

# Pop-Punk Kings Blink-182: Reunited and Ready to Party Like It's 1999

Plane crash spurs reconciliation, band plans tour, album by year's end  
By Nicole Frehsée

WHEN BLINK-182 broke up in 2005, they were sick of fame. "The giant vehicle of the band was determining everything," says bassist Mark Hoppus. "It sounds cheesy, but we

## REUNION

needed to take time to find ourselves." Apparently they have: At the Grammys, on February 8th, the pop-punk superstars announced that they are reuniting – and sources say the band will tour this summer and release a new album by the end of the year.

Tragedy sparked the reconciliation. After drummer Travis Barker was injured in a plane crash in September, guitarist-singer Tom DeLonge – who had been estranged from his bandmates since abruptly quitting – reached out. (Barker just underwent hand surgery for nerve damage sustained in the crash.) "I put the bullshit aside and wrote him a letter," DeLonge says. "There was no big talk; after a couple of phone calls, things were back to normal."



BLINK IN SYNC DeLonge, Barker and Hoppus (from left) at this year's Grammys

Now, the trio – who have sold almost 13 million records since forming as teens in San Diego in 1992 – are in the early stages of recording their self-produced sixth album. "We're talking about using analog keyboards from the Sixties," says DeLonge, who fronted emo-rock act Angels and Airwaves after leaving Blink. (Barker and Hoppus released one album as +44.) "People are going to be blown away."

Promoters expect the trio's tour will be a hit. (Their last trek, in 2004, grossed \$6.9 million.) "On the Warped Tour

Website, we ask fans who they want to see, and Blink pops up all the time," says the fest's founder, Kevin Lyman. For a new generation of emo fans and bands, Blink's irreverent, upbeat take on punk rock with hits like "What's My Age Again?" and "All the Small Things" was hugely influential. "They're the godfathers of punk pop," says the Academy Is . . . frontman William Beckett – who wasn't old enough to drive during Blink's late-1990s heyday. "When I heard they were reuniting, I was losing my mind on my blog." **TS**

# Eminem's Hit Builds Buzz for 'Relapse'

"Crack a Bottle" brings the Detroit rapper back to the top of the charts  
By David Browne

ON HIS NEW SINGLE, "Crack a Bottle," Eminem boasts, "I redeem my name, and haters get mused." He's not kidding. Featuring a horn-fueled Dr. Dre beat and cameos by Dre and 50 Cent, the cut is Eminem's first hit single since 2006 and is sparking buzz for the rapper's long-in-the-works fifth album, tentatively titled *Relapse*. Spurred by a strong listener response on radio, Interscope rush-released the song on February 2nd. And after selling a



record-breaking 418,000 digital copies in a week, "Crack a Bottle" shot from Number 78 to Number One on the Hot 100.

"It's been a long time since people have heard Eminem, and they're really curious," says E-Man, assistant program director for Los Angeles' Power 106, the first station to play the

track. "He sounds more mature, but he still has that classic flow. Everyone is saying, 'It's good to hear him again.'"

The song's success also comes as good news to Interscope, which is looking to Eminem, Dre and 50 Cent (the latter two have long-delayed CDs of their own) for big hits. "It's a great moment for the label," says Interscope exec Steve Berman. With a chart-topping single, the pressure is now on Eminem to finally wrap up *Relapse*. (A late-spring release date is being discussed.) "With Dre and Eminem, the album's never done until they turn it in," says Berman. "They always work on it until the last second." **TS**

## IN THE NEWS

### The Roots Prep for Fallon Show

The **Roots** have been busy gearing up for their new gig as the house band for *Late Night With Jimmy Fallon*, which begins on NBC on March 2nd. "I think they'll raise the bar of what a house band is considered to be," says Fallon. "They can play everything from hip-hop to Guns n' Roses to 'In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida.'" And the group will be venturing beyond the bandstand. "Me and **Ahmir [Questlove] Thompson**, the drummer] have a good rapport – he makes great jokes," says Fallon. "They are definitely down for sketches." Right now, the group is composing original tunes to play as interludes and segues. "We basically have to write 200 new songs," says Thompson. "We've got some emo shit, some disco shit, some hip-hop shit. . . ." To accommodate taping five shows a week, the band will cut back to only 10 weeks of touring a year. Though most of the group members will be commuting from Philadelphia to New York, the Roots are also planning to host a regular late-night residency at New York's Highline Ballroom, beginning March 5th.

## IN BRIEF

■ **Eric Clapton** and **Steve Winwood** will launch a 14-date U.S. co-headlining tour on June 10th in East Rutherford, New Jersey. The former Blind Faith bandmates reunited at Madison Square Garden in February 2008 for their first headlining shows together in nearly 40 years.

■ **Velvet Revolver** are only "weeks away" from announcing their new lead singer, according to bassist **Duff McKagan**. "It's down to a couple of guys," he says. Don't expect it to be another Scott Weiland-level star. "It's not like Chris Cornell or one of those guys," says the former Guns n' Roses member. "We just want someone that fits."

■ **Limp Bizkit** are reuniting with original guitarist **Wes Borland** for a new album and their first tour in eight years. "We decided we were more disgusted and bored with the state of heavy popular music than we were with each other," the group said in a statement. The band will kick off its tour in Europe this summer and plans to come to America later in the year.