

The Gutsy Capitalist

When we think of celebrity empires, names like Jennifer Lopez and Gwen Stefani normally spring to mind, although we'll soon be adding Toronto R&B singer **Jully Black** to that list - if Black has any say in the matter!

"It's about Jully Black Entertainment Inc.," says Black, as she relaxes on a posh hotel patio in downtown Toronto. "I'm building the Jully brand."

We might not (yet) think of Black as a media mogul, but if the budding songstress has her way she'll soon have her own daytime talk show. "I want to have a show like Ellen DeGeneres meets Arsenio Hall," she says with a straight face.

If anyone can become Canada's next big TV personality, it's Black. The outspoken vocalist already has a gig on *eTalk*, interviewing *Canadian Idol* contestants. Her sophomore album is about to hit stores, and she's even dating an international celebrity - Black Eyed Peas drummer Keith Harris. If all goes according to schedule, Black will be dominating our airwaves in no time.



'DA KINK IN MY HAIR
Jully Black fans are in for a treat on Sunday October 28 when Black guest stars on the new Global series *'da Kink in My Hair*. The 13-episode comedy, which is based on the award-winning Trey Anthony play (in which Black once performed), is set in a Toronto hair salon run by a Jamaican woman struggling to maintain her sanity working alongside her wacky friends and fam. - *Brianne Binelli*

"Here's the plan," she says, sounding like a veteran CEO revealing her long-term forecast to company shareholders. "I'll do another record in two years. Maybe I'll have a real person in my life by then, get married, have a little baby, but then do radio, so you don't see me fat, then get fit, spin off to television, and then I'll have another record."

It sounds easy enough, but first she needs to sell some copies of *Revival*, her followup to 2005's *This Is Me*. The record's Motown sound and Ray Charles-like first single, "Seven Day Fool," should have R&B fans lining up, but if her debut album's dismal sales are any indication, people would rather download Black's tunes than buy them. "There were 2.8 million illegal downloads of my last album," she says. "If those people bought my record, I'd be bathing in the dough."

She's joking about rolling around in greenbacks, but she's genuinely disturbed by the rampant downloading that's plaguing the music industry. Black advocates stronger copyright laws, even though it's not always the most popular cause to get behind.

"A lot of people don't speak up about it because they're afraid of it and afraid of the repercussions," she says.

Black's unwavering passion makes her imperial dreams seem attainable, but interviewing *Canadian Idol* wannabes is a far cry from becoming the next Oprah. While she admits she has a long way to go, Black's confident she'll get there. "I've always wanted to go into TV but I've never seen someone on Canadian television that looked like me." ★



REVIVAL Released Oct 16

Black is a survivor - and one gutsy diva. Born in Toronto's tough Jane and Finch 'hood, the R&B singer got her start lending her gritty, soulful vocals to tracks by various T-dot hip hop artists before making her debut in 2005 with the big, bold *This Is Me*. Black's second album proves she has the songwriting chops to match her powerful alto. Including a ballsy remake of the Etta James classic "Seven Day Fool," it features Black singing her ass off on a collection of first-rate original ballads and rugged dance floor scorches. - *Nicholas Jennings*