The State Of Retail: Testing Brick-And-Mortar’s Foundation

BY ED CHRISTMAN
NEW YORK—While super chains like Tower Records/Video/Books, HMV, and the Virgin Megastore are acclaimed by label executives for their decentralized operations, retail chains that are known for strong leadership from corporate headquarters also make allowances for a degree of autonomy at the store level, according to retail executives and store managers.

Stores in the 20-unit Virgin Entertainment Megastore chain buy locally because each is practically a completely different market. But Glen Ward, CEO for the

Identifying & Keeping Retail Music Employees

BY BRIAN GARRITY
NEW YORK—Customer service and a positive in-store experience may be more important than ever for brick-and-mortar merchants, as they deal with competition from loss-leading music merchants, Web retailers, and Napster.

But hiring and retaining people to create and support the right environment for shoppers is anything but easy. Retailers say, especially with unemployment at a near all-time low and the competition for good help as ferocious as it has ever been.

Also, retailers are hard-pressed to be overly competitive in perhaps

Best Buy Acquires Musicland Chain

BY ED CHRISTMAN
NEW YORK—In a move that would create the music industry's largest retail account, Best Buy has signed a definitive agreement to buy the Musicland Group, in a cash deal that will pay Musicland shareholders $12.55 a share, or about $425 million.

The deal, which needs shareholder approval and is expected to be completed in first-quarter 2001, would give Best Buy a music market share of about 18%, according to senior

(Continued on page 89)

Concerts West Deal Boosts AEG

BY RAY WADDELL
NASHVILLE—Anschutz Entertainment Group's (AEG) acquisition of Concerts West and subsequent move to become a major player in the national concert promotion scene has the potential to bring tough competition to national promoters SFX and House of Blues (HOB).

By purchasing Concerts West (BillboardBulletin, Dec. 6) and making known its intention to be an

(Continued on page 90)
THE GOLD STANDARD HAS

IT'S BEEN JUST A YEAR SINCE INTER
COMBINED FORCES, AND

#1 CURRENT ALBUM MARKET SHARE Y
S JUST GONE PLATINUM

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**Gaylord Shuts Its Internet Division**

NAISHVILLE—Gaylord Entertainment Co. has shuttered its Internet division, Gaylord Digital, and shopping its assets.

Gaylord Digital will be shuttered or sold by Dec. 31. Most of the 85 Gaylord Digital employees were terminated Dec. 5. The remainder will lose their jobs effective Dec. 31. Gaylord has also eliminated another 31 jobs in various parts of the company as part of what it terms its “ongoing operational review,” for a total of 116 jobs lost. Gaylord Digital previously laid off 22 staffs in October. The company has approximately 5,500 employees.

The closing of Gaylord Digital is expected to result in a nonrecurring loss of approximately $35 million for the fourth quarter. Through the first nine months of this year, the company’s investments in Gaylord Digital resulted in a negative operating cash flow of $16.5 million. Gaylord Entertainment’s negative operating cash flow was $106.9 million for that period. Among the larger expenses was the company’s $1 million plus title sponsorship of Dixie Chicks’ Fly tour, which wraps up this month.

Gaylord Digital’s largest assets are Christian sites, which are the company’s biggest breadwinners, including its online publishing site Lightsource.com; full-service music country site MusicCountry.com, which launched in June; and Songs.com, a site for independent artists to sell their music.

Negotiations are underway for the sale of both Christian sites, which are believed to have attracted numerous bidders. Proceeds from the sales, if consummated, are expected to materially affect the nonrecurring loss for the quarter.

With the closing of its Internet arm, Gaylord has transformed from three operating groups into two—one encompassing its hospital and attractions ventures, including the Opryland hotels, and the other encompassing its music, media, and entertainment ventures. Those ventures include Acuff-Rose Music Publishing, the Grand Ole Opry and its related businesses, WSM America, and Nashville radio stations WSM-AM/FM and WWTN. Previously, the company operated as three groups: hospitality and attractions, and music and entertainment. Pictured was the company’s executive VP for corporate and operational development, Dave Jones, in his role as president of the hospitality and attractions division. Brian Payne remains president of the music and entertainment division.

Commenting on the closure of Gaylord Digital, Frank Breeden, president of the Gospel Music Assn., and the Christian Music Trade Assn., says, “It is not secret that times have been increasingly tough for dotcoms over the past 12-18 months. E-commerce is still seeking its own level and, in the process, has given us a really rough ride for a lot of talented people in our industry. While we’re saddened to learn that so many will lose employment, we certainly understand the need for a business to operate profitably.

“Of course, we will watch with interest to see if a buyer for Musicforce.com emerges between now and the end of 2000,” Breeden adds. “It would be great if at least one Christian music lifestyle Internet site with an E-commerce component attached could exist.”

The company’s cable operations, which were recently purchased from Central Mountain to CountryMusic.com, are believed to be on the block as well, although company spokesman Tom Aikinson would not confirm any reports of the sale.

Curtis Kornmeyer has been named president of the newly created business venture. He previously was the company’s executive VP for corporate and operational development.

**MyMP3.com Relaunched, With $50 Annual Fee**

BY EILEEN FITZPATRICK

LOS ANGELES—While the $40.99 annual fee for MyMP3.com may seem high for an Internet service, the company claims it represents a bargain.

MyMP3.com, which allows users to pay $0.65 per song to download tracks or $0.75 per song to download tracks and keep them on a personal computer, has relaunched the service, with TowerRecords.com as its new retail partner.

MyMP3.com was disabled in May when the service failed to pay–much more to bring back its personal music storage locker service.

After months of label and publisher negotiation, the service is back in business. MyMP3.com is paying—and will continue to pay—much more to bring back its personal music storage locker service.

However, outstanding lawsuits by independent labels and its elimination of MyMP3.com’s online purchases and downloads resulted in the sale of the assets to the company’s Beem It technology. They can also immediately hear CDs they’ve purchased online through the company’s Instant Listening area. Online users can store up to 25 CDs into their accounts for free, but for more than that they will be charged the $49.99 annual fee. A maximum of 500 CDs can be stored.

Until the terms of the publisher and labels deals, however, MyMP3.com will be required to pay some hefty licensing fees each time an album is bought up to a certain amount of sales.

The first time a consumer beams up a particular CD, MyMP3.com will have to pay at least $1 as a one-time licensing fee, depending upon the number of tracks the album contains. Music publishers will get 10 cents per track, and labels get 1.5 cents per track per album. Every time a consumer streams music from his or her account, MyMP3.com will pay another $0.65 per stream to the publisher and label combined.

For the record stores, MyMP3.com will collect the royalties for the publishers, and the labels will collect their shares themselves.

To get MyMP3.com going again, MyMP3.com secured licenses with the music labels and publishers that sued it in March. The cases were settled, and MyMP3.com is paying an estimated $100 million to the labels and $30 million to the recording companies. But MyMP3.com chairman/CEO Michael Robertson contends that the long-term outlook outweighs the costs.

“It’s important to look at the big picture,” he says. “We’ve talked to a number of labels, and we’ve come to an agreement. We’re talking about the science, and we’re turning it into a science. In the new world, music marketing will be data-driven.”

Robertson says his service can track purchasing patterns based upon the albums a customer puts in storage. He says that other subscription services have failed because they lack the selection that would appeal to the particular listeners.

**GAYLORD ENTERTAINMENT COMPANY**

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**Wilbur Rimes Countsersues LeAnn Rimes Inc.**

**BY PHYLLIS STARK**

**NASHVILLE—**Wilbur Rimes, the father and former manager/producer of singer LeAnn Rimes, has filed a countersuit against his daughter's company, LeAnn Rimes Entertainment Inc. (LREI), in Dallas.

The counterclaim comes in response to a claim filed by Rimes and her mother, Belinda Rimes, alleging that Wilbur Rimes bilked his daughter out of at least $7.5 million over the past five years. Among other defendants named in that suit was LeAnn's former co-manager, Lyle Walker.

The May lawsuit has charged Wilbur Rimes and Walker with a number of infractions, including fraud, breach of fiduciary duty, gross mismanagement, and dereliction of management duties.

The suit's central claim is that Wilbur Rimes was paying himself "egregiously excessive and unreasonable" management fees, producer fees, and guardian or "custodial" fees—essentially "triple dipping" into LeAnn's and LREI's income. Besides the fees being paid to Walker, the suit claims Wilbur Rimes and Walker were "distributing to themselves over 70% of the recording royalties available for distribution by LREI, with less than 30% being paid to LeAnn or invested for her benefit."

Wilbur Rimes' countersuit, which names only LREI and not LeAnn herself as a defendant, claims he is owed a 3% producer's fee under a previous agreement made with his ex-wife, Belinda Rimes, in 1999.

Wilbur Rimes' attorney, Brad Rhorer of the Baton Rouge, La., based Rhorer Law Firm, says, "LeAnn needs to understand that there are many people responsible for her success and consequently, her father, to whom she owes certain obligations. Wilbur has shown remarkable restraint in waiting this long [to file a countersuit] in light of the blatantly false, venomous allegations that his daughter levied against him."

"The facts speak for themselves," says J. Cary Gray, an attorney with the Houston law firm Looper, Reid & McGraw, which represents LREI, as well as LeAnn and Belinda Rimes. "Everyone involved sincerely regrets it was necessary to bring this case in the first place."

"This document Mr. Rimes has filed is so full of blatantly false and misleading statements that are totally unrelated to any issue in this case," he continues. "The only reason he could have possibly included such inflammatory language was to try to humiliate his daughter enough that she would let him get away with what we believe were outrageous acts of misconduct."

A court date for Rimes vs. Rimes has been tentatively set for late May 2001. LeAnn Rimes, who turned 18 in August, recently filed a suit against Curb Records seeking to terminate her recording contract (Billboard, Dec. 2).

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Sometimes Internet audio doesn't exactly come out sounding like it was meant to sound. You need RealAudio® 8. It captures more of the highs and lows in the music before it leaves the station. In fact, nearly 9 out of 10 people tested couldn't tell RealAudio 8 at 64kbps from the original CD. And RealAudio 8 can immediately cut your bandwidth costs by up to a third of what you're already paying. It just adds up. Better sound and better use of bandwidth equals better business. Let us show you how to put RealAudio 8 to work for you. Visit realnetworks.com/_listen or call 800.444.8011.

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Subject: THANKS!

To: The Performers:
Bon Jovi; Christina Aguilera; Creed; Metallica;
No Doubt; Red Hot Chili Peppers; U2

From: VH1

You blew everyone away...

...and rocked the very first music awards show TOTALLY RULED by fans!
Millions voted, millions more watched. Together, we made music history.

SUBJECT: Way to go!!

To: Those Who Presented and Appeared:
The Corrs; Macy Gray; Dave Matthews Band; Mark McGrath; No Doubt; *NSYNC; Carlos Santana;
Vertical Horizon; Scott Weiland; Vanessa Williams; "Weird Al" Yankovic; Sandra Bullock; Ellen DeGeneres;
Jenna Elfman; David Alan Grier; Salma Hayek; Sean Hayes; Ashton Kutcher; Matt LeBlanc; Rob Lowe;
Megan Mullally; Erik Palladino; Kevin Spacey; David Spade; Sylvester Stallone; Tenacious D; Sela Ward
Cc: Host: John Leguizamo
From: VH1

Thanks for being such a HUGE part of the show :) You made it bigger than we could've ever imagined.
Subject: CONGRATS!

To: My VH1 Music Award Winners
From: VH1

YOUR SONG KICKED ASS BUT WAS PLAYED TOO DAMN MUCH: "Smooth"/Santana

MOST ENTERTAINING PUBLIC FEUD: Eminem vs. Everyone

YOU WANT FRIES WITH THAT ALBUM?: Faith Hill/Pepsi

DOUBLE THREAT (MUSICIAN-ACTORS): Will Smith/The Legend of Bagger Vance

MUST-HAVE ALBUM: "Californication"/Red Hot Chili Peppers

WELCOME TO THE BIG TIME!: Creed

BEST KEPT SECRET: The Corrs

2 FOR 2: Creed
SONG OF THE YEAR: "Higher"/Creed

COOLEST FAN WEB SITE: nancies.org/Dave Matthews Band

MAN OF THE YEAR: Carlos Santana

WOMAN OF THE YEAR: Faith Hill

GROUP OF THE YEAR: Creed

LEGEND IN ACTION: Sting

BEST LIVE ACT: Dave Matthews Band

BEST STAGE SPECTACLE: Metallica with the San Francisco Symphony

GODS OF THUNDER: Metallica

BOOTY SHAKE: Ricky Martin

SEXXIEST VIDEO: "Breathe"/Faith Hill

VIDEO OF THE YEAR: "It's My Life"/Bon Jovi

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE VIDEO: "Californication"/Red Hot Chili Peppers

GIVIN' IT BACK: Limp Bizkit

BEST UK ACT: Robbie Williams
Clear Channel Unveils Webcasting Technology

BY FRANK Saxe

NEW YORK—Clear Channel Communications is using a developing Internet application to promote its radio and concert-venue operations and to help link the two divisions better.

Clear Channel is teaming with Chicago-based Perceptual Robotics, whose TrueLook technology allows Web surfers to view photos, videos, and document images on the Web using their own control cameras so they could look wherever they want to, much as if they were in the Fillmore. TrueLook software works by allowing multiple users to control cameras simultaneously; no matter how many visitors are using the system at the same time, each visitor only sees what he chooses.

TrueLook also allows users to create a scrapbook of sorts of their concert experience; more than 29,000 photos were snapped by viewers during the houleong presentation. During the weekend that followed the Thursday night show, more than 64,000 additional page views were recorded.

This is not the first such project for TrueLook. It has Webcast U2’s PopMart Live Tour and other concerts, and sporting events, including Wimbledon, the U.S. Open, and the World Series.

“Our goal is to do more with the concept of interactivity of the global network,” says Perceptual Robotics CEO Paul Cooper. “We want to give [users] a sense of being there by using a camera and under our own control and provide a fun, compelling interactive experience that’s hip in a way; it’s not the same old couch-potato experience.”

To promote the BBMak event, dozens of Clear Channel top-40, adult top 40, and AC stations around the country hosted a link to the show on their Web sites, as well as gave the Webcast on-air promotional announcements. Among the stations were WHTZ (Z100) New York, KHS Los Angeles, and KHMX (Mix 96.5) Houston.

It is also another piece of unique, exclusive content that we’re trying to provide to our radio station Web sites, so we can drive people to them more often,” says Clear Channel’s John Dunn. The company does not require stations to take part in the Webcast, says Dunn. He adds that in some markets the participating stations for the BBMak event was a top-40 outlet, while in others it was an AC station.

“What we’re trying to do is figure out the best way that this type of event has,” says Dunn. “We’re not looking at raw numbers right now [but at the] response from those that do participate. We want to find out what they think about it and how they enjoy the experience.”

Dunn finds most common is the feeling of convenience in that ability to make the station’s Web sites more interactive. “It’s not just a static image. Listeners go in and get the image they want. It’s on the spot. I think it’s an opportunity that listeners and Web site visitors will appreciate.”

Clear Channel hopes that advertising (Continued on page 87)

Five Web Firms Scale Back Or Halt Operations

BY FRANK Saxe

NEW YORK—Five more entertainment dotcoms have fallen on hard times.

Among the latest victims is DiscJockey.com, which on Dec. 4 filed a Chapter 11 reorganization petition in U.S. Bankruptcy Court for Massachusetts in Boston. DiscJockey seeks protection from its creditors and investors, which are owed approximately $3.4 million. The company has sharply scaled back its operations and is meeting with potential partners and buyers.

Jeffrey Schreier, DiscJockey attorney, says the filing “clear the way for DiscJockey.com to erase some poor decisions and mistakes that the company made as the part of management team which is fortunately gone.”

Coo Dave Quinta says that last spring’s stock market correction affected DiscJockey more than anyone had expected. “We couldn’t imagine that so much Internet advertising came from other Internet companies, and all that just went away.” The drop in dot-com spending caused DiscJockey’s advertising model to “fail apart,” says Quinta. “The company scrambled to generate advertising revenue.

“The other thing that hurt is audio advertising has not picked up as quickly as everybody thought it would,” adds Quinta. “That’s starting to turn around, but the problem is that our cash flow is the one that’s going to win.”

Quinta says the company failed to fully capitalize itself. When it went to the market to raise funding in 1999, it sought out $22 million in funding, instead of the $8 million-$8 million Quinta believes it should have pursued. “Ten months ago, we (Continued on page 87)

Universal Film, Music Share Executive

By Chuck Taylor

NEW YORK—The appointment of Dec. 5 of Disney film executive Kathy Nelson to the newly created role of president of film music for both Universal Music Group (UMG) and Universal Pictures will allow the company to infuse the entities with needed new blood. Nelson continues, “When I moved to Disney, I already knew there were a lot of things I could intercept between the two sides. Any studio that works with a record company needs somebody that understands both sides’ wants, needs, wishes, and dreams. I’m like the connective tissue.”

Adds Snider, “We felt like the studio was firing on all pistons, while the music company has the No. 1 market share in the world, and yet we weren’t maximizing our cross-company opportunities. I think a lot of projects we can contemplate, but we didn’t have the infrastructure in place to be able to follow through. We knew we should have been doing a whole lot more with the number of film music projects, not just soundtracks. There was a need to

Pedro Juan Rodriguez Dies At 67

Salsa Legend, Fania All Star Popularized Many Standards

By Leila Cobo

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IN MEMORY OF JOE ROBINSON, SR.
CO-FOUNDER OF SUGAR HILL RECORDS AND
THE MAN WHO HELPED BRING
HIP-HOP TO THE WORLD
Strictly Rhythm Enters Joint Venture With WMG

BY MICHAEL PAOLETTA
NEW YORK—After months of speculation, Warner Music Group (WMG) and New York-based independent dance label Strictly Rhythm have created a 50/50 worldwide joint venture. The deal also extends to Strictly Rhythm’s imprints Groovlicious and G2.

The new company gives the 11-year-old Strictly Rhythm access to the marketing and promotional resources of WMG’s numerous major U.S. labels for selected artists, which has the potential to boost sales and radio airplay of Strictly Rhythm recordings both in the U.S. and internationally. The partnership also gives all labels within WMG full access to Strictly Rhythm’s extensive back catalog.

Over the years, Strictly Rhythm has developed such international acts as Ultra Naté, the Wamuu Project, Planet Soul, Beel 2 Heal, Barbara Tucker, Roger Sanchez, and Armand Van Helden, among others.

“I have to liken my gut feeling to that of a baseball player who’s been taken out of the minors and put into the majors,” says Strictly Rhythm founder Mark Finkestein, who adds that he’s been considering aligning with a major since the mid-’90s.

“This deal with WMG gives one of the largest and most recognized dance labels in the world, especially throughout Europe, where it’s had spectacular success,” explains Peter Koepke, president of London-Sire Records. “We believe dance is an expanding universe, especially in the U.S., and we see this as significantly increasing our presence in the dance music arena.”

Andy Allen, president of Alternative Distribution Alliance (ADA), which has a two-year history with Strictly Rhythm (and is WMG’s independent distribution arm), says his relationship with the label remains unchanged, except for the fact that “I’ll now account to Strictly as a Warner company and not a third party.”

“The typical Strictly Rhythm record, which starts at the club level and often grows beyond that, is the kind of thing we do very well with,” elaborates Allen, who points out that one of the label’s acts (including Fragma and the Vengaboys) as being among his top 10 best sellers of 2000.

In England, where Strictly Rhythm has a second office, Warner Music International (WMI) will handle all manufacturing and distribution, while Strictly Rhythm will continue to promote and market the rest of the world. Strictly Rhythm product will go through WMI affiliates, which will have first-right options on all label recordings.

According to Finkestein, the deal with WMG has been in the works since October 1999. Last March, he says, WMG chairman/CEO Roger Ames made a formal proposal, which was sealed on June 28.

While Finkestein maintains that it will be “business as usual,” that the label will continue to independently sign, promote, and develop artists—he acknowledges that the deal offers him the best of both worlds and that it was ultimately done “to break dance music in the U.S.”

“In Europe, dance is considered pop music. But in this country, says Finkestein, ‘dance music is seen as this bas- tard child—and unfortunately, perception becomes reality. Now, we not only have the street-savvy attitude of an independent, but the added major-" (Continued on page 96)

Anti-Piracy Directive To Be Drafted

European Commission Lays Groundwork For Swedish Transition

BY KAI R. LOFTUS
OSLO—Sweden, which assumes leadership of the European Union (EU) next month, is planning the introduction of new laws to clamp down on the burgeoning crime of music piracy.

Piracy preceding Sweden’s highly anticipated EU presidency, the European Parliament voted unanimously (540-0) on a proposal—by the European Commission at a meeting Nov. 30 in Brussels—to introduce clearer measures to combat counterfeiting and piracy (Billboard Bulletin, Dec. 4).

As a result, the commission is expected to come forward with an initial draft of a piracy directive in late February, according to an official source.

Two months later, on April 23 and 24, Europe’s policy makers are scheduled to convene in Stockholm for a closed session conference on counterfeiting and piracy to further address the issue.

The proposed piracy directive, one of a growing number of industry-related legislative actions in Europe (including directives on copyright and E-commerce), will be designed to harmonize and strengthen existing legislation within the union’s 15 member states. The directive also aims to outline procedures related to search and seizure of pirated material and evidence, as well as to regulate optical disc manufacturing plants.

These developments follow consultations with the music industry undertaken by EU politicians in the Oct. Paper on Counterfeiting and Piracy, issued in October 1998. EU calculations based on figures supplied from a range of sectors, including data processing, audiovisual products, textiles, music, vehicle parts, and sports and leisure goods—estimate that piracy activities account for a total of 5%-7% of world trade, representing 200-300 billion euro ($177-$250 billion) a year in lost revenue, as well as the loss of 200,000 jobs worldwide. Music alone is estimated to account for 10% of piracy activities.

According to estimates by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), a total of 600 million CDs are sold annually on a global basis, while more than 25 million pirate files are available for trading on the Internet. Europe’s soft- ware, music, and audiovisual industries estimate that piracy deprives these industries of an annual revenue of 4.5 billion euros ($4 billion).

The short-term goals of the commission’s proposal include:

• training for supervisory authorities to be able to identify pirated goods (countries applying for EU membership will also have to implement such training).

• ensuring that negotiations with countries in Eastern Europe wishing to join the EU include counterfeiting and piracy as a priority issue;

• defining a methodology for collecting, analyzing, and comparing data, in order to have a simple, reliable, and effective evaluation tool to define and apply appropriate measures for combating piracy; and

• establishing a contact point at commission level to provide an interface among the various functions.

In the longer term, the commission says, it will focus on:

• a complementary mechanism for administrative cooperation between national authorities.

(Continued on page 83)

IFPI’s Berman Extends Contract

Chairman/CEO Sets Goals For Two More Years

BY GORDON MASSON
LONDON—Jay Berman, chairman/CEO of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), has exercised the option to extend his tenure for two more years so he can complete the job he set out to do.

Berman became the IFPI’s first full-time chairman/CEO two years ago, having left a stellar role at the Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA), and he is adamant that the leadership role should remain a full-time position.

“IT is impossible for any leader to effectively work for a range of sectors, including data processing, audiovisual products, textiles, music, vehicle parts, and sports and leisure goods—estimate that piracy activities account for a total of 5%-7% of world trade, representing 200-300 billion euro ($177-$250 billion) a year in lost revenue, as well as the loss of 200,000 jobs worldwide. Music alone is estimated to account for 10% of piracy activities.

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(Continued on page 96)

NARAS D.C.
Branch Gets Chapter Status

BY BILL HOLLAND
WASHINGTON, D.C.—In record time, the Washington, D.C., area branch of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS) has gained chapter status, having achieved a voting membership of more than 400, with about 200 additional associate members.

The new chapter will also serve as a hub for the organization’s federal lobbying efforts. The former branch was founded in January 1998 with about 100 initial members.

(Continued on page 90)
SPOTLIGHT YOUR COMPANY
ADVERTISE IN ONE OF THE MIDEM SPECIALS,
DISTRIBUTED DAILY IN THE
EXHIBITION AREA AND THE HOTELS
IN CANNES.

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THE "PERSON OF THE YEAR" DINNER

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DISTRIBUTION: 7,500 COPIES
ISSUE DATE: 23 JANUARY
FILM DEADLINE: 15 JANUARY

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AND DURING THE MIDEM.NET

PUBLICATION: 20-21 JANUARY
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The boy band's "What Makes A Man?"/"My Girl," to be released Dec. 18, had odds of 4-9 at press time and was predicted to become its eighth consecutive chart-topper and second straight Christmas No. 1. Westlife's "I Have A Dream," "Seasons In The Sun" achieved the feat last year with first-week sales of 213,000 copies.

"If we do get it, it's going to be pretty amazing, but if we don't, it's not the end of the world," says the group's Kian Egan. "Too much has been made of the No. 1 thing. The public probably thinks, 'Are these guys only making records so that they can be No. 1?'"

"Not only at Christmas but every week, the U.K. singles market is now under a constant media microscope, with the public made aware of detailed day-by-day sales figures in newspapers and on radio, television, and Internet news sites."

"I think it's a shame in a way that they can get hold of that information," says Egan, who believes that such access has removed the element of anticipation that used to greet the week-by-week unveiling of the new chart. "It takes all the fun out of it."

The late decision to make the Westlife release another double-sided single was prompted by Billboard by the band's manager, Louis Walsh of Rolo Management, due to favorable reaction and public demand for the quintet's version of the Temptations' classic "My Girl."

Of Westlife's extraordinary run of seven straight U.K. No. 1 singles since its debut in spring 1999 with "Swear It Again," Walsh says jovially, "We're actually going to go for 10 in a row. Then the pressure will be off." William Hill spokesperson Serena Momberg says that betting on the festive No. 1 may not yet be as much a part of the British way of life as a "flutter" on the horses, but nevertheless it is part of the fabric of the holiday season.

"We take thousands of bets," she says. "The other very keen bet is the white Christmas (currently a 6-1 shot), and if the punters are very keen on betting on the weather, they can bet on the wet and dry Christmas as well." Last year, Momberg adds, the company took about 40,000 pounds ($55,000) in bets on the holiday No. 1. This year's current second favorite, at 2-1, is "Can We Fix It?" by Bob the Builder, the latest BBC children's TV character to make the transition to CD, via the voice of popular British actor Neil Morrissey.

Released Dec. 4 by BBC Worldwide, the single was, at press time, in an improbable race for the top spot on the Dec. 10 chart with Eminem's Interscope release "Stan" (16-1 for Christmas), but observers believe Bob may outlast the controversial rapper and others to give Westlife some competition for consumers' pocket money. If so, it will be the latest example of British chart fortunes being shaped in part by "toddler power." Bob the Builder has become a children's TV hero since making his small-screen debut in April 1999.

That followed closely behind the top five hit "Number 1" on BBC Music by the Tweenies, who were preceded by those other mighty role models for the under-5's, the Teletubbies. "Teletubbies Say Eh-Oh!" was No. 1 in the week before Christmas 1997, going on to be certified double-platinum (1.2 million units).

The power of television in shaping the tastes of singles buyers, especially at holiday time, is further reflected in two more front-runners, Eternal/WEA's big hope is "At This Time Of Year" by Craig Phillips, the winner of the British version of the international TV sensation "Big Brother."

Polydor, meanwhile, is in the fray with "Robot Wars (Android Love)" by Sir Killalot V. Robo-Babe, yet another BBC spinoff, this time from the "robot gladiator" contest series "Robot Wars," which attracts some 5 million viewers per week. Merchandise from the series is also in hot demand this Christmas.

Adrian Rondeau, owner of the prominent indie retailer Adrians in Wickford, Essex, agrees with the choice of Westlife as festive No. 1 favorite but thinks Bob the Builder will also perform well, adding that early signs point toward very healthy business.

"The singles market at Christmas, one way or another, is always led by kids," he says. "It's a time of year when rational artists make silly records and rational people go out and buy them."

Other contenders include "New Year" by London Records-signed trio Sugababes, who with only one previous hit, September's "Reload," have developed a repu-

Dr. Frankenstein.

Wizzard's 1978 No. 1 "I Wish It Could Be Christmas Every Day" (still likely to be heard on many British retailers' in-store holiday tapes) has been merged with the Wombles' 1974 "Wombble Merry Christmas" to create the new Dramatico release "I Wish It Could Be A Wombble Merry Christmas Every Day."

Rondeau, when asked how he thinks such burlesque plays to foreign observers, says, "They probably think we're all rather stupid. But it's worth reminding them we do have good records... maybe just not at Christmas."
Son By Four Releases Its New ‘Pain’

Son By Four's new Latin pop album, "Puro Dolor," has sold 220,000 copies since its release on The Billboard Latin Hot 100. The song "A Puro Dolor" "Purest Pain" has been caught completely by surprise, says Lopez, referring to himself and his bandmates (brothers Javier and George Montes and their cousin, (Continued on page 22)

Industry Execs Cite Napster, Mergers
As Most-Memorable Stories Of 2000

Feeling Jazzy. Famed jazz saxophonist Richard Elliot, seated, recently signed a recording deal with the GRP label division of the Verve Music Group. The musician will begin work on his first disc for the label Jan 2001. Flanking Elliot, from left, are Steve Chapman, his manager, Bud Harmer, VP of A&R, Verve Music Group, Marc Lipner, director of business affairs, Universal Music Group, and Ron Goldstein, president, Verve Music Group.

BY MICHAEL PAOLETTA

NEW YORK—With its first English-language album, Sony Discos/Columbia’s “Puro Dolor,” Puerto Rican foursome Son By Four is on the verge of crossover success à la Ricky Martin, Marc Anthony, and Enrique Iglesias.

“Quite honestly, we weren’t actually thinking of recording an English-language album, says Son By Four’s lead singer, Angel Lopez. “But then [Sony Discos chairman] Oscar Lion suggested it and we thought, ‘If Oscar thinks it’s the right time for us to record in English, then it must be the right time!’”

Lion February, Sony Discos issued Son By Four’s eponymous sophomore album, which has sold 110,000 units, according to SoundScan. Worldwide, the album has sold more than 4 million copies, says the label.

“Son By Four” reached the No. 1 spot on two Billboard charts: The Billboard Latin 50 (tropical/salsa), and Heatseekers. On The Billboard 200, the set peaked at No. 86. In this issue, and after 42 weeks on The Billboard Latin 50, the album is at No. 6. One of the album’s tracks—“A Puro Dolor”—has spent 42 weeks on the Billboard Hot Latin Tracks chart (of them, non- consecutively, at No. 1), thanks to a handful of sales, R&B, and pop remixes. In this issue, the indefatigable track sits at No. 2.

The Spanish track also made its presence known on The Billboard Hot 42, peaking at No. 86 in May. Thirteen months later, its English version, “Purest Pain,” peaked at No. 26 on the same chart. “A Puro Dolor” “Purest Pain” has sold 220,000 copies, says SoundScan.

At the Billboard Music Awards, held Dec. 5 at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas, Son By Four not only served as an award presenter, but it picked up four honors as well: Hot Latin Tracks artist, hot Latin track, hot Latin pop track, and hot tropical/salsa track for “A Puro Dolor.”

“We broke that song,” says Kid Curry, PD at WPOW Miami, referring to “A Puro Dolor” “Purest Pain.” Curry says he began playing the Latin Grammy Award-nominated track the day after Son By Four’s performance at the Billboard Latin Music Awards in April.

“It was funny,” recalls Curry. “You had this act [Son By Four] surrounding by performances by Latin superstars, and all my wife and the Latina girls behind me kept singing was the chorus of ‘A Puro Dolor.’ My decision to add the song was based on my wife’s and the Latinas’ reactions to the song. From day one, it was an instant success.”

Several days later, Curry says he received a copy of the English version of the track, and immediately set about creating “our own Spanish version.” In the end, “it was a No. 1 track for us.”

“The overall success of the song caught us completely by surprise,” says Lopez, referring to himself and his bandmates (brothers Javier and George Montes and their cousin, (Continued on page 22)
There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.
— Edith Wharton

You are our light.

Thank you for the music, memories, and magic.
Much Love, Your Fans
A Night Of Sparkling Performances And VIP-Packed Parties

Highlights of the 11th annual Billboard Music Awards, held Dec. 5 at the Grand Garden Arena of the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas, included crackling performances from 'N Sync (which co-hosted with comedian Kathy Griffin), Destiny's Child, 3 Doors Down, Creed, Ricky Martin, Dixie Chicks, Mystikal, and Faith Hill. The event was televised by Fox-TV.

The ceremony was preceded on Dec. 4 by the Billboard Bash at Studio 54 in the MGM Grand, hosted by Mark L. Walberg of the Fox series "Temptation Island." The awards show was followed by a post-broadcast party at the Joint in the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino. (Photos: David Lee Waitte)

Son By Four, which collected a quartet of Billboard Music Awards, sings its smash "A Puro Dolor" at the Billboard Bash.

Sisqo, male artist of the year and new artist of the year, collects two of his six Billboard Music Awards at the Billboard Bash.

Kristine W. wows Billboard Bash attendees with an electrifying version of her new single, "Loving You."

Krissy Aguilera, right, accepts the female artist of the year award from Carter siblings Aaron, front, and Nick.


From left, Billboard associate publisher Howard Appelbaum and Billboard president and publisher Howard Lander greet Bob Bain, executive producer of the Billboard Music Awards.

Shown, from left, JVC Disc America senior VP of sales and marketing Sean Smith, his date Shelly Abrams, and Billboard account executive Aki Kaneko step out to the Billboard Bash.
Joe performs "I Wanna Know"—honored as the R&B/hip-hop airplay track of the year—at the Billboard Bash.


"Kryptonite," the rock track of the year and modern rock track of the year, was performed by 3 Doors Down at the Billboard Music Awards.

Britney Spears, right, collects her album artist of the year trophy at the Billboard Music Awards, as presenters BBMak and Mandy Moore look on. Spears also won a special award for the biggest one-week sales of an album ever by a female artist.

Baha Men literally let the dogs out for a rousing moment early in the Billboard Music Awards show.

Ricky Marlin steams up the stage at the MGM Grand Garden Arena with a live performance of his house-rocking hit "She Bangs."

Shown, from left, Urbanesq.com VP of marketing Jay Cowan, Urbanesq.com president/CEO Michael Johnston, Billboard R&B editor Gail Mitchell, and Billboard advertising director Andy Anderson link up before the Billboard Bash.

Baha Men literally let the dogs out for a rousing moment early in the Billboard Music Awards show.

Mystikal, right, is mobbed by his fans outside the Billboard Bash. The rapper performed his hit "Shake It Fast" at the Billboard Awards ceremony.

MTS Inc./Tower Records president Michael Solomon, left, and his wife, MTS Inc. public relations director Louise Solomon, are greeted by Billboard associate publisher Irwin Kornfeld at the Hard Rock party.

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Josh Joplin Group Serves Up ‘Useful Music’ On Artemis Set

BY DANIEL JENKINS
SAN FRANCISCO—In a market dominated by hardcore rap/rock acts, Artemis Records hopes to shake things up with the Jan. 23 release of “Useful Music” by the Josh Joplin Group.

“You don’t hear things like this at radio today,” says Daniel Glass, president of Artemis Records. “The market is so saturated with that style, listeners need relief. There needs to be a little mix.”

Glass is convinced there’s an audience that is hungry for rock music that’s both provocative and mature. “Current radio balance is too hard,” he explains. “Josh’s music rocks intelligently, and it doesn’t hit you over the head.”

Joplin got his start playing guitar at his grandmother’s house. “She was a music reviewer for The Washington Times, so I listened to all her albums,” he says. “I had a lot of folk albums, and that’s where I picked up the Phil Ochs thing.”

Joplin drew inspiration from the folk legend. “He is a musical hero of mine,” he notes. “It was all about who he is, his rebellion. He was a poster on my wall.”

The album includes a song named after Joplin’s hero. “I’ve written many songs about Phil,” he says. “The fact that he didn’t die naturally was an interesting thing for me to come to terms with.” (Ochs committed suicide in 1976.)

After picking up a copy of Ken Kenney’s acoustic album, “MacDougal Blues,” Joplin headed to Atlanta, where he was inspired to meet other songwriters around his own age. He formed the Josh Joplin Group four years ago and began opening for local artists Shawn Mullins and Natalie Farr at the Trackside Tavern in Decatur, Ga. Mullins took the band under his wing and released the original version of “Useful Music” on his SMG label in 1999.

The album was co-produced by Mullins and Jerry Harrison, and Joplin drew great strength from working with them both. “Shawn and I have been friends for such a long time,” he says. “When you work with a producer, you ask yourself if he’s going to care about the songs, and Shawn really did.”

The group was the first band Mullins produced. “He did it in the middle of his own success with a hit song,” says Joplin. “He’ll fly out to do ‘The Tonight Show’ and then be back working with us the next day.”

Joplin was honored by the chance to work with Harrison, known for his production work with No Doubt and Live. “Working with Jerry was very precious to me because I’m a huge fan of his music,” he says. “I love the Talking Heads and Modern Lovers.”

Harrison’s down-to-earth manner put Joplin and the rest of the band at ease. “He related to us all on a personal level,” says Joplin. “He was understanding and willing to discuss the songs. Songs are subjective things—they can mean different things to different people. The discussion lasted a few hours, about my influences and his. I felt elevated by him. He gave me more ideas—things I hadn’t thought of—and they came out brilliantly.”

Both producers’ influence can be felt strongly on “Useful Music.” Reviews have compared Joplin’s storytelling style to Mullins’ work and noted a similarity in Joplin’s vocal delivery to that of Harrison-produced Live front man Edward Kowalczyk. There are also frequent and inevitable comparisons to another Georgia band, R.E.M., especially on the first single, “Camera One.” Joplin describes the song as being about “faith in the face of doubt” and credits the films of director Paul Thomas Anderson (“Magnolia”) for partly inspiring the song.

“I had wanted to write a song about the kids who sell maps to the stars’ homes in Hollywood,” he explains. “I was fascinated by this population of nameless, faceless people who go there to make something out of themselves.”

The “Camera One” single has already gone to triple-A stations, and a special limited-edition single, “Camera One +2,” has been shipped to stores. It features the lead single plus two acoustic songs: “Sofa King” and a cover of Ochs’ “Half A Century High.” A video for “Camera One” is planned for January. “Due to the subject matter, we’re seeking out an intelligent director for the video,” says Glass. Artemis is strongly committed to promoting “Useful Music” for the duration. “We’ve been pushing this during October, November, and December while others are asleep at the wheel, just cashing in during the holidays,” says Glass.

Joplin and band members Geoff Melionian, Allen Broyles, and Deb Davis have been doing station appearances nationwide. “We’ve sat in meetings and discussed promotional aspects, everything from posters, pins, etc. to television and radio advertising,” says Glass. “In the end, we decided the best thing to do was bring the music to the people.”

The group has played venues both big and small, performing in clubs with such bands as Fuel and Lighthouse. It has also played commercial venues like Amazon.com in Seattle and Borders Books & Music. “You want the people to love your music,” says Glass. “Intimate audiences are the best.”

A newly revamped Web site, JoshJoplin.com, has been set up with downloadable music.

“Our job is to expose the music over the course of months, believe it, and stay with it,” Glass concludes. “We’re building an audience of music lovers who appreciate rock with intimacy and maturity. This is music that will be talked about. The timing is now.”

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SON BY FOUR RELEASES ITS NEW ‘PAIN’

(Continued from page 16)

Pedro Quiles. “Then to win four Billboard Awards was simply incredible. The whole experience has been beautiful.”

“Purist Of Pain,” which streeth Nov. 14, is a seamless fusion of salsa, hip-hop, R&B, pop, dance, and tropical. It was produced by the Diane Warren–pened/Ric Wake–produced “Miss Me So Bad?”/Scuan Seas, which is the title song. It was released simulaneously to top 40 and Spanish radio the week of Oct. 16. The track is currently the No. 2 song at WFOW Miami, says Curvy, who believes that it’s headed to the top spot.

Of the new album’s 13 tracks, four are English translations of Spanish songs that originally appeared on “Son By Four: “All I Ever Wanted” (Lo Que Yo Mas Quiero), “Purist Of Pain” (A Puro Dolor), “Sofia,” and “Where Did Our Love Go” (Donde Esta Tu Amor).”

According to Lopez, who released several of the album’s tracks, the new album is a true expression of the group, which is managed/owned by Edwin Medina of San Juan-based RJO Management. “It’s about our life experiences,” Lopez acknowledges. “We’ve definitely changed and evolved as a group, and we’ve grown.”

For Son By Four/Columbia, the success of “Son By Four” laid the perfect foundation for introducing “Purist Of Pain” to both the Anglo and Latin communities. “We’re definitely cross-marketing the new album to both markets,” says Llord. “If a group has the proper ingredients to attract both markets, you must cultivate that.”

Prior to the release of “Purist Of Pain,” Sony Discos secured the title track as the theme song to the popular telenovela “Por Que Diablos.” says Jorge Pino, senior VP/GM of Sony Latin. Additionally, Pino confirms the group will receive “lots of television exposure on Telemundo and Univision.”

Beyond TV, Son By Four utilized the Internet in raising awareness of the project via its own Web site (sonbyfour.com) as well as the act’s sonbyfour.com.

“Son By Four’s bilingual site is averaging 41,000 hits a day,” says Pino, who adds that “91% of the visitors are using the Spanish version, with the rest going the English route.”

Heading into the holiday season, Son By Four is confirmed to perform at several radio-sponsored events, including WHTH New York’s Z-100 Jingle Ball and WKTV New York’s Miracle on 34th Street, both at Madison Square Garden.

Pino says that several in-store retail appearances are also in the works. That will surely bring smiles to the face of somebody like David Massey, president of Neptune, N.J.-based 28-store specialty retailer Latino Records, who says that “Son By Four” is “still a very strong album for us; it’s still in our top 30. ‘Purist Of Pain’ is also doing very well, but it’s not as strong yet. It’ll probably increase in sales as the popularity of the current single (“Miss Me So Bad?”/Scuan Seas) increases.”

In January 2001, Columbia will aggressively begin courting the

Anglo citizens of America, says the label’s senior director of creative marketing Rocce Lanzlotti. For starters, the label will make “Miss Me So Bad” a priority at the radio stations that embraced “Purist Of Pain.” In the video department, Simon Brand, who directed the video for “Purist Of Pain,” will also handle production chores for the video of “Miss Me So Bad.”

“We’ll also be going after all morning and evening talk shows,” says Lanzlotti. “We want to Son By Four performing on all the important shows. Because of the crossover success of ‘Purist Of Pain,’ I’m finding that many shows are interested in having the group on to perform.”

As for the Internet, Lanzlotti gives great credit to the medium. “We’re currently ironing out all the details with different portals and Web sites,” he says. “But fans can definitely access more information on our site, as well as special music streams.”

At the end of February 2001, Son By Four will be one of four featured Sony Discos acts on the label’s “The Battle Of The Latin Bands” tour, which will hit key territories like New York, Chicago, Miami, Los Angeles, and San Juan, among other cities.

‘The overall success of the song caught us completely by surprise’

— ANGEL LOPÉZ —
Composer James Newton Howard Knows Movie Magic Is In The Score

BY CHARLES KAREL BOULEY II

Howard talks of his work and "Vertical Limit" sound exciting.

Howard
does that behind scene for the new film "Vertical Limit" sound exciting? It is, and that’s because James Newton Howard is providing the score.

"Action scenes just aren’t the same without the music driving the emotion behind them,” Howard says. "The music has to become a character, a catalyst to bring the filmmaker to the edge of excitement. The job with ‘Vertical Limit’ was clear, a classic orchestral action score with all the stops pulled out.”

Howard has been helping filmmakers pull out the stops for over 15 years, with a resume that reads like a Hollywood hits list. Having scored over 80 original or complete works for television and film, Howard has tackled a variety of projects on opposite ends of the spectrum. He has scored the theme for the hit show “ER” as effortlessly as that for “Space Jam” and has tackled film projects as diverse as “The Postman” and “Snow Falling On Cedars.” In the last few years alone, he has composed music for “Unbreakable,” “Munford,” “The Sixth Sense,” “Runaway Bride,” “My Best Friend’s Wedding,” “Dinosaur,” and “The Prince Of Tides.”

Then, in 1985, Howard scored the film “Head Office.” It wasn’t as if he were changing gears; he just thought it would be an interesting challenge. It was an experience he loved so much that he hanged up his pop music hat and dove headfirst into film. The industry welcomed him with open arms and noticed his talents right away. He received an Emmy for the TV pilot “Men,” his score for “Dying Young” received a Grammy nomination; and his scores for “The Prince Of Tides” and “The Fugitive” received Oscar nominations.

"For some reason, I couldn’t go back to the pop world once I began scoring film and television. It felt like what I was supposed to be doing, so right or wrong, away I went.”

One thing that keeps him working is his ability to tap into exactly what the director wants as a musical complement for the film. In the case of “The Sixth Sense” and “Unbreakable,” Howard had to bring director M. Night Shyamalan’s dark and foreboding visions to life.

“‘It’s very cerebral working with him. Night makes a very surreal, thoughtful, and quiet movie, and it evolves slowly,” Howard says. “There are a million different ways of treating the score, so the process is much more experimental, searching for different tones and quality and dimensions for the music.”

The diversity of Howard’s projects is not lost on him. Switching gears is not often easy. “Moving from something like ‘Vertical Limit’ into ‘Unbreakable’ is sometimes hard. It takes a while to set down the pencil on one project and get into another that’s so varied. Once you begin writing, the work consumes you, so letting it go and moving into an entirely new mind-set is a never-ending challenge.”

So what inspires this prolific writer to create unique soundtracks that are identifiable with the film while retaining a definite sound almost immediately recognizable as Howard’s?

"It’s corny and unconscious, but the films still completely inspire me,” he says. “Don’t run off and sit on a rock and look at the sunset. I find inspiration in the images I see in the characters and make connections from my own life. Part of it is that I’m so thrilled and honored each time to be asked to come and complete a director’s vision by working with great orchestrists and musicians. It instills a great work ethic in me, and, truth be told, I love to work.”

It’s a good thing Howard loves to work, because there is no stop sign in his future. Having done such a great job on Disney’s “Dinosaur,” he is doing another animated feature for the studio, “Atlantis: The Lost Empire,” due in 2001. He is also doing Barry Sonnenfeld’s “Big Trouble,” Scott Hicks’ “Hearts In Atlantis,” and “American’s Sweethearts,” directed by Joe Roth and starring Julia Roberts.

Keeping his plate so full is not escapism for Howard. He is not a mad composer locked in a studio somewhere, avoiding life through work. On the contrary, his work is only a part of what he loves most. Waiting at home each night is wife Sophie and two sons, Jackson and Hayden.

“I try not to work weekends and even evenings whenever possible and always remember that the drive that makes me want to work so much is derived from my wanting to make a happy life for my family,” he says. “So, I must never ignore these duties first. Ultimately, one’s life is the greatest production they’ll ever work on, and the most important characters are those they love in it.”

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**SBS’ Malone Releases ‘Authorized Bootleg’**

**BY LARRY FICK**

NEW YORK—Michelle Malone believes in beating bootleggers to the punch. Instead of battling tape peddlers, she’s assembled a live disc of her own, “Strange Bird, Volume 3: The Authorized Bootleg.”

Due Dec. 21, the project compiles 13 tracks from dozens of live recordings made around the U.S. in numerous venues—from arenas and theaters to clubs and living rooms.

“I put the best of the best on this record, and I tried to include fan favorites and previously unreleased songs,” Malone says. “The Authorized Bootleg,” which will be issued on SBS Records (an indie based in Decatur, Ga.), shows the rocker/tunemith backed on several cuts by bassists Charlene Owen and David Labruyere and percussionist Michael Lorant. Otherwise, Malone performs solo on guitar. That should not imply, however, that the set has a soft musical tone.

“I feel that this record is fiery and passionate, whether it’s rocking with abandon or ripping your heart out,” she says. “I’ve always had a ‘take no prisoners’ approach to performing. This record captures the live energy, which has always been the best way to discover my music.”

SBS is hoping that Malone’s fan base will expand as more people become acquainted with the artist’s music in live settings. To that end, the label will service the disc to college and modern rock stations. SBS will also aggressively market Malone to mom-and-pop retail as Malone continues what she describes as her “never-ending tour” of the U.S. It’s a plan that should serve the artist well.

“Michelle Malone is a journeywoman artist, truly tireless,” says her manager, Marlon Creation. “While she may never become a platinum artist, she has a loyal following that seems to get bigger and stronger with each release. She also gets stronger musically with each CD. Her history proves that without question.”

Malone does not recall a time when music was not a part of her life. At the age of 4, she began singing in a church choir. By the age of 10, she had taught herself to play guitar. At the age of 19, she was encouraged by Amy Ray of Indigo Girls to perform between sets at their shows.

Michelle’s first recording, “New Experience” (1987), was released to rave reviews, and she soon found herself signed to Arista Records. After 1990’s “Relentless,” Malone says she felt trapped by the politics of the major-label machine, and she asked to be released from her contract.

Having released her last five records in the indie scene, Malone says it’s a world in which she feels most comfortable. “It’s a beautiful and liberating thing to break free from the chains that can keep you from easily expressing yourself,” she says.

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**SOUNDTRACKS AND FILM SCORE NEWS**

**BY CHARLES KAREL BOULEY**

**MAMMA MIA!** Not all great soundtracks come from the silver screen. In fact, many of the best soundtracks come from the stage. One that came out recently without much fanfare warrants another look: the original London cast album of “Mamma Mia!” (Decca Broadway). Originally released in late October, the album is going to be making an impact at retail around the nation this January as the play moves into more and more major markets.

“Mamma Mia,” which originated in London’s West End, is a fast-paced musical with music and lyrics by Benny Anderson and Bjorn Ulvaeus (of Abba fame). The book by Catherine Johnson has been staged with more than 20 of the legendary Abba’s greatest hits, including “The Winner Takes It All,” “Take A Chance On Me,” “SOS,” and “Dancing Queen.” Many artists have covered Abba hits over the years, but what emerges in this setting is an entirely new take on these now-classic tunes.

“This idea has been thrown around for many years, but it was only when I was with my wife and kids at the West End production of ‘Grease’ that I thought we could do it,” says Ulvaeus. “Those lyrics of ours were always about relationships. If you look at the songs, they are little stories within themselves. Twenty-five years ago I didn’t have a clue anything like this would happen, and I didn’t even like musicals!”

Adds Judy Craymer, Ulvaeus’ co-producer, “It’s very exciting because people have tried to bring Abba’s songs to the stage for a long time, and it has never been allowed to happen until now. It is full of colour and supported by Bjorn and Benny, who feel that the time is right and the story is right, with the lyrics providing the underlying material to tell the story. And their music has always been very theatrical. It is not a ‘70s revival show. We hope it will cross all generations and all theater-going audiences. There is a whole new generation of Abba fans who were not even born when they first came to fame.”

The CD is available at the show, which is now playing or opens shortly in San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, Toronto, and London. It is also available at mamma-mia.com as well as through other online services.

**SOUNDS THAT SCARE US:** We’ve maintained that if there is a hell, heavy metal music will be the Muzak. Filmmakers seem to agree, as illustrated by the soundtrack to Wes Craven’s “Dracula 2000” (DVS/Columbia/Sony). The album is a metal-lovers dream and features previously unreleased tracks by Powerman 5000, Pantera, Slayer, System Of A Down, Disturbed, Static-X, Taproot, Monster Magnet, and Godhead with Marilyn Manson (the singer, not the band). Powerman 5000’s “Ultra Mega” is already picking up national airplay. The album hits stores Tuesday (12), with the film opening nationwide Dec. 22.

**EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN:** “Reissue” seems to be the buzzword of the year 2000, with several labels repackaging and re-pressing soundtracks by the droves. While some should probably have stayed analog and obscure, others are a refreshing treat. The soundtrack to the cult classic “The Fog” (who could forget Adrienne Barbeau?) has been expanded, and Silva Screen Records hopes fans of this 20-year-old film will want to recall John Carpenter’s work as both musician and director. The best part of the CD isn’t the four additional bonus tracks from the film but a six-minute radio interview with Jamie Lee Curtis about the film.

Ted Turner wants to exploit the thousands of films he owns in as many ways as he can. When the films are not playing on one of his various networks, the soundtracks to such movies as “Hit The Deck,” “Annie Get Your Gun,” and “The Unsinkable Molly Brown” can be found on Rhino Records in association with TCM Music. The big-budget movie musicals transfer well to CD, and who can resist Debbie Reynolds singing “Belly Up To The Bar, Boys?”

A frightening closing note: As a 38-year-old man, I have begun frightening my friends. Their concern stems from my insistence on playing the Telethons’ “Bedtime And Playtime Stories” (Kid Rhino) at parties. “Daisy’s Sleepy Song” or “Tubby Toast Accident” is crying out for a remix.
The Billboard's Heatseekers chart lists the best-selling titles by new and developing artists, defined as those who have never appeared in the top 25 of The Billboard 200 chart, and whose album reaches #30 or better. The album and the artist's subsequent albums are immediately ineligible to appear on the Heatseekers chart. All albums are available on cassette and CD. "*" indicates vinyl LP is available. 

Royal Ranger, Wou-G's latest album, "The Royal Impression" (Beyond/Music), debuted at No. 64 on the Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart in the Dec. 6 issue.

Down But Not Out. Heavy rock band Downer released an album and EP on indie label All Ammunition Records before signing with Roadrunner Records, which will issue Downer's self-titled album in first-quarter 2001. The Orange County, Calif.-based band worked with producer Bob Malette (Black Sabbath) on the new set. Downer's often dark lyrics are about "what we face in our lives," says lead singer John Scott.

The album, which is bubbling under the Heatseekers top 50 chart, features first single "We Got What You Want." A videoclip for the song has been serviced to video outlets, and Wou-G has been on a promotional tour. He recently performed at the Billboard Music Video Conference.

Solo From Bon Jovi: Bon Jovi keyboardist David Bryan steps into the spotlight with his debut solo album, "Lunar Eclipse" (Rounder Records). Instead of being a hard-driving rock album, as might be expected from a Bon Jovi alum, "Lunar Eclipse" is mostly acoustic. Bryan plays keyboard and sings lead vocals on the set, which he co-produced. Guest musicians include Edgar Winter, Troy Turner, and Stanley Watson. The Bryan-written Bon Jovi song "In These Arms" is featured on this set. Bryan is still a member of Bon Jovi, which is touring in support of its latest album, "Crush."


TWO OF THE Hottest SINGLES THIS WEEK: 

1. ROYAL G'S The album, which
2. "Lunar Eclipse" (Rounder Records)
**SPOTLIGHT**

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**

**O Brother, Where Art Thou?**

*Producers:* T Bone Burnett

Mercury Nashville 001 709 009

If the Coen brothers’ film “O Brother, Where Art Thou?,” with opening Dec. 22, is a match for its soundtrack, then it will be superb. The film, set in Mississippi in the 1930s, stars George Clooney and John Turturro as escapees from a chain gang. The music that underwrites their only partially purged penal institution radiates throughout. Aloxin Klaunz sings “Down To The River To Pray,” then joins Gillian Welch as Bill Fly Away. Krauss and Welch add to the proliferation of Barfly To Pray, then joins Gillian Welch as Bill Fly Away. Krauss and Welch add to the proliferation of

**AGENDAS AGAINST THE MACHINE**

*Producers:* Rick Rubin, Rage Against The Machine, Brendan O’Brien

EPK 012 029

On “Renegades,” Rage Against The Machine delivers a fairly solid set of primarily thrash/hop covers of socially and politically charged hip-hop, pop, rock, and punk bands. But it wasn’t always supposed to be this way. Originally, the album was taking on much more of a conceptual aspect, with two bonus studio tracks. Well, two tracks evolved into 12, which now form the rock-solid nucleus of this album. An absolute highlight of the set is the current modern rock smash, the blasting “Renegades Of Punk,” which was originally recorded by Afrika Bambaataa. Just try rousing this sauce for the big screen. Come out of your department front man Zack de la Rocha’s def, sacromanted delivery. That song, done, don’t look at the meaning of the set’s take on the Rolling Stone’s “Street Fighting Man,” J. P. Sprngsteen’s “The Ghost Of Tom-Joad,” EPMD’s “I’m House,” Bob Dylan’s “Maggie’s Farm,” Eric B & Rakim’s “Microphone Fiend,” or the Stoppo’s “Down On The Street.” For sheer beauty, go directly to the album’s soaring reading of Devos’s synth-pop treasure “Beautiful World,” which, under the watchful eyes of EBM, becomes a hauntingly sweet anthem “for you—not me.”

**RENOMA BROTHERS**

*Producers:* Dino Saroyan, new New York native Monifah, who crossed

**VITAL REISSUES**

**CHARLIE PARKER**

The Complete Savoy And Dial Studio Recordings, Vol. 1 (1945-1949)

*Compilation Producer:* Orrin Keepnews

Atlantic 012 157 999

This is perhaps the best large-scale, modern jazz reissue ever, a towering achievement, a jazzological wonder, and a labor of love-despite the fact that most of these sessions have been in print, in one compressed version or another, since they were first recorded. Of course, there’s no argument that Charlie Parker was the guy who forever changed the face of jazz. He was, and remains, indelible.

**DENNIS SAVOY**

Spend seven years preparing

**ALBUMS**

**Spotlight**

Reissues deemed by the review editors to deserve special attention on the basis of musical merit & Billboard chart position. VITAL REISSUES: Renowned albums of artistic, archivial, and commercial interest, and outstanding collections of works by one or more artists. PICKS: New releases predicted to hit the top half of the chart in the corresponding format. CRITICS CHOICE: *New releases, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended because of their intrinsic merits.* MUSICAL MEXICAN MUSIC TO MY EARS: New releases deemed Picks that were featured in the Music To My Ears column. All albums commercially available in the U.S. are eligible. Send reviews to Michael Paulletta, Billboard, 770 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10003. Send country albums to Ray Waller, Billboard, 49 Music Square W., Nashville, Tenn. 37203. Other contributors: Lee Michaels (Blues) & Anthony H. Kellaway, Entertaainment. (Continued on next page)
WORLD MUSIC

+ VARIOUS ARTISTS
This is Sanat Vol 1/ Volume 2
PRODUCER: Khitrobo Tshise
This two volume release takes listeners beyond the technic producers of Deep Earth's chart-topping Brazilian samba to a more elemental kind of music. The early 20th-century origin of this distinctive music. Producer Khatoum Tshise, who has joined forces with several vocalists in the Kali, are the vocalists of the songs, and they have been defined and revitalized for decades. This album is one of stunning, yet completely persuasive, mastery of the style called Samba.

+ CLASSICAL
VIVALDI: The Four Seasons, Violin Concerto Giuliano Carmignola, violin, Venice Baroque Orchestra, Andrea Marcon
PRODUCER: Alan Brough
SACD/SACD 313532
Apologies to certain virtuoso Ameri- can composer and violist. The disc, however, truly remarkable additions to the over- broking records of Vivaldi's "Four Seasons" is that in the past ten years we have seen many Italian period-instrument bands—namely Il Giardino Armonico and Concerto Italiano, whose historically minded renditions of this music of classic al loops the Korean and Japanese material in a new light. The album is a testament to the genius of all involved.

+ RUSTY JENN
The Chill
PRODUCERS: Bruce Iglauer, Rusty Zieh
ALBUM: LEDGE (4876)
Zinn is a West Coast guitarist who worked with Luther Tiefker, Mark Humel, and Kreis, among others. He began his career as a young man in his 20s. He's an absolute virtuoso of the blues, and his playing is a revelation in the world of jazz. His music is characterized by his ability to evoke emotions and create a sense of serenity.

+ CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN
TREE63
Tree63
PRODUCERS: Andreie Phipps, L. H. Holder
LEGG 1243
This talented trio has already par- tnered in its native South Africa as well as the UK, with its U.S. debut on the Cut Music label. On its impressive and engaging debut, Tree63r members John Ellis, Darryl Stott, and Tony Beehn, have crafted an album that combines the best elements of modern rock with the soulful and expressive vocals. Like other modern worship groups, such as SonicFlood (with whom Tree63r has been touring) and Brevi- tis, Tree63r serves up songs that are both worshipful and catchy. Among the album's best moments are the jubilant "Earnestly," "Look What You've Done," "A Million Lights," and "Tree63r." With its emotive melodies, strong vocal harmonies, and driving rhythms, this album is a testament to the power of music.

+ NEW AGE
+ THE GUARDIANS UNDERGROUND
Capturing
PRODUCERS: Jeffrey Sick, John Schuler
Twisted Fiddle Records TRF360
In the "90s and "90s, Shadowfax forged a union between fusion and world music. Now the Guardians Under- ground is back with their new album, "Shadowfax," and with the twin violins of Jeffrey Sick and John Schuler, the Guardians Under- ground has crafted a modern masterpiece. Available on CD, "Shadowfax" is a testament to the power of music.

(Continued on next page)

REVIEWS & PREVIEWS

R&B

RACHELLE FERELLE, I Forgive You (4:11)
PRODUCER: David Duke
WILLIAM SOUTHERN, producer/arranger
LABEL: independent
RACHELLE FERELLE's vocal talent is far more than just a trait and a pleasant sound. Her talent is a revelation to us. I for one have a hard time believing that she has been processed so much she sounds as if she were recorded underwater. This band is truly one of the best I have heard in my lifetime, and no rock stations will want to spin this hit. Contact 315-491-7282.

SCENE: The Spheres (6:22)
WILLIAM J. ALLEN, producer
LABEL: independent
SCENE: "The Spheres" is a true object d'arte, with the illustrated disc coming in a beautifully executed letter- pressed folder. The limited-edition EP is a joint release, with the U.K. issue from London's Sound Factory Records. Contact: ipe@soundina.com.

+ NICE & NOTEWORTHY
KOFFEE BROWN After Party (13:39)
PRODUCERS: Alton Taborn, Tommy E. Brown
LABEL: independent
KOFFEE BROWN puts on a show that serves as a throwback to the '80s, and it's a treat that's welcoming and enjoyable. The album is filled with songs that are both fun and well-written, making it a must-listen for anyone looking for a good time.

+ COUNTRY
ALLISON MOORE Thinkin' In Color (5:46)
PRODUCERS: Kenny Greenberg, Doyle Green
LABEL: independent
ALLISON MOORE has the kind of voice that can make you feel like you're in the middle of a beautiful sunset. Her music is a true representation of her talent, and it's a joy to listen to. Her latest album, "Thinkin' In Color," is a testament to her ability to create beautiful melodies and sing them with passion.

(Continued on next page)

www.americanradiohistory.com
More than 30 years after the Beatles’ acrimonious breakup and 20 years since John Lennon’s tragic murder, the music of the band from Liverpool is as timeless and universally appealing as ever. The excitement over “The Beatles Anthology” series—and its inclusion of the first “new” Beatles music in 25 years—only underlines the phenomenon.

At the close of 2000, the Beatles are back on top. The new collection of their U.S. and U.K. chart-topping songs, “I,” debuted, fittingly enough, at No. 1 on The Billboard 200. The Beatles CD and video “Anthology” collections have now been made complete with the companion book of the same title, a current best-seller put together by the surviving Beatles and Yoko Ono.

While “The Beatles Anthology” is receiving the most attention, several other Beatles-related books have just been published. Paul Saltzman’s “The Beatles In Rishikesh” is an intimate portrait of the band’s 168 pilgrimage to India, where they studied transcendent meditation with the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. In December 1967, Saltzman was a 23-year-old Canadian in search of himself. By then he had been a civil rights worker in Mississippi (spending 10 days in jail for his efforts), worked for the Canadian Broadcasting Corp., “smoked dope, doped psyches, loved the Beatles, gotten laid, given out flowers . . . and loved the life I was living,” Saltzman recalls. But he still felt his existence lacked a sense of meaning, so he left everything behind, including his girlfriend, and set out for India. Heartbroken by a subsequent break-up, Saltzman traveled to the Maharishi’s ashram in the hope of learning meditation. More so, the second album from those tracks recently produced their masterpiece, “St. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band,” and performed the de facto theme song of the Summer of Love—Lennon’s “All You Need Is Love”—for a worldwide audience via live satellite broadcast. Around the same time, George Harrison (who had fallen in love with the sound of the sitar on the set of the band’s film “Help!”) and later traveled to India to study the exotic instrument.)

Although no press were allowed inside the ashram, the Beatles did not object to Saltzman photographing them, and the results are magnificent. These previously unseen photos portray the band in a more relaxed and unguarded state than they had known since their mid-60s “she’s found some game” shots taken in the dark somewhere/And everything is different now.” On the album side, the songs feature a glistening acoustic guitar, which weeps along with Henley, creating an eerie, nauscent mood that guides the songs through its duration. “Everything Is Different Now” offers hope to the lonely masses and marks one of those milestone songs that raises the bar in its potential at the AC format, blissfully, is a show-in-top-five action, particularly on the heels of No. 1 hit there, “Taking You Home.” Just extraordinary.

(Continued from preceding page)

R A P


(Lead 4400 CD (piano)) Knowing with the Wu-Tang Clan tradition of tag-team lyrical expertise, MCs Method Man, Ghostface Killah, U-God, and singer Paulissa Monroe give birth to “Gravel Pit,” Wu-Tang’s second single from its third album, “The W.” This track pushes four minutes and 15 seconds of the dark, enigmatic, raw sound that Wu-Tang producer RZA has so masterfully artfully. Straying from the contemporary practice of slower, more conventional rap songs, “Gravel Pit” refreshingly clocks in at around 110 beats per minute. Relentless drum programming over an eerie organ, interspersed with a melodic horn, lays the foundation for “Gravel Pit’s” lyrical frenzy. In the classical Wu-Tang style, the subject matter of “Pit” is indecipherable and esoteric, but this hypnotizing, unorthodox tune with the catchy chorus transcends the need for any coherent topic. “Gravel Pit” is a current best-seller put together by the surviving Beatles and Yoko Ono.

AC

STING: My Funny Friend And Me (4/23) PRODUCERS: Sting, Jerry Lewis

Hot on the heels of his massive multi-format hit “Desert Rose,” Sting throws out a lightning single, “Pretend Ya Neck (The Jump Off),” which will go for both or against it. It will depend upon the ears of listeners who are willing to be injected with a dose of his contagious melody. On the radio side, this is one “Pit” that stagnant R&B and hip-hop stations should willingly swallow.

BOOKS: Send review copies of books pertaining to artists or the music industry to Bradly Barmbrack, Billboard, 770 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10003
Good things come to those who wait: that adage holds true—especially in the music industry. A current case in point is songwriter/guitarist Joshua Thompson, who describes his career as a "lesson in perseverance."

Some 15 years after first meeting Buddyface, Thompson got the chance to work with him when Babyface recorded the Thompson-written "Reason For Breathing"—the first single and one of two new tracks on his recent Epic release, "Babface: A Collection of His Greatest Hits." Thompson penned the song with singer/songwriter/producer Joe as well as Quincy Patrick, Scott Ziehl and Warren Wilson.

"I appreciate Babyface giving me and the others this opportunity," says West Orange, N.J.-based Thompson, who was born in Newark, N.J. "Other people wouldn't have been gracious enough to let us come in and work with them."

The DreamWorks Publishing writer began eyeing a career in music when he was a child, playing guitar in a singing group in 1969. In the time that’s elapsed since then, Thompson says, he’s "just been writing and writing, perfecting my craft. One day you wake up and someone says, ‘Hey, that’s pretty good, you.’ I think you may have potential in this." The first songs he wrote that were picked up by major artists were "Your Ex Wants You Back" (Babyface), and "I Can’t Feel It No More" (Gwen Guthrie).

Things began to really click, he recalls, when he connected with Joe, with whom he’s co-written such songs as Casee’s "Faded Pictures" and Joe’s "All the Things You Leave Behind." "We have a collaborative chemistry that I hadn’t had before," notes Thompson. On "Faded" we tried to do something that was classic but with a new edge. The chord progression and melody on that song could be something from the Spinners," he met his other principal writing partner, Patrick, through a mutual friend.

Upcoming projects include football themes for Sugar Hill plus artists on Clive Davis’ new J Records label, including O-Town, Luther Vandross, and the Product G&B (via Wyclef Jean’s Clef Records). The "Maria Maria" duet is cutting the Thompson/Patrick composition "Black Rose," originally written for Joe. Also set to record Thompson work is newcomer Olivia, whom Thompson met through Wilson and helped develop before he was signed to J Records. Her debut album is slated for March 2001.

INDIE AVENUE: With all the product pouring forth from the majors, it’s tough sometimes for independent projects to get attention. What got in mind was inaugurating an occasional forum that will focus on noteworthy independent R&B/hip-hop releases that might otherwise get lost in the shuffle.

First up is songwriter/guitarist Meld Fields, whose Oakland, Calif.-based Regina Records (named after his business partner/wife and daughter) has released Fields’ adult R&B-aimed "Promise." Promised by Kashif (Whitney Houston, Kenny G) and featuring such musicians as Eric Marienthal, Rodney Franklin, and Hiroshma’s Kimaya Seward, the album is a mix of standards ("Nature Boy") and Fields original (the title track) that incorporate R&B, jazz, and Latin music. A second CD sporting more original tunes is scheduled for March. The former State Farm insurance executive entrusted traveled in a six-figure salary to turn his moonlighting into a full-time commitment. "My turning point was the chance to work for another company," recalls Fields. "It was my first gig, and I got a standing ovation. The beautiful connection I experienced with the audience was something that couldn’t be duplicated in my insurance job."

Another life-altering experience occurred when his wife suffered a traumatic injury, and Fields became her primary caregiver. "She’s out of harm’s way now," says Fields. "But she pretty much motivated me, saying, ‘This is your turn. If you don’t do it now, it will get worse.’"

In addition to targeting the adult R&B and jazz/AC audiences, Regina Records plans to expand its artist roster to include hip-hop and old-school R&B. The label hopes to sign four new acts in the coming year.

While Fields underscores that it’s not a very level playing field for independents when it comes to airplay, he notes, "Our approach is regional. It may take longer, but like water it will trick its way around and find its power. We’ve got a fan club in Maryland and are developing one in Florida. People are hearing something, and it’s fresh. This is very challenging, but it’s happening because we’ve determined to make it happen."

The "Promise" is available through victorfIELDS.com and Amazon.com or by calling 888-899-9100.

The Rhythm and the Blues

by Gail Mitchell

The Things You Leave Behind

by Rashaun Hall

Stones Throw Group Breakestra

To Debut With Its ‘Live Mixtape’

BY RASHAUN HALL

NEW YORK—As the hip-hop universe continues to expand, new acts are finding their niches. Los Angeles-based act Breakestra is quickly making a name for itself in hip-hop with its funk-influenced grooves and organic hip-hop output, which was heard on its Stones Throw Records Jan. 9 debut, "The Live Mixtape Volume Two."

The 10-piece ensemble, led by Miles Tackett, was formed in 1995 as a house band for "The Breaks," a weekly coffeehouse series. The group—consisting of drummer Josh "Wallet" Cohen, saxophonist/artist Geoff "Double G" Gallestro, trumpet Todd Simon, trumpet Paul Vargas, trombonist Dan Osterman, keyboardist Carlos Guatierrez, percussionist Davy Chegwidden, guitarist Dan Ubbick, vocalist Demya, vocalist Mixmaster Wolf, and Tackett—has covered a wide array of tunes and wanted to record a set that highlighted its diversity.

"The songs included are just some of the jams we use in our show to learn for our repertoire," says Tackett, who manages and books the group. "The scary thing is we have way more than that. There are songs from the first tape that aren’t even on there, so there are a variety of things that went into choosing the songs."

Tackett continues, "I try to make a set that was balanced between electronic, chronicing the history of hip-hop, and also a dynamic that incorporates that jazz/funk/groove-sound. I also try to include some of the p-funk and soul sounds that I love, and then there are just classic breaks of hip-hop. So that’s what I’m trying to capture—all those elements."

The group’s growing popularity connected it with Stones Throw when Tackett met Stones Thrower Peanut Butter Wolf a few years ago when a mutual friend brought Wolf to a show where Breakestra was playing with Cut Chemist. "He heard us play, and he took some interest in us," Tackett says. "He got in touch with me about doing a 7-inch, because at the time he was doing a 7-inch series. So we put out the 7-inch (‘Getcha Soul Together’), which was in addition to our first mix tape [‘The Live Mixtape Volume One’], which we released independently in ’98."

Wolf wanted to diversify the label, which has primarily concentrated on hip-hop, and Breakestra was just ideal," says Eothen Alapatt, Stones Throw’s A&R project coordinator. "They take a hip-hop and funk and soul that creates a bridge between the two."

According to Alapatt, the label will be concentrating on breaking Breakestra in three major markets: New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. In addition to deploying street teams in those markets, Stones Throw will employ 100 interns nationwide to spread the word on the act.

Chicago-based EPE Management. "We’ve been through ups and downs over the past two years. But everybody is in unison, and we’re happy with our new label home. There’s a oneness there."

"We’re blessed to still be here," adds Robinson, who’s affectionately known as "Poppa PA." "The guys I’m working with right now will make our future.”

Inspired by PA’s outlook for the future, the act title of the group’s sophomore effort reflects not only a renewed career drive but a revamped musical direction as well. Whereas the first album consisted mostly of b-sides, "Don’t Hold Back" is a more balanced effort that includes a healthy share of uptempo and mid-tempo tunes that pay homage to the quartet’s various influences.

(Continued on page 31)
Latin Hip-Hop: Looking Ahead To 2001

BY DERRICK MATHIS
LOS ANGELES—The Latin hip-hop front will welcome some new recruits when 2001 rolls around. Among the newcomers set to release solo albums are Bully Boy Entertainment artists "O" Dee and Mark Curry, as well as Epix's Puerto Rican and 19-year-old Dominican Republican female rapper Armavida.

"Latinos are gaining speed in the hip-hop genre because of the Latin culture and the dedication of their fan base," says Kenyatta "Tally" Galbreth, Epix's senior director of A&R.

"One day somebody is going to be the next Jay Z-meets-Ricky Martin. I don't know when that's going to happen, and I'm not saying they're going to sell 6 million copies. But they're going to represent the streets, respecting them and the Latin love."

A lot of the Latin community has been raised in a similar plight as the urban African-American, Galbreth continues. "So they have a similar vibe in their upbringing and what they like. They all wear baseball hats, 'do rags, Timberlands, and Nike's."

Also in the works are Latin hip-hop projects by independent Latin labels such as Prorama Records, The Miami-based label, features an eight-artist roster of Latin hip-hop and Spanish reggae acts, inked a worldwide distribution deal with Fonovisa. The first full-length release from that affiliation will be a project by hip-hop group Los Dementes, slated for release in early 2001.

Ramon "Pacho" Bustamante, Prorama's president/GM, believes the success of his acts lies in their crossover potential and aggressive marketing to Hispanic youths who've long proved themselves loyal fans of hip-hop and rap.

"We want to aim at Spanish-speakers and then cross over for the English speakers," says Bustamante.

"So many young Latinas in and out of the United States are buying the big hits of American rap acts like Eminem, Cypress Hill, Dr. Dre, and Snoop Dogg. These artists are very influential."

Bustamante also contends that timing is a critical element in getting the music out there. "Now it is a good time for Latin artists whose music encompasses hip-hop, R&B, and reggae and those who want to do these styles of music in Spanish, taking advantage of the support that Spanish-speaking people give to these styles."

One day somebody is going to be the next Jay Z-meets-Ricky Martin

—Kenyatta "Tally" Galbreth

Chris Lighty, president/CEO of Violator Management, points to hip-hop's power as a cultural force, regardless of the artist's ethnicity.

"First and foremost, the music has an opportunity to be more of a cultural force," he notes. "For me—and I think I can speak for a lot of people—it's not been about "Oh, I'm dealing with this group or artist because they're Latino or Hispanic."

I'm quite sure Cypress Hill wasn't signed because they were some cool guys who have a Latino edge to them."

"No, it's about great music," continues Lighty. "When I signed the Beatnuts, it wasn't because of anything else other than that they were great producers. When I did the Fat Joe deal, it wasn't about him being a great Latin rapper; it was simply because I believed in him."

Randi Roberts, GM of Loud Records—the home of the Beatnuts and the late Big Pun—agrees there really shouldn't be a distinction between Latin hip-hoppers and other rap acts.

"I don't consider Latin hip-hop to be separate from rap music as we know it," says Roberts. "Latinos have been part of the hip-hop culture from its inception. Pun was one of the first artists to bring Latin hip-hop into mainstream awareness with his 1998 double-platinum album, "Capital Punishment." The Beatnuts and Fat Joe continue that legacy."

TO OUR READERS

Stephanie Lopes's Rhythm Section will return in the next issue.

Platinum Rap. LaFace/Arista co/OutKast celebrates the platinum status of its new album, "Stankonia," which features the singles "B.O.B." and "Ms. Jackson." Pictured are Outkast members Dre, left, and Big Boi, right, with Arista president/CEO Antonio "L.A." Reid, center.
among them Kelly, Take 6, Boys II Men, Dave Hollister, the Isley Brothers, and Luther Vandross. Newsmakers include the body-shaking track title to the Spanish-guitar-introduced midtempo charmer “Papi” to the sensuous, har- masonry “Sex on the Floor” to the clever “Rich Thieves,” which Davis describes as a “2000 version of the Camer- odoes Briches.” Lead single “Mambo” currently stands at No. 40 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart. The track, mixing ele- ments of funk, soul, and Latin, became commercially available Dec. 5. “We popped it up,” says Wright. “There were so many dance/party tunes, as opposed to the first album. Don’t get me wrong: There’s nothing like that first album, but this one feels better.” This album is different,” agrees Robinson, who along with Davis, Mike Dunn, and others produced several songs on the album (the group pro- duction company is named Yada Yada). “We have something for both younger and older listeners to think about. Everything goes around in a circle, and it’s definitely time for R&B. We’re not knocking rap. But it’s time for some people to go down-home singing to come back.”

Which is something RCA feels will propel “Don’t Hold Back,” up the charts. Melding the album’s merits with the quartet’s performing expertise, the label mounted a nationwide promo tour, with initial stopovers in New York, Philadelphia, the Caroli- nas, Washington, D.C., and San Francisco, where Public Announcement was the centerpiece of a Day in the Bay event during which the group performed on a boat ride. “It was one of the first and foremost,” says RCA VP of marketing and artist development Angela Thomas. “And while we know they’re good on ballads, we wanted to lead with the upempo ‘Mambo’ to show what they can do.”

In addition to the groups new Website (launched in mid-November), a CD sampler, appearances on the Jenny Jones and Queen Latifah television shows, a “Mambo” video, and advertising on BET and other media, RCA put together a club promotion in various major markets featuring a search for the “hottest Mamboin.” In December, a radio promotion award win- ning radio listeners a Motorola two-way pager was initiated.

On the retail front, Marketta Rodriguez, owner of Houston-based Serious Sounds, calls “Mambo” a “foot track for clubs. Public Announcement is one of the most underrated R&B groups out today.”
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**R&B Singles A-Z**

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produced “Time” by Dajae (licensed to Credence/EMI U.K.), the label is poised to take one of the biggest house records of 2001 with Dajae’s next single.

Scheduled to street next month, the Felix Da Housecat-produced “Everyday My Life” is one joyous filtered-house jam, recalling the spirited buoyancy of club records from days gone by. Imagine Chie’s “Everybody Dance” merging with Sister Sledge’s “Thinking Of You” and being sidestepped by the soulful strumings of Dajae. Get the picture? The track, with remixes by Felix Da Housecat and Junior Jack and L.A. Williams, has already been licensed to Defected U.K., which will release it in February.

At the same time, Kid Dynamite will release deep-dubbed remixes of “Time,” courtesy of Dean Coleman, Jos D Funky One and Steve Smooth, and DJ Rush—as well as Chez Damier’s classic “Chuggles,” complete with never-before-released remixes.

**DANCE TRAX**
(Continued from preceding page)
By Deborah Evans Price

NASHVILLE—Since the release of her career, Dolly Parton has proven adept at a variety of musical styles, blending traditional bluegrass country to polished pop. But as her last album, “The Grass Is Blue,” demonstrated, Parton is at her best when she returns to her Appalachian roots. She does so again with “Little Sparrow,” due out Jan. 23, 2001, on Blue Eye/Sugar Hill.

“The Grass Is Blue,” the first joint venture between Parton’s Blue Eye imprint and Sugar Hill, garnered numerous accolades, including the album of the year honor at the International Bluegrass Music Assn. Awards in October. On her new outing, Parton again serves up a mix of bluegrass numbers, ably backed by such luminaries in the field as Alison Krauss, Sonny Isaacs, Becky Isaacs Bowman, and Dan Tyminski. This time, however, she broadens the scope to include some Celtic-flavored numbers featuring the Irish ensemble Alan and covers by such artists as Cole Porter, the Eagles, and the Beatles.

The result is a project too broad to be tagged strictly bluegrass, and Parton stamps each number on the 14-cut collection with her signature style: “I’m calling it ‘blue mountain music,’” she says of the acoustic project. “It’s mountain music, and it’s bluegrass. I’ve just kind of picked a name. It sounds right to me. If you tell Chris Thile that’s bluegrass, he’ll say something. I think it’s blue mountain music.”

Parton admits to being pleasantly surprised that “The Grass Is Blue” was so well accepted, especially by the bluegrass music community. “You could have knocked me over,” she says of winning for bluegrass album of the year. “My brother said, ‘That’s one of the few times in my whole life I’ve ever seen you not know what to say.’ He says I staggered and stuttered and sounded like a fool.”

The prolific Parton, who is not a regular member of the bluegrass community, Parton says doing a bluegrass album wasn’t really a stretch for her at all. “I’ve always been a bluegrass music,” she observes. “It’s not like I came in the back door with this music. I’ve been doing it on my front porch for years. What we do is sort of gray area. We call it bluegrass, but everyone else calls it country. I feel what I was doing and felt it was real.”

She continues to serve up authentic, heartfelt music by producing Chris Thile’s Apple publishing catalog, such as “Bluer Pastures,” “My Blue Eyes,” “Marry Me,” “Mountain Angel,” and the title track, alongside the aforementioned “I Don’t Believe You’ve Met My Baby,” which features Keith Little and Claire Lynch on harmony vocals; the Randy Sharp-penned “A Tender River of Love,” and the traditional “I Get A Kick Out Of You.”

There’s also a stunning version of the Eagles’ “Seven Bridges Road,” which features Lyric Street artist Ickes and her sister Isaacs Bowman. “Sunny and Becky are unbelievable,” enthuses Parton. “I’ve always loved that song and thought [it] would be great with women, because the only way I’ve ever heard it was sung with men . . . I thought I’d get this up some time, and I asked both the Isaacses, and they did a great job. They are such great singers.

“I feel real fortunate to have all the great people I have on this album,” Parton enthuses. “I’m working with Claire Lynch many times, and she’s just a doll, and my little Alison [Krauss]. I’m just crazy with that. Anytime you have her singing with her I do. There is just a little soul mate there with Alison and me . . . And Rhonda and Darrin Vinson . . .”

“I don’t know if this album will do what [the last album] did as far as critical acclaim, but I think this album is just as good. It’s got a lot of my heart and soul,” says Parton, who is self-managed and booked by the William Morris Agency. “I’m on par with the promotion and the airplay, and I’m not the one who likes to hear me do really heartfelt, gut music . . . This is really who I truly am. It’s my roots, my Smoky Mountain DNA. It’s in every fiber of my body. When I open my mouth to sing these songs, it amazes me the feeling I get into my heart and down inside my soul.”

Tower Records Nashville GM Jon Kerlikowske thinks that feeling will translate into brisk sales. “The real Dolly fans, that’s how they think of her,” he says of the Appalachian sound. “That’s what she sounds the best doing.”

Kerlikowske predicts “Little Sparrow” will be a hit. “Her last few records, we have been really strong out of the box with them,” he says. “We’ve always gone kind of heavy on it, and her last few records have been reviewed well here by The Tennesseean.”

Sugar Hill GM Brev Paul anticipated the reaction to the Grass Is Blue. “The response to the first record was so overwhelming from her fan base,” says Paul. “People said, ‘Man, I’ve never heard her sound this great.’ And I didn’t know what bluegrass music was, but if this is bluegrass music, I love it. I think we’re going to here some new ears from her core audience to the music was one huge ben- efit, and the other benefit was the whole bluegrass community got to hear Dolly singing bluegrass.”

According to Parton, media will play a major role in launching the new album. Plans call for Parton to appear on numerous TV outlets, including “Late Show With David Letterman” and “The Rosie O’Donnell Show” as well as PBS vehicles like “All Things Considered.” The label also plans on printing press ads and launching a major effort at retail with listening posts, end caps, and in-store appearances. The project’s release date, then, will play another big push on the project with high retail visi- bility during Bluegrass Music Month in May 2001.

Dan Sell, VP of sales and marketing for Sugar Hill parent Welt Music Group, says the Internet will play a major role in launching the new release, and the label will be working with Amazon.com to maximize its visibility. “They are starting to create programs via their online auc- tion site,” says Sell. “We’ll provide Amazon with various auction items such as tickets and backstage passes to upcoming shows, autographed items, and various Dolly Parton memorabilia that can actually auction off on the Amazon.com site. They tie the auction site to the music site, where we’ll have Dolly prominently positioned. It’s a full-circle promotion.”

Sell says they also will be working with Cyber Cafe and will have special off-air promotions on the radio. The label plans to provide a sampler CD to coffeeshops and cafes. In addition, Parton’s music will be part of the Patro Music Sampler, which goes to upscale hotels for their guests’ enjoyment. A track will also be released to country radio, and there are plans for a video, although a single hasn’t yet been selected.

According to Paul, there’s the pos- sibility of in-store appearances when Parton’s schedule permits. There are also plans for Parton to show- case the album in New York, Los Angeles, and possibly other cities, which will allow her to utilize the musicians on the project.

Paul and Sell both hope to create synergies with other Parton proj- ects/enterprises. “Little Sparrow” will be promoted and positioned at Dollywood, Parton’s East Tennessee theme park. Parton is set to shoot a movie in an additional cable set- work in the spring and will also be doing a remake of “Solid Gold Cadil- lac” for the Turner Network.

Swag Releases 1st Full-Length Album, Classics And New Duets From Stanley

CATCHALL: On March 13, Chapel Hill, N.C.-based York, Los Angeles, and currently working on a full-length album by the Nashville-based band Swag. The band is made up of musicians who are regular members of other successful national acts: Ken Coomer (Wilco), Jerry Dale McDonald (Sixpence None the Richer), Isaac Hayes (Iris), Doug Powell (Not Lame solo recording artist), Robert Reynolds (the Mavericks), and Tom Petersson (Cheap Trick). The album, produced by Brad Jones, includes songs from Swag’s previous vinyl-only releases and eight new songs.

ON THE ROW: David Letterman was recently promoted from VP of promotion to senior VP of promotion at MCA Nashville. Bill Macky was elevated from the position of director of promotion to VP of promo- tion.

Neil Larkin has relinquished his former label, Sunbird, which was active in the late ’70s and early ’80s with artists such as Earl Thomas Conley, Billy Larkin, and Mel Street. Veteran record promoter Etroy Kahane has been hired to run the promotion department. Distribution will be through Red Distribution.

The new Sunbird’s debut artist is Lexington, Ky., native Len Doolin.

Brad Allen has been promoted to VP of creative services and COO of business affairs at Nashville-based Entertainment. He previously was the company’s creative director.

Tracy Collins joins Dreamcatcher Records as regional field promotion director. Collins most recently was with Diane Rehm Promotions and previously worked at Giant Records.

SIGNINGS: Delbert McClinton has been signed to New West Records, which has offices in Los Angeles and Austin, Texas. His label debut, “Notion Person- al,” is due March 6 and was produced by McClinton and with Dolly Parton, Lucinda Williams, Iris DeMent, Maria Muldaur, Chely Wright, Gillian Welch, and Valery Smith. No release date has been set.

Sara Evans has been signed to Telarc for next year’s George Strait Country Music Festival, which kicks off in March.

As tipped here Dec. 2, BR549 has been signed to Sony’s Lucky Dog label. The band will begin recording its next album with producer Paul Worley.

Nashville studio musician Jim Vest is independent-ly releasing his first solo album, “The Vest Of Christmas,” through his Web site, jimvest.com. Vest has played steel guitar on projects by Tim McGraw and Alan Jackson and has played on hits including Johnny Paycheck’s “Take This Job And Shove It” and Vern Gosdin’s “Chiseled In Stone.” He is band leader and musical director for Asylum artist Chalee Tennison.

ARTIST NEWS: The release date for “Man Of Constant Sorrows,” a collection of漂浮的歌曲 from Ralph Stanley, has been moved up from Jan. 30, 2001, to Dec. 26. The 72-year-old Stanley is already at work on a new studio album, “Climb Mountain Sweethearts,” which features him in duets with Dolly Parton, Lucinda Williams, Iris DeMent, Maria Muldaur, Chely Wright, Gillian Welch, and Valerie Smith. No release date has been set.

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**TOP COUNTRY ALBUMS**

**DECEMBER 16, 2000**

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by Wade Jessen

PLAYING FOR TIME: As “My Next Thirty Years” (Curb) becomes Tim McGraw’s 12th title to dominate Hot Country Singles & Tracks, there’s undoubtedly a wish for at least a second week atop the chart on the singer’s Christmas list—a hope that would keep alive his streak of posting multiple weeks at the top with each of his prior No. 1 songs. Given his solid run over the nearest billion-dollar chart, things look good for an encore. McGraw’s song gains 314 detections to close with 5,659 spins, which leaves a margin of 406 plays between it and Dixie chicks’ “Without You” (Monument), which increases 102 detections and steps 4-3.

Meanwhile, McGraw’s “Things Change” dips four plays but manages a 41-40 move, a seemingly small feat that is significant nonetheless, because it lands the title on “American Country Countdown With Bob Kingsley,” where it will find itself from those cumulative detections. Additionally, the song finishes with new spins at 12 monitored stations, including KNCI Sacramento, Calif.; WJCL Savannah, Ga.; WXTU Philadelphia; and WSSS Greenville, S.C. On Top Country Albums, McGraw’s “Greatest Hits” volumes a 29% decrease to command a second week at No. 1 on a chart that is up to 1% overall from the prior week. On The Billboard 200, the hits set 4-5.


IN THE FAST LAND: Up more than 6,000 units, Billy Gilman’s “Class Christmas” (Epic) wins the Greatest Gainer competition and moves 6-5, while his “One Voice” set inches 5-4. The seasonal set moves approximately 65,000 units, while the latter sells 58,000 copies. Pace-setter honors go to Anne Murray’s “What a Wonderful World” (Straightway), which takes a 22% hike and jumps 27-25.

DYSFUNCTION JUNCTION: Montgomery Gentry offers comic relief in the form of “Merry Christmas From the Family” (Columbia), which graces Hot Shot Debut honors at No. 57 on Hot Country Singles & Tracks. The song, written by Robert Earl Keen, is a four-minute audio snapshot of a boxed-up family Christmas party with plenty of trailer park imagery. Spins are detected at 61 stations, including KDKR, Spokane, Wash.; WWXT Augusta, Ga.; KSOP Salt Lake City; and WGH Norfolk, Va. Elsewhere, the Gentrys’ chart, centered on a Christian group Christmas set, enters at No. 66 with “The Christmas Shoes” (Benson), a touching tale of a young protagonist who comes up short at the register while buying shoes for his dying mother, who watches, while a church is in “Sheltering Tree,” which re-enters Top Contemporary Christian albums at No. 57.

COUNTRY SINGLES A-Z PUBLISHERS/PERFORMANCE RIGHTS/SHEET MUSIC

By Ray Waddell

NASHVILLE—A country music industry state of mind since 1972, Fan Fair will be a different animal in 2001, sporting a new location, a different vibe, and a charity angle.

Formerly known as the Country Music Association Convention & Visitor’s Bureau and overseen by Powers Management through the Gaylord Entertainment Center box office.

The Opry joint venture and co-sponsorships; Fan Fair does not bring that forward the way it used to be,” says Benson. “We’re still working with the Grand Ole Opry, and they’re still an important part of what’s going on, but we’re not counting the Opry in our direct-mail piece.”

During Fan Fair, the Opry will host a Saturday matinee performance at the Grand Ole Opry House, as well as regular Opry performances at the Grand Ole Opry House.

With the new location comes new expectations as well as a potential upside. “The move increased our projected expenses, as you would expect when stepping up to world-class facilities,” says Benson, “but the net of it is that our expenses are $2.5 million, vs. projected revenues of $1.5 million. That’s based on a very conservative attendance projection.”

The move comes to Adelphia Coliseum was prompted by a slump in attendance in recent years, as well as a perceived stagnation of the event. Last year’s Fan Fair drew about 21,000, much less than the early sell-out years of 24,000-plus.

“We had to come to the point where we feel like we need to grow and enhance the event, or it might slide further into decline,” says Benson. “Moving was an easy decision. We felt Fan Fair needed a breath of fresh air.”

After flitting with various locations outside of Nashville, downtown received the CMA nod following an aggressive pitch from the Nashville Convention & Visitor’s Bureau. With the move comes a change in Fan Fair’s overall tone reflected by the new marketing tagline “The World’s Biggest Country Music Festival.”

“We have never used that (title) before, but we all felt we were the biggest in terms of the number of acts participating,” says Benson.

“Now that we’ve increased our capacity for the four-day event, we feel called,” said Benson.

Benson says he expects 100% major-label participation in the 2001 Fan Fair. Shows will be organized by label through a move precipitated by label input, he says.

The artist feedback has also been good, according to Benson. Already announced as performers are Tracy Byrd, Kenny Chesney, Billy Ray Cyrus, Joe Diffie, Bill Engvall, Sara Evans, Vince Gill, Billy Gilman, Andy Griggs, Alan Jackson, the Kinleys, Lonestar, Patty Loveless, Joe Dee Messina, Martina McBride, Loretta Lynn, Brad Paisley, Collin Raye, Travis Tritt, and Trisha Yearwood.

More than 200 artists, who are not paid to perform, will perform on Fan Fair, and Benson says a new artist-driven charitable element of Fan Fair provides added incentive for acts to participate. “The CMA and the Opry are among the leading entertainers in the world in terms of philanthropy,” he notes.

Half the net proceeds from Fan Fair will go to charities designated by the artists, with the other half going into the CMA’s special fund for the promotion and development of country music. It’s a smaller gift than the Old Country Music Hall of Fame and the proposed Country Music Retirement Center.

“Country Music has been a reunion of sorts between fans and artists, the backstage area during shows has become a schmooze fest of sorts, populated by a who’s who of music biz workers. Now, labels will use the Coliseum’s suite level as a hospitality area.”

Ticket prices for Fan Fair 2001 will range from $59 to $115.
BY KAI R. LOFTUS

STOCKHOLM—Oops! Sweden did it again.

By way of over-analyzing the activities of Stockholm’s reputable songwriters and producers, it could be argued that this musical mecca’s success may have been conceived somewhere between Key West, Fla., and London; Barbados and Santa Monica, Calif.; New York and Nashville; or Los Angeles and Vancouver.

In addition to the producers’ respective studios, those destinations have proved to be creative resorts for such individuals as Max "Max" Sundberg, Kristian Lundin, Jacob "Jake" Schulze, Herbert "Herbie" Crichlow, Paul Rein, Per Magnuson, John Danielsson, David Kreuger, and Anders Bagge, who visit these places frequently in search of their next big hit.

"At Chiron Villaflores," we travel to "Key West once every year, and we usually write two or three songs that without exception are great," says Elofsson, who is joining Magnuson and Kreuger’s A Side Productions when Chiron resolves its disputes at the end of this month. "Jim Croce, for instance, is fantastic. I’m really lost in his music. As a songwriter, I believe it’s important to always get back to the basics."

Another publishing and production company, Murlyn Songs, has completely abandoned urban Stockholm by setting up offices in the Bagge’s-owned Villa Väntory in the countryside of Solna, 20 minutes by car from the Swedish capital. (While Bagge is signed to Air Chrysalis, he is also working on Solna’s publishing company.)

"Stockholm is a beautiful city, but it’s completely different for someone from, say, Los Angeles to come to Solna," says Murlyn Songs managing director Pelle Lidell, a former credo director at Air Chrysalis Scandinavia. "It’s important to have some human values preserved in all of this. Everything’s really down to business here. Every Friday, you have an informal gathering for everyone here. We’re not 150 writers who need a convention to meet each other."

The distance obviously doesn’t prevent label executives (like Sony Music’s Thomas Motola and David Massey) or songwriters (like Simon Climie) from visiting Murlyn or Stockholm-based companies to seek production assistance. (Writers affiliated with Murlyn and Air Chrysalis then reported working on songs for new albums by Destiny’s Child, Jennifer Lopez, Anastacia, and Jessica Simpson.)

Air Chrysalis Scandinavia VP of A&R Fredrik Trägårdh adds, "It’s really uncomplicated for someone to come to Sweden for co-writing situations. Compared to in the U.K. and U.S., where one needs to go through management and a bigger machinery, a writer can literally approach someone in Sweden and make an agreement. It’s simply a matter of having a song ready a few days later."

Rein, who is signed to Air Chrysalis, says, "It’s been an advantage that I once was an artist myself. Therefore, it’s possible for me to work out the songs properly before we pitch them."

Minimally, one of recent co-written songs that have made an impact on international charts are "Come On Over Baby (All I Want Is You)," which was written in Stockholm (Madhouse/BMG Music Publishing; "Give Me Just One Night (Una Noche)," written by Bagge (Air Chrysalis), Birgisson, and Claudia Ogalle (both Murlyn); and "Gotta Get Back (The Choo Choo Train)," written by Birgisson, and Samantha Mumba (Warner/Chappell Music).

One common denominator among these songwriters is an affection for Americans like Diane Warren, Rodney Jerkins, Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds, and Antonio "L.A." Reid, combined with a "kid-in-a-toy store" attitude and influences from hard rock, country, and folk music.

"I guess everyone is a bit colored by what they grow up with," says Kreuger; "Personally, I liked David Foster; Jimmy Jam, and Terry Lewis." Adds Elofsson, "I’m probably more influenced by pop music, like the Beatles, but also country music and rock. I was very fond of Rush."

"We’re buying extreme amounts of records to ensure that we’re familiar with what other production teams are up to," says Lidell. "Diversity is enormously important. I can’t understand people who are into just rock or just hip-hop. Why impose any limitations?"

Another Air Chrysalis signing, EMI Records’ Shellay Ogalde, who was born in Stockholm and grew up in Tottenham, England, says he never wanted his own studio "because it would hold me down."

"What drives me," says Birgisson, "is how people can relate to my music. I was in Italy recently, and I felt while I was at a gas station I heard a radio station playing ‘Gotta Tell You.’ One of the girls who worked there was walking downstream, listening to the song. I was able to 차고이 확인 할 수 있다."

"It’s obviously also a confirmation when you see your name on the charts."

In addition to a well-defined OK to move in this direction from chairman/CEO Ralph Peer II, Sparrow Records has appointed chief financial officer Joseph Young, who joined peer musicians two years ago. "He’s directing and helping us to put the pieces of the company on a worldwide basis in creating a new focus," says Spanberger. She also credits Frank Petrone, national director of creative affairs with helping establish hitsthat cover a broad spectrum of contemporary possibilities.

Peermusic, by any measurement in the publishing community, is a force. From the birth of the company in 1968 to the present, a strong catalog foundation, which started with Ralph Peer II’s father, the legendary Ralph Peer, and continued with the son’s mother, Monique, and, of course, Ralph Peer II himself.

But the company, Spanberger says, is flexible enough to take advantage of their "changes in the marketplace and peermusics worldwide network of publishing companies, "The sale of Ronstadt, Universal Music Publishing and the talk of mergers of EMI Music and Warner/Chappell or that of EMI Music and BMG Music give us the opportunity to sign talent that doesn’t want to be a part of a huge organization. Songwriters, like attention, and the world markets at the giants are staggering. These companies can’t be both." This view is echoed by Ralph Peer II, who says peermusic is "in a great position to really pursue substantial international growth working with clients able to provide both personal and expert service."

PRINTON PRINT:The following are the best-selling sold items from this month:

1. "To Be An Amo. For Easy Piano.”
2. "Paul Simon Complete.”
4. "AC/DC. "Stiff Upper Lip” (guitar tablature edition)"
5. "Larry Carlton. “Fingertips.”"
This issue’s column was prepared by Mark Mobley, music producer of National Public Radio’s “Performance Today.”

Not Long Ago, “Performance Today” received an angry E-mail from one of the stations that carries the show. A music director wanted to let us know that her GM was so outraged that he was thinking of dropping “PT” because this time we had gone too far. We had played four minutes, 22 seconds of the Beatles.

And what we played wasn’t “I Am the Walrus” or “ Happiness Is a Warm Gun” or “Twist and Shout.” It was the strings-festooned “Eleanor Rigby” and the sweet ballad “Blackbird.” I picked those tunes because later in the hour a young pianist, Stewart Goodyear, was to play his various arrangements on “Eleanor Rigby” and why not hear the original? But the manager wasn’t buying that logic, because the Beatles aren’t classical, and someone tuning in for a classical recording might not have recognized the song.

To be fair, this guy had just had enough of our Beatles fixation. When ever Paul McCartney has stepped into the concert hall, NPR has followed, broadcasting not just his sprawling tone poem “Standing Stone” but the various brief choral tributes to his late wife that make up the “Garland For Linda” breast cancer benefit project. You can argue that given the relative musical merits of “Standing Stone” (which is hardly Stravinsky’s “Symphony Of Psalms,” after all), we’ve gone a little overboard at times. But McCartney is an important artist, and if his name on a concert bill increases general interest in orchestral music, then great.

As for “PT” broadcasting the Beatles, this isolated “Eleanor Rigby” incident (only that one station complained) demonstrates just how rigidly formatted some classical outlets have become. Now, I’ve been that confused listener myself. A year or so back, in a contest to win a massive set of piano recordings, “PT” asked listeners to submit their piano memories on postcards. “All Things Considered” host and amateur pianist Noah Adams visited to select the winner, and he asked us to air a short tune played by Butch Thompson, a traditional jazz pianist. I happened to be out of the studio at the time, and when I went to listen to “PT” that night at home, I couldn’t find it, because I tuned in during Thompson’s performance.

Yet the possibility of such slight confusion is absolutely worth risking in pursuit of the flexibility that would allow all of us programmers to explore musical variety. Times are especially vexing now, as I find myself listening more and more to albums that can’t be defined as straight-ahead classical or rock and thus have few secure homes on the radio. And I’m not talking about orchestrations of pop tunes, as Jazz Coleman and Nigel Kennedy’s surprising ly pastoral “Riders On The Storm: The Doors Concert” on Decca or “The Three Tenors Christmas” from Sony Classical (the latter featuring an unintentionally hilarious joke on John Lennon’s sublime “Happy Christmas [War Is Over]”).

Exhibit A for the forces of good: Joe Jackson, not so long ago for the ambitions of his recent Symphony No. 1 but for his new “Night And Day II” album (Billboard, Oct. 14) and the live covers-and-vintage origina ls set “Summer In The City,” all on Sony Classical. The “Night And Day” sequel is not an art-rock record. It is something better: a rock record with classical artistry. Not only does Jackson subtly manipulate motifs from his classic “Night And Day” album of 1982; he builds the entire disc’s program on the same steady pulse — so that an up tempo tune morphs into “Love Got Lost,” a heartbreaking waltz sung by Mariann Faithfull with the pain of the lonely people that “Sex And The City” never shows you. And “Summer In The City” is Jackson with an exceptionally musical trio, brilliantly blending Jackson’s “Pools In Love” with the Yardbirds’ “For Your Love.” He even sings “Eleanor Rigby.”

Exhibit B: another work with a constant pulse, “Fearful Symmetries” by John Adams. This half-hour piece is basically his version of Ravel’s “La Valse” but the relative tunefulness and semi-classical recording are. And it is proof that minimalist pieces have room for interpretation; this disc sounds different from Adams’ own, tamer recording of the work in Nonesuch. Issued by the French Actes Sud label (distributed by Harmonia Mundi in the U.S.), the new collection also includes Adams’ “Oboe Concerto,” a joyous and Parisian evocation of his “Christian Zeal Activity,” in which the usual tape of the revival preacher is replaced by a guy narrating in a heavy French accent.

Exhibit C: Don Byron’s new “A Fine Line: Arias And Lieder” (Blue Note) is the same way: a different interpretation, a new way of looking at classical music, with a heavy French accent.

Speaking of the city, the has a new outlet for adventurousness similar to KCRW Santa Monica, Calif., WNYC New York Public Radio’s Public Radio Internationa l’s “Scheickle Mix.” It is Terrance McKnight’s “Musically Reclined,” heard Saturdays on the statewide Georgia Public Radio network. McKnight, a former “PT” staffer, just finished his first half-season. Full disclosure requires me to admit that I’ve been a guest on “Musically Reclined,” as has “PT” producer Don Lee. But we pale in comparison to such diverse attractions as soul legend Al Green, senior American composers, New Orleans, Broadway songstress Audra McDonald, and Carnegie Hall Jazz Orchestra director and trumpeter Jon Faddis, all of whom have talked, joked, and connected the dots between all kinds of music of the show.

“Musically Reclined” has an easygoing feel that allows McKnight to go wherever he wants to, from classical and jazz to, yes, the, the li ons of Jackson and the Beatles. As the former composer who forced to compete with single-genre satellite services and a gazillion Internet streams, one hope for their survival may be what turned the heads and captured the hearts of listeners through the ’50s, ’60s, and ’70s: the open-minded, thekeen-to-adventure DJ, not the remote programmer serving up a safe, unchanging sound.
Artists & Music

**In the SPIRIT**

by Lisa Collins

**MEETING OF THE MINDS: BET is pulling out all the stops for its forthcoming televised special "Celebrating Christmas With John P. Kee & Friends," which will be taped at Las Vegas' MGM Grand during Jones' Gospel Artists & Executive Retreat, which takes place Sunday through Tuesday (10-12). Among those headlining the hour-long show's broadcast as part of the network's weekly "BET Special" series (airing Tuesdays) are BeBe & skull; Vesta Williams; Mary Mary; Shirley Caesar; Vickie Winans; the Nashville Super Choir; John P. Kee; actor Shamarr Moore; and Judge Greg Mathis of the TV show "Judge Mathis." Thanks to events like the taping of the BET special and hard-hitting seminars, Jones' semifinal retreats have been growing steadily over the last few years. Other events include nightly concerts, which are taped for Jones' weekly "BET Gospel" show. That week's show will feature performances from BJJ, Deitrick Haddon, Natalie Wilson & the S.O.P. Choir, Kim Burrell, Damita Haddon, and Kelli Williams.

One of the strengths of the retreat is that it is not fan-based," Jones notes. "It is developed and supported by executives who make up gospel's inner circle, and being there and executing events together for information sharing, networking, and bonding. In talks with producer/songwriter Donald Lawrence about sharing hosting and producing responsibilities for the BET show. "A handpicked successor is in place to maintain and continue the work we're doing.""}

**RISING ABOVE THEondo**

by Deborah Evans Price

**JOY, JOY: As the old song says, "It's the most wonderful time of the year!" And few things make the holidays more festive than a tape of Phillips' "Joy, Joy." Phillips is well-known to Southern gospel fans as the incredible teren voice in the Gaither Vocal Band. For his first solo effort on Spring Hill Records, he records a wonderful Christmas album with Chicago's Millar Brass Ensemble. Phillips' sister and her husband, Kari and Matt Leach, are members of the ensemble, and Phillips performed with them in 1996. Fellow Vocal Band member Mark Lowry heard a tape of Phillips performing "O Holy Night" with the ensemble while having dinner at the Phillips home. Recalls Phillips, "The next morning about 8:30 I answered the phone, and Mark said, 'David, I stole that tape from your house last night, and I'm going over to Spring Hill, and you need to start picking out some Christmas songs.'"

When we spoke to Phillips about the recording, he shared Lowry's enthusiasm, and Phillips soon found himself in the studio. How did he determine the direction for the project? "I think a lot of that was dictated by using a brass ensemble," he says. "They are classical players and very versatile. It's a classic feel, and that was my desire. I love pop Christmas albums, but they
do tend to grow old from time to time. I wanted something that 10 years from now, I could look back on say, 'That's a fairly good project.' My driving force was picking classic songs. My fear is always, 'Will I have to take a solo album to try a more popular approach.'"

Phillips succeeds in delivering an album that people will make part of their holiday experience for years to come. On "Joy, Joy," he builds that gorgeous voice around some of the season's timeless gems, including "Do You Hear What I Hear?" "I Heard the Bells On Christmas Day," "Mary, Did You Know?" and a stunning rendition of "O Holy Night."" Phillips was an original penname by Phillips, producer Matt Huesmann, and Wendy Wills. "Christmas songs are so hard to write because it's about a single moment in time, and there are thousands of songs about that single moment in time," says Phillips. "I wanted a different angle, and I had a thought that was growing inside me. All we talk about at Easter time is sacrifice and sorrow. All we ever talk about at Christmas is joy and gift giving and happy thoughts, and that's how it should be. Those are the kinds of pictures we have for the holidays, but I started thinking, 'I bet that all looked different to God.' The sacrifice of God really happened at Christmas time. That's the time we start stepping into the body of flesh, that's the time we believe God stepped into." Phillips says his goal was to convey that heavy message, yet in a way that wouldn't be too sad. "We really didn't want to have a lot of tears in the Christmas cut, but I say, 'but in a positive way I wanted to say this is what Christmas Eve might have been like in heaven.' Phillips is a Texas native who currently resides in Nashville. However, he won't be seeing much of his home during December: He's performing nearly a dozen solo concerts as well as touring with the Gaither Vocal Band on Bill Gaither's Homecoming Christmas tour. The annual event is one of the season's best-selling Christmas tours and features many of the Southern (Continued on page 76)
Y ou've made hundreds of records in a 30-year-plus career, many of them classics; been nominated for 11 Grammys; and earned the highest respect of your entire industry. What frontiers are left to explore? In the case of engineer-producer Elliot Scheiner, the answer is to delve into surround sound—which, to a greater extent than most of his peers in the recording industry, he has done.

Many of Scheiner's 5.1 mixes have appeared on DTS CD releases, which deliver surround sound on compact disc, and DVD Video. With the long-awaited arrival of DVD Audio, current and future remixes will also be heard on the long-awaited DVD Audio format.

Effective Nov. 1, Scheiner—who's impressive résumé includes such notable titles as "Gaucho," "Aja," "Royal Scam," and "Moondance" and "His Band And The Street Choir" (Van Morrison); "Hell Freezes Over" (the Eagles); and "The Dance" (Fleetwood Mac)—is a consultant on DVD Audio to the Warner Music Group (WMG). WMG became the first major to release DVD Audio titles last month; the next group of releases, due Dec. 19, will consist of Scheiner's 5.1 mix of "Two Against Nature," as well as Béla Fleck's "The Bluegrass Sessions: Tales From The Acoustic Planet, Vol. 2." "The Doors" ("L.A. Woman"); and k.d. lang's "Inevitable Summer," Daniel Barenboim's "The Complete Beethoven Symphonies," and The Firesign Theatre's "Boom Dot Bust."

Scheiner describes his role at WMG as a liaison between artist and label. His knowledge of and experience with surround sound is a valuable asset to the music industry: While DVD and surround sound have become familiar to recording professionals over the past several years, many of Scheiner's colleagues have complained about confusion on the part of label executives—not to mention a sometimes less-than-enthusiastic response when they do understand. As a recording professional, Scheiner admits that can be frustrating. His affiliation with a major-label group should help remedy the situation.

"I think my role is to try to make the artist feel comfortable with the format and also to try and make the various (WMG) record labels feel that it's all OK, that they understand that, everything is good."

As so many producers and engineers—in particular those with an extensive history in the recording business—have testified, surround sound breathes new life into their profession. Having experienced music delivered through six discrete channels, after decades of stereo, most are reluctant to live without it.

"We've been making stereo records for so long, it's sometimes not even challenging anymore," says Scheiner, who began his career at A&R Studios in New York in 1967. "And unless the music is really intricate, there's a certain amount of boredom that fails in there. When I heard the whole 5.1 concept for the first time, it blew my mind. It wasn't like quad—it was all very discrete. It was really great.

"The thought of being able to create a new environment for music—a whole fresh, new approach—really energized me," he adds. "What was even more energizing was, when I started doing some of this, I'd bring people to the studio, like friends and neighbors. They'd come in, hear a 5.1 mix, and their mouths would drop."

"When I did the Fleetwood Mac 5.1 ("The Dance") on DVD Video, the band wasn't around for any of it. They didn't want to be there, as they were busy getting ready to go on tour. I begged them to come in on the last night, just to listen. To see the five of them sitting in this small threelike arena in the control room, listening to their record in 5.1—their mouths dropped, too. When we finished, Lindsey Buckingham said, "It would be very difficult to listen to stereo again." Even though it's a live album, there was much more information. It was wonderful because it was a fairly big band, and at the end we had the University of Southern California marching band come out. It was pretty amazing."

Scheiner's 5.1 discography also includes the "Hell Freezes Over" DVD Video and multichannel mixes of "Gaucho" and Sting's "Brand New Day" for DTS CD release.

Surround sound presents a whole new world of creative choices for both recording and mixing. New projects, conceived and recorded with multichannel delivery in mind, can benefit from a dizzying abundance of mixing options. But just as the initial surround sound experience is, as Scheiner illustrates, exhilarating, the notion of hearing 5.1 mixes of classic albums heretofore existing only in stereo—or even mono—may be even more tantalizing. A half-century's worth of popular music, much of it playing, the primary role in the postwar generation's very definition of itself, could be tapped for rerelease on DVD Audio, to be heard as never before.

Here, Scheiner will also be invaluable to WMG. In the case of "Moondance," Morrison's 1970 masterpiece, for example, the notion of a 5.1 mix is irresistible, at least to this fan. The title track and such songs as "Caravan," "And It Stood Me," and "Into The Mystic" are part of an ethereal collection of acoustic guitars, piano, and horns framing Morrison's unique muse. "Moondance" already has a transcendental effect. How might an enveloping surround sound experience affect the listener?

"When I came on to Warner, I asked if I could be involved with picking out catalog to mix in 5.1," Scheiner says. "They implied that I would be involved in that and in coordinating and trying to find people and tapes and all that. One of my considerations was 'Moondance.' I would love to, and I think the label would love to. The question is, Would Van love to? I don't think you can do this without the other label being.

"The other thing is, 'Moondance' was 8-track, Scheiner adds, "It's a little bit up from 4-track, but still, I even am curious as to how it would work. I can't remember the track layouts, except that the drums were mono; the bass had a track. I don't remember how keyboards and guitars were split up—or horns and vocals. Basically, everything was mono. It could be great—I would love to do that record again.

Based on the East Coast, Scheiner can often be found at Prescience Studios in Westport, Conn., which is where he did the "Brand New Day" mixing, as well as the 5.1 mix for John Fogerty's "Premonition" DVD Video. He frequently works on the West Coast as well; there, the historic Capitol Studios in Hollywood is his preferred venue ("Hell Freezes Over" was mixed there).

As for the success of DVD Audio, Scheiner is quick with a prediction. "It'll be a no-brainer once they put it in the cars," he states. "It's the obvious arena in which to listen to it. For a guy driving to and from work listening to 5.1—when he comes home and listens to his stereo, it's not going to be good."
LAURA PAUSINI has parlayed her soft-spoken manner and understated elegance (she always dresses in Armani clothes, which the designer custom-makes after being inspired by hearing her current music) into a career as one of the most successful Italian female singers of her time.

And like her contemporary Eros Ramazzotti, Pausini has, almost from the onset, recorded her albums in Spanish with steady, continued sales.

But her latest album appears to be the charm in much the same ways as one. "Entro Tu Y Mil Mares" (Between You And A Thousand Oceans) has sold more than 1 million copies since its Sept. 11 release, 300,000 of those in the Latin region, according to Pausini's label, Warner Music.

The disc has also provided Pausini, 26, with an outlet to explore new worlds. She recently signed an exclusive deal with Creative Artists Agency to handle her appearances in the U.S.; she is planning her U.S. and Latin American tour, set to take place this spring; and she's already recorded a handful of songs for her upcoming English album—her first in that language, due out at the end of 2001.

"Even a year ago, I was telling people I wasn't ready to record entirely in English," admits Pausini, who has already clinched the waters in that language in 1998, when she recorded a song written for her by Phil Collins, and in 1999, when she sang on the soundtrack to "Message In A Bottle." Even "Entro Tu" includes an Italian track—"The Exile"—that was in "Pokémon The Movie: 2000.

Although Pausini doesn't sound quite as at ease in that language as in Spanish, stylistically she maintains an Italian pop sound. "I don't want to change the style. We're looking for my music but sung in English," she says, even though—daringly—only a couple of the tracks on the disc are to be old Pausini material.

The singer has enlisted KC Porter—who produced one track on "Entro Tu"—as her executive producer. She will also produce some of the tracks herself, as she's done for her past two albums.

"These past couple of years, especially with the strength of Latin music, we thought an Italian doing very Italian music, it would be hard to get a foothold in the market again," she says, marveling at the success of "Entro Tu," one of the most memorable singers like Ramazzotti and Nec. "But it seems it hasn't been that way. It's been like magic.

RÁUL LIVE: Spanish singer Raúl traveled to the U.S. and Mexico early this month to promote his debut album, "Sueño Tu Bocar" (Dreaming Of Your Mouth) (Continued on next page)
**NOTAS**

(Continued from preceding page)

**SHORTS:** Spanish superstar Alejandro Sanz will kick off his 2001 U.S. tour—produced by Cardenas, Fernandez and Associates—with a concert May 2 in Miami. Sanz will play 10 cities, including Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, Houston, and El Paso, Texas...Jennifer Lopez’s album scheduled for Jan. 23 release, “El Amor,” will include a duet with heartfelt Shaggy titled “I’m Still Waiting.” Lopez selected the song...In February, a Spanish version will be included in the next one of Yasmine’s current album, “Simpatico.” In other Centro news, the singer—who co-starred with Vanessa Williams in the film “Dance With Me,” will guest-star on two “Ally McBeal” episodes set to air Jan. 25 and Feb. 8. The Cuban tribute album “Tributo A Los Prisioneros” (Tribute To The Prisoners) on Warner Chile, which honors the country’s music in a popular and popular rock band, will be released between December and April in seven South and North American markets: the U.S., Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru. Negotiations are still under way to add new versions of “Los Prisioneros” tunes to the album in some of the foreign editions of the album. Meanwhile, the album is doing well in the Chilean market, where it has reached gold status by selling over 15,000 units.

**ARGENTINA NOTAS:** A new and revised edition of the book “Historia Del Rock En Argentina” will be published Dec. 1 by Editorial Distrito. Written by Billboard contributor Marcelo Fernandez Bloise, it includes four decades of the genre, from 1964 to today, and includes rare photos and album covers. Also this month, Distrito will distribute “Charly,” a 240-page book of photos of Argentine rock star Charly Garcia taken by top photo studio RocaC3a9 Herna39n throughout his career.

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WNOP Sign-Off Is Cincinnati’s Loss

CINCINNATI BLUES: As the dearth of straight-ahead jazz radio stations becomes increasingly apparent, it is sad to note the passing of yet another of the music’s bastions. WNOP (RealJazz 740 AM), an anchor of Cincinnati’s jazz community since 1959, will disappear from the airwaves at the stroke of midnight Dec. 31, the victim of a sale by the station’s parent company.

“The station probably lost money over the years, but the owner [Heidi-Deiburg Distributing, a beverage distributor] was never concerned with making money in radio,” says WNOP GM Mark Stevens. “What is ironic is that in the past year, we started making money. We had Arbitron ratings for the first time in two years, and advertising sales were up.”

Although the station’s employees (five full-timers and an equal number of part-timers) made a bid to buy the station with the help of a financial backer, whom Stevens refers to as a “guardian angel,” the bid was rejected. The station’s new format will be religious programming, one of a dozen similarly programmed stations in the market. Although a petition to the Federal Communications Commission has been prepared and was signed by more than 2,000 listeners, Stevens expects the sale and format change to go through.

The station will go dark in the first few days of 1997, cutting down their frequency to 670 AM, the frequency WNOP was on prior to 1973. “This station was a part of a major trend in the businessafi for Universal Music Group; and Ron Goldstein, president of the Verve Music Group.

Elliot Has Verve. The Verve Music Group recently announced the addition of saxophonist Richard Elliot to the label group’s roster. Elliot will soon head into the studio to record his debut for Verve Records. Pictured at Verve’s New York headquarters, from left, are Elliot’s manager, Steve Chapman of Chapman & Co., Bud Harner, VP of A&R for the Verve Music Group; Elliot; Marc Lipiner, director of business affairs for Universal Music Group; and Ron Goldstein, president of the Verve Music Group.

Elliot Has Verve. The Verve Music Group recently announced the addition of saxophonist Richard Elliot to the label group’s roster. Elliot will soon head into the studio to record his debut for Verve Records. Pictured at Verve’s New York headquarters, from left, are Elliot’s manager, Steve Chapman of Chapman & Co., Bud Harner, VP of A&R for the Verve Music Group; Elliot; Marc Lipiner, director of business affairs for Universal Music Group; and Ron Goldstein, president of the Verve Music Group.
Nov. Is Europe's Platinum Month

After A Slow 10 Months, 22 Titles Sell 1 Million Or More

BY PAUL SEXTON
LONDON—November was the month in which platinum was discovered all over Europe.

The first 10 months of 2000 had been sparing in their yield of million-selling albums across the continent, with a typical quota of half a dozen or so titles in each period receiving International Federation of Phonographic Industry (IFPI) Platinum Europe Award certification for sales of 1 million copies or more. The date truly burst in November, when the total hitting the platinum standard was 22, the highest number the entire year.

Fifteen titles graduated to their 1 millionth European sale, one hit double-platinum, four moved to 3 million, and two reached the lofty height of 5 million apiece. While the list included many of what might be termed the usual Anglo-American suspects, there were some other strong European flavors in the pot, via certifications from France, Italy, and Ireland.

Indeed, November's star among platinum winners came from Italy. BMG's Eros Ramazzotti pulled off a remarkable double whammy that included the first-ever millionth certified sale for an Italian artist. For his latest, L'intervista, and an almost instant first million for his new Aria studio set, "Stilelibero" (Freestyle), released as recently as Oct. 23, BMG estimates the Italian idol's global career sales at 30 million units.

The international appeal of Ramazzotti's new album was immediately enhanced by the simultaneous release of a Spanish-language version, "Estilo Libre," which gave him his best-ever debut Nov. 25 on The Billboard Latin 50 chart, at No. 15. It climbed to No. 11 the following week.

"Eros is one of the most important artists in the BMG family," says Nick Stewart, London-based VP of international A&R for the BMG Group. "He's been extremely successful in Europe and South America for over a decade, and consequently he has a very good understanding of his own music and connects with his audience."

Producers of "Stilelibero" include two international hit mak-
Singer/Songwriter Oh Susanna Aims To Break Out With 3rd Set

BY LARRY LeBLANC
TORONTO—Despite being blessed with an exceptionally powerful and emotive voice and widely recognized as one of the most original songwriters
within traditional folk/country, Toronto-based artist Oh Susanna feels that her landmark third album is the one that might
really let her take flight. "After all the hard work, it feels like I'm finally getting to do what I set out to do," Susanna says. "I'm so excited about this one."

Oh Susanna's third album, "Wish Upon a Kingdom," is due out April 20 on Folkways Records, a division of the Canadian record label Blue Rodeo. The album features 10 songs, including the title track, which was co-written with Blue Rodeo bassist Bazil Donovan. "Wish Upon a Kingdom" is a 10-year labor of love for Susanna, who has been working on the project since she was a teenager. "I've been planning and writing songs for this album for over a decade," she says. "It's been a long time coming, but it was worth it."

Oh Susanna's previous two albums, "Bluebird" and "Waiting for the Rain," were both critically acclaimed and received widespread praise for their unique blend of folk, country, and bluegrass influences. "Wish Upon a Kingdom" builds on those strengths while adding new elements to Susanna's signature sound. "I wanted to create something that was both familiar and new," she says. "I wanted to push myself as a songwriter and musician, and I think I've done that with this album."

Oh Susanna's third album was recorded at the Blue Rodeo's studio in Toronto, with production by Blue Rodeo's Jim Cuddy and Ron Sparks. "Working with Jim and Ron was a dream come true," she says. "They've been so supportive of my vision for this album, and I'm grateful for their help."

The album's title track, "Wish Upon a Kingdom," is a powerful and emotional song that explores themes of love, loss, and longing. "Wish Upon a Kingdom" is a love letter to Susanna's husband, Ryan Morris, who passed away in 2010. "This song is about my love for him, and my wish that he could be with us again," she says. "It's a bittersweet reminder of the time we had together."
Season's Greetings and Happy Holidays.....

To: Charities Working for Cancer Research and Multiple Sclerosis

This year instead of sending greeting cards Warner Music International will be making donations in the UK and USA to charities.

.....to all our artists, management companies, suppliers, contractors, colleagues and friends around the world from

Warner Music International
Warner Classics International
Warner Music Asia Pacific
Warner Music Europe
Warner Music Latin America
Warner New Media
NVC Arts
Warner Strategic Marketing
Warner Vision International

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Retailers Tackle Spanish E-Commerce

France’s FNAC, Spain’s El Corte Inglés Start Web Ventures

BY HOWELL LLEWELLYN

MADRID—As Spain strives to make up ground with Europe’s E-commerce leaders, two new pion-
ner specialty-related online retail outlets began operating here on the same day.

On Nov. 30, two stores of the French-owned music, video, and book chain FNAC launched its
“clicks-and-mortar” service, while the country’s biggest department store chain, El Corte Inglés,
launched Spain’s first TV online retail venture with the biggest dig-
ital satellite-TV platform, Canal Satellite Digital (CSD).

FNAC president Jean Paul Giraud and FNAC España GM
Michel Barroso presented the launch of its in-store online opera-
tive, at the opening of the company’s sixth Spanish store in
Alicante. The Alicante and Valen-
tia stores will pioneer the “clicks-
and-mortar” service, and Barroso
said the chain’s other stores will be incorporated into it early next year.

CSD has slightly more than 1 mil-
lion subscribers, and El Corte Inglés—the country’s biggest
retailer—is responsible for 28% and 25% of all sound
carrier sales. It is Spain’s first
online commercial center via tele-
vision and the first phase of what is
called the Canal Club chain of online
shops.

The music sec-

tion is divided among new releas-
es, best sellers,

international

pop/rock, national

pop/rock, classical,

jazz, soundtracks,

and compilations. Other services

include books, videos, and video
games. Neither CSD management
arm managing director Sogecable
Javier Diez Polanco nor El Corte Inglés
director Juan Hermoso would offer a future sales estimate.

While in Spain, Giraud revealed
that FNAC plans to open 15 new
stores in the country by 2003, as
well as 15 others in Italy, Portugal,
Algeria, and the United Kingdom.

If confirmed, we may open in the Argen-
tine market if that country’s econo-

gym improves,” he says.

Two stores are due to open in

Spain next year, one in a commer-
cial center between the northern
cities of Gijón and Oviedo in the
Asturias region and a third store in
Barcelona. “The number of which in
Spain depends on decent sites
becoming available,” says Giraud.

“We are looking for a site to

move in,” Giraud adds.

Spain is FNAC’s second biggest
market after France, and it expects
to register sales in 2000 of 152.4 mil-

lion euros ($133.6 million). “We

intend to see that the existing

stores [in Spain] develop in order to

integrate new technologies, to con-

tral the process of sales to accelera-

te the speed of transactions, and to

grow as quickly as possible,”

Giraud adds.

The company says FNAC’s 79

stores—56 in France, six in Spain,
six in Belgium, five in Portugal, two

in Brazil, and one in Egypt—

are expected to have sales of 2.9 bil-

lion euros ($2.5 billion) in 2000.
The group target is 4.5 billion euros (3.5 billion)

by 2003.

Access To Amsterdam Music Event To Debut

BY ROBERT TILLI

AMSTERDAM—In a market already saturated with trad,

tours, and other international music con-

vention, dubbed A2A (Access to

Amsterdam), is to be added

in the Netherlands.

A2A is a music-driven con-

ference, which should set it apart from other industry trade fairs,
such as MIDEM and PopKomm.

The inaugural event will take place Oct. 17-20 next year.

A2A has been set up by the National Pop and Rock Institute (

NPO) in the Netherlands, and aims to be

the “cultural capital of the world”

in 2002.

As regular visitors of interna-
tional conferences such as MIDEM

and PopKomm in Cologne (Germany), we felt that in

Europe something was still miss-
ing,” explains Arjen Davidsse, pro-
duct manager at NPO. “The idea

mentioned was a mainly aimed

at the professionals within the music industry. A2A is meant to

be a meeting place for musicians, tal-

talent scouts, buyers, and agen-
t
tes of live music. This is the time for a

new music-driven convention in

Europe, as the borders between the
countries are falling away right now.

—ARJEN DAVIDSE—

So far, A2A has failed to close a

deal to collaborate with the Con-

corso-staged Amsterdam Dance

Event, which, almost simultane-
ously with the A2A event, caters to

the niche market of the worldwide
dance community.

A total of 350 things in 25 different locations will be scheduled in the

evening slot at the four-day event.

Davidsse says, “Our musical

programming is potential for

every thinkable genre, ranging

from pop to dance to jazz and world

music.”

An estimated 1,500 musicians

will attend A2A. Similar numbers of people are expected to attend

A2A’s daytime seminars.

“It’s obvious that Amsterdam is a
top location for any conference in

the world. It should be much easier
to lure the Americans to this

event,” says A2A consultant Jay

Louis Meyers.

Says Geert van Italie, newly

appointed managing director at

A2A, “It’s good to see that the tar-
get group are the people at the

bottom of the market. Besides, I fore-
saw great export potential for

Dutch artists who will perform at

A2A.”

However, Meyers does see some

pitfalls to be dealt with. “There’s no

reason why, for instance, the Dan-

ish affiliate from the same record

company would release a Dutch

artist who has never played abroad,” he observes. “Buyers and

sellers of live music in Europe are not

exposed to music from other

European territories. There’s still a

management of high border-

do.

The same thing applies to the

musicians themselves.”

Swedish Label Exec Siljemark

Adding Bulgarian Radio Role

BY JOHAN LINDBRO

COPENHAGEN—Jonas Siljemark, president/CEO of Swedish

indie label Bonnier Music, is moving into the radio sec-

tion of his company.

In a private project that will not affect his position at

Bonnier, Siljemark is launching a new commercial

radio network, to be called

Radio City, in partnership with

EMI Music Bulgaria and Vir-

gin Records Bulgaria managing

director Kareem Spassov.

Radio City recently secured regional frequencies in the

Bulgarian capital Sofia as well as in

Varna, Blagoevgrad, and Plovdiv.

Almost 300 companies participat-

ed in the contest for the

licenses, with the only other

successful foreign applicant being the RTL

Group’s Radio Contact from

Belgium.

Radio City will utilize a music-intensive top 40 for-

mat, targeting a 13- to 40-

year-old age group, and aims to

expand into a fully fledged

network. The company will

also buy media in metropolitan areas plus

Blagoevgrad, where the Amer-

ican university is situated,” says

(Continued on page 75)

Confab Looks At Asia’s Role

Region Could Be Leader In Digital Music Race

BILLY CHUNG

HONG KONG—Asia could become a leader in the digital music race, delegates at the Digi-

tal Distribution of Music Industry (DDMI) Asia 2000 conference heard during its second and last
day, Nov. 29.

During a discussion session titled “Waiting For America,” pan-

eilist Parry Tan, COO of music

web site Asiaivibe.com, told dele-
teges, “I don’t think we can learn very much from the American

[business] models. There have

been a few trends in the U.S., and a

lot of companies do follow those
trends. Ultimately, however, it is

up to [Asian] companies to see how they can fit in and to develop a

niche.”

The region still has some kinks to iron out, Tan commented, on

the three major national or creative

content. A lot of Asian songs are

aimed at the karaoke market,

which limits their scope, he noted.

“We have to have a homi-

ty industry,” Tan said.

“One way we can work toward that is for online compa-

nies to start creating their own content with the help of the in-

dustry.”

Although Asia’s diverse cultures have often been seen as holding

back the region’s development, a

common thought emerging from

various speakers on the panel was

that those differences could form

the very factor that would push

the region to the front of the pack.

“There has always been an ele-

ment of arrogance on the part of the Americans that assumes that

they are the leaders and that the

World Wide Web stops at their

borders,” said Frank Hall, CEO of

Web maintenance-services compa-

ny Webworks and online club

management firm Omniclubs.com.

“These of us not in Asia don’t

understand the way things are

here, and we have to learn. We

have to transpose our culture

onto Asia and be cyber-colonials.

We should let it develop.”

He added, “We’re all waiting for

China and India to develop, and

when that happens, it’s going to

change the face of the world.”

Other speakers at DDMI Asia
cited the region’s technological

acumen as a strong base for the

region to build on. “Nobody has

to wait for America,” said Jorge

Cebrian Lopez, chief marketing

card officer of German music downloads

site Netecon+ (netecon+2.com).

“If you look carefully, you will see that

America itself is waiting to see

what happens.”

“There is a great willingness on

the part of Asians to try new things,” he added. “Now is the time

to convert the mode of how to
deliver the music. It’s a great

time for American and European compa-

nies to be in this market.”

Peer Group. Peermusic France has signed a worldwide co-publishing deal with

Zouk Sarl, the publishing company of French zouk band Kassav, for the act’s

recent Sony France album, “Nou La.” Peermusic also has an option on the

band’s next album. Kassav, from the French Antilles, has brought zouk, a popular

genre from that region, to the world’s attention. Peered celebrating the deal in

Paris, from left, are band members Jean-Philippe Marthely and Jean-Claude

Naimro, peermusic France director of legal and administrative affairs Joëlle

Gallante, band members Philippe Joseph and Jocelyne Beraud, artist manager

Francois Pinard, band member Jacob Desvarieux, and peermusic France execu-
tive director Bruno Lion.

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BILLBOARD DECEMBER 16, 2000

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BERLIN—For the German music industry, Berlin's moment has come—again.

With its 3.4 million inhabitants, the German capital has become a cultural melting pot over the last few years. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the removal of the Iron Curtain have attracted a wide range of cultures to Berlin—especially from the East—almost overnight.

Today, Berlin boasts one of the most important, progressive and youthful music scenes in Europe. A new day has dawned. Ten years after reunification, the city's creativity is reminiscent of its heyday in the '30s, when Berlin was a key source for music throughout the entire world.

This is, after all, the city of Herbert von Karajan, Kurt Weill and Bertold Brecht, the city of the "Three Penny Opera," where David Bowie lived to find new creativity, where Pink Floyd performed "The Wall" and where U2 recorded "Achtung Baby." It is the city of Cabaret, the Charlatans and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra.

Now, and in the next few years, record companies, music publishers, authors, producers and artists are set to benefit from this. True to the motto that "Berlin is good for you," countless music companies have set up branches or even relocated their entire operations in Berlin.

JOIN THE LOVE PARADE

Wolfgang Bräuner, Berlin's senator for economic affairs, says he is convinced that the music business will become an increasingly important economic factor for Berlin. "With roughly 1.3 million visitors, the Love Parade is the world's largest open-air party," he notes, giving the example of the annual dance-music event. "The advantages for Berlin's economy are undisputed. However, alongside the Love Parade as an individual event, the techno and music industry is also increasingly gaining in importance."

Sony Music Germany is the first multinational affiliate to set up its headquarters in Berlin, on Potsdamer Platz. BMG, Berlin and V2 Germany are also based here. "It is therefore only logical for [other] national and international music publishers to turn to Berlin as a music center," says Bräuner.

Wolfgang Gramatke, chairman and CEO of Universal Music GSA and chairman of the German IFPI, has bold expectations for Berlin. "In 10 years' time, at the latest," he says, "Berlin will have the same importance as a European cultural capital as it did in the '30s, when it was a key source of influence for music, theater and literature."

However, he adds that this will require significant efforts to give Berlin the same appeal for authors, artists, producers, record companies and publishers as other music cities such as Hamburg, Cologne, Munich, Frankfurt, Stuttgart and Dresden. The German cultural scene is decentralized, resulting in a great deal of creativity and competition.

The two most successful Berlin acts are signed to Universal: Rammstein (Mann) and Rosenstolz (Polystar). Universal's Gramatke has appealed to the Berlin senate to finally start encouraging cultural companies to settle in Berlin. At present, other cities such as Hamburg, offer more favorable terms and funding.

Continued on page 54

On The Creative Edge

Berlin Has Regained Its Status As A Center For Artistic Talent In Europe

BY JAYFUNKESG

BERLIN—This city's long tradition of support for artists outside the mainstream has always attracted the most extravagant and interesting personalities. That's true of native artists, such as prolific rock-opera queen Nina Hagen or Udo Lindenberg, the father of German-language rock music, both of whom had their career peaks with the rise of German-language pop and rock in the "New German Wave" (New German Wave) of the '80s. It's also true of international figures like Nick Cave and David Bowie, who created some of their most influential pieces in Berlin.

Since the reunification of Germany, Berlin has regained its prominence as a creative and commercial center. No, the independent record labels and label-affiliates here will likely increase Berlin's role in the mainstream music industry, as well as its underground influence.

MOVING TO THE CITY

"This will bring movement into a scene which, during the '90s—apart from BMG Berlin and V2—was not over-represented with international labels," says Willy Elhammer, managing director of V2 Germany.

Elhammer's predecessor at V2 is Tina Funk, who has been acting MD at V2's of the Mute office in Berlin since July. Funk recalls what prompted her and her colleague to move to the capital. "Patrick Orth and myself had been appointed the managing directors for V2 Germany in 1997, with the goal of building a local department for the German market. When we had decided upon a location in Berlin, our English bosses were not very happy about the decision at first V2 was, at that time, one of the only labels to have moved."

Elhammer took over for Funk in Berlin after setting up the V2 office in Milan. "Milan and Paris are very concentrated in terms of cultural and political activities," he notes. "For the last year, this has also been happening to a certain extent in Berlin, but, nevertheless, I cannot imagine companies like RTL Television [with its base in Cologne] or MTV Central [in Munich] moving here."

But V2, among others, is making the best of its Berlin base, says Elhammer. "We have just recently signed a Berlin-based band, Das Department, and kicked off a project in cooperation with Berlin's..."
“The emergence of the global village and the importance of the Web, particularly for our industry, means that the question of whether we should be based in the capital city is of secondary importance,” says Stein. “As far as global pop is concerned, it really doesn’t matter whether we are based in London, New York, Moscow, Munich, Hamburg or Berlin.”

Even so, BMG is the German company’s most successful label, producing hits by world stars such as Lou Bega, Modern Talking, Eiffel 65 and ATC.

Jochen Leuschner, president of SonyMusicGSA, which relocated to Berlin four months ago, observes, “Berlin’s current situation is unique in the entire world. The cultural legacy prior to 1990, its geographic location in Europe, as well as the new spirit since the fall of the wall, have created a uniquely vibrant atmosphere underscoring the city’s special status of being more than just a capital.”

Despite the Internet, there is no substitute for personal contact among highly creative people, which is why Berlin’s role in the German music industry is growing, says Leuschner. “Looking forward, whether or not Berlin can become a serious rival to New York or London primarily depends on future cultural and economic trends in Eastern Europe,” he says.

Heinz Canibol, president of EMI/GSA, thinks it was easier for Berlin to become the political capital than it will be for it to provide a creative boost to the music market. From EMI’s point of view, there are still plenty of reasons to remain in the Cologne region, where it has signed artists from throughout Germany as well as from other countries.

“I would rather have a successful company with the right team in a regional capital such as Cologne than embark on an adventure to Berlin for no good reason,” he says. Canibol admits that this situation may change in five years’ time. However, EMI has moved its regional headquarters from Europe to London primarily because communications and logistic considerations make Berlin an ideal location for a hub for this region. In addition, EMI-Electrola has promotion and A&R activities in Berlin.
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PEARL JAM
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**GERMANY**

**On The Web**

A Brief Look At Some Noteworthy Music Sites In Germany, As Selected By Billboard Correspondent Ellie Weinert

VIVA will broadcast via ASTRA satellite to reach 32 million households. The VIVA Web site is lifestyle-oriented and includes a "Live On TV" area that can be viewed around-the-clock worldwide.

In addition, VIVA offers the "Webshow," which includes program content only available online, such as an interview with Britney Spears in its entirety (whereas only excerpts were aired on the channel) and Community & Service, which provides chatrooms and places for users to set up their own VIVA homepage. Fans can listen to Mariah Carey's new single or view the video clip, then click to order the album, video or even a Madonna T-shirt.

More than 2 million items are available at the VIVA shop. One drawback of the fan site is that it is still not formatted for handheld browsers and Flash plug-ins to use its content. On the other hand, VIVA's business site, <www.vivamediaag.de>, is more easily accessible and includes such informative features as the company profile, company structure and history. Other features include information such as investor services, business and management of the TV station launched in 1995 and headed by CEO Dieter Gorny.

**Popkomm**

<www.popkomm.de>

The Popkomm Music Fair in Cologne presents a colorful and complex site that caters to both industry and fans. Here, professionals can find the facts and figures on Popkomm 2000, as well as the plan for Popkomm 2001. Scrolling down to the "Inside" section reveals information on marketing, advertising and Popkomm partners. Profiles are available on companies that attended Popkomm and, upon entering your specific password, one has access to the entire database of Popkomm participants. Music fans can obtain the latest news and information on record releases in all genres, artist facts, business news, Web events, MP3 downloads and press info.

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and Berlin. Talent scouts from the U.S. and the U.K. are permanently in touch with the creative community in the city, ensuring direct links with the scenes in New York and London. Says Masuch, “Unfortunately, the sleepy Berlin publicans have avoided everything needed to aid this trend.” Along with others, he urges the Berlin senate to boost music-related economic development.

For concert and event promoter Peter Schwenkow, chairman and CEO of Deutsche Entertainment AG (DEAG), the spirit of Berlin can easily be compared to London or New York. “We have to respect that most of the products by young German artists are made for the German-speaking countries,” he says. “Therefore, it is difficult to compare any artistic results to those in London or New York. But increasing tourism, successful musicals like Disney’s ‘The Hunchback Of Notre Dame’ and the world-renowned Love Parade are definitely having huge artistic results.”

Joerg Hacker, managing director of Sony’s Epic label, says that the fall of the Berlin Wall can be credited for the rise of a group such as Rammstein, as creative barriers in Berlin fell as well. The groups Bell, Book & Candle and Band Ohne Namen are just two examples of successful bands coming from former Eastern Germany, with more to follow.

One of the most successful Berlin-based publishers, which has also made the Berlin music market famous with countless initiatives abroad, is Dr. Rolf Budde. At MIDEM in January, he will be present for a showcase of Berlin talent. “The multifaceted nightlife and people from all around the world offer what is needed to kindle creativity,” he says.

STARS READY TO SHINE

Martin Brem, managing director of Sony’s Columbia Records in Berlin, came to the city after working in London for four years. “I can confirm that Berlin is definitely gearing up to create a serious buzz on the global music scene,” he says. “Being as popular as the capital of ‘Vergangung Durch Techno’ [progress through techno], it only needs to widen its appeal for more genres. We can state some positive developments already for hip-hop and pop. New production teams are coming to town, a constant stream of new artists is appearing and a healthy radio-situation is at hand, with formats that dare to play rough stuff. There is great press, and the notoriously vibrant and diverse club scene is serving as a perfect ‘biosphere’ for big things to come.

“...within four years, we will see a few new major stars come out of Berlin,” continues Brem. “No other city is offering more exciting new talent at the moment. Here, we have almost London standards—everything from graphic design, video and art is on an amazing level.”

One of the most successful music producers in Germany, George Glaueck, whose company X-Cell Records is based in Berlin, is very upbeat about the city’s future. “Every artist and every hit capable of achieving global success from Berlin will boost the city’s standing as a source of repertoire with worldwide potential,” he says.

For Michael Karnstede, president of Peer Southern Europe, Berlin will need at least 10 years to gain the same status as that currently enjoyed by major music centers such as Paris, London, New York and Hamburg. In Berlin, the various influences arising since reunification must first grow together to ensure that infrastructure and professionalism meets international standards, says Karnstede.

Udo Lange, managing director of Virgin, just opened a satellite operation in Berlin under the name Labels, where he wants to support small labels like Slang, Source, Wall Of Sound, Pussycat and Grand Royal. According to Lange, the German capital is a significant source of new talent.

The German rights society GEMA, with more than 700 employees, has been based in Berlin for years. “ Needless to say, the composers, authors and publishers living here are inspired by a music tradition whose vitality is derived from the merging of different cultural influences,” says Prof. Dr. Reinhold Kreide, the chairman of GEMA. “Berlin’s creativity is a healthy blend of traditional and innovative music cultures which come together as a source of mutual inspiration.”

The German CEO of the German music-video channel VIVA, based in Berlin, observes that the city is the political center of the German republic “and will therefore increasingly become the cultural and creative center of a newly reunified Germany. This will make the city increasingly important for the national and international entertainment industry.”

United in their support of Berlin and gathered in front of the Brandenburg Gate, the German symbol of reunification, are, from left: Jens-Uwe Behnisch, GM, Logic Records; Markus Herz, head of A&R, De Jam Germany; Hartwig Masuch, MD, BMG UFA Music; Patrick Wagner, co-founder of the indie Berlin label Kitty Yo; Andre Seltennit, MD, BMG Berlin; Joerg Hacker, MD Epic; Sony; Dr. Rolf Budde, president Budde Musikverlage; Gerd Kaempf, MD, First Music Production; Martin Brem, MD Columbia/Sony; and Marcus Herrmann, MD, MHH Songs.

“...within four years, we will see a few new major stars come out of Berlin,” continues Brem. “No other city is offering more exciting new talent at the moment. Here, we have almost London standards—everything from graphic design, video and art is on an amazing level.”

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Continued from page 53

Aside "The main reason for choosing Berlin is the close and personal links of [Mute founder] Daniel Miller to this city," she says. "The music and the artists of Mute fit very well into the scene here, but talent can be found in any place." Aside from the presence of Sony and BMG in Berlin (see accompanying story), there are a number of independent labels concentrating with zeal on local talent. "It tumbles from the different clubs of the scene, experimenting with music in anarchical ways without any regard to genre or style," says Christof Ellinghaus, MD of Gay Slang. City Slang itself has been marketing and promoting music outside the mainstream for a decade, working with smaller artist-owned labels. Among them is the Bungalow label, which was initially set up five years ago to cut records from its owners, the DJ-duo Le Hammond Inferno. Today, Bungalow has grown into a trend-setting player within the electronic scene in Berlin and is part of Virgin's new Labels Germany unit. Ellinghaus, who is also MD of Labels Germany, makes the case for the new Virgin unit remaining in Berlin. "Bungalow is one of the smaller labels, that are very essential for us as an A&R cell and [in turn] discovers, develops and produces the creative output of a certain scene," he says. "After that work has been accomplished, Labels Germany will use its international contacts and network to distribute and market the finished products."

UNSIGNED TALENT ABOUND
There are a number of independent companies based in Berlin that are associated with BMG Berlin Music. Lautstark was formed in 1997 by Hansa founder Peter Meisel and his friend Rene Rennefeld. The company developed into a hit-machine with the million-selling Lou Bega, who had worldwide success with his debut album "A Little Bit Of Mambo" and single "Macarena No. 5." Lautstark produces unsigned artists and promotes them through a hit-machine. "We are stationed in this city because of the long tradition of European music and we have long been close to BMG Berlin," says Rennefeld. "We have been marketing and promoting music in Berlin and because we are close to the many production teams, IT companies and the many coming talents in our sector."

The newly-founded BMG Berlin company is Turbo Beat Music, with divisions ranging from a production company to a publishing arm. The production team of Ingo Politzand and Bernd Walter has achieved success with the pop-focused Bell, Book & Candle, who landed a deal with the Blackbird label in the U.S.

Kitty Yo is another independent label that continues to wave the flag for Berlin talent. Label founders Patrick Wagner and Raik Holz were developed Kitty Yo from an artist-owned label to a respected source of music from varied genres—such as acts as DDR 3, the Canadian Peach and Chilly Gonzales.

‘Talking as a musician, I can say that Berlin has a great live scene where, as an unsigned band, you have hundreds of opportunities to perform," says Wagner, who also is frontman of the power-rock act Surrogat. "There is a brilliant network between the scene and the smaller labels that catch the many unsigned talents around.

But Wagner, among others, lamented that there is little support from radio for Berlin's underground music scene. Some 27 different radio stations broadcast to the Berlin-Brandenburg metropolitan area, one of the most competitive radio markets in Europe.

Commercial heavyweights like R.S.2, 104.6 RTL and Energy 103.4 lead the overcrowded market with their mainstream programs. Aside from a few privately owned stations dedicated to specific genres, radio largely fails to cover the lively underground scene in Berlin.

UNDERGROUND NEEDS RADIO
A public radio station, which began broadcasting in 1997 from Postdam, an idyllic town southwest of Berlin, aims to offer listeners "an intelligent, informative, but at the same time entertaining" mix of music and speech. Radio Eins was born out of a cooperation between the two regional public-broadcasting houses, the SFB (Sender Freies Berlin) and ORF (Österreichischer Rundfunk Brandenburg), after earlier attempts at adventurous programming by those two entities failed.

Peter Radszuil, MD of Radio Eins, says it's important to strike a close connection with labels like Kitty Yo to help promote regional talent. At the same time, the "mainstream with the current chart-breakers," keeps on the cutting-edge with guest hosts such as Mute's Daniel Miller and specialty shows like "Studio Peel," produced by legendary BBC Radio 1 DJ John Peel.

Aside from the top-40 and AC-formatted public and local stations, there are a couple of noteworthy niche-formatted stations like the black-music specialist Jam FM. Frank Nordmann, MD of Jam FM, launched the private station in 1993, at a time when most American hip-hop and R&B wasn't available at German retail.

"When we started, it was, among other reasons, out of the frustration that there did not exist a strong enough black-music market locally," Nordmann says. "We shaped and fertilized a scene which has slowly built itself up and has even managed to gain a certain independence from its American origins."

The scene is why Def Jam opened a Berlin office recently. According to Nordmann, that gives the American company "the means to spot talent that is not just sitting in Berlin itself but [as] in the capital's environs" in signing up young bands like Diesel, Dresden, Madrid and Rostock. Rostock is home to the 20-year-old hip-hop princess Pyranja, "the next star in the German hip-hop sky," says Marcus Herz, A&R at the Def Jam Germany.

Herz explains why German hip-hop and related music fields have bloomed geographically. "In places like Stuttgart or Frankfurt, where the [American] Gl-forces cult-ures work," he says, "it has turned out that hip-hop has formed a very strong nucleus of German hip-hop and R&B in those places," he says. But the music scenes in Berlin have been more diffused, suggests Herz. The new concentration of music companies in the city will "surely help those scenes channel their creativity and output," he says.

Whether or not the mainstream attention on Berlin will help the city's underground music scene is an open question. But no one denies that Berlin is well on its way to a renewed status as a cultural capital in Europe.
Online Music is now a mainstream phenomenon. In 2005, the global online music market will grow to US $5.4 billion, and in Europe alone it will represent €1.6 billion or 12% of overall records sales. Yet, even as new distribution technologies are threatening to erode the industry’s core revenue models, new product categories, payment options and programming models are creating a wealth of opportunities. Plug.In Europe will focus on the prospects and pitfalls that are emerging as the music industry moves online.

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Jazz Thriving In Kral's Hometown

CD Retailer Serves Enthusiasts In Nanaimo, British Columbia

BY PATRICIA BATES

NANAIMO, British Columbia—When it comes to finding used, rare, and collectible rock/pop/R&B in this Canadian harbor city, indie retailer Fascinating Rhythm is unrivaled. But the 1,400-square-foot, 40,000-item store—located 10 minutes from the Nanaimo waterfront in the Country Club Mall—is best known for its connection to the community's thriving local music scene, specifically the jazz scene.

To be sure, jazz has enjoyed a rich tradition here. For years, restaurants and clubs featuring jazz have attracted yachtsmen from Seattle and the Vancouver Islands, who anchor in the city on weekends. What’s more, Fascinating Rhythm’s owner, Steve Lebtschning, is a jazz enthusiast and co-founder/director of the Hub City Jazz & Blues Society. The store is also a favorite of jazz music students at the local Malaspina University.

But the best endorsement for the store of late comes from its connections to Nanaimo’s most well-known artist, pianist Diana Krall. Krall—who has Grammy and Juno Award-winning albums “When I Look In Your Eyes” (Universal/Verte) and “Krahl hysteria” last year. She sold out two nights at the local 700-seat Port Theatre in just four hours. Fascinating Rhythm had “When I Look In Your Eyes” on sale at the time.

Kral is hardly the only big seller, though. In 2000, Keith Jarrett’s “The Melody At Night With You” (ECM), Dave Douglas “Soul On Soul” (BMG), and Kenny Barron’s “Spirit Song” (Verte) ranked as Fascinating Rhythm’s three top-selling jazz albums. But “nothing has caught on this year like Diana did,” says Lebtschning.

And overall, business at Fascinating Rhythm has been what Lebtschning describes as “so-so.”

“I am up slightly in revenue from last year, which was not all that profitable,” he says. “It’s partially due to the economy in British Columbia. Nanaimo still depends on much of its income from fishing and forestry, although tourism is on the rise, and the high-tech sector is emerging in the Vancouver Islands. And Ontario and Alberta seem to be having more provincial growth than [British Columbia],”

But the international music industry has also contributed to the tough retailing environment. Lebtschning believes, says the “Golden Era” of merchandising was five to eight years ago, when customers started switching their tapes and vinyl for CDs.

“Many adults already have their top 20 list now on CD, and youth are vulnerable to the technology of the Internet,” he says. “Prices are too high for CDs, and CD burners are becoming standard equipment with computers. I listen to high-school kids talking every day, and they say to each other, ‘I can steal records because I can make the CD for you.’”

In this context, investment in the store and outside promotion isn’t easy, either. “For independents like me, the money is not always there for electronic cash registers, security gates, and listening posts,” he says. “I’m not on [point-of-sale] computers yet, or SoundScan.”

As advertising, Lebtschning says he runs a few radio spots on a local station that broadcasts throughout the Vancouver Islands, but not on one of the most dominant for the area, KITL 88.5 Seattle.

But despite the challenging environment, sales at the store are expected to be strong in December, one of Fascinating Rhythm’s peak months. “I’d say that December is our largest sales month, but we get the most traffic during August when kids are looking for back-to-school clothes,” says Lebtschning.

Fascinating Rhythm takes advantage of its leased 1,400 square feet inside Country Club Mall in Nanaimo, British Columbia. Vinyl LPs are stored in an upright file in the center and around the perimeter of the independent store. (Photo by Patricia Bates.)

LockStream Locks Up Clients

Company Offers Securely Delivered Content

BY EILEEN FITZPATRICK

LOS ANGELES—Selling services that deliver secured music is one business that many companies are quickly migrating to in hopes of cashing in on new applications in the download space.

Offering an all-in-one solution, New York-based LockStream says it is able to securely deliver music, video, books, artwork, and computer software using multiple layers of encryption for PCs and portable and wireless devices.

In addition, LockStream provides digital rights management services for financial processing, encryption, packaging, and media transmission.

“Our core focus is to offer the best consumer experience that’s fast, easy, and works on multiple devices,” says David Goodman.


Clients outside the music industry are Lions Gate Entertainment, Harvey Entertainment, New Line Cinema, and Rug Burnett Family Entertainment, and Full Moon Entertainment.

Lebtschning says that in addition to selling its technology, the company secures delivers packages of entertainment with video, audio, text, and pictures.

“We can create a multimedia experience that comes across simultaneously with the download,” he says. “It gives consumers the pictures, text, or video to interact with their favorite artists.”
JAZZ THRIVING IN KRALL'S HOMETOWN
(Continued from preceding page)

And despite the reputation, Lebitscheg isn't relying on jazz to keep his store in business either—the genre actually represents less than 10% of Fascinating Rhythm's total inventory. In fact, Krall's last purchase at Fascinating Rhythm was a re-issue of Curtis Mayfield's "Superfly" on CD.

"I can't only sell jazz here," Lebitscheg says. "Nanaimo is such a small market, even though we have four channels (HMV, A&B Sound, Music World, and the Future Shop) and three other indies. I need to offer everything."

It's that mix of product that gives the store its strength, Lebitscheg adds.

"The chains don't compete with me in Nanaimo," he says.

"They telephone me from A&B Sound when they need to refer somebody for used, import, collectibles, or out-of-print items!"

The store keeps the "critically-acclaimed"s, even "a few indie releases that are on the Billboard Hot 100," he says.

"I can't only sell jazz here, although I've doubled the amount that I carry in the last two years... Nanaimo is such a small market, even though we have four chains and three other indies. I need to offer everything."

— STEVE LEBITSCHEG

Diana Krall is a best-seller in her hometown of Nanaimo, British Columbia, at the indie record store Fascinating Rhythm. The owner, Steve Lebitscheg, is also a director of the Hub City Jazz & Blues Society. (Photo by Patricia Bates.)

Retail price.

Yet the store's heart, just like the city's, remains in local jazz.

"The coal miners likely started jazz in Nanaimo with their marches in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The Nanaimo Concert Band has been playing since 1872, with five personnel changes over the decades," says Lebitscheg.

"And, there was an active swing band scene from the 1940s to the 1950s here in the Ramsey Ballroom. Louis Armstrong, Harry James, and Tommy Dorsey also came to Nanaimo. The cruise ships would dock around Nanaimo in the '40s and '50s for headliners in the new castle Pavilion."

Today, Nanaimo keeps expanding upon its jazz heritage. The Hub City Jazz & Blues Society began a four-part summer jazz series back on July 8 at the inner-city St. Andrews United Church and had another in the fall, says Lebitscheg. (The first performance in the 500-seat hall was by John Capon's six-piece ensemble, Full Circle.)

The city also opened the $12.9 million Port Theatre in September 1998.

Nanaimo's jazz tradition is being upheld through educational programs as well. Krall attended Bud Shank's jazz camp one July in nearby Port Townsend, Waah. In 1979, when she was 15, she began playing at the now-closed NHL Restaurant in Nanaimo. And Lebitscheg advertises in the Malaspina University student paper, the Navigator.

Meanwhile, many instrumentals continue to play live jazz in the downtown restaurants including Wesley Street, New York Style Pizza, and Acme Food Company, from two to five nights a week.

"It's important for us to have that in Nanaimo," says Lebitscheg. "The young, aspiring musicians need to see the older, established ones in action, so they can develop professionally."
One Step Forward, One Step Back For One-Stop Valley & Alliance

REPOSITIONING: Alliance Entertainment Corp. and Valley Media, the music industry's leading one-stops, have both recently announced changes in their digital business strategies.

On Nov. 20, Coral Springs, Fla.-based Alliance said that its parent, the Yacaipa Cos., was investing $25 million to nurture its digital-media business, even though Alliance has announced that it is going to be scaling back its efforts to establish its in-store CD-manufacturing business. The company also said it had hired Credit Suisse First Boston as its adviser regarding strategic consolidation opportunities.

On Dec. 4, Woodland, Calif.-based Valley announced that it would restructure its April agreement with Amplified.com,undoing for the most part the merger between Valley's digital business and Amplified that the two companies executed earlier this year.

In unannulling the agreement, Valley will take back its i-Fill arm, which it had merged into Amplified. The i-Fill division, which will once again go by that name, supplies online retailers with pick, pack, and ship capabilities to fulfill customer orders, along with database capabilities, which online merchants employ on the front-end that they present to shoppers. As a result, Valley will once again assume ownership of its Audiofile and Schwann databases.

Jim Miller, president/CEO of Valley, says that the change will reduce costs for both parties. "We felt a restructuring was needed to meet the realities of the marketplace," he says. "We could be more cost-effective if we controlled the direct-to-customer (functions) ourselves."

Prior to the restructuring, Valley still supplied pick, pack, and ship services for the i-Fill arm while it was with Amplified, but Amplified controlled and serviced the relationship with E-tailers. Also, Amplified was in charge of maintaining the databases. In reclaiming the i-Fill arm, Valley brings back 30 employees who had moved to Amplified.

As part of the deal, Valley's ownership stake in Amplified will be adjusted downward. Miller says he is not sure where it will wind up. "We owned as much as half of Amplified at one point," he notes. "It was diluted when they raised capital. Now, with taking back assets, [our stake] will be between 10% and 25%.

Miller says that, whatever the final ownership stake, Amplified will continue to be Valley's main vehicle to participate in the digitalization of the music industry.

Down in Florida, Eric Weisman, president/CEO of Alliance, says the company is unveiling new technology that "will extend the physical reach of the RedDotNet"— Alliance's on-demand CD-manufacturing kiosk.

The kiosk's redesign is smaller in order to give stores more flexibility as to where they can place the kiosks. In addition to CD manufacturing, the new kiosks provide users with the options of previewing music and accessing the All-Media Guide database.

Aside from helping retailers sell in-store product, the kiosks boost special-order capabilities, says Weisman. "It is affordable, more flexible, and less cumbersome," he says.

The addition of music-sampling capabilities and database-searching puts Alliance in direct competition with Muze, which has dominated this turf since the mid-1990s. On the other hand, Alliance's plans for in-store, on-demand manufacturing have been forced to take a backseat because of a reluctance on the part of some major record companies to provide catalog for RedDotNet.

Larry Kalantari, executive VP of corporate development at Alliance, says that the new kiosk, which has been dubbed Mercury Dot, "creates additional revenue streams," giving Alliance a viable business model while it waits for the in-store, on-demand business to catch up.

So far, approximately 50 of the original RedDotNet kiosks have been installed in retail stores nationwide, but Alliance has "held them back due to the fact that content hasn't been free-flowing," says Kalantari. "The number of titles that are burnable isn't enough to support a business model in its own right."

Weisman says that the redesigned, smaller kiosks are cost-effective, which will allow retailers to have five to 10 in small places in stores that are 2,500-3,000 square feet. So far, Alliance has installed one Mercury Dot kiosk in a Kmart and one in the Virgin Megastore on 14th Street in New York.

As for the announcement that Yacaipa Cos. will earmark $25 million to fund the growth of Alliance's digital-media business, Kalantari says, "This amount takes us beyond where we would be cash-flow positive."

I'M GENERALLY not the "I told you so" kind of person, but when I need to fill space on a short deadline, even I can stoop to that level. In the Nov. 25 column I suggested that Best Buy's strategic use of loss-leader pricing is akin to thinking one could fight a strategic nuclear battle without it escalating into a full-scale holocaust. Well, a couple of weeks after Best Buy priced Limp Bizkit's new album at $2.99, it placed several more titles at that price point. At the same time, Wal-Mart offered four titles at $9.99. Then the Wiz put the Backstreet Boys album on sale for $9.99 for the first hour on street date, which was followed by Best Buy putting its entire music selection on sale for $9.99 for five hours the day after Thanksgiving. And now, Kmart has priced its top 20 at $9.99. Will the madness end?
SQUEEZED: It used to be that the fortunes of an independent record label could be a wild ride, dependent on the vicissitudes of record sales. But today, with labels increasingly part of corporate infrastructures resembling Chinese boxes, an imprint’s fate is often inextricably tied to that of the parent company.

The staff of Seattle-based Miramar Records has watched its parent fell with an action on Nov. 28, when its parent, New York-based Unapix Entertainment, filed for Chapter 11 protection in U.S. Bankruptcy Court in New York and simultaneously slammed the doors on the record company’s offices.

The filing by Unapix—which is primarily a film, TV, and video producer, and apparently specializes in modestly budgeted releases—was hardly unexpected. On Nov. 20, trading of the company’s stock was suspended on the American Stock Exchange, where its price had dipped to a mere 16 cents per share.

Despite Miramar president Russ Martín’s efforts to make the label a going concern in the midst of Unapix’s financial hardships, the parent’s bankruptcy may spell fates for the label, which Unapix purchased in 1997.

In recent years, Martín has attempted to carve a niche in the AC and smooth jazz markets for his company, which was distributed by Distribution North America. Last year, the label had a bona fide jazz chart hit with pianist Roger Smith’s album “Both Sides.” The imprint also managed to sign up such veteran acts as Al Stewart, Brian Parson’s, and Brazilian singer Augusto Obilion Express.

But Martín’s best efforts meant little in the face of Unapix’s financial woes, and he was forced to essentially shutter Miramar’s offices in October.

“The parent company has had its ups and downs, and they basically decided to sell the record label,” Martín says. “Unapix told me [on Nov. 28] when they terminated that they wanted to continue to seek out opportunities for the label. I’ve been beating the bush for a couple of months now, looking for buyers.”

However, Martín acknowledges that there does appear to be much of a market for an independent label right now, “especially one with a troubled past.”

MOVING ON: There’s been a changing of the guard at K-Tel Distribution (KTD), the New York-based distribution arm of Minneapolis-based K-Tel Interna-

tional. Managing director Duncan Hutchison has exited the compa-

ny, joining K-Tel International in

the newly created position of VP of the Eastern division, essentially replacing Hutchison. Bergenty will now head the distribution company and will also be responsible for all music sales activities in the Eastern U.S. (Mike Gla-

eson,basic head of national accounts, is directing sales for the Western region.)

Hutchison, who had headed KTDL since its founding in mid-

1997, was previously COO of Alliance Entertainment’s AEC Label Development and president of Caroline Distribution.

QUICK HITS: Indie-rock distributor Moridam Records is moving

its offices from San Francisco to Sacramento, Calif. The new address is 731 N. Market Blvd., Suite B, Sacramento, Calif. 95834-1211; phone number is 916-641-8900. Los Angeles-based D-F Records has shifted to Chanhassen, Minn.-based Pau-

lstar Distributing from Nava
care in New Hope, Minn. D-F is the home of the Ritchie Valens and Bobby Fuller catalogs … Entertain-

ment attorneys Marcy Rauer and Jessica Sol have founded Majera Entertai-

ment Group in Wine-

newood, Pa. The company has hired ex-Mystic Music VP Vince Kershner to run its rock label Majera Records and its like-named publishing arm and has brought in former Antra Records VP Glenn Manko to run its R&B label Bosou Records. Big new distribution in New York is occurring.

Rykodisc’s Hannibal Records imprint has signed Moreno Veloso, son of the founding father of Brazilian tropicália, Caetano Ve-

loso. “Music Typewriter,” the younger Veloso’s debut, is due Feb. 20… Atlanta-based CMG Productions has struck a distribution deal with hometown wholesaler Southern Music Distribu-

tion. The first released on the pact is R&B singer Francine Reed’s seasonal project “Here Comes Frani Claus.”

FLAG WAVING: Guitarist Elliott Sharp, who has played in almost every imaginable format, is again flexing his blues chops on “Blues For Next,” the new Knitting Factory Records album by Terraplane.

Sharp has long been a fixture of New York’s “downtown” scene; he has cut several albums with his experimental group Carbon and has giga
d with such like-minded avant-gardists as John Zorn, Arto Lindsay, Wayne Horvitz, and Fred Frith. He has even performed with classical ensembles. But Sharp has also maintained an abiding fascination for the blues form: He issued his first Terraplane album, largely made up of skewed versions of blues stan-

dards, in 1994; and in 1996 he collaborated with singer Queen Esther on the one-off project Hoo Regow. “The first music that got me really excited was blues,” says Sharp, “I’ve always loved the vocabulary of the blues guitarists, because they make the instru-

ment speak… There’s something about the intensity of the blues and the directness of expression.” Sharp cites such guitarists as Otis Rush, Hubert Sumlin, Albert Collins, Robert Nighthawk, and Freddie Roulette as influences. He also name-checks Zoot Horn Rollo, the longtime slide singer in Captain Beefheart’s Magic Band; Sharp’s withering slide attack bears the unmistakable hallmark of Rollo’s trailblazing work.

“Blues For Next” is a two-CD set, and the first disc features Sharp’s basic quartet—including ex-Rollins Band drummer Simon Cain, former Johnny Copeland and Julius Hemphill saxophonist Sam Furnace, and bassist David Hofstra—backing several guests. These include guitar titans San
din, Howlin’ Wolf’s great side-

man, “Queen Esther met him in Austin, Texas,” Sharp explains, “and Terraplane backed him up” (Continued on page 67)
Verex Planning To Take Diggity Devon To TV, Thanks To Album, Live Shows

by Moira McCormick

in 20 area schools, according to Svezia.
"We sent them the jazzy and different (artistic renditions) of Diggity Devon," he says, "to see how they'd respond. The first image, drawn by my father, is the one the kids liked best. I'd asked him, 'Got any ideas for a happy, singing pig?'
He came up with about five different drawings; some harder-edged, some with sharper features, one in a toon. But the kids responded best to the one that was the roundest and friendliest.
The pink porcine wears yellow overalls and a blackwork baseball cap and plays a purple acoustic guitar.

(Continued on next page)
**CHILD'S PLAY**

(Continued from preceding page)

After the album was finished, the Verus crew developed a live show, featuring a costumed character as Diggity Devon, along with four Diggity Devon Band [kids aged 10-14]. "I felt we'd have a great tour because we were playing the Mickey Mouse Club, and I wanted to develop a Diggity Devon Club," he says. The tour showed "Homecoming Eyes," which was awarding the Mickey Mouse Club, and I wanted to develop a Diggity Devon Club."
The live show toured Borders Books & Music throughout the United States in September and October and will tour this summer at children's fairs, events, parades, and "wherever there's a good kid audience."

Borders carries the album, as do "all the online stores," according to Svezia. "We've made the live show as memorable as possible," she notes, "so it's a fun and entertaining, that kids can't wait to buy the tour... We've been reluctant to push it harder with other retailers, because we don't want it sitting on shelf. We want to be able to support the album with live performances."

In the meantime, the TV show is proceeding apace, with Verus having averaged "Diggity's video animation demo" (which are computer-generated), written the pilot script, and more. "It has action in costume, which are then digitally replaced with animation," she says. "Who Framed Roger Rabbit?"

There's a full cast of 3D characters, including Diggity's sidekick, Larrybug. Guests come on, and he interviews them. "It's like taking Day Lewis and the Muppets and mixing them together. Each show has a theme, and there's a 'song of the day' at the end; all the characters are based on music."

By next summer, Svezia hopes to have a second Diggity Devon album out. "Right now, we're lining up celebrity guests to appear on the record," he says, noting that one has already signed on: "Paul Simon's percussionist, Cyro Baptista, will be a Brazilian song."

"We're trying new kids' character via animation, and Svezia knows it. However, he says, "I see it as breaking a rock band—except that you don't have radio.""

**INDEPENDENTS**

(Continued from page 65)

for a couple of shows." The album also features guest vocalists Eric Mingus (son of the late jazz bassist/composer Charles Mingus) and Dean Bowman, former singer for the New York rock band Screaming Headless Tombs, as well as a solo album by Mingus." The second CD in the series comprises seven quartet performances by the spin-off of familiar blues templates into modern terrain. "Blues has always incorporated a lot of new grooves," Svezia says.

Teraplane, which performed at the Bell Atlantic Jazz Festival in New York, will probably play next year as well as Sharp takes up a monthlong residency at the New York club Toric in March. He says the shows will include appearances by some ad hoc improve groups; Orchestra Car- bon; and his solo electronic entity, Tectonics.
Fox, Indiespace Find Music For 'The Lounge'

This issue's column was prepared by Steve Trivillin.

FOX INTERACTIVE, publisher of the highly anticipated PC action game "No One Lives Forever" (which hits stores Nov. 10), teamed up with Indiespace.com for a search to find music for the special-edition bonus CD, "The Lounge," that is included with the game.

The team picked two unsigned acts from Southern California out of hundreds of entries from around the world. The songs "Void" by Red Delicious and "El Dorado" by Archie Thompson were chosen to be featured on the '60s-inspired "Lounge." The tracks are available on the PC game's second disc. It also contains eight original tracks, including the game's theme song, "The Operative," all created by Los Angeles-based studio musicians and personally selected by Chris More, the game's producer.

Gamers who purchase "No One Lives Forever" at retail chain Best Buy for $44.98 (suggested retail price) also get an exclusive, bonus music CD featuring a range of six "Lounge" tracks. They also receive a free shareware version of Microsoft's SideWinder Game Voice, which allows multi-player chat and voice commands. Its estimated street price is $16.95. Gamers receive a $10 mail-in rebate offer on the SideWinder system, which includes a headset and a control pad.

"No One Lives Forever" is a first-person action/adventure PC game set in the '60s, developed by Seattle-based Monolith Productions. Players assume the role of agent Cade Archer, a beautiful but deadly operative working for UNITY, a super-secret organization fighting to free the world from the clutches of H.A.R.M. From tense subterfuge to in-your-face combat, the game ups the ante for spy action with killer weapons, vivid international locales, and deadly archvillains.

"It’s more than just a great game," says Karly Young, director of worldwide brand marketing for Fox Interactive. "The "Lounge" theme allowed us to offer a unique musical experience that gamers and music fans will both enjoy. The music search was a great way to bring new talent into the gaming world as well as offer a new medium to the artists to get their music heard."

"Rumbling music with interactive games could be a whole new form of music promotion for independents," says Jeannie Novak, founder and CEO of Indiespace.com, a leading Internet artist development, promotion, and distribution company that she established in 1994.

"Based on Web activity to date, we’re thrilled about the future possibilities (for such projects)," Novak says. "Each artist’s track is being downloaded 7,000-20,000 times a day from the Indiespace Web site. This has demonstrated that independent music is viable [and] appealing to a large audience. The tracks selected for the CD will get even more exposure as more games are sold and the music is shared by players."

MEASURING STREAMING AUDIENCE: Fairfax, Va.-based Multicast Technologies (MCT) released its MCT Player Nov. 29, which it says is the Internet’s first multicast audio player. According to Jim Junkala, co-founder and president/CIO, it is the first to deliver CD-quality sound and to track multicast streaming traffic. Until now, there was no way to measure the audience of multicast [audio] streams, Junkala says. (Continued on next page 79)
Yoga Helps Revitalize Fitness Video

Interest In Eastern Wellness Philosophies Boosts Lagging Sales

BY ANNE SHERBER

After years of heading south, the beleaguered fitness category is heading in a new direction: East.

Fitness programs related to the ancient disciplines of yoga, tai chi, and qi gong are topping the charts. In fact, one-third of the top 20 best-selling titles on Top Special Interest Video Sales/Health and Fitness chart are yoga or so-called wellness videos.

According to Living Arts president Jane Pemberton, who has produced six of the company’s best-selling wellness titles, the shift toward Eastern philosophy extends beyond exercise. She points to articles in The Wall Street Journal, USA Today, and People that have reported on Americans’ newfound interest in the benefits of yoga and other Eastern wellness techniques, helping erase its previous stigma as an “alternative” route to good health.

“The Wall Street Journal printed an article which said 33% of Americans now do yoga, meditation, etc.,” says Pemberton.

One explanation for yoga’s rising popularity is the aging U.S. population, says Anchor Bay senior product manager Michelle Rygiel. Exercise videos, like virtually every aspect of American culture, are profoundly influenced by the whims and interests of the baby-boom generation, Rygiel explains.

“As the former joggers and Stair Master junkies hit 50 and beyond, they are looking for new ways to stay in shape that don’t cause undo stress on aging joints,” she says. “Traditional exercise makes people feel tired. Yoga helps to rejuvenate.”

Anchor Bay has attempted to live up its large fitness library with “Yoga For Dummies,” which (Continued on page 72)

Crowe And Scott Discuss ‘Gladiator’; E-mail Helps Promote ‘Seven’ On DVD

THEREGLADIATORHIMSELF: DreamWorks Home Entertainment hosted a triumphant party celebrating the record-setting DVD sales of “Gladiator” in a style even Caesar would have appreciated.

DreamWorks head of animation Ann Daly predicts the title will sell nearly 4 million units by the end of the year. (Sure helps to have all those new DVD players wrapped up for holiday gift-giving, more than doubling penetration levels from last year.)

The main attraction of the Nov. 30 event was the question-and-answer session with “Gladiator” director Ridley Scott and the gladiator himself, Russell Crowe, following a screening of the film.

Crowe and Scott hawked back and forth about the making of the film, including how the director cut a patch of actor Oliver Reed, who died before finishing the film.

In what must have been a painstaking editing job, Scott took footage of Reed, copied his facial expressions, parts of his dialogue, and head positions, and pasted them on the body of another actor in order to piece together a few scenes which were shot after Reed’s death.

Crowe paid tribute to Reed, saying that Reed’s work in the film was his best in years. “He really concentrated for this movie,” Crowe said, “and he hadn’t concentrated on anything in the last 15 years.”

Crowe and Reed (whom Crowe called Ollie) also helped their young co-star Joaquin Phoenix through some mixed feelings about wearing tights and puffy shirts for the movie. “The thing was, he was a boy from Florida who thought he shouldn’t be wearing clothes like this,” Crowe said over roars of laughter. A couple of beers later lie and Reed helped the young actor overcome his costume dilemma.

Scott also told of how he got Crowe laughing when Scott proposed using a rhinoceros in one of the Coliseum scenes, instead of the tigers that were eventually used. “We were going to use a very old one,” Scott said, “and I told him, ‘It’s not going to be a fast one.’

Unlike other directors who seem to apologize for making mass-market films, Scott, who also directed the special-effects laden “Alien” and “Blade Runner,” says he feels an obligation to fill theater seats.

“My films are meant to be seen by the big public in large venues,” he said, “because these films cost a lot to make.”

YOU’VE GOT MAIL: Interactive marketer eUniverse has signed up New Line Home Video to promote the Dec. 19 DVD release of “Seven.” The company will conduct a targeted E-mail campaign that allows consumers to follow a story told by the film’s characters through E-mail. Consumers can register to receive the E-mail correspondence, which is delivered several times a day.

Next spring, it will release a special Platinum Series edition of “Seven” with commentary by stars Brad Pitt, Morgan Freeman, and director David Fincher.

MACROVISION SIGNS BBC: Macrovision UK, a subsidiary of the Sunnycal, Calif.-based video copy protection innovator, will license its SafeCast digital rights management technology to BBC Worldwide Under the deal, Macrovision will encode the BBC’s “Wallace & Gromit” series on DVDs with a locked video game. Consumers can unlock the game by purchasing it through an Internet link or by calling a toll-free number and providing their credit-card information. The “Wallace & Gromit” DVD hits stores Dec. 4.

CELINE DION: Epic Records has set Jan. 9 as the release date for the Celine Dion VHS and DVD “All The Way… A Decade Of Song & Video,” priced at $19.95 for VHS and $29.97 for DVD. The program features 18 songs, many of which are from her concert performances and her 1999 CBS TV special. Highlights include “My Heart Will Go On,” “Because You Loved Me,” and a duet with Frank Sinatra, “All The Way.”

In the 30 years since Stan Lee and Jack Kirby introduced “The X-Men” comic book series, the world’s best-loved mutants have jumped off the page and stormed onto TV screens, video games, and the blockbuster film “X-Men,” which was just released on DVD and VHS from 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment.

Actor Tyler Mane portrayed the mutant Sabretooth in the hit movie. Mane, who wrestled professionally for 11 years under the alias Big Schatz, Ntron, knows what it’s like to play the bad guy, and what he didn’t know about “The X-Men” didn’t hurt him.

Were you familiar with the “X-Men” before getting the role?

I had seen the cartoon, but I had never read the comic books. It’s probably a good thing I didn’t, because a lot of people who multiplied for it were such big fans that they psyched themselves out.

How did you get the role?

I was originally asked to do the stunt work. When (“X-Men” director) Bryan Singer saw my picture, he said, “I gotta meet this guy,” so I went to his office. Bryan was writing and had his head down for a while, and I was thinking, “This isn’t going too well.” But then he looked up and fell off his chair and said, “Oh my God, it’s Sabretooth!”

Were you apprehensive about playing a comic book character?

No. I was excited, because it’s kind of nice to bring a comic book character to life. It was a challenge
to get Sabretooth’s mannerisms and actions right—he is such a vicious fighter. So I watched a lot of the cartoons and read the comic books. I did quite a bit of research, but it was a lot of fun doing it.

How X-Men fans respond to the movie? Were they tough critics?

My first meeting with fans was in Toronto, where we shot the movie. A lot of “X-Men” fans would try to see what was going on, but it was a closed set. And they were like, “Please tell us it’s going to be true to the characters and story.”

At that point, I knew these people took it really seriously. Just by talking to fans like that I learned quite a bit about Sabretooth.

I like what?

Oh, some of his mannerisms and his history. There are just so many different story lines, people know. Did the “X-Men” catapult your acting career?

Well, I look at it this way: It sure didn’t hurt, did it?

So what’s next?

I just got back from Thailand, where I did “Black Mask II,” I’ll be coming out in “Adventures Of Joe Dirt,” starring David Spade, with Adam Sandler producing.

CATHERINE CELLA

Give Me Liberty Or Give Me DVD. Cast and crew of “The Patriot” take a break from signing copies of the DVD at the Virgin Megastore in West Hollywood.

Caled, from left, are actor Jason Isaacs, who plays British officer Col. William Tavington, producer Dean Devlin, and director Roland Emmerich. The title is available from Columbia TriStar Home Video.

Tyler Mane, Sabretooth in the film “X-Men.”


Eric: “I’m not going to be a fast one.”

HAROLD PINCUS HANSON
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Yoga is catching the attention and imagination of a lot of celebrities, and more and more are publicly endorsing and embracing yoga.

— MICHELLE RYGIEL

has had an enormous effect on sales.

"Celebrities have embraced this," says Pemberton. "Madonna and Sting are devotees. Courtney Lovey. A company executive credits getting off drugs to yoga. And when you have those people in the media saying, 'I got my body through yoga,' that's going to generate interest for yoga among the pubic.

"Yoga is catching the attention and imagination of a lot of celebrities," she says, "and more and more are publicly endorsing and embracing yoga.

Although many programs feature masters who are unknown to American audiences, well-known fitness experts, such as Kathy Smith, are also getting into the act. Smith has released four yoga programs to date through Sony Music Video (SMV), including the new title "Wellness Mind And Body," a video and audio set that combines yoga and visualization exercises. The title will be advertised in Sony Theaters this month to take advantage of the traditional exercise selling season in January, according to SMV associate director of marketing, Elisa Peimer.

Artisan Entertainment is selling Denise Austin's Pilates tape. Pilates is another low-impact workout that's gaining popularity. Gurlitz says that the fitness celebrity plans to release a new yoga video in April.

PH Video, which is rebuilding its stable of fitness properties following Austin's switch to Artis,

san, distributes "Minna Lessig Strength And Grace." Lessig is featured on CBS' "The Early Show."

Warner Home Video, the only major studio that maintains a fitness catalog, markets "Yoga and more of Eastern methods of exercise and wellness

"Yoga and more of Eastern methods of exercise and wellness

Rygel concurs. "Yoga is catching the attention and imagination of a lot of celebrities," she says, "and more and more are publicly endorsing and embracing yoga.

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**46 PRODUCTIONS**

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SINGERSONGWRITER OH SUSANNA AIMS TO BREAK OUT WITH THIRD SET
(Continued from page 46)

Siljanmark: “This is the first step, and we plan to take part in [live] contests for another four to six cities.”

Radio City, which has already built premises in Sofia, announced a franchise deal with two existing local Bulgarian students of the same name. “This means we will be available in six cities by February, with a reach of 2½ to 4 million Bulgarians,” Cripps says.

Siljanmark’s interest in the Bulgarian market derives from his days running Siljanmark Production, a music business venture subsequently bought by United Stage. “We produced a lot of concerts in Eastern Europe after the fall of communism. I lived in Bulgaria for an event and made some friends there,” he says. “We started this [radio] project 2½ years ago, just a few months ahead of the announcement in the winter of 1998. We opened at 6:15 and the frequencies would be available.”

Siljanmark sees Bulgaria as one of the most interesting markets in Europe that’s now the fifth-best selling market. “The country is solid and has enjoyed strong economic growth with an increased influx of tourists,” he notes.

The radio director of Arcade Music Company Sweden from 1997 until 1999, in March that year, he joined Bonnier Music when the company was acquired by the long-established Swedish publishing corporation Bonnier (Billboard, March 27, 1999). Bonnier owns some of Sweden’s highest-circulation newspapers and the mail-order record operation Scandinavian Music Club, which operates in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland.

KISHI NAMED SONY JAPAN’S NEW CEO
(Continued from page 51)

Kishi’s appointment was announced on Nov. 28 at an extraordinary meeting Nov. 30 and took effect Dec. 1. Through the years, the 59-year-old Kishi has become the major corporate world’s most colorful and outspoken characters—has been one of the driving forces in the Sony music group. In 1970, he played a key role in setting up the Epic/Sony label (now Epic Records), which achieved great success with artists such as TMN and Dan. Cripps — his departure from the post of CEO had been rumored for some time and received relatively little attention in the Japanese media.

In February this year, Maruyama oversaw the introduction of a “corporate executive” system to speed up decision-making and clarify management responsibilities. One industry source says that having put Sony’s management structure after becoming the wholly owned subsidiary of parent Sony Corp. on Jan. 1. The SMEJ group currently has 2,690 employee members.

Kishi, 57, graduated from Keio University and joined Nikko Securities in 1967. He joined CBS/Sony, the predecessor of SMEJ in 1986. In 1994, he was named one of Sony’s corporate executives under the company’s new executive structure.

In another personnel move, corporate executive Hiroshi Goto was named to the board of directors, bringing the number of SMEJ directors to six, including Kishi.
**LIFELINES**

**FILMMAKERS**

*Births*

- Girl, 7 weeks, to Mark and Stacie Cross, Toms River, N.J. Father is a musician.

*Deaths*

- Frank S. Bennett, 84, a newsman in New York City. His most recent role was as a commentator for the nightly segment on CNN. He was a member of the National Association of Broadcasters and the Society of Professional Journalists.

**GOOD WORKS**

**HOLIDAY CHEER:** A country artist will be ringing in Christmas with a benefit for Toys For Tots and the Wounded Warrior Project. The “A Kicks Country Christmas” event, taking place Dec. 19 at Bell Auditorium in the Village, will focus on air personalities from Atlanta’s KICKS 101.5 and WABE 90.1. To support the cause, attendees are encouraged to bring unwrapped toys and books for assistance of children in the community.

**DECEMBER 16, 2000**

**FOOD STUFFS:** The recent food drive for Nashville’s Second Harvest Food Bank collected an estimated 8,000 pounds of canned and dry goods due to efforts by Billy Ray Cyrus. He personally called on Music Row businesses and organizations to donate to the cause, and he also performed a benefit concert at the Country Music Hall of Fame. The proceeds from the event were split between the Nashville Food Bank and the Second Harvest Food Bank of Tennessee.

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**Update**

**HIGHER GROUND**

(Continued from page 42)

**FRIENDLY HAND:** On Dec. 7, Arizona Governor Fife Symington, Jr., returned from a trip to South Africa, where he visited Lilac Hearden, who was released from prison after serving 18 years on drug charges. Hearden, african music, and their roots were definitely showing (with) elements of Crosby, Stills, Nash, & Young, [it’s] a very acoustic approach, and that’s what naturally came out of us.”

Sprague has high praise for his collaborators. “It felt like I was Mount Rushmore of songwriters,” he says, “I thought ‘What’s my face doing chiseled up there with those guys?’ I just happened to be very lucky and have very cool friends. It was the most satisfying musical experience I think I’ve ever had since coming to Nashville, and I think that these guys aren’t just songwriters; they are producers and artists in their own right. They are great singers and great players. These guys are all of the above. They do it all.”

The foursome hit the road and performed dates in selected cities this fall, and Sprague says they may go out for some additional dates after the holidays. “Coming From Somewhere Else” is the first in a series of full-length albums that Rocketown plans to release. Sprague says the next collection may feature keyboard-oriented songwriters such as Mark Heimerlein, Dejean Eaten, and Billy Simon.

**DECEMBER 13**

**FILMMAKERS**

*Births*


*Deaths*

- Girl, Rose Simone Fisher, to Norwood Fisher and Sarah Fritz, Nov. 27 in Los Angeles. Father is a country recording artist. Mother is a painter.

*Boy, Thomas Aaron, to Aaron and Thea Tippin, Dec. 1 in Murfreesboro, Tenn. Father is a country recording artist. Mother is a painter.

*Boy, George Thomas, to Jim and Molly Hart, Nov. 5 in Berkeley, Calif. Father is a WEA account executive. Mother is a WEA account executive.

*Boy, Presley Long-Shin, to Robert and Ivy Greenwood, Nov. 3 in Valen- cia, Calif. Father is a WEA account executive.

*Boy, Brett Peterson, to Vicki and Peter Aimer, Oct. 5 in Los Angeles. Mother is a WEA product development rep.

*Girl, Charlotte Lu, to Stacey and Chris Ghosh, Sept. 13 in Rancho Santa Margarita, Calif. Mother is a WEA account executive.

*Boy, Jared Mitchell, to Matt and Andrea Block, Sept. 3 in Woodland Hills, Calif. Father is a WEA marketing rep.

**DECEMBER 13**

**MUSICIANS**

- Music Supervisors, presented by the Film Music Network and B’nai B’rith Music Entertainment Media Unit, Local 802 Building, New York. 212-592-3600.


**DECEMBER 14**

**MUSICIANS**

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**DECEMBER 16**

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**DECEMBER 22**

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**DECEMBER 23**

**MUSICIANS**

- Music Supervisors, presented by the Film Music Network and B’nai B’rith Music Entertainment Media Unit, Local 802 Building, New York. 212-592-3600.


**DECEMBER 30**

**MUSICIANS**

- Music Supervisors, presented by the Film Music Network and B’nai B’rith Music Entertainment Media Unit, Local 802 Building, New York. 212-592-3600.

Where Have All The Cowgirls Gone?
Women Are Noticeably Absent From The Modern Rock Scene

BY JILL PESSELNICK
LOS ANGELES—2000 was a difficult year for females on the modern rock dial. Only four singles by female-fronted acts debuted on the Modern Rock Tracks chart, and three of those featured vocals by the same artist. None of these singles reached No. 1, and only one of them had attained a top 10 position at press time.

Though Gwen Stefani broke through with No Doubt’s “Ex-Girlfriend” and “Simple Kind Of Life” and with Moby on “South Side,” it seems as though female rockers took the year off. In the mid-90s, it would have been difficult not to hear a female act such as Alanis Morissette, Garbage, or the Cranberries on modern rock radio. That was not the case in 2000.

A scan of modern rock play lists nationwide reveals that female voices were effectively squeezed out of the format by hard rock/metal/rap acts such as Limp Bizkit, Korn, and Papa Roach. Consider that in 1996 there were 34 female debuts on the Modern Rock Tracks chart, yet in 2000 there were merely four: There were four No. 1 modern rock tracks by a female artist in 1996. In the four years since, there has only been one—1998’s “Celebrity Skin” by Hole, which topped the chart for four weeks.

Mike Peer, music director for New York’s WXRK (K-Rock), says, “I see every major record label every Monday, and I heard exactly zero female artists this week. If a female-based group was brought in here, it would have every single opportunity as a band fronted by men. It’s not that we don’t want to play them.”

Peer also points out that less than 5% of the singles that are picked to his station are from female artists or bands. When only two or three songs are added per week out of the 70 or so that are sent for his review, the probability that the chosen song is female is minuscule.

V2 Records head of promotion Matt Pollock says there hasn’t been a female artist, song-wise, that has worked in some time. “All departments are leery of signing female bands. The ratio will always be much lighter for females. But right now it’s zero, and that’s out of whack,” says Pollock.

But Diane Gentle, VP of promotion for Artemis Records, says labels are not giving up on female rock acts. “I think the record companies have signed a lot of female artists over the past 10 years. I think they are fair to females.”

NEW YORK—Sirius Satellite Radio has had a takeoff and a crash of sorts. The company’s stock price hit the skids as Wall Street debat ed the future earnings potential for the satellite radio company, which is set to start its service within the next few months.

Salomon Smith Barney analyst John Coutts cut its rating from “outperform” to “neutral,” citing worries about Sirius’ technology and ability to attract customers. At the same time, Dain Rauscher Wessels analyst Jonathan Lawrence upped the stock to “strong buy” from “buy.” Merrill Lynch analyst Marc Nabi split the difference, holding Sirius at “accumulate.”

The uncertainty of debate shaved more than 15% off its value. On the upside, Sirius has picked up $150 million in capital from Lehman Brothers, which will keep Sirius running through the end of the fourth quarter.

Also, Sirius launched its third and final satellite (see photo). Liftoff of the Proton rocket occurred Nov. 30 from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. In-orbit testing is expected to be completed within 45 days.

*FRANK SAXE*
**Radio Programming**

**Fears Of A Recession Arise At Confabs**

**Radio On The Offensive As Analysts Continue To Devalue Stocks**

**By Frank Saxe**

NEW YORK—Uncertainty was in the air at a pair of media conferences the week of Dec. 4, as recessionary worries were voiced. Many of broadcasting’s biggest board-room names converged on Wall Street for Credit Suisse First Boston’s (CSFB) annual Media Week Conference and the biannual PenrueMedia Conference to explain why their companies should be able to weather whatever economic storm may be brewing.

November was the worst month since the crash of October 1987 for technology stocks, which lost 23% of their value due to fears of a recession. That decline had a spillover effect on the broadcast sector, whose stocks have been languishing for months. Investors and analysts fear that a sharp decrease in dotcom spending on advertising will hurt media companies.

“Economic downturns don’t equal advertising recessions,” said Clear Channel chairman/CEO Bob Mays, trying to quiet fears at the CSFB confab. Mel Karmazin, CEO of Viacom, agreed. “The advertising business is better today than it’s ever been.”

Karmazin also went on the offensive against market analysts, whom he held accountable for preventing Viacom’s stock price from trading at the higher price he said it deserved. He said Wall Street is “screwed up” and is acting very similar to the way it did two years ago, when it thought there was going to be a recession—which, of course, has yet to happen.

“I’m absolutely wishing there was a recession, and we could show you how well we operate in a recession, so I don’t have to hear it for the next few years. The sooner we have a recession, the better off we are,” quipped Karmazin, who said that media companies will remain healthy even if dire economic predictions come true.

“You will see something different than in 1991 when advertising got hit,” he continued. “You’re going to see a very different marketplace where people don’t cut advertising.”

“That’s one of the unusual things about our business,” said Mays. “We’re not at the mercy of the economic downturn, as most other businesses are.”

Not everyone was as bullish, however. “We’re not immune to the economy. If there’s a recession or a slowdown, we’ll be affected like everybody else,” said Radio One CEO Alfred Liggins, who was not sure how his books would look when the year comes to a close.

There’s a lot of uncertainty out there, and while we believe this is going to be a quarter in line with long-term trends in the industry, there are questions as to where the year will end,” he added.

Emmis Communications CEO Jeff Smulyan agreed, noting that, for his company, “it’s been slowing down for the past three or four months.”

The radio industry recorded its 98th consecutive month of advertising sales gains, yet there appeared to be some weakness. According to new figures from the Radio Advertising Bureau, in October, local ad spending rose 6% from 1999, although national figures fell 5%. On a year-to-date basis, local sales are 14% ahead of last year, while national ad revenue was 16% higher.

**Gazing Into The Crystal Ball**

Midway through the media conferences, Wall Street was given a hint of what it may get for the holidays. On Dec. 5 in Washington, D.C., Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan said the economy had slowed appreciably. “One must remain alert to the possibility that greater caution and weakening asset values in financial markets could signal or precipitate an excessive softening in household and business spending,” Greenspan said.

That statement led many to believe Greenspan will recommend a cut in interest rates when the Federal Reserve meets Dec. 19.

When asked at the PaineWebber Media Conference if he expects to see his stock to continue growing in value in 2001, Mays joked, “I expect to stay rich.” Mays added that Clear Channel’s growth should be, at the very least, more predictable as its appetite for gobbling up companies diminishes.

At PaineWebber’s conference, Universal McCann senior VP and director of forecasting Bob Coen released his annual forecast of advertising growth, which predicted that ad spending will grow at a slower rate in 2001 than during this year. According to Coen, U.S. advertisers will spend $6 billion more in 2001 than in 1999, with a 10% growth rate in 2000.

In radio, Coen said, ad spending will grow only 6.2% in 2001, far lower than the 19.8% forecast for this year.

To help grow its business, Karmazin said, Viacom will look to overseas markets. He told analysts, “Right now we’re getting too small a percentage of our business from other parts of the world.”

Karmazin said Viacom was reluctant to make deals that would give the company a minority stake in a broadcaster, leaving it no control over its investment. One exception would be a situation in which Viacom would gain distribution—e.g., buying a minority stake in a TV company that would air its MTV programming.

Karmazin is not alone in his quest to find an outlet for programming. Liggins said Radio One is still looking into launching a radio network to better distribute its programming aimed at African-Americans. However, Liggins said the company had changed its business model after it determined it could charge a higher rate on its better-rated radio stations if the advertising time was sold locally.

Liggins said Radio One hopes to bundle its weaker FMs and AMs under the network that would join forces with another radio network. While he said Radio One is not “crazy” about the proposal, “it’s trendy, and its audience, so it comes down to, What are they willing to pay for that?”

**The Holiday Spirit.** Top 40 WHATZ (100) New York’s Billy Hammond and listeners Laura Ingram, 16, were recent guests on “The Sally Jessy Raphael Show” to spread awareness of connected tissue disorder, a disease Ingram is battling. Z100 will brighten Ingram’s holiday by arranging for her to meet Arista recording artist Pink and 555 Music’s Mandy Moore backstage at the upcoming Z100 Jingle Ball concert. Shown, from left, are Hammond, Ingram, and Raphael.
people overreact to the simplest things, says Nickelback's lead vocalist/guitarist, Chad Kroeger, and it's a good idea to stop and think in perspective.

This is the case in "Two Minutes to Midnight," the second single off the group's Roadrunner album "The State" and No. 35 on this issue's Modern Rock Tracks chart. Kroeger says, "The first line of the song is, "Two men, they started talking about two other days.' The image that conjures for me is Churchill and Stalin walking along during the Second World War, discussing the catastrophic state the world was in.

"It goes from that verse to the second verse, which talks about relationships and just sort of fighting about stupid little things," he continues. "Nine times out of 10, if you're having an argument with somebody you love, it's over money or something stupid. The song just sort of compares the two. With the things that are going on in the world we've gone to the world, it's trying to put things in perspective, because so often people blow things out of proportion." Nickelback keeps its thoughts on putting on memorable live performances. Kroeger says, "So many people tell us that we sound better than we do on the record. That's the thing that might separate us from other bands. When we get onstage, every emotion that you might think that we're going through, we're definitely going through. When we're onstage and realize putting it in, it's really real.

"That's why this band hates shooting videos, because it's so fake," he continues. "You've got to pretend you're playing the song, pretend like you're really into it. I can't stand doing it. It just feels like I'm suddenly a WWF wrestler."

**SITES + SOUNDS**

(Continued from page 68)

MCT Player enables a direct measurement, which is vital to ascertain any future royalty compensation for Internet-based radio and audio works. Available as a free downloadable file on the company's audio station, www.On-The-Icon, the player also features staggered encryption protecting peer-to-peer sending of MCT technology that prevents blank spots in sounds when they are downloaded.

Created by MCT senior developer Marty Schoch and co-founder and CEO/CTO Marshall Eubanks, it is based on the popular open-source FreeAmp player.

"The decision to release our technology under this license makes sense because the streaming media industry has historically been dominated by proprietary protocols and formats," Schoch says. "We hope to leverage the efforts of programmers worldwide to become a serious competitor in this field.

Currently, Web sites use their audio, sending out one signal to each computer that accesses the site, making it difficult and expensive to reach mass audiences. Through multicast, which enables streaming to reach millions of PCs, MCT can distribute audio over the Internet to a mass audience while substantially lowering distribution costs to Webcasters.

MCT recently announced the creation of its commercial, multi-domain Multicast Network. The reduced cost of Internet streaming, plus the growth of broadband, means that Internet audio will eventually be able to rival terrestrial radio in delivering CD-quality sound to a worldwide audience.

At a substantial savings per listener, Eubanks explains, MCT is demonstrating this technology through its own ad-supported network, now enhanced by the MCT Player, which will mark the first time that Internet broadcasting will be able to reach more people than current terrestrial radio, he adds.

**WINDOWS HOLIDAY**

Now through Jan. 7, the WindowsMedia.com Holiday Page at www.windowsmedia.com/html/holiday/holiday.html is offering free downloads and streamed music from some of the biggest names in pop, R&B, country, opera, lounge, rock, and soul. Included are pop superstars Christina Aguilera with "Christmas Time" and Britney Spears with "Only Girl (In the World)," the Lonestar country version of "This Christmas," R. Kelly with his R&B version of "White Christmas," and a 14-song album from opera star Charlotte Church with "Dream A Dream," and two standards from Ultra Lounge. Also offered is a variety of holiday radio specials from the Web sites Ron Diamond.com, Cyberadio2000.com, and MusicChoice.com.
WHERE HAVE ALL THE COWGIRLS GONE?

That was the first year in the '90s that a female rock act failed to attain a No. 1 hit on the Modern Rock Tracks chart.

Ogilvy, VP of programming for Boston's WSHW, says, "I think Lilith Fair scored a lot of labels say from signing bands fronted by women."

"In 1995, we had Alanis Morissette, and then Sarah McLachlan and Lilith Fair, and then 20 versions of Alanis Morissette," agrees Jim McGuinn, PD for Philadelphia's WPLY (100). "I think that modern rock radio got over-Lilithed."

Matt Smith of DreamWorks' national alternative promotion department points out that Lilith Fair artists did not really fit in with the modern rock format at all. "It was very odd when Lilith Fair was at its peak, and the airwaves were filled with Sarah McLachlan and Jewel. It didn't really represent alternative radio.

The majority of artists then were pop artists.

"If you were sitting in a room and played a track from one of those records, I don't think anyone would say it was modern rock," Smith adds. "I would think that more people would say top 40. It's probably a transition period right now. You had a large growth of modern AC and adult top 40 stations in the last five years.

In fact, the modern AC format was created about five years ago as a result of the proliferation of female acts on modern rock radio. Yet those artists that cross over have lost their rock credibility, according to Howard Leon, VP of promotion for Universal Records. "The AC and pop formats are getting the females because they're in the mainstream," Leon says. "The women who were popular on alternative several years ago have found a home on pop AC formats. It is difficult for artists to come back from crossing over into pop."

Peer says, "The alternative format was created by you if you didn't play. After it went through the genre period, the alternative format had to shift, and it shifted to where there were a lot of females. Once something gets so popular, you're going to get cannibalized by other formats that say they can play it, too. All of a sudden, rock music starts featuring females."

"It reinvented itself," says Leslie Fram, PD at Atlanta's WWNN.

"I think it's more of a genre explosion," says Jed Poe of the Cranberries, who were favorite band, you might not be listening to modern rock right now."

THE RISE OF HARD ROCK

At the time when female artists were being shunted to other formats, hard music was gaining fans on a grass-roots level. MCAs VP of promotion, Darren Eggleson, traces this back to 1998, when artists such as Korn were finding success on the road. Although metal music artists who were selling tickets and building a fan base, few PDs would put them on the radio, says Eggleson.

"With Internet promotions and websites now responding to the music," Eggleson observes. "Once Korn got just a drop of exposure by just getting one spin a night, all of a sudden we were selling units like crazy. Smart programmers looked at this and said, 'I need to play this.' Then Limp Bizkit and Godsmack came around. Now this year, the latest breakthrough is that it all started to test really well."

And the hard music tested well among males and females, adds Eggleson. "I think the music is just too that's what they think it is. It's not a genre, but it's a style that people can take to hard rock."

"I think it would be all young boys moving at these shows, but it's a mixed demographic with males and females," adds Eggleson. "I think that women are still interested in rock, but it's a natural if these groups are marked correctly and the visual on MTV is there, too. Women are also seeing that these are some of the guys are good-looking.

This interest from both men and women has propelled hard music titles to multi-platinum sales figures. Limp Bizkit's "Chocolate Starfish And The Hot Dog Watered Flavor" (Flipp/Interscope), for example, has sold 2.5 million copies since Oct. 17 release, according to SoundScan, whereas No Doubt's "Return Of Saturn" (Trauma/Interscope) has been available since April 9 (three months longer than Limp Bizkit), has sold slightly more than 1 million copies.

Limb weeks for hard bands have also been strong. A Perfect Circle's "Mer De Noms" (Virgin) debuted at No. 4 on The Billboard 200, and Godsmack's "Avalanche" (Republic/Universal) debuted at No. 5, whereas PJ Harvey's "Stories From The City, Stories From The Sea" (Island) debuted at No. 42, and Foo's new album, "Helter Skelter" (Atlantic), debuted at No. 115.

Juliano says, "I think record labels are looking for more hard rock bands that they can sign because they are selling so many records. It goes along with the trend."

The trend may be as good for labels as it is for bands. "Labels are just as interested in hard rock that says label consolidation means that "people have to have hits quicker than before; the nature of the industry is general is that people need instant gratification."

Todd Thomas, PD of Hartford, Conn.'s WMRQ, concludes, "I think the record companies put out stuff they think is going to sell, and we play that stuff that will get us ratings. That all goes back to the consumer. It's sort of a Catch-22."
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BEST BUY ACQUIRES MUSICLAND CHAIN
(Continued from page 1)
executives at the major labels. The largest account now is Wal-Mart, which executives say has a market share of about 10 percent.
Best Buy, whose 357 electronics and software stores are mainly in strip shopping centers known as power centers, views the Musicland deal as a way to boost its music business. Musicland’s mall division has about 1,650 stores—560 Sam Goody music stores and 400 Suncoast Music Pictures. The deal also gives Best Buy access to tertiary rural markets through Musicland’s Out Cues stores. Both companies are based in suburban Chicago.
In addition to giving Best Buy’s real-estate portfolio more play, Sam Goody’s mall locations would give the company access to demographic groups such as students and newly minted diplomas.
When the deal is completed, Best Buy executives expect to create a co-branded music division to head up Musicland. Musicland chair-
man EUGER OF THE WEEK
Best Buy will assume $230 million in Musicland debt, but Musicland is expected to be so strong this year that a good portion of the debt could be paid down before the transaction closes. The Best Buy board of directors has the final say on the deal. If Best Buy didn’t comment on expected cost savings from the elimination of duplicate functions at the two companies. In fact, during a conference call with the investment community Best Buy indicated that it was going to run the companies as separate entities. Best Buy didn’t return calls seeking comment.
Reaction from the major record companies and retail competitors was muted, although a few acknowledged being startled by the deal. “A day that will live in infamy,” said one senior distribution executive. “Musicland, our biggest music specialty store account, gone.”
In addition to the anticipation that the acquisition will give Best Buy—already the best account in obtaining premiums and other special deals from the labels—the seven national acts, the majors, one senior distribution exec-
tive doubts it, saying that Best Buy “already had an 800-pound gorilla, so now they are just a bigger gorilla.”
Musicland’s competitors viewed the deal positively, because if Best Buy tries to add some of its electron- ics products to the Musicland to the stores, it will probably mean a decrease in the amount of music they carry. One industry observer estimates that Musicland’s $5K count could decrease by as much as 30 percent. Another benefit of the merger to retailers might be to reverse rapidly declining prices on front-line music titles, a trend that appears to be moving toward a full-blown price war.
A price war would likely reduce Musicland’s cash flow, which—esti-
mates—will be about $2.5 billion this year—is said to be one of the chain’s principal attractions in a merger. Best Buy, then, might be expected to back off from its aggressive pricing strate-
gy, says one industry observer.
commanded the stage for a racy, eye-popping rendition of “Shake It Fast,” replete with an array of 47 scantily clad female dancers.

Another of the more striking moments of the evening came after Mystikal’s performance, when Don Henley presented Randy Newman with Billboard’s annual Century Award. “That was a tough act to fol-

low,” Newman said with a playful grin, referring to Mystikal’s production number.

Newman’s wry, resonant acceptance speech also yielded what would prove to be the most sensitive com-

ment for the evening’s array of striv-

ing artists: “Try not to live what you write always. You don’t have to, you know.”

Those words rang true for Tim-

berlake. “In the end, we all want to be here for the story, whatever that might be,” said the ‘N Sync member. “In order to do that, you have to take care—and never lose sight of the big picture. I hope that all of us who are part of this special night are able to do that. Ultimately, I think we will.”

Assistance in preparing this story was provided by Melissa Newman and Gail Mitchell.

**Newman Celebrates Century Award**

The 2000 Billboard Century Award was presented to Randy Newman by Don Henley at the Dec. 5 Billboard Music Awards. Following is the text of the presentation and acceptance speeches.

**Don Henley:** Thank you, I love show business. The first Century Award winner of the new century is a friend of mine, and I hope you won’t mind when I describe his work as brilliant.

His songs are tough but tender, understanding but never unctuous, caustic but much too caring to be cruel. He has become a peerless annotator of all that ails and enno-

bles us. He has made incredible points in song about the heartbeat of betrothal, the folly of bigotry, and the dangers of blind faith, while reminding us that life, however messy, is a process worth pursuing.

And over the past 30 years, his music has become one of the great bodies of work produced by a liv-

ing American composer. In my opinion, he’s one of our greatest musical storytellers. He may also have earned a reputation as a misunderstood songwriter in America, and he probably likes it that way.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Bill-

board magazine Century Award winner for 2000, Mr. Randy New-

man.

**Randy Newman:** Don, thank you very much. That was a tough act to follow, Mystikal, that was just on. There are some beautiful, beautiful young people here tonight. I think I should have worn tighter pants.

Other than that, I do take this award seriously and am glad I stayed alive to get it. Some of you who’ve performed tonight, I hope you remember that and try not to live what you write always. You don’t have to, you know. I paid Timothy White at Billboard $423,000 for the chance to win this award, and I’d like to thank him. I’d like to thank Don Hen-

ley so much for following Mystikal, which is not a pleasant chore.

I’d like to thank Jesus Christ, I can’t do that. I’d like to thank my wife, Gretchen; my manager, Cathy Kerr; Lenny Waronker, who was my confidence when I was 16 when I didn’t have any. And I’d like to thank overconfident, you know?

But in any case, I love you all. It’s been a pleasure being here. I’ve really enjoyed the show... Anyway, all my love. Thank you, Don; I appreciate it.
Creed’s Album Sales May Spike

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

winning at VH1, says Artale, who Oversees for the Cartridge, Pacific-based, 176-store chain. “This will keep the momentum going.”

to date, the band’s album, “Human Clay,” has sold more than 7 million units, according to SoundScan. Jim Richter, GM for an HMV Atlanta store, says Creed will benefit most because it was playing to its fan base. “If a winner continues to ride the wave of publicity, then they will see spikes,” Richter says. “I think Creeds sales for the Cartridge, Pacific-based, 176-store chain. “This will keep the momentum going.”

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THE CHALLENGE OF IMPROVING RETAIL CUSTOMER SERVICE (Continued from page 1)

But there is a bright side to Glen's story. Before he left Tower, he visited its classical annex, where he had a wonderful shopping experience.

In the classical outlet, Glen became a different kind of shopper, swinging from one who knew what he wanted to a buyer who was staffed, he recalls, with three opera buffs who made recommendations and discussed music with him.

“They knew everything,” he says. “I couldn’t have had that kind of experience at Amazon.”

Glen’s shopping experiences at Tower are two examples of service extremes. The majority of music-label executives would say that Glen’s Lombardo experience is about par for the course at U.S. music chains. The head of sales at one major label says he went shopping in a store categorized by a music chain as specializing in jazz. “I said, ‘I want to learn about jazz. I have a credit card—what do I buy?’ The sales clerk handed me a book titled ‘100 Great Jazz Records’ and walked away.”

Worse, according to that executive, is that he couldn’t find any of the titles suggested in the book.

“There is not a whole lot of regard for the customer out there,” says this executive. “And it gets worse every year. I don’t think the kids take their jobs seriously—nor do their bosses.”

But music retail execs argue that they work hard to instill good customer service among their employees and contend that Glen’s classical-annex experience is what they are striving for, although they concede that service glitches like the one he experienced also can occur. Some where between the music-label complaints and the contentions of music-retail execs lies the truth about customer service in U.S. record stores.

Despite the complaints, two-thirds of the 1,550 respondents in a survey conducted by Billboard online rated service in traditional record stores as good to excellent (see chart, this page).

Visitors to the Billboard.com site were also asked why they still shop at traditional record stores, considering the online opportunities that are available. Of the 1,777 who responded, the largest percentage—28.8%—said for convenience, while 10.4% said they do not shop in record stores anymore.

However, sales through nontraditional outlets—which includes the Internet—account for only 21.4% of total album sales so far this year, according to SoundScan.

But despite its small market share, online shopping is rapidly changing the face of retail. “The era of consumer power has never been here like now,” says Glen. “Customers can shop 24/7 and delete you in one second. The customer is the gatekeeper and the policies have to be made to accommodate the customer.”

Bob Douglas, music management chairman at Amazon, contends that “all the misery and wretchedness that you are about to report on when it comes to customer service in stores is no longer news for someone who chooses to do business with a customer-focused company like ours. We provide everything that they don’t get in a physical store, right down to personal recommendations, which are based on what you have bought in the past.”

But Glen and other music retailers think that online merchants like Amazon mainly provide a good shopping experience for customers who know what they want to buy, not for browsers.

Len Cosimano, director of music and movies at 325-store Ann Arbor, Michigan, based Tower Records, says, “Online is great if you know what you want. If you don’t know, I don’t see the value of written reviews on any of the experiences of being in a record store.”

And Brett Wickard, owner of nine-unit, Portland, Maine-based Bull Moose, goes Cosimano one better. He says customers who don’t know what they want would “much rather go out and see” music in record stores than browse online. And he says that much of online shopping has caused service at brick-and-mortar stores to improve, merchants say. With online customers having to know what they want to buy, album stores have responded by markedly increasing the number of listening posts, Wickard adds.

While some chains like Harmony House, that has the Musicland Group use separate staffs to run their online stores, other merchants say that they see a need for the convergence of traditional and online stores with sites in order to provide better customer service.

At Los Angeles-based Virgin Entertainment Group, president/CEO for the 20-store chain, says, “We are in the throes of fully integrating our online business with offline.”

Consequently, operations, marketing, and purchasing executives for the chain are now assuming those responsibilities for the chain’s online stores as well, he says.

“People want to shop in different ways,” Ward says. “They may do it online, go to a store, or call in orders.”

A few months ago, Virgin began an 800-number service, manned by 180 staff with music knowledge who also respond to E-mails. Since then, “there has been a vast increase in the number of phone calls, he says.

The addition of an 800-number is just one way that Virgin has enhanced its ability to interact with customers. Ward says that the evolution of technological tools will also improve customer service.

“We have been interactive with the customer for 30 years in the physical world, and now we are doing it online,” Ward states.

“There is always room for more sophistication, so we are augmenting the physical store with our online store” and vice versa.

Similarly, Cosimano says the Borders chain’s management sees a need to complement its online efforts. While its online store allows Borders to serve customers 24 hours a day, a key component of the company’s convergence strategy is the placement of kiosks (which link to Borders’ E-commerce site) in the physical stores, allowing customers to special-order music not available in the store. The kiosks also serve as a tool for staffers, placing product information at their fingertips.

While the online and brick-and-mortar stores have separate staffs, they often work in tandem on project initiatives and new-release strategy reports.

Online competition is not all that music retailers have to worry about. Best Buy, which is aggressive in pricing and in marketing, has been pursuing music merchants to improve their service in order to survive loss-leading policies, Wickard says.

But even Best Buy has weaknesses that can be exploited. “Best Buy is not able to stock their shelves as quickly as they’d like,” says Wickard. “You know they have it in the [store] because they have fantastic computer systems. [But] nothing pisses off people more than to get out of a cab, walk 50 yards into a store, and then not finding a title that is advertised in the paper.”

Since Best Buy gives “as a little wiggle room,” specialty music merchants “better have the title, better have it on sale, and better have it well-positioned,” Wickard adds. That gains customer loyalty, he argues.

Rick Galusha, president of seven-unit, Omaha, Neb.-based Homer’s, sees wiggle room in another customer-service direction. “No one at Best Buy is going to talk to you about music; it’s like a hospital there,” he says. “Ultimately, all they have is price.” At Homer’s, “we’ve always been a heavy customer-service chain. We have the three A’s: acknowledgement, approach, and then bid adios or adieu.”

New competition from online stores and discounters like Best Buy isn’t the only thing driving stores to improve customer service. Ward points out that shoppers themselves are changing the shopping experience in a pleasant environment, filled with people who share their passion for what they are buying.

That’s why Wickard says the chain strives to give its customer more than good service. “We want to establish a customer experience,” he says. “We want our customer to have some type of connection, some type of human interaction. Someone who bought the same CD as you might make a comment about one of the songs on it.

“It’s got to be an emotional experience and fun experience to go out to a store,” he adds. “We have sofas in our stores so people can come and hang out. We put CD players there so people can hear the music.”

At West Sacramento, Calif.-based Tower, Renee Gromacki, VP of human resources, says the company has the right formula to ensure good customer service.

“There is a real family feel to our stores,” Gromacki states. “Our employees love each other and their customers. They love the music and love selling it.”

But a love of music, while great, is not enough to provide good customer service. Ward says Virgin has to have a culture of customer service. Besides that, the chain is striving to improve itself. “We have mystery shoppers [come in] to make sure standards are being maintained and improved,” he says.

Randy Davidson, president of Nashville-based Central South Music Sales, which runs the 80-unit Sound Shop/Music for Less chain, also employs secret shoppers to ensure his stores are maintaining the appropriate service standards. He says that the shoppers go once a month and call customer greeting, whether sales associates suggest music, how well they help locate titles, how well and correctly the front counter is merchandised, cleanliness, and what employees are doing during the visit. “We’ve been doing it for years,” Davidson says. “A few weeks ago, I walked in as a peep, and all the employees were peoping as much as twice a month.”

At the 1,800-unit, Minneapolis-based Musicland Group, vice chairman Keith Ballantyne offers up another insight into customer service. “The important thing you can do is establish a dialogue,” he says. “If there is a dialogue with an employee, the customer develops a relationship and feels good about the shopping experience.”

(Continued on next page)
BORDERS IN THE NEWS

By Ed Christman

New York—When it comes to building customer loyalty and extending the notion of service, many music retailers are increasingly finding that a personal touch with older, less frequent buyers with price breaks. However, such programs have only really come into their own over the last few years, due to the increased marketing and financial value placed on customer data, along with claims made by online merchants that they make buying recommendations to customers based on their personal buying histories.

In the early to mid-1990s, chains with in-store "Station to Station" systems, while others like Compact Disc World in South Plainfield, N.J., started setting up clubs that would give information regarding customers' buying habits. Now, other chains, doing the same thing, are evolving in that direction as well.

At the nine-unit Bull Moose chain in Maine, says Brett Ward, the company's frequent-buyer program is helping sell records and make customer contacts. "When somebody signs up, we know their purchase history... and pretty clearly [can tell] what somebody would like," Ward says. "We can then tailoring a new title, Bull Moose can send a sampler or part of a single and a discount offer to the customers who would be most likely to buy it.

"It's a great way to develop artists," he says. "We literally have 100,000 cards in Maine alone, which we saturate as well with..."

Ward says Bull Moose chain's online club, with more than 200,000 E-mail addresses of customers, partly older customers, so we can send an E-mail of what the hot titles coming out are.

Ward says "it's in-house magazine, Express, published seven times a year with a run of 32,000 copies to customers." Another 8,000 copies circulate in its stores.

All of Homer's direct marketing is intended to provide the customer with additional music knowledge, Galusha points out. "We're trying to establish the idea... "If you want to know about music, Homer's knows music," he states. "And this reinforces that message again.

At 20-unit Newbury Comics in Boston, CEO Mike Dreese says the company is aggressively promoting its frequent-buyer program, which is about 9 months old. It charges customers $2 to join, and that will soon be increased further. Newbury offsets the membership fee by giving discount coupons, but also makes deals fairly with purchases at the chain. In addition, "we pick two or three titles a week, sticker the product, so that members can get the albums for $2 off with their [membership] card," he reports.

Dreese says that the club is more of an E-club than a frequent-buyer club, with the goal of being "a potent way to advertise to the customer." When members sign up, Newbury collects demographic data and music tastes, and then play music to customers' musical tastes and which radio stations they listen to. "Currently, our club members are biased towards..." his "transactions," he reports. "We do about 20,000 E-mails a week. By next summer, we will be influential in publishing music information as any other media in the market. Our E-club could put people who publish to the music fans out of business."

The Musicland Group in Minneapolis has long charged customers a fee to join its membership club, named Replay. Keith Benson, the company's vice chairman, says Replay now has 1.3 million customers who pay $7.99 per year to be members. The club used to be offered free by the Sam Goody division, but this year it was expanded to all of the company's store concepts. Unlike some stores with frequent-buyer clubs, Musicland doesn't use tiered pricing in stores because "we don't want to alienate [non-member] customers," by offering them that some customers are...
who care and will go above and beyond,” says Gromacki. “If someone builds a foundation on music knowledge and the confidence to sing, they can even show off that confidence and have a great attitude, strong product knowledge, and the passion for music is less important.”

That’s why at Musicland, managers “tend to look at people who are able to connect with the music inside,” Benson says. “I know that many young people today may not know who the Eagles or the Red Hot Chilies are, but they heated up listening to hip-hop music and enjoying rap music, and that can lead to a great attitude, strong product knowledge, and the passion for music is less important.”


game and retail skills in one person, you nail his feet to the floor and leave him hanging on you.”

Likewise, HMV looks for people with a passion for music as well as what Luckhurst calls “a retail personality.” “One of our store managers had a very good way in hiring staff,” he says. “She would say something like ‘Music Trivial Pursuit’ with the potential employee and then tell them, ‘It’s a song.’ If they had the knowledge and the confidence to sing, it shows personality and someone to whom they could then relate. The people who are good are knowledgeable, HMV accommodates musicians, music nuts, and even actors, in terms of structuring hours for them.”

While Tower also likes to hire employees with musical knowledge, the main thing is to look for “people who execute the Orange County sound, but not much about jazz.”

In fact, Tower makes sure that its employees can help customers, Homers gives new hires a quit after they have been working at the store for a while. The test doesn’t ask who Jimi Hendrix is, but rather is designed to make sure they are learning the fundamentals of working in the store, such as knowing how to use the company’s systems well enough to help customers find what they are looking for.

“The other thing we like to do is make our employees (especially new ones) sort the store,” which helps educate them, says Galusha. “So even if you don’t hear all the music, you can at least recognize names after a while.”

While Gallery of Sound likes to hire knowledgeable people who are into music, company management says it’s also necessary to give staffers tools so they can answer questions that they don’t know the answer to. “We’ll go to all the lengths to make sure our managers have all the information they need,” says Nardone. “Our people are trained to report difficult questions they may get answers and distribute information about what [albums] are coming out or what’s happening with a certain band.”

As for the employees they need, music chain executives use a variety of tools to reach potential staffers. Chain executives make three months.

While music retailers are blessed with a lot of their employees have such a passion for music, chains large and small appear to be getting away with undercutting the going market rate for pay, despite management’s claims to the contrary.

In a survey conducted by Billboard of 30 store managers spread across 13 chains, practically all said they have not raised their pay in the past year to try and compete better compared to managers’ pay at other types of retail stores. Music-store managers can make anywhere from the mid-$20,000s to the lower $30,000s, although those running bigger chain stores may make as much as $50,000.

Tower, we want to embrace everyone,” she says. “Look at how diverse they are! Why isn’t our people be like that as well?” Also, Tower offers all types of leave for employees, including musicians who need time off to tour and/or record.

All the chain’s compensation is performance-based, Gromacki says. The chain awards bonuses, such as the one for its employee of the month, which is given out at each store. Also, Tower managers can reward an employee on the spot if they see an employee doing something right.

Another benefit of working in record stores that helps companies maintain staff is the product discounts offered to employees, which range from 20% off to the wholesale cost. Like other music chains, Musicland offers such discounts, but it also will hold an employee-appreciation sale, in which the discounts are higher than usual, Benson reports. In addition, Musicland offers bonuses based on performance in a number of areas, including sales, shrinkage, and controllable expenses.

“HMV allows employees to buy product at cost,” which helps keep them on a sales on the music and, hopefully, stops them from stealing,” says Luckhurst.

In addition to the usual assortment of employee compensation and incentive tools, Musicland uses its frequent-buyer program, awarding points through different means, Benson says. “It could be through employee purchases, or employees could pass certain tests based on our training menus, or if your store wins a certain contest,” he says. “We try to find lots of reasons to hand out platinum points to our employees.”

At Newbury, in addition to health benefits, a 401K plan and higher-than-average salary levels, store managers are on a bonus plan based on profitability and contribution to overhead. Such personnel can realize as much as $3,000 a year in bonuses, Drees reports.

Even with these added benefits, record stores suffer high employee turnover levels, merchants report.

(Chain executives surveyed cited anywhere from 60%-90%). But Benson reports that other forms of retail suffer even higher levels. Benson that says that Macy’s West, employee turnover is approaching 50%, and Ward says that McDonald’s has a turnover rate of about 150%.

With turnover rates like that, personnel use people as their own. While Benson reports out that other called “boothies” by depressed personnel, who often defend their hires by saying the employer is better than nothing,” Glen says.

With help scarce and employee turnover soaring, poaching staff from competitors and neighboring retail stores is becoming commonplace, says Chuck Papke, senior VP of retail operations at the 38-unit Harmony House in Troy, Mich. Finding employees nowadays is almost the easy part, adds Benson. “After all, we are in the third year of a three-year deal. “‘Once they gain competence as a sales clerk, other chains try to steal them,” he explains.

One of the most important things to maintaining employees is “to take care of your people first and foremost,” says Papke. “We just had an old-timers’ banquet. How many retail store managers say they have paid people for 25 years?”

Harmony House tries to make the workplace enjoyable, including having a company picnic on the Fourth of July and renting a theater for company to watch “This Is Spinal Tap” together, Papke says.

Of course, a main tool in maintaining the employee base is to tout the company as a career. While all the executives interviewed for this story say that their companies offer career opportunities, the Billboard survey reveals that store managers and owners so sure that their store managers say they have a career in music retailing, about half of them say they do not.

Benson says that the chain lets its employees know “you can have a career, starting with the assistant manager.” “It is well-understood that there is a career path if you are good, dedicated, and stay with it,” Benson says.

But even if store employees “may not want to be in the music industry once they get older, we try to tell them, ‘While you’re here, you can learn a lot of marketable skills that are going to help you as much as you are learning in college,’” says Galusha.

Supervisory employees learn “how to manage people, how to organize the store, how to make decisions and plan out your workday — you can make this more than an indie retail experience. You can learn skills you can take with you for the rest of your life.”

Assistance is preparing this story was provided by Rashaan Hall in New York and Jill Petersen in Los Angeles.
PUTTING AN E-SPIN ON FREQUENT BUYERS CLUBS (Continued from page 87)

getting better deals, says Benson. Instead, he says that members earn points, which can be redeemed for gifts like T-shirts, lunch cards, and free magazines.

“Repay is good because it opens up a dialogue between the customer and the employee,” Benson says. “We try to establish a dialogue so that the customer develops a relationship with our employees and feels good about the experience.”

Repay members get a free subscription to a local fan magazine, Request. They also get to take advantage of special sale events.

Moreover, Benson says that Musicland Group has developed a new program to the next level. “We have information on the [Repay] customers in terms of what they are buying,” he reports. “So far, we have sent out information to members on specific events, like classical sales, to people who have an interest in that area of music and have registered on our website and matched the surface, and there is a lot more that we can do [with Repay].”

The 40-unit Harmony House chain in Troy, Mich., also seeks to capitalize on the e-loyalty club trend by working on its software, which it bought two years ago. Chuck Pajeck, its VP of operations, says the chain has “announced a membership program” and is “working on revamping it and starting something of the nature” sometime in 2003. He says Harmony House will not charge a fee for club membership. “We think that the fact that you’re a club member is worth more than the fee,” he says. “It’s a marked contrast to the giant Barnes & Noble chain, which touts a membership club for its credit card customers and charges a $25 annual fee.”

But not everyone thinks that membership clubs are the way to go. Randy Davidson, president of the 80-unit Central South chain in Nashville, says the company has no plans to start such a club because he can’t afford to be giving away and/or discounting product. He adds that with locations in malls and factory outlets, the incentive isn’t the same, either.

Galusha cautions that there is an unstated issue for the customer who buys music online: “We need to educate our customers about it.” He says the company’s reps talk about the CD player when they visit stores to support them in their efforts to answer customer questions. “We don’t want to get a bunch of crap sent to them that they’re not agreeing to. It’s a very sensitive trust, and if you violate that trust, their later loyalty is lost, so you risk not only losing them as a participant, but as a customer.”

Glen Ward, CEO of Virgin Enter- tainment Group, another major membership clubs has to offer more than just discounts to customers in order to be successful. “Personally, I don’t think those schemes, per se, are the way to encourage customer loyalty,” Ward argues. “A club has to have hard and soft benefits and provide a way to take advantage of these just by shopping to anticipate [customer] needs.”

While Virgin does not have a membership club, the company is planning to create one, using the i-musicclub.com software. An integral element for a successful club is the software used to capture information on customers’ buying habits. In early 2000, the company introduced a “loyalty scheme,” and if the software proves successful, it will be adapted to the U.S. market, Ward reports.

Ward says that the benefit of having a membership database is a skill that he has yet to see deployed in our marketplace with any great level of sophistication.” Ward says that i-musicclub.com is an area where we think we can use technology and databases to improve customer service.” Ward adds that he is working on creating a database that would allow the customer to be able to E-mail a message reading, “Here is a new Brian Wilson with a couple of extra tracks,” to the appropriate customers.

PRODUCT DISCOUNTS WERE IDENTIFIED AS THE BIGGEST PERK FOR ALL CUSTOMERS AT BOTH LARGE MUSIC STORE CHAINS AND INDEPENDENTS

Certainly it’s not the competitive battle that is the overwhelming factor in most employee decision to stay in music retail. Large and small retail managers surveyed by Billboard said that, while their companies generally are good places to work, the common feeling is that salaries are below those of managers of non-music stores.

At large chains, most full-time employees are paid by the hour, and in some cases, only top management gets a salary. Most said the pay rate varies by location and experience. They cited hourly rates ranging from $6 to $10. Meanwhile, part-time employees usually start around the minimum wage or slightly above, with salaries ranging from $5.15 to $5.50. At smaller chains, full-time employees are mostly paid by the hour, which varies depending upon experience.

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aggressive participant in the business, the deep-pocketed AEG brings to the three number of keynote concert promoters vying for tours. The behemoth SFX is still top dog, with HOB remaining a distant, albeit very active, second. But AEG and Concerts West have plenty of resources to quickly become a factor.

“There is no deal we can’t compete on,” says industry veteran Irving Azoff, who along with AEG president Timothy Leiweke will serve as co-chairmen of Concerts West, Paul Gongaware and John Meglen, founders and former owners of Concerts West, will retain their co-CEO titles. While active in arenas, SFX and HOB are both heavily invested in amphitheaters and the programming there. With AEG and Concerts West (which will retain its name), the emphasis is focused mostly on bringing concerts and other entertainment to arenas.

“This is clearly an arena play,” says Leiweke. “We’re offering arenas the opportunity to book entertain ment tours on a national basis. AEG acquires Concerts West for a undisclosed purchase price; sources close to the situation say the figure was between $30 million and $80 million. Leiweke and Gongaware remain equity positions in the new venture.

Azoff defines his role as “steering the ship,” adding that the idea to bring Concerts West “and others” to AEG was his own. “As a veteran of 30 years in the business, I will keep the ship from hitting icebergs,” says Azoff. “I’m not running the day-to-day operations [of Concerts West].” Azoff remains chairman of Los Angeles-based Giant Records, and as a manager he oversees the careers of Don Henley and Christina Aguilera.

AEG is a top sports and entertainment presenter, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Anschutz Corp., which owns such facilities as Staples Center and the Great Western Forum in Los Angeles and the London Arena, as well as all or part of numerous sports and entertainment venues in the U.S. and overseas, including the NHL’s L.A. Kings and the NBA’s L.A. Lakers. Founded by multibillionaire Phillip Anschutz, AEG also owns a naming rights and sponsorship company, Envision.

Leiweke says Concerts West is a good fit with the other properties.

“We are fans of Concerts West and in particular John and Paul,” says Leiweke. “We are big in the sports world and in the facility management world, but we felt there was a missing piece. Concerts West gives us a prominent position in the live entertainment and concert business.”

Meglen says the acquisition by AEG allows Concerts West to expand on the vision he and Gongaware had when they resurrected the company in Los Angeles in 1998. (Under their management, Concerts West was a national concert-promoter force in the 1970s.) Concerts West’s recent tour promotions include Andrea Bocelli, Mariah Carey, and about one-third of the 2000 Dixie Chicks tour.

“Our plan was to build a company that could be the best in the business by being a focused, location-based company and to put everything on the table,” says Meglen. “We believe there has been a system built up, in particular by AEG, that is just too big. Building a business, increase revenues, and promoting and marketing artists, which is what we have to do. In that respect, not much has changed.”

What has changed is the Concerts West bank account in terms of coming to the table in the national touring game. “We now have the resources available to go out and do everything out there that there is to do,” says Meglen. “We want to make sure of the opportunity to take control of our business, there is no limit to what we can do.”

Leiweke agrees. “Our commitment is to make Concerts West one of the top two or three live entertain ment companies on a national basis,” he says. “If we wanted to, we could be a bidder on everything. We have enough staying power not for one or two or three, but for hundreds of opportunities.”

Expect Concerts West to become very active very soon, Leiweke says. “We hope next year alone these guys do as many tours as we did in the last 10 years.”

“We want to jump in and be a major player very quickly.”

Concerts West under the AEG umbrella may find some immediate competition, says Azoff. “You have one big player in SFX, and House of Blues seems to be pretty dormant at the moment,” he says. “There is nobody—whether it is us or anybody else—that can fill the void in the major U.S. arenas. I’ve known [Meglen and Gongaware] forever; they’re honest, great promoters, and they have great relationships with the arenas. While Meglen stopped short of saying Concerts West would produce a dozen tours in 2001, he did say there was “a whole bunch of shoots” that the company could handle that number from an operational and financial standpoint. Obviously, our priority will be the an arena and we definitely want to work on getting this back to a 12-month business,” he says. “We think that would be much more healthy for every artist and their fans.”

The same month that SFX was formed with participation in the work-for-hire bill business and the passage of a sound recording preservation bill, both of which were successful.

NARAS D.C. BRANCH GETS CHAPTER STATUS

(Continued from page 12)

NARAS chapters enjoy more resources and command a larger representation on the National Board.

The celebration of chapter status was held, appropriately, in the House of Representatives’ Cannon Building Caucus Room. NARAS began expand ing its D.C. chapter in the mid-1990s, with participation in the work-for-hire bill business and the sound recording preservation bill, both of which were successful.

NARAS president/CEO Mike Greene told members, “Your [members]hip recruiting] efforts have exceeded our wildest dreams.”

The association, which one drawing internal battle lines in legislative fights and to not characterize those who hold conflicting views as ‘the enemy’ but rather as ‘friends’ and who we happen to disagree on an issue.”

Greene said, “Sometimes we will be in full agreement with other segments of the music industry, and other times we’ll be 180 degrees diametrically opposed, but that doesn’t mean that we can’t rise above differences.”

Associate member Kenneth M. Kaufman, a Washington music and Internet attorney said about Greene’s comments, “In the macro sense, artists, record companies, songwriters, and music publishers are all in this together. Now, in contract negotiations, for example, artists and labels are generating different sets of criteria. When it comes to music’s future in the digital medium, they’re on the same side.”

50 other members reacted to Greene’s remarks with mixed responses. Rep. Karen McCarthy, D-Mo., a leading artists’ rights advocate in the House, spoke on copyright and other issues at the D.C. chapter who was present at the announcement, said, “A NARAS chap ter in D.C. marks a new era in ad vocacy for the recording community. They, along with other artists’ groups, will be here in the room, and at the table, when Congress considers issues that affect the music industry.”

Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, is also an associate member of the chapter. According to Daryl Friedman, executive director of the chapter, the growth of the Washington group is attributable to two main factors—"a wide and diverse cross-section of music talent and the presence of so many music- and arts-related institutions,” such as the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian Institution, the National Endowment for the Arts, and Time-Life. There are also dozens of law firms in D.C., with intellectual property and entertainment law attorneys.

Friedman will soon be joined by a still-to-be-chosen legislative affairs official hired to educate and inform members of Congress about NARAS’ position on copyright, anti-trust, and other rights concerns, as well as music education, health care, and archival and preservation issues affecting the music community.

D.C. area music community members, including officials of the Washington Area Mus Assn., had correspondence with NARAS for at least years requesting chapter status. Before it was granted, prospective area members had to join NARAS’ mid-Atlantic chapter in Philadelphia.
Joel Whitburn's all-new "Top Pop Singles" and "Pop Annual" serve up Pop just the way you like it—artist-by-artist or year-by-year. With complete chart stats, artist facts, and everything there is to know about every charted Pop single. Each book just $79.95 hardcover and $69.95 softcover. Get the full facts at 800-827-9810 (in U.S.), 262-251-5408 (outside the U.S.) or at www.recordresearch.com.
### Albums with the Greatest Sales Gains

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### Heatseeker Impact

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### Top Selling Albums

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121 113 113 1 4 MTV THE RETURN OF ROCK VOLUME 2 75 
123 140 108 89 1 5 ANDREA BOCELLI THE BEAT 2 
123 143 106 6 3 B.B. KING & ERIC CLAPTON THE NORTHERN CIVIC (12.08/19.08) 13 
124 114 121 1 8 SORROW OR LATER 38 
125 119 106 5 3 BARBRA STREISAND TIMELESS: LIVE IN CONCERT 21 
125 106 68 8 9 SCARFACE "RAPP-A-LTOP 458997/MYG 12/98/19" THE LAST OF A DYING BREED 3 
126 141 123 2 3 MARC ANTHONY & COLINA RODRIGUEZ 12/98/07/19 CD 34 
126 112 68 8 4 SPICE GIRLS "VIRGIN 543477/12/98/19" FOREVER 39 
126 131 72 3 3 FOUR VARIOUS ARTISTS STONED IMMEDIATELY: THE MUSIC OF THE DOORS ELECTRA 6295/12/98/21 
127 144 108 9 1 PAUL SIMON WARNER BROS. 4764 12/98/21 "YOU'RE THE ONE" 19 
127 144 18 11 55 BUNBURY "INTERKULT 69352/199/12/98/21" MAKE YOURSELF 47 
129 151 10 2 1 LOUIE DEVITO N.Y. UNDERGROUND PARTY VOLUME 1 35 
136 122 10 18 10 JACON TIPPIN "LARRY 10/30/2000/HOLLWOOD 10/30/98/19" PEOPLE LIKE US 51 
136 125 10 19 10 KID ROCK "ROLL-O-POLITICAL 833/10/30/98/19" THE HISTORY OF ROCK 2 21 
138 121 140 82 1 SONDHEIMER "LARRY 10/30/2000/HOLLWOOD 10/30/98/19" THE WHOLE SHEBANG 70 
139 126 10 2 7 9 SONDHEIMER "LARRY 10/30/2000/HOLLWOOD 10/30/98/19" REMEMBER THE TITANS 71 
139 140 10 2 9 9 SONDHEIMER "LARRY 10/30/2000/HOLLWOOD 10/30/98/19" EVERYTHING YOU WANT 40 
139 141 9 1 3 EAGLES "MARCA 105/25/199/98/21" SELECTED WORKS-1972-1999 109 
145 156 12 81 1 7 MACK GRAY "EPIC 60460/11/08/21" ON HOW LIFE IS 4 
145 138 95 5 9 SONDHEIMER "MARCA 105/25/199/98/21" HOW TO MAKE A SPICY CARROT SALAD 5 
146 158 1 2 15 UP TAP CHAKUR "RAREBREED RECORDS 12/98/19" THE ROSE THAT GREW FROM CONCRETE VOLUME 1 89 
146 151 11 1 1 GEORGE STRAIT "MONDAY MORNING" 11/08/21 "THE PROMISE" 76 
150 154 1 1 5 SAVANNAH MURPHY "HEAL LIGHTER RECORDS 11/08/21/19" GOTTA TELL YOU 150 
153 137 14 12 1 CHRISTINA AGUILERA "RCA RECORDS 101/98/19" MY REFLECTION 27 
155 132 10 1 16 EVERLAST "Warner Bros." 11/08/21/21 "EAT AT WHITEYS" 20 
158 152 13 9 9 TRAVIS "COLUMBIA RUGGED TRAVERS 12/98/19/21" "DOWN THE ROAD I GO" 51
Strictly Rhythm Enters Joint Venture with WMG

Machine muscle, too. Strictly Rhythm acts will have a better chance of getting important radio and video play. This is a good part of the deal that I’m not locked into one major label. We have the ability to place our music with the appropriate WMG label. That’s what makes this such a special and clever deal. It’s a great situation for everyone involved.”

The agreement stipulates that Strictly Rhythm will market each record, and only a small amount of ownership sold—75,000 units in SoundScan-certified sales or 250 broadcast data systems spins—it becomes “up for grabs” by any WMG label, says Finkelestein. “If one of the WMG labels has a passion for the release, then they’ll go for it. Furthermore, if more than one WMG label wants the same Strictly Rhythm release, then it’s up to us [Strictly Rhythm] to decide which label to go with. This gives us the opportunity to place a record with the label that we believe will have the highest level of success with that release.”

On top of this, Finkelestein says, Strictly Rhythm will have final approval on “the marketing and budget obligations” of its first album in any deal. “I don’t want a label to take one of my albums and release it without a thought-out plan.”

Ritmoteca

(Continued from page 10)

growing) music segment in the country, so we wanted to be very active in the Latin area,” says Sanni Valikonen, VP of business development for the BMG Distribution. Ritmoteca will be able to sell BMG’s entire digital catalog, which currently includes a limited number of Latin titles. BMG expects the Latin catalog to grow substantially in the coming months. “The entire commercially meaningful catalog will be available,” says Valikonen.

BMG is also discussing with another Latin Internet site—ermito.com—signaling an increasing awareness of the importance of digital catalog in the Latin market.

“We have good expectations,” says Valikonen. “In this environment, the key is that we start making it available, and that we grow legitimately so people who enjoy digital music have the availability to buy it, and the market will grow.”

Although Parron won’t disclose exact figures, he says Ritmoteca’s sales have increased 33% per month. (The company reports sales to SoundScan.)

Ritmoteca says it is in talks with the other majors and expects to have signed agreements with them by first quarter 2001. Also, at the beginning of the year, Ritmoteca plans to offer a new subscription model—a combination of streaming and downloads—that will allow up to 1,000 hours of hours of music, at $9.99 per month. Ermito.com already has a subscription-based music streaming service in place.

To Our Readers

The Hot 100 Spotlight will return in the next issue.
CLEAR CHANNEL UNVEILS WEBCASTING TECHNOLOGY (Continued from page 10)

Clear Channel radio stations or SFX venues.

EXPANDING THE SFX LINK

Perceptual Robotics is already looking beyond Clear Channel's radio stations to its live venues, as well as SFX. By using its TrueSquare software, Cooper says, he can create synergies between the two. "We can outfit venues and bring visual content synergies from the SFX venues and the radio station distribution network online, so SFX and Clear Channel are working together," he says, pointing out that those concerts can complement a station's programming, too.

"Part of the plan is to syndicate venue content and private-label it for each local radio station to complement their traditional programming," Cooper adds. "It's another way Clear Channel can put local advertising and local signature-branding on an SFX event."

The same time, Cooper does not believe that the free Webcasts will keep concertgoers at home by the computer. "TrueLook can create more interest and buzz in the pre-promo period, but then the event sends people down to the dumpster to see it for themselves. It's far from keeping people at home; it creates buzz and brings them to events, awareness and actually causes people to go there."

For a venue, says Cooper, that can lead to additional revenue for the radio station, that translates to additional off- and online ratings.

At least two more pilot projects are in the works, says Duncan, featuring concerts by Limp Bizkit and the Corrs.

The long-term application is more likely to be in the studio, where artists will pay a visit to one station and via TrueLook visit dozens of other Clear Channel stations' web sites. Says Duncan, "Whether it's at a venue, at a studio, or at a promotion, if you're doing something cool that people want to see, it's very easy to set yourself apart."

FIVE WEB FIRMS SCALE BACK OR HALT OPERATIONS (Continued from page 10)

were in the black, and as we continued to grow and get bigger audi- ences, our costs went up, but the advertising wasn't growing at the same rate."

Today, the Webcaster says, its users and revenue are both increasing, while it has outsourced nearly all its operations and has given up its Salem, Mass., office space. At the same time, it has cut its staff from 29 to three.

Guinta says the company should be in the black for December and will continue to grow at a likely reduced rate in 2001. Yet an outright sale may be imminent. "We're looking for someone to acquire us or to do some consolidation with other companies," he says. "That's the most likely scenario," says Guinta. DiscJockey has met with four potential buyers or partners to date.

While DiscJockey looks for a buyer, CMGI has pulled the plug on iCast.com, which Webcast magician David Blaine's recent ice-box stunt in New York City.proved.

In a three-sentence statement posted on its site, iCast CEO Margaret Heffernan says iCast "has closed down its Web site and is in the process of winding down the business." In November, CMGI closed off about five dozen employees and announced it was looking to sell its entertainment operations. CMGI is a holding company that owns many Web sites but was unable to find a buyer. RadioWave.com, creator of Internet Radio Network, is also tightening its business. The company is selling the business or perhaps the company's roster in first-half 2001.

The Chicago-based RadioWave is built around its Web site and in the process of winding down the business, CMGI said. The company has sold off about five dozen employees and announced it was looking to sell its entertainment operations. CMGI is a holding company that owns many Web sites but was unable to find a buyer.

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Billboard Site Seeks Chart Fans For 2000 Trivia Contest

Billboard.com has launched its Year-End 2000 Trivia Contest & CD Giveaway with 29 questions designed to please the brain of even the most knowledgeable chart fan. The questions were created by Fred Bronson, renowned chart expert for Billboard and Billboard.com, so you know they’re tough and intriguing.

The site will post a new question each weekday through Jan. 4. Each day, the first 10 Billboard.com readers to submit the correct answer will win a daily prize and be eligible for the grand-prize drawing.

After all the submissions are in for the 20 questions, Billboard.com will place every winning entrant in a prize drawing. One grand-prize winner will receive the top 200 CDs of the year, based on the year-end Billboard 200 as printed in the Dec. 30 issue of Billboard. Additionally, two runners-up will receive the top 50 CDs of the year.

The contest is but one part of Billboard.com’s Year-End Review. Close to www.billboard.com for a preview of Billboard magazine’s big year-end issue (street date: Dec. 22). There’s also an exclusive, interactive year-end crossword puzzle. Plus all the regular daily news and weekly features that made Billboard.com a favorite destination for music fans and professionals alike.

Musician’s Guide Hits The Road Again

The Original Musician’s Guide to Touring and Promotion has been serving the needs of working musicians for nine years. The latest edition of the Musician’s Guide for winter/spring 2001 has just been issued by Billboard Publications and is updated with more essential listings than ever. Published twice a year, the Musician’s Guide lists over 4,000 industry contacts. This comprehensive guide contains names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses for each listing.

In addition to contact information, there are touring tips throughout the Guide by touring musicians such as Bruce Kulick (Kiss), Chuck Wright (Quiet Riot), and Ravi (former Hanson guitarist). The Musician’s Guide is a helpful tool for any band preparing for a live showcase. For example, a band in Boston can use the Guide to find information on numerous local clubs including Bill’s Bar and K unreal Club. There’s a description of the types of bands the clubs book, a list of the top six radio stations, five local publications including The Boston Globe and The Improper Bostonian, local record stores, equipment repair rental shops, A&R personnel from major and/or independent labels, and other invaluable information.

Listings also include contact information for booking agents, managers, attorneys, tour managers, music industry websites, talent and dance services, bus and van rental companies, and annual music conferences and showcases.

To purchase a copy, send a check or money order for $13.95 per copy ($15.95 in Canada, $16.95 overseas) to Musician’s Guide to Touring and Promotion, 40 Music Square West, Nashville, TN 37203; or contact Julie Crider at 800-407-8574 or 615-321-8255 for non-U.S. readers. Or visit www.musiciansguide.com. All prices include shipping and handling.

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There are some things you just never expect to hear. For example, in your wildest imagina

ication, you can picture of Florida Secretary of State Katherine Harris ever saying, "I hereby certify Al Gore as the winner of Florida's 25 electoral votes."

In that same vein, a year ago, could you ever have expected to hear "Gwyneth Paltrow is No. 1 in Billboard."

I can’t speak for Harris, but I can tell you that the star of "Slid- ing Doors," "Shakespeare In Love," and "Duets" is No. 1 on the Adult Contemporary chart, along with her "Duets" co-star Huey Lewis.

This unlikely duo tops the chart with a remake of Smokey Robinson's 1980 hit "Cruisin.'" Paltrow is not the first actress to top a Billboard chart. Think Shelley Fabares ("Johnny Angel") and Vicki Lawrence ("The Night The Lights Went Out In Georgia."). But there are many more singers who have crossed over to Billboard from the movie world, such as Cher, Diana Ross, Madonna, Cyndy Lauper, and Whitney Houston, among many others.

For the original version of "Cruisin'" debuted on the AC chart in December 1979, it was the first time Robinson had an AC entry. But his version peaked at No. 34, so Lewis and Paltrow have the most successful AC version of the song. Ironically, Robinson did hit the top of the AC chart as an artist. But the song that did the trick, "Just To See Her," is a rarity, as it’s one of the few songs Robinson has recorded that he didn’t write.

"Cruisin'" is the first AC No. 1 of 2000 to come from a soundtrack and the first movie song to reach the top since Phil Collins’ song from "Tarzan," the Academy Award-winning "You'll Be In My Heart," in 1999. "Cruisin'" is the first duet to reach pole position since R. Kelly & Celine Dion’s "I'm Your Angel" at the end of 1998.

Since 1992, the only other male/female duets to go to No. 1 on the AC chart have been "Wild Night" by John Mellencamp and MeShell Ndegeocello in 1994, "Lave I" by Vanessa Williams and Brian McKnight in 1993, and "A Whole New World" by Peabo Bryson and Regina Belle, also in 1993. "Cruisin'" marks the return of Lewis to the upper echelons of the AC chart. His last hit on this chart was "100 Years From Now," a top 10 hit in January 1997. "Cruisin'" is only his second AC No. 1, following "Stuck With You" in 1986.

As for Motown legend Robinson, this is a good week for him. While one of his songs reaches the #1 summit, another debuts on Hot R&B Singles & Tracks. Brandy Mosa-Scott and Cello's update of " Tears Of A Clown" (Heavenly) is now at No. 91.

Destiny Rides Again: It's not a case of an "Ex" file at No. 1 on The Billboard Hot 100 yet, as Mysa remains at No. 2 behind Destiny's Child's latest, "Independent Women Part I" (Columbia). "Women" is on top for a fifth week, making it the second-longest-running No. 1 of 2000. Only "Maria Maria" by Santana Featuring The Product G&B had a longer run, at 10 weeks.
SONIC BOOM

Top 5 Debuts Around The World:
United States, Australia, Canada, Japan, Mexico, Spain, Colombia, Chile, Switzerland, Peru

TV Appearances:
Stellar appearance on the Billboard Awards
The Tonight Show - December 12
American Music Awards - January 8
Prime Time Network Special
in the works

See Him On The Covers Of:
People Magazine
Entertainment Weekly

RICKY MARTIN
sound loaded

"*** Sound Loaded puts Martin back on top of the Latin pop genre... downright infectious... the singer is virtually invincible."
-- THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

"*** Martin's new sound is loaded with enough hooks and heart to ensure that fans won't be bidding him adios anytime soon."
-- USA TODAY

"*** Ricky Martin follows up his blockbuster with, well, a blockbuster. Near perfect pop... masterful and totally radio friendly."
-- NEW YORK POST

"Sound Loaded can samba one moment, shimmy to a pop chorus the next, or writhe to exotic Middle Eastern melodies."
-- NEWSWEEK

"***
-- ROLLING STONE

The album features an incredible collaboration with some of the hottest producers and arrangers out there, including Emilio Estefan, Jr. and his Crescent Moon, Inc. team of George Noriega, Randy Barlow and Jon Secada; Robi Rosa; Walter Afanasieff; Desmond Child; Mark Taylor for Brian Rawling; Rive Droite Music and KC Porter for WorldBeat Productions.
PLATINUM
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Diana Krall
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