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## Reviews

**Kenneth LaBarre, Director; Hank Neuberger, Producer. *Lady Antebellum: Own the Night World Tour* (DVD). Eagle Rock Entertainment, 2012 (124 minutes, NTSC). [www.eagle-rock.com](http://www.eagle-rock.com).**

Lady Antebellum has risen to become one of the most successful crossover country acts in recent memory. Their breakout 2009 hit single *Need You Now* topped both the *Billboard* Country and Hot 100 charts, opening up a broader market to the pop-leaning trio. This video combines one night's performance on the group's 2011-2012 arena headlining "Own the Night" tour, filmed in Little Rock, Arkansas, with selected backstage and tour-diary segments that provide the viewer with a good behind-the-scenes look at the roles and responsibilities artists and their support team assume when they get to the top levels of the music business.

For an introductory class in music industry studies, these clips are especially helpful in that the artists are speaking candidly about their aspirations and about their reliance on their eighty-person team to put on a successful show night after night. Three of the backstage segments bear note to help students see behind the spotlights, video walls, and three-level production stage that are used on the U.S. concert segments. The first, titled "From the Ground Up," details the production design and thought that goes into building and staging an eight-month-long arena tour. Set designers, riggers, lighting techs, sound, video, and backline crew are all shown in action helping to underscore their crucial offstage roles in preparing and executing each night's concert. The second, "The Road to Here," provides video clips of the band's early career, showing their work ethic and dedication to building an audience. It won't be lost on students that one of these gigs was to play in a rural truck stop/diner to celebrate the opening of deer season! Most of the diner's patrons ignore the band while a local radio personality shoves a mic between the trio serenading the sleepy crowd at 7 a.m. Nonetheless, Lady Antebellum soldiers on, touring in one Jeep Grand Cherokee with their acoustic guitars and merch boxes in the back. So much for overnight success.

The third segment may be the most insightful to what makes this band so successful. It's their 24/7 dedication to writing original songs that connect deeply with their audience. Titled, "Evolution of a Song," this

chapter starts with each member sharing his or her earliest involvement with music and the roles that supportive family played in early musical development. Singer Hillary Scott insightfully states that the trio see themselves as “songwriters, first” and that they are a band that chooses to focus their energy on songwriting every single day they are together. Scenes portray them working at their writer’s craft individually and as a group, before Dave Heywood demonstrates their Pro Tools mini-studio, which they tour with to constantly cut new demos of songs. The efficacy of such an approach can be heard in the concert segments as the group plays their hook-laden crossover pop-country songs to the tumultuous acclaim of the packed arenas both here and overseas.

For a music business educator, *Lady Antebellum: Own the Night 2012 World Tour* offers an excellent first-person account of a phenomenally successful crossover act that retains a sense of wonder and humility about the path they’ve taken to the top, with plenty of the off-stage nuts and bolts on display to remind students of what really underpins their success and rise to international acclaim and multi-platinum success.



**KEITH HATSCHEK** is Professor of Music and Director of the Music Management Program at the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California. Prior to joining academia, he worked in the music business for more than twenty-five years. He is the author of two music industry books: *The Golden Moment: Recording Secrets of the Pros* and *How To Get a Job in the Music Industry*, which provides career development tools and strategies for young

music professionals. He contributes monthly music industry commentary for the music blog, *Echoes-Insights for Independent Artists*. Among his research interests are music industry curriculum and pedagogy, student-led music businesses, recording and music technology, and the life and work of jazz pianist, Dave Brubeck. He has presented a number of conference papers and talks about Brubeck's role in Cold War jazz diplomacy, the Civil Rights movement and musicians' collaborative efforts to address segregation in the mid-twentieth-century United States.