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TALENT AND LITERARY AGENCY

Ciara

Take the best songwriters and the best singers, add the most exciting performers and the best all around personalities, throw in the hottest looks and the sexiest smiles -- mix them all together and the finished product would probably look and sound a lot like Ciara.

The 18-year-old beauty from Atlanta is the latest multi-talented scene-stealer to nudge her way to center stage with attention-grabbing vocals, irresistible songwriting and killer dance moves.

Ciara - a 'military brat' who has lived in Germany, New York, California, Arizona and Nevada- has found herself in the mix with some of the city's biggest and brightest producers, among them Jazze Pha -- who signed Ciara to his Sho' Nuff label after working with her for a mere five days -- and his royal crunkness Lil' Jon, who produced the singer's lead single, the "Crunk & B" cautionary wrist-slapper "Goodies."

Ciara is only the second artist (the first was Usher with his hit single "Yeah") to release a Crunk & B song. Says Lil' Jon of the newly-formed genre, "Crunk & B songs are R&B songs that get you crunk. They make you wanna wild out. ['Goodies'] is a female empowerment record. The female has the power. The female is in control on this song. This is one of those records for the ladies."

"I'm so happy I wrote 'Goodies'," Ciara enthuses. "I pray everybody gets it the way they're supposed to." In the hook, Ciara warns, "*I/you're looking/or the goodies keep on looking 'cause they stay in the jar.*" "I think: we all run across this problem," she explains. "A guy thinks you're gonna be with him because he's got the iced out chain, he's popular and all that. But that ain't it. That ain't gonna make me give you my number and that's definitely not gonna make me go home with you. It's the truth."

Jon says he was impressed by Ciara's approach to the song, which she co-wrote with "Yeah" songwriter Sean Garrett. "She did an excellent job on it," says Jon. "With this record, it's the way she rides over the track, the way she freaks the beat and the stuff that she says to connect her with other women. She's saying stuff that women can relate to. Guys are always trying to get some from a girl and she's like you can't have it. That's what makes her stand out and this is one of those records with that undeniable energy where as soon as the beat comes on it catches you and makes you move. You can't sit still when that song comes on. Crunk music, you can't fake because it's all about the energy. It's gotta be real."

And Ciara is as real as they come. Her self-titled Sho' Nuff/LaFace/Zomba Label Group debut is a heaping dose of real life issues conveyed through everyday language and extraordinary production and vocal delivery. The album is a complete work of art and a masterful mixture of messages for the young and not so young.

On "Thugstyle," a song she wrote with songwriter Johnta Austin (Toni Braxton, Aaliyah) Ciara displays her true 'round the way girl' nature. "It's kinda how a guy would talk to a female, always spittin' game," she explains. "To me, it's a little slick. It's just a fun record. Everyone loves to sing along with it."

"Looking at You" and "Pick up the Phone" with their groove-heavy tracks and sassy vocals, are signature Ciara, who says the latter, written and produced by Austin and



Ciara - Page 2

Jazze Pha, talks about something that "everybody goes through." "I love this record because it's so real. I say, 'You know it would be nice if you could call somebody and let somebody know that you're alright...I know you see me in the caller I.D. so pick up the p-h-o-n-e.'" "

The slow and sweet "And I," which Ciara did with producer Adonis, is about "loving someone for who they are and not what they have." And "Ooh Baby," written by Sean Garrett and Keri Hilson (Reuben Studdard, 3LW) is about good old-fashioned infatuation. "I'm just really into this guy," Ciara explains, in character. "I consider myself a 'round-the-way girl, down to earth and basically the kind of guy I like is like this guy who pulls up in the F-150 pickup with the crazy banging system. He's a 'round-the-way dude, kinda 'hood. But I'm like really into him."

With its easy-to-relate-to subject matter, the album is listener-friendly and accessible to anyone who knows even the slightest bit about 'keeping it real.' "The songs are very catchy," says Ciara. "They're for all demographics, all age ranges... They're not as personal as I want to be. I'd rather be more personal on the second album, once I grow a little more."

Considering the short time that she's been in the music business - about three years - Ciara has grown plenty. She admits that she's a bit more mature than the average teenager. "Throughout life I've experienced a lot more than the typical 18 year old has. And being in this industry makes you develop more quickly than a typical child would. You mature faster." But much of Ciara's growth and maturity come from her determination to pursue her dreams. "I remember watching Destiny's Child perform on TV one day. That's when I made up my mind: 'Hey I wanna do this.' I watched my peers around me and they were worried about who's wearing what, going to school, trying to talk to somebody and I was like 'I'm trying to be somebody. What can I do to get there as soon as possible?'"

Ciara set her sights on her dream and went after it. "I wrote down on paper that I had a goal to be a professional singer and I wanna be there soon I had to sacrifice a lotta things and I think that was the key thing to get me there. I cut out going to the movies, I cut out hanging with my friends, I actually told some of my mends 'This month we're not gonna hang out or talk on the phone.' I don't have too many friends anyway - less is better for me. I cut out the boyfriend - actually I had my heart broken so I was really like, 'I'm 'bout to do this. I'm 'bout to be on top.'"

From there, things moved swiftly: She joined a girl group, left the group to go solo, nabbed a publishing deal and eventually hooked up with Jazze Pha, whom she refers to as her "music soul mate." "God really put him in my life for a reason," she says. "Our vibe is incredible."

And now Ciara is ready to share her vibe with the rest of the world, but "It's not just about penning clever lyrics and singing and dancing to a banging track," she says. "My goal is to deliver a positive message and let people know they're not the only one going through things... I've been blessed to be able to counsel my peers. I'm here to deliver a message and I think the impression that you make is very important. I don't wanna write records just to write. I wanna have a message to everything that I write. That gives you longevity."