

grove says of the album, released April 27. Songs like lead single "Kissin' U," which vaults 41 spots to No. 54 on the Billboard Hot 100 this week, were co-written by Cosgrove and reveal a serious commitment to exploring pop music. "Some people might think I'm just another actress putting out an album," she adds. "But I wanted to prove that I'm more than that."

Although Cosgrove started singing at age 5 and playing guitar at 8, the Los Angeles native was first discovered for her acting skills. Following a supporting role in the 2003 Jack Black com-

edy "School of Rock," she was cast as the mischievous sister on Nickelodeon sitcom "Drake & Josh."

In 2007 Cosgrove signed on to star in "Carly," a show that follows a teenage girl and the popular webcast she creates with friends. Since its premiere, "iCarly" has become a hit for Nickelodeon, ranking as the No. 1 live-action series on broadcast and basic cable with kids 2-11 in first-quarter 2010, according to Nielsen.

Cosgrove started thinking seriously about a music career in 2007 after recording "Leave It All to Me," the "Carly" theme song, with "Drake & Josh" co-star Drake Bell. "Before that, I didn't see myself making an album," she says. "But when I spent time in the studio doing the theme song and saw how much fun it was, I wanted to go back."

An "iCarly" soundtrack, featuring "Leave It All to Me" and three other

songs by Cosgrove, debuted at No. 28 on the Billboard 200 in June 2008. Because of her filming schedule for "Carly," Cosgrove decided she "didn't want to do anything halfway" and worked on her full-length debut during a two-year period.

Recorded with producers like Dr. Luke, the Matrix and Antonina Armato, "Sparks Fly" is filled with dance-floor jams like "BAM" and reflective pop-rock cuts like "Shakespeare." The

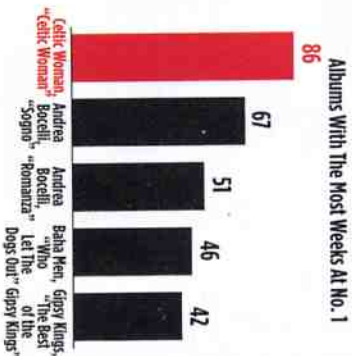
side from targeting "iCarly" fans, Cosgrove stopped by "The View" April 26 and appeared in a video with You Tube shopping tipster Blair Fowlke also known as JuiceStar07, in an effort to reach a post-adolescent audience. Following a radio promotional tour for "Sparks Fly," Cosgrove will spend the summer filming season four "Carly" and making appearances on radio concerts.

"Nickelodeon is our biggest partner, but we're also trying to appeal to different demographics like old teenage fans," Poppe says.

AS THE WORLD TURNS 20

Twenty years ago this week, Billboard launched its Top World Albums chart, ranking the best-selling sets of the week with a distinctive global beat. On the premiere tally in the May 19, 1990, issue, the Gipsy Kings' "Mosaïque" was No. 1, ahead of efforts from Black Uhuru and Le Mystere Des Voix Bulgares, respectively. Initially the chart was compiled based on reports from retailers, but that changed with the Dec. 3, 1994, list, when Nielsen SoundScan sales data began powering the ranking. The Gipsy Kings also hold the record for the list's most chart-toppers, with seven. Close behind with six each are the vocal group Celtic Woman and the Chieftains—both of whom tread in traditional Irish music waters. Anthony Kearns and Ronan Tynan, thanks to their credited work as members of the Irish Tenors, each have four No. 1s. While it seems like the World chart has been more of an Irish tally these days—this week six of the titles on the 15-position tally are Irish-related (see page 75)—the list has featured Hawaiian, Cuban, Celtic, European, Asian, Middle Eastern, African and South American music. That's in addition to any other music style native to lands outside of the contiguous United States.

—Keith Caulfield



World leaders: GIPSY KINGS

