

## Hip-Hop Label Def Jam Co Founder Teams With WB

Written by Keith ID1735  
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American Recordings headed by legendary hip-hop and rock producer Rick Rubin has joined the Warner Bros. family of labels.

Rubin has produced such landmark hip-hop albums as Run DMC's "Raisin" Hell," Beastie Boys' "Licensed to Ill," and LL Cool J's "Radio," as well as best-selling music by such diverse artists as Red Hot Chili Peppers, super rap artist Jay-Z, System of a Down, Tom Petty, Weezer, Audioslave, Dixie Chicks, and Johnny Cash. The co-founder of classic hip-hop label, Def Jam, with Russell Simmons, Rubin struck out on his own in 1988 and formed American Recordings. The label built its reputation with chart-topping hits by such artists as System of a Down, Black Crowes, and Sir Mix-A-Lot.

The new partnership entails that American Recordings will sign and provide creative services for artists, while Warner Bros. will handle promotion, publicity, sales, marketing, and distribution. Current American Recording artists who will make the transition include Swedish political punk rock band International Noise Conspiracy, singer-songwriter Dan Wilson, and extreme metal pioneers Slayer. American will be based out of Warner Bros.' Burbank, California, headquarters where Rubin will maintain an office.

In 2007, Warner Bros. will also acquire the rights to the extensive American Recordings catalog, which includes Johnny Cash, the Black Crowes, the Jayhawks, Slayer, and Danzig. Warner Bros. was American's home from 1992 through 1997.

Now Rubin is excited to be back with Warner Bros., citing the stewardship of CEO Tom Whalley as his primary reason for returning. "Tom Whalley grew up in the record business in the same way that I did," Rubin says. "He understands the grass roots development of artists and the importance of growing real careers in a time when most executives are looking for short-term success, which ultimately yields short-sighted goals. Tom understands that if artists are developed and nurtured the right way from the beginning, they'll stick around for a long time.

"Of all the labels," Rubin adds, "Warner Bros. is the rock label. All the biggest acts on it are rock artists. The company has a better understanding of rock and eclectic music than any other in the industry. It's a perfect fit."

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Whalley is equally excited about the deal with Rubin. "Rick has been a driving creative force in popular music for two decades, discovering new artists, nurturing established ones, and bringing about their success time and again," he says. "We are thrilled to have him back in the fold."