

A close-up portrait of Marty Diamond, a middle-aged man with short, graying hair and glasses, wearing a dark blue polo shirt with white stripes on the collar. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression.

# MARTY DIAMOND &

**B**y trusting in the new and the different, Marty Diamond and Tom Windish have built two of the most impressive careers in the live-music indus-

try. Booking agents who took chances, started small and grew, they both eventually joined forces with **Paradigm**, turning the Hollywood-based firm into a music-agency powerhouse.

Their story is about having a good ear and great instincts, finding acts such

as **Billie Eilish**, **Coldplay** and **Ed Sheeran** at the dawns of their careers and building them into superstars.

“What makes Marty unique in this business is that he is not afraid to speak his mind with the truth as he sees it,” **Another Planet Entertainment CEO**



# TOM WINDISH

## THE EVER-SHIFTING PARADIGM

Gregg W. Perloff offers. “He not only has a brilliant business sense but is a creative thinker who is able to articulate to bands and managers a vision for how to build a career. He is one of a kind and a credit to both our world of music and to his family.”

“Tom has a great ear and an unparalleled knack for understanding where music trends are headed,” **Huston Powell** of **C3 Presents** says of Windish. “Every year before I start booking the next festival, I call Tom to chat about what he’s seeing, what is interesting

and what is going to pop, and almost without fail he’s spot-on. I’m amazed at how enthusiastic Tom is about the new projects he is discovering.”

The Paradigm story, meanwhile, is about knowing what to do with great leadership when you encounter it. **Sam**





*Paradigm's music machers (l-r): the late Chip Hooper, Marty Diamond, Sam Gores, Tom Windish and Paul Morris*

Gores built Paradigm through acquisitions. After opening the company as **SGA Representation** in 1986, he acquired the **Jack Fields Agency**, changing the name to **Gores/Fields** and then acquiring **ATM & Associates**. The expansions and mergers were all in the film, TV and literary sectors until 2005 when he bought **Dan Weiner** and **Fred Bohlander's Monterey Peninsula Artists** (**Dave Matthews Band**, **Aerosmith**, **Toby Keith**) and followed that up 20 months later by acquiring **Diamond's Little Big Man** (**Coldplay**, **The Fray**) and **Paul Morris' AM Only**. In London, Paradigm acquired a 50% stake in the **CODA Music Agency** in 2014, which brought in around 500 clients, including **Imagine Dragons**, **Bastille** and **The xx**. CODA merged into Paradigm in July of 2019.

"The common thread in building Paradigm Music has been to invest in strong, visionary leaders who are universally respected by their peers and committed to building careers the right way," Chairman/CEO Gores told **Music Business Worldwide** in 2015.

Diamond became Head of Music for the company this year; Morris and Windish maintain leadership roles with Weiner and CODA's **Tom Schroeder**. Diamond also serves on the board of Paradigm's international partner, the **Steve Strange**-co-founded **X-ray Touring**, in which Paradigm bought a stake in 2017. Paradigm shares about 100 clients with X-ray.

Windish sold a piece of **The Windish Agency** in 2015, 11 years after launching

his company, famous for a behemoth roster that peaked at 850 acts.

"I was spending a lot of time thinking about what I needed to do with the company," he says. "I was predicting where things were going to go, and it didn't take a rocket scientist to think that the world's going to become more global for artists. I didn't have an office in the U.K., and I thought, 'Can I start one and be really good?' And I decided, no, I can't."

"Artists had other aspirations and were getting calls from people in other areas of the entertainment business, and they needed help to figure out what to do about it. I had one person doing brand partnerships, and Paradigm had like 25."

"Agencies need to do more for artists. That's going to continue to evolve, and I



needed a partner to help me do that. I didn't think I could build it myself and do it well."

Windish wrote on his **Facebook** page the night he sold the company in 2017: "We had a picture in our minds of how we could create an agency that did not currently exist in the business, and we have all been working tirelessly to build it."

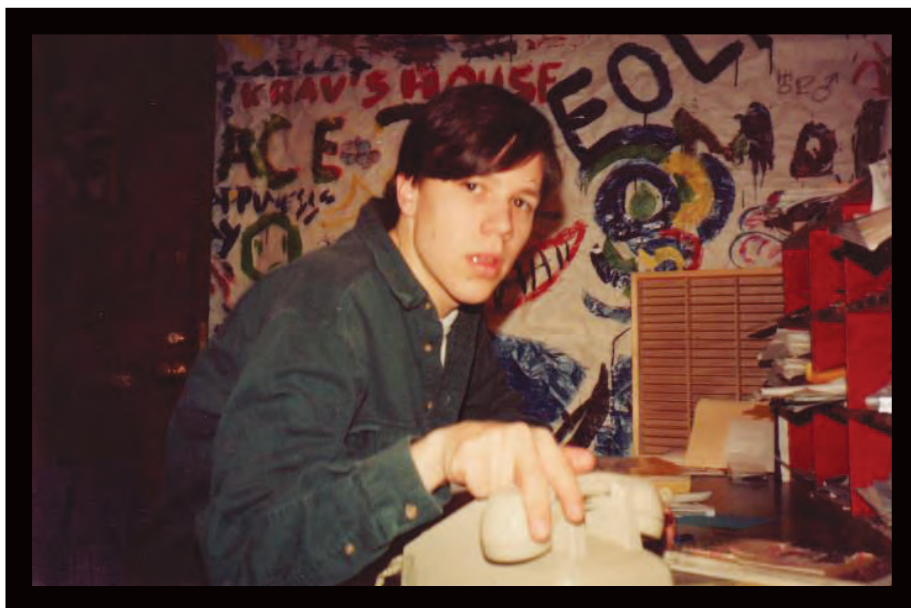
In 1994, as Windish was closing out his college career booking bands such as **Dinosaur Jr.**, **Sonic Youth** and **Cypress Hill**, Diamond created Little Big Man Booking, subleasing office space in midtown Manhattan and working, literally, out of the guitar closet of **Living Colour's Vernon Reid**. Diamond and his team have repped the likes of **Janelle Monáe**, **Lorde** and the **Lilith Fair**; with a history of doing well with singer/songwriters, he signed on to rep Sheeran after seeing him in a small club in the U.K.

At 60, Diamond still gets out three to five nights a week to see performers. He especially relishes the role his family plays in his business, specifically his two daughters.

"My kids are dying to get there before I do on things, and now they're old enough that they're really active and engaged music fans and participants," says Diamond, whose interest in music was stirred by his two older siblings—a brother who turned him on to **The Grateful Dead** and a sister who made him a fan of **The Rolling Stones**. "My kids make fun of me—I'm addicted to the darker side of songwriting. Sometimes sad songs are incredibly cathartic."

"What I admire about him is his love for his family, and his love for the artists he represents," says veteran promoter **Louis Messina**. "He's more than an agent—everything and everyone is personal to him. He cares."

Both Diamond and Windish hail from New York State, and both got their starts in the concert industry in college, Diamond at the **University of Delaware**



Top: Diamond with Gores and Greg Bestick; bottom: aspiring agent Windish

**"Tom finds so many unique artists every year—  
somebody please give him a record company already."**

—Paul Tollett



*Clockwise from top left: Diamond with Larry Webman and Sara Bareilles; Diamond and Webman with LeBron James; the Diamond family with David Gray; early days*

and Windish at the SUNY Binghamton. After graduation, both went into the biz; Diamond worked for a booking agency that handled British New Wave bands; Windish went to **William Morris** and got canned three weeks into his internship. He promptly created his own agency, **Bug Booking**, on the third floor of the **Lounge Ax** in Chicago.

Diamond's career has been more circuitous than Windish's. He started as an intern at **Neil Warnock** and **Steve Hedges' Cricket**, which repped **Echo** and **the Bunnymen**, **The Teardrop Explodes**, **Haircut 100**, **The Thompson Twins** and **Madness**. "It was kind of like an underdog competitor at the time to **Ian Copeland's**

**FBI agency**," Diamond says. "They were the gold standard at that point in terms of finding new and developing bands."

From there, he moved to other side of the business, booking **The Ritz** in New York for three years. "I was there all day and all night," he says of the venue now called **Webster Hall**. "Every day and every night." After a brief time with **Bill Graham Presents**, he went into the record business, first at **PolyGram** as a product manager and then as head of artist development at **Arista**. It bored him.

So Diamond returned to the live side, helping market shows for **Michael Farrell** and **Wayne Forte's ITG**. The two split up, and both asked Diamond to join them in

their new ventures, but he felt it was time to go out on his own. His bankroll was the \$30,000 he had in a 401K from his label gigs, and all he could afford for an office was **Vernon Reid's** aforementioned guitar closet. "I was really fucking proud of that closet," he says.

His first client was **David Gray**, four years before he would record his breakthrough album, **White Ladder**, which would eventually be the first release on **Dave Matthews' ATO** label; that led to Gray performing in arenas.

Diamond next signed **The Verve** and quickly assembled a roster of 22 acts. He has a framed copy of that early roster on his office wall—it includes **Sarah McLachlan**,





Windish brainstorming with Paradigm's Christine Cao and Nate Sokolski

“There are a lot more entry points that still require acute curation from agents in terms of what they’re signing. I think the discovery process is starting earlier, and we really take great pride in our process here.” —Marty Diamond

**Nick Heyward** and **Levellers**—“so I never forget where I came from.”

Diamond signed multiple artists very early in their careers: Coldplay, **MGMT**, **Ray Lamontagne**, **Barenaked Ladies**, **Gomez** and **Franz Ferdinand** among them. He signed **Jason Mraz** after hearing him perform in a hotel room in Las Vegas.

Eventually, he moved the headquarters for Little Big Man, which included **Larry Webman** as his #2, into the basement of the apartment building he lived in.

“It was about as DIY as it gets,” Diamond recalls. “I could lie in bed in my apartment on Gramercy Park and hear the fax machine at night. I’d go downstairs and check the fax machine. That’s how

closely connected I was and still am with my clients and my peers—they can reach me at any time of day or night.”

By the early 2000s, Little Big Man was one of the most successful boutique agencies in the biz. Naturally, larger agencies became interested in acquiring Diamond’s company.

“We had been approached by everybody,” he says. “We were so set in our ways that we didn’t want to be somewhere where we had to adapt to the way someone else worked. And when we met with Sam, he was going to let us do things the way we did things. There were no rules. I still feel at times with Sam that there are no rules, but in fairness and

respect, the person who really embraced me and was an integral part of me being successful was **Chip Hooper** [Paradigm’s head of music, who died in March 2016]. Every once in a while, I still think I have him on my shoulder, kind of whispering some good ideas or at least encouraging words. I realized that we could build something that was great.”

When Gores bought Little Big Man in 2006, Diamond was less interested in the weight the music division carried than the synergies possible on the film-and-TV side of the agency’s business. “I want all my clients to put on their thinking caps and say, ‘Wow, our agency now has access to the film and TV world; what else can we provide in terms of content?’” he told *Billboard* at the time. (In 2007, Monterey and Little Big Man stopped operating individually under their own names and became Paradigm.)

“We’re seeing more and more success, but I also think that that’s partially due to a climatic change,” Diamond says today. “We’re seeing artists have a much more diverse set of skills, largely due to the need to grow in the social space. People are much more conscious [of the visual image] because so much of their careers have been on **Instagram** or **Snapchat** or **Facebook**. When I started, that wasn’t necessarily part of the dialogue.”

Central to the crossover success have been Sheeran’s forays into film and TV—*Game of Thrones*, *Yesterday*, etc.—and **Sara Bareilles’** theater work (*Waitress*, hosting the **Tony Awards**).

“You hope that you can help widen a person as much as you can,” Diamond explains. “And that’s not to say that it’s relegated to somebody who is a superstar act vs. somebody who is a developing act. Those opportunities and other integration points are there for everybody on the roster.”

While Diamond was getting Lilith Fair off the ground with **Nettwerk** and McLachlan in the mid-’90s, Tom Windish was in the process of leaving his Bug Booking operation for the **Billions Corporation**.

“That was like winning the lottery,”



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Top: Diamond at Ed Sheeran's opening 2017 tour stop at Kansas City's Sprint Center with Paradigm's Ash Mowery-Lewis, the venue's Brenda Timmen, Sheeran and Louis Messina; center: with Sheeran; right: Windish with Tom Howie of Bob Moses at Red Light Management's 2017 Grammy afterparty

he told **Music Business Worldwide** in 2018. "Billions was probably my favorite agency; they were booking **Pavement**, **Jon Spencer Blues Explosion**, **The Jesus Lizard**. They helped me sign some bands and helped me fill in some of the cities on the map where I just didn't have relationships with promoters."

His time at Billions coincided with the rise of **Napster** and the Internet, dramatically increasing the speed with which information traveled. That opened windows of opportunity for Windish, who would learn about British bands long before they were picked up for distribution in the U.S. For many young acts, the Internet helped them build a fan base far more quickly than had previously been possible.

On day one, he had about 40 acts and

quickly developed a reputation for discovering artists early, signing them when they were only drawing double-digit audiences to their shows. Low—one of the first acts he signed to Bug Booking—**Hot Chip**, **Kid Koala**, **Godspeed You! Black Emperor** and **St. Germain** were among them. Once the agency—run out of a spare bedroom in his apartment with one employee—was up and running, he signed **Diplo**.

"We generally found artists we really loved, really believed in, and helped them build long-term careers," Windish says. "I enjoy being part of the process when it feels like we are rolling a boulder up a hill and convincing people to support the artist. I also enjoy the freedom and opportunities one gets when there is a devoted audience. Being part of the creative pro-

cess and lending creativity to the live performance is very fulfilling."

Windish is fond of saying the company has three principles: Only work with artists that you love, respond to every email immediately and be nice to people. "It sounds simple and silly, but we said that a lot, and we really tried to do that," he told *Crain's*. "I think it's pretty amazing how far those principles got us."

"Having known Tom for almost 20 years, it's been amazing to watch his evolution," the **Hollywood Bowl's Johanna Rees** says. "I remember him telling me about how, when he was a kid, he started a neighborhood business mowing lawns. It's that same tenacity and willingness to work hard that has gotten him where he is now. It's a testament to his commitment to see him



with a beautiful family and great success in business. He earned it all.”

Seven years into The Windish Agencyh’s existence, the accolades started pouring in. *Pollstar* named Windish—whose roster then included **James Blake**, **The Knife** and **Lorde**—the Independent Booking Agency of the Year for 2011 and 2012, and *Paper* magazine named him the second-most important booking agent in music in 2012.

Then, in 2015, Gores and Paradigm came knocking. They struck a partnership similar to the one Paradigm had with CODA and AM Only.

“From the moment I met Tom Windish, I was impressed with his business acumen, integrity, leadership, taste, and unique way of thinking,” Gores said at the time. “Over the years, Paradigm has established a pattern of successful partnerships that together have formed a unified culture that I am proud of.”

While part of the Paradigm family, Windish’s work with Eilish has begun to blossom. They met in 2015, and Windish has been carefully building her career alongside **Darkroom**, **Interscope** and managers **Danny Rukasin** and **Brandon Goodman**.

“I think that we knew a long time ago that she would be playing arenas relatively quickly, so we were very intentional about not going there,” he says. “Until the record came out, we had her underplay—smaller, iconic places. We didn’t want her to play 5,000-capacity venues when she hadn’t played for 1,500. It was very intentional.”

The tour for Eilish’s debut album, *WHEN WE ALL FALL ASLEEP, WHERE DO WE GO?*, was booked seven or eight months prior to its release. They have her playing a mix of large theaters and festivals in the U.S. and Europe into October and are setting up a major arena tour for 2020. “I guess we’ll evaluate in the next couple months,” Windish says, “but there’s lot of stuff planned for next year.”

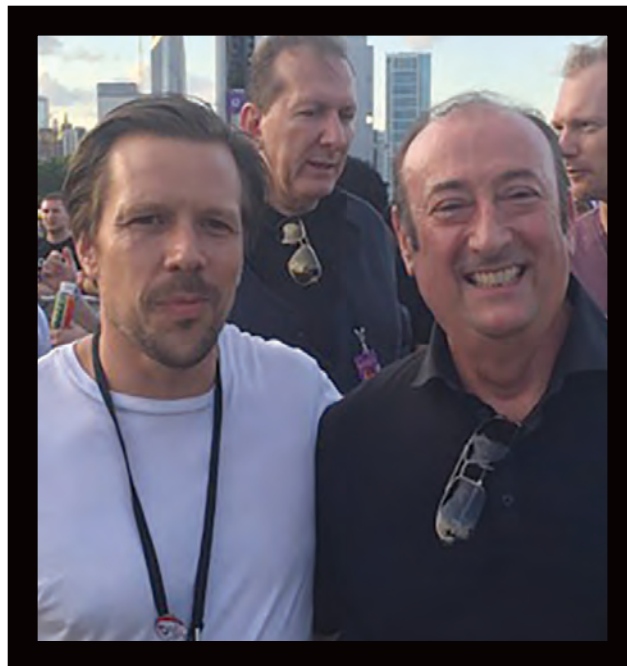
While Eilish is his latest budding superstar, Windish also continues to be hands-on with newcomers and veterans at various stages of their careers. Among established acts, his current focus is **Aphex Twin** and the **Stereolab** reunion; he’s also plotting a 2020 tour for **King Krule** and



Top: Windish with Billie Eilish; bottom: with wife Emma Ludbrook; work is play.

“No, Tom, you can’t have a hot air balloon with the Windish logo flying over the festival.” —Paul Tollett





Left: Windish and Goldenvoice main man Paul Tollett; right: with Metro Chicago owner Joe Shanahan

“I enjoy being part of the process when it feels like we are rolling a boulder up a hill and convincing people to support the artist. I also enjoy the freedom and opportunities one gets when there is a devoted audience. Being part of the creative process and lending creativity to the live performance is very fulfilling.” —Tom Windish

building the careers of **Vulfpeck**, the self-releasing/self-managing quartet heading to **Madison Square Garden** in September, and **JS Ondara**, whose debut came out on **Verve** in February.

“Tom finds so many unique artists every year,” **Goldenvoice** founder **Paul Tollett** says admiringly. “Somebody please give him a record company already.”

Windish had a 750-act roster at the time he joined **Paradigm**, ballooning the company’s list of artists to more than 2,000 and its ranks of agents to nearly 120. “The role an agency plays in an artist’s career is shifting,” Windish told the *Los Angeles Times*. “Musicians will increasingly rely on agencies to further their careers... Everyone’s figuring out how to add value.”

That statement resonated when, in June 2019, word spread around the biz of merger talks between **Paradigm** and fellow giant **UTA**. But just days after the rumor mill exploded, the principles confirmed the attempted deal was off in a pair of internal memos reprinted in **Deadline**.

“UTA made an offer to acquire **Paradigm** that would have represented one of the largest talent agency transactions in the history of our business,” Gores wrote. “The offer was made for both the Talent/Literary and Music divisions... After careful consideration and in consultation with leaders of both the Music and Talent/Literary executive groups, I have made the decision to shut down discussions and not make this deal.”

“We admire Sam and the business he and his colleagues have built,” read a statement from **UTA’s Jeremy Zimmer**. “We are disappointed we didn’t come to an agreement. But we wish him and everyone at **Paradigm** the best.”

The year **Paradigm** acquired Windish, it had two powerhouses in its stable—**Coldplay** and **Sheeran**—while a host of young artists were rocketing in popularity, among them **Alessia Cara**, **Shawn Mendes**, **Lil Uzi Vert** and **Sturgill Simpson**. A year later, **Sheeran’s** concert grosses and ubiquitous presence would

dwarf the rest of the industry. “Ed’s life traverses a lot of different places within our company, which is something we take great pride in,” Diamond says.

“Marty is a great partner for **Atlantic**,” says Chairman/COO **Julie Greenwald**. “He’s uncompromising in supporting an artist’s vision, and he never hesitates to roll up his sleeves to get the job done. Marty doesn’t wait for data to tell him what’s happening—he creates opportunities from the ground up, and he delivers time and time again. We love Marty; he’s part of the family.”

Diamond uses the word “participation” often, applying the term to artists and fans. He told *Pollstar* this year that participation and involvement “are really big words in **Ed Sheeran’s** life. He allows people to participate, he wants them involved, and part of that is from pricing to what he puts onstage. He talks to the audience in a stadium no differently than he talks to the audience at the **Mercury Lounge**.”

Diamond, who was named Agent of





Top: Windish with Paradigm's Sam Hunt and Sam's wife, Katherine Bucar, at Bonnaroo; with Hunt at Outside Lands; below: with son Wilder London Ludbrook; with Cleo; nice kicks; with signage

the Year at this year's **Pollstar Awards**, doesn't spell out his credo the way Windish once did. When he became the head of Paradigm's entire music operation in April, Gores credited Diamond's "passion, his intelligence, and his dedication to building amazing careers" as a personal inspiration. In reviewing the comments he and Windish have made during their decades in the business, it's clear they're dedicated to the new and the different, pushing boundaries and doing what's best for the artist.

"There are lot more entry points that still require acute curation from agents in terms of what they're signing," Diamond says. "I think the discovery process is starting earlier, and we really take great pride in our process here.

"Sometimes artists aren't fully formed when you find them. They don't have a band or a manager yet; they don't have the basic mechanics to start the process. And

so we're getting involved very early on and engaging with artists, helping them build their teams and learn the process."

Diamond reflected on the recent success of **Halsey**, watching her develop from playing small rooms to arenas and key slots on festivals, while also growing in the film and TV space.

"Her performance on *Saturday Night Live*, not only as a performer but as a part of the cast, was mind-blowing," he says. "She's a ferocious talent who continues to evolve—a credit to her, her agent team, her management team and her label. It is a collaborative effort with an artist who really leads the charge. She has a very clear definition of who she is and who she is becoming and how powerful her voice is."

As he said in April after receiving the top music job at the agency, "Being a tireless advocate for artists' work is the best way to grow careers."

Windish agrees. "I'm looking for artists who have long-term careers and are happy doing this at a level that they're satisfied with," he says. "I think you really need to make sure that every show [an artist performs] is special. I'm really trying to create moments so that it feels like there's some magic in the air between the audience and the fan. And it probably sounds pretty cheesy, but I think about that kind of stuff and I think about the event, which venue it is and what size, and how hard it is to get tickets, the ticket price and who else is on the bill. Obviously, what they're doing onstage matters immensely, but I think that other stuff adds to it too. I'm not expecting every artist I sign to sell out arenas or amphitheaters. I want to find great artists that I love, and help them have a career. And I think I've done that hundreds of times." ■