Studio Craft From A Distance

EDNet Helps Producers And Artists Get Connected

BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH
NEW YORK—The landmark 1993 sessions at Capitol Studios in Hollywood that produced Frank Sinatra’s Duets album permanently transformed the recording industry—and for far more than the music.

Duets—which paired Sinatra with more than a dozen contemporary singers, including Lenny Kravitz and Barbra Streisand—was the music world’s first high-profile use of Entertainment Digital Network, or EDNet (pronounced E-D-net).

EDNet is a telecommunications network that allows artists in different locations to collaborate simultaneously via fiber-optic connections. Using the nascent technology, producer Phil Ramone crafted seamless duets between Sinatra and guest artists who were often thousands of miles away.

“When the Duets album came up, I realized that there are so many great artists who are not always in the same city,” Ramone says. That’s when he decided to use EDNet.

“Many people said, ‘It doesn’t work,’ or ‘It will have problems.’ But [the EDNet] guys sat behind me all the time and monitored my stuff so that we didn’t have breakdowns.”

Ramone remembers hugging EDNet to studios, encouraging them to get the technology. One studio that already had it was the Hit Factory, the legendary New York City recording facility. “We were the first in New York in 1993, when we were doing Duets with Phil Ramone and [engineer] Al Schmitt,” says CEO Troy Germano.

Such artists as Bono, Gloria Estefan, and Charles Aznavour came to the Hit Factory to record with Sinatra—who was clear across the country.

(Continued on page 79)

Christian Hip-Hop: Devil’s Bargain?

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE
NASHVILLE—As the Christian music industry has grown—the sector sold some 44 million units last year—the ethos that contemporary Christian and gospel artists use to convey their message has evolved dramatically.

Although quartets and choirs are still an integral part of the soundscape, many other forms have emerged to spread the faith—Christian rap and hip-hop among them. Yet just as Christian hard-rock and metal bands fought for critical legitimacy and retail shelf space in the ‘70s and ‘80s, Christian rap and hip-hop artists are now struggling to gain acceptance and support from their brethren.

It’s a new day for the Christian music industry, with SoundScan numbers up 12% for first-half 2001 over the same period last year. As the sixth-largest genre, according to the RIAA, Christian is exceeded in sales only by rock, rap/hip-hop, pop, country, and R&B/urban. But are Christian rap and hip-hop artists getting their share of the pie?

Some argue that they are waging the same battles their rock predecessors fought decades ago, when conservatives in the Christian ranks challenged whether that genre was an appropriate medium for furthering the Christian message—and whether such music would sell.

“We’re fighting the exact same battle,” says Teron “Bonafide” Carter of Gotee Records act Grits. “Christian rock is one of the main music genres they sell a lot of. I believe it’s getting to the point that with hip-hop, but they’re a little more fearful of this genre because they’re uneducated about it. Rock pretty much crossed all cultural boundaries. Hip-hop has done that in the main—

(Continued on page 82)

Ryan Adams Finds ‘Gold’ On Lost Highway

BY WES ORSHOSKI
NEW YORK—Spend enough time with acclaimed singer/songwriter Ryan Adams, and chances are good that the conversation will eventually meander through topics of love and heartbreak, New York vs. Los Angeles, and speedy songwriting, before somehow turning to—of all things—death-metal juggernaut Slayer.

It may take a while, but Adams—the former frontman of alt-country heroes Whiskeytown—will get there. In conversation, he might make a silly reference to the head-hanging outfit. In concert, he may even attempt one of the group’s buzz-saw guitar solos—on an acoustic guitar, no less. And, for this, he’s routinely awarded with laughter.

Yet Adams is only half-kidding.

An unashamed pop-culture sponge, the 26-year-old, Jacksonville, N.C.-born singer could just as easily dissect Slayer’s best records (for the uninitiated, 1986’s Reign in Blood tops ’88’s South of Heaven) as he could those of the rock, country, and punk legends that have obviously informed his own work.

It may come as a surprise to most fans that Adams’ brand of barroom rock and misty-eyed balladry owes as much to the less-than-hip corners of rock culture as it does to such icons as Neil Young, Paul Westerberg, and Bruce Springsteen. But this help explains why his new solo set—Gold, due Sept. 25 from Lost Highway—is the most mainstream-leaning, least alt-

(Continued on page 80)
Latin Grammys’ Move Carries Cost

BY LEILA COBO
MIAMI—The last-minute move of the Latin Grammy Awards from Miami to Los Angeles has caused a tumult of activity, as labels, artists, and the Latin Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (LARAS) itself struggle to revive in three weeks plan that had taken many more.

“A lot of the details need to be worked out, but we are hoping to move everything over there,” Enrique Fernández, senior VP/executive director of LARAS, tells Billboard. “We were prepared for this event, not a local event, so it can be held anywhere in the world.”

Originally slated to be held at Miami’s AmericanAirlines Arena, the Latin Grammys with the most recent move from seven-time nome R&B hotel according to Michael Greene, president/CEO of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences and LARAS.

Greene decided to move the show the 11th hour to Los Angeles because with Miami city officials regarding the location of approximately 100 Cuban-exile groups opposed to Fidel Castro’s regime who are scheduled to protest on the evening of the awards show over the treatment of Cubans two weeks ago. Greene made the decision to move the event because she thought he couldn’t guarantee the safety of guests, artists, sponsors, and presumably themselves (see Latin Notes, page 38).

While the move itself won’t be too painful—after all, the entire Grammy show infrastructure is in Los Angeles—it will come at a financial cost.

“We’ve basically acknowledged that we’re going to lose between $400,000 and $600,000,” Greene says. “We have 40 suites at the AmericanAirlines Arena which we are selling between $20,000 and $40,000, and we have no suites in the Forum. We’re going to lose money on this endeavor. But if one person were going to be injured, or if the show all of a sudden weren’t about the music, you can’t put a price on that.”

Greene had previously said it would cost $1 million to move the Grammys from L.A. to Miami. That cost being offset by the South Florida Host Committee, which has already raised more than $500,000 for the awards.

Many think the event could have gone on without a hitch in Miami. “This community has hosted popes, kings, queens, the Summit of the Americas, the Super Bowls, World Series, and other events bigger than the Latin Grammys,” committee member Fred Balsera says. “Leaving Miami because of potential demonstrations is a lame and hurtful excuse. It’s a possibility that people have been contemplating months before, when Miami was chosen as the host city. We had foreseen that [protests] would be a possibility—not a certainty, but a possibility,” Fernández says.

But two weeks ago, when protesters asked to be placed closer to the venue, LARAS began to look for alternative sites, sources say, and was ready to pick up and go. The first possibility was Miami, which was scheduled for 2000. It was also scheduled for the arena, but this too fell through, according to Fernández.

“Leaving the system is not expected, although I think we’ll have higher-profile presenters because we’ll be in Los Angeles,” Greene says. “We probably won’t have an all-star tribute to the music of Miami."

Aside from the costs to LARAS, the South Florida economy forfeits an estimated $35 million in revenue from a series of spinoffs to the media and ancillary events. Many of these events will be transferred to L.A., but others, logically, can’t make it in time.

Universal Settles Into New Rhythm With López

BY LEILA COBO
MIAMI—More than a month after Jesús López took over as chairman of Universal Music Latin America/Iberian Peninsula, the label finally seems to be settling into a new rhythm. It follows myriad structural and personnel changes at all levels of the company, including the departure of veteran Sánchez as president/CEO of Latin Music Mexico—Music Mexico, which had already raised more than $500,000 for the awards.

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Chart Beat by Fred Bronson

It's true, man, DeWyne Wins: The 12:3 rise of Janet Jackson's "Someone to Call My Lover" (Virgin) on The Billboard Hot 100 is good news for the artist, who collects her 28th top 10 hit. But it's better news for songwriters Dewey Bunnell, who has his first top 10 hit since America's "Tin Man" peaked at No. 4 some 27 years ago.

"Someone," which samples America's 1972 No. 8 "Ventura Highway," is the second-highest-ranked song of Bunnell's career—runner-up to the tune that brought America to America's attention earlier in 1972, "A Horse With No Name." Bunnell was the sole writer on that song, which spent three weeks at No. 1. As an artist, Bunnell was last in the top 10 in 1982, when "You Can Do Magic" went to No. 8. But that song wasn't composed by any of America's members; Russ Ballard penned the act's fifth-top hit.

As for Jan, with "Someone," she surpasses the number of top 10 singles amassed by her brother Michael Jackson. The former lead singer of Jackson 5 has 27 top 10 hits just counting his solo career away from his siblings. (He'll have a chance to catch up with his sister with the release of the first single from his forthcoming album.)

Janet is also ahead of Michael when you count consecutive top 10 hits. Janet has 18 in a row, from "Miss You Much" to "Get Lucky," while Michael has 17, from "Don't Stop 'Til You Get Enough" to "Dirty Diana" (not counting some Motown singles that were released long after Michael signed with Epic). If you don't include songs on which Janet was a featured guest, she has 20 consecutive top 10s.

If you apply that same rule to Michael, he would have 16. Put another way, since "What Have You Done For Me Lately." But one of Janet's singles on which she was the main artist (thus dismissing guest appearances with Shaggy and Blackstreet) has made the top 10. The lone exception is 1997's No. 14 "The Pleasure Principle."

Big Brother: Nothing its 18th week atop Top Country Albums, O Brother, Where Art Thou? (Mercury) has been No. 1 twice as long as the second-longest-running No. 1 soundtrack in the history of this chart. Hop Flops floats behind with nine weeks on top.

Alison Krauss, who sings the ethereal "Down to the Rover to Pray" on O Brother, is represented by two albums in the top three, as her new Favorite, recorded with Union Station, enters at No. 3.

Big Red: A cultural icon created in 1939 continues to inspire pop songs in 2001. Five for Fighting makes its Hot 100 debut at No. 69 with "Superman (It's Not Easy)" (Atlantic/Columbia). It was only five months ago that 3 Doors Down was on the chart with Superman's Achilles' heel, "Kryptonite." The debut of the Smallestville series on the WB in the fall could inspire a new rash of Clark Kent and/or Superboy hits, but it's time someone wrote a song about Lana Lang.

EARL SCRUGGS AND FRIENDS

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BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAIN BLUES (Earl with JOHN FOGERTY)
PASSIN’ THRU (Earl with DON HENLEY and JOHNNY CASH)
FOGGY MOUNTAIN ROCK/FOGGY MOUNTAIN SPECIAL
(Earl with MARTY STUART)
BY BRIAN GARRITY  

NEW YORK—Despite recent strong sales from the likes of ‘N Sync and the latest installment of the ‘Star Wars’ compilation series, 2001 has been a disappointment for the record industry. New figures from the Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) indicate that music companies shipped less product to retail outlets during the first six months of 2001 than they did in the first half of last year, resulting in a decline in the dollar value of unit shipments.

The value of music shipments in the U.S. during the first half of 2001 fell 4.4% from the same period last year, to $3.62 billion to $5.9 billion. That decline translates into 2.2 million fewer units shipped to retail, which fell 9.4%, from 488.7 million to 442.7 million during the same time frame.

Pacing the fallout is the deteriorating cassette format. The number of cassette units shipped to retail fell 42.9%, from 38.6 million to 22 million. Correspondingly, the value of these shipments also declined, falling 41.9% from $393.2 million to $176 million. Shipments of singles also continue to decline. Singles shipped in the U.S. in the CD, cassette, and vinyl configurations combined totaled 14 million units during the first six months of 2001—a decline of 9.3% from 15.6 million units shipped in the first half of 2000. A year ago, 22.7 million singles units were shipped—a value of $93.4 million.

As sales of singles and albums declined, DVD music videos provided the best news during the first half of 2001, doubling last year’s figures by moving 3 million units.

BY PHILLIS STARK  

NASHVILLE—Ford Phillips says one of his top goals as the new senior VP/GM of CMT will be “to flesh out the identity, the culture, and the values of the channel.”

Phillips currently is the director of FM programming for Susquehanna Broadcasting’s Dallas and Atlanta stations, will join CMT Sept. 10. After consulting for the network for several months, Phillips will succeed Paul Hasta, who exits after six years at the network’s helm in Nashville.

Phillips will oversee programming, production, talent relations, marketing, and promotions for CMT, which became part of the country-flavored Viacom network in January. Based in Nashville, Phillips reports to John Sykes, president of CMT and VH1 in New York.

Phillips says he’ll be “tremendously” involved in the programming at CMT. “As a programming person, that’s my natural inclination. It’s something else that goes with the job that I’ll learn.”

Sykes explains that running a radio station requires many of the same skills as running a cable network. CMT is a focused niche brand that is not only out to get ratings but to build an image. Great program directors are gatekeepers, and I think Brian is one of them.

“It was also the right time in the evolution of CMT to bring in a heavy-weight programmer like Brian. We are weeks away from passing the 50 million-subscriber mark. We feel that CMT is poised to truly see incredible growth. We really see this as being a great brand opportunity for MTV Networks, much the same way VH1 was seven years ago.”

Phillips agrees that CMT “has this huge, latent power to change the direction of the music and to expose exciting new things. We’ll try a lot of different ideas. We’ll succeed with some, fail with some but we’re consulting for those stations.

Hard as it was to leave radio after 18 years, Phillips says, “I realized that there probably wasn’t going to be another opportunity in my life where somebody was going to say, ‘Go run a Viacom network.’ ” He describes his new gig as a “big job, with pictures.”

Phills’ duties at Susquehanna included overseeing programming for country RPLX (the Wolf) in Dallas, modern rock WNNX (99X) Atlanta, and top 40 WWWQ (Q100) Atlanta. He will be working to accommodate continuing interests during the first half of 2002.

Rosen said she was confident that year-end numbers would be strong, pointing to high hopes for second-half releases from the likes of Mary J. Blige, Andrea Bocelli, Brandy, Goo Goo Dolls, Macy Gray, Enrique Iglesias, Jewel, Natalie Merchant, and Alanis Morissette.

Among the bright spots in the first-half figures was the value of LPs, which rose amid what the RIAA termed a “modest” increase in popularity. Units rose 7.4% to 1 million, while dollar value was up 3.9% to $12.9 million.

The biggest growth came from DVD music video shipments. They were up 99.2% to $70.1 million on shipments of 3 million units. In the first half of last year, 1.4 million units were shipped at a value of $35.2 million. The RIAA said the growth is “further confirmation that the disc is the preferred format” for music videos.

Also during the first half of 2001, the CD increased its dominance as the prevalent music format. CD shipments represented close to 90% of all units shipped, up from 86% in the first half of last year.

Rosen said, “Consumer loyalty to the physical product still dominates, and we are committed to providing the quality product listeners desire.”

“But she added that the majors are also working to accommodate consumer interest in new formats—specifically digital.”

“Our companies recognize the fact that more consumers are looking to get music online and are experimenting with a number of approaches, including legitimate subscription services,” Rosen said.

“We are committed to delivering the music consumers love when they want it and how they want it.”

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In New CMT Post, Philips Faces Uncharted Territory

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In The News

- Music TV network CMT will launch a new food serving the Pacific and Mountain regions, as well as Alaska and Hawaii. The new Western feed launches Sept. 10.

- Pioneering concert promoter Jack Boyle, who sold his cellular Door Companies to SFX Entertainment—now Clear Channel Entertainment (CCE)—in 1998 for $106 million to become CCE’s music division chairman, will curtail his activities in CCE’s Washington, D.C., offices and become chairman emeritus. Short of saying he is semi-retiring, Boyle tells Billboard: “I’ll still be available if they need me, but I’m going to get totally out of the day-to-day. I’m not mad at anybody, but I’m 67, and there are other things I want to do. I walked out on my own, in my own time, and not many people can say that.”

- Def Jam founder Russell Simmons has been appointed to be the board of directors of Brilliant Digital Entertainment, a 3-D technology development company in which he has become a shareholder. Brilliant Digital creates interactive, animated music videos for the Web.
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"This Is Destiny's Child" Thursday, August 30, on FOX (8 PM ET/PT • 7 PM CT)
Indie Launch, EMI Signing Dominate Gospel Event

**BY LISA COLLINS**

MINNEAPOLIS—The signing of a rising gospel star to a major label and the introduction of a new label from one of the industry’s most respected names eclipsed artist showcasesthe 34th annual Gospel Music Workshop of America (GMWA) Convention, held here Aug. 11-17.

The emphasis on industry news is part of an effort on the part of the convention’s Gospel Announcers Guild to set a more substantive agenda, solidifying the gathering’s ranking as the most important event in gospel. GMWA vice chairman Al “the Bishop” Hobbs says, “We want it to be known that if you’re going to introduce this agenda, you’ve got to be here.”

The focus— and highlights—of this past convention had been artist showcases. But while Yolanda Adams thrilled an audience of more than 700 gospel announcers with a full concert performance, such showcases were notably down in number this year, due in equal part to rising costs and an industry in flux, as reflected by the absence of such labels as Word Records.

EMI Gospel marketing director Shawn Tate, who used the event to announce the label’s recent signing of songwriter Smokie Norful, says, “Regardless of what’s happening in the industry, the GMWA is the biggest gospel convention in the world. What better place to make a statement or introduce an artist than to the largest audience of gospel announcers in the country?”

To that end, Verity and Tyscot Records—in a joint statement—announced the signing of Deitrick Haddon (Tyscot’s most popular breakout artist) to a solo pact with Verity in a deal similar to the one that brought John P. Kee from Tyscot to Verity eight years ago.

According to Tyscot VP Bryant Scott, “There’s always been a provision for Deitrick to do something on a solo level on a larger scale, so his choir, the Voices of Unity, will stay with Tyscot, and he’ll continue to record with them, while his solo projects will go through the Verity system.”

The convention also served as the site for the official launch of New Orleans-based Tebahil Music Group. The label is owned by the 1 million-member-strong Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship, consisting of churches in more than 30 states and five countries. Its first release—Elder Debra B. Morton Presents Women of Excellence Mass Choir—is slated for release next month.

Debra B. Morton, who was on hand to make the announcement, tells Billboard that the convention was the smartest choice for the label’s coming out. “We know that it is the gospel announcers who help to make it happen for artists—both old and new.”

Concerts West Lands Spears Trek

**Clear Channel Faces Competition For National Tours**

**BY RAY WADDELL**

NASHVILLE—News that Concerts West—the concert promotion arm of Anschutz Entertainment Group (AEG)—will produce the upcoming Britney Spears tour demonstrates not only that Concerts West isn’t about to be gobbled up by Clear Channel Entertainment (CCE) but also that it will compete mightily for the right tours.

Earlier this summer, industry speculation regarding an impending Concerts West acquisition by CCE (then SFX) was rampant (Billboard Bulletin 20/81). Talks apparently fell through, and now Concerts West has beaten out CCE in head-to-head competition for the Spears tour, which will play arenas this fall instead of CCE sheds.

**UNDISPUTED LEADER**

CCE remains the undisputed concert leader indoors and out, producing such arena tours as Madonna, Backstreet Boys, and U2 outings. The company is also the world’s largest owner/operator of outdoor amphitheaters and is promoting major events to hit its AMPC network.

Despite CCE’s dominance, Concerts West’s Spears coup sends a message that the industry leader now has a deep-pocketed competitor, above and beyond distant second House of Blues Concerts (HOB). Talk that AEG is making a bid to purchase HOB appears to be premature: a source at HOB says a deal was not imminent.

Philip Anschutz, owner of the sports and entertainment giant AEG, purchased Los Angeles-based Concerts West last year (with mega-manager Irving Azoff on board as investment partner) to focus on arena tours, as was the intention of Concerts West co-presidents John Meglen and Paul Conaway. The goal to compete for national tours now has been accomplished. Meglen declined to comment.

The Spears deal marks the first time Concerts West has outbid CCE for a tour. Larry Rudolph, who co-manages Spears with Johnny Wright, says the artist’s options to tour with either Concerts West or CCE were both exceptional opportunities.

“Clear Channel is an incredible company, and I’m sure we’ll be doing more business with them,” Rudolph says. “We went with Concerts West because they’re a strong touring company and because they have ancillary properties, in that [parent AEG owns] arenas and some 7,000 movie theaters throughout the country.

“This decision was not made to exclude Clear Channel,” he adds. “It was made to include Concerts West.”

AEG’s theater properties, including United Artists theaters, have increased importance, given a motion-picture project from Spears due in February, Rudolph says. “AEG has the ability to help us market our core products—the album and tour—and our secondary properties—the movie—in ways that tipped the scale for us.”

**BRITNEY’S BEST INTERESTS**

David Zedek, agent at Evolution Talent for Spears (as well as such CCE-associated acts as Bruce Springsteen and ‘N Sync), declaimed to comment on published reports that Spears would earn a $13 million-$15 million guarantee for the tour, but he did acknowledge the competition Concerts West made to the offer: “We just made the decision that we felt was in Britney’s best interests.”

While production details and markets had not been finalized at press time, details of the Spears tour are expected to hit 32-33 arenas beginning Oct. 29, tentatively in Miami, and continuing through Dec. 17. A new five album is due in early November, with the show and tour both expected to open on most dates; sponsors include Pepsi and two other as-yet-unannounced corporations. Last year, Spears’ touring grossed $30 million.

**Popkomm Talk Focuses On Turnaround**

**BY EMMANUEL LEGRAND**

and GORDON MASSON

COLOGNE, Germany—At a time when Germany’s record industry is enduring plummeting sales (see story, pg 45), delegates at this year’s Popkomm trade show Aug. 16-18 spent much of their time discussing initiatives to turn the market around.

Setting the mood was BMG Europe president Thomas Stein who noted, although 260 million units of recorded music were sold in Germany last year, during the same period 22.8 billion CDs were sold, down 18% from the previous year. The boom in CDs, plus the impact of illegal downloads, contributed to a loss in industry revenue of 3.3 billion deutsche marks ($1.55 billion).

“This is not a rosy picture,” said Stein, who predicted that other countries—including the U.K., which last year leapfrogged Germany to claim its place as the No. 3 music market in the world—will not be immune from these developments.

Stein urged German politicians to improve the country’s Union copyright legislation—a move backed by Vivendi Universal chairman Jean-Marie Messier, who also made a plea to hardware manufacturers not to encourage the proliferation of such devices as CD-R writers.

“You cannot, on one hand, sell tools to create creative products and, on the other hand, build hardware that steals intellectual property,” Messier said. “Our business has already been seriously damaged by CD-R and the several hundred million of art- ists, songwriters, and our compa- nies. That should not start again with Super Audio CD recorders or DVD-Audio recorders. Respecting manufacturing and promotion creation is a prereq- uisite. I hope we will be heard this time by manufacturers and recording companies. As one of the most affected coun- tries, Germany is currently the big- gest lab for copy-protection experi- mentation. “Germany is the country that must suffer the most, so it is natural that we were the first to look into the issue,” explains Warn- er Music Germany president Bernd Dopp. Warner has yet to release a copy-protected CD in the German market, but, Dopp says, the company hopes to be releasing them by the end of the year.

Universal Music Germany presi- dent/CEO Tim Renner says the most likely tracks to be illegally copied are hit singles and dance music. Like the other majors, Uni- versal is in a testing period, with only a few releases copy-protected so far. Renner tells Billboard, “If it works, we will jump.”

Label heads tell Billboard that a decision about which technological solution to adopt will not be made merely at European level. Dopp notes, “It is an important decision that must also involve the artists, and it would make no sense if only German acts had their CDs copy-protected—we need to include all the artists.” Labels estimate that per unit, such copy protection will add about one-tenth of a euro (9 cents) to manufacturing costs.

One of the few outspoken opt- imists for the evolution of Messier, who predicted that the music market globally will begin to regenerate and grow in 2002. “If you remember that two-thirds of the population in the world does not buy music today, you can imagine that the opportu- nities to sell more music to more people may be limitless.”

Executive Turntable

**RECORD COMPANIES:** Tommy Boy Music promotes Steve Knutson to head of alternative A&R/marketing and Barry Ko- ven to head of sales in New York City. They were, respectively, head of sales and in the sales department.

Suzanne Perl is promoted to national director of rock formats for Universal Records in New York City. She was New York regional promotion director.

Lincoln Wheeler is named director/product manager for Virgin Records in Los Angeles. He was senior channel manager for ArtistDirect.

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**Spanish Lessons Pay Off For BMG's Alexandre Pires**

BY LEILA COBO

MIAMI—While most Latin artists are busy brushing up on their English in preparation for crossing over from Spanish, these days Alexandre Pires spends his time with a Spanish tutor. "It's not easy," acknowledges the soft-spoken Pires, speaking in Spanish from his office in Brazil. "It's been lessons, lessons, lessons, because [before] I heard Spanish in my own. Now, it's been a question of recording 40 minutes of music in a foreign language.

Those 40 minutes constitute Alexandre Pires, the artist's first full-length Spanish album—and a disc that label BMG U.S., Latin hopes will make Pires the first Brazilian artist to gain full acceptance in the Spanish-language market since Roberto Carlos. The album, due Sept. 11 in the U.S., Spain, and other Latin territories.

That lofty goal doesn't seem so far-fetched. Pires has already successfully tested the waters with Spanish tracks. Last year, he won awards at Spain's Premios Amigo y Premios Ondas, and the duet "Santo Santo," recorded in 1999 with Gloria Estefan, was nominated for a Latin Grammy Award.

Most telling, Pires doesn't need to be a Spanish-language star. Not yet 24 years old, he has reportedly sold some 11 million discs with his band No Par. Contraria. He tours most of the year, and Carlos himself has publicly named him his successor. A Spanish album, at this point, would appear to be a side project in an already fertile career—except that Pires says he plans it as the beginning of a new, parallel route.

"This will work because he's already sold over 800,000 units in the Latin region," says Jorge Louie Domingo, BMG VP of marketing for the Latin region. "He has great awareness, and this album is full of hits—Latin hits. We believe he's Brasil's best Latin artist.

In the U.S., where Pires is less well-known, Dorigha hopes to create initial awareness with the first single, "Usted Se Me Robó la Vida," which has already hit Latin radio and is the theme tune for different five soap operas throughout Latin America. In Brazil, the single has propelled the Portuguese version of the album, issued last month, to sales of more than 200,000 copies, the label reports.

"I have so much faith in that track," says German Estrada, PD for Miami-based Romant 106.7 FM. "From the moment I first played it, people were calling to ask who the singer was. Beyond the single, Pires' album strikes an almost ideal balance of voice and repertoire, in the grand tradition of such classic balladeers as Carlos, Manuel Alejandro, and José José."

"This might be the best album I've made in my 18 years in the business," insists Adrián Posse, BMG U.S. Latin A&R director. "Alexandre is a multi-instrumentalist, a dancer, a composer, a great-looking guy. And he brings a different voice—he brings a feeling you detect in the first four bars."

"Pires also brings a Brazilian sensibility that's considered irresistible by many elsewhere. But in recent years, few Brazilian acts have achieved commercial success on a grand scale, either in English or Spanish. Part of the problem is the Brazilian market is so large and self-sufficient that acts lose revenue if they sacrifice domestic touch for international promotion. I know I'm not as important abroad as I am in Brazil," Pires says. "But my priority now is international." He is aided by a disc that, far from being a translation of a Portuguese production (the Portuguese version is an actual translation of the Spanish), was conceived specifically for the Latin market.

To accomplish this, Posse enlisted songwriter Estefánia, who spent a month in Brazil with Pires, tailoring songs for the artist. "I've heard my songs placed up there by an amazing interpreter," Estefánia says, adding that Pires has "a very sweet but strong voice, a soulful voice." Ranked as the No. 1 Latin songwriter by Billboard for 2001's first six months, thanks to hits written for the likes of Paulina Rubio and Chayanne, Estefánia wrote most of the tracks on Alexandre Pires. The album was produced by Julio Reyes, Roy Neuro, Donato Pozza, and Paul del Sol for Estefánia Productions.

On his end, Dorigha expects to sell more than 2 million copies of Alexandre Pires worldwide. "He's the sex symbol of Brazil—we're targeting women and a younger audience. And we've done a dance remix and a pop remix of 'Usted,' to cover the whole spectrum. We're positioning [Pires] as someone who crosses all frontiers.
BY WES ORSHOSKI
NEW YORK—They take their music very seriously,” a Roadrunner Records publicist says of the label’s platinum shock-thrashers Slipknot. For most bands, this much is implied. But most bands aren’t like Slipknot.

In fact, most groups have nothing in common with the hardcore nonet, which, in the three years since emerging from the very definition of the middle of nowhere—Des Moines, Iowa—has gone on to establish itself as the reigning act of shock rock.

What’s helped win Slipknot that title (which it is sure to retain after the highly anticipated Aug. 28 release of its second Roadrunner album, Iowa) more than anything else, and what distinguishes it from just about every other act, is that each member of the band wears a mask. We’re not talking sparkly Mexican wrestling masks or rubbery Dick Nixon masks. The Slipknot get-ups range from the psychotically clown to the bloody mime.

What’s more, when the band members—some of whom have exchanged their names for numerals—take the stage in these masks (and matching, sometimes faux-blood-stained jumpsuits), they deliver the stuff of modern-day metal legend: relentlessly full-throttle aggression, chaotic and frightening enough to generate as many nightmares as it does the blood-spewing antics did in the ’70s.

With Slipknot making Halloween an everyday event, it’s understandable that the group’s publicist feels compelled to stress that the band also puts care and effort into its songwriting as well. (Their songs are published by EMI April Music/Music That Music, ASCAP. Slipknot is managed by L.A.-based Steve Richards at No Name Management, and booked by Dave Kirby at the Agency Group in Los Angeles.)

Playing to metalheads across the U.S.—from the fest’s second stage—helped Slipknot reach platinum status.

This summer, Slipknot again set up its forthcoming album with a slot on the just-wrapped Ozzfest, this time playing the main stage with Black Sabbath and Marilyn Manson, among others. The band will hit the road again Sept. 14, when it begins the Pulse of Allegiance arena tour with Rammstein and System of a Down. This time around, the band’s fans—which the group refers to as its “maggots”—are in for a more intense, experience, one that promises its founder, Shawn Crahan, aka the Clown, aka No. 6.

“We’re not fucking around,” he says.

“When we came out, we told people it was going to be world domination.”

Crahan, 31, says that Iowa—which will be packaged in a foil booklet with a 12-panel vellum foldout—features the band at its most “metal.” So, says the singer, “we’re going to made little, totally full of anxiety. It’s someone who will cheer off an ear to get the chance to allow the world to hear it. Well, we still have that...[with metal], but instead of the ear, now it’s the whole body.”

LEAD TRACK LEAKED

Nachsin says Roadrunner was forced to sell metal and active and modern rock formats earlier this month, after several stations leaked the track. The label has also partnered with MTV for an exclusive that will let fans preview on its album promoted across MTV and Mtv2, as well as on mtv.com.

Natalie Walek, senior buyer for Newbury Comics’ 22 stores, says the band’s product is a stop that is once the MEG Tumbles, the few remaining indie promoters will not be able to stand up against consolidation. As it is now, CCE has snapped up most of the top-tier regional promoters. Among the few holdouts are Chicago-based Jam; New Orleans-based Beaver Productions; West Palm Beach, Fla.-based Fantasia; Dallas-based 4g2; Portland, Ore.-based Double Tee; Washington, D.C.-based LMP; and Denver-based NIPP, which is suing CCE.

Scher, even though he had Cowanta as a partner and before Pabst, was emblematic of the indie promoter—and the David standing up to Goliath.

IN BRIEF: Former Hollywood Records senior VP BMG Music has begun in his new role as senior VP at Capitol Records by the end of August. Artesis Records has signed Russell Crowe’s Island, 30 Odd Foot of Grunts, and is releasing the group’s Fastland Life or Clarity in the U.S. on Sept. 18... Dannzig has inked with Survival Management for representation and is negotiating a new label deal.

Additional reporting by Ray Waddell.
VETERAN NICK LOWE ACTS HIS AGE ON YEP ROC RECORDS’ ‘THE CONVINER’

BY CHRIS MORRIS
LOS ANGELES—Nick Lowe’s new album, The Convincer, due Sept. 11 on Chapel Hill, N.C.-based Yep Roc Records, is very much a continuation of prior associations and aesthetic directions for the English musician. Although Upstart Records—the Rounder-distributed label that issued Lowe’s two most recent albums—no longer exists, Yep Roc (and its parent distributor, Redeye Distribution) is co-owned by Glenn Dicker, who formerly was a partner in Upstart. (The other partner, Jake Gurulnick, now handles U.S. management chores for Two lakes Management, whose Jake Rivera has long directed Lowe’s career.)

Lowe says, “I had a very nice association with those people at Upstart, and Glenn Dicker, who used to be involved with Upstart, runs Yep Roc. I couldn’t see a little detail like their record company going bust interfering with my desire to work with them again.”

Of Lowe’s arrival at the label, Dicker says, “We’re thrilled. This is a huge thing for us. It’s something we’ve been trying to build for a while—trying to be able to get into a position where we could do his next record. That’s been a personal goal, in some ways. The timing worked out great, with the way the label developed, the way distribution developed, and the way the timing for his release came out.”

The Convincer continues in the darker, more contemplative style of its acclaimed Upstart predecessors, The Impossible Bird (1994) and Dig My Mood (1998). “Homewrecker,” “Late, I’ve Let Things Slide,” and “I’m a Mess” (published by Plangent Visions Music Ltd.) are superlative examples of Lowe’s mature approach, which is sometimes in pronounced contrast to the tartly funny pop mode in which he worked during the ‘70s and ‘80s.

“I’ve been looking for a long time for a way to record myself and for a style that would suit the fact that I’m getting older,” Lowe says. “I had a brief career as a pop star in the late ’70s and thoroughly enjoyed it, but as you know, most people have only a little time at that, and then it’s over. Unless you’re Cher or Elton John or someone like that, you either become a terrible parody of yourself and try and carry on doing the music you were doing as a kid, or you find some other way.”

KEEPING THINGS COVERED
Lowe turns in two typically well-selected covers—of American singer Johnny Rivers’ “Poor Side of Town” and the Jamaican reggae group Byron Lee & the Dragonaires’ “Only a Fool Breaks His Own Heart.” “I will always put covers on my record, even if I were really, really prolific,” Lowe explains. “If you put a couple of covers on your record, it shows that you’re not obsessed, even if you are. My heart rather sinks when I look at a CD sleeve and see that an artist has written everything on it. I say, ‘Well, why don’t you get out more?’”

Dicker says that Lowe will be in the U.S. in late September and early October for a media tour that will include appearances on the nationally aired radio shows Fresh Air and Mountain Stage. Lowe, who is booked in the U.S. by Marsha Vlastic of MVO in New York City, will embark on a formal U.S. tour sometime after the completion of his U.K. jaunt, which starts Oct. 11.

In addition to working with both major chains and indies stores, Dick-
Mercury Rev Creates An Upbeat, Mythic World On V2’s ‘All Is Dream’

BY TODD MARTENS
LOS ANGELES—Mercury Rev lead singer Jonathan Donahue is perfectly willing to accept that “monsters want souls” and “vampires want blood,” as he sings on new single “Nite and Fog.” These mythic images, not conventional reality, shape the transcendental band’s world, explored in all its fantastic lushness on the band’s latest V2 offering, All Is Dream.

“It’s not a rejection of reality but an acceptance of an alternate reality that’s equally valid,” Donahue says of the set, due Sept. 11. “I do what I can to balance my unconscious dream world with this physical, dense matter plane of existence. My dreams [are] as valid as my waking life.

Those dreams inspire an expansively orchestrated, psychedelic pop sound, which has given the group a gold album in the U.K. and at least 49,000 admirers in the U.S.—the number of people who bought the band’s last disc, Deserter’s Songs, according to SoundScan.

After nearly drifting into obscurity after 1995’s See You on the Other Side (Sony), this Catskill Mountains, N.Y.-based band, once ousted from Lollapalooza for loudness, looked ready to disappear with a whimper. Yet with a new home on V2, and Donahue fully recovered from a post-tour nervous breakdown, Mercury Rev emerged with a quieter, almost mystical sound, giving the label a critical and cult favorite in 1998.

“When I first heard Deserter’s Songs, I knew I had been given a gift,” says Sharon Lord, V2’s head of product management.

Much of the Band-influenced, twilit feel of Deserter’s Songs was borne out of relief. The once-turbulent relationships among Donahue, guitarist Grasshopper, and bassist/producers/Flaming Lip Dave Fridmann were finally cooling. New drummer Jeff Mercel was also setting in, and Donahue has described Deserter’s Songs as the sound of friendship renewed.

With All Is Dream, it’s like our nerve endings were reattached,” Donahue says. “There was a greater focus of light that seemed to be flowing through us, like a prism, and reflecting in a much stronger way. The imagination was there, as well as greater inspiration.”

The result is a more upbeat, rock-oriented piece, a starlit journey through nightmares and folklore, launching with the symphonic fantasia of “Dark Is Rising” and traversing through the siren-like keyboard of “Lincoln’s Eyes” to the soaring guitar of “Queen.” Also, Tony Visconti’s elegantly rolling, classic rock strings fly through “Chains.”

Yet the album’s beginnings almost led to disaster. The group, managed by Marcus Russel at Ignition in the U.K. and published in the U.S. by Caravell Pictures (BMI), had hoped legendary producer/arranger Jack Nitzsche (Neil Young, Rolling Stones) would helm the set. Donahue, a longtime fan, counted Nitzsche’s scoring work for One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest, with its haunting bowed saw, as having a direct impact on the band. It wasn’t to be. Nitzsche passed away days before recording was to start.

“We’ve met famous people before, and everyone has a special aura, but Jack’s was unearthly,” Donahue says. “We had to enter Jack’s world. It wasn’t a mutual thing. He had so much pure musical imagination that it boggles my mind.”

Donahue stresses that what the band recorded is not a tribute to Nitzsche. “Lord knows, I have no idea what he would have done. We only knew to keep going. Songs hang away in my mind. Until I manifest them on vinyl, I don’t sleep.”

V2 is planning a slow, nontraditional rollout for the album, at least in the U.S., where the emphasis will be on promotion at college radio and on the Web. The band was recently on the cover of England’s New Musical Express and will headline the second stage of the Reading Festival at the end of August. Booked by Sam Kirby of New York City-based Evolution Talent Agency, the band will play Europe until early winter.

Brett Grossman, music buyer for Chicago’s Reckless Records, says V2 is right to take it slow. “There are so many huge records coming out, like Spiritualized, Bjork, and Stereolab,” he says. “Mercury Rev might get overshadowed in these coming weeks, but the band will find a way to eke it out.”

Nic Harcourt, music director of KCRW L.A., thinks the band may have a shot getting radio play. “College will gravitate toward it quickly, but the single, ‘Nite and Fog’, is something that will stand out when radio programmers are looking at adding songs.”

Regardless, Donahue won’t be abandoning his hermit traits. “It’s tough for V2 to figure out what I’m doing up in the Catskills, but when they hear these records, they understand why I’m reclusive. It takes everything out of me to make these things. I couldn’t deal with being close to a label or a big city.”

FOR THE RECORD
The Soundtrack column will return in the Sept. 15 Billboard.

Boxscore Top 10 Concert Grosses

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Epic’s Stone Gossard Makes Pearl Jam’s First Solo Move

BY JONATHAN COHEN
NEW YORK—Throughout Pearl Jam’s first decade together, the Seattle rock outfit’s five members often dabbled in side projects, but none had released an official solo album.

That distinction falls by the wayside Sept. 11, when Epic releases <i>Bayleaf</i>, the solo debut from guitarist Stone Gossard. The artist previously released two Epic albums with the band Brad during downtime with his primary gig.

“In the time off between Pearl Jam, I’ve always liked to get up and play guitar and write,” says Gossard, whose love prior lead vocal came on “Manikin” from Brad’s 1996 debut. “In the process of doing that, I wrote a bunch of songs. I had been recording and trying to learn how to sing and attempting to finish something without it having to be a Pearl Jam song. I just happened to be the first guy to get them all together and make the final push of getting them out.”

Gossard began work on the project more than three years ago, when he penned the album’s somber, personal reflections “Every Family,” written for his brother, who died of an overdose. “It’s a little cynical and a little bit fun, I think, in terms of the mood of how that person is saying it,” Gossard says of the latter cut. “It’s sort of saying that things destroy sometimes. You can look at it as an adventure as to how you go on from there.”

Gossard says he welcomed the challenge of putting both his words and his voice to tape, skills he looks forward to honing. “What I struggled with the most was coming in one day and saying, ‘Wow, that sounds good, and then coming in the next day and going, ‘Wow, that just is not great. How do I get it to be great?’”

GOSSARD GOES ONLINE
Such questions aside, Epic knows it has a built-in audience in Pearl Jam’s rabid fan base, according to VP of marketing Chris Pope. As has become customary with such recent special projects as Pearl Jam’s live bootleg series, fans were able to preorder <i>Bayleaf</i> beginning Aug. 20 through the Pearl Jam fan club site TenClub.net, as well as the newly launched StoneGossard.com. The label recently began streaming one album track per week on Gossard’s site, which also hosts videos of the artist discussing the album’s creation and an e-card with his personal greeting. According to Epic head of new media Cory Llewellyn, Gossard will participate in two Web chats around the release date, with partners to be determined. A number of online contests are on tap, with prizes including autographed guitars and lithographs.

Epic serviced retail with two-song samplers and a Gossard-penned biography in July. In addition, <i>Bayleaf</i> (as well as upcoming Epic/Sony albums from Ben Folds and Jamiroquai) will be listed for $12.98 via a special developing-artists promotion. “Although people know Stone through Pearl Jam, this record has such a cool vibe that we want to make sure a lot of people get to pick up on it,” Pope says. “This price will really help with that.”

The label is also considering several programs with indie retailers, which is where some retailers believe the project will break first. “This record has the kind of edge and experimentation that open-minded listeners crave,” says Marko Crenier, manager of San Francisco’s Record Kitchen. <i>Bayleaf</i> is also the centerpiece of a contest within Sony Music’s college promotion department: The campus representative deemed to have done “the best job of creating awareness for the album” will win a trip to London. Gossard will personally meet with reps during a September visit to New York.

“Inward Me” was serviced to rock radio Aug. 13, and Epic has hired promotion company the Syndicate to work the album at college radio. Pope says Gossard may visit stations in major markets in September.

One thing Gossard won’t do is tour in support of <i>Bayleaf</i>. He chalks this up to his inexperience with singing in a live setting. He says, “Ultimately, I might be able to be, but I’m not there yet in terms of the headspace.”

As Pearl Jam prepares for three October concerts and impending sessions for its seventh studio album, Gossard reflects fondly on this latest phase of his musical exploration. “I’ve achieved what I wanted to achieve, which is to get [an album] done and to know that I can do it again,” he says. “Knowing I can make a record when I feel like it is comforting.”
Choirs Inspire Arista's Trippy Spiritualized

BY LIANA JONAS
NEW YORK—Jason Pierce is a walking dichotomy. The lead singer/guitarist of the trippy British rock band Spiritualized does not believe in God. Nor is he a big fan of organized religion. Yet his band's new disc, *Let It Come Down* (Arista, Sept. 25), brims with religious and spiritual references and influences. In fact, the musician is a self-proclaimed gospel fanatic.

> *Let It Come Down* is a partial departure from the space-rock sound of past Spiritualized records, including 1997's internationally acclaimed *Ladies & Gentlemen, We Are Floating in Space*. On tap is a new band lineup and an earnest amalgam of pure rock n' roll and live orchestra and choirs. "Over a year was spent in prep," Pierce says of the set's creative process. "I wrote the orchestrations first, [starting] with the French horns and oboes. I sang the melodies into a Dictaphone and played them there by note by note on a piano. It was an extremely slow process. I did it this way because I wanted to go outside myself.

First single "Stop Your Crying" ships to college radio in early September. In October, Arista will service the single to modern rock and triple-A. According to Arista VP of marketing Tony Warner, more than 100 retailers, including some chains, have taken part in Arista's pre-order campaign.

Don VanCleave—president of the Coalition of Independent Music Stores and owner of Birmingham, Ala.'s Magic Platter record shop—compares Spiritualized to another unlikely commercial success story. "You look at the insane success of Radiohead—you can't get into their shows," he points out. "They're never on the radio, and they created their own scene. Spiritualized is in that camp with that same crazy genre." Up next for Spiritualized is a fall tour with a 13-piece band. How will Pierce compensate for the choirs and droves of musicians who appear on the disc? "We won't," he says matter of fact. "It comes to me in folds, and the show constantly changes. If a song has to be changed radically, we'll do that."

Spiritualized is managed by Frank Gorshin at Lookout Management in Los Angeles and booked by Sam Kirby at Evolution in New York City.

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Among the engaging
Kevin
Rhino Sandoval
All
REISSUE PRODUCERS: Gary
Sandoval and
My
predicted to hit the top half of the chart
with
Huer,
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as
The
Bone Burnett
- Bone Burnett
- RW
**MIDWEST**

**SOUTH**

**THAILAND**

**LATIN**

**COUNTRY**

**DANCE/ELECTRONICA**

**RECITAL/PERFORMANCE**

**GOSPEL**

**BLUES**

**ALL MUSIC GUIDE TO ELECTRONICA**

**PRINT**

For some, this will be a bone of contention. Card-carrying members of the house-music community may cringe upon seeing such names as Walter Gibbons, Larry Levan, Frankie Knuckles, and Masters at Work listed in an electronic music book. Gibbons, like this fan, rejoices in such inclusion, because it eschews the "ghetto mentality" often found in the minds of too many dance music purists. Electronic music covers much terrain; it also revels in evolving ideas and technology. Why limit yourself?

Earlier this year, V2 recording artist Moby told *Billboard* that the most "general definition of electronic music would be non-acoustic instrumentation. That means hip-hop is electronic. Britney Spears is electronic, the bulk of what's played on the radio is electronic."

While this is indeed a valid statement, a few psychologists thankfully, knows when not to cross the musical line. Spears fans are advised to quickly tune away from here. But those with an appreciation for the likes of Giorgio Moroder, the Human League, Pink Floyd, Squarepusher, Howard Jones, Wendy Carlos, John Cage, Philip Glass, Laurie Anderson, Goldie, Paul Oakenfold, and Juan Atkins will find *Electronica* an essential addition to their collections.

In addition to the artist biographies and reviews that make up the bulk of the tome, *All Music Guide to Electronica* also offers "The Mass Appeal of My Oldfield's Tubular Bells" by Richard Newman and Generation Ecstasy by Simon Reynolds, for instance and label descriptions of Harthouse, helmed by German techno artist Sven Väth; Metalheadz, founded by drum'n'bass producer Goldie; Pusseyfoot, formed by lefflid DJ/producer Howie B; and one of Björk's favorite labels, Rephlex, founded by Grant Wilson-Claridge and Richard "Apex Twin" James). The book's creation is another validation of the electronic genre's growing stature in today's marketplace.

What makes *Electronica* especially appealing and impressive is the editors' wise decision to be musically inclusive—rather than exclusive. Certainly a smart move, given the genre's reliance on what came before in other musical spheres including classical, jazz, and pop.
**SINGLES**

**Edited by Chuck Taylor**

**POP**

**KRISTAL**

*Love Is a Beautiful Thing* (3:19)

**PRODUCER:** Patrick Leonard

**WRITER:** S. Swift

**PUBLISHERS:** November Nights Music/EMI April, ASCAP

**R&B**

**Arista**

*Got to Break* (4:13)

**CD promo**

With the glut of teen female singers vying for breathing room amid the airwaves, radio didn’t take to Krystal’s debut release, “Small Girl,” a quirky faux-alti- tude-laden pop gem that likely would have secured promising chart presence a couple years ago. So it takes two for Geller, which has managed to place this equally compelling top 40 contender on the Legally Blonde soundtrack. “Love Is a Beautiful Thing” sits along at an easy midtempo pace, featuring the artist’s pleasingly matured chops and acumen on piano appropriate, given that her debut album was titled Me, My Piano. Produced by pop mainstay Patrick Leonard and remixed for top 40 action, the track is a playful pop rock romp, giving promising artist a second chance. —**CT**

**R&B**

**Kenny Lattimore**

*Weekend* (4:09)

**CD promo**

No matter how you slice it, Kenny Lattimore comes from within original group Maniquin, Kenny Lattimore released a solo album in 1996 to rave reviews and found himself a minor star on the R&B radio circuit. Five years later, Lattimore comes forth with his third album, in a bid to recapture the success of the top 40 R&B hit “Never Too Busy” brought him with. He’s a feel-good rhythm that celebrates every- body’s favorite part of the week and sick production by his former peers. “Weekend” may revive the Washington, D.C., native’s momentum on R&B and AC stations. Lattimore’s voice is as strong as ever on his first single from Aristia (from the Sept. 25 release Week- end), and the story of a man who sees a loveseat will only please the ears of listeners all the more. —**CF**

**COUNTRY**

**Shannon Brown**

*Baby I loved (3:15)*

**PRODUCER:** Byron Gillemon

**WRITERS:** K. Van Hoy, R. Bourke, D. Allen

**PUBLISHERS:** Ushuaïa Music/Chappell & Co., ASCAP, Mike Diner Music/Emard Storm Music/Posey Publishing, BMI 690791 (CD promo)

Originally from Chicago, Illinois, native Shannon Brown now joins BNA, Aristia’s sister label under the RCA Label Group umbrella, and it looks like the album production and marketing stands poised to break through. Here, she tackles Deborah Allen’s “Baby I loved,” peaking at No. 1 in 1987 on the country singles chart and No. 26 on Billboard Hot 100. It’s one of those songs that stand the test of time, and it’s a wise choice for a remake. The lyrics find a spurned lover choking on words uttered when the end of a relationship didn’t seem like it would be such a painful thing: “Baby I lied/don’t believe a word I said before/see me when I say I love you more.” Gillemon’s pro- duction skillfully builds the momentum, and Brown turns in a fine perfor- mance, shaded with ache and regret. It’s been 18 years since Allen’s hit dom- inated airwaves, so most programmers and listeners may not be familiar with it, and Brown’s version won’t suffer by comparison. The newcomer’s take on the tune is certainly worthy of its own day in the sun. —**D EP**

**LEANN RIMES**

*Soon* (3:53)

**PRODUCERS:** Wilbur C. Rimes, Chuck Howard, Mike Curb

**WRITERS:** Wilbur C. Rimes

**PUBLISHERS:** Realsongs, ASCAP, Curb Records 510023 (CD promo)

LeAnn Rimes has publicly distanced herself from her current I Need You set, but that hasn’t stopped fans from buying hit half a million copies and taking it to No. 1 on Top Country Albums. Curb Records is running with the momen- tum, especially after reaching the top 20 on Hot Country Singles & Tracks with the previous “But I Do Love You,” Like that song, “Soon” is written by Diane Warren and leans more toward the AC side than anything resembling true country. But with the No. 1 suc- cess of Faith Hill’s recent Warren com- position—the ultra-smaltzy pop tune “There You’ll Be”—does that matter? This outing is pleasant enough, but it’s far from new turf. Perhaps Rimes had the right idea. —**CT**

**NEW ORDER**

*Crystal* (4:19)

**PRODUCER:** Steve Osborne

**PUBLISHERS:** Warner/Chappell, ASCAP

**Reprise** 10717 (CD promo)

This thrilling lead single previewed New Order’s first new album in eight years: the guitar-charged Get Ready, “Crystals”—in the grand tradition of such stinging New Order catalog items as “Big EP,” “Song & Passion,” and “Bizarre Love Triangle”—manages to confect the most buoyant of pop hooks with rock ten- sion and emotional complexity. Far from being behind the curve, the mas- sively influential British dance-pop veterans—labeling it all Bernard Sum- nes, bassist Peter Hook, and drummer Stephen Morris, along with sundry guests—have freshened their sound in a way that will do this airwave’s world a world of good. Out this month in Euro- pe and in October in the U.S., Get Ready will benefit from attention sur- rounding Heat and Soul, the Rhino boxed set devoted to the post-punk precursor to New Order—Joy Division. An excellent 18-track promo disc titled 20 Years of New Order features the “Crystal” radio edit and probable sec- ond single “50 Miles An Hour,” plus new radio catalog highlight and three essential Joy Division tracks. —**BB**

**ROCK TRACKS**

**COWBOY JUNKIES**

*Small Swift Birds* (3:34)

**PRODUCER:** Michael Timmins

**WRITERS:** M. Timmins

**PUBLISHERS:** Zomba Music/Paz Junk Music, SOCAN, Jaleh/Lek/Reeder 12329PP (CD promo)

While lacking the musical impact of some of the other tracks on Open—the Cowboy Junkies’ darkly poetic, often feedback-laced Zeot debut—second single “Small Swift Birds” does offer the immutable verities of Michael Timmins’ highly literate writing and his sister Margo’s expressive vocals. A simple bass- driven, organ-inflected guitar carries Timmins’ musings on creeping mortality and missed opportunities, which are sub-

**AC**

**ELTON JOHN**

*I Want Love* (3:50)

**PRODUCER:** Patrick Leonard

**WRITERS:** E. John, B. Taupin

**PUBLISHERS:** Warner New Order Ed./Wretched Music, adm. by Warner-Chappell Music

**Rock/Universal 20591 (CD promo)**

More than 30 years after “Your Song” ushered in the seminal early-80s hit En- Elton John, there remains an event quality to any new release from the mighty man. This first single from his upcoming *Songs From the West Coast* is a mulitempo outing that will delight his worldwide legion of fans, as well as offer AC radio its oft-unmet hit from this format staple. “I Want Love” is written with longtime collaborator Bernie Taupin and differs from recent releases in its meaty base of manicured electric guitars and driving percussion. Much of what Sir Elton has served late- ly has been on the cheesy side, and pro- ducer Patrick Leonard wisely pushes this one ever-so-slightly to the left. The big question is whether top 40 radio will wall its support this time around, after last year’s “Somewhere Out of the Blue” peaked at an uncharacteristic No. 49. With several back-to-back Top 40 hits, there’s a videotap that features Robert Downey Jr., which will at least help add to its exposure on VH. West Coast is due in October. —**CT**

**DANCE**

**DEBORAH GIBSON**

*Your Secret* (3:50)

**PRODUCERS:** Deborah Gibson, Vibe Patrol

**WRITERS:** D. Gibson, J. Sharrill

**PUBLISHERS:** Possibilities Publishing/J Sharrill/Hee Bee Donot Music, ASCAP

**REMIXER:** Mike Rizzo

**Golden Egg Records** (CD promo)

Deborah Gibson continues to pump out the hooks some 14 years after she first wowed top 40 with “Only In My Dreams.” Now she’s offered up another album, _M.Y.O.B._, one that showcases her skills as a singer/songwriter, pro- ducer/arranger, and record company homeboy with her own Golden Egg Records. “Your Secret” is a joyous dancefloor throwdown that sports all the elements that her fan base craves on rich layers of harmonies, creative, current-day production, and a chorus that just won’t quit. The pop CD contains six remixes, including the late O’Neal version. —**CT**

**RAP**

**ROYCE DA 5’9’’**

*You Can’t Touch Me* (3:00)

**PRODUCERS:** Poke & Tone

**WRITERS:** R. Montgomery, J. Olivier, S. Barnes, S. Blatrich, A. Lewis

**SINGLE FACTS:** Top 40 Songs/Deep Publishing/Nikki Poo/Ryan Montgomery/Ashitabah, BMI

**Columbia 24542 (CD promo)**

Judging from the fact that the Track- masters (Poke & Tone) usually work with such acts as Mariah Carey, Will Smith, Snoop Dogg, Kelly, and Destinys Child, it’s quite common that the Columbia put up the bucks to produce newcomer Royce Da 5’9” after creating a street buzz over the past few years (including an appearance on Wella Ford’s current “I Wanna Be Bad”) and signing to a dual-label relationship with Tommy Boy, the Detroit native is given the chance to make a major-label mark in rap. Well-structured and laced with sultry background vocals by Shalena “Nikki” Bratich and Ashah Lewis, “You Can’t Touch Me” is a hooky single that will fit well with the new-found heavy Neptunes-influenced airwaves. The talented raper states, “Read The Source/Head of my class for all four years of high school, I can’t be touched” — should help prove that Royce has been well-schooled and isn’t going to rest on any academic laurels. —**CF**

**CONTRIBUTORS**

- Bradley Bambarger, Colin Finan, Deborah Evans Price, Chuck Taylor

**SPOTLIGHT**

Releases deemed by the review editors to deserve special attention on the basis of musical merit and/or billboard chart potential. **NEW & NOTEWORTHY**

- Exceptional releases by new or upcoming artists. **PIcks** (+) new releases predicted to hit the top half of the chart in the corresponding format. **CRITICS’ CHOICES** (#): New releases, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended because of their musical merit. **New review copies to Chuck Taylor (Billboard), 720 Broadway, 6th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10003, or to the writers in the appropriate byline.**

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Loud Executive Discusses Label’s Origins, New Imprint

Schott Free is senior VP of A&R at Loud Records. The Staten Island, N.Y., native and graduate of the University of Maryland began his industry career with an internship/radio promotions job at Ready Records. Through the Wu-Tang Clan, Free later landed at Loud as its first New York employee. Free recently launched his own imprint, W.O.R.L.D. Records, via Loud. The label’s debut act, I.G.T., will release its first album, The Alpha and The Omega, this fall.

What do you look for when signing an act?

To be stabbed in the heart by something, “Press play” is my favorite saying. If you press play, and you hear something ill, it’s going to stick out in your head. Talent comes to you. You don’t look for it. The same thing with artists. The dopest MCs don’t look for a deal. They just rhyme here and there, and shit happens.

Describe the Loud sound.

The Loud sound is the purest aesthetic of hip-hop. It’s a bold, intimidating sound. It’s the kind of sound that comes on, and for some reason you grab your coat, because you think beef might set off at any minute. It’s the kind of song that incites energy, whether positive or negative. Be it East Coast or West Coast, it’s unsavaging.

In A&R, you’re often the middle man between the label and the artist. How do you keep both sides happy?

As an A&R person, your whole job is to bring across the artist’s vision. If you don’t, you’ll appease the label and artist. But my main concentration is with the artist. If you show the artist that you’re trying to get whatever it is they’re going to be on your side. Same thing with the label.

My biggest problem in appeasing the label, however, is the give and take. It’s hard to be that cat who makes records until seven or eight in the morning and then pops in the office from noon to five.

What’s next for Loud?

Besides W.O.R.L.D. Records, there’s a whole lot of new shit—from Danté Ross’ Impacted imprint to Three 6 Mafia and its Hypnotized South. Xzibit finally went platinum, giving some shine to the Likwit camp, so Taa Liks are going to do something. Then we still have our heavyweights Mobb Deep and Wu-Tang.

Why did you start W.O.R.L.D. Records?

To protect the pure aesthetic of Loud’s original sound that started with me, my partner Matt Life, and Steve Rikfin’s marketing genius. Like any successful business, Loud has grown. But in order to grow, we had to assume more responsibilities and even more modes. I’m just here to protect the original sound that got us where we are.

W.O.R.L.D. also began in order of there being so many ill artists out there who need to be heard. My original idea was to set up as an independent. I wanted to take advantage of the many great American hip-hop producers like Pete Rock, Alchemist, the Large Professor, etc., and release a record called Artists and Repertoire. From there, it turned into something bigger. But I’m still Loud Records, regardless.

W.O.R.L.D. Records will cater to the New York MC, an endangered species. I love a lot of MCs, but I was raised here. It would be sad for me to be in A&R and not look out for the purest aesthetic of what I know.

What are some of the trends on the horizon for hip-hop?

Music, especially hip-hop, has gotten a little watered down. People are going to come back to the raw aesthetic and the raw, revolutionary sound. President George W. Bush is in power now. Everybody’s mentality is going change about the way they feel and what they want to hear. We shine at climactic periods in time, and it’s another climactic time.

Rashaun Hall

U$3 RELAUNCH: With the recent signing of jazz-fused hip-hop group U$3, Universal Jazz U.K.’s Nathan Graves says the label is ready to announce the chart-topping new act, the radio promotion center with a real bang.

After two internationally released albums on Blue Note—the last being 1997’s Broadway & 33rd—U$3 is mainstay DJ/producers Geoff Wilkinson has recruited rapper Michelob and singer Alison Crockett to front, a new Ordinary Day in an Unusual Place, due Oct. 15.

It will be preceded on Sept. 24 by the funky star- and brass-driven rap cut, “You Can’t Hold Me Down.” “The first priority is to build a strong platform of awareness up front,” Graves says. “Our plan is to work ‘You Can’t Hold Me Down’ to re-establish the U$3 name and get exposure among the existing fan base and the wider urban/hip-hop/crossover audience.”

With a national/regional TV and radio campaign, play on MTV in the U.K. and Europe, plus promotional tours in major European cities, U$3 looks set for a successful relaunch.

While it still uses samples, U$3 also employs more live musicians and instrumentation. “Also, this is the first time I’ve worked with a female singer,” Wilkinson says. “It pushed me into an uncharted territory, and I relish a challenge.”

“I’ve been aware of criticism about the previous albums’ lyrics,” he continues. “Michelob and Alison are both great lyrists. I got them to write more socially conscious, eco-friendly themes,” which come across on such cuts as the Michelob-fronted “World No More” and the Crockett-sung “Pay Attention.”

While the four-year- between-album gap seems to fall in line with U$3’s previous projects, Wilkinson says it wasn’t planned. “Unfortunately, it took a year of legal wrangling,” he says. U$3’s fruitless deal with the now-shuttered Work Group, “I just sat there hanging in the wind and tearing my hair out. After that experience, I decided not to sign another deal.”

The new album—which concludes the group’s EMJ Music publishing deal—will be released via Toshiba EMI in Japan but is unsigned for North America. U$3 is managed by New York-based Tommy Manzi and signed to Atlantic Records.

SUBISM: After two albums, one on W.O.R.L.D. Records, the Mindless Behavior’s debut album, Every Little Thing, would be released under the Subism imprint. Subism is the solo venture of co-owner Geoffrey Wilkinson.

BRIGHT PROSPECTS: Germany’s DJ/producers duo Turntablrockers, who have been signed by W.O.R.L.D. Records, will release their debut album on the label. Afterwards, they will also be managed by LCD.

Turntablrockers’ Classic album, released in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria, has been on the turntable since March by Four Music/Columbia Germany, engagingly embraces hip-hop, rap, and R&B, plus live and programmed music. One single, “A Little Funk,” is a phat, hip-hop-joint-rockin’ cut.

The duo, consisting of DJ Hausmarke and DJ Thomilla, has a solid hip-hop background. Hausmarke has been DJ and an MC for Die Fantastischen Vier, while Thomilla is a former producer of Stuttgart rap act Die Krâhen.

Kwan’s debut single, “Padam,” is blessed with juicy strings and R&B flavor. It was a top five hit and one of the most-played songs on Radiomaria, Finland’s biggest national radio outlet. “Microphoney,” released March 5, would not come with a radio edit. The group, which incorporates a live rhythm section, a DJ, and English-rapping MC Mariko, and MC Tidjan, has been gigging around Europe in support of its new album. The group, which incorporates a live rhythm section, a DJ, and English-rapping MC Mariko, and MC Tidjan, has been gigging around Europe in support of its new album.

One of the most successful U.K. dance music acts, Cheeky/Arista’s Faithless, is set to chart rap and R&B heads with “Muhammad Ali,” described as “a Timbaland-inspired track that features Nas and Fabolous Featuring Nate Dogg...” People are. The result was a two-year, 1970s soul strings and brass, but this venerable jazz group dropped both the band’s debut album. The band released on London-based Stonegroove, which has two upcoming singles: “Simple Tingz” by the Yang Gang (featuring rappers Fallacy, Lyric L, Seanie T, Wildflower, and Karl Hinds with cuts by London’s Kiss FM personalities Big Ted), and “Silk Stream” by Psycho. The Phenomena featuring Ty, which decries the state of U.K. rap.

MAC RAP: Once described as the British-Asian Public Enemy. Fundamental eschews any obvious rap on “There Shall Be Love,” arriving Oct. 1 in Nation. The eccentrically fused album, which includes South African chants, also uses a contribution by Pete Falcon—an Apple Mac G4 voice recorder—on “More Than a Hundred Times.”
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### Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>PEAK POSITION</th>
<th>WEEKS ON CHART</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>THE ISLEY BROTHERS</td>
<td>FACES</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 O'Clock</td>
<td>Right Here With Me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>J. R. Writer</td>
<td>The Real Book of Murder</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>The Power of Love</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>D'Angelo</td>
<td>Brown Sugar</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Isley Brothers</td>
<td>The Richest Man In Town</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The Isley Brothers</td>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>A Tribe Called Quest</td>
<td>Midnight Marauders</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>A Tribe Called Quest</td>
<td>Low End Theory</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>J. R. Writer</td>
<td>The Real Book of Murder</td>
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<td>2</td>
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### Top R&B/Hip-Hop Catalog Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>PEAK POSITION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Maxwell</td>
<td>Exodus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Maxwell</td>
<td>Embryonic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Maxwell</td>
<td>Urban Hang Suite</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Maxwell</td>
<td>Signification</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Maxwell</td>
<td>All About The Fun</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Maxwell</td>
<td>Now &amp; Then</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Maxwell</td>
<td>Blackground</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Maxwell</td>
<td>One Love</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Maxwell</td>
<td>First Love</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Maxwell</td>
<td>Don't Sweat the Small Things</td>
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<td>2</td>
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### Greatest Gainer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>WEEK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ginuwine</td>
<td>I'm Not A Player</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
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### Hot Shot Debut

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>WEEK</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pacesetter</td>
<td>The Streets Made Me</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
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### New This Week

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<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>WEEK</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aerial</td>
<td>Hotline</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Announcements

- **Artist of the Week**: 3 O'Clock
- **Number One Artist**: The Isley Brothers
- **Number One Album**: FACES
- **Number One Single**: Right Here With Me

- **Artist of the Year**: Maxwell
- **Album of the Year**: Exodus
- **Single of the Year**: The Power of Love

### Billboard

- **Artist xxx
- **Album xxx
- **Single xxx

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**Note**: Billboard's chart system has evolved over the years, with different metrics and methodologies influencing the rankings. The charts reflect the most popular music acts, singles, and albums across various genres.
Top Dog... Columbia Records Group and So So Def Recordings executives recently presented So So Def/Columbia rap artists Lil' Bow Wow with a plaque commemorating worldwide sales of 3 million copies of his debut album, 'Beware of Dog'. Pictured, from left, are Columbia executive VP/GM Will Botvin, So So Def COO Michael Maultin, So So Def CEO Jermaine Dupri, Columbia chairman Don Jenner, Columbia executive VP John Ingrassia, Columbia senior VP of urban promotion Cynthia "CK" Harris, Columbia West Coast VP of product marketing Mal Huggins, Columbia senior VP of sales Tom Donnanna, and Columbia executive VP of promotion Charlie Walt. Standing immediately to the right of the plaque is Lil' Bow Wow.

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**Billboard SEPTEMBER 1, 2001**

### Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>ARTIST (RECORD/PROMOTION LABEL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Girl Next Door</td>
<td>Walgreens feat. A*Tea (Sire/Sony)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rock The Boat</td>
<td>Jodeci (MOTOWN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dance With Me</td>
<td>Usher (Island)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>First Love</td>
<td>K-Ci &amp; JoJo (MOTOWN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>John Doe</td>
<td>John Doe (Warner Bros)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Let Me Blow Ya Mind</td>
<td>DMX (Warner Bros)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Wait A Minute</td>
<td>Yo Yo (Interscope)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The Groom</td>
<td>Puff Daddy feat. Mase (Bad Boy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The Ladies</td>
<td>Onyx (Warner Bros)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Made To Love Ya</td>
<td>Lil' Bow Wow (Columbia)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles Sales...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>ARTIST (RECORD/PROMOTION LABEL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Big Poppa (Warning)</td>
<td>Big Poppa feat. Lil' Bow Wow (Columbia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Let's Be Friends</td>
<td>Babyface feat. Brandy (Bad Boy/Warner Bros)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>All My Thugs</td>
<td>Snoop Dogg feat. Tha Dogg Pound (Tha Dogg Pound)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Po' Punch</td>
<td>Lil' Bow Wow feat. Nipsey Hussle (Columbia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Make It Rain</td>
<td>L'il Bow Wow feat. Nipsey Hussle (Columbia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Enjoy Yourself</td>
<td>Da Brat feat. Lil' Bow Wow (Columbia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>We Need A Resolution</td>
<td>Lil' Bow Wow feat. Nipsey Hussle (Columbia)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>In The Back (Remix)</td>
<td>Lil' Bow Wow feat. Nipsey Hussle (Columbia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>One More Chance/Stay With Me</td>
<td>Lil' Bow Wow feat. Nipsey Hussle (Columbia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Keep It Thru</td>
<td>Lil' Bow Wow feat. Nipsey Hussle (Columbia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Thug Or What?</td>
<td>Lil' Bow Wow feat. Nipsey Hussle (Columbia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Waiting</td>
<td>Lil' Bow Wow feat. Nipsey Hussle (Columbia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Peaches &amp; Cream/Dance With Me</td>
<td>Lil' Bow Wow feat. Nipsey Hussle (Columbia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Wait A Minute</td>
<td>Lil' Bow Wow feat. Nipsey Hussle (Columbia)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Billboard SEPTEMBER 1, 2001**

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Geffen’s Dub Pistols Charm Crowds In ‘Six Million Ways’

BY RASHAUN HALL
NEW YORK—On the Vans Warped tour isn’t where a dance/electronic act should be, but don’t tell that to Dub Pistols mastermind Barry Ashworth. “Yeah, it’s usually more rocky bands, isn’t it? But that only made it more interesting,” Ashworth says of the recently completed tour , which also featured Blink-182, Alien Ant Farm, and the Rollins Band, among others. Of course, an act has a new, musically expansive album to promote—as the U.K.-based Dub Pistols do with Six Million Ways To Live—being on such a high-profile bill certainly creates awareness. Due Tuesday (28), Six Million Ways To Live is the U.K. act’s first album for Geffen. (The Dub Pistols are signed to Interscope Geffen A&M for the world.)

“We started out with a blank canvas,” Ashworth, a former club promoter, says of the new set... The last album [1998’s Point Blank] was seven underground dance tracks we put together. They were never meant to be an album, but the label I was signed to at the time [1500] decided that we’d make an album.”

CHANGE OF DIRECTION
Ashworth adds, “We only got to make three or four tracks for [Point Blank]. “Cycling” was one of the last ones, and it was definitely headed more in the direction of the new album.” For Six Million Ways To Live, Ashworth recruited co-producer- bassist Jason O’Bryan spent six months experimenting with different styles of sounds, “creating tracks that were absolute rubbish to a track like ‘Soldiers,’ which we did with Planet Asia. In fact, once we completed ‘Soldiers,’ everything else for the album seemed to make sense.”

According to Ashworth, the Dub Pistols hooked up with Asia through their management, Sherman Oaks, Calif.-based 3AM Management, which also handles their bookings. (The band’s music is handled by BMG Music Publishing.)

“One time I got his vocals, and because of the whole reggae vibe we’ve got going, it just sort of felt right,” Ashworth notes of “Soldiers.” Asia “is a great guy to work with. He totally gets the vibe.”

The album’s title track finds the Dub Pistols reuniting with New York City-based T.K. Lawrence and Sight Beyond Light. “We worked with T.K. and his crew a bit on the first record,” Ashworth says, “but he did most of those tracks on his own.”

“This time, we did the beat, and then he recorded the vocals,” Ashworth continues. “When we took it back and listened to the lyrics, we felt an acoustic guitar fit the mood. It’s one of the best tracks we’ve ever done, without a shadow of a doubt.”

‘GREAT ARTISTS, PERIOD’
For Steve Berman, head of marketing and sales at Geffen, an act like the Dub Pistols demands to be exposed beyond its traditional fan base.

“The Dub Pistols are great artists, period,” Berman says. “One of the things that’s always important for us is that these bands have to be real. Kids have to relate to it as a live show. The kids who attended the Warped shows, thrive on live music. If you can convert those music fans, you can win the battle.”

Additional conversions may be made Sept. 11 at Las Vegas’ Hard Rock Cafe, when the Dub Pistols commence a six-week U.S. tour, opening for 311. Live, the Dub Pistols consist of Ashworth, O’Bryan, and DJ Stix, and others.

If nothing else, Ashworth hopes that Six Million Ways To Live will open minds. “We try to make sense. We’ve only got one opportunity to make sense.”

“The Dub Pistols are a great artist, period,” Berman says. “One of the things that’s always important for us is that these bands have to be real. Kids have to relate to it as a live show. The kids who attended the Warped shows, thrive on live music. If you can convert those music fans, you can win the battle.”

“But,” Berman continues, “we’d make sense.”

NEWYORK: Mixes of revered soul/house label Naked Music has inked a three-year, worldwide joint-venture deal with New York City-based/Caroline-distributed Astralwerks/Virgin (Billboard Bulletin, Aug. 15).

“’This creates an opportunity for soulful house/dance music to get to a larger audience, both domestically and internationally,” says Jay Denes, who, along with Bruno Ybarra and Dave Boonshoft, founded Naked Music in 1999. (The label was profiled in the April 29, 2000, Billboard.) “It also gives us more possibilities to unveil new ideas and talent.”

On Oct. 2, Astralwerks will reissue five Naked Music compilations (Rare Essentials, Vol. 1, among them), as well as a new compilation (Nude Dimensions, Vol. 3). January will see the release of the much-anticipated full-length debut from Blue Six (aka Denes). Proper artist albums by Petalpusher (aka Miguel Migs) and Lisa Shaw will follow.

In other Naked news, the label’s catalog is now handled by EMI Music Publishing in all territories, except the U.S.

Since breaking the news that Tommy Boy had signed Masters at Work to label and that an album should street early next year (Beat Box, Billboard, Aug. 11), we’re now happy to report that the album, Our Time Is Coming, features guest appearances from James Ingram, Patti Austin, India, Stephanie Mills, and Roy Ayers.

U.K.-based DJ Cass (of Cass & Slade) is confirmed to helm the third volume of Spudabe Recording’s Spudabe Interpretations series. The Mute-distributed compilation is due in January and follows in the footsteps of the first two installments, which were mixed by Jerry Bonham.

Trotin’s Merv Pepler and the B-52’s Fred Schneider will soon remix “Crash and Burn”—the title track from EAT Static’s CyberOctave Records album, released earlier this year. Perhaps Pepler will be able to coax Schneider into laying down some ad libs in the process.

Speaking of Schneider, his unmistakable vocals are featured on “Nonstop Nonsense,” one of many winning moments on French duo Bosco’s third album Bum/Bum/U.S. debut, Action (Atlantic).

NIGHT DREAMS: Tuesday (28) sees the release of a few noteworthy titles. A hit throughout Europe, Montre- al’s Miguel Graça Presents Soulnot- mind’s Shining Stars (Bombay, distrib- uted by Caroline) is a stunning journey—replete with live instrumenta-tions—that is only made under- ground as it is sunny and tropical.

Another Montreal-based act, Bran Van 3000, offers the snappy Discois (Grand Royal/Virgin). The set features contributions from Curtis Mayfield („Astounded”) and Dimitri From Paris and Big Daddy Kane (on the title track), among others.

Last year, France’s Pascal + Miste- re issued the discos High Flying (basically a collection of the duo’s early releases on Pascal Rioux’s Rotax label). On their follow- up, The Lure of Melody (Glasgow Underground/U.K., distributed in the U.S. by Studio K7), Pascal and Day deliver a solid collection that merges funk, house, soul, and R&B.


GOT MY EDUCATION: Serious about dance music’s roots? If so, you need to investigate some newly issued titles from Legacy’s Rhythm & Sound series, all of which have been digitally remastered: The Best of Gladys Knight & the Pips (Columbia/Legacy), Harold Melvin & the Blue Notes Featuring Teddy Pender- grass’ The Ultimate Blue Notes (Epic/Legacy), and the Isley Brothers’ The Heat Is On and Harvest for the World (both Epic/Legacy).

FOR THE RECORD: Contrary to what was reported in Beat Box in the Aug. 18 Billboard, Masters at Work have done special remixes, not re- edits, for Masters at Work: West End Records—the 25th Anniversary Edition Mastermix (West End Records).

— Michael Paletta

THE BEAT BOX HOT PLATE


• Brenda Russell, “Walkin’ In New York” (Hidden Beach/Epic single). The newly remixed (by Nate Scott & Curtis Williams) “Walkin’ In New York” may give last year’s grossly overlooked Paris Rain album, from which it’s culled, a new lease on life. Over a smoldering Sheila E.-fueled foun- dation, Russell ruminates on the joys of New York City, while vocalist Neriessa Vitello pays homage to numerous New York clubs and DJs.

• Simulation, “Simulation” (un- signed single). DJs like Carl Cox and John Digweed are heavily sup- porting this hypnotic progressive house jam, which nicks a snippet or two from Yazz’s early-80s club classic “Situation.” Contact: simulationnt@hotmail.com.

• DJ T-Terrory, “Raining” / “Enough Is Enough” (Pimento Music/PIAS the Netherlands single). With this double A-side, Terry takes punter on a cut ‘n paste tour de force, Rock-solid rhythms, clas- sick house basslines, and disco flourishes feature prominently on both tracks. — Michael Paletta

Beat Box

DENES

BY MICHAEL PAOLETTA

RHYTHM & SOUL

Naked Music

• Fernando Navarro, “Don’t You Need Me” (Billboard 97). The enchanting single from Naked Music’s Groove (Epic/Legacy) is a new remix (by Blank & Jones) of a late-80s Peter Rauhofer production. It’s a must-get.

• DJ Muro, “Dolly” (Spindrift). The New York DJ and producer delivers a stunning set of re- edits, from the dub mix of Aretha Franklin’s “Respect” to a lovely house mix of Marvin Gaye’s “Too Short”.

• Mark Farina, “Right Here” (Espionage). Mark takes a techy, deep house spin on the.”
Bluegrass Rules On Skaggs’ ‘History Of The Future’

BY JIM BESSMAN
NEW YORK—As he puts it, Ricky Skaggs has his “left foot in the past and the right in the future”—hence the title of Skaggs & Kentucky Thunder’s Sept. 11 Skaggs Family Records release, History of the Future.

“I’m standing on a place where few others have connections,” Skaggs explains, noting his formative links with such bluegrass music luminaries Bill Monroe, Ralph Stanley, and Flatt & Scruggs, prior to his late-’70s stint in Emmylou Harris’ Hot Band and subsequent emergence in the early ’80s as a country artist in his own right.

“So I bought myself second-guessing on this album,” he continues, looking back at his previous album, Strickland’s return to the traditional bluegrass fold with 1997’s Bluegrass Rules! “Some people say, ‘Do some new songs—that anybody can do the old bluegrass tunes like I regularly do Bluegrass Rules!’ I listen respectfully, and they have merit—but my heart is to educate.

“Twenty-year-old [fiddler] Andy Leftwich is with us now, and we have to educate him on Benny Martin, Paul Warren, Kenny Baker, Chubby Wise, and all those great fiddle players of the past.” Skaggs adds, “He’s a great musician, but he doesn’t have all the old bluegrass records I have and only knows Mark O’Connor and Stuart Duncan and the fiddle players of the ’80s and ’90s.”

THRASH-METAL BLUEGRASS

Skaggs, then, wants to continue the “mandate” given to him by Dixie Chicks when they took Skaggs & Kentucky Thunder on the road.

“They hired us not to do the country hits but to play the real stuff: raw bluegrass music, in-your-face with attitude at thrash metal volume,” he says. “They gave us the stage to influence young kids—and every night we got a standing ovation. So one of the most important things I think we’re doing is influencing young people not only where this music is going but where it came from—which is the reason for the album title.

‘History of the Future’ again focuses on classic bluegrass covers, such as Monroe’s “Mother’s Only Sleeping” and the staple “Roll In My Sweet Baby’s Arms,” while including some less-familiar material, such as Ricky Skaggs Music/Golden Hook Music (ASCAP) writer Skaggs’ Celtic-flavored “The Road to Spencer.”

One of the key cuts on the project is the traditional “Shady Grove.” “It’s an old-time song that shows our roots,” Skaggs says. “Everybody’s done it, from Doc Watson to Bill Monroe to the Stanley Brothers—and Bruce Hornsby could have done it up differently. So it represents the history of the future—an old-timey song but done in a hip, cutting-edge fashion, with Clay [Hess] playing an awesome guitar solo and showcasing his abilities on mandolin.

Skaggs continues, “They’re all such great musicians, and everyone’s competing and pushing each other every night to do the best solo and get the biggest applause—not just for themselves but for the band.”

Stan Strickland, who manages Skaggs and co-founded the Lyric Street-distributed Skaggs Family Records label with him, points out Skaggs’ inclusion of Grand Ole Opry clog dancers on the “Shady Grove” cut and their percussive contribution to the party feel.

“Nobody does an interpretation of that song quite this way,” Strickland says. “But Ricky wanted the album to be a celebration overall. There was a moody quality to the 1999 follow-up to Bluegrass Rules! —Ancient Tones—and a mission to [1999 gospel album] Soldier of the Cross, and he wanted to stay out of the way artistically on the [the 2000 Skaggs-produced tribute Big Mon —The Songs of Bill Monroe and let the participants interpret their visions of Bill Monroe’s music. So this is the first time he’s really come back to Bluegrass Rules!”

‘O BROTHER’ OPENS DOORS

The label will work History of the Future throughout the traditional bluegrass community, Strickland notes, “but we’re also fortunate that more media opportunities have opened up because of O Brother, Where Art Thou?, Dolly Parton’s bluegrass albums, and Nickel Creek. A lot of people are exploring this music that weren’t a year ago.

The album also benefits from Skaggs Family Records’ recently instituted sales, marketing, and distribution pact with Lyric Street and its major distributor, Universal Music and Video Distribution (UMVD) (Billboard, June 16).

A compilation of “thousands of independent distributors” DNA was, it didn’t have the clout with retailers that the UMVD system does, “Strickland says. One UMVD rep, adds, “Ricky’s been very good to us—no further afield than his country singles of the early ’80s.” So UMVD is “testing the waters” at country radio with “Shady Grove,” bylby production of the album via the country market via the Sept. CDB compiliation.

“We’re all disappointed that radio didn’t embrace O Brother’s Man of Cosmic Removal,” Strickland says, but that with that and Patsy [Lovett’s new bluegrass album], we may be in a unique situation where it’s just one more little twist to take the top off the jar.”

AN INCREDIBLE BODY OF WORK

Terry Herd, owner of the syndicated Bluegrass Radio Network and host of its weekly Into the Blue show, as well as consultant/ PD for Sirius Satellite Radio’s bluegrass channel, sees History of the Future as “another installment in an incredible body of work that Ricky’s released since his return to bluegrass.

A collection of mostly traditiona lbluegrass in Southern California, the show is a modern studio production with the best players on the planet,” the album, Herd adds, shows that “Skaggs hasn’t wavered as the chasm between traditional country music and new country pop widens. He just continues marching down the road, playing the best bluegrass music possible.”

The Mercury Peninsula-booked Skaggs, who Strickland says is now touring “like he hasn’t done since the early ’80s, in addition to the normal load of festivals and performances,” says he recognizes the “scrutiny on me more than other bluegrass musicians, because I did go into country music in the ’80s, and some bluegrass diehards out there still hold that against me.

But Bluegrass Rules! did a whole lot to change that mind-set,” Skaggs adds, realizing his position as a leading figure in modern bluegrass resurgence. “We try not to let the bluegrass chat rooms deter us from where we need to go and what we need to do in staying true to the music while allowing it to grow.”

Duncan thinks programmers’ reluctance to play songs that research with strong negatives has hurt the format. “Records that research well don’t sell well,” he said. “As soon as you start watching your negative factor, you’ve lost any level of excitement you had on the station. If you create a good product, it can survive three minutes and 20 seconds of a song [some listeners] don’t like.”

Monument Records VP of promotion Larry Pareigs agreed: “We as an industry have gotten too territorial, of what I call ‘acceptable negatives.’

WGNRA Albany, N.Y., operations manager Buzz Brindle admitted that for some PDs, “Research becomes an opportunity not to play music.”

Still, Pareigs argued that this passion is not necessarily the problem. “If anything, it may not be a lack of passion. It may just be fatigue,” Pareigs said that in the business culture of radio today, people labor under the assumption that it’s better to be overwhelmed than unoccupied.

Just what constitutes country music was another central theme of the seminar. The topic arose at the opening session when KPFP Kansas City, Mo., PD Dale Carter, former PD of WWZI Hartford, took current WWZZ PD Jay McCarthy to task for mixing in records by pop acts like Barry Manilow during a spirited debate on whether such broadening moves are good for the format.

The seminar addressed country music in the Northeast, WXTU Philadelphia PD Bob McKay said he plays Bob Seger’s “Night Moves” and “Still the Same” and America’s “A Horse With No Name.” Previously, WOR, N.Y., PD Mike Kenrick said he digs into the music stack of his sister top 40 station from time to time, looking for cuts to play. Kenrick said he often plays music by Sheryl Crow and Selena with Shelly Lynne’s “Killin’ Kind” earlier this year.

“If the AC station is going to play Diamond Rio or LeAnn Rimes,” Kenrick contended, why not country stations reciprocate with some AC music? “I’d rather be a good music station than just a country station.”

ON THE ROW: Mercury Records chairman Luke Lewis has lured veteran Nashville A&R exec Mary Martin out of retirement to join the label as VP of A&R, Martin, one-time VP of A&R at RCA, had been A&R consultant to Asylum Records prior to her retirement.

MCA Nashville senior VP of promotions David Hale. He had been part of the promotion team that made MCA the Billboard country label of the year for the past 10 years. Director of A&R Laura Putty joins the three other Sonoma Music Nashville staffers who were laid off recently (Billboard, Aug. 25).

Steve Markland, who has headed publishing company Windswept Pacific’s Nashville office since 1996, is elevated to VP of creative affairs for the company. Cliff Audretch III is upped from catalog manager to director of creative affairs. Lisa Garmersfelder, who joined the company earlier this year in an administrative capacity, is promoted to catalog manager.

Paddock Music, the Nashville publishing company the company earlier this year by Toby Keith, T.K. Kimberle, and creative director Rob Henderson, has signed three writers: Curtis Wright, Don Ellis, and Gary Lloyd.

ARTIST NEWS: Dixie Chicks will perform together Sept. 15 for the first time this year at the Texas Twilight Gala in Austin. The event is a fund-raiser for pediatric AIDS charities. The Chicks will perform an acoustic set with the Austin Symphony Orchestra.

Dualtone Records has pushed back the release of Chris Knight’s A Pretty Good Gag to Sept. 11.

www.americanradiohistory.com
### Hot Country Singles & Tracks

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#### Top Country Singles Sales

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Bluegrass Great Earl Scruggs Calls On Friends' For All-Star MCA Album

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

NASHVILLE—Country music has few, if any, icons left who can attract musical collaborators as devoted as those from Emmylou Harris, Elton John, Melissa Etheridge, Sting, Billy Bob Thornton, Steve Martin, Travis Tritt, and Johnny Cash. Yet Earl Scruggs' musical genius has been on show since his universal appeal, and many of the industry's top names jumped at the chance to be part of the new MCA Nashville release Earl Scruggs and Friends, due Aug. 28.

Produced by Earl's multi-talented son Randy Scruggs, the album features the elder statesman's signature banjo, alongside vocal performances by luminaries from the pop world, and country music communities.

"The first track we recorded with Elton John," Randy says. "When he came, I was actually bringing a box set of early material that Dad had recorded. Elton was a fan of Dad, and Dad was a huge fan of Elton. It set the mood and the stage." 

Randy says the song selection process was "always very open. The important thing to me was that it was something the subject artist would feel passionate about, and at the same time, something Dad could dig his teeth into, in terms of performance on the banjo."

As the first new recording from Earl in 17 years, the album represents a musical resurrection for the legendary picker. Plagued by health problems, he had been inactive in the music community for quite some time. But hip-replacement and bypass surgeries gave him a new lease on life. "I'm feeling good and I enjoy performing and picking," Earl says. "I guess I don't feel my age."

A MUSICAL LIFE

Born in 1924, Earl first rose to prominence as a member of the late Bill Monroe's famed Bluegrass Boys. Debuting at the Grand Ole Opry in 1945, Earl earned acclaim with his unique playing style, but his career really took off when he and vocalist/guitarist Lester Flatt left Monroe's band in 1948, forming the famed duo Flatt & Scruggs. The two performed together until 1969, when Earl formed the Earl Scruggs Revue with sons Gary, Randy, and Steve.

Over the years, Earl's virtuoso picking could be heard in these memorable pieces as the Beverly Hillbillies TV theme and in the Faye Dunaway/Warren Beatty film Bonnie and Clyde, which used Earl's classic "Foggy Mountain Breakdown" as the theme.

"Earl had written and recorded it in 1949," Randy says. "Thirty-three years, Louis Swoger, who is also his manager. "Warren Beatty called when he was producing Bonnie and Clyde and said he needed a perfect performance for a deep-era portrait of Earl's that he thought would work great in the movie. Ends up it won a Grammy, and Earl got the Millionaire Award [for airplay] from BMI."

Earl's life has been filled with such musical highlights. "Earl is a [Country Music] Hall of Famer, and I'm really glad we are able to record and document this part of his musical history," says MCA executive vice president Bruce Hinton. "All of us at MCA Nashville feel privileged to be associated with it.

Earl is pleased with the results. "They are all exciting to me," he says of the 12 cuts. "I'll start listening to the album, and sometimes I'll play one for two or three days just over and over, and then I'll move to another one. Later, I'll come back to that first one. So it's been an exciting trip for me."

TAKING IT TO THE STREETS

MCA Nashville senior VP of sales and marketing Dave Weigand sees a broad audience for Earl Scruggs and Friends: "The artists on this project have garnered over 65 Grammy awards, sold more than 35 million records, and have won 318 gold, platinum, and multi-platinum certification albums."

MCA plans to service music to both country and Americana stations, with a special radio program going to Americana. Weigand anticipates sales being media-driven and says the project will be covered in numerous publications and via TV appearances.

Through advertising, Weigand says MCA will target "the Earl Scruggs audience that grew up with the banjo and the bluegrass world and the fans of some of the other artists participating in this project. We are also going to do a lot of what we call ambush marketing online."

At retail, Weigand says MCA plans to have Earl Scruggs and Friends featured in country, bluegrass, and pop sections and will cross-merchandise it.

Terry Herd, owner of the syndicated Bluegrass Radio Network and host of its weekly Into the Blue show, hadn't heard the album yet, but he plans to play it. "Just by the sheer novelty of it, I can tell you without even hearing it, yes, we'll play some of it. It will be a wonderful interview at a combination of artists like that together." Herd, who is also the consultant/PD for Sirius Satellite Radio's bluegrass channel, adds, "Depending on how it is, we will be testing out how many spins it gets. The novelty will get it on the air—the quality will determine the longevity."

Earl Scruggs, co-executive producer of the album, says he would like to go out and perform select dates in support of the album: "Music has been my life. To walk into a club and get a standing or just quieting—either word is a bad word to me."

Putting together a multi-artist project is always a challenge, and Earl Scruggs's project is no exception. But it was also a labor of love for producer Randy Scruggs and a source of pride and pleasure for those involved. Earl's wife and manager, Louise Scruggs, "He lives in Atlanta part time. He was out working somewhere, and his manager was in Nashville when Randy called. Within a few minutes, Elton said yes he'd like to do it." Earl says, "I pleased me that he chose that song."

"Borrowed Love," with Dwight Yoakam. He didn't have it written at all," Earl says of the song Yoakam wrote while they were in the studio. "What makes it exciting is that I didn't know something that we re-heard until the excitement kind of died to us. We just recorded it.

3. "Ring of Fire," with the stage. "Earl and Louise Scruggs heard [Thornton and Cash] doing the Johnny Cash classic "I Still Miss Someone" one night and aper shat it over." Thornton says, "Earl says, I'm doing a record—will you cut a Johnny Cash song?" We cut it early one morning in Ocean Way [Studios] in Nashville. It has a lot of passion. I love the way Earl played banjo on this version of it. It's just insane. I liked the way the banjo up there in that range. That thin-king goes with how I sing it so low. It's a real nice contrast."

4. "True Love Never Dies," with Randy Scruggs and Steve Earle. "[The Scruggs] and Kevin Welch wrote that; Louise says. "Gary did vocals on it, and we wanted to put on a harmony part. We love Travis Tritt's singing, so we called Travis. He came up and did a harmony part and did lead with one of the vocals."

5. "The Angels," with Melissa Etheridge. "They ran through it twice," Louise explains. "There wasn't a thing wrong with it, but [Etheridge] had another idea. So she went back in the vocal booth and came out with that version, and everybody in the studio was on their feet and gave her a standing ovation. It was marvelous."

6. "Foggy Mountain Breakdown," with Sting. "Sting's song was on an album he did," Louise says. "Earl and Randy put the track down [before] Sting worked a concerned song in Nashville. We asked if he would do the vocals. He was just going to be here one day, and he didn't really feel like he had time to do it justice. I said to take the track to London and record it. So he did, and he put his wife, Trudie Styler, on it."

7. "Foggy Mountain Breakdown," with Glen Duncan, Randy Scruggs, Steve Martin, Vince Gill, Marty Stu- art, Gary Scruggs, Albert Lee, Paul Simon, and Harry Douglas, and Leon Russell. "That was the most traveled instrumental in history," Louise says. "The basic track was put down in Nashville. Then we took it to New York and London, and in the studio, and in the studio, and we played another song, and then we played another song, and then we played another song, and then we played another song."

"Something Just Ain't Right," with Randy Scruggs. "That's a song Randy has helped me a lot, as well as helping other people," Earl says of his son's production skills. "He tries to get to it as a sound as he can." Louise says, "It doesn't sound like a studio recording."

9. "I Found Someone," with Vince Gill and Rosanne Cash. "Randy and Earl wrote music to that, and Randy wrote part of the words, and then Vince Gill finished it up," Louise explains. "I think they finished it. It was a farming of the song. Rosanne Cash has been a good friend of the family for a good many years."

10. "Blue Ridge Mountain Breakdown," with Steve Earle. "That's an old tune I grew up with in the Carolinas as a boy but never had played it very much."

11. "Passin' Thru," with Don Henley and Johnny Cash. "Randy started communicating with me a little over a year ago about this album," Henley says. "The Scruggs came to Dallas to accommodate my schedule, and I appreciated that. We walked into the studio, and there sat Earl, Louise beside him, and Randy and the engineer at the board. That was it—it was a very simple, low-key session with no one else around. Louise took a few pictures, they all had a beer, and we started. It was proud to be asked to perform with Earl Scruggs."

12. "Foggy Mountain Breakdown Rock/Foggy Mountain Special," with Marty Stuart and Steve Earle. "Randy and I started into another song, but ended up doing this one."

Earl adds, "We were just goofing off actually, not thinking of recording it."
### Top Country Albums

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<td>Shanina Twain</td>
<td>Come Go Over</td>
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<td>Dixie Chicks</td>
<td>Wide Open Spaces</td>
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<td>Toby Keith</td>
<td>Greatest Hits Volume One</td>
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<td>Brooks &amp; Dunn</td>
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<td>Trisha Yearwood</td>
<td>The White Sheep (Songbook)</td>
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<td>Johnny Cash</td>
<td>16 Biggest Hits</td>
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<td>Hank Williams Jr.</td>
<td>Greatest Hits, Vol. I</td>
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### Top Country Catalog Albums

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*Note: The above listings are not exhaustive and only a selection of the top country albums is provided. For the complete list, please refer to the full Billboard magazine issue.*
We’re targeting an audience that’s mostly Hispanic in Spain and English,” MTV Digital VP Eric Sherman says. “These are music fans who are exposed to [English-speaking] artists on a regular basis through other media but who watch MTV for music they can’t really see anywhere else. Rock en español and alternative Latin music is very popular with our audience.”

According to the 2000 U.S. census, more than 70% of the 35 million people who make up the Hispanic population of the U.S. are under the age of 35. “There are more young Hispanic people in the U.S. than ever before,” says Robert Ramos, president of the Ruido Group, MTV’s advertising agency. “People in the MTVS audience are bombarded by English-language media and artists, and they watch MTVS because they’re looking for something from their own culture.” Sherman cites the diversity of acts to which MTVS gives exposure, ranging from “crossboners” Ricky Martin and Christina Aguilera to rockers Puya and Maná.

“Normally, the U.S. Latin media has a difficulty reaching the youth market, so the media targets the adult-contemporary audience,” observes Jorge Lopez-Doriga, VP of marketing for BMG U.S. Latin. “But MTVS is really the only [national] Latin music channel in the U.S. that caters to young people. It’s a hip channel that attracts people who want to see the latest music.”

Artist manager Karen Cookman, whose client roster includes Los Fabulosos Cadillacs and Manu Chao, says, “The Latin alternative world has been repeatedly marginalized. We like artists and labels that are concerned.” Cookman is also a producer of the MTV Español program The Red Zone, which is set to debut next month. “The expectation is that the Latin alternative acts get tons of press and play sold-out concerts, but [they] may not necessarily get the labels’ support with other things. These acts have a love for MTVS.”

Alejandra Campins, national promotions coordinator for Sony Discos’ dance division, says, “MTVS is very helpful to new artists. Because so many other acts are vying for chart slots, it helps artists get their acts and videos of Latin artists, MTVS has influenced Latin music artists to make better quality videos for the channel. Even if another company wanted to start a Latin-music channel in the U.S., it still would have the power of the MTV brand name.”

But Flatten’s Flavio Portillo believes the exciting thing about MTV Español is that it can make a cultural mark on the Latin music market in this country, much like MTV did for [English-language] pop music. MTV Español can change people’s perceptions of Latin music.

FACING THE MUSIC: The departure of the Latin GrammyS from Miami to Los Angeles (Billboard Bulletin, Aug. 21) raises the age-old questions about whether arts and politics mix. And, of course, they do. Art in general, and music in particular, have a long and illustrious history of politicization, either by the radar screen of many who would take offense. But Cuban music is another story.

In the U.S., where everything coming from the island has been glorified as forbidden fruit by the mainstream press, Cuban music—specifically that made by artists feeling the oppression that has come to be regarded, quite often rightfully so, as special by many. Others, specifically Cuban exiles, find it offensive, giving its associa- tion with the Castro regime. Indeed, the past decade in Miami’s history is riddled with instances of protests surrounding Cuban acts.

To pretend, then, that even the specter of Cuban acts because no Cuban act has even confirmed its attendance at the Grammys at this point—from the island would not result in disturbances in this city is delusional. Despite our efforts not to protest the presence of, say, Omar Portuondo (nominated in the traditional tropical category for her album with Buena Vista Social Club) or participating at Portuondo not to kiss Fidel Castro on the cheek, as she was portrayed doing so a couple of weeks ago in Venezuela.

It’s important to emphasize that Grammy officials say they didn’t switch locations for fear of protest—“We don’t run from [protests],” says National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences CEO Michael Greene—but for fear that the city of Miami could not guarantee a large, non-Cuban crowd for the press, or Grammy guests.

But by stating that music does not have any political barriers and that all musical celebrations should be divorced from their political backgrounds, we are truly removing ourselves from much of the creative impetus that drives great music.

Music is not sanitized, nor does it exist in a social vacuum. The Grammys are a private event and are entitled to take place in a conciliatory, celebratory atmosphere. But to pretend to stand apart from the ramifications of the music they celebrate is wishful thinking.

Artists and executives alike must know that once you make the music, you must face it as well.

The biggest pity here is that all involved couldn’t find a way to face it in Miami, the U.S. city that best embraces all things Latin.
Billboard's Latin Music Six Pack 5 looks at the Regional Mexican Music scene and highlights strategies for marketing this exploding genre. We also focus on the emergence of independent Latin labels, the rising popularity of Vallenato music, and the hot Latin artists to watch. In addition, Billboard provides a 6-month re-cap of its 3 Latin genre charts.

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Have updated ratings for Hot Latin Tracks.

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<td>AMOR</td>
<td>Juan Gabriel</td>
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<td>ME VOY EXTRAÑANDO</td>
<td>Marco Antonio Solís</td>
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Note: The updated ratings are based on the Hot Latin Tracks chart for the week of September 1, 2001.
Mercado Bounces Back To Promotions

BY MATTHEW BENZ

NEW YORK—Goodbye RMM, hello RMP. A few months after seeing the label he founded—RMM Records—sold off in court to Universal Music Group, Latin music titan Ralph Mercado revealed a new focus, with the official re-launch of his 20-year-old promotions business, Ralph Mercado Presents.

COMING-OUT PARTY

The official coming-out happened at an Aug. 21 party at Bahaló—Mercado's restaurant on Manhattan's West Side—that attracted an estimated crowd of 300. There, the firm's new logo was unveiled.

John "Gangst" Rivera, who has worked with Mercado on special events for five years through his own firm, Prestige Productions, says that with the "headache of the sale of the label out of the way," Mercado can now "focus his energies" on event promotion. Mercado says, "My forte is as a promoter. I've always been a promoter."

The first event being promoted is a Sept. 8 concert at New York City's Madison Square Garden celebrating Fania Records co-founder/president Jerry Masucci's 30-year-old firm, Our Latin Thing. Among the featured Fania All-Stars are Fania Records co-founder/musical director Johnny Pacheco, as well as Willie Colón and Ray Barretto. A West Coast version of the event is set for Sept. 29 at the Hollywood Bowl.

Rivera expects the new Ralph Mercado Presents to put on more tropical concerts at Madison Square Garden. He says it is also likely to

RM

RALPH MERCADO PRESENTS

expands its presence further, into other markets, including Miami, Chicago, and Los Angeles.

EMOTIONAL OCCASION

"I never thought, 30 years ago, that we'd get to this point," Mercado says of the relaunch and the new focus. "My emotions are high."

The sale of RMM Records to Universal for close to $18 million was the culmination of a process that began last November, when RMM filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection.

The label had an estimated $31.9 million in assets at the time, but it was facing liabilities of $12.73 million. Five months earlier, it had been ordered by a federal judge in Puerto Rico to pay singer Glenn Monroig $7.7 million for illegally recording one of his songs.

DIVERSE INTERESTS

Mercado is no longer associated with RMM, which has a catalog that runs to more than 400 titles and 130 artists, including the late Tito Puente, Celia Cruz, and the Spanish-language albums of Marc Anthony. Still up and running are RMM Filmworks, two music-publishing houses, and Bahaló. Despite the challenge of renewing his focus on event promotion—while also overseeing these diverse businesses—Mercado says he continues to keep his eye out for new musical talent, and he plans to re-enter the record business.

But Mercado adds that wouldn't happen until at least next year. Right now, he says with a smile, "I need a break."

Jazz

Notes

ALL ABOUT SOUL: Jazz is a tradition passed down throughout the generations, with a history of masters and apprentices, great men and young lions, teachers and students. It is a discipline best experienced firsthand by its up-and-coming practitioners, or, in the words of guitarist Rodney "Big Tym" Smith, "it's a music that's caught, not taught." Jones, who has soaked up a fair share of jazz history while working with such handmeas as Dizzy Gillespie, Chico Hamilton, and Lena Horne, brings his experiences to bear on Soul Manifesto (Blue Note, Aug. 28), a combination of hard bop, fluidity and old-time funk grooves.

Joined by a band that bridges the gap between the older and younger guard—with saxophonists Ronny Jordan and Arthur Blythe, organist Dr. Lonnie Smith, bassist Lonnie Plaxico, and drummer Idris Muhammad—Jones' Soul Manifesto is steeped deep in the improvisational camaraderie. It also draws its roots from Jones' own history; in his formative years, the guitarist became familiar with Smith while learning guitar lines from George Benson records and with Parker from James Brown records.

But it was more than funky lines that Jones soaked up from seminal recordings. "It was the meaning that the musicians put behind the grooves that really made the music what it was," Jones says. "It was the values, the licks and the grooves. At the end of the day, what is important in music, and in life, is knowing one's self, knowing what came before you, and knowing yourself with that knowledge."

Although Jones picked up his first guitar at age 6, his introduc- tion to jazz did not come until his teens, when he heard Barney Kessel's version of "Summertime" on the radio. "Up until then," Jones says, "I was known as the guy who could hear the hot guitar lines on the radio and emulate their style. When I tried to play like Kessel, it just did not happen, and the challenge of jazz called out to me.

Jones, who also draws inspiration from guitar greats Kenny Bur-rell, Wes Montgomery, and Grant Green, says he "gives a strong nod of the head to those who came before me," whenever he plays the guitar. "My career is defined by looking back and then moving forward with the knowledge gained from studying those masters."

Despite Jones' lifelong obsession with funk, Soul Manifesto is his first project as a leader to delve into the music's rich R&B rhythms and succulent lines. Most of the material was written and recorded within a short time span to retain a sense of immediacy, as well as allow the instantaneous joy that the guitarist and his cohorts felt when another's musical contributions seep deeply into the recorded grooves.

"When jazz was popular music, the enjoyment and fun that you heard in the music was what made it popular," the guitarist says. "Jazz needs more doing, less thinking. Without the joy, the technical aspects are not enough to connect with people."

As would be expected, considering the pedigrees of the musicians who perform on Soul Mani- festo, the music contained within is fun, danceable, and filled with joyous improvisations and rich harmonic interplay. It is almost a given that Muhammad, Parker, and Smith would contribute vibrant, soul-jazz lines to the music; Jones admits that the inclusion of Blythe, generally known for his avant-garde lean- ings, is the most unexpected aspect of the project. "Arthur comes from the same places, has the same musical roots, as the rest of the group," Jones says. "The point is he is a soulful player, one whose life experiences can be heard in his playing."

At 44, Jones is cognizant of the fact that, demographically, he sits between the music's ageless masters and Young Turks. "Jazz," he says, "is a young man's music best played by older men. It is best played by musicians who have the energy of youth, but who have experienced the ups and downs and loves and losses that are part of life. That is what gives the music its richness."

JAZZ EXTRAS: In Montreal, a live duo set by bassist Charlie Haden and guitarist/pianist Egberto Gismonti recorded at the Montreal Jazz Festival in 1999, sees the light of day Aug. 21 on ECM. The concert was the sixth in a series of eight Haden performances featured at the festival that year (with most issued on disc by Verve).
ASCAP SHOWCASES TALLEY: Long-time ASCAP exec Jim Steinblatt has taken it upon himself to bring back established singer/songwriters who have been unfairly absent from the New York City concert scene—or whenever under-represented.

In January, Steinblatt launched ASCAP Presents... Up Close, a monthly performance series centering on folk and roots artists at Upper West Side club Makor. So far, he's hosted Willie Nile (in a rare solo acoustic performance), Eric Andersen, Jim Kweskin (in his first New York City showing in 15 years), and former Jim Kweskin Jug Band member Geoff Muldaur, as well as Bob Neuwirth, Cindy Bullens, Duane Jarvis, and, last week, Sid Selvidge and James Talley.

"I'd talked with a lot of other ASCAP members and other singer/songwriters who said they couldn't get gigs in New York, and I thought about how many deserving people have had trouble getting gigs here," Steinblatt says. "I then walked over to Makor, which is a couple blocks from ASCAP, and suggested an occasional series to give them a chance to be heard again."

Kweskin's appearance was particularly useful, Steinblatt notes, in that it garnered a New York Times review and introduced new band members to Kweskin's loyal long-time following.

"The series was conceived with a roots music focus—and as a service to the singer/songwriter community," Steinblatt adds. "Not that we won't put on young people: For Kweskin, Geoff Muldaur's youngest daughter, Clare Muldaur—who is a young ASCAP member and promising singer/songwriter—opened. But the primary objective is to showcase the older voices."

Kweskin, middle daughter of the legendary Woody Guthrie, Talley was heavily influenced by Guthrie and has recorded an album of his songs. He will have a star a long time ago. His 1975 Capitol debut album, Got No Bread, No Milk, No Money, But We Sure Got a Lot of Love, drew comparisons to Bob Dylan, Jimmie Rodgers, Kris Kristofferson, and Woody Guthrie—the subject of his self-released 1999 Cimarron Records tribute, Woody Guthrie and Songs of My Oklahoma Home. "Woody Guthrie obviously had a big impact on my musical life," says Talley, who spent the afternoon the day after the Makor show touring Guthrie archives with the legend's daughter, Nora Guthrie. "He and Hank Williams are in the same category: A couple of unbelievable writers at the same time, with a different perspective but a lot in common. Unfortunately, the music business has gone far away from the sense of genuineness in their music."

Talley's early acclaim, unfortunately, did not convert to commercial success, and he's been quietly supporting his family as a real estate agent in Nashville. But he has continued to write and record his acclaimed latest album, Nashville City Blues, came out on Cimarron (last year), and he is looking forward to a tour of the Northwest in October. He has also promised Steinblatt that he will perform at the North American Folk Alliance conference next February in Jacksonville, Fla.

Hardhit Music writer Talley, incidentally, is a BMI member. "We're not restricting ASCAP Presents... to ASCAP members," Steinblatt says, adding slyly, "Of course, if somebody wants to switch over, we won't stop them.

He's now "rummaging around in the past" and has confirmed singer/songwriter Tim Moore for the November Makor production. Moore, who released several albums for Asylum in the '70s, wrote such hits as the Bay City Rollers' "Rock And Roll Love Letter" and Art Garfunkel's "Second Avenue." Steinblatt says, "We're taking a pop direction next time."

SGA Presents Songwriter Shows: The Songwriters Guild of America (SGA) recently presented several songwriter shows at Nashville's 3rd & Lindsley club as part of the 9001 national SGA Week, which also included activities in New York City and Los Angeles. Vince Gill headlined one songwriter show. Pictured in the left photo, from left, are songwriters J ohn Draper and Chuck Cannon, SGA's Judie Telf, and songwriters Gill, Rick Barnes, and Janis Carmel. Pictured in the right photo, from left, are songwriters Baxter B. Jones, Thom Bros, William Lee Ellis, Lisa Carver, and Paul Craft, SGA's southern regional director Rundie Ream; and songwriter/SGA Southern VP Casey Kelly.

Universal Blinks: Universal Publishing Group (UMPG) has signed SCA recording group Blink-182 to an exclusive worldwide publishing deal. The band's latest album, Take Off Your Pants and Jacket, debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 in the June 30 issue. Pictured at the Los Angeles signing in the back row, from left, are bass manager Rick DeVoe, UMPG senior VP/CFO Michael Sammis, Blink-182's guitarist/vocalist Tom DeLonge and drummer Travis Barker, and UMPG worldwide president Dave Renzer. Pictured kneeling, from left, are UMPG VP of business affairs Robert Allen, Blink-182's bassist/vocalist Mark Hoppus, and UMPG executive VP of creative affairs (U.S.) Tom Sturges.

Beggs Wins BMI's Parker Prize: Big-hand leader/composer Jamie Beggs has won the second annual BMI Foundation/Charlie Parker Jazz Composition Prize for his piece, "Puffy Math."

The $3,000 award, given to the writer of the best new work composed in the BMI Jazz Composers Workshop, was presented during the workshop's annual showcase concert at Merkin Hall in New York. Pictured, from left, are BMI Jazz Composers Workshop co-musical director Jim McNeely, Beggs, workshop director Barron Koral, and BMI VP of writer/publisher relations Charlie Feldman.

BMG Songs Wisely Signs Wiseman: BMG Songs has signed a co-publishing agreement with country songwriter Craig Wiseman, whose hits include Lonestar's "Tell Her" and Tim McGraw's "Where the Green Grass Grows." Wiseman's future works will now be co-published by BMG Songs and Wiseman's Mrs. Lumpkin's Poolife/ASCAP; his back catalog with Daddy Rabbit Music/ASCAP has been purchased by BMG. Pictured outside BMG Songs' Nashville offices, from left, are BMG Songs president Scott Francis, BMG Songs VP of creative director of country music Chris Oglesby.
New York's Sound On Sound Adds Sony Oxford, Second SSL 9000 J

BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH

NEW YORK—Sound on Sound Recording has made two major hardware acquisitions. After installing a Solid State Logic (SSL) 9000 J Series console in Studio B, an overdub/mix room, owner David Amelio opted to add a second 9000, this one in Studio A, in June. Most recently, he chose to install a Sony Oxford digital console in Studio C, replacing that room’s previous digital board, a New Cartier.

The second 9000, a 72-input console, comes from London’s Townhouse I and replaces a Neve VR in the facility's main tracking studio. Despite the popularity of the Neve VR design—albeit a small one, Amelio says—of mix engineers, a second SSL J Series makes business sense, given the strong preference for the 9000 throughout the industry and around the world.

“Are the unfortunate thing we’ve found is that there are several engineers in the city who like to mix on VRs,” Amelio says. “In half those cases, their clients want to mix on a J. We’re trying to stay around for the long haul, and there are things we’ve had to do as a result.”

Several New York City studios still feature VRs, including Chung King, the Hit Factory, Manhattan Center Studios, Sony Music Studios, Soundtrack, and Right Track Recording.

ONE 9000 IS NOT ENOUGH

Despite the proliferation of the 9000, many studios are finding that one is not enough. A number of studios that had originally installed SSLs

The SSL Oxford digital console has since exchanged it for a 9000, most recently Quad Recording in New York City.

“Mostly, everyone needs two,” SSL’s Rick Plushner notes, “because of the overwork you have to have another room that can handle it. People have gone on to three or four.”

Sound on Sound’s latest installation, the Sony Oxford, is housed in Studio C, a 5.1 mixing suite. At the upcoming Audio Engineering Society Convention, Sept. 21-24 in New York City, Sony will demonstrate Version 3.0 software for the Oxford.

“That is focused substantially on surround,” Sony’s Courtney Spencer explains. “In the current version of the software, we had a full surround implementation, but you were using multi-track busses, essentially reassigning in a matrix mode, to be able to mix the surround buses. With Version 3.0, we now establish a completely different set of surround program busses, so the multitracks remain available and apart from the surround busses.”

Sound on Sound has also opened Studio E, a 24-bit, Pro Tools 5.1 suite with Digidesign ProControl for editing, pre-production, and recording environment.

“Three main rooms have been doing very, very well,” Amelio says. “We’re looking forward to the Oxford room doing very well also.”

A PRO TOOLS MILESTONE:

As the first No. 1 song recorded and mixed completely within the Pro Tools environment, Ricky Martin’s “Livin’ la Vida Loca” was a landmark recording for the computer-based system.

Nashville engineer Ed Seay says Pro Tools has reached another benchmark with Blake Shelton’s “Austin,” standing at No. 1 on Hot Country Singles & Tracks. Seay mixed “Austin” from Pro Tools using Digidesign’s Pro Control interface, hyped as the traditional console—the first country recording, he states, to be created this way.

When the Warner Music Group (WMG) acquired the 50% of the SSL that it did not previously own, the label’s Nashville and Los Angeles offices were closed. Prior to closing, however, president Doug Johnson had installed a Pro Tools rig in the label’s Music Row offices, with which he and Seay were mixing projects.

Despite Giant’s closing, Seay and Johnson have continued to work at the space, dubbed Cool Tools Audio. “Pro Tools has been used as a tapeless recorder in the past,” Seay says, “where they take the outputs directly into a ‘normal’ console and use it like a tape machine, but never in this way, where Pro Tools replaces the tape machine, the console, and the outboard.”

Cool Tools Audio features a control room designed by Michael Cronin. “Doug and I have actually worked on several projects there,” Seay says. “I’ve mixed a lot of records there, but a lot of them were for Giant, which didn’t get a lot of stuff on the air in country.”

“‘Austin’ was, in fact, tracked to digital 48-track tape. Seay explains, but then transferred into Pro Tools. Overdubs were added before mixing, with ProControl, to a Sony PCM 9000 MD recorder at 48 kilohertz/24-bit. But significantly, Seay says, while “Livin’ la Vida Loca” apart from vocals, was largely sampled sounds, “Austin” consists of traditional country instrumentation: acoustic guitar, bass, drums, piano, electric guitar, and lead and background vocals.

Can the full timbre of acoustic, that we want to be able to the harmonics on mixed by a tube amplifier be faithfully captured on a hard-disk-based format? Yes, if the popularity of Pro Tools and stand alone hard disk is high in Nashville, such as RADAR, is an indication.

But like RADAR, the sonic attributes of Pro Tools 24 is only part of the attraction. After recording and mixing for 10 years, they’ve want to be able to get hard disk and magnetic tape. Seay is equally enthusiastic about the convenience of Pro Tools.

“Like everybody else, I’ve been doing it that way for years,” he says. “It’s really fun to do something a different way and make a different kind of record, and then it’s a bit and the process is where it needs to be. That is the case this year, Seay did the bulk of his engineering work at the Trident console-equipped Money Pit Studios.

“After a while,” he recalls, “my clients were saying, ‘We want to mix this, but we want to be able to recall it’. Because now, everybody—managers, labels, artists, A&R people—is hip to ‘Just recall it and turn the hard hat up’ or ‘Change that word’. Conventional ly, that’s not easy. You start from scratch, because it’s a Trident, a pitch bay, bring in the gear, put it back, make notes. So I moved a lot of the mixing work to SSL 9000, which was great, but it wasn’t quite recall, and you’re renting a room that costs $2,500 a day.”

As analog becomes more a format for archiving and less for tracking, that disk claims a greater share of the projects. With every AES Convention, where Pro Tools and related developers occupy a greater share of the floor, fewer disparaging voices are heard.

“I used to have to learn you work in,” Seay says. “No, it’s not going to sound like an SSL, but an SSL doesn’t sound like a Trident and analog tape doesn’t sound like digital tape. It’s just one thing different. But obviously, it is not getting in the way of chart success.”
Complete Conference Information

Mainstream Marketers Court Black Pop

New Urban Teen Acts

Global Hip-Hop Rap-Up

Upcoming Product and Reissues Guide
Billboard, BET, Heineken Join For Second Annual R&B/Hip-Hop Confab

BY GAIL MITCHELL

LOS ANGELES—The second annual Billboard/BET R&B/Hip-Hop Conference gets under way once again at the New York Hilton, Aug. 28-30. But this year, something new has been added. In addition to Billboard hosting its first-ever R&B/hip-hop awards show, American Urban Radio Networks will be on hand to cover the awards festivities for a two-hour syndicated program. In addition to behind-the-scenes commentary, the program will present artist interviews and highlights from the actual ceremony.

The AURN special is slated for broadcast via the nationally syndicated USA Music Magazine and Super Jam Survey radio programs on Sept. 14-15. Among the major outlets on board are New York’s WWRL, Los Angeles’ KJLH, Chicago’s WVAZ, Philadelphia’s WDAS, Dallas’ KMFB, Detroit’s WGGP, Houston’s KMJQ, Cleveland’s WZAK, New Orleans’ WWLW, Washington, D.C.’s WHUR, Kansas City, MO’s KPRS and Pittsburg’s WAMO.

AWARDS-SHOW HIGHLIGHTS

Presented in association with Heineken, the awards ceremony will feature performances by Warner Bros.’ artist Jaheim, Background/Virgin’s Tank, Loud/Columbia’s Tha Liks, Goodvibe/Baraa/IOC’s Mystic, and Epic act Ruft Endz. The roster of preducers’ panels will include Tank, Mystic, Professor Griff and Jaheim, as well as recently signed TVT act Naughtly By Nature, Koch Records’ RZA, Salt-N-Pepa’s Cheryl “Salt” James and Dee Dee “DJ Spinderella” LaToya Roper, the legendary Bootsy Collins, J Records artists Jimmy Cozier and Product Q&G, RCA artist Dante, TVT Group’s Lil Jon & The East Side Boys, and Elektra/Roc-A-Fella artist Reel. Honoring the genre’s best songs, performers and producers, awards will be handed out in 17 categories (see accompanying sidebar).

The awards show will cap off three days of showcases and panels. One of the panel highlights of this year’s conference is the Thursday afternoon session “The Black Music Industry: Then & Now,” where old- and new-school artists share their viewpoints on the current state of the industry. The panel boasts such participants as Bootsy Collins, Public Enemy’s Professor Griff and newcomers Mystic and Reel.

Another conference highlight promises to be Wednesday’s “Producers’ includes Tank, Mystic, Professor Griff and newcomers Mystic and Reel.

The conference also includes the “A&R & Executive Roundtable” on Sept. 29. Moderating this panel is Kris Fite, president of Classic Music Publishing. Joining her will be ASCAP VP of creative affairs, film & TV, special projects, membership group Jeannie Weems; Universal VP of creative urban affairs, East Coast, LaRonda Sutton; songwriter Shamara Crawford of Ground Breaking Music (Sony/ATV Music Publishing) and Winkler Law Firm principal Maury Winkler, whose clients include Mos Def, Nelly and the St. Lunatics, Cedric The Entertainer and Easy Mo Bee.

This year’s Billboard/BET R&B/Hip-Hop Conference culminates with the magazine’s inaugural R&B/Hip-Hop music awards show. The Aug. 30 event, presented in association with Heineken, will be staged at the New York Hilton. Awards will be given out in 17 categories, with the nominees as follows.

**BEST R&B/HIP-HOP ALBUM**
- TP-2.com, R. Kelly (Jive/Zomba)
- Adjusting (I Just Want To Sing), Musiq Soulchild (Def Soul/IDJMG)
- Lovers Rock, Sade (Epic)
- Hot Shot, Shaggy (MCA)

**BEST R&B/HIP-HOP SINGLE**
- "Missing You," Case (Def Soul/IDJMG)
- "Put It On Me," Ja Rule Featuring Lil’ Mo & Vita (Muder Inc./Def Jam/IDJMG)
- "Promise," Jagged Edge (So So Def/Columbia)
- "Stutter," Joe Featuring Mystikal (Jive)

**BEST R&B/HIP-HOP ARTIST**
- Jay-Z (Roc-A-Fella/Def Jam/IDJMG)
- R. Kelly (Jive)

**BEST R&B/HIP-HOP ARTIST, MALE**
- Ja Rule (Muder Inc./Def Jam/IDJMG)
- Jay-Z (LaFace/Arista)
- R. Kelly (Jive)

**BEST R&B/HIP-HOP ARTIST, FEMALE**
- Erykah Badu (Motown)
- Sade (Epic)
- Jill Scott (Hidden Beach/Epic)
- Tania (Elektra/EGG)

**BEST R&B/HIP-HOP ARTIST, DUO OR GROUP**
- 112 (Bad Boy/Arista)
- Destiny’s Child (Columbia)
- Jagged Edge (So So Def/Columbia)

**BEST NEW R&B/HIP-HOP ARTIST**
- Jaheim (Divine Mill/Warner Bros.
- Lil’ Bow Wow (So So Def/Columbia)
- Musiq Soulchild (Def Soul/IDJMG)

**BEST R&B/HIP-HOP SINGLES ARTIST**
- Jagged Edge (So So Def/Columbia)
- R. Kelly (Jive)

This year’s awards will be given out in 17 categories, with the nominees as follows.

**BEST R&B/HIP-HOP ALBUM**
- TP-2.com, R. Kelly (Jive/Zomba)
- Adjusting (I Just Want To Sing), Musiq Soulchild (Def Soul/IDJMG)
- Lovers Rock, Sade (Epic)
- Hot Shot, Shaggy (MCA)

**BEST R&B/HIP-HOP SINGLE**
- "Missing You," Case (Def Soul/IDJMG)
- "Put It On Me," Ja Rule Featuring Lil’ Mo & Vita (Muder Inc./Def Jam/IDJMG)
- "Promise," Jagged Edge (So So Def/Columbia)
- "Love," Musiq Soulchild (Def Soul/IDJMG)
- "Danger (Been So Long)," Mystikal (Jive)

**BEST R&B/HIP-HOP SINGLES ARTIST**
- Jagged Edge (So So Def/Columbia)
- R. Kelly (Jive)

**BEST NEW R&B/HIP-HOP ARTIST**
- Jaheim (Divine Mill/Warner Bros.)
- Lil’ Bow Wow (So So Def/Columbia)
- Musiq Soulchild (Def Soul/IDJMG)

**BEST R&B/HIP-HOP ARTIST, MALE**
- Ja Rule (Murder Inc./Def Jam/IDJMG)
- Jay-Z (LaFace/Arista)

**BEST R&B/HIP-HOP ARTIST, FEMALE**
- Erykah Badu (Motown)
- Sade (Epic)
- Jill Scott (Hidden Beach/Epic)

**BEST NEW R&B/HIP-HOP ARTIST**
- Jaheim (Divine Mill/Warner Bros.)
- Lil’ Bow Wow (So So Def/Columbia)
- Musiq Soulchild (Def Soul/IDJMG)

**BEST R&B/HIP-HOP SINGLES ARTIST**
- Jagged Edge (So So Def/Columbia)
- R. Kelly (Jive)

**BEST SONGWRITER**
- Mike City
- Chad Hugo
- R. Kelly
- Pharell Williams

**BEST PRODUCER**
- Mike City
- Jermaine Dupri
- The Neptunes
- Timbaland

**BEST MAJOR LABEL**
- Arista
- Columbia Records Group
- Island Def Jam Music Group
- Jive

**BEST INDEPENDENT LABEL**
- Koch
- Loud
- Tommy Boy
- TVT

And The Nominees Are...

Billboard Stages Its First R&B/Hip-Hop Music Awards Presentation

**BEST R&B/HIP-HOP ALBUM ARTIST**
- R. Kelly (Jive)
- Musiq Soulchild (Def Soul/IDJMG)
- Sade (Epic)

**BEST R&B/HIP-HOP ALBUM**
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- Lovers Rock, Sade (Epic)
- Hot Shot, Shaggy (MCA)

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- "Promise," Jagged Edge (So So Def/Columbia)
- "Love," Musiq Soulchild (Def Soul/IDJMG)
- "Danger (Been So Long)," Mystikal (Jive)

**BEST R&B/HIP-HOP SINGLE**
- "What Would You Do?," City High (RicoPhoto/Interscope)
- "Bow Wow (That’s My Name)," Lil’ Bow Wow (So So Def/Columbia)
- "My Baby," Lil’ Romeo (Soula/No Limit/Priority)
- "Ms. Jackson," OutKast (LaFace/Arista)

**BEST SONGWRITER**
- Mike City
- Chad Hugo
- R. Kelly
- Pharell Williams

**BEST PRODUCER**
- Mike City
- Jermaine Dupri
- The Neptunes
- Timbaland

**BEST MAJOR LABEL**
- Arista
- Columbia Records Group
- Island Def Jam Music Group
- Jive

**BEST INDEPENDENT LABEL**
- Koch
- Loud
- Tommy Boy
- TVT

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HALLOWEEN... DOGGYSTYLE

www.americanradiohistory.com
BY RHONDA BARAKA

As the appeal of urban music extends beyond its usual boundaries and makes its way into mainstream culture, opportunities for black artists to reach new audiences—and make more money—abound. Not only are urban artists selling music by the truckloads, they’re also helping major corporations market and sell their products. Everyone, from Sprite and Foot Action to Radio Shack and American Express, is tapping the shoulders of black artists, wooing them with endorsement and licensing deals, tour sponsorships and more.

Bailey says the campaigns that RCA has done (including those for Kevon Edmonds, Tyrese and Coko) have benefited the corporations and the artists. “If you got a record out in the marketplace or you’re setting up to release a record very shortly after these campaigns begin running, that’s a lot of exposure that the record label would not have to afford,” she explains. “These blue-chip companies can afford a half-million-dollar ad campaign.”

Bailey says deals run the gamut, noting, “It can be music used in a promotional spot or a brand spot. It can be an artist appearance or a music video used in a television campaign. It can be an artist in a print campaign or an artist wearing a product. It can include sponsorship of tours, and it can include promotions in record stores, which gives corporate brands distribution in a place where they would never have distribution normally.”

COKE GOES WITH MUSIC

Philip Polk, manager of national consumer promotions for Coca Cola, says his company relies heavily on the use of music to reach its audience. “We know intuitively that one of the strongest touch points with any consumer—particularly young African Americans—is entertainment,” he says. “That’s one of the most relevant ways to integrate Coca Cola into the lives of folks on an everyday basis.” Polk says Coca Cola, which has been a title sponsor of the Essence Music Festival for four years, always seeks new ways to tie into the music industry, but the company often chooses to build campaigns around music genres instead of specific artists.

Despite his broad acceptance as a model and spokesman, Tyrese says his success has not translated into record sales the way he had hoped. “Music is my first love,” he says. “I only do things outside of music to bring more awareness to my music. I didn’t start modeling saying, ‘I want to be huge as a model. Yet, all of the things I’ve done outside of music have upsaged my musical career, and I’ve been really sad about that lately.”

NO SMOKE FOR TYRESE

R&B singer/actor/model Tyrese, who first came to the attention of the music industry via a Coca Cola commercial, says he likes to be aligned with already-successful companies and shies away from endorsing tobacco products as well as those of a sexual nature. “I try to represent class and do things in a classy way,” he says, “so, when your demeanor is consistent, it attracts people who would like for you to represent their companies.” Tyrese says he realizes the impact an artist’s endorsement can have: “A lot of things aren’t really set in stone in people’s heads until you get somebody famous to actually say the same words you’ve been saying all year. If we match the direction that they’re going in, we’re able to help each other.”

Having done campaigns for Guess and American Express, Tyrese says he wants to be “the Michael Jordan of music.” “I want to be the most-sponsored guy in singing history because, like never before, blacks are influencing America and influencing the world, and I just want to be able to deal with these major corporations and bring a little texture to the brand. I want to go to different companies that people wouldn’t necessarily associate us with.”
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Wow (aka Shad Moss) busted the Billboard chart, with the Soulja/Priority debut album, released by Columbia debut album, Beware of Dog. which has sold more than 700,000 units since its release. Lil' Romeo (aka Pady Romeo Miller), 15-year-old son of rapper/entrepreneur Master P, continues to feed the insatiable appetites of the pre-teen and teen record buyers with his eponymous album, released July 3. Lil' Romeo is the youngest rapper to hold the No. 1 spot on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart, with the lead single "My Baby," and his album debuted at No. 6 on the Billboard 200.

"The Jackson Five and New Edition made way for the Osmonds and New Kids on the Block, respectively," says David McKeever, executive VP of A&R/urban music at Epic Records, which boasts a teen roster that includes newcomers B2K and 3LW, whose eponymous debut album has SoundScanned better than 1 million units to date. "Almost the reverse has happened now, with the Backstreet Boys, 'N Sync and Britney Spears leading the charge."

LOOKING FOR IDOLS
Mark Cheatham, VP of touring at International Creative Management (ICM), agrees. "There are a lot of young girls between the ages of 10 and 18, maybe even younger, who are looking for young African-American teen idols," Cheatham says. "There haven't been any teen heartthrobs who can tour on a national level. The biggest tour I have going out that's hitting that demographic is Usher.

"Usher begins his next concert schedule in February for a seven-week, 30-date tour and follow-up summer stint. The supporting acts are expected to be young acts that also cater to the teen market. Cheatham is also preparing an October/November run for B2K, a teen quartet, whose Epic debut album, B2K, is Hot, drops this fall. "B2K is going to hit this market in a major way," Cheatham says of the Los Angeles-based group discovered by Chris Stokes, who developed teen trio Immature (now known as IMX).

MILLION-UNIT MARCH
For artists like Usher who attract a young, mostly female demographic, touring and merchandising become lucrative avenues. Lou Pearlman, the boy-band guru who launched the careers of Backstreet Boys and 'N Sync, boasted that these groups—along with LFO and O-Town—have made more than $2.2 billion in album sales and merchandising (Billboard Feb. 24, 2001). Nonetheless, income for successful urban artists targeting a comparable audience pales to that of mainstream groups, whose individual tours can gross well over $100 million. "Lil' Bow Wow's recent 45-show tour grossed an estimated $4 million in ticket sales and more than $1 million in merchandising, according to reps at Atlanta Worldwide Touring, a subsidiary of So Def/Artistic Control, owned by artist/producer Jermaine Dupri. "I've sold 2 million records to a black audience," Dupri says. "Two years ago, people were saying in Billboard that, if you are a black artist, you can only sell a million records to a black audience."

Master P's strategy for Lil' Romeo is to aim for mainstream success out of the gate. "Right now, it's about getting out there in the marketplace and not just being considered an urban entertainer," he stresses. "Romeo has urban music, pop music and Latin-flavored music on his record. There is something for everybody."

Dupri has a stellar reputation for working with young acts like Kris Kross, whose 1992 debut, Totally Krossed Out, sold close to 4 million units, according to SoundScan. So So Def/Columbia recording artist Da Brat, who has scored two gold and one platinum album, is another example of the young talent Dupri has groomed for stardom.

"Jermaine knows what kids want, and he's a great songwriter/producer," says Alison Ball-Gabriel, VP of A&R/urban music division at Warner Bros. Records, who signed Lil' Johnny and tapped Dupri to work on his debut album, I Got Yu, which bowed last month. "He takes those kids under his wing, and he nurtures them into great artists. He really created Lil' Johnny's sound."

SONGWRITING AND SPECIALS
Other young acts expected to draw the pre-teen and teen markets include Cheri'lynn, four sisters ranging from 14 to 18-years-old and signed to Atlanta-based Arten/Warner Bros. Records, owned by songwriter/producer (TLC, Eric Benet) Manuel Seal Jr. "Their father [Charles King] developed them," says Seal, who has also signed teenaged songstress Ty. "They wanted to sing, so he nurtured them and brought them a long way, taught them how to write and how to complete songs."

Jahe Allah, owner of Las Vegas-based independent label Lost Sound Records, is developing a 15-year-old set of twins called Lady. "They come from a rough upbringing, so they are pretty grown," Allah says of the duo expected to bring the "keeping it real" perspective to the teen market. "We are making the music strong and creating a balanced image. We don't want to just compete with another teen act. We want to be strong enough to knock out Aaliyah and Destiny's Child."

"It's great for African-American teens to have something to lose their minds over," says Stephen Hill, VP of music programming at BET, the network given a lot of credit for the success of Lil' Bow Wow and Lil' Romeo. "It's definitely great for us to have a focus to expand and create additional programming around. We've done a number of shows with Bow Wow. All of them have been extremely high in ratings."

Two BET specials featuring Lil' Bow Wow are in the network's top-10 for the September 2000-September 2001 season. BET reps expect similarly high ratings for Lil' Romeo's Access Granted Special which initially aired July 17.

ACTS COME AND GO
Cynthia Horner, editorial director of the urban teenzine Right On!, has seen young acts come and go over the last 30 years and feels compelled to talk with parents about the impact the pressures of the business can have on young teens. "Sometimes, parents are living vicariously through their children, coercing them into doing things that they are not interested in or have not developed the self-confidence to compete in professionally," Horner says.

Nonetheless, it seems that those who see the light of day are prepared for the big break and relish the opportunity. "I've always loved singing," says 16-year-old Lil' Johnny (aka Johnny Ray Manuel Jr.), who recently toured with Lil' Bow Wow. "My dad took me to a local producer, and we recorded my demo. I got signed at 13."

J-Boog (aka Jarel Houston) of B2K says that singing professionally has been a dream of all the members, who also performed on the Lil' Bow Wow tour. But J-Boog admits that even that fame has its drawbacks. "The hardest part is that people look at you to see if you are changing," says the 16-year-old. "Backstage, there might be a fan and a family member. You have to act like J-Boog of B2K. Family sometimes doesn't understand that. They are like, 'Oh, he's cocky now.'"

Lil' Bow Wow is gearing up for the next level of his career, which he says is "staying ahead of the competition by practicing and working hard."

Lil' Romeo, who performs on the Sept. 10 date of Michael Jackson's 30th-anniversary "Invitation to the Thriller" event at the Universal Ampitheatre/Square Garden, already has his sights on the big time in another arena. "I want to be an NBA basketball player," says the artist, who was recently tapped to do a Nickleodeon series. "But right now, I'm going to school and focusing on my music."
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GLOBAL RAP-UP: Homegrown Hip-Hop Covers The World

Every country adapts the sounds of hip-hop and R&B to its own culture, as evidenced by these dispatches from Billboard’s global team of correspondents.

LONDON—With the late-summer release of the new single and album from British R&B singer Beverlee Brown, the U.K. independent label Dome Records has experienced a bit of déjà vu all over again. “In all honesty, we did first consider signing Beverlee Brown to Dome back in 1996, when her former record label went out of business, but we didn’t go ahead at the time because we weren’t sure how people would react to our replacing one Beverlee with another,” says Peter Robinson, managing director of Dome, referring to former Dome star Beverley Knight.

Five years later, Brown—who has backed the likes of Fine Young Cannibals, Chaka Khan and Brand New Heavies—makes a confident Dome debut with the single “Somebody Knows How You Feel” and the album Next to You. For Dome, which bills itself as the “Home of U.K. R&B,” Brown’s album showcases a very fine singer with quality songs, such as the superb mid-tempo soulful ballad “In the Summer Time” and “Unhappily Ever After.”

Colin “Bigger” Bartlett, an East London R&B retailer and radio presenter, has been airing tracks off the Japanese import version of the album since March. “The class and quality shown on Beverlee Brown’s album is second to none,” he says. “U.K. production has grown immensely in the past few years, and the huge void that was once evident between the U.K. and America’s production is getting smaller and smaller. Full Crew come with some wonderful production on this album.” One of the Full Crew-produced tracks, “Best Friend,” was used to re-introduce Brown earlier this year on the Dome compilation Soul Power. Adds Robinson, “She has a lot of experience, a good attitude and an excellent voice. Plus, we have crafted a debut album that is full of good songs in a variety of soul/R&B styles. It isn’t one-dimensional.”—Hawk

TOKYO—Universal Music K.K., confident that rap’s popularity in Japan is not just a passing fad, last year set up the Def Jam Japan label—the first rap/hip-hop specialty imprint launched by a major Japanese record company. “Rap and hip-hop have become a natural part of the Japanese music scene,” points out Kazu Nohke, VP of the company’s Universal International division, which includes Def Jam Japan. The first Japanese act signed to Def Jam Japan was Dec. 27. The album has sold 100,000 units, according to DJJ, including about 20,000 units on Reality. In June, NMU lead vocalist Dabo released a brilliant solo album, Platinum Tongue. Various Dreambeat DJs produce the individual tracks on Platinum Tongue, which comprises hardcore cuts such as the title track, more soulful stuff like “Pinkey-Dokara To wo Hana” (a Japanese R&B singer Tyler) and deep chill-out material such as the superlative closing track, “Zero” (Mukase-Ukase Mix). According to Def Jam Japan, the new single has sold some 50,000 copies in the first two weeks after its release. That’s further proof that rap and hip-hop are now an integral part of the Japanese music scene. Def Jam Japan is now looking at the possibility of marketing its domestic acts internationally.

—Steve McClure

MUNICH—The eponymously titled debut solo album by 23-year-old rapper Sammy Deluxe (EMI) entered the German charts earlier this year at No. 2 and settled in for a long stay. What appears to be an overnight success is based on six years of hard work at building a fan base here. Starting out at age 16, Sam Semlila, a.k.a. Sammy Deluxe, made a name for himself at MC battles and jams in the underground scene and rapidly gained popularity due to his rap skills and self-penned, socially critical, German-language lyrics. By touring for three years, he built up a fan following due to his street credibility and respect within the German hip-hop community. Prior to his EMI deal, Sammy Deluxe was signed to Emsbusch Entertainment in his hometown of Hamburg, which released his previous vinyl productions. In 1998, 500 copies of a white-label 12-inch titled “Pures Gift” (Pure Poison) sold out in one weekend. In 2000, his group Dynamite Deluxe released the album Deluxe Soundsystem on EMI, which also hit the odds to break out worldwide. “It’s hard coming out as an R&B act in Sweden, because, if you sing in Swedish, you have that competition,” says vocalist Anna Lidner. “But, in English, you have to compete with Janet Jackson and others. It’s hard for Swedes to accept R&B from Sweden, because they want it from America or England.” The 18-year-old singer is the daughter of a jazz drummer and a piano teacher, but, although she recently graduated from music school, she doesn’t play any instruments in Chana. Two years ago, Lidner met DJ/producer Charlie Tamakloe, nine years her senior and a native of Ghana. “I used to produce rappers in Malmö,” says Tamakloe, “including the group Excel on Warnk, which [cut] Lionel Ritchie’s ‘All Night Long,’ and one track for Permanent, a group from Malmö on BMG Denmark that raps in English.” After meeting, the duo immediately began writing and recording together. Their moniker, Chana, is an amalgam of Charlie and Anna’s names and Ghana. “Blaming Me,” their debut single, was released in late May and became a hit on national radio, going top-30 on the sales chart. Their debut album, Here to Stay, was completed prior to their deal with Polar, on the heels of signing with Universal Publishing. Its arrival was set up by the late-summer release of their second hook-laden single, “Stupid.” It is chock-full of the syncopated beats of “Blaming Me,” but without the rapid-fire vocals laid down on the first track, a move that Lidner sees as a plus in Sweden. Referring to their live appearances, Tamakloe says, “Stupid is probably the song the crowds know best. It’s really a good song, and that’s why we’re releasing that as a second single.”—Jeffrey DeHart

MELBOURNE—As Australian record labels try to predict the next musical trend Down Under, 17-year-old Queensland-born Tal, a solo R&B singer, has put up her hand. Signed to Michael Gudinski’s Liberation Records, she’s seen her debut single, “Whatever,” develop into a chart hit since its release in June.

Her multi-colored dreads and sassy way of dressing have also attracted attention from fashion/magazine editors. The youngest of three siblings, Tal (pronounced Tar-lee) was enrolled in Nitro Microphone Underground, a seven-member rap group from Tokyo. NMU’s eponymous debut album, which came out on Tokyo indie label Reality Records last November, was re-released by Def Jam Japan on a drama course at the local entertainment academy at age 8. “I wanted to act, but the teacher said, ‘You’ve a great voice, you should do more with it.’ So I entered talent quests and sang at festivals and school functions, doing stuff by Vanisha Williams and Mariah Carey, that whole R&B thing,” she says. At 14, Tal was in a studio cutting demos when she was spotted by writers and producers Shane Monopol and Paul Wiltshire. They liked that her earthy R&B tone was melodic enough for radio, and the three started writing together. Says Warren Costello, Liberation’s managing director, “What impressed us was the quality of the songs. She and her two producers essentially came to us with a finished album. She has a great head on her shoulders—and with a real charisma, which few teenage artists have. She’s only had one singing lesson and didn’t like it, and she has a killer voice. How many contemporary artists would say their loves range from Aretha Franklin to the Beach Boys?”—Christie Eliozéré
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**CONFERENCE**

Continued from page B-2

- "Surviving the Downsizing": Music-industry players who have survived staff layoffs and career shifts as a result of consolidation and the recent economic downturn share their experiences and explain how they've managed to resurface. Billboard's Gail Mitchell will lead the discussion with Rainmaker, LLC president James Andrews, Fortress Management/Hidden Beach consultant Thornell Jones, TaylorMade Media president Karen Taylor, JS Media Relations' Juanita Stephens, and Ed Strickland, GM of music-distribution company Jadanansi Music Group.

- "The Independent Viewpoint": Alan Grunblatt, president of In the Paint/Koch Records and executive VP of Koch Entertainment, moderates this session, which will focus on the trials, tribulations and successes encountered by independent labels. Among those on hand will be Viola's principal Mona Scott, founder of Monami Records, and Vincent Thornell Jones, TaylorMade CEO and chairman, who will share his experiences to date.

- "Finding the Right Mix": Billboard's Minal Patel heads this panel, which will concentrate on assessing the DJs' role in breaking new music artists, because the lyrics in many of those songs are not kid-friendly. You're generally going to go after more pop artists."

**MAINSTREAM MARKETERS**

Continued from page B-4

Just as corporations have to find the right fit in an artist, they also have to find common ground with the record labels with whom they partner. And that, says Sheri Huguley, owner of Glue, a four-year-old Atlanta-based marketing firm that develops partnerships between corporations and the entertainment industry, can be challenging. "Corporate America speaks Chinese, and the entertainment industry speaks Russian," she says. The biggest problem is that everything about corporate America and the entertainment industry is different. The only real similarity is the fact that they're going after the same audience."

Huguley says Glue, whose clients include Aqumens Records and First Action, tries to help the parties communicate effectively and "understand the value that the other partner is bringing to the partnership."

Violator's Cruz thinks labels and corporations are finding common ground, each striving to be a little more like the other. "I see the fields of play becoming closer," he opines. "I see corporate executives working a lot closer with corporate music executives. I see the music industry becoming more professional while, at the same time, the corporations are becoming more business-savvy and trendy. Corporate America is plucking a lot of music professionals to come in and be more professional and do more things on their side, and the music industry is identifying those corporate executives who make sense, who can fit into their music divisions."

**SEPTMBER**

6 Shot, The Actual Meaning (Tommy Boy)
Allure, Sunny Days (MCA)
Babyface, Face 2 Face (NuAmerica/Arista)
Richard Burton, Ballamore (MCA)
Cadillac Tah, untitled (Murder Inc./Def Jam)
Cee-Lo, untitled (Arista)
Coo Coo Cal, Disturbed (Tommy Boy)
Desperidos, untitled (Koch)
DMX, The Great Depression (Def Jam)
Dungeon Family, untitled (Arista)
Fabulous, Ghetto Fabulous (Desert Storm/Elektra)
Grand Puba, Project Heat (KELA/In the Paint)
I.G.T., The Alpha and the Omega (Free World/Loud)
Jay-Z, untitled (Roc-A-Fella/Def Jam)
Keidis, Wanderland (Virgin)
L.A. Symphony, Call it What You Want (Squint Entertainment)
Latreille, untitled (NuAmerica/Arista)
Gerald Levert, Gerald's World (Elektra)
Likwit Crew, untitled (JCOR)
Lil' D, Meet Me At the Playground (Priority)
Lil' Troy, Back to Ballin' (KELA/In the Paint)
Lina, Stranger on Earth (Atlantic)
Main Source, Breaking Atoms/Fuck What U Think (Wild Pitch/JCOR) (reissue)
Masta Ace, Disposable Art (JCOR)
Mobb Deep, untitled (Loud)
M.E.R.O., In Search of (Virgin)
Nivea, Nivea (Jive)
Nucci Rey-O, American 21-
That's The Ball Game (MCA)
Professor Griff, And the Word Became Flesh (The Rough Stuff/EMI)
Prophet Jones, Prophet Jones (University/Motown)
Relle, The Remedy (Roc-A-Fella/Elektra)
Slum Village, Trinity (Barak/JCOR)
Syne, untitled (Bad Boy/Arista)
T.I., I'm Serious (Arista)
Too Short, Chase the Cat (Jive)
Wiz Dinero, The Cartel's Hitman (MCA)
KeKe Wyatt, Soul Sista (MCA)

**OCTOBER**

Black Rob, untitled (Bad Boy/Arista)
Toni Braxton, untitled (LaFace/Arista)
Cadillac Todd, The Great White Pimp (Koch/In the Paint)
Athena Cage, The Art of a Woman (Priority)
C-Murder, C-P-3.com (Priority)
dead prez, untitled (Loud)
Ja Rule, Pain Is Love (Murder Inc./Def Jam)
La Chat, untitled (Hypnotize/In the Paint)
Lil' Keke, untitled (Koch/In the Paint)
Ludacris, Word of Mouth (Def Jam South)
Christina Milian, Christina Milian (Def Soul)

**NOVEMBER**

BBall, Almost Famous (JCOR)
The Dayton Family, untitled (In the Paint/Koch)
Musiq Soulchild, untitled (Def Soul)
Onyx, untitled (Kela)
Phil Da Agony, The Body of Christ (Goodvibe/JCOR)
Kelly Price, untitled (Def Soul)
Snoop Dogg, Death Row's Greatest Hits (Priority)
Westside, Re-Up (Priority)

**DECEMBER**

Bahamadia, untitled (Goodvibe/JCOR)
Martin Luther, untitled (Goodvibe/JCOR)
Noreaga, God's Favorite (Def Jam)
Redman/Method Man, How High Soundtrack (Def Jam)

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**SEPTEMBER**
- Harry Belafonte, Christmas (RCA)
- Regina Belle, Super Hits (Columbia Legacy)
- Commodores, Anthology (Motown)
- Four Tops, Fourever (Hip-O)
- Marvin Gaye, Super Hits (Columbia Legacy); Let's Get It On (Deluxe Edition) (Motown)
- Rick James, Street Songs (Deluxe Edition) (Motown)
- Quincy Jones, Q: The Musical Biography of Quincy Jones (Rhino)
- Smokey Robinson, Anthology (Motown)
- Salt N' Pepa, Greatest Hits (Island)
- Bill Withers, Super Hits (Columbia Legacy)
- Various artists, Say It Loud: A History of Black Music (Rhino)

**OCTOBER**
- Bobby Brown, Millennium (MCA)
- Jerry Butler, Gamble and Huff Sessions (Mercury)
- Miles Davis, The Complete In a Silent Way Sessions (Columbia Legacy Jazz)
- Gaye & Terrell, The Complete Duets (Motown)
- Larry Graham & Graham Central Station, The Jam: The Larry Graham and Graham Central Station Anthology (Rhino/Warner)
- Al Green, Power: The Al Green Collection (A&M)

**Billie Holiday**
- Billie Holiday, Lady Day: The Complete Billie Holiday on Columbia (1933-1944) (Columbia Legacy Jazz); The Best of Lady Day (Columbia Legacy Jazz)
- The Jets, Best of/20th Century (MCA)
- Lou Rawls, Natural Man—Classic Lou (Polydor)

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The Curtis Mayfield Family and I wanted to express our deepest appreciation to those of you who have recorded or sampled Curtis’s songs. A few years ago in an interview Curtis was asked how he felt when he heard his music sampled in so many different ways, Curtis responded, “The creative juices that flow from these new poets brings new life to my music and paint a vivid picture of the inner city.”

It is through all of your efforts that Curtis’s music will be kept alive for generations to enjoy. That is the dream of the Mayfield family.

Some of the following artists have recorded or sampled Curtis’s music. We apologize that space does not allow us to mention all of the artists.

Our thanks go to Sean “Puff Daddy” Combs, R. Kelly, 2Pac, Coolio, Monifah, Rakim, UGK, J.T. Money, Samantha Mumba, Bran Van 3000, Notorious B.I.G., Eminem, Black Eyed Peas, Total, Donnell Jones, Snoop Dogg, TLC, En Vogue, Outkast, Boyz II Men, Erick Sermon, Jay-Z, D’Angelo, Mary J. Blige, and Project Pat.

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selling more than 1 million units, are achieving sales of only 200,000. That plunge in sales is forcing retail cutbacks. Sources tell Billboard that numerous stores are closing, while a number of labels claim that revenue has been down by as much as 40% in some months.

The Federal Assn. of the Phonographic Industry (BPI) reports that during the first half of 2001, German sales amounted to only 108.7 million CDs, cassettes, LPs, and singles. This figure is down 9.8% from the 121.8 million in the same period last year.

Revenue was even worse during the first six months of this year, with the local industry as a whole reporting a 12.6% shortfall, although no figures have yet been disclosed.

Sales of the two most important formats in the record market—CDs and singles—showed a sharp decline. At 74.6 million, compared with 86 million a year earlier, sales of CDs fell by 13.3%. Singles, predominantly released in CD form, were down 13.2% to 23 million.

The downturn has seen the country’s world-market share slip further, as sustained growth in the U.K., bolstered by the No. 3 slot it took from Germany last year.

BPI’s managing director, Peter Zombik, blames increased CD piracy for Germany’s dramatic slump. Referring to a report by the BPI, consumer research institute Zombik said that between April 2000 and March 2001, more than 133 million CD-Rs/CD-RWs were sold—a figure far in excess of the number of records sold in the first half of 2001.

Additionally, the GfK report revealed that 14.6% of the country’s 13.7 million CD-copier users admitted that they no longer bought as many records. Between April 2000 and March 2001, 316 million songs were downloaded from the Internet. Eighty-one percent of users stated that it was either important or very important for them to be able to download music free of charge.

According to Thomas M. Stein, BPI’s chairman and president of BMG Europe/executive VP worldwide A&R, most companies will be increasingly launching copy-protected CDs to counteract copying. He appealed to the German federal government to “put an end to illicit copying in the interests of musicians and the music sector. Digital copying should be outlawed, as it is already long since the case with software and databases.”

Stein’s plea is backed by Gerd Gebhardt, president of Warner Music Central/Northern Europe, who calls on politicians to criminalize free file-sharing and CD-copying before the entire creative market collapses.

The German industry’s troubles were no more apparent than at the Popkon trade show Aug. 16-18 in Cologne, where overall, proceedings were subdued. Attendance of exhibitors and visitors was down to 9,000 from 19,000 last year, and not even the optimism of Vivendi Universal chairman Jean-Marie Messier (see story, page 12) could help raise spirits.

However, the German public’s lack of enthusiasm does not seem to extend to all genres. National folk and Schläger music escaped the general downturn, and Koch International, for one, reports that its business actually expanded. Owner Franz Koch says, “Fortunately, the styles of music on which we concentrate have so far not suffered from the overall state of the market.”

Needless to say, contracting record sales have triggered intensive discussions on layoffs and new structures at German companies. Universal Music Hamburg will be losing numerous employees when the company moves to Berlin next July.

Tim Renner, president/CEO at Universal Music Germany, has his own take on this: “Laying off staff when the market sag is an extremely short-sighted strategy, which ultimately does more harm than good. Restructuring is not merely another word for layoffs. Rather, it must remove areas that are not required, but build up competence in other areas.”

Jochen Leuschner, senior VP for Sony Music Germany/Switzerland/Austria, is confident that the current crisis is just another hurdle that the industry will, ultimately, overcome.

“I am optimistic enough to believe that the record market will not only stabilize but start growing again over the next two years,” Leuschner says. “We may have lost a set but not the match.”

Aussie Artists Demand Radio-Quota Legislation

BY CHRISTIE ELIEZER
SYDNEY—A panel of artists at the Fifth National Entertainment Conference has called for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation to enforce a levy that supports Australian music on commercial radio.

Local content is voluntarily regulated by the Federation of Australian Radio Broadcasters. The quota is for pop/rock and album-oriented rock formats to consist of no less than 25% local music, a quarter of which should have been released within the last 12 months. Adult contemporary, golden oldies, easy listening, and country formats are 15%, while jazz and big band have a 10% quota. Most stations claim to exceed the quota.

Yet artists argue that domestic success is a prerequisite for gaining international interest from record labels, and quotas cannot be left to chance.

Songwriter/guitarist Diesel says, “I wouldn’t think twice about bringing my work to Australia if they haven’t already.”

YesAsia Gives EMI Asia Sales Boost

BY PETER SERAFIN
TOKYO—YesAsia, a San Francisco-based online retailer of Asian entertainment products, has signed an agreement to market music product from EMI Asia to consumers and retailers in the U.S. and Canada.

YesAsia sells Asian music, games, karaoke, comic books, and gifts directly to consumers through its yesasia.com Web site. It also supplies retail shops. Since its inception in 1998, the company has become a leading distributor of Asian music in the North American market.

EMI Asia artists like Faye Wong and Elva Hsiao are superstars in Asia,” says David Liu, YesAsia’s CEO. “We intend to reflect that success among the Asian population in North America.”

The two companies plan a series of joint promotional campaigns that will target those Asian customers in North America who are already familiar with the genres. There will also be marketing efforts geared toward non-Asians who are unfamiliar with the music.

YesAsia, with offices in the U.S., Japan, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, also has sales alliances with Universal Music, Sony, and Rock Records. The Web site currently supports English and Chinese (with Japanese and Korean capability reported to be coming soon) and is a leading B2B Internet source for Asian music. The company is also positioning itself to supply Chinese, Korean, and other Asian music to the Japanese market through its Japan-based Web site, yesasia.jp.

In a related development, YesAsia recently acquired Angel Pop, a competing online retailer that had been selling Korean products primarily to Korean customers in North America, legislation in, because you have to know the sort of people you’re dealing with. There’s no spontaneity about what they play—it’s all to do with surveys and demographics.

Dave Gleeson, lead singer of the Screaming Jets, adds, “In the U.S., they don’t need a quota, because radio is proud of what their bands achieve.”

Andy Van of Body and Soul, which has had two chart and club hits in the U.K. and Europe, notes that Australian radio plays a very large role for dance acts. “We sent our records to U.K. DJs to play. We are not about waiting for Australian radio to play our stuff—we made our music for the world.”

“It’s no use having a [voluntary] quota unless you can enforce it,” Van continues. “As it stands, Australian radio has no obligation to play local music, so an enforceable legislation is an option.”

The call was made as 350 members of the music industry met Aug. 2-4 at the Sydney Superdome. International executives Ted Cohen, VP of new media for EMI Recorded Music Los Angeles-based author and former Billboard correspondent Bruce Haring; and Liquid Audio’s Internet marketing VP Charlie Prevost were among the 65 speakers drawn from the music, broadcasting, and technology industries to discuss a wide range of issues.

Most attendees left the conference feeling excited about the future. Artists were told of licensing and marketing opportunities for them through the Internet, wider streams as music finds such new delivery mediums as mobile phones, and radio playlists of dancing to Macau Avenue, the wake of a third major player, DMG Radio, entering the market.

But musicians have reason for concern. Such problems as the rise of piracy to 9% in the local market, increased CD burning in homes, and heavy retailer discounting have kept record labels’ profits down. On the latter point, Warner Music Australia chairman Shaun James reveals that “over 50% of records sold in Australia are sold for under Australian $24 [$12.85].”

As a result, the event’s CEOs and managing directors’ seminar concluded that most labels would only sign five or six new acts this year, and the indications are that most of these will either be acts that fuse dance and rock or male R&B solo acts.
Charles in Wonderland: It’s typical of the Charlatans, admits singer Tim Burgess. “After 10 years of making records, we get around to building our own studio—and then we record our next album in Los Angeles.”

Produced by Danny Sabre (Black Grape) and set to be released Sept. 10, Wonderland is the band’s sixth album and its second for Universal. Burgess moved to L.A. following the release of 1999’s “It’s结束了 us Only,” which peaked at No. 2 on the U.K. chart, after a run of three U.K. chart-topping albums. The rest of the band still lives in the U.K., but the singer insists that the division has not sold more records. “It works fine,” he says. “Living in a new place gives you an open mind, which is good for me and the band.” The first single, “Love Is The Key,” is picking up major airplay, but excitement around the record has been marred by the news that keyboard player Tony Rogers has had a car crash in 1996.

Nick Kelly

Making Waves: The third annual Iceland Airwaves Festival will be held Oct. 17-21 in Reykjavik. Last year, the festival was headlined by Suede and the Flaming Lips, while Badly Drawn Boy and Beck are rumored to be lined up for this year’s event. The emphasis will be on the domestic scene, as the festival has become the main door of opportunity for Icelandic bands. Following previous showcases in the festival, Quasars was signed to Columbia and Shonishin’s Bürse. Sigrur Ros was signed by FatCat following an appearance at the festival, and the hardcore metal band Minus was signed to Victory Records, which recently released the band’s first album, Jesus Christ Bobby. Iceland’s bands Maus, ENSIMI, and Jagaar also lined up U.S. dates after being seen at the festival, which takes place in 15 clubs and venues in downtown Reykjavik. Special festival packages are available through Icelandic outlets and agents around the world.

Björn Órn Stenarsson

Bussing Angels: Even in these days of manufactured teen pop, it seems it’s still possible to get discovered on the streets. Ireland’s latest chart sensation No Angels launched its career busking on Grafton Street, the main shopping thoroughfare in Dublin. The band, the covers of Oasis and U2 songs caught the ear of such powers as Sinead O’Connor—who reportedly threw $100 into the group’s hat—and Ocean Colour Scene’s Simon Fowler, who gave the band his Gibson guitar. A youthful quartet—Aaron Moran (15), Keith Moran (13), John Brady (14), and Shane Daly (12)—has scored with its debut single, a spirited cover of the Beatles’ “Help!,” which is selling at the Irish charts at No. 4 and remained in the top 10 for six weeks. A second single on the Grapevine label is scheduled for September, and an album is likely before Christmas.
‘Miss California’ Crowned A Euro Hit
Utah’s Thomas Is Heading For Sales Of One Million Singles Across The Continent

BY PAUL SEXTON
LONDON—“Miss California” is bestowing European honors on the young American who sings about her, Elektra’s Dante Thomas.

Featuring Pugjes member Fras Michel, the single—a flagship release for Michel’s Rat Pack Entertainment label via Elektra Entertainment Group—is taking an unusually cosmopolitan route to success.

While “Miss California” has done respectably at home for the Salt Lake City-born 23-year-old reaching No. 22 on Hot 100 Singles and No. 85 on the Billboard Hot 100 Aug. 4, Thomas has focused on promoting the track in Europe—with spectacular results.

The single, from his Fly album, has been certified gold in both Germany and France and has sold more than 700,000 Continent-wide, according to Elektra.

Jaqueline Ledent-Vilain, London-based VP of artist development for Elektra Entertainment International, says, “The rule normally is that the repertoire owner has got to break the artist in their [own] territory before we go into international. But at the beginning of April, Warner Music Europe came to me and said, ‘If you got a single—video—which Elektra would never have done so early in the game for America—and you give us access to the artist, we’re not going to wait for the U.S., we’re going to go for it.’

With the blessing of manager Johnny Wright (N Sync, Britney Spears), Thomas worked European territories May 11-June 9, committing to more time there through the summer, with five dates planned for November. “To be honest with you, before I did [the trip], I would have said, ‘Why do we have to spend that much time out there?’ Thomas confides. ‘But after doing it, I totally understand why. You’ve got to give people an honest chance to hear you.’

Thomas found time to pay 17 dates on N Sync’s summer tour of the U.S. “The smallest show we did was 58,000, and the biggest was 105,000 in Pasadena [Calif.],” he says. “The label has been having big contests in Germany and France for winners to come over and see me perform and hang out.”

Ledent-Vilain says, “We did it the old-fashioned way, because we had the luxury of having him for a month. We started with Germany, spending a week traveling everywhere, driving from Baden-Baden to Cologne to Mannheim to Munich [and Leipzig]—name it, we did it. And on the last week of the tour, we ended up doing major TV.”

A visit to France followed, with a focus on teen press, and the single climbed to the top 10 there and 21 to No. 1 in Germany. Such territories as Sweden, Denmark, Portugal, Austria, Switzerland, and Belgium have since added to the momentum of “Miss California,” which spent a second week at No. 3 Aug. 15 on the Music & Media Hot 100 Singles Eurochart.

“When all’s said and done, we’re going to sell a million singles across the Continent, once the U.K. jumps on,” says Joe Peta, senior director of international for Elektra in Los Angeles. “And [Warner Music International] made it a worldwide priority [recently], so we’re expecting to see some action in Australia and Japan.”

U.K. support ahead of the Aug. 20 release there of “Miss California” included that of such major top 40 players as BBC Radio 1 and 95.8 Capital FM, whose executive producer of music, Sheena Mason, describes it as “an instant summer tune with a great feel-good vibe.”

Of Thomas’ European adventure, Peta concludes: “People really liked him—particularly in France, where they can be a little put off by a nobby artist. The e-mails were coming back to us saying, ‘This kid’s great, he’s got something to say, no attitude, he got up at the right time every morning.’ That type of goodwill ambassadorship is really important to breaking artists these days.”

**Belgium Hopes 10-Day Campaign Revives Music Retail**

BY MARC MAES
BRUSSELS—The Belgian record industry has planned a huge promotion campaign aimed at encouraging consumers to come back to record stores.

The campaign, Musiekviandienste Les 10 Jours de la Musique (Ten Days of Music), will run Oct. 5-15 and include major publicity campaigns, extensive point-of-sale material, and a unique bonus CD. The project is set up by the Belgian arm of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI). The project is being organized by Bernard Carbonez, former managing director of BMG France and now head of his own consultancy company, Carso.

Carbonez explains, “The campaign is organized in close collaboration with both small retailers and specialized shops, as well as chains like Free Record Store, FNAC, and Extra Zoo. We are inviting up to about 500 points of sale nationwide.”

All IFPI members have been invited to jump on the publicity bandwagon. “With IFPI, we have booked advertising space with all major media, and we expect to get a good deal of free publicity as well,” Carbonez says. “This promises to be a huge campaign, as both the record companies and retailers have reacted very positively.”

Carbonez is negotiating with TV and radio partners including national broadcaster VRT and commercial stations TF1, Vlaanderen and RTL-TVI.

Another push is expected to come from the bonus album, which is being distributed at all points of sale. The compilation of No. 1 songs from 1990 to 2000 will be distributed for each purchase of more than 25 euros ($22.91) during Musikviandienste.

Erwin Goeghebeur, managing director of EMI Music Belgium, says, “We must get people back in the record stores—the 40-plus age group, audiences who don’t go into copying or downloading. By generating in-store traffic, we will be able to assess a new buying potential. Releasing material for the 45+ audience group like our recent Route du Soleil compilation is another instrument [for reaching that target group].”

**PRESSPLAN**

By Paul Sexton

London—Pressplay, the international music streaming service, is set to launch its new streaming platform in Europe, with the support of major labels and distributors.

The service, which has been in development for several years, is designed to provide a single, secure platform for artists to release their music and connect with fans across the world.

In a statement, EMI Music said: “We are excited to be part of the Pressplay launch and look forward to working with the team to bring this innovative service to listeners in Europe.”

Other major labels and distributors, including Sony Music Entertainment, Warner Music Group, and Universal Music Group, have also signed on to support the service.

“The launch of Pressplay is a significant milestone for the music industry,” said Mark Erlich, CEO of EMI Music. “We are delighted to be working with such a talented team to bring this service to fans across Europe.”

Pressplay plans to launch in Europe in the coming months, with further expansion planned for other regions in the future. The service will offer a range of features, including personalized playlists, live concerts, and exclusive content.

“Pressplay will provide a unique opportunity for artists to connect with their fans in a new and exciting way,” said Olivia Campbell, manager of artist relations at Sony Music Entertainment. “We are thrilled to be part of this exciting development.”

**Consumer Data Insights**

An analysis of consumer data by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) has revealed that young people are increasingly turning to streaming services for their music.

According to the IFPI, global music streaming revenue reached $10.1 billion in 2017, up from $7.8 billion in 2016. The growth is due in part to the increased adoption of streaming services by younger consumers.

“Streaming is becoming the dominant music consumption model for young people,” said IFPI chief executive Laszlo Csihar. “This is a positive trend for the music industry, as it allows artists to reach a wider audience and connect with fans on a deeper level.”

The IFPI report also found that streaming accounted for 65% of global music consumption in 2017. This figure is expected to rise further in the coming years, as younger consumers continue to adopt streaming services.

**NOTES**


**EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE**

**STUDIOS**

Julie Bateman is named head of Sanctuary Group’s recording, mixing, and mastering studios in London. She was at Metropolis Studios (London, 1999-2004) and is now at 125 London Crystal, the一群人 who named the recording facilities and were also instrumental in setting up and developing the mastering facilities.

**RELATED FIELDS:**

Lucinda Leo has been promoted to member relations director of the U.K.’s Mechanical Copyright Protection Society, based in London. She was the corporation’s counsel in the legal division of the MCV/PRS Alliance.

**MUSIC RETAIL:**

Zoe Bartels is named head of product marketing for Virgin Entertainment Group’s London-headquartered VShop/Our Price chain. She was marketing manager of music, video, and new media for MCV.
Mint Records Still Fresh After 10 Years

BY LARRY LEBLANC

MINT RECORDS—The remarkable thing about Mint Records celebrating its 10th anniversary Friday (31) is that the Vancouver-based label has stayed true to its alternative roots, even though several of its acts have enjoyed mainstream success.

“We have never flown the flag of ‘alternative’ at any cost,” jokes Bill Baker, who co-founded the label with partner Randy Iwata. “A lot of music gets put out is still not mainstream.”

To date, Mint has released 32 albums, 23 singles, and five EPs. The label celebrates its decade milestone this week with the release of a 23-track budget-priced sampler, Team Mint Volume 2—the follow-up to its 1996 compilation Team Mint—and with Vancouver show on Tuesday, Aug. 30-31. The sampler will be priced at $6.98 Canadian ($4.51).

Mint’s roster includes Chicago-based Neko Case & Her Boyfriends, San Francisco singer/songwriter Luscious Jackson, Winnipeg’s Drudgery, and Carolynn Mark & Her Room-mates from Victoria, British Columbia. It also includes such Vancouver-based bands as the New Pornographers, the Evaporators, Operation Makeout, Tennessee Twin, and the Smugglers (headed by Mint promo rep Grant Lawrence).

With four part-time staffers, Mint operates from offices in Vancouver (Iwata and Lawrence) Summerland, British Columbia (Baker); and Toronto (publicist Yves Neufeld). Mint is distributed by Universal in Canada by three independent distributors: Skratch Distribution, Fab Distribution (which also exports the label outside North America), and Treehouse, which itself is distributed exclusively in the U.S. by the Northwest Alliance of Indie Labels of Portland, Ore.

While Canada’s major labels have intermittently signed fringe or alternative acts—particularly in Toronto, where the labels have their head offices—they have rarely shown interest in the other end of the spectrum, which Vancouver’s alternative scene operates at. The same time, many of the city’s top bands have resolutely and defiantly remained outside the mainstream music industry.

“We have some acts from outside Vancouver, but we certainly draw heavily on our own backyard,” Baker says. “Being an independent in Toronto is a band’s approach. The band plays a couple of shows and gets excited because there’s a major-label A&R rep in the audience. In Vancouver, there has never been that level of interest.”

An independent band here has to really work hard if they want to make it.”

Iwata adds, “There are lots of good bands here, but the club scene is quite barren. The lack of live opportunities gives bands a chance to practice. With the Internet, they can release music that can potentially go around the globe.”

During its first decade, Mint has also issued critically acclaimed recordings by Vancouver-based band Maow (featuring Neko Case); the Huevo Rancheros from Calgary, Alberta; and Lou Barlow and Friends from Boston.

MAINSTREAM MEDIA BUZZ

It has been recent recordings and side projects by Case, including (those with the neo-country Corn Sisters (with Carolyn Mark) and pop-punk group the New Pornographers—which won a Canadian Juno Award earlier this year for best alternative band—that have created such a mainstream media buzz throughout Canada.

“It’s funny that [such acts as] Neko and the New Pornographers are now being considered mainstream,” Baker says. “Neko’s current record [Furricane Room Lullaby, released last year] probably hasn’t sold 10,000 copies in Canada. We put out her first record [The Virginian, in 1997] because she’s so talented. That brought us

[neo-country] people, like Carolyn Mark and the Tennessee Twin.”

Baker acknowledges that the bulk of Mint’s releases fall far short of the 10,000-unit mark. “If a release gets into four digits, 10,000 units, we’re happy,” he says. “We will release records that we know won’t sell that many but that we want to put out. It boils down to [them] breaking even.” Iwata agrees: “We put out things we like.”

Baker and Iwata, both 35, formed Mint in 1991, while working at the University of British Columbia’s FM radio station CITR. Iwata was the station’s program director; Baker was the station’s volunteer coordinator and production manager of its monthly publication, Discorder.

While the pair was still working at CITR, Mint released its debut recording, the 7-inch green-vinyl “The Mint Is A Terrible Thing to Taste” featuring Tankhog and Windwalker. By the time Mint released Windtalker’s Ranitick album in 1992, the two had severed their ties with CITR and set up an office in Baker’s apartment.

We wanted to do something that kept us involved in the music community,” Baker recalled. “We thought we could be the next Sub Pop.”

While running Mint, both Baker and Iwata have continued to support themselves by working as graphic artists. “We haven’t achieved the level of financial success with the label that we thought we might,” Baker concedes. “Our personal financial futures don’t depend on the label, so we can be a little cavalier about what we choose to release. The label itself is a hobby that has become a past-time that is entertaining and exciting.”

Route of Sting’s. In London recently to play the penultimate show of his 300-date world tour, Sting was presented with a special award that marked 7 million worldwide sales of his album Brand New Day. Celebrating at the open-air “Route of Kings” venue in the capital’s Hyde Park are, from left, Universal Records U.K. chairman Lucian Grainge, Sting, and Universal Music International V.P. of marketing Matt Voss.
Billboard's RETAILERS HOLIDAY BUYING GUIDE

Billboard's annual holiday buying guide is back, forecasting the hottest buys for the holiday selling season. We put it all into perspective for retailers with a review of key music releases in every genre, the best-and-brightest kid-audio, video and multi-media releases, the latest on the CD-reissue front, and the Holiday Season's top DVD offerings.

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Trans World Posts 2nd-Quarter Loss
Retailer Sounds Alarm On CD Copying, Gets Boost From DVDs

BY MATTHEW BENZ
ALBANY, N.Y.—Trans World Entertainment reported second-quarter financial results that were in line with expectations and said its FYE (For Your Entertainment) re-branding process is on schedule.

But chairman/CEO Robert Higgins sounded an alarm about CD-Rs, whose proliferation, he says, was to blame for “a pretty good fallout” in new-release sales from the first week to the second week. Overall, Higgins says, the difficult economy was the reason the retailer posted a net loss of $4 million, or 10 cents per share, for the quarter that ended Aug. 4. In the same period last year, when Trans World was operating 940 stores—30 fewer than the current number—it had a net income of $6.7 million, or 16 cents per share.

Revenue rose to $294.6 million from $285.5 million. Owing to a decrease in music sales, comparable-store sales fell 4%. Comparable-store sales of CDs in the quarter fell 9% from the second quarter of 2000, while cassette sales fell 37%. Total album sales, which includes CDs and cassettes, fell 12%, though CFO John Sullivan noted that July sales were stronger than the first two months of the quarter.

SECOND WEEK SALES DECLINES
Beyond the impact of the general economic environment, Higgins says that Trans World experienced noticeable second-week sales declines on new releases. “We think that the CD-Rs definitely have an impact on our sales in the second week,” Higgins says.

CD copying did not appear to be an issue at the start of the quarter, Higgins says, but now, with 75 million CD-Rs sold each month, it is very much an issue. Some of the majors have begun taking steps to prevent copying, Higgins notes. He thinks that the industry should have a better sense of the end of the next quarter of how best to address the issue.

Barry Sosnick, an analyst who follows Trans World at New York brokerage Fahlenstock & Co., notes that rap appears to be the most-copied type of music. Because rap sells best in mall-based stores, he says that Trans World, with its many mall locations, could be hurt by CD copying. But Sosnick says he is awaiting further word from Trans World’s competitors before he pins any sort of blame on CD-Rs.

Elsewhere, DVD sales, which now make up almost 60% of Trans World’s video revenue, led a 39% increase in video sales over the second quarter of 2000.

Looking ahead to the rest of the year, Higgins says, Trans World expects to benefit from the early November rollout of new videogame systems from Microsoft and Nintendo. Game sales currently account for 3% of Trans World’s total sales, but Higgins says that could triple in 2002.

RE-BRANDING EFFORTS
During the quarter, Trans World spent $2.5 million on re-branding and its E-Works initiative, a pilot project that involves setting up music and video preview stations in three markets. FYE signs have been added to 300 stores, with the rest set to be completed by the start of the holiday selling season. A re-branded Web site will be unveiled in October.

Sullivan says the company cut inventory in the quarter by $52 million and expects to meet its 2001 inventory-reduction goal of $400 million. Cash fell to $52.2 million from $106 million, as Trans World bought back 200,000 shares in the quarter as part of a 5 million-share repurchase program. So far, the company has bought back 1.9 million shares.

SHARES HAVE UPSIDE
For now, Sosnick says there is little else Trans World can do to boost sales. “It’s in the Johnson,” which peaked above $10 in February but has traded below $8 since early July. Sosnick still thinks Trans World stock represents “a phenomenal opportunity” for investors. The company is cash-flow positive and has a clean balance sheet, which, he says, helps give its shares as much as a 40% upside.

Gross profit for the quarter fell to 33.5% of sales from 36.4% in the same period last year. Sullivan says Trans World has been taking steps to boost its margins and actually saw improvement in July relative to the first two months of the quarter. Still, Sullivan says, a difficult promotional environment leaves the retailer cautious about margin improvement for the rest of the year.

Bullseye Targets Teens
Music Used To Draw Consumers To Target, Gets Boost From E-Store

BY BRIAN GARRY
NEW YORK—Target Stores is courting younger consumers with a new teen-specific area on its e-commerce site that incorporates streaming radio, music news, information, and purchase links.

The teen site, known as Bullseye, is just one of a number of recent music-related branding efforts by the mass merchant. Other initiatives include a TV advertising campaign featuring Destiny’s Child, exclusive CD offers, and concert tour sponsorships.

Bullseye, located on the Web at target.com/bullseye, is being billed as a source for what’s hot for teens, with information on fashion, beauty, music, and current events, as well as horoscopes, advice, and quiz features.

Sally Mueller, senior marketing manager for Target Corp., says the aim for Bullseye is to serve as “a quick and easy resource for the latest news and trends in areas that young teens care about most.”

“Bullseye aims to be a quick and easy resource for the latest news and trends in areas style-savvy teens care about most.’

—SALLY MUELLER, TARGET

The radio feature, known as Target Radio, includes music from pop, alternative rock, and country artists. Elsewhere, the mass merchant is actively using music to help with its branding efforts. It has recently been running commercials featuring Destiny’s Child to promote a new Target tour, being held from the group’s tour, Love Destiny.

The album features an exclusive version of the track “Boo-licious” and the unreleased track “My Song,” as well as remixes of other Destiny’s Child hits, including “Survivor,” “Bug a Boo,” “So Good,” “Say My Name,” and “Jumpin’, Jumpin’.”

In addition, Target has sponsored several summer concert tours, including the Vans Warped tour.

WARPED IS ‘PERFECT OPPORTUNITY’
Not only is Target sponsoring the summer tour, but it is the presenting sponsor for the Warped Inside 01 Spring and Warped Inside 01 Fall tours.

At the summer festival, Target is hosting an on-site tent with product giveaways and a wheel of fortune, where concertgoers can enter to win prizes. Additionally, Target is providing a Reverse Day Care center, where kids can drop off their parents while they attend the festival. A special Warped Are They CD sampler, which features bands that have previously been on the Warped tour, is being offered exclusively at Target Stores.

Michael Francis, senior VP of marketing at Target, says, “The Warped tour is a perfect opportunity for Target to reach out to our younger guests.”
Amazon Partners With Circuit City

BY BRIAN GARRITY
NEW YORK—Amazon.com is further strengthening its ties with third-party brick-and-mortar partners: The Internet retailer has inked a distribution deal with consumer electronics powerhouse Circuit City.

Under the pact, shoppers at Amazon buying select consumer electronics products will have the option of picking up their purchases at Circuit City stores rather than waiting for the items to be delivered. Shoppers at the Circuit City Web site, circuitcity.com, will also have the opportunity to buy products through Amazon. The deal does not include music and video product.

The expanded selection and in-store pickup will launch in November, in time for the holiday shopping season. In situations where both Amazon and Circuit City offer the same electronics products, customers will have a choice between traditional Amazon shipping options and immediate pickup from more than 600 Circuit City stores. Items offered by Circuit City that are not offered in Amazon’s electronics section will be available exclusively for in-store pickup; merchandise offered by Amazon that is not available at Circuit City will be delivered exclusively from Amazon.

Amazon will be paid a percentage of the revenue for Circuit City electronics merchandise purchased through Amazon’s electronics store. Amazon will retain responsibility processing the transaction; Circuit City will be responsible for product fulfillment, as well as providing product-related customer service. Circuit City will accept returns on merchandise picked up at Circuit City stores.

Additional terms of the multi-year agreement were not disclosed. The companies say they expect to offer “additional customer benefits to both firms in the future.”

Circuit City president/CEO W. Alan McCollough said in a statement that the agreement “will serve as a revenue generator for both companies.” Amazon chief executive Jeff Bezos called the deal a convenience boon to Amazon shoppers: “For electronics shoppers who want their merchandise right away, our in-store pickup option is a great way for them to get exactly what they want, when they want it.”

SunnComm, a digital-content security provider, has agreed in principle to provide German CD manufacturer Sonopress, a division of Bertelsmann, with its MediaCiq “cloaking” technology. Under terms of the deal, which is a precursor to a five-year commitment, Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.-based SunnComm will install and test its proprietary software for use in discs manufactured at Sonopress’ plant in Gütersloh, Germany. Similar implementations are scheduled to follow at plants in Spain and the U.K. MediaCiq prevents unauthorized CD replication or conversion to the MP3 format. Bertelsmann’s BMG Entertainment recently agreed to test MediaCiq for possible use on its CDs. SunnComm has unveiled its security measures for promotion and limited-release CDs in the U.S., including Charley Pride’s A Tribute to Jim Reeves. SunnComm president Peter Jacobs says the company sees Europe as a key territory to “accelerate the process to standard-run music.”

Handelman reports a net income of $2 million, or 6 cents per diluted share, for the fiscal year’s first quarter, which ended July 28. This compares with a net income of $1.7 million, or 6 cents per share, in the same period last year. Revenue rose to $261.1 million from $231.4 million. The Troy, Mich.-based rackjobber says the results were driven mainly by the expansion of its distribution business in the U.K. as well as in the U.S., where it recently began providing fulfillment for JCPenney.com. The distribution unit had operating income of $10.2 million, or $6 million last year. The unit’s revenue rose to $239.4 million from $207.7 million.

Columbia Records is teaming with Microsoft’s WindowsMedia.com to preview a song from Bob Dylan’s upcoming album, Love and Theft. The track “Po’ Boy” is available at WindowsMedia through Sept. 20. The download times out after one year. Dylan’s album is due Sept. 11.

CenterSpan Communications, owner of the Scour file-sharing network, says it intends to enter the on-demand streaming business. The company has developed a peer-to-peer streaming audio technology that pulls together a streamed file from multiple sources on CenterSpan’s network, instead of just one central server. In traditional streaming schemes, a computer server hosting streamed content creates a series of one-to-one connections with the media players of individual users receiving the stream. The technology is not expected to affect the listening experience. CenterSpan says the advantage of the service is “substantial savings in bandwidth and server infrastructure costs,” because the content stream is broken into many file segments, rather than delivered as a single, large package. CenterSpan plans to offer on-demand streaming functionality on Scour and its white-label service C-star when they launch in the fourth quarter.

Circuit City officials say the deal will not extend into music and video sales any time soon. The company is already working with Alliance Entertainment on the fulfillment of DVD, and game sales through Alliance’s e-commerce property known as theStore24. That deal was announced last fall.

But the agreement with Circuit City does mark the latest move by Amazon to provide online distribution and fulfillment services to third parties—a business being targeted by such offline music and video distribution powers as Alliance and Handelman.

As part of that effort, Amazon recently launched a co-branded e-commerce site with Borders Group, which is called BookBarn.com but is operated by Amazon. Additionally, Amazon has deals in place with the likes of Toysrus.com and America Online, which enable them to use Amazon’s online retail platform for varying aspects of their businesses.

Declarations Of Independence

RYKO HITS THE QUARTER: New York-based Ryko Distribution brought its annual sales road show back to New Orleans Aug. 8-11, when the distributor and its 16 labels set up shop at the Hotel Monteleone in the Big Easy.

Anyone who was watching the Weather Channel immediately before the Ryko conflagration town knows that tropical storm Barry was threatening to swamp the festivities. But, Ryko Distribution president Jim Cuomo says drily, “I called up the National Weather Service, and I bought a couple of programs and sent them a bunch of clean’s.” And thus, the day was saved.

Ryk—which became part of a free-standing operation earlier this year, after Rykodisc parted company from Palm Pictures—has had a profitable year so far. Its biggest success story has been Eva Cassidy’s Blix Street catalog. Cuomo says the late vocalist’s Songbird, “the biggest release we’ve had,” has shipped at nearly gold levels, and four other titles have shipped in 150,000- to 350,000-unit range.

Overall, Cuomo says, “For three years in a row, we had 35 growth… but I have 30 feweller labels than when I walked in the door four years ago.” He says that Ryko’s volume has quintupled in that period.

In New Orleans, Ryko introduced a new distributed label to its staff: High Note, the jazz imprint that can’t get enough of the market. Another relatively recent Ryko signee, Macaiza, made its first concert appearance and also made the mark of Northside Records, Rykodisc co-founder Rob Simmonds’ label, to the Ryko fold.

During its session, Miami-based DM Records announced that it had acquired the assets of the now-defunct Atlantic-based Ichiban Records and will reissue key titles.

Sales conference showcases included a Storyville presentation by ex-Bad Livers banjoist and Termi- nut artist Danny Barnes, Alligator’s Michael Franti & Spearhead; and a MaxJazz session at the Bombay Club by Rene Marie.

Rykodisc, the distribution company’s sister firm, mounted a showcase of its own at Tipitina’s, bringing in Catie Curtis (backed by ex-Blood Oranges guitarist Jimmy Ryan) and the Chicago power-pop band Mathew, guitarist Sam Coomes has most recently toured with Elliott Smith.

“If of us have been touring heavily in the past,” Cuomo says. “It was due time to give Quasi some attention.”

The twosome (once married, now divorced) show off the full range of Quasi’s talents on the two newly released albums, cut in 1993-94, is the more primal of the two and is largely instrumental.

“It’s a bit shocking to listen to,” Weiss says. “It’s so primitive-sounding, I appreciate it as a document of our lives at the time. It sounds very spontaneous. Now we agonize over things for days and days.”

Plenty can be inferred from the recording of the band’s penning, skillfully sculpted pop songs (mostly written by Coomes) on The Sword of God. Weiss and Coomes decided to co-produce the album themselves and may have lived to regret it.

“It was truly brutal,” Weiss admits. “There were moments when we put our faces in our hands, and wondered if we’d ever finish.”

The effort paid off beautifully, though, and Quasi now prepares to hit the U.S. road for a month in September and October. The band members had to make the effort to clear their schedules for the tour.

“It takes organization and cooperation and planning by all the parties involved,” Weiss says. “We pretty much have to plan the whole year out.”
Reduced Losses, Less Sales For Valley

BY BRIAN GARRITY

NEW YORK—Amid ongoing management shuffles and talk of a pending merger with rival distributor Alliance Entertainment, Valley Media reports reduced losses but lower sales in its most recent quarterly financial results.

Woodland, Calif.-based Valley posted a net loss for the first fiscal quarter, which ended June 30, of $2.5 million, or 30 cents per share. This compares with a loss of $6.9 million, or 85 cents per share, in the same period last year.

Despite stemming its bottom-line loss, revenue was down $35.4 million, or 20%, from the corresponding quarter. The distributor had net sales for the quarter of $142.9 million, vs. $181.3 million the same time a year ago.

The biggest sales drop came from Valley’s e-fulfillment business, where revenue declined $27.4 million, or 44%. E-fulfillment sales were $34.3 million in the last quarter, compared with $61.7 million a year ago. Valley attributes the decline to one of its largest customers increasing direct purchases from major suppliers, as well as to “a general absence of viable Internet retailers.”

Also slipping was the full-line distribution business. Net sales decreased $10.6 million, or 10%, to $94.9 million from $105.5 million the year before. Valley says performance in the segment was adversely affected by slow retail sales to large audio retailers and by the sale of its video rental distribution business in April.

Still, not all divisions’ figures were down. The release of the Death Row Records catalog helped boost independent distribution net sales by $2.0 million, or 11%, to $20.1 million. Valley posted independent distribution sales of $18.1 million the same time a year ago. Valley also says sales are up due to an expansion of existing market share with certain suppliers.

The company’s gross margin as a percentage of net sales increased to 12.6% from 7.8% a year ago, due to favorable pricing terms with customers, a shift in product mix within the video line as a result of management’s decision to exit the rental product line, improved purchasing efficiencies, and higher marketing incentives from vendors.

The company was also able to reduce its general and administrative expenses by $2.3 million, thanks largely to “a substantial reduction in the work force.” Valley reduced its number of employees from about 1,500 to 1,300 between March 31 and July 31 of this year.

TURNAROUND PLANS

Over the coming year, the company plans to aggressively manage inventories to reduce inventory levels; accelerate collections of accounts receivable; decrease its discretionary spending on general and administrative items; and evaluate opportunities to liquidate non-core assets.

Valley also has to refinance its revolving line of credit and may need to obtain additional equity or debt financing by the end of the first quarter of fiscal 2004 to maintain current operations.

In other Valley news, the company has promoted Lew Garrett from executive VP to president and John Kordic from senior VP of operations to executive VP of operations. Kordic reports to Garrett and CEO Peter Berger.

Garrett replaces former president/COO Jim Miller, who resigned from the company July 27. Miller had been brought in by chairman Barney Cohen to help turn around the ailing wholesaler. But the Valley board decided it didn’t like how the Cohen-led turnaround was going, and in early April it bought in Peter Berger as CEO to complete the process.
BY STEVE TRAUMAN
OWINGS MILLS, Md.—Music Machine, an independent retailer based in suburban Baltimore, celebrates its 28th anniversary this September. Store owner Hovie Horowitz credits his survival in recent years to the conversion of the store into a thriving click-and-mortar operation.

Music Machine has transformed from a niche retail outlet that focused on rare import vinyl and CDs into a growing mail-order and online business that has more than 25,000 titles up for auction on eBay.com.

"You have to adapt to make it in today's retail music economy," Horowitz says. "You have to carry what Tower and the others don't carry."

The Web site, musicmachine.com, launched in 1998, making the store one of the first Indies to capitalize on the potential of the online market. Music is searchable by genre, artist, title, and song, with more than 10,000 items in the back-room "warehouse."

Horowitz says the store's eBay sales—a part of Music Machine's business for three years—have taken on an increasingly important role. Music Machine runs daily auctions, with 200-300 going at any one time. Within eBay, Music Machine also has a site for the store, which was launched in June. "It's an excellent way to clear our warehouse overstock."

The company's online operations are an extension of its physical store. The brick-and-mortar retail outlet, located in a small business park, is open two days a week and by appointment for a dedicated customer base that Horowitz estimates includes more than 10,000 active buyers.

The store boasts two walls of import LPs and another wall of import CDs and singles. Collectible merchandise also figures prominently in Music Machine's store layout. Among the items for sale are a 1971 Rolling Stones Com Pack—a set of two LPs in a snap cover box from Japan—that sells for $350, a 1990 12-inch vinyl promo of Madonna's "Hanky Panky" from Brazil ($70), Genesis' first album on gold wax from Japan ($200), and the Rolling Stones' Flashpoint LP on picture disc from Brazil ($200).

BIG IMPORT BUSINESS

Imported CD maxi-singles and imported boxed sets also rank as big sellers. Horowitz says that two of the more popular items are the UK two-part maxi-single for "Elevation" on Island and the Elvis Presley Live Greatest Hits boxed set on RCA/BMG from the U.K.—a 30,000-unit, limited-edition, numbered-sleeve package featuring several previously unreleased tracks. Last year, the U.K. version of the Beatles' "1" was one of the store's top sellers, with more than 1,000 copies sold at $35 each.

Music Machine has always supported vinyl. About 85% of its stock consists of LPs, 12-inches, 7-inches, and vintage 45 singles. The balance of inventory is about 25% CDs; the rest is made up of cassettes, posters, books, British magazines, and memorabilia.

By genre, about 50% of the inventory is pop/rock, 30% is heavy metal, 10% is punk/alternative, and 10% is progressive, electronic, and everything else. A limited number of front-line releases are carried at competitive prices, but the primary focus is collectibles.

Suppliers in the U.S. include Classic Records and Sundazed Music, but the majority are overseas, including Phantom Sound & Vision and several proprietary U.K. and Japanese sources.

"There's always something new and hot the kids want," Horowitz says, "so we have to stay on top of everything."

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EPIC REVAMPS SITE: Epic Records is relaunching its Web site ahead of the label's fall release schedule, which features new albums from Macy Gray, Incubus, Michael Jackson, and Ozzy Osbourne.

While label-specific sites aren't branded destinations for consumers, record companies are nonetheless finding they need slick sites that can host high-profile interactive promotions like Webcasts, full-listening parties, and chats.

Epic president Polly Anthony calls the label's site a "crucial component of our overall marketing." The company further moves to take advantage of promotion opportunities related to digital music.

Visitors to the revamped EpicRecords.com (see image below) immediately hear a streaming audio clip from the label's designated Artist of the Week.

Other features on the new home page include Artist on the Rise, a section highlighting up-and-coming label acts; New Music Mondays, a weekly spotlight on a new track; and Watch, Listen & Win, a contest area that gives site visitors the opportunity to win prizes while watching a video or listening to a song from one of Epic's latest releases.

Additional features on the site include a Wireless page, where fans can sign up to have artist news sent to their cell phones, and a games section with such Epic-themed challenges as a virtual Mosh Pit, a Music Trivia game, a match game, and a target-shooting range. Travis and Ben Folds games are on the way.

EpicRecords.com will soon launch an Epic Urban site, streaming music channel Epic Radio, and a Radio Request Engine.

PRESSPLAY HIRES: Pressplay, the music subscription service being developed by Universal Music Group and Sony Music, has made three senior-level appointments to its programming and marketing teams.

Glenn Kaino has been hired as executive VP, head of programming, and creative director; Alex Luke has been hired as VP of music programming; and Deborah Newman has been named senior VP of marketing.

Kaino comes from Farmclub.com, where he held the same title and worked for Andy Schuon, now Pressplay CEO. Kaino is responsible for Pressplay's overall programming effort, including creative and technical aspects of the service.

Luke, a 10-year radio veteran and most recently founder of entertainment trading site Spun.com—will be responsible for artist, artist management, and record-label relations for Pressplay, as well as oversee the company's music library.

Newman, an online music veteran, will take on Pressplay's marketing program, including efforts with affiliates MSN, MP3.com, and Yahoo.

NEW MEDIA

Reprise Offers New Order Fans Free Advance Album Streams

BY BRIAN GARRITY

NEW YORK—In a significant step for major-label online promotion, Warner Bros./Reprise Records is teaming with AOL Music to offer New Order fans free streaming access to the band's new album more than a month before its Oct. 16 release.

Under the initiative, AOL Music's Spinn.com is streaming New Order's Get Ready in its entirety from Aug. 20-27.

Also, Sonic Foundry/Acacidplanet.com is launching a contest to celebrate the Aug. 13 release of the album's first single, "Crystal." From Aug. 20 to Sept. 17, visitors to acidplanet.com who have downloaded Sonic Foundry's free Acid Xpress music software will be able to remix the track. The best "Crystal" remixes will be posted on New Order's official Web site, neworderweb.com, and will be submitted to the band for consideration as a future release.

While major labels have greeted albums prior to release in the past, such sneak peeks are usually offered on a one-time basis and right before the product's release date. More extended free streaming has been limited to brief song clips rather than full tracks.

Kevin Conroy, senior VP/head of AOL Music, said in a statement that the promotion is an example of the company encouraging artists to release their music via the Web: "It's a sign that the majors are changing their standards."

Raymond James & Associates analyst Phil Leigh goes one step further, calling the move an "almost radical change" on the part of the majors. "Nothing upset Metallica more than that their show was up on Napster before it got into the retail stores. Now it seems that at least one Warner label believes advance release actually stimulates demand."

Leigh says Reprise takes recourse from file-swapping service Napster, where last year such top sellers as 'N Sync, Britney Spears, and Eminem were heavily traded the week before each of their records came out.

"Reprise thinks it can make money this way," Leigh says. "Its reasoning is that an advance Internet release tends to generate enthusiasm for the album, thereby making fans more likely to go to the stores to buy the music when it is available in the CD format."

Sinreich says in the short run, the majors will likely find aggressive advance promotions most attractive with small- to midsize-selling acts, where the upside from Internet promotion is potentially higher.

Jupiter Media Metrix senior analyst Aram Sinreich calls the promotion a symbolic step for the majors in promoting their artists via the Web: "It's a sign that the majors are changing their standards."

RAYMOND JAMES & ASSOCIATES

Traffic Ticker:

Traffic In July

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Traffic In July

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Source: Media Metrix

July 2001. Site usage is based on Billboard Media Metrix defines users as the actual number of users who visited each site, without duplication, once in a given month. Approximately 130,000 individuals throughout the U.S. participated in the Media Metrix sample.

Copyright.net, Publishers Seek MP3.com Injunction

BY ERIK GRIENWEDEL

LOS ANGELES—The music publishing arm of Nashville-based media file-tracking service Copyright.net and a consortium of 50 independent music publishers have filed a multimillion-dollar copyright-infringement suit against MP3.com, seeking a permanent injunction against the San Diego-based online music company.

The suit, filed Aug. 15 in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, also seeks $25 million in statutory damages, as well as "more than anyone has asked for so far" in actual damages in a copyright-infringement case, says co-counsel Lauren Kluger, stemming from the "viral distribution" of 1,000 songs whose publishing rights were allegedly infringed by MP3.com and its subsidiaries.

MP3.com operates the MP3.instant-listening service, in which copyrighted material is offered as on-demand streams; according to a Copyright.net statement, consumers can "easily capture and vireally share or trade" these songs with millions of people participating in the Internet's growing peer-to-peer/file-sharing communities."

The argument that streamed files, like downloads, can be traded among peers was first made by the Harry Fox Agency in its copyright-infringement lawsuit against Universal Music Group's Farmclub.com (billboard Bulletins, Dec. 3, 2000).

"Tracking systems can determine how far a song has been distributed [online]," says Kluger, who hopes to get summary judgment based on other successful lawsuits against MP3.com and expects the trial to focus on damages. "We're going for the jugular."

Calls to MP3.com representatives were not returned.
WARREN PACKS ‘WILLY WONKA’ SPECIAL DVD WITH TREATS

BY EILEEN FITZPATRICK

LOS ANGELES—Finding the actors who played the kids in 1971’s Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory was hard enough, but getting them in one room to reminisce about the film for the DVD-Video required the precision of a military maneuver.

The classic children’s film, which tells the story of a trip to a magical candy factory awarded to five children who discover golden tickets inside Wonka candy bars, is to be released as a special edition DVD Tuesday (28) by Warner Home Video for $24.98.

J.M. Kenny, who produced the DVD, says the plan involved grabbing the now grown-up kids—Peter Ostrum (who plays Charlie Bucket), Julie Dawn Cole (Veruca Salt), Denise Nickerson (Violet Beauregarde), Paris Themmen (Mike Teevee), and Michael Bolliner (Augustus Gloop)—between appearances at a New Jersey comic book convention last October.

“The convention was so big, we couldn’t get a room at the hotel where it was being held,” Kenny says. “The only hotel we could get was across the street, and we were on a really tight schedule. There was no room for error. If someone would have overslept or the car was late, the costs to redo this would have been insurmountable.”

Remarkably, the interviews went off without a hitch, and the next day Kenny and his crew also squeezed in a trip to Connecticut to interview Willy Wonka himself, Gene Wilder.

In addition to the interviews, the Wonka kids contributed an audio commentary on the DVD, recorded while the actors viewed the film together for the first time. They had not attended the film’s premiere because they all lived in Europe, where the film was shot. Flying them and their families to Hollywood had been considered too expensive.

On the commentary, Nickerson and Cole reveal they both had crushed on Ostrum during production and remember the time Themmen, the most rambunctious of the group, released a jar of live bees used for one scene on the set. “When you’re watching the film and listening to their commentary,” Kenny says, “it’s like they’re sitting in your living room.”

The classic won’t come cheap, though. The four-disc set will retail for $24.98, a far cry from the $29.99 sticker that brought collectors to the showbizdata.com website, or the $39.99 set Warner expects the DVD to retail for in Europe.

Despite the relative cheapness of the DVD, interest in the showbizdata.com site has remained high, according to the San Francisco-based company. As of press time, a preview of SnowWhiteDVD.com was readily available to view animation clips from the disc, play games, and hear a preview of the new Baha Men single “Who Woke Snow White Up.”

The track is on the Disney Records label, though the DVD is not part of the Disney catalogue.

Consumers can also pre-order the disc on the site. When the order is posted, they can download a mail-in certificate for a free Disney DVD. The site will be disabled at street date.

Meanwhile, sister division Touchstone Home Video will release Pearl Harbor in three different configurations. On Dec. 4, a two-disc DVD that includes a historical documentary, the Faith Hill music video of “There You’ll Be,” and an introduction by director Michael Bay will list for $29.99.

On Oct. 30, a 60th anniversary commemorative gift set will be available on DVD for $49.99. This set includes all the features of the $29.99 set plus the 53-minute documentary National Geographic Beyond the Movie: Pearl Harbor and a map.

On Jan. 15, the studio will release the film as part of its “Vista” series, which presents the director’s cut of the film, with scenes deleted from the theatrical version. The National Geographic documentary is also included, as are additional featurettes, secrets behind the filming of the movie’s battle scenes, and filmmaker commentaries.

Oddly enough—and perhaps in an effort to propel post-holiday sales—the three-disc set, which contains the most features of the three versions, is priced at $39.99, $10 cheaper than the commemorative gift set.


NUMBERS PLEASE: Trying to gather real stats on the home video rental market has often been an elaborate guessing game because of inflated information provided by studios and retailers. That may all come to an end with the new alliance between the Video Software Dealers Assn. (VSDA) and ShowBizData.

Under the joint venture, the VSDA will supply ShowBizData with video rental information for VHS and DVD Video from its VidTrac database. In turn, ShowBizData will compile a variety of reports, including individual title tracking, studio market share, forecasting, and studio profiles based on the release of the title.

VSDA president Bob Andersen says, “We’ve been trying to expand the reach and capability of our research group, because it’s become more and more critical for the industry to be understood on a global level.”

The VSDA began VidTrac in 1998 and has about 12,000 storefronts—or half of the U.S. video rental retail chain—reporting to the service. Four-year-old ShowBizData got its start compiling industry stats based on box-office reports from Exhibitor Relations.

Through the ShowBizData Web site, anyone will be able to search the video database—for a price. A revenue search for one title will cost $5, seeing how the title has done on a weekly basis will cost an additional $2.50 per week, and a list of the top 200 box-office grossers will cost $100. A handy forecast function that projects revenue of a certain title based on the past performance of similar titles will cost $10.

ShowBizData founder Oliver Eberle says the service will be targeted to studios and retailers: “The video data fills an important gap and opens up a whole new world of opportunities.”

The Web site has a monthly fee of $29.95, but the video data can only be accessed on a pay-per-view basis. ShowBizData.com has 2,300 paid subscribers and more than 70,000 registered users.

In addition to studios, Eberle says, film producers and actors are also in the target market. That could open up a can of worms if their studios’ accounting reports from video sales don’t jibe with the ShowBizData info.

As impressive as ShowBizData’s stats are, the lack of sell-through data is a huge oversight. Eberle says the company wants to include that information later. VideoScan, the leading tracker of VHS/DVD retail sales, declined to comment.

With a few adjustments, such as revising that pay-per-view structure, the ShowBizData Web site could turn out to be a valuable source for accurate information on the video industry—information that has been badly needed since the industry was born more than 20 years ago.
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**Calendar**

**AUGUST**


**SEPTEMBER**


Sept. 7-9, Street Scene 2001, downtown San Diego. 619-557-8490.

Sept. 11, Latin Grammy Awards, Great Western Forum, Los Angeles. 310-392-3777.


Sept. 16, Racquet Rumble: The 10th Anniversary Entertainment Industry Tennis Open, benefiting the Neil Bogart Memorial Fund, Riviera Tennis Club, Pacific Palisades, Calif. 310-358-4970.

Sept. 20, How to Manage Your Copy Rights Outside the U.S., presented by AIMP, Hilton's, New York City. 212-756-6157.

Sept. 21-23, Music Business Adelaide, Adelaide, Australia. 61-8-8663-5483.

Sept. 25, 39th Songwriter Showcase, presented by the Songwriters Hall of Fame, New York City. 212-957-9230.


Sept. 29-30, Stand and Run Your Own Record Label, presented by Revenge Productions, New York City. 212-688-3504.

**OCTOBER**


Oct. 4-6, Billboard/Airplay Monitor Radio Seminar and Awards, Eden Roc Hotel, Miami Beach. 646-654-4660.

Oct. 5, 12, 19, 26-28, Black/Friday Music & Film Festival, El Rey Theatre, Los Angeles. 323-298-6875.

Oct. 5-14, Nashville New Music Conference, various venues, Nashville. 615-269-5454.

Oct. 11, 2001 Spirit of Life Gala, presented by the Music and Entertainment Industry for City of Hope, Courthouse Square, Universal Studios, Los Angeles. 213-241-7268.


Oct. 17-20, AXS Access to Amsterdam International Music Conference and Showcase, Golden Tulip Amsterdam Centre, Amsterdam, Netherlands. 512-536-0969.


**UPGRADE**

**NOVERMBER**

Nov. 2, Billboard/Prudential Music & Money Symposium, St. Regis, New York City. 646-654-4660.

Nov. 5, Music Row Celebrity Bowling Bash, presented by the T.J. Martell Foundation, Hermitage Lane, Hermitage, Tenn. 615-256-2092.

Nov. 5, Sprint Music Row Celebrity Golf Tournament, presented by the T.J. Martell Foundation, Governor's Club, Brentwood, Tenn. 615-256-2002.

Nov. 9-11, Jimbenchine Electronic Music Festival, Montego Bay, Jamaica. 305-545-0790.

Nov. 15, Seventh Annual PricewaterhouseCoopers Global Entertainment, Media & Communications Summit, Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York City. 646-340-2413.

**DECEMBER**

Dec. 5, Chicago Heroes Awards, presented by the Chicago Chapter of the Recording Academy, Adler Planetarium, Chicago. 312-786-1112.

Submit items for Lifelines, Good Works, and Calendar to Jill Pessner, Billboard, 2555 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90026 or to jpsellnick@billboard.com.

**Good Works**

**RIVER TOUR:** The fourth annual Music Industry Buds ‘n Suds Love Boat Tour is Aug. 25 on the Duck River in Columbia, Tenn. Participants will launch their canoes at either 9:30 a.m. or 1:30 p.m. Registration costs $40 for one person and $70 for two and includes canoe rental, beverages, a catered lunch, and a day’s entertainment. Music entertainment will be provided by DreamWorks artist Joanna Janet and by the band Luvjoji. Proceeds will go to the Crohn’s and Colitis Foundation of America. Contact: Claire Cook at 615-329-2303.

**CHARITY JAM:** Alicia Keys, the Bacon Bros., and Steven Seagal and his band will take part in the Charity Jam Aug. 29 at the Hard Rock Cafe at Universal Studios’ CityWalk. The event will benefit Best Buddies, an organization that aids people with developmental disabilities. Tickets are available through Ticketmaster from $40 to $175. Contact: Jerry Digney at 323-651-9300.

**CITY OF HOPE:** On Sept. 9, the LA Bluescapers will perform at a City of Hope fund-raiser on the hospital grounds in Duarte, Calif. The event is free to the public and will raise money for breast cancer research. Contact: Marcus Cazares at 323-257-4815.

**RECORD FUND-RAISER:** The 10th annual Bobby Hatfield Classic, held July 9 on the Newport Beach Country Club in Newport Beach, Calif., raised more than $235,000 for Lupus International. This year’s event was its best-ever fund-raiser, adding to the more than $1.4 million Linda and Bobby Hatfield have helped raise for the organization. Contact: Christina Kelly at 888-532-2322.

**Lifelines**

**BIRTHS**

Boy, Eja, to Shania Twain and Robert “Mutt” Lange. Aug. 12. Mother is a recording artist. Father is a record producer.

Girl, Juliette, to Patti Galluzzo and Steve Lillywhite, Aug. 15 in New York City. Mother and father recently launched the record label Gold.

**DEATHS**

Steve Runkle, 49, due to a stroke, Aug. 9 in Nashville. Runkle was a singer/songwriter/musician who wrote the Oak Ridge Boys hit “Love Song.” He got his start in the early 1970s, touring as a vocalist, guitarist, and bassist for such acts as David Olney & the X-Rays, David Ball, and Clifford Curry. He worked as a staff songwriter for Combine Music, a company that also worked with Steve Reddick and Larry Gatlin. Runkle joined the Contenders in 1976 and went on to write “Light From Carolina” and “Snowing Me Under” for the group. His songs have also been recorded by Tommy Roe, Willis Alan Ramsey, Elise Witt, and other artists. He is survived by his mother and his brother.

Neil Cooper, 71, of liver cancer, Aug. 15 in New York City. Cooper founded Reach Out International Records (ROIR), a punk rock label, in 1979, which put out titles by such acts as Bad Brains and James Chance. Prior to his work at ROIR, Cooper was an agent at MCA and operated a nightclub in New York City. He is survived by two sons.

Flip Phillips, 86, of natural causes, Aug. 17 in Pompano Beach, Fla. Phillips was a tenor saxophonist best remembered for his work at the Philharmonic concerts in the 1940s and 1950s. During his career he played with such artists as Benny Goodman, Wingy Manone, and Red Norvo and co-led a group with Kristofferson and Larry Gatlin.

**FOR THE RECORD**

In the Native American Spotlight (Billboard, Aug. 25), it was mistakenly reported that Scott Cunningham, who performs as Golana, is a non-native; he is actually of Cherokee descent. He was also misquoted on the issue of non-natives making Native American music.

**Solution to this week’s puzzle (page 84)**

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Arbitron’s Recasting Of Markets’ Ethnicity Could Hurt Country Shares

BY ANGELA KING
Airplay Monitor
NASHVILLE—Arbitron will begin incorporating Census 2000 figures, along with other data used to calculate the ethnicity of markets, into its fall 2001 report, and some programmers are worried that the Hispanic population data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau could drastically change the way diaries are weighed in some markets.

Arbitron will begin asking respondents for their race and ethnicity in every market, meaning that some PDs will, for the first time, have a handle on the size of their market’s Hispanic population. Programming for the Hispanic audience has long been a concern for country programmers in such markets as Miami, San Antonio, and Los Angeles. But what about such cities as Cincinnati, Minneapolis, and Omaha, Neb., which haven’t previously been thought of as strongholds of Hispanic listening?

Some programmers in the format are concerned that country shares across the board may dip after Arbitron incorporates the Census 2000 data, but most PDs say it’s too early to tell. Other veterans of traditionally Hispanic markets say stations that have previously ignored this audience will protest that decision in the future.

**BUT DOES IT MEAN ANYTHING?**

WUBE (B105) Cincinnati PD Tim Closson says, “When I worked in Los Angeles and Houston, we had to deal with the Hispanic population. We had to take that into consideration with anything we did. Same thing for Phoenix. But Cincinnati? It’s an issue that I never had to worry about.”

WKHX/WYAY Atlanta operations manager Dene Hallam has noticed a jump in Hispanic listening in his own market and is wondering how country stations across the board will fare when the new data is incorporated.

“The more Arbitron reflects and gets more accurate on the changing face of America, the more it’s going to water down the country shares we already have nationwide,” he says. “Even if we stay the same, our share may go down. We may be doing just fine, the music may be just fine, and the index may go down.”

Arbitron has made the current 18-plus population figures for Hispanics available on its Web site for programmers to look at as “indicative but not definitive” numbers that will be used in the fall ratings period. Arbitron VP of communication Thom Mocarsky warns that these are only 18-plus figures and they could change when they are adapted to 12 plus. He also warns PDs not to worry about large jumps in the Hispanic population if the market penetration number doesn’t change significantly.

In a statement on the Arbitron Web site, senior demographer Dan Esterhazy calls the Census 2000 data a “baseline” and only “one of many sources used to produce estimates of total population.”

During the fall 2001 ratings period, Mocarsky says, Arbitron will start asking the race ethnicity question everywhere. We need to have a full picture of how that information about markets we don’t normally produce. There will be information to be used in all markets.”

Mocarsky thinks the research’s outcome will give some PDs a better idea about their own market compositions.

While most PDs are taking a wait-and-see attitude, Hallam says they will need to “keep the new Arbitron data in mind when we’re programming and selling our numbers, so agencies aren’t unnecessarily alarmed when country shares fall off after the fall 2001 book. Whenever there’s a change with Arbitron data, you need to keep that in mind when analyzing book to book. I don’t think it’ll bring massive changes, but someone at an agency looking at a four-book average — and your station is down three tenths — may say, ‘Wow, what happened? Country’s off.’”

Angela King is a reporter for Country Airplay Monitor.

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**WHAT’S THE HISPANIC POPULATION DIFFERENCE?**

MARKETS WITH GREATEST GAINS*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MARKET NAME</th>
<th>PREVIOUS ESTIMATE</th>
<th>CENSUS 2000</th>
<th>% DIFFERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DALLAS-FORT WORTH</td>
<td>521,000</td>
<td>706,776</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORLANDO, FL.</td>
<td>135,700</td>
<td>179,542</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PORTLAND, ORE.</td>
<td>59,400</td>
<td>117,571</td>
<td>98.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALT LAKE CITY</td>
<td>83,100</td>
<td>107,499</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DENVER</td>
<td>219,500</td>
<td>277,265</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* BASED ON 18-PLUS POPULATION

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**NEWSLINE...**

**Congress may be in recess**, but the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is busy dispensing fines. Radio One, which recently closed its $110 million purchase of Blue Chip Broadcasting, giving it 65 stations in 22 markets, got slapped with $21,500 in fines. Here’s the tab for WBOT (Hot 97) Boston: $10,000 for failing to have emergency alert equipment (Radio One blamed shipping delays), $2,000 for not having any operating power logs, $1,000 for a lack of station logs, and $500 for not having a toll-free number.

**The transition to digital radio** won’t be anything like TV’s troubled transition to high-definition TV, radio operators promise. About one-third of commercial TV stations won’t make the May 1, 2002 deadline to adopt the digital standard, according to the National Assn. of Broadcasters (NAB), which recently submitted a report to the FCC. While some stations are awaiting the delivery of digital equipment, others are facing financial hurdles, NAB president Eddie Fritts says. Even if all the stations did make the transition, consumers aren’t snapping up the new TV sets to receive the digital signals.

**Carson Daly**, a nationally syndicated personality for Clear Channel’s Premiere Networks arm, is adding more TV to his schedule. The host of MTV’s Total Request Live, Daly signed on to host Later, which NBC is reviving next year. In January, Daly signed with Premiere to host the daily weeknight show Most Requested and the weekend program Alternative World.
Masters Runners-Up

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3RD PLACE
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4TH PLACE
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WPGC, Washington, DC
$5,000

5TH PLACE
Kevin Weatherly
KROQ/Infinity, Los Angeles, CA
$2,500

Grand Prize
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I'd like to thank everyone at AIR for their support and musical guidance. While my position as P.D. at WXRK forces me to specialize in listening to and programming rock and alternative music, the AIR Masters Competition helped me stay aware of not only WXRK music like Crazytown and Creed, but also a wide variety of musical genres. The overall perspective developed by participating in AIR helps me perform in a competitive market place, while satisfying my personal interests in a broad spectrum of music. This, and a tremendous staff at WXRK have given me a great sense of pride and accomplishment. After a long association with Jonas, Dave, Joe, and Bruce, chalk up another in the WXRK win column. THANKS AGAIN, AIR!!!

AIR would like to congratulate Steve Kingston for his victory in the second AIR Masters Competition.

Over the years Steve has shown true talent in recognizing the hit potential of records regardless of format. In AIR Masters Competition II he was able to accurately predict the chart topping success (Billboard Hot 100) of such now well known artist as, Outkast, Train, and Faith Hill. It all starts with listening and Steve has shown that his passion and instinct for music, makes him a winner. We are proud to have Steve Kingston become AIR's Second Grand Master!
An MTV spokeswoman will privately to hold CANADA Awards.

The artists join previously announced performers U2 and Alicia Keys. Jamie Foxx will host the show.

Video-production company Partizan has appointed Craig Deaton as a Union Station and was previously MCA Records director of music video production. Partizan has relocated its New York City and Los Angeles offices.

Justice League is a new Los Angeles-based production company founded by ex-SuperMega employees Brian Cooperman and Anthony Honn. Cooperman is executive producer/reg, and Honn is a director.

Missy "Misdemeanor" Elliott, Jennifer Lopez, Ja Rule, "SYC, Britney Spears, and St31na will perform at the 2001 MTV Video Music Awards, which will be presented in a live show Sept. 6 at New York's Metropolitan Opera House. The artists join previously announced performers U2 and Alicia Keys. Jamie Foxx will host the show.

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BILLBOARD  SEPTEMBER 1, 2001  www.billboard.com

Over The Counter

Waiting for Maxwell: Sometimes good things do arrive for those who wait. Once suggested as a March or April release, Maxwell's Now didn't hit stores until Aug. 21. Based on first-day sales from music chains, the neo-soul stylist is on course for the biggest sales week of his career, with a shot at earning his first No. 1 album.

Maxwell appears to be headed for a sum in the range of 250,000 units, which would give his Now a solid chance to unseat No. 7, the multi-hit set that rules The Billboard 200 for a third straight week. The current champ moves 278,500 units this issue, down 29% from the prior issue; it has scanned 1.3 million since its release.

In sharp contrast to last issue, when three new albums crashed the top five, the big chart sports a quiet top 10. The latest 'N Sync album has its first frame below 200,000 units and its first week lower than No. 2 (No. 3, 167,000, down 31%). A debut that allows Alicia Keys to claim the runner-up slot, despite her own 6% erosion (180,000).

The big deal near the top of the chart is the American Pie 2 soundtrack, which climbs into the top 10 with its second straight Greatest Gainer award (267-7, 109,000 units).

Here, There, and Everywhere: SoundScan calculated that almost 29,000 albums were released last year (Billboard, April 28). That staggering bulk illustrates why the odds against getting a new artist on the ground are almost as great as winning a big prize in a crooked McDonald's promotion—which explains why Maverick is over the moon about the launch of rookie Michelle Branch. Weighing in with almost 10,000 units, the 18-year-old's The Spirit Room enters The Billboard 200 at No. 97, bypassing the Heatseekers chart.

The label began planting seeds at the National Assn. of Recording Merchandisers Convention in March, playing tracks for key music accounts. In June, Branch played showcases for retail and press in seven markets, including Los Angeles and New York City. Around the same time, lead track “Everywhere” went to adult top 40 radio and has since spread. It's now No. 1 on Adult Top 40 and No. 30 at Top 40 Tracks, and it has garnered enough airplay to earn the Hot Shot Debut, at No. 62, on The Billboard Hot 100.

The video has become an evergreen on MTV’s Total Request Live, where Branch is scheduled to perform Friday (24). “Everywhere” also showed up on VH1, Nickelodeon, and Fox Family two weeks before street date, and Branch played Late Night With Conan O'Brien Aug. 14, the day her album hit stores.

RULE BOOK: In 1997, when Billboard revised its catalog album criteria to 2 years old and below No. 100 on The Billboard 200, a guiding force was that it would be unlikely for such an album to remain viable at radio. Leave it to country radio to prove us wrong, as Shania’s “Still Holding On For You” began its climb to No. 27 on Hot Country Singles & Tracks, even as its parent album, The Comeback, reached its second anniversary. We thus made a commonsense exception to the rule, allowing the album to retain current status until last issue, after “Holding” peaked at radio. The set is now No. 6 on Top Country Catalog Albums.

We find ourselves in similar waters with Dido’s No. 82 No Ordinary Day, which finds an eighth track, “Heartbreak Town,” bulling at No. 26, even as “Some Days You Gotta Dance” waits in the wings. So, Fly will remain current for the time being. And just in case you think people don’t take our chart rules seriously, questions about Shania’s extension drew a letter from France and an e-mail from the Dominican Republic—not from label executives, mind you, but from civilians.

Potpourri: Krauss & Union Station garner their best first week ever, as 37,500 copies secure the Hot Shot Debut at No. 3 on Top Country Albums and the No. 35 slot on The Billboard 200. That beats 22,000 units found by 1999’s Forget About It, which entered the country list at No. 5 . . . Fanned by exposure from public-television pledge drives and other TV appearances, Russell Watson saw a 93% gain last issue, when he re-entered The Billboard 200 at No. 147. He’s still rolling with a 55% spike, good for No. 1 on the big chart and a 13th week atop Top Classical Crossover . . . With stops on QVC and Live With Regis & Kelly, actor-turned-singer James Darren saw both his Concord albums reach last issue’s unpublished Top Jazz Albums chart, with a majority of sales on both titles coming from the cable channel.

This is without QVC to play his new Because Of You just shy of the list.

Singles Minded

Keys Locked In: Alicia Keys maintains her lead on both The Billboard Hot 100 and R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks for a third straight week with “Fallin’.” Keys freed off strong radio gains for “I’m Real” by Jennifer Lopez, which holds at No. 2 on the Hot 100, while moving 5-2 on the R&B chart. “Real” gains 2 million listeners at R&B radio and 9.5 million overall and may overtake “Fallin’” on either or both charts next issue. “Fallin’” loses 3 million listeners at R&B but is up 7.5 million overall, for a total Hot 100 Airplay audience of 123 million.

On the Hot 100, Janet Jackson’s attempt to vault to No. 1 with the retail release of “Someone to Call My Lover” falls just a tad short. “Someone” sells well enough (45,000 units) to debut at No. 1 on Hot 100 Singles Sales but not quite at the level needed to get to the top of the main chart. In the end, “Lover” falls 6.5 million shys of No. 1, climbing 12-3 on the Hot 100. Besides, “Real,” the next track with a shot at No. 1 on the Hot 100 and R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks is Jagged Edge’s “Where the Party At” featuring Nelly. A CD and maxi-CD hit stores Aug. 28 and affect the charts in two weeks.

High Times: Afroman’s “Because I Got High” earns the Greatest Gainer/Airplay award on The Billboard Hot 100 for a second consecutive week, climbing 33-20 with a song that has become one of the biggest-reacting records (or should we say highest reactivity) of the year.

“High” has taken off at radio formats as diverse as rock and R&B, with top 40 falling in line as well. This could be attributed more to the song’s novelty factor than rock radio’s recent acceptance of rap songs.

“I’m Real” has received exposure on Howard Stern’s nationally syndicated radio show and in TV and radio ads for the movie Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back. Recently, MTV added a re-edited version of the video into rotation after some initial reluctance about the clip’s content. Afroman’s debut album, The Good Times, has been rush-released to hit stores Aug. 28. The Jay and Silent Bob soundtrack, which also houses the track, wins the percentage-based Pacesetter award on The Billboard 200, climbing 92-55.

Betten His Boots: Blake Shelton digs his heels in for a fourth week atop Hot Country Singles & Tracks and Top Country Singles Sales, “Austin” dips 91 detections to 6,077 on the most-played chart, but handily outshines Toby Keith’s “I’m Just Talkin’ About Tonight” at No. 2 (5,777 detections) for a third straight week.

Shelton is the fourth new artist in the Broadcast Data Systems (BDS) era to hold court for four straight weeks at No. 1 on the radio chart. If he manages a fifth, Shelton would join Billy Ray Cyrus as the only new artist to achieve such a feat. Cyrus notched his five-week reign in spring ’92 with “Achy Breaky Heart.” On Top Country Singles Sales, “Austin” scans 10,500 copies, roughly 7,000 more than the No. 2 title, Cyndi Thomson’s “What I Really Meant to Say.”

All Tied Up: For the first time since Billboard began using BDS in 1991, there is a tie for No. 1 on the Adult Contemporary chart, as Dido’s “Thank You” and Faith Hill’s “There You’ll Be” both have 1,955 detections for the week.

For each of our detections-based charts, we have a series of tie-breaker rules for such instances. A song with a gain in detections is always placed first if it had first airplay or notch a five-week reign in spring ’92 with “Achy Breaky Heart.” On Top Country Singles Sales, “Austin” scans 10,500 copies, roughly 7,000 more than the No. 2 title, Cyndi Thomson’s “What I Really Meant to Say.”

Tricky Move: Propelled by gains at retail and radio, Trick Daddy had his first top 10 single on R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks with “I’m a Thug,” which moves 11-10. It leaps 68-41 on the R&B/Hip-Hop Singles Sales chart with a 33% increase, while also moving to No. 10 on R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay, raising its audience by 3.2 million. “I’m a Thug” and “Ain’t Codes” by Ludacris featuring Nate Dogg swap positions on the Singles & Tracks and Airplay charts, with the latter earning a backward walk. “Codes” gets a 2 million gain in audience, thereby retaining its bullet.
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<td>DIANA KRALL</td>
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<td>PAT MARTINO</td>
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### Top New Age Albums

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<td>Pure Moods III</td>
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<td>YANNI</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>If I Could Tell You</td>
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<td>DEER</td>
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<td>Secret Garden</td>
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<td>My Romance: An Evening With Jim Brickman</td>
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### Top Classical Crossover

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<td>Heart: A Celebration Anthology</td>
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<td>TAN DUN FEATURING YO-YO MA</td>
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<td>Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon</td>
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<td>La Luna</td>
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<td>JOSHUA BELL</td>
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<td>Berio: West Side Story Suite</td>
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<td>JOHN WILLIAMS</td>
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### Top Independent Albums

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<td>DUCES 'N TRAYZ - THE OLD FASHIONED WAY</td>
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<td>DREAM STREET</td>
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<td>KURUT</td>
<td>SPACE BOOGIE: SMOKE ODESSEY</td>
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<td>THA DOGG POUND</td>
<td>DEATH ROW PRESENTS: THA DOGG POUND 2002</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>LIL &amp; THE EAST SIDE BOYZ</td>
<td>PUT YO HOOD UP</td>
<td>Click for Details</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>CORMEGA</td>
<td>THE REALNESS</td>
<td>Click for Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>GILIAN WELCH</td>
<td>TIME (THE REVELATOR)</td>
<td>Click for Details</td>
</tr>
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<td>8</td>
<td>NICKEL CREEK</td>
<td>NICKEL CREEK</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>SOULJA SLIM</td>
<td>THE STREETS MADE ME</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>PENNYWISE</td>
<td>LAND OF THE FREES</td>
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| 12 | DARUDE | BEFORE THE STORM | DARUDE /
| | | | Click for Details |
| 13 | AT&GEORGE ACOSTA | TRANCE NATION AMERICA WCW | Click for Details |
| 14 | DARUDE | TALES FROM THE LOTUS POOL | Click for Details |
| 15 | METHRONE | PICTURE ME | Click for Details |
| 16 | DJ TONNY/DJ MINX | WAREF 2001 TOUR COMPILATION | Click for Details |
| 17 | LOU DEVITO | PLEASE FOR PLEASURE TAKE ACTION | Click for Details |
| 18 | MARCO ANTONIO SOLIS | MAS DE MI ALMA | Click for Details |

### Heatseekers

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<td>FIVE FOR FIGHTING</td>
<td>AMERICA TOWN</td>
<td>Click for Details</td>
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<td>THE WISEGUYS</td>
<td>THE ANTIDOTE</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>CORMEGA</td>
<td>THE REALNESS</td>
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<td>TOYA</td>
<td>MUSIC FOR THE MORNING AFTER</td>
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<td>PETE YORN</td>
<td>CRACK THE IMPAK</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>DA BEATMINERZ</td>
<td>HISTORICAL ROMANTIC</td>
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<td>GRUPO BRYNIS</td>
<td>TIME (THE REVELATOR)</td>
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</tr>
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<td>NEW FOUND GLORY</td>
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### Greatest Gainer

- CUTS FOR LUCK AND SCARS FOR FREEDOM (JAME O'NEAL)
### Top Internet Album Sales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>ALBUM</th>
<th>LABEL</th>
<th>WEEKS ON CHART</th>
<th>WEEKS AT NUMBER</th>
<th>NET UNITS S F</th>
<th>LAST WEEK ON CHART</th>
<th>NET UNITS S LAST WEEK</th>
<th>NET UNITS S CHANGE</th>
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<tr>
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<td>O Brother, Where Art Thou</td>
<td>Reprise</td>
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<td>ATRAX ROYAL</td>
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<td>Songs In A Minor</td>
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### Top Internet Soundtracks

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MTV.com Plans Overhaul

MTV.com expects to undergo a massive relaunch this summer, sources say. “The relaunch will be total: not a single page from the old MTV.com will be the same after the new MTV.com is launched,” says one source. “The goal is to make MTV.com the most technologically innovative Web site from any major media brand.” The relaunch will include advanced technology and add elements for interaction among users, including Instant messaging and further development of communities. The relaunch will be part of MTV 360, a cross-media initiative that began earlier this year. Andy Gershon Gets V2 President Stripes

Look for Andy Gershon to be named president of New York-based V2 Records on Monday. He will replace Richard Sanders, who is moving to RCA Records as GM. Gershon, who will assume new post by mid-summer, is co-founder of Atlantic’s Outkast imprint. Black Promoters Retain Top Lawyer

Bulletin has learned that well-known Atlanta lawyer Willie E. Gary has joined the legal team representing black promoters in their $700 million lawsuit against promoters and booking agencies. A source close to the suit says that Gary known for winning high damages for small businesses in cases against corporate giants—will suggest raising the demand to $2 billion. Zomba Nixes BMG Distrib Deal In Canada

Zomba has terminated its distribution deal with BMG for Canada, according to a source. Zomba, parent of Jive and other labels, notified the major in March the move would not renew the deal; the move becomes effective at the end of September. Zomba is said to be in talks with another distributor in territory. Bebel To Join Schuon Atop Duet

Look for Mike Bebel, executive VP of business development at Universal Music Group’s eLabs, to be named today as COO of Duet, UMG’s joint venture with Sony Music. Bebel will work closely with Andy Schuon, the president. U.K. Indie Labels Planning ‘Radical’ New Sales Chart

Britain’s independent labels are planning to launch their own chart later this year. The Asn. of Independent Music’s (AIM) business development committee is “still very much in the consultation process” about the chart, according to chairman/CEO Alison Wenham, but is likely to launch the sales-based system complete with sponsor—in September.

Sources: Pressplay, Microsoft In Talks

Pressplay, the subscription service being developed by Universal Music Group and Sony Music Entertainment, is in talks with Microsoft about an alliance to distribute content through Internet service provider MSN, sources say. The deal, expected to be formally announced shortly, is said to include a partnership with a Windows media player and its music management and social network, WMA. Macy’s New Manager

Macy Gray has signed with Williams’ Family Tree Entertainment for artist management. She was formerly managed by Andy Slater, now president of Capitol. Gray brings with her the management firm she runs, which includes Atlantic artist Sunshine Anderson. Williams—whose other clients include Outkast and Del the Funky Homosapien—becomes a partner in SCAM, which remains separately owned.

HMV Revamps In U.S. Under Stuart Fleming

HMV North America has restructured its U.S. arm, Bulletin has learned. Stuart Fleming, formerly director of purchasing, has been named director of HMV U.S., overseeing all business in the U.S. He continues to report to HMV U.S. VP/GM Lesya McQueen, who is based at HMV head office in the UK.

Sources: Pressplay, Microsoft In Talks

Gospel Gold. Verity Records recording artist Fred Hammond was recently presented with a gold plaque for his latest album, *Purpose by Design*. Hammond is on a national tour with the musical *Been There, Done That*. Pictured, from left, are Jive senior VP of sales and marketing/GM Tom Carrabba, Jive president Barry Weiss, Hammond, Verity VP of A&R/GM Tara Griggs Magee, and Verity/Jive VP of marketing James "Jazzy" Jordan.

Mandy Sells More. Epic Records executives recently convened to celebrate the success of Epic recording artist Mandy Moore's eponymous third release, which is certified gold by the Recording Industry Assn. of America and approaching platinum status. Pictured standing, from left, are Epic senior VP of sales and marketing/GM Tom Carrabba, Epic executive VP of sales Steve Kennedy, Epic executive VP/GM Steve Barnett, Epic chairman David R. Clew, Epic executive VP of A&R and urban David McPherson, Moore, Epic president Polly Anthony, Moore manager Jon Leshay, Epic executive VP of promotion Hilary Shuey, and Epic director of urban &R Marvin Pearl. Pictured kneeling are Epic VP of video promotion Doug McVehil, Epic senior VP of international marketing Rob Kos, Epic senior VP of promotion Joel Klaiman, and Epic senior director of marketing, East Coast, Scott Carter.

Lennon's Early Call. Arista Records president/CEO Antonio "L.A." Reid recently welcomed one of his newest recording artists, 19-year-old Lennon Murphy, while she was in New York City, opening for the Cult. Murphy will release her debut album, *5.30 Saturday Morning*, Sept. 11.

Sum Time. Island Records recording act Sum 41 recently played a show at New York City's Roseland Ballroom, opening for Blink 182. The band performed songs from its debut album, *All Killer No Filler*, which is No. 17 on The Billboard 200 this issue. Pictured backstage, from left, are Island Def Jam chairman/CEO Jim Caparro; Sum 41's Cone McCaslin, Steve Jocz, Deryck Whibley, and Dave Baksh; Island Def Jam president Lyor Cohen; and Sum 41 managers Greig Nori and Ari Martin.

30 Years and Counting. To acknowledge his 30 years with EMI Records and sales of more than 2.5 million units for his four Latin albums, Placido Domingo was presented with an anniversary plaque at the EMI Classics International Convention in Rome. Pictured amid the fanfare, from left, are EMI CEO Ken Berry, Domingo, and EMI Classics president Richard Lyttelton.
EDNet

Continued from page 5

Artistically, the collection of duets on Sinatra standards bridged decades and genres, introducing one of the 20th century’s most important popular singers to new generations. Technology, reaching across the recorded music industry, sometimes made that collaboration impossible. As a result, the fledgling EDNet came to epitomize the digital future and its seemingly limitless possibilities.

FROM FILM TO MUSIC

EDNet’s birth predated Duets, its roots lying in the motion picture industry. The company was conceived in 1991 within Lucas Digital, the innovative provider of visual effects and sound design to the film industry.

While working for Skywalker Sound—George Lucas’s post-production facility in Marin County, Calif.—the EDNet management group, including Tom Kobayashi, David Gustafson, and Thomas Scott, successfully transmitted four channels of digital audio between Skywalker’s Northern and Southern California studios, more than 400 miles apart. This was achieved by employing digital communications using Fiber-optic parallel links carried over a fiber-optic link. That effort, for the making of the movie Backdraft, led to the founding of EDNet; with Lucas–Arts’ approval, the management group formed the company in June 1992, with its base in San Francisco.

With an initial network of seven studios, EDNet quickly attracted more music and film and TV post-production facilities. Like previous breakthroughs in communication, EDNet brought about an evolution in operating procedures. The entertainment industry could now link talent, equipment, and studios worldwide without spending considerable time and money on the transport of people or master recordings.

Duets—and Duets II in 1994—are just two of EDNet’s advantages to light in the music industry. Such early participants as Capitol, the Hit Factory, and Sony Music were joined by other high-end recording studios in the EDNet network. From the Village, and Ocean Way Recording in Los Angeles, Hit Factory/Criteria Recording Studios and Crescent Moon Studios in Miami, Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis’ NPG Productions near Minneapolis, and Quad Recording and Right Track Recording in New York. Additionally, producers and artists, including Steviaying Dion, and composer David Foster installed EDNet connections in their private studios or homes.

“Phil Ramone, who was on our开机 disk for a while, was a right away,” chief technical officer Tom Scott recalls. “His attitude was, ‘I’m spending so much time on planes, I have to find a way to spread myself around.’ That’s what we’re going to accomplish what I need to.” Since then, other producers, such as David Foster and Walter Afanasieff, have also realized they have to fly to New York to listen to a recording for two hours—they can just dial them up.

EDNet president David Gustafson adds, “Wherever he goes around the world, Phil will almost not work in any studio unless they’re connected to our network. He’s always working on multiple projects.”

Ramone says he realized the value of EDNet early on. “The first week it was put into Right Track, I had a job where the artist had been working with me in New York. She went back to Paris, and I said, ‘I’m not going to have you fly back. Why don’t you listen to the mixes and make your comments?’ We did three nights via New York to Paris.”

Over the past few years, “[EDNet] has become the most comfortable thing to work with,” Ramone adds. “Picture a morning where you would start with an idea for a mix on the Sinatra record, get on a plane, get to L.A. and continue to mix, and hear where the updates were. You can’t do that on a regular day.

EDNet’s private, point-to-point network consists of more than 700 North American affiliates—audio production and post-production facilities, adviser, producers, directors, executives, and artists in more than 700 international associates. The system provides high-speed exchange of high-quality audio, compressed video, and multimedia communications. Connectively available are regional telephone companies, long-distance carriers, satellite operators, and, now, Internet service providers. The company’s hardware and software provide point-and-click connections to members of the network listed in an electronic directory.

WIDE-RANGING PARTNERSHIPS

EDNet’s partnerships with such companies as Dolby Laboratories, MCI Worldcom, and Audio Processing Technology (APT) have helped build and support the network. EDNet’s relationships are focused on direct digital ISDN connections, while Dolby-Fax—which uses Dolby coders to send and receive digital audio—is employed in the recording studio. The network, in fact, is the North American distributor for Dolby Fax and APT transmission codes.

“We had originally launched the Dolby technology in a lab and worked with EDNet, more than five years ago,” says Tom Dally, Dolby laboratories marketing director for professional audio.

We found that they were such a good partner, in terms of helping custom build set up and providing the service side that Dolby hadn’t been set up to do, we set them up as the exclusive distributor of the Dolby Fax system in the U.S. When we get calls from customers that want to use that service, we recommend EDNet to them and work with EDNet to implement that.”

Scott explains, “The music studios are largely using the Dolby system, and that is about a $10,000 piece of equipment. It costs them about $100 to ship the ISDN to their study, and their connection and say, L.A. to New York is costing them about $2 a minute. It’s a billable service, and at least in some cases, the recording is not as good as what they’re buying wholesale and will sell to their clients.”

In the competitive commercial-studio business, rising equipment costs have forced even small or even large clients to look for alternatives, and dozens of suchxdn networks and small ISDN packages have become critical to profitable studios.

Our policy is to never say no to an EDNet client,” says EDNet’s studio manager Paula Salvatore, “so we do it any time of day or night. People are always coming here to listen to [engineers/producers] Mick Guazzini or Tom Lord-Alge or to connect to artists, whatever. Lately, it’s been a lot of mixing—monitoring mixes and actually burned a CD or DAT for the client to come and get.”

Capitol Records operations Michael Frondelli says, “EDNet has served an incredibly big role here in terms of convenience for producer, artist, and label. Not only do we transfer files from one studio to another, but it’s recorded on the other end and then submitted for approval—but also in real time, where people are using it to judge performance or mix.”

“I really like the way he was doing it,” Frondelli elaborates. “There’s the edgewater way, where somebody is listening in on a session at another location; there’s the point-to-point way where it works with ISDN on the other end and delivered to the executive, artist, or whomever; and the other one is in film, where we can lock to picture at another location and sending audio actually happens to have six channels of EDNet, so we can do actual 5.1 mix to picture. We’re done here with several films—including Bandits, a crime-crime movie—to get director approval. It’s always helpful to keep creative people in the loop. And it saves a ton of money in the long term.”

UNEXPECTED APPLICATIONS

EDNet’s applications extend beyond those visualized in the network’s development.

Scott says, “Celine Dion’s husband [René Angélil] was sick and couldn’t go on the tour a while ago. It was the first he had missed in years. We set them up with a traveling set of equipment through to the stage every night and had ISDN lines ready to plug into all around Europe. As they set up the show, the PA guys would plug in and send a tape remote test call back to Florida. [Angélil] was able to listen to the shows in real time and immediately afterwards sit down with her the way he did when he was traveling and talk about the show.”

EDNet was likewise deployed in the home studios of Arethusa’s Steven Tyler and Joe Perry, when the former was sidelined with an injury. “We take the output of the console,” Scott says, “as though it was going to a tape machine, and instead feed it into the sending portion of, in [Tyler’s] case, the Dolby equipment. It comes out on the receive side as though it were a tape machine playing back. I’m fond of saying that this stuff is just studio plumbng. There’s a lot of different ways to hook it up. Almost as many ways as artists can think about it, we can figure a way to hook it up.”

TECHNOLOGY HAS LEGS

Recent projects involving the mature EDNet technology illustrate the network’s ubiquity and usefulness. High-profile sessions by such acts as Dr. Jive, The Rock Duo Di shots Enrique Iglesias, and Jill Scott have employed EDNet-affiliated studios to link to label offices for mix approvals.

“The technology seems to have amazing legs,” Scott says. “In the face of what you would think would be a big challenge from the Internet, we find that the ISDN is still very much in use and still has a good technology we are deploying nine years ago still in use today, and it goes out the door as new equipment. The nice thing about ISDN, and the thing that seems to give it its longevity, is that it’s a nailed-up, not-needed connection. When you dial up with a connection ISDN, you get a two-way call that you own.”

Ramone summarizes, “EDNet has been around and sound and never received the kind of notice that I thought it should have. But at the end of the day, we are here almost 10 years later. I think that’s a sign of the times. And any communication between artist, writer, and producer, in any form like this, is an amazing way to make music.”

EDNet will continue to grow and spawn new applications, as the recording industry is affected and transformed by the Internet. Recent developments in remote collaboration and monitoring are integrating new media, particularly Digital. Technological products, all of which will be demonstrated at the upcoming Audio Engineering Society Convention, to be held Sept. 21-24 in New York.

“Don’t think that’s the main reason we came up with this concept, when we all worked for Skywalker,” Scott says. “We lost business because we didn’t have the ability to get somebody from New York or Hollywood [to Northern California]. By getting this long-distance playback capability, it meant that we could take back the market. Even the consumer may not have been able to come out and spend a month, or two or three months, on the ranch. It was a marketing-driven decision,” he concludes, “and we’ve found that quite a number of people have made a whole business of staying in their home studio and reaching out over these long-distance connections.

NEWSLINE...

Don Henley and Courtney Love are expected to testify at a California State Senate hearing Sept. 5 in Sacramento that will examine the so-called Seven-Year Statute. The hearing will be held by the newly formed Select Committee on the Entertainment Industry and will bring together Sen. Kevin Murray of Los Angeles, a former music agent at the William Morris Agency. The statute limits the time an individual can be held to a contract for personal services. It was amended in 1987 to provide a limited exception for recording contracts. Such acts as Henley, Love, Luther Vandross, and Metallica have their labels upset about the statute and have stripped contracts settled before a ruling was delivered on the legal validity. “I think the law is adequate, but I’ve not come to the conclusion of how it should be changed,” Murray says, “That’s the point of the hearing. I’m trying to approach it from as neutral a standpoint as possible. Obviously, there are some suspicions when only one industry adheres to the statute.”

MELINDA NEWMAN

Russ Taff is joining the Gaither Vocal Band. He is replacing Mark Lowry, who announced his resignation from the award-winning Southern gospel group last month (Billboard, Aug. 11). Lowry has been with the band for 13 years—longer than anyone except Bill Gaither himself. Guy Penrod and David Phelps round out the Spring Hill Music Group quartet, which was formed by Gaither in 1974 as an offshoot of the Bill Gaither Trio. Taff is a veteran singer/songwriter who has won five Grammy Awards and nine Gospel Music Assn. Dove Awards. He will record his fourth album, Aug. 28 during the taping of a Homecoming video at Colorado’s Red Rock Church. WholeHearted Lowry—who has been dividing his time between commitments to the band and his solo career as a singer/songwriter and comedian—is expected to exit the group officially at the end of the year.

DEBORAH EVANS PRICE
Ryan Adams
Continued from page 5

country, and most upbeat of any of his albums.

As Gold moves from hard-strumming midtempo to gripping ballads and an choir-backed confessional to Stones-worthy boogie, the album gracefully reaffirms Adams' musical range and impeccable storytelling skills. If he began to spread his wings on the which he broke his relator Whisketown swan song Pneumonia (Lost Highway), consider him looking on Gold, the first of two albums that he has recorded this year.

The least surprising surprise to Lost Highway president/Mercury Nashville chairman Luke Lewis. "Part of the beauty of Ryan," he says, "is that he's capable of surprising you in a really nice way. He takes you to places that you can't imagine he'd take you—with a really strange combination of styles."

"Just the other day," Lewis adds, "he was playing some really great things by some band I'd never even heard it of. What was it? 'Speed metal.'" Adams raves, "I just really dig records. And I love metal. I think some people even think I'm joking when I tell them that I like Mariah Carey, really like her records. They're so cool and fun. She's really fun, really sexy."

"I can talk about that," Adams continues, "I just can talk about that. I just can talk about that. I just can talk about that. I just can talk about that."

Although free of speed-metal licks and high-flying diva pop, the songs on Gold are a kind of Cliffs Notes version of Adams' life over the past 1½ years, during which he moved in with his girlfriend and moved from New York to Nashville—where he cut his 2000 solo debut, Bloodshot's Heartbreaker (Music to My Ears, Billboard, Nov. 4, 2000). The still-southern and a bit Pandemonium—same as I can talk about really liking Peter Tosh and listening to "(For the Grateful Dead's Live Dead."

In New York, he thought about his friend and former bandmate, East Crows' Heartbreaker. In Los Angeles, he thought about the title, lyrics, and feel of Gold, Adams says. The title describes L.A. at dusk: "La Cienega Just Smiled" comes from a moment when he stood on the corner of La Cienega Boulevard and Melrose Avenue reflecting on his recent past.

"In New York, I think I wrote more from a claustrophobic kind of sense," Adams explains. "I wrote outward because everything was so in. You're in this small-ass apartment, the fuck- ing subway is hot, it's busy. So you externalize. Pneumonia is a very internal album. It lacks a sense of time and a sense of place, which allows it to be sort of free-floating, dreamy, floating music. That's what I think I needed at the time. I needed to de-structure stuff, because New York is so structured."

"But when I came to California, I think I looked harder for structure, because there's so much room here, so much space," Adams continues. "Also, with the writing, you can get away outside more. And so I think Gold sounds more structured."

Adams, who says he's working on a book about the people he has met in the bars and on streets of Hollywood, says that he's relaxed feel unconsciously seeped into the tempo of the record, particularly on such songs as "La Cienega Just Smiled." Also making an impact on the mood of Gold, according to Adams, was time spent listening to a lot of John Hammond, James Taylor, and "all that Keith (Richards) stuff, all that great Biggins Boogie stuff, really acoustic rhythms."

As with most of his songs (published by Barland Music, BMI), Adams wrote the Gold material on acoustic guitar. But for the first time since he finished work on Whisketown's acclaimed 1997 album, Stranger's Almanac (Outpost), the songwriter used a pick when playing. This helps him to bring why this album is strikingly upbeat compared to Heartbreaker and Pneumonia—both of which he wrote in his old apartment in New York's East Village, using his fingers and thumb to pluck or strum his guitar, partially to avoid upsetting the neighbors.

PINK HEARTS
Natalie Walek, senior buyer for the Boston-based Newbury Comics' 22 stores, says interest in and excitement for Adams' material has built steadily since Stranger's Almanac, Heartbreaker, and Gold. Also, that this year's release of Whisketown's Heartbreaker was due in part to 1996's Medical (Outpost), says Adams. Managed by Nashville-based Lost Highway exec Frank Callari and booked by Frank Riley at High Road Tracks in San Francisco, Adams will tour the East Coast and the West Coast on a quick trek in October across Europe (where he is booked by Paul Fenn of London's Asgard Productions). He also open a few shows for Counting Crows. Backing him on the road will be the Pink Hearts, with whom he recently finished recording an as-yet-untitled album. The classic album was recorded at Domnick (Lenny Kravitz) slated for release in the first half of 2002. The band just may be Adams' Crazy Horse. "It's fuckin' punk as hell," he says. "They sound like Zeppelin."

The Pink Hearts include lead guitarist Brad Rice, bassist Billy Mercer, drummer Brad Pemberton, and Bucky Backster on guitar. Chris "Rhino" Durltz, of Counting Crows. Each track on the EP was written during the Gold sessions. Several of those and the Gold tune

continues on next page
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stream, but in the Christian market, it has such a bad reputation that they don’t take it seriously or consider it to be a viable ministry.”

Addams Mars Ill’s Greg Owens (aka name), who believes, “we want to impact lives. Rap lets us do that.”

Gotee president Joey Elwood agrees that today’s rap and hip-hop acts seem to be battling the same prejudices that such rock pioneers as Petra, DeGarmo & Key, and Whiteheart were up against 20 or more years ago, only in the evolution of today’s contemporary Christian marketplace. “Having heard the stories from Eddie DeGarmo and those guys, I think it’s the same thing,” Elwood says. “There are a lot of people who don’t understand the impact of [rap/hip-hop] on today’s youth. I find less resistance from people who have kids or grandkids.”

**IT’S A WIDE WORLD**

Unlike the contemporary Christian record companies—which are concentrated almost exclusively in Nashville—the rap/hip-hop community is spread across the nation, from Cross Movement, an independent label operating out of Philadelphia, to the San Antonio-based Grape Tree label—and from Franklin, Tenn.-based Flicker Records, which is enjoying brisk sales of the new T-Bone album, to the year-old Uprok label, a division of Tooth & Nail, whose roster includes Mars Ill and Tunnel Rats.

Although most Christian companies—Word, EMI Christian Music Group, and the Zomba-owned Provident Music Group—have been slow to sign rap and hip-hop acts to their rosters, each has a distribution company chaining rap and hip-hop to the Christian Booksellers Assn. (CBA) market. Gotee and Uprok are distributed via EMI CMG’s Chordant Distribution. Word will issue the L.A. Symphony record on the Squint imprint, and Provident is slated to distribute an album later this fall that is being put together by Sean “P. Diddy” Combs.

Provident also has plans to beef up its urban music presence. Don Noes, senior VP of Provident Music Distribution, explains, “We distribute gospel and urban labels, including Verity Records, B-Rite, and GospoCentric, and we’re in discussions with a rap/hip-hop label. Our goal is to introduce and educate retail outlets on gospel, urban, rap, and hip-hop music through strategic placement of experienced people in positions to help develop this genre. Provident is re-examining the process of hiring a vice president of gospel/urban music who will be responsible for development of the genre in the CBA market.”

**CATCH-22**

Since rap and hip-hop sales account for such a large slice of the mainstream music pie, many feel that Christian retailers are missing the boat by not getting behind the genre. But because it doesn’t have a strong sales history at the CBA, many are hesitant. It’s a Catch-22 situation: You can’t afford not to explore the genre, but some are hesitant to devote prime real estate in their stores because of the lackluster sales history.

“There is some resistance, and it’s mainly the Nail bakers,” insists Rich Peluso, co-president of Chordant. “The gatekeepers are assuming that hip-hop and rap records are going to sell to young males—specifically to young, black males—and they aren’t necessarily the majority of the consumers that are walking into their stores.”

Peluso says these buyers tend to “lighten up” and the genre does tend to get good positioning. “Anything that’s not mainstream pop/AC is generally on the lowest shelf on the floor to the far right of the music section.”

**BURSTING THE BUBBLE**

Although there are obvious obstacles involved, whether or not the hip-hop connecting with a wide audience in the Christian market, many feel progress is being made. “I think the chains have been really great, actually,” Elwood says of Christian retailers. “They’ve been open to figuring out how to rack it and what to call it. They’ve been that way for five years. I don’t think sales are down. I don’t want it. I just think until it reaches a critical mass, [retailers are saying]: ‘We want to do it, but we just aren’t seeing the sales. They don’t plug into that. So, I think there’s a natural resistance there. We don’t always have very good content to plug into that.’”

Since touring is key to exposing new acts, Tooth & Nail president Brandon Ebel is determined. “There’s a hypothesis that [the rap/hip-hop] genre is growing. ‘We do sell quite a bit of it,’ he says. “As the popularity in mainstream culture has increased, we’ve seen a lot more Christian rappers. Bob Rush, senior music buyer for the 345-store Grand Rapids, Mich.-based Family Christian chain, says, “It’s a growing genre—mainly in stores. There’s been growth in the past few years, so far this year. That’s probably due to a couple of releases, with T-Bone being the biggest.”

“Rush says, “There is definitely a market out there for hip-hop.” Unfortunately, the customer who buys that product isn’t necessarily one of our regular customers. So we are trying to reach out. We do that through our All Access magazine, and we try to feature the best of rap on our new release Telescan [the in-store video monitor]. There’s a lot of stuff out there. It seems like over the past couple of years, the production levels and the quality of the product have gotten better.”

To increase sales in the CBA market, all involved agree education is key. “We’re working on awareness in our stores of what is out there and what’s going on,” says Kevin O’Brien, music buyer for the 60-store, Wheaton, Ill.-based Lemstone chain. “We have gone over the idea that the typical customer for hip-hop music doesn’t walk into [Christian retail] stores. I send out a newsletter to our stores every month, and for three years now, I’ve been giving them information about hip-hop music: what’s important, what the demographics are, and the fact that if you look at the mainsteam top 40, probably 90% of that is inspired by hip-hop and urban music. I’ve been trying to plant the seeds in our stores that this is something you have to have product that matches up in its quality. Our industry is starting to finally do that.”

For Christian rap and hip-hop to gain significant retail ground, many feel it is going to take the breakthrough of a highly anticipated release from the likes of Toby McKeehan or L.A. Symphony. “Toby’s new CD coming out this fall, Momentum, will go a long way,” O’Brien says, “because he’s such a big name in our industry.”

Uprok’s Pat Mullen, president of Houston, agrees: “Toby going to be able to draw people in who may not be drawn to rap and hip-hop but who are drawn to it because of Toby and what they have to say about them.”

Peluso says that Atlanta Falcons player Ray Buchanan is working on a release for next year on Uprok. “It’s good, and there’s a natural tie-in with the NFL,” Peluso says. “We may be able to get some real heat growing out of the Atlanta market, because we have those Atlanta fans who love him and are there for their team.”

**CULTURE CLASH**

Despite mainstream marketing and big name changing Christian rap/hip-hop records, many still see a fundamental obstacle. One Christian industry executive, who asked to remain anonymous, says the biggest hurdle is that many people consider hip-hop culture—with its images of guns, gangs, and violence—so contrary to Christian beliefs that it’s hard to envision the music that sprang from that culture spreading the gospel.

“People say that the culture of hip-hop is a secular market is concerned about the Christian beliefs that we have here,” Peluso says. “Toby McKeehan, head of Gotee, acknowledges, “Hip-hop didn’t start in church. Hip-hop started on the street. It’s a voice of a generation, as rock’n roll was a voice of a generation. What we’ve done is taken the voice and used it to minister the gospel. I’m an evangelist to the ghetto.”

Many Christian rappers have experienced the turbulent life associated with rap and hip-hop. Dallas-based Toby McKeehan, known as Mr. Solo and ChillIt Baby of the Gospel Gangstaz group, grew up in gang-ridden South Central Los Angeles and was members of the Crips; fellow Gangsta Tiki Takk was formerly a Blood. “We’re not afraid of nothing,” stresses ChillIt Baby, who says they have now devoted their lives to sharing the gospel.

“The doors are opening,” Solo says of the acceptance the Christian establishment is giving rappers. “At first, it was so new to people, but we’ve created a whole new market.” Tik Takk says, “Now is the time. We want to help others.” But, DAX points out, “It doesn’t come out of the sky. Bottom line is, you have to work for it.”
Event To Shed Light On Funding For Music Ventures

Billboard and financial services giant Prudential have teamed up to create the Billboard Music & Money Symposium, scheduled to take place Nov. 13 at the St. Regis Hotel in New York City. This one-day symposium will connect companies seeking to fund music industry activities with top music-industry professionals and entrepreneurs who manage financial resources. Participants in the event will include top-level executives from artist-management companies, record labels and publishing companies, recording studios, touring and promotion companies, new-media companies, attorneys, accountants, financial services and consulting firms, venture capitalists, and equity providers, to name a few.

The Billboard Music & Money Symposium will provide a unique opportunity for music-industry professionals to fully explore the financial aspects of the industry and uncover some of the many economic opportunities that exist. The event also will give financing specialists valuable insight into current developments in the music industry. Programming will include detailed panel discussions on such topics as mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, Internet funding, and asset securitization. The sessions will be led by top executives from the music and financial services industries. In addition, the symposium will include continuous opportunities for networking, as well as presentations on personal finances and money management.

Additional information on symposium programming, speakers, and associated special events will be announced soon. For general information on the event, contact Michele Jacangelo at 646-654-4660. For sponsorship information, contact Cebelle Rodriguez at 646-654-4546.

In connection with the symposium, Billboard will publish a special Music & Money section reaching a global audience of more than 150,000 readers. For advertising information, contact Darren Strothers in Billboard's sales department at 323-255-2304.

**upcoming events**

**Billboard/BET R&B Hip/Hop Conference & Awards**
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Eden Roc Resort • Miami Beach • Oct. 4-6, 2001

**Billboard Music Video Conference & Awards**
Beverly Hilton • Los Angeles • Oct. 31 - Nov. 2, 2001

**Billboard/Prudential Music & Money Symposium**
St. Regis • New York City • Nov. 13, 2001

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For more info: Michele Jacangelo 646 654 4660
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**THIS WEEK@**

COMING MONDAY: Bobby Digital, the alter ego of Wu-Tong Clan principal RZA, returns this week on the album Digital Bullet (In the Paint/Koch). The set features guest spots from O' Dirty Bastard, Masta Killa, Beretta 9, and Black Knights, among others. The Billboard review will appear exclusively on billboard.com.

Also online this week is an expanded edition of the Stone Gossard feature found on page 19 of this issue of Billboard, reviews of new albums from the Waterboys and the Clean, plus a review of Mary Chapin Carpenter, Lyle Lovett, and John Prine in concert in Toronto.

News contact: Jonathan Cohen • jcohen@billboard.com

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**personnel**

Emma Warby has joined the New York editorial staff of Billboard as an assistant editor. Warby is responsible for copyediting and proofreading articles and additional editorial tasks as assigned.

A native of England, Warby has relocated to New York from London, where she worked as a sub-editor for leading book-trade magazine and Billboard sister publication The Bookseller. Prior to that, she held editorial and production positions in book and Web site publishing.

Warby graduated from the University of Liverpool in 1995 with an honors degree in English language and literature. She reports to Bradley Bambarger, executive editor, and Timothy White, editor in chief of Billboard.
The Roundhouse in Camden Town is one of London’s best-known rock landmarks—it may now rarely be used, but in the past the venue hosted the U.K. debuts of a host of U.S. acts, from the Doors to the Ramones. Paul Charles, co-owner/joint managing director of London-based Asgard Promotions, also left a dead body there last year—in the pages of The Ballad of Sean and Wilko, his fourth crime novel featuring Detective Inspector Christy Kennelly, the fictional cop who polices the North London district.

“Writing’s my favorite thing to do, apart from listening to music,” Charles confesses. As proof, his fifth novel, History of the Silent Lonely Room, published Sept. 20 in the U.K. by The Do Not Press (it is due March 2002 in the U.S., via Dufour Editions). He’s also already finished his next book and is working on yet another. An agent and promoter with more than three decades’ experience, Charles puts his inside track on the music business to full use in his novels. That body in theRoundhouse, for example, was the road manager of a hit ’70s band on the comeback trail, murdered in a story of emotional entanglements and contractual disagreements.

Charles’ Camden locations are also true to life, although familiar buildings often appear in new guises: The police station where Kennelly works, North Bridge House, is actually a former monastery now used as a school—directly opposite Asgard’s offices. “People knock on their door and ask if it used to be a police station,” Charles says with a laugh. “I use all the buildings around here in the books. There’s also a familiarity about the musical tastes of the detective. “All the stuff Kennelly likes, I like,” Charles admits. “The Beatles, Ray Davies, Jackson Browne, Nick Lowe.” He also pleads guilty as charged to basing characters in the books on real musicians and music-business figures, although he declines to name names. “There’s such a wealth of characters in this industry.”

TOM FERGUSON

Neighborhood Acts

Recording artist and Nashville resident Michael McDonald presented a check for $50,000 to the National Assn. of Music Merchandisers (NAMM) in his hometown to support four charities that promote music: the American Music Conference, the International Foundation for Music Research, the Mr. Holland’s Opus Foundation, and the Museum of Making Music. The proceeds were reaped from the sale of the video rights to the February 2000 Yamaha Millennium Concert, an all-star musical tribute to McDonald’s career accomplishments. Acts included Ray Charles, Patti LaBelle, Kenny Loggins, Alan Parsons, Brian Wilson, and the Doobie Brothers. McDonald’s former band, Pictured, from left, are Joe Lamond, president of NAMM—International Music Products Assn.; Chris Gero, corporate director of artist affairs for Yamaha Corp. of America; McDonald; Terry Lewis, Yamaha’s senior VP; and Yamaha GM Rick Young.

Rabid Sports Fan

Sports aficionado and Lakers fan Snoop Dogg recently took his gaming knowledge to the round table as a celebrity guest on The Last Word With Jim Rome show on Fox Sports Network. Pictured in the studio, from left, are Boston Celtics player Paul Pierce, Fox Sports Net music director Jerry Davis, Rome, Snoop, and Christine Edwards, VP of music at Fox Sports/Fox Sports Net.
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