

GRAMMY AWARD-WINNING PRODUCER TEAMS WITH PACIFICO FOR THIRD ALBUM

On a breezy afternoon in a South Norwalk coffee house, P.J. Pacifico has settled into a cushy chair. "This is the exciting part," he beams, referring to the few months leading up to an album release. *Outlet* (due out June 7 under Viper Records), is Pacifico's third album and it represents a change in focus, if not quite a change in direction. Viper signed Pacifico in 2005 and allowed him complete creative control, but for the new album, Grammy Award-winning producer Dave O'Donnell (Eric Clapton, Ray Charles, James Taylor, and John Mayer) joined the project. O'Donnell's presence offered a major advantage. Says Pacifico: "I was dying to be coached, so when Dave came in and took the reins he was met with arms wide open.

Outlet, not unlike Pacifico's previous work, decidedly drifts from pop-rock to country and features a full-piece band in addition to solo tunes. It is upbeat with a junk-band vibe, taking the listener for a Sunday drive on a scenic highway...throw on your shades, roll down the windows, and crank it up. The vocals are harmonious, resonant, and pure and the accompaniment of playful violin harmonies and tangy guitar riffs offer tasty surprises.

Still, perhaps owing to the new collaboration or perhaps as a result of his recent marriage, the sound is a bit more focused and refined. "I'm hearing the word 'mature' a lot [from label executives]," he muses. "I felt no pressure this time." Pacifico has battled the interference of alcohol abuse in his music career, but he has been sober for three years. Sobriety has given him the clarity of mind to focus his thoughts and feelings on a purpose while writing and performing his music. *Outlet* is the expression of that purpose.

Pacifico's new-found confidence and his unending charm shine through as he opens with the uplifting lead single "Heads Up," due out May 10. The lyrics allude to his struggle with maintaining sobriety and they encourage listeners to keep their eyes on the future and move in the right direction, one step at a time: "You got one foot in and one foot out. Keep your head up." On "New Song," he lightheartedly thumbs his nose at the music industry: "Am I too friendly, Mr. Radio?" Other standouts include piano-driven "Waiting" and the not-too-twangy guitar-laced "Ships in the Night." Although Pacifico has become decidedly more focused in his personal life, his music abounds with variety.

"People wanted me to pick a lane. How about the PJ Pacifico lane?" he says of musical boundaries.

When he's not on the road, Fairfield County dwellers can catch weekly acoustic performances by Pacifico. His weekly gigs include Ridgefield's

The Little Pub every Monday from 8:00 to 10:00 p.m. and The Goose in Darien every Thursday from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. along with other shows that can be found at PJPacifico.com. Music from *Outlet* will be available on all download sites and atviperrecords.com.

"I'm so fired up," he says.

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