



It's now

BY GLENN GAMBOA

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Justin Bieber's "Never Say Never" 3-D movie opens with a bunch of YouTube videos that went viral the way his did. Sneezing pandas, surprised kittens and little Bieb singing, "With You."

Director Jon Chu says he wanted to start the documentary the way he, like most people, learned about the 16-year-old sensation. "I remember exactly where I was when I saw him sing that Chris Brown song," Chu says. "I remember saying, 'Who is this kid?' and I remember forwarding it to my friends."

More than almost any other artist — aside from maybe Lady Gaga, who gives him a run for his cyber-money — Bieber is a product of today's brave new, incredibly wired world, where stars seemingly maintain one-to-one contact with fans through a barrage of tweets, pictures and

or 'Never'

Justin Bieber, who started on YouTube, takes his career to a new dimension with his big-screen debut

videos. When Bieber dubbed his debut, "My World," he could just as easily have been staking his claim to his considerable corner of the Internet.

But "Never Say Never" — part documentary, part concert film — shows that Bieber's new-millennium success is based on old-school hard work and talent. "That's the vision I wanted," says Scott "Scooter" Braun, Bieber's 29-year-old manager

and one of the movie's producers. "We didn't make this for his core audience. This wasn't just a kiss to the fans. We wanted to make a great movie. In this recession, when kids aren't hearing any stories of inspiration, this is a success story and it's for real. It shows hard work and determination can lead to something extraordinary."

When discussions began for a "Justin Bieber" movie, Braun

says they were planning a more limited project, filming Bieber's sold-out Madison Square Garden show in August and releasing it on DVD. But, Braun says, Team Bieber took inspiration from Will Smith, whom they had gotten to know from working with his son, Jaden, on the movie's title track.

"One thing he says a lot is 'Do not be realistic,'" Braun says. "What we're hoping the

film shows is that it might seem impossible. It might never have been done before. But we did it. It's like the Wright Brothers were told, 'You can't fly.' Well, now we're flying all over the place."

The Bieber success story that "Never Say Never" chronicles may be familiar to fans, but that doesn't make it less amazing.

In 2007, when he was 12, Bieber entered a singing contest in his hometown of Stratford, Ontario. His mom, Pattie Mallette, filmed it and uploaded it to YouTube so their relatives could watch it, but soon strangers were finding Bieber's ver-



People tuned in for Susan Boyle's performance of "I Dream a Dream" on YouTube, and her career became a dream come true.

YouTube's got talent

Justin Bieber is the biggest star to be discovered on YouTube so far, but he isn't the only one.

Here's a look at some other musicians who have built their careers on the video site:

SUSAN BOYLE

WHO The 49-year-old Scottish singer with the remarkable voice who had two No. 1 albums last year and sold more than 14 million copies worldwide.

YOUTUBE MOMENT Her audition for "Britain's Got Talent" stunned judges and viewers with her stirring version of "I Dreamed a Dream," showing how deceiving appearances can be.

VIEW COUNT 70 million

signed to Ellen DeGeneres' eleveneleven label, and is on his first tour supporting his debut single "Waiting Outside the Lines." He also opens for Miranda Cosgrove at NYCB Theatre at Westbury next Sunday.

YOUTUBE MOMENT His piano-driven version of Lady Gaga's "Paparazzi," taped at his sixth-grade festival, garnered lots of attention, including an appearance on DeGeneres' talk show.

VIEW COUNT 47 million

CHARICE

WHO The 18-year-old from the Philippines was discovered on YouTube singing on talent shows. She has since released a CD and is set to return to "Glee."

YOUTUBE MOMENT

She wowed Oprah Winfrey, who booked her on the show and introduced her to David

Foster, who signed her to Warner Bros.

Records, and Celine Dion, who had her perform with her at Madison Square Garden.

VIEW COUNT 30 million for her song "Pyramid."

— GLENN GAMBOA



Thanks to "Pyramid," things shaped up for Charice.

sion of "Respect" and forwarding it to their friends.

By the end of 2009, Braun, who also manages rapper Asher Roth and worked with Jermaine Dupri at So So Def Recordings in Atlanta, had seen the videos, signed Bieber, and helped him create his major-label debut. Now, even though Bieber is still new enough to be up for a best new artist Grammy next week, he's already sold out Madison Square Garden.

"It's a fairy tale," Chu says. "I love fairy tales. . . . This is the origin story of a hero."

However, real-life fairy tales have struggles, too. "Never Say Never" shows Bieber and his team working hard, traveling from city to city to meet radio personalities and building an audience a handful of excited teenagers at a time.

The sign that this strategy was working comes when those excited teens band together in ever-growing groups, as they did at Roosevelt Field mall, where police had to shut down a

Bieber appearance out of public safety concerns in November 2009. (Braun faces misdemeanor charges of reckless endangerment and criminal nuisance for not helping disperse the crowd, according to prosecutors. He has pleaded not guilty to the charges and says he could not discuss the ongoing case.)

And in real life, fairy tales also have consequences. "Never Say Never" gets some extra drama when Bieber gets sick and starts losing his voice only days before the star-studded Madison Square Garden concert that forms the heart of the movie.

"It's just one of God's jokes," Braun says, adding that they were already making plans to film another show on the tour.

Though the illness made the movie more exciting, it also created some serious production issues. "I did not want to cheer this drama on," Chu says. "It may have added another layer to the movie, but we had a lot riding on that one show. We already had 11 3-D cameras

"Never Say Never," which opens Friday, is a part concert, part documentary look at Bieber's success story.

coming in. We were thinking . . . 'this movie could double in price.'" (Spoiler alert: Bieber performs at the Garden and sounds just fine.)

Chu says that in watching hundreds of hours of footage of Bieber, he found another unexpected consequence of fame.

See **BIEBER** on C8



See a trailer for "Never Say Never"



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/movies

OK GO

WHO Chicago rockers who released their eponymous debut in 2002, but became sensations after their videos went viral.

YOUTUBE MOMENT

Their "Here It Goes Again" video, the one where they dance on treadmills, went viral in 2006 and has been their biggest success, though several other videos, including the Rube Goldberg machine for "This Too Shall Pass," have been big hits.

VIEW COUNT 52 million for "Here It Goes Again"

GREYSON CHANCE

WHO The 13-year-old from Edmond, Okla., is currently working on his major-label debut,



Fans went gaga over Greyson Chance's version of "Paparazzi."

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Meeting Justin

Kidsday reporters Jillian Smerechniak and Claire Chapey, age 11, Bay Shore, attended a screening of the new movie "Justin Bieber: Never Say Never" Wednesday and then stood on the red carpet for his New York movie premiere at the Regal E-Walk Theater that night. Here is their report:

We are "Beliebers"! Bieber Fever hit Manhattan Wednesday. We were given an amazing opportunity to see the "Justin Bieber: Never Say Never" movie premiere. It is a documentary on Justin's journey to fame. His hard work and dedication to his profession is inspiring. With his busy work schedule, he still finds time for his family and friends. The behind-the-scenes footage was entertaining, and the music was rockin'. We recommend this movie not only for his fans, but for everyone. It's a must-see.

After the premiere, we walked over to Regal E-Walk theater to meet Justin on the red carpet, and we saw and spoke with many celebrities, including Spike Lee, Jay Sean and Stephen Baldwin, while waiting.

Our big moment was when we met Justin. He looked great in a purple bow tie. He greeted us with a friendly, warm smile. He told us that he is grateful to singer Usher and his manager Scooter Braun. We only had a few minutes to speak with Justin — the crush of cameras and fans was incredible — but we did get to ask him who he would want to perform with next. He told us either Beyoncé or Eminem. We also asked if he was looking for more roles to challenge himself. Justin said, "I am. We're going to do more acting in the future and explore my acting career." He is a natural singer; he said that some of the dance moves are difficult to learn.

He is HOT! Interviewing Justin on the red carpet was a dream come true . . . Never Say Never!!



Kidsday reporters Claire Chapey, left, and Jillian Smerechniak meet Justin Bieber.

Bieber screen fever

BIEBER from C6

"We got to see how we were just one of 300 people he would talk to in a day," Chu says. "For him, he has to start seeing people as a sea of people. Everywhere he goes people are staring at him. Everyone has a weird fascination with him. I don't know how he copes with it. . . . He has to grow a thick skin."

Though Bieber says in "Never Say Never" that he wants to make sure he doesn't miss out on his childhood, he also wants to keep moving forward.

"He keeps telling me he wants people to hear the new songs he's written," says Braun, adding that they hope to release a new album in November.

Bieber wants to keep acting, after good reviews for his guest arc on "CSI," which continues Thursday. Braun says Bieber will look at small movie roles this year, with hopes of larger roles next year. "This is his moment," Braun says. "He's not going away."