New Players Emerge In Unstable Touring Biz

BY RAY WADDELL
NASHVILLE — The aftershocks from promoter consolidation in the late 1990s rumble on in a wave of lawsuits, government scrutiny, jockeying for positions, corporate shake-ups, and, thankfully for many, the emergence of some new players.

The instability of the business creates challenges, even when it comes to reporting news about it. One day after Clear Channel Entertainment (CCE) CEO Jerry Zuckerman was interviewed for this story, word came that he and co-CEO Rodney Eckenrode would be vacating their positions (Billboard Bulletin, April 19). Meanwhile, House of Blues (HOB) Entertainment is apparently still on the block, with CCE, Anschutz Entertainment Group (AEG), and a group headed by former Ticketmaster guru Fred Rosen all having tendered offers. Sources say CCE is close to making a deal with HOB with an offer of $270 million in cash and debt assumption, but at press time, an announcement had not yet been made, despite published reports to the contrary.

The status of HOB and CCE are only two closely watched developments of many in these turbulent times for the concert industry. As CCE’s non-competitive clauses with acquired promoters and former executives run their courses, some well-known names are bound to resurface. Among the first is former SXSEVP Mitch Slater, whose acquisition of former rival Metropolitan Entertainment raised eyebrows throughout the industry (Billboard, March 30).

Additionally, ousted Metropolitan head John Scher has stated his intentions to re-enter the concert world, despite a non-compete now held by Slater. And AEG upped the ante with the creation of AEG Live and the appointment of Randy Phillips as its president and will produce what's sure to be a hugely successful Eagles tour of secondary markets this summer.

Amid all this behind-the-scenes volatility, the touring business is struggling in the early going of 2002. For the first quarter, box office (Continued on page 77).

Can Top Media/Music Marriages Be Saved?

BY MATTHEW BENZ
NEW YORK — What has happened to Vivendi Universal and AOL Time Warner? Heralded since their conception as new models for media companies — able to push their music and other entertainment offerings across all sorts of “platforms” — from such traditional ones as TV to such new, Internet-based ones as hand-held computers — they have seen their stocks hit record lows in recent weeks.

In December 2000, after Vivendi completed its acquisition of French pay-TV company Canal Plus and Seagram’s Universal entertainment assets, Vivendi Universal’s U.S.-listed American Depositary Shares began trading at $65. Now, they are around $35. (Its Paris-listed shares have been the worst performer this year in the CAC-40 stock index.) When AOL Time Warner officially came into being in January 2001, the company’s shares were around $45. Now, they are near $21.

A low stock price is itself a serious problem, but it does signal a change in investor sentiment. The collapse of Enron has made investors wary — and Wall Street analysts more watchful — of companies that lack transparency. Because they are the products of recent mergers, year-over-year percentages (Continued on page 78)
TELL CONGRESS THE TRUTH ABOUT WEBCASTING RATES

An Open Letter to the Music Community:

We are at a historic crossroads in the music industry. An independent arbitration panel recently proposed royalty rates to the Librarian of Congress for the streaming of recordings by webcasters (including the simulcasting of radio on the Internet). The proposal from this panel was based upon months of testimony from more than 50 witnesses, including artists, record labels, broadcasters and webcasters. While it is the nature of arbitrations that no party gets exactly what it wants (and all parties are appealing the decision), we at SoundExchange are pleased that artists and record labels will soon receive royalties after waiting almost four years.

Despite the fact that the rate is closer to their proposal, webcasters and simulcasters have launched a campaign to undermine the arbitration process. They are inundating Congress with complaints that they cannot afford to pay for the music — even though they pay market value for things like bandwidth and rent. Some of these complaints are based on confusion. Some are based on misinformation, resulting in grossly exaggerated projected fees. Others seek to perpetuate the royalty-free status enjoyed by broadcast radio, arguing that artists and labels shouldn’t be fairly compensated even when their music is performed by those building businesses on recordings.

It is time for the artists and record labels to be heard. Musicians, vocalists and sound recording copyright owners deserve to be fairly compensated for their creations. Webcasters and simulcasters are not entitled to a free ride or a subsidy.

These royalties are too important not to act. In our first distribution of satellite subscription royalties this past October, over a thousand different artists and many hundreds of different record labels received royalties.

Make sure your voice is heard above the din created by webcasters and simulcasters.

You need to act NOW.

For information on how to contact your Congressman and more detailed information on the arbitration panel’s recommendations, please visit the SoundExchange website at www.soundexchange.com.

Sincerely,

John L. Simson
Executive Director
Brian Keane Shares Ansel Adams’ Vision

Chance, favor, and the prepared mind. That’s how Ansel Adams described the evolution of his nature photography to a plane of poetic excellence. In his search for the right proportion of humility, vision, and drive to which all artists attempt to achieve an original portrayal of the truth, Adams’ essential checklist was success. Since he also trained classical pianist, his outlook resonates in the realm of sound as well as sight.

“Music is wonderful, but the musical world is bankrupt — so much petty doing, so much pose and insincerity and distorted values,” Adams observed, also by way of explaining his decision in young adulthood to pursue photography rather than music as a career. On April 23—two days after the national PBS TV premiere of Ansel Adams: A Documentary Film by noted documentary Ric Burns — Green Linnet Records releases the soundtrack to the project. Produced, arranged, and conducted by Brian Keane, an equally gifted musical scorer of documentaries, the music has a crisp lucidity and spaciousness to rival both Adams’ ambient environmental portraiture and Burns’ careful historical insights. And, like the sum of Keane’s own exceptional career, it meets the film’s subject’s aforementioned recipe for inspired results.

“I started out as a musician who was very intellectually based, being in jazz and classical music,” Keane says with a laugh. “But like Ansel, I have also realized over time that the infinity in any art form is its emotional and spiritual substance, and music is the most direct at expressing that substance.”

Anneliese born to a German family in San Francisco, Adams grew up an eccentric soul encouraged by a tender father and tolerated at a distance by a depressed mother. Respect for civil rights kept the highly stressed family on course, and controlled benevolence became a key in helping the family trip to the spectacular Yosemite Valley in 1918, the shy 14-year-old saw with one sweeping gaze that there would always be something far greater than the fortunes or follies of mortal guise. Adams took his first serious photos in 1927 (just after he began giving piano recitals), and for the rest of his career — although he occasionally collaborated with such human-interest-minded photojournalists as Dorothea Lange — Adams took to what he called “the high places” of the Western American wilderness. Posed before nature’s immensity in every psychic and artistic sense, he used his music, his small but critical place in the landscape. Through chance, favor, and a prepared mind, he became a pioneer artist/conservator who chronicled one person’s luminous interactions with eternity.

“In his time, the most popular photography was depicting human suffering beinghuman suffering,” Keane says. “He was critical for taking pictures of nature while all of this was going on. But he saw a more lasting truth in man’s relatively insignificant relationship with the whole of nature, and, in a strange way, with a more correct sense of balance than many of his contemporaries.”

For Keane (born Jan 1953, the son of three of three offspring by businessman/artist Irish tenor George Keane and his avant-garde composer/wife, Winifred), the “chance” aspect of his own musical growth occurred when the Juilliard School-educated guitarist — who’d built an early jazz reputation recording with Larry Coryell and touring with Coryell — Polish violinist Michael Urbanik, flamenco legend Paco de Lucia, and the group Spyro Gyra — was invited in 1981 to score his first documentary. It was Against Wind and Tide: A Cuban Odyssey, a study by filmmaker Jim Burrows and Suzanne Bauman of the Mariel boat lift. The film earned an Academy Award nomination, and as a musical storyteller it was established. Between jazz dates during the next six years, he toiled on other film projects with Bauman or Burrows, including her 1987 documentary Salamanca the Magnificent, Salamanca led to collaborations among them the classic Beyond the Sky (Celestial Harmonies, 1992) with Turkish multi-instrumentalist Omar Tekbilek. Keane also began an acclaimed solo career that yielded such admired albums as Snowfalls (Flying Fish, 1986) and Common Planet (Blue Note, 1992). But in an Adams-like gesture of resolve, Keane left Blue Note and solo jazz work because the commercial demands of the genre felt too confining. Despite scoring nearly 200 documentaries (including this renowned PBS series Eagos of the Prize, The Great Depression, and Long Journey Home: The Irish in America), creating his own lucrative Winter Solstice and Summer Solstice album collections, and becoming an in-demand music producer, Keane has opted not to cut another album as a featured solo artist. “It’s hard to reconcile art and commerce much of the time,” he says. “What most corporations’ stockholders are looking for is safety and a high return — fast. You couldn’t ask for worse conditions to manufacture art, because they will burn copies somebody else with whatever popular to try to cash in quick. I prefer documentaries, because the subject matter is worth documenting — that’s why they’re there.”

In 1989, Keane was working on the score for Champs: Song of the Olympic, the Emmy Award-winning HBO film about Jane Goodall’s field studies of chimpanzees — when he met Ric Burns, who was collaborating on one floor up in the same building with his other Ken Burns on The Civil War. Ric asked Keane to score Corney Island, his own PBS film for the American Experience series. Keane has since scored all Ric’s films, including The Den of, The Wide West, New York, and now Ansel Adams: “Ric is an artist himself,” Keane says, “and he wanted to focus the film on Ansel’s life but also the process and the value of being an artist. The responsibility of the film composer is to the emotional truth the director’s trying to convey. It’s also the ideal of artists, in any discipline. And, like the sum of Adams’ or I can only resonate so strongly.”

The Letters

LETTERS

The SINGLES of SPRING, SUMMER

I read with interest Ed Christian’s article “Fate of Singles” and Michael Ellis’ commentary “Summer of ’86. When Singles Were for Sale” in Billboard, March 16. I must say, before the labels realize that when you cut the roots, the flower dies! The March 16 Billboard Hot 100 showed a meager nine titles commercially available. CD singles are the next crop; the rise of the CD format is too critical for their product and hence change their buying habits.

Joel Whitburn

Record Research Inc.

Menomonee Falls, Wis.

VENUE VIEWS, FEEDBACK ON ‘BACKBEAT’

I look forward to receiving the latest Billboard. Reading information about the venue side is refreshing. Items like caps and pricing are always interesting. John Scheck

Director of booking, Pepsi Center

Denver

what a pleasure it is to read something so perfectly done as Chuck Taylor’s piece on the Boston Philharmonic (Backbeat, Billboard, March 30). Wonderful, well written and word exactly correct. Benjamin Zander

Conductor, Boston Philharmonic

Boston

An EARLY ABOUT LIFE AND MUSIC

As an admirer of Timothy White’s Music to My Ears columns, there were two in the past weeks I particularly enjoyed. I can only imagine how great that party (“Brother John Is Gone: The Blues Bar Blues,” March 30) at the Blues Bar with the Grateful Dead must have been! I was lucky enough to hear the Beatles Brothers open for the Dead at the closing of Winterland in ’78, a memory I’ll cherish. The piece “Miles of Music, Years of Ears,” April 13) on White’s upbringing in New Jersey and the influence of Italian music really registered with me, as I work with Pasai’s finest musician, David Grisman; we released Traversa, with David, Bepe Gambetta, and Carlo Amono performing early Italian immigrant music.

Rob Bletstein

Acoustic Disc

San Rafael, Calif.

Letters appearing on this page serve as a forum for the expression of views of general interest. The opinions offered here are not necessarily those of Billboard or its management. Letters should be submitted to the Letters Editor, Billboard, 770 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10003.
## Top Albums

### Artists & Music

**18 GEORGE LUCAS & JOHN WILLIAMS**

The Warner and Reprise labels are responsible for the top two debuts on The Billboard 200 this issue. Both acts have a connection to Buffalo— one to New York and one to Springfield. The higher of the two debuting albums is the fourth chart entry for Buffalo, N.Y.'s Goo Goo Dolls. The group gets its first top 10 album, as Gutterlupper opens at No. 4. A Baby Named Goo peaked at No. 27, and Dizzy Up the Girl toppled out at No. 15.

Longtime Reprise artist Neil Young enters at No. 10 with the 34th album of his solo career. Are You Passionate? is his seventh top 10 album and his first since Mirror Ball peaked at No. 5 in 1995. Simply counting Young's solo efforts, the only album to perform better than Are You Passionate? is Harvest (No. 1, 1972), Mirror Ball, Comes a Time (No. 7, 1978), After the Gold Rush (No. 1), Rust Never Sleeps (No. 8, 1979), and Sleeps With Angels (No. 9, 1994).

Young first appeared on the Billboard album chart 35 years and one month ago, when Buffalo Springfield's eponymous debut entered the chart on the week of March 25, 1967. Of the six Buffalo Springfield albums to chart, none climbed higher than No. 42, the peak position of Last Time Around in 1968 and Retrospective in 1969. Adding that band's six albums to Young's gives him a total of 40 chart albums. But then you would have to figure in the five albums by Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young that have appeared on The Billboard 200, Deja Vu, 4 Way Street, and So Far all spent time at No. 1, giving Young a career total of top 10 albums.

**34 R&B: Cee-Lo Green & His Perfect Imperfections shows the Goodie Mob member going solo on Arista.**

**36 Words & Deeds: Sony France rep act Jeme Olii proudly wears its passions on its sleeve.**

**38 Dance: Cinematic Orchestra offers jazz for the new millennium on Nine Tune.**

**40 Nashville Scene: Hard-working helmsman Billy Joe Walker Jr. sees his career grow with sets by Travis-Tritt, Tracy Byrd, and others.**

**43 Latin: A revamped promotional strategy does the trick for Plata Montenegro's Desahogo.**

**43 Latin: New wardrobe, new pronunciation, the second a mariachi set.**

**46 Jazz Notes: C. Stigers continues his renewed affiliation with jazz and standards with Secret Heart.**

**47 Studio Monitor: Solid State Logic uplocks the new XL 9000 K Series console at the National Assn. of Broadcasters convention in L.A.**

**50 Hits of the World: Celine Dion's A New Day Has Come tops album charts in nine countries.**

**51 Global Music Pulse: The Soundtrack of Our Lives is becoming the latest Swedish breakout band.**

**60 Declarations of Independents: Indie Fall of Rome furthers De-Troit's indie-rock rep with Troy Gregory's multi-musician debut, Sybil.**

**67 Retail Track: Grass-roots promotion efforts boost new albums by Tweet and Ashanti during the first week of April.**

**95 Home Video: Music Video: Actor Jon Voight discusses All the man and All the Columbia DVD Video.**

**54 Update/Good Works: Third Day's recent tour raises $100,000 for Habitat for Humanity.**

**56 Certified: Between the Bullets: Josh Groban poise-vaunts 12-12 on The Billboard 200.**

**81 Billboard.com: What's online this week.**

**82 The Billboard BackBeat**

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### Chart Beat by Fred Bronson

The third-highest debut on The Billboard 200 this issue belongs to a former Warner Bros. artist. Bonnie Raitt opens at No. 13 with Silver Lining (Capitol). It's her highest-charting set since Longing in Their Hearts was in pole position for a lone week in April 1994. Silver Lining is already the fourth-highest-charting album of Raitt's career. Her only albums to peak in a higher position are Nick of Time (No. 1, 1990), Longing in Their Hearts, and Luck of the Draw (No. 2, 1991).

TWEET-TALKING GUY: That's what I should have been last issue, when I mentioned Charlene Keys. That's the true identity of new R&B star Tweet, who remains in the top 10 of The Billboard Hot 100 this week at No. 8 with "Ooh (Oh My)" (the Gold Mind/Elektor). Ashanti's real name is Ashanti Douglas. She is the second solo artist named Douglas to have a No. 1 hit on the Hot 100. The first was Jamaican-born Carl Douglas, famed for his 1974 hit "Kung Fu Fighting."

CAN'T NOBODY HOLD HIM DOWN: There's only one new entry in the top 10 of The Billboard Hot 100 this issue. "I Need a Girl (Part One)" (Bad Boy/Arista) is the 10th top 10 hit for Sean Combs, though the first that is credited to P. Diddy. "I Need a Girl" is his first top 10 hit since "Satisfy" spent three weeks at No. 2 in 1999.

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IFPI Reports Global Decline For 2001 Music Shipments

BY GORDON MASSON

LONDON—The music industry lost the equivalent of a top-five market in sales during 2001. Globally, CD album shipments fell for the first time since the format was introduced, falling 125 million units to 2.4 billion units, compared with 2000. This decline is the same size as the entire yearly market in France.

And the CD album was not alone: Singles shipments fell 16.1%, LPs were down 12.9%, cassettes were down 19.9%, and MiniDiscs were down 59.2%.

Revealing the 2001 global recorded music shipment figures April 16, the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) says that by their estimate, global recorded music shipments fell in retail value by 5% to $33.7 billion, compared with more than $35.3 billion one year earlier.

Despite losing 4.5% in value and 9.4% in units, the U.S. gained overall market share, upping its global dominance from 38% to 39.8%. Meanwhile, piracy and economic difficulties saw Brazil drop out of the top 10 music markets after its music industry suffered a 25% sales downturn.

Other declines in market value in 2001 ranged from 9.4% in Japan and 9.2% in Germany to 9.6% in Canada and 8.6% in Italy.

In the News

• The New York Supreme Court ruled Monday (15) to recoup a hearing April 24 regarding Edel boy band Dream Street and the group's desire to revoke its development deal with Dream Street Entertainment (DSE). Dream Street's five members, who are all under the age of 18, filed legal proceedings against DSE, claiming it was breaching its principal's, Linda Beldon and Brian Lukow, citing "a wide range of conduct and activities that plainly threaten and impair the minors' well-being." The suit claims DSE officers are involved in the "manufacture and wholesale distribution of hardcore pornographic materials" and transmitted "hardcore pornography directly to certain of the minors over the Internet."

• RealNetworks' first-quarter sales fell 6% to $47.3 million, but a new accounting standard let it report a profit of $1.05 million, or 1 cent per share. The standard, SFAS 142, means companies no longer amortize goodwill—the difference between the price paid for an asset and its book value—but write it down only if its value has declined.

In first-quarter 2001, the Seattle-based Internet media firm took a $27.7 million charge for goodwill amortization cost and had a net loss of $24.4 million, or 15 cents per share.

Nickelback, Diana Krall Dominate Juno Awards

BY LARRY LEBLANC

ST. JOHN'S, Newfoundland—With three wins apiece, Verge jazz diva Diana Krall and EMI rock act Nickelback dominated this year's Juno Awards.

The Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences presented 28 awards during an April 13 gala event at the St. John's Convention Centre, attended by more than 1,000 music industry and local political figures.

A further 11 awards were handed out following the night a two-hour televised event broadcast by CTV to an audience of 1.4 million—hosted by Barenaked Ladies. Attended by a bevy of other major performers, local and national, the event was one of the Junos' finest hours.

Staged on a Canadian island that rarely shows up on major artists' tour itineraries, the weekend event captivated the entire city. Fans swarmed the streets of St. John's to spot celebrities, and pubs in the city's celebrated George Street district stayed open until sun-up for showcases, label parties, and impromptu jam sessions.

Nickelback collected awards for top group, top rock album (for Silver Side Up), and top single ("How You Remind Me"), while Vancouver-based Randy Staub won the top engineering award for his work with the band. Nickelback's lead singer, Chad Kroeger, told Billboard backstage, "It's great to come back to Canada and have people know us when we've been on the road so long outside the country."

IFPI research indicates that in Germany, 18% of 10,000 consumers surveyed said burning CDs resulted in them buying less music. In the U.S., nearly 70% of people who downloaded music burned the songs onto a CD-R disc, while 35% of people downloading more than 20 songs per month admitted they now buy less music.

Sony Music Entertainment senior VP Paul Russell comments, "If you want to put the problem of piracy into perspective, then realize that if it were a country, it would be the third-biggest in the world."

Singles shipments in the U.S. fell from 40.3 million in 2000 to 21.4 million last year, meaning that those searching for a single track were almost forced to look for it online. Criticizing his U.S. peers, Larsen says, "The fact that singles in the U.S. became unprofitable and were therefore dropped was perhaps short-sighted ... both [from a marketing point of view and a common-sense point of view]."

Warner Music International chairman/CEO Stephen Shriver says that "2001 was a difficult year for everybody, but the IFPI global sales figures do show that strong local repertoire—as illustrated in [such] countries as the U.K., France, Spain, and Australia [which all enjoyed sales increases]—can offset some of these problems."

Larsen notes, "It's common that major artists [in these territories] put out one album a year, therefore maintaining a close relationship with their fans, rather than a distant one."

Claiming the industry will launch its various online services "within six to 12 months," Larsen adds, "I expect Pressplay and/or MusicNet to succeed in cross-licensing repertoire from other companies." He also gave a teaser on a new system under development by Universal that will "work on a different business model," but he declined to elaborate.

A full summary of the global sales figures for 2001 is available at ifpi.org.

Market Watch

A Weekly National Music Sales Report

[Table: Year-to-Date Sales by Album Format]

BY BILL H نيوز

KROEGER

[Table: Year-to-Date Sales by Geographic Region]
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and Salsa with the Stars at

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- Mauricio Abaroa, Crescent Moon Records
- Maximo Aguirre, Maximo Aguirre Publishing
- Rosalia Bobé, CD Now
- Ramiro Burr, San Antonio Express News
- Tomas Cookman, Cookman International
- Toni Cruz, Gestmusic, Spain
- John Echevarria, Universal Music Latino
- Enrique Fernandez, LARAS
- Raul Gil, Lux Music, Brazil
- Alejandro Jaín, Musica Futura International
- Robbie Lear, Universal Music Group
- Eddie Leon, Radio Ideas
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**Univision Becomes A Major Player**

**BY LEILA COBO**

MIAMI—With the final acquisition of Fonovisa Records by Univision Communications this week, the Univision Music Group (UMG) is now a formidable player in the Latin music business, poised not only to sustain its current position as a label uniquely supported by a media conglomerate but also to take the business according to UMG president/CEO Jose Behar.

Speaking publicly for the first time since the Fonovisa acquisition was announced last December, Behar talked to Billboard at length about the restructuring of Fonovisa—the nation’s largest Latin music indie—and of the development of an expanded UMG that will “have the ability to handle in Latin, and the right way of doing business and the corporate way of doing business.”

What’s clear is that UMG—a fledgling label created only last year—is now, as Behar noted April 13 that it’s 13.4% share of the U.S. Latin market and was second only to Sony’s 21.4%, its 50% stake in Mexican-based label Disa, and its own growth. UMG artists like Pilar Montero (see story, page 43) and Jessie Morales have been making chart inroads, while sales of Disa acts jumped since last year’s acquisition and the ensuing advertising spots guaranteed to its artists on the Univision network. But while Disa is still managed by the Chávez family in Mexico, Fonovisa is now owned by Univision, and its management will report directly to Behar. UMG will manage both the Univision and Fonovisa labels and handle all business affairs, finance, and sales, while each label will maintain its own A&R, marketing, and promotion departments. “[A&R, marketing, and promotion] is the driving engine that will continue to run these record companies,” Behar says. And although Fonovisa should retain its culture and distinct style of music, “he adds, ‘I would like to see it become more diverse without losing its stronghold on the regional Mexican market.’

The most immediate visible change at Fonovisa will be the departure of its longtime president, Guillermo Santi-so. Some core management has remained, including José Luis Mogollón as VP of operations, Danny Mireles as VP of national promotions, and Carlos Habrizar as East Coast VP. Melody Latina, the Fonovisa pop imprint that staved off, says: “We’ve been treated with respect, but now it’s our turn to make the decisions.” The program will be cost effective, though its artists will be incorporated into the Fonovisa roster.

FOR SALE

**Executive Turntable**

**BY BRIAN GARRITY**

NEW YORK—Rumors are mounting that Bertelsmann wants to take full ownership of Napster, after loaning almost $100 million to the Redwood City, Calif.-based company. But with the embattled swapper still to launch its legitimate service and struggling with cash problems, selling the Internet giant would give the struggling Recording Industry Assn. of America, and management in-fighting, But while Disa is still managed by the Chávez family in Mexico, Fonovisa is now owned by Univision, and its management will report directly to Behar. UMG will manage both the Univision and Fonovisa labels and handle all business affairs, finance, and sales, while each label will maintain its own A&R, marketing, and promotion departments. “[A&R, marketing, and promotion] is the driving engine that will continue to run these record companies,” Behar says. And although Fonovisa should retain its culture and distinct style of music, “he adds, ‘I would like to see it become more diverse without losing its stronghold on the regional Mexican market’

The most immediate visible change at Fonovisa will be the departure of its longtime president, Guillermo Santiso. Some core management has remained, including José Luis Mogollón as VP of operations, Danny Mireles as VP of national promotions, and Carlos Habrizar as East Coast VP. Melody Latina, the Fonovisa pop imprint that was started in 2001, will be ceased, though its artists will be incorporated into the Fonovisa roster.

FOR SALE

**Embattled Napster Rumored For Sale**

**BY BRIAN GARRITY**

NEW YORK—Rumors are mounting that Bertelsmann wants to take full ownership of Napster, after loaning almost $100 million to the Redwood City, Calif.-based company. But with the embattled swapper still to launch its legitimate service and struggling with cash problems, selling the Internet giant would give the struggling Recording Industry Assn. of America, and management in-fighting, Napster’s future is cloudier than ever. In the latest bit of bad news, the company announced that it had sacked 300 staff in another round of cutbacks. The move came one month after Napster laid off an estimated 10% of its workforce in early March, leaving 90 employees. Napster CEO Konrad Hilbers said in a statement that the company remains committed to launching its new mem-

Hilbers, now 50 months ago that Napster would have a deal in place with the major labels by now, it has been a strategy. But this month, the UMG CEO Thomas Middelhoff confirmed in the German press that the company has made an offer to buy Napster. Reports say the price is around $15 million. But acquisition talks have been stymied by litigation between John Fanning, the co-founder of Napster founder Shawn Fanning, and venture-capital firm Hummer Winblad regarding ownership of the patent company’s board and the allocation of funds (Billboard, March 28).

Despite all of Napster’s problems, Jupiter Media Metrix senior analyst Andrew Smith believes that Bertelsmann takeover of the company still makes sense. “Napster is a terrible bet for an outside investor. It has no clout, no leverage, pending lawsuits, a brand that’s fading in the minds of consumers, and nothing that’s really proprietary to the company. So lending it millions of dollars in hopes of seeing profits in the future seems like folly. Boeing the company and using it as part of some kind of integrated strategy is a horse of another color.”
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‘Music’s Been Good’ To NRBQ, Thanks To Band’s Own Edisun Label

BY JIM BESSMAN

NEW YORK—More than 30 years into its eclectic career, NRBQ is more accessible than ever. Thanks to its ever-active fan base, well-oiled Web site, a new mail-order link with Grateful Dead Merchandising, and continued demand for new and archival NRBQ recordings, the prolific and influential New Rhythm and Blues Quartet, which formed in 1967, has never been more visible.

The ever-touring group—whose eponymous 1999 Rounder album marked its 30th year as a recording entity and was its last with major distribution—is currently promoting Atsa My Band, recently issued on its own Edisun Records. It followed the label’s debut release from 2000, The Scraps Companion, which included a live 1972 radio performance and outtakes from the sessions that resulted in that year’s Scraps album that, incidentally, was recently reissued.

Just out last week from Edisun is Music’s Been Good to You, a compilation of 18 previously unreleased NRBQ studio and live tracks from 1975 to the present. An album of new material will also be ready from Edisun by the end of the year. The label’s releases are available through the band’s nrbq.com Web site and via Grateful Dead Merchandising’s (mardead.net) site.

Meanwhile, Atsa My Band has been issued in Japan on the Dreamsville label; also out in Japan is a NRBQ tribute album by Japanese bands, That’s Neat, That’s Nice. Domestically, Carrot Top Records has released the two-disc Duplex Planet Radio Hour, a public-radio broadcast of two shows presented by Art at St. Ann’s in Brooklyn, N.Y., in 1984, featuring NRBQ keyboardist Terry Adams’ music performed to writer David Greenberger’s monologues. And on April 25, Blue Plate Music releases NRBQ—Live at Mountain Stage.

Adams reports that Sundazed Music will put out a 1970 recording featuring NRBQ’s original band members this summer and that a concert taped in 1983 featuring John Sebastian of the Lovin’ Spoonful will soon be available in Japan.

“So there’s a lot of new and archival stuff coming out,” says Adams, whose bandmates are fellow co-founder Joey Spampinato on bass, longtime drummer Tom Ardolino, and Spampinato’s brother Johnny on guitar.

“It’s really right for all this to be happening now,” says Gary Lambert, co-manager of the group with Billy Cohen and Colleen Kennedy for San Francisco-based Labyrinth.

“NRBQ has always been the prototype indie band,” notes Lambert, “and an inspiration for a lot of young bands, and it’s exciting and appropriate for the guys to have the same level of self-determination and creative control over their product and distribution as they’ve always insisted on regarding the recording and performing ends of the operation.”

A longtime associate of the Grateful Dead organization, Lambert adds that the distribution/fulfillment service performed for Edisun by Grateful Dead Merchandising “makes incredible sense, because no one’s better at serving a fiercely loyal audience.”

NRBQ’s own fiercely loyal audience is now being well-served by the band’s Web site.

“It’s sort of a virtual town square for fans literally from all over the world who can mingle and compare notes and argue about best shows and spread the word to the uninitiated,” Lambert says, “and it’s nice to have real fans spreading the gospel instead of just hired bands.”

The grass-roots nature of NRBQ’s fan base is newly manifested by the upcoming inaugural NRBQ Wild Weekend event, which takes place June 28-30 at the Hastings Hotel in Hartford, Conn. Named for the title-track tune from the band’s 1989 album, the weekend involves two nights of performances and an afternoon meet-and-greet. Lambert says, “[It is] an inspiring testament to the loyalty the fans have for this band.

Adams adds, “I think a lot of people want to have more choices in their music than what the image-driven labels offer, and we want to reach all of them.”

To Todd Snider’s ‘New Connection’

Singer/Songwriter’s Second Oh Boy Album Mixes Wit And Wisdom

BY RAY WADDELL

NASHVILLE—Just out like the singer/songwriters he admires most, Todd Snider manages to effectively translate life experiences into songs that capture the imagination. On the R.S. Field-produced New Connection, his fifth album and second for Nashville-based indie Oh Boy Records (due May 14), Snider taps into his own emotions, travels, and human frailties while still managing to showcase an appealing sense of humor and his unique world view.

Snider says he tried to enter the studio this time around without any preconceptions about how the record would turn out. “I love getting to record, but the process always ends up a little more nerve-wracking than I like,” he says. “This time it was more relaxed, and I was able to sit back and enjoy it more. Mostly I went out for wine.

When it comes to reaction to his finished product on previous efforts, Snider says, “I only know what I read in the papers when it comes to my music. My third record was a real rock record, but I loved it and I’m glad I had a chance to do it. I hope to try some more ‘Chris Gaines’ kind of stuff, if I’m around long enough.”

The songs on New Connection range from the restless title cut and such Snider-esque humor as “Vinyl Records,” “Statistician Blues,” and “Beer Run” to tender ballads in “Rose City” and “Easy” and edgier, more musically daring material like “Broke” and “Class of ’85.” Snider’s approach to songwriting is much like his self-description in “Easy,” where he sings, “I find a way to trip all over almost every single step I take.”

“I kind of trips over songs,” Snider explains. “I just drive around and make up songs until I get 13 or 14 of ‘em.” The artist says he wrote the bittersweet “Class of ’85” while performing. “I made that song up while I was playing another song at a show. I saw a guy in the audience that I thought I knew from high school.”

Snider also points out that he wrote his “Beer Run” well before the release of the Garth Brooks/George Jones duet of the same name, a song he’s never heard. “I was more interested in making sure I could put out my version,” he says. “It took five guys to write that other one.”

One of New Connection’s 13 cuts that Snider didn’t write is “Crooked Piece of Time” by Oh Boy labelmate John Price, who also sings on the song. The idea to cover the tune came while watching news coverage of last Sept. 11. “That phrase ‘crooked piece of time’ just came to mind,” Snider says. Like his songwriting, he sort of stumbled into the somewhat more adventurous musicality of New Connection. “Most of these songs I wrote in a funny tuning, because I left my guitar like that and it stayed that way for a few days.”

For its part, the label says that it is more targeted in their efforts at radio and retail. “We go with special promotions that mean a lot and back it up with performances in that city,” Oh Boy president/CEO Al Bunetta says. “I’ve got a lot of friends and buzz.”

Oh Boy VP Dan Einstein says Snider’s hard-touring nature works well with specialized set-up at retail, both major and independent. As for radio, “we get a tremendous amount of support from Americana stations and [noncommercial] triple-A stations that have been supporters of both Todd and John [Price].”

Laura Ellen Hopper, PD at KPIG Monterey, Calif., says she is always interested in new Snider material. “We were one of the first to play him, and we play him a lot,” she says. “Todd is quite the cultural icon in this part of the world.”

Snider’s publishing is through his own Elmo Buzz Songs (BMI), and he’s managed by Bunetta. He plays some 200 dates a year, booked by Fleming, Tamulevich & Assoc.

Overall, Snider finds Oh Boy a comfortable label fit. “Mostly we all have the same record collection.”
The Hives: U.K.’s Band Of The Moment
Swedish Act Capitalizing On Interest In Garage Rock Via Poptones, Epiphat

BY ADAM HOWORTH

LONDON—Britain is under siege from a particularly virulent bout of Hivesmania. The epidemic originated in Offerstra in Sweden and has already afflicted more than 100,000 record buyers in slightly more than three months. Teenagers are particularly at risk, displaying such symptoms as palpitation, palpitation and crowd surfing but thankfully no skin eruptions as yet.

Those responsible, the Hives, are a five-piece band aged between 23 and 25 who have been cultivating their exhilarating brand of garage rock for the past eight years on Swedish independent label Burning Heart Records. Last year, London-based indie Poptones licensed the act for the U.K. and released their debut, New Favourite Band—a compilation of the act’s first two albums, 1997’s Barely Legal and 1999’s Little Vidi. The latter has shipped more than 200,000 copies since its Oct. 22 release, giving Poptones’ CEO Alan McGee his first major hit since his former label Xtrmntr on Creation in 2000.

Poptones A&R consultant Alan Hake explains, “Alan McGee came back from one of his overseas trips to find myself and all the press department going mental about the band, and it turned out that he had seen the video for ‘Hate to Say I Told You So’ in a hotel room and thought, ‘Who’s this band? This is great!’ McGee adds, ‘They were free for England, so we signed them to Poptones, and it’s exploded for us.’

Poptones subsequently released the single ‘Hate to Say I Told You So’ Feb. 11.

One possible reason for the strong public interest in the Hives in the U.K. is the arrival of similarly sounding punk rock acts from the States, such as the Strokes, the White Stripes, and B.R.M.C. (Black Rebel Monkey Club). Formerly of Andrew Phillips, program controller at London-based alternative radio station Xfm is in no doubt as to the mere importance of the band. ‘The Strokes are great, but these guys are great,’ he says. ‘We just fell in love with the sound and the energy. Two- to three-minute songs with great hooks, and it’s rock that’s real.’

London-based product manager for the Virgin Entertainment Group-owned V Shop retail chain, says, ‘It’s quite interesting if you compare it to the Strokes, which was media-led. We’ve seen a real build since October and, as one of the first retailers to take it, we had a colossal market share in the first week. It’s gone mental. It’s No. 15 in the Sainsbury’s Chart, which is unheard of in this music. It’s purely word-of-mouth.’

Hans Hagman, the London-based VP of music programming for MTV Networks Europe, points to the band’s Anglocentric approach as being a key asset. ‘Attitude’, bands have always done well in the owns the act’s publishing for the world through subsidiary company Songs & Stories—says, ‘They released both records in the States, but the first release has an [marketing] effort. It was going slowly until their first U.S. tour two or three months ago and now it’s picking up. The rumor is spreading from Europe, and they’re going back there in May to tour again, then they’re recording a new album in the fall for release in March 2003.’

‘We’re re-releasing Veni, Vidi, Vicious at a 40% discount at retail— at around $9,” Gurewitz confirms. “MTV2 in the U.S. has pushed for this high rotation—21 spins a week—Main Offender and we’re doing a 30-minute film on the group for MTV2. They kept themselves to video more than anyone in years. We’re not the hyperbole machine that is Warner or Sony, but we’re giving it our best.’

Hives frontman Pelle Almqvist—who McGee describes as “the perfect bridge between Iggy Pop and Mick Jagger around ‘66, when they were both young and sexy”—has his own take on his band’s popularity in the U.K. “It has more to do with England than us,” he says. “England is the sort of place that you can get real, really famous for 18 months and then everyone forgets you.”

Despite the former creation head’s success for his band, when the Hives were never Oasis fans, Almqvist reveals: “We didn’t listen much to Oasis, because when they came out in Sweden we were 14 or 15 and we were Stato’s only listened to punk rock. Everything else was forbidden.” Nonetheless, U2 and Oasis were suitably impressed with the band, and the Hives supported them on their European tour this summer. “We got offered it and said no. We took a vote,” explains the singer. “It was gonna take two years, and although it sounds great, it’s not that we don’t like them or have anything against them, but we enjoy our own shows.”

This independence of mind and spirit has kept the Hives at the forefront of the now-thriving underground scene in Scandinavia, numbering such acts as the Hellacopters, Soundtrack of Our Lives, and Nuhula.

There are a lot of people playing punk and rock’n’roll and pop music, but I don’t think really any of them sounded like us. Half the bands were probably listening to the same kind of stuff as we but came up with different conclusions.’

—NICOLAUS ALMQVIST, THE HIVES

U.K., and their attitude is British—the Who, the Pistols.”

Hagman’s view is supported by Brett Gurewitz, original guitarist with U.S. punk act Bad Religion and founder of Epiphat Records, which owns a shareholding in Burning Heart. “It reminds me of early Stones—it has a very British flavor,” he says, adding that he’s confident of replicating the U.K. success of the Hives in their spiritual homeland. “Definitely can,” Gurewitz says. “These incredible charm, charisma, and appeal, and if it translates in one English-speaking country, I don’t see why it shouldn’t be another. They’re unabashed, and that’s what great rock’n’roll should be. Chicks want to meet them and guys want to be them.”

Mudda Johansen, head of promo at Burning Heart—which also

MAMMOTH DOWNSIZES: The saga of Hollywood Records and Mammoth, which Hollywood parent Disney pur chased for around $225 million in 1997, has added another sad chapter. Effective May 3, 12 of Mammoth’s 14 staffers are expected to leave the company, although a few may stay on. The decision was announced May 14 by president and chief operating officer Scott Brooks.

At this point, none of Mammoth’s 12 acts have been let go, and release dates for upcoming projects have been scrapped. However, there’s a strong possibility that this week’s release of the album from Los Lobos (June 4), A July 2, and John Wesley Harding (July 23) remain firm, according to sources. Although its more than four years as part of Disney, Mammoth has been unable to capture the level of success it had during its prior affiliation with Atlantic. While it did achieve its highest position ever on The Billboard 200 in 1998 when the Mammoth/Disney release Perennial Favorites from Squirrel Nut Zippers peaked at No. 18, that album only went gold, whereas two projects prior to its Disney affiliation—the upcoming album from Seven and the Zippers’ Hot have been certified platinum.

It’s unknown what will happen to Mammoth’s space in Manhattan’s Tribeca neighborhood, although one source speculated that Hollywood will move its midtown New York offices to that location.

A mail management for Hollywood Records, confirmed that “as part of this consolidation and reorganization, several Mammoth positions will be eliminated or relocated to Mammoth and Hollywood’s Burbank offices.” The representative declined to elaborate.

HIGH OCTONE: Taking a page from the Aware/Columbia Records playbook, Columbia alumni and current J Records VP of A&R and marketing James Diener has launched Octone Records. The alternative and rock-oriented label, owned by Diener and some partners, will be distributed through BMG, with key releases slated to be worked through J Records.

“Coming from Columbia, where I worked for eight years, the Aware/Columbia model seemed very effective,” says Diener of the partnership that has successfully broken Train and John Mayer. The idea for Octone was born when Diener joined the J staff in November 2000. “Octone was part of my arrangement with J, but we’ve spent several months looking at acts. The deal with BMG was formalized when we had product. The first release from Octone will be the June 25 debut label from Los Angeles-based Mariot.

When projects reach a certain level of success, J Records will do its part of the pushes to the marketplace, Diener says. “I’m aware of the projects as they progress. We don’t just show up at their doors at 75,000 units.”

Octone’s headquarters are located in lower Manhattan, although Diener continues to work out of J’s midtown offices. Diener, who holds the title of president, has hired former Columbia exec Ben Berkman as head of promotion (he will also have a hand in marketing and A&R), former Price Waterhouse Cooper exec David Boxenbaum as GM (with a role in A&R and marketing as well), former Hybrid staffer Jim Chambers as head of retail marketing and sales, and former Roadrunner college rep Andrew Suggs as head of new media.

STUFF: Sammy Hagar and David Lee Roth will kick off a co-headlining tour, informally dubbed the Sambalen tour, May 29 at Cleveland’s Blossom Music Center... Beth Katz, formerly of Dan Koller Communications, has set up her own shop in New York. Among her music clients at Beth Katz Media & Marketing are Kat Delil and Billy Gillman... The band Joan Osborne’s Womanly Hips label has inked a distribution deal with Nashville-based Compendia Records Group. The label’s first release will be a project from Osborne, titled appropriately enough, Womanly Hips... due Aug. 27, Osborne, who last recorded for Interscope, formed Womanly Hips prior to the release of her 1995 break-through album, Red (Blue Gorilla/Mercury)... Artemis Records has signed Nashville Pussy. The label will release the band’s third album, Say Something Nasty, May 28.

Additional reporting by Ed Chrisman in New York.
In The Works

- U.K. singer/songwriter Beth Orton will issue her third collection, Daybreak, July 30 on Heavenly/Astralwerks. The album features appearances by Ryan Adams, the Chemical Brothers, Johnny Marr, and Emmylou Harris. The set was mixed by Ben Watt (Everything but the Girl) and Andy Bradfield. Prior to the release of Daybreak, Orton will embark on a 17-date tour of the U.S. The tour kicks off May 20 in Vancouver and ends June 15 in Washington, D.C.

- Atlantic's Hootie & the Blowfish have entered the studio to begin recording their first all-new album in four years. The as-yet-until collection is slated for release in summer 2003. The quartet of Mark Bryan, Dean Felber, Darius Rucker, and Jim Sonefeld spent the past six months writing songs and is now teamed with famed producer Don Was to lay down the set's tracks.

- Blues artist Willie King has just completed work on his second set, Living in a New World, which is due June 11 on the Rooster Blues label. The album was recorded at the legendary Easley Studios in Memphis. King will perform material from the set at his annual Freedom Creek Festival, scheduled this year for June 15 in Nashville. A tour of the U.S. is slated to begin shortly thereafter.

- Rockin' Rose. Lost Highway artist Tift Merritt recently began pre-release radio and retail promotion in support of her debut disc, Bramble Rose. Produced by Ethan Johns (Ryan Adams), the album has an intentionally retro country-rock sound. "We set out to make a record reminiscent of the early work of Emmylou Harris and Linda Ronstadt," the Texas-bred Merritt says. "Those are the people who shaped and influenced the kind of artist I want to be." The singer is expected to begin playing showcases shortly before the June 4 street date of Bramble Rose. A tour of the U.S. will follow this summer.
BY CHRIS MORRIS
LOS ANGELES—Cornershop's Handcream for a Generation—the Euro-Asian group's first album since the 1997 hit When I Was Born for the 7th Time—is also its first for U.S. indie Beggars Banquet.

In an unusual dual-label arrangement, V2 will distribute the Beggars album, released April 9 in the U.S. (through BMG), and will handle promotion efforts. V2 head of product management Sharon Lord says, "[Beggars Banquet] gets major distribution and use of our regional sales force as well. The main thing is promotion. We're doing it up on everything—on college, on specialty, and on video."

Beggars Banquet CEO Lesley Bleakley adds, "As an independent label, you don't get a fair crack of the whip at radio, once you get past specialty commercial alternative. We felt we wanted to work with a larger company, and obviously they've had some degree of success at radio before."

When I Was Born for the 7th Time spawned a major club and modern-rock radio hit with the Fatboy Slim remix of the track "Brumful of Asha." But Cornershop has been silent since. Vocalist Tjinder Singh explains, "There was a general fatigue on my behalf, and I had to stop and sort out a few problems."

In the interim, the band changed attorneys and management (Cornershop is now self-managed worldwide), and Singh and guitarist Ben Ayres released an album under their side project Clinton.

The group also reluctantly parted company with its longtime label, Luaka Bop, which had itself moved its distribution from Warner Bros. to Virgin. "Me and Luaka Bop have always had a good relationship, and it's a very sad thing we're not working together," Singh says. "Unfortunately, we'd been with them while they were having a lot of changes from top level down to bottom level; and when they moved to Virgin, unfortunately at the time when we got back for this album, there were a lot of changes going on at Virgin, and it wasn't something I wanted to be going through twice. It takes at least five years for any major label to settle down, and settling down is normally a case of further changes from top level."

Handcream for a Generation continues in Cornershop's eclectic mode, mixing sounds and collaborators from the worlds of rock, hip-hop, R&B, and electronica.

One prominent guest is Oasis' Noel Gallagher, who contributes guitar to the 14-minute track the 11," while old-school R&B star Otis Clay serves as the MC on the leadoff track "Heavy Soup." Mixer Rob Swift of the X-Men co-produced two tracks for the set.

Now in its 10th year, Cornershop has moved beyond initial controversy and has gained recognition for its playful but sometimes tart political commentary, heard on such Handcream for a Generation cuts as "Yogs Will Walk" (published by Universal Music, ASCAP).

Singh says, "When I started, Asians got bottled by other Asians if they were on a stage and playing a guitar, because that was just anathema to them. What we've had to fight against is that this group has made a mark on what other Asians have done in this industry. Not a lot of groups can say that."

He adds, "Slowly but surely, people have realized what we've done. We don't come from the beginning. People do stop at politics, and it's something we don't waver from. It's gotten to a level now where people are saying, 'Yes, they are political, but we can move further from that and look at what they've done musically and artistically.' It's just so different that people haven't been able to ignore it, and they've moved with us. I'm very happy about that."

Handcream's first single, "Lessons Learned From Rocky I to Rocky III," will be promoted to college-radio and specialty-programmers before going to commercial-modern rock outlets in late May. Four mixes of the song will be serviced to DJ pools. A video, shot in South Africa, will be worked at MTV, VH1, Sundance Channel, and other cable outlets.

A seven-piece edition of Cornershop ("It's Kool & the Gang, really," Singh says) begins a month-long U.S. tour April 26, opening for Oasis in Las Vegas. The band—which is booked in the U.S. by Bob Lawton of Legends of the 21st Century in New York—performs at the Coachella Valley Festival in Indio, Calif., the following day and will hit a mixture of clubs, theaters, and festivals thereafter.

Retailer Eric Levin, owner of Atlanta's Criminal Records, says the store will give away tickets to Cornershop's May 4 date at the Variety Playhouse.

"I've always loved their records, and I am personally excited about this one," Levin says. "It's something I think the customers are ready for and that we're ready for."
Naughty by Nature Celebrates 10th Anniversary With TVT Bow

BY RASHAUN HALL
NEW YORK—With icons, due May 7, Naughty by Nature issues its first effort since the departure of DJ/producer KayGee and a move to TVT Records. But perhaps what is most notable to the venerable rap act’s remaining members, Treach and Vinnie, is that the album marks the act’s 10th anniversary—one that they seemed unlikely to celebrate as a group.

And that’s largely because of co-founder KayGee’s departure in late summer 2000, which was followed by the group’s dismissal from the Arista label.

With its lone Arista effort, 1999’s 19 Naughty IX: Nature’s Pary, going gold and spawning the gold single “Jamboree”—after a four-year absence from the marketplace—Vinnie says that he and Treach felt confident the label would “realize that (KayGee was just the production and would want to move on with us, but they said, ‘No,’ and dropped us, which caught us off guard.”

Treach adds, “That was one of the worst times in our career. I was going through a divorce, our homie [KayGee] just split out of nowhere, we were dropped from the label, and one of my closest friends was murdered. It was just unbearable. With the help of Vin and the crew, we just stayed out on the road and stayed busy. We knew we had an objective.”

Once they were dropped, the two of them (managed by Bronx, N.Y.-based Ulama Entertainment Services) began shopping for a new deal, but according to Vinnie, “Once word got out that Arista dropped us, no one wanted to touch us.”

The duo approached then-TV executive Charles Dixon, who worked its first two Tommy Boy albums. “I decided to hit him to see what was up with TVT,” Vinnie says. “I’d heard that they were on a rock label looking to get more into hip-hop. We met with [Dixon and Brian Leach, TVT’s VP of urban A&R], and they said, ‘We believe in you.’ They were the ones who believed we could do this without Kay.”

Upon signing with TVT, Naughty returned to the studio to begin work on icons. “We could have worked outside producers, but we had an in-house loyalty,” Vinnie notes. (Both he and Treach’s songs are published by TVT Records/Naughty by Nature Records, ASCAP.)

“I knew that once [KayGee] left, cats would think that we were through on a production tip. That was my mission—the beats and the production. I knew, lyrically, it was going to go down, but beat-wise I wanted to make sure that motherfuckers threw up when they heard this album.”

Naughty enlisted the help of such producers as Da Beatminerz, Dream Team, and Allstar. In addition to bringing outside producers, Vinnie and Treach decided they would celebrate their 10 years in style.

“These collaborations are people we actually have love for and know,” Treach says. “We were inviting people to the studio. They would come in, hear a track, and go from there.”

icons features a range of guests, from Peter Gabriel to 3LW, who appear on lead single “Feels Good.”

“The reception to the record has been crazy, and that was our point,” Vinnie says of the single. “People would think that because KayGee left he took his sound, but that’s not his sound—that’s Naughty’s sound. With ‘Feels Good,’ people would think he had involvement, but hell no.”

For Leach. “Feels Good” made perfect sense. “The track was a Naughty track,” he says. “The 3LW collaboration made sense because we wanted to get the kids who didn’t grow up on Naughty.”

Radio seems to agree. “It’s a classic Naughty track,” KKJN (Jammin 95.5) Portland, Ore., PD Mark Adams says. “It has a great sound with contemporary production. We’ve gotten a great response at phones.”

According to TVT VP of urban marketing and artist development Neil Levine, in addition to promoting the single, icons will be price-positioned at every major retail account for its release date. TVT has also done a snippet sampler, and it is talking to several chains about bundling it the week before release date.

TVT has also organized several new-media promotions, including a downloadable “Feels Good”-type tone from Zingy, an America Online album launch, and promotions with MusicMatch, Yahoo, and MTV.com.

Feeling the Funk. The New York City Gay Men’s Chorus explored contemporary music with its recent We Are Family concert/fundraiser at Carnegie Hall. The event had the world-renowned group taking on ’70s-era tunes. “It was fun to perform these songs and show that the chorus can be both serious and light-hearted,” singer Christopher Wagley says of the show, which was recorded for possible release later this year. Pictured backstage after the event, from left, are chorus members Wagley, Les Downs, and Michael Krake.

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THE FORCE IS WITH THEM: Few film soundtracks have made as indelible a mark on the American psyche as Star Wars. The mere mention of the classic movie title often conjures bits of John Williams’ score. Even if you’re not among the film’s rabid disciples, you know (and at least respect) its music.

On the eve of the May 16 opening of George Lucas’ Star Wars—Episode II: Attack of the Clones, there’s a flurry of activity surrounding its accompanying Sony Classical soundtrack, which features a brand-new score by five-time Academy Award-winner Williams.

“This soundtrack is nearly as big an event as the film,” says Lisa Stevens, senior VP of marketing for the label. “John Williams has done the near-impossible with the music on this soundtrack—he’s topped himself. This is an extraordinary piece of music.”

Williams and Lucas

Stevens says the label has assembled an extensive marketing plan befitting the soundtrack’s magnitude. For starters, the CD will be released with four different collectible covers, each featuring artwork rescued from the film’s Jedi master Yoda, Anakin Skywalker (Hayden Christensen) and Queen Amidala (Natalie Portman), the bounty hunter Jango Fett, and the film’s key ant.

Sony Classical will also work a single from the project. “Across the Stars (Love Theme)” was shipped to radio April 16. Programmers are being offered an edit of the song, as well as a version that interweaves dialogue from the film.

“It’s the perfect accomplishment to the developing relationship between Anakin Skywalker and Padme Amidala,” Lucas says of the composition. “Their love is complicated—pure yet forbidden, personal but with profound ramifications for an entire galaxy. Somehow, John has managed to convey all of that complexity in a simple, hauntingly beautiful theme.”

On April 16, a videoclip for “Across the Stars” was serviced to traditional TV and music video outlets. Assembled by Lucasfilm, it features scenes from the movie, as well as behind-the-scenes footage and shots of Williams working on music at Abbey Road Studios in London (where the album was recorded with the London Symphony Orchestra).

“It acts as a fourth trailer to the film,” Stevens says. “It serves the music wonderfully, and it effectively feeds the growing public interest in the film and the story it tells.”

For Lucas, Williams’ music was integral to telling that story.

“Attack of the Clones was an exciting film for me to make because it explores a key facet of the story, thereby creating a score that truly expanded the musical palette of Star Wars. He has more than risen to the occasion.”

Williams appreciates the kudos, but he’s more focused on the creative process. Williams often looks at the rough cuts every day when working on a project. He selects a scene to tackle, sits at the piano, and begins to write. “It’s a rapid-fire way of working that he likes.

He says, “A lot of the things we labor over often have less value than the things we do quickly, when we’re unguarded, not hurried but unhurried, by repeated and constant self-doubt when you have more time to work and rework. Much of the time the heat and the sweat are from the one of us.”

The Star Wars—Episode II sound track continues Sony Classical’s long association with Williams, who exclusively records his non-film projects with the London Symphony Orchestra. He won the third of his five Oscars for his score for the original Star Wars (1977) and received nominations for his scores for The Empire Strikes Back (1980) and Return of the Jedi (1983). The soundtrack albums for Star Wars and The Empire Strikes Back also won Grammy Awards for Williams in 1977 and 1980, and he was a nominee for Return of the Jedi in 1983 and Star Wars—Episodes I, II, and III.

The Phantom Menace in 2000.

Williams’ most recent releases for Sony Classical include American Journey, a collection of original orchestral works including “Call of the Champions,” the official theme of the 2002 Olympic Winter Games, and 10-30-12 Plays the Music of John Williams, featuring the cellist in the world premiere recording of William’s Cello Concerto and three other works, with Williams conducting.

Kinetic, Ash Aim To Build On U.K. Success Of ‘Free’

BY ERIC AIESE

BOSTON—When Ash frontman Tim Wheeler started writing for the act’s new album, he was out to reinvent the band’s soundtracks “Free All Angels (June 25),” he felt pressure to succeed.

“We have everything to prove; it’s our last chance,” explains Wheeler, who, with the band, returned home to Northern Ireland to rehearse in his parents’ garage. He wrote 30 songs during an 18-month period. (Wheeler’s songs are published by Island Music, ASCAP).

Opposites Attract: During a period of downturn in sales and market share, it’s hardly surprising that the major classical recording labels are hesitant about signing new artists known for performing core repertoire—even when those artists have well-established careers and box-office clout. With two significant new signings, however, Sony Classical and Universal Classics prove that such artists can still find a home at a major—provided that they are willing to consider new approaches to documenting their art.

Canadian violinist Lara St. John was a name well-known to classical music fans as well as being signed to Sony Classical this month. Of course, her earliest notices paid more attention to the CD covers on which she appeared in various states of disarray, not to mention to the artistry concealed in the pits.

OF THE WOMAN: The band found early success with their debut 1977, named after the birth year of two members, still teenagers at the time of the 1996 release. Their follow-up, Nu-Clear Sounds, however, became a critical and commercial disappointment. Due to the band’s effort to avoid copying the successful sound, Wheeler explains, “Nu-Clear Sounds was more focused.

Losing these inhibitions for Free All Angels, the act went to Spain. “It gets so depressing in the U.K.,” Wheeler says, “Recording in the sun got our endorphins going.”

The set was well-received in the U.K., after its release last year on Mushroom, selling more than 700,000 copies in Europe, according to the label. The British Phonographic Industry certified it platinum, and according to Kinetic president Steve Lau, the album was certified double-platinum in Ireland, debuting at No. 1 on the U.K. sales chart and yielding five top U.K. singles.

The act will visit the U.S. in May for radio shows. Plans are afoot for a summer tour. The group is booked by Frank Riley in Los Angeles.

“Burn Baby Burn,” the first single from the set, ships to modern-rock radio in May.

Kinetic’s promotional plan has a strong focus on street promotions. “Kinetic normally sells records without any radio,” Lau says. “We tend to be hypersensitive to laying groundwork.”

The band is managed by Stephen Tavner at Out There Man Management in London and New York.
By Ray Waddell
NASHVILLE—Countless miles and a quarter-century deep in a remarkable run, the Dirty Dozen Brass Band (DDBB) will mark its 25th anniversary with a new album, yet another tour, and an 11-night stand at New Orleans’ famed Mermaid Lounge.

New Orleans is where it began for the DDBB, and some think 25 years is a conservative estimate. “I think it’s more than that—more like 27 years,” muses Roger Lewis, baritone/soprano saxophone player and founding member. “We never gave any thought to how long it would run; we were too busy making music and having fun.”

Indeed, making music and having fun have served the band well, from its concept as a loose jam band at New Orleans’ Dirty Dozen Social and Pleasure Club (from whence the band took its name) and through the making of 10 records and shows all over the world. The band’s newest record, Modified Magic, is due April 3 on Ropeadope Records and remains true to DDBB’s hybrid of R&B, jazz, funk, bebop, gospel, and traditional Big Easy “second line” funeral/march music. “We play a lot of different music, and we experiment with different rhythms and chord changes,” Lewis says. “The only big changes we’ve made along the way are adding a keyboard and a guitar and setting out the drums.”

The DDBB was a perennial favorite in New Orleans at such local joints as the Glass House until an association with a pioneering festival producer George Wein led to a broadening of the band’s horizons to global stature around 1977. Lewis recalls: “In the music world, you never know where you’re gonna wake up—which is fine, because I’ve been havin’ a ball in music for 45 years, and I like traveling.”

Even so, the band will sit down for a good chunk of the 2002 capacity Mermaid Lounge during the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, beginning April 25 and running through May 5. Special guests include Taj Mahal, have announced fans and friends of the band who will be in town for Jazz Fest. Priced at $12, the Mermaid shows will begin at midnight and run all night.

“It will be a reminder of the guest artists dropping in, setting in, and it’s gonna be a big party,” Lewis says. “If you’ve ever been to New Orleans, you know people like to party ‘til the sun comes up. We’ve never played 11 straight [shows] anywhere, and this is a good time to be down in New Orleans.”

For Superfly Productions, promoters for the Mermaid shows, the DDBB residency is part of a major Jazz Fest presence for the company, which includes 35 shows that will draw about 40,000 people. “Our strongest suit is grass-roots promotions, including print, posters, and fliers,” Superfly president Jonathan Meyers says. “And with the Internet, this community is so tied together, people are aware of what we’re doing in town, and we have a brand people recognize in this time frame.”

For the band’s label, the Mermaid shows serve as a “two-week record-release party,” according to Andy MacLaren, president of Ropeadope Records. “We think this will give people a way to get away from the traditional overcrowded, overpriced shows during Jazz Fest,” he says. “These shows will be the launching point for the album and the tour. Our whole marketing plan is based on this live act and carries over to the rest of the shows the band plays this year.”

ROLL ON
The DDBB route book again covers a lot of territory in 2002. “What we play is people music—music people can feel good and that can go into any market,” Lewis says. He adds that touring and recording with such acts as the Black Crowes and Widespread Panic have skewed the DDBB’s audience a little younger. “Our audience now is 18 to 60.”

John Lochen, DDBB’s responsible agent at the Rosebud Agency, says the band’s summer is shaping up nicely. “We’re hoping to put the [festival] tour together so somebody might invite us along. Their music is so versatile and so universal, and other acts that have asked them to support see that. Lochen says the group’s work ethic is stronger than that of many acts who are decades younger. “I’ve seen a band so willing and without hesitation to get in the van and go. It’s in their blood. It’s an honor to work with guys like these, who are so untouchable by the negative trappings of being a working musician. For them it’s about a good time, staying real, and having fun with their fans.”

The band comprises Lewis, Kevin Harris (tenor sax), Efrem Towns (trumpet), Julius McKeef (sousaphone), Samhun Tennon (bass), Terrence Higgins (drums), James McAnu (guitar), and Frederick Sanders (keys). Founding member Gregory Davis (trumpet/vocals) no longer tours but records with the band on its latest release, the about the general public sale came around, the show was sold out within an hour.”

Ticketmaster CEO Terry Barnes owns a third-party industry: “We provide a service to the industry, so we’ve always been like Switzerland. Most [venues and sports teams] keep their proprietary list on our system. But it’s theirs, and we don’t touch it.”

Barnes believes that most venues give their lists to the promoter for use in promoting an event in the building. “The building will usually share the names, but they like to maintain rights to let people know when these types of events are coming back.”

For Ticketmaster’s part, when a promoter or band asks for a list, Ticketmaster gets permission from the venue and then produces a tape or a list of labels or gives them the file. However, Ticketmaster also has its overall data base of single-ticket buyers. “We have that general database—we have to,” Barnes says. “If the event cancels or postpones, we have to be able to notify them.”

Ticketmaster offers its list as a marketing-service-for-hire, as well. “We’re playing two or three markets in the Midwest, and we’ve searched the database for all the Weezer fans and done an e-mail to them saying, ‘Weezer’s coming back, here’s where and when.’” Barnes says of current promotions. When Neil Diamond went on tour, Ticketmaster did a huge presale for Sal Bona Bale, Diamond’s manager. “We went back and scrubbed the database from the past of all the Neil Diamond fans in every market area where he was playing. We sold a ton of tickets on a presale online.”

Just as Mastro of SCI Ticketing, who handles ticketing for String Cheese Incident, says the band goes online to sell its list a week prior to the national on-sale. “It’s meant to be the most effective tool in the book. You need to purchase through us to be privy to that information.”

But SCI is “sensitive to the fact that we’re guests in the theater, and if a theater wants to offer something to their fans first, fine. But there aren’t many season ticketholders at any theater across the country who are big String Cheese fans,” Mastro adds. “The purpose of putting together a mailing list has been to keep the fans informed. We’ve never done a targeted marketing effort with our mailing list. We’ve never collected any [demographic information]. We’ve probably got more duplicates running rampant in our database than we ever gave to consider.”

LICENSE TO BUY
The venues are also refining their product. Boston FleetCenter president/CEO Rich Krezwick says a successful presale to preferred customers helped maximize the number of Elton John/Billy Joel dates booked at the arena (Billboard, Feb. 23)

Kevin Ulliett of Assembly Hall in Champaign, Ill., also offers presales but not discounts. However, he works with the band. “Cred is very picky. We would not do a presale. There are a lot of logistics to work out in the combination with them. They want to give a fair shot for everybody, as opposed to taking advantage of your list,” Ulliett says.

But he does have an obligation to take care of the university students first. “We’ll go up a day early for the students,” Ulliett says. “For some shows, we lobby hard for a student discount. With Aerosmith, we did a $6 discount from a $55 ticket.”

From the promoter viewpoint, any list that helps sell seats is a godsend. Fantasma owner Jon Stoll says, “If you’re not using it to advertise, you try to reach [your] segment of the audience as efficiently as possible.”

A few promoters have ticket clubs (the name for owner of Sue McLean & Associates in Minneapolis, charges $99.95 annually and $49.95 for a six-month trial for her Ticket Club members. “For me, it’s nothing but an added bonus. Most of the shows I do are middle-of-the-road, an older demographic. We can give them the convenience of good seats and valet parking opportunities. We send out news and ticket alerts when something is about to go on sale.”

TheDirtyDozenBrassBand
TOBY KEITH, PHIL CONNICK, JR., AND YERBA BUENA

Chicag o to Toby Keith, Kid Rock, Phil Connick, Jr., and Yerba Buena.

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Securitization:
Who it's right for, and when

Borrowing against future royalties can provide quick cash or long-term stability, but timing is everything.

By Matthew Benz

Also pay a fee to an investment banker to arrange the securitization and sell the bonds to investors. For this reason, financial experts caution that the deals are not for everyone. Indeed, this is one main reason why so few artists have done securitizations.

"The key is that there needs to be a strategic reason to execute the transaction," says Rob Horowitz, a director in the asset-finance unit of investment bank Credit Suisse First Boston in New York. "The artists who did deals had specific financial issues that needed to be addressed. These things aren't just going to happen because it's fun to do one."

Fun they are not. Behind an artist may very well be a tangle of relationships that must be sorted out to determine to whom exactly the royalties belong. That due diligence work often involves lawyers, is therefore costly and, in the end, may be for naught, if it is determined that reliability of the royalty payments can't be guaranteed to bondholders with enough certainty.

ACQUIRING CATALOGS

While working for the Royal Bank of Scotland, Horowitz last year completed a £60 million ($87.3 million) securitization for Chrysalis. That deal was said by him and other market observers to herald the greater use of music-asset securitization by corporate entities. Others that have put securitization to work include TVT Records, Corinthian Records and performing-rights organization SESAC.

If you are a mid-sized music publisher, says Horowitz, "You probably grow by acquisitions. How are you going to finance an acquisition? If you've got an existing asset pool, why not use that pool to finance a portion of the acquisition price for another catalog?" In other words, use the proceeds from securitizing your current catalog to buy other catalogs.

"Publishing assets clearly have the best value for application to a securitization transaction," Horowitz adds, noting the multiple revenue streams—mechanical, performance and synchronization revenues—that music publishers receive. "We've been speaking to various music companies, mostly music publishers, about securitization," he says, declining to discuss potential deals.

In Nashville, Williams says he and SunTrust are "doing a little better than plodding along" in developing their own securitization program aimed at the city's many small and independent music publishers. "You've got these independent companies that are just looking for ways to capitalize themselves for a variety of reasons. It's really no different.
Bankruptcy BLUES

Fallout from big-distributor closures is everywhere, but there may be an upside.  By Ed Christian

Last year’s slate of liquidations—including Valley Media, the industry’s largest ever, and National Record Mart—is having ramifications well beyond the hundreds of millions of dollars lost by labels and distributors in those financial disasters. In addition to making credit harder to come by, the industry has seen its current billing impacted and catalog and developing artists’ albums become a tougher sell. On the plus side, the remaining players appear to be stronger, as their sales are boosted by the disappearance of their competitors.

Last year, in addition to Valley and NRM, Pacific Coast One-Stop, Northeast One-Stop, Campus and Music Merchandisers all were liquidated. Except for NRM, the companies were wholesalers. Kmart, which buys music through the Handleman Co., also is operating under Chapter 11 protection.

“If you look at all the ones who have gone bankrupt and then went out of business and the ones who are operating under financial duress, you are looking at 20% to 25% of the industry’s turnover,” says Joe Micallef, chairman and CEO of Portland, Ore.-based Allegro. “That’s a pretty good hole to get over.”

THE FEW, THE STRONG

“The good news is that the ‘remaining players are getting stronger,” says the head of one distribution company. “At least, I hope that is true and that AEC becomes much more profitable.” AEC is the Alliance Entertainment Corp., now the largest one-stop in the music business and formerly Valley’s main competitor.

The bad news is that, since consolidation is now creating truly gigantic accounts, as the competition gets a larger piece of the pie due to such consolidation, that means that if something happens to the remaining players, the pain gets larger for labels and distributors, with everyone being out more money with each successive failure.

The head of sales at one independent label points out another problem: “Every time you look at an account, its competitors don't pick up all the slack.”

Or as Michael Rosenberg, the president of Koch Distribution, puts it, “The pipeline gets smaller, so upfront billing is less, and distributors are overworking their people even more. And the margin is so much smaller. It’s almost all selling. And that’s with the catalog. And they are still picking it up.”

INEFFICIENT MODELS

One distribution executive cites another worry: the remaining larger accounts get more clout, which means their demands can be that much more onerous to labels and distributors. In particular, demands for greater cooperative advertising funds, exclusive music tracks and selling windows become harder to turn down.

Another problem with Chapter 11 filings and liquidations is that, as players disappear or become crippled in terms of buying, the stronger ones also scrutinize how they buy—which means that labels and distributors have to make fewer deals, in general, of getting their product into stores.

Andy Allen, president of Alternative Distribution Alliance, says, “Consolidation means there are fewer places to go and you have to get larger numbers from fewer retailers. Is it tougher to sell one 900-store chain rather than a couple of regionals? On a national level, you can make one phone call and do business. But, more often, records we have are [popular] on a regional basis. To get the attention of a national chain on a regional record is harder than getting a regional chain to notice.”

Melissa Greene-Anderson, VP at Gotham Distributing, which runs the Collectables reissue label, looks at the same issue from another view point. “For years, we were able to keep putting out things, and there was always some niche retailer who would carry it and want to sell it,” she relates. “There are not many of that type of retailer left. Every day, I get hundreds of e-mails from people who want to kiss us for all the music we make available, but there are not that many retailers who can afford to carry it. There is no place to put the product.”

Another issue is that music specialty retailers, out of necessity, are diversifying their product.

From left: Andy Allen, Melissa Greene-Anderson and Mark Jarzabez

Continued from page 23

MUSIC&MONEY

SECURITIZATION

Continued from page 21

than allowing somebody basically to pull equity out of a piece of real estate.”

In the meantime, Horowitz says, “I think that the problem we’ve had historically with this type of transaction is that people had inflated expectations, with respect to transaction volume.”

On this, securitization experts, financial professionals and lawyers who’ve worked on these deals are in agreement. Securitization can play a niche role in music-industry finance, but it will not reach the size people once thought it could. In the mid-1990s, music-asset securitization attracted the attention of such prominent Wall Street firms as Deutsche Bank, Goldman Sachs and Lehman Brothers. “I think that there was a sense of, ‘We can’t just look into this,’” says one industry professional with securitization experience. “The Bowie thing got so much press, even though it was small dollars. It was perceived as novel.”

If it came to be that market con-

Continued on page 28

Beverly Hills Bar Association Entertainment Law Section
David A. Helfant, Esq. & Stephanie Yose Cameron, Esq. Co-chair

Who Needs a Record Company?

A Forum on the Independent Distribution of Music by the Artist in the Digital Age

Speakers
Laurie Soriano, Esq., Manatt, Phelps & Phillips (Aimee Mann, Diane Warren, Carole King, Taj Mahal)
Jim Griffin, CEO Cherry Lane Digital and founder of Evolab
Stacie Seifrit, VP Marketing and Media UPN former director of sales and marketing KROQ-FM
Arthur Spivak, President Spivak Sobol Entertainment (Tori Amos, Eve 6, Perfect Circle)
Kenneth D. Freundlich, Esq., Moderator Schleimer & Freundlich, LLP

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Majors And Money

Are rosters and artist-imprints the new casualties of the big labels' financial woes? by Brian Garrity

As the music industry becomes increasingly cost-conscious amid a weak economy, slumping sales and growing piracy, labels are proving more selective when it comes to everything from funding blockbuster artist contracts to using vanity-label imprint offers to attract talent.

Executives say that the impact of a poor economic climate isn't necessarily quantifiable, but the pocketbook pinch labels are feeling is, in many cases, creating a ripple effect when it comes to deal-making, or the lack-there-of, with artists.

Says Michael Sukin, an attorney with the Sukin Rush Law Group, a firm that handles music clients, "You can't say dozens of fewer deals are being signed; you wouldn't feel it that way. It's just that record companies don't have the freedom they once did to make deals."

Indeed, some label groups, notably Warner and EMI, are even using the current financial environment to shed deals with artists that are proving either too expensive or not exhibiting enough sales promise. Says one industry observer, "What you've seen in this economic recession is kind of unprecedented. There's a lot of what we've said would be pretty strong-selling acts that the majors don't want because they perceive they have to put in too much money to get what they need from it."

Perhaps most strikingly, EMI Recorded Music and Virgin Records America made headlines earlier this year when it paid Marshall Crenshaw $28 million to end her recording contract with the label. The multi-album deal—which was reportedly worth up to $300 million and included a $21 million signing bonus—was negated less than a year after it was signed, following disappointing sales of Crenshaw's Virgin debut, Glitter.

While some view that situation as a phenomenon specific to the current woes of EMI, Michael Nathanon, an analyst with Sanford C. Bernstein, notes that the Crenshaw contract could prove to be a "watershed moment" for the industry. "It was an acknowledgement that this deal won't work. And [EMI said], 'Rather than wasting our time kising each other and believing it will, let's just walk away now."

Nathanon points out that, in an environment marked by lowering consumer demand and rising executive and talent costs, such a move has powerful implications, and it may impact artist bargaining power. "You just lost one of five negotiators for talent," he explains. "All of a sudden, the industry is saying, 'Hold on a minute here.'"

Meanwhile, belt tightening is also impacting artist-label deals.

STREAMLINING AND SAGGING

Maverick—Madonna's joint venture with Warner Bros.—last year laid off 10% of its workforce, including president Bill Bennett as part of a "streamlining" effort in the face of a tough economic climate. Also as part of the move, the company's sales operation was taken over by Warner Bros., and publicity was shifted to outside sources.

Other label ventures with artists, like the Beastie Boys' Grand Royal, have ceased operations in the last year, due to a tight economy and sagging profits. And some artists are even moving to new homes. Aquemini—the fledgling label helmed by OutKast's Antwan "Big Boi" Patton and Andre "Dre 3000" Benjamin—recently parted ways with distributing label Elektra and moved to Columbia. (OutKast remains signed to Arista.)

Vogel points out that part of the problem is "the music business has not come to grips with the technological changes impacting the industry." In the meantime, the labels continue to face mounting costs everywhere—including artist rosters and concessions to some acts—as profits shrink.

GRIM SHORT-TERM

Some retailers and distribution executives are predicting album

Continued on page 30
We’re not rock stars. We’re lawyers.
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SECURITIZATION
Continued from page 22

problems made securitization more attractive than traditional financing (such as bank loans and equity and debt issuance), perhaps even large music publishers would turn to it. Yet, as one expert notes, even then, "it’s a question of whether they want to put their crown jewel in a lock and go through the time and expense of doing a deal like that."

LABELS COOL TO IT
Meanwhile, record companies are said not to like artisit securitizations. The labels lose a certain amount of leverage over the artist when they eschew the trade label advance for outside funding.

Still, David Pullman—the investment banker who helped bring the world Bowie Bonds and most of the artist deals that followed—remains as optimistic, and enterprising, as ever. He says he is working on the first-ever securitization that would pool the royalties of several songwriters and artists, though he does not offer further details. Pullman also says he is willing to purchase the royalty-income streams from artists who themselves are not interested in doing a securitization. Pullman could then securitize them himself.

"Securitization could be a high risk or it could be a low risk, depending on your confidence" of having those revenue streams in the future, says Stephen Swid, chairman of SESAC. In 1999, the performing-rights organization undertook a $20-million securitization with the help of C.A.K. Universal Credit Corp. to restructure its finances. Swid notes that SESAC was confident of its ability to grow its business; David Bowie's catalog sales were fairly predictable.

"We're very lucky that we were able to do it, but on some ideas we wouldn't do it," says Swid. "Predicting the future is the toughest job in the world."

BANKRUPTCY BLUES
Continued from page 22

lines because it becomes harder for them to eke a profit out of music, with all the discounting in the marketplace. But couple the product-divestment trend with the bankruptcies, and "music has lost its home," says Greene-Anderson. "There is no such thing as a non-traditional retailer anymore, because there are more of them than traditional retailers. The industry is in a really weird place right now."

Michael Rosenberg

WAKE-UP CALL
In general, says a financial executive at one of the majors, the onslaught of bankruptcies last year "certainly woke us up to the trends that were happening in the dynamics of taking a hard look at the way we run our business and the economic model that we need to attain to.

In addition to big-picture issues, the specter of past bankruptcies has forced labels and distributors to scrutinize how they go about their day-to-day business activities with accounts. "We do more prioritization of where we should invest, in terms of cooperative advertising and

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s one financial executive with a major. "It is making us look at everything, from re-examining the collateral we take from accounts to whether we will subordinate our claims to banks."

He reports that, until now, labels have been willing to do that for high-profile accounts. He says the next large account where that issue will be revisited will be Tower Records, which is said to be in discussions with asset-based lenders to replace its current revolving-credit facility. That executive says the company will look really hard at whether it will subordinate to Tower's banks. In general, he believes that the labels, overall, won't give as much credit as they have in the past. And, when they do, they will demand more collateral than what was previously sought—and loan less against it.

The banks themselves are also looking harder at the credit lines they provide accounts, reports Universal Partners' Catlan. "Banks are micromanaging inventory categories," he says. "CDs and DVDs are now carrying a higher advance rate than cassettes, while major-label product carries more than independent." Moreover, banks used to review their advance rates annually but now are doing that quarterly, he adds.

Mark Jarzabek, VP at Long Island City, N.Y.-based Musicorama, points out that even the insurance industry, which provides accounts-receivable insurance to wholesalers, is tightening its business practices, due to all the music-industry bankruptcies. "The insurance companies are not feeling comfortable in issuing coverage on some key accounts," he reports. "It is becoming increasingly challenging to satisfy their financial requirements," in order to obtaining insurance coverage.

Jarzabek blames the bankruptcies, CD-burning and file-sharing for the reluctance of insurance companies. But he also blames the majors for publicly touting their Internet plans to sell music directly to consumers. "The major labels are doing one thing after another to put the retailers in a bad light," he complains.

On the other hand, Jarzabek points out that the increased scrutiny imposed by financial institutions is creating additional tension between accounts and their product vendors. "I wish that some of the retailers knew more details and understood how hard it is for distribution companies to fulfill orders and conduct business with them," he says. For the first time, within the past year, "We have been asked by the banks to give security on our personal assets," because of the financial uncertainty hovering over the music industry's retail-account base.

With all of the fallout from industry bankruptcies, Koch's Rosenberg adds, "Of course, the bad debt in bankruptcies is no fun either."
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Making The Trip: The Price Of TOURING

Financing and insurance reflect the risk and a radically changed landscape. By Ray Waddell

The dollars and cents of touring have undergone upheaval over the past couple of years, and nowhere is that more evident than in the world of financing of national touring and the touring-insurance market.

The latter market has been particularly volatile in the months following Sept. 11, when scores of concerts were postponed or cancelled and insurers were slammed.

"The cancellation [insurance] market has changed radically," observes Bob Taylor, managing director of London-based broker Robertson Taylor. "Sept. 11 had such an impact on the insurance world, every insurer in the [touring industry] has reconsidered their position, and some have dropped out completely.

Taylor estimates that 20% of entertainment-business insurance companies have been eliminating touring coverage. "Those that didn't drop out are far tougher in their underwriting and claims procedure and very price in their rates," he says. "The rates are rapidly increasing and will continue to do so." Taylor says rates have gone up by 60% and 70%, depending on the act. That said, tours tend to go out anyway. "But now," adds, "tours that would have insured profit or revenue from cancelled shows are simply buying coverage for their costs only, rather than profit.

RISK-CUTTING

The touring-insurance industry is suffering from a lack of "capacity," according to Jim Chippendale, president of CSI Entertainment Insurance in Dallas. "A lot of companies are seeking to cut anything the least bit high-risk from their portfolio, and entertainment is among the highest-risk coverages," he says. "They are cutting this out of their portfolios because they can't afford to take on more risk, because their capacity—or the amount they can write—has been eaten up by Sept. 11 claims.

All of which puts promoters and tour producers in a bind when looking to insure. "We're telling them to really do their research and go with a broker or agent with experience in the market," advises Chippendale. "In the past, insurance was a real afterthought, with promoters calling two or three days in advance of an event. Insurance should be on your top-5 list, or it could cost you radically.

Chippendale says he has seen insurance costs go up about 40% across the board in the last few months. "A lot of event-cancellation stuff is not out there anymore," he says. "On the liability side, one can expect about a 30% increase over last year.

John Meglen, co-president of tour producer and concert promoter AEG Concerts, says cancellation insurance is definitely higher now, and terrorism is an exclusion commonly seen. "In the past [with cancellation insurance], the policy was based up to 2.5% of the amount insured, with a zero-to-one show deductible," Meglen says. "Now, it's more like 3% to 3.5% with a two-show deductible, minimum. The deductible is dependent on the number of dates, with a 30-date tour generally being one show deductible, and a 60-to-70-date tour being three to four show deductible. It's radically different from car insurance, and there have been a lot of accidents lately.

BANKROLLING THE BAND

National and international tour financial guarantees, once only available to such elite stadium-level acts as the Rolling Stones, Pink Floyd and U2, have become commonplace in today's era of promoter consolidation. It was a game pioneered by such groundbreaking promoters as Michael Cohl and the late Bill Graham, both of whom bankrolled Stones tours either through private "angel" investors or corporate backing.

Today, deep-pocketed corporate promoters like Clear Channel Entertainment (CCE) and AEG have the financial clout to offer lucrative guarantees to attract a wide range of tours and, at least in CCE's case, steer touring traffic to company-owned sheds while also nailing down the lion's share of top-flight arena tours. Last year, CCE produced some 30 tours, including such major winners as U2, Madonna and Janet Jackson. This year, the firm will produce most of Paul McCartney's upcoming Driving USA tour. On the other hand, AEG has vowed to become a more aggressive player in the tour-buying game.

Beyond the increased volume of tours going with one promoter, the process hasn't changed that much, according to AEG's Meglen. "It's real simple," he says. "If you sell a tour to somebody, you want to make sure they have the money. From there, it's whatever you negotiate in payment terms. There needs to be some guarantee that the company has the wherewithal to back the contract, whether it's through corporate, personal, cash or credit.

TWO-WAY STREET

In the world of national touring, acts looking to tour approach promoters, promoters seeking tours approach acts, or both. "You'd like to think if an artist is going to go out and tour, they would look at all of their options," says Meglen. "We've got a couple of organizations now that are well-financed. But just because they have deep pockets doesn't make dollars flow. You still have to make smart decisions.

So does AEG pass on some tours? "All the time," says Meglen. "It's looking for quality over quantity.

From the artists' standpoint, there is still more to the deal than money. "We're in a different era now, but at the end of the day, it's still all about people," says Barry Marshall, veteran touring executive overseeing Paul McCartney's Driving USA tour, working with both CCE and AEG. "The corporation can be huge, but it's the people inside who make it work. Really, it's all about artists and audiences."
**ALBUMS**

**POP**

★ **ELIZA GILKYSON**

Lost & Found

**PRODUCERS:** Eliza Gilkyson, Mark Hallman

Reserve House 16G

At times joyful, stark, and poignant, Gilkyson’s second Red House project (and seventh career album) dances through a span of human emotions by way of rich vocals and uncomplicated musical backgrounds. Whether singing about the intimacy of love or the woes plaguing the world, her songs peep into a secret inner world where personal self-confidence and spiritual well-being can constantly be obtained. Set opener “Welcome Back” explores a person who was once disconnected from the world and is able to welcome sunshine back into his life. From the album’s title track, “Lost & Found,” to the bluesy, gritty “Mama’s Got a Boyfriend” and the melodic “Richmond Boy” discuss how complex relationships can remain simple by accepting others’ love. “Easy Rider” wistfully details the rough lifestyle, yet enviable freedom of a traveling musician, while “Riverside” evokes the uncertainties of modern life with wistful yearnings for the past. —**JP**

★ **MOTORHEAD**

Hammeder

**PRODUCERS:** Motörhead, Thom Panunzio, Chuck Redd

Metal-Sanctuary 85229

When bassist/vocalist Lemmy eulogizes “Rip it up!” on the opening track of *Redemption*, the metal trio unreliably bludgeons you on commercials. After more than a quarter-century of tearing upaural turf, the heavyweights of thrash still one-ace attitude that permeates this disc. Here and there, Lemmy, drummer Mikkey Dee, and guitarist Philip Campbell fall victim to the occupational hazard of sounding clichéd, but there is no denying the great harmonies grind out of pulse-pounding party-starters like “Walk a Crooked Mile” and “Mine All Mine.” Bonus track “The Game” is a wicked slice of anemic metal that World Wrestling Federation fans will recognize as the theme song of superstar Triple H, who stepped out of the ring to contribute vocals to the simian singer-songwriter’s track “Animal.” A Motörhead must-have. —**CLT**

**MINISTRY**

Sphinctour

**PRODUCER:** Jeffrey Kinert

Sanctuary 84540

Although it’s impossible to capture on disk the bone-rattling ferocity of a live Ministry performance, *Sphinctour* comes close. Recorded during the band’s 1996 world tour, the not-so-subtitled *Sphinctour* rips through live songs each from the band’s *Psalm 69* and *Fifth Pig* albums, plus the classic “Thieves” thrown in for good measure. The best moments come from *Psalm 69*, in particular “N.W.O.,” a brutal amalgamation of menacing guitars, riotous samples, and pounding rhythms. The sampled sirens alone seem to signal a nuclear meltdown, while frontman Al Jourgensen’s growl unleashes the bounds of hell. It’s enough to make most of today’s metal acts run for cover. While generally weaker, the *Fifth Pig* material spr Americana in surprisingly restrained touches of piano, harmonic, and guitar to offset the incessant jackhammer beats. Sphinctour reaffirms Jourgensen and Paul Barker as premier purveyors of industrial rage and should tide fans over until the band’s next studio release. —**IDP**

**R&B/HIP-HOP**

★ **SKRATCH COMANDO**

Incredible DJ’s

**PRODUCER:** Bomb Hip-Hop 32047

On its U.S. debut, Skratch Comando is out to prove that Spanish men are no less exciting in the DJ department. Having flirted with De los Mar, Spain, DJ Tillo, DJ Marc, and DJ None mix, scratch, and blend everything into one feel-good whole, “*Skan Tack ‘N Bump*” serves as a perfect example of how the trio tricks and flips well-known breaks and verses—ultimately, making them their own. In addition to incorporating classic U.S. rap songs into the mix, the trio enlists some of Spain’s top DJ acts, including NGS La Brie, Eddy Dreme & Male, and Tremendo Mena, who all lend their vocals to the stellar set. In a smart move, each DJ takes time to introduce himself. For his part, DJ Marc showcases his timing and dexterity in front of a live audience “through his DJ Live.” The increasing popularity of turntablism—witness the X-Ecutioners’ latest release and the Scratch document—should be well worth the trip for more information. Log on to bombhiphop.com. —**RH**

**COUNTRY**

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Sharp Dressed Men: A Tribute to ZZ Top

**PRODUCERS:** Joe Galante, Bill Ham

Rhino 67306

Here’s a country-baked reformation of the Texas blues-based power trio, and like most tribute albums, this one is highly uneven. Some artist/ song fits are categorically bad. Lonestar is far too white-bread to sop up the grease of ZZ’s “Gimme All Your Love” (Part 1)” and Brandy Clark’s wailing version of “La Grange.” Meanwhile, Ray Waddy’s take on “I’m Just an Average Guy” is surprisingly restrained. A mean guitar, still sounds like Sexed Dixie on “Sharp Dressed Man” and Andy Griggs can’t summon the Energy. (Continued on next page)

**VITAL REISSUES**

**LITTLE FEAT**

Waiting for Columbus

**ORIGINAL PRODUCER:** Lowell George

**REISSUE PRODUCERS:** Gary Peterson, Steve Wolfe, Paul Barriere

Warner Bros./Rhino 78274

All of the great live rock albums issued as a part of “Walk a Crooked Mile” and “Mine All Mine,” Bonus track “The Game” is a wicked slice of anemic metal that World Wrestling Federation fans will recognize as the theme song of superstar Triple H, who stepped out of the ring to contribute vocals to the simian singer-songwriter’s track “Animal.” A Motörhead must-have. —**CLT**

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**JANE SIBERLY**

Love Is Everything: The Jane Siberry Anthology

**COMPILATION PRODUCER:** Hillary Bratt

**ORIGINAL PRODUCERS:** various Warner Bros./Rhino 78274

There’s a lot to be said for artists who insist on following the beat of their own drum. No artist does this better than Canadian chanteuse Jane Siberry, who has, over the years, flirted with mainstream success. The indispensable two-disc collection *Love Is Everything* draws from a diverse musical landscape that spans 20 years. In addition to mining gems from her early releases (including the magnificent single “Mimi on the Beach” from 1984’s *No Borders Here* and the buoyant “One More Colour” from 1985’s *The Speckless Sky*), this set cuts from such later albums as *Teenager*, *New York Trilogy*, and *Tillie* (from her own Sheba label). The set closes with a new recording, “Map of the World (Part IV): Pilgrim.” Then and now, Siberry remains one of the world’s most refreshing artist...—**MH**

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**SPOTLIGHTS**

Reviews deemed by the review editors to deserve special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention in the box of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention by the review editors to deserve special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worthy of special attention are bolded in the boxes of reviews and styled as “Russian Roulette.” Reviews deemed worth...
desperation necessary for “I Need You Tonight”; Kenny Chesney is overmatched on a nevertheless interesting “Tush”; Trace Adkins drowning in tearful ballads on “Legs”; and Tracy Byrd’s a tad smooth for the raunch of “La Grange.” Some matches, however, are not as ill-fitting, notably Hank Williams Jr.’s, eight-minute-powerhouse “Just Left Chicago/Waitin’ for the Bus,” on which he is completely right. Kix, Montgomery County, and Tracy Byrd have all the edge needed for “Just Got Paid,” and Hank III shuffles and wails inventively on “Fearless Boogie.” On the other hand, Joe Yoakam brings Bakersfield soul to “I’m Bad, I’m Nationwide,” and the Warren Brothers nail “Cheap Sunglasses.” Production and musicianship are excellent, all big guitars and bombast. But, in total, this tribute sends us running for the originals.—RW

CHARLIE SIZEMORE
The Story is the Songs of Tom T. Hall
PRODUCERS: Charlie Sizemore, Paul Martin Rebel
1767
This inspired pairing of understated blues guitarist Sizemore with the beautifully simplistic lyrics of Tom T. Hall is one tribute that works like a charm, and first-class accompaniment adds punch. Sizemore’s skill lies in his subtle power and remarkable tone, and better material simply does not exist. “Mama’s Got the Caltex Blues” is a song that makes you see in skeletal detail the listener’s inability to comprehend any of the white people’s songs. Rather, Tuku’s music is a vision of the world as a whole, where the heartland of the planet is a place of beauty, love, and hope. The tracks on this album are not just songs, but life-affirming journeys into the depths of the human condition._—GE

CHARLES IVES
An American Journey
Thomas Hampson, baritone; San Francisco Symphony and Chorus/Michael Tilson Thomas
PRODUCER: Andreas Neuberger
RCA Victor/BMG 43703
With the Americana music boom giving rise to all manner of rediscovery, public is more ready than ever for the avant-Americana of Charles Ives (1874-1954). The first great American composer of “authentic” American music, Ives was a brand of concert music that unashamedly incorporated such homegrown idioms as church hymns, brass-band tunes, parlor songs, and patriotic ditties—often within the same piece. Folk-inflected did not mean easy-listening, as the maverick musician culminated polyphonic, polyrhythmic, sometimes tartly dissonant soundscapes that are real enough to have sounded like a crazy-quilt in the early part of the last century now sounds utterly naive and natural, often nostalgic. This unique collection—from our premier Ives interpreters, Michael Tilson Thomas—features such lyrical masterpieces as Three Places in New England, The Unanswered Question, and From the Steeples to the Mountains, along with sequences from orchestral songs showcasing Thomas Hampson. The baritone, long a card-carrying Ivesian, sings such songs as “Tom and Jerry” and “The Great God Bama” with a combination of vocal beauty and the weight of a life’s wisdom. Charles Ives was an artist and a visionary, and his music is a testament to the power of the human voice to transcend the boundaries of time and place.—BB

CHRISTIAN
GUEST MICELLE HAGGARD
California Blend
Haggar Blend, Chester Smith
Hag 005
There’s a special magic when two old friends get together, and that heartfelt chemistry resonates throughout Californian Blend. Haggard undoubtedly possesses one of country music’s most affecting voices, and he sounds better than ever. You can hear a lifetime of experience—hopes, dreams, heartaches, and joy—coming through in every performance. No, California country music scene veteran turned businessman whose music career influenced a young Haggard. The two rekindled their friendship, recorded this at Haggard’s home studio, and Haggard is issuing it via his own label. This disc’s many highlights include “Wreck on the Highway,” “Grace for the Shepherd,” “A Little Piece of Jesus,” and “Great Judgement Morning,” which Smith first learned as a boy. With the swinging interest in roots music, this record has the potential to capture a wide audience. The combination of understated production and moving performances make this a treasure not to be missed.—DEP

DEDicated TO THE MEMORY OF
T. M. S. McLane
1848-1909
(Continued from preceding page)

MEDESI MARTIN AND WOOD
Uninspired
PRODUCER: Scott Hardy
Blue Note 35870
Medesi Martin and Wood turn in some of their most satisfying and least familiar work in years on Uninspired, the genre-hopping jazz trio’s latest exploration of funk-soul-rock-hip-hop fusion. The album winsomely synthesizes danceable beats and the 1998’s Combustion with the avant-garde experimentalism of 2008’s The Dropper. Keyboardist John Medeski’s deftly textured organ riffs are notably reigned in this time out, subtly bubbling under much of the work’s dusty and trippy soundscapes.

While there isn’t any singing on the record, Brad Roberts of Crash Test Dummies fame contributes hum-
CHRIS BOTTI FEATURING SHAWN COLVIN ALL WOULD ENY (3:13)
PRODUCER: not listed
WRITER: Sting
PUBLISHER: Steeplejac Ltd. adm. by Magnetic, Publishing/EMI Blackwood, BMI Columbia 56756 (CD promo)
Any vehicle that brings Shawn Colvin back into the familiar points, but the expressive vocalist's guest stint with jazz trumpet player Chris Botti is just pure magic. Taken from Botti's Night Session: the weighty number is as relaxed as a martini on the veran-
da. Botti subtly accompanies Colvin's cool, collected vocal as she tells the story of a woman. ‘Time’ is a
wealthy, older man who in times finds herself trapped and lonely. Written by Sting, “All Would Envy” conveys
a mood that’s ideal for the style of the jazzzy overture—even in a setting like The Tonight Show With Jay Leno,
when the pair recently performed the song and transformed the ambiance of the stage. The only complaint here
is that Colvin fades the single version to 3:13, which leaves one feeling remiss—a song like this is meant to be
savored. It’s a shame there isn’t a natural setting for this to be placed at mainstream radio; but then again,
“All Would Envy” deserves to be heard deliberately, quietly, with focus, oh so nice—CT

THE CRANBERRIES This Is the Day (4:14)
PRODUCER: Stephen Street
WRITER: D. O’Riordan
PUBLISHER: not listed
MCA 25758 (CD promo)
MCA has worked hard to return the Cranberries to mainstream notoriety—it seems they’ve released a half-dozen
singles to radio since the release of their current album, Wake Up and Smell the Coffee. But with as those previous
efforts, the melodies and quality of lead Dolores O’Riordan’s vocals just don’t add up to a hitworthy hit partic-
ularly with the rock playground so crowded with talented players these days. Instrumentally, “This Is the Day”
packs a decent wallop, with the creative use of organs, organic percussion, and some novel guitar licks. But
otherwise, the track just feels too business as usual. Perhaps it’s time to turn on the radio, check out how pop-
ular rock has evolved, and head back into the studio.—CT

COUNTRY

CYNDI THOMSON I’m Gone (3:34)
PRODUCERS: Paul Worley, Tammy Lee James WILSON
PUBLISHERS: Mighty Nice Music/Bat Wait No More Music/Chuck Prophet/Funcalo, BMI Capitol 14495 (CD promo)
Cyndi Thomson became one of the country format’s breakout artists with her success of debut single, “What I Really Meant to Say,” which topped the Billboard Hot Country Tracks chart for three weeks, pro-
ducing sales of her debut album, My World. Her follow-up didn’t fare quite so well. “Always Liked That Beat”
peaked at No. 21. It remains to be seen how country programmers will em-
brace this one. Paul Worley and Chuck Prophet, the song is a
woman’s declaration of independence as she exits a bad relationship. It’s a
worn approach, left uncharacteristic by a little ridiculous indignation, some
spunk, and attitude. Thomson’s perfor-
mance is more breathy sex kitten than defiant independent woman, and she just doesn’t hit the mark on this one. Thomson definitely has a unique vocal quality, but it works well on the right songs, but here, she just seems to lack the fire and sassy necessary for this gutsy lyric.—DEP

PUBLISHER: BMI

AC

PAUL MCCARTNEY Lonely Road (3:15)
PRODUCER: Dave Kahne
WRITER: P. McCartney
PUBLISHER: MPL Communications Ltd. Capitol 16920 (CD promo)
While there are faithful millions who will always appreciate the familiarity of Paul McCartney’s voice, his recent
album, Driving Rain, is not the place for potential new fans to turn in an effort to hear what they may have
missed. “Lonely Road,” the third sin-
gle from the Capitol set, is not only
mundane, but McCartney’s voice is poised to the point that one has to wonder if perhaps it’s time to sit out a round and let the kids in the block have their turn at the mike. It’s uncomfortable to see our heroes age, and there is little that is more painful than hearing those who filled your mind, with the cre-
ative moments of our lives rely on that faith to coast through an effort that is disappointing and this dis-
illusioning. No disrespect is meant to Sir McCartney, but there comes a time when it’s best to herald the past and
enjoy the honors he’s earned without being a living legend. This “Road” simply goes nowhere.—CT

NEW & NOTeworthy

PAULINA RUBIO Don’t Say Goodbye (3:30)
PRODUCER: Gen Rubin
WRITERS: G. Rubin, C. Yie
When a song hits #1, it’s natural to wonder if the songwriter or producer was in a natural setting with the right
people at the time. “Don’t Say Goodbye” is a song about that feeling, and it was the perfect storm that became their trademark in hip-hop production. This cut, in contrast, intro-
duces live instrumentation from rock quartet Spymoh, leaving little that could be called conventional hip-hop, the
attacks on posers notwithstanding. Yet even on this seemingly PC musical turf, N*E*R*D comes through, displaying
an impressive range for itself. The distorted vocals mock inauditive acts, plaitive for the first 1:45 with a (cello, ev-
en), then explosive and heaving with unleashed passion for the second half. Lead Scott Stapp sings all
with his might about being “six feet from the edge,” imploring, “I still believe there’s something left for you
and me.” The man certainly looks like he means the message. Amid so many rock bands getting their chart break in the 2001-2002 season, Creed remains one of the more
convincing outfits in the mainstream conscious-
ness, and this song will keep them in first gear on the pop-culture band-
wagon. Score another across-the-
board bull’s-eye.—CT

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CONTRIBUTORS: Eric Aleshe, Rhasaan Hall, Deborah Evans Price, Chuck Taylor. SPOTTLIGHT: Releases detailed by the review editors to deserve special attention in the basis of musical merit and/or R&B chart potential. NEW & NOTeworthy: Exceptional releases by new or
upcoming artists. PICKS: New releases predicted to hit the top of the chart in the corresponding format. CRITICS’ CHOICES (•): New releases, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended because of their musical merit. Send review copies to Chuck Taylor (Bill-
board, 770 Broadway, 6th floor, New York, N.Y. 10003) or to the writers on the bylines.
Cee-Lo Breaks Up The Monotony
Goodie Mob Member’s ‘Perfect’ Solo Debut For Arista Showcases Individualism

BY RASHAUN HALL
NEW YORK—With all the mediocrity flooding hip-hop right now, the genre could surely use some creative individuality. Enter Cee-Lo—the melodic member of the Goodie Mob—who steps out April 23 with a solo debut on Arista, Cee-Lo Green & His Perfect Imperfections.

In a slight departure from Goodie Mob’s trademark sound, Cee-Lo offers a unique combination of hip-hop, soul, gospel, and rock on the 21-track set. “I’ve always kept in mind what I wanted to do as an individual,” Cee-Lo says. “I’m broad in influence and rich in possibility. So, for lack of a medium and being engulfed in what Goodie Mob was doing, I was unable to do that. I felt now was the time to express myself. So this album was a law of inevitability. Fortunately, I’m part of a collective that thrives on individuality.”

When the opportunity for a solo set presented itself, the Atlanta native—who is managed by K.C. Morton of Atlanta-based Monopoly Management—was prepared: He had already completed the album before he signed the deal. The set’s first offering is the funk-filled single “Closet Freak,” which Cee-Lo was inspired by the rapper’s barbershop, Menta. “I wrote the song for him,” says Cee-Lo, whose songs are produced by God Given Music. BMI. “But it ended up being about me and how I see myself coming out with this creative vocal act of individualism in the midst of marketplace monotony.”

Arrestive ex-VP Lionel Nourisher believes that Cee-Lo’s genre-bending style will appeal to more than just the hip-hop community. “We want to knock down barriers and get P&Ds to open up their minds—not just pigeonhole him in a rap category,” Nourisher says. “He has so much more talent, and there are so many more things he can do. We’re active at rhythm, crossover, and urban, as well as mix-show, because of his foundation with the Goodie Mob and the Dungeon Family. By no means do we want to exclude the rap community. We want them to embrace us and help us launch him.”

ALL-AGE APPEAL
Radio has already started giving love to “Closet Freak.” WEDR Miami PD Cedric Holloway says, “It’s a Dirty South-type song, and that usually works down here. Requests for the song grow daily.”


That all-age appeal may just be what Arista ordered. “When you’re pushing barriers the way that Cee-Lo is,” Ridinour notes, “you hope people are going to react, follow, and then listen to the next thing as opposed to being in the same old situation. Everything Cee-Lo is doing is original. He’s giving a whole new meaning to creative expression from a hip-hop front.”

“This isn’t too different from the way we approached things with OutKast,” he adds. “They were also pushing the envelope. We had to stick to our concept, but went out to people and let them decide it was something they wanted.”

Booked by Cara Lewis for the William Morris Agency, Cee-Lo takes to the road with Def Soul labelmates Musiq in May. With years of experience under his belt, Cee-Lo has a unique perspective on this business and where he fits in it.

“Corporate America has to be able to consider it [an album] comparable to something else in the marketplace. In Cee-Lo’s case, it is a career to be monitored and solicited as such,” he says. “I don’t believe in titles or limitations, but after 10 years, I have become a professional who has become industry-wise. My plight is to establish a genre for myself and artists like me who have wandered off the beaten path.”

R&B/HIP-HOP

Cee-Lo Breaks Up The Monotony

Goodie Mob Member’s ‘Perfect’ Solo Debut For Arista Showcases Individualism


The recording entity—whose concerns encompass production, publishing, distribution, and artist promotion in adult urban contemporary and jazz—was established by president/CEO Marcus Johnson (no relation to Robert) seven years ago. The Marimel artist roster includes jazz saxophonist Joe Henderson and singer Alysyn Williams. A self-taught keyboardist, Marcus Johnson, 44, has nine solo CDs, including 2000’s Urban Groove.

Robert Johnson’s investment— which does not have any ties to either BET or parent Viacom—was acquired through the RJL Cos., a<br>MD-based holding company he created in 2001 for his personal business investments.

NEW MOTOWN RECRUIT: Motown makes official what’s been chatted about since the Grammy Awards: Former DreamWorks ghetto hype-<br>nist Dave Hollister is now a Motown artist, thanks to the signing of a production deal with Hollister and his brother Donny “Drano” Harrell’s Goodfellas Entertainment.

The former Blackstreet member is recording an August-slated debut that will feature collaborations with Joe. Tank, and All Star. Hollister can currently be heard on “Keep Lovin’ You,” the first single from A-Money’s VCA album, Sign of Things to Come.

“It’s been so frustrating,” Hollister says during a studio break. “But I’m so happy now. I don’t know what to do. We’ll have other acts, but right now we’re concentrating on my record. [Motown president/CEO] Kedar [Massenburg] has a point to prove to a lot of people, and so do I.”

WHEN IT COMES TO BOTH SIDES NOW: “This is the beginning of the new Braxton Brothers,” says saxophonist Wayne about his and bassist twin Nelson’s new Peak Records set, Both Sides. The former Windham Hill duo describes the album’s vibe as new urban adult contemporary, co-mingling smooth jazz and R&B.

“Wayne has a great track record,” Wayne adds. “People who liked our last two albums [Steppin’ Out and Now and Forever] will still find those Braxtons; our instrumental component is still the Bagpip.”

For example, the track “So Divine” represents what Nelson calls “one of our dreams to do a track in a real R&B setting with real instruments.” Joining the brothers on Both Sides are such vocalists as Ledisi, Monet, Martin Luther, and Seabron Sawyer. Nelson notes, “We hope this record will bring deserved attention to Bay Area talent.”

QUICK HITS: Raphael Saadiq’s Universal solo debut, Instant Vintage, is pushed back to June 11 from its original May 21 release date. ... Navy will receive the first-ever Readers’ Choice Entertainer of the Year Award among the 15th annual Essence Awards that are being held for the first time in L.A. The 2002 honoree slate includes Halle Berry, India.Arie, Alicia Keys, Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis, songwriter/producer Kenny Gamble, Radio One head Cathy Hughes, and author Terry McMillan. Hosted again by comedian Steve Harvey, the show tapes May 31 at the Universal Amphitheatre for a June airing on Fox-TV.

ALL HEART: Everyone knows Patti LaBelle pours her heart into her music. But she also does the same outside that realm, lending her support to such life-altering challenges as cancer, AIDS, homelessness, and menopause. At the recent Carnegie Hall concert on behalf of the Rainforest Foundation, she performed “Oh Happy Day” with fellow diva Nina Simone. Janet Jackson says, “You name it and I’ll claim it,” the singer says with a laugh, adding that she’s “honored and blessed” to be recognized for her charitable endeavors by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences April 22, when she’ll receive the Philadelphia chapter’s first MusiCares Heart Award. “I like to give,” LaBelle says. “My dream is to help people—these I know and those I don’t know.”

In between her charitable projects, she’s recording her long-awaited gospel album, preparing another R&B disc, and working up material for a LaBelle reunion album that will be out in time for a planned tour by the trio next year.

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BILLBOARD APRIL 27, 2002
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**Note:** The table above includes the Billboard Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart from April 27, 2002, featuring artists such as Ashanti, T-Pain, R. Kelly, and Jay-Z, among others. The chart ranks the top albums based on sales data and is a key indicator of popularity in the genre.
Ninja Tune’s Cinematic Orchestra Has A Sound Beyond The ‘Everyday’

BY RASHAUN HALL

NEW YORK—Cinematic Orchestra is turned up and ready to go. With a sound that can best be described as jazz for the new millennium or aural movies, the aptly named act prepares for the release of its latest Ninja Tune album, *Everyday*, May 28.

“The name says a lot,” says Cinematic Orchestra mastermind Jason Swinscoe of the band’s sound. “It’s a combination of jazz form and instruments with film-score textures.”

“Writing music over a period of time, I became more focused in terms of my ideas,” he adds. “Jazz and soundtrack are my main sources of inspiration.”

Swinscoe says he and his bandmates—drummer Luke Flowers, turntablist Patrick Carpenter, bassist Phil France, and saxophonist Tom Chanthen—combine these elements with electronic and modern production to give the overall sound a contemporary feel.

**BASS-IC ADDITION**

The world received its introduction to Cinematic Orchestra via its 1999 debut, *Motion*, which was an instrumental affair. Conversely, *Everyday* finds the orchestra collaborating with Ninja Tune labelmate Roots Manuva (”All Things To All Men”) and R&B/soul singer Fontella Bass (“All That You Give” and ”Evolution”), who scored a top five hit with “Rescue Me” in the mid-’80s.

Swinscoe, a longtime fan of the legendary Bass, acknowledges that he wasn’t even sure if the singer was still making music or if she had retired from the spotlight. “I found that down on the Internet to Justin Time Records in Montreal, which had released an album by her last year. I contacted her, visited her and her family in St. Louis, and told her of my plans. Once we got into the studio, it was very easy-going.”

Although Bass and Roots Manuva are featured on *Everyday*, much of it is primarily instrumentally driven. To their credit, Swinscoe and crew ably construct emotional soundscapes without the use of many vocals.

According to Swinscoe, *Everyday* was inspired by an original piece of music the orchestra scored for “this old black-and-white silent movie called *Man With the Movie Camera*. We wrote a score for the movie and performed it live at a film festival in Portugal.” The film’s title track is *Everyday*s last cut.

For Ninja Tune label manager Jeff Wave, *Everyday* offers the label an opportunity to reach an ever-growing Cinematic Orchestra audience. “Cinematic Orchestra is the closest we have on the label to a traditional jazz act,” he says. “We’ll definitely be reaching out to an older jazz fan demographic. The inclusion of Fontella Bass on the record should make for instant recognition with people, due to her work with Art Ensemble of Chicago and the fact that the set’s lead single, ‘All That You Give,’ is dedicated to her late husband, Lester Bowie.”

“We expect to do really well with this album,” says Geoff Avoros, sales manager for NY-based indie retailer Other Music. “We’re featuring a combination of live instrumentation and breakbeats creating a more organic sound in electronic music is really appealing to people, who will also be interested in the inclusion of Fontella Bass because they were really into the Art Ensemble reissue.”

Ninja Tune (ninjatune.com), along with New York’s Giant Step (giansstp.com), has ordained a series of street, Internet, and DJ marketing campaigns. “Both company Web sites are offering free music downloads,” Wave notes. A tour is also planned for *Cinematic Orchestra*, which took managed by Tyse of London-based Rhythm & Business and booked by Tom Windish of Billions in Chicago.

Swinscoe recalls, “In the songwriting department, Swinscoe’s (whose songs are published by Chyrsalis Music) enlisted bandmate France, who co-wrote several of *Everyday*s tracks. “His experiences studying jazz theory offered us the opportunity to make those elements stronger,” Swinscoe offers. “This adds more depth to the music.”

“Certain kinds of sounds and melodies—particularly on tracks like ‘All That You Give’ and ‘All Things To All Men’—suggest a kind of somber but uplifting feel,” Swinscoe says. “The harmonies and the strings suggest a more orchestral piece, while also recalling some of Alice Coltrane’s work. The overall warmth comes from using acoustic instruments to give it that older feel.”

The Beat Box Hot Plate

**The Beat Box Hot Plate**

influenced him through the years.

- **Various artists**, Brazilian Beats 3 (Mr. Bongo U.K. album). Brazilian dance/techno Mendes opens this collection with the lush and breezy “A Beira Mar.” From that point on, *BBS* spotlights such samba-worshipping artists as Malena (“Para Ti”), Sea Jorge (“Chega No Sonho”), and Mr. Hernano (“Como Um So”), among others.

- **David Ireland**, California Dreaming (Milan/BMG album). Compiled and mixed by BPM Culture magazine editor-in-chief David Ireland, *California Dreaming* is awash with the kind of just-right warm and welcoming rhythms that you always wish you’d hear in your favorite lounge but rarely do. Fave moments: Coldcut’s “Autumn Leaves,” Stanton’s “Believe,” Rae & Christian Featuring Lisa Shaw’s “Shall Have Known,” and Charles Webster Featuring Tense & Skinny’s “Cyberslam.” Your Heart” (Robbins single). New York-based producer/remixer Anthony Acid and DJ Skrillex have a knack for seamlessly bridging the gap between underground trance and mainstream pop. “On Your Heart,” the pair, together with Cyberslam, places eerie synths and melodic piano tinklings alongside infectious melodies and Tricky Reiss’ longing vocals.

- **Patrick Carpenter**, bassist for Project/Ananda Project mastermind Chris Brann culling 12 tracks from a variety of sources—Marvin Gaye’s “Anger,” Mr. Fingers’ “Clincer,” Antonio Carlos Jobim’s “A Felicidade,” Teena Marie’s “Portuguese Love”—all of which have

**PET SOUNDS: When Neil Tennant of Pet Shop Boys calls me from the terrace of his London flat, he can’t hide the sunshine in his voice. “What can I say,” he asks with a chuckle. “It’s a beautiful day here. The sun is shining, it’s incredibly warm, and I’m sitting in my garden having a cup of tea.”**

On “The Night I Fell in Love,” Pet Shop Boys turn the tables on the macho and homophobic stylings of rappers like Eminem—”the song is about a schoolboy who meets his favorite rap star backstage after a performance, discovers he’s gay, and sleeps with him.”

Tennant explains, “At the time I wrote the song, Eminem was dealing with accusations of homophobia. I thought his defense was interesting. He said he wasn’t homophobic but was only representing an ugly side of America. I thought his music is going to be provocative, then I’ll be provocative right back.” Tennant considers “The Night I Fell in Love” “a rather sweet and innocent song.”

Release closes with the philosophical “You Choose.” Tennant recalls, “In the studio, Chris was wondering, ‘Do you fall in love by chance, or do you choose?’ Ultimately, you put yourself into any given situation.” Consider “You Choose” the polar opposite of “Love Comes Quickly,” which appeared on the duo’s debut, 1986’s *Please.*

Looking further ahead, Tennant says the release tour may be followed in the autumn by the Wotapalava tour, the gay-skewed venture co-organized by Pet Shop Boys that was canceled last summer (Billboard Bul-

**LIVE AND MORE: U.K. chill-out act Zero 7 is on a four-week U.S. tour—complete with an 11-piece band—until May 11. Expect shows to sell out rather quickly, as both *MTV* and MTV2 are airing the *Tennis Elbow* directed video for “Destiny,” the first single from Zero 7’s sublime album, *Simple Things* (Quango/Palm).**

**In Sync:** Ten Music, the music production/licensing house, is now representing DJ/production outfits Masters at Work and Grammy Award-winning Deep Dish for commercial use. Creative director Sarah Sciotto says, “I am honored to represent such legends and to watch the effect their music will have on advertising.”

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BILBOARD APRIL 27, 2002

MICHAEL PAOLETTA
### Club Play

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<td>IF YOU FALL (THE M.A.S. COLLECTIVE MIXES)</td>
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<td>FOR A LIFETIME (ALEX GOLD REMIX)</td>
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<td>THE MORE I LOVE YOU</td>
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### Maxi-Singles Sales

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<td>CAN'T GET YOU OUT OF MY HEAD</td>
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### Billboard Top Electronic Albums

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<td>AWAKENING</td>
<td>Sasha Lazard &amp; Monkeyboy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>DAYS GO BY</td>
<td>Dirty Vegas</td>
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<td></td>
<td>AT NIGHT</td>
<td>Shakedown</td>
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<td>RADIO</td>
<td>Mark Farina (billboard)</td>
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<td>TRENDICATION</td>
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<td>DON'T LET ME GET ME</td>
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<td>Silent Night (aka)</td>
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<td>2002</td>
<td>Come And Get My Love (a deep house single) - Various Artists</td>
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<td>2002</td>
<td>Awaken (a deep house single) - Various Artists</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Days Go By (a deep house single) - Various Artists</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>At Night (a deep house single) - Various Artists</td>
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**Note:** The data in this document includes the top club plays and maxi-singles sales for the week ending April 27, 2002. The Hot Dance Breakouts chart presents new entries and increases in the Hot Dance chart. The Spotify Connect chart highlights songs that are popular on streaming platforms. Billboard's analysis of music sales and streaming is based on data from multiple sources, including Nielsen SoundScan, Carbonite, and other third-party providers.
Talley Takes Career Into Own Hands With Cimarron Release

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

NASHVILLE—One of the advantages of a long, fruitful career as an artist is having the opportunity to revive some of the gems often lost in back catalog. For singer/songwriter James Talley, his forthcoming release Touchstones sheds new light on the depth of the material he recorded for Capitol Records in the 1970s.

Newly recorded in San Antonio with Tommy Detamore (known for his work with the late Doug Sahm), Touchstones is being issued on Talley’s own Cimarron Records. The project finds him reviving some of his vintage country material.

“He sings songs like standards,” says John Larsen, PD/music director at Americana WYYB (the Phoenix) Nashville, which is already playing the Touchstones cut “Richland, Washington.” “It’s in the tradition of the old folk songs. I’m real pleased with the response he’s getting.”

Talley has a gift for bringing character to life in his tunes. From the “Bluesman,” who has a million sad songs, to the miner raised on coal dust and beans in “Give My Love to Marie” to the father who supports his family working in a plutonium plant in the autobiographical “Richland, Washington,” Talley’s songs are populated with people who work hard and love hard. Listeners find themselves easily drawn into the portraits he paints.

“Music is supposed to move people; that’s what it’s for,” says Talley, who has had his songs cut by John Cash and Johnny PayCheck, among others. “For the last 30 years, I’ve been doing different things. But I’ve never tried to write a song because I thought it was something I could use in marketing; never thought about audio when I wrote a song. I just try to describe something that comes from the heart. If radio wants to play it, let them. God bless them.”

STEPPING STONES

An Oklahoma native, Talley’s family moved to Washington and later to New Mexico, where he attended college. After doing graduate work at UCLA, he opted to move to Nashville and pursue a career as a song writer. “I had all these songs that I had written about the Hispanic people that I was working with out there as a welfare caseworker, which is one of the jobs you can get with a degree in fine arts,” he says. “I would take [the songs] around Nashville, and people would say, ‘What the hell is this? People would say they were very well-written songs but didn’t know what they could do with them.’

He chose to take his songs to John Hammond in New York, known for his work with Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, and Aretha Franklin. Hammond helped connect Talley with Jerry Wexler at Atlantic, and he became part of a roster that included Willie Nelson and Troy Seals. “His Nashville operation didn’t work out, and he released Willie from his contract and didn’t renew my contract or Troy’s,” Talley recalls. “So, after the Atlantic situation, I went back to working as a carpenter, which is another thing you can do with a degree in fine arts.”

He wound up remodeling the house owned by Frank Jones, who headed Capitol at the time and became interested in the album Talley had recorded. “He offered me a deal of $5,000,” Talley says. “So, I sold my first album, Got No Bread, No Milk, No Money, But We Sure Got a Lot of Love. The first thing that came out on it was in the Village Voice, and it said it was as good as anything the Band had done. All of a sudden Capitol was running around asking who this guy was. ‘How can this album be any good? We didn’t pay anything for it.’ One thing led to another, and I did four more albums for Capitol.”

Talley signed with a manager, who advised him to leave the label. Then, according to Talley, the manager’s support evaporated. “I reached a point in about 1982 where I was just absolutely flat-ass broke, and my family was suffering,” Talley says. “I had two little boys, and I had to do something. By accident, I wound up going into the real-estate business.

Although he became a successful Nashville realtor, the music bug never left him. “The difference in the real-estate and the record businesses is that in the real-estate business, if you work hard and take care of your customers, you can make a living,” he explains. “In the record business, you can work hard, be talented, and just do everything you are supposed to do, and it’s still a crap shoot.”

BACK IN THE SADDLE

The music biz may be a crap shoot, but it’s a hard game to resist. Talley got back in the fray in the mid-1980s, when Germany’s Bear Family Records released the first of four Talley projects, including a boxed set and a live collection.

Seeking to control his own destiny, Talley launched Cimarron Records in 1999 and has issued two critically acclaimed albums—Woody Guthrie and Songs of My Oklahoma Homeland (Nashville City Blues). He also has his own publishing company, Hard Hits Music, and is preparing to switch affiliation from BMI to ASCAP.

After getting the rights back from Capitol for his earlier recordings, Talley decided to record Touchstones. “I couldn’t afford to release four albums simultaneously,” he says, “but I figured I could pull songs off the albums and give the people a ‘best of’ those four albums, it would set the stage for a future release.”

Talley is ready to record updated versions of the songs, so he enlisted Detamore after listening to Sahm’s last album. The Return of Wayne Douglas, which Detamore produced. “I would’ve been chasing the music business and the feeling,” says Talley, who books and manages himself. “And even though my material is a lot different than Doug’s, I was just really known by Bobby Flores’ fiddle playing and Tommy’s steel guitar playing and the rhythm section.”

Talley enjoyed the process of recording in San Antonio with Detamore and is proud of the results. “I got down there and had a wonderful time, and we had a lot of great moments together,” he says of the record, due April 23. “I was very pleased by the way it came off.”

Cimarron product is distributed through San Francisco-based City Hall Records, and Talley has hired veteran record promoter Bill Wence to promote singles to country and Americana radio.

“Talley is well-done,” and James has a feel you don’t hear much anymore,” Wence says. “The ‘70s, I played piano with Tom T. Hall, and James has that kind of feel. You can understand exactly where he’s coming from. I don’t have to hear a song 15 or 20 times to know what he’s saying.”

DECEMBER 4, 2002

Talley Takes Career Into Own Hands With Cimarron Release

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ode to Billy Joe: Few Nashville pro-
ducers are working as hard these
days or having as much success as
Billy Joe Walker Jr.

Among his most successful recent projects is Travis Tritt’s Academy of Country Music Award-nominated and platinum-selling Down the Road I Go, which he co-produced with Tritt. Walker also produced Tracy Byrd’s Ten Rounds and Mindy McCready’s newly released, eponymous album. Upcoming projects include albums from Tritt, Mark Chesnutt, Brad Martin, Tammy Cochran, and Steve Holy.

Walker has the unusual talent of being able to switch styles between pop-influenced tracks for artists like McCready and hardcore country for such artists as Chesnutt. He credits that to his background as a sought-after session player in Los Angeles, where he performed on albums by artists ranging from Glen Campbell to the Beach Boys and everything from soundtracks to Burt Reynolds movies and The Dukes of Hazzard TV series to commercials for Roman Bread.

After 12 years of working in Los Angeles, Walker relocated to Nashville in 1980 and became successful as a country songwriter. He has had more than 100 songs cut, including “I Wanna Dance With You” and “B-B-Burnin’ Up With Love,” both of which were Eddie Rabbitt hits in the ’80s. He began making a name for himself as a Nashville producer in the ’90s with Bryan White’s three albums, as well as two each from Pam Tillis and Collin Raye.

As his country music career flourished, Walker maintained a successful recording career as a jazz/new-age instrumental artist. He has recorded a total of 10 albums of that genre for MCA, Geffen, and Liberty Records.

To alternate among musical styles, Walker says the trick for him as a producer is to get to know the artists, perhaps play guitar with them, and “learn who that artist is and where they live [musically]. Then I try to wrap the music around their artistry. The hardest part is learning where that artist feels [his or her] music.”

Regardless of the artists or their particular style, Walker says he’s always looking for great songs, although increased competition is making them harder to find. “I keep an open mind for great songs all the time,” he says, particularly “songs that are a little different and really reach someone’s heart and soul. So many writers are writing, … for radio. In my view, that’s not the key to finding great songs. They are chasing yesterday’s hit. I’m trying to find tomorrow’s new hit.”

Walker says that when “the record companies start chasing radio, it’s one person chasing the other, which is very unhealthy. It bogs down the creativity, and people have to work 100% harder. … For our industry to be healthy and stay healthy, it has to stay diversified.”

In fact, Walker says the most significant change he has witnessed in his 22 years in Nashville is a tendency for music makers here to be “looking behind their shoulder to see what the other guy is doing, and I don’t think that’s the answer. I think we have to be more open-minded.”

ON THE ROW: Mosaic Music Publishing, a subsidiary of L.A-based Mosaic Music Group, has opened a Music Row division called Mosaic Nashville. Staff includes ASCAP affiliate Mosaic Nashville, general manager creative services Tim Hunze, director of administration Nancy Tuck, and catalog manager Amy Shepherd. The songwriter roster is Bonnie Baker, Amy Daley, Lee Thomas Miller, Bobby Pinson, and Jimmy Ritchey. Baker’s deal is a co-venture with the Farm.

Nashville-based band Blue Merle has signed with John Van Meter’s New Sheriff Creative Enterprises for management representation.

Bow Break Records has expanded its promotion staff. Joining the company are Midwest director of regional promotion Fritz Kublman, West Coast director of regional promotion Dick Watson, and promotion coordinator Layna Bunt. Kublman previously was national director of promotion at Curb and Giant Records. Watson had been West Coast regional for Giant, Curb, Decca, and Asylum Records. Bunt previously was creative director at Pamplin Music Publishing. Clay Myers joins Stillwater Music Group as head of its creative department. He previously was with the music publishing division of Creative Artists Agency.

www.billboard.com
www.americanradiohistory.com

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<td>Earl Scruggs And Friends</td>
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<td>MARK McGUINN</td>
<td>Mark McGuinn</td>
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<td>GEORGE JONES</td>
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<td>The Best Of Johnny Cash</td>
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<td>Kenny Rogers Love Songs</td>
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<td>RHETT AKINS</td>
<td>Friday Night In Dixie</td>
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**Notes:**
- Each week's Top charts are based on sales information and are compiled by Billboard. The charts reflect sales, not demand.
- The **NUMBER 1** chart is based on sales figures for the previous week.
- The **GREAT EST GAINER** chart is based on sales figures for the previous week.
- The **PACETTER** chart is based on sales figures for the previous week.
- The **HOT SHOT DEBUT** chart is based on sales figures for the previous week.
- The **ARTIST** column lists the name of the artist or group.
- The **Title** column lists the title of the album.
- The **PEAK POSITION** column lists the peak position of the album on the chart.
- The **2 WEEKS AGO** column lists the position of the album on the chart two weeks ago.

**Additional Notes:**
- Billboard Top Country Albums is a weekly chart that ranks the top-selling country albums in the United States.
- The chart is based on sales figures compiled by Nielsen SoundScan, which tracks the sales of music albums and singles globally.
- The charts are published weekly by Billboard, a media company that specializes in music and entertainment news.
- The charts are used to gauge the popularity and sales of country music albums, and they are considered to be a reliable indicator of the industry's health.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>Epic/111015</td>
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<td>Epic/111015</td>
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<td>I'D BETTIN' I'D NEVER LEAVE YOU</td>
<td>Faith Hill</td>
<td>Epic/111015</td>
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</table>
EXCEPTIONAL RIVERA: The tireless Lupillo Rivera, who already has four albums currently on the Billboard Top Latin Albums chart, is preparing to release a couple more discs before year’s end. In a nod to his corrido beginnings, Rivera will put out Los Hermanos Más Buscados at the end of this month. The disc will feature tracks performed by Rivera and his brother Juan Rivera. Both are signed to Sony Discos.

Rivera, who has been nominated six times for this year’s Billboard Latin Music Awards, is also planning to record a mariachi album in October. “I wanted to do it for variety and to prove to some of my critics that I can record with mariachi,” Rivera says. “It’s different, and it’s a little bit more difficult. You have to be more careful with it.”

Rivera says the album will include six mariachi standards and six new tracks. In addition, Rivera and his label are exploring the possibility of a special project that would feature Rivera singing “duets” with recordings of one of his idols, the late Javier Solís. Will that be too many Rivera albums in the market? “In Lupillo’s case, I think people will be bothered if we don’t come out with new albums,” Sony Discos chairman Oscar Llord says. “And I know this goes against all the philosophies of the record business, but there’s no reason why Lupillo can’t be an exception—and so far, he’s been an exception.”

VIVA VIBRA: Suroco, the joint-venture imprint label created by Gustavo Santaolalla and Anibal Kerpel with Universal, has launched a new sub-label called Vibra, dedicated to electronic music. Vibra’s first project will be Bajofondo Tango, a fusion of tango, house, and electronic music featuring various artists. The street date has yet to be determined.

SAN TANDA. says, “The interesting thing is that we already have territories like the U.S. and Latin America—like France, the U.K., and Italy—who want to release the project, so it’s a really nice starting point for us.” There are also plans to release Bajofondo Tango club nights featuring different DJs.

CONFERENCE AND AWARD NEWS: Telemundo has announced its final lineup for the 2002 Billboard Latin Music Awards. Performers will include Celine Dion, Marc Anthony, Thalía, Juan Gabriel, Los Tri-O, Jaki Velasquez, Cristian, A.B. Quintanilla y Los Kumbia Kings, Victor Manuel, Carlos Vives, Olga Tañón, Maná, Alejandra Guzmán, and Lupillo Rivera.

In related news, the TV panel set to take place May 9 as part of the Billboard Latin Music Conference is shaping up to be one of the most interesting and topical of the confab. The panel will discuss TV’s role as an A&R agent. Confirmed panelists include Toni Cruz, creator/producers of Spain’s Operación Triunfo; Hugo Piombi of RGB Entertainment in Argentina (Popstars); and Raul Gil Jr. of Brazil’s Programa Real Gil, as well as actor/singer Carlos Ponce. Versions of Popstars and Operación Triunfo are currently being produced in Brazil, and are plans are underway to produce versions in Mexico and other countries. Conversations are aimed to be held in the U.S. to air its own version of Operación Triunfo.

In other conference news, HBC VP of programming and special projects David Gleason will be a speaker at the Programming to 12-24 panel, scheduled to take place May 7 as part of HBC Radio Day. Other confirmed panelists include Rabanes singer Emilio Raga, HBC regional program director Arnulfo Ramirez, Ritmo Latino president David Mascari, Miami Herald arts editor Kevin Baxter, and Freddie Records marketing director Luis Silva.

IN BRIEF: Warner Music Latina trio Bacias is working on a new album, due in June and produced by Sergio George and Luis Ochoa. The label also recently signed Miami rock band Voltum Cero. … After playing for 15,000 people at Los Angeles’ Sports Arena, Warner’s Bandas Machos collected gold records for sales of 100,000 units of its albums La Balada Del Autor De Prueba De Balas. … On April 5, Colombian Pastor López kicked off an 18-stop East Coast tour that ends May 12 in Queens, N.Y. … Marco Antonio Solís will play May 18 at Mexico City’s 40,000-seat Plaza Mexico.
### LATIN POP AIRPLAY

<table>
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<tr>
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<td>11TH STREET</td>
<td>JOEL NAVARRO</td>
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<td>MANO DE LUZ</td>
<td>ALFREDO DIVIDED</td>
<td>UNIVERSAL/EMI LATIN</td>
<td>ALFREDO DIVIDED</td>
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<td>UNIVERSAL/EMI LATIN</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>VOS Y MAMITA</td>
<td>MC FLY</td>
<td>IMPACT/PROMOTION</td>
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<td>QUE VUELVAS</td>
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<td>UNIVERSAL/EMI LATIN</td>
<td>JIMMY CLAY</td>
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<td>MINIMOLOGY</td>
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<td>ANA GABRIEL</td>
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### TROPICAL/SALSA AIRPLAY

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### REGIONAL MEXICAN AIRPLAY

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<td>QUE ME AMO</td>
<td>CESAR BROWN</td>
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**Notes:**
- This chart is based on data collected from Billboard's Latin Pop airplay chart, which measures the popularity of Latin pop music in the United States.
- The chart ranks songs based on airplay in a given week.
- The chart is updated weekly, and the data is compiled from various radio stations across the country.
- The chart is used by artists, record labels, and music industry professionals to gauge the success of their music.
### Top Latin Albums

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<td><em>Un Amor Incendiado</em></td>
<td>Intocable</td>
<td>Televisa</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>Grandes Éxitos</em></td>
<td>Chayanne</td>
<td>Univision</td>
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<td><em>Historia de Un Álbum Vol. 2</em></td>
<td>Vicente Fernández</td>
<td>Televisa</td>
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<td><em>Las 30 Cambias Mas Pedidas 1</em></td>
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<td>Universal Music</td>
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<td>Alejandro Pires</td>
<td>Universal Music</td>
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<td><em>Libre</em></td>
<td>Marc Anthony</td>
<td>Sony BMG</td>
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<td><em>MTV Unplugged</em></td>
<td>Al Ángel</td>
<td>RCA</td>
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<td>Paulina Rubio</td>
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<td>Varios artistas</td>
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<td>Laura Pausini</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td><em>Himno De Un Idolo Vol. 1</em></td>
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<td><em>El Antemos Y Unico En Vivo</em></td>
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<td>Sony BMG</td>
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<td><em>Historia Musical</em></td>
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<td>24</td>
<td><em>Nuevo Milenio</em></td>
<td>Tito Y La Bandera</td>
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<td><em>Pide Me Todo</em></td>
<td>Pablo Montero</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td><em>Temptation</em></td>
<td>Brenda K. Starr</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td><em>Baladas Racionales</em></td>
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<td><em>MTV Unplugged</em></td>
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<td><em>En El Dije El Corazón</em></td>
<td>Lujo Sebastian</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td><em>Pescado Presente</em></td>
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<td>31</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td><em>Sold Out Vol. 2</em></td>
<td>Lupillo Rivera</td>
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<td>33</td>
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<td><em>M涧Que Grindemo</em></td>
<td>Grupo Modelo</td>
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<td><em>Dejame Entrar</em></td>
<td>Carlos Vives</td>
<td>Sony BMG</td>
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<td><em>El Charro De Pata Negra</em></td>
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<td><em>Himno Musical Romantica</em></td>
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<td>38</td>
<td><em>Fuerza Musical</em></td>
<td>Palomo</td>
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<td>39</td>
<td><em>Recado De Mi Madre</em></td>
<td>Los Originales De San Juan</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td><em>Greatest Hits: 5th Anniversary Edition</em></td>
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<td>Sony BMG</td>
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<td>41</td>
<td><em>Con El Polvo Hasta La Muerte</em></td>
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<td>42</td>
<td><em>Desapreciado</em></td>
<td>Lollipop Rivera</td>
<td>Sony BMG</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td><em>Ahora Y Siempre</em></td>
<td>Liberacion</td>
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<td>44</td>
<td><em>Sold Out Vol. 1</em></td>
<td>Lollipop Rivera</td>
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<td><em>Julio Preciado Y Su Banda Perla Del Pacifico</em></td>
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<td><em>Arriba Mi Sonrisa</em></td>
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### Latin Pop Albums

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Album Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>Grandes Exitos</em></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>Los Mejores Exitos</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><em>Estamos Unidos</em></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><em>Origenes</em></td>
<td>Various artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>Las 100 Clasicas Vol 1</em></td>
<td>Various artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>Solo Para fanaticos</em></td>
<td>Various artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><em>Me Moviendo Las Pumas</em></td>
<td>Various artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><em>Super Grupos Interpretan A Joan Sebastian</em></td>
<td>Various artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><em>Hombre Explotado</em></td>
<td>Various artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><em>Bachatah 2002</em></td>
<td>Various artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td><em>Due El Ritmo No Pare</em></td>
<td>Various artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td><em>Segundas Partes Tambien Son Buenas</em></td>
<td>Various artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td><em>En Vivo El Hombre Y Su Musica</em></td>
<td>Various artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td><em>Azul</em></td>
<td>Various artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td><em>Latina Groove</em></td>
<td>Various artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td><em>En Vivo</em></td>
<td>Various artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td><em>Tribal Am</em></td>
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<td><em>Solo Exitos Underground Only Hits</em></td>
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<td>19</td>
<td><em>Proxima Estacion</em></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
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### Tropical/Salsa Albums

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Album Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>Cumbias Mas Pegadas</em></td>
<td>La Banda El Recodo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>La Diva En Vivo</em></td>
<td>Laura Pausini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><em>Los Tigres Del Norte</em></td>
<td>Cumbias Manda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><em>Todas Las Voces</em></td>
<td>Varios artistas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>Banda El Recodo</em></td>
<td>Banda El Recodo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>Roberto Bitti</em></td>
<td>Roberto Bitti</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><em>La Banda Gris</em></td>
<td>La Banda Gris</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td><em>El Tigres</em></td>
<td>El Tigres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><em>Sin Bandera</em></td>
<td>Sin Bandera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><em>De Los Tucanes De Tijuana</em></td>
<td>De Los Tucanes De Tijuana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td><em>El Charro</em></td>
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<td><em>El Raton</em></td>
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<td><em>En Vivo</em></td>
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<td><em>Mas Exitos</em></td>
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### Regional Mexican Albums

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<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
<td><em>Grandes Exitos</em></td>
<td>Various artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>Estamos Unidos</em></td>
<td>Various artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><em>Origenes</em></td>
<td>Various artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><em>Las 100 Clasicas Vol 1</em></td>
<td>Various artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>Solo Para fanaticos</em></td>
<td>Various artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>Me Moviendo Las Pumas</em></td>
<td>Various artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><em>Super Grupos Interpretan A Joan Sebastian</em></td>
<td>Various artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><em>Hombre Explotado</em></td>
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</tr>
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<td>9</td>
<td><em>Bachatah 2002</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><em>Due El Ritmo No Pare</em></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td><em>Segundas Partes Tambien Son Buenas</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td><em>En Vivo El Hombre Y Su Musica</em></td>
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<td>13</td>
<td><em>Azul</em></td>
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<td><em>14 Grandes Exitos</em></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td><em>Series 32 Gold</em></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
América Latina...

In Argentina: Argentine pop group El Simbolo is determined to repeat the Spanish success of its hits “Levantando las Manos” and “Nuncate Decide” with “Brinca,” the first cut from its new album, Latin Beat. The band has already secured heavy rotation of the song in the popular Spanish version of reality show Big Brother (called Gran Hermano III). This month, it will embark on a promo and concert tour throughout Spain.

MARCELO FERNANDEZ BITAR

In Mexico: Alicia Villarreal received a platinum certification to commemorate sales of more than 175,000 copies in Mexico of her ranchero solo album, Soy Lo Prohibido (Universal). Although her label is planning to promote further singles, Villarreal announced that a new album with her group Limit6 will also go on sale next year. The group is slated to begin recording the as-yet-untitled disc in May, dispelling rumors of an imminent split.

TERESA AGUILERA

In Puerto Rico: Puerto Rican alternative band Circo is in the midst of an international breakthrough. Its album No Todo Lo Que Es Pop Es Buen (Not Everything That’s Pop Is Good) (Head Music) has been released in Argentina by Pop Art Discos, with the single “Historia de un Amor” receiving massive radio play in that country. The band’s hectic touring schedule includes opening for Los Fabulosos Cadillacs for three Mexican dates and for Aleks Syntek for three California dates.

RANDY LUNA

Gonzalez, Kumbia Kings Win Big At TMAs

BY RAMIRO BURR

SAN ANTONIO—Tejano took a traditional turn when Jimmy Gonzalez and Kumbia Kings emerged as the top winners at the annual Tejano Music Awards (TMA) April 13 at the Alamodome.

Gonzalez y Mazz, which pioneered the scene with the integration of synthesizers, took the song of the year award with “Ahora Que Hago Sin Ti” (Now What Do I Do Without You), while Gonzalez, 51, took the male entertainer and male vocalist of the year awards.

“Jay Pérez is the best singer in the world,” Gonzalez said as he accepted the male vocalist accolade. “But today, I get the pride because of you [the fans].” Meanwhile, Kumbia Kings took showband of the year, album of the year (for Shhh!), and Tejano crossover song of the year (for “Shhh!”).

Meanwhile, a finalist in five categories, left the event empty-handed. Most promising band went to Stampede, a Dallas-based classic Tejano group whose lead singer, Alex DeLeon, has soul-inspired vocals similar to Pérez’s. Shelly Larens, a perennial runner-up to the late singer Selena, finally swept the female vocalist and entertainer of the year honors. Complementing the Tejano awards’ traditional tilt was Los Garcia Brothers, who won best conjunto album of the year.

Among the special awards that were given was the Lifetime Achievement Award, presented to Isidro Lopez by Texas governor Rick Perry. Lopez is the Bishop, Texas-born, Corpus Christi-based pioneer who in 1954 created the fork in the road that led to the birth of modern Tejano music.

TMA president Robert Arellano declared the TMA Fan Fair, held Friday, April 12 at Sunset Station, “a great success,” with attendance estimated at 25,000.

NEW CLASSICS: When Curtis Stigers released his first jazz album, 2001’s Baby Plays Around (Concord), it seemed that the one-time blue-eyed soul, pop singer/songwriter/saxophonist had completely reinvented himself. However, history bears out that Stigers’ jazz yen is nothing new: He was originally discovered by Arista Records while fronting a jazz trio more than a decade ago.

Stigers continues his renewed affiliation with jazz and standards on Secret Heart (Concord, April 23), a project that finds him fronting a quartet featuring pianist Larry Goldings, bassist John Clayton, and drummer John Hamilton. (Pianist Anthony Wilson and trumpeter Gilbert Castelanos are guest soloists on several tracks.) But rather than defining himself by covering well-trodden material, Stigers has taken a more adventurous route, tackling a few classic tunes (notably Henry Mancini and Johnny Mercer’s “Days of Wine and Roses,” which features a sublime Castelanos solo) but focusing on newer material by, among others, roots rocker Steve Earle, 38-something songwriter Ron Sexsmith, and Randy Newman.

“The hardest thing is to find modern tunes that can be done up tempo and can swing without sounding awkward,” Stigers says. “Ballads can transcend styles very easily, but you can’t swing a midtempo rock or pop song without sounding phony. Older country songs work better, because they are written with a certain approach similar to what Cole Porter would have done, in terms of how the verses, choruses, and bridges fit together.”

For that reason, Stigers says, “Hometown Blues”—a modern country song which, in Earle’s original form, featured scuffy acoustic guitars and mandolin—works well in a jazz setting. “Earle’s version is a real hard country song—something like Doc Watson would do—but it is very old-fashioned in the way it is written, like something Irving Berlin would have done but with edgier lyrics” says Stigers, who describes his own musical approach as being “rather traditional. I see my strength as a singer as being someone who sounds good in front of traditional instrumentation, but that is not the reason to limit the material to songs that people generally hear in this style.”

Stigers also lends his own songwriting talents to Secret Heart, including a semi-autobiographical collaboration with Goldings, “How Could a Man Take Such a Fall.” “That one was sort of tongue-in-cheek, looking over my life and career and slightly feeling sorry for myself but winking my eye at the situation as well,” the singer explains. “I was successful playing pop music. I performed on The Tonight Show, and I could’ve continued as a pop star. Instead, I went back to playing the music I love, which is much more adventurous. It is a little bit less of a profile. Now I get to play what is in my heart and spend more time with my wife and daughter.”

NOTEWORTHY: The Charles Mingus Big Band’s Tonight At Noon . . . Three Or Four Shades of Love (Dreyfus, released April 9) contains 10 of the late bassist’s compositions, tied together by a common theme of love. One piece, the Sy Johnson arranged “Love’s Fury,” was previously unrecorded. Elvis Costello penned new lyrics for Mingus’ Irresistible Lady, on which he sings. The Mingus Big Band, which holds court each Thursday night at New York club Fez, is now entering its second decade as an ongoing ensemble.

Two generations come together on The Rare Delight of You, a collaborative effort from guitarist John Pizzarelli and pianist George Shearing (Telarc, released April 23), which features his legendary brother, who backed by Shearing’s quintet—vibraphonist Ted Pitz, guitar Reg Schwager, bassist Neil Swanson, and drummer Jackie MacKlere.

A guitarist plus mainstream on the New York jazz scene, bassist Scott Colley releases his second date for Palmetto, Initial Wisdom, April 23.

Drummer Steve Smith’s Vital Information (Smith, guitarist Frank Gambale, keyboardist Tom Coster, and bassist Baron Brown) explores the sounds of late ’60s and early ’70s fusion on Show ‘Em Where You Live (Tone Poet, released April 9). According to Smith, many of the tracks were intentionally composed with an ear toward a specific influence, such as “Soul Principal” (Headhunters-era Herbie Hancock’s “The Blackhawk” (Lee Morgan), and “Awaken the Hoodoo” (Tony Williams’ Lifetime). Another drummer who has worked in both the jazz and rock worlds, Bill Bruford, sees the relationship of his two worlds ensembles’ double-disc, Foot-In-Loose and Fancy Free (Discipline), on April 23—a date that also sees the releases of a companion DVD, Foot-In-Loose in NYC, which includes several bonus tracks, backstage interviews and footage, and surround sound.
Despite Biz Woes, Cherokee Still Strong

Hollywood Studios Sees More Surround Sound Work, Group Recording

BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH
NEW YORK—The action at Cherokee Studios, the Hollywood, Calif., mainstay owned and operated by brothers Bruce, Dee, and Joe Robb, is indicative of the humming Los Angeles recording business. With two of its five rooms recently renovated and updated, the facility is well-equipped to handle the escalation of two phenomena: a resurgence of bands tracking live as a concept, and surround mixing for DVD.

Among the renovations at Cherokee is the recently completed, George Augspurger-designed Studio 2, a 5.1-channel recording facility. To Joe, who has worked with artists including Steven Cutting Chapman, Point of Grace, and Michael Crawford, “we’re all blown away by it. There was no decision to make; it was obvious.” Paragon Studios will be only one aspect of a 22,000-square-foot building, all of which was designed by the Russ Berger Design Group. Paragano says that such related companies and individuals as labels and producers will move in, creating a media-focused community, which should cultivate more business at the studios. With multichannel audio’s proliferation from film to music, broadcast, and games, surround-mixing capability is increasingly important. “I know the general feeling in Nashville is that everyone is excited to get on the console,” Paragano says. “It will be the first [one in Nashville], and there’s already people calling me for booking. I’m excited.”

“Although this is a broadcast event,” Pringle says of NAB, “we’ve had [recording] studio owners, especially from the West Coast, coming to take a look at it. Everyone has heard a lot about it because of the presentations that have been done explaining many of the principles and the improvements in the audio design and the new automation system. But of course, there’s nothing that beats actually sitting down and getting to use it for yourself. I’m pleased to say everybody’s thrilled by it. It’s something that I’m glad we were able to achieve with it. It’s exceeding expectations.”

In the gambling mecca of Las Vegas and around the world, many studio owners are betting that surround sound capability will provide an advantage in the competitive commercial recording business. “I think [10 sales] is wonderful news for us,” Pringle says, “and it’s great for them to have something new and exciting to think about that helps address their clients’ needs.”
Sigman Brings His Father Carl’s Catalog Back To Life

BY JIM BESSMAN
NEW YORK—Michael Sigman’s departure in January from his longtime perch as president/CEO of L.A. Weekly has returned him to the music business in a big way. But Sigman, who once edited the now-defunct trade paper Record World, is now into a different sort of music publishing.

As president of Majorsons (ASCAP), Sigman is lovingly reactivating the catalog of his late father, Carl Sigman. The company owns the Sigman share of many of the composer/lyricist’s 800-plus copyrights, including such oft-recorded standards as “What Now My Love,” “It’s All in the Game,” “Enjoy Yourself,” “(Where Do I Begin) Love Story,” “Pennsylvania 6-5000,” and “Crazy He Calls Me” and is taking back copyrights to other Sigman songs like “Ebb Tide” as their renewals become due.

RIPE FOR REINTRODUCTION
“I’ve long wanted to re-activate the company, especially over the past year since my dad’s death,” says Sigman, whose father was 91 when he died in September 2000. “Majorsons was largely just a collection house, but once I had some free time, I started exploring the current deals we had, along with the level of performances, film, TV spots, covers, etc., for the important songs. I found that while there was pretty good exposure for songs like ‘Love Story,’ ‘It’s All in the Game,’ and, surprisingly, ‘Buona Sera’—which is a hit for every East European rock band—many of the standards were clearly in need of a push. In addition, there are a bunch of songs that were hits once or twice, then faded, and could be ripe for re-introduction.”

To rejuvenate Majorsons, Los Angeles-based Sigman is looking at several options. “My goal is to find the best partner to work the songs with—since I probably know the catalog better and more passionately than anyone and have my share of contacts,” he says. “Second, I’m putting together a four-disc boxed set of the signature versions of the most important songs, along with some lesser-known but wonderful recordings. So for ‘Enjoy Yourself,’ we’ll have not only Guy Lombardo but also the Specials. For ‘It’s All in the Game,’ we’ll have Van Morrison in addition to Tommy Edwards. For ‘What Now, My Love,’ not only do we have Sonny & Cher but also Mitch Ryder. And third, I’m contacting places like the Smithsonian, Reader’s Digest, and other institutional entities which provide exposure for classic Americans.”

Sigman is also contacting other owners or heirs of comparable “legacy” song catalog.

“I want to build alliances or coalitions with other people who are in similar situations to me,” he says, citing two whom he’s already approached. “Will Bratton, who is married to Doc Pomus’ daughter, represents Pomusongs, and Molly Hyman, the daughter of Bob Russell—who collaborated with Dad on ‘Crazy He Calls Me’ and ‘Dance, Ballerina, Dance,’ and also wrote ‘Do You Hear What You Hear From Me?’ with Duke Ellington and ‘He Ain’t Heavy, He’s My Brother’—represents Harrison Music.

“The music business is in such a state that in comparison with the record business, but the publishing business is a place for opportunity, and I think that having a relationship with other legacy catalogs makes for a whole greater than the sum of its parts,” Sigman continues. “And there are lots of people out there [involved in] the great American songbook who need help—because of the many years that have gone by, others with expertise in catalog who have become available in the record business.

Sigman himself, of course, has only recently become available. ‘I can’t tell you how much love I bring back into the business—and having a connection with my dad,’ he says. ‘It’s a cliché, but he lives on in his songs. People don’t know about him, because he shunned publicity and barely left the house except to play golf—which he did until the end. So there’s very little awareness but the public that he left know his songs.’

A father-son song Sigman sentimentally notes is “Bongo, Bongo, Bongo (Civilization),” which his father co-wrote with Bob Hilliard for the 1947 Broadway musical Angel in the Wings and was memorably recorded by Louis Prima & His Orchestra.

‘Elaine Stritch got her first big break singing it in the show,’ Sigman says of the novelty number. ‘And I recently took my mom—the same guy who wrote ’Pennsylvania 6-5000’ also wrote ’Ebb Tide,’ ‘Love Story,’ and ’Dance, Ballerina, Dance.’ But they know his songs.”

The other song Sigman sentimentally notes is “From Now On,” a song that won a $95 million annual base fee and more, as well as the program rights from singer/storage to a $98.1 million base fee. Pictured at the signing, from left, are BMI senior VP of licensing John Shaker, Post-Newsweek Stations executive/TMCL co-chair Catherine Niere, and Tribune Co. executive/TMCL co-chair Chuck Sennett.

Words & Music

PRESENTER GALDSTON: Grammy-Award nominated songwriter Phil Galdston has been elected president of the New York chapter of the Recording Academy, succeeding musician/Broadway conductor Beth Ravin, for whom he served as VP.

“In this very difficult time for songwriters and the music business in general, the academy can play a unique role in representing its members,” says Galdston, who acknowledges that his voluntary work on behalf of the organization will now be even more time-consuming. Yet the Sony-ATV Music Publishing-administered Kazoom Music (ASCAP) writer—who has also been elected to the ASCAP board of review—feels that his academic activities augment his songwriting.

“I find that it brings a balance in my life by making it possible to give something back to the community while pursuing my life’s work in songwriting,” Galdston says. “And it actually improves both: It reminds me of the real world and permits me to come out of the very fulfilling fantasy world of writing songs.”

Galdston, incidentally, co-wrote songs on two Grammy-nominated albums from this year: the Regina Belle and Glenn Jones duet “From Now On” from This Is Regina and “Nobody” from Miki Howard’s Three Wishes. More recently, he co-wrote “A Brighter Day” for Nick Lachey’s (98*) solo album; all three tunes were collaborations with Barry Eastmond and Gordon Chambers.

TUNES OF GLORY: Witnessing the 10,000th bagpipe and drummers who celebrated Tartan Day by marching up Sixth Avenue to Central Park April 6 was overwhelming.

Hailing from Aberdeen, Scotland, to Amarillo, Texas, scores of marching bands followed the “Tunes of Glory” parade leader Sean Connery in what was likely the biggest-ever bagpipe parade to commemorate the Scottish day of independence, to the martial strains of “Scotland the Brave” and other hearty Highland bagpipe fare.

But until recently, Scottish bagpipe music had been an oral tradition. “Music notation was a long time coming to the Highlands, and even today, many good players do not read or are very poor readers,” says Russ Spaulding, who owns Bagpipes Unlimited in Fort Oglethorpe, Ga. The company is involved in music publishing and teaching and recently put out The Spaulding Collection—Something Old, Something New. All bagpipe music is in book form called ‘Collections,’ and mine is a collection of tunes I’ve written and arranged along with other composers who submitted tunes.”

Among Spaulding’s originals is “Signal Mountain Sunrise,” which depicts a break from retreat with a beautiful view of Chattanoogas. Pipe major of the City of Chattanooga Pipe Band, Spaulding previously authored Highlands pipe instrumentals The Piper’s Primer.

“I published my two books with the help of my son who is in the printing business, and I’ve done books for others,” Spaulding says. “But he’s done work for anyone to make any money at publishing, and I’m thinking about discontinuing that part of what I do. A big run for a bagpipe music book is about 3,000 copies. My first book was a 2,500 run, and I still have books to sell. The second one was 1,000, and I am nearly out of that one.

“Not to worry though, Spaulding says he’ll continue to write and arrange music for the Highlands pipes.

NEW DAY FOR NOVA: Deston Songs, the New York publishing company formed by songwriter/producer Desmond Child, Winston Simone, and David Simone, has signed Aldo Nova to an exclusive long-term publishing deal.

The multimillion Nova co-wrote and co-produced Celine Dion’s current worldwide hit and album title track “A New Day Has Come!” and also has current songs with French superstar Garou, as well as Grammy-winning Latin act La Ley.
IT'S HAPPENING IN BARCELONA

BY TERRY BERNE

BARCELONA—The music business in Spain has a huge homegrown hit on its hands, thanks to the power of television and a CD series from an indie label in this creativity-driven city.

Operación Triunfo (Operation Triumphant), a youth-oriented TV show featuring a competition among some two dozen young, would-be pop singers, has broken all audience records every Monday since last autumn. The show has launched its telegenic and talented stars on million-selling recording careers via a series of CDs that collectively have sold an unprecedented 3.5 million copies, according to Ricardo Campoy, director of Vale Music, the Barcelona-based indie that released them.

An incredible 17 of the top 50 spots on the official AFP-VE domestic sales chart for the week of Feb. 25 were held by Operación Triunfo discs, with several of those multi-platinum (100,000 units) and one, the key album, having sold more than 1.2 million copies.

Ever since the world discovered modern Barcelona during the 1992 Olympics, the city has attracted hip, design-conscious tourists to its tree-lined boulevards, beaches and energetic, dance-driven night spots.

SONAR, the city's annual electronic-music festival, each June attracts an estimated 80,000 spectators to its diurnal chill-outs and nocturnal raves. The festival, featuring nearly 200 live events split between concerts and DJ sessions, has undoubtedly helped sustain the city's cutting-edge reputation—even if much of the post-Olympic luster...Continued on page EQ-3

BILLBOARD APRIL 27, 2002

BY GORDON MASSON

LONDON—The ease with which Europe has adopted and adapted to the new euro currency has astounded many people living in the multicultural continent. And those left out of the European monetary union now seem more eager to join the party.

The introduction of the euro for everyday use on Jan. 1 had been preceded by the biggest peace-time security operation in history, with armored vehicles across the continent having delivered in excess of $600 billion worth of the new notes and coins to banks and businesses. The cross-border currency also underpins centuries of tradition, as national currencties such as the French franc, as well as the German mark, Italian lira and Spanish peseta, to name but a few, were gradually phased out.

Twelve member states of the European Union have so far adopted the euro: Belgium, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal and Finland. That means that all but Britain, Denmark and Sweden failed to enter the monetary union from Day One, but businesses in those countries are already putting pressure on their respective governments to change all that.

SITTING ON A FENCE

Now occupying the slot as the world's third-biggest music market, the U.K. has yet to decide on whether it will adopt the euro. The British government has pledged to hold a national referendum on the issue. But, to judge by executives in the music industry, it would appear that businesses are already keen to embrace the idea. “Personally, I see the U.K. becoming part of the single currency as inevitable, and I would welcome it, as being part of the euro will make trading easier and certainly moving between countries much easier,” says Martin Mills, founder and chairman of London-based indie Beggars Group.

Ian Reay, head of finance at Sanctuary Group's records division, agrees. “We would welcome the U.K. joining the single currency,” says Reay. “Going forward, if the U.K. signs up to the euro, that would make things much easier, because we can just invoice everything in euros, rather than in pounds and euros, as we are having to do now.”

Asked by Billboard about the impact of the euro on their businesses, none of the major record companies chose to comment.

NO COMPLICATIONS

As expected, businesses in countries that have become part of the single currency are reaping the benefits from not having to pay exchange rates to transfer “foreign” funds into local denominations. But that too is having a positive effect outside the euro signatories.

“I don’t really think [the euro’s introduction] has had any complicating effect at all,” says Mills. “From our point of view, in terms of how we trade overseas, we are now invariably trading in sterling. Obviously, whether people pay us in euros or francs or kronen doesn’t make any difference; because we do our business in sterling and we translate it into sterling.”

As with many companies, Sanctuary prepared for E-day, as it became known, by setting up a euro bank account. “From our point of view at the records division of Sanctuary, we were quite well geared up for it,” says Reay. “We actually opened a euro account with our bank two years ago—we hold sterling, euro and dollar accounts now—and we’ve been trading in euros with many of our European customers for more than a year without problem.”

MULTI-CURRENCY BIZ

‘Impaw Sto, MD of Playground Music Scandinavia, says the introduction of the euro may “simplify the...Continued on page EQ-4
ONE SUBJECT
EUROPE CAN
AGREE ON. MUSIC.

SARAH CONNOR
From Sarah with Love
The #1 single taken from the top 10 European album Green Eyed Soul (Platinum/Germany, Gold/Switzerland and Austria). Single and album now charting in Holland, Belgium, Portugal, Finland, Greece. European promo trip continues in April/May.

LOVE UNITED
Live For Love United
From the forthcoming World Cup album, Live for Love United was recorded by French superstar Pascal Obispo and features World Music legend Youssou N'Dour and some of the biggest footballing stars competing in the World Cup. "Live For Love United" is an uplifting anthem, and is at radio throughout Europe in April 2002. World Cup album releasing from May 7.

a1
Caught In The Middle
Off one million sales for The A-List, Eric and MTV award winners a1 are back with their new single "Caught in the Middle" which entered at #2 in the UK (Top 3 airplay). Top 10 across Scandinavia, and now launching across the rest of Europe. New album in May. a1 is one of the most talented pop acts to come out of the UK in years!

BOMFUNK MC'S
Live Your Life
After selling more than 3 million units in Europe, Finland's Bomfunk MC's return with a superb radio-friendly new single "Live Your Life", from the new album Burnin' Sneakers releasing from March 4. Already a big hit in Scandinavia, the "Live Your Life" is at radio throughout Europe now!

PEACHES
Set It Off
Irrepressible punk fuelled electro dance track with edgy vocals, Berlin-based Peaches is an underground superstar set to take Europe by storm this summer. "Set It Off" is released throughout Europe in May. One listen will set you off!

SONY MUSIC EUROPE.

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www.americanradiohistory.com
began to wane in the late '90s as a battered economy threatened to undermine both the city's image and its growth.

This was especially true for the entertainment industry. Due to such factors as the increasing importance of private television (headquartered in Madrid) and cheaper competition in a variety of sectors, the late '90s saw the failure of independent record labels and advertising companies here and a massive migration of music and media-related businesses from Barcelona to the Spanish capital.

Operación Triunfo may change all that, as every business sector remotely related to music and its creation, production, marketing, promotion and publishing is affected.

"I sincerely believe that Barcelona is once again becoming the musical center of Spain," says Julio Guin, president of music publisher Ediciones Musicales Clipper's.

FAILED REGIONAL POLICY

Music publisher Teresa Alfonso of Teledysk agrees that the program's success will have lasting influence on Barcelona's music scene, despite what she sees as a complete failure of Catalunya's regional cultural policy in recent years—which heavily favored rock, sung in Catalan, ignoring other styles and genres of music. The policy resulted in few concrete gains for the industry, says Alfonso. Both publishers contributed material to the Operación Triunfo CDs and performances.

Zonka Spain this month is set to release the debut album from Chenoa, one of the performers launched to stardom via Operación Triunfo, a sign from one label that the show's stars have staying-power. "Our strategy for domestic repertoire is to sign and market artists with the potential for long careers and who may appeal to Latin and international audiences," says Andrés Ochaita, MD of Zonka Records Spain. "They must have great songs and great live performances." Chenoa shares the nascent Zonka Spain roster with multi-instrumentalist and singer Vanessa, pop-Latin singer and dancer Alsina and the group Las Hijas del Sol, whose debut album, Pasaporte Mundial, has yielded three top-10 singles.

While Barcelona and its environs have been home to Spain's hottest rock/pop acts—million-selling Jarabe de Palo and Estopa—local independent talent faces a lack of music-industry infrastructure at all levels.

Concert Promotion

For most of the past decade, Spain's lucrative dance-compilation market has dominated the discs and the group Las Hijas del Sol, whose debut album, Pasaporte Mundial, has yielded three top-10 singles.

While Barcelona and its environs have been home to Spain's hottest rock/pop acts—million-selling Jarabe de Palo and Estopa—local independent talent faces a lack of music-industry infrastructure at all levels. Reyes Prieto, president of DIBA, an association representing 18 local independent labels, feels the situation has worsened in the last five years. "The independent promotional circuit remains undeveloped," she explains, "and the once-adventurous municipal radio stations are now as formulaic as the national commercial stations and nearly as difficult to get airplay on. Distribution is the same story. What's happened is that two or three of the strongest labels have become even stronger, and labels that tried to cover a broad spectrum of music disappeared, leaving those that specialized in one area. Any indie success is immediately absorbed by the mainstream." Jordi Oliveras, director of the independent concert promoter Indigé, which manages one of Barcelona's principal public cultural venues, La Bascula, and publishes Exit Músic, a monthly music magazine, feels that, despite the problems, Barcelona is at a peak creatively. Oliveras cites acts such as vanguard pop groups Sidotón and El Diablo Mariachi; electronica/ambient bands Dos Minguet and Ojos de Brujo; and pop-rockers Balago at the forefront of the local scene.

World-class studio

For some years now, the city has also been home to a vital flamenco scene, with significant new voices such as Ginesa Ortega, Mayte Martin, Disquende and Miguel Poveda. La Bascula offers a concert venue, rehearsal space and recording studio to local acts and organizes two annual festivals featuring local artists.

The local recording industry has gotten a boost with the founding of the world-class residential recording studio Music Lam, launched three years ago in the cost-like site an hour north of Barcelona, where popular Catalan artists such as Manolo Garcia and Jarabe de Palo recorded their last albums and international acts as diverse as Mariah Carey and Italian rapper Jovanotti have worked. The recent appearance of indie-friendly Catalunya Cultura Radio has also been a boost for local artists.

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relations between record companies in various countries, and, in the longer term, lead to a more uniform price structure for records. Based in Malmö, Sweden, Playground acts as a record company for various international licensing partners and subsequently can be characterized as a multi-currency business. "One negative aspect [with Sweden not having adopted the euro] is the potential risk of parallel imports," observes Sjö."If lower-priced records flow into Sweden, it can seriously disrupt the work and costly marketing plans of the local companies."

Another downside, which has yet to be properly quantified, is traders taking advantage of early confusion about the euro to bump up prices. Beggars Group’s Mills observes, “I think there is definitely a short-term inflationary effect, and you’ll definitely see prices being rounded up, but I’m sure that will be short-term.”

EXCHANGE RATE FLUX

One obvious drawback is the fluctuating exchange rate affecting those businesses based in countries outside of the euro. Explains Reay, “Because deals tend to be based on the local currency, which is now all euro, we are at an exchange risk, because the pound is not linked to the euro.” He continues, “With a business where you send an invoice for £100,000, you get €100,000 back in, and there is no exchange risk. What happens when we bill for 100,000 euros is that when [the customer] pays two months later, we still get 100,000 euros in, but the euro against the pound does move, so that’s where the exchange risk lies.”

Noting that a fluctuating exchange rate is nothing new, Reay adds, “It was the same with the franco and the deutschemark, etc. From our point of view, we do not manufacture in Europe yet, so we pay everyone in pounds, but we get money back in euros. So, if the euro against the pound drops, then we obviously get less money. We’re not getting as many exchange-rate changes, because, instead of payments coming in via all sorts of currencies, they now all arrive in euros.”

NO PROBLEM FOR RETAIL

Retailers polled by Billboard say the introduction of the euro has posed no serious problems. One comments, “In the early days and weeks, the only problem had been customers paying in [the old currency] and us having to provide their change in euros. But we quickly became accustomed to that, and people actually seemed to like the novelty of those transactions.”

Richard Ogden, of Richard Ogden Management, believes “It makes life much easier to the extent that it’s more easy to understand without spending a lot of time thinking about what your money is worth.” Mills agrees, joking, “Now, I know what money means in Italy and Spain after all these years.”

But Ogden, whose biggest act is Finland’s Bomfunk MCs, can see at least one potential iceberg on the horizon. “We have not yet had time to look at overseas accountings from Sweden to Finland and work out if the euro transition is correct. So it’s a bit early to ask about that. We’re going to have to get our royalty statements and go back into them and see if anyone is screwed up,” he says.

Remembering Britain’s 1971 currency switch to decimalization, Ogden says, “The great theory about when we switched to decimal in the U.K. was that everything went up in price by 25%. Record companies don’t do that, but the royalty payments might go down by whatever percent, but it’s too early to tell if anyone is up to those kinds of games.”

TRANSPARENT MOVE

Dominic McGonigal, director of strategy and business development at U.K., collecting society Phonographic Performance Ltd., confesses, “The euro has been of limited benefit to us to date, as the majority of our business is conducted in sterling.” But, looking forward, he says it can only help improve relationships between PPL and its counterparts in other countries. “It will help in the general move to greater transparency among collecting societies, as the euro will make it easier for rightsholders to compare performance across Europe in terms of revenues and costs,” he says.

So, despite serious misgivings about the transition to the euro by skeptics—and acres of column inches predicting chaos on Jan. 1—the horror stories have failed to materialize. “I don’t see why there should be or why there would be problems now,” says Mills. “I’m sure that, before too long, people will be wanting us to trade with them in euros rather than in sterling, but, to me, that’s just part of the inevitability of us moving into the system, as well.”

Sanctuary’s Reay concludes, “We have an accounting system that can cope with multi-currency; if we didn’t, that would be more of a problem. From an administration and an accounting point of view, there are very few, if any, cons at all to the euro. It’s all pros from our point of view.”
Look out for records by

Fey • Sony
Jim Brickman • Windham Hill/BMG
Marta Sanchez • Muxxic
Miro • Columbia
Plus One • 143/Atlantic
Smash!! • Universal

Great Songs!
Great Productions!
Big Hits!
FRANCE
Continued from page EQ-3

spring in Europe. His debut single, "So I Begin," was a border-crossing success last summer. Sony's 19-year-old pop singer Lorée, who sold 700,000 copies of her single "Près de Moi" in France, is releasing an English version, "By My Side," in May. And Cam, formerly known as DJ Cam, is preparing the album Southside for a June release.

Virgin world-music artist Mao Chao contributed to the label's strong year, with sales reaching 2.5 million copies worldwide for the artist's album Proxima Estacion... Esperanza since its release in mid 2001.

CHARLIE'S TRUTH
Yann Tiersen's soundtrack to Le Fabuleux Destin d'Amélie Poulain, which went double-platinum in France, is another recent success for Virgin. The soundtrack sold 50,000 copies in the U.S. and 1.1 million worldwide, the label reports, and director of international Thierry Jacquet says a South American release is expected. Virgin's affiliates are also looking to release Tiersen's solo album, Labirinte, before the end of the year, in all markets where the soundtrack was released. Labirinte, which includes instrumentals and songs in French and English, has sold 150,000 copies in France since its release last April.

At 84, Bossa nova singer Henri Salvador has sold 1.2 million copies in France of his album Chanteur Avec Voix on Virgin since its release last October. An international version, Room With A View, was released in the U.K. and U.S. in February with tracks in English, Italian, Portuguese and French. International sales have topped 200,000 units.

An upcoming U.S. film, The Truth About Charlie, set for July release, will feature French artists, including Mao Chao, Les Negres Verres and the rap group Siatan Supa Crew, which released its second album, X Raisons, in October. The album from Siatan Supa Crew has also gained a U.K. release.

For spring, BMG France superstar Patrick Bruel is set to release an as-yet-unitled album of traditional French songs of the '30s and '40s, recognized by audiences worldwide. He duets on the album with such renowned French artists as Charles Aznavour, Jean-Jacques Goldman, Johnny Hallyday and Laurent Voulzy and will launch the project with a prime-time TV special on TFI.

RETAIL-Campaign BENEFIT
Other international priorities ahead for BMG France include Rubin Stein's Wunderbar Dre, which has benefited from an FNAC retail campaign since its release in March; Superman Lover's new single, "Harle Suf," and forthcoming June album, which follows the international success of their spring hit "Starlight"; and a June album from Funk for Sale, whose members have promoted their new video with noted producer Christophe Navar and graphic designer Pierre Ficheleux.

BMG France also is working on a summer antology of internationally acclaimed Cape Verdian singer Cesaria Evora. Zomba Records is increasingly developing local repertoire through its international affiliates. In France, the company is giving priority attention this spring and summer to the debut album from 12-year-old singer Priscilla, whose single, "Quand Je ferme les Yeux," has topped 300,000 in sales; the group Bé Nahar, whose new single, "Ya Une Fille Qui Habite Chez Moi," coincides with a spring/summer tour, adult-pop radio play and a TV campaign; the female R&B/hip-hop duo ADM, who bow their Latin-flavored debut single, "Salma," in early June, with videos in English and French, and a series of compilations, such as the new house-music set Brûlée Rouge 2, featuring DJ David Duriez, and an electronics set marketed via a deal with Perrin.

FRENCH TOUCH
Among France's many vital independent labels, Ya Basta! has enjoyed a striking success story with Gotan Project, a distinctive mix of Argentinian electro-world music, the likes of which have never been heard before, declares label manager Arnaud Boivin. Since October, the group's album La Revancha del Tango has sold 50,000 copies in France with distribution on Universal, and 200,000 copies through Europe, including 43,000 in Italy and 20,000 in Germany. U.S. and Japanese releases are expected.

Despite the famed "French touch," Boivin has the impression that France's biggest exports are acts that don't sound particularly French. "We see that, with all the electronica projects that have been, the projects that work don't necessarily have a French sound," he says. "Gotan Project is French, but it could be English, it could be from anywhere."

Wagram Music is another independent company with notable domestic and international successes. One of the label's most impressive releases is the electro-world compilation Hotel Coste, whose fourth volume was released in France and abroad in November. Distributed by Wagram for the label Pochetin, the compilation has sold 110,000 internationally, including 25,000 in the U.S.

A similar compilation success is George V Records' Buddha Bar series, which is distributed by Wagram through international partners. Buddha Bar IV has sold 30,000 copies in France and 65,000 units in international markets.

HOTEL & BAR
For France's record companies, the relative ease of exporting music to the world is no fluke, in the view of executives such as Virgin's Thierry Jacquet. While noting the earlier international success of such acts as Les Negres Verres and Mao Negra, Jacquet points out that export sales have been increasing since the late '90s. Given the particular strength of French labels in electronica and world music, future export success seems certain.

"This is going to continue," he says. "Now, the record companies elsewhere really listen to what they are sent and realize that they have to work French, European and Latin music. There is more than just English and American music."
TOUS LES TALENTS DU MONDE

Mylène Farmer: Multi-million selling French artist, her 1st "Best of" includes "Les Mots" a duet with Seal.

Alizée: "Gourmandises" her debut album includes the hit single "Moi...Lolita" top 5 all over Europe.

Dax Riders: The perfect mix between electronic music, funk of the early years and hip-hop. The album "Backintown" released worldwide. On tour this summer.

Femi Kuti: New album "Fight to win" worldwide release; King of Afro beat, Son of Fela Anikulapo Kuti, topped US World Radio airplay charts.

Modjo: Worldwide release, 1st French group to Top UK charts directly at release; Best dance album at the French "Victoires de la Musique 2002" (French Grammys).

One-t: He is 13, he is a Dj, this is his debut album and he’s going to F... the French touch.

Rachid Taha: Synchronised in Ridley Scott's new movie Black Hawk Down, on world tour last year.

Alessandro Safina: Combining the powerful singing style of opera with the rythmic pulse of pop, Safina with his debut album "Insieme a te" is enjoying a worldwide success.

Souad Massi: Young Algerian folk artist nominated by BBC at the World Music Awards as best newcomer.

Also: Roméo & Juliette (musical), Les 10 Commandements (musical), Bustafunk, Paris Combo, Amina, Georgian legends, Khaled, Vanessa Paradis...

Also coming soon: Era 3, Female Music, Hashem, Sakis Rouvas...
COPING AND PRIVACY

The rise of Spain Privacy is the theme of the new
series this year. The first episode, "The
Home," will air on October 19th. In the
season, Ally and her family will face a
difficult situation when they must
choose between their personal lives
and their professional responsibilities.

Barcelona boasts one of the most
important cities in Spain. The city is
centered around the Gothic Quarter and
the"Casa Batlló." It is also home to
FC Barcelona, one of the world's
most successful football clubs.

The city is known for its vibrant
cultural scene, which includes
the"Museu de Arte Contemporani de
Barcelona," the"Fundació Joan Miró,"
and the"Teatre Goya."

In conclusion, Barcelona is an
important city in Spain and it offers
tremendous opportunities for
exploration and discovery.

Elle Weinert

A quarterly roundup of European music- 
industry and artist-development news.

THE U.K.—The release in June of Coldplay's second album,
"Parachutes," by EMI GMR, has generated significant
interest in the music industry. The album has sold
over 800,000 copies in the U.K. alone, and
has received critical acclaim for its
lyrics and production.

THE NETHERLANDS—The release in June of
Coldplay's second album, "Parachutes," has
also generated significant interest in the music
industry. The album has sold over 100,000
copies in the Netherlands, and
has received critical acclaim for its
lyrics and production.

THE SWEDEN—The release in June of
Coldplay's second album, "Parachutes," has
also generated significant interest in the music
industry. The album has sold over 50,000
copies in Sweden, and
has received critical acclaim for its
lyrics and production.

THE GERMANY—The release in June of
Coldplay's second album, "Parachutes," has
also generated significant interest in the music
industry. The album has sold over 20,000
copies in Germany, and
has received critical acclaim for its
lyrics and production.

THE FRANCE—The release in June of
Coldplay's second album, "Parachutes," has
also generated significant interest in the music
industry. The album has sold over 10,000
copies in France, and
has received critical acclaim for its
lyrics and production.

THE ITALY—The release in June of
Coldplay's second album, "Parachutes," has
also generated significant interest in the music
industry. The album has sold over 5,000
copies in Italy, and
has received critical acclaim for its
lyrics and production.

THE DENMARK—The release in June of
Coldplay's second album, "Parachutes," has
also generated significant interest in the music
industry. The album has sold over 1,000
copies in Denmark, and
has received critical acclaim for its
lyrics and production.

THE SWITZERLAND—The release in June of
Coldplay's second album, "Parachutes," has
also generated significant interest in the music
industry. The album has sold over 1,000
copies in Switzerland, and
has received critical acclaim for its
lyrics and production.

THE PORTUGAL—The release in June of
Coldplay's second album, "Parachutes," has
also generated significant interest in the music
industry. The album has sold over 1,000
copies in Portugal, and
has received critical acclaim for its
lyrics and production.
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THE SISTER PUBLICATION TO BILLBOARD AND AIRPLAY MONITOR
Sony Is First Major To Launch Joint-Venture Label In China

BY WINNIE CHUNG

HONG KONG—Sony Music has become the first international record label to launch a joint venture in China with mainland partners after the People’s Republic relaxed its rules concerning such ventures with the nation’s accession to the World Trade Organization early this year.

The company, Shanghai Epic Music Entertainment (SEME), received a distribution license from the Chinese authorities in late February and has now begun trading. However, Shanghai-based joint venture is managing director Andrew Wu, previously VP of business development for Sony Music Asia.

Sony, as a foreign investor, is only allowed to hold 49% of the equity in the joint venture. The other 51% is divided between Shanghai Synergy Media Group and Shanghail Jinwei Investment.

The three partners are expected to initially invest a collective $30 million in the company.

The joint venture’s license is for nationwide distribution. Sony already has production and replication licenses, which allow it to produce and manufacture albums in China. Only mainland Chinese companies are allowed to hold music “publishing” licenses. In the Chinese context, “publishing” does not refer to music publishing in the conventional sense but simply to the right to legally release a recording—a governmental instrument. SEME is cleared on the publishing front by virtue of the fact that Shanghai Synergy subsiduary Shanghai Audio Visual Press has such a license.

Prior to the setting up of SEME, Sony product was released in China under license, mainly by Shanghai Audio Visual Press. “The biggest difference now is that we are in control of our own products and in selling to retailers and wholesalers,” says Sony Music Asia’s Hong Kong-based president Richard Denekamp. He also hopes that having a stronger presence and greater control in China can help Sony battle piracy.

The International Federation of the Phonographic Industry estimates China’s overall music piracy rate to be more than 50%, climbing to 90% for international repertoire. Simultaneous release dates with the rest of the world on international product means labels can get a head start on sales before the pirates hit. Denekamp says, “That’s a very good thing for us... For Celine Dion’s ‘A New Day Has Come’, for example, we were able to have the same in-store date [March 25] in China as everywhere else, for the first time in history.” During the past two weeks, SEME has moved 73,000 units of Dion’s album, according to Denekamp.

Under the terms of the new license, SEME will be able to distribute any Sony recordings in China subject to Ministry of Culture approval. There is no official quota on releases of foreign product. “We’re hoping to release about 200 titles per year,” Denekamp says. “That’s won’t only be new releases. We’re looking at re-releasing some catalog titles that were never officially released in China before.”

SEME has signed five male artists to the label—Man Wenjun, Wang Ziming, Yang Yun, Li Yasha, and Han Xue—along with two other female singers whose names have not yet been released. SEME’s main office is in Shanghai’s industrial district of Songjiang, where Sony is also setting up a production plant and a warehouse. The distribution unit has 57 employees, 10 of whom are based in Sony’s representative office in Beijing. Denekamp says offices in Guangzhou and other cities will be set up if the need arises.

Although Denekamp is unwilling to give short-term sales estimates, he says long-term prospects made it a necessity for Sony to have a presence in China. “We’re being realistic—we’re not looking at the whole market of 1.2 billion people,” he adds. “Basicallly, we’re just looking at the East Coast region from Beijing to Shanghai and down to Guangdong, which has a population of between 150 [million] and 300 million people. We really see it with a long-term view.”

HMV Group Has High Hopes For IPO

CEO Giles Says Flotation Should Assist Asia/Canada Turnaround

BY TOM FERGUSON

LONDON—HMV Group CEO Alan Giles says the music retail giant is confident about turning around the fortunes of its ailing North American and Asian divisions after the company floats in June.

On April 11, the group confirmed its intention to float on the London Stock Exchange by the end of June. The company also announced a change of name with immediate effect, from HMV Media Group to simply HMV Group. A prospectus giving full details of the initial public offering will be published later this month.

The news of the proposed flotation came as HMV released positive third-quarter figures for the 13 weeks ending Jan. 25. Group like-for-like sales were up 5.1% on a comparable basis.

Regionally, the group’s core HMV Europe business led the way, with total sales up from £257.4 million (£317 million) to £310.1 million (£348 million). However, HMV Group, which includes the HMV and HMV Direct brands, saw results fall 4.8% to £70.2 million (£81 million).

Although he concedes that market conditions remain difficult, Giles says that the group has “greatly strengthened the management team” in North America. In January, HMV North America president Peter Luckhurst stepped down (Billboard, Jan. 19); the company’s business in that territory is currently overseen on an interim basis from Toronto by HMV Asia Pacific managing director Chris Walker. Most of HMV’s North American business is in Canada.

The Asia-Pacific region registered a third-quarter sales drop of 4.8% to £77.4 million (£112 million). Giles insists, though, that “we are still firmly believing in the long-term market opportunity out there. We’ve got a superb management team in Japan.”

Giles says that the recent performance of the business is also key to the decision to float in June. “For some time, HMV has performed incredibly well, despite difficult music markets outside the U.K.” Thanks to a recent revival in the fortunes of the group’s U.K. bookselling chain Waterstones, he says, “we now feel that we’ve got the business firing on all cylinders, and we’ve got two very attractive brands.”

He adds, “We had a very difficult period with Waterstones, but it’s been a very good story there over the last 18 months. There’s a lot of work going on there to introduce some of the ideas, philosophies, and practices of HMV.”

EMI Group has a 42.65% equity stake in HMV Group; in a statement, EMI says it intends to “realize a proportion of its stake on flotation.” The Prospectus in the U.K. has suggested that EMI could raise some £400 million ($578 million) from the sale of its stake. But EMI Group chairman Eric Nolot—a non-executive director of HMV Group—has said that the company intends to “continue as a significant shareholder in HMV” after the retailer goes public.

Senior management and venture capitalist Advent International holds the remaining equity in HMV Group. Giles says that if all the senior management share options are triggered, this would be “between 35 and 40%” of the company. “A lot of the ordinary shares in the business.”

TOWER RECORDS May Float After Sale

BY STEVE MCCLURE

TOKYO—Tower Records’ Japanese operations could end up being floated as a public company here following their sale for some $120 million to Tokyo-based Nikko Principal Investments (NPI) Japan, a wholly owned subsidiary of Japanese securities company Nikko Cordial.

The sale is scheduled to be wrapped up by May 21; it was announced April 11 by Sacramento, Calif.-based Tower parent company NTS. An investment company jointly set up by NPI and the management of Tower Records KK (the Japanese company) will make the investment through a management buy-out (MBO), in what media reports here describe as one of Japan’s biggest ever MBO deals.

“This investment will strengthen potential growth for the Japanese company and the Tower Records brand in what is the second-largest music retail market in the world,” said Tower Records’ president/CEO Michael Solomon in a statement. “For us here in the U.S., the sale forms part of our debt restructuring strategy and, upon completion, will enable Tower Records to significantly pay down its current credit facility” (see story, page 55).

NPI Japan president/CEO Hirofumi Hitano said in a statement: “We are delighted that we will become the new shareholder of Tower Records KK...” We fully intend to preserve and perpetuate the integrity of the brand based on Tower Records Japan.”

Tower Records KK managing director Keith Cahoon—who, together with corporate planning director Aiko Mimori, will continue to oversee the Tower operation in Japan—says: “I’m glad to have this matter resolved and to get back to running the stores.”

Because Tower in Japan has previously operated on more independent in part of the MTS, the buyout is expected to have minimal impact on the way the stores are run. One industry source notes: “Tower is a bona fide cultural icon, and if the rumors that were floating around early on about them being acquired or somehow becoming affiliated directly with a local chain had turned out to be true, it could have diluted some of what Tower has always stood for to music fans.”

Tower has 51 outlets in Japan with sales of 40.7 billion yen ($308 million) for the year to April 2002.
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**HOT MOVES SINGLES**

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**NEW** = New Entry  **RE** = Re-Entry
GLOBAL MUSIC PULSE

SWEDISH SOUNDTRACK: Following the success of the Hives, the Soundtrack of Our Lives (TSOOL) is the latest Swedish band to break international records. Their acclaimed third album, Behind the Music (Warner Bros.), has established a substantial following for the band in the UK, where it underlines an extensive tour in May. All three TSOOL albums were recently issued in the U.S. by Hidden Agenda/Parasol. Meanwhile, TSOOL' vocalist/producer Ebbot Lundberg has been busy building a studio in Lidingholm, Sweden. "There are always external things happening around the band, but I prefer to keep working on new music," Lundberg says. "It's cool if the music gets spread, but I never think in a career perspective." Lundberg doubles as a member of Audio Laboratory. He also produces other Swedish acts, and his list of accomplishments includes the Looms, Niclas Dungen, and Nymphed Noahs. After the U.S. tour, the group will commence work on its fourth album—the last for Warner Music Sweden under its current contract.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

OUT OF AFRICA: Veteran French DJ/ electronic producer Frederic Galliano has come a long way since his 1985 debut performance at the UK's legendary Hacienda club. Having championed everything from acid house to techno, Galliano is now demonstrating a passion for African music. His latest project, Frederic Galliano & The African Divas, is released May 13 via his own Paris-based F Communications label and is the result of four years traveling through Africa with a portable studio in his suitcase. Following recording sessions involving 40 musicians and a dozen vocalists, the outcome is an enchanting album blending African with traditional African music with European house. "I like the idea of mixing influences, of putting together very different types of music and people," Galliano explains. "I guess I just like mixing different worlds; discover one another." Along with artists featured on the album—including Nahawa Domin, Hadja Koyate, Fanta Diahate, and Kaba Koyate—Galliano will tour heavily during the next two years to promote the project.

CHRIS BARRETT

HESKELMIN DOMINATORS: Finland's Giant Robot extended its popularity beyond Helsinki in 1999 with the anthemic single "Helsinki Rock City" (Hawaiian Sounds/Spinfarm). The group's first top 10 hit has now come with latest single "Dancehall Domino" (EMI Finland), while its sophomore album, Superweekend—"with its organic, R&B-influenced electronic—has enjoyed chart success. "We wanted to make an album that sounded good wherever you played it—on the dancefloor, on the radio, or at the barber shop, or at home," singer Toma Toivonen says. A European tour is now planned.

JONATHAN MANDER
CD Protection Debate Escalates In Europe
GERA Europe Calls For Meetings With Record Companies To Urge Greater Transparency

BY JULIANA KORANTENG
LONDON—The debate surrounding the use of copy-protection technology on CDs in Europe is escalating.

The European arm of trade group Global Entertainment Retail Assn. (GERA Europe) is calling for a series of meetings with record companies to urge them to undertake a greater level of consultation and transparency about the use of copy-protection systems on CD recordings.

The move follows a recent meeting by Brussels-based GERA Europe’s council, at which the concerns of the region’s retailers were expressed (Billboard Bulletin, April 10).

“We’re now trying to set up links with the manufacturers so that they inform us of what technology they’re introducing,” U.K.-based GERA Europe VP Bob Lewis tells Billboard. Taking one recent example, he says, “They never told anybody about the Imbruglia’s White Lilies Island album last year. Lewis, who is also director general of U.K. entertainment merchants body the British Assn. of Record Dealers, adds, “We’d also need discussions on how to address the technology issue in the future. Is it a question of just putting a code on the CD or something on the PC? We would like to be involved in what’s happening and know what systems are being used.”

With the price of blank CD-Rs plummeting to as little as 55 cents each, the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) forecasts that the global growth rate of CD burning could soar as high as 35% annually during the next few years and continue to hurt legitimate sales. Meanwhile, despite the high-profile Napster copyright-infringement court case in the U.S., unauthorized online file sharing continues to grow.

Record companies are incorporating such systems as Midbar’s Cactus Data Shield or Sony Electronics’ Key2Audio on CDs to stop illegal digital copying. Yet European music retailers state customers still complain about the lack of information on secure CDs and playability problems on home computers. Some report that PCs crashed while playing the secure CD. Moreover, the retailers argue, the different secure-CD technologies are incompatible.

GERA Europe president Nanna Zafmehly complains, “Many won’t play on certain hardware, even though they are legitimately bought. There are not always clear indications as to whether any given CD has technological restrictions. This causes great concern for retailers and the music-loving public.”

Jay Berman, chairman/CEO of the IFPI, says his organization is taking retailers and consumers’ concerns very seriously. “We’ve instructed our music companies that they were going to use copy-protection technology, they should notify the public.”

In the near future, Berman adds, “we’re going to issue another set of guidelines about what playability and compatibility. As soon as we do that, we shall be in discussion with the retailers, and that would be a function that takes place within the national territories.”

Artists March Against Piracy In Taiwan

BY TIM CULPAN
TAIPEI, Taiwan—In a rare public display of solidarity, more than two dozen Chinese-language recording artists took to the streets of Taiwan’s capital to protest the city’s rampant piracy problem.

The 5.6-m billion-dollar music industry, which includes the territory’s domestic music piracy rate of around 50%.

“Definitely the biggest problem right now, not only in Taiwan, but for movies and many kinds of products sold in Taiwan,” Mok’s labelmate Coco Lee tells Billboard. U.S.-based Lee, born in Hong Kong and raised in San Francisco, flew in from New York—where she is recording an album—to lend her support to the industry.

Lee says Taiwan’s international reputation is being tarnished as a result of the piracy problem. “People have a misconception that Taiwan is the place that makes all the fake stuff,” she says.

The high-profile event was part of a new strategy being undertaken by IFPI Taiwan to increase international awareness of Taiwan’s piracy problem. Its aim is to pressure the government here to crack down on the manufacturing and distribution of illegal CDs (Billboard, March 16).

Keeping Taiwan on the U.S. Trade Representative’s (USTR) Special 301 Priority Watch List—the second-highest category on the USTR list of countries with intellectual property-protection problems—is the focus of the Taiwanese industry’s lobbying efforts. The aim is to shame the Taiwan government into taking further action, under the threat of U.S. trade sanctions.

Two days before the march, the USTR office pointed to Taiwan’s lack of intellectual property rights enforcement as a cause for concern in its annual Trade Estimate Report. That report is considered a good hint as to who will appear on the Special 301 list released at the end of the month and seems to have given Taiwan some leverage.

At the end of the protest march, Tai-

wain Premier Yu Shi-yen appeared in front of the crowd to pledge new initiatives aimed at stamping out piracy. After several days, the government has been getting together to discuss the problem, and we have realized we haven’t done enough,” Yu said.

The government may undertake several of the IFPI’s four main demands:

• to have the police set up a special piracy task force to investigate and raid production and sales outlets;
• to make intellectual property piracy a criminal rather than a civil offense; and
• to tighten controls over optical-disc manufacturing through strict licensing and monitor control.

A fourth IFPI demand, to clamp down on online piracy, was not addressed by the premier.

Having seen various governments plan to implement such measures for years, the IFPI’s response to his statement was cautious. “It seems they have been studying very carefully what we have been saying,” IFPI Taiwan chairman Samuel Chou says. “But the question for this government is not about planning but the execution.”

Executive Turntable

RECORD COMPANIES: Niel Van Hoff is promoted to president of EMI Recorded Music Netherlands. He was managing director of Capitol Records Netherlands (formerly EMI Music Netherlands).

Raymond Lighthart is named GM of Virgin Records Netherlands. He was head of Virgin’s Labels Netherlands division.

Paul Muller is promoted to GM of Capitol Records Netherlands. He was marketing and business development director.

Giampietro Paravella is named GM of Virgin Music Italy. He was responsible for strategic marketing, jazz, and classical repertoire at EMI Music Italy.

Bart Cools is promoted to managing director of EMI Recorded Music Switzerland. He was managing director of Virgin Records Belgium.

Alejandro Lopez is promoted to commercial director at Universal Music Spain in Madrid. He was sales director.

Sanna Johansson is named managing director at Stockholm-based Most Wanted Group. Johansson was managing director at the Norwegian arm of WWA Records.

Alan Young is named commercial director at Warner Music U.K. in London, effective July 1. He was head of the strategic business unit for entertainment at retailer Woolworths.

Volker Neumueiller is named GM of Epic Germany. He was A&R director of BMG Berlin.

Dave MacGregor is promoted to marketing manager at Virgin as head of Virgin Records International.

MUSIC PUBLISHERS: Caroline Molko is named managing director of Paris-based Warner/Chappell Music France, effective July 1. She is currently artistic director of Universal Music France.

RELATED FIELDS: Colleen Hue has been appointed head of Video Performance Ltd., the U.K. collecting society for music videos. She is head of e-business for Phonographic Performance.
Epic’s World Cup Single Is AIDS Research Fundraiser

BY JOANNA SHORE
PARIS—Sony France is backing a new international single that finds the worlds of sport and music uniting in the fight against AIDS, as the French national soccer team readies itself to defend the World Cup, which it won in the 1998 championship.

“Live for Love United,” a project organized by Epic-signed French artist Pascal Obispo, teams World Cup soccer players from 21 countries with Warner Music artist Yousou N’Dour on a track composed by Obispo with lyrics by Desmond Child and Sam Stoner. All profits from the single—likely to be released in France, Belgium, and Switzerland May 7 and throughout Europe that month, with the U.K. following in June—will go to the French charity “Together Against AIDS” and will be distributed internationally through that organization.

The track was recorded in English and is part of The Official Album of the 2002 FIFA World Cup compilation, which Sony will also release across Europe from May 6 onward, followed by other international territories. CDs of the album from the will also go to AIDS charities internationally, channeled through Ensemble. Artists featured on the album include Anastacia, Jennifer Lopez, Lara Fabian, and Elisa.

A VARIETY OF VOCALISTS

The vocals on “Live for Love United” are by a total of 45 soccer players—including 22 current French internationals—plus N’Dour. They include many of the world’s most highly-rated and best-known players, including Luis Figo (Portugal), Juan Veron (Argentina), Ronaldinho (Brazil), and Zinedine Zidane (France), Sony France international marketing director Andy Meier points out. “It’s an opportunity to bring together the world’s top players, who are so strong to be the ‘next We Are the World.’”

Praising Obispo’s proactive role in the project, Epic France managing director Thierry Chassagne says, “The project could not have been put together by a record company if there hadn’t been someone there to bring the whole thing together. Obispo himself contacted the players and convinced them to join in. Obispo wanted to use his fame to [help fight] AIDS and to take advantage of the World Cup in order to promote the project.” Obispo has previously released two other AIDS fundraising albums, which Sony says have benefitted Ensemble Contre le SIDA to the tune of 14 million euros ($12.4 million).

Epic is depending on the strength of the song, as well as the universal appeal of the World Cup, to attract a wide audience. Chassagne says, “I think that the song itself is a hit. It’s a popular, worldwide hymn.” Chassagne adds that the international range of soccer players involved gives the single cross-border appeal: “The public recognizes the names Zidane or Figo.”

Chassagne also suggests that the fact that the song is recorded in English gives it “a true international dimension.”

The single will be released in every country taking part in the World Cup, and Chassagne says he is confident of the song’s potential throughout Europe, Africa, and Asia.

A U.S. release for the single and album has yet to be planned. In France, the project already has a high profile. “For the single, all French media—TV, radio—were giving us free advertising space, since this is for a cause. Everyone is doing this project voluntarily,” Chassagne says, adding that neither the players nor Sony will collect royalties from the single.

Natalie Bimmah, head of programming at national soft AC station Chérie FM/Paris, says, “Like everything that Pascal Obispo does, it is aimed at a wide public. It’s already popular, and besides being a beautiful song, it is a project for charity. Like many stations, we offered the record company the opportunity to air the commercial for free. It’s a humanitarian project that touches everyone.”

Flying Nun Still Airborne After 21 Years

New Zealand’s Pioneering Indie Imprint Celebrates With Album Project

BY JOHN FERGUSON
AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Generations of New Zealand musicians and record buyers have grown up under the influence of pioneering indie imprint Flying Nun. And as the label kicks off its 21st birthday celebrations, it aims to make sure it’s a habit that continues.

The centerpiece of the anniversary is the Under the Influence album project, which sees the label taping its hat to past favorites, as well as showcasing the best of its new roster. Flying Nun acts have recorded one new song and one from Flying Nun’s back catalog for the album, which will be released May 16. It will feature contributions from such label stalwarts as the Clean and new signings like D4, as well as those from overseas acts with Flying Nun links, including Australian band Gerling and American Stephen Malkmus—whose former band, Pavement, appeared on Flying Nun in New Zealand. Under the Influence’s release will coincide with a TV documentary on state broadcaster TVNZ and a national tour in June featuring acts that appear on the album.

Flying Nun GM Andrew Meier, who heads the label, says, “We recognize the value of the history of the label, and Under the Influence makes the connection between the newer acts and the older ones who have influenced their music.”

Flying Nun, formed in 1981 by Christchurch record-shop worker Roger Shepherd, had almost immediate success with the Clean’s low-budget debut single, “Tally Ho,” which cracked the New Zealand top 20. Other signings quickly followed, including Tall Dwarfs, the Chills, the Verlaines, the Gordons (later to become Baitsa Space), the Sneaky Feelings, and the Straitjacket Fits, all of whom received acclaim both in their home country and internationally. The label also opened offices in the U.K. and Europe and formed alliances with U.S. labels, including Matador and Merge.

Flying Nun moved to Auckland in 1988, and its status as a “pure” indie began to fade in 1990, when Australia’s Mushroom Records took a 49% stake in the business. Shepherd cut his ties with the business in 1999. By 2000, it was fully absorbed into the merged Festival Mushroom Records (FMR) operation. FMR New Zealand managing director Mark Ashbridge says: “It’s a label within our company, but it gets special attention. We have other New Zealand acts—as such as King Kapis and Sola Rosa—signed to FMR, and they are important to us. But Flying Nun has a key part to play in our New Zealand music strategy and in signing local acts.”

Both Ashbridge and Meier are keen to use Under the Influence to revive Flying Nun’s international profile, which has slipped a little in recent years. Apart from the activities of Flying Nun’s newer signings, such as D4, HUI, and Betchadupa (featuring Net Flinders), James and they are good-naturedly remain as strong as ever. This year has already seen the release of new albums from two of the label’s earliest signings, the Clean and Tall Dwarfs.

NEW ERA, SAME PRIORITY

The latter’s Chris Knox—whose punk band the Enemy inspired many of the first generation of Flying Nun’s acts—admits that the label has been “swallowed up by the corporate beast it was fighting to begin with.” But, he continues, “the people involved with Flying Nun could become an old folks’ retirement home, so it’s great to see people like HUI, D4, and Betchadupa coming through.”

For Meier, the No. 1 priority remains the music. “If we can’t listen to it, we can’t put it out,” he says. “And we probably are our own harshest critics. But we want to ensure that we continue to be the first stop for bands who want to sign to a record label.”

Roger Marbecks, who owns one of New Zealand’s longest-established music outlets—Auckland two-store independent Musicland—also believes that the label still has an important part to play in the local industry. “It was the New Zealand sound for 10-12 years,” he says. “Now there is probably a whole new generation of people who don’t really know much about what Flying Nun was about—which is a good thing in a lot of ways, because the label can now cut a path through to a whole new generation.”

By Steve McClure
TOKYO—Japanese labels and publishers have won the first round in their landmark dispute with a Tokyo company providing Japanese-language music file-sharing software.

The Tokyo District Court has issued a provisional disposition against MMO Japan to stop the company from providing free downloads of a Japanese-language version of the FileRogue file-sharing software on its Web site.

The action had been sought by the Recording Industry Association of Japan and other bodies. Analysts say that if MMO Japan had made audio CDs transmittable, thereby violating that right, along with the users of the FileRogue software, according to the RIAJ, the April 9 decision by the court was “in line with common sense.”

MOMO Japan president/CEO Michihito Matsuda says, “This decision is unexpected. We’ll keep insisting on the legality of our service.”

At press time, the file-sharing program was no longer available on the Web site.

In another legal challenge to MMO Japan, the RIAJ filed a lawsuit Feb. 28 against the Tokyo-based company seeking 151 million yen ($1.1 million) in damages—a sum it claims represents the revenue its members have lost from illegal downloads made with the FileRogue software since MMO Japan began offering it last Nov. 1. A decision in that case is still pending.

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April 25, The Recording Process: From Concept to Mastering, Career Development Workshop, presented by and held at the Arkadia Music Center, New York. 212-533-0007.

April 25, Third Annual T.J. Martell Ball-Ball Classic, Basket-City, New York. 615-256-2902.


April 30, Fishing for a Cure, sponsored by the T.J. Martell Foundation, Nashville, Nashville. 615-256-2912.

May 2, Presenting Yourself to the Record Company: Getting Your Album Released, Career Development Workshop, presented by and held at the Arkadia Music Center, New York. 212-533-0007.


May 3-12, 11th Annual St. Lucia Jazz Festival, presented by BET/the Jazz Channel, various venues, St. Lucia. 758-451-8566.

May 7, SESAC New York Awards. B.B. King Club & Grill. New York (by invitation only).


May 9, Record Distribution: How Your CD Gets on the Shelf and Off, Career Development Workshop, presented by and held at the Arkadia Music Center, New York. 212-533-0007.

May 9, Steven J. Ross Award Dinner, presented by the UJA-Federation of New York, Waldorf-Astoria, New York. 212-836-1126.

May 10, Peace and Love to Erase MS, benefitting the Nancy Davis Foundation, Century City Plaza Hotel & Spa, Los Angeles. 213-364-0042.


May 16, Radio Promotion: How to Get Your Songs on the Radio, Career Development Workshop, presented by and held at the Arkadia Music Center, New York. 212-533-0007.

May 20, ASCAP Pop Music Awards, Beverly Hilton Hotel, Los Angeles (by invitation only).


May 22, Academy of Country Music Awards, Universal Amphitheatre, Los Angeles. 310-201-8816.


May 23, M.C. Handy Awards, presented by the Blues Foundation, Orpheum Theatre, Memphis. 323-653-1588.

May 29-31, Emerging Artists and Technology in Music Conference, MGM Grand Hotel, Las Vegas, eat-m.com.

May 30, 11th Annual Ella Award Dinner, sponsored by the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Office, Beverly Hilton Hotel, Beverly Hills, Calif. 323-668-2802.

June 4, SESCAC Television & Film Awards. Michael’s Restaurant, Santa Monica, Calif. (by invitation only).

June 5, How to Protect Yourself in the Entertainment Industry, presented by California Lawyers for the Arts, Ken Edwards Center, Los Angeles. 310-998-5550.


June 12, CMT Flameworthy Video Music Awards, Gaylord Entertainment Center, Nashville. 615-255-9690.


June 17, ASCAP Rhythm & Soul Awards, Beverly Hilton Hotel, Los Angeles (by invitation only).

June 19, Music Visionary Awards Luncheon Honoring Fred Davis and Daniel Glass, presented by the UJA Federation, Pierre Hotel, New York. 212-836-1126.

June 19, How to Choose an Entertainment Attorney, presented by California Lawyers for the Arts, Ken Edwards Center, Los Angeles. 310-998-5550.

June 24-26, MI REPILeTec Europe, Amsterdam Rai, Amsterdam. 800-880-5474.


July 28-31, International Assn. of Assembly Managers’ 77th Annual Conference & Trade Show, Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta. 972-255-8902.


July 31-Aug. 3, Atlanta Music Conference, Sheraton Atlanta Hotel, Atlanta. 770-499-8600.

Submit items for Lifelines, Good Works, and Calendar to Margot Whitley at Billboard, 5595 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90036 or at mw@billboard.com.

COMETOGO: Three-time Grammy Award nominee Third Day has raised $100,000 so far for Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI) on the gospel group’s current Come Together Tour. A portion of each ticket bought goes to HFHI, a non-profit ecumenical Christian housing ministry, with the goal to build eight homes worldwide this year. The band will break ground on the first home fully funded by the tour April 20 in Nashville. Contact: Jackie Marushka at 615-261-6439.

BACKSTREET BENEFIT: Howie Dorough of Backstreet Boys will host the Lupus 2002 Benefit Concert June 22 at the Hard Rock Live in Orlando, Fla. Proceeds will go to the Dorough Lupus Foundation, founded by Dorough and his family after losing his sister Caroline to lupus. Returning for the third year is Deborah Gibson, with the rest of the performers to be announced. Artists and bands interested in donating a performance may contact Joe Lambusta at 407-677-1103. For other inquiries, contact: Kelly Coughlin at 407-648-4660.

Solution to this issue’s puzzle (page 82)
Other Music Shuts Boston Store

BY MATTHEW S. ROBINSON
CAMBRIDGE, Mass.—New York’s Other Music has shuttered its Boston-area store—its first and only branch location—after a year of operation. The retailer says the move was motivated by financial pressures stemming from high rental costs and slow business growth in a highly competitive, Internet-heavy environment.

“There is something good about a boutique store if you are a real music head, and that is something that big stores really can’t do,” Other Music co-owner Josh Madell says. “But as we apparently learned in Boston, not every city wants that.”

Housed in Cambridge’s Harvard Square—already home to Tower Records, HMV, Newbury Comics, and a slew of smaller stores—the location proved not to be the most inviting spot for a specialty retailer.

“We always figured that we’d do it for a year and then take a look at it and see where it was going,” Madell says. “It was the financial realities that made us close.”

One of the biggest challenges facing the store—which debuted in December 2000—was real estate. Commercial space in Harvard Square is among the most expensive in the country, more than New York, even,” Madell points out. “And when we went in, the economy was peaking, and we paid top-dollar.”

He observes that another complicating factor was that the store found itself in a highly competitive, cost-conscious market: “Because there are so many other stores within blocks of our store, they were willing to comparison-shop.”

In addition to the customers who would go elsewhere to save money, Harvard Square seemed to be a bastion of MP3 fans. “A lot of people came in, took notes, and then went back to their computers,” Madell says. “Though I do not blame that for our problems as much as other people might, it certainly didn’t help.”

Still, Madell determined to make a go of it in an area that seemed to be an ideal fit for a retail concept that had proved a favorite among New York tastemakers interested in indie rock, electronica, and jazz. Madell says business started picking up after about six months and that sales around the holidays were encouraging. However, business retreated again in the wake of last Sept. 11.

With two stores exposed, Madell and his team made the decision to pull back and focus on one. He says, “At the moment, we are concentrating on our New York store, our Web site, and some concert promotion.”

But Madell isn’t against another attempt at expansion. “We had been considering Chicago and Los Angeles—and they may still work because the rents are cheaper and the scenes are good—but we are not ready to do another store right now.”

Industry Approves Of Tower Japan Sale

Major-Label Execs Believe Such Moves Will Contribute To Chain’s Continued Turnaround

BY ED CHRISTMAN
NEW YORK—The pending sale of Tower Records Japan to Tokyo-based Nikko Principal Investments for ¥120 million (see story, page 49) is bringing much-needed relief to the balance sheet of parent Tower Records and to the peace of mind of financial executives at U.S. music labels.

In a related move, West Sacramen-

to, Calif.-based Tower Records says that its lender, J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, has granted a 60-day extension on the April 23 maturation of its revolving credit facility, which means the chain has until June 23 to pay it down. According to a filing with the Securities & Exchange Commission, Tower had drawn down $150 million from the revolver as of Jan. 31. The company says it will refinance that credit facility upon completion of the Tower Japan sale, which is expected by May 21. According to sources, three or four different banks have been vying to provide the replacement facility.

CIT Financial is said to be the front-runner.

Senior Tower Record executives were not available for comment, but president Michael Solomon said in a statement, “In the U.S., the sale forms part of our debt-restructuring strategy and, upon completion, will enable Tower Records to significantly pay down its current credit facility.”

While financial executives at U.S. labels applaud the moves for giving the chain some breathing room, they say Tower still has to show it can generate strong positive cash flow so it can afford interest payments due on $110 million in company debentures outstanding and then pay them off when they come due in 2005.

A research report issued by New York-based financial firm Sanford C. Bernstein points out that while the Japanese sale alleviates the company’s immediate credit crunch, it could likely “hurt Tower’s longer-term prospects,” because that business is more profitable than the U.S. operation.

Last year, Tower Records was applauded for its turnaround effort and the improvements made to its operating performance. While Tower spokes-

woman Louise Solomon says that the chain’s numbers show that it continues to improve—the company posted an operating loss of $400,000 in its most recent fiscal quarter that ended Jan. 31, vs. the $3.6 million loss it had in the company’s first quarter, which ended last Oct. 31—label executives were slightly disappointed that the

rebound wasn’t stronger, given that the current period contains the lucrative Christmas holiday selling season. Overall, Tower posted a loss of $9.4 million for the second quarter, as a result of restructuring charges of $11.7 million. For the six-month period ended Jan. 31, the chain has a $20.6 million loss on sales of $520.4 million.

When Tower refines its revolving credit facility, label executives wonder if it will maintain its relationship with retail and financial consultant Polienco & Marzano, who has been working with management at the behest of J.P. Morgan Chase Bank.

Privately, financial and senior executives at the majors say a consensus has emerged that they hope Tower maintains the relationship or brings onboard another senior-management-level retail executive to complement senior VP of finance DeVaughn Searson, who gets high marks for his performance during Tower’s turn-around efforts.

“Nobody wants to replace current management; we just want them to add to it,” one major-label financial exec says. “We have all agreed to support cur-

rent management, but now it is up to them to decide if they want to bring someone else in at a senior level.”

Another senior distribution exec with a major adds, “Tower management still have a great entrepreneurial spirit and vision, and that is what makes Tower special. But they need somebody else with strong business acumen in the background to help shape what they do.”

Other distribution execs remain optimistic that Tower will continue to improve operations and realize greater efficiencies. For instance, the head of an independent distribution company points out that Tower is experimenting with an automatic replenishment program that allows Tower to place orders daily on out-of-stock items. If that proves successful and is rolled out to other stores in the chain, that executive expects Tower to go to a regional buying structure, just like Virgin Retail North America has been doing in its stores, which previously had genre buyers at store level. Such a move for Tower would eliminate some overhead and improve its in-stock position. That executive also expects more store closings, which should further reduce unprofitability, and the possible sale of the company’s U.K. stores, which would be used to further pay down debt.

Going forward, another financial executive in the major-label camp says it is too soon to decide if their worst-case scenario is if we don’t see improvements in the numbers; then we may insist on them bringing in somebody else. A best-case scenario is Tower continues to improve and they put some profitable numbers up on the scorecard, which would give them a little more room to breathe. And if the [stock] market changes, then maybe they can do an [initial public offering] to pay down the bonds.”

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In The News

- Target reports that March comparable-store sales increased 6.8% from the same time last year. Net retail sales for the five-week period that ended April 6 increased 16.2% to $3.7 billion, from $3.2 billion one year ago. Much of the gain was posted by the company's Target Stores division, which reports a 9.4% increase in March comp-store sales. Overall sales for the division totaled $3.1 billion—a 20.8% jump over last year.

- Wal-Mart Stores reports that net sales in March increased 14.5% to $21.5 billion, up from $18.8 billion last year. The company also announced plans to open a 17% increase in net sales, rising to $13.9 billion from $11.9 billion one year ago. Sam's Club sales for the period were $2.9 billion, up 13.2% from $2.6 billion last March.

- CenterSpan Communications, operator of the Scour network, has secured $11.1 million in new funding since the beginning of the year. Most recently, the company secured $2.1 million through the sale of 33.6 million shares of common stock at $6 each. Buyers included chairman/CEO Frank Hausmann and company director Gerald Pratt. The investor group also received a three-year warrants to buy 350,000 additional shares at $10.67 apiece. In March, CenterSpan collected $5 million from its largest shareholder, Peter Kellogg, senior managing director of Goldman Sachs unit Spear, Leeds & Kellogg. In February, the company secured $4 million via a private placement of 650,000 shares.

- Sales of Microsoft's Xbox may be slowing, according to a recent report from a Wall Street analyst. Deutsche Banc Alex. Brown analyst Chris Whitmore estimates that Microsoft sold roughly 300,000 units of the video game system in North America in the first quarter of this year, vs. 1.5 million units sold in the last six weeks of 2001. Whitmore tracks Xbox manufacturer Electronics International. He also estimates that 180,000 units have been sold in Japan since the system bowed there at the end of February and that sales are rising. Following the premiere of Xbox in March, look “disappointing.”

The Many Faces of Detroit: The music of Detroit is enjoying a higher profile than ever with the bust-out success of the White Stripes’ White Blood Cells, which has hammered its way into the top half of The Billboard 200 (see story, page 30). Anyone seeking a useful primer devoted to some of the Motor City’s better young rock bands needn’t look much further than Troy Gregory’s debut solo album Sybil, due April 22. The album was recorded in Detroit-skeewed indie Fall of Rome Records (Billboard, Oct. 27, 2001). Gregory—a member of hard rock acts Flotsam & Jetsam and Prodigy before he forged his own path as The Witches—has enlisted some of the best up-and-coming talent on the fertile Detroit scene. Each of the 13 tracks on Sybil—which takes its name from the book about a famed case of clinical multiple personality—finds singer/guitarist Gregory backed by a different hometown combo.

“I was going to play everything myself, and I thought, ‘Well, I’ll get so-and-so to play on it.’” Gregory says. “And then I thought, ‘Fuck it, why don’t I just get their whole band?’”

The album kicks off with “Lice Cots N’ Rabies Shots,” on which Gregory wails over the axe-whacking power duo Sanlam Rosier, and concludes with “Freezing Rain Freezin’,” where he is supported by the whispery all-female unit Slumber Party. The tracks sandwiched between these extremes run the gamut from fawning garage rock to psychedelia and neo-soul; the back-up bands include the Dirtbombs, Outrageous Cherry, the Sights, They Come In Threes, the Alphabet, the Wildbunch, the Volebeats, and the album co-producer Jim Diamond’s Pop Monsoon.

The one-for-all-and-all-for-one style of Sybil is in keeping with the open-ended modus operandi of the Detroit scene, as Gregory describes it. “It’s so incestuous around here,” he says. “So that creates that kind of combinative style of music.”

You just go to jam with some friends, and it’s not like, ‘OK, we’re going to get this together, and then we’re going to get ourselves on the cover of Spin.’

Flag Waving: The liner copy for Stew’s debut Smile Records solo album, The Naked Dutch Painter, illustrates a useful term that describes the music made by the Negro Problem’s lead vocalist: “Afrobaroque.”


This whole divide didn’t exist in my upbringing,” Stew adds. “It was all revolutionary, changing-our-times music.”

Stew’s music has often startled observers who can’t seem to deal with an African-American performer who draws as much on pop forms (see the Beatles, a professed major source) as he does on early black music (cf. James Brown). But Stew proudly wields both streams of influence on The Naked Dutch Painter, and the result is a seamless and melodically astute blend of rock, pop, and soul stylings.

The album is a hybrid of live and studio recording: The basic tracks were cut before an audience at the Knitting Factory in Hollywood and then enhanced in the studio. “We wanted kind of a combination, because I still love my studio trick¬ery,” Stew says. “We couldn’t really do the Fframpton Comes Alive thing—make everybody believe it was all live. The idea was to make the overdubs obvious.”

Scarcely pausing to catch a breath, Stew is now in the studio completing his first Negro Problem album in years. “I want to make a more immediate record,” he says. “It’s going to be out in September, and it’ll be finish¬ed in late May or early June.”

In the interim, Stew is taking to the road. He is currently on tour, opening for Dan Bern, in a duo with musical compatriot Heidi Rodewald; that trip concludes April 22 at the Knitting Factory. He’ll celebrate the release of The Naked Dutch Painter with a full-band performance at that venue May 16.
Listen, FullAudio To Give Users More Options

BY BRIAN GARRITY

NEW YORK—While the overwhelming majority of digital music continues to be consumed via free file-sharing services that offer virtually unlimited content and unencumbered portability, companies attempting to launch commercial alternatives to pirate networks are slowly amassing permission from record companies and publishers to offer similar content and usage features.

With licenses in place from Universal Music Group, Warner Music Group, EMI Recorded Music and the Harry Fox Agency (HFA), Chicago-based FullAudio has launched its new digital subscription service through Clear Channel Communications. Meanwhile, Listen.com’s Rhapsody service is adding a CD-burning function to its classical music digital subscription package via a deal with Naxos of America.

The Listen.com deal will allow users to burn a pre-selected number of Naxos tracks each month. The CD-burning technology is provided by NewTech Infosystems (NTI), a rival to market leader Roxio, and will be built directly into the Rhapsody interface.

“Listen recognizes that consumers want to take some of their music with them, and our agreements with NTI and Naxos are important first steps toward meeting those needs,” CEO Sean Ryan says.

Users will pay a higher fee for a Rhapsody package with burning; pricing tiers and the number of burns available were not disclosed. Burning will become available in May, when Listen launches an updated Rhapsody service.

Issues of portability and permanence remain complicated for subscription services. Major labels do not allow services to offer “full-ownership” downloads, which can be both burned to a CD and transferred to a digital device. Consumers burning tracks through Rhapsody—a streaming-only model—will not take control of the permanent file on their computers; instead, the tracks will be transferred directly to the blank CD.

The move makes Rhapsody the second subscription service to offer burning, after Pressplay. San Francisco-based Listen says it is in talks with other major and independent label partners to secure additional burning licenses. It is unclear whether licenses Listen secures from majors will allow for burning from their entire available online catalogs, as is the case with Naxos. At Pressplay, majors have cleared only certain content for burning.

Meanwhile, FullAudio’s deal with its content partners—which covers rental downloads and streaming—permits subscribers to transfer tracks from their PCs to secure portable devices and set-top boxes as soon as those devices become commercially available. However, the company is not currently offering a burning feature.

FullAudio is also largely covered on publishing, following its deal with HFA. That pact—covering works from 27,000 publishers—marks the company’s first wide-reaching publishing agreement. Previously, it had pursued deals with individual companies. It has agreements in place with EMI Music Publishing and BMG Music Publishing.

Financial terms of the HFA deal were not disclosed; however, the pact follows the model of subscription licenses HFA has brokered with the Recording Industry Assn. of America and Listen.com. FullAudio will pay HFA an advance, and royalty rates will be determined later, either by negotiation or by the Copyright Arbitration Royalty Panel.
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Columbia’s ‘Ali’ DVD Will Pack A Punch, Says Co-Star Jon Voight

BY RASHAUN HALL

NEW YORK—Known for his battles both in the ring and in the world at large, legendary boxer Muhammad Ali has long been considered a heroic icon of the 20th century. With Columbia’s ‘Ali’—set for release on DVD-DVD ($27.96) April 30—director Michael Mann brought to life the boxer’s often controversial story, focusing on the 10-year span from 1964 to 1974 and the famed “Rumble in the Jungle” fight against George Foreman in Zaire.

Jon Voight, who was nominated for an Academy Award in the best supporting actor category for his role as sports reporter and Ali foil Howard Cosell, recalls watching the famed Foreman fight while filming ‘Ali’ in Switzerland. “The fight was really frightening, but it was also amazing,” he says. “The fact that [Ali] prevailed was a miraculous event and something that was very popular, of course.”

Making ‘Ali’, which stars Will Smith (also nominated this year in the best actor category) in the title role and actors including Jamie Foxx, Mario Van Peebles, Mykelti Williamson, and Nona Gaye, held special meaning for Voight, as he has known the boxer and his family for several years. “I have an affection for Muhammad because I knew him during his comeback in the early ’70s,” he says. “It was heartwarming to me to retrace those footsteps, and I knew that Michael would get behind the scenes and find out what was really going on.”

The DVD version of the film, which is presented in wide screen and includes theatrical trailers and animated menus, will be particularly valuable for Mann’s dramatic vision, Voight says. “Michael makes films that have many layers, so I think it’s nice to have a DVD because you can go over sections,” he explains.

“There is so much good filmmaking in it and so many different levels of stuff going on. You can take your time and go over it.”

Ali marks the second time that Voight and Mann have worked together, the first being for 1995’s Los Angeles crime drama ‘Heat’. It was Mann’s “eye and support” that led Voight to accept the Ali role, though he does recall feeling some trepidation.

“I was out of the country, and Michael called me and said, ‘What do you think about playing Howard Cosell?’ ” Voight says. “That was obviously a very interesting question, and I think everyone who heard that I was playing Howard Cosell initially had a similar response to mine—how did he arrive at picking me for that part? The more I thought about it, the more I thought I would be the right fellow to try it in a Michael Mann movie.”

In order to get into his role, Voight studied video footage of Cosell. "He was a television phenomenon," Voight says. "It was a matter of just taking the gestures and the sounds [he made] and trying to trace them back to the roots of where they came from, and then making that bridge between my own personality and his."

The film’s ultimate critical acclaim, stemming particularly from Voight’s and Smith’s performances, will play a large role in Columbia’s ‘Ali’ promotional campaign, says VP of marketing Tracey Garvin. While the company will embark on a national TV and print campaign in support of the title, Garvin notes, “We wanted to be out there within that 30-day period or so after the Academy Awards to really work off the heat and notoriety from that.”

Retailers are expecting the title to receive strong support from consumers. Rhadames De La Cruz, DVD buyer at a Tower Records outlet in New York, says, “I think it is one of those movies that people will buy because they missed it in the theater. I mean, it deals with Ali and Will Smith, and that’s a great combination that people will want in their collection.”

BY O.SCAR SLATE: As expected, Buena Vista Home Entertainment has announced a hearty summer home video release schedule for its slate of Oscar-nominated films.

The roster kicks off with the July 9 DVD release of Touchstone’s dark family comedy ‘The Royal Tenenbaums’ ($29.99), nominated in the best original screenplay category for the work of writer/director Wes Anderson and writer/actor Owen Wilson. The two-disc set will include an in-depth look at Anderson’s directorial style and philosophy, interviews with members of the cast (which include Gene Hackman, Anjelica Huston, and Ben Stiller), and deleted scenes.

Lori McPherson, VP of brand marketing for Buena Vista, says that retailers have shown early support for the title. “We will have a very broad TV advertising campaign on all of the major networks and on entertainment cable stations like E!,” she says. “We are also going to have a multiple-purchase offer: When you buy the DVD and [Hollywood Record’s Royal Tenenbaums] soundtrack [at the same time], you will get an instant $5 off.”

Next in line will be July 16’s French film ‘Amélie’, also available as a two-disc DVD priced at $29.99. Miramax’s magical tale starring Audrey Tautou received five Academy Award nominations, including best foreign language film. The DVD version is packed with such extras as interviews with Tautou and director Jean-Pierre Jeunet, “making of” and design featurettes, and cast members’ audition tapes. Buena Vista is pursuing targeted TV and print advertising, a deal with the Turner network is being discussed.

Single-disc, $29.99 priced DVD-DVD videos of Miramax’s ‘In the Bedroom’ (Aug. 13) and Iris (Aug. 20) round out the list. In the Bedroom, the Todd Field-directed drama about a family tragedy that earned nods at the best picture, best actress (Sissy Spacek), best actor (Tom Wilkinson), and best supporting actress (Marisa Tomei) categories, will not include any extras, according to McPherson, though it will feature a double-viewing option allowing users to watch a version dubbed with a French-language track. Buena Vista is banking on this film’s post-Oscar buzz in its promotional campaign and will emphasize the feature’s acclaim in its TV spots.

Iris, the story of English novelist Iris Murdoch and her battle with Alzheimer’s disease, will include a behind-the-scenes featurette, as well as information about this medical condition. Starring best actress nominee Judi Dench, the film also features best supporting actor winner Jim Broadbent and best supporting actress nominee Kate Winslet. Expect a largely PR-driven marketing effort.

CONVENTION LINEUP: The Video Software Dealers Assn. (VSDA) has announced the seminar offerings for its July 16-18 Home Entertainment 2002 convention taking place at the Rio Suite Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas. Attendees will have the opportunity to participate in one of five seminar tracks: DVD, retailing operations, technologies and trends, adult issues and product, and acquiring new independent films. Topics will include the future of DVD extras and programming, loss prevention, video-industry trends, and how to make money with independent product.

VSDA president Bo Anderson says the seminar programs reflect the show’s renewed focus on business elements and think that panels such as the “DVD & VHS—Balancing the Product Mix” program will be of particular interest. “This is such an extraordinary issue for retailers every day. They are trying not to undercut VHS and estimate their demand for DVD. I also think the research program on the future of the industry will be compelling.”

KUROSAWA COLLECTION: Independent video supplier WellSpring Media has joined with Amazon.com to release the Limited Edition Kurosawa DVD Collection. Currently slated for a Sept. 9 issue date, the $129.98 three-disc set will include a newly remastered edition of famed Japanese director Akira Kurosawa’s Ran (a 1985 adaptation of Shakespeare’s King Lear); his final film, Madatago (1993); a detailed Kurosawa documentary; a fan mini-poster collectible images; a miniature Shoji screen; and a certificate of authenticity. A limited run of 5,000 numbered sets will be available exclusively through Amazon in a discounted price of $99.98. "When you do something in a limited run, collectors look at the product as something that is different,” Wellspring VP/CM of home video Dan Gurultz says. “The box itself is gorgeous. It’s rice paper outside; it’s gold-embossed. It’s stunningly simple.”

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“You can get a really good read on a record early,” he says—which is why he’ll put songs in callout as early as the 20-spin mark at his station. But that’s only when the song has been warmed up in the market by airplay on MTV or rival stations. A station might be willing to bag a record after 150 spins, but Olsen is not going to walk away until “you don’t see phones or consistent callout after a minimum of 250 spins in a market.” Most label reps agree that an R&B crossover, which usually starts with other airplay in the market, will test sooner.

And even 250 spins is not always enough. Olsen emphasizes, recall that Ben Joes’s “It’s My Life” took nearly 300 spins to test. “That was a battle, week in and week out.” Only by being warmed up at adult top 40 did the song start showing a pulse for mainstream top 40 radio. Olsen also notes that if a song is starting solely at top 40, “it’s the dayparts, not just the spins. It’s got to be the dayparts between 6 a.m. and 7 p.m. (for a fair test).”

Another problem that Goldner cites is that because radio will see perhaps 10 tracks a year that explode out of the gate—like “Family Affair” by Mary J. Blige or “It Wasn’t Me” by Shaggy—they get conditioned to expect that from any record after 150 spins. “Radio programmers are under enormous pressure and are naturally impatient to play only immediate hits,” she says. “They need to allow artists and records time to develop. I would tell programmers to stay the Goldner does this by pointing out sample-size issues or whether a certain demographic cell is over- or under-represented and what the potential scores might be.

MITIGATING DATA

Programmers have generally maintained that research is just one element they examine. Like Universal—“Radio programmers are under enormous pressure and are naturally impatient to play only immediate hits. They need to allow artists and records time to develop.”

BONNIE GOLDBERG, MCA RECORDS

osal—who will cut a song some slack if three of his five indicators are strong—Laird says, “If I’m getting phones and bad research, I’ll still take a look at it. If everyone in the building thinks it sounds good on the radio, I’ll give it more time.”

Riccitelli agrees that growth or positive showing on fronts other than research “buys you time if research is not working out.”

Olsen adds, “Our argument to bad callout is, ‘Look at the sales,’ because if they can’t get anybody to do is spend money.”

When it comes to requests, WBLI Long Island, N.Y., PD/Cox top 40 format specialist Jeremy J.J. Rice will discount heavy requests for a super-star, because it’s an expected part of the equation, but requests for a new artist can indicate a healthy grass-roots groundswell. It’s the flip side, he says, of songs from such acts as Lifehouse or Nickelback that are research monsters but don’t generate requests.

EXCEPTIONS TO THE RULES

There are those records that can skip research, pass go, and collect their 200 spins. “I add a lot of records,” Goldner says, “but I play them for other reasons.”

Rice says, “There’s nothing wrong with playing an event record. The Alanis Morissette hit No. 18, but the stations that played the Alanis weren’t making a mis-

correction. But Universal contends that 90% of the time, if a record starts out with bad research, it stays there.

results too soon, the research “ops” particularly rankles at a time when the financial investment in any song is higher and the industry can’t afford to lose hits.

As mainstream top 40 KHTS San Diego PD Diana Laird says, she’ll drop a song “when the research sucks,” but she also admits that “we joke that the second we drop something, it comes back great in research.”

So how do PDs decide when it’s time to give up on a song? And how would labels like them to decide, particularly when, as Jive Records senior VP of pop promotion Joe Riccitelli notes, his job is always to view the glass as half-full?

At first glance, the acid tests aren’t so different. Top 40 WKSE Buffalo, N.Y., PD Dave Universal’s five keys sum up what everyone is looking for: research, requests, sales, MTV, and other market airplay. “If you don’t have at least three of the five, you’re gone,” he says.

Likewise, Island Def Jam Music Group VP of national top 40 promotion Erik Olsen says there’s trouble “when you see all the active elements in a song not connecting.”

At the crux of the matter is when a station can reasonably expect a song to generate callout. “Programmers want to see a record research in 150 spins,” MCA Records VP of national promotion Bonnie Goldner says. Riccitelli agrees that radio wants “to see a record react quicker than records have a tendency to react.” They think 250-300 spins is more reasonable.

But Universal contends that 90% of the time, if a record starts out with bad research, it stays there.

course and not overreact to the roller-coaster effect of peaks and valleys. DreamWorks nearly lost Nelly Furtado three times, and she continued on to sell more than 2 million CDs and win a Grammy.

Goldner adds, “You’re always subject to the research itself. There are weeks when the research is flawed, and you have to ask the right questions to find out if it’s a bad batch.”

OOPS . . . I’LL ADD IT AGAIN

But “N Sync’s ‘Gone’ was one of those songs that began researching in a number of markets (often fueled by the record’s surprise R&B success) after PDs had decided that the song was over. Rice has several songs that has happened to, among them Alicia Keys’ ‘A Woman’s Worth,’ Daft Punk’s ‘One More Time,’ and D’Urbinis’ ‘Sandstorm.’ Because those songs don’t often reach critical mass as currents, once they do kick in, they’re much slower to judgment,” she says. “If the pay-off is only a few weeks away, it makes much more sense to wait. Experience should tell us that while there is no guarantee of a hit, staying with a record for a little longer can make all the difference. I’ve seen it time and time again.”

Rice wants labels to keep in mind that there are only so many slots for new music in a given week, and sometimes he simply has to make room. Laird admits that research is not always infallible, but it’s still one of the most important tools in her arsenal, and labels would do better, she says, to understand it more. “They’ll argue because you’re not telling them what they want to hear.”

Riccitelli agrees that “you don’t want to question the station’s research, because that’s a battle you lose; but if you have some other information you can promote to them, then it’s like being in court. If you assemble your facts and arguments the right way, you should win most of the time. That’s the way we try to present most of the discussions here.”

Goldner says a big difference between her colleagues and the stations they deal with is that a radio station can walk away from a record any time it wants and has the option of either re-adding the song if it comes back in research or moving on to the next single. But radio doesn’t have the same financial investment in the single that the label does.

“Radio stations depend on the record companies developing superstars for them. It’s part of their branding,” she points out. “If programmers do not allow records and artists to grow over a reasonable time, record companies will find themselves under tremendous financial pressure, with new artists often abandoned prematurely and at great financial loss to the company.”
Clark is the host/executive producer of the special. He says, "American Bandstand is like my fourth child. I love it and cherish it. I'm especially proud that the show gave so many artists their first chance to perform on national TV—everyone from Little Richard, Chuck Berry, and the Everly Brothers to the Doors to Madonna and Prince."

In addition to archival American Bandstand footage, the anniversary special will feature new performances taped exclusively for the event. Artists to be featured in these new performances include Little Richard, Michael Jackson, Kiss, Cher, Stevie Wonder, Alanis Morissette, Brandy, KC & the Sunshine Band, and Babyface.

As influential as American Bandstand was in bringing music to the masses, Clark remembers that the show had its difficult moments: "We had a lot of detractors, and the biggest misconception of the show was that we played only vanilla music. But every moment was memorable. There are too many great memories to name them all."

And after all these years, Clark is getting back in the business of producing a weekly music show on TV. In a partnership with Clear Channel Entertainment, Dick Clark Productions is developing a new music series that will showcase artists through music videos, live performances at Clear Channel venues, and behind-the-scenes footage (Billboard, March 2). Clark tells Billboard he plans to take the show into syndication or to late-night TV on a broadcast network.

In BRIEF: Will Smith's Overbrook Entertainment, a name that produced a remake of the 1970s Sidney Poitier comedy films Uptown Saturday Night, Let's Do It Again, and A Piece of the Action. Smith will star in at least one of the remakes, which will be released by Warner Bros. Pictures. The versatile Smith has also signed on for a starring voice role in the DreamWorks Pictures animation film Sharkskickers. The movie has a "mothers in the sea world" plot and is expected to be released in 2004.

Following in the footsteps of Smith, Jennifer Lopez's New York-based productions has pacted with Columbia Pictures for a three-year, first-look deal for film production and development. Smith's Overbrook struck a similar deal with Columbia earlier this year... L.A.-based Kanoo Films has launched a music video division, which has signed director Jim Yucht.
HAPPY DAY: Mary J. Blige earns her 14th top 10 single on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart, as “Rainy Day” featuring Ja Rule moves 11-10. This comes nearly 10 years after Blige’s first single, “You Remind Me,” from the Strictly Business soundtrack, which debuted on this chart in May 1992. Remind eventually went on to become her first No.1 single in the chart, a chart built on the success of the song. The song was released with the prime time magazine aired Groban’s “Everything You Want,” a month after its audience peak (also 88 million). “Want” scanned 29.5 million units its first week out. Nearly two years later, the total for “Want” is roughly 91% smaller.

The labels’ retreat from retail-available singles prompts at least two limitations. Product placement in those accounts that still sell singles is scattered, and in many stores, the area set aside for singles is unattractive. Also, those consumers who used to scour the singles section do not have any expectation of finding their favorite songs. Quite often, we see singles sell more in their second week, which means fans have less awareness of a single’s arrival than in years past. Without a well-organized and publicized effort between the label and retailer, the reversal of this trend seems less and less likely.

ON THE BACKROADS: Newcomer Anthony Smith’s “If That Ain’t Country” takes Hot Shot Debut honors at No. 49 on Hot Country Singles & Tracks, scoring the second-highest opener for a debut single in the current chart year. Of all the dozen singles by new artists that have reached this chart year, only Brad Martin’s No. 46 start with “Before I Know Better” bowed higher than Smith’s title. (By the way, Martin gains 88 detections and steps 35-34.)

Smith previously made his mark on the chart as a songwriter, with George Strait’s “Bub” and Trace Atkins’ “I’m Tryin’.” They peaked at No. 2 and No. 6, respectively, in the Dec. 15, 2001 issue.

Compared with the same period last year, debut singles by new acts in 2002 are slightly more plentiful and are opening a hit higher on the chart. Nine such singles entered by this time last year, with an average opening position of No. 58. The current year-to-date average debut is No. 55. Elsewhere on the chart, Smith’s Mercury labelmate Steve Azar nails his first top 10, with “I Don’t Have To Be Me (Til Monday),” gaining 380 detections (11-10). He charted two singles in 1996 on the now-defunct River North imprint.

Happy Day: Mary J. Blige earns her 14th top 10 single on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart, as “Rainy Day” featuring Ja Rule moves 11-10. This comes nearly 10 years after Blige’s first single, “You Remind Me,” from the Strictly Business soundtrack, which debuted on this chart in May 1992. Remind eventually went on to become her first No.1 single in the chart, a chart built on the success of the song. The song was released with the prime time magazine aired Groban’s “Everything You Want,” a month after its audience peak (also 88 million). “Want” scanned 29.5 million units its first week out. Nearly two years later, the total for “Want” is roughly 91% smaller.

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ON THE BACKROADS: Newcomer Anthony Smith’s “If That Ain’t Country” takes Hot Shot Debut honors at No. 49 on Hot Country Singles & Tracks, scoring the second-highest opener for a debut single in the current chart year. Of all the dozen singles by new artists that have reached this chart year, only Brad Martin’s No. 46 start with “Before I Know Better” bowed higher than Smith’s title. (By the way, Martin gains 88 detections and steps 35-34.)

Smith previously made his mark on the chart as a songwriter, with George Strait’s “Bub” and Trace Atkins’ “I’m Tryin’.” They peaked at No. 2 and No. 6, respectively, in the Dec. 15, 2001 issue.

Compared with the same period last year, debut singles by new acts in 2002 are slightly more plentiful and are opening a hit higher on the chart. Nine such singles entered by this time last year, with an average opening position of No. 58. The current year-to-date average debut is No. 55. Elsewhere on the chart, Smith’s Mercury labelmate Steve Azar nails his first top 10, with “I Don’t Have To Be Me (Til Monday),” gaining 380 detections (11-10). He charted two singles in 1996 on the now-defunct River North imprint.

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<td>KENNY CHESEY</td>
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<td>ROD STEWART</td>
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<td>146</td>
<td>THE BEATLES</td>
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<td>LIL J</td>
<td>Thug Life Vol. 3</td>
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<td>148</td>
<td>NEWSBOYS</td>
<td>All About The Benjamins</td>
<td>149/148</td>
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**Note:** The above table represents the Billboard Hot 100 chart for the week ending April 22, 2000, as published in Billboard magazine. The chart ranks songs based on sales, airplay, and streaming, with the Hot 100 being the most popular chart in the United States. The chart is compiled by Nielsen SoundScan, which tracks sales, and the Billboard Airplay chart, which tracks airplay. The chart is used to determine airplay success and to influence sales. Billboard also publishes charts for other formats, such as R&B/Hip-Hop, Country, and Dance. All rights reserved.
### Billboard Top Jazz Albums

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DIANA KRALL</td>
<td>The Look Of Love</td>
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<tr>
<td>CASSANDRA WILSON</td>
<td>Belly Of The Sun</td>
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<tr>
<td>BENNETT</td>
<td>Playin' With My Friends: Bennett Sings The Blues</td>
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<tr>
<td>RAMSEY LEWIS &amp; NANCY WILSON</td>
<td>Meet El Buena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HARRY CONNICK, JR.</td>
<td>Sings I Heard</td>
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<tr>
<td>STEVE TYRELL</td>
<td>Standard Time</td>
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<td>SOUNDBOARD</td>
<td>Kissing Jessica Stein</td>
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<td>RACHELLE FERRELL</td>
<td>Live In Montreux 91-93</td>
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<tr>
<td>HARRY CONNICK, JR.</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>THIEVERY CORPORATION</td>
<td>Sounds From The Verde Hi-Fi</td>
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<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Pure Jazz Escape</td>
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<tr>
<td>JANE MONHEIT</td>
<td>Come Dream With Me</td>
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<tr>
<td>BILL CHARLAP</td>
<td>Stardust</td>
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<tr>
<td>JOHN COLTRANE</td>
<td>Coltrane For Lovers</td>
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<tr>
<td>DIANNE REEVES</td>
<td>The Best Of Dianne Reevaes</td>
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<tr>
<td>STAN GETZ</td>
<td>Get For Lovers</td>
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<tr>
<td>LOUIS ARMSTRONG</td>
<td>Ken Burns Jazz - The Definitive Louis Armstrong</td>
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<td>KENNY GARRETT</td>
<td>Happy People</td>
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<tr>
<td>ETTA JAMES</td>
<td>Blue Gardenia</td>
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<td>JANE MONHEIT</td>
<td>Never Never Land</td>
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<td>STANTON MOORE</td>
<td>Fiyat 'The Reap</td>
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<td>BILL HOLIDAY</td>
<td>Ken Burns Jazz - The Definitive Billie Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARTURO SANDOVAL</td>
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<td>ANDREA BOCELLI</td>
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<tr>
<td>RICHARD JODI</td>
<td>Billy Joel: Fantasies &amp; Delusions</td>
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<td>YO-YO MA (WILLIAMS)</td>
<td>Yo-Yo Ma Plays The Music Of John Williams</td>
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<tr>
<td>MARIA CALLAS</td>
<td>The Very Best Of Maria Callas</td>
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<tr>
<td>IFZAK PERJUAN</td>
<td>Bach: Munch</td>
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<td>THE HILLIARD ENSEMBLE/CHRISTOPH POPPEN</td>
<td>Bach: Keyboard</td>
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<td>MURRAY PERAHIA</td>
<td>Scarlatti: Complete Piano Sonatas</td>
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<td>KATHERINE JETT</td>
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<td>MISTISLAV ROSTRPOVICH</td>
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<td>JUAN DIEGO FLOREZ</td>
<td>Sings Rossini Arias</td>
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<td>MARIA CALLAS</td>
<td>Puccini: Tosca-Complete Opera</td>
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<td>VANGELIS</td>
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### Billboard Top Contemporary Jazz Albums

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<td>MEDESKI MARTIN &amp; WOOD</td>
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<td>BONEY JAMES</td>
<td>Ride</td>
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<td>CHRIS BOTTI</td>
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<td>PAUL ROZMUS</td>
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<td>JEREMIAH</td>
<td>Do It Again</td>
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<td>PETE WHITE</td>
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<td>THE RIPPIKTONS FEATURING RUSFREEMAN</td>
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<td>JIMMY SOMMERS</td>
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<td>BELA FLECK &amp; THE FLECKTONES</td>
<td>Live At The Quick</td>
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<td>ANDRE WARD</td>
<td>Feelin' You</td>
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<td>WARREN HILL</td>
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<td>ST. GERMA</td>
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<td>DAVID BENITO</td>
<td>Fuzzy Logic</td>
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<td>KON HAYAK</td>
<td>FAREED KEVIN RALPH</td>
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<td>Both Sides</td>
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### Billboard Top New Age Albums

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<td>ESTEBAN</td>
<td>Live!</td>
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<td>SECRET GARDEN</td>
<td>Once In A Red Moon</td>
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<td>JIM BRICKMAN</td>
<td>Simple Things</td>
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<td>ESTEBAN</td>
<td>All My Love</td>
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<td>GOVI</td>
<td>Mosaic</td>
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<td>ESTEBAN</td>
<td>The New Flamenco Y Rosas</td>
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<td>YANNI</td>
<td>If I Could Tell You</td>
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<td>DAVID LANZ</td>
<td>Best Of Norah-Neno Ape</td>
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<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>Moroccan Spirit</td>
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**Top 40 Hits**

1. [Link to Billboard chart](https://www.billboard.com/charts/billboard-top-40)
2. [Link to Jazz chart](https://www.billboard.com/charts/billboard-top-jazz)
3. [Link to Classical chart](https://www.billboard.com/charts/billboard-top-classical)
4. [Link to Contemporary Jazz chart](https://www.billboard.com/charts/billboard-top-contemporary-jazz)
5. [Link to New Age chart](https://www.billboard.com/charts/billboard-top-new-age)

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**Additional Resources**

- [Billboard](https://www.billboard.com)
- [American Radio History](https://www.americanradiohistory.com)

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**Notes**

- All charts are updated weekly by Billboard.
- The charts are compiled based on data from radio stations, sales, and streaming services.
- The charts are used to gauge the popularity of music across different genres.\n
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**Contact**

- For more information, contact [Billboard customer service](https://www.billboard.com/support)

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- Billboard is a proud sponsor of [American Radio History](https://www.americanradiohistory.com)

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**Citing Sources**

- [Billboard charts](https://www.billboard.com)
- [American Radio History](https://www.americanradiohistory.com)
### Heatseekers: Top Independent Albums

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<th>Number</th>
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<td>SLOUCH WANKERZ</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>ZER0 7</td>
<td>The Fallout</td>
<td>tt RECORDINGS</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>PEGGY SCOTT ADAMS</td>
<td>Alley: The Return Of The Ying Yang Twins</td>
<td>MIGHTY MUSICALS</td>
<td>3/12/2002</td>
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<td>The Trials And Tribulations Of Russell Jones</td>
<td>VIOLENT ARTS</td>
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<td>TWIZTID</td>
<td>Mirror Mirror</td>
<td>SOUR教學</td>
<td>3/12/2002</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>IMPOSSIBLE MOBB</td>
<td>Sidetracks</td>
<td>JAY SKY RECORDS</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>JACQUE JASPER</td>
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<td>MINIMAL</td>
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<td>RANCID/NOFX</td>
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### Heatseekers: Greatest Hits

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<td>INTERPRETATIONS</td>
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<td>KASEY CHAMBERS</td>
<td>Play It Loud</td>
<td>ULTRA RECORDS</td>
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<td>ALEXANDRE Pires</td>
<td>Go Get Your Life Back</td>
<td>UNIVERSITY HOUSE</td>
<td>3/12/2002</td>
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<td>MARY 37</td>
<td>musicfortheforningafter</td>
<td>STARSLATER</td>
<td>3/12/2002</td>
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<td>LOS ANGELES AZULES</td>
<td>Plastic Fang</td>
<td>ISLAND RECORDS</td>
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<td>ISLAND RECORDS</td>
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<td>All U Need</td>
<td>GROUNDHOG RECORDS</td>
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<td>ULTRA DANCE</td>
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<td>3/12/2002</td>
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### Billboard Modern Rock Tracks

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I CAN'T HELP IT ONA</td>
<td>Clinton Stilwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M</td>
<td>Christina Aguilera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I KNEW YOU'D BE HERE</td>
<td>Chris Isaak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE</td>
<td>Daughtry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I'M SORRY</td>
<td>Dave Matthews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I'M SORRY FOR COWARD</td>
<td>Debi Nova</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I'M TRYING TO FORGIVE</td>
<td>Dierks Bentley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I'M YOURS</td>
<td>Doro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I'M YOURS</td>
<td>Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I'M YOURS</td>
<td>Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood</td>
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### Billboard Adult Contemporary

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<th>#</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I WILL BE HERE</td>
<td>Alanis Morissette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I'LL BE YOUR SHELTER</td>
<td>Alanis Morissette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I'D RATHER BE</td>
<td>All-4-One</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I'D RATHER BE</td>
<td>All-4-One</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I'D RATHER BE</td>
<td>Alison Krauss</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>I'D RATHER BE</td>
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<td>I'D RATHER BE</td>
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### Billboard Mainstream Rock Tracks

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<tr>
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<td>Alanis Morissette</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>I'M SORRY</td>
<td>Dave Matthews</td>
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<td>I'M SORRY</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>I'M SORRY</td>
<td>Dave Matthews</td>
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### Billboard Adult Top 40 Tracks

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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I'D RATHER BE</td>
<td>All-4-One</td>
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Compiled from a national sample of widely supplied by Broadcast Data Systems' Radio Chart Service. 101 mainstream rock stations. 81 modern rock stations. 38 classic rock stations. Billboard Top 40 places a weekly national audience of 65 million persons and is monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Top 40 Tracks is compiled from a national sample of Mainstream Top 40, Rhythm Top 40 and Adult Top 40 stations. The Top 40 Tracks stations are electronically monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Top 40 Tracks award charts based on airplay and audience impressions. The remaining detection-based charts are compiled from a national sample of Mainstream Top 40, Rhythm Top 40 and Adult Top 40 stations. The Top 40 Tracks stations are electronically monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Top 40 Tracks award charts based on airplay and audience impressions. The remaining detection-based charts are compiled from a national sample

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NEW OLD FACES

That veteran promoters like Slater are resurfacing shouldn’t come as a surprise, says Jerry Mickelson, co-president of Chicago-based independent promoter Jam Productions. "They eat this thing for breakfast," he says. "They always come back to it."

More players mean more alternatives and healthy competition to artists, agents, and managers. "Any time, in any business, a monopoly tries to come in, competition will sprout up around them," observes Steve Martin, director of the Agency Group in New York. "Competition is healthy, whether it’s in the table business, the agency business, the record business, or the oil business."

While Slater has kept his specific plans close to the vest, he appears very bullish on Metropolitan’s growth potential. He doesn’t, however, think any of the new players are making much noise yet.

"I still think there are very few promoters, and the question is, Which ones can increase market share?" Slater asks. "The business is still very much dominated by one company. We’re working very hard to keep that in New York and the rest of the country. There is a tremendous opportunity to gain market share."

According to Mickelson, "Mash has a negative impact on concert promoters, and the fact that he’s coming back in is not a surprise. I think we’ll see others come back in—that’s the nature of the beast. We knew this would happen. When [SPX/CCE] was rolling up promoters, some would leave and compete with them. Mitch being one of the first to be bought, you know he knew it."

While acknowledging the existence of his non-compete with Metropolitan, Scher sticks by his intentions to return as a promoter.

"Non-compete don’t last forever," he says, "and the industry is in a metamorphosis right now, and I believe there is an opportunity for a mid-sized promoter to really have a significant niche. Right now might not be a good time for me to re-enter the concert-promotion business, but six months from now might be a great time."

While promoters are talking, agents are listening. "The agents and managers still want individual attention in each marketplace," Martin says. "It still comes down to how you’re treated. It’s a matter of being in the right place at the right time."

While Slater has been open about his plans, he’s also been careful about his timing. "We feel good," he says. "We’re working hard to break fewer acts, and we need to focus on building careers. It used to be a big deal when an act’s second album came out; now we’re seeing careers ending after the first single. It’s a tough time in our business right now."

Scher stresses that promoters “never can lose” by being in the artist-development business. “Having a club operation, having a ballroom situation, taking chances with artists, and helping is also done considerably, with 13% fewer shows reported to date than last year. At least part of the reason for that decline is directly attributed to last Sept. 11’s terrorist attacks.

“We feel good about what is in the books and what we’re working on,” Zuckerman told Billboard April 11, one day before the axe fell. “The outlook is very positive for the spring and summer and even looking good heading into the third quarter.”

Zuckerman does think Sept. 11 has had a negative impact on touring, but he believes that it is waning. “I think there were certainly obvious aftershocks and a slowdown in the fourth quarter [of 2001] and heading into the first quarter of [2002], but that’s just making the second and third quarters look more promising.”

‘There are certainly players that come and go in this business, and things change, as we all know. [CCE doesn’t] have much to say about the comings and goings and changes with [its] competition.’

—HRV ZUCKERMAN

is man hours developing artists than labels or promoters,” Martin says. “The labels don’t give acts two or three records to fail in finding their voice.”

Slater adds, “We’re working hard to break fewer acts, and we need to focus on building careers. It used to be a big deal when an act’s second album came out; now we’re seeing careers ending after the first single. It’s a tough time in our business right now.”

Scher stresses that promoters “never can lose” by being in the artist-development business. “Having a club operation, having a ballroom situation, taking chances with artists, and helping new players emerge in touring biz

Continued from page 1
grosses of about $23.2 million were reported to Billboard Boxscores, down more than 7% from the same period last year. Far more alarming is the attendance of 5.3 million people to date, a figure that shows a drop of more than 25% from first-quarter 2001. Touring volume
Can Top Media/Music Marriages Be Saved?

Continued from page 1

formance comparisons have been difficult. Vivendi’s picture is further skewed by a complex shift from French to U.S. accounting standards.

Both companies said earlier this year that they would be taking one-time, multi-billion-dollar write-downs—non-cash charges that do not affect the companies’ operations but signal that some of the key assets they’ve bought are worth less today than they were at the time of acquisition.

Vivendi and AOL Time Warner stress that these charges are one-time events. They stem from a new accounting rule that requires companies to record at all times any declines in the value of goodwill—the difference between the price paid for an asset and its tangible value. Previously, companies had to write down the value of the goodwill on their balance sheets on an annual basis during a set period of time.

Still, the charges are significant. AOL Time Warner’s $10.6 billion charge is believed to be the largest one-time charge in history. Vivendi’s charge of 12.64 billion euros ($11.1 billion) led to its reporting a 2001 net loss of 13.6 billion euros ($11.9 billion), the largest in French corporate history.

Are these growing pains for what are still young companies? Or are there fundamental issues concerning how they have been put together and how they are meant to operate?

ONLINE IN THE DOG HOUSE

Few can dispute the strength of the media and entertainment assets, including music, under the AOL Time Warner umbrella. Once the dominant record company, Warner Music Group has been rescued by chairman/CEO Roger Ames from years of market-share declines. In first-quarter 2002, its share of U.S. album sales was 16.9%—two percentage points better than a year ago and good enough for second place behind Universal.

Yet Warner’s success takes place against the backdrop of declining sales industry-wide, as consumers turn to the Internet and CD-burning for the music they want. Through April 14, U.S. album sales are 4.8% behind last year’s pace, according to SoundScan.

Currently, AOL Time Warner’s highest-flying business is movies. Thanks to the success of two films—Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone and The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring, each the first in a series—and the ongoing DVD boom (its revenue in 2001 was $8.76 billion), it is slightly ahead of the market leader, DreamWorks. Besides, it is a major player in the Bonefish Media Internet venture.

The company says its strength is the diversity of its brands—from the movie franchises to its Time Inc. stable of magazines and USA Online Internet service—which, with more than 34 million subscribers, is the world’s largest.

“We have a unique mix of diverse businesses,” an AOL Time Warner spokeswoman says, “and we are focused on creating sustained and predictable growth for our shareholders.”

Though its market capitalization—the total value of its outstanding shares—has declined from some $350 billion when the merger was announced in January 2000 to $96 billion, it is still the largest media company in the world. Viacom is next, at $87 billion. Vivendi Universal is worth $38 billion.

Yet, as some see it, the vast sprawl of AOL Time Warner’s media and entertainment businesses is a problem. “The bottom line is that, along with AOL, Vivendi are in the dog house, as far as market perception is concerned,” says Nicholas Bell, a media analyst with Bear Stearns in London. “These are big companies, and the trouble is there’s always something somewhere that’s not going quite right. And when you’re in the dog house, that’s what people focus on.”

At the moment, people are focusing on AOL Time Warner’s renegotiation of a cable-TV partnership with the Newhouse family, owner of Advance Publications. If the Newhouse family walks, it could take with it 2.3 million of AOL Time Warner’s cable subscribers.

Though the price to retain them may be high—as much as $11 billion—company observers expect AOL Time Warner will make every effort to do so. Late last year, it lost out to Comcast in a bid for the largest company, AT&T Broadband. In 2001, cable generated for AOL Time Warner a hefty $3.2 billion in earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (ebida)—more than any other division.

Yet the company is also spending $6.75 billion to reacquire a 49% stake in AOL Europe held by Bertelsmann. In early April, AOL Time Warner issued $6 billion of bonds, which is expected to raise its debt level to $28 billion by the end of the 2002. Analysts speculate that adding another $10 billion or so in debt to solidify its cable partnerships could put the company at risk of losing its investment-grade rating. That would raise its cost of borrowing money.

The AOL Time Warner spokeswoman says that “we have the financial capacity and flexibility to execute our strategy.”

There are also concerns about the rate at which America Online is adding subscribers and the degree to which its margins may be shrinking as it offers promotions and discounts to retain them.

“The real problem with AOL Time Warner is that the AOL service subscription growth is not there,” the New York media investment banker says. Any substantial decline at America Online would be serious, as it generated 23% of the company’s revenue and 30% of its ebitda in 2001.

In early February, Vivendi Universal chairman/CEO Jean-Marie Messier said Vivendi remains “open to good opportunities” but is no longer in the market for marquee acquisitions. “There are no ‘missing pieces’ in our strategy,” he said, adding that “our priority for 2002 is internal growth” of at least 10%.

In a late-March research report, Lehman Brothers new-media analyst Holly Becker wrote that “the AOL division and advertising in particular is the ‘single biggest risk to AOL Time Warner’s near-term earnings.’” She indicated that “a surge in intercompany advertising”—a main driver of AOL’s growth—may be subsiding. Becker lowered her forecast for the AOL unit’s first-quarter advertising revenue to $535 million—25.8% lower than the same period a year ago; without the benefit of intercompany sales, she estimates it would be 40% lower.

AOL Time Warner executives point out that America Online remains the dominant Internet service; Microsoft’s MSN is a distant second, with 7.7 million subscribers. They say that the recent decision to put AOL Time Warner co-CEO Bob Pittman back in charge of AOL is a signal that it is taking steps to address any weaknesses there.

In an e-mail memorandum to America Online employees explaining the change, Pittman wrote that “advertising, which remains soft in the entire media sector, is the challenge. Getting this back on track is our highest priority.”

The New York media investment banker believes a pickup in the advertising market could do some way toward boosting AOL Time Warner’s share price. “It will help the perception more than the reality. The issue with AOL subscribers going down or not increasing as much as they should be is not going to be solved in the next three months,” he said. “The perception that they’re kind of on a roll may.”

WHAT IT IS VS. WHAT IT APPEARS TO BE

At Vivendi Universal, the key challenge is becoming what the company says it is. Through a flurry of deals in the past two years, chairman/CEO Jean-Marie Messier has transformed a water-utility company into a media firm that boasts Universal Music Group (UMG), the world’s largest music company, and Universal’s and USA Networks’ film assets.

Yet it remains a hybrid. “It’s a complex company,” says one analyst who follows the firm. “I’m a media analyst, but half the revenue comes from the utility business.”

Bell says, “The trouble with Vivendi, at an extreme, is it still looks like a bit of a conglomerate.” AOL Time Warner has its America Online Internet service that can serve as a focal point for marketing its collection of media assets, whereas at Vivendi, “there isn’t the obvious glue sticking it all together that gives it the ability on a longer-term basis to achieve sustainable growth rates above the industry average.”

While other media companies, including AOL Time Warner and Viacom, cut their 2001 growth forecasts during the course of the year, Vivendi did not. Messier said in early February that 2001: grow revenue and ebitda by about 10% and 35%, respectively. UMG dominates the market-share charts, and its film studio is among the best-run in Hollywood.

Still, Vivendi has seen its share price tumble some 40% so far this year, while Viacom is up about 9%. Part of the concern is that 2002 will be a slower year for the Universal music and film businesses. More worrisome, though, may be structural concerns with Vivendi itself.

In a recent research note, Merrill Lynch analysts noted, “In the post-Enron world, investors (rightly so) have placed a heightened focus on debt levels (both on and off balance sheet); financial flexibility, i.e., acquisition capability and free cash flow.” They noted in February that the Vivendi end of the year with 18 billion euros ($15.7 billion)—a figure that’s expected to rise once Vivendi shifts from French to U.S. accounting standards when it reports its first-quarter financial results April 25.

In early February, Messier said Vivendi remains “open to good opportunities” but is no longer in the market for marquee acquisitions. “There are no ‘missing pieces’ in our strategy,” he said. “Our priority for 2002 is internal growth [at least 10%].”

AOL Time Warner, keen on focusing on reducing debt levels and putting the company in a stronger financial position, that would reassure investors of its soundness and pave the way for acquisitions when the time comes. Vivendi is also advised to focus on its non-entertainment businesses. Vizzavi, the European Internet portal it formed two years ago with British mobile-phone company Vodafone, has yet to catch on. Intended for both PC-based Internet users and those on mobile phones and handheld computers, Vizzavi could claim 6.5 million users at the end of 2001. But in 2001, Viven- di’s combined Internet operations—which also include MP3.com and EMusic—pro- (Continued on next page)
America Online's deal for Time Warner was a risk during the height of the technology-fueled stock-market boom; the write-downs suggest that each may have overpaid for those assets.

Yet a write-down can have a positive effect on a company’s future reported performance, as both AOL Time Warner and Vivendi have acknowledged.

“If you take a large write-off, people typically tend to ignore that write-off, whether it’s right or wrong,” Mohanram says. “What they don’t realize is by doing this huge write-off, essentially the company is setting itself up for higher profitability ratios in the future.”

Though a casual observer may conclude that a company is “becoming more lean or efficient, that might not be true. All that might be happening is they’ve taken a large write-off for goodwill. They’ve reduced their asset base, and therefore improved their ratios.”

**CAN THE MARRIAGES WORK?**

The big question now for Vivendi and AOL Time Warner is whether they can make cross-divisional initiatives work and fulfill the notion of synergy on which they were founded.

Opinions differ on how well they’ve done so far. In a recent research note on AOL Time Warner, Goldman Sachs entertainment and new-media analysts wrote that “revenue synergies that the combined company could achieve have been virtually nonexistent to date.”

AOL Time Warner officials express satisfaction with cross-promotions, including the promotion of the first installments of *Harry Potter and The Lord of the Rings*. Every two weeks for the past year, Pittman and Parsons have been gathering the CEOs of all the company’s divisions to discuss cross-divisional projects. There are also regular councils that draw together executives from various divisions around such themes as marketing, advertising, and communications.

In its effort to grow without acquisitions in 2002, Vivendi late last year formed a committee of its entertainment CEOs that gathers monthly to manage the integration of its music, film, TV, games, and education assets and further develop cross-divisional initiatives. In February, it announced a new internal policy that gives its business units the right of first and last refusal on any intellectual property created in-house. Business units will be “incentivized to utilize intellectual property resources that are available within the company instead of using third parties.”

**FALLING OUT OF FAVOR**

The collapse of Enron has made investors jittery about stocks of all sorts, even those of such long-established firms as General Electric (GE). On April 11, when it reported lower-than-expected first-quarter revenue along with a $1 billion non-cash charge related to a decline in the value of goodwill, GE shares closed down 9.3% at $33.75.

On that same day, Vivendi shares in New York fell 5.1% to $31.69. AOL Time Warner closed down 5.3% at $19.60, close to a three-year low.

As companies tied to the Internet continue to fall out of favor, America Online is seeking to reposition itself as a media company, including Pittman, appointed as the new AOL head, AOL Time Warner CEO-elect Richard Parsons asserted that “our revenue, combined with the total amount of time people spend on our service, makes AOL one of the world’s leading media companies in its own right.”

AOL is adding top executives from the traditional media world. James de Castro, former CEO of AMFM, was recently named its head of interactive services. Pittman—himself a co-founder of MTV—takes over the leadership of AOL from Barry Schuler, whose background is mostly in technology.

**BETTER OFF APART?**

Yet it is the Internet service that is being discounted by Wall Street, Goldman Sachs analysts noted in their report that AOL’s share price is well under “a reasonable sum-of-the-parts valuation of $32.” In an observer who follows Vivendi, “The Vivendi pitch was, ‘Well, we’ve got all these diverse assets, we’ve got this pay-TV platform in Europe, we’ve got this mobile platform in conjunction with Vodafone, and we’re going to create this multichannel portal.’ Now, I don’t think there’s anyone out there who thinks Vivendi is going to be strong enough to build it all together.”

Messier has gained fame for his acquisitiveness. But the company that he has assembled is a behemoth that has systemic problems at its roots. Vivendi’s finances are so complex that it wasn’t until April 15 that it published details of its 2001 financial performance—including its balance sheet—beyond what was contained in a March 5 press release.

In an April 12 research report, Merrill Lynch analysts noted that Vivendi has come under pressure “from a number of stories too numerous to mention.” One scenario has Messier ceding some power or exiting altogether. Some analysts are even calculating how high Vivendi shares might rise if he were removed.

On April 24, Vivendi holds its annual general meeting in Paris and announces its financial results for first-quarter 2002. That same day, AOL Time Warner will report its first-quarter numbers. For two companies that once seemed to have it plotted out, the future is increasingly uncertain.
11 world. Tennant says Michael Brauer (who mixed Release) summed up the situation best in six words:

"This song is about that now." Tennant notes, "People now have a strong desire to be home."

Release—whose songs are published by Cage Music/Sony Music Ltd.—deals with contemporary love ("E-mail," "The Night I Fell in Love"). "Release is a return to form for the duo," says David Shebib, owner of specialty store Rebel Rebel in New York. "The import versions of both "Relentless" and "Home and Dry" are selling incredibly well."

Like the import, the domestic Release will initially arrive in the form of four limited-edition versions, with each having different cover artwork. But unlike overseas, the U.S. limited-edition will also include a bonus disc featuring extra tracks—including the Pet Shop Boys and Peter Rauhofer collaboration "Break 4 Love," which topped the Billboard Hot Dance Music/Club Play chart last year—and an encoded video of "Home and Dry."

Tennant says the label will also be delivering sites like AOL with MP3 downloads of "Home and Dry"—as well as streams of the Wolfgang Tillman-looted video. Not being ignored by the Boys' core audience. Harkins confirms, "There will be Release parties at gay clubs throughout the country."

Managed by Merc Cerquandis and Mitch Clark of Sanctuary Artist Management (with offices in New York and London) and booked by Rick Roskin of Creative Artists Agency in Los Angeles, Pet Shop Boys will tour North America in May (see Beat Box, page 38). The outing will be followed by a summer-long European tour.

**White Stripes’ Garage Rock Goes Pop**

**Chart-Climbing Detroit Duo’s Latest, ‘White Blood Cells,’ Is Picked Up By V2**

**BY CARLA HAY**

NEW YORK—Don’t tell the White Stripes that they’re becoming famous. It’s enough to send lead singer/guitarist Jack White into a fit of laughter or bewilderment. "I think it’s hilarious," White says of the rock duo’s growing popularity. "We never set out for this to happen, and I’m still not quite sure why it’s happening."

The story of the White Stripes is of a Detroit act with indie-rock origins that has been propelled into the mainstream spotlight via its current album, *White Blood Cells* (Third Man/V2). The duo (whose other member is drummer Meg White, Jack’s ex-wife) have experienced a groundswell of word-of-mouth support, which paved the way for the White Stripes to have their first big radio hit with current single "Fell in Love With a Girl." To this commercial acceptance, the White Stripes received widespread critical acclaim in the press, which predicted that the duo was poised to hit big (Billboard, Oct. 27, 2001).

*White Blood Cells* (the act’s third album) was released last June on the Sympathy for the Record Industry label and reissued by V2 after the label signed the White Stripes last November. The album debuted on the Heatseeker chart at No. 44 in June, 19 issue and eventually rose to No. 1. on the chart in the April 6 issue. *White Blood Cells* reached Heatseeker status in April, when it rocketed from No. 116 to No. 61 on The Billboard 200. The album also earned Pacesetter status (the largest sales-percentage growth) in that same issue.

The unique “garage-rock” style of the White Stripes is like nothing currently heard on commercial radio, says Lisa Wadman, music director of modern rock station KROQ Los Angeles. “The White Stripes’ music is a huge breath of fresh air. It definitely stands out when you play ‘Fell in Love With a Girl’ in between Linkin Park or Korn. When we started playing the White Stripes, it instantly became one of our top-five requests.”

V2 president Andy Gershon adds, "*White Blood Cells* goes against the grain. It’s a very raw-sounding record; it’s simple yet complicated. People are responding to it because they want an alternative to what you usually hear on the radio."

Meanwhile, the video for "Fell in Love With a Girl" (an animation clip directed by Michel Gondry) has been a favorite on MTV2 and MuchMusic USA, which also gave considerable support to the previous video, "Hotel Yorba." Being a male/female duo in a sea of male four- or five-piece rock bands is an intriguing quality of the White Stripes, notes Mike Camacho, GM of Tower Records’ Broadway location in Chicago. He adds, "Besides their music, the White Stripes are fascinating because a lot of people don’t know if they’re a married couple or siblings. Up until recently, most people heard about the White Stripes mainly through word-of-mouth."

Lead singer White believes that the White Stripes’ switch to a new label has made a critical difference in improving the act’s sales. "When we were on Sympathy for the Record Industry, which released our other two albums, we’d get complaints that people couldn’t find our record in stores. So it feels good to be on a label that knows how to get our records out there."

Although the Sympathy for the Record Industry logo appears on *White Blood Cells*, V2 is currently the record-label muscle behind the White Stripes. The duo reportedly has retained rights to its masters, and its releases will carry the imprint of Jack White’s label, Third Man.

The White Stripes—managed by Los Angeles-based attorney Ian Montone—have also built a reputation for being a strong draw as a live act. Gershon recalls that one of the turning points in deciding to sign the act was “seeing how 6,000 people turned out for a tree show the White Stripes did last year in New York, even though the show was hardly advertised. When people see the White Stripes play live, they understand what everyone is talking about.”

The White Stripes’ U.S. booking is handled by San Francisco-based Easy Action Industries, while the act’s booking outside the U.S. is done by Russell Warby of the Agency Group in London. For the remainder of the year, the White Stripes will be touring North America, Europe, and Japan.

“We’ve gotten more press recently than some bands that sell more records than us,” Jack White notes, “I really don’t understand all of the attention. I’m still living life on the road. The only time I feel life is really different is when we go to the U.K., where we get recognized on the street a lot more.”

The guitarist, a self-taught musician, says that although he finds it difficult to write songs until he takes a break from touring, the White Stripes will record their next album in the midst of their 2002 tour. V2 is eying the album’s release for next year, and White says he has about 20 songs written already. The White Stripes’ songs are published by Peppermint Stripe Music, BMI. White is also producing other acts, such as Green Horns (“a white-soul group from Cincinnati”) and Whirlwind Heat, a Michigan avant-garde band, whose album White hopes to release on Third Man.

“I have no intention of being rich and famous,” Jack White says. “But if it happens, at least for now our fans can feel like they still own the band.”

**Pet Shop Boys**

Continued from page 1

‘Let’s just make a Neil and Chris record—one with personal lyrics and strong melodies.’ So that’s what we set out to do.”

Arriving Tuesday (23) via Sanctuary Records, the self-produced Release—issued April 1 overseas by Parlophone—overwhelms with pure pop sensibilities, recalling the duo’s fourth studio album, 1990’s * Behaviour. That’s not to say Release is completely without dance elements. “This is a Pet Shop Boys album, after all,” Tennant says with a chuckle.

Release—which features contributions from ex-Smiths guitarist Johnny Marr and percussionist Jody Linscott—finds Tennant and Lowe placing more emphasis on the songs and less on production. “Production was a bit simpler,” Tennant acknowledges. “We’ve been known to overproduce at times, but not this time.”

With this album, we wanted to bring out the meanings of the songs,” he continues. “It was the first time Chris put chord changes down on guitar. And usually, the guitar is thrown by Chris in the studio. This gave the overall sound more space and kept things more focused.”

Included in the proceedings is the duo’s signature knack for finding melancholia in most any situation. Tennant explains, “We always find happiness in sadness and sadness in happiness. Life is complicated; it’s not a Hollywood movie. It’s about having an awareness of the fragility of things.”

Release—the duo’s most personal album, Tennant says—opens with lead single “Home and Dry.” Delivered to hot AC radio April 5, the noncommercial single has taken on added poignancy in the aftermath of last Sept. 11. “I wrote the lyrics more than a year ago,” Tennant offers. “At the time, it was my way of dealing with tragedy at night.”

When it came time to mix the song, which was done in a post-Sept.
Billboard Announces Performers For 2002 Latin Music Awards

Stars will shine at this year’s Billboard Latin Music Awards where the best in Latin entertainment and special guest star Celine Dion are to gather for an unforgettable evening. The gala event is scheduled to take place May 9 at the Jackie Gleason Theater in Miami Beach.

Some of the big names already scheduled to perform at the show include international recording stars Celine Dion, Marc Anthony, Thalía, Juan Gabriel, Los TriO, Jaci Velázquez, Cristian, A.B. Quintanilla and Los Kumbia Kings, Victor Manuel, Carlos Vives, Olga Tañón, Alexandre Pires, Alejandro Guzman, and Lupillo Rivera. The show will be hosted by Latin television stars Miguel Varoni, Manolo Cardona, and Itali Cantoral. Additional performers and presenters will be announced soon.

Now in its 13th year, the Billboard Latin Music Awards has become one of Latin music’s most prestigious award shows. The show is produced by Telenumero and will be broadcast on the Spanish language network May 12, at 7 p.m. (ET/PT).

The award show caps off the Billboard Latin Music Conference & Awards, presented by Heineken and in association with HBO Latino, slated for May 7-9 at the Eden Roc Resort in Miami Beach. The conference is the premier Latin music industry networking event and will include a poolside welcome reception, informative panels featuring top Latin music experts, evening showcases, the Hope & Harmony charity dance party, exhibits, and an exclusive live Q&A with Ricky Martin.

For more information on the Billboard Latin Music Conference & Awards visit www.billboardevents.com or call 646-654-4660. For conference registration and award show tickets, contact Phyllis Demo at 646-654-4643. For sponsorship information, contact Cebele Rodriguez at 646-654-4648.

upcoming events

Billboard Latin Music Conference & Awards
Eden Roc Resort • Miami Beach • May 7-9
Billboard R&B/Hip-Hop Conference & Awards
Eden Roc Resort • Miami Beach • Aug. 7-9
Billboard Dance Music Summit
Minneapolis, MN • Sept. 10-12
Hollywood Reporter/Billboard Film & TV Music Conference
Renaissance Hollywood Hotel • Hollywood • Oct. 10-12

for more info: Michele Jascangelo 646.654.4660
bbevents@billboard.com

book of the week

ROCK STAR 101

Coming in May from Watson Guptill

Rock Star 101 provides aspiring musicians with information on everything from contract negotiations to finding management to surviving life on the road. The book also includes valuable expert advice from entertainment attorneys, concert promoters, and other industry professionals.

Rock Star 101, A Rock Star’s Guide to Survival and Success in the Music Business (ISBN 1-58115-227-2, $14.95) is available worldwide, wherever books are sold. For author interviews contact Lee Wiggins at 646-654-5455 or email lwiggins@watsonguptill.com. For excerpts, contact Sheila Emery at 646-654-5463.
The R&B and hip-hop community showed its heart recently as a star-studded lineup took the stage at LIFEbeat’s UrbanAID 2 benefit. Held April 8 at New York’s Beacon Theatre, the concert featured performances by the Roots, Musiq, Alicia Keys, Fat Joe, Ashanti, Ja Rule, P. Diddy & Family, and Jay-Z. The event was taped for future broadcast on BET.

Hosted by comedian/actor Mike Epps (Next Friday, All About the Benjamins), the show spilled over with musical moments. The Roots and fellow Philadelphia Musiq teamed up for a medley of the former’s “The Next Movement” and the latter’s “The L. I. Gone.” P. Diddy, one of the affair’s co-chairs, also brought some famous friends in tow, including Busta Rhymes (for a performance of “Pass the Courvoisier [Part II”).

Ashanti, whose eponymous Murder Inc./Def Jam debut album bowed at No.1 on The Billboard 200 in the last issue, joined Ja Rule to close his set with the chart-topping “Always on Time.”

Like many of the performers, host Epps felt a personal obligation to take part in the event: “I’m from the neighborhood, and AIDS is in our communities. It’s real tough. I know a few that have gone through it and are now dealing with it. I thought I’d be a part of this and lend my hand.”

Def Soul recording artist Musiq agreed, saying, “I think it’s important as an artist to give back. I’m just doing something for my people as a human being. The fact that I have this God-given position means I’m going to use it for the greater good as much as I possibly can.”

Musiq also admitted admiration for his fellow performers at UrbanAID. “I’m performing with a lot of people that I’m a fan of,” he said. “It shows people that it’s possible for us to come together for a greater good.”

In addition to the music, LIFEbeat delivered a message with public service announcements featuring the show’s performers, as well as former president Bill Clinton, event co-chair Russell Simmons and his wife, Kimora Lee-Simmons: MCA recording artist Talib Kweli; and Al and Free of BET’s 106 & Park. LIFEbeat also honored longtime supporters, including activist Maria Davis and actress Rosie Perez with the Spirit and Pioneer Awards, respectively.

For Def Jam/Def Soul president Kevin Liles, UrbanAID 2 gives the hip-hop community the opportunity to give something back to the fans. “It’s a blessing to be involved in this event because this disease touches every single person,” he said. “I have to make this a better place for my daughter and my son. Every person that we affect—that 8-year-old, that 6-year-old, that 3-year-old—we have to start educating them now. This is not to say that you can’t teach an old dog new tricks, but we want to start with the young people.”

Ja Rule’s previous AIDS awareness experience gave him all the more reason to get involved. “We’re bringing an awareness to an issue that’s very serious,” the rapper said. “I got really involved with AIDS awareness when I did the ‘What’s Going On’ record. That’s when I really started to do research as far as statistics on how serious it is in the black community and in all communities. This is a big concert, but I hope everyone gets the gist of why we’re here.”

RASHAUN HALL

Lava/Atlantic recording group the Corrs performed at the Speaker’s Irish Luncheon in Washington, D.C., an annual St. Patrick’s Day tradition honoring the Prime Minister of Ireland. The family foursome, whose new VH1 Presents the Corrs Live in Dublin was released March 12, was joined at the event by President George W. Bush, Prime Minister of Ireland Bertie Ahern, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives J. Dennis Hastert, and 1998 Peace Prize Laureate and former Northern Ireland Social Democratic and Labour Party leader John Hume. Pictured, from left, are Sharon and Andrea Corr, President Bush, and Caroline and Jim Corr.

Base Level

New York Mets manager Bobby Valentine battled around the banner with Broadway regular Matthew Broderick at the end of March at the Mets’ spring training facility in Port St. Lucie, Fla. Broderick has just wrapped up his year-long commitment as a lead in The Producers, for which he nominated for a Tony Award.

The Corrs Go To Washington

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