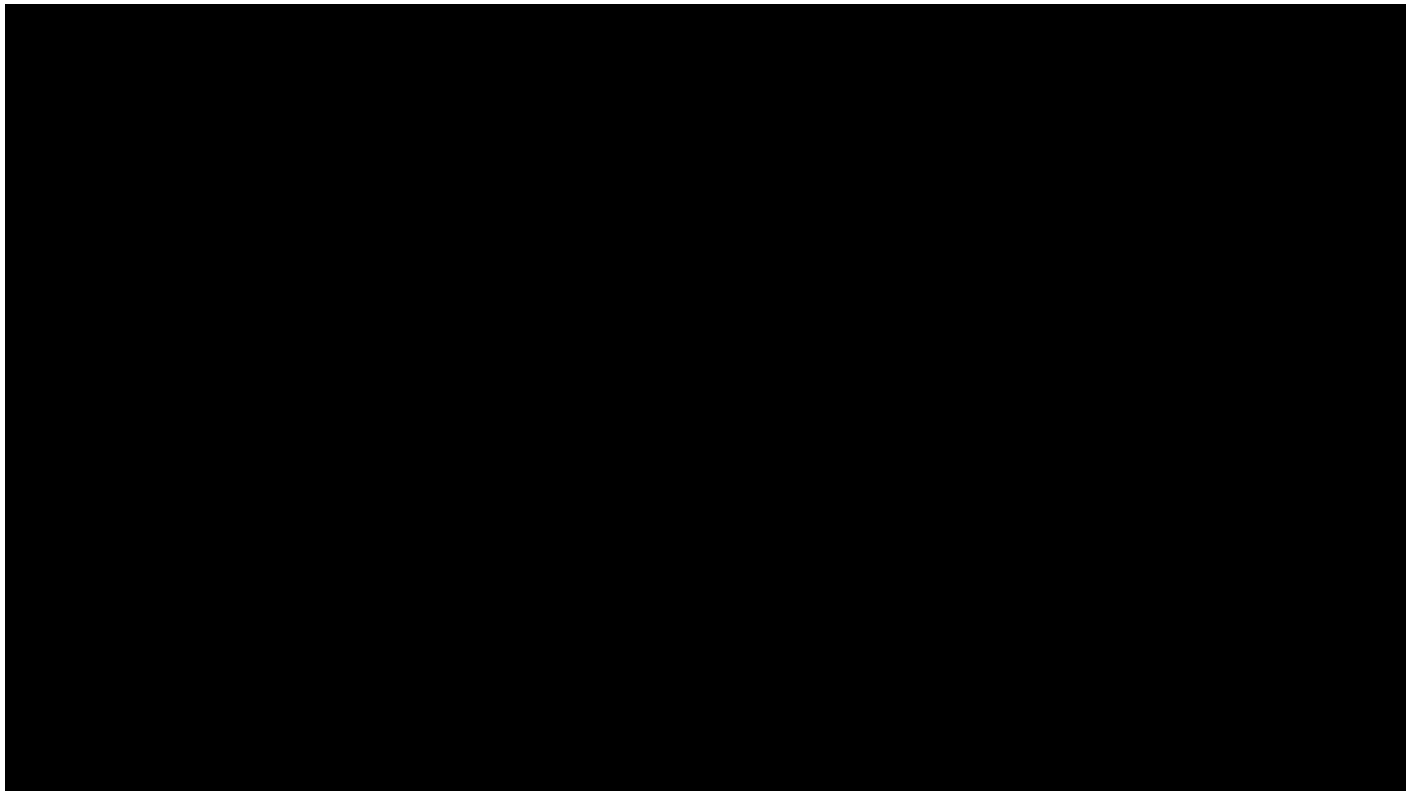
The new disc doesn't offer a lot of new material, as promised by a too-good-to-be-real document that circulated on the Web. There are new tunes on the disc -- two to be exact, called "7/11" and "Ring Off."

Remixes of "Drunk in Love," "Blow" and "Flawless"... [READ MORE >](#)

---

NOVEMBER 4, 2014, 7:06 AM

## Calvin Harris keeps jock jams pumping on 'Motion'



"Motion" is a new album by Calvin Harris. (Columbia Records)

An architect as well as a beneficiary of the mainstream EDM boom, Calvin Harris has spent much of this year dominating music festivals around the world, including Coachella, where he dramatically outdrew higher-billed rock bands like Muse and Arcade Fire. So you can understand why the Scottish DJ's fourth studio album is full of muscled electro-house anthems that seem designed to be blasted across crowded polo fields throughout 2015. (Spoiler alert: They will be.)

In "Blame" the English singer John Newman works his throaty growl during the verse but then

gets out of the way of a bludgeoning beat in the chorus; Ellie Goulding does much of the same in “Outside,” her and Harris’ follow-up to their 2013 hit “I Need Your Love.” Big Sean gets more room in “Open Wide” but his rapping still feels like a coach’s encouragement to that whomping groove.

For all the intensity he delivers on “Motion,” Harris is best -- and most easily distinguished from peers such as Zedd and David Guetta -- when he... [READ MORE >](#)