



SZA

RCA's Peter Edge and John Fleckenstein reflect on working with the emerging global superstar

The release of SZA's second solo album, *SOS*, has seen the artist break numerous records and established her as a rising global superstar. Critically hailed on release, *SOS* debuted at #1 in the US, amassing over 400 million streams in the US alone during its release week and charting at #1 around the world. *SOS* has now yielded four #1 hits on both Rhythm and Urban Mainstream radio - *Snooze*, *Kill Bill*, *Shirt*, and *I Hate U*, and has seen SZA named Billboard's Woman of the Year 2023, Webby Awards Artist of the Year, WSJ Magazine's Innovator of the Year, and Variety's Hitmaker of the Year. SZA also won three awards at the 2024 Grammys, where she was the most nominated artist overall.

Peter Edge, Chairman and CEO, RCA Records, says: "It's so exciting to have this combination of critical acclaim and commercial success. The way that she speaks to and connects with her fans is truly remarkable."

SZA signed to Top Dawg Entertainment (TDE) in 2013 before releasing her debut album *Ctrl* on TDE/RCA in 2017. **John Fleckenstein, COO, RCA**, talks about how long-term relationships with Anthony "Top Dawg" Tiffith and Terrence "Punch" Henderson at TDE have helped foster her career from the start. "Punch and Top have been there for Solana from the onset, both as her label and management. Our relationship is built on trust and stellar communication. We make a lot of effort to work as one and to stay unified and cohesive. Nearly every person at RCA who works on Team SZA has an individual relationship with both Punch and Top, and I can't speak highly enough of them and the way they work in tandem with our team."

Fleckenstein believes that it's this close collaboration that has helped drive the artist's success: "The art SZA creates is incredibly personal, and she speaks and interacts with her fans directly - so it all starts with her and her magic. To enhance that on a global level, there are tons of incredible minds at TDE, RCA, and Sony worldwide working tirelessly to ensure people are being exposed to her art and her message. When everyone is working together and in full alignment, it feels effortless and spontaneous, but the reality is that it requires hundreds of people doing a lot of little things to make sure the album is positioned in the right way in every country around the world."

SOS came out in December 2022. In the build up to the release, there was a feeling that something special was coming. Peter Edge says: "Having been part of the process, I felt that on a musical level it was something extremely unique. It took a long while for her to feel like she had the album that she wanted to put out. Many people will tell you that her previous album, *Ctrl*, changed their lives. So yes, she felt the pressure of following that up and to do that, she went really deep into herself on the songs and spoke really candidly about where she was coming from. I think that was a big reason why it has gone on to become such a success."

With *SOS* establishing SZA as a rising global superstar, Fleckenstein is excited about what might come next and how RCA will continue to support her: "I think Solana is a creative's creative, I'm not sure there are limitations on what she may do next, I can't imagine her not making music, that's for sure. We're going to offer her the trust and support to make whatever she wants to make next."

"At RCA we are very, very committed to creative freedom. We believe in allowing for time and space in development and her future will be defined by where she wants to take it".

SZA has achieved over 10 billion streams to date across all platforms.

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PETER EDGE
Chairman and CEO,
RCA Records