

# Sean "The Pen" Garrett

## Writing with Precision

### How one week changed the life of a songwriter

By: Chris Williams | Photos by: Derek Blanks

In one week, life irrevocably changed for the man dubbed "The Pen" by Jay-Z.

Sean "The Pen" Garrett landed on the scene when "Yeah!" (performed by Usher) and "Goodies" (performed by Ciara) were released during the same week to radio stations during early 2004. Since then, he hasn't looked back and has steadily achieved record breaking success. For the past seven years, Garrett has had 38 top ten records and 17 number one records on the Billboard Hot 100 Chart. Those statistics are a testament to his talent as a songwriter/producer/arranger and it's by far more than any of his contemporaries in the industry today. Having 17 number one records puts him in fifth place on the Billboard list of producers with the most number one hits of all-time and he stands alone as being the only hip hop producer that is mentioned on the Billboard list of producers with the most number one hits.

Garrett spoke to Street Report Magazine about how his life changed after the release of the aforementioned records by Usher and Ciara respectively.

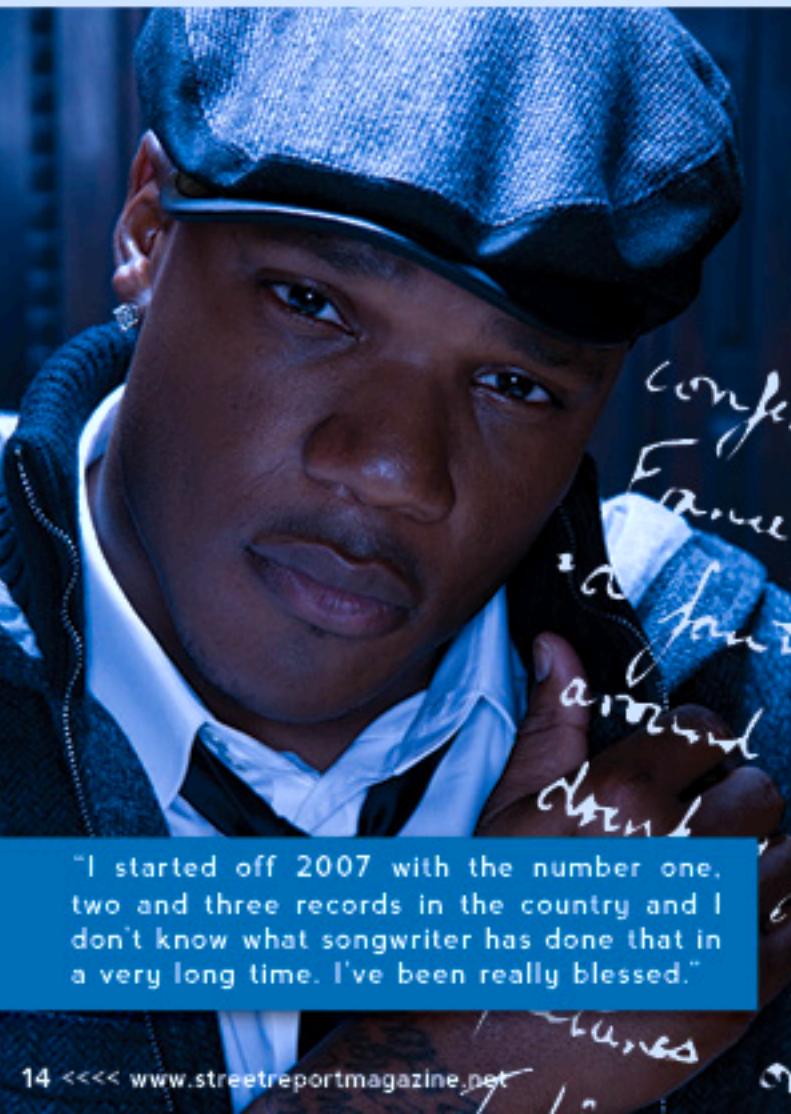
"My first official credit as a songwriter came back in 2003 when I wrote this record and recorded it with my boy Latif called "I Don't Want to Hurt You," says Garrett. To this day, it's still one of my favorite records that I've written. The next record that I did which came out a year later was "Yeah!" with Usher and in that same week I did a record with Ciara called "Goodies." Those were my first two number one records. At that point, things just went crazy for me. I ended up doing my next hit, "Soldier" for Destiny's Child and I did nine songs on that same album, which was entitled "Destiny Fulfilled." It was a pretty big feat for me because I don't think any producer has been that dominant on one Destiny Child album. They're one of the most incredible female acts of our time."

Garrett's discography reads like a scroll due to how many hit records he has written for the top recording artists of this past decade. A plethora of popular mainstream hits came from his innovative hands such as "Run It" "Gimme That" and "Wall to Wall" by Chris Brown, "Buttons" by The Pussy Cat Dolls, "London Bridge" by Fergie, "Check On It" "Upgrade U" "Ring the Alarm" by Beyoncé among countless other compositions.

Garrett touched on the musicians and people who influenced him when he was growing up.

"I was so heavily influenced by many people," says Garrett. "My mother was my biggest fan and encouraged me to do many different things. She played different types of music from artists like Patti Labelle, Marvin Gaye, the Eurythmics, the Beatles, Gloria Estefan, and a lot of soul and pop music. Growing up in Europe, I grew up around a heavy pop culture and it set my mind up to be able to do a lot of popular music once my career took off. I know people look at me and assume I just do a lot of urban music, but that's not really the case. I've had a lot of big urban hits, but I've had huge pop hits such as "London Bridge" by Fergie, "Do You Know" by Enrique Iglesias, which was #1 for 14 weeks on the Latin Billboard charts. I also did the "Buttons" record for the Pussy Cat Dolls off of their debut album. I wrote "Enough Cryin," which was a number one hit for Mary J. Blige, I helped break Jamie Foxx with a record like "DJ Play A Love Song." I've had success in many areas. I started off 2007 with the number one, two and three records in the country and I don't know what songwriter has done that in a very long time. I've been really blessed."

A native of Atlanta, Garrett encountered a multitude of different cultures growing up in Europe. His father was a member of the US military and as a result he traveled back and forth between England and Germany rigorously. He was entered into his first talent



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