

When Daniel Powter hunkered down in a Los Angeles recording studio with producer Linda Perry earlier this year to make his new album *Under the Radar*, he had no idea what kind of music would result. “I knew the songs were good,” the former violinist-turned-singer-songwriter and pianist says, “but I didn’t know there would be so much guitar. I didn’t know some of it was going to be electronic. I didn’t know it would have strings. But Linda has such an incredible versatility with music, and she had all these ideas. I just had to get out of her way and let it all unfold.”

A singer-songwriter and musician herself who has worked career-makeover magic with Gwen Stefani and Christina Aguilera, Linda Perry is known for her brutal honesty and for cajoling artists to look inside and dig deep emotionally. On *Under the Radar*, she pulls the performance of a lifetime out of Powter. “Linda was like a therapist,” Powter recalls. “I cried in that studio, and she cried. There was frustration because she demanded a lot from me as a songwriter and performer. But she’s a kind, caring, wonderful, and very emotional woman. If you want to make music with her, you have to learn how to take an ass-kicking, and I think that’s what helped me. It was a cathartic experience.”

The tough-love was just what he needed after the whirlwind of the previous two years. When Warner Bros. Records released Powter’s self-titled album in Europe in 2005, Powter watched his career skyrocket as its lead-off track, the irresistibly catchy “Bad Day,” became the most-played song in Europe that year, peaking at No. 1 on national airplay charts in the U.K., Germany, France, Holland, Switzerland, Belgium, Denmark, and Norway. It also hit No. 1 in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, and went Top 5 in Italy, Austria, Sweden, Brazil, Finland, and South Africa. The album was certified platinum in Japan, the U.K., Ireland, France, and Switzerland, and gold in Australia, Canada, Singapore, and Taiwan.

Encouraged by its stunning international success, Warner Bros. Records released Daniel Powter in the U.S., where it debuted on the Billboard Top 200 at No. 9 thanks to “Bad Day” — by now an unstoppable juggernaut that eventually became the best-selling digital single of all-time in the U.S., selling nearly 2.5 million downloads. “Bad Day” topped the Billboard Hot 100 for five consecutive weeks and earned Powter a 2007 Grammy Award nomination for “Best Male Pop Vocal Performance.” Three follow-up singles were released — “Free Loop,” “Jimmy Gets High,” and “Lie to Me” — eventually pushing global sales of Daniel Powter to more than 2.7 million copies. A fourth single, the live favorite “Love You Lately,” reached the Top 10 in several countries and appears as a bonus track on *Under the Radar*.

Highly in demand to perform around the world, Powter hit the road for an international tour. But after the seemingly endless string of media appearances and touring ceased, Powter found himself emotionally depleted. “I was really burned out,” he says. “I didn’t know where the music was going to come from. I didn’t think I had a lot to say.” He decided to hole up alone in a small studio in Los Angeles to see what might happen. Within two weeks, “Best of Me,” “Whole World Around,” “Am I Still the One,” and

“Not Coming Back” came pouring out of him. “I just fell in love with the songwriting process again,” he says. “Once I sat down at the piano, I felt really comfortable.” If the previous album (initially recorded in a tiny apartment in Vancouver) was about Powter trying to discover what kind of voice he had, *Under the Radar* is the sound of an artist stretching creatively, refining that voice, and coming into his own. “Linda wanted to make an ‘artist’ record,” Powter says. “And I think that’s what we’ve done.”

“Best of Me” sets the tone immediately: “It’s basically saying, ‘Take me for who I am or leave me for who I am, but this is the best of me,’” Powter says. “That was the first song we recorded and it opened the door to me getting over myself. Once we got that out of the way, things started to flow and everything became much easier.” Other album highlights include the first single “Next Plane Home,” “Whole World Around,” and “Am I Still The One?” (on which Perry makes a very rare vocal appearance). Through it all, the music affirms Powter’s love for classic pop songwriting, complete with unforgettable melodies and anthemic choruses. It also expands his previously piano-driven sonic palette by blending in chunky guitars, electronic flourishes, and sweeping strings.

“As a singer-songwriter, I have a responsibility to communicate and connect with people,” Powter says, “and for me, melody speaks louder than words so that’s where I go with things, but I think a lot of people will relate to the lyrics. I just can’t wait for people to hear these new songs. I’m hungry to get back out on the road because I have this amazing, honest record to back me up!”

Warner Bros. Records will release *Under the Radar* in Europe in September and in the U.S. in early 2009.